# Slide 1:

# Presentation Title: Transportation Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic in the National Capital Region

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Access for All Advisory Committee

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Slide 2: Introduction

* The COVID-19 pandemic has had profound impacts on transportation since March 2020
* Staff reviewed a variety of data sources for “snapshots”
	+ Insights, not definitive conclusions
	+ Be aware of caveats regarding the variety of data sources and the dynamic situation
* Examined were:
	+ Travel and roadway traffic volumes impacts
	+ Transit
	+ Safety, speeds, and other impacts

Slide 3: Roadway Traffic Volumes

Bar Graph showing Monthly Average Percent Change from Equivalent 2019 Month

2020 volumes in comparison to 2019:

January 3.7%

February 2.4%

March -21.9%

April -50.5%

May -37.5%

June -25.5%

July -19.8%

August -19.9%

Source: COG/TPB

Regional traffic volumes, which in April 2020 had dipped below 50% of 2019 volumes, by July had recovered to over 80% of 2019 volumes, and remained at that level in August

Slide 4: Vehicle Miles of Travel

Line Graph showing vehicle miles travelled (VMT) from March to July for Metropolitan Washington and median of 26 Metropolitan cities

Source: INRiX

* Regional vehicle miles of travel (VMT) dipped most dramatically in April, but by July had recovered significantly
* Lower but similar to the median of 26 major metro areas

Slide 5: Person Travel

Line Graph showing the average percent of people staying home

Source: Maryland Transportation Institute (MTI) November 2020

Persons staying home on a given day regionally went from about 25% pre-pandemic, up to about 45%, and recently back to around 35%

Slide 6: Truck Travel

Bar Graph showing normalized trip count and confirmed COVID-19 cases by date by vehicle type.

Source: INRiX

Nationally and regionally, truck travel (blue) never declined as much as passenger travel (red/orange) did

Slide 7: Metrorail and Metrobus Ridership

Line graph showing year-to-year (2019 vs. 2020) percentage decline in ridership on Metrorail and Metrobus from 6/1/20 to 10/23/20

Source: WMATA COVID Public Information Page

* Usage of available capacity has been significant, particularly on the bus system, which remains a lifeline for critical workers
* Complex interaction of demand and supply (what services were running)

Slide 8: Local and Commuter Transit

Line graph showing reported approximate reductions in of ridership vs. typical levels.

Source: COG/TPB questionnaire of local transit agencies, August 5, 2020.

Loudoun (local bus) -30%

Frederick Transit -36%

PRTC (local bus) -50%

Fairfax Connector -54%

Alexandria DASH -70%

DC Circulator -70%

PRTC (Commuter Bus) -85%

MTA (Commuter Bus) -87%

MARC -90%

Loudoun (Commuter Bus) -97%

Impacts varied among long-distance, local, and tourist routes

Slide 9: Roadway Speeds

Source: COG/TPB Analysis of the National Performance Management Research Data Set (NPMRDS). Certain regional Interstate highway segments excluded due to data availability.

Line graph showing Interstate System Car and Truck Mean Speeds by Week. Weekdays only - Holidays excluded. January – September 2020. 4pm-7pm

Range from 35 mph – 66 mph. Shows cars travelling faster than trucks except for a couple of points where they were the same.

Slide 10: Safety: MATOC Incidents

Bar graph showing:

Numbers of documented roadway incidents during Metropolitan Area Transportation Operations Coordination (MATOC) Program operating hours (4:30 A.M. to 8:00 P.M. weekdays only). January 2019 to September 2020.

Incidents range from about 8 to 103 incidents with severity shown in different as Minor, Intermediate, Major. Lowest overall in April 2020. Highest overall in September 2020. Highest during COVID in June 2020.

Source: MATOC.

MATOC-tracked major incidents were disproportionately high in April, and have remained disproportionately elevated.

Slide 11: Crashes (Northern Virginia)

Data for 2020 are preliminary and subject to change. Source: VDOT

2019 fatal crashes, 2020 fatal crashes, 2019 serious injury crashes, 2020 serious injury crashes. Number of crashes range from about 3 to about 96

Though serious crash numbers have been lower than 2019, fatal crashes have remained at about the same level as 2019, even with reduced traffic volumes since March

Slide 12: Air Travel

Line graph showing 2019 and 2020 Monthly Enplanements (in thousands) at Washington/Baltimore Regional Airports

Source: COG

Lowest April 2020, Highest August 2019. Still well below 2019 as of August 2020.

Air travel has recovered somewhat at the region’s three major airports since April, but remains much lower than 2019

Slide 13: Summary

* Traffic volumes and vehicle miles of travel dipped most dramatically in April but have significantly recovered
* Truck travel never declined as much as passenger travel did
* Though the overall number of crashes and incidents went down during the pandemic, major incidents and fatal crashes remained high even during periods of reduced travel demand
* Transit ridership has varied, with greater declines for longer-distance commuter services, lesser declines for local bus transit services
* Ridership changes should be viewed in relation to pandemic-reduced service levels; bus usage has been significant and remains a lifeline for critical workers.

Slide 14: Next Steps

Staff from COG Departments of Transportation Planning, Environmental Programs, and Community Planning & Service to collaborate on a multi-sectoral assessment of COVID-19 impacts on the region.

* Deeper dive into more data
* Examine interrelationships of data from multiple sectors to discern impacts and inform long-range planning and programming.
* Sectors of Analysis
	+ Roadway Travel
	+ Public Transportation
	+ Economy
	+ Environment
	+ Health

Slide 15:

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