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Free Ride Day endorsed by cities across San Diego

San Diego – Regional leaders held a rally at the Old Town Transit Center to promote and encourage San Diego residents and workers to choose transit on Tuesday, Oct. 2 – the region’s first Free Ride Day. Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) and North County Transit District (NCTD) are co-sponsoring Free Ride Day. Rides will be free on buses, the Trolley, the COASTER and SPRINTER, and discounts will be available on first/last mile providers.

Free Ride Day is being held in conjunction with the SANDAG iCommute program to promote National Rideshare Week and to educate people about transportation choices available in the San Diego Region.

“Our ask is very clear to the San Diego community. We want people to choose transit on Oct. 2,” said Georgette Gómez, MTS Board Chair. “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 change commuting habits and get people to try alternative modes of transportation. Free Ride Day is designed to do just that.”

“Free Ride Day is a great opportunity for folks to ditch their cars for a day and use public transit or other transportation options to get around,” said Mayor Kevin L. Faulconer. “We want people to know that you can choose to get to work or school many different ways and the choice you make can help us leave a cleaner tomorrow.”

Free Ride Day will be valid on all MTS and NCTD fixed-routes services including buses, the Trolley, SPRINTER and COASTER (MTS Access, NCTD LIFT and Amtrak R2R trains are not part of this promotion). Passengers will not need a Compass Card 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/NCTD 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 information about raffle prizes.

“Try transit on Free Ride Day and see how it can make your commute easier,” said Rebecca Jones, NCTD Board Chair. “NCTD’s services directly access so many businesses and schools in North County. Save money on gas, help your environment, and let NCTD do the driving.”

SANDAG, MTS, and NCTD have partnered to celebrate National Rideshare Week. On Monday, October 1 through Friday, October 5 transportation organizations here and around the country

will celebrate the many benefits of commuter alternatives.

“Rideshare Week and Free Ride Day both align with the SANDAG iCommute program mission to get solo drivers out of their cars and into a carpool, a vanpool or on transit,” said SANDAG Transportation Committee Vice Chair and Coronado Councilmember Bill Sandke “SANDAG encourages every San Diego commuter, especially those heading to and from military installations, to pledge to share the ride during Rideshare Week and beyond.”

Free Ride Day Activities/Partnerships

Transit Center Activities - MTS and partners will be out at transit centers greeting passengers, passing out freebies and offering a raffle prize in the morning from 7-9 a.m., and in the evening from 3 – 5:30 p.m. For a full list of stations, activities and Free Ride Day information, people can visit the MTS Free Ride Day website.

Bird - MTS has partnered with Bird — the last mile electric scooter sharing company – to offer new Bird riders with a free ride (up to \$5) with promo-code “SDMTS” to help better connect the people of San Diego to MTS transit centers and bus stops. Bird will also be at the Old Town Transit Center on Free Ride Day from 7 – 9 a.m. offering free helmets (while supplies last) to those who either have the Bird app installed on their phone, or who download the app on site.

Uber/Lyft – SANDAG has partnered with Uber and Lyft to provide discounted rides to and from transit stops on Free Ride Day. Participants can use promo code RIDESHARESD18 and get a \$5 discount. Leave your car at home!

To plan a trip on transit, just go to the MTS or NCTD website and enter your starting and end points. It will display a series of travel options. And 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.

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.

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.

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