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## Transportation Committee

Documenter name: Carlos Moyeda

Agency: SANDAG- Board of Directors Committees

Date: Sept. 20, 2024

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### Summary

The September 20, 2024, Transportation Committee meeting began with public comments urging the committee to strengthen its commitment to clean air initiatives and address pollution in residential neighborhoods from nearby ceramic manufacturing industries. Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Mario Orso then announced recent completed and ongoing transportation projects. Next, SANDAG staff provided updates on various grant programs and the results of the 2025 Regional Transportation Initiative Program (RTIP) Social Equity Analysis. Lastly, Caltrans staff updated the Committee on completed and ongoing projects related to the North County Corridor Program.

### Here's what you need to know

- Staff provided updates on the various active and completed projects for the Environmental Mitigation Project–Land Management Grant Program (EMP LMG), Specialized Transportation Grant Program (STGP), Active Transportation Grant Program (ATGP), Smart Growth Incentive Program (SGIP), and Access for All Grant Program (AFA), including those on the watch list or withdrawn.
- The 2025 Regional Transportation Incentive Program (RTIP) Social Equity Analysis, which includes transportation projects from the SANDAG Regional Plan, Capital Budget, and TransNet Program of Projects, revealed that 190 out of the 276 mapped projects intersect with vulnerable communities, resulting in approximately \$4.9 billion (38 percent) in social equity investments.
- Staff provided an overview of the North County Corridor (NCC) Program's achievements over the past decade, highlighting completed projects such as the addition of 13 miles of carpool lanes on the I-5, 5 miles of rail double-tracking, 7

miles of bike and pedestrian facilities, and the restoration of over 405 acres of coastal habitats. Current NCC projects are focused on adding 3 miles of managed lanes from I-78 to Harbor Drive, 0.6 miles of rail double-tracking, 1 mile of bike and pedestrian facilities, and restoring an additional 107 acres of coastal habitats, as well as continuing collaborative efforts with nearby cities.

**Immediate Actions**

- The following agenda items were approved of in a unanimous 9-0 (yes-no) vote:
  - The consent agenda comprised of item #2: Approval of Meeting Minutes, item #3: Master Agreement for State-Funded transit Projects with Caltrans, and item #4: Regional Active Transportation Program Call for Projects.
  - Agenda item #5: SANDAG Grant Programs–Quarterly Status Update and Amendment Requests.
  - Agenda item #6: Proposed Final 2025 Regional Transportation Improvement Project.

**Accessibility Issues**

- No accessibility issues were encountered while on assignment.

**Follow-Up Questions**

- N/A

**Notes**

**Meeting Call to Order:**

- The meeting was called to order at 9:01 a.m. by Chair Jack Shu.
- The agenda for this meeting may be viewed by clicking [here](#), while a video and/or audio recording of the meeting may be found by clicking [here](#) and [here](#), respectively.
  - **All timestamps below were taken from the video recording.**

**Committee Members in Attendance:**

Jurisdiction:	Name:	Attended:
San Diego County Regional Airport Authority	Esther Sanchez <b>Rafael Prez</b>	No Yes
City of San Diego	<b>Raul Campillo</b> Marni von Wilpert	Yes No
County of San Diego	<b>Montgomery Steppe</b> Joel Anderson	Yes No

	Nora Vargas	No
East County	<b>Jack Shu</b> <b>Alysson Snow</b>	<b>Yes</b> <b>Yes</b>
Metropolitan Transit System (MTS)	Vivian Moreno Marcus Bush	No No
North County Coastal	Tony Kranz <b>David Zito</b>	No <b>Yes</b>
North County Inland	<b>Dane White</b> <b>Ed Musgrove</b>	<b>Yes</b> <b>Yes</b>
North County Transit District	<b>Priya Bhat-Patel</b> Jewel Edson Corinna Contreras	<b>Yes</b> No No
Port of San Diego	Frank Urtasun <b>Job Nelson</b>	No <b>Yes</b>
South County	<b>John Duncan</b> Jose Rodriguez	<b>Yes</b> No
<b>Advisory Members:</b>	<b>Name:</b>	<b>Attended:</b>
Caltrans	Everett Townsend Ann Fox <b>Roy Abboud</b>	No No <b>Yes</b>
Southern California Tribal Chairmen's Association	<b>Erica Pinto</b> James Hill	<b>No</b> No

**Staff Present:**

- Mario Orso, Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
- Antoinette Meier, Senior Director of Regional Planning
- Brian Lane, Committee Coordinator
- Betsy Blake, Legal Counsel
- Goldy Herbon, Senior Grants Program Analyst
- Aly Vazquez, Grants Intern
- Richard Rafcliffe, Associate Financial Analyst
- Paula Zamudio, Senior Equity Planner
- Marvin Canton, Project Manager
- Kareem Scarlett, Senior Transportation Engineer

### **Non-Agenda Public Comments: (7:21)**

- Bee Mittermiller, representing [SanDiego350](#), which works to prevent the impacts of climate change, commented that while the [Clean Air Day](#) initiative offering free MTS, NCTD, and electric vehicle rides, as well as incentivizing bicycling, is a good start, there is more that SANDAG can do to encourage non-vehicular modes of transportation. “This is a good start, but there’s so much more that can be done, and I hope that SANDAG will do more because SANDAG must do better than this,” she said. **(10:03)**
- Purita Javier raised concerns of residential pollution being caused by ceramic manufacturing industries operating near neighborhoods.
- Cesar Javier echoed Purita’s comments, emphasizing the need for political will among officials to address the issue with ceramic manufacturers being allowed to operate near populated areas.

### **Chief Executive Officer’s Report/Non-Agenda Committee Comments: (17:25)**

- CEO Orso reported on the following:
  - The [Pershing Bikeway](#) opened. It offers 2.3 miles of bike and pedestrian pathways through Balboa Park.
  - The ongoing construction on the [Inland Rail Trail Project](#), which is anticipated to be completed by 2026.
  - The full closure of the [Del Mar Bluffs](#) in anticipation of crews working 24/7 shifts from Saturday, October 12 at 12:30 a.m. to Monday, October 14 at 12:30 a.m.
  - Public workshops on the [Purple Line](#) revealed a need from residents to have transportation options between San Ysidro and Sorrento Mesa during the interim period of the project.
  - The [Clean Air Day](#) on Wednesday, October 12 encourages non-vehicular modes of transportation and features free rides from MTS and NCTD.
- Non-Agenda Committee Comments: (25:21)
  - Chair Jack Shu expressed his appreciation for the Pershing Bikeway, highlighting his experience bicycling through it since its opening. “It is the smoothest, fastest part of my ride from La Mesa to Downtown. I hope we can work to connect the rest of those routes to be of that kind of caliber of safety and speed,” he said. **(27:31)**
  - Chair Jack Shu asked Committee Member Abboud if Caltrans has plans for facilitating electric vehicle charging.
    - Committee Member Abboud responded that although Caltrans is considering plans for electric vehicle charging and has convened a

green committee to explore opportunities, the biggest challenge lies in the laws and regulations prohibiting vending.

- Committee Member Pinto announced that Jamul, Sycuan, Manzanita, and San Pascual have partnered with the Harbor Police Foundation to bring awareness to human trafficking and missing and murdered indigenous persons.

#### **Consent Agenda: (36:44)**

- The consent agenda included item #2 (Approval of Meeting Minutes), item #3 (Master Agreement for State-Funded transit Projects with Caltrans), and item #4 (Regional Active Transportation Program Call for Projects).
- Presentation:
  - None.
- Public comments:
  - TheOriginalDra commented on item 4, expressing skepticism about the effectiveness of SANDAG's efforts to promote and fund bicycling. She questioned whether the current number of cyclists justifies the investment in new and existing bicycle facilities.
- Committee comments:
  - None.
- Committee action:
  - Committee Member Steppe moved and was seconded by Committee Member Duncan, motioned to approve the consent agenda. The motion was carried in a unanimous 9-0 vote.

#### **Agenda Item #5: [SANDAG Grant Programs–Quarterly Status Update and Amendment Requests](#) (39:53)**

- Presentation by Goldy Herbon, Aly Vazquez, SANDAG:
  - The [Environmental Mitigation Program – Land Management Grant Program](#) (EMP LMG) provides funding to land managers for maintaining regional preserves and protecting endangered species and their habitats.
  - As of the reporting period, the EMP LMG has 17 active projects and 2 completed projects, including the City of San Diego's Lower Otay Reservoir Project and the San Diego Audubon Society's Silverwood/Anstine Preserve Project. Additionally, the EMP LMG has received one amendment request from the San Dieguito River Valley Regional Open Space Park Joint Powers Authority (JPA) for their West Bernardo Mountain Habitat Management Area Enhancement and Restoration Project.
  - The [Specialized Transportation Grant Program \(STGP\)](#) provides funding for

- transportation programs aimed at older adults and people with disabilities.
- As of the reporting period, the STGP has 36 active projects, 10 completed projects, including the [Jewish Family Service of San Diego's On the Go Transportation Program](#), 6 grants on the watch list, and 2 grant withdrawals.
  - The San Diego Center for the Blind Vehicle Project was placed on the watch list for failing to meet their 20-hour weekly service minimum. Additionally, the Arc of San Diego and Facilitating Access to Coordinated Transportation (FACT) have two and three grants, respectively, on the watch list due to late reporting.
  - Reviewing Life requested to withdraw their vehicle grant due to the dissolution of their nonprofit, while MTS requested to withdraw their vehicle grant because the vehicles offered did not meet their project needs.
  - The [Active Transportation Grant Program \(ATGP\)](#) provides funding to local jurisdictions for developing bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure that promotes active transportation—any method of travel that requires human power—and increases connectivity to schools, workplaces, retail areas, and community spaces.
  - As of the reporting period, the ATGP has one active project, the Carlsbad Boulevard and Tamarack Avenue Pedestrian Improvement Project, which is also on the watch list due to the grantee failing to deliver project milestones for their scope of work.
  - The [Smart Growth Incentive Program \(SGIP\)](#) provides funding for public infrastructure projects and planning activities that facilitate compact, mixed-use, and transit-oriented developments, thereby increasing housing and transportation choices.
  - As of the reporting period, the SGIP has 9 active projects, 3 completed, including the Sweetwater Roadway Project, the Together We Plan Project, and the Downtown Wayfinding Signage Project. Additionally, there are 2 grants on the watch list and 3 amendment requests.
  - The City of El Cajon's Main Street – Green Street Gateway Project and the City of San Diego's Downtown Mobility Cycleway Improvement are on the watch list and are being investigated by the Department of Industrial Relations (DIR) for potential labor compliance issues.
  - The [Access for All Grant Program \(AFA\)](#) provides funding for the expansion of on-demand wheelchair accessible vehicle (WAV) projects and programs.
  - As of the reporting period, the AFA has no active projects and one completed project—the RideFACTNOW program, a county-wide initiative that has completed over 10,000 WAV trips.
- Public comments: **(57:26)**

- TheOriginalDra commented on the need to enhance and expand outreach and engagement opportunities to increase accessibility for older adults interested in transportation programs.
- **Committee comments: (59:47)**
  - Committee Member Duncan requested that future presentations on cycle grants include information from at least five years prior for use as a reference.
  - Chair Shu asked for the approximate value of the vehicles being returned and whether operating costs for the vehicles will be covered when awarded to a new agency.
    - Vazquez replied that the vehicles were valued at \$4,800 each at the time of appraisal, and only the vehicles will be rewarded, requiring the agency to allocate funds to operate them.
- **Committee action: (1:06:14)**
  - Committee Member Bhat-Patel, seconded by Committee Member Zito, motioned to approve of staff recommendations for item 5. The motion was carried by a unanimous 9-0 vote.

**Agenda Item #6: [Proposed Final 2025 Regional Transportation Improvement Project](#) (1:07:04)**

- **Presentation** by Richard Radcliffe, Paula Zamudio, SANDAG:
  - The [Regional Transportation Improvement Project \(RTIP\)](#) is a list of transportation projects stemming from the SANDAG Regional Plan, SANDAG Capital Budget, and the TransNet Program of Projects (POP).
  - The RTIP has committed funding from FY 2025-2029, and its projects support federal air quality and performance management targets.
  - The RTIP exists because federal planning and air quality regulations require a nonprofit organization (NPO) to prepare a transportation improvement program that demonstrates funds are being committed to projects to authorize the use of those funds. State law mandates that the program be updated every two years. Additionally, the TransNet Ordinance requires that all projects receiving federal or TransNet funding must be programmed into the RTIP.
  - Federal requirements mandate that the RTIP be consistent with the approved Regional Plan, that funding be committed and the program be fiscally constrained, that the projects in the RTIP meet acceptable air quality levels and make progress toward achieving management targets, and that public involvement be included.
  - The 2025 RTIP Social Equity Analysis provides a current snapshot of where RTIP-programmed projects are in relation to vulnerable communities.

- The methodology approach behind the 2025 RTIP Social Equity Analysis involved defining vulnerable and most vulnerable communities in the San Diego region, identifying project locations and social equity areas, and calculating overall RTIP social equity investments.
- In comparison to the 2023 RTIP, which captured less than 40 percent of RTIP-programmed projects, the 2025 RTIP captured 70 percent of projects and included additional location-based analysis in low-income and minority populations.
- The results of the 2025 RTIP Social Equity Analysis revealed that, of the 276 mapped projects, 89 intersect with the most vulnerable communities in the San Diego region. Including these 89, a total of 190 projects intersect with vulnerable communities. This translates to approximately \$4.9 billion in RTIP social equity investments, or 38 percent of mapped projects, going towards vulnerable communities.
- **Public comments: (1:24:55)**
  - Rita Clement, a SanDiego350 volunteer, expressed support for the proposed final 2025 RTIP and emphasized the need to incorporate health outcomes and equity considerations in the future. “To keep San Diego safe, liveable, and thriving, we need to invest in projects to reduce traffic, fix crumbling infrastructure, and improve transportation county-wide to make life better for all San Diego County residents now,” she said. **(1:26:00)**
- **Committee comments: (1:31:15)**
  - Committee Member Steppe asked for clarification on the distinction between vulnerable and most vulnerable communities.
    - Zamudio explained the distinction is based on the [CalEnviroScreen 4.0 Data Dashboard](#) for the San Diego region. The top 50% is considered vulnerable, while the top 25%, indicated by red, is most vulnerable. Therefore, the top 50% includes both vulnerable and most vulnerable communities.
    - **Several factors are considered** in the classifications, including exposure to different types of pollution, effects of chemicals present in certain regions, presence of sensitive populations to certain pollutants determined by factors such as health or age, and socioeconomic factors.
  - Chair Shu asked for the total count of RTIP investments and whether the mapped projects were chosen at random.
    - Zamudio replied that a total count of RTIP investments is unavailable because not all projects can be mapped. Consequently, the mapped projects weren’t chosen at random as they need to be identifiable

- through a geographic information system (GIS).
- Committee Member Duncan asked for clarification on the 38 percent figure listed under 2025 SE RTIP Investments and questioned where the remaining 62 percent is being allocated.
    - Zamudio explained that the 38 percent represents the percentage of mapped projects corresponding to vulnerable communities and the percentage of dollars being invested into them, while the other 62 percent is allocated to non-vulnerable communities.
  - Committee Member Abboud clarified that the scope of the 2025 RTIP Social Equity Analysis was to identify where money was being invested, not to track the benefits communities are receiving.
  - Committee action:
    - Committee Member Zito, seconded by Committee Member Nelson, motioned to approve the final 2025 RTIP. The motion was carried in a unanimous 9-0 vote.

#### **Agenda Item #7: TransNet Major Corridor Projects Update (1:50:27)**

- Presentation by Marvin Canton and Kareem Scarlett, Caltrans:
  - The [North County Corridor \(NCC\) program](#) is part of the Public Works Plan/Transportation and Resources Enhancement Program, a 40-year, \$6 billion initiative. It aims to facilitate projects for highway, coastal road, and transit improvements, as well as environmental protection and coastal access.
  - In the past decade, the NCC program has achieved the addition of 13 miles of carpool in both directions on the I-5, 5 miles of rail double-tracking, 7 miles of bike and pedestrian facilities, and has restored over 405 acres of coastal habitats, totalling \$1.6 billion in completed project costs.
  - Completed NCC projects include the Genesee Bikeway, double-track and rail crossing improvements to the San Elijo Lagoon, the restoration of the San Elijo Lagoon, and bike/pedestrian improvements to the San Elijo Lagoon Suspension Bridge, Solana Hills Bike and Pedestrian Trail, and the North Coast Bike Trail.
  - Active NCC projects include adding 3 miles of managed lanes from I-78 to Harbor Drive, 0.6 miles of rail double tracking, 1 mile of bike and pedestrian facilities, and restoring an additional 107 acres of coastal habitats.
  - The NCC program also involved partnering with neighboring cities, such as Encinitas and Carlsbad, to provide community, bike, and pedestrian enhancements. These collaborative projects include art installations in Encinitas, as well as bike/pedestrian enhancements to Chestnut Avenue and the Palomar Airport in Carlsbad.

- The [SR-78 Asset Management Project](#) is a 2-year, \$140 million initiative aimed at providing a complete corridor refresh between the I-5 and I-15. It involves repaving, operational improvements, drainage and safety upgrades, and landscaping.

**2-hour limit for note taking reached.**

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