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Video b-roll available on [Dropbox](#)

MTS experiences 20% surge in ridership last week, preliminary estimates show

San Diego – With gas prices hitting record highs and no end in sight, more and more San Diego residents are turning to transit to find relief. The San Diego Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) has seen a significant spike in transit ridership in recent months, and even more so in recent weeks as gas prices continue to soar.

“MTS was budgeting for an 11% increase in ridership over last fiscal year. Our new estimates show ridership will jump 45% over the previous year,” said Sharon Cooney, MTS chief executive officer. “We still have room to grow to get back to pre-pandemic levels, but these are great indicators. This sustained growth coupled with recent ridership spikes prove that people are motivated to save money, and still know that transit is a safe and affordable way to get around.”

MTS has developed a [dedicated webpage](#) with a commute calculator for those interested in learning about the cost of driving alone vs. taking transit. The calculator factors in information such as commuting miles, estimated miles per gallon, parking costs, number of days commuting and price per gallon of fuel. The agency has also launched digital advertisements to educate commuters about the costs of driving vs. taking transit. Commuters interested in skipping the pump and seeing how much they can save with transit can visit sdmts.com/commute.

Preliminary ridership estimates from last week show:

Ridership was up to nearly 200,000 trips per weekday (197,000) for the week of March 7-11, which is approximately 70% of the pre-COVID baseline.

This is the highest ridership has been since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic

Trolley ridership has grown to more than 80% of pre-pandemic level

On Wednesday, March 9, ridership jumped 102% systemwide vs. the same day in 2021

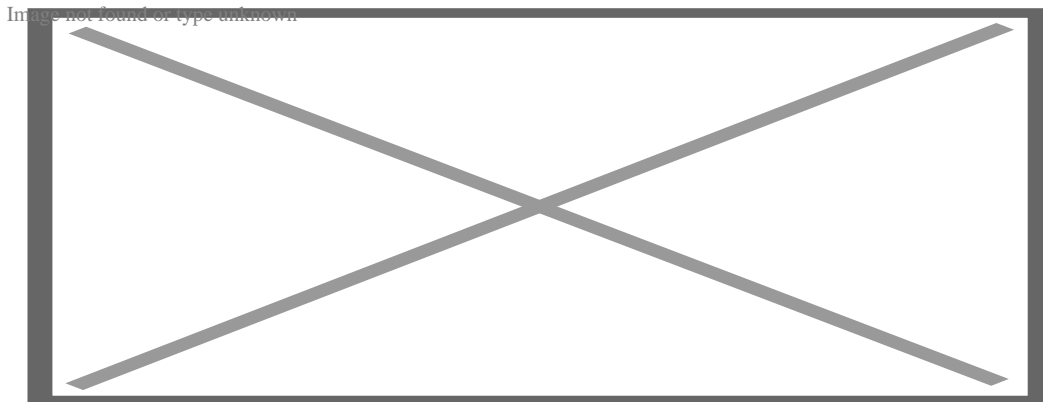
111% ridership increase on Trolleys

94% ridership increase on buses

Additionally, year-over-year comparison by month shows that ridership has consistently been significantly higher compared to last year. Even during the height of the Omicron surge in January, MTS transit ridership showed consistent improvement over 2021. In February, MTS hit its highest monthly increase in ridership over the same month last year.

FY 2022	BUS	TROLLEY	ACCESS	TOTAL	Compared to FY21
Jul	2,050,500	2,068,672	13,918	4,133,090	32%
Aug	2,116,519	2,163,600	14,884	4,295,003	37%
Sep	2,601,433	2,299,331	15,322	4,916,086	53%
Oct	2,438,818	2,253,978	16,105	4,708,901	32%
Nov	2,293,692	2,326,209	15,842	4,635,743	49%
Dec	1,965,989	2,404,259	15,124	4,385,372	49%
Jan	1,910,697	2,308,344	12,566	4,231,607	53%
Feb	2,042,824	2,417,108	14,169	4,474,101	59%
TOTAL	17,420,472	18,241,500	117,930	35,779,902	45%

Another positive development for transit is that the UC San Diego Blue Line is performing exceptionally well since the 11-mile extension to UTC opened in November 2021. The Blue Line is now averaging nearly 60,000 trips per weekday since the start of February. This is approximately a 33% ridership increase since the extension opened on November 21.



MTS operates more than 100 bus routes and three Trolley lines in 10 cities and unincorporated areas of San Diego. Frequencies and spans have been restored to near-pre-COVID-19 levels. Updated schedules can be accessed on the MTS website. Federal law requires passengers to wear face coverings at all times, and MTS requests that riders practice physical distancing when possible.

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Contact: Mark Olson. 619-557-4588 . mark.olson@sdmts.com

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