



CITY LEADERSHIP IN A PANDEMIC

City Transportation Responses to the
First Year of the COVID-19 Crisis

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INTRODUCTION

Acknowledgments



This report was developed in consultation with leaders in cities across North America. We want to especially thank the following for their insights into the early days of the response, and what comes next:

- **San Francisco:** Jeff Tumlin, Director of Transportation, San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency.
- **Minneapolis:** Robin Hutcheson, Director of Public Works, City of Minneapolis.
- **Detroit:** Chisara Brown, Mobility Planner; Caitlin Marcon, Deputy Director of Complete Streets, City of Detroit.

NACTO's resources on COVID-19 Response, including the COVID-19 Transportation Response Center, were supported by Bloomberg Philanthropies as part of the Bloomberg Philanthropies COVID-19 Local Response Initiative.

ABOUT NACTO

NACTO is an association of 86 major North American cities and transit agencies formed to exchange transportation ideas, insights and practices and cooperatively approach national transportation issues.

NACTO's mission is to build cities as places for people, with safe, sustainable, accessible and equitable transportation choices that support a strong economy and vibrant quality of life. We do this by:

- Communicating a bold vision for 21st-century urban mobility and building strong leadership capacity among city transportation officials.
- Empowering a coalition of cities to lead the way on transportation policy at the local, state and national levels.
- Raising the state of the practice for street design that prioritizes people walking, biking and taking transit.

About This Report

In early 2020, it became clear that the COVID-19 pandemic would have extreme impacts on all of our lives, and that cities and transportation agencies around the world would be hard-hit and on the frontlines of the response.

Despite limited resources, uncertainty surrounding the virus, guidances that emerged and changed daily and the challenge of protecting both staff and essential workers, cities and transportation agencies responded fast. Their most valuable source of guidance became each other: cities quickly replicated interventions from other cities that appeared promising. NACTO, through its peer networks, was a hub for sharing these immediate interventions and learnings in real-time, across the association's 86 cities and transit agencies and more publicly through:

1. NACTO's member-sourced [COVID-19 Transportation Response Center](#) served as a daily-updating hub for resources and guidelines to the city officials and staff tasked with shaping the pandemic response.
2. NACTO's [Streets for Pandemic Response and Recovery](#) documented emerging practice on city streets, bringing response and recovery strategies to cities around the world, from streets for dining, to streets for voting, public health, and for protest. Thanks to NACTO's Global Designing Cities Initiative, this resource is [available in 10 languages](#).
3. NACTO partnered with Bloomberg Philanthropies on a [Streets for Pandemic Response and Recovery Grant Program](#) to fund new on-street projects with local partners that explicitly address deep-seated inequalities exacerbated by the pandemic. NACTO funded 10 new demonstration projects that serve as key examples of the processes cities can use to make an equitable impact.
4. NACTO used the combined voice of its membership to [advocate for urgent funding for city and transportation officials](#) that had to do more with less as they responded to this new crisis. Billions in federal aid are now ensuring that transit remains an essential service, and that cities are able to avoid some of the most draconian cuts to their operations.

This report focuses on learnings and stories from the first six months of pandemic response, including challenges that emerged and key interventions undertaken to address them. Each city's challenges are shaped by its unique history and circumstances, but they share the universal experience of assuming new kinds of leadership during a pandemic that affected every country worldwide.

At the time of this report's publication in March 2021, communities are still severely impacted by the pandemic that has infected over 100 million people and claimed over 2 million lives. As communities emerge from this crisis, NACTO aims to help forge a long-term recovery with equity and sustainability at the forefront.



Chicago, IL



Portland, Oregon
Photo: TriMet

Responding to an Emerging Crisis

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic changed the world. In just a few short weeks, the threat of infection, stay-at-home orders and social distancing requirements radically altered daily life. Globally, everyone experienced huge shifts in daily activities, from moving about the community to getting groceries to traveling to work. Essential and critical workers, including most employees in Departments of Transportation (DOTs), Departments of Public Works (DPWs) and transit agencies, played a vital role in keeping services going as cities worked in real time to ensure their safety and the safety of all their residents.

The challenges faced by transportation and city officials were unprecedented. How the coronavirus spread was not fully understood for months, which meant that difficult decisions had to be made-fast. There was no playbook for addressing the emergency that city officials were facing.

Even before the pandemic, the landscape was rife with challenges: new complexities brought about by climate change, sustained and growing inequality, systemic racism and a lack of federal leadership that further compounded all of these problems. The pandemic has caused tremendous harm to the populations and regions that are already more vulnerable to public health crises. Systemic, pre-pandemic inequalities heightened the risk of unequal levels of exposure to the virus and disparate resources to respond to it. Each city had to respond urgently to the specific needs for space, mobility and access to services in their communities.

Amid these challenges, leaders in cities and transportation agencies around the world responded to COVID-19 with creativity. Communities have seen distinctive innovations in how streets can be used to support mobility and expand public space for new purposes. Early ideas have evolved and led to ongoing collaborations for long-term recovery. These evolving approaches will have a sustained effect on city planning in the months and years ahead.

As cities continue the hard work of responding and planning for recovery, we endeavor to share some of the successes, challenges and lessons learned across NACTO member cities during this crisis. The stories and insights captured here reflect the strength of our city workforces, and a deep dedication to the cities we call home.

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NACTO member cities have not only demonstrated necessary leadership in responding to the biggest crisis in years, they have also begun to lay a new foundation for long-term recovery. Though cities have responded with creativity and extraordinary dedication, they didn't always get it right. We hope to take a moment to reflect and capture lessons learned to help shape the next phase of response.

Moving forward, we have the mandate to ensure that our cities provide opportunities for all who live in them. Together, we can invest in our cities and help them become more resilient, equitable and sustainable-charting a new path forward for generations to come.



Janette Sadik-Khan
Chair, NACTO



Corinne Kisner
Executive Director, NACTO

THE CHALLENGE

Adapting Without a Playbook

From the very beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, uncertainty was the defining challenge for all of us. For months, there was little consensus about the nature of the novel coronavirus. New and different information arrived every day as experts learned more about the virus and how it spreads. Everyday life was altered in unprecedented and constantly-shifting ways.

For city and transportation officials, the stakes were high, and the lack of information made them even higher. Bearing the responsibility for ensuring safe movement in cities without clarity on what exactly the risks were meant that getting it wrong could put people's health and safety at great risk. Total shutdown was not an option, however. Essential workers still had to get to work; transit employees needed safe and clear new protocols; and public space needed to be reimagined—the complications were manifold. There was no playbook for a pandemic.

Many transportation departments and transit systems were not well-positioned to handle a crisis to begin with. Already-limited budgets were suddenly hit with new losses: transit ridership (and with it, fare revenue) evaporated almost overnight, and the collapse of many local economies meant less tax revenue to fund local services. Federal funding from the CARES Act in early April mitigated initial

financial losses for some cities and transit agencies, but as coronavirus cases surged and restrictions were reinstated, transit became increasingly imperiled. There was no choice but to learn to do more with less.

Cities adapted with agility. Through tireless leadership and swift innovation, they wrote their own playbook.

Despite these extraordinary constraints, cities adapted with agility. Through tireless leadership and swift innovation, they wrote their own playbook. The resulting practices, if paired with the necessary investment and funding, could have sustained influence on cities and drive community changes that are long overdue.

Our cities and streets will be changed from the pandemic. But there is power in transformation: as we recover, we have the opportunity to create transportation systems that are safer, more equitable and work better for everyone.



RAPID RESPONSE INTERVENTIONS

Objective:

01

Protect Essential Workers

When the pandemic hit, cities had to act swiftly to make sure essential workers-especially those providing medical care, meals and groceries, transportation and more-could safely get to and from work.

Challenges

2.8 million essential workers rely on transit every day to reach their workplaces. At the start of the pandemic, the capacity of individual transit cars and buses was reduced and service in many cities was limited. These changes made it difficult for essential workers to get to work. Transit operators and ride-hail drivers faced the risk of contracting COVID-19 on the job; crew turnout was unpredictable as workers were encouraged to stay home if they felt sick; and social distancing and sanitation practices had to be maintained for buses, trains and ride-hails. On the streets, existing bike networks proved to be insufficient and unsafe as streets became more dangerous due to increased speeds.

Key Interventions

Transit agencies adjusted service plans

They deployed their limited crews and vehicles to where they were needed most. It was critical to prioritize service and maintenance on routes that connect public transit-dependent communities to essential services and jobs. To balance social distancing guidelines with reduced staffing, officials put protocols into place to monitor crowding and redirect service.

Increased mobility options

Access to bike share and ride-hail services was expanded-especially on low-ridership and late-night routes. In cities like Chattanooga and Detroit, free memberships for local bike share systems were given to frontline workers.

Established new sanitation protocols

Disinfecting vehicles and facilities was an important priority. This included cleaning stations, electrostatic sprayers and providing hand sanitizer for operators and passengers.

Made space for queuing and travel

Sidewalks and other transit access points were expanded at bus stops, grocery stores and other high-traffic areas. To maintain social distancing, transit authorities established a maximum number of allowed passengers per vehicle and increased the amount of space available to passengers. In Canada, the city of Montréal added 327 km of new pedestrian and bike travel lanes.

Reduced exposure points for operators

Rear-door boarding was established, sometimes facilitated by waiving fare collection. Masks, gloves and sanitizer (in some cases sourced creatively, including from local distilleries) were also provided to operators and frontline staff.

Changed interventions to limit exposure

Adjustments were made to city and agency protocols, including emergency sick leave policies, which encouraged employees to stay home if exposed to the virus. Agencies also began staggering shift start times to reduce spatial interactions among employees.

New York, NY
Photo: MTA



Objective:

02

Adapt Streets for Safety and Mobility

By late spring, it was clear that COVID-19 transmission is greatest indoors, which led many people to opt to walk and bike to work, and spend more of their time outside. Streets and sidewalks constitute most of the public space in cities, so authorities responding to the pandemic had to create safe, walkable streets for getting around and in many cases, reinvent streets and sidewalks altogether for adaptive uses.

Challenges

With schools and businesses closed, and social distancing guidelines in place, streets in cities assumed an even greater role in supporting communities. Beyond getting people from A to B, streets had to be able to host and facilitate access to grocery stores and restaurants, deliveries, schools, religious and cultural institutions, health services, outdoor exercise, protests, voting and more—all while keeping people safe. While some streets and neighborhoods had familiarity with adaptive street uses, others had no precedent for such changes.

Key Interventions

Streets for Pandemic Response & Recovery

[nacto.org/
pandemicstreets](https://nacto.org/pandemicstreets)

As cities adapted, NACTO compiled emerging practices from around the world, including implementation resources for cities and their partners, from slow streets, to prioritized transit, to providing critical services, during the crisis and as we recover. Thanks to NACTO's Global Designing Cities Initiative, this resource is **available in 10 languages**.



Closed or limited through-traffic on select streets

This provided more space to social distance in areas near parks, playgrounds and commercial areas with high foot traffic. In many cities, green space is already sparse, and is often unevenly or inequitably distributed. Closing streets and converting parking spaces allowed people to spend more time outdoors in more places, and move through dense areas safely.

Continued essential maintenance and construction

Maintenance projects continued, adhering to social distancing guidelines, to maintain jobs and avoid service disruptions. Cities like Atlanta kept moving on their ongoing key safety improvements, such as **speed limit reductions**. Cities also explored options to reallocate staff whose roles were impacted by COVID-19 to outreach and construction projects.

Adjusted intersection design and signal timing

As traffic volumes dropped, intersection design and signal timing was adjusted to slow vehicle speeds and ensure safety for pedestrians. Some cities even announced plans to eliminate “beg buttons” altogether.

Established dedicated delivery and loading zones

Dedicated zones supported restaurants and businesses, along with protocols for on-sidewalk queuing at grocery stores. In cities like Raleigh, North Carolina, parking lanes were converted into curbside pickup zones to ensure safe outdoor deliveries and dropoffs.



Charleston, SC
Photo: Keith Benjamin



Raleigh, NC
Photo: City of Raleigh

Objective:

03

Communicate Policies and Changes to Key Audiences

As cities adapted quickly, and contended with uncertainty, local residents were trying to do the same. In addition to implementing solutions for safe transportation, cities were tasked with communicating changes to streets and transit networks. This was key for maintaining trust as well as promoting safe behavior.

Challenges

COVID-19 created extreme disruption to people's lives everywhere, and these disruptions were seen to an extraordinary extent on city streets. People encountered road closures on their regular routes, transit shutdowns and other sudden changes that took them by surprise. Building credibility and transparency while navigating the chaos of a crisis was an uphill battle.

In the span of mere weeks and days, transportation agencies had to leverage their own outreach networks with creative messaging to communicate how street and transit changes would affect diverse communities. They had to give simple instructions in plain language to a variety of audiences and stakeholders. Cities faced difficulties in coordinating the distribution of urgent messages, pursuing every avenue to get essential information out-press conferences, social media, text messages, listservs, and outdoor signage.

Key Interventions

Leveraged city and transit-controlled media communications networks

Clear communication helped to advise the public to only take essential trips. Assets include in-station signage, ad space on vehicles and in stations, social media, press conferences and websites. Networks include social media channels, transit advocacy groups, neighborhood associations and large employers.

Used temporary signage

Temporary signage was placed on vehicles, at stations and bus stops to indicate shifts in operations and policies, including maximum capacity and social distancing regulations. Sometimes signage became a part of the new infrastructure itself: the city of Oakland created a 74-mile network of slow streets, all of which was mapped and indicated by using signage mounted on a-frames.

Engaged local groups

Local groups helped to disseminate information widely across the community. To communicate changes to school facilities and health policies, school leadership and parents became important messengers.

Offered internet access

Internet access supported communities without it and in situations where pre-pandemic access to the internet had been disrupted. Through [a NACTO-provided grant](#), the city of Alexandria, Virginia installed public space with wifi, shade and seating.

Drove digital sign-ups

These digital sign-ups helped community members opt-in to alert systems via text messages and localized apps.

Seattle, WA
Photo: Jeanne Clark



**STREET
CLOSED**

KEEP IT MOVING
Stay Healthy Streets
Keep it Distant: 6 + feet
Stay Healthy Streets in place 24/7 for the duration of the emergency or until otherwise noted.
Local access and deliveries allowed. Watch out for each other.
www.Seattle.gov/StayHealthyStreets
Seattle Department of Transportation

Objective:

04

Aid in Economic & Social Recovery

The road to recovery will not be short, which means the planning must begin now. Transportation is integral to economic and social recovery for cities everywhere. Cities must create space for people to be outside safely and reinforce transportation infrastructure as more people return to work.

However, recovery should not be a “return to normal.” By worsening inequalities that have existed for years, COVID-19 has given us the mandate to not only recover, but to chart a new path forward. City and transportation leaders must seize the moment to create a new vision for mobility.

Challenges

In many cases, the bureaucratic red tape that disappeared in March and April has returned, limiting the abilities of city and agency staff to make the required changes for recovery. Procurement hurdles like long lead times to make small purchases, and strict contracting rules often dissuade or disable small organizations from partnering with cities. And even federal dollars, while crucially needed, often comes with complex and arduous paperwork—limiting the number of low-cost but high-impact projects that cities are able to deliver for their residents. Cities often have not developed formal relationships with a wide range of embedded community partners, making projects harder to implement, and in some cases, harmful to intended beneficiaries.

Key Interventions

NACTO launched an emergency grant program

We offered funding to 10 cities that were reimagining streets, implementing ideas and supporting ongoing community efforts that met the needs of populations disproportionately harmed by COVID-19. The lessons learned from this program are intended to help guide cities towards effective approaches that help the most impacted communities from the pandemic.

Built on local partnerships

Many cities found that working with existing partner organizations was the most effective way to make change. For example, the city of Durham has a long-standing relationship with the community organization SpiritHouse. When the grant opportunity arose, city staff were able to work quickly with SpiritHouse to plan engagement events and translate resident feedback into street designs.

Used data to identify a need

To understand gaps in students' access to at-home internet early in the pandemic, Alexandria, Virginia staff created an internet access heat map. The map clearly identified that the neighborhood of Arlandria had significantly less at-home internet access than most other Alexandria neighborhoods. This finding helped guide staff to work with embedded partner CASA, which in turn had a clear sense of community needs.



CITY SPOTLIGHTS

SAN FRANCISCO

Re-Tooling Transit for Radical Resilience



We did not have the luxury of doing nothing.

JEFF TURLIN,
Director, San Francisco Municipal
Transportation Agency

San Francisco's unique transit system posed unique challenges during the height of the pandemic. Cable car lines required hands-on maintenance too difficult to deliver with social distancing, and the rail lines required small teams of specialists that were spread too thin due to quarantines and physical distancing within the workplace. The necessary response to this challenge meant a 70% loss in worker capacity for the SFMTA—and ultimately a shutdown of the cable and rail systems altogether. As San Francisco's Director of Transportation Jeff Tumlin put it: **this situation required solutions for “radical resilience.”**

Typically, San Francisco's transit is largely dedicated to moving people to and from the Central Business District. But the drastic drop in daily commuters resulted in both a loss in revenue and a shift in transit patterns and route priorities. These factors called for restructuring San Francisco's transit system wholesale, so the SFMTA retooled. All of the train operators are also trained as bus operators, so they were able to be re-assigned to buses. Similarly, train maintenance crews were reassigned to bus maintenance. Re-tooling the system in these ways enabled the city to provide service solutions in spite of the severe gap in funding.

To avoid overcrowding, the SFMTA needed to restructure service in terms of both frequency and geography. The revised service map prioritized routes based on:

1

Hospitals: Prioritizing transit lines with hospitals to keep essential workers moving to and from the frontlines.

2

Equity: Identifying neighborhoods with high transit dependence, and ensuring they still had transportation.

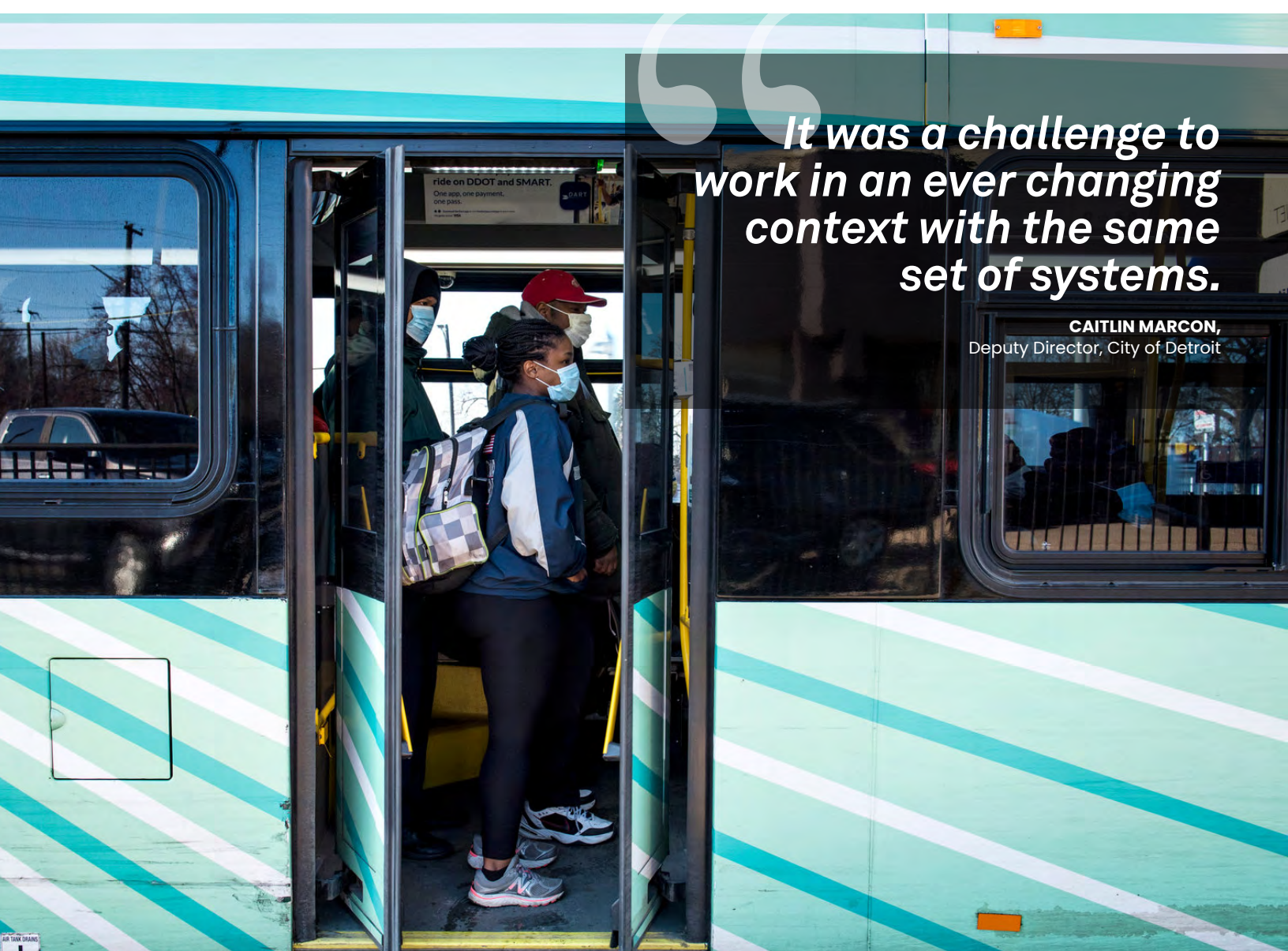
Buses proved to be a flexible, adaptable alternative to the cable and rail lines. Routes could be modified quickly, and frequency could be increased as needed. In fact, there were unexpected benefits to bussing modifications. For example, bus operators repurposed a service planning tool—the Headway Management System—to help alleviate crowding at bus stops. While bus operators typically adhere to fixed timetables, using the HMT allowed them to manage bus service in

real-time, and avoid “bunching” that results in long wait times at stops.

Overall, the challenges and solutions in San Francisco were about fundamental investments in the safety and security of its people. The SFMTA's pursuit of resilience continues beyond this moment: In 2021, the SFMTA's plans include the implementation of the new [Racial Equity Action Plan](#) and a push for 70 miles of permanent transit-only lanes.

DETROIT

Innovation for Equity



It was a challenge to work in an ever changing context with the same set of systems.

CAITLIN MARCON,
Deputy Director, City of Detroit

COVID-19 hit the city of Detroit hard, and city officials had to act fast to ensure the safety of its residents. In doing so, Mayor Mike Duggan prioritized equity and accessibility by focusing on the immediate need for testing and testing supplies. Food distribution for low-income residents and transportation solutions were also identified as key priorities, as a large segment of the population lives below the poverty line. Limited funding for these initiatives meant that the city would need to leverage strategic partnerships and contributions from businesses.

Immediately following the stay-at-home order in March, Detroit began setting up drive-through COVID-19 [testing sites](#), testing 800 to 1,000 individuals per day. However, as noted by the Office of Mobility Innovation, one-third of Detroiters do not have access to vehicles, and this population was disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. It was mission critical to provide access for all Detroiters to get to testing sites.

The city of Detroit implemented transportation solutions, keeping vulnerable populations and accessibility in mind:

- 1 \$2 round trip rides to COVID-19 drive-through testing sites through IntelliRide for Detroit residents who do not have access to vehicles. No resident was turned away, even if they didn't have \$2.
- 2 The city received a donation of 10 minivans from Honda with built-in separation barriers between drivers and passengers, equipped with separate airflow systems.
- 3 Implemented boarding from the rear of buses (instead of the front) to ensure safe social distancing between passengers and bus operators.
- 4 Expanded transportation services for essential workers through partnerships with ride-hailing companies like Lyft, and increased access to bike share, and on-demand shuttles. The nonprofit bike share program MoGo gave out free monthly passes to essential workers.

The [Open Detroit](#) program in June helped 181 small businesses by repurposing sidewalks, parking lanes and entire streets for outdoor dining, retail sales, exercise classes and more.

Additionally, partnerships with [Brilliant Detroit](#) and [Urban Neighborhood Initiatives](#) created outdoor classrooms and play spaces in four central locations. These enabled food

distribution programs, tutoring, parent support systems and other community-led activities.

Generous partnerships, creative collaborations and civic dedication are at the heart of Detroit's COVID-19 story. In a crisis where things seemed to fall apart, Detroit's community efforts and innovations helped to ease the catastrophe.

MINNEAPOLIS

Immediate Action
for City Workers

Minneapolis, MN
Photo: Evan Roberts

In a crisis, if you take care of your people, they'll take care of everything else.

ROBIN HUTCHESON,
Director, Minneapolis' Public
Works Department



When Minnesota Governor Walz announced the March 27th, 2020 [stay-at-home order](#), the immediate priority of the Minneapolis Public Works Department was to assure employees and the public that they would be safe and cared for. “We are an organization that has to keep going,” DPW director Robin Hutcheson said—and that meant worker safety first.

Critical workers needed to stay on the job and couldn't perform their duties from home—800 of the Department of Public Works' 1,100 employees fit into this category. From drinking water to sanitation to transportation, the services for which the department was responsible would have to be maintained, no matter the circumstance.

The agency quickly established safety protocols for employees. Some were tech-based solutions they had already been planning, like using high-resolution mapping for inspection teams, drones for monitoring infrastructure projects and virtual platforms for meetings. There were still more precautions for employees working in the field: meetings were held outside, and workers were reminded of the importance of wearing masks and physical distancing, even with teams they worked with every day. The agency sent safety teams into the field to help convey these measures and support workers implementing the new protocols.

With plans in place to protect workers, the agency turned its attention to the streets. **To get groceries or travel to work, people needed as much space as possible to maintain social distance.** To that end, Minneapolis put a number of interventions into place in the first days and weeks of COVID-19, including [closing parkways to motor vehicles](#); reintroducing [bike share](#) programs (with free 30-day memberships for health workers); issuing permits for more than fifty pick-up-only zones to restaurants and other businesses so patrons could briefly park to pick up food or other items; adding [barricades and bollards](#) to streets to protect people on foot and on bike; installing [operator barriers](#) on buses; providing free [food delivery](#); and providing [transportation](#) for unsheltered and vulnerable individuals to safe housing in hotels and other shelters.

Just before the pandemic hit, Minneapolis had released its Transportation Action Plan for public comment. As a blueprint grounded in climate, equity and prosperity solutions, many of its ideas were relevant to the steps the city took to respond to COVID-19. Now, as the city looks forward and learns from the pandemic, it is bolstered by already having a robust plan for cultivating streets as places for people, mobility and change.



Minneapolis, Minnesota
Photo: @visionzerompls

WHAT COMES NEXT

A New Phase of Recovery

NACTO member cities, transit agencies and staff across the country have stepped up and harnessed incredible creativity, finding new solutions that will benefit our communities well beyond the pandemic. However, the immense need exposed and exacerbated by the pandemic has barely begun to have been met, and there is critical work on the horizon.

COVID-19 exacerbated the inequities in resources and public health that many communities have experienced for decades. The communities hardest-hit by the virus are commonly the same communities most affected by climate change, economic downturns and cuts to public services—including transportation.

We call on the new Administration to work hand-in-hand with Congress to rethink how we design, fund, and prioritize transportation projects, so that the needs of local residents are put first on our streets. Recent funding passed is a welcome relief — but without sustained investment, outside of highway-building business-as-usual, we will not chart a just recovery from this crisis. Our economic recovery depends on strong transportation systems and mobility in our cities. Moving beyond immediate emergency funding, the Biden-Harris Administration must chart a new vision for mobility in our country, including robust and long-term investments in cities and public transit.

Cities and transportation agencies have critical roles to play as communities emerge from this crisis and look to chart a long-term path to recovery. It is essential to continue finding innovative solutions to the problems that have faced our cities for decades. Priorities for recovery must include:

- Resetting how the U.S. government funds, prioritizes, and approves transportation projects. As the FAST Act, the current federal transportation law, expires this year, we have a once-in-a-five-year opportunity to rethink America's transportation program and prioritize safety, equity, and access.
- Bringing transportation dollars closer to local residents. Most transportation funds are spent by states, sometimes in opposition to city goals. Giving cities the authority they need to build responsive, impactful, and multimodal projects, will enable cities to chart a path for a just recovery.
- Prioritizing a transit-led recovery. Transit is an essential service in cities, and no one uses transit more than frontline workers. Transit's crucial role in society was both underpinned and imperiled by the COVID-19 crisis. We must prioritize transit on our streets, and dedicate resources to properly funding the most equitable and efficient mobility option for Americans.
- Overhauling federal design standards, including the [MUTCD](#), so that cities do not need to go against federal standards to build streets that are safe and accessible. Without overhauling these standards, there is no way to meet the new Administration's sustainable and equity goals, or chart a sustainable recovery for the 80% of Americans living in urban areas.

Together, we can do the hard work needed to change the status quo and build equity and sustainability into all of our systems. And finally, we can continue sharing new ideas, resources and lessons learned with each other. With the resilience and leadership shown by cities, it's time to step up for what comes next—a new phase of recovery.



