The City of San Diego

Regional Transportation Center
FACT SHEET

The Regional Transportation Center (RTC) is an innovative project designed to introduce San Diego residents to the benefits of alternative fuel vehicles (AFVs). The RTC signature architectural design will transform a formally blighted commercial corner of the City Heights community, into an impressive commercial and public service development. This $12.5 million facility includes an education center, alternative vehicle display, repair center and fueling station – combining non-profit educational and for-profit commercial components. When finished, the project will be the most comprehensive, alternative fuel vehicle center in the State of California. City Heights is a redevelopment project area for the City of San Diego’s Redevelopment Agency. As a development partner, the Agency has managed the relocation assistance for residents or businesses displaced by the project, as well as being a major source of funding and land.

Location
The RTC will be located on the south side of El Cajon Boulevard between the State Route 15 off-ramp and 41st Street. The RTC project is one of several projects for the City of San Diego’s City Heights Redevelopment Project Area.

What RTC will have to offer
RTC is composed of five components:

- **Education center** – The 9,000 square-foot Education Center will address air and water quality issues, introduce AFVs, with a focus on the benefits of new automotive technologies, and will be a global epicenter for environmental teaching and learning.
  
  The education center will host field trips for San Diego middle and high school students, as well as making courses in alternative vehicle automotive repair available to college students. The program will feature an orientation, multimedia theater presentation, interactive exhibits, remote Internet classes and debriefing session. Program topics will include: What AFVs are available now? What’s been done to help air quality? Why is improving air quality important?

- **AFV Showroom** – The showroom will be the signature structure of the project, combining a state-of-the-art automobile showroom with an efficient, comfortable design. The showroom will feature Ford’s complete line of AFVs alongside conventionally powered vehicles.

- **AFV Rental/Demo Operation** – As more AFVs become available, the demand to drive the vehicles is sure to increase. So, as part of the sales process, Pearson Ford will incorporate an AFV rental/demonstration operation.

- **AFV Repair Center** – The repair center will not only provide service to AFVs, but also allows students to see the operations of an AFV engine first hand. The center will have multiple service bays and be equipped to service various types of AFVs.

- **AFV Fueling Station** – The station will offer several types of alternative fuels including compressed natural gas, liquefied propane gas, electric recharging stations and methanol. Petroleum will also be available for Bi-Fuel, Flex-Fuel and conventional automobiles. The station is proposed to be in operation 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
Facilities:
- RTC is 40,347 square-foot facility that will occupy 1.48 acres.
- Building 1 will contain a vehicle display area, educational facilities and office space.
- Building 2 will include a repair facility, parts storage and employee lounge.
- The education center will feature high technology classrooms, an IMAX theater, and museum quality interactive exhibits.
- 119 underground and surface level parking spaces.

RTC Project Funding Sources:
The RTC Project is funded by multiple sources including:
- $1,485,000 Federal Economic Development Initiative (EDI) Grant
- $2,500,000 Federally guaranteed Section 108 Loan
- $1,400,000 Ford Foundation Grant
- $250,000 Federal Energy Commission Grant
- $800,000 Private equity funding
- $6,000,000 Private Lender

Project Timeline:
May 2000- DDA for the project approved
March 2002- Construction began
Spring 2003- Anticipated completion and grand opening

Operations and Staff:
The education center will be operated by the San Diego Educational Foundation. The facility will be utilized for educational field trips for middle and high schools students, and for vocational training in alternative fuel technology.

The commercial components for RTC will be operated by Pearson Ford, a San Diego Ford dealership that is located just four blocks east of the RTC site at 4300 El Cajon Boulevard. The facility is expected to employ approximately fifty employees when it is operating at full capacity in approximately two years.

For more information, contact Jim LoBue, Community Development Coordinator at (619) 533-5263 or the City of San Diego Community and Economic Development Department at (619) 533-4233.

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