

## Key Economic Challenges

**Lack of economic opportunity:** One of the top economic challenges raised by people throughout the region was the lack of higher-paying jobs within the region. Sometimes this was expressed as a lack of sufficient education and training to access those jobs. As we transition to clean energy technologies, it will be important to support residents in the necessary training to ensure that they have the skills to access opportunities within these related fields.

**Population aging:** By 2050, the region's median age is projected to increase to 43.8 years—up from 37.7 years in 2019 and 30.5 years in 1990. This will lead to a substantial change in the ratio of working-age individuals (16–64) to seniors (65+). In 1990, there were 6.8 working-age people per senior, and by 2050, there are projected to only be 2.9. This will likely put additional strain on retirement benefits, including Social Security.

**Increasing supply-chain complexities:** Accommodating the needs of a growing goods movement sector across the supply chain is a challenge. Variables beyond the region's control, such as trade tariffs, the COVID-19 pandemic and other geopolitical tensions can impact how we can efficiently move goods within and through the region. Additionally, national, state and local policies will have an impact on both freight intermodal capacity and industrial development across goods movement industries.

# TAKING ACTION

Implementation of Connect SoCal relies primarily on the actions and decisions of other transportation agencies, local jurisdictions and actors in the private sector to operate transit service, install new bike paths, approve new land uses or build new housing. SCAG's role for Plan implementation rests on collaboration with other agencies and stakeholders, policy leadership, our role as an information hub, through research—and, lastly, by providing resources to local agencies or jurisdictions to advance their planning efforts or implementation of Connect SoCal. Implementation Strategies for Connect SoCal 2024 can be found in Chapter 3.

## Regional Leadership

SCAG's role in implementing Connect SoCal 2024 is primarily through one of four ways: collaboration, funding administration, research and resources.

**Collaboration and policy leadership:** Coordinating policies across jurisdictions is crucial to successful Plan implementation. SCAG will collaborate with local governments, transit agencies, non-profits, community organizations and other stakeholders to align land use and transportation planning, streamline regulations and encourage cooperation.

## Transportation System Management

- 12. Pursue efficient use of the transportation system using a set of operational improvement strategies that maintain the performance of the existing transportation system instead of adding roadway capacity, where possible
- 13. Prioritize transportation investments that increase travel time reliability, including build-out of the regional express lanes network

## Transportation Demand Management

- 14. Encourage the development of transportation projects that provide convenient, cost-effective and safe alternatives to single-occupancy vehicle travel (e.g., trips made by foot, on bikes, via transit, etc.)
- 15. Encourage jurisdictions and TDM practitioners to develop and expand local plans and policies to promote alternatives to single occupancy vehicle travel for residents, workers and visitors
- 16. Encourage municipalities to update existing (legacy) TDM ordinances by incorporating new travel modes and new technology and by incorporating employment and residential sites of certain populations—for example, employers who have less than 250 employees (below the 250 or more employees threshold identified in AQMD’s Rule 2202)

## Technology Integration

- 17. Support the implementation of technology designed to provide equal access to mobility, employment, economic opportunity, education, health and other quality-of-life opportunities for all residents within the SCAG region
- 18. Advocate for data sharing between the public and private sectors to effectively evaluate the services’ benefits and impacts on communities while protecting data security and privacy

- 19. Advocate for technology that is adaptive and responsive to ensure it remains up to date and meets the evolving needs of users and stakeholders
- 20. Promote technology that has the capacity to facilitate economic growth, improve workforce development opportunities, and enhance safety and security
- 21. Proactively monitor and plan for the development, deployment and commercialization of new technology as it relates to integration with transportation infrastructure

## Safety

- 22. Eliminate transportation-related fatalities and serious injuries (especially those involving vulnerable road users, such as people, especially older adults and children, walking and biking) on the regional multimodal transportation system
- 23. Integrate the assessment of equity into the regional transportation safety and security planning process, focusing on the analysis and mitigation of disproportionate impacts on disadvantaged communities
- 24. Support innovative approaches for addressing transit safety and security issues so that impacts to transit employees and the public are minimized and those experiencing issues (e.g., unhoused persons) are supported
- 25. Support the use of transportation safety and system security data in investment decision-making, including consideration of new highway and transit/rail investments that would address safety and security needs

THE 2020-2045 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN/  
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES STRATEGY OF THE  
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS



ADOPTED ON  
SEPTEMBER 3, 2020

Finally, the Southern California to Las Vegas high-speed rail project was environmentally cleared under XpressWest and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) issued a record of decision on July 8, 2011. XpressWest is now in the process of planning, constructing and operating this service, which is expected to be privately financed.

## ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

With its temperate climate and wide array of stunning natural and built environments, the SCAG region holds great potential for active transportation initiatives. Walking (inclusive of people using personal mobility devices) and bicycling are accessible forms of transportation for people of all ages, abilities and socioeconomic backgrounds. Communities that are built to support walking and bicycling trips tend to be healthier and are safer for people using all modes of transportation. Likewise, the implementation of infrastructure and development of plans and programs increases the number of people walking and bicycling and decreases the number of people driving. This will improve health outcomes and reduce GHG emissions in the region.

Connect SoCal is expected to increase the number of daily active transportation trips by more than two million, increasing the mode share from 7.8 percent in 2016 to 10 percent by 2045. In order to achieve these outcomes, planned future investments are nearly doubled from \$12.9 billion in the 2016 RTP/SCS to \$22.5 billion in Connect SoCal. The active transportation investments in Connect SoCal are allocated across a range of active transportation strategies that address planning, policy making and implementation for both short and regional trips. Additionally, they are designed to improve environmental justice outcomes and enhance the safety and comfort of people walking and bicycling.

Since the adoption of the 2016 RTP/SCS planning efforts throughout the region have expanded significantly. Nearly 80 percent of the cities in the SCAG region now have completed some sort of active transportation plan, bringing the regional total to more than 300 pedestrian, bicycle and safe routes to schools plans. This is a 40 percent increase from 2016. Likewise, every county in the SCAG region now has a county-wide pedestrian, bicycle and/or active transportation plan (ATP) or is in the process of completing one. Some of these include the Imperial County Active Transportation Plan (2019) and Pedestrian Master Plan currently in progress, the Los Angeles County Active Transportation Strategic Plan (2016), Orange County's OC Active (2018), the Western Riverside

Council of Governments Active Transportation Plan, the San Bernardino Non-Motorized Transportation Plan (2018) and the Ventura County Regional Bikeway Wayfinding Plan (2017). Through Connect SoCal, SCAG's Sustainable Communities Program and other statewide funding sources, additional planning funding will be available to continue this progress and to plan for more active communities across the region.

In addition to development of a robust set of plans, the region has seen significant positive changes to our built environment as active transportation projects have been implemented. Almost 500 bikeway miles have been built in the region since the 2016 RTP/SCS. These efforts are dispersed across the region, with a focus on projects that improve active transportation mode share and safety for disadvantaged communities. SCAG has worked closely with impacted communities and partnered with community-based organizations to ensure that plans and projects are designed to best address the issues that people walking and bicycling in each community face. Some noteworthy active transportation projects initiated or implemented since 2016 include:

**Coachella Valley Link:** A multi-use trail in the Coachella Valley which is expected to facilitate more than 3 million active transportation trips per year by 2035.

**El Centro 8th Street ATP Project:** The El Centro 8th Street ATP-funded project is significant in part due to the positive impact of a Go Human demonstration project. The partnership allowed the City to showcase potential improvements and solicit community feedback and support, which helped see the project to implementation.

**Venice Boulevard Great Streets:** Mar Vista's Venice Boulevard Great Streets project enhanced pedestrian and bicycle safety, and promoted place-making through community art installations. The one-year evaluation report highlights how infrastructure investments, such as new signalized crossing locations and protected bike lanes, resulted in an 11 percent increase of active transportation users, a 75 percent reduction of collisions at its busiest intersection and a decrease in bicyclist injuries, all while supporting the same traffic volumes and promoting a vibrant downtown core.

Connect SoCal includes a wide variety of infrastructure projects that will support short and regional active transportation trips. These strategies will

reduce automobile vehicle miles traveled by increasing the number of trips accomplished by walking, bicycling and the use of micro-mobility devices. These strategies include building physical infrastructure such as local and regional bikeways, sidewalk and safe routes to schools pedestrian improvements, regional greenways and first-last mile connections to transit. In addition to reducing vehicle miles traveled, these strategies will improve air quality and public health by reducing emissions and increasing levels of physical activity. Finally, they will have a positive economic impact on the region by reducing transportation and healthcare costs.

Since the 2016 RTP/SCS there has been a significant change in technology and the way that it influences travel behavior. The growth in popularity of micro-mobility in the past few years necessitated the inclusion of strategies in Connect SoCal to address shared mobility infrastructure and regulation frameworks to ensure that new technologies can be used safely and responsibly. These strategies range from incentives for the purchase of e-bikes, to the distribution of private micro-mobility devices that help ensure access for low-income communities. While it is expected that many of these devices will be provided through the private sector, they will still use public streets and will likely increase demand for separated facilities that are safe for all ages and abilities. Local jurisdictions will likely be tasked with the regulation of these devices and will need to manage the locations where they will be stored and where they can be ridden.

New technology also has the potential to provide local partners with more and better travel behavior data. SCAG and member jurisdictions should support the procurement and development of new data sources for active transportation. This will include the collection of pedestrian, bicycle and micro-mobility volume data, as well as the integration of large data sets. Local cities, county agencies, public health departments and other stakeholders will all benefit from better data sets that provide information on traffic stress, accurate collision rates and information on the types of people using these modes. In addition, zoning codes and general plan elements should be updated when appropriate to support short trips and end-of-trip facilities such as bicycle parking.

Recent developments regarding micro-mobility and personal e-bikes and scooters have shown that new shared mobility benefits from the same programmatic and infrastructure improvements as traditional active transportation. Complete streets, which are planned, designed, operated and

## CORE VISION COMPLETE STREETS



Creating “complete streets” that are safe and inviting to all roadway users is critical to increasing mobility choices, reducing traffic fatalities and serious injuries and meeting greenhouse gas reduction targets.

### PROGRESS SINCE 2016

In December 2018, the City of Santa Ana opened its first protected bikeway, or cycletrack. The project, funded by OC Go (Orange County Measure M), features a 6-foot wide bikeway protected from vehicle traffic by a landscaped median. About 55 percent of the surrounding community doesn't have access to a car. Santa Ana has been awarded about \$45 million in grant funding for projects like this one that improve safety for people walking and biking.

In the City of Los Angeles, the Mobility Plan 2035 advances the complete streets concept beyond a single project by prioritizing multi-modal networks including a Bicycle Enhanced Network, Transit Enhanced Network, Vehicle Enhanced Network and Pedestrian Enhanced Districts.

### PLANNING FOR 2045

Connect SoCal invests in local streets and arterials and anticipates continued success in securing grant funds for regionally significant projects through programs like the California Active Transportation Program (ATP).

By expanding complete streets concepts to accommodate and optimize new technologies and micro-mobility devices, first-last mile connections to transit and curbside management strategies, the region will achieve even greater mode shift and reductions in VMT. SCAG champions Complete Streets policy implementation throughout the region with the Go Human campaign and a range of planning resources, including the Regional High Injury Network. Specific strategies and actions related to Complete Streets are detailed in the Active Transportation Technical Report.

maintained for safe, convenient, and comfortable travel and access for users of all ages and abilities, will support people who are walking, bicycling, and using micro-mobility devices. A variety of engagement strategies will need to be implemented alongside infrastructure components to support active transportation, in whatever form it takes. This engagement can take the form of Safe Routes to School programs designed to encourage students to walk and bicycle to school, SCAG's Go Human advertising campaigns to encourage the public to walk and bicycle more, or the demonstration of possible new infrastructure to get communities excited about changing their streets.

## TRANSPORTATION SAFETY

Connect SoCal prioritizes the safety and mobility of the region's residents, including drivers and passengers, transit riders, pedestrians, and bicyclists. To adhere to MAP-21/FAST Act performance measures requirement, SCAG adopted its annual regional safety targets in February 2020. For the year 2020, SCAG is aiming to reduce fatalities by a minimum of 3.03 percent and serious injuries by a minimum of 1.5 percent. To enhance safety in the region, SCAG anticipates providing cities with resources to develop safety plans and help achieve the safety targets.

SCAG's safety strategies are largely grounded in the State's Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP), which helps member agencies interested in pursuing safety initiatives and strategies at the local level. SCAG outlines detailed strategies and actions that local jurisdictions and county transportation commissions can undertake to enhance safety in our region in the Transportation Safety and Security Report. The strategies are supportive of the Strategic Highway Safety Plan and include:

1. Reduce Aggressive Driving and Speeding
2. Improve Safety for Aging Populations:
3. Improve Bicyclist Safety
4. Improve Commercial Vehicles Safety
5. Ensure Drivers are Licensed
6. Improve Emergency Response Services
7. Leverage Emerging Technologies
8. Reduce Impaired Driving Fatalities
9. Reduce Distracted Driving

### 10. Improve Safety at Intersections

11. Reduce the Occurrence of Lane Departure Fatalities
12. Improve Motorcycle Safety
13. Improve Occupant Protection by Increased Use of Seat Belts and Child Safety Seats

### 14. Improve Pedestrian Safety

15. Improve Work Zone Safety
16. Improve Safety for Young Drivers

To achieve regional safety targets SCAG will:

- Develop and maintain a High Injury Network (HIN) mapping tool to support planning efforts related to transportation safety by our local partners
- Work with local jurisdictions to provide active transportation safety education opportunities through its Go Human campaign
- Continue to represent Southern California on the California SHSP Steering Committee, the California Walk Bike Technical Advisory Committee, the Active Transportation Program Technical Advisory Committee and active transportation emphasis areas
- Support regional safety efforts including the development of Vision Zero policies and plans
- Support bicycle and pedestrian safety as part of SCAG's Sustainable Communities Program
- Analyze shared use of sidewalks between different modes (bicyclists, pedestrian's e-scooters) and the impacts on personal safety (e.g. dockless devices blocking foot traffic or other conflicts when riding near pedestrians)
- Advocate for funding strategies that reflect unique local needs

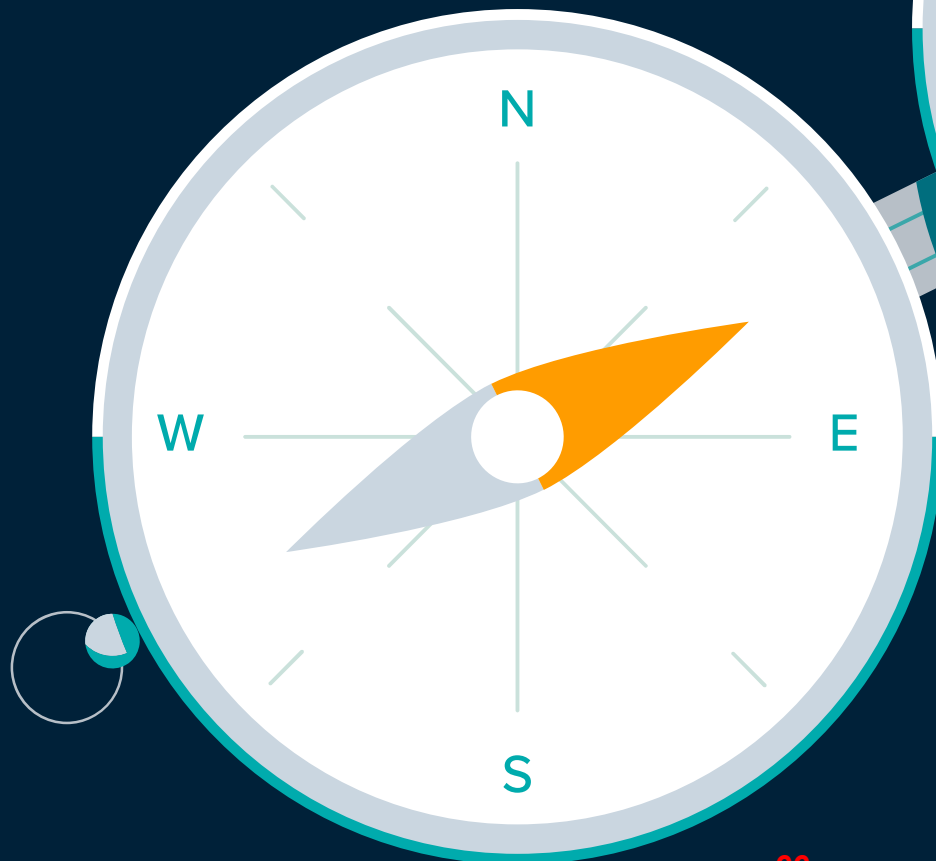
## HIGHWAY & ARTERIAL NETWORK

Southern California's highway and arterial system functions as the backbone of the larger transportation network. Most trips in our region are still made on our highways and arterials. The network provides access to employment, health, social and educational services among others. Yet, expansion of our highways

# Connect SoCal™

A Plan for Navigating  
to a Brighter Future

ADOPTED, APRIL 4, 2024



The Southern California Association  
of Governments' 2024–2050  
Regional Transportation Plan/  
Sustainable Communities Strategy

# THE BIG PICTURE

## Plan Requirements

As the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the region, SCAG is required by federal law (23 U.S.C. Section 134 et seq.) to prepare and update a long-range Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) every four years. The Plan must provide for the development, integrated management and operation of transportation systems and facilities that will function as an intermodal transportation network for the SCAG metropolitan planning area. The process for development of the Plan takes into account all modes of transportation, federal planning factors and goals and objectives of the California Transportation Plan (CTP 2050)—and is accomplished by a “continuing, cooperative and comprehensive” planning approach, which is also performance-driven and outcome-based. In addition, because most areas within the SCAG region have been designated as nonattainment or maintenance areas for one or more transportation-related criteria pollutants under the federal Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. Section 7401 et seq.), the Plan must conform to the applicable State Implementation Plan (SIP). The passage of California Senate Bill 375 (SB 375) in 2008 requires that SCAG prepare and adopt a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) that sets forth a forecasted regional development pattern which, when integrated with the transportation network, measures and policies, will reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from automobiles and light-duty trucks and achieve the GHG emissions reduction target for the region set by the California Air Resources Board (Govt. Code Section 65080(b)(2)(B)). In addition, the focus on equity in this Plan supports compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Environmental Justice guidance at the state and federal levels, all of which is further detailed in the Equity Analysis Technical Report.



### READ THE SUPPLEMENT

To see a full description of the laws that guide the plan, see the *Supplementals* section.

## Setting a Vision for 2050

Southern California is a vast region with a diversity of landscapes and communities. The six counties of Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and Ventura are home to a population of nearly 19 million people, powering the 16th largest economy in the world. The region is a vibrant economic hub and a center for innovation, culture and entertainment. Southern California is a polycentric megaregion that operates as a single labor market, housing market and transportation shed. This means that people and destinations are more spread out, with linkages both within and across communities. This dispersed activity, combined with decades of prioritizing roadway investments, has led to increasing congestion and poor air quality. In addition, the rewards of our economic prosperity have not been equitably shared. Some communities and their residents face more adverse health consequences based on where they live—or they have less access to opportunities, including housing. The region is also vulnerable to challenges outside of anyone’s immediate control, like global economic shifts or a pandemic.

Connect SoCal is a long-term plan for the Southern California region that details investment in our transportation system and development in our communities to meet the needs of the region both today and tomorrow. The horizon year for Connect SoCal is 2050.

### What kind of future are we envisioning?

**Healthy:** Southern California’s sustainable future hinges on a commitment to improved public health. The efforts to improve how we travel and where we develop will help us achieve environmental goals, like meeting air-quality standards and GHG emission-reduction targets, but will also contribute to better public health outcomes. Because the transportation sector is the largest contributor to statewide GHG emissions, Connect SoCal 2024 will expand alternatives to driving


alone—with transit as a backbone of the regional transportation system—and the focus on cleaner transportation. Land use planning will concentrate on reducing sprawl, preserving open spaces, increasing access to important resources and enhancing resilience to climate change impacts.

**Prosperous:** Connect SoCal fosters an inclusive and resilient economy. Strategic investments in infrastructure and transportation will improve access to employment centers and stimulate regional economic growth and opportunity in historically underserved areas. The region will prioritize workforce development initiatives, entrepreneurship and innovation to create diverse job opportunities across industries. Connect SoCal will advance the transition to clean-transportation technologies, such as the development of a roadmap for the infrastructure to support zero-emission medium- and heavy-duty trucks. Investment in clean technologies and the transition to a clean-energy economy will provide valuable opportunities to support economic development and recovery, resilience planning and the achievement of equity.

**Accessible:** Connect SoCal envisions a future where transportation is efficient, multimodal and accessible to all. Integrated transit networks, including expanded rail systems, bus rapid transit and active transportation infrastructure, will provide seamless connections throughout the region and expand mobility options connecting to previously underserved areas. The improved safety and security of the system will help more people feel comfortable taking transit or active transportation. Innovative technologies, such as zero-emission vehicles, broadband and Intelligent Transportation Systems, will play a vital role in expanding accessibility and reducing congestion and emissions.

**Connected:** The Southern California region will be characterized by connected and vibrant communities. New compact and mixed-use development patterns will prioritize walkability and create livable neighborhoods with ample green spaces, public amenities and affordable housing options. Transit-oriented development will foster thriving urban centers, reducing dependency on single-occupancy-vehicle travel and the need for long commutes.

Achieving this vision will require the collaboration of each community as well as leadership at the local, regional and state levels to take bold actions that address the injustices of the past, face the challenges of today and make investments for the future. SCAG is committed to ensuring that Connect SoCal remains a living document that is rooted in strong analysis and evolves alongside changes in the economy, technologies and demographics. SCAG adopted its first Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy in 2012. At that time, the region faced uncertainty as to how recovery from the Great Recession would impact the region over the long term. There were not yet e-scooters on our sidewalks, and there were less than 10,000 electric vehicles on our roads. Navigating this shifting context requires continued collaboration with local and state government agencies and other stakeholders.



**In 2050, Southern California will be a healthy, prosperous, accessible and connected region for a more resilient and equitable future.**