



Green Means Go is a multi-year program to lower greenhouse gas emissions in the six-county Sacramento region by accelerating infill development and reducing and electrifying vehicle trips. The program aims to support and fund projects that create more infill housing, increase mobility, and reduce vehicle emissions. Green Means Go funding is directed to locally-nominated Green Zones, areas that cities and counties have identified for infill development in their local plan that are within a center, corridor, or established community as identified in SACOG's Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy. In addition to reducing vehicle emissions, Green Means Go will also stimulate economic development and improve quality of life in the region. To support the program, the SACOG Board directed \$34.5 million to fund the initial set of Green Means Go infill projects. The program was awarded the 2023 Achievement Award from the National Association of Regional Councils.

Why Green Means Go

Green Means Go is a key implementation component of SACOG's 2025 Blueprint to build a connected region with transportation options, affordable housing, and equitable investments that give all community members access to a safe and healthy region. The 2025 Blueprint includes a 19 percent greenhouse gas reduction target set by the California Air Resources Board. Yet without significant funding assistance from state and federal partners, the greater Sacramento region's 19 percent emission reduction goal will be unachievable. Most notably, infill areas in the Sacramento region, and other established communities in the state, face corridor-level challenges with existing infrastructure that

create immediate barriers to potential development and individual housing projects. Green Means Go's goal is to address those barriers through infrastructure investment, technical assistance and policy support.

Regional Growing Pains

SACOG forecasts its six-county region needs 11,000 housing units per year, 75% of these as attached and small lot housing products. Yet the Sacramento region faces serious barriers around infill development compared to the coastal metropolitan areas. Infill development is costly while the current infrastructure was built to support old commercial corridors; it simply does not support high-density housing, nor do cities and counties have the resources to upgrade sewer, water, drainage and other infrastructure needs. As a result, the Sacramento region has only been able to build about 20% of the attached product the region would



Accelerating Infill Development Across the Sacramento Region



need to meet the goals laid out in our Sustainable Communities Strategy.

By the year 2040, through Green Means Go and with the necessary investment in Green Zones, the region is primed for promising outcomes:

- Green Zones have 32 percent of planned housing growth, creating an estimated 84,000 new homes
- Green Zones will see around 40 percent of planned employment growth, creating about 525,000 new jobs
- Green Zones see a 16% reduction of VMT per capita, double the regional reduction per capita at 8%

On top of general impacts on housing, SACOG's infill strategy will help reduce the number of homes in high and very high fire risk areas by 10,000 units over 20 years. This is based on historical development and on the share of homes and existing housing stock in wildfire prone areas.

Green Zones

26 of the SACOG region's 28 local jurisdictions have adopted Green Zones and developed policies or plans to support and promote infill development and new transportation options in those zones. Green Zones are key areas that have infill capacity yet currently face market or other barriers to development. Green Zones will be the accelerators for economic development projects that promote increased alternative transportation options, increase housing near expanded travel options and other amenities, and make it easier for the region to access electric vehicles for cleaner transportation.

These Green Zones show the region's enthusiasm for Green Means Go and the benefits go far beyond greenhouse gas reductions. Green Means Go is the Sacramento region's commitment and solution to California's housing, climate, and transportation

challenges. Green Zones recognize there is a connection between land use, housing, economic and workforce development, transportation investments, and travel choices. Jurisdictions across the region have gone through an extensive process to develop Green Zones that meet the program criteria, but also face significant barriers to their development, especially infrastructure costs.

State Funding Support

After months of developing the proposed pilot program, and several years of advocacy with state regulators, legislators, and the administration on the need for Green Means Go, the state approved critical funding to metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) like SACOG for SCS implementation. AB 140 provides \$600 million statewide for the Regional Early Action Planning Grants Program of 2021 while SB 170 allocated an additional \$4 million to SACOG's Green Means Go program. The need for this type of funding was identified over a decade ago when the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act of 2008 (Senate Bill 375) was adopted by the state legislature and is long overdue. SACOG's partners' and members' efforts have been recognized as a key catalyst for this state funding.

Through this state funding support, SACOG developed the Green Means Go funding program, including outreach and engagement, guidelines development, applications and updated data on Green Zones. In November 2022 the SACOG board awarded the first \$3.2 million in Green Means Go awards for 'Early Activation' projects, with \$31.3 million awarded in March of 2023 for planning and capital investment in infill Green Zones.

As part of the program SACOG has also partnered with the Urban Land Institute on four technical assistance activities and convened the region's infrastructure providers around barriers to infill development.



Examples of Green Means Go funding in use:

City of Auburn Form-Based Code

The project will guide a comprehensive vision for Auburn's central commercial core (Old Town and Downtown) which includes higher intensity uses including an array of housing types and mixed-use developments.

City of Citrus Heights Sunrise Tomorrow Infrastructure Support

The Green Means Go scope will include preliminary engineering of backbone infrastructure to support the redevelopment of the Sunrise Mall, a transformation of the 100-acre site into a mixed-use, transit-oriented village comprised of 2,200 residential units, 480 hotel rooms, 320,000 SF retail, 960,000 SF office, 450,000 SF community/ institutional uses, and 25 acres of open and green space. The award will also support evaluation of infrastructure financing opportunities for the site.

City of Folsom 300 Persifer Street

The City of Folsom and partner Habitat for Humanity's proposed 300 Persifer Street project will develop ten affordable for-sale housing units in a high opportunity and high resource area. The Green Means Go award will support water, sewer, drainage, and non-transportation dry utility infrastructure needs.

City of Lincoln Downtown Green Zone

The City of Lincoln is developing a specific plan and urban design standards for the Lincoln Blvd downtown Green Zone. The work will evaluate the feasibility of adopting an Enhanced Infrastructure Financing District to upgrade the zone's gaining utility infrastructure while also providing an ongoing source of funding for affordable housing.

City of Rancho Cordova Mills Crossing

The Mills Crossing transit-oriented development is a mixed-use, mixed-income community hub including over 100 multifamily and townhouse units, 2+ acres of public parks and plazas, and approximately 100,000 square feet of community arts, culture, and wellness facilities. Green Means Go funding will advance civil and utility engineering technical studies as well as non-transportation capital infrastructure.

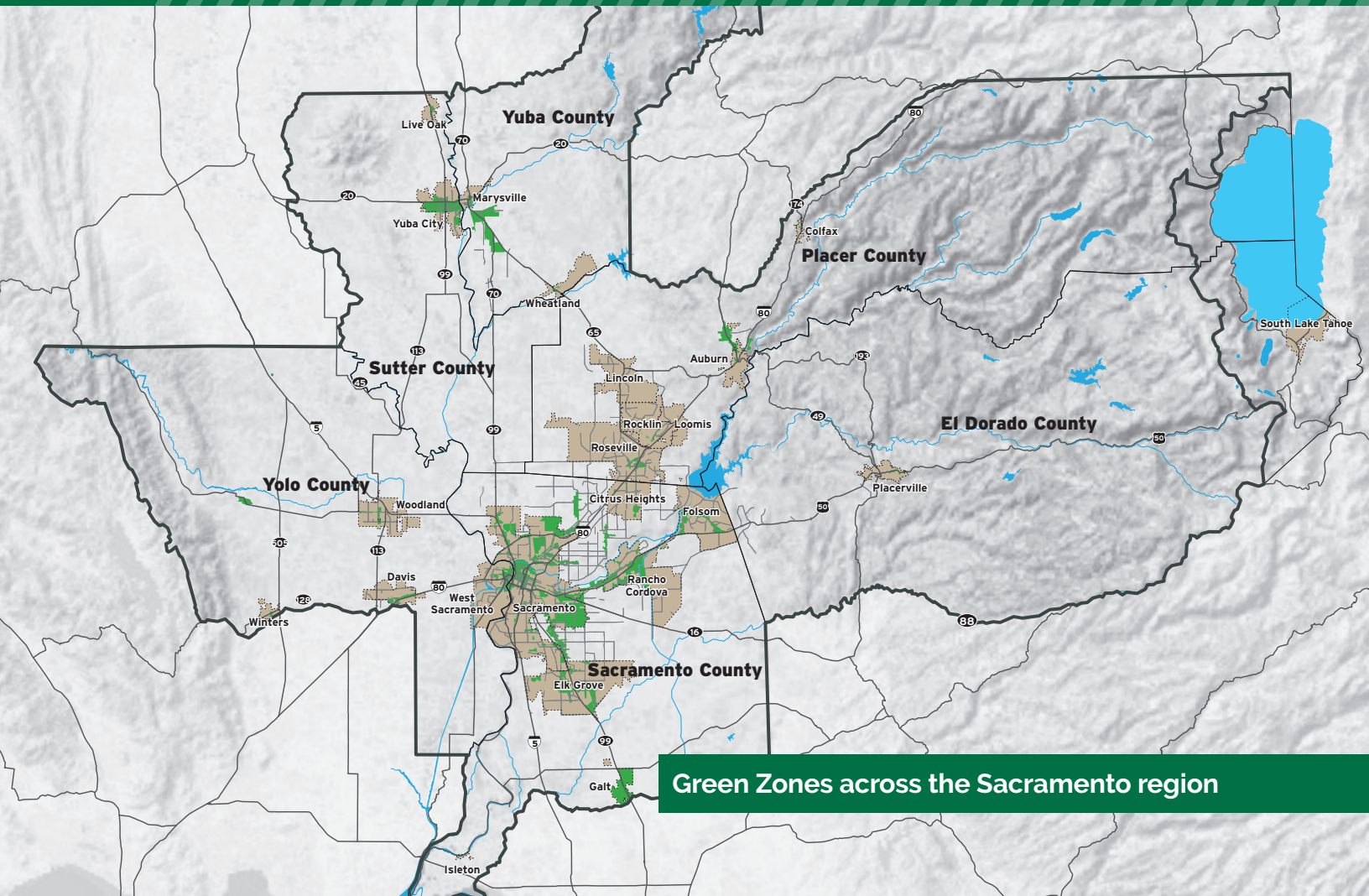
City and County of Sacramento San Juan Apartments by Mutual Housing—Offsite Improvements

San Juan Apartments by Mutual Housing is a proposed 150- unit affordable housing development (including a childcare facility and 2,500 SF of commercial space) located at 5700 Stockton Boulevard, to serve families with incomes between 30% and 60% of the area median. The Green Means Go award helps offsite improvements, including the extension of domestic water and sewer and stormwater services, as well as undergrounding of power lines that run through and adjacent to the site.

City of Sacramento Del Paso Blvd

Green Means Go has funded a sewer system upgrade in the Del Paso area to enable denser infill development and eliminate infiltration into the collection system from heavy rain events. The program also funded associated storm drainage modeling in the area.





Green Zones across the Sacramento region



SACOG
Sacramento Area
Council of
Governments

For more information, please visit: sacog.org/greenmeansgo

