



# Southern California Safe Routes to School Regional Network Platform

## Introduction

This platform describes the Southern California Safe Routes to School Network's policy recommendations for the Southern California Association of Governments 2012 Regional Transportation Plan, currently under development.

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) in Southern California<sup>1</sup>. Every four years, SCAG adopts a federally mandated Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). This plan brings together policies and future transportation investments for the next 25 years for a six county region, made up of 19 million people and 38,000 square miles. SCAG is the largest MPO in the nation, and includes 190 member cities.

In the last adopted RTP in 2008, over \$530 billion dollars were dedicated for transportation infrastructure. Even though 12% of all trips in the region are made by walking or bicycling<sup>2</sup> less than 0.5 percent of that \$530 billion was dedicated towards bicycle and pedestrian projects..

SCAG is currently working on the development of the next RTP, to be adopted in 2012. , there are tremendous opportunities for improving walking and bicycling conditions in Southern California. Focusing attention on the needs of bicyclists and pedestrian, particularly children accessing schools, will help to achieve SCAG goals such as maximize mobility and accessibility, provide mitigation to traffic congestion, improve air quality, reduce injuries, decrease greenhouse gas emissions.

## Background

The Southern California Safe Routes to School Network, formed in January 2010, is working with partners and government agencies to generate 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.

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<sup>1</sup> SCAG Region is made up of 6 counties: Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino, Riverside and Ventura

<sup>2</sup> Also important to note, 25% of all roadway accident and fatalities are pedestrians and bicyclists in the SCAG Region.

## **Southern California Safe Route to School 2012 RTP Platform**

The Southern California Safe Routes to School Regional Network makes the following recommendations to SCAG in the development of their 2012 RTP:

### **Improved Planning and Policies**

- 2012 RTP Regional Performance Measures should include all modes, specifically bicycle and pedestrian trips.
- 2012 RTP should have an active transportation modeling scenario.
- 2012 RTP should connect 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 should retain two full-time regional planners for pedestrian and bicycle regional planning and provide sufficient funding for significant regional bicycle and planning studies and modeling efforts.
- 2012 RTP should carefully examine 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 low-income communities.

### **Improved Data Collection**

- SCAG should take the lead in developing standardized bicycle and pedestrian data collected throughout the region on an annual basis, and incorporated into the RTP.
- Regional Transportation Modeling should specifically include pedestrian and bicycle trips 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%) and safety trends (25% accidents and fatalities) in roadway collisions and fatalities. We specifically request funding and policies for the following projects and programs:
  - A dedicated Safe Routes to School regional source of funding
  - A dedicated 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 all roadway users, including bicyclists and pedestrians, have been evaluated.
  - A comprehensive Regional Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan for the six county region, to coordinate a regional policy and to prioritize the use of future Regional bike/ped funds.

### **Education and Promotion**

- Ensure that local jurisdictions, elected officials, and SCAG policy committee members are receiving regular updates on active transportation innovative polices and planning opportunities.
- Ensure pedestrian, bicycle, and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) representatives serve on all applicable Technical Advisory Committees and other relevant task forces to ensure all roadway users are represented to provide multi-modal perspectives at all transportation meetings (i.e., Modeling task force, Planning and Programming TAC).

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- Provide Regional support and encouragement to various events designed to reduce vehicle trips, such as Bike to Work Day, Walk to School day, "CicLAvia" and other innovative active transportation outreach opportunities for encouragement.

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