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May 23, 2011

File Number 2300000

Ms. Elyse W. Lowe
 Move San Diego
 P.O. Box 87588
 San Diego, CA 92138

Dear Ms. Lowe:

SUBJECT: Letter dated March 10, 2011, re: March 11, Item No. 2 on the Board Agenda

Thank you for your letter regarding the March 11, 2011, SANDAG Board Policy meeting that discussed transportation modeling to support the 2050 Regional Transportation Plan. This letter responds to some key points raised in your letter.

The SANDAG transportation modeling tools have been extensively peer reviewed and are considered to be among the premier in the United States. They are based on solid empirical evidence and decades of research and development by transportation professionals and SANDAG staff. The SANDAG transportation model meets all federal requirements for analyzing the scenarios and policies considered in the development of the Draft 2050 Regional Transportation Plan (2050 RTP).

The responses below address some of your points regarding the SANDAG planning and modeling process. The points being addressed are excerpts from your letter and are shown in **bold font**; page numbers refer to the pagination of the original letter.

[Generally accepted SANDAG] biases include ... only low income people will use transit in any significant numbers (particularly buses). (pg.2)

SANDAG has developed a plan for transit that is inclusive of the entire region. The Draft 2050 RTP includes nearly \$90 billion (year of expenditure) for transit investment, 46% of the total as compared to 31% for transit in the 2030 RTP. This includes investments in bus rapid transit (BRT) along the Interstate 15 (I-15) corridor (partially paid for by revenues from the managed lanes), increased local bus frequency in the urban core, and significant investment in more than 125 miles of new light-rail. Under this investment

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plan, SANDAG expects transit mode share will double in every income group over the life of this plan

[Generally accepted SANDAG] biases include ... freeway expansion will not increase regional vehicle miles traveled (VMT). (pg. 2)

SANDAG acknowledges that there is a relationship between expansion of the regional transportation system and vehicle miles traveled (VMT). Providing people transportation choices, however, also assists in reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Each of the alternatives explored in the Draft 2050 RTP would reduce greenhouse gas emissions compared to the no-build alternative by providing residents and visitors with competitive transit, biking, and walking alternatives to driving to work, school, and recreation.

[Generally accepted SANDAG] biases include ... buses are less attractive than railcars. (pg. 2)

In developing the Draft 2050 RTP, the focus is on providing the most efficient mode of transportation to meet the needs of the San Diego region. In some cases along the I-15 and in the South Bay, the transit improvements include BRT services. In other areas throughout the urban core, Mid-Coast corridor, and SPRINTER corridor, the most efficient transportation was determined to be light-rail. During the development of the Draft 2050 RTP, numerous route and mode alternatives were explored to find the combination that provides the most benefits. As an example, SANDAG engaged in a multi-year process with Federal Transit Administration and local stakeholders to identify the best mode, and route for the Mid-Coast corridor light-rail extension to University Towne Centre.

HOT lanes – Inaccurate modeling by grossly overestimating current and future toll lane usage and revenues. (pg. 1)

The SANDAG transportation model is a regional aggregate model, and it is not used to forecast specific toll revenues for any particular corridor. Toll revenue estimates are based on experience to date from the I-15 FasTrak® program, given expected increases in usage of the I-15 Managed Lanes over time. In summary, the SANDAG transportation model and planning process are well-suited for the type of analysis conducted to support the Draft 2050 RTP.

Your letter closes with several requests. Namely, you request transparency and a model that is useable and understandable, and that all current and future model files are made open to the public without a Board policy decision required for each public information request. SANDAG held a Board Policy meeting in March 2011, during which SANDAG staff explained the SANDAG model to the Board of Directors and the public in an attempt to make it useable and understandable. SANDAG has continued the process of updating and enhancing the model and its documentation for the RTP and public review process. Intermediate level documentation is available in the Regional

Models section of the SANDAG Web site at www.sandag.org/models. Model validation and sensitivity reports will be posted later this spring. Final detailed technical model documentation will be posted prior to adoption of the 2050 RTP this fall.

As you know, SANDAG considers elements of its current model to be source code and therefore not a public record. SANDAG provides responses to public records requests without approval from the Board of Directors, and has responded to the six requests for public records that have come from Move San Diego over the past two years. SANDAG has offered to provide Move San Diego with a license for its source code under the same terms it has provided to others, but Move San Diego has not agreed to those terms.

Thank you again for taking the time to provide your feedback and suggestions. If you have any questions or additional comments, please feel free to contact Kurt Kroninger, Technical Services Director, at (619) 699-6996 or kkkr@sandag.org.

Sincerely,

JEROME STOCKS
Chair, Board of Directors

JS/KKR/kca