



**Caltrans Sustainable Communities Grant to  
Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG)**

**Stakeholder Forum Summary Report**

**Regional Broadband Consortium: Southern Border Broadband Consortium (SBBC)**

**Date of Stakeholder Forum: 1/26/22**

**Date of Forum Summary Report: 1/28/22**

**What are your overall observations about the Stakeholder Survey Results and what do you think are the major conclusions?**

1. Across industry sectors and respondents, Imperial County and SCAG overall survey results show key data trend similarities regarding:
  - a. There was a balanced group of respondents that identified as either policy makers or policy advisors in remote work policy for their organization. Given that respondents of this survey belonged to either of these categories, we can conclude that the results of survey questions regarding remote work policy are accurate and reflect experienced observations.
  - b. When asked first, what percentage of clients, customers, students or patients currently receive remote services and second, what the optimal percentage is, we saw an increase in responses for larger percentages from the first to second question. This alludes to a conclusion that access to and utilization of remote services have room for improvement in public and private sectors.
  - c. There were two distinct top-ranked strategies to reduce vehicle trips across industry sectors in Imperial County: one, construction of high-speed internet infrastructure and two, assist clients, customers, students or patients with securing affordable home internet services and computing devices. This finding suggests that across public and private sectors, infrastructure and affordability is at the height of importance for reducing vehicle trips related to work and daily services.

2. Across industry sectors and respondents, Imperial County survey results show key differences compared to the SCAG region as a whole:
  - a. When asked how much the lack of high-speed internet infrastructure limits the number of employees who can work remotely, the majority of both public and private sector respondents rated either a 4 or 5 on a scale of 1 to 5. This signifies that Imperial County policymakers and input providers agree that infrastructure is a key component for remote work capabilities.
  - b. When asked about work policy over the last few years, there were significantly less responses for remote work practices for all time periods, including pre-pandemic work, pandemic work, current work and future work. Most notably, the majority of Imperial County respondents predicted that future work practices will be all on site. Overall, this suggests that Imperial County employees are less likely to work remotely than those in other areas of the SCAG region. We believe that this conclusion is directly related to other findings from this survey and overall outreach from this grant that highlight Imperial County's need for broadband infrastructure and adoption, based on lower rates of remote service and work capabilities.
3. Public sector participants were concerned that the size of the survey (45 surveys per region) would make it difficult to draw solid conclusions based on these responses alone. Although we are confident with the results from this survey due to the focus on responses and input from a diverse set of regional leaders and stakeholders, we concur that the data conclusions set forth by this survey would be overall strengthened and improved upon with a larger scope for data collection in the future.
4. Participants suggested that city-to-city geography be considered in future data analysis of the survey results or in future surveys. Public sector participants agreed that this direction could be greatly beneficial for local government policy decision making and action plans in the future as well as help identify priority areas in the region where vehicle trips can be reduced at higher potential due to unique characteristics such as distance from work to home, or city center to home. Participants agreed that cities and rural communities within Imperial County have unique needs and varying levels of access to broadband, broadband affordability and access to public and private service and work centers.

**What are public policies or actions that you can take for your own business or organization to reduce trips?**

1. Participants agreed that increased remote and hybrid work policies can help to reduce vehicle trips.
2. Participants agreed that increased remote service offers can help to reduce vehicle trips.
  - a. Private sector participants noted that a significant portion of vehicle trips in Imperial County will occur outside of work for daily activities such as banking, paying bills, shopping and education. Participants agreed that new or additional remote services from service providers in the public and private sectors can help to reduce weekly vehicle trips, such as online banking and grocery shopping.
  - b. Similarly, participants agreed that increased utilization of current remote service offers can help to reduce vehicle trips. Participants agreed that assisting their clients, customers, students and patients with securing access to affordable home internet and devices can help make this possible. This echoed a similar priority level for affordability and accessibility assistance seen in the survey results.

**What are the major barriers to implementing the policies and practices and how can they be overcome?**

1. Participants echoed similar concerns about Imperial County's low income populations and the difficulty to reduce vehicle trips for community members based on increased likelihood of no or insufficient access to internet and devices. Participants agreed that the current level of community awareness of affordable internet service offers is not ideal, and the public and private sectors must work together to improve awareness of these offers for low income populations.
2. Imperial County is rural in nature and does not utilize public transit as much as other urban regions. Participants agreed that increased use of public transit can help to reduce vehicle trips.
3. Participants agreed that data collection and identification of underserved broadband populations is key to reducing vehicle trips. Further local data collection and leveraging of resources are fundamental to identification. Public sector education participants outlined a possible solution for filling regional data gaps: as regional stakeholders, we can collaborate further to take advantage of communications capabilities and the data available from strategic partners of Southern Border Broadband Consortium, Imperial County Office of Education and Imperial Valley Telecommunications Authority, which include local government, law enforcement, schools, emergency responders, hospitals, etc. Each of these partners have access to niche population data that we can access and rely on in the future.



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Stakeholder Forum**

**Regional Broadband Consortia: Southern Border Broadband Consortium (SBBC)  
Date: January 26, 2022**

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1	Timothy Kelley	President/CEO	IVEDC/SBBC
2	Alessandra Muse	Communications Director	IVEDC/SBBC
3	Sean Wilcock	VP Business Development	IVEDC
4	Alma Silva	Director	IV Business Resource Center
5	Jaysel Mendoza	Advisor	IV Business Resource Center
6	Esperanza Colio-Warren	Deputy CEO	County of Imperial
7	Rebecca Terrazas-Baxter	Intergov. Relations Director	County of Imperial
8	Teri Sanders	COO K-12 High Speed Internet	Imperial County Office of Education
9	Erik Freeman	Financial Advisor	Northwestern Mutual
10	Sierra Jaime	Agent	State Farm
11	David Salgado	Regional Affairs Officer	SCAG
12	Vince Signorotti	VP Real Estate	EnergySource
13	Ann McDonald	Deputy CEO	County of Imperial
14	Marisa Muse	Counselor	Bill Young Middle School
15	Marlene Flores	Transportation Planner	Imperial County Transportation Commission
16	Roque Barros	Director	Imperial Valley Wellness Foundation
17	Luis Wong	CEO K-12 High Speed Internet	Imperial County Office of Education
18	Tom Bellino	Senior Regional Planner	SCAG
19	Carla Kuhns	N/A	Self-employed CPA
20	Mark Baza	Retired Executive Director	Imperial County Transportation Commission
	Bobby Brock	CEO	Imperial Valley Community Foundtn
21	Deborah McGarrey	Public Affairs Manager	SoCalGas
22	Gustavo Gomez	Regional Mobility Coordinator	Imperial County Transportation Commission
23	Armando Garibay	Information Systems	City of Brawley
24	Lisa Winkler	Manager	Guild Mortgage
25	Cristi Lerma	Executive Assistant	Imperial County Transportation Commission
26	Christine Moore	Director of External Affairs	AT&T