MEETING NOTICE
AND AGENDA

MID-COAST CORRIDOR TRANSIT PROJECT WORKING GROUP

Wednesday, October 26, 2011
3:30 to 5 p.m.

SANDAG Board Room, 7th Floor
401 B Street, Suite 800
San Diego, CA 92101-4231

Staff Contact: Anne Steinberger
(619) 699-1937
ast@sandag.org

AGENDA HIGHLIGHTS

• MID-COAST CORRIDOR TRANSIT PROJECT UPDATE
• UPDATE TO MID-COAST CORRIDOR TRANSIT PROJECT PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

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**MID-COAST CORRIDOR TRANSIT PROJECT WORKING GROUP**  
Wednesday, October 26, 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM #</th>
<th>RECOMMENDATION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>+1.</td>
<td>MEETING SUMMARY OF OCTOBER 6, 2010</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Review and approve the meeting summary from the October 6, 2010, meeting.</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>PUBLIC COMMENT</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Members of the public shall have the opportunity to address the Mid-Coast Transit Project Working Group (PWG) on any issue within the jurisdiction of the PWG that is not on this agenda. Public speakers are limited to three minutes or less per person. PWG members also may provide information and announcements under this agenda item.</td>
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<td>+3.</td>
<td>MID-COAST CORRIDOR TRANSIT PROJECT UPDATE</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Staff will provide an update on the Mid-Coast Corridor Transit Project. Information from a report provided to the SANDAG Transportation Committee on October 21, 2011, will be referenced for this item. Staff will discuss the Preliminary Engineering announcement and the National Environmental Policy Act Scoping. Staff also will report on the project schedule, scope, and budget.</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>UPDATE TO MID-COAST CORRIDOR TRANSIT PROJECT PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN</td>
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<td>Staff will be making updates to the Public Involvement Plan (PIP) so that the tactics and strategies reflect the next phases of the project. The PWG will be asked to provide input on the PIP update.</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>NEXT STEPS FOR PROJECT WORKING GROUP</td>
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<td>The PWG Charter states that the PWG would convene until the environmental process was completed. The PWG will discuss next steps.</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>ADJOURN</td>
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+ next to an item indicates an attachment
MEETING SUMMARY OF OCTOBER 6, 2010

Members in Attendance:
Ron Roberts, Supervisor, County of San Diego (Chairman)
Robert Emery, Retired Metropolitan Transit System Board Member and Poway Councilmember (Vice Chair)
Daniel Allen, La Jolla resident
Greg Fitchitt, Westfield Corporation
Ian Foster, Clairemont resident
Brian Gregory, University of California, San Diego (UCSD)
Rob Hutsel, San Diego River Park Foundation
Janay Kruger, University Community Planning Group
Joe LaCava, La Jolla Community Planning Group
Mark Marcus, La Jolla Country Day School
Brooke Peterson, Clairemont Community Planning Group
David Potter, Clairemont resident
Andrew Poat, San Diego Regional Economic Development Corporation
Carmen Sandoval, San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce

Others in Attendance:
Susanne Bankhead, MJE Marketing
Lawrence Spurgeon, Parsons Brinckerhoff

SANDAG Staff in Attendance:
Leslie Blanda
Greg Gastelum
Anne Steinberger

Chairman Ron Roberts called the meeting to order at 3:41 p.m. He reported on recent meetings he attended in Washington, D.C. with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). The meetings included comprehensive presentations on the project and were very positive.

AGENDA ITEM #1: JULY 14, 2010, MEETING SUMMARY

David Potter, Clairemont resident, made a motion to approve the July 14, 2010, meeting summary. Vice Chair Bob Emory seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.
AGENDA ITEM #2: PUBLIC COMMENT

Members of the public were given the opportunity to address the Mid-Coast Corridor Transit Project Working Group (PWG) on any topic not on the agenda. No public comment given.

AGENDA ITEM #3: APPOINTMENT OF PWG MEMBERS

Anne Steinberger, SANDAG Marketing Manager, explained that two former PWG members had resigned. The Selection Committee reviewed the original application list and recommends the appointment of Ian Foster, a Clairemont resident and engineering student, and Mark Marcus, Assistant Head of School Operations at La Jolla Country Day School.

Joe LaCava, La Jolla Community Planning Group, made a motion to appoint Mr. Foster and Mr. Marcus as the PWG members. Brooke Peterson, Clairemont Mesa Planning Group, seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM #4: UPDATE ON JULY 23 BOARD ACTION/FTA APPLICATION

Ms. Steinberger provided a brief report on SANDAG Board of Directors’ action on July 23 to reconfirm the previously selected Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA). She referred to the project “At a Glance” at each member’s seat, which provides an overview of the LPA. She announced that the PWG will meet again in January 2011 and then again in advance of the release of the environmental document.

AGENDA ITEM #5: OVERVIEW OF NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT/CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT PROCESS

Lawrence Spurgeon, Parsons Brinckerhoff, provided the PWG members with an overview of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)/California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process. He explained that the purpose of NEPA/CEQA is to inform decision-makers and the public about potential impacts that could result from the project, and identify ways to avoid or reduce those impacts to prevent damage to the environment.

Mr. Spurgeon then reviewed the steps in the NEPA/CEQA process. He explained that the scoping period for the Mid-Coast project had been completed and the environmental analysis has now begun. The next step is developing a draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS)/Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (SEIR) and allowing for public comment on the document. Comments are responded to in the final SEIS/SEIR, which will be approved by the SANDAG Board of Directors (SEIR) and the FTA (SEIS).

Mr. Spurgeon explained that staff anticipates that the PWG will play an important role in the project throughout the NEPA/CEQA process. Specifically, staff anticipates that the PWG will assist with coordination during technical analysis of transportation, environmental, and financial elements of the project and will provide feedback on the Draft SEIS/SEIR.
Rob Hutsel, San Diego River Park Foundation, asked whether staff was aware of the Section 4(f) provision with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Mr. Spurgeon confirmed that he was aware of the provision with the FHWA, that the agency could not make it a practice to take public parklands as part of the project. Mr. Hutsel asked if there is an impact to the parklands, would mitigation be required to address it. Mr. Spurgeon explained that under the Section 4(f) process, mitigation would not be mandated, but there would be measures to minimize the impacts.

Chairman Roberts asked Mr. Spurgeon about the feasibility of an additional station at the Veterans Administration Hospital. Mr. Spurgeon replied that analysis of that station is underway, but is not far enough along to know whether it is feasible.

Ms. Peterson asked about the timeline of the full funding grant agreement. Mr. Spurgeon explained that the full funding grant agreement occurs after the Record of Decision.

Chairman Roberts explained that it is nerve-wracking to not know whether the grant agreement will be in place until the end. Mr. Spurgeon replied that each time we move forward with the FTA, they are indicating and validating that this is a project of merit that is ready to move forward. It is very rare that this could be stopped later in the process. Leslie Blanda, Mid-Coast Corridor Director, added that as long as the project continues to get a New Starts rating of medium or above, the project will be a good candidate. Chairman Roberts explained that the project should have a New Starts rating by early next year, which is a very big milestone.

Daniel Allen, La Jolla resident, asked about the timeline for the PE application. Ms. Blanda replied that staff is preparing the Preliminary Engineering (PE) application and materials and will be submitting the package to the FTA in fall 2010. Staff expects to receive a New Starts rating late 2010 or early 2011.

**AGENDA ITEM #6: UPDATE ON ALIGNMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES**

Greg Gastelum, Project Development Program Manager, reported that the project team had initiated several environmental base studies, which define and survey in detail areas of potential effect. This includes biological studies of Rose Canyon and Rose Creek, surveys of historical structures in the area, and conducting traffic studies for the entire corridor. Mr. Gastelum added that staff is developing the FTA PE application and is collaborating with FTA staff on the project’s financial plans, economic forecasts, and operations plans.

Mr. Allen asked about the process for station design. Mr. Gastelum explained that the team has conceptual designs for the stations now and the next step will include refining the station design further, incorporating existing and future bus routes, and bicycle and pedestrian access. Chairman Roberts added that the team will be able to share some of this information with the PWG in January. Mr. Allen asked whether the technical team would take the widening of Interstate 5 (I-5) into account with implementation of the Mid-Coast project. Mr. Gastelum confirmed that the team is including several alignment options on the UCSD campus, due to the widening of I-5 and potential direct access ramps at Voigt Drive.

Mr. LaCava asked whether conceptual designs had been prepared for the stations. Mr. Gastelum explained that staff is taking what was previously studied and designed and building upon that. Staff will be prepared to share some of that information with the PWG in January.
AGENDA ITEM #7: NEXT MEETING

Ms. Steinberger will coordinate with staff and the PWG members on the next meeting date. She asked the PWG members for suggestions of meeting topics.

Ms. Peterson asked whether conceptual drawings would be submitted at the end of the year. Mr. Gastelum explained that those drawings would be included in the environmental document, but not in the PE application which is being submitted at the end of the year. Ms. Peterson stressed the importance of allowing stakeholders to have input into the process.

Janay Kruger, University Community Planning Group, recommended that staff coordinate with some of the University City stakeholders on construction of parking facilities, as there could be partnership opportunities.

AGENDA ITEM #8: ADJOURN

Chairman Roberts adjourned the meeting at 4:20 p.m.
MID-COAST CORRIDOR TRANSIT PROJECT STATUS UPDATE

Introduction

The Mid-Coast Corridor Transit (Mid-Coast) Project is a TransNet Early Action Project that extends the MTS trolley system’s Blue Line from the Santa Fe Depot in downtown San Diego to University Towne Centre, through the University of California, San Diego (UCSD) campus. The project achieved a major milestone in September when the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) approved moving the Mid-Coast Project into the Preliminary Engineering phase of project development under the New Starts Program. This report provides an update on the status of the project including refinements to the Local Preferred Alternative (LPA) and revisions to the budget and schedule.

Discussion

FTA Preliminary Engineering Approval

On September 2, 2011, the FTA approved Mid-Coast for entry into Preliminary Engineering (PE) under the FTA New Starts Program. PE approval is an important milestone under the FTA New Starts Program. The project is now officially in the New Starts funding pipeline and eligible to receive New Starts funding for the PE phase should such funding become available. If a Full Funding Grant Agreement (FFGA) is awarded to the project in the future, the FFGA would fund approximately 50 percent of all eligible PE, Final Design, Construction and Start-Up activities.

Prior to approving the project’s entry into PE, FTA evaluated the project against New Starts criteria to ensure that SANDAG demonstrated the technical, legal, and financial capability to implement the project. Based on the evaluation, FTA assigned the project an overall rating of “Medium-High,” the highest rating assigned to any FTA New Starts project in the PE phase.

The Mid-Coast Project will now be included in the FTA FY 2013 Annual Report on Funding Recommendations to the United States Congress. FTA’s Project Profile provides a summary of the Mid-Coast Project and will be attached to the FY 2013 Annual Report on Funding Recommendations. A map of the Mid-Coast Corridor is included as Attachment 1.

NEPA Scoping

As reported to the Transportation Committee on July 15, 2011, the FTA and SANDAG continue to move forward in the preparation of a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement and Subsequent Environmental Impact Report (SEIS/SEIR) for the Mid-Coast Project. The FTA is the lead agency for compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and SANDAG is the lead...
agency for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). In mid-2011 FTA published a new Notice of Intent (NOI) in the Federal Register to conduct NEPA scoping to supplement the previous scoping on the project’s SEIS/SEIR.

To ensure public awareness of the NOI and NEPA scoping process SANDAG conducted a number of outreach activities including: updating the SANDAG Transportation Committee on July 15; posting notice of the NOI and NEPA scoping on the SANDAG “Notices” Web site; notifying the Mid-Coast Project Working Group via e-mail; distributing the eNewsletter to individuals and organizations on the stakeholder e-mail list (609 individuals and organizations); and updating the project Web site to announce the NOI and NEPA scoping.

FTA issued the NOI on July 12, 2011, and requested comments by August 15, 2011. Comments were accepted later than August 15 to account for any delays in mail. A total of 43 comments were received from 14 commenters via 5 letters and 9 e-mails. All comments received were similar to those received during CEQA scoping and/or involved issues previously identified for analysis. All comments received during the NEPA scoping period will be addressed in the SEIS/SEIR for the project.

FTA additionally sent a letter of invitation to potential participating federal, state, regional and local agencies, and the Region’s 17 Native American tribes. A scoping information packet was attached to the letter and announced the NOI and NEPA scoping period. FTA has received responses from a number of agencies requesting to become actively involved as a participating agency in the environmental review process for the project.

Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) Refinements

Since the SANDAG Board adopted the LPA on July 23, 2010, the design of the project has continued to advance. On the alignment from State Route 52 north to Nobel Drive, design efforts continue to refine the LPA to improve safety and operations, define right-of-way requirements, and minimize encroachments into Rose Creek. Through the UCSD west campus, the LPA alignment proposed tunnels at the north and south approaches to an at-grade UCSD west campus station with three design options north of the station, in the vicinity of Voigt Drive. An aerial alignment is now proposed through all of the west campus with an elevated station in Pepper Canyon (UCSD West station). North of the west campus station, the alignment was modified to locate the crossing over Interstate 5 north of Voigt Drive to the UCSD east campus as shown on Attachment 2. The station serving the UCSD east campus will be an aerial station in the vicinity of Scripps and Thornton Hospitals. The refined alignment improves trolley operations through the west campus, reduces capital costs and maintenance compared to the previous alternatives. The LPA, refined as described above, would be included in the Draft SEIS/SEIR.

Station Parking

The Mid-Coast Project, as approved for entry into PE, included 340 parking spaces at two station locations, the Tecolote Road and Balboa Avenue stations. Subsequent modeling forecasts estimate the demand for an additional 920 spaces at 4 station locations including Tecolote Road, Clairemont Drive, Nobel Drive and University Towne Centre. The additional parking demand could potentially be accommodated through the purchase of additional right-of-way and construction of parking either at grade or in a structure. Design options for additional parking will be further developed
during preliminary engineering to determine feasibility, provide additional details and cost estimates. Consultation and coordination with potentially impacted stakeholders will proceed as design options are developed. The additional parking will be included in the project description in the Draft SEIS/SEIR to assess any potential impacts associated with the additional parking and propose mitigation measures if needed.

**Project Budget**

The project capital cost approved in the FY 2011 budget is $1,246 million. The current estimated project capital cost, based on advancement of the design, updated unit costs, and changes to the operating plan and schedule, has increased by $350 million to $1,596 million. The increase is largely attributed to increases in estimated construction capital costs ($73 million); the addition of 22 vehicles ($142 million) to meet service requirements; and escalation of construction, right-of-way, engineering costs, and contingency ($135 million).

The budget amounts presented to the Board of Directors for TransNet Early Action Projects do not include financing costs for each project. Financing costs for the Mid-Coast Project have been included at a program level in the Plan of Finance. However, federal funding through an FFGA allows for reimbursement of financing costs included in the project budget. Therefore, the project estimate submitted to the FTA with the request to enter preliminary engineering included an estimate of $207 million for finance charges bringing the total project capital cost estimate to $1,803 million. Because financing costs are dependent on revenues, market rates, FTA reimbursement schedule and Board direction, staff will continue to report a project budget without finance costs.

Generally, costs incurred prior to FTA approval to enter PE are not reimbursable and have not been included in the capital cost. However, staff believes the previous purchase of the LOSSAN right-of-way ($20 million) should be considered a capital cost reimbursable under the FFGA and will pursue including this expenditure as part of capital cost with the FTA.

Estimated costs for the additional station parking discussed above, including construction and right-of-way, is estimated to range from $55 million to $82 million.

With the adoption of the LPA for the project, the Board directed staff to evaluate an additional station at the VA Medical Center during the development of the draft environmental document. The cost is estimated to range from $18 million to $20 million.

With the addition of the LOSSAN right-of-way and station parking, the project cost would range from $1,671 million to $1,698 million. With the inclusion of the VA Medical Center, project costs would range from $1,689 million to $1,718 million.

The project capital costs will be continuously updated through PE for inclusion in the draft and final SEIS/SEIR and updated again prior to entering final design in the FTA New Starts process. The estimated costs for additional station parking and the LOSSAN right-of-way will be included in the proposed project budget. This budget adjustment is being evaluated with the update of the TransNet Plan of Finance. The results of the Plan of Finance will be presented to the Transportation Committee next month that will include a request to increase the Mid Coast budget. As the project proceeds through PE, value engineering will be pursued to identify any cost saving opportunities.
**Project Schedule**

With the federal approval to enter PE the following delivery schedule has been developed resulting in a revenue operations date of 2018. This schedule is based on a design-bid-build delivery method.

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<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>Locally Preferred Alternative Approved - SANDAG</td>
<td>July 2010</td>
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<tr>
<td>FTA Approval to enter PE</td>
<td>Sept 2011</td>
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<tr>
<td>Draft Environmental Document</td>
<td>Mid 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Environmental Document and PE Completed</td>
<td>Mid 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>FTA Record of Decision</td>
<td>Late 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>FTA Approval to enter Final Design</td>
<td>Early 2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>FTA Full Funding Grant Agreement</td>
<td>Late 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Begin Construction</td>
<td>Mid 2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>Revenue Operations</td>
<td>2018</td>
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Evaluation of alternative delivery methods and options to refine the project schedule will continue to be explored through PE to expedite delivery.

**Next Steps**

The Project Working Group for the Mid-Coast Project, chaired by Supervisor Ron Roberts, is scheduled to meet on October 26 to review project status.

Development of the Draft SEIS/SEIR for the project will continue and is anticipated to be available for public review in the summer 2012.

Advance engineering in support of the draft environmental document and continue third party review and coordination.

SANDAG staff will continue to work closely with MTS, UCSD, the City of San Diego, Caltrans, and other stakeholders in addition to the FTA and its Project Management Oversight Contractor in development of the Mid-Coast Project.

JIM LINTHICUM  
Director of Mobility Management and Project Implementation

Attachments: 1. Mid-Coast Corridor Map  
2. Refined LPA Plan

Key Staff Contacts: Leslie Blanda, (619) 699-6907, lbl@sandag.org  
Greg Gastelum, (619) 699-7378, ggas@sandag.org
Refined LPA Plan