

South Bay Cities Council of Governments

**SOUTH BAY CITIES COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2026
HELD VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM & IN-PERSON AT THE SBCCOG OFFICE
357 Van Ness Way, #90, Torrance, California 90501
RECORDING AVAILABLE ONLINE:
https://youtu.be/f1g3xC0uBFY?si=ildVvNY6jjchG_Cq**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Suarez of Lawndale called the meeting to order at 6:03 pm.

II. & III. CONFIRM POSTING OF THE AGENDA

SBCCOG Executive Director Jacki Bacharach confirmed the posting of the agenda.

MOTION by Board Member Waller, seconded by Board Member Tanaka, to **APPROVE** Board Member Saemann AB 2449 virtual attendance as a voting member. No Objections. No Abstentions. **MOTION Passes.**

Ms. Bacharach reminded the Board that all votes would be conducted via roll call in accordance with procedural requirements.

In attendance were the following voting elected officials:

Lance Giroux, El Segundo	Jennifer LaMarque, LA County D4
Rodney Tanaka, Gardena	Nina Tarnay Manhattan Beach
Alex Monteiro, Hawthorne	Craig Quinn, Palos Verdes Estates
Rob Saemann, Hermosa Beach (AB 2449 - virtual)	Brad Waller, Redondo Beach
Bernadette Suarez, Lawndale	Bea Dieringer, Rolling Hills
Bill Uphoff, Lomita	Britt Huff, Rolling Hills Estates
Aksel Palacios, LA City	Jon Kaji, Torrance
Irma Galicia, LA County D2	

Also, in attendance were the following non-voting elected officials:

Zein Obagi, Redondo Beach

Also, in attendance were the following persons:

Andy Sywak, Metro	Colleen Farrell, SBCCOG
Jeffrey Kiernan, Cal Cities	David Leger, SBCCOG
Venus Medrano, Bowman	Ronson Chu, SBCCOG
Zachary Stoller, Antioch University	Jacki Bacharach, SBCCOG
McKenzie Neely-Wright, AT&T, Inc.	Jake Romoff, SBCCOG
Michael Bohlke, Metro	Kevin Umaña, SBCCOG
Martha Tremblay, LACSD	Kim Fuentes, SBCCOG
Holly Osborne, South Bay resident	Moana Franco, SBCCOG
Anne Tsai, SBCCOG	Natalie Champion, SBCCOG

IV.ANNOUNCEMENTS OF ANY CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

No changes to the agenda.

Ms. Bacharach announced that Aksel Palacios of the City of Los Angeles was present and seated at the table as the designated alternate representative for Los Angeles, noting that the Joint Powers Authority amendment previously considered by the Board had successfully passed with the required number of approvals on file. She reported that a total of 13 approvals had been received, exceeding the minimum requirement of 12, and acknowledged receipt of formal correspondence from the City of Los Angeles appointing Mr. Palacios as the alternate. Ms. Bacharach further informed the Board that materials before them included a letter from Councilmember McOsker expressing appreciation for the SBCCOG's action on this matter, as well as a General Assembly flyer and additional documents related to an upcoming discussion on a proposed county sales tax measure. She noted that supporting materials, including the county sales tax motion, had been distributed at each table.

V.COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

McKenzie Neely-Wright of AT&T, Inc provided an update regarding ongoing network modernization efforts across the State of California. Ms. Neely-Wright reported that AT&T continued to pursue relief from its Carrier of Last Resort obligations and had introduced a joint proposal with the California Public Advocates Office. The proposal established updated criteria for relief areas, requiring that at least 80 percent of such areas be served by providers offering one gigabit-level broadband service, while prioritizing low-income and underserved communities. The remaining 20 percent of areas would be built out over a 10-year period, with commitments to maintain broadband or voice service access, participate in the California Lifeline program, and provide quarterly progress reports. Ms. Neely-Wright further noted that legislation aligned with the proposal had been introduced by Assemblymember McKinnor (AB 2443) and offered to provide additional presentations to member cities. Additionally, she shared that AT&T's continued infrastructure investments, including the expansion of its fiber network into additional cities following the acquisition of a mass-market fiber business, as well as efforts to enhance wireless coverage through a \$1 billion spectrum transaction. She emphasized AT&T's ongoing commitment to improving statewide connectivity and modernizing its telecommunications network.

VI.CONSENT CALENDAR

A. January 22, 2026 minutes (attachment) – Approved

B. Analyst/Senior Analyst Classification & Description – New Position (attachment) – Approved

C. LACAHS Representative Mirisch Capacity Support Contract (funding to the SBCCOG) (attachment) – Approved

D. Legislative Matrix (attachment) – Approved

1. Support AB 1557 and SB 868

E. South Bay Workforce Investment Board (SBWIB) Apprenticeship Outreach Opportunity (funding to the SBCCOG) (attachments) – Received and filed

NOTE: Due to the short timing to complete this project, the Steering Committee approved the agreement

F. Audit for Year Ending June 2025 (attachment) – Received and filed

Full report available at https://cdn.southbaycities.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/02094508/2025_South-Bay-Cities-Council-of-Governments_BFS_FINAL-SECURED.pdf

G. Progress re: JPA agreement approvals for LA City Non-Elected Alternate – Received & filed

- Amendment approved -12 agreements on file – sufficient to meet the 2/3 requirement

H. SBCCOG Monthly Reports – Received and Filed

1. City Attendance at SBCCOG Meetings (*attachment*)
2. Client Aid Report (*attachment*)
3. TLS (Time Limited Subsidy) Report (*attachment*)
4. Media Report (*attachment*)
5. Transportation Report (*attachment*)

Board Member Dieringer requested a correction to the minutes on page 16 to accurately reflect that she had stated the cost of the lobbyist should be borne by the Trust, and that it was Ms. Bacharach who indicated the matter would be decided by the Board. The revised minutes are accessible using the following link: <https://cdn.southbaycities.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/05125220/REVISED-1.22.26-Board-of-Directors-Minutes.pdf>

Additionally, Board Member Dieringer raised concerns regarding safeguards to prevent SBCCOG funds from covering funding gaps if Measure A or LACAHS funding proved insufficient and noting the absence of a sunset clause. Ms. Bacharach clarified that the item in question was a job description for a position contingent on available funding, and stated that if funding ceased, the position would be terminated. Additional concerns were raised regarding indemnification clauses and potential legal liability, with staff stating that all contracts had been reviewed and approved by SBCCOG legal counsel, Mr. Jenkins, and that such clauses were standard. Further clarification was provided that certain contracts were executed on behalf of the City of Inglewood due to regulatory requirements. Lastly, Board Member Dieringer inquired whether legal counsel had reviewed the South Bay Workforce Investment Board contract and clarified the scope of services. Staff explained that the contract supported outreach to businesses for an apprenticeship program funded through a grant, with the SBCCOG receiving \$50,000 to leverage its existing business engagement efforts. It was confirmed that legal counsel had reviewed the agreement.

MOTION by Board Member Dieringer, seconded by Board Member Uphoff, to **APPROVE** the Consent Calendar with the revisions to the minutes via Roll Call Vote.

Yes: Giroux, Tanaka, Monteiro, Saemann, Suarez, Waller, Palacios, Tarnay, Quinn, Huff, Kaji, LaMarque

No: None

Abstain: None

MOTION Passes.

VII. PRESENTATIONS

1. Proposed 2026 Wastewater Service Charge Rates

Martha Tremblay, Asst. Chief Engineer of LA County Sanitation Districts presented on the proposed wastewater service charge rate increase, providing an overview of the sanitation districts' regional operations, which serve over 5 million residents across 78 cities through 24 independent districts. Ms. Tremblay explained that the proposed rate increase was necessary to address rising operational costs, aging infrastructure, and increased expenses for electricity and treatment chemicals, noting that costs had risen approximately 20 percent over the past four years while rates had only increased by 10 percent, resulting in reliance on reserves. She further described planned infrastructure investments, including sewer system repairs and the design of enhanced treatment processes to support water reuse initiatives, as well as ongoing efforts to minimize costs through shared services, energy efficiency, and revenue generation from recycled water and biogas. Ms. Tremblay stated that

the proposed increase would average less than \$3 per month and would be implemented incrementally over a five-year period beginning July 1, subject to approval, and emphasized that even with the increase, rates would remain lower than comparable agencies. She also outlined a low-water-use rebate program offering 25 to 40 percent discounts for qualifying property owners and described outreach efforts, including Proposition 218 notices, public meetings, and scheduled hearings in May. Board Member LaMarque sought clarification regarding the implementation timeline and applicability of the rate increase. Ms. Tremblay confirmed that the increase would be phased annually over five years and clarified that the charges would apply only to properties connected to the sewer system, not to those utilizing septic systems.

The presentation is located here: https://cdn.southbaycities.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/19122456/PRESENTATION_LACSD_02-26-2026_Prop_218_JOS_Rate_Presentation_to_Southbay_Cities_COG.pdf

2. SBCCOG Annual media presentation

SBCCOG Senior Project Manager Colleen Farrell provided a communications and marketing overview, outlining her role overseeing social media, print and digital media, email marketing, website management, media relations, video production, and advertising. She described the agency's communications strategy as encompassing earned, owned, rented, and paid media, and highlighted performance outcomes across each category. Ms. Farrell reported that earned media efforts resulted in 27 media placements over the past year and emphasized the high trust value associated with such coverage, while noting increasing challenges due to a shrinking media landscape. She explained that owned media, including the quarterly *South Bay Watch* publication and email campaigns, remained a critical tool for message control and audience engagement, with email open rates significantly exceeding industry averages and approximately 1.7 million annual email distributions. Ms. Farrell further shared that website traffic had increased modestly and that social media performance showed strong growth, including a 20 percent increase in followers, over 200 posts, and more than 9,000 engagements, with particularly strong performance from video and employee-related content. She noted that paid media was used selectively, primarily to support the General Assembly, at which there were approximately 400 attendees. Ms. Farrell outlined future communications goals for 2026, including expanding video content production, leveraging additional staff support, and establishing a citywide communication working group to strengthen collaboration, share best practices, and amplify messaging across jurisdictions. The presentation is accessible using the following link: https://cdn.southbaycities.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/09174057/2025-Annual-Communications-and-Marketing-Report_FINAL.pdf

VIII. SBCCOG PROGRAM ACTION ITEMS, REPORTS AND UPDATE

A. Mid Year Budget (*attachment*) – Approved

SBCCOG Deputy Director Kim Fuentes presented the Fiscal Year 2025–2026 midyear budget update, noting that the budget remained balanced overall, with both revenues and expenditures increasing compared to the prior year due primarily to expanded contracts, grants, and program implementation needs. Ms. Fuentes reported that a significant portion of revenue continued to be derived from Homeless Services funding and other grant sources, with a substantial share passed through to member cities, and a smaller portion generated from dues and other revenues. She highlighted that increases in expenditures were largely driven by staffing, consultant support, program delivery, and one-time costs such as office relocation and improvements, which included the use of unrestricted reserves. Ms. Fuentes further noted that the organization had begun preparation of the Fiscal Year 2026–2027 budget and that no major increases were currently anticipated. Board Member Quinn inquired whether estimated revenues and expenditures should more clearly distinguish LACAHS funding and questioned whether the organization would remain financially stable without those funds. Ms. Fuentes responded that the organization remained

financially sound, and Ms. Bacharach clarified that homeless services funding and related expenditures would be more clearly delineated through separate reporting mechanisms, including future Housing Trust structures. It was further explained that existing funding sources sufficiently supported ongoing operations and that programmatic funding streams collectively sustain administrative, finance, and management functions. Board Member Quinn also asked about projected year-end outcomes. Ms. Bacharach directed the Board to the budget details on page 72 and indicated that current estimates reflected a modest positive balance, approximately \$761, consistent with the adopted budget structure and confirming that the budget remained balanced. Board Member Dieringer expressed concern regarding the appearance of a deficit in the midyear figures and questioned how the budget remained balanced. Ms. Fuentes clarified that the apparent deficit reflected Board-approved use of General Fund reserves for one-time expenditures, including office relocation and audiovisual improvements, as well as timing differences in revenues and expenditures, rather than a structural imbalance. It was further noted that, when these approved reserve allocations were incorporated, the budget balanced to a minimal surplus and that sufficient reserves remained in place without requiring additional assessments to member cities. Board Member Dieringer further raised questions regarding receivables and revenue timing. Ms. Bacharach explained that audit findings highlighted delays in receipt of funds and the reliance on quarterly billing cycles, which can affect midyear financial presentation but do not indicate uncollectible revenue or financial instability. Additional clarification was provided that reported decreases in certain grant revenues were attributable to cost savings from projects completed under budget rather than a loss of funding, and that additional grant opportunities were actively being pursued. In response to whether projections were expected to change, it was noted that the figures reflected a midyear update and may be adjusted as revenues are received and expenditures finalized; however, the projected surplus remained minimal and stable. It was also confirmed that the midyear budget represented the final adjustment for the current fiscal year, with the next budget cycle to be presented in May. The presentation is accessible using the following link: https://cdn.southbaycities.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/19110528/13_FY2025-26-Midyear-Budget.pdf

NOTE: Board Member Saemann (AB 2449 approved voting member) left the meeting.

MOTION by Board Member Tanaka, seconded by Board Member Quinn, to **APPROVE** the Mid Year Budget. No Abstentions. No Objections. **MOTION Passes.**

B. 2nd Vice Chair Selection – close nominations and vote (*attachment*) – Approved

Ms. Bacharach mentioned the nominations for the 2nd Vice Chair were Board Member Monteiro and Board Member Tarnay. Chair Suarez invited additional nominations from the floor, with none being received.

MOTION by Board Member Tanaka, seconded by Board Member Uphoff, to **CLOSE** the nominations for the 2nd Vice Chair position. No Abstentions. No Objections. **MOTION Passes.**

The nominees were then invited to provide brief statements outlining their qualifications and priorities. Board Member Tarnay shared her professional background as an attorney with experience working across multiple cities and within the nonprofit sector, emphasizing her commitment to collaboration, learning best practices, and advancing regional priorities such as housing, transportation, and environmental sustainability. Board Member Monteiro highlighted over two decades of public service, including experience on a school board and city council, as well as leadership roles in nonprofit organizations serving low-income residents. He further noted his regional board experience and expressed a commitment to economic development and regional collaboration in anticipation of upcoming opportunities affecting the South Bay. Following the

candidate statements, the Board discussed term length and regional representation among leadership positions, including the historical frequency of chair appointments by city. It was noted that Hawthorne most recently held a chair position in 2019, while Manhattan Beach had not held the position since approximately 2006. Ballots were then cast, with the Board instructed to include their name and city, and votes were publicly announced in accordance with procedure. Upon conclusion of the vote tally, Board Member Monteiro was elected to serve as Second Vice Chair. The Board acknowledged the result and extended appreciation to both nominees for their willingness to serve.

C. Executive Director Salary Adjustment for FY2025-2026 (*attachment*) – Approved

The Board considered a proposed amendment to the Executive Director Employment Agreement to provide a 3% salary increase, increasing the annual salary to \$206,876, effective retroactively to July 1, 2025, consistent with the fiscal year and as reflected in the adopted FY 2025–2026 budget. It was noted that, pursuant to the Employment Agreement, all salary adjustments must be approved by the Board in a public meeting as a non-consent item, and that the recommendation had been advanced by Board Members and reviewed by the Steering Committee prior to presentation to the full Board. SBCCOG Program Manager David Leger presented the item and explained that the adjustment was intended to align the Executive Director’s compensation cycle with the broader staff salary schedule due to prior timing misalignment following the transition from contractor to employee status, and that the last salary adjustment occurred in August 2024. Board Member Quinn inquired whether the proposed increase had been incorporated into the budget, and Mr. Leger confirmed that it had been previously budgeted. Board Member Dieringer expressed concern regarding fiscal prudence, noting the limited surplus and variability in grant funding, and emphasized the importance of responsible stewardship of organizational resources. She raised concerns about additional costs associated with the Executive Director’s transition to employee status, including benefits and related expenses, and recommended deferring the increase for approximately six months to allow for greater financial clarity. Board Member Monteiro sought clarification regarding the duration of the increase, and it was confirmed that the adjustment would remain in effect until modified by future Board action. Board Member Obagi raised governance concerns, emphasizing that compensation adjustments should be preceded by a formal performance evaluation conducted in closed session, consistent with best practices and the Board’s prior approach. He described a multi-session evaluation process used in other jurisdictions and recommended establishing a regular and consistent evaluation structure. Mr. Leger acknowledged that, while the increase had been planned and budgeted, the timing of evaluation cycles had been misaligned due to the Executive Director’s start date and transition to employee status and confirmed that a formal evaluation would occur prior to the May 31 contractual deadline and that future adjustments would align with the evaluation and budget cycle. Additional Board discussion reflected that the current situation was atypical and not reflective of the intended long-term process, and that future actions would follow a more standardized approach. Board Member Dieringer further questioned the retroactive nature of the increase and suggested that retroactivity and performance evaluation should be considered as separate matters. She emphasized the importance of a formal written evaluation to support compensation decisions and noted that similar practices are followed by other public agencies and joint powers authorities. Board members discussed the distinction between Steering Committee recommendations and full Board authority, clarifying that the item had not been finally approved and was properly before the Board for action.

Board Member Dieringer made a motion to defer the proposed salary increase pending completion of a closed session performance evaluation and further Board discussion prior to approval. The motion did not receive a second and therefore failed.

MOTION by Board Member Uphoff, seconded by Board Member Tanaka, to **APPROVE** the salary adjustment as presented. Opposition by Board Member Dieringer. Abstention by Board Member Galicia. **MOTION Passes.**

D. General Assembly update

Ms. Bacharach provided an update regarding the upcoming General Assembly event, noting planning efforts were progressing well and expressed increased confidence in the overall program structure and execution. It was announced that Mr. Mark Rogondino, an Emmy award-winning sportscaster from Fox 11 News, would serve as Master of Ceremonies and panel moderator, with a format emphasizing interactive, discussion-based panels rather than formal presentations. She encouraged Board members to submit potential questions for panelists to support audience engagement. Ms. Bacharach outlined the event agenda, noting that the morning session would feature a panel focused on cultural arts, venues and community activation, including representatives from the Redondo Beach Performing Arts Center, the San Pedro Chamber of Commerce, and a potential participant from Hollywood Park, as well as brief remarks from participating mayors, including confirmed representation from the Cities of Torrance and El Segundo. The afternoon programming would include a panel on the economic impacts of major events, featuring Mr. Larry Kosmont and additional speakers from BeachLife Festival, West Harbor development, and sports facilities planning. A subsequent panel would address hospitality, transportation, and public safety considerations, with participation from the westdrift Hotel, regional transit agencies including Metro and GTrans, the City of Los Angeles, and a pending public safety representative. Ms. Bacharach highlighted emerging regional impacts related to upcoming large-scale events, including increased demand on local hotel capacity due to Olympic-related activity, particularly in coastal communities such as San Pedro. It was further reported that the event would be offered free of charge, with parking subsidies provided for the first 250 attendees, and that the westdrift Hotel had contributed significant in-kind support through reduced facility rates. Staff noted that current sponsorship commitments had reached approximately \$64,000, exceeding the initial goal, and encouraged additional participation through exhibitor tables, particularly from local cities and cultural institutions.

E. Homeless Services

1. Measure A implementation – Renter Protection & Homelessness Prevention update

SBCCOG Staff Kevin Umaña and Ronson Chu provided an update on the Renter Protection and Homelessness Prevention (RPHP) program, funded through Measure A. Staff reported that the program provides financial assistance and prevention services, including dedicated specialists and case management, and is accessible through the program website. Eligibility criteria include residency within the South Bay, income at or below 80% of Area Median Income, rental tenancy, and demonstration of a recent financial hardship. Assistance includes emergency rental aid, temporary subsidies, and flexible financial support, with defined per-person limits. Staff outlined the referral and assistance process, noting that the program utilizes a broad intake approach followed by intensive screening and case management. Board Member Waller inquired about potential barriers to participation and acceptance rates. Staff explained that while the program casts a wide net, each case undergoes a detailed review process, including financial literacy assessments and verification procedures, which can require approximately 10 to 20 hours per household. This comprehensive approach contributes to lower conversion rates but ensures appropriate use of funds and program integrity. Board Member Monteiro asked about the amount of financial assistance individuals may receive, and staff clarified that support is capped per participant based on program guidelines. Board Member Quinn inquired about the circumstances that typically prompt individuals to seek assistance, and Mr. Chu responded that the program is designed to capture individuals experiencing a recent financial crisis, such as job loss, illness, or other destabilizing events, to prevent entry into homelessness. Staff reiterated that services are delivered through contracted

providers responsible for eligibility screening, case management, and distribution of funds, and emphasized that the program is structured to stabilize households through both financial assistance and supportive services.

2. SBCCOG Program for Prevention with funds from LACAHS

3. Safe Parking closing

Mr. Chu presented an update on the Annual Local Solutions Fund and Measure A Homeless Allocation, noting that the SBCCOG budget must be approved by April 13 to ensure continuity of programming. Mr. Chu reported that SBCCOG continues to implement homelessness prevention and response programs, which have supported approximately 500 individuals transitioning off the streets. He further noted that the most recent Point-in-Time count reflects fewer than 1,000 individuals experiencing homelessness in the South Bay region, indicating progress in regional efforts. Mr. Chu also discussed additional funding opportunities, including opioid settlement funds, which may be leveraged for eligible homelessness-related programs such as safe parking and supportive services. Ms. Bacharach encouraged member cities to identify local points of contact responsible for these funds and to coordinate with SBCCOG to align program implementation. Staff emphasized SBCCOG's intent to work collaboratively with cities to finalize programming and ensure effective deployment of available resources. Mr. Chu further referenced the Executive Committee for Regional Homeless Alignment (ECHRA), describing it as a statutory body responsible for regional coordination. He noted concerns that the committee's role has not been fully recognized in decision-making processes and emphasized ongoing efforts to elevate awareness of ECHRA's authority and integrate its strategic plan actions into broader implementation efforts.

F. Housing Trust Update

1. Progress on City Approvals – 8 cities approved. JPA agreement circulating

2. Legislation update

3. Implementation schedule

Mr. Chu provided an update on the status of the regional housing trust, reporting that eight cities had approved participation; however, he clarified that executed agreements had not yet been received and emphasized that the trust could not be formally established until all required documents were on file. Ms. Bacharach stated that all required documents must be submitted to the SBCCOG and that delegate appointments must be confirmed by March 31. Mr. Chu noted that staff were targeting April 23 for the inaugural Housing Trust Board meeting and were preparing by reviewing models from other regional housing trusts, including the San Gabriel Valley Trust, to inform the structure and agenda, and were developing foundational governance documents, including bylaws and conflict-of-interest policies, in coordination with Civic Home, the consultant that has been assisting the formation funded by REAP funds from SCAG. He further reported that SBCCOG legal counsel Mike Jenkins had identified an interim housing trust attorney through BBK to support legal and organizational development until the Board determines long-term representation. Board Member Waller referenced prior revisions made in coordination with legal counsel, and Ms. Bacharach clarified that a final JPA agreement incorporating negotiated revisions had been issued on February 9 following discussions with the City of Redondo Beach, after which no further changes were accepted to ensure consistency across jurisdictions. Board Member Waller indicated that he had not yet reviewed the final version and stated that it was needed in order to confirm representation and proceed. Mr. Chu reiterated the importance of receiving finalized documents and delegate confirmations to move forward. He also noted that four cities had declined participation at this time due to internal considerations, and that outreach to remaining cities was ongoing. In response to an inquiry regarding engagement with the City of Los Angeles, Mr. Chu stated that neither the City nor the County had been formally engaged and that future participation would be determined by the Housing Trust Board, with staff available to provide briefings as needed.

G. Senior Services

Mr. Chu announced an upcoming presentation by the South Bay Workforce Investment Board (SBWIB) focused on employment opportunities for seniors seeking to supplement their retirement income. He noted that the session will highlight job placement and deployment opportunities available to older adults and is scheduled to take place on March 24.

H. Transportation Reports

1. Metro Report – Board member James Butts/Mike Bohlke

a. Update on Metro Board composition ad hoc committee

Andy Sywak of Metro reported on recent developments from the Metro Board meeting, noting that the Purple Line Extension is scheduled to open on May 8, with three new stations along Wilshire Boulevard at La Brea, Fairfax, and La Cienega, marking a significant milestone following approximately eleven years of construction. He also provided an update on the Metro Board Ad Hoc Board Composition Committee, stating that the committee had convened its first meeting and approved a motion to initiate a community outreach plan, which will include presentations to Service Councils and Councils of Governments (COGs) to provide background on the committee's formation and gather stakeholder input. Mr. Sywak noted that outreach efforts would include an upcoming presentation at the South Bay Service Council meeting to outline the committee's purpose and next steps, with a broader presentation anticipated in April. During the discussion, members raised concerns regarding the composition of the committee, noting that while Councils of Governments receive and utilize Metro funding, no COG representative had initially been appointed, despite the inclusion of labor and other special interest representatives. Ms. Bacharach stated that the committee had been appointed by the Metro Board Chair and confirmed that, following advocacy efforts, a representative from the Las Virgenes-Malibu COG had been added to the committee to ensure regional COG representation. She noted that this individual had attended the initial meeting and would serve as a voice for COG interests. Ms. Bacharach further commented on the scope of the committee's work, indicating that it is expected to meet multiple times to address topics such as equity and governance, and that additional updates and presentations will be provided to the Board in April.

2. Transportation Committee recommendation

a. Measure R South Bay Highway Program FY26-27 Program (*attachments*) – Approved

Mr. Leger presented the FY26–27 Measure R South Bay Highway Program (SBHP) Annual Program Update, noting that the program continues to focus on funding adjustments to existing projects due to limited remaining funds and increasing costs to complete projects through the life of the program ending in 2039. He reported that it had been a relatively quiet year, with three recommended project adjustments across two projects. Mr. Leger stated that the County of Los Angeles requested an additional \$1 million for an Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) implementation project, increasing its total allocation to approximately \$3.42 million. He further reported on two related Metro projects associated with the Integrated Corridor Management (ICM) system along the I-105 freeway, designed to improve coordination between freeway and local street systems during major incidents. Mr. Leger explained that one component involving independent quality assurance, previously estimated at \$150,000, was no longer required and would be de-obligated. He noted that Metro requested an additional \$3.65 million for the primary I-105 project, with Metro contributing its own funds and the COG share totaling approximately \$26.5 million. He stated that the net recommended funding increase before the Board was \$4.5 million and that, if approved, approximately \$47.8 million would remain available in the program through 2039 to address future project needs and cost increases. Mr. Leger indicated that the Transportation Committee had reviewed and recommended approval of the proposed adjustments.

MOTION by Board Member Monteiro, seconded by Board Member Tanaka, to **APPROVE** the Measure R South Bay Highway Program FY26-27 Program. No Objections. No Abstentions. **MOTION Passes.**

I. Land Use and Transportation Programs and Projects

1. REAP 2.0 Updates

a. Commercial Redevelopment to Housing

Ms. Bacharach provided an update on the Commercial Redevelopment Program, reporting that staff had conducted additional fine-tuning of the effort and continued to work closely with participating cities to gather and update data. She noted that the Cities of Torrance and Carson were actively participating and sharing information to support the analysis. Ms. Bacharach stated that the consultant was in the process of completing a feasibility analysis to assess the viability of redevelopment opportunities on identified properties. She further reported that outreach had been conducted to additional cities, including Gardena and Hawthorne, and that both cities were planning studies related to commercial redevelopment. Ms. Bacharach also announced that a web-based mapping tool was being developed and would be made available to cities to assist in identifying potential commercial redevelopment sites. She indicated that the program was progressing and that deliverables, including the feasibility analysis and mapping tool, were nearing completion.

b. Micromobility Hubs

2. Micromobility Programs and Projects

Ms. Bacharach provided an update on the Mobility Hubs initiative, reporting that SBCCOG staff are working in coordination with Metro to advance planning efforts. She stated that a scoring tool had been developed to support site selection and evaluate potential mobility hub locations. Ms. Bacharach noted that staff had conducted outreach to the Cities of Gardena and Hawthorne regarding potential sites and indicated that additional discussions with the City of Carson were forthcoming. She further reported that the analysis includes evaluating site characteristics and surrounding land uses, and that the consultant is preparing an inventory of needed services and amenities to support future mobility hub development. Ms. Bacharach emphasized that these efforts are currently in the planning phase

3. South Bay Fiber Network – No updates were provided

J. SBESC Projects and Programs (*attachment*)

1. Video of Kits for Kids Celebration

CivicSpark Fellow Moana Franco produced a video which featured a recognition and presentation celebrating students from Ramona Elementary School for their participation in the “Kids for Kids” program, an energy education initiative led by Southern California Regional Energy Network in collaboration with the South Bay Cities Council of Governments. The content focused on how the program engages elementary school students in learning about energy conservation through classroom lessons and hands-on kits that include energy-efficient tools like LED bulbs and faucet aerators. It highlighted the program’s broader impact, noting that 19 classrooms participated and received funding support, and emphasized the goal of extending energy-saving behaviors beyond the classroom to students’ families and communities. The video is accessible using the following link: <https://youtu.be/f1g3xC0uBFY?si=yHzFbRB0rXfuT22H&t=8054>

2. Energy Efficiency Awards Criteria for 2026-2027

Ms. Fuentes presented an update on the Energy Efficiency Awards criteria for the 2026–2027 cycle, highlighting new criteria developed in collaboration with the Energy Working Group and city staff. She noted that a key enhancement to the program is the addition of a “Partners Award,” which

expands recognition to include water conservation efforts alongside energy efficiency initiatives. Ms. Fuentes also shared updates on the success and visibility of SBCCOG's energy programs, noting that at a recent conference session, with over 100 attendees, there was significant interest in SBCCOG programs, including inquiries about future partnerships and grant opportunities. She emphasized the program's effectiveness and the collaborative efforts that contribute to its success.

K. Opportunity to Serve

Ms. Bacharach reminded members that the deadline for submitting nominations for "Opportunities to Serve" is March 20 and provided an overview of available positions. She noted that positions include representation on the SCAG Energy and Environment Committee, for which Board Member Huff has expressed interest in continuing, as well as the Cal Cities Regional Director position, for which Board Member Waite has indicated his intent to seek reappointment. Ms. Bacharach also reported that three positions are open on the Metro Service Council and that nominations are being accepted. She further identified upcoming SCAG Regional Council elections, for the seats currently held by Board Member Henderson and Board Member Boyles,. Ms. Bacharach encouraged members to submit nominations by the stated deadline and indicated that this item will return to the Board at the April meeting with recommendations from the Steering Committee

L. Proposed LA County Sales Tax

Ms. Bacharach introduced the proposed Los Angeles County sales tax, noting that the discussion was being brought forward for informational purposes following a meeting of the LA County Council of Governments (COG) Chairs, where there was general sentiment of opposition. The measure has been approved by the County Board of Supervisors and will appear on the June ballot as a general tax intended to offset anticipated losses in federal funding, with revenues directed to the County's General Fund and subject to oversight by a committee composed of County representatives. Board Member Uphoff commented that the issue represents a broader federal, state, and county funding challenge and raised concerns regarding potential regional impacts if approved. Board Member Giroux expressed opposition to the measure, questioning the decision to place it on the June ballot rather than November, and citing concerns about increased sales tax rates potentially reaching approximately 11 percent, the financial burden on consumers and businesses, and the sustainability of funding following the expiration of COVID-related federal relief funds. He further stated that SBCCOG should consider taking a position in opposition. Board Member Waller stated that while his city had taken a position, he did not believe SBCCOG should take a formal stance given the diversity of perspectives among member jurisdictions. Additional members expressed opposition, citing concerns that the tax is regressive, lacks dedicated funding safeguards due to its designation as a general tax, and may be misleading in its presentation to voters. It was also noted that organizations, including Cal Cities, have taken positions opposing related legislation, including AB 1768, which would exempt the tax from the state sales tax cap.

MOTION by Board Member Dieringer for the SBCCOG to **OPPOSE** the proposed sales tax measure, seconded and **AMENDED** by Chair Suarez to include opposition to the associated state legislation. No Abstentions. No Objections. **MOTION Passes.**

M. Other – No updates were provided.

IX. UPCOMING EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

March 26 – General Assembly (*attachment*) – Ms. Bacharach encouraged Board Members to attend.

April 3 – Legislative Briefing – Ms. Bacharach encouraged Board Members to attend.

X. AGENCY REPORTS

NOTE: Oral reports will only be made to clarify or amplify written reports

A. SCAG update (Erik Rodriguez) (*attachment*)

1. Regional Council (Mark Henderson, Mark Waronek, Drew Boyles) (*attachment*)
2. Community, Economic, and Human Development (Mark Henderson, Drew Boyles, Mark Waronek)
3. Transportation (Bill Uphoff, Asam Sheikh)
4. Energy and Environment (Britt Huff)

B. AQMD update (Brandee Keith) (*attachment*)

C. Metro Service Council (Don Szerlip) (*attachment*)

D. County Department of Public Health (Alicia Chang) (*attachment*)

E. League of California Cities & LA Division Legislative Committee (Britt Huff, Jeff Kiernan, Barry Waite)

F. South Bay Workforce Investment Board (Chris Cagle)

G. South Bay Association of Chambers of Commerce (Barry Waite)

H. Area G Emergency Management (Brandy Villanueva)

I. California Association of Councils of Governments – CALCOG (Britt Huff)

J. South Bay Aerospace Alliance (David Bradley/Rodney Tanaka)

K. Baldwin Hills and Urban Watersheds Conservancy (Katrina Manning)

L. Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission (Dean Francois/ Zein Obagi)

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Suarez ended the presentations and updates at 8:36 pm until the next Board meeting on Thursday, April 23, 2026.

Respectfully Submitted:

Natalie Champion

SBCCOG Staff