

Metropolitan Transportation Commission Operations Committee

June 12, 2020

Agenda Item 6a

Report on Travel during COVID-19 Shelter-In-Place

Subject: Report on travel on highways, bridges, transit, and local roads during COVID-19 Shelter-In-Place.

Background As a result of the major tech companies sending their workforce home to work remotely and the initial shelter-in-place (SIP) orders issued in mid-March, traffic across the Bay Area dramatically changed from highly congested to practically congestion free conditions. Staff has been monitoring the traffic condition and analyzing data sources such as Caltrans Performance Measurement System (PeMS), counts from Bay Area Toll Authority (BATA), INRIX, transit ridership (via Clipper data), and data provided by local jurisdictions. Staff will continue to monitor and report the state of the transportation system as circumstances change. Below is a snapshot of our key observations to date:

- Daily weekday traffic on the seven BATA administered toll bridges decreased between 41% and 66% during the week of March 23.
- Traffic on major corridors reached the lowest point by early-April and then increased approximately 20% to 30% by the end of May.
- The change in traffic has not been consistent across the region as corridors like I-80 in Alameda County experienced only a 40% decrease while US-101 in San Mateo County experience decreases over 60%.
- To allow for 6' social distancing some transit agencies have reduced passenger capacity on their vehicles by approximately 75%. On corridors with high rates of transit ridership and carpool, like the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge, many commuters may switch to driving alone.
- Bay Wheels (bike share) ridership decreased 85% by early April but nearly tripled from its low by the end of May.
- Cities are also starting to implement street and traffic signal strategies to better allow people walking and biking to practice social distancing. Staff are coordinating with agencies on best practices and documenting the growing number and type of social distancing strategies implemented.

The significant adverse impact of COVID19 on the economy, traffic, transit ridership, sales and gas taxes and so forth has challenged us to be nimble and creative problem solvers and leaders. Key activities to date include:

- **Blue Ribbon Transit Recovery Task Force:** This 30-member task force lead by Commissioner Sperring is to address the current public transit crisis with the goal to stabilize transit systems and restore ridership. It will also direct how to distribute the second round approved by Congress earlier this year through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act. The first distribution of \$780 million in CARES Act funding was approved by MTC in April.
- **Ad Hoc BATA Recovery Working Group:** With leadership from BATA Oversight Chair Amy Worth and Caltrans Director 4 Director Tony Tavares, this working group is to strategize ways to support on-going toll bridge operations and maintenance within a constrained revenue outlook; manage congestion as traffic is expected to surge with the reopening of the economy while transit and carpooling is expected to recover more slowly; and fund and make progress to deliver low-hanging, near-term operational improvements via our Forward initiatives now and over long-haul.
- **Partner Coordination:** As companion to the Blue Ribbon Transit Recovery Task Force and Ad-Hoc BATA Recovery Working Group, there are numerous opportunities to coordinate and partner with transportation agencies, cities and counties and business groups to define and delivery creative transportation solutions. For example, in the early weeks of SIP, MTC and cities/counties participated in webinars on social distancing for bike and pedestrian activities. More recently, SFMTA has reached out to us to collaborate on conceptual congestion management strategies in anticipation of tsunami-like wave of traffic bound for the Bay Bridge/I-80 corridor as SIP protocols are lifted.

In February 2020 prior to SIP, the BATA Oversight Committee approved Bay Bridge Forward's suite of operational improvements to address bottlenecks at the approaches to the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge, increase passenger throughput, and manage travel demand. Delivering Bay Bridge Forward and other investments is equally important then and now. Furthermore, the work to be carried out by the Blue Ribbon Transit Recovery Task Force and the Ad Hoc BATA Recovery Working Group will not only tackle the immediate impacts of COVID19 but also strategize about the long-game on how to invest, support, reposition and sustain our transportation system. With the Commission's leadership, we will brave this storm, and where practical we will stay the course, and where there is opportunity, we can forge new ground.

Attachments: PowerPoint


Therese W. McMillan

Travel During Shelter-In-Place

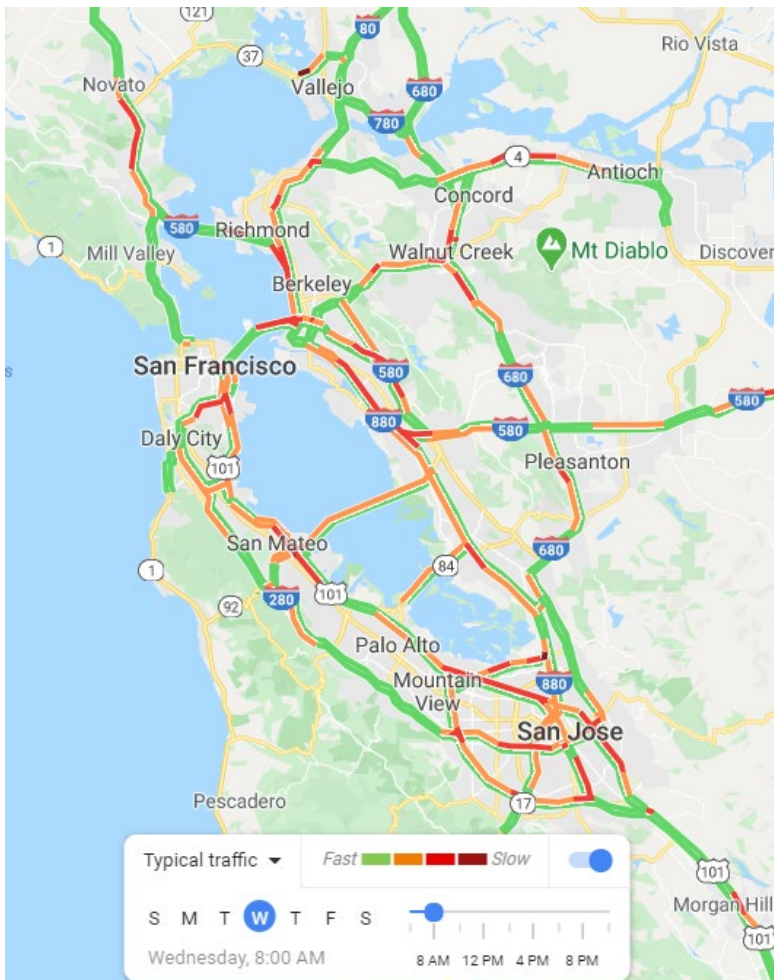
MTC Operations Committee

June 12, 2020

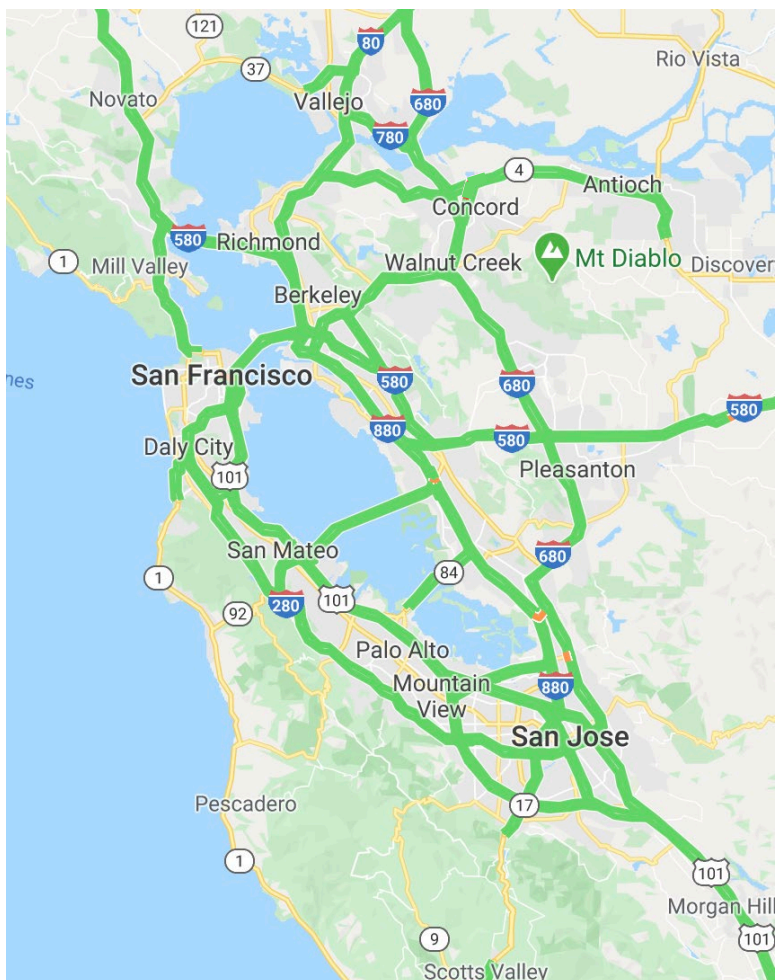


Traffic Quickly Disappeared Starting Days Before Shelter-in-Place

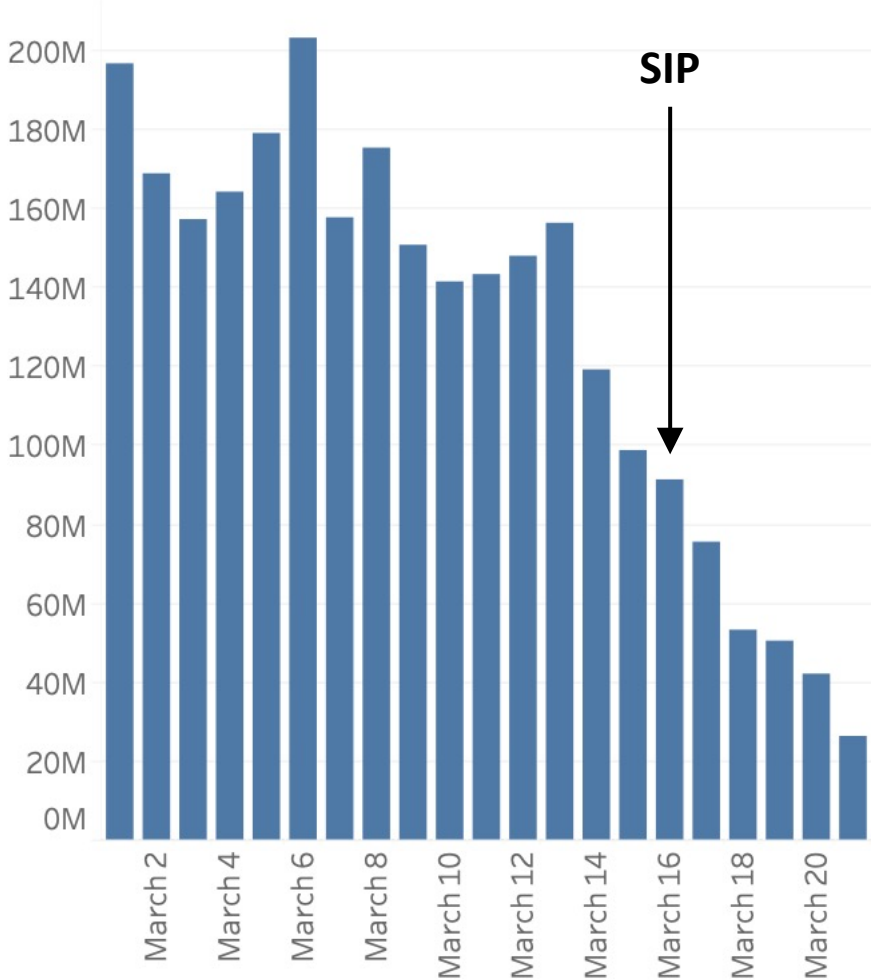
Typical Weekday
AM Peak



After Shelter-In-Place
AM Peak



Daily VMT



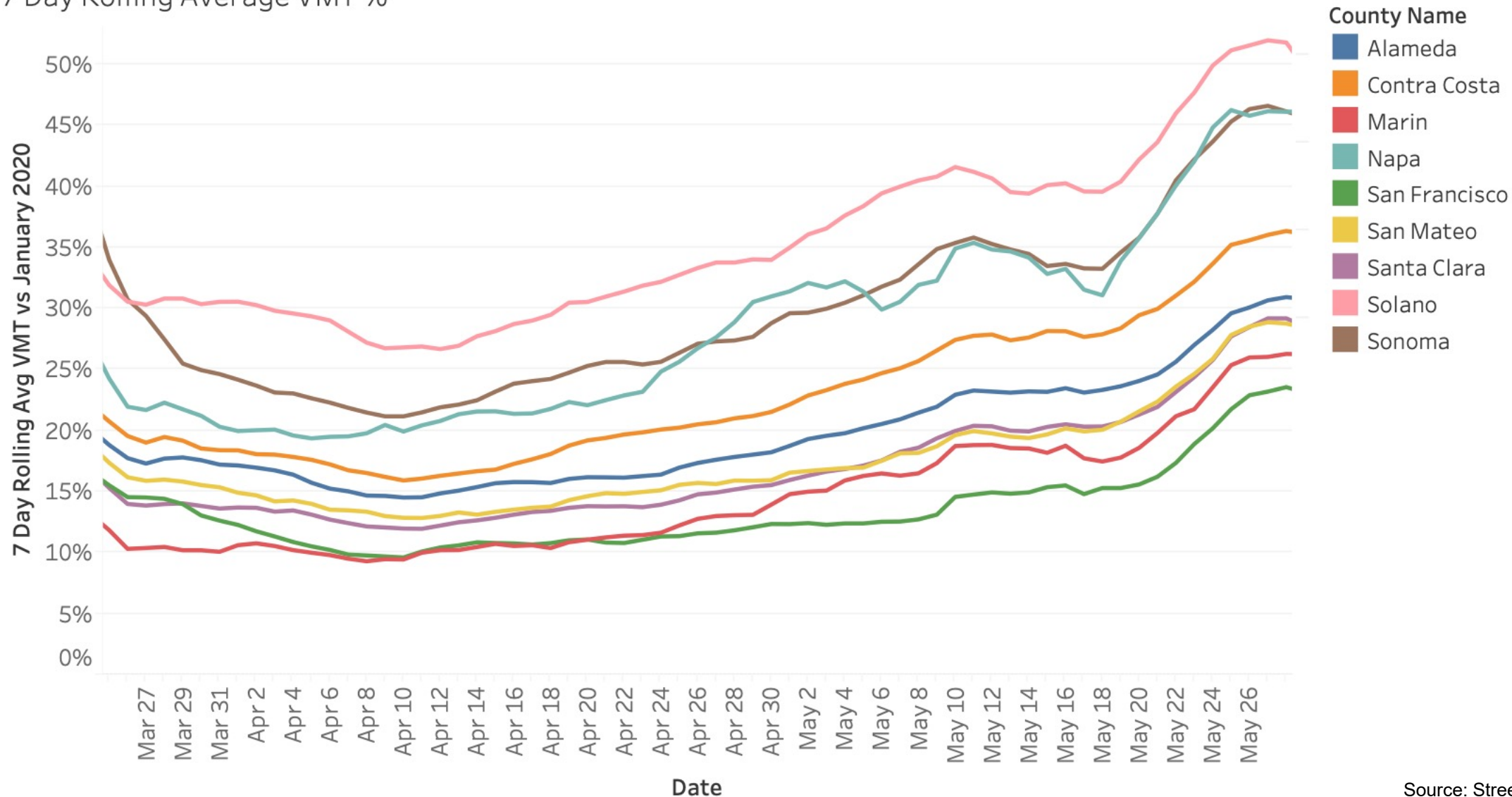
Source: Google Maps 2020

Source: Streetlight Data



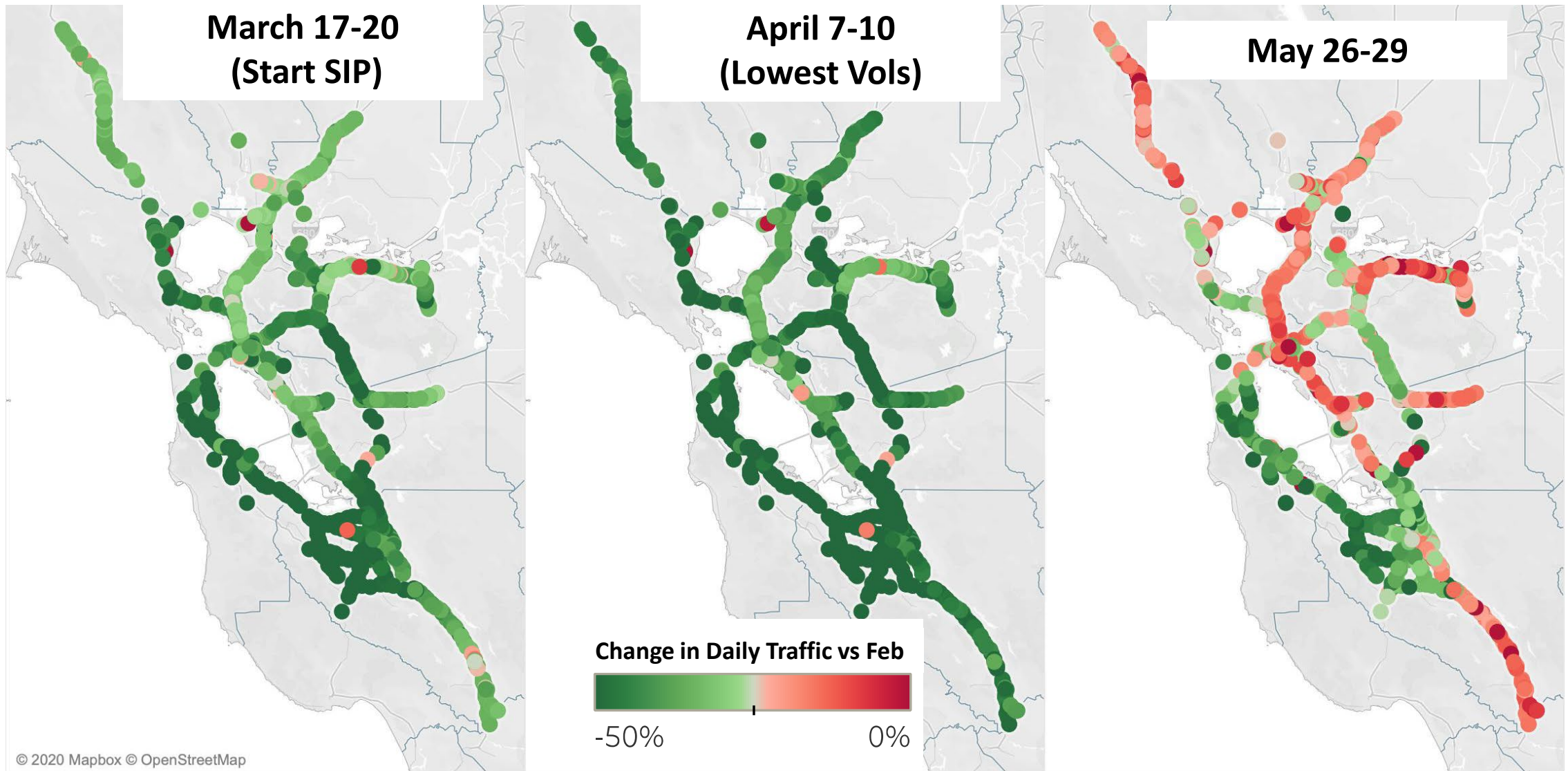
VMT Began Increasing Again in Mid-April

7 Day Rolling Average VMT %



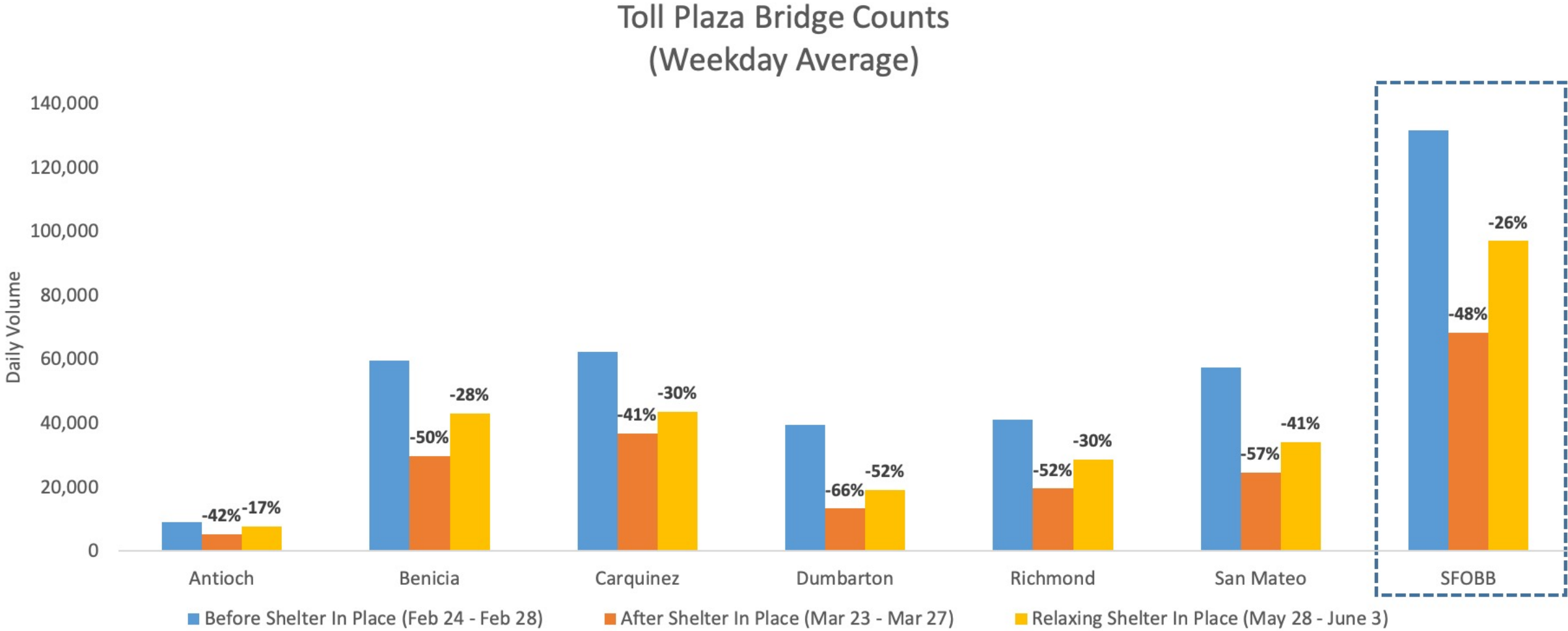
Source: Streetlight Data

Traffic Reduced the Least on the Regions Peripheral Corridors & BART Corridors



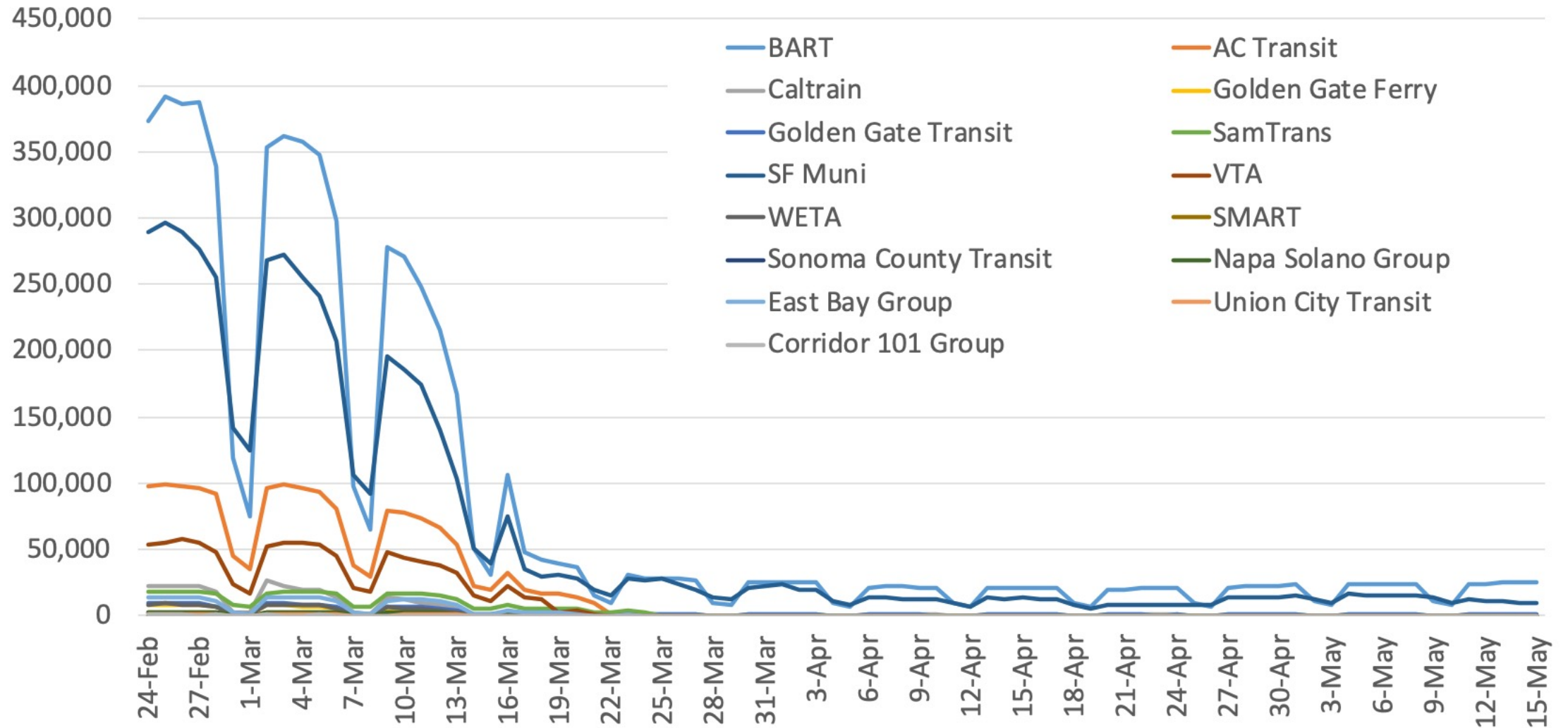
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San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge Already Restored 74% of Traffic



Transit Ridership Has Declined, Slow to Recover

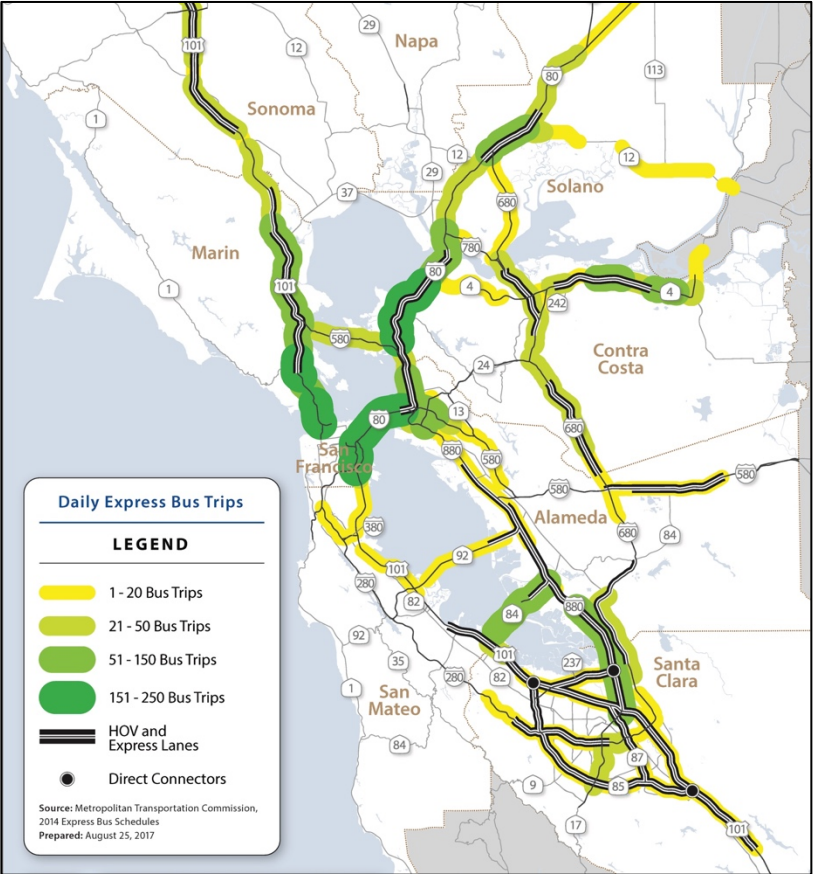
Daily Clipper Transactions (Not Ridership)



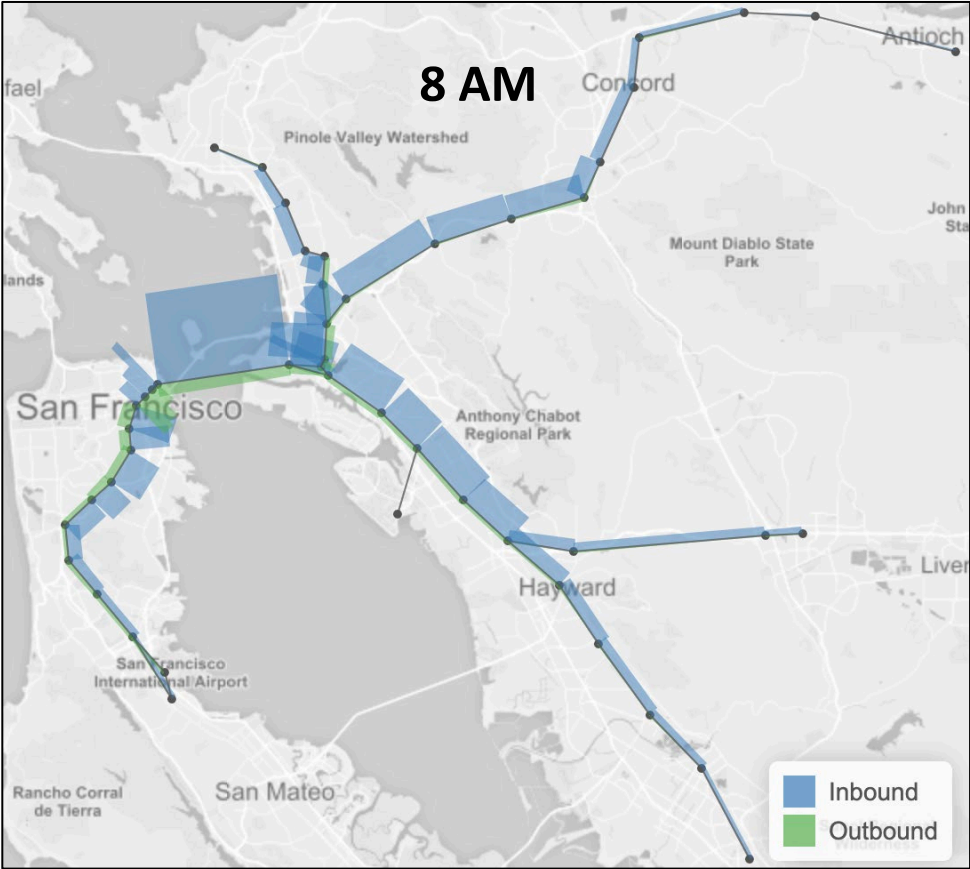
Source: MTC

Transit Ridership & Carpooling Historically Greatest on SFOBB Corridor

Express Bus Service



BART Ridership



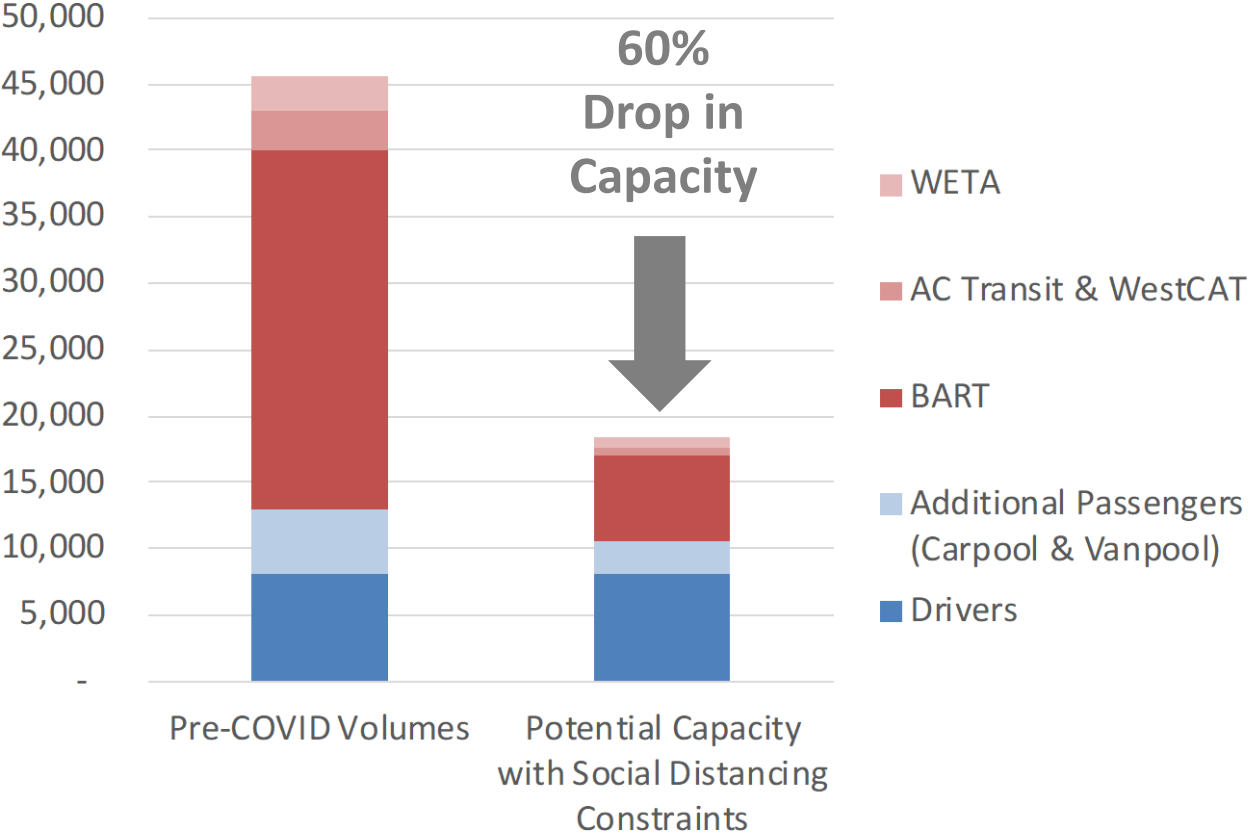
Carpool on BATA Bridges

Bridge	Carpool % of Traffic	Daily Carpool	HOV Policy
SFOBB	9.4%	16,565	3+
San Mateo	9.3%	7,033	2+
Dumbarton	8.4%	3,868	2+
Carquinez	3.2%	2,736	3+
Benicia	1.9%	1,537	3+
Antioch	6.6%	793	3+
RSR	3.5%	1,934	3+

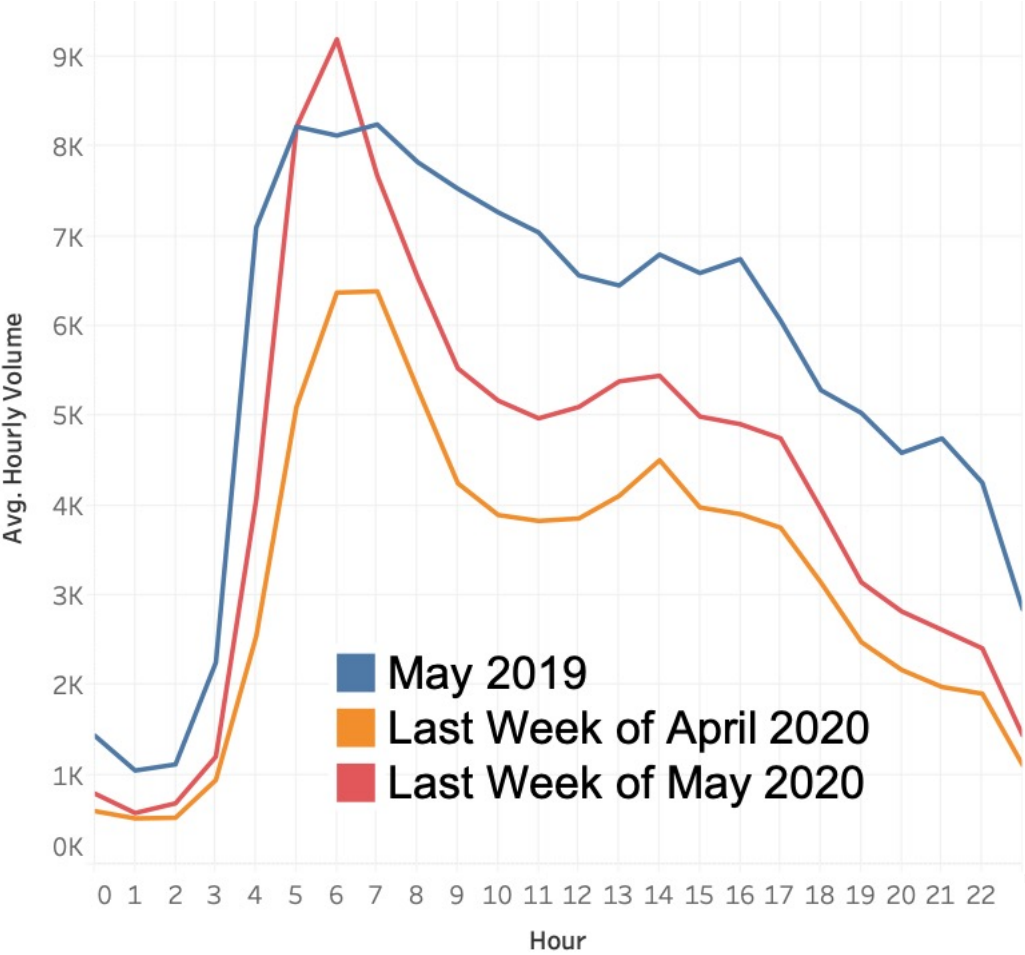
Source: BART, MTC, BATA

Greatest Loss in Transit Ridership and Carpool on Bay Bridge Corridor → Likely Worst Increase in Congestion

SFOBB Corridor WB Peak Hour Passenger Throughput

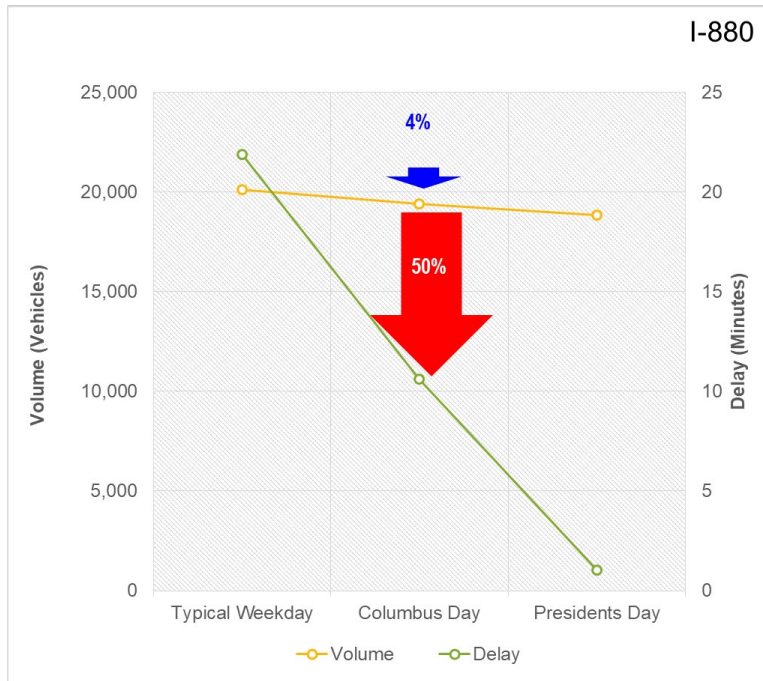


SFOBB WB Hourly Volumes (Tu-Fri)

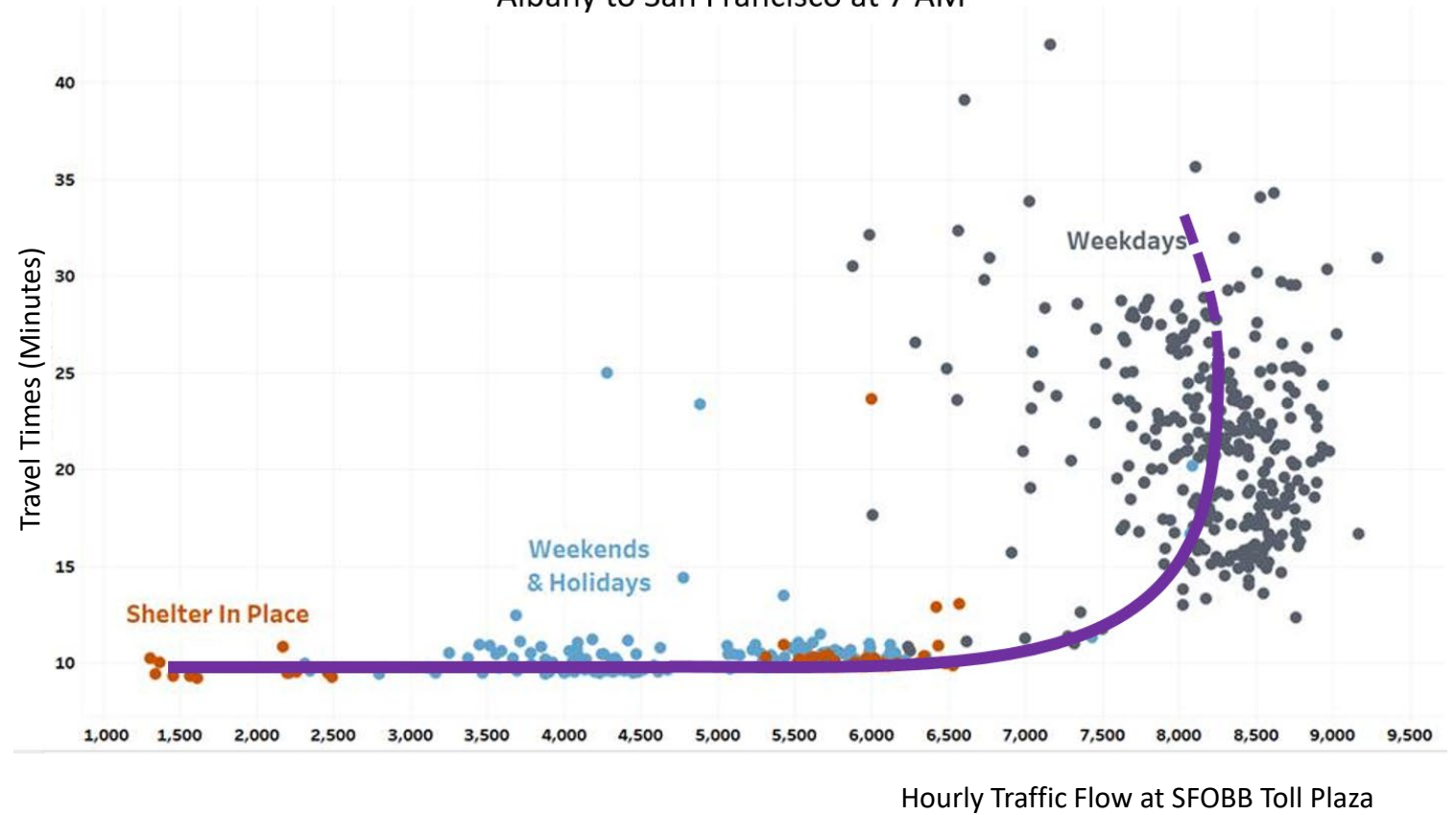


Reliability Cuts Both Ways → Slight Uptick in Demand May Lead to Considerable Delays

**3% to 5% Lower Traffic Demand
Yields 50% to 70% Less Delay**



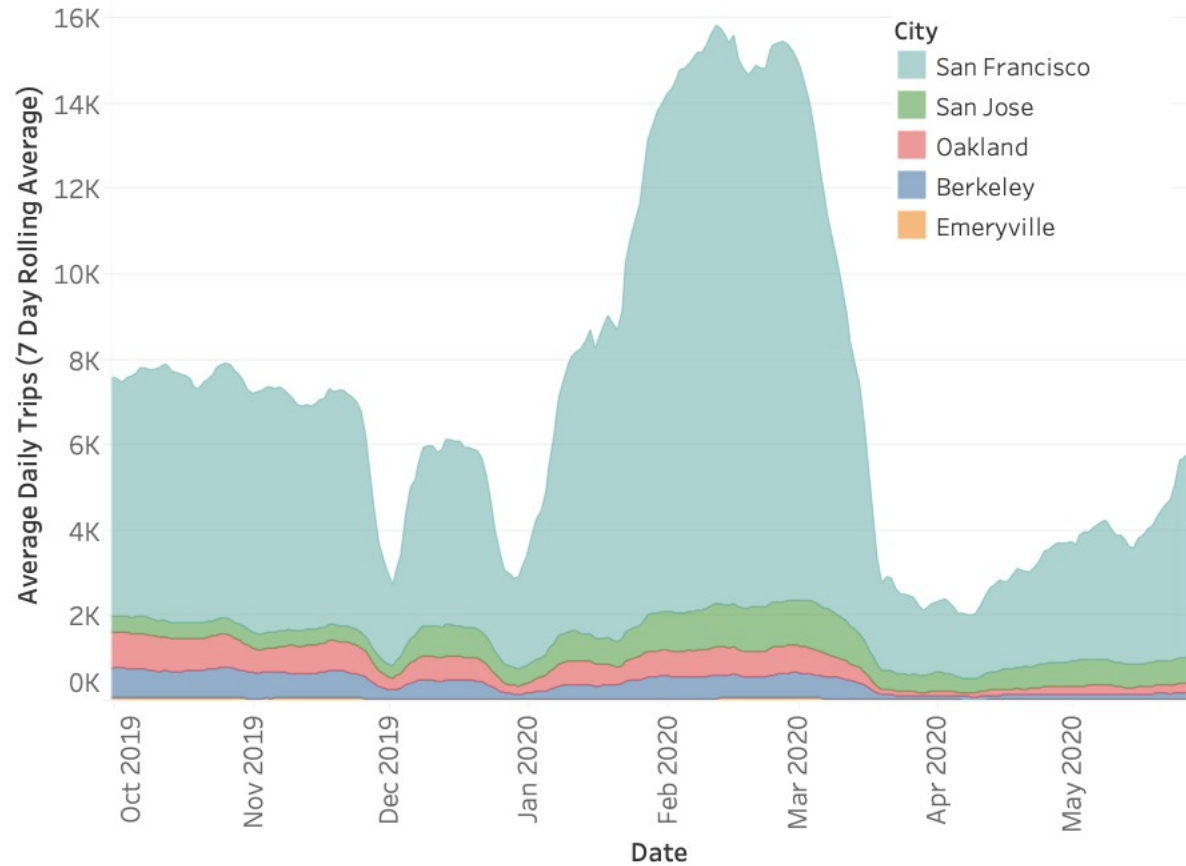
I-80/Bay Bridge Corridor:
Albany to San Francisco at 7 AM



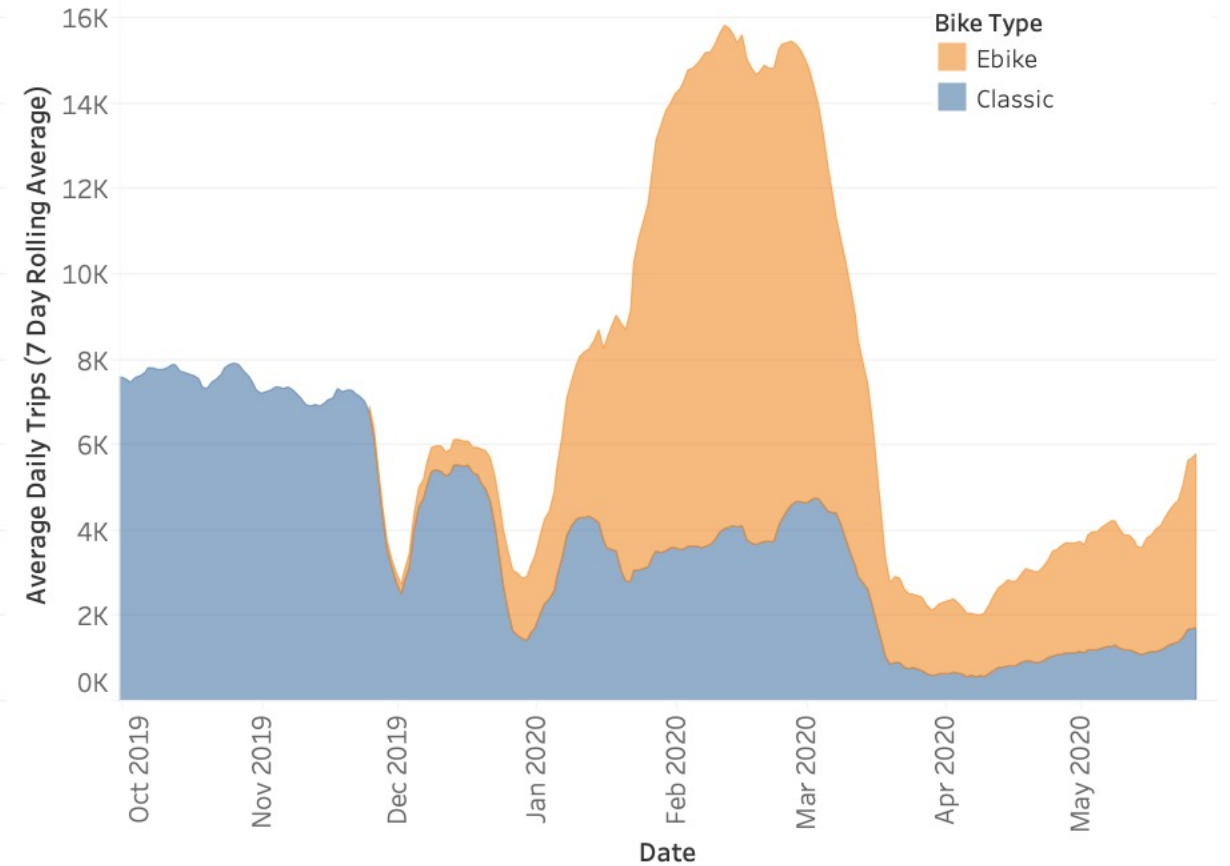
Source: BATA, INRIX, 2019 and 2020

Bikeshare Was Down Significantly but Growing Since April

Average Daily Trips by City



Average Daily Trips by Bike Type



Source: Lyft

Working Towards a New Normal

Commission Initiatives & Partner Coordination

Transit

Blue Ribbon Transit Recovery Task Force

Bridges

BATA Recovery Working Group

Congestion Management

SFMTA Partner Coordination

Walking & Biking

Cities implementing social distancing actions

