



The future ain't what it used to be.

(Yogi Berra)

# MST COVID-19 RECOVERY PLAN

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*“Revitalizing and  
Strengthening Monterey  
County’s Public  
Transportation System in a  
Post Pandemic World”*

# Acknowledgements

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Mayor Mike LeBarre, King City

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## **SECTION 1.0: Executive Summary:**

The purpose of this document is to detail Monterey-Salinas Transit's efforts to assist in restoration, redevelopment and revitalization of the health, social, economic, natural and environmental fabric of our community and build a more resilient organization to serve the Monterey Bay region. Our intended audience is Monterey-Salinas Transit board members, employees, customers, community stakeholders and members of the public.

In response to growing concerns related to news of the pandemic's spread in California, MST staff initiated an Emergency Operations Center on February 26, 2020. On March 4, 2020 Governor Newsom issued a state of emergency in response to the growing threat of the COVID-19 pandemic. Since that time MST staff has been in an active state of response, initiating a variety of tactics to protect our employees, their families and everyone we contact from the spread of the virus; to serve our community partners in their own efforts to respond and recover; and to innovate new practices and technologies to better plan, prepare, prevent and mitigate against future crises while responding to our current situation.

The recovery plan attempts to provide integrated perspective across the emergency response phases of Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, Response, and Recovery in order to achieve unity of effort and make the most effective use of limited resources. MST views a successful recovery as broader than simply restoring the infrastructure, services, economy, and tax base that supports our services. Recovery also encompasses re-establishing civic and social leadership, providing a continuum of care to meet the needs of affected community members, re-establishing the social fabric, and positioning the community to meet the needs of the future. Our plan recognizes that a community comprises a variety of partners, including economic development professionals, business leaders, affordable housing advocates, faith-based organizations, and functional and access needs populations, and each has a significant part to play in recovery.

By working in advance to develop an understanding of needs and vulnerabilities, identify leaders, form partnerships, establish resources, and reach consensus on goals and policies, communities will be prepared to begin recovery immediately. Throughout the recovery, MST will assist with the significant efforts our communities will invest in to understand and acclimate to the new conditions and growth opportunities, in order to rebuild in a sustainable and resilient way.

With this recovery planning framework in place, we believe our community is better situated to take advantage of available resources, and seize opportunities to increase local resiliency, sustainability, accessibility, and social equity.

## **SECTION 2.0: Project Background and Pre-Planning Activities:**

### **2.1 Recovery Program:**

Monterey Salinas Transit District (MST) began to develop its recovery program while the agency was still heavily engaged in its response to the COVID-19 crisis. Ultimately, the program adopted many of the best practices and strategies that had been identified by FEMA, that had emerged from several disaster recovery case studies.

MST's COVID-19 recovery program embraces a "whole community" approach to recovery where the District views its role as one of support to the entire community as it begins its economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The recovery program outline is attached to this document - Reference Appendix A: MST COVID-19 Recovery Program Outline.

### **2.2 Recovery Program Team:**

On May 11, 2020, the MST Board of Directors received a report from the General Manager/CEO and conducted a workshop with MST staff on the planning effort for the COVID-19 recovery. Board Chair LeBarre appointed a COVID-19 Recovery Ad Hoc Committee consisting of board members LeBarre (King City), Barrera (Salinas), and Albert (Monterey).

In addition to the COVID-19 Recovery Ad Hoc Committee, a multidisciplinary team consisting of twelve MST staff members was formed to work under the guidance of the Ad Hoc Committee to administer the recovery program and develop the district's recovery plan.

The Recovery Program Team is comprised of representatives from; Finance, Administration, Human Resources, Planning, Marketing, Safety, Training, Transportation, and Fleet Maintenance.

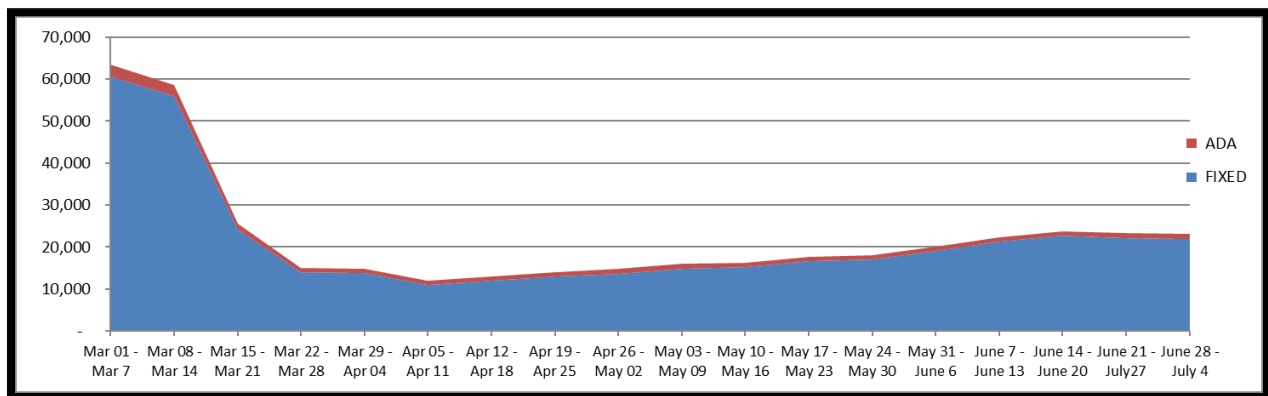
Among its other responsibilities, the COVID-19 Recovery Program Team was tasked with developing and submitting a comprehensive recovery plan to the Board of Directors for review and comment in advance of approving the plan.

## 2.3 Business Impact Analysis:

### *Loss of ridership*

On March 11, 2020 the World Health Organization declared the COVID-19 outbreak as a worldwide pandemic. In the weeks that followed, MST sustained a dramatic loss in ridership on its fixed route and public dial-a-ride services. At the lowest point, weekly passenger boardings fell by approximately 80% following Monterey County's March 18th Shelter-in-Place order. As illustrated in the chart below, passenger boardings began to realize a conservative increase as the pandemic moved into its fifth month.

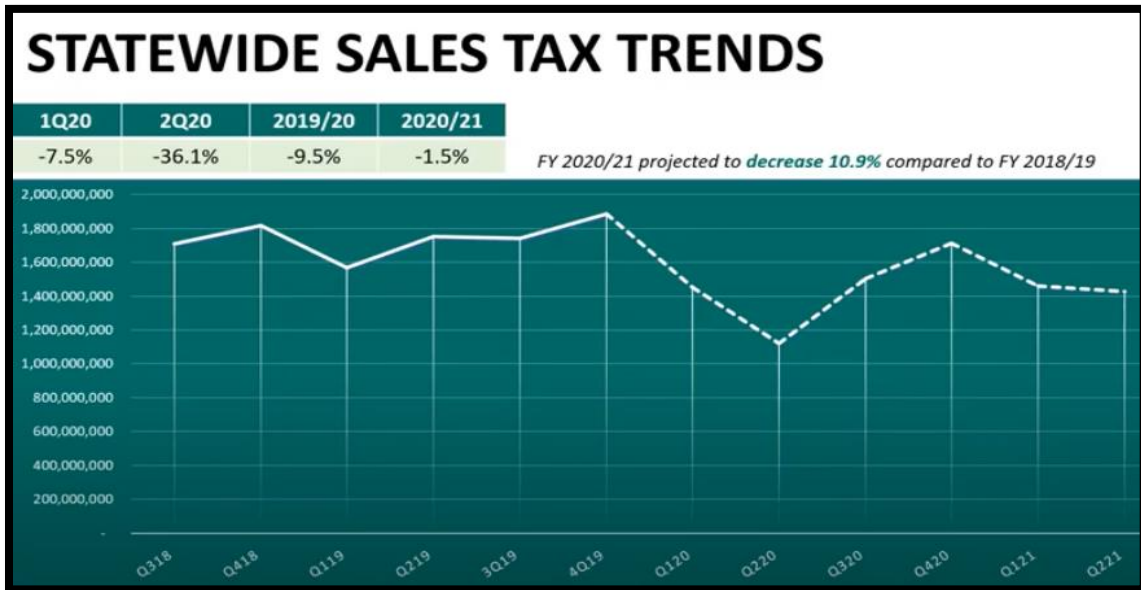
The MST RIDES ADA Paratransit service also sustained similar declines in ridership during the initial weeks of the COVID-19 pandemic, suffering a 65% reduction in daily passenger trips. The RIDES program has seen little recovery through July as many of the elderly and disabled passengers have substituted in-person medical appointments in favor of remote medical consultation services or in-home treatment. Also, as mandated by County and State Health Officials, all medical adult daycare facilities had remained closed.



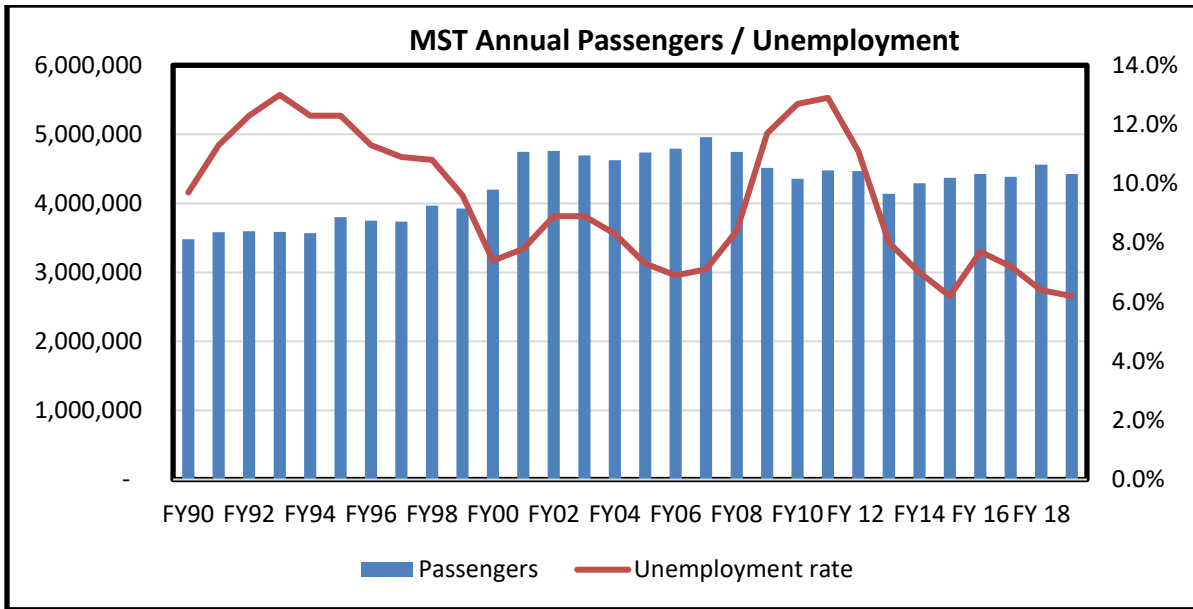
### *Loss of Revenue*

Leading up to the County and State Shelter-in-Place order, MST staff began to anticipate significant reductions in revenues with the temporary closure of non-essential businesses. From Federal funding to retail sales taxes and passenger fares, MST relies on several revenue sources to support public transit services within its service area. The largest source of revenue is derived from retail sales taxes generated within the County associated with restaurants, service stations, department and apparel stores, furniture and appliance, auto sales, miscellaneous, drug stores and light industry.

The graph below shows the estimated statewide sales tax trends from Quarter 3 of FY 2018 through Quarter 2 of FY 2021. The sharp decrease in sales tax revenue is found in Q1 and Q2 of FY 2020.



Unemployment rates within the region have reached record highs in April 2020 at 20.2% lowering to 14.5% by the end of June 2020. As the majority of MST passengers use MST to travel to and from work, MST ridership has a strong inverse relationship to unemployment rates (i.e. high unemployment yields lower transit ridership). The following chart shows a 30-year relationship between MST annual passenger boardings and unemployment rates:



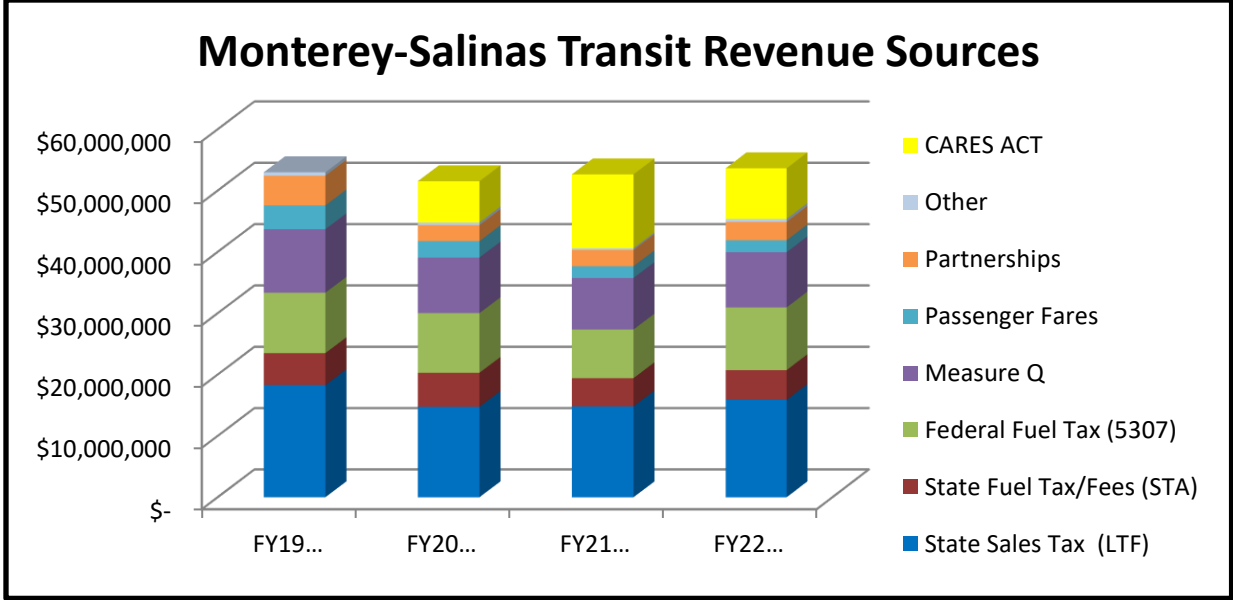
When many of these non-essential businesses temporarily closed, retail sales tax collections began to diminish, causing a major hole in MST’s FY 2020 budget. The estimated loss of retail sales tax revenue is estimated at upwards of \$25 million for MST over a three-year period.

Additionally, MST began suspending fare collections from passengers on March 28, 2020 to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 by minimizing close contact between MST Coach Operators and riders. The impact of suspending fares along with an 73.4% drop in ridership on the fixed route services has resulted in a steep decline in passenger fare revenue in FY 2020 and is projected to continue in FY 2021 (as of mid-July 2020). The estimated loss in fare revenue is \$387,500 between March 18, 2020 and July 15, 2020.

On March 27, 2020, Congress passed, and the President signed the Coronavirus, Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act which allocated billions to transit agencies across the nation. MST is eligible for \$25 million to secure its financial stability during the response and recovery.

The graph below shows how the CARES Act stabilizes MST’s financial situation between FY 2020 and FY 2022:





On the expenditure side, MST has increased its costs on items including Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) as well as HVAC improvements, driver protection barriers, and public information signage. Non-payroll COVID-19 costs to May 31 were \$112,397.

**2.4 Labor Impact Analysis:**

On March 13, 2020, Monterey County schools announced that day would be the last for on-site instruction and school-aged children would be moved to online learning from their homes. At the time, MST did not see an immediate impact on the need for employees to stay home due to childcare. Day care facilities and in-home day care operators were able to remain open as well as other businesses throughout Monterey County.

On March 18, 2020, the Monterey County Health Officer issued a Shelter-in-Place order for all Monterey County residents. The order also closed business or industries that were not considered “*Essential Business*”. However, MST was categorized as an “*Essential Business*”. Shortly thereafter, Governor Newsom recommended individuals who were sixty-five or older should Shelter-in-Place and as well individuals who were at risk due to underlying health conditions. Twenty-five staff members fell under this category. MST took proactive measures to provide leave to those individuals who wished to Shelter-in-Place. Out of twenty-five employees, twelve employees made the decision to Shelter-in-Place at home.

By the end of March 2020, the Federal government passed the Families First Coronavirus Response Act which applies to certain public employers, and private employers with fewer than 500 employees. The act allows employees to take a limited amount of paid leave if they qualify under any one of the following reasons:

1. An individual has tested positive for COVID-19 or exhibits COVID-19 symptoms or is caring for a family member who falls into one of the previously mentioned categories.
2. An individual is classified as high risk due to age or an underlying health condition.
3. An individual needed to take time off work due to childcare issues.
4. An individual has been advised by a health care provider not to work due to COVID-19 concerns.
5. An individual is subject to a federal, state or local government issued shelter at home order that prevented them from telecommuting or coming to work.

Once the paid leave went into effect on April 2, 2020, MST had sixteen employees who took leave to Shelter-in-Place due to underlying health conditions or a health care provider deemed them unable to come into work. By May 10, 2020, Monterey County schools announced they would be closed for the remainder of the school year and many day care providers were unable to continue to operate. Twenty-two MST employees took childcare leave to care for their children who were unable to attend daycare or remain in school. Out of the twenty-two employees who requested leave due to childcare, nine of those employees continued to work either in person or by telecommuting and took leave as needed.

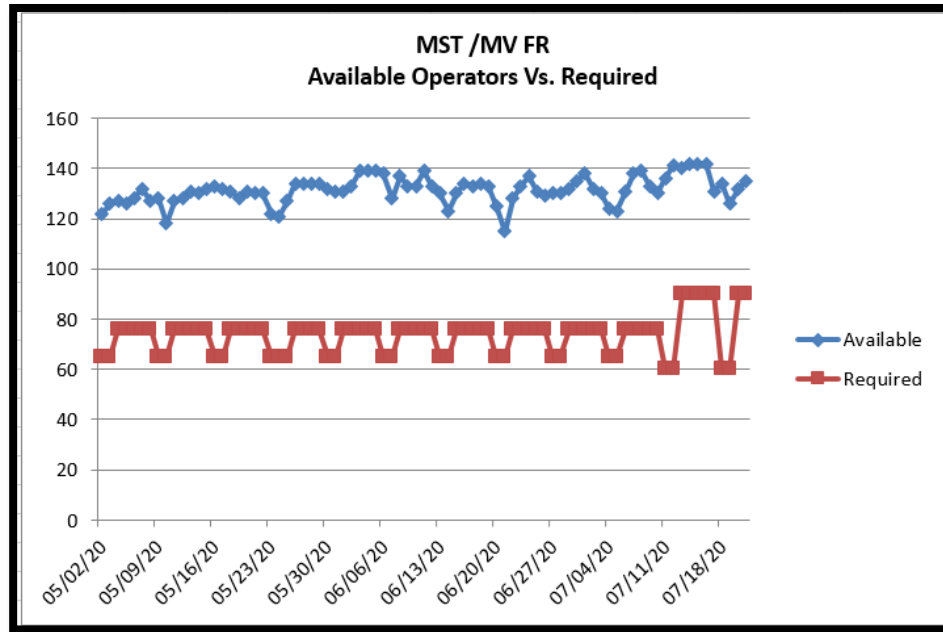
As of July 2, 2020, thirty three of the forty-eight employees who took the COVID-19 leave have returned to work. The table below provides a breakdown by department of employees who took COVID-19 leave:

<b>Department</b>	<b>Number of Employees on COVID-19 Leave</b>
Administration	12
Maintenance	2
Coach Operators	34

Additionally, MV Transportation Inc. (MST’s contractor for Fixed Route, On Call, and MST RIDES services), reported that they had a total of nine employees who were sheltered in place between March and July due to COVID-19 of which five returned to work before July 1st.

Also, due to declining business volume caused by the COVID-19 crisis, MV had initially furloughed three Coach Operators and two Mechanics in April. All these employees were returned to full-time employment by MV by early July.

The chart below, illustrates the daily number of MST and MV fixed route Coach Operators available versus the number required in order to provide service. The data shown demonstrates that the state of readiness of MST’s Coach Operator workforce remained intact and more than adequate to restore essential services that had been previously suspended.



Using the Slido™ App based survey instrument MST queried employees to better understand their attitudes and opinions regarding MST response and recovery efforts. MST received responses from sixty-seven employees representing 27% of the entire workforce. The employees revealed the following pertinent information:

- 82% agreed that MST is taking substantial actions to improve employee safety, security and working conditions.
- 89% feel well-supported by their immediate supervisor.
- 82% think that fares should be re-instated this summer or fall
- 79% are concerned about themselves or a family member getting COVID-19, a physical altercation with a member of the public, or job security.

With the information gathered from the surveys MST management is able to focus on developing policies, practices and communication that focus on areas of greatest concern to our employees.

## 2.5 MST Vulnerability Assessment:

### 2.5.1 Pandemic Disaster Response Plan:

Like most agencies, it was clear early in the COVID-19 crisis that MST was ill-prepared to respond to the pandemic. While the District did have a pandemic response checklist as part of its Continuity of Operations Plan, the plan had never been exercised (tested), or updated, since its creation in May of 2014.

On February 26, 2020, MST activated its Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and used the checklist to help guide the EOC staff in the initial response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The checklist did prove to be helpful in the initial response to the crisis; however, as time went on, MST found that it to be lacking in many areas that required immediate action. In hindsight, had the plan been exercised and updated before the COVID-19 crisis, MST may have been better prepared in its initial response.

### 2.5.2 Personal Protective Equipment and Employee Training:

Early in the response phase, MST lacked sufficient reserves of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to protect its essential workers over a sustained period. The nation's supply chains were strained, and PPE supplies were back ordered and very difficult to acquire. MST only had enough disposable gloves and hand sanitizer to last about ten days and face masks were very few in number. While the shortage of PPE supplies was eventually overcome, this proved to be an initial vulnerability for the agency.

As the pandemic progressed, MST also recognized that the training provided to its essential workers was insufficient to meet a crisis of this scope. Up to that point, the only relevant training provided as required by OSHA was minimal in scope and primarily addressed protection from blood-borne pathogens. This training deficiency was especially true of MST's Utility Service Workers. They not only lacked the appropriate level of PPE but also the training to use the equipment properly to avoid cross-contamination of other buses or areas within the workplace.

As MST and the industry learned to both recognize and correct these deficiencies all have since been resolved and shall be discussed in detail in the mitigation, preparedness, and prevention sections of this recovery plan.

### 2.6 Community Needs Assessment:

The focus of MST's Community needs assessment was to determine how MST could support the economic recovery of the community following the COVID-19 pandemic.

MST staff conducted a targeted outreach through various associations, organizations, stakeholders, and key contacts within the following Monterey County economic sectors.

- Agriculture Sector
- Business Sector
- Department of Defense
- Education (K12, State, Local College) Sector
- Healthcare Sector
- Hospitality Sector
- Public Transportation Riders

- Social Services / Government Sector

Using the same App-based survey as described in section 2.4, MST was able to conduct surveys of community members broadly representing organizations of the economic sectors mentioned above. This Community Survey garnered eighty-two responses and revealed:

- 55% had no opinion about buses being disinfected often and safe to ride during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Most respondents were connected daily to online news (76%), radio (60%), cable/broadcast television (57%), social media (64%) , and/or streaming services (56%).
- 90% employed full time.
- If they were furloughed due to COVID-19, 43% said that they expected to return to work within a month.

Finally, a similar bilingual survey of current MST passengers revealed the following:

- Rider for 10+ years (36%), 5 times per week (32%).
- Ride for shopping (61%), working (53%).
- Access to internet by phone (74%), at home (82%).
- 37% pay with cash.
- 42% had no car available, and 52% did not have a driver's license.
- 81% said MST has had an excellent/good response to COVID-19.
- Cleaning, frequent service, face coverings, and social distancing are all important to customers.

These efforts enabled MST to identify and prioritize several short-term and long-term recovery projects, which is discussed in more detail in sections 3.0 and 4.0 of this plan.

## 2.7 Recovery Requirement Assessment:

### 2.7.1 Financial Recovery:

As described in section 2.3 (Business Impact Analysis) of this document, the steep decline in some revenues was offset by a significant influx of new federal CARES Act funding. MST's short-term financial recovery primarily relies upon the federal financial aid for the three-year period after the pandemic hit the US and California.

As MST moves further into the recovery phase, a long-term financial recovery plan will be required to guide the District once the Federal financial aid has been exhausted. The framework of this plan is discussed in section 3.0 of this document. The California Transit Association has identified a \$3.1 billion need for additional Federal or State funding to offset the loss of local revenues statewide and to stem future losses of transit service and related jobs within the industry.

### 2.7.2 Re-establishing Community Trust:

In the simplest of terms, MST's recovery is largely predicated on its ability to regain lost ridership and restore service levels to pre-pandemic levels. However, achieving that objective requires the support of the whole community. Elected officials, Federal, State, local government, and most importantly, MST's passengers and the economic sectors that they support, must all recognize the value that MST can contribute to the community's economic recovery.

The most significant challenge in attaining this level of support is to demonstrate that Monterey County's public transit services are still safe to use in a post-pandemic world. To that end, the mitigation, prevention, and preparedness strategies discussed in this plan lay the foundation to regain community trust, and ultimately its support during the COVID-19 economic recovery. Also, the public information and education campaign discussed in section 3.0 of this plan is an essential part of re-establishing that public trust.

### 2.7.3 Diminished Capacity Due to Social Distancing Requirements:

Another significant challenge facing MST is the sustained loss of up to 80% of its capacity to carry passengers on its services. Social distancing mandates have limited MST to only carry 20%-25% of the total passenger capacity on its fixed route vehicles. This constraint is also in effect with the MST RIDES ADA Paratransit and dial-a-ride services.

The CDC has made it clear that social distancing will continue to be compulsory until an effective vaccine can be found for COVID-19, and "herd immunity" is finally realized. A prolonged loss in capacity to this extent will hinder MST's ability to keep up with demand when the economy fully re-opens and ridership increases. To overcome this challenge, MST will have to find a way to balance the level of service provided to the community without jeopardizing the health and safety of its passengers and employees.

As with many other industries, the COVID-19 pandemic will force public transit agencies to change the way that they conduct business. MST must reimagine itself, rethink its vision, and act on new opportunities if it hopes to recover and thrive in the future.

## 2.8 Plan Development and Timeline:

Generally, disaster recovery planning activities should be initiated at or near the end of the response phase. They should be completed within six to twelve weeks, depending on the severity and duration of the disaster.

The planning process for MST's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic began in earnest in mid-April, less than thirty days after Monterey County's mandatory Shelter-in-Place order went into

effect. It is important to note that the District was still heavily engaged in response to the crisis at that time.

Completing the recovery planning process in a relatively short time frame following the conclusion of the incident was essential to capture the cooperative community spirit that usually exists immediately following a disaster and to take advantage of funding opportunities that are typically made available by Federal and State agencies.

The first draft of the plan has taken just over fourteen weeks to develop and is scheduled for review by the MST Board of Directors during its August 2020 meeting.

## **SECTION 3.0: RECOVERY PLAN ELEMENTS AND OBJECTIVES:**

### **3.1 Demobilization Activities:**

#### **3.1.1 Task Force(s), Strike Teams, and Support Units:**

During the response phase to the COVID-19 pandemic, MST’s EOC activated the following support elements to manage the response to the crisis and provide non-transit support services to the community:

<b>Element</b>	<b>EOC Section</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Community Support Task Force	Operations	Deactivated 06/26/20	8,450 meals delivered to Isolated Seniors
High Risk Transport Strike Team	Operations	Active	Equipped and ready to deploy to transport COVID-19 positive patients
Mobile Wi-Fi Unit	Logistics	Deactivated 6/30/20	7,138 mobile Wi-Fi hot spot connections provided for distance learning
Fleet Decon Unit	Logistics	Active	Supplemental team to provide enhanced vehicle decontamination
TelaWellness Unit	Logistics	Active	Welfare checks via telephone to isolated seniors
Human Resource Unit	Finance & Administration	Active	COVID-19 employee benefit and leave support
Demobilization & Recovery Unit	Planning	Active	Recovery planning

Apart from the Demobilization & Recovery Unit, the remaining elements will be demobilized on or before September 30, 2020. MST staff and resources assigned to these tasks will be needed

to resume normal operations as transit services are restored. It is anticipated that the Recovery Unit will remain active for at least the next eighteen months, or longer.

### 3.2 Work Force Remobilization:

#### 3.2.1 Employee Assistance and Support:

In late January 2020, COVID-19 concerns began making national news and employees had questions about the virus. MST’s Human Resources Department searched for information and guidance for our employees on the virus. Early CDC guidance and information was posted in the employee breakrooms at the end of January. Memos were quickly updated as CDC became more knowledgeable about COVID.

In the middle of February 2020, the Executive Leadership began exploring possible scenarios in which the state or federal government would limit travel, shut down schools or restrict daily life functions. Human Resources started to gather information and drafted a check list of items needed to address these concerns. Human Resources partnered with our Health Care providers and vendors to gather information and services for our employees (CalPERS, Blue Cross, Montage Health and Alliant Insurance Brokers).

The MST EOC group established a Gilley Room folder on the MST network so that information was made accessible to the Coach Operators and other MST employees. Any information that was shared by email was also placed in this folder. As information and guidance changed, the Human Resources Unit established resource tables in TDA/CJW breakrooms staffed by the Mobility Department. Below is a listing of information and guidance provided to MST staff:

Employee Assistant Program Flyer	CDC Information on COVID-19 Virus
Montage Flyer on e-visit/COVID self-evaluation test	Anthem Blue Cross billing information regarding COVID testing and treatment costs
Guidance on hand washing	Guidance and “how-to” video on proper mask use
Guidance on how to take off disposable gloves	Personal Travel guidance
Supervisor/Manager guidance on sending sick employees home	Process on reporting/responding to possible employee exposure and/or positive COVID cases
General Manager/CEO Messaging	How to file for SDI Disability benefits
How to file for EDD Unemployment	Guidance on Family First Paid Act Benefits
How to set up County EOC COVID text alerts	Information on how to apply for rent forgiveness
How to talk to children regarding COVID	Childcare resources for essential workers



Steps on how to stop the spread of COVID	How to tape off Priority seating area on buses
Guidance on county and state Shelter-in-Place orders	Guidance and explanation of Social Circles/Bubbles

The Human Resources (HR) Unit also worked with the ATU leadership in developing an ongoing line of communication. Communication briefings were conducting daily to discuss pressing issues and to vet processes and plans developed by the MST EOC. ATU leadership worked with the HR Unit and EOC command to develop effective communication to the workforce. The HR Unit partnered with ATU leadership to co-sponsor ZOOM townhall meetings for the employees, along with information to discuss with the workforce. The meetings are now going to be an ongoing occurrence, scheduled for Thursday afternoons following MST board meetings.

The HR Unit also partnered with EOC members to provide guidance and training to supervisors and managers through ZOOM meetings. This allowed for staff to have ongoing discussions on best practices, how to respond to employee questions and how to enforce COVID preventive measures.

### 3.2.2 Training Initiatives:

As MST works toward the COVID-19 recovery process, the Training Department has implemented various new training initiatives and procedural changes for its Coach Operators and other essential workers. These include:

#### *COVID-19 Content-Specific Training:*

A one-hour training module was developed that is devoted exclusively to reducing the spread of COVID-19. CDC guidance, as well as local County compliance requirements, are discussed in detail to ensure there is a clear understanding of the information presented. The course continues to evolve, and training materials are updated as new information and guidelines become available.

#### *Personal Protective Equipment Training:*

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) training was provided to all Coach Operators, Utility Service Workers, Mobility staff, Facilities employees, and Operations Supervisors. PPE kits were supplied to each of these essential workers as they all work directly with the general public and have an inherent risk of having their social distancing space compromised.

*Each PPE Kit contains the following equipment:*

- N-95 masks
- G-16 eye protection
- Hand sanitizer
- Disposable gloves.

This training provides information on cross-contamination prevention, use and removal of PPE, proper storage and disposal, and when employees need to utilize this protective equipment. The use of PPE is now mandatory for these workers. Each employee is expected to have this equipment with them while they are on duty.

*Reduced class size:*

The annual update training class was reduced from a class size of approximately fourteen participants to no more than eight participants to support social distancing requirements.

The class frequency has increased from once to twice a month. Also, the training location was relocated to a larger space, and masks are required for all trainers and trainees.

*General workplace safety:*

The Training Department issued a series of memorandums and posted informational signage to remind employees to disinfect shared workstations and devices to prevent cross-contamination and mitigate the spread of the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

Also, all employee break rooms, and common area furniture was arranged to allow employees to maintain proper social distance from one another.

### 3.2.3 Employee Policies and Procedures:

The CDC guidance on how to respond to COVID has been ever-changing and fluid. While it is also prudent to develop policies, it did not make sense during this pandemic. Policies are generally developed to address issues that are more permanent in nature. MST made the decision that it made better sense to develop processes and Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) that could be quickly modified and pushed out to staff. It was also decided that employees would be given leeway to adhere to every changing process with gentle reminders and to provide coaching as needed.

As MST moves into the recovery stage of this pandemic, guidance will become more concrete. Staff will evaluate and review existing policies to determine if there is need to update them or create new policies to address new federal, state and local regulations. MST is currently

updating the Flexible Workweek Policy to encompass telecommuting as an option. As staff moves forward with developing a safety protocol for essential workers, MST will be updating the Medical Leave and Life-Threatening Illnesses in the Workplace policies.

#### 3.2.4 Reopening Administrative Offices:

At the onset of the COVID pandemic and the implementation of social distancing, those staff members who were able to work from home were encouraged to do so. The EOC Logistics Chief partnered with the Information Technology (IT) Department to identify resources that could be allocated to MST staff who requested or needed to work from home. The IT Department also ordered additional laptops to issue to employees.

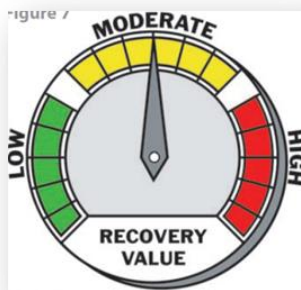
Administrative departments developed “social distancing” schedules to ensure only 50% of the employees were in the office at any given time. It was identified that the following positions shared workspaces: Maintenance Supervisors, Operations Supervisors, Mobility Staff, Communications Center Staff, Parts Staff, Mechanics and Customer Service Representatives. Individual Customer Service staff were assigned to one location and stopped rotating to other customer service locations. Mobility staff were assigned to one location or allowed to rotate working at home to reduce shared spaces. Staff members who had to share spaces were given guidance and PPE resources were provided, so a thorough clean of shared spaces occurred prior to and at the end of each shift.

MST has limited public access to the administrative offices when possible. Staff is working on protocols to clear individuals who would be visiting the Administrative offices. MST employees who do not work at the administrative offices have been asked to make appointments to meet with the staff (Human Resources or Finance). If staff needs to meet in person, they are encouraged to use MST conference rooms to ensure the appropriate social distancing. Staff will continue to stagger schedules and telecommute when permissible until the State allows for businesses to allow over 50% employee capacity. Administrative offices shall be re-opened without restriction when 100% capacity is allowed.

### 3.3 Recovery Strategy:

#### 3.3.1 Defining High, Moderate, and Low “Recovery Value” Projects:

Recovery Value is the designation assigned to a project that indicates its ability to help jump-start a community's recovery from a natural disaster or incident of national significance. Projects that positively contribute to recovery typically address a broad range of issues that promote a functioning and healthy economy, support infrastructure optimization, and encourage the provision of a full range of opportunities.



The MST Recovery Team identified proposed recovery projects by evaluating information derived from the community needs assessment discussed in section 2.6. The specific material examined included; staff outreach, survey data, pre and post-pandemic ridership trends by geographic area, and passenger origin and destination data provided by the Transit App™.

Using the Slido™ online survey tool the Recovery Team applied the following criteria to score each proposed recovery project to determine its recovery value:

- Post-disaster community needs
- Project feasibility
- Project economic sustainability
- Economic impact on the community
- High visibility and increased community capacity
- Linkage throughout the community and leveraging other projects and funding
- Enhancement of the quality of life within the community

Recovery projects that receive a high recovery value are classified as short-term projects with implementation timelines of three to six months. Those that scored as moderate to low are considered nonviable or are identified as long-term recovery projects that may be implemented within a six to eighteen-month time period.

A listing of both short-term and long-term recovery projects can be found in section 4.0 of this plan.

### 3.3.2 Public Information and Education Campaign:

Corresponding with response efforts, MST will use all available communication tools to provide the public and community with information about MST’s response and recovery from COVID-19. Public information and educational campaigns are timely and accurate so that passengers and community members can make informed decisions about their mobility needs.

MST may utilize all available communication tools to reach as many individuals as possible including:

1. MST website
2. Interior and exterior bus advertising space
3. Customer Service Center windows and major transit stops
4. Social media (Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram)
5. Transit App
6. Press releases

MST's website includes a homepage banner which links to MST's COVID-19 response and recovery. It includes information and links to resources at the federal, state, and local level. MST will place timely and accurate information about service levels and messages in support of preventing the spread of COVID-19 on its advertising space inside and outside of buses. Some of these messages may include but would not be limited to hand washing, face coverings, social distancing, what to do in case of COVID-19 suspected illness, and other prevention initiatives. Public information will be placed at Customer Service windows and at major transit stops. Temporary A-frame messaging signs may be used for on-the-ground messages at transit centers.

MST utilizes its social media platforms to push information out quickly. With over 1,400 Facebook fans, nearly 1,000 followers on Instagram, and almost 800 Twitter followers, MST can reach a substantial number of people.

Trip planning services are provided to customers via Transit App™. With the ability to alert passengers to service deviations, disruptions or changes, MST will push information through the App when appropriate.

Press releases are also a tool available to MST for recovery efforts.

To the extent feasible and required by MST's Language Assistance Plan, messaging is provided in English and Spanish.

### 3.3.3 Ongoing Resource Assessment:

One of the primary objectives during the recovery process to COVID-19 is to restore services as quickly as possible; however, only where and when needed. To do this, MST will have to become more agile as it will require a series of service changes implemented in rapid succession. Pre Covid-19, MST would schedule only two service changes per year. However, the recovery effort may require MST to perform a service change every 60 to 90 days to meet the needs of the community as the economy recovers.

Additionally, passenger capacity constraints imposed by social distancing requirements and/or a resurgence of the COVID-19 virus may place an additional strain on MST's existing resources.

It is for these reasons that this effort will require close collaboration between MST's Planning, Transportation, Maintenance, and Human Resources departments to ensure that adequate

personnel and revenue vehicles remain available to deploy the services at a pace that can meet the rising demand for public transit services.

To ensure that this level of collaboration is maintained, the Recovery Team shall remain active for at least eighteen months. MST will re-evaluate the situation at that time to determine if the Recovery Team should continue its efforts, and if so, for how long.

### 3.4 New Opportunities:

#### 3.4.1 Service Improvements Beyond Pre-COVID-19 Conditions:

Service prior to COVID-19 included numerous fixed routes throughout the County, general on-call service in Marina and the southern part of the County, and paratransit service compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Generally, any major changes to service occurred in the spring and fall, and were tied to a public Rider's Guide, a collection of all the routes and timetables. Transit services had been spread to as many communities as possible and where grant funding dictated. Frequency in service varied from community to community, with some areas seeing only a couple of trips a day and other areas seeing service every 15 minutes for much of the day.

With Monterey County's Shelter-in-Place Order, MST experienced a severe drop in ridership beginning in March 2020. Service was scaled back to a limited schedule and many routes were suspended completely. While this drastic change in operations was not planned, it did give MST the opportunity to see where demand is the greatest in the system and where the District can focus service improvements beyond what was offered in the pre-COVID-19 condition.

To no surprise, the trunk lines have been in most demand. These are lines transporting passengers:

- Between Salinas and the Monterey Peninsula
- In the E. Alisal community of Salinas
- From residential neighborhoods in Marina and Seaside to jobs in Monterey, Carmel, and Carmel Valley
- To and from medical and commercial facilities on the Monterey Peninsula

As the economy reopens and MST service is slowly being restored with reduced onboard capacity to support social distancing, transit service improvements beyond the pre-COVID-19 condition are being implemented. Increased frequency on *Line 24 Monterey-Carmel Valley Grapevine Express* has already been implemented to a level beyond what was offered in March 2020. Additionally, the Community Hospital of Monterey Peninsula (CHOMP) is now served by *Line 22 Big Sur-Monterey*, a major medical destination not previously available without transferring, to transit passengers coming from the Big Sur community.

### 3.4.2 New Service Opportunities:

A major disaster in a community can provide opportunities to reshape operations and reimagine services. New services must be designed to support the community's rebuilding effort. Unemployment will begin to drop as businesses reopen, and travel patterns may change.

#### *Hospitality:*

One of the largest industries in Monterey County is hospitality, and there are opportunities to improve transit service to that sector. A Hospitality Bus Pass Program is being developed to offer a more cost-effective transportation option for employees getting back to work in the industry.

#### *Public Education:*

One of the hardest hit sectors was education. Educators scrambled to implement distance learning plans when the Shelter-in-Place Order took effect. Looking forward to the coming school year, not only is in-person learning still undecided, the public education system is also experiencing a large funding deficit as sales tax revenues have decreased. School bus transportation budgets are being cut, and many students may need to use MST to travel to and from school. Opportunities for MST to support this industry include revising existing timetables to better align with school bell times and rerouting of existing MST routes to reach schools not currently served in the system. Additionally, a Youth Bus Pass Program is being developed. It will leverage a state transit grant to provide free monthly passes that students can use on the fixed route system.

#### *Agriculture:*

Another major industry in Monterey County is agriculture. This sector has historically operated independently of MST as much of their transportation requirements are already met through employment regulations. This industry has been hit hard by transmission of the virus as the employees tend to be minority, low-income populations, and many live-in close proximity. MST has worked with agriculture industry leaders in the past and has resumed conversations. MST will continue to work with the agriculture industry and the County Health Department to support their needs such as donating old MST buses for mobile testing clinics. Other opportunities might include public transit service to the agriculture fixed facilities like the cooling and packing plants.

#### *Mobility and Connectivity:*

A South County Plan will be completed in late 2020 to redesign services in the rural communities of southern Monterey County. Currently a mix of weekday general public on-call,

minimal daily fixed route, and ADA paratransit are available to growing areas of the county. New service improvements will be developed through the planning process.

On a systemwide level, a Comprehensive Operational Analysis will be conducted to evaluate MST's pre-COVID system and identify areas for improved service. A plan will be developed to guide the elimination of low-usage and outdated services, improve existing routing and timetables, and design new future services. Connectivity between communities within the County as well as regional connections outside the county will be evaluated.

### 3.5 Long Term Financial Recovery Strategy:

During recovery, MST staff will review its financial status on a monthly basis and develop a cash flow model to predict any future gaps between revenues and expenditures.

In response to the COVID-19 crisis, California Assembly Bill 90 recognized the reality that operating costs are unpredictable during the pandemic and are uncontrollable. Below is a summary of AB90 on TDA, STA, LCTOP and SOGR funds.

#### *Transportation Development Act Penalties:*

This bill prohibits the imposition of financial penalties on an operator that does not maintain the required ratio of fare revenues to operating cost during the 2019–20 or 2020–21 fiscal year.

#### *State Transit Assistance Program Standards:*

This bill exempts an operator from meeting efficiency standards for the 2020–21 and 2021–2022 fiscal years and authorizes the operator to use those funds for operating or capital purposes during that period.

#### *State Transit Assistance Program /LCTOP/SOGR allocations:*

The bill requires the State Controller to calculate and publish the allocation of transit operator STA revenue-based funds for FY 2020–21 and FY 2021–22 based on FY 2018-19 data published by the Controller in August 2020 and apply these ratios to Low Carbon Transit Operations (LCTOP) and State of Good Repair (SOGR) formula funds.

While these temporary exceptions and modifications may provide some long-term economic relief, they may not be enough.

MST may need to renegotiate the current structure of its labor agreement and other key vendor contracts to strengthen its long-term solvency.

Also, transit services that were reduced or eliminated due to the COVID-19 pandemic may need to be replaced with new, less expensive mobility options. In some cases, demand response, micro-transit, and partnerships with Transportation Network Companies may prove to be more



cost-effective and convenient than the traditional transit service they replace. If cost savings are significant, MST can use these services to increase service levels on high ridership lines.

Additionally, a review of planned fleet upgrade programs (e.g., zero emission buses) and other capital projects may force the District to reprogram investments according to the new financial reality.

While other transit agencies have been helpful by sharing knowledge related to service restoration and other mitigation and prevention activities, managing the financial consequences of the pandemic will take much longer and require a tailored approach. Economic recovery measures are difficult to replicate across county borders as they are tied to context-specific contractual arrangements, funding availability, and the size of stimulus packages.

To avoid potentially damaging delays, MST shall continue its efforts to work with its peers, the California Transit Association (CTA), and APTA to influence state and federal policymakers to kickstart the process as soon as possible to implement many (if not all) of the funding and policy recommendations listed in Appendix B. (*CTA; Recommendations for the Future of Transit*) as well as other economic initiatives.

The timeline forward is uncertain, but the long-term financial sustainability of public transit systems is the next port of call.

### 3.6 Mitigation Strategies:

#### 3.6.1 Managing Passenger Capacity While Preserving Social Distancing:

Social distancing requirements will continue to be the "new normal" for some time to come. As MST moves through the recovery phase of the pandemic, social distancing standards, as defined by State and County Health Officials, shall continue to be observed on all services.

Should the current social distancing standard of six feet remain as the statute that has been adopted by both State and Local Health Agencies, MST will continue to experience a sustained loss of up to 80% of its capacity to carry passengers on its services.

The table below provides a detailed analysis of passenger capacity loss by revenue vehicle type.

Bus Fleet Vehicle Type	Vehicle Length	Seating Capacity	COVID19 Seating	Seating Capacity Reduction	Total Capacity (Seated + Standees)	Total Capacity Reduction
BYD ZEB (2200)	30 ft	22	7	-67%	30	-76%
TROLLEY (1900)	29 ft	27	8	-70%	37	-78%
*Passenger Coach Low Floor (2000)	35 ft	31	10	-67%	47	-78%
*Passenger Coach Low Floor (1700)	40 ft	37	10	-73%	57	-82%
MCI Coach (4500)	45 ft	57	20	-65%	57	-65%
Suburban Low Floor (2101)	40 ft	39	10	-74%	63	-84%
*Mini Bus (937-971)	24 ft	17	4	-76%	22	-82%
*Mini Bus (972-981)	24 ft	18	4	-78%	23	-83%
*Mini Bus (994)	24 ft	24	4	-83%	29	-86%
			Average	<b>-73%</b>	Average	<b>-79%</b>

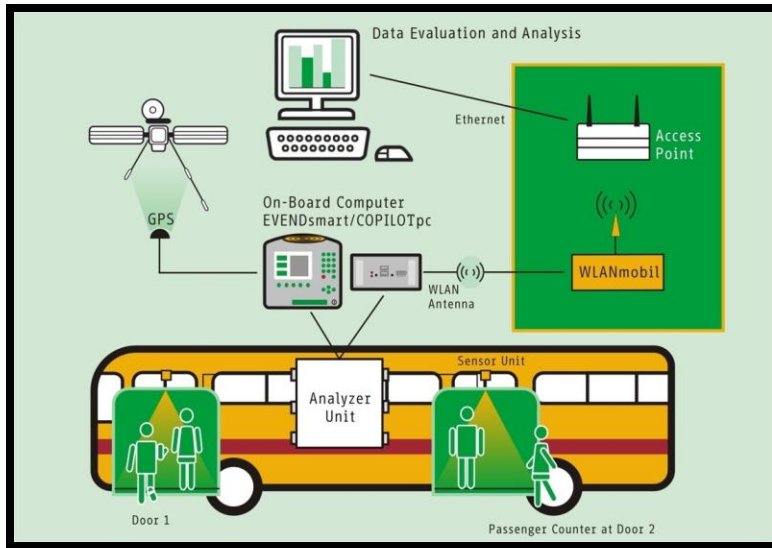
If the reduced level of capacity is maintained, it will delay MST's ability to meet the needs of the entire community as ridership increases. MST will be required to focus its available resources to increase frequency on routes that primarily support access to employment and other essential services. Transit service to other less vital services may continue to remain suspended indefinitely, or until such time that social distancing requirements are eased.

*Leveraging Data:*

Data from MST's Automatic Passenger Counting (APC) system can be utilized to monitor passenger loads in real-time. APC data can be used to alert MST Center when a bus has reached maximum capacity allowing staff to deploy an additional bus along the route to pick up waiting passengers.

To ensure their safety, passengers also have a role and the responsibility to maintain proper social distancing. To assist its passengers in doing so, MST shall leverage its technology to provide passengers with the information that they need to make informed decisions before using MST services.

To notify passengers of revenue trips that have a higher probability of being at maximum capacity, MST shall integrate data from the APC system with the Transit App™. This interface will allow passengers to quickly identify less crowded trips through the Transit App™ that can meet their travel needs.



*Partnership with Public Health:*

MST staff will continue to meet with Monterey County Health Department officials to identify opportunities that may allow the District to increase capacity on its services without jeopardizing the safety and wellbeing of the passengers or MST's employees.

*Social Distancing Coaches:*

To provide additional support to its Coach Operators and improve customer service, MST will assign Social Distancing Coaches at its transit centers. The coaches' primary function will be to ensure that passengers are seated in such a manner to maintain appropriate social distancing in the passenger cabin. Also, these employees will contact MST Center to request additional buses as required when a coach is full.

At this time, MST does not intend to hire new employees for this program; instead, personnel will be assigned to this duty as available staffing levels allow.

3.6.2 Mandatory Face Coverings and Masks:

*Passengers:*

MST shall continue to require all passengers to wear face coverings while using all modes of service. Transit Supervisors and Customer Service Representatives shall be supplied with extra masks to provide to passengers who do not have their own facial covering. Passengers who refuse to wear a facial covering will be refused service.

*Coach Operators:*

All MST Coach Operators shall also be required to wear a cloth mask or shall wear an N95 mask when required to interact with passengers closely. Operators will be required to wear a mask when there are no passengers on the bus or while deadheading (out of service) back to the yard. This requirement will be in force even when the Operator is behind an enclosed barrier.

*Other Employees:*

All MST personnel shall be required to wear a face mask while in any common area in an MST facility. The only exception to this is when the employee is working alone within an enclosed office space.

These requirements shall remain in effect for the foreseeable future or until such time that public health officials advise otherwise.

3.6.3 On-Board Passenger Hand Sanitizers:

As part of an ongoing effort to protect MST employees, passengers, and the community against COVID-19, MST procured and installed hand sanitizing dispensers at the boarding entrances of its buses in a two-phased installation. The two-phased installation project resulted from the number of dispensers required for the installation and the number of dispensers physically available for MST. Our vendor provided dispensers in two separate shipments.

The first shipment and first phase of the installation allowed MST to install dispensers at the rear-doors of all two-door buses and at the front-doors of all single-door buses.

Upon receiving the second shipment of dispensers, MST will complete the second and final phase of the installation project – installing dispensers at the front-doors of all two-door buses.



#### 3.6.4 Contactless Fare Collection System:

Beginning in mid-September 2020, MST will launch a contactless fare payment option for passengers. This demonstration project is being implemented in partnership with Caltrans, Visa™, and LittlePay™. From a customer perspective, this payment mechanism will be similar to the transaction process using a credit/debit or e-wallet at many major grocery and retail stores.

Contactless fare payments allow passengers to tap-to-pay for their ride without touching cash at the farebox. It will also move people through the payment process more quickly than inserting crumpled up dollar bills and searching for loose change while at the farebox.

Validators will be installed on the bus which will accept a contactless credit/debit card or e-wallet with Apple Pay™, Google Pay™, or Samsung Pay™. The payment will be deducted from the contactless credit/debit card or e-wallet when the passenger taps the validator again at their destination. Those who travel longer distances pay more than those who travel shorter distances, measured in a straight line.

Should the demonstration prove successful, MST may offer the contactless fare payment option on a permanent basis.

#### 3.6.5 Fleet Engineering Modifications:

The pandemic has triggered a world-wide effort within the transit industry to explore and adopt technologies and engineering modifications to mitigate the spread of the SARS-CoV-2 virus. These technologies and engineering modifications include:

### *Passenger Seating:*

- Increased spacing between seating to encourage and enable social distancing.
- Plexiglass installed at seatbacks that act as "sneeze guards".
- Opposite faced middle seats - allows passengers in middle seats to face the opposite direction of other passengers in the same seating row.

### *Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) Treatments:*

- Air treatment spray devices release aerosols at timed intervals.
- Antimicrobial filters add additional layers of protection.

### *Ultraviolet (UV) Light Disinfecting:*

- In May 2020, the New York Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) and Columbia University began testing UV light devices to clean buses.
- Dual-headed UV light lamps claim to be effective against Class two and three viruses, including coronaviruses.

MST shall continue to monitor emerging technologies and apply those to its revenue fleet that are proven to be economically feasible and effective in mitigating the spread of COVID-19.

### *Permanent Driver Compartment Barriers:*

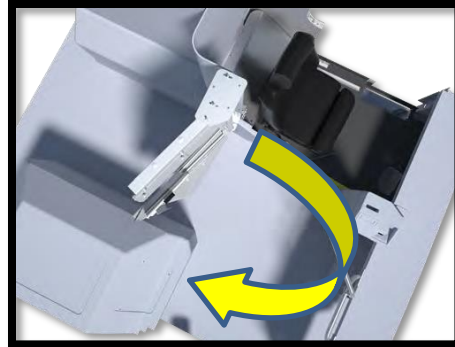
MST procured permanent driver compartment barriers for each of its various types of buses including Gillig 35' and 40' coaches, RIDES and fixed-route cutaway buses, Optima and Hometown Trolleys, MCI 45' commuter coaches, and BYD 30' all-electric buses.

The procurement process has been long and drawn-out. This was expected and a direct result of world's demand for safety equipment and supplies due to the pandemic. Specifically, companies involved in manufacturing, shipping, and supplying PPE, cleaning and disinfecting products, plexiglass, heavy-duty plastic, and other related materials and supplies have experienced unprecedented demand for their goods and services.

MST worked with Gillig and MCI to procure heavy-duty driver barriers through AROW Global™ – the leading manufacturer of driver barriers for transit vehicles. AROW™ is designing, fabricating, and manufacturing driver barriers tailored to MST's fleet. Barriers are made of steel and heavy-duty glass. The barriers can be described as a door to the drivers' seating compartment. The barrier swings open and allows the operator to comfortably close the barrier from their seated position. The heavy-duty glass slides to an opened or closed position, allowing the operator to physically interact through the opening if desired.



BARRIER OPERATES LIKE A DOOR



EXAMPLE OF BARRIER DOOR OPEN

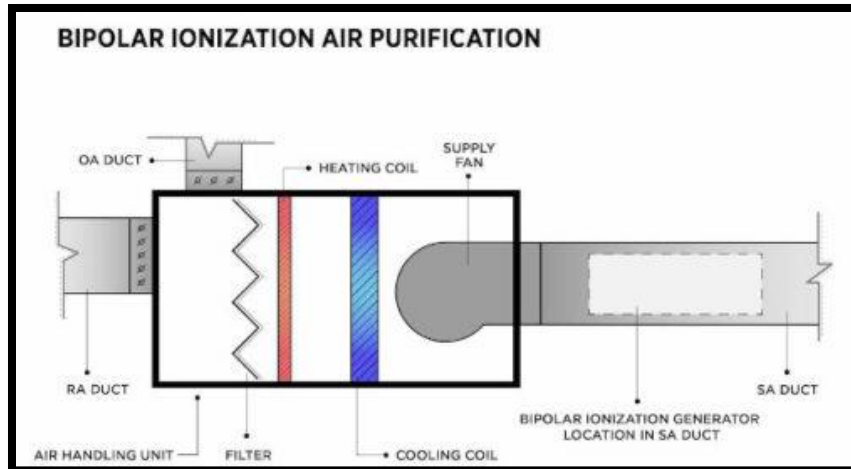


EXAMPLE OF BARRIER IN CLOSED POSITION

### 3.6.6 Facility Engineering Modifications:

#### *Bipolar Ionization Technology:*

Integrated into HVAC systems, Bipolar ionization technology utilizes specialized tubes that take oxygen molecules from the air and convert them into charged atoms that then cluster around microparticles, surrounding and deactivating harmful substances like airborne mold, bacteria, allergens, and viruses.

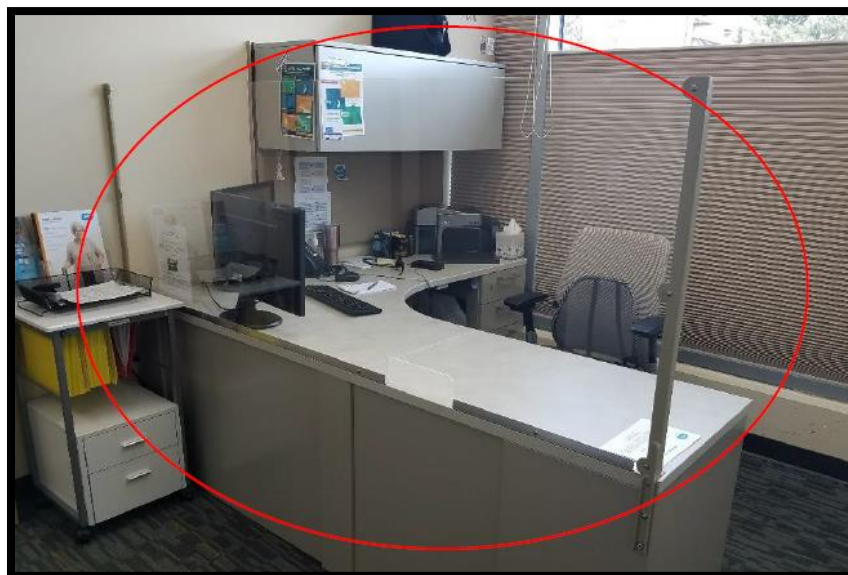


These charged atoms also attach to expelled breath droplets and dust particles that can transport viruses, enlarging them, so they're more easily caught in filters. It's an active process that provides continuous disinfection.

MST has completed the upgrade of the HAVAC systems in all of its facilities to include this air purification system.

*Protective Barriers:*

Protective barriers have been installed in all of the interview rooms at the Mobility Services Center to protect MST's customers and its employees. MST's mobility services require staff to routinely conduct interviews with customers during the RIDES ADA certification process and some travel training activities.





### 3.6.7 Essential Worker and Customer Body Temperature Screening:

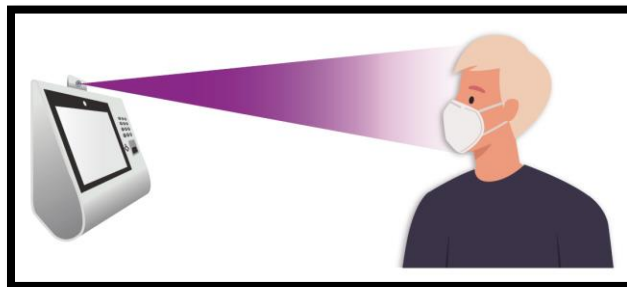
The CDC has provided guidance to the public transit industry that agencies implement a COVID-19 employee health screening process to its essential workers. Implementing this recommendation would require that all of MST's employees who routinely encounter the general public should be screened daily for a high body temperature at the beginning of their workday.

MST essential employees would include Coach Operators, Transit Supervisors, Mobility Specialists, and Facilities workers. Given the complex matrix of work schedules and the span of MST services, it would not be feasible for MST to hire dedicated personnel to provide round-the-clock employee screening at multiple employee reporting locations.

#### *Primary Screening:*

To implement this program, MST shall establish a primary screening program for its essential workers using Infrared Thermographic Camera technology (ITC). ITC devices detect and report via email or SMS, body temperatures that are above pre-determined control limits.

ITC units shall be installed at essential employee reporting locations. When the employee reports to their work location, they shall be required to present themselves to an ITC station. Should the device detect the employee's body temperature to be above the pre-determined control limit, the employee will be directed to designated staff who will conduct a thorough secondary screening of the employee.



#### *Secondary Screening:*

During the secondary screening process, designated staff will verify the employee's body temperature with a handheld touchless thermometer and ask the employee a series of CDC recommended COVID-19 screening questions. If determined that the employee is showing symptoms of COVID-19, they shall not be allowed to work, directed to contact their health care professional, and be sent home to self-isolate following County Health protocols and MST's Medical Leave policy.

### *Mobility Center Customer Screening:*

MST shall also implement pre-entry health screening for customers at its Mobility Services Center in Salinas. Typically, these customers require close contact with MST staff during ADA Paratransit eligibility assessments or travel training sessions. A secondary screening process, as described above, shall be completed on all customers before entering the facility.

### *Passenger Screening:*

At this juncture, MST does not have any immediate plans to initiate pre-boarding passenger temperature screening on its services. This may change should additional guidance be issued on this subject, and as new technologies become available to support such a program.

### 3.6.8 Contact Tracing:

As the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic crisis entered its fifth month, the number of positive COVID-19 cases within the State of California increased significantly. State and County Contact Tracing programs became quickly overwhelmed and could not effectively keep up with the number of active cases.

Contact tracing programs serve as the front-line offensive tactic used by public health officials to help mitigate the spread of infectious diseases. However, these programs are only effective when those who have been in "close contact" with a contagious person are quickly identified, contacted, and directed to change their behavior (e.g., isolate or quarantine).

To further mitigate the potential spread of the SARS-CoV-2 virus among its employees and passengers, MST established a Contact Tracing unit. The unit is comprised of five key staff members who completed the Contact Tracing certification course with the John Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.

As one of Monterey County's largest employers and the sole public transit provider, MST established this program to support the County Health Department's Contact Tracing efforts, not replace them. Qualified MST staff are able to collaborate in a meaningful way with County Health Officials and provide informed direction and appropriate follow up to MST employees who believe that they may have been infected with or exposed to the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

Should an MST Coach Operator test positive for COVID-19, MST's Contact Tracing Unit is able to utilize GPS technology, vehicle telemetry data, on board video surveillance, and Contact Tracing skills to determine if any passengers engaged in "close contact" with the employee during their infectious period. Should it be determined that a passenger was in "close contact" with an infectious employee, MST's protocol requires that a press statement be released notifying the public of the date(s), time(s), and route number(s) where it was determined that the contact(s) occurred. Also, passengers who may be concerned that they had come in close contact with the Operator, will be advised to contact their healthcare provider or the Monterey County Health

Department for direction and support. As of this writing, (August 11, 2020), MST has had no incident requiring the release of such a press statement.

### 3.7 Preventative Strategies:

#### 3.7.1 Enhanced Vehicle Decontamination, Upgraded PPE Equipment, and Training for Utilities Service Personnel:

##### *Enhanced Vehicle Decontamination:*

In 2017, MST introduced a new cleaner, deodorizer, and disinfectant into its inventory of supplies. This new agent was proven to be effective against a number of viruses and diseases including Hepatitis. At the time, the Monterey County region had experienced a rise in Hepatitis infections in and around areas and facilities served by MST.

MST uses this chemical daily to disinfect its vehicles and facilities. At the onset of the COVID-19 crisis, MST increased the frequency of cleaning and disinfecting the fleet. As staff is available, buses that pull into the yard at midday are cleaned and sanitized a second time before being redeployed into revenue service.

Additionally, MST purchased portable foggers (mistifiers) that alter the cleaning agent into a vapor that quickly disperses the disinfectant evenly throughout the passenger cabin of the bus. The mist will settle on various surfaces, disinfecting and deodorizing everything it touches.

##### *Upgraded PPE Equipment:*

MST upgraded the PPE issued to the Utility Service Personnel (USP) who are responsible for cleaning and disinfecting vehicles and facilities. PPE for MST's USP workers now include:

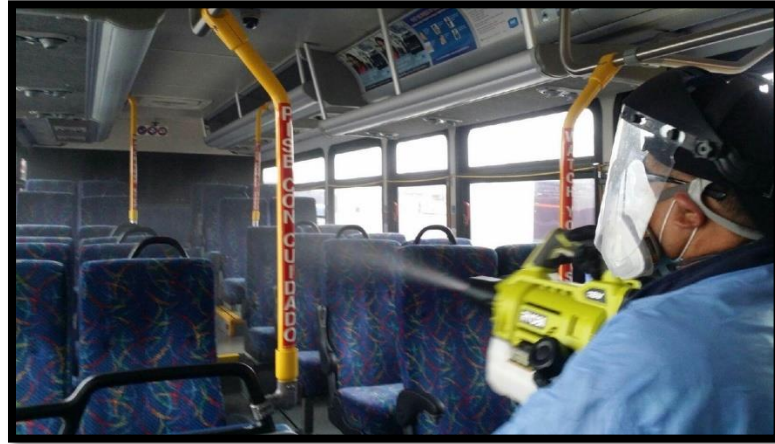
- N-95 respirator face mask
- Face shield
- G-16 Eye protection
- Heavy duty industrial grade disposable gloves
- Disposable Microporous coveralls

##### *Updated Training:*

MST has also revised and included the following training topics in a bi-annual certification course for all USP workers:

- Proper donning and doffing of personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Proper storage and care of PPE

- Proper use and application of chemicals
- Proper use of tools and equipment
- Proper use of Foggers and Misters



### 3.7.2 Formalize Essential Worker PPE Training and Recertification:

A 'New Hire PPE training module' will be incorporated into the MST New Hire Coach Operator and Utility Training Program. Additionally, PPE recertification training will be included in VTT Training and Maintenance Safety Training every two years.

## 3.8 Future Preparedness Strategies:

### 3.8.1 Revised PPE Vendor Contractual Agreements – Guaranteed Supply Chain:

Early in the COVID-19 crisis, MST experienced a shortage of PPE. As the Nation's supply chains were strained due to overwhelming demand, MST struggled to maintain sufficient PPE supplies to protect its essential workers.

As a preparedness strategy, MST will work with its key vendors to explore the feasibility of modifying contractual terms to ensure that MST is always guaranteed product shipments to maintain a minimum of a 90-day supply of PPE. MST will consider paying the vendor(s) in advance to ensure an uninterrupted supply of PPE.

Currently, MST has at least a 90-day supply of PPE on its shelves; however, should there be additional waves of the COVID-19 virus or future pandemics, a guaranteed supply chain of PPE will be crucial.

### 3.8.2 Annual Review and Updates of MST Disaster Response Plans:

MST staff shall review its Continuity of Operations Plan for Disasters and Other Emergencies on an annual basis. The plan addresses several disaster scenarios that may affect MST, including pandemics.

All plan updates shall be submitted to the MST Board of Directors for review, comment, and approval.

### 3.8.3 Disaster Response Plan Testing (Tabletop Exercises, Live Drills):

Having a disaster plan is an essential first step in preparedness; however, if the plan is not tested or exercised regularly, it may not be as effective as it could be when executed during a real-world event.

MST staff shall hold a tabletop exercise at least annually to test its Continuity of Operations and Disaster planning effort. After-action reviews will be conducted after each exercise, and lessons learned will be incorporated into future disaster planning updates.

### 3.8.4 Mandatory Incident Command System (ICS) Training for Designated MST Management Personnel:

The Incident Command System (ICS) is a proven method for the *command*, *control*, and *coordination* of a response to any incident. ICS provides an effective means to coordinate the efforts of multiple agencies and/or personnel and resources to work towards the common goal of stabilizing the event while protecting life, property, and the environment.

During MST's response to the COVID-19 crisis, it was found that some of MST's key management personnel had not received prior ICS training. This lack of preparation became problematic as some of these individuals were expected to staff critical positions in MST's Emergency Operations Center, which relies heavily on the use of ICS controls during emergency operations. It is for this reason that MST must strengthen its ICS training and certification program for all Supervisor and Manager level personnel.

MST shall make ICS training mandatory for designated management level personnel within the agency. At a minimum, staff shall be required to certify in FEMA's IC-100c. This course describes the history, features, principles, and the organizational structure of the Incident Command System. It also explains the relationship between ICS and the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

MST's Transit Supervisors shall continue to be required to certify in FEMA's IS-200c. This training offers a higher level of certification that is designed to meet the all-hazards, all-agency NIMS ICS requirement for operational personnel.

# SECTION 4.0: Implementation Schedule For Pre-Pandemic and New Services:

## 4.1 Short-Term and Long-Term Service Restoration Schedule for Pre-Pandemic Services:

“Pre-pandemic” services are defined as those operated by MST prior to the County Health Officer’s first order on March 18, 2020. Much of the service was suspended in terms of span of hours or days in operation. Some lines were completely suspended and have not operated since the end of March 2020. As the economy starts to reopen and MST provides transit service to more and more people traveling to work, service restoration must occur. Short-term restoration is estimated to occur within the next 3 to 6 months. Long-term restoration of those pre-COVID services will take place between 6 to 18 months. The table below summarize the shorter-term and long-term restoration of “existing” services that served our passengers prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

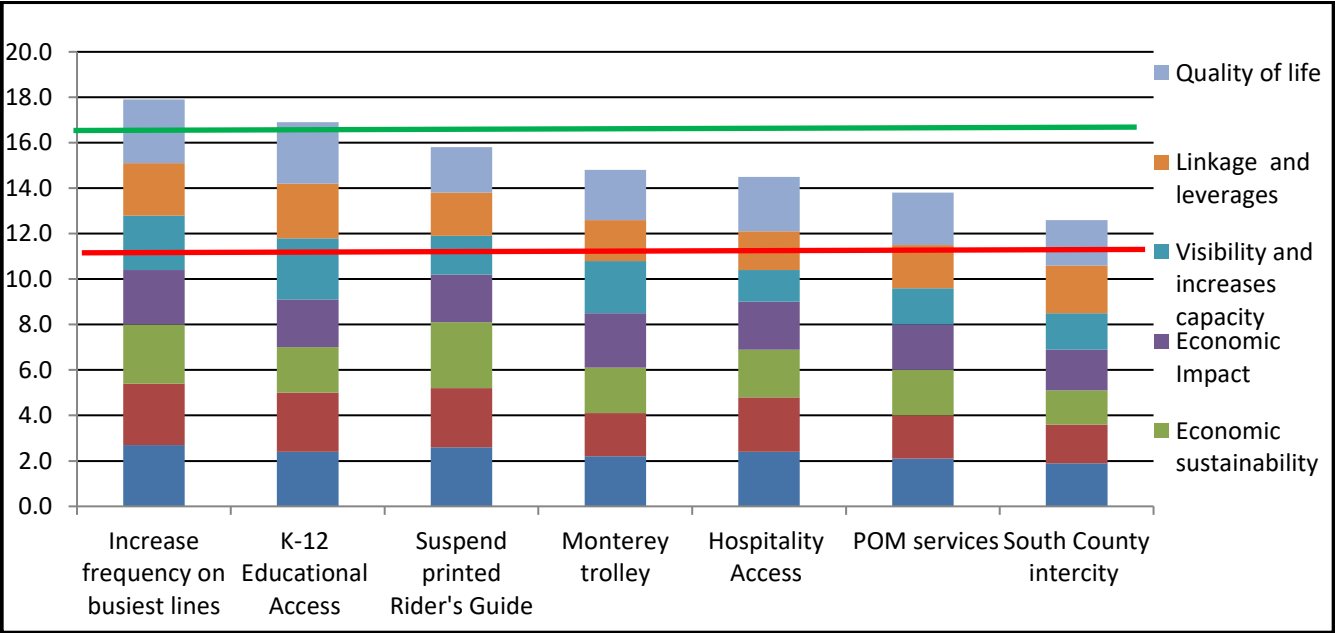
Short-term 3-6 months	Long-term 6-18 months
High Demand Local and Regional Lines	Historically Low Usage Local and Regional Lines
Presidio and Naval Post-Graduate School service	South County 80’s Lines
Santa Cruz and San Jose service	CSUMB and Hartnell Lines
Monterey Trolley	

## 4.2 Short Term and Long-Term Service Implementation of New Services:

“New” services are defined as those that did not exist prior to the County Health Officer’s first order on March 18, 2020. One example is a single-seat ride for Big Sur residents to access CHOMP. This new service was established during the response period and will be continued going forward. Other new services include better access for the hospitality commute and development of new bus pass programs. Additional projects will be developed through the Comprehensive Operational Analysis (COA). The table below summarizes the short-term and long-term new services.

Short-term 3-6 months	Long-term 6-18 months
Big Sur to CHOMP	Redesign of South County 80's Lines
Improved Access for Hospitality (e.g., Line 21 access to Monterey Peninsula Country Club)	Berryessa BART Connection
Improved Access for K-12 Schools	Others to be determined through COA
Hospitality Bus Pass Program	Park-It Big Sur Parking and Shuttle Program
Student Bus Pass Program	

The following chart shows how the MST Recovery team rated the current short-term recovery services utilizing the recovery criteria as described in Section 3.3.1



## SECTION 5.0: Plan Approval and Implementation:

### 5.1 Approval Process and Timeline:

This plan will be presented in draft form to the MST Board of Directors during its August 2020 meeting for review and further direction.

MST staff recommends that the final plan be returned to the Board for approval during its September 2020 meeting.

## 5.2 Recovery Plan Implementation Process:

### *Plan Implementation:*

The MST Board of Directors has the ultimate responsibility to both initiate and implement the recovery plan. Almost all of the recovery projects require public dollars and action. However, some projects may require private dollars, and some may require a public/private partnership to implement. The key to a successful implementation is the support and commitment of the local elected officials.

It is recommended that the MST Recovery Program Team remain active and oversee the entire implementation process of this recovery plan. The team is currently comprised of MST Board members and key MST staff.

The length of the implementation timeline will depend on the pace of economic recovery of the various sectors within the community. That may be three months in some cases or 18 months or longer in others. The key to continued success includes; 1) regular project completions, 2) maintaining a fluid plan, 3) community involvement during the implementation process.

### *Priorities for Implementation:*

Project implementation priorities should be based on two general principles:

1. Focus on projects that will have the most impact on the community's recovery when completed. The High Recovery Value projects should have priority. These should get the primary focus of the Recovery Project Team and the MST Board of Directors.
2. Move forward on projects that can be completed quickly, have significant public support, and available funding. These are the "low hanging fruit" of the plan. Completion of these types of projects creates significant visibility and helps solidify community and political support for continued emphasis on plan implementation. In some cases, these projects may not have a high recovery value, but their completion will help hold the community's interest in MST's recovery program.

### *Plan Flexibility:*

This plan should be viewed as a guide, not a set of specific instructions. Specifics of the recovery projects in the plan may change and evolve as designs are undertaken or as more details become known. Also, a resurgence of the COVID-19 pandemic could significantly alter the trajectory of the recovery program. It is important that MST remains flexible during the recovery process and assesses changes based on the community's recovery needs and the overall objectives of the plan.



Evaluation and feedback are essential components of the long-term recovery planning process. Also, tracking and reporting the progress of the recovery plan can be used to demonstrate success to stakeholders and the general public.

## **SECTION 6.0: Plan Maintenance and Updates:**

### **6.1 Plan Changes:**

An essential aspect of any recovery plan is that it must accommodate and allow flexibility for changes in priorities or circumstances that generally occur during the recovery process. The MST Board of Directors must be aware of and prepared for changes in plan or project priorities.

Also, MST's Recovery Project Team should not fear modifications, alterations, or deviations from the plan. Instead, they should be prepared to adjust as needed throughout the process and accept it as an ordinary course of the recovery process, all the while keeping the stakeholders involved and informed.

### **6.2 Plan Updates:**

This plan should be reviewed regularly to ensure that MST is following the appropriate path toward recovery. In the first year following the approval of this plan, an evaluation of the implementation process should occur monthly. This evaluation may consist of regular status reports or presentations to MST's Board of Directors.

After the first year, the status of the recovery process could be included in MST's annual report to stakeholders. The status report could consist of; noted plan modifications, project challenges, and new implementation priorities for the coming year.

## **APPENDIX:**

Appendix A: *MST COVID-19 Recovery Program Outline*

Appendix B: *CTA; Recommendations for the Future of Transit*