

## FUNDING OPPORTUNITY: 2018 SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES PROGRAM

The 2018 Sustainable Communities Program (SCP), formerly known as the "Sustainability Planning Grants" program, will soon be formally announcing a new call for proposals. Upon approval by the Regional Council at the September meeting, guidelines and application materials for the 2018 SCP will be released. The program is a multi-year funding opportunity supported through federal, state and local resources. It will fund integrated land use, green region and active transportation projects that support the policies and initiatives of the 2016 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy. Guidelines, applications and other details on eligibility and process will be available on SCAG's website by Sept. 10. Applications will be due on Nov. 15. In early October, SCAG staff will also conduct a webinar sharing details with prospective applicants.

## UPDATE ON RHNA AND CONNECT SOCIAL (2020 RTP/SCS)

Since fall 2017, SCAG staff has been working hard to engage all the region's local cities and counties in the process for developing our next major transportation and land use plans, the Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS) and Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA). Working closely with local governments and collecting their data on land use and growth trends in a "[Bottom-Up Local Input and Envisioning Process](#)" helps us get a clear picture of what's going on at the local level, and forms the basis for SCAG's demographic projections and strategies for hitting state targets for reducing greenhouse gases.

We are excited to announce a major milestone: SCAG staff has now held one-on-one meetings with each of the 191 cities and six counties in our region, ensuring that SCAG's planning process is fully explained. This process also ensures that SCAG's plans are locally relevant and sensitive to unique challenges across diverse communities. SCAG staff have also been providing on-site technical assistance to nearly 80 agencies that need help in compiling the data. We are grateful for the support of our local partners, including our 15 subregional organizations, for hosting SCAG presentations at standing meetings and facilitating engagement with city and county leadership. The local input process is still ongoing; the deadline for [sharing information with SCAG](#) is Oct. 1.

## UPDATE ON FEDERAL AIR QUALITY TARGETS

Several parts of the SCAG region have recently been found to fall short of the latest federal ozone standard. As of Aug. 3, Imperial County, Ventura County, Coachella Valley, the South Coast Air Basin and the Western Mojave Desert Air Basin have all been designated as "nonattainment areas" by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Each area will be required to create a new air plan, applying more stringent measures, to meet these targets for ambient air quality. In addition, SCAG will have to re-determine transportation conformity for the 2016 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy and 2019 Federal Transportation Improvement Program by Aug. 3, 2019. SCAG staff will develop a new plan for attaining these standards to go before the Regional Council for adoption by Spring 2019. More information about the area designations is included in the federal register notice: <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2018-06-04/pdf/2018-11838.pdf>.

## FUTURE COMMUNITIES PILOT PROGRAM IN DEVELOPMENT

SCAG is launching a new funding program to help cities and counties work together to meet the state's ambitious targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The SCAG Future Communities Pilot Program will provide local agencies and governments with resources to implement new approaches to reducing vehicle miles traveled from municipal operations and programs, particularly strategies that implement new technology and data solutions.

In preparation for the Future Communities Pilot Program Call for Projects, to be released later this year, we are reaching out to city and county leaders for input on how to provide useful, relevant support. SCAG launched an online survey this month to ask local agency staff with experience in mobility innovation, transportation, planning, public safety, public works and transportation demand management, for feedback that will shape the priorities for the first round of the program. For additional information about the Future Communities Pilot Program, please contact SCAG Assistant Regional Planner Deanna Dupuy at [dupuy@scag.ca.gov](mailto:dupuy@scag.ca.gov).

## SCAG'S GO HUMAN CAMPAIGN PARTNERS WITH E-SCOOTER COMPANY

As a wider array of new mobility options become available in Southern California, SCAG recognizes the importance of encouraging safe use of these options as a way to increase active transportation and meet greenhouse gas reduction targets. Because of that, we're pleased to announce a new sponsorship from [Bird](#) to expand *Go Human* messaging to encourage e-scooter safety. This sponsorship involves several components, including Bird support of *Go Human's* upcoming [Experience Elenda](#) event in Culver City and the implementation of an advertising campaign with a goal to encourage users to be safe when riding e-scooters. Ads will be placed in several areas including Culver City, El Segundo, Long Beach, Los Angeles and Santa Monica, and will remind people to wear helmets and ride e-scooters in bike lanes rather than on sidewalks. SCAG looks forward to continuing to expand the reach of safety messaging through additional public and private partnerships. If you'd like to improve traffic safety in your community, consider partnering with our *Go Human* program! Visit [GoHumanSoCal.org](http://GoHumanSoCal.org) to learn more.

## SCAG LAUNCHES NEW STUDY ON THE FUTURE OF THE WORKPLACE

SCAG is excited to announce the launch of an innovative study investigating how economic and technological changes are changing the spatial relationship between the home and the workplace. This study, which is primarily supported by SB 1 funding, will allow SCAG to use state-of-the-art practice information in the models for the next Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS). It will illuminate emerging trends affecting where and how people work, including changes in telecommute behavior, the emergence of co-working spaces, the impacts of workplace automation and the continued rise of the service economy. Since work travel is among the region's largest sources of greenhouse gas emissions, we anticipate this study will play a substantial role in helping SCAG to meet the aggressive targets mandated for the upcoming 2020 RTP/SCS, as well as keeping us at the forefront of important regional trends.

## DEVELOPING A COMPREHENSIVE REGIONAL DATA PLATFORM

SCAG has begun internal work on our upcoming Regional Data Platform, which will standardize regionally significant datasets, provide opportunities for local partners to update their data in real-time and draw insights from local trends. This platform will help people engage with data in a simpler way, translating a vast pool of available information into actionable insights and knowledge. Local agencies will be able to use this platform for their own initiatives, leverage it as a digital venue for engaging their residents, and help to improve the platform through data revision and insight sharing. This initiative is intended to foster continuous experimentation at the local level, and help cities and counties understand how their plans can impact the region's most significant challenges related to transportation, jobs, housing and sustainability. Later this year SCAG will be conducting a local data needs assessment and soliciting participation from local agencies. The Regional Data Platform is anticipated for release in fall 2020. For additional information, please contact Kimberly Clark, Regional Planner Specialist, at [clark@scag.ca.gov](mailto:clark@scag.ca.gov).

## CALIFORNIA CLIMATE CHANGE RESEARCH GRANT PROGRAM

In July, the California Strategic Growth Council (SGC) announced the first round of awardees as part of its \$10.5 million Climate Change Research Grant Program. SCAG is excited to partner with UCLA and San Diego State University on two outcome-based projects that will focus on building community resilience, integrating land use and development considerations, and facilitating the sustainable transformation of communities. For UCLA's \$1.4 million project "Measuring the Impacts of Climate Change on Vulnerable Communities to Design and Target Protective Policies", SCAG staff will serve on an advisory committee as researchers seek to quantify financial and health costs of understudied climate impacts. San Diego State's \$1.7 million project "Integrated Land Use Planning to Support Climate Resilient Ecosystems and Local Communities: Fire, Water, and Biodiversity" will identify adaptation strategies and establish an integrated planning framework that incorporates ecological connectivity, wildfire risk and water sustainability into potential land management approaches for jurisdictions. [SGC's research program](#) is part of California Climate Investments, a statewide program that puts billions of cap-and-trade dollars to work reducing greenhouse gas emissions, strengthening the economy, and improving public health and the environment.

## DEMOGRAPHIC WORKSHOP ADDRESSED CHANGING HOUSING AND TRANSPORTATION NEEDS

On June 11, more than 200 people from over 70 different organizations attended SCAG's 29th annual Demographic Workshop at the University of Southern California. The workshop, jointly produced with the USC Sol Price School of Public Policy, was developed under the main theme, "Lasting Demographic Impacts After the Recovery." Major takeaways from the conference outline a population that has yet to completely bounce back from the economic downturn. According to demographers, policymakers and business leaders speaking at the conference, recession recovery in the areas of fertility and housing development are lagging well behind job growth. Ongoing declines in birth rates and home-buying among millennials are expected to continue. Stagnant wage growth in the low- and middle-income categories paired with rising home and rental prices are big factors.

Highlights from the workshop included a suite of presentations on how demographic changes affect our economy, housing shortage, and transportation choices. Audience members also heard from Paul Taylor, Senior Fellow at Encore and former executive vice president of the Pew Research Center, who gave a keynote address taking a critical look at current policies and trends that will hurt millennials and Generation X-ers in the long run and offering potential solutions. Other highlights included a roundtable discussion session that fostered substantive conversations on the 2020 Census, population estimates, the Regional Housing Needs Assessment and homelessness. Conference presentations and photos are available on the SCAG website: [scag.ca.gov/demographics](http://scag.ca.gov/demographics).

## SCAG AND ORANGE COUNTY BUSINESS COUNCIL TEAM UP TO STUDY THE FUTURE OF RETAIL

In late August the Orange County Business Council released its long-awaited report, "Inside Orange County's Retail E-volution: How e-commerce is transforming the future of retail, land use, work, and taxation." As e-commerce and the rise in services transform shopping, we must rethink not only how cities rely on sales tax revenue but also how Orange County and the region can most efficiently use its land to meet future needs. SCAG conducted a part of the report's analysis using the parcel-level land use data we generate every four years as part of our long-range forecast. These data and this analysis can help cities understand which types of land uses are well-suited for the future and which may need to be adapted to meet future housing and fiscal needs.

## FEDERAL AGENCIES MOVE TO ROLL BACK SUSTAINABILITY STANDARDS

On Aug. 24, the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency published a proposal for new 50-state standards for vehicle fuel efficiency and greenhouse gas emissions. The joint proposal, "*Safer Affordable Fuel-Efficient (SAFE) Vehicles Rule for Model Years (MY) 2021-2026 Passenger Cars and Light Trucks*," would hold automakers to less rigorous targets than the previous policy. The proposal, if finalized, would also null California's authority to set its own standards by withdrawing the waiver of preemption by the federal Clean Air Act for California's Advanced Clean Car program, Zero Emissions Vehicle mandate and Greenhouse Gas standards. California's Air Resources Board, in conjunction with the Governor and Attorney General, has [announced](#) strong opposition to the proposed rule.

For more information about the proposed rulemaking and how to comment, see the [official federal notice](#). A public hearing on this proposal will be held in Fresno, California on Sept. 24. More information about public hearings is available here at <http://bit.ly/2CoqM1q>.

## GO HUMAN PROMOTES TRAFFIC SAFETY DURING BACK-TO-SCHOOL SEASON

SCAG's *Go Human* program and Culver City officials kicked off the new school year with an event on August 13 aimed at reminding drivers to slow down and look out for students as they walk or bike to school. City officials, parents and students gathered in Culver City at [La Ballona Elementary School](#) to call for increased traffic safety in advance to back to school. Speakers, including SCAG Regional Council Member and Culver City Vice Mayor Meghan Sahli-Wells, urged drivers to slow down and be alert as children are walking and biking.

In addition, the *Go Human* program worked to raise awareness of the need for increased traffic safety throughout the summer and continues to plan for community engagement this fall. SCAG has partnered with AAA to promote safe driving at schools throughout Southern California as part of [AAA's Annual School's Open Campaign](#). Through this partnership, 115 schools have requested *Go Human* banners to display that remind drivers to slow down and look out for students walking to school. SCAG president Alan Wapner joined the *Go Human* team for demonstration events in the cities of West Covina in July and Ontario in August. Hundreds of attendees were able to experience temporary infrastructure demonstrations that promote and encourage safe walking and biking. Three more demonstration events are planned for the month of September in the cities of Culver City, Chino and San Jacinto on Sept. 15, 22 and 29 respectively. To stay up to date on *Go Human* activities, follow the campaign on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

## TOOLBOX TRAINING WEBINAR ON COMPLETE STREETS

On Aug. 21, SCAG hosted a Toolbox Training webinar addressing how to design “complete streets” policies and projects to succeed in rural and suburban communities. Agencies from throughout the SCAG region detailed their successful projects: Ventura County Transportation Commission presented on their Bicycle Wayfinding Plan, Western Riverside County on their Active Transportation Plan and Los Angeles County Department of Public Health’s Lake Los Angeles Community Pedestrian Plan. Alta Planning + Design also presented on the Federal Highway Administration’s Small Town and Rural Multimodal Networks Guide. To access a recording of the webinar and downloads of the presentations, please visit <http://sustain.scag.ca.gov/Pages/Online-Training-Materials.aspx>. Toolbox Trainings provide free classes for staff of SCAG-member local governments and other partners, and offer a range of practical skills and planning knowledge. To be added to the mailing list, please contact India Brookover at [brookover@scag.ca.gov](mailto:brookover@scag.ca.gov). Future events on other exciting topics will be announced via email and [SCAG Sustainability Program website](#).

## COMMUNITY WORKSHOP IN CALEXICO SHARES UPDATES ON PORT OF ENTRY CHANGES

Last week, the Imperial County Transportation Commission (ICTC), Caltrans District 11 and SCAG co-hosted a public workshop to share details, answer questions and collect community feedback on how the city roads will accommodate a newly expanded Calexico-West land port of entry. This vital border crossing is an important link between the Imperial Valley’s agricultural industry and Mexico, but the existing pedestrian and vehicle inspection facility cannot accommodate existing traffic loads and security requirements. The port processes about 15,000-20,000 northbound vehicles and 20,000 northbound pedestrians daily, with wait times regularly exceeding three hours. SCAG is partnering with ICTC on developing a new traffic circulation plan for the U.S. side of the expanded port of entry. The public open house in Calexico gave the community an opportunity to understand and plan to address the challenges that accompany the expansion of the border crossing in the city. Construction on Calexico’s local streets to accommodate traffic is expected to wrap up by March. The SCAG-ICTC project will define how traffic moves between now and then, and create a long-term framework for traffic management thereafter. More information on the Calexico-West Port of Entry is available from the Imperial Valley Press.

## SCAG SHARES PRIORITIES WITH STATE SENATE LEADER AND BUSINESS COMMUNITY

In July, SCAG had the honor to welcome California Senate President pro Tempore Toni Atkins to our headquarters for a discussion on collaborative solutions for several statewide issues, particularly in the area of infrastructure. Senator Atkins was a special guest at the Los Angeles County Business Federation Leadership Roundtable, which SCAG hosted. SCAG President Alan Wapner opened the program, sharing updates on some of our agency’s major upcoming programs and operations – including the development of a new Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy and the next cycle of the Regional Housing Needs Assessment. President Wapner also thanked Senator Atkins for her leadership in securing resources for Southern California, and emphasized that though her home district falls outside the SCAG region, her partnership is a priority. The roundtable gathering covered pressing policy matters around housing, transportation and energy, and discussed how to cultivate a system in Southern California that allows partners to work together across sectors, across cities and counties, to move the region forward. More details on SCAG’s work on legislative engagement and advocacy at both the state and federal level are available on our [Legislation Program website](#).

## SCAG SHARES KNOWLEDGE AT 2018 ESRI USER CONFERENCE

In July, several SCAG staff attended the 2018 Esri User Conference in San Diego to share knowledge and present on recent projects to the mapping and data-analysis community. The conference convened more than 18,000 professionals of various backgrounds who implement geographic information systems, or GIS, in their work. The program features moderated paper sessions, technical workshops, exhibits, poster presentations and one-on-one discussion with technical specialists. SCAG staff presented four projects at the conference: 1.) Spatial Distribution of Urban Runoff Pollutants in Orange County and its Impacts on Environmental Justice Areas, 2.) Active Transportation Safety Analysis, 3.) Transit Commuting Accessibility in High-Quality Transit Areas, and 4.) Commuting Characteristics and Job/Housing Balance. More information on SCAG’s research and analysis projects is available online at [scag.ca.gov/DataAndTools](http://scag.ca.gov/DataAndTools).

## SCAG OFFICE VIDEOCONFERENCING UPGRADES

The SCAG Regional Offices, and our partner offices at SBCCOG, CVAG, and Palmdale were upgraded this summer with new videoconferencing equipment in support of our strategic goal to foster and promote regional collaboration. Meetings such as the Legislative/Communications and Membership Committee, the Technical Working Group, and Modeling Task Force, among others, regularly connect members from various locations via SCAG’s videoconferencing service. The new videoconference equipment seamlessly integrates with the technology at our office in downtown Los Angeles, and will improve the quality and reliability of video and audio calls across our locations.