INTRODUCTION

REGIONAL INPUT FOR A REGIONAL PLAN

Input and engagement from the public is essential to making strong, successful plans for the region. Outreach has been one of SCAG’s key priorities in the development of Connect SoCal, the 2020 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy.

The Connect SoCal plan will present a long-range vision that balances future mobility and housing needs with economic, environmental and public health goals. The development process for the plan, which is updated every four years, involves goal setting, target setting, growth forecasting, financial projections, scenario development and analysis, and comprehensive exploration of significant issues. It also includes input from communities all over the region, which includes the counties of Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and Ventura.

In spring and early summer 2019, SCAG conducted dozens of outreach activities to provide the general public an opportunity to prioritize concerns, discuss the challenges our region is facing in the next 25 years and provide solutions to address them. Sincere thanks to all those who participated! This report offers a summary of what we heard, and how that input will be used in the final plan.
OUTREACH OVERVIEW

For the 2020 plan, SCAG built on the public outreach strategies of previous planning cycles to drive greater and more diverse participation. By utilizing new methods of engagement and investing in modern communication tools, SCAG saw significant gains in the volume and variety of public input.

SCAG held a series of 29 public outreach events across the region (28 open-house workshops and one telephone town hall meeting) to share information and get input on how residents travel and their preferences. We also solicited input online, promoting our Connect SoCal survey across multiple channels including social media and radio ads, street teams and partnerships with community-based organizations in each county in the region.

In total, SCAG received over 4,000 surveys and over 12,000 comments either at the workshops or through the open-ended survey responses. This feedback has given us a substantial pool of data to consider as we make progress towards a full draft of the Connect SoCal plan.

PUBLIC WORKSHOPS

A total of 28 workshops were conducted throughout the region with over 500 attendees. The open-house style meetings were designed to be informal and engaging to the public in a manner that encouraged meaningful conversation and gave every participant the opportunity to be heard.

Poster boards were utilized to present information about a multitude of factors that will influence future mobility, growth, and health in an accessible way. Each event was supported by SCAG planning staff and outreach professionals and included multimedia presentations.
**IMPERIAL COUNTY**

Imperial County’s workshop was held in the city of El Centro at the regional retail mall, a central location in the area. The location was easily accessible by transit, and Spanish-language interpretation was made available. As the region’s least populous and most agricultural county, Imperial has a unique climate that presents different challenges for residents. Air quality was consistently emphasized as a primary concern.

**WHAT WE HEARD:**

“Bicycling or walking in 120 degrees is not a walk in the park!”

“Things/buildings are too far apart in Imperial county for this to be effective”

“Assist with sidewalk projects in rural communities. Improvements will lead to more persons walking, reliance on vehicles will then decrease.”

---

**LOS ANGELES COUNTY**

For Los Angeles County, the most populous and diverse in the region, SCAG held workshops in a variety of unique and accessible locations in the cities of Long Beach, Palmdale, Carson, El Monte, Monrovia, Culver City and Los Angeles. Translation services were offered in Spanish and Chinese. Most of the comments in this area expressed concerns related to traffic, equity and the need to move quickly to make changes.

**WHAT WE HEARD:**

“People with means will pick efficiency/convenience over anything else”

“Please incorporate lifestyle analysis assessment in the strategies and technologies you consider in this plan. Emissions aren’t actually reduced if you’re only relocating them elsewhere.”

“We need to move quickly on making these ideas happen. Climate change is a HUGE issue, the only issue for our & children’s future. Jobs near our homes! Better public transit! We can do it!”
RIVERSIDE COUNTY

Riverside County workshops were held in Corona, Murrieta, Perris and in Palm Desert at the University of California Riverside Extension campus, at locations chosen to take advantage of where community members already participate in other activities. There was also a dedicated workshop targeted to an audience of Tribal Governments and staff. Simultaneous translation in Spanish was provided at many of the workshop locations.

WHAT WE HEARD:

“Bike lanes/trails need to be safer if people are to use them”

“Subsidize funding to replace loss of redevelopment activities”

“We have to pay serious attention the mismatch between where jobs are and where new housing can be built. There is abundant opportunity for new housing in the Coachella Valley but very limited job opportunities. This forces long commutes.”

ORANGE COUNTY

To ensure accessibility for all, workshops were held throughout Orange County in the cities of Aliso Viejo, Anaheim, Orange and Buena Park. Based on population needs, different workshops included translation services in Spanish, Korean and American Sign Language. Many participants expressed a concern about open space loss, housing affordability and reduced travel times.

WHAT WE HEARD:

“Require inclusionary zoning in every city to ensure new housing development is affordable”

“Please include skateboards! So many youth depend on skateboards to get to school, stores, centers, etc. A skateboard is accessible to youth, easy to carry for all, low cost and low maintenance.”

“The ideas for alternative transportation make sense, but without an effective cross county rail system little will change.”

106
ATTENDEES

10
COMMENT CARDS

7
WORKSHOPS

7
WORKSHOPS

105
ATTENDEES

9
COMMENT CARDS

4
WORKSHOPS
VENTURA COUNTY

Workshops were held in the eastern and western portions of Ventura County in the cities of Ventura, Camarillo and Moorpark. The county is home to a naval base and offers a countywide transit system serving a diverse population of economic, agriculture, environment, and education sectors. The region experienced devastating wildfires in recent years and fire prevention was a common topic for workshop attendees.

WHAT WE HEARD:

“A large part of the population is aging out of driving so are needing a better mass transit system. Uber, electric vehicles etc. only put more cars into the congestion. It seems prudent to move toward a mass transit system for all.”

“A big underlying concern is “where is the money going to come from?” Please inform public on existing incentive programs.”

“Require more fire control measures for individual homes or consider financial relieve to insure these.”

SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY

Because San Bernardino County is the largest in the region at 34,000 square miles, workshops were offered in a wide spread of geographical area in the cities of San Bernardino, Ontario, Joshua Tree and Victorville. Where possible, events were held in conjunction with other public meetings and in areas with high accessibility by bus and rail transit. Simultaneous translation in Spanish was provided at many of the workshop locations.

WHAT WE HEARD:

“Housing needs to be re-imagined. Change zoning laws, encourage large corporations like Amazon to build housing for employees”

“It would be great if monthly Metrolink passes were made more affordable and/or based off distance of travel.”

“It is difficult to build faster, less polluting trains, when tracks are owned by freight train companies. We need to invest in new property for passenger rails”

5 WORKSHOPS
133 ATTENDEES
10 COMMENT CARDS

3 WORKSHOPS
52 ATTENDEES
6 COMMENT CARDS
TELEPHONE TOWN HALL

Widely used for political campaigns, ballot measures and by elected officials to stay in touch with their constituents, tele-town halls allow organizations to reach people who may be unable or disinclined to participate in an in-person open house. This technology allows constituents to participate from their homes or work, by phone, from anywhere in the region.

On June 11, SCAG held a one hour tele-town hall meeting during which Executive Director Kome Ajise gave a live overview of Connect SoCal to hundreds of residents by phone. After this brief overview, the phone lines were then opened for questions. Several callers were able to ask questions which included concerns about housing, technology, and future infrastructure investments. This technology reached out to more than 30,000 residents with about 200-700 people staying on the line throughout the event.

Q&A WITH SCAG EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR KOME AJISE:

Q: “Why is it important that you receive input and how will it be used from the people of Southern California?”

A: We have a lot of information, a lot of data on traffic systems, on volumes of who’s using the highway, of who’s riding the train system, but we also need to hear from people in terms of what their preferences are. Having that kind of information allows us to understand better what the needs are, so we can identify how those needs are going to be met as we think about the scenarios that the plan could have, and what opportunities we might be able to provide for adding capacity or adding efficiency to the system going forward.

Q: “So you’re collecting all this data and getting input from throughout the region, and then I understand you’re developing some sort of plan, but then what happens next? What can we expect after the plan is developed?”

A: The process is taking all of this input and shaping it into a vision document for the region, and then reflecting what we’ve gathered back to the public. There will be a draft of this plan that goes out to the public sometime in the fall. The public will have a chance to review the draft plan and comment on whether or not we’re reflecting the input before we take it to the final draft stage and then bring it to our board for adoption.

Q: “To what extent is the state devoting our resources to increase our infrastructure, particularly mass transit? Because the more we build infrastructure, we create a lot of jobs, and that in turn has a broad impact on the rest of the economy.”

A: Sometimes we overlook the fact that we already have a ton of infrastructure in place that we need to maintain and sustain a longer life cycle for. We need to maintain those, in addition to working to build more capacity. The state is making investments and many of our counties

New Telephone Town Hall

June 11, 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
have additional resources and sales tax measures to expand existing infrastructure. A lot of these resources are going to transit expansion. We’re a dense region and we need more transit capacity. So yes, there is a need to continue to invest and you will continue to see a lot of investments in our system, some on the highway side but mostly on the transit side because that’s where the need is highest and we are most short of capacity.

Q: “I was wondering if the planning is including ideas about smaller housing. Everybody’s seeing a lot about tiny house living. A lot of small families or college students or whatever could nicely live in smaller homes, maybe going as large as 800 square feet. And they maybe wouldn’t take up as much of the land and areas that are available for building.”

A: One of the things that we’re looking at in the plan is areas that already have strong infrastructure - we feel like we can put more housing in those areas. And there are some areas that are uniquely prepared to take on more housing capacity- but those calls are for individual cities to make. We also know that across the state and in some of our counties, accessory dwelling units are already allowed. And so, your notion of tiny homes comes into play, and they could easily fit in that model. They would have to go through the various cities and counties to get authorization to build, but those could definitely have a place in some of our communities.

WHAT WE HEARD DURING THE TELE-TOWN HALL

“On a typical day, how do you get to work or around your community?”

- 89% Drive
- 6% Carpool
- 0% Walk/Bike
- 4% Public Transit

“Which of these transportation improvements is most important to you?”

- 35% Reduced Travel Time
- 23% Safer Streets (like crosswalks, bike lanes, better lighting)
- 21% More Access to Reliable Transit
- 21% Improved Air Quality
- 21%

“What improvements would you like to see in your community?”

- 44% Housing that is affordable to people of all income levels
- 20% More quality jobs closer to home
- 10% More parks & open spaces
- 27% More sustainable design that conserves water & energy
PARTNERING WITH COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS

SCAG partnered with local community based organizations to broaden Connect SoCal outreach to traditionally underserved and underrepresented communities. These organizations assisted with workshop and survey outreach as well as hosting local gatherings for community members to provide input on Connect SoCal. This allowed us to reach over 1500 people from communities that have been traditionally excluded from formal public participation processes.

“Street teams” were also deployed throughout the region and accounted for approximately 3000 personal interactions and nearly 1400 survey responses. Street team members were given a calendar identifying and targeting regional and popular events where large groups of people would congregate and potentially respond to the survey.
THE CONNECT SOCAL SURVEY

SCAG used an online platform, Neighborland, to host a survey to solicit input from Southern California residents about perspectives and priorities for various land use and transportation strategies. The survey included both multiple choice and open ended questions.

The online survey was available in 17 languages and hard-copy surveys were available at each meeting in Chinese, Korean, Spanish, Vietnamese and English. In total, over 4,000 response were collected from a broad sample of residents.

The share of survey responses from each county nearly matched the proportions of the counties’ populations, with a little over-sampling from Orange County and a little under-sampling from Los Angeles County.

For a complete report of Connect SoCal survey questions and responses, please visit: www.connectsocal.org/Documents/Workshops/WorkshopOutreachSurveyResults.pdf

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Survey Responses</th>
<th>Top Challenges</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Imperial</td>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Air Quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Housing Affordability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Traffic Congestion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles</td>
<td>1,401</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Housing Affordability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Traffic Congestion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Air Quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange</td>
<td>634</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Housing Affordability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Open Space Loss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Traffic Congestion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riverside</td>
<td>461</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Traffic Congestion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Housing Affordability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Traffic Safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Bernardino</td>
<td>264</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Housing Affordability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Traffic Congestion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Traffic Safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ventura</td>
<td>192</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Housing Affordability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Traffic Congestion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Air Quality</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
KEY THEMES

CLIMATE CHANGE
Concerns were expressed about climate change and persistent trend of auto dependence in the region. Comments encouraged growth where infrastructure exists, and to endeavor to mitigate future climate impacts of wildfires, loss of wetlands, and sea level rise.

CONGESTION
Traffic congestion is noted as a top problem in the region. Survey responses indicate that more than 70 percent of people within the SCAG region drive by themselves to reach their destinations.

DENSITY
Concerns were expressed about higher density housing potentially increasing traffic without also providing adequate infrastructure or convenient transportation options. Support was expressed for higher density in urban centers to help combat sprawl and reduce congestion.

EMERGING TECHNOLOGY
More than half of survey respondents indicated that it is “very likely” or “somewhat likely” that their next automobile purchase would be an electric vehicle. Over 50% of participants indicated that they had tried ride-sourcing applications like Lyft or Uber.

HOUSING
Housing affordability identified as a top challenge in the region, as was rising homelessness rates and the need for supportive services. Housing that is affordable to people of all income levels was identified as the most important needed land use/development improvement. Some noted that daily travel times would be reduced if sufficient affordable housing options were available near job opportunities.

INFILL & REDEVELOPMENT
Nearly 60% of respondents disagreed with the following statement: “I think new growth and development should occur in other communities, mine should preserve its current character.” When asked where new development should occur to accommodate 3.6 million new people in the region by 2045, the greatest percentage of respondents indicated growth should locate within existing cities, by building on vacant lots and through redevelopment. Illustrating the challenge our region faces, the second most popular response to this question was future growth should located outside of cities, on undeveloped land.

TRANSIT
Open ended responses indicated broad support for more transit, but comments noted the need for more infrastructure and improvements to service and quality. When survey participants were asked what transportation options they wanted more access to, the highest response rate was for more transit service.

SAFETY
Safer streets (e.g. crosswalks, bike lanes, street lighting), reduced travel times and street quality were the three most important transportation related improvements recorded from the survey. Moreover, the need for more enforcement of current laws was seen as most important step to improving safety.
WHAT WE HEARD
Not surprisingly, the survey responses reflected a wide diversity of opinions and contrasting perspectives on solutions for the region.

“Future growth should not occur on pristine open space.”

“Close to transit investments, regardless if its within existing single family or not.”

“Densification should be done carefully to make sure existing residents aren’t pushed out, especially the disadvantaged…”

“Within in city limits! No more stretching into dangerous wildfire country…”

“Farm land and protected areas should not be developed. Rural areas need to remain rural.”

“Keep single family housing zoning.”

“Do not need further growth, already too crowded.”

“Build new cities if you must out in the desert…”
SCAG’s robust outreach strategy provided more diverse avenues for collecting input for the plan than have been provided in past cycles. The input provided through the outreach process is being used to reflect upon and evaluate the policies and programs to be included in the draft Connect SoCal plan.

Generally, the feedback received supports the majority of SCAG’s direction carried forward from past planning cycles but offers nuanced perspective on implementation details or strategies currently outside the scope of SCAG (such as increased police enforcement to improve transportation safety).

At right, you’ll see a timeline of remaining milestones in the Connect SoCal development process.

**STAY CONNECTED**

- CONNECTSOCAL.ORG
- FACEBOOK.COM/SCAGMPO
- @SCAGNEWS

**JUNE 2017 – DECEMBER 2017**
Technical Bases & Data Collection

**JANUARY 2018 – DECEMBER 2018**
Focus on Major Policy Directions

**SUMMER 2019**
Engage the Public to Explore Issues

**NOVEMBER 7, 2019**
Release Draft Connect SoCal Plan

**NOVEMBER 2019 – JANUARY 2020**
Public Comment Period

**APRIL 2020**
Adopt 2020 Connect SoCal Plan
PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT REPORT

JULY 2019

You can keep up with the Connect SoCal development process, as well as upcoming opportunities for public input, at connectsocal.org