



Green Means Go is a multi-year pilot that aims to lower greenhouse gas emissions in the six-county Sacramento region by accelerating infill development, and reducing and electrifying vehicle trips. It allocates state funding to projects that create more infill housing, increases mobility, and reduces vehicle emissions. Green Means Go funding will be 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, the pilot will also stimulate economic development and improve quality of life in the region. To support the pilot program, the SACOG Board has directed that eligible future state funds be used on the Green Means Go program.

Why Green Means Go

When the California Air Resources Board established SACOG's 19 percent greenhouse gas reduction target, SACOG was the only region in the state to have its target conditioned on the successful implementation of a pilot. This allows it to be a model for other regions on how to effectively grow their communities while reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Green Means Go is a key component of SACOG's 2020 Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (MTP/SCS), which sets the goal to have one third of all homes built in centers, corridors, or established communities. Without significant funding assistance from the state, the greater Sacramento region's 19 percent emission reduction goal will be unachievable. Infill areas in the Sacramento region, and other established communities in the state, face

corridor-level challenges with existing infrastructure. This creates immediate barriers to potential development and individual housing projects, Green Means Go can address that.

Regional Growing Pains

SACOG forecasts its six-county region needs 11,000 housing units per year, approximately doubling the current rate, to meet projected demand. 7,000 of those units are needed in infill areas to meet the region's ambitious greenhouse gas reduction targets. Infill development is costly, and our region is behind coastal and metropolitan areas in creating it. 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.

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

23 of the SACOG region's 28 local jurisdictions have identified Green Zones and developed policies or plans to support and promote infill development and new transportation options. Green Zones are key areas that must have infill capacity, be in an area planned for infill development, and be in a center, corridor, or established community as identified in SACOG's MTP/SCS. 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 that 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

After months of developing the proposed pilot program, and several years of advocacy with state regulators, legislators, and the administration, the state has approved critical funding to metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) for SCS implementation through AB 140. AB 140 defines the expenditure of \$600 million for the Regional Early Action Planning Grants Program of 2021 (REAP 2021). SB 170 allocated an additional \$4 million to SACOG's Green Means Go program. The need for this 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 REAP 2021, SACOG will receive approximately \$34 million in formula funds. Funding must be used for "housing, planning, infrastructure investments supporting infill housing, and other actions that enable meeting housing goals that also result in per capita vehicle miles traveled reductions, including accelerating infill development, supporting residents through realizing multimodal communities, shifting travel behavior through reducing driving, and increasing transit ridership." Investments must also align with one of the following: state planning priorities (Gov't Code § 65041.1), affirmatively further fair housing (Gov't Code § 8899.50),

housing element compliance, or sustainable communities strategy (or APS). In addition, SACOG can compete for additional funds from a \$30 million set aside for "transformative planning and implementation activities that demonstrably exceed the requirements of [the grant program] and further multiple policy objectives."

Housing and Community Development (HCD) will begin stakeholder outreach on the REAP 2021 program guidelines in September 2021 and plans to release a final Notice of Funding Availability in January 2022. Beginning January 1, 2022, MPOs can request an initial allocation of 10 percent of the funds for which they are eligible. As currently proposed, the funding includes federal funds, which would need to be obligated by December 2024, and expended by June 2026, creating a tight timeframe.



**For more information,
please visit:**
www.sacog.org