
Press Release

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Regional Council of the Southern California Association of Governments Unanimously Approves Release of a Draft Transportation, Sustainability and Economic Recovery Plan for 2012-2035

Los Angeles, CA —The Regional Council of the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) unanimously approved the release of its Draft 2012-2035 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS) for public review and comment.

The draft presents a long term strategic investment plan for transportation and housing through 2035. The SCAG region includes six counties, 191 cities and over 18 million residents. If the region were a state, it would be the fifth largest in the nation after California, Texas, New York and Florida. And, the region’s population is projected to add 4 million new residents by 2035, predominantly our children and grandchildren.

SCAG President Pam O’Connor noted that, “the draft 2012 RTP/SCS is the first time that transportation and community-planning are working together to invest in a future that’s economically prosperous and a great place for people to raise their families.” The draft is the culmination of outreach over two years that gathered input from a wide-range of communities: business, transportation, environment, labor, non-profit, health and residents. “The region SCAG represents is a vast area. A one-size-fits-all approach is not appropriate for an area that covers 1 in 17 people in the U.S. This plan respects local governments’ decision-making while linking communities together for a better quality of life in Southern California,” commented SCAG Executive Director Hasan Ikhata.

Over 350 leaders attended the Transportation, Sustainability & Economic Recovery Summit on December 1, where Wallace Walrod, Ph.D., Vice President of Economic Development and Research at the Orange County Business Council, outlined the economic benefits of the draft plan. “Southern California is taking the lead to secure our economic future. The draft 2012 RTP/SCS is projected to create 168,000 new jobs annually over 25 years, totaling 4.2 million jobs in just our region alone.” Tom Martinez, Executive Director of IBEW-NECA Management Labor Cooperation Committee stated, “What’s important to labor is that all stakeholders work together to create jobs, jobs, jobs - and this regional plan will achieve that goal.” Greg Devereaux, Chief Executive Officer of San Bernardino County, quoted General George S. Patton in his comments by stating, “A good solution applied with vigor now, is better than a perfect solution applied ten minutes later.” He also added, “this is not a perfect plan, but it’s a good plan.”

The proposed plan meets the requirements outlined in Senate Bill 375 and defined by the California Air Resources Board for a reduction in Green House Gas Emissions (GHG) of 8% by 2020 and 16% by 2035. Amanda Eaken, Deputy Director of Sustainable Communities with the Natural Resources Defense Council observed, "This plan can be an inflection point for Southern California. SCAG is taking an impressive step to build sustainable communities for the 21st Century. People want these communities and SCAG's leadership has actually heard that." Southern California business leader, Randall Lewis, Executive Vice President at Lewis Operating Corp, expressed his support of the plan by stating, "This is an unprecedented opportunity for SCAG to work with stakeholders, such as government, business, labor and the environmental community and health community, to build a foundation for our region's future economic well-being and health."

SCAG will release the technical appendices to the draft plan on December 20, and the Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) on December 30. All documents are available for review online at www.scag.ca.gov including video and audio from the summit. Beginning in January 2012, SCAG will conduct workshops in all six counties before the 55-day public comment period ends on February 14. The Regional Council is scheduled to certify the Final PEIR and adopt the 2012-2035 RTP/SCS on April 4.

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About SCAG

SCAG is the nation's largest metropolitan planning organization, representing six counties, 19 cities and more than 18 million residents. SCAG undertakes a variety of planning and policy initiatives to plan for a livable and sustainable Southern California now and in the future. For more information about SCAG's regional efforts, please visit www.scag.ca.gov.