



2025

FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES



THE SCAG REGION

18.7M

RESIDENTS

15TH

LARGEST
ECONOMY
WORLDWIDE

\$1.6T

REGIONAL
GDP

40%

NATION'S
CONTAINER
IMPORTS

6

COUNTIES



191

CITIES

47.6%

STATE
POPULATION

5.7%

U.S.
POPULATION

38,618

SQUARE MILES



ABOUT SCAG

Founded in 1965, the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) is a public agency established as a Joint Powers Authority under California state law that convenes local governments and agencies to address regional issues.

SCAG leads Southern California, serving as the unified voice of the region and empowering local jurisdictions to work toward regional solutions. The SCAG region encompasses six counties (Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura) and 191 cities in an area covering more than 38,000 square miles.

The agency develops long-range regional transportation plans, including sustainable communities strategy and growth forecast components, regional transportation improvement program, regional housing needs allocations, and a portion of the South Coast air quality management plans.

SCAG is governed by an 86-member board of directors known as the Regional Council, whose membership includes city councilmembers, mayors, and county supervisors, and representatives of the region's tribal governments, air quality management districts, and transit operators.

SCAG REGIONAL COUNCIL LEADERSHIP



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City of Long Beach

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SCAG'S FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

SCAG'S 2025-2026 FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Mobility

Support dedicated funding for the 2028 Summer Olympic and Paralympic Games

With the 2028 Summer Olympic and Paralympic Games just around the corner, Southern California will experience an influx of international athletes and spectators while continuing to facilitate transportation of one-third of the nation's freight and goods movement sector and nearly 19 million residents.

As part of LA28's Games Mobility Executive's group, SCAG is leading transportation demand management (TDM) plans for both passengers and freight activity before and during the 2028 games. Additionally, SCAG is deploying quick-build projects, which are flexible in design and require only minor construction activity, to support these TDM efforts.

SCAG's Ask:

- Support dedicated funding for 2028 Summer Olympic and Paralympic Games, including funding for SCAG to conduct our TDM efforts.
- Consistent with the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority, SCAG requests that funding be included in the Congress's FY 2026-27 appropriations bills for the 2028 Games in the amount of \$3.2 billion (including \$239 million for enhanced Metrolink regional rail service).

Communities

Support critical investments in proven housing programs

The SCAG region has a serious housing shortage, impacting both housing affordability and availability. As a result, the SCAG region has some of the highest purchase and rental housing prices in the nation, a problem that continues to impact other regions as Californians seek more affordable housing opportunities.

SCAG uses considerable state and local resources to help cities, counties, and tribal governments prepare sites for housing development. In turn, a strong federal partnership is needed to ensure the necessary public-private partnerships are in place to construct the housing.

SCAG's Ask:

- Protect the PRO Housing Program to provide for the planning of housing.
- Incentivize construction with Congress' continued investments in the Community Development Block Grant Program, Emergency Solutions Grants, and the HOME Investment Partnerships Program in the fiscal year 2025-26 appropriations package.
- Extend the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit.



Environment

Protect Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program Funding

Southern California’s geography presents opportunities and challenges as air gets trapped between our coastal and mountain regions, leading to some of the poorest air quality in the country. Created in 1991, the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) program funds transportation projects that reduce congestion and improve air quality for areas that do not meet National Ambient Air Quality Standards for ozone, carbon monoxide, or particulate matter. These pollutants have been proven to lead to respiratory illnesses and disrupt agricultural development.

SCAG’s Ask:

- As discussions relating to the nation’s Surface Transportation Reauthorization continue, SCAG urges the Congress to prioritize the CMAQ program for continued funding.

Economy

Help Southern California rebuild after disasters

The January 2025 Palisades and Eaton fires are indicators of a new era for natural disasters. As Southern California grapples with historic levels of destruction, SCAG is committed to the collective work of recovery by helping local agencies prepare for future disasters. SCAG’s Sustainable Communities Program offers technical assistance and financial resources to cities, counties, and tribal governments to support diverse resilience planning needs. Even with these critical tools, many local jurisdictions lack capacity to take critical steps toward resiliency, such as updating pre-disaster plans and ordinances, developing strategies to harden utilities and infrastructure, or establishing new financing tools to create more resilient communities.

SCAG’s Ask:

- With the elimination of the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) Program, SCAG supports the authorization of a new and improved mitigation program that provides resources to and creates capacity for local jurisdictions to write disaster preparedness plans, implement home hardening strategies, and respond to natural disasters.

SCAG'S FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION REAUTHORIZATION PRIORITIES

As the 119th Congress considers the next iteration of the Surface Transportation Reauthorization, SCAG is committed to supporting effective and efficient project delivery, safety improvement, congestion alleviation, and economic growth for our region. As the nation's largest metropolitan planning organization (MPO), SCAG is the steward of hundreds of millions of federal transportation dollars in the Southern California region that collectively contribute to the 16th largest economy in the world.

With this experience, SCAG respectfully presents the following priorities:

1. **Preserve Metropolitan Planning (PL), FTA Section 5303, and Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funding**

These critical funding streams allow MPOs to create consensus on regional projects, advancing the delivery of complex infrastructure projects. In the SCAG Region, PL and Section 5303 funding pay for our Regional Transportation Plan, which includes more than 2,000 local projects, valued at nearly one trillion dollars of investment, vetted through a comprehensive public participation process. Equally important, Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG) funding helps regions identify and prioritize local transportation priorities, providing critical funding to plan, construct, and program local transportation projects. These programs are inextricably linked and are essential for effective federal investments in infrastructure.

2. **Create a freight planning pilot program for MPOs and local governments with a population over 1 million**

Goods movement is a critical component of the SCAG region's economy and quality of life. Global supply chains have been heavily impacted by historic events, such as COVID-19, over the past decade, which have disrupted freight movement and dramatically shaped consumption patterns. Reauthorization should include a pilot planning program to allow regions with the most complex goods movement systems to develop a master plan to demonstrate the most value and stability for this critical component of the economy. A master plan would ensure federal and state resources are prioritized for projects that would eliminate bottlenecks, identify efficiencies, improve safety and air quality, and contribute to the nation's economic growth. Setting the target to those agencies with a population of one million or greater would ensure enough local consumption to ensure the need for more sophisticated freight planning.

3. **Reauthorize the Safe Streets and Roads for All Program**

Established under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) program was the first-ever discretionary grant program to fund regional, local, and Tribal initiatives to prevent deaths and serious injuries on local streets and roads. Since its authorization, SCAG has received two SS4A grant awards, making critical investments in our region to reduce the rates of fatalities and serious injuries. This includes the development of our "Regional Safety Action Plan" and expansion of our open streets model that will create reliable and safe routes of travel during high volume events and civic gatherings, including the upcoming 2026 FIFA World Cup, the 2027 Super Bowl, and the 2028 Summer Olympic and Paralympic Games.

4. Enact a CEQA-for-NEPA Reciprocity Program in California to streamline the delivery of federally funded projects

Federally funded projects in California undergo two environmental review processes: the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). While these two processes share the same goals, CEQA is the more stringent, applying to a broader range of projects and often requiring a more detailed environmental analysis, robust measures to mitigate impacts, and greater opportunities for public involvement. While the reciprocity program already exists, it is set to expire soon. SCAG supports its reauthorization, working to make improvements as needed to aid local governments who continue to face challenges associated with duplication, increased costs, and delays related to the overlapping requirements of state and federal laws.

5. Simplify the NEPA Categorical Exclusion process

SCAG supports the creation of Programmatic Categorical Exclusion agreements for adoption by states and municipalities to standardize and simplify the NEPA process across various jurisdictions to ensure consistent, fast-tracked, and timely applications of Categorical Exclusions (CEs). Further, the process for pursuing CEs should be simplified through developing a program that provides a CE or NEPA approval at the time of a federal grant award.

6. Require a singular consistent format for NEPA environmental review documents for all federal agencies and departments

SCAG supports establishing a lead agency and requiring preparation of a single, coordinated environmental document for projects requiring action from multiple federal agencies. Implementing this action would expedite permitting approvals to deliver projects faster and more efficiently.

7. Support measures to streamline project delivery and implementation

SCAG supports streamlining and simplifying the regulatory review process, permitting and oversight, and project development and delivery as well as increasing coordination among state and federal agencies to ensure a more efficient delivery of federally funded transportation projects.

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