Members
Lori Holt Pfeiler, Chair
Mayor, Escondido (Representing North County Inland)

Patty Davis, Vice Chair
Deputy Mayor, Chula Vista (Representing South County)

Matt Hall
Mayor Pro Tem, Carlsbad (Representing North County Coastal)

Jerry Jones
Mayor Pro Tem, Lemon Grove (Representing East County)

Scott Peters
Councilmember, City of San Diego

Bill Horn
Supervisor, County of San Diego

Alternates
Judy Ritter
Councilmember, Vista (Representing North County Inland)

Patricia McCoy
Councilmember, Imperial Beach (Representing South County)

Bud Lewis
Mayor, Carlsbad (Representing North County Coastal)

Barry Jantz
Vice Mayor, La Mesa (Representing East County)

Jim Madaffer
Councilmember, City of San Diego

Pam Slater-Price
Chairwoman, County of San Diego

Advisory Members
Susannah Aguilera
U.S. Department of Defense

Leon Williams
Chairman, Metropolitan Transit System

Dave Druker
North San Diego County Transit Development Board

Howard Williams
San Diego County Water Authority

William Hall/Bill Briggs
San Diego Unified Port District

Pedro Orso-Delgado
District 11 Director, Caltrans

Gail Goldberg
Regional Planning Technical Working Group

Bill Anderson
Regional Planning Stakeholders Working Group

Gary L. Gallegos
Executive Director, SANDAG

Friday, June 3, 2005
Noon to 2 p.m.
SANDAG Board Room
401 B Street, 7th Floor
San Diego

AGENDA HIGHLIGHTS

• SMART GROWTH IN ESCONDIDO
• SMART GROWTH CONCEPT MAP
• INDEPENDENT TRANSIT PLANNING REVIEW

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MISSION STATEMENT
The Regional Planning Committee provides oversight for the preparation and implementation of the Regional Comprehensive Plan that is based on the local general plans and regional plans and addresses interregional issues with surrounding counties and Mexico. The components of the plan include: transportation, housing, environment (shoreline, air quality, water quality, habitat), economy, borders, regional infrastructure needs and financing, and land use and design components of the regional growth management strategy.

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Welcome to SANDAG. Members of the public may speak to the Regional Planning Committee on any item at the time the Committee is considering the item. Please complete a Speaker's Slip, which is located in the rear of the room, and then present the slip to Committee staff. Also, members of the public are invited to address the Committee on any issue under the agenda item entitled Public Comments/Communications/Member Comments. Speakers are limited to three minutes. The Regional Planning Committee may take action on any item appearing on the agenda.

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REGIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE
June 3, 2005

ITEM # | RECOMMENDATION
---|---
+1. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES | APPROVE

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS/MEMBER COMMENTS

Members of the public will have the opportunity to address the Regional Planning Committee on any issue within the jurisdiction of the Committee. Speakers are limited to three minutes each and shall reserve time by completing a “Request to Speak” form and giving it to the Clerk prior to speaking. Committee members also may provide information and announcements under this agenda item.

CHAIR’S REPORT

+3. URBAN LAND INSTITUTE (ULI) "SMART GROWTH WORKS" SYMPOSIUM
   (Bill Anderson, SWG Vice Chair)

SANDAG is co-sponsoring the Smart Growth Works symposium being organized by the San Diego/Tijuana chapter of the Urban Land Institute. The symposium, which will focus on the mechanics of making smart growth work from the economic, regulatory, infrastructure, and community values perspectives, will be held on Friday, June 10, 2005, at the University of San Diego (USD) Joan Kroc Center. Several SANDAG staff members will be participating as moderators or panelists. Committee members are welcome to attend.

+4. SHOWCASING LOCAL SMART GROWTH PROJECTS: SMART GROWTH PLANS IN ESCONDIDO
   (Charlie Grimm, Community Development Director, City of Escondido; Linda Culp, SANDAG Staff)

The Regional Planning Committee has received periodic presentations featuring local smart growth efforts throughout the region. Representatives from the City of Escondido and SANDAG will make a presentation on smart growth and transit planning efforts happening in downtown Escondido and along Escondido Blvd.

REPORTS

+5. STATUS REPORT ON THE SMART GROWTH CONCEPT MAP
   (Carolina Gregor, SANDAG Staff)

A key "early action" of the Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP) is the preparation of a Smart Growth Concept Map illustrating the location of existing, planned, and potential smart growth areas. The Smart Growth Concept Map will be used in the update of the 2030 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and to determine eligibility to participate in the longer-term Smart Growth Incentive Program funded by TransNet. SANDAG is in the process of preparing a Draft Smart Growth Concept Map based on preliminary input by the planning and public works staffs of the local jurisdictions within the region. This item provides a status report on the map and an updated schedule for the map’s preparation.
INDEPENDENT TRANSIT PLANNING REVIEW  (Dave Schumacher, SANDAG Staff)

SANDAG staff will make a presentation about the Independent Transit Planning Review being undertaken by the agency as a result of the passage of TransNet. The results of the Review will play a significant role in the RTP update and will interrelate with the Smart Growth Concept Map.

7. UPCOMING MEETINGS

The next Regional Planning Committee meeting is scheduled for 12 to 2 p.m. on Friday, July 1, 2005.

8. ADJOURNMENT

+ next to an agenda item indicates an attachment
Committee Chair Lori Holt Pfeiler (North County Inland) called the Regional Planning Committee meeting to order at 12:06 p.m. The attendance sheet for the meeting is attached.

1. APPROVAL OF APRIL 1, 2005, MEETING MINUTES
   a. Joint Meeting of the Transportation and Regional Planning Committees
   b. Regular Meeting of the Regional Planning Committee

   Action: Vice Chair Davis (South County) moved and Mayor Pro Tem Jones (East County) seconded the motion to approve the minutes of the April 1, 2005, meetings. The motion passed unanimously.

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS/MEMBER COMMENTS

   Staff announced that SANDAG’s Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP) and Mayor Holt Pfeiler, as Chair of the Regional Planning Committee (RPC), have both received awards from the local section of the American Planning Association (APA). These awards will be presented at an event hosted by the APA on June 2, 2005, at the San Diego Zoo.

   Chair Holt Pfeiler thanked the Chairs of SANDAG’s Regional Planning Stakeholders and Technical Working Groups, Caltrans, and the RPC for their efforts and vision. She noted that this is a monumental accomplishment and that everyone worked together to create the Plan. She encouraged interested Committee members to attend the awards ceremony.

3. INTRODUCTION OF THE NEWLY ELECTED VICE CHAIRS OF THE REGIONAL PLANNING STAKEHOLDERS WORKING GROUP (INFORMATION)

   At its meeting on April 19, 2005, SANDAG’s Regional Planning Stakeholders Working Group (SWG) elected two Vice Chairs. One of the roles of the Vice Chairs is to represent the SWG as advisory members on the Regional Planning and Transportation Committees.
Chair Holt Pfeiler mentioned that the SWG was created to advise both the Regional Planning and Transportation Committees on RCP implementation and the RTP update. She noted that Bill Anderson is the Second Vice Chair for the SWG and will be attending future RPC meetings. She thanked Mr. Anderson for attending today's meeting and welcomed him to the RPC.

Bill Anderson thanked the Committee and stated that it is an honor for him to participate on the Committee as representative of the SWG. Mr. Anderson mentioned that he is a native San Diegan. He noted that he is also on the Urban Land Institute’s (ULI) Board of Directors. The ULI will be hosting a symposium on June 10, 2005, focused on what it takes to create and implement smart growth projects. He invited RPC members to attend.

Chair Holt Pfeiler stated that the ULI event resonates with the smart growth focus of the RCP, especially the upcoming implementation efforts. She also introduced Sandor Shapery, the SWG First Vice Chair, who will represent the SWG on the Transportation Committee. She thanked Mr. Shapery for attending today's meeting and welcomed him.

Sandor Shapery, also known as “Sandy,” noted that he will fill in for Mr. Anderson when he is unable to attend the RPC meetings and vice versa.

Chair Holt Pfeiler commented that the RPC appreciates the cooperation between the two of them and will be looking forward to their participation and input at future meetings.

**Action:** The RPC accepted this item for information.

### 4. UPDATE ON TRANSNET ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION PROGRAM AND ESTABLISHMENT OF THE REGIONAL ENTITY TO ALLOCATE FUNDING FROM THE REGIONAL HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND (RECOMMEND)

Staff briefed the RPC on the Environmental Mitigation Program (EMP) for the TransNet measure. The overall goal of the EMP is to provide a total of $850 million for environmental mitigation of projects identified in SANDAG’s Regional Transportation Plan (MOBILITY 2030). Specifically, $450 million is allocated to mitigate impacts of the regional transportation projects identified in MOBILITY 2030, and $200 million is allocated to mitigate impacts of local transportation projects. The EMP also identifies $200 million for a Regional Habitat Conservation Fund to be used for habitat acquisition, management, and monitoring activities that are not necessarily associated with the mitigation of transportation projects. The economic benefit will be based on determining mitigation ratios in advance by including transportation projects in habitat conservation plans and purchasing mitigation land in advance of need in larger blocks at a lower cost.

The EMP is beginning with focus on the TransNet Early Action Projects that the SANDAG Board approved in two tiers. The Tier 1 projects are the SR 76 widening, the SR 52 Highway Extension, and the Mid-Coast Regional Transit Extension. The Tier 2 projects include the I-15 Managed Lanes; the SR 52 – HOV/Managed Lanes (Reversible); the I-5 North Coast Corridor Project; and the I-805 Corridor Project. The development of the EMP was a collaborative effort of many organizations and stakeholders throughout the region. It is expected that those same organizations will participate in the implementation of the EMP.
The SANDAG Board of Directors will be the regional entity making decisions on the implementation of the EMP. However, a structure to advance recommendations to the Board needs to be established. The policy committee’s responsibilities will consist of providing the SANDAG Board of Directors with guidance on the allocation of funding included in the “Regional Habitat Conservation Fund,” and future funding efforts. Three alternative structures are proposed. Alternative A is the creation of a new Environmental Resources Policy Committee; Alternative B consists of the expansion of the duties of the RPC; and Alternative C is to add EMP advisory members to the RPC.

Staff recommends Alternative C. Under this alternative, the responsibilities of the RPC would be expanded to include EMP items. Current advisory members of the RPC would continue their role on RPC issues, and the SANDAG Board would appoint additional advisory members for EMP-related issues. The RPC would organize items on its agenda related to the EMP so that the appropriate advisory members can be present for those items without being required to attend the entire meeting. This alternative would enable the RPC to provide guidance on one of the key implementation strategies of the Regional Comprehensive Plan.

The next step would be to forward today’s recommendation by the RPC to the SANDAG Board for approval. Additional actions will include developing a master agreement with federal and state agencies regarding Early Action Projects; and making appointments of advisory members from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services (USFWS), the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG), and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACOE) to the RPC.

Supervisor Horn (County of San Diego) commented that it will be challenging to get the Army Corps of Engineers to participate.

Chair Holt Pfeiler stated that the RPC would benefit from their participation at this level.

Mayor Pro Tem Hall (North County Coastal) requested additional information from staff on how the proposed mitigation program would be implemented and how permit processing would be expedited. Staff replied that SANDAG will be entering into agreements with the wildlife agencies regarding the processing of amendments to habitat conservation plans and other permits necessary for transportation projects to proceed.

Mayor Pro Tem Hall asked if there is a way to benchmark the projects to determine if the current process is working.

Chair Holt Pfeiler indicated that right now, the only way to determine that is to monitor the process as time passes and land is acquired.

Mayor Pro Tem Hall stated that if the EMP’s goal is to create efficiency and shorten the time period, there should be some guidelines in place if all parties agree on the principles. Staff responded that they have met with senior staff from USFWS & CDFG and have indicated that benchmarks would need to be included in the master agreements. As those benchmarks are met, funding from the Regional Habitat Conservation Fund would be
released. If benchmarks are not met, then EMP funding would be made available for mitigation of projects through traditional means.

Mayor Pro Tem Hall noted that in that case, funding might not be spent on mitigation but could be spent on cost overruns. Staff stated that funding would primarily be dedicated to mitigation but could also be spent on related administrative costs, if projects were delayed.

Mayor Pro Tem Hall mentioned that he understands the time element and process, and can appreciate the funding allocation. His concern is ensuring that the EMP creates an economic benefit. Staff stated that the EMP master agreements will be presented to the Committee, and the elected officials will have the opportunity to participate in the development of the proposed benchmarks.

Councilmember McCoy (South County) commented that she would prefer to have a separate policy committee dedicated to this issue. This is a very complicated issue and it would make sense to have one committee focus on these issues in order to streamline the process. She asked how a new committee might fit into the Policy Committee structure.

Chair Holt Pfeiler indicated that under Alternative 3, the RPC would do much of the "heavy lifting" regarding the land use aspects of mitigation decisions, much like the Transportation Committee currently does for transportation funding decisions, and notify the Board of its efforts. With this added responsibility, the RPC could evolve into a policy committee with greater responsibility and autonomy, similar to the Transportation Committee.

Chairwoman Slater-Price (County of San Diego) stated that she would like to see the Wildlife Conservation Board be an ex-officio member on this Committee. She mentioned that the mentality in Sacramento is that with the passage of Proposition A, the San Diego region does not need any additional funding for habitat conservation efforts.

Mayor Pro Tem Jones (East County) noted that the RPC has already gone down this road with the creation of the Energy Working Group (EWG), where the EWG does the technical work and forwards its recommendations to the RPC. Creating a new policy committee will put a heavy load on staff. He commented that he supports Alternative C.

Motion Made

Mayor Pro Tem Jones made the motion and Supervisor Horn seconded the motion to approve the staff recommendation (Alternative C). The motion also includes the addition of the Wildlife Conservation Board as an ex-officio member to the RPC and specifies that an elected official would chair the new EMP working group that would report to the RPC.

Committee Discussion on the Motion

Public Comment

Michael Beck, representing the Endangered Habitats League, indicated he supports Alternative C. Adding the wildlife agencies to the Committee as ex-officio members would allow wildlife agency representatives to participate in the decision-making
process, while still allowing local elected officials to make final decisions on issues related to the Natural Communities Conservation Planning (NCCP) Act. He recommended that there be an implementing agreement between the wildlife agencies and SANDAG. He recommended that EMP working group membership should be flexible enough to allow additional members to be added to the group in the future. This working group needs to have the right expertise. Finally, the region receives a lot of the state and federal monies through the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB). The WCB is one of the few agencies that listens to San Diego issues in Sacramento. He urged the Committee to consider adding a member of the WCB to the Committee.

Chair Holt Pfeiler stated that the motion on the floor would allow the flexibility to add the appropriate groups to the Committee and EMP working group. She also stated that an elected official would chair the working group.

Mayor Pro Tem Jones reminded the Committee that the action being taken today is not written in stone and the Committee could revisit the issue and make changes as necessary.

Vice Chair Davis commented that adding a member of the WCB was included in the motion. Staff noted that they will contact the WCB to determine whether it will be interested in participating on the Committee.

**Action:** The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of Alternative C, which would assign responsibilities for allocating the Regional Habitat Conservation Fund to the SANDAG Board of Directors, with the advice of the RPC, and to appoint four new advisory members to the RPC: the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the California Department of Fish and Game, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the Wildlife Conservation Board. In addition, the Committee voted to appoint an elected official to chair the working group once it is formed.

5. **SHOWCASING LOCAL SMART GROWTH PROJECTS: THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO’S “CITY OF VILLAGES” STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK ELEMENT AND PILOT VILLAGES PROGRAM (INFORMATION)**

Gail Goldberg, Planning Director from the City of San Diego, introduced the General Plan Program Manager, Colleen Clementson. She noted that Ms. Clementson led the City of Villages planning effort that was the foundation for the Pilot Villages Program.

Colleen Clementson made a presentation on the City’s growth strategy, the City of Villages, which seeks to promote development that mixes housing, retail, jobs, schools, and civic uses within walkable communities that have easy access to transit. The Pilot Villages demonstration program is intended to facilitate the implementation of these concepts and encourage other developers and communities to create similar neighborhoods throughout the City. The Pilot Villages program was developed through three committees: the City of San Diego Mayor’s Smart Growth Implementation Committee; the Pilot Villages Citizen Committee; and the City of San Diego’s Technical Working Group.
The City developed a “pilot village” incentive package, revolving around infrastructure incentives, deferment of fees and taxes, expedited processing, assistance with funding, prioritization of city resources, and undergrounding of utilities. The selection process focused on two areas: project location (transit service, number of jobs, land availability, walkability, and visibility), and project criteria (mixed use, walkable, visible and accessible, replicable model, affordable housing, and architectural fit within the community fabric). In February 2003, the San Diego City Council selected five demonstration projects: the Mid-City Transit Interchanges Project, the Paseo, Euclid & Market, Mi Pueblo, and North Park. Ms. Clementson provided a brief overview of each project and their special features.

Ms. Clementson reviewed the lessons learned as a result of this effort. She concluded by stating that these projects are examples that all jurisdictions throughout the region can learn from. She added that this information was also presented at this year’s national conference of the APA, where the concept was well received.

Ms. Goldberg added that one of the criteria for selecting the pilot village projects was broad community support. The City of Villages is viewed as a bridge between adopting the City of San Diego’s general plan and updating the community plans. There is power in visualizing positive changes. If people can see and experience the benefits, it will make communities more anxious to develop these smart growth projects.

Councilmember Peters (City of San Diego) commented that if communities have buy-in on the projects, it makes the implementation of projects more acceptable. The more that people in the community can see, the better the project will be. Showing examples is important.

Chairwoman Slater-Price asked if the project that has been started in the East Village, the Mercado, is being considered as a Pilot Village. Ms. Clementson replied that even though that project would be a perfect candidate for this type of program, the community was not ready to move forward at this time.

**Public Comment**

Steven Russell, a resident of Mid-City, noted that the key to a successful plan is the infrastructure. There are parts along the I-15 that need to be linked to bring the projects together. The investment of SANDAG in these types of projects is critical to the success of the communities. The I-15 Bus Rapid Transit Project will be the heart of the Mid-City community. He added that the pilot village projects still need resources and urged the Committee to consider priority funding for the projects when funding is allocated.

Gary Weber, representing the El Cajon Business Improvement District, expressed his support for the enhancements to the I-15 along El Cajon Boulevard. He stated that he has learned that there actually can be community support for infill development as long as the process is bottom up and inclusive. He also noted how difficult it is for projects to "pencil out." Land values tend to be higher in infill areas, and redevelopment costs are high. There are limited public resources to complete the
projects. He commented that he appreciates SANDAG’s support for smart growth and the Pilot Smart Growth Incentive program.

Chair Holt Pfeiler thanked Ms. Goldberg and Ms. Clementson for the presentation.

**Action**: The RPC accepted this item for information.

### 6. ENERGY WORKING GROUP UPDATE (INFORMATION)

Staff noted that Councilmember Abarbanel, Co-Chair of the Energy Working Group (EWG), sends his regrets for not being able to attend the meeting today. The EWG is currently working on the update of the long-term resource plan that SDG&E is required to submit to the California Public Utilities Commission every two years. The EWG’s top priority is to help develop the plan. The EWG has also been hosting workshops to discuss energy issues. One such workshop has already been held. The next workshop will be held on May 18, 2005, and will focus on border energy issues. Finally, the EWG kicked off an Energy Efficiency Pilot Program and is currently working with the City of Carlsbad to make public buildings more energy efficient. The goal is to expand energy efficiency measures in the future to all jurisdictions in the region, once the program has been established. Staff added that Co-Chair Abarbanel has been making presentations to all jurisdictions to update them on what the EWG is doing and to advertise the workshops.

**Action**: The RPC accepted this item for information.

### 7. UPCOMING MEETINGS

The next meeting of the RPC is scheduled for 12 to 2 p.m. on Friday, June 3, 2005.

### 8. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Holt Pfeiler adjourned the meeting at 1:05 p.m.
**CONFIRMED ATTENDANCE**  
**SANDAG REGIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**MAY 6, 2005**  
**12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.**

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SMART GROWTH WORKS
Real World Implementation of Smart Growth Principles.

June 10, 2005 | 7:30 AM - 4:30 PM | USD Joan Kroc Center

There is a void in discussions about Smart Growth in the region. The policies have been debated—how to deliver the development has not.

On June 10th, ULI presents a fast-paced, interactive symposium to identify what it takes to make Smart Growth development work in the San Diego region. Four multi-disciplinary modules will discuss the mechanics of making Smart Growth projects work from economics, regulatory, infrastructure, and community values perspectives. The event will provide the basis for a ULI San Diego District Council white paper that will narrow the gap between Smart Growth rhetoric and effective development. We want your opinions.

The program will discuss the following:
• How do we attract capital to finance Smart Growth projects?
• How should we regulate projects that implement Smart Growth policies?
• How do we provide the necessary public infrastructure?
• How can Smart Growth projects integrate community values and gain support?

Who should attend? Public agencies, elected officials, lenders, developers, community activists, planners, designers, attorneys, and anyone concerned with making Smart Growth work in San Diego County.

SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES
Are you interested in gaining extensive visibility for your company at these events?

WANT EXPOSURE, click here
The Event Code is: 8132-0519

ONLINE Registration click HERE

To Download a Form click HERE

Phone Registration 1-800-321-5011

LEARN MORE ABOUT ULI SAN DIEGO: www.sandiego.uli.org
SHOWCASING LOCAL SMART GROWTH PROJECTS:
SMART GROWTH PLANS IN ESCONDIDO

Introduction

The Regional Planning Committee has received periodic presentations featuring local smart growth efforts throughout the region. Representatives from the City of Escondido and SANDAG will make a presentation on smart growth and transit planning efforts happening in downtown Escondido and along Escondido Boulevard.

Discussion

Smart Growth Planning Efforts in Escondido

Attached is a San Diego Union-Tribune news article on planning and redevelopment efforts happening in downtown Escondido. Escondido representatives will provide a more detailed overview of the various planning projects underway within the core of the City. At the same time, SANDAG, NCTD, and the City are working on a rapid bus and transit priority concept study that would compliment the current land use planning efforts.

Escondido Rapid Bus and Transit Priority Concept Study

MOBILITY 2030, the San Diego region’s long-range transportation plan, focuses on a robust network of public transit services that are competitive with the automobile, that are convenient and reliable, and provide the customer with a first-class experience. This network includes improvements in light and commuter rail, the introduction of new innovative bus rapid transit (BRT), and enhancements to existing local transit services.

MOBILITY 2030 identifies improvements to a six-mile existing transit corridor in the City of Escondido for enhanced local bus services in the near-term, possible BRT service in the mid-term, and an extension of the Sprinter rail service in the long-term. SANDAG’s Regional Short-Range Transit Plan also calls for these near-term transit improvements.

SANDAG, NCTD, and the City of Escondido are working together to evaluate the most effective transit priority measures that could be implemented in this corridor. These measures could include signal priority treatments and/or queue jumpers that allow buses to bypass congested intersections. Central to this study is the objective to implement transit priority measures that provide the transit system with speed and reliability without significant degradation of the roadway capacity for vehicles, pedestrians, and bikes. Specifically, this study will develop, screen, and recommend the appropriate transit priority measures for the corridor, determine impact to area mobility and transit...
travel times, develop capital costs, and develop conceptual drawings of the proposed measures and stations.

Bob Leiter
Director of Land Use and Transportation Planning


Key Staff Contact: Linda Culp (619) 699-6957; lcu@sandag.org
String of Escondido projects designed to revitalize downtown

City plans to add 1,000 housing units

By Craig Gustafson
STAFF WRITER

May 15, 2005

ESCONDIDO – Sidewalks teeming with people. Restaurants and shops overflowing with activity. Sold-out shows at the arts center. A first-class hotel packed with visitors.

Those visions for downtown Escondido may come into focus soon.

Although most people fondly refer to it as historic, downtown Escondido became largely an afterthought when the shopping mall now called Westfield Shoppingtown North County opened in February 1986 on former parkland on the city’s southern edge. As the mall drew customers away, downtown businesses closed and vacant buildings became commonplace on Grand Avenue.

The $16 million City Hall was completed in 1988 and the city opened the $85 million California Center for the Arts, Escondido, in 1994 to encourage a resurgence, but it’s been a long, slow climb to prominence.

Now, with such activities as the Cruisin’ Grand classic car event highlighting downtown’s vibrance weekly during the spring and summer and a new 16-screen movie theater proving its viability, city leaders have an ambitious plan to add a key missing ingredient: people.

They want lots of them, and they want them to live in the heart of downtown.

From new, high-end condominiums to condo conversions, from row homes to townhomes, the city plans to add more than 1,000 housing units to downtown and nearby areas during the next five years.

When the first housing project, on the site of the former Palomar Lanes bowling alley, is completed sometime early next year, it alone will have more residents than the rest of downtown combined. Besides the city’s original bungalows and some scattered homes, few people have lived in downtown since early in the 20th century, according to the Escondido Historical Society.

Some of the housing units will be built atop parking garages, and others will be situated in mixed-use projects, where retail shops and condos coexist to form mini-neighborhoods. They’ll replace eyesores such as the run-down bowling alley, the former Kmart building and parking lots.
The result, city leaders hope, will be an urban village where residents can live, work and play without leaving Escondido.

"Society is going to an urban lifestyle," said Charlie Grimm, the city's community development director. "Home prices have gotten so high, people are looking at condominiums."

The target audience for this new housing is young professionals and recent empty nesters, two sought-after groups who spend money frequently and rarely need city services, such as paramedics or police.

"It makes your downtown more alive," Mayor Lori Holt Pfeiler said. "It'll become a 24-hour downtown. ... They'll own downtown in a sense."

A unified, pro-business City Council is pushing the projects to fulfill three goals: encouraging home ownership, increasing the city's median income and re-establishing Escondido as the hub of North County.

The council has focused on creating an easier path for developers. In recent years, the city has often waived development fees and worked closely with builders to redevelop blighted areas.

Critics accuse the council of giving away too much and prompting too much growth. For example, the city is using $18.4 million in taxpayer money to help launch a downtown Marriott Hotel next to City Hall.

**Move-down buyers**

In all, developers have proposed more than 700 condominiums/townhomes and nearly 700 single-family homes in or near downtown, and more are expected. The largest of those projects is at the former Kmart site on West Mission Avenue, where a developer proposed 600 row homes. The city rejected the plan last month and the developer is revising it.

Developer John Barone, who is involved in two projects that total 224 condos, said the building boom doesn't surprise him.

"The city of Escondido is really very ripe for that sort of development," he said. "We're finding in Escondido there is a large number of people who are move-down buyers, who want to be downtown near the civic center or sell the large house in the outlying area and be in a more convenient, accessible location. And downtown is also very close to the freeway."

City officials say other factors are also contributing to the interest in downtown housing:

A red-hot housing market. It has forced many would-be homeowners to look for less-expensive options such as condominiums and townhomes.

Traffic congestion. More and more people and their employers are looking to reduce time wasted on North County freeways.

A growing acceptance of downtown living. Baby boomers and empty nesters seek to stay
active now that their children are grown.

A new 186-acre business park. City officials expect the park, under construction west of the Escondido Auto Park, to attract as many as 4,000 jobs. Those workers will need places to live and shop.

Better public transportation. The 22-mile Sprinter commuter train will connect Escondido to Oceanside and points in between. It is expected to debut in December 2007.

Return to downtown

John McIlwain, a housing expert with the Urban Land Institute in Washington, D.C., said that the urban sprawl that began in the 1950s and '60s led many cities to abandon their downtowns and concentrate commercial development in outlying areas.

Now, he said, the situation has come full circle.

"People are bored with the suburbs. There's no sense of community," McIlwain said. "There's still people who want their suburban homes and who want to be away from everything, but a significant subset of the population is much more interested in city living than they were 10, 15 years ago."

Other county cities, including San Diego and Chula Vista, have accelerated efforts to revitalize their downtowns and encourage downtown living. Hundreds of cities around the country are undergoing similar changes.

Escondido and smaller cities, McIlwain said, are creating what he called "an urban-light" environment, an alternative for people who want the urban life but don't want to live in the downtown of a metropolitan city such as San Diego.

In Rockville, Md., a suburb of Washington, D.C., city officials tried to redevelop their downtown in the 1960s by building a shopping mall.

"They built this soulless, unattractive mall and it didn't do anything to revive downtown," Rockville City Manager Scott Ullery said.

Forty years later, Rockville is embarking on a $352 million revitalization that calls for 630 condominiums, 170,000 square feet of retail and restaurant space and four large parking garages. Developers will pay 70 percent of the costs and taxpayers the rest.

"It's sort of going back to basic principles of an earlier era where mixed-use was very common, before there was rampant suburbanization," Ullery said. "That's what downtowns were, a so-called urban village."

Although Rockville's effort seems more grand in scale, Escondido's – in terms of the number of housing units and cost – may be larger if all the proposed projects are built and use fewer tax dollars.

While Escondido is encouraging new types of housing, some of the projects may not survive in their current form. City officials, for example, have said they would prefer mostly retail development, not housing, on the Kmart property. It remains to be seen how the 600-home
Remain focused

Escondido City Manager Clay Phillips said that the city has been careful about where it invests and when it chooses to waive fees for projects. Still, he said, officials need to be careful not to spread the city too thin and lose focus on creating high-quality structures that will stand the test of time.

"Trying to make it happen and trying to make it happen the way you'd like to have it happen are two different things," Phillips said.

Escondido has space for about 60,000 housing units, according to the city. There are about 45,000 now, and 53 percent are owned by their occupants, the lowest percentage in North County.

Many attribute that statistic on an overemphasis on apartment complexes in the 1960s. It is one reason the city is in the process of retooling the requirements for condominium conversions, another hot item for developers.

Assistant City Manager Jack Anderson said that, altogether, the projects should bring distinctive changes to downtown Escondido.

"It creates close to a 7-24 kind of life in downtown as opposed to the downtown rolling up its sidewalks at 5 o'clock when everybody goes to their suburban home," Anderson said.

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STATUS REPORT ON THE SMART GROWTH CONCEPT MAP

Introduction

The Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP) contains policy objectives and actions aimed at improving transportation and land use coordination. A key recommendation is to identify smart growth opportunity areas and place a higher priority on directing transportation facility improvements and other infrastructure resources toward those areas.

The Urban Form chapter of the RCP defines seven categories of smart growth “place types,” ranging from “metropolitan center” to “rural community” (Attachment 1). In addition, the RCP recommends that smart growth development be planned near existing and future transit stations identified in the adopted Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), as well as other appropriate locations such as rural community village cores, which can provide a focal point for commercial and civic uses that serve surrounding rural areas.

One of the RCP’s early actions is the development of a Smart Growth Concept Map illustrating the location of existing and planned smart growth areas, and potential smart growth areas. This report provides a status report on the Smart Growth Concept Map. In addition, it describes the uses of the map, the overall approach for developing the map, and a schedule for completing the map.

Recommendation

The Regional Planning Committee (RPC) should provide comments on the general approach for preparing the Smart Growth Concept Map.

Discussion

Status of the Map

The Regional Planning Technical Working Group (TWG) (local planning directors) is serving as the lead advisory group in preparing the Concept Map. SANDAG has asked city and county planning staffs to identify and provide descriptions of areas within their jurisdictions that they believe should be classified as either existing/planned or potential smart growth areas. SANDAG has hired a consultant (P&D Consultants) to assist with this project. The consultant has identified several options for how the smart growth areas could be illustrated at either a regional or subregional level. Staff is testing the options and will present one or more options to the TWG and the Regional Planning Stakeholders Working Group (SWG) at their June meetings. Staff will modify the map(s) based on input from the working groups, and expects to present the draft map to the RPC at its July meeting.
Uses of the Map

The Smart Growth Concept Map will be used in relation to two key SANDAG initiatives: updating the RTP, and determining eligibility for the long-term TransNet Smart Growth Incentive Program. As summarized in Attachment 2, the map will be used to develop the land use scenarios for the RTP, including the Regional Growth Forecast (Existing Plans and Policies) and an Enhanced Smart Growth scenario. These scenarios will be used in the environmental analysis of the RTP. The map also will be used in the update of the transportation project evaluation criteria that will occur as part of the RTP work program. These criteria are used to determine priorities for transportation funding.

In addition to the RTP, the map also will be used to determine eligibility to compete for future funding from the long-term TransNet Smart Growth Incentive Program. The intent of the program is to provide incentives to plan and provide for the infrastructure to support smart growth development in our communities.

The map will be updated periodically to reflect ongoing general plan amendments and updates. Regular updates to the map will ensure accurate land use inputs into future growth forecasts and RTP updates, and will allow active participation by local jurisdictions in the future TransNet Smart Growth Incentive Program.

General Approach

The seven smart growth place types identified in the RCP fall into two distinct categories – “Existing and Planned Smart Growth Areas” and “Potential Smart Growth Areas.” As summarized in Attachment 1, the RCP includes recommended land use characteristics, intensity targets, and transportation system and public transit service characteristics for each of the seven place types.

Existing and planned smart growth areas are places where existing development and/or planned land uses are consistent with the urban design characteristics and recommended residential and employment land use intensities described in the RCP’s Smart Growth Matrix, and are (or will be) served by appropriate levels of public transit. Potential smart growth areas are places where there are opportunities for smart growth development, if local land use plans and/or plans for transportation and transit service are changed.

As mentioned above, the TWG is serving as the lead advisory group in preparing the Concept Map. City and county planning staffs have identified and provided descriptions of areas within their jurisdictions that they believe could be classified as either existing/planned or potential smart growth areas. Initially, SANDAG will include all areas identified by local planning staffs on the draft map. Staff anticipates bringing a first draft of the map to the working groups later this month and to the RPC next month for a preliminary round of review and comments. Following this preliminary review, SANDAG staff will evaluate the areas for consistency with the intensity thresholds and transit service levels included in the RCP Smart Growth Matrix. Based on the results of that analysis, staff may suggest re-classifying certain areas if they are not consistent with the RCP place types. Any changes to the regional map would be made in coordination with local planning staffs.
Public Outreach Workshops

In partnership with local jurisdictions and the SWG, SANDAG plans to hold a series of subregional workshops on the Smart Growth Concept Map this fall. SANDAG will work with the consultant and the technical and stakeholders working groups to address initial questions about the workshops, such as how focused or broad the workshops should be, and how to structure the workshops to obtain valuable input by local residents. A workshop schedule and initial ideas on workshop content will be brought to the RPC for consideration next month.

Input from the public workshops will be integrated into the concept map. A revised map will be brought to the RPC and working groups for review in October and November.

Schedule

The schedule for preparing the Concept Map (Attachment 3) is tied to the 2007 RTP Update schedule. In order to allow sufficient time to develop the land use scenarios for the RTP environmental analysis, the SANDAG Board would need to accept the final draft Smart Growth Concept Map by November 2005. The following milestones are anticipated within this time frame:

- Draft Concept Map – June/July 2005
- Revised Draft Concept Map – July 2005
- Verification of Smart Growth Areas (Intensity Thresholds) – August 2005
- Public Workshops – September 2005
- Final Draft Concept Map – October/November 2005
- SANDAG Board Action – November 2005

A draft Smart Growth Concept Map will be available for preliminary review by the RPC next month.

BOB LEITER
Director of Land Use and Transportation Planning

Attachments: 1. Smart Growth Area Classifications
2. Characteristics of Smart Growth Categories and Uses of Smart Growth Concept Map
3. Smart Growth Concept Map Schedule

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SMART GROWTH DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The following design principles apply to all categories and are critical to the success of smart growth.

- Human-scale built environment that creates uniqueness and identity
- Vertically and horizontally mixed use development, with vertical mixed use located near transit stations
- Robust transportation choices that complement the intensity of development within the Smart Growth Opportunity Area (SGOA)
  - Strong pedestrian orientation: network of streets & pedestrian paths, narrower street scales, special designs to facilitate pedestrian crossings at intersections, and the walker having precedence
  - Bike access/locker facilities and park-n-ride facilities woven in the human-scale design
  - Transit station(s) located centrally within main activity area(s); transit user amenities located adjacent to stations (e.g. child care facilities, coffee bars, dry cleaning drop-off)
- Nearby recreational facilities and public plazas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY/ LAND USE TYPE CHARACTERISTICS</th>
<th>LAND USE INTENSITY TARGETS</th>
<th>TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM CHARACTERISTICS</th>
<th>PUBLIC TRANSIT SERVICE CHARACTERISTICS</th>
<th>EXAMPLES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Metropolitan Center</td>
<td>Desired Building Types: Mid- to high-rise residential and office/ commercial</td>
<td>Access from several freeways with multiple access points</td>
<td>Served by numerous corridor/ regional/local services</td>
<td>Downtown San Diego</td>
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<td></td>
<td>75+ dwelling unit/ average net residential acre within ¼ mile radius of transit station</td>
<td>Hub transit system</td>
<td>Very high frequency service (less than 15 minute) throughout the day on all corridor/ regional services</td>
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<td>80+ employees/average net acre within ¼ mile of transit station</td>
<td>Regional hub for numerous local, corridor, regional transit lines</td>
<td>High frequency service (15 minute) all day on most local services</td>
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<td>Shuttle services and pedestrian orientation for internal trips</td>
<td>Multiple station locations, with several key transfer points</td>
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<td>Internal shuttle system</td>
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<td>Urban Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employment draws from throughout region, while other uses draw mainly from subregional area</td>
<td>Desired Building Types: Mid-to high-rise residential and office/commercial</td>
<td>Freeway connections with multiple access points</td>
<td>Served by several corridor/regional lines and several local services</td>
<td>Existing and Planned: Rio Vista (Mission Valley) (San Diego)</td>
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<td>Urban centers likely located within larger area that has several SGOA designations</td>
<td>40-75+ dwelling unit/average net acre residential within ¼ mile radius of transit station</td>
<td>Served by several corridor/regional transit lines and several local services</td>
<td>High to very high frequency service (less than 15 minute peak) on all corridor/regional services</td>
<td>Little Italy (San Diego)</td>
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<td>Mixed use employment</td>
<td>25+ dwelling unit/ acre for mixed use sites within ¼ mile radius of transit station</td>
<td>Possible shuttle routes for internal trips</td>
<td>High frequency throughout the day on all lines</td>
<td>Costa Verde (University City) (San Diego)</td>
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<td>Civic/cultural facilities</td>
<td>50+ employees per net acre within ¼ mile of transit station</td>
<td>Minimal park-and-ride facilities; access should be handled by internal shuttle system</td>
<td>Key transit center, along with multiple smaller station locations</td>
<td>The Boulevard Marketplace Pilot Village (San Diego)</td>
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<td>Possible internal shuttle system</td>
<td>Morena Linda Vista (San Diego)</td>
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<td>East Urban Center (Chula Vista)</td>
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<td><strong>Town Center</strong></td>
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<td>- Draws mainly from immediate subregional area</td>
<td>- Desired Building Types: Low- to mid-rise</td>
<td>- Served by one or more corridor/regional transit line and several local services</td>
<td>- Served by 1 to 2 corridor or regional lines, or less than 5 minute shuttle distance from corridor/regional station, and multiple local services</td>
<td>- Existing and Planned:</td>
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<td>- Residential and office/commercial, including mixed use</td>
<td>- May also be served by regional arterials</td>
<td>- Very high frequency service (less than 15 minute peak) on corridor/regional service or connecting shuttle</td>
<td>- Downtown Oceanside</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Civic/cultural facilities</td>
<td>- High frequency throughout the day on most lines</td>
<td>- Multiple station locations, some with central access/transfer point</td>
<td>- Downtown Escondido</td>
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<td>- Shared use parking or dedicated park-and-ride facilities for regional transit services</td>
<td>- Grantville Trolley Station (SD)</td>
<td>- Downtown La Mesa</td>
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<td>- San Marcos Creek Specific Plan</td>
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<th>CATEGORY/ LAND USE TYPE CHARACTERISTICS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Community Center</td>
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<td>Existing and Planned:</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Draws from nearby community/ neighborhoods</td>
<td>• Desired Building Types: Low- to mid-rise</td>
<td>• Served by at least one corridor or regional transit line</td>
<td>• Served by at least one corridor/ regional service</td>
<td>• Otay Ranch Villages (Chula Vista)</td>
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<td>• Residential and commercial, including mixed use</td>
<td>• 20-45+ dwelling unit/average net acre within ¼ mile of transit station</td>
<td>• Served by arterials and/or collector streets</td>
<td>• High frequency service (15 minute in peak hours) on corridor/ regional services</td>
<td>• Mercado (Barrio Logan, San Diego)</td>
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<td>• Possible community-serving civic uses</td>
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<td>• Moderate to high frequency throughout the day</td>
<td>• Mira Mesa Market Center (San Diego)</td>
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<td>• One or more on-street stations</td>
<td>• Pacific Highlands Ranch (San Diego)</td>
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<td>• Downtown Lemon Grove</td>
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<td>• Downtown Coronado</td>
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<td>• San Elijo/ La Costa Meadows Community Center (San Marcos)</td>
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<td>• Palm Avenue (Imperial Beach)</td>
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<td>Potential SGOAs:</td>
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<td>• Solana Beach/ NCTD Mixed Use Site</td>
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<td>• North County Metro (Buena Creek Sprinter Station Area, County of San Diego)</td>
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<td>Transit Corridor</td>
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<td>- Draws mainly from several nearby communities</td>
<td>- Desired Building Types: Variety of low-, mid-, and high-rise</td>
<td>- Located along a major arterial</td>
<td>- Generally served by a corridor/regional line and local services</td>
<td>Existing and Planned:</td>
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<td>- Residential and office/commercial, including mixed use</td>
<td>- 25-75+ dwelling unit/average net acre along transit corridor and within ¼ mile of transit stations</td>
<td>- Served by a corridor or regional service, or local services with less than 10 minutes travel time to corridor/regional line station</td>
<td>- High frequency service (15 minute in peak hours) on corridor/regional and/or local services</td>
<td>- El Cajon Blvd and University Avenue (Mid-City) (San Diego)</td>
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<td>- Linear size with length extending from less than one mile long, and width extending 1 to 2 blocks outward from corridor</td>
<td>- Employment: Commercial and retail supportive uses</td>
<td>- Small shared-use park-and-ride facilities possible</td>
<td>- Multiple station locations, with one or more on-street transfer locations with intersecting services.</td>
<td>- Washington Avenue (Mission Hills)</td>
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<td>- University Avenue (La Mesa)</td>
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<td>- South Santa Fe Transit Corridor (Vista)</td>
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<td>Potential SGOA:</td>
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<td>- El Camino Real (Encinitas)</td>
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<td><strong>Special Use Center</strong></td>
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<td>• Employment draws from throughout region, with other uses being community serving</td>
<td>• Desired Building Types: Variety of low-, mid-, and high-rise</td>
<td>• Nearby freeway access</td>
<td>• Generally served by one or more corridor/ regional line and local services</td>
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<td>• Special use centers may be located within larger area that has several SGOA designations</td>
<td>• 45+ employees/ average net acre within ¼ mile of transit station</td>
<td>• Served by one or more corridor/ regional lines and local services</td>
<td>• High to very high frequency service (15 minute or better in peak) on corridor/ regional services</td>
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<td>• Dominated by one non-residential land use</td>
<td>• Optional residential: 50+ dwelling units/ average net residential acre</td>
<td>• May be served by shuttle service for internal trips</td>
<td>• Moderate to high frequency throughout the day</td>
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<td>• Retail support services</td>
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<td>Multiple station locations, with possible central access/transfer point</td>
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<td>• Potential residential element</td>
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Existing and Planned:
- Grossmont Center/ Hospital/ Trolley Station (La Mesa)
- The Paseo at SDSU (San Diego)
- Chula Vista Bayfront
- Palomar College (San Marcos)
- Cal State San Marcos

Potential SGOAs:
- Ocean Ranch/ Rancho Del Oro Industrial Complex (Oceanside)
- Vista County Courthouse Area
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| Rural Community                        | Within Village Cores, 10.9-24+ dwelling units/ acre (higher densities permitted for senior housing) | Concentrated local road network within village, with regional connection to urban areas | Village Cores should include or allow for bus stops and an expansion of bus service in higher density areas | Existing, Planned, and Potential SGOAs:  
  - Ramona  
  - Fallbrook  
  - Alpine  
  - Lakeside  
  - Valley Center |
|                                       | Desired Building Types: Low-rise employment and residential | Bicycle and pedestrian-friendly street design in Village Core | Served by one or more local services with moderate frequencies throughout the day | |
|                                       |                                                            | Could include park-n-ride facilities near major road or transit corridors | Possible peak period corridor/regional service with transit stations located within village core | |
|                                       |                                                            | Possible local transit service or central access point for possible corridor/regional peak transit line | |

Rural Community
- Distinct communities that include Rural Villages defined by a village limit line with concentrated areas of residential and commercial development
- Draws from nearby rural areas
- Includes semi-rural and rural areas outside the village limit line

Main Street Ramona
### Characteristics of Smart Growth Categories

**And Uses of Smart Growth Concept Map**

June 3, 2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SMART GROWTH CATEGORIES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Existing and Planned Smart Growth Areas</strong></td>
<td><strong>Potential Smart Growth Areas</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHARACTERISTICS</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Places where existing development and/or planned land uses are consistent with the urban design characteristics and minimum residential and employment land use intensities described in the Smart Growth Matrix, and are (or will be) served by appropriate levels of public transit.</td>
<td>Areas where there is potential for the application of urban design characteristics and minimum residential and employment land use intensities described in the Smart Growth Matrix if appropriate changes are made to local plans and appropriate levels of transit service are provided.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Uses of Concept Map

1. RTP Update
   
a. Development of Land Use Scenarios
      
      | Enhanced Smart Growth Scenario | Will be included in the Enhanced Smart Growth Scenario, at same intensities as assumed in (a) above. | Will be included in the Enhanced Smart Growth Scenario. |

b. Update of Transportation Project Evaluation Criteria
   
   To Be Determined

2. TransNet Smart Growth Incentive Program

   | Eligible for both planning and infrastructure grants. | Eligible for planning grants only. |

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1. The Existing Plans and Policies Scenario will include the Existing and Planned Smart Growth Areas, and will therefore contain the same information as the Regional Growth Forecast.
## Smart Growth Concept Map Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>April</th>
<th>May</th>
<th>June</th>
<th>July</th>
<th>August</th>
<th>September</th>
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<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### MAJOR TASKS

- **Preliminary Draft Analytical Maps**
- **Staff Assessment/Verification of Areas**
- **Return Analytical Maps to Local Staff for Review**
- **Generic Overlay Assumptions**
- **Written Descriptions (and photos) of Areas**
- **Compile Suggested Transit Network Modifications**
- **Draft Concept Map**
- **Revised Draft Concept Map**
- **Status Report to SANDAG Board**
- **Workshops**
- **Plan Workshops**
- **Attend Workshops**
- **Public Review by Local Jurisdictions**
- **Incorporate Workshop Results into Map**
- **Final Draft Concept Map**
- **SANDAG Board Accepts Map for Use in RTP Update**

### Key

- CTAC = C
- TC = Tr
- TWG = T
- TWG = T
- SWG = S
- SWG = S
- RPC = Pl

### Notes

1. Local Scale
2. Regional Scale

05/25/2005
INDEPENDENT TRANSIT PLANNING REVIEW

Introduction

The TransNet extension includes funding for a number of light rail transit (LRT) and bus rapid transit (BRT) projects that are identified in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). At the SANDAG Board’s direction, passage of the TransNet extension triggered a commitment to conduct an Independent Transit Planning Review (ITPR) of the RTP and regional transit projects to help determine the most effective and cost-efficient transit service and infrastructure plan for the region.

At its February 18, 2005, meeting the Transportation Committee approved an action plan for the ITPR. This Review includes hiring a consultant and the formation of a Peer Review Panel of individuals from outside the San Diego region to bring expert guidance and oversight from transit industry professionals with direct implementation, operating and research experience. The Transportation Committee approved the composition of the peer review panel at its April 1, 2005, meeting.

At its May 6, 2005, meeting (see Attachment 1) the Transportation Committee heard an update report on the results of the first meeting of the peer review panel, held on April 20-22, in which the panelists were introduced to the RTP, the transit strategy, transit projects proposed in the RTP, and the various issues that SANDAG wants the ITPR to address, including transit/land use coordination.

Staff will provide an overview of the study and the efforts to date, and its relationship with the Smart Growth Concept Map.

Recommendation

The Regional Planning Committee is asked to accept this report for information.


Key Staff Contact: Dave Schumacher (619) 699-6906; dsc@sandag.org
INDEPENDENT TRANSIT PLANNING REVIEW – SUMMARY OF FIRST PEER REVIEW PANEL MEETING

Introduction

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The first meeting of the peer review panel, held on April 20-22, introduced the panelists to the RTP, the transit strategy, and transit projects proposed in the RTP, and the various issues that SANDAG wants the ITPR to address. This report highlights the results from this meeting, along with next steps related to both the peer review panel and the ITPR consultant selection process.

Recommendation

The Transportation Committee is asked to accept this report for information.

Discussion

Based on direction from the Transportation Committee, input from the American Public Transit Association, and colleagues in the field, the Peer Review Panel is comprised of following panelists:

- David Mieger, Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority - Mr. Mieger is the Director of Westside Planning and has led the development of both LRT and BRT projects for the agency.

- John Bonsall, McCormick/Rankin - Mr. Bonsall is the former head of OC Transpo, the transit authority in Ottawa, Ontario, where he led development of its bus transitway system. Currently he serves as President of McCormick/Rankin, a consultant firm that has been involved in the development of a number of BRT projects throughout the world.
Richard Feder, Pittsburgh Port Authority of Allegheny County – Mr. Feder serves as Director of Transit Planning and is involved in the planning, implementation, and operations of the agency’s extensive LRT, BRT, and exclusive busway system.

Phil Selinger, Portland Tri-County Metropolitan Transportation District of Oregon – Mr. Selinger serves as Director of Project Implementation for the agency’s extensive LRT and bus system.

Linda Cherrington, Texas Transportation Institute (TTI) – Ms. Cherrington serves as Program Manager for TTI’s Transit Mobility Program, which has been involved in several studies involving high occupancy vehicle (HOV) facilities, BRT, and value pricing; she previously served as Assistant General Manager for the Houston Metropolitan Transit Authority and Chief Executive Officer for LKC Consulting Services in Houston.

Robert Cervero, University of California Berkeley – Dr. Cervero is professor of City and Regional Planning and is considered a leading expert in transit-oriented development, the land use and economic benefits of transit service, and transit/land use integration.

Highlights from Peer Review Meeting

At the first peer review panel meeting, staff briefed the panelists on the Regional Transit Vision and 2030 Mobility Plan network, followed by a tour of key RTP transit corridors. This overview provided the context for discussing the issue areas identified in the February 18, 2005, Transportation Committee agenda item (see Attachment 1).

The focus of the panel’s work at this first meeting was to review and refine the issues list based on their observations. Their suggestions centered on the need for a stronger articulation of the transit/land use relationship as the starting point for defining the Regional Transit Vision. While still capturing the points highlighted in Attachment 1, they defined the issue areas and framework for review of our transit plans as follows:

1. Regional Transit Vision – The panel felt that an effective transit system emanates from an overarching land use vision and that land uses should influence the regional transit strategy, type of service, and level of service. As a result, the strategic relationship between the our regional land use and transit visions needs to be strengthened so that land use more directly guides the application of a hierarchy of transit. Transit and land use strategies within a given transit corridor should be mutually supportive, with a gradation of facility and service applications tailored to specific corridor characteristics. Given that the Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP) was adopted after the MOBILITY 2030 RTP, a reassessment of the RTP in light of the RCP and the panel’s comments is a logical next step in refining the transit vision and plan.

2. Problem Statements - Once the regional land use/transit vision is strengthened, the panel suggested outlining a set of problem statements to help develop guiding principles for application of a transit plan. The problem statements will help assess the trade-offs among differing strategies for transit facilities and services. The regional transit plan would be implemented to reflect the unique characteristics of our region in terms of land uses, travel corridors, and activity centers. Consideration also should be given on what non-transit factors (e.g. land use densities, parking policies) may need to be in place to achieve the double-digit peak period mode split for transit called out in MOBILITY 2030.
3. Transit Concepts - This issue area explores the transit concepts needed to address the problem statements. While our current regional/corridor/local/community (Yellow, Red, Blue, Green) hierarchical concepts are a good start, the peer review panel felt the definitions need to be refined to provide for a gradation of concepts for a wide range of corridor applications.

4. Service Type, Network, Operating Strategy - The panel suggested that we need to better define land use and service thresholds for the various transit concepts (the expanded Yellow, Red, Blue, Green hierarchy) and sharpen the definition for BRT in our region. In the current Regional Transit Vision, BRT is assumed to be equivalent to the trolley in both service and supporting facilities and amenities. By clearly defining the land use and service characteristics needed to achieve this objective, we will be able to better understand what corridors can truly support BRT. Corridors that don't meet the thresholds may be more appropriate for other types of enhanced bus transit with BRT features.

5. Modeling - The peer review panel’s discussion echoed the need identified in Issue #2 of Attachment 1, to incorporate market research insights into our ridership forecasting tools.

6. Operating Cost/Finance - The panel supported the activity identified in Attachment 1 to develop a cost model for estimating BRT operating costs, with sufficient detail to address variable and fixed operating cost items.

**Next Steps**

The Request for Proposals for consultant services was sent out earlier this month, with proposals due to SANDAG by May 7. The peer review panel will assist staff in the consultant selection process, which will select a firm with international expertise in BRT and LRT planning and design. We expect to have the consultant on board in late June/early July.

In the meantime, we have tentatively set a second peer review panel meeting for June 20-21. At that meeting, the panel will meet with the Regional Planning Stakeholders Working Group, the Regional Transit Management Committee, as well as other interested stakeholders, to get their input on these and any other issues that should be addressed in the ITPR. Based on that input, staff and the peer review panel will finalize the issues list and outline the consultant scope of work.

BOB LEITER  
Director of Land Use and Transportation Planning

Attachment

Key Staff Contact: Toni Bates, (619) 699.6950; tba@sandag.org  
Dave Schumacher, (619) 699-6906; dsc@sandag.org
Initial Issues List for Independent Transit Planning Review  
(from February 18, 2005 Transportation Committee Meeting)

**Issue #1 - Regional Transit Vision** - The Regional Transit Vision, which is the basis of our MOBILITY 2030 plan, would be evaluated to assess the anticipated effectiveness of the hierarchy of the regional, corridor, local, and shuttle service concepts (previously referred to as Yellow/Red/Blue/Green Car concepts) in achieving our transit system and network objectives. The Independent Transit Planning Review would address the potential success of these tiered service concepts in attracting the different market segments identified by our previous market research, and how these service concepts would form an effective and efficient transit network in different parts of the region (based on land use density, land use types, and urban design).

**Issue #2 - MOBILITY 2030 Regional Transit Corridors** - The MOBILITY 2030 network and the Proposition A TransNet program of projects identifies a number of primary corridors where high-speed transit services (LRT and BRT) are planned. The Independent Transit Planning Review will review the appropriateness of these primary regional corridors based on existing/future travel demand and the roadway network.

The review will also evaluate the corridors based on the potential to attract the choice rider market and assess how well we have incorporated the results of the market research work conducted in the region in 2000 into our travel demand models for forecasting transit ridership, which were updated in 2004. The market research produced some interesting insights into the various factors that play a part in a person’s decision on whether to use public transportation (e.g. speed/flexibility, safety, and the customer experience, and how the relative importance of each differs across the various market segments). The question has been whether these factors can help us to better predict transit ridership and to identify which market segments a new BRT or LRT service would attract.

**Issue #3 - Transit Network Structure** - This issue examines the overall transit network structure in place today and that proposed in MOBILITY 2030 in terms of its effectiveness for serving the multi-center urban setting of the San Diego region (i.e., unlike cities with a single activity center in a downtown, our region is composed of a number of existing and emerging centers such as downtown, the Golden Triangle, Mission Valley, and the future East Urban Center). The trunk line/feeder bus structure along our trolley corridors today represents one operating strategy for a network structure, but is this the best network strategy for future corridors where LRT and BRT service is proposed? What other options might be considered, and what is the most practical network structure and strategy given the expected resources for transit?

**Issue #4 - Regional Transit Facilities and Operating Strategy** - MOBILITY 2030 would achieve the Regional Transit Vision through Implementation of freeway BRT, arterial BRT and LRT lines. For BRT, our plan calls for a range of facility types, including multi-modal managed lanes facilities in freeway corridors (e.g. the north I-15 corridor Managed Lanes/BRT project), dedicated transitways (e.g. South Bay BRT project in Otay Ranch), arterial transit-only lanes (e.g. Showcase project along El Cajon Blvd), and mixed flow street operations. The physical and operational design of stations, particularly the configuration of freeway BRT stations, has implications for operating strategies as well. Station proposals range from simple on-street bus stops to median guideway stations to major park-and-ride facilities connected to managed lanes by direct access ramps. The Independent Transit Planning Review would assess the applicability, effectiveness and trade-offs related to the various
transit modes and facilities proposed in our MOBILITY 2030 network corridors, and provide
guidance on the level and type of capital and operating investment needed to create a successful
system. This would include consideration of the effectiveness and efficiency of providing parking,
and parking fees, at transit stations and in communities along BRT and LRT corridors. The review
will also help evaluate the resulting operating, cost and ridership implications of the various capital
investments and designs.

The consultant and Peer Review Panel would also help assess the feasibility of short and long-range
strategies for implementing and operating BRT given funding availability, right-of-way needs, and
environmental and community impacts. General guidelines and thresholds for BRT facilities, station
spacing and service levels would also be developed.

**Issue #5 – Operating Costing/Financing** - The Regional Transit Vision envisions BRT in the
San Diego region as providing a level of service and amenities on par with those provided by LRT
(e.g. well-designed stations, roving security/fare inspectors, and higher end vehicles) but with the
flexibility of a conventional bus (e.g. being able to operate on a dedicated transitway or in mixed-
street traffic). As a result, operating costs for BRT services will likely be higher than conventional bus
services. Identifying cost categories and assumptions has been a challenge given the wide range of
BRT services and concepts in the United States. There is also a need to provide appropriate
comparisons to LRT operating costs to be able to assess cost-effectiveness of the various transit
modes and service concepts.

The Independent Transit Planning Review will use experience from other cities and regions to refine
our operating cost assumptions for both BRT and LRT, including discussion of fare levels and
farebox recovery rates as well. In addition, we will explore the potential role that public-private
partnerships could play in funding capital and/or operating costs of future transit services (e.g.,
businesses subsidizing a shuttle connection from an employment area to LRT/BRT stations).

**Issue #6 – Transit/Land Use Coordination** - A key element of both MOBILITY 2030 and the
Regional Comprehensive Plan is the need for increased coordination between transit planning and
land use development. The success of our Smart Growth Opportunity Areas strategy is dependant
upon fostering a close relationship between future LRT/BRT services and potential areas where
transit oriented development could occur. Several of our potential peer review panelists have direct
experience in this area that could provide valuable insights on how to translate successful practices
elsewhere to the San Diego region.