SCAG 2026 DRAFT PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN COMMENTS

Matrix of Comments Received and Responses

	Comment	SCAG Response
1	In addition to X, SCAG needs to have a presence on Bluesky, Reddit, and Threads. In particular, Bluesky is a forum where significant planning and transportation related discussion occurs. At the minimum, posts on X announcing SCAG programs or public meetings should be posted on Bluesky and Threads as well. This is especially important as the X and Instagram algorithms downgrade content with links in them.	Added notes on page 12 to indicate potential to expand or change social platforms over time.
2	Public meetings for the RTP/SCS should be held both virtually and in person, as some people prefer in person while others prefer virtual.	Document includes commitment to online outreach opportunities for the RTP/SCS to make engagement as accessible as possible. Not all engagement activities are conducive to virtual participation.
3	Produce a Guide to the Transportation Improvement Program process and use it as the basis for education and outreach related to transportation funding processes that lead to the (F,S,R,) TIPs. The call-for-projects to funded program process is an administratively complex with several opportunities for public participation. However, external stakeholders do not understand this complex process. To be honest, many people don't understand it so the guide can be useful in training internal staff and working with local agency partners. Fortunately, MTC has developed a Guide to the TIP as part of a past PPP and SCAG could probably ask MTC about using it, modifying it, or otherwise adapting it. MTC updates this guide every two years.	Comment noted. The PPP is a programmatic plan that does not address specific tactics for individual programs. This comment will be considered by SCAG in relevant programs.
4	As part of a goal of collecting representative input, conduct a survey to get baseline information on	SCAG regularly conducts its SoCal Transportation Study

	how transportation needs differ based on location and demographics. Some travel survey and travel modeling seeks to understand people's travel needs. However, most existing approaches infer these needs rather than asking people directly. The University of Michigan's Travel Security Index (TSI) instrument is a direct way to ask people directly about how transportation security (or a lack thereof) impacts their ability to meet their needs. The TSI is 3, 6, or 16 questions that are used to identify the category of transportation security some individual household is facing. The questions can be an independent survey or dropped into some other representative survey.	via a representative survey effort throughout the region. This comment will be considered in gathering input for the next Connect SoCal plan development cycle.
5	I commend SCAG for developing a comprehensive and forward-thinking Public Participation Plan that reflects a deep commitment to transparency, inclusivity, and collaboration across our region. The plan's clear inclusion of engagement tactics and focus on public input demonstrate the agency's dedication to ensuring that regional planning efforts are informed by a range of voices. This approach sets a strong foundation for equitable, innovative, and implementable transportation and infrastructure solutions that will benefit all communities across the region.	Comment noted. No action or changes suggested.
6	Expand your digital engagement to integrate multilingual online tools such as ArcGIS, mobile surveys, virtual town halls.	Incorporated language to address on page 15 in the "Owned Tactics" section of the Communication Toolbox.
7	Leverage PPPs to include collaborations with local businesses, universities, media outlets, and civic organizations.	Incorporated language to address on page 16 in the introduction of "Partnership Tactics" section of Communication Toolbox.
8	Intensify influencer outreach to help reach younger demographics and traditionally hard-to-engage populations by identifying champions in communities who can carry the agency's message.	Comment noted. Influencer tactics covered in "Partnership Tactics" and "Paid Tactics" sections, as they could be implemented as part of community partnerships or paid social media partnerships.

9	As the owner of a DBE/SBE public outreach firm based in southern California, I appreciate the thought SCAG has put into developing a Public Participation Plan that values transparency and authentic engagement. My firm truly believes that every stakeholder should have a voice in shaping the policies and projects that impact their daily lives. It's encouraging to see that same philosophy reflected in SCAG's plan, one that prioritizes outreach strategies designed to reach people where they are and truly listen to their input. This kind of commitment lays the groundwork for more equitable, informed, and effective regional planning that benefits all communities across our region.	Comment noted. No action or changes requested.
10	Nowhere in the entire report does it mention Councils of Governments. At least in the South Bay, we conduct your Regional Council elections and provide our cities with regular reports through our Board agendas. We appoint members to your policy committees. Additionally, several of the COG's are working with you on REAP projects. I would think that is more than just a generic partner. This just builds on my frustration that SCAG does not create a formal relationship with Councils of Governments.	Added mention of local and subregional agencies on page 3. Added specific mentions of Councils and Associations of Governments to "Local Jurisdictions" audience category on page 7.
11	On Page 11 of the plan, under Transparency and Accessibility, the last paragraph of that section states: "Staff will also document, summarize, and report on public comments received through public engagement activities. This process demonstrates that input has been meaningfully considered and supports accountability and transparency in SCAG's decision-making." Documenting, summarizing and reporting public comments does not demonstrate that they have been meaningfully considered. It shows they have been reported but it gives no indication of what the response to the comments is. When SCAG establishes a matrix of comments and summarizes them, unless it says something about what the response to the comment is, there is no demonstration of meaningful consideration.	Added language on page 11 to clarify that comment reporting will also include information on how comments were considered and/or incorporated.

12	Overall strong document, well organized, user friendly and explanatory.	Comment noted. No action or changes requested.
13	Hoping to understand if document will apply to other processes outside of transportation planning, and, if so, can that be clarified in the introductory section?	Edited language on page 3 to clarify purview of PPP to major SCAG efforts.
14	Also including line edit for minor copy edit notes intended to clarify SCAG's representation of local agencies.	Added mention of local and subregional agencies on page 3. Added specific mentions of Councils and Associations of governments to "Local Jurisdictions" audience category on page 7.
15	Also including line edit for minor copy edit notes intended [for] adding definitions to help explain different uses of social media.	Line edit incorporated to clarify definitions of different social media uses on page 12.
16	What is the definition of affordable housing? I was told it is based on number of units per acre lot instead of actual affordability. We need more clear and concise definitions of how SCAG is coming up with requirements for each city…	Clear definitions of individual terms will be used in outreach related to efforts, as covered in "Communication Best Practices" on page 9.
17	… and I don't feel SCAG is taking into account the whole city plan (meaning amount of open space and housing in proximity to groceries/food should also be a consideration on top of just housing when discussing development plans.	Consideration of specific issues in housing studies out of the scope of this document but shared with appropriate SCAG department.
18	Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the SCAG Draft Public Participation Plan. As stated, public participation is fundamental and SCAG relies on meaningful participation. However, Meaningful engagement is a very nebulous and hard-to-measure concept. The Public Participation Plan discusses metrics for engagement like 'email opens, website or video views, ad impressions....clicks, downloads, interactions in-person and/or online'. Those are quantifiable metrics of visibility and reach, but not of 'engagement'. Engagement is participation in decision-making.	As noted in the plan SCAG seeks to engage partners to shape planning efforts through activities including but not limited to workshops, comment periods, and surveys; these activities are measured by attendance and input metrics as noted in the document.

19	The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency1 released a guidance document on public participation that I find provides a useful framework based on the International Association of Public Participation2 spectrum of public participation. This helps to define the range of roles the public might play in a decision process. Figure 1 shows the range of possible levels of public participation. SCAG decisions can span any of these of levels of public participation. Communicate the expected level of public participation to all stakeholders in the process at the outset of any process. For example, previous iterations of Connect SoCal follow a Consult level of public participation, where CEQA requires public feedback, but SCAG and its consultants simply acknowledge that public feedback from stakeholders but does not actually change the plan as a result.	Included as part of SCAG's commitment to transparency, the purpose of engagement and overall process for effort at hand should be made clear in informational material related to each individual outreach effort. Added language on page 11 to clarify that reporting on comments also includes notes on how comments were considered and/or incorporated.
20	Ensure that the seven stakeholder groups identified as the SCAG audiences have equitable levels of public participation. At the moment, it feels like Transportation Commissions, Jurisdictions, and Legislators/Funders/Regulators have Collaborate/Empower levels of public participation, Public Agencies are at Involve levels, and the stakeholders and general public are at Consult levels of public participation. Measuring clicks and email opens is the lowest Inform level of public participation. It is not engagement and is certainly not meaningful involvement. Lack of communication on the expected level of impact on decision-making and inequitable decision-making access is why Connect SoCal can be a disempowering and terrible process for the general public. SCAG chooses to give some of its audiences more impact in the decision-making process and that is why the results reflect the influence of a subset of SCAG audiences and underweight the public interest. SCAG's public participation is not representative and does not follow the best communication practices as shown in the leading participation	Much of SCAG's work is intergovernmental; however, SCAG's transparency commitments in this document are intended to provide access to members of the public and allow them to comment and engage on any item or process.

	organization methodology. Please adopt best practices to ensure that all stakeholders are on as equitable a footing as possible in helping to shape the decision-making process.	
21	Among the stakeholders that should be included are: League of Women Voters and Parent-Teacher Association. Both are nonpartisan, and structured similarly (national-->state-->County-->local). Both also have position papers on topics that pertain to urban planning, including housing and transportation. The League's mission is to literally empower people to participate in our democracy through voter education, advocacy and promoting an understanding of public policy issues. PTAs are advocacy organizations that seek to speak on behalf of all children under "one voice", and their participation reflects the SCAG region's rich diversity. Both have positions on housing and transportation.	Confirm these groups would be covered in "Stakeholders" audience category. Comment noted for tactical level for SCAG outreach.
22	Since this is an electronic document, every page footer should reference SCAG PPP and date so the information is easily referenced if a single page is extracted.	Added footers to document.
23	[SCAG Audiences] section has no reference to subregions or COGs. Please add.	Added mention of local and regional agencies on page 3. Added specific mentions of Councils and Associations of governments to "Local Jurisdictions" audience category on page 7.
24	["Other public entities beyond SCAG's direct jurisdiction"] implies SCAG has authoritative power over some agencies, suggest rewording to clarify.	Incorporated line edits to clarify on page 7.
25	What exactly is the plan? The document thoroughly explains how SCAG solicits input. Everything in the document sounds great, but is what SCAG does the same as what it plans to do? I just don't know, find it confusing. I am used to public comment being reserved for a proposed policy change or project, this document is just about business processes.	Added language to page 3 to clarify the purpose of the document.

26	I support the plan's emphasis on Representative Input. Too often, local agencies focus outreach efforts on more affluent stakeholder groups with the privilege of time to be able to participate in a public outreach process. This methodology excludes low income communities, who in many cases are the most impacted by projects or the most likely to make use of projects, and whose feedback can be the most beneficial to preparing a successful project.	Comment noted. No action or changes requested.
27	My comment is that the PPP should provide more clear guidance on how to ensure that outreach processes make every effort to provide spaces that are harassment-free for participants. We have seen over the past decade that typical public hearings—in which a microphone is provided to individual speakers before a gathered audience—can lead to raucous and toxic environments where differing opinions are shouted down and met with harassment. Members of the public, and especially at-risk communities, should not be forced to subject themselves to harassment in order to have their voices heard. Where the Public Participation Tactics Toolbox notes public hearings as a format of meeting, it should make clear that efforts must be made to provide harassment-free spaces, such as taking written comments, or taking oral comments in separate one-on-one spaces with staff. Better yet, the toolbox should emphasize the value of open house format and other focused stakeholder meetings, where individuals are not presented with a soapbox to obstruct projects and/or stifle participation by others.	Addressed by adding language to "Public and Stakeholder Meetings, Events and Workshops" section on page 12. Added language on page 14 in the "Workshops, Community Forums and Other Events" section about allowing anonymous comments at broad public events.
28	Nice work SCAG. I work in the public sector and rarely see such a clear articulation of audiences. I usually just see "the public", which results in blunt, ineffective communication. It was refreshing to see the critically important approach to get representative input. Too often governments make decisions based on the loud few voices that had the resources to make their voice heard and the influence to sway public officials.	Comment noted. No action or changes requested.

29	Ensuring representative feedback, gives everyone their proportionate level of voice. Kudos to SCAG for building representation into their plan.	Comment noted. No action or changes requested.
30	The Port is lumped under 'Other Public Agencies' and 'freight' under 'Stakeholders.' Would it be possible for the final PPP to include callouts (i.e. subbullets) for major transportation uses (i.e. freight, active transportation)?	Added a section to distinguish stakeholder-specific engagement from community forums on page 14.
31	The PPP is largely focused on general community participation. Would it be possible to include a section specifying how economic stakeholders (such as port freight) can be engaged?	Added a section to distinguish stakeholder-specific engagement from community forums on page 14.
32	As a regional agency representing one of the most diverse populations in the nation, SCAG's continued focus on inclusive engagement is commendable. The 2026 Draft PPP outlines a solid framework for transparency and accessibility.	Comment noted. No action or changes requested.
33	However, to strengthen the plan's effectiveness, I recommend: Deeper focus on underrepresented communities: Expand on how SCAG will reach populations with limited digital access, language barriers, or low civic participation.	Confirmed mentions of underrepresented audiences throughout the document and inclusion of non-digital and community-oriented tactics such as community partnerships, workshops, and community events.
34	Evaluation transparency: Consider publishing engagement metrics and lessons learned after each major planning cycle to demonstrate accountability and progress.	Confirmed inclusion of metrics reporting as related to outreach on specific efforts.
35	Integration with partner agencies: Encourage closer alignment with Metro and other local transit operators, CBOs, and housing agencies to create more coordinated outreach and messaging, especially around environmental justice and mobility equity topics.	Comments on partnerships incorporated on page 16 in introduction of "Partnership Tactics" of Communication Toolbox.
36	Innovation in outreach: Explore interactive tools, mobile engagement units, and social media partnerships to make regional planning more accessible and relatable to everyday residents. These additions would help ensure SCAG's participation efforts not only meet compliance	Greater description of community-oriented tactics incorporated on page 15 in "Owned Tactics" section of Communication Toolbox.

	but truly embody the spirit of inclusive, community-informed regional planning.	
37	SCAG frequently endeavors to conduct public engagement activities and input opportunities on its work items. The PPP could add specific actions SCAG will take following public input collection processes. As an example, SCAG asks its member jurisdictions to review and provide input on the Data Map Books it prepares during the local data exchange (LDX) process to inform the development of the RTP/SCS. The Data Map Books included parcel level data that identified General Plan designations, zoning, vacant land, potential infill parcels, and permanent open space areas. The City of Huntington Beach previously participated in the Data Map Book process and provided comments to SCAG, which included clarifying inaccurate information and providing updated GIS data. However, the City is unaware if the Data Map Book was ever updated to incorporate the City's comments. The City recommends the PPP specify SCAG's actions following all public input collection processes (such as the LDX process) and include a plan to ensure that these processes reflect local input. This is directly consistent with Purpose #1 of the PPP, which states that, "SCAG's primary working relationships are with public entities, which both guide and implement SCAG's work." This aligns with the Values listed in SCAG's 2024 Strategic Plan to, "Be Open: Be accessible, respectful, collaborative and transparent in the work we do," and, "Lead by Example: Lead with integrity and fairness in working to meet the diverse needs of all people and communities in our region." This also furthers SCAG's 2024 Strategic Plan, Objective 3.1: Ensure SCAG is a trusted source for accurate data and intelligence dedicated to objective analysis of regional plans and assisting local jurisdictions with planning, and, Objective 2.1: Build a deep understanding of the needs of all our communities and stakeholders to inform our work.	Added information on page 11 to clarify that reporting on comments also includes notes on how comments were considered and/or incorporated.

38	The City recommends the section titled, "SCAG Audiences" expressly include the California Coastal Commission under #4: Legislators, Funders, and Regulators. SCAG should engage the CCC throughout its planning processes as part of SB 375 requirements to address climate change, transportation, and land use. This also aligns with SCAG's 2024 Strategic Plan Objective 1.8, "Coordinate with partners to meet federal and state ambient air quality standards and support local and regional climate adaptation, mitigation and resilience activities;" and Objective 2.1: Build a deep understanding of the needs of all our communities and stakeholders to inform our work.	Added California Coastal Commission on page 7 as an example in "Other Government Agencies" audience category.
39	While SCAG provides archived video recordings of its Regional Council meetings on its website, video recordings of other public meetings (Committees, Subcommittees, etc.) are not available on the SCAG website nor via its owned media accounts. The City recommends making recordings of all public meetings permanently available on the SCAG website and/or its YouTube channel for increased equity and public access.	Added links to where SCAG public meetings are available online on pages 11 and 12. Will also look to revise locations of this link on SCAG's website to improve accessibility.
40	"The section titled, "Audience Communication Preferences," states that, "Since its last Public Participation Plan update, SCAG's collected qualitative and quantitative audience feedback," and that, "Findings confirmed that SCAG's audiences come from a variety of backgrounds, vary greatly in the level of time and resources available to them, and often serve as intermediaries to a more general public audience." The PPP could be updated to include the background dataset (survey questions, feedback from listening sessions, interview summaries, etc.) and other meaningful information (identify if participation included all SCAG counties, participating audience types, etc.) as an appendix. This would ensure the needs of all audience types and all SCAG counties are reflected in the PPP. This aligns with SCAG's 2024 Strategic Plan,	Expanded description of methodology for SCAG audience research effort on page 8.

	Objective 2.1: Build a deep understanding of the needs of all our communities and stakeholders to inform our work, and, Objective 2.2: Facilitate regional dialogue and collaboration on key issues for effective policy development."	
41	"The City recommends that, "SCAG Public Participation Standards #3: Communication Best Practices," include language to specify when any agenda item that has been through a public review or comment period is materially altered after the end of the public review/comment period or during a public meeting, an additional public notice and review/comment period of the same length be required prior to final action on the item. Generally, a substantially similar public participation process should be required for any substitutes or alternatives prior to final action. This aligns with the Values listed in SCAG's 2024 Strategic Plan to, Be Open: Be accessible, respectful, collaborative and transparent in the work we do," and "Lead by Example: Lead with integrity and fairness in working to meet the diverse needs of all people and communities in our region."	Confirm that public comment is available when documents appear at Regional Council for adoption following any changes in response to or following a public comment period.
42	Include references to subregions and COGs.	Added mention of local and subregional agencies on page 3, and specific mentions of councils and associations of governments to local jurisdictions audience category on page 7.