



401 B Street, Suite 800
 San Diego, CA 92101-4231
 (619) 699-1900
 Fax (619) 699-1905
 www.sandag.org

December 14, 2012

File Number 3100000

TO: Interested Agencies, Organizations, and Individuals

FROM: SANDAG Staff

SUBJECT: Notice of Preparation of a Programmatic Environmental Impact Report for the 2050 Regional Plan

MEMBER AGENCIES

- Cities of
- Carlsbad
- Chula Vista
- Coronado
- Del Mar
- El Cajon
- Encinitas
- Escondido
- Imperial Beach
- La Mesa
- Lemon Grove
- National City
- Oceanside
- Poway
- San Diego
- San Marcos
- Santee
- Solana Beach
- Vista
- and
- County of San Diego

ADVISORY MEMBERS

- Imperial County
- California Department of Transportation
- Metropolitan Transit System
- North County Transit District
- United States Department of Defense
- San Diego Unified Port District
- San Diego County Water Authority
- Southern California Tribal Chairmen's Association
- Mexico

Notice of Preparation

The San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG), as lead agency, will prepare a Program Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the 2050 Regional Plan in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Pursuant to CEQA Section 21080.4(a) and Section 15082 of the State CEQA Guidelines, responsible and trustee agencies and members of the public are asked to provide written comments regarding the scope and content of the Programmatic EIR; therefore, SANDAG is interested in the views of members of the public as to the scope and content of the environmental information in the draft EIR. The preliminary project description, location, and probable environmental effects are contained in the attached material. An initial study was not prepared for this project.

Scoping Meeting

A public scoping meeting will be held on Thursday, January 10, 2013, at 12 noon (immediately preceding the Regional Planning Technical Working Group meeting). The meeting will be held at SANDAG, 401 B Street, Suite 800, San Diego, California 92101.

Public input will be taken at this meeting. In addition, public input can be provided in writing at the meeting or can be submitted to SANDAG. Contact information is provided below.

Time limits mandated by state law require that responsible agencies and trustee agencies provide comments no later than 30 days after receipt of this notice. However, SANDAG is providing a 60-day comment period to public agencies, interested organizations, and members of the public. As such, your response must be sent at the earliest possible date, but no later than February 15, 2013.

SANDAG Contact Information

Please send your response to:

Rob Rundle, Principal Regional Planner
401 B Street, Suite 800
San Diego, CA 92101
E-mail: Rob.Rundle@sandag.org
Phone: (619) 699-6949
Fax: (619) 699-1905

Please include your name and contact information or the name of a contact person in your organization or agency, if appropriate.

Lead Agency: San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG)

Project Title: Programmatic Environmental Impact Report for the 2050 Regional Plan

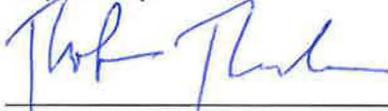
Project Location: All 18 municipalities and the unincorporated areas within the County of San Diego

Date: December 14, 2012

RRU/dsn

Attachment: Project Information and Scope of Environmental Analysis

Prepared By:



Rob Rundle, Principal Regional Planner

**Notice of Preparation – Programmatic Environmental Impact Report
Project Information and Scope of Environmental Analysis
2050 Regional Plan
December 14, 2012**

Background and Project Overview

The San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) is the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and will prepare a Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the 2050 Regional Plan. The EIR will be prepared pursuant to the CEQA. The 2050 Regional Plan will include the merging of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), the Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS), and the Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP) in order to provide an easily accessible document that includes an overall vision for the San Diego region.

The regional plan will address the region's housing, economic, environmental, transportation, and other related needs in the context of long-term sustainability.

SANDAG will start the planning process for the regional plan by establishing a framework of goals, policy objectives, and performance measures to guide development. This is a key first step, as it is the policy foundation for the regional plan and identifies the "big picture" of what the region can achieve.

Project Location

The regional plan focuses on both the land use and growth, and the movement of people and goods within the San Diego region. The regional plan also considers crossborder and interregional travel patterns with neighboring counties and Mexico. The geographic extent of the 2050 Regional Plan includes the Cities of Carlsbad, Chula Vista, Coronado, Del Mar, Encinitas, El Cajon, Escondido, Imperial Beach, La Mesa, Lemon Grove, National City, Oceanside, Poway, San Diego, San Marcos, Santee, Solana Beach, Vista, and the unincorporated County of San Diego.

Senate Bill 375

Pursuant to Senate Bill 375 (Steinberg, 2008) (SB 375), the SCS will be designed to achieve, to the extent feasible, regional greenhouse gas (GHG) emission targets, that will be established by the California Air Resources Board (CARB), through development patterns, infrastructure investments, and transportation measures or policies. Additionally, the SCS will identify areas sufficient to address the region's future housing needs and address protection of sensitive resource areas. If the SCS is unable to achieve the GHG emission targets, an Alternative Planning Strategy (APS) must be developed to demonstrate how the targets could be achieved.

The regional plan environmental analysis will include GHG emissions baseline measurements and projections, as well as potential mitigation measures to reduce those emissions.

In accordance with state and federal guidelines, the RTP component of the regional plan is updated every four years. The region's first RTP to be produced under SB 375 was adopted by the SANDAG Board in 2011. As such, the most recent comprehensive EIR on the RTP was conducted in 2011 for the 2050 RTP and its SCS. A new EIR for the regional plan is necessary to adequately evaluate potentially significant environmental effects of the regional plan and to indicate the manner in which such significant effects can be reduced, avoided, and/or mitigated. The regional plan is scheduled for adoption by the Board of Directors in summer of 2015.

This Notice of Preparation (NOP) is intended to alert regulatory and trustee agencies, interested agencies, organizations, and individuals of the preparation of the regional plan EIR. Comments regarding the scope of the EIR received during the 60-day NOP review period will be incorporated, as appropriate, in the environmental document.

Issues Addressed in the Environmental Impact Report

The EIR will analyze the impacts of the regional plan on the physical environment. The EIR will address the regional plan's potential impacts to the following environmental resource areas:

1. Agricultural and Forest Resources
2. Air Quality and Health Risks
3. Biological Resources
4. Cultural Resources
5. Energy
6. Geology and Soils/Mineral Resources
7. Greenhouse Gas Emissions
8. Hazardous Materials
9. Hydrology/Water Quality
10. Land Use/Population and Housing
11. Noise
12. Public Services/Utilities
13. Recreation
14. Regional Water Supply
15. Socioeconomics/Environmental Justice
16. Transportation
17. Visual Resources

In addition, the EIR will address cumulative impacts, growth-inducing impacts, and other issues required by CEQA.

Alternatives Analyzed in the Environmental Impact Report

SANDAG will evaluate several alternatives to the project in the EIR. Each alternative will be compared to the proposed project for its potential to achieve the goals of the regional plan, while reducing significant environmental impacts. In addition to the project, which will assume a land use base adapted from the region's general plans and a transportation

network and transportation policies that are developed from a revenue-constrained funding scenario, the following alternatives also will be evaluated.

1. No Project Alternative – The No Project Alternative is required by CEQA. For this EIR, the No Project Alternative is defined as a land use base comprised of existing land use plans and a transportation network comprised of committed transportation projects.
2. Intensified Land Use Distribution Alternative – The Intensified Land Use Distribution Alternative will analyze a land use pattern that further concentrates the same forecasted population and employment growth along existing and planned transportation corridors. The transportation network would be modified to accommodate this projected concentration of future growth.
3. Modified Transit Network Alternative – The Modified Transit Network Alternative will evaluate additional transit investments and/or transit system improvements that would further implement the region’s goals.

Although these alternatives have been preliminarily identified, SANDAG is seeking input on the alternatives during the NOP process that could result in modifications to the number of alternatives analyzed in the EIR, or modifications to the alternatives identified above. In addition, the EIR will identify other alternatives that were initially considered, but rejected for reasons including infeasibility or inability for a particular alternative to meet the project objectives or reduce significant environmental impacts of the project.