

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

August 15, 2003

AGENDA ITEM NO.: **2**

Action Requested: APPROVE

DISCUSSION AND ACTIONS FROM AUGUST 1, 2003 TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MEETING

The meeting of the Transportation Committee was called to order by Chair Joe Kellejian (North County Coastal). Other voting members in attendance were Vice Chair Dick Murphy (City of San Diego), Mickey Cafagna (North County Inland), Art Madrid (East County), Jerry Rindone (South County), Ron Roberts (County of San Diego), 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), Corky Smith (North County Inland), Phil Monroe (South County), Jack Feller (NCTD), as well as ex-officio member Pedro Orso-Delgado (Caltrans).

CONSENT ITEMS (1 through 6)

1. 2002 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (RTIP) AMENDMENT NO. 13 – VARIOUS PROJECTS (APPROVE)
2. TRANSPORTATION DEVELOPMENT ACT (TDA) CLAIM AMENDMENTS – SAN DIEGO METROPOLITAN TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT BOARD (MTDB) (APPROVE)
3. FEDERAL TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITIES (TEA) PROGRAM QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT (INFORMATION)
4. I-805/I-5 TRANSPORTATION STUDY UPDATE (INFORMATION)
5. QUARTERLY TRANSIT COORDINATION DEVELOPMENT REVIEW REPORT (INFORMATION)
6. REGIONAL RAIL GRADE SEPARATION STUDY (INFORMATION)

Action: The Transportation Committee approved Consent Items 1 through 6, including Resolution Nos. 2004-01 and 2004-02.

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS

Chair Kellejian indicated that an oral roll call will be taken starting with the August 15, 2003, Transportation Committee meeting so that persons listening to the Webcast will know who is present.

Chair Kellejian introduced and welcomed two new SANDAG employees: Jack Boda, Department Director of Mobility Management and Project Implementation, and Bob Leiter, Department Director of Land Use and Transportation Planning.

REPORTS

8. I-15 EXPRESS LANES OPERATIONS (INFORMATION)

Chair Kellejian suggested that the action on this item be changed from "Information" to "Information and Possible Action." The Transportation Committee unanimously approved this change.

Chair Kellejian thanked Supervisors Ron Roberts and Pam Slater for bringing this matter to the attention of the SANDAG Board and the public. He also thanked Caltrans and SANDAG staff for working on this item.

Before starting his presentation on I-15 Express Lane operations, Caltrans District Director Pedro Orso-Delgado thanked SANDAG for approving the loan of *TransNet* funds to Caltrans to continue construction projects. However, he noted that Caltrans will probably not need the loan, because a state budget is expected to be approved within the week.

Mr. Orso-Delgado stated that Caltrans plans to open the I-15 Express Lanes for weekend operations beginning the weekend of September 5, 2003. He stated that Caltrans staff would be providing presentations on two related issues: the proposed weekend operations of the Express Lanes and ongoing construction projects in the I-15 corridor that are affecting current Express Lanes operations. Chair Kellejian asked that the item be bifurcated with discussion of the I-15 Express Lanes weekend operations held first.

Caltrans staff provided a report that included background information on the I-15 Express Lanes, a status of activities since July 1, 2003, current average daily traffic (ADT) volumes in the I-15 corridor, current operations, and the proposed opening of the Express Lanes for weekend operations.

Caltrans staff noted that unlike weekday periods, there is no clear peak period or peak direction during the weekend. To better determine weekend usage, Caltrans would test operating the lanes in the southbound direction for one to three months, followed by operating the lanes in the northbound direction for another one to three months. This pilot program would allow Caltrans to obtain information about high occupancy vehicle (HOV) versus single occupancy vehicle (SOV) weekend usage and help determine the optimum operations of the lanes for weekend conditions. The pilot program also would include provisions to adjust weekend operations to handle special events, such as major football games or major accidents.

Discussion ensued regarding the advantages and disadvantages of various weekend operating scenarios, associated operating costs, and how special events would be managed. Committee members supported the concept of using new I-15 FasTrak™ revenues to defray weekend operating costs, but stated that Caltrans should minimize operating costs and provide sufficient documentation of any additional costs incurred.

Transportation Committee members expressed concern that Caltrans would use the pilot study just to collect weekend traffic data. The Committee requested more information about the decisions that would be made based on the information collected.

Chair Kellejian asked if there were plans to notify the public about the opening of the Express Lanes on September 5, 2003. Staff replied that SANDAG and Caltrans would likely send out a joint press release and that SANDAG would notify its I-15 FasTrak™ customers if the lanes were to be open to SOVs for a fee. It was suggested that the press release also indicate that California Highway Patrol (CHP) would be enforcing the HOV requirements on the lanes, and that the information also be sent to local jurisdictions to include in their community newsletters.

Supervisor Ron Roberts (County of San Diego) asked about the possibility of opening the Express Lanes for the Labor Day weekend. Caltrans staff agreed to consider this suggestion.

Action: The Transportation Committee supported opening the I-15 Express Lanes for weekend operations, strongly encouraged Caltrans to consider opening the lanes for the Labor Day weekend, and directed staff to work with Caltrans to prepare public outreach information related to weekend operations.

The Committee asked Caltrans to provide a status report at the August 15 meeting on the opening day and direction.

Caltrans staff provided a report on a series of construction improvement projects for the I-15 corridor and described measures planned by Caltrans to minimize the effects of construction activities on weekday operations of the I-15 Express Lanes.

Chair Kellejian called a five-minute break at 10:10 a.m. and reconvened the meeting at 10:15 a.m.

9. TRANSPORTATION FOR SENIOR CITIZENS (INFORMATION)

Chair Kellejian stated that Councilmember Jack Feller (Oceanside) asked that this item be included on the agenda. Councilmember Feller noted that the American Public Transportation Association's (APTA's) main thrust is to increase transit ridership. Seniors in the future will make up a bigger percentage of ridership for all of our transit agencies. He requested that the Transportation Committee consider a response to seniors regarding transportation options available to them.

Staff reported that this region does make a substantial investment in services for seniors and disabled persons. Fares for seniors are discounted off the regular fare, low-floor vehicles are being implemented to ease boarding/alighting, and there are special services for Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-certified patrons. Public dollars also help fund other local transportation programs, such as senior shuttle services. SANDAG's long-range transportation plan, MOBILITY 2030, lists additional programs to improve transit service for seniors, but funding remains a constraint. Last fall, the City of Oceanside conducted a survey of its seniors and their transportation needs.

Oceanside staff presented the survey results, which indicated that the numbers of seniors in the City of Oceanside will increase significantly in the future, leading to a need to provide transportation for seniors who do not qualify for ADA service. Oceanside staff suggested that a Regional Task Force be formed to conduct regional research, a cost analysis of technology, visit cities that have senior transportation services, and develop a prototype

regional service to address senior transportation needs. The objectives of this prototype would be to improve service and dispatching, provide more efficient service operations, improve service information, facilitate transit information, improve emergency response, provide automated vehicle location capabilities, and improve/upgrade communications capability. The final product would be the implementation of a demonstration project for North County.

Public Comment

Gary Baldwin, a member of the public, stated that transportation is essential to everyone, including seniors. He asked that the transportation needs of seniors be seriously considered.

Chair Kellejian stated that there is a substantial incentive program for seniors in the San Diego region in the way of discounted monthly transit passes.

The Transportation Committee supported addressing senior transportation needs, and recognized that the available funding constrains the region's ability to provide improved transportation service for seniors. Committee members asked what types of services could be implemented if funding were available.

Staff indicated that MOBILITY 2030 includes a number of improvements that will make public transportation better for everyone, including making bus stops more accessible, adding more low-floor buses, and retrofitting curbs and sidewalks to ADA standards. Transit services also should connect to senior centers and other major activity centers. If the *TransNet* extension is approved, there would be additional funding for senior transportation programs.

Staff noted that SANDAG's Subcommittee for Accessible Transportation (SCAT) has been the venue to discuss these issues. SCAT is the technical committee for regional issues related to senior and accessible transportation services, and the Transportation Committee is the policy committee. Various agencies and individuals from around the region that provide senior/accessible transportation services are represented on SCAT.

Supervisor Roberts stated that the City of Vista has a very effective senior transportation program and he asked that Vista share this information with the City of Oceanside and other jurisdictions interested in implementing similar programs.

Chair Kellejian said that he did not see the need for another regional committee, and MOBILITY 2030 includes plans for the future with regard to transportation needs for seniors and persons with disabilities.

Staff indicated that a telephone survey related to the development of the *TransNet* extension is underway, and a report on the results of this survey is scheduled to be presented at the September 2003 Policy Development Board meeting. The survey and related focus group research will be used to determine what types of senior transportation services the public desires. Staff suggested that this matter be referred to SCAT with a recommendation regarding how to improve senior transportation services coming back to the Transportation Committee in the October/November 2003 timeframe.

Mayor Madrid suggested that any SCAT subcommittee working on this issue involve the senior commissions and committees on aging in each city. Staff replied that these various senior groups are already on the SCAT mailing list.

Action: The Transportation Committee referred the City of Oceanside's Senior Survey Report to SCAT for its review. SCAT's review and recommendations will be reported back to the Transportation Committee by November 2003.

10. TRANSIT STATION JOINT DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS (INFORMATION)

Staff presented a report on transit-oriented joint development projects at five transit stations around the region. The aim of these projects is to develop the property in a way that both supports the use of transit and other regional goals. These projects help enhance regional mobility, support transit ridership, provide additional housing options, promote smart growth, and help protect the environment.

The region's Transit First strategy is to make transit more accessible, more convenient, and more relevant so that people will choose to use transit for more of their daily trips. Staff reviewed the five joint development project case studies, including four at existing rail stations and one at a planned bus rapid transit (BRT) station. All of these concepts include parking structures for transit users, and a mix of retail and for-rent housing. These projects are good examples of the types of smart growth developments envisioned in the Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP). Benefits of these projects include enhanced ridership, additional security on the street, additional passenger amenities, and access improvements.

Staff noted that SANDAG plays a role in helping to plan these joint development projects. Project leases and other financial details would be negotiated between the developers and the transit agencies, which own the various transit stations.

Deputy Mayor Jerry Rindone (South County) asked staff to clarify the difference between the presentation and the written staff report regarding the number of proposed housing units at the Morena Vista Trolley Station development. *The following updated information became available after the Committee meeting: The project includes 184 units total, consisting of 22 lofts and 162 apartments. The Affordable Housing Assistance Agreement between the developer and the City of San Diego calls for the construction of 16 low and moderate income rental units.*

Transportation Committee members discussed the need to provide (and not preclude) future expansion of parking for transit patrons in the plans for these joint development projects.

11. TRANSIT FIRST NOW! PROGRAM UPDATE (INFORMATION)

Staff presented an update on the Transit First Now! program. Staff summarized the four major Transit First elements: service concepts, community design, customer experience, and transit priority. The Transit First Now! program focuses on the fourth element of the Transit First strategy — applying transit priority measures to maintain transit travel speeds and reliability.

Staff reviewed several transit priority treatments in place today, including various transit-only lanes, queue jumpers, and transit signal treatments in San Diego and Chula Vista. Proposed improvements under the Transit First Now! program include a transit-only lane on Eleventh Avenue between Broadway and A Street in downtown San Diego, a reduction in the number of bus stops on University Avenue between Park Boulevard and Seventh Avenue, a queue jumper lane on First Avenue between A and Cedar Streets, and a bus-only lane along Rosecrans/Taylor Street for easier access to the bus transfer center at the Old Town Transit Center.

Staff stated that SANDAG's FY 2004 Overall Work Program and Budget includes the \$100,000 necessary to make these proposed projects "implementation ready" (i.e., carried through the final design phase). Additional funds for right-of-way and construction phases would need to be identified as part of the transit Capital Improvement Program (CIP) in order to implement these projects.

Mr. Orso-Delgado noted that Caltrans has been working with MTDB on a demonstration project to allow buses to operate on freeway shoulder areas in the peak hours near the I-805 and SR 52 interchange. Following this test, the ultimate goal is to allow existing transit services to use freeway shoulders along I-15 to help bypass traffic congestion during the construction of the I-15 Managed Lanes.

Chair Kellejian asked whether similar projects were being developed in the NCTD area. Staff indicated that the next phase is to take a broader look at developing similar transit priority treatments around the region, including appropriate improvements in the NCTD area.

12. ADJOURNMENT AND UPCOMING MEETING

Chair Kellejian announced that the next meeting is Friday, August 15, 2003, at 9 a.m. He clarified that the meeting tentatively scheduled for Friday, September 5 has been cancelled, but there will be a regular meeting of the Transportation Committee on September 19. He stated that the Transportation Committee will begin meeting twice a month beginning in 2004. Staff will transmit a meeting schedule to the Committee.

Deputy Mayor Rindone asked staff to include information in the next Transportation Committee agenda about the planned ribbon-cutting ceremony for the SR 125 South project. He encouraged all Transportation Committee members to attend the ceremony. *Subsequent to this meeting, revised information related this ceremony was received. It will now be held on Friday, September 12, 2003, at 2 p.m. in the South Bay.*

Staff noted that U.S. Secretary of Transportation Norm Mineta will be attending this ribbon-cutting ceremony.

Mayor Murphy asked about the I-15 Managed Lanes groundbreaking ceremony. Mr. Orso-Delgado replied that the groundbreaking would likely be held sometime in late October or early November 2003.

Chair Kellejian adjourned the meeting at 11:40 a.m.