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Subject: SCAG Update February 2026

To: South Bay Cities Council of Governments Board Directors

From: Erik Rodrigues, SCAG Sr. Government Affairs Officer

INFORMATION

Regional Council Hears Update on ‘Regional Housing Production Leadership’

The [February Regional Council meeting](#) featured a panel discussion about partnerships between SCAG and local and subregional partners to produce housing in Southern California. Lessons from the presentations also contribute to SCAG Regional Council President Cindy Allen’s “Presidential Priority” for the fiscal year to focus on housing production in the region.

SCAG’s role in housing work has changed in recent years to include supporting jurisdictions and partners across the region to increase housing production—a shift made possible by state funding from the Regional Early Action Planning (REAP) grant program.

The REAP program represents a [new approach to addressing the housing crisis](#), providing resources to pilot and test solutions at the local level and confront multiple barriers to housing production. SCAG received \$47 million in REAP 1.0 and \$231.5 million in REAP 2.0, which SCAG largely suballocated across Southern California to fund critical efforts to support housing growth.

The panel discussion featured SCAG partners Brielle Salazar, regional housing trust manager of the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments; David Pollock, executive director of the Ventura County Council of Governments; and Doug Spondello, community development director of the city of Moorpark, who discussed how SCAG’s support through the REAP program facilitated their work to produce housing in the SCAG region. The presentation was followed by discussion among Regional Council members about the successes and challenges in accelerating housing production in their communities and opportunities for regional collaboration and leadership.

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ACTION

Regional Council Approves Programming Procedures for FHWA-Administered Federal Funding

On Feb. 5, the SCAG Regional Council [approved programming procedures](#) for Federal Highway Administration funding sources requiring metropolitan planning organization project selection. This document focuses on post-award activities for the Carbon Reduction Program (CRP), Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) Program, and Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) program.

The intent of these procedures is to prevent and minimize loss of federal funds to the SCAG region and provide flexibility in delivering transportation projects. They also assist the region in managing obligation authority and meeting federal financial constraint requirements.

ACTION

Regional Council Adopts Updated Public Participation Plan

At its Feb. 5 meeting, the SCAG Regional Council [adopted an update](#) to SCAG's Public Participation Plan (PPP). The PPP outlines SCAG's commitments to representative, accessible, and effective public and stakeholder participation in the development of its plans, programs, and initiatives.

This PPP update is an early milestone in the development of Connect SoCal 2050, SCAG's next update to the Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy. The updated PPP will be provided to the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration as required and will be available on the SCAG website.

NEWS FROM THE PRESIDENT

Scholarship Program Opening Soon

The annual 2026 SCAG Scholarship Program opens Feb. 9.

In partnership with the California Transportation Foundation, the program will award nine \$4,000 scholarships for high school or community college students from the SCAG region. Students in any field of study are invited to apply, with preference given to applications that demonstrate a commitment to community planning, regional planning, urban planning, civil engineering, political science, public administration, sustainable development, or related fields.

SCAG Regional Council President Cindy Allen announced the members of the 2026 Scholarship Committee at the February Regional Council meeting. The committee includes at least one representative from each county, a Tribal representative, and two representatives from academia.

Applications are due electronically Friday, March 20. For more information, visit the [SCAG Scholarship website](#).

2026 SCAG Student Showcase Open for Submissions

The 2026 SCAG Student Showcase is now [open for submissions](#).

The SCAG Student Showcase challenges students to create posters and StoryMaps that illustrate the possibilities of open data to tell compelling stories, create insights, and showcase plans and projects. Competition finalists receive unparalleled opportunities for visibility and networking. Winners receive cash prizes.

2026 SCAG Student Showcase finalists will receive complimentary event registration, hotel accommodation, and admission to [SCAG's 2026 Regional Conference and General Assembly](#) in Palm Desert on May 7-8. At the conference, participants will present their posters and StoryMaps to elected officials and industry leaders from across Southern California.

Submissions are due March 12. Visit the [2026 SCAG Student Showcase website](#) to learn more.

NEWS FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

County-Specific Annual Economic Reports Now Available

SCAG recently released county-specific reports for a deeper look at economic conditions across Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura counties. Each report highlights local trends, key indicators, and emerging issues to help policymakers, planners, and stakeholders better understand county-level economic dynamics and plan for the year ahead.

The county-level reports expand on findings included in the "[2025 Southern California Economic Update](#)" presented at the SCAG Joint Policy Committee Meeting on Dec. 4, 2025. This annual report provides a comprehensive overview of the region's economic performance and outlook, offering data-driven insights to support informed decision-making by Southern California's local and regional policymakers.

Download county-specific reports by clicking the following links:

- [Imperial County](#)
- [Los Angeles County](#)
- [Orange County](#)
- [Riverside and San Bernardino counties](#)
- [Ventura County](#)

For additional details on the reports and SCAG's Economic Roundtable, visit the [Economic Insights & Data Resources](#) webpage.

SCAG-Hosted Inland Empire Housing Workshop Explores Solutions

SCAG, in partnership with Riverside Mayor Patricia Lock Dawson, hosted the Inland Empire Housing Workshop on Jan. 14, gathering city and county staff and housing professionals to address the region's most pressing housing challenges.

The workshop focused on real-world approaches to increasing housing supply, coordinating infrastructure, and reducing barriers to housing production. Attendees learned about regional

data tools, state-level insights, and peer strategies designed to support local planning and implementation efforts. Read more about the event on [SCAG News](#).

SCAG Begins 'Future Leaders Initiative' Program

SCAG launched the inaugural cohort of the [Future Leaders Initiative](#) with the program's first meeting on Jan. 22. This six-month civic leadership pilot program is designed to help young adults across Southern California develop knowledge and skills related to how local and regional governments collaborate for long-term change. The program received a total of 244 applications across all counties in the SCAG region, showing a strong interest in civic engagement, planning, and community leadership among emerging leaders. The first cohort will complete the program in June.

To read more about the Future Leaders Initiative, visit [SCAG News](#).

The full Executive Director's Report for February 2026 is available on the [SCAG website](#).

UPCOMING MEETINGS

FEBRUARY

10th Toolbox Tuesday: SCAG Region Transportation Project Development Process

16th Presidents' Day (SCAG Offices Closed)

17th Legislative/Communications and Membership Committee

MARCH

4th Executive/Administration Committee

5th Community, Economic, and Human Development Committee

5th Energy and Environment Committee

16-17th Legislative/Communications and Membership Committee

19th Technical Working Group