

**THE OLYMPICS  
LEGACY -  
LET'S KEEP  
IT MOVING**



**Regional Advisory Council**

**scag**  
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA  
ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS  
600 J. Commonwealth Ave.  
Los Angeles, Ca 90005

**THE OLYMPICS LEGACY:  
LET'S KEEP IT MOVING**

## ***Miracles do Happen***

Were you in Los Angeles during the "Olympics Miracle"? Did you like the absence of traffic jams and freeway congestion? Would you like it to be that way all the time? Do you think it could be like that all the time? Or was it a fluke, a once in a lifetime occasion – like the games?

What happened? People modified their work schedules and stayed off the roads at normally peak periods. Truckers changed their delivery schedules to avoid peak period traffic. Special transit services and highway improvements helped to increase capacity.

The result was that more people were travelling in the region, but traffic congestion was much lower than normal.

The Regional Advisory Council of the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) believes that the changes in peoples' transportation behavior during the games can be continued, and a permanent traffic miracle in the Los Angeles basin can be created. We want to keep the Olympics legacy moving.

## ***Olympic Transportation Strategies***

A study by SCAG staff concluded that a variety of new and old transportation strategies altered driving habits and kept traffic moving smoothly during the Olympics period.

SCAG surveyed some 326 local businesses and nearly 17,000 workers. They found that five percent of the workers were able to take two days off as a result of modified work schedules, not driving to work at all.

Many private businesses sponsored vanpools and, of those surveyed, twice as many as before instituted staggered shifts during the games, 14 percent more than normal offered flextime and unusual hours. A large percentage (30%) changed their delivery or receiving schedules with the cooperation of truckers, enabling deliveries to be made during late night hours. Very little significant congestion occurred at all during the normal peak hours, largely as a result of flextime and staggered work schedules. By the end of the second week of the games, the freeways were carrying 11 percent more traffic than normal but still operated with only moderate congestion during the peak periods.

Here are some of the strategies that proved effective during the Olympics:

- Increased transit ridership reduced congestion as much as 25 percent on some local streets. The Southern California Rapid Transit District's Special Olympic Bus Service carried a total of 1,130,000 riders to and from the six main venues.
- Truckers rerouted their trips away from central Los Angeles and switched their hours of operation, resulting in a five percent decline in truck traffic during peak hours.
- Charter operators ran about 750 full-sized coaches and carried the majority of the Olympic sponsors – ten percent of total spectators – and transported youth groups to events.
- Several street improvements designed to increase traffic capacity and reduce demand were implemented: street closures around some venues and

in Westwood; one-way streets in the Exposition Park area; "bus only" streets, lanes and freeway ramps' double right- and left-turn lanes; parking prohibitions; Automated Traffic Surveillance and Control that allowed instant changes in traffic signal timing; and, modification and modernization of traffic signals to improve signal interconnection.

- On the freeways, an automated map of the system, tied to electronic sensors in the pavement, monitored traffic conditions and allowed officials to keep operation levels high. Freeway ramp metering hours were extended.

The benefits of all this were not limited to smooth traffic flow. Accidents declined 16 percent during the Olympics, and truck accidents alone declined a whopping 67 percent. And as a side benefit, there was a 14 percent decline in ozone concentrations in the basin.

## ***What is the Transportation Outreach Program?***

Of course, not all of these strategies can be repeated on a regular basis. But there is a lot we can do.

Many of the strategies employed during the games can be made permanent and many of the benefits can be realized again. That is the goal of the Transportation Outreach Program of SCAG's Regional Advisory Council – to promote those successful measures used during the Olympics to reduce traffic congestion on a daily basis and make our streets and highways flow better.

A major part of the program is a video presentation that develops understanding of these successful transportation measures and asks for continued support. It will serve as the focal point of presentations targeted to labor, business and government groups and their employees. A speakers bureau of specially qualified experts directs the presentations to the specific concerns of targeted groups. It's all there for you to use.

The Regional Advisory Council believes that the positive experiences of the Olympics proved that we already have the strategies to reduce traffic congestion in Southern California. Adapting these strategies to everyday commuting, we can modify individual, employer and governmental transportation behavior and make the Olympic spirit pay off permanently.

## ***What We Can ALL Do***

**The Individual:** Work different hours. Carpool or vanpool. Take transit, even if only once a week. Stay off the freeways during rush hours. Urge employers to provide rideshare and transit programs and to provide a company car for business trips during office hours.

**The Labor Representative:** Seek higher salaries in lieu of fringe benefits such as free or subsidized parking. Advocate incentive programs for ride-sharing and transit. Develop a "Commuter Bill of Rights". Seek child care at or near work.

**The Employer:** Eliminate free parking for individuals and increase salaries to cover increases in parking costs to employees. Give priority treatment to ridesharers and transit users. Invest in employee commute programs. Provide company cars to employees for use during the workday. Join or form an employer association.

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**The Businessman:** Work to reroute trucks or re-schedule truck deliveries so that they are not in congested areas during peak commute hours. Support a review to find ways of keeping local travel demand from exceeding capacity. Support the implementation of a one-way street near your business if it will improve circulation. Offer delivery services, such as joint shopping center deliveries.

**The Public Servant:** Practice what you preach – implement incentive programs now being offered by private sector employers, such as paid parking and staggered work hours. Design and implement one-way streets where beneficial. Enact local ordinances and legislation that will create financial incentives for employers to promote ridesharing and transit. Consider a freeze on development in congested areas unless or until actions are taken to relieve congestion.

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Please contact me to schedule a presentation before our group:

**NAME** \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDRESS** \_\_\_\_\_

**PHONE** \_\_\_\_\_

**ORGANIZATION** \_\_\_\_\_

**MEETING DATE/TIME** \_\_\_\_\_

**MEETING SITE** \_\_\_\_\_

**ATTENDANCE** \_\_\_\_\_

Return to RAC OLYMPICS LEGACY PROGRAM, 600 South Commonwealth Avenue, Suite 1000, Los Angeles, Calif. 90005 213/385-1000

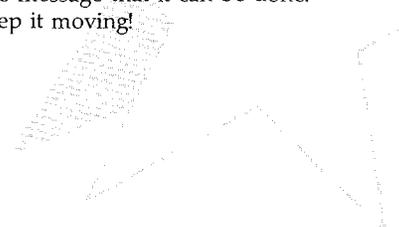
## **We Can Do It!!**

We all have a stake in improving traffic conditions. The measures that we know worked to clear the roads during the Olympics are far more economical than expensive capital improvements and yield equally desirable results. And in some areas, freeway and highway expansion which is needed to accommodate traffic growth is not financially feasible.

Keeping our transportation system moving smoothly can be done. We did it already and as an added benefit we reduced air pollution and accidents, too. We were able to accomplish this by all of us working together. It would be a pity to sacrifice all that was gained just because the games are over.

Help is available. The Transportation Outreach Program of SCAG's Regional Advisory Council can help businesses, industries, labor associations and governmental agencies reach their employees and members with the issues and with the message that it can be done.

Let's do it! Let's keep it moving!



**THE OLYMPICS LEGACY:  
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