

# How Does Transit Impact Mobility?

Many San Diego residents experience some form of traffic congestion on a daily basis, and such congestion is easily visible during peak hours when many of the freeways are at full capacity. This sentiment was firmly expressed in a 2004 survey conducted by the City of San Diego, in which **89%** of responders said that they felt it was either very important or somewhat important to reduce traffic congestion.<sup>1</sup> The severity of traffic congestion can be estimated by total delay, which measures the total difference between actual travel time and the amount of time it would take to travel at free-flow speeds. In other words, this measure can estimate the amount of time people spend in their cars due to traffic congestion. The Texas Transportation Institute estimated that in 2007 the total delay time for San Diego was approximately 85 million hours.<sup>2</sup> Such time spent behind the wheel in traffic reduces quality of life, and threatens the ability for San Diego to succeed as a community in the future.

*The Complete Community Mobility Plan*, a recent planning document that was created to address mobility issues in Downtown San Diego noted that space dedicated to transportation should be dedicated to the **movement of people and goods, not to the movement of cars**. This point recognizes that:

- Mobility is not about automobiles; it is about allowing people to get where they want, when they want, in a safe and reliable manner.
- Many people in our community **do not have the choice** to travel with a personal automobile because they cannot afford one or cannot drive. Whatever a person's personal circumstances may be, our transportation system should be indiscriminate, and should focus on facilitating the movement of people, not cars.

The main issue in San Diego is not whether or not traffic and mobility are significant issues, but **how these issues will be resolved**. One way would be to provide reliable and time-competitive non-automobile modes of transportation and reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT), thereby reducing the amount of driving done each day. The only way make this happen is to increase transit infrastructure and make transit time competitive with the automobile so that some people choose transit over driving and those who ride transit (by choice or by necessity) do not experience reduced mobility.

Please work with the Cleveland National Forest Foundation (CNFF) to make efficient, safe, and reliable transit a reality in San Diego. Get involved with the Urban Area Transit Strategy!!!!

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services/sustainable/pdf/ut\\_8\\_29\\_04.pdf](http://www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services/sustainable/pdf/ut_8_29_04.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [http://mobility.tamu.edu/ums/congestion\\_data/tables/san\\_diego.pdf](http://mobility.tamu.edu/ums/congestion_data/tables/san_diego.pdf)