MEETING NOTICE
AND AGENDA

REGIONAL PLANNING TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP
The Regional Planning Technical Working Group (RPTWG) may take action on any item appearing on this agenda.

Thursday, April 12, 2007
1:15 to 3:15 p.m.
SANDAG, 7th Floor Conference Room
401 B Street, Suite 800
San Diego, CA  92101-4231

Staff Contact: Carolina Gregor
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AGENDA HIGHLIGHTS

• 2007 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN: CONTINUED DISCUSSION ON REVENUE CONSTRAINED AND REASONABLY EXPECTED REVENUE SCENARIOS

• OVERVIEW OF PECAS AND INITIAL DEMONSTRATION OF I-PLACE³S SKETCH MODELING TOOL IN DOWNTOWN ESCONDIDO

• UPDATE ON IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES AND LEGISLATION ASSOCIATED WITH PROPOSITIONS 1C AND 84

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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.

CONSENT ITEM

+3. SUMMARY OF MARCH 8, 2007, TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP MEETING

   The Regional Planning Technical Working Group (TWG) should review and approve the March 8, 2007, meeting summary.

REPORT ITEMS (4 through 8)

4. 2007 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN: CONTINUED DISCUSSION ON INITIAL REVENUE CONSTRAINED AND REASONABLY EXPECTED REVENUE SCENARIOS (Mike Hix)

   Last month, staff presented initial options for Revenue Constrained and Reasonably Expected Revenue Scenarios for the 2007 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). Staff discussed these options with SANDAG's Transportation Committee and Board of Directors in March and is seeking additional input from various SANDAG working groups. Specific scenarios will go back to the Board in April and into the draft 2007 RTP in June 2007.
5. OVERVIEW OF PECAS AND INITIAL DEMONSTRATION OF I-PLACE³'S SKETCH MODELING TOOL IN DOWNTOWN ESCONDIDO (Ed Schafer, Carolina Gregor, and Escondido Planning Staff)

a. PECAS: (This item is continued from last month’s meeting.) SANDAG is currently preparing a contract with Drs. John Hunt and John Abraham of the University of Calgary to develop an integrated urban simulation model for the San Diego region. Currently, Drs. Hunt and Abraham are under contract with Caltrans and the University of California Davis to develop a PECAS-based freight movement model for the state. PECAS will replace the Urban Development Model as SANDAG’s small-area forecasting tool. The new PECAS model uses current rents and vacancy rates to trigger the development of additional square footage of residential and non-residential space. In addition, it uses land economics and explicit travel costs to locate the new development in space. This model will provide SANDAG with a more sensitive simulation tool for various policy studies. The model will take three or four years to develop. During model development, staff will consult with the Technical Working Group for their input and suggestions regarding model development. A presentation will be made on the PECAS model.

b. I-PLACE³'S Sketch Modeling Tool: Last month, staff introduced the I-PLACE³'s sketch model to the TWG. This month, using the Downtown Escondido Smart Growth Area, SANDAG and Escondido planning staffs will demonstrate the capabilities of the model. I-PLACE³'S is designed to provide planners and communities with the opportunity to develop alternative “what-if” land use scenarios for selected planning areas and evaluate the results of those scenarios based on indicators related to housing, jobs, and other public facilities. I-PLACE³'S training workshops for planning directors and their staff will be held on the afternoon of Tuesday, May 22, 2007, and on the morning of Wednesday, May 23, 2007. TWG members and local planning staff should reserve time on their calendars for one of the two training sessions. Additional workshop information will be sent via e-mail.
6. UPDATE ON IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES AND LEGISLATION ASSOCIATED WITH PROPOSITIONS 1C AND 84 (Susan Baldwin and Rob Rundle)  

Staff will update the TWG on the regional and statewide discussions on implementation guidelines and implementing legislation associated with Propositions 1C and 84.

7. COMPLIANCE WITH ASSEMBLY BILL 2140 (Rick Brady, City of Santee)  

Assembly Bill 2140 (effective 1/1/07) requires incorporation of the Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan into General Plan Safety Elements to ensure full disaster assistance eligibility. All 19 jurisdictions in the San Diego region prepared a joint-hazard mitigation plan in 2004 through the County Office of Emergency Services. Fire departments of each jurisdiction took the lead in preparing the plan. In some cases, the plans were prepared with little involvement by planning and community development departments and with minimum public outreach, especially vis-à-vis their required incorporation into local general plans. The City of Santee has requested that the TWG discuss this issue.

8. ADJOURNMENT AND NEXT MEETING  

The next TWG meeting will be held on Thursday, May 10, 2007, from 1:15 to 3:15 p.m. The I-PLACE³S workshops will be held on May 22 and May 23, 2007. Workshop invitations will be mailed out shortly.

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SUMMARY OF MARCH 8, 2007, 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
There were no public comments.

CONSENT ITEMS (3 through 5)

Agenda Item #3: Summary of the February 8, 2007 Technical Working Group Meeting
This item was not pulled from the Consent Agenda.

Agenda Item #4: Form 700 Statement of Economic Interests
This item was not pulled from the Consent Agenda.

Agenda Item #5: Upcoming Nexus Study Workshop
This item was not pulled from the Consent Agenda.

A motion and second were made to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

REPORT ITEMS (6 through 11)

Agenda Item #6: Reports from TWG Members
Susan Baldwin informed TWG members of the Department of Housing and Community Development’s (HCD) Notice of Proposed Rule Making for the adoption of the Housing Element Annual Progress Report. HCD is drafting the guidelines for the preparation of the annual housing report, and is hosting a hearing on March 19, 2007. Current comments and responses are posted on the HCD Web site, and HCD is taking additional comments until March 19. Ms. Baldwin asked that TWG members share any comments they might post onto the HCD Web site with her.
**Agenda Item #7: 2007 Regional Transportation Plan Initial Revenue Constrained and Reasonably Expected Revenue Scenarios**

Mike Hix and Linda Culp, SANDAG staff, presented initial options for Revenue Constrained and Reasonably Expected Revenue Scenarios for the 2007 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The estimated revenues for the Revenue Constrained Scenario are $40.6 billion in constant 2006 dollars. There are two options for the Reasonably Expected Scenario – Option A, which would generate $4.2 billion more than the Revenue Constrained scenario, and Option B, which would add another $6.5 billion, for a total increase of $10.7 billion, or an overall total of $51.3 billion. Mr. Hix and Ms. Culp indicated that they would be presenting these options to SANDAG’s Transportation Committee and Board of Directors in March. Specific scenarios will be presented to the Board in April and will be incorporated into the draft 2007 RTP in June 2007.

Mr. Hix distributed a draft handout entitled “Major Capital Improvements – 2006 vs. 2007 Revenue Constrained Scenario.” This handout summarized the differences between the 2006 and 2007 Revenue Constrained scenarios.

Linda Culp described the major differences in transit services and capital improvements as outlined in Options A and B of the 2007 Reasonably Expected Revenue Scenarios. Option B would provide the following improvements that Option A would not provide: transit parking structures, SPRINTER double-tracking, SPRINTER extension from the Escondido Transit Center to the South Escondido/North County Fair, and coastal rail improvements. She also spoke about the SPRINTER Rail Grade Separation Criteria that were approved last year. In addition, Ms. Culp guided the TWG members through the draft handout regarding phased transit service and major transit expenditures as they relate to the 2007 Reasonably Expected Revenue Scenario.

Mr. Hix explained the process for ranking projects in the 2007 RTP. This process will use the “transportation project evaluation criteria” recently approved by the SANDAG Board. He stated that the results from the ranking process, which are meant to be as objective as possible, would be used to establish transportation priorities within the region. Project rankings are scheduled to be available next week.

Questions and comments included:

Ed Batchelder, City of Chula Vista, inquired as to the primary reasons to drop High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes from the Interstate 805 (I-805) at Palomar Road. Mr. Hix responded that the HOVs north of Palomar are needed to serve the planned Bus Rapid Transit route, and limited funds would phase the extension south of the HOV lanes.

Andy Hamilton, Air Pollution Control District, asked if there was a goal in mind when setting criteria for transit. Linda responded that last time, in MOBILITY2030, the Board of Directors asked that a network be designed that could reach double-digit mode share. This time around, there is no overarching goal for double-digit mode share in the region as a whole, but there are different criteria for evaluation in the ranking process.
Mr. Hamilton felt that many transit projects would not score very well if you were looking at how they incrementally improve travel in five or ten years, but if they are a key part of a future system to which you keep adding pieces, we can reach a tipping point where it becomes better to take transit. Ms. Culp responded that the transportation project evaluation criteria help assess the way each transit project fits in with the rest of the network. She added that the criteria now evaluates mode share by specific corridor as opposed to the region as a whole. Mr. Hix emphasized that the project rankings are a start, but that we have to evaluate how all of the projects come together to make an assessment of the overall system.

Don Neu, City of Carlsbad, asked which aesthetic improvements would not be included in the Interstate 5 (I-5) project in the Option A of the 2007 Reasonably Expected Revenue Scenario. Mr. Hix responded that the direct access ramps, some local interchange improvements, high-grade landscaping, and sound walls would not be provided, resulting in a cost savings of approximately $600 million. Mr. Neu mentioned recent Caltrans workshops where there was discussion suggesting community improvements as a trade-off for transportation projects in an attempt to cut project costs. Mr. Hix indicated that Caltrans is still in the middle of those discussions, but that another approach could be to build all of the desired improvements in a corridor as far as the funding allows.

Rosemary Rowan, County of San Diego, requested copies of the Unconstrained Revenue Scenario and the Reasonably Expected Scenarios, and asked if these documents are on the SANDAG Web site. Mr. Hix stated that the documents would be placed on the Web site shortly. Ms. Rowan stated that the County will need to evaluate the scenarios due to lack of improvements on the Interstate 15 (I-15), being that most of the growth in the unincorporated area is projected for North County, and any resulting gridlock would affect the growth of the region as a whole. Mr. Hix responded that the Unconstrained Map shows eight plus four managed lanes all the way to the San Diego/Riverside County line, but because of funding shortfalls, it is not felt that the region can build more lanes north of Escondido. He stated that one proposal outlined in the Transportation Committee Report is the construction of four managed lanes north of Escondido as a toll facility. Ms. Rowan agreed that that would capture some of the costs of people moving to North County for housing. In addition, Ms. Rowan commented on the relationship between the planned transit and smart growth areas by inquiring if the transit development incentives for jurisdictions are set to minimize the exodus to Riverside and Imperial Counties.

Coleen Clementson, SANDAG staff, responded that this is what the Smart Growth Incentive Program (SGIP) is about. She also stated that the ranking of transit projects is supplemented by the status of current land use plans, and if the plans already call for mixed-use and higher density development, they will be given priority. Bob Leiter, SANDAG staff, added that in working with the Riverside County Transportation Commission, the Riverside Transit Agency, the Western Riverside Council of Governments, and their Caltrans office, a report will be issued this month with a strategy to add capacity in the I-15 corridor. Since SANDAG’s RTP and Riverside Transportation Plan have different approaches, an interface is needed. Furthermore, it may be possible to make improvements on the I-15 through consistency between the RTP and the Riverside General Plan.
Lance Schulte, North County Transit District, asked if there has been any research looking at the I-5 as a toll road. Mr. Hix responded that SANDAG is looking at building the rest of the managed lane system with four lanes in the middle up to the Orange County Line as a toll facility.

Mr. Schulte commented that addressing the I-5 revenue shortfalls with a toll road is appropriate given its interregional and international nature. Mr. Hix asked Heather Werdick, SANDAG staff, if any additional issues related to the question posed by Mr. Schulte were raised at the I-5 toll pricing focus meeting. Ms. Werdick stated that the group was very supportive of toll lanes to Oceanside, being able to use them as carpool lanes for free and reinvesting the toll revenues into transit services in the corridor. Mr. Schulte commented that since the I-5 is a “front door” to the region, it must be looked at more broadly.

Bill Chopyk, City of La Mesa, inquired about the allocation of funds between transit, highways, local streets, and system management, asking if there is a formula to determine the allocations. Mr. Hix responded that TransNet specifies allocations in approximately equal thirds and assumes a 50/50 match from other state and federal funds. Mr. Chopyk asked if more funding is allocated to highways than transit due to the fact that the majority of the RTP’s funding is from TransNet. Mr. Hix specified that TransNet does not constitute the majority of the plan’s funding. He added that the allocations relate to the Board’s desire for a balanced approach regarding the dispersion of funds.

Nick Ortiz, County of San Diego, wondered if SANDAG had done any preliminary assessment to determine if the “Option B” funding alternative is sufficient for all highway improvements in the Reasonably Expected Scenario. Mr. Hix said that no preliminary assessment has been made, but once the SANDAG Board provides direction, staff will conduct further evaluation. He stated that the Board will likely ask staff what improvements the region will no longer receive with Option B that were included in the last Reasonably Expected Revenue Scenario. Mr. Ortiz requested the project rankings. Mr. Hix responded that they will be available next week.

Mr. Batchelder referred to page four of the draft handout, asking what projects the first column of the Major Transit Expenditures – 2007 Revenue Constrained Scenario included. Ms. Culp noted the two grade separations for the Blue Line in Chula Vista. She added that Metropolitan Transit System and North County Transit District established that those separations were needed from an operational standpoint to provide additional service and are included in the miscellaneous capital section. Mr. Hix reaffirmed that when a grade separation is needed to make the rail project work, it is included in the costs of the project. He added that when grade separation is an additional benefit, the costs of the grade separation projects are separated from the project costs and then each grade separation project is required to compete individually for funds.

Mr. Leiter informed TWG members of a discussion at the Cities/County Transportation Advisory Committee (CTAC) meeting last week where a point was made that the double-tracking of the SPRINTER Line would not make sense unless it was accompanied by grade separation. He added that the integration of costs generated by grade separation would reduce the amount of flexible money and reduce the cost-effectiveness of the project, which would in turn; contribute to a lower ranking of the project. Mr. Hix stated that grade separations do not necessarily help the rail work better, but they do improve traffic impacts.
Mr. Ortiz asked what the current percentage split is between transit and highway projects in the 2007 Reasonably Expected Revenue Scenario. Mr. Hix replied that for the last RTP, allocations were split up using a different allocation methodology, so the breakup is noncomparable to some extent. Ms. Culp added that, last time, transit was about $16 billion and the highway side was about $15.5 billion.

Mr. Schulte commented that one limitation of getting people to use the COASTER is the lack of parking at COASTER stations. He requested increased parking through joint uses to get maximum value for the community. He added that the COASTER could carry more passengers through the addition of longer platforms and more parking structures. Ms. Culp stated that additional COASTER parking structures are included in 2030 in the draft handout.

Nancy Bragado, City of San Diego, asked if the cost of parking structures are accounted for separately or included in the cost of the project for priority purposes. Ms. Culp stated they are included in the transit structure category. She added that this time around, they were accounted for separately from the project cost, unlike in MOBILITY2030. Mr. Hix pointed out that when an existing facility needs capital improvements to operate, the cost is shared among other routes benefiting from the facility, but when you actually build the projects, whichever route is scheduled for construction first, has to pay for the initial capital improvement. Ms. Culp corrected herself and stated that the costs were included in the rankings.

Mr. Hamilton brought up research by the Independent Transit Planning Review Panel and wondered if there was followup research on their recommendations. Ms. Culp replied that staff looked at the operating costs per hour to establish realistic operating costs. Mr. Hamilton asked if there was anything else that the Panel came up with that changed the RTP. Ms. Culp responded that based on the Panel’s recommendations, a stronger focus was placed on the urban core area, creating more transit lines than before, and grade separation guidelines were examined. Mr. Hamilton relayed Los Angeles’ experiences of robbing from the bus system and giving to the subway, and stated his desire to avoid such problems.

Niall Fritz, City of Poway, asked Mr. Hix when Highway 67 will be improved. Mr. Hix replied that as an individual project, it does not rank very well, and it is not in the 2007 Revenue Constrained Plan. It was not in the last revenue constrained RTP either.

**Agenda Item #8: Pilot SGIP - Lessons Learned**

Stephen Vance and Christine Eary, SANDAG staff, provided a report based on experience gained to date in developing and implementing the Pilot SGIP, and on lessons learned about how well the program is meeting its goals. The report addressed how these lessons might be used to develop the long-term SGIP that will be funded through TransNet extension.

Questions and comments included:

Mr. Chopyk mentioned the hurdles involved in completing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) environmental documents required by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) for federal funds and asked if there was any commitment to streamline the process for the application process for certain projects. Mr. Vance responded that SANDAG works with Caltrans on FHWA funded projects, and Caltrans also is frustrated with the process. Caltrans has informed SANDAG
that the FHWA will delegate some responsibilities for various fund types to them, and they will pay attention to speeding up the approval process. Mr. Chopyk further voiced his experiences with the NEPA process and sought to find a way to shorten the process under the existing approval timeline. Mr. Vance commented that maybe funds should be moved around to avoid time-consuming approval processes. Mr. Fritz recommended using the California Environmental Quality Act documents for NEPA requirements in an attempt to shorten the approval process.

Gary Halbert, City of Santee, pointed to situations that may require contingencies on funding. He also commented that areas already experiencing smart growth should not be penalized for projects that would have resulted in even smarter growth. Mr. Vance stated that the pilot program captured both types of smart growth. Ms. Clementson provided an example of a development situation where an application comes in for smart growth funds that will support high densities, but market conditions change, resulting in the need to lower the densities stated in the application packet. She stated that the funding should still be provided as long as is the approval of the densities is within the city's control, even if lower density options have surfaced.

Mr. Vance stated that this example raises issues regarding how to deal with changes once a project has been approved. Mr. Fritz stated that the essential ingredients that got a project funded should be identified or a range should be approved to evaluate project conformance. Mr. Schulte supported this by pointing to local use of “substantial conformance requirements.”

Vicki Parker, City of Vista, commented that she would not like to see the potential for equalized regional distribution abandoned. She specifically pointed to projects where property values are low on individual parcels, but not on cumulative parcels. Ms. Parker said they are equally important relative to a fair regional distribution of project money.

Ms. Clementson reviewed the performance-based process that has been used to evaluate projects. Mr. Schulte advocated for a more even representation of projects across the region. Mr. Hamilton offered a new way to approach federal vs. TransNet funding. Also, he supported the use of the urban design guidelines in the same way the pedestrian design guidelines are used. In addition, he supported the idea of a negotiated award. Mr. Hamilton then addressed the project description of a bridge across Park Boulevard and whether or not it was an appropriate project to be funded under this program. He asked if there is a way to fully understand the nature of a project. Mr. Vance acknowledged that the review of the project did not take into account its limited function and described how capital improvements must be examined under subsequent evaluations. Ms. Clementson further acknowledged this site as a “lessons learned” project and indicated that this type of project will be looked at more closely in the future.

Mr. Batchelder voiced his opinion relative to the design criteria. He advocated for the function of the design to be evaluated so as to not enter into a beauty contest, and in turn, detract from actual smart growth. In addition, he suggested that the performance evaluation not be solely based upon percentages, but by looking at raw numbers as well. He also commented on the program objectives, specifically, how SANDAG funding should not be the tipping source for funding, which could be counter-productive. He also furthered the idea of categorically separating projects for evaluation.

Chris Schmidt, Caltrans, commented on the possibility of swapping other funds with TransNet funds. Mr. Vance defined the limited uses of enhancement money, as well as, generally defining what could be considered an enhancement.
**Agenda Item #9: Update on Implementation Guidelines for Statewide Propositions 1C and 84**

Susan Baldwin, SANDAG staff, updated the TWG on the regional and statewide discussions on implementation guidelines for Propositions 1C and 84. Ms. Baldwin notified the Working Group of upcoming meetings and invited TWG members to represent themselves at these events.

Questions and comments included:

Ms. Rowan asked if decisions regarding regional priorities will be made at the HCD Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Guidelines Stakeholders meeting on Monday, March 12, 2007, and the Stakeholders meeting on Proposition 1C and 84 at SANDAG and asked for a recommendation on which meetings to attend. Ms. Baldwin further described the agendas of the meetings and invited TWG members of their representatives to attend both HCD’s TOD meeting on March 12 and SANDAG’s Stakeholders meeting on March 15.

**Agenda Item #10: I-PLACE³S and PECAS: SANDAG’s Next Generation of Small Areas Land Use Models**

a. Coleen Clementson provided a presentation on the I-PLACE³S Sketch Modeling Tool. SANDAG has contracted with EcoInteractive to develop a sketch model planning tool for the San Diego region. I-PLACE³S is designed to provide planners and communities with the opportunity to develop alternative “what-if” land use scenarios for selected planning areas and evaluate the results of those scenarios based on indicators related to housing, jobs, and other public facilities. Training sessions on I-PLACE³S are proposed for local planning staff this spring. Ed Schafer, SANDAG staff, described a transportation indicator that is in the process of being added to I-PLACE³S. He also described the incorporation of aerial photos in hopes of making I-PLACE³S a more powerful tool.

b. The PECAS discussion was tabled to the next meeting on Thursday, April 12, 2007.

**Agenda Item #11: Adjournment and Next Meeting**

The next TWG meeting will be held on Thursday, April 12, 2007, from 1:15 to 3:15 p.m.