

SANDAG
Social Services Transportation Advisory
Council

Tuesday, May 18, 2021
10 a.m.

****Teleconference Meeting****

MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT AMIDST COVID-19
PANDEMIC:

The Social Services Transportation Advisory Council meeting scheduled for Tuesday, May 18, 2021, will be conducted virtually in accordance with Governor Newsom's State of Emergency declaration regarding the COVID-19 outbreak, Executive Order N-29-20, and the Guidance for Gatherings issued by the California Department of Public Health. Council Members will primarily participate in the meeting virtually, while practicing social distancing, from individual remote locations.

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<https://zoom.us/j/91722006001>

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Public Comments: Persons who wish to address the members on an item to be considered at this meeting, or on non-agendized issues, may email comments to the Clerk at clerkoftheboard@sandag.org (please reference "May 18 SSTAC Meeting" in your subject line and identify the item number(s) to which your comments pertain). Comments received by 4 p.m. on Monday, May 17 will be provided to members prior to the meeting. If you desire to provide live verbal comment during the meeting, please join the Zoom meeting by computer or phone and use the "Raise Hand" function to request to provide public comment. On a computer, the "Raise Hand" feature is on the Zoom toolbar. By phone, enter *9 to "Raise Hand" and *6 to unmute. Requests to provide live public comment must be made at the beginning of the relevant item, and no later than the end of any staff presentation on the item. The Clerk will call on members of the public who have timely requested to provide comment by name for those joining via a computer and by the last three digits of for those joining via telephone. All comments received prior to the close of the meeting will be made part of the meeting record. Please note that any available chat feature on the Zoom meeting platform should be used by

panelists and attendees solely for procedural or other “housekeeping” matters as comments provided via the chat feature will not be retained as part of the meeting record. All comments to be provided for the record must be made via email or orally per the instructions above.

SANDAG

Welcome to SANDAG. Members of the public may speak to the Social Services Transportation Advisory Council on any item at the time the Council is considering the item. Public speakers are limited to three minutes or less per person. The Council may only take action on any item appearing on the agenda.

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- Click the closed caption icon on the toolbar at the top of your screen and follow the prompts, or
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Message from the Clerk

In compliance with Government Code §54952.3, the Clerk hereby announces that the compensation for legislative body members attending the following simultaneous or serial meetings is: Executive Committee (EC) \$100, Board of

Directors (BOD) \$150, and Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) \$100. Compensation rates for the EC and BOD are set pursuant to the SANDAG Bylaws, and the compensation rate for the RTC is set pursuant to state law.

Mission Statement

The 18 cities and county government are SANDAG serving as the forum for regional decision-making. SANDAG builds consensus; makes strategic plans; obtains and allocates resources; plans, engineers, and builds public transit; and provides information on a broad range of topics pertinent to the region's quality of life.

Our Commitment to Equity

We hold ourselves accountable to the communities we serve. We acknowledge we have much to learn and much to change; and we firmly uphold equity and inclusion for every person in the San Diego region. This includes historically underserved, systemically marginalized groups impacted by actions and inactions at all levels of our government and society.

We have an obligation to eliminate disparities and ensure that safe, healthy, accessible, and inclusive opportunities are available to everyone. In 2021, SANDAG will develop an equity action plan that will inform how we plan, prioritize, fund, and build projects and programs; frame how we work with our

communities; define how we recruit and develop our employees; guide our efforts to conduct unbiased research and interpret data; and set expectations for companies and stakeholders that work with us.

We are committed to creating a San Diego region where every person who visits, works, and lives can thrive.

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Social Services Transportation Advisory Council

Tuesday, May 18, 2021

Item No.		Recommendation
1.	Introductions	
+2.	Approval of Meeting Minutes	Approve
+2A.	January 19, 2021, Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC) Meeting Minutes	
+2B.	March 11, 2021, Joint Social Services Transportation Meeting	
3.	Public Comments/Communications and Member Comments Public comments under this agenda item will be limited to five public speakers. Members of the public shall have the opportunity to address the SSTAC on any issue within the jurisdiction of Council that is not on this agenda. Public speakers are limited to three minutes or less per person. SSTAC members also	

may provide information and announcements under this agenda item. If the number of public comments under this agenda item exceeds five, additional public comments will be taken at the end of the agenda. Subjects of previous agenda items may not again be addressed under public comment.

Reports

4. Staff Report

Staff will report on notable activity within the SANDAG Short Range Transit section.

5. SSTAC Membership

An overview on SSTAC membership rotation and opportunities to serve on the SSTAC will be presented. An overview on the application process and request for volunteers to serve on the selection panel in July, will also be presented. The new membership

Information

terms will begin on August 1, 2021.

6. Transit Operator Update

Information

An update on proposed service changes and any notable activity will be provided by representatives from the Metropolitan Transit System and North County Transit District.

7. Facilitating Access to Coordinated Transportation Update

Information

An overview on the most recent developments of the Facilitating Access to Coordinated Transportation Update and the Council on Access and Mobility will be presented.

8. Public Hearing

Information

As required by Public Utilities Codes 99238.5, the SSTAC will hold a 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.

9. Adjournment

Information

The next SSTAC meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, July 20, 2021, at 10 a.m.

+ next to an agenda item indicates an attachment

Item: **2A**

May 18, 2021

Action: **Approve**

January 19, 2021, Meeting Minutes

Chair Meagan Schmidt (Facilitating Access to Coordinated Transportation [FACT] – Seat B) called the meeting of the Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC) to order at 10:09 a.m. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the meeting was held in a virtual environment via Zoom.

1. Welcome and Introductions

The attendance sheet for this meeting is included.

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes (Approve)

Action: Upon a motion by Sharlene Ornelas (At-Large Voting Member – Seat B) and a Clytie Kohler (Special Interest Alternate – Seat B), the SSTAC approved the minutes as amended from the November 9, 2020 meeting. Yes: Ilse Carey (Special Interest Member – Seat A), Kent Rodricks (Special Interest Member – Seat B), Lorry Seagrim (At Large Voting Member – Seat A), Catherine Manis (At Large Voting Member - Seat C), Winona Garcia (Survivors of Torture), Marissa Lucero (San Diego Center for the Blind), Anthony DeSalis (The ARC of San Diego), Chair Meagan Schmidt (FACT), Vassilena Lerinska (MTS Fixed Route), Vice Chair Jay

Washburn (MTS Paratransit), Charles Main (NCTD Fixed Route), and Robert Gebo (NCTD Paratransit).
Abstain: None. Absent: Home of Guiding Hands

3. Public Comments/Communications/Member Comments

Sharon Beckas commented that there is a State of MTS presentation by Nathan Fletcher on January 21.

Reports

4. Staff Report (Discussion)

Additional Section 5310 Funding through the [Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2021](#) – The San Diego region will be apportioned [\\$412,817](#) of the \$50,000,000 available nationwide. SANDAG staff is working with the Federal Transit Administration to seek clarity on eligibility requirements, schedule of funding, and other details. Staff is slated to present draft funding recommendations for the Cycle 11 Call for Projects in March to the Independent Taxpayer Oversight Committee (ITOC), Transportation Committee (TC), and Board of Directors (BOD).

SANDAG and Caltrans are developing a Comprehensive Multimodal Corridor Plan (CMCP) for the South Bay to Sorrento corridor. The South Bay to Sorrento (SB2S) project aims to guide development of an innovative transportation network, transforming

the way people and goods move through the San Diego region. The CMCP evaluates all travel modes and transportation facilities in a defined corridor – highways and freeways, parallel and connecting roadways, transit (bus, bus rapid transit, light rail, intercity rail, etc.), pathways, and bikeways.

Completing the CMCPs will help the San Diego region compete for local, state, and federal funds. The SB2S CMCP is anticipated to be finalized by late 2021.

SANDAG and Caltrans District 11 are hosting a their first virtual public engagement meeting through [Zoom](#) on Thursday, January 28, 2021, 6 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

During this meeting, the project team will introduce the Comprehensive Multimodal Corridor Plan (CMCP) for the South Bay to Sorrento region. The team will explain how the development of an innovative transportation network will transform the way people and goods move through the San Diego region. Time will be dedicated during the meeting for attendees to share information about their corridor challenges, participate in surveys/polls, and remark on what is working well. The meeting will include details on how the public can submit their comments and provide input for the development of the corridor study through a virtual engagement hub. For more information on the South Bay to Sorrento CMCP planning effort, visit the SANDAG [CMCP website](#), the [Virtual Engagement Hub](#), and or download the project [Fact Sheet](#).

SANDAG recently formed an internal Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Council. Ms. Madsen noted that she was one of 12 SANDAG employees appointed to this Council. The Council will play an important role in developing SANDAG's equity action plan and will serve as both an advisory and working group.

5. Discussion of Equity Statement (Discussion/Possible Action)

SANDAG Executive Director Hasan Ikhata noted that staff is going to SANDAG's Board of Directors this Friday to ask them to adopt an Equity Statement. Staff is open to suggestions on the Equity Statement.

SANDAG's team thinks the equity statement is critical; first to acknowledge the sins of the past when it comes to transportation and the division of communities, including low income and minority communities getting the bad end of transportation investments. Now it is time to overcome these sins and move forward in an equitable way. It is anticipated that the Board will adopt the Equity Statement this Friday. The team, led by SANDAG Director of Regional Planning Coleen Clementson, will adopt a methodology for future transportation investments.

SANDAG Director of Strategic Communications, Irene McCormack, drafted the equity statement with input from the Social Equity Working Group and the internal Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Council. The Statement is as follows:

Equity Statement Draft II

We hold ourselves accountable to the communities we serve. We acknowledge we have much to learn and much to change; and we firmly uphold equity and inclusion for every person in the San Diego region. This includes historically underserved, systematically marginalized groups impacted by actions and inactions at all levels of our government and society.

We have an obligation to eliminate disparities and ensure that safe, healthy, accessible, and inclusive opportunities are available to everyone. In 2021, SANDAG will develop an equity action plan that will inform how we plan, prioritize, and build projects in programs; frame how we work with our communities; Define how we recruit and develop our employees ; Guide our efforts to conduct unbiased research and interpret data; And set expectations for companies and stakeholders that work with us.

We are committed to creating a San Diego region where every person who lives works or visits can thrive.

Brian Pollard commented that he likes the second draft of the statement. The second draft has a little bit more specificity, but still allows room in the Action Plan that will be worked on in 2021. The rubber is going to hit the road when we look at the action plan and some communities may have some priority shifts. This is an excellent start; Hasan thank you for pushing

this statement because something like this must be top down and knowing that the staff are supported will be a huge driver for this effort.

Ms. McCormack noted that Brian is correct, and the rubber will hit the road with the Action Plan and hold us all accountable for the words in the Equity Statement.

Sharlene Ornelas commented that she was glad to see that SANDAG didn't specify any of the minority groups because sometimes you can leave out the less known minority groups that are still not having those needs being met. I am really pleased with this draft presented.

6. Development of a Regional Social Equity Planning Framework (Discussion)

Coleen Clementson stated that it is an exciting time at SANDAG as we work to emphasize equity in everything we do. The agency has previously discussed the transformational transportation vision that is being incorporated in to the 2021 Regional Plan. This is about providing true travel alternatives to driving. The team is addressing three primary conditions: traffic congestion, social equity, and meeting the state and federal mandates. Our state and Federal mandates make sure we are addressing climate change and that we are reducing the number of individual vehicle miles traveled.

SANDAG Principal Regional Planner Tuere Fa'aola discussed the five inter-reliant actions:

1. Engagement - wanting to ensure that there is an engagement process that is transparent, fair, and inclusive. It elevates people of low income, people of color, and people with disabilities or with limited English. We want to make sure that what we learn from the engagements can translate into solutions.
2. Data Accountability - SANDAG has used a lot of data throughout the Regional Plan process and it has been incredibly helpful on how we should plan for transportation investments. We recognize that we need to drive our decisions in conjunction with engagement. We recognize that data is inherently biased and can result in inequitable access to communities that need work. But we need to recognize that and work from a human centered design perspective.
3. Measuring Impacts - SANDAG understands that we need to not only just measure impacts but understand the benefits of the plans and projects that we do, as well as the tradeoffs. There are always two sides to every impact. Working closely with communities will help inform our decision-making process.
4. Prioritizing Investments – SANDAG will prioritize investments based on the understanding of community priorities, state, local, and federal goals,

and regulations that we must comply with.

SANDAG will establish a new methodology that allows us to really prioritize investments in our plans, projects, and programs that benefit communities.

5. Monitor, Report, and Evolve - conduct ongoing monitoring and reporting to evaluate actual benefits or negative impacts. SANDAG needs to understand the outcomes of reports to inform all future decisions. We need to monitor, report, and be open to evolving as we learn more.

Anthony DeSalis commented that he was glad to see SANDAG looking at equity. The Arc of San Diego predominately serves people with disabilities in San Diego and it is important to understand that the people we serve are truly dependent upon public transportation. One of the major barriers with intellectual and developmental disabilities is the inability to achieve employment because of transportation issues, including first and last mile transportation, scheduling, and the time it takes to get from point A to B in their travel. It's also apparent in some of the other lower social economic classes that depend on public transportation to ensure they get educational or employment opportunities. I think this a positive step, but it will really be depending on the details and funding.

Clytie Koehler commented that she loves what is being said but wanted to mention the three forms of

omission that she was concerned about: first - asking questions of those affected, second - listen to hear and incorporate, third - to act on what is learned. Brian Pollard responded to Clytie; He also had the same comment and noted that this is the most receptive SANDAG has been in years.

7. Bridging the Digital Divide: Developing a Regional Digital Equity Strategy (Discussion)

SANDAG Director of Mobility and Innovation, Antionette Meier presented on the Digital Divide, noting that this topic has been getting more attention in the last year due to the pandemic. The Digital Divide has a lot to do with planning; broadband connectivity touches on areas from economic development, public health and safety, education, social equity, sustainability and even transportation.

Broadband is high-speed internet access via a variety of wired and wireless networks. High-speed is an important part of broadband, because not all internet connections are broadband. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) defines a broadband connection as transmission speeds of at least 25 Mbps downstream and 3 Mbps upstream. There are multiple ways to get broadband through DSL, cable modem, fiber-optic cables, wireless, and satellite. Broadband infrastructures consist of a first, middle, and last mile. First mile is the backbone, the larger fiber optic network that can transmit a lot of

data over a long distance. Middle mile links that backbone to the internet service providers' network. The last mile brings the connection to a home or business. There is a lack of a last mile connection for many people and communities in need. Closing the Digital Divide is also critical to the future of transportation. Broadband is also a green technology; we have seen during the pandemic how working and accessing services remotely can reduce car travel and the associated greenhouse gas emissions.

Over 2 million Californians do not have access to high-speed broadband services and 8.4 million residents do not have broadband subscriptions. In San Diego, 23% of households do not have a broadband subscription. 20-40% of students in local districts are under-connected or lack access. 42% of people who live in the County's rural areas have internet, versus 97% of the people who live in urban areas.

In December 2020, the Governor put out an executive mandate that directs state agencies to mandate a minimum broadband speed of 100 Mbps download speed and increase access to broadband under four areas: mapping and data, funding, deployment, and adoption. In addition to the executive order there are two other bills in the legislature that address the Digital Divide. The goal is to create digital equity within the State.

Some of the efforts in the San Diego region include the City of San Diego and San Diego Futures Foundation supporting 30,000 local households without a computer, SD Access4All providing Wi-Fi and laptop access, the City of Chula Vista adopted a Digital Equity and Inclusion Plan and a Telecommunications Master Plan, the San Diego County Office of Education funded 19 school districts, and the San Diego Foundation granted \$3 million in relief funding. SANDAG also has been involved in the efforts to expand broadband through the Interagency Fiber Optic Sharing Agreement, a public-private partnership with Media3, broadband planning integration into CMCP's, and collaborations with organizations across southern California to create a framework to streamline broadband deployment.

The primary objectives for these efforts is to develop consistent broadband-friendly policies and practices in the region. One of the biggest barriers to broadband is prohibitive policies and a lack of proactive planning and coordination. SANDAG sees this as an opportunity to accelerate intelligent transportation (NextOS) and smart city initiatives.

Clytie Koehler said that it is exciting to see and wonderful for the future, but wondered if the actual study is expected be done by the end of the calendar year? Is there any action supposed to be taken this year? The questions that are being asked need to be

framed in a way more than just 'can you afford it', it needs to be a 'either or'; 'are you letting other expenses go in order to keep it?'. People are giving up other things to get internet access. Ms. Meier noted that SANDAG wants to have the strategy and action plan 100% adopted by the Board of Directors by the end of calendar year. This Friday, she will be asking the Board for support in bridging the divide. The Task Force is trying to have a conversation about why people can't access the internet and put it in the action plan.

Catherine Manis asked about connecting seniors as well as those most in need. Ms. Meier noted that the Task Force is made of public agencies and non-profit and community-based organizations that are serving all communities. It is understood that seniors are a portion of the region that need help, and this is part of the strategy. Sharlene Ornelas commented that another thing to keep in mind is that not everyone has the ability to access the internet in the first place; this includes equipment, knowledge, and accessibility. Anthony DeSalis noted that during this pandemic we found that access to remote learning has created a great opportunity. The problem we found was that individuals either didn't have equipment or speeds were operating too slow. We have been working with individuals to assist them in getting the equipment they need. We learned that this is a meaningful

opportunity to access remote learning and social experiences, and it allowed for people to not be so isolated during the pandemic.

Sharon Beckas commented that many acronyms in the speech made it hard for someone who don't know their meaning. Is the Task Force open to engage with the public and are other members able to join still? How will this integrate with transit? Ms. Meier noted that this Task Force is a temporary working group that is focused on providing input on the action plan and it is open. Getting Wi-Fi on transit will be part of the action plan.

Brian Pollard commented about the map shown in her presentation; what do the yellow squares mean? Within those areas that do need broadband, is there a map for the fiber optic inventory? Ms. Meier noted that the blue areas on the map are areas that do not meet the minimum speed threshold, and the yellow areas are the areas in the region that do meet the threshold established by the Federal Communications Commission. We are integrating fiber into our plans; it is a part of our Regional Plan and CMCP (corridor studies). We want it to become a best practice for not only SANDAG but local jurisdictions as well.

8. Update on Next Generation Fare System and Possible Fare Changes (Discussion)

SANDAG Senior Regional Planner Brian Lane presented proposed fare changes for MTS and NCTD.

He noted that these fare changes are just proposals and they are gathering feedback and public comments right now and no board or elected official has voted on these proposals yet.

Scenario A: Proposed Fare Changes

- Reduce one-way cash fares for Youth to align with the reduced Senior/Disabled/Medicare (SDM) cash fares (from \$2.50 to \$1.25 for Trolley, SPRINTER, and most bus services)
- Increase Adult one-way cash fares on Trolley, SPRINTER, and most bus services from \$2.50 to \$2.75
- Include “best-fare” capabilities for 1-day and Monthly passes (except NCTD COASTER)
- Increase MTS Access and NCTD LIFT one-way fares from \$5.00 to \$5.50

Scenario B: Alternative Proposal would also increase monthly pass price

- from \$72 to \$75 for Adult Monthly Pass and Monthly Best-fare
- from \$23 to \$24 for Youth and SDM Monthly Pass and Monthly Best-fare

(No changes are proposed for *Rapid Express* or COASTER monthly pass prices)

Scenario C

- Reduce one-way cash fares for Youth to align with the reduced Senior/Disabled/Medicare (SDM) cash fares (from \$2.50 to \$1.25 for Trolley, SPRINTER, and most bus services)
- Include “best-fare” capabilities for 1-day and Monthly passes (except NCTD COASTER)
- No increases

The new PRONTO system will be replacing the Compass Card system (anticipated start in mid-2021)

- Compass software and hardware is at end of useful life
- Riders will always get the best-possible fare
- Real-time account management online or on mobile app
- Track progress toward day and month passes
- Online verification of eligibility for reduced fares
- Up to 400+ retail locations eventually (currently ~55 with Compass)
- Visit ridepronto.com for more information in the coming months

How will PRONTO work?

- Gives riders the best-possible fare.
- Riders who load money into their PRONTO account will have a one-way fare deducted from their balance each time they board a public transit vehicle.

- A rider will never be charged more than the value of a Day Pass or Monthly Pass once they have deducted the value of those passes over the course of a day or month. (COASTER requires the pre-purchase of Day and Month Passes)
- Riders may still purchase a calendar month pass in advance if they choose.
- Riders will be able to load money in their account online, in the new PRONTO mobile app, on ticket machines at stations, at the Transit Store or Customer Service Centers, and at participating retail outlets.

Examples of Best Fares:

SDM Rider traveling three days a week taking two trips per day (Using 13 days of travel for the month)

Today:

- Rider pays cash for each trip; $\$1.25/\text{trip} = \$2.50/\text{day}$;
 $13 \text{ days} \times \$2.50/\text{day} = \32.50

With Pronto:

- SDM and Youth rider loads $\$7.50/\text{week}$ into account; Week 1: $\$1.25$ deducted for each of six trips ($\$7.50$ total); Week 2: $\$1.25$ deducted for each of six trips ($\$15$ total); Week 3: $\$1.25$ deducted for each of six trips ($\$22.50$ total); Week 4: Only 50 cents deducted ($\$23$ total); Month pass earned on 10th day of travel; All other trips are free for that

month; No upfront payment required - month pass;
Savings of \$9.50 per month

Adult Rider traveling five days a week taking four trips per day (Assumes 22 workdays per month)

Today:

- Rider buys \$6 day pass each day; \$132/month

With Pronto:

- Rider puts \$6/day into PRONTO account; Account is deducted \$2.50 for first two trips/day; Account is deducted \$1 for third trip/day as \$6 Day Pass is earned; On 12th day of travel, Month Pass is earned (12 days x \$6 = \$72); No deductions for next 10 days of travel; No need to put \$6 into account for next 10 days of travel; No upfront payment needed to receive \$72-month pass; Savings of \$60 per month!

Timeline for Public Outreach and Approval

SANDAG, MTS, and NCTD conducted three public meetings in January 2021 virtually on GoToWebinar:

Board Meetings

MTS Board Info/Public Input Item: Thursday, January 21, 2021, 9 a.m.

NCTD Board Info/Public Input Item: Thursday, January 21, 2021, 2 p.m.

SANDAG Transportation Committee Info/Public Input Item: Friday, February 5, 2021, 9 a.m.

MTS Board Meeting: Thursday, February 11, 2021, 9 a.m.

NCTD Board Meeting: Thursday, February 18, 2021, 2 p.m.

SANDAG Transportation Committee Meeting (1st Reading): Friday, March 19, 2021, 9 a.m.

SANDAG Transportation Committee Meeting (2nd Reading and Approval): Friday, April 2, 2021, 9 a.m.

To submit your comments: Mail to SANDAG PIO, 401 B Street, Suite 800, San Diego, CA 92101; email pio@sandag.org; via phone at (619) 595-5321; or at sandag.org/fares.

Sharlene Ornelas asked if the fare machines were going to be changed, or if the same fare machines would be used? Are there going to be requirements for people when buying passes to make sure they are not being sold the wrong pass such as the senior/disabled pass? Lastly it would be nice when visiting the PRONTO website if there was an option to sign up for upcoming notifications. Mr. Lane noted that they will be changing the Cubic Compass machines entirely and they will be replacing them with PRONTO machines, fare boxes, and the app. It will take a couple of months to change over the systems; they will have both working simultaneously until they are confident that PRONTO is working, then they will

turn off Compass. There will also be the same verifications for people to be eligible for discounted passes.

Sharlene Ornelas pointed out her concern was that when the Cubic Compass machines were put in, many changes needed to be made and the audio needed work. She noted that the agencies keep wanting to decrease the fares for the youth, but the people who are more affected are the seniors. Many youths have plenty of money while seniors are set on a fixed income. ADA paratransit service guidelines cap fares at double the fixed route price; at five dollars a ride a person could be paying \$20 for a one-way trip if using more than one vehicle, which is expensive. If it could be considered to not raise the prices for paratransit that would be beneficial.

Clytie Kohler mentioned that for Compass Cards, the eligibility for reduced fares had to be verified both in North County and in San Diego. Can the eligibility verification apply to everyone County-wide?

Mr. Lane mentioned that he would let MTS and NCTD know; there is going to be a program for online eligibility.

Marissa Lucero noted this information is good to be hearing ahead of time; she works with the San Diego Center for the Blind and a lot of their training is working with people to learn these systems. Since this is a new system, would it be possible to have access to

documents or PowerPoint presentations to learn the system so that they can teach their clients? If there were any resources to help that would be great.

Mr. Lane responded that he would provide this feedback to MTS.

Ethel Miranda commented that the public outreach was missed and went by very quickly and it affects the blind community very much; better outreach is needed. It felt like it was sliding in the back door and more effort needs to be put out. My opinion would be no fare increases.

Mr. Lane provided the public outreach phone number and noted that the public would be able to provide feedback at the upcoming board meetings.

Ilse Carey asked if the agency had considered selling transfer tickets? Europe does something similar such as a two-hour pass.

Mr. Lane noted that we had heard about the two-hour pass from Circulate SD but so far, the transit agencies are not going in that direction. They are pushing the day pass at an affordable price. We will be presenting the two-hour option at the Board meetings, letting them know we have heard this option.

Sharon Beckas mentioned that she has been able to sign up for updates and notifications and was able to receive advanced notice about the public meetings.

Mr. Lane noted that he would forward that comment to the transit agencies.

9.2021 Meeting Calendar Change (Approve)

Action: Upon a motion by Sharlene Ornelas and second by Chair Schmidt, the SSTAC approved changing the March meeting date to Thursday, March 11, 2021 at 1 p.m. Yes: Ilse Carey (Special Interest Member – Seat A), Clytie Kohler (Special Interest Alternate – Seat B), Lorry Seagrim (At Large Voting Member – Seat A), Catherine Manis (At Large Voting Member - Seat C), Winona Garcia (Survivors of Torture), Marissa Lucero (San Diego Center for the Blind), Anthony DeSalis (The ARC of San Diego), Vassilena Lerinska (MTS Fixed Route), Vice Chair Jay Washburn (MTS Paratransit), and Charles Main (NCTD Fixed Route). Abstain: None. Absent: Home of Guiding Hands, Kent Rodricks (Special Interest Member – Seat B) and Robert Gebo (NCTD Paratransit)

10. Transit Operator Update (Information)

MTS

Jay Washburn noted that MTS is continuing to work on their web app for reservations and scheduling, and through beta testing they have received good feedback. MTS is continuing to expand that beta testing. They are continuing to develop their cashless fare payment options for individuals, and they hope to have this started within the next few months. They

also completed a 90-day pilot of their virtual in-person assessments for eligibility for new applicants. This modification was made due to COVID-19. The pilot has gone really well, and MTS will extend the pilot out, so that all new and re-certifying individuals will go through the virtual in-person assessment until we can return to actual in-person assessments.

MTS paratransit ridership is at about 25% of what it was pre-COVID. Right now, MTS has some COVID cases internally, but not a single case that has been tracked back to transmission within MTS employee to employee or employee to passenger. All cases have been from contracting COVID-19 from an outside source.

Vassy Lerinska noted that MTS will be having a service change on Sunday January 31st. Routes 280 and 290 will have added trips in the morning and evening, increasing frequency to approximately every 30 minutes. Route 9 will continue with Saturday service to SeaWorld, but weekday trips will skip SeaWorld Monday through Friday.

Sharron Beckas commented that the State of MTS meeting is happening on January 21 at 5pm. You can join San Diego County Board of Supervisors and MTS Board Chair Nathan Fletcher for an update on the latest news from MTS. Tune in on Facebook; the discussion will be about the new fare system, zero emissions buses, the Blue Line extension to the UCSD campus, and more.

NCTD

Charles Main noted that NCTD will have their next service change in April. They will be being going to their Board this Friday for the discontinuation of Flex Route 372, which is a midday on-demand service that complements Flex Route 371 during midday times only between Escondido and Ramona. Currently, only a handful of people request the service throughout the year. With the SANDAG ride home program and TNC availability such as Uber and Lyft, there will be sufficient services available for those emergency-only type trips. Other than that, NCTD only has minor schedule changes for April.

Sharlene Ornelas commented that if you are person who works or lives in Ramona or Escondido, will there be services to get to your job, and will this be taken into consideration when discontinuing Flex Route 372?

Charles Main noted that for peak hour services, Route 371 will still be available. NCTD has not seen the

demand for the midday trips but there will be other services available like TNC's or FACT.

Meagan Schmidt noted that FACT could be available but does not have a same day service and would need to be notified the day before.

11. Facilitating Access to Coordinated Transportation Update (Information)

Megan Schmidt noted that they had their first virtual FACT Annual Meeting and many great speakers, including City of Encinitas Mayor Catherine Blakespear, who is also the new SANDAG Board Chair. FACT's ridership is seeing record-breaking demands. They are currently looking at bringing back fares, since for the most part of 2020 they removed fares to eliminate the transfer of cash from hand to hand. On January 28th the FACT Board will review bringing those fares back. FACT is trying keep up with demand, but they also need to look at the budget and how that is affected by free fares. The Council on Access and Mobility (CAM) meetings are being held on the second Tuesday of the month and the next one will be on February 9th. Everyone is invited, and if you are not receiving the agenda and would like to, please contact Ms. Schmidt and she will add you to the list.

Catherine Manis asked if there was an explanation for why FACT is seeing such a high demand in ridership?

Megan noted that a lot of demand is coming from referrals from 211, and others who are looking to get transportation to in-person medical. FACT also received attention from the County Board of Supervisors, news articles, and television. FACT is working to deliver meals with 211 and the County, which is also adding to ridership.

12. Upcoming Meetings (Information)

The next SSTAC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 11, 2021, at 1 p.m.

13. Adjournment

Chair Schmidt adjourned the meeting at 12:15 p.m.

Confirmed Attendance at SANDAG Social Services Transportation Advisory Council Meeting

January 19, 2021

Jurisdiction/Organization	Name	Attended	Comments
Individual Members			
Special Interest Voting Member (Seat A)	Ilse Carey	Yes	
	Helen Elias, Alternate	Yes	
	Kent Rodricks	Yes	
Special Interest Voting Member (Seat B)	Clytie Kohler, Alternate	Yes	
	Lorry Seagrim	Yes	
At-Large Voting Member (Seat A)	Sharlene Ornelas	Yes	
At-Large Voting Member (Seat B)	Catherine Manis	Yes	
At-Large Voting Member (Seat C)			

At-Large Voting Member (Seats A through C) Alternates	Wayne Landon	Yes
	Rebecca Steiner	No
	Ted Kagan	Yes

Rotating Agency Members

Survivors of Torture, International	Winona Garcia	Yes
	Mahvas h Alami	No

San Diego Center for the Blind	Marissa Lucero	Yes
	Elsa Caballero (Alternate)	No

Home of Guiding Hands	Todd Shaw	No
	Edward Hershey (Alternate)	No

The Arc of San Diego	Anthony DeSalis	Yes
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	Melanie McCoy (Alternate)	No	
	Claudia Gavin	No	
ElderHelp	Nansi Kiwanuka (Alternate)	No	

Standing Agency Members

Facilitating Access to Coordinated Transportation (Seat A)	Arun Prem	No	
Facilitating Access to Coordinated Transportation (Seat B)	Meagan Schmidt	Yes	Chair
Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) Fixed Route	Vassy Lerinska	Yes	
MTS Paratransit	Jay Washburn	Yes	Vice Chair

North County Transit District (NCTD) Fixed Route	Charles Main	Yes
NCTD Paratransit	Robert Gebo	Yes

Other Attendees

Budd Anderson

Sharon Beckas

Judi Bonilla

Thyme Curtis

Alicia Garispe (Captioner)

David Jackson

Lillia Luna

Catherine Matel

Ethel Miranda

Cynthia Pedersen

Brian Pollard

Marcy Roke

Liz Santucci

Kellie Spurgeon

Jonathan Stanton

Christopher Velasco

Alejandra Warner

Adrianna Yemhatpe

SANDAG Staff

Linda Cimmino

Coleen Clementson

Jane Clough

Tuere Fa'aola

Hasan Ikhrata

Raychel Jones
Brian Lane
Tessa Lero
Lisa Madsen
Irene McCormack
Antoinette Meier
Kendall Reynolds
Elaine Richardson
Erik Staples
Arthur Tovar
Ashley Wiley

Item: **2B**

May 18, 2021

Action: **Approve**

March 11, 2021, Joint Social Services Transportation Meeting Minutes

The Joint Social Services Transportation Meeting was a joint meeting of the SANDAG Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC), Facilitating Access to Coordinated Transportation's (FACT's) Council on Access and Mobility (CAM), the Metropolitan Transit System's (MTS') Accessible Services Advisory Committee (ASAC), and North County Transit District's (NCTD's) Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Advisory Group.

The ASAC Chair, National City Mayor Alejandra Sotelo-Solis, called the Joint Social Services Transportation Meeting to order at 1:08 p.m. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the meeting was held in a virtual environment via Zoom.

1. Welcome and Introductions

Mayor Sotelo Solis kicked off the meeting with a welcome introduction to the joint meeting; she noted that it is important to have these joint meetings to maximize coordination between the agencies.

The attendance sheet for this meeting is included.

Lisa Madsen, SANDAG staff liaison, noted that we will not be holding a quorum, roll call, or voting on anything at this special joint meeting. The January SSTAC meeting recording is available online, and we will vote to approve the minutes from the January meeting at the May SSTAC.

2. Public Comments/Communications/Member Comments

Arun Prem noted that he was appreciative to meet with everyone and this is a wonderful idea and it should happen again.

Mayor Sotelo Solis noted that this was a great opportunity. This is something that we could do annually.

Kacie Rodvill from RI International commented that they have boots on the ground kits; these have hand sanitizer, water, keychain, mask, helpful information, and other information about RI International.

Viridiana Salgado commented, with assistance from Debbie Marshall, and spoke regarding her experiences on MTS Bus and MTS Access, and her concerns regarding these services.

Sharon Beckas wanted to compliment MTS Access regarding phone updates she had received about changes due to COVID-19. Sharon also noted that she is having trouble getting physical bus schedules as MTS is not currently printing new schedules. She

would like to know when they are going to get more schedules.

Reports

3. Staff Report (Information)

Lisa Madsen noted that the National Aging and Disability Transportation Center have launched a national equity, diversity, and inclusion transportation survey.

SANDAG and Caltrans invited meeting attendees to participate in an upcoming virtual public workshop for the Central Mobility Hub and Connections Comprehensive Multimodal Corridor Plan. The Central Mobility Hub and Connections Comprehensive Multimodal Corridor Plan will propose innovative transportation solutions to transform the way people and goods move in the area of San Diego International Airport and the surrounding communities, focusing on the proposed development of the Central Mobility Hub. During the workshop, initial concepts for the Central Mobility Hub will be presented. The workshop will be held on March 11, 2021 from 6 to 7:30 pm. More information is available at sandag.org/cmcp.

Lastly, Ms. Madsen recently spoke with Erika Espinosa Araiza, who is a graduate student at SDSU and an Intern at SANDAG; she is working with a group of fellow students on her Master's Capstone Project. The project seeks to understand public perceptions of

equity, safety, and surveillance across the San Diego Metropolitan Transit System (MTS). Their research method involves conducting one-on-one interviews with key stakeholders in the San Diego community. This data will be used in their final report, which has been commissioned by Council Member Monica Montgomery Steppe's office and will be used to inform future conversations about MTS's transit security and enforcement policies. Ms. Madsen let her know that SSTAC members may be interested in participating in the interview, which can take place via phone or Zoom, and lasts approximately 1 hour. Information and responses will remain confidential. Ms. Madsen let attendees know that if they were interested, she would get them in touch with Erika. Mr. Zach Rivera discussed the SANDAG Specialized Transportation Grant Program (STGP), which funds projects that provide transportation services to seniors and individuals with disabilities whose mobility needs cannot be met by conventional transit. The STGP is comprised of the Federal Transit Administration Section 5310 program and the local *TransNet* Senior Mini-Grant program. About every two years, SANDAG holds a competitive process or call for projects to distribute available STGP funding. Now, after project proposals were received, reviewed for eligibility, and evaluated, the draft funding recommendations will be presented to SANDAG policy

advisory committees. Staff presented the draft Senior Mini-Grant funding recommendations to the Independent Taxpayer Oversight Committee. At its March 19th meeting, the Transportation Committee will be presented with the Cycle 11 Senior Mini-Grant and Section 5310 funding recommendations and will be asked to recommend approval. At its March 26th meeting, the SANDAG Board of Directors will consider approval of the Cycle 11 funding recommendations. Pending Board approval, funded projects would begin on or after July 1. More information on the STGP Cycle 11 Call for Projects is available at sandag.org/stgpcycle11.

Mr. Rivera also provided an update on the Cycle 11 Supplemental Call for Projects. One of the requirements of the Section 5310 Program is that 55% of Section 5310 funding go towards "Traditional" projects such as accessible vehicle purchases and mobility management programs. Due to the results of the Cycle 11 Call for Projects, there were fewer grant requests for Traditional projects than there was funding restricted to Traditional projects. Therefore, SANDAG will release a supplemental call for projects for the remaining Section 5310 funding available.

Mr. Rivera noted that SANDAG will be releasing a solicitation to distribute six Class C buses returned to SANDAG through the Specialized Transportation

Grant Program. SANDAG highly encourages agencies interested in using these vehicles to provide specialized transportation services to seniors and individuals with disabilities to apply. There is no match requirement for this solicitation! Application materials will be posted on the Specialized Transportation Grant Program website.

Lastly, Mr. Rivera discussed the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (December 27, 2020) and COVID-19 Relief Bill (\$1.9 trillion package). On December 27, 2020, the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act was signed into law. It includes \$50 million in Section 5310 funding, of which \$412,000 was apportioned to the region. It is limited to non-capital projects, focuses on operations and payroll expenses, and includes the dissemination of PPE as an eligible expense. The COVID-19 Relief Bill also would apportion \$412,000 in Section 5310 funding to the region and is focused on operations. SANDAG is still gathering more information from the Federal Transit Administration on these COVID-19 funding measures with much more still to be determined, so stay tuned!

Brian Lane also provided an update on the proposed fare changes. MTS' Board of Directors voted to recommend the proposed fare changes and to take the changes to the SANDAG Transportation

Committee on April 2 and 16 This includes the PRONTO best fare capping capabilities, reducing the Youth cash fares to align with the SDM passes, and adding free two-hour transfers with one-way tickets and no fare increases.

Mayor Sotelo Solis echoed what Brian shared, noting that they had just had a really good meeting at MTS just literally about an hour ago where we discussed the importance of working with nonprofits, to have outreaches, and to actually have resources to help with these efforts.

4. Best Practices for Addressing Passenger Behavioral Issues (Discussion)

Staff discussed best practices for addressing passenger behavioral issues on community transit and paratransit services. Chair Megan Schmidt mentioned that FACT is interested in a uniform code of conduct and process for dealing with both safety issues and issues that would affect the staff of the specialized transportation services, grantees, and also their riders. FACT is interested in coming up with a uniform way of handling issues and working together to come up with a code of conduct that could be used by all specialized transportation grantees so that issues can be addressed in a consistent manner.

Jay Washburn from MTS noted it would be interesting topic - to put a uniform standard together to be used in the disability community, so that riders know the

expectations are the same across all agencies. Maybe grantees who are interested could form a working group to draft a common standard that they could bring back to SSTAC.

Scott Jaeger, California Department of Rehabilitation, suggested that in addition to the code of conduct staff might try to incorporate a disability awareness training for the drivers.

Arum Prem, FACT, commented that there are ways agencies can work proactively to have a broader conversation on services between providers.

Sharon Beckas commented that the code of conduct would be great no matter who is providing the service. She thinks the hard part is that people have not always been trained on how to implement something. How does the code of conduct get implemented? The training is very important for the drivers.

5. Transit Operator Update (Information)

MTS

Rob Schupp, MTS Director of Marketing and Communications, gave an overview of the new PRONTO system. Mr. Schupp noted that the new system is needed to replace CompassCard because the existing system has reached the end of its useful life and needs to be replaced. MTS, NCTD and SANDAG selected INIT in 2018. PRONTO works through an

account based fare system with real-time communications.

The PRONTO system is an account-based fare system with real-time communications. It will include a new mobile app and web site, and multiple cards can be managed from one account. The current system has about 60 retail locations for the CompassCard, but the PRONTO system will launch with 100 retail locations, with the anticipation that this will grow to 400 or more locations.

To ensure a smooth transition from the CompassCard to PRONTO, staff will be exchanging PRONTO cards at transit stations and mailing out new cards.

Additionally, there will be video tutorials online with instructions in multiple languages, as well as closed captioning and voice-overs.

Viri Salgato asked what the differences between the Compass app and PRONTO app will be?

Rob Schupp responded that the PRONTO app will allow for better account management as well as the capability to use your phone on the fare validators.

Jay Washburn noted the many changes to MTS Access over the past year to adapt to rider's needs, including single rider trips and increased cleaning. MTS has been focusing on new innovations as well, including online reservations, phone notifications with special announcements, and a cashless fare system.

NCTD

Robert Gebo noted that NCTD was in their 54th week of tracking COVID-19. Ridership is slowly starting to come back. NCTD's EZ-Wallet has been operational for over a year but since COVID hit many people have not used it and NCTD is getting ready to market it. The app has been updated and new enhancements have been added. There will be a service change for BREEZE on April 4th.

NCTD also is also providing free transportation to the COVID-19 vaccine site at the Del Mar Fairgrounds. Transportation is provided between the Solana Beach COASTER Station and the Fairgrounds. The service runs approximately every 30 minutes and is projected to be seven days a week between 8 a.m. and 12 p.m. daily.

NCTD has been in the process of getting new vehicles for the past year, including 30 new BREEZE fixed route buses, with an additional 46 buses set to arrive within the next year. Of those 76 buses 6 will be electric vehicles. 52 new vehicles have been ordered for NCTD LIFT. 10 have been received. It is anticipated that all 52 vehicles will be in service within the next few months.

Sharon Beckas commented that she was thrilled to see transportation from Solana Beach to the Del Mar fairgrounds. She suggested that since the COASTER does not run as often, the shuttle should be coordinated with the bus routes. Robert Gebo noted

that as the service rolls out, they will be adjusting the service as needed. The County may also expand the times that vaccines are available.

Franco Saavedra commented that it would be beneficial for healthcare providers to fill out Senior/Disabled/Medicare (SDM) ID card applications electronically. Clients are currently having to take paper copies to their healthcare providers get signed and then they have to physically turn them in at the train station. Robert Gebo noted that NCTD is working on streamlining this process once COVID is over to make it easier for everyone.

Marissa Lucero asked if NCTD was offering free rides to vaccine appointments, or if the Solana Beach shuttle was the only free option to getting to a vaccine appointment. Robert Gebo noted that there are two options; any individual with proof that they are going to a vaccine appointment can ride for free both to and from their appointment. The second option is the shuttle to the Del Mar Fairgrounds.

Facilitating Access to Coordinated Transportation Update

Megan Schmidt gave an update about FACT. FACT has phased out food deliveries as part of their partnership with the County, 211, and the San Diego Food Bank which started last April. Interested persons are able to call 211 regarding food delivery, but FACT's partnership has come to an end. FACT is

continuing to provide transportation to unsheltered individuals to shelters as well as COVID testing sites. FACT has experienced their highest demand to date for both referrals and trips in the month of December, receiving over 500 referrals a month and providing over 4,000 trips a month.

Ms. Schmidt asked the other providers for their experiences in returning to shared ride services. Robert Gebo noted that NCTD has started to increase the number of people on vehicles, to no more than 3 or 4 passengers on the smaller vehicles and no more than 4 to 5 passengers on their cutaways. Jay Washburn noted that MTS is still performing single-rider trips, but will soon shift to two riders plus companion on buses. Paratransit trips performed by taxis are still single rider. Jewish Family Service (JFS) noted that they are still doing individual transport and are starting the discussion on when they can increase ridership onboard vehicles.

Budd Anderson gave an update on 15 new vehicles that FACT is going to be receiving by the end of the year. They are going to be used to replace some of the buses that are at the end of their useful life. FACT plans to purchase 13 Class D low-floor minivans and 2 Class B cutaway ADA busses. FACT anticipates final approval in June 2021.

Catherine Manis, City of San Marcos and Chair of FACT's Council on Access and Mobility (CAM), gave

an update on CAM. CAM promotes the coordination of transportation resources and services throughout San Diego County. Before the pandemic, CAM would meet four times a year, but during the pandemic the Council met 26 times virtually. Those meetings held discussions on transportation as well as additional ways to meet the needs of seniors. Members provided food delivery, shopping trips and services to seniors in North County. The collaboration has been extraordinary over the past year, and CAM has also added two members this year putting them at 40 members.

6. Upcoming Meetings (Information)

The next SSTAC meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 18, 2021, at 10 a.m. This meeting will include the annual unmet needs public hearing.

7. Adjournment

Chair Schmidt adjourned the meeting at 2:28 p.m.

Confirmed Attendance at the Joint Social Services Transportation Meeting

March 11, 2021

Meeting Attendees

A. Martinez	Franco Saavedra
Adrianna Yemhatpe	Glenn Leider
Ali Poorman	Jay Washburn
Alicia- Captioner	Joann Delgado
Amanda Denham	Jorge Malone
Amy Kalivas	Kacie Rodvill
Arturo Ayala	Kevin Marquez
Arun Prem	Kjersten Langill
Belinda Kelly	Liz Santucci
Betsy Knight	Marcy RokeMarilyn
Bree Wallace	Greenblatt
Budd Anderson	Marissa Lucero
C. J. Palmer	Mayor Alejandra Sotelo-Solis
Callie Anderson	Mayra Perez (Captioner)
Carla Perez	Meagan Schmidt
Catherine Manis	Michael Wygant
Charles Hipp	Nan Valerio
Christiana Gauger	Nick Duron
Christy Patch	Noela Rios
Clytie Koehler	

Daphne Drapeau
David Jackson
Debbie Marshall
Elsa Caballero
Emily Tran
Ethel Miranda

Rob Schupp
Robert Gebo
Samantha Leslie
Scott Jaeger
Sharon Beckas
Ted Kagan
Vassilena Lerinska
Violeta Flores
Viridiana Salgado
Wayne Landon

SANDAG Staff

Arthur Tovar
Ashley Wiley
Brian Lane
Jennifer Williamson
Jenny Russo

Kendall Reynolds
Lisa Madsen
Raychel Jones
Zachary Rivera