



State and Federal Legislative Program 2021



Metropolitan Transit System



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San Diego Metropolitan Transit System
2021 State and Federal Legislative Program

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System Summary

Creation

The Metropolitan Transit Development Board (MTDB) was created in 1975 by the passage of California Senate Bill 101 and came into existence on January 1, 1976. In 1984, the Governor signed Senate Bill 1736, which expanded the MTDB governing board from eight to 15 members. In 2002, Senate Bill 1703 merged MTDB's long-range planning, financial programming, project development and construction functions into the regional metropolitan planning organization, the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG). In 2005, MTDB changed its name to the San Diego Metropolitan Transit System (MTS).

Board of Directors

15-member Board generally meets once a month. Members are appointed as follows:

- One member of the County of San Diego Board of Supervisors appointed by the Board of Supervisors.
- Four members of the City Council of the City of San Diego, one of whom shall be the Mayor, appointed by the City Council.
- One member of each city council appointed individually by the City Councils of the Cities of Coronado, El Cajon, Imperial Beach, La Mesa, Lemon Grove, National City, Poway, and Santee.
- Two members of the City Council of the City of Chula Vista, one of whom shall be the Mayor, appointed by the City Council.
- The chairperson of the board shall be selected from the board membership by a two-thirds vote of the board, a quorum being present. The chairperson shall serve for a term of two years, except that he or she is subject to removal at any time by a two-thirds vote of the board, a quorum being present.

Subsidiary Corporations

MTS owns assets of: San Diego Trolley, Inc. (SDTI); San Diego Transit Corporation (SDTC); and the San Diego & Arizona Eastern (SD&AE) Railway Company, which owns 108 miles of track and right-of-way.

Areas of Jurisdiction

About 570 square miles of the urbanized areas of San Diego County as well as the rural parts of East County, 3240 total square miles, serving approximately 3 million people in San Diego County.

Provision of Services

MTS provides bus and rail services directly or by contract with private operators. MTS coordinates all its services and determines the routing, stops, frequencies and hours of operation.

Light Rail

Light rail service is operated by SDTI on four lines (the UC San Diego Blue, Orange, Green and SDG&E Silver Lines) with a total of 53 stations and 54.3 miles of rail.

Bus

Fleet of over 800 buses and over 100 fixed bus routes and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) complementary paratransit service (MTS Access). Fixed route bus services include local, urban, express, premium express and rural routes.

Freight

MTS contracts with the San Diego & Imperial Valley (SD&IV) Railroad and the Baja California Rail Road, Inc. (BJRR) to provide freight service to San Diego shippers over SD&AE right-of-way. SD&IV shares certain tracks with SDTI, operating during non-service Trolley hours.

Operating Budget

Approximately \$278 million annual operating budget; \$96 million comes from fares. Fare revenue accounts for 34.5% of annual operating cost, one of the highest fare box recovery ratios among similar transit systems (FY18).

Ridership

MTS generates 88 million annual passenger trips or 300,000 trips each weekday. To handle the demand, the agency schedules 7,000 trips each weekday, and has 128 trolley cars and 800 buses in its fleet (FY18).

Planning and Scheduling

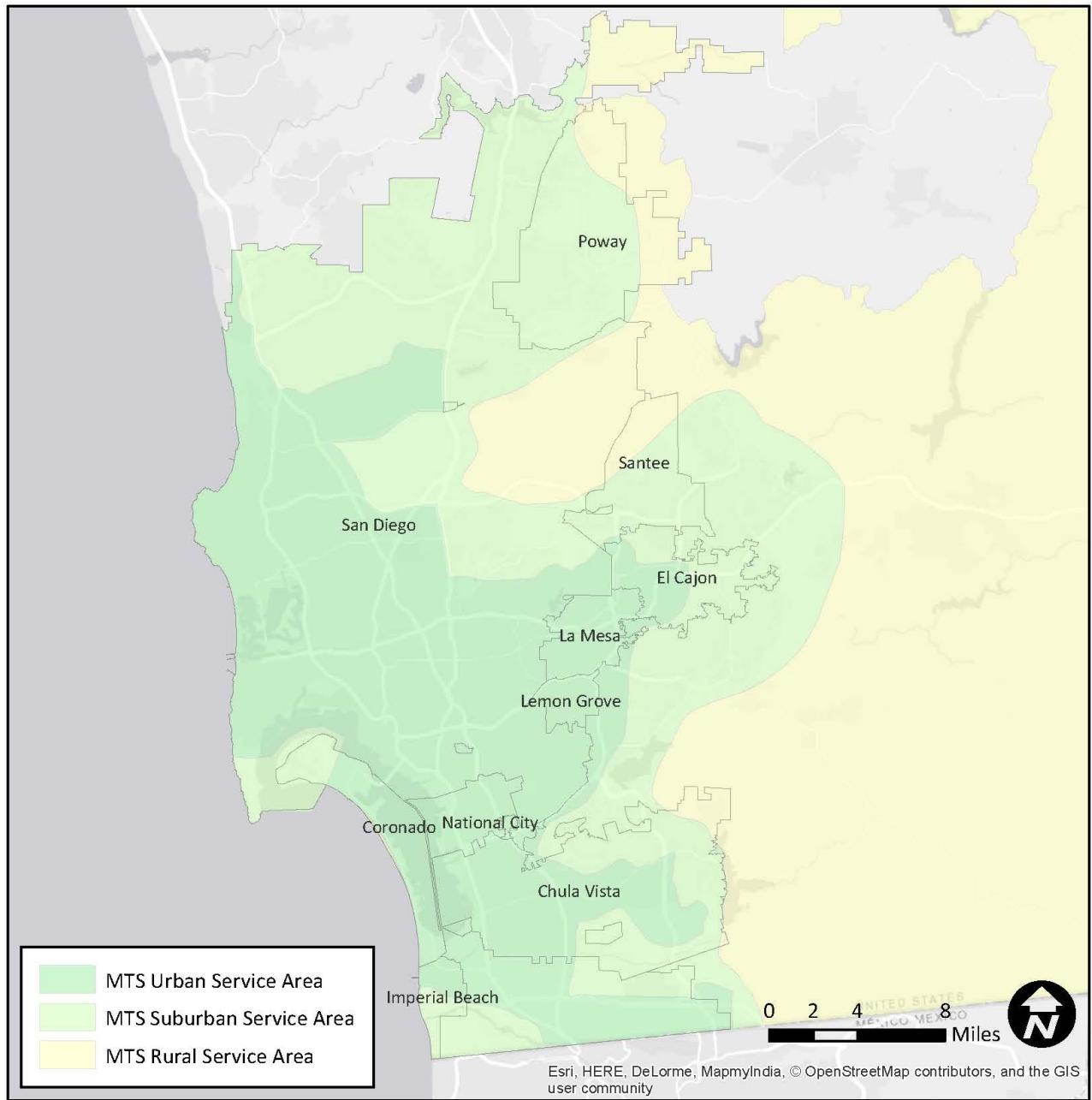
MTS is responsible for the service planning, scheduling, and performance monitoring of all MTS transit services. Service adjustments occur three times per year and as needed to improve efficiency and customer service.

Funding

MTS receives funding from various federal, state, and local sources. The primary sources are the California Transportation Development Act (TDA), Federal Transit Administration (sections 5307, 5337 and 5339), TransNet funds (local sales tax) and fares.

For-Hire Vehicle Administration

MTS licenses and regulates taxicabs, jitneys, and other private for-hire passenger transportation services by contract with the cities of San Diego, Chula Vista, El Cajon, Imperial Beach, La Mesa, Lemon Grove, National City, Poway, and Santee.



San Diego Metropolitan Transit System

Area of Jurisdiction

June 2020



2021 State Legislative Program

I. Transit Funding

- Support legislation that would generate new revenue for transit projects and operating costs.
- Oppose legislation that would reduce direct funding to transit agencies or transportation funding in general.
- Oppose legislation that would expand the use of Transportation Development Act (TDA) funds to non-transit purposes not currently covered by statute.
- Support legislation that would help offset the impact on transit budgets caused by increases in fuel and energy costs.
- In partnership with interested cities, seek funding dedicated to grade-separation projects.
- Support legislation to exempt transit agencies from state sales tax.
- Seek favorable programmatic guidelines for Cap and Trade Program-related funding sources, and seek awards under all relevant programs.
 - Support member agency applications for all relevant programs funded by Cap and Trade auctions.
- Oppose attempts to legislate local fare programs or to remove fare setting decisions from transit agencies.
- Seek subsidies for specialized fare programs supported by the MTS Board.
- Seek funding to help implement Youth Opportunity Passes in San Diego.
- Seek funding or policies that would facilitate better utilization of the San Diego waterways as a viable transportation option.
- Seek opportunities for funding or policies to help improve system infrastructure as a means to increase the safety of transit riders.
- Seek funding for zero emission buses and electrification infrastructure.
 - Support favorable electric rate setting to incentivize deployment of zero emission bus technology.
 - Support standardization of charging infrastructure and on-board bus charge management systems.
- Seek funding for the following capital projects:
 - 12th and Imperial Transit Center Expansion
 - Bus Stop Improvements
 - Expansion of Trolley Yard
 - MTS Bus Replacement Vehicles
 - New Bus Maintenance Facility
 - San Ysidro Intermodal Transit Center
 - SD 100 Light Rail Vehicle Replacements
 - Traction Power Substation Replacements
 - Zero Emission Buses and Electrification Infrastructure

II. Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic

- Support legislation that would provide funding and policy relief measures to public transit agencies in order to continue operating essential transportation services during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Support policies and public health measures that protect the safety and wellbeing of transit riders and public transit employees during the COVID-19 pandemic, while maintaining sufficient levels of service to facilitate essential transit trips.

III. Equity and Social Justice

- Support equity and social justice measures that encourage inclusivity in public engagement and outreach efforts in order to better serve and deliver equitable transportation options.

IV. Homelessness

- Seek funding and resources to implement a program that helps persons experiencing homelessness throughout the MTS system.

V. Climate Change

- Support state and other governmental agency efforts that help address issues of climate change.
- Seek legislative opportunities for funding and policies that increase transit's ability to play a lead role in addressing issues of climate change.

VI. Transit-Oriented Development

- Support legislation that provides funding incentives for mixed-use projects and transit oriented development.
- Support legislation that aids transit operators' efforts to create high density transit-oriented development.
- In partnership with interested cities, seek changes to Surplus Land Act statutes that would allow MTS development and joint development projects to be planned and designed in a way that benefits and achieves the region's important housing, climate action, and economic development goals.

VII. Public Safety

- Oppose legislation or regulations that would have an adverse impact on transit agencies' ability to provide safe transportation to their customers.

VIII. For-Hire Vehicle Administration

- Seek changes to MTS enabling statutes that would allow MTS to regulate for-hire vehicle transportation services for the County of San Diego or any City within the County of San Diego.

IX. Regulatory Matters

- Support legislation that would facilitate the delivery of transit capital projects.
- Oppose unfunded mandates that negatively impact transit operators.
 - Seek dedicated funding to offset costs when new regulatory requirements are proposed.
- Oppose legislation that adversely limits the use of eminent domain for public transportation projects.
- Oppose legislation that would limit MTS's use of data to provide better service to customers.
- Oppose efforts to eliminate or restrict transit exemption provisions in the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

- Seek changes to Medi-Cal Benefits Program statute clarifying that transit operators shall be reimbursed for Medi-Cal eligible paratransit trips.

X. Labor Relations

- Monitor and respond to legislation relating to personnel matters.
- Support legislation that protects the integrity of collective bargaining agreements.
 - Oppose efforts to mandate benefits or working conditions.
- Monitor and respond to legislation designed to clarify provisions of the Public Employees' Pension Reform Act of 2012.

XI. Administration

- Seek changes to MTS enabling statutes that would allow Ordinance summaries to be posted on the agency's public website.
- Seek changes to MTS enabling statutes that would amend MTS contracting thresholds to align with the Federal Transit Administration.

XII. Support Legislative Programs of Other Agencies or Organizations

- Support the legislative programs of other agencies, such as the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) and North County Transit District (NCTD), where consistent with the MTS legislative program.
- Support provisions in the legislative programs of other organizations, such as the California Transit Association (CTA) and American Public Transportation Association (APTA), where consistent with the MTS legislative program.

2021 Federal Legislative Program

I. Transit Funding

- Support legislation that would generate an increase in appropriation levels for existing transit funding program.
- Oppose legislation that would reduce direct funding to transit agencies or transportation in general.
- Support legislation that would help offset the impact on transit budgets caused by increases in fuel costs.
- Support legislation that would generate new revenue for transit projects and operating costs.
 - Support new long-term surface transportation reauthorization legislation that provides increased levels of funding for transportation programs.
 - Advocate for positive outcomes in any new infrastructure funding program.
- Support legislation to bring funding to railroad corridors and seek funding for railroad bridge and infrastructure rehabilitation.
- Seek funding to offset the costs associated with implementation and deployment of zero emission bus technologies.
- Seek funding or policies that would facilitate better utilization of the San Diego waterways as a viable transportation option.
- Seek opportunities for funding or policies to help improve system infrastructure as a means to increase the safety of transit riders.
- Seek programs in the defense appropriation process that would help offset the cost to provide transit services for military facilities.
- Oppose attempts to discontinue federal funding for school paratransit services or for nonemergency medical transport.
- Seek a legislative fix to ensure that transit operators will be reimbursed for paratransit services for Medicaid eligible trips.
- Seek funding for the following capital projects:
 - 12th and Imperial Transit Center Expansion
 - Bus Stop Improvements
 - Expansion of Trolley Yard
 - MTS Bus Replacement Vehicles
 - New Bus Maintenance Facility
 - San Ysidro Intermodal Transit Center
 - SD 100 Light Rail Vehicle Replacements
 - Traction Power Substation Replacements
 - Zero Emission Buses and Electrification Infrastructure

II. Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic

- Support legislation that would provide funding and policy relief measures to public transit agencies in order to continue operating essential transportation services during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Support policies and public health measures that protect the safety and wellbeing of transit riders and public transit employees during the COVID-19 pandemic, while maintaining sufficient levels of service to facilitate essential transit trips.
- Support new federal emergency and economic stimulus measures that include direct funding for public transit agencies via Federal Transit Administration Formula Grants.

III. Equity and Social Justice

- Support equity and social justice measures that encourage inclusivity in public engagement and outreach efforts in order to better serve and deliver equitable transportation options.

IV. Homelessness

- Seek funding and resources to implement a program that helps persons experiencing homelessness throughout the MTS system.

V. Climate Change

- Support federal and other governmental agency efforts that help address issues of climate change.
- Seek legislative opportunities for funding and policies that increase transit's ability to play a lead role in addressing issues of climate change.

VI. Public Safety

- Oppose attempts to create duplicative state rail safety regulatory agencies.
- Support legislation that provides reimbursement to transit operators for lost employee work hours due to emergency preparedness and antiterrorism training.
- Oppose legislation or regulations that would have an adverse impact on transit agencies' ability to provide safe transportation to their customers.

VII. Regulatory Matters

- Support legislation that would facilitate the delivery of capital projects.
- Oppose unfunded mandates that negatively impact transit operators.
 - Seek funding for all newly mandated programs.
- Support efforts to increase competition in the fuel market.
- Oppose proposals that limit the use of eminent domain for public transportation projects.
- Monitor and respond to legislation in the areas of finance, employment, and safety that could affect agency governance or operations, including issues related to contractors.
- Support efforts to ensure that climate change legislation recognizes that transit investment can help achieve emission reduction goals, and seek inclusion of transit funding in any climate change legislation.
- Oppose efforts to enlarge the universe of paratransit service eligibility to classifications of individuals that could effectively be served through fixed route services.
- Seek limits on the interpretation of the Americans with Disabilities Act with regard to service animals.
- Monitor and respond to attempts to alter Access Guidelines in a way that would financially burden transit operators without providing funding.
- Seek positive closure to the Department of Labor's case regarding the California Public Employees' Pension Reform Act (PEPRA).
- Seek approval for the operation of cross border rail freight. Work with Customs and Border Protection to seek approval for a new Customs Inspection Facility to serve cross border rail freight.

VIII. Support Legislative Programs of Other Agencies or Organizations

- Support the legislative programs of other agencies, such as the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) and North County Transit District (NCTD), where consistent with the MTS legislative program.
- Support provisions in the legislative programs of other organizations, such as the California Transit Association (CTA) and American Public Transportation Association (APTA), where consistent with the MTS legislative program.