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[Home](#) > FY22 Report: MTS Ridership Climbs by Nearly 50%

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Ridership trends reach approximately 200,000 trips on weekdays

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San Diego- Ridership on the Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) continues to climb, exceeding five million trips a month since March 2022. The latest Fiscal Year 2022 (FY22) report revealed an increase in ridership of 52% for Trolley and 41% for bus when compared to FY21. Between July 2021 to June 2022, Trolley ridership totaled 29.7 million trips compared to 19.5 million in the previous fiscal year. Bus ridership totaled 27.7 million trips compared to 19.6 million trips the year prior.

The COVID-19 pandemic provided a major challenge for transit agencies across the country as commute habits changed, including MTS where ridership plummeted to about 30% of normal levels in April 2020. Ridership has since been able to recover to approximately 75% of pre-pandemic levels, and reached approximately 200,000 weekday trips in the spring-summer of 2022.

Historical Milestones:

The largest increase in Trolley ridership was seen on the UC San Diego Blue Line, which went up by 66%, jumping from 10.4 million rides the prior fiscal year to 17.4 million. In November 2021, MTS inaugurated an 11-mile Mid-Coast Trolley extension to UTC, and this allowed for the largest increase in ridership in one year for any line in the history of MTS.

ROUTE	FY 2022	FY 2021	VAR %
Blue	17,366,905	10,468,636	66%
Orange	5,571,123	4,047,094	38%
Green	6,799,373	5,000,525	36%
Silver	2,098	82	2459%
TROLLEY	29,739,499	19,516,337	52%

Getting Back to School and Office:

Some of the largest increases in ridership were along routes that serve major school and employment centers. The *Rapid 201/202/204* routes all saw over 300% jumps in ridership as UC San Diego students and staff returned to school in person.

Bus ridership also increased to more than one million trips each for the system’s highest

performing bus routes which include *Rapid* 215 and Routes 7, 13 and 929, and serve areas of City Heights, Downtown, City College, South Bay and Grantville.

Youth Ride Free:

In May 2022, MTS, North County Transit District (NCTD) and San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) launched the Youth Opportunity Pass (YOP) Pilot program, which allows Youth 18 and under to ride free. Following the launch of YOP, Youth bus ridership jumped 34% in the first month of free transit (May vs April 2022), and remained high in June, even as schools were no longer in session (18% increase over April 2022).

MTS operates more than 100 bus routes and three Trolley lines in 10 cities and unincorporated areas of San Diego.

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