



COVID-19 UPDATES

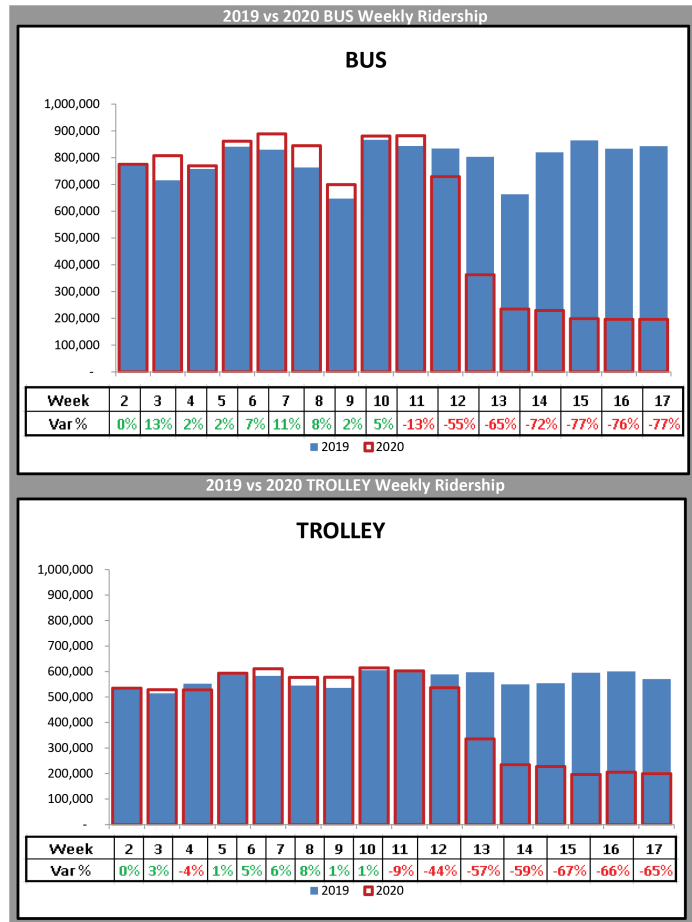
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It's hard to believe that it's already been six weeks since the first stay-at-home orders were issued. If I had to guess, I'd say the state is still two weeks away from loosening up the stay-at-home policies. So, for those of you working at home, please continue to do so until further notice. And for everyone who is coming to work to keep our system running, we will likely keep our service levels where they are for at least another month or two.

As you can see in the chart, our "new normal" ridership numbers have leveled off at about 200,000 trips on bus and 200,000 trips on Trolley each week (weekdays). That translates to about 80,000 trips on an average weekday for the system. That is 72% lower than weekday ridership before the stay-at-home order. Our current service levels allow for adequate physical distancing, but we are constantly monitoring ridership closely to determine whether or not additional service is required.

Our primary focus has been, and will continue to be, on the safety and health of our riders and employees. On Friday, May 1, face coverings will be mandatory for all riders as required by the County of San Diego. Enforcement of this policy will be extremely difficult and our bus operators, supervisors and security personnel will work together to ensure a proper response on a case-by-case basis. We are posting signs all over our system and on our vehicles letting customers know of face covering and physical distancing requirements. Variable message signs, bus header signs and social media have all been utilized to ensure that our message is seen.



We are also accelerating our plans to install barriers between bus operators and riders. Originally intended to provide protection against assaults, these will also help protect our drivers from communicable diseases. These barriers are now in top demand so delivery will take some time. We expect to get two sample barriers in by mid-May to test.

Additionally, procurement has done an excellent job securing all the necessary Personal Protection Equipment. At first, masks were nearly impossible to find, but procurement kept digging and we now have more than 60,000 masks, which is enough for all employees. Many of our employees, and even riders, have made and contributed hundreds of masks as well. Thanks!

As an extra precaution, we are in the process of setting up stations to take temperatures of all employees at IAD, KMD, Trolley and the Mills Building. People with temperatures of 100 degrees or more will be asked to go home.

I believe all of our efforts are working. To date, only eight employees (six MTS employees and two First Transit employees) have tested positive for COVID-19. And two of those workers have completely recovered and are back at work. None are in serious condition. So that is great news! Keep up all of your efforts to stay six-feet away from others, wear face coverings when appropriate and wash your hands frequently. Those are the keys to staying healthy.

I want to commend everyone for their efforts during this time. As you know, MTS had turned the corner on ridership before COVID-19 happened. Through February, we were up more than a million passengers over last year. Even with a huge drop in March, our ridership was just about even with last year. So our ridership loss is really disappointing. Our efforts to develop a project list and expenditure plan via an intense public outreach process – ElevateSD 2020 -- are also sidelined due to COVID-19. Our board earlier this month decided that the time isn't right to ask people to pay more taxes. To sideline Elevate was another big disappointment as polling showed we were really close to the two-thirds threshold to pass the measure.

What is never disappointing is the strong work ethic of MTS employees. No matter what the world throws at us, we always rise to the occasion. This crisis is no different. To me, everyone one of us are heroes as we continue to provide an essential service to the people who need it most.

And we will continue to provide great service. Next month our board will vote on a FY2021 budget. That budget projects about a \$100 million hole due to lost revenues and additional expenses because of the health crisis. The good news is that the CARES Act provides MTS with relief funding to cover that deficit.

The most difficult part of this is not knowing how or when the situation will be resolved. All we can do is keep doing our jobs to our best capability and do everything possible to keep ourselves and our families safe. So keep up the good work everyone. Thanks!