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High-Tech Signs Light Up Stations at Night, Feature Security Cameras, and Next Arrival Times

The San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) in partnership with the Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) has completed the Downtown Rapid Stations Project – a \$21 million investment to build 11 modern bus stations on the Broadway corridor to elevate public transit to a new level of comfort, security, and convenience.

“Tens of thousands of commuters and visitors will benefit from the investment we made in the heart of Downtown San Diego. Just think of the number of people who come to downtown every day to work, shop, dine, and have fun,” said County Supervisor Ron Roberts, who is chair of the SANDAG Board of Directors and vice chair of the MTS Board. “The new stations are modern, well-lit, and monitored by security cameras. They help make public transit an attractive choice.”

The most prominent feature of the *Rapid* stations is the 16-foot-tall electronic pylon signs, which can be seen from blocks away. The signs are made of stainless steel and branded with the dynamic swooshes of the red *Rapid* theme color.

The pylons have built-in lighting, security cameras, and digital video screens. The screens display real-time arrival information, so transit riders know exactly when they can catch the next bus. Feeds from the closed-circuit cameras on the pylons are monitored remotely by MTS to provide enhanced security.

The Downtown Rapid Stations Project represents another major milestone in the region’s efforts to build out the *Rapid* network, which provides high frequency, limited stops and greater amenities. SANDAG and MTS launched *Rapid* in 2014.

“*Rapid* is a highly successful level of service that is getting people out of their cars,” said MTS Chief Executive Officer Paul Jablonski. “These new amenities along Broadway further demonstrate the region’s commitment to provide modern and convenient transit options.”

Two existing *Rapid* lines, which average more than 11,000 riders per day, terminate in downtown along Broadway, dropping riders off steps away from residential and commercial high rises, shops, restaurants, hotels and the Trolley.

- Rapid 215 provides a one-seat (no transfers) ride between San Diego State University and downtown via College Avenue, El Cajon Boulevard, and Park Boulevard. This route serves

some of the most vibrant and diverse communities in San Diego, including North Park, City Heights, and the College Area, as well as key destinations such as Balboa Park, the San Diego Zoo, Naval Medical Center, City College, Horton Plaza, and Santa Fe Depot.

- Rapid 235 uses the I-15 Express Lanes, Direct Access Ramps, and limited stops to offer speedy trips between the Escondido Transit Center and downtown. Stops include Escondido Transit Center; Del Lago, Rancho Bernardo, Sabre Springs/Peñasquitos, and Mira Mesa transit stations; Kearny Mesa; City Heights; City College; and along Broadway.

A third *Rapid* line called South Bay *Rapid* is currently under construction and is expected to begin service in 2018. The 26-mile route will run between the Otay Mesa Port of Entry and Downtown San Diego via eastern Chula Vista.

The new downtown stations are roughly book-ended by the Santa Fe Depot to the west and Smart Corner (near City College) to the east. On the blocks where custom-made, metallic silver bus shelters were installed, substantial investment was also made to upgrade the streetscape, including sidewalks, crosswalks, curb ramps, storm drains, and landscaping.

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