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12 Stations from Barrio Logan to San Ysidro Will be Revamped

San Diego, CA –The final phase of the \$660-million Trolley Renewal project began today with a groundbreaking ceremony to kick off construction to modernize the Blue Line—the most heavily used transit service in the San Diego region with an average daily ridership of more than 50,000.

The Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) and the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) held the celebration at the Barrio Logan Station, one of the first stations on the Blue Line to be renovated. The event drew more than 100 participants, including elected officials, business and community leaders, project contractor Flatiron, and representatives from SANDAG, MTS, and the City and County of San Diego.

In less than 18 months, the oldest segment on the MTS Trolley system will be transformed into the newest,” said Harry Mathis, chairman of the MTS Board of Directors. “And the primary beneficiaries of all these improvements are our customers.”

The Blue Line, which has been one of the most successful light rail lines in North America, will be completely renovated. A dozen stations from Barrio Logan to San Ysidro will be elevated to afford customers almost level boarding. Access between bus and trolley services will be enhanced. New shelters, closed circuit television, next-arrival signage, enhanced lighting, and a smoother ride will all improve the customer experience.

“Trolley Renewal is a great example of how we can prudently use taxpayer dollars to maintain and improve our existing transportation infrastructure, create new jobs, and bring benefits to the entire region,” SANDAG Chair and Santee City Councilmember Jack Dale said. “Not only is this project producing enormous benefits for riders, it also is giving a major boost to the local economy. Overall, the project is expected to create about 8,000 jobs directly and indirectly in the region. We’re making transit work better for San Diego and we’re making it easier for San Diegans to choose transit.”

Trolley Renewal is funded by a variety of sources, including TransNet, the regional half-cent sales tax for transportation administered by SANDAG; California Proposition 1B and 1A bond money; and the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act, commonly known as the federal stimulus package.

SANDAG began the Trolley Renewal project in partnership with MTS in fall 2010 and is scheduled to finish the work in 2015. The project is bringing 65 sleek, low-floor trolley cars to the region, improving access for all riders. The new vehicles provide nearly level boarding, so time-consuming mechanical lifts will no longer be needed. The ultimate result will be faster boarding for all passengers and improved on-time performance. These new vehicles are already being used by thousands of passengers each day on the Green and Orange Lines.

Launched in 1981, the Trolley became an immediate success and sparked a resurgence of light rail transit across the nation. The system marks its 32nd anniversary this week as many of its original components are nearing the end of their useful lives.

The system-wide overhaul also includes raising 35 station platforms to accommodate the low-floor vehicles, replacing outdated rail and overhead wires, and improving street crossings, switching, and signaling. In addition, the project will also expand freight capacity between Downtown San Diego and the border area.

All Trolley stations will remain open during construction but will be temporarily relocated close by during construction. The first three stations to be renovated are Barrio Logan, Harborside and Pacific Fleet.

For information on Trolley Renewal, please visit sdmts.com/trolleyrenewal.asp or KeepSanDiegoMoving.com, call the Trolley Renewal Hotline at (866) 497-2326, get updates via Twitter at twitter.com/sdmmts, view project videos on the San Diego MTS and SANDAGREGION YouTube channels, and follow the project on Facebook at facebook.com/sdmmts.

For media inquiries, please contact David Hicks at (619) 699-6939 or david.hicks@sandag.org.

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