MEETING NOTICE
AND AGENDA

MID-COAST CORRIDOR TRANSIT PROJECT
WORKING GROUP

The Mid-Coast Corridor Transit Project Working Group may take action on any item appearing on this agenda.

Thursday, November 14, 2013
3:30 to 4:30 p.m.

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

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AGENDA HIGHLIGHTS

• MID-COAST CORRIDOR TRANSIT PROJECT: Refined Build Alternative

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+1. MEETING SUMMARY OF MAY 29, 2013

Review and approve the meeting summary from the May 29, 2013, meeting.

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS/MEMBER COMMENTS

Members of the public shall have the opportunity to address the Mid-Coast Corridor 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.

3. MID-COAST CORRIDOR TRANSIT PROJECT: REFINED BUILD ALTERNATIVE

The public comment period for the Mid-Coast Corridor Transit Project Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement/Subsequent Environmental Impact Report closed in July 2013. In response to comments and further analysis, refinements are proposed to the Build Alternative. Staff will present the proposed refinements to the PWG.

4. ADJOURN

+ next to an item indicates an attachment
MEETING SUMMARY OF MAY 29, 2013

Members in Attendance
Ron Roberts, Supervisor, County of San Diego (Chairman)
Anette Blatt, Scripps Health
Barbara Obrzut, La Jolla resident
Dan Allen, La Jolla resident
David Potter, Clairemont resident
Ann Van Leer, Land Conservation Brokerage, Inc.
Ian Foster, Clairemont resident
Brian Gregory, University of California San Diego
Joe LaCava, La Jolla Community Planning Association
Janay Kruger, University Community Planning Group
Rob Hutsel, San Diego River Park Foundation
Jeff Barfield, Clairemont Mesa Planning Group

SANDAG Staff in Attendance
Leslie Blanda
Greg Gastelum
John Haggerty
David Hicks

The meeting was called to order at 3:15 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM #1: MEETING SUMMARY OF NOVEMBER 7, 2012

Rob Hutsel, San Diego River Park Foundation, requested that he be added to the attendees list on the meeting summary for the last Project Working Group (PWG) meeting. With that change, Mr. Hutsel made a motion to approve the meeting summary for the November 7, 2012, PWG meeting. Janay Kruger, University Community Planning Group, seconded the motion and it was approved.

AGENDA ITEM #2: PUBLIC COMMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS/MEMBER COMMENTS

There were no public comments/communications/members comments provided.
AGENDA ITEM #3: MID-COAST CORRIDOR ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT RELEASE

John Haggerty, SANDAG Rail Director, provided an update on the Mid-Coast project and the release of the draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement/Subsequent Environmental Impact Report (SEIS/SEIR).

Mr. Haggerty explained that the project is an extension of the Blue Trolley Line and will include 10.9 miles of new Trolley tracks. There are three at-grade stations proposed and five aerial stations proposed, with an optional station being proposed at Veterans Affairs (VA) Medical Center. There is also a design option being considered on Genesee.

Mr. Haggerty provided an update on the status of engineering, explaining that staff has completed advanced conceptual design in support of preparation of the draft SEIS/SEIR. He then reviewed the plan views of the proposed stations at Tecolote Road, Clairemont Drive Station, Balboa Station, Nobel Station, VA Station, Pepper Canyon (at University of California San Diego [UCSD] West), and Voigt Drive (at UCSD East). He pointed out that in the University City area where the line goes down Genesee Avenue there are a number of design elements being analyzed in the environmental document.

With regard to construction, there are currently three potential methods of construction that could be considered for the project:

1) Design-Bid-Build: This is essentially a low-bid process that gives SANDAG very little control.

2) Design-Build: This is a newer method in which SANDAG would turn over the project to the best value bid and this project isn’t ideal for that method.

3) Construction Manager/General Contractor (CM/GC): This is a method where contractors are selected based on their expertise and value. This is the method that SANDAG has selected for Mid-Coast.

Questions/Comments:

Chairman Ron Roberts, County of San Diego, asked about the project costs. Mr. Haggerty explained that the project costs are $1.7 billion exclusive of financing costs. He added that the project costs include design, right-of-way, vehicle procurement, and construction.

Dave Potter, Clairemont resident, asked for an overview of the Clairemont Drive Station. Chairman Roberts explained that the station plans presented were still conceptual. Mr. Potter recommended that the primary use for this station be commercial since this is the major entrance into Clairemont Mesa. He stated that the plans for the station are not acceptable. Chairman Roberts explained that the future plans for this station are still being discussed with the owners. Mr. Haggerty explained that the current plans are consistent with what is included in the environmental document, which casts the largest environmental net possible and shows the most basic parking needed for that station. However, SANDAG is open to working with the property owners on their future plans.
Jeff Barfield, Clairemont Mesa Planning Group, echoed Mr. Potter’s comments stating that the current design will cause concerns in the community. He recommended SANDAG show some type of parking structure with integrated mixed use at that station. He added that Mid-Coast should not interfere with the developer’s ability to move forward with a project. Chairman Roberts explained that SANDAG is working with the property owners.

Dan Allen, La Jolla resident, asked about bus connections at the Nobel Drive Station. Mr. Haggerty explained that SuperLoop will provide bus connections to the Nobel Drive Station. Mr. Allen noted that the feeder bus loops weren’t included in the alternatives and suggested better ways to connect buses to the Trolley stations at VA and Nobel.

Brian Gregory, UCSD, noted an issue with buses idling and using the streets for layovers on the UCSD campus. Campus staff is working with Metropolitan Transit Systems and Caltrans on the bus turnouts on Gilman and is hopeful there will be bus parking areas near Nobel Drive to avoid buses routing through their campus. He added that they will continue to work with those agencies on those issues.

Anette Blatt, Scripps Health, asked about the changed station names for the Pepper Canyon Station (at UCSD West) and Voigt Drive Station (at UCSD East). Chairman Roberts explained that these are not the final station names and are for placement only. He added that a process for station naming will be forthcoming and that there could be potential for naming rights at these stations.

Ms. Kruger stated that the University City community is concerned about noise along Interstate 5 (I-5) and the visual issues with the aerial guideway on Genesee Avenue. She requested more information about the station design and recommended including state-of-the-art, functional stations. Chairman Roberts explained that the stations still need to go through a design process. He added that with regard to noise, the alignment made a more gradual turn over the I-5 freeway to minimize noise. Ms. Kruger stated that she is having trouble figuring out the bicycle/Trolley/rail/I-5 connections coming from Rose Canyon to the Nobel Station. Mr. Haggerty explained that Greg Gastelum, SANDAG Program Manager, is developing a graphic on the projects in this vicinity and will provide that to Ms. Kruger once it is completed.

Ann Van Leer, Land Conservation Brokerage, Inc., asked how SANDAG planned to coordinate mitigation efforts for the Los Angeles-San Diego-San Luis Obispo Rail Corridor and the bicycle projects in the same vicinity as Mid-Coast. Mr. Haggerty explained that the environmental impacts for each of these projects will be coordinated through the TransNet Environmental Mitigation Program. Ms. Van Leer asked how this would be addressed in the information at the public meeting. Mr. Haggerty explained that each of those projects has their own environmental process, timeline, and their processes are separate. However, SANDAG is coordinating with the various agencies for all of the projects. Chairman Roberts asked Mr. Gastelum when SANDAG anticipates having the graphic illustrating all of the projects available. Mr. Gastelum replied that it would be ready in a couple of weeks.

Mr. Hutsel stated that the San Diego River aspects of the project are very important and very little information is available in the document. He added that SANDAG should expect to receive a lot of comments from many groups with interests in the San Diego River. Chairman Roberts explained that the light rail transit bridge for Mid-Coast is parallel to the existing bridge going over the San Diego River.
Barbara Obrzut, La Jolla resident, asked whether any thought been given to the selection of contractors and inclusion of local jobs for project construction. Mr. Haggerty said that SANDAG uses prevailing wage to make sure they are good quality jobs and added that the construction delivery method, CM/GC, will help with that as well.

Leslie Blanda, SANDAG Mid-Coast Project Manager/New Starts/Environmental/Planning, provided an overview of the status of environmental review. She explained that the draft SEIR/SEIR is complete, including 25 technical reports, 3 technical memoranda, and a plan set. A Notice of Availability (NOA) for the draft SEIS/SEIR was published in the Federal Register on May 17, 2013. This initiates a public comment period on the document for 60 days, which concludes on July 17, 2013.

**AGENDA ITEM #4: PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

Ms. Blanda explained that public comments can be submitted by members of the public in several ways. Comments can be provided by:

- United States Mail
- Email
- Fax
- Voicemail
- Public Meetings
- Public Hearing

All comments must be postmarked by July 17, 2013.

Ms. Blanda then explained that during the public review period, SANDAG will hold five public meetings (four meetings and one public hearing):

- June 4, 2013: Cadman Elementary School (Clairemont Mesa)
- June 1, 2013: UCSD
- June 12, 2013: La Jolla Country Day School (University City)
- June 18, 2013: Caltrans (Old Town)
- June 21, 2013: SANDAG (Downtown)
The format of the four public meetings will be similar to the meetings held during the scoping period for the project. There will be nine stations for the public to visit:

- Welcome
- Purpose and Need
- Alternatives Evaluated
- Transportation Analysis
- Construction
- Environmental Analysis
- Property Acquisitions
- Public Involvement
- Comments

Ms. Blanda then reviewed the information to be presented at each station.

PURPOSE AND NEED:

Information will be presented about population and employment growth, as well as transportation needs within the Mid-Coast Corridor. This station will also include graphics and information about the project purpose to increase transit speed and reliability, expand transit capacity, and reduce transfers.

ALTERNATIVES EVALUATED:

Details will be presented about the No-Build Alternative and the Build Alternative at this station. The No-Build Alternative consists of modifications to Route 150 bus line and no additional transit stations, in order to meet the project needs. The Build Alternative includes the extension to University City, eight new stations (five to include parking), no new at-grade crossings, and a capital costs of $1.64 billion (year-of-expenditure dollars, excluding financing charges).

TRANSPORTATION:

The project team will cover the benefits of transit, bus-Trolley connections, and the bicycle and pedestrian connections related to the project. Additionally, information will be available on the traffic analysis completed as part of the draft SEIS/SEIR. Ms. Blanda summarized some of the key findings of the traffic analysis:

- Impacts were found at 15 intersections and one roadway segment throughout the Mid-Coast Corridor
- 13 of the 15 intersections are fully mitigated
• Impacts remain at two intersections and one roadway segment:
  o Beech Street and Pacific Highway
  o Mission Bay Drive and Garnet Avenue
  o Balboa Avenue from I-5 southbound on-ramp to I-5 northbound off-ramp

CONSTRUCTION:

Information will be presented about the anticipated construction schedule and activities. It is anticipated that there will be 4.5 years of construction. Working hours will vary and construction activities will overlap. There will be impacts anticipated during construction including air quality; noise and vibration; historic, archaeological, and paleontological resources; and transportation. Additionally, information will be available on the construction mitigation and minimization measures and the transportation management plan.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

An overview of the environmental studies and impacts will be provided at this station. There are areas in the project areas with impacts after mitigation. They include communities and neighborhoods (Genesee Avenue Design Option only) and visual resources/aesthetics (Genesee Avenue Design Option only). There will be a focus on the noise analysis and the ecosystems and biological resources at this station.

PROPERTY ACQUISITIONS:

At this station, the project team will provide an overview of federal and state policies that deal with property acquisition, including SANDAG Policy No. 21. Ms. Blanda provided a summary of property acquisitions.

Ms. Blanda then provided an overview of the next steps for the project:

• July 17, 2013: Complete public review and comment period
• Summer/Fall 2013: Review and respond to comments
• Fall 2013/Winter 2014: Prepare final SEIS/SEIR
• Early 2014: Public NOA of final SEIS/SEIR
• Mid-2014: SANDAG Notice of Determination on final SEIR and Federal Transit Administration Record of Decision for final SEIS

Questions/Comments:

Ms. Van Leer asked whether SANDAG intends to install fencing in the Rose Canyon and Rose Creek area. If so, she asked how SANDAG will address public access. Mr. Haggerty explained that fencing is planned in the railroad right-of-way, as the Public Utilities Commission requires a barrier. He added
that a segment of the line from Balboa Avenue north would require fencing. Ms. Van Leer asked whether there is a way to provide access to pedestrians/bikers. Ms. Kruger asked whether the fencing would be chain link. Mr. Haggerty stated that it would probably be chain link. Ms. Van Leer suggested that the fencing should consider that area is a wildlife crossing and that pedestrians are already moving through that area.

Mr. Hutsel asked whether Friars Road would be closed during the construction period. Mr. Haggerty explained that the team will be putting up false work and there will be a time where the bike path will be closed during that time. Bikers would need to walk their bike under false work during construction because it is not safe to direct bicycle traffic there. Mr. Hutsel stated that closing traffic at Friars Road will be tough and suggested the team look at flooding impacts on Friars Road as there weren't details in the document about that.

Mr. Allen raised concerns about the Trolley users parking at University City stations, similar to what happens at the Old Town Transit Center currently. He referenced that there are a total of 1,000 parking spaces at Mid-Coast stations and asked whether that number is adequate and how the decision was made. Ms. Blanda explained that the decision was made based on ridership and projected parking demand and stated that with the parking spaces proposed, SANDAG is meeting demand for the model. Chairman Roberts added that he didn’t think any of the University City stations would rise to the level of activity of Old Town Transit Center.

Ms. Van Leer asked about what will happen to the Rose Canyon bike path during construction. Mr. Haggerty explained that the path will remain open where possible, but there may be a need for it to close for periods of time (up to two weeks) for safety reasons. Chairman Roberts added that the CM/CG construction method gives SANDAG leverage should the conditions or plan not meet with the satisfaction of SANDAG.

Mr. Barfield asked whether the City of San Diego is moving forward with the Morena Boulevard Station Area Planning Study and if SANDAG is integrating any of the Mid-Coast elements design with that process. Ms. Blanda explained that SANDAG is coordinating with the City of San Diego on that effort and sharing information with that project team.

**AGENDA ITEM #5: ADJOURN**

Chairman Roberts stated that another PWG meeting will be held soon and suggested the members attend the public meetings. He then adjourned the meeting at 4:17 p.m.