



Published on *MTS Intranet* (<https://mtsnet.demosite.us>)

[Home](#) > Powered Up: First Trolley Rides Mid-Coast Tracks and Enters Tecolote Station

Tuesday, June 29, 2021

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

[B-roll and photos are on Dropbox](#)

[News Conference FB Live](#)

Date: June 29, 2021

San Diego –Transportation leaders and transit advocates from around the region gathered to witness the first-ever Trolley on the Mid-Coast Extension of the UC San Diego Blue Line. The milestone signifies that train testing is beginning and that the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) is officially transferring responsibility to the San Diego Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) for operations.

“This is an important day,” said Nathan Fletcher, MTS Board Chair and Chair, San Diego County Board of Supervisors. “We get the keys to Mid-Coast and it’s all-systems-go for testing our Trolleys on the tracks. The public will see more and more of San Diego’s famous red Trolleys testing on these tracks over the next several months. MTS will be working hard to train staff to get ready for the November launch.”

The Mid-Coast Extension of the UC San Diego Blue Line Trolley is a priority project for SANDAG and will have a transformative impact on regional transit connectivity. The project will expand the current Trolley network to provide a one-seat ride from the U.S./Mexico Border all the way north to the University community. The extension will connect the two largest employment centers in San Diego – the University area and Downtown San Diego, serve UC San Diego which supports 75,000 students, faculty and staff, and provide healthcare access to the VA San Diego Healthcare System’s 84,500 Veterans.

Major construction for the 11-mile Trolley extension began in 2016, and the project remains on budget and on schedule to begin service in November 2021.

“The Mid-Coast Extension of the UC San Diego Blue Line Trolley is the largest infrastructure project in our region’s history, and a testament to what we can achieve when local agencies like SANDAG and MTS work together,” said SANDAG Chair and Encinitas Mayor Catherine Blakespear. “This project will give people real transportation choices. As we approach the completion of this project, we also move one step closer to realizing SANDAG’s vision for a faster, fairer, and cleaner transportation system for generations to come.”

MTS and SANDAG also wants to remind people that there is no public access to the

stations or the tracks during the testing period. Construction is still ongoing on portions of the extension and active trains will be on the tracks. Testing and training on the extension will take place for approximately five months to ensure the system is ready to carry passengers. Key dates for testing include:

- June 29 - September 10 - MTS Rail Activation Committee will test train operation aspects of the system including vehicle and system interface testing, traction power, braking, speed and travel time verification.
- September 10 - MTS Rail Activation Committee testing is anticipated to be complete
- September 11 - the six north-end stations are anticipated to be complete and MTS will take on security, facilities and maintenance for those stations and the full alignment.
- September 17 - MTS will begin training operators and supervisors on the full 11-mile extension
- November 21 - MTS is planning to open the full alignment for revenue service

To support the extra service, MTS has added 45 new Trolleys built by Siemens Mobility and partially funded by TransNet, the region's half-cent sales tax for transportation projects. MTS added 128 new positions including train operators, security, maintenance, IT and more to manage the extension. MTS has also made significant enhancements to its bus service to align with the Trolley extension, and better-connect residents to the new Trolley stations. MTS will replace two existing express routes, modify seven existing east-west connections and implement three new routes that connect to the Trolley.

About MTS

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.

About SANDAG

SANDAG's Mission

We are the regional agency that connects people, places, and innovative ideas by implementing solutions with our unique and diverse communities.

SANDAG's Vision

Pursuing a brighter future for all

Our Commitment to Equity

We hold ourselves accountable to the communities we serve. We acknowledge we have much to learn and much to change; and we firmly uphold equity and inclusion for every person in the San Diego region. This includes historically underserved, systemically marginalized groups impacted by actions and inactions at all levels of our government and society.

We have an obligation to eliminate disparities and ensure that safe, healthy, accessible, and inclusive opportunities are available to everyone. In 2021, SANDAG will develop an equity action plan that will inform how we plan, prioritize, fund, and build projects and programs; frame how we work with our communities; define how we recruit and develop our employees; guide our efforts to conduct unbiased research and interpret data; and set expectations for companies and stakeholders that work with us.

We are committed to creating a San Diego region where every person who visits, works, and lives can thrive.

COVID-19 Response

To protect the health and safety of everyone, SANDAG offices are closed to the public. Most employees are teleworking to provide essential services and continue progress on critical regional projects. We continue to monitor COVID-19 in the region and follow guidance from the San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency.

Facebook: SANDAGregion

Twitter: SANDAG

Instagram: SANDAGregion

LinkedIn: San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG)

YouTube: SANDAGregion, SANDAGmeetings

Media Contacts:

Mark Olson, MTS

mark.olson@sdmts.com

(858) 354-1441 cell

(619) 557-4588

Jessica Gonzales, SANDAG

Jessica.gonzales@sandag.org

(323) 326-4226 cell

(619) 699-1950

###

News Category:
San Diego

Source URL:<https://mtsnet.demosite.us/news/powered-first-trolley-rides-mid-coast-tracks-and-enters-tecolote-station>