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NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY

TO: Interested Agencies, Organizations and Individuals

SUBJECT: Public Notice of Availability of a Draft Program Environmental Impact Report for Connect SoCal

DATE: December 9, 2019

LEAD AGENCY: Southern California Association of Governments
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The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), as Lead Agency, has prepared a Draft Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) (SCH#2019011061) in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for Connect SoCal (2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy). The Draft PEIR serves as a programmatic document that conducts a region-wide assessment of potential significant environmental effects of Connect SoCal.

Connect SoCal is a long-range regional transportation plan that provides a blueprint for the region to achieve coordinated regional land use strategies and transportation investments for more than a 20-year period. Connect SoCal provides land use and transportation strategies to help achieve a coordinated balance of land uses and transportation investments. Connect SoCal envisions future regional growth that is well coordinated with the transportation system improvements, as well as new transportation projects planned for the region. It also incorporates best practices for increasing transportation choices and transportation infrastructure expenditures; reducing dependence on single-occupant automobiles; and encouraging future new growth in walkable, mixed-use communities and in high quality transit areas (HQTAs), where feasible. The Plan is intended to achieve a range of benefits, including: reducing vehicle trip length and land consumption; improving air quality and physical fitness; increasing shared mobility; improving jobs/housing balance and natural habitat preservation; and enhancing water and energy conservation.

Environmental Factors and Alternatives Considered

The PEIR is a programmatic document that will analyze potential effects of the Plan on the environment. Although Connect SoCal will include some individual transportation projects, the PEIR does not specifically analyze environmental effects of any individual transportation or development project. Project-level environmental analyses will be prepared by implementing agencies on a project-by-project basis as projects proceed through the design and decision-making process.

The Draft PEIR determines that the following resource areas would have significant impacts even after the implementation of mitigation measures:

- Aesthetics and Views
- Agriculture and Forestry Resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources and Open Space
- Cultural Resources
- Geology, Soils and Mineral Resources
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Climate Change
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Resources
- Land Use and Planning
- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Recreation
- Transportation/Traffic
- Public Services
- Utilities and Service Systems
- Wildfire

The Draft PEIR addresses the following alternatives:

No Project Alternative

The No Project Alternative is required by Section 15126.6(e)(2) of the CEQA Guidelines and assumes that the Plan would not be implemented. The No Project Alternative considers continued implementation of the goals and policies of the adopted 2016 RTP/SCS. The No Project Alternative includes only those transportation projects that are in the first two years of the previously conforming FTIP (i.e., 2018). The growth scenario included in the No Project Alternative, and all other alternatives, includes the same regional totals for population, housing and employment.

Existing Plans - Local Input Alternative

The Existing Plans-Local Input Alternative incorporates jurisdictional general plans and land use information to reflect the Plan's population, household and employment growth estimates and land use development patterns in the region. This alternative includes policies and strategies in the 2016 RTP/SCS to the extent that they have been incorporated into local jurisdictional plans. This alternative does not include additional land use strategies described in the Plan that go beyond current local policy. This alternative includes projects planned by each County Transportation Commission (CTC).

Intensified Land Use Alternative

The Intensified Land Use Alternative is aligned with the Plan's transportation network and strategies, and building on the land use patterns of the Accelerated Tomorrow Scenario, which consists of more aggressive densities and land use patterns. The growth pattern associated with this Alternative optimizes urban areas and suburban town centers, transit-oriented developments (TODs), HQTAs, livable corridors, and neighborhood mobility areas. It also includes a greater progressive job-housing distribution optimized for TODs and infill in HQTAs.

SCAG is providing a **45-day public review and comment period from December 9, 2019 to January 24, 2020. Written comments will be accepted no later than 5:00 p.m. on January 24, 2020.** A copy of the Draft PEIR is available at: <http://connectsocal.org> and hard copies will be available at SCAG's Los Angeles and regional offices. Electronic copies are available for review at major libraries in the region. Comments

may be submitted using an online form at <http://connectsocial.org> or via email at 2020PEIR@scag.ca.gov. A public workshop will take place at SCAG's Los Angeles office, Room Policy-Meeting-A, located at the address shown above on **January 9, from 2 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.** Video conferencing of the public workshops is available from SCAG's regional offices and videoconferencing sites. For more information on the locations of SCAG's regional offices and videoconferencing sites, please visit SCAG's website at: <https://www.scag.ca.gov/about/Pages/SCAGOffices.aspx>

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