



April 23, 2019

SANDAG Board of Directors  
401 B Street  
San Diego, CA

**RE: Priorities for 2021 Regional Transportation Plan**

Dear Chair Vaus, SANDAG Board members, and Staff:

The authors of this letter represent thousands of families, residents, and workers throughout the region advocating for an equitable, safe, and healthy transportation system for all San Diegans. We are writing in support of six outcomes we would like to see accomplished in the 2021 Regional Transportation Plan.

We support the Board’s decision to delay the RTP for two years in order to meet state-mandated climate targets; however, we do not condone the delay if it merely translates to an RTP that barely reaches state targets and remains similar to past RTPs. Rather, we see this delay as a singular opportunity to rethink transportation in San Diego from the ground up, in a manner that goes above and beyond state targets in climate, social justice, and economic justice issues and gives all San Diegans the clean and healthy environment they deserve while ensuring high-quality jobs and a world-class transportation network.

Below we have attached six outcomes the RTP should achieve to support a safe and healthy future for all San Diegans. We urge the Board to adopt these priority outcomes as the measures of success against which any RTP network scenario should be evaluated.

We look forward to working in partnership with SANDAG staff and the Board of Directors to ensure that the new vision for our regional transportation system supports a just, prosperous, and sustainable future for all.

Sincerely,

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Executive Director  
San Diego County Bicycle Coalition

David Grubb  
Transportation Chair  
Sierra Club San Diego Chapter

Jack Shu  
Board President  
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## **Key Outcomes for SANDAG's Vision and RTP**

To secure a healthy, safe, and equitable future, SANDAG must embrace an outcomes-driven RTP planning process and identify priority outcomes aligned with those values. Below are six key outcomes the Quality of Life Coalition urges SANDAG to prioritize in the 2021 Regional Transportation Plan as well as the preceding Vision that will influence that plan.

### **1. Improve public health in disadvantaged communities by:**

- **Reducing transportation related pollution levels in disadvantaged communities.**
  - AB 805 requires SANDAG to identify which communities to prioritize in their efforts to reduce pollution levels in this RTP.
  - SANDAG must use CalEnviroScreen 3.0 to identify these communities; we recommend defining disadvantaged communities as those in the top 30% of census tracts countywide.
  - Any new transportation vision that successfully reduces pollution levels in disadvantaged communities must include significant reduction in Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT).
- **Providing infrastructure that:**
  - Encourages increased physical activity from active transportation
  - Reduces the risk of traffic related fatalities and injuries for all modes
- **Analyzing health outcomes** that are affected by the regional transportation system in each alternative, such as asthma, cardiovascular and pulmonary disease, lung cancer, type 2 diabetes, and obesity rates.

### **2. Align with cities' CAP transportation mode shift targets.**

- SANDAG's plan needs to support those local plans in order for our cities to be able to hit their targets and support transportation alternatives to driving, such as mass transit.
- Further, AB 805 – the new state law to reform SANDAG – requires that SANDAG align the RTP with local climate action plans.

### **3. Achieve a 30% per capita GHG reduction from transportation by 2035.**

- SB 375 requires a minimum of 19% reduction by 2035; however, SANDAG Executive Director Hasan Ikhrata has identified a 30% target as feasible, and SANDAG should pursue the maximum feasible reduction to adequately address the threat of climate change.
- VMT reduction and mode shift through land use and transportation planning decisions must play a significant role in GHG reduction.

- As evidenced by Governor Brown's Executive Order B-55-18 to Achieve Carbon Neutrality by 2045, and EO S-3-05, which sets statewide emissions reductions targets 80% below 1990 levels by 2050, the State of California continues to move towards decarbonization. SANDAG should align with these statewide goals in the next RTP.

#### **4. Create a rate structure that increases ridership and expands access to mobility.**

- The regional transportation system must include Youth Opportunity Passes, which are no-cost transit passes for students and youth 24 and under.
- It must also include strategically-priced fares that maximize transit usage in all income brackets to increase use of public transit, improve public health, lower greenhouse gas emissions, and enhance social equity.
- Finally, it must be easier for seniors, people with disabilities, and Medicare users to obtain the discounted passes they are entitled to by making them available online and at more in-person sites.

#### **5. Ensure that public transit is convenient and competitive with vehicle travel.**

- Public transit must be competitive with driving in terms of time, cost, predictability, and convenience.
- Prioritize urban core and transit-dependent communities, who are frequently low-income communities of color.
- Ensure safe and comfortable bike and pedestrian access to transit as well as adequate accommodation for bicycles on transit.

#### **6. Ensure transportation projects are creating high-quality careers in construction in our region through a Project Labor Agreement.**

- Major cities including Seattle and Los Angeles have employed project labor agreements to promote their commitment to labor stability, joint labor-management apprenticeship and a diverse, local workforce.
- Encourage construction employment and training opportunities in ways calculated to mitigate the harms caused by geographically concentrated poverty and unemployment in economically disadvantaged areas and among disadvantaged workers.
- Adopt a Community Workforce Policy that is implemented through a Project Labor Agreement with the Building Trades to create career pathways for a skilled and trained workforce for residents of our local communities.