

Funding Programs

Transportation Development Act

The Transportation Development Act (TDA) program is the major funding source that supports the region's public transit operators and nonmotorized transportation projects like bicycle and pedestrian projects. The TDA comes from a quarter of a percent of state sales tax assessed in the region. The San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG), as the Regional Transportation Planning Agency, is responsible for apportionment of TDA funds each year in conformance with state statute. The transit operators and other member agencies submit their annual TDA claims based on the annual apportionment and in compliance with [SANDAG Board Policy No. 027](#).

Pursuant to state statute, the County of San Diego Auditor and Controller office has the responsibility for providing the TDA apportionment for the upcoming fiscal year. The County Auditor develops the apportionment in consultation with SANDAG staff and with the transit operators, based on actual sales tax receipts and projections. The annual apportionment determines the amount of funds available to each agency to claim. SANDAG is required to notify prospective claimants of the apportionment by March 1, necessitating action by the Board of Directors in February each year.

The legislative priorities established by state law include certain categories for which TDA funds are taken "off the top." These include the allocation to SANDAG for various planning, programming, and administrative-related expenses, funding of bike and pedestrian facilities, and support of community transit services. In addition, the County Auditor receives an allocation based on estimates of its costs to administer the TDA program. The remaining apportionment, along with any prior year carryover funds, is available to be claimed by the North County Transit District (NCTD) and Metropolitan Transit System (MTS). The balance of current-year funds is allocated based upon the population of the service area served by the two transit agencies.

Pursuant to provisions of Senate Bill 1703 (Peace, 2002) and as agreed to by MTS, NCTD, and SANDAG, regional transit capital projects are implemented by SANDAG with funding transferred from both MTS and NCTD. The transit agencies may choose to transfer a portion of their TDA share for purposes of matching federal formula funds for the capital projects to be implemented by SANDAG on behalf of MTS or NCTD. Transfers of federal funds and/or TDA as the match are based on the draft five-year transit Capital Improvement Program (CIP). The final list of projects and associated funding will be included with the transit CIP scheduled for Transportation Committee and Board action in March or April of each year. An additional apportionment to SANDAG covers those indirect administrative functions not directly funded by projects. The calculation for the cost of these administrative functions was memorialized in Addenda Nos. 3 and 4 to the Memorandum of Understanding between SANDAG, MTS, and NCTD.

TransNet

The TransNet Extension, a 40-year half-cent sales tax transportation funding measure approved by the voters in 2004, became effective in FY 2009. TransNet provides funding for major transportation projects in the region. After deducting costs associated with administrative expenses; the operation of the TransNet Independent Taxpayer Oversight Committee (ITOC); and the Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Neighborhood Safety program; the TransNet program is divided into Major Corridor (42.4%), New Bus Rapid Transit/Rail Operations (8.1%), Local System Improvements (33%), and Transit System Improvements (16.5%).

Within the Transit System Improvements, services provided pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and subsidies for seniors have specific earmarks (2.5% and 3.25%, respectively). The remaining revenues can be used by the transit agencies for operating or miscellaneous capital purposes. Similar to TDA, the transit share between NCTD and MTS is allocated based upon the respective population of the two transit agencies' service areas.

The ITOC reviews the TransNet estimates for the entire program at its meeting in February each year. Significant comments from the ITOC are shared with the Transportation Committee and Board.

Federal Transit Administration Formula Programs

Section 5307: FTA 49 USC Section 5307 provides for transit capital and operating assistance in urbanized areas and for transportation-related planning. For areas with populations of 200,000 and more, such as San Diego County, the formula is based on a combination of bus/vanpool revenue vehicle miles, bus/vanpool passenger miles, fixed-guideway revenue vehicle miles, and fixed-guideway route miles, as well as population and population density. Eligible activities under this program include planning, engineering design, and an evaluation of transit projects and other technical transportation-related studies; capital investments in bus and bus-related activities; construction of maintenance and passenger facilities; and capital investments in new and existing fixed-guideway systems, including rolling stock, overhaul and rebuilding of vehicles, track, signals, communications, and computer hardware and software. Preventive maintenance and some ADA complementary paratransit service, while recorded as operating expenditures, are considered capital costs for purposes of eligibility.

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) includes a provision that requires the transit agencies to maintain equipment and facilities in accordance with the transit asset management plan and that transit agencies are no longer required to expend 1% for associated transit improvements. These requirements did not substantively impact how SANDAG or the transit agencies use this program.

Section 5337: This State of Good Repair (SGR) program provides funding to transit agencies that operate rail fixed-guideway and high-intensity motorbus systems for the maintenance, replacement, and rehabilitation of capital assets, along with the development and implementation of transit asset management plans. This program reflects a commitment to ensuring that public transit operates safely, efficiently, reliably, and sustainably so that communities can offer balanced transportation choices that help to improve mobility, reduce congestion, and encourage economic development. Eligible activities include projects that maintain, rehabilitate and replace capital assets as well as projects that implement transit asset management plans. The IIJA clarifies that high-intensity motorbus tier funds can only be used for vehicle SGR costs and not for roadway SGR repair costs.

Section 5339: The IJJA provides both formula and discretionary funding for this section, and there is also a sub-program that provides competitive grants for bus and bus facility projects that support low- and zero-emission vehicles. The purpose of both formula and competitive programs is to provide capital funding to replace, rehabilitate, and purchase buses and related equipment and to construct bus-related facilities.

As stated above, the Section 5307 program is based on a number of factors, including data from the vanpool program. Over the years, the Regional Vanpool program has contributed substantially to the overall funding that comes to the region. In recognition of its contribution, the transit agencies have agreed to update the funding level to fully fund the Regional Vanpool program from the total apportionment based on prior year actual expenditure. After deducting for the cost of the Regional Vanpool program, Section 5307 funds are allocated 70% for MTS and 30% for NCTD. The same 70/30 formula was used to allocate the Sections 5337 and 5339 between MTS and NCTD. SANDAG does not directly receive funds from either Section 5337 or Section 5339.