

Safe Routes to School 2012 RTP Platform for the SCAG Region

Regional Transportation Planning in Southern California: Achieving Federal, State, Regional and Local goals by supporting Walkable and Bikeable Communities



Introduction

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) is a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) in Southern California¹. Every four years, SCAG adopts a federally mandated Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). This plan brings together policies and future investments for the next 25 years for a six-county region, made up of 18 million people and 38,000 square miles. SCAG is the largest MPO in the country, and includes 189 member cities.

In the last adopted RTP in 2008, an over \$530 billion dollar plan, less than 0.5 percent of funding was dedicated towards bicycle and pedestrian projects, yet 12 percent of all trips in the region are already made by walking and bicycling.²

SCAG is currently working on the development of the next RTP, to be adopted in 2012. In light of state, regional and local legislation and policies (and a forthcoming new Federal transportation bill), there are tremendous opportunities for improving walking and bicycling conditions in Southern California.

The co-benefits from walkable and bikeable communities are numerous. Focusing attention on the needs of bicyclists and pedestrians, particularly children accessing schools, will help the SCAG Region to achieve goals such as:

- Maximizing mobility and accessibility through strategic and fiscally prudent investments in a time of limited resources;
- Addressing traffic congestion and improving air quality;
- Decreasing greenhouse gas emissions;
- Addressing public health impacts from the built environment;
- Reducing injuries;
- Supporting regional hubs that attract and maintain families, and more.

This platform describes the Southern California Safe Routes to School Network's³ policy recommendations for the 2012 RTP.

Background

The Southern California Safe Routes to School Network, formed in January 2010, is working with partners and government agencies to leverage additional funding resources and supportive policies to advance Safe Routes to School in Southern California. We are also working to share best practices and maximize the variety of areas of expertise and leadership to:

- Increase physical activity in school aged children by increasing opportunities for children to walk and bicycle to schools.
- Leverage additional resources and policy changes to support walking and bicycling to schools and improvements to the built environment.
- Build partnerships with regional and local agencies, non-profits and community members to ensure that Southern California SRTS and SR2S funds are being expended on quality projects in the region, and that these funded projects are being constructed.

¹ SCAG Region is made up of six counties: Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino, Riverside and Ventura.

² Also important to note, 25 percent of all roadway accidents and fatalities in the SCAG Region involve pedestrians or bicyclists.

³ The Southern California Safe Routes to School Network is a project of the Safe Routes to School National Partnership.

Southern California Safe Route to School 2012 RTP Platform

Improved Planning and Policies

- 2012 RTP Regional Performance Measures include all modes, specifically bicycle and pedestrian trips.
- 2012 RTP has active transportation modeling scenario.
- 2012 RTP connects state, regional and local policy and legislation that helps achieve walkable/bikeable communities (SB 375 (transportation and land use), AB 1358 (complete streets), AB 321 (speed limits) and DD-64-R1 (complete streets)).
- SCAG provides funding and support for regional transportation planners, for pedestrian and bicycle planning, and provides the necessary funding for significant regional bicycle and planning studies and modeling efforts, ensuring adequate resources are available for meaningful planning for area encompassing 38,000 square miles and over 18 million people, and a mode representing 12 percent of all trips. (i.e. allocating only \$200K in SCAG's 2010 OWP for all Active Transportation studies and staffing for the Region is not considered adequate).
- 2012 RTP carefully examines performance measures to determine inequities of the RTP on any group, in this instance considering impacts on modes (pedestrians and bicyclists) and school children (aged 6-18), and public health impacts.

Improved Data Collection

- Standardized bicycle and pedestrian data collection throughout the region on an annual basis is incorporated into the RTP and adequately staffed and funded.
- Regional Transportation Modeling that addresses all modes, specifically pedestrian and bicycle trips is included as part of the RTP planning, and incorporated into future planning models.

Increased Investment

- Investments in bike/ped in the RTP should be representative of the mode share (12 percent) and safety trends (25 percent fatalities) in roadway collisions and fatalities. We specifically request funding and policies for the following projects:
 - A Safe Routes to School regional source of funding
 - A Regional/Bicycle Pedestrian source of funding
 - A Complete Streets policy where all roadway projects funded through SCAG must have the implementing agency complete a checklist to show how the needs of bicyclists and pedestrians have been evaluated.
 - A completed Regional Bicycle Master Plan for the six-county region in order to prioritize the use of future Regional bike/ped funds.

Education and Promotion

- Ensuring that local jurisdictions, elected officials, and SCAG policy committee members are receiving regular updates on active transportation, innovative polices, and planning opportunities.
- ~~Pedestrian and bicycle representatives serve on all applicable Technical Advisory Committees and other relevant task forces to ensure multi-modal perspectives at all transportation meetings (i.e., Modeling task force, Planning and Programming TAC).~~ Active Transportation expert Ryan Snyder appointed to P&P TAC (03/11).
- Regional support and encouragement of participation in Bike to Work Day, Walk to School Day, Let's Move National Campaign, and events such as CicLAvia and other innovative active transportation outreach opportunities for encouragement.

Endorse the Platform



What's Next? We are currently seeking endorsements on this Platform. Please share this document and encourage organizations, as well as individuals, to sign on in support of these principles. Our goal is to have **75 Platform endorsements by May 15, 2011** -- and you can help us achieve that goal. Do you have comments on key elements you see missing from the Platform? Please let us know (california@saferoutepartnership.org).

How can you endorse the Platform? Visit the Support page on <http://saferoutescalifornia.wordpress.com/support-us>

If signing as an organization, please include:

- Name of staffer to be listed
- Name of organization
- City in which organization is based

If signing on as an individual, please include:

- Name to be listed
- City of residence, city of work/school (not required, but helpful for policy makers to see)

Live/work outside the SCAG Region? (SCAG Region: Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, Ventura, San Bernardino)
That's okay, you can still sign on and will be listed in a group of signers outside the region. Support for our efforts in Southern California are welcome from all over California.