

Proposed Waiver of Section 5.8 of Board Policy No. 029

Background

California Senate Bill 1703 (Peace, 2003) assigns SANDAG the responsibility for setting a regional transit fare policy and overseeing the [Comprehensive Fare Ordinance](#) which establishes the regional fare pricing structure for services operated by Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) and North County Transit District (NCTD).

SANDAG's Comprehensive Fare Ordinance, Section 10.2, entitled *Temporary, Promotional, and Experimental Fares*, provides that, "MTS and NCTD shall have the ability to set temporary, promotional, and experimental fares. Temporary, promotional, and experimental fares are defined as fares implemented for no more than 12 months for seasonal events or for marketing purposes. These fares, because of their short term/temporary nature, are not included in this Ordinance."

Examples of temporary, promotional, and experimental fares include the Youth Opportunity Pass (YOP), microtransit pilots, and 5 or 10 pack COASTER ticket packs.

Overview

MTS and NCTD have requested that the SANDAG Comprehensive Fare Ordinance be amended to allow temporary and experimental fares (proposed to be redefined as pilot fares) to remain in effect for up to 36 months so long as the operator has completed any required Title VI equity analysis and complied with other applicable federal requirements. Because Section 5.8 of Board Policy No. 029 currently defines temporary, promotional, and experimental fares as limited to no more than 12 months, staff requests a waiver of that section to permit the proposed ordinance amendment.

Approval of the waiver would allow the Transportation Committee to consider an amendment to Section 10.2 of the Comprehensive Fare Ordinance that would authorize temporary and experimental fares (proposed to be redefined as pilot fares) exceeding 12 months in duration, so long as the operator satisfies applicable Title VI requirements, and that is otherwise consistent with Board Policy No. 029.

Future updates to Board Policy No. 029, which are expected to be proposed in the coming year, would include language consistent with the approved Fare Ordinance amendments allowing for a long-term solution going forward.

Next Steps

Pending approval by the Board of Directors, the Transportation Committee will consider an amendment to the Fare Ordinance that includes updates to Section 10.2 at its meetings on May 15, 2026, and June 12, 2026.

Antoinette Meier, Senior Director of Regional Planning

Action: Approve

The Board of Directors is asked to approve a waiver of Section 5.8 of Board Policy No. 029 to allow amendments to Section 10.2 of the SANDAG Comprehensive Fare Ordinance regarding temporary, promotional, and experimental fares.

Fiscal Impact:

None.

Schedule/Scope Impact:

None.