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TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE AGENDA

Thursday, November 14, 2002
12:15 p.m.

**SANDAG Board Room
401 B Street, 7th Floor
San Diego, CA 92101-4231**

AGENDA HIGHLIGHTS

- **2030 DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT (EIR)
FOR MOBILITY 2030**
- **TRANSIT FIRST SHOWCASE/EARLY ACTION PROGRAM
UPDATE**

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MISSION STATEMENT

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Welcome to SANDAG! Members of the public may speak to the Transportation Committee on any item at the time the Committee is considering the item. Please complete a Speaker's Slip which is located in the rear of the room and then present the slip to Committee staff. Also, members of the public are invited to address the Committee on any issue under the agenda item entitled Public Comments/Communications. Speakers are limited to three minutes. The Transportation Committee may take action on any item appearing on the agenda.

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TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE AGENDA

Thursday, November 14, 2002

Staff contact: Kim Kawada (619) 595-5394 or kka@sandag.org

ITEM

RECOMMENDATION

CONSENT ITEM (1)

The Transportation Committee will take action on the consent agenda without further discussion and with one vote unless an item is pulled by a Committee member or by a member of the public for comment.

- +1. REQUEST TO SELL LEAST BELLS VIREO CREDITS FROM THE RANCHO SAN DIEGO MITIGATION BANK (Dean Hiatt) APPROVE**

On March 4, 1996, SANDAG, Caltrans, and the County of San Diego entered into an agreement with the California Department of Fish and Game and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to establish the Rancho San Diego Mitigation Bank. SANDAG holds four least Bell's vireo mitigation credits at the Rancho San Diego Mitigation Bank. California Transportation Ventures (CTV) is in need of Least Bells Vireo mitigation credits for its State Route 125 South Toll Road, and has requested that SANDAG sell their remaining credits to them. The credits can only be used for a project in the same vicinity of the Rancho San Diego Mitigation Bank, such as State Route 125. The Transportation Committee is asked to approve, subject to the concurrence the Board of Directors through the approval of the Transportation Committee actions, the sale of SANDAG's remaining four least Bell's vireo credits from the Rancho San Diego Mitigation Bank to CTV.

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS

(Speakers limited to three minutes each.)

REPORTS

- + 3. DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR MOBILITY 2030 (Rob Rundle) ACCEPT FOR DISTRIBUTION**

A Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) has been prepared for the 2030 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), MOBILITY 2030. The Transportation Committee is asked to accept the Draft EIR for public review and comment, as authorized by the SANDAG Board of Directors at its October 25, 2002. A public hearing on the Draft 2030 RTP and Draft EIR is scheduled for December 6, 2002. The closing date for public comments is

ITEM #

RECOMMENDATION

scheduled for December 30, 2002.

+ 4.

TRANSIT FIRST SHOWCASE/EARLY ACTION PROGRAM UPDATE (Toni Bates, MTDB; Linda Culp, SANDAG)

INFORMATION

The Regional Transit Vision (RTV) is the long-range vision of integrating public transit into communities throughout the San Diego region. Since many of the RTV service concepts are not like traditional transit services, it will be important to show the public these new and innovative concepts. MTDB, NCTD, and SANDAG continue to progress on a number of showcase and early action projects in order to build support for the RTV and future funding. Eighteen of the top performing RTV routes are included in MOBILITY 2030.

5.

POSSIBLE PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP FOR CAR-POOLING TO SAN DIEGO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT (Hon. Robert Emery, City of Poway; John Hawkins, CEO, Cloud 9 Shuttle CEO)

INFORMATION

The City of Poway has a cooperative arrangement with Cloud 9 Shuttle for an airport shuttle service between the city and the San Diego International Airport. Cloud 9 Shuttle provides a discounted airport shuttle service for any rider who originates or is destined for the City of Poway. John Hawkins, Cloud 9 Shuttle CEO, will present the Poway airport shuttle service and discuss the potential for similar public/private partnerships with SANDAG and its member agencies.

THE NEXT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MEETING IS TENTATIVELY SCHEDULED FOR THURSDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2002.

This agenda is sent to all members of the SANDAG/RTC Board of Directors and alternates for informational purposes.

The Transportation Committee may take action on any item appearing on this agenda.

+ next to an agenda item indicates an attachment

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

November 14, 2002

AGENDA ITEM NO.: **1**

Action Requested: APPROVE

REQUEST TO SELL LEAST BELLS VIREO CREDITS FROM
THE RANCHO SAN DIEGO MITIGATION BANK

Introduction

On March 4, 1996, SANDAG, Caltrans, and the County of San Diego entered into an agreement with the California Department of Fish and Game (CDF&G) and the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service (USF&WS) to establish the Rancho San Diego Mitigation Bank (RSD Bank). The goal of this banking agreement was to preserve sensitive habitat and establish mitigation credits for habitat and rare, threatened, and endangered species. SANDAG, Caltrans, and the County of San Diego hold mitigation credits proportionate to their respective funding contribution for the creation of the RSD Bank. Least Bell's vireo is one of the species protected at the RSD Bank and SANDAG currently holds four least Bell's vireo credits. One credit for least Bell's vireo represents one pair of birds observed at the site.

California Transportation Ventures, Inc. (CTV) submitted a letter dated October 30, 2002 which is included as Attachment 1, requesting to purchase least Bell's vireo credits from each of the contributing agencies. The credits requested would be used for the State Route (SR) 125 South Toll Road. CTV has requested seven credits from Caltrans, one credit from the County of San Diego and four credits from SANDAG.

Recommendation

The Transportation Committee is asked to approve, subject to the concurrence of the SANDAG Board of Directors through the approval of the Transportation Committee Actions, the sale, at fair market value, of four least Bell's vireo credits held by SANDAG at the Rancho San Diego Mitigation Bank. The Committee's action would also serve to authorize the Executive Director to take actions necessary to implement the sale of these credits.

Discussion

The Rancho San Diego Mitigation Bank was established by SANDAG, Caltrans, and the County of San Diego, with the cooperation of the CDFG and the USF&WS, to create a preserve for various types of sensitive habitat, to assist in the preservation of rare, threatened and endangered species, and to establish mitigation credits for the habitat and species protected at the site. The credits created by the RSD Bank were originally planned for projects sponsored by the contributing agencies. The banking agreement did not originally contemplate the sale of credits established by the bank.

Mitigation of impacts to least Bell's vireo has two components, habitat acres (Riparian Woodlands) and credits for the actual number of bird pairs observed at a specific site. Normally a site capable of habitat creation, that can support a population of birds is purchased for mitigation and will satisfy both components of the required mitigation once the site is created and birds are observed inhabiting the site. The Riparian Woodlands required to sustain the least Bell's vireo is under the jurisdiction of the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE), whereas the number of bird pairs that are accounted for at a specific site is under the jurisdiction of the USF&WS. Since the RSD Bank did not create new Riparian Woodlands, it did not receive recognition from the ACOE, therefore, the Riparian Woodlands at the RSD Bank cannot be used for the habitat acres component of the mitigation.

CTV is required to mitigate for impacts to least Bell's vireo in accordance with the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the SR 125 South Toll Road, but no least Bell's vireo pairs have been observed at the Rancho Jamul Mitigation Bank. CTV acquired the necessary Riparian Woodlands habitat acres at the Rancho Jamul Mitigation Bank. CTV needs to purchase least Bell's vireo bird pairs credits at another site, but has not been successful in finding the necessary credits. CTV has therefore submitted a request to purchase least Bell's vireo credits from SANDAG, Caltrans, and the County of San Diego at the Rancho San Diego Mitigation Bank.

Any project in the future that SANDAG sponsors that is required to mitigate for least Bell's vireo could use the credits at RSD Bank for birds only, necessitating a Riparian Woodlands purchase at another site. The circumstances that have evolved in relation to CTV's request for least Bell's vireo credits at RSD Bank are ideal for this situation. Since similar circumstances are not likely to develop for a future project sponsored by SANDAG, it is staff's recommendation to sell the four least Bell's vireo credits to CTV and concur in the sale of credits by Caltrans and the County of San Diego.

Upon the concurrence of the Transportation Committee's approval by the SANDAG Board of Directors to allow the sale of RSD Mitigation Credits, SANDAG staff will work with Caltrans and the County of San Diego to agree upon a proposed methodology for determining the fair market value of the least Bell's vireo credits. Once fair market value has been determined and agreed upon between the parties, four least Bell's vireo credits will then be sold to CTV.

Attachment

The attachments to the Agenda Item may be obtained by contacting SANDAG's Public Information Office at (619) 595-5347.

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

November 14, 2002

AGENDA ITEM NO.: **3**

Action Requested: ACCEPT FOR DISTRIBUTION

DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR MOBILITY 2030

Introduction

The 2030 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), Mobility 2030, was distributed for public comment at the October 25, 2002 Board meeting. A draft Environmental Impact Report that evaluates the environmental impacts of the 2030 RTP has been prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). In addition to evaluating the proposed plan, the draft EIR evaluates and compares the impacts of several program alternatives.

Recommendation

As authorized by the SANDAG Board of Directors, the Transportation Committee is asked to distribute the draft EIR for a 45-day public review and comment period.

Discussion

The draft EIR evaluates the impacts of the 2030 RTP (the project) on the physical environment at the program level. This draft provides the framework for subsequent environmental analysis on specific projects. The impacts from individual projects will be evaluated separately as project alignments are defined and specific project features are outlined.

Eleven issue areas are analyzed in the document as well as the cumulative impacts of this, and other projects. The draft EIR also evaluates environmental justice, an analysis to determine if the project has disproportionate impacts on low-income or minority populations and provides those same populations with equitable access to the planned improvements.

Of the 11 issue areas analyzed in the draft EIR, the 2030 RTP would result in significant environmental impacts to land use, population and social environment, visual resources, noise, geology/paleontology, water resources, biological resources, and cultural resources. Of the areas where significant environmental impacts have been identified, mitigation measures are recommended that would reduce most impacts to a level less than significant. However, even with mitigation measures, impacts to visual resources and biological resources would remain significant.

The draft EIR evaluates several alternatives to the project which include alternative land use assumptions and alternative transportation networks. The network alternatives include the No Project, Revenue Constrained, Transit Emphasis, and Highway Emphasis. All these alternatives assume a smart growth land use scenario as does the plan. In addition to these alternatives, the EIR analyzes an additional Highway Emphasis scenario that assumes existing land use plans and policies.

Next Steps

Public comments that are submitted on or before December 30, 2002 will be considered in preparation of the final EIR. Staff will address all comments received on or before that date and will incorporate the comments and responses into a final document that will be considered by the SANDAG Board of Directors tentatively scheduled for the February/March 2003 Board meeting. A public hearing on the draft RTP and draft EIR has been scheduled for December 6, 2002.

If the document is accepted for distribution by the Transportation Committee, copies of the draft EIR will be sent to individuals, agencies and organizations interested in the RTP. The draft EIR also will be distributed to all individuals who provided comments on the Notice of Preparation of the EIR that was published on July 12, 2002. In addition, the draft EIR will be distributed to local libraries throughout the region and will be posted on SANDAG's Web site at www.sandag.org. A notice of availability of the draft EIR will be published in area newspapers and sent to interested individuals, agencies, and organizations generated from SANDAG's mailing lists.

Note: Copies of the Draft EIR were sent to all Transportation Committee members, Board members and alternates. If you would like a copy before the November 14 meeting, please visit SANDAG's web site at www.sandag.org or call the Public Information Office at (619) 595-5347.

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

November 14, 2002

AGENDA ITEM NO.: **4**

Action Requested: INFORMATION

TRANSIT FIRST SHOWCASE/EARLY ACTION PROGRAM UPDATE

Introduction

The Regional Transit Vision (RTV) is the long-range vision of integrating public transit into communities throughout the San Diego region. Transit First is the strategy called for in the RTV to implement this vision. It calls for a number of frequent and fast routes to connect the region's major employment and destination centers. It integrates transit and land use decisions and is a cornerstone of MOBILITY 2030, the 2030 Regional Transportation Plan. Since many of the RTV service concepts are not like traditional transit services, it will be important to show the public these new and innovative concepts to build support for the RTV and future funding.

At the April 2002 meeting, the Transportation Committee reviewed the Regional Transit Vision Showcase Project Criteria Report. Since that time, work has progressed by MTDB, NCTD, and SANDAG. At their July 25, 2002 meeting, the MTD Board of Directors approved a Transit First Showcase/Early Action Project Management Plan that includes the development of a Showcase Project in the San Diego State University-Downtown corridor and four Early Action Projects in the Cities of San Diego and Chula Vista. At their May 16, 2002 meeting, the NCTD Board of Directors approved two potential Showcase/Early Action corridors for further study in the Cities of Oceanside, Vista, and Escondido. Attachment A shows the corridors currently under study.

Each of these corridors is currently included in the draft MOBILITY 2030 plan.

Recommendation

This report is provided to the Transportation Committee as information.

Discussion

Objectives

The aim of the Showcase/Early Action Projects is to demonstrate Transit First through a number of small-scale projects that could be implemented within a three-to-five-year timeframe. Desirably, the projects would demonstrate key elements of Transit First:

- integration of transit and land use development,
- test various types of transit priority measures such as signal priority and queue jumper lanes, and
- illustrate the Transit First customer experience.

The intent is to develop Transit First Showcase and Phased Implementation (or Early Action) Projects in a number of corridors in the MTDB and NCTD service areas.

- Showcase Project. Designed to showcase the full Transit First customer experience package that encompasses the long-range Transit First vision in terms of new-design vehicles, upgraded stations, transit priority treatments, a close integration of transit into land use planning around stations, and other customer amenities like vehicles with level boarding, Smart Card fare collection, and real-time “next-bus” technology. The Showcase Project is intended to provide an example of, and generate support for, the comprehensive Transit First strategy and services, as well as providing a “laboratory” for testing and learning how to produce the Transit First experience.
- Early Action Projects. Designed to show how Transit First projects can be implemented in phases and be successful without complete development of all Transit First components. The aim will be to identify various Transit First attributes that can be implemented with a minimal capital investment to produce the type of service called for in the RTV. This phased approach is similar to that used by the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transit Authority on its highly successful Metro Rapid service. Such a development strategy could enable a faster implementation of the Transit First network and build on the phased implementation to achieve the full Transit First objectives. Over time, one might expect that most of the Transit First projects would necessarily be implemented in a phased manner.

Funding

MTDB is moving ahead with environmental/preliminary engineering for these projects. NCTD has budgeted FY 2003 funds for detailed analysis/preliminary engineering. Funding beyond the planning and environmental phases is currently limited. A U.S. House of Representatives earmark of \$1 million has been identified for continued development of these projects, pending final approval of the federal FY 2004 budget. MOBILITY 2030 proposes to set aside \$75 million within the first 10 years of the plan to fund these projects pending more detailed analysis and prioritization.

MTDB Program Management Plan

MTDB's program management plan approach is to move forward with the environmental and preliminary engineering studies necessary to move towards implementation of Showcase and Early Action projects in each of the corridors discussed below. The goal is to conduct a similar level of effort on the environmental/preliminary engineering studies for both the Showcase and Early Action projects. The difference between the Showcase and Early Action projects will be in the extent of Transit First attributes that are included in the initial project implementation. The Showcase Project will demonstrate the complete set of Transit First attributes. Early Action Projects will demonstrate a number of these attributes over time and will detail opportunities and constraints with each corridor, leading to identification of the key Transit First elements that should be included in the initial project implementation.

It is important to note that even with the Showcase Project, budget constraints may not allow us to implement all of the desired Transit First elements. The environmental/preliminary engineering studies will help us prioritize which elements should be included.

Detailed environmental/preliminary engineering studies will include transit priority measures, traffic impact analysis, preliminary engineering site plans and design drawings, and all appropriate environmental analyses. Based on these results and available funding, an implementation phasing plan would be created that would guide the final design and construction schedule.

MTDB Showcase Project

The selected Showcase Project corridor would extend from the SDSU Transit Center and Mission Valley East future trolley station now under construction to Downtown San Diego via College Avenue, El Cajon Boulevard, and Park Boulevard.

Of the various corridors that were tested as potential Showcase Projects, the SDSU-Downtown corridor had the strongest ridership potential (over 21,000 daily boardings based on an assumed 10-minute service frequency---12,000 of which are new boardings), the lowest capital costs (about \$50 million), and lowest annual operating subsidy (\$1.75 million). The project corridor allows the testing of a wide range of transit priority measures (signal priority treatments, signal queue jumpers, dedicated transit lanes) and station designs (curb and median), and showcases the strong transit-supportive land uses throughout the corridor (Downtown, Balboa Park, North Park, Mid-City Transit Plaza, and SDSU). The project also has strong community support. For these reasons, this corridor is best suited to serve as the palette for illustrating the Transit First vision. Environmental and preliminary engineering studies will begin later this year and should take 15-18 months to complete. MOBILITY 2030 proposes that this route be in service by 2006.

MTDB Early Action Projects

As noted above, Early Action projects will implement various attributes of Transit First depending on the results of the environmental/preliminary engineering studies. Capital costs for each project will depend on which attributes are recommended for inclusion in the initial project implementation. Annual operating subsidy requirements will vary based on the level of funding available for service improvements, with the possibility that some projects may start as peak-period only services. MOBILITY 2030 proposes that services begin by 2009.

Mid-Coast Project. The Mid-Coast Transit First Study has developed a Near Term Action Plan for the Mid-Coast study area. The top priority project is implementation of a Super Loop route that would serve as the core distribution system connecting existing and future regional routes with the University Towne Center, La Jolla Village, and University of California, San Diego (UCSD) areas. The Super Loop route would operate in shared travel lanes along Nobel Drive, Judicial Drive, Executive Drive, Regents Road, and Gilman Drive. The Mid-Coast Near Term Action Plan has strong community support and was approved by the MTD Board at its October 17, 2002 meeting.

Old Town – Pacific Beach Project. This Early Action Project would connect the Old Town Transit Center with Pacific Beach via the Sports Arena Boulevard, West Mission Bay Drive, and Mission Boulevard corridors. A phased implementation strategy will focus initial attention on transit priority measures designed to benefit existing routes that operate along the Early Action Project alignment. The Early Action Project highlights include evaluation of a shared station for serving Sea World and Quivera Basin, and a single, two-way median transit-only lane along Mission Boulevard.

Chula Vista – Otay Ranch Project. This Early Action Project would connect the H Street trolley station with the newly developing Otay Ranch community via the H Street corridor and Southwestern College. The project, which has received strong support from the City of Chula Vista, will be built largely along existing street rights-of-way using a combination of shared travel lanes and exclusive travel lanes, including a dedicated transitway reserved through Otay Ranch and a proposed transitway through Southwestern College.

South Bay – Sorrento Mesa Project. This Early Action Project would connect the inland South County area with job centers in Kearny Mesa and Sorrento Mesa via the I-805 and I-15 freeway corridors. The project would have the added benefit of connecting with the Mid-Coast Super Loop, SDSU – Downtown, and H Street – Otay Ranch corridors, creating a network of Transit First Showcase/Early Action projects. While the Transit First network assumes development of a Managed Lanes/Bus Rapid Transit project similar in scope to the north I-15 project now under development, initial studies will evaluate the use of freeway shoulder lanes as an interim transit priority measure.

NCTD Showcase/Early Action Projects

NCTD is finalizing a request for proposals for detailed analysis/preliminary engineering for two potential showcase/early action corridors:

Oceanside - Vista via Mission Avenue. This corridor connects major activity centers in the Mission Avenue corridor and two of NCTD's busiest transit centers in the cities of Oceanside and Vista. Local transit service in this corridor, the Route 303, exceeds current capacity on average, most critically during the peak period. There also are transit supportive land uses adjacent to the corridor. This route will serve the San Luis Rey Transit Center, a major transit center currently under study by NCTD. The route will also provide important feeder services to the Coaster and future Oceanside-Escondido Rail line.

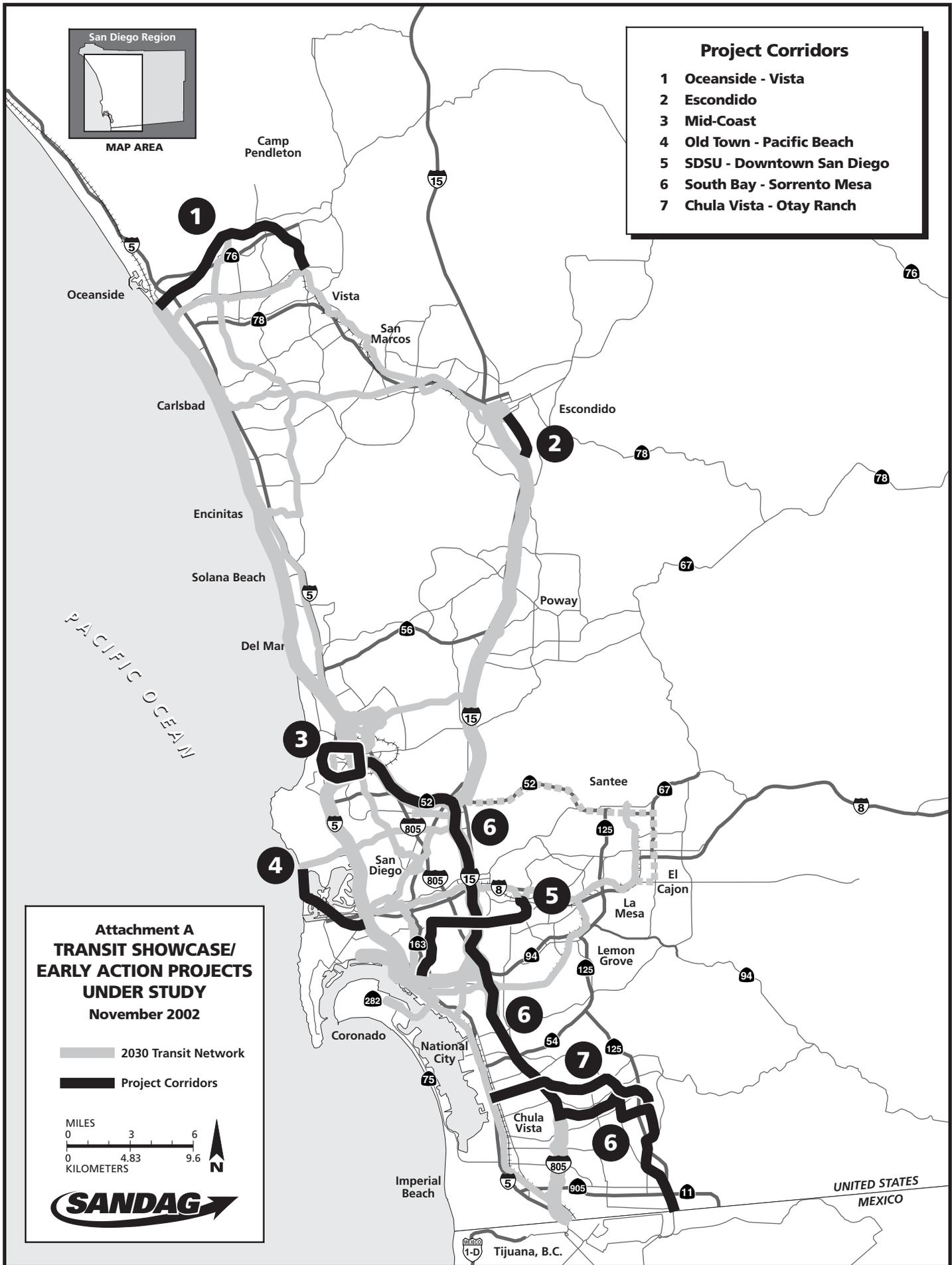
Escondido Transit Center – North County Fair. This corridor currently has high all-day demand, with particular challenges during the peak period. It also provides the opportunity to showcase the extension of the Oceanside-Escondido rail line, identified in MOBILITY 2030, in the near-term with a bus rapid transit (BRT) technology. Current services are subject to severe peak hour traffic congestion particularly at signals and would benefit from signal and other priority treatments. Key activity centers include the Escondido Central Business District, San Pasqual High School, Kit Carson Park, and North County Fair. This corridor also would provide integration with the Oceanside-Escondido Rail Line and I-15 BRT services.

In addition, two corridors have been identified by the NCTD Board for further study of spot improvements that can benefit existing local transit services. These are the Oceanside to Encinitas Coast Highway corridor and the Encinitas to Oceanside via El Camino Real corridor.

Attachment



- Project Corridors**
- 1 Oceanside - Vista
 - 2 Escondido
 - 3 Mid-Coast
 - 4 Old Town - Pacific Beach
 - 5 SDSU - Downtown San Diego
 - 6 South Bay - Sorrento Mesa
 - 7 Chula Vista - Otay Ranch



**Attachment A
TRANSIT SHOWCASE/
EARLY ACTION PROJECTS
UNDER STUDY
November 2002**

2030 Transit Network
 Project Corridors

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