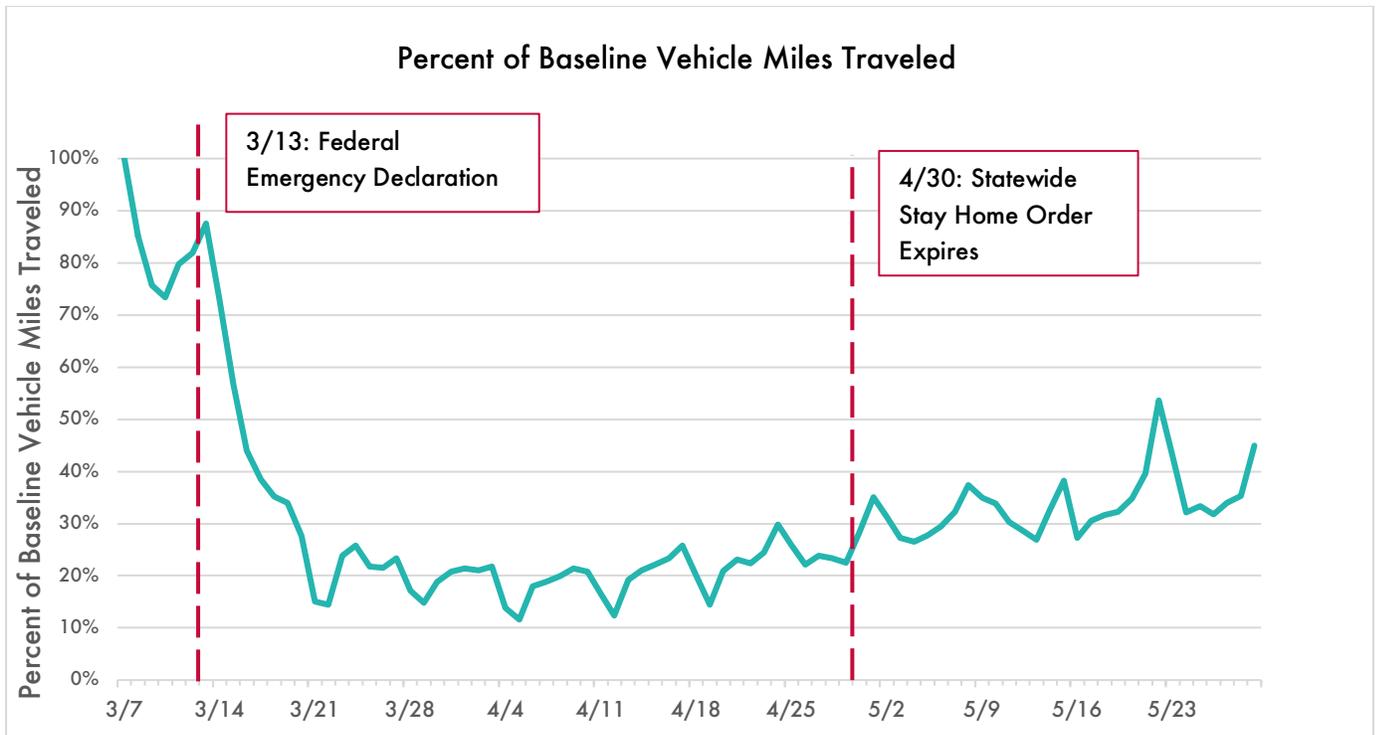


Regional Travel Impacts of COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent mitigation efforts, such as social distancing guidelines, stay home orders, and mandatory closure of businesses, has had a dramatic effect on travel patterns in the Houston-Galveston region over the last three months. The Houston-Galveston Area Council's Transportation Department monitors regional travel volumes with a platform that collects travel data from GPS capable devices. Figure 1 illustrates the percentage of daily vehicle miles traveled (VMT) as compared to the baseline date of March 7. Following the issuance of a federal emergency declaration on March 13 and declaration of Texas public health disaster on March 19, there was a sharp decline in daily VMT throughout the region.



StreetLight, www.streelightdata.com, May 2020

With the March 19 Texas public health disaster declaration came prohibition of groups larger than 10, closure of gyms, bars, and schools, and change to takeout only at restaurants. From this date onward, the region sustained traffic volumes significantly lower than baseline as mitigation measures continued.

Regional travel declined 70% to nearly 90% of baseline volumes through the end of April, when the statewide stay home order expired. Since initiating Phase I of the

compared to April 2019, while Harris County was the least impacted with only a 9% decrease.

