TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE DISCUSSION AND ACTIONS
MEETING OF JULY 20, 2007

The meeting of the Transportation Committee was called to order by Chair Jim Madaffer (City of San Diego) at 9:09 a.m. See the attached attendance sheet for Transportation Committee member attendance.

Chair Madaffer noted that Item No. 3 has been pulled from Consent and will be presented as a report, so there will not be a consent calendar.

1. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Action: Upon a motion by Deputy Mayor Dave Druker (North County Coastal) and a second by Councilmember Bob Emery (Metropolitan Transit System [MTS]), the Transportation Committee approved the minutes from the June 15, 2007, meeting.

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS/MEMBER COMMENTS

Mayor Jim Desmond (San Marcos) said that on behalf of the San Diego County Regional Airport Authority (Authority), and after meetings at the Transportation Committee, MTS, and the Authority's July Board meeting, the Authority’s Executive Committee has come forward with a proposed resolution at its September meeting to direct staff to develop options for commercial, cargo, and general aviation to optimize all operations at the airport. In addition staff was directed to work with the City of San Diego, Port District, County of San Diego, SANDAG, MTS, and Caltrans to develop a framework for a multimodal transit center at the north side of the airport for greater and more balanced access to the airport.

Chair Madaffer stated his appreciation for this positive energy coming from the Authority. He hoped that we can make the necessary amendments to the RTP to include the work that Mayor Desmond mentioned.

Pedro Orso-Delgado, Caltrans District 11 Director, commented that about a month ago we held an opening of the extension of the State Route (SR) 52 auxiliary lane. Today, we opened the additional extension just before Santo Road. Another piece of news is that we opened bids on the Loma Santa Fe project and received good bids. It looks like we will be $6 million under the engineer’s estimate, and will save between 100-200 working days on the project. We are moving forward to break ground on that project around September.
Councilmember Phil Monroe (South County) announced that the Navy has opened the Third Street gate at North Island. We still have to take the dip out of the road in order to use the low-floor buses. The base is working to try and bring bus service into North Island.

Councilmember Monroe reminded Committee members that he represents the Committee on the Full Access and Coordination Transportation (FACT) Board. He mentioned that there is some new federal money that is going to be made available, and FACT will be competing for that money. He added that Bob Leiter and staff will be making a presentation to FACT about this federal funding program.

Chair Madaffer introduced an intern for his office this summer, Drew Spence, who is a junior at Patrick Henry High School.

**REPORTS (3)**

3. **2006 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM: AMENDMENT NO. 6 (APPROVE)**

Sookyung Kim, Financial Programming Manager, reported that at its meeting on August 4, 2006, the SANDAG Board adopted the 2006 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP), and the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration approved the 2006 RTIP on October 4, 2006. The RTIP is the five-year program of major transportation projects in the San Diego region covering the period from FY 2007 to FY 2011. SANDAG processes amendments to the RTIP based on requests from member agencies on a quarterly basis. Ms. Kim said that most of the changes are routine in nature, but she highlighted a few significant changes.

Chair Madaffer asked if there will be a schedule on project No. 26 related to SR 52 as far as the delay on the high-occupancy-vehicle/Managed Lanes (HOV/ML) project. Jack Boda, Director of Mobility Management and Project Implementation (MMPI), said that in the fall we will assess all of the improvements as part of the Plan of Finance to determine the impact of moving this plan forward. The project schedules will be part of that review.

**Action:** Upon a motion by Councilmember Emery (MTS) and a second by Mayor Desmond, the Transportation Committee adopted Resolution No. 2008-01, approving Amendment No. 6 to the 2006 RTIP.

**CHAIR’S REPORT (4)**

4. **STATE ROUTE 905 STATUS UPDATE (INFORMATION)**

Mr. Orso-Delgado stated that a couple of weeks ago one of the biggest issues with this project was the lack of building material. We needed over 700 cubic meters of material. We have worked hard and got a deal where we will sign an agreement with one of the property owners to procure 1.3 million cubic meters of material at no cost to us. In exchange, we will move and grade his parcel. We have incorporated that into the project.
plans. We were able to settle on one of the property parcels, and the settlement agreement resulted in a savings of anticipated costs. The condemnation trials are moving forward. We have one that we will be closing next week, and there will be four more; two in September, one in October, and one in November. There will be two more condemnation cases early next year. We had an expert witness validate our original appraisal amount for parcels that will be heard in October.

Sandor Shapery (Regional Planning Stakeholders Working Group) wondered if there was a cost savings on the 1.3 million cubic meters of dirt. Mr. Orso-Delgado replied that the potential additional cost to the project for this material was tagged at $7 million.

Chair Madaffer commented that he couldn’t be happier with the progress being made by Caltrans on this project.

REPORTS (5 through 8)

5. PILOT SMART GROWTH INCENTIVE PROGRAM PROJECT SCHEDULE EXTENSION REQUESTS (APPROVE)

Stephan Vance, Senior Planner, reported that $22.5 million of Pilot Smart Growth Incentive Program projects are funded through the federal Transportation Enhancements program. Caltrans administers the Transportation Enhancement program for the federal government. The Transportation Committee adopted a “use it or lose it” funding policy in 2002 for these projects. Under this policy, SANDAG staff monitors schedule compliance through a quarterly reporting system. The policy requires that projects meet milestone dates or request a schedule extension. All approved projects were required to invest time to go through the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. Most projects have experienced some delays due to this process. Seven projects are projecting 6-12 month schedule delays. Attachment 2 lists the projects along with an explanation of the projected delays. SANDAG staff is working with the various agencies to make sure they understand the process and document the need for any delays.

Mr. Vance noted that one project, the University Avenue Mobility Project, will require an extension that exceeds one year. The City of San Diego originally thought this project would be categorically exempt under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), but now it will need to complete an Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Approval of a delay of this length would require additional documentation. We will work with city staff to bring this item back as a future separate item.

Councilmember Monroe asked for clarification regarding the categorical exemption for the University Avenue Mobility Project. Mr. Vance said that this is a complicated project. Along with enhancements there are bus treatments with potential traffic impacts. That is what triggered the EIR. Our part, the streetscape, is exempt.

Councilmember Monroe asked who is working on the bus portion. Mr. Vance responded that the City is doing the street improvements related to bus service. There will be a bus-only lane in a section of the roadway.
Councilmember Monroe asked who made the decision that a full EIR is required. Mr. Vance answered that the city’s development review process resulted in that determination. He added that the City was not able to provide the additional documentation in time for this meeting.

Deputy Mayor Druker asked if, based on these changes, any project would now be ranked differently. Mr. Vance replied that it was hard to say. Project readiness was one of our criteria. If the delay was significant enough, that project may have lost a point or two, but it is not likely a project would have been removed from the funding list.

Deputy Mayor Druker asked if the status of the Palomar Gateway Community Transit Area project would have changed. Mr. Vance said that it could have made a change, but while the developer has decided not to go forward with the condominium development due to the density requirement, the Gateway project will continue forward.

Deputy Mayor Druker asked if there are any guarantees that the density will be met. Mr. Vance said that SANDAG has no control over the density issue. Bob Leiter, Director of Land Use and Transportation Planning (LU&TP), added that the City zoning and plan for that development project calls for those densities. This is considered in the existing smart growth area. The City has proposed the density for when the market will allow the project to move forward. We didn’t require any city to commit to a density.

**Action:** Upon a motion by Councilmember Monroe and a second by Councilmember Emery, the Transportation Committee approved schedule extensions for seven Pilot Smart Growth Incentive Program projects.

6. TransNet POLICY ON ACCOMMODATING BICYCLISTS AND PEDESTRIANS (RECOMMEND)

Mr. Vance stated that Section 4(E)(3) of the TransNet Extension Ordinance includes a provision that all projects funded under the Ordinance provide accommodations for pedestrians and bicyclists unless the accommodation is excessive. Over the past year, staff has been working with the Bicycle-Pedestrian Working Group (BPWG) and the Cities/County Transportation Advisory Committee (CTAC) to develop policy guidelines for the implementation of this provision. The 2003 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) states that SANDAG will develop guidelines to ensure all regionally funded transportation projects preserve or enhance nonmotorized access. This proposal will implement and provide guidance on this section of the Ordinance. The guidelines would be incorporated as Rule 20 of Board Policy No. 031: TransNet Ordinance and Expenditure Rules. The BPWK, CTAC, and Independent Taxpayers Oversight Committee (ITCO) have reviewed the guidelines and recommend adoption.

Mr. Vance said that we tried to use existing, agreed-upon, and best practices in the region in the development of these guidelines, and not to propose an undue burden. He reviewed the guidelines to be used as a baseline and the exemptions from accommodation. The guidelines will ensure public participation at the funding approval stage of project development. He reviewed the process for SANDAG approval.
Chair Madaffer noted that if this item is approved by the Committee, it will then go to the Executive Committee for concurrence, and then to the Board for final approval.

Mayor Art Madrid (East County) asked how other councils of governments (COGs) address this issue throughout the state. Diane Eidam, Chief Deputy Executive Director, responded that she was not aware of how other COGs address the issue. This is specific to San Diego’s TransNet Extension Ordinance. We could find out what other COGs are doing and report back to the Committee.

Mayor Madrid said that there are 10-11 other self-help counties.

Mr. Vance stated that other agencies are addressing this issue. The state has a policy that addresses this issue for state highway facilities. The California Transportation Commission (CTC) has a policy on accommodation that encourages review early in the project development process. We are the only sales tax process that has this provision. We will be happy to bring back a summary of similar efforts being conducted by other agencies.

Councilmember Emery expressed concern about the broadness of the exemption. He wondered what the limit is if providing pedestrian and bicycle accommodations would make a project infeasible. Mr. Vance said that the groups discussed this concern, but it is difficult to try and resolve every situation that could arise. We tried to develop a process for the local agencies, SANDAG, and transit operators to consult with stakeholders and make that determination early on in the process.

Mr. Leiter stated that over time, as we get experience with these requests we can suggest guidelines on exemptions. The cities and county representatives at CTAC felt this was a better process to start out with.

Councilmember Monroe asked for a definition of critical gap. Mr. Vance replied that in some places there will be missing sidewalks because the cost of providing that sidewalk would require an investment in retaining walls. Over the years, these kinds of projects have been put off because of that requirement. We intend that as this policy is implemented, the cities will understand that this is the kind of thing that needs to be funded.

Councilmember Monroe said that there may be another critical gap. We have an approved bicycle network in San Diego County. He suggested that another criterion be to determine if a project would provide a missing link in the bicycle network. He didn’t see that in these guidelines and wondered why that hadn’t been included. He would like a different level of consideration for feasibility if it is a network connection or part of a project. Mr. Vance said they tried to address that initially, but felt that we have not done enough analysis on the RTP’s regional bikeway network to provide guidance on what all of those projects are. We are about to undertake a regional bike planning process and will look at these projects. We will have an opportunity to review this issue as we refine that network. We could incorporate that criterion into these guidelines. This will be added to the highway projects.

Chair Madaffer noted that there were several requests to speak on this item.
Kathy Keehan, San Diego Bicycle Coalition Executive Director, said that the accommodation of bicycles and pedestrians is vital to this region. We have to do a better job so bicyclists and pedestrians can use our network safely. We think the policy is the right step in this direction. It is easier and cheaper to accommodate pedestrian and bicycles at the front end of a project than it is try and make accommodations after the fact. There are going to be exceptions. The exception process outlined is a good one and provides flexibility for jurisdictions. The Bicycle Coalition has some concerns about the language related to a bicycle master plan. They will be discussing these guidelines with the individual cities.

Kristin Muller, Walk San Diego, read a statement that indicated that the San Diego region ranks third in the nation in the percentage of traffic fatalities involving pedestrians, thus they are supportive of the pedestrian, bicycle, and neighborhood safety programs in TransNet as well as the Smart Growth Incentive Program. They have participated in most of the implementation phases for these programs and they consider this policy to be a pivotal document for realizing the promise of a more walkable region. This policy is a result of many compromises. While it will improve the chances that critical bicycling and walking facilities are included in TransNet roadway projects, it is also designed to minimize delays in project review. It does not mandate state-of-the-art pedestrian accommodations. Walk San Diego is not completely content with this policy, but it represents an improvement over current practices. They intend to participate in the evaluation at the three-year mark to make sure the design of TransNet roadways meet the spirit of the Ordinance.

David Hopkins, BPWG, said that this document is a great first step to accommodate pedestrian and bicycles. It gives us an opportunity to review the results at a later date.

Second Vice Chair Jerome Stocks stated that at the CTAC meeting, two agencies raised concerns and did not support this: Encinitas and the County of San Diego. This is not because these agencies are not bicycle-pedestrian friendly. Encinitas viewed these guidelines as more strings being applied to TransNet dollars. Encinitas uses General Fund money for residential streets and uses its TransNet dollars to overlay major arterials and collectors. He asked City staff to meet with SANDAG staff, and the result is that Encinitas staff is now willing to support this. They still have concerns and asked him to caution city staffs to be more careful with documenting where this money is going. There will be more impacts in implementing these guidelines in parts of our more established communities.

Councilmember Monroe thanked the speakers. He clarified that the strings are already attached in the TransNet Ordinance, and these guidelines are defining the strings.

Mr. Orso-Delgado said that the city of Sacramento didn’t have enough disabled access on its sidewalks and as a result of litigation is having to go back and retrofit them. Caltrans is going through an inventory of existing sidewalks and openings for Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) conformance, and retrofitting those facilities.

Action: Upon a motion by Councilmember Monroe and a second by Mayor Lori Holt Pfeiler (North County Inland), the Transportation Committee recommended, subject to Executive Committee concurrence, that the SANDAG Board of Directors adopt Rule 20 of Board Policy No. 031, Accommodating Bicyclists and Pedestrians, under the TransNet Ordinance Extension.
7. MID-CITY RAPID BUS PROJECT: PROPOSED APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION FUNDING (RECOMMEND)

Miriam Kirshner, Senior Planner, said that there is a new federal program call Very Small Starts. Staff has reviewed the criteria and feel that the Mid-City Rapid Bus program would be a good candidate for that program. The Mid-City Rapid Bus program includes the design and implementation of a ten-mile, high-speed, limited-stop service between San Diego State University (SDSU) and downtown San Diego along El Cajon Boulevard and Park Boulevard. This project represents the initial step towards implementing a full Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service in this corridor as envisioned in the RTP. Advanced planning and conceptual engineering work for the middle segment of the project (between Park Boulevard/University Avenue and El Cajon Boulevard/College Avenue) have been completed.

Ms. Kirshner stated that the this project would provide improvements to the middle segment of the corridor; we are deferring the improvements to the segment to downtown San Diego and the transit-only lanes on El Cajon Boulevard. The goals of this project are faster travel times for transit users, enhanced customer experience, and improved transit frequencies. She reviewed the methods to achieve these goals including bus storage lanes (queue storage lanes and stations), transit signal priority, a dedicated transitway, new shelters for identifying service, level boarding, service branding, and service frequencies. During peak hours the frequency improvements will be reduced from 15 to 10 minutes for the Rapid Bus route. The local bus route would remain at a 30-minute frequency.

Ms. Kirshner reviewed the criteria for this federal Very Small Starts program. She noted that federal officials have encouraged us to apply for these funds. We are refining our capital cost estimates. The project would cost approximately $40 million and a federal funding share is 50 percent or $20 million. Having this cost sharing would potentially rank us higher in the process. Action would authorize submittal of the application to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and recommend selection of the Mid-City Rapid Bus route as the “Locally Preferred Alternative” for this corridor. Next steps are to submit the application by September 15, 2007, and bring the project forward for inclusion in the updated Plan of Finance. There is an expedited process for this project and we should hear back by next spring. If the application is approved, preliminary and final design work would occur next year, construction in 2009, and operations in 2010. She noted that the ITOC recommended support for this federal application.

Councilmember Emery asked where the $20 million would come from. Mrs. Kirshner responded that this project was included in the TransNet Extension measure. She added that the cost includes bus acquisition.

Chair Madaffer noted that there was one request to speak on this item.

Clive Richard, a member of the public, said that he has watched the progress of Route 15 limited-stop service on El Cajon Boulevard following this proposed routing. What he noticed is that it continues to the freeway (SR 163) to downtown San Diego. He was concerned that this is taking people down Park Boulevard, and the people he rides with on Route 15 are on
their way to downtown and not areas along Park Boulevard. However, he expressed support for this action.

Supervisor Ron Roberts (County of San Diego) commented that this corridor is one of the most successful we have with regard to public transit. It has one of the highest ridership in the whole county. He asked about the branding program. Ms. Kirshner said that we would buy the buses and develop the branding to indicate this is a special route.

Supervisor Roberts expressed concern about the shelter concept, and hoped the transit board would be able to review that design. He wanted to move this project forward. It would be great if we get this federal grant. This is one of those projects we hoped to see implemented, and this segment is where the most significant changes will take place.

Harry Mathis, MTS Chair, commented a concern that we brand the vehicles in a way that will not preclude flexibility.

Mr. Shapery said he didn’t see how this Rapid Bus service compared to the conventional system. Ms. Kirshner said that we are estimating a 20 percent travel time savings.

Councilmember Emery said that we have to keep in mind that operating funds that will be needed. Ms. Kirshner stated that the TransNet measure provides operating funds for this project.

Councilmember Monroe said this project has really come a long way. It is a good compromise from having a dedicated lane for the whole route. He asked about the change from diagonal parking to parallel parking and how many spaces would be lost as a result. Ms. Kirshner said that diagonal parking spaces will be transferred to parallel parking spaces, and the net loss is about a dozen spaces. Some diagonal parking spaces will be placed on side streets having sufficient width.

Councilmember Gallo asked if there was an expectation of matching funds with this project being in the TransNet Extension. Ms. Kirshner replied affirmatively, and added that the TransNet measure assumed an average 50 percent match of capital monies.

Chair Madaffer stated that this is an initial step toward implementing a full rapid transit bus service in this corridor. The public will get a chance to see how the dedicated transit section will work. We will get much better through-put and usage with these improvements.

**Action:** Upon a motion by Supervisor Roberts and a second by Councilmember Monroe, the Transportation Committee recommended that the SANDAG Board of Directors: (1) authorize staff to submit an application to the Federal Transit Administration for funding for the Mid-City Rapid Bus Project under the new “Very Small Starts” program; and (2) select the Mid-City Rapid Bus Project as the “locally preferred alternative” for purposes of federal funding consideration.
Barrow Emerson, Senior Planner, reported that in December 2005, in partnership with MTS, Caltrans, and the California Highway Patrol (CHP), a freeway transit lane demonstration project was implemented on State Route (SR) 52/Interstate 805 (I-805) between Kearny Mesa and University City using MTS Express Route 960. This demonstration project had four goals: test the viability of freeway shoulder low-speed transit lanes in terms of freeway safety, operations, and transit efficiency; determine opportunities for shoulder lane transit lanes as a precursor to high-occupancy-vehicle (HOV) and Managed Lanes; document infrastructure and maintenance impacts of shoulder operations; and identify other candidate corridors. He provided a project overview indicating that there are two phases: during the first year of implementation there would be a six-month report to the Transportation Committee; and during the second 12-month period, staff would conduct analysis, documentation, other corridor planning, and development of legislation. He noted that this concept was patterned after a successful program in Minneapolis, Minnesota. He reviewed the following performance measures: safety, bus travel time/reliability, freeway level of service/maintenance, structure changes to shoulder, and perceptions. The conclusions following the first year of implementation were that this demonstration project has been successful; we should continue to monitor for freeway operational safety, impacts on infrastructure, and transit operational benefits; evaluate the potential for shoulder transit lanes in other freeway corridors; and investigate the required legislation necessary to make bus on shoulder facilities permanent.

Mr. Emerson introduced Bill Valle, Caltrans Chief Deputy Director, Traffic Operations and Maintenance, who was available for any questions.

Chair Madaffer noted that we received a letter from Capt. McGagin, CHP, in support of this project. The letter indicates there have been no issues or problems with this demonstration project.

Harry Mathis, MTS Chair, asked how bus drivers deal with a gridlock situation. Mr. Emerson replied that part of the driver training was an exercise in how to deal with the protocol toward getting on the off-ramps during gridlock conditions. It has worked well so the training has established an effective protocol.

MTS Chair Mathis noted that in this segment of highway there are not many off-ramps, and wondered how it would work in other areas with more off-ramps. Mr. Emerson said that there haven’t been any issues with that, however, we will consider that in the long-term.

Mr. Orso-Delgado said there are two possibilities: the bus could wait on the shoulder until there is an opening in traffic, and if a vehicle is disabled on the shoulder they know how to merge back into the traffic.

MTS Chair Mathis asked if there have been situations where automobiles have followed the bus onto the shoulder. Mr. Emerson responded that this has not happened.

Chair Madaffer indicated there were several requests to speak on this item.
Clive Richard, a member of the public, said that initially he had a great deal of skepticism about this project. However, when he read the CHP support letter and the report indicating there have not been any problems, he expressed support for making this project permanent and expanding it to other areas.

Kathy Keehan, representing the San Diego County Bicycle Coalition, stated that they had two small issues as they relate to bicycling and this program. There are two locations where bicycles use shoulder space. She asked that this program not be implemented on SR 52 from Santo Road to Mast Boulevard. She said they would like to have a shoulder open in I-805 between Governor Drive and Nobel Drive, and asked how often the bus used the shoulder in this section. Mr. Emerson said that some of the trips used the shoulder in that area.

Mr. Boda agreed that we will need to be careful in that shoulder section. He said that if we are successful on the Urban Partnership Agreement (UPA), we have a major project called SWOOP where buses will go from the inside shoulder from Palomar Street in Chula Vista to Sorrento Valley. We will be implementing lane positioning control (new technology). The bus driver can then have more confidence to follow a track work. We should know about the UPA project in 2-3 weeks.

MTS Chair Mathis asked if this new technology includes markings on the pavement and signage comparable to diamond lanes so motorists will know what to expect. Mr. Boda replied affirmatively, and added that we are working with Caltrans to safely implement this new technology.

Councilmember Monroe cautioned that should there be an incident, we shouldn’t overreact and let one incident negatively affect this project.

Mr. Orso-Delgado said that we have really learned to like these buses and sharing the freeway shoulder lanes. This has been a good project. One thing that will be very important as we move forward is the need to create the legislation to allow this to become a permanent project.

**Action:** This item was presented for information only.

9. **UPCOMING MEETINGS**

   The next meeting of the Transportation Committee is scheduled for Friday, August 3, 2007, at 9 a.m.

10. **ADJOURNMENT**

    Chair Madaffer adjourned the meeting at 10:45 a.m.

Attachment: Attendance Sheet
## CONFIRMED ATTENDANCE
### SANDAG TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MEETING
#### July 20, 2007

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<th>GEOGRAPHICAL AREA/ORGANIZATION</th>
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<th>NAME</th>
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<td>David Druker</td>
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