

# TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

March 2, 2007

AGENDA ITEM NO.: **1**

**Action Requested: APPROVE**

## TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE DISCUSSION AND ACTIONS MEETING OF FEBRUARY 16, 2007

The meeting of the Transportation Committee was called to order by Chair Jim Madaffer (City of San Diego) at 9:03 a.m. See the attached attendance sheet for Transportation Committee member attendance.

Chair Madaffer recognized Kevin Siva and Albert "Boxie" Phoenix, new advisory representatives for the Southern California Tribal Chairmen's Association. He also acknowledged Admiral Bruce Boland from the San Diego County Regional Airport Authority.

### 1. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES (APPROVE)

Mayor Lori Holt Pfeiler (North County Inland) noted a correction to page 11 of the January 19, 2007, minutes. She stated that she, rather than Chair Madaffer, made the motion to approve FY 2008 federal transportation appropriations proposals.

Action: Upon a motion by Mayor Pfeiler and a second by Councilmember Bob Emery (Metropolitan Transit System [MTS]), the Transportation Committee approved the January 19, 2007, meeting minutes, as amended.

### 2. PUBLIC COMMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS/MEMBER COMMENTS

Chuck Lungerhausen, a member of the public, mentioned the upcoming 2007 National Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Society Walk on April 28-29, 2007, and the MS Water Walk on April 20 at the Mission Beach Plunge. He thanked the members for their past and continued support for this cause. Mr. Lungerhausen also mentioned the need to fund more trolleys with the half-cent sales tax measure.

Don Stillwell, a member of the public, noted SANDAG efforts to improve highways and local streets, but expressed concern that not enough attention was being paid to public transit. He recommended putting a trolley line in the I-15 corridor to serve activity centers such as the Wild Animal Park in Escondido.

## CONSENT ITEM (3)

### 3. TRANSIT REVENUE APPORTIONMENTS AND PROJECTIONS (RECOMMEND)

By March 1 of each year, SANDAG provides operating revenue estimates and allocations to the transit operators and to local agencies for the nonmotorized program. The

Transportation Committee is asked to recommend that the Board of Directors approve these estimates and allocations at its February 23, 2007, meeting.

Action: Upon a motion by Mayor Holt Pfeiler and a second by Deputy Mayor Jerry Rindone (South County), the Transportation Committee recommended that the SANDAG Board of Directors at its February 23, 2007, meeting: (1) adopt the FY 2008 apportionments for various federal, state, and local revenues; and (2) approve the revenue projections for FY 2009 to FY 2012 for these revenues, as contained in Attachments 1 through 5 of the agenda report.

## **REPORTS (4 THROUGH 9)**

### **4. INTERSTATE 15 BUS RAPID TRANSIT OPERATIONS PLAN UPDATE (APPROVE)**

Barrow Emerson, SANDAG Senior Planner, presented the staff report concerning the Interstate 15 (I-15) Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Operations Plan. He was joined by Conan Cheung, MTS Director of Planning and Performance Monitoring.

Mr. Emerson summarized the October 2006 Transportation Committee approval of the initial I-15 BRT Operations Plan for service to downtown San Diego, and direction to staff to evaluate service options to Sorrento Mesa/University City/University of California, San Diego (UCSD). He provided an overview of the three Sorrento Mesa/University City/UCSD alignment options that were evaluated, including travel times, patronage, and population forecasts.

He noted that BRT vehicle types have not yet been decided, and that operational issues such as these would be further evaluated by staff and brought back to the Committee at a future date. Mr. Emerson continued by summarizing staff's recommendations for the Mira Mesa Boulevard alignment, and its reasons for recommending MTS as the service operator for the 2012 I-15 BRT Operations Plan.

Councilmember Emery commented about the need for queue jumpers and other priority measures on Mira Mesa Boulevard. He said that even though this is a more direct alignment, it would be more difficult to operate a premium express service on it because of traffic congestion and lack of transit-friendly accommodations.

Mayor Art Madrid (East County) noted that he would like to see a potential merger of MTS and North County Transit District (NCTD) if we're serious about providing state-of-the-art transit service for the region.

Sandy Shapery, representing the Regional Planning Stakeholders Working Group, confirmed the problem with traffic congestion in the Sorrento Valley area along Mira Mesa Boulevard.

Deputy Mayor David Druker (North County Coastal) thought that staff should continue to look at State Route (SR) 56 alignment, as it is a more direct route to the area. He also asked the Committee to consider implementing queue jumpers and other priority measures on Mira Mesa Boulevard sooner than 2012 in order to improve travel times for existing bus service along that corridor.

Councilmember Emery concurred with Deputy Mayor Druker's suggestion for accelerating the implementation of transit priority measures along Mira Mesa Blvd.

Gary Gallegos, Executive Director, stated that staff would look at ways to implement transit priority measures in the corridor, and would report back to the Committee.

Action: Upon a motion by Deputy Mayor Druker and a second by Councilmember Emery, the Transportation Committee approved: (1) an I-15 corridor BRT operations plan for 2012 that includes BRT service to both downtown San Diego and the Sorrento Mesa/University City/UCSD area, with an alignment along Mira Mesa Boulevard for the Sorrento Mesa/University City/UCSD service; and (2) identification of MTS as the operator for the 2012 BRT operations plan. The Committee also directed staff to report back on its findings regarding transit priority measures on Mira Mesa Boulevard.

5. PROPOSED CHANGES TO FasTrak® PROGRAM – TRANSPONDER AND ACCOUNT FEES ASSESSMENT (RECOMMEND)

Derek Toups, Associate Planner, presented the staff report on this item. Renee Wasmund, Director of Finance, detailed the interest earned for the I-15 FasTrak program, as had been requested by Committee members at the January meeting.

Mr. Toups summarized the total FasTrak business costs, which equate to approximately \$100,000 per month, or \$5.00 per month per account. He noted that the fixed contractor costs are \$64,000 per month (a subset of the total business costs), or approximately \$3.50 per month per account.

Mr. Toups continued by highlighting the components of the proposed business model recommended by the Transportation Committee. It includes a \$1.00 per month per transponder fee and a \$3.50 per month account maintenance fee. Both would be offset by I-15 tolls paid. The business model also achieves a number of benefits, such as incentives to motivate use, cost recovery, and parity with other toll operators, among others. He provided examples of how the fees would apply, from a customer's perspective.

First Vice Chair Jerome Stocks (Encinitas) thanked staff for its efforts in coming back with a better business model for the FasTrak program.

Mr. Shapery commended staff and inquired about how prepaid toll deposits were handled. Mr. Toups responded by summarizing the financial practices that Ms. Wasmund highlighted in her portion of the presentation, and by explaining how credit card charges were handled.

Deputy Mayor Rindone asked about the funding agreement with MTS and asked if there would be as much revenue passed through to MTS as in the past. Mr. Gallegos replied that a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) would be implemented following action by the SANDAG Board of Directors. He noted that in the short-term, the pass-through funding would be less than prior year levels, but that once the Managed Lanes were expanded and opened to traffic, a higher revenue stream was expected. Mr. Gallegos mentioned that by law, any net revenues earned above and beyond operating costs is to be used to enhance public transportation and carpool services in the I-15 corridor.

Deputy Mayor Rindone expressed concern that the MTS I-15 corridor service may be reduced based on declining revenue. He asked whether it would be appropriate to consider increasing FasTrak fees to raise more revenue for transit.

Chair Madaffer said that the idea of raising fees was proposed by staff, but rejected by the SANDAG Board. However, with today's proposal, forthcoming Managed Lanes improvements, and changes to operations once the Managed Lanes are open, we expect to see some significant changes beginning in 2008.

Mayor Madrid mentioned that this program was started as a pilot program in 1996, and the original business model had not been modified since its inception. He requested a periodic review of this program.

Jack Boda, Director of Mobility Management and Project Implementation, stated that within the next year, SANDAG will have both a consultant and a contractor onboard to assist us in developing a new incentive-friendly pricing system. Staff expects to return to the Committee and Board with regular program updates, including how to handle enforcement, toll algorithms, and the overall FasTrak business plan. Caltrans also is interested in recovering some of its costs to operate and maintain the Managed Lanes, and we will need to work with Caltrans and the two transit agencies to determine the best use of the net FasTrak revenue in the I-15 corridor.

Mr. Boda also said that there are approximately 13,000 drivers interested today in using the South Bay Expressway. One of our concerns is that if we don't take some action today regarding our transponder and account fee policies, these people may sign up for a free transponder from SANDAG. This may further exacerbate our program cost deficit.

Chair Madaffer said that today's action was an interim one, and that there would be much further discussion of program policies in the future.

Paul Jablonski, MTS Chief Executive Officer, asked about the projected revenues in the short-term. Mr. Boda responded that projected annual revenues are approximately \$500,000 for FY 2008.

Ed Gallo (NCTD) asked where the excess revenues might go. Mr. Gallegos responded that state law mandates net revenues must go to public transit or/or carpool services in the I-15 corridor.

Supervisor Ron Roberts (County of San Diego) asked what staff expects will happen if the proposed transponder and account fees are put into place. Marney Cox, Chief Economist, believed that of the 19,000 account holders approximately 13 percent overall would close their accounts. He also estimated that the increase in fees would generate an additional \$400,000 to \$600,000 per year in revenues.

A concern was raised by NCTD Chair Gallo as to why the public was being asked to further subsidize public transit. He voiced opposition to the recommended action.

Pedro Orso Delgado (Caltrans) provided a brief history of and rationale for the FasTrak program which has been in operation for a decade.

Deputy Mayor Rindone amended his original motion. He asked that staff report back on the effects of the program fee changes.

Action: Upon a motion by Deputy Mayor Rindone and a second by Mayor Pfeiler, the Transportation Committee recommended that the SANDAG Board of Directors: (1) approve the FasTrak \$1.00 per month transponder fee, and \$3.50 per month account maintenance fee, with credits to offset fees based on tolls paid; and (2) authorize staff to negotiate a funding agreement with MTS. The action included direction to staff to report back to the Committee within six months of the implementation of the fee changes.

6. 2006 STATE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM AUGMENTATION (INFORMATION/POSSIBLE ACTION)

Jose Nuncio, Senior Engineer, reported that the infrastructure bond measure (Proposition 1B) approved by the voters in November 2006 added \$2 billion to the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) account. He summarized the \$164 million of funding available through the STIP Augmentation, consisting of a \$85 million highway target, a \$35 million transit target, and \$44 million in advanced funds in FY 2012.

Mr. Nuncio described the adopted SANDAG STIP funding priorities – to finish what has been started, to focus on the *TransNet* Early Action Program (EAP), and to fund ready-to-go projects. He went over the options for funding *TransNet* EAP highway projects: SR 52 Extension, I-15 Managed Lanes (South), and SR 52 Managed Lanes Widening. Options for *TransNet* EAP transit projects include I-15 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Stations, Blue Line Trolley Vehicles, and Blue Line Trolley Station Improvements. He continued by describing the options for non-*TransNet* EAP projects, which include the regional Smart Card project, transit projects recommended by MTS and NCTD, and the SANDAG noise barrier retrofit program, among other priorities. Mr. Nuncio concluded by summarizing the next steps in the STIP Augmentation process.

Chair Madaffer mentioned the upcoming California Transportation Commission (CTC) hearing on February 20, 2007, on the Proposition 1B Corridor Mobility Improvement Account (CMIA) program. He said that we were in a better position than other regions to present transportation projects that were ready to go.

Deputy Mayor Druker stated that the proposed programming represented a balanced allocation of funds across the various project priorities, both highway and transit.

Councilmember Emery asked staff to distribute a list of CTC members to the Committee.

Mayor Madrid commented that CTC Commissioner John Chalker has played a key role for the San Diego region, and that we should be able to benefit because we are better organized than other regions that encompass multiple counties.

NCTD Chair Gallo thanked Chair Madaffer for his leadership. He stated that the San Diego region should be rewarded for its aggressive efforts in transportation.

Mr. Gallegos mentioned that San Diego local officials and business leaders also were planning to appear at the February 20 CTC hearing.

Mr. Shapery added that Commissioner Chalker was recently selected to be Vice Chair of the CTC.

Action: Upon a motion by Deputy Mayor Rindone and a second by Councilmember Emery, the Transportation Committee directed staff to develop a draft letter of support for the SANDAG CMIA proposals.

7. RURAL HIGHWAY 94 STATUS REPORT (INFORMATION)

Elisa Arias, Principal Planner, introduced Caltrans Project Manager Sam Amen, who reported on the progress made and future work to be done on the SR 94 Rural Corridor. Mr. Amen described the corridor, current environmental efforts and operational projects underway, needs and problem areas, outreach activities, and the development schedule for short-term and long-term improvement projects..

Theell Fowler, a member of the public, noted the significant number of accidents and fatalities that have occurred on SR 94 over the last few years, because of the road's sharp curves and the increase in long trucks using the stretch of road. He mentioned the need to straighten the road's curves and provide operational improvements such as passing lanes. He also encouraged more California Highway Patrol (CHP) enforcement in order to provide patrols during the afternoon peak periods.

Councilmember Emery commented on the changing environment of the "back country" with the widening of the roads and the housing subdivisions that are springing up.

Chair Madaffer asked Caltrans District 11 Director Orso Delgado to respond to Mr. Fowler's concern about longer trucks using the road. Mr. Orso Delgado replied that the road is signed for 55-foot trucks, but some 65-foot trucks have been witnessed, and Caltrans is working with CHP on the enforcement issue.

Action: This item was presented for information only.

8. UPDATE ON THE COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION SERVICES AGENCY (INFORMATION)

Karen King, NCTD Executive Director, mentioned Councilmember Phil Monroe's involvement with Full Access and Coordinated Transportation (FACT), the new Consolidated Transportation Service Agency (CTSA) for the San Diego region. She then introduced Rob Carley, Executive Director of FACT, who provided an overview of FACT.

Mr. Carley summarized the agency's vision, recent milestones, changing demographics (aging of our population), and current transportation services in the region. He stated that FACT aims to coordinate the diverse services and be a one-stop shop for its clients, who include seniors, low income, and otherwise disadvantaged individuals. He described the role of FACT as the CTSA and certain grant funded work that was underway, as well as what is planned for the future.

Admiral Bruce Boland (San Diego County Regional Airport Authority) asked if FACT was coordinating with the 211 service provider. Mr. Carley responded yes.

Action: This item was presented for information only.

9. SPRINTER PROJECT STATUS REPORT AND SANDAG INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT (INFORMATION)

Jim Linthicum, Director of Engineering and Construction, provided the monthly status report on the progress of the NCTD SPRINTER Rail Project, which converts an existing 22-mile freight rail corridor into a Diesel Multiple Unit (DMU) transit system connecting Oceanside, Vista, unincorporated County areas, San Marcos, and Escondido. Mr. Linthicum provided an overview of current progress, including 22 of 32 track miles completed, 11 of 15 station platforms poured, delivery of station canopies in March, start of work on parking lots and repair of the Rancho Del Oro Landslide, and continued testing of the DMU vehicles.

Mr. Linthicum described recent efforts to keep the project on schedule as well the schedule for the remaining work. He also described the estimate at completion (\$447.7 million), which is less than the project budget (\$484.2 million). He noted that a project concern is the large number of work areas left incomplete. If not properly mitigated, this presents the potential for future delay to critical activities and the start of pre-revenue training.

Action: This item was presented for information only.

NCTD Chair Gallo stated that he would like to reconsider his opposition vote to the prior FasTrak agenda item. General Counsel said that it was only possible to change a vote by re-opening the agenda item. Mr. Gallo declined to do so, but stated that he would like his support for the staff recommendation to be noted on the record.

10. UPCOMING MEETINGS (INFORMATION)

The next meeting of the Transportation Committee is scheduled for Friday, March 2, 2007, at 9:00 a.m.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Madaffer thanked the staff and Committee for their work and adjourned the meeting at 11:30 a.m.

**CONFIRMED ATTENDANCE  
SANDAG TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MEETING  
February 16, 2007**

GEOGRAPHICAL AREA/ ORGANIZATION	JURISDICTION	NAME	MEMBER/ ALTERNATE	ATTENDING
North County Coastal	City of Del Mar	David Druker	Member	Yes
	City of Oceanside	Jerry Kern	Alternate	No
North County Inland	City of Escondido	Lori Holt Pfeiler	Member	Yes
	City of Vista	Bob Campbell	Alternate	No
East County	City of Santee	Jack Dale (Vice Chair)	Member	Yes
	City of La Mesa	Art Madrid	Alternate	Yes
South County	City of Coronado	Jerry Rindone	Member	Yes
	City of Chula Vista	Phil Monroe	Alternate	No
City of San Diego	----	Jim Madaffer (Chair)	Member	Yes
	----	Scott Peters	Alternate	No
	----	Ben Hueso	Alternate	No
County of San Diego	----	Ron Roberts	Member	Yes
	----	Bill Horn	Alternate	No
	----	Greg Cox	Alternate	No
Metropolitan Transit System	City of Poway	Bob Emery	Member	Yes
	MTS	Harry Mathis	Alternate	Yes
North County Transit District		Ed Gallo	Member	Yes
		Jerome Stocks	Alternate	No
		David Druker	Alternate	No
San Diego County Regional Airport Authority		Bruce Boland	Member	Yes
		Vacant	Alternate	No
ADVISORY/LIAISON Caltrans	----	Pedro Orso-Delgado	Member	Yes
	—	Bill Figge	Alternate	No
Regional Planning Stakeholders Working Group	—	Sandor Shapery	Member	Yes
		Gary Nordstrom	Alternate	No
		Kathy Keehan	Alternate	No
SCTCA	—	Kevin Siva	Member	Yes
		Albert Phoenix	Alternate	Yes
SANDAG 2 <sup>nd</sup> VICE CHAIR		Jerome Stocks	Ex Officio	