TO: Interested Agencies, Organizations, and Individuals

FROM: San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) Staff

SUBJECT: Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the South Bay Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Project

Notice of Preparation
SANDAG, as lead agency, will prepare an EIR for the South Bay BRT Project in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). SANDAG would like to know your views or the views of your organization or agency regarding the scope and content of the environmental information that will be addressed in the draft EIR. The project description, location, and probable environmental effects are contained in the attached material. An initial study was not prepared for this project.

Scoping Meeting
A public scoping meeting will be held on the following date and location:

April 28 - 4 to 8 p.m.
Heritage Elementary School
1450 Santa Lucia Road, Chula Vista, CA 91910

Public input will be taken at the meeting. In addition, public input can be provided in writing at the meeting or submitted via letter or e-mail to SANDAG. Contact information is provided below.

Due to the time limits mandated by state law, your response must be sent at the earliest possible date, but no later than 30 days after receipt of this notice.

SANDAG Contact Information
Please send your response to:
Rob Rundle, Principal Regional Planner
401 B Street, Suite 800
San Diego, CA 92101
E-mail: rru@sandag.org
Phone: (619) 699-6949
Fax: (619) 699-1905
Please include your name and contact information or the name of a contact person in your organization or agency, if appropriate.

**Lead Agency**
San Diego Association of Governments

**Project Title**
South Bay Rapid Transit Project Environmental Report

**Project Location**
The 21-mile route is located between the Otay Mesa Port of Entry and downtown San Diego via eastern Chula Vista within San Diego County, California.

**Date**
April 20, 2010

RRU/ama

Attachment:
1. South Bay Bus Rapid Transit Project Description

Prepared by: [Signature]

ROB RUNDLE
Principal Regional Planner
South Bay Bus Rapid Transit Project Description

The proposed BRT project is being proposed in two phases. Phase I improvements would be completed by 2012; Phase Ia improvements would occur thereafter depending on funding and managed lane construction, but are anticipated to be completed by 2016.

Under Phase I, the BRT route would originate at the proposed Intermodal Transit Center located immediately southwest of the Siempre Viva Road/State Route (SR) 905 interchange and generally extend north via SR-905, transition to SR-125 at Otay Mesa Road, and continue north to the SR-125/Birch Road interchange. The proposed route would follow Birch Road east to the transit guideway Right-of-Way (ROW) located around the perimeter of the Otay Ranch Town Center, then turn north from Birch Road generally paralleling Eastlake Parkway, and then turn to the west within the guideway along the northern boundary of Otay Ranch Town Center. The route would cross over SR-125 within an existing transit corridor via a new transit/pedestrian bridge and then travel within a dedicated guideway between SR-125 and Magdalena Avenue. The route would travel generally west within the East Palomar Street center median guideway to Heritage Road. From this intersection, the interim Phase I route would travel north on Heritage Road then west on Telegraph Canyon Road to the Interstate (I) 805/Telegraph Canyon Road interchange.

Phase Ia improvements would extend the BRT guideway west within the existing East Palomar Street ROW from Heritage Road to Oleander Avenue. Oleander Avenue is located approximately one-quarter mile east of I-805. This would be the ultimate South Bay BRT alignment. The South Bay BRT route would continue west to I-805, north to SR-94, and west into downtown.

Issues Addressed in the EIR

The EIR will analyze the impacts of the BRT service on the physical environment. The EIR will address the BRT’s potential impacts to the following environmental resource areas:

1. Aesthetics
2. Agricultural & Forest Resources
3. Air Quality
4. Biological Resources
5. Cultural Resources
6. Geology & Soils
7. Greenhouse Gas Emissions/Global Climate Change
8. Hazardous Materials
9. Hydrology/Water Resources Quality
10. Land Use/Population & Housing
11. Mineral Resources
12. Noise
13. Public Services/Utilities
14. Recreation
15. Regional Water Supply
16. Traffic/Transportation
17. Utilities/Service Systems
18. Mandatory Findings of Significance
In addition, the EIR will address cumulative impacts, growth-inducing impacts, and other issues required by CEQA.

**Alternatives Analyzed in the EIR**

SANDAG will evaluate alternatives in the EIR. Each alternative will be compared to the proposed project for its potential to achieve the goals of the South Bay BRT while reducing potentially adverse regional environmental impacts. In addition to the project, the EIR proposes to evaluate four alternatives as described below.

1. **No Project Alternative** – The No Project Alternative is required by CEQA. This alternative would be existing conditions through 2030.

2. **Otay Mesa Alternative** – Evaluation of alternatives to serve the Otay Mesa Port of Entry.

3. **Otay Ranch Alternatives** – Alternatives to serve various station sites along East Palomar, including but not limited to the station site at Santa Venetia, Otay Ranch Town Center, and the future Eastern Urban Center.

4. **Access to I-805** – Alternatives to assess routings between Otay Ranch Villages and I-805.

Although these alternatives have been identified, SANDAG is seeking input on the alternatives in the Notice of Preparation process that could result in modifications to the number of alternatives analyzed in the EIR or modifications to the alternatives identified above. In addition, the EIR will identify other alternatives that were initially considered, but rejected for reasons including infeasibility.