I-805 BRT/ 47th Street Trolley Station Area Planning
Community Working Group Kick-Off Meeting Summary
Joe & Vi Jacobs Center, Celebration Hall 111A
March 5, 2012, 6-8 PM

1. Welcome and Introductions

2. San Diego City Council President Tony Young
   The meeting was kicked off by San Diego City Council President Tony Young, who serves on the Executive Board for MTS, Executive Board for SANDAG, and the Airport Authority Board. The SANDAG Board voted unanimously to begin planning for the BRT Station at 47th Street. At the Board level, Council President Young expressed his commitment to ensuring that this project continues to move forward.

3. I-805 High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV)/ Express Lanes and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Overview – SANDAG project managers Danielle Kochman and Barrow Emerson provided an introduction to the project.
   a. HOV/Express Lanes- construction on I-805 between 94 and 54 to build 2 HOV lanes will be complete by 2014. By the year 2020, it will be widened to 4 Express Lanes. The freeway construction and Bus Rapid Transit operations for 40 years is funded by TransNet, the half-cent sales tax for transportation projects, approved in 2004.
   b. Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Service- This I-805 based service will operate at high frequency in the peak hours between the Border, Chula Vista and employment centers in the central and north county including; Mid-City, Kearny Mesa, Sorrento Mesa, UTC, and UCSD. This proposed station will also allow for transfers between the new BRT service and the Orange Line trolley.

4. Project Overview
   Danielle Kochman provided an overview of the process and purpose of the working group.
   a. Schedule and Budget- The project is currently in the planning stages. Preferred viable alternatives will be selected in 12-15 months. These alternatives will move into environmental analysis where a preferred alternative will be selected. Final design and construction will follow. The goal is to have the station completed in 2020, when the Express Lanes will be open. There is currently funding for the planning stages, and SANDAG will continue seeking further funding for the following stages.
   b. Community Working Group Process- The Community Working Group is expected to meet on a regular basis, approximately monthly. Over the next few months, the Community Working Group will identify objectives and criteria (e.g. effect on transit ridership, pass travel times, community benefits, associated costs, construction costs, etc.); receive briefings on various topics, then assist in the development of alternatives. Alternatives will then be evaluated based on criteria, with 3 or 4 moving into the environmental phase.

5. Technical Analysis
   Barrow Emerson presented information about the different components of the planning phase for this project.
a. Freeway Engineering- Initial analysis by engineering firm will develop alternatives to connect the freeway HOV/Express Lanes to the existing 47th Street Trolley station. Challenges include the ability to climb up and back down within available distance and the costs associated.

b. Rail Engineering- Discussions will potentially include moving the trolley platform west towards the freeway for a closer transfer between bus and rail. Challenges include rail regulations and associated costs.

c. Transit Service Analysis- Euclid Trolley station has extensive local and regional bus services while there are currently no buses serving the 47th Street Trolley station. Surveyors will talk to riders at the Euclid and 47th Street stations to gain information about trip patterns to assess the potential for adding additional bus service to the 47th St station.

d. Local Mobility Analysis- a Health Impact Assessment was recently completed for this project site. It included a Pedestrian Environmental Quality Index. Results identified pedestrian and bicycle safety problems, and these issues will be addressed as the station design is developed.

e. Community Development Opportunities- There may be re-development opportunities in adjacent properties. There is limited pedestrian access connecting the East side and the West Side of the freeway, creating a barrier in the community. This project will include evaluation of opportunities for community redevelopment and increased pedestrian mobility across the freeway.

6. Next Steps

Danielle Kochman discussed the next steps for the project and the Community Working Group.

a. Meeting Schedule- The Community Working Group is expected to meet on a regular basis over the next 12-15 months. An e-mail will be sent out for feedback on the next meeting time and date. It is hoped that the working group members can continue attending throughout the process.

b. Preview of Upcoming Agendas
   i. Initial Discussion of Objectives and Performance Criteria
   ii. Initial Results of Technical Analysis

7. Questions and Discussion

a. The community is 63% Latino. In order to include more representation, we should contact the Catholic Community Planning Group.

b. Timeline for Financing- this project only has money identified for initial planning at this time. As work progresses, SANDAG will pursue additional funding.

c. Regional Transportation Plan- the I-805 Express Lanes and the BRT are included in the SANAG Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).

d. SANDAG will develop the project and MTS will operate the bus services and manage the station.

e. Estimated Cost and Schedule - In recent years a Direct Access Ramp/Station concept station alternative was developed which was estimated to cost approximately $270 million. This alternative included modifying the I-805 freeway interchanges at Imperial
Ave. and Market St. SR 15 Mid-City “in-line” stations are estimated to cost about $20 million each; however, that project is much simpler than this one. TransNet dollars can be used to leverage state and federal funding, enhancing the project’s potential for funding.

f. Funding - community support is extremely important in moving a project forward through each phase. For example, on the SR 15 BRT stations project in Mid-City, State Senator Susan Davis and City Councilmembers Toni Atkins and Todd Gloria worked with community organizations to maintain community support to keep the project moving forward. SANDAG grants for Safe Routes to Transit and Smart Growth Incentive Program may also serve as additional funding sources for the adjacent areas.

8. Areas of Interest:

a. Patrick Ambrosio would like to consider relocation westward of 47th Street trolley platform (360 ft. long) from its current location. There is another 360ft from west edge of platform to edge of freeway. The vacant land behind the elementary school, (Chollas Mead Elementary on 45th and Market) presents an opportunity for local children to access the school by foot in a non-threatening car environment and possibly lessen school-oriented traffic congestion in the vicinity of the school.

b. Gerald Ramsey is interested in connection to San Diego City Colleges.

c. Randy Van Vleck stressed the importance of safety through design by providing “eyes on the street.” As a staff person from the City Heights Community Development Corporation, he can provide the City Heights perspective to the working group from his experience on the SR 15 BRT Station project.

d. Sherry Brooks stated that we should not dismiss the inline station alternative. Alternatives should also be sensitive to surrounding community, favoring alternatives with the least amount of eminent domain impacts.

e. Darryl Williams (Groundworks SD) is interested in the station’s interface with the YMCA, and looking forward to seeing the traffic impact on Euclid. Chollas Creek is a natural connection from West to the East and should be considered when looking for opportunities for improving pedestrian access. He favored involving local consultants in the design phase and identified street lighting as a current issue with the project site.

f. In the process Michael Brunker would like to expand the project area maps to Logan to include the Educational Cultural Complex (ECC) and Home Depot (0.6 miles to ECC, .4 miles to Imperial Market Place, and 0.8 miles to Logan Ave via 45th). He emphasized that the project should pursue walkable connection(s) to the areas west of the freeway, crime prevention through environmental design (potentially through adding a small police substation). He hopes to see Chollas Creek develop into something similar to the River Walk in Mission Valley.

g. Kathleen Macleod stated her concerned about traffic congestion on Imperial and 47th Street.

h. Michelle Krug is concerned as a public transit rider who is not a choice rider. She does not want services reduced at the Euclid station. She is also interested in regional connectivity to the Airport and Amtrak.
i. One of the volunteers from the PEQI analysis expressed her interest in bike paths, drought tolerant landscaping, and impacts this project might have on real estate development and land values.

j. One resident expressed the importance of ADA accessibility.

k. Mike Singleton is interested in bringing people to jobs or shopping centers locally from other areas in the region, while also attracting new businesses to the area.