MEETING NOTICE AND AGENDA

REGIONAL PLANNING TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP

The Regional Planning Technical Working Group may take action on any item appearing on this agenda.

Thursday, May 11, 2006

1:15 to 3:15 p.m.

SANDAG Board Room
401 B Street, Suite 800
San Diego, CA 92101-4231

Staff Contact: Carolina Gregor
(619) 699-1989
cgr@sandag.org

AGENDA HIGHLIGHTS

- 2030 REGIONAL GROWTH FORECAST UPDATE
- SMART GROWTH CONCEPT MAP: PUBLIC OUTREACH RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO SANDAG POLICY COMMITTEES
- 2007 COMPREHENSIVE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN (RTP) DRAFT ISSUE PAPER: ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION PROGRAM

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To request this document or related reports in an alternative format, please call (619) 699-1900, (619) 699-1904 (TTY), or fax (619) 699-1905.
1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Members of the public will have the opportunity to address the Technical Working Group on any issue within the jurisdiction of the Working Group. Speakers are limited to three minutes each.

ANNOUNCEMENT: SPECIAL JOINT MEETING WITH THE INDEPENDENT TRANSIT PLANNING REVIEW PANEL.

TWG members are invited to a special joint meeting among the Technical Working Group and the Cities/County Transportation Advisory Committee (CTAC) with the Independent Transit Planning Review Panel to discuss the results of their study. The joint meeting is planned for Thursday, June 1, 2006, from 2 - 4 p.m. in the SANDAG Board Room. Attendance is encouraged.

CONSENT (ITEMS 3 - 5)

3. SUMMARY OF THE MARCH 9, 2006, TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP MEETING

The TWG should review and approve the March 9, 2006, meeting summary.

4. REGIONAL HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT (RHNA) BOARD POLICY NO. 033 (Susan Baldwin)

On April 28, 2006, the SANDAG Board approved Board Policy No. 033, which sets forth guidelines for incentives related to the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA). On February 25, 2005, the SANDAG Board approved the Final RHNA for the San Diego region for the 2005-2010 housing element cycle, and agreed to provide certain financial incentives to jurisdictions that provide a greater share of affordable housing now and in the future. The Board Policy identifies the funding programs that will be subject to the RHNA policy, the housing element-related eligibility requirements for the funding programs affected by the policy, and how incentive points will be allocated based upon lower income housing production.
5. REMINDER: FORM 700 STATEMENT OF ECONOMIC INTERESTS (Carolina Gregor) INFORMATI

As a reminder, TWG members that have not yet submitted their Form 700 Statements of Economic Interest should do so as soon as possible. The deadline was April 3, 2006. The forms can be accessed at fppc.ca.gov. Completed forms should be mailed to Deborah Gunn, SANDAG’s Clerk of the Board. Questions should be directed to Deborah at (619) 699-1912.

REPORTS (ITEMS 6 - 12)

6. REPORTS FROM TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP (TWG) MEMBERS DISCUSSION

Members of the Technical Working Group (TWG) may report on their activities and/or upcoming events.

+7. 2030 REGIONAL GROWTH FORECAST UPDATE (Ed Schafer) INFORMATION

SANDAG is updating the 2030 Regional Growth Forecast to coincide with the preparation of the 2007 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The SANDAG Board will receive an update on the preparation of the forecast at its May 12, 2006, policy meeting. The Board report is attached. In addition, SANDAG thanks the planning and community development directors for responding to the General Plan Update Survey sent out last month. Results of the survey will be used in the presentation. SANDAG staff and Niall Fritz, Chair of the TWG, will preview the Board presentation at the TWG meeting.

+8. SMART GROWTH CONCEPT MAP: PUBLIC OUTREACH RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO SANDAG POLICY COMMITTEES (Carolina Gregor) RECOMMEND

Last month, SANDAG held eight workshops around the region on the draft Smart Growth Concept Map and the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). Attached is a summary of the results of the workshops and recommended changes to the Concept Map. The TWG is asked to (a) review and comment on the results of the public outreach process; (b) make recommendations on any additions, changes, or deletions to the Smart Growth Concept Map; and (c) recommend to SANDAG’s Regional Planning and Transportation Committees that the SANDAG Board of Directors accept the Smart Growth Concept Map for planning purposes for the 2007 RTP update.
9. **HOUSING ITEMS**

(A) Information Requested on Density Bonus and Minimum Density Ordinances (Susan Baldwin, SANDAG, and Barbara Redlitz, City of Escondido)

The City of Escondido is working on two programs associated with their housing element: an updated density bonus ordinance and a minimum density ordinance. Jurisdictions who have worked on similar ordinances are asked to share any information they have with Escondido and other local planning staff.

(B) Review of the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) Proposed Rulemaking for the Annual Housing Element Reports (Susan Baldwin)

SANDAG staff is requesting the assistance of members of the TWG and Regional Housing Working Group (RHWG) to review HCD’s proposed regulations that will govern the required annual housing element reports. Staff will send an email to TWG and RHWG members asking for participation in a meeting to prepare comments on the proposed regulations.

+10. **2007 COMPREHENSIVE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN (RTP) DRAFT ISSUE PAPER: ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION PROGRAM (EMP) (Shelby Tucker)**

A number of issue papers are being developed for the 2007 RTP. Staff will present the draft issue paper for the Environmental Mitigation Program.

11. **PLACE3S URBAN SIMULATION MODEL (Ed Schafer)**

Earlier this year, SANDAG received a grant from the California Business Transportation and Housing Agency (BT&H) for the Regional Blueprint Planning Program. The grant funds will support SANDAG’s use of the PLACE3S urban simulation model and various other programs. As part of this effort, SANDAG has contracted with Eco Interactive to develop a sketch model for the San Diego region. The development of the model is underway. This summer, staff will provide an overview of the functions and capabilities of the model and, in the fall, staff will provide a demonstration of how the model can be applied in a local setting. As part of development of the model, in the next few weeks, staff will email the TWG a short survey about land use assumptions for mixed use areas.

12. **TRANSPORTATION PROJECT EVALUATION CRITERIA UPDATE (Rachel Kennedy and TWG Members)**

SANDAG staff and members of the TPEC Ad Hoc Working Group will report on the status of the group’s work to date.
13. ADJOURNMENT AND NEXT MEETING

The next regularly-scheduled TWG meeting will be held on Thursday, June 8, 2006, from 1:15 - 3:15 p.m. Please mark your calendars for this meeting and for the special joint meeting with the Independent Transit Review Panel on Thursday, June 1, 2006, from 2 - 4 p.m.

+next to an item indicates an attachment.
May 11, 2006

AGENDA ITEM NO.: 3

Action Requested: APPROVE

SUMMARY OF MARCH 9, 2006, TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP MEETING

Agenda Item #1: Welcome and Introductions

Niall Fritz, City of Poway, chaired the meeting. Self-introductions were conducted.

Agenda Item #2: Public Comments and Communications

No public comments or communications.

CONSENT ITEMS (3-4)

Agenda Item #3: Summary of the March 9, 2006, Regional Planning Technical Working Group Meeting

A motion and second were made to approve the March 9, 2006, TWG Meeting Summary. The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item #4: Regional Blueprint Planning Grant Work Program and Budget Amendments

This item was removed from the Consent Agenda to allow for discussion.

Coleen Clementson, SANDAG staff, informed the TWG that SANDAG received $409,750 in Blueprint grant funding from the State. The grant funding will be directed toward I-PLACE3S software and licensing requirements, goods movement within Southern California, and implementing the Integrated Regional Infrastructure Strategy (IRIS). Additions and amendments have been made to SANDAG's overall work program to reflect these additional activities.

REPORTS (5-9)

Agenda Item #5: Public Comments and Communications

No public comments or communications.
Agenda Item #6: Reports from TWG Members

Niall Fritz informed the group that Smart Growth presentations made by local planning directors at the Regional Planning Committee are very interesting and useful. Staff offered to arrange for similar presentations to the TWG, as we used to do in the past. The TWG was receptive to this idea.

Carolina Gregor, SANDAG staff, announced that Walk San Diego is hosting a free lecture by Frank Kent on “Creating a Sense of Place” on Tuesday, March 14, 2006, at 7 p.m. at UCSD.

Ed Batchelder, City of Chula Vista, announced that the City of Chula Vista is hosting a lecture regarding energy conservation and building practices.

Susan Baldwin, SANDAG staff, announced that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is accepting applications for the fifth annual National Award for Smart Growth Achievement. This award program recognizes communities that use the principles of smart growth to create better places. Applications are available on the EPA Web site.

Agenda Item #7: Update on the Series 11 2030 Regional Growth Forecast for the 2007 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)

Ed Schafer, SANDAG staff, updated the TWG on the progress of the Series 11 2030 Regional Growth Forecast. Mr. Schafer indicated that the Series 11 Forecast is almost complete. After the forecast is reviewed internally, the results will be mailed to each jurisdiction. The TWG will review and discuss the forecast at the next meeting. The forecast is scheduled to be presented to the Board in June.

Questions and comments included:

Dennis Turner, County of San Diego, asked what forecast numbers will be reported. Mr. Schaffer answered that population, housing, employment, and land use changes such as vacancy and redevelopment will be reported.

Ed Batchelder asked if forecast results could be generated for smaller subareas instead of only jurisdiction-wide. Mr. Schaffer indicated that this level of detail was possible and available upon request.

Barb Redlitz, City of Escondido, asked if the jurisdictions need to take formal action on the forecast prior to approval by the Board. Mr. Schaffer answered that the jurisdictions should review the output and assess the reasonableness of the results. No formal action by jurisdictions is required.

Mr. Turner asked if the action taken by the Board will be to adopt the forecast or to release the results for public comment. Mr. Schaffer stated that the Board is asked to adopt the forecast for planning purposes.

Agenda Item #8: Smart Growth Concept Map: (A) Updated Draft Map and Site Descriptions, (B) Public Workshops, and (C) Generic Overlay Assumptions

Ms. Gregor highlighted revisions to the draft Smart Growth Concept Map and Site Descriptions. Additionally, Ms. Gregor stated that the next version of the map will distinguish between planned
smart growth areas that meet the density criteria and the areas that meet the densities but are not served by transit. Ms. Gregor also reminded the TWG that revisions to boundaries and/or site description changes are due to SANDAG by March 17.

Questions and comments included:

- Mr. Batchelder suggested a tier 1/tier 2 classification system to distinguish potential areas and their respective transit characteristics. Staff stated that nine areas do not qualify as existing/planned due to lack of existing/planned transit. SANDAG staff will double check the data inputs and reassess the transit plans for these areas.

- Ms. Redlitz asked for clarification on site E-8 in the San Marcos/Escondido area adjacent to a planned Sprinter station. Staff indicated that this site will be reevaluated to ensure accuracy.

- Mr. Batchelder noted that educational facilities classified as Special Use Centers do not take into account student transit usage. Staff stated that, of the 13 Special Use Centers, only 2 qualify as existing/planned. Over the course of the next year, staff will revisit the Special Use Center criteria.

- Marcela Escobar-Eck, City of Carlsbad, asked about the difference between a Town Center and a Mixed-Use Transit Corridor. Staff replied that a key distinction is that the Town Center designation has an employment target whereas the Mixed-Use Transit Corridor does not have an employment target.

- Jerry Backoff, City of San Marcos, commented that the employment targets may be too high for suburban areas. He indicated that Cal State University San Marcos, the largest employer in San Marcos, doesn’t meet the minimum employment target. Staff answered that the Independent Transit Peer Review (ITPR) Panel is reviewing place types and characteristics and may recommend changes to targets over time.

- Niall Fritz stated that student parking and sports facilities, because they cover a large land area, decrease employment density.

- Ms. Escobar-Eck noted it would be helpful to include city boundaries on the Concept Map.

- The TWG and staff briefly discussed adding jurisdictional boundaries and major roadways to the Concept Map.

- Ms. Redlitz noted that the designation of major employment areas on the Concept Map could be a sensitive political issue among jurisdictions.

- Ms. Escobar-Eck commented that areas around airports won't qualify for funding due to lack of residential density. Staff replied that SANDAG is analyzing and planning transit networks that serve existing development areas above and beyond those areas identified on the Concept Map. Additionally, Ms. Escobar-Eck suggested depicting the region’s airports on the subregional maps.

- Mr. Batchelder commented about the factors that relate to achieving employment density such as building intensity and building height. Staff suggested recirculating a list that illustrates the employment densities generated by different building uses.

- Jim Griffin, City of El Cajon, asked about the significance of the size of the dots on the Concept Map and subregional maps. Staff replied that the intent is to depict place types hierarchically on the Concept Map, with more detail provided on the subregional maps.
• Melanie Kush, City of Santee, asked about a possible benefit to changing the one-quarter mile radius around community centers to try to achieve qualification as existing/planned. Staff replied that they have maintained consistency with this target due to walkability and transit factors.

Ms. Gregor next discussed the status of the public workshop/outreach preparations, the presentations to local jurisdictions, and the draft agenda and content for public workshops. Coleen Clementson, SANDAG staff, added that the remaining steps with the Concept Map are as follows: 1) present the Concept Map to local jurisdictions; 2) conduct public workshops and gather public input; 3) present the Concept Map to the SANDAG Board in June; and 4) use the Concept Map to help develop the land use and transportation alternatives for the RTP update. Additionally, Ms. Clementson stated that the Concept Map, over time, will be used for the smart growth incentive program.

Questions and comments included:

• Mr. Backoff cautioned that the Concept Map could become a political issue, given the recent activity related to the November elections.

• Ms. Escobar-Eck agreed that the Concept Map might become contentious and indicated that Carlsbad may consider removing an identified area due to potential conflict.

• Mr. Turner stated the importance of clarifying how potential smart growth areas will be handled in relation to the RTP update, and to articulate exactly how the Concept Map will be used.

• Ms. Redlitz commented about the Series 11 growth forecast and the potential for the forecast numbers to generate controversy at the workshops. Staff indicated that the draft forecast numbers will be made public at the end of May or June. Additionally, the forecast is strictly based upon existing policies, and the numbers will not be significantly different than the previous Series 10 forecast.

• Mr. Turner, in reference to the visual simulation portion of the workshop, asked what would happen if people reject smart growth and what would happen to their input. Staff replied that the intent of the simulation is to generate discussion and input.

• Mr. Batchelder commented that general agreement among the public could significantly influence the Urban Design Guidelines. Additionally, the selection of smart growth photo examples will greatly influence the public's perception of smart growth.

Ms. Gregor next discussed the structure and purpose of the break-out sessions at the workshops. Mr. Schaffer then discussed the Generic Overlay Assumptions, explaining that the generic overlay assumptions serve as “placeholders” for transportation modeling purposes until the potential areas transition into planned smart growth areas. The generic overlay assumptions serve as an alternative land use assumption that will be used in the RTP update.

Questions and comments included:

• TWG members discussed the use and purpose of the generic overlay assumptions. Staff clarified that the purpose is to take the generic overlay assumptions and apply them to all Potential areas and model those results as an alternative land use.
• Mr. Batchelder asked about the Special Use areas and how these assumptions work for areas such as Southwestern College. Staff replied that applying generic overlay assumptions in certain locations and place types will have to be done on a case-by-case basis, such as the special use centers.

• Mr. Turner suggested that the Generic Overlay Assumptions should be presented to the City/County Transportation Advisory Committee (CTAC).

**Agenda Item #9: Update on Transportation Project Evaluation Criteria (TPEC) Ad Hoc Working Group**

Rachel Kennedy, SANDAG staff, provided a brief update on the progress of the TPEC in updating the transportation evaluation criteria for the 2007 RTP. Ms. Kennedy also previewed the content of both March TPEC meetings. The TWG will receive a formal presentation on the progress of the TPEC, as well as a complete list of draft criteria at its July meeting.

Mr. Batchelder, member of the TPEC, commented that the TPEC has a good balance of members and good discussions and input have resulted to date.

**Agenda Item #10: Adjournment and Next Meeting**

The next TWG meeting will be held on Thursday, May 11, 2006, from 1:15 – 3:15 p.m. The April TWG meeting is cancelled in order to encourage TWG members to attend the smart growth workshops.
2030 REGIONAL GROWTH FORECAST UPDATE

Introduction

The Regional Growth Forecast is a foundation of SANDAG’s Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP). The forecast represents the best assessment of the changes we can anticipate for the region and its communities based on the most current information available and well-proven and verified computer models. It is meant to help policy and decision-makers prepare for the future and is not an expression for or against growth.

The Regional Growth Forecast provides data that gives us a picture of where we are heading under our current plans and policies. It provides insight into what is working, what isn’t, and what we can do to change our future for the better. This forecast update provides the opportunity to discuss strategies and options relevant to the 2007 RTP and future updates to the RCP.

Policy Questions

The Board should discuss the following issues:

- What strategies should be considered to help keep local general and community plans current?
- What strategies should be considered in addressing increasing interregional and binational commuting trends?
- What steps should be taken to minimize the imbalance between the deficit of land planned for housing and the surplus of land planned for employment by 2030?
- To what extent should the 2007 RTP address the transportation needs of the increasing number of older residents?

Background

To ensure that the forecast reflects current national, state, and regional trends and recent changes to local plans and policies, it is updated every three to five years. In December 2003, the 2030 Regional Growth Forecast was accepted by the Board for use in planning and other studies. We are updating the 2030 Regional Growth Forecast at this time to coincide with the preparation of the 2007 RTP. This forecast update covers the period from 2005 to 2030.

The forecast is developed through a collaborative effort with experts in demography, housing, the economy and other disciplines, and the close cooperation of local planning directors and their staffs. The forecast process includes two iterative phases. First, a forecast for the entire region is produced, based largely on economic trends and the associated demographic dynamics. The second phase allocates the regional forecast to jurisdictions and smaller geographic areas based on local general and community plans. Our procedures also incorporate the region’s increasing interregional and binational connections with our neighbors to the north, east, and south. At this time, local staffs are...
reviewing the jurisdiction-level forecasts; therefore, this report focuses on updated forecasts for the entire San Diego region to the year 2030.

SANDAG’s forecasts have been very accurate. Analysis of previous forecasts has shown that on average, population forecasts for our region have erred by a scant 0.4 percent per year. For example, 10 years into the future, we would expect the forecasted population to be off by only ± 4 percent. Our most recent forecast (accepted by the Board in 2003) for the year 2005 differs by less than ½ percent from the official population estimate prepared by the State Department of Finance.

**The Forecast’s Role in the Planning Process**

It has been apparent since the mid-1990s that our local land use plans and policies, in aggregate, cannot support the long-range economic and population growth anticipated for the region. In part, this is because the local plans typically have a shorter horizon year than the forecast does. They are intended to guide development over a certain period and then be updated to reflect changing conditions.

Following the approach identified in the RCP, this forecast update is based on the general and community plans as they stand today. This forecast is not a prescription for the future, it simply portrays the likely outcomes if we continue operating under our current plans and policies. The RCP sets forth a planning and policy framework and implementation strategies for addressing issues related to future growth.

The RCP’s collaborative planning approach builds up from the local level into a regional framework to establish stronger connections between transportation and land use and connect local and regional plans. This collaborative approach is an iterative process as shown in Figure 1. There are strong ties between the jurisdictions’ general and community plans, the regional growth forecast, and our major regional plans. Updates to local plans and policies will feed into the Regional Growth Forecast, the RTP, and the RCP, which in turn will affect the other plans as they, themselves, are updated. The RCP is intended to provide guidance for future plan changes. Basing our forecasts on existing plans and policies provides us with an important tool to help monitor the RCP’s progress in maintaining and improving the region’s quality of life.

**Why We Grow**

Population change results from two sources: natural increase (births minus deaths) and net migration (people moving into an area minus those who move out). Generally, natural increase is more stable than net migration, while net migration is much more sensitive to economic conditions.

The source of the region’s growth has shifted significantly over the last three decades as shown in Figure 2. During the 1970s and 1980s, the majority of the region’s growth was due to net migration...
influenced by significant economic expansion and labor force growth. Since 1990, natural increase has become the major source of the region’s growth. Over the decade of the 1990s, virtually all of the region’s growth arose from natural increase due in part to the severe recession in the early 1990s. Over the last 10 years net migration has rebounded and accounted for 42 percent of the region’s growth. While net migration remains positive to the year 2030, its share of our growth declines slightly over the next 25 years. Net migration is expected to account for approximately 40 percent of the region’s future growth.

![Figure 2]
The Majority of the Region’s Future Growth Will Be from Natural Increase

Regional Forecast Results

We expect the region to grow by almost one million people by 2030. Table 1 shows that between 2005 and 2030 the region also adds 285,700 new homes and 456,200 new jobs. Our population and employment grow by roughly the same percent, while housing growth is at a slower pace, reflecting the relative lack of residential opportunities in current plans.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1</th>
<th>Regional Forecast Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total population</td>
<td>3,051,280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population 65 years or older</td>
<td>332,643</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing units</td>
<td>1,108,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persons per household</td>
<td>2.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacancy rate</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total employment</td>
<td>1,382,671</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per capita income ($2000)</td>
<td>$32,645</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
By 2030, the region is expected to be home to just over four million people. This forecast is somewhat higher 145,000 (3.8 percent) than our previous population forecast. The higher population in this forecast is a result of more regional employment (6 percent higher than the previous forecast). The higher employment forecast follows from a more robust national forecast.

While the region adds a sizable number of people over the next 25 years, the rate of growth is slowing. By the last five years of the forecasted period, annual population growth is less than 1 percent per year with the growth rate of the region approximating that of the nation as indicated in Figure 3. The slowing regional growth is due to an anticipated decline in birth rates and an aging population. The aging of the population dampens the growth in labor force and migration.

![Figure 3](image)

The Region's Growth Rate Slows in the Future

Other notable forecast results include:

- **Interregional and binational commuting increase significantly.** In this forecast, 88,000 households are “exported” to Riverside and Imperial Counties and Baja California. People will seek lower cost housing elsewhere but will continue to work within the region. This level of external commuting represents 24 percent of all housing demand associated with the region’s future job growth and associated demographic shifts. However, it is lower than the interregional number of 93,000 households in the last forecast. This indicates that the region is moving in a direction consistent with the RCP and reflects recent plan changes such as those in the western area of Chula Vista and downtown San Diego.

- **More housing will be built through redevelopment than ever before.** Regionally, 62 percent of the new housing units are forecasted to be built on vacant land, while 38 percent will be built on redeveloped land. In the previous forecast, only 25 percent of new housing was sited in redevelopment areas that were identified in current plans. This shift of residential development from vacant to redevelopment areas also is consistent with the RCP.

- **There is an imbalance in current plans between areas identified for future residential and employment growth.** Over the forecast, the region fully develops all of its residential capacity. In 2030, however, there is still enough land designated for employment (17,000 acres) to locate over 228,000 jobs.
• **There will be a significant aging of the population.** Over the next 25 years, the population 65 years and older grows by 123 percent, which is almost four times faster than the overall population. The aging of our population has widespread implications including the fiscal health of social security, pension plans, and Medicare; the provision of transportation and other public services; and the anticipated rise of public safety concerns such as elder abuse.

• Household size (the number of persons per household) rises by about 6 percent between 2005 and 2030 from 2.77 to 2.94. This slight increase accounts for 93,000 additional residents living in the region.

**Next Steps**

The following are key next steps in the process to complete the 2030 Regional Growth Forecast and forecast alternatives for use in the preparation of the comprehensive 2007 RTP update:

• Board is asked to accept (1) the Smart Growth Concept Map and (2) the 2030 Regional Growth Forecast Update (Existing Policies) for use in the comprehensive 2007 RTP and other planning studies (June/July 2006)

• Staff develops a forecast alternative based on the Smart Growth Concept Map (September 2006)

• Board discusses the Smart Growth and Existing Policies Forecast Alternatives (October/November 2006)

GARY L. GALLEGOS
Executive Director

Key Staff Contact: Edward Schafer, (619) 699-1967, esc@sandag.org
SMART GROWTH CONCEPT MAP: PUBLIC OUTREACH RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO SANDAG POLICY COMMITTEES

Introduction

On July 23, 2004, the SANDAG Board of Directors adopted the Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP) for the San Diego region. The RCP provides an overall vision and policy framework for better connecting transportation and land use within our region.

One of the RCP’s early actions is the development of a Smart Growth Concept Map illustrating the location of existing, planned, and potential smart growth areas, and placing a higher priority on directing transportation facility improvements and other resources toward those areas.

Over the past year and a half, SANDAG staff has been working with the Technical Working Group (TWG), the Stakeholders Working Group (SWG), and the Regional Planning Committee to develop the draft Smart Growth Concept Map. The map identifies approximately 200 smart growth areas in the San Diego region, based upon land use and transportation targets included in the RCP.

Public Outreach

Last month, SANDAG held eight workshops around the region on the draft Smart Growth Concept Map and the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). In addition, SANDAG made presentations to local city councils and received correspondence via mail and email regarding the map. This report summarizes the input resulting from the workshops, presentations, and correspondence, and lists suggested changes to the Smart Growth Concept Map for consideration by local jurisdictions based upon the collective input.

Recommendation

The TWG is asked to (a) review and comment on the results of the public outreach process; (b) make recommendations on any additions, changes, or deletions to the Smart Growth Concept Map; and (c) recommend to SANDAG’s Regional Planning and Transportation Committees that the SANDAG Board of Directors accept the Smart Growth Concept Map for planning purposes for the 2007 RTP update.

As depicted in Figure 1, the SWG also will be asked to review the results of the public outreach process and make a recommendation to the policy committees. At a joint meeting in early June, the Regional Planning and Transportation Committees will be asked to review the TWG’s and SWG’s recommendations and recommend that the SANDAG Board accept the map for planning purposes.
for use in the 2007 RTP at its June 23, 2006, meeting. Final action on the map would take place at the time of adoption of the 2007 RTP.

**Figure 1:**
Process to Accept the Smart Growth Concept Map for Planning Purposes

Discussion

Background

The RCP recognizes that smart growth is not a "one-size-fits-all" proposition in the San Diego region, and defines seven categories of smart growth place types, ranging from Metropolitan Center to Rural Village. In addition, the RCP recommends that smart growth development be planned near existing and future transit stations identified in the adopted RTP, as well as other appropriate locations, such as rural community village cores that can provide a focal point for commercial and civic uses that serve surrounding rural areas.

To date, local jurisdictions have identified approximately 200 smart growth areas in the San Diego region. The map will be used in relation to two key SANDAG initiatives: the comprehensive 2007 RTP update, and determining eligibility to participate in the long-term Smart Growth Incentive Program (SGIP) funded by TransNet.

About 40 percent of the areas identified by jurisdictions qualify as existing or planned smart growth areas. These areas either contain existing smart growth development or allow planned smart growth in accordance with RCP land use targets, and are accompanied by existing or planned transit services included in MOBILITY 2030, the current RTP. The remaining 60 percent represent potential smart growth areas, where smart growth development could occur if local plans are changed and/or if the RTP is modified to provide adequate levels of transit service. The map includes smart growth opportunities in every jurisdiction within the region.
Overview of Workshops and Summary of Major Outcomes

Workshops on the Draft Smart Growth Concept Map and the RTP were held in April 2006. The objectives of the workshops were threefold: (1) to generate greater awareness of smart growth and transportation links; (2) to update the public on the implementation of the RCP and on the RTP Update; and (3) to obtain public input on the draft Smart Growth Concept Map, transportation planning priorities, and urban design factors that promote smart growth.

Workshop Activities

The workshops consisted of four main activities: a background presentation providing an overview of major SANDAG initiatives; a community image survey intended to generate discussion about land use and urban design issues; facilitated break-out sessions focused on the resources necessary to make smart growth and transit work; and a dot exercise where participants could prioritize resources.

An additional activity was the Marketplace of Ideas, an informal gathering area where SANDAG, local jurisdictions, and Caltrans provided materials highlighting local and regional projects, including the draft Smart Growth Concept Map and various transportation maps. Because of the strong emphasis on land use and transportation, local elected officials, local planning staffs, Caltrans, and transit agency staff members were involved in the workshops and were available for discussion at the Marketplace of Ideas. The workshops were facilitated by Sam Gennawey of EDAW, a consultant to SANDAG on this project.

Attendance and Participation

A number of activities were undertaken to promote attendance and participation at the workshops, including the mailing of post card invitations to SANDAG and Caltrans mailing lists; email invitations to groups throughout the region, including SANDAG working groups, local economic development corporations, and interested planning groups and organizations; advertisements in various local and community based newspapers; press releases; presentations to local city councils prior to the workshops; editorials by several local-elected officials; and the forwarding of email invitations by the TWG, SWG, and other groups and individuals to interested parties.

In general, while participation varied by location, the workshops were well attended, with the highest attendance at the Oceanside, Escondido, and Balboa Park workshops. Sign-in sheets indicate that almost 400 residents attended the eight workshops, averaging 45-50 attendees per workshop. Spanish-speaking staff members and translated materials were available at all of the workshops. In addition, simultaneous translation services in Spanish were available at three of the eight workshops.

Major Outcomes

The following sections provide a summary of the issues heard most frequently at the workshops. In addition, the more detailed summaries for each workshop will be available at the meeting and will be posted onto the SANDAG Web site at www.sandag.org/rcp within the next several weeks.
Summary of Break-out Sessions and Marketplace of Ideas

In general, workshop participants expressed a variety of opinions on growth, smart growth, transportation, public transit, infrastructure, housing, natural resources, and the planning process. Some areas seemed to be more accepting of smart growth, and focused much of their discussions on what it would take to either enhance the existing smart growth and transit in their communities or to make new smart growth work in their neighborhoods. Generally, these areas included South County, East County, and parts of Central San Diego and North County Inland. Other areas expressed more uncertainty about smart growth and, in some cases, advocated for the removal of smart growth areas from the Smart Growth map. These areas generally included North County coastal and parts of Central San Diego. The following summarizes comments broken out by issue area, and in some cases, by geographic location.

\section*{Transit/transportation/traffic:} Of all of the topics discussed at the workshops, public transit, transportation, and traffic issues received the highest number of comments. Many of the comments focused on the need for more frequent transit service, faster transit service with reasonably-competitive travel times, more dependable schedules, more affordable fares, and the need to spend more money on transit services and operations. A key point was that, if smart growth equals transit, then transit needs to be fast and accessible. Some participants pointed out that seniors and the handicapped need greater access and that better service is needed to key destinations.

Participants in virtually all areas where workshops were held wanted more transit service - with specific listings for the beach communities, the rural areas, North County, Riverside County (Temecula/Murrieta), San Ysidro, El Cajon, and Central San Diego. Participants felt that there is insufficient transit service in existing high-density areas, that public transit service should be more “customer-friendly” (with better timed transfers, more convenient information about how to use transit, a more pleasant walking environment to the stations, and more safety at the stations and on the buses), and that more late-night service is needed. In addition, participants suggested the use of additional shuttles and smaller jitney services in neighborhoods as ways of connecting to the main trunk lines.

Participants also made specific comments on Coaster, Sprinter, and Trolley services, suggesting that the Coaster should connect to the airport and to the international border with Mexico, that Coaster service should be increased and should operate later into the evenings and on weekends, and that the Coaster should be less expensive. Regarding the Sprinter, some participants questioned whether Sprinter stations should serve as smart growth sites and expressed concern over traffic at the Sprinter intersections. Regarding the trolley, some participants suggested that the trolley should skip stops at some stations to go faster, that trolley service should be expanded north and west, and that the trolley should go back to urban neighborhoods.

Participants also suggested alternative forms of transportation, including people-movers (moving sidewalks), scooters such as Segways, sea-taxis, smaller cars, “smart” cars, high speed rail to inland areas, BRT for the I-5, and greater use of mopeds and motorized bikes.

\section*{Infrastructure:} Infrastructure was another highly discussed topic at the workshops. Participants expressed the need for additional infrastructure and amenities to support growth (especially smart growth), including more roadway and transit facilities, recreation centers, schools, libraries, public spaces, services at key transportation hubs, sewers, streets, sidewalks, shops and
restaurants, scenic trails and paths, electrical transmission, and waste disposal. Concerns also were expressed about limited water supply. In addition, varying opinions were expressed about how infrastructure should be financed. Some felt that growth should pay for infrastructure, while others stated that we can't require new projects to bear the entire cost of infrastructure needs. Some felt that we need to identify funding sources to build infrastructure, and that infrastructure should be put in place before growth. Some felt that local communities are already carrying unfunded infrastructure deficits. Participants also expressed concern that, while infill development is good, it can overwhelm the utility infrastructure (water, roads, schools, parks).

- **Parking**: Parking was also a topic that received considerable attention, with a variety of opinions expressed, ranging from the need for additional parking at local transit stations to the need for reduced parking requirements at transit stations. Some participants expressed support for free parking, while others felt that the region should shift toward paid parking. Some participants wanted more Park-n-Ride lots throughout the region, more parking spaces at Park-n-Ride lots, especially in North County and for lots that help rural areas to connect to urban areas, more security at transit parking stations and Park-n-Ride lots, larger parking spaces for larger vehicles, more handicapped parking spaces, greater use of parking garages, and better enforcement of parking codes.

- **Density, growth, and smart growth**: Residents expressed a variety of opinions regarding density and growth. While some participants questioned the accuracy of the region's forecasts and the region's "holding capacity," others felt that growth was inevitable. Some participants felt that the region needs to concentrate growth in key areas and use our land more efficiently. Others felt that we need to limit densities and evaluate the impacts of density on our quality of life. Some felt that density is being disproportionately added in less affluent communities, and that we need to encourage additional densities in suburbs, not just the inner cities. Some felt that it would be acceptable to increase densities in coastal areas, as long as ocean views were preserved. Some recognized that higher densities would make our transit systems work better and that limits on density restrict the use of transit. Some felt that adding density doesn't stop sprawl. The following areas were cited as good examples of density: London, Chicago, Boston, Washington D.C., Santa Barbara, Scottsdale, and North Park and Normal Heights.

- **Urban design**: Many recognized the interface between density and design, indicating that density needs to relate to the character of the community and that it needs to be aesthetically appealing. Desire was expressed for good landscaping, nice front entrances, reduced asphalt parking in front of stores, better soundproofing in denser areas, and careful design. A suggestion was made to use planning tools that illustrate the impacts of development on communities over time. Participants also discussed the need for community safety, street lights, more gathering places, wider sidewalks, greater walkability, medians to slow down traffic, pedestrian crossings, grade separation for transit projects, and bike trails. In addition, many expressed the need for better design and information kiosks at transit stations.

- **Affordable housing**: There is a need for more affordable housing in the San Diego region, especially for seniors, the disabled, and "average Joes." There was recognition that the housing that is far away from employment centers is the less expensive housing. There was support for removing obstacles to the production of more affordable housing. There was also concern that mixed use development and redevelopment could result in unaffordable housing. A suggestion was made to set aside a percentage of mixed use development as low-income housing.
Housing and transit near jobs: Many participants expressed the need to better link employment centers, housing, and public transportation; to provide transit services more directly to job centers; and to provide more jobs where people live. Jobs/housing balance comments were prominent at the San Ysidro and Oceanside workshops in particular, where many residents felt that more jobs are needed in Otay Mesa and in Oceanside. Additionally, interregional commutes were raised, with suggestions for additional transit service between North County and Riverside County. One participant suggested “commuter amnesty,” where employers could forgive lateness by employees when using transit.

Natural Resources: Participants encouraged the preservation of natural and cultural resources, and the use of less land to preserve the environment. One participant stated that the region needs to preserve more habitat above and beyond the MSCP, the MHCP, and the TransNet funding. Another suggested trading the guarantee of open space in some areas for density in others.

Planning Process: There seemed to be confusion on the planning process related to the Smart Growth Concept Map and SANDAG’s role in the planning process. One participant stated that communities must have a key say in whether they accept smart growth, and that smart growth cannot be imposed. Several participants in the Central subregion expressed concern about growth and additional development in their community planning areas, referencing the work that has already been done through the City of San Diego’s general plan update process. Several participants questioned whether political support for infill and infrastructure improvements exists.

Summary of Prioritization Exercise

In addition to the discussion generated at the break-out sessions and the Marketplace of Ideas, participants also prioritized issues and topics in a “blue-dot” exercise (described above). The following provides a summary of the topics that received the most votes by workshop.

Escondido Workshop:
- Developers need to follow through on plans (18)
- Look at how to mix uses - live/work (17)
- Transit needs to be where it serves a greater need (17)
- Quick, safe transit service (16)
- Need funding for infrastructure from developers, not residents (15)
- Start bus in Temecula, go downtown (15)

Del Mar Workshop
- Development needs to be in scale with community character (28)
- Adequate station parking (21)
- Better connections (like LAX) (13)
- Need parking with density (12)
- Need to show long-term changes when projects are proposed (12)
- Need transit before density (12)
National City Workshop
- Need good mix of uses in close proximity (10)
- Transit needs to be reliable, on time (8)
- Balance of jobs and housing (6)
- Affordability has to be a part of smart growth (6)
- Orient land uses toward transit corridors (5)
- Need smaller schools in mixed use areas (5)

San Ysidro Workshop
- Need to accommodate existing businesses in new development (15)
- Mixed use, need jobs, new economies correct market development (13)
- Need jobs (living wage) to support increased density (12)
- Need enhancements – many smart growth elements exist today (11)
- More organized jitney service (10)
- Enhance station areas with restrooms (9)

Kearny Mesa Workshop
- Smart growth must come from the community – not government (20)
- Smart growth requires more public facilities and addressing existing deficits (16)
- Cities need to respect planning group input (14)
- Better transit system connectivity (14)
- Sustainability green building design (10)
- Think about what future transit technologies will be (9)

La Mesa Workshop
- Affordable housing burden should not be placed upon developers (22)
- More mixed use near transit (14)
- Network of trails (13)
- Need to remove obstacles to smart growth / higher density (12)
- Need political support for smart growth (10)
- Need transit before development (7)

Balboa Park Workshop
- Need to address infrastructure deficits (44)
- Improve political will for smart growth and density changes (36)
- No more free car parking (29)
- Safety and street lights for pedestrians – pedestrian enhancements (18)
- Transit needs to be frequent (15)
- More walking connections (crossings, pedestrian bridges) (12)

Oceanside Workshop
- Remove smart growth areas from SR-78 (38)
- Keep riparian natural (Quarry Creek) (36)
- Remove Rancho Del Rey as a smart growth area (28)
- Preserve habitat areas / natural resources (27)
• Weekend Coaster service (25)
• Shuttles to trains (22)
• Smart growth happens on borders – needs to be more spread out among communities throughout the subregion (20)

Comments from City Council Meetings and Related Venues

In addition to the workshops, SANDAG offered to make presentations to local city councils/Board of Supervisors on the Smart Growth Concept Map. As a result of this effort, SANDAG staff made presentations to almost all of the local jurisdictions, as well as the Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) and the North County Transit District (NCTD) Planning Committee.

In general, while most local city councils expressed support for the regional smart growth approach and for the specific smart growth areas identified in their jurisdictions, concerns also were expressed. Generally, the concerns focused on gentrification and housing affordability in smart growth areas; potential conflicts between proposed smart growth areas and existing habitat plans; increased traffic congestion in smart growth areas; inability to provide adequate transit services and frequencies to support the smart growth areas; the need for enhanced permanent funding for transit operations; and the need to continue working with local jurisdictions on the smart growth designations.

Comments on the Draft Smart Growth Concept Map

The current draft Smart Growth Concept Map contains almost 200 existing, planned, or potential smart growth locations identified by the local planning staffs from each jurisdiction and reviewed in most cases by local city councils. Through the workshops and through other venues, such as emails and correspondence, SANDAG received a number of comments on the locations identified on the draft map. Attachment 1 lists the comments received by jurisdiction.

Overall, most of the comments focused on smart growth areas in the cities of Carlsbad, Oceanside, and San Diego, with suggestions for both additions and deletions.

The TWG should review the comments for their locations, determine whether any additions, deletions, or changes should be made to the smart growth areas identified on the map in their jurisdictions or to the accompanying Site Descriptions, and verify the remaining accuracy of the map.

Because the map has been developed through a collaborative approach with the local planning staffs and because land use authority rests with the local jurisdictions, each jurisdiction will be responsible for determining whether areas remain on the map, are removed, or are modified. Local planning staffs are requested to communicate any changes to the map to SANDAG staff in writing on or before Friday, May 12, 2006.

The Draft Smart Growth Concept Map, the Draft Smart Growth Concept Map Site Descriptions, and other materials are currently posted on the SANDAG Web site at www.sandag.org/rcp and will be available at the May 11, 2006 meeting.
Next Steps

As described earlier in this report, the SANDAG Board will be asked to accept the Smart Growth Concept Map for use in planning purposes for the comprehensive 2007 RTP. The Concept Map will serve as a key input in developing the alternative land use and transportation scenarios for the RTP update and in determining eligibility to participate in the long-term Smart Growth Incentive Program (SGIP) funded by TransNet.

It is anticipated that the Smart Growth Concept Map will be updated once every two to three years, in conjunction with the issuance of the “call for projects” for the SGIP. The first SGIP funding cycle will be available in July 2008, based upon starting date of the TransNet Extension Ordinance.

During the next two years, SANDAG and its member agencies and stakeholder groups will begin to develop the SGIP program guidelines and criteria. During this timeframe, SANDAG also will initiate the preparation of a set of regional smart growth Urban Design Guidelines; complete the update of the comprehensive Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), including the development of updated transit networks; develop an action plan to implement key components of the RCP’s Integrated Regional Infrastructure Strategy (IRIS); initiate the update of the Regional Economic Prosperity Strategy (REPS); continue to implement key provisions related to the Environmental Mitigation Program (EMP); and work toward the development of a Quality of Life bond measure that would compliment the passage of the Transnet extension and help address infrastructure issues related to smart growth raised at the workshops.

The public input generated at the workshops and through the other outreach mechanisms described in this report will be used in these and other regional efforts at SANDAG.

Attachment 1: Draft Summary of Comments on the Draft Smart Growth Concept Map by Jurisdiction

Key Staff Contact: Carolina Gregor, (619) 699-1989; cgr@sandag.org
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jurisdiction</th>
<th>Comments on Smart Growth Areas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carlsbad</td>
<td>▪ Avoid areas of rich cultural resources – especially Quarry Creek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ No residential built west of Quarry Creek unless it exits through Carlsbad only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Quarry Creek good area for high density housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Quarry Creek – bus service drops off riders on College Boulevard not in the shopping center – bad for handicapped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Take Quarry Creek off list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Question Carlsbad mall site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Preserve area in Carlsbad is shown inaccurately. Land zoned residential is shown as “preserve”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Higher density in Carlsbad Village</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Remove Ponto station as smart growth area – due to lack of transit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Area around CB-1 smart growth area has no connectivity by walking or biking to surrounding residential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Must not impact on environmental corridor – Buena Vista and Loma Alta Creek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Look at jobs more than RCP – Palomar Airport Road and El Camino Real corridors must be on list.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Carlsbad and Vista need to take their smart growth off Oceanside borders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chula Vista</td>
<td>▪ No comments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coronado</td>
<td>▪ No comments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Del Mar</td>
<td>▪ No comments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Cajon</td>
<td>▪ No comments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encinitas</td>
<td>▪ No comments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Escondido</td>
<td>▪ No comments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperial Beach</td>
<td>▪ No comments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Mesa</td>
<td>▪ El Cajon Boulevard in La Mesa is an existing smart growth corridor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ La Mesa Boulevard in La Mesa is an existing smart growth corridor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lemon Grove</td>
<td>▪ No comments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National City</td>
<td>▪ No comments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jurisdiction</td>
<td>Comments on Smart Growth Areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Oceanside** | • The high density concentration on Oceanside Boulevard is out of line  
• Too many smart growth areas on Oceanside Boulevard  
• Too many transit centers on Oceanside Boulevard. Eliminate station at Crouch/Canyon  
• Crouch Street station area will not accommodate traffic or density  
• Concentrate on Coast Highway in Oceanside for smart growth  
• Remove smart growth areas from SR-78  
• Remove Rancho del Rey as a smart growth area  
• Smart growth in Carlsbad and Vista could create congestion in Oceanside |
| **Poway** | • Potential Special Use Center at Pomerado Rd. and Bernardo Heights has potential but is not likely to redevelop soon. |
| **San Diego** | • Need more smart growth along east trolley line  
• Market Street, Commercial Avenue, and Imperial Avenue should be smart growth potential areas  
• 62nd and Imperial should be a smart growth area  
• Rethink the North / South connection along Fairmount and 47th Street between the communities of City Heights and Diamond. Your plan has artificially divided two traditionally connected communities. Please review the current and proposed number 13 bus routes. Also please review the locations of Military Housing, trolley stops, regional recreation facilities and the locations of the two Community Colleges on the Fairmount / 47th spine.  
• No mixed use or high density residential on Mission Boulevard in Pacific Beach. Need special protection for single family homes adjacent to high density mixed use (e.g., corner of Mission Boulevard and Pacific Beach Drive).  
• Rancho Bernardo should be on the map as a potential Smart Growth Area  
• The Bird Rock area which received a SANDAG grant, should be designated as a community center on the map  
• Single family neighborhood – no room for five community centers (refers to Clairemont Mesa area on map)  
• Mid-city transit plazas need to be on the map  
• Why is there not in place in Carmel Valley? Lots of open space - still building  
• Add a smart growth area around Carmel Mountain Rd—a current activity center for the area—and move the I-15 BRT transit station Ted Williams Pkwy to the area.  
• Carmel Mountain site more likely to develop as a smart growth area than site at Bernardo Heights Pkwy and Pomerado Rd. |
<p>| <strong>San Marcos</strong> | • No comments. |
| <strong>Santee</strong> | • No comments. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jurisdiction</th>
<th>Comments on Smart Growth Areas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Solana Beach</td>
<td>- Concerns raised regarding development at the Solana Beach Coaster station – no additional density should be allowed; urban design features are important in this beach area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vista</td>
<td>Carlsbad and Vista need to take their smart growth off Oceanside borders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Diego County</td>
<td>- Remove the Ramona Rural Village smart growth area from the map (requested by the Ramona Community Planning Group)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- The potential transit to Ramona (rural) should be dropped. Other rural villages are not getting this level of transit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Put smart growth in Fallbrook and other communities.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction

SANDAG has identified a list of issue papers to be developed for the 2007 Comprehensive Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). For each of these issue areas, staff is preparing a paper to stimulate discussion and gather input from SANDAG’s policy committees and working groups.

Attached is the issue paper for the Environmental Mitigation Program (EMP), which is listed under the category of Land Use/Transportation Connection. Since the passage of the TransNet Extension Ordinance and Expenditure Plan, staff has been working to implement the components laid out as part of the EMP. This issue paper provides background information on the EMP and how it relates to the RTP.

Background

The issue papers address several of the specific issue areas that have been identified as requiring focused analysis and discussion during the preparation of the RTP.

Two efforts have begun that are independent of the RTP, but whose results will be incorporated into the RTP and for which issue papers are being prepared. The first is the Independent Transit Planning Review, which was conducted in late 2005 and early 2006. This review is a follow-up action to the TransNet extension that was approved in November 2004, and the results of this review will affect the transit network and service assumptions in the RTP. The second effort is the EMP, which also is a result of the extension of TransNet. As work begins to set up habitat mitigation banks related to the development of transportation projects and identified funding, SANDAG staff will work closely together to ensure that the work being done to implement the EMP is coordinated with the development of the RTP.

Several other topics are routinely updated along with any RTP, but have a new focus with the adoption of the Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP) in 2004. They include land use forecasts, which will include the Smart Growth Concept Map currently under development, a review of the Transportation Project Evaluation Criteria, and an update of the Regional Arterial System. The preparation of a Regional Freight Strategy also was identified in the RCP as a priority action for the RTP.
Eight other issue papers will cover new topics or will report on results of recent studies. The five issues that were identified initially include Cross-Border Travel, Interregional Travel, Energy Demand and Infrastructure, Tribal Development Issues, and Public Safety/Homeland Security. Three more topics that were recently added to the listing of issue papers include Ground Access to the Regional Airport, Toll Facilities, and Network Improvements using HOV/Managed Lanes or General Purpose Lanes.

Attachment: Environmental Mitigation Program Issue Paper for the 2007 Regional Transportation Plan

Key Staff Contact: Shelby Tucker, (619) 699-1916, stu@sandag.org
Environment Mitigation Program Issue Paper for the 2007 Regional Transportation Plan
Draft: 3/15/06

Introduction

In 1987, voters approved the TransNet program — a half-cent sales tax to fund a variety of transportation projects throughout the San Diego region. This 20-year, $3.3 billion transportation improvement program expires in 2008. In November 2004, 67 percent of the region’s voters supported the extension of TransNet to 2048 - thereby generating an additional $14 billion for highway, transit, and local road projects and other transportation improvements.

A unique component of the TransNet Extension Ordinance and Expenditure Plan (TransNet Extension) is the creation of an environmental mitigation program (EMP), which goes beyond traditional mitigation for regional and local transportation projects. While the EMP includes an allocation for the estimated direct costs for mitigation of upland and wetland habitat impacts for regional and local transportation projects, it also includes additional funding for habitat acquisition, management, and monitoring activities. The EMP will help implement the Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) and the Multiple Habitat Conservation Program (MHCP).

The TransNet Extension identifies $850 million to be used for the EMP. The EMP principles state that two funds shall be established. The first one, the “Transportation Project Mitigation Fund,” (TPMF) covers direct mitigation costs for regional and local transportation projects estimated to be $650 million ($450 million for regional projects, $200 million for local projects). These funds will be used for the mitigation needs of the major transportation infrastructure improvement projects and programs identified in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), known as MOBILITY 2030.

The second fund, the “Regional Habitat Conservation Fund,” (RHCF) will be approximately $200 million. These funds will be made available for regional habitat acquisition, management, and monitoring activities necessary to implement the MSCP and the MHCP, if certain requirements related to transportation project mitigation are met.

Objectives for 2007 Comprehensive RTP

The objective for the 2007 Comprehensive RTP is to obtain permits for specified projects through the process outlined in the EMP. The EMP provides an alternative approach to project by project mitigation requirements. A more comprehensive approach is to consolidate as much as possible transportation mitigation requirements thus expediting permit processes while at the same time implementing the MHCP and MSCP.

Background

The intent of the EMP is to provide a fund for acquisition and management of habitat lands identified in the region’s habitat conservation plans and to create a reliable approach for funding required mitigation for transportation improvements thereby reducing future costs and accelerating project delivery.

The projects identified in the RTP have been evaluated in a preliminary manner to estimate the potential impacts associated with implementation of each project and the potential cost of mitigating these impacts. The total estimated mitigation cost for all RTP regional projects has been identified by project, and totals approximately $450 million. The total estimated mitigation cost for
all local projects is approximately $200 million. This total amount of $650 million allocated to cover full mitigation for all RTP projects makes up the TPMF.

SANDAG, through a partnership with Caltrans, will mitigate impacts of all regional and local transportation projects. The regional transportation projects are identified in the RTP. Local jurisdictions will identify their mitigation needs and through the use of funds from the TPMF, one of the options laid out below will be utilized to meet those mitigation needs.

- Establish a mitigation/conservation bank
- Purchase appropriate credits in an existing bank
- Perform restoration or habitat creation activities at a new or existing bank
- Purchase land for preservation outside of a formal bank

Funds in the RHCF are estimated based on the economic benefit derived from establishing fixed mitigation requirements for transportation projects early in the planning process, and purchasing land with the TPMF. Principle number 4 of the TransNet Extension EMP principles states that, “The EMP shall include a funding allocation for the estimated economic benefit of incorporating specified regional and local transportation projects into applicable habitat conservation plans, thereby allowing mitigation requirements for covered species to be fixed, and allowing mitigation requirements to be met through purchase of land in advance of need in larger blocks at a lower cost.” By predetermined mitigation ratios and purchasing land for mitigation in advance of actually needing it later in the planning process, the economic benefit is created from the cost savings.

The RHCF is estimated to be approximately $200 million. The accrual of economic benefit monies is tied to the completion of regional projects. Milestones within each project have been established and once a milestone has been met, a proportion of the economic benefit money associated with that project (both the local and regional share) will be released into the RHCF. The milestones are as follows:

- Establishing and fixing project mitigation ratios
- Approval of mitigation methods (utilizing one of the options laid out above)
- Receiving permits

The RHCF monies will be allocated for regional habitat acquisition, management, and monitoring activities necessary to implement the MSCP and MHCP. The first allocation of RHCF funds is currently underway. The current allocation is being distributed through a competitive process and future funds could be allocated in a similar manner or through another process.

**Current Conditions**

SANDAG is preparing a Master Agreement (Agreement) among the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, California Department of Fish and Game, and California Department of Transportation. The Agreement identifies a process for allowing mitigation, through one of the methods outlined above, to help reduce project mitigation costs and expedite processing for environmental documents and permits for local and regional transportation projects.

Over the course of the 30-year buildout of various RTP projects and 40-year generation of TransNet revenue, individual projects will be proceeding at various times. SANDAG will work with Caltrans and local jurisdictions to determine the best means available to mitigate local and regional transportation projects.
Identification of Challenges Associated with the EMP

There are several challenges associated with implementing the EMP. The first is addressing changes that are made to the list of RTP regional projects. As mentioned above, the estimated allocation of funds from the TPMF and RHCF has been identified for each RTP regional project. Since this list is tied to MOBILITY 2030, which was the current RTP at the time of the passage of the TransNet Extension ordinance, how to address changes that would be made to the list by subsequent RTPs, such as the 2007 Comprehensive RTP, needs to be decided.

The second challenge associated with the EMP is the uniqueness of this type of program. This is a new way of addressing project mitigation and requires collaboration among many parties. The Agreement is the first step in laying out the processes for implementing the EMP. However, once the process has been established, applying it to specific projects is the next challenge. Every project identified in the RTP will have its own mitigation requirements and the methods chosen to meet each of the milestones laid out in the Agreement will be specific to that project. This becomes an even greater challenge when dealing with the “Early Action Program” because satisfying the mitigation requirements for these priority projects will be addressed comprehensively rather than on a project-by-project basis in order to maximize early land acquisition opportunities allowing for the creation of the economic benefit. Although the TransNet Extension does not begin until April 2008, work on the “Early Action Program” has begun and is the first set of projects used to implement the EMP process outlined in the Agreement.

Another challenge will be how to distribute the funds available in the RHCF. In 2005, SANDAG created the Environmental Mitigation Program Working Group (EMPWG) to advise the Regional Planning Committee and the SANDAG Board on issues related to the coordination and implementation of the EMP. The EMPWG is responsible for making recommendations on the allocation of the RHCF and provided guidance for the first allocation mentioned above. The EMPWG prepared a “needs assessment” identifying the short-term and long-term activities necessary to implement the MSCP and MHCP, such as biological monitoring, land management coordination, and supplemental land acquisitions. Additionally, the EMPWG will assist in identifying specific organizations to perform the monitoring, management, and acquisition activities identified in the needs assessment. Based on this analysis, the EMPWG will develop criteria and recommend priorities for allocation of RHCF funds.

Conclusions/Recommendations/Follow-up

The goals of the EMP are identified below. In order to achieve these goals, the relationship between the EMP and the RTP needs to be included in the 2007 Comprehensive RTP.

- Expedite the permitting process of transportation projects
- Mitigate comprehensively instead of project by project
- Purchase land in advance of need to maximize cost efficiency
- Implement the MSCP and MHCP

Over the next several weeks, staff will be finalizing the Agreement and will work to implement the next phase of the EMP, which includes work on projects in the “Early Action Program.” The Agreement will resolve many of the issues presented above but as we move forward with this project we anticipate needing to address any additional issues that arise. Since the EMP was part of the TransNet Extension, work will continue over the life of the ordinance, beyond the adoption of the 2007 Comprehensive RTP through 2048.