



**Our vision. Our future.**  
THE REGIONAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

*"To preserve and enhance the San Diego region's unique features – its vibrant and culturally-diverse communities, its beaches, deserts, mountains, lagoons, bluffs, and canyons, and its international setting – and promote sustainability, economic prosperity, and an outstanding quality of life for everyone."*



401 B St., Suite 800  
San Diego, CA 92101-4231  
(619) 699-1900  
www.sandag.org

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# SANDAG APPROVES REGIONAL COMPREHENSIVE plan



## Smart growth framework to provide insight on creating a sustainable future

After countless hours of collaboration among SANDAG, city and county officials, and involved citizen groups – the much anticipated Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP) was unanimously approved by SANDAG's Board of Directors.

The RCP is the planning blueprint for the San Diego region. It provides a broad context in which local and regional decisions can be made that foster a healthy environment, a vibrant economy, and a high quality of life for all residents. In doing so, the RCP balances regional population, housing, and employment growth with habitat preservation, agriculture, open space, and infrastructure needs. The intended result is a sustainable future — one with more choices and opportunities for all residents. True to its name, the RCP is comprehensive in its scope. It looks beyond San Diego's borders and considers the planning and growth underway in Imperial, Orange, and Riverside Counties as well as in Baja California, Mexico.



At the heart of the RCP is the goal of better connecting San Diego's land use and transportation plans to promote "Smart Growth." In an effort to combat urban sprawl and unfettered growth, the concept of smart growth refers to new and redeveloped areas that are compact in nature, situated near existing employment, and offer convenient access to efficient and viable transportation choices and public facilities.



The plan promotes the allocation of incentive funds to cities and communities that implement the RCP's principles and underlying planning philosophy.

As emphasized throughout the RCP, the need for smart, planned, and more concentrated growth with integrated and reliable transportation, permanent open space, more affordable housing, and improved cross-border collaboration is more critical than ever before as the region continues to grow. San Diego County's population of approximately three million is roughly equal to the population of the entire state of California a century ago, and 62 percent of the



area's homes were built after 1970. SANDAG is confident that the plan can serve as a bridge to guide the region to a better quality of life for years to come.

# THOUSANDS RESPOND TO CALL FOR public input

Residents in communities throughout the region responded to the call for public input on the RCP.

Based on recommendations for more open space, affordable housing, more transit, and less traffic, it is apparent that San Diegans care about their region and their communities.

SANDAG received more than 1,000 comments from residents at workshops, public meetings, via the Internet, and through the mail. All comments and recommendations were reviewed and many are reflected in the final Regional Comprehensive Plan.



Public input will be vital to the implementation of the RCP as SANDAG and the jurisdictions develop criteria for smart growth funding, identify smart growth opportunity areas, and pursue strategies to better connect land use and transportation planning.



## What the RCP Means for the San Diego Region

*"... (the RCP) recognizes the interdependence between our two cities, San Diego and Tijuana, at the border. It is important that this regional plan consider the future of this expanded region."*

**Luis Cabrera,  
Counsel General of Mexico**

*"The RCP provides us with the power of the imaginary—a collective vision of a healthier, more prosperous and socially just city-region. It is a 'living document' that can help guide our way forward to making this vision a reality, especially if it lives up to its promise to empower effective and equitable civic engagement."*

**Keith Pezzoli, "San Diego's Regional Comprehensive Plan: Reason for Optimism?"  
Union-Tribune, July 30, 2004.**

# STRATEGIC initiatives

As a catalyst to enable agencies and stakeholders to optimally implement the RCP, a set of "Strategic Initiatives," or priority actions, has been identified.

The Strategic Initiatives provide an initial work program for implementing the recommended actions contained in the RCP. They identify the responsible lead agency charged with implementing the initiative, supporting agencies that can assist with implementation, and proposed start dates and potential schedules for completion.

Strategic Initiatives underway in the coming months may include:

- Develop Smart Growth Concept Map
- Develop and implement the Smart Growth Incentive Program as funding becomes available
- Incorporate RCP smart growth goals and policy objectives into the upcoming Regional Transportation Plan
- Develop strategy for completing regionally significant arterials in the 2030 Mobility Network
- Identify and rezone appropriate sites for new housing close to public transit, employment, and other services
- Ensure that appropriate transportation projects incorporate pedestrian and bicycle access
- Develop regional habitat funding program
- Evaluate opportunities for beach sand natural systems restoration
- Strengthen collaboration with elected officials and representatives in surrounding counties and Mexico
- Expand access to international trade infrastructure

Because of the wide range of actions included in the Regional Comprehensive Plan, these Strategic Initiatives allow for short-term accomplishments while making progress toward long-term goals.

*"The RCP is a starting point to bring all our plans together. Further, it establishes a context for addressing regional infrastructure financing needs."*

**Escondido Mayor  
Lori Holt Pfeiler**

*"The high cost of housing is hurting local employers. Increasing traffic congestion and increased sprawl is affecting employee morale... The RCP provides an excellent opportunity to improve the region's 'GPA.'"*

**Rosemary Johnson,  
Interfaith Shelter Network**

