

# Appendix Q

## Travel and Tourism

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# Travel and Tourism

## Background

This appendix addresses a new planning factor known as, enhance travel and tourism. This planning factor was added to 23 CFR 450.306, within the Metropolitan Transportation Planning final rule in 2016. This appendix describes how travel and tourism are considered and implemented in metropolitan transportation planning.

## Introduction

San Diego is one of the top five travel destinations for Americans and the region welcomed 35.8 million visitors in 2018, making tourism the second largest industry in the region<sup>1</sup>. With a wide variety of attractions to enjoy, San Diego has something for everyone. Because of the large number of visitors and the importance of travel and tourism to our regional economy, the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) continues to plan and make travel easy and convenient for tourists and other visitors. SANDAG works with regional partners, including the San Diego Tourism Authority and the Downtown San Diego Partnership, to consider tourism in planning efforts. In addition, more than a dozen Chambers of Commerce and Economic Development Councils foster travel and tourism in the region.

## Year-Round Tourism

San Diego has many attractions that draw people to the region throughout the year. Our Mediterranean climate makes it an ideal place to visit regardless of the season. Popular tourist locations include the San Diego Zoo and Safari Park, Balboa Park, SeaWorld, Legoland, multiple sporting event venues, and 70 miles of coastline. Additionally, the San Diego region is home to 18 federally recognized tribal governments with jurisdiction over 19 reservations, some which contain gaming facilities, shopping, and entertainment venues. With a combination of public and private transportation options, San Diego residents and tourists have easy and convenient access to a variety of popular locations.

A great resource for visitors to our region, and residents too, is 511sd.com, a regionally coordinated resource for transportation information. The interactive site includes information on current traffic, transit, construction, active transportation, managed lanes, motorist aid, and more. The traffic information includes real-time travel speeds, traffic cameras, construction alerts, and a Twitter feed for regional transportation related services. The transit and active transportation sections are designed to help people plan trips while the managed lanes and motorist aid pages show how to easily access these resources.

Within the existing transportation system there are many transit routes that provide people with access to popular tourist destinations, and many more are planned through 2050. Below are some examples of existing and planned transit routes included in the Regional Transportation Plan that provide access to major tourist destinations:

### Balboa Park/San Diego Zoo

- Trolley Route 560: Downtown San Diego to SDSU
- *Rapid* Route 215
- Streetcar 554
- MTS Local Bus Routes 7, 15, and 20

## Beaches

- Trolley Route 563: Pacific Beach to El Cajon
- *Rapid* Routes 10, 30, 440, 473, 474, 477, 650, 653, and 950
- Streetcar 565

## Downtown/Convention Center/Gaslamp Quarter/Petco Park/Seaport Village/USS Midway Museum

- Trolley Route 510 (Blue Line): San Ysidro to University City
- Trolley Route 520 (Orange Line): Downtown San Diego to El Cajon
- Trolley Route 530 (Green Line): Downtown San Diego to Santee
- Trolley Route 560: Downtown San Diego to SDSU
- *Rapid* Routes 2, 11, 90, 120, 225, 235, 280, 290, 637, 640A, 640B, and 910
- Streetcars 553, 554, and 555
- MTS Local Bus Routes 992 and 923

## Legoland

- COASTER Commuter Rail (Route 398)/NCTD BREEZE (Route 444)

## Old Town San Diego

- COASTER Commuter Rail (Route 398)
- Trolley Route 510 (Blue Line): San Ysidro to University City
- Trolley Route 530 (Green Line): Downtown San Diego to Santee
- *Rapid* Routes 10, 28, 30, 640A, and 650

## SeaWorld

- MTS Local Bus (Route 9)

## San Ysidro/ International Border with Mexico

- Trolley Route 510 (Blue Line): San Ysidro to University City
- Trolley Route 562: San Ysidro to Carmel Valley
- *Rapid* Routes 640A and 688

In addition to existing and expanded transit services, there are many planned managed lanes and highway investments that also provide access to regional travel and tourist destinations. Managed lane and highway facilities provide access to Anza Borrego State Park, Cabrillo National Monument, Palomar Mountain, San Diego Zoo, Safari Park, and other attractions.

## Special Events

To ensure that everyone gets to their events safely and on time, SANDAG currently works with the Convention Center, San Diego Tourism Authority, and our local transit providers to increase service and availability for public transportation during such events. Comic Con alone can bring 135,000 people to Downtown San Diego in just one long weekend, with an estimated MTS ridership of 360,000-385,000 trips over four and a half days. MTS increases service for several events including Padres Games, SDSU Basketball Night games, and the Rock 'N' Roll Marathon. In total, more than 1 million additional passenger trips are recorded by MTS each year due to special events. North County Transit District (NCTD) also increases service for special events, including specially timed COASTER service for Padres games.

For major annual events such as the San Diego County Fair, NCTD runs Special Fair Route 408, picking up visitors from the Escondido Transit Center and the Solana Beach Train Station. Extra service for special events can help decrease congestion in areas surrounding these events, making it safer and easier for visitors to reach their destination.

### **Next Steps**

Many of the projects planned through 2050 will increase transit frequency and the number of routes to popular tourist destinations, allowing more visitors and residents access to them. These projects include expanded *Rapid* routes connecting major tourist destinations such as Coronado, Downtown San Diego, Fashion Valley, La Jolla, Old Town, Pacific Beach, San Diego International Airport, Solana Beach, and UTC<sup>2</sup>. SANDAG will continue working with our regional partners to address demand on our transportation system due to tourism, and ensure that everyone who lives in and visits San Diego has access to safe and convenient transportation options.

## Endnotes

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<sup>1</sup> San Diego Tourism Authority: <https://www.sandiego.org/about/industry-research.aspx>

<sup>2</sup> *Rapids* Routes 11, 28, 30, 41, 90, 473, 635, 638, 640, 688-690, and 910 are included in the 2035 project phase