MID-COAST CORRIDOR PROJECT
San Diego, California

FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
(Final EIS)

Volume II

by the

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION (FTA)

and the

METROPOLITAN TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT BOARD

PREPARED PURSUANT TO:


June 2001
PREFACE

This is the second volume of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (Final EIS) for the proposed Mid-Coast LRT Project, Balboa Extension and Nobel Drive Coaster Station. Pursuant to requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the EIS analyzes potential impacts of transit improvements proposed by the Metropolitan Transit Development Board (MTDB) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), at the project-specific level.

The Alternatives Analysis/Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Draft Environmental Impact Report (AA/DEIS/DEIR) was circulated for public and agency comments in February of 1995. The AA/DEIS/DEIR provided an analysis of a broader range of proposed investment alternatives and resulted in the selection of the Locally Preferred Alternative/Preferred Investment Strategy (LPA). A public hearing on the AA/DEIS/DEIR was held on April 27, 1995. In October 1995, the MTDB certified the Final EIR, in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act, and approved a LPA. A full description of the LPA is provided in Section 2.1.1 of this FEIS, and in a separate report, LPA Report (December 1995). The Mid-Coast LRT Project, Balboa Extension and Nobel Drive Coaster Station represents the extent of new LRT rail alignment and stations and new Coaster stations, and related facilities that MTDB projects it can construct and operate given its financial plan.

The first volume of this Final EIS contains information regarding the purpose and need for the project, alternatives considered, and the environmental and socioeconomic effects that can be expected if the project is implemented. Where necessary, text revisions have been made to reflect the change in the Build Alternative from the alternatives considered in the AA/DEIS/DEIR, and in response to comments on the AA/DEIS/DEIR. Information reported in the AA/DEIS/DEIR is summarized, and additional clarification is provided regarding potential impacts of the Mid-Coast LRT Project, Balboa Extension and Nobel Drive Coaster Station, and a low cost Transportation Systems Management (TSM) Alternative. Potential impacts of the No-Build Alternative are also described.

This second volume contains copies of all written and oral comments received on the AA/DEIS/DEIR, along with written responses to those comments. Previous responses to the comments pertaining to the AA/DEIS/DEIR were prepared prior to the selection of the LPA and circulated with the Final EIR. While some responses provided in this FEIS are identical to those provided in the FEIR, it was necessary to revise a number of responses to reflect the selection of the LPA and the further refinement of the Mid-Coast LRT Project, Balboa Extension and Nobel Drive Coaster Station.

Several of the comments and responses address issues associated with the extension of the LRT to the University City area (the "University City Extension"). The University City Extension is not part of the proposed project now being considered by the Federal Transit Administration in this FEIS. Due to the low potential for funding to be available for design and construction of the University City Extension in the near future, the MTD Board determined that it would not be appropriate to conduct preliminary engineering and prepare a final environmental impact statement for it at this
time. When funding does become available for the University City Extension, additional environmental analysis will be performed.

A listing of all agencies, organizations, and individuals who commented on the AA/DEIS/DEIR is provided. Comments were numbered for the FEIR, and that numbering system has been maintained to allow comparisons between the documents.
## VOLUME II

### COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

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February 13, 1995

Metropolitan Transit Development Board
1255 Imperial Avenue, Suite 1000
San Diego, California 92101-7490

Re: Mid-Coast AA/DEIS/DEIR Comments

Dear Members of the Board:

Please accept the following comments regarding the Mid-Coast AA/DEIS/DEIR released by the MTDB in January 1995:

1) The Alternatives Analysis does not include a full range of transit modes. Several automated guideway transit (AGT) technologies exist, many that could be the Mid-Coast transit needs. Some of these technologies have been in use for several decades. Newer technologies, such as personal automated people movers will be shown by the time application of a transit system to the Mid-Coast area is expected.

2) Cost effectiveness measures do not consider revenues generated directly by alternatives. The MTDB should not be limited by FTA prescribed ideas of cost effectiveness. The cheapest investment is not necessarily the best investment. As a region, we should be using transit technologies and strategies that allow a greater return for our transit investment dollars. They do exist.

3) Potential new revenue sources do not include private investment in transit. Privatization of local transit services is being considered in the suburban Chicago area. San Diego should be thinking similarly. What is required is the proper selection of transit technologies and funding strategies to adapt to a true passenger service orientation.

Please consider these comments in your review of the AA/DEIS/DEIR.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Thomas M. Richert
Secretary/Treasurer, Advanced Transit Association

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Thomas M. Richert
Secretary/Treasurer, Advanced Transit Association

Response 1

The AA/DEIS/DEIR included a full range of reasonable, implementable alternatives. The proposed commuter rail and light rail transit (LRT) projects represent expansions of existing systems. The LRT project was included in the 1987 TransNet sales tax ordinance. Prior studies ("North Line Light Rail Transit Study, Phase I Report, Assessment of Feasible Corridors," December 1982 and "Mid-Coast Light Rail Alignment Study," May 1986; both hereby incorporated by reference) have determined that LRT would provide appropriate capacity for the corridor, while AGT technologies tend to provide lower capacity. These studies narrowed down the options to allow further study of a reasonable number of alternatives as contained in the AA/DEIS/DEIR. The alternatives in the Mid-Coast AA/DEIS/DEIR were developed over several years during the study, with community and FTA review. This process is documented in Chapter 2.0 of the AA/DEIS/DEIR and Chapter 2 of the FEIS.

Response 2

As stated in Footnote 1 to Table 6-14, page 6-30 in the AA/DEIS/DEIR, the cost-effectiveness index reported in the DEIS includes the net operating and maintenance cost, i.e., the cost less revenues.

Response 3

MTDB has pursued and continues to pursue private sector involvement in its projects. Joint developments at American Plaza, 47th Street, La Mesa Boulevard, Grossmont, Amaya Street and several stations on the Mission Valley West line attest to that effort.

VOLUME II COMMENTS AND RESPONSES
VOL II-1
Buena Vista Audubon Society
William D. Daugherty, Vice President
Member, Regional Transportation Advisory Committee

Response 4

Preference for No Build or TSM Alternative is noted. LRT and Coaster service may, at times, compete for the same rider, particularly where stations are proximate. The two services, however, are designed to serve different markets. The Coaster is designed to serve the longer commute trips from outlying areas during peak commute hours. LRT, with its more-frequent and all-day service is designed for the shorter commute and other trip purposes in the more dense urban core. The travel time savings for the commuter comprise approximately 10% of the end-to-end trip time, and would represent a substantial savings. Operating deficits are inherent in transit operations; there is no expectation that any of the transit services would operate without a subsidy. All transportation alternatives, including TSM, require direct and indirect subsidy.

Addition of the Nobel Drive Coaster station, as reviewed in this FEIS, would add only one additional minute to the overall Coaster travel time. The commentor's opinion regarding the Commuter Rail Tunnel is noted.

The alternatives represent a full range of realistic, implementable alternatives. (See also the response to Comment No. 1.)

Subsequent to this letter NCTD has initiated mid-day Coaster service.
Response 5

The Coaster is not a local service. It represents a high level of service in the corridor. The LRT Alternative is an expansion of the existing LRT system, as approved by the voters in 1987 as part of the TransNet transportation sales tax ordinance. Elevating systems that provide similar capacity are much more costly than the mostly at-grade LRT alternative and have their own environmental impacts. They were not considered to offer advantages over LRT. The alignment for the Balboa LRT Extension portion of the Mid-Coast Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative is fully grade-separated.

Response 6

The La Jolla Village Drive/Miramar Road corridor was addressed in the Mira Mesa LRT Alignment Study. Bus services throughout the corridor were evaluated for improvements as part of the various alternatives. No one project can serve every geographic location.

MTDB is currently studying alternative alignments in the University City Community that would bring LRT service to La Jolla Village Drive. This is an ongoing planning process which will have subsequent environmental review and is not a part of this Mid-Coast LRT, Balboa Extension/Nobel Coaster Station project.
Response 7

Comment noted. MTDB is seeking amendments to the University Community Plan.
Response 8

Comment noted. As discussed in Section 2.4.9.3 of the FEIS, the Mid-Coast LRT Project, Balboa Extension and Nobel Drive Coaster Station Alternative would include bus service (Route #150) to the Nobel Drive Coaster Station, providing a connection to the University Towne Centre Transit Center. Although the Balboa LRT Extension (Phase I of the Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative - LPA) does not reach University City, future phases of the LPA will provide LRT service to the University City area.

Response 9

The nearest Coaster commuter rail station is located in Old Town. There are no plans for a Coaster station in Linda Vista. The LRT stations at Tecolote Road (Mid-Coast line), and Morena Boulevard/Friars Road (Mission Valley West line) would serve Linda Vista. The Tecolote station would be built on railroad right-of-way owned by MTDB and street right-of-way owned by the city. No private property would be needed.

Response 10

Comments noted. Joint development opportunities would be pursued at all stations, as appropriate. The Balboa Station (LRT or commuter rail) would most likely be developed with surface parking initially, as described in this FEIS (Section 2.4.4.3). Space limitations at the proposed site might limit the ability to provide a convenience retail center. Such commercial developments at stations would be subject to subsequent, separate design efforts and environmental review.
Mid-Coast Corridor Project, Final Environmental Impact Statement

Metropolitan Transit Development Board
Attn: Dennis Wahl
1255 Imperial Ave. Suite 1000
San Diego, CA 92101

Dear Dennis,

I am writing this memo on behalf of the Valencia Committee representing all the homeowners in the community of Valencia in La Jolla Colony, University City. Please enter this memo into the public record regarding the Mid-Coast Corridor Study.

Based on continual monitoring of the development of and a thorough review of the Draft Environmental Impact Report of the Mid-Coast Corridor Study, it is the position of the homeowners of Valencia that there are more desirable alternatives than the LRT-Genesee alignment and the LRT-Genesee alignment should not be chosen as the locally preferred transportation alternative.

It is also my understanding that the Rose Canyon Recreation Council, formed by Councilman Harry Mathis, has taken a similar position and the UCPG, at the urging of Councilman Harry Mathis, previously passed a resolution that the community plan should continue to call for only passive uses of Rose Canyon which would not include the LRT-Genesee option.

Some combination of TSM, HOV lanes and the existing Commuter Rail appears to be very cost effective alternative. In addition, the LRT 1-5 alternative costs less, has more ridership and follows an existing busy transportation corridor as opposed to causing the significant adverse impacts to Rose Canyon noted on page 5-63 of the EIR. The passing of trains on an infrequent basis has very little impact when compared to the existing level of noise and traffic on I-5 and the possible passing of light rail through Rose Canyon nearly 180 times a day at intervals as small as 3-7 minutes.

Valencia Committee
Russ Craig
University City homeowner

Response 11

This letter is part of the public record through its inclusion in this FEIS.

Response 12

Comment noted opposing selecting the Genesee alignment option as the Locally Preferred Alternative. This alignment was not included in the Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative.

Response 13

Positions of Rose Canyon Recreation Council and UCPG opposing LRT in Rose Canyon are noted. For the Balboa LRT Extension and Nobel Drive Coaster Station Alternative described in this FEIS, LRT will not be constructed in Rose Canyon. A proposed Nobel Coaster Station is proposed in the Canyon, but the station would be within and to the north of the rail right-of-way and not within the Rose Canyon Open Space Park. The design of this Coaster station would allow for new access to the Open Space Park, as described in Section 2.4.8 of the FEIS.

Response 14

Comment noted regarding combination of projects to avoid impacts to Rose Canyon. The LRT Balboa Extension and Nobel Drive Coaster Station Alternative evaluated in the FEIS does combine specific components of the LRT 1-5 Alignment and commuter rail alternatives evaluated in the AA/DEIS/DEIR.
Response 15

Potential adverse impacts to Rose Canyon resulting from the LRT Genesee alignment are documented in Chapter 5 of the AA/DEIS/DEIR, along with proposed mitigation. The Nobel Drive Coaster Station component of the Build Alternative evaluated in the FEIS would result in some visual impacts related to Rose Canyon (particularly relating to views from the Canyon looking north), as documented in Chapter 5 of the FEIS. However, these impacts are considerably less extensive than potential impacts of the LRT Genesee alignment, and they will be mitigated.

Response 16

Preference for combinations of projects not including LRT Genesee is noted. The LRT Genesee alignment was not included in the Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative. The LRT Balboa Extension and Nobel Drive Coaster Station Alternative evaluated in the FEIS does combine components of LRT and commuter rail alternatives evaluated in the DEIS. See also responses to Comment Nos. 12 and 14.

Response 17

As described in Chapter 2 of the FEIS, the MTDB evaluated many criteria prior to selecting a Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA). Evaluation criteria included ridership, cost, and environmental impacts.

Response 18

Comment opposing LRT in Rose Canyon is noted. The LRT Genesee alignment (which would locate LRT in Rose Canyon) was not included in the Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative.
UNIVERSITY CITY LIGHT:  Editorial

Preserve Rose Canyon

The Metropolitan Transit Development Board has made available for public review the study of transportation improvement alternatives for University City including the possible running of the San Diego Trolley through Rose Canyon. The trolley would pass through Rose Canyon nearly 180 times per day, as often as every 3-7 minutes, on two new tracks with overhead wires, fencing on both sides of the tracks, and possibly a concrete overhead walkway as the only access across the canyon. According to the study, these items along with the removal of existing vegetation would have a "significant adverse impact".

Based on a thorough review of the study, it is the position of the homeowners of Valencia/La Jolla Colony and the Rose Canyon Recreation Council, formed by Councilman Harry Mathis, that there are more desirable and cost effective alternatives than the trolley passing through Rose Canyon and this alignment should not be chosen as the locally preferred transportation alternative. Also, the UCPG, at the urging of Councilman Harry Mathis, previously passed a resolution that the community plan should continue to call for only passive uses of Rose Canyon which would not include the Rose Canyon alignment.

Users of the canyon, homeowners and ultimately every resident of San Diego will be affected by adding two new tracks, overhead wires, right-of-way fencing, and possibly a concrete overhead walkway along with disturbing the natural habitat and running light rail every 3-7 minutes through a peaceful open space canyon.

We urge Councilman Harry Mathis, and the rest of the Metropolitan Transit Development Board to listen to the UCPG, Rose Canyon Recreation Council, the homeowners in the area and the citizens of San Diego and not disturb the peaceful open space of Rose canyon by choosing the Rose Canyon route as the locally preferred alternative when there are more adequate and cost effective choices.

Ross Craig
University City homeowner

Response 19

Comments noted. See responses to Comments 12-18.
April 19, 1995

Dennis Wahl
Senior Planner
San Diego Metropolitan Transit Development Board
1235 Imperial Ave Suite 1000
San Diego, Calif 92101

Dear Mr. Wahl,

I had the opportunity to attend your presentation last night at La Jolla Village Square, and I was encouraged to see that San Diego is engaging in some long term transit planning. I grew up in La Jolla, attended U.C. San Diego, and now work in the city and the county.

I was surprised to see some of your ideas in the context of the Golden Triangle area. There is only very light traffic in the area, and the transit district is not in the area. There are few light rail options in the area. The transit district is not in the area. There are almost no light rail options in the area. The transit district is not in the area.

Aside from these specifics, I wonder why San Diego is implementing the Golden Triangle area as its primary transit corridor. The corridor between Old Town and UTC is used very little by those who commute by transit. The corridor between Old Town and UTC is used very little by those who commute by transit.

The initial reaction to the Golden Triangle area was that it would be the preferred transit corridor. The initial reaction to the Golden Triangle area was that it would be the preferred transit corridor. The initial reaction to the Golden Triangle area was that it would be the preferred transit corridor. The initial reaction to the Golden Triangle area was that it would be the preferred transit corridor.

Sincerely,

Jack Illes

Response 20

Improved levels of bus service connecting UCSD and the UTC area were proposed as part of all of the AA/DEIS/DEIR build alternatives. An exhaustive process of defining LRT alternatives resulted in the alignments studied in the AA/DEIS/DEIR. See also the response to Comment No. 1. Please note that the Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative includes the 1-5 LRT alignment which includes a station at UCSD.

Response 21

Impacts near Executive Drive and Genesee Avenue including visual, traffic at the intersection, and the elimination of mid-block left turns, are documented in the AA/DEIS/DEIR. None of these can be characterized as “sabotage.” The LRT Genesee alignment, which would result in those impacts, was not included in the Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative.

Response 22

Comments regarding lack of need for HOV lanes and the need for service to beach front amenities are noted. Expanded bus service from LRT stations is proposed to serve beach communities.

Response 23

Any transit improvement project will be undertaken only on the basis of a viable financial plan.

Response 24

Opinions noted. The Coaster service has been a success with commuters and is being expanded to serve others. Therefore, the meaning of this comment is unclear. Transit projects are the result of extensive planning efforts to identify travel demands.
April 21, 1995

DENNIS MAUL
SAN DIEGO MTDB
1255 IMPERIAL AVE
SUITE 1000
SAN DIEGO, CA 92101-7450

Subject: SAN DIEGO MTDB REGIONAL LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT SCH 8:
90511825

Dear DENNIS MAUL:

The State Clearinghouse submitted the above named environmental
document to selected state agencies for review. The review period
is closed and none of the state agencies have comments. This
letter acknowledges that you have complied with the State
Clearinghouse review requirements for draft environmental
documentation, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act.

Please call Mark Goss at (916) 445-0613 if you have any questions
regarding the environmental review process. When contacting the
Clearinghouse in this matter, please use the eight-digit State
Clearinghouse number so that we may respond promptly.

Sincerely,

Michael Chiriatti, Jr.
Chief, State Clearinghouse

Statement regarding the lack of comments from the state agencies is noted.
Attachment to letter from Mr. Chiriatti is referenced in Comment No. 25.
4/29/95

Metropolitan Transit Development Board
Attn: Dennis Wahl
1255 Imperial Avenue, Suite 1000
San Diego, CA 92101-7490

Ben Stevenson
7804 Camino Negra
San Diego, CA 92122

Dear Sirs,

I would like to express my concern over the LRT-Genesee alignment option. I have reviewed the Mid-Coast Corridor Draft Environmental Impact Report and I can not see any purpose it would serve that another option would not serve better. A combination of the existing Coaster Rail, more efficient bus service and HOV lanes seem to hold the most promise for alleviating our traffic situation. If the trolley must come north to University City, the I-5 alignment option again is the more cost effective, it is less expensive, it would transport more people, and it would serve the three major transportation sources of University City: La Jolla Village Mall, the University of California, and University Towne Center. The Genesee alignment of the light rail would only serve University Towne Center. I don’t see any logic in the Genesee alignment in this economic light.

Further, the Genesee alignment would create a high impact in Rose Canyon, presently a lightly impacted open space. Currently perhaps 30 Amtrak and Coaster trains travel through Rose Canyon daily. That frequency could rise to 50 trips per day if current projections are correct. The LRT-Genesee alignment would increase those 50 trips by 180 every day; that is intolerable in an open space park. The value of that park is its visual and auditory tranquility, the LRT through Rose Canyon would completely destroy that. 180 trips daily, regardless of sound walls and planted visual protection, would be so frequent as to ruin the attraction of the park. The heavy infrastructure needed for the LRT, two tracks, supportive foundations, a

Ben Stevenson

Response 26

Opposition to Genesee alignment and preference for other alternatives is noted. The Genesee alignment was not included in the Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative.

Response 27

Comments regarding impacts of the LRT Genesee alignment in Rose Canyon are noted. As indicated above, the Genesee alignment was not included in the Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA). The LPA does include a new Coaster station at Nobel Drive, which would have some impacts on a small area of Rose Canyon. Please see response to Comment No. 15.
Response 28

As described in Chapter 2 of the FEIS, the MTDB considered many criteria in the selection of a Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA). Evaluation criteria included ridership, cost, and environmental impacts. Based on the MTDB’s evaluation of all alternatives, the Genesee alignment was not included in the Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative.

Response 29

Opposition to Genesee alignment is noted.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Ben Stevenson
City of San Diego
Marcia McLatchy
Park and Recreation Director

Response 30

Comment noted that fencing of the railroad right-of-way had already taken place. MTDB has not erected any fencing of the right-of-way and North County Transit District has installed only small amounts of fencing at selected points. The fencing in Rose Canyon at the time the comment was written was temporary construction fencing erected as part of the City of San Diego’s water/sewer line project.

As described in Section 2.4.8 of the FEIS, the Nobel Drive Coaster Station will enable a pedestrian crossing of the SDNR railroad tracks and access directly from Nobel Drive which will enhance pedestrian access to the Rose Canyon Open Space Park.

VOLUME II COMMENTS AND RESPONSES
VOL II-14
Response 31

The alternatives under consideration in the FEIS do not include the parkland impacts described by the commenter. Implementation of future phases of the Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) would, however, affect Mandell Weiss/Eastgate Park. We checked with the City Attorney and learned that while voter approval is needed in most cases for use of dedicated parkland for other uses, parkland can be used for streets and highways with City Council authorization, if the Council finds that the public interest demands it. The use of Mandell Weiss/Eastgate Park, under future phases of the LPA, would be for street widening purposes. Therefore, a vote would not be needed.

Response 32

Figure 5-14 in the AA/DEIS/DEIR should have shown the underpass. Figure 2-24 in the AA/DEIS/DEIR, a drawing of a portion of the HOV Alternative, does show the proposed parking lot connection. The connection is part of the HOV Lane Alternative reviewed in the AA/DEIS/DEIR and is not part of any alternative under consideration in this FEIS.
Lawrence Family Jewish Community Centers of San Diego County
Todd Kobernick

Response 33

Support for Genesee alignment option is noted. This alignment, however, was not included in the Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative.

Response 34

The high levels of activity and comments regarding parking turnover are noted.
Response 35

The trolley running along Executive Drive would have little effect on the safety of the street. A greater danger would be posed by the thousands of cars and trucks using the street each day. Construction of a median barrier for LRT would enhance safety by reducing the possibility of head on collisions. A new traffic signal at the Executive Drive/Regents Park Row would increase the safety of pedestrians crossing Executive Drive. In addition, the light rail vehicles are highly visible and LRT operators are trained professionals. The expected frequency of the trolley trains would be 7.5-minutes in each direction, which would be much less frequent than the flow of automobiles along the street from adjacent traffic signals. Trains would operate at or below the street speed limit. Also, trains will be leaving or slowing to arrive at the station platforms planned at Genesee Avenue just to the east.

As part of the design of the trolley track-way, a raised vertical curb would be used to separate the tracks from the adjacent traffic lanes. Openings in the raised median would be provided at signalized intersections. Discussions with the management of the JCC, and the City of San Diego, included the possiblity of reconfiguring the entry to the Center site from Executive Drive with a traffic signal at the Regents Row intersection, as part of the JCC's remodel. This new entry would provide better access to the recreational facility as well as a crossing point of the LRT line.

A review of accident statistics for street-running sections of the existing San Diego Trolley system in Centre City showed there were five pedestrian/trolley accidents on C Street during 1990-1994. Three of those accidents occurred in stations. One block away on B Street, between Kettner and 12th, there were 28 pedestrian/auto accidents in the same period. These figures would support the statement that proximity to automobiles poses more risk to pedestrians than proximity to the trolley.

Since publication of the AA/DEIS/DEIR, MTDB has continued to work with the University Public Advisory Committee (PAC) to address community concerns in this area. This coordination will continue throughout the planning and design of the future University City Extension.
Response 36

On-street parking would be removed on Executive Drive if the LRT runs on the street. Employee parking could be provided in the parking structure across the street, with a traffic signal at Regents Park Row to facilitate crossings. Hopefully, with the option of LRT for work trips, some employees would no longer drive to the Center.

Response 37

The parking supply is insufficient for existing operations. At the writing of this FEIS, the JCC is expanding their facilities, and will provide additional parking at the completion of the project. See response to Comment No. 36 regarding structure parking.

Response 38

Support for the Genesee alignment option is noted. However, that alignment was not included in the Preferred Investment Strategy/ Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) and is not under consideration in the FEIS. As described in Chapter 2 of the FEIS, MTDB’s selection of the LPA was based on many criteria, including ridership, cost, and environmental impacts.
MAY 4, 1995

MR. DENNIS J. WAHL
MTDB
1235 IMPERIAL AVENUE
SUITE 1000
SAN DIEGO, CA 92109

SUBJECT: 1-5 MID-COAST CORRIDOR

DEAR MR. WAHL:

MY WIFE AND I ARE RESIDENTS OF THE MORENA AREA AND SUPPORT THE EXTENSION OF
THE TROLLEY IN THIS AREA. OUR CONCERN, HOWEVER, IS THE AESTHETIC OR
LANDSCAPING TREATMENT THAT THE TROLLEY EXTENSION WILL RECEIVE ALONG
MORENA BOULEVARD. RECENTLY, MORENA BOULEVARD WAS AESTHETICALLY
IMPACTED BY THE CONSTRUCTION OF A INTERCEPTOR SEWER. AS PART OF THIS
CONSTRUCTION, AN UGLY CONCRETE RETAINING WALL WAS BUILT BETWEEN
MILTON STREET AND CLAIRMONT DRIVE. NO LANDSCAPING WAS INCLUDED TO SOFTEN
THE IMPACT OF THIS NEW HARDSCAPE. AS WOULD BE EXPECTED, THE WALL IS TAGGED
WITH GRAFFITI FAIRLY OFTEN.

WE DO UNDERSTAND THAT THE TROLLEY STATIONS AND CORRESPONDING PARKING
AREAS WILL BE LANDSCAPED. WE URGE THAT SERIOUS CONSIDERATION BE GIVEN TO
ADDITIONAL LANDSCAPING ALONG MORENA BOULEVARD WITHIN THE TROLLEY RIGHT
OF WAY TO ENHANCE AND SOFTEN IMPACTS ALONG THIS MAJOR THROUGHFARE IN
OUR NEIGHBORHOOD.

SINCERELY,

Joel and Vicky Morrison
1937 FRANKFORT STREET
SAN DIEGO, CA 92110

Joel and Vicky Morrison

Response 39

Landscaping and graffiti resistant elements have been incorporated in the
design of the three LRT stations, which are all located in the vicinity of Morena
Boulevard. Additional landscaping on the right-of-way is not required to
mitigate impacts, but was considered during preliminary engineering and
discussed with the Public Advisory Committee (PAC). It was decided not to
include the additional landscaping. It is MTDB policy to provide landscaping
and graffiti resistant elements at stations, but providing these elements along
the entire right of way is not consistent with MTDB policy.
Marian Bear Natural Park Recreation Council
J. H. Steinbach, Treasurer

Response 40

Support for a higher use, more cost-effective alternative than LRT is noted.

Response 41

Concern regarding potential access and noise impacts of the LRT Genesee alignment is noted. The LRT Genesee alignment is not evaluated in this FEIS and was not included by the MTD Board in the Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative.

Response 42

Concern regarding potential impacts to wildlife movement resulting from the LRT Genesee alignment is noted. The LRT Genesee alignment was not included by the MTD Board in the Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative. This decision was due, in part, to concerns such as those voiced by the commenter.
May 8, 1995

Dennis Wahl
Metropolitan Transit Development Board
Suite 1000
1225 Imperial Avenue
San Diego, CA 92101-7490

Re: Mid-Coast Corridor, Alternatives Analysis and Draft
Environmental Impact Report and Statement

Dear Dennis:

This letter provides comments from the University of California, San Diego (UCSD) in response to the draft documents identified above. UCSD values the on-going cooperative relationship which we have with MTD. Although these comments will focus primarily upon UCSD-related impacts and considerations, we are also concerned that any alternative which is pursued provides effective service to both UCSD and the surrounding community.

We recognize the purpose of the Alternatives Analysis and realize that the locally Preferred Alternative which is chosen may be the one which has the best prospect of implementation and may be the most cost effective given any number of factors. In this regard, everyone must recall that the focus and interest has been on light rail alternatives, although the process requires consideration of all alternatives.

UCSD believes that the best alternative in a long-range and comprehensive sense is and will continue to be a light rail alternative. Light rail service, especially the Interstate 5 option, will provide the most direct service to the UCSD campus and will, in combination with other light rail and public transit services, provide the best overall service to UCSD. However, no other alternative is clearly the best choice for UCSD.

Support for LRT service is noted.
Because the alternatives analysis examines the entire Oceanside-San Diego corridor, it is difficult to assess the specific benefits to UCSD and determine the specific value of an alternative which does not provide direct campus service. It is also difficult for UCSD alone to judge the trade-offs that are inherent in an attempt to balance individual interests and concerns against those of the region. For these reasons, we do not believe that it is appropriate or desirable for UCSD to endorse any one alternative. We do remain committed to active participation in the implementation of transportation alternatives, either by ourselves or as part of a larger regional scheme.

It is even more problematic in a choice between the two light rail alternatives. As we have noted, an I-5 alignment provides better, direct service to the campus, but has potentially significant negative impacts associated with it. In addition to the community noise impacts and other impacts on existing housing of the I-5 alignment, there are significant concerns on the part of UCSD for this route as it crosses the East campus. The Genesee Avenue alignment would not provide an equal level of service to the campus, but may provide better community service, in spite of the impacts to Rose Canyon and the community concern associated with the alignment. The specific concerns regarding the I-5 alignment are identified below, but, more importantly, we believe that these concerns and a choice between I-5 and Genesee alignments requires a balancing of both campus and community concerns, interests, and benefits.

The impacts and proposed mitigations which are associated with the interstate 5 light rail alignment alternative are of greatest concern to UCSD. The Alternatives Analysis and environmental evaluation defers the identification of specific impacts and mitigation measures to a later design phase. It is assumed that impacts can be mitigated and that the mitigation measures and the resulting impacts will be acceptable.

There is no agreement in place between UCSD and MTDB relative to right-of-way or station locations for the I-5 alignment currently under consideration. We are concerned that impacts and mitigations may not be acceptable in the final analysis and that MTDB would not be able to pursue this option. We believe that probable, if not detailed, impacts should be identified now, together with mitigation measures. If this analysis and mitigation are acceptable, then it may be possible to assure the availability of right-of-way.

Response 44

The projects in the Mid-Coast Corridor, considered in the AA/DEIS/DEIR extended from Old Town to Carmel Valley Road, not Oceanside. Position on not endorsing any one alternative, and the need to balance University and community concerns is noted. The MTDB’s decision making role as a regional transportation implementation agency, and a lead agency for this EIS, is consistent with this position.

Response 45

The AA/DEIS/DEIR identified specific impacts and mitigations for all of the alternatives considered; it did not defer the identification of specific impacts and mitigation measures to a later design phase. Refinements have been made during preliminary engineering for the Balboa LRT Extension, and these refinements are reflected in this EIS. Further refinements will necessarily take place as the design progresses beyond preliminary engineering. Additional planning, engineering, and environmental review will be required prior to completion of future phases of the Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA). Such efforts would clearly involve extensive consultation with UCSD and the affected communities.

Response 46

The Points of Agreement Regarding the Mid-Coast LRT Project, signed by MTDB and UCSD in November 1990, specify that UCSD will dedicate right-of-way at no expense to MTDB as needed for the I-5 alignment as it was defined at that time. The alignment had changed to some extent, in consultation with UCSD, prior to the publication of the AA/DEIS/DEIR. Detailed impacts and mitigations were reported in the AA/DEIS/DEIR for the I-5 alignment (as defined in that document), including land use (page S-6), visual (pages 5-60 and 5-61), noise (pages 5-92 and 5-93, plus Figures 5-11 and 5-12), biology (Figure 3-24, with information for these habitats included in Table 5-22, page 5-108) and vibration (page 5-99).
Specifically, the following items are of greatest concern:

Alternatives Definition - The "no build" alternative contains several projects whose time frame has changed or whose implementation cannot be assured. Included are Regents Road bridge, I-5/Genesee interchange, and UCSD Gilman Drive bridge. The analysis may be flawed if these projects are assumed as critical elements.

Land Use - The usability of both the future housing parcel (north of existing Mesa housing) and the science research park property is in jeopardy because of the unknown impacts from grading, noise and other factors. Also, the access to the housing parcel should be addressed.

Access to the proposed UCSD station does not appear to be feasible given topographic considerations. The station design needs refinement including the probable addition of vertical circulation elements.

Response 47

The No-Build Alternative considered in the AA/DEIS/DEIR included many projects that have been completed. The No-Build Alternative assumed those projects would be in place in the AA/DEIS/DEIR horizon year, 2005. These projects were also assumed to be in place for all alternatives. Since all alternatives have them, the determination of differences between the alternatives -- presented in the AA/DEIS/DEIR -- was valid and not flawed, regardless of their status in 1995. The preparation of the FEIS has made use of the most recent transportation planning documents and funding plans (e.g., the 1996 Regional Transportation Plan) to describe the No-Build Alternative for the horizon year 2015.

Response 48

The AA/DEIS/DEIR fully addressed potential impacts associated with the alternatives in relation to the existing affected environment. The AA/DEIS/DEIR also found the proposed LRT I-5 alignment through UCSD to be consistent with locally approved planning documents. There appears to be no basis for the statement that the "useability" of the vacant housing and science research park sites is "in jeopardy." During environmental and permitting review of possible future developments on these vacant sites, proposed uses and site plans can be evaluated and conditioned to ensure that future developments are sited and designed to avoid conflicts with the regional transportation facility. Access to the future housing parcel would be maintained with any of the alternatives.

Response 49

The station would be approximately 4.9 meters (16 feet) below the proposed Gilman Drive bridge. The conceptual design of the station was coordinated with the initial design work by the UCSD consultants, Libby Engineers, to set the elevation of the station platform. The platform is under the bridge to take advantage of the pedestrian walkway along the bridge connecting the east and west parts of the campus. Vertical circulation elements such as stairs and an elevator are planned at the site. A small shuttle drop-off loop is also planned, depending upon the level of service provided by UCSD to the platform. The same
Specifically, the following items are of greatest concern:

**Alternatives Definition** - The 'no build' alternative contains several projects whose time frame has changed or whose implementation cannot be assured. Included are Regents Road bridge, I-5/Genesee interchange, and UCSD Gilman Drive bridge. The analysis may be flawed if these projects are assumed as critical elements.

**Land Use** - The usability of both the future housing parcel (north of existing Mesa housing) and the science research park property is in jeopardy because of the unknown impacts from grading, noise and other factors. Also, the access to the housing parcel should be addressed.

Access to the proposed UCSD station does not appear to be feasible given topographic considerations. The station design needs refinement including the probable addition of vertical circulation elements.
Response 50

The alignment through the east portion of the UCSD campus was carefully coordinated with the master plans for the area and UCSD staff. The alignment follows parcel layout lines from the master plan to avoid an environmental mitigation area and to remain at a distance of more than 15.2 meters (50 feet) to any residential building and over 30.5 meters (100 feet) to any research building.

Noise and vibration impacts to the east portion of the UCSD campus were evaluated and reported in the Final Noise and Vibration Impacts Technical Report, January 26, 1994. Field work included a measuring site along Miramar Street in front of UCSD Married Housing. This site showed ambient noise levels to be in the range of 58 Ldn, to peak hourly 63 Leq. The addition of LRT was considered and found to raise the Ldn by 4 to 62 Ldn at a distance of 15.2 meters (50 feet) from the tracks. (For more detail on definitions of abbreviated terms, consult pages 3-36 and 3-37 in the AA/DEIS/DEIR.) According to FTA impact criteria, the degree of impact at this site would be categorized as “impact” and not “severe.” There are no impacts under ACTA criteria. The suggested mitigation to alleviate this impact and reduce the noise levels to acceptable limits is the construction of a sound barrier wall. The wall would be approximately 549 meters (1,800 feet) in length and 1.8 meters (6 feet) high, with a cost of approximately $216,000.

Mitigation treatments are customarily designed with the completion of preliminary engineering, after FEIR certification.

As discussed above, the mitigation of noise impacts could include the addition of a noise wall with the concurrence of UCSD.
Response 50. Continued

Although the UCSD Master Plan has not set the building locations or types of uses in this area, a more definite development program will probably be available when the LRT line would be designed and/or built. In this case, the specific impacts, if any, of ground-borne vibration will be investigated. Given the type of soils in this area, which are sandy clays over the Ardath Shale formation, vibration is not expected to be a problem. The Santee LRT Extension DEIR (November 1990) reported a minimum setback distance of approximately 10.7 meters (35 feet) is necessary to reduce ground-borne vibration levels to below the impact threshold for the at-grade condition and speeds of 45-50 mph.

However, some research building uses, such as sensitive optical microscopes or laser equipment may be susceptible to ground-borne vibration. Buildings should be sited to avoid vibration impacts. Depending on the distances from the trackway to UCSD buildings, a range of mitigation techniques could be used including:

- An insulated trackway could be built to support and isolate the trackway from the grade-bed, thus dampening vibrations.

- Mitigation for vibration could include the use of ground insulators to dampen vibrations from passing trains. These insulators could include design treatments for the trackbed itself or parallel underground walls to intercept the vibration waves to sensitive buildings. Below-ground vibration wave intercepting walls could be built along the trackway on the side facing the research buildings. In this case, piles or columns are sunk and tied together with walls resembling retaining wall structures. The walls intercept and dampen the vibration waves, thus isolating the trackway from adjacent buildings.
Response 51

The mitigation area is identified on the plan and profile drawings, with a 137-meter (450-foot) long bridge spanning the area as discussed with UCSD staff. The analysis was done with the knowledge and awareness of the UCSD mitigation area. The impact analysis was conducted on existing site conditions, rather than impacts on the future possible East Campus mitigation habitat. However, any direct impacts of the LRT project are expected to be minimal, since the bridge would span the habitat area. Construction Impacts are possible, but they would be mitigated by MTDB through plant restoration and timing of construction activities if necessary. The LRT project would not preclude the use of the area by UCSD for biological mitigation.

Response 52

The future Gilman Drive bridge is mentioned in the AA/DEIS/DEIR in Section 5.4.7, page 5-67, Cumulative Impacts. It is also discussed in Section 5.1.5 Overcrossing in the Visual Impact technical report dated April 1994, which is incorporated into the AA/DEIS/DEIR by reference. Since the exact location, design, construction materials, and height of the UCSD bridge has not been determined, it is difficult to determine the specific visual contrasts the bridges would have with each other. If the I-5 alignment option moves forward, MTDB would work closely with UCSD to help identify and avoid contrasts of character and position. For example, the elevation of each bridge above I-5 should be established, so that when viewed from I-5, both bridges visually appear to be at the same elevation, and one bridge is not viewed below the other unless the more architecturally significant structure would benefit from being placed higher. Likewise, the form, features, color, texture, and building materials should be made complimentary with each other to the extent possible, as viewed by drivers on I-5. These design specifics can be addressed during final design and will be incorporated into the mitigation program.

Biological Habitat - The environmental analysis was performed prior to UCSD’s development of the East Campus environmental mitigation area. The project specific impacts on this area should be identified to determine if impacts can be mitigated within the general mitigation framework. Also, impacts on the UCSD mitigation area may affect the future development of the science research park.

Visual Impact - In addition to the impacts and mitigations of the light rail alignment and operations and sound walls, the independent and related visual conflicts between the proposed UCSD bridge, the light rail bridge, and other view features in the immediate area should be made.
Response 53

This issue is evaluated in appropriate detail. There is no building layout for the UCSD Science Research Park at this time. The LRT alignment would be located within the Miramar Street right-of-way to the south of the UCSD property line. LRT right-of-way would be 9.1 meters (30 feet) wide and would lie approximately 3 to 6 meters (10 to 20 feet) south of the property line near the UCSD housing area and be located from 6 to 12.2 meters (20 to 40 feet) from the property line near the Science Park. Because emfs drop to ambient levels approximately 15.2 meters (50 feet) from LRT substations, they can be expected to be lower along catenary lines as the emf potency decreases with distance from the source. Although it is not possible to completely identify impacts of emfs, it appears that impacts would be insignificant to buildings located at least 15.2 meters (50 feet) from the catenary line. Accordingly, this distance should be taken into consideration during the design and layout of the Science Park buildings.

A study was conducted for the Toronto Transit Commission in August 1989 to address concerns the University of Toronto had about effects of electromagnetic interference (EMI) on laboratory test equipment. The study concluded that EMI in the frequency range of 30-90MHz is produced by chopper controlled vehicles during acceleration and braking; however, the magnitude is sufficiently low that test equipment would need to be very close to the LRT line to be affected.

In a study that was conducted at the University of Toronto, computer equipment located 10 meters from the LRT line was not affected. However, an older electron microscope located 150 meters from the line needed to be modified to operate at its most sensitive setting. More modern electron microscopes were not affected. The study recommended conducting an AC and DC stray magnetic field survey before and after LRT operation to see if there is any effect. A similar monitoring effort would be employed on the I-5 LRT alignment if it is implemented.
Response 53, continued

The evaluation of electromagnetic fields in Section 5.1.6, page 5-19 of the AA/DEIS/DEIR, indicated that the effect of these fields is largely unknown at this time. It also states that MTDB and SDG&E field checks indicate that emfs drop to ambient levels at a distance of 15.2 meters (50 feet) from the substations. Health risks are perceived to be associated with magnetic fields, although a direct correlation has not been proven by scientific study. In operating the San Diego Trolley, low level magnetic fields are continuously generated from traction power substations and intermittently generated from overhead contact wires.

One medical study suggested children subjected to prolonged exposure to a magnetic field of two milligauss had a higher risk of cancer. Studies conducted by MTDB and SDG&E found that traction power substations generated magnetic fields in excess of two milligauss when a train is traveling within 1.6 kilometers (one mile) of a substation, and that the magnetic field strength drops below two milligauss a distance of 9.1 meters (30 feet) from the substation. Magnetic fields are also generated from the overhead contact wires when a train is operating up to 1.6 kilometers (one mile) past the location of interest. There has been no reported risk associated with train operations nor should there be because magnetic fields of two milligauss occur for only four minutes per hour.

Since none of the buildings of the housing is within 15.2 meters (50 feet) of a substation, no impacts are expected. The nearest substation would be located 91.4 meters (300 feet) south of the UCSD Station, on the west side of I-5.
Response 54

Comments regarding support for MTDB goals, the alternative selection process, and the need for campus and community support are noted. The Draft and Final EIS do provide adequate evaluation to support selection of an alternative and project implementation.

In summary, UCSD continues to be supportive of MTDB goals and the alternatives selection process. We wish to assure that adequate evaluation and consideration is done at this time so that one or more alternatives which are selected can be implemented and that the choices have support of both the campus and the community.

Sincerely,

Milton Rhegley, AICP
Campus Community Planner

cc: B. Darling
    S. Reylea
    J. Steindorf
    S. Taylor
    J. Woods
San Diego County Archaeological Society
James W. Royle, Jr., Chairperson
Environmental Review Committee

Response 55

All technical reports supporting the AA/DEIS/DEIR were available for review. No request was received from the Environmental Review Committee.

Response 56

As listed in the Cultural Resources Technical Report, of the 19 archaeological sites identified within the area of potential effect, the following 10 have been tested: CA-SDI-197; CA-SDI-1,103; CA-SDI-10,143; CA-SDI-10,437; CA-SDI-11,738H; CA-SDI-12,556; CA-SDI-12,577; CA-SDI-12,558; CA-SDI-12,559; and CA-SDI-12,560H. In order to reflect the alternatives considered in this FEIS, a new APE was delineated. Section 5.9 of the FEIS and the Mid-Coast LRT Project, Balboa Extension and Nobel Drive Coaster Station Cultural Resources Report (June 1998) identify archaeological sites within the new APE. Based on field reconnaissance and archival research conducted for the FEIS, it is not anticipated that construction activities will disturb buried cultural materials. If such materials are unearthed during construction, work in the vicinity of the find will be halted until a qualified archaeologist can assess their significance.
Response 57

No sites were tested in preparation of the AA/DEIS/DEIR due to the large number of project alternatives and the uncertainty of their implementation. Since the selection of the Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) and development of the FEIS Build Alternative, those sites potentially affected have been tested, as documented in Section 5.9 of the FEIS and the Mid-Coast LRT Project, Balboa Extension and Nobel Drive Coaster Station Cultural Resources Report (June 1998). See also Response 56, above. Additionally testing will be done during environmental review of the future University City Extension.

Response 58

MTDB will continue to include the San Diego County Archeological Society in the distribution of environmental materials on this project.
Martin Schmidt, ASLA

Response 59

Sound walls proposed for the alternatives evaluated in the AA/DEIS/DEIR are listed in Table 5-6, page 38, and shown in Figures 5-8 through 5-12 of that document. The greatest visual impacts in the Mission Bay Park area would have resulted from sound walls associated with the HOV Alternative. The greatest visual impacts in Rose Canyon would have resulted from the LRT Genesee alignment. Neither the HOV Alternative nor the Genesee alignment were included in the Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA), in part due to concerns voiced by the proponent. The FEIS documents potential visual impacts of the Balboa Extension/Nobel Drive Coaster Station Alternative on the Mission Bay Park area in Section 5.4.3. As documented in the FEIS, the track would be at a lower grade than Morena Boulevard in this area, and there are already existing utility poles, which reduce the visual contrast of new LRT catenary poles.

Response 60

This issue has already been addressed in Section 5.4.5.1, p. 5-44 of the AA/DEIS/DEIR. The statements are not incomplete and the issue is addressed. The proposed planting will mitigate the impact below significance as determined by the landscape consultant in preparing the AA/DEIS/DEIR.

Response 61

Catenary is an essential part of the LRT alternative. Center pole catenary would be used to reduce the number of poles. The visual analysis did not find this to be a significant impact, and thus it was not listed in the Executive Summary of the AA/DEIS/DEIR. The catenary is included in the project description for the Balboa LRT Extension, which is analyzed in the FEIS; and visual effects of the catenary are discussed in Section 5.4.3.
Response 62

The Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative does not include LRT in Rose Canyon. This decision was due, in part, to the concerns voiced in this and other, similar comments.

Response 63

Comment noted. Only the word “Bike” is missing from the document’s use of these terms. While the word bike is not used, the facilities are correctly identified.

Response 64

MTDB policy is to replace affected facilities to their existing condition at MTDB expense. Any improvement is a betterment and requires funding from other sources. MTDB is available to coordinate facility upgrading construction funded by others with MTDB project construction if feasible.

MTDB is actively working with the proponents of the Coastal Rail Trail who are investigating a bicycle trail along the railroad corridor from Oceanside to San Diego. This project is not in conflict with that planning effort.
Response 65

These open space efforts were brought to our attention during the DEIS review period. Our consulting biologist indicated that the presence of a regional trail for human use was not a factor in the biological impact analysis. The Biological Resources Technical Report identified a number of wildlife corridors that would be transected by the LRT. Tecolote Creek was not considered in this analysis because of the lack of habitat for terrestrial animals within the channel and a similar lack of habitat for terrestrial animals at Mission Bay. The transportation alternatives proposed in the AA/DEIS/DEIR do not appear to conflict with this possible future project. Since the publication of the AA/DEIS/DEIR, the proposed Tecolote LRT station has been moved to the south so that the new LRT station and alignment will have even less impact on the creek area. Specifically, the station will be located to the south of the Creek, and the LRT tracks will be on a bridge spanning over the creek. This design should allow for trail development within the Creek channel, should this be pursued.

Response 66

An analysis of traffic was conducted for all LRT stations. Traffic analyses conducted for the FEIS indicate that the proposed Clairemont Drive Station would not reduce the level of service at intersections in the station vicinity. Although we did not evaluate the intersection mentioned by the commenter (Ingulf Street/Denver Street), our analyses included nearby intersections on both Ingulf and Denver. Under both the No-Build and the Build Alternative, the Morena Boulevard/Ingulf Street intersection would perform at LOS B, and the Clairemont Drive/Denver Street intersection would perform at LOS C. (LOS A through D are considered acceptable levels of service). More information regarding traffic analyses is provided in Chapter 4 of the FEIS.
Response 67

At Tecolote Station, the elevator connection to the overpass was eliminated. An elevator connection to the overpass at Clairemont Station is proposed at the north end of the station (see Figure 2.4-22), but it would conform to ADA requirements. Preliminary engineering of the Clairemont Station includes a new sidewalk at the north end of the station, along the west side of Morena Boulevard. This sidewalk extends to approximately 100 meters (328 feet) north of McGraw Street to allow access to the north. The new sidewalk would conform with ADA requirements. The north side of the Clairemont Drive overcrossing would also be modified to provide a wider, ADA compliant sidewalk between the station and Mission Bay Park. Discussions with Caltrans staff indicate that ramps for wheelchairs could be cut into the sidewalks and the southbound off-ramp could be reconfigured to be controlled by a traffic signal to improve pedestrian access.

Response 68

Potential impacts on this 183-centimeter (72-inch) sanitary sewer interceptor line (Morena Boulevard Interceptor) were considered in preliminary engineering. It was concluded that the Clairemont Station design, as shown in Figure 2.4-22 of this FEIS, is feasible.

Response 69

Buses are currently routed on residential streets on several routes in San Diego. This routing was discussed with city traffic engineers and no problems were identified. During preliminary engineering, however, the Clairemont Station Plan was revised and does not include rerouting of buses onto residential streets.
Response 70

As discussed in the Preliminary Engineering Report (October 1997) and Section 5.13.8 of this FEIS, the Balboa LRT Extension/Nobel Drive Coaster Station Alternative would affect several types of utilities (e.g., a telephone line owned by Pacific Bell that runs almost the whole length of the Balboa LRT Extension). Preliminary engineering indicates that the majority of these utility poles would remain in place, but they would need to be relocated in LRT station areas. There are no plans to underground them.

The power line in question may have been the old AT&SF signaling system which has since been removed.

Response 71

See the responses to Comment Nos. 65 and 100. As shown in Figure 2.4-20, the design for Tecolote Station has been revised and it is no longer spanning Tecolote Creek. The FEIS Build Alternative would include a LRT bridge over Tecolote Creek; however, there would be little effect on the vertical clearance over the channel, and this project would not preclude development of the proposed trail.
Response 72

Bike facilities shown on the Bicycle System Map in the FEIS (Figure 3.2-3) are based on information provided by SANDAG. The facilities include connections into regional open space and parklands, including the Rose Canyon bicycle path, a bike route into Tecolote Canyon, and an undesignated bikeway on Fiesta Island. The University City Community Plan identifies a planned Class I Bike Path along the northern portion of Rose Canyon, from Gilman Drive to Nobel Drive. This facility would be a part of the proposed regional Coastal Rail Trail to be constructed from San Diego to Oceanside along the San Diego Northern Railway right-of-way. See response to Comment No. 149 regarding MTDB position on the Coastal Rail Trail.

Response 73

As explained in Section 5.10 of this FEIS, the Build Alternative would not have any Section 4(f) impacts. A pedestrian connection was included in the design of Clairemont Station: via an elevator and stairs at the north of the platform. The Project Advisory Committee determined that a connection to Mission Bay Park at the Tecolote Station was too costly to include as part of the project. However, MTDB has agreed to work with the neighborhood in the Tecolote Station area to construct a pedestrian bridge to Mission Bay Park should alternative funding become available. Comments regarding the need for future bicycle improvements for access to Mission Bay Park are noted.

Response 74

"Bottom line figures" showing the total capital costs (split out by cost component) for the FEIS Alternatives are provided in Section 2.5 of the FEIS. These estimates are supported by the Preliminary Engineering Report and technical memos. Capital costs for Tecolote, Clairemont and Balboa Stations, including contingencies for construction and right-of-way, are as follow:

- Tecolote Station $962,000
- Clairemont Station $2,053,000
- Balboa Station $2,997,000
Daniel T. Allen

Response 75

Per the November 25, 1990 response to the NOP from Mr. Allen, a review for potential station sites in this area was undertaken. No feasible sites were identified. The alternatives under consideration in this FEIS do not include any improvements in the Torrey Pines Mesa area. As proposed in the AA/DEIS/DEIR, connections would have to be made from Torrey Pines at the Gilman Drive, La Jolla Village Square Station or the UTC stations. Neither of these alternatives induce widening of Carmel Valley Road.

Response 76

Bus route changes are proposed as part of the TSM and Build Alternatives described in this FEIS. The TSM Alternative evaluated in the FEIS was designed to provide bus service that is comparable (to the extent feasible) to the Balboa LRT Extension. The Build Alternative includes bus route reconfigurations designed to work with and complement the new LRT line. Please see Sections 2.3 and 2.4.9.3 for discussions of bus routing for the TSM and Build Alternatives.

Response 77

The concerns of the La Jolla community have been taken into consideration throughout the Mid-Coast planning process. The topography of the area and the difficulties in finding right-of-way led to proposing the I-5 corridor for LRT in this area. The Balboa LRT Extension/Nobel Drive Coaster Station Alternative includes a bus connection to La Jolla (Express Route 30) at the Clairemont Drive LRT station. Both MTDB and SANDAG are addressing the issues of transit access to La Jolla in regional transportation planning. Regional planning will continue to examine solutions given La Jolla’s geographic and operational constraints.
Response 78

UCSD is currently served by the Sorrento Valley Center Station and would be served indirectly by the Nobel Coaster Station in the Build Alternative evaluated in this FEIS. As described in Chapter 2 of the FEIS, the future phases of the Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative include a light rail connection to UCSD. Additional planning, engineering, and environmental review will be required prior to completion of the full Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative to the University City area. Such efforts would clearly involve extensive consultation with UCSD and the affected communities. MTDB has coordinated closely with UCSD since the beginning of its planning efforts regarding transit alternatives.

Response 79

Transportation demand ordinances were not included in the forecasting assumptions.

Response 80

A review of the November 25, 1990 letter from Mr. Allen revealed concern regarding transportation services to Torrey Pines Mesa, La Jolla and UCSD; LRT alignment location; and bicycle issues. The substance of these issues was addressed in the AA/DEIS/DEIR and the FEIS.

Yours sincerely,

Daniel T. Allen
The City of San Diego
Engineering Department
Siavash Pazargidi, Senior Traffic Engineer
Transportation Planning Division

Response 81

Transit travel times from corridor locations to Centre City were estimated for by the SANDAG regional travel forecasting model. The model shows total travel times which consist of the wait times at each stop/transfer location and the running time on the congested street system. The times are also dramatically affected by the directness of travel, i.e., the number of transfers required to make the full trip. The times reported by the model were checked against times on the bus system today. With respect to the transit travel time cited from Via De La Valle to Centre City, 134 minutes is required because no direct or express routes are planned for this trip. Travelers will be required to ride North County Transit service to North University City before transferring to San Diego Transit service to complete the trip via downtown La Jolla and Pacific Beach. In consideration of these facts, the trip times are considered to be realistic.

Response 82

Traffic forecasts were obtained from the SANDAG regional forecasting model for the AA/DEIS/DEIR study years of 2005 and 2010, in addition to a base run from 1990 to compare to ground counts. The model was validated and found to be producing reliable results. The volume at Grand Avenue was actually a combined value for the Grand/Garnet pair and reflects the continuing increase in volumes attempting to access the Pacific Beach/Mission Bay area. The volumes on I-5 were independently confirmed by Caltrans with their forecast model for the Year 2010. These volumes were developed over several years with input from Caltrans, SANDAG and City of San Diego staff, and utilized in the study reports at the request of Caltrans and with agreement from all participants.
Response 83

All stations, transit centers, and park-and-ride sites were analyzed in detail for potential impacts to the adjacent street system. These findings are documented in the "Traffic Impact Analysis Report," dated July 1993 by BRW, Inc., which is incorporated by reference into the DEIS, and summarized in the DEIS. The results of this report indicated that minor impacts to the street system would result from any of these new parking/transit facilities. Three locations were found to require mitigation:

1. Genesee Avenue at UTC Mall West Entrance
2. Balboa Avenue Eastbound Ramps to Morena Boulevard
3. Gilman Drive Interchange Ramps and Park-and-Ride Entry

Mitigations for these locations are described in the AA/DEIS/DEIR.

Further analysis of traffic impacts at station and park-and-ride areas was conducted in preparation of this FEIS, as documented in Section 4.4.3. All traffic impacts in these areas were found to be within acceptable limits, defined by City of San Diego guidelines, and no mitigation is required.
Response 84

Over the several years needed to complete the Mid-Coast study, the City of San Diego was involved directly in the development and evaluation of traffic volumes and impacts. The development of the traffic impact methodology was coordinated with city staff in 1991. At that time, it was agreed that the most conservative approach should be used to assess traffic impacts. The approach considered either the forecasts from the SANDAG Series 7 traffic model or the community plans, whichever was higher. In this manner, the traffic impacts were kept conservative, i.e., the DEIS portrayed a worst case situation. A similar approach, using the SANDAG Series 8 traffic model, has been used for the traffic analysis in this FEIS.

Response 85

Concept drawings of this intersection were shown in AA/DEIS/DEIR, Appendix H Plan and Profile Drawings. Since the alternatives under consideration in this FEIS do not include improvements at this intersection, no analysis is included. Additional planning, engineering and environmental review will be required prior to completion of the full Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative to the University City community.
## Table 1
1994 CMP UPDATE PRINCIPAL ARTERIALS
San Diego Region

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Manchester Avenue/El Camino Real (I-5 to SR76/Mission Avenue).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Palomar Airport Road/San Marcos Boulevard (I-5 to SR78).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Olivehain Road/Rancho Santa Fe Road (El Camino Real to SR78).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Centre City Parkway (I-15 North to I-15 South).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Scripps Poway Parkway (I-15 to SR67).</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>NOTE:</strong> Includes unconstructed segments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>La Jolla Village Drive/Miramar Road (I-5 to I-15).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Sea World Drive/Francis Road/Mission Gorge Road/Woodside Avenue (I-5 to SR67).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Fletcher Parkway/Broadway/E. Main Street/Greenfield Drive (I-8 West to I-8 East).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Nimitz Boulevard/North Harbor Drive/Grape &amp; Hawthorne Streets/Pacific Highway/ Harbor Drive (I-8 to I-5).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>South Bay Parkway-Interim SR54 &amp; Sweetwater Road-Interim SR125 (I-805 to Broadway).***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Otay Mesa Road-Interim SR905 (SR905 West to SR905 East).***</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE:** *** These CMP Principal Arterials are designated as interim facilities on the CMP network and will be replaced by the state highway following their construction.

One of the main purposes of both the Congestion Management Program (CMP) and the Regional Growth Management Strategy (RGMS) is to improve the region's quality of life by reducing the growing congestion on the regional transportation system. The CMP and RGMS address this problem through the establishment, monitoring and attainment of traffic LOS standards and objectives. The initial 1991 CMP traffic level of service (LOS) standard is established at LOS "E" with a Regional Growth Management Strategy (RGMS) traffic level of service objective of LOS "D". The RGMS traffic objective applies to all state highwways and the regional arterial system identified in the 1990 Regional Transportation Plan. Table 2 summarises the LOS standards and objectives unchanged from the initial 1991 CMP.

Source: 1994 Congestion Management Program Update by SANDAG

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**VOLUME II COMMENTS AND RESPONSES**

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Analysis only needs to use this condition. If the project land uses are greater than what is in the model, then the base model condition and the addition of the net project trips condition must be analyzed. The net project trips can either be distributed and assigned manually or by the computer model based on review and approval of the local agency Traffic Engineer.

If the manual method is used, then the distribution percentages should be derived from a computer generated Select Zone Assignment or optionally, with local agency approval, by professional judgment.

If the model is used, the project driveways should be accurately represented by the centroid connectors. Preferably the project would be represented by its own node. Some adjustments to the output volumes may be needed especially as intersections to smooth out volumes, convert daily volumes to peak volumes, adjust for pass-by and diverted trips, and correct logistical output.

VIII. PROJECT TRAFFIC GENERATION

The local agency shall have authority over the selection of trip generation rates to be used in the traffic impact analyses. However, use of published SAMDAG or City of San Diego rates should first be considered. Reasonable reductions to trip rates may be considered for mixed use developments, developments near transit stations, or commercial developments with a large component of pass-by and diverted trips when approved by the local agency.

IX. IMPACT ANALYSIS

The 1991 CMP traffic level of service standard is established as LOS “E”, or LOS “F” if that is the actual 1990 base year level of service. This is the minimum LOS standard prescribed in the CMP statutes. The Regional Growth Management Strategy (RGMS) has established an LOS “D” objective for freeways and the Regional Arterial System. Attachment A includes the “CMP-LOS Standard” and “RGMS-LOS Objective.” Attachment A also contains listings and a map of the Regional Arterial System including the CMP Principal Arterials.

Individual jurisdictions have wide ranging experience and requirements with LOS analysis, reflecting the variety of community characteristics, traffic controls and street standards throughout the County. As a result, the CPM acknowledges the possibility that no single set of assumptions should be mandated for all TIRs within the County.

Source: 1994 Guidelines for Congestion Management Program by SAMDAG
Attachment 2
However, in order to promote consistency in TIRs prepared by different jurisdictions, CMP TIRs must conduct LOS calculations using the following methods:

**Intersection Level of Service Analysis**

Level of service analysis for key intersections should be conducted under short-term and long-term peak hour conditions using the 1985 Highway Capacity Manual operational analysis (Chapter 9). The key intersections, including signalized intersections and freeway on/off ramps, should be defined by the local agency and consulted prior to beginning the TIR process.

**Regional Arterial System and Street Segment Level of Service Analysis**

Peak hour capacity analysis for street segments should be conducted for both the short-term and long-term peak hour conditions using the 1985 Highway Capacity Manual (Chapter 11). Regional arterial system LOS is based on arterial section speed (HCM Chapter 11) including intersection delay (HCM Chapter 9). Traffic LOS for rural two-lane highways use HCM Chapter 8 procedures, and rural multi-lane highways use HCM Chapter 7 procedures.

**Freeway Segment Analysis**

Freeway segment analysis may be conducted for the short-term and long-term peak hour conditions using a demand (forecast volume) to capacity calculation using the 1985 Highway Capacity Manual (Chapter 9).

**X. SCREEN CHECK**

As part of the first draft of a TIR, the preparer must ensure that all required elements have been included. This procedure was implemented to reduce the number of submittals and to encourage earlier dialogue between the reviewer and preparer. The local agency reviewer will check the study for completeness and return all incomplete submittals within seven days of receipt. Attachment B contains the sample screen check. The agency should have a presubmittal conference to determine which elements are not required for the proposed study.

*Source: 1994 Guidelines for Congestion Management Program by SANDAG*
Attachment 4 to letter from Mr. Pazargadi referenced in Comment No. 83.
To: Metropolitan Transit Development Board  
From: Vincent A. Hodge  
Date: May 8, 1995  
Subject: Comments on Mid-Coast Corridor Alternatives Analysis/Draft EIR/Draft EIR

1: DO NOT BUILD THE COMMUTER RAIL TUNNEL

- Tunnel does not provide a cost-effective benefit
  The tunnel simply cannot be regarded as cost-effective, given that it would save only about five minutes running time for commuter and/or Amtrak passenger trains, at a cost of over a quarter of a billion dollars. To those of us rail passengers who think every day of the operation of passenger trains in this corridor the image of high-speed trains whisking along the "straight line" of the tunnel, compared to the comparatively circuitous routing around the mountain, seems ultimately attractive. But this is not what is important. What is important is getting ever more people to switch from cars to trains (whether intercity or commuter) in a reasonably cost-effective manner, and those five saved minutes are simply not going to cause thousands of additional customers to suddenly show up on passenger trains on this line. If the time savings were fifteen to thirty minutes then perhaps such improved performance might attract many new riders. But such time savings simply wouldn't be the case with the proposed tunnel. A five-minute improvement will hardly cause potential passengers to suddenly decide to travel by train, and what few might do so certainly wouldn't be worth a quarter-billion-dollar investment.

- Capital-intensive improvements are needed much more on other portions of the San Diego Northern
  Funding levels such as those suggested for a tunnel, if they are achievable, should instead be used to dramatically improve the rest of the San Diego Northern Railroad, not to "gold plate" a two-mile stretch of it. This is particularly true if after the "gold-plating" of this short portion of the line the rest of it remains under-capitalized single-track operation that cannot efficiently support high-frequency, high-speed commuter and intercity passenger trains plus freight services. There is no doubt that this line is already stretched to the limit with services as they exist today, never mind expanded operations to come in the future. Just ask passengers on Amtrak's Train #578, who have on more than one occasion endured unbelievable delays, even complete cancellation of their train out from Oceanside, in order to let Coaster trains get through on time. This simply isn't right (not that the Coaster should run on time, but that Amtrak passengers should have to endure intolerable delays to let them do so), and it needs to be fixed, certainly before we dig quarter-billion-dollar tunnels that won't have any effect on this problem.

- Time savings and improved service reliability from other such improvements can be achieved incrementally, being gradually added over time, whereas a tunnel requires a huge, difficult-to-achieve one-time cash commitment
  Capital improvements that should be undertaken long before a tunnel is seriously considered include the double-tracking of most, if not all, of the San Diego Northern, with first priority going to Stewart Mesa - San Diego. Much of the line has satisfactory right-of-way to accomplish this now. As far as the four lagoon crossings are concerned, one of two methods could be undertaken (or perhaps both,
in a phased approach). First, double-track could be added over the existing single-track spans via a
guerrilla track, thus providing a mostly double-tracked railroad with some short segments of single
track (without expensive-to-build-and-maintain switches at both ends of each bridge), rather than the
mostly single-tracked railroad with passing sidings we endure today. Second, the
environmental impacts of the railroad bridges on the lagoons could actually be reduced through modern bridge
construction methods, with arch spaces that are either completely enclosed at either end of the
crossing, or with at least one support pier in the water, rather than the dozens of concrete-tooled
logs that presently rest in the water. This new structure, with limited or no contact with the lagoon
itself, would be designed to be wide enough to accommodate two tracks.

Another capital improvement that might force itself upon the rail systems using this line would be the
erasing of the line to the Del Mar area. Apparently these are long-term problems with the
bluffs south of the former Del Mar Station, and Mother Nature might someday decree a resolution
(at great expense) of this problem (the blust at this situation with the massive landslide that closed
the railroad for two weeks in the Dune Point area a couple of years ago). Again, keeping the line
open should be assigned greater importance than the five-minute time savings of the Rosed/Solidad
tunnels, so if this improvement really is needed, it should also come before those tunnels.

**Response 88**

See response to Comment No. 87.

**Response 89**

We are aware of the challenge of ventilating diesel fumes from an underground station. A survey of operators in North America could not find any with such a station. The consultant that prepared the AA/DEIS/DEIR, BRW, Inc., has stated that ventilation systems can be designed to handle the fumes. However, these considerations are not relevant to the Preferred Investment
Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA), which does not include an
underground station for diesel-electric trains.
Comment 90

After substantial consideration, the Board acted on October 28, 1993 to no longer pursue a commuter rail station at Miramar. The report for Agenda Item No. 33 documenting this decision is hereby incorporated by reference and may be reviewed at or obtained from MTDB at our offices at 1255 Imperial Avenue, San Diego, CA 92101. Concerns regarding location in the accident potential zone, ridership, and cost led to that decision. There are no plans at this time to reconsider that decision.

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Response 91

Discussions have been held with University Towne Centre management regarding a joint use parking structure with approximately 600 spaces for transit use as part of an expansion of the shopping center. Additional planning, engineering, and environmental review will be required prior to completion of the full Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative, which includes an LRT extension to Executive Drive and Towne Centre Drive. This will involve continued consultation with local businesses and the affected communities regarding such options as shared parking. See the response to Comment No. 90 regarding Miramar Station.

Response 92

Comments regarding the access and shuttle service to Nobel Drive Station are noted. The extension of Nobel Drive to I-805 provides a convenient connection to the station site for travelers from the south. The Balboa LRT Extension/Nobel Drive Coaster Station Alternative includes a bus connection (Route 150) to the Nobel Drive station.

Response 93

Comment regarding the use of Miramar Naval Air Station (now Maritime Corps Air Station - Miramar) as a commercial airport is noted. If it ever is developed as a civilian airport, the Miramar Station can be reconsidered.

Response 94

After the consideration of many comments and factors, the Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) included the I-5 alignment, without adding the stations recommended in this comment. It should be noted that the I-5 alignment, as defined in the AA/DEIS/DEIR, performed better than the Genesee alignment in terms of travel times, congestion reduction, and increased transit usage. For more information regarding the LPA and the selection process, please see the LPA report (December 1995).
should be a major interchange with transit bus services, and with the underground train station if that is built. However, it should be minimized as a parking site (if the underground train station is built, parking should be limited to commuter rail and Amtrak passengers). Light rail should then continue along Nobel Drive to the site now proposed as the Nobel Drive commuter rail station. This would be promoted as the major parking facility for light rail in the University City area, instead of the UTC site, thus reducing the need for parking lots on the extremely expensive real estate at UTC. As far as market penetration is concerned, this combined route would properly access all major destinations in the area. La Jolla Village Square, UCSD and the hospital complex, mixed with the Gessner alignment, would be directly accessed via the E-5 alignment, while University Towne Centre and the underground rail station (if it ends up being built), mixed with the E-5 alignment, would be directly accessed with the modified Gessner alignment.

This site would also serve as the endpoint for light rail short of extending into the Mira Mesa/Minamar region, rather than Towne Centre Extensive Drive Station. The Nobel Drive site would position light rail for later extension into Mira Mesa/Minamar by continuing along the San Diego Northen right-of-way and then via I-805 and Soledad/Carroll Canyons, as indicated on maps at the Public Meetings, or via further running on the San Diego Northen to the Minamar Train Station (if that is built rather than the tunnel and underground station, as advocated above) and beyond into the Minamar International Airport, should that facility become reality. I would go on to make one more suggestion here: one some of the savings from not building the commuter tunnel and underground stations to extend the Mid-Coast Corridor light rail line beyond the immediate University City area to the Minamar Train Station in the first place, so that it is ready to go on later to the airport if that becomes applicable.

*The combined route even the environmental impact (read: the line runs through both side's backyards)*

At the Public Hearing regarding the Mid-Coast Corridor, held April 27, 1995, most comments on the two proposed alignments maligned the route through the speaker’s back yard, and promoted the other through the “other guy’s” back yard. If only one of the two routes is chosen, residents and businesses on the side that is chosen to be built through will not have access to MBTA and ushers. Assuming light rail is to be built through both areas, and spread the political pain evenly.

3. SUMMARY

Assuming the above reasoning might help lead to the decision being made to cease development of the Commuter Rail Tunnel, use the savings to improve the Soledad Canyon side of the loop for light rail running speeds and to develop the Minamar Station (for both Amtrak and Coaster) rather than the underground UTC station. Extend light rail via the Nobel Drive Station (making this a light rail development rather than a commuter rail station) in the Minamar Train Station as an integral part of the Mid-Coast Corridor (don’t wait until the next phase of LRT development), also using some of the savings from the cancelled tunnel.

If despite the above reasoning the go-ahead is given to proceed with the Commuter Rail Tunnel, build the Nobel Drive Commuter Rail Station but design it to be converted from commuter rail to light rail use. Then, when the deep tunnels and underground train station are built, light rail is
constructed through the area, re-route commuter trains through the tunnel (therefore missing Nobel Drive Station) and extend light rail via the combined route described above to the Nobel Drive Station as its furthest extension. This will at least extend the service life of the Nobel Drive Station after it is rendered redundant for commuter rail service because of the deep tunnels.

Response 97

Comment regarding these comments not reflecting company positions is noted.

NOTE: It should be understood that although my occupation is Ticket Clerk for Amtrak at their Irvine, California station, the comments in this paper represent my personal opinions and are not intended in any way to reflect company positions on any item discussed herein.
From the Desk of Billy Paul:

8 May 1995

Metropolitan Transit Board
Dennis Wahl
1255 Imperial Ave., Suite 1000
San Diego, Ca 92101-7490

Dear Dennis Wahl:

I am a member of several community groups and have had the plan for the Mid-Coast Trolley Project presented to me on several occasions. I also attended the Public Hearing on April 19, 1995, at Clairemont High School.

I have a great deal of concern about the Mid-Coast Corridor Trolley Station Plan and the ability of these stations to meet the needs of the public who may want to use it, by locating the trolley stations on only "throw away" parcels of land.

These "throw away" parcels are generally so small that it is difficult for them to be effectively used. They are also constrained in that there isn't much other room available, except for the Tecolote Road Site.

The station at the Balboa Station Area, does, at least allow for a reasonable sized parking area and is of reasonable size to provide for a small station with proper bus linkage. It is the best we can do for now.

The Clairemont Drive Station Area is constrained, and of a small size. But there is no other place for this station to go, and it is at an important location here at Clairemont Drive. It would also be possible for future expansion to allow parking in the shopping center across the street. This station is also the best we can do for now.

But, when one looks at the Tecolote Road Area Station, it is poorly planned and will not meet the needs of the community. Especially when one considers that this station is the one that should provide access to Mission Bay Park and the Mission Beach Area (and not the Old Town Station), IT IS TOTALLY INADEQUATE.

Of greatest concern is the fact that this station is planned to be located over the Tecolote River Channel. I cannot begin to tell you of the future environmental impact that putting this station over THE ONLY REMAINING WILDLIFE CORRIDOR THAT CONNECTS THE TECOLETO CANYON NATURAL WILDLIFE PARK TO THE MISSION BAY WILDLIFE WETLAND AT TECOLETO RIVER OUTLET, will have in degrading the environment.

Billy Paul
Board Member, Clairemont Town Council
Board Member, Clairemont Mesa Planning Committee
Member, Rose CAC

Response 98

Station sites are based on access needs and available right-of-way. All of the sites in Clairemont are considered to be feasible and functional. Comment regarding the reasonable size of the Balboa Station is noted.

Response 99

Opinion regarding the adequacy of the Clairemont Drive Station is noted.

Response 100

Tecolote Creek was not considered by our consulting biologist to be a significant regional wildlife corridor (Harold Weir, 1995). To be significant, a corridor would have to connect two large areas of habitat suitable to the wildlife species in question. Whereas Mission Bay and upper Tecolote Canyon are significantly large open spaces, they are dissimilar for most of the species that would be of concern for wildlife movement. The Final Biological Resources Technical Report, January 17, 1994, on which the AA/DEIS/DEIR is based, stated that it is unlikely that large predators such as mountain lion and bobcat, and the largest herbivore, mule deer, would be present in the project area. This would be especially true for the most urbanized portion of the alignment where Tecolote Creek is located. Small, urban-adapted animals such as skunks and gray foxes are able to transact the urban landscape essentially without the aid of large corridors. Therefore, the covering of a short section a Tecolote Creek would not be expected to cause a significant environmental impact. See also the response to Comment No. 65.

The Balboa LRT Extension/Nobel Drive Coaster Station Alternative considered in the FEIS includes Tecolote Station at a site south of Tecolote Creek with access to the intersection of the Morena Blvd. with Vega Street.
Response 100, continued

This change in station location was due, in part, to concerns voiced by the commentor and others regarding Tecolote Creek. As discussed in Comment No. 73, this station does not include access to Mission Bay Park. During preliminary engineering the Project Advisory Committee determined that a connection to Mission Bay Park at the Tecolote Station was too costly to include as part of the project. However, MTDB has agreed to work with the neighborhood in the Tecolote Station area to construct a pedestrian bridge to Mission Bay Park should alternative funding become available.
As the only link between these two areas, it is vital that the Tecelote River Channel remain open (and uncovered) for a wildlife link between the two parks, and to allow for pedestrian access thru this area during the non-rainy season.

I totally reject the idea of having the Tecelote Trolley Station over the River Channel when a more suitable location exists a short distance to the south. Rather than having the Station to the north side of Tecelote Road on this "throw away" land, it should be located on the south side of Tecelote Road and the adjoining parcel of land should be purchased.

This would allow for the station to be of reasonable size, allow for access to the station via Vega Street where there is a proper intersection for access to the station for both cars and connecting busses.

Please reject the idea of allowing the Tecelote Trolley Station to be located over the Tecelote River Channel and require it to be moved to the south side of Tecelote Road as a solution to reduce the undesirable environmental impact of this station at its proposed location.

Sincerely,

Billy Paul
2747 Fairfield St.
San Diego, Ca 92110
(619) 276-2333

Board Member, Clairemont Town Council
Board Member, Clairemont Mesa
Planning Committee
Member, ROSE CAC
Memorandum

U. S. Department of Transportation
Robert P. Thurber, Deputy Director, Office of Environment, Energy and Safety

Response 101

As discussed in Chapter 2 of the FEIS, the Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative does include both the I-5 LRT alignment and HOV lanes. Appendix F of this FEIS, which was prepared in 1995, contains a sensitivity analysis of various alternatives. Specifically, three sensitivity comparisons are made:

- Combination of the HOV Alternative with the LRT Alternative as requested by the EPA.
- Deferral or elimination of three LRT stations.
- Addition of train trips for the commuter rail service between Centre City and North County.

Chapter 2 also notes that MTDB possesses neither the jurisdiction nor the funding necessary to implement the I-5 HOV lanes within the corridor, and responsibility for their implementation resides with Caltrans. The 1996 Regional Transportation Plan includes HOV lanes on I-5 north of the corridor, but the costs and impacts of I-5 widening within the corridor to provide HOV lanes have thus far prevented their implementation.

Please note that this FEIS evaluates the first phase of the Mid-Coast LRT Project and the Nobel Drive Coaster Station.
Dear Mr. Wahl:

We presently have no train tunnels in the City of San Diego. They are expensive, dangerous to build and dangerous to maintain particularly in earthquake country.

More importantly, the tunnel entrances are in close proximity to our schools. No matter what kind of security fencing, kids will find a way to breach that security and enter the tunnel endangering themselves and others.

The element of sabotage is also not to be taken lightly in this day and age.

I strongly urge you to adopt the I-5 route that will serve more of our citizens, be less costly and also will not damage the Rose Canyon Preserve.

Sincerely,

J. Nikkinen
University City

Response 102

Concerns regarding trespassing and security of tunnel operations are noted. Please note that the I-5 LRT Alignment was included in the Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative, while the commuter rail tunnel alternative was not.
The City of San Diego
Office of Planning Department
Jeff Washington
Deputy Planning Director

Response 103

The cost-effectiveness index is calculated using the factors mandated by the Federal Transit Administration, to ensure comparability in the analysis of projects throughout the country. The effect on the regional economy and employment are reported in the AA/DEIS/DEIR and this FEIS. These elements, along with joint development opportunities and influence on regional development patterns, and other factors were considered by the MTD Board in the adoption of the Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative.

Response 104

The DEIS found that the transit alternatives are consistent with transit policies, community plans, including the University Community Plan. The policies cited by the commenter support this finding. As noted, the LRT and commuter rail alternatives are more consistent with the University Community Plan. The Nobel Drive Coaster Station, included in the Build Alternative evaluated in the FEIS provides a transit improvement consistent with the plans noted by the commenter. This is discussed in Section 5.1 of the FEIS, where it is also noted that the City of San Diego’s community plans may require updating to be consistent with the Build Alternative. Emphasis on transit in the University Community Plan is noted. Discussion of the effectiveness of selected projects in meeting these objectives is included in the LPA report (December 1995). Discussion of the effectiveness and efficiency of alternatives considered in this FEIS is provided in Sections 6.1 and 6.2.
The relationship between the guidelines and the FEIS Build Alternative is discussed in Section 5.1.6. Any LRT project in the corridor should be accompanied by a strong City commitment to developing neighborhood centers at the stations.

Response 106

See responses to Comment Nos. 104 and 105.

VOLUME II COMMENTS AND RESPONSES
VOL II-62
Mid-Coast Corridor Project, Final Environmental Impact Statement

Mr. Dennis Wahl (Project Manager)  
Metropolitan Transit Development Board (MTDB)  
1255 Imperial Ave.  
San Diego, CA 92101-7490

May 8, 1995

RE: Mid-Coast Corridor Alternatives Analysis DEIS/DEIR

Dear Mr. Wahl and MTDB Board members:

The "TSM" (Bus) Alternative for the Mid-Coast corridor will deliver a more efficient use of our dwindling transit dollars than an LRT extension. Transportation professionals and experts disagree with MTDB assertions that LRT, (Trolley) is a preferred regional transportation alternative.

Professor Martin Wachs, (Director of the Institute of Transportation Studies at UCLA), wrote in opposition to the Proposition 181 Rail Bond Issue: "...transportation money should be spent on more bus service...[and for] those who really need and use transit, including the elderly and disabled," (and buses) "...would serve more people and do more to clean the air than a few expensive rail projects." (October 19, 1994 Union Tribune). Ryan Snyder, a transportation planning consultant and former member of the Transportation Commission of the City of Los Angeles, co-authored the article.

Proposition 181 and 185 were overwhelmingly rejected by the voters.

Dick Brown, former Chair of the State Transportation Board, (appointed by Governor Reagan) and former Chair of SANDAG, spoke before SANDAG (March 9, 1995) saying, "The trolley is really a toy... not a mass transit solution." He explained, "The trolley, county-wide, will not serve 1% of the trips... it will never be a significant contributor to the movement of people in San Diego County... and yet you're spending billions of dollars... it's time to stop, simply stop." The trolley faces several fundamental problems: capital cost, speed, at grade/traffic-interrupting design, and access.

MTDB consultant Thomas Jenkins, in a March 17, 1995 Union Tribune article entitled, "Light Rail For I-15 Is Doubtful", was quoted saying, "...there simply isn't enough demand development north of Kearny Mesa to warrant a rail line". Although he emphasized that the study was incomplete he indicated other impediments: access, the need for large and expensive park-and-ride lots and "... a 30 mph trolley would be too slow for the Escondido-San Diego trip...".

30 mph would be fast for a trolley line, all existing and proposed lines average about 20 mph.

The trolley "South Line" replaced a money-making bus route and is very cost effective, and when combined with downtown trolley statistics MTDB can compile some great looking efficiency data. This data is misleading and should not be used to consider other alignments because as alignments are stretched out into less dense and remote areas, the cost increases and the ridership decreases drastically and the trolley is not worth the capital and operational costs.

The Trolley Advocates book Light Rail Transit, (New System Successes At Affordable Prices, 1989), states: "The remaining North American corridors with potential for capital-intensive transit improvements generally will have patronage in the low to middle-intermediate range.

---

Eric Bowley

Response 107

Opinion regarding preference for TSM alternative and opposition to rail projects is noted. The Mid-Coast LRT project is part of the TransNet ordinance approved by voters in 1987. Its viability as a transportation mode in this corridor has been confirmed in various previous studies.

Response 108

Comments on the lack of viability of LRT in the I-15 corridor are noted. The I-5 corridor does not have the same characteristics as the I-15 corridor. The consultant's comments were made in pointing out the unique aspects of the I-15 corridor. The length of the corridor leads to long travel times, and the lower development density leads to difficult walking access. These factors may lead to rail service in the corridor not being as effective as other modes. Existing LRT lines, which include miles of street-running operation, with closely spaced stations, average 35 kilometers per hour, or kph, (22 miles per hour, or mph) over their entire length. Outside of downtown San Diego, the lines average 45 kph (28 mph).

Response 109

Cost and ridership information specific to the Mid-Coast Corridor is included in the AA/DEIS/DEIR and the FEIS (Chapters 2, 4, and 6). The Mid-Coast cost-effectiveness figures compare favorably with LRT systems in other cities.
LETTER FROM ERIC BOWLEY

that is, 15,000 to 50,000 passengers per day. To be competitive and cost-effective with buses in this range, light rail must be designed to be inexpensive... (about $20 million/mile).** (p. 76)

The proposed 5.5 mile Mission Valley East trolley line has a projected ridership of 12,500/day, (year 2010), and would cost $232 Million, ($42 million/mile). The proposed 6.2 mile Mission Valley West trolley line has a projected ridership of 16,000/day, (year 2010), and would cost $245 Million, ($39 million/mile). The TSM Alternative for Mission Valley West was estimated to cost $2 - $4 Million, which would double frequency of Route 1 from Pacific Beach through Mission Valley to La Mesa, and add two new Express Bus Routes, and, according to the 1993 Project EIR, it would meet the project purpose. Since $6 million in added bus service was found to meet the project purpose for Mission Valley West, consider the new Express Bus service that $357 Million (combined cost of LRT for Mission Valley East and West) would provide.

MTDR General Manager Tom Larvin reported in March '95 that, "Additional revenue is needed just to keep existing service levels".

MTDR asserts that buses are impracticable because they would be slow, having to compete with traffic in streets that are becoming more congested. However, most trolley riders require buses or cars to reach trolley stations.

REMEMBER Operational costs of the trolley should include feeder bus operational costs. When comparing bus and trolley alternatives, operational costs, compare the mileage covered and the accessibility (number of stations, and station locations) factors. Also fare recovery should be included for a bottom line taxpayer subsidy comparison.

RECOMMENDATION Please implement the "ZON" (Bus) Alternative. For now, provide service from the transportation hubs to activity centers such as downtown, the Golden Triangle, or S.D.U. can be handled with buses using commuter lanes wherever practicable. Eventually, as demand reaches the "cost effectiveness threshold", fast elevated guideway systems such as 300 mph MAGLEV will connect regional transportation centers and hubs.

Personal Rapid Transit (PRT), is ready now to provide automated, non-stop service within congested activity centers like Mission Valley, eliminating the need for inter-community feeder buses, and the trolley. Small PRT cars, (like mini-vans), can furnish efficient, ready-to-go, 40 mph average speed service for one to four passengers, (larger cars can serve up to 20 people). PRTs travel on elevated guideways above the traffic along existing roads. Communities near Chicago are installing them to connect activity and transportation centers with shopping malls.

While transportation plans that belong in the third millennium develop, low-cost bus improvements can provide a true mass transportation solution. They service more locations, cover a wider area, are faster, and cost from 5% to 10% of the capital cost of Trolley, and unlike the trolley, they will complement future mass transportation services.

Thank you for your time.

ERIC BOWLEY
P.O. BOX 7098, SAN DIEGO, CA 92147

Response 110

Comments regarding bus service and costs are noted. However, they are not relevant to the Mid-Coast Corridor. These comments should be addressed to the Mission Valley East planning effort.

Response 111

The operating costs reported for the alternatives in the AA/DEIS/DEIR included both bus and trolley services. The differences in mileage covered and accessibility were reflected in the number of riders. The farebox recovery for the alternatives fell within a narrow range, as follows: No Build - 63.1%, TSM Plus Commuter Rail Stations - 60.7%, Commuter Rail Tunnel - 62.1%, HOV Lanes - 61.2%, LRT I-5 - 62.5%, LRT Genesee 62.9%.

Response 112

Preference for bus systems, MAGLEV, and PRT are noted. The operating disadvantages of buses in a traffic-congested region are documented in the DEIS and the FEIS. Introduction of MAGLEV and PRT technologies would have potentially significant cost and environmental impacts. The rationale for selection of the alternatives studied in the DEIS is discussed in the response to Comment No. 1.
United States Environmental Protection Agency, Region IX
David Farrel, Chief
Office of Federal Activities

Response 113

Summary descriptions of the alternatives considered in the AA/DEIS/DEIR are noted.

Response 114

Compliments regarding the analysis are noted and appreciated. Rating of "2, Insufficient Information" is noted; information in this FEIS and in the following responses (115 through 136) provide the additional information. None of the additional information changes the conclusions of the DEIS regarding the significance of the impacts or their mitigation.

See responses to Comment Numbers 124 and 125 and FEIS Sections 3.5 and 5.5 regarding localized air quality impacts. See responses to Comment Numbers 127 and 128 regarding impacts from nonpoint source pollution. See response to Comment No. 126 regarding inclusion of alternatives in a conforming RTIP. See response to Comment No. 119 regarding level of detail to be included from technical reports.

Specific adverse impact criteria are outlined in relation to each impact area in each FEIS section. For air quality and noise, adverse impact criteria include additional exceedences of state and federal standards; for traffic congestion, levels of service exceeded; for biological resources, an extensive discussion of criteria for determining impact is reported in Section 5.7.

See response to Comment No. 116 regarding a combined LRT/HOV alternative.
and potential impacts from nonpoint source pollution on water quality and coastal waters. We are also concerned that none of the alternatives except the LRT alternative has been included in the conforming RTP. The DEIS is rated "S", Insufficient Information because the document incorporates several detailed reports by reference, without providing sufficient summaries of the detailed reports' contents. Also, there are statements in the DEIS regarding level of significance of impacts without providing the criteria for that determination. The lack of such criteria affects one's ability to fully evaluate the merits of each alternative. We also suggest as further noted below that there is another alternative within those discussed that should be evaluated.

Please note that the Final EIS should provide additional information as required by the NEPA/404 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), including a detailed analysis of the impacts on wetlands, and identification of the least environmentally damaging practicable alternative (CWA §404). In keeping with the MOU, the Final EIS must include: 1) a final alternatives analysis identifying the NEPA preferred alternative/404 least environmentally damaging practicable alternative; 2) the final feasibility study of mitigation sites; 3) identification of the mitigation site location(s); and 4) a conceptual mitigation plan (refer to the Compensatory Mitigation Section of the MOU Guidance Paper). Additionally, other MOU requirements may also be applicable, e.g., §401 water quality certification.

EPA does not believe that transportation components such as High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes and LRT should be considered mutually exclusive. We suggest a composite alternative be evaluated and discussed in the Final EIS. Both the MOU and the LRT I-5 alignment are the best performing alternatives in the plan, from a mode shift, air quality, and overall environmental benefit perspective. These two alternatives should be examined together to determine their joint impacts and benefits in the corridor. We strongly feel that the corridor would see even more dramatic benefits if both alternatives were implemented. For example, the HOV alternative greatly enhances the number of OAVs and is the most cost effective and the LRT I-5 alternative offers the greatest mode shift, transit travel time, and ridership and has the next best cost/ridership ratio of all the rail transit alternatives. The composite alternative analysis should include consideration of a 3 person HOV system.

Our detailed comments and specific concerns are enclosed as an attachment to this letter.

We appreciate the opportunity to review and provide comments on this Draft EIS. Please send two copies of the Final EIS to this office at the same time it is officially filed with our Washington, DC office. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (415) 744-1584, or David J. Carlson of the Office of Federal Activities at (415) 744-1577.
and potential impacts from nonpoint source pollution on water quality and coastal waters. We are also concerned that none of the alternatives except the LRT alternative has been included in the constraining RFP. The DEIS is rated "B". Insufficient Information because the document incorporates several detailed reports by referencing without providing sufficient summaries of the detailed reports' contents. Also, there are statements in the DEIS regarding level of significance of impacts without providing the criteria for that determination. The lack of such criteria affects one's ability to fully evaluate the merits of each alternative. We also suggest as further noted below that there is another alternative within those discussed that should be evaluated.

Please note that the Final EIS should provide additional information as required by the NEPA/404 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), including a detailed analysis of the impacts on wetlands, and identification of the least environmentally damaging practicable alternative (CWA §404). In keeping with the MOU, the Final EIS must include: 1) a final alternatives analysis identifying the NEPA preferred alternative/§404 least environmentally damaging practicable alternative; 2) the final feasibility study of mitigation actions; 3) identification of the mitigation site location(s); and 4) a conceptual mitigation plan (refer to the Compensatory Mitigation Section of the MOU Guidance Paper). Additionally, other MOU requirements may also be applicable, e.g., §401 water quality certification.

EPA does not believe that transportation components such as High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes and LRT should be considered mutually exclusive. We suggest a composite alternative be evaluated and discussed in the Final EIS. Both the HOV and the LRT I-S alignment are the best performing alternatives in the plan, from a mode shift, air quality, and overall environmental benefit perspective. These two alternatives should be examined together to determine their joint impacts and benefits in the corridor. We strongly feel that the corridor would see even more dramatic benefits if both alternatives were implemented. For example, the HOV alternative greatly decreases the number of SOVs and is the most cost effective and the LRT I-S alternative offers the greatest mode shift, transit travel time, and ridership and has the next best cost/rider ratio of all the rail transit alternatives. The composite alternative analysis should include consideration of a 3 person HOV system.

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Response 117

As requested, two copies of the FEIS will be sent to the San Francisco EPA office when it is filed with the Washington office.
Last page of letter from Mr. Farrel.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

David Farrel, Chief
Office of Federal Activities

Enclosure: 1) Detailed Comments
2) Summary of Rating

MIDCOAST.DEI

cc: Robert Hom, Federal Transit Administration
    Donald Emerson, Federal Transit Administration
    Dennis A. Scovill, Federal Highway Administration, CA
    Division
    Thomas F. Larvin, Metropolitan Transit Development
    Board
    U.S. Army Corps of Engineers-Los Angeles District
SUMMARY OF RATING DEFINITIONS AND FOLLOW-UP ACTION

Environmental Impact of the Action

10: Lack of Alternatives

The EPA review has not identified any potential environmental impacts requiring substantive changes to the proposal. The review may have identified opportunities for application of mitigation measures that could be accomplished with no more than minor changes to the proposal.

EC: Environmental Concerns

The EPA review has identified environmental impacts that should be avoided in order to fully protect the environment. Corrective measures may be required as changes to the preferred alternative or application of mitigation measures that can reduce the environmental impacts. EPA would like to work with the lead agency to reduce these impacts.

ED: Environmental Objectives

The EPA review has identified significant environmental impacts that must be avoided in order to provide adequate protection for the environment. Corrective measures may require substantive changes to the preferred alternative or consideration of other project or alternative (including the no action alternative or a new alternative). EPA intends to work with the lead agency to reduce these impacts.

EU: Environmental Sensitivities

The EPA review has identified adverse environmental impacts that are of sufficient magnitude that they are unavoidable from the standpoint of environmental quality, public health or welfare. EPA intends to work with the lead agency to reduce these impacts. If the potential unmitigable impacts are not resolved at the final EIS stage, this proposal will be recommended for referral to the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ).

Advisory of the Impact Statement

Current Conditions

EPA believes the draft EIS adequately addresses the environmental impacts of the preferred alternative and that the alternatives reasonably available to the project or action. No further analysis or data collection is necessary, but the reviewer may suggest the addition of clarifying language or information.

Current Limiting Information

The draft EIS does not contain sufficient information for EPA to fully assess environmental impacts that should be avoided in order to fully protect the environment, or that are unavoidable from the standpoint of environmental quality, public health or welfare. EPA intends to work with the lead agency to reduce these impacts. If the potential unmitigable impacts are not resolved at the final EIS stage, this proposal will be recommended for referral to the CEQ.

Current Indefiniteness

EPA does not believe that the draft EIS adequately assesses potential significant environmental impacts of the action, or that the EPA has identified all reasonably available alternatives that are outside of the spectrum of alternatives analyzed in the draft EIS, which could reduce the environmental impacts of the action. The identified additional information, data, analysis, or discussion should be included in the final EIS.


Response 118

Summary of rating definition and follow up actions is noted.
Response 119

NEPA specifically mandates that technical information should be summarized and referenced, and not repeated in an EIS to the greatest extent possible. The pages referenced in the comment summarize the contents of the Caltrans PSR and Design Exception Fact Sheet, i.e., that they define the Caltrans preferred HOV alternative design, etc. Page 5-116 of the AA/DEIS/DEIR clearly states that the EIS section is a summary of the Water Resources Report. This is also stated in the Water Resources section (Section 5.8) of Chapter 5 in the FEIS. The AA/DEIS/DEIR Air Quality section (page 5-69) states that the section is a summary of the technical studies referenced. This is the approach followed for the FEIS as well. It is unnecessary and would be redundant to describe the referenced technical documents further.

Response 120

The presence of the North County commuter rail line was assumed from the outset of the project. The train frequency and number of daily trips assumed in the travel demand models for the AA/DEIS/DEIR were the same as the opening day level of service. Ridership for the AA/DEIS/DEIR TSM and TSM/Commuter Rail Alternatives was reported in Tables 4-12 and 4-13, respectively, while operating and maintenance costs are reported in Table 2-15. ADT volumes on key arterial and freeway segments for the AA/DEIS/DEIR alternatives are presented in Tables 4-20, 4-21 and 4-22. Corresponding information for the FEIS alternatives is provided in Tables 4.3-1 (ridership), 6.1-3 (operating and maintenance costs), 4.4-1, and 4.4-2 (ADT volumes).

Response 121

See the response to Comment No. 116. Comments regarding the different ridership bases are acknowledged.
The LRT I-5 alignment is important in that it services two large destination sites, UCSD and Veteran's Hospital. College students, particularly, would be very likely to use public transit, due to ease, economics, and need. Therefore, we feel that the NOV and LRT I-5 alternatives should be examined together as a feasible composite alternative since they serve different populations with different transit needs.

NOISE

We recommend that FTA coordinate and receive input from residents in the surrounding housing developments in the vicinity of the proposed project regarding the design and engineering of the noise mitigation actions. Studies have shown that vegetated earthen berms at the same height as a noise wall, can reduce noise by an additional 3 dBA. These may be desirable by the residents in areas where there will be significant noise impacts, as opposed to a noise wall, which will have visual impacts. Also, concerns regarding wildlife movements along rail corridors can be addressed through the use of earthen berms.

PARKLANDS

FTA should continue their early and close coordination with the city agencies to discuss the potential 4(f) parklands impacts. We encourage a discussion of parkland impact avoidance and recommend that FTA promote this issue as the alignment is designed in the preliminary engineering phase of the project.

AIR QUALITY

Carbon Monoxide (CO) Microscale Analysis

CALINE4 emissions factors were used for the carbon monoxide microscale analysis (page 5-74). The project sponsors should indicate what criteria were used to select the 8 areas for modeling that are identified in the DEIS. There were no CO Microscale analyses for any of the proposed transit stations; commuter rail, LRT, or bus. The Final EIS should discuss the localized CO impacts, if any of the transit stations may meet any of the 40 CFR 93.105 and 93.131 hotspot criteria, due to waiting times and stop/start conditions.
The LRT 1–5 alignment is important in that it services two large destination sites, UCSD and Veteran's Hospital. College students, particularly, would be very likely to use public transit, due to ease, economics, and need. Therefore, we feel that the HOV and LRT 1–5 alternatives should be examined together as a feasible composite alternative since they serve different populations with different transit needs.

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AIR QUALITY

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CALINE4 emissions factors were used for the carbon monoxide microscale analysis (page 5-73). The project sponsors should indicate what criteria were used to select the 8 areas for modeling that are identified in the DEIS. There were no CO Microscale analyses for any of the proposed transit stations; commuter rail, LRT, or bus. The Final EIS should discuss the localized CO impacts, if any of the transit stations may meet any of the 40 CFR 93.105 and 93.131 hotspot criteria, due to waiting times and stop/start conditions.

Response 124, continued

Station sites and other transit centers were not analyzed for the AA/DEIS/DEIR using the microscale techniques because based on the screening of analysis locations described above, the analyzed intersections represented a worse case condition that the station sites, i.e., station site traffic data did not indicate a severely congested condition that would result in air quality impacts.

From the traffic analysis performed for the AA/DEIS/DEIR for the potential stations, MTDB concluded that there would be no unacceptable levels of traffic service at any of the station sites or adjacent and nearby intersections. The air quality analysis which was conducted confirmed that with acceptable levels of traffic service, there would be no adverse CO impacts.

None of the potential stations are expected to have “waiting times” or “stop–start conditions” which would lead to the creation of CO hot-spot areas. At each case, the level of traffic at a station is much less than traffic at each intersection. The stations are not designed to allow lines of idling cars for passenger pickup and dropoff. Any particular train or LRT arrival at a station is not expected to generate more than 50-70 vehicle departures. In no case do the intersections associated with a station site involve intersections which meet the criteria of 40 CFR Section 93.132.

Nonetheless, an assessment of localized air quality impacts was conducted for this FEIS. Locations were selected based on the anticipated traffic operations at intersections and the adjacency of sensitive receptors. Three intersections were selected as potential worst case conditions. None exhibited violations of one-hour or eight-hour CO standards under any of the FEIS alternatives.
Response 125

As described in response to Comment No. 124, further modeling was conducted in preparation of this FEIS, at locations selected on the basis of anticipated traffic operations at intersections and the adjacency of sensitive receptors. Three intersections were selected as potential worst case conditions. None exhibited violations of one-hour or eight-hour CO standards under any of the FEIS alternatives.
that Final EIS identify whether these intersections should be included among those evaluated in the carbon monoxide microscale analysis even after mitigation. We recommend including any intersections in further microscale analysis if it is identified as one where in the future adverse traffic impacts are likely to occur.

40 CFR 93.106 states that all projects must be identified in a conforming plan or TIP. 40 CFR 93.115 states that all projects must come from a conforming plan. We are concerned about the fact that only the LRT alternatives are accounted for in the conforming RTP. Since the other alternatives are very different in their design concept and scope, it will be necessary to perform a new conformity determination for each one. We should also point out that only projects in the conforming plan can receive funding from FTA per 40 CFR 93.129.

WATER RESOURCES

Nonpoint Source Pollutants

In January, 1993, EPA and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration jointly announced the availability of the Guidance for Nonpoint Management Measures for Sources of Nonpoint Pollution in Coastal Waters (Guidance) pursuant to Section 6217(g) of the Coastal Zone Reauthorization Amendment of 1990. We FTA recommend consider this Guidance for the entire Mid-Coast Corridor project. These guidelines are referenced only in the discussion of mitigation of the construction impacts, but the guidelines should also be implemented at transit stations, parking lots, and associated facilities.

Section 6217(g)(5) defines management measures as, "economically achievable measures for the control of the addition of pollutants from existing and new categories and classes of nonpoint sources of pollution, which reflect the greatest degree of pollutant reduction achievable through the application of best available nonpoint pollution control practices, technologies, processes, siting criteria, operating methods, or other alternatives."

The DEIS states that the net increase in nonpoint source pollution would be negligible from any of the alternatives. However, no criteria for making this conclusion are offered in the discussion. While it may be true that throughout the corridor, if there is a decrease in auto trips, the increase in nonpoint source pollution from the transit options would be offset. However, there will be a realignment of the geographic

Response 126

The Balboa LRT Extension/Nobel Drive Coaster Station Alternative of the FEIS is included in the current RTP and RTIP and is conforming.

Response 127

We have received a copy of the Guidance and have incorporated management measures as appropriate in the FEIS (see FEIS Section 5.8.2).
Response 128

The suggested mitigations for park-and-ride lots have been included in the FEIS (Section 5.8.2), as appropriate. The San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board will be contacted for their suggestions on management practices during final engineering. The full name of the State Water Resources Control Board, is spelled out in Sections 3.9 and 5.8 of the FEIS.

Response 129

The technical report for the Nobel Drive Commuter Rail station referenced in the comment was dated August 12, 1993 (not 1994) and reported impacts resulting from development of the entire 3.76 hectare (9.3 acre) site. The conceptual site plan for the station was refined after that (see Figure 1-16 in the AA/DEIS/DEIR). The TSM/Commuter Rail Alternative is discussed in the DEIS. The impacts reported in Table 5-20, page 5-102 of the AA/DEIS/DEIR are based on that refined design. Approximately 0.97 hectare (2.4 acres) of disturbed coastal sage scrub and 0.46 hectare (1.14 acres) of southern willow scrub and sycamore alluvial woodland were expected to be impacted as discussed in the DEIS. It should be noted that the coastal sage scrub on this site is not natural; it was planted as a mitigation for the Renaissance project. Impacts and mitigations were discussed in adequate detail in the DEIS to determine that all adverse impacts could be mitigated.

As discussed in Section 5.7.3.3 of this FEIS, the design of the Nobel Drive Coaster Station since been modified to reduce wetland impacts. As indicated in Table 5.7-1, this station would affect a total of 0.048 hectare (0.12 acre) of wetlands. This wetland area consists of 0.028 hectare (0.07 acre) of southern cottonwood-willow riparian forest, 0.018 hectare (0.045 acre) of sycamore-elder riparian woodland, and 0.002 hectare (0.005 acre) of freshwater marsh. The station would also affect 1.04 hectare (2.57 acres) of coastal sage scrub and 0.356 hectare (0.88 acre) of non-native grassland. Non-native grassland is considered a protected habitat, due to its value as a foraging area for raptors. Mitigation measures are detailed in Section 5.7.2 of the FEIS.
Response 129, continued

In Section 5.7.2 the MTDB's strategy for mitigating coastal sage impacts is identified. The MTDB will mitigate these impacts by contributing to a USFWS-approved mitigation bank in the City of San Diego. A list of sites currently being evaluated is provided in Section 5.7.2. Off-site wetland mitigation locations are also identified in Section 5.72. Discussions with the permitting agencies indicate that these sites would be appropriate for wetlands mitigation.

Wetlands and Waters of the U.S.

The DEIS identifies several waters of the United States in the project area (page 3-62), including Mission Bay, the San Diego River, and Rose Creek. The latter two have had past incidences of flooding. The DEIS states that the project is proposed in an area that is mostly urbanized, but that remnants of native vegetation occur and there are wetlands that will be impacted by 1 or more of the alternatives (Section 5.7). The DEIS recognizes that wetlands are locally scarce and are highly productive and valuable habitats. The total acreage of wetlands that would be affected by the project ranges from .4 acres (Light Rail Alternatives) to 2.0 acres (TSR Commuter rail and Commuter rail tunnel Alternatives). Various habitat types would be affected under the Build Alternatives, including coastal fresh water marsh, cismontane alkali marsh, and riparian forests (section 5.7).

We are concerned with the lack of detailed discussion regarding the potential loss of coastal sage scrub and alluvial woodland (approximately 2.0 acres total) at the Renaissance La Jolla development, as part of the TSR Commuter rail alternative (Hobet Drive Commuter Rail Station construction). This area is a wetland mitigation site for wetland losses from the La Jolla development. An area near the Miramar NAS, on Rose Creek, is offered as a mitigation site, but no other information is
Response 130

Comments regarding preference for the Lakeside site for wetland mitigation are noted. Additional details regarding wetland mitigation are provided in Section 5.7.2 of the FEIS. As discussed in the FEIS, the Build Alternative would disturb 0.407 hectare (1.01 acre) of wetlands and other waters of the U.S., and therefore the project will not trigger an MOU review and is expected to require only a Section 404 nationwide permit. Coordination with the Army Corps of Engineers and other permitting agencies is ongoing. See also response to Comment No. 129.

Response 131

See response to Comment No. 115 regarding the least environmentally damaging practicable alternative. The alternatives achieve the objectives to varying degrees, and a selection of the LPA was based on achievement of objectives, cost effectiveness, and environmental considerations.

Response 132

As discussed in Section 5.8 of the FEIS, the provisions of Executive Order 11988 were followed during preliminary engineering. Some potential floodplain impacts were avoided, while those that could not be avoided were minimized.
regarding floodplain management should be applied whenever considering the siting of any of the alternatives in floodplains. Paragraph 2(d) of the Order states that if an agency determines that the only alternative is siting in the floodplain, then the agency is required to design or modify the action to minimize floodplain impacts. The DEIS identifies the floodplain impacts from each alternative based on the criteria in 23 CFR 650 Subpart A, but does indicate that only the HOV alternative has prepared engineering design drawings. Since a preferred alternative has not been selected, engineering design drawings should be prepared in accordance with 23 CFR 650 once the preferred alternative is identified in the FEIS.

POLLUTION PREVENTION

Pursuant to Public Law 91-508, Pollution Prevention Act of 1990, "It is the policy of the United States that pollution should be prevented or reduced at the source whenever feasible; pollution that cannot be prevented should be recycled in an environmentally safe manner, whenever feasible; pollution that cannot be prevented or recycled should be treated in an environmentally safe manner whenever feasible, and disposal or other release into the environment should be employed only as a last resort and should be conducted in an environmentally safe manner."

We encourage the project sponsors to include pollution prevention measures in the Final EIS for the Mid-Coast Transit Corridor project such as placing glass, aluminum and paper recycling receptacles and installing water/energy conserving devices at transit stations and using solar energy, where possible.

CLARIFICATIONS/ADDITIONS TO THE DOCUMENT

The term "Screenline" is used often in the DEIS, yet there is no definition of the term in the Glossary. This is a particular term that many in the public may not be familiar with, and should be defined in the Final EIS.

The use of the term "transit" is confusing throughout the document. At certain points it is used to mean buses only, and at other times it implies all transit options. The document should clarify what transit mode is implied when using the term.

The term "HOV-Transit Trips" is used in the Executive Summary and the Financial Analysis Evaluation of Alternatives Section. There

Response 133

Wherever feasible, LRT stations will include recycling collection containers, and water and energy saving devices. These facilities will be identified in final engineering and would be consistent with MTDB design standards. We will also include the reduction of construction waste stream pollutants as feasible.

Response 134

"Screenline" is a term used to denote a line across several transportation facilities (such as highways, streets and transit lines) that is used as a common point to measure characteristics or performance among the alternatives. Across screenlines, the total person-trip capacity can be added for a group of alternatives, as can the number of person-trips served. In this way, comparisons can be made among alternatives at key geographic points within a corridor or travel-shed. The glossary in this FEIS includes a definition of "screenline" and explains the assumptions regarding screenline analyses.

Response 135

"Transit" is a comprehensive term that is employed throughout the document consistent with its use in the transit industry. In the AA/DEIS/DEIR, transit means bus service only when used in reference to the TSM and HOV Lane alternatives. When used in reference to the commuter rail and LRT alternatives, it can mean both bus and rail service. Where we use the term "transit" in the FEIS, we have attempted to specify the type of transit that is being discussed.

Response 136

The HOV lanes would be available to both buses and carpools. HOV Transit Trips means people on buses using the HOV lanes for part of their trip. The term exclusive bus lanes would be used if the lanes were to be used only by buses.
The City of San Diego  
Engineering Department  
Julio Fuentes, Senior Traffic Engineer  
Traffic Engineering Division  

Response 137  

The City of San Diego  

Response 138  

The cross-section of the proposed Pacific Highway overcrossing does not include a Class II bike lane on both sides. The proposed cross-section (looking west) includes a 2.4-meter (8-foot) shoulder, a 3.6-meter (12-foot) eastbound lane, a 4.3-meter (14-foot) left turn lane, 7.3 meters (24 feet) for two westbound lanes, and an 2.4-meter (8-foot) shoulder. Discussions with Caltrans indicate that, as described in the Project Study Report, the shoulders of this bridge could be used by bicyclists (and pedestrians) but it would not be striped or signed as a Class II facility. This comment refers to HOV lanes on the Pacific Highway/1-5 Bridge, which are not included in any alternatives considered in this FEIS.

Response 139  

None of the FEIS alternatives would affect the bicycle lanes on Regents Road. The bike lanes on Regents Road are in place today.

Response 140  

(Comment from a rough draft of the letter was not included in the final version of the letter.)
Response 141

Figure 2-44 in the AA/DEIS/DEIR depicts an alternative that is not considered in the FEIS, and was therefore not included in the FEIS. The bike path is shown on the Nobel Drive Coaster Station plan (Figure 2.4-33 in the FEIS).

Response 142

Definitions of bicycle facilities in the FEIS are consistent with the Caltrans Highway Design Manual.
Response 143

Figure 3.2-4 in Chapter 3 of the FEIS reflects the current bicycle route system.

Incorrect Bikeway Depictions

1. The Class I bicycle path along the Sunset Cliffs Boulevard Bridge does not continue northeasterly along Sea World Drive. The bicycle path turns northwesterly and terminates at Quivira Way.

2. Peres Cove Way is incorrectly depicted as a Class III bikeway between Ingraham Street and Sea World Drive.

Omitted Bikeways

1. Balboa Avenue/Garnet Avenue (Class III)
   (Noyes Street to Rose Creek Bike Path)

2. Bayside Walk (Class I)
   (West Mission Bay Drive to Verona Court)

3. Crown Point Drive (Class II)
   (Ingraham Street to Lamont Street)

4. Crown Point Drive (Class III)
   (Lamont Street to Pacific Beach Drive)

5. Dana Landing Road (Class III)
   (West Mission Bay Drive to Ingraham Street)

6. Fanuel Street (Class III)
   (Sail Bay to Cardena Drive)

7. Friars Road (Class I)
   (Sea World Drive to approximately two blocks west of Fashion Valley Road)

8. Friars Road (Class II)
   (Sea World Drive to Mission Gorge Road)

9. Hornblend Street (Class III)
   (Ocean Front Walk to Noyes Street)
10. Ingraham Street (Class II)
(Dana Landing Road/Perez Cove Way to Riviera Drive/Crown Point Drive)

11. La Jolla Boulevard (Class III)
(Mission Boulevard to Sea Ridge Drive/Carla Way)

12. Law Street (Class III)
(Ocean Front Walk to Mission Boulevard)

13. Mission Boulevard (Class III)
(Law Street to Agate Street)

14. Noyes Street (Class III)
(Hornblend Street to Balboa Avenue)

15. Ocean Front Walk (Class I)
(South Mission Beach Jetty to Law Street)

16. Old Sea World Drive Bike Path (Class I)
(Quiviera Way to approximately one block east of the Sports Arena Boulevard Bridge)

17. Old Sea World Drive (Class III)
(Approximately one block east of the Sports Arena Boulevard Bridge to Sea World Drive at a point approximately 1/4 mile west of Friars Road)

18. Olney Street (Class III)
(Pacific Beach Drive to Balboa Avenue)

19. Pacific Beach Drive (Class III)
(Crown Point Drive to Olney Street)

20. Perez Cove Way Bicycle Path (Class I)
(Sea World Drive at Sea World Way to Ingraham Street at Perez Cove Way)

21. Quiviera Road (Class III)
(West Mission Bay Drive to Quiviera Way)

22. Quiviera Way (Class III)
(Quiviera Road to Old Sea World Drive Bike Path)

23. Sail Bay Bike Path (Class I)
(Verona Court to Moorland Drive)
Response 144

Figure 3.2-4 in Chapter 3 of the FEIS includes the corrections listed.

Incorrect Bikeway Depictions

1. There is no Class III bicycle route along the east end of Governor Drive.

2. There are no Class II bike lanes along Regents Road between Nobel Drive and La Jolla Village Drive.

Omitted Bikeways

1. Camino Del Mar (Class I)
   (Carmel Valley Road to Solana Beach city limits)

2. Del Mar Heights Road (Class II)
   (Rob Avenue to Carmel Canyon Road)
Mr. Dennis J. Wahl  
TR 201, 804  
Page 5

3. Eastgate Mall (Class III)  
(Regents Road to Miramar Road)

4. La Jolla Shores Drive (Class III)  
(Torrey Pines Road to North Torrey Pines Road)

5. Mira Mesa Boulevard (Class II)  
(Scranton Road to Parkdale Drive)

6. Mira Mesa Boulevard (Class III)  
(I-805 to Scranton Road)

7. Miramar Road (Class II)  
(Eastgate Mall to I-15)

8. Nobel Drive (Class II)  
(Towne Centre Drive to Shoreline Drive)

9. North Torrey Pines Road (Class II)  
(Genesee Avenue to Carmel Valley Road)

10. Regents Road (Class III)  
(Eastgate Mall to Genesee Avenue)

11. Sorrento Valley Boulevard (Class II)  
(Roselle Street to Camino Santa Fe)

12. Sorrento Valley Road (Class II)  
(I-805 to a point approximately 1/2 mile north of Sorrento Valley Boulevard)

13. Torrey Pines Road (Class II)  
(Prospect Place to Gleneagles Way)

14. Torrey Pines Road (Class III)  
(Glenbrook Way to La Jolla Village Drive/North Torrey Pines Road)

15. Vista Sorrento Parkway (Class II)  
(Mira Mesa Boulevard to Lusk Boulevard)

16. Vista Sorrento Parkway (Class III)  
(Lusk Boulevard to Sorrento Valley Boulevard)
Response 145

Figure 4-3 in the AA/DEIS/DEIR showed an intersection layout in the La Jolla Colony vicinity. None of the alternatives considered in the FEIS would affect this intersection, and therefore this figure was not included in the FEIS.

Response 146

The needs of bicyclists will be considered in the design of LRT through these intersections along Executive Drive.

Response 147

Comments noted. The areas referenced would be affected by future phases of the Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA), not the alternatives evaluated in this FEIS. The suggested changes will be incorporated in separate environmental reviews of the HOV lane project and the LRT University City Extension.

Response 148

See response to Comment No. 147.

Response 149

The comment regarding the planned Class I bike path in Rose Canyon is reflected in Section 3.2.6 of the FEIS. The bike path alignment through the Nobel Drive Coaster Station area is shown in the site plan (Figure 2.4-33 in Chapter 2) to run parallel to the tracks, north of the platform. We are willing to discuss the proposed Coastal Rail Trail with interested parties, but at this time MTDB does not support the use of railroad right-of-way for non-railroad purposes.
Response 150

Bike lockers and racks are included in design criteria for LRT stations and would be included at this station. Comment regarding the use of the term "path" rather than "trail" is accepted.
and lockers. Use of this right-of-way would require rerouting of the Rose Canyon bicycle path. The bicycle path is located in the 1-5 right-of-way."

Page 5-10 - Please insert the following sentence immediately following the third sentence of the third paragraph beneath the heading titled, "Mitigation Measures": "Bicycle access should be maintained at all times during the relocation of the Rose Canyon bike path because there are no alternative routes for non-motorized traffic within this travel corridor."

Page 5-22 - Please insert the following sentence immediately following the last sentence of the first paragraph beneath the heading titled, "Significance of Impacts": "One such crossing that serves both pedestrians and bicyclists is just south of and parallel to the SR-52 freeway which provides access between the Rose Canyon bicycle path and Marian Bear Natural Park."

Page 5-23 - Please revise the first paragraph to read, "Grade-separated non-motorized (pedestrian and bicycle) traffic crossings would be installed at three locations for the LRT Genesee Alignment Option in Rose Canyon. Grade-separated non-motorized traffic crossings would mitigate the impacts to pedestrian and bicycle access in Rose Canyon resulting from fencing along the LRT Genesee Alignment option. Pedestrian and bicyclist safety would be enhanced considerably, and operations on the rail line would benefit with the resolution of this safety issue. The City of San Diego is planning to construct a bicycle path along the south side of SR-52 between the Rose Canyon bike path and Genesee Avenue which would include a bridge for non-motorized traffic to connect the bike path with Marian Bear Natural Park. MTD should coordinate with San Diego city staff regarding this planned bike path bridge."

Page 5-25 - Please insert the following sentence immediately after the second sentence of the third paragraph. "The fencing should be installed in such manner as to not preclude the construction of the planned Coastal Bikeway within the AT&SF Railroad right-of-way."

Page 5-27 - Please insert the following sentence immediately after the first sentence of the third paragraph. "The University City Community Plan also identifies a planned Class I bicycle path which will serve as part of the proposed Coastal Bikeway along the AT&SF Railroad right-of-way between downtown San Diego and Oceanside."

Page 5-142 - Please revise the first sentence of the second paragraph to read, "Indirect adverse impacts would occur due to non-motorized (pedestrians and bicyclists) traffic access restrictions caused by the fencing of the right-of-way."

Response 151

See response to Comment No. 147.

Response 152

This mitigation measure addressed impacts resulting from the Genesee LRT alignment, which is not included in the Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA). Therefore, the proposed mitigation is not necessary.

Response 153

See response to Comment No. 152.

Response 154

See response to Comment No. 152.

Response 155

As noted in response to Comment No. 149, this bicycle facility is referenced in Section 3.2.6 of the FEIS.

Response 156

(This comment from a rough draft of the letter was not included in the final version of the letter.)

Response 157

As noted in response to Comment No. 152, the Genesee alignment was not included in the LPA. Therefore, the impacts will not occur.
Response 158

As noted in response to Comment No. 149, this bicycle facility is referenced in Section 3.2.6 of the FEIS.

Response 159

See response to Comment No. 152.

Response 160

See response to Comment No. 152.

Response 161

Every effort will be made in design to minimize impacts to nonmotorized traffic. Recent discussions with Caltrans structure staff have noted that it may be possible to keep the Sea World Drive overcrossing open to all traffic if construction only involves bridge support relocation. However, this will not be known until project design. If a detour is required, nonmotorized traffic will be redirected to use Clairemont Drive, resulting in 2.9 kilometers (1.8 miles) of out of direction travel. This is not uncommon or considered to be unreasonable if required for only a short period, for a small number of users.

Response 162

Suggestion accepted: construction staging areas would be secured to avoid bicycle conflicts also. The FEIS includes this requested revision.
Figure 3-4, attachment to letter from Mr. Fuentes referenced In Comment No. 143.
May 2, 1995

Mr. Dennis Wahl
Project Manager
MTD
1255 Imperial Avenue, Suite 1000
San Diego, CA 92101

SUBJECT: COMMENTS ON THE MID-COAST CORRIDOR ALTERNATIVE ANALYSIS/DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT/DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

Dear Mr. Wahl:

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the Mid-Corridor AA/DEIS/DEIR. The proposed action is an improvement to the transportation system in the coastal portion of the Metropolitan Transit Development Board (MTDB) area of jurisdiction between the community of Old Town and the northern boundary of the City of San Diego. Connections to other elements of the MTDB are included as part of the proposed action. Our comments are as follows:

Bicycle parking facilities. Although your standard design for LRT stations may generally include bicycle racks, bicycle racks should be included in the project description.

Alternative fuel sources. Bus transit alternatives only discuss diesel power. The document should explain that new technologies would be incorporated as they come on line; however, there is currently no data to support such an analysis.

Energy, lights and glare. Project design should include the consideration of solar generated parking lot lighting.

The City of San Diego
Office of Development Services Department
Ann B. Hix, Principal Planner
Development Services Department

Response 163

Suggestion accepted. The design criteria for LRT projects include bicycle lockers and racks at all stations outside of Centre City. A minimum of 20 bicycle lockers are to be provided at transfer stations, 12 at other stations. Outside bike lockup is provided for a minimum of four users. The description of LRT stations (Section 2.4.2) in the FEIS includes this information.

Response 164

Compressed natural gas (CNG) buses are estimated to reduce nitric oxide (NOx) emissions 40%. Currently, 100 CNG buses are in operation in the MTDB area. By 2003, 98 more CNG buses are expected to be purchased to replace existing diesel buses as they reach the end of their useful life, bringing the total number to 198. The use of these CNG buses will provide air quality benefits not assumed in the Mid-Coast AA/DEIS/DEIR or FEIS. As such, the data in these documents represents the worst case from an air quality perspective. The actual levels of future pollution can reasonably be expected to be lower.

Response 165

Solar power generation will be considered for station lighting in the design of park-and-ride lots and station parking in the corridor.

VOLUME II COMMENTS AND RESPONSES
VOL II-92
We look forward to receiving the final EIR when it becomes available. Please feel free to contact Mary Roush at (519) 236-6525 should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Ann B. Hix, Principal Planner
Development Services Department

Response 166

The Final EIS will be sent to all people who provided comments prior to FTA issuing its Record of Decision (ROD).
Dear Metropolitan Transit Board,

I read about your plan to run the proposed new University City Trolley line through Rose Canyon at the UC Trolley Station. Why in the world would you plan a line where it is one line? I grow up in Boston where taking the streetcar was part of my daily life. Being close to a trolley line is an advantage. I recommend a route that would come up from either Freedom Valley or House Vebe that runs through Clairemont, up Regents Road, along Governor Drive, then north on Irenas Ave. Please consider placing the new trolley where the new

Rec'd 5-15-95

Mary A. Russell

Response 167

The Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative does not include light rail in Rose Canyon. This decision was due, in part, to local concern about impacts to Rose Canyon.
Response 168

Monthly passes are currently available, with discounted passes available for students, seniors and disabled persons.

Mary A. Russell
V Pres 1974
May 22, 1995

Mr. Tom Larwin
General Manager
MTDB
1255 Imperial Ave., Suite 1000
San Diego, CA 92101

Dear Mr. Larwin:

At the May 4, 1995, North San Diego County Transit Development Board (NSDCTDB) meeting, Dennis Wahl presented an overview of MTDB's Mid-Coast Corridor Alternatives Analysis/Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Draft Environmental Impact Report. At that meeting, the NSDCTDB took action to encourage MTDB to review the effectiveness of the Balboa Avenue Coaster rail station and to consider a Coaster rail station at Gilman Drive as an alternative to the Nobel Drive rail station.

Paul Price of my staff and Dennis Wahl discussed this subject preliminarily on April 24, 1995, and agreed that there is merit to further investigation of the Coaster rail stations noted above.

I appreciate the opportunity for the NSDCTDB to review the Mid Coast Corridor AA/DEIS/DEIR. If you have any questions regarding the Board's action, or if you or your staff wishes to meet to discuss this further, please contact Paul Price at 967-2818.

Sincerely,

Richard L. Fifer
Executive Director

cc  Paul Price
    Dennis Wahl

North County Transit District (NCTD)
Richard L. Fifer
Executive Director

Response 169

Ridership at the Balboa Commuter Rail Station was estimated to be 770 daily boardings (460 during peak hours). The total capital cost of the station was estimated at $8.2 million, which includes $2.8 million for construction and $3.8 million for right-of-way to purchase the site from the City. The full list of cost components is as follows (amounts in millions): Project Administration - 0.3, Design Engineering - 0.3, Construction Management - 0.3, Right-of-way - 3.8, Construction - 2.8, Project Reserve - 0.7. The Board decided not to include this station in the Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative after a comprehensive evaluation based on numerous criteria, including ridership, cost, and environmental impacts.

The design of the Balboa LRT Station is such that it could accommodate future expansion to include a Coaster Station. This would require further planning, engineering and environmental review.

Response 170

The Gilman Drive station was reviewed for its appropriateness as a commuter rail station. Detailed information can be found in Appendix J (Gilman Drive Coaster Rail Station Technical Memorandum) of this FEIS.

Previous work by our staff supports NCTD's contention that destinations in the North University City area for southbound riders can be reached more quickly from the Sorrento Valley Station (assuming connections to North University City are available at Sorrento Valley). The proposed Nobel Drive Station would require riders to stay on the train through the slow speed Miramar section, increasing their travel time.
May 22, 1995

Mr. Tom Larwin
General Manager
MTDB
1255 Imperial Ave., Suite 1000
San Diego, CA

Dear Mr. Larwin:

At the May 4, 1995, North San Diego County Transit Development Board (NSDCTDB) meeting, Dennis Wahl presented an overview of MTDB's Mid-Coast Corridor Alternatives Analysis/Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Draft Environmental Impact Report. At that meeting, the NSDCTDB took action to encourage MTDB to review the effectiveness of the Balboa Avenue Coaster rail station and to consider a Coaster rail station at Gilman Drive as an alternative to the Nobel Drive rail station.

Paul Price of my staff and Dennis Wahl discussed this subject preliminarily on April 24, 1995, and agreed that there is merit to further investigation of the Coaster rail stations noted above.

I appreciate the opportunity for the NSDCTDB to review the Mid Coast Corridor AA/DEIS/DEIR. If you have any questions regarding the Board’s action, or if you or your staff wishes to meet to discuss this further, please contact Paul Price at 967-2818.

Sincerely,

Richard L. Fifer
Executive Director

cc Paul Price
Dennis Wahl

NCTD

Response 170, continued

NCTD has found that people are unwilling to go very far out of direction to get to a Coaster station to start their trip. Most southbound trips from North University City pass through the vicinity of the Gilman Drive station site. As a result, little out of direction travel would be needed to reach a commuter rail station at Gilman Drive. The Nobel Drive site would require eastbound travel for most trips prior to heading south. Gilman Drive appears to offer the fastest overall travel time for southbound trips and therefore, the best ridership potential.

Feeder service is an important consideration in station planning. While it may be desirable for reaching a station, feeder service is essential for reaching destinations beyond walking distance. Because of the limitations on operating funds, and the high cost of connecting shuttle services, a station that does not need connecting service would be desirable at this time. The staff consensus is that Gilman Drive station would be primarily an origin station for North University City, and it could operate effectively with only auto access. The focus of connecting service to North University City should be at Sorrento Valley Station.

In terms of physical characteristics, Nobel Drive has the advantage since it is larger and access is simpler. For track issues, neither site has an advantage. Nobel Drive is on less of a grade, the platform would be partially in a curve, and the track speed is high. At Gilman Drive, the grade is greater, but the platform would be on a tangent section. The track speed is lower due to its proximity to the Elvira curve.

The primary issue for Gilman Drive is access. La Jolla Colony Drive has a sharp curve in the area as it approaches the intersection with the freeway ramps. BRW's work indicates that there could be impacts to the intersection. Special effort would be needed in the design of this station to minimize these impacts. Another consideration is the potential for opposition from the community. Comments have been received from some residents and the La Jolla Colony homeowners association regarding potential traffic impacts.
May 22, 1995

Mr. Tom Larwin
General Manager
MTDB
1255 Imperial Ave., Suite 1000
San Diego, CA

Dear Mr. Larwin:

At the May 4, 1995, North San Diego County Transit Development Board (NSDCTDB) meeting, Dennis Wahl presented an overview of MTDB’s Mid-Coast Corridor Alternatives Analysis/Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Draft Environmental Impact Report. At that meeting, the NSDCTDB took action to encourage MTDB to review the effectiveness of the Balboa Avenue Coaster rail station and to consider a Coaster rail station at Gilman Drive as an alternative to the Nobel Drive rail station.

Paul Price of my staff and Dennis Wahl discussed this subject preliminarily on April 24, 1995, and agreed that there is merit to further investigation of the Coaster rail stations noted above.

I appreciate the opportunity for the NSDCTDB to review the Mid Coast Corridor AA/DEIS/DEIR. If you have any questions regarding the Board’s action, or if you or your staff wishes to meet to discuss this further, please contact Paul Price at 967-2818.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Richard L. Fifer
Executive Director

cc Paul Price
Dennis Wahl

Response 170, continued

Comments have also been received from the University Community Planning Group favoring the Nobel Drive site over Gilman Drive.

The cost for the station was estimated to be $4.85 million, broken down as follows (amounts in millions): Project Administration - 0.17, Design - 0.34, Construction Management - 0.34, Right-of-Way - 0, Construction - 3.43, Fare Collection - 0.12, Project Reserve - 0.44.

Based on the above and the information included in the Gilman Drive Coaster Station Technical Memorandum (in Appendix J), the MTD Board adopted the Nobel Drive Coaster Station as a component of the Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA). A more detailed explanation of the LPA selection process is provided in the LPA Report (December 1995). The impacts, mitigation measure, costs and other station characteristics are reviewed in this FEIS as part of the Balboa LRT Extension/Nobel Coaster Station Alternative.
MID-COAST AA/DEIS/DEIR
Comments at the SANDAG Board Meeting
March 24, 1995

MAYOR CHUCK DUVIVIER, ENCINITAS

1. What is the impact on commuter rail ridership if LRT is implemented? A1
2. How much will commuter rail ridership increase if a Nobel Drive station is built? A2
3. What is the commuter rail travel time savings if the tunnel is built? A3

DEPUTY MAYOR MARVIN DUGGAN, SOLANA BEACH

4. Would the LRT alternatives connect to commuter rail near UTC? A4

COUNCILMEMBER EILERT PARKS, DEL MAR

5. UCSD and Torrey Pines Mesa should be better served. A5

COUNCIL MEMBER CRAIG LANE, LEMON GROVE

6. What is the northern terminus of the corridor, LRT alternatives? A6

DEPUTY MAYOR MARVIN DUGGAN, SOLANA BEACH

7. North County area view this corridor as a first increment of Trolley service to their communities. Councilmember Parks agree? A7

COMMENTS RECEIVED AT NCTD AND SANDAG BOARD MEETINGS

MAYOR CHUCK DUVIVIER, ENCINITAS

RESPONSE A1

As reported in Table 4.3-3 in the FEIS, the Balboa LRT Extension/Nobel Drive Coaster Station Alternative would result in a net increase of 75 weekday Coaster boardings. It is estimated that LRT would divert approximately 405 Coaster riders. For example, some riders who formerly drove to the Sorrento Valley Coaster station may prefer to drive to the new LRT stations. This decrease in ridership is offset by the 480 new boardings projected to result from development of the Nobel Drive Coaster station, discussed in response to Comment No. A2.

RESPONSE A2

The proposed Nobel Drive Station is projected to attract 240 boardings per day. Because of return trips, the total Coaster boardings would normally increase by another 240 boardings, for a projected total of 480 boardings.

RESPONSE A3

Studies conducted for the AA/DEIS/DEIR showed that the Commuter Rail tunnel would save approximately 5.5 minutes for each trip through the area. As discussed in response to Comment No. 86, the commuter rail tunnel was not included in the Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative.
Deputy Mayor Marian Dotson, Solana Beach

Response A4

The alternatives considered in this FEIS do not include such a connection, but do not preclude one. Under the proposed Balboa LRT Extension/Nobel Coaster Station Alternative, the most northerly cross-platform transfer point between Coaster and LRT service would be at the Old Town Transit Center. Future LRT extensions could include shuttles to connect with commuter rail.

Councilman Elliot Parks, Del Mar

Response A5

UCSD would be served under the Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative, but the closest rail stations to UCSD under the first phase (as reviewed in this FEIS) would be the existing Sorrento Valley Coaster Station and new Nobel Drive Coaster Station, which would offer bus service to the UCSD campus. The Balboa LRT Extension/Nobel Coaster Station Alternative would also include bus service (Express Route #310) between the Torrey Pines Mesa area and the Clairemont Drive LRT station.

Councilmember Craig Lake, Lemon Grove

Response A6

In the first phase of the Mid-Coast LRT Project, the Balboa Avenue Station would be the northern terminus of LRT service. The Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative shows a terminus at Judicial Drive. However, LRT could be extended further north or east; MTDB’s Regional Rail Transit Plan includes a future rail extension (for study purposes) north along the I-5 corridor toward Oceanside and easterly toward Mira Mesa and I-15.
DEPUTY MAYOR MARIAN DOTSON, SOLANA BEACH

Response A7

Comment noted. See also the response to Comment A6 above.

MAYOR CHUCK DAvIVIER, ENCINITAS
1. What is the impact on commuter rail ridership if LRT is implemented?  
   A1
2. How much will commuter rail ridership increase if a Nebel Drive station is built?  
   A2
3. What is the commuter rail travel time savings if the tunnel is built?  
   A3

DEPUTY MAYOR MARIAN DOTSON, SOLANA BEACH
4. Would the LRT alternatives connect to commuter rail near UTC?  
   A4

COUNCILMEMBER ELIJAH PARKS, DEL MAR
5. UCSD and Torrey Pines Mesa should be better served.  
   A5

COUNCIL MEMBER CRAIG LACEY, LEMON GROVE
6. What is the northern terminus of the corridor, LRT alternatives?  
   A6

DEPUTY MAYOR MARIAN DOTSON, SOLANA BEACH
7. North County views this corridor as a first increment of Trolley service to their communities. 
(Councilmember Parks agreed)  
   A7
Councilmember Craig Lake, Lemon Grove

Response A8

See response to A5, above.

Response A9

The Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative (described in Section 2.1.1 of this FEIS) does not include the commuter rail tunnel evaluated in the AA/DEIS/DEIR. See also response to Comment No. 94.

Supervisor Pam Slater, County of San Diego

Response A10

The existing level of Coaster service was assumed to be a part of all the alternatives considered in the AA/DEIS/DEIR and FEIS. The AA/DEIS/DEIR TSM Plus Commuter Rail Stations Alternative (No. 3) would have provided two new Coaster stations plus parking at an existing station. AA/DEIS/DEIR Alternative No. 4 would have constructed a tunnel between Sorrento Valley and Rose Canyon for use by the Coaster and Amtrak. The AA/DEIS/DEIR LRT Alternative (No. 6) would connect with the Coaster stations at Balboa Avenue, Old Town and in Centre City. The Balboa LRT Extension/ Nobel Drive Coach Station Alternative of this FEIS includes a new Coaster station at Nobel Drive.

Response A11

Connections to the airport for Coaster riders are available via Route 992 (The Flyer) at the Santa Fe Depot Station. MTDB's Regional Rail Transit Plan includes an Airport/Point Loma rail extension (for study purposes) that would connect with the Old Town LRT Line either at Washington Street or the Santa Fe Depot.
Supervisor Pam Slater, County of San Diego, continued

Response A12

Opinion noted. As discussed in Chapter 2 of the FEIS, MTDB selected a Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative that included an LRT extension, commuter rail, and HOV components. This selection was based on a number of criteria including reducing automobile trips, improving travel times, increasing transit trips, minimizing environmental impacts and distributing the system’s costs, benefits and impacts equitably among all residents. All of the alternatives have environmental impacts, e.g., the HOV alternative evaluated in the AA/DEIS/DEIR would require the construction of several sound walls to mitigate noise impacts, and the direct connectors at I-5/I-805 and the drop ramp at Pacific Highway would cause visual impacts.

Response A13

Congestion relief for the alternatives is reported as an evaluation measure in two places in the AA/DEIS/DEIR. See pages 4-26 through 4-28, and pages 6-19 through 6-22 in that document. Congestion relief is also reported as an evaluation measure in Section 6.2.2 of the FEIS.
Mid-Coast Corridor Project, Final Environmental Impact Statement

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE NORTH SAN DIEGO COUNTY TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT BOARD HELD MAY 4, 1993

A-4 American Public Transit Association (APTA) Dues

That the Board withdraw from APTA and use the Board's Legislative Analyst, Roger Hanberger, as our Washington, D. C. liaison.

A-5 Exercise of Option for Worker's Compensation Claims Administration Services Contract

That the Board authorize the Executive Director to exercise the Wear and Wood, Inc. contract option for two (2) years at a negotiated cost increase of 3% per year over the current contract cost, resulting in a two year option cost of $208,603.

A-6 Ridership Data for March, 1995

Operation Statistics as of March, 1995

Financial Statement as of March, 1995

Information item.

A-7 Printing and Delivery of NCTD's Route Schedules and Rider's Guides for June 4, 1995 Route Changes

That the Board approve one-time purchases from Meyenbach and VOS Printers in the amount of $49,848.04 and $25,357.40 for the printing and delivery of 14 Route Schedules and Rider's Guides for the June 4, 1995 route changes.

MOTION BY BETTY EVANS, SECONDED BY LORI HOLT PFIEFER, TO ADOPT THE CONSENT CALENDAR. MOTION CARRIED.

B. MIDB'S MID-COAST CORRIDOR STUDY

Leslie Blaude, Principal Planner, informed the Board that MIDB has just completed their draft of the Mid-Coast Alternatives Analysis. She then introduced Mr. Dennis Wahl, MIDB's Project Manager, who explained the study in detail. (A newsletter from MIDB was also passed out to the Board that described the study.)

Mr. Wahl gave an overview of the study by explaining how it began five years ago as part of the process to qualify for federal funds to build a trolley line from the Old Town area up to Carmel Valley. He explained the process involved in obtaining federal funds and pointed out that six different alternatives have been developed as a result of the study. He stated that there is a 60-day public review period for the study, which ends May 8th, and after this date, they will then go forward to try and decide which project or projects can actually be built. He pointed out that the study includes cost information for the alternatives and ridership estimates. He then described the different alternatives with the side of aerial map charts, pointing out the commuter rail options, and explained the costs involved. He also explained the environmental issues affecting the various alternatives.

VOLUME II COMMENTS AND RESPONSES
VOL II-104
Second page of NCTD meeting minutes

Joe Kellejian

Response A14

See response to Comment No. 169.

Response A15

See response to Comment No. 170.

Julianne Nygaard

Response A16

MTDB welcomes the opportunity to discuss Comments A14 and A15 with NCTD Board members or staff. A meeting with NCTD staff took place on August 2, 1995. The recommendations for the commuter rail projects were discussed with NCTD and staff concurrence was secured.
MESSAGE FROM PESACH KREMEN RE MID-COAST AA/DEIS/DEIR

April 13, 1995, 1:42 p.m.

My name is Pesach Kremen. Phone number's 220-0675. Public comments since I
probably can not be at the public hearings and meetings on the Mid-Coast
study. Of the six alternatives mentioned on the Take One, Alternative No. 1
and 5 are out of the question. The No Build is not good. Number 5, extending
HOV lanes. HOV lanes are a common joke being pursued by the highway lobby.
It does not encourage people to get out of their cars. It just moves the
people that happen to have two in the car into that particular lane. Does not
courage transit usage one iota whatsoever. We do not need more concrete, we
do not need more highways whatsoever. The good options are the commuter rail
tunnel, No. 4, because any increase in the speed of the Coaster, Amtrak,
commuter trains, trolleys will increase the ridership tremendously. One
percent decrease in travel time is well known to have a 1 percent increase in
patronage is known to all public transit circles. The idea of adding the
additional commuter rail stations, Option No. 3, at Balboa and Nobel Drive, is also
an excellent idea because the more places of interface you have the
better off we are. Option No. 2 Is so so so because it includes the No Build,
which is completely unsatisfactory.

Summary, the best thing of all the options Is to make sure the landlords,
employers, as well as merchants, stop subsidizing people with free parking and
treat transit users equally. The trolley extension that is mentioned on Item
No. 6 is an absolute must. That must be done ASAP to have Trolleys going in
three different directions instead of just the two east and south we have
right now. Suffice it to say that there is no real feeder network from the
Old Town Coaster and eventual trolley station right now going east so the
ridership is probably as bad as it probably Is right now. I'd like to talk to
you in person. Late morning is the best time or early afternoon. Again 220-
0675. Thank you.

kremen.djw April 17, 1995

MESSAGE FROM PESACH KREMEN RE MID-COAST AA/DEIS/DEIS

Pesach Kremen

Response PM1

Comments opposing the HOV Alternative are noted. As discussed in
Chapter 2 of the FEIS, the Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred
Alternative does include both the I-5 LRT alignment and HOV lanes.
Appendix F of this FEIS, which was prepared in 1995, contains a sensitivity
analysis of various alternatives. Specifically, three sensitivity comparisons are made:

- Combination of the HOV Alternative with the LRT Alternative as
  requested by the EPA.
- Deferral or elimination of three LRT stations.
- Addition of train trips for the commuter rail service between Centre
  City and North County.

Chapter 2 also notes that MTDB possesses neither the jurisdiction nor the
funding necessary to implement the I-5 HOV lanes within the corridor, and
responsibility for their implementation resides with Caltrans. The 1996
Regional Transportation Plan includes HOV lanes on I-5 north of the corridor,
but the costs and impacts of I-5 widening within the corridor to provide HOV
lanes have thus far prevented their implementation.

Response PM2

Support for the Commuter Rail Tunnel is noted. As noted in the response to
Comment No. 86, the Commuter Rail Tunnel was not included in the Preferred
Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative. This was due to a number
of considerations, including cost-effectiveness.

VOLUME II COMMENTS AND RESPONSES
VOL II-106
MESSAGE FROM PESACH KRENNEN RE MID-COAST AA/DEIS/DEIR
April 11, 1995, 1:42 p.m.

My name is Pesach Krennen. Phone number’s 220-0675. Public comments since I probably can not be at the public hearings and meetings on the Mid-Coast study. Of the six alternatives mentioned on the Take One, Alternative No. 1 and 5 are out of the question. The No Build is not good. Number 5, extending HOV lanes. HOV lanes are a common joke being pursued by the highway lobby. It does not encourage people to get out of their cars. It just moves the people that happen to have two in the car into that particular lane. Does not encourage transit usage one iota whatsoever. We do not need more concrete, we do not need more highways whatsoever. The good options are the commuter rail tunnel, No. 4, because any increase in the speed of the Coaster, Amtrak, commuter trains, trolleys will increase the ridership tremendously. One percent decrease in travel time is well known to have a 1 percent increase in patronage is known to all public transit circles. The idea of adding the additional commuter rail stations, Option No. 3, at Balboa and Nobel Drive, is also an excellent idea because the more places of interface you have the better off we are. Option No. 2 is so so because it includes the No Build, which is completely unsatisfactory.

Summary, the best thing of all the options is to make sure the landlords, employers, as well as merchants stop subsidizing people with free parking and treat transit users equally. The trolley extension that is mentioned on Item No. 6 is an absolute must. That must be done ASAP to have trolleys going in three different directions instead of just the two east and south we have right now. Suffice it to say that there is no real feeder network from the Old Town Coaster and eventual trolley station right now going east so the ridership is probably as bad as it probably is right now. I’d like to talk to you in person. Late morning is the best time or early afternoon. Again 220-0675. Thank you.

krennen.djw April 17, 1995

Response PM3

Support for proposed commuter rail stations at Balboa and Nobel Drive is noted. While the Balboa commuter rail station was not included in the Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative, the Nobel Drive Station is part of the Balboa Extension/Nobel Drive Coaster Station Alternative evaluated in this FEIS.

Response PM4

Comment regarding the elimination of subsidized employee parking is noted.

Response PM5

Support for LRT Alternative is noted. Extension of LRT service is included in the Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative and is a principal component of the Balboa LRT Extension/Nobel Drive Coaster Station Alternative evaluated in this FEIS.

Response PM6

Since this comment was received, increased bus service has been implemented at Old Town Station.
Hi Dennis. My name is Robert Rider. I'm calling from the San Diego Air
Pollution Control District. I wanted to provide a couple of quick comments on
your Mid-Coast Corridor Draft EIS, let's see, circulation draft February '95.
The comments focus on page 3-32. Since this was written, a couple of our
attainment statuses have changed and I just wanted to very quickly go over
those with you. But anyway on page 3-32, second paragraph, carbon monoxide,
we are now attaining carbon monoxide for the state standard. So that would be
paragraph two, you can scratch carbon monoxide. Same page, 3-32 under ozone,
we are listed as a serious non attainment area by the EPA, as opposed to
severe when this was written. Now we are serious. And then down first
paragraph, under carbon monoxide, just to reflect those changes that we
attained for the state standard.

Those were the changes I was going to give you and I realize it's the midnight
hour now. Comments are due by Monday and I wouldn't get a chance to write
those down and send it on through management and then get it to you in time.
So I wanted to give it to you over the phone. My number is 694-0852. If I can
answer any questions. I will send you also, we have air quality data for
1993. I realize it's a moving target with these things. It's a couple of
years old now probably since you've written this first starting writing this
draft. The existing data reflects '92. At a minimum I can get you '93 data.
Maybe your consultant can update your tables for you under the Affected
Environment. So I'll send that to your attention at RIOB. OK again 694-0852.
My name's Robert Rider. If you have any questions, feel free to give me a
call. Thank you.

Robert Rider, APCD

Response PM7

Comments regarding updated air quality attainment status were taken into
consideration in evaluating the LPA for conformance with the State Implementation Plan. The most recent information regarding air quality
attainment status has been incorporated into this FEIS.

Response PM8

The air quality analyses conducted for the AA/DEIS/DEIR used the most
current and up to date information available at the time. The background air
quality data were taken from 1992 and formed the basis for all the following
assumptions and calculations. Since we had completed our work with the
1992 data, reporting the 1993 data along with the 1992 data would tend to
mislead and confuse the reader. This is especially true since the air quality
actually improved in 1993 with no CO violations. By using the 1992 data and
reporting these data, the analyses remained sufficiently conservative, i.e., they
represented a worse case than what would likely occur with implementation of
the alternatives.

MTDB contacted the San Diego Air Pollution Control District during the
preparation of the FEIS and obtained the most recent, available air quality
data.
Sandra Milgram

Response PMC1

The consultant reviewed the traffic impacts at the La Jolla Village Square Station site (see Appendix C of the Final Environmental Impact Report, October 1995). This work confirmed the AA/DEIS/DIIR finding that the station at La Jolla Village Square on Nobel Drive would have no significant traffic impacts remaining after mitigation improvements were made. It was found that adjacent intersections would operate at acceptable levels of service with the addition of the third eastbound lane on Nobel Drive as identified in the La Jolla Village Square Transportation Study for the full development of the shopping center. Traffic circulation on-site will also require adjustments to current flow patterns and drive-aisle geometrics as the station and parking facility is added. These improvements would be developed in conjunction with the site owner during the design of future phases of the full Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative (described in Section 2.1.1 of the FEIS), if the project moves forward. See response to Comment No. 35 above regarding pedestrian safety.

Beatrice Parnes

Response PMC2

Preference for HOV lanes is noted. As discussed in Chapter 2 of the FEIS, the Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative does include both the I-5 LRT alignment and HOV lanes. Appendix F of this FEIS, which was prepared in 1995, contains a sensitivity analysis of various alternatives. Specifically, three sensitivity comparisons are made:

- Combination of the HOV Alternative with the LRT Alternative as requested by the EPA.
- Deferral or elimination of three LRT stations.
Beatrice Parnes, continued

- Addition of train trips for the commuter rail service between Centre City and North County.

Chapter 2 also notes that MTDB possesses neither the jurisdiction nor the funding necessary to implement the I-5 HOV lanes within the corridor, and responsibility for their implementation resides with Caltrans. The 1996 Regional Transportation Plan includes HOV lanes on I-5 north of the corridor, but the costs and impacts of I-5 widening within the corridor to provide HOV lanes have thus far prevented their implementation.

Response PMC3

Comments regarding the LRT Alternative and preference for Genesee Alignment Option are noted. The MTD Board adopted the I-5 Alignment Option as a component of the Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative. The alternatives evaluated in this FEIS only include the first phase of the LRT as far north as Balboa Drive. Additional planning, engineering, and environmental review will be required prior to completion of the full Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative into the University Towne Centre area.
Karin Swisher

Response PMC4

Support for the LRT Alternative and comments regarding the HOV Alternative are noted. The Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative includes LRT, HOV, and commuter rail improvements. See response to Comment No. PMC1 regarding the proposed station at La Jolla Village Square. See response to Comment No. PMC2 for a discussion of HOV lanes.

Bob Lewis

Response PMC5

Under the Build Alternative considered in this FEIS, bus service would be realigned to provide connections to the new LRT and Coaster Stations. The proposed North University City Loop Shuttle would serve some of the destinations listed. Bus connections to other locations are currently available.
Ellen Thro

Response PMC6

See response to Comment No. PMC5 regarding loop routes.

Caroline Self

Response PMC7

The Genesee Avenue LRT alignment option was not included in the Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative adopted by the MTD Board in October, 1995.
Ellen Thro

Response PMC6

See response to Comment No. PMC5 regarding loop routes.

Caroline Self

Response PMC7

The Genesee Avenue LRT alignment option was not included in the Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative adopted by the MTD Board in October 1995.
Paulette Duve

Response PMC10

Support for the trolley is noted. As explained in the response to Comment No. A12 and in Section 2.1.1 of this FEIS, MTDB selected a Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative that included LRT, commuter rail, and HOV components.
Vince Hodge

Response PMC11

Suggestions for staging are noted. As explained in the response to Comment No. A12, MTDB selected a Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) that included LRT, commuter rail, and HOV components. Implementation of the LPA is staged in phases. Phase 1 includes a Coaster station at Nobel Drive and an LRT extension as far north as Balboa Avenue, which are evaluated in this FEIS. A full description of the LPA is provided in Section 2.1.1 of this FEIS. See also the LPA Report (December 1995).
Commuter Rail

- Very important to build a CR station at Miramar (at the Fost Lumbar site). Should put a station at the slow point on line.
- Don't need Nobel CR
- Use the money not spent on tunnel to realign railroad through Soledad Hills
- Use remaining money to double-track north to Oceanside
- Rebuild bridges at lagoons to remove hazard close to turbines - build double-track bridges out of long-span concrete. Gives win-win situation

Vince Hodge, continued

Response PMC12

The MTDB acted on October 28, 1993 to delete the Miramar Road Station from further study for the commuter rail line in the MTDB area. At this point, there are no plans to reconsider this action. Future changes in nearby land uses could prompt a reexamination. Opinion regarding the Nobel Drive Station is noted; this station is included in the Balboa LRT Extension/Nobel Coaster Station Alternative in this FEIS. Other improvements for the commuter rail line may be worthwhile projects, but they were not considered in the AA/DEIS/DEIR nor in this FEIS. Environmental clearance and funding would be required for implementation. No money has been programmed or received for the commuter rail tunnel, so the decision to withdraw that alternative from further consideration does not result in the availability cash.

The commuter rail tunnel was not included in the Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative. No money was programmed or received for the commuter rail tunnel, so the decision to not pursue that project did not result in the availability of any actual cash.
Nancy Bragado

Response PMC13

Support for the LRT Alternative with a station at Clairemont Drive is noted. An LRT station at Clairemont is included in the Balboa LRT Extension/Nobel Coaster Station Alternative evaluated in this FEIS.

Richard Jensen

Response PMC14

This suggestion was discussed with the city General Services department and others. The Rose Canyon Operations Center will continue to be used as an operations yard. The area in the southeast corner of Mission Bay Park, proposed at one time for an operations facility, has been deleted from the Mission Bay Plan and is not available for equipment from the Rose Canyon Operations Center. A field check of the suggested station site revealed that it would require more circuitous access than the site south of Balboa, and would be less visible to passersby. It does not appear to provide an advantage over the currently proposed site. The Balboa LRT Extension evaluated in this FEIS includes sound walls to help reduce potential noise impacts. Please see Section 5.6.1.3 regarding potential noise impacts and proposed sound walls, and see Section 5.4.3.1 regarding potential visual impacts of the proposed walls.
Alex Bragado

Response PMC15

Preference for the LRT Alternative with a station at Clairemont Drive is noted. Suggestion for using white light is also noted. The existing trolley station lights are high pressure sodium and give off a pinkish glow. The shelters use fluorescent white lights. In Section 5.3.3.2 (Safety and Security Mitigation Measures) of the FEIS, MTDB makes a commitment to the use of appropriate lighting to enhance the safety and security of passengers and employees.

Betty Cavanagh

Response PMC16

Preference for not building a station at Clairemont Drive is noted. See response to Comment No. 66 regarding traffic impacts at this station. Security and fare inspection would be provided at the station to minimize loitering. As described in the Preliminary Engineering Report, the Project Advisory Committee (PAC) was very involved in developing the design of the proposed Clairemont LRT Station. The PAC determined that a pedestrian bridge at this location would not be cost-effective, however a handicap-accessible pedestrian connection to Mission Bay Park is provided via an elevator from the LRT Station to the Clairemont Drive Bridge and new sidewalks on the Clairemont Drive Bridge. Please see response to Comment No. 67 for more information about pedestrian access to Mission Bay Park.
ON THE 16TH DAY OF APRIL COMMENCING AT THE HOUR OF
7:00 O'CLOCK P.M., AT 8757 VILLA LA JOLLA DRIVE, IN THE
LA JOLLA VILLAGE SQUARE COMMUNITY ROOM, IN THE CITY OF LA
JOLLA, COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO, STATE OF CALIFORNIA, THE
FOLLOWING STATEMENTS BY CITIZENS WERE MADE BEFORE ME,
ELIZABETH CLOSE, CERTIFIED SHORTHAND REPORTER IN AND FOR
THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA.

PUBLIC MEETING TRANSCRIPT - APRIL 18, 1995

JAM WHITE & ASSOCIATES
James Rasua

Response PMS1

Support for the bus service improvements in the Transportation Systems Management Alternative is noted.

Response PMS2

Comments in support of LRT are noted. The Balboa LRT Extension/Nobel Coaster Station Alternative evaluated in this FEIS includes an LRT extension to Balboa Avenue.
Joyce Dawson

Response PMS3

Preference for expanding Coaster service is noted. The Mid-Coast LRT Project, Balboa Extension and Nobel Drive Coaster Station Alternative, evaluated in this FEIS, includes a new Coaster Station at Nobel Drive.

J. Adam Milgram

Response PMS4

Concern for visual impacts of LRT is noted. The DEIS analyzed these impacts and suggested mitigations. Mitigations in the form of planted retaining walls, use of earth tones and use of special design catenary would be included in the project in the vicinity mentioned. The DEIS found that these mitigations can reduce most visual and community character impacts to a level less than significant.

Sidney Parnes

Response PMS5

Preference for Genesee LRT alignment is noted. Impacts were identified for both alignments. Approximately 75 residential buildings (both single- and multi-family) overlook the Genesee alignment option between Gilman Drive and Genesee Avenue. Approximately 100 residential building overlook or look up to the I-5 alignment between Gilman Drive and Regents Road. The buildings are generally closer to the I-5 alignment. As discussed in Chapter 2 of the FEIS, MTDB selected a Preferred Investment Strategy/ Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) that did not include the Genesee alignment option. This selection was based on a number of criteria including reducing automobile trips, improving travel times, increasing transit trips, minimizing environmental impacts, and an equitable distribution of costs, benefits and impacts.
Bob Lewis

Response PMS6

Comment regarding the slow travel between Sorrento Valley and Rose Canyon is noted. To date, ridership on the Coaster has been good; commuters are willing to trade slightly longer commute time for the convenience of rail commuting. Concern regarding the cost of a commuter rail tunnel is also noted. These factors were taken into consideration in the selecting the Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA), as documented in the LPA report and summarized in Section 2.9 of this FEIS. Given the limited cost-effectiveness of the tunnel option, the MTD Board did not include the tunnel option in the selected LPA.
Response PMS7

Interest in shuttle service for the North University City, Carmel Valley and Del Mar area is noted. No such services are in the Short Range Transit Plan at this time due to funding limitations. These services would be desirable and will be considered when funds are available. The alternatives in the Mid-Coast AA assumed various bus and shuttle services. Implementation schedule depends on the availability of funding. The Build Alternative evaluated in this FEIS (part of Phase 1 of the Mid-Coast Project) includes bus and shuttle services, as described in Section 2.4.

J. Adam Milgram

Response PMS8

Concern regarding traffic impacts at the La Jolla Village Station at Nobel Drive is addressed in response to Comment No. PMC1 above.
Lyn Parrish

Response PMS9

Preference for the Genesee alignment and the important role of University Towne Centre, and opposition to a transfer station on Nobel Drive, are noted.

Response PMS10

The construction of LRT in the median of I-5 was considered in screening alternatives for further study in the DEIS. The median is limited in many segments of the corridor. Also, the location of stations and the need for pedestrian bridges to the platforms adds to the complexity of the design. Noise impacts to patrons from being in the middle of the freeway is also a concern. LRT needs a right-of-way up to 10.7 meters (35 feet) wide. The standard freeway lane width is 12 feet (3.6) meters, not 50 feet, so LRT would fill the space of approximately three lanes, not one lane as suggested.

As described in Section 2.1.1 of the FEIS, the Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative includes LRT, commuter rail, and HOV improvements.
BE, because you only need 50 feet in most -- the width is
only 50 feet of rail that you need. In most spaces one
vehicle lane is almost that much. So even putting HOV
vehicles on both sides of the freeway going north and
south is going to take more of the right of way up with
less -- probably less people using it. Light rail going
down the center of the freeway will get people interested
in riding something else than sitting in their cars
parked on the freeway.
ON THE 19TH DAY OF APRIL COMMENCING AT THE HOUR OF
7:00 O’CLOCK P.M., AT 4150 UTE DRIVE, IN THE CLAIREMONT
HIGH SCHOOL CAFETERIA, IN THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO, COUNTY
OF SAN DIEGO, STATE OF CALIFORNIA THE FOLLOWING
STATEMENTS BY CITIZENS WERE MADE BEFORE ME, ELIZABETH
CLOSE, CERTIFIED SHORTHAND REPORTER IN AND FOR THE STATE
OF CALIFORNIA.

JAN WHITE & ASSOCIATES
Howard Emmons

Response PMS11

A station at Clairemont is included in the Board-adopted Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative. As described in the response to Comment No. 66, traffic analyses conducted for the proposed Clairemont LRT station showed that the station’s effect on traffic would be too minor to consider it an adverse impact.

The commentor’s concern regarding the safety of turning movements would be addressed by installing a traffic signal at Gesner Street and Morena Boulevard, which would provide safe access to and from the station.

The amount of parking planned at the Tecolote Station has been increased and the parking at the Clairemont Station decreased to encourage greater use of the Tecolote Station.
TREMENDOUS AMOUNT OF TRAFFIC IN TRYING TO GET TO THIS
STATION.
SO I DON'T KNOW JUST WHERE THE STATION IS
GOING TO BE FOR PARKING ON THE STREET, SO I DON'T KNOW IF
I CAN SHOW YOU. WE HAVE THIS WOULD BE LIKE INGULF
STREET, THIS WOULD BE MORENA BOULEVARD AND HERE WOULD BE
GESNER. THERE'S A JACK-IN-THE-BOX RIGHT ON THE CORNER.
NOW MORENA COMES AND THIS WOULD BE GESNER STREET AND WE
AREN'T OUR COMPLEX COMES ALONG HERE. SO WE HAVE A PLACE TO
PULL OUT. THIS IS VERY, VERY HIGH SPEED TRAFFIC THROUGH
THERE ON MORENA. I DON'T KNOW IF I'M EXPLAINING IT GOOD
OR NOT, BUT WE HAVE PEOPLE THAT COME OUT OF THIS PARKING
LOT HERE AND HAVE TO GO AND PULL INTO MORENA. PEOPLE
COME DOWN GESNER AT THE SAME TIME, THIS GOES UP ON A
STREET CALLED DENVER AND FROM THERE YOU GO ON TO
CLAIREMONTE BOULEVARD AND THE OVERPASS GOES DOWN TO 5. WE
GET A LOT OF HEAVY TRAFFIC THERE.

SO IT SEEMS TO US THAT'S A BAD PLACE TO PUT
A STATION, BUT THAT'S MY STORY. I WAS PRESIDENT OF THE
ASSOCIATION THERE. I HAD TRIED TO GET SLOWER TRAFFIC. I
EVEN TRIED TO GET THEM MAYBE TO PUT A STOP SIGN AT
GESNER. WE HAVE QUITE A FEW ACCIDENTS ON THIS CORNER
NOW. IT WAS DEEMED I GUESS BY THE CITY ENGINEERING WE
DIDN'T NEED THAT, WE DIDN'T GET IT. BUT NOW WE'RE
TALKING ABOUT MORE CONGESTION. I THINK THAT'S BAD NEWS.
SO I HOPE THAT THEY MOVE THE STATION SOMEPLACE ELSE.
PLUS I DON'T KNOW WHERE THEY'RE GOING TO PARK. ANYWAY,
SO THAT'S MY STORY.

JAN WHITE & ASSOCIATES
Billy Paul

Response PMS12

The adequacy of the proposed site and interest in alternative site for Balboa Station are addressed in the response to Comment No. PMC14 above.

Response PMS13

The proposed site for the Clairemont Drive Station is adequate. There is space to provide 50 on-street parking spaces to serve the station. There is an opportunity for joint development with the shopping center on the other side of Morena Boulevard.

Response PMS14

Comment regarding whether the Jutland Station is justified is noted. It is forecast to have low ridership and could perhaps be developed if needed after the line has been in operation. The LPA Report (December 1995) identified the Jutland Station as part of a future phase of the Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA). This will be addressed in future reviews of the University City Extension.
Response PMS15

Concern for construction of the Tecolote Station platform over Tecolote Creek is noted. See responses to Comment Nos. 65 and 100. Please note that the commuter rail tunnel was not included in the Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative, partly due to cost-effectiveness issues. However, since no money had been programmed or received for the tunnel, this decision did not free up any funds to spend on other projects.

Response PMS16

As explained in the response to Comment Number 100, the Project Advisory Committee (PAC) participated extensively in decisions regarding the station configuration during preliminary engineering. It was decided that access to Mission Bay Park would be provided from the Clairemont Station by an elevator between the overpass and the station platform. Due to cost considerations, no access to Mission Bay Park is provided at Tecolote Station. However, MTD has agreed to work with the neighborhood in the Tecolote Station area to construct a pedestrian bridge to Mission Bay Park should alternative funding become available.
Response PMS17

See response to Comment No. PMS15.

Richard Jensen

Response PMS18

See response to Comment No. PMC14 above.
Response PMS19

As explained in Comment No. 67, a new sidewalk would be constructed on the Clairemont Drive bridge, making it easier and safer for pedestrians to use. The new sidewalk would comply with handicapped-accessibility requirements. Preliminary engineering has shown that the site is adequate to support the proposed station.

Response PMS20

This suggestion was evaluated. Information resulting from that evaluation is located in Appendix J of this FEIS (Ashton Street Station Proposal Technical Memorandum). The proposed station would offer no advantages over the proposed Clairemont or Tecolote stations for the following reasons: the existing street system connects better to the rest of Clairemont; Clairemont Drive has been designated as the primary access point to Mission Bay in the Mission Bay Plan; there are generally more population and employment within 1/2 kilometer (1/3 mile) of the Clairemont Station; and a joint development opportunity is available at the Clairemont Drive site. The Ashton site would have potential neighborhood impacts from traffic, parking by motorists who would use the pedestrian overpass to the beach, and visual impacts from the new overpass. Please see response to Comment No. 67 regarding access to Mission Bay Park from the proposed Clairemont LRT Station. The mitigations mentioned for the existing bridges will be implemented.

Marty Schmidt

Response PMS21

Preliminary engineering plans for Tecolote and Clairemont Stations have been developed that adequately deal with existing infrastructure at a reasonable cost. These stations would be able to function properly.
ELEVATORS DOWN TO THE STATIONS, AND THEN ALSO WITH THE SEWER LINE AND THE POWERLINES AND WHATEVER OTHER CONSTRAINTS EXIST AT THOSE TWO SITES.

I HAVE AN ALTERNATIVE PROPOSAL THAT WOULD BE TO PROVIDE ONE STATION AT ASHTON STREET RATHER THAN AT CLAIREMONT AND TECOLOTE. IT'S A CENTER POINT BETWEEN CLAIREMONT DRIVE AND TECOLOTE. THERE'S AN EXISTING TOWN SQUARE CONFIGURATION AND COMMERCIAL DISTRICT AT THAT LOCATION. BASICALLY IT WOULD ONLY TAKE RELOCATING THE CURRENT BUS STOP AT MILTON STREET TWO BLOCKS SOUTH TO GO ON ASHTON. THEY COULD CIRCULATE AROUND THE TOWN SQUARE AND GO BACK UP MILTON ON THEIR CURRENT ROUTE. ALSO THERE IS MORE SUFFICIENT ROOM TO PROVIDE PARKING ALONG THE FRONTAGE OF MORENA, AND THE COST FOR THIS STATION WOULD BE SUBSTANTIALLY LESS THAN THE OTHER TWO. THERE ARE NO UTILITIES OR INFRASTRUCTURE THAT POSE A PROBLEM EXCEPT FOR THE POWER LINES THAT'S DANGEROUSLY LOW THAT HAVE TO BE ADDRESSED ANYWAYS.

I ALSO SERVE ON THE MISSION BAY PARK MASTER PLAN UPDATE AND AS SUCH THERE WAS AN IDENTIFICATION OF A DESIRE TO DO A SIGNIFICANT GATEWAY FEATURE FOR MISSION BAY PARK, AND WHAT I'D LIKE TO PROPOSE IS THAT AT ASHTON STREET IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE TROLLEY STATION, THAT A PEDESTRIAN OVERPASS BE INCORPORATED, THAT WOULD FUNCTION AS A SAFE METHOD FOR PEDESTRIANS AND BICYCLISTS TO GET ACROSS THE FREEWAY TO THE PARK. CURRENTLY CLAIREMONT DRIVE AND TECOLOTE DRIVE BRIDGES ARE CLEARLY ONLY DESIGNED FOR VENICULAR TRAFFIC AND NOT FOR PEDESTRIANS OR

Response PMS22

Refer to the response to PMS20 regarding the Ashton Street Station proposal.

Response PMS23

Refer to the response to PMS20 regarding Ashton Street Station and impacts of a new bridge. See response to PMS Comment No 19 regarding improvements to the Clairemont Drive bridge for pedestrians and bicyclists.
BICYCLISTS. YOU'RE AT GREAT DANGER WHEN YOU UTILIZE
THOSE BRIDGES. THE ONE PEDESTRIAN OVERPASS WOULD SERVICE
THE ENTIRE BAY PARK COMMUNITY. WHICH HAS BEEN SEPARATED
FROM MISSION BAY BY THE FRESNO AND BY THE TRAIN. THE
OVERPASS WOULD ALSO FUNCTION AS THE GATEWAY THAT COULD
IDENTIFY FUTURE EVENTS THAT ARE GOING TO HAPPEN SUCH AS
HIDROPLANE RACES AND OVER-THE-LINE TOURNAMENT.

ALSO A PART OF THE MISSION BAY PARK MASTER
PLAN IDENTIFICATION FOR A TRAM THAT GOES AROUND THE BAY
WAS IDENTIFIED. THAT TRAM STOP COULD BE LOCATED AT THE
FOOT OF THE PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE SO ALL OF THE CIRCULATION
REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMPONENTS COULD FOCUS ON THIS
ONE STATION LOCATION. PEOPLE COULD GO ACROSS THE BRIDGE,
THEY COULD GET THE TRAM. IT'S ALSO DIRECTLY ADJACENT TO
THE HILTON. THE HILTON WOULD SUPPORT THE PROPOSAL, AND I
THINK IT WOULD RIGHT A LOT OF WRONGS THAT CURRENTLY
EXIST, AND IT'S A REAL OPPORTUNITY FOR MTD, CALTRANS,
THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO AND WHOEVER ELSE TO GET INVOLVED
AND GENERATE A POSITIVE PROJECT WHILE IMPLEMENTING THE
LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT PROPOSAL.

(PUBLIC HEARING CONCLUDED AT 9:00 P.M.)

Response PMS24

If a tram is developed in Mission Bay, connections could be made from Clairemont Drive and Tecolote Road stations. Such a tram is not part of this project, and would be developed separately by others.
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TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS TAKEN, ON THE 27TH
DAY OF APRIL, 1995, COMMENCING AT THE HOUR OF 10:12 A.M.,
AT METROPOLITAN TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT BOARD, 1255 IMPERIAL
AVENUE, SUITE 1000, IN THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO, COUNTY OF SAN
DIEGO, STATE OF CALIFORNIA, BEFORE ME, ANGELA B. BLOOD,
CERTIFIED SHORTHAND REPORTER IN AND FOR THE STATE OF
CALIFORNIA.

APPEARANCES

DENNIS J. WAHL:
METROPOLITAN TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT
BOARD
1255 IMPERIAL AVENUE, SUITE 1000
SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA 92101-7490
MR. WILLIAMS: Okay. That will move us to
Item Number 25 if I'm correct and that presentation
by Bill Lieberman, who is not here, Dennis Wahl and
our Executive, Acting Executive, Jack Limber.

MR. LIMBER: This is a Noticed Public Hearing
on the Mid-Coast Corridor Study.

Dennis will give you a brief overview of the
study, and then we have seven individuals who have
requested the opportunity to address you on this
matter.

MR. WAHL: Mr. Chairman, Members of the Board,
as you know, the Mid-Coast Alternatives
Analysis/Draft Environmental Impact Report/Draft
Environmental Impact Statement was released for
review during the week of February 27th.

We're currently in a 60-day review period which
runs officially from March 10th to May 8th.

We're here today to hold a public hearing to
receive comments from interested parties on the
study, its adequacy and its completeness.

We have held two public meetings last week, and
a summary of the comments we received at those
meetings has been distributed to you.

The hearing today and these meetings are part
of a large effort to make the public aware of our
document and encourage comments.

The second page of our agenda report today is a list of the actions we've taken to try to get the word out that this report is available and we'd like to hear from people.

So to wrap up my presentation, we're having a public hearing today to receive comments from people that have opinions or concerns about our project and about the document.

We will not be responding today to those comments, but rather we're taking them all down with the help of a court reporter here today, to be included in our final environmental documents along with responses.

We will be back to the board hopefully in July with our final environmental impact report and a proposed action on which projects should be pursued in the corridor.

That concludes my presentation.

MR. WILLIAMS: Okay. If there are no questions, my board members will ask the members of the public.

Jack, will you announce the first speaker?

MR. LIMBER: The first speaker we have is
Public Hearing Transcript - April 27, 1995

Kenneth Polin

Response PH1

Support for the Genesee LRT Alternative and opposition to the I-5 alignment are noted. The MTD Board has adopted the I-5 alternative as a component of the Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative. This selection was based on a number of criteria including reducing automobile trips, improving travel times, increasing transit trips, minimizing environmental impacts and distributing the system's costs, benefits and impacts equitably.

Response PH2

High level of activity at the Center and the high level of parking use are noted.
Response PH3

See response to Comment No. 35 above regarding the safety of people in proximity to LRT operations.
Response PH4

See response to Comment No. 36 above regarding impacts and mitigations for the removal of on-street parking.

Response PH5

See response to Comment No. 37 above regarding the effect of on-street parking. The I-5 alignment would require a larger taking of property at this site than the Genesee alignment.

Response PH6

See response to Comment No. 36 above.

Response PH7

Support for the Genesee alignment is noted. The Genesee alignment option was not included in the Preferred Investment Strategy/ Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA). As described in Section 2.1.1 of this FEIS, and in the LPA Report (December 1995), the LPA includes LRT, commuter rail, and HOV improvements. It was selected based on a number of criteria, including reducing automobile trips, improving travel times, increasing transit trips, minimizing environmental impacts, and an equitable distribution of costs, benefits and impacts.
parking, the board of directors of the Lawrence Family JCC strongly urges the MTD to adopt the Genée alignment option.

And I will leave with you today, for your information, a handout which lists our services and programs that we provide on an annual basis. And, as I've described, very extensive.

Thank you very much.

MR. WILLIAMS: Thanks.

MR. LIMBER: Next speaker is Martin Schmidt, followed by Joseph Steinbach.

MR. WILLIAMS: Mr. Schmidt.

MR. SCHMIDT: Yes. My name is Martin Schmidt.

I live at 6623 Blackfoot Avenue in Clairemont.

What I'd like to do is initially indicate that yes, we do support the Mid-Coast rail project. The concerns that I have, and I've been in front of the Executive Committee before, on January 20th, '94, was to propose a different alternative for a station location.

Instead of the Tecolote Drive and Clairemont Drive stations, the proposal would be to locate a single station at Ashton Street, which is essentially midpoint between the two freeway overcrossings and it's also a midpoint between the Old Town station and

Martin Schmidt

Response PH8

Support for the Mid-Coast LRT project is noted.

Response PH9

See response to Comment No. PMS20 above. A station at Ashton Street is analyzed in Appendix J of this FEIS (Ashton Street Station Proposal Technical Memorandum).
Response PH10

The minutes and transcript from the January 20, 1994 meeting confirm that Mr. Roberts did suggest that the City be contacted regarding the proposed pedestrian bridge. In response, a technical memo was prepared, which is included in Appendix J (Ashton Street Station Proposal Technical Memorandum).

Response PH11

No contacts were initiated by Mr. Schmidt following the January 20, 1994 meeting until the AA/DEIS/DEIR was circulated for review. Staff was not directed to contact or work with Mr. Schmidt in furtherance of his proposal. The proposal was not included in the AA/DEIS/DEIR. There was adequate coordination through the alternatives analysis process. No further discussions were necessary after the station had been considered. See response to Comment Number PMS20 for information regarding the Ashton Street station proposal.
Thank you.

MS. STALLINGS: I would like to ask a question of staff at this point, please.

Is this alternative site still being considered? Have you ruled it out altogether? Is it still in the draft EIR/EIS?

Where are we on this because the community has not heard back on this?

MR. WAHL: This particular station site is not in our Environmental Impact Report.

We discussed it, as Mr. Schmidt mentioned, and the action that we received at the time was to suggest that they contact the City for pursuing the overpass, and that we not include it as a station site in our work. So --

MS. STALLINGS: Was that an executive board decision or full board decision?

MR. WAHL: As I recall it was executive committee direction.

Based on the comments that we received from Mr. Schmidt today we can take another look, and would, as part of our response.

And we will be providing some response, and we can provide you, and anyone else interested, the historical information that we worked up on this.
Response PH12

See response to Comment No. PH9 regarding Executive Committee direction and response to Comment No. PMS20 regarding the Ashton station proposal.
Mr. Chairman, before we continue with the
 testimony I'd like to announce the arrival of a group
 of children from San Diego Transit that are touring
 the system today and visiting the Board soon.
 (Applause.)
 MR. LIMBER: And we do have plenty of room if
 you care to step on into the room. Make yourselves
 comfortable.
 MR. WILLIAMS: Thank you for coming,
youngsters.
 MR. LIMBER: The next speaker is Joseph
 Steinbach.
 MR. STEVENS: Mr. Chairman, excuse me. I'd
 like to also acknowledge the young people that are
 here with their parents today. I think we have two
 today. I know that young lady over there is Mr.
 Bartell's daughter because I can see the stripes in
 her hair.
 MR. BARTELL: I'd like to introduce my daughter
 Rebecca, 7th grader.
 (Applause.)
 MS. SHOEMAKER: And I'll introduce my daughter
 Jennifer.
 (Applause.)
 MR. STEVENS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
Joseph Steinbach

Response PH13

Recommendations by the Marian Bear Recreation Council and the Rose Canyon Recreation for an alternative to the Genesee alignment are noted. The Genesee alignment option is not included in the Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA).

Response PH14

The Genesee alignment was not included in the Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA). See response to Comment No. PH7 regarding the basis of the LPA selection.

Response PH15

As noted above (in the responses to Comments PH13 and PH14), the Genesee alignment is not included in the LPA.
Gene Konrad

Response PH16

Comments regarding staff work are noted and appreciated.
Response PH17

Support for the Nobel Drive commuter rail station is noted. This station is included in the Mid-Coast LRT Project, Balboa Extension and Nobel Drive Coaster Station Alternative, evaluated in this FEIS.

Response PH18

Support for the HOV Lane Alternative is noted. See response to Comment No. PMC2 for a discussion of HOV lanes.

Response PH19

Support for the I-5 LRT alignment option is noted. This alignment is included in the Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) adopted by the MTD Board.
Followed by Russ Craig.

MR. HODGE: Hi. My name is Vince Hodge. I'm an employee of Amtrak today. I sell tickets for Amtrak at the station in Irvine, California.

I just want everyone to understand that I'm not here as a representative of Amtrak today. I am here speaking on my own as a private citizen.

Basically my comment is in reference to the commuter rail tunnel that's discussed in the proposal, and I would like to urge that this be not pursued aggressively due to its high cost.

I believe that the greater need for the commuter rail service and for Amtrak service, as well as freight service in the Oceanside to San Diego corridor, would be served if that type of money were spent on the improvement of the railroad, primarily the double tracking of the railroad to allow more reliable services as well as faster services.

Having what I would call a gold-plated tunnel at a quarter of a billion dollars, under the Rose Canyon area, entering and leaving a single track railroad on either end would be completely ineffective. We need to double track this railroad to make it much more feasible to run additional trains.

Vince Hodge

Response PH20

Comments regarding tunnel ventilation issues are addressed in the response to Comment Number 89. See response to Comment Number 87 regarding improvements to the existing tracks. The Preferred Investment Strategy/Locally Preferred Alternative does not include the commuter rail tunnel. This decision was made, in part, due to cost-effectiveness considerations.
Amtrak suffers at this time from considerable delays with the service due to allowing the Coaster to run on time. So we need the double track to allow both systems to proceed efficiently.

Also I believe that the north side, the Soledad Canyon side of the loop, could be upgraded for vastly lower cost than, again, the quarter billion dollars that's proposed for a two-mile tunnel.

And, of course, there is also the significant problems, cost and technological and environmental, of an underground station with diesel hauled locomotive trains.

That's not done anywhere in the world that I know of, and you are going to have some real problems with what to do with the diesel exhaust from that station.

So basically that's my main point, is that I wish that we would go away from the idea of the tunnel for cost reasons, fix the railroad, and fix both the double tracking and the north side, on the Soledad Canyon side, to make the trains be able to run more quickly through the area. Thank you.

MR. LIMBER: Next speaker, Russ Craig, followed by Michael Pallemany.

MR. CRAIG: My name is Russ Craig. I represent...
Response PH22

Positions of the Rose Canyon Recreation Council and UCPG against LRT Genesee are noted. See response to Comment No. PH7 regarding MTDB's decision not to include the Genesee alignment in the LPA.

Response PH23

Preference for a combination of TSM, HOV and commuter rail projects is noted. As described in Section 2.1.1 of this FEIS, the LPA includes LRT, HOV, and commuter rail improvements.

Response PH24

Comments regarding relative impacts of Genesee and I-5 alignment options, and opposition to the Genesee alignment option are noted. Both alignments serve commercial areas and have impacts. The I-5 alignment is included in the LPA. See response to Comment No. PH7 regarding MTDB's selection of the LPA.
on page 5-63 of the EIR.

The effective developments along the LRT/I-5 route were purposely designed to be buffers, and were developed after the freeway was in place. And basically the whole route, including along the Jewish Community Center, is right in a commercial area and not an open space canyon.

Users of the canyon, homeowners, will be affected by adding two new tracks, a catenary system, right of way fencing, and possibly a concrete overhead walkway along with disturbing the natural habitat.

Currently the passing of trains on an infrequent basis has very little impact when compared to the existing level of noise and traffic on I-5, and a possible passing of light rail through Rose Canyon nearly 100 times a day at intervals as small as every three to seven minutes.

The LRT/I-5 alternative passes right through the center of the community and serves UCSD, La Jolla Village Square, and the portions of the community west of I-5, and it also still serves UTC, the businesses and community in the surrounding areas. Cost factors and the need for transportation management along the I-15 corridor may be

Response PH25

As noted above, in the responses to comments PH21-PH24, the Genesee alignment is not included in the LPA.

Response PH26

Comments regarding the I-15 corridor, extending LRT to Balboa, and opposition to Genesee alignment are noted. As described in Section 2.1.1 of this FEIS, the LPA includes the development of LRT in phases, with the first phase to Balboa. Opinion opposing LRT/Genesee alignment is noted.
Michael Pallamary

Response PH27

See response to Comment No. PMC14 regarding the use of the Rose Canyon Operations site for the Balboa LRT station.
aspects of traffic coordination it may have merit.

Also I think it's imperative that we link Bay
Park, the community of Bay Park with Mission Bay.
I'm a coauthor of the Mission Bay Master Plan, and
it's imperative that we link that community either
through a pedestrian bridge or a tunnel.
I think that's mandatory that we do that. This
is a community named Bay Park and they have been
completely deprived of any access to the Bay.
I'd also ask that you consider the design
elements. I think it would be terrible if we create
community nuisances in the way of graffiti-attractive
structures. The design of this building is critical
in its facilities, and I would hate to see it as a
graffiti magnet.
The Morena Boulevard area is already a high
propensity area for graffiti vandalism so I would
hate to see this become part of the urban blight.
Also the Bay Park residents are in a unique
position because they're elevated. They look into
the right of way so we have to be concerned about
visual blight to that community.
This is unique from what you dealt with in
Little Italy. These people sit up above and look
down so we have the issue of catenaries. And there

Response PH28

Enhanced pedestrian access to Mission Bay is included in the Clairemont LRT Station, under the Mid-Coast LRT Project, Balboa Extension and Nobel Drive Coaster Station Alternative, evaluated in this FEIS. Please see response to Comment Number 67 regarding the potential for a future pedestrian bridge at Tecolote Station, and Comment No. PH11 regarding the proposed Ashton Street station.

Response PH29

MTDB Design Criteria call for graffiti resistant treatments and designs for stations and other elements. A graffiti coating is placed on all vertical surfaces up to 3 meters (10 feet) high.

Response PH30

Visual impacts were evaluated in this area, and no significant impacts identified. The vast majority of Bay Park residents are at a higher elevation than the tracks and will consequently look over the right-of-way toward Mission Bay. For the several dozen residents that are at a low enough elevation to see through the catenary lines, several overhead utility lines currently exist. The catenary would not be out of character with this existing view that is already affected by the utility lines.
Response PH31

The proposed ramp from Balboa Avenue to northbound I-5, and other improvements to provide more connections between Balboa Avenue and I-5, were considered by Caltrans and the City of San Diego in 1990. The concepts were found to be feasible, but no funding was identified for implementation. The proposed ramp is not needed for the LRT project and would not be pursued by MTDB. No actions by MTDB on any of the alternatives would preclude this project.
MR. HATHIS: Yes, I so move.

HS. SHOEMAKER: Second.

MR. WILLIAMS: There's a motion. Did I hear a
motion and second to follow the staff recommendation?
Those in favor indicate by the sign aye.

ALL: Aye.

MR. WILLIAMS: Ayes have it, obviously. Okay.
Thank you for your testimony, those of you who
testified to us. We take what you say in cognizance
and in the meantime we are going to move on to the
next item.

(Ending time: 10:45 a.m.)
REPORTER'S CERTIFICATION

I, ANGELA B. BLOOM, C.S.R. No. 9423,
R.P.R., Certified Shorthand Reporter, certify:
That the foregoing proceedings were taken
before me at the time and place therein set forth;
That the testimony was recorded
stenographically by me and was thereafter
transcribed;
That the foregoing is a true and correct
transcript of my shorthand notes so taken.
I declare under the penalty of perjury under
the laws of the State of California that the
foregoing is true and correct.
Dated this 10th day of June, 1995.

ANGELA B. BLOOM, C.S.R. No. 9423

JAN WHITE & ASSOCIATES
Mid-Coast Corridor Project, Final Environmental Impact Statement

4. 20. 1b

MIDB Board
1255 Imperial Avenue, 10th Floor
San Diego, CA 92101

RE: MID-COAST CORRIDOR PROJECT DER- BAY PARK STATION LOCATIONS

Dear Board Members:

We would like to reintroduce to the Board a design alternative that we conceptualized two years ago. The specifics of this proposal are outlined in the attached letter. Initial work and contact with MIDB staff to present our alternative occurred in November and December of 1993, and a presentation to the Executive Committee on January 20, 1994. At that meeting, Councilmember Roberts made a motion to send staff back to further investigate the station locations in both the current MIDB design proposal at Tecate Drive and Clairemont Drive overcrossings and the station site that we propose at Napier and Ashton Streets. The motion was unanimously endorsed. Staff has not contacted us since that meeting and no mention is made in the DRR of our proposal at that meeting.

After working through the Executive Committee, we met with Sue Blackmon and Joe Goldobin of Councilmember Seltins staff. They recommended that we interact with the Bay Park and Clairemont community and generate support. Jim Neil met with Mr. Mike Polomary and we both interacted with the subcommittee chairs for Transportation and Public Facilities & Recreation of the Clairemont Mesa Planning Committee. Both of the chairs concurred with and supported our proposal. Mr. Schmidt will be presenting our proposal at the next meeting of the Planning Committee on May 16, 1995. They have indicated that the Planning Committee is going to endorse our proposal versus the recommendations in the DRR.

Two items have surfaced in the last few months that further refine and provide additional support for our proposal.

1. In Mr. Schmidt's role as staff landscape architect for City of Chula Vista, he serves on the Technical Committee for the Olaf Ranch Project. As a component of several villages, a light rail transit (LRT) line is being incorporated in the street alignments and the "Village Core". MIDB and City staff, along with the Baldwin Company have been working on designing these villages based on the principles of "New Urbanism" or "Neotraditional" planning. One of the primary components is the inclusion of town squares in the center of the village core and the station of the LRT to be located at the town square.

Historical photographs of Bay Park show that as recently as the early 1950's that the square block bounded by Napier, Ashton, Morena and Denver was in fact a town square prior to having a fire station, office building and a Kentucky Fried Chicken built on this community focal point. These questions:

- If staff is committed to creating an image for the Olaf Ranch, why is the opportunity to resurrect the same condition that exists in Bay Park not being aggressively pursued?
- How was a town square/city park allowed to be sold off? What would it take to reacquire the property?

Attachment to Public Hearing Comment Numbers PH8 through PH11

Response PH32

See responses to Comment Nos. PH9, PH10 and PH11. No motion was made or adopted to study the Ashton Street station in the AA/DEIS/DEIR. Appendix J does include an analysis of the proposed Ashton Street Station. It concludes that the station would offer no significant advantage and would introduce a significant adverse visual impact.

Response PH33

MTDB staff attended the May 16, 1995 Clairemont Mesa Planning Committee meeting. The Committee took no action on the proposal at that time.

Response PH34

MTDB considered the site in light of its efforts to support transit oriented development. The Clairemont Drive station site appears to offer more opportunity for supportive development, due to the location of the site and better access to a larger area of Clairemont.

Response PH35

Current and past ownership was researched and it was determined that the property currently has three owners: the Hamilton Moody Trust (Louisville, KY), the City of San Diego, and Thomas and Eleanor Atkinson and Edwin Johnson. We also checked with the City Property Department, the San Diego Historical Society and the Clairemont branch library and were unable to get any definitive information about the existence of a town square in the 1950s or years prior to that time. Aerial photos from 1946-47 show an open grassy area with a few large trees bordering the eastern side. On the eastern side, there was a small building for unknown uses. A 1954 photo shows the same trees on the western border, but the building appears to have an addition built onto it. As stated in PH34 above, the Clairemont Drive station appears to offer more opportunity for transit oriented development.

VOLUME II COMMENTS AND RESPONSES
VOL II-159
Response PH36

Bus stops for Route 5 in the area are currently located along Morena at Asher, Littlefield, Napier and Milton. Regarding a station at Ashton, see response PH32 above.

Response PH37

The UCSD is currently considering a composite bridge for the Gilman Drive crossing of I-5. They were contacted about the potential for designing a similar bridge in this location and indicated that they would be willing to take part in designing the proposed pedestrian bridge.

Response PH38

Potential positive effects of a station at Ashton Street are noted. See Appendix J of this FEIS (Ashton Street Station Proposal Technical Memorandum) for an analysis of an Ashton Street Station. See responses to Comment Nos. 67 regarding pedestrian access; 67, 68, 74 and PMS20 regarding construction costs; PH34 regarding transit oriented development; and PH37 regarding teambuilding. Regarding the Mission Bay Park gateway concept, staff has discussed this with the chair of the Mission Bay Park Committee (Helen Duffy, May 1, 1995). Potential impacts to the neighborhood were identified, particularly resulting from people parking there to use the bridge on busy days. The Clairemont Station was seen as providing good transit access to the Park. The pedestrian bridge was not seen as a vital part of the gateway to the park.
December 1, 1993

Mr. Jim Heri, ASLA
Mr. Martin Schmidt, ASLA

KIUAA
6165 Greenwich Drive, Suite 200
San Diego, CA 92122

Dear Messrs. Heri and Schmidt:

Subject: BAY PARK COMMUNITY PETITION AND ASHTON STREET TROLLEY STATION REPORT

Thank you for forwarding the Bay Park Community Petition for our review. If the petition is circulated, we would ask that you include an explanation that MTD is considering not only a trolley line in the I-5 corridor, but also other alternatives to improve transportation, as well. These alternatives are Transportation Systems Management (TSM), which includes improved bus service and new park-and-ride lots; TSM Plus Commuter Rail Stations, including one at Balboa Avenue; High Occupancy Vehicle Lanes on I-5; and Light Rail Transit (i.e., LRT or trolley). These alternatives are explained in the attached fact sheet. Also attached is a response to your July 12, 1993 letter.

You may want to reconsider the petition after you read the attached memo regarding a station near Ashton Street. The memo documents our observations of the area and the potential for an LRT stop at Ashton Street. We found that the Ashton Street site has comparable surrounding population and employment to other stations in the vicinity. An Ashton Street Station does not, however, have better access to Mission Bay Park or areas east of the Ashton Street community because of the roadway network and existing bridges near the other two station sites. The addition of a bridge at Ashton Street would provide superior pedestrian access; however, there would be higher costs and greater impacts to views than the planned situation. Based on this analysis, we would not recommend pursuing the Ashton Street site. The focus of our efforts will be to improve the pedestrian access of both the Clairemont Drive and Tecate Road bridges.

The schedule for the Mid-Coast Alternatives Analysis calls for distribution of the document in February 1994 for public review, with Board adoption of a locally preferred alternative in June 1994. During the review period,
Attachment to Public Hearing Comment Numbers PH8 through PH11

Dennis J. Wahl
Senior Transportation Planner

Attachments: Fact Sheet
Response to July 12, 1993 letter
Ashton Street Trolley Station Memo
MID-COAST CORRIDOR ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS

PROJECT DESCRIPTION
MTDB, in conjunction with the Federal Transit Administration, the California Department of Transportation, and the Federal Highway Administration, is evaluating alternatives for improving mass transit service in the Mid-Coast Corridor. The Mid-Coast Corridor extends from the junction of Interstate 5 and Interstate 15, north along Interstate 8 to the vicinity of Del Mar Heights Road.

PROJECT PURPOSE
The Mid-Cost Corridor was formally identified as a regional transportation improvement project in SANDAG's Regional Transportation Plan of 1988. San Diego County voters approved the development of high rail transit (LRT) within the Mid-Coast Corridor in 1989 as part of the Transit 2000 sales tax program. MTDB's objective is to provide transportation improvements to the Mid-Coast Corridor in order to increase accessibility and opportunities for both residents and visitors to the Corridor.

PROJECT ALTERNATIVES
The federal government requires MTDB to consider transportation alternatives to LRT in order to qualify for discretionary capital funds. The alternatives under study include:

No-Build
No-Build indicates no mass transportation improvements or service, within the next six years. These improvements include:

- The Regional Transit Interchange at the SR-52/I-84 interchange at SR-52, Interchange
- The Park & Ride Bridge over the Mission Bay Expressway
- The Del Mar Heights Bridge

Rail
The Preferred Alternative includes rail service, bus service, and express rail service, plus additional park-and-ride lots and transit centers.

LRT
The Specific LRT Alternative includes rail service, bus service, and express rail service, plus additional park-and-ride lots and transit centers.

TOD Plus
TOD Plus includes rail service, bus service, and express rail service, plus additional park-and-ride lots and transit centers.

NOV/STO
Includes all projects from the NOV Alternative, plus a high occupancy vehicle lane on I-80 from the Carmel Mountain Road to the vicinity of Del Mar Heights.

PROJECT SCHEDULE
The Board will schedule a public hearing for the Mid-Coast Corridor Final Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report (EIS/EIR) in 1995. The NOV Alternative would begin service in 1997; the LRT Alternative would begin service in 1998; and the TOD Plus Alternative would begin service in 1999.

FINANCIAL PROGRAM
Funding for the Mid-Coast Corridor will depend on a mix of federal, state, and local funds. Capital costs range from as low as $2 billion (1991 $) for the NOV Alternative, up to $5 billion (1992 $) for the LRT Alternative.

November 1993

VOLUME II COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

VOL II-163
CIRCULATION

The lack of congestion here (at Ashton Street) would lessen the traffic impact on either off-ramp.

The traffic analysis conducted for the Mid-Coast Project has found that there will be no increase in congestion to the major streets surrounding the Tecolote Road or Clairemont Drive Trolley Stations. The addition of these trolley stations decreases forecasted traffic volumes on Interstate 5.

Access to both the neighborhood and to the I-5 and I-8 freeways is more direct from Ashton Street.

Access to the neighborhood surrounding Ashton Street would be more direct with the trolley station located there. Access to Ashton Street from I-5 or I-8 is no more direct than to the Tecolote Road or Clairemont Drive stations.

There is an existing bus stop at Ashton Street.

An Ashton Street station would be accessible to one bus route under existing and future conditions. The Clairemont Drive Station will have two, possibly three bus routes serving it; Tecolote will possibly have one.

It is a practical distance between the proposed Old Town and Balboa Avenue stations.

Ashton Street is well located between the proposed Old Town and Balboa stations. However, if only one station is constructed (Tecolote Drive, Ashton Street, or Clairemont Drive), it would most likely be at Clairemont Drive due to its superior accessibility, higher surrounding population and employment, greater number of planned bus connections, and the existing link to Mission Bay Park.

ECONOMICS

A single station could be constructed instead of two.

As mentioned above, if only one station is constructed, it would most likely be at Clairemont Drive.
The commercial district at Ashton Street would benefit from riders and park users.

The Ashton Street Station would serve the commercial district in the surrounding area, as well as the San Diego Hilton on Mission Bay. The employment surrounding Tecolote Road and Clairemont Drive stations is greater and, therefore, those stations would serve more employment.

Caltrans has a responsibility to safely connect the neighborhood with the park and should bear the costs of the pedestrian bridge.

We are unaware of any obligation Caltrans has to constructing a pedestrian connection to Mission Bay Park at Ashton Street. Access to the park is available now, with the Tecolote Road and Clairemont Drive bridges.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Trolley riders and residents could directly access the park without having to cross dangerous freeway on-ramps (with 10-inch-high curbs and no ramps).

A bridge at Ashton Street would make it safer for pedestrians to access the park. Improvements such as curb cuts and signalized intersections would improve pedestrian use of the Tecolote Road and Clairemont Drive bridges.

Disabled access to the park could be prospectively provided.

Currently, there is no disabled access to the park from the Clairemont area. An Ashton Street bridge would create this access. As mentioned earlier, improvements could also be made to the Tecolote Road and Clairemont Drive bridges.

The pedestrian bridge could originate alongside the trolley stop and end at the existing upper esplanade of Ijam on the opposite side of I-5 across from a guarded beach and tax lot.

The Ashton Street bridge landing in Mission Bay Park has amenities similar to the existing Clairemont Drive bridge landing. An Ashton Street bridge would give employees and customers of the Hilton, access to the trolley system.

TMN:trm
R-ASHRES.TMN
12/1/93

VOLUME II COMMENTS AND RESPONSES
VOL II-165
Memorandum

Date: December 1, 1993

To: Dennis Wahl

From: Tony Handoz

Subject: MID-COAST STATION AT ASHTON STREET

This report analyzes the potential for a station site at Ashton Street as proposed by Jim Herr and Martin Schindt, residents of the Ashton Street area and landscape architects (see attached letters). The site was compared to the Tecolote Road and Claremont Drive station sites based on population, employment, trip-end information, field evaluations, and physical conditions. A map indicating station location and one-third-mile radius around each station is attached. Three charts comparing the sites are also attached. Based on this analysis, an Ashton Street station would perhaps be a better community station than the Tecolote Road Station because of higher surrounding population and superior community access. Ashton Street, however, is less accessible than the other two stations due to the surrounding roadway network, physical hindrances surrounding the Ashton Street community (canyons and hills isolate the community), and existing bridges at the Tecolote Road and Claremont Drive stations that serve Mission Bay Park. The addition of a pedestrian bridge at Ashton Street would improve pedestrian access to the park, but would have higher costs and impacts to views.

STATION SITE DESCRIPTIONS

Tecolote Road

Development surrounding the Tecolote Road site consists primarily of commercial and industrial areas. Office, showroom, and industrial buildings dominate the immediate area. South of the Tecolote Road bridge there is a nursery, various restaurants, and a small hotel. A concrete flood channel to the north runs parallel to the bridge. There is a mix of low- and high-density residential units on the hill east of the commercial area. A few single-family homes, medium-density apartments, and mobile homes are located at the east end of the bridge near the Tecolote Road and Morena Boulevard intersection. Residents in this area cannot access the Tecolote Road bridge directly behind their homes because the streets end in cul-de-sacs bordered by fences and a steep hillside. This forces them to walk out of direction to Morena Boulevard then west on Tecolote Road to access the bridge.
Pedestrian and vehicular access to Mission Bay from the Tecolote Road Station is provided by the Tecolote Road Bridge. The sidewalk on the south side of the bridge is temporarily closed due to Caltrans construction. The curbs are 10 inches high and there are no curb cuts. There is no bike lane. There are traffic signals at each on- and off-ramp of this diamond interchange for east-west pedestrian movements. Heading west on the northern side of the bridge leads to the Fiesta Island area, but pedestrians must walk approximately 500 feet out of direction to the south in order to reach an attractive area of the park.

Pedestrian access to the bridge from the Tecolote Road station is included in the station design. Vertical circulation is included in the site plan; however, elevators are not and, therefore, disabled access would be forced one mile out of direction to access the bridge from the station.

Bus service is provided in the area by San Diego Transit Routes S and 105, but is not planned to directly serve the station. It is considered in the Mid-Coast LRT Alternative that Route 105 terminate from the north near Jutland Drive. Route S could be rerouted down West Morena Boulevard with no out-of-direction travel. This option is not included in the Mid-Coast LRT Alternative.

Ashton Street
Ashton Street is 3,300 feet south of Clairemont Drive and 3,000 feet north of Tecolote Road (see attached figure). The community near Ashton Street, east of Morena Boulevard, consists primarily of single-family homes with a few multi-family residences on the western fringe of the community. Small retail businesses and restaurants are located near Morena Boulevard. An Early Learning Center is located at Ashton Street and Chicago Street; a neighborhood market is across the street. Area residents currently have a link to Mission Bay Park via Clairemont Drive or Tecolote Road. Few sidewalks line the streets in this area. Commercial land uses north of Hilton Street limit pedestrian access from the north; the south is blocked off by Tecolote Canyon; to the east is a hillside developed with homes.

The Ashton Street Station site is currently served by San Diego Transit Routes S and 105. The Mid-Coast LRT Alternative proposes that Route 105 terminate from the north near Jutland Drive; Route S would continue to serve the area.

Clairemont Drive
The Clairemont Drive Station site is surrounded by high-density residential units and diverse commercial uses. The street pattern forces autos to make circuitous routes to access the site due to one-way and discontinuous streets. Pedestrians can access the site from all directions due to open parking lots that allow pedestrians to walk through and that pedestrians can travel either direction on one-way streets.

The Clairemont Drive bridge connects to Mission Bay Park at the San Diego Visitor Information Center. The bridge serves as an on- and off-ramp for Interstate 5 and provides access from Clairemont Drive to the park. The southbound on- and off-ramps are in a half-clover-leaf configuration. The
northbound on- and off-ramps are in a "T" configuration. Caltrans uses yield signs to control traffic on the clover-leaf ramps, while traffic signals are present at "T" intersections. This presents a situation where pedestrians are forced to cross one unsignalized, high-speed on-ramp on the north side of the bridge to access the park; on the south side of the bridge, pedestrians are forced to cross three unsignalized high-speed, off-ramps and one low-speed on-ramp. The north side of the bridge is temporarily closed to pedestrians due to Caltrans construction.

Sidewalks on the Clairemont Drive bridge are of standard five-foot width. There is no sidewalk extension to the park and no bicycle lane. No disabled access exists due to lack of curb cuts. The curbs are approximately 10 inches high, compared to typical curb heights between six and eight inches. There is a staircase leading from the station site to the south sidewalk of the bridge; however, unless an elevator is installed from the station site directly to the bridge, disabled persons would be forced to travel approximately 400 feet out of direction, to the east end of the bridge, to access the park.

The station site is currently not served by any bus routes. The Mid-Coast LRT Alternative plan for this site to be served by San Diego Transit Route 30 from the north and Route 25 from the east. A bus drop-off location would be located south of the LRT platform along Morena Boulevard. Route 3 could be rerouted (approximately 0.8 miles out of direction) by coming up Morena Boulevard to Jellie Street, over to Chicago Street, and back down Ingulf Street to turn into the station at Morena Boulevard. The rerouting of Route 3 has not been considered in the Mid-Coast LRT Alternative.

SITE COMPARISONS

The Tecolote Road and Clairemont Drive stations are more desirable station sites because of the existing bridges, higher surrounding employment, greater opportunities for expansion, and better regional access. Three charts are attached that support this conclusion. The first chart shows population, employment, trip-and information, and number of bus routes that serve the stations. This information was analyzed to develop the station comparison chart that rates various aspects of the station. The third chart describes the station site characteristics. The Ashton Street site would be a better community-serving station than the Tecolote Station, but it would not be as accessible to the region.

CONCLUSION

An Ashton Street Station would primarily serve the immediate surrounding community. If pedestrian access at Ashton Street to the park was provided, it would serve mostly the residents of Ashton Street and the customers and approximate 350 employees of the San Diego Hillcrest. If emission Bay, it would not, however, serve Mission Bay Park significantly better than the Tecolote Road or Clairemont Drive stations, as the existing bridges there provide vehicular and pedestrian access to the park. The addition of a pedestrian bridge at Ashton Street is not necessary for the LRT project. It would be desirable to make improvements to the Tecolote Road and Clairemont Drive bridges to enhance pedestrian access to the park from the proposed stations. Ashton Street would not be more accessible to the region.
than Tecolote Road because of the existing bridge and higher surrounding employment at Tecolote Road.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Access from the Tecolote Drive and Clairemont Drive stations should be provided directly to the adjacent bridges to minimize out-of-direction travel and provide access for disabled persons. Vertical circulation is planned for both the Tecolote Road and Clairemont Drive stations without elevators.

- Improvements should be made to the Tecolote Road and Clairemont Drive bridges to make pedestrian use safer and more convenient. These include: curb cuts, signalized intersections (for Clairemont Drive only), and extensions of the sidewalks to Mission Bay Park. These improvements may be done to only one side of the bridge to minimize costs and need for multiple elevators.

- Route 5 should be considered for rerouting to serve both the Tecolote Road and Clairemont Drive stations.

Attachments: July 12, 1993 and October 16, 1993
Letters from Jim Herl and Martin Schmidt
Map Showing One-Third-Mile Radius
Tecolote Road, Ashton Street, and Clairemont Drive Stations - Population, Employment and Trip-Ends
Comparison of Tecolote Road, Ashton Street and Clairemont Drive Stations
Station Site Comparisons
July 12, 1993

Mr. Dennis Wahl
Metropolitan Transit Development Board
1225 Imperial Avenue, Suite 1000
San Diego, CA 92101-7940

Dear Mr. Wahl:

We are writing as private citizens to introduce to you an idea which we believe will make a positive contribution to MTDI's growing circulation network and to the quality of life in San Diego.

This idea involves the construction of a trolley/pedestrian bridge link to Mission Bay Park from morena Boulevard, mid-way between the off ramps at Tecolotl Road and Clairemont Drive. To be quite honest, this idea is both professionally and personally motivated. We are landscape architects: 1 with RTU-A, one of your consulting firms, Mr. Schmidt is a landscape architect for the city of Chula Vista. We both served as members of the Aesthetics and Design subcommittee for the Mission Bay Park Master Plan. We are both residents of the Clairemont/Bay Park community.

Via RTU-A I have learned of MTDI's upcoming draft Mid-Cost Study which will include the tentative locations of trolley stops at both Tecolotl Road and Clairemont Drive. Public input on the Mission Bay Park Master Plan has exposed the need for safe pedestrian access to the park from the Clairemont/Bay Park side of I-8. The location of a single trolley stop with an associated pedestrian bridge, located on Morena Boulevard opposite the small commercial district on Ashton Street makes sense for the following reasons:

CIRCULATION
- The lack of congestion here would lessen the traffic impact on either offramp.
- Access to both the neighborhood and to the I-5 and I-8 freeways is more direct from this location.
- There is an existing bus stop here for transit interconnection.
- It is a practical distance between the proposed Old Town and Balboa stops.

ECONOMICS
- A single stop could be constructed instead of two.
- The commercial district at Ashton Street would benefit from riders and park users.
- Caltrans has a responsibility to safely connect the neighborhood with the park and should bear the costs of the pedestrian bridge.

PUBLIC SAFETY
- Trolley riders and residents could directly access the park without having to cross dangerous freeway onramps with 10' high curbs and no rampway.
- Disabled access to the park could be proactively provided.
- The pedestrian bridge could originate alongside the trolley stop and end at the existing open, unobstructed entrance of the park on the opposite side of I-8 across from a graded beach and tot lot.

Enclosed are some annotated photographs which will help to explain what words cannot. If convenient to you, we would like to follow this letter with a phone call or if you like, you can reach Jim Nett at RTU-A (619-203-16) or at home (275-3123).

Sincerely,

Jim Nett, ASLA

Martin Schmidt, ASLA

Attachment to Public Hearing Comment Numbers PH8 through PH11
Attachment to Public Hearing Comment Numbers PH8 through PH11

Note: Mr. Neil and I met with staff from MIDB regarding this proposal. Current planning by Metropolitan Transit Development Board (MIDB) has two stations proposed. One at the Clinemont Drive overcrossing and one at the Sea World Drive overcrossing. Based on current funding and phasing, the trolley is likely to run north from the Old Town Station to the proposed Baboo Avenue Station. This would be the terminus of the light rail system until sufficient funding is secured to extend the line to North County. General response from DSR was supportive of this one station concept in regards to funding and bus line connection issues. However, additional planning and environmental studies would have to be conducted.

This proposal is a logical solution for identification and inclusion in the Mission Bay Park Master Plan Update for the following reasons:

1. The addition of this dedicated overcrossing provides an opportunity to identify the park and provide safe and convenient access to the park from the Clinemont/Bay Park neighborhood. A design competition could be organized for the design of the overcrossing as a gateway and entry feature to the park.

2. The cost of constructing the one overcrossing would be less than modifying the other two overcrossings. The dedicated overcrossing would also function better than the other two modified overcrossings due to the numerous vehicular/pedestrian interfaces that exist where the traffic transitions onto the freeway on-ramps. The cost for the dedicated bridge could be shared between Collins, City of San Diego, and MIDB.

3. The location would connect the local business district and the proposed light rail and bus transit center to the park. The Mission Bay Park from stop could be added at the foot of the overcrossing and the services of the Hilton Hotel would realize additional exposure. This would provide regional public transit access to the park.

4. The existing business district provides the opportunity for transit oriented development to be expanded, and provide park users with the ability to safely access the mall and specialty stores that cater to park users. Currently, people have to drive over the freeway and on Morena Blvd. to get to the businesses.

We urge the Mission Bay Planners to have the foresight to review, consider and include this proposal in the final document for the Mission Bay Park Master Plan Update.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this proposal.

Sincerely,

[Signatures]

Martin F. Schmidt ASLA
RLA 3010

cc: Mr. Dennis Wohl - MIDB
Ms. Martha McLatchy - Director of Parks and Recreation
Mr. Tim Allson - Collins

VOLUME II COMMENTS AND RESPONSES
VOL II-171
Attachment to Public Hearing Comment Numbers PH8 through PH11
TECOLOTE ROAD, ASHTON STREET AND CLAIREMONT DRIVE STATIONS: POPULATION, EMPLOYMENT AND TRIP-END INFORMATION

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SOURCE: 1990 Census Data, SANDAG Series 7 Regional Growth Forecast.
SANDAG TSMCommuter Rail Model Run with Hidden and Subsea Stations

VOLUME II COMMENTS AND RESPONSES
VOL II-174
### COMPARISON OF TECOLOTE ROAD, ASHTON STREET AND CLAIREMONT DRIVE LRT STATIONS

**EXISTING CONDITIONS**

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**FUTURE AND PLANNED CONDITIONS**

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Scale of 1 to 3: 1 = best conditions, 3 = needs most improvement

* Assumes rerouting SD Transit Rt S and construction of Ashton Street pedestrian bridge. Ashton St. information not available for future conditions therefore, these factors are not considered for future comparisons.
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<th>Description</th>
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<th>CLAIREMONT DRIVE</th>
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<td>Highly visible location. Good community amenities (market, child care). Difficult to walk to from areas north and south of the immediate surrounding neighborhood.</td>
<td>Highly visible from two major arterials. Good future bus service. Surrounded by high density condos and apartments. Good community amenities.</td>
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<td>Available</td>
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<td>Regional Access</td>
<td>Accessible from W. Morena Blvd, I-8, I-5. Access from Tecolote Rd./Sea World Dr. is circuitous. Good access to Point Loma, Ocean Beach and Fiesta Island.</td>
<td>Accessible from Milton St. and Morena Blvd. Good visibility from I-5.</td>
<td>Good access from I-5. Circuitous access from Clairemont Dr. Good access to Mission Bay Park.</td>
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