# 2

# Our Region Today



With a diverse geography that spans 38,000 square miles, Southern California is the 16th biggest economy in the world. This chapter examines the most significant trends and challenges across the region today.

# 2.1 Past and Present

The fabric of today's Southern California communities is rooted in activities and decisions of people who came before us. Travelers on Wilshire Boulevard in Los Angeles are tracing the path that Kizh people used to gather tar and reach the ocean.[1] Neighborhoods and corridors throughout the region trace the former routes of the Pacific Electric Railway. Today's freeways dissected once-vibrant communities in eastern Los Angeles when they were developed in the 1960s.

Planning for the future requires an understanding of how the past informs our present-day environment and infrastructure—and opportunities for people who live in the region. Before we can plan for the future, we must assess the existing conditions in the region, including challenges, recent progress and broader context.

# CONTEXT FOR CHANGE

## Planning for Justice

Understanding the context of regional planning includes considering the historical circumstances that led to the transportation system and built environment that exist today, as well as broader economic and technological trends. As a regional planning organization, understanding the disparities and inequities resulting from geography and the built environment are central to SCAG's work to plan for a more racially just and equitable future.

## Policy Roots of Inequality

Throughout history, communities of color have faced limitations in mobility, housing and accessing essential services due to federal, state and local policies that resulted in racial segregation, gentrification, displacement and systemic underinvestment.

In 1911, the newly established California Highway Commission implemented federal policy direction to create the Interstate Highway System, furthered by the 1921 and 1944 Federal Aid Highway Acts. The Commission determined project locations, and both state and local officials routed new freeways through existing communities of color, displacing thousands of households through eminent domain. Much of this freeway construction was in service of an explicitly segregationist suburban housing boom. Racist policies and decisions also influenced the siting of other types of transportation infrastructure, such as commuter railways and the delivery of transit services.

In 1934, the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) was established to facilitate numerous tasks, including assisting with home financing, improving housing standards, making housing and mortgages more affordable and increasing employment in the home construction industry in the wake of the Great Depression. However, while its core function was to insure home mortgage loans by banks and private lenders, the FHA refused to insure mortgages to Black residents and in Black neighborhoods. Beyond leaving Black residents unable to build the wealth that comes through the purchase of a home, these practices significantly reduced their housing options. Access was limited to neighborhoods that lacked adequate investments and resources and, in some cases, had a prevalence of noxious land uses. It is important to note that the impacts experienced by Black residents cited above also impacted other people of color.

This FHA home-valuation system was known as "redlining" because maps created by the Home Owners' Loan Corporation and the FHA used red to color-code neighborhoods where Black residents lived, indicating these areas were too risky to insure mortgages. The FHA also tacitly endorsed the use of restrictive covenants, which were private agreements attached to property deeds to prevent the purchase of homes by Black, Hispanic (Latino), Asian and Native American people. Though the FHA announced that it would not insure mortgages with restrictive covenants in 1950, redlining lasted until the mid-1960s.

People of color had few choices where to live. Neighborhoods where they were allowed to live became overcrowded and were often adjacent to noxious land uses that created unhealthy living conditions. Many of these neighborhoods were located next to polluting industrial infrastructure, sped up by burgeoning industrial factories in the defense, garment and automobile industries. Many of the highway infrastructure projects not only cleared existing neighborhoods but also contributed to heavy air pollution that led to ongoing asthma and health conditions in remaining residents. Even in neighborhoods where people of color found housing, they were threatened by violence and urban renewal policies. The Federal Housing Acts of 1949 and 1954 enabled the clearing of blighted areas and led to the demolition of affordable housing units in urban areas and neighborhoods inhabited by people of color.

## Steps Toward Fairness

Attempts have been made through various federal and state laws and regulations, including the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Executive Order 12898 (1994), to identify and rectify the impacts of racially discriminatory policies. More recently at the federal level, Executive Order 13985 (2021) and Executive Order 14091 (2023) directed federal agencies to make policy changes to strengthen the federal government's ability to address the barriers that underserved communities continue to face. These include the creation of annual progress reports on Equity Action Plans. Executive Order 14008 (2021) established the first-ever White House Environmental Justice Advisory Council and the Justice40 Initiative, which commits to delivering 40 percent of the overall benefits of federal investments in climate, clean energy, affordable and sustainable housing, clean water and other investments to disadvantaged communities that have been historically marginalized, underserved and overburdened by pollution.

At the state level, Senate Bill 115 (1999) called for "the fair treatment of people of all races, cultures and income with respect to development, adoption and implementation of environmental laws, regulations and policies" to be included in the development of General Plans. More recently, Governor Newsom issued Executive Order N-16-22 (2022) to strengthen the state's focus on advancing equity and tackling disparities. Targeting the historic inequities of transportation investment, Senate Bill 535 (De Leon, 2012) required at least 25 percent of Greenhouse Gas Reduction Funds, collected as a result of Assembly Bill 32 (Nunez 2006), go to projects benefiting disadvantaged communities, with at least 10 percent of projects to be located directly within those communities. In 2016, California passed Senate Bill 1000, The Planning for Healthy Communities Act, requiring local jurisdictions to create an Environmental Justice element and integrate environmental justice–related policies, goals and implementations aimed to aid disadvantaged communities into their General Plans. In addition, recently adopted legislation is helping SCAG work toward improving the availability of housing for all residents. In 2018, the State of California adopted legislation requiring local governments to "affirmatively further fair housing." (Assembly Bill 1771 (2018))

Prior to the final adoption of Connect SoCal, in July 2020 SCAG's Regional Council made a commitment to advancing justice, equity, diversity and inclusion throughout the region (Resolution 20-623-2). For the region to become healthy, livable, sustainable and economically resilient, SCAG recognized that it would need to dramatically improve outcomes for low-income families and people of color. To that end, SCAG's core function, its planning work, must directly address the long-standing systemic and institutional barriers that have fostered inequities in health, wealth and opportunities. SCAG adopted its Racial Equity Early Action Plan in May 2021 to help facilitate the consistent integration of equity into its planning work. The Racial Equity Early Action Plan provides a definition of equity and establishes goals, strategies and a set of "early actions" to advance racial equity through SCAG's policies, practices and activities. In 2022 and 2023, equity's integration into Connect SoCal was prioritized through the convening of the Racial Equity & Regional Planning Subcommittee. The subcommittee recommended that Connect SoCal 2024 function as a vehicle to promote racial equity, to address the historic impacts of systemic racism, and coordinate and implement equity-centered activities across the region.

**LET'S GET TECHNICAL**

*The Connect SoCal Housing Technical Report includes a detailed assessment of existing conditions including housing stock, overcrowding, housing tenure and displacement pressures.*

*The Connect SoCal Equity Analysis Technical Report includes a detailed analysis of how the Plan impacts protected populations as defined by federal regulation, priority communities identified by SCAG, and regional stakeholders across the region.*

**CONNECT SOCAL 2024: LOOKING FOR MEANING**

## What is Racial Equity?

Central to SCAG's work, racial equity describes the actions, policies and practices that eliminate bias and barriers that have historically and systemically marginalized communities of color in order to ensure that all people can be healthy, prosperous and participate fully in civic life. SCAG aims to lead with racial equity as a focal point to address the pervasive and deep inequities faced by people of color and support the overarching goal of the creation of a just and equitable society.

SCAG's understanding of racial equity in the context of regional planning is closely tied to Executive Order 12898 issued by President Clinton in 1994 and to the completion of the first-ever environmental justice analysis of SCAG's 1998 Regional Transportation Plan—Community Link 21. Tracing roots back to the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s and the Environmental Movement of the 1960s and 1970s, the Environmental Justice Movement in the United States is in response to discriminatory environmental practices, including toxic dumping, municipal waste facility siting and land use decisions which negatively affected communities of color. Several grassroots organizations founded in the SCAG region during this movement continue to advocate for a cleaner environment to protect all communities. The federal government defines environmental justice (EJ) as the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin or income with respect to the development, implementation and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations and policies.

The history of transportation and housing policies in both the United States and California demonstrates how racism in government has played a role in the disparities and inequities that people of color face today. The range of economic and social impacts, such as health outcomes, education, employment, housing conditions, rates of incarceration and life expectancy varies significantly in this region based on race, income and location. The institutional and systemic racism experienced by communities of color continues to impact their access to more mobile, sustainable and prosperous futures in Southern California. To illustrate, people of color were overrepresented in bicycle- and pedestrian-related fatal and serious injuries, according to analysis from the Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System. This data shows that 18.4 percent of fatal collisions in 2021 involved Black victims, who represent just over 6 percent of the population.

# 2.2

# New and Evolving Trends

The SCAG region is continually shaped and reshaped by technologies, social and political shifts, and local, national and global events. Some of these changes evolve slowly with unforeseen impacts and others are sudden.

Twenty years ago, we were just beginning to see e-commerce emerge. Ten years ago, transportation network companies like Uber and Lyft were gaining market share. More recently, in early 2020, the region and world were shocked by a global pandemic. At the same time, other stressors were also building within the region and can no longer be sidelined: housing affordability and climate change.

# A CHANGING REGION

## Regional COVID-19 Pandemic Recovery

The COVID-19 pandemic and the response to it impacted the way we live, work and play in the region—and we are still feeling those impacts today. When SCAG's Regional Council adopted Connect SoCal 2020 for all purposes in September 2020, following the May 2020 adoption for federal transportation conformity only, they affirmed aligning Plan implementation with pandemic recovery and identified emerging trends to be monitored alongside future planning, like Connect SoCal 2024. The following are the key disruptions to the region that SCAG has been tracking since 2020. SCAG monitored these elements alongside Plan development to apply relevant updates to our inputs and assumptions. These changes and challenges are continuing to evolve.

**Housing crisis:** The COVID-19 pandemic and the corresponding economic fallout exacerbated the housing crisis and, for communities of color, widened the economic gap. While early concerns focused on the stalling of housing construction, the more immediate crisis became employment loss—particularly for low-income households—that resulted in a growing number of households falling behind on their mortgage or rent. To minimize this, local, state and federal policymakers prioritized urgent pandemic needs and responses, such as mortgage-relief policies and foreclosure and eviction moratoria. While this had a beneficial impact on households at risk for displacement, it shifted housing priorities away from those that increased housing supply.[2]

**Demographic shifts:** The region's population growth was already slowing during the 2010s due to lower fertility rates and more out-migration than in-migration. The pandemic response provided additional shocks—a near-zero level of foreign immigration, fewer births and excess deaths from the pandemic itself. While these shocks appear to be dissipating substantially, the region's population declined between 2019 and 2023.

**Goods movement:** Supply chains were disrupted on a global scale, leading to severe bottlenecks at ports and cascading bottleneck and congestion issues further across the entire goods movement system—from railyards to industrial warehouses and distribution centers.

**Transit ridership:** While vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and congestion have returned to pre-pandemic levels, transit/rail ridership has rebounded unevenly. These transit/rail ridership declines have resulted in reduced farebox recovery and impacts to operations budgets—and there is widespread concern that transit/rail operators are fast approaching a fiscal cliff. Many transit operators remain uncertain of the longer-term future, particularly if remote working remains a norm for discretionary riders who tend to take rail. Some returning riders are apprehensive about their safety and security as they resume using transit/rail services.

**Active transportation:** During the pandemic, the region saw an increased use of active transportation (i.e., bicycling [including via e-bikes], walking, rolling, etc.). Bicycling and walking were regarded as reliable and resilient options because they enabled physical distancing and carried a low risk of contracting or spreading COVID-19.[3] The increase in bicycling was reflected in the higher demand for bicycles and in bicycle sales figures. According to market research company NPD Group, sales of bicycles between April 2020 and April 2021 were up by 57 percent in the United States.[4] Numerous communities reconsidered how public space was allocated, and several prioritized opening up streets to bicyclists and pedestrians to make it easier to physically distance from others while traveling to essential businesses and engaging in recreation.[5] However, at the start of the pandemic, most dockless, shared micromobility providers temporarily withdrew from the public space.

**Tele-everything:** Relying on remote work and school (e-learning) as primary ways to physically distance exposed the region's digital divide of those who have access to reliable internet and those who do not. The internet, computers and smartphones have provided unprecedented access to information and have helped transform our relationship to transportation. Although many residents have benefited from these advancements, a significant portion of the population

remains unconnected. Currently, 10 percent of residents across the region lack broadband. This disparity is more pronounced in certain populations. For example, the lack of broadband rises to 20 percent of adults aged 65 and older—and 70 percent of those without internet are concentrated in low-income households.[6]

As we recover from the pandemic, faster broadband speeds and better devices will become increasingly essential, and the disparities between those who have access and those who do not will continue to widen. While broadband access might seem to be an issue that primarily affects individual quality of life, it is crucial infrastructure that supports technological advancements in the mobility ecosystem. That's why in February 2021, SCAG's Regional Council adopted the Broadband Access Resolution (Resolution No. 21-629-2) and resolved to bridge the digital divide in underserved and unserved communities.

**Traffic Congestion:** VMT and congestion have returned to pre-pandemic levels, yet our travel patterns are shifting both spatially and temporally. Despite the fact that increased working from home has reduced the region's historic peak-commute congestion ("rush hour"), workers continue to drive for other household-serving and personal trips throughout the day. In particular, the afternoon "peak" period of travel has lengthened. Most trips are occurring during the early afternoon and in locations associated with the rise of working from home and school pickup/dropoff.[7]

**LET'S GET TECHNICAL**

*For more detail on migration and workplace changes related to COVID-19, see the Demographics & Growth Forecast Technical Report.*

## Rethinking the Workplace

During the early stages of the pandemic, California implemented multiple measures to mitigate the spread of the virus. Remote-working rates rose abruptly and dramatically. Prior to the pandemic's start, most workers spent the bulk of their time working outside of their homes, but once the pandemic was well underway, close to half of all employees were working remotely. Based on American Community Survey 1-year samples, the percentage of workers ages 16 and over who worked from home was just over six percent in the SCAG region in 2019, but by 2021, this figure had jumped to 19 percent.[8] This change in behavior had an outsized impact on downtown areas, which relied on increased daytime populations to support local businesses.

"Work from home" can be defined as working outside the traditional office or workplace, usually at home. However, this can also more broadly describe when people work remotely while traveling, at client/customer workplaces, libraries, co-working spaces and other internet-accessible locations.

Across the entire SCAG region, the share of jobs that can be performed at home is 36.7 percent. This is only slightly greater than the national share of 36.4 percent but varies widely across the region, with one of the nation's highest shares in Los Angeles and Orange counties (50.5 percent) and one of the nation's lowest in Riverside and San Bernardino counties (30.1 percent).[9] There appears to be a strong relationship between wage and the ability to work remotely, with the industries with the highest wages and days worked from home being Finance and Insurance ($61 per hour and 2.15 remote days per week) and Professional and Business Services ($50 per hour and 1.96 remote days per week). The lowest wage-to-remote-work relationships are in Retail ($24.80 per hour and 0.68 remote days per week), Transportation and Warehousing ($29.19 per hour and 0.58 remote days per week), and Hospitality and Food Service ($15.39 and 0.58 remote days per week).[10] For the purposes of this Plan, SCAG is assuming roughly 22–25 percent of workdays will be conducted at home through 2050.

While these relationships are driven by the nature of the work in each of these sectors, a regional plan must consider how to balance the needs of remote workers, who are largely in higher-wage occupations, and the needs of commuting, on-site workers, who are more likely to be in low-wage occupations. Some literature suggests that while flexible work schedules and telecommuting may reduce (or, in the case of satellite offices, reroute) single occupancy vehicle (SOV) commute trips, they likely increase SOV trips for other purposes, such as errands and trips for lunch while an employee is working from home (although not necessarily during peak congestion periods). This is known as the rebound effect.[11]

Working from home has long been part of the planner's toolbox for reducing travel. The significant rise of working from home following the pandemic, and the changing travel patterns that have resulted, underscore the importance of pursuing strategies that offer more transportation options for non-work trips, in particular. A key component of this is fostering more connected and accessible communities that allow a wide range of trips to be accomplished within a short distance or via alternative modes. More analysis is needed to better understand this changing trend and how it may impact long-term decisions, including choice of housing location. However, despite recent concerns about people fleeing urban areas in general, the fact that the hybrid work model is becoming more predominant than the fully remote work model, workers will have more incentive to return to—or stay near—cities.[12]

At the present time, these changes appear to be felt very heavily in downtown areas, which by definition have the most intense clusters of employment in a region or subregion. American downtowns have had numerous declines and resurgences. Declines occurred during the crime increases of the 1990s and as a result of post-9/11 security concerns. Then, beginning in the mid-2000s, an increase in residential population and amenities took place. Now, due to the post-pandemic work-from-home trend—as well as crime and the perception of crime—many headlines have been sounding the alarm about the future vitality of downtowns. For example, office utilization rates in U.S. downtowns averaged less than 50 percent in mid-2023, which affects both transit ridership and small businesses, like restaurants.[13] However, there remains a price premium for both commercial and residential property with connectivity and activity nearby. Livability improvements and continued monitoring of opportunities can help downtowns—which can pool the largest labor force and foster more activity density than anywhere else—and in turn help improve surrounding neighborhoods and the region as a whole.

## Emerging Technology

New and emerging technologies have had a significant impact on the transportation sector, transforming various aspects of mobility, efficiency, safety and user experience. These technologies include advancements in vehicle technology, like electric vehicles and automated vehicles, as well as advancement in travel planning and safety systems, such as Mobility as a Service and Advanced Driver Assistance Systems. Several of the key technologies impacting the region today—and on the horizon—include:

**Zero-Emission Vehicles (ZEVs):** The rise of hydrogen and electric vehicles has disrupted the automotive sector. ZEVs offer lower emissions, reduced dependence on fossil fuels, and improved energy efficiency compared to traditional internal-combustion-engine vehicles.

**Shared Mobility:** Ride sharing services such as Uber and Lyft have transformed the way people travel, reducing the need for personal car ownership. Car sharing and bike sharing platforms have also gained popularity, providing convenient and cost-effective transportation options.

**Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS):** ITS integrates advanced technologies into transportation infrastructure to improve efficiency, safety and sustainability. This includes traffic management systems, dynamic signaling, smart parking and real-time traveler information systems.

**Blockchain and Mobility as a Service (MaaS):** Blockchain technology can enable secure and decentralized transactions for mobility services, such as car rentals or ridesharing. MaaS platforms integrate various modes of transportation, providing users with seamless and personalized travel options.

**Advanced Driver Assistance Systems (ADAS):** ADAS technologies, including adaptive cruise control, lane-keeping assist and automatic emergency braking, enhance vehicle safety and reduce accidents by assisting drivers and providing warnings or automated interventions.

**Vehicle to Everything (V2X):** Utilizing Internet of Things (IoT) technology, V2X enables vehicles to communicate with one another and with infrastructure to share real-time data on traffic conditions, crashes and road hazards, enhancing safety, optimizing traffic flow and improving overall efficiency.

**Advanced Air Mobility (AAM):** The goal of AAM programs and technology is to develop an air transportation system that safely moves people and cargo in local, regional and interregional settings. AAM technology includes electric vertical take-off aircraft, and autonomous aircraft/uncrewed aircraft systems (i.e., drones). Urban Air Mobility refers to AAM in an urban context.

**Connected Autonomous Vehicles (CAVs):** Self-driving cars and trucks have the potential to revolutionize transportation. AVs use sensors, artificial intelligence and advanced algorithms to navigate roads without human intervention. However, harnessing the potential of this technology will require ensuring that it contributes to achieving safety, accessibility and other mobility goals.

**LET'S GET TECHNICAL**

*For a full list of Guiding Principles for Emerging Technology, please refer to appendix 1 in the Mobility Technical Report.*

To address this evolving mobility technology landscape, SCAG's leadership recommended establishing Guiding Principles for Emerging Technology during the development of Connect SoCal 2020. In response, SCAG developed an objective framework to serve as a guide for policy discussions regarding emerging technologies within SCAG's programs and as a template for SCAG and its partner agencies.

The Guiding Principles give guidance to the topics of equity, accessibility, safety, sustainability, integration, adaptability, data privacy and security, transparency and accountability, resilience and workforce development investments. These Guiding Principles should be considered as a starting point and used as building blocks that agencies and local jurisdictions can adapt to fit their unique needs when making informed decisions regarding emerging technology.

## Clean Energy Transition

The state of California is a leader in the national and global reduction in climate pollutants and deployment of clean technologies and fuels. Recent regulations passed by the California Air Resources Board (CARB) have put us on a path to cleaner buses, trucks and passenger vehicles.

For buses, the Innovative Clean Transit Rule requires public transit agencies in the state of California to shift their fleets to zero-emission buses by 2040, with only zero-emissions buses allowed for new purchases starting in 2029. For trucks, the Advanced Clean Fleets rule requires that fleet owners operating vehicles for private services such as last-mile delivery and government fleets, like the Postal Service, begin transitioning to zero-emission vehicles starting in 2024—and includes an end to combustion-engine truck sales in 2036. The Advanced Clean Cars II rule requires that all new passenger cars, trucks and SUVs sold in California be zero-emission vehicles by 2035.

The state and our region are on the precipice of a major shift in the transportation sector. Supporting this transition will have significant implications for the planning and designing of the built environment, as we must ensure that refueling or recharging infrastructure is available and that the power grid can support the refueling of our cleaner fleets. This transition also has fiscal implications, as sales and excise-tax receipts for fuel sales will decline over time. The transition will also have economic and social impacts, as gas stations—predominately owned by immigrants—might become obsolete.[14]

## Climate Change

By the year 2050, the region is projected to face numerous challenges and pressures due to climate change, including heightened risks of intense wildfires, droughts, extreme heat, extreme rain, rising sea levels and seismic events. The region is already experiencing extreme climate-related events more frequently, such as air-quality degradation, inland flooding, the destruction of homes and infrastructure from wildfires, landslides from torrential rainstorms, coastal flooding from sea level rise, and urban heat island effects from unusually high temperatures. These conditions have detrimental effects on the region's communities and will adversely impact the quality of the air we breathe, availability of essential resources like water and energy, safety of neighborhoods and the stability of the economy—as well as the transportation system and the people and businesses who depend upon it.

Among Southern California residents, roughly 3.4 million people live in fire hazard severity zones, over one million people reside in "100-year" flood hazard areas and/or landslide hazard zones, more than 70,000 residents live in areas estimated to be impacted by one meter of sea level rise (conservatively projected to occur by 2050), and over 11 million residents reside in areas that will be subjected to extreme heat health events in the near future (as calculated by overlaying population estimates for year 2019 from Connect SoCal and climate hazard data layers described further in the Land Use and Communities Technical Report). Rising sea levels pose a threat to coastal railways and bridges, and severe storms can trigger mudslides and highway flooding. Extreme heat can cause road surfaces to soften and buckle, leading to pavement damage and road closures. It can also cause rail tracks to buckle and induce slower transit/rail speeds. Such conditions can reduce the lifespan of infrastructure assets, disrupt operations more frequently, and necessitate the development of new infrastructure that incorporates design, construction, location and maintenance adjustments. It is likely that some existing transportation infrastructure will need to be modified or relocated to remain functional, and the planning, construction and maintenance processes will increasingly need to consider the consequences of climate change to ensure the long-term viability of infrastructure. Extreme heat and severe-weather conditions can also have a significant impact on people who rely on bicycling and walking as modes of transportation. Their excessive sweating, increased heart rates, and difficulty breathing in hot conditions can decrease overall physical performance and make it far more difficult and riskier to complete their trips.

In recognition of the importance of addressing such challenges, a resilience lens was used throughout the development of the Plan to consider and address shocks and stressors facing the region.

**LET'S GET TECHNICAL**

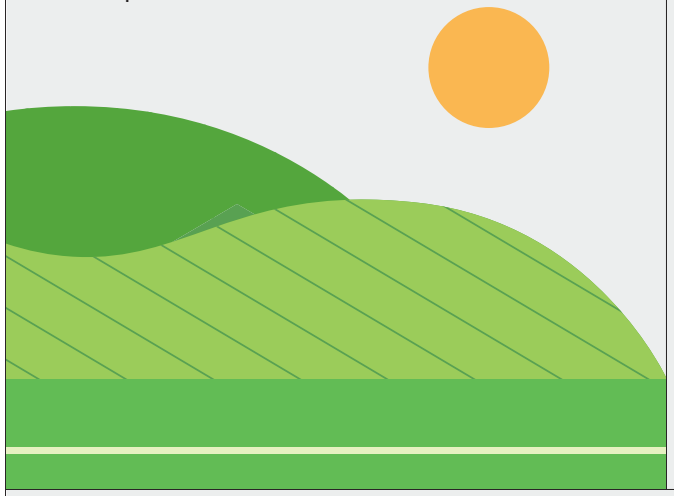
*You can explore key shocks and stressors to consider when planning for resilience in the Connect SoCal Technical Reports.*

**CONNECT SOCAL 2024: LOOKING FOR MEANING**

## What is Resilience?

A resilient and prepared region requires that transportation systems, the built environment and natural resources coexist in a well-balanced land use pattern. When well-coordinated, these components can result in multiple benefits, including greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reductions, health improvements and better resource conservation.

Resilience is defined as the capacity of the SCAG region's built, social, economic and natural systems to anticipate and effectively respond to changing conditions, acute shocks and chronic stressors by creating multiple opportunities for a sustainable, thriving and equitable future.



### Shocks and Stressors

Shocks are sudden and acute events that threaten immediate safety and well-being, such as earthquakes and wildfires. Stressors are chronic challenges that weaken built, social, economic and natural systems, including persistent air-quality issues or transportation system disrepair. As part of the development of the Regional Resilience Framework, SCAG identified various shocks and stressors, including their potential scale and scope, that could impact Southern California's resilience. These were gathered through research on non-climate and environmental-related shocks, Local Hazard Mitigation Plans (LHMPs), local general plan safety elements, and through outreach to stakeholders and community-based organizations (CBOs).

When planning for community resilience, it is vital to adopt a comprehensive approach that acknowledges the interdependence of built, social, economic and natural systems.

Resilience within:

- **Built systems** can withstand changing conditions and shocks, including changes in climate conditions, while continuing to provide critical services
- **Social systems** can respond to changing conditions, shocks and stressors by minimizing risks to public health and safety, and maximizing equity and protection of the most vulnerable
- **Economic systems** can maintain function when shocked and efficiently use resources over time for investment in repair, reconstruction and adapting to change.
- **Natural systems** can adjust and continue to provide essential resources, including clean air and groundwater, and maintain functioning ecosystems

By embracing such an approach, local governments can effectively develop strategies that address the distinct vulnerabilities inherent within each system and fortify our communities against the impacts of shocks and stressors while also nurturing sustainable development that supports a thriving and equitable future.

**LET'S GET TECHNICAL**

*Take a deeper dive into shocks and stressors and learn how the Plan can lessen their impact in the Connect SoCal Land Use and Communities Technical Report.*

# 2.3 Regional Challenges

During Plan development, SCAG collects data and information to better understand the region's existing conditions including persistent and emerging challenges, which are as complex and interconnected as the region itself. Some challenges are rooted in our changing needs, while some have been persistent for several years.

The region has made strides over the last several decades to develop a regional light rail and commuter network and to reduce air pollution following the passage of the Clean Air Act of 1970 but there is still much work ahead. During the public engagement process, thousands of people across the region reflected on the challenges facing Southern California. The top responses were: housing affordability, limited reliable travel options other than driving and climate change impacts.

# MOBILITY

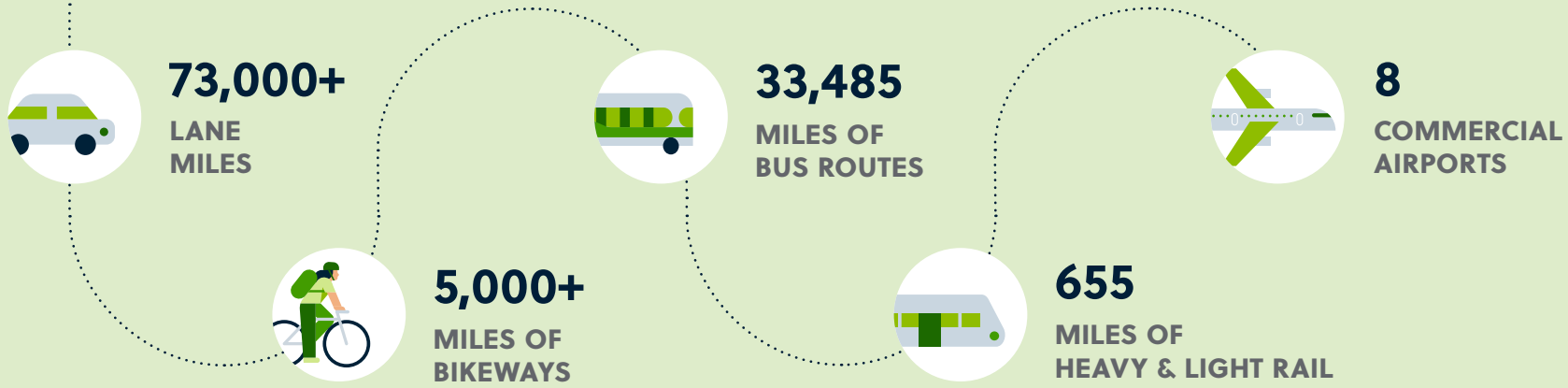
## Overview

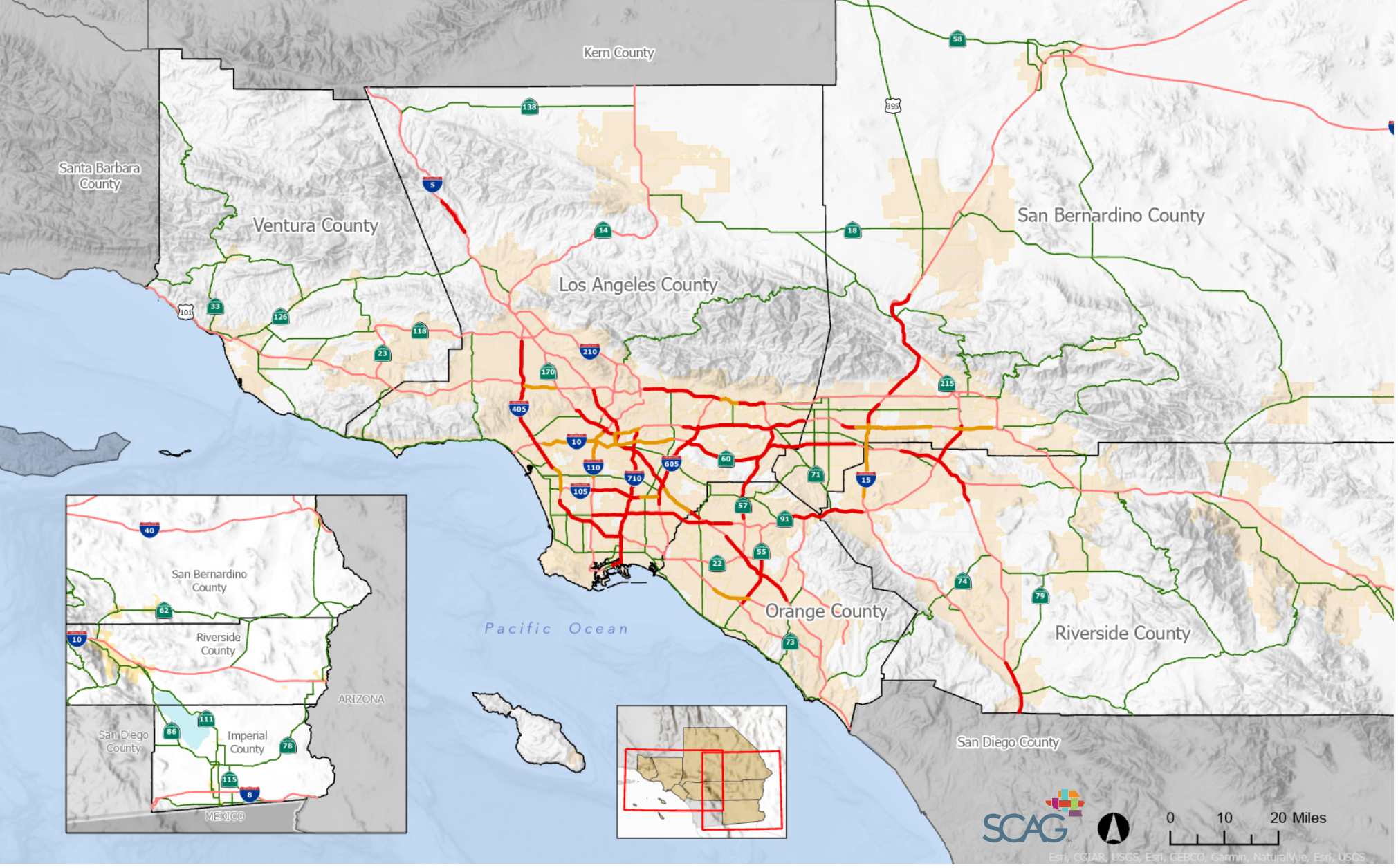
**How do we move today?** Our current transportation network is comprised of more than 73,000 miles of streets and freeways, 135 centerline miles of express lanes and over 5,000 miles of bikeways. The region is home to an extensive transit/rail network that includes over 100 transit operators; 33,485 miles of bus routes, including local bus, express and bus rapid transit (BRT); 109 miles of local heavy and light rail, serving 108 stations; Amtrak intercity and long-distance services; and Metrolink commuter rail service, which operates on seven lines with 66 stations in five of six counties on a 546 route-mile network. (See Maps 2.1 - 2.4 for more detail on the regional tranportation network.) Our transportation network supports the largest container complex in the U.S., the Port of Los Angeles and the Port of Long Beach as well as the Port of Hueneme, and helps millions of passengers and employees annually, and goods move to and from eight commercial airports, seven government/military airfields, and over 30 reliever and general aviation airports.

This transportation system links people to places. It also supports our economy, allowing goods and raw materials to move throughout the region. How we move today is shaped by the land use patterns in each neighborhood and community. The distribution of activities and destinations, combined with transportation options, influences how a person will move around the region and what opportunities will be accessible to them.

When SB 375 was passed in 2008, the region had already embarked on a path to consider the intersection between land use and transportation more comprehensively, as a way to provide more options for getting around. For example, in the early 1990s, the counties of Riverside, San Bernardino, Los Angeles and Orange passed sales-tax measures that enabled the opening of Metrolink in 1992. In Los Angeles County, Metro (Los Angeles Metropolitan Transportation Authority) began operation of the Blue Line in 1990 and has continued expanding its rail network with funding from locally supported sales-tax measures.

### Regional Transportation Network

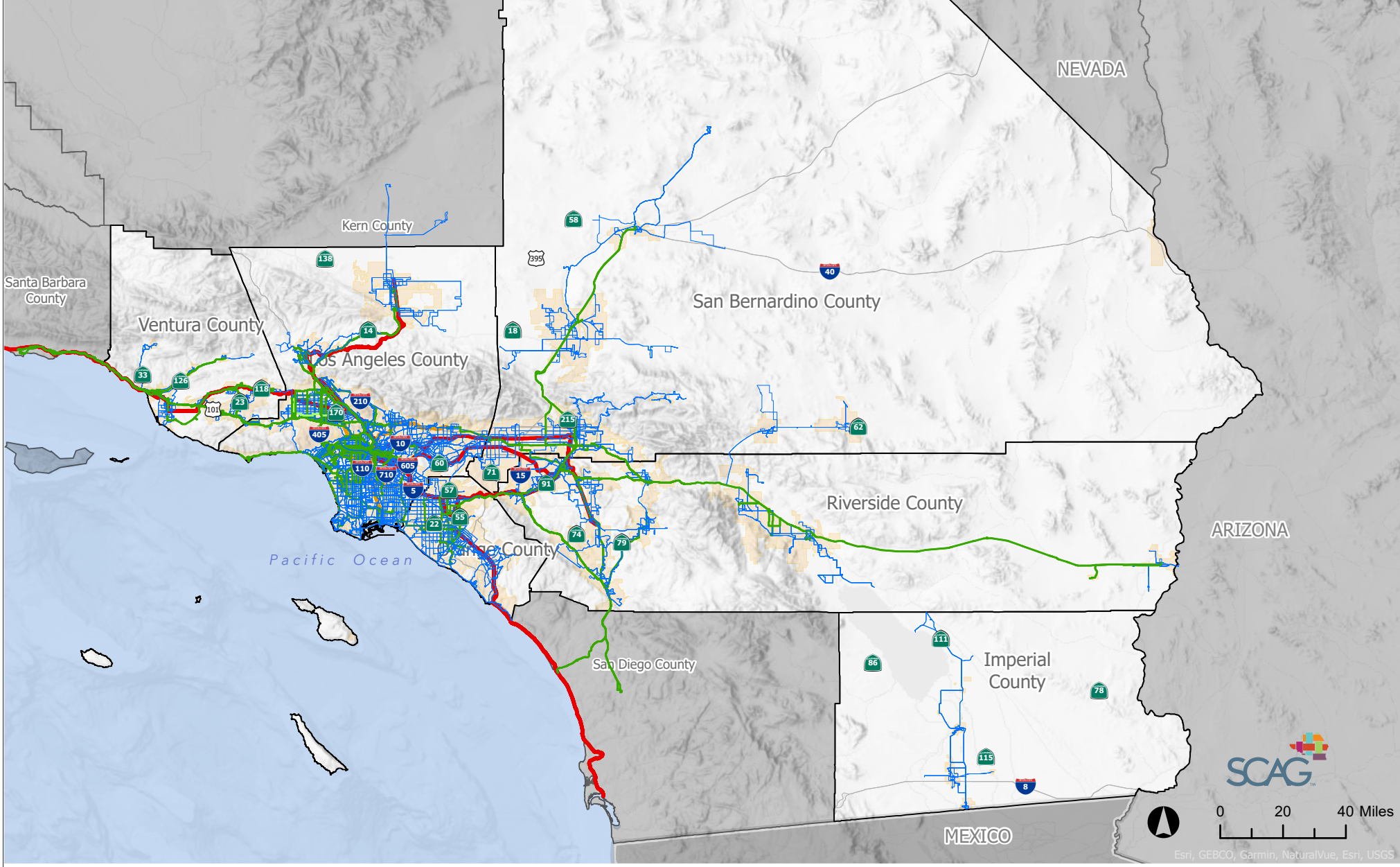





SCAG: Connect SoCal 2024 **MAP 2.1 Heavy-Duty Truck Highway Bottlenecks by Annual Vehicle Hours of Delay (2019)**

15,000 - 20,000
Above 20,000
Freeway
Other State Highway
SCAG Counties
City Boundaries

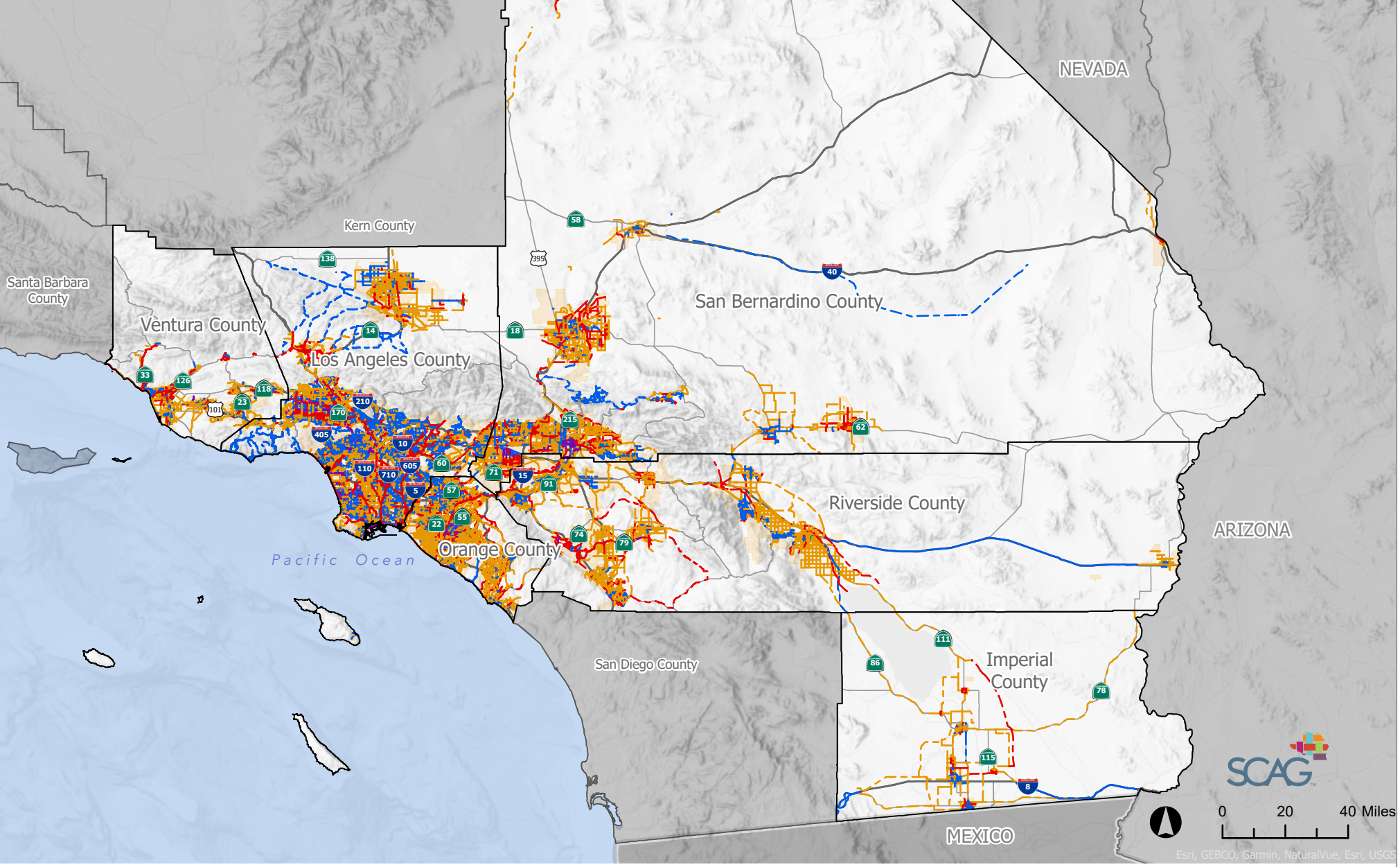
Source: SCAG 2023




SCAG: Connect SoCal 2024 **MAP 2.2 Existing Transit Network (2019)**

Metrolink | Urban Rail | Rapid, Commuter, and Express Bus | Bus Rapid Transit | Bus Routes

Source: SCAG 2023



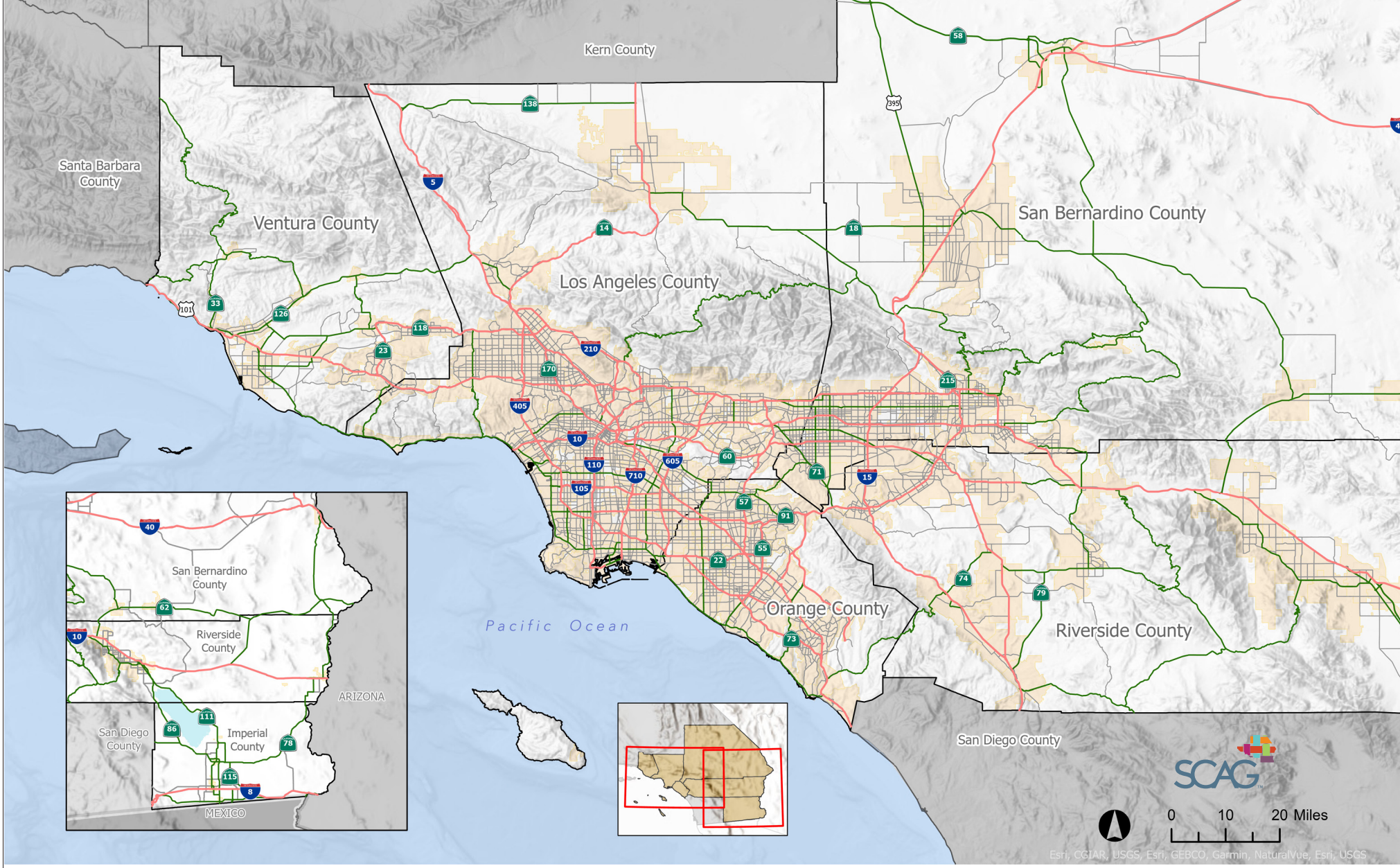

SCAG: Connect SoCal 2024 **MAP 2.3 Existing Bikeways (2023) and Planned Bikeways (2050)**

- SCAG Counties
- City Boundaries (July 6, 2021)
- Freeway/Toll Road
- Other State Highway

Existing Network
- Class 1; Bike Path/Multiuse Path
- Class 2: Bike Lane
- Class 3: Bike Route
- Class 4: Separated Bikeway

Proposed Network
- Class 1: Bike Path/Multiuse Path
- Class 2: Bike Lane
- Class 3: Bike Route
- Class 4: Separated Bikeway

Source: SCAG 2023




SCAG: Connect SoCal 2024 **MAP 2.4 Existing Arterials and Highways (2019)**

SCAG Counties
City Boundaries
Freeway/Toll Road
Other State Highway
Arterial

Source: SCAG 2023

# Key Mobility Challenges

**Limited Reliable Travel Options Besides Driving:** As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, one of the top challenges noted by Connect SoCal survey respondents is having limited reliable travel options other than driving. Despite billions of dollars in investments in our transit and active-transportation infrastructure, gaps in service and reliability remain—and these gaps impact perceptions of available options. As evidenced by responses to other survey questions, many people in the region prefer to drive alone on some trips, like errands, but want different options, such as walking or transit, for other trips that might include going to work or school or visiting friends.

The current lack of travel options besides driving in parts of the region can lead to increased congestion on the regional transportation network, which then leads to time wasted in traffic and increased emissions and pollutants. In other parts of the region, people with access to a transit network have noted concerns about reliability and safety.

**Transportation Safety:** Safety can refer to both personal security when traveling on transit and safety when on our roadways, either in a vehicle, on a bike or on foot. Traffic-related fatalities and serious injuries are a critical and preventable public health and equity issue in the region. Approximately 1,600 people die, and 140,000 are injured—more than 7,000 of which are serious injuries—on roadways throughout the SCAG region every year.[15] Collisions are happening in every community in the region and to people from all walks of life, including those who drive, walk and bike. Approximately 90 percent of collisions occur in urban areas, with most taking place on local roads, not highways. Regionally, about 65 percent of fatalities and serious injuries occur on less than 1.5 percent of the roadway network. Of particular concern are vulnerable groups such as children, older adults, pedestrians, bicyclists and users of personal mobility devices like e-scooters.

The regional housing crisis has resulted in people without housing seeking shelter in public spaces, particularly at locations with 24-hour transit/rail service. Unhoused persons frequently utilize buses or trains for overnight stays. The situation raises several concerns for both transit/rail agencies and riders. Returning riders are apprehensive about their safety and security as they resume using transit/rail services. Buses or trains occupied by unhoused persons may face lingering cleanliness issues, and there have been reports of threats, assault and crime incidents that deter ridership.[16] From the transit/rail agency's perspective, addressing homelessness on systems poses a complex challenge, particularly amidst many other pressing issues and limited funding. Across the region, transit/rail agencies will need to develop comprehensive strategies that address homelessness on their systems, considering factors such as safety, cleanliness and the welfare of both riders and unhoused persons.

Increasing safety for pedestrians and bicyclists can make transit and active transportation a more appealing travel option, thereby motivating mode shifts away from single occupancy vehicle travel and reducing GHG emissions. However, finding sustainable solutions within the context of limited resources will remain an ongoing challenge.

## A Just and Clean Transition

Transitioning to clean transportation technology offers numerous potential benefits, but will also require fundamental shifts in how we think about and plan for transportation, land use and energy. Barriers to implementation include cost, technology readiness, infrastructure, consumer knowledge and regulatory support. These barriers could result in disparities that create an unequal transition, meaning that some communities will benefit from a cleaner transportation system sooner than others. Barriers such as high vehicle costs and inadequate supportive infrastructure for renters and public charging stations hinder the transition to EVs for the majority of SCAG residents. For example, access to charging infrastructure can be particularly challenging for people who live in apartments or other multi-unit dwellings, where installing personal charging stations (i.e., home charging) may not be possible. Public charging stations are an alternative, but they require investment in infrastructure that may be lacking in low- and moderate-income neighborhoods. Lack of incentives for vehicle purchases and inconsistent regulations across jurisdictions create a complex landscape, discouraging potential adopters and stifling innovation in the clean-transportation sector.

**Transitioning to clean transportation technology presents an opportunity, but will also require fundamental shifts in how we think about and plan for transportation, land use and energy.**

**CONNECT SOCAL 2024: MOBILITY STORIES**

## Traveling in the Region Today

To understand how people move, it helps to look beyond statistics to see how different people travel based on their daily need, ability and access. The following are illustrative examples inspired by conversations with people across the region.

**Oxnard, CA:** A father uses his SUV to drop off his kids at school on his way to work in Thousand Oaks two days a week. He picks them up from after-school care on his way home. On days when he works from home, he still drives the kids to and from school. The family lives within walking distance of restaurants on Saviers Road, which they like to go to on the weekends, but they drive together for most errands and outings.

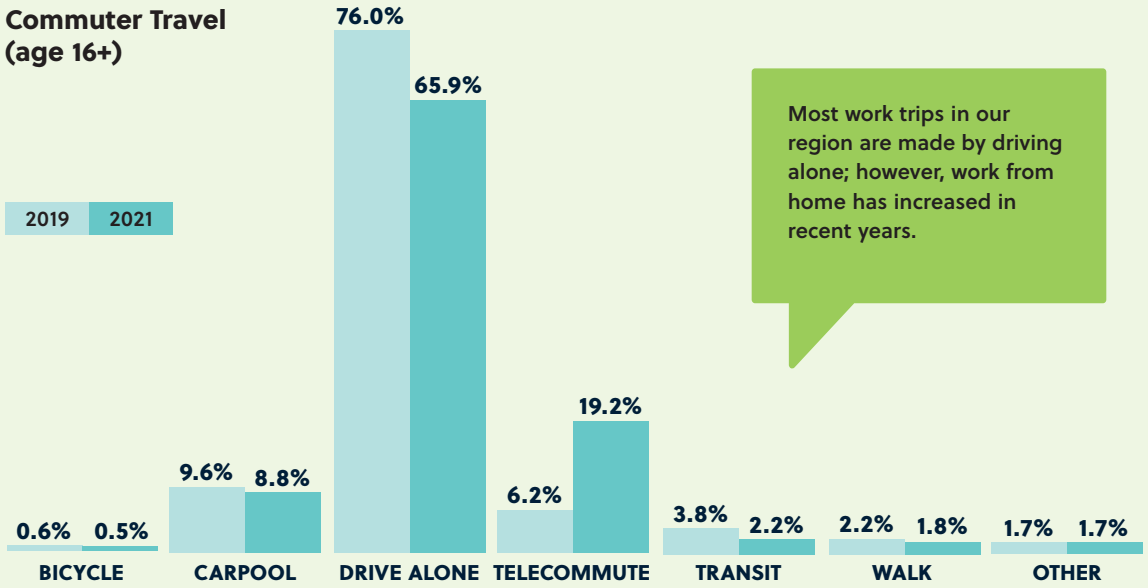
**Los Angeles, CA:** A young adult lives in the East Hollywood neighborhood of Los Angeles. When their car broke down last year, they decided not to replace it so that they can pay down their student loans. To get to work in El Monte, they take the Metro B Line to the Silver Line. On weekends, they bike or use Uber to meet up with friends and run errands.

**Hemet, CA:** A retired woman uses GoMicro on-demand transit to travel to her appointments during the week. She likes to walk around her neighborhood but doesn't have many destinations that allow her to run errands on foot. Instead, she relies on her daughter to drive her to the grocery store and community events outside of GoMicro service hours.

## The Way We Move Today

The region's transportation network is extensive. However, the current lack of convenient travel options in areas of the region apart from driving create traffic congestion and air pollution. Responses to the COVID-19 pandemic sparked changes in travel behavior and trends, which spotlight what is needed and what is possible for the future of transportation in our region.

### Commuter Travel (age 16+)

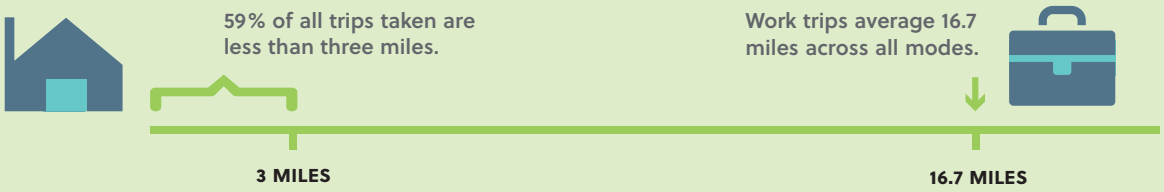



Most work trips in our region are made by driving alone; however, work from home has increased in recent years.

*Source: 2021 American Community Survey 1-year Sample, Table B08006*

### Most Non-Work Trips are Short

While trips to work are longer on average, the short distance of most other trips taken in the region opens up possibilities for other modes like walking, biking or rolling.




### Annual Safety Statistics

**140,000** INJURIES

**7,000** SERIOUS INJURIES

**1,600** DEATHS

ABOUT **65%** OF COLLISION-RELATED DEATHS OCCUR ON LOCAL ROADS

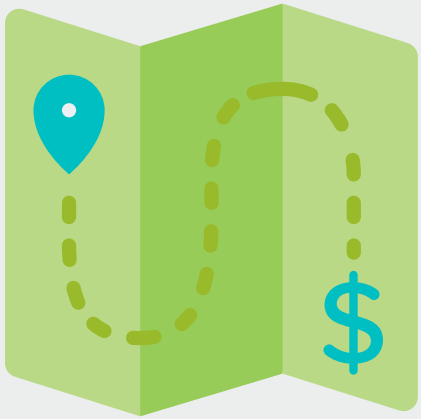
Traffic-related deaths and injuries are a preventable public health and equity issue in the region.

*Source: California Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System (SWITRS) (2021); Fatality Analysis Research System (FARS) 2021*

**CONNECT SOCAL 2024: TRANSPORTATION FINANCE**

## Funding the System

One of the biggest challenges facing transportation in the country is decreasing revenues due to increases in conventional fuel efficiency and the adoption of alternative fuel vehicles (especially electric vehicles). This is because transportation systems have historically been funded by excise fuel taxes. Decreasing revenues lead to challenges in securing stable and sustainable transportation funding over the life of the Plan to meet our region's evolving transportation needs. Our current transportation funding mechanisms are insufficient to maintain the existing system, let alone fund new investments, tackle ever-expanding maintenance backlogs and address failures of the current system to achieve larger Plan goals.



Costs for operating and maintaining the transportation system comprise the biggest portion of Plan expenditures. They are steadily increasing due to inflation and rising construction costs that decrease the purchasing power of existing revenue streams. Additional funding is needed to address deferred maintenance sooner and aggressively pursue preservation to minimize total system management costs. The region will increasingly need additional resources to absorb the shocks and stressors to the system as resiliency concerns become more pressing. Addressing this growing need is crucial to maintaining and managing the investments our region has already made.

The Connect SoCal financial plan summarizes federal, state and local sources of revenues used to pay for transportation, system preservation and improvements over the next 25 years. SCAG highlights the importance of finding new and innovative ways to pay for transportation as we continue to face an insolvency crisis due to the Federal Highway Trust Fund's (HTF) reliance on fuel excise taxes. The federal gas tax has remained unchanged since 1993, and fuel tax receipts have declined precipitously as fuel efficiency has increased. California's passage of the Road Repair and Accountability Act of 2017 (Senate Bill [SB] 1) provides a significant influx of new state revenue through a gas-tax increase and other transportation fees, yet only a fraction of our needs are funded through state sources.

Our region currently supplements state and federal transportation funding streams with local sources, which comprise 61 percent of Plan funding. The largest single source of revenue in the region are local sales taxes for transportation, which provide 58 percent of core revenue and allow for the prioritization of local needs but are not linked to system usage and fail to encourage efficient use of the transportation system.

California's Advanced Clean Cars II rule requires that new sales of gasoline-powered vehicles be phased out by 2035. CARB's recently adopted Advanced Clean Fleet regulation requires drayage trucks to start transitioning to zero-emission technology beginning in 2024, with full implementation by 2035. This presents an imperative for the region to transition toward user-fee funding sources to replace lost revenues from conventional fuel-tax revenues and provide a sustainable and stable funding source.

Overall, the core transportation funding sources that our region has traditionally depended on are declining, volatile and uncertain. To meet the increasing costs of implementing the recommended improvements, as well as operate and maintain the transportation system, our region needs new, stable and sustainable funding.

# COMMUNITIES

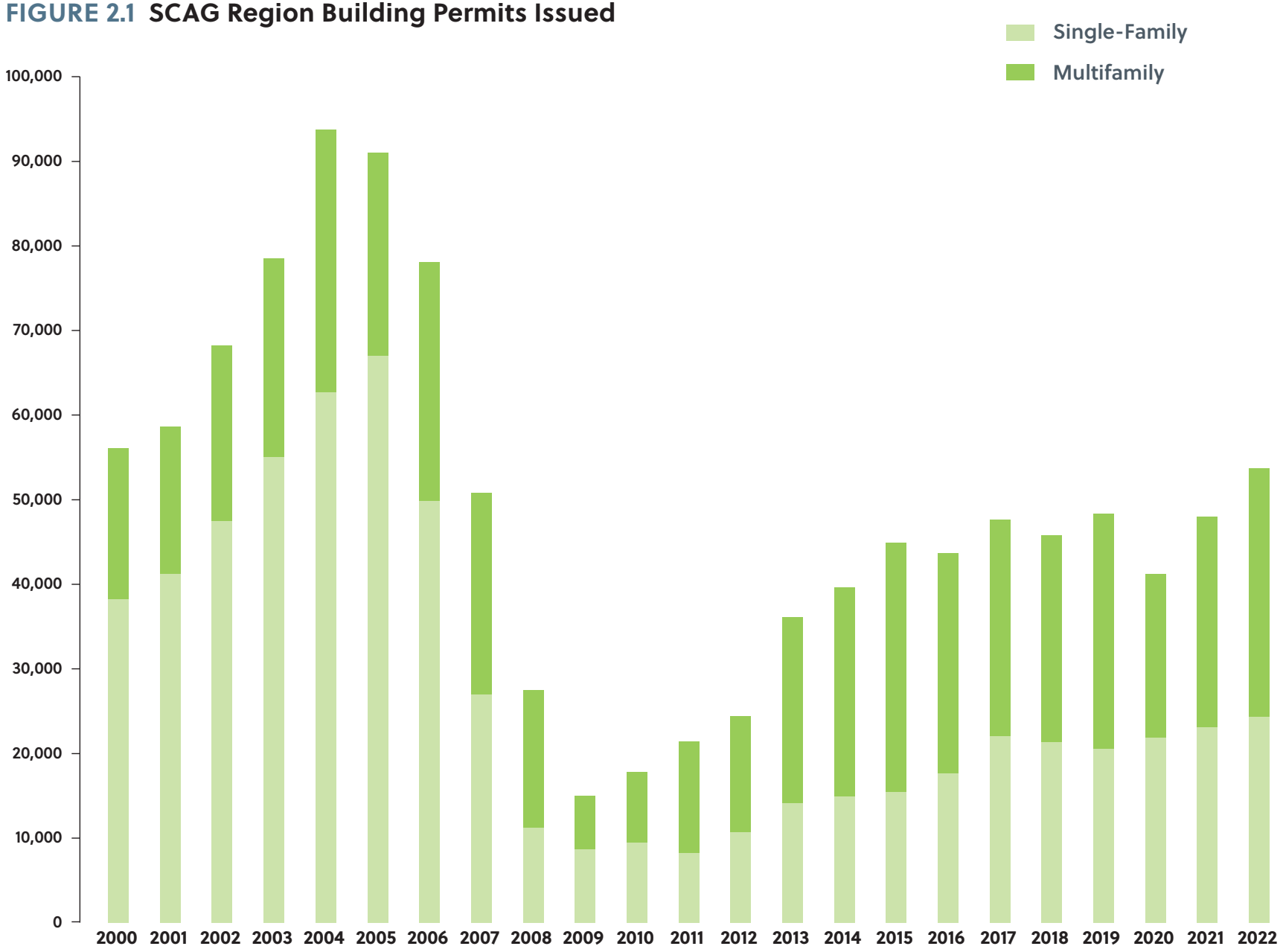
## Overview

**Where do we live?** The SCAG region has incredible diversity in its built environment and land use patterns. This diversity is reflected in how people experience their communities and how that influences overall quality of life. Complete communities are important considerations in land use planning as they are places that meet peoples' essential needs (housing, mobility), the provision of goods and services, recreation and respite, and overall access to opportunity. It is important to evaluate existing conditions around community and land use patterns with a keen eye toward racial equity. Land use patterns are shaped by governmental decision-making and in many cases, the communities of today have been left with the burdens of the past that shape access to opportunities, resources and the quality of the environment. Issues around housing overcrowding and supply, environmental justice, access to healthy food and resources, parks and open spaces, economic and educational opportunity, and safety have critical influence over how people live and thrive in their communities.

Decisions about land use and growth, such as what type of housing, offices or retail gets built and where, rests fundamentally with each local government—sometimes referred to as "local land use authority." A given city or county articulates its land use planning through general plans, specific plans and other documents (such as zoning ordinances or development agreements). These land use decisions can include provisions to create incentives for more sustainable development such as infill or mixed uses, as well as strategies for conserving natural lands and farmlands. Decisions made at the local level impact the region's overall pattern of land use, such as when growth takes the form of a new regional employment center in one city and induces new travel from distant areas. Alternatively, when new housing is built close to shopping, job opportunities, schools, and other key destinations it tends to reduce the distance people travel and make transportation options such as transit, biking, walking, and rolling more feasible. The combination of these and other related factors have resulted in the existing unique and diverse land use patterns of the region and its communities and the resulting transportation and GHG emissions that Connect SoCal is intended to address. See Maps 2.5 - 2.7 for details on existing employment, households and land use.

The patterns that characterize our communities largely come down to housing and households. Over half of the region's 6.6 million housing units were built before 1980. For the purposes of Connect SoCal 2024, the category of "multi-family" residential units includes attached residences such as apartments, condominiums and townhouses. (Note: townhomes are defined by the State of California Department of Finance and the U.S. Census Bureau as single-family attached homes.) The predominant form of new housing construction has fluctuated over time—a function of the number of people entering their 20s and 30s (the main household formation years) and other aspects of the housing market such as land availability. The region's peak housing production years during the 1980s were associated with a multifamily building boom. Total units and multifamily units dropped precipitously during the 1990s, but single-family production in particular grew steadily until about 2006, when the Great Recession started to impact the housing market. Single-family housing production fell so greatly that in 2008, it only made up 43 percent of new units. Housing production continued to favor multifamily housing until 2016. Since then, annual production numbers have been fairly well balanced between single-family and multifamily housing, while total production gradually increased in most years. In a high-cost urban megaregion with decreasing family sizes,

## FIGURE 2.1 SCAG Region Building Permits Issued




SCAG Connect SoCal 2024

*Source: State of the Cities Data Systems (SOCDS), U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development*

the predominance of single-family housing results in limited land available for new construction, putting homeownership more out of reach for low- and moderate-income households, while also increasing overcrowding rates and travel distances. That's why a mix of housing types offers both regional transportation and community benefits.

Overall, whether single-family or multifamily units, the total amount of housing production has historically lagged behind our growing population. Five decades ago, the SCAG region produced one new housing unit for every 1.7 persons added to the population. By the 1990s, the ratio decreased to one new unit for every 4.8 persons added. While the ratio has steadily increased over the past two decades, this indicator suggests the region has not been building enough units over decades. Beyond planning challenges, the availability of land and the cost of building residential units are other primary barriers to meeting housing need. Not only does it include construction costs, such as the cost of land, materials and labor, but local land use entitlement processes and environmental requirements can also add cost to the process. While the region's population is expected to grow modestly, household sizes are expected to decrease substantially. This is due to aging—seniors generally live in one or two-person households—as well as the expectation that increased housing production begins to alleviate the region's high level of household overcrowding. Smaller households on average explain why housing demand can continue to increase despite slow population growth. A successful Plan needs to address housing need from anticipated population growth while also accounting for past undersupply.

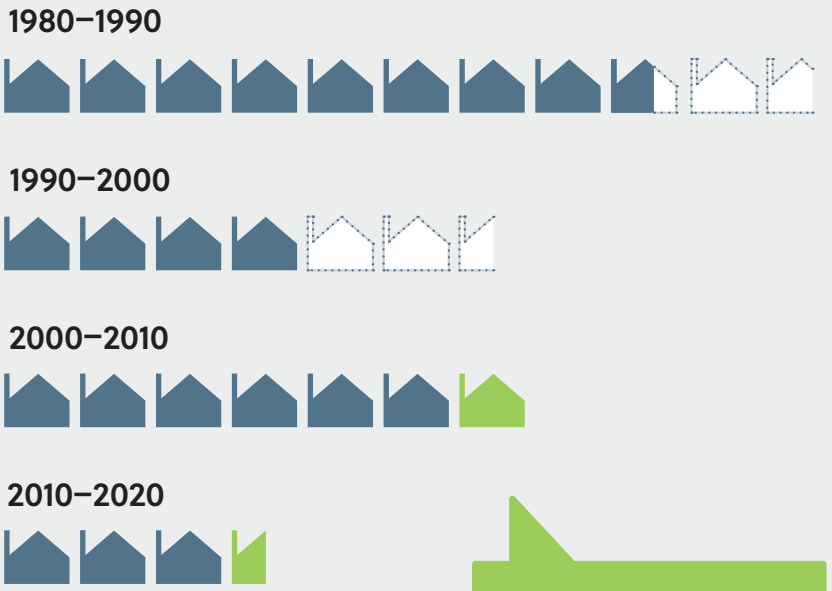
**LET'S GET TECHNICAL**

*Looking for greater detail on the housing issue? The Housing Technical Report, Demographic and Growth Forecast Technical Report and the Land Use and Communities Technical Report can help.*

**CONNECT SOCAL 2024: TAKE A CLOSER LOOK**

## Housing Supply and Population Growth

As the region's population grows, more housing units are needed to keep up with the growing demand.




*Source: U.S. Decennial Census, 1980–2020. Three persons per housing unit assumed, equivalent to the SCAG regional average household size since 2000. Each house represents 100,000 new housing units. The above figures illustrate the housing need but are not a specific estimate of housing need.*

**CONNECT SOCAL 2024: TAKE A CLOSER LOOK**

## Our Communities

The SCAG region is home to nearly 19 million people who live in a diverse range of communities. The over six million households are spread across a mix of single-family and multifamily homes.

**POPULATION**
**18,828,000**

**EMPLOYMENT**
**8,976,000**

**HOUSEHOLDS**
**6,193,000**

*Source: SCAG 2023, 2019 data*

### Housing Stock

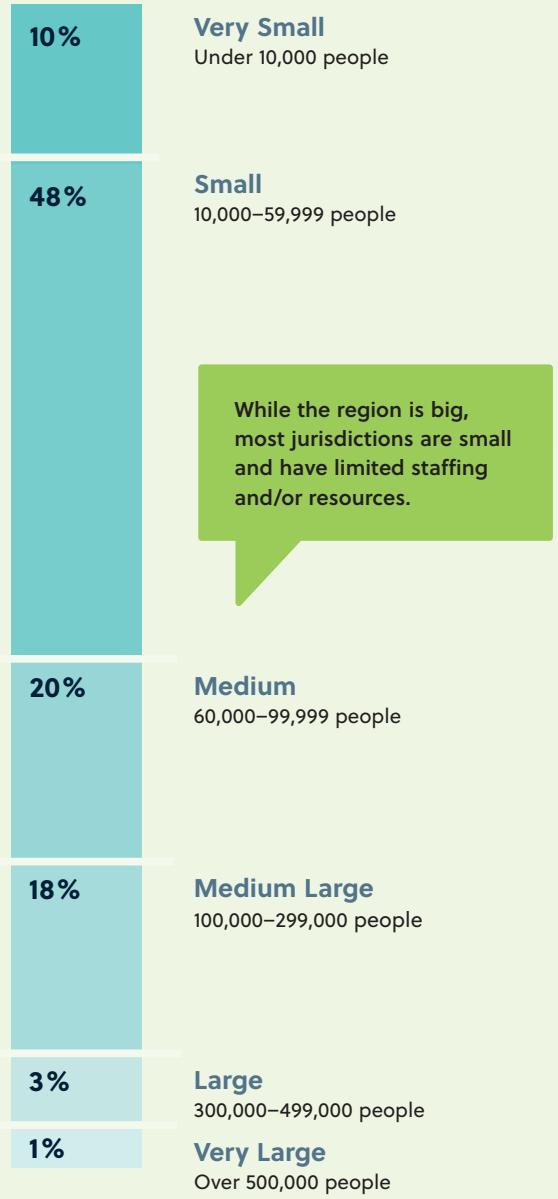
**54%**
**SINGLE-FAMILY HOMES**

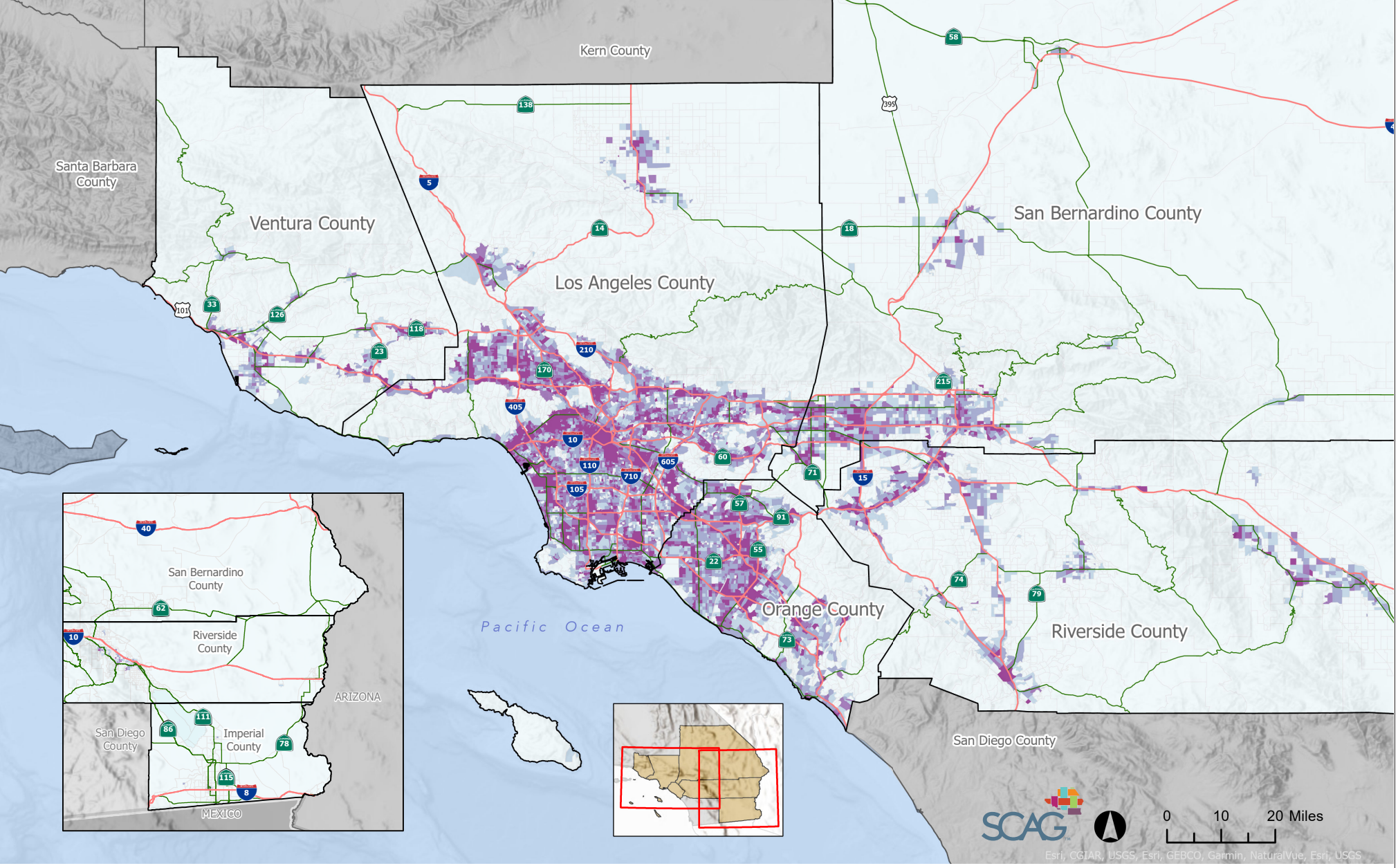
**46%**
**MULTIFAMILY HOMES**

Since 2011, multifamily development has outpaced single-family development, leading to a more balanced mix of housing stock.

*Source: 2021 American Community Survey 1-year samples, Table DP04*

### SCAG Jurisdictions by Population

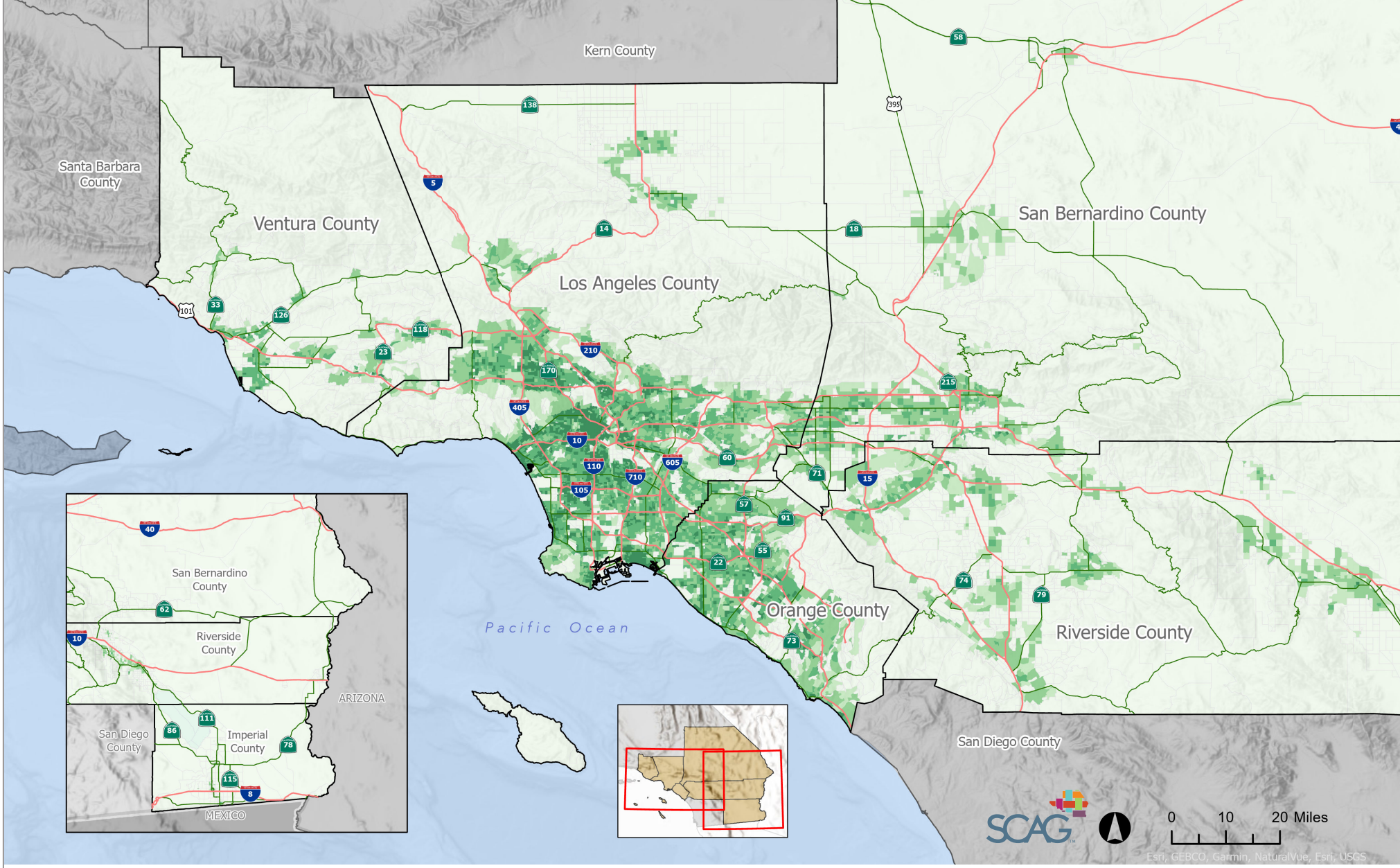





SCAG: Connect SoCal 2024 **MAP 2.5** **2019 Employment Density by TAZ (Jobs per Square Mile)**

- Less than or Equal to 500
- 501 to 1,000
- 1,000 to 2,500
- 2,500 to 5,000
- Greater than 5,000
- Freeway/Toll Road
- Other State Highway
- SCAG Counties

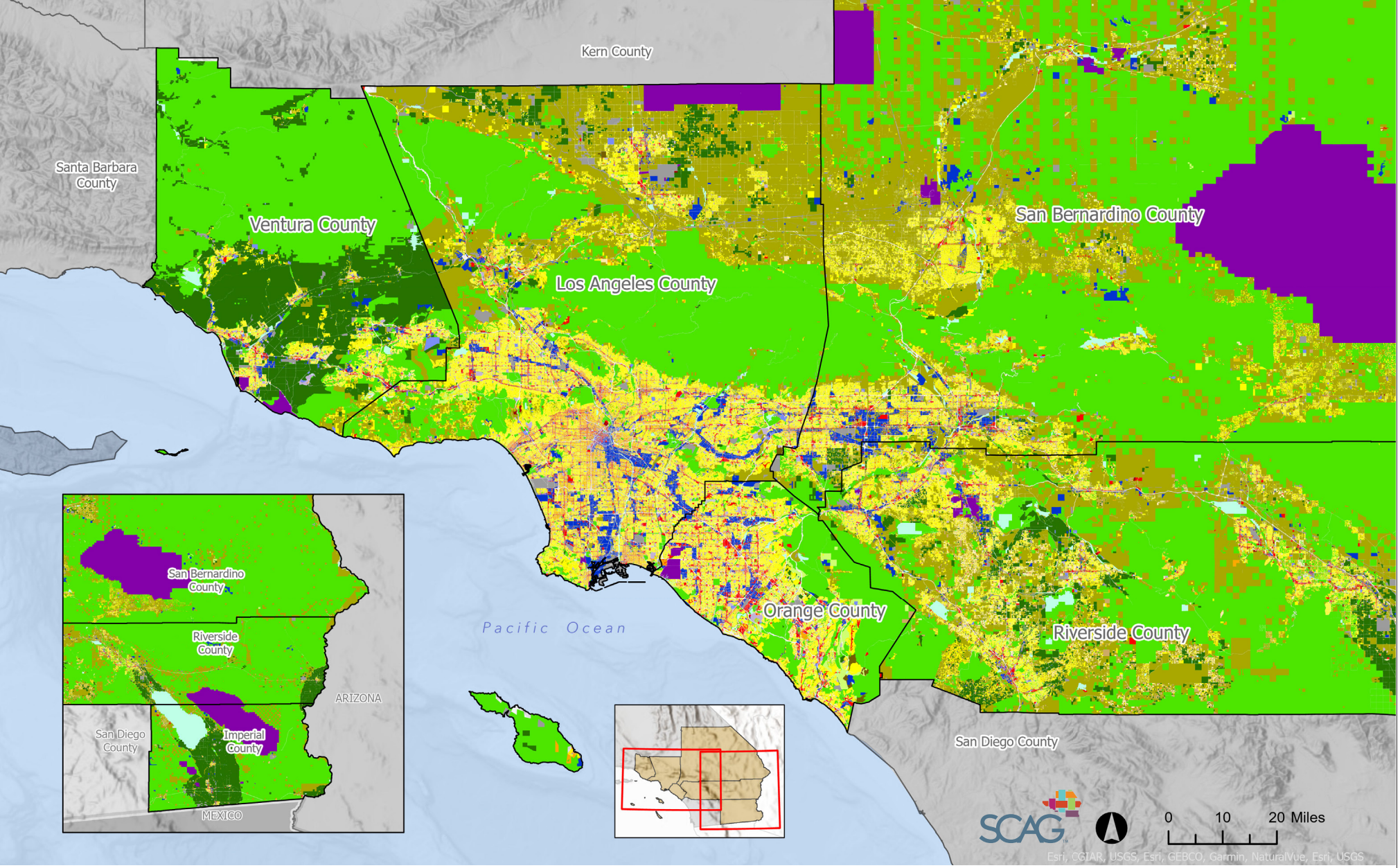
Source: SCAG 2023. TAZ refers to Transportation Analysis Zone (City/split Tier 2).




SCAG: Connect SoCal 2024 **MAP 2.6** **2019 Household Density by TAZ (Households per Square Mile)**

- Less than or Equal to 500
- 501 to 1,000
- 1,001 to 2,500
- 2,501 to 5,000
- Greater than 5,000
- Freeway/Toll Road
- Other State Highway
- SCAG Counties

Source: SCAG 2023. TAZ refers to Transportation Analysis Zone (City/split Tier 2).




## SCAG: Connect SoCal 2024 **MAP 2.7** **2019 Existing Land Use (SCAG Land Use Codes)**

- Single Family Residential
- Multi-Family Residential
- Mobile Homes and Trailer Parks
- Mixed Residential
- Rural Residential
- General Office
- Commercial and Services
- Facilities
- Education
- Military Installations
- Industrial
- Transportation, Communications, and Utilities
- Mixed Commercial and Industrial
- Mixed Residential and Commercial
- Open Space and Recreation
- Agriculture
- Vacant
- Water
- Specific Plan
- Under Construction
- Undevelopable
- Unknown
- SCAG Counties

Source: SCAG 2023. Please note that existing land use data shown in the map represents an approximation of local conditions as of 2019. SCAG shall not be responsible for user's misuse or misrepresentation of this map. For authoritative data on these subjects, please contact the respective local jurisdiction directly. For more information on SCAG's Land Use Codes, please visit the appendix of the Land Use and Communities Technical Report.

**CONNECT SOCAL 2024: HOUSING**

## Current Conditions

Southern California's housing crisis has been decades in the making. Despite market fluctuations, housing production has not kept up with demand. Years of underbuilding has resulted in a shortfall in the number of units needed to house the region and created issues such as cost burden and overcrowding. This also results in people living farther from where they work, necessitating long commutes and often contributing to regional congestion and pollution.

A lack of housing, including affordable housing, can lead to a variety of problems that affect our society at different levels. However, the impacts of the housing crisis are disproportionately burdensome on underserved communities, such as low-income households and communities of color. Historically, inequitable policies at all levels of government have led to the concerning disparities we see today.

The quantitative impacts of the housing crisis, such as overcrowding, cost burden and low home ownership, disproportionately burden communities of color. Addressing the housing shortage not only means increasing housing supply, it also means addressing equity and historic segregation patterns. Approaching the housing crisis through this lens is necessary for advancing equity and diversity across the region. Understanding the disparities resulting from historical inequities is central to SCAG's work as a regional planning organization—and is essential for successfully planning for a more racially just and equitable future. Over the past few years, SCAG has developed a regional housing program to address the needs of our region and, for the first time, a housing technical report is included in Connect SoCal.

**HOUSING STOCK IN THE SCAG REGION**

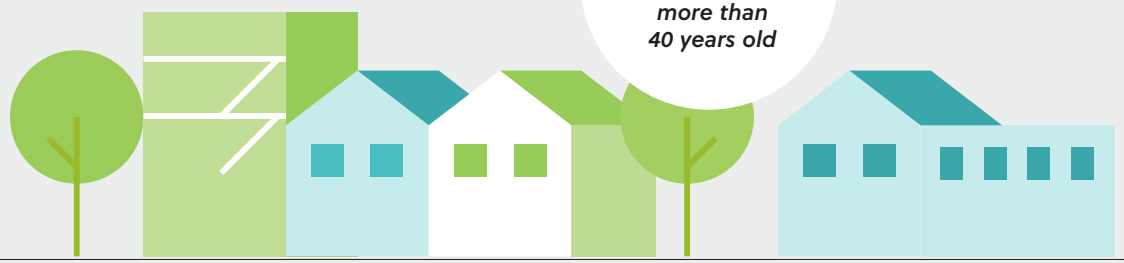
**6,622,509**

**UNITS**

**>50%**

**BUILT BEFORE 1980**

***more than 40 years old***



**LET'S GET TECHNICAL**

*To read more about the existing housing conditions in the SCAG region, the challenges in addressing these issues and affirmative strategies that seek to counter the impacts of historic practices, check out the Housing Technical Report.*

# Key Community Challenges

**Housing Affordability:** The desirability of the region has long influenced a higher than national-average home price. However, the lagging behind of housing production and stagnation of median incomes have exacerbated housing affordability in the region. The conventional indicator of housing affordability is the percentage of household income spent on housing. For example, housing expenditures that exceed 30 percent of household income have historically been viewed as an indicator of a housing affordability problem, both for rental and owner-occupied housing. Households that spend more than 30 percent of their income on housing are considered cost-burdened and will have less income to spend on both essential needs, such as food and transportation, and discretionary purchases. In 2012, 57 percent of SCAG-region renters spent more than 30 percent of their income on housing. By 2019, this figure dropped to 53.4 percent but climbed back to 55 percent by 2021. Severe cost burden, defined as households that spend at least 50 percent of their income on housing, represented 30.8 percent of all renters and decreased to 29.8 percent in 2021.

**Unhoused Population:** Communities across the region are grappling with an increase of unhoused neighbors. According to California Continuums of Care (CoC), the homeless count for CoCs across the SCAG region was 53,729 in 2012 and jumped to almost 85,000 in 2022, an increase of 58 percent over the last decade. During the Connect SoCal 2024 public outreach and engagement process, many people raised this as one of the top concerns facing the region and emphasized how this challenge spills over into other real or perceived quality-of-life concerns, such as access to sidewalks and safety on transit. While Connect SoCal does not directly examine or address the complex factors or solutions needed to understand and address homelessness, it is important to reflect this challenge in relationship to broader housing and transportation needs.

A recent comprehensive study on the California homelessness crisis found that the majority (89 percent) of unhoused persons lived in California prior to becoming unhoused. The top three economic reasons include lost or reduced income, housing costs were too high, or person was stolen from or was the victim of a scam, while the top three social reasons include conflict among residents, person didn't want to impose/wanted own space, and conflict with property owner. The story of homelessness is a story of high housing costs and lack of options when housing is lost.[17]

**Out-migration:** While the region typically loses more residents to other states and counties than it gains, domestic out-migration increased notably early in the pandemic. While slow or negative growth can reduce projected housing need, domestic out-migration reflects the inability of Southern Californians to stay in the communities they call home. Out-migration is one economic response to a too-small housing supply, alongside overcrowding, cost burden, becoming unhoused, and the suppression of life-cycle ambitions (e.g., household formation and homeownership). This presents itself as a challenge to fostering resilient social and economic systems within the region's communities.

**Growing Sustainably, Slowly:** The region can and has made progress in promoting land use patterns, including substantial housing growth, that do not consume natural lands or induce excessive travel demand. Given the diversity across the region, the evolution of how much each community will change between today and 2050 varies. However, regionwide, most of the housing and built environment that we will have in 2050 exists today. Turning the tide on long-standing land use patterns and transportation investments can take a long time, where implementation follows years of planning. This means that even though newer development is trending to be more sustainable than in the past, the pace of progress may be slower than needed.

**LET'S GET TECHNICAL**

*See the Housing and Demographics and Growth Forecast Technical Reports for more detailed information.*

# ENVIRONMENT

## Overview

**What is the health of our people and environment?** Despite significant improvements over the last several decades, the SCAG region still has some of the worst air quality in the country. Poor local air quality and the lack of dependable transportation options, active transportation, affordable housing, health care and job opportunities in many SCAG region communities can lead to poor health outcomes. The region is already facing the impacts of climate change, including extreme heat and severe wildfires. Heat-related events occurring from 2010 to 2019 resulted in more than 53,000 emergency room visits, 7,000 hospitalizations, and 600 deaths in California. Indicators show that the number and intensity of extreme-heat health events will worsen drastically throughout the state by midcentury. Extreme heat causes drier landscapes, which then make wildfires and drought more likely and extreme. In 2020, California experienced a record number of dry heat days due to a changing climate and had over 6,000 fires that burned millions of acres, making that year the largest wildfire season recorded in the state's modern history. Economic costs from wildfires include resources involved in fighting the fires, damage to property, health care bills, disrupted business costs, lost tax revenue, and decreased property values—and were estimated to be $10 billion in 2020.

Natural lands offer important benefits to the region, including capturing carbon emissions and recharging groundwater resources. However, natural lands have decreased by roughly 50,000 acres, or 0.2 percent, between 2012 and 2019. Farmland decreased by 40,000 acres, or 3.5 percent, between 2012 and 2018. While farming practices can contribute to GHG emissions, these are typically far less than emissions in urban environments, and farm and grazing lands can provide co-benefits such as wildlife habitats, flood control and groundwater recharge. Our agricultural sector generates $12.8 billion (2023 $US) average annual output each year and employs an average of 53,000 workers.

As the region faces unprecedented challenges, it is important to coordinate regional land use and transportation strategies. It is also essential to address Southern California's growth and sustainability challenges in order to protect the SCAG region's natural resources and reduce future risks from climate change.

## Key Environmental Challenges

**Climate Change:** This challenge includes increased wildfires, flooding, extreme heat, drought, sea-level rise and heavy storms, among other hazards. These impacts influence public health, communities, natural systems and the economy, as well as how we travel if there are disruptions and damages to our transportation system.

**Poor Air Quality and Related Health Impacts:** Across the SCAG region, transportation and land use decisions are shaping neighborhoods while also influencing the health outcomes of residents. The way a community is designed impacts the likelihood that a person will bike or walk to school, work or local shops; have access to healthy food or parks; and breathe air free of pollutants. Conditions in the places where people are born, live, learn, work and play are known as the Social Determinants of Health (SDOH), and they help explain why some health outcomes (e.g., rates of asthma or diabetes) vary widely across the region. To improve health outcomes and reduce these inequities, it is critical to consider public health in integrated land use and transportation planning such as through meeting federal air quality standards. (For more details, see Chapter 5 for SCAG's transportation conformity, the Supplementals section for the South Coast Air Quality Management District's Contingency Measure Plan, and the Goods Movement Technical Report Section 5.2 for goods movement related air quality.)

**Loss of Open Space:** The urbanization of the region over the past several decades has led to the consumption of hundreds of thousands of acres of natural land and farmland. The diverse natural landscapes of Southern California are an invaluable asset to the millions of people, native plants and animal species that call the SCAG region home.

CONNECT SOCAL 2024: TAKE A CLOSER LOOK

## The Health of Our Environment

Our choices about where to live or how to travel impact the quality of our environment. At the same time, the region is subject to a changing environment due to climate change.

### Communities at Risk

Many homes in the region are at risk of climate-related hazards.

**~200,000**
HOMES IN 100-YR FLOOD PLAINS

**~1,000,000**
HOMES IN FIRE HAZARD ZONES

### Resilience Challenges

The region is home to a diverse range of natural lands and a robust agricultural sector; but, conversion of these lands to other uses over time has reduced agricultural production and recreational opportunities in the region.

IN LESS THAN 10 YEARS, WE HAVE LOST:

**40,000**
ACRES OF FARMLAND

**50,000**
ACRES OF NATURAL LANDS

### Air Quality


Air quality has steadily improved but still poses health risks to residents and can worsen due to extreme heat from climate change.

*Notes:*
*1. The 2015 8-hour ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) at 70 parts per billion (ppb).*
*2. South Coast Air Basin data for illustrative purposes. Days equals basin-days, which represents the number of days the 2015 8-hour ozone NAAQS was exceeded.*

# ECONOMY

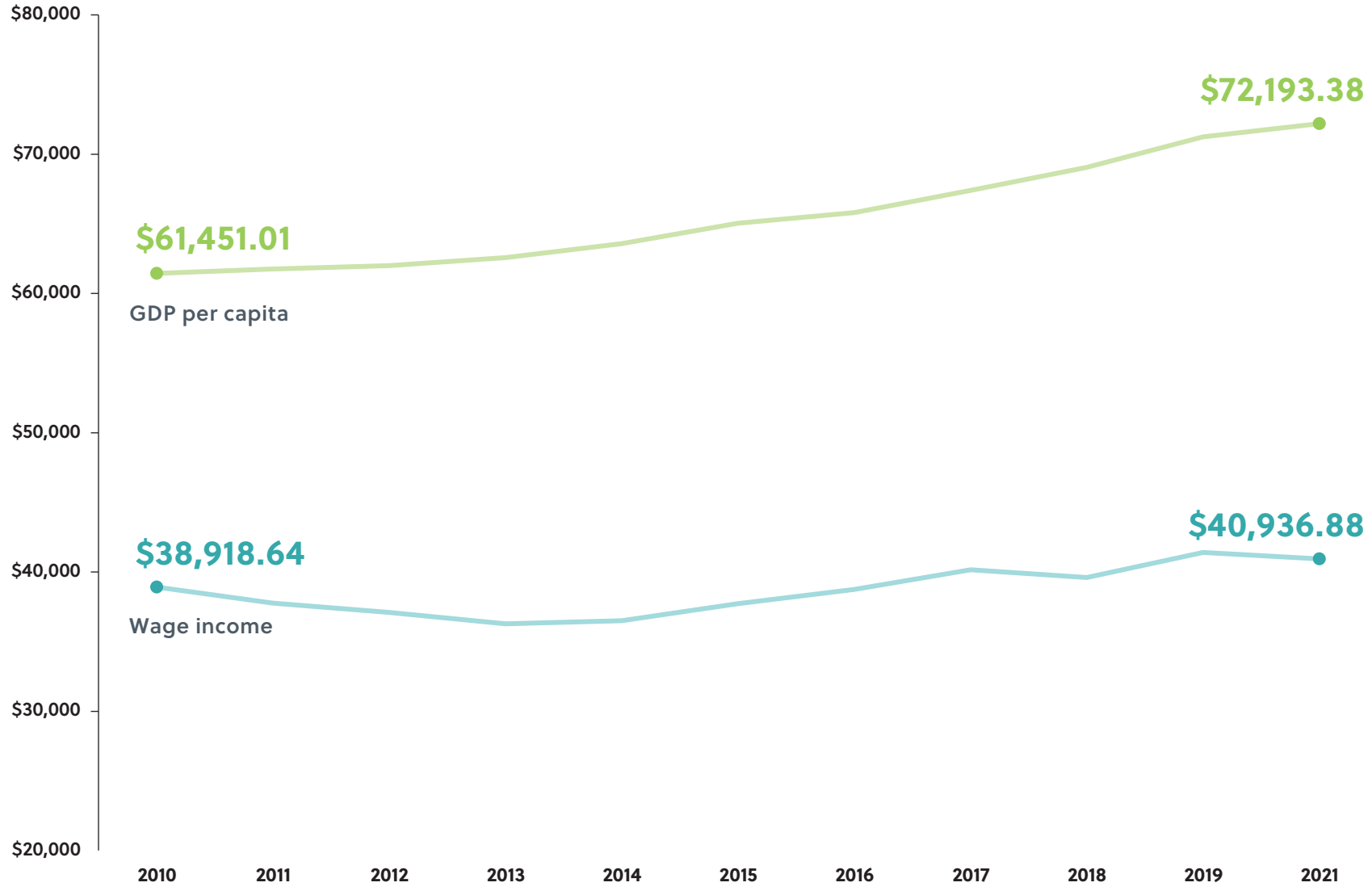
## Overview

**What is the state of the regional economy?** SCAG's economic base is well diversified, from specialty manufacturing to logistics to the entertainment industry. The healthcare sector (NAICS 62) makes up the single-largest industry sector in the region, representing nearly 15 percent of SCAG employment in 2022. The information sector (NAICS 51) added the most jobs between 2021 and 2022, increasing the industry share of employment from 3.2 percent in 2021 to 4 percent in 2022. The region's ports are a global gateway to the rest of the U.S. Combined, the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach terminals handle 35 percent of all waterborne containers entering and exiting the U.S., while the Port of Hueneme serves as a leading U.S. port for autos and fresh produce. Global supply chains are interconnected, and changes in one area have subsequent and far-reaching ripple effects on transportation networks. This is especially true in the SCAG region, which serves as the premier trade gateway for the U.S.—and which ranks in the global top 10. See Map 2.8 for more details on the existing regional goods movement system.

Between 2010 and 2021, real per capita gross domestic product (GDP) in the SCAG region increased by 17.5 percent (see Figure 2.2). Real per capita GDP is an indicator of the standard of living in a region. Higher per capita GDP means a region is producing more goods and services per person, and growth in per capita GDP suggests we have growing job opportunities and increasing productivity. The SCAG region's GDP grew faster than the U.S., which saw a 14 percent increase in real per capita GDP. However, SCAG region real per capita GDP growth was three times the growth in median real-wage income, which grew only 5.2 percent over the same period. Median real-wage income measures typical worker purchasing power. This disparity in growth between real per capita GDP and median real-wage income suggests that economic growth in the region is concentrated among a subset (upper income) of the population in the economy. Communities in the SCAG region that depend primarily on wage income have not enjoyed the income growth suggested by the growth in GDP.

The COVID-19 pandemic and related disruptions also highlighted vulnerabilities in our economy. Disruptions in the supply chain put a strain on both the global and local network. Stay-at-home orders, often not applicable to occupations concentrated with lower-income workers, further exacerbated the impacts from the digital divide and highlighted the importance of reliable internet access for shopping and attending school, work and medical appointments.

## FIGURE 2.2 GDP per capita and Median Wage Income, 2010–2021




SCAG Connect SoCal 2024

*Notes: Wage income computed for adults (age 25+) in the labor force from ACS Public Use Microdata Sample, 1-Year Samples 2010-2019, 2021. GDP per capita from REMI. Figures inflated to 2022 dollars using the Consumer Price Index for Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim MSA.*

**CONNECT SOCAL 2024: TAKE A CLOSER LOOK**

# Economic Trends in the Region

The COVID-19 pandemic and related disruptions highlighted vulnerabilities in our economy. Though the region's economic base is well diversified, it may not benefit all people in the region equally.

## Digital Divide

The Internet, computer and smartphones have provided unprecedented access to information and helped transform our relationship to transportation—but there's a digital divide.

**10%** of people who live in the region do not have access to the internet

**70%** of the 10% are concentrated in low-income households

*Source: 2021 CETF-USC Statewide Broadband Adoption Survey and U.S. Census Bureau, 2016–2020 ACS 5-Year Estimates*

## Goods Movement

Southern California has the largest container port complex in the United States, and includes three deep-water ports. The region is also home to major border crossings with Mexico, air cargo facilities and an extensive roadway and rail network. This network supports two billion industrial square feet for manufacturing and warehouse and distribution facilities.

### CHANGES AND CHALLENGES

#### Supply Chain Volatility

While shipment levels are back to pre-pandemic trends, freight supply chains are still grappling with constraints and degrees of instability.

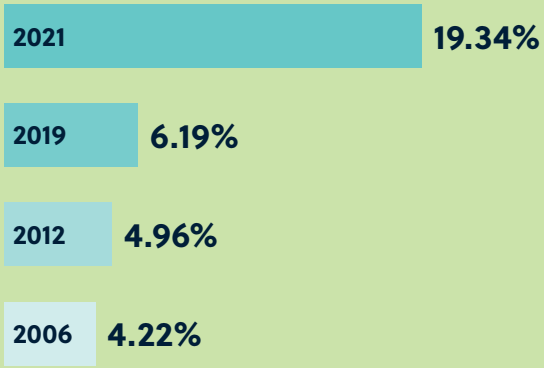
#### Regulatory Requirements

State regulations require the transition of trucks and locomotives to clean technologies. Challenges related to timing and scalability of technology have economic considerations for the industry.

#### Community Impacts

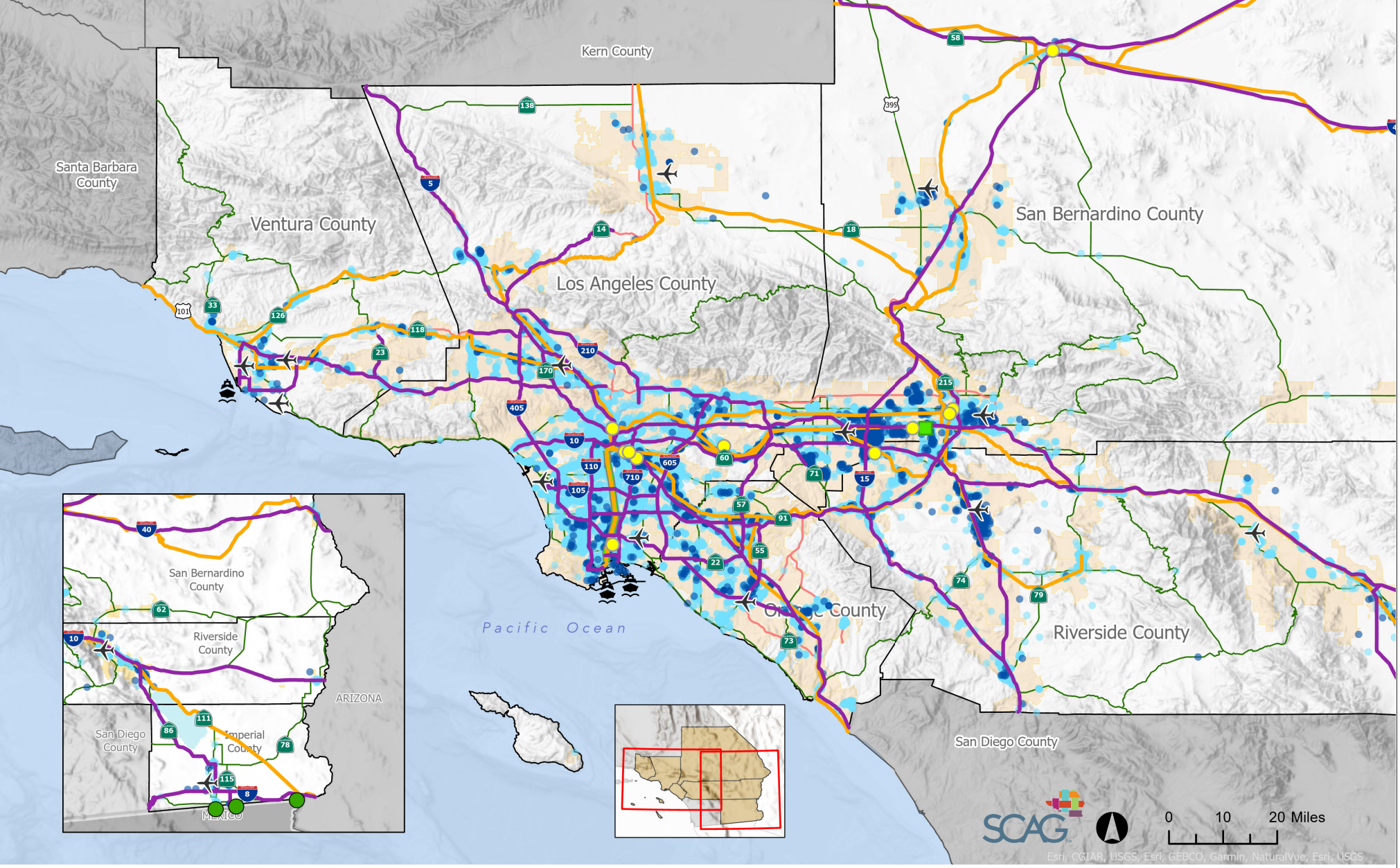
Solving the complex and interrelated community and environmental issues surrounding goods movement will require new approaches that consider public health, safety, clean technology and workforce development.

**Work From Home** *(percentage of workers age 16+)*




Working from home has rapidly increased since the pandemic, but not all jobs can be remote, and more analysis is needed to better understand this evolving trend.

*Source: American Community Survey (2006, 2012, 2019 and 2021) 1-year samples, Table DP04*




SCAG: Connect SoCal 2024 **MAP 2.8 Existing Regional Goods Movement System**

- Airports
- Ports
- Ports of Entry
- Intermodal Facilities
- Classification Facilities
- Alameda Corridor
- Main Line Rail
- Major Freight Highway Corridors
- Warehouses
  - < 50,000 sq ft
  - >= 50,000 sq ft
- Freeway
- Other State Highway
- SCAG Counties

Source: SCAG, CoStar Group, Inc.

## 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.

SCAG resolutions include:

- Resolution on Commitment to Advancing Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in Southern California (July 2020)
- Climate Change Action Resolution (January 2021)
- Resolution for SCAG to Bridge the Digital Divide in Underserved Communities (February 2021)
- Water Action Resolution (October 2022)
- Goods Movement Supply Chain Resolution (March 2023)
- Regional Complete Streets Policy (March 2023)
- Clean Technology Policy (April 2023)

**Federal funding administration:** SCAG prepares the Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP) every two years to implement projects and programs listed in the Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS). As part of preparing the FTIP, SCAG ensures that included projects further the goals in Connect SoCal and assist the region in advancing key performance measures. Additionally, SCAG plays a critical role in project selection, programming and administration of certain federal formula and discretionary funds available to the region. Specific state and federal funding areas where SCAG plays a key role include:

- Carbon Reduction Program
- Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program
- Federal Highway Administration Discretionary Funds
- Federal Transit Administration Formula Funds
- Surface Transportation Block Grants
- Trade Corridor Enhancement Program
- Active Transportation Program

**Data collection, analysis and research:** To understand the region and help further policy advancement, SCAG leads and facilitates research in land use and transportation. Regional studies completed since the adoption of Connect SoCal 2020 include:

- Last-Mile Freight Delivery Study (October 2020)
- Wilmington Freight Mitigation Study (January 2021)
- Accessory Dwelling Unit Potential in the SCAG Region (June 2021)
- Mobility Innovations and Pricing (March 2022)
- Curb Space Management Study (June 2022)
- SCAG Region Value Pricing – Regional Express Network: Concept of Operations (June 2022)
- Mobility as a Service Feasibility White Paper (July 2022)
- Other-To-Residential Toolkit (July 2022)
- Racial Equity Baseline Conditions Report (November 2022)
- Integrated Passenger and Freight Rail Forecast (December 2022)
- COVID-19 Mobility Study – SCAG & UC Davis (2023)
- SoCal Goods Movement Communities Opportunities Assessment (2023)
- Electric Vehicle Charging Station Study (February 2023)
- Regional Dedicated Transit Lanes Study (April 2023)
- Clean Technology Compendium (September 2023)

## Local Technical Assistance Resources:

**Local Information Services Program:** Responding to the needs of local jurisdictions, SCAG has initiated the Local Information Services Program by providing tools, resources, technical assistance and training to local jurisdictions to support local planning projects. The program consists of three major services, which benefit local jurisdictions: Toolbox Tuesday Technical Webinars, Local Information Services Team (LIST) and GIS training services. The program has also created tools like the Safety Hub and the Housing Element Parcel Tool (HELPR). Overall, the purpose of the program is to:

1. Improve internal and external collaboration, education and engagement
2. Promote SCAG's available tools and resources
3. Provide personalized one-on-one (1:1) technical assistance to local jurisdictions
4. Enhance staff planning knowledge and technical capabilities

**Go Human:** To address the safety of people walking and biking in the region's transportation network, SCAG created the *Go Human* campaign, an award-winning community engagement program with the goals of reducing traffic collisions and encouraging people to walk and bike more in the SCAG region. With support from the California Office of Traffic Safety, SCAG's *Go Human* program has implemented four rounds of grant-funding opportunities since 2018, helping local organizations create and lead traffic-safety projects. With more than $893,000 distributed through grant funds in the SCAG region, *Go Human* funding has supported 106 traffic-safety projects and reached more than 981,000 people. In April 2023, *Go Human* launched its Community Hubs Program, which offers funding opportunities for community organizations to implement local traffic-safety and community-engagement strategies that leverage community gathering and resource sites or networks. The program aims to build street-level community resiliency and increase the safety of populations that have historically been and/or are currently most harmed by traffic injuries and fatalities, including Black, Indigenous and people of color; people with disabilities; and frontline workers, particularly those walking and biking.

**Sustainable Communities Program:** SCAG helps to advance Connect SoCal through the Sustainable Communities Program (SCP), which has facilitated over $16.9 million in funding to local jurisdictions since the adoption of Connect SoCal in 2020. This adds to the $17 million in funding to local jurisdictions through the SCP between the adoption of the 2016 RTP/SCS and Connect SoCal 2020. The funding program's goals are to provide needed planning resources to local jurisdictions so they can plan for active and multimodal transportation, sustainable land use and affordable housing—all to support the implementation of Connect SoCal and increase the region's competitiveness for federal and state funds. See Table 2.1 for the projects funded since 2020.

**Regional Early Action Program:** On July 5, 2023, SCAG was awarded $237 million from the California Department of Housing and Community Development. This was part of the Regional Early Action 2.0 program to accelerate progress toward state housing goals and climate commitments through a strengthened partnership between the state, its regions and local entities. These resources will enable SCAG to fund projects and programs that support Connect SoCal implementation.

# Plan Implementation

Since Connect SoCal was adopted in 2020, transportation agencies and local jurisdictions have taken actions that implement the Plan.

In housing, we have seen the positive impact that funding, collaboration, capacity building and action at the local level can have to spur housing policies that align with increased housing production and the Connect SoCal growth vision. In March 2021, SCAG adopted its 6th cycle Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA)—based on Connect SoCal 2020's growth vision—by allocating units to cities and counties with the greatest job and transit access. To assist local jurisdictions through the RHNA and local housing plan—or housing element—update processes, the state created the Regional Early Action Planning (REAP) program in 2019 and the REAP 2.0 program in 2021. These actions represent the first time the state provided funding to regions to conduct the RHNA program and support regional housing-planning efforts.

Over the past three years, SCAG has used its REAP 1 grant funding to provide technical assistance to local jurisdictions, create development streamlining initiatives and develop a housing leadership academy, all to stimulate housing development in the Southern California region. These planning efforts are already paying dividends, with 137 of the SCAG region's cities and counties having fully compliant housing elements. These 137 housing elements represent newly identified, developable sites for over one million new housing units in Southern California across all affordability levels. The adoption of housing elements across the region is a clear indication of how the region can realize the Connect SoCal growth vision.

In transportation, SCAG adopted the 2023 Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP). SCAG prepares the FTIP every two years to implement projects and programs listed in the Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS). The FTIP identifies specific funding sources and fund amounts for each project, with the purpose of implementing Connect SoCal. Since Connect SoCal was adopted in 2020, SCAG has gained new responsibility for the selection of transportation projects to be funded with federal revenue sources, such as CMAQs, STBG and CRP. SCAG's project selection process follows a performance-based evaluation and selection approach—and ensures that selected projects further Connect SoCal goals.

**Over the past three years, SCAG has used its 2019 Regional Early Action Program (REAP 1) grant funding to provide technical assistance to local jurisdictions, create development streamlining initiatives and develop a housing leadership academy—all to stimulate housing development in Southern California.**

Since 2020, several projects have been implemented, including but not limited to:

- **Redlands Rail Arrow Service in San Bernardino County:** The Arrow service is a new, nine-mile corridor operating between downtown San Bernardino and the University of Redlands and includes four new stations. Metrolink commuter rail also runs one roundtrip along this corridor as an extension of its San Bernardino Line to the downtown Redlands station.
- **LA Metro Crenshaw/LAX Light Rail:** Now in operation, the K Line connects to the Metro E Line (Expo), which travels between East Los Angeles and Santa Monica. In 2024, the K Line will also connect to the new LAX/Metro Transit Center Station, the new Aviation/Century Station and the Metro C Line (Green).
- **LA Metro Regional Connector:** In June 2023, Metro opened a rail line that provides a seamless journey from Azusa to Long Beach and from East Los Angeles to Santa Monica through the downtown Los Angeles core. The project includes three new underground stations between Little Tokyo and the Arts District and 7th Street/Metro Center Station.
- **Metrolink's Southern California Optimized Rail Expansion (SCORE) Program:** Elements of Metrolink's SCORE program are currently being implemented. It includes new grade crossings, station and signal improvements, and track additions that will allow much greater bi-directional train frequency and accelerate progress toward its zero-emissions future. Examples of projects include the Simi Valley Double Track, Chatsworth Station improvements, El Monte Siding Extension Project and Rancho Cucamonga Siding Extension Project. In addition, the state of California will deliver high-speed rail service from San Francisco to Los Angeles/Anaheim in the future, and Brightline West will operate high-speed rail service between Las Vegas, the Victor Valley and Rancho Cucamonga by the end of the decade.
- **Aten Bike Path Project (City of Imperial):** Located on Aten Boulevard from Dogwood Road to Puerto Vallarta Avenue in the City of Imperial is an eight-foot-wide paved bike path, striping and signage for approximately one mile, and bike lanes and signage for another half mile. The project closes an active-transportation gap between a dense residential neighborhood and Imperial Valley College.
- **San Pablo Corridor Improvements (City of Palm Desert):** Following a SCAG-funded, 10-day demonstration event in 2016, the City of Palm Desert secured funding to install bicycle and pedestrian improvements along San Pablo Avenue. The improvements included a roadway reconfiguration that reduced vehicle lanes to add wider sidewalks, shade trees, street furniture, center median vehicle parking, three roundabouts and a separated bikeway.
- **Civic Center Bicycle Boulevard Project (City of Santa Ana):** The project was identified in the Downtown Santa Ana Complete Streets Plan (funded by SCAG in 2014). The City of Santa Ana secured Active Transportation Program funding to implement a bicycle boulevard along the Civic Center corridor in Downtown Santa Ana between the Civic Center and the Metrolink Station. The City installed pedestrian crossing improvements at seven intersections, including crosswalks, curb extensions and curb ramps. Additionally, the City installed four roundabouts and bikeway markings with signage along the corridor to reduce vehicle speeds and volumes.
- **Conejo School Road and Willow Lane Sidewalk and Bike Lanes Project (City of Thousand Oaks):** Located along Conejo School Road and Willow Lane from Hampshire Road to Hillcrest Drive in the City of Thousand Oaks, the City addressed a gap in its sidewalk network and installed one mile of bike lanes and signage.

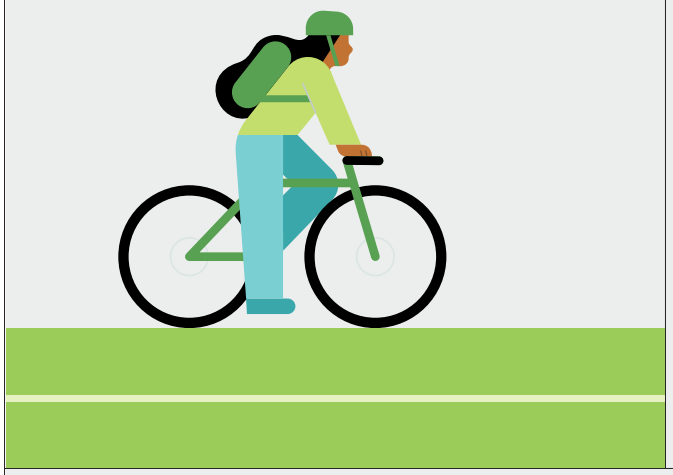
- **Maine Avenue and Pacific Avenue Corridor Complete Streets Improvement (City of Baldwin Park):** Located along Maine Avenue and Pacific Avenue in the City of Baldwin Park, the City installed high-visibility crosswalks, pedestrian ramps and curb extensions. The City also reconfigured the corridor by removing a travel lane in each direction to install a protected Class IV bikeway for the entire length of the corridor.
- **I-8 Imperial Avenue Interchange (City of El Centro):** Caltrans undertook reconstruction of the I-8 interchange at Imperial Avenue to replace two lanes with a standard four-lane overcrossing to provide improved access to Imperial Avenue.
- **I-15 Express Lanes (Riverside County):** The 15 miles of I-15 Express Lanes opened for service in April 2021. The Riverside County Transportation Commission, in partnership with Caltrans and the Federal Highway Administration, added two express lanes in each direction to the I-15 and extended them from State Route 60 near the San Bernardino County line to Cajalco Road in the City of Corona.
- **Long Beach International Gateway Bridge:** Originally known as the Gerald Desmond Bridge Replacement Project, this new bridge opened in October 2020 to connect Terminal Island with Downtown Long Beach. The bridge includes traffic lanes, a higher clearance to accommodate larger cargo ships and a dedicated bicycle path and pedestrian walkway.
- **I-405 Improvements (Orange County):** Orange County Transportation Authority in cooperation with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) improved 16 miles of the San Diego Freeway (I-405) between State Route 73 (SR-73) and Interstate 605 (I-605). Improvements included new express lanes from SR-73 to I-605, improved interchanges, and rebuilt overpasses with new bike lanes and sidewalks.

**Since Connect SoCal was adopted in 2020, SCAG gained responsibility for the selection of transportation projects to be funded with federal revenue. SCAG's project selection process follows a performance-based evaluation and selection approach—and ensures that selected projects further Connect SoCal goals.**

**CONNECT SOCAL 2024: RECENT PLANS AND PROJECTS**

## Sustainable Communities

The following snapshots feature recent Sustainable Communities Program plans and projects completed in the region. The type of plans and projects funded can vary depending on the focus of each call for applications. Recent calls have included a focus on Smart Cities & Mobility Innovations; Housing & Sustainable Development; and Active Transportation & Safety.



### City of Riverside PACT

Funding: $374,944 (2016 SCP)

**Plan Summary:**

- The Riverside PACT is a unique planning document that includes an integrated, active transportation and recreation planning effort that combines streets, plazas, sidewalks, trails and streetscape design. This comprehensive plan includes a Pedestrian Target Safeguarding Plan, an Active Transportation Plan, a Complete Streets Ordinance and a Trails Master Plan. Together, these four plans represent the City of Riverside's "pact," or commitment, to creating robust, sustainable and accessible transportation options and public spaces for residents and visitors well into the future. These plans include creating funding strategies and opportunities to provide more transportation options such as walking, bicycling and taking public transit from one place to another.
- The Riverside PACT is supportive of Connect SoCal's core vision of Complete Streets, as it envisions means to enhance public rights of way in support of all roadway users and prioritizes outcomes in underrepresented communities.
- Through these combined forms of engagement, thousands of residents were reached as part of plan development, including those who may not have previously attended in-person meetings. Because the elements of the PACT were developed jointly, residents were uniquely empowered to cohesively develop their vision for active mobility and recreation in Riverside and then codify it through the Complete Streets Ordinance.
- The city codified the Complete Streets Ordinance in 2021 as part of the plan adoption.

**Plan Outcomes:**

- Incorporated bike lane and sidewalk recommendations from the Riverside PACT into the city's Annual Capital Improvement Paving Program for three fiscal years.
- Incorporated and expanded upon safety assessments within the Riverside PACT as part of the City's recently adopted Local Roadway Safety Plan.
- Awarded $7.8 million in grant funds for the HSIP Cycle XI Project, which includes the installation of retroreflective backplates and Leading Pedestrian Interval Phasing at signalized intersections citywide. The PACT document includes both of these traffic-safety countermeasure improvements and also identified the citywide application of the improvements, which led to the project application's selection.

- Received the award for the 2023 SB 821 Pedestrian & Bicycle Facilities Improvements Grant in the amount of $1.3 million. The grant application consists of pedestrian/bike improvements, audible pedestrian push buttons, flashing LED stop signs, high-visibility crosswalks, green bike lane striping and rectangular rapid-flashing beacons at 24 intersection locations. Awarded $16.4 million in ATP Grants, recently approved by the CTC.
- Received a $1.4 million Recreational Trails Program grant to supplement the $3.7 million Urban Greening Grant for the Gage Canal Trail project.
- Awarded $0.7 million in Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant Program to develop individual Safe Routes To School Action Plans for 50 public K-8 schools citywide as supported by the PACT.
- Awarded $11.1 million in federal funds through the Safe Streets For All Program to construct a road diet along Main Street between Third Street and the 60 Freeway along with a citywide speed limit reduction program and Vision Zero or update to the Local Road Safety Plan as referenced by the PACT's Complete Street's Ordinance and Active Transportation Plan.

## Imperial County Ride, Walk, Learn

Funding: $224,000 (2016 SCP)

**Project Summary:**

- Project Ride, Walk, Learn is a non-infrastructure, educationally focused program that provides information to students and parents on bicycle and pedestrian safety, connects children and families by foot and bicycle to their schools and to the community at large, and has an added health and environmental component. Students were engaged through a multipronged program, including distribution of educational materials to students, parents and school staff, school assemblies, walk to school events, walk audits and bicycle rodeos.
- The program provided funding to the underserved communities of Calipatria, Niland, Heber, Seeley and Westmorland to support an educational Safe Routes to School program to increase awareness, identify safety concerns and provide direct resources to school sites.

**Project Outcomes:**

- Community-Identified Infrastructure Improvements: Through coordinated community walk audits, the project team identified several safety concerns. As a result of the program, the county implemented new rapid-flashing beacons at priority crossings and installed new high-visibility crosswalks to address safety concerns at school sites.
- Cross-Collaboration With Partners: This work resulted in a strengthened partnership between the County's Office of Education, the Partnering School Districts, the County Public Health Department and the County Public Works.
- Coordinated, Replicable Activities Across School Sites: The project model proved successful to implement across five schools in Imperial County and created a model that can be replicated across school sites.
- School Staff Training: Created training programs for school staff to continue the project beyond the grant award.

## TABLE 2.1 Sustainable Communities Program Projects Approved Since 2020

| COUNTY | PROJECT TYPE | AGENCY | PROJECT NAME |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Active Transportation & Safety** | | | |
| Los Angeles | Pedestrian Plan | LA County Public Health | Lennox Community Pedestrian Plan |
| Los Angeles | Network Visioning & Implementation | Los Angles Dept. of Transportation | Wilshire Center/K-town AT Network Visioning |
| Los Angeles | Quick Build | City of Santa Monica | East Pico Safety Project |
| Riverside | Non-Infrastructure | Riverside County Public Health | Safe Routes for All - Coachella |
| Orange | First/Last Mile | OCTA | OCTA Bus Stop Safety and Accessibility Study |
| Riverside | Active Transportation Plan | City of Banning | Banning Comprehensive ATP |
| Los Angeles | Safe Routes | City of Lynwood | Lynwood Safe Routes To School Plan |
| Los Angeles | Network Visioning & Implementation | City of Pomona | Pomona Citywide Complete Streets Ordinance |
| Los Angeles | First/Last Mile | Montebello Bus Lines | First-Mile / Last-Mile Master Plan |
| Los Angeles | Safe Routes | City of Duarte | Safe Routes to School Program |
| Orange | Vision Zero | City of Santa Ana | Safe Mobility Santa Ana Plan Update |
| **Housing & Sustainable Development** | | | |
| Los Angeles | Advanced ADU Bundle | Pasadena | City of Pasadena ADU Incentive Program |
| Los Angeles | | Santa Monica | ADU Accelerator Program |
| Orange | | Laguna Beach | ADU Ordinance and Toolkits |
| Orange | Preliminary ADU Bundle | Buena Park | Advancing ADU Implementation |
| Los Angeles | | Compton | ADU Housing Opportunity |
| Orange | | Garden Grove | Advancing Accessory Dwelling Unit Implementation Programs |
| Los Angeles | | Paramount | Paramount Small Model Homes |
| Los Angeles | | Santa Fe Springs | ADU Implementation Program: Prototypes and Procedural Manual |
| Los Angeles | EIFD Bundle | Covina | Covina Downtown Enhanced Infrastructure Financing District |
| Los Angeles | | LAC/USC Health Village | LAC/USC Healthy Village Vision |
| Riverside | | Yucaipa | Yucaipa EIFD |

## TABLE 2.1 Continued Sustainable Communities Program Projects Approved Since 2020

| COUNTY | PROJECT TYPE | AGENCY | PROJECT NAME |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Housing & Sustainable Development continued** | | | |
| Los Angeles | Workforce Housing | Palmdale | Central Palmdale Workforce Housing Project WHAR12 |
| Los Angeles | EIFD | Heart of Hollywood (City of LA) | Heart of Hollywood Infrastructure Financing District |
| Los Angeles | EIFD | One San Pedro (HACLA) | One San Pedro |
| Riverside | Objective Development Standards Bundle | Coachella | Objective Design and Development Standards |
| San Bernardino | | Grand Terrace | Permitting Software For Expediting Housing Opportunities |
| Los Angeles | | Montebello | Streamlining Permitting Procedures |
| Orange | | Newport Beach | Newport Beach Objective Development Standards |
| Los Angeles | | Santa Fe Springs | Objective Design Standards and Design Manual |
| Los Angeles | | Santa Monica | Objective Development Standards |
| Los Angeles | | South Pasadena | Housing Application & Materials Streamlining and Training |
| Orange | | Westminster | Westminster Objective Development Standards |
| Los Angeles | Specific Plan | San Dimas | San Dimas Downtown Specific Plan |
| San Bernardino | Specific Plan | Rialto | Foothill-Riverside Specific Plan Updates |
| Los Angeles | Specific Plan | Burbank | Media District Specific Plan Update |
| Los Angeles | Objective Zoning Standards | South El Monte | South El Monte Zoning Code Comprehensive Update for Housing Streamlining |
| **Smart Cities & Mobility Innovations** | | | |
| Los Angeles | Curb Space | Los Angeles Dept. of Transportation | Curb Zone Data Inventory for Digital Curb Management |
| Los Angeles | | City of Long Beach | Long Beach Curb Space Management Study |
| Orange | | City of Stanton | Stanton Citywide Curb Management Plan |
| Los Angeles | Technology | San Gabriel Valley Council of Govts | GoSGV Engagement & Evaluation |
| Riverside | Parking | City of Desert Hot Springs | Downtown and Light Industrial Parking Plan |
| Orange | | City of Garden Grove | Garden Grove Curb Data Study |
| Orange | Technology | City of Laguna Woods | Laguna Woods Mobility Technology Plan |
| San Bernardino | Technology | City of Rialto | Smart Cities Plan for Warehousing & Logistics |

# Chapter 2 Endnotes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