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**San Diego** – The San Diego Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) and North County Transit District (NCTD) announced today that the agencies will hold the region’s second “Free Ride Day” on Wednesday, Oct. 2. Fixed-route bus and rail services will be free for everyone to use.

Free Ride Day is being held in conjunction with California Clean Air Day also on Oct. 2, and SANDAG iCommute efforts to promote Rideshare Week, September 30 – October 4, to educate people about the sustainable transportation choices available in the San Diego region.

“Last year, MTS recorded a 17 percent increase in passenger trips on Free Ride Day. It was a great success to get that many San Diego residents to shake up their routine and choose transit,” said Mona Rios, MTS Board Vice Chair and Councilmember for National City. “Choosing transit is absolutely critical for this region as we all strive to meet our climate action goals. We need to do everything we can to get people to use alternative modes of transportation.”

“North County Transit District is a proud supporter of Clean Air Day. We value the opportunity to reduce air pollutants and the number of personal vehicles on the road by offering free rides on our buses and trains all day on October 2,” said NCTD Board Chair and City of Encinitas Councilmember Tony Kranz. “San Diegans recognize the importance of protecting the environment, and NCTD is excited to provide public transportation at no cost so commuters can see for themselves how simple it can be to catch a bus or train to their destination while also reducing their carbon footprint.”

“SANDAG is proud to be a part of this joint effort with MTS and NCTD. We want to educate San Diegans about alternative transportation choices and provide people with more options as we strive to build a world-class transportation system,” said SANDAG Vice Chair and Encinitas Mayor Katherine Blakespear. “We encourage all single riders to consider giving carpool, vanpool, or transit a try during Rideshare Week. Making the change even one day a week will take cars off the road and increase sustainability and quality of life in the San Diego region.”

Free Ride Day will be valid on all MTS and NCTD fixed-routes services including buses, the Trolley, SPRINTER and COASTER (Amtrak Rail 2 Rail, MTS Access and NCTD LIFT paratransit are not part of this promotion). Passengers will not need a Compass Card or valid fare for either system. MTS and NCTD services will operate on a normal weekday schedule. Participants who plan to choose transit on Free Ride Day are encouraged to RSVP through the MTS Facebook page event, or online at the Free Ride Day webpage. When they do, they’ll receive reminders about Free Ride Day, tips for taking transit, and more.

“Last year, MTS logged 53,000 extra passenger trips on Free Ride Day and the Sycuan Green

Line Trolley's ridership spiked 37 percent," said MTS chief executive officer Paul Jablonski. "We want even more residents this year to try it out and experience the thriving network of transportation options in San Diego."

Free Ride Day will be supported by all cities in the region, the County of San Diego, and other major employers. Everyone is using the day to encourage the increased use of transit.

SANDAG, MTS, and NCTD have partnered to celebrate the regional Rideshare Week, which is a nationally recognized event. On Monday, September 30 through Friday, October 4, transportation organizations in San Diego County will celebrate the many benefits of commuter alternatives. Employers are invited to register to participate and encourage employees to try ridesharing during Rideshare Week.

Last year, MTS made many investments in its service to increase frequency and speed service, and just introduced Rapid 225 in the South Bay, which provides high-frequency and limited stop service from Otay Mesa to Downtown San Diego. Check out the agency's high-frequency network here.

NCTD partnered with SANDAG and the City of Carlsbad to launch the Carlsbad Connector, an on-demand app that serves as a mobility hub. In the coming years, NCTD looks forward to partnering with other cities for additional mobility hubs, improving service frequencies on COASTER to every 30 minutes, and offering enhanced customer services throughout the region.

To plan a trip on transit, visit the MTS or NCTD website and enter your starting and end points. It will display a series of travel options. For Free Ride Day, just get on board, sit down and relax.

### **About the Partners**

MTS operates 95 bus routes and three Trolley lines on 53 miles of double-tracked railway. Every weekday more than 300,000 passenger trips are taken on MTS bus and Trolley services in 10 cities and the county. In FY 2017, MTS served more than 88 million riders. For more information on how you can use public transportation and save money, go to [www.sdmts.com](http://www.sdmts.com).

The North County Transit District is a public transportation agency providing over 10 million passenger trips annually throughout North San Diego County and into downtown San Diego. NCTD's system includes BREEZE buses (with FLEX service), COASTER commuter trains, SPRINTER hybrid rail trains, and LIFT paratransit service. NCTD's mission is to deliver safe, convenient, reliable and user-friendly public transportation services. For more information visit: [GoNCTD.com](http://GoNCTD.com).

Powered by SANDAG and in cooperation with the 511 transportation information service, iCommute is the Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program for the San Diego region. iCommute encourages use of transportation alternatives to help reduce traffic congestion and greenhouse gas emissions. To learn more, visit [iCommuteSD.com](http://iCommuteSD.com).

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