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May 21, 2026

Orange County Grand Jury
700 Civic Center Drive West
Santa Ana, CA 92701

Subject: Response to 2025–2026 Orange County Grand Jury Report –
Connecting Orange County to LAX: Evaluating Transportation Options

Dear Orange County Grand Jury:

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) appreciates the opportunity to respond to the findings and recommendations presented in the Orange County Grand Jury report titled Connecting Orange County to LAX: Evaluating Transportation Options. SCAG values the Grand Jury’s efforts to examine regional transportation challenges and identify opportunities to improve airport accessibility and inter-county mobility.

SCAG provides the following responses to the findings and recommendations directed to the agency.

Response to Finding F4: Southern California Association of Governments planning documents that discuss regional airport ground access neglect cross-county mobility challenges.

SCAG respectfully disagrees with Finding F4. The issues identified in the finding are already addressed in SCAG’s existing Aviation and Airport Ground Access Technical Report, a core component of the region’s long-range plan, the Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS), Connect SoCal. The current technical report includes analysis of regional travel behavior, airport access conditions, and multimodal connectivity challenges affecting major airports in the region. The report addresses cross-county mobility challenges by emphasizing regional collaboration among transportation and aviation agencies, which is critical for improving connectivity across jurisdictional boundaries. It also highlights the importance of coordinated research, stakeholder engagement, and grant partnerships to identify and advance regional mobility and airport access solutions.

As part of the development of the next long-range plan, Connect SoCal 2050, SCAG is further refining and building upon the existing analysis by incorporating detailed discussion of cross-county travel behavior, travel time competitiveness, and first/last-mile barriers that impact transit accessibility to airports. Work on the plan is currently in development, with the full long-range plan, including the updated aviation component, scheduled for adoption in spring 2028.

In parallel, SCAG is advancing the SoCal Airport Access and Mobility Study, which will collect airport travel data through passenger and employee surveys across the region’s commercial airports. This effort is designed to better understand real-world travel choices, constraints, and preferences, including those related to inter-county trips. Findings from this study will directly inform

recommendations to improve multimodal airport access. The study will further strengthen SCAG's existing analytical framework and directly inform recommendations to improve multimodal airport access in the long-range plan.

Response to Recommendation R6: By September 30, 2026, Southern California Association of Governments should reach out to all Orange County cities to engage and understand each city's transportation need for enhancing regional intermodal transit connectivity across various transit authorities and agencies and across county lines.

SCAG recognizes the importance of engaging Orange County cities to better understand local transportation needs and improve regional intermodal transit connectivity across jurisdictions and transit providers. SCAG's existing long-range plan outreach and engagement framework already includes coordination with Orange County jurisdictions, Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA), and regional transit operators, and this work is ongoing.

As part of the development of Connect SoCal 2050, SCAG is conducting a comprehensive and iterative outreach process that includes coordination with cities, county transportation commissions, and transit operators throughout the region. This outreach is multi-phased and is occurring over multiple years, involving data collection, technical coordination, and ongoing dialogue to ensure that local priorities and cross-county mobility challenges are appropriately reflected in regional planning efforts. SCAG is already actively engaging Orange County partners, including cities and transit agencies, to inform the development of the next long-range plan and strengthen intermodal connectivity. This outreach and engagement will occur through plan adoption in spring 2028.

In addition to the RTP/SCS outreach, SCAG continues to coordinate with regional stakeholders through technical advisory committees, targeted one-on-one meetings, and corridor-based planning efforts. These activities collectively support a more integrated and collaborative approach to improving transit connectivity across county lines and between multiple transit systems. Furthermore, through SCAG's Aviation Technical Advisory Committee (ATAC), the region's county transportation commissions, including OCTA, are regularly engaged and provided updates on the SoCal Airport Access and Mobility Study. ATAC meetings offer a structured forum for stakeholders to review study progress, share technical input, and provide feedback on preliminary findings and recommendations, ensuring that regional and county-level perspectives are incorporated into the study's outcomes.

SCAG appreciates the Grand Jury's attention to these important regional mobility issues and remains committed to advancing coordinated, data-driven transportation planning efforts that improve airport access and regional connectivity. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Courtney Aguirre, Manager of Mobility Planning and Goods Movement at SCAG, at (213) 236-1990 or aguirre@scag.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Sarah Jepson
Chief Planning Officer