

## Local group blasts SANDAG's high-speed rail, high-density housing plans



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SAN DIEGO (KGTV) -- SANDAG'S recently unveiled transit plan that focuses on high-speed rail and high-density housing is being blasted by the Environmental Health Coalition.

SANDAG released its Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) at its meeting last Friday.

"Our current system doesn't work for the people who depend on it the most – low-income communities of color," said Carolina Martinez with the Environmental Health Coalition.

The plan will determine San Diego's transportation future for decades to come. Now, local organizations are demanding SANDAG include 10 Big Moves in the RTP to improve public transit.

The 10 demands are:

1. Prioritize environmental justice communities who need public transit most
2. Improve the bus system now
3. Fund the Blue Line Express
4. Provide 24-hour service
5. Fund the Purple Line
6. Provide Youth Opportunity Passes for 24 and under
7. Electrify the bus fleet by 2030
8. Fund anti-displacement efforts
9. Provide bathrooms
10. Ensure an emergency ready transit system

"San Diego's current public transportation system does not work for the communities that depend on it most – low-income communities of color. 80% of MTS riders live south of Interstate 8 freeway, but only 7% of low-income residents have access to fast and frequent transit. Most MTS riders do not have another mode of transportation available, such as a car. This means they rely on infrequent and inconvenient bus and trolley schedules to get to work, school, or doctor appointments. With 70% of job unreachable by public transit, this seriously affects their quality of life and earning-potential," said Martinez.

SANDAG's plan is open for public review until July 30. The plan's overall price is \$160 billion dollars. It would call on voters to approve a 1% sales tax increase. SANDAG board members will cast a final vote by December.