



Metropolitan
Transit
System

State and Federal Legislative Program 2023



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San Diego Metropolitan Transit System
2023 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 per 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

Approximately 570 square miles of the urbanized areas of San Diego County as well as the rural parts of East County, 3,240 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 Silver Lines) with a total of 62 stations and 65 miles of rail.

Bus

Almost 100 fixed bus routes and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) 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 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 \$300 million annual operating budget; one-third of that budget comes from fare revenue.

Ridership

MTS generates 88 million annual passenger trips or 300,000 trips each weekday pre-COVID. To handle the demand, the agency schedules 7,000 trips each weekday, and has 160+ trolley cars and 750 buses in its fleet.

Planning and Scheduling

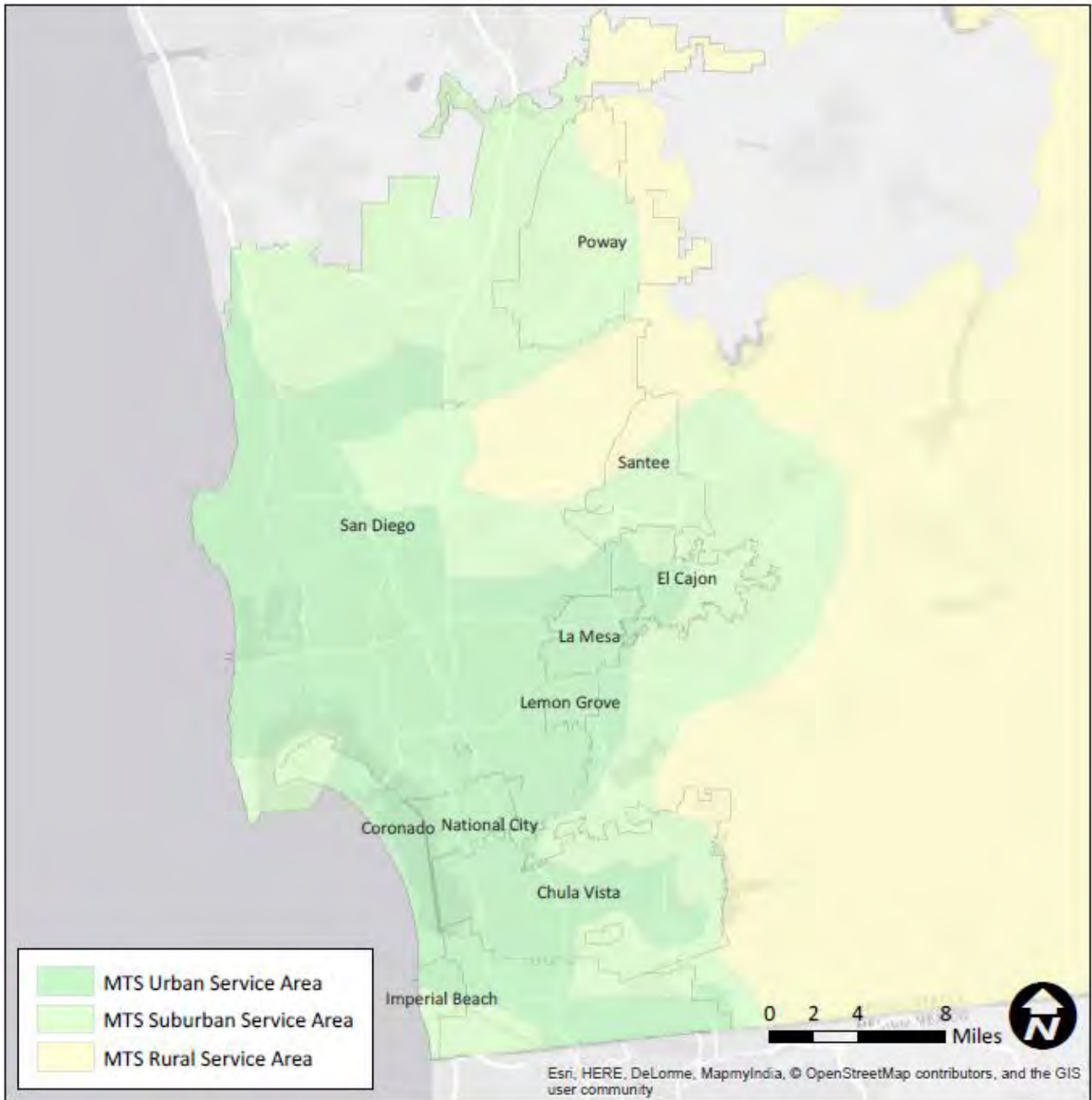
MTS is responsible for the service planning, scheduling, and performance monitoring of all MTS transit services. Service adjustments occur three times per year and as needed to improve efficiency and customer service.

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 2022



2023 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.
- Support legislation to extend existing Transportation Development Act (TDA) statutory relief through Fiscal Year 2025.
 - Collaborate with the California Transit Association and other California transit agencies on reviewing existing metrics for the qualification and distribution of TDA revenues to pursue future legislation to reform TDA law more holistically beyond the current statutory relief.
- Oppose legislation that would expand the use of TDA funds to non-transit purposes not currently covered by statute.
- Support legislation that would eliminate the requirement or need of transit agencies to have a fare box recovery and replace with state and/or federal funding which would clearly permit public transit to be free to all users.
- Support legislation which increases funding systems for public transit operations and development, while at the same time reducing regional vehicles miles traveled.
- 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.
- Support 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 of Directors.
- Seek funding to continue Youth Opportunity Passes in San Diego beyond the pilot period.
- Support legislation that incentivizes increased transit ridership.
- Seek opportunities to provide more maritime transit services.
- 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 subsidies for the operation of public restrooms at transit stations.
- Support favorable electric rate setting to incentivize deployment of zero emission bus technology.

- Seek funding for the following capital projects:
 - Clean Transit Advancement Campus
 - Zero Emission Buses and Electrification Infrastructure
 - MTS Bus Replacement Vehicles
 - Bus Stop Improvements
 - Light Rail Vehicle Replacements
 - Traction Power Substation Replacements
 - Grade Separation Projects
 - Light Rail Vehicle Maintenance Building Expansion
 - Orange Line Signaling Improvements
 - Blue to Green Line Double Tracking
 - Trolley to the Airport
 - Seek funding for other MTS provided effective transit opportunities to better connect to the San Diego International Airport.

II. Equity and Social Justice

- Support equity and social justice measures that help to better serve and deliver equitable transportation options.

III. Homelessness

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

IV. Climate Change

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

V. 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.
- Support legislation related to zoning and permitting processes that advance maximum density transit-oriented development projects.
- 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.

VI. Public Safety

- Oppose legislation or regulations that would have an adverse impact on transit agencies' ability to provide safe transportation to their customers.
- Support legislation that promotes employee safety, including higher penalties for assaults on transit workers.
- Support Legislation which funds and expands the data collection, studies, and programs to reduce harassment of transit users as a public health and safety issue particularly when the victims are women, disabled or transgender and when race, gender, sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, age, appearance, body type, ableism or culture are the basis for the harassment.

VII. 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 current personal identifiable information data standards to provide better service to customers.
- Oppose efforts to eliminate or restrict transit exemption provisions in the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).
- Seek legislation to require Medi-Cal managed care plans to reimburse public transit agencies for Medi-Cal eligible paratransit trips.
- Support legislation that ensures electricity is prioritized for transit agencies.
- Support standardization of charging infrastructure and on-board bus charge management systems.

VIII. 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.

IX. Administration

- Seek changes to California Public Records Act clarifying that public agency contracts are public records subject to disclosure.
- Support mechanisms to provide post-conviction relief to individuals with records of MTS violations.

X. 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.

2023 Federal Legislative Program

I. Transit Funding

- Support legislation that would generate an increase in appropriation levels for existing transit funding programs.
- Oppose legislation that would reduce direct funding to transit agencies.
- 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 legislation that incentivizes increased transit ridership.
- Support legislation that would eliminate the requirement or need of transit agencies to have a fare box recovery and replace with state and/or federal funding which would clearly permit public transit to be free to all users.
- Support legislation which increases funding systems for public transit operations and development, while at the same time reducing regional vehicles miles traveled.
- 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 opportunities to provide more maritime transit services.
- 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.
- Oppose attempts to discontinue federal funding for school paratransit services or for nonemergency medical transport.
- Seek funding for the following capital projects:
 - Clean Transit Advancement Campus
 - Zero Emission Buses and Electrification Infrastructure
 - MTS Bus Replacement Vehicles
 - Bus Stop Improvements

- Light Rail Vehicle Replacements
- Traction Power Substation Replacements
- Grade Separation Projects
- Light Rail Vehicle Maintenance Building Expansion
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- Support equity and social justice measures that help to better serve and deliver equitable transportation options.

III. Homelessness

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

IV. Climate Change

- Support federal and other governmental agency efforts that help address issues of climate change.
- Support legislative opportunities for funding and policies that increase transit's ability to play a lead role in addressing issues of climate change.
- Support efforts to ensure climate change legislation recognizes that transit investment can help achieve emission reduction goals, and seek inclusion of transit funding in climate change legislation.

V. Public Safety

- Oppose attempts to create duplicative rail safety regulatory agencies.
- Oppose legislation or regulations that would have an adverse impact on transit agencies' ability to provide safe transportation to their customers.
- Support legislation that promotes employee safety, including higher penalties for assaults on transit workers.
- Support Legislation which funds and expands the data collection, studies, and programs to reduce harassment of transit users as a public health and safety issue particularly when the victims are women, disabled or transgender and when race, gender, sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, age, appearance, body type, ableism or culture are the basis for the harassment.

VI. 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.
- Oppose efforts to broaden paratransit service eligibility classifications of individuals that could effectively be served through fixed route services.
- Support limitations 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).

VII. 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.