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Sent: Monday, August 24, 2020 4:15 PM

To: Christine Asiata <Christine.Asiata@OPR.CA.GOV>

Subject: 120-Day Update on Connect SoCal

Connect SoCal Logo



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In May, SCAG's Regional Council voted to approve Connect SoCal, and associated Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) Addendum, for the limited purpose of federal air quality conformity and delay further submittal of the plan by 120 days in order to facilitate further review in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

As that 120-day period comes to a close, we want to share our appreciation for your contributions to the progress of Connect SoCal and PEIR Addendum. We are pleased to say that we have great confidence that the plan and PEIR Addendum are ready for adoption. This is thanks to the continued involvement of our partners, local organizations and governments, SCAG working group members, and individuals from the public who have given us their time and feedback throughout the development of the plan and in this recent delay period. The contributions of our stakeholders throughout the initial phase of setting goals and strategies for the plan were instrumental in creating a long-term vision that moves the region forward and can withstand our current challenges.

The plan includes strategies that help us to address our current challenges and move the region forward, including, but not limited to:

- [Improvements to transportation safety](#)
- [Support for the goods movement system](#)
- [Promotion of conservation of natural and agricultural resources](#)
- [Integration of recent and emerging technologies](#)

SCAG recently organized several opportunities to connect with stakeholders including regional planning working groups, direct outreach to specific stakeholders, focus groups with community-based organizations, a public survey and a public virtual townhall. These conversations illuminated the challenges facing local communities and highlighted ways that SCAG could help to support regional recovery but ultimately underscored the continued relevance of the goals and strategies in

Connect SoCal. SCAG also gathered feedback from local jurisdictions on general plan capacities and entitlements which was used to make technical refinements to the plan. At the next Regional Council meeting on Sept. 3, staff will bring Connect SoCal and PEIR Addendum before the governing board again for final adoption and approval to transmit the plan to state agencies.

The plan has already been approved by the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration and fully achieves state greenhouse gas reduction benchmarks. After closely reviewing and responding to input and feedback, SCAG staff has made the appropriate technical refinements but has not recommended any policy or investment changes. As a living document, subject to amendments and updated every four years, Connect SoCal remains ready to evolve and address the needs of a constantly changing world.

We strongly urge against further delay, which would threaten the region's recovery from the devastating economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Adopting the plan has several benefits to help move the region forward, including:

- Ensuring that the more than 4,000 transportation infrastructure projects in the plan will be fully eligible for relevant funding sources
- Keeping jurisdictions in the SCAG region eligible for certain streams of state funding such as Senate Bill 1
- Creating over 430,000 new jobs
- Saving households \$700 annually in reduced driving and utility costs
- Improving [public health](#) outcomes, saving the region over \$340 million

[Click here](#) for county-specific benefits of the plan.

WHAT'S NEXT

The Regional Council will consider Connect SoCal for final adoption at their next meeting on Thursday, Sept. 3.

We welcome you to join us on this momentous day. Full details on the staff recommendations as well as information about how the public can participate in the meeting will be available as part of the Regional Council agenda materials which will be posted online [here](#).



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