



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDA

Friday, November 6, 2020 at 9:00 AM

Omnitrans, 1700 West 5th Street, San Bernardino, California 92411

VIRTUAL MEETING

*This meeting is being conducted in accordance with Governor Newsom's
Executive Orders
N-25-20, N-29-20 and N-35-20*

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://omnitrans.zoom.us/j/82883594654>

Meeting ID: 828 8359 4654

There will be no physical location for this meeting. Members of the public wishing to participate via teleconference, can do so by dialing the following number: 1 669-900-6833, Meeting ID: 828 8359 4654. Interested persons who wish to make a public comment, may submit comments in writing to BoardSecretary@omnitrans.org. Comments must be submitted by Thursday, November 5, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. Comments received will be read into the record.

Committee Members:

City of Yucaipa
Chair David Avila

City of Montclair
Vice Chair John Dutrey

City of Loma Linda
Ron Dailey

City of Highland
Penny Lilburn

City of Fontana
John B. Roberts

City of Rancho Cucamonga
Sam Spagnolo

The Board of Directors meeting facility is accessible to persons with disabilities. If assistive listening devices or other auxiliary aids or Limited English Proficiency services are needed in order to participate in the public meeting, requests should be made through the Board Secretary at least three (3) business days prior to the Board Meeting. The Board Secretary's telephone number is 909-379-7110 (voice) or 909-384-9351 (TTY). If you have comments about items on the agenda or other general concerns and are not able to attend the meeting, please mail them to Omnitrans at 1700 West Fifth Street, San Bernardino, California, Attention Board Secretary. Comments may also be submitted by email to BoardSecretary@omnitrans.org.



**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDA – David Avila, Chair
Friday, November 6, 2020 at 9:00 AM**

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>RECOMMENDATION</u>
A. CALL TO ORDER	
1. Pledge of Allegiance	
2. Roll Call	
B. ANNOUNCEMENTS/PRESENTATIONS	
1. Next Committee Meeting: Friday December 04, 2020, 9:00 AM Omnitrans Metro Facility Board Room	
C. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC	
This is the time and place for the general public to address the Board. In accordance with rules applicable to meetings of the Board of Directors, comments on items not on the agenda and on items on the agenda are to be limited to a total of three (3) minutes per individual.	
D. POSSIBLE CONFLICT OF INTEREST ISSUES	
1. Note agenda item contractors, subcontractors and agents, which may require member abstentions due to conflict of interest and financial interests. Board Member abstentions shall be stated under this item for recordation on the appropriate item.	
E. DISCUSSION ITEMS	
1. Executive Committee Minutes – September 4, 2020 - Araceli Barajas	APPROVE
2. Proposed 2021 Executive Committee Schedule - Erin Rogers	ADOPT
3. FY2021-2025 Strategic Plan Update - Jeremiah Bryant	RECEIVE AND FORWARD
F. REMARKS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS	
G. ADJOURNMENT	

Item #: E1

**Executive Committee Meeting
Minutes
September 4, 2020**

A. Call to Order

In accordance with Governor Newsom's Executive Orders N-25-20, N-29-20, and N-35-20, the September 2, 2020, Executive Committee Meeting was held virtually. Vice Chair John Dutrey called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

Committee Members Attending

Mayor John Dutrey, City of Montclair – Vice Chairman
Council Member Ron Dailey, City of Loma Linda
Council Member Sam Spagnolo, City of Rancho Cucamonga
Council Member John Roberts, City of Fontana

Committee Members Not Present

Mayor David Avila, City of Yucaipa – Chairman
Mayor Pro Tem Penny Lilburn, City of Highland

Omnitrans Staff Attending

Erin Rogers, CEO/General Manager
Shawn Brophy, Director of Operations
Jeremiah Bryant, Director of Strategic Development
Alex Chen, Director of Information Technology
Suzanne Pfeiffer, Director of Human Resources
Nicole Ramos, Director of Marketing & Communications
Connie Raya, Director of Maintenance
Jerome Rogers, Director of Safety & Regulatory Compliance
Art Torres, Director of Procurement
Don Walker, Director of Finance
Victor Cuate, Service Planning Manager
Marcos Espinoza, Network Engineer
Liz Gutierrez, Executive Staff Assistant
Jose Hernandez, Community Outreach Coordinator
Teresa Villa, Contracts Manager

Legal Counsel

Steve DeBaun, Legal Counsel

B. Announcements/Presentations

Next Committee Meeting: Friday, October 2, 2020, 9:00 a.m.

C. Communications from the Public

There were no communications from the public.

D. Possible Conflict of Interest Issues

There were no Conflict of Interest Issues.

E. Discussion Items

Member Dailey asked that this item be moved up on the agenda.

4. Discuss and Provide Direction on the Transition to In-Person Meetings

CEO/General Manager, Erin Rogers provided some background information by stating that updates were provided at the July and September Committee & Board Meetings and subsequently staff was directed to bring this item back before the Committee for further discussion/direction. She briefed the Committee on the projects staff has been working on to conduct future virtual/in-person (hybrid) meetings should the Committee desire to do so.

The Committee engaged in a discussion regarding the transition to hybrid meetings and the consensus was to begin with offering hybrid Committee meetings beginning in October and continue with virtual Board Meetings and reevaluate in January.

M/S (Dutrey/Dailey) that forwarded this item to the Administrative & Finance Committee and recommended approval of the transition to hybrid/in-person Committee meetings; and continue virtual Board meetings and reevaluate in January. Roll call vote was taken and the motion was passed unanimously by Members present

1. Approve Executive Committee Minutes – July 10, 2020

M/S (Dutrey/Spagnolo) that approved the Executive Committee Minutes of July 10, 2020. Roll call vote was taken and the motion was passed unanimously by Members present.

2. Recommend the Board of Directors Adopt New Policy and Approve Proposed Procurement Policy Changes

Director of Procurement, Art Torres provided a brief background as detailed in the staff report.

Vice Chairman Dutrey asked that the action on this item be changed from *Recommend Approval* to *Receive and Forward* to the Administrative & Finance Committee to allow for a more thorough discussion.

The Committee received and forwarded this item to the Administrative & Finance Committee.

3. Recommend the Executive Committee Approve a Temporary Waiver of Provision of Policy 606 and Forward to the Board of Directors for Ratification

Director of Human Resources, Suzanne Pfeiffer provided a brief background as detailed in the staff report.

M/S (Roberts/Spagnolo) that recommended the Executive Committee approve a temporary waiver of a provision of Policy 606 and forward to the Board of Directors for ratification. Roll call vote was taken and the motion was passed unanimously by Members present.

4. CEO/General Manger's Report

CEO/General Manager, Erin Rogers reported on the following items:

- September service changes and implementation of OmniRide, Omnitrans' first Microtransit Pilot Project in Chino and Chino Hills, is scheduled to begin next week. A small ribbon cutting ceremony will be held on Tuesday, September 8th at Chino Hills City Hall at 2:30 p.m.

F. Remarks and Announcements

There were no remarks or announcements.

G. Adjournment

The Committee adjourned at 9:32 a.m. The next Executive Committee Meeting is scheduled Friday October 2, 2020, at 9:00 a.m., with location posted on the Omnitrans website and at the Omnitrans San Bernardino Metro Facility.

Prepared by:

Araceli Barajas, Sr. Executive Asst. to the CEO
Clerk of the Board



1700 W. Fifth St.
San Bernardino, CA 92411
909-379-7100
www.omnitrans.org

Item #: E2

DATE: November 6, 2020

TO: Committee Chair David Avila and Members of the Executive Committee

FROM: Erin Rogers, CEO/General Manager

SUBJECT: **Proposed Executive Committee Meeting Schedule for 2021**

Form Motion

Adopt Calendar Year 2021 Executive Committee Schedule, set for 9:00 a.m., the first Friday of each month except on the date noted.

January 8, 2021*
February 5, 2021
March 5, 2021
April 2, 2021
May 7, 2021
June 4, 2021
July 2, 2021
August 6, 2021
September 3, 2021
October 1, 2021
November 5, 2021
December 3, 2021

*2nd Friday due to the holiday.

ER:AB



Item #: E3

DATE: November 6, 2020
TO: Committee Chair David Avila and Members of the Executive Committee
THROUGH: Erin Rogers, CEO/General Manager
FROM: Jeremiah Bryant, Director of Strategic Development
SUBJECT: **FY2021-2025 Strategic Plan Update**

Form Motion

Receive and forward to the Board of Directors this FY2021-2025 Strategic Plan update.

Background

In February 2020, Omnitrans awarded the Strategic Planning Consultant Services contract to MIG. MIG and Omnitrans' Senior Leadership Team formally kicked off the Strategic Plan on March 9, 2020. Work on the Strategic Plan has occurred in ebbs and flows as staff has focused on responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and completing the Consolidation Study and Innovative Transit Review of the Metro Valley. Despite these external forces, several elements of the strategic planning effort have been completed including:

- Development of the FY2021 Management Plan
- Senior Leadership Team Strategic Planning Sessions
- Completion of the Environmental Scan Report
- Staff Member Surveys & Focus Groups
- Individual Board Member Interviews
- Development of initial draft Vision, Mission and Values
- Initiation of a General Public Survey

The General Public Survey is scheduled to be completed in mid-November. Its completion will provide further information to inform the Board on the community's priorities and goals related to public transportation in the San Bernardino Valley. The survey asks questions related to commute patterns, awareness of Omnitrans, likely use of Omnitrans, impact of COVID pandemic on travel patterns, reasons for not taking transit, investments that would increase likelihood of taking transit, desired values for a transit agency, and demographic information. Once the approximately 1,000 respondent survey is completed it will be presented to the Board at an upcoming Board Workshop.

The next step of the Strategic Plan development is the Board Workshop, which is

designed to provide the Board with an opportunity to discuss the long-term priorities for the Agency. On October 27, 2020 Omnitrans began polling the Board for an early December workshop with proposed dates of Thursday, December 3, 2020 9:00 A.M. or Wednesday, December 9, 2020 9:00 A.M.

As of the writing of this report, the poll is ongoing with the expectation that the date and time will be discussed during the Executive Committee Meeting. Additionally, Omnitrans is polling Board Members on the desire to complete the Board Workshop entirely in a virtual format or in a hybrid in-person/virtual format. Staff also seeks the Executive Committees opinion on a preference for a fully virtual or hybrid Board Workshop.

The Board Workshop is tentatively scheduled for 2.5 hours. The tentative agenda for the workshop is:

1. Strategic Plan Process
2. Environmental Scan Report
3. General Public Survey Results
4. Vision, Mission, Values
5. Initiatives, Priorities and Projects

Omnitrans staff looks forward to the Board Workshop in December so that it can be completed in time to influence the FY2022 Management Plan and the FY2021-2025 Short-Range Transit Plan (SRTP) which is the required, longer-term version of the ConnectForward service plan.

The development of a new FY21-25 Strategic Plan will allow the Agency to enhance its long-term position by reaffirming, revising or recreating the Agency's vision, mission, values and goals. Additionally, the new Strategic Plan will include actionable projects with visible milestones and performance metrics that can be clearly measured to ensure a high-performing agency into the future. The Strategic Plan is designed to create the highest-level business plan for the Agency by setting core Agency-wide goals. The Strategic Plan is also the guiding document for the Annual Management Plan presented to the Board each year.

Omnitrans staff will provide the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors with regular updates as the Strategic Plan moves forward.

Conclusion

This status report provides open and transparent information as Omnitrans develops the FY2021-2025 Strategic Plan.

ER:JB

Attachments

A. Draft Environmental Scan Report



Strategic Plan 2021 – 2025

Environmental Scan Report

DRAFT – June 9, 2020

DRAFT

Prepared by:



With contributions from:



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DRAFT

Executive Summary

Omnitrans initiated the process to develop the Strategic Plan 2021-2025 in early 2020, with development of this Environmental Scan Report (the Report) as an important reflection point for the organization early in the planning process. The Report allows the organization's key stakeholders to review accomplishments, its context, and organizational changes in recent years that shaped the Omnitrans of today. The Report also provides new information about specific activities conducted to inform development of the Strategic Plan through engagement with Omnitrans staff. Collectively, the Report's findings and information will provide a baseline for considering Omnitrans' future and creating the Strategic Plan.

Key Findings

Organizational

- Serving the San Bernardino Valley, Omnitrans covers 480 square miles through 15 cities and adjacent unincorporated areas, primarily via local and express services.
- In recent years, Omnitrans shifted its allocation of services to primarily “productivity-oriented services productivity-oriented services: straight, fast, direct, frequent routes” with a smaller proportion dedicated to providing lifeline services, with a greater percentage of homes or jobs within one-fourth of a mile of a bus route.

Community

- One in three residents live in a household with an income below the poverty line. Omnitrans' proposed FY2021 service area includes 76.9% of residents as low income and/or minority (LIM).
- In the next twenty years in the San Bernardino Valley, substantial growth is projected among 30-to-40-year-old and older adults, while declines are projected among school-age and young adults.
- Regional studies of residents identified crime and transportation as some of the top negative aspects of living in San Bernardino County. Housing affordability and a mismatch in available jobs versus workforce qualifications are also ongoing challenges

Ridership

- Overall ridership and fare revenues experienced declines in the past five years, though a rebound in ridership and fare revenues emerged in FY2020 prior to the COVID-19 incidence in March 2020. Express bus and sbX services exhibited gains over the past five years.
- sbX ridership up dramatically, riders appreciate improved service: frequency, timeliness, safety, technology
- Omnitrans' fixed route ridership tends to be younger, more ethnically diverse, and among lower income levels than the region's population. Seniors are increasingly using Access services.
- Compared to similar transit agencies in recent customer satisfaction surveys, Omnitrans scores higher in availability, ease of use, information and comfort, but

lower in feeling safe while riding and running on-time. Omnitrans' overall public awareness climbed in East Valley and declined in West Valley in 2019.

The New COVID-19 Era

- In the COVID-19 era, essential riders are in need of transit as an “essential service:” lower income, minority essential workers more likely to travel on transit and less likely to have transportation alternatives, like a family car to use. Transit ridership may continue to represent lower income strata of population due to necessity of public transit for these riders.
- A new safety paradigm is emerging from COVID-19 that may further challenge Omnitrans and other transit agencies in regaining ridership and revenues due to new safety and capacity constraints.
- Planned projects and innovations include a second bus rapid transit route, cross-county connections, demand response micro transit, and connections to new rail services to Redlands.

Finances and Funding

- In recent years some of Omnitrans' cost drivers and expanded services have outpaced revenue gains, and are further hampered by reductions in some public funding sources and tax revenues. New or renewed public funding sources may be some of the strategies for closing the gap.

Employees

- Omnitrans' diverse workforce of 707 employees is trending older, with an increasing proportion of employees approaching retirement.
- As part of the regular employee opinion survey last conducted in 2019, most respondents expressed favorable responses about their work, sense of accomplishment. However declines in the last five years are evident related to career/personal life balance, concern for employees and communication from leadership.
- Recent staff engagement efforts to inform the strategic planning process identified serving the community, stable employment and supportive coworkers as examples of points of pride in being an employee.

Emerging Challenges and Opportunities

- Responding to the COVID-19 impacts and economic decline poses major challenges including greatly reduced funding, ridership and service levels, as well as new health and safety constraints for riders and employees. Yet, due to this “reset” of the organization, Omnitrans is better positioned to re-align services levels, costs and revenues to fuel its recovery.
- Continuing challenges for the organization will include serving auto-oriented communities, competing with relatively-affordable costs of owning a personal vehicle, and attracting choice riders in a growing segment of working-age adults.
- Technology will play a major role in Omnitrans' future from an electrified fleet, improved operational communications and GPS-enabled coaches. Public-facing improvements may include web and online based communications and trip-planning

- Exploring how service may further be refined in the coming years through route efficiencies, customer-facing technologies, and public communications that follow suit with the economic recovery could strengthen Omnitrans' position and service to the community.
- Long range planning can focus on strengthening partnerships and cost-sharing with other regional transit agencies and public institutions, as well as innovative service and infrastructure development.

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Introduction

Omnitrans initiated the process to develop the Strategic Plan 2021-2025 in early 2020. The purpose of the Strategic Plan is to confirm a vision, mission and set of values for an organization that defines its reason for being and over-arching priorities. Additionally, the Omnitrans Strategic Plan outlines goals, objectives, strategies and performance measures, all of which will guide the organization's decisionmaking for the future. Essentially, it serves as the highest-level business plan for Omnitrans and is the guiding document for performance management.



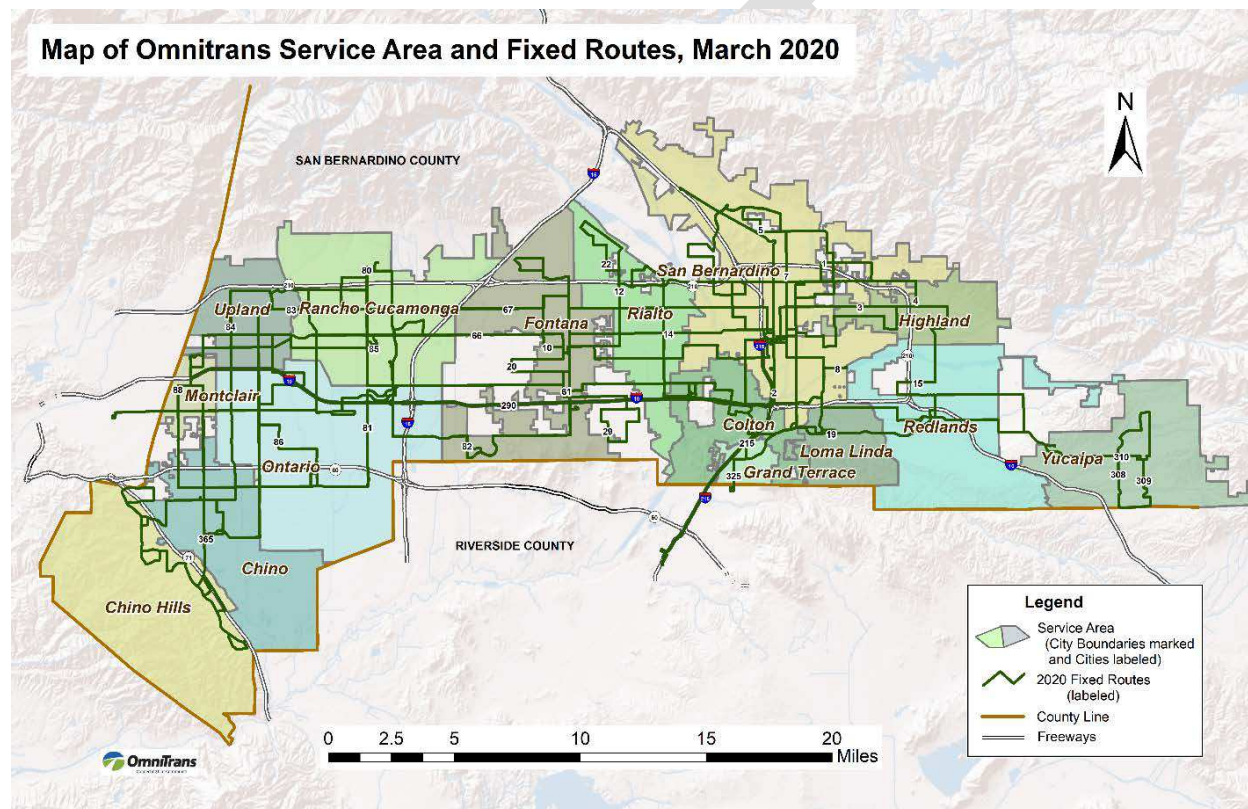
The Environmental Scan Report (the Report) is part of the initial portion of the planning process, serving as an important reflection point for the organization. The Report allows the organization's key stakeholders to review accomplishments, its context, and organizational changes in recent years that shaped the Omnitrans of today. The Report also presents results from specific Omnitrans staff engagement activities conducted to inform development of the Strategic Plan. Collectively, the Report's findings and information will provide a baseline for considering Omnitrans' future and creating the Strategic Plan.

The Report is organized into the following sections:

- Omnitrans Overview
- Services and Operations
- Finances
- Organization
- Key Themes in Prior Organizational Plans
- Emerging and Ongoing Challenges and Opportunities

Omnitrans Overview

Omnitrans is a public transit agency that serves the roughly 1.5 million residents of San Bernardino Valley, in the southwestern portion of San Bernardino County. Initiated through a joint power authority agreement in 1976 to provide public transportation service in the region, Omnitrans' service area currently covers 480 square miles through 15 cities and adjacent unincorporated areas of San Bernardino County, from Upland, Montclair, and other communities along the Los Angeles County line east to the Yucaipa Valley, and from the San Gabriel Mountains south to the Riverside County border.¹



Source: Omnitrans, March 2020

Omnitrans provides local and express bus service along 28 routes in its service area, including one bus rapid transit (BRT) line called sbX. Omnitrans also offers a local shuttle service provided by a contractor (community circulators in smaller vehicles, to less populated parts of the service area) and demand response paratransit services for seniors and the disabled.² Omnitrans also works with several community-based organizations which serve seniors and disabled populations, providing pass-through funding to these groups to cover the costs of transporting their members and customers.³

Omnitrans is governed by a board of directors whose membership is made up of representatives from the elected leadership of each of the 15 cities in its service area

¹ <https://omnitrans.org/about/>

² Omnitrans, ConnectForward FY2021 Service Plan, p.5

³ [Title VI data file](#) and STS Partners Program list (ConnectForward board memos)

(Chino, Chino Hills, Colton, Fontana, Grand Terrace, Highland, Loma Linda, Montclair, Ontario, Rancho Cucamonga, Redlands, Rialto, San Bernardino, Upland and Yucaipa) and from the four San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors districts which represent residents in the San Bernardino Valley.⁴

In 2015, Omnitrans was designated by San Bernardino County Transportation Authority (SBCTA) as the Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (CTSA) for the region. It merged with Valley Transportation Services (the previous CTSA in the region) to provide more services to the San Bernardino Valley region in a cost-effective manner, by reducing overlapping services and providing more efficient management of operations.⁵

Also in 2015, Omnitrans leadership recommitted to a goal set by the agency in 2001 to move from a 50/50 resource allocation of productive services to lifeline services to a 65/35 ratio, where 65 percent of resources went to “productivity-oriented services: straight, fast, direct, frequent routes with high rates of ridership and a bus at least every 20 minutes.”⁶ The other 35 percent would be earmarked to providing lifeline services, and furthering another agency goal that 85 percent of homes or jobs in service area would have access to a bus route within one-fourth of a mile of their location.

As the CTSA in the San Bernardino Valley, Omnitrans has a mandate to reduce gaps in mobility and provide accessible and equitable public transportation options for as many residents of the service area as possible. Through its Measure I Regional Mobility Partnership Program, Omnitrans coordinates and provides funds to community organizations with transportation programs which improve mobility and/or coordinate transportation services for seniors and/or persons with disabilities. Omnitrans released its most recent Call for Projects in February, with \$2.75 million available in funding for both 2021 and 2022.⁷

In late 2019, the Omnitrans board provided direction to staff to conduct an analysis of transit consolidation countywide following a board discussion about Omnitrans operational deficit, proposed 11 percent service cuts, and possibilities for improving the cost-effectiveness of transit service in San Bernardino County.⁸ The consolidation study currently underway is looking at the benefits and shortcomings of consolidation between Omnitrans and SBCTA, determining alternatives for what a joint organization might look like, and compiling a set of innovative transit recommendations with area agency representatives. The work will revisit a previous SBCTA which looked at “potential areas of cooperation” among six transit operators in San Bernardino County to “identify potential cost efficiencies

⁴ Omnitrans, “About,” <https://omnitrans.org/about/>

⁵ Omnitrans FY2019 White Paper, p.120

⁶ Omnitrans, OmniConnects FY2015-FY2020 Short-Range Transit Plan, p.2

⁷ Omnitrans, Omnitrans Measure I Regional Mobility Partnership Program (RMP) Call for Projects, February 2020, <https://omnitrans.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/20-02-24-Measure-I-CFP-Announcement-2020.pdf>

⁸ San Bernardino County Transportation Authority, Board of Directors Agenda Item 7, SBCTA and Omnitrans Consolidation Study and Innovative Transit Review of the Metro-Valley, November 6, 2019, p.57

that could be achieved through coordination and joint efforts among the operators and SBCTA.”⁹

Omnitrans’ Mission Statement¹⁰

To provide the San Bernardino Valley with comprehensive public mass transportation services which maximize customer use, comfort, safety, and satisfaction, while efficiently using financial and other resources, in an environmentally sensitive manner.

Omnitrans’ Vision Statement¹¹

Omnitrans’ vision for Transit in the San Bernardino Valley is a values and customer-based vision where:

- The San Bernardino Valley’s multimodal transit system supports the local economy.
- Omnitrans’ service is reliable, not just in the narrow sense of on-time performance, but in a broader manner: Omnitrans’ service is worthy of the customer’s trust.
- Customers have a high-quality experience using Omnitrans.
- Omnitrans maximizes value to the community with every transit dollar available.

Service Area Demographics and Economic Data

Omnitrans’ service area spans the southwestern corner of sprawling San Bernardino County, known as the San Bernardino Valley. The median age of the region is 32 years old. Approximately 75 percent of residents are 16 years of age or older, and 10 percent are seniors (65 or older.)¹²

Race/ Ethnicity

More than half of residents in the San Bernardino Valley identify as Hispanic or Latino (54.4%). Latinos represent more than sixty percent of the population in Colton, Fontana, Montclair, Ontario, Rialto and San Bernardino.¹³ One in four service area residents (25.9%) are white; white residents make up more than half the population in Redlands City and Yucaipa. Residents who identify as Asian make up 8.5 of the service area population and represent nearly one third of the population of Chino Hills (31.8%) and Loma Linda (27.6%). Another 8.2 percent of service area residents identify as Black or African American. Black residents make up more than ten percent of the population in San Bernardino (13.6%) and Highland (10.3%).¹⁴

⁹ San Bernardino County Transportation Authority, Board of Directors Agenda Item 7, SBCTA and Omnitrans Consolidation Study and Innovative Transit Review of the Metro-Valley, November 6, 2019, p.58

¹⁰ Omnitrans Strategic Plan, 2017-2020, p. 4

¹¹ Omnitrans Management Plan, FY2020, p.10

¹² U.S. Census, American Community Survey, 5-year data, 2015

¹³ U.S. Census, American Community Survey, 5-year data, 2015

¹⁴ U.S. Census, American Community Survey, 5-year data, 2015

Chart: Race/ Ethnicity of Service Area Residents

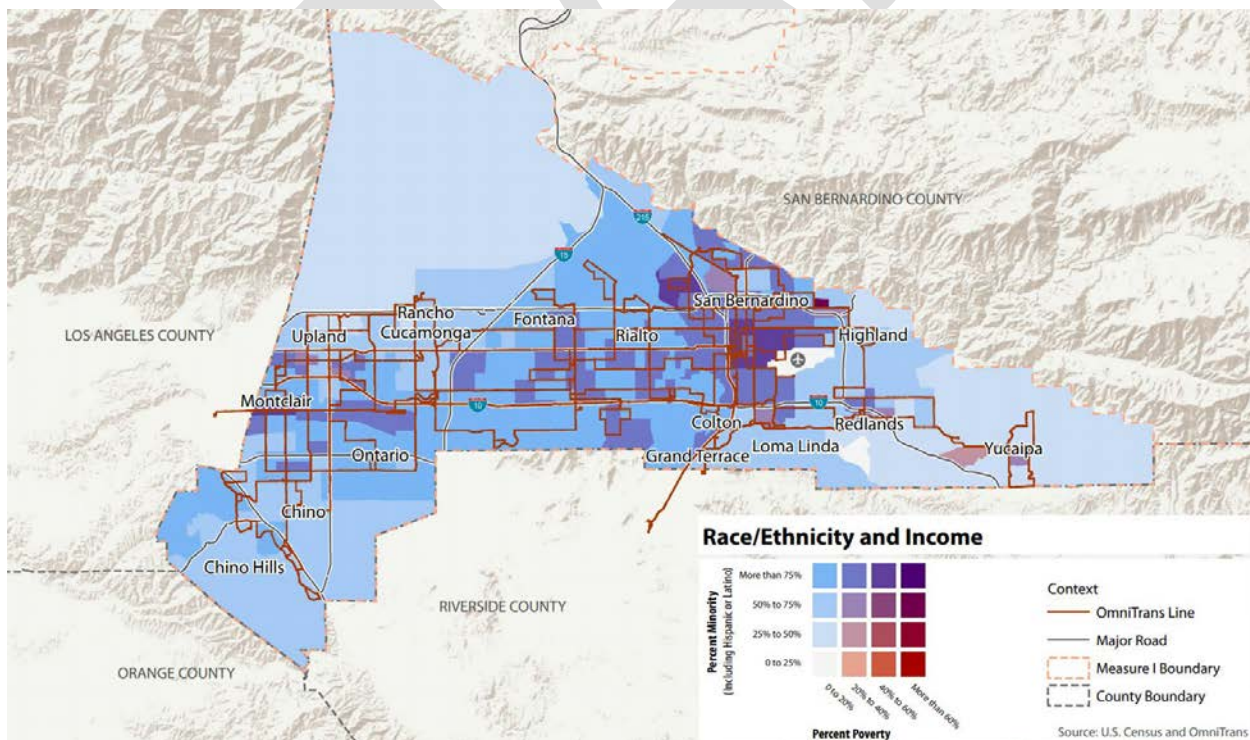
Race/ Ethnicity	Percent of Population
Hispanic or Latino	54.4%
White	25.9%
Asian	8.5%
Black or African American	8.2%
Two or more races	4.6%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.3%
American Indian and Alaska Native	0.2%
Some other race	0.2%

Source: U.S. Census, 2015

Income

Median incomes of the 15 cities in the Omnitrans service area range from \$37,047 in the city of San Bernardino to \$96,914 in Chino Hills.¹⁵ Per capita income in the Valley is less than \$40,000.¹⁶ In San Bernardino, remembered as the epicenter of the housing crisis in California during the Great Recession, one in three residents live in a household with an income below the poverty line. Nine other cities in the service area have poverty rates between 15 and 25 percent.¹⁷

Map: Race/ Ethnicity and Income Among Residents in Omnitrans Service Area



Source: U.S. Census, 2018

¹⁵ U.S. Census, American Community Survey, 5-year data, 2015

¹⁶ Omnitrans, Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, FY2019, pp.51-56

¹⁷ U.S. Census, American Community Survey, 5-year data, 2015

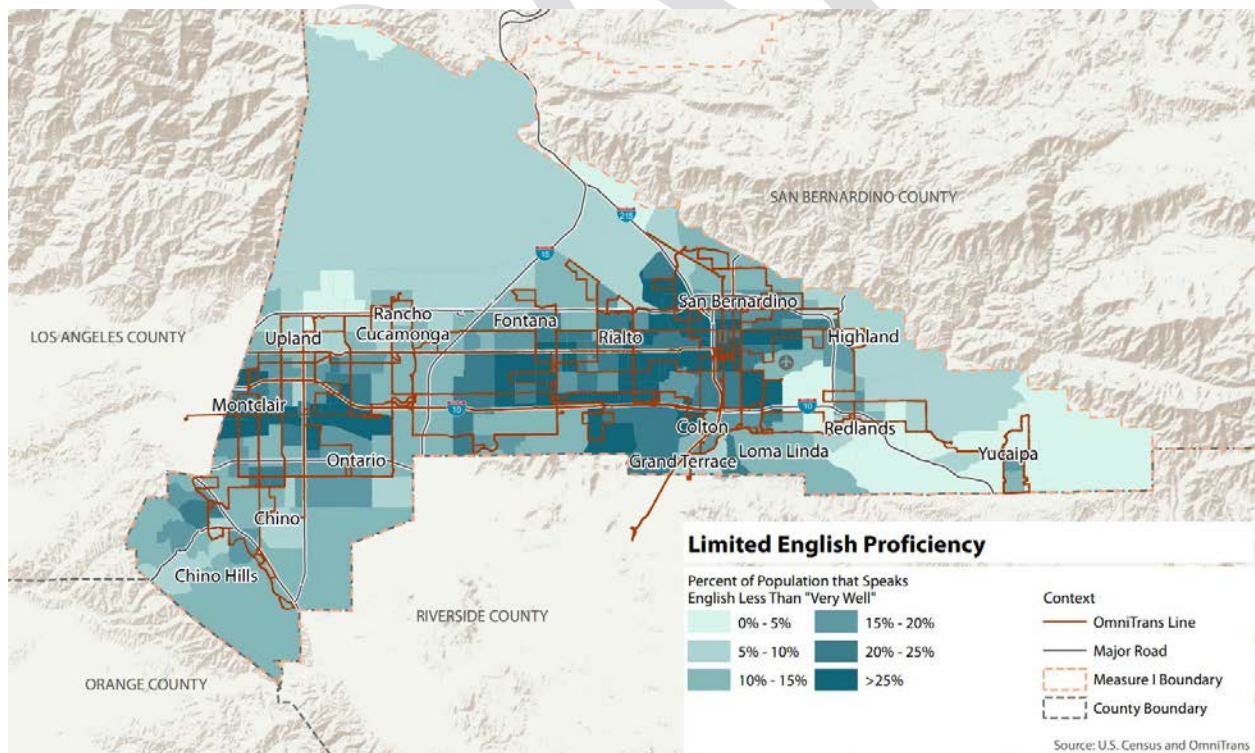
The map above provides a layered view at income and race/ethnicity across the service area and shows the communities where there are concentrations of lower income and/or nonwhite residents. Omnitrans' equity analysis of its proposed FY2021 service changes reports the service area is 72.4% minority (nonwhite) residents; while 76.9% of residents are low income and/or minority (LIM), the rate used for transit equity analyses.¹⁸

Language

Within the San Bernardino Valley, most residents with limited English proficiency speak Spanish as their first language. But there are also much smaller LEP populations in the service area who speak Chinese, Korean, Arabic, Tagalog, Vietnamese, and Cambodian.¹⁹ The map below shows LEP population across the service area.

The largest concentrations of Spanish speakers in the service area occur in Fontana, where more than 100,000 residents speak Spanish, in San Bernardino (92,000 Spanish speakers) and Ontario (89,000 Spanish speakers).²⁰ According to Omnitrans' 2014 LEP policy document, significant concentrations of Chinese, Korean and Tagalog speakers live in Chino and Chino Hills, northern Fontana, Rancho Cucamonga and Loma Linda, while Cambodian speakers are clustered in San Bernardino and Redlands. Vietnamese and Arabic LEP speakers can be found throughout the service area.²¹

Map: Limited English Proficiency Among Residents in Omnitrans Service Area



Source: U.S. Census, 2018

¹⁸ Omnitrans, ConnectForward FY2021 Service Plan, p.34

¹⁹ Omnitrans, Title VI Limited English Proficiency Policy and Assistance Plan, 2014, p.3

²⁰ U.S. Census, American Community Survey, 5-year data, 2015

²¹ Omnitrans, Title VI Limited English Proficiency Policy and Assistance Plan, 2014, p.8

Veterans and Residents with Disabilities

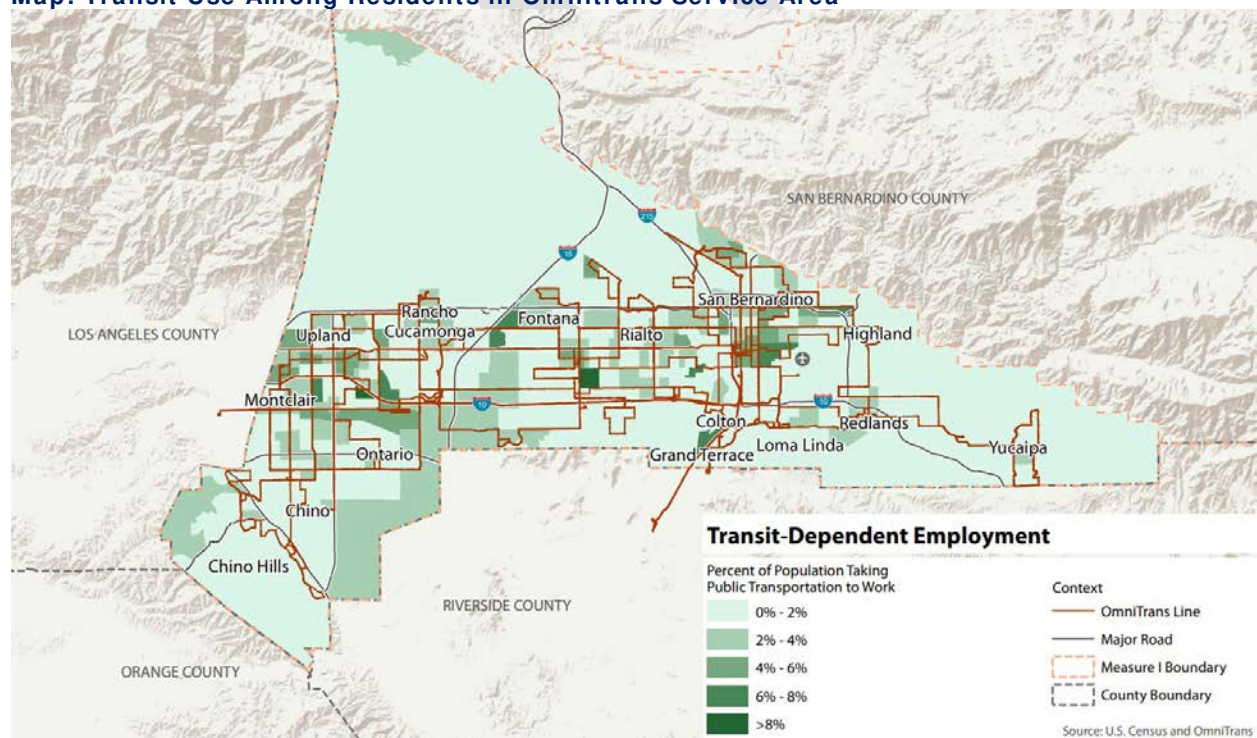
Nearly ten percent of the service area population has a permanent disability. San Bernardino has the highest number and rate of residents with disabilities, 28,049 or 13.1% of the city's population. Other cities in the Omnitrans service area with more than 10,000 residents with disabilities include Fontana, Ontario, Rancho Cucamonga, and Rialto.²²

Almost four percent of residents in San Bernardino Valley are veterans, with large concentrations of veteran residents in San Bernardino, Rancho Cucamonga, Fontana, Ontario, and Redlands.²³

Transit Use and Dependence

The percent of residents in the service area who use transit ranges between 0.8% (Grand Terrace) and 3.0% (San Bernardino). Other cities in the service area with some of the highest rates of transit use include Fontana (2.1%), Montclair (2.7%), Ontario (2.3%), Rialto (2.3%) and Upland (1.9%).²⁴ The map below shows the communities with highest transit use (4 to 8 percent and above) are located in Ontario, Fontana, San Bernardino and Colton.

Map: Transit Use Among Residents in Omnitrans Service Area



Source: U.S. Census, 2018

The map which follows below shows transit dependence by census tract in the service area. At the city level, the rate of residents without a vehicle is highest in San Bernardino

²² U.S. Census, American Community Survey, 5-year data, 2015

²³ U.S. Census, American Community Survey, 5-year data, 2015

²⁴ U.S. Census, American Community Survey, 5-year data, 2015

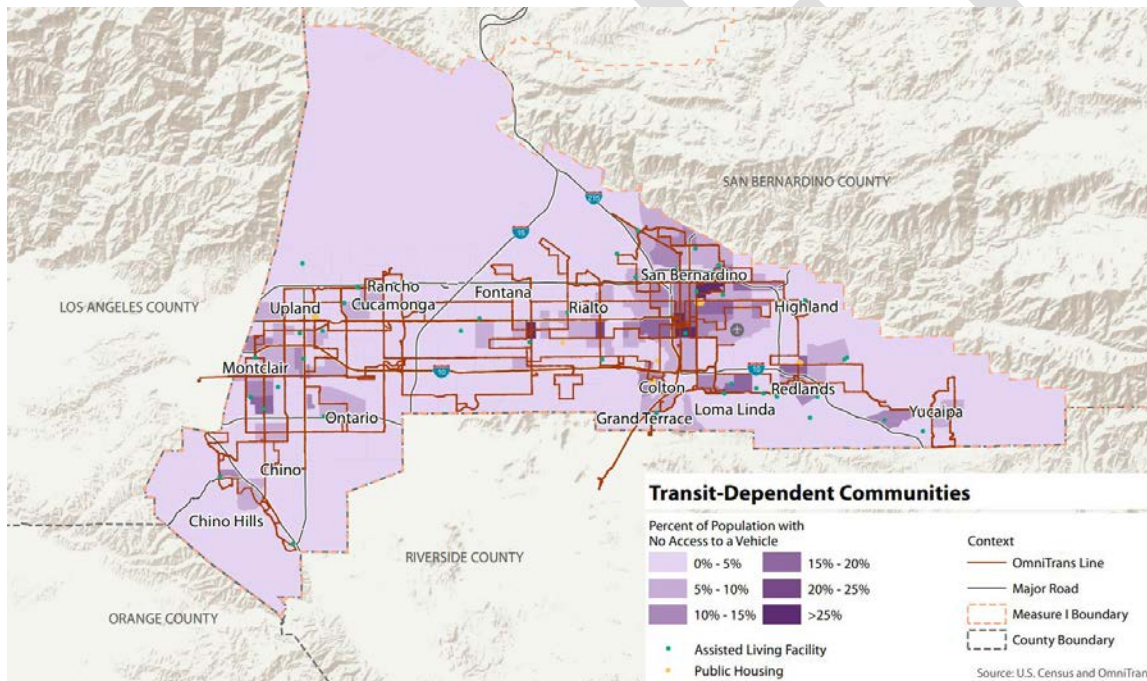
(11.8%), Loma Linda (8.1%), and Grand Terrace (6.5%).²⁵ Parts of San Bernardino have upwards of twenty percent or more of residents who do not have access to a vehicle.

Commute Distance, Time, and Expense

According to the Institute of Applied Research and Policy Analysis’s 2018 Inland Empire Annual Survey, San Bernardino Valley respondents had an average commute of 38.5 miles and mean round trip travel time of 62.5 minutes. The value of commute times for service area residents, based upon the county’s average hourly wage of \$22.65 amounts to approximately \$5,894 per year.²⁶

Census data shows that average commute times are highest among residents in Chino Hills (37.3 minutes), Chino (33.5 minutes), Fontana (32.7 minutes), and lowest among residents in Loma Linda (19.8 minutes) and Redlands (22.4 minutes). Eight service area cities have average commute times of 30 minutes or more.²⁷

Map: Transit-Dependent Communities in Omnitrans Service Area



Source: U.S. Census, 2018

Jobs and Job Density

There are more than 526,000 jobs in the service area (and 0.38 jobs per capita). Nearly one of every five (102,967) is in Ontario or San Bernardino (98,555). Rancho Cucamonga is another job center (76,808), as are Chino (40,329) and Fontana (47,933). Job density is highest in Montclair, Loma Linda, Ontario, and Rancho Cucamonga.²⁸

²⁵ U.S. Census, American Community Survey, 5-year data, 2015

²⁶ Institute of Applied Research, 2018 Inland Empire Annual Survey, p.30

²⁷ U.S. Census, American Community Survey, 5-year data, 2015

²⁸ U.S. Census, American Community Survey, 5-year data, 2015

Unemployment, which was 13.7% and 13.5% in 2010 and 2011 in San Bernardino County respectively, reached 3.3% in the service area by the end of 2019. Preliminary unemployment data for the month of April 2020 shows that the unemployment rate has jumped to 13.4% in the county.²⁹

Key Employers

The largest employers in San Bernardino County (listed in the chart below) include area school districts and Loma Linda University and its healthcare centers, Arrowhead and Kaiser Permanente medical centers, the Ontario airport, the County of San Bernardino, and a regional grocery chain.³⁰ Many of these employers are considered essential during this time, from health care workers and County employees, to grocery store clerks and stockers.

Chart: Top Employers in San Bernardino County³¹

Employer	Employees (Range)
Arrowhead Regional Medical Center	10,000 to 20,000
Stater Brothers Markets, San Bernardino	10,000 to 20,000
County of San Bernardino, San Bernardino	10,000 to 20,000
Loma Linda University (includes Medical Center and VA Loma Linda Healthcare Systems)	5,000 to 10,000
San Bernardino Unified School District	5,000 to 10,000
Ontario International Airport, Ontario	5,000 to 10,000
Kaiser Permanente	5,000 to 10,000
Fontana Unified School District	1,000 to 5,000
San Manuel Band of Mission Indians	1,000 to 5,000
U.S. Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center	1,000 to 5,000

Source: Omnitrans CAFR, 2019

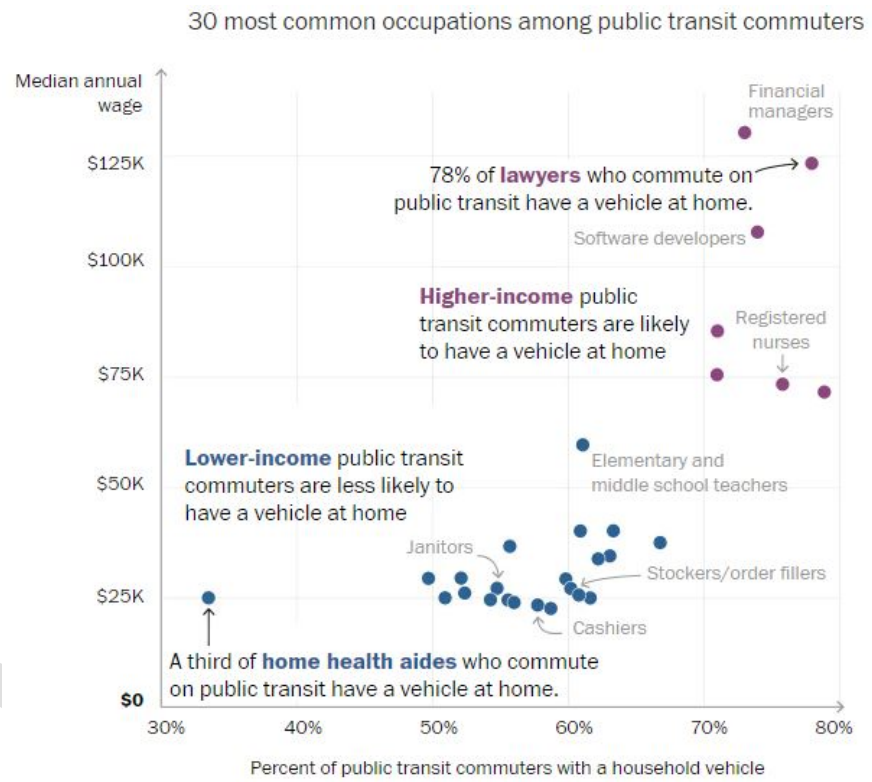
²⁹ Employment Development Department, San Bernardino County Profile: Unemployment Rates and Labor Force, accessed June 2020 from <https://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/geography/sanbernardino-county.html>

³⁰ Omnitrans, Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, FY2019, pp.51-56

³¹ Omnitrans, Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, FY2019, p.52

Essential Rider Occupations

A recent analysis done by the Washington Post looking at the profile of transit riders during the COVID-19 pandemic found that in cities with low overall transit use, riders with lower incomes tend to make up higher percentages of overall riders since they have fewer transportation alternatives than those with higher incomes. These riders are also more disproportionately likely to become sick from the coronavirus, and many hold essential jobs which require them to commute to work and be in close contact with other people. This places these workers, their families, and coworkers at risk from community spread of the coronavirus.³² The screenshot of the chart at right from this study shows the most common occupations among transit users, and the likelihood of each to have an alternative to public transit.



The chart below displays the top occupations in the region which have an average wage below the County’s median wage of \$18 per hour. Many of the holders of these jobs may be both essential workers and essential riders, that is they are both required to keep working during the COVID-19 pandemic and stay-at-home orders, and they have few transportation choices beyond taking the bus. Those highlighted in green below are labelled as part of the thirty most common occupations in the graphic on the previous page.

³² Shelly Tan, Alyssa Fowers, Dan Keating, and Lauren Tierney, Amid the Pandemic, Public Transit is Highlighting Inequalities in Cities, The Washington Post, May 15, 2020, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2020/05/15/amid-pandemic-public-transit-is-highlighting-inequalities-cities>

Chart: Top 30 occupations in San Bernardino County with mean wages below the median (\$18/ hour)

Occupational Title	Number Employed	Mean Wage
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers	65,590	\$15.93
Personal Care Aides	51,980	\$11.99
Retail Salespersons	46,110	\$15.73
Cashiers	45,110	\$13.23
Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	44,350	\$12.81
Stock Clerks and Order Fillers	35,590	\$14.63
Waiters and Waitresses	23,500	\$13.60
Teacher Assistants	20,060	\$17.16
Security Guards	17,040	\$14.56
Industrial Truck and Tractor Operators	16,910	\$17.92
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	16,740	\$16.66
Cooks, Fast Food	14,550	\$12.21
Landscaping and Groundskeeping Workers	13,990	\$15.03
Cooks, Restaurant	12,370	\$14.24
Packers and Packagers, Hand	11,580	\$14.43
Assemblers and fabricators, all other, including team assemblers	10,940	\$14.86
Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	9,560	\$14.24
First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	9,130	\$17.12
Food Preparation Workers	8,730	\$13.34
Receptionists and Information Clerks	8,710	\$14.93
Medical Assistants	8,590	\$16.20
Dining Room and Cafeteria Attendants and Bartender Helpers	7,700	\$12.18
Nursing Assistants	7,610	\$16.85
Dishwashers	6,630	\$12.09
Cleaners of Vehicles and Equipment	6,160	\$12.97
Childcare Workers	5,960	\$13.77
Farmworkers and Laborers, Crop, Nursery, and Greenhouse	5,870	\$12.22
Dental Assistants	5,600	\$17.24
Bartenders	5,130	\$13.55
Office and Administrative Support Workers, All Other	4,810	\$15.57

Source: California Employment Development Department, 2019

Population Projections

San Bernardino County has added approximately 150,000 new residents since 2010.³³ Its population is projected to grow another eight percent (178,000 new residents) over the next decade, and more than 14 percent (or 312,000 people) between 2020 and 2040.³⁴ Growth among younger working age adults in their 30s and 40s and substantial growth in the number of seniors is projected to fuel much of the population expansion in the county.

³³ Omnitrans, Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, FY2019, p.51

³⁴ California Department of Finance, County Population Projections (2010-2060) by Age, http://www.dof.ca.gov/forecasting/demographics/projections/documents/p2_Age_1yr_Nosup.xlsx

Ontario is expected to see the most growth among cities in the service area, and by 2030 is projected to overtake San Bernardino as the largest city in the San Bernardino Valley.³⁵ San Bernardino and Fontana are also expected to experience considerable growth in population over the next ten and twenty years. Like the rest of the southern California region, school enrollments are down, declining in San Bernardino by 20,000 in the last ten years.³⁶ Over the next few decades, San Bernardino County will experience continued declines among school age residents and younger adults (those under 30 years of age).³⁷

Regional Insights

The Inland Empire Annual Survey, carried out by the Institute of Applied Research and Policy Analysis (IAR) at CSU San Bernardino, is an annual measure of how residents of San Bernardino County feel about living in the region. It includes questions related to the economy, financial well-being, crime, commutes, and quality of life in San Bernardino County.³⁸

The 2018 Annual survey included the highest levels of positive responses from survey participants about the condition of the local economy since the great recession, though responses differed significantly depending on one's residence. The lowest percentage of respondents rating the economy as excellent or good came from residents of San Bernardino, Highland, and Barstow.³⁹ More survey respondents chose location, lower cost of living, good climate and less crowded as the best things about living in San Bernardino County.⁴⁰

One in three respondents to the 2018 survey chose crime (36%), and 14 percent chose the grouping "traffic, poor transportation system and/or poor street/road maintenance" as the top negative things about living in San Bernardino County.⁴¹ Looking at particular cities in the region, fear of being the victim of a crime is highest in Yucaipa, Highland, Rialto and San Bernardino; residents feel safest in Chino Hills, Yucca Valley and Chino.⁴² Street and road maintenance was rated by two-thirds of all respondents as fair or poor;⁴³ least favorable ratings regarding the condition of road maintenance were found among respondents from San Bernardino, Yucaipa, Highland, Yucca Valley, and Adelanto.⁴⁴ Only about one percent of all respondents specifically called out transit as the biggest negative issue.

Regional Challenges

³⁵ Omnitrans, OmniConnects FY2015 to 2020 Short-Range Transit Plan, p.36, data from SCAG RTP 2012

³⁶ Omnitrans, Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, FY2019, p.51

³⁷ California Department of Finance, County Population Projections (2010-2060) by Age

³⁸ Institute of Applied Research, 2018 Inland Empire Annual Survey, p.1

³⁹ Institute of Applied Research, 2018 Inland Empire Annual Survey, p.6

⁴⁰ Institute of Applied Research, 2018 Inland Empire Annual Survey, p.24

⁴¹ Institute of Applied Research, 2018 Inland Empire Annual Survey, pp.24-25

⁴² Institute of Applied Research, 2018 Inland Empire Annual Survey, p.16

⁴³ Institute of Applied Research, 2018 Inland Empire Annual Survey, p.59

⁴⁴ Institute of Applied Research, 2018 Inland Empire Annual Survey, p.28

In addition to declining numbers of young people in San Bernardino, community safety and infrastructure repair issues, there are several other challenges affecting the Inland Empire and San Bernardino Valley which may impact Omnitrans, its employees and its customers.

- Housing affordability and access
- Continued sprawl vs TOD/infill development
- Jobs spatial mismatch: even in the Inland Empire, before the recession, employers were finding it hard to fill positions
- Ongoing pollution and air quality issues: growing logistics sector and online delivery making traffic and air quality worse
- Local control and funding for transit development
- Budget shortfalls at the state and local level due to declines in tax revenues from stay-at-home orders and COVID-19 recession
- Economic impacts of COVID-19 and the recession on residents

Transit in the Time of COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has created an existential crisis for transit organizations: what kinds of service should they provide? What types of riders are essential riders? Where will funding come from to support significant declines in ridership and a need in the short-term for more frequent service given social distancing requirements?

Much of the data in this document reflects life before the pandemic, stay-at-home orders and significant ridership and service declines for transit agencies across the region, the country and world. While the experience of the Great Recession and its impacts on transit and on the Inland Empire region offer some insight about the way forward through economic recovery, this situation may be different, given a new and emerging safety paradigm.

What is emerging in the next few years for transit?

Transit agencies around the world have had to deal with immense declines in revenues and ridership as governments put stay-in-home orders in place. Amid lost revenues and budget shortfalls, most agencies have continued to provide decent levels of service to support essential workers who rely on transit to get to work. Even with the implementation of extensive cleaning policies and safety precautions, hundreds of transit workers have contracted coronavirus, and many have died from complications.

As they struggle with how re-opening the economy will affect transit ridership and demand, here are some of the key questions and issues that these agencies are considering:

- Providing essential transit service vs. mass transit service
- How to adjust service levels due to new safety regulations, such as capped ridership (Foothill Transit: 10 riders per 40-foot bus)
- Fares: many agencies considering possibility of free service, or permanent changes to fare structure
- How to address revenue needs with ongoing safety precautions, lower ridership, lower sales revenues from diesel taxes, environmental regulations (clean fleets)
- Broader revenue impacts in FY2021 from the loss of sales taxes which could create the possibility of municipal bankruptcies and consolidation among communities or agencies

- Innovations and opportunities to regain choice riders, such as expanding use of tap card technology and other app-based services to track passenger counts

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Services and Operations

Omnitrans provides fixed route, demand response and special transit services to residents, workers, and other travelers in the San Bernardino Valley. The chart below describes the agency’s menu of services.

Chart X: Omnitrans Family of Service Offerings

Service	Type	Brand	Image	Description
Fixed Route	Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)	sbX		BRT service mirrors light-rail service with dedicated lanes, amenities, stations and vehicles.
	Express	Omnitrans		Freeway bus service connecting two or more areas of highly concentrated activity.
	Local	Omnitrans		Traditional large bus service operating on a set route with a set schedule at defined frequencies.
	Community Circulator	OmniGo		Smaller bus service designed to offer lifeline mobility for areas with relatively low population and employment density.
Demand Response	MicroTransit	OmniRide		Real-time customer requested, technology-enabled, automatically dispatched demand responsive service
	ADA Paratransit	OmniAccess		Curb-to-curb service provided to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) that is provided within ¼-mile of a fixed route service.
Special Transit Services				As the designated Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (CTSA), Omnitrans offers a variety of mobility services including Travel Training, Volunteer Driver programs, a Lyft & Taxi program, and many Regional Mobility Partnership programs.

Source: Omnitrans, April 2020

Systemwide Service Characteristics

Omnitrans revenue hours have been relatively stable over the last few years, with total annual hours when vehicles are in service at about 830,000 hours between FY2016 and FY2019 (see chart which follows below).⁴⁵ Estimates for FY2020 revenue hours show a slight increase over FY2019, however due to proposed service cuts later this year, revenue hours are projected to decline by 8.7 percent to 770,000 hours in FY2021.⁴⁶

Chart: Omnitrans Systemwide Service Characteristics⁴⁷

System Total (in thousands except for vehicles and ratios)		Actuals				Year-End Estimate	Projection	Percent Change
		FY2016	FY2017	FY2018	FY2019	FY2020	FY2021	FY2021
Financial	Fare Revenue	\$14,193	\$13,314	\$13,078	\$13,595	\$14,863	\$14,597	-1.8%
Operating Data	Revenue Miles	11,320	11,389	11,415	11,425	11,609	10,662	-8.2%
	Total Miles	12,741	12,742	12,805	12,818	12,902	11,838	-8.2%
	Revenue Hours	831	832	830	833	843	770	-8.7%
	Total Hours	900	897	898	898	915	835	-8.6%
Fleet Data	Passengers	12,813	11,653	11,210	10,864	11,059	10,676	-3.5%
	Peak Revenue Fleet	248	250	251	251	250	250	0.0%
	Spare Fleet	32	31	31	32	34	34	0.0%
	Total Fleet	278	281	282	283	284	284	0.0%
Key Statistics	Passengers per Hour	15.4	14.0	13.5	13.0	13.1	13.9	5.7%

Source: Omnitrans, April 2020⁴⁸

Vehicle revenue miles, or the number of miles travelled by Omnitrans riders, was approximately 11.4 million miles in FY2018 and FY2019, and estimated to grow to 11.6 million miles by end of FY2020. In FY2021, revenue miles will experience a similar decline to revenue hours due to service cuts; projections for FY2021 are 10.6 million revenue miles, or an 8.2 percent decline over the previous year.⁴⁹

Total ridership is expected to grow by approximately 200,000 rides by the end of FY2020 compared to FY2019, but FY2021 projections are approximately 400,000 rides less than FY2020, or a 3.5 percent decline.⁵⁰ In FY2016, there were approximately 1.1 passengers per vehicle revenue mile.⁵¹ Data from previous years show that there were 1.5 riders per Omnitrans vehicle revenue mile from FY 2012 through FY2014.⁵² By FY2019 there was less than one passenger per vehicle revenue mile (.9 passengers).⁵³ FY2021 estimates will bring that back to one passenger per vehicle revenue mile.

⁴⁵ Omnitrans, ConnectForward FY2021 Service Plan, p.26

⁴⁶ Omnitrans, ConnectForward FY2021 Service Plan, p.26

⁴⁷ Omnitrans, ConnectForward FY2021 Service Plan, p.26

⁴⁸ Omnitrans, ConnectForward FY2021 Service Plan, p.26

⁴⁹ Omnitrans, ConnectForward FY2021 Service Plan, p.26

⁵⁰ Omnitrans, ConnectForward FY2021 Service Plan, p.26

⁵¹ Omnitrans, ConnectForward FY2021 Service Plan, p.26

⁵² Transit Insights, Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario, TransitCenter, accessed May 2020 from <http://insights.transitcenter.org>

⁵³ Omnitrans, ConnectForward FY2021 Service Plan, p.26

Omnitrans uses a total of 284 vehicles in its fleet, including 250 with peak revenue assignments and 34 spare vehicles. The fleet total is projected to stay constant going forward, however Omnitrans plans to switch out nineteen 40-foot coaches during the September 2020 service changes.⁵⁴ Fifty of its fixed route buses have Wi-Fi, and 113 have GPS Mileage trackers. Twenty express buses and 15 sbX buses have Wi-Fi and APC automated passenger counters.⁵⁵

Omnitrans has an additional 75 non-revenue vehicles, including those for relief services, supervisors, maintenance, and equipment. Omnitrans purchased transportation fleet includes 106 smaller passenger shuttle vans, including 11 for OmniGo fixed route revenue vehicles. Fifty-nine of its purchased transportation fleet are CNG Vehicles.⁵⁶

Fixed Route Service

Omnitrans currently runs 22 local and two freeway express fixed route bus lines, directly operated by the agency on 160 40-foot and 15 60-foot articulated New Flyer CNG buses, 146 of which have peak coach assignments, Monday through Friday.⁵⁷ Fixed route service accounts for 88 percent of all rider boardings, and 71% of FY2021's revenue hours.⁵⁸

Omnitrans launched its first of ten planned Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) routes in 2017, the sbX green line, along a north-south corridor in San Bernardino and Loma Linda. The route includes stops near CSU-San Bernardino, in downtown San Bernardino, at Loma Linda University and Medical campus and the VA hospital. It also connects to the San Bernardino Transit Center, a key hub for more than a dozen Omnitrans routes, as well as connections to other regional transit agency services.⁵⁹ SbX provides 10 to 15-minute headways during the week along the route and 20 minutes on the weekend, making stops every mile. As one of the few "true" BRTs in the U.S. when it opened, sbX includes dedicated lanes along part of the route, and dedicated platforms and real time trip information at stops.⁶⁰

The second of these routes, the West Valley Connector, is currently in development. It will link Metrolink stations in Pomona, Ontario, and Fontana, and include stops from downtown Pomona to the Ontario airport and Ontario Mills shopping center and extend east to Fontana and Chaffey College.⁶¹

SbX accounts for eight percent of all boardings and is projected to be six percent of revenue hours in FY2021.⁶²

⁵⁴ Omnitrans, ConnectForward FY2021 Service Plan, p.26

⁵⁵ Omnitrans, Bus Fleet with Equipment, March 25, 2020

⁵⁶ Omnitrans, Bus Fleet with Equipment, March 25, 2020

⁵⁷ Current website count (May 2020), ConnectForward FY2021 proposal is 21 local routes; Omnitrans, Bus Fleet with Equipment, March 25, 2020

⁵⁸ Omnitrans, ConnectForward FY2012 Service Plan, p.26

⁵⁹ Omnitrans, SbX Green Line Before and After Study, May 2018, p.2

⁶⁰ Omnitrans, SbX Green Line Before and After Study, May 2018, p.2

⁶¹ San Bernardino Transit Authority, West Valley Connector (BRT), accessed June 2020 from <https://www.gosbcta.com/project/west-valley-connector-brt/>

⁶² Omnitrans, ConnectForward FY2021 Service Plan, April 2020, p.26

Omnitrans also provides smaller community circulator bus service, called OmniGo, for parts of the San Bernardino Valley with less density and demand for transit services. OmniGo represents one percent of boardings and three percent of projected FY2021 revenue hours.⁶³

Demand Response

Omnitrans offers “curb-to-curb” demand response shuttle services for residents who are disabled and cannot use regular fixed route bus service. In FY2019, Omnitrans served 360,000 passengers along 2.3 million revenue miles. The FY2020 OmniAccess ridership estimate is 331,000 passengers, approximately 100,000 less than the FY2016 total of 434,000 passengers. Projected ridership for Access in FY2021 is 328,000 passengers, or a one percent decline over the previous year.⁶⁴

In FY2021, Omnitrans will launch a new micro transit pilot program in Chino Hills called OmniRide, which will offer an on demand, shared ride shuttle service in real time to customers who book through a digital app, like other ride hailing services.⁶⁵

Special Transit Services

Omnitrans also provides a range of Special Transit mobility services to support its designation as Consolidated Transit Service Agency (CTSA), including travel training for riders, reimbursement for volunteer drivers, and Lyft and taxi vouchers. Through its Regional Mobility Partnership program, Omnitrans provides funding support to area community organizations which provide transportation services to seniors and people with disabilities.

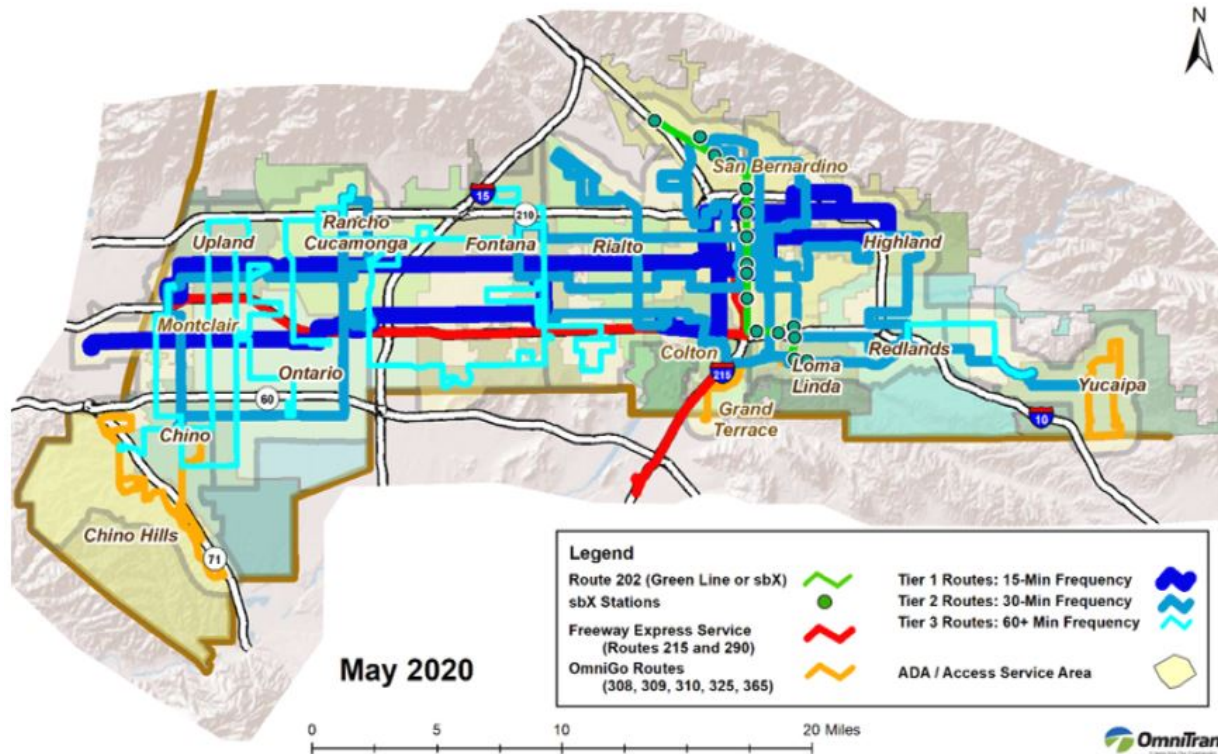
The map below shows current Omnitrans routes and services.

⁶³ Omnitrans, ConnectForward FY2021 Service Plan, April 2020, p.26

⁶⁴ Omnitrans, ConnectForward FY2021 Service Plan, April 2020, p.28

⁶⁵ Omnitrans, ConnectForward FY2021 Service Plan, April 2020, p.5; Micro transit program definition from LA Metro, MicroTransit Pilot, <https://www.metro.net/projects/microtransit/>, another transit agency piloting micro transit ride hailing technology from RideCo, Omnitrans’s tech provider partner for this pilot.

Chart: Map of Omnitrans Routes and Services



Source: Omnitrans, April 2020⁶⁶

Recent Service Changes

Due to a looming shortfall, Omnitrans leadership proposed several strategies to streamline services and reduce costs “in order to achieve a balanced operating budget forecast through 2040.”⁶⁷ In its ConnectForward Service plan for FY2021 made public in April 2020, Omnitrans includes an 11 percent service reduction of 71,000 revenue hours, planned for implementation in September 2020.⁶⁸ Most of its service reduction proposals come from frequency changes, realignments, and route eliminations. A small amount of additional savings are expected to come from the use of contractors with smaller vehicles for Access and OmniGo, eliminating trips, and reducing ADA services.⁶⁹

Omnitrans proposes several key changes to ADA services in the ConnectForward plan. These include eliminating “Beyond the Boundary ADA Service,” reducing ADA service boundaries from $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile beyond fixed route service to the mandated $\frac{1}{2}$ mile service,

⁶⁶ Omnitrans, ConnectForward FY2021 Service Plan, April 2020, p.6

⁶⁷ Jeremiah P. Bryant, Omnitrans Memo the board chair and members of the Omnitrans Board, Hold ConnectForward Public Hearing, February 5, 2020, p.5

⁶⁸ Omnitrans, Proposed Service Changes for September FY2021, March 2020

⁶⁹ Jeremiah P. Bryant, Omnitrans Memo the board chair and members of the Omnitrans Board, Service Adjustment/Realignment: Guiding Principles, Scale of Reductions and Preliminary Draft Proposals, November 6, 2019, Attachment A: Annual Service Hours Reduction by Strategy, p.48

and making key changes to the Access ride reservation system to stem costly cancellations among requests made more than a few days in advance.⁷⁰

“Access is the most expensive cost per passenger.”⁷¹ Omnitrans’ analysis of Access ridership and use found that most of the trips beyond the service area were requested by a small group of riders. Costs from no shows and cancellations cost Omnitrans between \$250,000 to \$400,000 per year; reservations made in 4 to 7-day window represent 63% of cancellations and 66% of no-shows.⁷² Omnitrans is expanding and promoting alternatives to Access riders affected by these changes, including participation in STS programs, Ride Lyft/Taxi, micro transit, or volunteer driver reimbursement program.⁷³

COVID-19 Service Reductions

Before these proposals were made public, as a result of the stay-at-home order due to the COVID-19 pandemic instituted statewide in March, Omnitrans ridership plummeted 65 percent compared to ridership levels in March FY2019.⁷⁴ In response, Omnitrans implemented its Emergency Service Deployment Plan and reduced its service capacity by 35 percent through frequency reductions, but “kept every Omnitrans route in service in order to provide lifeline coverage service throughout Omnitrans’ service area.”⁷⁵ Omnitrans also implemented a number of precautions to promote the safety of its operators and staff, including rear door boarding, requiring masks, and eliminating fares. Due to continued ridership declines among routes, especially those that service schools, Omnitrans implemented further reductions in capacity to 45 percent, including more frequency reductions on some routes, route eliminations and expansion of contract service on routes to use smaller vehicles.⁷⁶

Many of these service reductions were part of the changes scheduled for September 2020, however during this emergency, Omnitrans has been operating at service levels even below what was planned for September. The agency has developed a number of scenarios for boosting service levels, looking especially at the reopening plans of area schools and universities.⁷⁷ In the meantime, Omnitrans and other transit agencies have been able to rely on CARES act stimulus funding to cover operating costs, lost fare revenues and other expenses due to the pandemic.⁷⁸

Ridership data

⁷⁰ Jeremiah P. Bryant, Omnitrans Memo the board chair and members of the Omnitrans Board, Initial Draft Proposed ADA Access Service Changes, November 6, 2019, p.67

⁷¹ Jeremiah P. Bryant, Omnitrans Memo the board chair and members of the Omnitrans Board, Initial Draft Proposed ADA Access Service Changes, Attachment B: Initial Draft Proposed ADA Access Service Changes, November 6, 2019, p.76

⁷² Jeremiah P. Bryant, Omnitrans Memo the board chair and members of the Omnitrans Board, Initial Draft Proposed ADA Access Service Changes, November 6, 2019, pp.70-71

⁷³ Jeremiah P. Bryant, Omnitrans Memo the board chair and members of the Omnitrans Board, Initial Draft Proposed ADA Access Service Changes, November 6, 2019, p.68-70

⁷⁴ Omnitrans, ConnectForward FY2021 Service Plan, p.23

⁷⁵ Omnitrans, ConnectForward FY2021 Service Plan, p.23

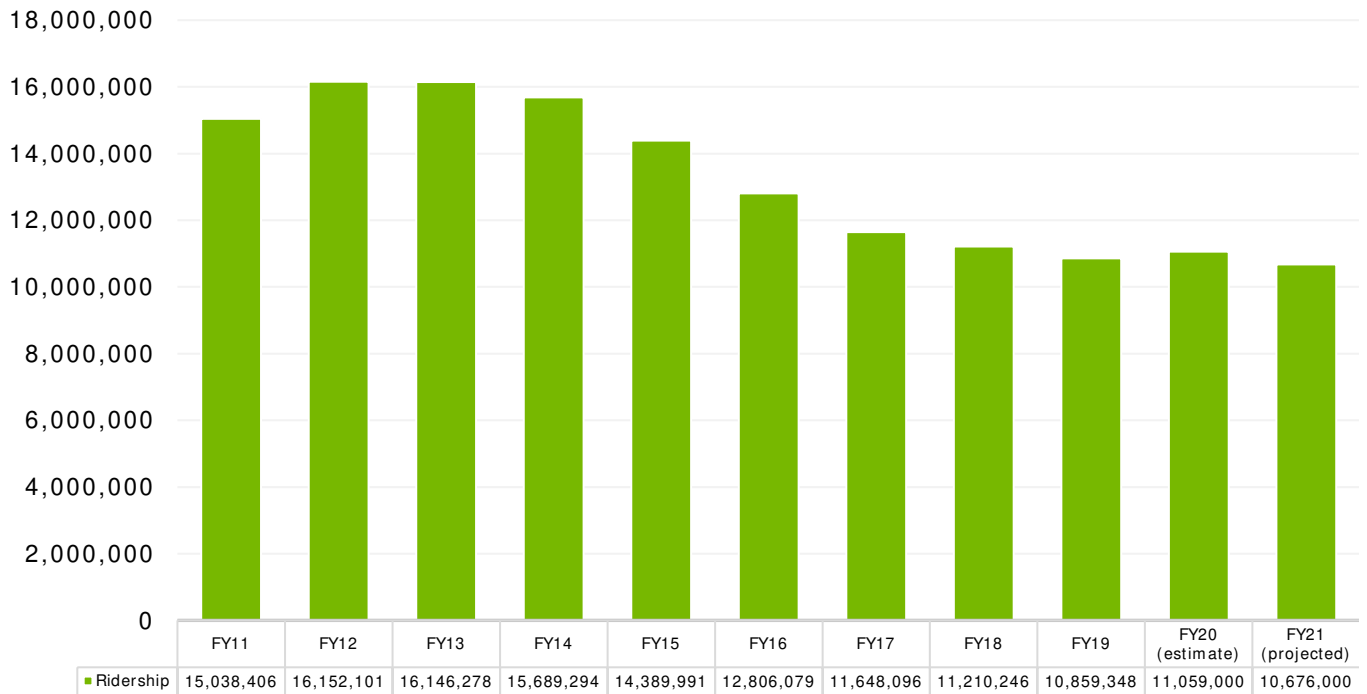
⁷⁶ Omnitrans, ConnectForward FY2021 Service Plan, pp.23-24

⁷⁷ Omnitrans, ConnectForward FY2021 Service Plan, pp.24-25

⁷⁸ Omnitrans, ConnectForward FY2021 Service Plan, p.4

Omnitrans provided 10.86 million rides in FY2019, a decline of approximately 351,000 rides (-3.1%) from the previous year FY2018's total of 11.21 million rides.⁷⁹ Estimates for FY2020 ridership suggested modest growth (1.8%), as data through February 2020 showed year over year increases in ridership among fixed route and sbX services. However the 65 percent decline among riders in March 2020 and corresponding reduction in service thanks to the COVID-19 pandemic has changed FY2020 estimates and outcomes.

Chart: Omnitrans Systemwide Ridership, FY2010 to FY2019



Source: Omnitrans, March and April 2020⁸⁰

Looking at the last decade, Omnitrans systemwide ridership peaked at 16.1 million rides in FY2012 and FY2013 (see chart above).⁸¹ Since that time, ridership has declined by nearly a third (-32.7% or 5.3 million rides) or a loss of approximately 873,000 rides annually, mirroring ridership declines experienced by many transit agencies in the Southern California region and across the country. The pace of Omnitrans ridership decline in the last few fiscal years has levelled off, and as mentioned above, was expected to change toward a positive course in FY2020.

Much of the decline at Omnitrans in the last five fiscal years came from reductions in fixed route ridership, which lost approximately 1.64 million rides between FY2016 and FY2020 (see chart below).⁸² Estimates for FY2020 showed a growth in ridership expected in Omnitrans fixed route service.

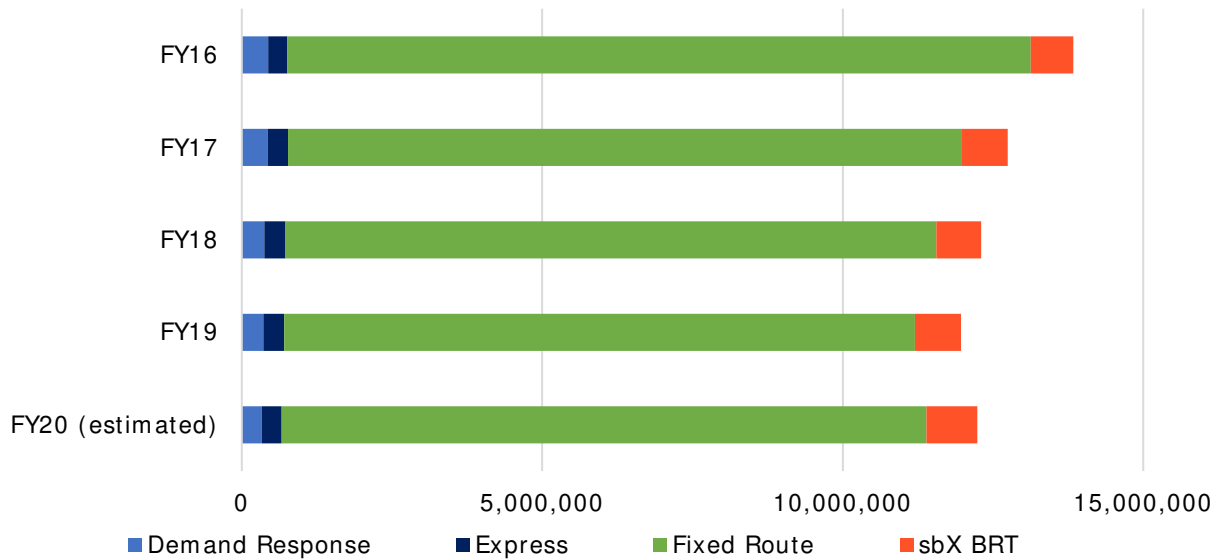
⁷⁹ Omnitrans, System Ridership, FY18, FY19 and FY20 to date, March 2020

⁸⁰ Omnitrans, System Ridership, FY18, FY19 and FY20 to date, March 2020; Omnitrans, Connect Forward FY2021 Service Plan, p.26

⁸¹ Omnitrans, Trend-System Ridership, FY10 to FY19

⁸² The data and estimates provided by Omnitrans and used in this section are pre-COVID-19

Chart: Omnitrans Systemwide growth rates by transit type, FY16 to FY20 (estimated)



Source: Omnitrans, March 2020⁸³

Among other ridership types, demand response also has experienced a relatively significant decline in ridership, down an estimated 106,821 rides between FY2016 and 2020, or - 24.4%. Express service and sbX BRT service ridership has grown during this period, with express ridership up 4% and sbX 15.6% between FY16 and FY2020.

Trips per Rider and Trip Length

Average trip length among Omnitrans riders grew from 4.8 miles in FY2010 to 5.4 miles in FY2017.⁸⁴ In FY2010, Omnitrans had 10.2 trips per person in its service area; by FY2017, that number had fallen to 7.8 trips per person.⁸⁵

⁸³ Omnitrans, System Ridership, FY18, FY19 and FY20 to date, March 2020

⁸⁴ Transit Insights, Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario, TransitCenter, accessed May 2020 from <http://insights.transitcenter.org/>; most recent data available is from FY2017

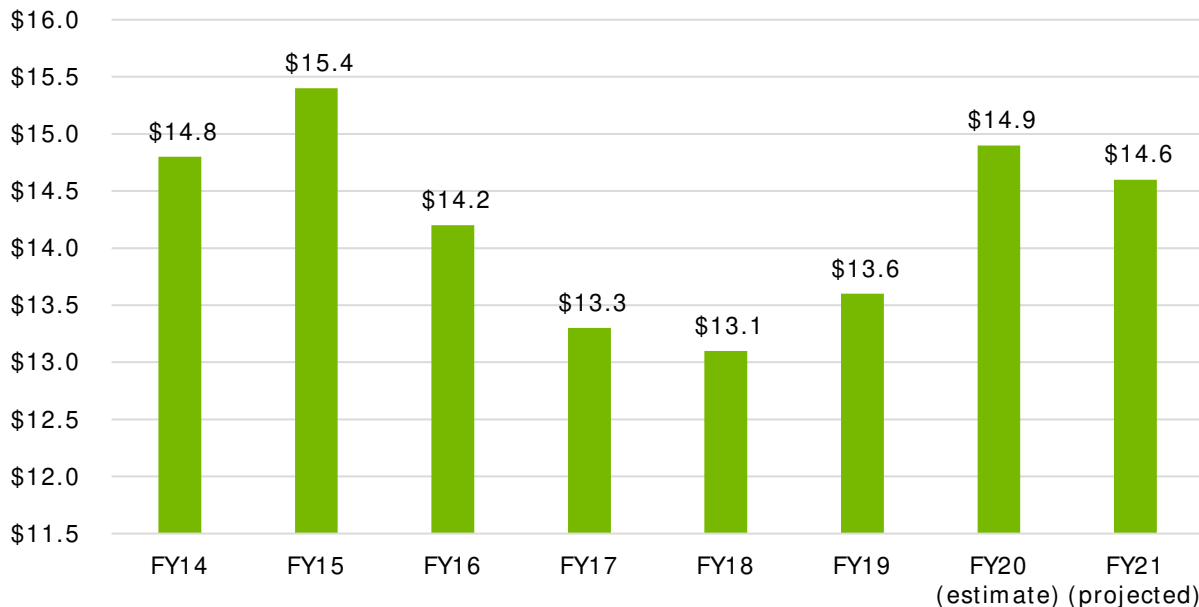
⁸⁵ Transit Insights, Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario, TransitCenter, accessed May 2020 from <http://insights.transitcenter.org/>; most recent data available is from FY2017

Fare Revenues

Omnitrans' total revenues from passenger fares slightly increased in FY2019 over FY2018 and FY2017. Estimates for FY2020 show total revenue growth of 9.5 percent from FY2019, or an additional \$1.3 million (see chart below.) Due to service cuts during FY2021, revenues are expected to decline slightly.⁸⁶

Omnitrans' base fare, which was raised in FY2020 to \$2.00, is higher than most other agencies in the region, and higher than the average among its ABBG peers.⁸⁷

Chart: Omnitrans Systemwide Passenger Fares, FY2014 to FY2021 (in millions)



Source: Omnitrans, 2020⁸⁸

Net revenues from pass sales and tickets show substantial growth between FY2018 and FY2019, with total revenues in FY2019 exceeding FY2018 by \$1.1 million, or 19.2%.⁸⁹ (see chart X below). There are even greater increases looking at year-to-date comparisons between FY2019 to FY2020, with data available through February 2020.⁹⁰ (see chart y). This data is prior to implemented service reductions due to COVID-19.

Fare revenues in FY2020 were on track to exceed FY2019, corresponding with growing ridership. By February of FY2020, total pass and ticket revenues were 16.5% greater than in the same year-to-date period in FY2019, or a difference of nearly \$805,000,⁹¹ and had exceeded full year totals for FY2018.

Chart: Omnitrans Net Pass and Ticket Revenue Sales, FY2016 to FY2019

⁸⁶ Omnitrans, FY2020 Service Plan, p.13; Omnitrans, ConnectForward FY2021 Service Plan, April 2020, p.26

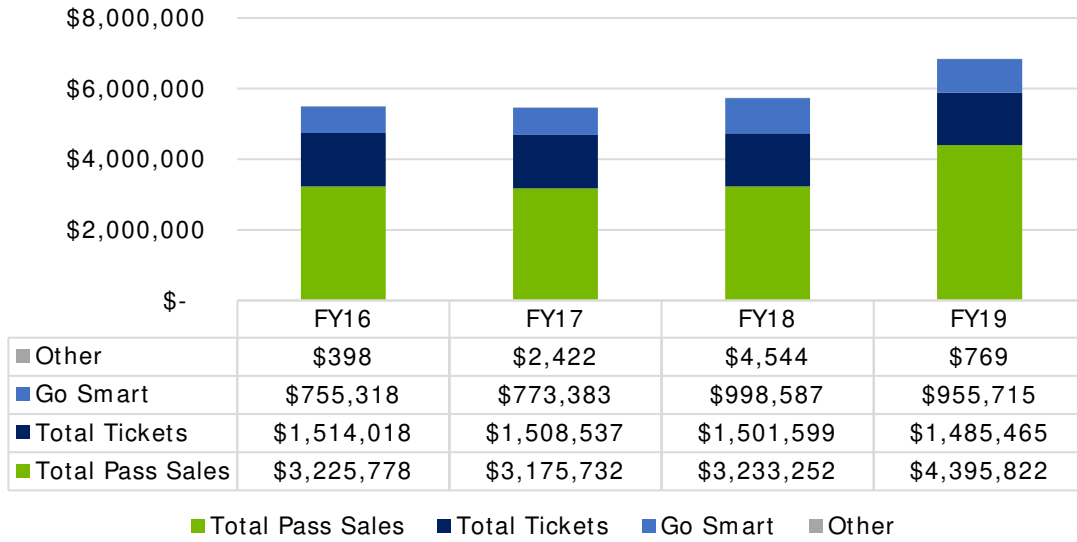
⁸⁷ Omnitrans, FY2020 Service Plan, p.14

⁸⁸ Omnitrans, ConnectForward FY2021 Service Plan, April 2020, p.26

⁸⁹ Omnitrans, Net Pass and Ticket Revenue Sales Summary, June 2019 and FY2019, March 2020

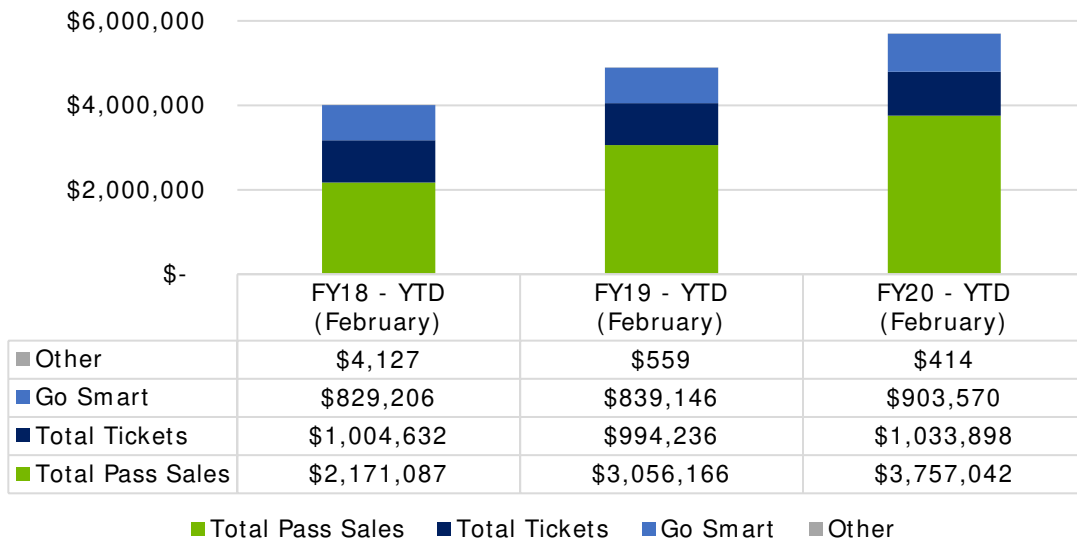
⁹⁰ Omnitrans provided FY2020 YTD data through February 2020. FY2019 to FY2020 comparison is through February for both years.

⁹¹ Omnitrans, Net Pass and Ticket Revenue Sales Summary, February 2020 and FY2020 to date, March 2020



Source: Omnitrans, March 2020⁹²

Chart: Omnitrans Net Pass and Ticket Revenue Sales, FY2018 to FY2020 YTD through February



Source: Omnitrans, March 2020⁹³

⁹² Omnitrans, Net Pass and Ticket Revenue Sales Summary, June 2019 and FY2019, March 2020; Omnitrans, Net Pass and Ticket Revenue Sales Summary, February 2020 and FY2020 to date, March 2020

⁹³ Omnitrans, Net Pass and Ticket Revenue Sales Summary, June 2019 and FY2019, March 2020; Omnitrans, Net Pass and Ticket Revenue Sales Summary, February 2020 and FY2020 to date, March 2020

Pass Sales⁹⁴

Total pass sales grew by \$700,000 (or 27.9%) in year-to-date comparisons of FY2019 to FY2020 through February. Full fare pass revenues were up 30.6 percent or \$502,000 over the previous year, or \$2.1 million in FY2020 to date (February 2020) compared to full fare pass revenues of \$1.6 million in FY2019 through February. Full fare pass sales grew by \$1.1 million (87.3%) between FY2018 and FY2019.

Total 31-day pass sales revenues increased by 20.3% (nearly \$484,000) by February FY2020 over the previous year. Most revenues for senior/disabled and veteran passes and tickets come from 31-day passes; sales for senior/disabled monthly passes were flat year-to-date in FY2020 compared to FY2019 year-to-date. Veteran monthly passes were down about 10 percent between FY2019 and FY2020 year-to-date.

One-day pass sales for seniors/disabled between FY19 and FY20 have more than doubled, increasing nearly \$100,000.

Ticket Sales⁹⁵

Ticket sales were up four percent (nearly \$40,000) in FY2020 to date over the same period FY2019. In the previous four fiscal years total ticket sales have been mostly flat, approximately \$1.5 million (\$1.48 million in FY19) per year. Access ticket sales declined \$300,000 between FY17 and FY19 and were down about one percent in YTD totals in FY2020 over YTD totals through February in FY2019.

GoSmart

GoSmart, a program which provides unlimited free rides on certain bus lines to students enrolled at CSU San Bernardino, Chaffey College, Crafton Hills College and San Bernardino Valley College,⁹⁶ experienced an increase in a year-to-date growth in revenues of 7.7% between 2019 and 2020. In 2018 the program accounted for approximately 1 in 6 of every ride dollar (and YTD in FY2020) and 1 of every 7 in 2019.⁹⁷

Farebox Recovery

In FY2019, transit fare revenues were estimated to represent approximately 14.6% of total agency revenues for the year.⁹⁸ To remain eligible for federal funding, the Transportation Development Act requires urban transit agencies like Omnitrans to maintain a ratio of at least 20 percent of fare revenues to operating costs (fare box recovery),⁹⁹ although amendments allow operators to add local costs such as providing ridesharing, ADA-

⁹⁴ Omnitrans, Net Pass and Ticket Revenue Sales Summary, June 2019 and FY2019, March 2020; Omnitrans, Net Pass and Ticket Revenue Sales Summary, February 2020 and FY2020 to date, March 2020

⁹⁵ Omnitrans, Net Pass and Ticket Revenue Sales Summary, June 2019 and FY2019, March 2020; Omnitrans, Net Pass and Ticket Revenue Sales Summary, February 2020 and FY2020 to date, March 2020

⁹⁶ Omnitrans, Ride the Bus for Free with Your College Student ID, accessed May 2020 from <https://omnitrans.org/gosmart/>

⁹⁷ Omnitrans, Net Pass and Ticket Revenue Sales Summary, June 2019 and FY2019, March 2020; Omnitrans, Net Pass and Ticket Revenue Sales Summary, February 2020 and FY2020 to date, March 2020

⁹⁸ Maurice Mansion, Memo to Board Chair Ron Dailey and Member of the Omnitrans Board of Directors, FISCAL YEAR 2019-2020 ANNUAL BUDGET – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY, Attachment A, Revenue Budget, p.112

⁹⁹

compliant paratransit services, or creating new transit routes, to boost this calculation.¹⁰⁰ For fixed route services in FY2019, fare box recovery was 15.7%, or 24.9% with subsidies included.¹⁰¹ Omnitrans demand response farebox recovery ratio was 11.2% in 2019.¹⁰² A recent comparison of these ratios with nearby transit agencies shows that Omnitrans is recovering at a better rate than many of its peers in these two categories.¹⁰³

Customers

Who Rides Omnitrans?

According to a ridership survey conducted in 2017, Omnitrans' fixed route riders "skew younger" than the region's population, and are more likely to be Latino, employed, and speak English.¹⁰⁴ More women use Access demand response services (70% of Access ridership are women), and the age of Access riders has trended toward older riders in recent years.¹⁰⁵ Nearly one in five (19%) Omnitrans riders are permanently disabled.¹⁰⁶

More than half of riders do not have a driver's license, and only 18 percent have access to a car.¹⁰⁷ More than half of Omnitrans riders work at least part-time, and forty percent of riders are students. Average household income among riders is significantly below data for region.¹⁰⁸

Age

Nearly one-third of riders (31%) are 20 to 29 years old, though they make up about 20 percent of San Bernardino County population. Another 18% of Omnitrans system riders are 19 years of age or under, but only 10 percent of regional population. Seniors represent 9% of riders, which is about half the rate of their representation in San Bernardino County.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁰ John Gahbauer, et al, An Assessment of Performance Measures In the Transportation Development Act, UCLA Institute of Transportation Studies, August 2019, pp.12-13

¹⁰¹ Jeremiah P. Bryant, Memo to Board Chair David Avila and Members of the Omnitrans Board of Directors, CONSOLIDATION STUDY AND INNOVATIVE TRANSIT REVIEW OF THE METRO-VALLEY UPDATE, April 1, 2020, p.18

¹⁰² Jeremiah Bryant, Memo to Board Chair David Avila and Members of the Omnitrans Board of Directors, CONSOLIDATION STUDY AND INNOVATIVE TRANSIT REVIEW OF THE METRO-VALLEY UPDATE, April 1, 2020, p.47

¹⁰³ Jeremiah Bryant, Memo to Board Chair David Avila and Members of the Omnitrans Board of Directors, CONSOLIDATION STUDY AND INNOVATIVE TRANSIT REVIEW OF THE METRO-VALLEY UPDATE, April 1, 2020, p.47

¹⁰⁴ Omnitrans, Fixed route Onboard Study, 2017, p.56; Omnitrans, Marketing Plan 2019-2020, p.1

¹⁰⁵ Omnitrans, Access Rider Survey, 2017, p.11

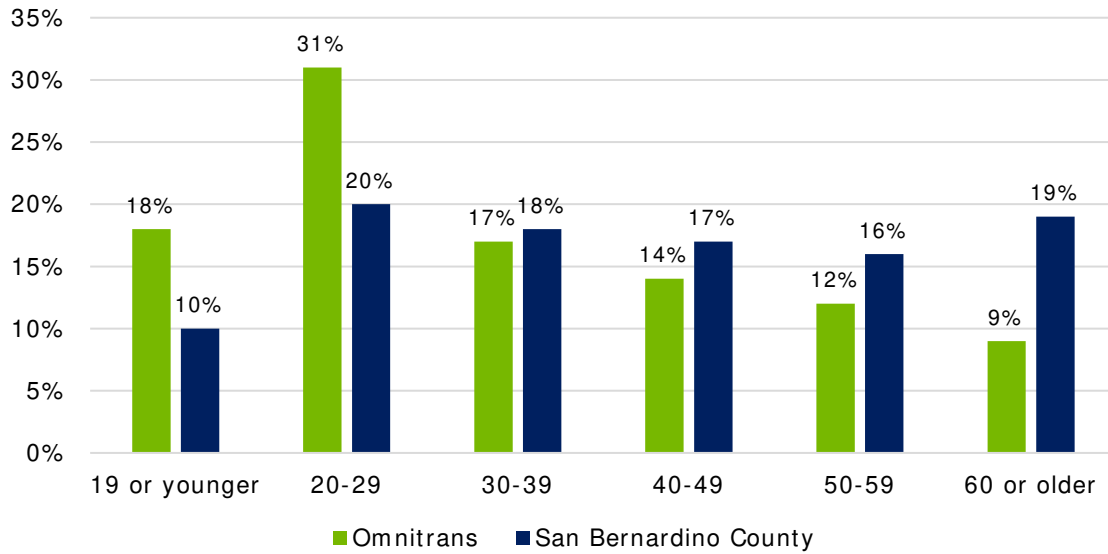
¹⁰⁶ Omnitrans, Marketing Plan 2019-2020, p.1

¹⁰⁷ Omnitrans, Marketing Plan 2019-2020, p.1

¹⁰⁸ Omnitrans Fixed Route Onboard Study, July 2017, pp.5-6

¹⁰⁹ Omnitrans, Fixed route Onboard Study, 2017, p.56

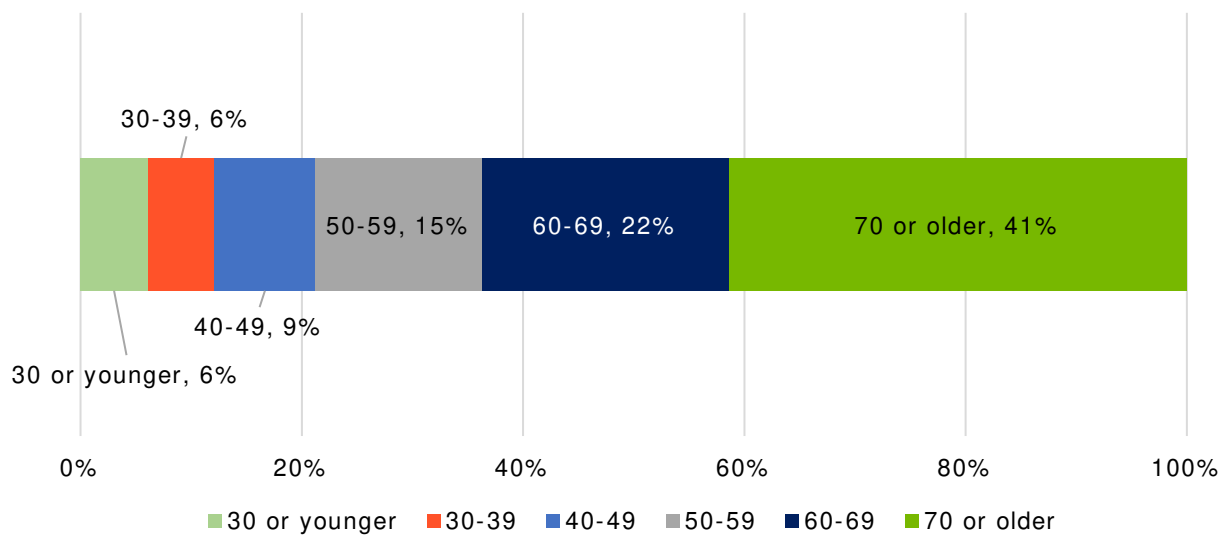
Chart: Age of Omnitrans Riders and San Bernardino County Population



Source: Omnitrans, 2017;¹¹⁰ San Bernardino County data from U.S. Census American Factfinder

Omnitrans Access riders tend to be older; most are above the age of 60, and more than 40 percent are 70 years or older.¹¹¹ Two-thirds of sbX riders are under 40 years of age. More than a third (36%) are 20 to 29 years old.¹¹²

Chart: Age of Omnitrans Access Riders



Source: Omnitrans, 2017¹¹³

Race/ Ethnicity

¹¹⁰ Omnitrans, Fixed Route Onboard Study, 2017, p.57

¹¹¹ Omnitrans, Access Rider Survey, 2017, p.12

¹¹² Omnitrans, Fixed route Onboard Study, 2017, p.56

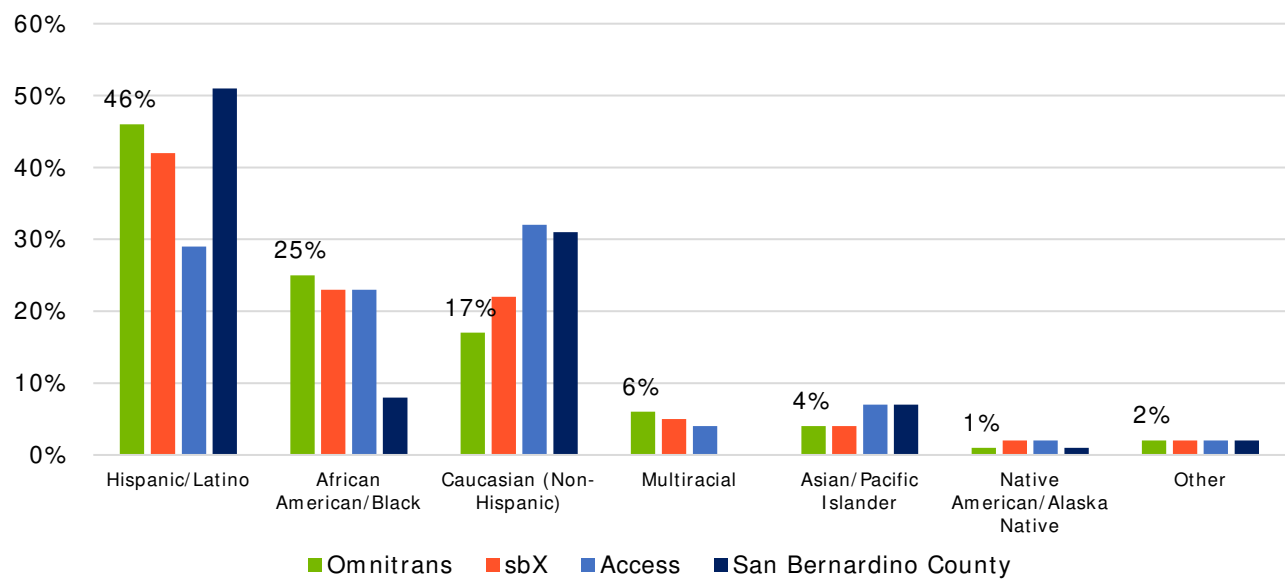
¹¹³ Omnitrans, Access Rider Survey, 2017, p.12

Four in five Omnitrans riders identify as Hispanic/Latino or Black. Latino riders represent 46 percent of Omnitrans customers, and African American riders represent 25 percent of riders. African American Omnitrans ridership occurs at three times the rate of residency in San Bernardino County (8 percent of residents are African American).¹¹⁴

Latino and African American riders also account for the largest groups of riders on sbX. The rate of white riders is higher on sbX buses than among all Omnitrans fixed route services.¹¹⁵

White riders represent 31 percent of Access customers, but only 17 percent of overall Omnitrans systems riders. Nearly another third of Access customers are Latino (29%), and 23 percent are African American. Seven percent of Access riders identify as Asian or Pacific Islander.¹¹⁶

Chart X: Race/ Ethnicity of Omnitrans System, sbX and Access Riders and San Bernardino County



Source: Omnitrans, 2017;¹¹⁷ San Bernardino County data from U.S. Census American Factfinder

English Language Proficiency

Approximately one in four riders speak a language other than English at home. Seventeen percent of these riders say they do not speak English well or at all. Six routes (as of 2017, see chart below) have high rates of limited English proficient travelers, from 11 percent to nearly 30 percent of riders. Five routes have rates above one percent of other language speakers who limited in English proficiency. On average, seven percent of riders on Omnitrans routes have limited English language proficiency.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁴ Omnitrans, Fixed Route Onboard Study, 2017, p.57

¹¹⁵ Omnitrans, Fixed Route Onboard Study, 2017, p.57

¹¹⁶ Omnitrans, Access Rider Survey, 2017, p.13

¹¹⁷ Omnitrans, Fixed route Onboard Study, 2017, p.57, Omnitrans, Access Rider Survey, 2017, p.13

¹¹⁸ Omnitrans, Fixed Route Onboard Study, 2017, pp.59-60

Chart: Omnitrans Routes with High Rates of Speakers with Limited English Proficiency

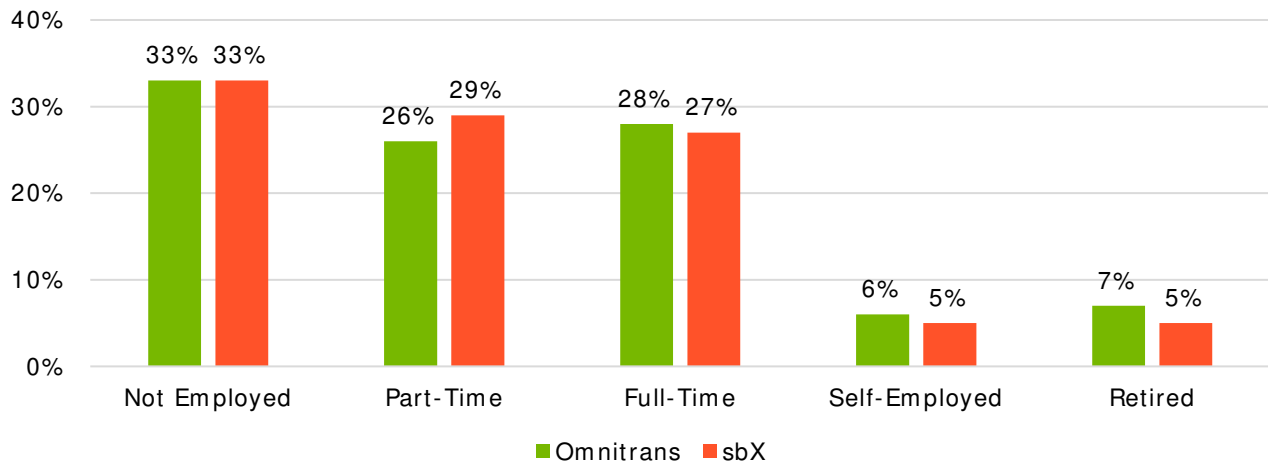
Route	LEP Spanish Speaker	LEP Other Non-Spanish Speaker
19	5.7%	1.7%
20	29.5%	0
29	14.2%	0
61	13.6%	1.2%
80	11.3%	0
84	15.7%	0
85	9.0%	1.5%
86	12.6%	3.3%
88	9.0%	1.3%

Source: Omnitrans, 2017¹¹⁹

Employment and Student Status

More than one-third of Omnitrans riders work full time or are self-employed. Another 26 percent work part time.¹²⁰

Chart: Omnitrans System and sbX Riders by Employment Type



Source: Omnitrans, 2017¹²¹

Forty percent of Omnitrans riders are students; sbX has even higher rates of students: 52 percent of riders are students. The 2017 ridership survey attributed higher student sbX ridership to the locations of several universities and schools along the route.¹²²

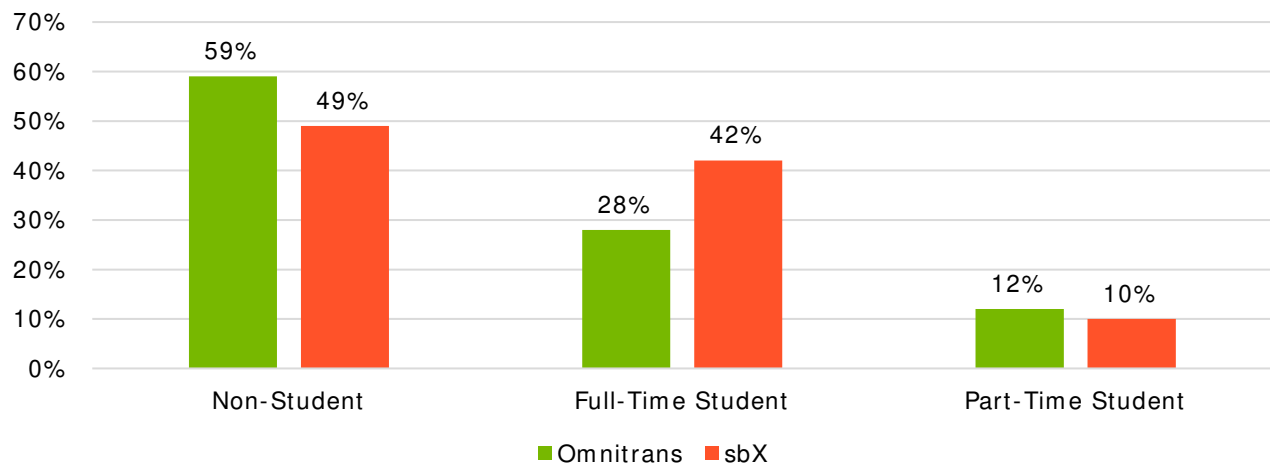
¹¹⁹ Omnitrans, Fixed Route Onboard Study, 2017, pp.59-60

¹²⁰ Omnitrans, Fixed Route Onboard Study, 2017, p.54

¹²¹ Omnitrans, Fixed Route Onboard Study, 2017, p.54

¹²² Omnitrans, Fixed Route Onboard Study, 2017, p.55

Chart: Omnitrans System and sbX Riders by Student Status



Source: Omnitrans, 2017¹²³

Customer Satisfaction

Omnitrans participates in two annual surveys which offer ongoing feedback about Omnitrans and its services—one focused on agency customers and another on residents of the San Bernardino Valley. American Bus Benchmarking Group (ABBG)'s annual customer satisfaction survey, which polls riders from its 22 mid-sized bus operator member agencies in the U.S., including more than 850 Omnitrans riders in its 2019 survey.

Omnitrans received its highest satisfaction results in 2019 in categories related to operator professionalism (91.2% satisfied), and two related to ease of use: bus entry and exit (88.5%) and convenience in paying bus fare (84.9%) (see chart of all results which follows on the next page).¹²⁴

Its highest dissatisfied results from customers surveyed were in categories about safety waiting for the bus (17.7% dissatisfied); timeliness of buses (19.1% dissatisfied); ease of access to information about whether buses are running on time (18.2%) and in getting alternative route or schedule information (22.7%); and buses which operate when customers need them (18.0%).¹²⁵

Omnitrans received an overall satisfaction rating of 83 percent in the 2019 survey. Its overall satisfaction rating has been higher than the group average in all the last five years.¹²⁶

Looking at trends in survey results from the last five years, Omnitrans has done better than or at the ABBG average in most categories related to availability, ease of use, information,

¹²³ Omnitrans, Fixed Route Onboard Study, 2017, p.55

¹²⁴ Jeremiah Bryant, Memo to Omnitrans Committee Chair Penny Lilburn and Members of the Plans and Programs Committee, ABBG CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY OF OMNITRANS, January 2020, Appendix 1, p.3

¹²⁵ Jeremiah Bryant, Memo to Omnitrans Committee Chair Penny Lilburn and Members of the Plans and Programs Committee, ABBG CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY OF OMNITRANS, January 2020, Appendix 1, p.3

¹²⁶ Jeremiah Bryant, Memo to Omnitrans Committee Chair Penny Lilburn and Members of the Plans and Programs Committee, ABBG CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY OF OMNITRANS, January 2020, Appendix 2, p.4

comfort, environmental impact. (see Chart X which follows on page X). Omnitrans performs far better than average in a few metrics which every agency scores low, such as ease of information about buses on schedule and about alternative routes. And Omnitrans also scores higher than average in responsiveness to customer issues, even at an average of less than 55 percent satisfied responses.¹²⁷

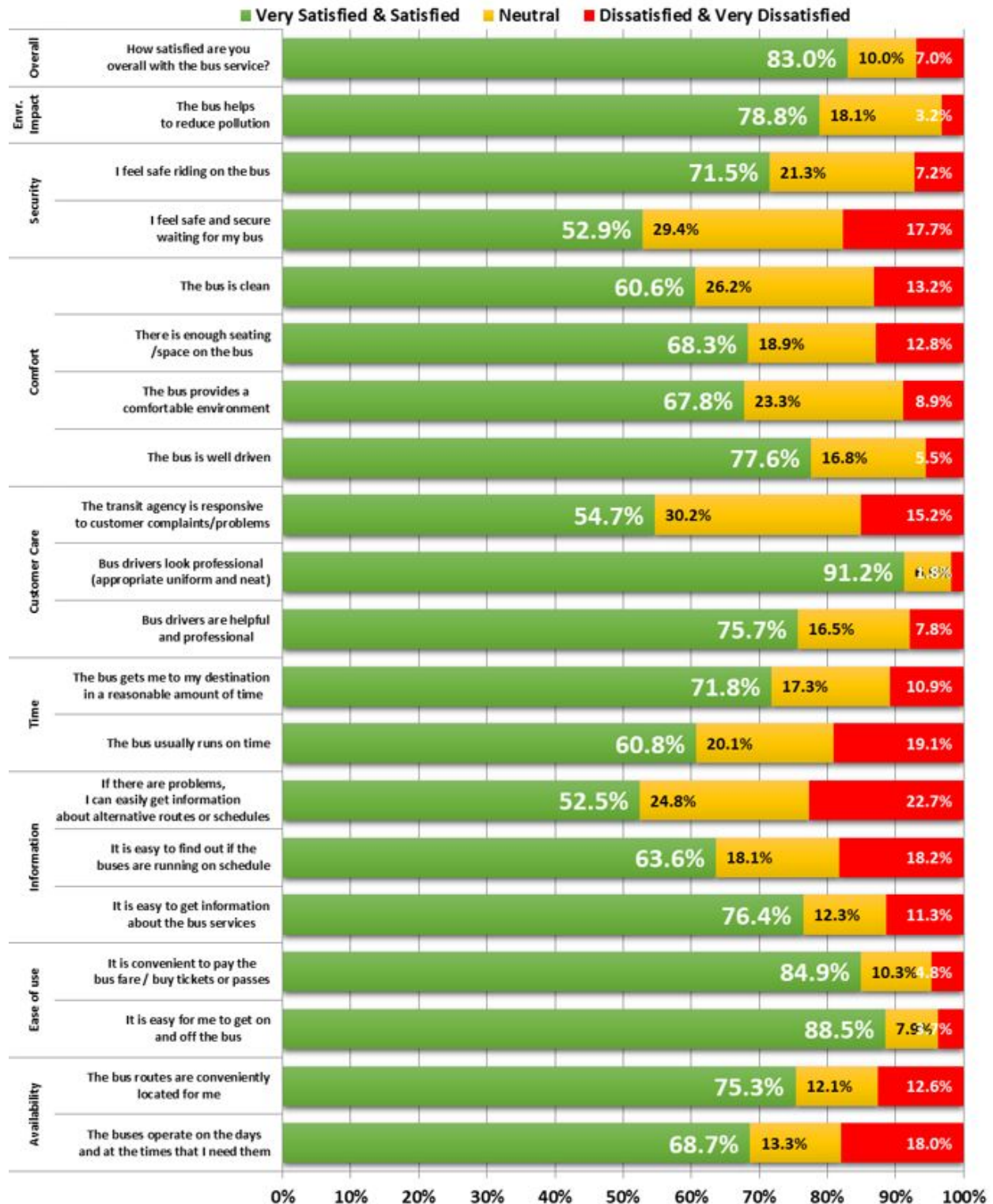
There are two markers where Omnitrans falls well below ABBG average: I feel safe riding the bus (Omnitrans average is 54.1% satisfied, overall survey average is 60%); and the bus usually runs on time (Omnitrans average is 61.5% satisfied, overall survey average is approximately 65%).¹²⁸

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¹²⁷ Jeremiah Bryant, Memo to Omnitrans Committee Chair Penny Lilburn and Members of the Plans and Programs Committee, ABBG CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY OF OMNITRANS, January 2020, Appendix 2, p.4

¹²⁸ Jeremiah Bryant, Memo to Omnitrans Committee Chair Penny Lilburn and Members of the Plans and Programs Committee, ABBG CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY OF OMNITRANS, January 2020, Appendix 2, p.4

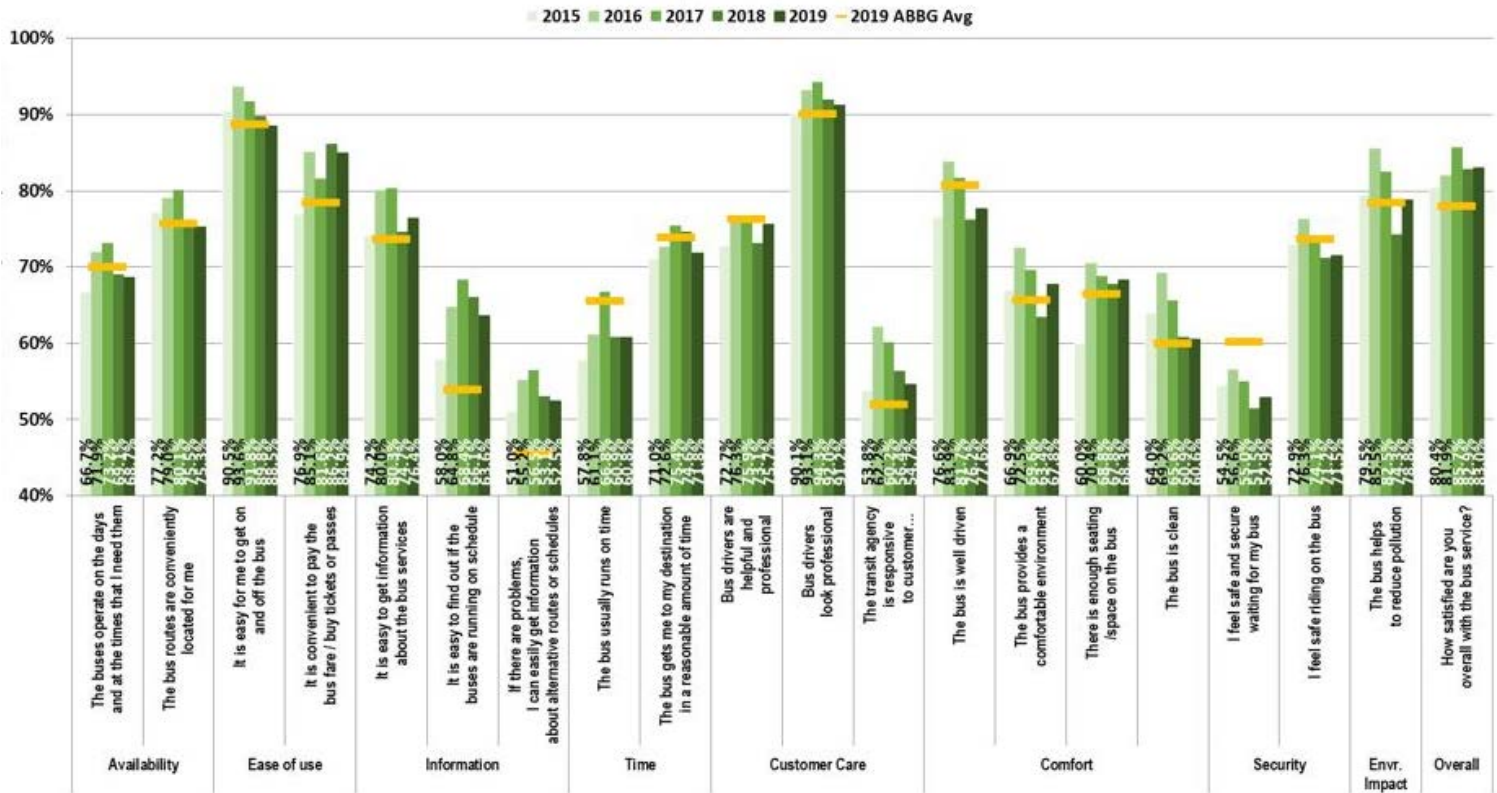
Chart: Omnitrans ABBG Customer Satisfaction Survey Results, 2019



Source: Omnitrans, March 2020; ABBG¹²⁹

¹²⁹ Jeremiah Bryant, Memo to Omnitrans Committee Chair Penny Lilburn and Members of the Plans and Programs Committee, ABBG CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY OF OMNITRANS, January 2020, Appendix 1, p.3

Chart: Omnitrans ABBG Customer Satisfaction Survey, Percent Positive Results, 2019



Source: Omnitrans, March 2020; ABBG¹³⁰

Inland Empire Annual Survey

In addition to questions about the region discussed above, the Institute of Applied Research and Policy Analysis (IAR)'s Inland Empire Annual Survey asks respondents a set of questions specifically about Omnitrans to assess community awareness and perception of the agency, respondents' use of public transportation, and the reasons why respondents do not or why they might use transit.

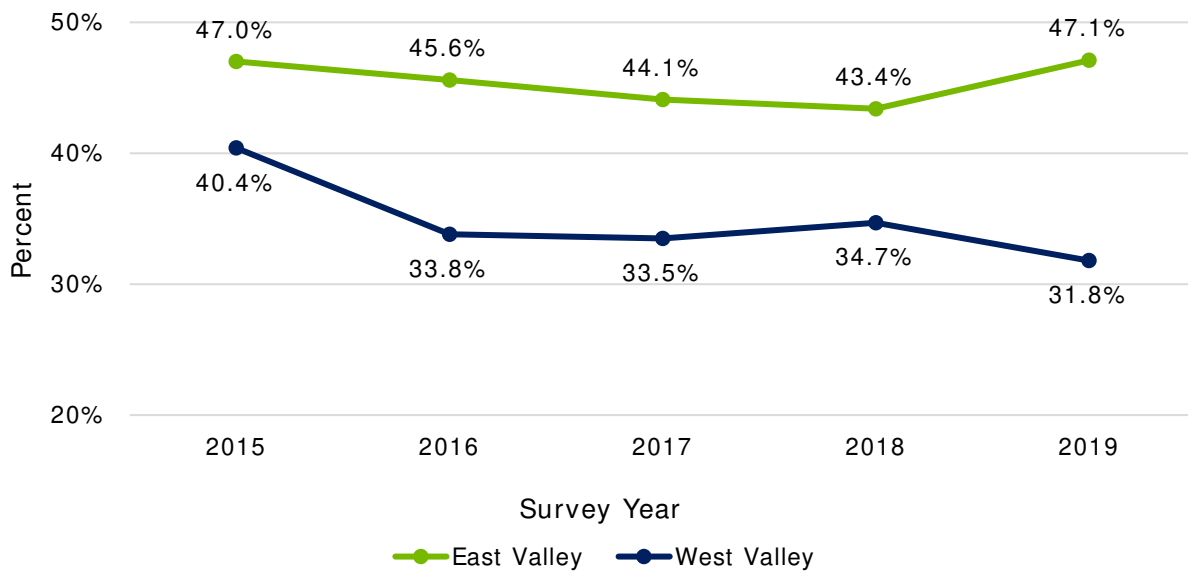
Awareness

In the last several years, less than 40 percent of respondents who live in West Valley and less than 50 percent of respondents who live in East Valley have been able to name Omnitrans as their transit provider when asked (see chart X on next page).¹³¹ But awareness of Omnitrans appears to be higher, as IAR's follow up question for those who cannot name their transit agency, "have you heard of Omnitrans?" leads to many more people saying yes. In the last five years, between 78 and 86 percent of this pool of respondents say they have heard of Omnitrans. Awareness of Omnitrans has been higher among East Valley respondents, where nearly 88 percent say they have heard of Omnitrans, while the rate among West Valley respondents has been eight to ten percentage points less (see chart X).

¹³⁰ Jeremiah Bryant, Memo to Omnitrans Committee Chair Penny Lilburn and Members of the Plans and Programs Committee, ABBG CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY OF OMNITRANS, January 2020, Appendix 2, p.4

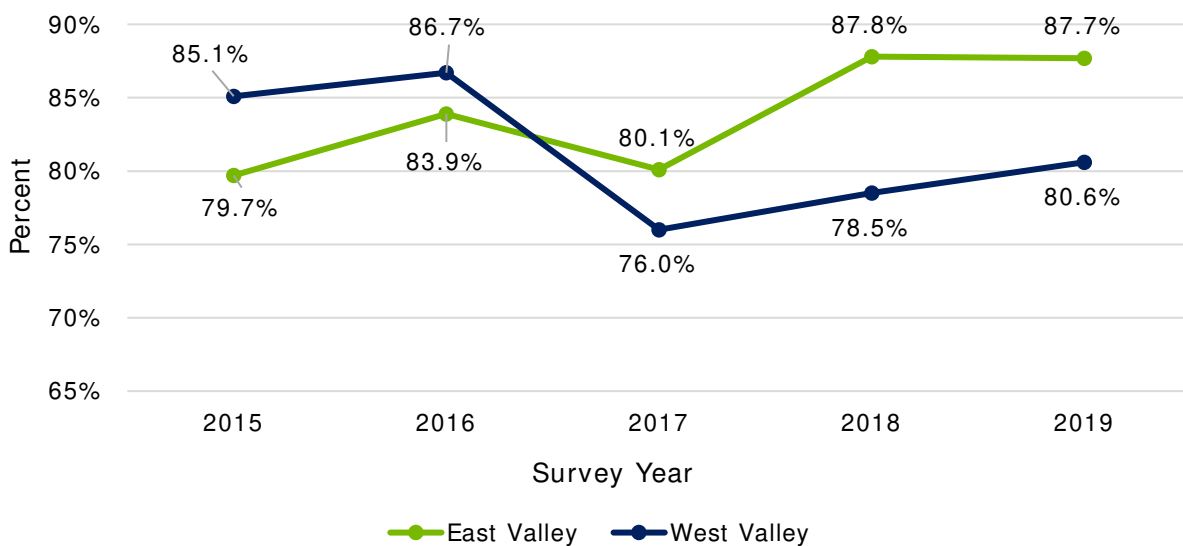
¹³¹ Institute of Applied Research, 2019 Inland Empire Annual Survey, Omnitrans Proprietary Questions, pp.3-4

Chart: Inland Empire Annual Survey Results, Ability to Name Omnitrans as Transit Provider, 2009 to 2019



Source: Institute of Applied Research and Policy Analysis, 2019¹³²

Chart: Inland Empire Annual Survey Results, Have you Heard of Omnitrans? Asked of Those Unable to Name Transit Provider, 2009-2019



Source: Institute of Applied Research and Policy Analysis, 2019¹³³

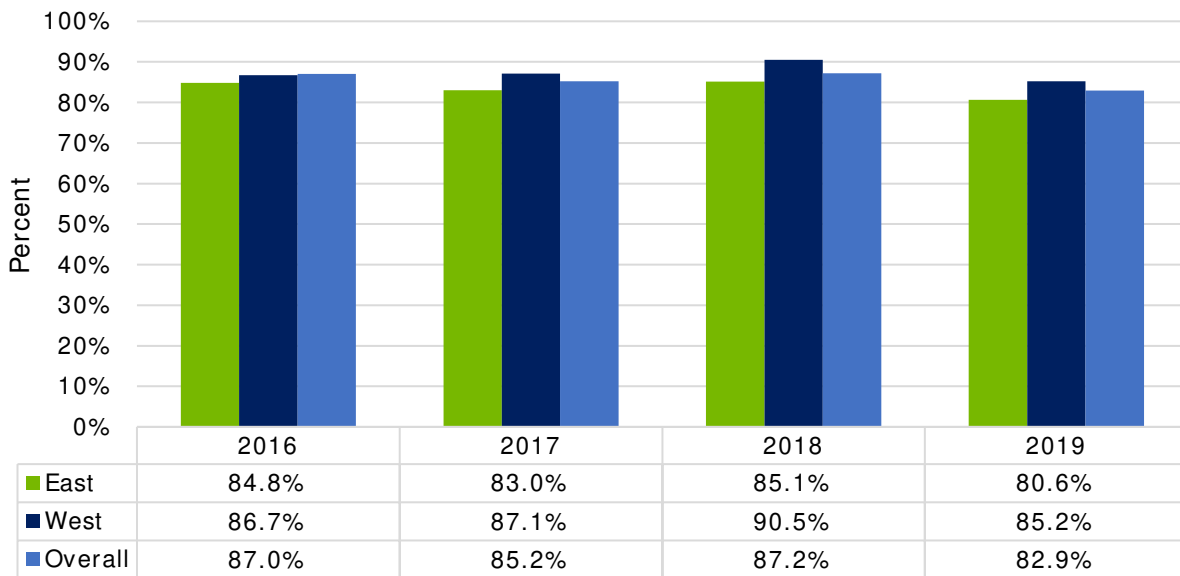
¹³² Institute of Applied Research, 2019 Inland Empire Annual Survey, Omnitrans Proprietary Questions, pp.3-4

¹³³ Institute of Applied Research, 2019 Inland Empire Annual Survey, Omnitrans Proprietary Questions, p.5

Favorability

In 2019, nearly 83 percent of respondents said they had a favorable perception of Omnitrans.¹³⁴ This is a slight decline over favorability ratings of the previous three years, which ranged from 85 to 87 percent (see chart X). Favorability ratings tend to be slightly higher among West Valley respondents than those from East Valley.

Chart: Inland Empire Survey Results, Overall perception of Omnitrans: "very favorable" or "somewhat favorable," 2016 to 2019



Source: Institute of Applied Research and Policy Analysis, 2019¹³⁵

Of respondents who provided unfavorable ratings to Omnitrans in these surveys, most common responses were related to inconvenient schedules and routes, unreliable or untimely buses, long travel times, and safety concerns.¹³⁶

Transit use and interest

In the most recent Inland Empire Annual survey, 15.3 percent of respondents say they use public transit on a regular basis.¹³⁷ Of the reasons offered to respondents who do not take the bus regularly, the most popular choices included: "bus schedules don't work for me;" "buses don't go where I need to go" and "I don't need it/I have a car."¹³⁸

¹³⁴ Institute of Applied Research, 2019 Inland Empire Annual Survey, Omnitrans Proprietary Questions, pp.5-6

¹³⁵ Institute of Applied Research, 2019 Inland Empire Annual Survey, Omnitrans Proprietary Questions, p.6; overall totals from previous year surveys (2016, 2017, 2018)

¹³⁶ Institute of Applied Research, 2018 Inland Empire Annual Survey, Omnitrans Proprietary Questions, p.6; 2017 Inland Empire Annual Survey, pp.5-6; 2016 Inland Empire Annual Survey, p.4

¹³⁷ Institute of Applied Research, 2019 Inland Empire Annual Survey, Omnitrans Proprietary Questions, p.8

¹³⁸ Institute of Applied Research, 2019 Inland Empire Annual Survey, Omnitrans Proprietary Questions, p.8-9

Amenities and service enhancements to improve ridership

Suggestions among IAR Inland Empire respondents about what amenities or services would likely get people to ride the bus include more neighborhood routes, more frequent service, express service, nicer bus stops, and feeder routes to and from Metrolink stations.¹³⁹

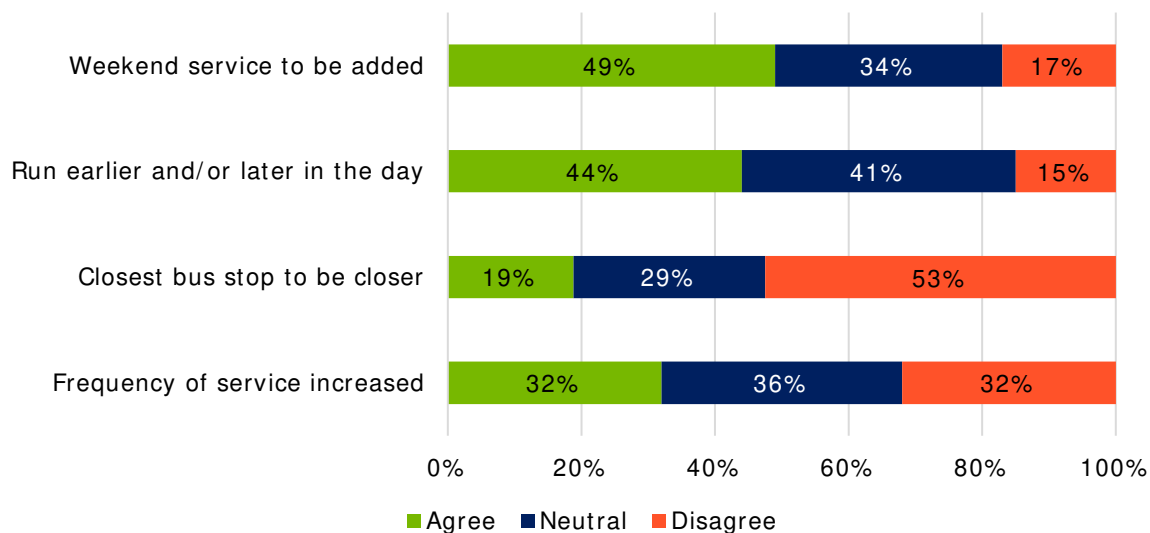
Omnitrans focus groups

Omnitrans own surveys of customers in 2017 provide some further insight into the needs and desires of customers and service area residents and stakeholders.

Participants of sbX rider focus groups suggested that rider experience could improve with vehicle cleanliness and better safety waiting for the bus.¹⁴⁰ Service frequency was most important for riders, followed by longer weekend service hours; amenities like wi-fi ranked last. Timing transfers, access to seating and shade, and cross-county connections were also important. Access riders discussed need for accurate trip time information; and cited lack of benches, shade, sidewalks as impediments to using the bus.¹⁴¹

Nearly half of business owners surveyed (n= 191) after the launch of the sbX Green Line route showed some interest in service enhancements, including weekend service (49%) and extended service hours (44%); and increased frequency (32%); however more than half did not want bus stops closer to their establishments (52%).¹⁴²

Chart: Omnitrans sbX Business Survey regarding future sbX Service Enhancements, 2017



Source: Omnitrans, 2017¹⁴³

¹³⁹ Institute of Applied Research, 2015-2018 Inland Empire Annual Surveys, Omnitrans Proprietary Questions

¹⁴⁰ Omnitrans Focus Groups, November 2017, pp. 2-7

¹⁴¹ Omnitrans Focus Groups, November 2017, pp. 16-17, 23

¹⁴² Omnitrans, sbX Corridor Business Study, May 2017, p. 38

¹⁴³ Omnitrans, sbX Corridor Business Study, May 2017, p. 38

Partnerships

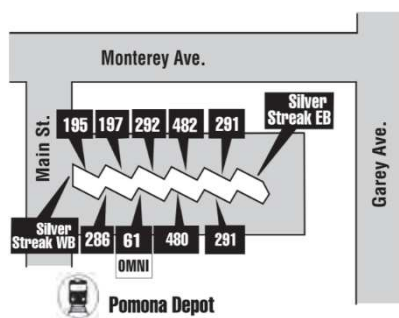
Omnitrans Special Transit Services (STS) Partner Programs

Through its Measure I funding, Omnitrans partners with and funds more than a dozen community-based agencies and cities which offer transportation services programs for seniors, individuals with disabilities, and people living with HIV/AIDS. STS Partner programs include paratransit services, curb-to-curb or door-to-door transport, dial-a-ride services, volunteer driver reimbursements and a bus pass program.¹⁴⁴

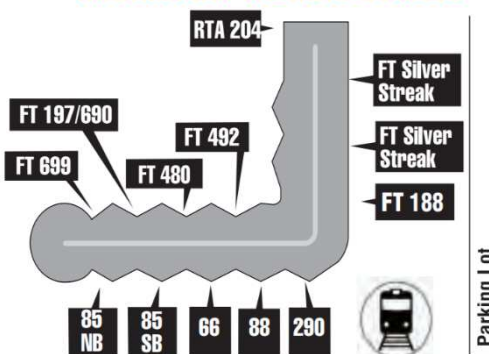
Connections and Partnerships with Regional Transit Agencies

Omnitrans provides connections to several neighboring transit agency routes at its transit hubs and centers. In Pomona and Montclair, riders can connect with Foothill transit and with one of two Metrolink lines.¹⁴⁵

Pomona Transit Center

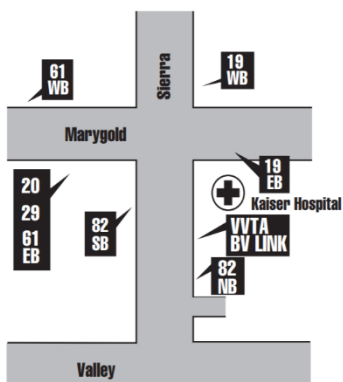


Montclair Transit Center

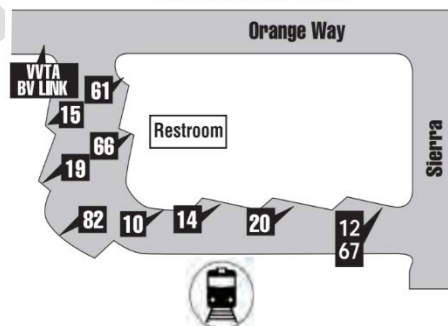


Riders connect to Victor Valley Transit Authority (VVTA) and Metrolink in Fontana and South Fontana.¹⁴⁶

South Fontana Transfer Center



Fontana Metrolink Transit Center



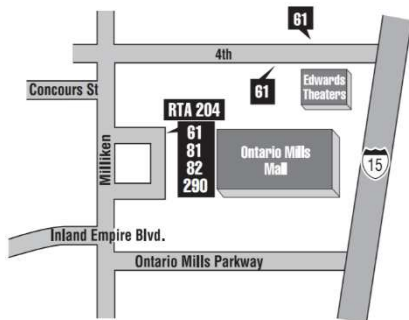
¹⁴⁴ Jeremiah P. Bryant, Omnitrans Memo the board chair and members of the Omnitrans Board, Initial Draft Proposed ADA Access Service Changes, Attachment A: Omnitrans STS Partner Programs (Measure I), November 6, 2019, p.73-74

¹⁴⁵ Maps from Omnitrans, March 2020

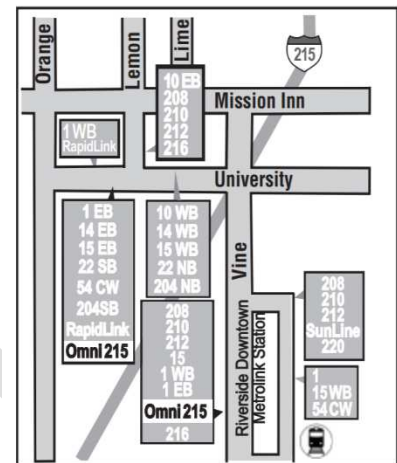
¹⁴⁶ Maps from Omnitrans, March 2020

Riverside Transit Authority (RTA) provides connections in Montclair, Ontario, South Fontana, and San Bernardino. Omnitrans route 215 extends into Riverside and makes stops in Downtown Riverside and at the nearby Riverside Metrolink station.¹⁴⁷

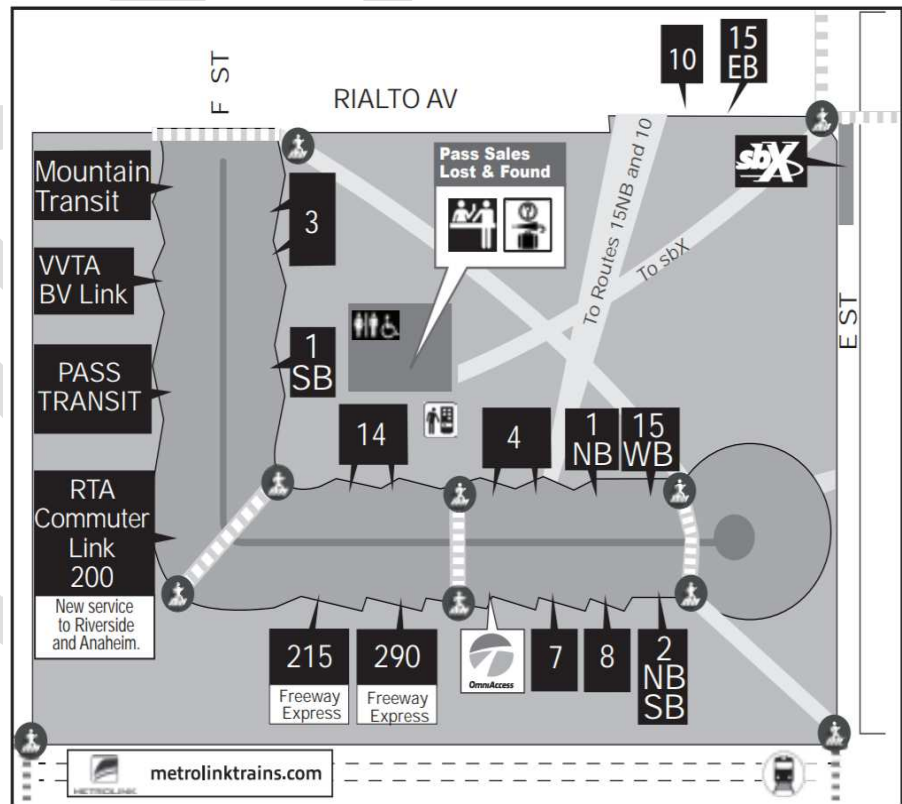
Ontario Mills Transfer Center



Downtown Riverside & Riverside Metrolink



The San Bernardino Transit Center connects Omnitrans fixed route and sbX Green Line riders to Pass Transit, Mountain Transit, Victor Valley Transit Authority (VVTA), and Riverside Transit Agency (RTA) routes, and to the San Bernardino and Inland Empire-Orange County Metrolink lines.¹⁴⁸



¹⁴⁷ Maps from Omnitrans, March 2020

¹⁴⁸ Omnitrans, Metrolink service extends to the San Bernardino Transit Center on December 18, December 2017, <https://omnitrans.org/metrolink-service-extends-san-bernardino-transit-center-december-18/>; Maps from Omnitrans, March 2020

In addition to sharing bus bays, Omnitrans partners with neighboring agencies in cost management strategies, such as mutual-aid agreements providing road service assistance to VVTA and Mountain Transit and collective procurement of new buses.¹⁴⁹

Planned Projects and Innovations

As a part of the agency's commitment to provide better service area mobility and regional connectivity, Omnitrans has embarked on a number of service enhancements and regional infrastructure projects: expanding fixed route service to provide higher frequency and faster BRT; extending service coverage to provide connections to Ontario airport and service area Metrolink stations; enhancing its demand response services through technology advances and contract arrangements, and engaging in partnerships with other transit agencies to build connections (such as through the San Bernardino Transit Center) and expand access to rail in San Bernardino County.

Fixed Route Cross-County Connections

Omnitrans provides services into Riverside County and provides connection opportunities at several its transit centers and stops in its service area to RTA routes and Riverside Metrolink. It continues to look for opportunities to provide cross-county connections, like its new proposed route linking West Valley cities (Rancho Cucamonga and Ontario) to Riverside County.¹⁵⁰

Bus Rapid Transit

Omnitrans is working on the second of ten planned bus rapid transit (BRT) sbX routes. The West Valley connector is a 35-mile route linking Pomona, Montclair, Ontario, Rancho Cucamonga, and Fontana, and will include 3.5 miles of exclusive bus-only lanes in Ontario, signal priority and spaced stops.¹⁵¹ The route will connect to the Metrolink San Bernardino Line at Rancho Cucamonga and Riverside Line at Pomona, Ontario Airport and with many of the West Valley's education and employment hubs and healthcare facilities.¹⁵² Expected project outcomes include increased transit usage, reduced traffic congestion and auto vehicle miles traveled, and improvements to regional air quality.

Demand Response Micro Transit

Omnitrans is initiating a micro transit pilot starting in FY2021 to replace an OmniGo community circulator route in Chino Hills. Using contracted drivers and vehicles and a technology provider to offer real-time, automatically dispatched demand response service, this service will be similar to other digital ride-hailing services. However this service will offer shared shuttle service to virtual stops at nearby intersections, rather than provide pickups at customers' houses or destinations, with a goal of less than 15-minute average wait times once a trip is requested.¹⁵³

¹⁴⁹ Jeremiah Bryant, Memo to Board Chair David Avila and Members of the Omnitrans Board of Directors, CONSOLIDATION STUDY AND INNOVATIVE TRANSIT REVIEW OF THE METRO-VALLEY UPDATE, April 1, 2020, p.20

¹⁵⁰ Omnitrans, ConnectForward FY2021 Service Plan, p.17

¹⁵¹ SBCTA, West Valley Connector-Preferred Alternative, Board of Directors Agenda Item, November 6, 2019, p.1

¹⁵² SBCTA, The Transit Vision for the San Bernardino Valley, January 2020, p.2, <https://www.gosbcta.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/West-Valley-Connector-Website.pdf>

¹⁵³ Omnitrans, ConnectForward FY2021 Service Plan, p.19

Rail

Redlands Passenger Rail Project (Arrow), rail service from downtown San Bernardino to several Redlands destinations with connections to Metrolink lines and “an opportunity for a one-seat ride from Redlands all the way to Los Angeles with a Metrolink run-through train in the peak period.”¹⁵⁴

In 2015, the Redlands Passenger Rail Project (RRRP) Operations and Vehicle Study was presented to SBCTA Board, with several organizational structure alternatives to support a future blended service of one Southern California Regional Rail Authority (SCRRA) round trip express Metrolink service train during peak periods between downtown Redlands Station, San Bernardino Transit Center (SBTC), and LA Union Station, and an Arrow service of 25 hybrid rail or Diesel Multiple Unit (DMU) train round trips between SBTC and University Station in Redlands.¹⁵⁵

This initial study found that Omnitrans as operator and SCRRA as managing agency would be cost effective and provide local control of a rail service entirely in San Bernardino County. It considered integration of bus and rail in one company, transit linkages, and future opportunities for intra-county rail service. However given high actual costs for Omnitrans, especially liability costs as a new rail operator, and duplication of services with SCRRA, SBCTA recommended transferring operation and maintenance of Arrow hybrid-rail vehicles for the Arrow service from Omnitrans to Southern California Regional Rail Authority, which is the current commuter service provider in San Bernardino County.¹⁵⁶

Gold line and Ontario Airport service: SBCTA is responsible for the funding and development of 0.6 miles of expansion into San Bernardino County of the Metro Foothill Gold Line to its terminus station at Montclair. Due to significant construction cost increases and concerns about duplication of transit services with significant differences in public subsidies, SBCTA has offered a lower cost Gold Link alternative proposal using Diesel Multiple Unit (DMU) hybrid rail, self-powered transit vehicles which could run on existing Metrolink tracks and provide more frequent service on the San Bernardino County Line.¹⁵⁷ Hybrid rail would also provide opportunities “for more economical future rail service expansion within San Bernardino County.”¹⁵⁸

Both LA Metro and statewide legislators have been pushing for a further extension of the Gold Line to Ontario Airport, and two bills proposed in the 2020 legislative session would initiate the creation of construction authorities with the sole purpose of extending the Gold

¹⁵⁴ SBCTA, The Transit Vision for the San Bernardino Valley, January 2020, p.2, <https://www.gosbcta.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/West-Valley-Connector-Website.pdf>

¹⁵⁵ San Bernardino County Transportation Authority, Board of Directors Agenda Item 14, Redlands Passenger Rail Project - Change of Arrow Service Operator, January 8, 2020, p.127

¹⁵⁶ San Bernardino County Transportation Authority, Board of Directors Agenda Item 14, Redlands Passenger Rail Project - Change of Arrow Service Operator, January 8, 2020, p.127

¹⁵⁷ San Bernardino County Transportation Authority, Board of Directors Agenda Item 13, Proposed Gold Line to Montclair Alternative, November 6, 2019, pp.197-200

¹⁵⁸ San Bernardino County Transportation Authority, Board of Directors Agenda Item 13, Proposed Gold Line to Montclair Alternative, November 6, 2019, p.200

Line to Ontario Airport. One of these mandates that SBCTA direct San Bernardino County Measure I funds to Gold Line development.

SBCTA responded to these proposals reminding legislators of the importance of local control in determining transit development and funding allocations, and that Ontario airport data shows that 75% of current domestic passengers reside in San Bernardino and Riverside Counties.¹⁵⁹ Board member Alan Wapner commented that this “would drain the agency of its funds, taking away from transit projects planned for eastern San Bernardino County... From a policy perspective, it will cause the bankruptcy of the SBCTA.”¹⁶⁰

A previous SBCTA ONT Rail Access Study from 2014 reviewed options, costs and ridership estimates to provide rail connections between the airport and nearby rail corridors. Two preferred alternatives were an extension of the Gold Line from Montclair or a light rail or DMU service from the Metrolink Rancho Cucamonga station.¹⁶¹

SBCTA has initiated an updated Ontario Airport Rail Access Alternative Analysis, and in the meantime has offered several transit linkage improvements to the airport, including Omnitrans fixed route bus service directly to terminals and SBCTA's subsidy of lyft rides from four nearest Metrolink stations to the airport. Once the West Valley Connector is completed, it will provide another connection between Ontario Airport and nearby Metrolink lines in Pomona and Rancho Cucamonga.¹⁶²

¹⁵⁹ San Bernardino Council of Governments, San Bernardino County Transportation Authority, Letter to Senator Anthony Portantino, Board of Directors Agenda Item, Attachment A, March 4, 2020, pp.22a-22b

¹⁶⁰ Scauzillo, Steve, “Gold Line Board Warm to Ontario Airport Light-Rail Connection Bill,” San Gabriel Valley Tribune, March 11, 2020, <https://www.sgvtribune.com/2020/03/11/gold-line-board-warms-to-ontario-airport-light-rail-connection-bill/>

¹⁶¹ San Bernardino County Transportation Authority, Board of Directors Agenda Item 13, Ontario International Airport Rail Access Alternatives Analysis, March 4, 2020, p.157

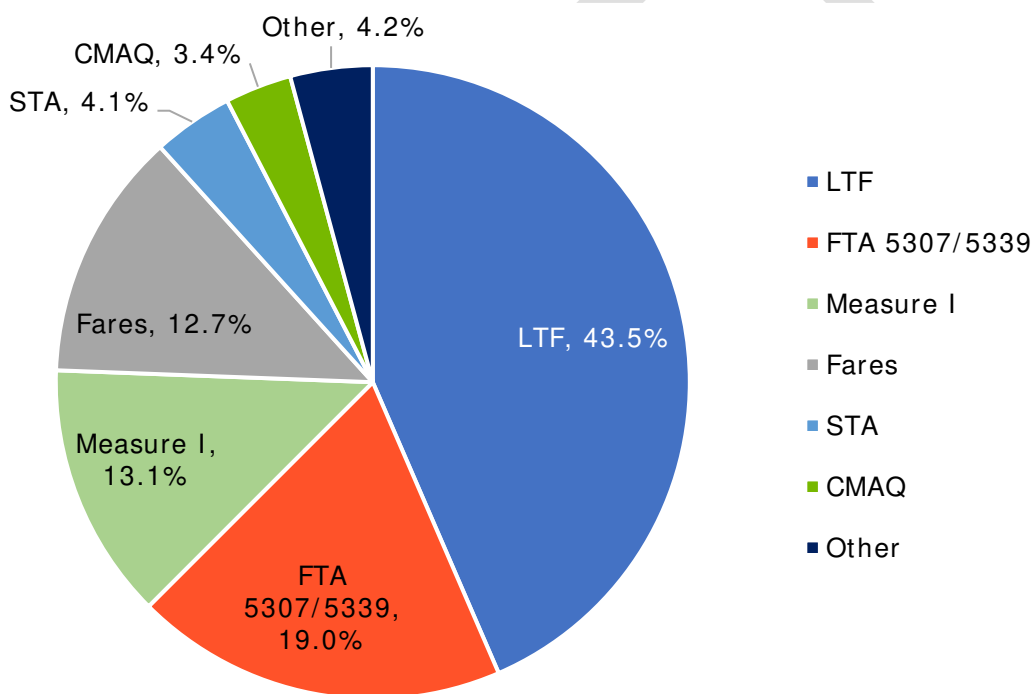
¹⁶²

Finances

Omnitrans Funding Sources

Omnitrans relies on a mix of local, state, and federal funding sources to finance its services and operations. Many of these revenues flow through and are allocated to Omnitrans by SBCTA, including Measure I funds, Federal Transit Administration (FTA) 5307, State Transit Assistance Funds (STA), and Local Transportation Funds (LTF).¹⁶³ The chart below displays what this breakdown looked like for FY2019.

Chart: Omnitrans Projected Revenue by Funding Type, FY2019



Source: Omnitrans, 2018¹⁶⁴

Local Transportation Funds, which represent the largest share of Omnitrans annual revenues,¹⁶⁵ are collected by the state of California as a ¼ cent sales tax statewide and distributed to each county based upon population.¹⁶⁶ Federal Transit Administration (FTA) 5307 provides federally appropriated funds to urban areas for transit operations and capital assistance, and FTA 5399 provides funding to purchase, repair and rehab buses and related equipment, including costs related to modifying buses to low or no emissions vehicles, and

¹⁶³ P. Scott Graham, Memo to Board Chair Ron Daily and Members of the Omnitrans Board of Directors, Financial White Paper, Omnitrans FY2019, May 2, 2018, p.118

¹⁶⁴ P. Scott Graham, Memo to Board Chair Ron Daily and Members of the Omnitrans Board of Directors, Financial White Paper, Omnitrans FY2019, Attachment A, May 2, 2018, p.124

¹⁶⁵ P. Scott Graham, Memo to Board Chair Ron Daily and Members of the Omnitrans Board of Directors, Financial White Paper, Omnitrans FY2019, May 2, 2018, p.118

¹⁶⁶ Caltrans, Transportation Development Act, accessed May 2020 from <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/rail-and-mass-transportation/transportation-development-act>

for construction of bus-related facilities.¹⁶⁷ State Transit Assistance funds (STA), provides funding for operations and capital projects. STA has been historically funded by a state tax on gasoline and diesel, but due to declining revenues from these sources, the legislature passed SB1, The Road Repair and Accountability Act of 2017, which provided additional revenues to the fund to support transit infrastructure projects and service improvements.¹⁶⁸

Measure I funding supports local San Bernardino transportation improvements, paid for by a voter-approved half-cent sales tax in the county in 1989, and in a second election in 2004 extended through 2040.¹⁶⁹ Measure I also provides guidance for San Bernardino County Transit Authority (SBCTA) in its allocation of state and federal funds to local transit agencies, requiring allocations to be made proportional based upon service area population. Because of this, Omnitrans receives 72 percent of SBCTA state and federal pass through funds.¹⁷⁰ As the Consolidated Transit Services Agency for the San Bernardino Valley region of the county, Omnitrans serves as a conduit of Measure I funding to area community organizations which provide transportation services to seniors and/or people with disabilities.¹⁷¹

Operations Funding Deficit

Omnitrans' FY2019 Financial White Paper introduced an approaching revenue shortfall due to estimates that funding allocations from SBCTA capped at a three percent growth rate over the next decade would not cover projected increases in the agency's operational costs.¹⁷² The memo discussed the possible sources contributing to the rise of operational costs, even as Omnitrans has taken many steps in recent years to grow ridership and create cost efficiencies, like consolidation of departments, negotiated changes to contract agreements with no raises and increased benefit payments, Medi-Cal reimbursement for Access rides, transition to CNG fuel and use of fuel tax credits.¹⁷³

The Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) for FY2019 identified some of the current drivers of costs: among operating expenses by category, personnel and depreciation have seen the greatest increase over the last ten years.¹⁷⁴ While Omnitrans total operating revenues grew \$680,000 in FY2019 over FY2018 thanks to growth among passenger fares and advertising revenues, operating expenses also grew, from \$103.4 million in FY2018 to \$114.5 million in FY2019. Omnitrans' net position at end of FY2019 was approximately \$15 million less than at the beginning of year (\$222 million to \$207.3 million).¹⁷⁵

¹⁶⁷ SBCTA, Federal Funding Sources, accessed June 2020 from <https://www.gosbcta.com/funding/federal/>

¹⁶⁸ SBCTA, State Funding, <https://www.gosbcta.com/funding/state/>; CalTrans, State of Good Repair, <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/rail-and-mass-transportation/state-transit-assistance-state-of-good-repair>

¹⁶⁹ SBCTA, Measure I Funding, accessed June 2020 from <https://www.gosbcta.com/funding/measure-i/>

¹⁷⁰ SBCTA, Measure I Funding, accessed June 2020 from <https://www.gosbcta.com/funding/measure-i/>

¹⁷¹ Jeremiah P. Bryant, Omnitrans Memo the board chair and members of the Omnitrans Board, Initial Draft Proposed ADA Access Service Changes, Attachment A: Omnitrans STS Partner Programs (Measure I), November 6, 2019, pp.73-74

¹⁷² P. Scott Graham, Memo to Board Chair Ron Daily and Members of the Omnitrans Board of Directors, Financial White Paper, Omnitrans FY2019, May 2, 2018, p.117

¹⁷³ P. Scott Graham, Memo to Board Chair Ron Daily and Members of the Omnitrans Board of Directors, Financial White Paper, Omnitrans FY2019, May 2, 2018, p.118-120

¹⁷⁴ Omnitrans, Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, FY2019, January 2020, p.57

¹⁷⁵ Omnitrans, Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, FY2019, p.14

The FY2019 CAFR also identified some key challenges for the agency, including bringing future service levels in line with funding projections and identifying future capital funding sources to address unfunded emissions reductions mandates.¹⁷⁶

Key Costs and Challenges

Future cost drivers laid out in the FY2019 white paper and the FY2019 CAFR include:

- Benefit premium costs
- Pressure on wages due to rising minimum wage and competition from neighboring transit agencies with contractual wage increases
- Growing contract costs for Access services
- Hiring and retaining quality staff, both frontline operators and in leadership
- Costs associated with unfunded mandates of the Innovative Clean Transit Regulation requirements (zero-emissions buses)
- Long term funding for Express Bus Service which qualified for start-up Low Carbon Transit Operations Program funding
- The increased costs associated with being designated as a Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (CTSA) by SBCTA, and “challenge going forward to contain cost, provide safe, dependable and quality public transit service as sustainable levels.”¹⁷⁷

Other factors mentioned in more recent Omnitrans Board memos include costs of staffing for the Arrow Rail Line, which is shifting to SCRRA; a one-time write-off for a Medi-Cal reimbursement which did not occur for services provided by Access, costs associated with the San Bernardino Transit Center, and growth in electric utility costs.¹⁷⁸

Additional Funding Opportunities

The FY2019 white paper proposed a list of funding possibilities to address Omnitrans’ pending budget deficit, including additional SB1 and LTF funding, a reauthorization of Measure I and increasing fares.¹⁷⁹ Given the current situation of declining tax revenues and gasoline and diesel use which support many of Omnitrans’ funding sources and this period of significant ridership decline, the path forward may need to include other strategies as well.

¹⁷⁶ P. Scott Graham, in Omnitrans, Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, FY2019, January 2020, front letter

¹⁷⁷ Omnitrans, Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, FY2019, January 2020, p.12

¹⁷⁸ Jeremiah Bryant, Memo to Board Chair David Avila and Members of the Omnitrans Board of Directors, CONSOLIDATION STUDY AND INNOVATIVE TRANSIT REVIEW OF THE METRO-VALLEY UPDATE, April 1, 2020, p.35

¹⁷⁹ P. Scott Graham, Memo to Board Chair Ron Daily and Members of the Omnitrans Board of Directors, Financial White Paper, Omnitrans FY2019, May 2, 2018, p.122

Organization

The two sections below are a summary of the themes related to Omnitrans' values and strengths highlighted by staff in recent focus groups and the staff survey.

Omnitrans Values¹⁸⁰

- Commitment to community service
- Safety
- Fiscal responsibility and stewardship
- Flexibility/ Adaptability
 - Willing to adapt and take bolder action to improve services and the community
 - Adapting to the times
- Stability for employees and professional growth
- Professionalism
- Communication
- Teamwork and Collaboration
- Motivation, productivity, and hard work
- Respect for one another

Omnitrans Organizational Strengths¹⁸¹

- Knowledgeable and dedicated employees
- Strong staff, teamwork, and collaboration
- Commitment to community service
- Leadership
- Adaptability
- Great place to work
- Stable and progressive employment
- Community focused
- Customer service and accountability to customers
- Service provision, providing service to all
- Low cost transportation

¹⁸⁰ This section represents highlights from Omnitrans Strategic Plan Staff Focus Groups, April 2020

¹⁸¹ This section represents highlights from Omnitrans Strategic Plan Staff Focus Groups and Surveys, April and May 2020

Leadership Structure

Omnitrans Board of Directors

Omnitrans is a Joint Powers Authority, which allows the fifteen San Bernardino Valley cities, along with the County of San Bernardino Board of Supervisors, to jointly manage and direct the transit needs of the region. The Omnitrans Board of Directors is made up of the Mayor or City Council representative of each JPA city, and four supervisors from the County of San Bernardino.¹⁸²

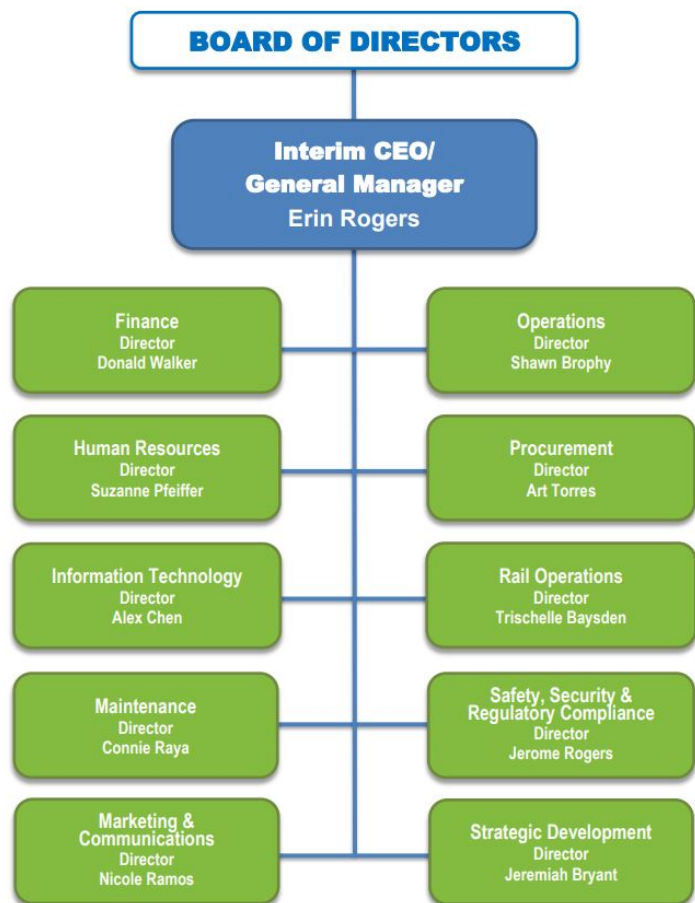
The Board of Directors meets each month and has four standing committees: Administrative and Finance Committee, Plans and Programs Committee, Operations and Safety Committee, and Executive Committee. The current board chair is David Avila, Mayor of Yucaipa, and the Vice-Chair is John Dutrey, Mayor of Montclair.¹⁸³

Omnitrans Leadership Structure

The current structure of Omnitrans agency leadership includes ten departments which report directly to the Interim CEO/General Manager, Erin Rogers, who reports to the Board of Directors. The graphic at right shows the Omnitrans Organization structure.

Omnitrans leadership has made several rounds of changes to its department structure. Updates from the previous version include:¹⁸⁴

- Safety, security, and regulatory compliance moved to a separate department from Human Resources
- Marketing and Planning changed to Marketing and Communications
- New strategic development department
- No deputy GM position
- No separate director of Internal Audit Services



¹⁸² Omnitrans, "About," <https://omnitrans.org/about/>

¹⁸³ Omnitrans, "About," <https://omnitrans.org/about/>

¹⁸⁴ Omnitrans, Omnitrans Organizational Chart, in Omnitrans Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, Fiscal Year Ended June 2019, January 28, 2020, p.v

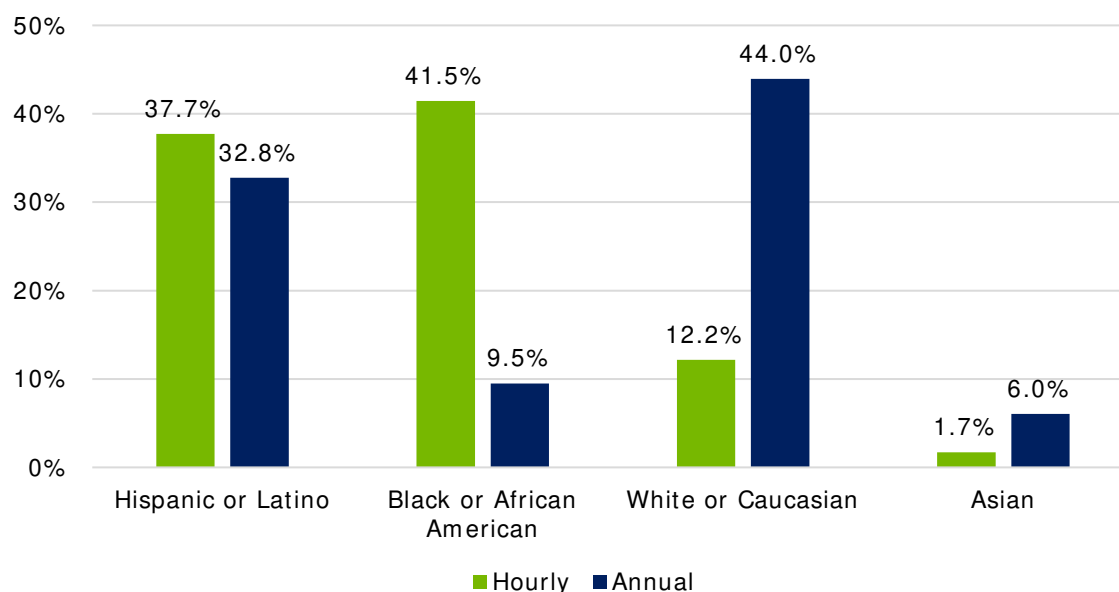
Employees

As of March 2020, Omnitrans employed 707 people.¹⁸⁵ Omnitrans has increased hiring in recent years, bringing on 155 new people in 2018 and 98 in 2019.¹⁸⁶ The agency's turnover rate has also grown substantially in the last few years, with 16.4% of employees in 2018 and nearly 18.5% of employees in 2019 leaving the organization. In the last two years (2018 and 2019), four percent of Omnitrans employees retired, which was double the rate of retirements in each of the previous three years.¹⁸⁷

Sixty percent (424 employees) are coach operators. Other top positions include equipment mechanics (6% or 42 employees) and sbX operators (4% or 31 employees). Forty percent of the workforce are women. Forty-seven employees at Omnitrans are Veterans, and seventeen workers have disabilities. Five employees with disabilities are also Veterans.¹⁸⁸

Race/ Ethnicity

Chart: Omnitrans Workforce by Race/ Ethnicity and Work Status (Hourly/ Salaried)



Source: Omnitrans, March 2020¹⁸⁹

Omnitrans has a diverse staff, though hourly workers more closely mirror the racial/ethnic composition of the agency's riders. Overall, 36.9 percent of employees identify as Hispanic or Latino, and another 36.2 percent as Black or African American. Seventeen percent of employees are white, and approximately four percent are of Asian descent. Hourly workers are more likely to be Hispanic/Latino (37.7%) or Black (41.5%), while 44 percent of salaried employees are white, and one third (32.8%) are Hispanic/Latino (see chart X).¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁵ Omnitrans, Employee Demographics, March 2020

¹⁸⁶ Omnitrans, HR Dashboard, March 6, 2020

¹⁸⁷ Omnitrans, HR Dashboard, March 6, 2020

¹⁸⁸ Omnitrans, Employee Demographics, March 2020

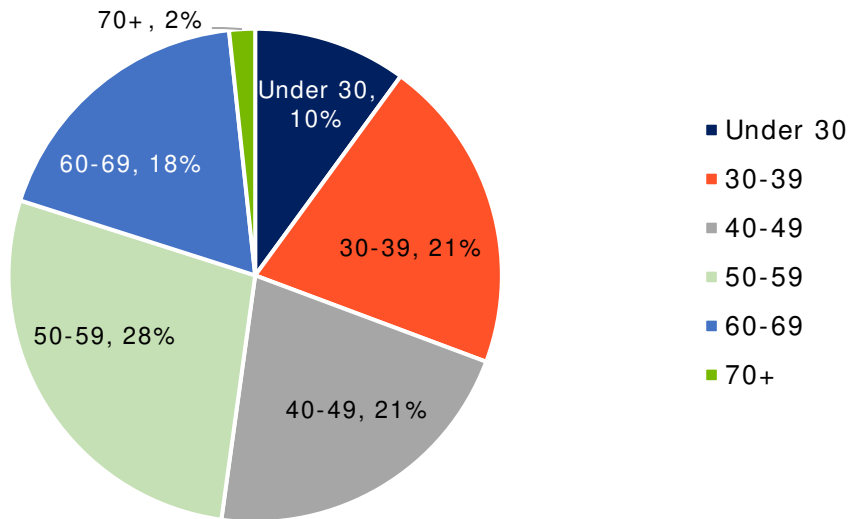
¹⁸⁹ Omnitrans, Employee Demographics, March 2020

¹⁹⁰ Omnitrans, Employee Demographics, March 2020

Age and Seniority

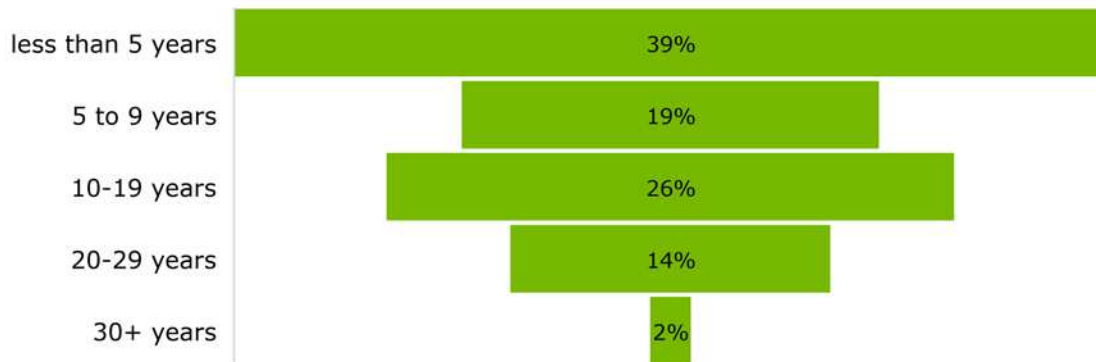
Omnitrans workforce is older. Nearly half of employees (48% or 338 employees) are over 50 years of age, and 20 percent (142 employees) are 60 years and older. Ten percent (71) are under 30 years of age (see chart X).¹⁹¹ Two of every five workers at Omnitrans has been with the agency for less than five years. Sixteen percent have spent twenty years or more with Omnitrans (see chart X).¹⁹²

Chart: Omnitrans Workforce by Age



Source: Omnitrans, March 2020¹⁹³

Chart: Omnitrans Workforce by Seniority



Source: Omnitrans, March 2020¹⁹⁴

Employee Satisfaction

Omnitrans engages its employees regularly about their experiences at work. Among 2019 Employee Opinion Survey responses (39% of employees participated), employee job satisfaction was high: 74 percent of survey respondents provided favorable responses to

¹⁹¹ Omnitrans, Employee Demographics, March 2020

¹⁹² Omnitrans, Employee Demographics, March 2020

¹⁹³ Omnitrans, Employee Demographics, March 2020

¹⁹⁴ Omnitrans, Employee Demographics, March 2020

category questions like: “I like my work” and “my work gives me a feeling of accomplishment.”¹⁹⁵

All categories experienced declines in favorable ratings since the employee satisfaction survey in 2015. The largest decline in favorable ratings (25% decline) were among questions in the Work and Family Balance and Diversity category. Less than half (average of 48%) of respondents agreed with statements in this section, including: “Omnitrans helps me balance career/personal life” and “I do not feel that I am forced to choose between career and personal” “values individuals and their differences.”¹⁹⁶

In the Employee Involvement section of the survey, one in four respondents did not agree with statements like “sufficient effort is made to get the thoughts and opinions of people who work here.”¹⁹⁷

Comparing these results to those of past years, key places where employee surveys remain low or have declined recently include company concern for employees, open/friendly environment, and employee involvement; working conditions, work/life balance, pay and benefits; and communication from leadership. Key categories with consistently high levels of favorable ratings include work enjoyment and work satisfaction.¹⁹⁸

The Strategic Plan project team surveyed staff (168 responses) in April 2020 to engage Omnitrans staff around issues that matter to the future of the organization. The survey included questions which asked employees about what they appreciate about working for Omnitrans, and what brings them the most pride in their work at Omnitrans.

Staff respondents chose benefits most often as what they most appreciated about working for Omnitrans (76 responses, or 18.0% of responses), followed by stability (15.1%) and helping others (13.9%). Culture and adaptability (both 20 responses, 4.7%) and openness (11 responses, or 2.6%) received the least responses.¹⁹⁹

Respondents provided one comment to answer the question: “what are you most proud of as an employee of Omnitrans?” The word cloud visualization which follows on the next page shows the responses to this question. Serving the community, stable employment, professional development and work opportunities, supportive coworkers, being part of a community, customer service, personal abilities, and making a difference emerged as respondents’ most popular responses.

¹⁹⁵ Omnitrans, 2019 Satisfaction Survey Graphs Overall

¹⁹⁶ Omnitrans, 2019 Satisfaction Survey Graphs Overall

¹⁹⁷ Omnitrans, 2019 Satisfaction Survey Graphs Overall

¹⁹⁸ Omnitrans, 2019 Satisfaction Survey Graphs Overall

¹⁹⁹ Omnitrans Strategic Plan Staff Survey April 2020, Summary Memo, June 2020

Chart: What are you most proud of as an employee of Omnitrans? (n= 142)



Source: Omnitrans Strategic Plan Staff Survey, April 2020

The Strategic Plan survey also polled staff on their ideas for improving Omnitrans as an organization. Improving communication—internally, across departments, and with the public was by far the most repeated suggestion. Expanding the use of technology and valuing employee input were also frequent recommendations. Many suggested more advancement opportunities, training for employees and cross-training opportunities. Other popular responses included improving collaboration, developing a teamwork culture in the organization, and embracing innovation: “think outside the bus.”²⁰⁰

²⁰⁰ Omnitrans Strategic Plan Staff Survey April 2020, Summary Memo, June 2020

Key Themes in Prior Organizational Plans

Below is a review of some of the key themes and goals of recent Omnitrans plans, including the last Strategic Plan and Management Plan, as well as the most recent Marketing Plan, Service Plans and Omnitrans' most recent SRTP.

FY2020 Management Plan

Strategic Initiatives

- Customer Focused Service and Development
- Safety and Security
- Employee Engagement and Development
- Innovation and Technology
- Financial Stability and Funding Growth

Themes

- Energy and Cost Savings
- Planning and Service
- Technology
- Operational Costs and Staffing
- Funding Challenges
- Planned Development and Population Growth
- Safety and Security

2019-2020 Marketing Plan²⁰¹

Goals (and Metrics)

- Retain and attract new riders (system ridership)
- Increase revenue (bus pass sales and advertising revenue)
- Maintain high customer satisfaction (customer satisfaction and call center efficiency)
- Maintain high public awareness and public opinion (public awareness and opinion metrics, outreach at events, favorable media coverage)

Strategic Plan, FY2017 to 2020²⁰²

- Safety and Security (top priority): Develop and enhance an integrated, responsive safety and security system to protect customers, employees and assets.
- Service and Operations: Improve and expand public transportation service to our customers and community.
- Technology: Increase capacity to provide new, innovative technology solutions and enhance existing ones.
- Finance: Optimize funding opportunities while maintaining fiscal stewardship.
- Marketing: Increase the awareness and use of Omnitrans within the community we serve.

²⁰¹ Omnitrans, Marketing Plan 2019-2020, p.12

²⁰² Omnitrans, Strategic Plan FY2017-2020, p.3

- Organizational and Workforce Excellence: Improve organizational systems to cultivate Omnitrans as an employer of choice.

Omnitrans Service Plan, FY2020

- Ridership declines (though substantial growth in express, sbX ridership)
- “Express service key to Omnitrans future”²⁰³
- Need to address pending operating deficits

ConnectForward FY2021 Service Plan

- Stabilizing Omnitrans long-term financial situation by reducing service levels
- Using innovations, partnerships, analysis, pilots to build more agile and cost-effective set of services to meet the needs of customers
- “A rapidly evolving, flexible and scalable plan that can match service levels to the fluid ridership, workforce, funding and economic realities faced in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.”²⁰⁴

OmniConnects FY2015 to 2020 Short Range Transit Plan²⁰⁵

- Deliver safe, reliable, clean, frequent, convenient, comfortable, and equitable service
- Enhance network design to increase ridership and minimize costs by reducing redundancy
- Minimize impact to existing riders while seeking opportunities to expand ridership
- Support local economy by providing connections to where people want to go
- Maximize cost recovery while charging a fair fare.
- Financial and environmental sustainability in both short and long term
- Expand, maintain, and improve existing vehicles, facilities and passenger amenities.

²⁰³ Omnitrans Service Plan, FY2020, May 2019, p.5

²⁰⁴ Omnitrans ConnectForward FY2021 Service Plan, p.4

²⁰⁵ Omnitrans, OmniConnects FY2015-FY2020 Short-Range Transit Plan, pp.23-24

Emerging and Ongoing Challenges and Opportunities

Following is a summary of the emerging and ongoing challenges for Omnitrans, and some opportunities to move forward. These are gathered from the project team background review and analysis and include responses from staff focus groups and the staff survey. Expanded summaries of these activities and findings are available in the appendix of this report.

Emerging Challenges

- Resuming service during and after COVID-19 conditions and constraints:
 - Providing safe, socially distanced, frequent service to essential riders
 - Regaining lost ridership with a growing fear of transit related to health and safety
 - Competing with the growth in mobile work opportunities for higher income transit users
 - Competing with the recommendations from the CDC to solo commute by car
- Financing transit
 - Closing the gap between operations costs and revenues
 - Reconciling declines in public funding sources including but not limited to FTA funding for capital projects, sales and fuel tax revenues
 - Identifying new sources of funding to supplement shortfalls and increased maintenance and cleaning requirements
- Maintaining and transitioning infrastructure
 - Advancing the transition to an all electric fleet: equipment, training and maintenance
 - Updating internal systems and customer-facing technologies

Ongoing Challenges

- Declining ridership
- Addressing safety and security for drivers and passengers, including new COVID-19 related issues
- Balancing productive, high ridership service and community-based transportation solutions for those without other options
- Understanding community needs
- Maintaining the workforce: retirements, pay below market and many employees at top of wage structure, regional unemployment low (before March)
- Employee morale
- Interdepartmental communication and collaboration
- Challenge of funding ongoing operations--capital financing is more available, other sources for startup programs sunset after a few years of funding

- Perceptions of transit from choice riders and captive riders
- Tension between service coverage and productivity due to regional sprawl
- Traffic and car culture in the region, growing accessibility of auto financing
- Lower gas and parking prices
- Crime and safety issues in high ridership areas and across service area
- Regional challenges like housing affordability and filling job vacancies
- Street infrastructure issues: funding for repairs, and broader lack of transit friendly infrastructure
- Demographics: declines in student populations and growth in seniors may shift ridership needs/demands

Opportunities

- Emerging from COVID-19 as a more adaptable, flexible organization
- Recent service reductions and intermediate federal funding support from the CARES Act provides a “reset” for the agency—in a better financial position
- Flexible fleet of smaller vehicles
- Route efficiencies: more grid routes, fewer stops
- Provide more onboard and at stop/station amenities for passengers to address safety/information concerns
- Technology: expand use of passenger counting tools, apps with information like how busy services are, tap cards, more demand-responsive services to support growing demand
 - Using tech to expand opportunities to communicate and interact with customers and staff
- Strategic use of facilities given more staff are working remotely
- Expand upon leadership development, training, and cross-training opportunities for staff
- Encourage more opportunities for staff feedback and two-way communication
- Multi-modal planning and continued partnerships with other regional transit agencies
- Continued opportunities for cost-sharing with other fixed route providers, SBCTA
- Continued advocacy for bus-only lanes, transit priority signals
- Community partnerships with private companies, schools, community organizations to support and develop transit services

Appendices

Appendix 1: Background document review matrix

Appendix 2: Focus Group Summary memo

Appendix 3: Staff Surveys Summary and analysis

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