

2026 REGIONAL CONFERENCE & GENERAL ASSEMBLY



May 7-8, 2026
JW Marriott Desert Springs Resort & Spa

The 2026 Regional Conference and General Assembly is Southern California's largest gathering of elected and industry leaders.

Join SCAG May 7-8 at the JW Marriott in Palm Desert for panels, networking, and activities addressing the biggest challenges facing the region in resilience, housing affordability, mega-events, and the emerging AI economy.

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Agenda

TIME	AGENDA
MAY 6 WEDNESDAY	
4 p.m.	EXECUTIVE/ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE MEETING
6 p.m.	PRESIDENT'S RECEPTION (Invitation Only)
MAY 7 THURSDAY	
8 a.m.	REGISTRATION, NETWORKING, AND CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST
9 a.m.	REGIONAL COUNCIL MEETING
10 a.m.	WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS
11 a.m.	GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETING
12:15 p.m.	SUSTAINABILITY AWARDS LUNCHEON



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Together, we will illustrate how cross-sector collaboration

TIME	AGENDA
2:15 p.m.	<p>BREAKOUT SESSIONS I</p> <p>ALIGNING LAND, CAPITAL, AND INFRASTRUCTURE FOR SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES <i>Sponsored by National CORE</i> Southern California’s housing crisis requires holistically addressing systems of housing production. This panel will discuss how jurisdictions can effectively align land availability, financing, and utility capacity to turn housing goals into reality. Panelists from municipal leadership, finance, and technical consulting will demonstrate how integrated regional resources help communities bridge planning and implementation. Attendees will gain practical insights into how this alignment can accelerate the development of sustainable neighborhoods across the region.</p> <p>Moderator: David Pollock, Executive Director, Ventura Council of Governments Panelists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adam Eliason, Trust Manager/Affordable Housing Consultant, CivicStone • Alicia Gonzalez, Associate Vice President, MBI • Mike Balsamo, Chair, Building Industry Association of Southern California • Paige Montojo, Special Projects Manager, City of Riverside <p>HARNESSING MEGA-EVENTS TO ACCELERATE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA’S MOBILITY <i>Sponsored by WSP</i> Mega-events like the 2028 Summer Olympic and Paralympic Games present a unique opportunity for Southern California to accelerate mobility improvements, strengthen regional coordination, and globally highlight local communities. This panel will explore how public agencies, local jurisdictions, and private-sector partners are advancing multimodal transportation solutions to prepare for the LA28 Games. Panelists will discuss the scale of games-related travel demand and the governance structures guiding regional planning efforts, highlight resources and coordination that support cities and local partners, and share how communities are leveraging the LA28 Games to advance mobility projects and improve experiences for residents and visitors. Together, we will illustrate how cross-sector collaboration</p>

TIME	AGENDA
	<p>translates mega-event preparation into lasting mobility, economic, and community benefits.</p> <p>Moderator: Aaron Gaul, TDM Principal, Alta Planning + Design</p> <p>Panelists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bill Panos, Senior Vice President and Head of Transportation, LA28 • Marcel Porras, Deputy Chief Innovation Officer, LA Metro • Anthony Brenneman, Executive Director, Orange County Sports Commission • Michael Krouse, President/Chief Executive Officer, GOCAL Greater Ontario California
2:15 p.m.	STUDENT SHOWCASE
3:15 p.m.	BREAK AND NETWORKING



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TIME	AGENDA
3:45 p.m.	<p>BREAKOUT SESSIONS II</p> <p>STRATEGIES FOR PLANNING, BUILDING, AND FUNDING RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE <i>Sponsored by Podium</i></p> <p>As Southern California faces intensifying shocks and stressors, jurisdictions are undertaking the critical work of planning and implementing resilient infrastructure that can support both daily needs and future disruptions. This panel will explore how to assess infrastructure vulnerabilities, identify priority projects, and strengthen community resilience. Speakers will share methods for evaluating resilience needs, lessons from recent projects, and practical funding strategies to help jurisdictions move from planning to implementation.</p> <p>Moderator: Alex Wigglesworth, Journalist, Los Angeles Times</p> <p>Panelists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jude Schneider, Senior Advisor, Business Resiliency, Southern California Edison • Geoffrey Danker, Public Policy & Planning Manager, SoCal Gas • Daniel Soltero, Program Manager, Western Riverside Council of Governments • Rita Kampalath, Chief Sustainability Officer, County of Los Angeles <p>FORECASTING THE FUTURE OF AN AI-FUELED ECONOMY <i>Sponsored by Prologis</i></p> <p>Economic progress in 2025 was characterized by AI expanding into an ever-increasing number of industries. AI technologies are generating high valuations and economic output, reducing the need for positions that have been pathways to stable, well-paying white-collar careers. However, AI will also create more high-demand positions over the next two years that can help to offset job losses. How are workforce development and training impacted? What defensible skills do the current and future workforce require? How can AI and AI tools be leveraged in the public sector to promote data-driven decision making, capacity building, and increased efficiency and cost savings? Experts from across sectors will share strategies to leverage opportunities and withstand challenges.</p>



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	Moderator: Dara Wheeler , Infrastructure Advisor, Rawlins Infrastructure Consulting Panelists: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biju Kewalram, Chief Strategy Officer, BrightStar Care of Huntington Beach • Claudia Preciado, Senior Director of Customer Partnerships & Business Development, Hayden AI • Kevin Gray, Chief Technology Officer, Metrolink
3:45 p.m.	STUDENT SHOWCASE
5:30 p.m.	EVENING RECEPTION
MAY 8 FRIDAY	
8 a.m.	REGISTRATION
8:30 a.m.	BREAKFAST
9 a.m.	WELCOME
9:10 a.m.	STUDENT SHOWCASE AWARDS
9:15 a.m.	KEYNOTE ADDRESS



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TIME	AGENDA
10 a.m.	<p>PLENARY PANEL SESSION</p> <p>THE FUTURE OF REGIONS: INNOVATING INSTITUTIONS FOR A NEW ERA <i>Sponsored by HNTB</i></p> <p>Regions today face unprecedented disruption—from accelerating climate impacts to transformative technological advances and changing global dynamics. The forces reshaping communities demand adaptive, forward-thinking public institutions, yet many agencies remain constrained by structures designed for a different time. This session brings together innovative leaders to explore how regional leadership, bold collaboration, and renewed institutional vision can unlock new pathways to progress. We will examine approaches and partnerships that break down silos and accelerate implementation, providing tools that rise to the demands of the moment and the future.</p> <p>Moderator: Kate Gordon, Chief Executive Officer, California Forward</p> <p>Panelists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kellie Kao Miles, Executive Director, Urban Land Institute Los Angeles • Chuck Wemple, Executive Director, Houston-Galveston Area Council • Darrell Steinberg, Former Mayor, City of Sacramento and Former President Pro Tem, California State Senate
11:15 a.m.	CONFERENCE WRAP-UP

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