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June 01, 2020 08:55 PM

Why public transit matters in the George Floyd protests

Transportation access has historically been at the heart of urban inequality.

LINDA POON

Bloomberg CityLab

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(Bloomberg) — Public transit became a flashpoint in this weekend's protests over police brutality and the killing of George Floyd by Minneapolis officers. As demonstrations intensified across the U.S., cities from Atlanta to Miami, and Chicago to Los Angeles announced the shutdown of bus and rail services as curfews took effect. The abrupt suspensions left [protesters stranded](#) in downtown areas, as well as restaurant and retail workers in cities that had begun lifting coronavirus restrictions. In Los Angeles, LA Metro sparked further outrage after an *LAist* reporter photographed police [loading arrested protesters onto a public bus](#).



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[Special Note] At request of public safety officials, service suspended on all rail lines and bus routes, eff. 9:30 pm. Services will remain suspended until 6 am Tue.


5:31 PM · Jun 1, 2020 

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For the safety of the public and our employees, Metra is suspending all service on Tuesday, June 2. We will provide updates on Tuesday about Wednesday service.

5:00 PM · Jun 1, 2020 

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Bloomberg's CityLab [reported](#) that transit unions in Minneapolis and New York City have thrown their support behind bus operators who refuse to help police drive detained demonstrators to jail. "It's not our role to transport arrested protesters," John Samuelson, president of the national Transport Workers Union, [told Time's Madeleine Carlisle](#). "We transport passengers."

Transportation access has historically been at the heart of urban inequality. When the U.S. began building the Interstate Highway System in 1950s and '60s, it was [no coincidence](#) that major roadways disproportionately cut through low-income neighborhoods and communities of color. They walled off residents behind impenetrable "[border vacuums](#)" that hindered not only travel, but also job opportunity and income growth. The construction of I-94 in downtown Minneapolis and St. Paul, among the [most racially segregated cities](#) in America, [drove out families and businesses](#) in the thriving mostly-black community of Rondo.

Today, U.S. cities still prioritize highways over public transit, with projects that [continue to isolate](#) low-income residents of color. Even when officials do add new bus and rail service, it often fails to benefit disadvantaged communities where car ownership is less common. During planning of the Green Line light rail connecting the Twin Cities, black community groups in St. Paul had to file a lawsuit to force the city to include stops in their neighborhoods.

More: [In Minneapolis and NYC, Bus Drivers Are Refusing to Drive Arrested Protesters](#)

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Joe Snell
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A few visuals from protests in downtown Chicago
#ChicagoProtests #Chicago #GeorgeFloyd




10:25 PM · May 31, 2020


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