**Executive Committee**

Friday, May 8, 2020
9 to 10 a.m.

**Teleconference Meeting**

**Agenda Highlights**

- FY 2021 Executive Director Performance Objectives

MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT AMIDST COVID-19 PANDEMIC:

The Executive Committee meeting scheduled for Friday, May 8, 2020, will be conducted virtually in accordance with Governor Newsom’s State of Emergency declaration regarding the COVID-19 outbreak, Executive Order N-29-20, and the Guidance for Gatherings issued by the California Department of Public Health. Executive Committee Members will primarily participate in the meeting virtually, while practicing social distancing, from individual remote locations.

There are a few options for public participation:
- Listen to the meeting audio stream through sandag.org
- Observe the meeting via GoToMeeting (registration required)

To register for the GoToMeeting webinar, follow the prompts to enter your name and email address. Members of the public who prefer not to share their names with SANDAG may use initials or a pseudonym; however, to receive a confirmation email, including a link to join the webinar, you will need to enter a valid email address. On the morning of the Executive Committee meeting, click the “Join Webinar” link in the confirmation email. To avoid connection issues, check your system requirements in advance.

During the GoToMeeting webinar: To minimize/expand the webinar attendee panel, click on the orange arrow at the top right corner of your screen. Attendees will be in “listen only” mode. View GoToMeeting FAQs for additional information.

SANDAG is relying on commercial technology to broadcast the May 8 Executive Committee meeting via GoToWebinar. With the recent increase of virtual meetings, platforms such as Microsoft Teams, WebEx, GoToMeeting, and Zoom are working to scale their systems to meet the new demand. If we experience technical difficulty or you are unexpectedly disconnected from the broadcast, please close and re-open your browser and click the link to re-join the meeting. SANDAG staff will take all possible measures to ensure a publicly accessible experience. Please note that the meeting will continue to be broadcast audio-only via the “Listen to the meeting” link on www.sandag.org.

Public Comments: Persons who wish to address the Executive Committee on an item to be considered at this meeting, or on non-agendized issues, may email comments to the Board at clerk@sandag.org (please reference: “May 8 Executive Committee Meeting” in your subject line and identify the item number(s) to which your comments pertain).

Comments received by 4 p.m. on Thursday, May 7, will be provided to Executive Committee members prior to the meeting. Comments received during the meeting will be read into the record at the appropriate time for public comments. All comments received prior to the close of the meeting will be made part of the meeting record.
Welcome to SANDAG. Members of the public may speak to the Executive Committee on any item at the time the Executive Committee is considering the item. Public speakers are limited to three minutes or less per person. The Executive Committee may only take action on any item appearing on the agenda.

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 sandag.org/meetings. Additionally, interested persons can sign up for email notifications at sandag.org/subscribe.

SANDAG operates its programs without regard to race, color, and national origin in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. SANDAG has developed procedures for investigating and tracking Title VI complaints, and the procedures for filing a complaint are available to the public upon request. Questions concerning SANDAG nondiscrimination obligations or complaint procedures should be directed to the SANDAG General Counsel, John Kirk, at (619) 699-1997 or john.kirk@sandag.org. Any person who believes himself or herself or any specific class of persons to be subjected to discrimination prohibited by Title VI also may file a written complaint with the Federal Transit Administration.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), SANDAG will accommodate persons who require assistance in order to participate in SANDAG meetings. If such assistance is required, please contact the SANDAG ADA Coordinator, the Director of Diversity and Equity, at (619) 699-1900, at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting. To request this document or related reports in an alternative format, please call (619) 699-1900 or (619) 699-1904 (TTY), or fax (619) 699-1905.

SANDAG agenda materials can be made available in alternative languages. To make a request, call (619) 699-1900 at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting.

Los materiales de la agenda de SANDAG están disponibles en otros idiomas. Para hacer una solicitud, llame al (619) 699-1900 al menos 72 horas antes de la reunión.

如有需要, 我们可以把SANDAG议程材料翻译成其他语言.

请在会议前至少72小时打电话 (619) 699-1900 提出请求.

Closed Captioning is Available

Steps to Access Closed Captioning:

1. Open your browser and go to rrCaptions.my.webex.com
2. Enter the Meeting Number: 626 891 237
3. Enter the Meeting Password: SANDAG

Message from the Clerk

In compliance with Government Code §54952.3, the Clerk hereby announces that the compensation for legislative body members attending the following simultaneous or serial meetings is: Executive Committee (EC) $100, Board of Directors (BOD) $150, and Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) $100. Compensation rates for the EC and BOD are set pursuant to the SANDAG Bylaws, and the compensation rate for the RTC is set pursuant to state law.

Mission Statement

The 18 cities and county government are SANDAG serving as the forum for regional decision-making. SANDAG builds consensus; makes strategic plans; obtains and allocates resources; plans, engineers, and builds public transit; and provides information on a broad range of topics pertinent to the region’s quality of life.
Executive Committee
Friday, May 8, 2020

**Item No.**

+1. **Approval of Meeting Minutes**
   The Executive Committee is asked to approve the minutes from its February 14, 2020, and February 28, 2020, meetings.

+2. **Public Comments/Communications/Member Comments**
   Public comments under this agenda item will be limited to five public speakers. Members of the public shall have the opportunity to address the Executive Committee on any issue within the jurisdiction of SANDAG that is not on this agenda. Other public comments will be heard during the items under the heading “Reports.” Persons who wish to address the Executive Committee on an item to be considered at this meeting, or on non-agendized issues, may email comments to the Executive Committee at clerk@sandag.org (please reference: “May 8 EC Meeting” in your subject line and identify the item number(s) to which your comments pertain). Comments received by 4 p.m. on Thursday, May 7, will be provided to Executive Committee members prior to the meeting. Comments received during the meeting will be read into the record at the appropriate time for public comments. All comments received prior to the close of the meeting will be made part of the meeting record. Board members also may provide information and announcements under this agenda item.

3. **Executive Director’s Report**
   *Hasan Ikhrata, SANDAG*
   An update on key programs, projects, and agency initiatives, including the agency’s response to COVID-19, San Diego Forward: The 2021 Regional Plan, and the Airport Connectivity project, will be presented.

**Chair’s Report**

+4. **FY 2021 Executive Director Performance Objectives**
   *Steve Vaus, Chair, SANDAG Board of Directors*
   The Executive Committee is asked to recommend that the Board of Directors approve the proposed performance objectives for the Executive Director for the period July 1, 2020, through June 30, 2021.

**Reports**

+5. **Review of Draft Board Agendas**
   *Victoria Stackwick, SANDAG*
   The Executive Committee is asked to approve the draft agenda for the May 22, 2020, Board Business meeting. A verbal update on the June 12, 2020, Board Policy meeting will be provided.

+6. **Legislative Status Report**
   *Robyn Wapner, Hector Vanegas, and Laurie Gartrell, SANDAG*
   An update on SANDAG legislative and policy activities will be presented.
7. **Continued Public Comments**
   If the five-speaker limit for public comments was exceeded at the beginning of this agenda, other public comments will be taken at this time. Subjects of previous agenda items may not again be addressed under public comment.

8. **Upcoming Meetings Information**
   The next Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for Friday, June 12, 2020 at 9 a.m.

9. **Adjournment**

+ next to an item indicates an attachment
February 14, 2020, Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Chair Steve Vaus (North County Inland) called the meeting of the Executive Committee to order at 8 a.m.

1. Approval of Meeting Minutes (Approve)
   
   Action: Upon a motion by Supervisor Jim Desmond (County of San Diego) and a second by Council President Georgette Gomez (City of San Diego), the Executive Committee approved the minutes from its January 10, 2020, meeting. Yes: Chair Vaus, Vice Chair Catherine Blakespear (North County Coastal), Mayor Mary Salas (South County), Supervisor Desmond, and Council President Gomez. No: None. Abstain: None. Absent: East County.

2. Public Comments/Communications/Member Comments (Information)
   
   None.

3. Executive Director’s Report (Discussion)
   
   Executive Director Hasan Ikhrata presented an update on key programs, projects, and agency initiatives, including San Diego Forward: The 2021 Regional Plan and the Airport Connectivity Subcommittee.  
   
   Action: Discussion only.

4. Review of Draft Board Agendas (Approve)
   
   +4A. Draft Board Business Agenda – February 28, 2020
      
      Director of Government Relations Victoria Stackwick presented the item.

   +4B. Draft Board of Directors Retreat Agenda – March 11-13, 2020
      
      Director of Strategic Communications Irene McCormack presented the item.

      Action: Upon a motion by Mayor Bill Wells (East County) and a second by Council President Gomez, the Executive Committee approved the Board Business meeting agenda for February 28, 2020, as amended, and the March 11-13, 2020, Board Retreat agenda. Yes: Chair Vaus, Vice Chair Blakespear, Mayor Salas, Mayor Wells, Supervisor Desmond, and Council President Gomez. No: None. Abstain: None. Absent: None.

5. Regional Housing Needs Assessment: Proposed Appeals Hearing Procedures (Approve)
   
   Senior Regional Planner Seth Litchney presented the item.

   Action: Upon a motion by Council President Gomez and a second by Mayor Salas, the Executive Committee approved the proposed procedures for the Regional Housing Needs Assessment appeals hearing, as amended to extend the hearing date from February 28 to March 27, and allowing agency rebuttal after public
comments. Yes: Chair Vaus, Vice Chair Blakespear, Mayor Salas, Mayor Wells, Supervisor Desmond, and Council President Gomez. No: None. Abstain: None. Absent: None.

6. Preliminary Development of the FY 2021 Program Budget (Discussion)

Chief Financial Officer André Douzdjian and Senior Budget Program Analyst Sandi Craig provided preliminary information on the development of the FY 2021 Program Budget.

Action: Discussion only.

7. Proposed 2020 Legislative Program (Recommend)

Victoria Stackwick, Manager of Government Relations Robyn Wapner, Border Program Manager Hector Vanegas, and Associate Government Relations Analyst Laurie Gartrell presented the item.

Action: Upon a motion by Council President Gomez and a second by Mayor Wells, the Executive Committee recommended that the Board of Directors approve the proposed 2020 Legislative Program, including sponsorship of Assembly Bill 2062 (Boerner Horvath). Yes: Chair Vaus, Vice Chair Blakespear, Mayor Salas, Mayor Wells, Supervisor Desmond, and Council President Gomez. No: None. Abstain: None. Absent: None.

8. Continued Public Comments

None.

9. Upcoming Meetings

A Special Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for Friday, February 28, 2020 at 8 a.m.

10. Adjournment

Chair Vaus adjourned the meeting at 8:53 a.m.
### Confirmed Attendance at SANDAG Executive Committee Meeting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jurisdiction</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Member/Alternate</th>
<th>Attended</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North County Inland</td>
<td>Steve Vaus, Chair</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rebecca Jones</td>
<td>Alternate</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North County Coastal</td>
<td>Catherine Blakespear, Vice Chair</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>David Zito</td>
<td>Alternate</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South County</td>
<td>Mary Salas</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Serge Dedina</td>
<td>Alternate</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East County</td>
<td>Bill Wells</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>John Minto</td>
<td>Alternate</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of San Diego</td>
<td>Georgette Gomez</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Barbara Bry</td>
<td>Alternate</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Monica Montgomery</td>
<td>Alternate</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County of San Diego</td>
<td>Jim Desmond</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kristin Gaspar</td>
<td>Alternate</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
February 28, 2020, Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Vice Chair Catherine Blakespear (North County Coastal) called the meeting of the Executive Committee to order at 8:01 a.m.

1. Public Comments/Communications/Member Comments (Information)

None.

Reports

2. FY 2021 Performance Objectives for the Executive Director (Discussion/Possible Action)

The Executive Committee discussed the performance objectives for the Executive Director for the period July 1, 2020, through June 30, 2021, and provided direction to staff on next steps.

Action: Discussion/possible action.

4. Continued Public Comments

None.

5. Upcoming Meetings

Please Note: the next meeting of the Executive Committee, scheduled for Friday, March 13, 2020, at 8 a.m., will be held at the following location:

Viejas Resort
5000 Willows Road
Alpine, CA 91901

6. Adjournment

Vice Chair Blakespear adjourned the meeting at 8:42 a.m.
## Confirmed Attendance at SANDAG Executive Committee Meeting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jurisdiction</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Member/Alternate</th>
<th>Attended Open Session</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North County Inland</td>
<td>Steve Vaus, Chair</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rebecca Jones</td>
<td>Alternate</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Catherine Blakespear, Vice Chair</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>David Zito</td>
<td>Alternate</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South County</td>
<td>Mary Salas</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Serge Dedina</td>
<td>Alternate</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East County</td>
<td>Bill Wells</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>John Minto</td>
<td>Alternate</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of San Diego</td>
<td>Georgette Gomez</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Barbara Bry</td>
<td>Alternate</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Monica Montgomery</td>
<td>Alternate</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County of San Diego</td>
<td>Jim Desmond</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kristin Gaspar</td>
<td>Alternate</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Overview

The Executive Committee is responsible for advising the Board of Directors regarding the performance objectives of the Executive Director, Hasan Ikhrata.

On February 28, 2020, the Executive Committee discussed and provided direction regarding the performance objectives for the period July 1, 2020, to June 30, 2021. At this time the Executive Committee is asked to finalize the draft objectives and forward to the Board for approval.

Steve Vaus, Chair, SANDAG Board of Directors

Attachments: 1. FY 2021 SANDAG Executive Director Performance Objectives

Action: Recommend

The Executive Committee is asked to recommend that the Board of Directors approve the proposed performance objectives for the Executive Director for the period July 1, 2020, through June 30, 2021.

Fiscal Impact:
None.

Schedule/Scope Impact:
None.
FY 2021 SANDAG Executive Director Performance Objectives

**Cleary define the goals for the Regional Plan**

- Within the first quarter of FY 2021, delineate the required goals for the Regional Plan that the San Diego region must meet to be compliant with state and federal laws and mandates.
- With the development of the 2021 Regional Plan, provide a report that demonstrates how the proposed portfolio of projects, programs, and policies contribute toward the achievement of the required goals.
- Provide a regional progress report that depicts how the region, including local agency actions, are contributing toward achieving the required goals.

**Develop strong partnerships with member agencies and facilitate greater Board member effectiveness**

- Provide Board of Directors (Board) members with agenda packets and supporting materials, including PowerPoint presentations at least seven days prior to Board and Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) meetings.
- Through enhanced Board and PAC reports, include necessary background, foundational information, and policy analysis with relevant agenda items; identify choices and related consequences to support effective decision-making.
- Provide briefings to all interested Board members in advance of Board meetings.
- Provide budget vs actual cost comparison for capital projects via a quarterly report.
- Promote harmony with the Board by avoiding controversial or highly simplified statements on subjects that have not been decided by Board members.
- Utilize the established committee process. For example, present the proposed Regional Transportation Plan to Transportation and Regional Planning committees prior to presentation to the Board.
- At Board meetings, when there are questions from Board members, allow staff members who are subject matter experts to respond whenever possible.
- Oversee the agency’s proactive engagement of community groups and the public.

**Strategic Initiatives**

**Implement Organization Effectiveness actions**: SANDAG must think, work, and plan differently as the region changes. The strategic planning project that started in 2019 produced a set of recommendations tied to workplace culture, organization structure, and internal operations. Together, these actions serve as a comprehensive roadmap for optimizing the agency’s overall capacity and ensuring SANDAG successfully delivers on its regional responsibilities through improved levels of performance.

**Modernize the agency’s supporting systems and technology**: For SANDAG to become a world-class organization and deliver its vision for the region’s future, the best equipment, technology, and training are necessary. The agency has embarked on an effort to modernize digital technology used throughout the agency, to enable staff to collaborate better, and to work more effectively and efficiently. Over the next few years, the agency will update its capabilities in finance, human resources, payroll, telecommunications, desktop and mobile computing, and in the use of cloud-based systems.

**Become a data-driven organization**: SANDAG is using real-time data to solve real-world challenges. The agency is working to implement data solutions that are both secure and innovative, with an objective to develop a data-driven culture within the agency that fosters collaboration with public and private partners.
SANDAG will deliver data services that will help to better illuminate issues and opportunities and will enhance decision-making and policy development.

Priority Projects

2021 Regional Plan

Two important milestones were reached in fall 2019 to help SANDAG continue to develop a bold new vision for San Diego Forward: The 2021 Regional Plan (2021 Regional Plan). On October 8, California Governor Gavin Newsom signed Assembly Bill 1730 (Gonzalez) into law, which in effect keeps the region in compliance with state laws and ensures that important state funds continue to flow into the region while the 2021 Regional Plan is developed. On November 15, the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit 2019 Federal Regional Transportation Plan (2019 Federal RTP). The 2019 Federal RTP, developed by SANDAG throughout 2019, is the region’s current long-range plan and maintains the region’s eligibility for state and federal transportation funding while the agency continues to develop the 2021 Regional Plan.

The bold new transportation vision for the 2021 Regional Plan will focus on creating a balanced transportation system through the implementation of five strategies SANDAG refers to as the “5 Big Moves” – Complete Corridors, Transit Leap, Mobility Hubs, Flexible Fleets, and Next Operating System (Next OS).

These closely coordinated initiatives create a framework for a transformative vision for mobility in our region, and this FY 2021 budget reflects the region’s early steps toward realizing that vision.

Complete Corridors focuses on improving how people travel by balancing the need for dedicated space for cars, transit vehicles, shared mobility options, bike riders, pedestrians, commercial vehicles, and other fleets of vehicles that promote individual mobility (Flexible Fleets), including small transit shuttles and rideshare services such as Uber and Lyft. The anticipated benefits of developing Complete Corridors include increased roadway capacity, reduced congestion and air pollution, shorter travel times, increased transit ridership, improved safety, and the maximization of existing infrastructure.

Transit Leap is an initiative to create a complete network of high-speed, high-capacity, and frequent transit services that connect major residential areas with employment centers and local attractions. New high-speed transit services, covering longer distances with limited stops, may be separated from vehicle traffic with bridges, tunnels, or dedicated lanes. Service times will be expanded, transit will be more personalized with a greater variety of vehicles and types of service, and new and existing transit service will transition to electric power or alternative fuels to decrease greenhouse gas emissions. Less congestion, faster transit travel times, reduced air pollution, decreased demand for parking, and lower household transportation costs are among the anticipated benefits.

Mobility Hubs are places of connectivity where different types of travel options—walking, biking, transit, and shared mobility—come together. They are uniquely designed around the needs of communities and better connect high-frequency transit to an individual’s origin or destination. Mobility Hubs offer people safe walkways and bikeways; shared mobility options such as transit, on-demand rideshare, and smaller vehicles such as scooters and bikes; support services such as real-time travel information and charging stations for electric cars and bikes; and other features. Higher transit ridership, less congestion, reduced air pollution, and increased mobility for seniors and people with disabilities are among the anticipated benefits of Mobility Hubs.

Flexible Fleets will provide people with shared vehicles for all types of trips 24 hours a day and seven days a week—all aimed at improving individual mobility. They will provide important connections between high-speed transit and key destinations such as work and home, making it easier for people to choose public transit and reduce the need to own a car. Anticipated benefits include better access to transit, trip convenience, reduced air pollution, congestion relief, and increased mobility for seniors and people who are physically disabled.
Next OS is the “brain” of the entire transportation system, and it will be the digital platform through which technology and data can be used to connect and manage different modes of transportation, including passenger vehicles, buses, ridesharing vehicles, delivery trucks, bikes, scooters, and more. The result will be roadways and transit services that operate more smoothly and serve people better. Next OS will make the other four big moves discussed above work in unison to give people a seamless travel experience across all modes of transportation.

Del Mar Bluffs Stabilization

In the City of Del Mar, construction began in FY 2020 on the fourth phase of stabilization efforts along the coastal bluffs. These improvements include the installation of support columns that stabilize localized areas and sea walls, construction of a drainage channel on the top of the bluffs, repair of concrete channels, and stabilization of storm chute outfalls and an existing headwall.

SANDAG and the North County Transit District (NCTD) are currently seeking $100 million to accelerate two more phases of stabilization projects: Del Mar Bluffs Phase 5 and 6. Phase 5 is currently funded through design and will address additional seismic and general stabilization needs, install additional support columns, and replace more aging drainage structures. Phase 6 will continue to provide long-term rehabilitation and stabilization work, including protecting the base of the bluffs against additional bluff retreat and improved pedestrian access. Simultaneously, to ensure the long-term viability of the corridor, SANDAG is also seeking $5 million to study potential long-term solutions, which could include tunneling below Del Mar.

Mid-Coast Trolley Project

Under construction since late 2016, the Mid-Coast Trolley project will extend UC San Diego Blue Line Trolley service from the historic Santa Fe Depot in Downtown San Diego north through the University community of San Diego. The Trolley extension will include nine new stations along its 11-mile length and is scheduled to begin service in late 2021. When complete, the $2.1 billion project will provide service to major activity areas such as the Veterans Administration Medical Center, UC San Diego, and University Towne Centre, commonly referred to as Westfield UTC mall. A little more than half of the project is being funded by the regional TransNet half-cent sales tax for transportation and the remainder by the federal government under a $1 billion Full Funding Grant Agreement, which was executed with the FTA in September 2016. The first half of the Trolley extension runs from the Santa Fe Depot to the southern section of the University community. It follows the heavy rail freight and passenger corridor right-of-way (ROW), which is operated by NCTD. The second section, which comprises four miles of elevated guideway, follows the Caltrans ROW along I-5, crossing over I-5 twice to travel through UC San Diego, and ends at University Towne Centre.

In FY 2020, SANDAG completed major work on bridges, abutments and piers, utility undergrounding, and columns in addition to forming the full length of the elevated Trolley viaduct by installing 192 pre-cast concrete girders and conducting cast-in-place concrete pours. Work also began on construction of the Trolley stations, including initial systems work, and the Trolley underpass. In addition, crews have almost completed realigning the rail corridor, double-tracking the heavy rail, and have begun to install the Trolley light-rail lines.

In FY 2021, SANDAG will continue work on the viaducts in the northern section of the project and grading, drainage, retaining walls, and bridges in the southern section. Trackwork, station construction, and systems elements will also continue along the length of the alignment.

Navy Old Town Campus Revitalization/Central Mobility Hub

For decades, San Diego has explored ways to improve regional connectivity to San Diego International Airport. With future traffic impacts to current San Diego International Airport roads projected to exceed capacity, combined with insufficient transit access to the airport, SANDAG has made it a chief priority to identify a solution for a direct transit connection to the airport. Revitalization of the Naval Base Point Loma
Old Town Campus, situated on the west side of I-5 about one mile north of the airport, may solve this longstanding regional connectivity issue by providing a location for a new central mobility hub.

The 70.5-acre Navy property currently houses the Naval Information Warfare Systems Command facilities, which the Navy seeks to redevelop and modernize to support its cyber security mission. On September 19, 2019, Secretary of the Navy Richard V. Spencer, San Diego Mayor Kevin Faulconer, and SANDAG Executive Director Hasan Ikhrata signed an Agreement to discuss how the property might be redeveloped to meet the Navy’s needs and those of the region at large. The Agreement outlines how SANDAG and the Navy will work together throughout the environmental clearance process and establish a timeline for redevelopment of the site. An additional Agreement was signed on January 23, 2020, which signifies that SANDAG and the Navy will collaborate exclusively to explore solutions for redeveloping the Navy Old Town Campus.

The Central Mobility Hub at the revitalized Naval Base Point Loma Old Town Campus, if realized, would include a state-of-the-art transportation center with a direct connection to the airport and additional connections to the Trolley, COASTER, Amtrak Pacific Surfliner, Rapid transit, local bus, and future transportation options. It would offer San Diegans a one-transfer connection to the airport from major destinations across the region for generations to come.

In FY 2021, discussions will continue on redevelopment of the Naval Base Point Loma Old Town Campus for the benefit of the Navy and the San Diego region.

### Otay Mesa East Port of Entry and State Route 11

The Otay Mesa East Port of Entry (POE) project, along with a new connecting future tolled road, SR 11, is jointly undertaken by SANDAG and Caltrans, in cooperation with key partner agencies on both sides of the United States–Mexico border.

Project milestones reached so far include the start of construction in FY 2020 of the SR 125 southbound connectors to westbound SR 905 and SR 11, the final segment of SR 11, and procurement of ROW for the new POE. FY 2021 work will continue these construction efforts and begin construction on the Siempre Viva Road interchange improvements.

Also in FY 2020, the project completed the binational Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) pre-deployment study; operationalized southbound border wait-time data collection; began implementation of a northbound border wait-time monitoring system; initiated an investment-grade Traffic and Revenue Analysis; and developed a comprehensive funding plan that includes public funds, tolls, and other revenues. Upon completion of these studies, a binational architectural and engineering design plan for both the United States and Mexican sides of the POE complex will commence. In addition, the project team began designing the binational ITS.
Draft May 22, 2020, Board of Directors Meeting Agenda

Item No. | Recommendation
---|---
1. **Public Comments/Communications/Member Comments**
   - Public comments under this agenda item will be limited to five public speakers. Members of the public shall have the opportunity to address the Board on any issue within the jurisdiction of SANDAG that is not on this agenda. Other public comments will be heard during the items under the heading “Reports.” Persons who wish to address the Board on an item to be considered at this meeting, or on non-agendized issues, may email comments to the Board at clerk@sandag.org (please reference: “May 22 Board Meeting” in your subject line and identify the item number(s) to which your comments pertain). Comments received by 4 p.m. on Thursday, May 21, will be provided to Board members prior to the meeting. Comments received during the meeting will be read into the record at the appropriate time for public comments. All comments received prior to the close of the meeting will be made part of the meeting record. Board members also may provide information and announcements under this agenda item.

2. **Policy Advisory Committee Chairs' Report**
   - Information
   - Policy Advisory Committee Chairs will provide updates on key committee activities.

3. **Executive Director's Report**
   - Discussion
   - Hasan Ikhrata, SANDAG
   - An update on key programs, projects, and agency initiatives, including San Diego Forward: The 2021 Regional Plan, the Airport Connectivity project, and the agency’s response to COVID-19, will be provided.

**Consent**

+4. **Approval of Meeting Minutes**
   - Approve
   - The Board of Directors is asked to approve the minutes from its April 10, 2020, Board Policy Meeting.

+5. **Approval of Proposed Contract Award**
   - Approve
   - Julie Wiley, SANDAG
   - The Board of Directors is asked to approve the proposed contract award.
+6. FY 2021 Transportation Development Act Allocations
   Lisa Madsen, SANDAG

The Transportation Committee recommends that the Board of Directors approve the eligibility of the Metropolitan Transit System and North County Transit District to receive their FY 2021 allocations of Transportation Development Act funds.

+7. Annual Public Transit Report
   Jennifer Williamson, SANDAG

The Transportation Committee recommends that the Board of Directors approve the submission of the Annual Public Transit Report to the State Legislature.

+8. Policy Advisory Committee Actions
   Tessa Lero, SANDAG

The Board of Directors is asked to ratify the delegated actions taken by the Policy Advisory Committees.

+9. Executive Director Delegated Actions*
   Kim Monasi, SANDAG

In accordance with various SANDAG Board Policies, this report summarizes delegated actions taken by the Executive Director.

+10. FY 2021 Weighted Vote Distribution*
    André Douzdjian, SANDAG

This report provides the weighted vote distribution for FY 2021 for the Board of Directors, which has been recomputed based on updated population figures certified by the California Department of Finance.

    André Douzdjian and Ray Major, SANDAG

This quarterly report provides various finance-related items to the Board of Directors, including: (1) a quarterly report of investments, including all money under the direction or care of SANDAG; (2) an update on the SANDAG debt portfolio; and (3) information about the latest developments in the financial markets, the economy, and sales tax revenues.

    Michelle Smith, SANDAG

This quarterly report provides an update on the status of major SANDAG and Caltrans projects and programs in the San Diego region.
Meetings and Events

Tessa Lero, SANDAG

Board members will provide brief reports on external meetings and events attended on behalf of SANDAG.

Reports

Buena Vista Lagoon Enhancement Project

Keith Greer, SANDAG

The Board of Directors is asked to adopt Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) Resolution No. RTC-2020-XX regarding the Buena Vista Lagoon, approving the Modified Saltwater Alternative as the project, certifying the Final Environmental Impact Report, and adopting the Findings, Statement of Overriding Considerations, and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program.

Housing Element Extension Deadline Request

Seth Litchney, SANDAG

The Board of Directors is asked to consider supporting the City of Solana Beach’s request to the State of California to extend the April 2021 deadline for housing elements by at least six months.

Continued Public Comments

If the five-speaker limit for public comments was exceeded at the beginning of this agenda, other public comments will be taken at this time. Subjects of previous agenda items may not again be addressed under public comment.

Upcoming Meetings

The next Board Policy meeting is scheduled for Friday, June 12, 2020, at 10 a.m. The next Board Business meeting is scheduled for Friday, June 26, 2020, at 9 a.m.

Adjournment

+ next to an agenda item indicates an attachment

* next to an agenda item indicates that the Board of Directors also is acting as the San Diego County Regional Transportation Commission for that item
Executive Committee
May 8, 2020

Legislative Status Report

Overview

Status reports on SANDAG legislative activities are provided to the Executive Committee on a regular basis. Attachments 1 and 2 include summaries from Ellison Wilson Advocacy, LLC on state legislative activity, and from Peyser Associates LLC on federal legislative activity related to SANDAG for April 2020.

Key Considerations

State Update

On March 4, Governor Gavin Newsom declared a State of Emergency related to the COVID-19 outbreak and on March 19, issued a Stay-At-Home order to prevent the spread of the virus.

Since then, the Governor has taken several actions:

- Announced the Western States Pact between Colorado, Nevada, Oregon, and Washington. The collaboration will include developing guidelines based on best practices for an “incremental release of the stay at home orders of keeping people healthy and keeping people safe.”
- Assembled an 80-member task force to guide California’s economic recovery and includes representatives from the public and private sectors and focuses on those hardest hit by the virus. The purpose of the Task Force is to develop a strategy “to help California recover as fast as safely possible from the COVID-19 induced recession, and to create a fair, green, and prosperous future.”
- Granted a 90-day extension for small businesses to pay sales taxes. Under the order, small businesses would be able to defer payment of sales and use taxes of up to $50,000, for up to 12 months.
- Released California’s Roadmap to Pandemic Resilience, which discusses how the state is planning its path forward in phases based on science, health, and data.

The State Legislature has been in recess since March 20, 2020. The Assembly is scheduled to return to the Capitol on May 4; the Senate is currently scheduled to return on May 11. The Legislature has yet to formally announce how it will conduct business when it returns, but it will likely include significant changes to committee processes, the number and types of permissible bills for each legislator, and voting procedures.

- In general, Committee Chairs are advising that only bills directly related to the COVID response be heard at this time. As a result, Assembly Bill 2062 (Del Mar Bluffs Long Term Study) will not move forward this year; however, SANDAG continues to work with its delegation to pursue funding for this effort.
- This year’s state budget will likely occur in two stages: 1) a June 15 baseline budget, which will be a “workload” budget that reflects current service levels and will not consider any new items other than COVID-19-related costs, wildfire prevention, or homelessness funding; and 2) an August Revision, which will consider other issues not taken care of by June 15, but also likely will not include “new investments.”

Federal Update

- On March 13, the President declared a National State of Emergency concerning the COVID-19 pandemic.
- On March 31, the President signed SAFE Vehicles Rule Part 2 into law, which will weaken CAFE and CO2 emission standards through model year 2026 compared to those established during the Obama Administration.
The rule will be effective 60 days after publication in the Federal Register (likely late June). Part 2 of the rule will not impact SANDAG’s ability to conduct air quality conformity analyses, but will impact how regions achieve clean air standards and reduce overall vehicle emissions and greenhouse gas emissions.

- The Federal Transit Administration provided $317 million to the San Diego region via funding from the third federal economic relief package – the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act). At its April 10 meeting, the Board of Directors approved the allocations for how these funds would be split between Metropolitan Transit System and North County Transit District. Other SANDAG-related CARES Act provisions include:
  - Formula funding for state and local law enforcement assistance ($850 million nationwide) to prevent, prepare for, or respond to the coronavirus.
  - $250,000 available through the Federal Railroad Administration to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the coronavirus.
  - States, territories, and tribal governments will receive formula funding through the new $150 billion Coronavirus Relief Fund for expenditures incurred due to COVID-19 in the face of revenue declines. $8 billion would be available for tribal governments.
  - States and localities are also eligible to participate in a $500 billion emergency relief fund through which the Department of the Treasury will make loans and loan guarantees for coronavirus relief.

- The President provided guidelines for a three-phased approach for governors and county officials to consider the reopening of economies. The President has deferred responsibility to either the states or the regions/counties as to how these steps are implemented.

- The Senate is scheduled to return on May 4, while the House continues to convene remotely until further notice. Discussions on the next relief package(s) began as soon as CARES 2 was signed into law. Infrastructure investment continues to be discussed to a varying degree, though it is likely it will be included as part of a reauthorization of the surface transportation bill set to expire at the end of September 2020.

**Binational Borders Update**

- The President of Mexico, Andrés Manuel López Obrador, declared a National Health Emergency and mandatory Stay-at-Home order for the country, which has now been extended to May 31. Phase 3 of Mexico’s response was declared on April 21, and identifies a period where Mexico is expecting a rapid increase in the number and severity of cases, which could reach a peak in mid to late May. A reopening of the economy will be based on industry and will be phased over time.

- In addition, President López Obrador announced in early April a relief package that is based on low-cost loans for both small businesses and those hardest hit, along with a program to invest in energy infrastructure.

- U.S. Customs and Border Protection has restricted non-essential travel across the border. All pedestrian crossing at “PedWest” has been suspended, and hours of operations have been reduced in Tecate, Andrade, and Calexico East in Imperial County, as well as SENTRI lanes at Otay Mesa. Commercial operations have not changed at this time.

- Certain maquiladoras, or manufacturing industries, in Mexico were reclassified as an essential sector to allow shared production lines serving needs in both the United States and Mexico during the emergency.

- The new United States, Mexico, Canada Free Trade Agreement will be enacted on July 1, 2020, as planned.

**Victoria Stackwick, Director of Government Relations**

Key Staff Contacts:  Robyn Wapner, (619) 699-1994, robyn.wapner@sandag.org
Hector Vanegas, (619) 699-1972, hector.vanegas@sandag.org
Laurie Gartrell, (619) 595-5388, laurie.gartrell@sandag.org

Attachments: 1. Report from Ellison Wilson Advocacy
2. Report from Peyser Associates LLC
TO: SANDAG BOARD OF DIRECTORS
FROM: ELLISON WILSON ADVOCACY, LLC
SUBJECT: SANDAG LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITY REPORT – APRIL 2020

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Legislative Overview – COVID-19
On March 16, the Legislature met to pass a number of coronavirus-related emergency bills, including ACR 189, which established that the Legislature shall be in joint recess from March 20, 2020, until April 13, 2020, with flexibility to be extended. At the time of this report, their return date has already been extended to May 4, with significant uncertainty about whether this return date will be extended further. During this time, legislative staff has been allowed to work remotely and bills are continuing to be amended. Other than the two constitutional deadlines (June 15 to pass a budget and August 31 to pass all bills), all legislative deadlines are waivable and thus have already been significantly delayed. The Legislature has yet to formally announce how it will conduct business when it returns, but will likely include significant changes to committee processes, the number and types of permissible bills for each legislator, and voting procedures, amongst others.

Meanwhile, under California’s Emergency Services Act, the governor’s powers are virtually unlimited – he can suspend any law or regulation during a state of emergency. Since declaring a state of emergency on March 4, Governor Gavin Newsom has signed 29 executive orders, including using his executive authority to shut down businesses, move local elections to vote-by-mail, accelerate spending on homeless shelters, alter court proceedings, and provide benefits for essential workers.

ACTIVITY REPORT

4/1: Communicated with SANDAG staff on upcoming schedule.
4/2: Conference call with SANDAG staff on Assembly Bill 2731 (Gloria).
4/3: Met with California Department of Tax and Fee Administration on Executive Order deferring sales tax payments; Provided subsequent updates to SANDAG staff.
4/6: Conference call with SANDAG staff on AB 2731.
4/7: Provided update to SANDAG staff on the revised state budget and policy committee processes; Communication with Assembly Member Todd Gloria’s staff on AB 2731.
4/8: Communicated with Assembly Member Gloria’s staff and SANDAG staff on AB 2731; reviewed the SANDAG updated economic forecast.
4/9: Conference call with Assembly Member Gloria’s staff and SANDAG staff on AB 2731.
4/10: Communicated with SANDAG staff on legislative appointments, the Senate Special Budget Subcommittee on COVID-19 Response, and amendments to pertinent legislation.
4/13: Provided updates to SANDAG staff on changes within the Governor’s Office of Business and Economic Development and schedule for the Assembly Budget Committee.

4/14: Conducted research for SANDAG staff on previous housing funding and transportation funding legislation.

4/15: Conducted research for SANDAG staff on budget matters; communicated with State Water Resources Control Board on pertinent matters.

4/16: Provided updates to SANDAG staff on the Senate Budget Special Subcommittee on COVID-19 Response, Legislative Analysts Office economic report, and previous emergency funding.

4/17: Communicated with State Water Resources Control Board on pertinent matters and SANDAG staff on Governor’s Task Force on Business and Jobs Recovery; revised SANDAG economic forecast and upcoming schedule.

4/20: Communicated with SANDAG staff on Governor’s Task Force on Business and Jobs Recovery and upcoming schedule.

4/22: Communicated with SANDAG staff on Governor’s Task Force on Business and Jobs Recovery.

4/23: Conference call with SANDAG staff on AB 2731; Reviewed previous pertinent legislation and revised SANDAG economic forecast.

4/27: Provided updates to SANDAG staff on AB 2731.
Transportation Update from Peyser Associates

April 3, 2020

Infrastructure Rising to the Top for Consideration in COVID-19 Package #4

Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) and President Trump this week highlighted the importance of including an infrastructure package in whatever legislative response to the COVID-19 crisis comes next. Despite the President’s strong support for action, both top GOP leaders on Capitol Hill signaled either caution or outright opposition to including infrastructure in a COVID-19 package.

President Trump led the chorus with an early morning Tweet on Tuesday:

"With interest rates for the United States being at ZERO, this is the time to do our decades long awaited Infrastructure Bill. It should be VERY BIG & BOLD, Two Trillion Dollars, and be focused solely on jobs and rebuilding the once great infrastructure of our Country!…"

In his comments at the daily briefing, the President made it clear he is proposing to pay for an infrastructure package with borrowed money – not by raising revenues.

On Wednesday, Speaker Pelosi, Majority Whip Jim Clyburn (D-SC), Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chair Peter DeFazio (D-OR), and Energy and Commerce Committee Chair Frank Pallone (D-NJ) held their own press briefing to push the Democratic infrastructure plan for which they revealed a framework in January. They suggested they would augment that $760 billion, five-year plan by adding $10 billion for construction of community health centers.

Pelosi and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin are engaged in talks about how to pay for the infrastructure investment that would be included in the next COVID-19 package. Press reports this morning say those talks are “accelerating.” Based on the President’s comments, and backed up by the Treasury Secretary, it would appear the Administration is prepared to sign on to a plan that would “pay for” the infrastructure program by issuing federal debt. This approach would sweep away what has been the major barrier to moving on infrastructure legislation – the perceived need to offset the investment with tax increases. The coronavirus has changed perspectives on the evils of deficit spending.

While all of these statements and talks are happening, top GOP leaders on Capitol Hill are not on board with the direction the Speaker and the White House are headed. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) has said more than once this week he thinks Congress needs to wait and see how the COVID-19 package enacted last week is performing. Speaking about Speaker Pelosi, he said, “She needs to stand down” in pushing for a new package. On the House side, Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) on Thursday said that, while he is all for moving ahead on an infrastructure bill, he does not think it should be included in a COVID-19 package.

In the midst of this back and forth, staggering job loss numbers emerged Thursday for the previous week. Over the past two weeks 10 million American jobs have been lost. As that number sinks in for official Washington, the momentum for taking further action to address this crisis will likely grow, as will the momentum for including a jobs component in the package. When Congress thinks “jobs” it usually thinks “infrastructure.”

Both Houses of Congress are in recess until April 20. It is not beyond the realm of possibility that by that time congressional leaders and the White House will have come to agreement on a new legislative package.
Committee staffers in the House and Senate are at work now preparing options for such a package. The world has changed in so many ways in the past three weeks.

**Federal Transit Administration Releases Apportionments of CARES Act Funding**

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) on Thursday released the apportionment tables for the $25 billion in transit aid included in the CARES Act (otherwise known as COVID-19 Package #3). Click [HERE](#) for a link to the apportionment table for urbanized area funding.

In addition to the apportionment tables, the FTA also published answers to Frequently Asked Questions about the funds – including information on eligible expenses. Click [HERE](#) to see that information.

**April 10, 2020**

**Infrastructure Package Slips in Priority but Still in the Queue**

Within hours of the publication of last week’s update, Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) announced that the next legislative package dealing with the COVID-19 crisis would not involve infrastructure and other elements aimed at economic recovery. Instead, the Speaker said, the next package would continue in the vein of emergency relief and should include additional funding for relief programs enacted in the first three packages. Shortly thereafter Treasury Secretary Mnuchin voiced the Administration’s support for immediate action to add $250 billion to the small business loan program – otherwise known as the Paycheck Protection Program.

As this week began, the legislative jockeying for position began on a partisan basis. Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) on Monday announced his intention to try to move by unanimous consent the additional funding for the small business loan program as a stand-alone measure. On Wednesday, Speaker Pelosi and Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) issued a statement stating their support for adding more than $250 billion to the McConnell proposal – $100 billion for hospitals, community health centers, and health systems; $150 billion for fiscal relief for state and local governments; and a 15% increase to the maximum Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefit.

Despite the clear indication that unanimous consent would not be obtained for his proposal without an accommodation to Democratic priorities, Senator McConnell pressed ahead on Thursday. Senator Ben Cardin (D-MD) was designated as the official objector by the Democrats and that was that. Each side predictably accused the other of “playing politics” with the health of the economy and the health of people. As the week draws to a close, it is unclear whether a bipartisan, bicameral deal can be negotiated over the weekend. Congress is not due back from recess until April 20, so it is entirely possible this discussion will continue until the House and Senate are ready to begin normal operations – if that is even possible in this situation.

All of this means that a recovery package that would include infrastructure is likely to slip well into May for significant action. This fits with the more extended timeline for considering a recovery measure first laid out last week by Senator McConnell.

**Advocates Shifting into High Gear to Affect Infrastructure Package**

The delay in consideration of an infrastructure package notwithstanding, transportation advocates this week ramped-up their efforts to affect the development of policy and spending proposals.

The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials came out of the chute strongly on Monday with a request for an immediate infusion of $49.95 billion for state departments of transportation to offset what they estimate to be a 30% loss in gas tax and other revenues over the next 18 months. They requested $16.7 billion in fiscal 2020 and $ 33.3 billion in fiscal 2021. At present, their proposal does not appear to be on the table during consideration of the spending bill about to move through Congress. That
means their proposal will be considered in the context of the recovery package – as an add-on to their request for a five-year reauthorization of the FAST Act with funding increases.

American Public Transportation Association (APTA’s) Legislative Committee met on Thursday to discuss the transit industry’s request for the infrastructure portion of the recovery package. With transit having already received $25 billion in aid from the CARES Act, APTA appears content to stand pat with the reauthorization proposal they developed last year. There was some suggestion in the meeting that the numbers in the APTA proposal should be increased, but APTA staff appeared to be more concerned about protecting transit systems from anticipated scrutiny over their rate of spending of the $25 billion already appropriated. Apparently, some transit systems are considering a go-slow approach to spending that funding while they wait to see how the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis unfold both in terms of their own operations and potential cutbacks in state and local subsidies to transit. APTA President Paul Skoutelas’ main charge to the committee members at the end of the meeting was to spend the new federal funds as quickly as possible. So, the nation’s leading transit advocacy organization is essentially playing defense at this moment.

Other transit advocates are not taking the same view. Groups like Transportation for America (T4A) and the National Association of City Transportation Officials are ramping up their advocacy for significant restructuring of the priorities of federal transportation policy by putting more focus on the funding needs and policy priorities of metro areas. T4A in particular is also focusing on the health and safety of frontline transit workers as an area for congressional attention as part of the COVID-19 recovery package.

The House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure is likely to move on its piece of a recovery package in May. That gives advocates just a few more weeks to weigh-in with the committee. The Senate Environment and Public Works (EPW) Committee already approved last fall its FAST Act reauthorization proposal for highways. If history is any guide, the committees on Commerce, Science, Transportation and Banking, and Housing and Urban Affairs will get to work in May and June to prepare amendments to the EPW bill covering the transit, highway safety, and rail elements of the FAST Act reauthorization package.

**Meanwhile, Fiscal 2021 Spending Process Gets Underway**

Leaders of House Appropriations subcommittees this week received from Chair Nita Lowey (D-NY) their top-line spending allocations for FY 2021. Subcommittee markups are expected to begin shortly after Congress returns on April 20, according to Lowey’s office.

The 302(b) allocations to the subcommittees are based on the two-year spending cap deal reached last year. Under that deal, discretionary spending levels increase by only .5% over the FY 2020 levels. The FY 2020 cap does not take into account the trillions of dollars of spending this fiscal year on COVID-19 response. The measures enacted to date dwarf the $622 billion cap on domestic discretionary spending for FY 2020. Similar cap exemptions can be anticipated for COVID-19-related funding in FY 2021. Even so, House Democrats are already discussing raising the regular spending caps for FY 2021. It remains to be seen if initial subcommittee actions will reflect increases to the spending caps or not.

**April 17, 2020**

**Next COVID-19 Relief Package Bogs Down**

As last week’s report was going to press (in the digital sense, of course), congressional leaders were talking about working out the next COVID-19 relief package over last weekend to set up a vote on it this week. The potential elements of the package appeared to be additional funding for the small business loan program, general fiscal relief for states and cities, and aid to health systems.

No agreement was reached on the package this week and the list of potential elements of the package grew. Senate Democrats unveiled on Tuesday a proposal for a “Heroes Fund” to pay essential frontline workers up to a $25,000 premium pay increase covering the period from the beginning of the pandemic through
December 31, 2020. The premium pay would come in the form of an additional $13/hour up to the maximum amount. Public transit workers would be eligible under this plan. Their proposal would also authorize a $15,000 recruitment incentive for the hiring of health and home care workers and first responders needed to fight the pandemic. Another idea being put forward by some Democrats is for a fund to support a more robust testing programs for diagnosing COVID-19 and identifying people with antibodies.

With all of these issues on the table, the conversations aimed at getting an agreement on the next package became bogged-down. Yesterday came the first sign of progress when Treasury Secretary Mnuchin began discussions with Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) and Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY). As of this writing, however, there is no sign those talks have yielded an agreement.

The announcement yesterday that the Payroll Protection Program of loans to small businesses had run out of resources should provide added momentum for some action next week. Senator McConnell may believe the pressure to replenish that program may help him get through the Senate a bill that would fund only that program. It is worth noting that in this report two weeks ago, we pointed out that Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) and House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) had each called for a pause in congressional action on COVID-19 response. It appears that a pause has, in fact, occurred and that they are succeeding so far in pursuing that approach.

**Infrastructure Package Development Continues, but No Dates for Action Yet**

Congressional staff, particularly at the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, continue to work on their reauthorization of the FAST Act as part of a future COVID-19 recovery package. However, there is no indication how long it will be after Congress returns before there will be action at the committee level. It is beginning to look like mid-to-late May would be the earliest potential time for action in the House committee.

In the meantime, transportation advocates continue to consider the extent to which another round of funding specifically related to COVID-19 should be considered along with the reauthorization of the FAST Act. As noted in last week’s report, state Department of Transportation is asking for $50 billion to help them cover lost gas tax and toll revenues. This would be double the $25 billion allocated to transit in the CARES Act. The American Public Transportation Association (APTA) Legislative Steering Committee will be meeting again next week to discuss whether APTA should augment its existing proposal, which would not ask for anything beyond FAST Act Reauthorization.

A national network of public transit advocates at the local level is working to include in the next package funding for transit worker protection as well as supporting the Heroes Fund idea for transit workers. Such a proposal could well gain traction in the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee or at the House Appropriations Committee.

Further delay in consideration of the infrastructure package could result in a loss of momentum for it. Three weeks ago, when the CARES act was passed, Congress was in a full-on spending spree, where adding $2 trillion to national debt for COVID-19 relief seemed like the right thing to do. By the time Congress is in a position to turn its attention to an infrastructure package – no earlier than May 4 – it will be six weeks or more since the CARES Act was passed and some states will have announced they are beginning the “re-opening” process. If hopes for a quick rebound build, people like Senator McConnell, Representative McCarthy, and those who follow them may feel that pushing an expensive, debt-financed infrastructure package off the table might be politically do-able. This is particularly true if states and cities continue to ratchet-up their requests for fiscal relief. At present, their immediate ask is for $150 billion, but that number is likely to grow by many multiples in the coming weeks. It is possible – even likely – that governors and mayors will move ahead of infrastructure in the queue for additional federal money.
April 24, 2020

Infrastructure Package Faces Further Delays or Being Shelved Altogether

Last week’s report cautioned that the need to address the request of state and local governments for significant fiscal relief has emerged as another barrier to consideration on Capitol Hill of an infrastructure package. That barrier is likely to cause a delay in consideration of an infrastructure package – moving it beyond the next round of COVID-19 response – and could end up in the shelving of infrastructure altogether in this session of Congress.

Shortly after passage of the CARES Act last month, Congressional leaders made it clear that the next package of COVID-19 relief would include additional funding for programs already established in the CARES Act and the two earlier packages responding to the crisis. An infrastructure package would have to wait until the package following that, they said.

The funding top-off package cleared the House and Senate yesterday. It includes $485 billion in funding for small business loans, hospitals, and testing. Senate Republicans were successful in rebuffing an attempt by Democrats to include fiscal assistance to state and local governments.

The bipartisan National Governors Association has requested $500 billion in fiscal assistance to go to states with a portion passed on to cities. In a press conference on Tuesday after the Senate passed this week’s package, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) and Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) both said state and local fiscal assistance would be at the top of their agenda for the next package. During their statements, both Pelosi and Schumer listed several additional things they would like to cover in that package – neither included infrastructure on their list. In response to a question later, Speaker Pelosi mentioned infrastructure as something the Trump Administration wants in the next package. It is telling though that neither she nor Senator Schumer volunteered it as a priority in the initial statements.

For his part, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) made it clear this week he is losing his enthusiasm for large spending packages – particularly those aimed at helping state and local governments. In an appearance on a radio show Tuesday evening, Senator McConnell suggested that states declare bankruptcy to address their fiscal issues.

McConnell’s suggestion ignores statutory and constitutional barriers to that option. An article from the Council of State Government website, which can be found HERE, quotes a Professor from Northern Kentucky University (ironically enough) saying the federal bankruptcy code does not allow states to declare bankruptcy and the 10th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution prohibits states from passing laws to relieve either private debt or their own debt.

In the same interview, McConnell lent a decidedly partisan view to his argument against aiding state and local governments. In a summary of the radio appearance on Senator McConnell’s website, his office includes the following quote under the heading “Stopping Blue State Bailouts”

“I said yesterday we’re going to push the pause button here, because I think this whole business of additional assistance for state and local governments needs to be thoroughly evaluated. You raised yourself the important issue of what states have done, many of them have done to themselves with their pension programs. There’s not going to be any desire on the Republican side to bail out state pensions by borrowing money from future generations.”

It is hard to know how long Senator McConnell would like to keep his finger on the pause button. If he holds it there long enough, the impetus for moving on infrastructure could dissipate altogether.

Amtrak Losses Could Reach $700 Million in Current Fiscal Year

In a call with the media yesterday, Amtrak Chairman Tony Coscia said the railroad expects to lose $700 million in revenue in the current fiscal year. He said ridership is down by 95% on the railroad. Service
has been cut by 50%, including a complete suspension in the lucrative Acela service in the Northeast Corridor.

Amtrak did receive more than $1 billion in aid from the CARES Act. However, $239 billion of that was to cover the loss of payments from states on state supported services, representing no net benefit. If the remaining $761 million were applied to cover the revenue loss, then Amtrak would be able to stay afloat through the fiscal year. However, the revenue losses are likely to extend into next year due to the time required to re-start service, potential reduced demand in the Northeast Corridor and social distancing policies.

While Coscia did not indicate on the call that Amtrak would be asking for additional federal funding support, his statement certainly helps lay the predicate for an ask in the future.