

BROADBAND INITIATIVE UPDATE

On May 14, SCAG Executive Director Kome Ajise and SANDAG Executive Director Hasan Ikhata participated in a panel discussion moderated by Sunne Wright McPeak, President and CEO of the California Emerging Technology Fund (CETF) and former secretary of the California Business, Transportation and Housing Agency. The panel focused on regional efforts from metropolitan planning organizations (MPO) to adopt region-wide digital equity resolutions and regional efforts to address the digital divide. SCAG and SANDAG have worked collaboratively to bring resources to Southern California and highlight current efforts to support further broadband deployment. The panel focused on the ongoing collaboration and the focused leadership both agencies have provided to Southern California in leading efforts to bridge the digital divide, highlight best practices, and advocate for more resources and collaboration.

The MPO Digital Divide Panel was a part of the "Getting Connected: A Broadband Deployment and Adoption Resource Guide for Local and Regional Government Leaders Webinar" program developed by CETF and Valley Vision Community Inspired Solutions. The webinar was developed to highlight the release of the resource guide, which is a refresh of the guide developed close to a decade ago in cooperation with CETF and the Orange County Business Council. The guide will be used as a vital tool to help accelerate the deployment and adoption of broadband throughout the State of California and was developed by Valley Vision and CETF using the many resources, best practices, and case studies available. This resource guide is especially timely in light of Governor Gavin Newsom's executive order to pursue broadband for all and adopt an action plan to achieve the state's goals.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

SCAG's newly elected executive board officers, including President Clint Lorimore, Second Vice President Carmen Ramirez, and Regional Councilmember Peggy Huang, met with Assemblywoman Suzette Valladares (R-Santa Clarita), who represents California's 38th Assembly District. Assemblywoman Valladares had never held elected office prior to her November 2020 victory. She shares various priorities with SCAG, including seeking ways to increase housing affordability in California while finding the right balance between local control and streamlining the approval process. She is also focused on expanding high-speed broadband access, especially for her rural constituents. Assemblywoman Valladares expressed a desire to continue conversations with SCAG to leverage our expertise in the housing and broadband arenas as she continues to learn more about these policy issues.

LETTER TO STATE LEGISLATIVE LEADERSHIP REQUESTS SUPPORT FOR LOCAL AGENCIES TO MEET STATE HOUSING GOALS

On behalf of our region's cities and counties, I sent a letter to Speaker of the Assembly Anthony Rendon and Senate President pro Tempore Toni Atkins requesting certain flexibilities for jurisdictions currently working to update their Housing Elements. Given the unusual circumstances under which jurisdictions must plan and the significantly higher housing need identified by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD), the letter laid out four asks as follows:

- Allow up to 25 percent of a jurisdiction's Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) allocation to be met through preservation of naturally occurring affordable units or units "at-risk" of conversion to market rate.
- Extend the deadline for SCAG region jurisdictions to submit Housing Element updates by six months from October 2021 to April 2022.
- Modify the deadlines for required rezoning for those jurisdictions requiring a comprehensive update to its General Plan.
- Allow cities and counties to trade or transfer portions of their RHNA allocations as long as the state's Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) guidelines are still achieved.

Over the past several weeks, SCAG staff has met with stakeholders, including representatives of housing advocacy organizations, HCD staff, and staff with the legislative housing and budget committees. Reactions have been mixed, but SCAG continues to advocate for these changes to not only support local jurisdictions in updating their Housing Elements, but to produce better Housing Elements. An extension of the Housing Element update deadline, for example, would allow SCAG region cities and counties to maximize the State's \$250 million investment in the Regional Early Action Planning (REAP) and Local Early Action Planning (LEAP) programs as local jurisdictions work to plan for more housing.

DEMOGRAPHIC WORKSHOP TO ADDRESS PLANNING FOR “THE POST-PANDEMIC CITY”

SCAG and the University of Southern California's Sol Price School of Public Policy will be hosting the [32nd Annual Demographic Workshop](#) in two parts on **Tuesday, June 8** and **Tuesday, June 15**. This year's workshop contemplates life in “the post-pandemic city.” [Register here to attend.](#)

PART 1: CHANGING CALIFORNIA DEMOGRAPHICS

Starting on **Tuesday, June 8 from 1:30 to 4:45 p.m.**, join us for an update on the latest in demographic trends, including migration, fertility and aging, and a look at the unequal impacts of COVID-19.

PART 2: THE POST-PANDEMIC CITY

The next webinar in the series will be held on **Tuesday, June 15 from 1:30 to 4:45 p.m.** and will feature a keynote address by **Tiffany Chu**, designer, planner and the former chief executive officer and co-founder of Remix, and now the senior vice president at Via, on the emerging neighborhood-centric mobility patterns seen during the COVID-19 pandemic. Additional panels will include a 2020 Census update and a discussion on the post-pandemic workforce, housing, and transportation.

Each part of the series will also include expert-led roundtable discussions to build skills about topics presented throughout the day. The cost of this year's workshop is free to all individuals who [register](#). For additional details about the event, visit scag.ca.gov/demographics.

SCAG ANNOUNCES 2021 SUSTAINABILITY AWARDS RECIPIENTS

SCAG is proud to announce the 2021 Sustainability Award recipients! Recipients of this year's 14th annual awards include municipalities, agencies, and nonprofit organizations – all recognized for excellence in coordinating land use and transportation to improve mobility, livability, prosperity, and sustainability. The 2021 Sustainability Award recipients by category:

- **Outstanding Achievement in Sustainability:** The City of Santa Ana, for the Santa Ana Arts Collective (SAAC) Affordable Housing and Adaptive Reuse Community
- **Active, Healthy and Safe Communities:** The City of Palm Desert, for its San Pablo Avenue Streetscape Project
- **Clean Cities – Alternative Fuels and Infrastructure:** Sunline Transit Agency, for Driving the Future of Hydrogen
- **Efficient and Sustainable Land Use:** Kounkuey Design Initiative and the City of Los Angeles, for its Adopt-A-Lot Program
- **Housing Innovation:** Clifford Beers Housing Inc., for its Isla de Los Angeles development
- **Green Region Initiative:** The San Bernardino Valley Water Conservation District, for the Upper Santa Ana River Wash Habitat Conservation Plan

[Watch the videos](#) to learn more about each project. For more information on the SCAG Sustainability Awards and to view past winners, please visit scag.ca.gov/sustainability-program-awards.

2021 STUDENT SHOWCASE

SCAG hosted the Student Showcase again in 2021, a virtual Esri StoryMap competition that challenged post-secondary students to utilize an online tool to reflect current events related to planning while using SCAG data. This is a meaningful way to tell a story or provide insight, showcase plans, and projects, engage supporters and stakeholders, illustrate the possibilities of data, and highlight the usefulness of open data at the regional level. Applications fell under two categories: Planning and Innovation. More than ten universities and community colleges were represented in this year's competition. The top projects for both categories are highlighted below:

PLANNING CATEGORY

- 1st Place – \$2,000 – Reaghan Murphy – University of Southern California
 - ◎ [Surviving SoCal's Streets: The Case for Vision Zero](#)
- 2nd Place - \$1,000 – Lacy Gugliemino – Crafton Hills College
 - ◎ [To Reach It, We Have to Teach It!](#)

INNOVATION CATEGORY

- 1st Place - \$2,000 – Irene Farr – University of California, Los Angeles
 - ◎ [Identifying Hidden open Spaces](#)
- 2nd Place - \$1,000 – Adam Doyle – California State University, Long Beach
 - ◎ [Gas to Green](#)

Congratulations to our 2021 Student Showcase award recipients!

INCLUSIVE ECONOMIC RECOVERY STRATEGY NEXT STEPS

SCAG staff provided an update on the [Inclusive Economic Recovery Strategy \(IERS\)](#) to the Regional Council at their meeting on May 6, presenting initial research, findings from their convenings, and draft recommendations for the IERS. The draft recommendations focus on the strategies and actions that SCAG is well-positioned to lead or implement with an appropriate partner in the region. SCAG is seeking stakeholder input on the findings and proposed recommendations for the final IERS. All stakeholders who live or work in the SCAG six-county region are encouraged to review the draft IERS Findings and Recommendations and submit comments by June 4. With additional feedback from the Regional Council and stakeholders, the final report and recommendations will be brought to the Regional Council in summer 2021.

SCAG AWARDED FULL REGIONAL EARLY ACTION PLANNING AMOUNT

On May 13, HCD provided a formal letter awarding SCAG its remaining full award amount of approximately \$35.6 million under the REAP grant. REAP grants are awarded to councils of governments and other multi-partner agencies such as SCAG to accelerate housing production and increase housing supply through a variety of planning programs. SCAG was awarded an early application amount of \$11.8 million in early 2020 and intends to use its full amount to continue its wide variety of programs to help local jurisdictions and partners plan for and implement the 6th cycle RHNA allocation. REAP funds must be expended by December 31, 2023. Please visit the [SCAG Housing webpage](#) for more information.

SCAG COMMENT LETTER ON DRAFT CALENVIROSCREEN 4.0

SCAG staff prepared and submitted comments on the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment's (OEHHA) Draft CalEnviroScreen 4.0 on May 14. The new version of the environmental health screening tool includes the incorporation of the most recent data available for all indicators, improvements to the calculations of some indicators, and one new indicator (Children's Lead Risk from Housing). SCAG Comments on CES 4.0 covered the absence of racial/ethnic and climate change indicators and recommendations regarding an increased emphasis on air pollution indicators and improved outreach efforts. SCAG staff is coordinating with OEHHA staff to arrange a presentation of the CES 4.0 updates for the Energy & Environment Committee meeting in June 2021.

PROJECT LIST APPROVED FOR THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES PROGRAM ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION & SAFETY CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

At its meeting on May 6, SCAG's [Regional Council approved the recommended project list](#) for the 2020 Sustainable Communities Program (SCP) Active Transportation & Safety Call for Applications. For Active Transportation Program-funded projects, SCAG will take the approved project list to the California Transportation Commission (CTC) at the [June 23-24 meeting](#) for approval. After approval, SCAG staff will begin allocation for those funded projects. SCAG staff will send award letters in the coming weeks with more details on next steps, for all projects. SCAG plans to release a fourth SCP Call for Applications this fall that will be focused on Civic Engagement, Equity, and Environmental Justice. More details will be provided on SCAG's [SCP webpage](#) with opportunities to provide feedback on the development of the guidelines this summer.

GO HUMAN UPDATE

COMMUNITY STREETS MINI-GRANTS PROGRAM RECEIVES 45 APPLICATIONS

Go Human's Community Streets Mini-Grants Program received 45 applications through its Call for Applications, which closed on May 19, in alignment with Bike Month. SCAG received applications from Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura Counties. SCAG will announce awardees the week of June 7, funding street-level community resiliency and safety projects to address the needs of people most harmed by traffic injuries and fatalities, including without limitation, Black, Indigenous, and People of Color; people with disabilities; and frontline workers, particularly those walking and biking.

GO HUMAN RECRUITS OVER 55 COMMUNITY SAFETY AMBASSADORS FOR PILOT POPULAR EDUCATION PROGRAM (AND STILL RECRUITING)!

Go Human and California Walks have recruited over 55 Community Safety Ambassadors and are still accepting applicants for the [Community Safety Ambassador Training Program](#) for Imperial, San Bernardino, and Ventura counties! The Ambassador Program is a community engagement and leadership development opportunity working with 20 community members per county to complete a paid, virtual training program to build capacity and bridge relationships with local governments to improve walking and biking safety. Applications will be accepted through early June. You can find the application on the [Community Safety Ambassador Training Program webpage](#).

GO HUMAN CELEBRATED BIKE MONTH IN MAY

In celebration of Bike Month, *Go Human* shared bike safety resources and amplified partners' efforts to encourage biking and bike safety across the SCAG region. *Go Human's* [Every Month is Bike Month](#) blog post highlighted Ride Guides, virtual classes, promotions, and more. *Go Human's* other communications channels included partner spotlights and SCAG resources and opportunities, including *Go Human's* Community Safety Ambassador Application recruitment, Community Streets Mini Grants Calls for Applications, and opportunities for safety co-branding. Follow *Go Human* on social media at @GoHumanSoCal for Bike Month promos continuing in June because #EveryMonthIsBikeMonth.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES PROGRAM + GO HUMAN

Administered by the Strategic Growth Council and implemented by HCD, the Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Program (AHSC) builds healthier communities and protects the environment by increasing the supply of affordable places to live near jobs, stores, transit, and other daily needs. As part of the application process, applicants are required to provide a letter of support from the MPO of the region in which the project is located, indicating that the project is consistent with the most recently adopted regional transportation plan. SCAG is currently reviewing the consistency of 18 applicants with Connect SoCal. Letters of support will be provided to projects consistent with Connect SoCal's Sustainable Communities Strategy. To support the development of competitive applications, SCAG has developed guidance for applicants to leverage its *Go Human* program resources. Completed applications are due to the Strategic Growth Council on June 8. On October 28th, the Strategic Growth Council will announce their Round 6 award recipients. A report will be provided to SCAG's Community, Economic, and Human Development Committee (CEHD) after the awards have been announced. Please contact Lyle Janicek for more information at janicek@scag.ca.gov.

SCAG HOSTS ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STATION PERMITTING WEBINAR

SCAG's Clean Cities program, in partnership with the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (Go-Biz), hosted a virtual training session on permit streamlining for electric vehicle (EV) charging stations for stakeholders and jurisdictions in Imperial County on May 12. The training increases adoption of EVs by helping to fulfil a state directive to streamline the EV station permitting process set by Assembly Bill 1236 and achieve the Accelerated Electrification goals of Connect SoCal. Staff from seven jurisdictions and a local utility in Imperial County participated in the training, which also included information on available funding and incentive opportunities for purchasing and installing EV charging infrastructure. The goal of the small group training was to support peer-to-peer learning, share opportunities, and spur local process improvements for electric vehicle charging station permit streamlining. SCAG will continue to work with local jurisdictions across the region to assist with streamlining their EV permitting processes. For more information, please contact cleancities@scag.ca.gov.

TOOLBOX TUESDAY ABOUT ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT AND HELPR 2.0

SCAG hosted a Toolbox Tuesday on May 18 focused on Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) and the Housing Element Parcel (HELPR) Tool version 2.0. To support ADU planning, SCAG has collaborated with Cal Poly Pomona's Department of Urban and Regional Planning to identify parcels with potential for detached ADUs using criteria from recently amended State law and parcel-level geospatial data from SCAG. This webinar introduces the updated HELPR version 2.0 with improved visualization capabilities, jurisdictional dashboards of housing statistics, and new data and filtering capabilities based on ADU site dimensions set forth in State law. Speakers included representatives from the City of Garden Grove, Cal Poly Pomona, and SCAG. The webinar provided an extensive overview and insights regarding planning for ADUs, local ADU development trends and policies, and more. The second part of the webinar introduced SCAG's Housing Element Update GIS Support, including: Pre-certified Local Housing Data Reports, Pre-Certified Regional ADU Affordability Analysis, HELPR 2.0, and one-on-one staff training available to our members to access GIS tools. While HELPR 2.0 has not yet been posted, the initial version and housing element support materials are available on the [Housing Elements webpage](#). A recording of the webinar and downloads of the presentation are available on the [Toolbox Tuesday Online Training Materials webpage](#).

AVIATION TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (ATAC)

On May 4, SCAG and the San Bernardino International Airport (SBD) co-hosted a hybrid virtual/in-person Aviation Technical Advisory Committee (ATAC) meeting. After introductions from Gary Gosliga, ATAC Chair and SCAG staff, SBD Director of Aviation Mark Gibbs and SBD staff presented information about the airport and the surrounding community. Attendees for the meeting included officials and representatives from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), Los Angeles International Airport (LAX), Ontario International Airport (ONT), John Wayne Airport (SNA), San Diego International Airport (SAN), the City of Ontario, and Kimley-Horn Consulting. Following the meeting, Mark Gibbs led a tour of SBD for in-person attendees.