

APPENDIX F: Transit Funding Primer



A Primer on Transit Funding and Potential COVID-19 Impacts

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A PRIMER ON TRANSIT FUNDING AND POTENTIAL COVID-19 IMPACTS

This primer was prepared as part of SCAG's Mobility Innovation and Pricing project. In order for our region to equitably provide innovative mobility services and programs, SCAG believes that policymakers must better understand the travel patterns and needs of underrepresented communities throughout the region. This effort aims to provide a forum for a shared learning experience with community members, that can provide a foundation for increased participation in transportation policy, both through COVID recovery and beyond.

To facilitate discussions with underrepresented communities on the potential impacts of COVID-19 on transit services, SCAG has prepared a primer on how transit in the region is funded, how those funding sources could be affected by COVID-19's impact on our economy and travel, and changes to transit agency operations to address public health concerns during the pandemic. These materials can help provide a starting point for discussions with community members on how to approach recovery in a way that builds a more equitable foundation for transportation innovations in the future.

The first section of this primer is intended to provide background on core funding sources that transit agencies throughout the SCAG region typically rely on to support their capital and operating programs. The second section then discusses the possible impacts of COVID-19 and associated policy responses on current sources of funding. Lastly, it surveys a variety of short-term changes transit agencies throughout the region have implemented in response to COVID-19, and preliminary plans for recovery.

1. CURRENT TRANSIT FUNDING SOURCES

Transit is generally funded through various programs and sources at the federal, state, and local levels. Local transportation includes both funding that is raised by local and county governments, and revenues generated directly by transit agencies. The table below describes the main categories of transit funding in the SCAG region, as well as the underlying sources of revenues that fund these programs.⁴

TABLE 1 Description of Transit Funding Sources

	Type of Transit Funding	Description	Main Source of Revenue
Local	Local Option Sales Tax Measures	Revenues are derived from locally imposed 0.5 to 2 percent sales taxes for select counties. Five counties in the SCAG region (all counties except Ventura) currently have sales tax measures dedicated to transportation expenditures. The percentage of sales tax revenues dedicated to transit varies among the counties.	Local sales tax revenue
	Transportation Development Act (Local Transportation Fund)	The Transportation Development Act (TDA) provides two major sources of funding for public transportation—the Local Transportation Fund (LTF) and the State Transit Assistance (STA) fund. LTF funds are derived from a 0.25 percent sales tax on retail sales statewide.	Local sales tax revenue
	Transit Farebox Revenue*	Transit fares collected by transit operators in the SCAG region.	Transit usage
	Highway Tolls	This category includes revenues generated from express lanes operated by LA Metro to fund transit in toll corridors. LA Metro operates express lanes along Interstate 10 and Interstate 110.	Express Lane revenue
	Transit advertising and auxiliary revenues*	Varies across agencies. Includes advertising, income of transit agency-owned property, and commercial revenues.	Various
State	State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)	The STIP is a five-year capital improvement program that provides funding for capital projects that increase the capacity of the transportation system. The STIP may include projects on state highways, local roads, intercity rail or public transit systems. The Regional Transportation Planning Agencies (RTPAs) propose 75 percent of STIP funding for regional transportation projects in Regional Transportation Improvement Programs (RTIPs). Caltrans proposes 25 percent of STIP funding for interregional transportation projects in the Interregional Transportation Improvement Program (ITIP).	The STIP provides funding from the State Highway Account (SHA), which is funded through a combination of the state gas tax, the Federal Highway Trust Fund, and truck weight fees.

⁴ This list outlines the main sources of transit funding but is not exhaustive. Depending on the local jurisdiction, other sources of transit funding may include but are not limited to local general revenues, property taxes, development impact fees, and tax increment financing. For information on transportation funding in California more broadly see <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/transportation-planning/economics-data-management/transportation-economics/transportation-funding-in-ca>.

TABLE 1 Description of Transit Funding Sources Continued

	Type of Transit Funding	Description	Main Source of Revenue
State	State Transit Assistance Fund (STA)	The STA distributes funding to transit operators based on a formula. The funds can be used for either operational support or to fund capital projects based on local priorities.	The STA is funded by diesel sales taxes and the transportation improvement fee (an additional registration fee paid on the value of a vehicle) established under Senate Bill 1 (2017), which increased the state gas tax, and introduced other vehicle fees, to fund transportation statewide
	Cap-and-Trade Auction Proceeds	The Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (AB 32) established the goal of reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions statewide to 1990 levels by 2020. In order to help achieve this goal, the California Air Resources Board (ARB) adopted a regulation to establish a Cap-and-Trade program that places a “cap” on the aggregate greenhouse gas emissions from entities responsible for roughly 85 percent of the state’s greenhouse gas emissions. As part of the Cap-and-Trade program, ARB conducts quarterly auctions where it sells emission allowances. Revenues from the sale of these allowances fund projects that support the goals of AB 32, including transit and rail investments.	Fee levied on GHG from the manufacturing and oil refining sector.
Federal	Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Formula Funding	This category includes a number of FTA programs distributed by formula, including FTA Section 5307 for transit capital and operating assistance under certain circumstances, and is distributed to urbanized areas with a formula based upon population, population density, number of low-income individuals, and transit revenue and passenger miles of service.	Federal gas tax, federal general funds
	Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Discretionary Grant Funding	This category includes discretionary grant funding available on a competitive basis through FTA 5309 Capital Investment Grants for new fixed guideways or extensions and bus rapid transit projects and projects that improve capacity on an existing fixed guideway system.	Federal general funds
	Other Federal Funding	The federal government also provides funding through programs such as Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) to fund new transit service and system expansion needs, in addition to numerous non-transit projects, that help support efforts to reduce mobile source emissions in areas designated as non-attainment or maintenance of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). Other programs include the Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG), which provides flexible funding to preserve and improve the conditions on federal-aid highways, public roads, pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, as well as transit capital projects.	Federal gas tax, federal general funds

Note: funding sources denoted by * are raised directly by transit agencies. Because direct funding sources (e.g. farebox revenue) are earned locally, they can be consolidated into the local funding category.

Table 2 shows the amount and percent of funding by source for all transit operators within the SCAG region based on historical data from the 2018 National Transit Database (NTD), the most recent year for which data is available. NTD data is self-reported by transit operators and must conform to standardized categories. Thus, funding from various state programs described above are aggregated into a single category, along with other minor discrepancies in categories. This data includes funding for both capital investment and operations.

While there is some variation between operators in the region, discussed further below, in aggregate, the largest single source of funding for transit in the SCAG region are sales taxes for transit enacted at the county level, which account for over 40% of all transit funding. Federal Transit Administration formula funding (13%), various sources of state transit funding (12%), and revenues from passenger fares (11%) also provide sources of transit funding.

TABLE 2 Percentage of Transit Funding in the SCAG Region by Source

Funding Program	Percent of Total Regional Transit Funding
Sales Taxes	44.20%
FTA Formula Funds	12.53%
State Transportation Funds	11.75%
Total of Passenger Fares	10.81%
FTA Capital Program	7.86%
Revenue from Local General Fund	3.75%
State General Fund Revenue	2.13%
Other Direct Revenue	2.05%
Tolls	1.34%
Other Federal Funds	2.91%
Other Local Funds	0.66%
TOTAL	100.00%

1.1 FUNDING SOURCE BY GOVERNMENT LEVEL

As described in the table above, transit funding comes from a variety of federal, state and local sources, in addition to revenues raised by transit providers directly. Figure 1 below shows the breakdown by funding source for all transit providers in the SCAG region. Directly generated funding includes farebox revenue and other revenue raised by transit agencies (including advertising, income of transit agency-owned property, and commercial revenues).

Local and directly generated sources provide almost 75% of all transit funding in the SCAG region. Further, the predominance of federal funding is restricted to capital uses. Local sources are necessary to support operations and maintenance needs, which will only become more critically important as transit agencies plan for COVID-19 recovery.

Each operator within the SCAG region relies on its own mix of funding from these sources. The chart below shows the distribution of revenues by funding source for each operator. Due to the unique funding mix of each operator, the degree of potential impacts from COVID-19 and associated policies may vary among operators. Note that this data does not include smaller transit operators within the SCAG region that did not report income to NTD.

FIGURE 1 Transit Funding Sources in the SCAG Region

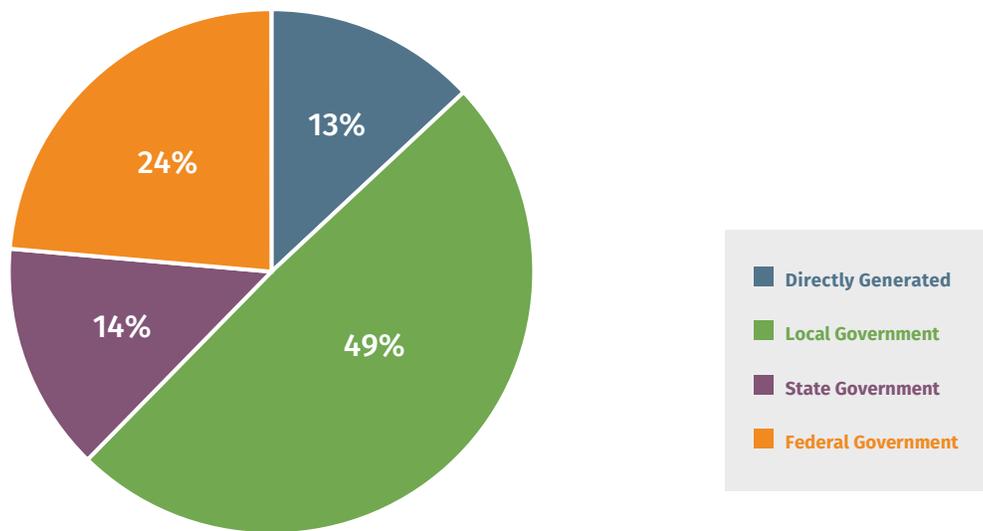
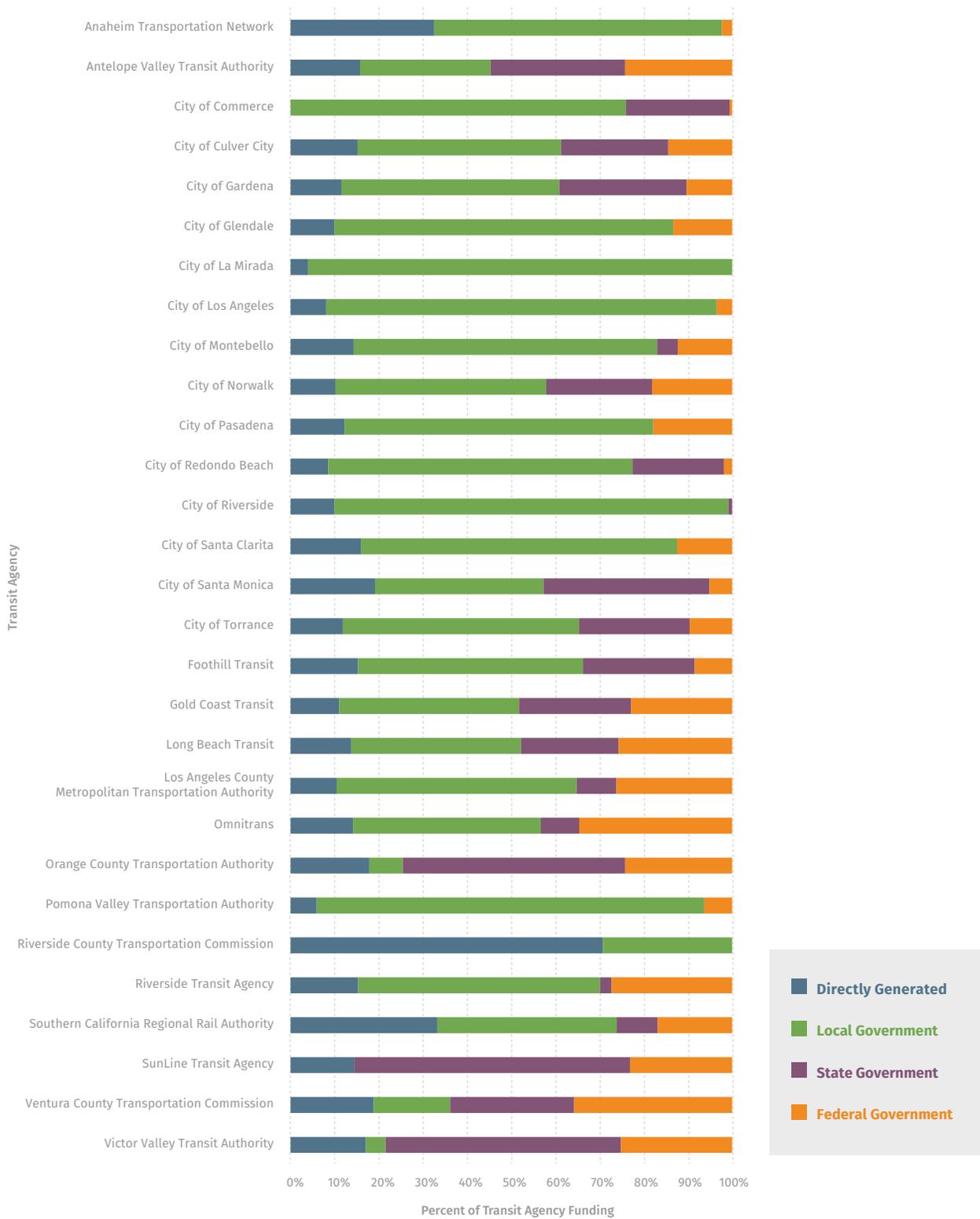


FIGURE 2 Transit Agency Funding Sources by Government Level



Note: Riverside County Transportation Commission is not a transit agency, but reports revenue from vanpool service to NTD.

2. IMPACTS OF COVID-19 TRANSIT FUNDING

The table below briefly describes in more qualitative terms, the possible impacts from COVID-19 and associated policies to each of the funding sources described above. SCAG and our partner agencies continue to monitor preliminary attempts to quantify the impacts of COVID-19 and associated policies on funding sources, but this assessment is intended to provide some context on how the source of funds, depending on how it's generated, can be impacted.

TABLE 3 Potential Impacts of COVID-19 on Transit Funding Sources

	Type of Transit Funding	Main Sources of Funding	Description of Potential COVID-19 and Associated Policy Impacts
Local	Local Option Sales Tax Measures	Local sales tax revenue	Local sales tax revenue is directly linked to general economic conditions. During a recession, people buy less, which reduces sales tax revenues.
	Transportation Development Act (Local Transportation Fund)	Local sales tax revenue	Local sales tax revenue is directly linked to general economic conditions. During a recession, people buy less, which reduces sales tax revenues.
	Transit Farebox Revenue	Transit usage	Transit farebox revenue is directly linked with the level of transit ridership. If people who can, choose not to ride transit due to health and safety reasons, farebox revenue will decline. Additionally, during the epidemic, some transit agencies suspended fare collection, and it remains to be seen when and how fare collections would be reinstated. Reductions in service that lower ridership would lower farebox revenues, but also lower costs.
	Highway Tolls	Express Lane toll revenue	Reduced travel due to a recession and a likely increase in telework could reduce congestion, lowering the incentive to use express lanes.
	Transit Advertising and Auxiliary Revenues	Various	Varies, but presumably would decrease in conjunction with a recession.

TABLE 3 Potential Impacts of COVID-19 on Transit Funding Sources Continued

	Type of Transit Funding	Main Sources of Funding	Description of Potential COVID-19 and Associated Policy Impacts
State	State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)	State gas tax revenues	Gas tax revenue depends on how many miles people drive, which could decrease due to a recession and a likely increase in telework.
	State Transit Assistance Fund (STA)	The STA is funded by diesel sales taxes and the transportation improvement fee ("TIF," an additional registration fee paid on the value of a vehicle) established under SB 1	TIF revenues increase with the purchase of newer vehicles. While a recession may cause many to defer buying a newer and more expensive cars, early reports from China indicate that overall car purchases may increase because people want to avoid using transit, leading to a possible increase in revenues. Diesel fuel is purchased largely by trucks and depends on overall level of economic activity.
	Cap-and-Trade Auction Proceeds	Fee levied on GHG from the manufacturing and oil refining sector	Cap and Trade revenues are based on the emissions by manufacturing and oil refining in California. A reduction in overall economic activity due to a recession would reduce emissions from these sectors, reducing Cap and Trade revenues. Cap and Trade revenues from the oil refining industry would also decrease if people drive less due to job loss and increased teleworking.
Federal	Federal Transit Agency Formula Funding	Federal gas tax, federal general funds	Federal funding levels are determined through federal legislation. The main source of funding for federal transportation spending is the federal gas tax. Gas tax revenue depends on how many miles people drive, which could decrease due to a recession and a likely increase in telework. However, the federal government can use federal general funds for spending on transportation.
	Federal Transit Agency Discretionary Grant Funding	Federal general funds	Federal funding levels are determined through federal legislation. The main source of funding for federal transportation spending is the federal gas tax. Gas tax revenue depends on how many miles people drive, which could decrease due to a recession and a likely increase in telework. However, the federal government can use federal general funds for spending on transportation. FTA Discretionary 5309 Fixed Guideway Capital Investment Grants program is funded by federal general funds.
	Other Federal Funding	Federal gas tax, federal general funds	Federal funding levels are determined through federal legislation. The main source of funding for federal transportation spending is the federal gas tax. Gas tax revenue depends on how many miles people drive, which could decrease due to a recession and a likely increase in telework. However, the federal government can use federal general funds for spending on transportation.

2.1.1 ECONOMIC RECESSION

The likelihood of a prolonged economic recession resulting from COVID-19 will probably cause the greatest transit funding crisis in the SCAG region. The largest impact on transit funding will likely be a reduction in sales tax revenue, both because of the importance of this source of funding and a reduction in general consumer spending. This would result in a decrease in funding through local sales taxes, and also in state transit funding through the TDA. A reduction in consumer demand for goods would also extend to a reduction in trucking activity that would reduce diesel tax revenues that fund transit at the state level.

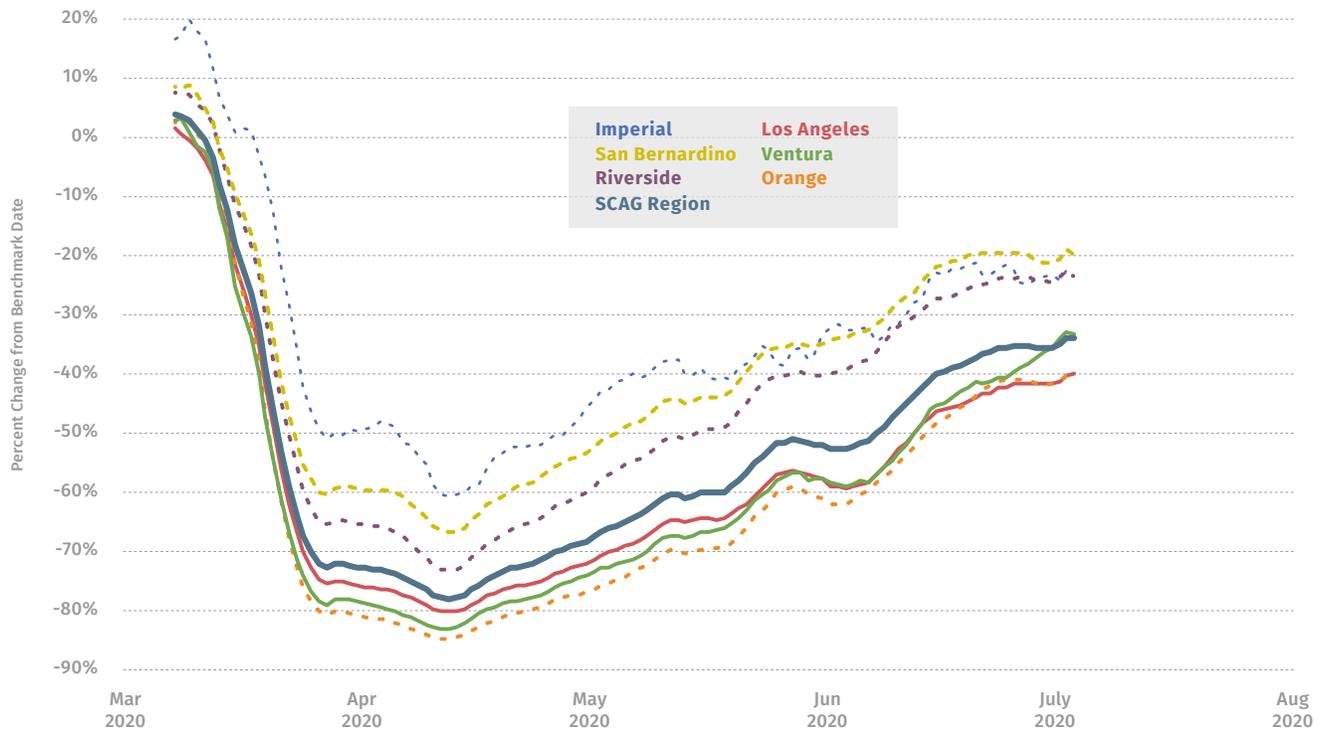
2.1.2 TRANSIT RIDERSHIP CHANGES

Transit farebox revenue is directly linked with the level of transit ridership. If people who can, choose not to ride transit due to health and safety reasons, farebox revenue will decline. Additionally, during the epidemic, some transit agencies suspended fare collection to limit driver/passenger interaction, and it remains to be seen when and how fare collection would be reinstated. Reductions in service that lower ridership would lower farebox revenues, but could also lower costs. As of June 2020, information reported to the California Transit Association (CTA) shows transit operators in the SCAG region have lost about 65% to 85% of their ridership. The region's largest operator, Metro, reported a 65% decline in bus ridership and 75% decline in rail ridership about two months into the stay at home order, and reported a 95% reduction in passenger fare revenues during the last two weeks of March. More recent data reported to the NTD suggest a modest recovery of ridership levels coinciding with the phased reopening of the economy, but overall ridership remains far below pre-pandemic levels.

2.1.3 VEHICLE MILES TRAVELED (VMT) CHANGES

Vehicle Miles Traveled VMT directly impacts funding sources derived from fuel taxes, including state and federal gas taxes. Stay-at-Home orders led to severe short-term reductions in VMT. The chart below shows the average reduction in daily VMT for each county in the SCAG region for the period of early March 2020 through mid-June 2020, compared with the average daily VMT for January 2020. At their lowest points in mid-April, daily VMT reductions ranged from 85% in Orange County to 60% reduction in Imperial County. Daily VMT has risen steadily since then as reopening has begun, and ranged from 20%-40% reduction by mid-July.

FIGURE 3 Percent Change in 7-Day Moving Average VMT by County (using January 2020 as benchmark)



Source: Streetlight Data

Longer-term forecasts of VMT depend on several factors. Historically, VMT has decreased in the short-term during past economic recessions but increased in the long-term in the SCAG region. Increases in telework, either on a short-term or permanent basis could lead to a decrease that is greater and longer compared to previous economic downturns. Conversely, travelers switching modes from transit to personal car due to health concerns, and possible service reductions, could put upward pressure on VMT and increase congestion. Early evidence from China shows that there has been an increase in vehicle purchases following reopening.

2.1.4 CARES ACT FEDERAL FUNDING PACKAGE

As part of the CARES Act, the federal government provided \$25 billion in emergency funding for public transit agencies nationwide, with \$22.7 billion provided through the Sec. 5307 Urbanized Area Formula Grant funding program⁴ and \$2.2 billion provided through the Sec. 5311 Rural Formula funding programs.⁵ The funding can be used for transit operations including operations and maintenance, safety and sanitation, and staff expenses (including salaries and administrative leave).

⁴ The CARES Act provides funding to the Section 5307 Urbanized Area Formula Grant program through the formulas identified in Section 5336, Section 5337 - State of Good Repair, and Section 5340 Growing States and High Density Formula Factors. These amounts are combined to show a single amount. An area's apportionment amount includes regular Section 5307 funds, Small Transit Intensive Cities funds, Section 5337 State of Good Repair, and Section 5340 Growing States and High Density States formula funds, as appropriate. See <https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/apportionments/table-2-fy-2020-cares-act-section-5307-urbanized-area-apportionments>.

⁵ Section 5311 and Section 5340 were combined to show a single amount. The State's apportionment under the column heading "Section 5311 and 5340 Apportionment" includes Section 5311 and Growing States funds. See <https://cms7.fta.dot.gov/funding/apportionments/table-3-fy-2020-cares-act-section-5311-rural-area-apportionments>.

Under the Sec. 5307 urban program, the SCAG region will receive a total of \$1.612 billion. The funds are apportioned by area using existing FTA formulas to urbanized areas, as opposed to by transit provider. The distribution of funding depends upon population, density, and transit service. The initial federal apportionments are as follows:

- The Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim area receives \$1,215,978,439.
- The Riverside-San Bernardino area receives \$137,566,673
- The Indio-Cathedral City, CA area receives \$16,055,891.
- The Lancaster-Palmdale, CA area receives \$47,875,609.
- The Mission Viejo-Lake Forest-San Clemente, CA area receives \$42,599,365.
- The Murrieta-Temecula-Menifee, CA area receives \$14,423,497.
- The Oxnard area receives \$41,148,230.
- The Santa Clarita area receives \$20,865,603.
- The Thousand Oaks area receives \$18,272,209.
- The Victorville-Hesperia area receives \$24,756,254.

Additional funding was apportioned to state governors for smaller urbanized areas, including in the SCAG region:

- The Camarillo area receives \$4,048,903
- The El Centro-Calexico area receives \$10,590,846
- The Hemet area receives \$9,841,873
- The Simi Valley area receives \$7,955,434
- The Yuma area receives \$60,951

Under the CARES Act, funding is received by the County Transportation Commissions (e.g. Metro, OCTA, RCTC), which then allocates the funding among transit agencies within the county. Because urbanized areas within the region spans multiple counties (for example, Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim), SCAG first apportioned the funding among the County Transportation Commissions. Similarly, SCAG allocated funding for Metrolink throughout the region.

3. THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON TRANSIT OPERATIONS

Any funding changes that result from COVID-19 must ultimately be viewed through the lens of how they relate to the services offered to riders, and there is much that we cannot predict about what the transportation system and travel patterns will look like in the near future. Declining revenues will likely lead to a reduction in new capital investment and could lead to service reductions in some situations. But the impact from COVID-19 will undoubtedly be a transit system dramatically altered to reflect the “new normal”, incorporating concerns about health and safety of both passenger and transit agency employees, the likely continued implementation of some social/physical distancing measures, and adaptation to changing travel patterns. The crisis has highlighted more than ever that transit provides a critical “frontline” service to essential workers and the most vulnerable members of our communities.

3.1 HOW SCAG REGION OPERATORS ARE RESPONDING TO COVID-19

SCAG asked the transit agencies on its Regional Transit Technical Advisory Committee (RTTAC) to identify how they were responding to the COVID-19 crisis to 1) facilitate information sharing and inter-agency coordination and to 2) serve as a resource for agencies while planning for service changes. Transit agencies were asked to share information on safety measures, service changes, fare collection, communication strategies, changes to school service, challenges and next steps as they navigate the reduction in demand due to the shelter in place orders. The summary provided below reflects the responses received from March 30 to May 7. As transit operators navigate the current reopening measures in their respective counties and cities, conditions are changing. Agencies are setting up recovery plans for operations that align with health officials' directives. For instance, LA Metro's Recovery Task Force recommendations not only outlines what the agency is doing to increase service hours but also steps to reintroduce riders to transit and overall improvements in the long term.

3.1.1 PUBLIC HEALTH CONCERNS

Transit operators engaged in best practices to cleaning and disinfecting transit vehicles as recommended by the CDC and public health professionals in order to reduce the spread of the virus to transit workers and the riders. Most transit agencies increased cleaning and disinfecting buses and trains (e.g. Metro and Metrolink), and at transit stops, shelters, facilities and maintenance yards. High contact points such as doors, armrests, stop pull chords, fareboxes and Ticket Vending Machines (TVMs) were cleaned and disinfected regularly (e.g. Montebello Bus Lines, Antelope Valley Transit Authority, Victor Valley Transit Authority).

While many agencies required face coverings for both operators and riders (e.g. City of Beaumont), other agencies such as City of Norwalk Transit, Ojai and Gold Coast Transit, supplied face coverings to bus operators. To maintain social/physical distancing, agencies posted signs on the buses to alert riders to maintain at least six (6) feet separation per CDC guidelines. Long Beach Transit (LBT) launched a "Skip a Seat, Skip a Row, Stop the Spread" campaign to encourage social distancing on their buses. Agencies also erected barriers to protect bus operators.

3.1.2 SERVICE CHANGES

Agencies implemented service adjustments to respond to the slow ridership and lower demands following the stay at home orders. Service changes for most transit agencies in the region ranged from shift to weekend, Saturday/Sunday, holiday schedules, to completely newly created modified schedules. Metrolink started implementing reduced service changes in late March.

Other agencies like Foothill Transit created different scenarios through their Computer-Aided Dispatch/Automatic Vehicle Location (CAD/AVL) platform meant to be implemented as the crisis unfolded based on ridership levels. Imperial County Transportation Commission (ICTC) operated all transit services except Imperial Valley College stops, while LADOT implemented different changes by a percentage (e.g. 15% on DASH, 50% on Commuter Express) on the various services they provide based on ridership decline.

For agencies that operated school related schedules, such school trippers were either suspended (e.g. Orange County Transit Authority, Beach Cities Transit, Santa Clarita Transit, Montebello Bus Lines, Riverside Transit Agency) or reduced (e.g. LBT, Santa Monica Big Blue Bus) due to the school closures.

ADA Paratransit service providers continued to provide service but many rides were restricted to only medical or essential life sustaining (such as grocery) trips, e.g. Gold Coast Transit District. Access services did not implement any service reduction despite about 50% ridership decline, and offered only “solo trips” in lieu of shared rides due to the need for social/physical distancing.

3.1.3 REAR DOOR BOARDING AND FARE SUSPENSION

Transit agencies implemented mandatory rear-door boarding on buses to further protect operators and riders from contracting the virus. Boarding through the front doors were restricted to riders with mobility devices that require the use of the bus ramp. Rear-door boarding policies were associated with fare suspension for many agencies like Omnitrans, Sunline Transit, and LA County municipal bus operators.

3.1.4 OTHER CHALLENGES

In addition to the reduced fare revenues associated with the significant ridership loss, transit agencies outlined additional short- and long-term challenges that may impact the way transit is delivered in the region.

Agencies expressed concern about the ability to keep transit staff employed, and how to protect operators from catching the disease while they interacted with riders daily. The American Public Transportation Association (APTA) reported that an overwhelming majority of transit agencies are using their CARES Act funding to maintain their workforce and avoid layoffs.

Agencies also acknowledged the need for decision-making processes for future service modifications while others were concerned about how interruptions to planned service plan implementations and delivery schedule of infrastructure projects will impact planning (e.g. LADOT’s Zero Emission Buses)

Finally, not only did transit agencies fear the potential tax revenue reduction that will impact annual Transportation Development Act (TDA) allocations, they were also concerned about the additional cost related to increased cleaning and procurement of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

3.2 PLANNING FOR RECOVERY

As the stay-at-home orders are lifted and the economy gradually begins to reopen, safety and social/physical distancing requirements present a challenge to operators already facing funding shortfalls. Not only will transit agencies be confronted with increased costs due to cleaning and disinfecting, but they may need to operate more vehicles at greater frequencies to meet demand while still allowing for a 6-foot separation between passengers.

3.2.1 LEVEL OF SERVICE RESTORATION

Demand for transit may be returning, and transit agencies must determine whether to continue to run reduced services and gradually switch to regular schedules, or resume regular services outright. Beginning June 1, some agencies planned to resume regular local and commuter services, but the such plans will need to be considered through the lens of the safety and health of both transit workers and riders. The notion of people likely to return to their personal vehicles until such time when a vaccine is found is undauntedly true, but the demand for transit will continue to grow as the traffic congestion increases, among other factors. Non-essential workers returning to work including those who can no longer

afford cars due to pandemic related job losses, for instance, will benefit from frequent transit services. Transit agencies need to place themselves in the position to respond to the demand sooner than later. Some agencies have already received requests to restore Express lines but lack the fiscal capacity to quickly do so. Agencies are also thinking about how to safely run school trippers when schools reopen.

Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LA Metro), the largest transit operator in the SCAG region issued a 4-phase plan to restore service as follows:⁴

- Phase 1 is projected to take place in June with some modest gains in service on their busiest corridors to accommodate returning non-essential trips.
- Phase 2 is projected to take place as early as July and August with additional service with an eye toward providing transit service for students returning to school and additional people returning to work.
- Phase 3 is projected to take place between September and November and include modest gains in service in areas where and when we see demand growing.
- Phase 4 is projected to take place between December and January and is expected to begin implementing changes and enhancements proposed under the ongoing NextGen bus restructuring effort.

3.2.2 FARE COLLECTION IN THE POST-PANDEMIC ERA

Transit agencies suspended fare collection to allow for rear-door boarding and limit interaction between riders and operators. When returning to regular or phased services, agencies now need to think about how fares will be collected. In concurrence with resuming regular schedules, some agencies have installed temporary and permanent barriers (eg. using plexiglass and vinyl) with plans to begin front door boarding and fare collection effective June. Agencies in the region with the TAP or other mobile ticketing systems may be able to quickly adopt a fare payment system, however, on-board cash fare collection will require additional training, planning and expertise. For instance, operators will need time to safely validate and quote the fare for cash customers which may likely cause delays on the systems.

3.2.3 CDC GUIDELINES FOR REOPENING TRANSIT

The CDC published guidelines for reopening transit urging agencies to adhere to public health protocols in their respective states and/or local jurisdictions. The CDC's mass transit decision tool provides information to transit agencies on how to promote healthy hygiene practices, such as, handwashing and wearing face coverings and communicating effectively with their employees especially those that interact with riders daily. The CDC also encouraged transit agencies to increase cleaning and disinfecting of vehicles and facilities and provided social distancing measures, for instance, blocking off every other seat (s) on transit vehicles.⁵

⁴ <https://thesource.metro.net/2020/05/14/metro-to-pursue-four-phase-plan-to-restore-bus-and-rail-service/>

⁵ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/mass-transit-decision-tool.html>

3.2.4 APTA AND TRANSIT SERVICE RECOVERY

APTA issued a Pandemic Virus Service Restoration checklist to assist transit agencies as they restore service, incorporating best practices from transit agencies and information from the CDC and EPA. APTA also formed a new Mobility Recovery & Restoration Task Force led by LA Metro CEO Phil Washington. Its purpose is to develop a path forward for public transportation's core functions and financial stability and to explore new methods, tools, and approaches to reposition the industry's essential role in a post-pandemic mobility world. The end product will be a set of recommendations that cover a wide range of issues critical to public transit's success, including public and rider confidence, safe-guarding employees and riders, customer-focused operations, quick-strike rail and bus scheduling, as well as resiliency, equity and societal needs.