MEMORANDUM

To: Jacob Armstrong and Damon Davis; County of San Diego
From: Stephen Cook, TE, Intersecting Metrics
Date: November 9, 2021
Regarding: Potential Transit Expansion within the County of San Diego

The purpose of this memo is to identify potential opportunities in which high-frequency regional transit routes can be further expanded into the unincorporated portions of San Diego County (Unincorporated County). This memo was completed in conjunction and builds on the County of San Diego's Staff Comments and Recommendations Regarding the Proposed San Diego Forward: Draft 2021 Regional Plan.

1.0 Background

Regional transit services within the Unincorporated County are currently limited to a single Sprinter[1] Station (Buena Creek) and a limited number of low frequency rural bus routes. With the implementation of California Senate Bill 743 (SB-743) the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) guidelines were revised to strongly encourage the use of vehicle miles traveled (VMT) as the metric in which transportation related impacts are determined. This presents a significant challenge for the Unincorporated County since it is predominantly comprised of lower density suburban and rural[2] communities, not served by transit, which is not ideal for efficient VMT production. As a result, the majority of the Unincorporated County generates VMT at a higher rate than what is prescribed under CEQA. As such, the County of San Diego Planning and Development Services Department (County) is currently looking for opportunities to further expand transit within the Unincorporated County to help alleviate VMT related impacts and allow for higher density infill development within key locations around the potentially expanded transit services.

The following sections provide background on SB-743, the effect that it has had on the Unincorporated County, its relationship to regional transit services, and the direction in which the County of San Diego Board of Supervisors (Board) provided County staff in regard to exploring regional transit opportunities within the Unincorporated County to potentially reduce VMT related impacts.

1.1 SB-743

On September 27, 2013, Governor Edmund G. Brown, Jr. signed SB-743 into law, starting a process that is expected to fundamentally change the way transportation impact analysis is conducted under CEQA. Within the State's CEQA Guidelines, these changes included elimination of auto delay, level of service (LOS), and similar measurements of vehicular roadway capacity and traffic congestion as the basis for determining significant impacts.

On December 2018, the Resources Agency certified and adopted the CEQA Guidelines update package, which included the California Natural Resources Agency Guidelines for the Implementation of

[1] The San Diego Sprinter Line is a light-rail line operated by the North County Transit District (NCTD) along the SR-76 corridor in the norther portion of San Diego County.
[2] See Attachment 1 for definition of urban, suburban, and rural areas.

the California Environmental Quality Act. As part of this package the CEQA Guidelines were updated to include the new impact standards and criteria for transportation related impacts, as outlined below:

> *CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(b)(1):* Vehicle miles traveled exceeding an applicable threshold of significance may indicate a significant impact. Generally, projects within one-half mile of either an existing major transit stop or a stop along an existing high quality transit corridor should be presumed to cause a less than significant transportation impact. Projects that decrease vehicle miles traveled in the project area compared to existing conditions should be presumed to have a less than significant transportation impact.

1.2 OPR Technical Advisory

As a result, the California Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) updated and released the *Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA (Technical Advisory)*[3] *in December 2018*. The Technical Advisory provides guidance and recommendations on how jurisdictions can update their transportation guidelines to be consistent with SB-743 and the updated CEQA guidelines. The Technical Advisory also provides substantial evidence for recommended VMT based significance thresholds, in which jurisdictions can adopt, or project applicants can use in cases where jurisdictional specific standards are not provided.

The recommended VMT impact thresholds provided within OPR's Technical Advisory are as follows:

- *Residential Projects:* Projects that generate a VMT per Capita at or below 85% of the regional mean have a less than significant impact.
- *Commercial Office Project:* Projects that generate a VMT per Employee at or below 85% of the regional mean have a less than significant impact.
- *Commercial Retail:* Projects that would result in no net increase in VMT within the region have a less than significant impact.
- *Transportation Projects* – Projects that do not induce additional vehicular travel have a less than significant impact.

The County does not currently have adopted VMT significance thresholds. Therefore, they currently utilize the standards, thresholds, and methodologies outlined in the OPR Technical Advisory for guidance in identifying VMT related impacts within the Unincorporated County.

1.3 Transit Priority Areas

As outlined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(b)(1), new development located within a half-mile of a major transit stop should be presumed to cause a less than significant transportation impact, regardless of if their anticipated VMT generation. Section 21064.3, of the CEQA Guidelines defines a major transit stop as a site containing any of the following: (a) An existing rail or bus rapid transit station. (b) A ferry terminal served by either a bus or rail transit service. (c) The intersection of two or more major bus routes with a frequency of service interval of 15 minutes or less during the morning and afternoon peak commute periods. These areas have been defined as Transit Priority Areas (TPA) by the OPR Technical Advisory.

The OPR Technical Advisory further notes that the presumption of a less than significant impact within TPAs would not apply if project-specific or location-specific information indicates that the project will still generate significant levels of VMT. For example, the presumption might not be appropriate if the project:

- Has a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of less than 0.75

[3] OPR Technical Advisory: https://opr.ca.gov/docs/20190122-743_Technical_Advisory.pdf

- Includes more parking for use by residents, customers, or employees of the project than required by the jurisdiction (if the jurisdiction requires the project to supply parking)
- Is inconsistent with the applicable Sustainable Communities Strategy (as determined by the lead agency, with input from the Metropolitan Planning Organization)
- Replaces affordable residential units with a smaller number of moderate- or high-income residential units

This shows that TPAs can be a good tool to provide additional opportunities for infill or higher density development to occur within areas that would otherwise have VMT related impacts. However; as noted above, low density projects (FAR less than 0.75) or developments that provide excess parking within TPAs may still result in a significant impact. Therefore, development within TPAs should adhere to the criteria outlined within the OPR Technical Advisory.

1.4 Effect on the Unincorporated Portions of San Diego County

The VMT per Capita and VMT per Employee for different areas within the Unincorporated County are derived using the SANDAG Series 14 Transportation Forecast - Base Year 2016 Model. As per the OPR Technical Advisory, development within areas that are identified to generate a VMT per Capita or VMT per Employee at or below 85% of the regional mean are presumed to have as less than significant impact. Figure 1 displays the areas within the Unincorporated County that currently generate a VMT per Capita[4] at or below 85% of the regional mean (green) and the areas that generate above 85% (red). As shown in Figure 1, there are only a small number of areas within the Unincorporated County that generate a VMT per capita below the OPR thresholds. Additionally, there is only one existing TPA located within the Unincorporated County, at the Buena Creek Sprinter Station. This indicates that there are very few locations within the Unincorporated County in which future development can occur without resulting in a significant VMT related impact.

1.5 Board Direction

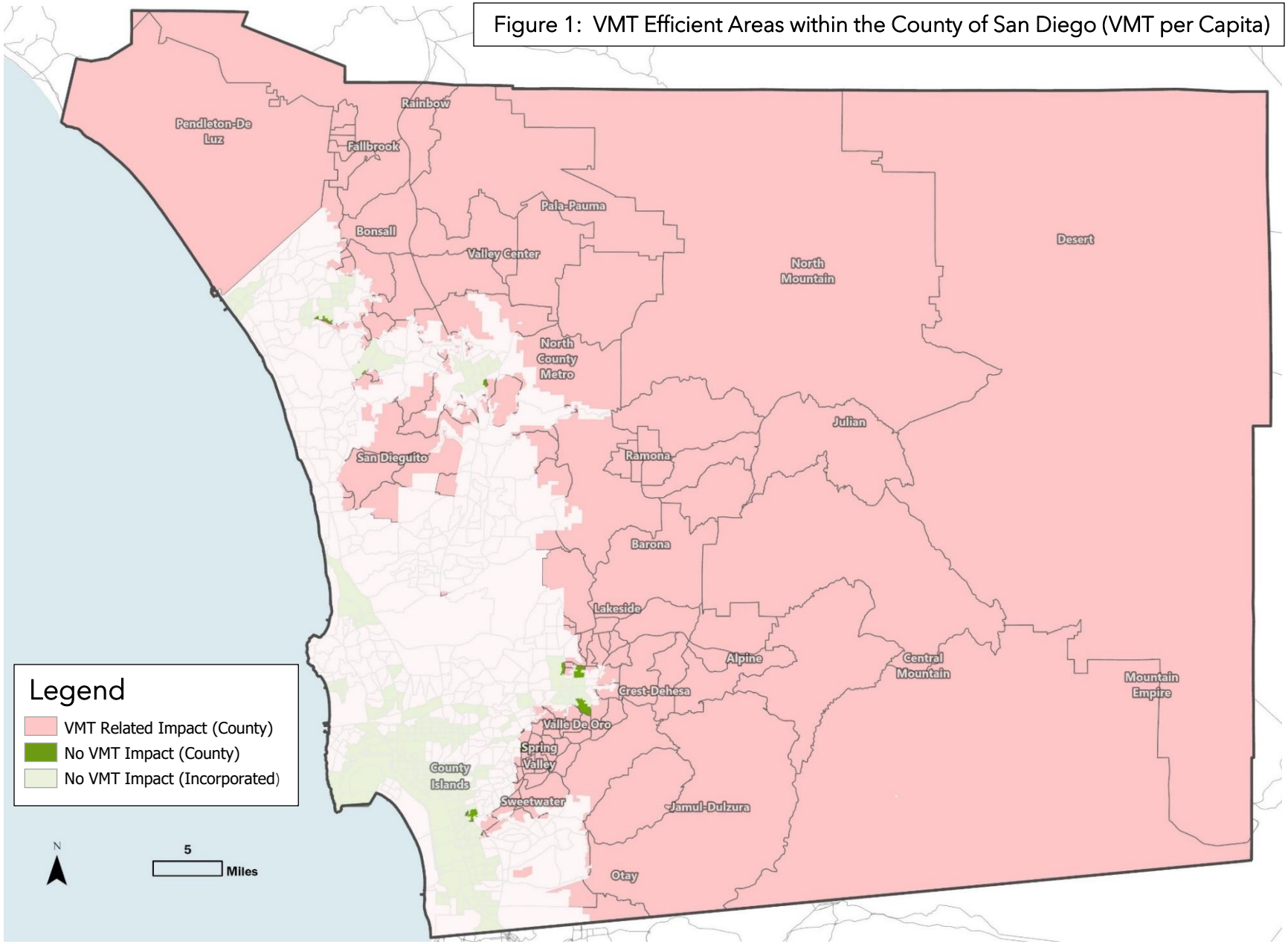
In an effort to expand the number of TPAs within the Unincorporated County and incentivize infill development in less impactful areas, the Board provided County staff the following direction at the May 19, 2020 hearing:

> Explore the potential creation of transit accessible areas and look at the intersection between VMT efficient areas or lower thresholds in accordance with the areas that do not require further analysis. Explore the potential transit corridors and look at the SANDAG Regional Transportation Plan, Metropolitan Transit System (MTS), North County Transit District (NCTD), and other possible areas and how that may impact VMT efficient areas or areas covered by the exemption.

As such, the remaining sections of this memo outline the available resources and associated opportunities to expand the region's transit services into the Unincorporated County.

[4] VMT per Employee generation can found through the following source: https://sandag.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=5b4af92bc0dd4b7babbce21a7423402a

Figure 1: VMT Efficient Areas within the County of San Diego (VMT per Capita)



Source: SANDAG Series 14 Transportation Forecast – Base Yea 2016

2.0 San Diego Forward 2021 Regional Plan

The San Diego Forward is the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) for the San Diego Region. The RTP sets the vision, plan, timing, and funding allocation for a region's transportation network. As the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the San Diego Region, SANDAG is responsible for developing, publishing, and implementing the region's RTP. SANDAG released the initial Draft of the *San Diego Forward the 2021 Regional Plan (2021 Regional Plan)*[5], in May 2021. As such, the Draft 2021 Regional Plan was used as the primary resource to identify potential opportunities to expand future transit services within the Unincorporated County.

2.1 Transit Plan

High-frequency regional transit routes such as fixed rail, bus rapid transit (rapid bus), or express bus services are generally considered to be associated with high-quality transit corridors with major transit stops (as outlined in Section 1.2). Thus, these are the types of transit services that facilitate TPAs, and future development is encouraged to build around, as outlined in SB-743 and Section 21064.3 of the CEQA Guidelines. Figure 2 displays the planned regional transit network contained within the 2021 Regional Plan. As shown, there is currently a limited number high-frequency regional transit services planned within the Unincorporated County, thus limiting the number of opportunities to create future TPAs. A Next Gen Rapid[6] route is proposed to service the Spring Valley, Casa De Oro, Sweetwater, and Otay Community Planning Areas (CPAs); however, no other high-frequency regional transit services are proposed within the other portions of the Unincorporated County (outside of the exiting Buena Creek Sprinter Station).

The 2021 Regional Plan also identifies a series of Complete Corridors within the regional highway network where additional transit service and improvements are envisioned. Complete Corridors will be designed to give buses and other transit vehicles dedicated space on roadways that are currently identified to have excess vehicular capacity. Complete Corridors will also offer transit vehicles a traffic signal system that gives them priority over other traffic, thus reducing travel times and improving service. These improvements should provide the opportunity to implement additional future high-frequency regional transit services (Rapid bus or Express bus) within the Unincorporated County. Figure 3 displays the Complete Corridors that are planned within the 2021 Regional Plan. As shown in the figure, the I-15, I-8 and SR-125 corridors are all included within the regional Complete Corridor network. As such, the proposed Complete Corridors will have the ability to provide additional high-frequency regional transit services to the Bonsall, Fallbrook, North County Metro, and Lakeside CPAs.

2.2 Mobility Hubs

As outlined in the 2021 Regional Plan, Mobility Hubs are communities with a high concentration of people, destinations, and travel choices. Mobility Hubs can span one, two, or even a few miles based on community characteristics. Mobility Huns will be uniquely designed to fulfill a variety of travel needs while strengthening sense of place. A fully connected network of regional Mobility Hubs ensures seamless connections to major work, school, shopping, and leisure destinations using transit and Flexible Fleets. Infrastructure improvements associated with the regional transit network, Complete Corridors, and Mobility Hubs will ensure that Flexible Fleets have safe spaces to use streets and places to charge and park vehicles at key destinations. Based on these identified features Mobility Hubs are generally associated with the development that is encouraged within TPAs.

Figure 4 displays the proposed Mobility Hub locations within the region. As shown in the figure, there are proposed Mobility Hub locations that incorporate portions of the San Dieguito, North County Metro, Lakeside, and Otay CPAs.

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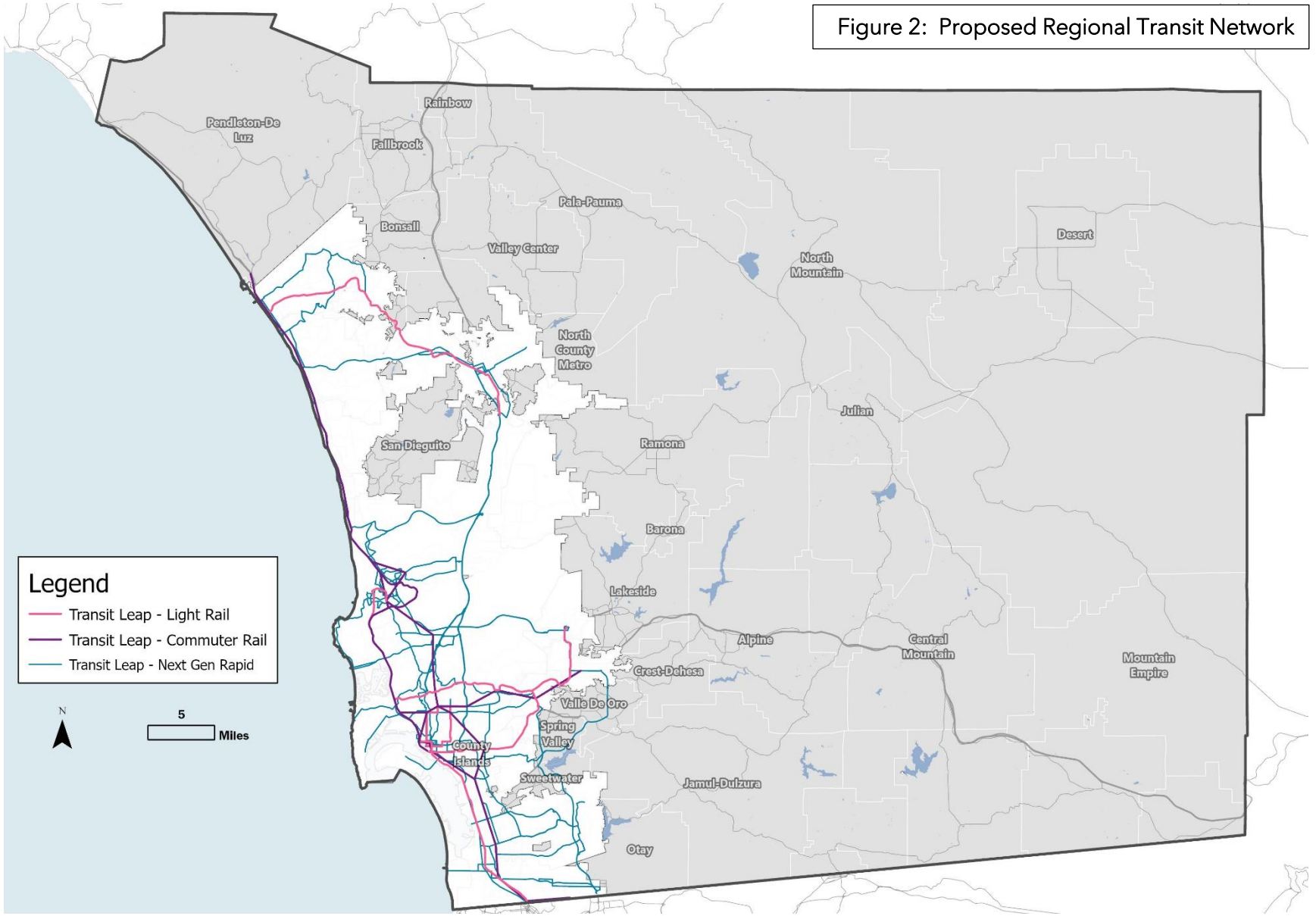
[5]Source: https://sdforward.com/mobility-planning/2021-regional-plan

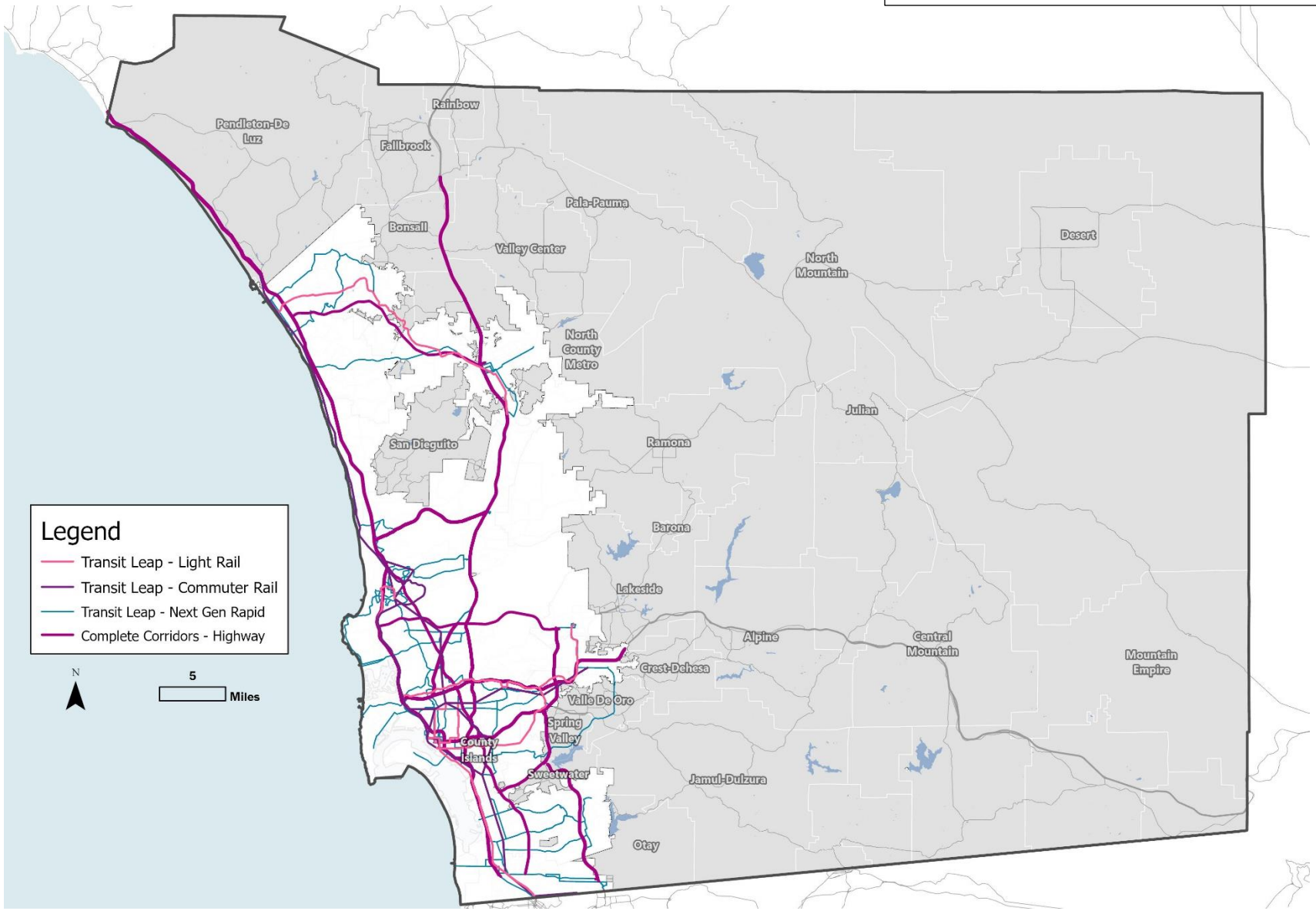
[6] The 2021 Regional Plan identifies Next Gen Rapid as faster and more reliable Rapid bus service with more comfortable, high-tech vehicles operating in priority lanes and making use of better signal technology. All day service would operate 20 hours per day.

Figure 2: Proposed Regional Transit Network



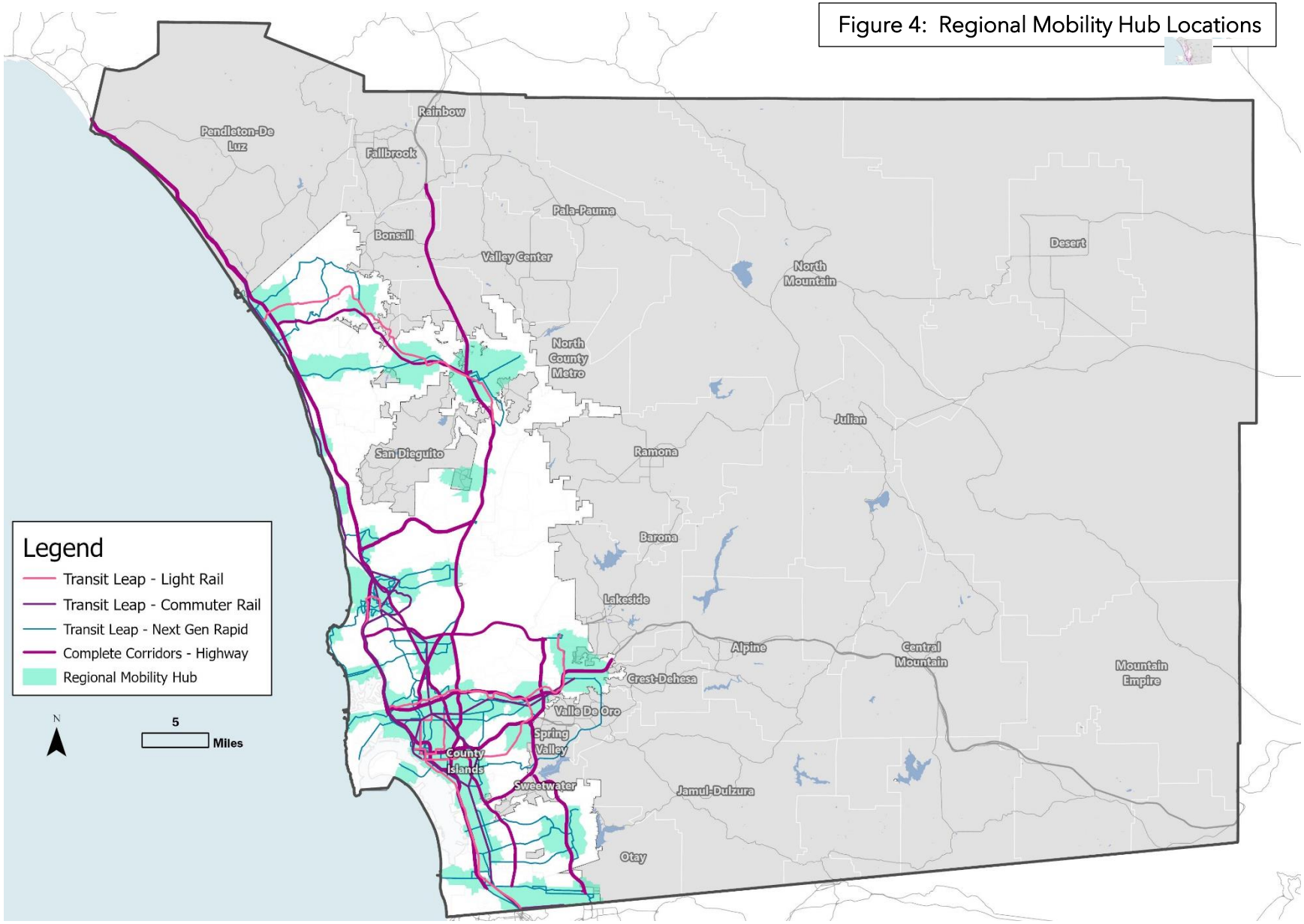
Source: San Diego Forward – 2021 Regional Plan

Figure 3: Proposed Complete Corridors



Source: San Diego Forward – 2021 Regional Plan

Figure 4: Regional Mobility Hub Locations



Source: San Diego Forward – 2021 Regional Plan

2.3 Implementation

The 2021 Regional Plan is intended to be implemented over the next 29 years (with a horizon year 2050). The funding and improvement schedules within the plan are broken down into three different timeframes 2025, 2035 and 2050. Appendix A[7] of the 2021 Regional Plan provides a break down of both the timing and anticipated construction costs (Year 2020 dollars) for each component of the plan.

As outlined in Table A.14[8] (Appendix A) of the 2021 Plan, over $5 billion dollars will be allocated towards the development of the regional Mobility Hub network that is planned throughout the region. In general, the timing of the proposed Mobility Hub improvements will be in conjunction with the Complete Corridor and Transit Leap improvements, outlined in Table A.1.

Based on discussions with SANDAG staff, the locations, features, and amenities within the individual Mobility Hub sites have not yet been defined. SANDAG plans to work with the member agencies to identify the transportation needs and opportunities within each Mobility Hub site. Table A.17[9] (Appendix A) of the 2021 Regional Plan establishes $837 million in future planning and capital grant opportunities in which local jurisdictions can use to identify, plan, and implement transportation related infrastructure, programs, or land uses opportunities associated with the proposed Mobility Hubs, as well as smart growth and/or VMT reduction opportunities. An additional $333 million in grant funding will also be available for member agencies to develop, enhance review, process, and/or update their smart growth and VMT reducing related policies.

3.0 Opportunities to Expand Transit

This section identifies potential options to expand transit services within the Unincorporated County based on both existing and future land uses patterns identified within the County's General Plan.

3.1 Density

A key component to successful transit service is to provide a connection between areas with high densities both in population and employment. When transit services can efficiently connect one higher density area to another, there is a higher propensity that travelers within those areas will have both their origin and destination along the provided transit line, thus, making the use of transit more viable, as noted in the OPR Technical Advisory (see Section 1.3). Additionally, areas with higher existing densities provide more opportunity for infill development, which is encouraged in and around TPAs, as outlined in SB-743. Figure 5 displays the areas within the Unincorporated County that have the highest existing service population[10] density per square mile.

3.2 Village Areas

The *County of San Diego General Plan* identifies a series of areas within the Unincorporated County where higher density development and mixed-use development will be concentrated, known as Village Areas. The main goal of the Village Areas is to support multi-modal and mixed use travel, as outlined in Goal LU-5.1 of the County of San Diego General Plan:

> *Reduction of Vehicle Trips within Communities.* Incorporate a mixture of uses within Villages and Rural Villages and plan residential densities at a level that support multi-modal transportation, including walking, bicycling, and the use of public transit, when appropriate.

This makes the identified Village Areas as ideal locations to increase land use densities to draw and expand more regional transit services and Mobility Hub locations to the Unincorporated County. Figure 6 displays the Village Areas that are identified within the County of San Diego General Plan.

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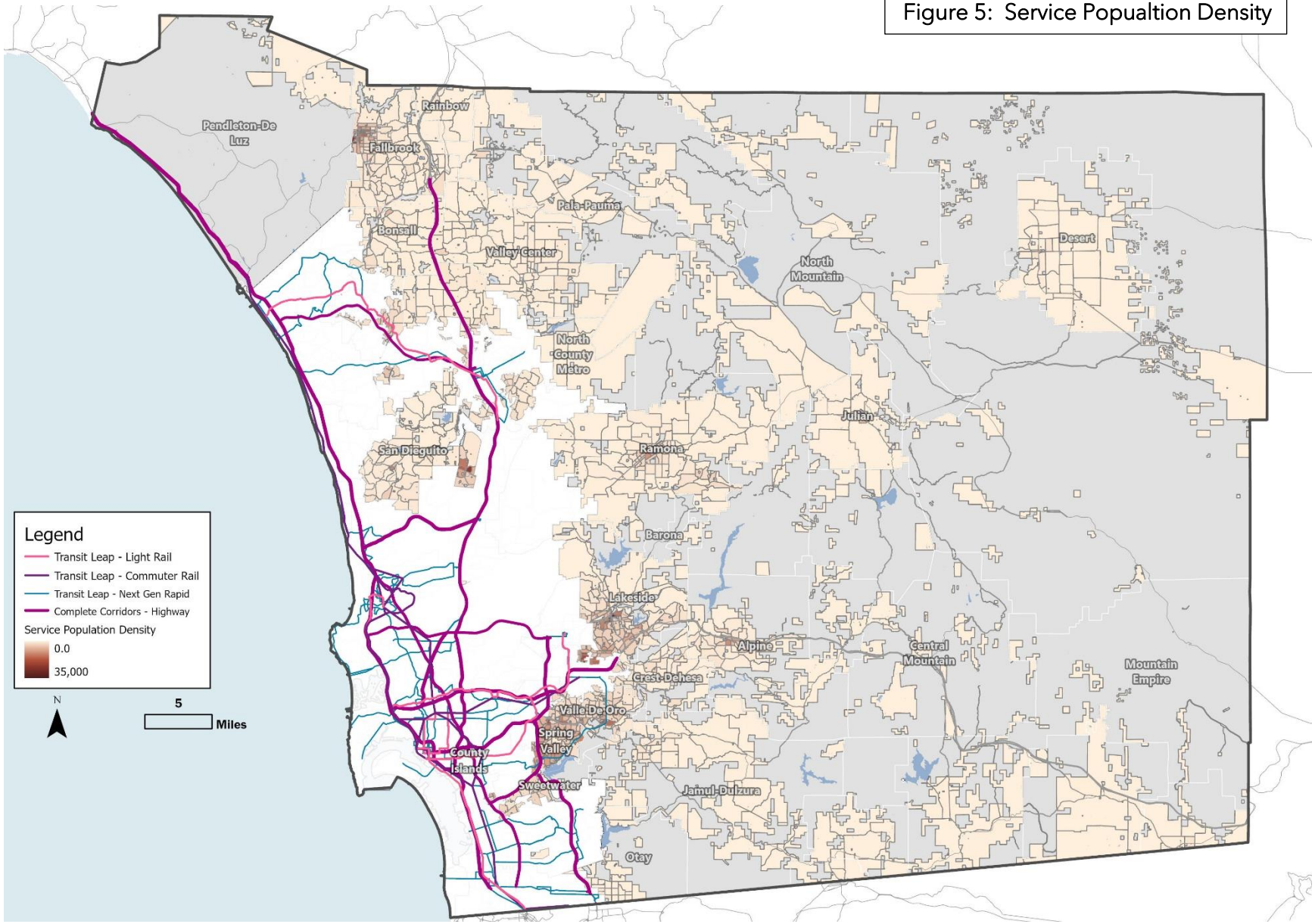
[7] Appendix A: https://sdforward.com/docs/default-source/2021-regional-plan/appendix-a---transportation-projects-programs-and-phasing5715966e63506b1e9dedff0000f4af15.pdf?sfvrsn=ba44fd65_4

[8] Table A.14 is provided as Attachment 2.

[9] Table A.17 is provided as Attachment 3.

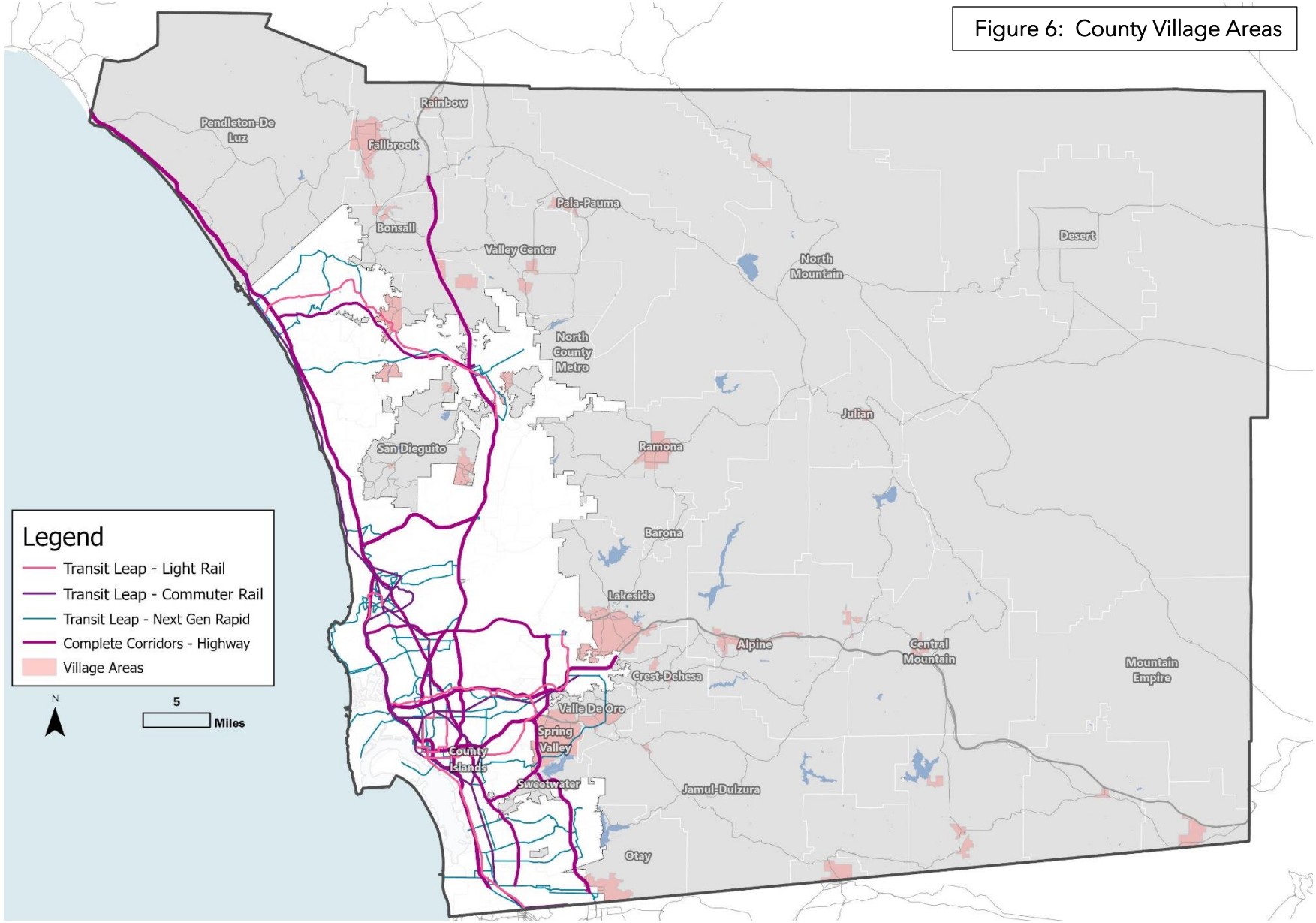
[10] Service Population is the total number of residents plus the total number of jobs within an identified area.

Figure 5: Service Popualtion Density



Source: SANDAG Series 14 Transportation Forecast, Year 2016

Figure 6: County Village Areas



Source: County of San Diego General Plan

3.3 Transit Opportunity Areas

The data previously presented in Figures 2-5 was utilized to identify areas in which the regional transit network has the best opportunity to be expanded within the Unincorporated County. Based on this analysis the following areas were identified to be the best suited for regional transit expansion, as also displayed in Figures 7a through 7c:

San Dieguito East Village Area: As shown in Figures 2 and 6, the San Dieguito East Village Area is located adjacent to the Next Gen Rapid line that is proposed along I-15 corridor. Additionally, the 2021 Regional Plan proposes a Mobility Hub that will fully encompasses the San Dieguito East Village Area, as shown in Figure 3. Finally, as shown in Figure 5 the San Dieguito East Village Area is currently in the top tier of service population densities within the Unincorporated County making it ideal for infill development. Based on these findings, the San Dieguito East Village Area has the highest potential to receive high frequency regional transit service within the Unincorporated County. As such, the County should work with SANDAG to prioritize the development of future transit services and the development of a Mobility Hub within this area. The County should also look for opportunities to incentivize and streamline transit oriented development (TOD) within this area.

Lakeside Village Area: As shown in Figures 5 and 6, parts of the Lakeside Village Area is currently in the highest tier of service population densities within the Unincorporated County. As displayed in Figure 4, the southwest portion of the Lakeside Village Area is located within a proposed Mobility Hub location. Finally, as displayed in Figure 3, I-8 is identified as a future Complete Corridor within the 2021 Regional Plan, which may help to bring high-frequency regional transit to this area. However; it should be noted that the proposed Complete Corridor improvements are planned to end just to the west of the Lakeside Village Area. As such, the County should coordinate with SANDAG to evaluate the potential and feasibility of extending the proposed I-8 Complete Corridor Improvements through the Lakeside Village Area. Additionally, the County should look for opportunities to incentivize and streamline transit oriented development (TOD) within this area, particularly in the areas that are located within the proposed Mobility Hub.

Spring Valley & Valle De Oro Village Areas: As shown in Figure 6, a future Next Gen Rapid Line is proposed along the southeastern boundary of the Spring Valley Valle De Oro Village Areas. The SR-125 Complete Corridor is proposed along the western boundary of the Spring Valley Village Area. As shown in Figure 5, the service population densities within both village areas are in the highest tier within the Unincorporated County. The 2021 Regional Plan did not identify a Mobility Hub within either of the village areas; however, the high quality transit access and service population densities within these village makes them ideal candidates for future or additional Mobility Hub locations. As such, it is recommended that the County coordinate with SANDAG to potentially expand the Mobility Hub network into these areas as well. It is also recommended that the County explore the feasibility of increasing the land use densities along the proposed transit lines within both village areas to better facilitate a potential Mobility Hub and increase the need for transit access.

Sweetwater CPA: As shown in Figure 2, a future Next Gen Rapid line will provide service through the middle of the Sweetwater CPA, the SR-54 Complete Corridor is also proposed along its northern boundary. Both of these facilities should provide ideal transit access to the Sweetwater CPA in the future. However, as shown in Figure 6 there are no Village Areas proposed within the Sweetwater CPA, and as shown in Figure 5, the CPA currently has moderate lot low service population densities. To take advantage of the future transit access within the Sweetwater CPA, it is recommended that the County implement a Village Area within the western portion of the Sweetwater CPA, increase the proposed land use densities within the area, incentivize TOD styles of development, and coordinate with SANDAG to implement a future Mobility Hub within the area.

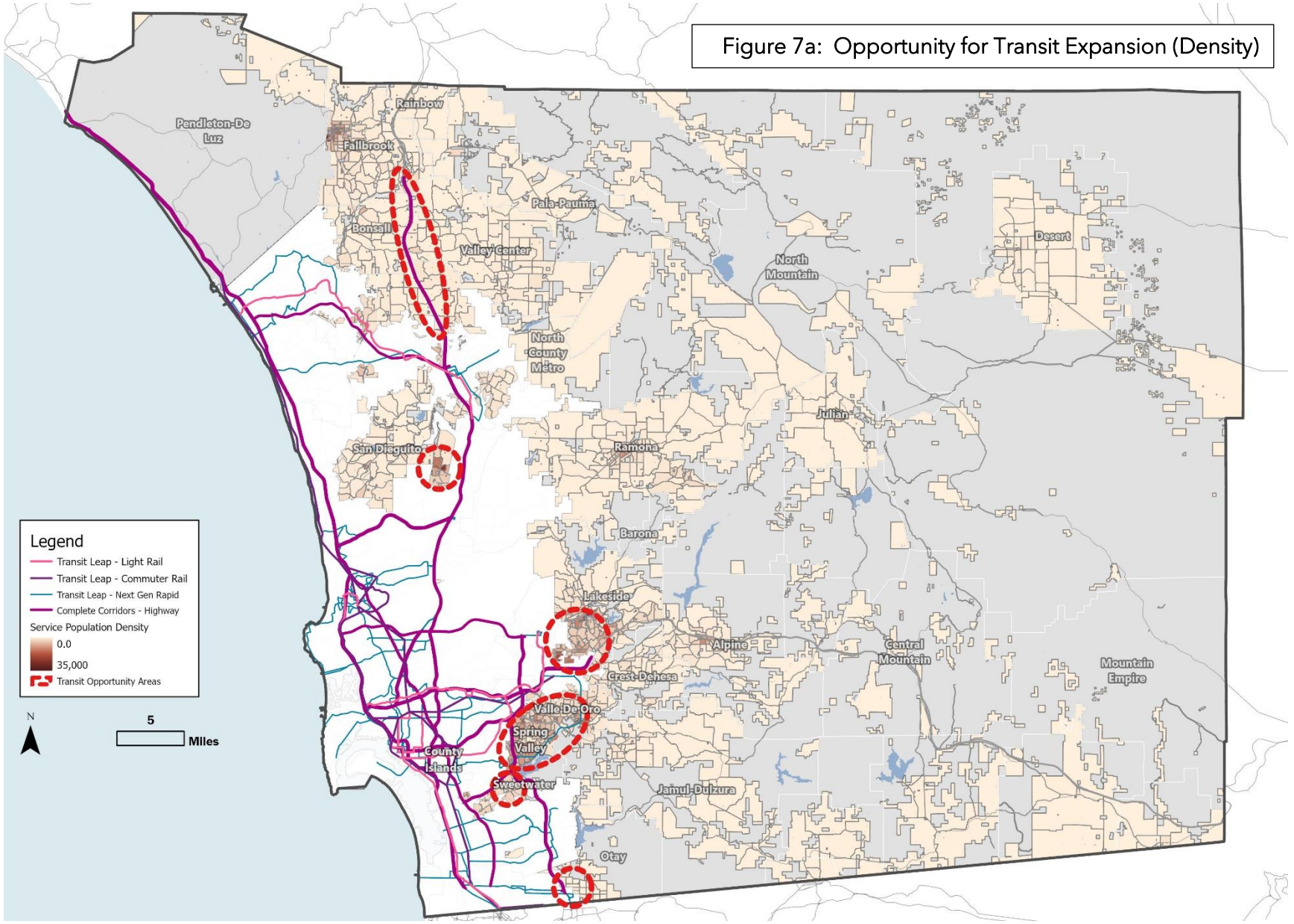


Figure 7a: Opportunity for Transit Expansion (Density)
Pendleton-De Luz
Rainbow
Fallbrook
Bonsall
Pala-Pauma
Valley Center
North Mountain
Desert
North County Metro
Julian
San Dieguito
Ramona
Barona
Lakeside
Alpine
Central Mountain
Mountain Empire
Crest-Dehesa
Valle De Oro
Spring Valley
County Islands
Sweetwater
Jamul-Dulzura
Otay
Legend
Transit Leap - Light Rail
Transit Leap - Commuter Rail
Transit Leap - Next Gen Rapid
Complete Corridors - Highway
Service Population Density
0.0
35,000
Transit Opportunity Areas
N
5
Miles

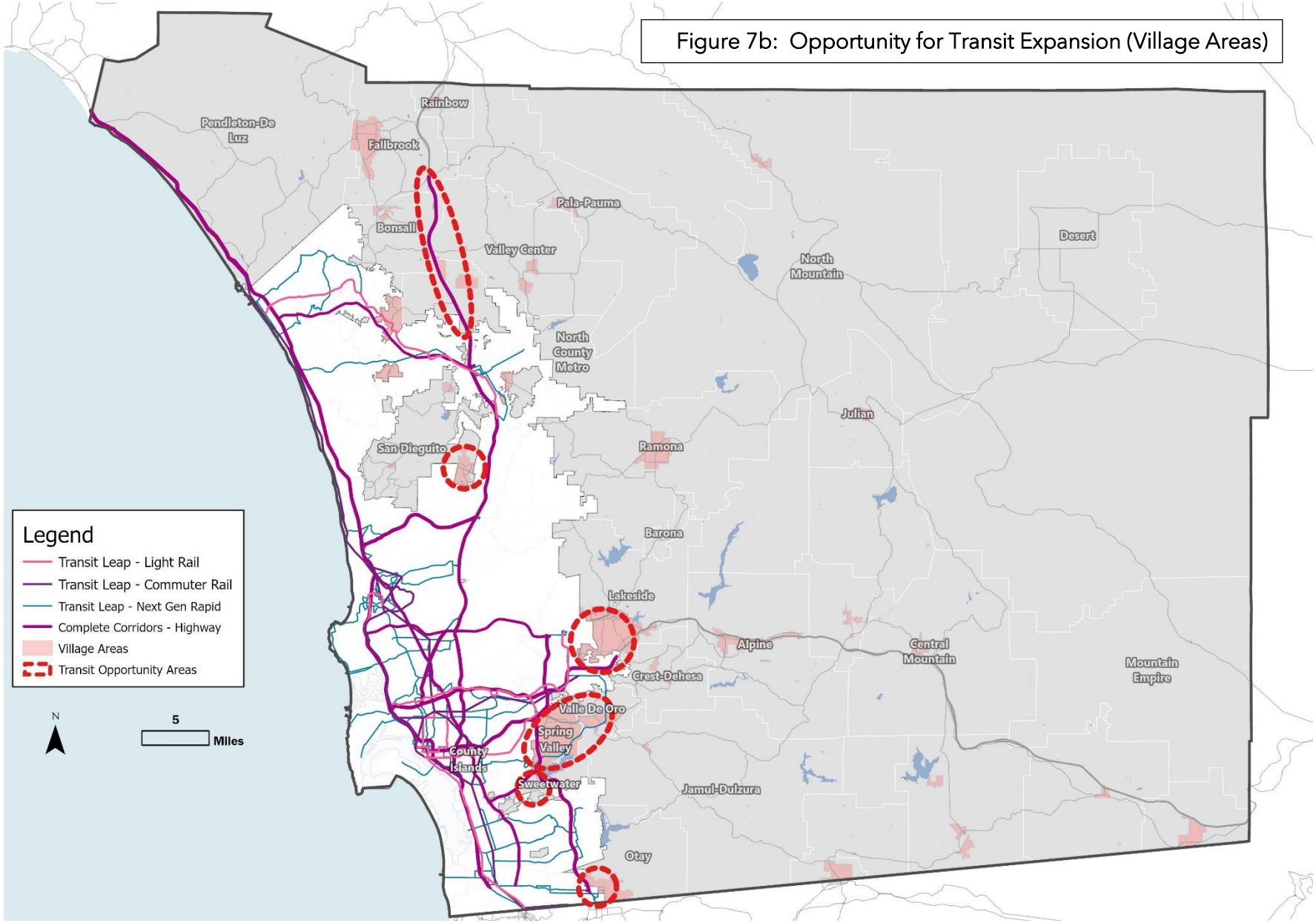


Figure 7b: Opportunity for Transit Expansion (Village Areas)
Pendleton-De Luz
Rainbow
Fallbrook
Bonsall
Pala-Pauma
Valley Center
North Mountain
Desert
North County Metro
Julian
San Dieguito
Ramona
Barona
Lakeside
Alpine
Central Mountain
Mountain Empire
Crest-Dehesa
Valle De Oro
Spring Valley
County Islands
Sweetwater
Jamul-Dulzura
Otay
Legend
Transit Leap - Light Rail
Transit Leap - Commuter Rail
Transit Leap - Next Gen Rapid
Complete Corridors - Highway
Village Areas
Transit Opportunity Areas
N
5
Miles

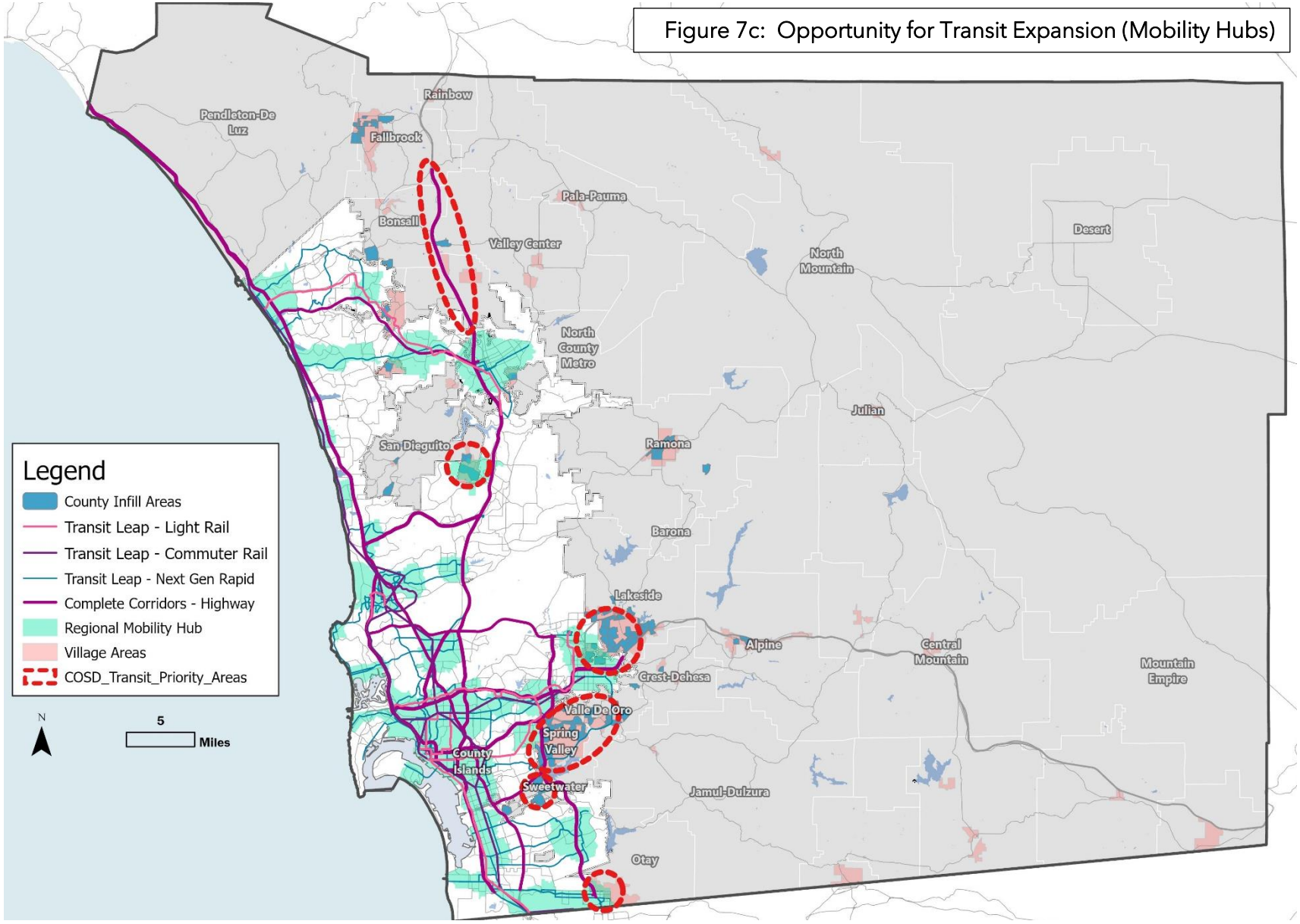


Figure 7c: Opportunity for Transit Expansion (Mobility Hubs)
Pendleton-De Luz
Rainbow
Fallbrook
Pala-Pauma
Bonsall
Valley Center
North Mountain
Desert
North County Metro
Julian
San Dieguito
Ramona
Barona
Lakeside
Alpine
Central Mountain
Mountain Empire
Crest-Dehesa
Valle De Oro
Spring Valley
County Islands
Sweetwater
Jamul-Dulzura
Otay
Legend
County Infill Areas
Transit Leap - Light Rail
Transit Leap - Commuter Rail
Transit Leap - Next Gen Rapid
Complete Corridors - Highway
Regional Mobility Hub
Village Areas
COSD_Transit_Priority_Areas
N
5
Miles

Otay Village: As shown in Figure 6, the Otay Village Area is located directly adjacent to a proposed Next Gen Rapid line and the SR-125 Complete Corridor. The 2021 Regional Plan also proposes a Mobility Hub which encompasses a portion of the Otay Village Area, as shown in Figure 3. As shown in Figure 5, the service population density within the Otay Village Area is currently low; however, the East Otay Mesa Specific Plan does provide the opportunity to substantially increase the employment densities within the area. As such, the County should continue to coordinate with SANDAG to help facilitate the development of both the Next Gen Rapid services as well as the development of the planned Mobility Hub in conjunction with the buildout of the East Otay Mesa Specific Plan.

I-15 Corridor: As shown in Figure 3, the 2021 Regional Plan is proposing that the I-15 corridor become a Complete Corridor, particularly within the northern portion of the Unincorporated County. However, as shown in Figures 4 and 5 there are currently no Mobility Hubs proposed along this corridor and the existing service population densities along the corridor are low. There are two village areas (Hidden Meadows West and Hidden Meadows East) located along the corridor which may present an opportunity to increase the density along the corridor and in which transportation oriented development could be implemented to facilitate and attract future transit services. The County should continue to monitor the progress of the I-15 Complete Corridor plan and adjust the land use densities as needed.

3.4 Rural Mobility Hubs

As shown in Figure 5, the Fallbrook, Ramona, and Alpine Village Areas all are in the top tier of service population density within the Unincorporated County. However, as shown in Figure 6 no future high-frequency regional transit services are planned to access these areas. The County is currently working with SANDAG to investigate the potential for implementing a rural version of Mobility Hubs within these areas. Rural Mobility Hubs would incorporate the same internal multi-modal and Flexible Fleet improvements as the other Mobility Hub areas but would not be incorporated into the regional transit network. The designation of Rural Mobility Hubs within these areas should allow the County to seek grant funding for localized multi-modal improvements within these areas, such as bicycle and pedestrian improvements as well as Flexible Fleet services, as previously outlined in Section 2.3. These improvements, as well as the high service population densities, and mix of land uses should help to reduce VMT within these areas via internal trip capture and transportation mode shifts.

The potential Rural Mobility Hub locations are displayed in Figure 8.

It should be noted that since these areas would not be included within the regional transit network, they are not anticipated to be within a TPA (existing or future). Additionally, while the multi-modal improvements outlined above will help to reduce VMT within these areas, it is not anticipated to reduce the VMT generation to less than significant levels (85% below the regional mean). As such, future development within these areas would most likely have a VMT related impact, even with the Rural Mobility Hub designation. Thus, additional CEQA work would be required for development to occur.

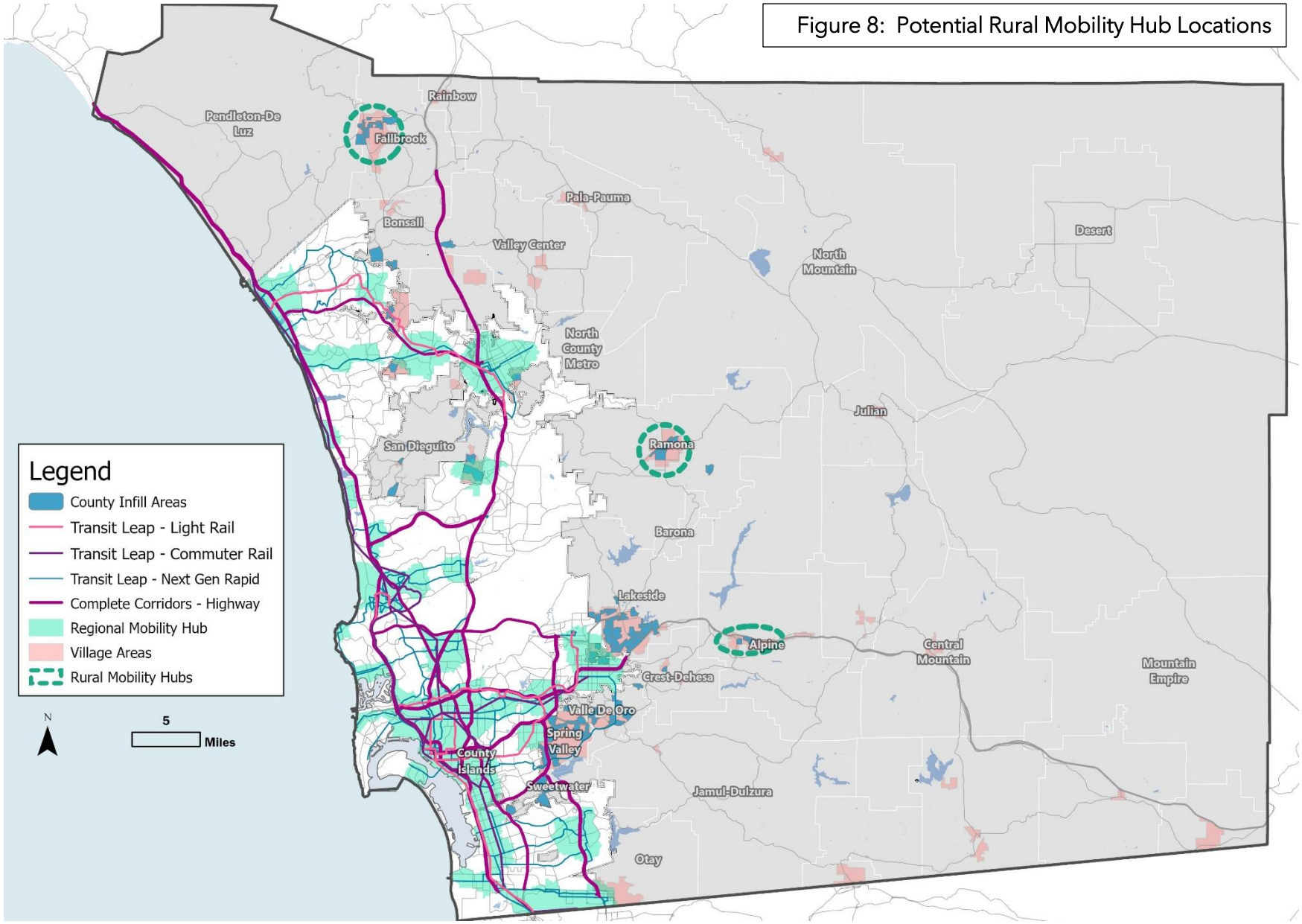


Figure 8: Potential Rural Mobility Hub Locations

4.0 Recommendations

This section provides recommendations on how the County can best move forward in expanding the regional transit network within the Unincorporated County.

4.1 Coordination with SANDAG

Continued coordination with SANDAG staff will be key in both prioritizing the proposed future transit improvements within the Unincorporated County as well as facilitating the further expansion of the regional transit network further into the Unincorporated County. As such, the following efforts are recommended:

Establish Targets: The County should continue to coordinate with SANDAG staff to better understand and identify the land uses, population density, and transportation network indicators and metrics used most when developing the future transit network within the RTP. The County can then use this information to develop a planning framework which establishes a series of land use and transportation infrastructure related targets. This framework can then be used in subsequent planning and implementation efforts to further incentivize land use growth within the Transit Opportunity Areas (outlined in Section 3.3) and help draw future transit services to these areas.

Grant Opportunities: As noted in Section 2.3, the 2021 Regional Plan has reserved over $5 billion for the implementation of the proposed Mobility Hub network. However, the exact location and scope of the improvements included within the Mobility Hub network have not yet been defined. To further this effort and incorporate the SANDAG Member Agencies into the process, the 2021 Regional Plan has set aside $837 million in planning capital grant funding to assist with the planning and implementation of the Mobility Hub network. These grants may provide ideal opportunities to fund the planning and subsequent CEQA efforts to increase the land use densities, implement multi-modal infrastructure, and incentivize infill/TOD style development within the Lakeside, Otay, and San Dieguito Village Areas (all of which are located within planned Mobility Hubs). With these planning efforts in place, subsequent phases of the grant program could then be used to fund the construction of the needed transportation infrastructure that is identified throughout the planning process.

2025 Regional Plan: RTPs are generally released every four years; as such, the next San Diego Forward Plan should be released in Year 2025. Over this time period, it is recommended that the County continue to coordinate with SANDAG staff on their planning and implementation efforts for the Transit Opportunity Areas outlined in Section 3.3. If the County can show that they have further incentivized higher density land use growth within these areas, or similar key areas, then additional transit services to these areas could be planned or better defined within the next RTP.

4.2 Implementation Options

The following provides three different options in which the County can take in implementing the land use and mobility changes that are needed to draw additional transit services to the Unincorporated County.

Transit Development Specific Plans

High-frequency regional transit service is typically only extended to areas which currently have high population or employment densities (or both). Therefore, it cannot be assumed that the high-frequency transit services will be extended into the Unincorporated County prior to the buildout of its village areas. This presents an issue for future development within these areas as they are currently projected to generate VMT at a higher rate than the regional threshold (as shown in Figure 1) and they cannot rely

on the formation of future TPAs[11] to alleviate their VMT related impacts. As such, development within these areas would be identified as having a significant and unavoidable VMT related impact[12]. Therefore, the majority, if not all of the development within these Transit Opportunity Areas would be required to conduct an environmental impact report (EIR) to disclose these impacts and seek an override from the board, even if future transit services are planned within the area.

To help streamline the CEQA process and incentive growth and development within the identified Transit Opportunity Areas, the County can develop a specific plan for one (or multiple) of the Transit Opportunity Sites. The development of a specific plan will allow the County to re-evaluate the land use mixes and densities within these areas, ensure that they are consistent with SANDAGs transit targets, and implement specific policies for these areas to ensure the future development adhere to infill/TOD styles including minimum FAR and parking requirements. A specific plan can also re-evaluate the transportation network within the area and ensure that it provides the multi-modal connectivity that is needed to connect the future transit services to the surrounding land uses as well as maintain consistency with what is envisioned within SANDAG's proposed Mobility Hub network.

The accompanying EIR with any specific planning effort will allow for the VMT related impacts associated with the increase in develop to be disclosed and approved by the Board. The EIR can also tie the plans mitigation strategies to the development of SANDAG's Mobility Hub network as well as the planned expansion of the transit network potentially providing a nexus for future development within these areas pay their fair share towards the implementation of these improvements and services. Future development within these areas will also be able to tier off the findings of the specific plan EIR and would be eligible for 15182 development.

Transit Development Specific Plan Examples

The following provides examples of three separate, recently completed, specific plans that focused on increasing land use densities around existing or proposed transit stations. Each plan also recommend enhancements to the multi-modal infrastructure around the transit station to better connect the land uses to the transit services.

Similar efforts have recently been completed by the City of San Diego with both the Morena Corridor[13] and Balboa Station[14] specific plans at future stations along the Mid-Coast Trolley Line. The specific plans increased land use densities within the study area, identified enhancements to the internal multi-modal network to provide better connectivity to the planned transit stations, and established policies and guidelines to ensure TOD style development would occur. The specific plans also included a subsequent CEQA effort which provides environmental clearance for planned development within the study areas. The Balboa Station Specific Plan was funded through a California Strategic Growth Council Sustainable Communities Planning Grant.

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[11] As noted in Section 15064.3(1)(a):

> Generally, projects within one-half mile of either an existing major transit stop or a stop along an existing high quality transit corridor should be presumed to cause a less than significant transportation impact.

TPAs are only designated when associated with existing transit facilities. Therefore, land development near planned or future transit services and/or facilities can not be assumed to have a less than significant impact until the transit is implemented.

[12] As outlined in the *California Air Pollution Control Officers Association (CAPCOA) Qualifying Greenhouse Gas Mitigation Measures* study identifies a maximum feasible VMT mitigation of 15% for projects within suburban areas. Most locations within the County, even within suburban areas, tend to generate VMT at or above the regional mean. As such, it would be infeasible to mitigate their impacts to 15% below the regional mean through VMT reducing mitigation.

[13] Morena Corridor: https://www.sandiego.gov/planning/community/specificplans/morena-corridor

[14] Balboa Station: https://www.sandiego.gov/planning/community/specificplans/balboa-station

Another example is the City of El Cajon Transit District Specific Plan (TDSP)[15]. Similar to the two City of San Diego examples, TDSP incentivized infill/TOD style development around the El Cajon Transit Center through increased land use densities and the development of a strong multi-modal network connecting the transit center and the adjacent land uses. The Program EIR for the TDSP allows for development within the study area to be streamlined through the 15182 process. Develop of the TDSP and its EIR was funded through a SANDAG grant, similar to what us proposed in the 2021 Regional Plan. Since its adoption, the City of El Cajon has been awarded multiple Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) grants to fund the multi-modal capital improvements that were included in the TDSP.

Focused General Plan Update

In-lieu of developing specific plan(s) for the Transit Opportunity Sites (as outlined above), the County can combine the planning and CEQA efforts for the Transit Opportunity Sites into a focused General Plan update. Including these efforts into a focused General Plan update will allow the County to synchronize and consolidate the development of the transit opportunity areas with other parallel planning such as the Climate Action Plan (CAP), infill opportunity areas, and smart growth planning. Additionally, including the Transit Opportunity Sites directly into the General Plan will still allow the development within these areas to be streamlined through the 15183 process.

Finally, incorporating the planning and CEQA process for the Transit Opportunity Sites into a focused General Plan update will allow for their associated mitigation and facility needs to be integrated seamlessly into the County's development impact fee and mitigation monitoring programs. They can also rely on other features and/or components of the focused General Plan update to allow for self-mitigation or partial mitigation based on the implementation of other planning efforts.

Developing Transit Overlay Zones

A final option for the County to implement the Transit Opportunity Sites, is to amend the zoning code to incorporate a transit overlay zone. The transit overlay zones can be implemented within the Transit Opportunity Sites to encourage infill/TOD style developments. The overlays can allow for increases in land use density, set a minimum floor to area ratios, and reduce parking standards around potential station areas. As noted in Section 1.3, these are key features for developments located within TPAs to reduce or eliminate VMT related impacts and is encouraged by SB-743. The overlays can also allow for a mix of uses to provide more employment and commercial service options for residents within the area, resulting a greater potential for internal trip capture and mode shift, resulting decreased levels of VMT generation.

To implement the transit overlay zones the County will most likely need to conduct a programmatic EIR to document and disclose the impacts associated with the increased densities within the overlay zones, similar to what was required for the Agricultural Promotion Program[16]. Development within the Transit Opportunity Sites would be able to tier off this EIR to help streamline the CEQA process; however, since the EIR will be programmatic in nature, a project level CEQA analysis for individual projects within the Transit Opportunity Sites will still most likely be required.

Items to Consider when Choosing a Process

Each implementation option outlined above has its own set of pros and cons. Therefore, the following items should be considered in determining whether it is best to incorporate the planning and CEQA efforts for the Transit Opportunity Sites into or into specific plan(s), a focused General Plan update, or the development of transit overlay zones:

[15] TDSP: https://www.elcajon.gov/your-government/departments/community-development/planning/transit-district-specific-plan
[16] APP: https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/pds/advance/agriculturepromotion.html

- Is the 15182 or 15183 process the more preferable for the implementation of future development within these areas?
- Which options presents the best opportunity for grant funding (section 2.3)?
- Would the timing align with the development and publishing of the 2025 Regional Plan?
- Which is the best option to integrate these changes into the 2025 SCS?

Attachment 1
Area Type Definition

As used in this Report, location settings are defined as follows:

Urban: A project located within the central city and may be characterized by multi-family housing, located near office and retail. Downtown Oakland and the Nob Hill neighborhood in San Francisco are examples of the typical urban area represented in this category. The urban maximum reduction is derived from the average of the percentage difference in per capita VMT versus the California statewide average (assumed analogous to an ITE baseline) for the following locations:

Location	Percent Reduction from Statewide VMT/Capita
Central Berkeley	-48%
San Francisco	-49%
Pacific Heights (SF)	-79%
North Beach (SF)	-82%
Mission District (SF)	-75%
Nob Hill (SF)	-63%
Downtown Oakland	-61%

The average reflects a range of 48% less VMT/capita (Central Berkeley) to 82% less VMT/capita (North Beach, San Francisco) compared to the statewide average. The urban locations listed above have the following characteristics:

- Location relative to the regional core: these locations are within the CBD or less than five miles from the CBD (downtown Oakland and downtown San Francisco).
- Ratio or relationship between jobs and housing: jobs-rich (jobs/housing ratio greater than 1.5)
- Density character
  - typical building heights in stories: six stories or (much) higher
  - typical street pattern: grid
  - typical setbacks: minimal
  - parking supply: constrained on and off street
  - parking prices: high to the highest in the region
- Transit availability: high quality rail service and/or comprehensive bus service at 10 minute headways or less in peak hours

Compact infill: A project located on an existing site within the central city or inner-ring suburb with high-frequency transit service. Examples may be community redevelopment areas, reusing abandoned sites, intensification of land use at established transit stations, or converting underutilized or older industrial buildings. Albany and the Fairfax area of Los Angeles are examples of typical compact infill area as used here. The compact infill maximum reduction is derived from the average of the percentage difference in per capita VMT versus the California statewide average for the following locations:

Location	Percent Reduction from Statewide VMT/Capita
Franklin Park, Hollywood	-22%
Albany	-25%
Fairfax Area, Los Angeles	-29%
Hayward	-42%

The average reflects a range of 22% less VMT/capita (Franklin Park, Hollywood) to 42% less VMT/capita (Hayward) compared to the statewide average. The compact infill locations listed above have the following characteristics:

- Location relative to the regional core: these locations are typically 5 to 15 miles outside a regional CBD
- Ratio or relationship between jobs and housing: balanced (jobs/housing ratio ranging from 0.9 to 1.2)
- Density character
  - typical building heights in stories: two to four stories
  - typical street pattern: grid
  - typical setbacks: 0 to 20 feet
  - parking supply: constrained
  - parking prices: low to moderate
- Transit availability: rail service within two miles, or bus service at 15 minute peak headways or less

As used in this Report, additional location settings are defined as follows:

Suburban Center: A project typically involving a cluster of multi-use development within dispersed, low-density, automobile dependent land use patterns (a suburb). The center may be an historic downtown of a smaller community that has become surrounded by its region's suburban growth pattern in the latter half of the 20th Century. The suburban center serves the population of the suburb with office, retail and housing which is denser than the surrounding suburb. The suburban center maximum reduction is derived from the average of the percentage difference in per capita VMT versus the California statewide average for the following locations:

Location	Percent Reduction from Statewide VMT/Capita
Sebastopol	0%
San Rafael (Downtown)	-10%
San Mateo	-17%

The average reflects a range of 0% less VMT/capita (Sebastopol) to 17% less VMT/capita (San Mateo) compared to the statewide average. The suburban center locations listed above have the following characteristics:

- Location relative to the regional core: these locations are typically 20 miles or more from a regional CBD
- Ratio or relationship between jobs and housing: balanced
- Density character
  - typical building heights in stories: two stories
  - typical street pattern: grid
  - typical setbacks: 0 to 20 feet
  - parking supply: somewhat constrained on street; typically ample off-street
  - parking prices: low (if priced at all)
- Transit availability: bus service at 20-30 minute headways and/or a commuter rail station

While all three locations in this category reflect a suburban "downtown," San Mateo is served by regional rail (Caltrain) and the other locations are served by bus transit only. Sebastopol is located more than 50 miles from downtown San Francisco, the nearest urban center. San Rafael and San Mateo are located 20 miles from downtown San Francisco.

Suburban: A project characterized by dispersed, low-density, single-use, automobile dependent land use patterns, usually outside of the central city (a suburb). Suburbs typically have the following characteristics:

- Location relative to the regional core: these locations are typically 20 miles or more from a regional CBD
- Ratio or relationship between jobs and housing: jobs poor
- Density character
  - typical building heights in stories: one to two stories
  - typical street pattern: curvilinear (cul-de-sac based)
  - typical setbacks: parking is generally placed between the street and office or retail buildings; large-lot residential is common
  - parking supply: ample, largely surface lot-based
  - parking prices: none
- Transit availability: limited bus service, with peak headways 30 minutes or more

The maximum reduction provided for this category assumes that regardless of the measures implemented, the project's distance from transit, density, design, and lack of mixed use destinations will keep the effect of any strategies to a minimum.

Attachment 2
2021 Regional Plan - Table A.14

Table A.14: Mobility Hubs and Flexible Fleets

Mobility Hubs and Flexible Fleets					
Project ID	**Year Built**	**Category**	**Project Name**	**Description**	**Cost ($2020) Millions**
MH1	2025	Mobility Hubs	Mobility Hub Amenities	Mobility Hub amenities including secure micromobility parking and e-charging, interactive travel kiosks, electric vehicle charging infrastructure, passenger loading zones, parcel delivery lockers, and carshare parking	$152
MH2	2035	Mobility Hubs	Mobility Hub Amenities	Mobility Hub amenities including secure micromobility parking and e-charging, interactive travel kiosks, electric vehicle charging infrastructure, passenger loading zones, parcel delivery lockers, and carshare parking	$247
MH3	2050	Mobility Hubs	Mobility Hub Amenities	Mobility Hub amenities including secure micromobility parking and e-charging, interactive travel kiosks, electric vehicle charging infrastructure, passenger loading zones, parcel delivery lockers, and carshare parking	$285
MHLA2	2035	Mobility Hubs	Other Mobility Hub Land Acquisition	Land acquisition for additional future Mobility Hub anchor stations	$66
CCSI1	2035	Mobility Hubs	Complete Streets Improvements	Complete streets improvements within Mobility Hubs such as pedestrian, micromobility, and other traffic calming treatments that complement the Adopted Regional Bike Network.	$1,809
CCSI2	2050	Mobility Hubs	Complete Streets Improvements	Complete streets improvements within Mobility Hubs such as pedestrian, micromobility, and other traffic calming treatments that complement the Adopted Regional Bike Network.	$667
FF1	2025	Flexible Fleets	Flexible Fleets Operations	Operations for Flexible Fleet services including micromobility, ridehail/carshare, rideshare microtransit, and last mile delivery	$161
FF2	2035	Flexible Fleets	Flexible Fleets Operations	Operations for Flexible Fleet services including micromobility, ridehail/carshare, rideshare microtransit, and last mile delivery	$538
FF3	2050	Flexible Fleets	Flexible Fleets Operations	Operations for Flexible Fleet services including micromobility, ridehail/carshare, rideshare microtransit, and last mile delivery	$1,094

Attachment 2
2021 Regional Plan - Table A.17

Table A.17: Supporting Policies and Programs ($2020) Millions

Supporting Policies and Programs ($2020) Millions				
	2025	2035	2050	Total
Land Use and Regional Growth				
Planning and Capital Mobility Hub/Smart Growth/Vehicle Miles Traveled Reduction Grants	$75	$262	$500	$837
Member Agency Resources to enhance development review/processes/update policies	$25	$100	$208	$333
Housing				
Affordable Housing Grant Program	$730	$1,400	$500	$2,630
Climate Action Planning				
CAP Monitoring Program	$4	$20	$12	$37
CAP Implementation Grants	$20	$100	$150	$270
Regional Carbon Reduction Program Management	$6	$150	$150	$306
Climate Adaptation and Resilience				
Climate Adaptation and Resilience Program	$8	$75	$75	$158
Nature-based Climate Solutions	$40	$325	$200	$565
Resilient Capital Grants and Innovative Solutions	$20	$215	$100	$335
Electric Vehicles				
Incentives for Zero-Emission Vehicles	$52	$552	—	$604
EV Charging Stations	$45	$133	$91	$270
Hydrogen Fueling Stations	—	$100	$150	$250
Zero-Emission Buses and Infrastructure	$75	$250	$332	$657
Goods Movement Vehicles and Infrastructure	$25	$100	$104	$229
Parking and Curb Management				
Member agency resource/coordination	$8	$100	$40	$148

Supporting Policies and Programs ($2020) Millions				
	2025	2035	2050	Total
Transportation Demand Management				
GO by BIKE	$0.2	$0.5	$1	$1
TDM Innovation and Shared Streets Grants	$1	$50	$4	$55
E-bike incentive	$5	$15	$15	$35
Program Administration	$19	$59	$89	$167
Commuter Services and Bike Program	$18	$35	$56	$109
Rideshare Incentive Program	$1	$1	$2	$4
Marketing, Outreach, and Education	$11	$23	$35	$69
TDM Ordinance	$8	$40	$60	$108
Vision Zero				
Member agency project resource/coordination	$6	$25	$15	$46
Community Based Education	$4	$25	$25	$54
Capital and Planning grants	$25	$150	$150	$325