

### SANDAG CENTRAL MOBILITY HUB

**POSITION:** The Chamber's Transportation and Land Development Committee voted to SUPPORT the project IN CONCEPT on May 18, 2021. The Chamber's Public Policy Committee also voted to SUPPORT IN CONCEPT on June 10. The Board of Directors voted to SUPPORT IN CONCEPT on June 24.

**RATIONALE:** The project will increase the viability of public transportation in the San Diego region, especially as it pertains to airport connectivity, by connecting all types of transportation at a single junction. Mobility hubs can integrate travel methods like walking or biking, in addition to standard transit options. They can also serve as sites for housing, office space, shopping centers, and other amenities.

**STATUS:** The CMH is still early in planning development, with three sites having been identified. In addition, the 2021 Draft Regional Plan is currently out for public review with the SANDAG Board of Directors expected to take a position and certify the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) by late 2021.

#### SUMMARY

The Central Mobility Hub is part of SANDAG's 2021 proposed Regional Plan within a greater network of proposed mobility hubs. It would connect future and current transportation options in the region, from walking, biking, transit, to shared mobility. A major focus of the plan is a direct transit connection to the San Diego International Airport (SDIA). The Central Mobility Hub (CMH) will serve as the lynchpin for SANDAG's greater draft 2021 Regional Plan, which seeks to foster connectivity, sustainability, and quality of life in the San Diego region through investments in transportation. The planned integrated transportation system is to be implemented through five interdependent strategies: Next OS, Flexible Fleets, Mobility Hubs, Complete Corridors, and Transit Leaps.

#### INDUSTRY/IES IMPACTED

San Diego is one of the largest metropolitan cities that does not have a main mobility hub. Residents, employees, and stakeholders in San Diego County all stand to benefit from this important airport connectivity, as do visitors and tourists who form an important part of the San Diego economy.

#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

SANDAG established the [Airport Connectivity Subcommittee](#), a temporary subcommittee of the Board of Directors, advisory in nature, to identify future transportation solutions for improved ground and transit connectivity to the SDIA. The work of the Airport Connectivity Subcommittee began in December 2018 and concluded September 2019.

In September 2019, the Board of Directors unanimously approved the Airport Connectivity Subcommittee's recommended concepts and subsequently unanimously allocated \$40 million to begin environmental studies and preliminary engineering for the CMH.<sup>1</sup>

SANDAG began the Environmental Impact Report process on April 21, 2021 by issuing a Notice of Preparation for consideration of a CMH on two sites:

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<sup>1</sup> [September 27, 2019 Board of Directors](#)

### 1) *The Intermodal Transportation Center*

The [Intermodal Transportation Center](#) is a 13-acre site located near the northeastern edge of the airport between I-5 and Pacific Highway, south of Washington Street. This site would provide direct connections to all regional transit services, other mobility options, and the airport.

### 2) *Navy Old Town Campus*

The [Navy Old Town Campus](#) is a 70.5-acre site located west of I-5 and south of Old Town.

Another alternative being considered by SANDAG is a trolley connection to SDIA, which would extend west from the existing trolley alignment toward SDIA via a trench/tunnel below Grape and Hawthorne Streets.

SANDAG is working with the Navy to explore the opportunity to include the CMH on a portion of this site while the Navy, in a separate and standalone project, seeks to revitalize the NAVWAR facilities. NAVWAR is in dire need of redevelopment to fulfil its mission. The CMH is included in NAVWAR's Revitalization project and includes two alternatives with a transit center. NAVWAR envisions revitalized Navy facilities via public-private partnerships that would realize the office and lab space necessary to fulfill the Navy mission alongside thousands of housing units and commercial development. This location also includes the potential for the Navy to develop supportive land uses, such as housing, office space, and retail, in addition to direct connections to all regional transit services, other mobility options, and the airport.

### **SUPPORTERS**

- None official at this time.

### **ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR**

The Central Mobility Hub (CMH) is core to the draft 2021 Regional Plan where the interrelated 5 Big Moves are needed to envision a better transportation future for the San Diego region. The CMH, foundational to the Mobility Hubs component of the Regional Plan, would serve as a multimodal connection point for all current and future modes of transportation. The CMH would also include better access to the SDIA via a high-speed transit connection – giving an alternative to driving to the airport where surrounding roads are often congested – and are forecasted to worsen as demand for the SDIA increases.

Building densely along public transit lines is widely viewed as a best practice, particularly with respect to lowering greenhouse gas emissions.

Additionally, the CMH is envisioned to advance regional goals of reducing vehicle miles traveled, increasing social equity, encouraging community engagement, reducing sprawl, adding housing of varying income levels, and promoting economic development opportunities in the San Diego region.

Construction and operation of a Central Mobility Hub, according to SANDAG's Airport Connectivity Analysis, anticipates a great deal of economic benefit through construction and job creation. Additional economic benefit includes the varying land uses at the Central Mobility Hub – commercial

### **OPPONENTS**

- None official at this time.

### **ARGUMENTS IN OPPOSITION**

Concerns include funding of the project and whether the proposed sites for the CMH are central enough for all San Diegans to use. Certain mobility advocates believe that the proposed rail connection to the airport, with the CMH being proposed north of the airport, is inadequately placed for most of the San Diego region's transit riders, who live east or south of the airport, however, the majority of airport travelers come from the North City, East Suburban, North County East, and North County West Metropolitan Statistical Areas<sup>2</sup>. This inefficiency could discourage transit use, however, the trolley alternative being considered is projected to have the lowest ridership compared to a CMH.

At this time, parking is not proposed on in the project. There have been concerns raised from neighboring communities that no parking would force users to take up much needed parking in their neighborhoods.

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<sup>2</sup> [Airport Connectivity Analysis](#)

and business space, retail, recreation, housing,  
and more.