



**SAN DIEGO FORWARD: THE REGIONAL PLAN: SUMMARY  
OF PUBLIC COMMENTS AND PROPOSED CHANGES**

File Number 3102000

**Introduction**

On April 24, 2015, the SANDAG Board of Directors accepted the Draft San Diego Forward: The Regional Plan (Regional Plan) and its Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) for public review and comment. The public comment period for the Draft Regional Plan, its SCS, and its Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) closed on July 15, 2015.

Prior to its release, SANDAG received more than 7,000 comments that helped develop and shape the Draft Regional Plan. After the Draft Regional Plan was released, SANDAG received nearly 1,000 comments from local jurisdictions, community based organizations, other non-profit organizations, various government agencies, professional organizations, and interested citizens. These comments were submitted at public workshops and public hearings, and also via email, the online comment tool, fax, and letters.

The notable changes proposed for the Final Regional Plan and its SCS are discussed in this report and are summarized in Attachment 1. A summary of the comments and draft responses on the Draft Regional Plan and its SCS is included as Attachment 2. An overview of comments made on the Draft EIR also is provided as Attachment 3. Responses to the Draft EIR comments will be included with the Final EIR, which is expected to be presented to the Board of Directors at its October 9, 2015, meeting.

**Recommendation**

The Transportation Committee is asked to recommend that the Board of Directors accept the proposed modifications to the Draft San Diego Forward: The Regional Plan (Regional Plan) and its Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) in substantially the same form as presented in this report. The proposed changes will be considered in the Final Regional Plan and its SCS, and evaluated in the Final Environmental Impact Report prior to Board adoption, which is scheduled for October 9, 2015.

## **Discussion**

### ***Public Comments on the Draft Regional Plan***

The comments received on the Draft Regional Plan generally covered the following broad issues:

*Advancing Transit Projects* – Multiple comments were received requesting the general advancement of transit projects to earlier phases in the Regional Plan.

*Support for/Opposition to Transportation Modes and Specific Projects* – Many comments generally supported public transit, active transportation, and alternatives to freeway enhancements, including advancing the implementation of these components and Managed Lanes. Support for specific transit projects included the Trolley Project from San Ysidro to Carmel Valley (Route 562), the *Rapid* from San Ysidro to Old Town and Kearny Mesa (Route 640), the *Rapid* from San Diego State University to Palomar Street (Route 550), the peak *Rapid* from San Ysidro/Otay Mesa to Sorrento Mesa and University Town Center (Routes 688, 689, 690), COASTER and SPRINTER improvements, as well as increased transit frequencies. Grade separations on the Blue and Orange Trolley Lines and on the coastal rail corridor also were supported. Support for specific Managed Lanes projects include State Route 78 from Oceanside to Escondido. Managed Lanes on the Interstate 5 (I-5) North Coast Corridor received both comments of support and opposition. Many commenters expressed opposition to the addition of Managed Lanes on the State Route 94 segment between I-5 and Interstate 805 and requested community alternatives be analyzed. Caltrans, the lead agency for this project, has indicated that it will evaluate additional alternatives in the Draft EIR.

*More Active Transportation Infrastructure* – Many commenters expressed support for more bike routes and infrastructure and the advancement of those projects to earlier timeframes. Also, comments were submitted regarding pedestrian safety near transit stops and freeway overpasses.

*Greenhouse Gas Reductions* – Various comments were received on greenhouse gas reductions, including references to Senate Bill 375 (Steinberg, 2008) as well as to Assembly Bill 32 (Perez, 2012), Executive Orders S-3-05 and B-30-14, and speculation on future or pending greenhouse gas legislation.

*Public Health* – An interest in protection of public health was expressed in several comments relating to implementation of the Regional Plan.

*Funding* – Dozens of comments were received on funding and the desire to use flexible funding (including *TransNet* funding allocations) to advance transit and active transportation projects.

### ***Public Comments on the Draft Regional Plan EIR***

SANDAG received 35 letters, emails, online submissions, and comment cards containing more than 500 comments, many of which applied to both the Regional Plan and its EIR. Responses to the Draft EIR comments will be provided in the Final EIR and presented to the Board at its October 9, 2015, meeting. In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act, all responses to public agency comments will be provided ten days prior to the October 9, 2015, meeting. Attachment 3 lists the agencies, organizations, and individuals that submitted comments on the Draft Regional Plan EIR.

Among the EIR comments received, several themes emerged where various commenters raised similar issues. To address these themes and to assist in the review of the information, SANDAG is developing six Master Responses that provide detailed information to address the issues raised. SANDAG also will provide additional information to specific comments where nuanced issues were not covered in the Master Responses. In addition to the Master Responses, SANDAG will provide responses to the individual comments, as is customary practice. Where appropriate, responses to comments will be accompanied by edits or revisions to the Final EIR. The Master Responses will address the following issues:

1. EIR Alternatives
2. Project Funding
3. Greenhouse Gas Emissions Analysis
4. Greenhouse Gas Emissions Technical Methodology (includes a discussion regarding the reasons for differences in calculation results since the adoption of the 2050 Regional Transportation Plan/SCS)
5. Greenhouse Gas Emissions Impacts and Mitigation Measures
6. Mitigation Measures

### ***California Air Resources Board Meeting***

The California Air Resources Board (ARB) heard an informational update on the Draft Regional Plan and its SCS at its June 25, 2015, meeting. The staff presentation focused on the SANDAG regional greenhouse gas reduction targets established in 2010, regional growth and development patterns, key strategies included in the Draft Regional Plan and its SCS, performance measures, as well as a status update on implementation activities relating to the 2050 Regional Transportation Plan/SCS. ARB staff will collaborate with SANDAG staff to complete the technical evaluation of the SCS and review the Final Regional Plan and its SCS, once submitted (this occurs after SANDAG Board adoption), for any changes that affect the final greenhouse gas quantification determination. The ARB Executive Officer will issue an ARB executive order accepting or rejecting the determination.

### ***Proposed Changes to the Draft Regional Plan and SCS***

There were several comments that resulted in proposed changes to the Draft Regional Plan in order to reflect additional project features requested during the comment period. No revisions are proposed to the phasing of projects. The proposed modifications and changes are discussed in Attachment 1. Also, based on public comments received, additional minor edits will be made in the Final Regional Plan and its SCS to text, tables, and figures to clarify or expand explanations of the projects, programs, services, and actions.

## **Next Steps**

Pending acceptance of the proposed changes by the Board of Directors, staff will prepare the final version of San Diego Forward: The Regional Plan and its SCS. It is expected that on October 9, 2015, the Board of Directors will be asked to certify the Final EIR prepared for the Regional Plan and its SCS, make a finding that the Regional Plan and the 2014 Regional Transportation Improvement Program, as amended, are in conformance with the State Implementation Plan for air quality, and adopt the Final Regional Plan and its SCS.

CHARLES "MUGGS" STOLL

Director of Land Use and Transportation Planning

Attachments:    1. Summary of Proposed Changes from Draft Regional Plan to Final Regional Plan  
                  2. Public Comments and Draft Responses on the Draft Regional Plan  
                  3. List of Comment Letters on the Draft Regional Plan Environmental Impact Report

Key Staff Contact: Phil Trom, (619) 699-7330, phil.trom@sandag.org