



# *Transit Watch:* Public Transit in Crisis



August 20, 2020

Friends,

Public transit is critical to serving essential workers and others who rely on public transportation as their only form of mobility. Significant ridership and fare revenue declines due to the Covid-19 pandemic threaten the viability and availability of transit services in the near- and long-term.

California's local public transit agencies are going to tremendous lengths, and at great expense, to safely keep the lines open for transit riders and workers. In consultation with our member agencies, the California Transit Association recently released our report, "[The Future of Transit](#)," reflecting recommendations for regaining ridership while also protecting riders, operators and the general public during the COVID-19 pandemic to help rebuild trust in the safety of California's public transit agencies.

Read more about how some of our members are already putting these recommendations into action.

## **SamTrans Increases Service, Enhances Boarding Procedures**

- SamTrans is restoring more frequent service on 14 routes to allow for social distancing, making changes to routes that primarily serve schools to respond to distance learning and installing protective barriers to allow for front-door boarding and fare payment while avoiding contact with bus operators.
- Read more from SamTrans: [SamTrans Increases Service, Enhances Boarding Procedures](#)

## **Transportation during COVID-19: VTA provides safe working environment**

- In order to ensure rider and operator health and safety, VTA trains, Access Paratransit vehicles and transit facilities are being cleaned every day; buses are sanitized at transit centers before and after they come into the yard; and high touchpoint surfaces are disinfected throughout the day.
- The agency is also putting hand sanitizers next to all doors and posting health and safety signage through its facilities to help keep riders safe. For more information about VTA's safety guidelines, learn more [here](#).
- Read more from VTA: [Transportation during COVID-19: VTA provides safe working environment, service for Silicon Valley](#)

## **SMART seeks support for low-income discount program in ticket price review**

- SMART's board members are looking for ways to attract more riders to public transit and improve transit equity for those who rely on its services.
- The agency is looking at decreasing fares as a way to increase ridership and help boost the local economy by getting folks to and from work and maintaining the transit system's viability as it fights to weather the effects of

COVID-19.

- Read more from Santa Rosa Press Democrat: [SMART seeks support for low-income discount program in ticket price review](#)

### **SF's Muni Metro to roll out big changes in August, but reopening carries risks**

- SF Muni has had to reinvent its subway system in order to create a rail service that operates efficiently and with fewer resources in order to abide by social distancing guidelines and providing riders with reliable service; the agency is prioritizing the city's essentials workers and people who don't own cars.
- Read more from San Francisco Chronicle: [SF's Muni Metro to roll out big changes in August, but reopening carries risks](#)

### **LA Metro: We're here for you — here's how to stay safe while riding**

- LA Metro has increased capacity on 95 bus lines in the past month in order to alleviate crowding, and they have been encouraging passengers to abide by social distancing practices as much as possible.
- Metro's buses and trains are thoroughly cleaned each time they begin and end service on a bus route or train line, and high touchpoint surfaces are cleaned and disinfected three times each day at all rail stations, G Line stations, and both El Monte and Harbor Gateway bus stations.
- Read more from The Source: [We're here for you — here's how to stay safe while riding](#)

### **MTS Reminds Passengers Efforts to Keep Buses, Trolleys Sanitized Make Ridership Safe**

- MTS has been conducting outreach efforts to restore rider confidence by handing out PPE to passengers and letting riders know about the health and safety guidelines the agency has implemented to keep riders and operators safe.
- The agency also cleans their buses and trolleys daily, disinfects them nightly, and frequently deep cleans trolley stations.
- Read more from KNSD-TV7 (NBC San Diego): [MTS Reminds Passengers Efforts to Keep Buses, Trolleys Sanitized Make Ridership Safe](#)

For more information, please contact the California Transit Association at [COVID-19@caltransit.org](mailto:COVID-19@caltransit.org).