MEETING NOTICE
AND AGENDA

REGIONAL PLANNING TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP

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

Thursday, August 13, 2015

1:15 to 3:15 p.m.

SANDAG, 7th Floor Conference Room
401 B Street, Suite 800
San Diego, CA 92101

Staff Contacts: Carolina Gregor
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Susan Baldwin
(619) 699-1943
susan.baldwin@sandag.org

Beginning in February, the parking garage elevators at Wells Fargo Plaza will undergo a six month mechanical modernization. During this period, only one garage elevator will be in service. Please allow yourself extra time to make your way up from the garage to the SANDAG offices and Board Room. For those requiring special assistance, please call the SANDAG front desk in advance of any meetings at (619) 699-1900.

AGENDA HIGHLIGHTS

• DRAFT REGIONAL TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

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Public comments regarding the agenda can be sent to SANDAG via comment@sandag.org. Please include the agenda item, your name, and your organization. Email comments should be received no later than 12 noon, two working days prior to the meeting. Any handouts, presentations, or other materials from the public intended for distribution at the meeting should be received by the Clerk of the Working Group no later than 12 noon, two working days prior to the meeting.

In order to keep the public informed in an efficient manner and facilitate public participation, SANDAG also provides access to all agenda and meeting materials online at www.sandag.org/meetings. Additionally, interested persons can sign up for e-notifications via our e-distribution list at either the SANDAG website or by sending an email request to webmaster@sandag.org.

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REGIONAL PLANNING TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP
Thursday, August 13, 2015

ITEM NO. RECOMMENDATION

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Members of the public will have the opportunity to address the Regional Planning Technical Working Group (TWG) on any issue within the jurisdiction of SANDAG that is not on this agenda. Anyone desiring to speak shall reserve time by completing a “Request to Speak” form and giving it to the meeting coordinator prior to speaking. Public speakers should notify the meeting coordinator if they have a handout for distribution to working group members. Public speakers are limited to three minutes or less per person. TWG members also may provide information and announcements under this agenda item.

+3. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

The TWG is asked to review and approve the minutes from its July 9, 2015, meeting.

REPORTS

+4. DRAFT REGIONAL TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (Susan Baldwin)

DISCUSSION

Last month, the TWG reviewed and discussed the initial draft version of the Regional Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Strategy. Since then, the draft strategy also has been discussed by the Regional Planning and Transportation Committees and various other working groups. A revised draft strategy, in track changes, is attached. The draft strategy is built around the “big idea” that the “D” in TOD represents “Districts” versus “Development,” areas that are within “five minute access” (by walking, biking, and driving) of transit stations, thus broadening the definition of transit-oriented areas and transit accessibility, and the types of development that are transit supportive. The revised draft strategy includes the addition of a set of “Key Early Actions,” and the detailed actions toward the end of the document have been reformatted. The TWG is asked to review the revised draft, and in particular, discuss and provide input on the key early actions and the more detailed list of strategies and actions. The TOD Strategy will be included as an appendix of San Diego Forward: The Regional Plan.

5. ADJOURNMENT AND NEXT MEETING

INFORMATION

The next TWG meeting will be held on September 10, 2015, from 1:15 to 3:15 p.m.

+ next to an agenda item indicates an attachment
The meeting of the TWG was called to order by Chair Brad Raulston (National City) at 1:15 p.m.

1. **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

   Self-introduction were made.

2. **PUBLIC COMMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS**

   Carolina Gregor (SANDAG) announced that SANDAG recently published a “Quick Guide” and a two-page fact sheet that condense the most salient themes of San Diego Forward: The Regional Plan. The comment period for the Regional Plan will end on July 15, 2015. The Quick Guide and Fact Sheet, as well as the full version of the Regional Plan, are available online at sdforward.com.

   Ms. Gregor mentioned that on July 30, 2015, the Climate Action Campaign in conjunction with the League of Women Voters and Center for Sustainable Energy will hold a forum on sustainable energy solutions, jobs, and public participation.

3. **APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES (APPROVE)**

   **3A – Approval of the March 12, 2015, meeting minutes**

   **Action:** Upon a motion by Bill Chopyk (La Mesa), and second by Jeff Murphy (Encinitas), the TWG unanimously approved the March 12, 2015, meeting minutes. Yes: Chair Raulston, Don Neu (Carlsbad), Ed Batchelder (Chula Vista), Kathy Garcia (Del Mar), Tony Shute (El Cajon), Mr. Murphy, Barbara Redlitz (Escondido), Mr. Chopyk, Carol Dick (Lemon Grove), Rich Whipple (Poway), Lara Gates (San Diego), Andrew Spurgin (County of San Diego), John Conley (Vista); No: None; Abstain: None; Absent: Coronado, Imperial Beach, Oceanside, San Marcos, Santee, Solana Beach.
3B – Approval of the June 11, 2015, meeting minutes

Action: Upon a motion by Mr. Chopyk, and second by Mr. Murphy, the TWG unanimously approved the June 11, 2015, meeting minutes. Yes: Chair Raulston, Mr. Neu, Mr. Batchelder, Ms. Garcia, Mr. Shute, Mr. Murphy, Ms. Redlitz, Mr. Chopyk, Ms. Dick, Mr. Whipple, Ms. Gates, Mr. Spurgin, Mr. Conley; No: None; Abstain: None; Absent: Coronado, Imperial Beach, Oceanside, San Marcos, Santee, Solana Beach.

REPORTS

4. DRAFT REGIONAL TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (DISCUSSION)

Susan Baldwin (SANDAG) and Bill Anderson (AECOM) discussed the draft Regional Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Strategy. Ms. Baldwin said that the TOD Strategy will support and help implement the Regional Plan and its Sustainable Communities Strategy. The goal of the TOD Strategy is to bolster and reinforce the creation of sustainable communities by focusing on future residential and employment growth and development in urbanized areas near existing and future transportation infrastructure. Ms. Baldwin mentioned that TWG members have been involved in various aspects of the TOD Strategy, such as developing the scope of work, selecting the consultant team for the TOD Strategy, participating in the TOD Workshop held in October 2014, and attending the two-day TOD Strategy Forum held in January 2015 at the Jacobs Center.

Ms. Baldwin said that in May 2015, the SANDAG Board of Directors held a Policy Meeting, which was attended by Mr. Anderson (AECOM) and Dena Belzer (Strategic Economics). During this meeting, the Board provided feedback and comments on various aspects of the TOD Strategy as well as on topics pertaining to smart growth areas. Ms. Baldwin discussed the various recommendations that SANDAG staff and the consulting team have developed for the draft TOD Strategy, and asked TWG members to provide feedback. The goal is to include the TOD Strategy as an appendix to the Regional Plan.

Mr. Anderson encouraged TWG members to read the TOD Working Papers (sandag.org/tod) to gain insight into the context in which the strategy was created. Mr. Anderson added that the TOD Forum that took place in January served as a good mechanism to receive feedback on the strategy.

Mr. Batchelder asked if TWG members could have until mid-August to provide comments.

Ms. Baldwin said yes, and mentioned that the TWG could meet again in August to discuss the strategy in more depth.

Mr. Batchelder asked if the Working Papers were part of the TOD Strategy.

Ms. Baldwin said yes. Mr. Anderson added that the Working Papers are organized according to the barriers to TOD implementation that SANDAG staff and the consulting team heard identified based on outreach activities and the literature review at the beginning of the project.

Colin Parent (Circulate San Diego) stated that Circulate San Diego sent a letter to the SANDAG Board of Directors on May 7, 2015. In this letter, Circulate San Diego called for the incorporation of additional grant funding for TOD projects and in TOD-ready areas. Mr. Parent added that the draft TOD Strategy, as currently written, calls only for the “consideration” of and/or “continuation” of
current strategies, and therefore does very little for implementation. This is one of the major
dissatisfactions that Circulate San Diego has with the current draft strategy.

Mr. Batchelder agreed with Mr. Parent, and said that there are several areas where SANDAG could
take a stronger role, such as developing TOD readiness criteria.

Mr. Anderson responded that one of the challenges lies in trying to identify the role of SANDAG
versus the role of local jurisdictions.

Ms. Garcia noted that the language included in the TOD Strategy, specifically the words “continue
or consider,” made it seem like everything is fine instead of impressing urgency upon TOD
implementation.

Coleen Clementson (SANDAG) stated that SANDAG and the jurisdictions have been working on a
variety of smart growth and transit-oriented strategies for some time, and that many of these
strategies are reflected in the draft TOD Strategy. The strategy acknowledges the many efforts
undertaken in the region that are helping us move toward greater transit oriented development.

Ms. Garcia suggested that the TOD Strategy be reorganized to identify the actions that have
supported TOD in the past, and follow up with other actions that could help the region make
additional improvements in this area.

Mr. Batchelder suggested the addition of a chapter focused on TOD implementation.

Mr. Anderson clarified that many details on implementation are included in the TOD actions. He
added that in Denver, Colorado, approval of TOD projects only takes three to six months. Denver
adopted a form-based code (and does not have the California Environmental Quality Act), which
has been very effective from an implementation standpoint. However, different localities have
different implementation and approval timeframes.

Mr. Chopyk said that it would be helpful to see market demand data around Trolley Stations.
Developing specific plans for four to five miles around these stations is a small geographic area for a
specific plan. In addition, community members are uncomfortable giving blanket approval for
development projects.

Mr. Anderson said that this is context based. Some sites might require a Master Plan, and others
would require a Specific Plan.

Mr. Chopyk added that density is also an issue, and elements such as traffic and parking can be
barriers to TOD.

Ms. Baldwin said that one of the TOD Strategies focuses on the development of educational
materials that show where TOD has been done well. Mr. Anderson added that the “D” in “TOD”
represents the concept of “Districts,” as opposed to Development. A district approach would have a
greater variety of products (mid-rise and high-rise buildings, homes, commercial) in a larger area
around the transit station (a five minute walking, biking, and driving distance), as opposed to only
considering the immediate vicinity around transit stations. This is a much broader approach to
planning and works on a larger scale.
Kathy Keehan (Air Pollution Control District) asked if this approach would “wash-out” the higher spectrum of density.

Chair Raulston suggested turning the conversation towards the items TWG members feel are missing in the TOD Strategy and ask the transit operating agencies for their thoughts.

Denis Desmond (Metropolitan Transit System [MTS]) said that MTS has had success implementing TOD on publicly-owned lands, such as in the Grossmont Trolley Station area. From a transit planning perspective, intensification around the station areas helps; however, he reminded TWG members that local planning and design elements can have a major impact on the performance of the transit system, access issues, and American’s with Disabilities Act issues.

Johnny Dunning (North County Transit District [NCTD]) stated that there are various approaches to achieving building heights near transit stations and cited the examples of the SPRINTER and COASTER corridors. The SPRINTER is inland, which allows for more potential for higher density development than the coastal areas. However, the key to TOD implementation is acceptance by the local community. He expressed support for the approach of a TOD “district,” and indicated that NCTD is interested in further discussing the draft strategy.

Ms. Baldwin asked if TWG members would be interested in re-convening and discussing the top TOD strategies and actions in more detail.

Ms. Gates said that the TOD Strategy aligns well with policies espoused by the City of San Diego, but the challenge for San Diego is zoning. The City of San Diego does not have a true mixed-use zone.

Mr. Anderson said that one of the Working Papers contains information on zoning, and in some cases, mixed-use doesn’t pencil for the developers who want to be in a mixed-use zone. In a “district” setting, however, a greater mix of uses can be provided, with some vertical and some horizontal. In Denver, for example, higher ceiling heights are allowed in order to allow flexibility for future uses.

Ms. Gates inquired about the issue of parking in the TOD Strategy.

Mr. Anderson said that market information is needed from underwriters, as some areas don’t allow for high parking ratios; an educated banking/financing community is key.

Ms. Gates indicated that a further conversation on parking ratios would be helpful.

Mr. Anderson said that development in Portland, Oregon next to the transit lines is done according to Floor Area Ratio.

Chair Raulston suggested that an email be sent out to see if members of the TWG would like to have a TWG meeting in August to further discuss the TOD Strategy.

Mr. Batchelder said that public safety is also an issue to be taken into account with TOD.

Chair Raulston said that public safety is a big issue, and discussions that arise pertaining to socio-economics, health, and safety, are at the top of the list in planning.
5. **TransNet Smart Growth Incentive Program and Active Transportation Grant Program: Draft Project Rankings for Third Cycle of Grant Funding (Information)**

Ms. Gregor provided a status report on the draft project rankings for Cycle 3 of the TransNet Smart Growth Incentive Program (SGIP) and Active Transportation Grant Program (ATGP). A report to the Transportation Committee, outlining the draft project rankings and funding recommendations, was provided for information as part of the agenda packet. For Cycle 3, $15 million in funds are available, with $12 million allocated to the SGIP and $3 million designated for the ATGP. SANDAG received a total of 56 projects applications, out of which 29 are recommended for funding. For this round of funding, jurisdictions were allowed to submit applications under both programs. Separate evaluations panels were convened for each program. Both programs include qualitative and quantitative criteria. The evaluation panels scored the projects based on the qualitative criteria; the quantitative criteria were scored by SANDAG staff. Ms. Gregor asked TWG members to review the detailed scores and project rankings at sandag.org/cycle3grants, and inform SANDAG if any errors or discrepancies are found.

The draft project rankings and funding recommendations will be presented to the Regional Planning and Transportation Committees on July 17, 2015. The SANDAG Board of Directors will be asked to approve the projects recommended for funding on July 24, 2015.

6. **CAP-AND-TRADE: Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities (Discussion)**

Robyn Wapner (SANDAG) gave a brief presentation on funding results of the first round of Cap-and-Trade: Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Program (AHSC) funded by the State of California. On June 30, 2015, the Strategic Growth Council approved 28 projects for funding, totaling $121.9 million in statewide funding. Two projects in the San Diego region were awarded funding: the National City Westside Infill Transit-Oriented Development Project and the South Bay Bus Rapid Transit Project submitted by SANDAG. In preparation for the second cycle, TWG members were asked for their feedback as well as any lessons learned from jurisdictions who submitted applications.

Ms. Clementson said that Escondido and National City submitted applications, as did SANDAG. Ms. Clementson clarified that affordable housing proposals needed to have a transit component, and stated that the methodology for determining Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emission reductions was complicated.

Chair Raulston stated that National City was awarded a grant, and as a result, has been tapped to make presentations on the lessons learned from the application process. One of the complex elements was the way in which GHG emissions were calculated. The project that National City submitted was in Phase 2, and was “ready to go.” As jurisdictions apply for more grants, they will get better at the application process.

Ms. Gates shared that the City of San Diego did not apply for state funding because there was a shortage of staff to prepare applications.

Mr. Batchelder said that, in terms of equitable distribution, a block grant approach would be beneficial.
Mr. Chopyk observed that jurisdictions that are not in a “disadvantaged” area per statewide environmental justice criteria are at a disadvantage, and that there are very few state-designated disadvantaged communities in the San Diego region in comparison to other areas in the state.

Chair Raulston said that the application process was very confusing, and that the National City project competed well because it was already in Phase 2.

Ms. Wapner said that a workshop on lessons learned regarding the first cycle of the AHSC would be taking place in Los Angeles, and that SANDAG would attend and help represent the perspectives discussed at today’s meeting. The workshop will also be web-cast over the internet.

7. BORDER HEALTH EQUITY TRANSPORTATION STUDY (INFORMATION)

Dan Gallagher (SANDAG) gave a brief presentation on the Border Health Equity Transportation Study (BHETS), an extensive research study designed to analyze and assess the impact of mobility and environmental factors on health outcomes in the San Ysidro community. The purpose of the study, Mr. Gallagher said, is to create a model planning document that can be replicated to analyze the deeply rooted connections between the built environment and public health outcomes. The core methodology of the BHETS is intended to identify the existing conditions in terms of mobility, and built environment in the San Ysidro Community, analyze the connections and impacts between the built environment and health, solicit feedback from community members to help shape the study, and develop a set of recommendations that can assist in developing a monitoring and evaluation plan along with a list of resources for community members and agency staff. For this purpose, a data analysis and statistical/partial correlations analysis were conducted to quantitatively determine the association between the built environment, and public health in the San Ysidro Community and the San Diego region as whole. The result of this analysis was a set of 16 recommendations that range from infrastructure improvements, to education and awareness information.

Sarah Strand (SANDAG) presented the BHETS Story Map, an online interactive resource that outlines the 16 recommendations that resulted from the BHETS analysis. The BHETS Story Map was created in conjunction with SANDAG technical staff to showcase the recommendations included in BHETS, as well as to tell the story of the BHETS in a concise and user-friendly manner. Among the features of the Story Map are descriptions of each recommendation, easy scrollable pages, GIS mapping to pinpoint the exact areas where many of the recommendations are to be located, connections to various agency resources, and a community toolbox intended to serve as an informational resource for the San Ysidro Community.

For more information on BHETS and its Interactive Story Map visit sandag.org

Mr. Batchelder asked if the Story Map could be run on a loop with voice over.

Ms. Strand mentioned that the Story Map does not currently have this feature, but it would be worth looking into.
8. ADJOURNMENT AND NEXT MEETINGS

The next meeting of the TWG is scheduled for August 13, 2015, from 1:15 to 3:15 p.m.

Chair Brad Raulston adjourned the meeting at 3:15 p.m.
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**Advisory Members**

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<td>&quot;Thomas&quot; Stott</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mae Malong</td>
<td>City of Chula Vista</td>
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<td>SANDAG</td>
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<td>Kelly Brady</td>
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YOU ARE NOT REQUIRED TO SIGN-IN, however, if you would like SANDAG staff to know that you attended this meeting and want to provide a method of contacting you, please fill in the information below. Please note that SANDAG's sign-in sheets are public records and may be disclosed to the public upon request.
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INTRODUCTION

Transit Oriented Districts: A Strategy for the San Diego Region (“Regional TOD Strategy”) strives to create vibrant, healthy, and complete communities throughout the region by increasing access to the existing and planned regional transit network and overcoming barriers to implementation through coordinated, supportive land use policies and regulations, and public and private investment.

This strategy will support and help to implement San Diego Forward: The Regional Plan, the San Diego region’s Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy. It is intended to reinforce and help implement the regional strategy of creating sustainable communities by focusing future residential and employment growth and development in existing urbanized areas of the region near existing and planned transportation infrastructure. This strategy will help protect sensitive habitat and open space; provide residents with mobility, housing, and job options; create complete, healthy, and sustainable communities, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This Regional TOD Strategy is designed for the particular attributes of the San Diego region, its development patterns, economic base, unique urban topography, and diverse community contexts. The fundamental premises of the strategy are:

• The San Diego region has developed at a relatively low density with dispersed job centers, not unlike a number of major metropolitan areas in the United States. Except for a few locations such as Downtown San Diego, Mission Valley, La Mesa, Lemon Grove, and others, the conventional definition of TOD as “Transit-Oriented Development”—development immediately adjacent to an existing or planned transit station—alone would not result in sufficient development capacity and vibrant communities serviced by transit called for in San Diego Forward. “Transit Oriented Districts,” generally described as places within 5 minutes of existing and planned transit stations, would allow communities to consider larger areas for reinvestment and to tailor development to meet community goals. The working definition for a Transit Oriented District set forth in this strategy is 0.25 miles by walking (at 3 mph), 0.75 miles by biking (at 9 mph), and 2.0 miles by vehicle (at 25 mph) from a transit station. These 5-minute access areas vary based on the local topography and physical context of each transit oriented district.

• Existing and future transit oriented districts have varied geographies that offer a mixture of uses, building types, parcel sizes and configurations, and development opportunities at different scales for different types of investors, depending on the particular location and public support. All districts should, however, emphasize quality environments and supporting facilities for walking and biking, planned to be compatible with vehicles, and well-designed connections within the district and to adjacent neighborhoods and workplaces.

• TODs are not just individual locations within a community, but are part of an inter-connected network of mixed-use districts with roles that relate to and support other TODs along the network.
Purpose of the TOD Strategy

Creating vibrant, healthy communities that are accessible to transit is at the foundation of the region’s coordinated land use and transportation planning.

As the San Diego region and its transportation system continue to evolve, with almost 925,000 more people and 460,000 more jobs anticipated in the region by 2050, local jurisdictions have made great strides in planning for more compact development near transit and a large majority of future growth is expected to occur near existing and planned transit stops.1 In addition to the strides made by local jurisdictions, the region also has made great strides in planning for a more robust transit network as shown in the 2050 Regional Transportation Plan and its Sustainable Development Strategy (October 2011) and now in the most recent plan San Diego Forward: The Regional Plan, of which this strategy is an appendix.

Planning and implementing transit oriented districts in the region can give more people a choice to take transit, walk, or ride bicycles more, and drive less, reducing dependency on vehicles that generate greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions as they go about their daily activities and allow for a more active healthy lifestyle. Transit oriented districts also provide an opportunity to create vibrant community centers and neighborhoods that evolve into mixed-use walkable districts where people can live, work, shop, and recreate.

This Regional TOD Strategy sets forth an approach bringing together existing strategies and recommending new strategies to create communities serviceable by transit; implement successful supportive infrastructure; and facilitate development of homes, workplaces, and services that contribute to a rich mix of living, working, and mobility choices. The San Diego region has several successful transit oriented communities, but will need more as the region grows.
Objectives

This Strategy is organized to address the challenges that hinder successful implementation of more transit oriented districts. The objectives are to:

- Attract investment and enable development near transit so that these areas become centers of activity.
- Increase transit ridership by increasing the number of people that live and work near transit and enhancing accessibility to transit.
- Reduce vehicle miles traveled greenhouse gas emissions per capita and contribute to the goals of San Diego Forward: The Regional Plan to create sustainable, healthy, communities.
- Meet the challenges of regional growth by creating capacity near transit by using strategic investments and making selected TOD areas “ready” for new development.
- Build upon the existing foundation for TOD in the San Diego region by identifying supportive policies, targeted regulations, and assertive actions to create transit oriented districts.
- Align and coordinate efforts of SANDAG, local governments, transit agencies, developers, community members, and others with an interest in transit oriented development.
What Are “Transit Oriented Districts”?  

Transit oriented districts are areas, neighborhoods, or communities that are conveniently accessible to transit. Districts are larger areas where some people are close enough to walk or bike to and from a transit station while others can get dropped off, carpool, or use shared mobility options.

“TOD” is typically an acronym for “Transit Oriented Development.” This definition focuses on real estate development projects next to transit stations, often as public-private partnerships. However, this strategy defines report approaches the “D” in TODs as in this report stands for “District” to reflect the importance of the relationship between transit stations and the surrounding community. Thinking of TODs in a larger context enables a range of development opportunities that meet various needs, while remaining market feasible.

Each community in the San Diego region is distinct, varying by topography, community characteristics, the pattern and concentration of residential and employment activity, and other site-specific factors. However, transit oriented districts can serve as the center of each community in a unique way, while still having a relative concentration of residential, commercial, and mixed-use development served by high-quality transit.

Development opportunities may include a range of uses from small lot housing and town homes, to low-rise and loft housing, flats and residential towers, main-street commercial, urban flex and campus space, visitor-serving uses, institutional facilities, and taller residential, office, and mixed-use buildings — all within mixed-use environments near transit, most of which are accessible by walking or biking. The mix of uses and densities will depend on the existing fabric and future plans for the district and will vary from place to place. A few examples, among several, include downtown San Diego, smaller city downtowns, and urban centers in larger cities such as downtown Oceanside and Chula Vista, and University City in the City of San Diego. Many neighborhood districts at smaller scales also exist along transit corridors.

Benefits of TODs

Transit oriented districts have many benefits including:

• Creating healthy neighborhoods that contribute less to greenhouse gas emissions.
• Increasing transit ridership.
• Providing transportation choices.
• Providing walking, biking, and other mobility facilities options.
• Reducing the number of cars on the road.
• Providing facilitating housing and employment opportunities accessible to all residents in the region.
• Improving social equity and reducing social disparities.
• Improving performance of the street, highway, and freeway system by providing mobility options.
SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Below is a summary of the recommendations that SANDAG, the transit agencies, local jurisdictions, and developers can take to facilitate the creation of more vibrant transit oriented districts throughout the region. These recommendations are described in more detail on pages 31 through 54 of the strategy, and were developed to address specific challenges and opportunities discussed in the six TOD working papers and two context reports (www.sandag.org/tod).

1. **Support core areas within transit oriented districts with diversity of land uses and activities in the Smart Growth Opportunity Areas**, consistent with the land use targets identified in the regional Smart Growth Concept Map allowing for different housing types at varied densities with a range of price points. Consideration should be given to a range of local planning regulatory mechanisms, such as specific plans and overlay zones, and reduced parking ratios, should be undertaken to facilitate TOD where appropriate.

2. **Coordinate TODs strategically along single corridors or inter-connected networks of transit lines to better connect people to jobs by taking into account the characteristics of stations and surrounding land uses along a corridor.** Coordinated development along a network of TODs can help create housing at costs that are consistent with the wages of industries and jobs within the same network. This would help to create job growth and workforce housing in transit oriented districts and support workforce housing, and help build the market for TODs.

3. **Continue to promote walking and biking facilities within transit oriented districts to bridge the first-last mile gap**, by placing a funding priority on supportive walking and biking infrastructure, amenities, and connections within the core of transit oriented districts. The TransNet Active Transportation and Smart Growth grant programs and Local Streets and Road funds provide funding for these types of improvements. Transportation impact fees and other locally-adopted financing mechanisms can augment and leverage these funds.

4. **Consider ways to provide vehicular connections and manage parking within transit oriented districts to connect transit stations to job centers and homes where walking or biking distances are impractical.** Vehicles can extend people’s ability to get to and from home and work by carpooling, vanpooling, taking a shuttle, or using a car share or ride share service. Parking supply, pricing, and management tools found in the Parking Management Tool Kit also are important mechanisms to get people to and from transit stations. The creation of mobility hubs can help implement this recommendation.

5. **Continue to engage a broad range of stakeholders in the planning and design of transit oriented districts and support methods for public involvement.** SANDAG can continue its role in presenting examples of successful TODs within and outside the region, including field trips to exemplary districts and the ongoing Smart Growth Outreach program; and could consider producing a testimonial on-line video program of people who use transit, live and work in TODs, and are employers in TODs, and consider exploring national models for mediating design and planning conflicts with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the region to provide mediation and conflict resolution services. 
6. Continue to work toward the creation of clear rules that provide a predictable development process and focus on removing regulatory barriers. Reducing risk from the entitlement process, including time delay and political risk, is essential to attracting investors and developers. Each jurisdiction has its own structure for land use regulation and design review; however, priority can be given to context-sensitive design that produces predictable and feasible results that are embraced by the public.

7. Continue to explore opportunities to streamline California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) guidelines and processes to facilitate development projects in transit oriented districts. The region’s local jurisdictions should consider amendments to their General Plan policies, traffic impact analysis procedures, and locally adopted CEQA guidelines and significance thresholds to take advantage of recent changes in state law to facilitate infill development and CEQA review.

8. Continue to update transportation impact analysis methodologies to provide refined travel forecasting for infill projects in transit oriented districts. SANDAG transportation models that incorporate walking, biking, and access to transit should continue to be developed and refined with training on their use provided to local jurisdictions and consultants.

9. Consider focusing infrastructure and community facilities to support the success of transit oriented districts. Transit oriented districts may require significant investments to accommodate new development and changes in land uses, and to provide sufficient capacity and necessary public amenities. Enhanced Infrastructure Financing Districts; value capture techniques; special facility districts such as single or dis-contiguous TOD community facilities districts, property based BIDs, storm water districts, and mobility districts; TOD-specific standards for impact fees; and TOD-focused directed local capital improvement plan investments are among the local mechanisms available.

10. Continue to encourage and monitor public-private partnerships and explore emerging tools for financing development projects and value-capture techniques to help fill gaps in project financing; leveraging and proactively promoting transit agency and publicly owned land available for development near transit stations; investing in a regional pooled fund focused on TODs; utilizing incentive zoning and development agreements, and capitalizing on federal, state, and local grant programs are all ways of catalyzing development.

11. Direct affordable housing resources to transit oriented districts to maximize the household benefits of locating affordable and workforce housing in proximity to transit. Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME, and other funding can provide supportive infrastructure; sites can be positioned for tax credits and affordable housing grants and bond criteria; and TODs can be identified as priority receiving areas for inclusionary housing in-lieu fees and housing trust fund expenditures.

12. Promote new ways to promote market readiness and development feasibility of TODs by sharing information, showcasing successful case studies, highlighting emerging opportunities, and monitoring trends over time. Consider working with industry associations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to prepare market performance information for development within the region’s transit oriented districts and regularly publish a “Market State of TODs” report to inform potential developers and investors (locally and nationally).

13. Develop an on-line, interactive tool to evaluate the TOD readiness of sites and districts – a TOD Readiness Dashboard - that can be used by SANDAG, local jurisdictions, transit agencies, developers, community groups, and others to identify near term opportunities and to assess actions that can transition TODs that are “almost ready” to “ready” for near term development.
KEY EARLY ACTIONS

The following actions will be completed during the current (FY 2016) and upcoming fiscal years:

1. Develop a TOD readiness tool to evaluate the readiness of TOD sites and districts. (SANDAG, Local Jurisdictions, Transit Agencies, Developers)

2. Identify and pursue grant funding for one or more transit corridors to coordinate land uses, infrastructure financing, and environmental review through individual or dis-contiguous specific plans. (SANDAG, Local Jurisdictions, Transit Agencies)

3. Consider focusing capital improvement program funds and other funds (local, state, and federal; grants/loans; TransNet Local Street and Road funds) in transit oriented districts. (Local Jurisdictions)

4. Support the Affordable Housing Sustainable Communities cap-and-trade applications by identifying transportation related infrastructure projects that can be paired with applications. (SANDAG, Local Jurisdictions, Transit Agencies)

5. Evaluate development and infrastructure projects for consistency with Designing for Smart Growth, Creating Great Places in the San Diego Region using the Smart Growth Scorecard. (Local Jurisdictions)

6. Consider seeking funding to develop an outreach and information program that could include videos, social media, internet tools, traditional public meetings, and other platforms to showcase the benefits of transit oriented districts, highlighting places near transit, testimonials of users of transit, people who live and work in transit oriented districts, and major employers located in transit oriented districts. (SANDAG, Local Jurisdictions, Transit Agencies)

7. Monitor the pooled investment fund for TOD affordable housing being developed by Civic San Diego and the San Diego Housing Commission to determine the potential for creation of a similar fund(s) for use by other jurisdictions. (SANDAG)

8. Undertake a review of the TransNet Smart Growth Incentive Program and Active Transportation Grant Program evaluation criteria to ensure program alignment with TOD readiness criteria and an analysis of the completed grant projects to determine the degree to which they meet grant program objectives and align with TOD readiness criteria. (SANDAG, Local Jurisdictions, Transit Agencies)
CONTEXT OF TODs IN THE SAN DIEGO REGION

As the San Diego region and its transit system continue to evolve, SANDAG and local governments have made strides in planning for compact development near transit and in planning for more transit.

Our Changing Growth Patterns

In just 15 years, our planned development patterns have shifted significantly – toward more growth in the western and more urbanized areas of our region that are close to our existing and planned transportation network, allowing us to preserve 55 percent of the region (nearly 1.5 million acres) as open space, parks, protected habitat, and farmland.

The first map (on the left) shows the growth patterns that were planned in 1999 when the region’s plans called for extensive development in the eastern part of the county (Series 9 Regional Growth Forecast). Since then, plans have changed due to actions by our local cities and county. The second map (on the right) shows our new vision for the future (Series 13 Regional Growth Forecast).

1999 Planned Land Use

Prior Regional Growth Forecast
(Series 9, 1999)

- Growth in Housing Units
  1 dot = 10 new housing units

- Growth in Employment
  1 dot = 10 new jobs

Open Space

2015 Planned Land Use

Current Regional Growth Forecast
(Series 13, 2014)
Smart Growth Concept Map

In 2004, SANDAG adopted the Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP) for the San Diego region. The RCP provides a vision for the region based on smart growth and sustainability. A key component of the RCP is the “Smart Growth Concept Map” illustrating the location of existing, planned, and potential smart growth areas. These areas are potential locations for higher density mixed-use development near existing and planned public transit.

The Concept Map contains more than 200 locations in seven smart growth “place types”: the Metropolitan Center, Urban Centers, Town Centers, Community Centers, Rural Villages, Mixed Use Transit Corridors, and Special Use Centers, reflecting the principle that smart growth is not a “one-size-fits-all” endeavor but a series of land use, design, and mobility strategies that are applicable in varied contexts.

Local Governments

During the last decade, more than half of local jurisdictions have updated their land use plans and zoning ordinances, collectively moving the region’s vision of the future toward compact development near transit and greater open space preservation. Focusing housing and job opportunities in existing urbanized areas has replaced previous assumptions of more dispersed development patterns (as shown in the maps above). Transit oriented communities will play an important role in accommodating the region’s future population, housing, and employment growth, but challenges remain in market readiness and potential capacity for transit oriented communities throughout the San Diego region.

Smart Growth Concept Map Minimum Land Use and Transportation Targets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Smart Growth Place Type</th>
<th>Minimum Residential Target</th>
<th>Minimum Employment Target</th>
<th>Minimum Transit Service Characteristics</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Metropolitan Center</td>
<td>75 du/ac</td>
<td>80 emp/ac</td>
<td>Commuter Rail, Express Light Rail Transit (LRT), or Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Center</td>
<td>40 du/ac</td>
<td>50 emp/ac</td>
<td>LRT or Rapid Bus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town Center</td>
<td>20 du/ac</td>
<td>30 emp/ac</td>
<td>LRT, Rapid Bus, or Streetcar/Shuttle*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Center</td>
<td>20 du/ac</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>High-Frequency Peak-Period Local Bus or Streetcar/Shuttle within Urban Area Transit Strategy Boundary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rural Village</td>
<td>10.9 du/ac</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Special Use Center</td>
<td>Optional</td>
<td>45 emp/ac</td>
<td>LRT, Rapid Bus, or Peak BRT</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mixed-Use Transit Corridor</td>
<td>24 du/ac</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>High-Frequency Peak-Period Local Bus or Streetcar/Shuttle</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

du/ac = dwelling units per acre emp/ac = employees per acre

* In Town Centers, areas can be connected to LRT and/or Rapid Bus by a local transit connection or Streetcar/Shuttle Service.
Smart Growth Tool Box

Implementation is a key goal of the Smart Growth Concept Map. The primary ways that SANDAG supports implementation is to provide incentives and assistance to local member agencies to encourage smart growth and sustainable development in the areas identified on the Smart Growth Concept Map. The SANDAG Smart Growth Tool Box includes the following planning and financing tools:

Planning Tools:

- Smart Growth Concept Map
- Visualization Tools and Photo Library
- Smart Growth Design Guidelines
- Smart Growth Trip Generation/Parking Study
- San Diego Regional Bicycle Plan
- Planning and Designing for Pedestrians
- Integrating Transportation Demand Management Into the Planning and Development Process - A Reference for Cities
- Transportation Demand Management Parking Study and Inventory
- Regional Parking Management Toolbox

Financing Tools:

- TransNet Smart Growth Incentive Program (SGIP)
- Transportation Development Act/TransNet Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Neighborhood Safety Program (now Active Transportation Grant Program)
**Existing and Planned Transit System**

Transit oriented districts depend on high-quality transit service. The speed, frequency of service, number and spacing of stops, and ability to access employment centers and other major destinations are all key factors to making transit an integral part of the everyday life of communities. The Trolley (Blue Line, Orange Line, and Green Line), COASTER, and SPRINTER are the foundation of the region’s transit network and each of the stations along these lines presents an opportunity to create different types of transit oriented districts. Rapid bus service, and local bus service along key corridors and at major stops, also plays an important role in supporting TODs along key corridors.

San Diego Forward: The Regional Plan envisions an expanded and more efficient public transit system, and identifies a number of investments that will create new opportunities for TODs.

**Major improvements to the San Diego region’s public transit system identified in San Diego Forward: The Regional Plan include:**

- **Los Angeles-San Diego-San Luis Obispo (LOSSAN) Rail Corridor:** The COASTER, AMTRAK, and Metrolink rail corridor provides premier passenger rail services, connecting San Diego to Los Angeles and other points north and east. The Regional Plan builds on this corridor by adding more track capacity and improved stations.

- **Trolley/SPRINTER/Rapid Service:** These routes offer fast and reliable rail and bus travel with limited stops in key travel corridors. The Trolley and SPRINTER operate on their own dedicated rail lines, while Rapid services operate on freeway managed lanes and on local streets.

- **Mid-Coast Trolley extending service from Santa Fe Depot in Downtown San Diego to the University City community, serving Old Town, the University of California San Diego (UC San Diego), and Westfield University Towne Center.**

- **SPRINTER double-tracking, which will enable higher frequency service, and the extension of service from Escondido south to Westfield North County.**

- **A new Trolley line from San Ysidro to Carmel Valley along the I-805/I-15 corridors via Chula Vista, National City, Southeastern San Diego, Mid-City, Mission Valley, Kearny Mesa, University City and Sorrento Valley.**

- **A new Trolley line from Pacific Beach to the El Cajon Transit Center, via Clairemont, Kearny Mesa, Mission Valley, and San Diego State University (SDSU).**

- **A new Trolley line from Downtown San Diego to SDSU, along Park Boulevard and El Cajon Boulevard corridors via Balboa Park, North Park, and City Heights.**

- **A new Trolley line from University City to Sorrento Valley, which will include a connection to the COASTER.**

- **New Rapid service from Otay Mesa to Downtown San Diego, along State Route 125 (SR 125)/East Palomar/I-805 corridors via Otay Ranch, eastern Chula Vista, and National City.**

- **New Rapid service for commuters. This will offer peak period service to key regional job centers along the Managed Lanes of key freeway corridors, including South Bay to Kearny Mesa/University City/Sorrento Mesa via the SR 52 and I-805 corridors; East County**
to Downtown San Diego via the SR 94 corridor; South County/Mid-City to Palomar Airport Road corridor via the I-805/I-5 corridors; and Downtown San Diego to Kearny Mesa along the SR 163 corridor.

- New Rapid service on arterials. This will operate on arterial roadways and provide limited-stop, high-speed service along several key corridors throughout the region, supplementing existing local bus services.

- Streetcars/Shuttles: Streetcars would operate in several neighborhoods in and around Downtown San Diego, connect North Park with Downtown San Diego, and link La Jolla with Mission Beach via Pacific Beach.

- Local Bus Services: Local bus services remain the backbone of the regional transit system. Most routes will see service frequencies increased to every 10 minutes all day, creating a network of convenient local bus service for short-distance trips and access to rail and Rapid services.

### Transit Stations with the Highest Ridership in the San Diego Region - 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transit Station</th>
<th>Average Total Weekday Boardings &amp; Alightings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12th &amp; Imperial Transit Center</td>
<td>25,456</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Ysidro / Intl Border</td>
<td>18,060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City College Station</td>
<td>12,734</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old Town Transit Center</td>
<td>12,650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Cajon Transit Center</td>
<td>9,705</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Fe Depot</td>
<td>9,465</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palomar Street Station</td>
<td>9,031</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grossmont Transit Center</td>
<td>7,114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iris Avenue Station</td>
<td>6,740</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDSU Transit Center</td>
<td>6,709</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: SANDAG. FY2014 Ridership by Route and Stop.
2050 Draft Revenue Constrained Transit Network
June 2015

- High Speed Rail
- COASTER/AMTRAK/Metrolink
- Trolley/SPRINTER
- SPRINT Express
- Rapid Transit
- Streetcar/Shuttle
- Airport Express
- Local Bus

- Intermodal Transit Center
- Safe Routes to Transit

MILES
KILOMETERS
Real Estate Market

Transit access is one factor that can help make a location more attractive for new development. However, the introduction of new transit alone does not fundamentally change existing real estate market conditions. In a station area with a weak real estate market, there may be insufficient demand to support new, higher-intensity development even with the introduction of transit, especially if the station area is a considerable distance from an employment center or other major activity node. In other station areas, there may be a strong demand for new development but changes to local development standards may be required in order for development to occur near transit stations. In addition to real estate market strength, studies of development patterns near transit have found that the availability of appropriate development opportunity sites and local connectivity, infrastructure, and place-making needs can also affect the potential for development in any given transit station area. Key characteristics of the San Diego residential and office market are:

- **Developers have found that renters are willing to pay a premium for proximity to a rail transit station.** According to developers who participated in focus groups and interviews, apartments located close to a rail transit station can command a price premium. In some markets, particularly in the eastern and southern suburbs where rents tend to be lower, proximity to a transit station may help make a project financially feasible that would otherwise not be.

- **Research has found that single-family homes and condominiums in the San Diego metro area experience a significant price premium associated with proximity to rail transit.** A recent series of studies on property values around San Diego’s Trolley stations found that all else being equal, a condominium located within a quarter-mile of a station was worth 16 percent more than a condominium located a mile away from a station, while a single-family home located within a quarter-mile of a station was worth 6 percent more than one located a mile away. Property value premiums were generally higher near transit stations located in more pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods and in higher-density zoning districts.

- **Many of the region’s larger and higher-rent office markets currently have limited transit service, and development patterns that make providing frequent service challenging.** Service to many of the major employment centers in North City (San Diego) and North County Coastal, including Sorrento Valley, Torrey Pines, University Town Center (UTC), the I-5 Corridor, and Carlsbad, is provided by the COASTER, which provides limited service with long headways. The new Rapid services provide some access to employment areas in the I-15 corridor, Kearny Mesa and Sorrento Mesa, but first mile, last mile connections are difficult given the spread out, low density land uses. Other areas like much of the Carlsbad market, Encinitas, Torrey Pines, and Carmel Valley have little or no transit given the low employment densities and/or auto-oriented development patterns that make it challenging to provide efficient, high-frequency service.

- **Future transit investments could help support growth by reducing congestion and increasing access to jobs.** Freeways and arterials in many major employment centers in North City (San Diego) and North County are already congested, and traffic is expected to worsen as population and employment continue to grow in UTC and other major nodes. Employers in Sorrento Valley, Torrey Pines, UTC, and other nearby job centers already run shuttles to the Sorrento Valley COASTER Station during commute hours. Planned transit investments such as the Mid-Coast Corridor have the potential to support future growth while providing additional transportation choices.
THE CASE FOR TOD

Many trends that are shaping the San Diego region reinforce the importance and likely appeal of transit oriented options, including an aging population, strong knowledge-based industry sectors, a growing share of millennials, and the rising number of small, non-family households.

The San Diego region had approximately 3.25 million residents in 2014 and is projected to increase to nearly 3.5 million by 2020, and 3.85 million by 2035.

Source: SANDAG, U.S. Census Bureau; SANDAG, 2050 Series 13 Regional Growth Forecast (data extracted on: 05/2015).
Approximately 25 to 35 percent of U.S. households would prefer to live in a transit oriented community. The extent of demand for development near transit in any particular region depends on demographic characteristics, as well as local preferences.

Of San Diego residents, 68 percent are small households and households without children. These groups are considered most likely to locate near transit. The San Diego region has a high and growing number of households that are more likely to locate near transit.

Millennial (people born in the 1980s and 1990s) and Baby Boomer (people born between 1946 and 1964) Generations account for the largest shares of the region’s population and are expected to drive housing demand in the coming decade.

As the millennials come into adulthood and the Baby Boomers enter retirement, these demographic groups are particularly interested in access to transit, amenity-rich neighborhoods, and shorter commutes. Demographic shifts will continue to change preferences for housing in the San Diego region. Given the ready access to amenities and services, TOD settings with a mixture of housing types and densities support vibrant, dynamic neighborhoods that appeal to younger residents and enable people to age in place within their communities, creating multi-generational neighborhoods.

Source: SANDAG, 2050 Series 13 Regional Growth Forecast (data extracted on: 05/2015).
The region will see a dramatic shift toward multi-family housing development over the coming decades. SANDAG projects that by 2050, multi-family housing is expected to account for 46 percent of the county’s total housing stock, compared to 36 percent in 2010. To meet this projection, multi-family units will need to account for nearly 80 percent of new units built between 2010 and 2035, and more than 90 percent of new units between 2035 and 2050. In comparison, only 40 percent of new units built in San Diego County between 2000 and 2010 were in multi-family buildings.

Source: SANDAG, 2050 Series 13 Regional Growth Forecast (data extracted on: 05/2015).
Businesses increasingly choose locations based on factors such as local quality of life and the productivity and education levels of the local workforce. Firms in the professional, scientific, financial services, information, and other “knowledge-based” industries are especially likely to locate near transit.\(^8\)

Changes to the economy in the San Diego region are changing where people work. Knowledge-based industries that can work in more concentrated work environments have proven to be a key driver of demand for TODs in other cities. The knowledge-based industry group, which includes professional and scientific services, finance and real estate, information, and management and administration support services, accounted for over 300,000 jobs in 2010, or approximately 21 percent of total employment in San Diego County, and was the largest employment sector. National research has shown that firms in these knowledge-based industries have the greatest propensity to locate near transit, and that workers in these industries are most likely to take transit to work.\(^9\)

\[\text{Total San Diego County Employment} \]

* Production, distribution, and repair. Includes manufacturing, wholesale, transportation, warehousing, and utilities.

** Includes professional, scientific, business services, finance and insurance, real estate, and information.

Source: Strategic Economics 2014
The transit system in the San Diego region continues to grow, serving more neighborhoods and providing better access to jobs.
By 2050, it is estimated that nearly 72% of people living in the San Diego region could access a transit stop to and from home within 5-minutes.

In 2012, 5.5% of people could walk between a transit stop to and from home within 5-minutes; and, 21.3% of people could ride a bike between a transit stop to and from home within 5-minutes.

By 2050, it is estimated that 15.7% of people could walk between a transit stop to and from home within 5-minutes (an increase of 268%); and 49.1% could ride a bike between a transit stop to and from home within 5-minutes (an increase of 199%).

Access within 5-Minutes

- **Number of People Living with 5-Minute Walking Access to a Transit Stop (Approximately 0.25 miles @ a walking speed of 3 miles per hour)**
- **Number of People Living with 5-Minute Biking Access to a Transit Stop (Approximately 0.75 miles @ biking speed of 9 miles per hour)**
- **Number of People Living with 5-Minute Access by Car to a Transit Stop (Approximately 2.0 miles @ a driving speed of 25 miles per hour)**
- **Remainder of Regional Population without Access to a Transit Stop within 5-Minutes to and from home**

By 2050, it is estimated that nearly 80% of people **working** in the San Diego region could access a transit stop to and from work within 5-minutes.

In 2012, 10.4% of people could walk between a transit stop to and from work within 5-minutes; and, 26.4% of people could ride a bike between a transit stop to and from work within 5-minutes.

By 2050, it is estimated that nearly 25% of people could walk between a transit stop to and from work within 5-minutes (an increase of 222%); and, 56% could ride a bike between a transit stop to and from work within 5-minutes (an increase of 185%).

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**Access within 5-Minutes**

- **Number of Jobs within 5-Minute Walking Access to a Transit Stop (Approximately 0.25 miles @ a walking speed of 3 miles per hour)**
- **Number of Jobs within 5-Minute Biking Access to a Transit Stop (Approximately 0.75 miles @ biking speed of 9 miles per hour)**
- **Number of Jobs within 5-Minute Access by Car to a Transit Stop (Approximately 2.0 miles @ a driving speed of 25 miles per hour)**
- **Remainder of the Number of Jobs in the San Diego Region without Access to a Transit Stop within 5-Minutes to and from Work**

BIG IDEAS

Several overarching ideas have driven the development of the Regional TOD Strategy. These ideas define an approach to looking at transit oriented districts in the San Diego region and have informed specific strategies and actions.

Big Idea: Connecting Jobs and Housing along a Network of TODs

While connectivity to the surrounding context is critical for each TOD, a successful network of TODs throughout the region should have coordinated land uses. Most TODs have a mixture of uses, to varying degrees, that include a combination of mixed-use buildings and single-use buildings within a mixed-use district. However, some TODs serve as primarily employment or special-use centers, some as residential centers, and others as entertainment or cultural centers. Coordinating uses along the same line can help build a market for real estate within the individual TODs, reinforcing each other.

For example, if one TOD on a line is a major employment center and other TODs along the same line focus on housing, they are reinforced when the housing is at a price-point mix that is consistent with the wages paid by employers in the employment center. If a TOD is an institutional center, such as a medical and hospital district or a university, an opportunity exists to provide housing along the line not just for workers, but for customers as well—senior housing in the case of medical needs, and student and faculty housing in the case of universities. This reinforces the institution, while the institution creates demand for the specialty housing. The direct access to a workforce and customers attracts employers to TOD locations along the line. The direct access to jobs and services attracts residents to TOD locations along the same line. The attraction of employers and residents creates demand for real estate, which attracts investors and developers to implement TODs—if the appropriate urban form, densities, and land use regulations are in place. The base of workers and customers creates demand for commercial-retail development within a TOD area and along the line.

Opportunities for such co-ordination exist on every line, and if among multiple jurisdictions, co-ordination could range from a simple joint strategy to guide local efforts as local jurisdictions formerly plan individual TODs, to a dis-contiguous specific plan with associated special district financing, TOD-context zoning, and CEQA clearance. Local jurisdictions would have to take the lead given their land-use authority, although SANDAG could assist. Such an approach may be a candidate for State and SANDAG planning grants, perhaps as an early action pilot program.
Big Idea: Transit’s Important Role in the Region’s Transportation System

Transit is a component of a comprehensive and efficient regional transportation system. A successful transit system helps support other modes of transportation, such as walkable districts, bicycle networks, and car sharing. An effective transit system also supports a well-functioning highway and freeway network. The difference between a congested roadway and one where traffic can flow freely is at the margin. It is the last few cars entering the system that reduce travel speeds and can eventually lead to congestion. Several factors increasingly limit the ability to expand roadway capacity, including the diminishing supply and rising cost of land for right-of-way, inconsistency with mixed-use and pedestrian-oriented urban forms envisioned in many of the general plans adopted by local jurisdictions in the San Diego region, and the external environmental and health costs of air pollution and GHG emissions associated with more driving. A good transit system can play a role in addressing travel congestion by enabling the roadway system to operate more efficiently and achieving complementary benefits, such as improved regional air quality. In a successful, complete transportation network with competitive options, equilibrium can be achieved as people choose the option—walking, biking, transit, driving, or combination—that best meets their needs that day and time.

Given this relationship, investment in transit station area enhancements, active transportation linkages, or incentives to use transit could be factored into travel forecasting trip-generation assumptions, used as mitigation for trip generation impacts, or reduce impact fees associated with automobile trips.

Big Idea: 5-Minute Access by Walking, Biking, or Driving

Transit oriented districts depend on convenient accessibility to transit by foot, bike, and car (whether driving alone, carpooling, taking a shuttle, or car sharing). No two districts are the same, and the area that is conveniently accessible is often different for each district given their distinct context and geography.

Defining the “catchment areas” for each transit station can help identify what areas are conveniently accessible within 5-minutes of each transit station by foot, bike, and car. Measuring access within 5-minutes can help identify areas where people are most likely to take transit and areas where travel time on transit may be most comparable to driving.

Models that identify “catchment areas” should reflect the unique characteristics of a site and the existing roadway networks (and their suitability, or lack of, for pedestrians and bicyclists), as well as other physical and natural constraints such as topography that can affect the time it takes to get to a transit station. Using realistic assessments of accessibility can help identify clear areas of priority for infrastructure that improve access to a transit station and can identify areas where new development can contribute most to TODs. A broad range of residential and employment choices can be compatible with the access- and amenity-rich environments associated with TODs.

Within these districts, the cores near the transit station may be designated Transit Priority Areas to take advantage of State grants, financing mechanisms, and CEQA laws that have been adopted to encourage TODs and infill development.

The maps on the following pages show an example of one 5-Minute Catchment Area (Vista Civic Center SPRINTER station) or Transit Oriented District, and the 5-Minute Catchment Areas for the region for 2012, 2020, 2035, and 2050 by mode. The maps indicate the transit assumptions upon which the catchment areas are based.
Example Of “5-Minute Catchment Area” For Civic Center - Vista Sprinter Station

5-Minute Access to a Transit Stop by Mode

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Approximate Distance and Speed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Walking Access</td>
<td>Approximately 0.25 miles @ a walking speed of 3 miles per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biking Access</td>
<td>Approximately 0.75 miles @ a biking speed of 9 miles per hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access by Car</td>
<td>Approximately 2.0 miles @ a driving speed of 25 miles per hour</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Access is defined as follows:

TOD Transit Network includes:
- All rail stops (2012: Trolley, Sprinter, Coaster).
- All rapid bus stops (2012: I-15 BRT, Mid-City BRT, Rapid Express Services)
- All other bus stops with two or more routes, with 15 minute peak period frequency, with ridership > 400/day.
- Identified stations that meet thresholds for current 2012, and planned service in 2020, 2035, and 2050.

5-minute access sheds for walking, biking, and driving for each station are based on:
- 0.25 miles at a walking speed of 3 mph
- 0.75 miles at a biking speed of 9 mph
- 2 miles at a driving speed of 25 mph

2012
5-Minute Access to a Transit Stop by Mode
June 2015

Walking
Biking
Driving
Access is defined as follows:

TOD Transit Network includes:
- All rail stops (2012: Trolley, Sprinter, Coaster).
- All rapid bus stops. (2012: I-15 BRT, Mid-City BRT, Rapid Express Services)
- All other bus stops with two or more routes, with 15 minute peak period frequency, with ridership > 400/day.
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- 2 miles at a driving speed of 25 mph
5-Minute Access to a Transit Stop by Mode
June 2015

Access is defined as follows:
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- 0.25 miles at a walking speed of 3 mph
- 0.75 miles at a biking speed of 9 mph
- 2 miles at a driving speed of 25 mph
STRATEGIES

If TODs are to be successful, integral to the region’s Sustainable Communities Strategy, and transformative for the region’s management of future growth, they should become a priority of all parties involved in their implementation.

Implementation of this Regional TOD Strategy requires the coordination of multiple parties - SANDAG (who plans, designs, funds, and constructs the regional transit network), the San Diego Metropolitan Transportation System (MTS) and North County Transportation District (NCTD) (who operate the transit system and own some land near stations), local jurisdictions (who have land use, infrastructure financing, and development approval authority), the investor and development community (who finance and build the housing, workplaces, and commercial projects within a TOD), major employers (who choose where to locate and are the major market driver for TODs along a transit line), and the public (who are the consumers of TODs as users, residents, workers, and visitors).

The following are the major strategies and actions identified as part of this Regional TOD Strategy to support the San Diego region as its transit oriented districts continue to evolve into the future. These strategies and actions are focused on overcoming common barriers in the five key areas of TOD implementation as described in the working papers that were prepared to inform this strategy. These five key areas include: Urban Form, Density, and Land Use; Connections: Travel Options, Mobility Management and Access Enhancements; Housing Choices and Affordability; Financing Infrastructure and Community Facilities; and CEQA Streamlining and Travel Forecasting.

The strategies and actions address the many factors that affect the feasibility of TOD implementation, including availability and size of parcels, property and project costs, market rents, available financing, regulations and entitlement processes, the type and scale of development permitted, and community support.
Strategy #1

Ensure that core areas within transit oriented districts have a compact, diverse, and highly interconnected range of land uses and activities, consistent with targets identified in SANDAG’s Smart Growth Concept Map.

The urban form of transit oriented districts is different in each transit oriented community. A mix of land uses surrounding a transit station can facilitate more housing, access to employment, and neighborhood serving retail to support people living and working nearby. Public open space, civic and institutional uses, and other special use centers also provide strong anchors for transit oriented districts. Parcel configuration, block size, building massing, scale of buildings in relation to the street and people, and the amount of parking relative to active street frontage, and other factors are critical to the success of transit oriented districts. Increasing the number of people that live and work near transit provides more people with convenient access to transit. At the same time, as more people live and work near transit, ridership will increase. Planning policies and regulations that shape urban form, density, and land use, including zoning codes, engineering standards, and design guidelines can have a significant influence on transit oriented districts.

Actions to Continue:

- Using the Smart Growth Concept Map as a foundation for future planning efforts that link land use and transportation and a foundation for planning transit oriented districts. (SANDAG, Local Jurisdictions)
- Promoting the use of Designing for Smart Growth, Creating Great Places in the San Diego Region as a tool for local jurisdictions and developers. (SANDAG)
- Developing station area plans that identify a vision for future development, specify appropriate uses, set targets for minimum and maximum density and intensity and include development standards, design guidelines, and other policy tools. (Local Jurisdictions)

Actions to Consider:

- Evaluating proposed developments and infrastructure projects within transit oriented districts using the Smart Growth Scorecard included in the Designing for Smart Growth, Creating Great Places in the San Diego Region. (Local Jurisdictions)
- Tailoring zoning ordinances or creating new zoning districts or overlay zones, subdivision ordinances, development standards, and parking requirements within transit oriented districts. (Local Jurisdictions)
- Creating a survey of properties owned, a plan for disposition, and a policy for development with transit oriented districts. (Transit Agencies)
Strategy #2
Connect people to jobs in transit oriented districts.

People who work near a transit station are more likely than people who live near a transit station to commute by transit, and employment density is much more highly correlated with transit ridership than is residential density. Access to employment is a key driver of transit oriented districts and is a challenge for the San Diego region. Transit corridors and systems that provide direct connections to downtown or major employment centers are significantly more likely to attract new development compared to transit lines that do not serve a central business district or major employment concentration. In addition to attracting more development, transit corridors and systems that connect to employment centers are also likely to support higher ridership.

Actions to Continue:

- Leveraging future transportation investments identified in San Diego Forward: The Regional Plan to enhance connections to jobs; and, to consider access to employment as part of the Transportation Project Evaluation Criteria and Ranking for transit services (SANDAG).
- Building on the ongoing Regional Mobility Hubs Implementation Plan to enhance connectivity to jobs by different modes of transportation, including walking, biking, ridesharing, and public transit (SANDAG, Local Jurisdictions, Transit Agencies).
- Assessing access to employment density as part of alternative analysis planning studies conducted for future transportation projects, consistent with the Federal Transportation Administration New and Small Starts Evaluation and Rating Process (SANDAG).
- Supporting local employer investment in vanpools, shuttle services and other Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies (SANDAG).
- Working toward bridging the first-last mile gap to provide access to jobs, consistent with Strategy 3 and Strategy 4 (Local Jurisdictions).

Actions to Consider:

- Developing ways to coordinate land use, economic development strategies, infrastructure financing, and environmental review along transit lines and corridors (SANDAG, Local Jurisdictions) (Note: Moved from Strategy #1).
- Consider measuring and monitoring jobs-housing balance within transit oriented districts.
- Encouraging employer participation in regional TDM programs that promote transit use by employees (Local Jurisdictions).
Strategy #3
Promote walking and biking within transit oriented districts to bridge the first-last mile gap.

Walking and biking can extend the catchment areas around a transit station to provide connections to and from home and work, without the need for a car, and allow more people to take transit. For walking and biking to be viable ways of accessing transit stations, infrastructure improvements may be needed to provide enhanced access to transit that is safe and convenient.

Actions to Continue:

- Supporting the implementation of the Regional Complete Streets Policy as part of the development of all SANDAG transportation infrastructure projects.15 (SANDAG)

- Leveraging investments identified in the Regional Bike Plan Early Action Program (EAP) to enhance connectivity to transit.16 (SANDAG)

- Including relation to transit, bicycle facilities, and walkability as ranking criteria for TransNet Smart Growth Incentive Program Capital Grants.17 (SANDAG)

- Including connection to transit as a criterion for the SANDAG Active Transportation Grant Program.18 (SANDAG)

- Adopting and implementing Complete Streets policies to ensure that roads are safe and accessible in transit oriented districts. (Local Jurisdictions)

- Implementing the requirements of the California Complete Streets Act of 2008 when updating circulation elements.19 (Local Jurisdictions)

- Applying for Smart Growth Incentive Program grant funds in Smart Growth Opportunity Areas (SGOAs), and Active Transportation Grant Program grant funds in transit oriented districts and SGOAs to support complete streets, parking management plans, first mile/last mile projects, and other projects that support transit oriented districts. (Local Jurisdictions)
Actions to Consider:

- Building on the Regional Safe Routes to Transit work and developing focused studies for Safe Routes to Transit in areas of need (like the Kearny Mesa Rapid Safe Routes to Transit project). (SANDAG)

- Including stronger criteria/greater weighting for relation to transit, bicycle facilities, and walkability as ranking for TransNet Smart Growth Incentive Program Planning Grants. (SANDAG)

- Including criteria related to Smart Growth Opportunity Areas and transit oriented districts for the TransNet Active Transportation Grant Program. (SANDAG)

- Seeking additional funding specifically for Complete Streets plans and investments that link to transit stations. (SANDAG)

- Expanding grant funding programs to include mobility management as an eligible activity and to increase funding for access improvements critical to TODs. (SANDAG)

- Adapting thresholds for significance established for compliance with CEQA to reflect walking and biking; and use exemptions and streamlining to implement infrastructure improvements for walking and biking. (Local Jurisdictions)

- Using capital improvement programs (CIPs) to prioritize biking and walking improvements within transit oriented districts. (Local Jurisdictions)
Strategy #4

Provide access for vehicles, and manage parking within transit oriented districts to bridge the first-last mile gap.

It is important to take an active role in providing policies, programs, and facilities that provide a range of transportation choices and shape transportation decisions. Carpooling, vanpooling, taking a shuttle or circulator, or using car sharing or ridesharing, kiss and rides (passenger drop off) and other vehicular based transportation modes can help complement public transit by extending the ability for people to get to and from home and work. Parking supply, pricing, and other management tools are also important ways of shaping how people get to and from transit stations.

Actions to Continue:

- Building on the ongoing Regional Mobility Hubs Implementation Plan to enhance connectivity to jobs by different modes of transportation, including walking, biking, ridesharing, and public transit.\(^2\) (SANDAG)
- Promoting other transportation demand management (TDM) measures that can increase the range of transportation options and shape transportation decisions. (SANDAG)
- Supporting local jurisdictions seeking to implement parking management programs. (SANDAG)
- Forming public-private partnerships to develop mobility options, such as bike share, car share or employer-provided shuttles. (Local Jurisdictions)
- Integrating TDM measures, such as provision of bike and pedestrian facilities, carpool, vanpool and shuttle services, in the planning and development process.\(^3\) (Local Jurisdictions)
- Including TDM measures in conditions of approval or development agreements for reduced trip generation rates, reduced parking requirements, and lower impact fees as part of enhanced entitlements for projects.\(^4\) (Local Jurisdictions)
- Considering TDM measures to avoid, reduce, or mitigate transportation impacts identified through CEQA by reducing trip generation rates or lowering parking demand. (Local Jurisdictions)
Actions to Consider:

- Promoting services and technology that provide on-demand mobility options and shared-use mobility that can facilitate carpooling, vanpooling, car sharing, and bike sharing. (SANDAG)

- Integrating TDM measures, such as investment in transit services, and transit pass incentives for workers and residents in the planning and development process. (Local Jurisdictions)

- Evaluating and implementing strategies in SANDAG’s Parking Management Toolbox to improve mobility in transit oriented districts, including unbundled parking. (Local Jurisdictions)

- Providing parking for carsharing and bikesharing programs at transit stations. (SANDAG, Transit Agencies)
Strategy #5

Develop tools, techniques, and resources to engage a broad range of stakeholders and perspectives in the design and planning of transit oriented districts.

No two transit oriented districts in the San Diego region are the same, and each one will continue to evolve into a distinct place. Public participation is critical for the success of transit oriented districts and can help ensure that opportunities and constraints within each transit oriented district are reflected in plans, policies, and regulations that apply to development projects in transit oriented districts. Public participation can help ensure that urban form, density, and height are compatible with the surrounding community, while still allowing incremental and context sensitive growth.

Actions to Continue:

• Providing support for member agency smart growth planning and development efforts. (SANDAG)
• Facilitating robust public participation and community involvement efforts during the planning process. (Local Jurisdictions)
• Setting expectations for future development when preparing general plans, station area plans, and specific plans that will shape the overall character of a transit oriented district. (Local Jurisdictions)
• Communicating the importance of transit oriented districts in meeting community goals, improving community character, expanding housing choices, and providing a variety of opportunities for people to live, work and play. (Local Jurisdictions)

Actions to Consider:

• Developing and hosting an online, interactive tool to evaluate the TOD readiness of sites and districts that can be used by SANDAG, local jurisdictions, transit agencies, developers, community groups, and others. (Also included in Strategy #13). (SANDAG, Local Jurisdictions, Transit Agencies, Developers)
• Showcasing existing transit oriented districts online, through SANDAG publications, field trips, and other information and knowledge exchange forums. (SANDAG)
• Seeking funding to develop an outreach and information program that could include videos, social media, internet tools, traditional public meetings, and other platforms to showcase the benefits of transit oriented districts highlighting places near transit, testimonials of users of transit, people who live and work in transit oriented districts, and major employers located in transit oriented districts. (SANDAG, Local Jurisdictions, Transit Agencies)
Strategy #6

Create clear rules that provide a predictable development process, and focus on removing regulatory barriers.

Encouraging quality, predictable, context-sensitive design outcomes can lower risk not only for the investor or developer, but also for the public and community (including entitlement, time delay, and political risk). Reactive or negotiated zoning approaches can introduce uncertainty and cause project delays or even denial of a project after significant predevelopment investment. Consistent format and procedural requirements can provide predictability and establish an entitlement process that also results in good design. Good plans and policies can also reduce the risk of asset value erosion by ensuring that other properties nearby are subject to similar standards of quality.

Actions to Continue:

- Funding the preparation of specific plans to guide development in transit oriented districts through TransNet Smart Growth Incentive Program grants.27 (SANDAG, Local Jurisdictions)
- Supporting updates to local general plans, specific plans, and zoning that implement transit oriented districts through the Intergovernmental Review (IGR) process. (SANDAG)
- Promoting the use of Designing for Smart Growth, Creating Great Places in the San Diego Region for design and planning strategies that support transit oriented districts. (SANDAG)
- Preparing specific plans, update zoning, development standards, development review process, and design guidelines to establish standards for development within transit oriented districts. (Local Jurisdictions)
- Preparing Program EIRs for specific plans and zoning updates for transit oriented districts; allowing subsequent projects to tier-off Program EIRs. (Local Jurisdictions) (Also included in Strategy #7)
Actions to Consider:

- Determining whether tools such as form based zoning codes would be helpful in facilitating development within transit oriented districts. (Local Jurisdictions)

- Establishing a multi-disciplinary TOD action team to coordinate transportation, development, housing, environmental, and infrastructure policies and to develop integrated strategies to promote transit oriented projects specific to each jurisdiction. (Local Jurisdictions)

- Allowing through the use of policy and regulations a mixture of uses within a TOD, without requiring each building to be mixed-use in every location; a variety of densities and building types; flex-space whose use can change over time; height regulated by stories rather than feet, shared parking districts; and reduced minimum parking requirements within TODs. (Local Jurisdictions)

- Evaluating development and infrastructure projects for consistency with Designing for Smart Growth, Creating Great Places in the San Diego Region using the Smart Growth Scorecard. (Local Jurisdictions)
Strategy #7
Explore opportunities to streamline CEQA guidance and processes.

Recent state legislation lays out opportunities for CEQA streamlining for infill projects. However, many local governments are not able to fully implement the benefits of the legislation because their comprehensive planning documents, traffic impact review procedures, and locally adopted CEQA guidance have not been updated to reflect changes in state law. Transit oriented districts present opportunities to facilitate development and infrastructure projects through streamlined environmental review processes.

Actions to Continue:

- Supporting and exploring opportunities to streamline California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) guidelines and processes to facilitate development projects in transit oriented districts and support implementation of the SCS. (SANDAG, Local Jurisdictions)

Actions to Consider:

- Preparing Program EIRs to cover projects consistent with specific plans and zoning for transit oriented districts; allowing subsequent projects to tier-off Program EIRs. (Also included in Strategy #6.) (Local Jurisdictions)
- Updating and/or adopting revised CEQA processing and significance criteria guidelines that reflect the most recent legislation related to streamlining and that facilitate transit oriented districts. (Local Jurisdictions)
Strategy #8
Update transportation impact methodology.

With the passage of recent legislation, vehicle miles traveled (VMT) has become one recommended method for measuring transportation impacts. Recent state legislation seeks to streamline infill and transit oriented projects by shifting how transportation impacts are measured—away from conventional trip generation/roadway level of service (LOS) analyses and toward more substantive approaches that incorporate a project trip’s length, duration, quality and purpose. LOS standards only ration existing roadway capacity.

Actions to Continue:

- Supporting the transition to travel model tools that support non-LOS-based performance standards. (SANDAG, Local Jurisdictions)
- Validating the travel model’s suitability through before-and-after scenarios within the model stream before its application for analyzing development projects in transit oriented districts. (SANDAG, Local Jurisdictions)
- Developing documentation materials and providing outreach and support to help local communities understand and defend the enhanced capabilities of the travel model specifically related to the analysis of development projects in transit oriented districts. (SANDAG)

Actions to Consider:

- Exploring the idea of adding specific variables and modeling procedures to improve the model’s estimation of impacts of development projects in transit oriented districts. (SANDAG)
- Assisting local jurisdictions by developing a post-processing toolbox that takes the travel model outputs and reports performance measures geared toward development projects in transit oriented districts and their area of influence. (SANDAG)
- Updating local CEQA significance criteria with the focus toward VMT-based thresholds. (Local Jurisdictions)
Strategy #9

Paying for community facilities and infrastructure.

The success of transit oriented districts, as with all communities, depends on adequate infrastructure and public facilities. Transit oriented districts may require significant investments in infrastructure and community facilities to support new development, including high-quality transit; increased utility capacity; the replacement of aging infrastructure systems; public spaces; mobility and place-making improvements, such as sidewalks, bike lanes, and streetscapes; and public facilities and services. The ability to prioritize discretionary infrastructure spending can assist in filling financing gaps by directing public investment to enhance transit supportive areas.

Actions to Continue:

- Including relation to transit, bicycle facilities, and walkability as ranking criteria for TransNet Smart Growth Incentive Program Capital Grants. (Also included in Strategy #3) (SANDAG)
- Including connection to transit as a criterion for TransNet Active Transportation Grant Program. (Also included in Strategy #3) (SANDAG)

Actions to Consider:

- Including stronger criteria/greater weighting for relation to transit, bicycle facilities, and walkability as ranking for TransNet Smart Growth Incentive Program Planning Grants. (Also included in Strategy #3.) (SANDAG)
- Including criteria related to Smart Growth Opportunity Areas and transit oriented districts for the SANDAG Active Transportation Grant Program. (Also included in Strategy #3.) (SANDAG)
- Seeking additional funding specifically for Complete Streets plans and investments that link to transit stations. (Also included in Strategy #3.) (SANDAG)
- Expanding grant funding programs to include mobility management as an eligible activity and increase funding for access improvements critical to TODs. (Also included in Strategy #3.) (SANDAG)
- Using the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) process to give priority to community facilities and infrastructure projects in transit oriented districts. (Local Jurisdictions)
• Evaluating the feasibility of establishing Enhanced Infrastructure Financing Districts (EIFDs) or districts for tax increment generation. (Local Jurisdictions)

• Developing facilities financing plans that identify sources of funding for improving, or increasing the capacity of, infrastructure, parks and open space, necessary services, and other public realm improvements within transit oriented districts. (Local Jurisdictions)

• Forming a regional Community Facilities District (CFD) in transit oriented districts, in cooperation with willing jurisdictions, to generate revenue for supportive public facilities and infrastructure. A CFD could either be a dis-contiguous district or a contiguous district connected by transit, with a nexus established by the transit connections. (Local Jurisdictions)

• Transitioning existing parking districts into mobility districts and creating new mobility districts in transit oriented districts that allow funds collected to be used for a wider variety of mobility solutions. (Local Jurisdictions)

• Using value capture techniques, either as part of a community plan or zoning code update that increases density, as an incentive or bonus zoning program; or as part of a negotiated development agreement to provide a way to pay for extraordinary community facilities and infrastructure that benefit the community, such as affordable housing and parks. (Local Jurisdictions)
Strategy #10

Encourage public-private partnerships and explore emerging tools for financing development projects.

Private developer-investor equity, combined with debt, is the conventional form of financing a development project. Targeted federal, state, and local grants can also help provide additional sources of financing for real estate development projects. Other emerging tools, such as pooled investment funds also offer financing for development projects in transit oriented districts. Other forms of public-private partnership can also be effective, such as reduced impact fees, land assembly, and conveying land that is already entitled to help subsidize development costs to catalyze development in transit oriented districts.

Actions to Continue:

- Providing support for projects seeking financing through the Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Grant Program (California Cap-and-Trade Program) and other state and federal funding programs. (SANDAG)
- Partnering with developers to participate in the California Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Program. (SANDAG, Local Jurisdictions, Transit Agencies)
- Partnering with public agencies to participate in the California Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Program and other local, regional, state, and federal funding programs. (Developers)
- Working with other public, non-profit, and private sector stakeholders to explore establishing a public-private pooled investment fund focusing on development projects in transit oriented districts. (SANDAG, Local Jurisdictions)
- Exploring public-private partnerships. (Developers)

Actions to Consider:

- Leveraging joint development and land disposition policies in transit oriented districts. (Transit Agencies)
Strategy #11
Maximize the benefits of locating affordable housing and workforce housing in transit oriented districts.

Residents of affordable housing are more likely to use transit and less likely to own a car. In addition, the combined cost of housing and transportation can provide a more complete understanding of affordability; and, providing more housing near transit can reduce the cost of housing and transportation for households in transit oriented districts. Affordable housing developers may not be able to compete with market-rate builders for development sites. Local height and density limits, high parking ratios, and other regulatory requirements can also pose barriers to affordable (as well as market-rate) development near transit.

Actions to Continue:

- Advocating for block grants provided through the state and federal funding programs, to maximize benefit and ensure consistency with SANDAG’s Sustainable Communities Strategy. (SANDAG)

- Including affordable housing as an important criterion in the TransNet Smart Growth Incentive Program (SGIP) and Active Transportation Grant Program. (SANDAG)

- Considering lower parking requirements/unbundled parking for affordable housing in transit oriented districts. (Local Jurisdictions)

- Using the Housing Element update process to identify opportunities for affordable housing development on publicly owned land within transit oriented districts. (Local Jurisdictions)

- Monitoring the process for competitive grants issued by U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), California Cap-and-Trade funds, and others. (SANDAG, Local Jurisdictions, Transit Agencies)
Actions to Consider:

- Developing a regional affordable housing parking demand study, as was done in the City of San Diego, to evaluate the feasibility of lower parking requirements for affordable housing. (SANDAG)

- Working with other public, non-profit, and private sector stakeholders to explore establishing a public-private pooled investment fund focusing on affordable housing in transit oriented districts (whether with financial resources, technical assistance, or other forms of support). (Also included in Strategy #10.) (SANDAG)

- Establishing zoning districts that accommodate affordable housing. (Local Governments)

- Focusing Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME allocations and other public facility funding programs on affordable housing in transit oriented districts. (Local Jurisdictions)

- Using underutilized or surplus land near transit for affordable housing development or other community development purposes. (Local Jurisdictions)

- Analyzing how underutilized or surplus land near transit could be used for affordable housing. (Transit Agencies)
Strategy #12
Promote market readiness and development feasibility.

Sharing information about the real estate development market throughout the San Diego region can help showcase successful case studies, highlight emerging opportunities, and identify trends that emerge over time.

Actions to Continue:
- Identifying sites, including air-rights, available for public-private partnerships for development projects in transit oriented districts. (Transit Agencies)
- Working with local jurisdictions to entitle sites, and proactively promote the sites to the development community and investors. (Transit Agencies)

Actions to Consider:
- Developing market studies, marketing to developers, hosting development summits, and identifying ready sites, tools and technical assistance to support development in transit oriented districts. (SANDAG, Local Jurisdictions, Transit Agencies)
- Creating and updating regularly a regional TOD performance database of market performance (occupancy and absorption), rents and prices per square foot, and development costs by building types, parking ratio categories, and location, and publishing an annual “Market State of TODs” with building and real estate professional organizations. (SANDAG, Local Jurisdictions, Developers)
- Preparing through industry associations, TOD case studies to inform public agencies, the public, and the industry about lessons learned. (Developers)
- Every three years, commissioning a random sample survey of residents and employees within TODs regarding their use of transit and active transportation to reach their destinations and parking. (SANDAG)
- Analyzing aggregate property and sales tax revenue by major use categories in TODs within the jurisdiction annually to assess trends over time. (Local Jurisdictions)
Strategy #13
Prioritize “ready” transit oriented districts.

Given the scarcity of resources, the region should focus on places of high readiness and high potential benefit—that is, transit oriented districts that can “move the needle” in the near- to mid-term with targeted actions. Places that are ready today—in terms of transit connectivity, market strength, available land, supportive regulations, and local support—may need little more than visibility and marketing to attract private investment. Places that are generally ready, but lack a key ingredient or two, are targets for gap-filling public investment and/or actions that can help overcome the remaining barriers to TOD.

Actions to Consider:

- Selecting readiness metrics included in this Regional TOD Strategy to help policy makers, local jurisdictions, communities, and private investors evaluate and prioritize opportunities for development in transit oriented districts. (SANDAG, Local Jurisdictions, Transit Agencies, Developers)

- Developing an on-line, interactive tool to evaluate the TOD readiness of sites and districts that can be used by SANDAG, local jurisdictions, transit agencies, developers, community groups, and others to identify potential near-, mid-, and long-term opportunities for TOD. (SANDAG, Local Jurisdictions, Transit Agencies, Developers) (Also included in Strategy #5.)

- Creating an online information clearinghouse to showcase existing development projects in transit oriented districts, highlight proposed projects, and share other resources. (SANDAG)

- Using/promoting the readiness dashboard and an online information clearinghouse as a resource for stakeholders. (SANDAG)

- Prioritizing “ready” areas through Capital Improvement Programs (CIPs) and for Smart Growth Incentive Program and Active Transportation Program grant applications. (Local Jurisdictions)

- Determining how all the actions included in the Regional TOD Strategy can be applied to help make Smart Growth Opportunity Areas “ready.” (Local Jurisdictions)
Assessing Project Readiness

Readiness Framework

The figure below illustrates the intersection of TOD readiness and potential benefit. The intent of this two-dimensional framework is to identify Smart Growth Opportunity Areas that are ready or emerging and that offer potentially high or medium benefit—that is, locations that fall under Priorities 1 and 2.

Through application of these readiness metrics to the roughly 200 Smart Growth Opportunity Areas in the region, agencies can identify the best near- and mid-term opportunities. Other users, such as investors, developers, and community interests, could adjust the weighting of factors to reflect their individual priorities.

To create a set of metrics that helps identify high-readiness/high-benefit TOD opportunities, it is necessary to establish three parameters: the appropriate unit of geographic measurement; the appropriate time horizons for defining “readiness”; and distinct metrics for TOD readiness and TOD benefits. In principle, the highest-priority locations for public intervention and/or private investment would be those that rate high on both dimensions.
Geographic Unit of Measurement

SANDAG’s Smart Growth Concept Map, first adopted in 2006 and updated most recently in October 2014, identifies over 200 Smart Growth Opportunity Areas that illustrate the location of existing, planned, and potential smart growth areas. The Smart Growth Opportunity Areas are categorized by seven smart growth “place types”: the Metropolitan Center, Urban Centers, Town Centers, Community Centers, Rural Villages, Mixed Use Transit Corridors, and Special Use Centers. The different place type designations are based on whether the areas meet minimum housing, employment and transportation targets.

Time Horizons and Future Transit Projects

This Regional TOD Strategy is focused on “ready” TOD sites in the near-term and opportunities over the mid-term 2015-2030 time frame. Transit projects that are projected for implementation during this time period would be considered when assessing project readiness for TODs. In addition to the recently implemented I-15 Rapid and Mid-City Rapid, examples of other projects that are projected for implementation by 2020 are the Mid-Coast Light Rail Line and South Bay Rapid, along with frequency enhancements to existing local and express bus services.

It is understood that San Diego Forward: The Regional Plan includes three time horizons used to measure progress toward key performance indicators: 2020, 2035, and 2050. However, for purposes of measuring TOD readiness and thereby helping to focus public and private implementation efforts where TOD has the best chance of taking root, the closer mid-term horizon of 2025 was chosen.

Three broad time horizon categories have been identified: ready, emerging, and future.

- **Ready (near-term):** These are areas where, based on existing conditions, significant TOD could be under construction by the end of 2020. For this purpose, existing conditions include major transit improvements that are expected to complete construction and enter service by 2020, such as the Mid-Coast Light Rail Extension.

- **Emerging (mid-term):** These are areas that score in the middle range of the readiness metrics, suggesting they could have significant new or expanded TOD underway by around 2025, a decade from now. By that time, the San Diego regional market will be more experienced with TOD, and additional transit improvements listed in San Diego Forward: The Regional Plan will have advanced to construction.

- **Future (long-term):** The remaining Smart Growth Opportunity Areas will be ranked as Future. These areas may have land, market, and regulatory disadvantages compared to the Ready and Emerging locations, or they may depend on transit improvements not expected to be implemented until 2030 or beyond.
Level of Readiness Metrics

An area is TOD-ready to the degree that it enjoys a favorable combination of transit service, economic submarket strength, developable property, and local government support. Readiness metrics that differentiate the time horizon and whether a TOD is a ready (near-term), emerging (mid-term), or future (long-term) opportunity include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location in the Transit Network</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type of Transit Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to Employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catchment Area Connectivity (access to surrounding area)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Ridership</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local Market Readiness</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Station Area Density</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential Market Performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Market Performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development Activity</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Resource</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Developable Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pattern of Land Ownership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOD Fabric (suitable streets, sidewalks, utilities, open spaces, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major Site Constraints</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Government and Regulatory Support</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TOD District Designation (by local government)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zoning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Review Status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infrastructure and Facilities Funding</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Level of Benefit Metrics

A high-benefit TOD opportunity is one that can create, expand, or intensify a transit oriented community of substantial scale. Metrics that differentiate higher-benefit TOD opportunities could include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Benefit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Place Typology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multimodalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planned Housing Density / Affordable Housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planned Employment Density</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developable Area</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Endnotes


3. Ibid.


9. Ibid.


25. Ibid.


APPENDIX

A. Supporting Documents
B. Local Stakeholder Feedback
C. Policy Context-State, Regional, Local
Supporting Documents

Background documents have been prepared to support development of the Strategy.

A Context Report offers a snapshot of the current policies, growth patterns, demographic trends, market characteristics, and ongoing initiatives that will continue to shape TOD opportunities in the San Diego region.

An Economic Context Report also was prepared that presents new market data and financial feasibility analysis, builds on literature review findings on local and regional best practices for facilitating TOD, incorporates findings from stakeholder focus groups convened for this project.

Working Papers focus on issues associated with implementing TODs in the region, including common challenges, exemplary practice examples, and ideas for consideration. The Working Papers address the following topic areas:

- Urban Form, Density and Land Use
- Financing Infrastructure and Community Facilities
- Housing Choices and Affordability
- CEQA Streamlining and Travel Forecasting
- Connections: Travel Options, Mobility Management and Access Enhancements
- Readiness Criteria: Metrics for Transit Oriented Districts
Local Stakeholder Feedback

As part of the TOD Strategy for the San Diego Region, SANDAG conducted a series of focus group interviews with stakeholders representing non-profit organizations, local governments, public agencies, transit providers, and the private sector. The purpose of these sessions was to gather targeted, specific feedback on TOD challenges and opportunities in the region.

While participants noted specific challenges to TOD implementation, they also saw positive opportunities to develop transit oriented projects and neighborhoods in the region. Comments also generally reflected an understanding that increased density and improved transit system connectivity will play an important role in accommodating the region’s growth and maintaining its future economic competitiveness.

**TOD Implementation Forum**: National and local leaders participated in a two-day forum to discuss implementation challenges and identify opportunities to create TOD projects in the San Diego region. The forum included presentations and a video highlighting the TOD experiences of other metropolitan areas and the applicability of these practices in addressing implementation challenges in the San Diego region.

**Key Findings from Stakeholder Input**

- Community opposition can pose a major challenge for TOD implementation
- There is growing recognition that changing demographics and shifts in market preferences support more compact communities and vibrant city and town centers
- Connecting housing to jobs is important to both employers and residents
- TOD projects can provide more low- to moderate-income housing opportunities, but there are continued obstacles to delivering affordable housing
- The region has promising areas for TOD projects
- Successful TOD is about the thoughtful design and planning of the broader setting and transportation network
- The state regulatory environment, in particular how the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) is applied, can create barriers
- The market economics for TOD remain challenging but flexibility and predictability can help to reduce barriers
- It is important for the regional strategy to set priorities and focus.
Policy Context
State, regional, and local policies have set a foundation for the future of TOD in the San Diego region.

The Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act of 2008 (SB 375)
State mandates for GHG emission reductions have built significant momentum behind transit oriented planning. Senate Bill (SB) 375 directs the California Air Resources Board (CARB) to set regional targets for reducing GHG emissions from passenger vehicle use. SANDAG, as the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the region, is required to develop a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) as an element of its Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). San Diego Forward: The Regional Plan includes strategies that integrate transportation, land use, and housing policies to achieve demonstrable reductions in GHG emissions per capita.

2050 Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy
The SANDAG Board of Directors approved the 2050 Regional Transportation Plan and its Sustainable Communities Strategy (2050 RTP/SCS) for the San Diego region, becoming the first large region in California to prepare an RTP under SB 375. The 2050 RTP/SCS demonstrates how development patterns and the transportation network, policies, and programs will work together to achieve the GHG emission reduction targets.

In combination, the 2050 RTP/SCS results in the following accomplishments:

- Meets the state's GHG reduction targets;
- Focuses growth in the western third of the region;
- Preserves more than half of regional land as open space;
- Provides $214 billion of planned transportation investments;
- Provides more than 150 new miles of trolley service;
- Doubles the region's transit service miles, and
- Accommodates housing to meet the region's projected growth.

San Diego Forward: The Regional Plan
SANDAG is spearheading a broad-based community effort to create San Diego Forward: The Regional Plan. It will combine a big picture vision for regional growth over the next 35 years with an implementation program to help make that vision a reality. SANDAG is working in close partnership with all of the region's cities and the county government to create an innovative plan for the growth of communities.

San Diego Forward: The Regional Plan will unite two major SANDAG planning efforts into one document and will build upon local planning efforts, emphasizing the link between land use planning and transportation planning.
Other SANDAG Plans

The TOD strategy builds on and complements numerous other SANDAG studies that promote expanded accessibility and mobility choices in the region.

**Urban Area Transit Strategy (UATS).** Prepared as part of the 2050 RTP/SCS, the UATS seeks to maximize transit ridership in the greater urbanized area of the region and to test the role of the transit network to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and GHG emissions. The 2050 RTP/SCS added 60 additional miles of light rail transit and other transit service because of this project.

**Light Rail Advanced Planning Study.** This study conducts advance planning on the four new rail lines outlined in the 2050 RTP/SCS, providing a detailed analysis of ridership potential, capital and operating costs, system infrastructure needs, and potential alignments and station locations.

**Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) Plan.** SANDAG conducted the RHNA process for the fifth housing element cycle in conjunction with the 2050 RTP/SCS. The RHNA Plan allocates RHNA numbers in four income categories to each of the region's 19 jurisdictions, incorporating local plans that call for higher density housing in urbanized areas adjacent to transit, protection of environmental and agricultural resources, and significant increases in the region's multifamily housing capacity since the 2030 Regional Growth Forecast.

**San Diego Regional Bicycle Plan.** The Regional Bike Plan, adopted in May 2010, establishes a network of regional bikeway corridors for intercommunity bicycle travel and proposes a comprehensive set of programs to support bicycling to make the bicycle a practical means of transportation in the San Diego region.

**Regional Complete Streets Policy.** The SANDAG Board of Directors adopted a Regional Complete Streets Policy in 2014. Implementation actions include a project development checklist to ensure all projects implemented by SANDAG consider local mobility plans and accommodate the needs of all travel modes.

**Safe Routes to School Programs.** At the local level, a number of jurisdictions have initiated comprehensive Safe Routes to School programs to encourage more walking and bicycling to school. SANDAG approved a Regional Safe Routes to School Strategic Plan to guide future SANDAG involvement in promoting walking and bicycling to school as safe and attractive travel choices.

**Safe Routes to Transit.** The Safe Routes to Transit Program prioritizes projects and develops programs that provide bicycle and pedestrian access around existing and planned transit stops and stations. SANDAG works closely with the local jurisdictions to identify opportunities to complement projects and programs identified in their bicycle and pedestrian plans.

**First and Last Mile.** Transit can get riders close but not close enough for many trips. SANDAG’s goal is to increase transit accessibility and ridership by improving access to and from stations. To move toward this goal, SANDAG completed the First Mile and Last Mile Solutions for Transit Centers Study to identify potential pilot projects that would bridge the access gap between home and the transit station (first mile), and between the transit station and work (last mile).
Initiatives Underway

TransNet. TransNet is the regional half-cent sales tax collected to finance transportation improvements. The extension approved in 2004 provides for a $280 million smart growth incentive fund to support capital projects such as sidewalks, plazas, streetscape enhancements, and improvements to transit stations, as well as general plan updates, specific plans, and zoning regulations. In addition, approximately $5 million a year of the available funds will go to bicycle paths and facilities, pedestrian improvements, neighborhood safety projects, and the Regional Bike Plan Early Action Program.

TransNet Smart Growth Incentive Program (SGIP). The TransNet SGIP provides funding to the cities and County of San Diego for transportation-related infrastructure and planning projects that support smart growth and transit oriented development in Smart Growth Opportunity Areas (SGOAs) as shown on the Smart Growth Concept Map. The goal of this competitive grant program is to fund projects that catalyze compact, mixed use development around transit. An estimated $280 million is expected to be available over the 40 year lifetime of TransNet. Three cycles of funding have taken place since the program started.

TransNet Active Transportation Grant Program (ATGP). The TransNet ATGP provides funding to the cities and County of San Diego for projects that encourage the increased use of active modes of transportation, including biking and walking. Through competitive grants the ATGP funds capital improvements, planning projects, and programs that educate, encourage, and raise awareness about biking and walking as viable alternatives to get to work, shopping, and other daily activities. An estimated $280 million is expected to be available over the 40 year lifetime of TransNet. Three cycles of funding have taken place since the program started.

Regional Bike Plan Early Action Program (EAP). The Bike EAP is a $200 million initiative to expand the bike network countywide and finish high-priority projects within a decade. The EAP comprises 42 projects totaling about 77 miles of new bikeways, with projects prioritized based on several key criteria, such as proximity to smart growth areas.

Regional Mobility Hubs. Mobility hubs are places of enhanced connectivity where different modes of transportation, including walking, biking, ridesharing, and public transit, come together around concentrations of employment, housing, retail, and other services. Multiple mobility options, including carshare, bikeshare, Lift, Uber, taxi, shuttle, jitneys, and other modes, can bridge the distance between transit and individual origin or destination points. SANDAG has received a state transportation planning grant from Caltrans to develop a San Diego County and Imperial Valley Regional Mobility Hubs Implementation Plan. Working with the Imperial County Transportation Commission, SANDAG will lead the plan to develop conceptual designs and strategies for different mobility hub station place types within the region.
August 12, 2015

SANDAG
Board of Directors: Chair Jack Dale
Transportation Committee, Chair Todd Gloria
Regional Planning Committee, Chair Lesa Heebner
401 B Street Ste. 800
San Diego CA 92101

RE: Regional Transportation Oriented Development TOD

The Chula Vista Community Collaborative (CVCC) has been working to facilitate community input and social equity in the region in regards to transportation and social justice. In reviewing the draft Transit Oriented Development (TOD) policy, we would like to comment on the following areas of concern:

1) It is essential that a percentage of funds be spent and allocated to communities of concern. This must be clearly noted and required.
2) All TOD should be required to have inclusionary housing for low income families.
3) The policy must include a community engagement process in order to ensure social equity.
4) It is essential that a “readiness” tool be developed to identify which communities are ready for TOD; furthermore, a readiness criteria must be the inclusion of affordable housing.

We are hoping social equity is valued and the above items are considered as the policy moves forward.

Sincerely,

Margarita Holguin, Executive Director
Chula Vista Community Collaborative
July 21, 2015

SANDAG
Board of Directors, Chair Jack Dale
Transportation Committee, Chair Todd Gloria
Regional Planning Committee, Chair Lesa Heebner
401 B St. Ste. 800
San Diego, CA 92101

RE: SANDAG’s Regional Transit Oriented Development Policy

Honorable Jack Dale and SANDAG Board and Committee members:

On behalf of Circulate San Diego, a non-profit organization devoted to transit, active transportation, and sustainable growth, I would like to express concern with SANDAG’s draft Transit Oriented Development (“TOD”) policy.

1. It is more important than ever for SANDAG to create a meaningful TOD policy.

Local governments in San Diego have made great strides focusing land uses near our region’s transit investments.

However, more work is needed. In 1990, SANDAG projected multi-family housing to make up 52 percent of new development. In 2013, after local governments made different land use decisions, 82 percent of future development is projected to be multi-family. This change demonstrates the vital need for a useful TOD policy.

2. The San Diego region must focus on TOD to remain competitive for Federal and State transportation funding.

As outlined in Circulate San Diego’s report TransNet Today, Federal and state sources of funding are increasingly shifting toward large competitive grant structures. The State Cap-and-Trade funds, and Federal TIGER Grants are two significant examples.

These programs require applicants to show that transportation investments will serve adequate population densities, and will provide sufficient return on investments. For the San Diego region to remain competitive for these types of funding, SANDAG must help localities prepare for TOD.

3. SANDAG’s draft “TOD Strategy” contains no actual policy changes.

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The “Draft Regional Transit Oriented Development Strategy” presented by SANDAG staff at the SANDAG Technical Working Group (TWG) on Thursday July 9, 2015, contains no actionable policy changes.\(^2\)

Instead, the document outlines only areas of policy that SANDAG proposes to “continue,” and areas of potential policy updates that SANDAG proposes to “consider” at unspecified future times. The document does not even outline a time frame for considering policy changes, nor does it explain why those optional policy changes cannot be proposed to the SANDAG Board for immediate or near-term implementation.

The commitment by the SANDAG Board to develop a policy to implement transit oriented development recognized that some improvement was needed for San Diego. Unfortunately, the draft strategy includes only plans to “continue” or “consider” and fails to recognize the clear and stated need in the region to leverage the substantial investments SANDAG has made in transit with better land uses.

Over the course of the many-year stakeholder process SANDAG has engaged in, multiple constituents, including Circulate San Diego, have identified areas where SANDAG can improve TOD. In fact, AECOM, SANDAG’s consultant on this project, has presented a variety of tools that SANDAG can implement.\(^3\) SANDAG should implement them, not just plan to consider them.

4. **SANDAG Committed to develop a TOD “Policy,” not a mere strategy.**

The preparation of a Regional Policy is a commitment made by the SANDAG Board per the 2050 RTP/SCS resolution:

> “Implementing an action to develop a regional transit oriented development policy in the 2050 RTP Sustainable Communities Strategy to promote and incentivize sustainable development.”\(^4\)

However, the draft document published by SANDAG staff refers to itself as a “strategy,” as opposed to a policy. While the title of a document is not always dispositive of its content or impact, the draft TOD Strategy SANDAG published cannot be fairly considered to be consistent with what SANDAG agreed to prepare.

A strategy is nothing more than a plan, a document outlining how something is intended to proceed. A policy is a document that *decides* how something will proceed. The SANDAG Board agreed in 2011 not to talk about TOD, or to plan to talk about it. The SANDAG Board directed staff to prepare a “policy,” which can only reasonably be interpreted to mean a document that would actually direct the outcome of programs, funding, or other elements of action by SANDAG.


5. Circulate San Diego is concerned that the development of this Draft TOD Strategy does not represent good faith.

In negotiations around the 2011 Regional Transportation Plan, SANDAG agreed to prepare a TOD Policy, which was a part of why Circulate San Diego’s predecessor organizations agreed to support the Plan. However, four years later, SANDAG has made an about face, and is proposing to adopt a document that has no actionable elements, and does not substantively advance transit oriented development in any way.

Circulate San Diego cannot consider a TOD document devoid of any actionable elements to be a good faith fulfillment of the agreement SANDAG made in 2011. Moreover, Circulate San Diego is concerned that the SANDAG staff is also not meeting the expectations or directions given to them by the SANDAG Board in 2011.

6. Among other components, SANDAG’s TOD policy should create or modify a grant program to award funds to local governments that are ready for TOD.

In addition to the policies proposed by SANDAG’s consultant AECOM, a TOD Policy should incorporate a variety of other elements, as called for by Circulate San Diego in our letter dated May 7, 2015. Those recommendations are also provided below.

SANDAG should establish a grant program (or modify and expand the existing Smart Growth Incentives Program) to award jurisdictions based on how applicants score on their readiness for TOD. This would encourage local jurisdictions—with a carrot, not a stick—to update local regulations to facilitate development near transit and help to spur development.

a. The TOD grant program can coexist with existing grant programs.

The TOD grant fund would not need to replace the existing other grant programs. Jurisdictions that do not score well for their TOD readiness could still apply for grants as they always have under the existing grant programs.

This TOD grant program could be funded from flexible federal sources. Some of the funds could also be drawn from the TransNet funds that currently fund the existing grant programs. In the alternative, the existing grant programs could be modified to incorporate elements of TOD readiness criteria.

b. SANDAG’s consultants AECOM created a useful framework for evaluating TOD readiness.

AECOM prepared a white paper for SANDAG titled “Readiness Criteria: Metrics for Transit-Oriented Districts.” That paper proposes a series of measurements for TOD readiness, including market demand, parking ratios, connectivity to transit, and other important gauges.

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SANDAG could use the metrics in the AECOM white paper to develop a scoring mechanism for their new or modified TOD grant program.

c. **A TOD grant program could see large gains with little cost.**

Making grant funding available can be a useful, and politically palatable “carrot” to encourage, not require, local governments to update their development rules.

This is a similar model to the Federal Department of Education’s recent “Race to the Top” funding for education. The Department of Education made a relatively small pool of funds available nationally, and scored applications based on how much education reform states adopted. This resulted in a wide range of meaningful changes by states choosing to compete for a limited pool of funds.

7. **A TOD policy should include mechanisms to encourage affordable housing near transit.**

Most transit riders are low income. The TOD policy must build in mechanisms to ensure that low income people are able to afford to live near the region’s transit investments.

Fortunately, there are a variety of options for SANDAG to incorporate affordable homes in TOD:

- **Land for Homes:** SANDAG should fund a study for how MTS and NCTD can make land available for development into affordable homes. The Los Angeles Metro system recently committed to making 35 percent of its land holdings available for affordable homes. San Diego should examine the same.

  For example, while many park-and-ride lots in San Diego are well-utilized, many are not. Land that is underutilized could be repurposed for affordable TOD.

- **TOD Readiness:** When SANDAG creates a TOD grant program, it can include affordable housing tools as one measure of a jurisdiction’s TOD readiness. If a jurisdiction hasn’t planned for how affordable homes will factor into their TOD, they would be scored as less ready.

  Attachment A to this letter is a proposal for how to incorporate planning for affordable homes into the framework for readiness criteria developed by AECOM.

- **Contributions to Blended Funds:** Civic San Diego and the San Diego Housing Commission are both examining a blended fund to finance affordable home construction. Relatively small contributions by public entities can leverage huge private investments in blended affordable investment funds.

  The Association of Bay Area Governments contributed to a similar blended transit oriented affordable housing fund. SANDAG can make similar funds available in San Diego.

Circulate San Diego is committed to engaging in SANDAG’s ongoing TOD policy planning. We look forward to engaging in a productive dialogue over how SANDAG can both innovate and adopt policies that have proven to work in other regions.

Sincerely,
Creating excellent mobility choices and vibrant, healthy communities.

Colin Parent
Policy Counsel, Circulate San Diego
Attachment A - Proposed Affordable Housing Readiness Criteria for SANDAG’s Transit Readiness Policy:

The below criteria could be inserted in the readiness criteria proposed in the SANDAG white paper: http://www.sandag.org/uploads/conferenceid/conferenceid_360_18634.pdf

C. Affordable Homes. Proximity to transit is a crucial need for low income San Diegans. Transit investments tend to add market value to surrounding land. As land values rise, it becomes increasingly more difficult for developers of affordable homes to successfully bid against market-rate developers for land. However, different market conditions and available resources caution against a one-size-fits all solution. It is proposed that SANDAG include a readiness measurement that gauges how the district plans to mitigate the effect of transit investment on affordable home development.

4 = Plan includes a robust mechanism for ensuring affordable homes are built within the district. Options can include:

- mandatory affordable housing set-asides,
- land value recapture that finances affordable homes within the district,
- housing overlay zone or density bonus program that trades density for inclusionary affordable homes within the district (above and beyond the state density bonus program),
- public land in the district dedicated for affordable homes,
- substantial philanthropic donations of either land or capital costs for affordable homes in the district.

3 = Plan includes a significant mechanism for ensuring affordable homes are built within the district. Options can include:

- the district will generate tax increment through an infrastructure finance district that will be dedicated to affordable homes within the district,
- the district can access a locally administered transit oriented development blended fund.

2 = Plan includes a modest mechanism to develop affordable homes within the district, but may not generate new resources. Options include:

- dedicating an amount of preexisting local funds for affordable homes to be used in the district (HOME, CDBG, Redevelopment, Impact Fee revenue), within the district,
- affordable developments can receive expedited reviews, fee reductions, parking reductions,
- the district includes substantial amounts of multi-family zoned land in areas that would be competitive for nine percent Low Income Housing Tax Credits.

1 = Plan does not include a mechanism to ensure affordable homes are included, including for districts without any residential opportunities.