



MID-COAST CORRIDOR TRANSIT PROJECT

The Mid-Coast Corridor Study Area of the San Diego region is bounded on the north by the Del Mar Fairgrounds, on the south by Mission Valley, on the west by the Pacific Ocean, and on the east generally by SR163. This includes the Golden Triangle, Sorrento Mesa, La Jolla, Pacific and Mission Beach, as well as Clairemont and University City. Regional destinations and major employers include Qualcomm, UCSD, University Towne Center (UTC), and several major hospitals, biotech, and hi-tech facilities.

The San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) is undertaking the planning process for creating new transit services promised to this area since the early 1980s. Their preferred alternative is currently a new light-rail line that extends the trolley from Old Town up to UCSD and UTC.

Move San Diego has created an alternative based on *FAST* (Financially Affordable, Saves Time) Planning Principles and is requesting that this alternative be included in the Environmental Impact Report for this planning process.

THE PROPOSAL

Move San Diego's proposal for the Mid-Coast Transit Project is designed to provide shorter transit travel times, increase accessibility to major destinations, better access and better integration with other regional transit services. The proposal includes:

1. Mid-Coast Light Rail (MCLR) is an upgrade to and replacement for the existing Coaster service, with more frequent service and a rail tunnel under the Golden Triangle featuring a joint Coaster/Amtrak station.
2. Quickway (grade-separated busway) infrastructure linking the UTC transit station with major destinations in the Golden Triangle and Sorrento Mesa.
3. Quickway and other bus infrastructure linking Pacific Beach with Mission Valley, Hillcrest, and Downtown.



PLANNING PRINCIPLES

Move San Diego's proposal is based on the following principles:

1. **Reduce Travel Time:** Transit must be faster than driving for key trips, and competitive for a larger set of trips.
2. **Smarter "Smart" Growth:** Transit must effectively connect areas of existing density and support areas of market demand such as major employment centers.
3. **Attract New Riders:** Transit must attract a broader range of San Diegans by offering a great and secure experience.
4. **Reduce Operating Costs:** Investments in transit infrastructure should improve the operating efficiency of services, not worsen them.

QUICKWAYS

Quickways are fully grade-separated (limited access) guideways for transit vehicles. Just like freeways, Quickways have no cross-traffic, and pedestrians cross over or under them. The *FAST* Plan's Quickways support a range of all-stop and express routes, connecting many local neighborhoods with the region's primary destinations by means of faster, more direct, and more frequent service.

Brisbane, Australia is the leading city globally in Quickway planning and implementation. Engineers responsible for the planning, design, and operation of Brisbane's busways were brought to San Diego to develop the initial draft of the *FAST* Plan, which builds off their real-world experience. Quickway stations in Brisbane typically feature platforms that are 181' long and 16' wide. Travel lanes are typically 11.5' wide, though in some places are less. Pull-out lanes more typically are closer to 10' wide. All stations feature elevated walkways and elevator access. Station platforms feature continuous overhead shelter (for protection from sun and rain) and screened sides (for protection from wind). Station architecture is consistent in order to establish a clear branding/corporate identity to the Quickway network.

FAST PLAN NETWORK

The *FAST* Plan calls for an integrated system of both Trolley lines and a regional express network that, unlike Trolley lines, leapfrogs the region to connect people more directly and more rapidly with major regional destinations.

Trolley lines remain at the core of the system, with high frequency all-day service along dedicated rights-of-way. The *FAST* Plan, however, doesn't rely just on light rail to produce Trolley lines—it also takes advantage of what are known as DMU trains on the existing coastal rail corridor (like the Sprinter) and specialized rubber-tired rapid transit vehicles using the proposed Quickway network. For riders, though, the experience should be that of frequent and reliable service along major corridors, no matter the mode of travel.

In addition to improvements in existing rail systems, the *FAST* Plan anticipates the development of a regional Quickway system so as to permit the cost-effective operation of a regional express network. Quickways are sited to directly serve major employment sites and areas of both high residential/employment density and areas where market demand for continued development has been strong, but the lack of sufficient transportation or parking infrastructure has restricted infill development.

WHY NOT EXTEND THE TROLLEY TO UTC?

The Mid-Coast trolley extension, as currently conceived, does not connect to Sorrento Mesa, nor with the Coaster. It does not reach into beach communities, nor is it easy to get to the trolley line from these communities due to traffic congestion. There is little employment along the corridor itself, and much employment in the Golden Triangle—including the Judicial Drive/Towne Centre zone and the Campus Point concentration—is beyond a reasonable walking distance.

Move San Diego has the following concerns about the extension of the Trolley to the Golden Triangle:

1. The trolley does not connect to where most trips involving the Golden Triangle are coming from or going to.
2. For trips that do connect, door-to-door travel times for most potential travelers are excessive, leading to relatively low levels of modal shift, hence only minor traffic relief.
3. The Mid-Coast Corridor's principal employers and destinations are not arranged so that a single "line" effectively best serves them.
4. The new SuperLoop bus route may not be fast, frequent, and direct enough to make up for enough of the shortfall.
5. The new Trolley extension may not sufficiently meet the needs of employers in the Mid-Coast, let alone others, and will not be sufficient to support a major expansion of employment in the zone. *This alone is grounds for the serious consideration of a Quickway-based alternative such as the FAST Plan.*

BENEFITS OF MOVE SAN DIEGO'S MID-COAST ALTERNATIVE

Move San Diego's Mid-Coast Corridor Transit Alternative generates three primary benefits to the region:

1. **It saves time.** For most potential users of transit services in the study corridor, the *FAST* Plan significantly reduces transit time through its use of dedicated infrastructure, which also supports higher frequency service in key locations.
2. **It reaches more places.** The elements of this proposal tie in a much broader set of destinations and origins. It reaches into Sorrento Mesa and Pacific Beach, and sets the stage for future projects which will build off these elements to reach into other communities.
3. **It sets the stage for future expansion.** As more elements of the *FAST* Plan are developed, the performance of the network is enhanced, generating additional benefits (higher frequencies, faster travel times, and more destinations reached).