



BOARD OF DIRECTORS
JUNE 27, 2003

AGENDA ITEM NO. 03-06- **4-B**
ACTION REQUESTED – APPROVE

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE DISCUSSION AND ACTIONS

Meeting of June 20, 2003

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Transportation Committee was called to order by Chair Joe Kellejian (North County Coastal). Other voting Committee members in attendance were Vice Chair Dick Murphy (City of San Diego), Corky Smith (North County Inland), Art Madrid (East County), Jerry Rindone (South Bay), Bob Emery (San Diego Metropolitan Transit Development Board – MTDB), and Judy Ritter (North San Diego County Transit Development Board – NCTD). Also in attendance were alternates Christy Guerin (North County Coastal), Phil Monroe (South Bay), and Leon Williams (MTDB) as well as ex-officio member Pedro Orso-Delgado (Caltrans).

CONSENT ITEMS (1-6)

1. REGIONAL ARTERIAL SYSTEM (RAS) SCHEDULE EXTENSIONS (APPROVE)

For “Ready to Go” RAS projects delayed 6 months or greater, or other RAS projects delayed by 12 months or greater, the Use-It-or-Lose-It Policy requires the Cities/County Transportation Advisory Committee (CTAC) to make a mandatory recommendation to the Transportation Committee either to reallocate funds, determine certain projects ineligible for the following funding cycle, or grant a schedule extension. CTAC reviewed several projects over the past quarter and recommended approving schedule extensions for the City of Solana Beach’s I-5/Lomas Santa Fe Drive and City of San Marcos’ SR 78/Las Posas Road interchange projects.

2. SAN DIEGO-CORONADO BRIDGE TOLL REVENUES – CLAIM FOR FUNDING FROM THE CITY OF CORONADO (APPROVE)

The Settlement Agreement between SANDAG and the City of Coronado has resulted in a current balance of \$8.7 million in toll revenues and interest earnings being maintained in an account for use by the City of Coronado in addressing its local congestion problems. In accordance with the Agreement, the City of Coronado submitted a claim for \$6.4 million in toll funding to support the preparation of an environmental document for the SR 75/282 tunnel project.

3. 2002 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (RTIP) AMENDMENT NO. 11 – VARIOUS PROJECTS (APPROVE)

The 2002 RTIP, approved by the SANDAG Board of Directors in June 2002, is a five-year program of major transportation projects in the San Diego region covering the period from FY 2003 to FY 2007. Various agencies have requested project additions and changes to the

2002 RTIP as part of this annual update for FY 2004. Staff noted that there was a revision to RTIP Project No. MTDB-24 (Mid-Coast Corridor Project). At MTDB's request, additional funding for planning/environmental studies are included in FY 2004.

4. TRANSPORTATION DEVELOPMENT ACT (TDA) CLAIM AMENDMENTS (APPROVE)

TDA provides ¼ percent of State sales tax for operating and capital support of public transportation systems and non-motorized transportation projects. TDA claim amendments are needed based on the fiscal audit reports for the year ending June 30, 2002 for MTDB and for the Cities of Carlsbad and San Marcos for their bicycle and pedestrian projects.

5. FINAL FY 2004 TRANSPORTATION DEVELOPMENT ACT (TDA) ALLOCATIONS (RECOMMEND)

As the designated Regional Transportation Planning Agency, SANDAG is responsible for the annual allocation of TDA funds to the region's cities, the County, and transit operators. In February 2003, the SANDAG Board adopted the FY 2004 TDA apportionment schedule and administrative procedures. A total of \$105.4 million in FY 2004 TDA claims were received and reviewed by SANDAG staff. Staff noted minor revisions to figures shown on pages 54, 55, 59, and 62 of the agenda packet. These revisions were the result of updated TDA claim information from the City of Carlsbad.

6. LOS ANGELES – SAN DIEGO – SAN LUIS OBISPO RAIL CORRIDOR AGENCY (LOSSAN) BOARD ACTIONS (INFORMATION)

LOSSAN oversees intercity passenger rail service in the coastal rail corridor from San Diego to Los Angeles to San Luis Obispo and plans capital improvements that benefit intercity, commuter, and freight services. The Transportation Committee received the May 28, 2003 LOSSAN Board actions as information.

Action: The Transportation Committee approved Consent Items 1 through 6, as updated at the meeting, including Resolutions 2003-39 to 2003-42.

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS

Staff announced that SANDAG had recently received awards for three transportation projects: (1) *Planning and Designing for Pedestrians*; (2) Central I-5 Corridor Study; and (3) Solana Beach Coastal Rail Trail.

REPORTS

8. SUBSEQUENT TRANSITION PLAN FOR CONSOLIDATION (SB 1703) (RECOMMEND)

SB 1703 calls for the SANDAG Board of Directors to approve two transition plans: an "initial" plan for planning and programming functions, and a "subsequent" plan for project development and construction functions. The SANDAG Board approved the Initial Transition Plan in February 2003, and the initial transition process is underway.

The draft Subsequent Transition Plan, prepared by the staff-level Transition Team, was reviewed and recommended by the policy-level Ad Hoc Working Group on Transition and by both transit boards. Staff highlighted two primary issues that are dealt with in the Plan. The first issue is the distinction between major construction projects (SANDAG's future responsibility) and local and minor improvement projects (remain transit boards' responsibility).

The second issue is determining which current construction projects would remain under the policy direction of the respective transit boards. For these ongoing construction projects, the staff would be consolidated into one unit at SANDAG. For a given project, the consolidated staff would get policy direction from the transit board responsible for that project. This allows project continuity both on the policy side and with regard to the staff project management functions.

Karen King, NCTD, stated that on June 19, 2003, the NCTD Board of Directors recommended approval of the Subsequent Transition Plan and the addition of SANDAG voting members to the Joint Committee on Regional Transit (JCRT). She noted NCTD's concern that the transfer of project development and construction staff is occurring more quickly than originally anticipated. Staff replied that these issues would be discussed further at the staff level, and that actions to implement the subsequent transition would be brought back to SANDAG and the two transit boards in the future.

Action: The Transportation Committee recommended that the SANDAG Board of Directors (1) approve the Subsequent Transition Plan and (2) approve adding three SANDAG Board representatives as voting members on the JCRT, contingent upon action by the two transit boards to expand SANDAG's membership on the JCRT.

9. STATE BUDGET UPDATE (INFORMATION)

Staff noted corrections to Attachments 1 to 3 (pages 81 to 83 of the agenda package); the figures shown are in thousands of dollars (instead of millions of dollars). This item was prepared in response to the Transportation Committee's request at its last meeting. Staff summarized the recent budget-related actions taken by the State Senate and Assembly and described their potential impacts to the San Diego region's Traffic Congestion Relief Program (TCRP) and State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) funded projects. The Assembly version of the budget bill would make available more TCRP funding for transportation, which would be more beneficial to the San Diego region than the budget proposals by the Governor or Senate.

Staff summarized the status of the region's TCRP and STIP projects, including funding needs in FY 2003-04 and future fiscal years (see Attachments 1 to 3). The State is taking a year by year approach and is currently focusing on funding needs for FY 2003-04 only. A Committee member asked whether the region could bond against the future TCRP funds. Staff responded that future TCRP funding is probably not secure enough to bond against. However, the California Transportation Commission (CTC) is currently development a "letter of no prejudice," which would allow local agencies to spend local monies up front to pay for the projects and get reimbursed in a future year when TCRP funding becomes available.

10. FINANCIAL CONTINGENCY PLAN FOR TRANSIT OPERATIONS (INFORMATION)

At its May 23, 2003 meeting, the SANDAG Board of Directors approved the first reading of the *TransNet* Ordinance to reduce the formula share of annual *TransNet* transit funds for rail capital from 80 percent to 60 percent. This item responds to Board direction at the May meeting to develop the process for a financial contingency plan for transit operations in case *TransNet* is not re-authorized.

Staff summarized the operating "structural deficit," in which recurring revenues have not been sufficient to cover recurring expenses. Since the early 1990s, the San Diego Metropolitan Transit Development Board (MTDB) has bridged this structural deficit by implementing operating efficiencies and cost control measures as well as by using non-recurring resources. Prior to 1998, the North San Diego County Transit Development Board (NCTD) also experienced a structural deficit and took similar actions to address it. NCTD projects that a deficit will occur again in FY 2005.

Staff summarized the proposed guiding objectives for developing a financial contingency plan for transit operations. These include an overarching goal to achieve a sustainable level of service; encompassing a multi-year time period; developing a SANDAG Board policy for service evaluations; providing flexibility to react to changing circumstances; and ensuring sufficient funding to complete and operate the Mission Valley East Light Rail Transit extension and the Sprinter.

Components of the contingency plan would include an annual analysis of service productivity; an incremental approach for service changes; implementing fare increases, as needed; seeking additional revenue sources for transit operations; and balancing the use of federal transit formula funds between capital and operating needs. The financial contingency plan would be developed as part the FY 2005 budget process, scheduled to begin in late 2003. As part of this process, a common set of budget assumptions and transit service analysis policy would be developed for the region.

The Transportation Committee discussed the development of the transit service analysis policy. Staff noted that the Committee is scheduled to review draft transit policies at its August 15, 2003 meeting, and it is anticipated that a final policy could be developed over the next six months. Issues that need to be addressed include how to balance productivity standards with geographic service considerations, the manner in which low producing routes are cut, when fare increases are appropriate, etc.

Transportation Committee members who also serve on the transit boards emphasized the need to take an incremental approach and provide flexibility when considering service cuts and fare increases. The Committee discussed the need to determine the appropriate level of transit service for different areas, including defining geographic "lifeline" coverage and service levels. Committee members concurred that transit could not be expected to serve every trip in every area. Members stressed the importance of making annual service decisions while looking at the five-year operating plan.

11. TRAVEL TIME ANALYSIS OF SAN DIEGO'S MAJOR TRANSPORTATION CORRIDORS (INFORMATION)

Staff provided a presentation on a recent travel time analysis study. In 2002, SANDAG began implementing a monitoring program to track and compare auto and transit trip travel times within 12 major transportation corridors in the region. Regular commuters were recruited and asked to monitor their door-to-door travel times, including transfers and wait times (if via transit) and ramp metering delays (if via auto). An initial pilot study was completed in June 2002, and the regular monitoring program began in Fall 2002. Another round of data collection is scheduled in Fall 2004.

Staff highlighted major results from the study. Auto travel times during the morning commute are generally shorter than the afternoon commute, and afternoon trip times are less predictable. For directly comparable corridors, transit travel times tended to be longer than auto travel times. However, the study also found that transit trips tend to be more reliable than auto trips. For the purposes of the study, the morning peak period was defined as 6:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m., and the afternoon peak period was defined as 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Global positioning systems (GPS) technology also was used to capture travel time data and speeds on segments of Interstates 5, 8, 15, and 805. The lowest freeway speeds recorded via GPS were during the afternoon peak period on I-15 between Centre City Parkway and Mira Mesa Boulevard [19 miles per hour (mph)] and on I-5 between Palomar Airport Road and Lomas Santa Fe Drive (20 mph). Freeway speeds were generally higher in the morning peak period on these two routes as well as on Interstates 8 and 805 (in the 28 to 45 mph range).

Staff summarized how the study information would be used. The Fall 2002 travel data will be included in SANDAG's annual "State of the Commute" performance monitoring program. These data will be updated over time to track the change in auto and transit travel times as transportation investments are made over time. They also are useful in validating the automated freeway loop detector data collected by Caltrans, which are used to calibrate SANDAG's regional travel demand model.

Public Comment

Robert Hoffman stated his opinion that public transit will never be successful, because travel times via transit always will be longer than auto times.

Transportation Committee members asked staff to explain the methodology used for the study. Staff stated that both volunteer commuters and paid drivers were used to collect travel data on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, for six weeks between October and early December 2002 (excluding holiday weeks). The objective was to collect a minimum of 12 "clean" trips, in which the commuter left from work/home at his/her typical time, did not make any intermediate stops along the way, and did not experience major traffic incidents. The sample size enables determining statistically significant differences in trip times from year to year within a three-minute range at a 95 percent confidence level.

Committee members discussed whether it was appropriate to exclude travel data from days with traffic incidents. The Committee felt that traffic incidents/accidents were part of the every day commute, and that excluding these data skews the auto travel time results. It was

noted that providing public transit with exclusive rights of way would allow for faster transit trip times compared to auto trip times in congested corridors. Committee members also noted non-quantifiable benefits of public transit, including reduced stress on the commuter and reduced vehicle wear and tear.

A Committee member noted that the freeway system carries the most number of vehicles per hour per lane at speeds ranging from 38 to 55 mph. He suggested conducting a pilot study of ramp meter rates that would allow for freeway speeds in this optimum range. Pedro Orso-Delgado, Caltrans, replied that Caltrans has been working with the University of California, Berkeley on this issue. There are operational issues that need to be addressed. Mr. Orso offered to provide a presentation on this topic at a future Transportation Committee meeting.

12. I-15 MANAGED LANES/BUS RAPID TRANSIT (BRT) PROJECT STATUS (APPROVE)

The I-15 Managed Lanes/BRT project is jointly being managed by Caltrans and MTDB. Staff provided a status report on Phase 1 of the project between SR 56 and Centre City Parkway, including progress to date on the development of both the Managed Lanes and BRT components.

Staff summarized funding issues related to the development of the BRT stations and services. Following a temporary suspension in TCRP funds, various changes in project funding were made in order to secure the BRT station sites and enable the completion of final design.

Staff summarized the BRT service plan for the I-15 corridor. The plan calls for increasing the peak frequency from every 30 minutes to every 15 minutes for the six existing commuter express routes, plus adding two new express routes with 15- to 30-minute peak frequencies (Escondido to Kearny Mesa and Rancho Bernardo to Sorrento Mesa). In addition to these peak period services, the plan includes a 10-minute all day "trunk" service along I-15.

Staff described the proposed strategy for providing sufficient parking for BRT patrons. It includes developing five BRT stations along the I-15 corridor (each with 175-200 spaces) and securing remote, shared-use park and ride lots in local communities. Benefits of the shared-use park and ride lot strategy include providing transit access closer to residents and reduced traffic/community impacts at BRT stations near the freeway. Staff also summarized planning activities concerning the future Mira Mesa Transit Center and proposed Scripps Ranch direct access ramp locations.

Staff stated that the Transportation Committee is asked to approve the appropriate role of MTDB's I-15 Policy Advisory Committee (PAC), which has been providing policy direction for the project. Staff described the two options included in the agenda report for the Transportation Committee's consideration. Option 1 – disbanding the I-15 PAC, giving the Transportation Committee quarterly reports, continuing to include project information in the monthly progress reports to the Board, and communicating informally with current PAC members and other elected officials in the I-15 corridor – is recommended.

Bob Emery, Chair of the I-15 PAC, summarized the history of the PAC and recommended that the Committee's decision on its future role be deferred until PAC members could be

notified of the proposed change. The Committee discussed various ways to continue the involvement of I-15 PAC members, while retaining clear oversight by the Transportation Committee. In addition to the quarterly Transportation Committee project updates, quarterly updates to the City of San Diego's Freeway Congestion Strike Team, which includes PAC members Maienschein and Slater, also was suggested.

Action: The Transportation Committee approved Option 1, as described in the agenda report, with the following additions: (1) a letter from the Transportation Committee Chair will be sent to current I-15 PAC members notifying them of the Committee's actions, and (2) the Freeway Congestion Strike Team will receive regular quarterly progress updates on the I-15 Managed Lanes/BRT project.

Mr. Orso-Delgado provided the Committee with copies of a construction bulletin and fact sheet for the I-15/SR 56 interchange project. He stated Caltrans is working with SANDAG to improve the flow of the I-15 Express Lanes, which has been impacted by the project's construction activities.

Chair Kellejian announced that due to a conflict with a League of Cities conference, the July 18, 2003 Transportation Committee meeting would be canceled and rescheduled for August 1, 2003.

GARY L. GALLEGOS
Executive Director