

## **SCAG's Compass Plan and Mixed Use Housing Development**

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The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) is a joint powers agency that includes 188 cities in six southern California Counties. The counties that are members of SCAG are Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and Ventura.

SCAG hired Peter Kalsdorff, an architect and John Friggen, a planner to help develop a long term land plan and vision for southern California. The basic goal of the planning and visioning was to define how we can accommodate the projected growth of the population by 6,000,000 people, employment growth of 4,000,000 jobs, and the need for an additional 3,000,000 housing units. The basic approach was to obtain public opinion. This was accomplished through focus groups that involved over 5,000 people from all sectors of public and private life.

The basic needs of the region were identified. One of those needs was to develop a plan to rebuild our economic base, based on the competitive advantage that we are the logistic center of southern California and the world. Because of this strategic location, we will need to change our urban form around logistics.

Many different types of transportation were mentioned in the presentation. Most notable among these is the MagLev (magnetic levitation) system, a system that is currently under design. Studies suggest that this type of system will be self supporting. Other types of systems that will be necessary, either as expansions of current systems or the development of new systems will be bus ways and rapid bus ways, and truck ways. The truck ways will be a separate system just for trucks that will facilitate the movement of goods throughout the region and beyond.

SCAG has acquired all of the general plans from its member agencies and has digitized them in order to develop an overall plan of the entire region. They have developed a data base with 2,000 variables that can be analyzed and overlaid onto the composite general plan. The result of their studies using this methodology has identified 2.0% of the regions planned land area that will have to be changed in order to accommodate the projected growth. Because of these studies, five of the regions cities are currently in the process of changing their general plans, and more are expected to follow suit. One of the results of the studies was the need for 400,000 more housing units that the combined general plans had called for.

SCAG has developed a system to analyze proposed changes (such as FAR or parking rations) to a community's general plan that will enable the city to investigate the development returns. In effect, this tool makes the local planning agency think more like a developer rather than a city planner.

The entire County of Los Angeles has been mapped down to the parcel level, and SCAG can recommend the highest and best use for each parcel, and state if the property is operating at that use. It can also give approximations of the amount of infill land available that may lead to the redevelopment of urban cores. This process of mapping is being extended to all of the other member counties.

On a global development note, SCAG estimates that 70% to 80% of all new employment will be in 7 to 8 global gateway regions. Southern California is too small. We need to be larger. These global regions are where countries will find their competitive advantage in the global marketplace. Mr. Pisano believes that Southern California can compete head to head with any region in the world.

During the question and answer session that followed the formal presentation one of the questions was about funding for all of the proposed redevelopment and transit systems. The response was that the funding sources will have to be based on an enterprise strategy, one where users pay, much as how the development of this country occurred during its first 150 years, and not from a tax based system.

Web sites where more information about the topics covered in the presentation are:

General web address: [www.scag.ca.gov](http://www.scag.ca.gov)  
Growth Visioning: [www.socalcompas.org](http://www.socalcompas.org)  
Goods Movement: [www.scag.ca.gov/goodsmove](http://www.scag.ca.gov/goodsmove)  
California MagLev: [www.calmaglev.org](http://www.calmaglev.org)  
Housing Planning: [www.scag.ca.gov/comdev.htm](http://www.scag.ca.gov/comdev.htm)

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