2004

TransNet

BALLOT LANGUAGE

A	**SAN DIEGO COUNTY TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM.**

To relieve traffic congestion, improve safety, and match state/federal funds by:

- Expanding I-5, I-8, I-15, SR 52, SR 54, SR 56, SR 67, SR 76, SR 78, SR 94, SR 125, I-805;
- Maintaining/improving local roads;
- Increasing transit for seniors and disabled persons;
- Expanding commuter express bus, trolley, Coaster services;

Shall San Diego County voters continue the existing half-cent transportation sales tax (SDCRTC Ordinance 04-01) for forty years, including creating an Independent Taxpayer Oversight Committee to conduct yearly audits ensuring voter mandates are met?

YES 000 → O

NO 000 → O

TransNet Promised Projects - Not Started

Project Status Checklist (cont.)

Corridor	Completed	In-Progress	Future Project
I-5 South Express Lanes (905 to 8)			✓
I-5 Express Lanes (8 to Merge)			✓
I-8 Widening (2nd to Los Coches)			✓
5/805 HOV Connectors			✓
I-15 Express Lanes (94 to 8)			✓
SR 52 Express Lanes (125 to 15)			✓
SR 54 & SR 125 Express Lanes			✓
56 Widening and Connectors			✓
SR 67 Widening			✓
78 Express Lanes and Connectors			✓
SR 94 (5 to 15) and Connectors			✓
SR 94 (805 to I-15)			✓
I-805 Express Lanes (Mission Valley Viaduct)			✓
Coronado Tunnel			✓
BRT from San Ysidro to Sorrento Mesa			✓

SANDAG TransNet Statistics

Expended and Budgeted Expenditures for TransNet Major Corridors Program (Year of Expenditure $)

Mode	Total Cost	% of Total Cost	Total TransNet	% of Total TransNet	Total Other Funds	% of Total Other Funds
Highway	1,001,361,046	13%	157,424,917	6%	843,936,129	15%
HOV/Managed Lane	2,393,669,949	30%	674,276,022	28%	1,719,393,927	31%
Transit	4,518,529,890	57%	1,605,742,661	66%	2,912,787,229	53%
Grand Total	7,913,560,885	100%	2,437,443,600	100%	5,476,117,285	100%
	7,913,560,885		2,437,443,600		5,476,117,285	
			31%		69%	

Figures may not add up due to rounding

Remaining TransNet Major Corridor Projects

Category	Cost in 2018$ ($millions)	Percentage
Highway	2,333	12%
HOV/Managed Lane	14,822	75%
Transit	2,662	13%
	19,817	100%

The San Diego Union-Tribune

IS 10% TRANSIT USE REALISTIC? PROVE IT.

5/17/19

Last month, the San Diego Association of Governments unveiled a bold and costly plan to meet state requirements that the region reduce per-capita greenhouse gas emissions 19 percent by 2035, using 2005 emissions as a baseline. SANDAG — the lead planner on county transportation infrastructure — said the plan would use technology to "provide an integrated and connected transportation network that maximizes efficiency, capacity and speed, giving commuters choices in their travel.

Most notably, it calls for hundreds of miles of 100-mph transit lines running parallel to freeways, with the goal of increasing transit ridership from about 1.5 percent of vehicle trips to about 10 percent, and envisions "congestion pricing" tolls on certain freeways to decrease rush-hour traffic jams. Most controversially, it treats the promises that SANDAG made in 2004 to secure a 40-year extension of a half-cent sales tax hike — that the agency would widen state routes 67 and 56, add express lanes to state routes 78 and 52, and do 10 other major road improvements — as a lower priority.

The latter provision generated an immediate firestorm, with North County and East County politicians blasting SANDAG for betraying motorists desperate for relief. But in a telephone interview last week with The San Diego Union-Tribune Editorial Board, Hasan Ikhrata, SANDAG's executive director, said it's simplistic and shortsighted to depict the plan as an embrace of transit and a rejection of passenger vehicles. Instead, he said that increasing transit ridership to 10 percent would add "100 years of capacity" to local freeways, and technological advances would make freeways move faster as well.

"Every person in San Diego will have a better commute," Ikhrata said. "San Diego will be an example for the rest of the country," he said.

Or at least it will be, he said, if San Diegans "give us a chance to show what this plan is all about" and don't jump to conclusions.

That's entirely reasonable. SANDAG's advocacy should have as its first basis the urgent need for the region to do its part in trying to head off drastic changes in the climate caused by the massive build-up of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. San Diegans who view themselves as environmentalists can't just pay lip service to this need. But after emphasizing this point, SANDAG needs to show that it is realistic about how many people will give up cars and trucks, some of which are hybrids or electric.

Yet even righteousness and realism might not be enough to persuade voters to approve tens of billions of dollars in tax hikes that will likely be needed to create SANDAG's vision. While Ikhrata can say critics of his plan overlook the ways it would reduce traffic congestion, he will have a more difficult challenge in overcoming skepticism that 10 percent of trips will really be on transit. In an op-ed written for the Union-Tribune, county Supervisors Jim Desmond and Dianne Jacob and Santee Mayor John Minto pointed out that despite decades of efforts by governments to expand transit and promote its use, transit use in San Diego County had declined in recent years. As the Los Angeles Times reported in 2016, the same is true in Los Angeles and Orange counties "despite enormous and costly efforts by top transportation officials to entice people out of their cars and onto buses and trains."

Why is this happening? The simplest and most obvious explanation remains the most powerful: All the world's great transit success stories — New York City, Paris, Tokyo, Seoul, Beijing, Moscow — are in densely packed cities. Though they have large populations, San Diego, Orange and Los Angeles counties are more sprawling than densely packed.

Nevertheless, Ikhrata says if transit can be made much more attractive, a 10% transit goal in the region is realistic. But his belief alone is not enough. A year ago in this space, we wrote that the city of San Diego's Climate Action Plan needs "a solid foundation of candor and honesty on how much it can expect from its citizens." The same holds for SANDAG's plan. Ikhrata and SANDAG need to substantiate his confident prediction — if they can.

Los Angeles Times

Ridership on Metro fell to the lowest level in more than a decade last year

1/25/19

Despite a growing population and a booming economy, the number of trips taken on Los Angeles County's bus and rail network last year fell to the lowest level in more than a decade.

Passengers on Metropolitan Transportation Authority buses and trains took 397.5 million trips in 2017, a decline of 15% over five years. Metro's workhorse bus system, which carries about three-quarters of the system's passengers, has seen a drop of nearly 21%.

Rail ridership increased 3.6% over five years, bolstered by significant ridership gains on the Expo Line on the new extension to Santa Monica. But trips on the Blue Line fell 21%, and trips on the Green Line dropped 26%.

The ridership decline plaguing Metro and other Southern California transit agencies provides a grim assessment of public officials' efforts to shift commuters from driving to public transit.

Experts and officials have no firm answers, but have attributed the decline to a combination of factors, including changes to immigration policy, competition from Uber and Lyft and more people buying cars — as well as perceived problems with existing transit service and security.

Nearly two-thirds of former Metro riders told the agency in a 2016 survey that they stopped riding because transit service was inefficient, inconvenient or difficult to reach. An additional 29% said they stopped riding because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable on buses and trains. The vast majority of those people now drive alone.

Metro officials, concerned by the decline, have commissioned a study on how to improve their service, which spans 170 lines and 15,000 stops. The results are expected in April 2019.
Metro officials say they have also taken steps to address riders' concerns about security. Since July, the transit system has been patrolled by a combination of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, and the Los Angeles and Long Beach police departments.

Still, some concerns persist. At a meeting of the Los Angeles City Council's public safety committee Wednesday, Councilwoman Nury Martinez said she will not take her 8-year-old daughter on the Metro Red Line, which runs between North Hollywood and Union Station downtown.
"I don't have to see the data collection to know that if I feel unsafe to ride the train with my kid, that I'm just simply not going to use it," Martinez said. "I know a lot of people who feel the same way, and it's simply not acceptable."

Experts have theorized that Metro has lost a relatively small number of riders who previously relied on the bus for all kinds of trips, including commuting and running errands. Their departure has had an outsize effect on overall ridership because they took multiple trips per day.

The region's shift away from the traditional 9-to-5 job structure makes Metro less convenient for people who now work from home, visit several job sites per week, or hold multiple part-time jobs, they say.
"The bulk of our system has been tailored toward commuters and students," Metro senior executive officer Conan Cheung said. "We need to evolve relative to what customers expect."

Other cities across the U.S., including New York and Chicago, have lost bus riders as well. But no region is poised to invest as aggressively in transit as Los Angeles County, where voters approved a sales tax increase in 2016 that will raise an estimated $120 billion over four decades for transit construction and operations.

VOICE of SAN DIEGO

NEW SOUTH BAY RAPID BUS IS FALLING FAR SHORT OF RIDERSHIP EXPECTATIONS

5/9/19

The South Bay's newest transit line is not off to a great start.

In January, regional leaders unveiled the South Bay Rapid, a new bus line from Otay Mesa to downtown that runs frequently by San Diego standards, avoids traffic with dedicated roadways and offers well-accommodated stations much like trolley stops.

But three months in, the South Bay Rapid, now operating as the 225 bus, is coming up way short of ridership projections set by transportation officials.
Years ago, regional planners projected that the route could serve 4,500 daily riders in its first year, which would eventually grow to as many as 12,000 daily riders once expected developments in the east Chula Vista area were finished.

So far, the bus is attracting just around 1,500 daily riders, a third of what was expected for its first year and only 12 percent of its ambitious long-term expectation.

After three years in construction and even longer in planning, the $139 million expenditure – funded both by the beleaguered local sales tax TransNet and federal funds – isn't delivering.

A spokesman for the Metropolitan Transit System emphasized that it's still early for the South Bay Rapid, and its average daily ridership has grown from 1,300 at the beginning of March to 1,500 at the beginning of May.
"South Bay ridership is growing, but we recognize that it is lower than we had hoped," MTS spokesman Rob Schupp said.

Additional project improvements, like another dedicated roadway on Palomar Street and running the bus on the shoulder of I-805, should be finished at the beginning of next year, Schupp said.
"This will enable vehicles to go faster than cars during peak-hour commutes," he said.

MTS and SANDAG spent about $150,000 promoting the launch of the South Bay Rapid earlier this year, Schupp said, and they're now discussing other ways to market the route to improve ridership.

The San Diego Union-Tribune
5/19/19

Technology will solve our problems

The future is transportation for the masses, not mass transit. There's a big difference. Buses, trolleys, and trains were visionary technologies in 1910, but not today. There's nothing attractive about transportation that doesn't leave when or from where we want to leave, that repeatedly stops where we don't want to stop, that doesn't take us where we want to go, and that sometimes forces us to travel with unsavory members of society that we (and certainly our children) would rather avoid.

Two major developments will change all of this.

First, autonomous vehicles will make safe, flexible, and efficient travel available to everyone. Yes, the autonomous vehicle deniers among us are rolling eyeballs right about now, but please bear with me. This technology is definitely happening — and you'll love it!

Second, personal vehicle ownership will virtually disappear. Just as we discovered we don't need a collection of CDs (it was just the music we wanted all along), what we need is transportation — not a car loan, insurance, maintenance, gas stations and on it goes. We're going to love this too!

Imagine, say, 30 years from now when autonomous networked vehicles are the norm (and the proposed costly SANDAG trains are still in their infancy, but already obsolete). We'll be thankful for the enormous capacity provided by all those freeways. Since autonomous vehicles can safely travel closer together, we'll have more (narrower) lanes and higher speeds even with closer (yet safer) following distances. Just one of these lanes will easily move far more people per hour than a rail line, any given section of which is typically occupied less than 2% of the time.

Travel on secondary streets will be far faster too. Networked vehicles will automatically adjust their approach speed to safely sail through intersections in an assigned time slot without stopping. This will mean not only faster trips, but also a massive increase in congestion-reducing roadway capacity.

Traffic congestion will be further reduced since far fewer vehicle trips will be required to move us all. For example, no more endless lines of parents dropping off and picking up kids at school. Imagine, say, an eight-passenger autonomous mini-bus shuttling kids in a neighborhood to and from school. Just that reduces 32 daily vehicle trips to four. Likewise, thousands of commuter trips can be eliminated through predefined and ad hoc ridesharing.

With virtually any type of vehicle available, we'll summon a cargo carrier to transport gravel or plywood from the DIY store. The elderly and disabled will have appropriately equipped transportation to the doctor and other destinations. Order up a sleeping car (with actual beds) for an overnight trip to San Francisco — or how about a workspace or conference room on wheels for a business trip to Los Angeles? We'll all get home safely after a night of partying, and we'll never have to look for a parking space again.

Oh, and now that the garage is no longer occupied, it's going to make a great game room.

Steve Deal, Rancho San Diego

SANDAG Item: **16**

Board of Directors

February 22, 2019

TransNet Program Update

Action: **Information**

Staff will provide an update on the financial capacity of the *TransNet* Major Corridors Program.

Fiscal Impact:

Approximately $21.4 billion is reasonably expected to be available to finish *TransNet* Major Corridors projects through 2048.

Schedule/Scope Impact:

As of January 2019, 35 percent of the *TransNet* Major Corridors projects have been completed, 28 percent of the projects are in progress, and 37 percent of the projects have not yet been started.

Overview

SANDAG regularly reviews the capacity of the *TransNet* Major Corridors Program by updating its Plan of Finance to determine the financial feasibility of completing all remaining *TransNet* Major Corridors projects by 2048.

Key Considerations

As of January 2019, 35 percent of *TransNet* Major Corridors projects have been completed, 28 percent of the projects are in progress, and 37 percent have not yet been started.

The first *TransNet* Extension Ordinance Ten Year review, completed in December 2017, recommended that SANDAG "continually reevaluate the portfolio of projects remaining to be completed to ensure the *TransNet* Extension Ordinance listing of major highway and transit projects is the best mix compared to *TransNet* goals and whether additions, deletions, or other changes need to be made."

Analysis completed as part of the Regional Plan development shows that it is possible to meet the mobility needs of the region without certain Major Corridor capital improvements. In addition, the introduction of new and emerging technologies as well as potential operational alternatives provide the opportunity for new mobility solutions that originally were not envisioned in the *TransNet* Ordinance.

This is particularly relevant as current analysis indicates that approximately $21.4 billion is reasonably expected to be available for the *TransNet* Major Corridors program through 2048—which is not enough to complete all of the *TransNet* projects by the 2048 horizon year.

Cost estimates for all remaining Major Corridors projects were updated in 2018 as part of the development of the Regional Plan. These updated estimates show that the cost to complete all remaining projects is about $26.7 billion, which is an increase of about 16 percent from the October 2017 Plan of Finance. As a result, SANDAG estimates that approximately $9.8 billion from new or expanded sources would be needed to complete all remaining *TransNet* Major Corridors projects by 2048. This means that for every *TransNet* dollar, SANDAG would need to bring in about $4.20 in match funding.

As a point of reference, the average leveraging ratio for the first 30 years of *TransNet* was 1:3, and the leveraging ratio estimated in October 2017 was 1:3.4. Applying those ratios today would mean that about $4.8 to $7.2 billion would be needed in matching funds to complete all of the *TransNet* Major Corridors projects by 2048.

Timeline of SANDAG's Executive Director Comments

December 21, 2018

"I don't think we are going to solve our problem by widening freeways, period. Anyone who argues with that, I'd love to talk with them."

"We're not going to add any general lanes to any freeway – that's the wrong strategy." (KPBS)

January 25, 2019

"There's currently no transportation to the airport." (SANDAG Meeting)

February 27, 2019

"We can't build more highways, and if people think that we're going to pour concrete to build more freeways they're wrong. It's not going to happen. Nothing…" *(Union Tribune)*

March 23, 2019

"Every meeting I have with Mr. Supervisor Desmond I hear that. Every time I talk about transportation, he talks about, "What about my 78?" My answer doesn't change. The model of building highways is not sustainable, period. End of discussion."

May 9, 2019

"There is no money for the roads." (Valley Road Runner)

May 17, 2019

"We need to increase public transit ridership to 10%, which would add 100 years of road capacity." (Union Tribune)