

## *Regional Early Action Planning (REAP) Program Update – January 2022*

### **BACKGROUND:**

Under the California 2019-20 Budget Act, SCAG was eligible for \$47 million in REAP funding to support local governments and stakeholders with housing planning activities that accelerate housing production and meet the region's goals for producing 1.3 million new units of housing by 2029, as determined by the 6th Cycle RHNA.

SCAG has framed the REAP funding into three umbrella categories:

- Partnerships and Outreach
- Regional Housing Policy Solutions
- Sustainable Communities Strategies (SCS) Integration

### ***PARTNERSHIPS AND OUTREACH***

#### 1) Subregional Partnership Program

SCAG set aside approximately \$23 million of its REAP housing funding for the Subregional Partnership Program (SRP) to fund subregional partnership planning activities that will accelerate housing production and facilitate compliance in implementing a jurisdiction's 6th cycle RHNA.

MOUs have been executed for all fifteen subregions. Subregions are in the process of doing work directly through their staff as well as procuring consultants. SCAG staff are actively working with the partners to ensure that procurement scopes are consistent with the approved grant-funded activities. In addition, as appropriate, SCAG staff have offered to partners the use of the recently established On Call Services contracts, for which the Regional Council has approved up to \$10 million in contracting in support of the REAP program.

SCAG has increased the RHNA-adjusted SRP allocation for all subregions by 5%. Staff identified these additional funds by reducing SCAG's budget dedicated to our internal REAP program staffing. The additional funding can be used for approved projects and tasks as part of the executed scope of work approval form agreed upon by the subregion and SCAG.

#### 2) Call for Collaboration

In July 2020, the Regional Council voted to approve \$1 million of the early application REAP grant funding to establish the Call for Collaboration partnership program with the intent to support new partnership models and engage a wider range of stakeholders to advance the region's housing goals. SCAG partnered with the California Community Foundation (CCF), joined by the Irvine Foundation and Chan Zuckerberg Initiative for this program. The program was designed to fund community-based organizations and non-profit led activities that result in action-oriented planning policies and programs demonstrating a nexus to accelerating housing production.

SCAG entered into an MOU with CCF to identify other funding sources and administer the grant funding. In January 2021, CCF and SCAG procured a technical assistance provider, to be funded by

the foundation partners, to support the grant program awardees in their planning activities.

The technical assistance provider held initial meetings with all grantees to better understand their training and technical assistance priorities and is currently finalizing the topics and schedule for five to seven trainings, along with developing individualized plans for each grantee. SCAG held a webinar to assist grantees with project administration in September 2021.

### 3) Housing Policy Leadership Academy (HPLA)

A kickoff meeting was held with the selected consultant in July 2021 and materials for both the Housing Policy Forum and the Housing Policy Leadership Academy have been in development since then. The first Housing Policy Forum was held on November 1, 2021 and was attended by almost 300 participants. The Forum featured national-level speakers and provided an overview of recent Federal and State housing legislation. The HPLA applications are due on January 10, 2022 and candidates will be notified of their selection by January 18, 2022. SCAG will continue to publicize the HPLA application process through emails, social media, and meeting announcements. The trainings will kick off in February 2022 and will be held once per month for 10 months.

### 4) Pro-Housing Campaign

SCAG designated funding for the development of a community outreach and advertising campaign as a resource for cities and counties working to create positive associations with housing development and housing-supportive land use policies. This effort will be modelled on the success of SCAG's Go Human campaign, a community outreach and advertising campaign with the goals of reducing traffic collisions in Southern California and encouraging people to walk and bike more. In Fall 2021, SCAG staff met with the Chan-Zuckerberg Institute (CZI) and the United Way in Greater Los Angeles to discuss their current efforts in developing their pro-housing campaign on ways that SCAG can help to expand their efforts in the greater SCAG region. In early 2022, CZI will be publishing the results of a detailed market segmentation study that produced recommended directions for pro-housing campaigns. SCAG will provide updates on these efforts to the CEHD and plans to partner with either CZI or its foundation partners to launch the campaign.

## ***REGIONAL HOUSING POLICY SOLUTIONS***

### 1) RHNA Methodology/Allocation

The 6<sup>th</sup> cycle Final RHNA Allocation Plan was adopted by the SCAG Regional Council in March 2021. Subsequently, SCAG staff have processed two requests to transfer RHNA allocation between neighboring jurisdictions. Other than responding to these requests, no further work is currently underway with respect to the 6th cycle RHNA.

SCAG will use lessons learned from the 6th cycle process to inform its recommendations to HCD for revamping the RHNA process to be provided pursuant to Health and Safety Code 50515.05. This will most likely begin in mid- to late- 2022, depending on statewide activity led by HCD.

### 2) Data Tools and Technical Support for Housing Element Updates

In partnership with HCD, SCAG has provided several data and technical assistance tools to local

jurisdictions. These resources will help member jurisdictions reduce costs associated with developing 6th cycle housing element updates as well as streamline the review process.

This work has included:

- August 2020: A two-part webinar series focused on providing local governments and other stakeholders in the SCAG region with information and resources to support their 6th cycle housing element updates
- July 2020: Publishing housing element needs and affordability data sets for each local jurisdiction, pre-certified by HCD for use in housing element updates.
- Release of a Regional Accessory Dwelling Unit Affordability Analysis to support cities in determining assumptions for ADU affordability that can be used to assign ADUs to income categories to be included in 6th cycle housing elements.
- December 2020: Launch of the SCAG Housing Element Parcel Tool (HELPR), a web-mapping tool developed to help local jurisdictions and stakeholders understand local land use and site opportunities for aligning housing planning with the state's 6th cycle housing element updates and related guidelines.

### 3) Housing Policy Solutions Research

Building upon prior internal research efforts which focus on housing policies and fiscal innovations, this work item was established to develop collaboratively funded university studies (“university partnerships”) or other partnerships and engagements that provide research and recommendations on best practices that accelerate housing production, as well as additional small-ticket consultant items as needed, and staff time. The key deliverables will consist of policy briefs and periodic white papers on timely topics and best practices. Five efforts are underway for this program:

1. *Other to Residential*: The Other-to-Residential project considers the opportunities and barriers for conversion of underutilized non-residential sites to much-needed residential use in the SCAG region. The final deliverable of this project will be an Other-to-Residential Toolkit that will showcase case studies and best practices that highlight common barriers faced by jurisdictions and the development community in the conversion of non-residential land uses, and include measures to overcome them. The project commenced in September 2021 and USC student collaboration to develop a draft the Design Look Book to be completed in December 2021. The final Other-to-Residential Toolkit and Design Look Book will be completed and delivered to SCAG in the Spring of 2022.

2. *Housing Development Streamlining*: In early October 2021, staff kicked off the Housing Development Streamlining Project, which will offer guidance documents, best practices, workshops, and other materials and resources to support local jurisdictions’ efforts to streamline their CEQA and general administrative review processes. Staff is currently finalizing a Development Streamlining Questionnaire to understand current challenges to CEQA streamlining and administrative review processes in the SCAG region. The questionnaire will be launched early 2022 and the results will help determine the content for the guidance documents and workshops.

3. *Smart Permitting*: The City of Cerritos pilot program, as a part of the Future Communities Pilot Program (FCPP), continues making progress on their online permitting platform to accelerate housing production and reduce vehicle miles traveled. The consultant team and City staff are working closely together to migrate content, install critical modules, design functional systems, and build the new platform.

4. *Technical Advisory Panel*: SCAG is developing a partnership with the Urban Land Institute (ULI) to create two technical advisory panels (TAP) with experts in specialized fields. The objectives of these panels will be to: (1) explore infrastructure/utility needs for housing development and financing tools to support these investments, as well as methods to realize sustainable infrastructure, and; (2) development on underutilized properties owned by school districts. The first technical advisory panel is anticipated to be held in early 2022 as a National TAP and a subsequent more localized TAP is anticipated for late 2022.

5. *Tax Increment Financing (TIF)*: An expansion of SCAG's TIF pilot program, this project will provide technical assistance to advance establishment of innovative self-help financing districts for local jurisdictions that can accelerate housing production. The project will complete studies for the County of Imperial and City of Barstow incorporating best practices for district establishment and infrastructure financing and will have a specific focus on implementing housing supportive infrastructure and expanding housing supply. SCAG staff is currently developing a scope of work and anticipates procuring a consultant and project kickoff in early 2022.

### ***SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES STRATEGIES INTEGRATION***

#### 1) 2020 Sustainable Communities Program (SCP) – Housing and Sustainable Development (HSD)

This [HSD-SCP program](#) was designed to provide resources and direct technical assistance to jurisdictions to complete local planning efforts that both accelerate housing production as well as enable implementation of the Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) of Connect SoCal. There are three eligible categories for this program including: (1) implementing ADU programs; (2) Housing Sustainability Districts, Workforce Housing Opportunity Zones, and Housing Supportive Tax Increment Financing Districts; and (3) streamlining housing permitting, parking reduction strategies, housing-related specific plans and other pro-housing policies.

Staff worked with each participating jurisdiction to prepare scopes of work to release a Request for Proposals for each project and has been able to use the established On Call Services contracts to accelerate procurement and implementation. As of December 2021, 2 projects have kicked off, 4 are in contract negotiations, 3 are in proposal review, and 3 have released RFPs. The program anticipates all projects to be kicked off with work underway by February of 2022.

#### 2) Transit Oriented Development Work Program

**LA Metro Partnership:** SCAG and Metro are pursuing a Transit Oriented Development/Transit Oriented Communities (TOD/TOC) partnership via an MOU to fund a variety of programs and studies that promote housing production near transit stations. SCAG staff have been working closely with Metro in developing the scope of work for this effort, which includes deliverables to accelerate housing on Metro Joint Development sites. The goal of the partnership is to plan for nearly 10,000 units of housing on transit-adjacent properties. The MOU between Metro and SCAG will be/was executed in December 2021. The project is being procured as four separate task orders using SCAG's On Call Services Contracts. The first two are under active SCAG led procurement and a project kick-off are expected in February 2022. Procurement for the remaining two task orders will be begin in early 2022. All final project deliverables will be completed by June 2023.

**SCRRRA (Metrolink):** SCAG and SCRRRA are partnering through an MOU to identify and encourage transit-oriented housing and redevelopment opportunities throughout Metrolink’s network and around its stations. SCAG is preparing a station area land-use analysis for the Metrolink station areas that will be included in the 2024 Connect SoCal Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS). SCAG and Metrolink jointly developed a scope of work for this REAP-funded effort and expect to procure using the On Call Services contracts in early 2022.

**Inglewood Transit Connector (ITC):** A new project, staff is pursuing a partnership with the City to Inglewood to explore how to plan, design and engineer transit infrastructure such that it can support adjoining or adjacent housing. The project will study a maintenance facility and other components of the ITC project, which is currently in the environmental review phase and use findings to make recommendations that can apply broadly to the planning and delivery of transit infrastructure. This project is part of a larger scope of work for the ITC and is intended to produce housing by strengthening its connection to transit infrastructure investments.

### 3) Priority Growth Area (PGA) Analysis

**Partnerships:** SCAG staff have focused on identifying partnerships with existing programs and efforts, with an emphasis on the State-funded Transformative Climate Communities (TCC) areas. SCAG has selected two cities, Pomona and Riverside, to partner with in pursuing additional analysis and feasibility studies in connection with their existing TCC grant funds. The partnership with the City of Pomona will develop a housing land use suitability and infrastructure study to analyze the potential for development of affordable housing on City-owned parcels in the downtown area. The partnership with the City of Riverside will focus on developing an Infrastructure Assessment Plan for the recently adopted Innovation District Overlay Zone, and will include a detailed capacity model of utilities, assessment of roadways, and evaluation of broadband ability.

SCAG is developing project scopes with the two partners and plans to select a consultant and hold a kickoff meeting in early 2022.