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Subject: SCAG Update: February 2025

To: South Bay Cities Board of Directors

From: Erik Rodriguez, SCAG Sr. Government Affairs Officer; rodrigueze@scag.ca.gov

INFORMATION

JOINT POLICY COMMITTEE CONVENES PANEL DISCUSSION ON REGIONAL RESILIENCE

As Southern California grapples with the destruction caused by January wildfires, SCAG is committed to supporting local agencies in the collective work of recovery and resilience.

Regional collaboration is needed to build resilient communities better prepared to prevent and mitigate negative impacts from natural disasters. As a first step in an ongoing process, the SCAG Joint Policy Committee convened a panel of resilience and planning experts. The panel discussed recovery and long-term planning for creating more equitable and resilient communities.

The panel discussion included a presentation by Dr. Lucy Jones—renowned seismologist, author, and former seismic risk advisor for the city of Los Angeles—on important considerations during and after disasters. Dr. Jones’ presentation was followed by a moderated panel discussion with:

- Vince Bertoni, Director, Los Angeles City Planning
- Amy Bodek, Director, Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning
- Nuin-Tara Key, Executive Director of Programs, California Forward
- Steve Soboroff, Chief Recovery Officer, City of Los Angeles

A video of the Joint Policy Committee meeting, including the resilience presentations and panel, will be published on the [SCAG website](#) soon.

Following the Joint Policy Committee, each policy committee will have further conversations to dive deeper into issues and SCAG’s role in supporting equitable recovery and long-term resilience. Additional information about [resources for fire victims](#), [resilience planning](#), and [government actions](#) are available on SCAG News.

ACTION

REGIONAL COUNCIL ADOPTS REGIONAL TRAFFIC SAFETY TARGETS

At the February Regional Council meeting, the SCAG Regional Council adopted regional safety targets for calendar year 2025, in accordance with a 2016 Federal Highway Administration rule requiring statewide departments of transportation, in coordination with metropolitan planning organizations, to

improve safety on all public roads. The transportation safety performance targets facilitate statewide and regional transportation investments toward the greatest possible reduction in fatalities and serious injuries resulting from multimodal collisions.

For calendar year 2025, SCAG recommends maintaining a long-term aspirational focus on regional transportation safety, while adopting evidence-based near-term targets. The modeled safety targets for the SCAG region forecast a two percent increase in fatalities, a four percent increase in serious injuries, and a 2.8 percent increase in non-motorized fatalities and serious injuries. SCAG updates the regional safety targets each calendar year.

In addition to the adoption of regional safety targets, staff highlighted the SCAG Transportation Safety Predictive Modeling Platform, which will be available soon for local agencies to use while planning to reduce fatalities and serious injuries. SCAG's Toolbox Tuesday series recently featured a two-part demonstration of the forthcoming platform. [Part 1](#) and [Part 2](#) of the series are available on YouTube. More details on SCAG's methodology and the regional traffic safety targets can be found in the [SCAG staff report](#).

REGIONAL COUNCIL ADOPTS 2025 STATE LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM

In February, the Regional Council adopted SCAG's 2025 State Legislative Platform.

The 2025 platform updates the adopted 2024 platform, streamlining language and aligning with the [Connect SoCal 2024](#) Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy, newly implemented laws, and other changes to the legislative landscape. SCAG's 2025 State Legislative Platform is [available online](#).

SCAG staff will present a separate 2025 Federal Legislative Platform at the Legislative/Communications and Membership Committee, Executive/Administration Committee, and Regional Council meetings in coming months.

NEWS FROM THE PRESIDENT

SCAG WELCOMES NEW REGIONAL COUNCIL AND POLICY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Regional Council

- Hon. Gary Gardner, RC District #2, Desert Hot Springs
- Hon. Helen Tran, RC District #7, City of San Bernardino
- Hon. William Go, RC District #14, City of Irvine
- Hon. Debbie Baker, RC District #18, City of La Palma
- Hon. Ryan Balias, RC District #19, City of Anaheim
- Hon. Fred Jung, RC District #21, City of Fullerton
- Hon. Shaunna Elias, RC District #33, City of Glendora
- Hon. Adrin Nazarian, RC District #49, City of Los Angeles
- Hon. Ysabel Jurado, RC District #61, City of Los Angeles

- Hon. Butch Twining, RC District #64, City of Huntington Beach
- Hon. Daniel Ramos, RC District #65, City of Adelanto
- Hon. Victoria Garcia, RC District #67, City of San Fernando
- Sup. Jesus Escobar, Imperial County
- Hon. Carlos A. Leon, Orange County Transportation Authority

Transportation Committee

- Hon. William Go, RC District #14, City of Irvine
- Hon. Ryan Balius, RC District #19, City of Anaheim
- Hon. Fred Jung, RC District #21, City of Fullerton
- Hon. Butch Twining, RC District #64, City of Huntington Beach
- Hon. Zhen Wu, City of San Clemente, Orange County Council of Governments
- Hon. Carlos A. Leon, Orange County Transportation Authority

Community, Economic, and Housing Development Committee

- Hon. Gary Gardner, RC District #2, City of Desert Hot Springs
- Hon. Helen Tran, RC District #7, City of San Bernardino
- Hon. Shaunna Elias, RC District #33, City of Glendora
- Hon. Victoria Garcia, RC District #67, City of San Fernando
- Hon. Peggy Huang, City of Yorba Linda, Orange County Council of Governments

Energy and Environment Committee

- Hon. Debbie Baker, RC District #18, City of La Palma
- Hon. Daniel Ramos, RC District #65, City of Adelanto
- Sup. Jesus Escobar, Imperial County
- Hon. Patty Senecal, City of Seal Beach, Orange County Council of Governments

NEWS FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

UPDATED HOUSING, ENVIRONMENT, AND LAND USE PARCEL TOOL UPDATE NOW AVAILABLE

SCAG's [Housing, Environment, and Land Use Parcel Tool \(HELPR\) 3.0](#) is now available online, offering a site-specific interactive mapping tool for land use, environmental planning, and sustainable development. Built on SCAG's [Regional Data Platform](#), HELPR 3.0 provides the latest parcel-level data from [Connect SoCal 2024](#) Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy, enabling cities, planners, and stakeholders to make better-informed decisions about housing site selection and land use planning.

Key features include a housing statistics dashboard for quick insights, wildfire risk screening using CalFire data, and tools to align local plans with regional policies. HELPR 3.0 allows users to download datasets for further analysis but does not assess development capacity or suitability. To learn more about applications and maps included in HELPR 3.0 to assist with regional and local planning activities, visit [SCAG News](#).

UPDATE ON THE MOJAVE DESERT HIGHWAY SANCTION CLOCK

The SCAG region has been impacted by multiple highway sanction clocks imposed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) following disapproval of local air quality plans and rules. SCAG staff has worked extensively with local air districts and the U.S. EPA to address and remove highway sanction clocks, enabling critical transportation projects in the region to continue with planning and construction.

However, one highway sanction clock—resulting from the U.S. EPA’s disapproval of the Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District’s (MDAQMD) local rule in their stationary source review and permitting program—has been particularly challenging to resolve. If the underlying issue facing the MDAQMD is not resolved, highway sanction in the Mojave Desert will start on July 31.

The highway sanction could result in significant impacts to transportation projects and mobility throughout the SCAG region. To better understand the impacts, staff will work with federal and local transportation agencies to develop a project list to identify which projects in the Mojave Desert area can move forward during sanction and which projects can be obligated before July 2025 to minimize the impacts.

The federal air plan, developed by the U.S. EPA for the Mojave Desert area, is already in place and will be effective on Feb. 28. The federal air plan includes measures for stationary sources but no measures related to transportation. SCAG staff has met with MDAQMD staff, who confirmed a plan to resolve the issues through litigation against the U.S. EPA. SCAG will continue to closely monitor the situation and work with the MDAQMD and all involved parties to prevent the sanction.

APPLICATIONS OPEN FOR SCAG'S SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM, STUDENT SHOWCASE

Two student programs coinciding with the [2025 Regional Conference and General Assembly](#) are now open for submissions.

The [2025 SCAG Scholarship Program](#), in partnership with the California Transportation Foundation, provides nine \$4,000 scholarship awards for high school or community college students from the SCAG region. Preference is given to applications that demonstrate a commitment to community planning, regional planning, urban planning, civil engineering, political science, public administration, sustainable development, or other related fields. Applications are due electronically on March 21. More information is available on the [SCAG website](#).

The 2025 [SCAG Student Showcase](#) challenges students to create posters and StoryMaps that tell a story, provide insight, showcase plans and projects, engage stakeholders, and illustrate the possibilities of open data at the regional level. Student Showcase finalists will be invited to attend SCAG’s Regional Conference and General Assembly in Palm Desert on May 1-2—complimentary event admission and hotel accommodation included—to present their posters and StoryMaps to elected officials and industry leaders from across Southern California. All four awards, each worth \$1,500, will be announced at the end of the conference. Apply online by March 13 at 10 a.m. To download Student Showcase guidelines and to apply online, visit the [SCAG website](#).

The full Executive Director's Report for February 2025 is [available online](#).

UPCOMING MEETINGS

FEBRUARY

- 17th** President's Day (SCAG Offices Closed)
- 18th** Legislative/Communications and Membership Committee
- 25th** Transportation Conformity Working Group

MARCH

- 6th** Executive/Administration Committee
- 6th** Community, Economic, and Human Development Committee
- 6th** Energy and Environment Committee
- 6th** Transportation Committee
- 6th** Regional Council
- 25th** Transportation Conformity Working Group
- 26th** Regional Transit Technical Advisory Committee
- 26th** Modeling Task Force