

Mid-Coast Extension of the UC San Diego Blue Line Trolley

FACT SHEET



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The Project

The Mid-Coast extension of the UC San Diego Blue Line Trolley is a SANDAG priority project that will add 11 miles of light rail to the San Diego Metropolitan Transit System, from Downtown San Diego to the University Community. The extension will serve major activity centers such as Old Town, Mission Bay, the University of California, San Diego (UC San Diego), and University Towne Centre.

The Trolley extension will include nine new stations: Tecolote Road, Clairemont Drive, Balboa Avenue, Nobel Drive, VA Medical Center, UC San Diego Central Campus, UC San Diego Health La Jolla, Executive Drive, and the terminus station at the UTC Transit Center.

The Need

Freeways and arterials in the Mid-Coast corridor are generally congested, and traffic congestion is projected to increase as the region grows. By 2030, population in the corridor is forecast to increase 19 percent and employment is expected to increase by 12 percent. The University Community has developed as a major employment and high-density residential area, similar to Downtown San Diego. The University Community is San Diego's second downtown, and UC San Diego is a high transit use area with students and employment. In October 2017, SANDAG opened a regional transit center at University Towne Centre, and the Trolley extension will connect directly to the transit center, increasing transit ridership.

The Trolley extension project will provide an effective alternative to congested freeways and roadways for travelers, improve public transit services, and enhance travel options by connecting the corridor with areas served by the existing Trolley system.

Project Costs

The project budget is \$2.17 billion, which includes financing costs.

Project Status

In fall 2014, the SANDAG Board of Directors and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) gave final environmental clearance to the project. In September 2016, through its New Starts Program, the FTA signed a Full Funding Grant Agreement with SANDAG to provide the nearly 50 percent federal match needed to fund the project and allow construction to start in fall 2016. In June 2017, SANDAG secured a loan from the federal Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) program, which reduces borrowing costs and increases flexibility that will save taxpayer dollars in building the largest transit project in the region's history. In July 2019, SANDAG issued \$335 million in Capital Grant Receipt Revenue Bonds to lower interest rates on initial funding sources for the project. In June 2021, the project received just over \$57 million in additional funding through the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, increasing federal funding and decreasing the necessary *TransNet* contribution.

(Continued on reverse)



Pre-construction activities—consisting of the relocation of underground utilities—began in early 2016, and primary construction activities started in fall 2016. Construction is now approximately 95 percent complete, and the project remains on schedule to begin service in late 2021.

Funding Status

The Mid-Coast extension of the UC San Diego Blue Line Trolley is fully funded. The project is one of the highest priorities for SANDAG in its *TransNet* Early Action Program. The FTA is providing approximately 50 percent of the project funding, with *TransNet* providing the remaining local match.

Summary

The Mid-Coast extension of the UC San Diego Blue Line Trolley is a SANDAG priority project that will improve access to growing employment, education, and residential areas. A Trolley extension is particularly well-suited to the Mid-Coast corridor because:

- » It connects with the existing regional rail system at to improve mobility and provide more transit options within the San Diego region.
- » It will offer a one-seat (no transfer) ride from the international border and communities south of Downtown San Diego all the way north to the University Community.
- » It will connect residents of the corridor with major activity centers such as Downtown San Diego, Old Town, the VA Medical Center, UC San Diego, University Towne Centre, and two major hospitals.

For More Information

- » Visit: KeepSanDiegoMoving.com/MidCoast
- » Call: (877) 379-0110
- » Facebook: MidCoastTrolley
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