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San Diego – The San Diego Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) will celebrate the Trolley's 40th anniversary on Saturday, July 31 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., with a community celebration open to the public.

The free event at the E Street Trolley Station in Chula Vista will celebrate North America's first modern light rail system. Attendees will enjoy vintage trolley tours, '80s music, break dancers, free food, and family activities, including a blow-up obstacle course for kids and face painting. The event will also feature remarks from elected officials, local businesses, a long-time Trolley rider, and community leaders.

The MTS Trolley led a renaissance in light rail development when it was launched in July 1981. Today, MTS has one of the most productive light rail systems in the United States. The four-line, 54.3-mile system served more than 32 million passengers in FY 2019. More than 30 cities across North America have emulated the famous red Trolley light rail system.

"It's the millions of Trolley riders who have made this one of the most successful transportation projects in the United States," said Alejandra Sotelo-Solis, MTS Board Vice Chair and Mayor of National City. "This celebration is for the people who have made the Trolley successful for four decades."

Over the last 40 years, the Trolley has been instrumental in San Diego's economic growth by supporting transportation and its direct effect on jobs, capital spending, tourism, the environment, and real estate development. It has also played a significant role in the success of the San Diego Convention Center, Comic-Con, and major sporting events including Super Bowls, Holiday Bowls, San Diego Padres games, and concerts at Qualcomm Stadium and Petco Park.

Much of the Trolley's success has been due to the link it provides for workers living in Mexico with employers in San Diego, with about 19,000 Trolley and bus trips serving the border daily. As an essential part of the busiest land-border crossing in the Western Hemisphere, MTS serves more than one-half of all individuals crossing the border in San Ysidro.

"Tijuana and San Diego are inherently linked, and the Trolley provides a vital connection between the two regions," said Sharon Cooney, MTS Chief Executive Officer. "The Trolley brings families together, creates access to jobs, and provides educational opportunities."

The Trolley runs on four lines – Blue, Orange, Green, and Silver Lines – with 54 stations. The UC San Diego Blue Line opened first as the South Line, operating between Downtown San Diego and San Ysidro. The San Ysidro Transit Station is adjacent to the Mexico-U.S. Port of Entry,

easing connections across the border.

The UC San Diego Blue Line has been lengthened 11 miles from Old Town to UTC. The extension is scheduled to open with nine new stations in November 2021. The expanded route offers a one-seat ride from the U.S.- Mexico border to University Town Center.

MTS operates 95 bus routes and three Trolley lines across 10 cities and unincorporated areas of San Diego County. Frequencies and spans have been restored to near-pre-COVID-19 levels. Updated schedules can be accessed on the MTS website. MTS requires people to wear face coverings at all times and practice physical distancing when possible.

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