What We Are Learning from COVID-19 and How it Could Impact Transportation Planning in the San Diego Region

Transportation Committee, Regional Planning Committee, and Borders Committee
July 17, 2020

Regional Plan and Transportation Projects: State and Federal Laws

- Climate change and air quality: greenhouse gas emissions, smog, localized air pollution
- Social equity: compliance with federal civil rights requirements (Title VI) and environmental justice considerations
- SB 743: shift to vehicle miles traveled to evaluate impacts of transportation projects
Learning from the COVID-19 Crisis:
Re-envisioning Transportation Investments

Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic and Economic Crisis
Our Regional Economy is Reopening Slowly

San Diego Gross Regional Product

Visits to restaurants, cafes, shopping centers, theme parks, museums, libraries, and movie theaters

Source: BEA, SANDAG estimates
Source: Google mobility report

Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic and Economic Crisis

Unemployment
Impact of COVID-19 on Employment in the San Diego Region

March 7, 2020
3.3% Avg

May 9, 2020
25.0% Avg

June 27, 2020
14.3% Avg

Unemployment Estimates
Number of Unemployed and Rate

Source: Applied Geographic Solutions, Inc., Thousand Oaks, California, Weekly Release July 6, 2020
Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic and Economic Crisis

Businesses

San Diego Region Employment by Key Economic Sector

- **High Impact**: Tourism, Retail, Transportation
- **Moderate Impact**: Healthcare, Education, Government, Manufacturing
- **Low Impact**: Innovation, Military, Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, Construction

Tourism: 13%
Innovation: 10%
Military: 8%
Healthcare: 11%
Education: 9%
Government: 7%
Retail: 16%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate: 16%
Manufacturing: 5%
Construction: 3%
Transportation: 2%

31% 32% 37%
COVID-19 Impacts to Local Industries

General Retail
- Apparel Stores
- Department Stores
- Florists
- Furniture and Appliance Stores
- Pharmacies
- Recreation Products

Down 35%

Transportation
- Auto Dealers
- Auto Repair/Maintenance
- Gas Stations

Down 35-40%

Food and Beverage
- Coffee and Snack Bars
- Fast Food Restaurants
- Grocery Stores
- Sit Down Restaurants

Down 25-45%

Construction Materials
- Home and Garden Equipment Repair and Maintenance
- Home Centers/Hardware Stores

Up 10-15%

Source: SafeGraph COVID-19 Response Dataset - Weekly Patterns, v2

High-Contact Intensity Occupations

702,360 Jobs 49% medium contact intensity
387,950 Jobs 27% low contact intensity
337,570 Jobs 24% high contact intensity

337,570 High-Contact-Intensity Jobs Requiring Close Contact by Sector

Healthcare – moderate loss in jobs
- Most considered “essential workers
- Job loss in non-essential healthcare e.g. dentistry, elective surgeries

Education – few job losses
- Technology like Zoom enables remote learning and allows for social distancing

Transportation – high job loss
- Airline workers, taxi drivers, chauffeurs, delivery drivers and other occupations in transportation are significantly impacted

Food & Beverage Services – high job loss
- Restaurant and bar closures, catering companies, social events cancelled significantly impact occupations in this sector

Personal care and services – high job loss
- Non-essential services requiring close proximity like fitness workers, childcare, nannies, barber shops, hairdressers, manicures ordered to curtail operations

Source: SafeGraph COVID-19 Response Dataset - Weekly Patterns, v2
San Diego Region Employment by Race and Ethnicity and Frontline Workers

Share of ethnic group in selected industries relative to their share of all employed residents

Essential - frontline Non-essential

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>White</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal Care</td>
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<tr>
<td>Food Service</td>
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<tr>
<td>Retail</td>
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<td>Grocery, Convenience, and Drug Stores</td>
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<td>Child Care and Social Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health Care</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Other frontline</td>
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Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic and Economic Crisis

Small Business
**Impacts to Small Business in San Diego Region**

**Effect of COVID-19 on Small Businesses**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Large Negative Effect</th>
<th>Large Positive Effect</th>
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<tr>
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<td>1%</td>
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<tr>
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**Change in Revenue in the Last Week**

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<td>22%</td>
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<td>5/9</td>
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<td>39%</td>
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<td>6/20</td>
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<td>6/27</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>30%</td>
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**Change in Paid Employees in the Last Week**

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<tr>
<td>5/9</td>
<td>49%</td>
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<td>5/16</td>
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<td>6/27</td>
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**Change in Employee Hours in the Last Week**

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<tr>
<td>6/27</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic and Economic Crisis**

**Taxable Sales**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Small Business Pulse Survey
COVID-19 Impact on San Diego Region
Taxable Retail Sales

Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic
and Economic Crisis

Communities
Communities Most Impacted
An assessment of communities most impacted by both COVID-19 cases and unemployment

COVID-19 Cases and Estimated Unemployment by Ethnic Group

- **Black**: 21.6% COVID cases, 26.1% unemployment
- **Hispanic**: 44.9% COVID cases, 7.4% unemployment
- **White**: 29.9% COVID cases, 51.9% unemployment
- **Asian**: 14.4% COVID cases, 3.8% unemployment

San Diego Forward

SANDAG
Impact of COVID-19 and Unemployment on Ethnic Groups in the San Diego Region

Unemployment | COVID-19 Cases | Unemployment and COVID-19 Cases
--- | --- | ---
Black | 67% | 70%
Hispanic | 52% | 49%
Asian | 45% | 42%
White | 4% | 14%

Source: SANDAG Annual Estimates 2019; Applied Geographic Solutions, Inc., Thousand Oaks, California; County of San Diego, Health and Human Services Agency

Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic and Economic Crisis

Recovery
Economic Recovery Outlook

- Possible lasting effects beyond 2026
  - Discouraged workers leaving the workforce
  - Students dropping out during crisis
  - No investment in the capital stock during the crisis
  - Existing capital less productive given restrictions and possible durable changes in behavior (e.g. cruise-ships)
  - Real estate

- Shape of the recovery
  - V ruled out — we passed that stage
  - No return to "normal" before a vaccine is available
  - V long or U long depending on future closures

Fiscal Year

- The COVID-19 Forecast updated
- V-long 4 months
- Moderate 3M (V-Long)
- Moderate 4M (U)
- Pre COVID-19
- Moderate 4M (V-Long)

Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic and Economic Crisis

Transportation
Transit Ridership

2020 decrease in ridership (compared to 2019)

-120.00%  -100.00%  -80.00%  -60.00%  -40.00%  -20.00%  0.00%

March April May June

Trolley MTS Buses COASTER SPRINTER BREEZE

Essential Workers Depend on Transit

- 20% of people who ride transit to work have no vehicles available
- 79% of people who ride transit to work travel 30 minutes or longer
- The median transit travel time is 51 minutes, which is double the travel time for people who drive to work
**Travel Around the San Diego Region Survey: Public Transit**

- 42% of survey respondents reported that they used transit before and after COVID-19
- 36% said they did not use transit before and will not in the future
- 18% did not use transit before but stated they would after COVID-19
- 4% said they used transit before but not after COVID-19

**Freeway Travel Trends**

**Average Decreases in Daily Traffic Volumes at Freeway Hotspots in the San Diego Region (2019 to 2020)**

![Graph showing average decreases in daily traffic volumes at freeways hotspots.](image)

Source: Performance Measurement System (PeMS), Caltrans
Travel Around the San Diego Region Survey: Vehicle Travel and Telework

• **89%** reported driving less during the health crisis
  – 81% expect their vehicle travel to increase over the next six months

• **78%** reported using online shopping and delivery more
  – 42% expect to continue at a higher rate

• **48%** reported driving less for work because of telework
  – About half of those who teleworked said they saw it continuing
**Employer Telework Trends During the COVID-19 Health Crisis**

Of the 137 employers surveyed, 55% said they have had employees who have teleworked during the COVID-19 health crisis.

When asked if they would offer telework after COVID-19:

- 26% said yes
- 46% said no
- 28% said maybe

**Employers' Future Telework Plans**

When asked what percent of their workforce would continue to telework, the most common response was less than 25%.

Of those companies who said they would offer telework post-COVID-19, 9% said they would offer it full-time.

The most common response (71%) was to offer telework 2-3 times a week.
Employers' Top 5 Reasons for Offering Telework

- Increased job satisfaction (67%)
- Employees have been able to get work completed while working from home (55%)
- Improved work/life balance (55%)
- Helping the environment (50%)
- Cost savings in leasing commercial space (30%)

What is the Potential for Telework in the San Diego Region?

61% of occupations are not conducive to telework

64% of occupations are considered essential jobs
- 42% of essential jobs are not conducive to telework
Jobs that Can be Done at Home Typically Earn Higher Wages

Who Teleworks in San Diego Region?
Telework Targets in Regional Plans

Broadband Connectivity and Internet Access

- 23% of households earning less than $50,000/year do not have a broadband subscription
- 20 – 40% of students in many local districts are under-connected or lack home internet access
- 42% of people who lived in the County’s rural areas had fixed internet, versus 97% of the people who live in urban areas
Travel Around the San Diego Region Survey: Active Transportation

• **14%** are biking more
  – 85% will continue biking more and for recreation, exercise, shopping and errands

• **50%** are walking more
  – 82% will continue walking more for recreation, exercise, shopping and errands

Cycling on the Rise in the Region

• **91%** increase in bike volumes on eight regional bikeway corridors
• Data collected May 2020 and compared to May 2019 volumes
Cycling on the Rise in the Region

- San Marcos Inland Rail Trail +121%
- Solana Beach Coast Highway +109%
- Rose Canyon Bike Path +107%
- Chula Vista Bayshore Bikeway +158%

University Avenue +88%
4th & 5th Avenues +63%
Landis Street +52%
30th Street +54%

Shared Streets

- SANDAG Shared Streets Pilot Program awarded $95,000 to 11 jurisdictions to create safe spaces for biking, walking, scooting, and more
NCTD COVID-19 Response

Item 3 | Joint Transportation, Regional Planning, and Borders Committees Meeting | July 17, 2020

COVID-19 Impact on Transit Ridership

Change in demand
Public transit has experienced drops in demand across the board, while continuing to be a lifeline for those who must travel. You can use this chart to compare changes in different places.
Is This The Final.....

Predictions Versus Reality

“The horse is here to stay but the automobile is only a novelty – a fad.” — President of the Michigan Savings Bank advising Henry Ford's lawyer, Horace Rackham, not to invest in the Ford Motor Company.

1903

“There’s no chance that the iPhone is going to get any significant market share.” — Steve Ballmer, Microsoft CEO.

2007

1946

Television won’t be able to hold on to any market it captures after the first six months. People will soon get tired of staring at a plywood box every night.” — Darryl Zanuck, 20th Century Fox.
Service Recovery & Restoration

Industry Response to COVID-19

- Approximately 30 taskforce members
- Three priority areas:
  - Communicating the Transit Narrative and Rebuilding Public Confidence
  - Recovery & Restoration of Service
  - Transit Leadership in the Post-COVID-19 Mobility Landscape
- Final Report anticipated in October 2020
Regional Response

Funding & Regulatory Relief

- The CARES Act provided $25 billion for public transit formula operating and capital grants to prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19 (federal).
- Funding challenges remain. Potential opportunities for funding include:
  - Additional round of stimulus funding
  - Infrastructure bill
  - Re-Authorization of Surface Transportation Bill
  - State Emergency Funds
- State and Federal Regulatory Relief
Operator Safety & Vehicle Cleaning Practices

Economic Recovery & Prosperity
Outreach & Marketing

We want to hear from you. Please complete our survey.

Marketing Promotion

Part of the Marketing Mix: Promotion is an essential function of marketing!

Promotion is telling people the great stuff they can buy from you!

Updating Service Plans

Strategic Multimodal Transit Implementation Plan

- Rail Capital Investments
- Upgrade Rail Frequency
- High-Frequency Core Bus Network
- Core Network Access Options
- New FLEX service variations
- Technology & Customer Experience

Focus local routes on core ridership growth.
Enhancing Mobility Post COVID-19

Thinking Beyond Today’s Pain

- "Someone’s sitting in the shade today because someone planted a tree a long time ago."

- "If you aren’t willing to own a stock for ten years, don’t even think about owning it for ten minutes."

DRAFT
Questions?
MTS COVID-19 Update on Ridership and Safety Protocols

MTS Rider Profiles

Abraham  Rosario  Marzaacita
Derek  Nora  Jerry
Transit’s Role in Economic Recovery

- Passenger Median HH Income: $17,800
- Regional Median HH Income: $75,000

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Total Annual Household Income</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2019</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt; $15,000</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>41%</td>
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<tr>
<td>$15,000 - $49,999</td>
<td>45%</td>
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<td>$50,000 - $74,999</td>
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<tr>
<td>$75,000 - $99,999</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100,000+</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>5%</td>
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Transit’s Role in Economic Recovery

- $1 Public Investment = $2.82 Return
  - Fermanian Business & Economic Institute, Point Loma Nazarene University
- More than two-thirds (69%) of MTS riders are employed either full-time or part-time
MTS Ridership (Overall)

- 75% ridership decrease
- 49% increase since Apr. 6

MTS Ridership (Bus)

- 80% ridership decrease
- 64% increase since Apr. 6
MTS Ridership (Trolley)

- 68% ridership decrease
- 36% increase since Apr. 6

MTS Clean Ride

- Always
  - 935 vehicles cleaned thoroughly every day
  - 54 Trolley stations cleaned daily
  - 400+ bus shelters cleaned at least twice per week and as needed
  - 1,500 bus benches cleaned one to three times per week
- Since Hep A Outbreak
  - Use of strongest disinfectants recommended by CDC
  - Vinyl seats on all Trolleys
MTS COVID-19 Protocols

• Mandatory face coverings for employees/passengers
• Rear-door boarding
• No cash
• Germ barrier installations
• Daily temp checks for all employees
• Disinfecting fog
• Handwashing stations

Keeping in Line with Industry Best Practices

• Assesses current policies, procedures, and operation practices
• Looks elsewhere in the industry to learn best practices
• Recommends where MTS can adjust in short-term
• Begins to address long-term implications
### What is Important to MTS Passengers?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Important Features</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enforcement of Face Coverings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social distancing on board</td>
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<tr>
<td>Daily disinfecting of vehicles and stations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hand sanitizers installed at stations or on vehicles</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeing cleaning crews at stations and on vehicles</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased security and/or ambassadors at stations</td>
<td>5.0</td>
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### Best Practices for Passengers

- Always wear a face covering
  - MTS branded face covers: Week of July 13
- Practice physical distancing when possible
- Carry hand sanitizer
- Avoid conversation while riding
- Use our Mobile App
  - Compass Cloud
  - One-ways now available
- Text Security: (619) 318-1338
- Watch videos at sdmts.com
Next Steps

- Clean Ride education efforts
  - Onboard/outdoor/digital education efforts
- Monitor capacity/passenger loads
- Keep an eye on school decisions for September service changes
- Innovations Task Force
  - Real-time passenger loads
  - Alerts system
  - Audible help tools

Questions?

sharon.cooney@sdmts.com