EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN
2012–2035
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES STRATEGY
Towards a Sustainable Future
RTP

Southern California Association of Governments

PROPOSED FINAL
APRIL 2012

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Our Vision

Towards a Sustainable Future

For the past three decades, the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) has prepared Regional Transportation Plans (RTPs) with the primary goal of increasing mobility for the region's residents and visitors. While mobility is a vital component of the quality of life that this region deserves, it is by no means the only component. SCAG has placed a greater emphasis than ever before on sustainability and integrated planning in the 2012–2035 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS), whose vision encompasses three principles that collectively work as the key to our region's future: mobility, economy, and sustainability.

The 2012–2035 RTP/SCS includes a strong commitment to reduce emissions from transportation sources to comply with SB 375, improve public health, and meet the National Ambient Air Quality Standards as set forth by the federal Clean Air Act. As such, the 2012–2035 RTP/SCS contains a regional commitment for the broad deployment of zero- and near-zero emission transportation technologies in the 2023–2035 time frame and clear steps to move toward this objective. This is especially critical for our goods movement system. The development of a world-class zero- or near-zero emission freight transportation system is necessary to maintain economic growth in the region, to sustain quality of life, and to meet federal air quality requirements. The 2012–2035 RTP/SCS puts forth an aggressive strategy for technology development and deployment to achieve this objective. This strategy will have many co-benefits, including energy security, cost certainty, increased public support for infrastructure, GHG reduction, and economic development.

Never before have the crucial linkages and interrelationships between the economy, the regional transportation system, and land use been as important as now. For the first time, the 2012–2035 RTP/SCS includes a significant consideration of the economic impacts and opportunities provided by the transportation infrastructure plan set forth in the 2012–2035 RTP/SCS, considering not only the economic and job creation impacts of the direct investment in transportation infrastructure, but also the efficiency gains in terms of worker and business economic productivity and goods movement. The 2012–2035 RTP/SCS outlines a transportation infrastructure investment strategy that will benefit Southern California, the state, and the nation in terms of economic development, competitive advantage, and overall competitiveness in the global economy in terms of attracting and retaining employers in the Southern California region.

The 2012–2035 RTP/SCS provides a blueprint for improving quality of life for our residents by providing more choices for where they will live, work, and play, and how they will move around. Its safe, secure, and efficient transportation systems will provide improved access to opportunities, such as jobs, education, and healthcare. Its emphasis on transit and active transportation will allow our residents to lead a healthier, more active lifestyle. It will create jobs, ensure our region's economic competitiveness through strategic investments in our goods movement system, and improve environmental and health outcomes for its 22 million residents by 2035. More importantly, the RTP/SCS will also preserve what makes the region special, including our stable and successful neighborhoods and our array of open spaces for future generations to enjoy.

The Setting

In order to successfully overcome the challenges that lie before us, this RTP/SCS first recognizes the impacts that recent events and long-term trends will have on how people choose to live and move around.

ECONOMIC RECESSION

[800,000] jobs have been lost in the region due to the Great Recession

The economic turmoil faced by many of the region's residents is likely to impact their housing choices and travel behavior, including their transportation mode choice and day-to-day travel patterns. This will potentially require different types of transportation solutions.

POPULATION GROWTH

The region will add **[4 million]** people by 2035

This growth in population will only exacerbate our region's existing mobility challenges. The SCAG region is already home to 18 million people, or 49 percent of California's population. If it were its own state, the SCAG region would be the fifth most populous in the nation. Furthermore, this expected growth will occur mainly in the suburban inland counties of Riverside and San Bernardino, adding to the existing imbalance of jobs and housing in the region, and requiring people to travel, which contributes to transportation and air quality challenges. In addition, with the aging of the Baby Boomer generation (the share of the population 65 years or older will increase from 11 percent in 2010 to 18 percent in 2035), the region will have a greater need for more efficient modes of transportation for those who can no longer drive as their main form of transportation.

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MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

Over the past few decades, the region has invested heavily in a multimodal transportation system that serves as the backbone of the region's economic well-being.

THE SYSTEM AT A GLANCE

[21,690] miles of highways and arterials

[470] miles of passenger rail

[6] air carrier airports

Nine out of ten trips in the region utilize our extensive highway and arterial network, which supports a host of modes, including the automobile, transit, and active transportation. The region is also home to a growing number of passenger rail lines, none of which existed 20 years ago. Our regional aviation system is the nation's largest and most complex in terms of number of airports and aircraft, and our goods movement industry plays a critical role in sustaining the economy of our region. The importance of this system to our region cannot be overstated.

THE REGION IN MOTION

[446 million] miles driven each day

[81 million] air passengers each year

[45%] more urban rail riders between 2000 and 2006

[34%] of our jobs depend on the goods movement industry

Challenges

The challenges facing the region are daunting. When combined, our mobility, air quality, and funding challenges present an imposing threat to the quality of life for both current and future residents.

MOBILITY CHALLENGES

The region wastes over **[3 million]** hours each year sitting in traffic

The region's roadways are the most congested in the nation, and traffic relief is critical, even more so in our current economic situation. By failing to address our congestion, we have foregone jobs—every 10 percent decrease in congestion can bring an employment increase of about 132,000 jobs.

SAFETY CHALLENGES

On the brighter side, our roadways are among the nation's safest, with rate of fatal and injury collisions declining dramatically since the 1930s. But as we continue to successfully improve safety for our motorists, we cannot neglect the alarming fatality rates of those traveling on other modes of transportation.

[21%] of all traffic-related fatalities involve pedestrians

This fatality rate is unacceptable, and if we plan to successfully move toward a more sustainable future that includes plenty of active transportation, we must address the safety deficiencies in all modes of transportation.

AIR QUALITY CHALLENGES

In addition, while Southern California is a leader in reducing emissions, and ambient levels of air pollutants are improving, the SCAG region continues to have the worst air quality in the nation, and air pollution still causes thousands of premature deaths every year, as well as other serious adverse health effects. The South Coast Air Quality Management District (AQMD) estimates the monetary cost of air pollution in Southern California to be at least $14.6 billion annually.

Even with ongoing aggressive control strategies, ever more stringent national ozone standards require further oxide of nitrogen (NOx) emission reductions in the SCAG region. In the South Coast Air Basin, for example, it is estimated that NOx emissions will need to be reduced by approximately two-thirds in 2023 and three-quarters in 2030. This is a daunting challenge. The level of emission reduction required is so significant that 2030 emissions forecasted from just three sources—ships, trains, and aircraft—would lead to ozone levels near the federal standard. Because most sources, including cars and factories, are already controlled by over 90 percent, attainment of ozone standards will require broad deployment of zero- and near-zero emission technologies in the 2023–2035 time frame.

Senate Bill 375

New to this RTP, California's Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act, or Senate Bill (SB) 375, calls for this RTP to include an SCS that reduces greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from passenger vehicles by 8 percent per capita by 2020 and 13 percent per capita by 2035 compared to 2005, as set by the California Air Resources Board (ARB). SB 375 enhances the State's goals of Assembly Bill 32, the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006. Meeting the required targets will not be easy, but it must be done for the health and quality of life of current and future generations. Meeting these targets will point the region toward overall sustainability and will provide benefits beyond reducing carbon emissions.

FINANCIAL CHALLENGES

Of all the challenges facing us today, there is perhaps none more critical than funding. With the projected growth in population, employment, and demand for travel, the costs of our multimodal transportation needs surpass projected revenues available from our historic transportation funding source—the gas tax.

State and federal gas taxes have not changed in nearly [20] years

Yet, highway construction costs have grown by [82%]

As a result of years of underinvestment, a significant number of our roadways and bridges have fallen into a state of disrepair. It is imperative that this situation be addressed. The rate of deterioration will only accelerate with continued deferral, significantly increasing the cost of bringing our transportation assets back into a state of good repair. Furthermore, with recent declines in transit funding, the region's transit operators continue to face major obstacles to providing frequent and convenient transit service.

Rail operating costs have increased by over [40%] in the past decade

Intercity transit operators have been forced to cut service by up to [20%]

The region must consider ways to stabilize existing revenue sources and supplement them with reasonably available new sources. This region needs a long-term, sustainable funding plan that ensures the region receives its fair share of funding, supports an efficient and effective transportation system that grows the economy, provides mobility choices, and improves our quality of life.

Our Approach

To address these challenges, SCAG performed a careful analysis of our transportation system, the future growth of our region, and potential new sources of revenue, and embarked on a massive outreach undertaking to hear what the region had to say. While SCAG continued to work closely through hundreds of meetings with stakeholder agencies with which it has always collaborated, it also conducted a series of planning sessions throughout the region to find out what Southern Californians want to see in their future. The result of this multi-year effort is the 2012–2035 RTP/SCS, a shared vision for the region's sustainable future.

Transportation Investments

The RTP/SCS contains a host of improvements to our multimodal transportation system. These improvements include closures of critical gaps in the network that hinder access to certain parts of the region, as well as the strategic expansion of our transportation system where there is room to grow in order to provide the region with the mobility it needs. These improvements are outlined in **TABLE 1**.

Image courtesy of the Riverside Transit Agency

TABLE 1 Transportation Investments

Component	Description	Cost
Transit		$55.0 billion
Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)	New BRT routes, extensions, and/or service enhancements in Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura Counties	$4.6 billion
Light Rail Transit (LRT)	New Light Rail routes/extensions in Los Angeles and San Bernardino Counties	$16.9 billion
Heavy Rail Transit (HRT)	Heavy Rail extension in Los Angeles County	$11.8 billion
Bus	New and expanded bus service in Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura Counties	$21.7 billion
Passenger and High-Speed Rail		$51.8 billion
Commuter Rail	Metrolink extensions in Riverside County and Metrolink systemwide improvements to provide higher speeds	$4.1 billion
High-Speed Rail	Improvements to the Los Angeles to San Diego (LOSSAN) Rail Corridor with an ultimate goal of providing San Diego-Los Angeles express service in under two hours Phase I of the California High-Speed Train (HST) project that would provide high-speed service from Los Angeles to the Antelope Valley	$47.7 billion
Active Transportation		$6.7 billion
Various Active Transportation Strategies	Increase our bikeways from 4,315 miles to 10,122 miles, bring significant amount of sidewalks into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), safety improvements, and various other strategies	$6.7 billion
Transportation Demand Management (TDM)		$4.5 billion
Various TDM Strategies	Strategies to incentivize drivers to reduce solo driving: ▪ Increase carpooling and vanpooling ▪ Increase the use of transit, bicycling, and walking ▪ Redistribute vehicle trips from peak periods to non-peak periods by shifting work times/days/locations ▪ Encourage greater use of telecommuting ▪ Other “first mile/last mile” strategies to allow travelers to easily connect to and from transit service at their origin and destination. These strategies include the development of mobility hubs around major transit stations, the integration of bicycling and transit through folding-bikes-on-buses programs, triple bike racks on buses, and dedicated racks on light and heavy rail vehicles	$4.5 billion

Component	Description	Cost
Transportation Systems Management (TSM) (includes Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS))		$7.6 billion
Various TSM Strategies	Enhanced incident management, advanced ramp metering, traffic signal synchronization, advanced traveler information, improved data collection, universal transit fare cards (Smart Cards), and Transit Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) to increase traffic flow and reduce congestion	$7.6 billion
Highways		$64.2 billion
Mixed Flow	Interchange improvements to and closures of critical gaps in the highway network to provide access to all parts of the region	$16.0 billion
High-Occupancy Vehicle (HOV)/ High-Occupancy Toll (HOT)	Closure of gaps in the high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane network and the addition of freeway-to-freeway direct HOV connectors to complete Southern California's HOV network A connected network of Express/HOT lanes	$20.9 billion
Toll Facilities	Closure of critical gaps in the highway network to provide access to all parts of the region	$27.3 billion
Arterials		$22.1 billion
Various Arterial Improvements	Spot widenings, signal prioritization, driveway consolidations and relocations, grade separations at high-volume intersections, new bicycle lanes, and other design features such as lighting, landscaping, and modified roadway, parking, and sidewalk widths	$22.1 billion
Goods Movement (includes Grade Separations)		$48.4 billion
Various Goods Movement Strategies	Port access improvements, freight rail enhancements, grade separations, truck mobility improvements, intermodal facilities, and emission-reduction strategies	$48.4 billion
Aviation and Airport Ground Access		Included in modal investments
Various Airport Ground Access Improvements	Rail extensions and improvements to provide easier access to airports, and new express bus service from remote terminals to airports	Included in modal investments
Operations and Maintenance		$216.9 billion
Transit	Operations and maintenance to preserve our multimodal system in a good state of repair	$139.3 billion
Highways		$56.7 billion
Arterials		$20.9 billion

Financial Plan

The 2012–2035 RTP/SCS financial plan identifies how much money is available to support the region's transportation investments. The plan includes a core revenue forecast of existing local, state, and federal sources, along with reasonably available new revenue sources that are likely to materialize within the RTP time frame. These new sources include adjustments to state and federal gas tax rates based on historical trends and recommendations from two national commissions (National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Study Commission and National Surface Transportation Infrastructure Financing Commission) created by Congress, further leveraging of existing local sales tax measures, value capture strategies, potential national freight program/freight fees, as well as passenger and commercial vehicle tolls for specific facilities. Reasonably available revenues also include innovative financing strategies, such as private equity participation.

TABLE 2 presents ten categories of new revenue sources and innovative financing techniques that are considered to be reasonably available and are included in the financially constrained plan. For each funding source, SCAG has examined the policy and legal context of implementation, prepared an estimate of the revenue potential, and identified action steps to ensure the funds are available to implement the region's transportation vision.

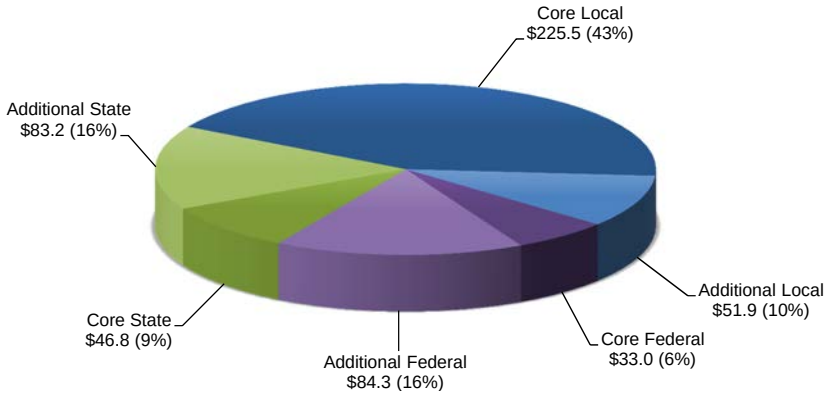
Revenue Sources and Expenditures

FIGURES 1 AND 2 provide a summary of the plan's forecasted revenues and expenditures. As shown in these figures, the region's budget over the next 25 years totals an estimated $524.7 billion.

TABLE 2 New Revenue Sources and Innovative Financing Strategies (Nominal Dollars, Billions)

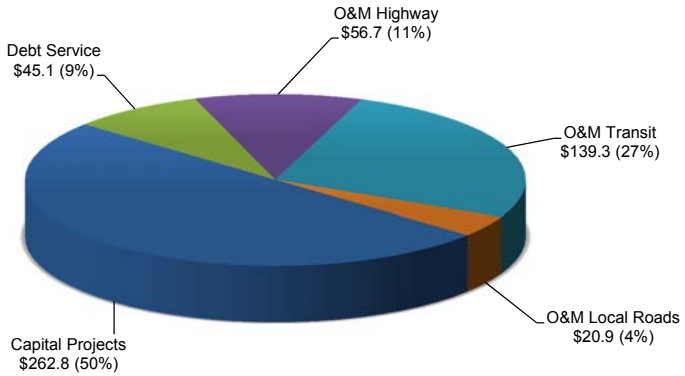
Revenue Source	Description	Amount
Bond Proceeds from Local Sales Tax Measures	Issuance of debt against existing sales tax revenues: Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, and San Bernardino Counties.	$25.6 bil
State and Federal Gas Excise Tax Adjustment to Maintain Historical Purchasing Power Enacted by Congress	Additional $0.15 per gallon gasoline tax imposed at the state and federal levels starting in 2017 to 2024—to maintain purchasing power.	$16.9 bil
Mileage-Based User Fee (or equivalent fuel tax adjustment) Enacted by Congress	Mileage-based user fees would be implemented to replace gas tax and augment—estimated at about $0.05 (2011$) per mile and indexed to maintain purchasing power starting in 2025.	$110.3 bil (est. increment only)
Highway Tolls (includes toll revenue bond proceeds)	Toll revenues generated from SR-710 North Extension, I-710 South Freight Corridor, East-West Freight Corridor, segment of the High Desert Corridor, and Regional Express/HOT Lane Network.	$22.3 bil
Private Equity Participation	Private equity share as may be applicable for key initiatives: e.g., toll facilities; also, freight rail package assumes railroad share of costs for mainline capacity and intermodal facilities.	$2.7 bil
Freight Fee/National Freight Program	A national freight program is anticipated with the next federal reauthorization of the surface transportation act. The U.S. Senate's proposal would establish federal formula funding for the national freight network.	$4.2 bil
E-Commerce Tax	Although these are existing revenue sources, they generally have not been collected. Potentially, the revenue could be used for transportation purposes, given the relationship between e-commerce and the delivery of goods to California purchasers.	$3.1 bil
Interest Earnings	Interest earnings from toll bond proceeds.	$0.2 bil
State Bond Proceeds, Federal Grants & Other for California High-Speed Rail Program	State general obligation bonds authorized under the Bond Act approved by California voters as Proposition 1A in 2008; federal grants authorized under American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and High-Speed Intercity Passenger Rail Program; potential use of qualified tax credit bonds; and private sources.	$33.0 bil
Value Capture Strategies	Assumes formation of special districts including use of tax increment financing for specific initiatives.	$1.2 bil

FIGURE 1 Revenue Sources
$524.7 Billion (Nominal Dollars) FY2011–FY2035



Source: SCAG Revenue Model 2011
Note: Numbers may not sum to total due to rounding

FIGURE 2 Expenditure Summary
$524.7 Billion (Nominal Dollars) FY2011–FY2035



Source: SCAG Revenue Model 2011
Note: Numbers may not sum to total due to rounding

Sustainable Communities Strategy

Within the RTP, the SCS demonstrates the region's ability to attain and exceed the GHG emission-reduction targets set forth by the ARB. The SCS outlines our plan for integrating the transportation network and related strategies with an overall land use pattern that responds to projected growth, housing needs, changing demographics, and transportation demands. The regional vision of the SCS maximizes current voluntary local efforts that support the goals of SB 375, as evidenced by several Compass Blueprint Demonstration Projects and various county transportation improvements. The SCS focuses the majority of new housing and job growth in high-quality transit areas and other opportunity areas in existing main streets, downtowns, and commercial corridors, resulting in an improved jobs-housing balance and more opportunity for transit-oriented development. This overall land use development pattern supports and complements the proposed transportation network that emphasizes system preservation, active transportation, and transportation demand management measures. Finally, the RTP/SCS fully integrates the two subregional SCSs prepared by the Gateway Cities and Orange County Council of Governments.

Photo by Alan Thompson

Measuring Up

The investments in this RTP/SCS are expected to result in significant benefits to the region with respect to transportation and mobility, as well as air quality, economic activity and job creation, sustainability, and environmental justice. They will result in better placemaking, lower overall costs, improvements in public health and the environment, responsiveness to a changing housing market, and improved accessibility and mobility.

Air Quality and GHG Targets

We will reduce greenhouse gas emissions by [**9%**] by 2020, and by [**16%**] by 2035

This RTP/SCS successfully achieves and exceeds our greenhouse gas emission-reduction targets set by ARB by achieving a 9 percent reduction by 2020 and 16 percent reduction by 2035 compared to the 2005 level on a per capita basis. This RTP/SCS also meets criteria pollutant emission budgets set by the EPA. With each passing year, Southern Californians should expect to breathe cleaner air and live healthier lives.

This air quality benefit is made possible largely by more sustainable planning, integrating transportation and land use decisions to allow Southern Californians to live closer to where they work and play, and to high-quality transit service. As a result, more residents will be able to use transit and active transportation as a safe and attractive means of travel.

Location Efficiency

Over [**twice**] as many households will live near high-quality transit

Share of households living in the High-Quality Transit Area will more than double over the plan period, signaling a more efficient overall development pattern in the future.

Mobility

Delay on our roadway system will improve over today's condition

Our roadways will be less congested, allowing our region's residents to spend less time in traffic onboard a bus or behind the wheel, and more time with their families.

Safety

Not only will residents be more mobile, they will also be safer. This RTP/SCS's emphasis on safety will result in significantly lower accident rates, giving our residents the peace of mind to travel freely throughout the day and come home to their loved ones every night.

Economy

We will generate [**500,000**] jobs per year

Not only will the region be more mobile, it will also be more prosperous. An annual average of 174,500 new jobs will be generated by the construction and operations expenditures in the RTP/SCS, and an additional 354,000 annual jobs will be created in a broad cross-section of industries by the region's increased competitiveness and improved economic performance as a result of the improved transportation system.

Investment Effectiveness

We will get [**$2.90**] back for every $1 spent

The RTP/SCS makes dollar sense. While overall expenditures by 2035 are a significant investment, the region will recover $2.90 for every $1 this RTP/SCS commits, which will only help propel the region to more prosperous days ahead.

Public Participation

The development of the Draft 2012–2035 RTP/SCS involved implementation of one of the most comprehensive and coordinated public participation plans ever undertaken by SCAG. The public and stakeholder involvement program went above and beyond meeting the requirements of SB 375 and the SAFETEA-LU. SCAG engaged the widest range of stakeholder groups, elected officials, special interest groups, and the general public through a series of workshops and public meetings, as well as SCAG's policy committees, task forces, and subcommittee structure. The input received through this process has truly shaped the Draft 2012–2035 RTP/SCS in a meaningful way. Furthermore, SCAG continued to involve and engage the stakeholders and the public in the process of refining and finalizing the 2012–2035 RTP/SCS through the close of the formal comment period in February 2012. SCAG developed a state-of-the-art video and the iRTP, an interactive RTP/SCS website, that enhanced our capability to engage and involve the stakeholders and the public in shaping the 2012–2035 RTP/SCS in an unprecedented way.

Strategic Plan—Looking Ahead—Beyond the Horizon

The 2012–2035 RTP/SCS proposes investing over $524 billion over the next 25 years to improve the quality of life of the region's residents by enhancing our transportation system. However, additional strategies and projects are needed. The Strategic Plan identifies additional long-term initiatives such as zero- and/or near zero emission transportation strategies, new operational improvements, expanded transit investments and high-speed rail system, as well as increased commitment to active transportation. Although elements of these strategies are included in the financially constrained plan, further work is needed to ensure there is regional consensus and commitment to fund the balance in subsequent RTPs.

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2012–2035
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES STRATEGY
Towards a Sustainable Future

RTP

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