2020/21 Sustainable Communities Program (SCP) Program Guidelines + Active Transportation & Safety Call for Applications

SCP Overview

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) announces the 2020 Sustainable Communities Program (SCP) – Active Transportation & Safety Supplement (ATS) Call for Applications. Since 2005, SCAG's various sustainability planning grant programs (Compass Blueprint, Sustainability Planning Grants, Sustainable Communities Program) have provided resources and direct technical assistance to jurisdictions to complete important local planning efforts and enable implementation of the Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS), which today is called Connect SoCal.

The SCP allows SCAG to strengthen partnerships with local agencies who are responsible for land use and transportation decisions. Projects selected will allow local agencies to facilitate coordination and integration of transportation planning with active transportation, housing production, safety, smart cities, mobility innovation, transportation demand management, green region and sustainability. The SCP also serves as one of the primary funding vehicles where SCAG partners with local agencies to implement the goals, objectives and strategies of Connect SoCal and achieve an integrated regional development pattern that reduces greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Applicants are encouraged to review strategies promoted in Connect SoCal to align project applications with regional planning priorities and concepts.

The SCP will provide local jurisdictions with multiple opportunities to seek funding and resources to meet the needs of their communities, address recovery and resiliency strategies considering COVID-19, and support regional goals. SCAG will release Calls for Applications throughout Fiscal Year '21 to select projects within different program areas and funding categories.

SCP Goals

The SCP aims to:
- Provide needed planning resources to local jurisdictions for active transportation and multimodal planning efforts, sustainability, land use, and planning for affordable housing;
- Promote, address and ensure health and equity in regional land use and transportation planning and to close the gap of racial injustice and better serve our communities of color;
- Encourage regional planning strategies to reduce motorized Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, particularly in environmental justice communities where there is the highest need for air quality improvements;
- Develop local plans that support the implementation of key strategies and goals outlined in Connect SoCal's Sustainable Communities Strategy;
- Develop resources that support the Key Connections as outlined in Connect SoCal, including Shared Mobility and Mobility as a Service, Smart Cities and Job Centers, Accelerated Electrification, Go Zones, and Housing Supportive Infrastructure;
- Support a resilient region that looks to climate adaptation and public health preparedness as key strategies to address community prosperity, transportation safety, economic recovery and sustainability;

- Increase the region's competitiveness for federal and state funds, including, but not limited to the California Active Transportation Program and Greenhouse Gas Reduction Funds.

Moreover, the SCP seeks to advance Connect SoCal's "Core Vision," which centers maintaining and better managing Southern California's transportation network for moving people and goods, while expanding mobility choices by locating housing, jobs and transit closer together and increasing investment in transit and complete streets. The Core Vision includes policies and investments that support sustainable development; system preservation and resilience; demand management strategies and intelligent transportation systems; a regional transit backbone; complete streets; and goods movement.

On July 2, 2020, the SCAG Regional Council adopted a resolution reaffirming the agency's commitment to working toward a fair and just society and systemic change to eliminate all barriers that reduce opportunity and undermine Southern California's shared values and ability to thrive. SCAG affirmed its commitment to meaningfully advance justice and equity; and SCAG declared its intent to strengthen the way it engages and convenes to protect and expand community voice and power, and work in partnership with others to close the gap of racial injustice and better serve our communities of color, and in so doing, serve all the people of the region. The SCP aims to prioritize resources where there is a demonstrated need, guided by the Connect SoCal Goal, "to support healthy and equitable communities." SCAG is committed to advancing equity through addressing systemic disparities in the SCAG region, and to lift and center communities most impacted by economic, social, and environmental injustices towards the goal of creating healthy and equitable communities.

Active Transportation & Safety Call for Applications (SCP – ATS)

SCP - ATS Overview

The Sustainable Communities Program Active Transportation & Safety Category (SCP-ATS) will fund planning and quick build projects that result in increased rates of walking and biking, promote traffic safety, expand opportunities for multimodal transportation options, and better position local jurisdictions to be competitive for implementation funds. Eligible projects include Active Transportation Plans, Safety Plans, Network Visioning and Implementation, and Quick Build projects.

Applicants are encouraged to review strategies included within Connect SoCal – specifically, Chapter 3, the Active Transportation Technical Report, the Transportation Safety and Security Report, Public Health, and other relevant technical reports - to align project applications with regional planning priorities and concepts.

The most competitive applications will advance multiple planning goals, prioritize practical context-based need, utilize innovative planning practices, and result in planning products or programs that clearly tie community need with implementation. Conducting collaborative public participation efforts to involve communities previously not engaged in land use and transportation discussions is required. Project must demonstrate how community engagement will implemented in shaping the project.

SCP – ATS Goals and Purpose

The SCP-ATS Call for Applications seeks to implement Connect SoCal, a long-range vision for transportation and land use planning for the region. Connect SoCal focuses on the implementation

of multiple regional active transportation strategy areas: Short Trip Strategies, Regional Trip Strategies, Planning Strategies, Data Collection, Technology and Micro-Mobility, Complete Streets, Education/Encouragement and Safety Strategies. All applicants are encouraged to review and align proposals with the recommended strategies, which can be found in the Connect SoCal Active Transportation Technical Report. And the Transportation Safety and Security Report.

By directing funding toward projects that implement Connect SoCal, SCAG aims to achieve the following goals:

- Prioritize historically disinvested and communities of color, which comprise the majority of the Regional High Injury Network to strategically invest resources;
- Increase the proportion of trips accomplished by biking, walking, and rolling;
- Increase safety and mobility of people walking, biking, and rolling;
- Continue to foster jurisdictional support and promote implementation of the goals, objectives, and strategies of Connect SoCal;
- Seed active transportation concepts and produce plans that provide local agencies with the project prioritization, conceptual renderings, and cost estimates required for future ATP applications;
- Prioritize alignment and integration of Key Connections outlined in Connect SoCal, including Shared Mobility and Mobility as a Service, Smart Cities and Job Centers, Accelerated Electrification, Go Zones, and Housing Supportive Infrastructure; and
- Integrate multiple funding streams to increase the overall budget for active transportation planning and capacity building projects.

SCP – ATS Eligible Applicants

The following entities, within the SCAG region, are eligible to apply for SCP-ATS funds:

- Local or Regional Agency - Examples include cities, counties, councils of government, Regional Transportation Planning Agency and County Public Health Departments.
- Transit Agencies - Any agency responsible for public transportation that is eligible for funds under the Federal Transit Administration.
- Natural Resources or Public Land Agencies - Federal, State, or local agency responsible for natural resources or public land administration.
- Public schools or School districts
- Tribal Governments - Federally-recognized Native American Tribes.

Prioritizing Community Engagement Across Project Categories: *Go Human* Integration

Community engagement is essential in developing and implementing any project. SCAG provides a suite of resources through its *Go Human* campaign that are available to complement and leverage proposed projects. These resources include the *Go Human* Kit of Parts and co-branded advertising collateral. To receive additional points, applicants must select and identify one or both of the following elements to integrate in their project. A small percent of the project budget shall be allocated to *Go Human* that SCAG will include in the project RFP.

Go Human **Kit of Parts** – The *Go Human* Kit of Parts includes materials, signage and evaluation tools that allow the applicant or their consultant to plan and implement a *Go Human* demonstration project to gain community feedback as part of the planning process. The applicant or its consultant will be responsible for transportation of materials and preparation of a site and installation plan, to be approved by SCAG. The applicant or its consultant will also be responsible for the set-up, break-down and oversight of the *Go Human* Kit of Parts as part of the demonstration. SCAG staff will be available to provide feedback and guidance on planning for a successful demonstration or event and direction on appropriate utilization of the Kit of Parts.

Advertising Campaign – Co-branded *Go Human* print materials are available at no cost to cities or other local government agencies to help improve traffic safety for people walking and biking, and to help extend the reach of the *Go Human* campaign. Available materials include, but are not limited to:
- Lawn signs
- Banners
- Postcards
- Billboard ads (with donated placement)
- Bus shelter or bench ads (with donated placement)
- Social media graphics

Projects should advance one or more previously described program goals.

SCP – ATS Summary of Eligible Project Types – Examples and Project Components

Project Type: Community or Area Wide Plans

Active Transportation Focused Plans -
Example Plans:
- Active Transportation Plans
- Pedestrian Plans
- Bike Plans
- First/Last Mile Plans

Required Project Components:
- Coordinated public engagement, prioritizing historically disinvested communities and non-traditional stakeholders
- Technical analysis and Level of Traffic Stress analysis
- Facility design and network mapping
- Project level conceptual designs

Transportation Safety Focused Plans -
Example Plans:
- Safe Routes Plans (Schools, First/Last Mile Plans)
- Local Road Safety Plans or Safe Systems Plans

Required Project Components:
- High Injury Network or Hot Spot Analysis
- Planning work will conclude with the preparation of a grant application for a project or program identified within the plan

Project Type: Quick Build Projects

Example Project:
- Interim capital improvement project (pilot infrastructure), identified through an existing plan and responding to an immediate community safety need
- 1-3-year duration, including evaluation, data collection, and study period
- Project modifications based on community need and evaluation

Required Project Components:
- Coordinated public engagement, prioritizing historically disinvested communities and non-traditional stakeholders
- Branding and advertising
- Facility design and data collection
- Performance evaluation

Project Type: Network Visioning and Implementation

Example Project:
- Active Transportation Network Vision Planning
- Quick Build project implementation, interim capital improvement project (pilot infrastructure), 1-3-year duration

Required Project Components:
- Coordinated public engagement, prioritizing historically disinvested communities and non-traditional stakeholders
- Technical analysis and Level of Traffic Stress analysis
- Facility design and network mapping
- Branding and advertising
- Quick Build interim capital improvement project (pilot infrastructure project) and performance evaluation

Note: Applicants may apply for more than one type, and they may submit multiple applications. SCAG staff is available to support applicants in determining the most appropriate type for their project(s).

SCP – ATS Eligible Project Types – Overview and Maximum Award

Project Type: Community or Area Wide Plans

Active Transportation Focused Plans (maximum award per project: $500,000)
Applications submitted for this project type should support the implementation of the Core Vision: Complete Streets and Active Transportation strategies as outlined in Connect SoCal. All planning applications must meet the requirements of the Active Transportation Program, as described in Appendix A of the 2021 Active Transportation Program Guidelines (Cycle 5), with the following exception: SCAG will allow for plan applications to be completed in communities or areas that are not considered disadvantaged.

Examples of eligible plans include but are not limited to the following:

- Community-wide Bicycle or Pedestrian Master Plans
- Community-wide Active Transportation Master Plans
- First-Last Mile Plans (active transportation improvements only)

The final deliverable for all plans must include the required components for a future ATP application; including project prioritization, conceptual renderings, and cost estimates.

Transportation Safety Focused Plans (maximum award per project: $250,000)

Safety Action Plans should include a focus on protecting people walking and biking but may also address vehicle to vehicle collisions. Examples of plans that may be funded include but are not limited to:

- Local Road Safety Plans or Safe Systems Plans: These plans should provide a framework to systematically analyze and identify safety problems and include recommendations for safety improvements. Plans should allow jurisdictions to address crash risks and may identify specific or unique conditions that contribute to crashes in the specific jurisdiction. Plans should provide jurisdictions with the opportunity to proactively correct high collision locations and reduce fatalities and serious injuries, especially for vulnerable users (e.g., children, seniors, bicyclists, pedestrians, etc.). Plans should recommend proven countermeasures, provide a structured and realistic set of recommendations that implement changes over time, and address the critical E's (engagement, equity, engineering, encouragement, education, and evaluation). These plans should include the identification of a High Injury Network (HIN) or hot spot analysis, and the identification of a priority project or program that can be the subject of a draft grant application.
- Complete Streets Safety Assessments: These assessments aim to improve pedestrian and bicyclist safety and to enhance a specific area's accessibility and walkability. The assessments are narrower in scope than a citywide plan and focus on specific high crash areas. Work may include completing a benchmarking safety analysis and a collision data analysis, site visits, walk audits and the formulation of recommendations specific to each area. These plans should include the identification of a priority project that can be the subject of a draft grant application.
- Safe Routes Plans (e.g., Schools, First/Last Mile Plans): These plans should include the identification of a High Injury Network (HIN) or hot spot analysis related to their area of focus, and the identification of a priority project or program that can be the subject of a draft grant application.

Safety Plans should aim to advance and leverage state and regional planning activities. Safety Plans are intended to help further the region's efforts to reduce transportation-related serious injuries and fatalities and achieve regional safety targets. SCAG's Calendar Year 2020 safety targets are as follows:

- Number of fatalities: 1,607
- Rate of fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles traveled (VMT): 0.96
- Number of serious injuries: 5,736
- Rate of serious injuries per 100 million VMT: 3.42
- Number of non-motorized fatalities and non-motorized serious Injuries: 1,916

Plans should be data driven and include recommendations for context-sensitive approaches for reducing collisions. Plans should be developed in close coordination with community members and stakeholders. To learn more about the region's transportation safety existing conditions and safety targets, please visit SCAG's [Transportation Safety page](#).

Plans in this category should consider including the following elements:

- Group safety skills walk or ride
- Walk or bike audits
- Media campaigns
- Temporary demonstration projects

Project Type: Quick Build Projects (maximum award per project: $900,000)

Quick Build projects are interim capital improvement projects that further the goals of the ATP and serve as design/build opportunities based on community feedback. These projects require minor construction activities, support workforce development needs, and are typically built with durable, low to moderate cost materials. Quick Build projects may be implemented for one to five years. These projects have moderate design flexibility to anticipate adjustments that may occur due to community feedback or design challenges. The purpose of a Quick Build project is to respond to an identified safety need and implement safety treatments, enabling a community to benefit quickly from the improvements. Quick Builds facilitate opportunities for communities to provide input and test the project improvements prior to full project construction.

Quick Build Projects support the Education/Encouragement Strategies outlined in Connect SoCal and provide support for the implementation of other regional strategies, such as Regional Corridors or Transit Integration Strategies. Quick Builds are an opportunity for communities to test infrastructure designs before committing to the permanent infrastructure. This strategy supports an avenue to envision how active transportation projects can support mobility needs and contribute significantly to the air quality requirements in Connect SoCal.

This project type is an evolution of SCAG's successful Go Human engagement events, which have helped local agencies refine designs, build community support, attract grant funding, and expedite delivery of active transportation projects. Quick Build projects should be installed a minimum of one year to accommodate significant community engagement and allow for a more comprehensive assessment of project impact. Applicants who wish to apply for this program are strongly encouraged to attend an Application Workshop and/or reach out to SCAG staff for more information.

Objectives include but are not limited to the following:
- Respond to a community-identified safety need and implement safety improvements quickly to maximize community benefit;
- Provide an opportunity to test infrastructure treatments and make modifications based on public feedback and/or design challenges;
- Increase public engagement with historically disinvested communities and non-traditional stakeholders through opportunities to test infrastructure and provide feedback;
- Position local jurisdictions to be competitive for grant funding through performance evaluation data and innovative community engagement strategies.

Examples of eligible projects include but are not limited to the following:
- Active transportation infrastructure (protected bike lane, bulb-outs, curb extensions)
- Multimodal infrastructure integration (dedicated bus pilot lanes and transit integration with active transportation infrastructure)
- Public Pedestrian Plazas

Project Type: Network Visioning and Implementation (Maximum award: $1,250,000)

Due to incomplete networks, high stress streets, increased fatalities/serious injuries, the SCAG region's walking and biking potential has not been maximized and as a result, community benefits of active transportation have not been capitalized upon. To respond to this need, SCAG is offering a network visioning project category to better position local jurisdictions to install targeted, complete, and low stress active transportation networks that can significantly improve safety, trigger economic development and contribute to sustainability efforts. Unlike traditional approaches, where the network is planned and built out over many years, one project or segment at a time, this approach develops a plan to deliver the entire network for targeted areas in a condensed timeframe ensuring there are no high-stress or unsafe gaps that compromise the travel experience. This project category prioritizes active transportation networks not as an amenity, but as essential and regionally significant transportation networks.

Objectives include but are not limited to the following:
- Identify a network gap based on/derived from existing community-supported plans or outreach efforts to ensure alignment with existing community direction;
- Conduct additional comprehensive and meaningful public engagement with historically under-resourced communities to inform network build out that prioritizes fulfilling transportation needs and connects to long term planning goals;
- Encourage a paradigm shift to view active transportation networks as essential infrastructure and encourage more ambitious active transportation projects;
- Better position local jurisdictions to be more competitive for statewide ATP implementation funding and other sources of funding that may require developed plans;
- Demonstrate the return on investment for active transportation networks via air quality improvements, public health benefits (such as reduced rates of chronic health disease) and reduced collision rates;
- Prioritize network build out in local jurisdictions by saturating an area, with comprehensive engagement, for catalytic impact.

This project category will include development of a framework as a model for cities to work with SCAG and a consultant to conduct visioning and position cities to plan and install entire active transportation networks within a short- to mid-term timeframe, alongside thoughtful community engagement. The framework will identify and implement a phased approach for quick build pilot projects, identified through technical analysis and robust public engagement, prior to network construction, to take on the most "stressful" segment first and set up the network build-out in phases. The project will include the following elements:
- Technical analysis
- Public engagement
- Education and advertising
- Development of a Community-wide Active Transportation Plan
- Phase 1 Quick Build project implementation
- Evaluation

Applicants who wish to apply for this program are strongly encouraged to attend an Application Workshop and/or reach out to SCAG staff for more information.

SCP – ATS Match Requirements

There are no match requirements for active transportation or safety projects proposed through the SCP-ATS.

SCP – ATS Scoring Rubric & Criteria

Each application includes three main scoring criterion – 1) Project Need, 2) Scope of Work and Project Outcomes and 3) Partnerships and Community Engagement. Application questions vary by project type. The potential points to be awarded for responses to each question, by project type, are noted in each application. Further clarification regarding how points are awarded will be provided in the project application forms.

Scoring Criteria	
Focus Area 1: Project Need	50 Points
Mobility Need	15
Safety Benefits	20
Disadvantaged Communities and Public Health	15
Focus Area 2: Desired Project Outcomes	35 Points
Safety Strategies and Scope of Work	5
Public Health Strategies	5
Community Engagement Strategies	5
Project Benefits and Scope of Work	20
Focus Area 3: Partnerships and Engagement	15 Points
Cost Effectiveness	5
Commitments, Partnerships, and Leveraging	10

SCP – ATS Application Process

Eligible applicants are encouraged to apply to the SCP-ATS by completing an application specific to one the three Project Types, above. Please contact SCAG staff if the project includes multiple components, or if for any other reason, support is needed in identifying the proper application to use for a project application. Application workshops will be scheduled for October 7 and October 21, 2020 to address any questions related to the application process. More information and details on the workshops see, please see the SCAG SCP website. **Applicants must complete and submit their application by precisely 5:00 p.m., December 11, 2020.**

SCP – ATS Evaluation Process

For SCP-ATS projects, six (6) evaluation teams, one (1) per county, will be established to review, score and rank applications submitted to the SCP-ATS. Each team will be comprised of staff from the county transportation commissions and SCAG. Projects will compete and be ranked against other projects within their respective county. Final awards will be based on application score, geographic distribution, and funding eligibility. Following grant award announcements, unsuccessful applicants are encouraged to meet with SCAG staff to obtain feedback on opportunities to improve their applications for future grant cycles.

Funding Sources

Funding for the 2020 SCP will be provided through a combination of federal, state, and local sources. SCAG will allocate funding for project applications based on the eligibility of each funding source and the applicant's readiness. Awards and projects will be managed by SCAG and implemented through its consultants only. Hosting a Call for Applications to award funds through multiple funding streams is intended to simplify the application process and achieve efficiencies in program administration.

The 2020 SCP-ATS will program up to five percent (5%) of SCAG's regional funding from Cycle 5 of the Active Transportation Program, per the 2021 ATP Regional Guidelines.

Due to the inclusion of Senate Bill 1 (SB1) funding, at the time of award notice an applicant, sub-applicant, and/or jurisdiction is required to have a housing element in substantial compliance with State housing element law, and must be current with submitted updated housing element Annual Progress Reports.

Timely Use of Funds/Time Extensions

A project initiation schedule and expectations regarding the period of performance will be determined within three months of project award announcements, and will be based on project complexity, funding source, and SCAG staff capacity. In certain cases, projects may receive a notice to proceed two to three years after the project award announcements. Once the project schedule has been established, extensions will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Extensions and scope changes must be requested in letter format. All requests must include an explanation of the issues and actions the agency has taken to correct the issues. All extensions will be contingent on funding availability and the program requirements of the funding source assigned to the project when awarded. SCAG intends all selected projects to be completed in a timely manner and requires that applicants coordinate internal resources to ensure timely completion of the projects.

SCP – ATS Schedule

The following schedule outlines important dates for the first phase, SCP-ATS.

SCP-ATS Milestone	Date
SCP-ATS Call for Applications Opens	September 8, 2020
SCP-ATS Application Workshops	October 2020
SCP-ATS Call for Applications Deadline	December 11, 2020
SCAG Regional Council Approval of the 2020 SCP – ATS Application Rankings*	May 2021

*Projects receiving ATP funding will also be subject to approval by the SCAG Regional Council and California Transportation Commission as part of the adoption of the complete 2021 Regional ATP. SCAG Regional Council consideration is anticipated in May 2021 followed by CTC action in June 2021.

SCP – ATS Contact Information

Questions regarding the SCP-ATS applications or application process should be directed to:

Hannah Brunelle
Telephone: 213-236-1907
Email: brunelle@scag.ca.gov

SCP – ATS Submittal Information

Applications are due Friday, December 11, 2020 by 5:00 p.m. using the instructions provided in the application. Questions regarding submitting applications for each category should be emailed to the contact person listed above. Applications should include all supporting documents in a single PDF file. Project sponsors do not need a board resolution in order to apply, but they will be required to agree to submit a supporting resolution from the elected body or a letter of intent in support of the project from the appropriate executive officer prior to receiving funding. Files should be labeled in the following format:

Agency Name_Phase Category_Application Category_Project Name. For
example: SCAG_AT_QuickBuild_Main Street Demonstration