



**Southern California Association of Governments  
Transportation Broadband Strategies to Reduce VMT and GHG  
Working Framework for Stakeholder Outreach and Focus Groups  
November 2021**

**Background**

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) awarded a Sustainable Communities Grant to the Southern California Association (SCAG) to study to assess the relationship between ubiquitous availability of broadband to all residents and the reduction of: (a) vehicle trips and associated vehicle miles traveled (VMT); and (b) decrease in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

The Grant Work Plan includes an obligation for each Regional Broadband Consortium (RBC) to conduct outreach to stakeholders and convene focus groups to inform the study to determine the potential for broadband to reduce VMT and GHG in the SCAG Region to meet targets for GHG reduction set by the California Air Resources Board (CARB). The Grant Work Plan further calls for the California Emerging Technology Fund (CETF) work support and assist the RBCs in planning and conducting the stakeholder outreach and focus groups. This document sets forth the working framework to fulfill those obligations. Given the time involved to finalize all the Grant documents coupled with the pandemic shelter-in-place constraints and the delay in the recruiting, selecting, and negotiating a contract and scope of services with the technical consultants, the following approach has been developed by the CETF and RBCs. Further, this working approach takes into account that changed circumstances and significant new relevant data gathered between the time that Caltrans awarded the Grant and implementation of the Work Plan could begin in addition to the actual commute patterns observed during the pandemic shelter-in-place orders. In particular, CETF engaged the University of California (USC) Annenberg School to conduct the 2021 Statewide Survey on Broadband Adoption that gathered real-time data to inform the study about resident preferences for reducing vehicle trips. The Statewide Survey obtained the kind of essential data originally envisioned to be gathered only through stakeholder outreach. CETF further supported USC to conduct follow-up interviews of low-income residents that were similar to the purpose of the focus groups. The 2021 Statewide Survey is a \$225,000 in-kind contribution to the Caltrans study by CETF.

## **Grant Work Plan Deliverables**

The Grant Work Plan envisions that each RBC will conduct 3 Stakeholder Outreach Meetings and convene 2 Focus Groups. Given the above background and changed circumstances, CETF and the RBCs developed the following approach to obtain valuable input to the study in an efficient manner to meet the time constraints of the Caltrans Grant. This approach will gather additional input from at least 260 individuals to augment the data from the 2021 Statewide Survey.

3 Stakeholder Meetings @ >15 Each = 45 x 4 RBCs = 180 Individuals  
2 Focus Groups @ >10 Each = 20 x 4 RBCs = 80 Individuals  
Total >260 Individuals in the SCAG Region (4 RBC Regions)

The 3 primary Stakeholder Groups to be reached and engaged are:

- Private-Sector Employers (Office, Retail, Industrial)
- Public Agencies and Services (Counties, Cities, Special Districts, Non-Profit Organizations)
- Education and Health Providers (K-12 Schools, Higher Education, Health and Medical Facilities)

### Stakeholder Outreach Methodology

The purpose of the 3 Stakeholder Meetings will be accomplished through 2 mechanisms: (1) Stakeholder Surveys with results compiled by the 3 primary Stakeholder Groups and “Other” for analysis and comparison of responses; and (2) Stakeholder Forum for follow-on discussion of issues and opportunities to reduce vehicle trips. The Stakeholder Survey will draw from and build upon the 2021 Statewide Survey and is envisioned to be about 5 questions. CETF and RBCs will develop a simple Discussion Guide for the Stakeholder Forums.

The Stakeholder Survey will be distributed by each RBC to: (a) all Members in their database; and (b) additional stakeholders in the RBC Region identified and recruited to ensure the minimum number of responders in each primary Stakeholder Group. CETF, in consultation with the RBCs, will establish an online process for receiving and compiling Stakeholder Surveys. CETF will prepare a recommended Engagement Message for the RBCs to use in distribution of the Stakeholder Survey. Each RBC will be responsible for following up to their distribution lists to ensure a sufficient number of Stakeholder Surveys in each primary Group.

### Focus Group Methodology

Each RBC will engage 2 kinds of partners in their Region to recruit low-income households in Focus Groups: (a) Counties to recruit CalFresh recipients; and (b) Health Providers to recruit Medi-Cal recipients. CETF and the RBCs will work with the USC Annenberg School to assist in conducting the Focus Groups efficiently consistently in-language and in-culture. CETF will provide a \$10 gift card for each participant (>\$800) as another in-kind contribution. The Focus Group conversations will build upon the 2021 Statewide Survey follow-on interviews.

### Expert Advisory Committee

The meetings of the Expert Advisory Committee will include online consultations.

## Stakeholder Survey

The Stakeholder Survey is to be completed by individuals in administration or management who have input to and/or approve policies for employees regarding work location (on site in-person or remote telecommuting). Each Regional Broadband Consortium (RBC) is responsible for ensuring completion of the minimum number of Surveys in each of the 3 primary Stakeholder Groups, which is 15 in each Stakeholder Group for a total of 45 Surveys. To ensure at least 15 completed Surveys in each Stakeholder Group, there should be twice that number or 30 identified individuals invited to complete the Survey. Each RBC will be responsible for developing that database and sharing it with CETF to compile a Master Roster for the 3 Stakeholder Groups.

Each RBC will distribute the Stakeholder Survey to: (a) 90 Individuals on the Master Roster; and (b) complete Membership (which will provide additional data and act as a control for the primary Stakeholder Groups. CETF will establish an online portal for completion and submission of the Surveys and will compile the results. CETF will monitor the submission of Surveys and provide progress reports to each RBC Region about the number of Surveys that still must be collected to meet the minimum 15 per Stakeholder Group.

### Proposed Survey Invitation Message to Stakeholders

Dear Civic Leader:

Please take just 5 minutes to complete this simple questionnaire to inform public officials about the construction throughout Southern California of high-speed Internet infrastructure—referred to generically as “broadband” and including wireline and wireless networks.

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) and [Inland Empire Regional Broadband Consortium] [LA DEAL Regional Broadband Consortium] [Broadband Consortium of the Pacific Coast] [Southern Border Broadband Consortium] are conducting study to determine the extent to which the availability of ubiquitous broadband could decrease vehicle trips and, in turn, reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This study examines the potential of “broadband as a green strategy” to reduce impacts on the environment if every household, business, government service, and community facilities were connected to the Internet with high-speed service.

We appreciate you contributing your valuable time and expertise to inform us. You will be invited to a webinar conversation on January \_\_\_\_\_ to discuss the results of this Survey and provide additional input to public officials.

To get started, just click below. Thank you for your assistance.

[Signed]

[Name of Regional Broadband Consortium]

Get Started Button Will Have a Drop-Down Menu for Name, Title, Email, Mailing Address, Telephone and RBC Region (which will provide the link to the Survey).

Background Demographics

(Set up with easy drop-down menus.)

<b>Stakeholder Group</b>	Private-Sector Employer	Public Agency or Service Provider	Education or Health Provider	Other
<b>Description</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business Office</li> <li>• Retail</li> <li>• Industrial</li> <li>• Other</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County</li> <li>• City</li> <li>• Special District</li> <li>• Non-Profit</li> <li>• Other</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• K-12 Schools</li> <li>• COE</li> <li>• Higher Education</li> <li>• Hospital</li> <li>• Clinic</li> <li>• SNF</li> <li>• Public Health</li> <li>• Other</li> </ul>	
<b>Number of Employees</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 – 10</li> <li>• 11 – 50</li> <li>• 51 – 100</li> <li>• More than 100</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 – 10</li> <li>• 11 – 50</li> <li>• 51 – 100</li> <li>• More than 100</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 – 10</li> <li>• 11 – 50</li> <li>• 51 – 100</li> <li>• More than 100</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 – 10</li> <li>• 11 – 50</li> <li>• 51 – 100</li> <li>• More than 100</li> </ul>
<b>Management Policy Role Regarding Employees Work Location</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make policy decisions.</li> <li>• Provide input to policy decisions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make policy decisions.</li> <li>• Provide input to policy decisions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make policy decisions.</li> <li>• Provide input to policy decisions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make policy decisions.</li> <li>• Provide input to policy decisions.</li> </ul>
<b>Description of Employees Work Locations</b>				
<b>Work Location Before Pandemic</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essential Workers</li> <li>• All On Site</li> <li>• On Site + Travel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essential Workers</li> <li>• All On Site</li> <li>• On Site + Travel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essential Workers</li> <li>• All On Site</li> <li>• On Site + Travel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essential Workers</li> <li>• All On Site</li> <li>• On Site + Travel</li> </ul>
<b>Work Location During Pandemic</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essential Workers</li> <li>• All Remote</li> <li>• Remote + Travel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essential Workers</li> <li>• All Remote</li> <li>• Remote + Travel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essential Workers</li> <li>• All Remote</li> <li>• Remote + Travel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essential Workers</li> <li>• All Remote</li> <li>• Remote + Travel</li> </ul>
<b>Work Location Currently</b> (Hybrid is Combined On Site and Remote)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essential Workers</li> <li>• All Remote</li> <li>• Hybrid</li> <li>• On Site + Travel</li> <li>• Remote + Travel</li> <li>• Hybrid + Travel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essential Workers</li> <li>• All Remote</li> <li>• Hybrid</li> <li>• On Site + Travel</li> <li>• Remote + Travel</li> <li>• Hybrid + Travel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essential Workers</li> <li>• All Remote</li> <li>• Hybrid</li> <li>• On Site + Travel</li> <li>• Remote + Travel</li> <li>• Hybrid + Travel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essential Workers</li> <li>• All Remote</li> <li>• Hybrid</li> <li>• On Site + Travel</li> <li>• Remote + Travel</li> <li>• Hybrid + Travel</li> </ul>
<b>Expectation About Future Regarding Work Location</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More On Site</li> <li>• About the Same</li> <li>• More Remote</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More On Site</li> <li>• About the Same</li> <li>• More Remote</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More On Site</li> <li>• About the Same</li> <li>• More Remote</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More On Site</li> <li>• About the Same</li> <li>• More Remote</li> </ul>

**For Private-Sector Employers and Other**

1. What percentage of your employees work remotely at the present time?

- 0%
- Up to 20%
- 20% – 40%
- 40% – 60%
- 60% – 80%
- 80% – 100%

2. Does the lack of high-speed Internet infrastructure throughout your region limit the number of employees who can work remotely?

- Yes
- No
- Uncertain

2a. If YES, on a scale of 1 to 5 (with 5 being the highest), how much does the lack of high-speed Internet infrastructure limit the number of employees who can work remotely?

1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_

3. What is the optimal percentage of your employees who could work remotely, taking into account all factors, including workforce productivity and employee satisfaction?

- 0%
- Up to 20%
- 20% – 40%
- 40% – 60%
- 60% – 80%
- 80% – 100%

4. If you are allowing for a “hybrid” arrangement for employees to work remotely part of the time, what do you find to be the optimal mix of days “telecommuting” and working on site for organizational productivity and employee satisfaction?

**Number of Days Per Week Allowed for Working Remotely**

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- Allow Flexibility Based on Employee-Employer Agreement

5. How helpful would the following be to your organization in reducing vehicle trips by your employees or vehicle trip related to other aspects of your business (such as customers being able to receive services or goods online)?

(Check your response on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the most helpful.)

<b>Assistance to Reduce Vehicle Trips</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
Construct high-speed Internet infrastructure throughout the region so that all locations are connected.					
Provide sample policies and employer training for implementing telecommuting.					
Improve availability and convenience of public transit.					
Enact federal and state tax credits to employers for implementing telecommuting.					
Launch an awareness campaign to educate employers and employees about the environmental benefits of telecommuting to reducing vehicle trips.					

You are invited to share other comments here:

Space for Comments
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Thank you for taking the time to complete and submit this Survey. You will be invited to participate in webinar conversation on January \_\_\_\_\_ and we hope your schedule will allow you to participate.

**For Public Agencies and Service Providers**

1. A. What percentage of your employees work remotely at the present time?
  - 0%
  - Up to 20%
  - 20% – 40%
  - 40% – 60%
  - 60% – 80%
  - 80% – 100%
  
1. B. What percentage of your clients or customers receive your services online at the present time?
  - 0%
  - Up to 20%
  - 20% – 40%
  - 40% – 60%
  - 60% – 80%
  - 80% – 100%
  
2. Does the lack of high-speed Internet infrastructure throughout your region limit the number of employees who can work remotely and the number of clients or customers who can receive your services online?
  - Yes
  - No
  - Uncertain  

2a. If YES, on a scale of 1 to 5 (with 5 being the highest), how much does the lack of high-speed Internet infrastructure limit the number of employees who can work remotely and clients and customers who can receive services online?

1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_
  
3. A. What is the optimal percentage of your workers who could work remotely, taking into account all factors, including workforce productivity and employee satisfaction?
  - 0%
  - Up to 20%
  - 20% – 40%
  - 40% – 60%
  - 60% – 80%
  - 80% – 100%

3. B. What is the optimal percentage of your clients or customers who could receive services online (including applying for benefits, submitting eligibility documents, and receiving actual services)?
- 0%
  - Up to 20%
  - 20% – 40%
  - 40% – 60%
  - 60% – 80%
  - 80% – 100%

4. A. If you are allowing for a “hybrid” arrangement for employees to work remotely part of the time, what do you find to be the optimal mix of days “telecommuting” and working on site for organizational productivity and employee satisfaction?

Number of Days Per Week Allowed for Working Remotely

- 1
  - 2
  - 3
  - 4
  - 5
  - Allow Flexibility Based on Employee-Employer Agreement
5. How helpful would the following be to your organization in reducing vehicle trips by your employees and vehicle trips by your clients or customers?

(Check your response on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the most helpful.)

<b>Assistance to Reduce Vehicle Trips</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
Construct high-speed Internet infrastructure throughout the region so that all locations are connected.					
Assist your clients or customers with securing affordable home Internet service and a computing device.					
Provide digital literacy training for your clients or customers.					
Improve availability and convenience of public transit.					
Launch an awareness campaign to educate the public about environmental benefits of reducing vehicle trips.					



You are invited to share other comments here:

Space for Comments
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Thank you for taking the time to complete and submit this Survey. You will be invited to participate in webinar conversation on January \_\_\_\_\_ and we hope your schedule will allow you to participate.

**For Education and Health Providers**

1. A. What percentage of your employees work remotely at the present time?

- 0%
- Up to 20%
- 20% – 40%
- 40% – 60%
- 60% – 80%
- 80% – 100%

1. B. What percentage of your [students] [members or patients] [attend classes] [receive your services] online at the present time?

- 0%
- Up to 20%
- 20% – 40%
- 40% – 60%
- 60% – 80%
- 80% – 100%

2. Does the lack of high-speed Internet infrastructure throughout your region limit the number of employees who can work remotely and the number of [students] [members or patients] who can receive your services online?

- Yes
- No
- Uncertain

2a. If YES, on a scale of 1 to 5 (with 5 being the highest), how much does the lack of high-speed Internet infrastructure limit the number of employees who can work remotely and clients and customers who can receive services online?

1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_

3. A. What is the optimal percentage of your workers who could work remotely, taking into account all factors, including workforce productivity?

- 0%
- Up to 20%
- 20% – 40%
- 40% – 60%
- 60% – 80%
- 80% – 100%

3. B. What is the optimal percentage of your [students] [members or patients] could receive services online?
- 0%
  - Up to 20%
  - 20% – 40%
  - 40% – 60%
  - 60% – 80%
  - 80% – 100%

4. If you are allowing for a “hybrid” arrangement for employees to work remotely part of the time, what do you find to be the optimal mix of days “telecommuting” and working on site for organizational productivity and employee satisfaction?

Number of Days Per Week Allowed for Working Remotely

- 1
  - 2
  - 3
  - 4
  - 5
  - Allow Flexibility Based on Employee-Employer Agreement
5. How helpful would the following be to your organization in reducing vehicle trips by your employees and vehicle trips by your [students] [members or patients]?

(Check your response on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the most helpful.)

<b>Assistance to Reduce Vehicle Trips</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
Construct high-speed Internet infrastructure throughout the region so that all locations are connected.					
Assist your [students] [members and patients] with securing affordable home Internet service and a computing device.					
Provide digital literacy training for your [students and parents] [members or patients].					
Improve availability and convenience of public transit.					
Launch an awareness campaign to educate the public about environmental benefits of reducing vehicle trips.					

You are invited to share other comments here:

Space for Comments
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Thank you for taking the time to complete and submit this Survey. You will be invited to participate in webinar conversation on January \_\_\_\_\_ and we hope your schedule will allow you to participate.

**Regional Broadband Consortia Webinars**

The following are the Next Steps for prepare for the webinar.

- Each Regional Broadband Consortium will set now a date and time in January 2022.
- CETF will prepare a Draft Discussion Guide for review and approval by RBCs and SCAG, including a few real-time questions for participant to answer to be engaging and interactive.
- CETF will develop the process and mechanisms for presenting the results of the Stakeholder Surveys for each RBC Region to share with participants.
- CETF will prepare the Summary Reports Template for RBCs and SCAG to refine and approve.
- CETF and RBCs need to set a schedule for regular Check-In Meetings (Friday mornings at 8AM is suggested) to ensure progress and coordination.