



WELCOME

# MAKING CONNECTIONS

## OUR REGION

Southern California is a region shaped by big dreams and big ideas. With an economy that continues to grow and thrive on the aspirations, courage and hard work of almost 19 million people, we are a region that retains and attracts people in search of opportunity and freedom. Our population is greater than all but four states. We are the 15th biggest economy in the world. Our geography spans more than 38,000 square miles, making us as large as the entire state of Indiana. The size and diversity of our region across a wide range of measures is extraordinary.

It is no surprise then that the infrastructure underlying the successful development of our region is huge. Our regional roadway network spans over 135,000 lane miles<sup>1</sup> — laid end-to-end, that is enough to circle the globe more than five times. We are home to the two largest container ports in the Western Hemisphere, the world's fourth busiest airport, and soon the world's longest light rail transit line, with the completion of the Regional Connector, which will connect transit lines from the Los Angeles Civic Center to the Financial District. Achieving this level of development has been a feat of engineering and ingenuity: tunneling under cities and across earthquake faults, scaling mountains and bridging rivers and canyons.

Our urban form also reflects extraordinary vision and leadership: the big ideas and persistence of community members seeking healthy and safe neighborhoods; civic leaders who through collaboration and compromise found a way to move initiatives forward; voters bold enough to tax themselves so that county transportation commissions—the region's implementing agencies—can fund and build critical transportation infrastructure projects. These collective efforts keep the region moving in an environmentally sustainable, economically efficient and socially equitable manner.

<sup>1</sup> Caltrans Highway Performance Monitoring System (HPMS) Data (2017)

## OUR PLAN

As the largest metropolitan planning organization in the country, the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) has worked collaboratively with transportation agencies across Southern California for the last fifty years to align and better connect transportation investments across the six-county region through the adoption of Regional Transportation Plans. The enactment of SB 375 in 2009 introduced a requirement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, essentially codifying the integrated transportation and land use planning that our region had already initiated with the 2008 Regional Transportation Plan. Through our continuing efforts to better align transportation investments and land use decisions, we strive to improve mobility and reduce greenhouse gases not just by building new and bigger infrastructure, but also by bringing housing and jobs closer together, making commutes shorter and making it easier to get around without a car.

Guided by the leadership of the Regional Council, in 2012 SCAG adopted the region's first Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS)—a plan we now call Connect SoCal. As might be expected, the vision for that plan was big: we would build more than 20 miles of light rail, creating a rail backbone to serve the entire region; we would accommodate 51 percent of all future housing near major transit stations and corridors; we would replace gas taxes with mileage-based user fees to ensure a long-term sustainable funding mechanism that isn't eroded by rising fuel efficiency and construction costs.

By many metrics, we've succeeded in meeting these ambitious objectives, advancing the Core Vision of our plan. Between 2009 and today, our region has constructed 61 miles of rail, a number that will continue to grow as projects embraced through voter-approved initiatives come to fruition. We collaborated with the state to implement California's Active Transportation Program, bringing nearly \$500 million to local agencies to complete critical mobility and safety projects. Our persistence in advocating for increased transportation revenue was rewarded with passage of Senate Bill 1, a funding bill that generates \$52 billion statewide over the next 10 years to maintain and preserve our transportation infrastructure.

However, despite our progress, we only narrowly achieve our 2020 target for greenhouse gas emission reductions, the core metric by which our

region's sustainability is judged. Transit ridership is falling, despite billions of dollars in investment and increased development in station areas. Deaths from traffic collisions are rising. Housing costs are increasing, along with homelessness. We must do better.

## OUR VISION

Connect SoCal was developed through a four-year planning process involving rigorous technical analysis, extensive stakeholder engagement and robust policy discussions with local elected leaders, who make up SCAG's policy committees and Regional Council. SCAG's leadership explored the challenges and barriers to the transformative change our region needs to address demographic and economic shifts, including an increasingly aging and economically inequitable society. Our analysis considered both the physical constraints and economic barriers of continuing to grow rapidly on the fringes of the region. Our policy committees reviewed and discussed emerging technologies and transportation innovations aimed at relieving congestion, while reducing emissions.

Through this extensive planning process, we discovered not just one technological advancement or signature transportation project to advance our goals and vision, but many. Reflecting the size and diversity of our region, Connect SoCal continues to aim toward transformative change by providing a clear vision for collective action. For example, the region has already committed significant resources to improve and expand the transit system. However, the solutions to transit ridership decline are not limited to what transit agencies can do. Rather, the solutions involve collective action regarding how we prioritize the use of streets and curb space, for people not cars; how our land use plans encourage more housing and jobs closer to each other and to transit; how we use technology to improve safety and provide meaningful choices to travelers; and how we price and manage use of the automobile.

We know that small changes can have a great impact. Taking the step of reforming how local jurisdictions permit accessory dwelling units, 2016's Senate Bill 1069 resulted in a dramatic statewide increase in construction permits for those units. Similarly, our 2018 transit ridership study with the University of California Los Angeles Institute of Transportation Studies found that if one out

## WHY WE CALL IT CONNECT SOCIAL

Connect SoCal charts a path toward a more mobile, sustainable and prosperous region by making connections between transportation networks, between planning strategies and between the people whose collaboration can improve the quality of life for Southern Californians

## CORE VISION

Connect SoCal builds upon and expands land use and transportation strategies established over several planning cycles to increase mobility options and achieve a more sustainable growth pattern

## KEY CONNECTIONS

To augment the Core Vision of the plan, Connect SoCal includes new initiatives at the intersection of land use, transportation and technology to close the gap and reach our greenhouse gas reduction goals

of every four people (who rarely ride transit) took transit just twice a month, it would more than make up for the region's lost ridership. It has also been proven that every dollar spent on early preventive maintenance can save five to 10 times as much on pavement rehabilitation or replacement costs for our vast roadway network.

The transformative change we seek does not require a radical shift in course. Our critical mission is to complete the Core Vision of our decades-long planning efforts and continue to build on past plans and successes. We must enhance and build out the transit network as the backbone of a mobility system that allows people to move freely without the personal, social and environmental cost of a car. We have to create complete streets across our communities such that people are prioritized over vehicles. And we must maintain the system we have and expand where necessary to ensure useful life and efficiency. We will adopt policies to encourage emerging technologies and mobility innovations that support rather than hamper regional goals. We will locate housing, jobs and transit closer together in priority growth areas while preserving natural lands and open spaces.

To complete the "last mile" towards our sustainability goals, Connect SoCal builds upon this Core Vision for Southern California with regional initiatives, or Key Connections, that link the built environment and transportation system with policies, projects and programs that strengthen and enhance each other beyond what each would accomplish in isolation. For example, we will foster housing construction in transit rich areas by deregulating parking, promoting housing supportive infrastructure, and supporting innovative self-help financing districts. We will encourage regional coordination to incentivize shared mobility, as mobility services and new technologies gain mode share. We will ensure the safe and fluid movement of goods while committing to the broad deployment of zero- and near-zero emission technologies.

Altogether, the multimodal transportation projects and strategies included in Connect SoCal represent an investment of over \$638 billion over the next 25 years. In addition to meeting our greenhouse gas reduction target, Connect SoCal will deliver significant benefits to the region with respect to mobility, safety, health outcomes, travel time reliability, air quality, economic productivity, environmental justice, and transportation asset condition. Technology will be integral to the solutions we need. The way we work, shop and travel has been transformed by a device that fits in our pockets. These

# Connect SoCal Plan Summary

innovations point to the tremendous opportunity to shift travel behaviors through small changes: the potential to unlock the promise of our big sustainability vision with investments in access, connectivity and technology.

## LET'S CONNECT SOCIAL TOGETHER

The following pages of Connect SoCal provide further detail on the challenges facing our region, our shared goals and transportation and land use strategies, and how we intend to realize them. It is a compass, not a roadmap. It is a vision, not a guarantee. As has always been the case, the big dreams and big ideas that have shaped the landscape of Southern California will only be realized through hard work and collaboration. Let's Connect SoCal together!

### CORE VISION

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### KEY CONNECTIONS

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### FUNDING

\$638.9 Billion

### 2035 GHG

19% Reduction Relative to 2005 Per Capita

### ECONOMIC IMPACT

- 168,400 New Jobs Supported by Transportation Investments
- 264,500 New Jobs Supported by Improved Competitiveness
- \$346 Million Saved Per Year in Healthcare Spending
- \$180 Million Saved Per Year on Air Pollution-Related Health Incidences
- \$1.00 Investment = \$2.06 Benefit

### PLAN BENEFITS

25.7% Decrease in time spent in traffic delay per capita  
5.0% Decrease in daily miles driven per capita