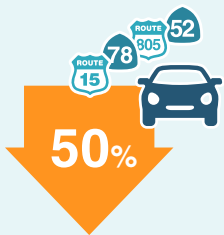


May 2020

On March 19, 2020, a statewide stay home order was issued to protect the health and well-being of Californians. Since then, daily travel on San Diego regional freeways has been drastically reduced because San Diegans are working from home or are not working at all. In early May, SANDAG analyzed the differences in travel patterns between mid-March and mid-April 2020 compared to the same period in 2019. This updated InfoBit includes additional data through mid-May 2020.

### Did you know?

Despite the stay home order, travel on the region's freeways did not stop.



The total average daily traffic volume hit its **lowest point the 2nd week of April**.



The number of vehicle miles traveled **increased from mid-April to mid-May**, as compared to the previous 4 week period.



The average peak period speed at eight local hot spots **continued to be significantly faster** during the past 4 weeks, even though traffic was increasing.

### Key Findings

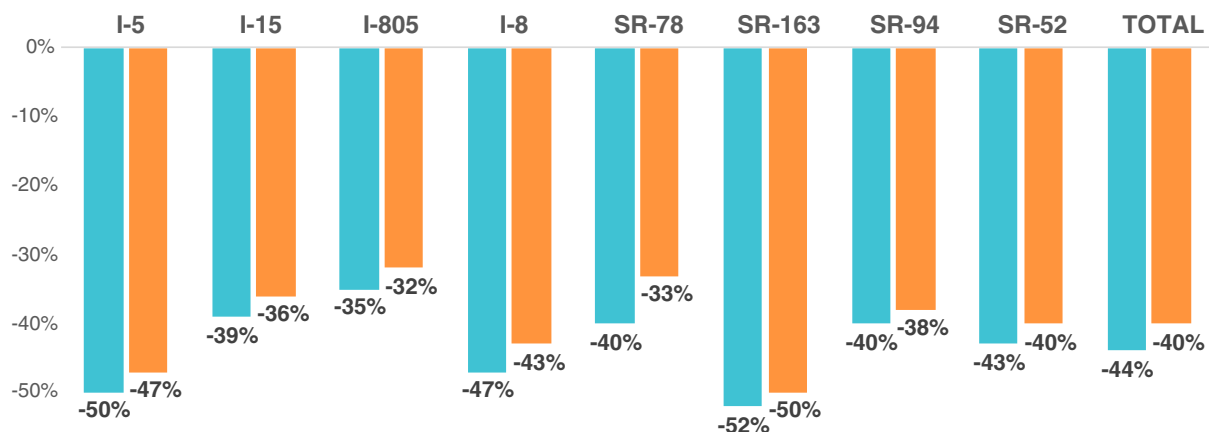
Two measures of the amount of traffic on our freeways are available to track over time – vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and the number of vehicles on our roads, or daily traffic volumes.

From mid-April to mid-May 2020, vehicles traveled almost 460 million miles on our eight local freeways on weekdays. While this is 40% lower than the 770 million miles traveled in 2019, it is higher than the previous month, when 434 million miles were traveled (a figure which is 44% lower than the same time period in 2019).

Vehicles traveled about 26 million more miles on freeways from mid-April to mid-May 2020 than they did from mid-March to mid-April 2020, resulting in a jump of 6%.

FIGURE 1  
Change in weekday VMT mid-March to mid-April and mid-April to mid-May 2019 to 2020

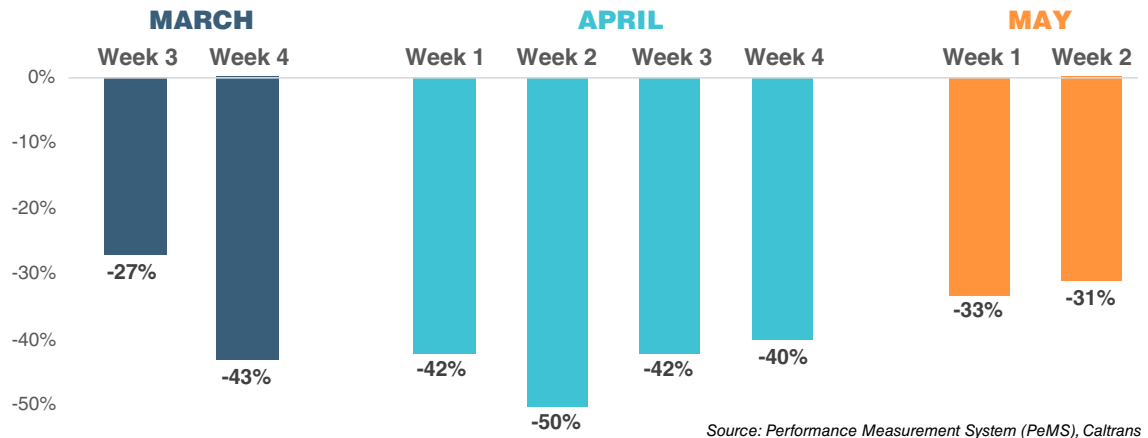
■ March-April  
■ April-May



Source: Performance Measurement System (PeMS), Caltrans

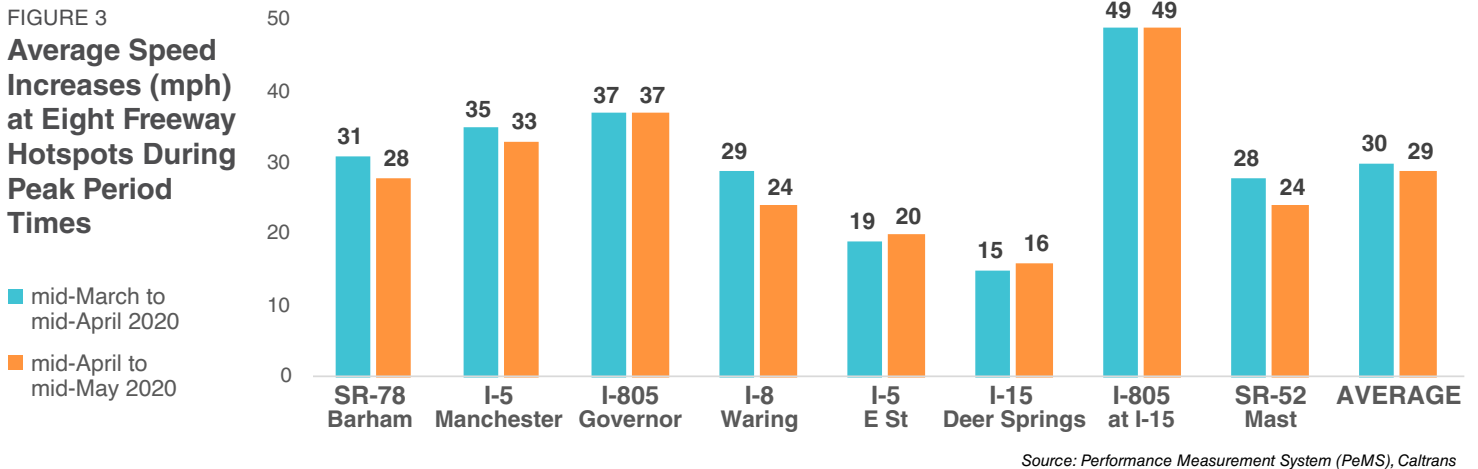
How have daily freeway traffic volumes changed week to week during this eight-week period? As the figure below shows, when examining eight hot spots on the region's freeway system (described in Figure 3), the average daily traffic volumes decreased from the first week to the fourth week, but have increased every week since.

**FIGURE 2**  
Average Decreases in Daily Traffic Volumes at Eight Freeway Hotspots Mid-March to Mid-May 2019 and 2020



Due to the significant reduction in freeway traffic, travel speeds during peak period travel times have increased. While daily traffic volumes have increased during the most recent four weeks, traffic was still moving 29 mph faster in mid-April to mid-May 2020 on average, compared to 2019.

**FIGURE 3**  
Average Speed Increases (mph) at Eight Freeway Hotspots During Peak Period Times



As the San Diego region's economy gradually reopens, traffic on our freeway system is beginning to increase, although it is still significantly lower when compared to the same time in 2019. SANDAG will continue to monitor regional economic measures and evaluate telecommuting rates and how they may relate to regional long-term planning.

## About info

SANDAG serves as the region's clearinghouse for information and data. InfoBits publish timely, relevant information informing the public while providing context on complex issues facing the region.

[sandag.org](http://sandag.org)