

# TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

March 5, 2004

AGENDA ITEM NO.: **1-A**

**Action Requested: APPROVE**

## TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE DISCUSSION AND ACTIONS

Meeting of February 6, 2004

The meeting of the Transportation Committee was called to order at 9:29 a.m. by Chair Joe Kellejian (North County Coastal). See attached attendance sheet for Transportation Committee member attendance.

1. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Action: Upon a motion by Councilmember Jim Madaffer (City of San Diego) and a second by Councilmember Bob Emery (Metropolitan Transit System [MTS]), the Transportation Committee approved the minutes from the January 16, 2004, meeting.

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS/MEMBER COMMENTS

Chuck Lungerhausen, a member of the public, reminded the Committee members about sponsorship opportunities for the Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Walk. On the matter of public transportation, he asked how the cities of San Diego County can only spend one-sixth of a cent of the *TransNet* tax to support transit in a vast county area. He noted that Los Angeles has a full cent of sales tax dedicated for transportation purposes. He said that having high transit fares does not encourage people to use transit.

Clive Richards, a member of the public, stated that a newspaper article about the recent SANDAG Board retreat referred to a discussion of less money for transit and more money for local streets and roads. He said that it seems to him the best way to deal with transportation projects is to find some blend between highway and transit dollars.

### CONSENT ITEMS (3 through 5)

3. TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT REVIEW REPORT (INFORMATION)

The report is an annual summary of the results of SANDAG's efforts to coordinate transit and land use through the project development review process. SANDAG staff works closely with local jurisdictions to ensure the integration of transit facilities into development projects and to improve the pedestrian environment wherever possible. These efforts resulted in the inclusion of privately funded transit and pedestrian facilities into 177 development projects worth over \$1.6 million during 2003.

4. TRANSFER OF FUNDS TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL MONIES TO REPLACE TRACK SWITCHES ON C STREET (RECOMMEND)

The Transportation Committee is asked to recommend to the Board a transfer of \$157,000 from the Beyer Station/Dairymart Road Rail Replacement Project to the State and Columbia Streets Switch Replacement Project. This additional funding is needed to complete the replacement of the San Diego Trolley, Inc., trackwork switches on C Street near Columbia and State Streets.

5. FY 2004-2008 REGIONAL SHORT-RANGE TRANSIT PLAN (SRTP) (APPROVE)

The FY 2004-08 SRTP supports the vision of MOBILITY 2030 by providing a short-term plan for transit system adjustments and enhancements regionwide. On January 16, 2004, the Transportation Committee conducted a public hearing on the SRTP. Comments received from the review period and public hearing have been incorporated into the final SRTP, as appropriate. The Transportation Committee is asked to approve the final FY 2004-08 SRTP.

Action: Upon a motion by Councilmember Emery and a second by Supervisor Ron Roberts (County of San Diego), the Transportation Committee approved Consent Items 3 through 5.

## REPORTS

Chair Kellejian noted that Item 8 would be taken out of order at this time.

8. 2004 STATE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (STIP) ALTERNATIVES (INFORMATION)

The Executive Director reported that this item will come back for action at the February 20 Transportation Committee meeting. The three programming options have been refined since the last time they were presented to the Committee. He reviewed each of the three options noting available STIP funding, the STIP funding commitments already in place, and the Interstate 15 (I-15) Managed Lanes GARVEE (Grant Anticipation Revenue Vehicle) bond debt service. He stated that in 2014 we would have the funding capacity in the STIP for new projects for the options with the least amount of GARVEE being proposed. He added that the STIP is not the only funding source for projects. He noted that there are challenges to obtain GARVEE bonding for the Sprinter project. We are working with our financial advisor and a plan has been developed to sell bonds to fund this project. The Executive Director said that Option C will allow us to possibly cover \$59 million in ongoing construction and procurement projects.

Staff highlighted the changes on this item from the last discussion including: additional Transit Congestion Relief Program (TCRP) projects at risk, added construction/right-of-way acquisition inflation costs, and the North County Transit District (NCTD) bond financing proposal for the Sprinter. The difference between the 2002 STIP as it is currently programmed and the 2004 STIP proposed program is that the \$203.8 million available is now spread over five years and most of the money is located on the tail end of the STIP cycle. In the 2002 STIP, we were promised \$113 million for 2004-05, and that has been decreased to \$4 million. This will result in project delays.

With Option A, No Additional GARVEE, the current GARVEE bond debt service would be \$17.1 million. It would complete all 2002 STIP projects, but with some delays to the following projects: State Route (SR) 52 right-of-way, SR 905 construction, Mid-Coast Light Rail Transit (LRT) right-of-way, and freeway operations projects. Projects already under construction are: the East Village Transit Stations, SR 56 Middle Freeway, I-5/I-805 "Merge," and the MTS Buses. The state has previously approved money for these construction projects. With this option, there is a \$243.4 million funding gap for the following projects: SR 52 construction, SR 905 construction, I-15 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), the Sprinter, and SR 56 landscaping.

Option B would increase the level of debt service from \$17 million to \$29 million. This option would complete all 2002 STIP projects, but with some delays. Staff proposes to minimize delays with GARVEE bonds for the SR 52 right-of-way acquisition and the SR 905 construction. The funding gap with Option B would decrease from \$243.4 million to \$196.7 million on the same projects contained in Option A.

Option C would increase the debt service from \$17 million to \$51 million. This option would complete all of the 2002 STIP projects and there would be no remaining shortfall. There is the option of having NCTD issue bonds for the Sprinter to cover the \$80 million shortfall from TCRP. It would be a 20-year bond with interest only in the first ten years with the anticipation that other funds would be identified to cover the principle. The following ten years would be used to pay back the principle if other funds were not found.

Staff clarified that final approval authority for the GARVEE bonds rests with the California Transportation Commission (CTC). We will probably be notified of the CTC's final recommendation in June.

Staff noted that there is \$196 million of unanticipated unprogrammed Regional Surface Transportation Program/ Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (RSTP/CMQA) monies, but these funds have been used in the past for other programs.

The next steps include presentation of this item to the Transportation Committee on February 20, 2004, for a recommendation to the SANDAG Board of Directors; a presentation on February 27, 2004, to the Board of Directors for information; action scheduled at the March Board of Directors meeting; submittal of the STIP to the CTC by the April 12, 2004, deadline; and adoption of the STIP by the CTC on August 5, 2004.

Chair Kellejian asked about the cost of the debt service for each option. Staff referred to page 21 of the handout of revised information.

Supervisor Roberts noted that we get more for our money in terms of project benefits with Option C. The Executive Director explained that the reason we don't get as much benefit from Option B is that we don't have the funds in that scenario to complete all of the projects.

Councilmember Madaffer asked if any of the options assume the passage of the *TransNet* Extension. The Executive Director responded that none of the three options assumes that passage. This item is solely dealing with the STIP projects that SANDAG has already

adopted. There are several projects that are included in the draft *TransNet* expenditure plan that are not in the STIP.

Councilmember Madaffer commented his feeling that Ms. Sunni McPeak, State Secretary of Business, Transportation, and Housing, was impressed with SANDAG and its aggressive stance in trying to solve the region's transportation needs. He said that traffic congestion is the primary issue in San Diego County and the public expects action now. He stated that Option C makes the most sense.

The Executive Director stated that we have a good case to make to the Governor and Legislature not to take away money we have already spent. It doesn't make sense to delay some projects because right-of-way costs are significant as time goes on.

Chair Kellejian expressed his support for Option C in order to accelerate completion of the projects.

Councilmember Emery also supported Option C.

The Executive Director reminded the Committee that this is an information item only. The challenge with this program is that other regions are doing exactly what we are doing and when the CTC puts it all together, there will be more requests than capacity at the state level. We have to persuade the CTC and the Administration that we have good projects. We feel that our projects will meet the requirements of the CTC/Administration.

The Executive Director clarified that Option C includes projects that are not in the STIP, such as the Sprinter. In the narrow definition, STIP funding in this cycle is only for projects that are already in the STIP. Therefore, by a strict definition, the Sprinter would not be eligible for STIP funding. However, staff will continue to work on this with the CTC.

Mayor Corky Smith (San Marcos) asked if there are any other projects like SR 56 that will be completed. The Executive Director highlighted several projects that are already underway such as the MTS bus order that has been issued, and construction of the East Village Transit Stations. The I-5/I-805 merge project is a different scenario because it is not as close to completion.

Mayor Smith stated that it seems the more projects we have underway, the better our case will be. He asked what other financing options are available if we can't GARVEE bond for the Sprinter. Karen King, NCTD Executive Director, stated that last week the President signed the appropriations bill which included \$48 million in federal New Starts funding for the Sprinter, which is the full amount requested. On Monday, February 2, the President's budget included \$55 million for the Sprinter project, which is also the full amount requested for FY 2005. She felt confident that this shows that the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and Congress strongly support this project. The question comes down to the \$80 million the state has pledged to the project. She said that the state needs to honor its funding commitment to this project. NCTD's Board has formed a task force to study funding options. NCTD is currently in the process of issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) for banking services and will try to secure variable rate bonds to bridge the \$80 million funding gap. NCTD has awarded a contract to purchase the vehicles. NCTD is also in the bid process to award a contract for the main line project and stations.

The Executive Director noted that the Mid-Coast LRT project has also been recommended for federal funding. It looks like we are in a good position for funding for Mid-Coast. We have an opportunity to leverage some discretionary money from the federal government.

Ms. King stated that the FTA is striving to deliver on its promises to grow the program. For us to deliver these projects at this point in time will be critical to how we are viewed in the future. We need to be able to demonstrate our ability to meet commitments already made.

Supervisor Roberts asked about the interest rate on the GARVEE bonds. Staff replied that it will probably be about 4 percent, but in the analysis the interest has been assumed at 5 percent.

Supervisor Roberts asked what the impact will be on our projects with the passage of the *TransNet* Extension. The Executive Director replied that we will finish projects we have started and complete more projects in a shorter period of time. He suggested that we add language in the *TransNet* Extension ordinance that includes those projects that were in the original measure and are not yet completed including SR 56, SR 52, and the Mid-Coast LRT Line.

Councilmember Feller (Oceanside) asked if there is any advantage to submitting our STIP projects early. The Executive Director responded affirmatively, though he noted that the CTC won't make its final decision until it receives all of the information.

Action: Upon a motion by Councilmember Emery and a second by Councilmember Madaffer, the Transportation Committee directed staff to recommend that the SANDAG Board approve STIP programming Option C, Maximize Use of GARVEE Bonds, as the 2004 STIP alternative.

## 6. GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPMENT OF FY 2005 TRANSIT OPERATING BUDGETS (APPROVE)

Staff reported that SANDAG is to assume a new responsibility for the transit operator budgets. The transition plan approved by the SANDAG Board identified this new responsibility as a result of consolidation. Staff explained that NCTD directly operates various services including the Coaster, fixed-route bus services, FAST Demand Response, and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) services. MTS is organized differently and has six separate operators. The new SANDAG responsibilities include preparation and approval of the SRTP, development of a public input process for service changes and holding of public hearings, development of the regional fare policy, development of fund estimates, examination of the budget process and obtaining efficiencies, and approval of the transit operator budgets for funding.

Staff provided an overview of the budget development process, noting that the transit boards will develop their budgets within the revenue estimates provided by SANDAG. The guiding principles and objectives are as follows: (1) having sustainable levels of service with recurring revenues covering expenses; (2) a policy addressing productivity and service coverage standards; (3) flexibility to adjust service to changing circumstances, (4) SANDAG provides the revenue estimates; (5) the operators prepare their budgets; (6) there is a zero-based approach for each operator with five-year projections including low and high ranges; (7) preservation of current service levels and the evaluation of possible cost efficiencies;

(8) recurring revenue that includes federal, Transportation Development Act (TDA), State Transit Assistance (STA), *TransNet*, passenger fares; and (9) consistent presentation of budget information meeting TDA requirements.

Staff noted that additional considerations include working with the Joint Committee on Regional Transit (JCRT) to develop policies related to service planning and regional fares, and staff proposes working with the JCRT on an incentive plan for the operators.

The budget schedule was reviewed concluding with the approval of the transit agencies budgets for funding, contingent upon transit agency board approvals.

Chair Kellejian commented that this is a major step in consolidation and fulfilling our obligations in Senate Bill (SB) 1703.

Councilmember Emery asked if there has been sufficient transit operator input on the schedule and the consistency of budget preparation. Staff replied affirmatively in both cases.

Paul Jablonski, Chief Executive Officer of MTS, stated that they will need to rely on former MTS (and now SANDAG) employees for this year's budget process. They will have a more formalized process next year.

Councilmember Feller clarified that the transit agencies will approve their budgets before they come to the Transportation Committee. Staff replied that the budget public hearings will appear before June 18 but the budgets will be approved by the transit boards after that date.

Councilmember Rindone asked if the budget public hearings will be at MTS and NCTD. Staff responded affirmatively.

In response to a question from Chair Kellejian about the budget process, staff clarified that after the transit boards approve their budgets, the only time the budgets would come back to the Transportation Committee would be if there are any changes.

Mr. Jablonski asked how the zero-based budget approach and current service levels would work with the Mission Valley East (MVE) project or the Sprinter. Staff agreed that language should be added to the zero-based budget approach to reflect the inclusion of MVE and the Sprinter.

Councilmember Rindone suggested language similar to "what the agency is obligated to operate."

Ms. King added that this was an issue discussed in the development of the transition plan and it does reference both of these projects. She suggested that appropriate language could be pulled from the transition plan.

In response to a question from MTS Chair Leon Williams, staff clarified that the Transportation Committee needs to approve the budgets of the operators for funding purposes.

Public Comment:

Clive Richard, a member of the public, commented that he has found over the years that the MTDB budget discussion process to be tolerable. He expressed concern about how the budgets will be handled at the operator level. He was under the impression that SANDAG would be responsible for setting the parameters.

Mayor Pro Tem Monroe (Coronado) suggested that principles 1 and 8 be combined. He said that the second principle is really interesting and wondered if there is a timeline for its achievement. He agreed with clearly defining lifeline services. He suggested that there may be services we could provide that would make money and he volunteered to work on that. Staff stated that they have been working with the JCRT on profitable services for a number of meetings and discussions are continuing. The JCRT has set up a task force to deal with a service planning policy. Staff will present a draft policy to the JCRT in May and to the Transportation Committee for policy discussion and action in the June-July time frame.

Action: Upon a motion by Councilmember Emery and a second by Councilmember Judy Ritter (Vista), the Transportation Committee approved the proposed guiding principles and objectives for use in preparing the FY 2005 transit agency operating budgets, with language that addresses the future operations of MVE and the Sprinter.

7. INTERSTATE 15 (I-15) BUS RAPID TRANSIT (BRT) STATION DESIGN (INFORMATION)

Staff reported that the I-15 Corridor Managed Lanes (ML)/BRT Project is a 20-mile corridor from SR 163 in downtown San Diego to Centre City Parkway in Escondido. It includes four-lane, bi-directional managed lanes and a moveable barrier. The BRT stations will be built as part of the middle segment (Phase 1) Managed Lanes Project between SR 56 and Centre City Parkway. Future phases would extend the I-15 managed lanes south to SR 163 and north to SR 78. There are two types of BRT options: a 100 percent exclusive use guideway with online stations, and a BRT/ML facility with shared lanes and direct ramps to the stations. The I-15 project is the latter type.

Staff reviewed the facility design concept which incorporated features such as access for buses, parking, and allowances for future parking structures. Bus access time getting into the station will be about 2-3 minutes. The only way to minimize this time would be to put the station in the middle of the freeway; however, this would put passengers in a hostile environment in the center of the freeway, add walking time for pedestrians and those who park-and-ride, and limited joint development opportunities. In addition, it would not tie in with the community. Staff noted that there are two types of service operating plans: a trunk-line service and point-to-point service. A trunk-line service would operate along the I-15 freeway corridor between Escondido and downtown San Diego stopping at every station to provide access to I-15 communities. It would be designed as an all-day service ultimately with 10-15 minute frequencies. Point-to-point service is designed to facilitate home-to-work trips during the peak-period commute times by providing direct connections from the north I-15 corridor residential neighborhoods to major employment centers. Point-to-point services would skip stations.

Staff reported that the operating strategy includes park-and-ride at stations and station designs that allow future parking structures, as well as opportunities for remote park-and-ride lots in communities along the routes after they leave the managed lanes.

The next steps include completing the design work on the BRT stations, identifying remote park-and-ride locations and pursuing shared-use agreements, developing a detailed BRT operating plan, and defining Smart Growth opportunity areas around stations as part of the Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP) work.

Chair Kellejian asked about the other transit modes that would use the BRT stations. Staff responded that carpools, vanpools, and Fastrak program participants would also use these stations.

Councilmember Emery cautioned staff to evaluate the holding capacity of the metered freeway on-ramps so that congestion on these ramps does not block access for the ML/BRT station facilities. Staff replied that that was considered in the traffic studies.

Mayor Smith asked about the managed lanes. Councilmember Emery stated that all of the lanes may not be heading in the same direction at the same time; two may be going south and three going north in the morning, and then it could change in the afternoon. Chair Kellejian added that a machine moves the lanes.

Mayor Smith asked how long it takes to move the lanes. Bill Figge, Caltrans, said that it depends upon traffic, but it will be flexible enough to respond to traffic conditions. Staff added that we are looking at new technology and multiple machines, so it should take less time than the existing system on the Coronado Bridge. The Executive Director stated that the managed lane in Coronado operates at 3-5 miles an hour. With new technology, that is now up to 10-12 miles an hour. We could move all of the proposed managed lanes in a maximum of an hour.

Chair Kellejian asked staff to arrange a tour of the existing managed lanes for Transportation Committee members.

Councilmember Feller asked if this is the only access for carpools. Staff replied that there will be other access lanes along the freeway. The Executive Director stated that the new system will allow access points at major cross streets.

Councilmember Ritter commented that in order to get people out of their cars you have to decrease transit travel time. A problem with the Coaster is that its parking lots are full all of the time, and she expressed concern about the parking situation. She noted that it's hard to acquire more space for future parking needs. The Executive Director said that we are going to have to build parking structures, and get more aggressive in how we plan and provide for parking for transit users.

Councilmember Ritter commented that when you are a senior citizen you have to be close to transit because you are not always able to drive.

Councilmember Rindone suggested that staff obtain a video of the median stations on the 110 freeway in Los Angeles to show to the Transportation Committee.

Mr. Jablonski said that we need to keep in mind the competitiveness of transit versus autos. If you stop at all of the BRT stations, that could add 20 minutes to the trip. Another concern was the mixing of cars, buses, and vans, and the congestion at the access and egress points over time. The Executive Director stated that the key to this concept is to manage it to achieve the established goals.

Action: The Transportation Committee accepted this report.

9. UPCOMING MEETINGS

The next meeting of the Transportation Committee is scheduled for February 20, 2004.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Kellejian adjourned the meeting at 11:31 a.m.

Attachment: Attendance Sheet

**CONFIRMED ATTENDANCE  
SANDAG TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MEETING  
FEBRUARY 6, 2004**

GEOGRAPHICAL AREA/ORGANIZATION	JURISDICTION	NAME	MEMBER/ALTERNATE	ATTENDING	COMMENTS
North County Coastal	City of Solana Beach	Joe Kellejian (Chair)	Member	Yes	
	City of Encinitas	Christy Guerin	Alternate	Yes	
North County Inland	City of Poway	Mickey Cafagna	Member	No	
	City of San Marcos	Corky Smith	Alternate	Yes	
East County	City of Santee	Jack Dale	Member	Yes	
	City of Santee	Hal Ryan	Alternate	No	
South County	City of Chula Vista	Jerry Rindone	Member	Yes	
	City of Coronado	Phil Monroe	Alternate	Yes	
City of San Diego	----	Dick Murphy (Vice Chair)	Member	No	
	----	Jim Madaffer	Alternate	Yes	
County of San Diego	----	Ron Roberts	Member	Yes	
	----	Dianne Jacob	Alternate	No	
	----	Bill Horn	Alternate	No	
Metropolitan Transit Development Board	City of Poway	Bob Emery	Member	Yes	
	MTDB	Leon Williams	Alternate	Yes	
North County Transit Development Board	City of Vista	Judy Ritter	Member	Yes	
	City of Oceanside	Jack Feller	Alternate	Yes	
	City of Del Mar	Dave Druker	Alternate	No	
San Diego County Regional Airport Authority	City of Oceanside	Terry Johnson	Member	No	
	City of Lemon Grove	Mary Sessom	Alternate	Yes	
ADVISORY/LIAISON Caltrans	----	Pedro Orso-Delgado	Member	No	
	—	Bill Figge	Alternate	Yes	