

Caltrans Sustainable Communities Grant to Southern California Association of Governments Expert Advisory Committee Meeting January 21, 2022



**Inland Empire
Regional
Broadband Consortium**



Caltrans Sustainable Communities Grant to SCAG

Agenda Item I: Welcome and Introductory Remarks

Tom Bellino



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Agenda Item II: Overview of Purpose and Focus of Grant

Sunne Wright McPeak

- Assess the potential of broadband—ubiquitous deployment and adoption—to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHG).
- Evaluate the relationship between broadband, vehicle trip generation (vehicle miles traveled—VMT), and GHG. Linchpin is vehicle trip reduction.
- Review research and prepare Data and Literature Report.
- Identify strategies to reduce vehicle trips with ubiquitous broadband through: (1) Data Collection; (2) Stakeholder Surveys; and (3) Focus Groups.
- Complete study with Technical Consultants analyses.

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Agenda Item II: Overview of Purpose and Focus of Grant

- 2021 Statewide Survey on Broadband Adoption asked residents about online activities (reduced vehicle trips) during pandemic and preferences going forward: 53% prefer to work remotely 3-5 days per week. However, 57% identified as “essential workers” with less ability to work remotely.
- Stakeholder Surveys probe policymakers’ willingness to continue remote working and identify what strategies will help reduce vehicle trips.
- Focus Group Interviews probe low-income residents’ ability to reduce trips.
- Public agencies impact ability of low-income resident’s to reduce trips.
- All of this data is applied to Regional Trip Inventory to assess potential to reduce overall trips in the region.
- Projected potential trip reduction is basis for GHG reduction.

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Agenda Item II: Progress to Date and Schedule

Sunne Wright McPeak

- Expert Advisory Committee was recruited and convened June 2021.
- Broadband and Environmental Benefit Data and Literature Report was completed (and accepted by SCAG and EAC without additional input).
- Stakeholder Engagement has been robust with Stakeholder Surveys near completion and Stakeholder Forums being conducted.
- Focus Groups Interviews are in progress and will be completed by end of January with preliminary results providing valuable insights.
- Technical Consultants are completing work products.

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Agenda Item III: Overview of Regional Trip Inventory

Tom Bellino

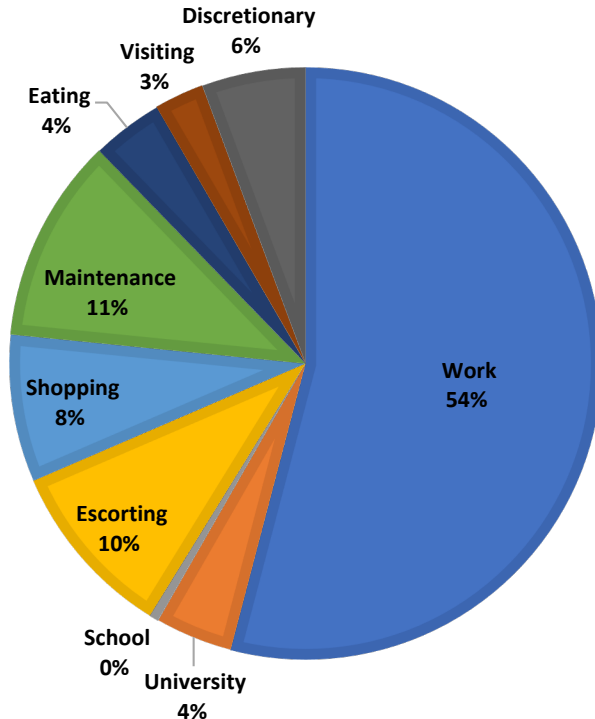
- Analysis of GHG emissions and max theoretical reductions for remote work, learning and services.
- Based on SCAG Activity-Based Model and Census data.
- Reductions vary based on County and sub-region:
 - Highest reduction: Orange County, 44.1%
 - Lowest reduction: Imperial County, 29.7%
 - Regionwide reduction: 40.1%

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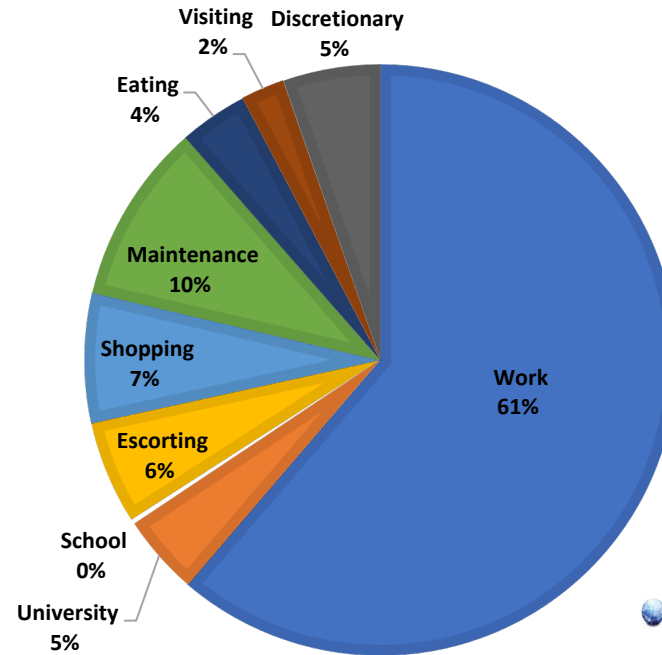
Agenda Item III: Overview of Regional Trip Inventory

Tom Bellino

IMPERIAL COUNTY GHG EMISSIONS



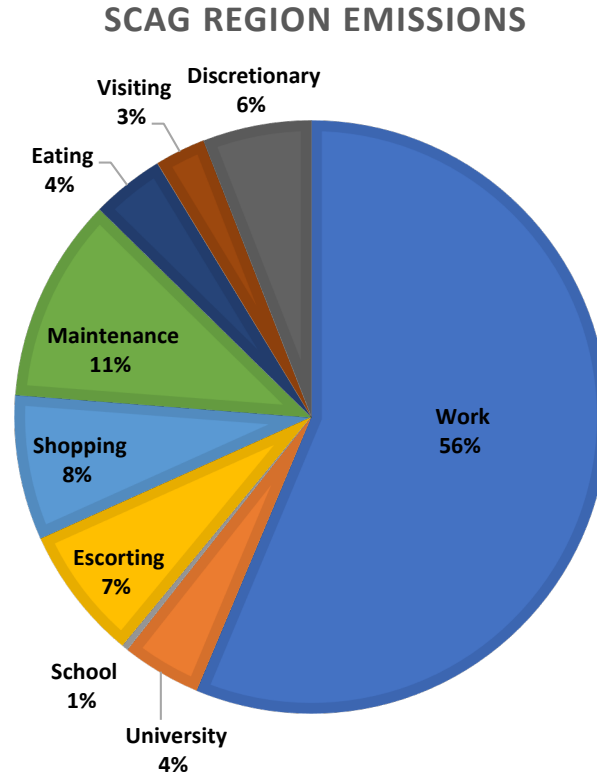
ORANGE COUNTY GHG EMISSIONS



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Agenda Item III: Overview of Regional Trip Inventory

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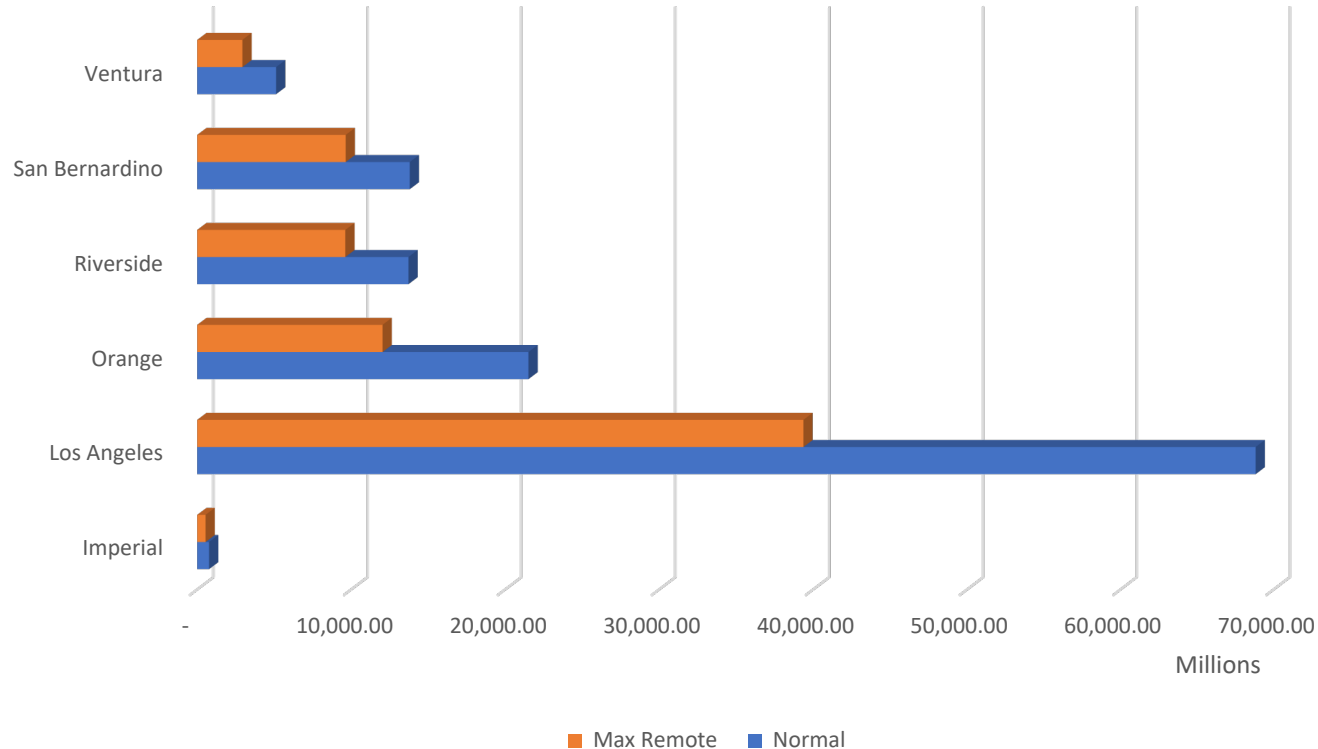


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Agenda Item III: Overview of Regional Trip Inventory

Tom Bellino

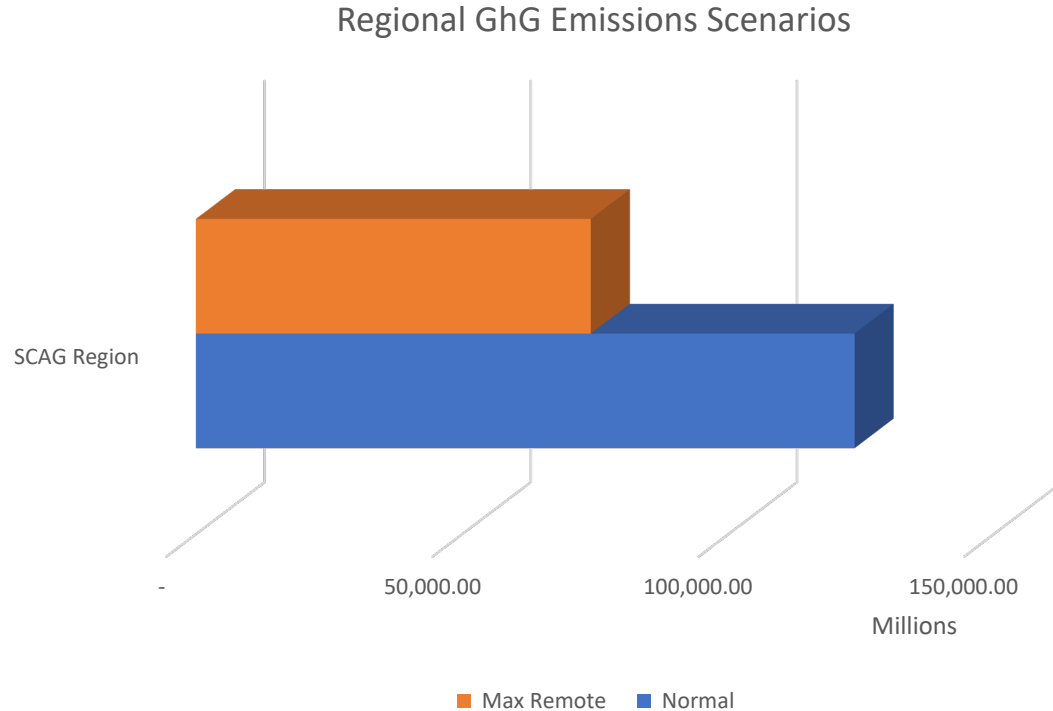
GhG Emissions Scenarios by County



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Agenda Item III: Overview of Regional Trip Inventory

Tom Bellino



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Agenda Item IV: Report from Regional Broadband Consortia

- Inland Empire Regional Broadband Consortium (IERBC)
 - ❖ Martha van Rooijen
- Los Angeles Digital Equity Action League (LA DEAL)
 - ❖ Bill Allen; Judy Kruger; Amy Cortina Mathias; Sulaiman Kenyatta
- Broadband Consortium of the Pacific Coast (BCPC)
 - ❖ Bruce Stenslie; Bill Simmons
- Southern Border Broadband Consortium (SBBC)
 - ❖ Tim Kelley; Alessandra Muse



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Agenda Item IV: Report on Stakeholder Survey Results

Martha van Rooijen

- Work Plan calls for 15 Surveys from 3 Stakeholder Groups = 45 Surveys Per RBC x 4 = 180 Total Surveys (N=210 to date).
- Stakeholder Survey Results by RBC are posted online.
- SCAG Region Composite Results (N=210) are presented to Expert Advisory Committee for review and observations.

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Agenda Item IV: Stakeholder Survey Results

- PowerPoint Presentation of Stakeholder Survey Results.

Caltrans Sustainable Communities Grant to Southern California Association of Governments Stakeholder Survey Key Insights

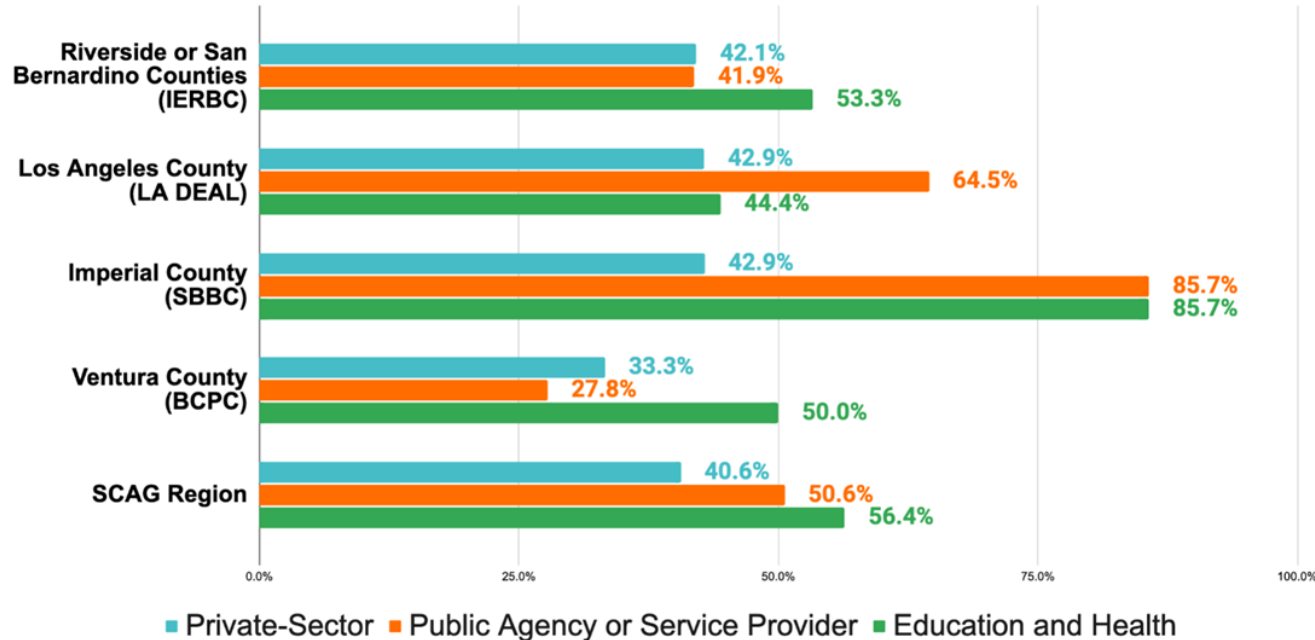


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Impact of Lack of High-Speed Internet

Percentage of Respondents Answering "Yes" to Lack of High-Speed Internet Impact



Private-Sector Business:

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

Public Agency or Service Provider:

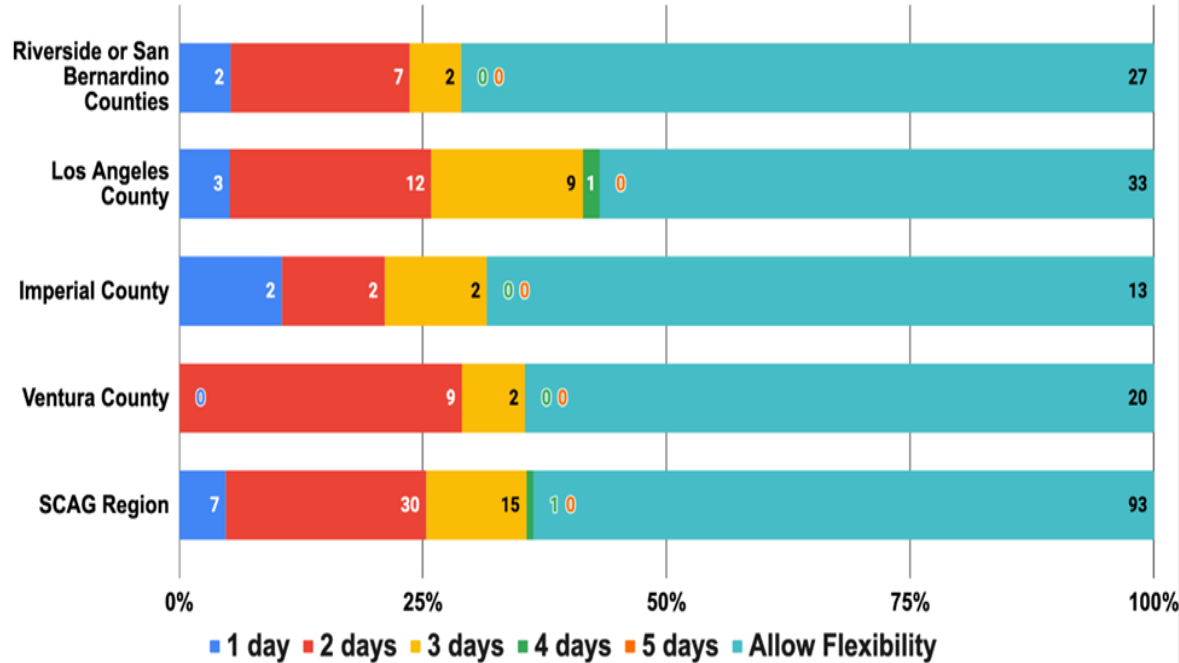
Does the lack of high-speed Internet infrastructure throughout your region limit the number of employees who can work remotely and the number of clients or customers who can receive your services online?

Education or Health Organization:

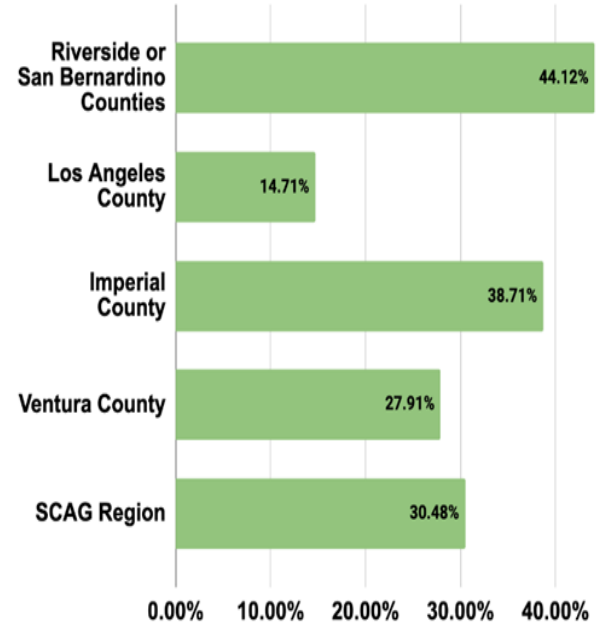
Does the lack of high-speed Internet infrastructure throughout your region limit the number of employees who can work remotely and the number of clients or customers who can receive your services online?

Optimal Mix of Telecommuting

Optimal Mix of Telecommuting for Employers Allowing Hybrid Working Arrangement



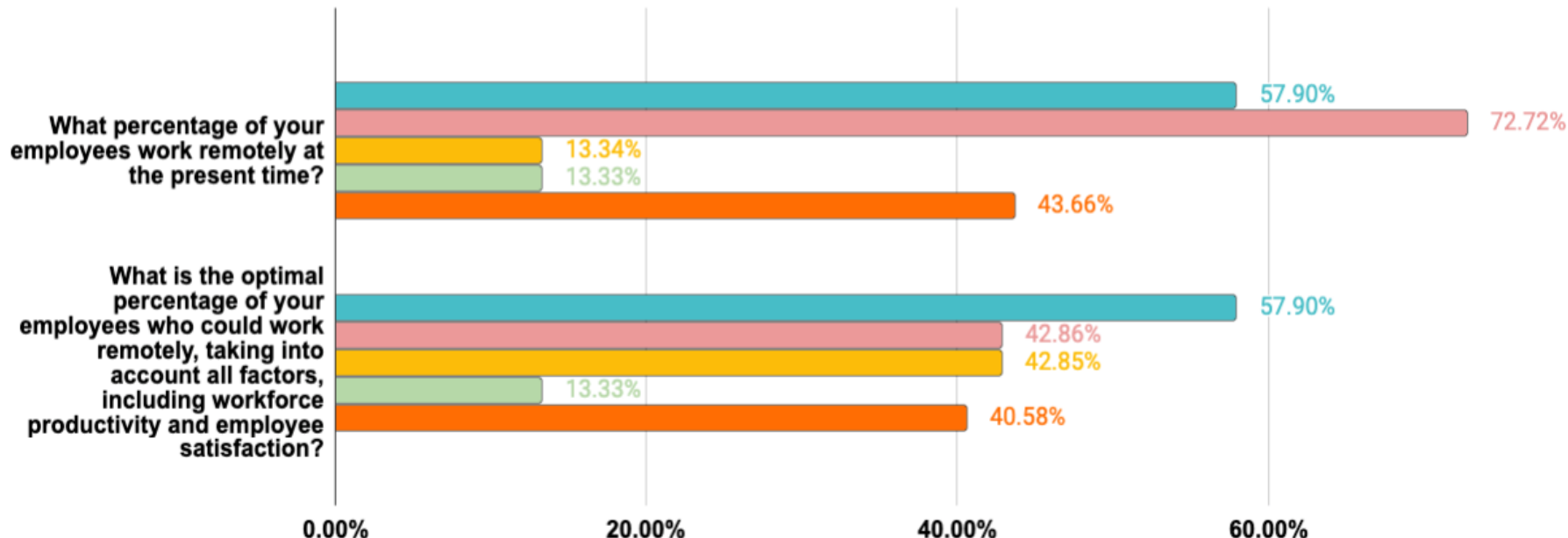
Percentage of Respondents Where Hybrid Working Arrangement is "Not Applicable"



Private-Sector Business - Optimal Percent of Remote Employees

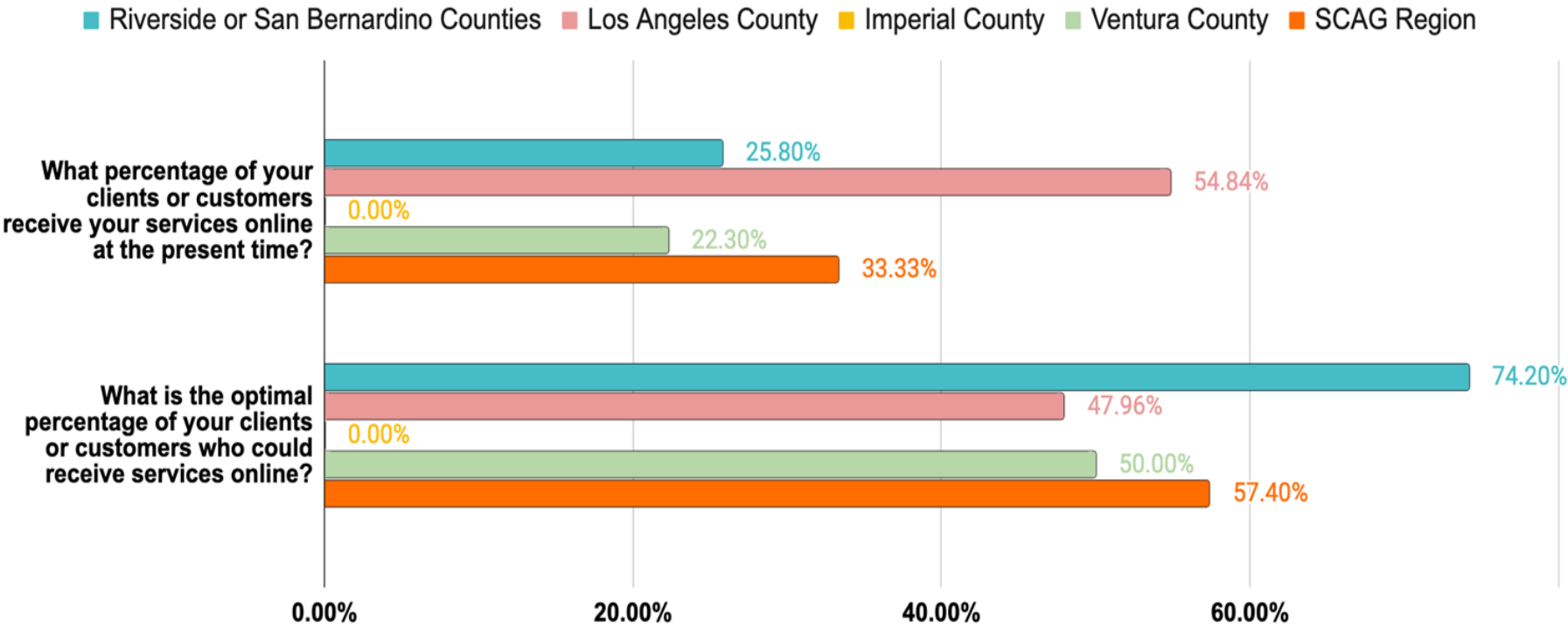
Percent of Responses Stating 60% or Greater

■ Riverside or San Bernardino Counties ■ Los Angeles County ■ Imperial County ■ Ventura County ■ SCAG Region



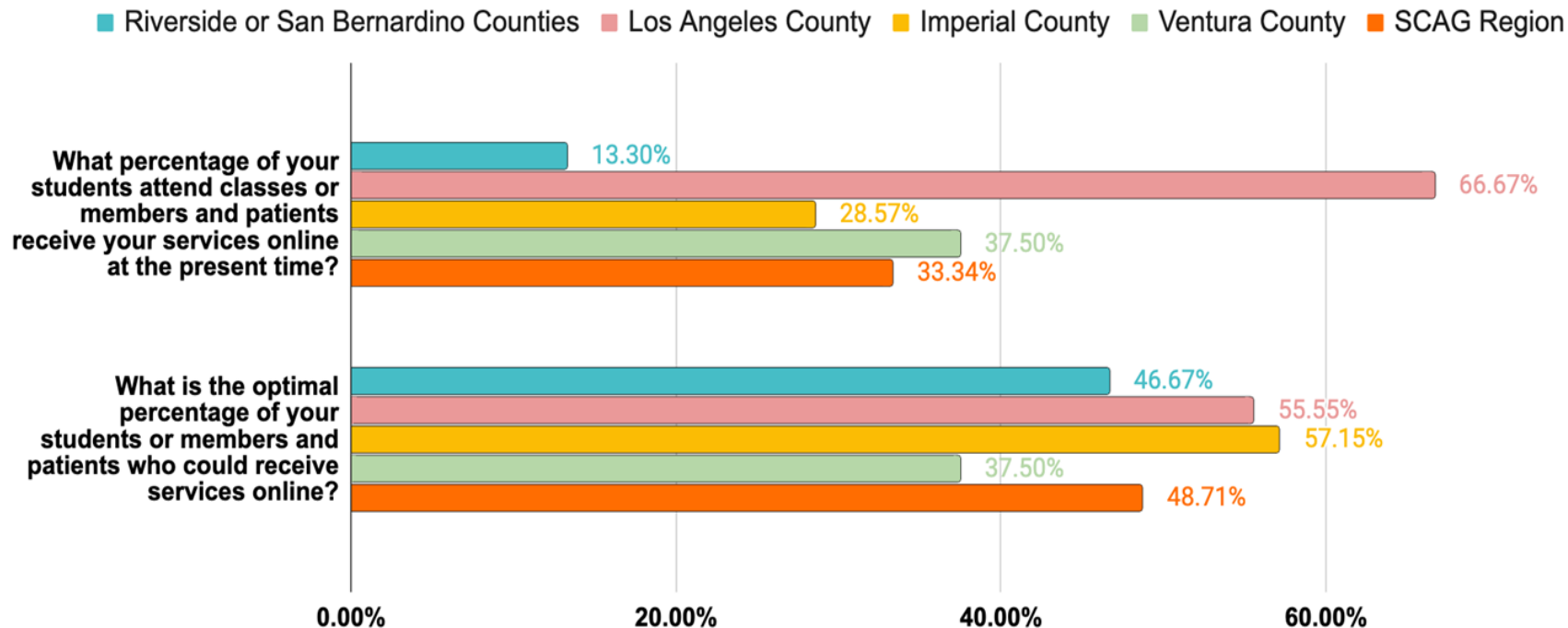
Public Agency or Service Provider - Optimal Percent of Remote Services

Percent of Responses Stating 60% or Greater



Education or Health - Optimal Percent of Remote Services

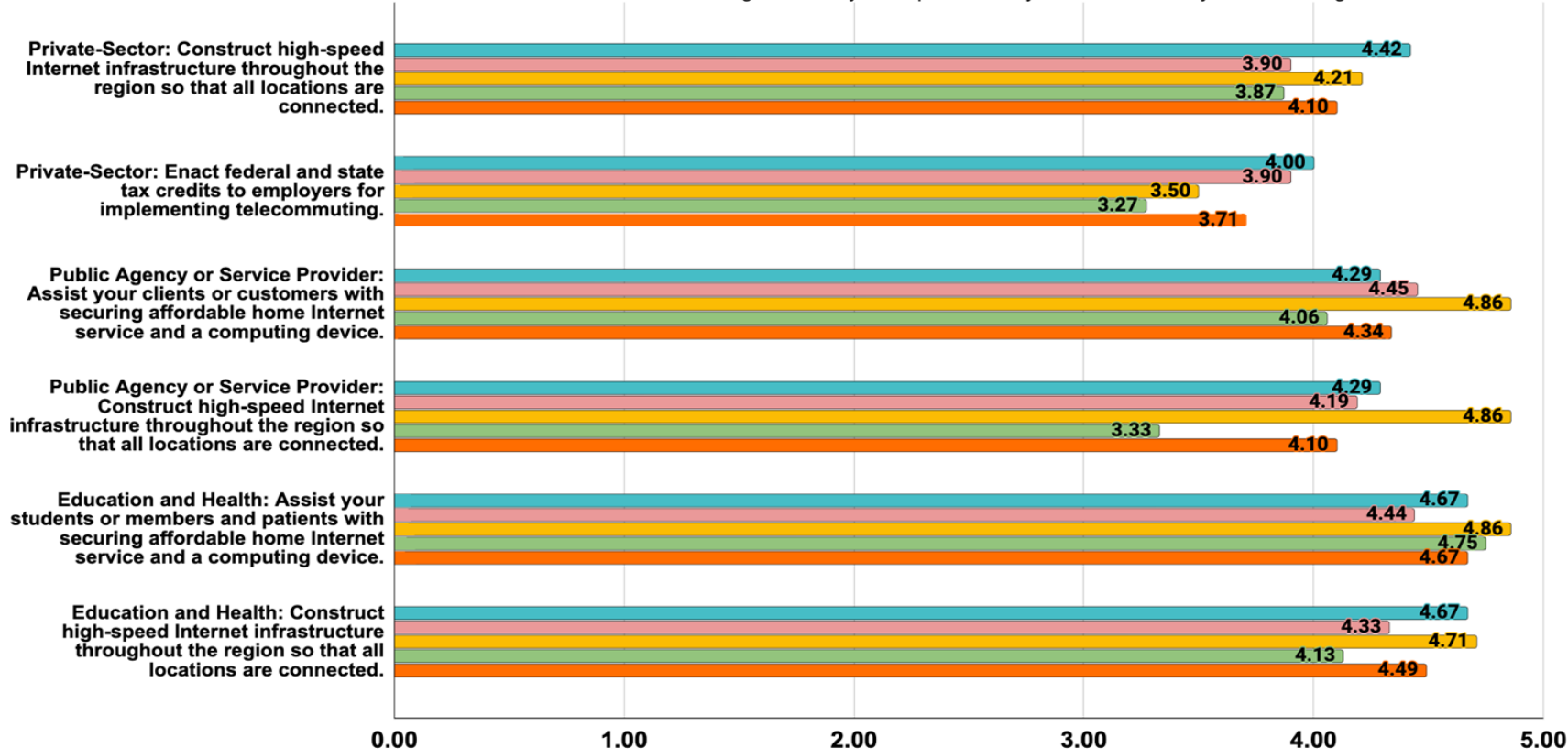
Percent of Responses Stating 60% or Greater



Top-Rated Strategies to Reduce Vehicle Trips by Stakeholders

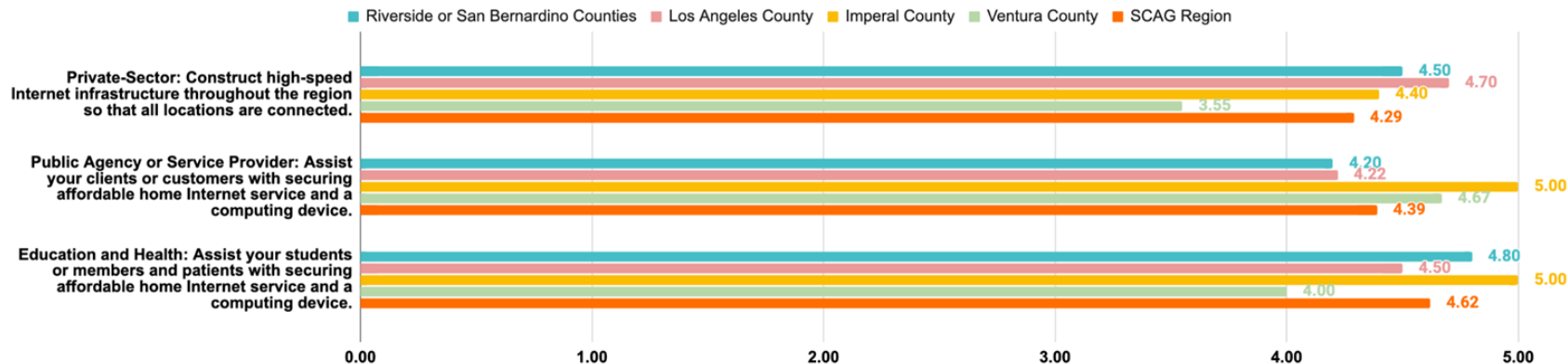
Top-Rated Strategies by Stakeholder Group (Top-2 Weighted Average)

■ Riverside or San Bernardino Counties ■ Los Angeles County ■ Imperial County ■ Ventura County ■ SCAG Region

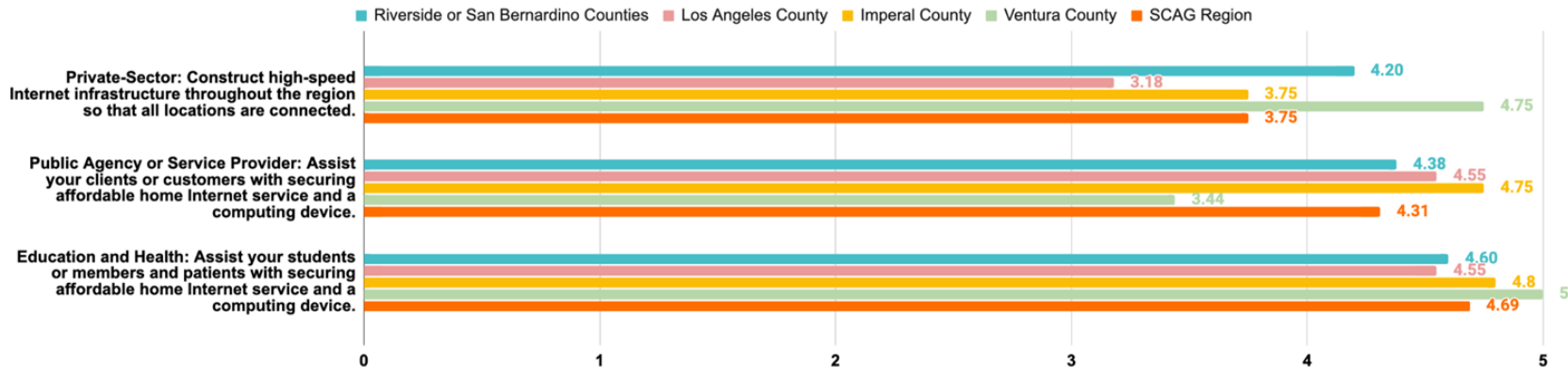


Top-Rated Strategies Comparing Policymakers and Policy Advisors

Top Strategy by Stakeholder Group for Policymakers (Weighted Average)



Top Strategy by Stakeholder Group for Policy Advisors (Weighted Average)



Caltrans Sustainable Communities Grant to Southern California Association of Governments Stakeholder Survey Key Insights



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Agenda Item IV: Stakeholder Survey Observations

- A significant percentage of all 3 Primary Stakeholder Groups in all RBC Regions said the lack of high-speed Internet infrastructure limits the number of employees who can work remotely: 40.6% Private-Sector Business; 50.6% Public Agencies; 56.4% Education and Health.
- There is potential for additional vehicle trip reduction among Stakeholders.
- Top-Rated Strategies for reducing vehicle trips reflect need for both “deployment” and “adoption”—both high-speed Internet infrastructure and assistance to get all households online with affordable home Internet service and a computing device.

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Agenda Item IV: Stakeholder Survey Observations

- All Stakeholders support a level of remote working; **Hybrid** and **Flexible** work arrangements are preferred, rather than a specific number of days weekly.
- Private Sector identified top strategy to reduce trips as “Construction of high-speed internet infrastructure throughout the region to connect all locations.” followed by “Employer Tax Credits to implement Telecommuting.”
- Public Agencies, Service Providers, Education and Healthcare Stakeholders identified top strategy as, “Assisting clients, customers, students and patients with securing affordable home internet service and a computing device.”
- Overall, Policymakers are taking a lead in identifying top trip reduction strategies with Policy Advisors either slightly ahead of them or having to catch up to the Policymakers.

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Agenda Item IV: Stakeholder Survey Observations

- Comments from Regional Broadband Consortia Leaders
- Expert Advisors Questions and Comments
- Updates on RBC Stakeholder Forums

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Agenda Item V: Focus Group Interviews of Low-Income HHs
Tim Kelley and Martha van Rooijen

- Work Plan calls for 2 Focus Groups (10) Per RBC = 20 Interviews x 4 = 80 Interviews Total for SCAG Region. Interviews will be from at least 2 different population segments.
- Focus Group Interviews are in progress to be completed by end of January 2022.
- SBBC and IERBC have completed Focus Group Interviews and have preliminary observations.

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Agenda Item V: Focus Group Interviews of Low-Income HHs

Timothy Kelley

- Online survey campaign targeting Private, Public and Nonprofit, Education and Healthcare leaders: we will be sharing results next week, Jan. 26, in a virtual forum with participants and other local stakeholders.
- We have conducted interview style surveys among low to very low-income community members, resulting in the following key findings:
 - Majority were essential workers, Medi-Cal or School Lunch program participants who were not aware of affordable internet service offers.
 - Home internet service was often described as having slow speed.
 - Highest interest in improved internet was for work, education, paying bills and banking activities.

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Agenda Item V: Focus Group Interviews of Low-Income HHs

Timothy Kelley

- Additional Data Collection:
 - The Cal Lutheran University study is currently being extended to include Imperial County. This study addresses broadband and device access at the zip code level.
 - Imperial County Office of Education and Imperial Valley College have provided key datasets for broadband in education, including:
 - Overall remote learning capabilities and difficulties (access to broadband and/or devices).
 - Percentage of students categorized as low-income (eligible for Free and Reduced-Price Meals program).

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Agenda Item V: Focus Group Interviews of Low-Income HHs

Martha van Rooijen

- The Inland Empire Regional Broadband Consortium (IERBC) conducted 24 Focus Group phone interviews with residents in disadvantaged communities in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties.
- **The participants identified a total of 75 vehicle trips could be avoided by using the Internet at home.**
- **Paying bills ranked the highest for potential to reduce trips.**
- Work, school and shopping trips were listed as next highest trips that could be avoided.
- The rest were applying for jobs, banking, health and pharmacy visits, library, post office, and getting public agency services.
- 9 participants identified themselves as “essential workers”.

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Agenda Item V: Focus Group Interviews of Low-Income HHs

Martha van Rooijen

- The average home Internet bill was \$90 per month.
(Two respondents had Internet service under \$30 per month.)
- All said they had Internet at home, but only a few knew about any discounted programs for eligible low-income households; those who did know mostly referenced the Federal Emergency Broadband Benefit (EBB) Program--now the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP).
- 10 listed a smartphone as the only device they use to access the Internet.
- The average satisfaction rating for Interviewees existing Internet service was about 3.5 in a rating from 1 to 5.

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Agenda Item VI: Update on Data Collection

Bill Allen and Bill Simmons

- In addition to the Literature Review, Stakeholder Surveys and Forums, and Focus Group Interviews, there are 3 Data Collection Activities:
 - Number of Recipients Total and With Emails Addresses for “Big 3”
Low-Income Populations: CalFresh; MediCal; NSLP.
 - Related Research Reports: 2021 Statewide Survey (CETF and USC);
Neighborhood Surveys (LA DEAL); Other Studies (BCPC).
 - Analysis of Census Data (CLU engaged by RBCs).
- The purpose of additional Data Collection is to further inform analysis of potential to reduce vehicle trips.

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Agenda Item VI: Update on Data Collection

Judy Kruger: LA DEAL

- Los Angeles County data collection results include the number of CalFresh, Medi-Cal, and school lunch recipients but not a count for household emails.
(DPSS responded that it would take longer than the project timeline to respond)
Data collection from LA County schools is in progress.
- 63 stakeholder surveys were completed for LA County; 31 CBO/Govt, 15 Business, 17 Healthcare/Education participants with a stakeholder discussion group to be held January 25th at 1:00 p.m. to review findings. Hilary Norton, Chair of the CTC, will open the meeting and kick off the discussion.
- Focus group questions to 20 low-income residents are being conducted this week and next week in two communities:
East LA Community Corp and South LA (Para Los Niños)

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Agenda Item VI: Update on Data Collection

Bruce Stenslie

- Have received positive feedback from the County of Ventura related to receipt of information and technical assistance in the mapping of CalFresh and Medical recipients and their use of Computers / Internet.
- High levels of stakeholder interest and willingness to participate have been noted. The BCPC stakeholder forum will occur next week.
- CLU has performed a study identifying data of “People with No Internet Computer and No Connection.” Have widened the scope and analysis of this data to represent the entire SCAG region.



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Agenda Item VIII: Next Steps and Meetings

- February 11: Submission of Draft Components of Final Report
- February 15: Draft Final Report Sent to EAC
- February 17: EAC Feedback on Draft Final Report
- February 23: Revised Working Final Report Sent to EAC
- February 25: Expert Advisory Committee Meeting
- Follow-Up Meeting in March if necessary or circulation of refined Final Report for comments.

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