



# Social Services Transportation Advisory Council

Item: **2**

July 22, 2019

Action: **Approve**

## May 13, 2019, Meeting Minutes

Chair Meagan Schmidt (Facilitating Access to Coordinated Transportation [FACT]) called the meeting of the Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC) to order at 10:17 a.m. at San Diego State University's Student Ability Success Center.

### 1. Introductions

The attendance sheet for this meeting is included.

### 2. Approval of Meeting Minutes (Approve)

Approval of the SSTAC's March 18, 2019, meeting minutes was deferred to the July 22, 2019, meeting due to a lack of a quorum at the meeting call to order.

### 3. Public Comments/Communications/Member Comments

Sharlene Ornelas (At-Large Member – 2nd Alternate) expressed the need for bus drivers to pull closer to curbs and for there to be adequate bus shelters and bus benches, especially for seniors and those who are unable to stand for long periods of time. Sharon Beckas (Special Interest Voting Member – 1st Alternate) commented that construction along Route 30 caused only one lane of traffic to be open, triggering long delays. Ms. Beckas expressed concern that Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) insufficiently alerted riders to these delays caused by scheduled construction. Wayne Landon (Special Interest Voting Member – Seat B) expressed concern for the safety of wheelchair-bound riders at the bus stop near the Southwest corner of the intersection of Genesee Avenue and Highway 52 which serves Routes 41 and 105. Mr. Landon called the bus stop hazardous, as it is located atop a dirt embankment near a storm-water drain.

## Reports

### 4. San Diego State University's Student Ability Success Center (Information)

Pamela Starr (San Diego State University [SDSU] - Student Ability Success Center [SASC]) discussed the mission of the SASC and how it provides accommodations for students with disabilities around campus. Ensuring that students have access to their education, the SASC serves nearly 2,000 SDSU students who have disabilities registered with the SASC. Ms. Starr provided an overview of the services the SASC provide including academic support, TriO student support services, mobility support, and employment and internship assistance.

Ms. Starr stated that the SASC offers rides to students to get around campus. Ms. Beckas asked if students who have sudden injuries like broken bones are eligible for the rides. Ms. Starr stated that the SASC would work with students on a case-by-case basis but does not provide an on-call service. Brian Lane, Senior Regional Planner, asked if the majority of the SASC's employees are paid and how the SASC is primarily funded. Ms. Starr stated that the SASC employees are paid and the SASC is primarily funded through the SDSU general fund and health fees.

Mark McCumsey (Caltrans) inquired about the the most common exam accommodations provided to students. Ms. Starr replied that extended time and distraction view settings are the most common, but the SASC also provides accommodating technologies such as JAWS, Zoom Text, and Dragon Naturally Speaking. Dan Totah, a member of the public, asked if the SASC provides training on JAWS for the visually-impaired. Ms. Starr stated that while the SASC can provide training, SASC hopes that incoming students are already familiar with the technology through the San Diego Center for the Blind, their K-12 education, or another resource so that they are not behind in their coursework. Clytie Koehler, a member of the public, asked if the SASC's services are also available to incoming graduate students. Ms. Starr stated the SASC provides services to the entire campus community, including undergraduate, graduate, open enrollment, and Center for Extended Studies students. Helen Elias (Special Interest Voting Member – Seat A) asked if SDSU's facility are also included in those eligible to receive the SASC's services. Ms. Starr stated that the SASC provides its cart service to facility, but SDSU's employee relations department provides all other accommodations.

## **5. County of San Diego Age Well Initiative (Information)**

County of San Diego staff presented an overview of the Age Well Initiative, including goals to make transportation options age-friendly and accessible to all throughout San Diego County. Christy Patch (County of San Diego) explained that the Age Well Initiative began in 2016 when the County Board of Supervisors agreed to join AARP's network of age-friendly communities, kicking off a two-year process with community input to prioritize the needs of older adults in the region. Zachary Hansen and Carolyn Proskow (County of San Diego) presented a draft of the Ride Well to Age Well Guide, a resource that lists current transportation options available to seniors and individuals with disabilities throughout the County.

Ms. Beckas asked County staff if there is an online version of the Ride Well to Age Well Guide. Mr. Hansen and Ms. Proskow stated that the physical guide was intended for seniors who want a hard copy, though an online version will be made available on the County of San Diego's website. Regarding the 2019 Age Well Summit, Ms. Beckas recommended that County staff include representatives from transportation network companies on a panel concerning transportation and aging.

Jack Christensen, Grants Administrator, asked how members of the SSTAC could participate in the Age Well Initiative. County staff encouraged members of the SSTAC and public to participate in the Age Well Initiative theme teams meeting which are held on the fourth Wednesday of every month in the afternoon at the County Operations Center.

Ms. Ornelas announced that there is a free smartphone application, AIRA, that enables a blind individual using the application to converse with a person who can access the smartphone's camera and provide guidance. Ms. Ornelas stated that the service is free in free zones such as Balboa Park and Santa Fe Station. Ms. Ornelas also announced that assistants who accompany disabled individuals to the San Diego County Fair can gain free admission and that service dogs are allowed.

## **6. Metropolitan Transit System and North County Transit District Performance Report**

Lisa Madsen, Associate Regional Planner, briefly introduced the Transportation Development Act (TDA) productivity improvements and the efforts of MTS and North County Transit District (NCTD) to implement productivity improvements during FY 2019. Established in California in 1971, the TDA provides funding to be allocated for transit as well as non-transit purposes that are consistent with regional transportation plans.

The TDA requires transit operators receiving TDA funds to annually report on six performance indicators and SANDAG Board Policy 018 requires quarterly updates on those performance indicators. The six performance indicators are: operating cost per passenger, which measures cost effectiveness; operating cost per revenue hour, which measures cost efficiency; passengers per revenue hour, which measures service productivity; passengers per revenue mile, which also measures service productivity; revenue hour per employee, which measures labor productivity; and fare box recovery ratio, which measures service cost efficiency. Ms. Madsen explained that performance, as measured by these six indicators, is evaluated separately by mode and type of service. For example, the performance of the MTS Trolley is not compared against that of MTS Access. Of the statistics shared, Ms. Madsen reported that regional ridership increased 1.23% from the second quarter of FY 2018 to the second quarter of FY 2019.

Ms. Beckas asked Ms. Madsen how she could review the statistics Ms. Madsen cited. Ms. Madsen stated that they are included in the SANDAG Transportation Committee's May 17, 2019, meeting agenda, listed under Item 5. Ms. Ornelas stated that SANDAG staff used to present the transit performance statistics and requested that SANDAG staff resume providing quarterly updates to the SSTAC.

## **7. Public Hearing (Information)**

Mr. Christensen opened the public hearing to solicit the input of transit dependent and transit disadvantaged persons, including the elderly, disabled, and persons of limited means, on public transportation needs in San Diego County.

Wally Wulfeck, a member of the public representing the Scripps Ranch Planning Group, the Miramar Ranch North Planning Group, and the Scripps Ranch Civic Association, expressed the need for improved public transportation for seniors and individuals with disabilities in the Scripps Ranch and Miramar communities. Mr. Wulfeck emphasized that the need is becoming more acute with an aging population and stated that there are 13,000 homes and 40,000 people in the Scripps Ranch area without any public transit options.

Ms. Koehler commented on the condition of transit bus stops, saying that many are filthy, neglected, and trashed, which disincentivizes transit for choice riders. Ms. Koehler cited a slanted, trashed, and unsheltered bus stop in Lakeside and another near a mall in Escondido as examples. Ms. Koehler expressed the need for safe, comfortable, and sheltered bus stops, which she stated could help increase ridership. Ms. Koehler also stated that since the right-most lane of five lanes on East Valley Parkway in Escondido was converted into a bike lane, buses now cannot pull up close to the bus stop. Ms. Koehler expressed concern that the design is dangerous for blind bus riders who may be unaware of the bike lane and might be disoriented as to where to board and deboard a bus. Ms. Koehler stated that there are not truncated domes or other markers to indicate the location of the bus stop and the bike lane, potentially causing blind riders to inadvertently enter vehicular or bicycle traffic.

Ethel Miranda, a member of the public, expressed the need for consistent and predictable bus stalls for bus routes at transit centers, especially for visually-impaired riders who may be disoriented by inconsistent and unpredictable drop-off and pick-up locations.

Ms. Ornelas expressed concern that established residents who rely on paratransit service may suddenly have their paratransit service cut due to cuts in fixed-route service, potentially causing sudden mobility hardship. Ms. Ornelas recommended that there be a way to grandfather in the changes so that paratransit riders have enough time to find transportation alternatives or a different living situation.

Ms. Beckas stated she noticed an unclean, unmaintained bus stop on Torrey Pines Road that had a sign indicating it was "adopted by" the Salk Institute. Ms. Beckas asked what the "adopted by" implies given the bus stop's poor condition.

## **8. Staff Report (Information)**

Mr. Christensen updated the SSTAC on the implementation of Senate Bill (SB) 1376 entitled Transportation Network Companies (TNC): Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities. SB 1376 requires the California Public Utilities Commission to hold a minimum of five public workshops throughout the state to gather input on the regulations being developed to govern the bill. Mr. Christensen reported that he and Mr. Lane have represented SANDAG at the workshops in-person and on the phone and advocated for a workshop to be held in San Diego. Mr. Christensen stated he would inform the SSTAC should a workshop be held in San Diego.

Mr. Christensen also noted that SANDAG staff unveiled a bold, new transportation vision for the region at a historic, joint meeting of the SANDAG Board, Policy Advisory Committee, and Independent Taxpayer Oversight Committee on April 26, 2019. The unveiled vision outlines what the 2021 Regional Plan could be, encapsulated by what SANDAG staff call the "Five Big Moves": complete corridors, transit leap, mobility hubs, flexible fleets, and next operating system (or OS). Mr. Christensen provided a brief preview but stated that SANDAG staff plan to give a full presentation on the "5 Big Moves" to the SSTAC in July 2019.

## **9. Transit Operator Update (Information)**

Charles Main (NCTD Fixed Route) informed the SSTAC that he noted the comments pertaining to NCTD and would relay them to his colleagues. Mr. Main announced that NCTD would hold an ADA review group meeting on May 14, 2019, from 2 to 4 p.m. at NCTD's headquarters in Oceanside, available to members of the public to provide input. Mr. Main notified the SSTAC that NCTD's service change occurred on April 7, 2019, with minor scheduling adjustments to improve connections and on-time performance. The next service change is slated for October 7, 2019. Chair Schmidt requested updates on NCTD's travel training program and its new eligibility center in Escondido.

## **10. Facilitating Access to Coordinated Transportation Update (Information)**

Chair Schmidt stated that FACT's board meeting is scheduled for May 23, 2019, in Encinitas. FACT's June Board meeting will also be an open house for FACT's new office. The next Council on Access and Mobility is scheduled for July 9, 2019. Chair Schmidt announced that FACT replaced its Route Match software with EcoLane. Chair Schmidt noted that FACT is participating in the ongoing discussions and workshop on how SB 1376 is to be implemented. Chair Schmidt informed the SSTAC that San Diego has the third highest transportation network company ridership behind San Francisco and Los Angeles and shared Mr. Christensen's desire for a workshop to be held in San Diego.

## **11. Upcoming Meetings (Information)**

The next SSTAC meeting is scheduled for July 22, 2019, at 10 a.m. at the SANDAG offices.

## **12. Adjournment**

Chair Schmidt adjourned the meeting at 11:55 a.m.

## Confirmed Attendance at SANDAG Social Services Transportation Advisory Council Meeting

May 13, 2019

Jurisdiction/Organization	Name	Attended	Comments
Access to Independence	Amy Kalivas	No	
At-Large Voting Member (Seat A)	Mary Birdine	Yes	Absent at time of voting
At-Large Voting Member (Seat B)	Rebecca Steiner	No	
At-Large Voting Member (Seat C)	Ted Kagan	No	
At-Large Voting Member (Seats A through C) Alternates	Linda Haddock, 1st Alternate	No	Resigned on meeting date
	Sharlene Ornelas, 2nd Alternate	Yes	
	Kathleen Baldwin, 3rd Alternate	No	
Facilitating Access to Coordinated Transportation (Seat A)	Arun Prem	No	
Facilitating Access to Coordinated Transportation (Seat B)	Meagan Schmidt	Yes	Chair
International Rescue Committee	Gayle Obrecht	Yes	
Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) Fixed Route	Vassy Lerinska	No	
MTS Paratransit	Jay Washburn	No	Vice Chair
North County Transit District (NCTD) Fixed Route	Charles Main	Yes	
NCTD Paratransit	Robert Gebo	No	
San Diego Center for the Blind	Elsa Caballero	Yes	
Special Interest Voting Member (Seat A)	Helen Elias	Yes	
	Sharon Beckas, Alternate	Yes	
Special Interest Voting Member (Seat B)	Wayne Landon	Yes	
	Tamara Airhart, Alternate	No	
Survivors of Torture, International	Nance Lovell	Yes	
The ARC of San Diego	Anthony DeSalis	Yes	

**Other Attendees**

Adrianna Ramirez

Christy Patch

Clive Richard

Clytie Koehler

David Jackson

Ethel Miranda

Larysa Rudich

Mark McCumsey

Megan Howell

Thyme Curtis

Wally Wulfeck

**SANDAG Staff**

Brian Lane

Jack Christensen

Lisa Madsen

Zachary Rivera