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Policies and Procedures

No. 39

SUBJECT:

Board Approval: 4/29/04

TRANSIT/LAND USE PLANNING COORDINATION

PURPOSE:

To work with the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) and the agencies in Metropolitan Transit System's (MTS's) area of jurisdiction in order to interrelate and coordinate land use and transit planning in all immediate-action, short-range, and long-range plans.

BACKGROUND:

While land use planning is the responsibility of individual local government agencies, MTS has a stake in the shape of future development in the region and in the redevelopment of existing urban neighborhoods. Sprawled development patterns and auto-oriented site designs are difficult and costly to serve by transit. Conversely, neighborhoods designed to facilitate walking and bicycling will reduce auto dependence, make transit easier to use, and lead to better communities. The cooperation and assistance of the cities in the region and the County of San Diego, as well as other government agencies with land development authority, are required for transit to become an important and integrated part of our communities.

Guidance on how to create pedestrian- and transit-supportive developments can be found in several local documents, including: MTS's *Designing for Transit* manual; SANDAG's *Land Use Distribution Element of the Regional Growth Management Strategy*; the Air Pollution Control District's *Tools for Reducing Vehicle Trips through Land Use Design* document; and the City of San Diego's *Transit-Oriented Development Design Guidelines*.

POLICY:

It is the policy of MTS to work closely with SANDAG and the agencies in its area of jurisdiction in the planning and implementation of pedestrian- and transit-oriented developments in accordance with the guidelines referenced above. At the neighborhood level, transit-oriented development (TOD) can make transit convenient and usable to



more people. At a regional level, the strategic application of TOD principles will help support an efficient and effective transit system. It will also assist in regional efforts to reduce traffic congestion, improve air quality, preserve open space, provide housing, and create walkable communities.

PROCEDURES:

MTS will work with SANDAG and the agencies to promote pedestrian- and transit-oriented development—instead of auto-dominated development—through the following actions:

1. Long-Range Planning. General, community, redevelopment, specific, and other long-range plans adopted by the cities, the County of San Diego, SANDAG and other government agencies set the policies that are implemented through codes, standards, projects, and programs. It is essential that transit be addressed as an integral component of all major planning and policy initiatives at this level.
2. Development Project Review. Policies are implemented through public and private development projects. MTS, SANDAG, and the agencies should be partners in striving to achieve excellence in transit-oriented design.
3. Zoning and Street Design Manual Updates. Zoning codes and street design manuals set the framework for how development will occur. These codes and manuals should have the flexibility to facilitate transit-oriented development.
4. Right-of-Way Protection and Acquisition. Right-of-way for transit operations can be secured and protected through the land development process. This requires action by SANDAG and each of the agencies. As congestion increases, the need for separate and priority right-of-way treatments for bus and rail projects will become increasingly important.
5. Funding of Pedestrian- and Transit-Oriented Development Projects and Transit Facilities, Vehicles, and Services.
 - A. Transit should be recognized as an essential public service similar to other elements of municipal infrastructure. MTS will work with the cities, the County of San Diego, SANDAG, and other agencies to strive to obtain transit operations and facilities funding from a variety of sources.
 - B. MTS will work with the cities, the County of San Diego, SANDAG, and other agencies to seek funding for transit-oriented development planning and projects from a variety of sources.
 - C. To encourage higher productivity of its resources, MTS will encourage SANDAG to consider transit-friendly community design as an important factor in evaluating the allocation of transit improvement funding.
 - D. MTS will work with SANDAG and the agencies to optimize and leverage any local funds with available discretionary transit funding.

6. Education and Outreach. A public information program will be implemented to establish an ongoing dialog on transit and transit-oriented development issues.
7. Formal Agreements. The factors stated above will be refined and adopted through agreements between MTS, SANDAG, and each of the relevant agencies in its service area.

PSmith/DGunn/SChamp
POLICY.39.TRANSIT LAND USE PLANNING
7/17/06

Attachment: Sample Memorandum of Understanding for Transit/Land Use Coordination

Original Policy Accepted on 9/27/90.
Policy Revised on 7/8/99.
Policy revised on 4/29/04.

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN CITY/COUNTY/AGENCY
AND THE SAN DIEGO METROPOLITAN TRANSIT SYSTEM (MTS)
FOR TRANSIT/LAND USE PLANNING COORDINATION**

WHEREAS, land use planning is the responsibility of individual local government agencies, and MTS has a stake in the shape of future development in the region and in the redevelopment of existing urban neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, sprawled development patterns and auto-oriented site designs are difficult and costly to serve by transit. Conversely, neighborhoods designed to facilitate walking and bicycling will reduce auto dependence, make transit use easier, and lead to better communities; and

WHEREAS, the cooperation and assistance of the cities in the region, the County of San Diego, and other government agencies with land development authority are required to provide an efficient and effective transit system; and

WHEREAS, MTS desires to work with the agencies in its area of jurisdiction in order to interrelate and coordinate land use and transit planning in all immediate-action, short-range, and long-range plans; NOW, THEREFORE, In consideration of the foregoing, the parties agree as follows:

1. The City/County/Agency will regard transit as an integral component of all major planning studies and programs.
2. The City/County/Agency will depict existing and proposed transit corridors and centers in long-range plans. Land use, development intensity, and transit-oriented design recommendations will be incorporated into the long-range plans to reinforce the use and effectiveness of these identified transit corridors.
3. The City/County/Agency will include MTS in the project review process at an early stage similar to review procedures established for other public agencies, such as school and water districts. MTS and the City/County/Agency will develop a "transit checklist" or other project review materials to raise awareness of transit issues and outline the scope of MTS's review.
4. MTS will provide a response to the City/County/Agency on project review within the City/County/Agency established allotted time frame. The City/County/Agency shall include MTS's comments into the formal record of the project and forward such comments to the municipal project decision-maker.
5. The City/County/Agency will identify a planning staff member who would include transit liaison as part of his or her job responsibilities. This staff person would oversee and monitor the MTS review process.
6. The City/County/Agency will include transit-, pedestrian-, and bicycle-oriented design standards in its zoning code and street design manual.
7. The City/County/Agency will locate public facilities and services, such as schools, libraries, government offices, parks, and recreation centers in transit-oriented, mixed-use neighborhoods whenever possible to provide a transit travel option for patrons and to strengthen the sense of community.

8. MTS and the City/County/Agency will work cooperatively in the planning of regional institutions and infrastructure and on issues of regional importance.
9. To encourage higher productivity of its resources, MTS shall encourage SANDAG to consider transit-friendly community design as an important factor in evaluating the allocation of transit improvement funding.
10. The City/County/Agency will work with MTS to secure and protect transit rights-of-way.
11. The City/County/Agency will recognize transit as an essential public service similar to other elements of municipal infrastructure and will strive to obtain transit operations and facilities funding from a variety of sources.
12. MTS will work with the City/County/Agency to optimize and leverage any local funds with available discretionary transit funding.
13. MTS and the City/County/Agency will conduct an ongoing public information program on the role of transit and transit-oriented development. This program would include: annual staff briefings, communications with elected officials, newsletter articles, information materials, and presentations targeted to key professional, community, civic, and environmental groups; and publicity for exemplary plans and projects.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have caused this Memorandum of Understanding to be signed this _____ day of _____ 1999.

Approved:

Approved:

 Chief Executive Officer
 San Diego Metropolitan
 Transit System

 Signatory
 City/County/Agency

Approved as to form:

Approved as to form:

 Office of General Counsel
 San Diego Metropolitan
 Transit System

 Signatory
 City/County/Agency

DGunn/KYarno/SChamp/JGarde
 POLICY.39.TRANSIT LAND USE PLANNING
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