APPLICANT TOOLKIT
SCP Call for Applications
Civic Engagement, Equity, & Environmental Justice (SCP CEEEJ)

Why Use This Toolkit

This Toolkit, intended for eligible primary applicants and co-applicants, provides an overview of the Southern California Association of Governments' (SCAG) Sustainable Communities Program Call for Applications focused on Civic Engagement, Equity & Environmental Justice.

Use this toolkit to develop a competitive application, review successful and competitive project examples, utilize the communication templates to build your project team, and review the materials needed to submit your application.

Overview

SCAG's Sustainable Communities Program (SCP) provides resources and technical assistance to agencies for local planning and serves as a key implementation tool for Connect SoCal. The SCP strengthens local partnerships to promote healthy, connected and equitable communities.

This Civic Engagement, Equity & Environmental Justice (CEEEJ) Call for Applications prioritizes funding for disadvantaged and historically underserved Priority Populations. After participating in an application workshop, applicants may register for office hours with SCAG staff to discuss any additional questions or potential projects as they prepare their application. Visit SCAG's SCP website for more information and review the SCP CEEEJ guidelines to learn how to apply.

Sustainable Communities Program

Application Checklist

Prior to submitting your application, review and complete (as needed) the following materials.

Before beginning your application:

» Review the Program Guidelines and the Appendix, including Appendix 3: REAP 2.0 Glossary of Terms

» Review Application Materials

- Program Application (PDF for reference purposes only)
- Fact Sheet
- Scoring Rubric
- SCP CEEEJ Website

» Register for an Application Workshop

- Applicants are encouraged to participate in an upcoming application workshop. After participating in an application workshop, they may sign up for office hours with SCAG staff to discuss additional questions or potential projects as they prepare their application.
- A recording of the application workshop will be available for review online.

Materials to upload as part of your final application:

» Complete the online Program Application

» Self-Certification Checklist (*for Co-Applicants only with 501c3 or Fiscal Sponsor lead*)

» PDF Map, Infill Indicators Map (for Housing and Land Use Strategies projects only)

- Please refer to Appendix 1, REAP 2.0 Mapping Indicator Tool Examples, and Figure 1 for instructions and a sample image.

» PDF Map, Priority Populations Maps

- • Please refer to Appendix 1, REAP 2.0 Mapping Indicator Tool Examples, and Figures 2-5 for instructions and sample images.

» Scope of Work and Proposed Budget (*please use the* Scope of Work and Proposed Budget template)

» Three (3) Letters of Support (*refer to the Letters of Support section for additional guidance and what to include*).

Project Categories

Housing and Land Use Strategies

Projects must have a direct tie leading to the production of affordable infill housing, rvehicle miles traveled (VMT), and supporting affirmatively furthering fair housing (AFFH). Eligible projects shall be designed to result in a change in behavior or a significant improvement to the existing land use pattern or other dynamics that result in accelerating infill housing production, reducing VMT, and supporting AFFH. **All projects funded with REAP 2.0 funds must be located in an infill area and explain how the project satisfies the infill definition, as defined in the** SCP CEEEJ Program Guidelines **Appendix 3: SCAG REAP 2.0 Program Glossary of Terms, and meet all REAP 2.0 funding objectives, as stated in the** SCP CEEEJ Program Guidelines**, Program Funding section.**

Applicants must describe how plans support accelerated infill development, VMT reduction, and support AFFH. Plans that accelerate infill development near jobs and other key destinations to support increased housing choices and affordability effectively reduce VMT and greenhouse gas emissions. Examples of eligible projects include, but are not limited to:

- » Area or corridor-wide plans, policies or ordinances supporting affordable infill housing, based in equity, environmental justice, and AFFH
- » General Plan updates and amendments focused on integrating infill housing and environmental justice goals in support of increasing housing supply and production
- » Development guidelines and standards
- » Zoning code updates and rezoning for housing element implementation and compliance
- » Plans to increase affordable housing supply and prevent jurisdiction-wide, corridor-wide or area-wide displacement and loss of existing affordability

All projects should be transformative in nature. This will look different from community to community depending on the local context – what might be transformative for a small, rural, under-resourced community might be very different from that of a large, urban, well-resourced community. Projects must meet the definition of a "Transformative Planning and Implementation Activity" meaning the project should result in a change in behavior or a significant improvement to the existing land use pattern or other dynamics that result in accelerating infill housing production, reducing VMT and supporting AFFH. All projects must lead to an adoptable and implementable deliverable and be consistent with the local 6th Cycle housing element.

Project Categories

Multimodal Communities

Multimodal Communities projects shall be designed to increase accessibility, mobility, resiliency, and safety. Projects are eligible when they leverage transportation planning, policies, and investment strategies that increase travel options to homes, jobs, services, and other key destinations that provide, support, or enhance Multimodal Communities. Projects must reduce the number or length of vehicle trips. Multimodal Communities are defined as those which are served by a variety of travel options that accommodate a variety of transportation modes for the public to access daily destinations. Multimodal options can include, but are not limited to, complete street improvements for active transportation, improving access to transit, and creating high quality transit stops. **All projects funded in this category must meet all SB 1 funding objectives, as stated in the** SCP CEEEJ Program Guidelines**, Program Funding section.**

Examples of eligible projects include, but are not limited to:

» Transportation safety plans that include a focus on protecting people walking and biking but may also address vehicle-to-vehicle collisions, including Vision Zero policies and programs, local road safety plans or safe system plans, complete streets safety assessments, or safe routes plans

» Highways to boulevards and freeway cap plans that result in improvements for non-motorized vehicles and pedestrian traffic and will restore community connectivity through the removal, retrofit, mitigation or replacement of eligible transportation infrastructure facilities that create barriers to mobility, access, or economic development

» Community e-bike rebates and e-bike share plans and pilots (alongside planning activities)

» Multimodal corridor plans or community-wide active transportation master plans, bicycle or pedestrian master plans, or first-last mile plans that improve access to transit

» Park and greenway connectivity plans that create safe and accessible routes to parks and green spaces, reduce the number of vehicle trips and support multimodal communities

» Transportation accessibility and safety demonstration projects including quick build projects (alongside planning and engagement activities)

All Multimodal Communities projects must have a housing element in compliance with the state housing element law and be consistent with the local 6th Cycle housing element. Cities and counties must submit updated housing element Annual Progress Reports (APRs) at the time of award notice to be eligible for an award.

Partnership Building

SCP CEEEJ includes a co-applicant partnership structure with one primary applicant and up to two (2) co-applicants to support and strengthen local partnership building. This program encourages co-applicant partnerships to support equity, local engagement and collaboration.

Key elements of equitable partnerships should include reciprocal, mutually beneficial relationships; balanced and clear roles and responsibilities; an equitable decision-making structure where each partner is closely involved in all decisions affecting the project; and power dynamics are recognized and addressed. The budget for the co-applicant(s) should reflect the roles and responsibilities described in the application and outlined in the scope of work. The partnership should also seek to support long-term relationship-building.

Opportunities to Connect with Local Partners

SCAG has developed a Jamboard to help facilitate the connection of potential project partners and co-applicants. If your agency needs further assistance in how to find or build a relationship with a local partner, SCAG can help support by providing guidance on known agencies and organizations specific to the local context. Please reach out to Hannah Brunelle, Senior Regional Planner, at brunelle@scag.ca.gov for additional guidance.

Best Practices for Inclusive and Equitable Engagement

Community Engagement Strategies are a required component of all projects funded through SCP CEEEJ and shall be integrated into the proposed project scope. Strategic community engagement centers those who have been historically excluded from planning processes. Using equitable and accessible community engagement practices throughout project planning and implementation encourages strategic and informed participation.

An exceptional description of the approach to community engagement includes detailed commitments for co-powered community decision-making and co-leadership with the process. Strategies must be accessible, inclusive and relevant to the community. Strategies must move beyond simply informing or consulting the community, and toward meaningful opportunities for active community participation and co-leadership. Exceptional strategies include, but are not limited to, the following examples:

» **Language Justice** – Conduct multi-lingual outreach in the most prevalent languages spoken in the community with translation and interpretation services provided for all project meetings and events as needed. Develop materials that are accessible and digestible for basic reading comprehension.

» **Accessibility** – Center and prioritize accessibility in community engagement. Address barriers such as location and timing of events, and accessibility by public transportation; hold meetings and pop-up events in existing community gathering locations, accessible by public transportation, and in places people are familiar and comfortable with, to foster a trusting relationship with the project team. This may include connecting with community members at existing community gathering points instead of planning meetings at inaccessible times; ensuring the availability of American Sign Language interpreters; ensuring text is accessible in both size and font and digital content includes image descriptions and alt text for screen readers; creating opportunities for virtual and in-person engagement recognizing the on-going risk of the pandemic.

» **Local History and Culture** – Many communities may have participated in previous outreach efforts that did not result in change. Over time, either not being included or participating and/or not feeling heard may affect future participation. Welcome and encourage communities to share oral histories and lived experiences in order to address community-identified needs. Explore opportunities to address this harm and seek repair. Consider opportunities to close feedback loops. Demonstrate an understanding of community norms, priorities, levels of comfort with technical language and expectations for project completion.

Best Practices for Inclusive and Equitable Engagement (continued)

» **Age** – Develop opportunities for people of all ages to participate and contribute; use strategies to facilitate the full participation of aging populations, as well as the needs of young residents, including utilizing diverse communication channels through social media, online platforms, print and radio outlets; and integrate opportunities for activities and engagement with young children to participate.

» **Equitable Partnerships** – Use paid partnerships with local community-based organizations and nonprofits working in the project area.

» **Inclusive and Equitable Decision-Making** - Include a plan for a feedback loop with the community to demonstrate continual engagement and equitable decision-making.

Letters of Support

Applicants should provide letters of support for the proposed project from three (3) other agencies or partners (not including co-applicants) that address the following:

» How the proposed project meaningfully addresses all of the program objectives, by project type.

» How the project reflects a meaningful approach to community engagement.

» How the applicant and/or co-applicants have the relevant expertise, experience and skillsets to implement the project.

» How the project directly addresses historical disinvestment and benefits Priority Populations.

» How the entity writing the letter will support the project.

Letters of support can come from, and are not limited to, the following agencies or partners (not including co-applicants):

» Advocacy Group (Social Equity, Health, Environment, etc.)

» Chamber of Commerce/Business Group

» City or County Agency

» Community-Based Organization

» County Transportation Commission

» Council of Governments

» Faith Based Organization

» School District

» State Agency

» Transit Agency

» Youth/Senior Group

Please upload letters of support with the following naming convention: ApplicantName_ProjectName_PartnerName_Support Letter.PDF

Communications Templates for Applicants

Use these templates as a starting point to promote and share this Call for Applications with interested co-applicants, partners and networks. Email templates and talking points are available below to assist in requesting a letter of support or initiating partnerships amongst primary/co-applicants. Be sure to change the messaging based on your request.

Email Template

Subject: SCAG's Sustainable Communities Program – Civic Engagement, Equity and Environmental Justice (SCP CEEEJ) Call for Applications

Dear **[AGENCY NAME]**,

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) is now accepting applications for the Sustainable Communities Program focused on Civic Engagement, Equity and Environmental Justice (SCP CEEEJ). The SCP is a technical assistance program that provides planning resources to local agencies and community-based organizations and promotes healthy, connected and equitable communities. SCAG is committed to work in partnership with others to close the gap of racial injustice and better serve historically disinvested communities, and the SCP aims to prioritize resources where there is a demonstrated need.

[YOUR AGENCY NAME] is seeking to apply for technical assistance resources through the SCP to support local planning and pilot projects that encourage strategies to reduce vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse gas emissions and leverage solutions that accelerate infill development, support housing for all incomes and affirmatively further fair housing.

Call to Action

As a valued partner, **[YOUR AGENCY NAME]** is asking for **[a letter of support / co-applicant partnership]** to increase the competitiveness of this application and expand engagement in the community.

To learn more, visit the SCP website, register for one of the application workshops, or contact Hannah Brunelle, brunelle@scag.ca.gov.
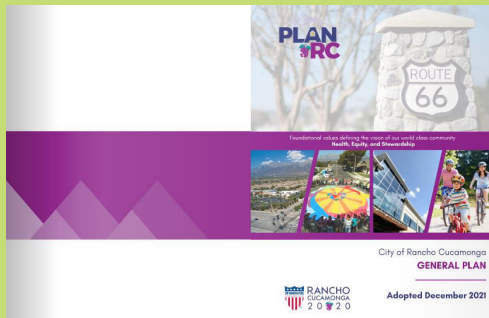
Talking Points

» Why apply to the SCP?

- Our community can benefit from technical assistance to reduce motorized vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse gas emissions, particularly in areas where there is a demonstrated need.

- Leverage solutions that accelerate infill development, support housing for all incomes, and affirmatively further fair housing.

- Address disparities in land use and transportation and invest in historically disinvested communities.

- Increase our agency and community's competitiveness for federal and state funds.

» SCP CEEEJ has an anticipated budget of $5 million and aims to:

- Advance the goals in SCAG's Racial Equity Early Action Plan, by prioritizing efforts that directly benefit Communities of Concern and Senate Bill 535 Disadvantaged Communities and encouraging racial equity in local planning practices.

- Support a range of eligible land use and transportation planning activities including housing-supportive infrastructure planning efforts.

- Support the development of plans to close the racial equity gap.

- Align with funding objectives including accelerating infill development, housing for all incomes, vehicle miles traveled reduction, greenhouse gas emissions reduction, and Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing .

- Support and encourage equitable partnerships between community-based organizations and local governments.

» What is a co-applicant partnership?

- Eligible primary applicants include local or regional agencies, transit agencies or districts, county transportation agencies, public academic institutions, natural resource or public land agencies, county public health agencies, housing authorities, special districts, school districts, and Tribal Governments.

- Community-based organizations, nonprofits, regional housing trust funds and social enterprises that fulfill a social or public service mission are eligible and highly encouraged to apply as co-applicants, in partnership with a primary applicant.

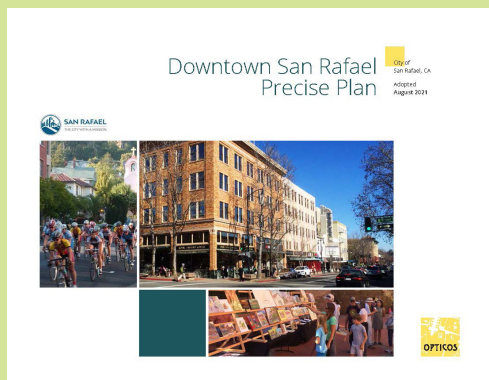- Up to two (2) co-applicants may apply alongside an eligible primary applicant.

Example Project Spotlights

Explore example projects to learn more about what SCP CEEEJ could fund and how funding from this program can benefit your community. Proposed projects should be transformative and innovative, specific to the context of the community and geography.

With a focus on reducing greenhouse gases to nearly 50 percent of 2018 levels by 2040, the City of Rancho Cucamonga planned infill development to align with public transportation to support new development in their General Plan Update, Plan RC.

This project is an example of the *Housing and Land Use Strategies* project type.

The City of San Rafael Downtown Precise Plan is an example of a potential project to fund in a transit-rich area that used rezoning and permit streamlining tools supporting affordable housing development.

This project is an example of the *Housing and Land Use Strategies* project type.

The comprehensive plan, *Muévete*, provides safer, walkable streets for residents that are dependent on walking or bicycling for transportation every day in Santa Ana. The recommended actions support and increase walking and bicycling, to enhance multimodal travel in the community.
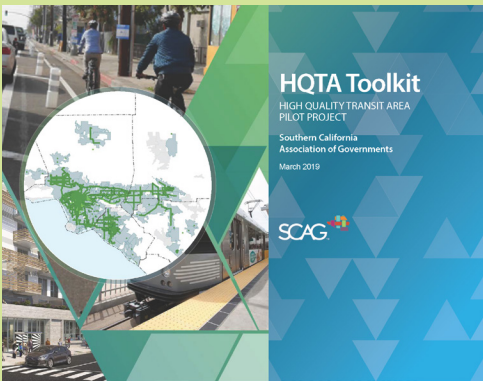
This project provides an example of the *Multimodal Communities* project type and of robust community engagement strategies.

Example Project Spotlights (continued)

Omnitrans is working to develop the Omnitrans ConnecTransit Plan, which will identify and prioritize clean transportation improvements that address hurdles to equity and access within the Omnitrans service area and that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Omnitrans will partner with community-based organizations to conduct meaningful and comprehensive community outreach and engagement to ensure the resulting plan is driven by community needs.

This is an example of the *Multimodal Communities* project type.

SCAG's High Quality Transit Area (HQTA) Pilot Project offers technical assistance and planning services to station areas that have a high potential for transit-supportive development patterns and future growth. The Toolkit includes contemporary best practices for transit-oriented districts, open space and complete street projects that are tailored to the desired place types for a HQTA.

This is an example of the *Multimodal Communities* project type.

The City of Buena Park adopted the Complete Streets Master Plan. Complete Streets not only improve individual mobility and safety; they promote better health, provide a cleaner environment, and enhance a sense of place and community.

This is an example of the *Multimodal Communities* project type.

Reap 2.0 Mapping Indicator Tool Examples

Instructions for How to Use the REAP 2.0 Mapping Indicator Tool

SCAG has developed the REAP 2.0 Indicator Mapping Tool to support applicants applying to SCAG's REAP 2.0 Programs. This map is a supportive tool for applicants to analyze equity indicators and Priority Growth Area (PGAs) layers that overlay with the project location. The map alone does not define an infill area but serves as a tool to support narrative development to describe how the project area overlays with equity indicators and PGA layers.

Applicants must also provide a detailed description of how the project area meets the definition of infill (Please see the SCP CEEEJ Program Guidelines, Appendix 3) to be eligible for the Housing & Land Use project category.

Please note the mapping tool may be slow to load, so please be sure all layers are visible before taking the screenshot. Please also feel free to annotate your map as needed to clarify any details about your project location and assist evaluators.

Infill Indicators Map

1. Open the REAP 2.0 Indicator Mapping Tool.

2. Start by zooming into your project location. The entire project location should be visible and clear on the map. You can use the Search location in the left-hand corner to assist in zooming into your project location. Depending on the geography of your project location, please include the project boundaries, whether area-wide, corridor-wide, jurisdiction-wide, or regional.

3. On the right side under Layer List, please select the following infill-related layers:

    » SCAG High Quality Transit Areas (2016)

    » Transit Priority Areas (Plan Area 2045)

    » Job Centers

    » Neighborhood Mobility Areas

    » Livable Corridor

Adjust the transparency to at least 50%, or less as needed to ensure all layers are visible on each map, by clicking on the three dots to the right of each layer.

4. Please take a screenshot of the project area overlay with the infill-related layers.

Please upload a PDF of the map to the upload button on the application. To view an example, please see Figure 1, Example Infill Indicators Map.

Please save files with the following name: ApplicantName_ ProjectName_Infill

Note: If your proposed project does not fall in one of these areas but you believe your project area aligns with the definition of infill (see the SCP CEEEJ Program Guidelines, Appendix 3), please reach out to Hannah Brunelle, brunelle@scag.ca.gov for additional guidance.
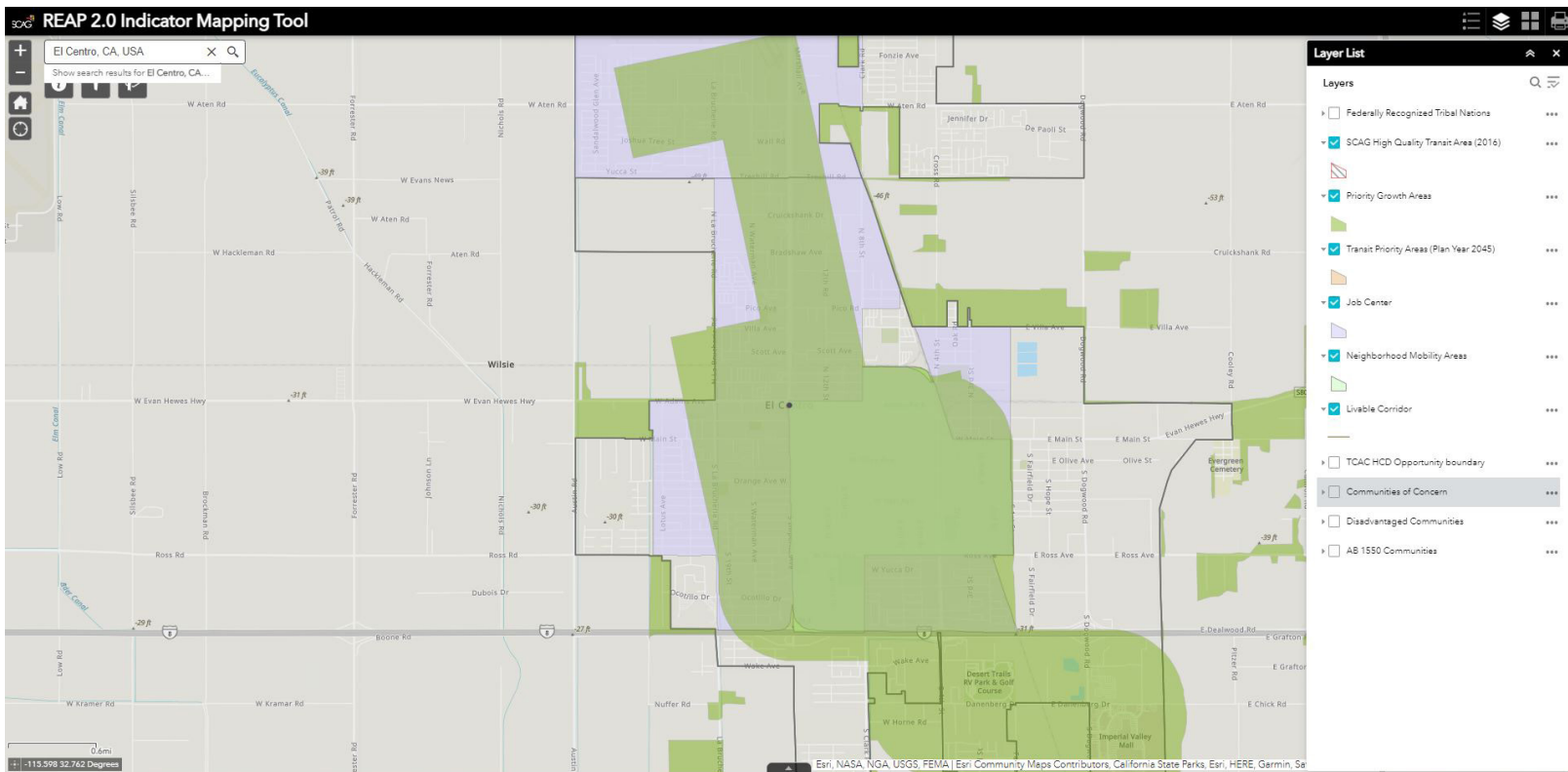
Appendix

Figure 1. Example Infill Indicators Map, ApplicantName_ ProjectName_Infill

Appendix

Priority Population Maps

1. Open the REAP 2.0 Indicator Mapping Tool.

2. Start by zooming into your project location. The entire project location should be visible and clear on the map. You can use the Search location in the left-hand corner to assist in zooming into your project location. Depending on the geography of your project location, please include the project boundaries, whether area-wide, corridor-wide, jurisdiction-wide, or region-wide.

3. On the right side under Layer List, please individually select the following Priority Population layers:

   » TCAC/HCD Opportunity Areas (Low resource, Moderate resource, and High Segregation and Poverty are eligible. For Housing and Land Use Strategies projects, affordable housing production in High resource and Highest resource communities are also eligible)

   » Communities of Concern

   » Disadvantaged Communities (All subcategories are eligible)

   » AB 1550 Communities (All subcategories are eligible, except for the subcategory, No priority population)

Adjust the transparency to at least 50%, or less as needed to ensure all layers are visible on each map, by clicking on the three dots to the right of each layer.

4. Please take a screenshot of the project area overlay with each Priority Population layer (in total, four maps).

Please upload a PDF of the map showing the project overlay with each Priority Population layer to the upload button on the application. To view examples, please see Figures 2 - 5. Please save files with the following name: ApplicantName_ProjectName_PP_PriorityPopulationLayerName
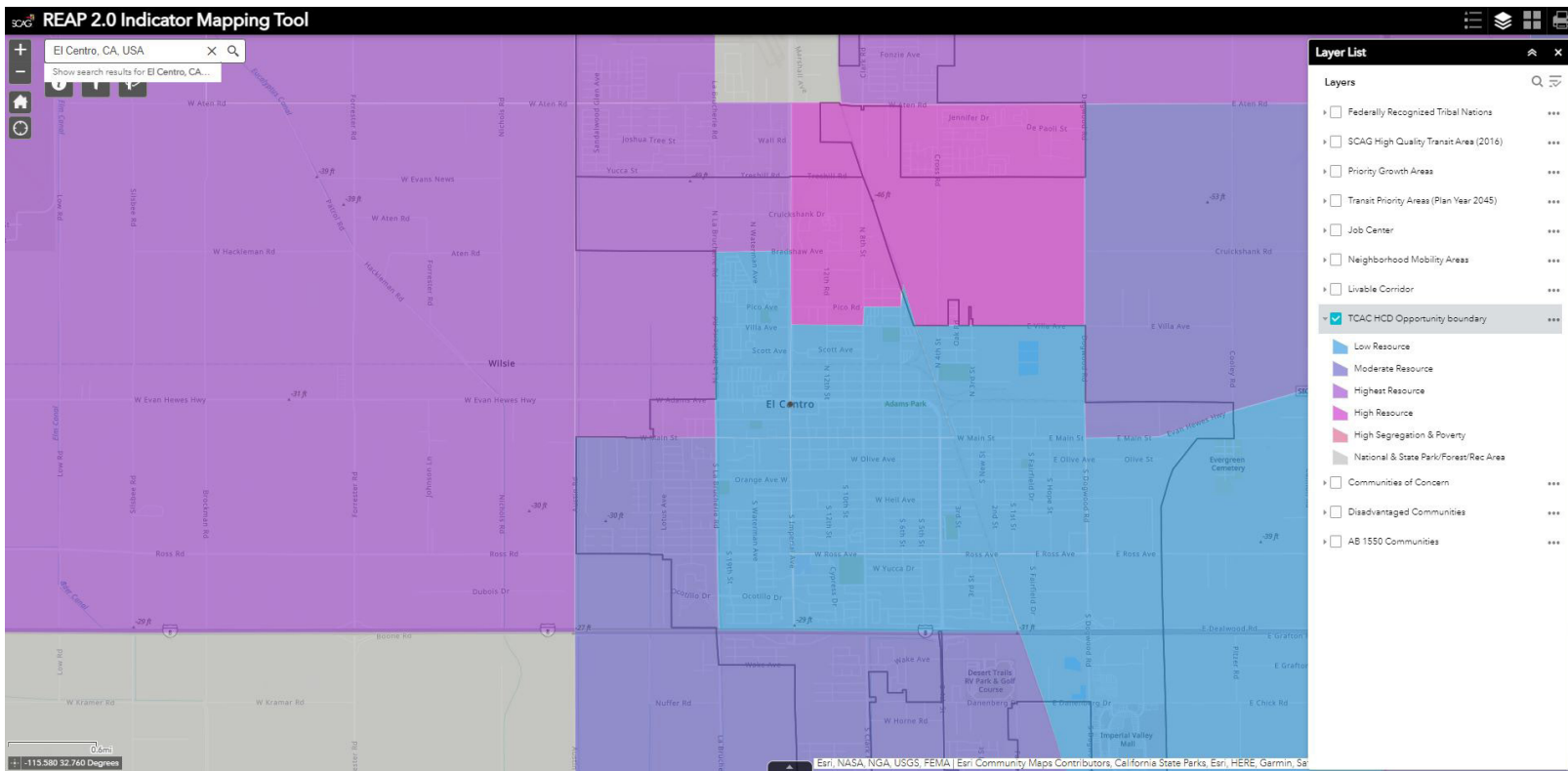
Appendix

Figure 2. Example Priority Populations Map, TCAC HCD Opportunity Boundary for the City of El Centro, ApplicantName_ProjectName_PP_TCAC_HCD.
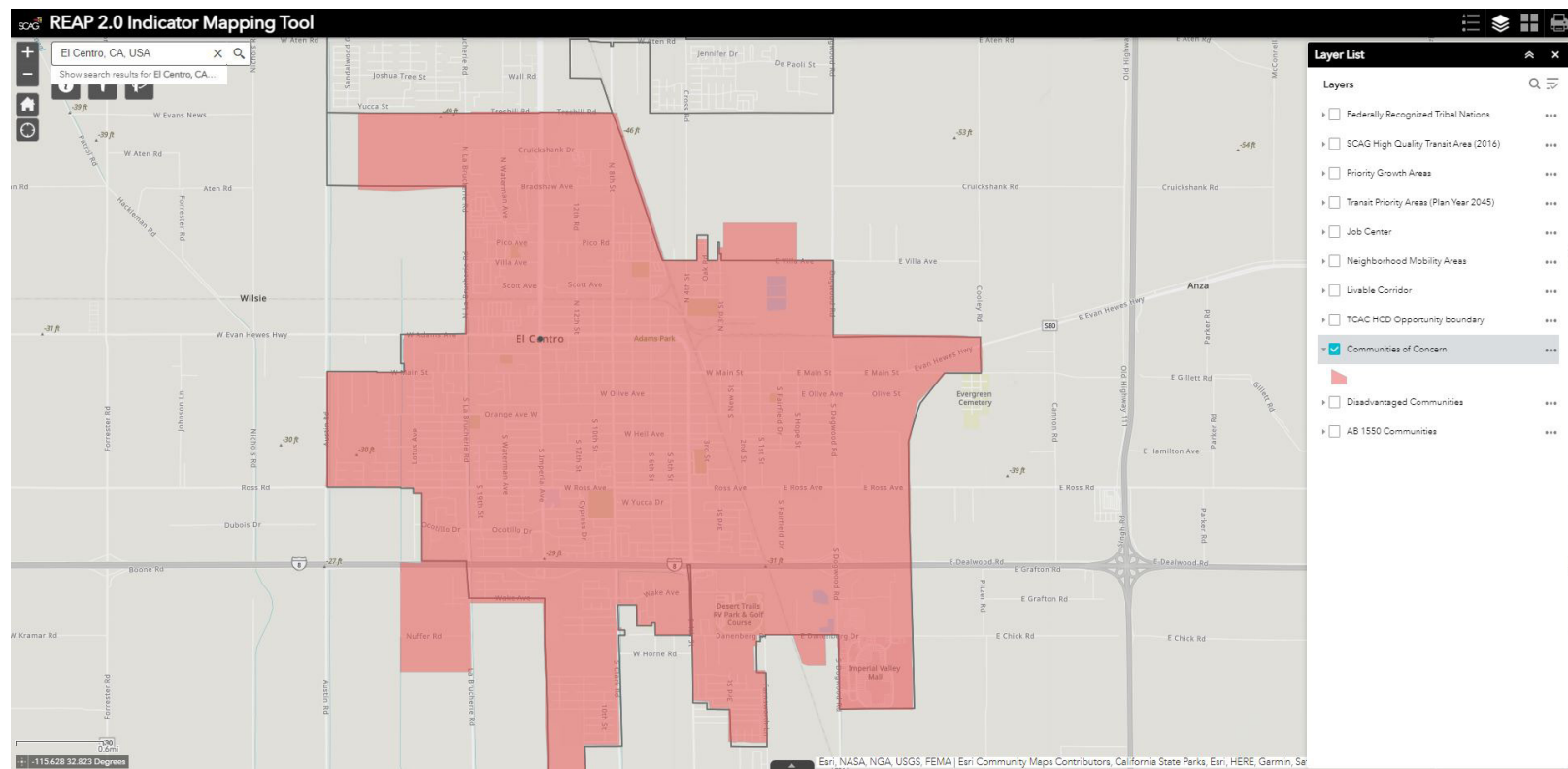
Figure 3. Example Priority Populations Map for the City of El Centro, Communities of Concern, ApplicantName_ProjectName_PP_COC.

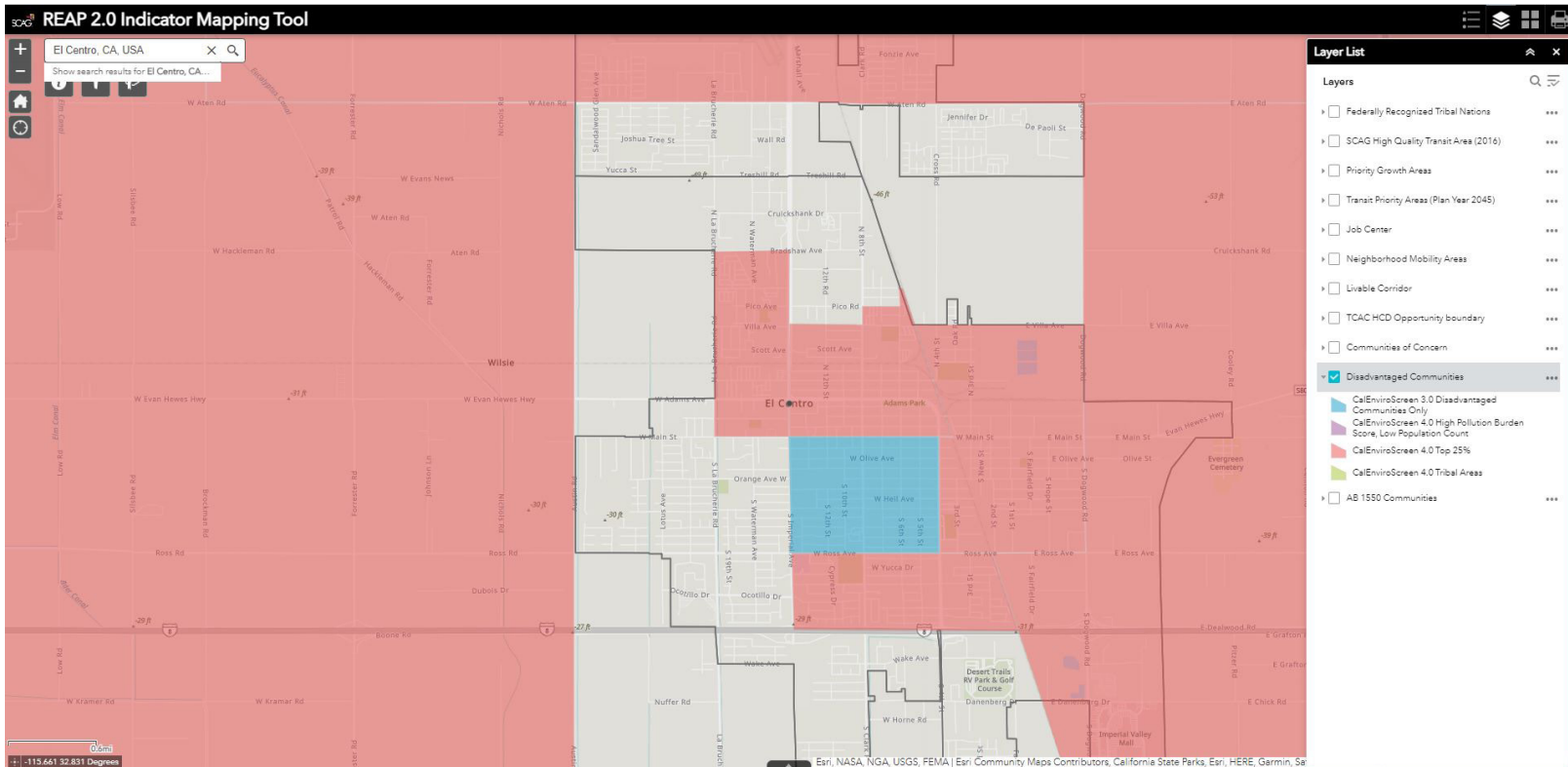**Figure 4.** Example Priority Populations Map for the City of El Centro, Disadvantaged Communities, ApplicantName_ProjectName_PP_ DAC.

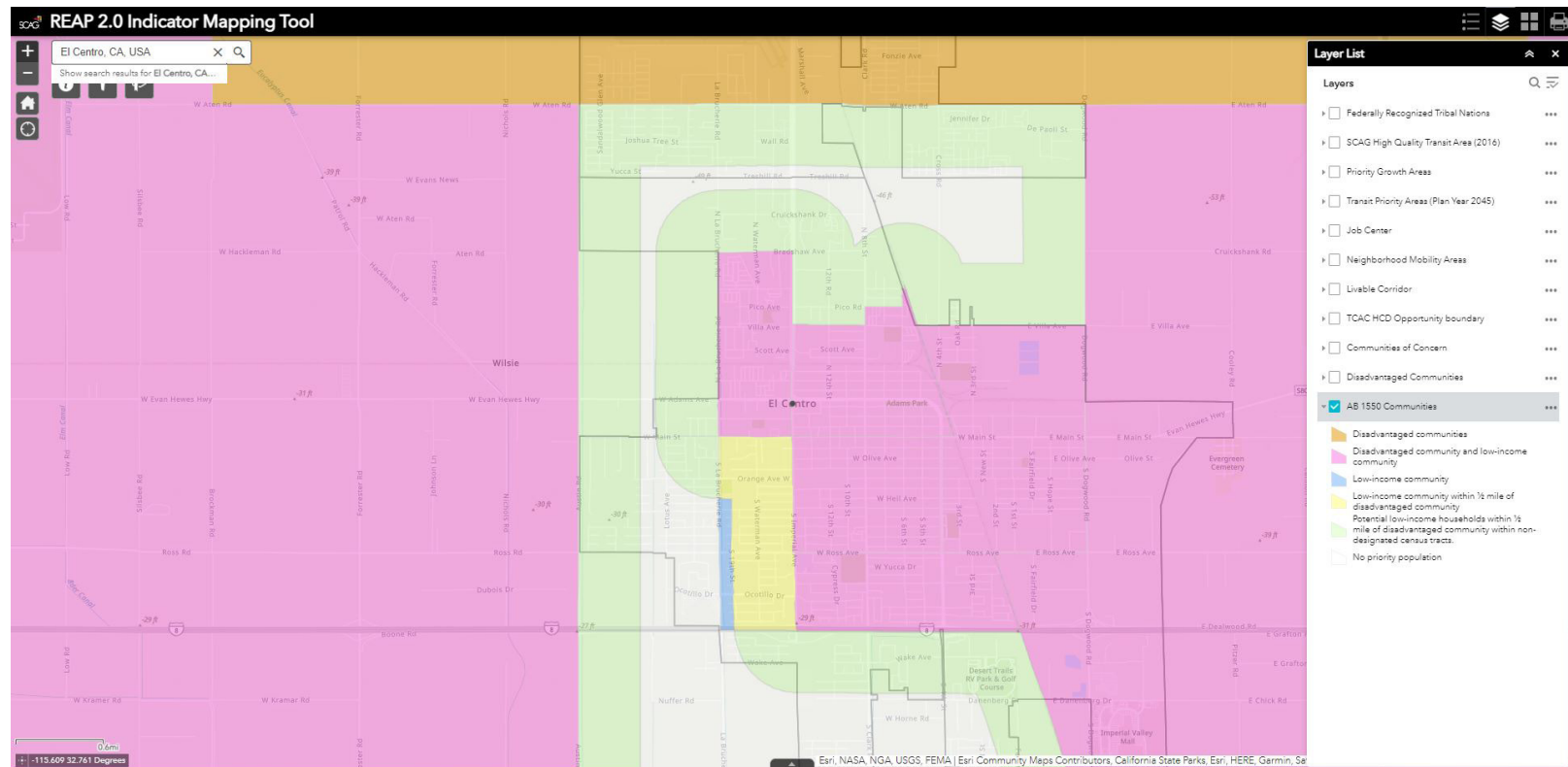# Sustainable Communities Program

Appendix

Figure 5. Example Priority Populations Map for the City of El Centro, AB 1550 Communities, ApplicantName_ProjectName_PP_AB1550.