October 11, 2018

To: Chairperson Terry Sinnott, SANDAG Board of Directors

CC: SANDAG Board of Directors; Regional Planning Committee Members; Transportation Committee Members, Kim Kawada, Interim Executive Director; Phil Trom, Senior Regional Planner; Rachel Kennedy, Senior Transportation Planner

From: Circulate San Diego

Subject: 2019 Regional Plan Network Concepts

Dear Chairperson Sinnott,

On behalf of Circulate San Diego, whose mission is to create excellent mobility choices and vibrant, healthy neighborhoods, I am writing with preliminary comments on the release of the 2019 Regional Plan Network Concepts.

These Network Concepts represent an important first step toward ensuring that the elected officials on the SANDAG board are able to determine the priorities for our region’s transportation future.

Circulate San Diego requested in 2017\(^1\) and 2018\(^2\) that SANDAG prepare different transportation scenarios, and the SANDAG board directed staff to do so. These Network Concepts are the result of that board direction.

Moreover, the staff report explains that the Network Concepts use flexible funds available to SANDAG to finance different priorities. SANDAG has previously resisted conceding the level of flexibility available to it, as Circulate San Diego detailed in our 2015 report “TransNet Today.”\(^3\) These Network Concepts represent a welcome change in approach and candor by SANDAG.

---


Circulate thanks staff for ensuring that the Board has the option of supporting a scenario that advances and prioritizes transit projects. We also appreciate that staff recognized the likely need to amend TransNet in response to changing transportation needs and technology.

Upon review of the network concepts, Circulate San Diego recommends that the Board consider requesting that transit projects be advanced beyond what is proposed in theShared Mobility concept and that planning for the Purple Line be incorporated into the future transportation network scenario.

1. **Transportation network scenarios must further advance transit more than the adopted project timelines in the 2015 Regional Plan.**

   The SANDAG Board should consider recommending staff prepare a Shared Mobility scenario that advances more transit projects beyond their current project timelines in the 2015 Regional Plan. The proposed Shared Mobility concept does advance transit in comparison to the Connected Corridors concept, and it does advance 12 projects from their current timeline in the 2015 Regional Plan. However, seven transit projects are delayed, resulting in only a net of five transit projects advanced. The Connected Corridors option pushes transit projects even farther back in time than the adopted Regional Plan, which is clearly a step backwards.

   We agree with the decision to prioritize Rapid transit over more expensive new rail projects, which will allow more transit projects to be implemented quicker and at a lower cost. Also, new and expensive rail projects likely need a new ballot measure to actually build, so they can be re-incorporated into the Regional Plan, and advanced, as a part of a future MTS ballot measure.

   However, the Board should consider requesting more and faster implementation of lower cost transit projects in the Shared Mobility concept.

2. **SANDAG must plan for the future Purple Line in the Regional Plan, not eliminate it entirely.**

   In order to maintain a pipeline of future transit infrastructure projects, SANDAG must plan for large transit projects such as the Purple Line, even if it does not foresee having the funding opportunity to construct the project in the immediate future. If SANDAG does not begin the planning and early design stages of the Purple Line, the project will never be shovel-ready and eligible for major federal and state grants that could bring in billions of dollars to the local economy. The Board should consider recommending that planning for the Purple Line be included in all scenarios. Making the Purple Line eligible for grants may also require formally including it in the Regional Plan, even if it is programmed for the later periods of the plan. As suggested above, the Purple Line could be accelerated through an MTS ballot measure.

3. **Performance measures show that the future Shared Mobility scenario should be improved to move the needle on improving transit travel time.**

   The performance measure results from the three proposed network concepts demonstrate that the Shared Mobility concept, as proposed, is only providing marginal improvements to San Diegans. The metrics show that there is minimal difference between the Shared Mobility concept and the Connected Corridors concept: driving alone and carpooling to work take virtually the same amount of time between the two scenarios on average, while transit is two minutes faster in the Shared Mobility concept than in the Connected Corridors concept.
The average peak-period travel time to work performance measure demonstrates that the Shared Mobility concept is superior overall in terms of average peak-period travel time to work, however it still shows that transit takes over double the amount of time than driving to work. At that travel time, few San Diegans will choose to take transit over driving if they have the ability to drive. Meanwhile, those unable to drive because of disability or lack of access to a car will spend over double the time commuting to work than those who have the choice. The Shared Mobility concept can improve transit times by further advancing transit projects.

4. **The Policy Possibilities concept should not distract from more substantive efforts SANDAG has the direct authority to implement.**

The Policy Possibilities concept is being described as the only concept that can reach SB 375 targets. This concept includes a variety of policy tools that may rebalance travelers’ decisions on using a car, transit, or other modes. It is true that SANDAG cannot be expected to solve the entirety of the region’s greenhouse gas targets through project phasing alone, and many such policies are appropriate to build into the Regional Plan.

However, the bulk of the proposed policies are speculative, or must be implemented by other agencies. SANDAG cannot use these policies as a fig leaf to put off more substantive efforts that SANDAG can directly affect, like the phasing of transit projects. SANDAG should adopt more aggressive transit project phasing that maximizes greenhouse gas savings, and to minimize its reliance on speculative policies.

Moreover, the Policy Possibilities concept will result in an astounding 16.7 percent increase in income consumed by transportation costs for low-income San Diegans, compared to only a 5.8 percent increase for non low-income San Diegans. This is an unacceptable trade-off and the policy tools should be reexamined to avoid this inequitable result.

5. **Conclusion.**

SANDAG’s Network Concepts should do more to advance transit phasing. SANDAG should not depend so greatly on other jurisdictions’ actions, nor should programs negatively impact low-income San Diegans, as is the case in the Policy Possibilities concept.

In order to truly move San Diego forward and provide mobility choices for all San Diegans, we recommend that the SANDAG Board of Directors direct staff to further advance transit projects in the Shared Mobility concept and include planning for the Purple Line when developing the transportation network scenarios.

Thank you for your consideration.

Maya Rosas
Director of Policy
Circulate San Diego

Attachment A: Letter: Development of Efficient People-Moving Transportation Scenarios for the 2019 Regional Plan – April 12, 2018
April 12, 2018

To: Chairperson Terry Sinnott

CC: Regional Planning Committee Members; Transportation Committee Members, Kim Kawada, Interim Executive Director; Keith Greer, Principal Regional Planner; Rachel Kennedy, Senior Transportation Planner

From: Circulate San Diego

Subject: Development of Efficient People-Moving Transportation Scenarios for the 2019 Regional Plan

Dear Chairperson Sinnott,

On behalf of Circulate San Diego, whose mission is to create excellent mobility choices and vibrant, healthy neighborhoods, I am writing to request that the SANDAG board direct staff to prepare Efficient People-Moving Transportation Network Scenarios that advance transit more effectively than the existing 2015 Regional Plan.

At the February 2\textsuperscript{nd} Transportation Committee meeting, SANDAG staff told Committee members that the SANDAG Board of Directors can direct staff to develop certain Transportation Network Scenarios. Specifically, staff stated that “the discussion on the network scenarios will be coming back to you later this spring, at that time that will be up for all of you to decide as well as the board of directors what different combinations of projects or emphases you want to have in your network scenarios.” Staff would not say if they planned to develop an Efficient People-Moving Scenario, or any other specific scenario.

1. **SANDAG board members must ensure that they maintain authority to determine which transportation scenario is adopted.**

For the SANDAG board to make a real choice between different transportation scenarios, any Efficient People-Moving Scenario must be fiscally constrained and cost similar to other scenarios. SANDAG staff should prepare Efficient People-Moving Scenarios that advance transit projects that can be implemented relatively quickly and with current best-estimates of available revenues. This process will allow the SANDAG board to make an apples-to-apples comparison of the scenarios presented by staff.
Any Efficient People-Moving Scenario must also be analyzed as an alternative in the EIR, so that the board will have an option to select it, after seeing the environmental analyses of the various alternatives.

2. **SANDAG must prepare at least two Efficient People-Moving Scenarios, one that amends TransNet, and one that does not.**

   (a) *No-Amendment Scenario:* The SANDAG board may not be willing to amend TransNet, so at least one People-Moving Scenario should be created that does not require two-thirds vote of the SANDAG board. An Efficient People-Moving Scenario that does not amend TransNet should only advance as much transit as can be accomplished by delaying highways in a manner that is not inconsistent with the text of TransNet.

   (b) *Amendment Scenario:* While amending TransNet may be difficult, it is not impossible. The text of TransNet itself requires that SANDAG periodically examine and potentially alter its list of required projects. As SANDAG prepares network scenarios for the 2019 Regional Plan, it should also develop at least one scenario that advances priority transit through amendments to TransNet to remove or delay projects.

   Given the makeup of the SANDAG board, a two-thirds vote to amend TransNet is not likely unless a broad consensus can be found. Therefore, any Efficient People-Moving Scenario that amends TransNet should maintain rough percentages of funding allocated between modes, but may allow amending TransNet to fund different projects within those mode allocations.

3. **Preparation of Efficient People-Moving Scenarios should update SANDAG models and assumptions.**

   SANDAG should develop its Efficient People-Moving Scenarios with the following assumptions, among others:

   (a) Land use models that project more intense uses near transit

   (b) Aggressive adoption of autonomous vehicles that will enhance highway capacity without significant infrastructure costs

   (c) Assumption of a half-cent sales tax passed within the Metropolitan Transit System through that agency’s new authority under AB 805

4. **Any Efficient People-Moving Scenario should prioritize certain high performing projects.**

   The SANDAG board should direct staff to prioritize advancing certain high-performing transit projects as a part of any Efficient People-Moving Scenario.

   Attachment A contains potential priority projects that SANDAG staff should consider for advancement. From among these projects, SANDAG staff may also want to prioritize advancing transit projects that are a part of TransNet, because of the obligation to voters to complete them, and the availability of dedicated local funding. Circulate San Diego’s proposed priority projects include:
(a) Increasing frequency and service enhancements for all three Trolley lines

(b) Planning phase for the Purple Trolley line

(c) Upgrading existing successful bus lines into high quality Rapid lines

These and the remaining potential priority projects advance transit in a meaningful way that is feasible with current revenue constraints.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Maya Rosas
Director of Policy
Circulate San Diego

Attachment A: Potential Priority Projects for 2019 RTP
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Existing Line?</th>
<th>In TransNet? (Y/N)</th>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Regional Plan Phasing</th>
<th>Capital Cost (millions)</th>
<th>Service Subsidy/Year (millions)</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Jurisdictions Served</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Trolley</td>
<td>All 3 Lines</td>
<td>Increased Frequencies and Capacity, and Service Enhancements</td>
<td>Blue: 2035 Orange: 2035 Green: 2050</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>$5.9 for Blue Line $3.7 for Orange Line $3.3 for Green Line</td>
<td>Measure A</td>
<td>El Cajon, La Mesa, Lemon Grove, National City, Chula Vista, Imperial Beach, San Diego</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Trolley</td>
<td>510</td>
<td>Blue Line rail grade separation at Palomar St.</td>
<td>2035</td>
<td>$50</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Chula Vista Staff</td>
<td>Imperial Beach, Chula Vista, National City, San Diego</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Trolley</td>
<td>510</td>
<td>All Blue Line rail grade separations. Including at 28th St, 32nd St, E St, H St, Palomar St, and Blue/orange Track Connection at 12th/Imperial</td>
<td>2035</td>
<td>$205</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>2015 Regional Plan</td>
<td>Imperial Beach, Chula Vista, National City, San Diego</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Coaster</td>
<td>398</td>
<td>COASTER frequency enhancements and Double Tracking</td>
<td>2035</td>
<td>$445</td>
<td>$2.6</td>
<td>2015 Regional Plan</td>
<td>Oceanside, Carlsbad, Encinitas, Solana Beach, San Diego</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Rapid</td>
<td>680</td>
<td>San Ysidro to Sorrento Valley</td>
<td>2035</td>
<td>$70</td>
<td>$1.5-$5 (estimated)</td>
<td>TransNet</td>
<td>San Diego, Chula Vista, National City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Trolley</td>
<td>562</td>
<td>Planning For Purple Line</td>
<td>2035</td>
<td>$132</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>SANDAG Staff</td>
<td>San Diego, Chula Vista, National City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Transit - Multimodal</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>San Ysidro ITC</td>
<td>Phase I – 2035 Phase II - 2050</td>
<td>$120</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Measure A</td>
<td>Entire Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Transit - Multimodal</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Airport ITC</td>
<td>2035</td>
<td>$343</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Measure A</td>
<td>Entire Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Rapid</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>North Park to Downtown</td>
<td>2035</td>
<td>$20</td>
<td>$0.7</td>
<td>Measure A</td>
<td>San Diego</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existing Line?</td>
<td>In TransNet? (Y/N)</td>
<td>Service</td>
<td>Line</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Regional Plan Phasing</td>
<td>Capital Cost (millions)</td>
<td>Service Subsidy/Year (millions)</td>
<td>Source</td>
<td>Jurisdictions Served</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Rapid</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>La Mesa to Ocean Beach</td>
<td>2035</td>
<td>$89</td>
<td>$4.5</td>
<td>Measure A</td>
<td>La Mesa, San Diego</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Rapid</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Spring Valley to SDSU via Downtown</td>
<td>2035</td>
<td>$66</td>
<td>$3.6</td>
<td>Measure A</td>
<td>San Diego (County), San Diego (City)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Rapid</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Pt Loma to Kearny Mesa via Old Town</td>
<td>2035</td>
<td>$12</td>
<td>$1.3</td>
<td>Measure A</td>
<td>San Diego</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Rapid</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Old Town to Sorrento Mesa via Beaches</td>
<td>2035</td>
<td>$54</td>
<td>$3.6</td>
<td>Measure A</td>
<td>San Diego</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Rapid</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>Fashion Valley to UTC via Linda Vista</td>
<td>2035</td>
<td>$56</td>
<td>$3.3</td>
<td>Measure A</td>
<td>San Diego</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Rapid</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>Downtown to Kearny Mesa</td>
<td>2035</td>
<td>$80</td>
<td>$5.1</td>
<td>Measure A</td>
<td>San Diego</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Rapid</td>
<td>550</td>
<td>SDSU to National City</td>
<td>2035</td>
<td>$60</td>
<td>$3.4</td>
<td>Measure A</td>
<td>San Diego, National City</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Totals:** $1,802 $42.5-$46