

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

October 5, 2007

AGENDA ITEM NO.: **1B**

Action Requested: APPROVE

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE DISCUSSION AND ACTIONS MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 20, 2007

The special meeting of the Transportation Committee was called to order by Chair Jim Madaffer (City of San Diego) at 12:32 p.m. See the attached attendance sheet for Transportation Committee member attendance.

1. PUBLIC COMMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS/MEMBER COMMENTS

Deputy Mayor Dave Druker (North County Coastal) and Chairman Ed Gallo (North County Transit District [NCTD]) welcomed the Committee members to North County.

REPORTS

2. PUBLIC HEARING: COMPREHENSIVE FARE ORDINANCE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

Chair Madaffer opened the public hearing and explained the procedures for holding a public hearing.

Daniel Levy, Senior Regional Planner presented the item. SANDAG has been responsible for setting all public transit fares in the San Diego region since 2003. The regional fare structure is outlined in the Regional Comprehensive Fare Ordinance (the Ordinance). The Ordinance needs to be updated to reflect the proposed fare changes. These fare changes are intended to bridge the Metropolitan Transit System's (MTS) budget gap of \$9.2 million. This public hearing was held in accordance with SANDAG Board of Directors Public Participation Policy and provided an opportunity for members of the public to comment on the proposed changes to the Ordinance.

Changes are needed due to the upcoming start of SPRINTER operations, the new ticket vending machines, and to meet funding gaps resulting from budget reductions. MTS had informed SANDAG in August that it faced a budget shortfall. MTS proposed fare increases after taking significant actions to increase revenues, reduce staff benefits, and reduce some services. Mr. Levy briefed in detail the proposed changes and the justification for the fare increases requested to include raising local fares, reducing the price of express bus fares, changing the name of the Commuter Express to Premium Express, and raising the cash price, eliminating all cash fare transfers and replacing them with a Regional Day Pass and a Regional Premium Day Pass available on all MTS and NCTD services. Mr. Levy explained the fare increases for the Regular and Premium monthly passes, College passes, and other changes such as eliminating the Social Service Day Tripper and other bulk discounts, and lowering the discount for Eco-Passes. Also, MTS would convert the Jury Ticket to a Jury Day

Pass. Mr. Levy briefed the committee on the changes to the Interagency Transfers between MTS and NCTD. SANDAG is also currently undergoing a Title VI Analysis and study of impacts on Limited English Proficiency access impacts which should be completed in October 2007. Mr. Levy also commented that SANDAG is conducting a Regional Fare and Revenue Sharing Study to develop a new fare structure for MTS and NCTD that would unify fares in the Region, take advantage of the Compass Card, simplify the existing structure and ensure revenue needs are met. After today's public hearing, a second public hearing will be held in the MTS service area on October 5, 2007. SANDAG Board of Directors approval of the proposed changes to the Ordinance is scheduled for the Board meeting on October 19, 2007.

Chairman Gallo requested Mr. Levy explain the reasoning for the reduction in the MTS Express Bus fare from \$2.50 to \$2.25.

Mr. Levy stated that the reduction was intended to simply bus fares by making the fare the same for all bus services by 2009.

Chairman Gallo also asked for an explanation on how the implementation of the Regional Day Pass would affect NCTD passengers.

Mr. Levy stated that the consultant for the Regional Fare Study did an analysis of these fare changes. The study shows relatively little impact to the region, less than one percent.

Chairman Harry Mathis (MTS) stated that the Regional Day Pass would be available for both NCTD and MTS passengers and would unify fares and reduce costs. Passengers with a Regional Pass would not have to pay the transfer fee.

Deputy Mayor Druker asked if the Regional Day Pass would be available in North County for those passengers who will ride MTS buses.

Mr. Levy stated that the passes would be available on board buses and there will be an amendment to the Ordinance so revenue sharing would be based on where the buses are boarded thus NCTD would now get a larger percentage of that revenue.

Deputy Mayor Druker asked for a definition of the Eco-Pass.

Mr. Levy responded that MTS has a program for employers to purchase passes for their employees and receive a discount depending on the number of passes purchased. The largest discount would drop from 30 percent to 25 percent.

Deputy Mayor Druker also requested clarification on how the Regional Premium Day Pass would be used.

Mr. Levy responded that the current Interstate 15 (I-15) MTS Commuter Express bus fare is \$4.00 and with the name change to Premium Express the cash fare is increasing to \$5.00. The Regional Premium Day Pass replaces transfers for the Premium Express bus in the I-15 corridor for NCTD passengers.

Councilmember Phil Monroe (South County) asked for clarification regarding the purpose for the briefing.

Mr. Levy stated that there were three purposes for the meeting today. SANDAG had planned to hold a public hearing to set the SPRINTER fares and amend the Ordinance to include those fares. Second, MTS has proposed several fare increases and due to the interconnections between MTS and NCTD, joint fares and transfers were affected by these proposed changes. And third, SANDAG Board policy requires public hearings in each district that is affected by fare increases and many North County passengers would be affected by the SPRINTER fares. SANDAG will also hold a public hearing in the MTS service area.

Councilmember Monroe stated that although NCTD increases fares regularly he felt it was important to state that MTS has not increased fares for the past four years.

Mr. Clive Richard, a member of the public, commented the issues addressed at today's meeting are addressed in the Regional Fare and Revenue Sharing Study, the Compass Card implementation, and the League of California Cities lawsuit regarding the state budget take away of transit funds. He stated that he felt the reason for this meeting was for an interim fare increase requested by MTS and that this interim increase only complicated the fare system when the goal is to unify and simplify it. He stated that under this proposal the NCTD basic fare would not be usable in MTS jurisdiction and the changes make transfers between the two transit systems complicated.

Alicia Young, a member of the public, stated that she works for the Escondido school system's Cal-SAFE program. The Cal-SAFE program purchases 50 monthly passes for its students. She stated that if fares are going to be raised, they would hope for adequate service to transport their students. The reductions in service have caused the Cal-SAFE students to be late for early morning classes or to arrive several hours early in order to make their afternoon classes. The school is purchasing a van to provide transportation for some students but they would prefer to have service routes in place that enable students to arrive to school on time. Additionally, many students have young children and when the bus is crowded, they are denied access due to the increased amount of baggage such as strollers. She stated that the transportation system is making it difficult for them to achieve the goal of getting students to school on time and to ensure they can graduate.

Councilmember Monroe stated that he appreciated her comments but felt that her issues were NCTD oriented and today's public hearing did not affect those fares or services.

Ms. Young stated that she understood that youth pass fares would be increased from \$30.00 to \$34.00 per month.

Mr. Levy stated that the youth fares are based on the Regional Pass fares and would increase from \$30.00 to \$32.00 in January 2008 and to \$34.00 in January 2009.

Ms. Lorraine Leighton, a member of the public, requested clarification on several items in the attachment to Agenda Item #2, Figure #1 Proposed Changes: number 2, juror fares, number 3, elimination of MTS to MTS transfers, number 4, elimination of NCTD to MTS transfers, and number 10, elimination of the Social Service Day Tripper.

Mr. Levy responded that the juror pass program benefits both the court and transit. The passes are paid for by the court and can be used by anyone. The tickets are transferable and when a juror agrees to use the transit pass, the court does not pay mileage to that juror. The interagency transfer is replaced by the \$5.00 Regional Day Pass, which allows the passenger to travel through both the NCTD and MTS networks and that passenger would receive a \$2.00 discount on the COASTER. The Social Service Day Tripper was a discounted rate to the Social Service Agencies and will be eliminated. The Social Service Agencies would now have to purchase either a \$5.00 day pass or a \$2.25 token, which they would still be able to pass on to their clients.

Ms. Bobbie Smith, a member of the public, stated that she is a frequent North County Transit District passenger and often rides the COASTER into San Diego. She stated that she uses public transit for all her travel and requested clarification on how the proposed changes would affect her bus pass now when she travels into San Diego.

Mr. Levy stated that the Senior Pass fare would increase from \$15.00 to \$16.00 in January 2007.

Ms. Smith expressed her concern that the fare increase affects passengers with fixed incomes and a \$2.00 increase was too much.

Mr. Levy stated that the increase was only \$1.00 in January 2008 and another \$1.00 in January 2009.

Mr. Emery requested clarification on whether the Senior Pass would still be available with no change in service except for a fare increase.

Mr. Levy stated that the Senior Pass remains the same only the fare would increase. The COASTER fares would not change.

Chair Madaffer stated that he would actually have a Regional Pass which would be good throughout both MTS and NCTD systems.

Chair Madaffer closed the Public Hearing at 1:08 p.m.

Ex-Officio Vice Chair Jerome Stocks (NCTD) expressed his and NCTD's honor at hosting the Transportation Committee for this Public Hearing.

8. UPCOMING MEETINGS

The next meeting of the Transportation Committee is scheduled for is Friday, September 21, 2007, at 9 a.m. at SANDAG.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Madaffer adjourned the meeting at 1:11 p.m.

Attachment: Attendance Sheet

CONFIRMED ATTENDANCE
SANDAG TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MEETING
SEPTEMBER 20, 2007 SPECIAL MEETING

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	Yes
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	No
	City of La Mesa	Art Madrid	Alternate	No
South County	City of Chula Vista	Jerry Rindone	Member	No
	City of Coronado	Phil Monroe	Alternate	Yes
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	Yes
	---	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	Yes
		David Druker	Alternate	Yes
San Diego County Regional Airport Authority		Charlene Zettel	Member	No
		Jim Desmond	Alternate	No
		Ramona Finnila	Alternate	No
ADVISORY/LIAISON Caltrans	---	Pedro Orso-Delgado	Member	No
	---	Bill Figge	Alternate	Yes
Regional Planning Stakeholders Working Group	---	Sandor Shapery	Member	No
	---	Gary Nordstrom	Alternate	No
	---	Kathy Keehan	Alternate	No
SCTCA	---	Kevin Siva	Member	No
	---	Albert Phoenix	Alternate	No