

San Diego Forward: The Regional Plan – Proposed Action Plan

Overview

Throughout 2018, SANDAG heard from thousands of people—through a Board workshop, a series of open houses and subregional community conversations, community-based organization outreach events, surveys, and social media—about projects, programs, and policies to include in San Diego Forward: The 2019-2050 Regional Plan. In particular, SANDAG prepared three distinct network concepts for discussion that generated significant and specific input from the Board of Directors and public.

Key Considerations

Using the input received, staff developed a multimodal transportation network that would provide key connections to jobs and other destinations, support housing growth and environmental preservation, address safety and congestion relief, and meet climate targets. Modeling results for this draft network show that, while it comes close, the network does not meet the new and ambitious 19 percent greenhouse gas emissions reduction target for 2035 that was set by the California Air Resources Board (CARB) in 2018. This challenge presents an opportunity to pause work on the 2019 Regional Plan and develop a bigger and bolder transportation vision for the San Diego region that is efficient, equitable, and environmentally sustainable. This report outlines the proposed action plan to develop a Regional Plan that builds on the public input received so far and reflects this new vision for the future.

Proposed Action Plan

The proposed action plan calls for the creation of a fast, safe transportation system with true alternatives in the San Diego region that are as good or if not better than the car (Attachment 1). **The new vision would strive to go beyond state climate targets and support local jurisdictions' achievement of local Climate Action Plan goals.** Cutting edge technologies, social equity, sustainability, supporting land use, and economic opportunities would be considered to create a transformative Regional Plan through an inclusive process that engages stakeholders and the public.

It is anticipated that a conceptual framework of projects and policies will be released by the end of 2019. It will be based on preferred outcomes defined by the Board and informed by public input. This would provide the region, within the next year, a clear picture of what the next Regional Plan could include.

After the concept is defined, SANDAG would focus on modeling the proposed network to ensure it meets state requirements and achieves the desired outcomes. The models SANDAG currently is using to develop the Regional Plan would be reconfigured and recalibrated to accommodate different methods of travel and travel behavior. This effort would require additional staff, new data, and consultant resources and is expected to

Action: **Approve**

The Board of Directors is asked to approve the proposed action plan to develop the Regional Plan.

Fiscal Impact:

The proposed action plan will require additional resources to complete the outreach, planning, modeling, legislative, and legal work needed to successfully carry it out. In FY 2019, it is anticipated that funds would be repurposed from the 2019 Regional Plan to support the proposed action plan. The FY 2020 Program Budget would include additional funding for consulting services and staffing for Board consideration to support continued implementation of the action plan.

Schedule/Scope Impact:

Under the proposed action plan, it is anticipated that a conceptual framework of projects and policies will be released by the end of 2019.

take until fall 2020. Once those results are available, the Board would be asked to consider approval of a preferred scenario (the final mix of projects, programs, and policies to be included in the Regional Plan) so that work on the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) could begin. Development of the Regional Plan EIR typically takes about a year to complete. As such, it is estimated that it would take until November 2021 to fully complete the next Regional Plan.

Statutory Requirements

Federal and state laws require that SANDAG complete a Regional Plan every four years. Under this timeline, the next Regional Plan is required to be adopted in October 2019. In [September 2018](#), the Board approved extending completion of the 2019 Regional Plan by up to six months to allow for meaningful discussion regarding transportation projects, programs and policies. Under federal law, SANDAG has a 12-month grace period to adopt the 2019 Regional Plan and maintain air quality conformity. The federal grace period expires on December 2, 2020.

Risks and Mitigation

There are risks to extending completion of the Regional Plan to November 2021, as outlined in Attachment 2. To mitigate those risks and protect the vital funding that SANDAG has worked so hard to secure, the following mitigation measures are proposed. Work on these efforts would begin immediately and be carried out concurrently with Regional Plan tasks.

- a) Immediately begin preparing a Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) update that complies with federal requirements and submit it to the federal agencies in spring 2020 (within the federal grace period) to obtain an air quality conformity finding from the U.S. Department of Transportation. This would be developed as a separate, but parallel planning exercise with the new transportation vision, and would largely rely upon the existing 2015 Regional Plan. Initial dialogue with staff from the Federal Highway Administration, the Federal Transit Administration, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency indicates that there is a viable path to pursue a stand-alone federal update of the RTP.
- b) Pursue state legislation that would allow the current 2015 Regional Plan and its EIR to remain valid after October 9, 2019, and keep the sixth cycle Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) process on its current schedule. This would allow jurisdictions to still have an 18-month period to update their housing elements with the new RHNA allocations. The legislation also would seek a one-time exemption from California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the federal RTP update that would be adopted in spring 2020.

Resources

The proposed action plan will require additional resources to complete the outreach, planning, modeling, legislative, and legal work needed to successfully carry it out. In FY 2019, it is anticipated that funds would be repurposed from the 2019 Regional Plan to support the proposed action plan. The FY 2020 Program Budget would include additional funding for consulting services and staffing for Board consideration to support continued implementation of the action plan.

Next Steps

Pending approval by the Board of Directors, the proposed action plan would be implemented immediately, and any needed budgetary actions would be brought forward for approval.

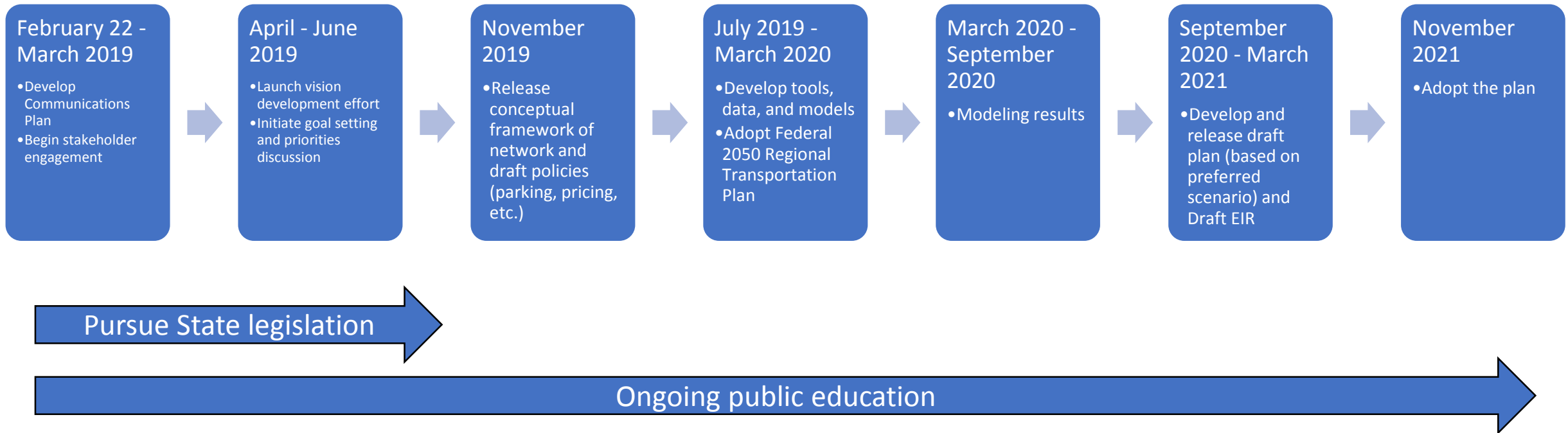
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- Attachments:
1. Regional Plan: Proposed Action Plan and Overview of Key Milestones
 2. Categories of Legal Risks and Proposed Mitigation

Regional Plan

Proposed Action Plan and Overview of Key Milestones



Categories of Legal Risks and Proposed Mitigation

Risk Category	Risks	Proposed Mitigation	Risks That Will Not Be Fully Mitigated
<p>Federal Regional Plan Requirements and Air Conformity Determination Due December 1, 2019</p>	<p>The following projects/actions could not be approved or proceed for Caltrans, SANDAG, or member agencies during the period between December 1, 2019 and adoption of new federal RTP documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federal funding or NEPA approval of non-exempt projects (non-transit capital projects that add capacity to the existing system) <i>that are not in</i> the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) and Regional Plan at time conformity period expires on December 2, 2019 • Regional Plan or RTIP amendments 	<p>Approve an update to the RTIP just prior to entering grace period, beginning December 2, 2019</p> <p>Adopt new Regional Plan that meets all federal requirements prior to end of grace period on December 2, 2020</p> <p>Submit new air quality conformity documentation for federal agency approval in spring 2020, which is prior to end of federal grace period</p>	<p>Significant changes to capacity-increasing projects or other non-exempt projects, currently under review may not be eligible for amendment into the RTIP during the grace period or beyond. Other agencies, including Caltrans and transit agencies, cities and the County may have their projects delayed. Additionally, SB 1 requirements as they relate to other state statutes may cause local/regional projects to not be eligible to compete for SB 1 funding in the next call for projects (likely late 2019 or early 2020)</p> <p>Some projects currently included in the 2015 Regional Plan may be modified or removed in the federal Regional Plan update due to increased project costs</p>
<p>State Regional Plan Requirements Due by October 2019</p>	<p>Lawsuit against SANDAG seeking to enforce state’s Regional Plan four-year adoption requirement</p> <p>Caltrans, SANDAG, and member agencies unable to make findings that projects are consistent with adopted Regional Plan</p>	<p>Legislation authorizing 2015 Regional Plan to continue to be considered the “adopted” RTP for purposes of planning and consistency findings until new Regional Plan is adopted</p>	<p>Legislation may not pass</p> <p>Approvals/funding for projects requiring a Regional Plan consistency may be delayed for SANDAG, Caltrans, and member agencies if those projects were not included in the 2015 Regional Plan. SB 1 requirements as they relate to other state statutes may cause local/regional projects to not be eligible to compete for SB 1 funding in the next call for projects (likely late 2019 or early 2020)</p>
<p>CEQA</p>	<p>Lawsuit against SANDAG seeking to enforce requirement for an Environmental Impact Report when adopting the federal RTP update</p>	<p>Legislation authorizing a one-time CEQA exemption for federal RTP update</p>	<p>Legislation may not pass</p> <p>New projects cannot be added to the Regional Plan until fall 2021</p>

Categories of Legal Risks and Proposed Mitigation

Risk Category	Risks	Proposed Mitigation	Risks That Will Not Be Fully Mitigated
Regional Housing Needs Assessment	<p>Lawsuit against SANDAG seeking to enforce requirement that RHNA be consistent with an approved SCS (update to SCS due in October 2019)</p> <p>Local governments would be unable to use an updated RHNA to update Housing Elements and meet eight-year deadline, putting local governments at risk for loss of funding and litigation</p>	<p>Legislation to address potential need to realign RHNA allocation process in future cycles with a modified RTP/SCS adoption cycle</p>	<p>Legislation may not pass</p>
Notice of Preparation for 2019 Regional Plan Issued in November 2016	<p>Notice of Preparation may need to be supplemented or amended</p>	<p>Use as an opportunity to obtain public input for next Regional Plan</p>	<p>New scoping meeting and comment period may be required</p>