



Notice of Preparation and Public Scoping Meeting

Date: January 3, 2023

To: Office of Planning and Research, Responsible and Trustee Agencies, Clerk of the County of San Diego, and Other Interested Stakeholders

Subject: Notice of Preparation of Environmental Impact Report for the 2025 Regional Plan and Public Scoping Meeting Notice

The San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG), as lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), will prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the 2025 Regional Plan (2025 Regional Plan or Project). The 2025 Regional Plan will consist of a Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) that identify the future of the San Diego region's transportation investments and growth.

In accordance with state and federal guidelines, the RTP and SCS are updated every four years and must include at least a 20-year planning horizon. On December 10, 2021, the SANDAG Board of Directors adopted the 2021 Regional Plan and certified its EIR. The 2025 Regional Plan is scheduled for consideration by the SANDAG Board of Directors in late 2025. A new EIR will be prepared for the 2025 Regional Plan to evaluate its significant effects on the environment, identify alternatives to the Project, and indicate whether and how significant effects from the Project can be mitigated or avoided.

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15082, SANDAG has issued this Notice of Preparation to provide responsible agencies, trustee agencies, and other interested stakeholders with information describing the proposed project and its potential environmental effects.

Project Description

Senate Bill 375 (SB 375) provides for a planning process to coordinate land use planning and regional transportation plans (RTP) to help California meet the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reductions established in Assembly Bill 32. SB 375 requires RTPs prepared by metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), including SANDAG, to incorporate into an RTP a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) that demonstrates how the region would achieve GHG emissions reduction targets for passenger vehicles set by the California Air Resources Board (CARB).

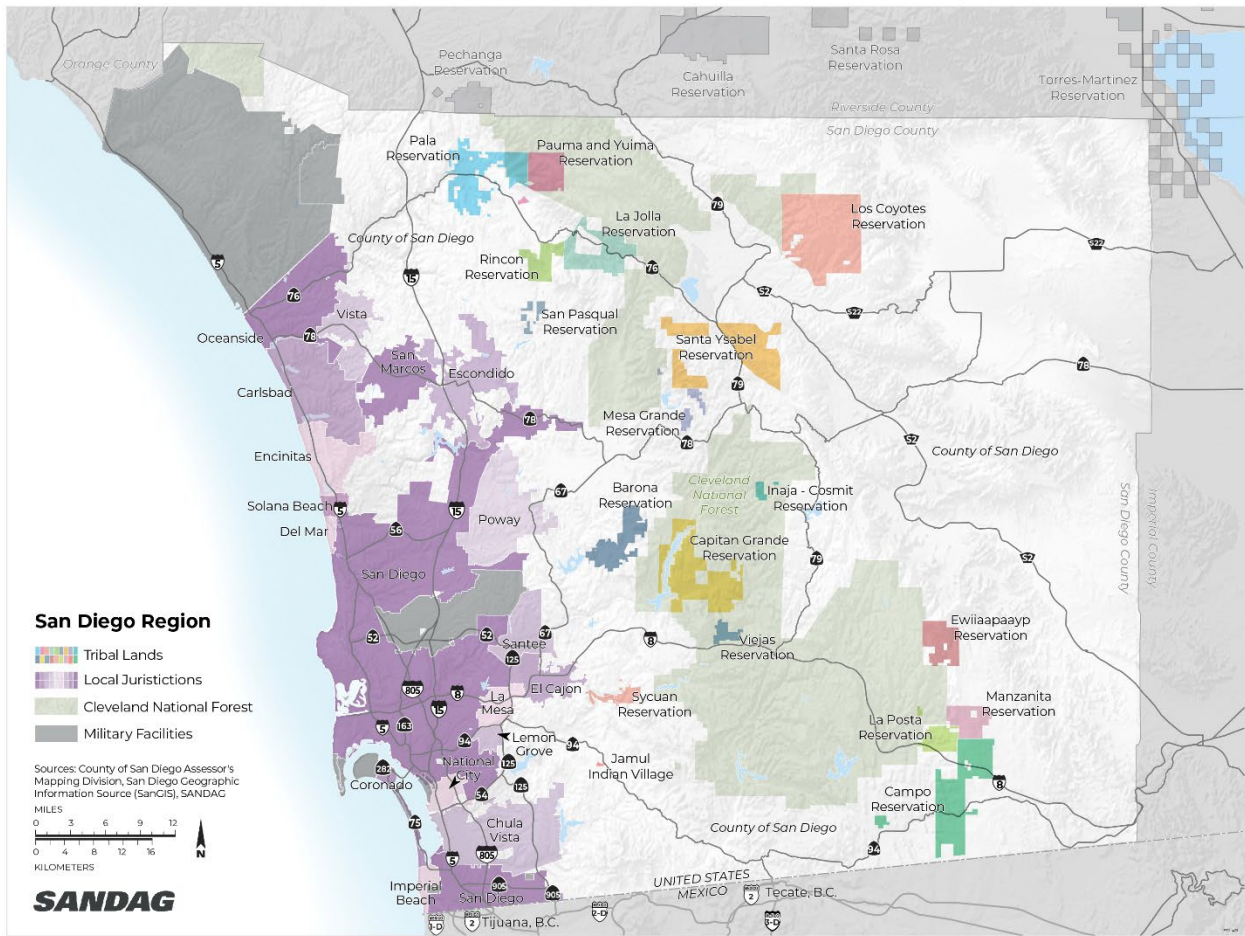
In March 2018, CARB updated regional GHG emissions reduction targets. The current SANDAG targets are per capita carbon dioxide emissions reductions from passenger vehicles of 15 percent by 2020 and 19 percent by 2035 compared to 2005 levels. The 2025 Regional Plan will build on the visioning completed for the 2021 Regional Plan with the latest planning assumptions to identify projects, programs, and policies to achieve the state's emissions reduction targets and attain federal air quality conformity standards.

SB 375 requires SANDAG to include an SCS in the RTP that demonstrates how the region will meet the greenhouse gas emission targets. If the SCS falls short of meeting the targets,

SANDAG must prepare an “alternative planning strategy” that, if implemented, would meet the targets.

Project Location

The Project location includes the 18 cities and unincorporated areas of San Diego County.



EIR Scope

As the lead agency, SANDAG will describe and analyze the impacts of the proposed Project on the physical environment. The EIR will identify potential impacts to the following environmental resources:

- Aesthetics
- Agriculture and Forestry Resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Energy
- Geology/Soils
- Land Use/Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Noise
- Population/Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation

- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards & Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology/Water Quality
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities/Service Systems
- Wildfire

As required by CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6, the EIR will analyze a range of reasonable alternatives to the 2025 Regional Plan that would feasibly attain most of the Project's basic objectives, while avoiding or substantially lessening any of the Project's significant effects on the environment. The EIR will also identify other alternatives that were initially considered, but rejected for reasons including, but not limited to, infeasibility due to economic, legal, or other considerations, inability to meet most of the Project's basic objectives, or failure to avoid or substantially lessen any of the Project's significant environmental impacts. SANDAG is seeking input on alternatives as part of the Notice of Preparation process.

In addition, the EIR will address cumulative impacts, growth inducing impacts, and other considerations required by CEQA.

Submitting Comments

Responsible and trustee agencies, and other interested stakeholders are invited to provide written comments on the scope and content of the EIR. Consistent with CEQA, your response should be submitted as early as possible, but no later than 5:00 p.m. PST on March 6, 2023, by mail or email to:

Kirsten Uchitel, Associate Regional Planner
SANDAG
401 B Street, Suite 800
San Diego, CA 92101
Kirsten.Uchitel@sandag.org

Scoping Meeting

SANDAG will hold a public scoping meeting where interested stakeholders will receive a brief presentation on the Project and will have the opportunity to provide comments on the scope and content of the environmental analysis that will be included in the SEIR for the Project.

Date and Time: January 12, 2023, at 4:00 p.m. PST

Place: Virtual meeting accessible at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81543240965>
Call in at +1 669 444 9171 US
Meeting ID: 815 4324 0965