



City of
SANTA CLARITA

City of Santa Clarita Transit **2024 Transportation Development Plan** Final Report | January 2025

Prepared by:



Contents

Introduction.	1
Goals, Objectives, and Performance Measures	2
Community Profile and Demand Analysis	5
Service Overview and Evaluation	61
Public Outreach.	113
Plan Framework	118
Service Plan.	121
Route by Route Changes	123
Capital Plan	141
Implementation Plan	146
Next Steps.	151



Introduction

Project Overview

The City of Santa Clarita embarked on the 2024 Transportation Development Plan (TDP) project in August 2023 as an update to its 2019 TDP. Since the last plan, Santa Clarita has continued to grow and change, and some travel patterns have shifted as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. This TDP seeks to address the public mobility needs of the growing Santa Clarita Valley community, both now and over the next 10 years. This plan will guide public mobility investment to ensure that newly developed and changing areas of Santa Clarita are served effectively by transit and that future operating and capital investments utilize available funding efficiently and responsibly.

This report is the culmination of the public outreach, data analysis, and service planning processes undertaken by Santa Clarita Transit (SCT) and its consultant. After collecting public, stakeholder, and bus operator input and analyzing current service characteristics and performance and the current community conditions and transit market, SCT developed a set of draft recommendations for future service improvements. These recommendations were then presented to the community in the spring and summer of 2024 for review. The draft service concepts were updated to reflect community and stakeholder feedback and are presented in this document's Service Plan section.

This report begins with a Goals, Objectives, and Performance Measures section which provides a review of the prior TDP's goals and performance measures and an update for this TDP and sets the stage for the plan development. This is followed by sections detailing the three main input sources that guided the plan development – the two existing conditions analyses (the Community Profile and Demand Analysis and the Service Overview and Evaluation) and the public outreach process. Next, the Plan Framework section summarizes this TDP's top priorities and unmet transit needs identified in the initial phase of the project. The final three sections of the report detail the TDP's service and organizational recommendations and the associated implementation and capital impacts.

About Santa Clarita Transit

The City of Santa Clarita Transit is the municipal bus agency for the Santa Clarita Valley in Los Angeles County, California. SCT provides local bus service in the city and surrounding unincorporated communities and commuter bus service to destinations within the cities of Los Angeles and Burbank. It also provides ADA paratransit which is also available to all individuals 60 years of age and older, a general public on-demand microtransit service (GO! Santa Clarita), and seasonal tourism-oriented services. All services are operated under contract by MV Transportation, while the City of Santa Clarita owns the transit vehicles and operating and maintenance facility.

Goals, Objectives, and Performance Measures

To lay the groundwork for a successful plan, SCT must articulate a clear set of goals, objectives, and performance measures for its bus service. These will support the development of a clear vision for transit and measurable outcomes for staff, stakeholders, and the public. This section outlines a review of the 2019 TDP’s goals, objectives, and performance measures and provides updates and additions that were utilized in the development of the 2024 TDP.

Goals and Objectives

In the 2019 TDP, the City of Santa Clarita (City) advanced four goals with 10 associated objectives aligned with the City’s vision in the Santa Clarita 2020 general plan. These are shown below in Table 1.

2019 TDP Goals and Objectives	
Goal	Associated Objective(s)
Goal 1: Expand transit services to enhance underserved business areas.	Conduct ongoing outreach with local schools and employers.
	Participate in ridesharing activities and promotions throughout the community.
	Continue to work with the City’s planning division to identify areas of commercial and residential development, as well as the status of those developments, to determine whether changes to the transit system are warranted and when those changes should occur.
	Develop strategies for serving large areas currently in development for implementation when appropriate.
Goal 2: Review the City’s fleet and maintenance standards to address changes in technology and clean fuels and implement best management practices.	Work toward meeting the goals set forth in the City’s Transit Asset Management Plan.
	Replace and/or overhaul vehicles according to their useful life specifications as well as in accordance with the City’s fleet replacement plan.
	Expand fleet where necessary to address service expansion recommendations.
	Fully develop and certify the City’s Federal Transit Administration (FTA)-required Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan prior to July 20, 2020.
Goal 3: Identify and develop a schedule for the maintenance and/or replacement of transit customer amenities including benches, shelters, trash receptacles, and signage.	Continue to identify 25 bus stops each year for improvements.
Goal 4: Enhance the customer experience so that it accurately represents the City’s commitment to customer service.	Continue to provide customer service training in line with City values to front-line transit employees, including bus drivers, dispatchers, and customer service representatives, as well as City transit staff.

The TDP project team reviewed these goals and objectives and identified updated measures that align with the City’s current vision in the Santa Clarita 2025 Strategic Plan and progress made toward the prior TDP’s goals. These proposed updated goals and objectives are shown below in Table 2. The first goal was reshaped to reflect a desire to enhance service to any underserved areas that warrants it, not just job centers. The second goal was updated to reflect the completion of the City’s Zero Emission Bus (ZEB) Rollout Plan in 2020. A fifth goal was added to reflect the City’s commitment to demonstrating Transit’s value to the community and importance among other municipal services.

Table 2: 2024 TDP Goals and Objectives

2024 TDP Goals and Objectives	
Goal	Associated Objective(s)
Goal 1: Expand transit services to enhance underserved areas.	Ensure that newly-developed and changing areas of the Santa Clarita Valley are served effectively by transit (including new Vista Canyon Metrolink station and surrounding development), based on TDP analysis.
	Work with the Santa Clarita Tourism Office to identify transportation opportunities for festivals, concerts, and major sporting events within the SCV.
	Assess the feasibility of adding trolley service to old town Newhall.
	Conduct ongoing outreach with local schools and employers.
	Identify ways to reduce barriers for low-income and disadvantaged communities and ensure equitable access to public mobility.
Goal 2: Implement the City's Zero Emission Bus (ZEB) Rollout Plan and ensure the needed infrastructure and funding is in place.	Purchase and take delivery of new buses in coordination with ZEB rollout plans and TDP service expansion recommendations.
	Assess current infrastructure and prepare a capital replacement plan.
	Work toward meeting the goals set forth in the City's Transit Asset Management Plan.
Goal 3: Identify and develop a schedule for the maintenance and/or replacement of transit customer amenities including benches, shelters, trash receptacles, and signage.	Implement a phased Bus Stop Improvement program, as recommended in the Santa Clarita 2025 Strategic Plan.
Goal 4: Enhance the customer experience so that it accurately represents the City's commitment to customer service.	Continue to provide customer service training in line with City values to front-line transit employees, including bus drivers, dispatchers, and customer service representatives, as well as City transit staff.
	Continue to meet or exceed customer complaint performance metric.
Goal 5: Position Transit as a critical public service such as parks, libraries, police, and fire.	Develop community education campaign highlighting the value of Transit.
	Identify ways to better integrate Transit with City's non-motorized transportation plans and infrastructure.

Performance Measures

Clear, measurable performance measures with attainable targets are essential for quality service delivery and customer satisfaction, transparency, and responsible stewardship of public funds. SCT has seven performance measures in place, which were identified in the prior TDP and are also a key component of the City's contract with MV Transportation as part of an incentives/liquidated damages program (along with other minor metrics). SCT reviewed the existing performance measures by mode, shown below in Table 3, and no necessary modifications were identified for the 2024 TDP.

The project team did identify three additional performance measures for inclusion in the 2024 TDP. These are shown with explanatory notes in Table 4. The first metric helps to provide a more nuanced snapshot of service delivery performance and the other two were added in response to the introduction of the GO! Santa Clarita service.

Table 3: Existing Santa Clarita Transit Performance Measures

Santa Clarita Transit Performance Measures		
Performance Metric	Mode	Standard/Target
On-Time Performance	Local Fixed-Route	90%
	Commuter	
	Dial-A-Ride	
Increase in Passengers per Vehicle Service Hour (VSH)	Local Fixed-Route	Increase over same month prior year
	Commuter	
Trip Denials	Dial-A-Ride	0%
Reservations initial telephone hold time	Dial-A-Ride	4 minutes or less
Total miles between road calls	System	15,000 miles or more
Valid complaints	System	15 complaints per 100,000 boardings
Preventable accidents	System	0.7 or fewer per 100,000 miles

Table 4: 2024 TDP Performance Measure Additions

2024 TDP Performance Measure Additions			
Performance Metric	Mode	Standard/Target	Explanation
Service Delivery Metric	Local Fixed-Route	99% of scheduled revenue miles delivered on a weekly basis	» Helps to track and ensure that all of the scheduled fixed-route service is being delivered and SCT is meeting its “promise” (the public timetable) to the customer. » Provides a more nuanced KPI than missed trips and accounts for differences in route lengths (e.g., local vs. commuter)
	Commuter		
On-Demand Service Productivity	GO! Santa Clarita	2.5 boardings per vehicle revenue hour	» SCT previously articulated a goal of 2.0 boardings per hour for the GO! service. This 2.5 boardings per goal target push for improved operational efficiency and aligns with performance measures for other similar microtransit services. » The Spring-Summer 2023 weekday average of 1.8 boardings per vehicle revenue hour indicates the goal is realistic and achievable.
On-Demand Service Wait Times	GO! Santa Clarita	90% of pickups within 15-minute wait time window	» GO! Santa Clarita currently promotes a 15-minute wait, with the caveat that wait times “may vary.” » 100% of wait times equal to or less than 15 minutes is not recommended, for both operational and customer expectation reasons. A 90% target aligns with the fixed-route OTP target. » The Spring-Summer 2023 weekday average of 80% of pickups within 15 minutes (83% on Saturdays and 88% on Sundays) indicates there is room for improvement but the goal is realistic and achievable.

Community Profile and Demand Analysis

Introduction

Evaluating present travel patterns, demographics, and recent developments is a key part of ensuring the transit network meets the current and future needs of Santa Clarita. It is also important to understand how travel patterns may have shifted following recent growth and the COVID-19 pandemic.

This Market Assessment focuses on the land use, demographic makeup, and travel patterns within the Santa Clarita Valley to gather insights on **where people live**, **where they work**, and **how they choose to travel**. Ultimately, this chapter will help us to better understand Santa Clarita's mobility needs and its market for transit and will inform future recommendations for Santa Clarita Transit (SCT).



Service Area and Study Area Overview

For this Transportation Development Plan (TDP), the SCT service area has been defined as the current boundaries of the City of Santa Clarita plus all areas within three-quarters of a mile of a current SCT local route (to align with current Dial-A-Ride service boundaries). Minor mapping adjustments were made to ensure any portions of communities that can be reasonably considered part of the potential service area were not excluded from the analysis. The service area was then divided into 14 communities that provide an insightful lens for this report. Six of the 14 communities consist of the older, more developed areas of the valley, some of which existed prior to the City's incorporation in 1987:

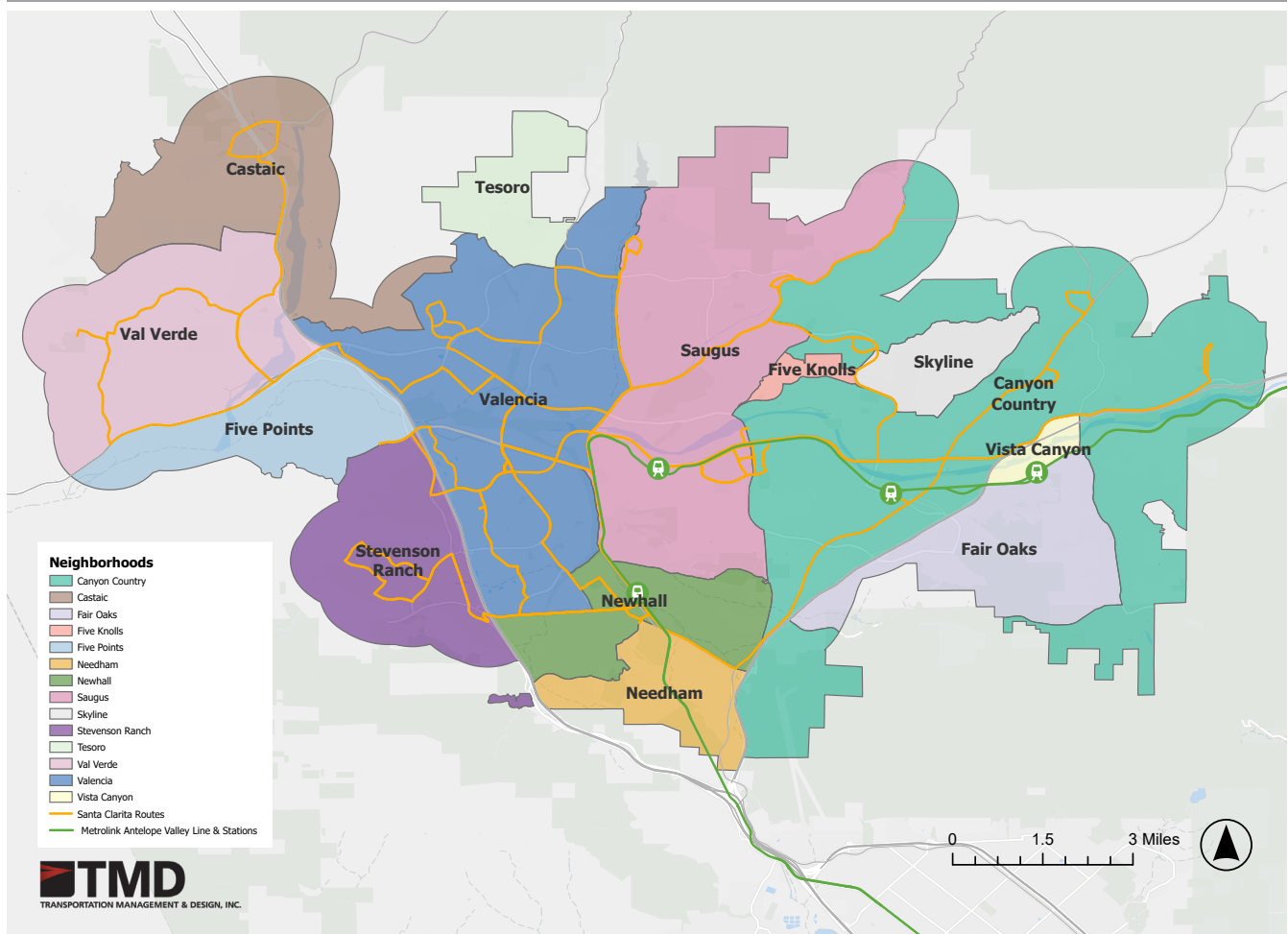
- | | | |
|-------------------|------------|--------------|
| 1. Canyon Country | 3. Newhall | 5. Valencia |
| 2. Castaic | 4. Saugus | 6. Val Verde |

Due to the rapid growth and recent development of the Santa Clarita Valley, eight additional communities have been designated to better to understand demographic and travel patterns in these subareas:

- | | | |
|----------------|---------------------|------------------|
| 7. Fair Oaks | 10. Needham Ranch | 13. Tesoro |
| 8. Five Knolls | 11. Skyline | 14. Vista Canyon |
| 9. Five Points | 12. Stevenson Ranch | |

This service area and its 14 communities provide a nuanced analysis of mobility needs and ensures that the uniqueness of each new or recently-changed community is considered.

Figure 1: TDP Neighborhood Boundaries





Data Sources

This report utilizes demographic, employment, travel pattern, and survey data to better understand current riders and the market for transit in the SCT service area. Data sources include:

- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, National Walkability Index (2021 data)
- U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census (2010 and 2020 data)
- U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (2021 5-Year Estimates)
- U.S. Census Bureau, Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (2020 data)
- Replica travel demand modeling platform (Fall 2019, Fall 2022, and Spring 2023 data)
- Santa Clarita Transit Onboard Rider Survey (Fall/Winter 2023-2024) - (In-progress)
- Various existing local and regional planning documents

Land Use, the Built Environment, and Transit's Potential

Land use and the design of the built environment directly impact SCT's likelihood of being the primary mode of transportation. Namely, the **density, diversity of destinations,** and **design** of each community collectively influence its ability to support SCT service.

Design

The design of Santa Clarita's street network and patterns of development influence the accessibility of transit and the efficiency in which it can serve surrounding destinations. With the Valley's vast expansion, comparing the design of old and new communities highlights where transit accessibility and efficiency currently is and where it is going in the future.

OVERVIEW OF THE SANTA CLARITA VALLEY

Santa Clarita is designed for the suburban lifestyle; travel is centered around the car. Most residential areas were developed to avoid through travel, funneling autos to a limited number of arterials. Therefore, the limited options of arterials for through travel limits where relatively direct fixed transit routes can efficiently operate. Until recently when Go! Santa Clarita microtransit service was developed, a large percentage of the population did not have access to Santa Clarita Transit services because they were beyond walking distance of the roads Santa Clarita Transit could operate fixed route service. Major destinations are also difficult to serve with transit. Most retail areas are separated from the street by parking lots that are challenging for pedestrians to access.

The business parks and industrial centers in the northern section of the City are a major source of employment. However, they are generally built on large blocks that lack sidewalks which can be a challenge for pedestrians. The Santa Clarita Valley's topography can also pose a challenge to effective service design, with natural barriers like hills, canyons, the Santa Clara River, and Newhall Creek.

Figure 2: Valencia Business Parks



Where these more compact, walkable areas do exist in the service area, there are generally higher concentrations of retail, dining, and other destinations that promote discretionary travel and provide community gathering spaces.

Figure 3: Old Town Newhall



While newer developments such as Five Points and Tesoro Highlands may place better emphasis on pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, they are greenfield developments at the fringe of the urban area and the development pattern of funneling traffic to a limited number of arterials persists today.

Figure 4: Six Flags Magic Mountain and Five Points Development



It is important to note that some major roadways, particularly around Valencia Town Center, have pedestrian bridges that provide safer walk access. Furthermore, Santa Clarita has significant bicycle infrastructure that lends itself to a healthy bike culture.

Figure 5: Pedestrian bridge over McBean Parkway



The City also offers a variety of trails, which are mainly located around the City's riverbeds. Offering more of these amenities while considering connections between transit and active transportation modes can help to promote the attractiveness of public mobility throughout the City.

Figure 6: Santa Clara River Trail



NATIONAL WALKABILITY INDEX ANALYSIS

Assessing a community's walkability is an important factor in determining whether or not its residents will utilize transit – a community with adequate sidewalks and shorter distances between intersections will have improved access to transit and residents will have more mobility options. To measure walkability, this report utilizes the National Walkability Index, a geographic data source from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that ranks block groups according to their walkability. The EPA considers intersection density, proximity to transit stops, the mix of employment types, and occupied housing to determine whether people will walk as a mode of transportation.



Block groups are ranked on a scale of 1-20, with an example of a suburban residential area scoring around 9.5.

- 1 - 5.75 ■ Least Walkable
- 5.76 - 10.5 ■ Below Average Walkable
- 10.51 - 15.25 ■ Above Average Walkable
- 15.26 - 20 ■ Most Walkable

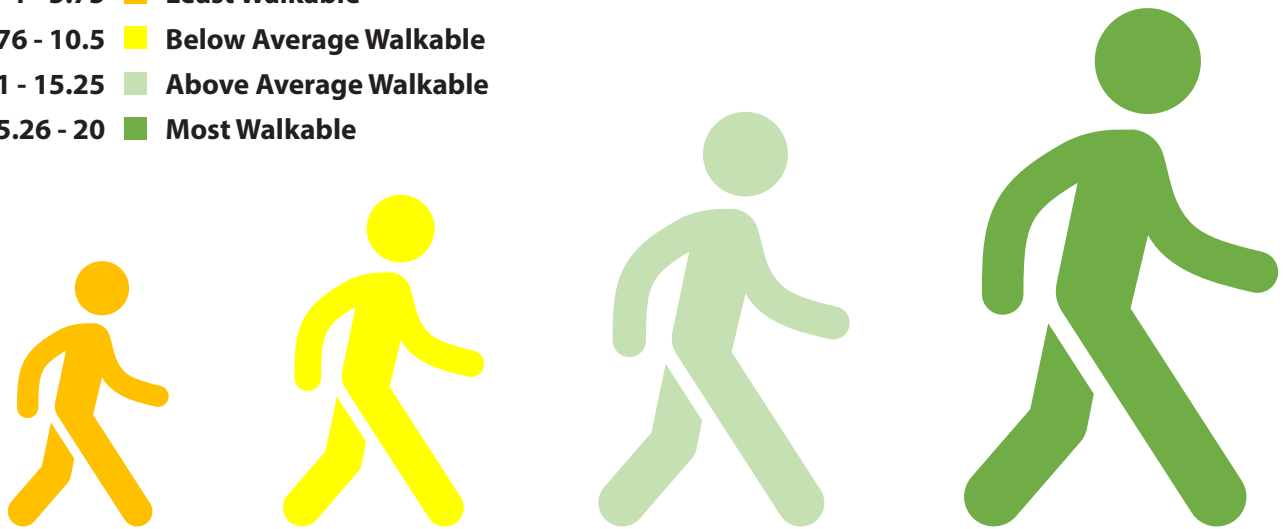
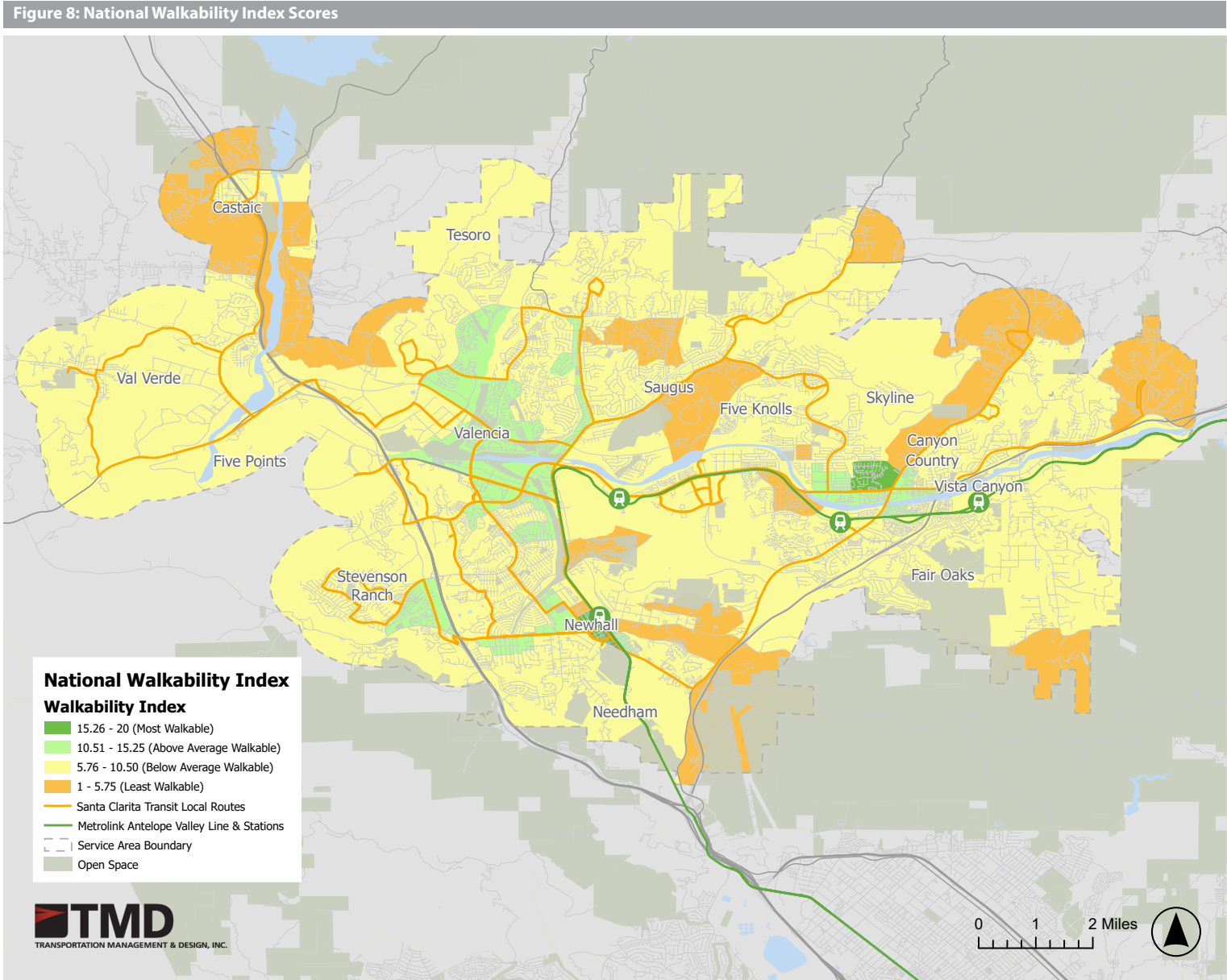


Figure 7: Old Town Newhall's Main Street



The SCT service area averages a walkability score of 8 out of 20. At a neighborhood level, all of the communities analyzed in this Market Assessment have **below average walkability** (scoring 10.5 or fewer points on the nationally averaged scale). At the community level, Vista Canyon scored the highest at 9.5 and Castaic scored the lowest at 6.0. However, at the Census block group level, Canyon Country, Newhall, Valencia, and Stevenson Ranch each have one or more areas with above average walkability. These areas generally encompass neighborhoods that contain bus stops and several shopping destinations. However, the block group with the very highest score in the service area (16.7) is a residential neighborhood in Canyon Country, east of Whites Canyon Rd and south of Nadal St near Leona Cox Elementary school.

Along with Canyon Country, Valencia has the most block groups scoring above average on the national walkability index. While some of the pockets of above average walkability are residential neighborhoods, others have notable destination concentrations, such as Old Town Newhall, the Valencia commercial core around Magic Mountain Pkwy and McBean Pkwy, and the Soledad Canyon Rd corridor in Canyon Country. Not only is it important to ensure these walkable areas have adequate bus stop placement and spacing, but it is also important to identify poorly walkable areas with bus stops that may benefit from capital projects to improve the customer experience and ridership.





Santa Clarita is not as well suited for transit, although the city's concentration of key destinations and significant multimodal system improves the environment.

Old Town Newhall Area

Density

Greater population densities mean more people are concentrated together and create a larger potential rider base for SCT. With the rapid growth of Santa Clarita, its communities are expected to have a higher concentration of development and potential riders. Denser areas are ideal for transit as they are generally more walkable and provide a closer connection between housing and key destinations. Moreover, transit in dense areas can serve a greater number of people in a shorter distance, increasing its competitiveness with car travel.

While density varies even within a single market and is only one of several land-use-related factors that can influence transit's success, fixed route transit requires certain minimums to be successful in urban or suburban contexts.

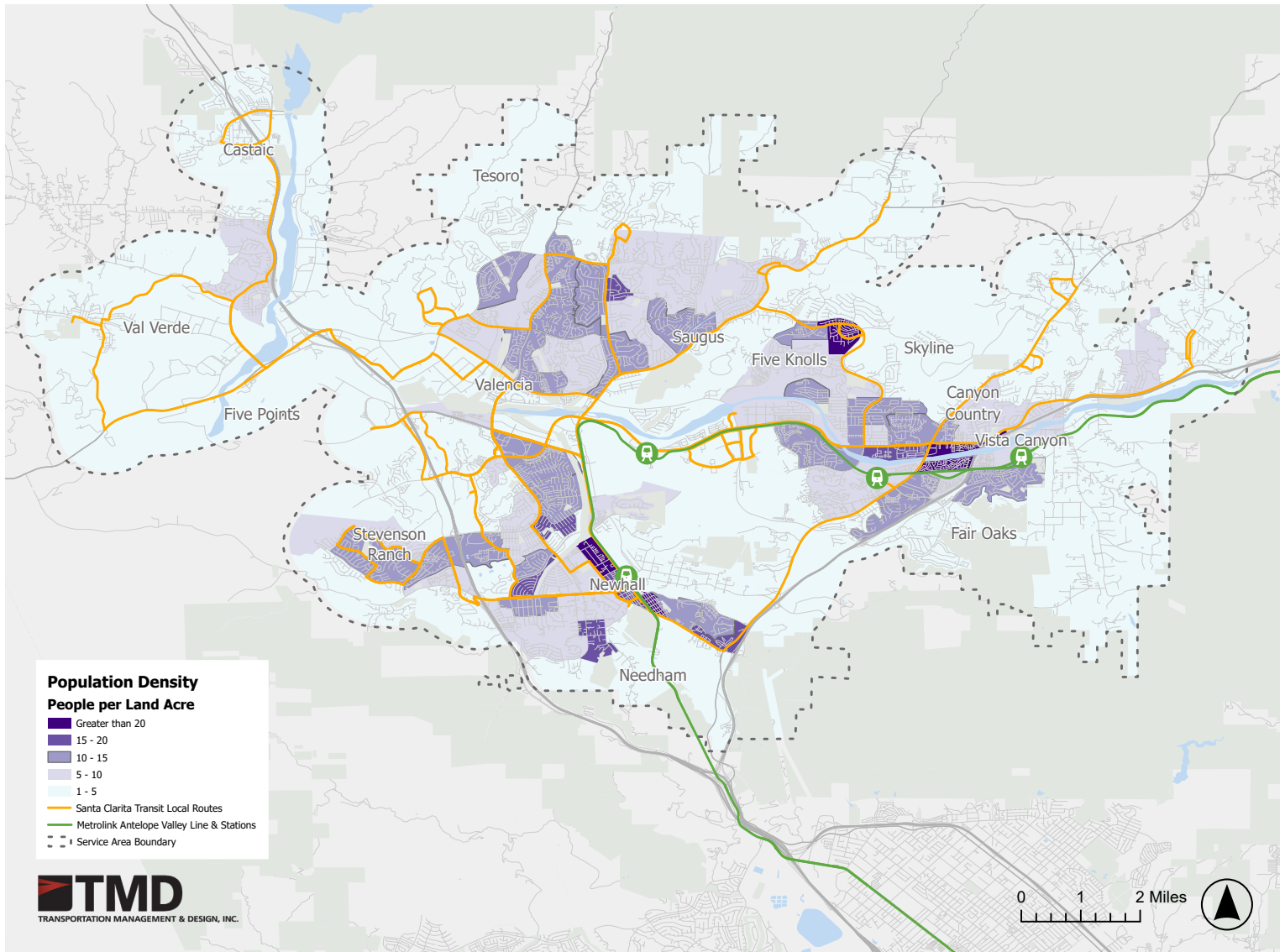
According to one Federal Transit Administration (FTA) research paper, a combined population and job density of 87 per acre is considered necessary for a "vibrant mix of uses, public transit, and walking over driving".

"Planning for Transit-Supportive Development: A Practitioner's Guide", 2014

POPULATION DENSITY

SCT's service area has an average density of **9.5 people per acre** (6,080/square mile). This is comparable to Pasadena and slightly lower than Glendale and Burbank. The communities of Newhall and Canyon Country have population densities above the service area average. On a census block group level, there are seven block groups with a population density over 25 people per acre (16,000/square mile). These block groups are located in Canyon Country (along the Santa Clara River, Soledad Canyon Road, and Sierra Highway), downtown Newhall, and the Plum Canyon Community. The two block groups with the highest population densities, at 58 people per acre (37,120/square mile) and 127 per acre (81,280/square mile), are located in Canyon Country and home to the Cordova Mobile Estates, River Ranch Townhomes, and The Oaks Apartments.

Figure 9: Santa Clarita Transit Service Area Population Density



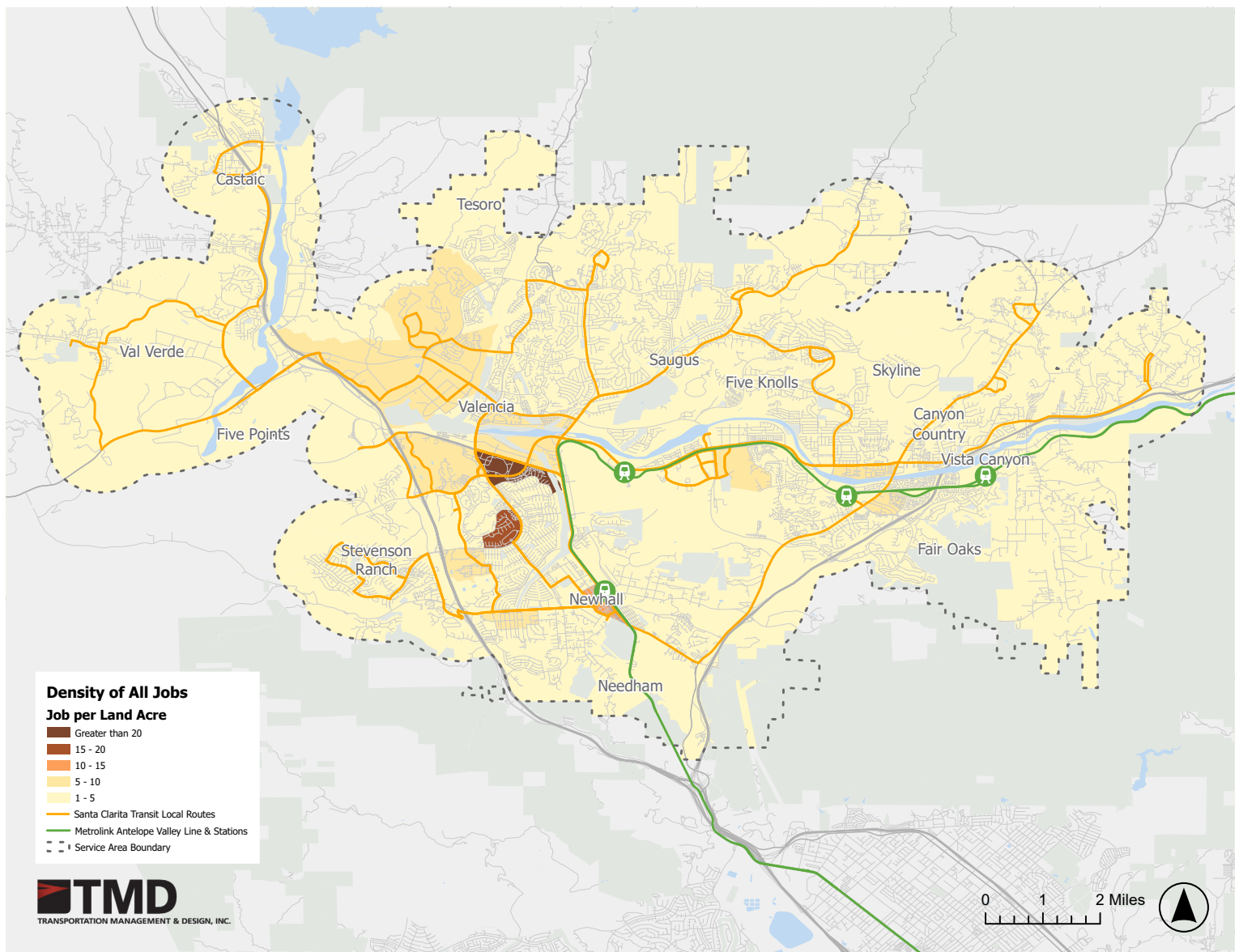
JOBS DENSITY

The service area has an average job density of **1.6 jobs per acre** (1,043/square mile) – a much lower density compared to population. The Valencia and Newhall communities have above average job densities; downtown Newhall, the Old Orchard area, Henry Mayo Newhall Memorial Hospital, and the Valencia Town Center are the major hotspots. The McBean Parkway, Valencia Blvd, and Magic Mountain Parkway corridors have the highest job densities in the service area and are home to some of the service area's top employers.



Having a smaller job density compared to population density is not uncommon. For example, the service area of peers like Gold Coast Transit and Pasadena Transit all have a lower job density.

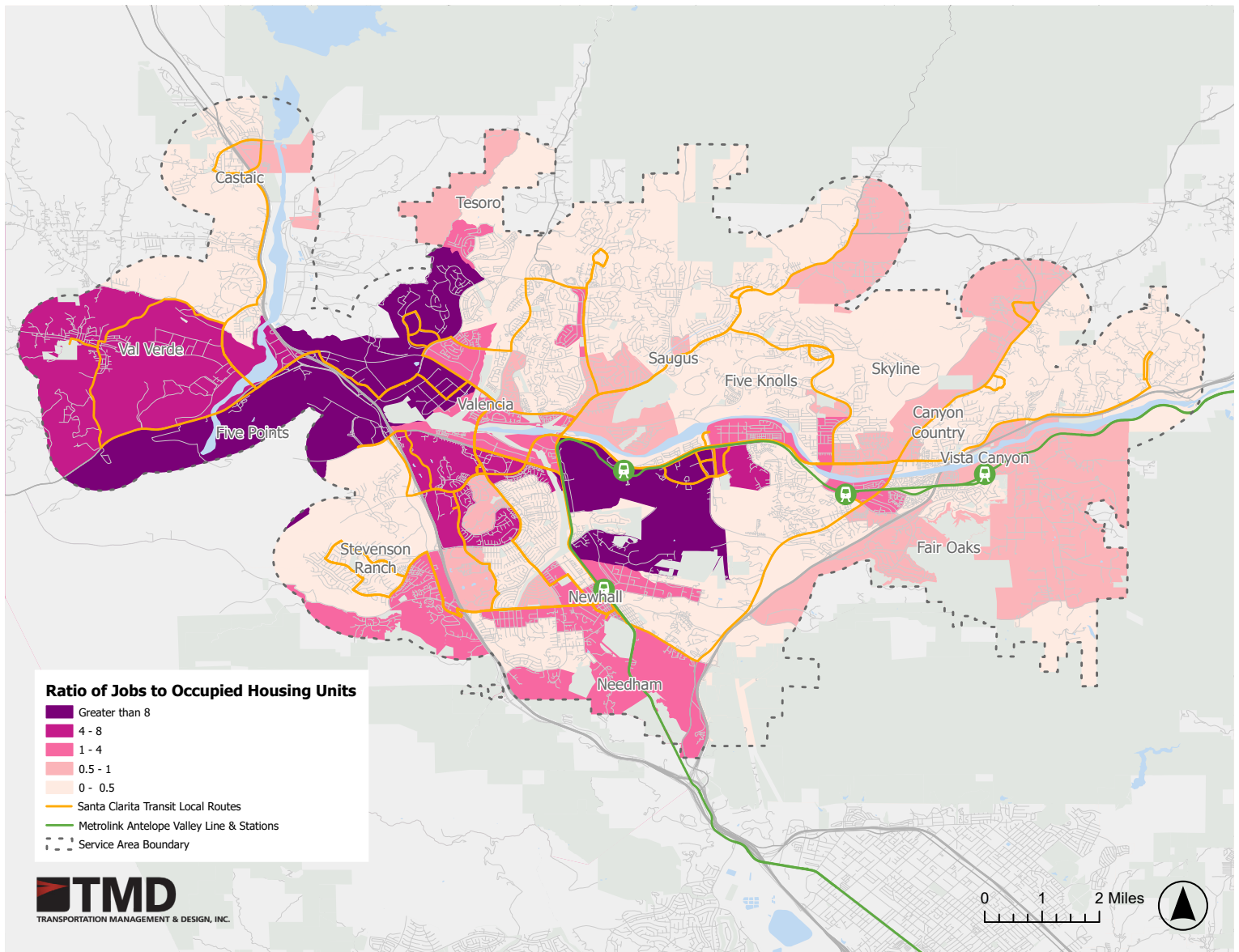
Figure 10: Santa Clarita Transit Service Area Job Density



HOUSING / JOBS BALANCE

Overall, the SCT service area has a fairly even balance between jobs and housing at **0.9 jobs per occupied housing unit**, with the Stevenson Ranch and Needham communities being the most balanced. Five Knolls, Castaic, and Skyline are primarily residential communities, requiring residents to travel outside of their community for work. Conversely, Val Verde Commerce Center and Valencia Industrial Center are major employment centers and require connections with other communities. Providing quality mobility within and to areas with good jobs to housing ratios can reduce commute times and help to promote improved quality of life for residents.

Figure 11: Santa Clarita Transit Service Area Job-Housing Ratio



While the service area as a whole is not particularly dense, there are various pockets of high density and jobs to housing ratios that are conducive to higher-frequency fixed route transit.

Destinations and Development

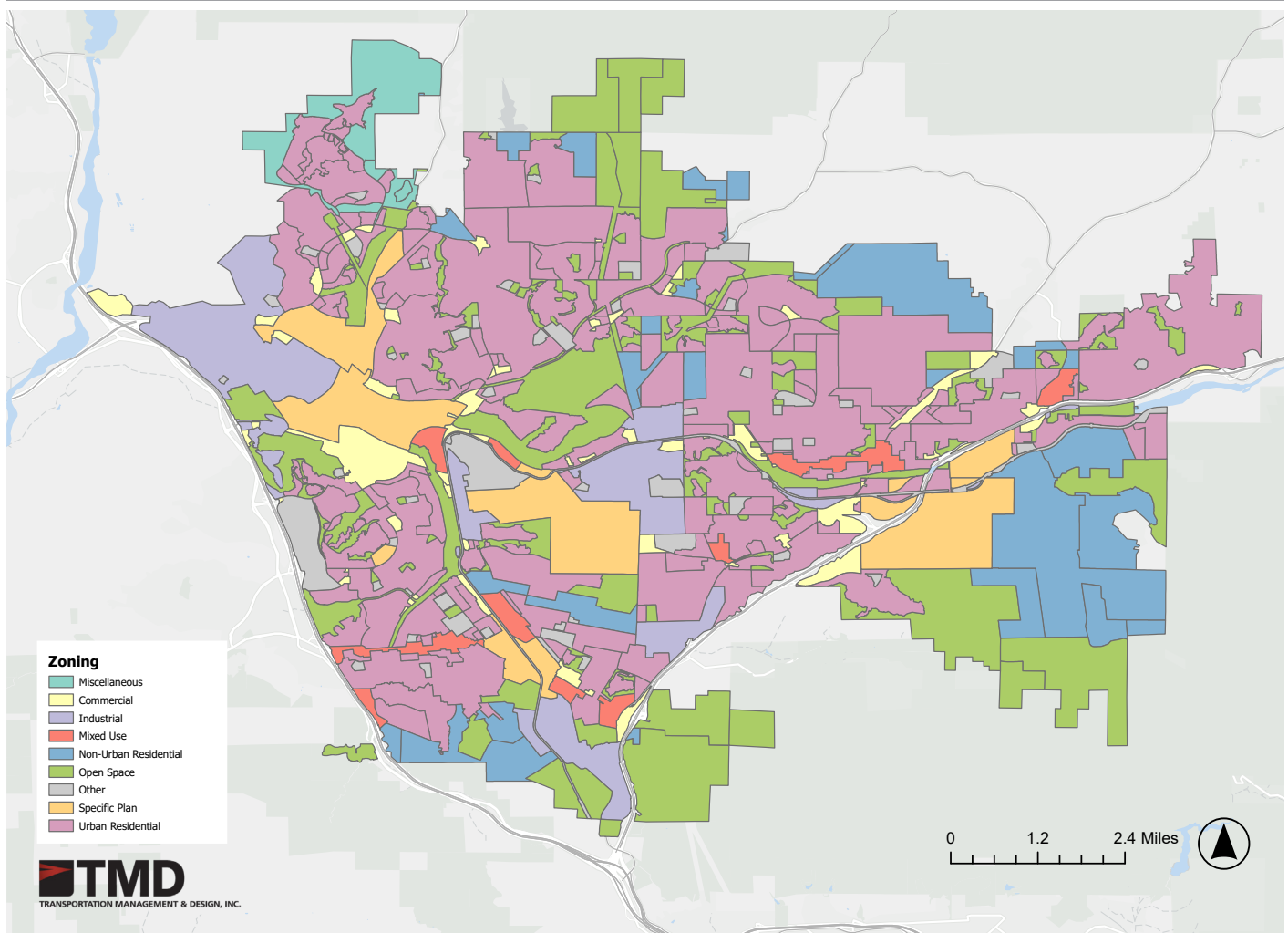
Transit is most successful when the routes serve a variety of destinations, including housing, job centers, grocery stores, medical facilities, social services, schools, and shopping malls. A route that travels entirely through a residential neighborhood or one that travels to a remote employer location will not carry many riders - due to a lack of diversity of destinations along the route.

CURRENT LAND USE

Santa Clarita's residential land use is dominated by areas zoned by the city as "Urban Residential," which includes both typical suburban single-family home densities and more compact zoning for multi-family residences. These areas are divided into five tiers ranging from two to 30 maximum dwelling units per acre. Residential areas at the City's periphery, zoned as "non-urban" range from 0.05 to one maximum dwelling units per acre.

Commercial, industrial, and mixed-use developments are primarily located along major corridors such as Railroad Avenue, Lyons Avenue, Soledad Canyon Road, Magic Mountain Parkway, and McBean Parkway. This concentration of jobs and key destinations can help to inform where SCT's routes should operate. While some portions of the service area have good jobs to housing ratios, there are limited portions of the City zoned for mixed use and residential developments are generally isolated from jobs and destinations. This separation of land uses makes it difficult for SCT to adequately serve all markets.

Figure 12: City of Santa Clarita Zoning Map



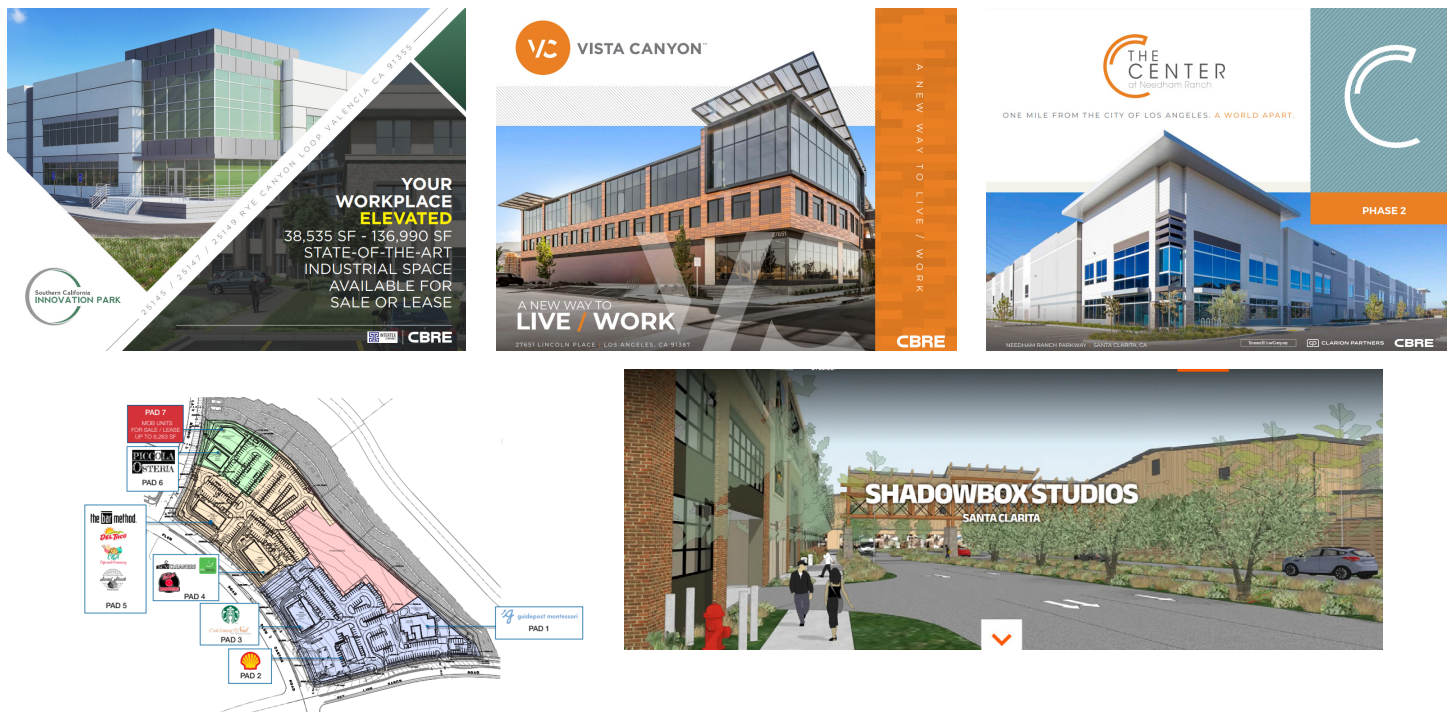
DEVELOPMENT TRENDS, AND RECENT AND PLANNED DEVELOPMENTS

As stated previously, the Santa Clarita Valley is undergoing a period of rapid growth and extensive development. The City's history of annexation – 41 instances since the City's incorporation in 1987 – has been a significant indicator of its expansion and growth. In 2018, the City's largest annexation incorporated the Plum Canyon, Skyline Ranch, and Sand Canyon areas. The most recent annexation included Tesoro Del Valle in 2022. The annexations, paired with the Five Points, Needham Ranch, and the Tesoro Highlands Community developments indicate that Santa Clarita's growth is directed outward.

The Valley has a number of developments that are in the planning phase, under review, or are currently under construction. These projects range from suburban neighborhoods and business parks to mixed-use developments. These developments are expected to change how SCT provides its service as new key destinations arise and travel patterns change.

The Vista Canyon, River Walk, Sand Canyon Plaza, and Valencia Town Center Redevelopment Plan are examples of a few future developments that may support increased transit usage.

Figure 13: Recent or Planned Development Examples



Santa Clarita is experiencing a massive increase in development that will inevitably change the City's mobility needs. Further, the pattern of isolated development provides challenges to SCT.

Population and Rider Markets

Population Trends

With the rapid growth of the Santa Clarita Valley, understanding changes in population are an important part of evaluating and improving the Santa Clarita Transit network. Capturing these changes for new and expanding communities within the Valley is imperative to ensuring equitable access to transit and allocation of City resources.

Table 5: Population Change by Neighborhood, 2010-2020

Communities	Population			
	2010	2020	Percent Change	Magnitude of Change*
Canyon Country	68,226	84,733	24%	↑
Castaic	10,657	10,907	2%	—
Newhall	25,027	24,607	-2%	—
Saugus	35,348	40,584	15%	↑
Valencia	63,267	71,959	14%	↑
Val Verde	8,462	10,860	28%	↑↑
Fair Oaks	4,831	8,832	83%	↑↑↑↑
Five Knolls	2,890	3,624	25%	↑
Five Points	N/A	684	N/A	Few / no residents in 2010.
Needham Ranch	1,814	2,383	31%	↑↑
Skyline	2,452	2,970	21%	↑
Stevenson Ranch	14,109	20,284	44%	↑↑↑↑
Tesoro	1,278	5,691	345%	↑↑↑↑↑↑
Vista Canyon	2,857	2,626	-8%	2021 pop. shown. Likely issue with Census data.
Study Area	241,218	290,744	21%	↑

*Each arrow signifies the magnitude of the population change from 2010 to 2020. A green arrow signifies a change of 20% while a gray arrow signifies a change of around 10%.

The Santa Clarita Transit service area is home to 289,591 people according to the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2020 Decennial Census, increasing by 20% since 2010. The following outlines current and past population counts for Santa Clarita’s communities:

PAST TRENDS

Comparatively, Los Angeles County as a whole has seen a 2% increase in population while California has had a 6% increase from 2010 to 2020. With such rapid growth, Santa Clarita should continuously evaluate its fixed route transit and other mobility offerings to ensure they are still meeting the needs of residents, workers, and visitors.

FUTURE TRENDS

According to the Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency’s 2020 Urban Water Management Plan, the population is expected to grow at an average of 1.3% per year. By 2050, the plan suggests that the Valley population will reach 432,200 people, a 50% increase from Santa Clarita’s population in 2021.

This is slightly lower than the 2011 “One Valley One Vision” Plan, a joint effort of the City of Santa Clarita and Los Angeles County, which projected higher average population growth at 1.5% to 1.6% per year. Based on zoning at that time, that plan projected the Valley population would reach between 460,000-485,000 people at full build-out. With population growth averaging 2% per year between 2010 and 2020, the City has clearly outpaced the 2011 projections.



Santa Clarita’s population is growing faster than Los Angeles County, and the state, as a whole.

This brings new and changing mobility needs, and creates challenges for SCT to balance service expansion with funding constraints.



Demographic Groups

Table 6: Demographic Share by Neighborhood

Communities	Senior (Ages 65+)	Persons With Disabilities	Youth (Under Age 18)	Young Adults (Ages 18-24)	Low-Income Population	Minorities	Zero-Vehicle Households
Canyon Country	11%	11%	26%	8%	11%	40%	3%
Castaic	8%	6%	17%	4%	5%	21%	1%
Newhall	10%	8%	30%	11%	12%	44%	1%
Saugus	12%	7%	26%	7%	4%	32%	2%
Valencia	14%	10%	23%	10%	5%	40%	1%
Val Verde	10%	9%	26%	8%	2%	43%	1%
Fair Oaks	10%	3%	28%	8%	5%	47%	0%
Five Knolls	7%	12%	30%	5%	14%	51%	1%
Five Points	3%	9%	48%	2%	5%	74%	0%
Needham Ranch	19%	10%	17%	12%	8%	39%	1%
Skyline	11%	11%	23%	12%	11%	49%	0%
Stevenson Ranch	10%	11%	26%	7%	6%	50%	1%
Tesoro	6%	4%	34%	7%	2%	49%	0%
Vista Canyon	4%	9%	33%	11%	5%	43%	2%
Study Area	11%	10%	25%	8%	8%	40%	1%

While population growth increases the potential transit rider base, it does not directly translate to a higher demand for transit. It is essential to consider other demographic factors that are more closely tied to transit demand. Based on past research and transit industry experience, there are certain demographic groups that are seen as more likely to use transit, based on age, economic status, private vehicle access, and other factors. Actual transit customer demographics and incomes vary between transit agencies and markets, but in more suburban U.S. transit markets where private automobile trips are the dominant travel mode, transit use generally increases among those without access to a car due to economic circumstances, or who cannot drive due to age or disability.

The following seven sections focus on demographic groups that may be more likely to use Santa Clarita's transit network:



Seniors



Persons with disabilities



Youth



Young adults and college students



Low-income households



Minority households



Zero-vehicle households

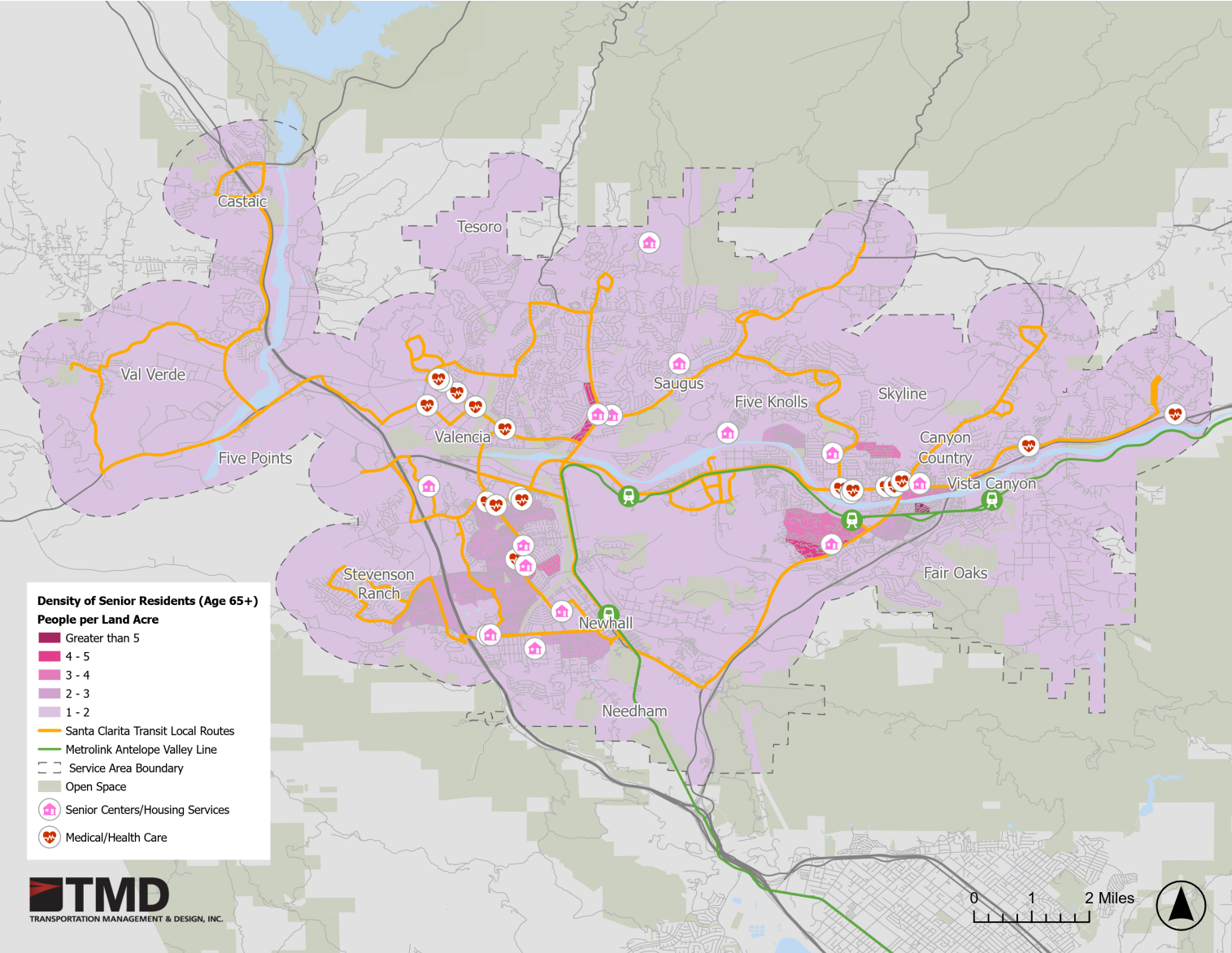
Seniors

Many seniors may no longer be able to drive, or they may choose not to, meaning they are more reliant on transit to meet their mobility needs. **11%** of the SCT service area population is over the age of 65 with the largest concentration per capita in the communities of **Needham Ranch, Valencia, and Saugus**.

While Santa Clarita’s share of seniors is lower than the regional average of 13%, according to the City’s 2023 Housing Element update to the General Plan, they are still a large population with unique mobility concerns. As the local population ages, it will be important for Santa Clarita Transit to understand where seniors live (whether in dedicated senior housing or in concentrations aging in place) and ensure their mobility needs are met.



Figure 14: Santa Clarita Transit Service Area Senior Population Density



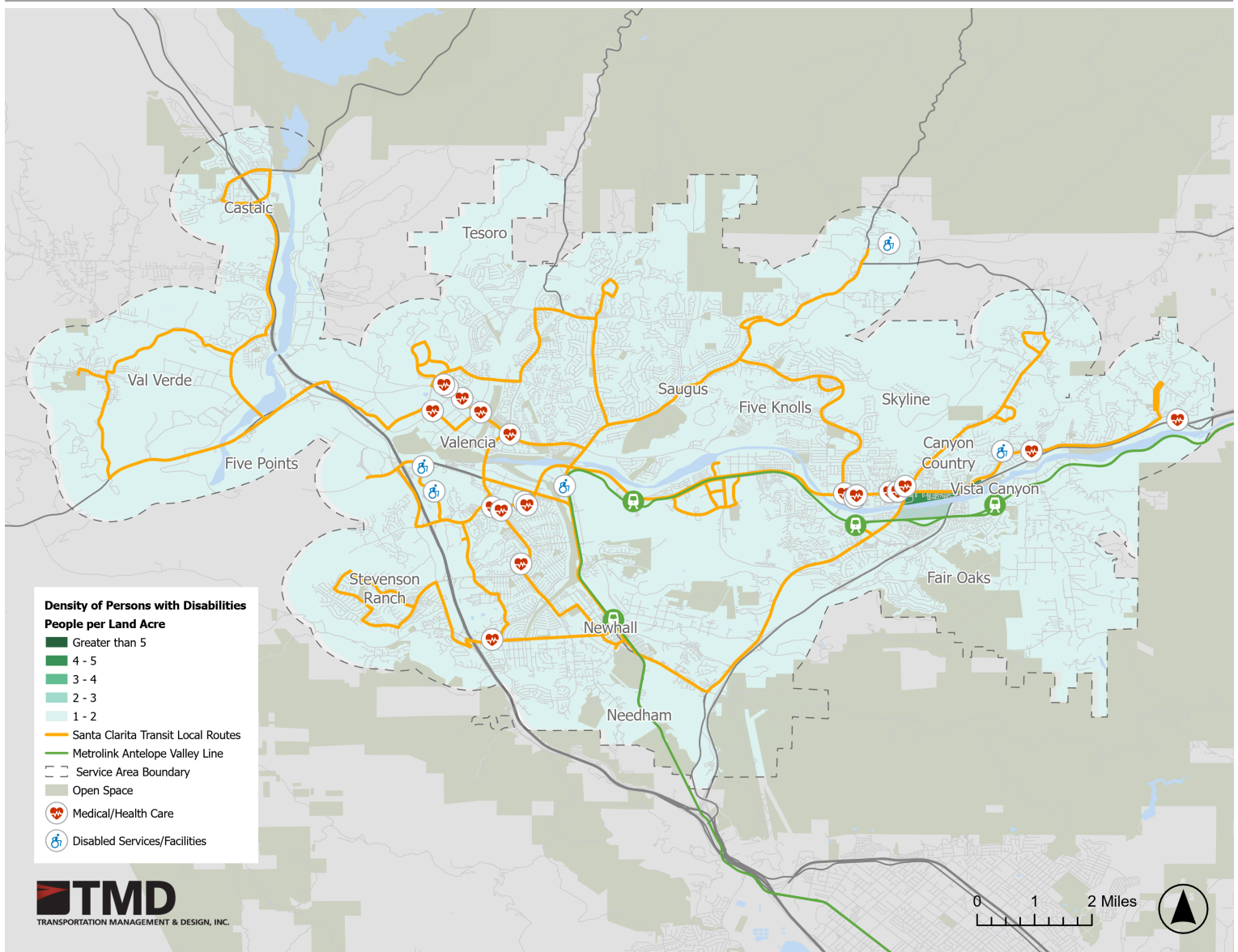
Persons with Disabilities

Persons with disabilities may have mobility or vision impairments that make it difficult to drive, so public transportation becomes the primary mode of travel for many. Within the SCT service area, the population of persons with disabilities is almost **10%** of the total population. **Five Knolls, Canyon Country, Skyline, and Stevenson Ranch** have the largest concentration per capita.

SCT provides a demand response service, Dial-A-Ride, for seniors and eligible persons with disabilities within city limits and within unincorporated areas served by SCT local routes. ADA paratransit service for the latter is operated under contract with Los Angeles County's Access Services, providing rides within three-quarters of a mile of all fixed route services during all hours of operation. SCT's Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) meets regularly to review and provide guidance to constituents on programs and services for seniors and persons with disabilities.

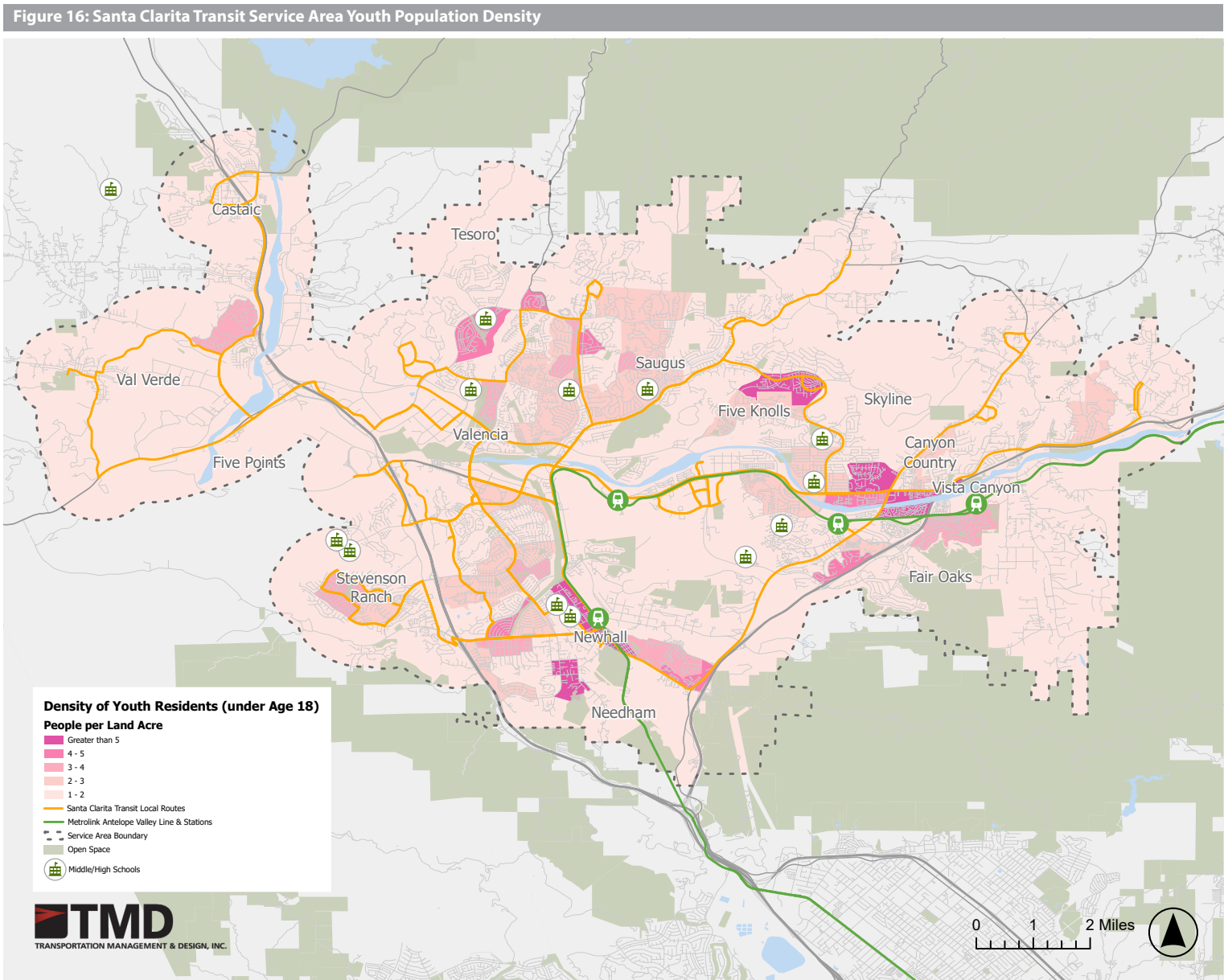
SCT has established a Transit Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC), which provides guidance on the quality of its programs and service for seniors and persons with disabilities.

Figure 15: Santa Clarita Transit Service Area Persons with Disabilities Density



Youth

The youth, consisting of **25%** of the SCT service area population, often rely on public transit as they may be too young to drive or do not have someone to drive them at all times. The largest concentration per capita of youth are in the **Five Points, Tesoro, and Vista Canyon** communities. SCT currently offers supplemental fixed route tripper service on school days to connect residential areas with the area’s 13 middle and high schools. The William S. Hart Union High School District only offers school bus service to select groups, making SCT’s school service an important part of their weekday mobility. In fact, SCT’s school service routes are the most productive in the system. The TDP will closely consider this important community service, and how SCT can best serve the City’s young people.



Continue to page 21.

Given Santa Clarita’s position as a family-friendly community, there is unsurprisingly a large share of people under the age of 18. In fact, Santa Clarita has a higher youth concentration than the regional average of 23%, according to the City’s 2023 Housing Element update to the General Plan. Middle and high school students comprise an important part of SCT’s current bus ridership when school is in session, making the supplemental school day routes the most productive in the system.

As more of the community’s children reach secondary school age, it will be important to continue to provide safe, reliable transportation to and from school. Additionally, with Santa Clarita’s warm climate, extensive walking and biking paths, and the rise of electric bicycles and other active mobility options, it will be important to consider multimodal connections with transit and ensuring safety and convenience for youth mobility needs.



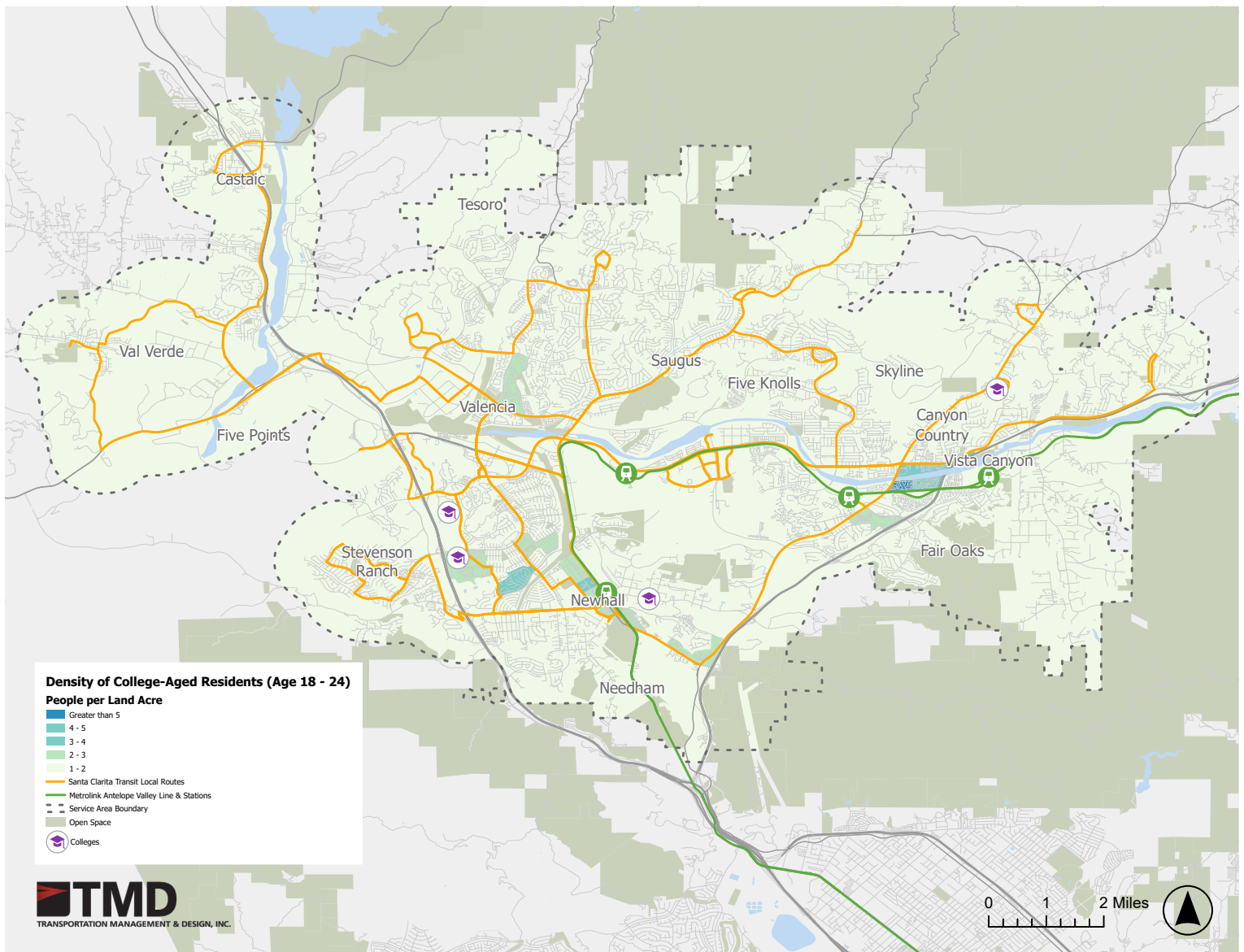
Young Adult / College-Aged

Typically, the young adult population (ages 18-24) are attending college or are early in their career. Nationally, access to a car and driver's licensure have dropped for this population in recent decades, partially due to economic factors, making this group more likely to utilize public transit. This is especially true for those attending college. Overall, **8%** of the SCT service area is between the ages of 18 and 24. The largest concentration per capita of young adults are seen in **Needham Ranch, Skyline, Newhall,** and **Vista Canyon**. Specifically, the largest densities are seen around the College of the Canyons' various campuses and The Master's University. In addition to frequent and reliable service throughout the day, SCT should provide the same level of service during the evenings and weekends to best accommodate the typical lifestyle of young adults.



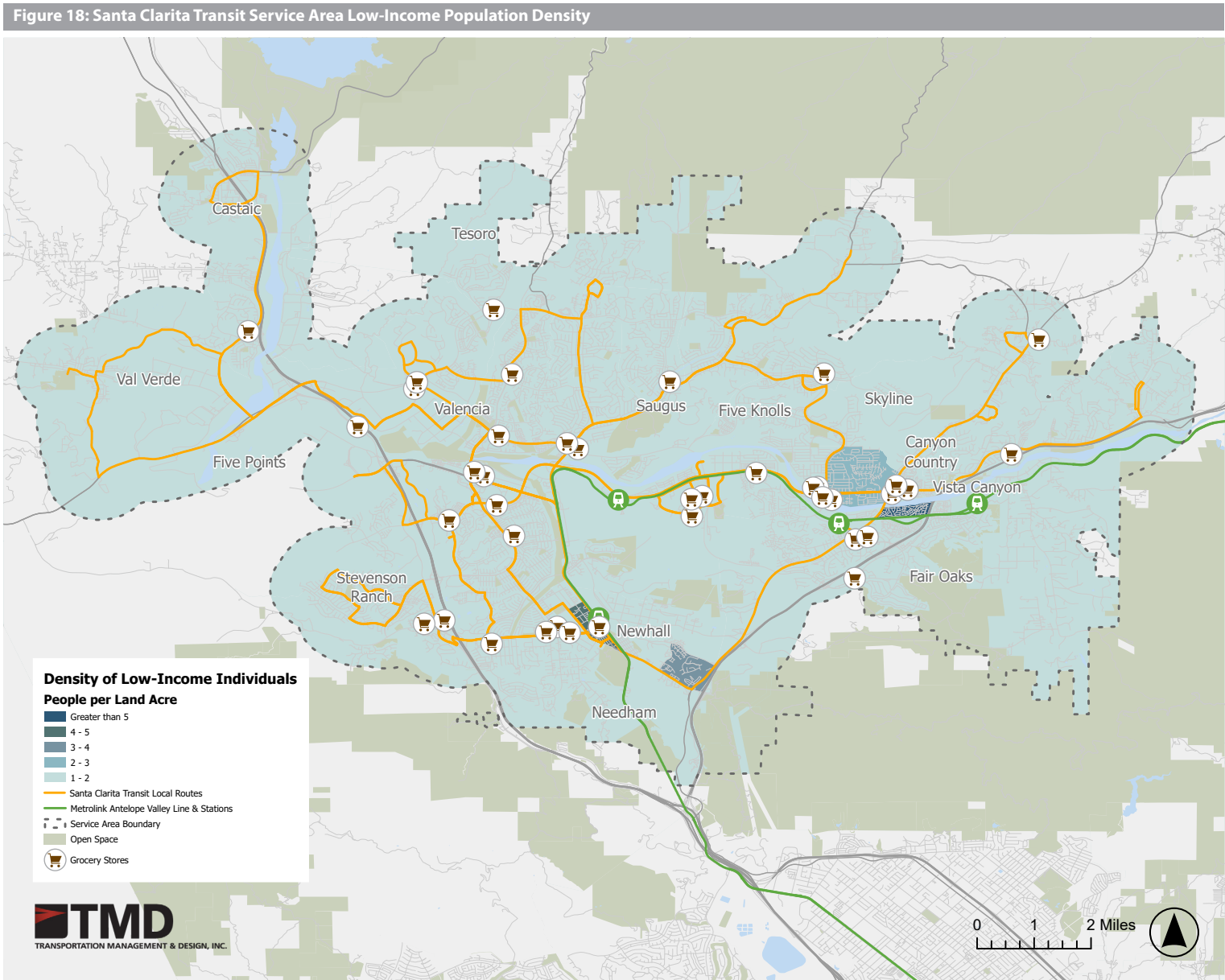
Earlier morning and later evening service to the College of the Canyons to better align with class times was a concern raised at the TDP's Round I stakeholder meeting in November 2023.

Figure 17: Santa Clarita Transit Service Area Young Adult Population Density



Low-Income Population

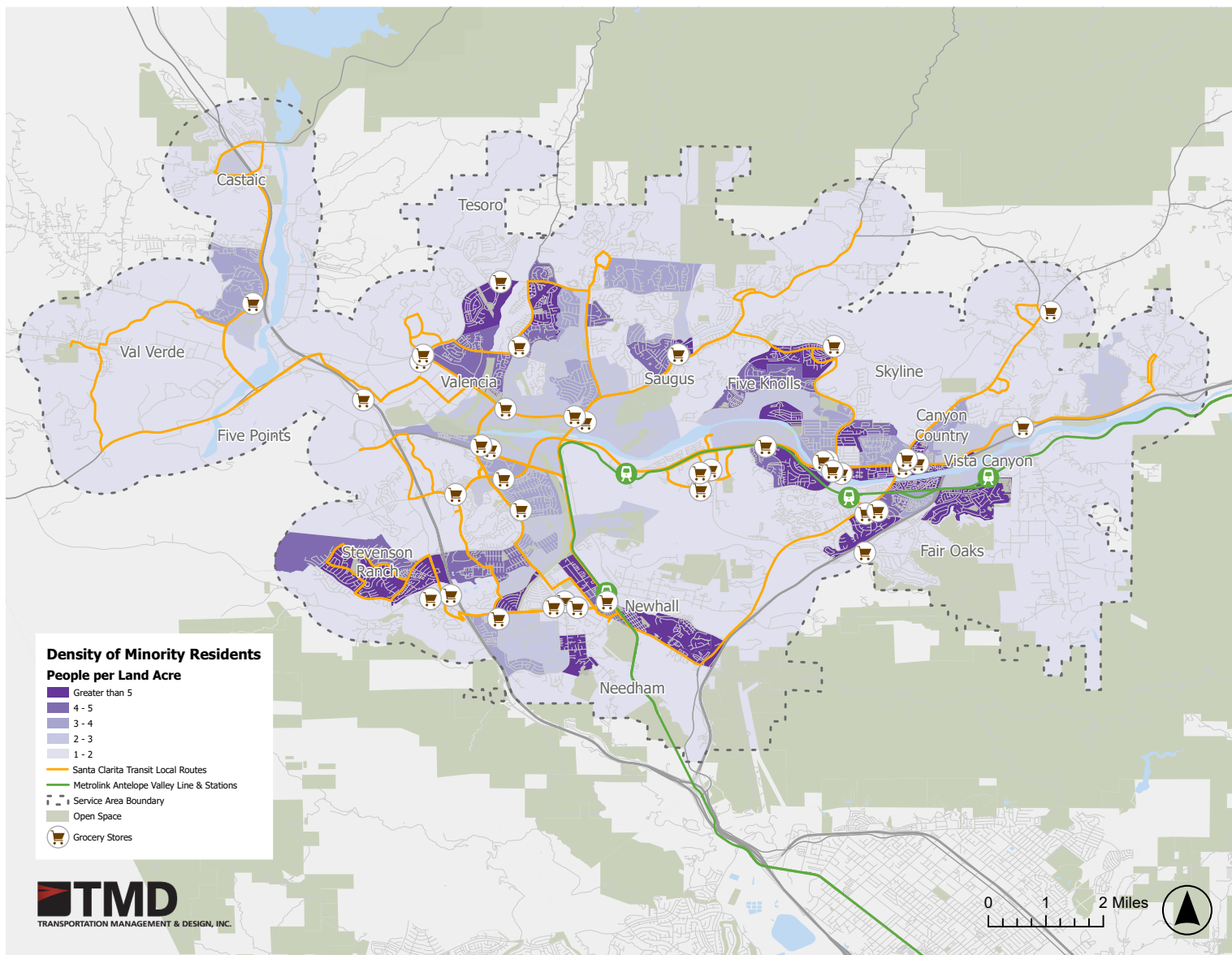
Owning a car is expensive. Costs such as gas, insurance, and maintenance are a huge barrier between low-income individuals and reliable transportation. Consequently, low-income individuals may not have a car, or enough cars for all household members, and are more likely to take transit. The low-income population represents a relatively low proportion of the SCT service area at almost **8%** of the service area population. The largest concentration per capita of low-income individuals are in the **Five Knolls, Canyon Country, and Skyline** communities. Providing reliable transportation and access to important education, job, health, and social service hubs has been proven to be the key factor in upward mobility.



Minorities

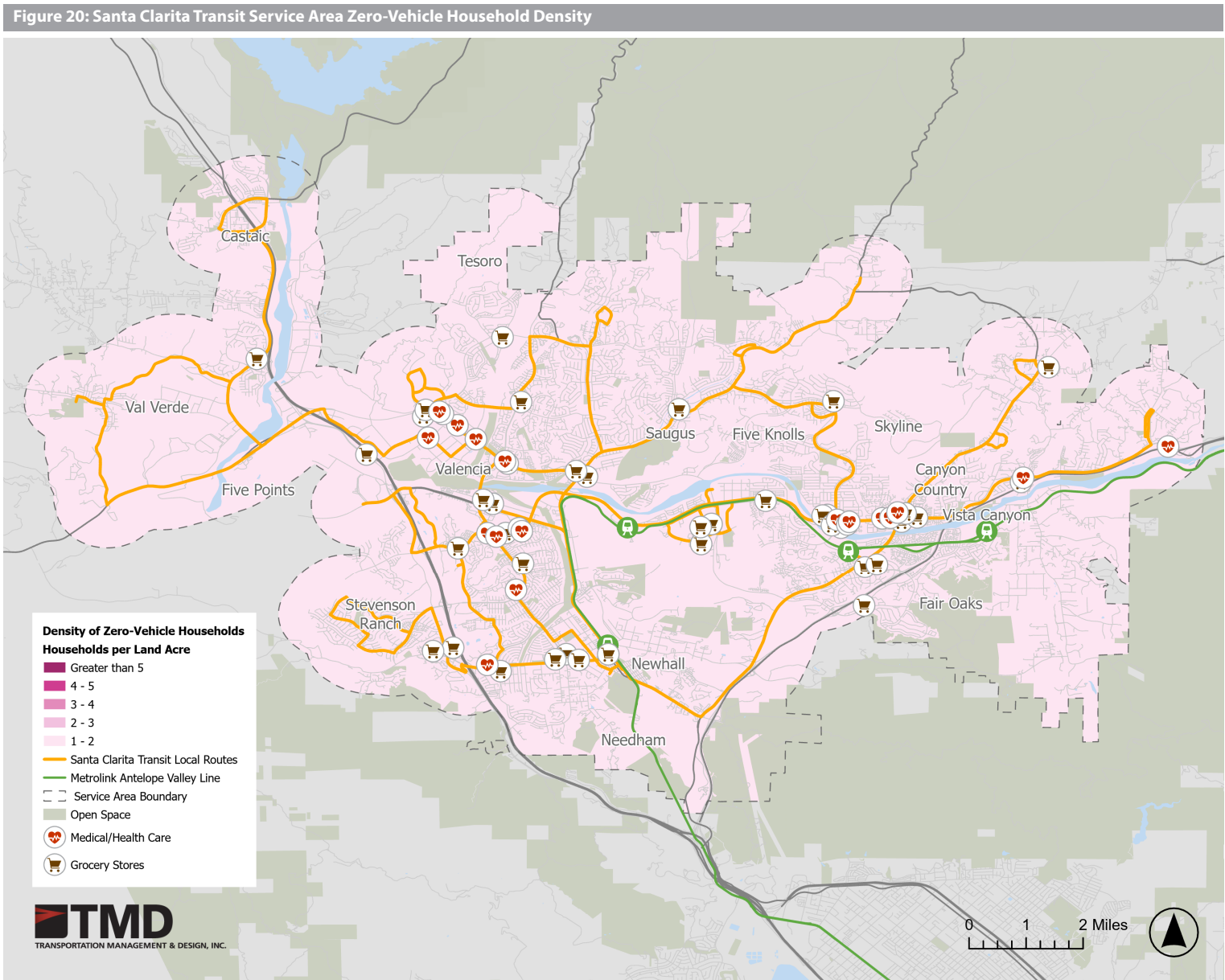
While the distribution of minorities is not a direct indicator of higher transit usage, it is critical to identify for conducting effective public outreach and ensuring equitable project recommendations that adhere to Title VI standards. Almost **40%** of the SCT service area population identify as a minority with the largest concentration per capita in the communities of **Five Points, Five Knolls, Stevenson Ranch, Skyline, and Tesoro**.

Figure 19: Santa Clarita Transit Service Area Minority Population Density



Zero-Vehicle Households

Lack of access to a car is one of the top indicators of a person’s likelihood to utilize transit – especially for destinations beyond walking or biking distance. With the size of the Santa Clarita Valley and separation of uses in most areas, this becomes an even more important consideration for SCT. Overall, zero-vehicle households, at 1%, represent the lowest proportion of the SCT service area population among the demographic groups analyzed. The largest concentrations per capita are in the Canyon Country, Saugus, and Vista Canyon communities. Similarly with low-income households, providing reliable transportation and access to important destinations is the key factor for upward mobility and prosperity. Even though these numbers indicate that car access is nearly ubiquitous among Santa Clarita Valley households, not all residents may have access to a vehicle at all times and providing quality public mobility to all communities lessens the economic burden of vehicle ownership and maintenance for lower-income households.



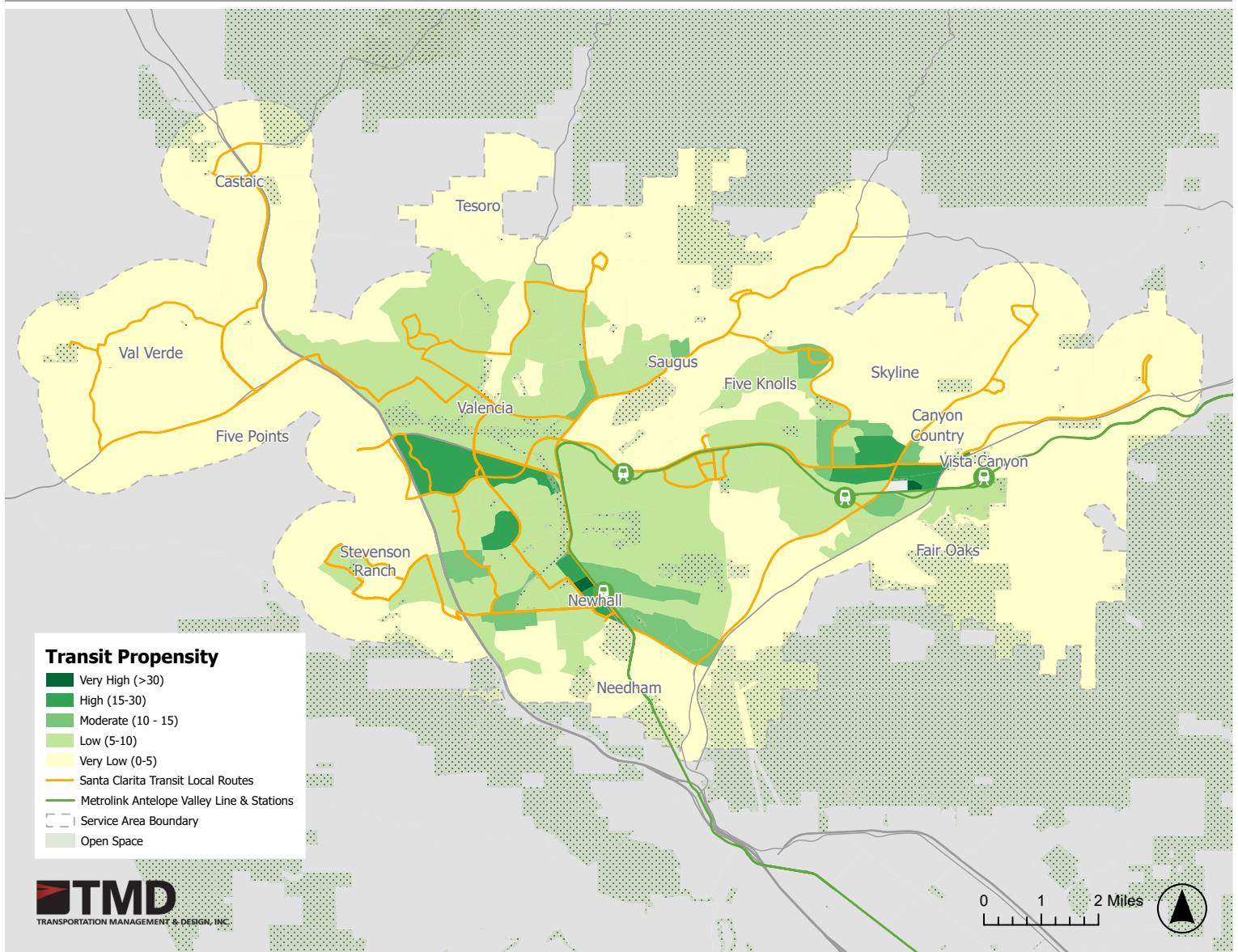
Transit Propensity

The transit propensity analysis creates a comprehensive community demographic profile that highlights which of Santa Clarita's block groups and communities have the highest likelihood of using transit. The profile synthesizes the density of demographic groups most likely to use transit, overall population density, and weekly passenger boardings in each census block group to determine this propensity score, which is on a scale of 1-100. Each block group is indexed against the others and assigned points based on its rank for each criteria and that criteria's weight. A block group that scores very highly overall would be one that ranks highly among the others across all demographic densities, overall population density, and current ridership. So while the transit propensity score does



The transit propensity scoring is not based on a national average - it is a unique analysis based off the relative geography. Scores should not be compared against other service areas or between different geographies.

Figure 21: Santa Clarita Transit Service Area Transit Propensity



not compare Santa Clarita's block groups to a fixed national scale or ideal transit market characteristics, it does help to highlight where transit may generate more ridership relative to the rest of the service area.

On a census block group level, there are nine block groups with a transit propensity score over 20; furthermore, no block group scored over 60. These areas are located in **Canyon Country** (along the Santa Clara River, Soledad Canyon Road, and Sierra Highway), **Downtown Newhall**, and around the **Valencia Town Center**; these areas are likely to benefit the most from service improvements. Placing a significant focus on areas with high transit propensity is an important part of ensuring an efficient – and effective – use of resources.



The Santa Clarita Valley is a diverse community, offering pockets of density with the potential for efficient transit investment and increased ridership.



Employment (LEHD data)

With the development of new business parks and commercial centers within the Valley, there is an expected increase in not only the number of jobs, but the amount of travel to these new job centers both from within the SCT service area and coming from elsewhere in the region. Documenting these changes and identifying trends will help SCT be better prepared to serve a potential increase in transit usage for work and current riders' evolving mobility needs.

Figure 22: Santa Clarita Transit Service Area Employment Inflow/Outflow

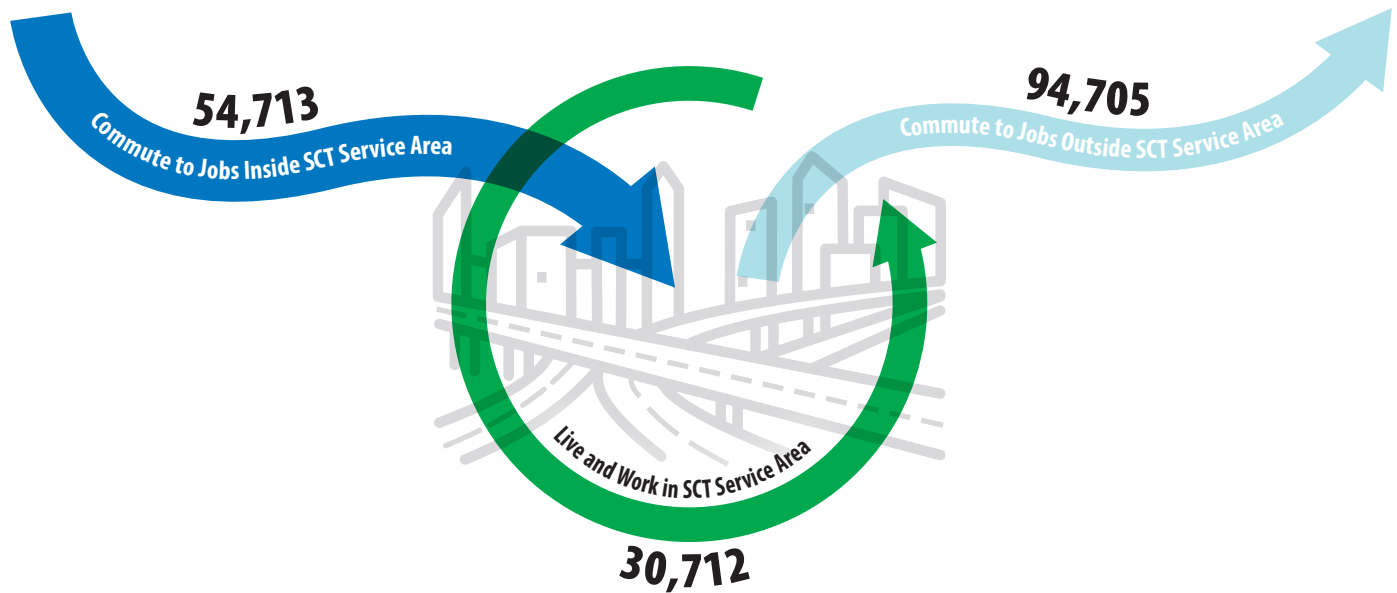


Table 7: Top Employment Sectors Within the Service Area

Sector Name	Share
Health Care and Social Assistance	13.8%
Manufacturing	13.4%
Retail Trade	11.5%
Educational Services	10.0%
Accommodation and Food Services	9.6%
Construction	7.8%
Administration & Support, Waste Management and Remediation	7.7%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	6.4%
Transportation and Warehousing	4.3%
Wholesale Trade	3.7%
Other Services (excluding Public Administration)	2.6%
Finance and Insurance	2.0%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	1.9%

According to 2020 data from the U.S. Census Bureau's Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) Origin-Destination Employment Statistics, there are 85,425 people employed within the SCT service area—the **majority of which come from outside the area**. SCT has an important role in providing transportation for these workers, as **77% of jobs are within a quarter mile**, or a five-minute walk of an SCT bus stop. Notably, there are 94,705 people who live in the SCT service area and commute outside the area.

Figure 23: Santa Clarita Transit Service Area Job Density

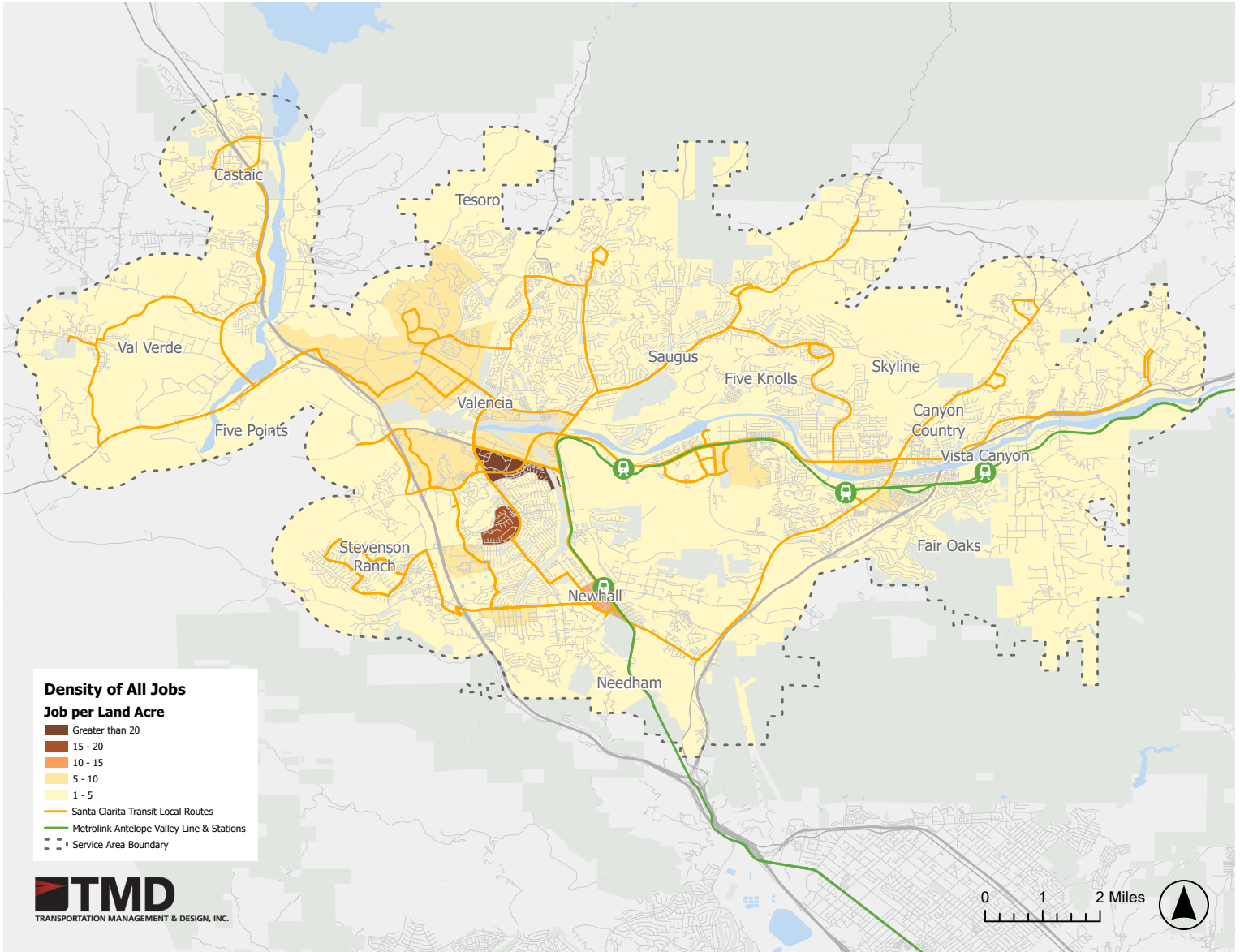


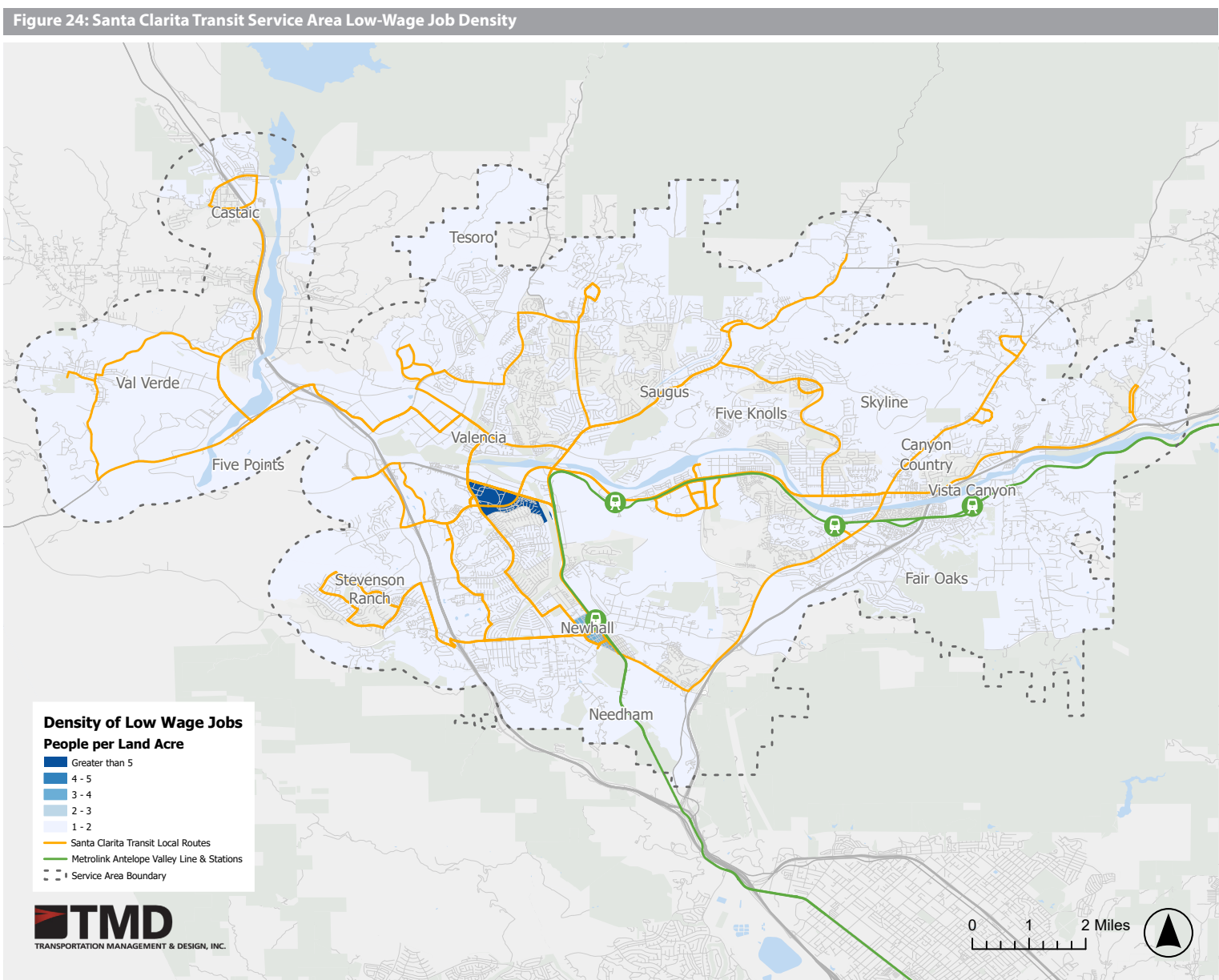
Table 8: Top Employers

Top Employment Centers	Total Jobs
Six Flags Magic Mountain	2,500
William S. Hart Union School District	2,115
Henry Mayo Newhall Hospital	1,775
Saugus Union School District	1,483
College of the Canyons	1,350
US Postal Service	1,203
Princess Cruises	1,100
City of Santa Clarita	1,098
The Master's University	916
Newhall School District	808

JOBS DENSITY

The service area has an average job density of **1.6 jobs per acre** (1,043/square mile). The Valencia and Newhall communities have above average job densities; downtown Newhall, the Old Orchard area, Henry Mayo Newhall Memorial Hospital, and the Valencia Town Center are the major hotspots. The McBean Parkway, Valencia Blvd, and Magic Mountain Parkway corridors have the highest job densities in the service area and are home to some of the service area's top employers.

The top ten employers in the service area provide jobs for between 800 and 2,500 employees and account for almost **17%** of the total jobs in the area. The vast majority of these employers are located in the **Valencia** and **Newhall** communities. The top employment sectors range from manufacturing, health care and social assistance, retail trade, and educational services.



The majority of low-wage jobs (paying less than \$1,250/month) are more concentrated in downtown **Newhall** and around **Valencia Town Center**. Major employment sectors for low-wage jobs include health care and social assistance, accommodation and food services, and retail trade. Identifying hot spots of low-wage jobs are important as these employees may be more likely to commute to work using transit as opposed to those with higher paying jobs.

SCT should review its commuter routes and connections with other services to ensure they align with work travel patterns and demand.

Travel Patterns (Replica)

Advancements in data collection and technology have made it possible to better understand and document the nuances of travel behavior more than ever before. **Replica**, an online software program, utilizes location-based data from cell phones, credit card transaction data, U.S. Census data, and other sources to provide comprehensive and representative databases of regional and local travel patterns.

Replica produces datasets that highlight **when** people travel, **where** they begin and end their trip, their **trip purpose**, and **how far** they travel. These data records, numbered in the hundreds of thousands, provide insights on whether SCT is providing service that aligns with the mobility needs of its current and potential customers. With a **17% increase in daily weekday trips** taken from 2019 to 2022, matching the changing needs becomes increasingly important. This Market Assessment reviews Replica travel pattern data (trips that begin in the SCT service area) from average weekdays and weekends in Fall 2019 and Fall 2022.

Comparing all travel to SCT service hours provides insight into whether SCT is operating their service at the right time and at the correct level of service. To better respond to the changing travel behavior, SCT should reevaluate its distribution of service to ensure that customer demand can be adequately served.

How have travel patterns changed from 2019 to 2022?

Weekday: There was a slight shift in travel from the morning hours to the evening. Overall, time of day travel has not substantially changed, as travel times “peak” around 7:00 AM and 3:00 PM – aligning with the traditional peak travel times associated with the morning commute and when school ends.

Weekend: Similarly to weekdays, time of day travel has not substantially changed, but there was a slight shift in travel from the morning and midday hours to the evening.

DOES SCT’S SERVICE MATCH WITH OVERALL TRAVEL PATTERNS?

Comparing the percent of trips that end within the SCT service area (internal trips) or end outside of the SCT service area (external trips) with the percent of SCT local or commuter service provides insights into whether SCT is offering their service when most people are looking to travel.

Weekday: SCT’s **local service is generally well-matched** with internal travel demand. However, service is slightly over-provided in the mid to late mornings and under-provided in the late evenings, relative to general public internal trips. SCT’s **commuter service shows a much greater discrepancy** between service and demand when considering all external trips leaving or coming to the SCT service area. Commuter bus service is vastly over-provided in the traditional peak travel times and under-provided during the midday period when only one route (Route 757) operates. Comparing SCT commuter service just with combined outbound work-purpose trips and inbound home-purpose trips, the data shows that many commuters are traveling earlier than most of SCT’s AM or PM peak commuter trips are provided. There is also a higher volume of inbound home-purpose trips in the evening than SCT service.

Figure 25: Weekday Internal Trips (Replica) vs. SCT Local Service

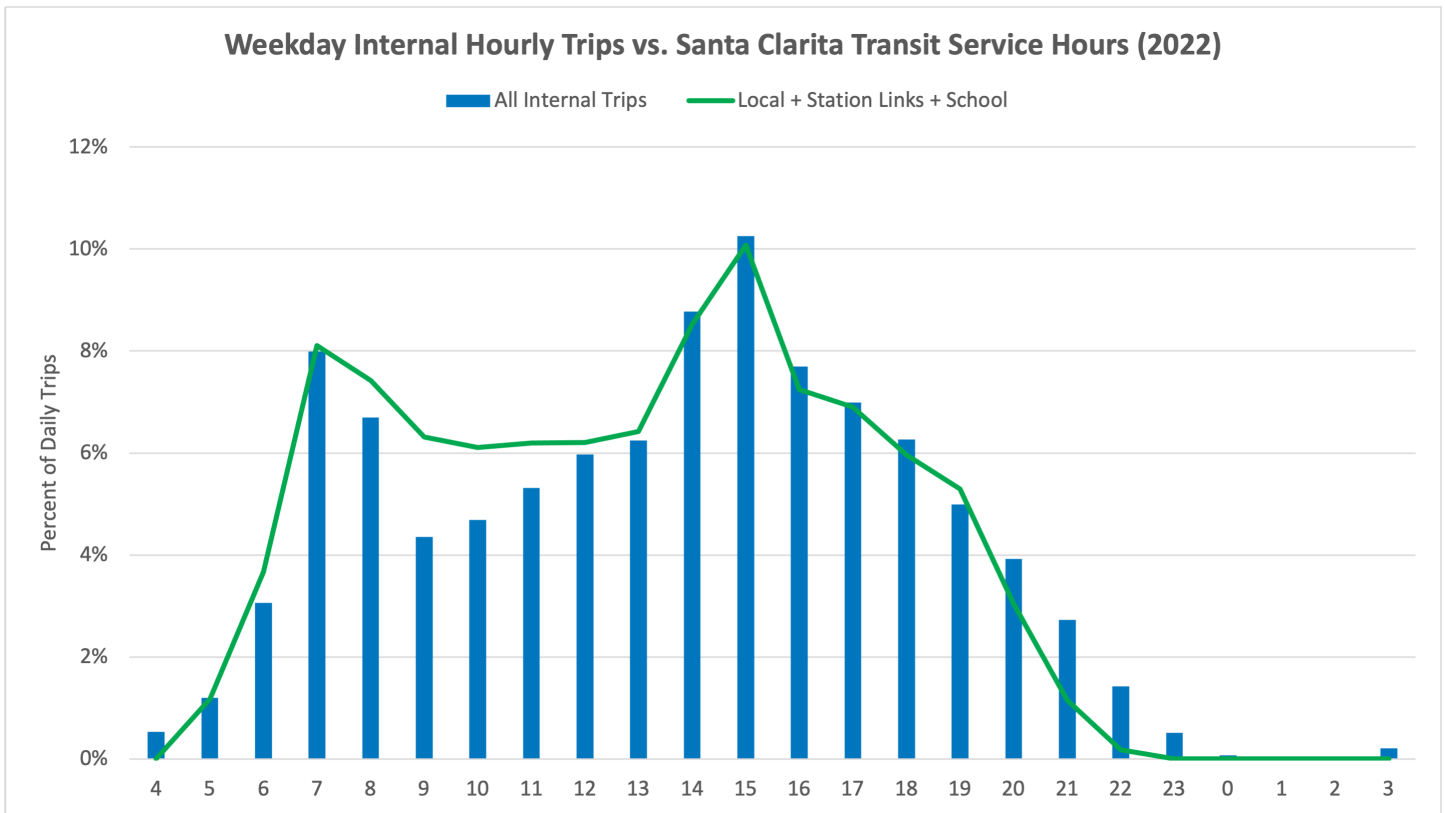
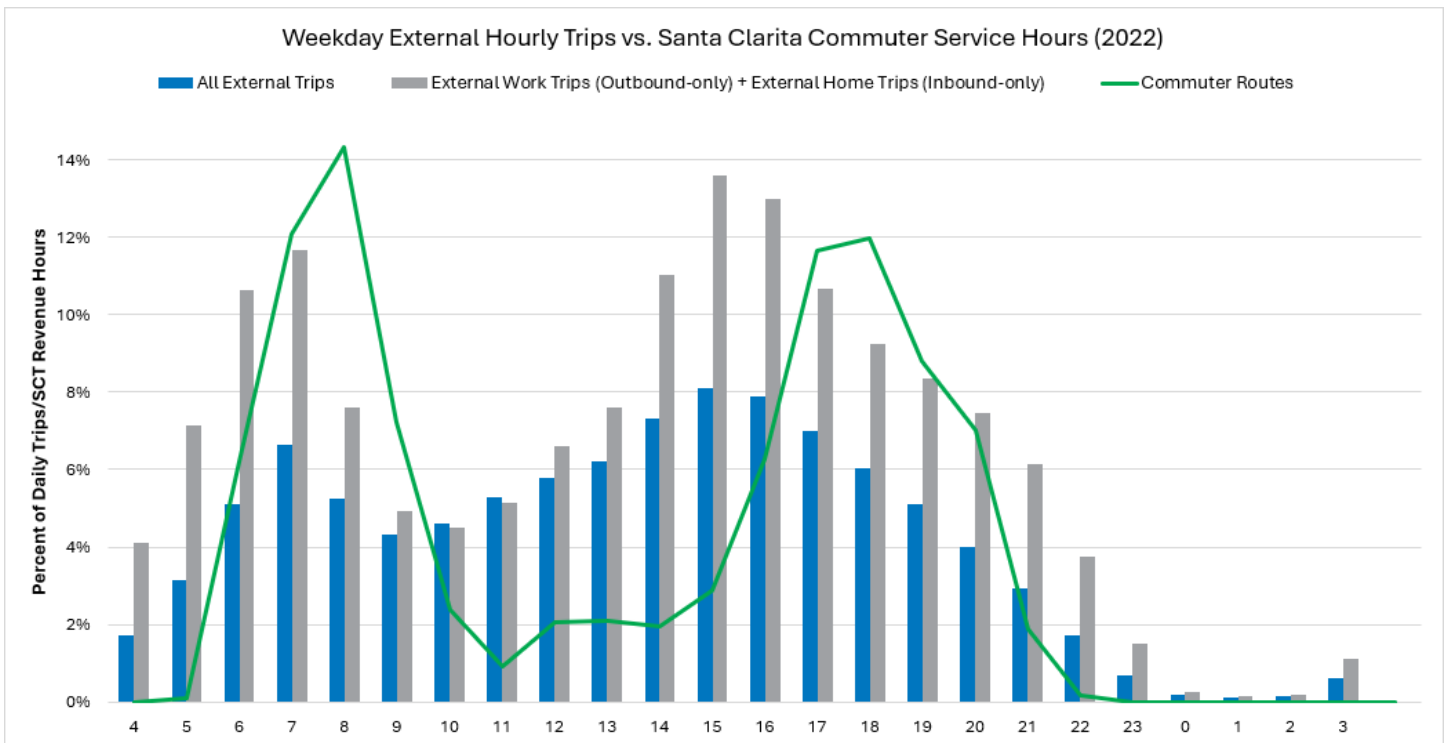
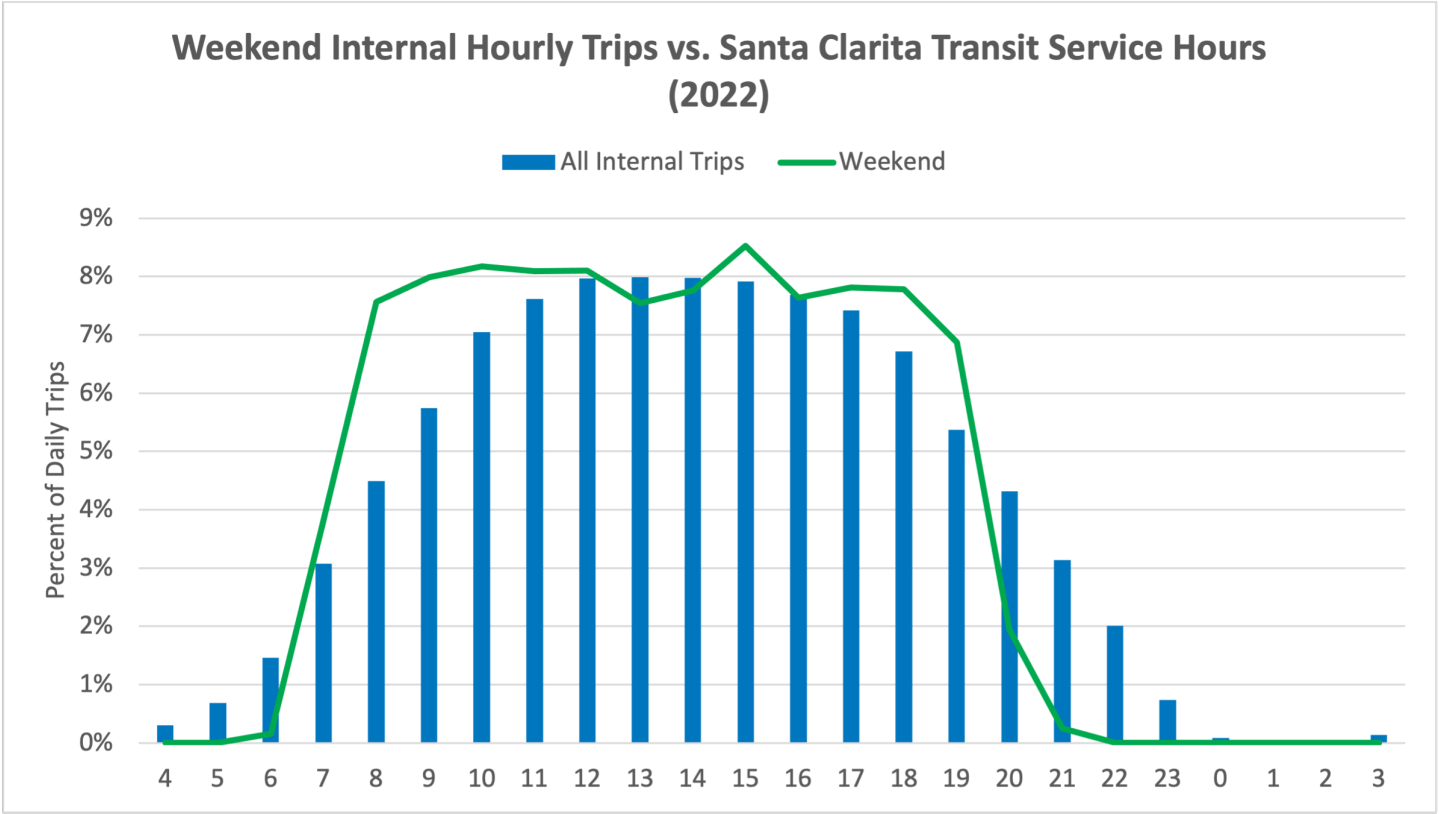


Figure 26: Weekday External Trips (Replica) vs. SCT Commuter Service



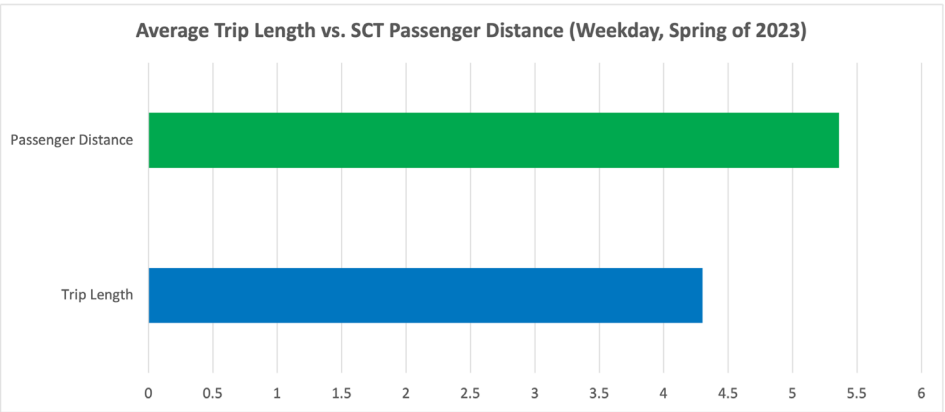
Weekend: SCT’s local service is **not as well-matched** with internal travel demand. Most people are traveling slightly later in the day relative to the SCT service volumes, meaning service is over-provided in the morning and under-provided in the late evening.

Figure 27: Weekend Internal Trips (Replica) vs. SCT Service



Trip Length

Figure 28: Weekday Trip Length, General Travel vs. SCT Riders



Between 2019 and 2022, average trip lengths have decreased. This trend is reflected further when accounting for time-of-day travel, where trip length is much longer in the late evenings and early mornings. Notably, travel distance from 12 AM to 2 AM has seen a **substantial increase**.



The average trip length for all travelers within the service area is about a mile shorter than the average distance an SCT rider travels. This suggests that residents may be using other modes to travel shorter distances. SCT can meet this demand by increasing frequency and reliability.

Trip Purpose

Analyzing trip purpose can provide insight into why people are traveling and help SCT to better match its mobility products to customers’ needs. For weekday trips internal to the SCT service area in Fall 2022, nearly 40% of general public trips were to shopping, restaurant, or personal errand destinations. This was followed by return trips home from other destinations at 35%. Trips to work or school each represented 7-8% of weekday travel.

Average trip distance varies widely with purpose and whether trips are internal or external to the service area. Among internal trips, average distance ranges from 3 to 5 miles across all categories indicating that common destinations are well distributed throughout the City and residents do not have to travel farther for one type of activity than another. There is a much greater difference in trip lengths between purposes when considering all trips, including those leaving the Santa Clarita Valley. School and shopping/restaurant/errands trips remain under 10 miles, due to the presence of these destinations locally. However, average distances for recreation, social, work, and other trips are much higher. The average distance for work trips increases to 18 miles when considering external and internal trips. This is similar to the drive from Old Town Newhall to North Hollywood or Chatsworth. But as it is an average, there are many workers who commute farther distances to or from other areas in Los Angeles County. As indicated in this chapter’s Employment section, most Santa Clarita residents commute outside the city for work and most Santa Clarita workers commute from elsewhere.

Figure 29: Share of Internal Trips by Purpose

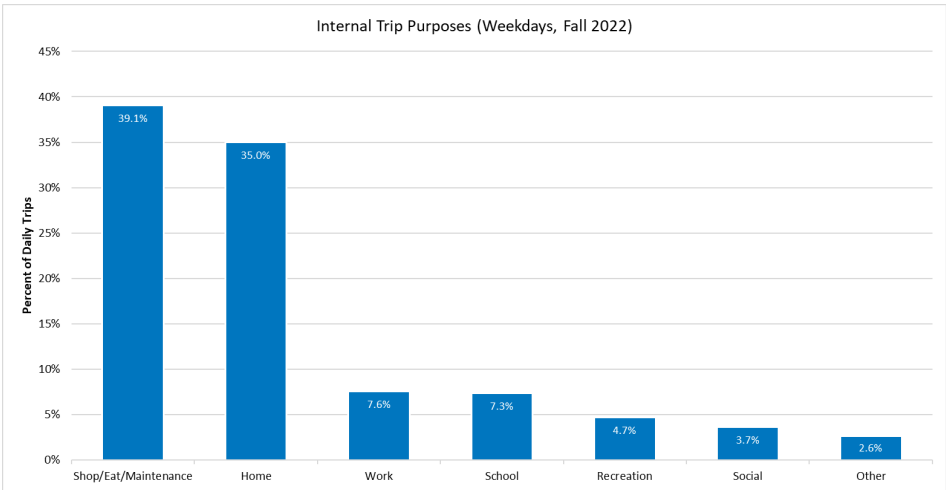
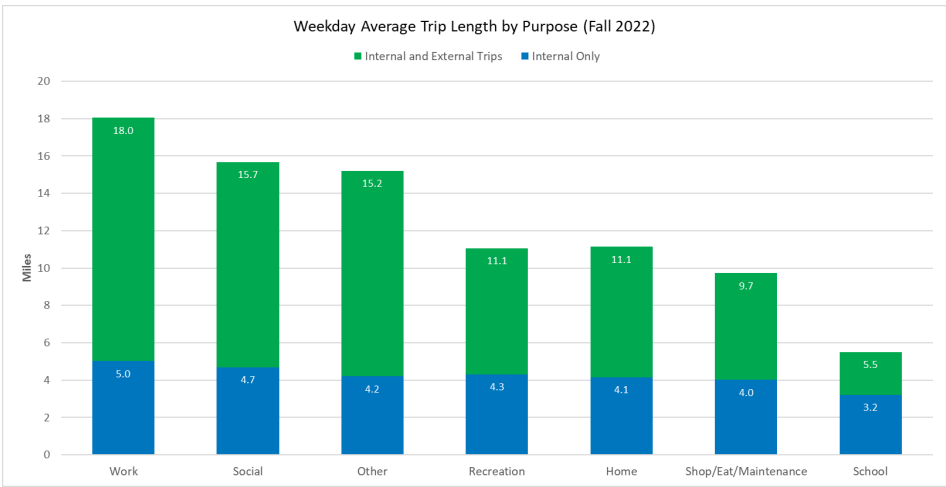


Figure 30: Average Trip length by Purpose



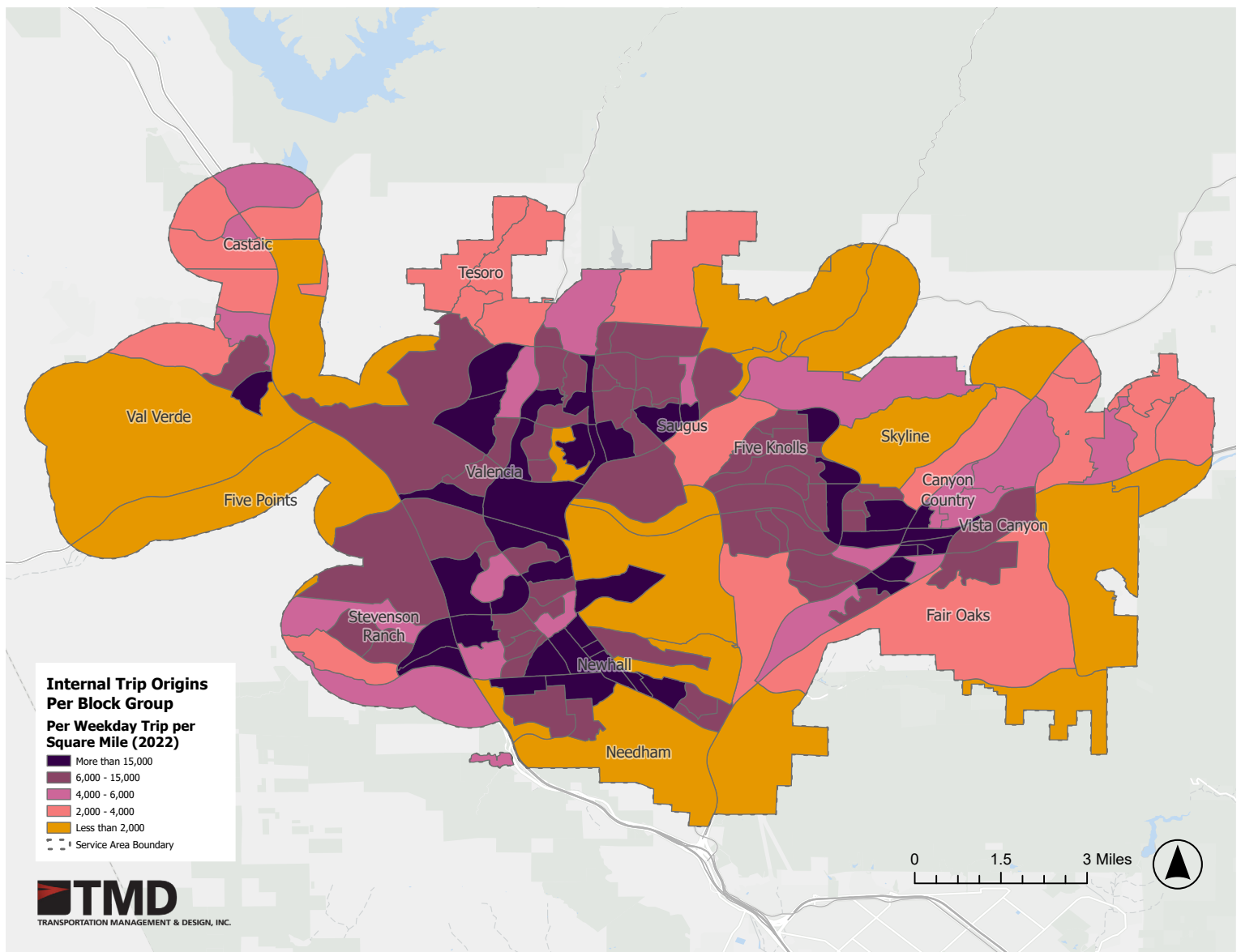
Travel Flows

Identifying predominant travel flows is an important factor for determining the location and intensity of service.

INTERNAL TRAVEL FLOWS

Internal trips dominate the balance of travel, consisting of about 77% of all travel in 2022. The majority of internal trips stay within Valencia, followed by trips within Canyon Country. The largest number of internal trips from one community to another are between Valencia and Saugus and between Valencia and Canyon Country. Unsurprisingly, these 3 communities saw the largest increase in trip destinations between 2019 and 2022. Notably, Tesoro, Five Knolls, and Skyline were the only communities to see a decrease in trip destinations. These internal travel patterns have remained largely unchanged since 2019.

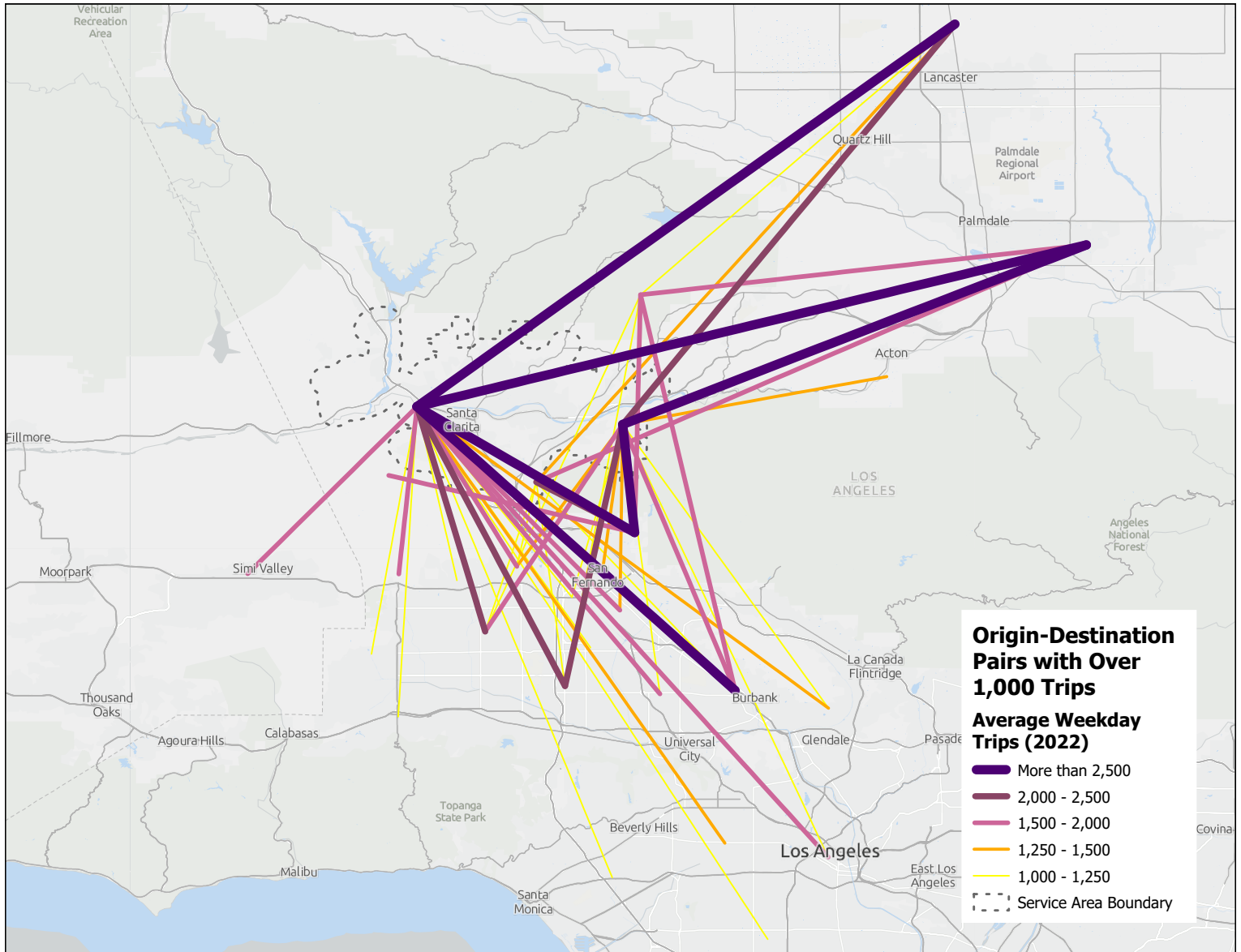
Figure 31: Internal Trip Origin Density



EXTERNAL TRAVEL FLOWS

The majority of external trips began in Valencia, Canyon County, or Newhall and ended in the San Fernando Valley or in the Lancaster and Palmdale area. Notably, while SCT commuter service does not directly serve top destinations like Lancaster, Palmdale, Sylmar, and Van Nuys, transfers to Metrolink and other services like Metro and AVTA provide that connection. These findings are largely consistent across the entire week and comparable to 2019.

Figure 32: Top Regional Origin-Destination Pairs



Key Travel Pattern Findings:

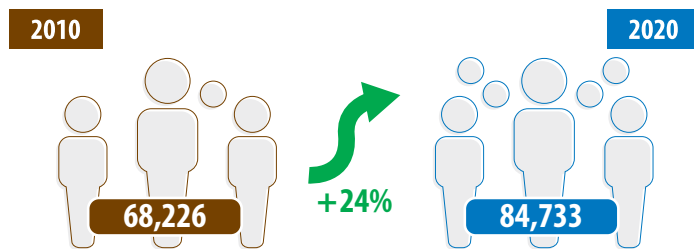
- The number of trips taken **increased 17%** between 2019 and 2022 across the entire week.
- The number of trips has **increased in the late evenings** across the entire week.
- SCT commuter service levels are **poorly matched** with external travel, relative to time of day – especially those traveling for work. With 33% of Santa Clarita’s residents commuting outside of the service area for work, matching their needs is important.
- People beginning their trip in the SCT service area **travel longer distances** than the average trip length in California.
- Trip takers in 2022 are traveling shorter distances compared to 2019. However, travel distance has **increased substantially** in the overnight period.
- The majority of trips are internal to the SCT service area. Furthermore, a majority of internal trips start and end within the same community.
- Valencia, Canyon Country, and Saugus dominate the share of trip origin and destinations within the SCT service area.
- Travel flows remain **largely unchanged** since 2019 and across the entire week.



Community Profiles

Canyon Country

Canyon Country, the largest community by land acre, is located in the eastern part of the Valley. To account for new and expanding communities, Fair Oaks, Vista Canyon, Skyline, and Five Knolls will be considered separately from Canyon Country. Canyon Country is primarily residential with commercial activities located along Soledad Canyon Road and the Sierra Highway.



Employment Centers:

- College of the Canyons

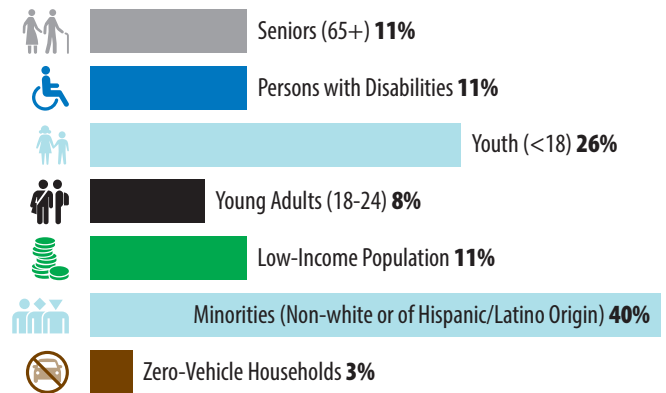
Key Destinations:

- College of the Canyons – Canyon Country Campus
- George A. Carvalho Santa Clarita Sports Complex
- Whitney Canyon Park
- Via Princessa Metrolink Station

Notable Developments:

- Bouquet Canyon
- Golden Triangle Apartments
- River Walk Project
- Sand Canyon Plaza
- Mancara at Robinson Ranch
- Park Vista Community (under review)
- Princessa Crossroads (under review)

Key Neighborhood Demographics



Note: The U.S. Census Bureau only provides estimates for low-income populations and persons with disabilities at the census tract level. All other metrics are based on block group totals, to align with this report's neighborhood boundaries.

General Public Weekday Travel (Source: Replica)

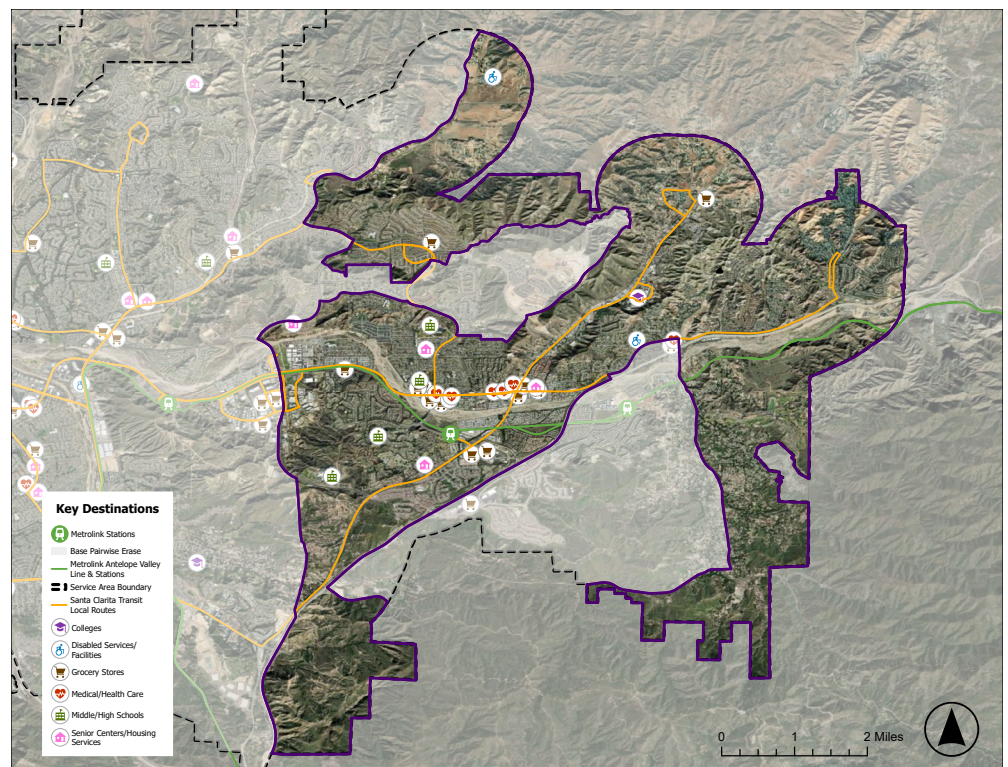
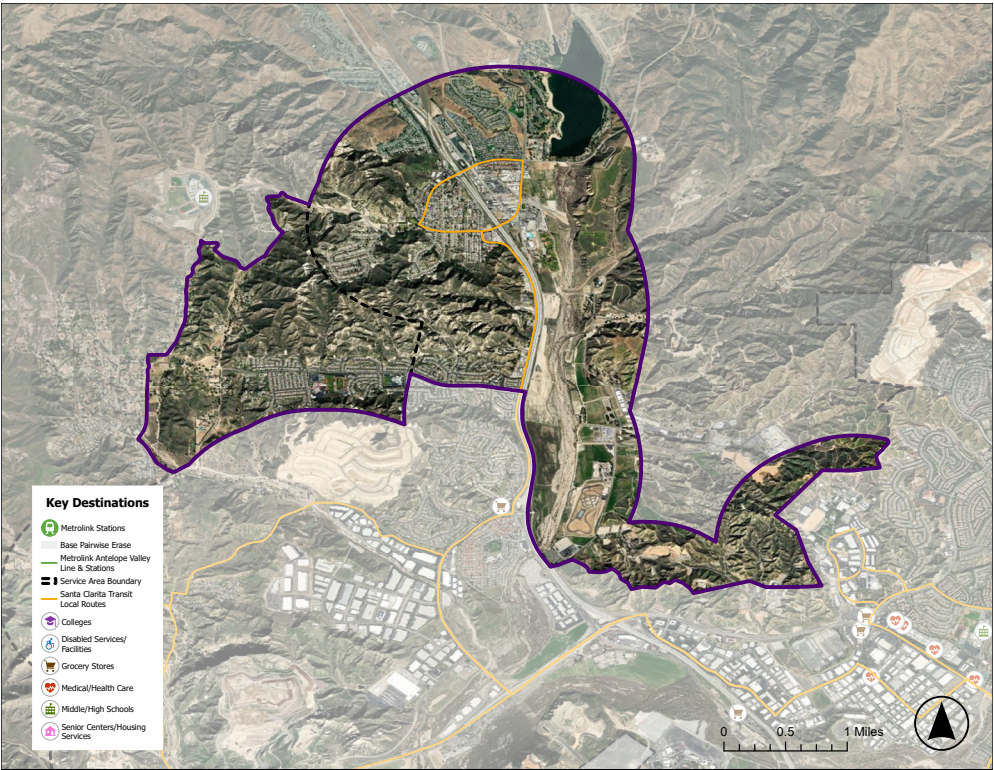
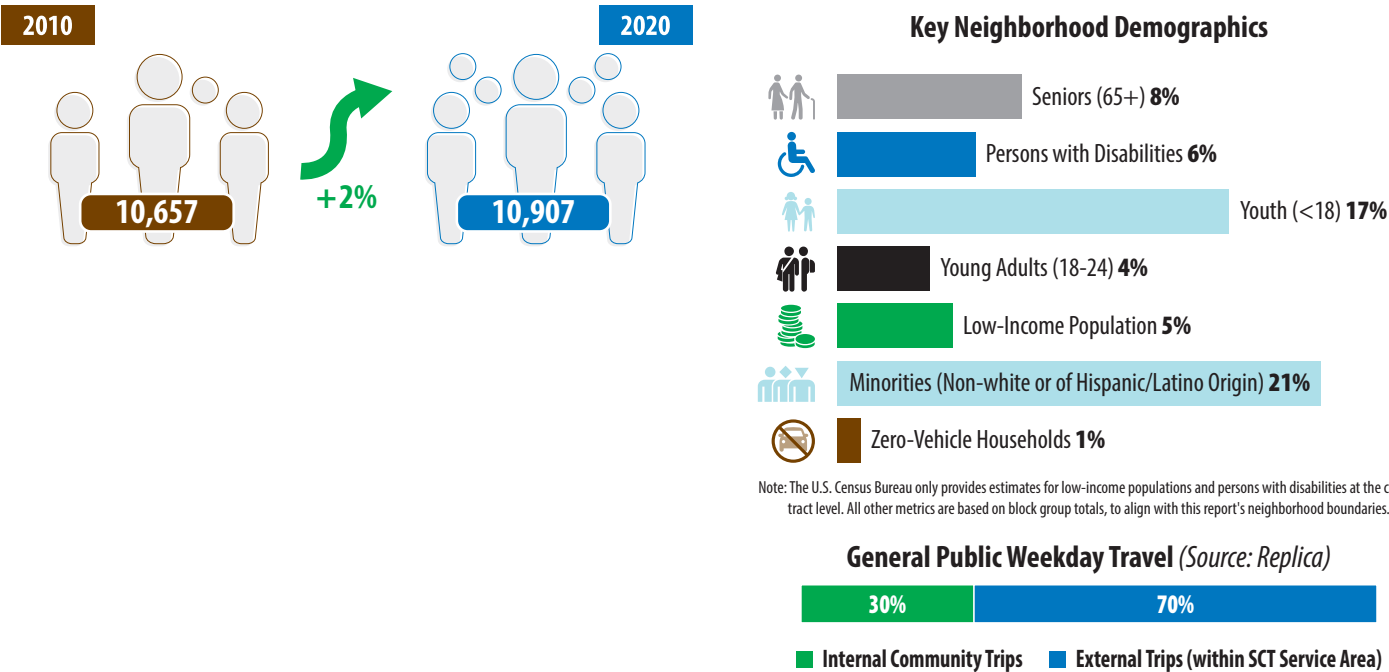


Figure 33: Canyon Country

Castaic

Covering the northernmost portion of the SCT service area, Castaic offers a variety of recreational opportunities within and just outside of the service area. The older part of Castaic serves the trucking industry while newer residential areas have the suburban character typical of the Santa Clarita Valley.

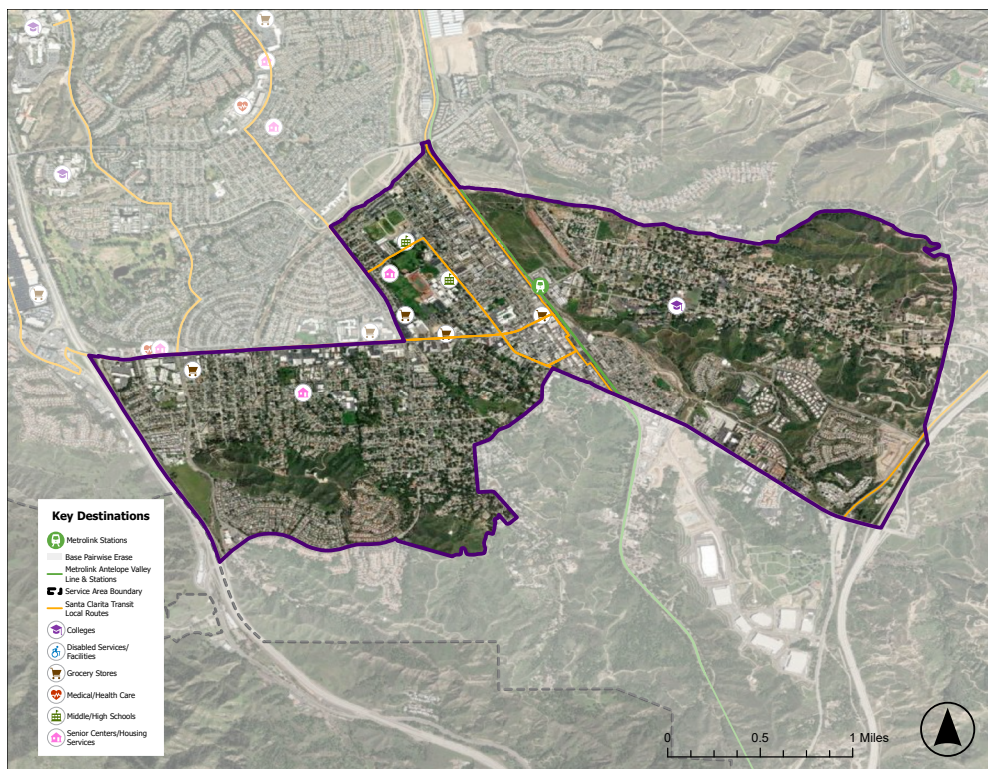
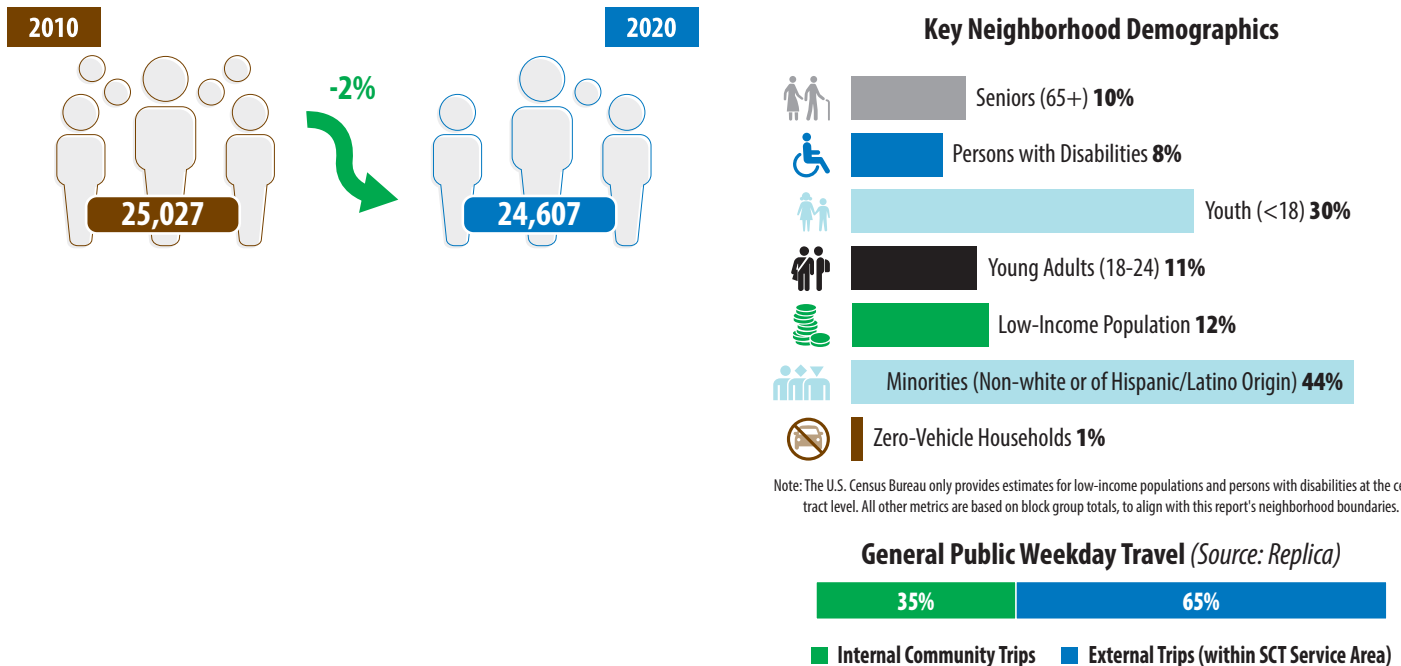


- Key Destinations:**
- Castaic Lagoon
 - Castaic Lake
 - Castaic Village Shopping Center
 - Tapia Canyon

Figure 34: Castaic

Newhall

Newhall stands as the oldest community in Santa Clarita. Widely regarded as a major cultural and business center, Old Town Newhall hosts a variety of local businesses, farmers markets, and arts and entertainment. The street pattern is closer to a traditional grid in the oldest developed area with commercial activity concentrated in Old Town Newhall and along Lyons Avenue.



Employment Centers:

- The Master's University

Key Destinations:

- Newhall Metrolink Station
- The Master's University
- Old Town Newhall

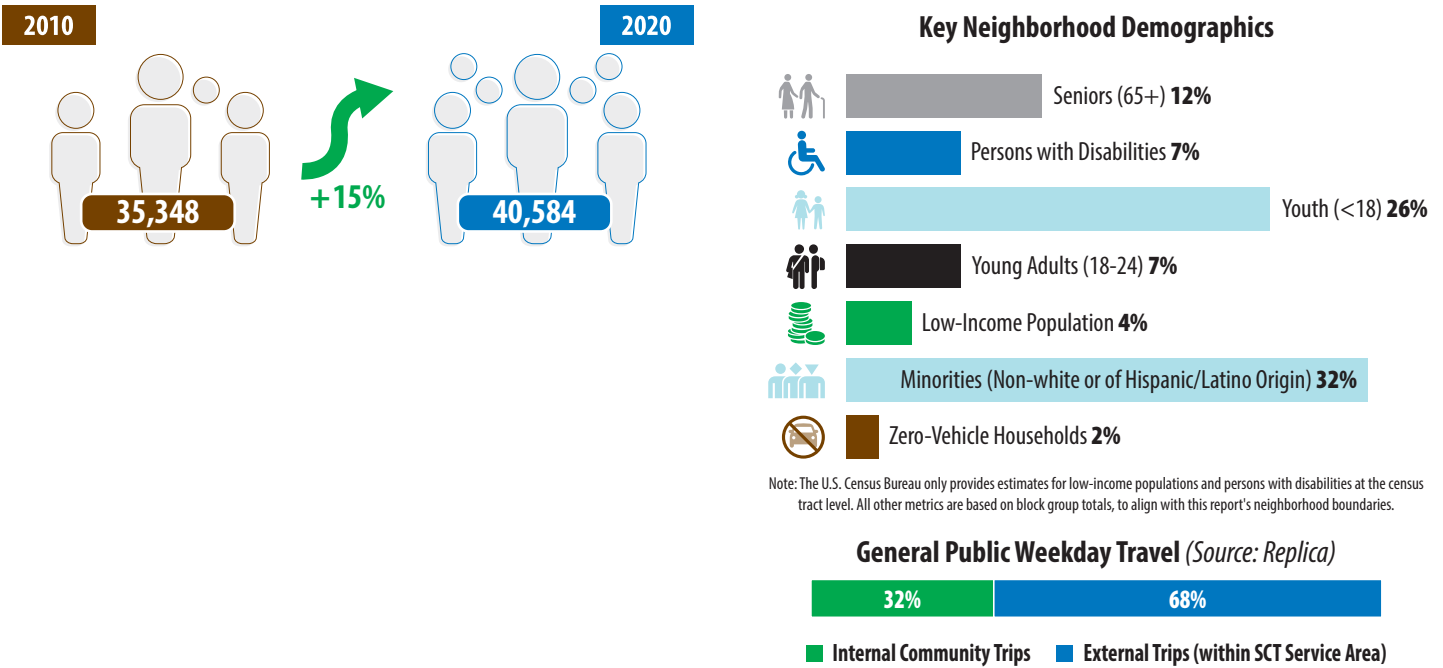
Notable Developments:

- Shadowbox Studios – Santa Clarita Campus (under review)
- Dockweiler 21
- Master's University Master Plan
- Trenton Heights
- Wiley Canyon (under review)

Figure 35: Newhall

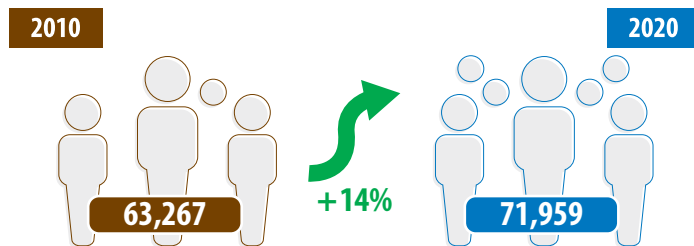
Saugus

Saugus, covering the north-central region of Santa Clarita, is a primarily residential community with commercial developments located in pockets along Bouquet Canyon Road and Seco Canyon Road, the main arteries serving the area along with Copper Hill Drive.



Valencia

Valencia is a master planned community and has the strongest economy across all Valley communities, hosting a majority of the City's medical centers and corporate headquarters. Additionally, Valencia contains most of the city's government buildings. The residential area includes an extensive network of paseos that provide direct pedestrian and bicycle access to schools, parks and other destinations including access to bus stops. To account for new and expanding communities, Five Points and Tesoro will be considered separately from Valencia.



Employment Centers:

- College of the Canyons
- Henry Mayo Newhall Hospital
- Princess Cruises
- Woodward HRT
- Advanced Bionics – LLC
- Boston Scientific Corporation

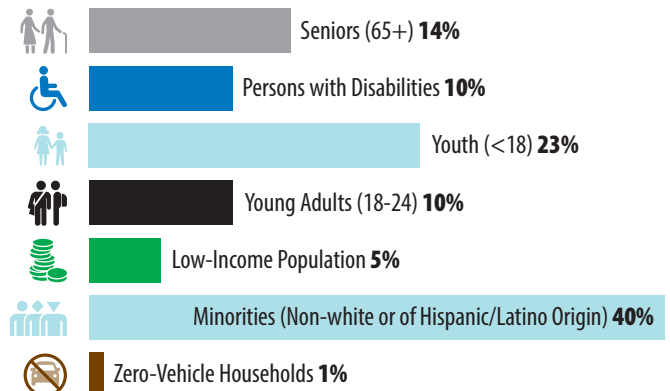
Key Destinations:

- California Institute of the Arts
- Southern California Innovation Park
- Henry Mayo Newhall Hospital
- College of the Canyons
- Valencia Town Center
- McBean Regional Transit Center
- Santa Clarita City Hall

Notable Developments:

- Henry Mayo Newhall Hospital Expansion
- Patios Connection
- Southern California Innovation Park
- Valencia Town Center Redevelopment (under review)

Key Neighborhood Demographics



Note: The U.S. Census Bureau only provides estimates for low-income populations and persons with disabilities at the census tract level. All other metrics are based on block group totals, to align with this report's neighborhood boundaries.

General Public Weekday Travel (Source: Replica)

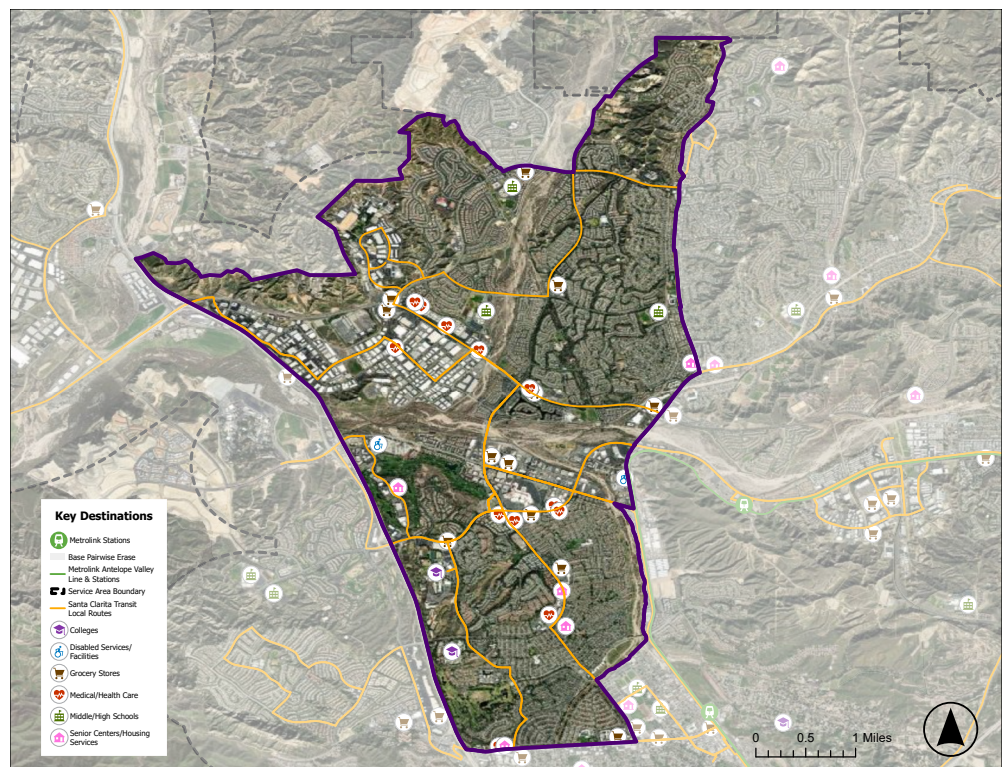
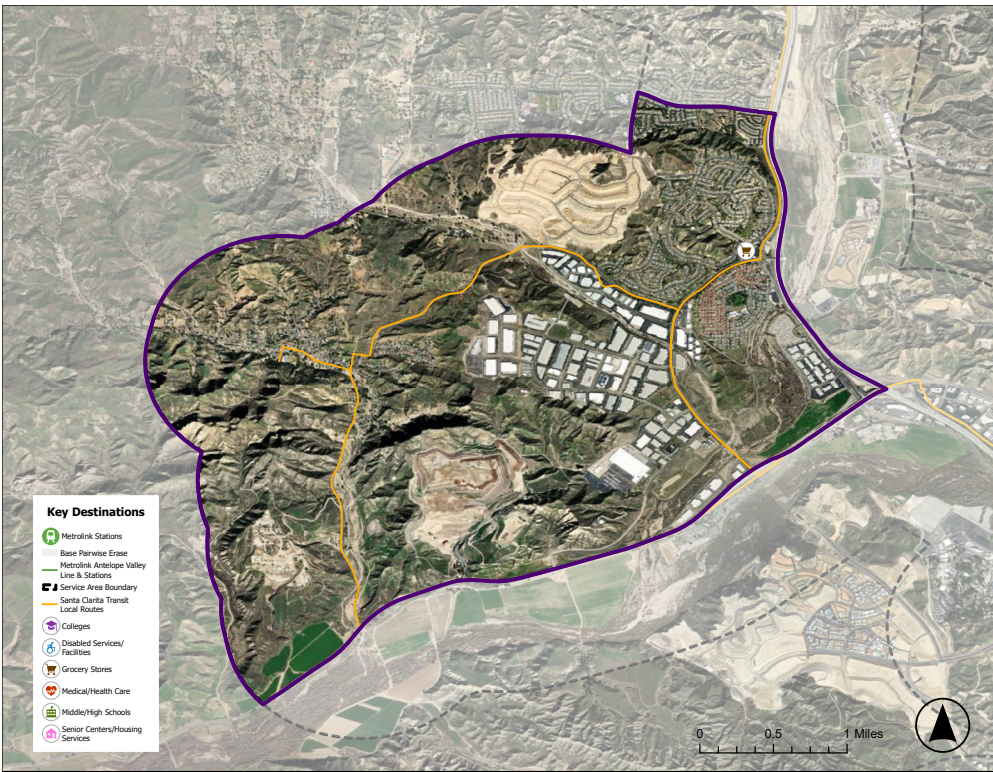
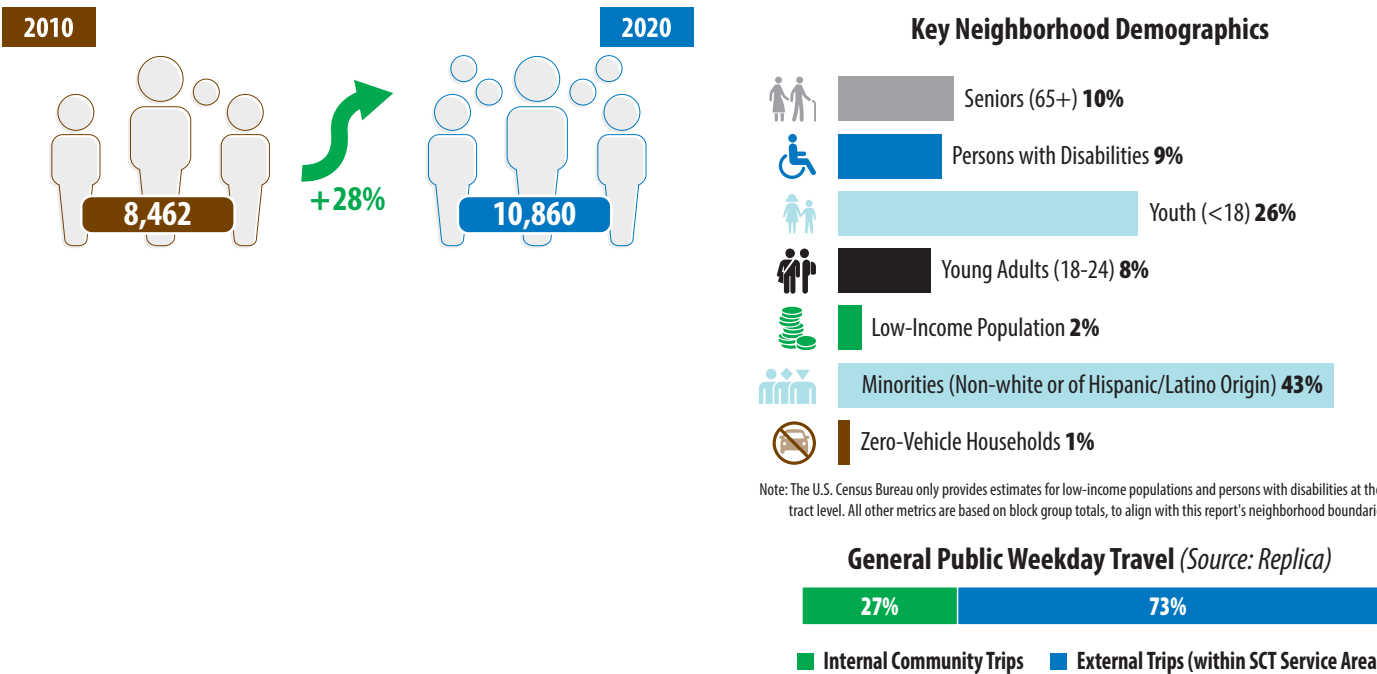


Figure 37: Valencia

Val Verde

Nestled between Castaic, Valencia, and Five Points, Val Verde is a community consisting mostly of open space with pockets of residential neighborhoods and commercial development in the eastern part of the community. New developments such as Williams Ranch highlight the new and upcoming nature of Val Verde. The older part of Val Verde has a rural character.



Key Destinations:

- Chiquita Canyon Landfill
- Val Verde Park
- Hasley Canyon

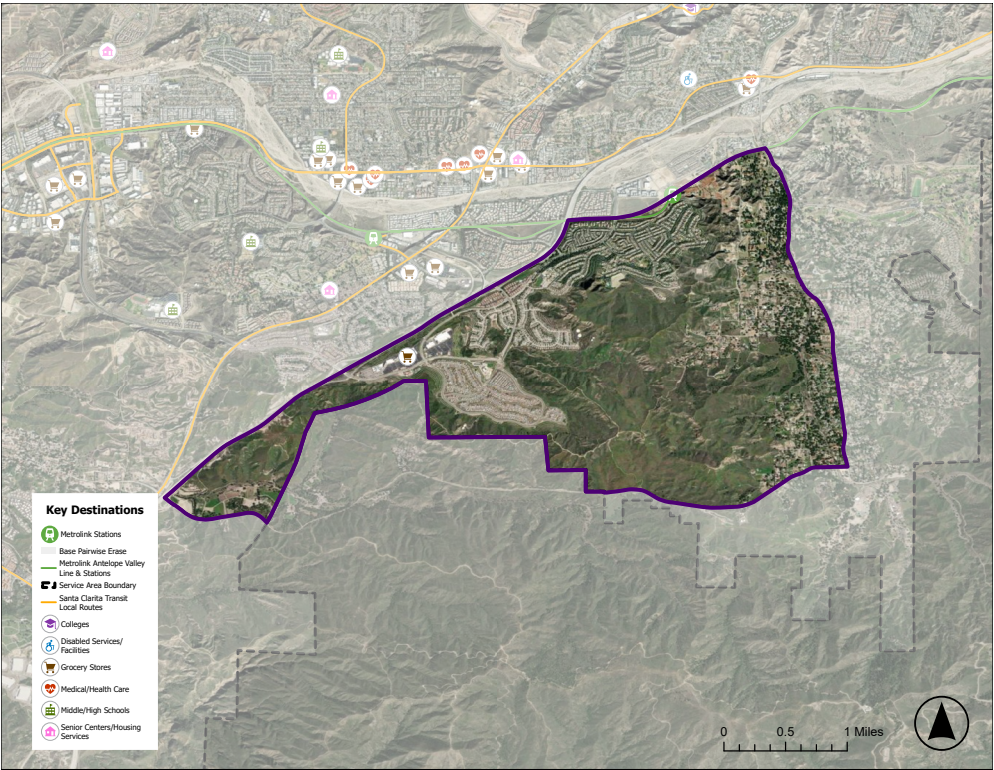
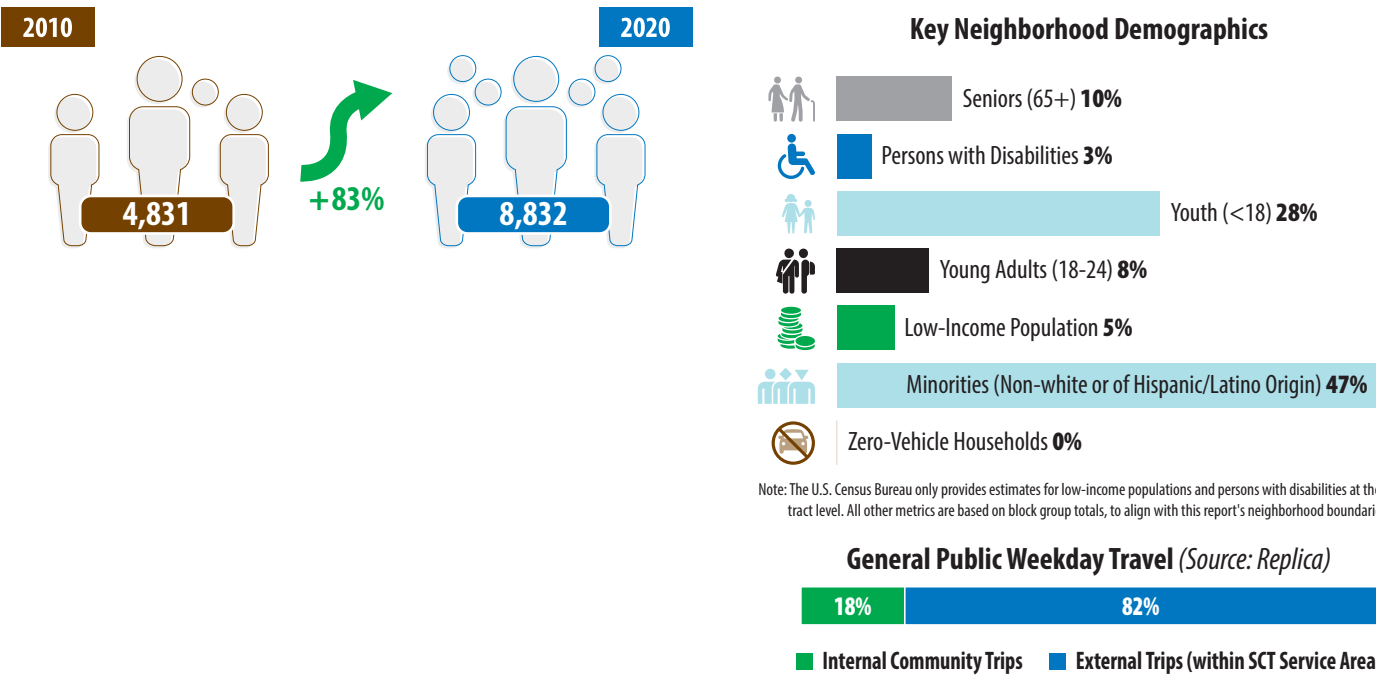
Notable Developments:

- Williams Ranch Community

Figure 38: Val Verde

Fair Oaks

Located in the southeast corner of the SCT service area, Fair Oaks is a community dominated by fairly new residential development. The community also offers a plethora of open space and recreational opportunities.

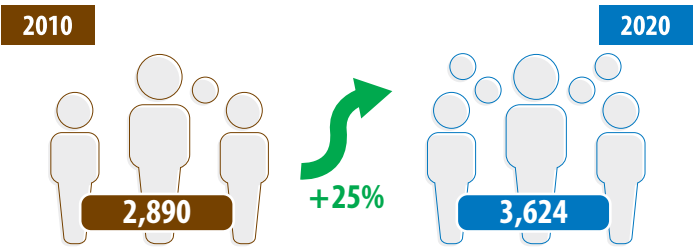


- Key Destinations:**
- Golden Valley Ranch Open Space
 - The Plaza at Golden Valley
- Notable Developments:**
- Aliento Neighborhood

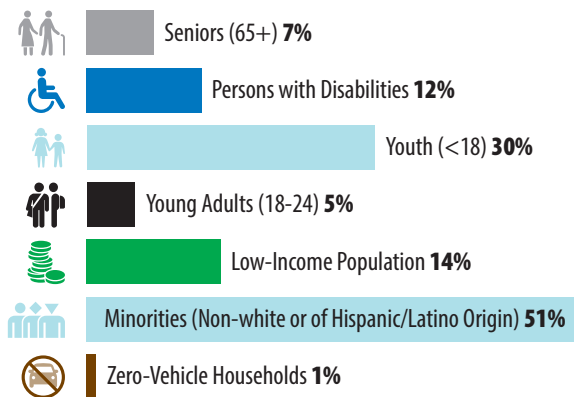
Figure 39: Fair Oaks

Five Knolls

Five Knolls, fully developed in late 2021, is a new community situated alongside Golden Valley Road. Of the 7 internal communities, the Galloway Community is a senior oriented neighborhood located adjacent to the Santa Clarita Valley Center.

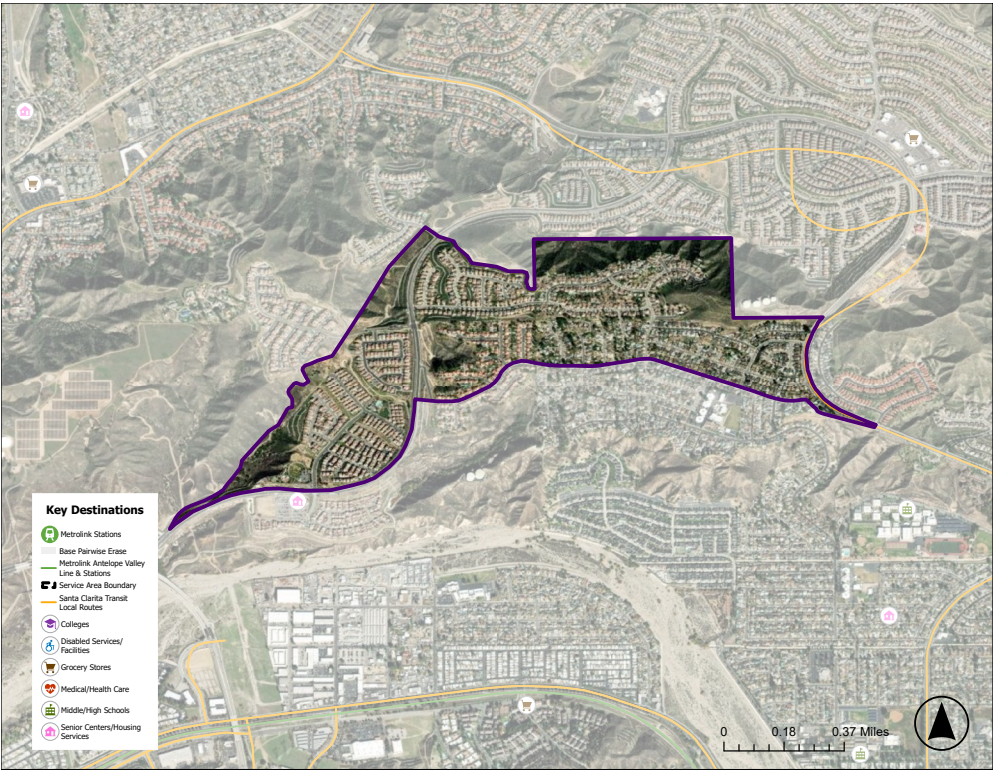
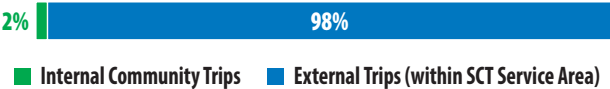


Key Neighborhood Demographics



Note: The U.S. Census Bureau only provides estimates for low-income populations and persons with disabilities at the census tract level. All other metrics are based on block group totals, to align with this report's neighborhood boundaries.

General Public Weekday Travel (Source: Replica)



Key Destinations:

- YMCA and Golden Valley Park

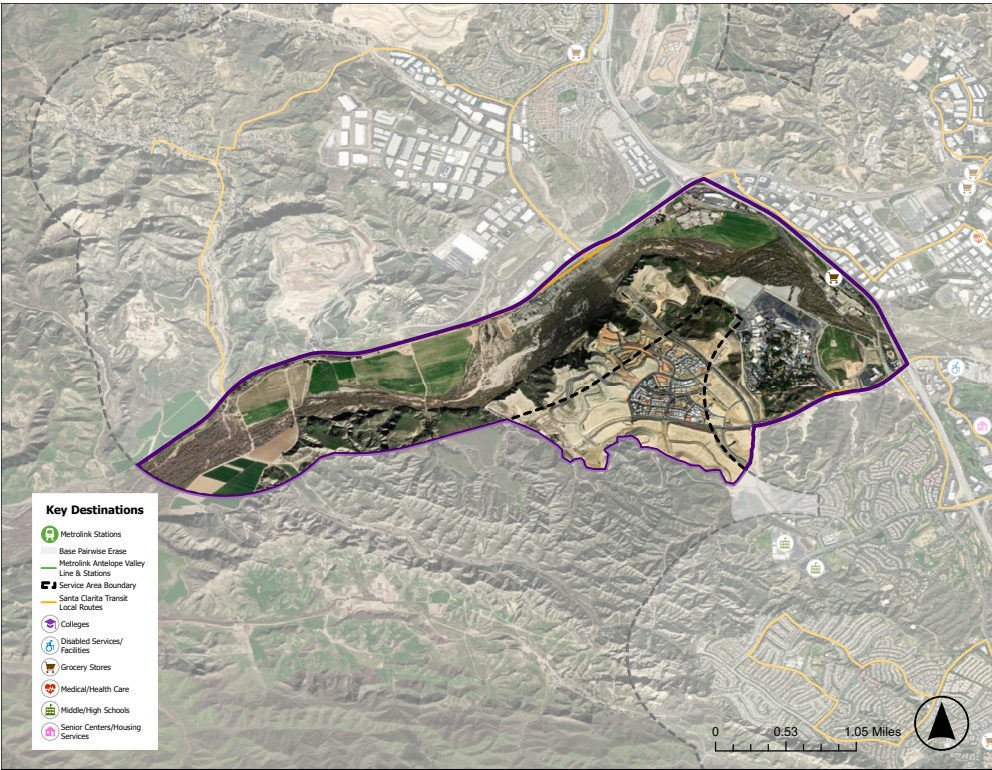
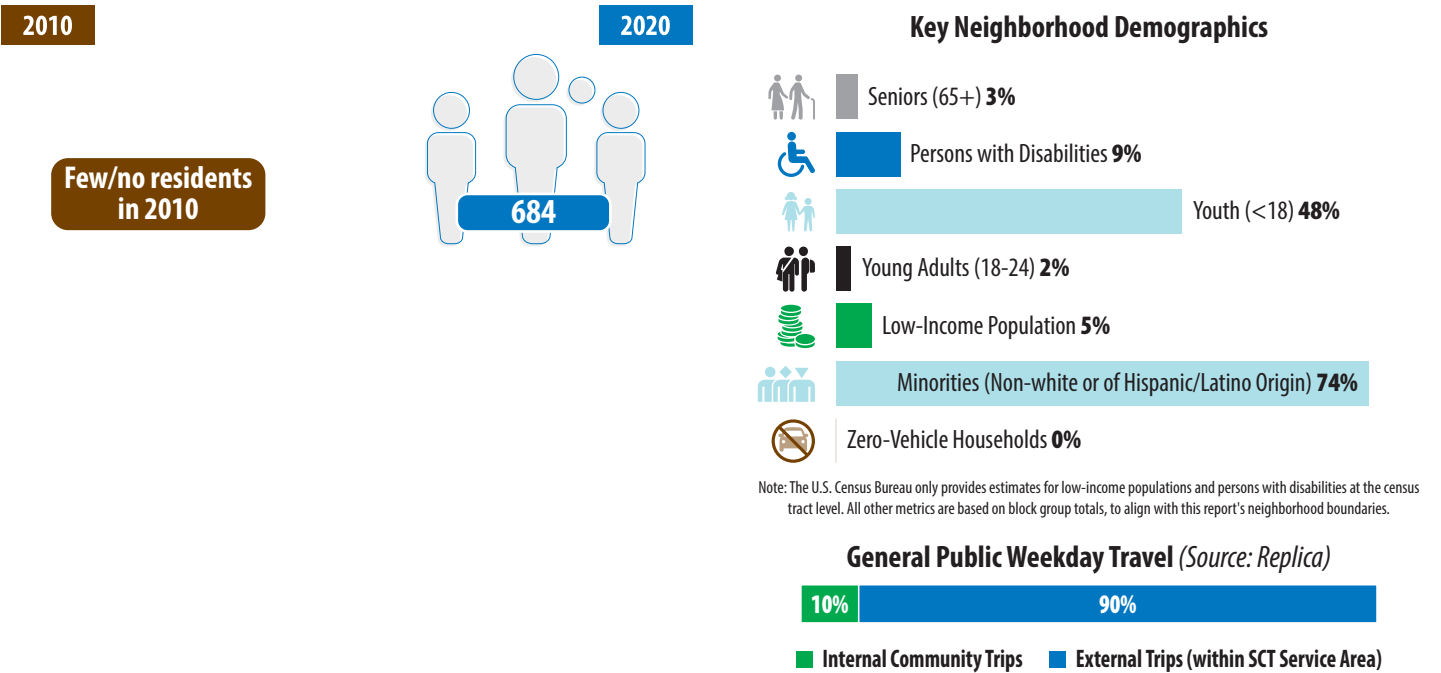
Notable Developments:

- Five Knolls Neighborhood
- Galloway Community

Figure 40: Five Knolls

Five Points

Five Points, along with the Tesoro community, is a new and upcoming community. Advertising almost 22,000 new homes and 74,000 new jobs, accounting for Five Point’s emergence becomes extremely important. The community emphasizes the creation of protected natural open space, new trails, and parks; recreational opportunities will be a huge draw for this community. Notably, with this community’s separation from Valencia, Six Flags Magic Mountain becomes the main employer and economic driver of Five Points.

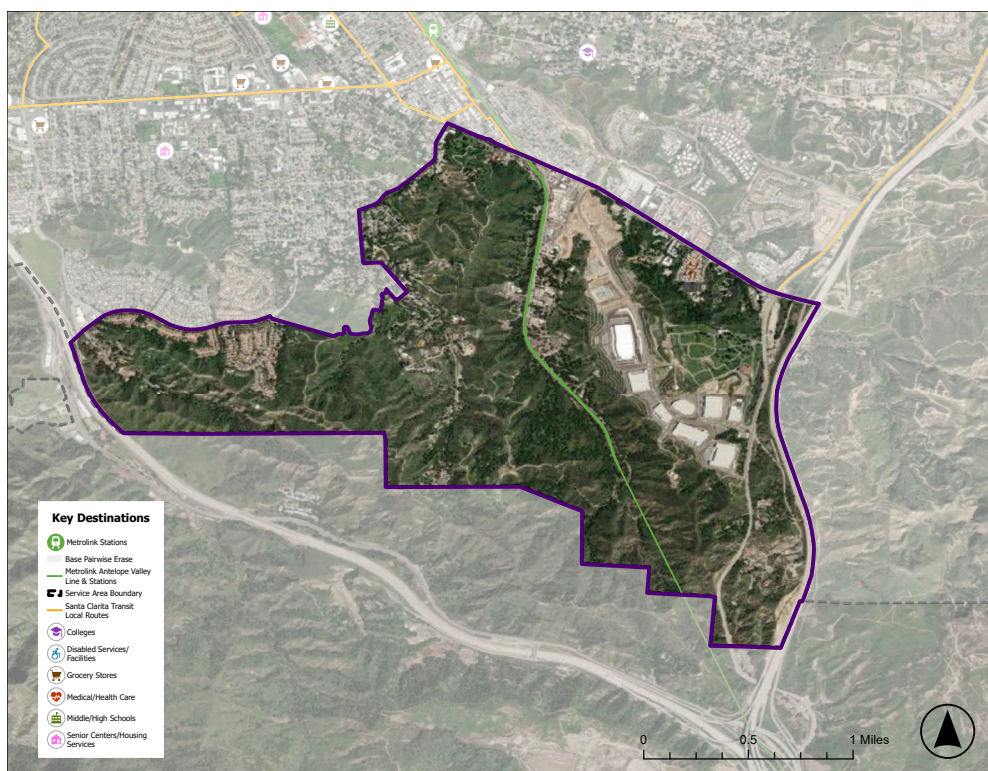
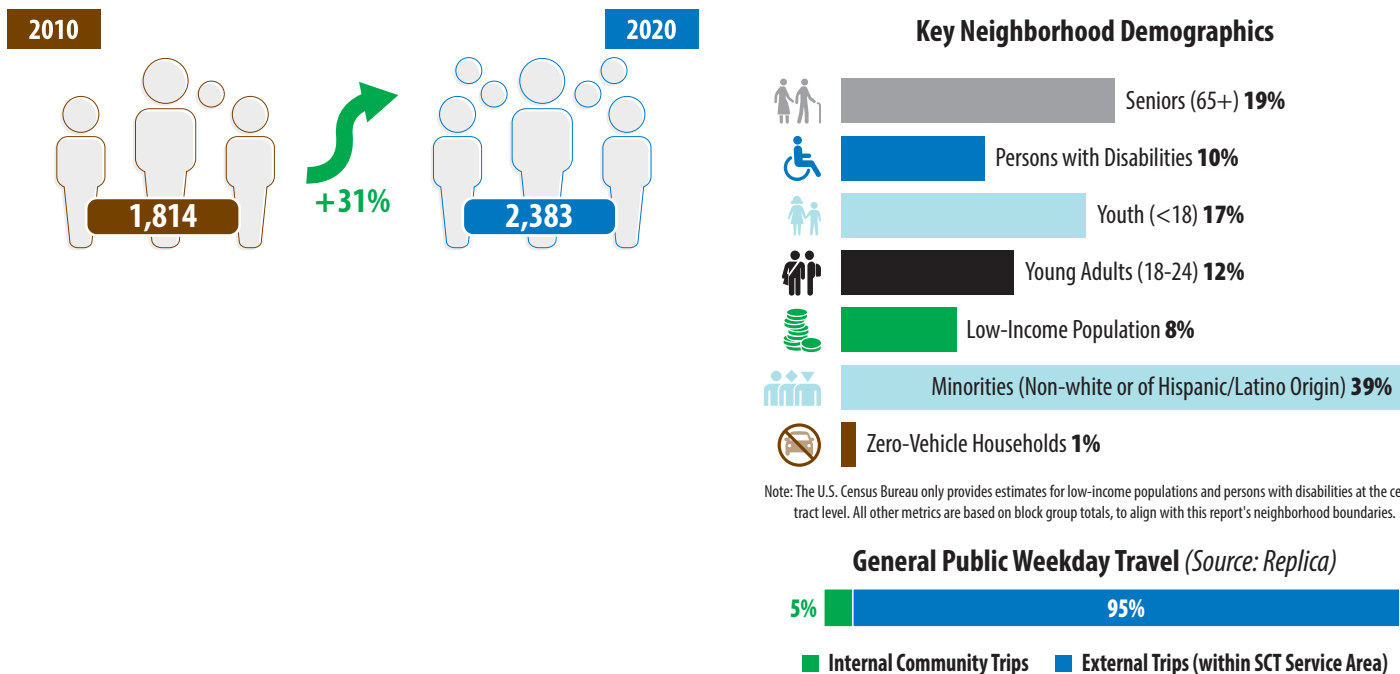


- Employment Centers:**
- Six Flags Magic Mountain
- Key Destinations:**
- Six Flags Magic Mountain
- Notable Developments:**
- FivePoint Valencia Neighborhoods

Figure 41: Five Points

Needham Ranch

Situated at the southern end of the SCT service area, Needham Ranch is a community defined by its upcoming industrial park. Currently occupied by companies such as Amazon, DrinkPAK, and LA North Studios, this community is expected to grow into a prominent economic and employment center. Further south from the anticipated development, Needham Ranch offers a variety of recreational opportunities.



Employment Centers:

- Amazon
- DrinkPAK
- LA North Studios
- Illumination Dynamics

Key Destinations:

- Wildwood Canyon Open Space
- Gates King Open Space

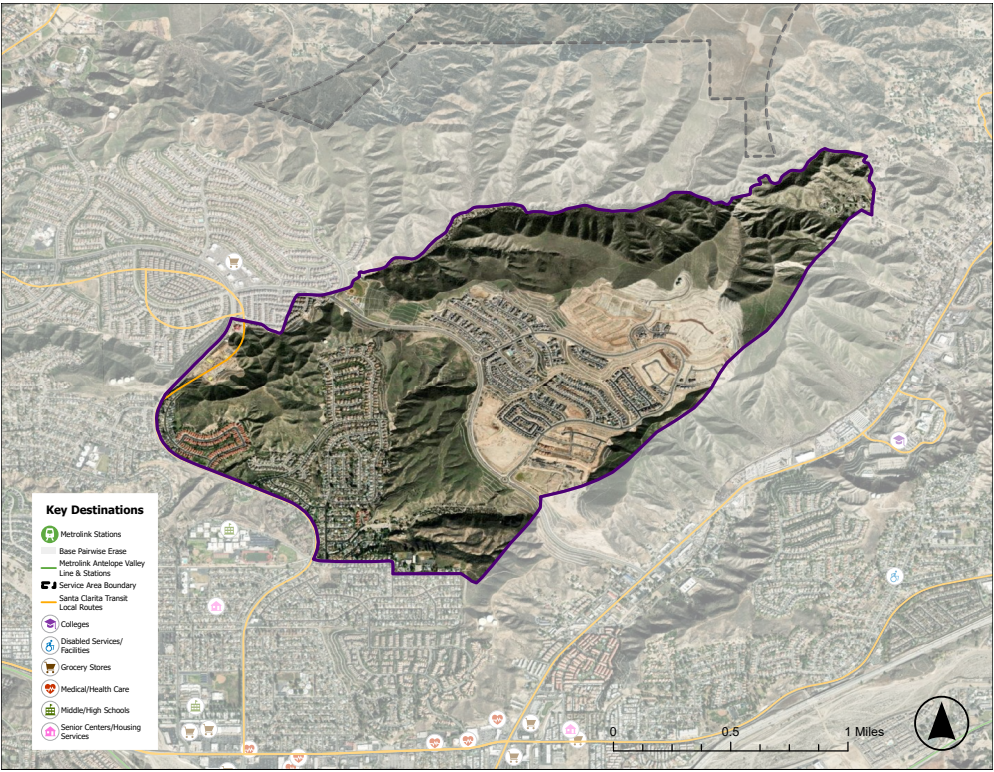
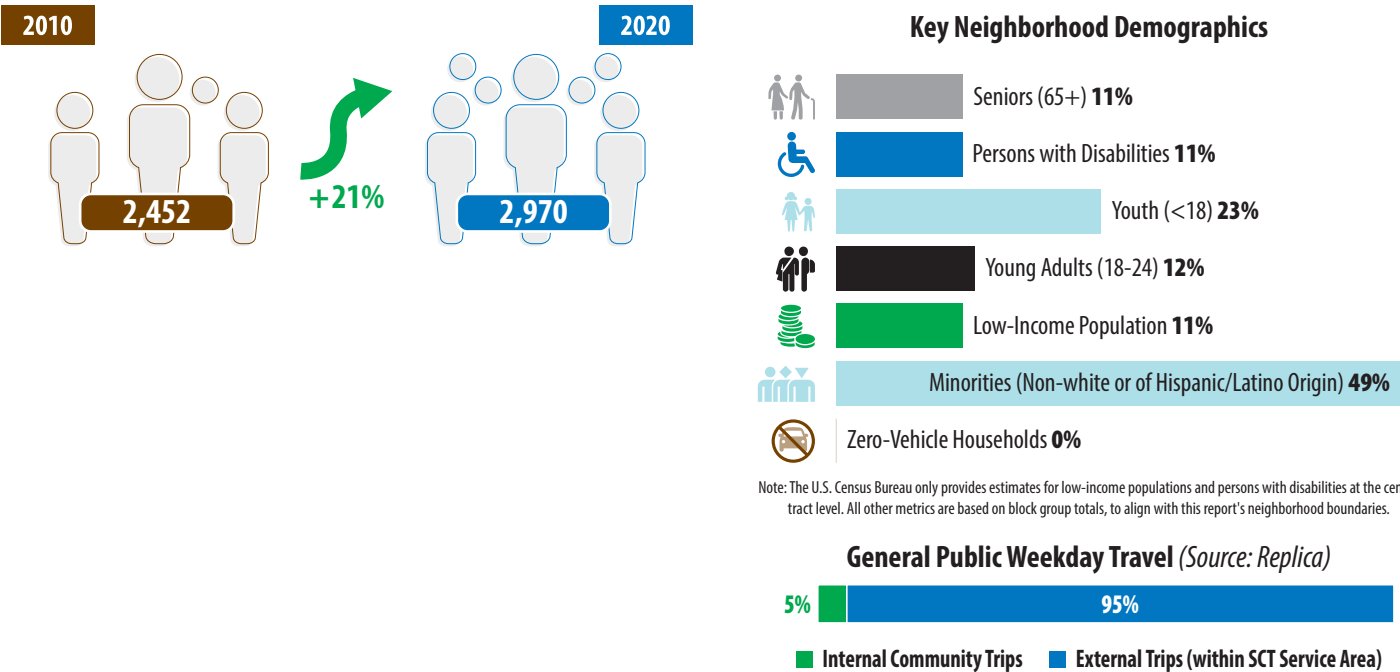
Notable Developments:

- Needham Ranch Industrial Park

Figure 42: Needham Ranch

Skyline

The Skyline community, which is still being developed, consists of seven neighborhoods. One of the neighborhoods, The Atlis community, is a senior-oriented neighborhood. The neighborhoods are surrounded by vast open spaces with an associated trail system.



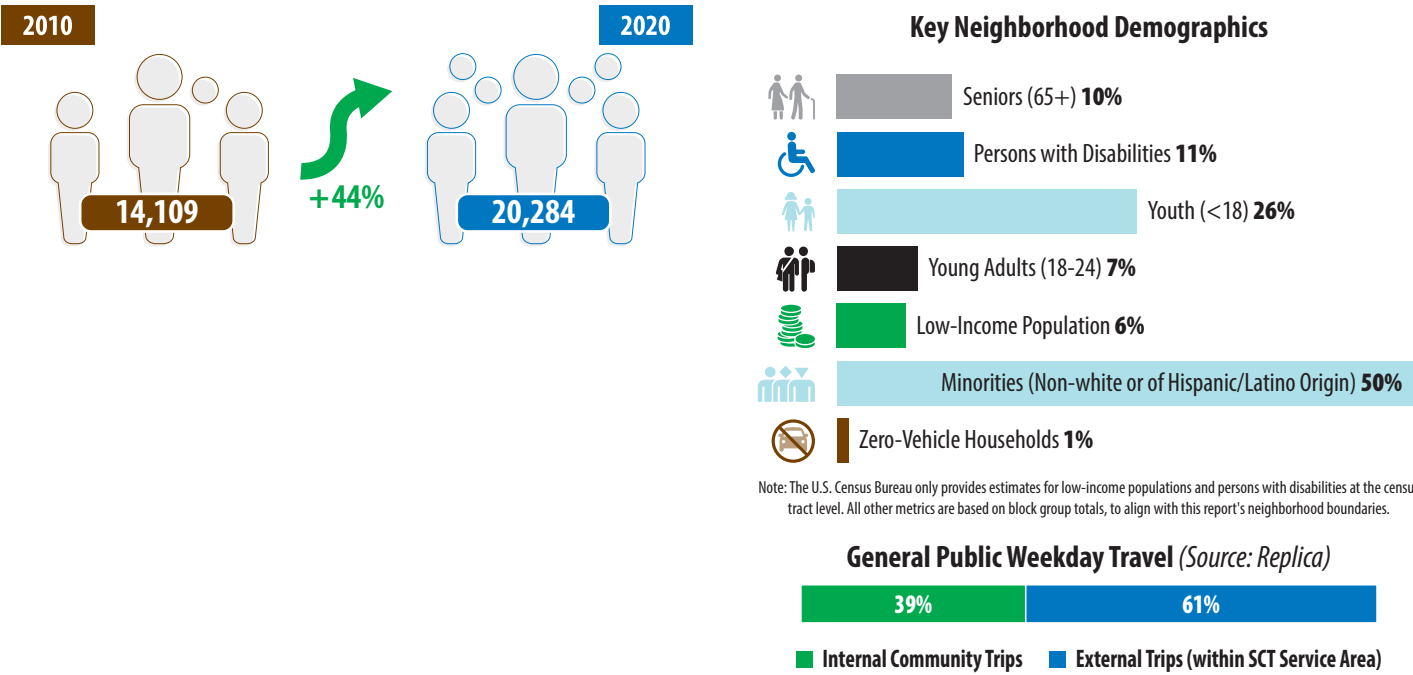
Notable Developments:

- Skyline Ranch Neighborhood

Figure 43: Skyline

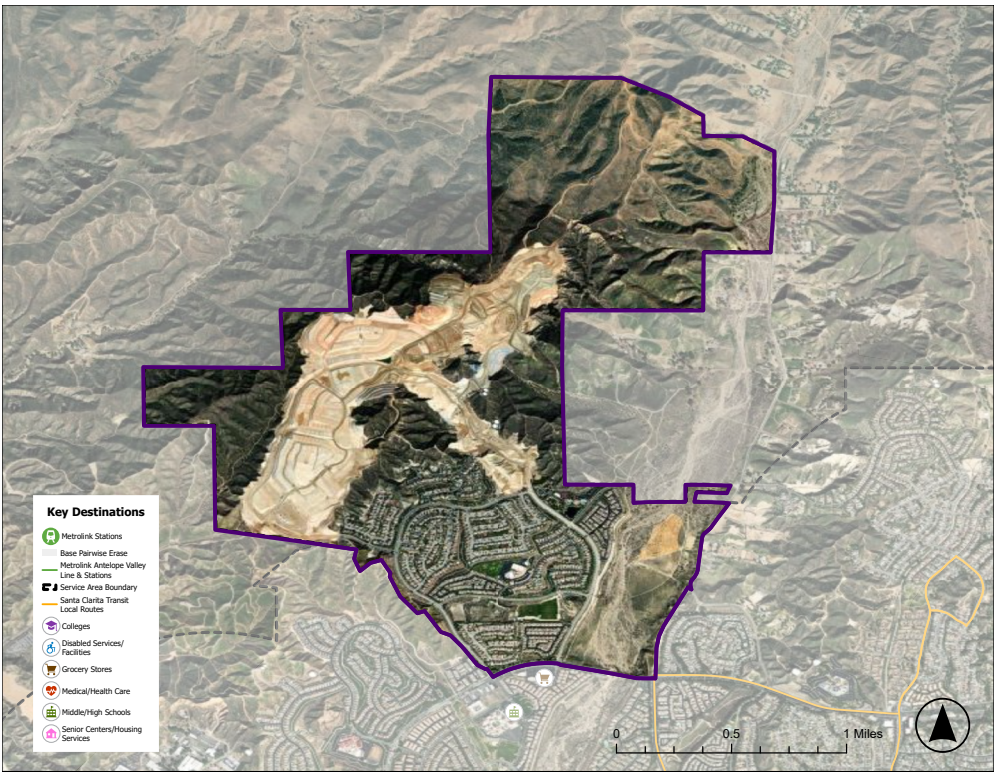
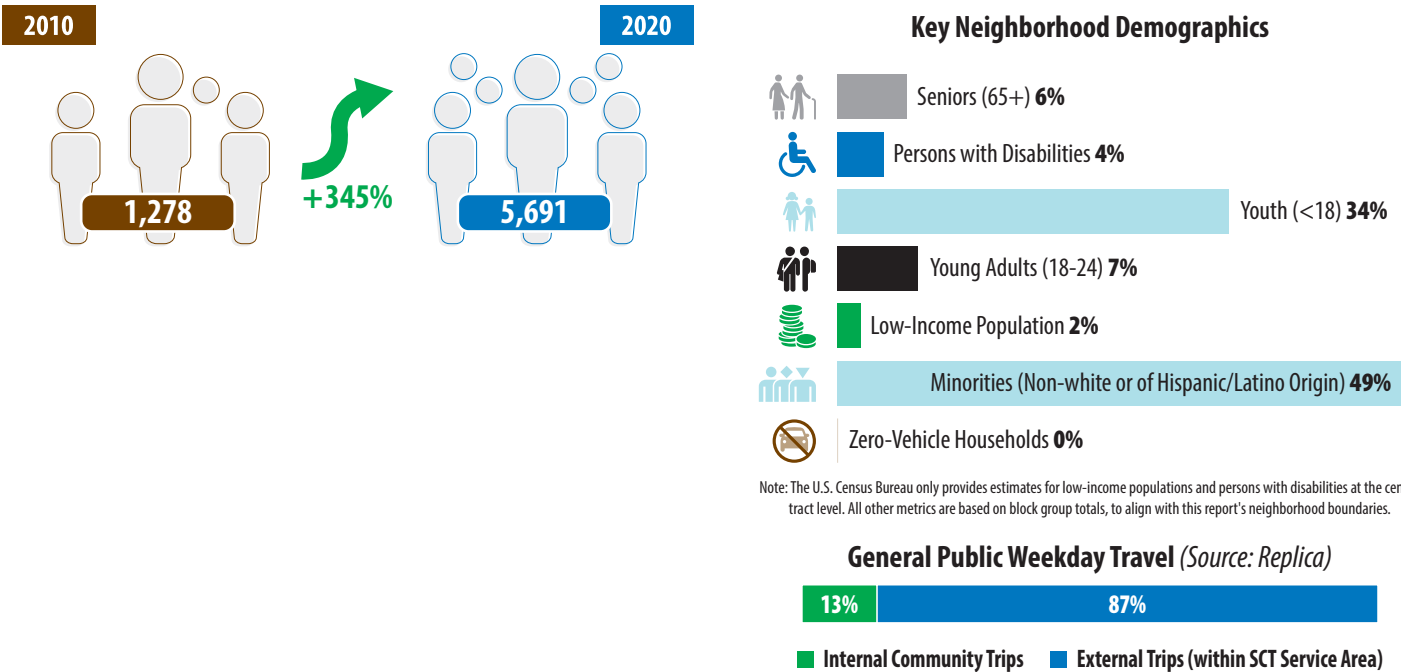
Stevenson Ranch

Stevenson Ranch, located west of Interstate 5, is a community consisting mostly of residential development. A large retail center consisting of big box retailers and restaurants is located at the eastern boundary of Stevenson Ranch. Hilly terrain defines much of the residential area.



Tesoro

Tesoro stands as the definition of a new and upcoming residential community. Along with the Tesoro Del Valle, the community is currently developing 13 new neighborhoods, a portion of which is dedicated to the Valley's senior community.



- Notable Developments:**
- Tesoro Del Valle
 - Tesoro Highlands Community

Figure 45: Tesoro

Vista Canyon

Vista Canyon is a newly completed mixed-development community situated alongside Freeway 14 and between the Canyon Country and Fair Oaks communities. The community offers almost 750 single family homes and apartments, retail space, and recreational space. Notably, the Vista Canyon Metrolink Station has recently completed development.

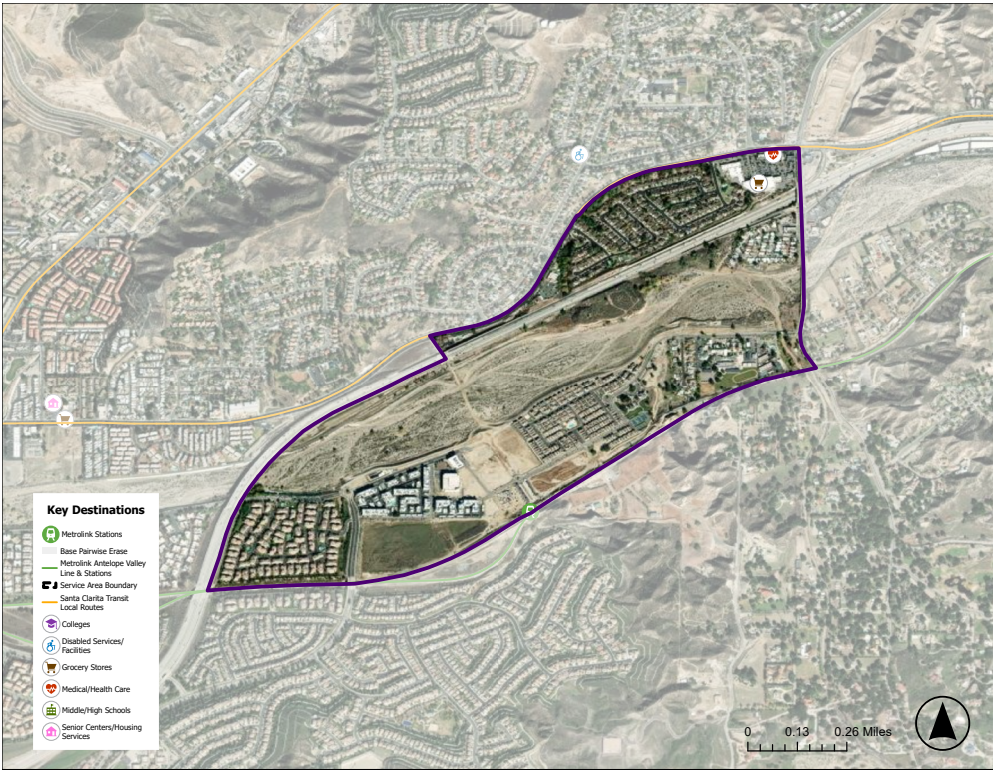
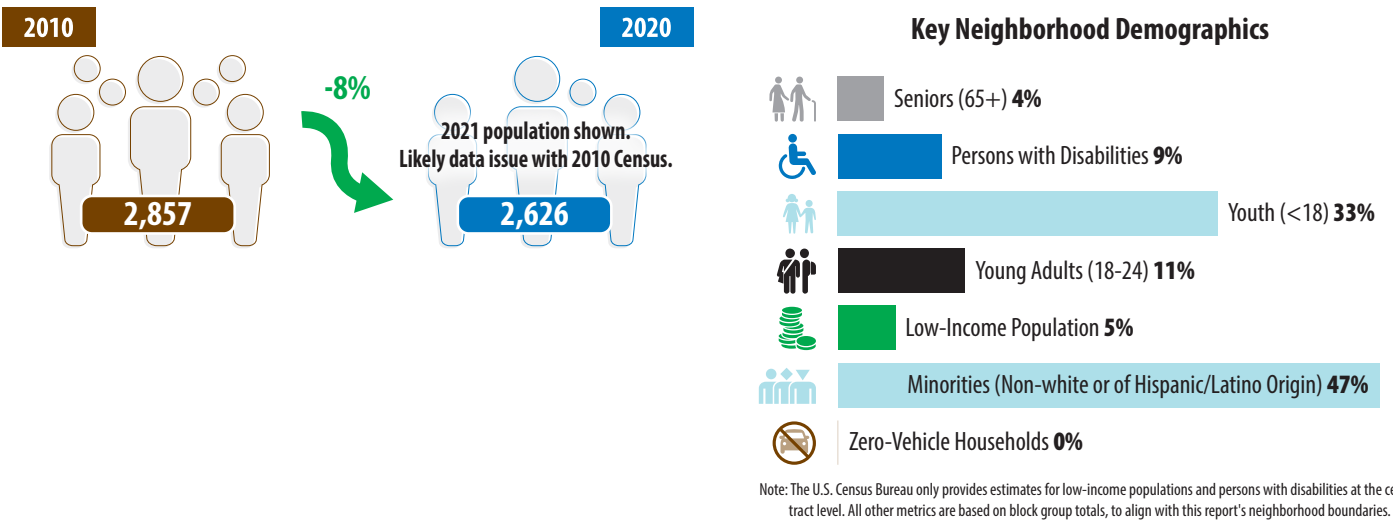


Figure 46: Vista Canyon

- Notable Developments:
- Vista Canyon Neighborhood
 - MetroWalk Specific Plan
 - Vista Canyon Metrolink Station

Rider Profile

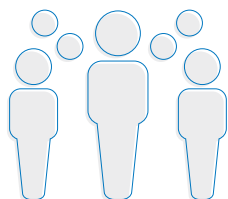
As part of the TDP’s public input process, the project team conducted an onboard survey of Santa Clarita Transit customers to better understand current riders and how they use the system. Surveys were collected from riders on SCT local, station links, and commuter routes. The survey did not include supplemental school service routes, GO! Santa Clarita on demand, or Dial-A-Ride. Survey collection began in October 2023 but was suspended shortly after due to the operators strike. Collection resumed in January 2024. A total of 638 weekday surveys and 157 weekend surveys were collected, for a total of 795 responses. The survey responses were analyzed and weighted using APC ridership data to provide a representative snapshot of all SCT customers.

The results show that many riders are heavily dependent on SCT buses for daily mobility, and that a little under half of all weekday riders use the system to travel between work and home. 57% of riders use the system for six or more trips per week, further supporting the finding that riders use SCT to commute to work. Just over 60% of all riders 18 and older do not have a driver’s license and around 27% of adult riders reported not having any available vehicles in their household. 70% of all riders reported not being able to make that day’s trip by car.

Survey results differed greatly between local/station links riders and the commuter service riders. This section presents separate profiles of each tier’s riders. Improving customer satisfaction and redesigning the network to better align with mobility needs will work to ensure that riders continue to choose transit when other options are available.

Local Routes/Station Links riders

The median age of riders is **33**



66% of riders do not have a valid driver’s license



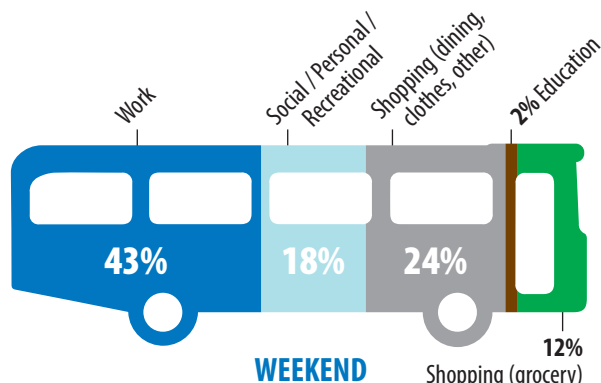
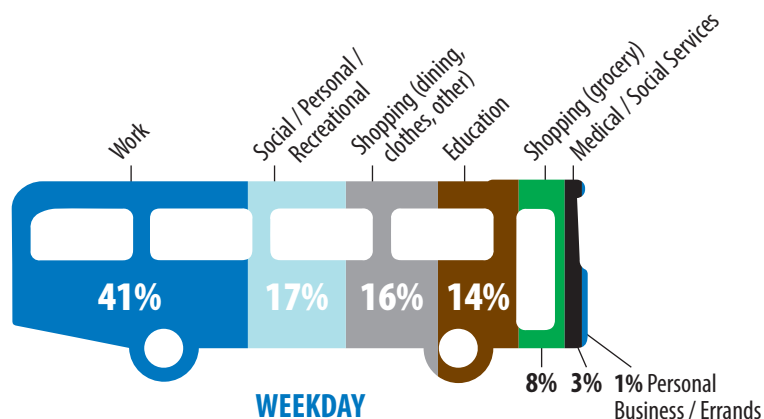
27% of riders live in zero-vehicle households



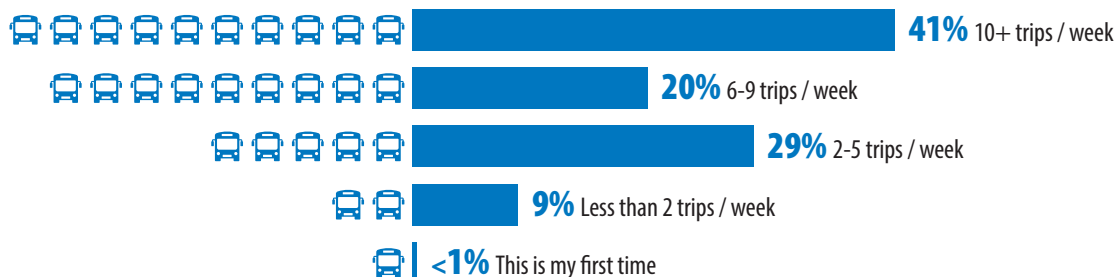
25% of riders have annual household incomes of less than \$35,000



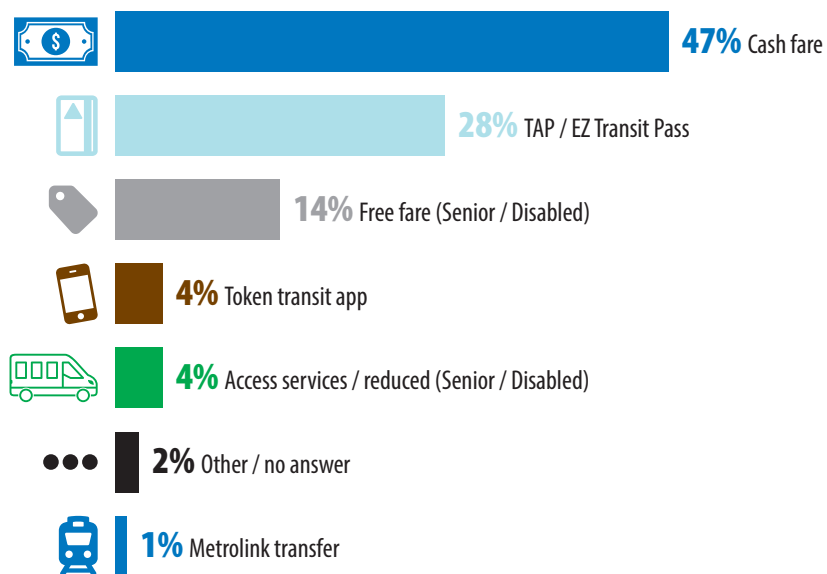
What is the purpose for your trip?



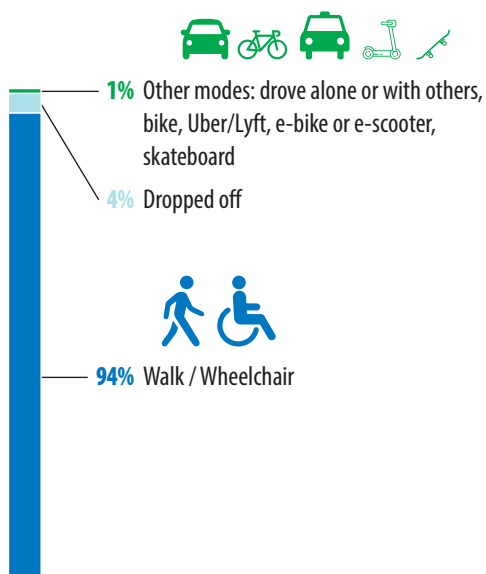
How many one-way trips a week do you make?



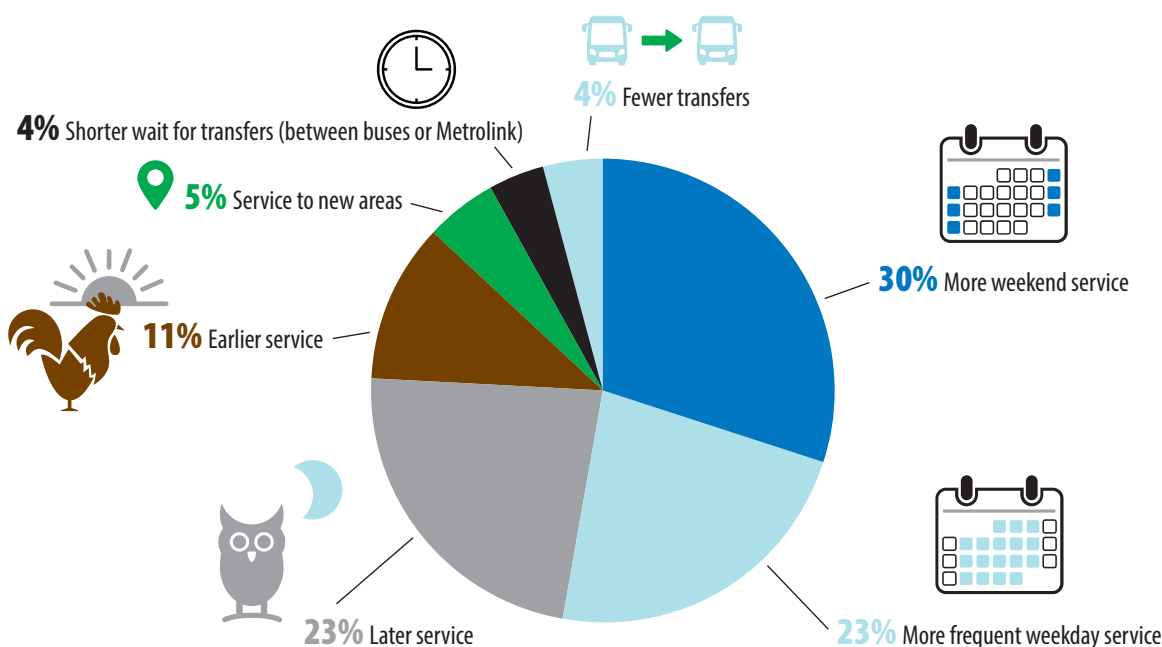
How do you pay your fare?



How do you access your stop?

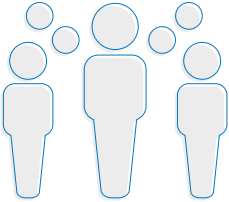


What would make you use SCT more?



Commuter Routes riders

The median age of riders is **36**



20% of riders do not have a valid driver's license



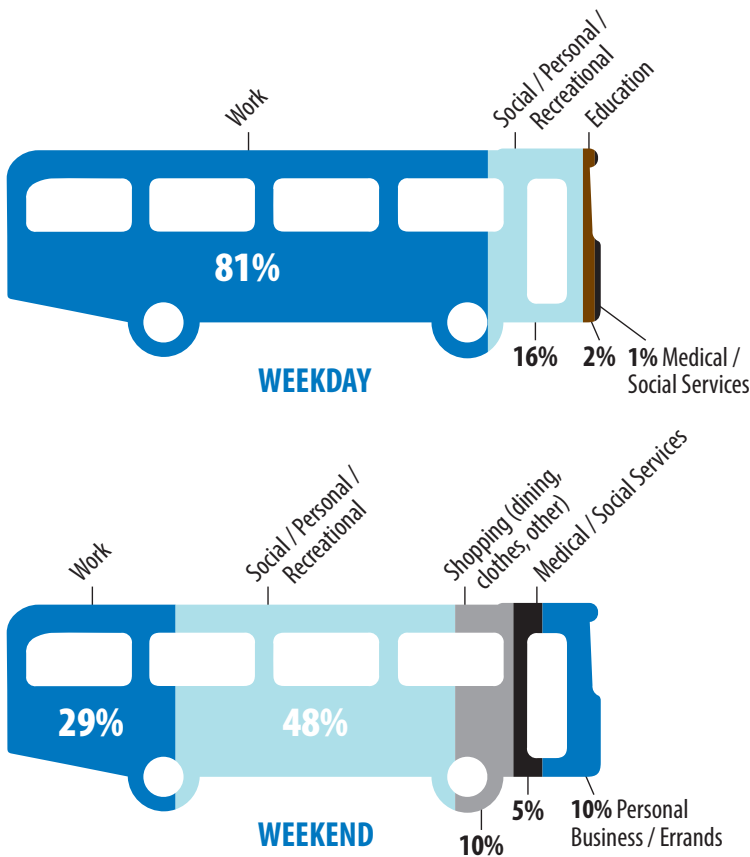
10% of riders live in zero-vehicle households



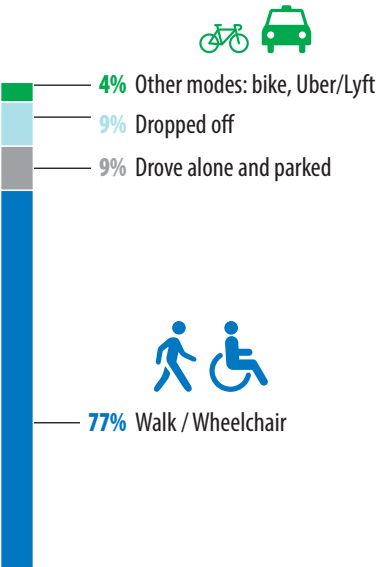
3% of riders have annual household incomes of less than \$35,000



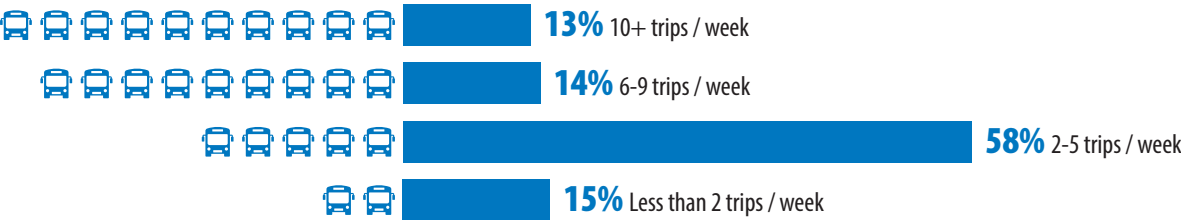
What is the purpose for your trip?



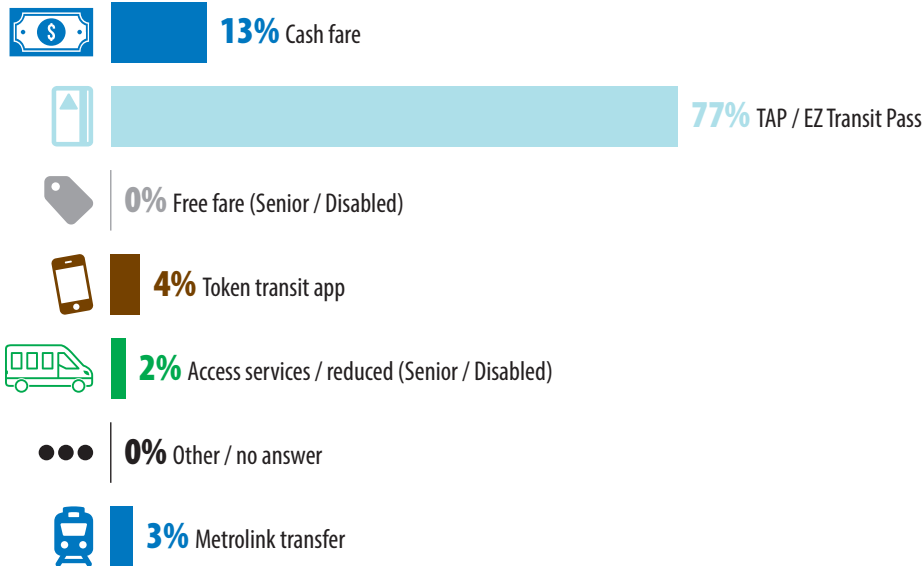
How do you access your stop?



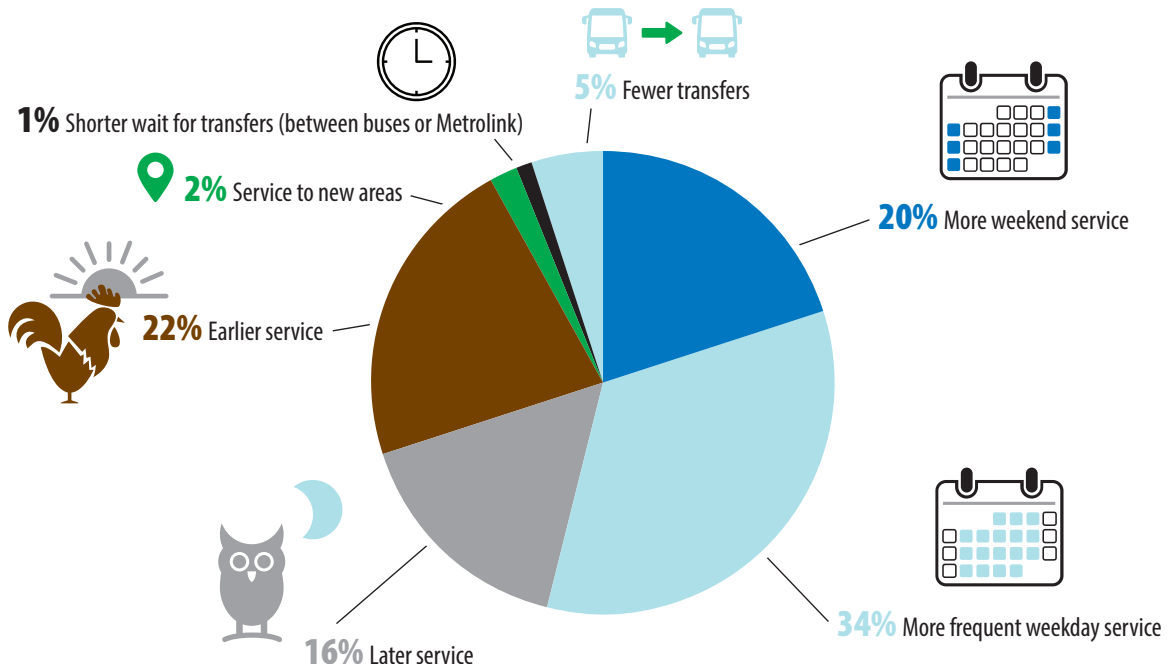
How many one-way trips a week do you make?



How do you pay your fare?



What would make you use SCT more?



Key Findings

The Market Assessment, as part of the TDP, will help guide future recommendations for SCT. The insights gained from this chapter will help ensure that any future service changes will be better matched to where and how residents of Santa Clarita travel. Key findings from this chapter include:



The built environment of The Valley is not well suited for transit, however, the concentration of key destinations and impressive multimodal infrastructure help improve the environment for non-automobile travel.



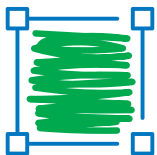
Santa Clarita is experiencing a massive increase in population and development, creating a dynamic community with evolving mobility needs. However, the isolated nature of some new developments creates challenges for effectively serving them with transit.



Commuting is an important aspect of travel for the Valley, as a majority of people travel to or from Santa Clarita for work. SCT should closely consider commuters' origins within Santa Clarita and their external destinations to increase service attractiveness and regrow ridership.



Travel pattern data reveals that the number of trips starting in SCT's service area has increased substantially. Travel has also shifted into the evening and people are traveling shorter distances. However, average trip distances remain longer in Santa Clarita than the average in California.



Most trips starting within the service area stay within the area, with the majority traveling within their community or between the large communities of Valencia, Canyon Country, and Saugus. Strengthening these connections would be an effective investment.

Service Overview and Evaluation

Introduction

This Service Evaluation details the **customer experience, how riders use Santa Clarita Transit's (SCT) network**, and analyzes **ridership and performance trends** on multiple levels. Findings from this section of the TDP will create a better understanding of the current SCT network and identify opportunities for improvement. This Service Evaluation, along with the Market Assessment and public input will help to guide the TDP's recommendations for future transit improvements in Santa Clarita.

DATA SOURCES

This report utilizes ridership, performance, and survey data to better understand SCT's current service network. Data sources include:

- SCT Automatic Passenger Counter (APC) and Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) data (Spring and Summer 2023)
- SCT Operator Survey (Summer 2023)
- SCT schedule, fare, and organizational data (2023)
- SCT financial data (2023)

Figure 47: McBean Regional Transit Center



Service Network Overview

SCT’s service network consists of nine local bus routes, two “Station Links” routes, 20 supplemental school service tripper routes, and seven commuter routes. Most SCT service is operated within the City of Santa Clarita, with some routes extending into surrounding unincorporated communities. SCT’s commuter routes leave the Santa Clarita Valley via Interstate 5 to serve the cities of Los Angeles and Burbank. A list of each tier’s routes, their service frequencies or trips counts, and hours of service are shown in Tables 1-4.

Table 9: Local routes					
Route	Alignment	Frequency		Span	
		Weekday	Weekend	Weekday	Weekend
1	McBean Regional Transit Center - Castaic	Branch: 45 to 60 Trunk: 12 to 33	Branch: 45 to 60 Trunk: 12 to 33	5:50 AM to 8:05 PM	7:35 AM to 8:05 PM
2	McBean Regional Transit Center - Val Verde	Branch: 44 to 60 Trunk: 12 to 33	Branch: 45 to 60 Trunk: 12 to 33	5:50 AM to 7:35 PM	7:20 AM to 7:35 PM
3	Seco Canyon - Five Points	Branch: 95 Trunk: 26 to 60	Branch: 95 Trunk: 26 to 60	7:40 AM to 10:00 PM	7:40 AM to 10:00 PM
4	LARC Ranch - Newhall Metrolink Station	Branch: 60 Trunk: 30	Branch: 60 Trunk: 30	8:00 AM to 9:27 PM	8:00 AM to 9:27 PM
5	Vasquez Canyon - Stevenson Ranch	Branch: 48 to 122 Trunk: 13 to 82	Branch: 60 to 120 Trunk: 28 to 32	5:05 AM to 9:25 PM	7:30 AM to 8:00 PM
6	Vasquez Canyon - Stevenson Ranch	Branch: 19 to 88 Trunk: 13 to 82	Branch: 30 to 62 Trunk: 28 to 32	6:40 AM to 10:25 PM	7:10 AM to 8:30 PM
7	Seco Canyon - Five Points	Branch: 95 Trunk: 26 to 60	Branch: 95 Trunk: 26 to 60	8:00 AM to 9:30 PM	8:00 AM to 9:30 PM
12	McBean Regional Transit Center - Canyon Country	10 to 32	18 to 32	5:15 AM to 9:35 PM	Saturday: 6:45 AM to 9:35 PM Sunday: 7:10 AM to 8:55 PM
14	Plum Canyon - Newhall Metrolink Station	Branch: 60 Trunk: 30	Branch: 60 Trunk: 30	7:20 AM to 7:45 PM	7:20 AM to 7:45 PM

Table 10: Stations Links routes					
Route	Alignment	Trips		Span	
		Weekday	Weekend	Weekday	Weekend
501	Santa Clarita Metrolink Station - Six Flags Magic Mountain	AM: 3 PM: 2	AM: 2 PM: 2	7:45 AM - 9:43 AM 3:48 PM - 5:31 PM	7:32 AM - 10:31 AM 2:57 PM - 7:26 PM
502	Santa Clarita Metrolink Station - Valencia Commerce Center	AM: 3 PM: 4	--	6:25 AM - 8:52 AM 3:40 PM - 5:33 PM	--

Table 11: Supplemental School Service routes

Route	Alignment	Weekday Trips		Weekday Span	
		AM	PM	Start	End
620	Arroyo Seco Junior High School - Saugus High School	1	1	Mornings: 7:22 AM Afternoon: 2:30 PM	Mornings: 7:44 AM Afternoon: 3:00 PM
621	Arroyo Seco Junior High School - Saugus High School	1	1	Mornings: 7:05 AM Afternoon: 3:15 PM	Mornings: 7:33 AM Afternoon: 3:43 PM
622	Rio Norte Junior High School - Valencia High School	1	1	Mornings: 7:10 AM Afternoon: 2:51 PM	Mornings: 7:38 AM Afternoon: 3:14 PM
623	Castaic High School	1	2	Mornings: 7:04 AM Afternoon: 2:50 PM	Mornings: 7:35 AM Afternoon: 4:23 PM
624	Valencia High School	1	1	Mornings: 7:45 AM Afternoon: 2:50 PM	Mornings: 8:11 AM Afternoon: 4:23 PM
626	La Mesa Junior High School	1	1	Mornings: 7:52 AM Afternoon: 3:05 PM	Mornings: 8:06 AM Afternoon: 3:41 PM
627	La Mesa Junior High School	1	1	Mornings: 8:10 AM Afternoon: 3:05 PM	Mornings: 8:34 AM Afternoon: 3:47 PM
628	Golden Valley High School	1	1	Mornings: 7:28 AM Afternoon: 2:54 PM	Mornings: 8:06 AM Afternoon: 3:11 PM
629	Golden Valley High School	1	1	Mornings: 7:15 AM Afternoon: 2:54 PM	Mornings: 7:50 AM Afternoon: 3:28 PM
632	Canyon High School - Sierra Vista Junior High School	1	--	Mornings: 7:20 AM	Mornings: 8:00 AM
633	Saugus High School	--	1	Afternoon: 3:15 PM	Afternoon: 3:40 PM
634	Rancho Pico Junior High School - West Ranch High School	1	2	Mornings: 7:12 AM Afternoon: 2:59 PM	Mornings: 8:04 AM Afternoon: 3:42 PM
635	Rancho Pico Junior High School - West Ranch High School	1	1	Mornings: 7:57 AM Afternoons: 3:06 PM	Mornings: 8:14 AM Afternoons: 3:23 PM
636	Rancho Pico Junior High School - Valencia High School - West Ranch High School	1	1	Mornings: 7:20 AM Afternoon: 3:10 PM	Mornings: 8:14 AM Afternoon: 4:00 PM
637	Arroyo Seco Junior High School	--	1	Afternoon: 2:30 PM	Afternoon: 2:47 PM
638	Arroyo Seco Junior High School	--	1	Afternoon: 2:30 PM	Afternoon: 2:44 PM
640	Arroyo Seco Junior High School - Saugus High School	1	1	Mornings: 7:08 AM Afternoon: 2:30 PM	Mornings: 7:53 AM Afternoon: 2:47 PM
641	Hart High School - Placerita Junior High School	1	1	Mornings: 7:25 AM Afternoon: 3:11 PM	Mornings: 7:46 AM Afternoon: 3:34 PM
643	Arroyo Seco Junior High School - Saugus High School	1	1	Mornings: 7:24 AM Afternoon: 2:30 PM	Mornings: 7:53 AM Afternoon: 2:46 PM
644	La Mesa Junior High School	1	--	Mornings: 8:00 AM	Mornings: 8:21 AM

Table 12: Commuter routes

Route	Alignment	Trips / Frequency		Span	
		Weekday	Weekend	Weekday	Weekend
757	McBean Regional Transit Center - North Hollywood Metro Station	26 to 87 min.	74 to 76 min.	5:35 AM - 8:15 PM	7:20 AM - 7:45 PM
796	Santa Clarita Metrolink Station - Canoga Park	AM: 3 PM: 3	--	5:25 AM - 8:30 AM 3:35 PM - 7:30 PM	--
791	Canoga Park - Santa Clarita Metrolink Station	AM: 3 PM: 3	--	6:50 AM - 8:30 AM 2:20 PM - 6:15 PM	--
797	Santa Clarita Metrolink Station - Century City	AM: 5 PM: 5	--	5:00 AM - 8:50 AM 3:45 PM - 9:10 PM	--
792	Century City - Santa Clarita Metrolink Station	AM: 3 PM: 3	--	6:50 AM - 8:55 AM 3:00 PM - 6:30 PM	--
799	Santa Clarita Metrolink Station - Downtown Los Angeles	AM: 5 PM: 5	--	4:55 AM - 8:30 AM 3:20 PM - 8:05 PM	--
794	Union Station - Santa Clarita Metrolink Station	AM: 1 PM: 2	--	6:50 AM - 7:55 AM 4:20 PM - 6:20 PM	--

The Customer Experience

SCT sells a product – public mobility – to customers across the Santa Clarita Valley. To attract more customers and maintain its ridership base, SCT must focus on delivering a positive experience for each trip every day. Otherwise, people will explore other options if their trips are consistently late, take too long, or are too expensive. Providing an attractive customer experience overall means considering the entire trip – **planning the trip, accessing the stop, waiting for the bus, and riding the bus.**

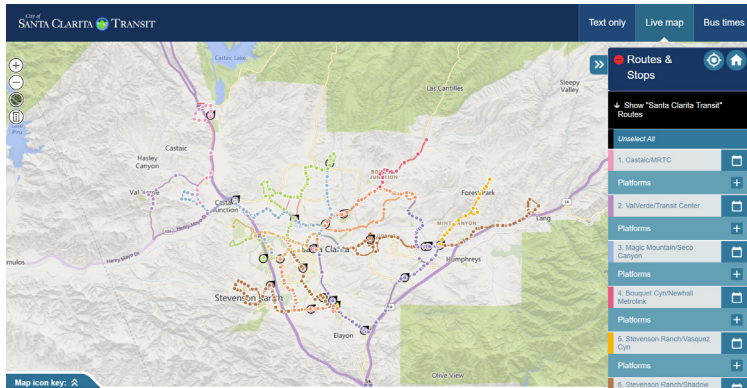
Planning the Trip

The customer experience begins the moment a rider plans their trip. Customers should be able to quickly and easily determine where and when service is available, how much a trip will cost, and what payment methods they can use. Service that is too confusing will deter potential customers from using transit or current customers from trying new trips.

SCT offers a variety of planning resources directly on their website. Customers can also utilize third-party navigation and trip-planning mobile apps.

- 1. Trip Planner:** SCT’s website has a built-in trip planner tool that is accessible via computer or mobile devices. The trip planner includes information on all L.A. Metro services and provides links to the **Go551 Trip Planner** and **Metro Trip Planner**.
- 2. Bus Finder Map:** SCT also offers a bus finder map that can be used to see estimated arrivals at specific bus stops and shows real-time bus locations for all routes. The map also outlines the expected speed and traffic on main roads to disclose possible delays.
- 3. Santa Clarita Transit App:** While not prominently advertised, SCT offers an app. With limited functionality, riders are likely utilizing SCT’s **Trip Planner** or a third-party app.
- 4. Booklets:** SCT offers online and paper booklets for local and commuter routes that provide useful introductory information and outlines each route with a map and timetable.
- 5. How to Videos:** On their website, SCT offers videos on how to use a TAP card, how to read their schedules, and how to use the QR codes posted at bus stops.
- 6. Trip planning information is available on third-party apps like Google Maps, Apple Maps, Moovit** (which is advertised on SCT’s front page), **Transit**, and **TAP LA**.

Santa Clarita Transit Live Bus Arrival - Stop Countdown & Live Map

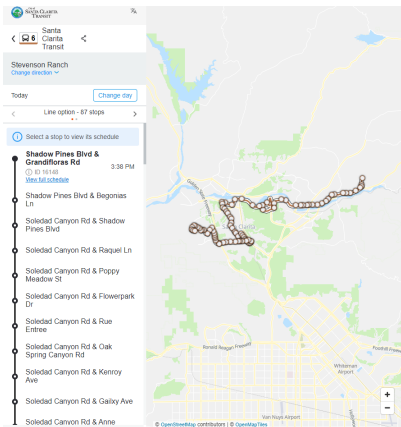


Arrival times for stop: McBean Regional Transit Center (MRTC)

Santa Clarita Transit

1. Old Rd & Sloan Cyn Due:	34min
2. Val Verde Due:	14min
4. Newhall Metrolink Due:	46min
5. Stevenson Ranch Due:	1min
6. Shadow Pines Due:	11min 50min

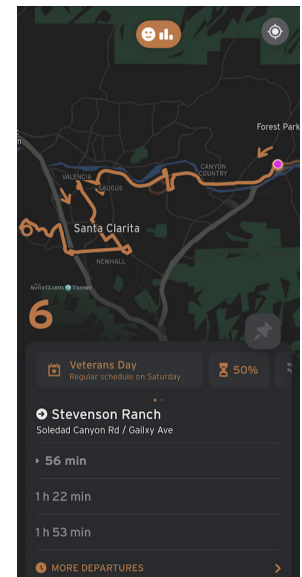
Santa Clarita Transit Trip Planner Tool



Santa Clarita Transit Schedule Pamphlets (Paper & Online)

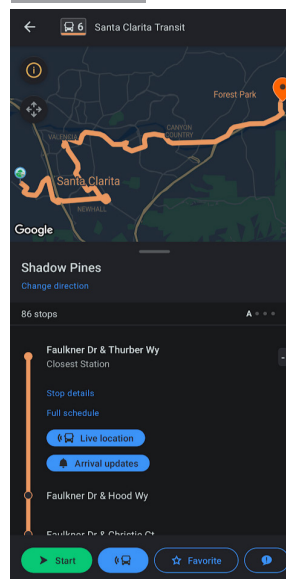


Transit App

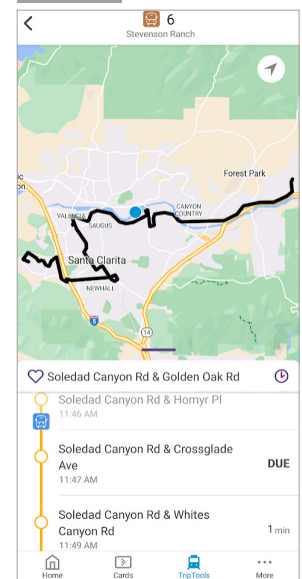


With many trip-planning resources available and a relatively small service area, SCT's network is easy to understand and navigate. However, potential riders may encounter initial trip-planning obstacles with the lack of a consistent, grid-like network structure, understanding the interlined routes with shared trunks (e.g. Routes 4 and 14 or Routes 5 and 6), and the limited frequencies on some routes.

Moovit App



TAP App



Accessing the Stop

The experience of walking to a bus stop is largely dependent on the **distance to the stop** and the **quality of the pedestrian environment**. With Santa Clarita’s lower-density development, separation of uses, and subsequent car dependency, ensuring a safe, convenient walk experience is challenging in some portions of the service area.



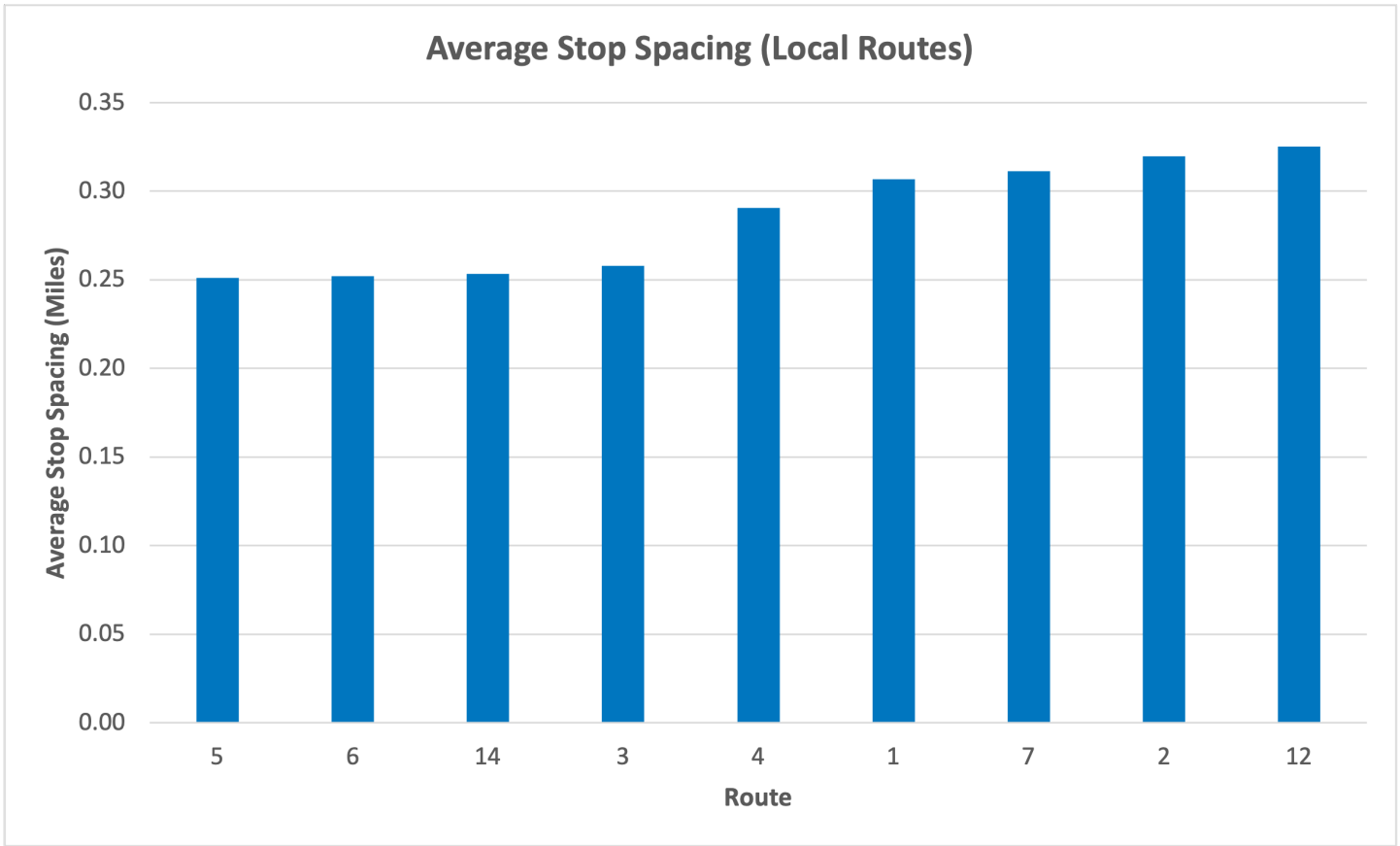
A quarter mile stop spacing means that most riders walk 5 minutes or less to a bus stop – a key customer experience factor.

STOP SPACING

Achieving the right stop spacing – the distance between bus stops – requires balancing the needs of riders on and off the bus. Riders on the bus prefer longer stop spacing so that the bus makes fewer stops and they have a faster trip. Conversely, riders boarding the bus prefer shorter stop spacing, so they have a shorter walk to the bus. **Ideally, average stop spacing in urban and suburban environments should be between 0.25 and 0.33 miles.** However, route context must be considered, as parts of a route may have closer stop spacing if it serves a high density of key destinations while other segments may have longer stop spacing if it serves low-density development or passes through open space, parks, or undeveloped areas.

Across the SCT service area, **all** local routes have an average stop spacing between 0.25 and 0.33 miles. Routes 1, 2, 12, and 7 have longer average stop spacing over 0.30 miles while Routes 5, 6, and 14 have shorter spacing at 0.25 miles. Average stop spacing for the local routes is shown in Figure 48.

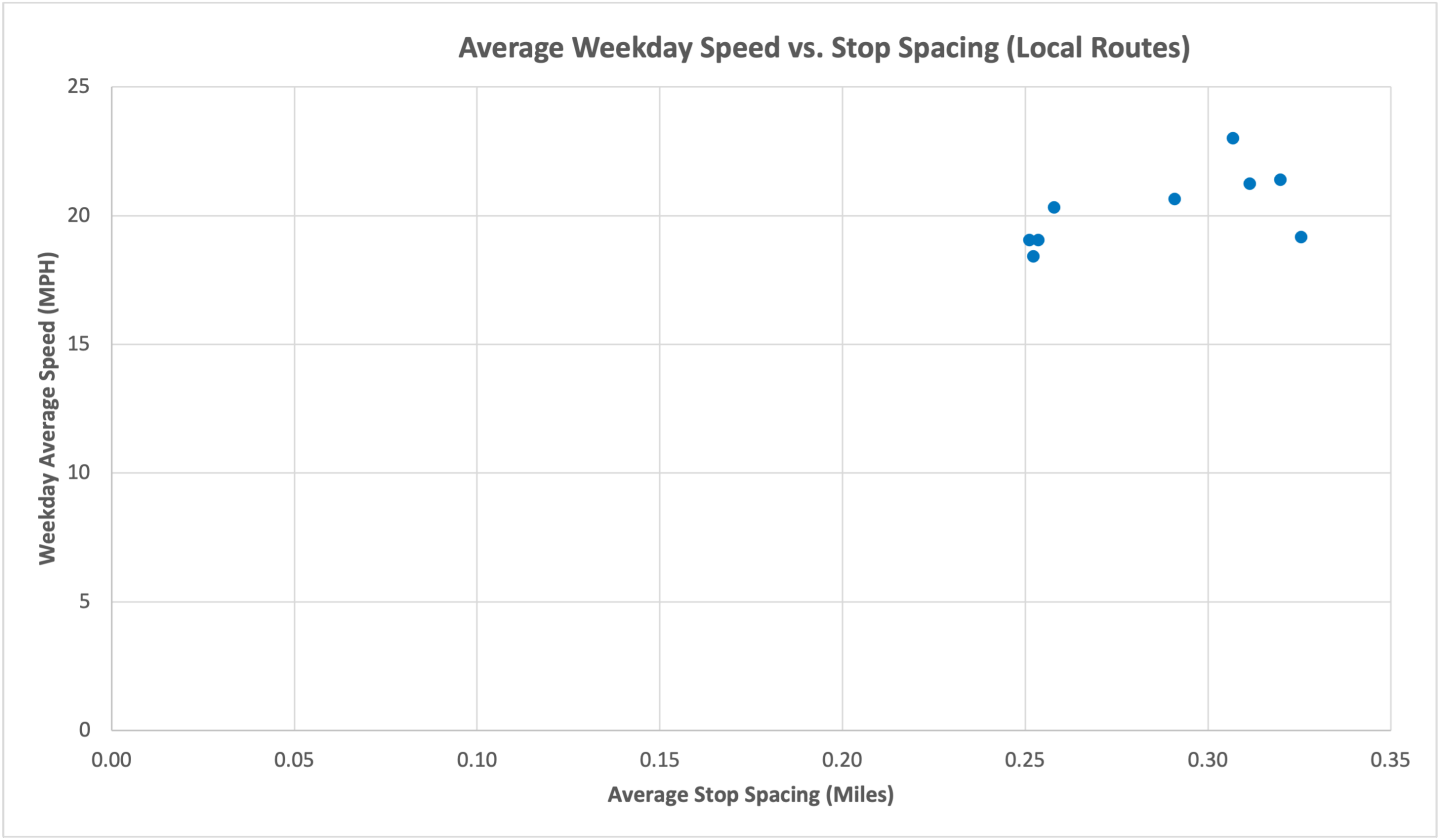
Figure 48: Local route stop spacing



Stop spacing on SCT’s school service routes, namely in the neighborhood segments, are much higher than the average seen on local routes. The stop spacing on these routes range from 0.23 to 0.46 miles with almost 50% of routes having an average spacing between 0.30 and 0.35 miles. However, these are special-purpose tripper services oriented around the school bell schedules and designed for collecting a higher volume of passengers from fewer locations and delivering them as quickly as possible to a single destination (a middle or high school).

The system’s longer stop spacing seems to have a **moderately positive correlation** with average operating speed. Across the nine local routes, bus speeds increase as stops are placed farther apart. (See Figure 49.) Route 12 is the only exception, which has the longest average stop spacing but with a lower average speed. While stop spacing seems to have a slight impact on average speed, it is likely that other route characteristics or operating factors have a greater impact.

Figure 49: Local route average speed vs. stop spacing



Even where bus stop spacing may not have a significant impact on speed or operation, SCT must consider its impact on other factors, such as **cost** and **running time**. Having more bus stops or shelters increases the cost of construction and maintenance, which may negatively affect the experience of customers. Having more stops adds more running time to a route by default, as schedulers must assume that the bus may stop.

PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT

Figure 50: Intersection of Citrus Street & Valencia Boulevard (next to City Hall)



Figure 51: Intersection of Soledad Canyon Road & Raquel Lane (served by Route 6)



SCT has appropriate stop spacing for their service network. While the vast majority of bus stops have adjacent sidewalk access, the City's development patterns reduce walkability in some areas.

Walking to and from a bus stop is part of every transit journey, and riders should feel safe doing so while enjoying a pleasant walking experience. Figures 50 and 51 offer two examples of common streetscapes and pedestrian environments in the SCT service area. Outside of Santa Clarita's older or more compact neighborhoods, wide and fast arterial roads or parkways create the best (or only) connectivity for motorists and bus routes, but offer a less inviting pedestrian experience.

There are a few factors that contribute to a high-quality pedestrian environment:

Sidewalks should be wide, well maintained, and free of obstacles.

- Almost 87% of bus stops within the service area have immediate access to a sidewalk. Many of the sidewalks are wider than five feet – the width of a typical sidewalk.
- 83% of bus stops within the service area have immediate access to an ADA ramp. A minimal number of ramps are constructed with a truncated dome surface.

Protected crossings should be present so that riders feel they can safely cross the street to access a bus stop.

- 77% of bus stops within the service area have immediate access to a pedestrian crossing – the majority of which are signalized crossings. A small percentage of crossings are dedicated pedestrian crosswalks.

Narrow streets generally cause cars to move slower and street crossings to be shorter, improving the pedestrian experience.

Waiting for the Bus

FREQUENCY

Frequency of service – the number of trips a route operates per hour - is the number one factor that attracts riders to use the bus. Riders want to be able to show up at a stop without consulting a schedule and have a bus arrive within a few minutes. When service is infrequent (trips come less often than every 15 minutes), most riders will not spontaneously use transit and will plan their trip around the timetable to minimize wait time. This can make transit much less attractive as they have to adjust their plans according to the timetable.

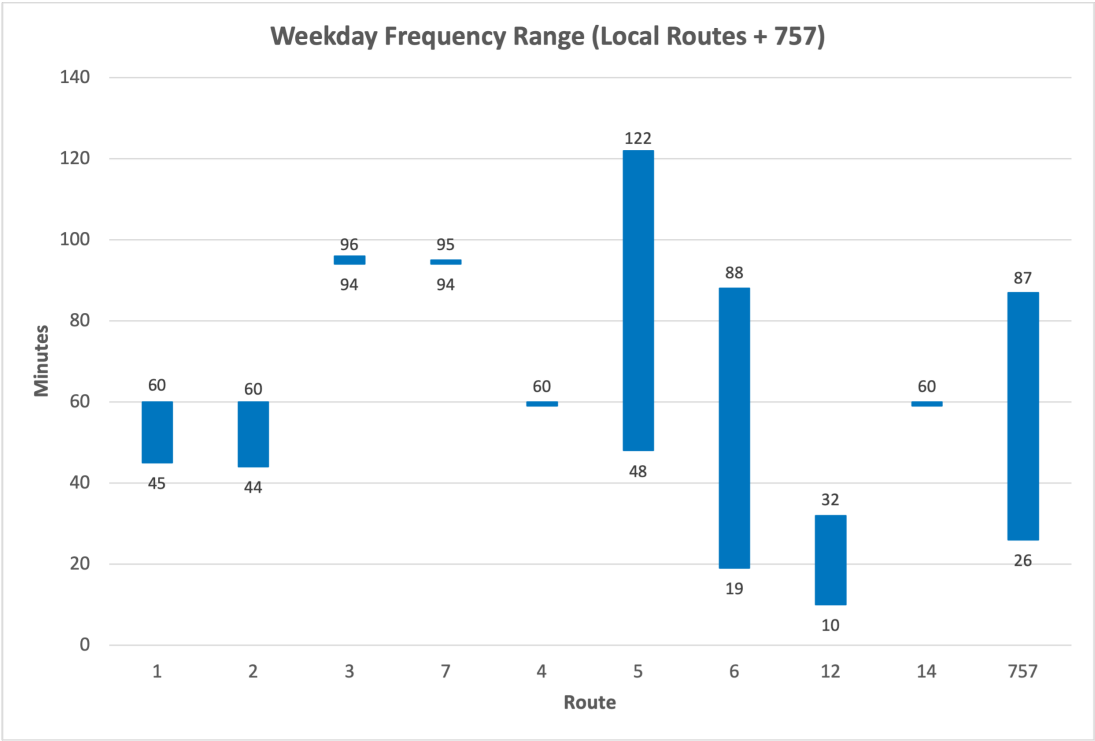
Current weekday frequencies are generally low across local routes. (See Figure 52.) **Route 12** is the only frequent route, with headways between trips as short as 10-15 minutes. However, the schedule is not clockface and frequencies vary between trips with headways as long as 30-32 minutes at certain times of the day. The other eight local routes operate as pairs with shared trunks over some or most of their alignments. The **Route 4/14** pair is the only route with clockface frequencies and operates every 30 minutes on the shared trunk on weekdays. On the other routes' common trunks, the **Route 1/2** pair varies between headways in the 12-33 minute range. The **Route 3/7** pair alternates between 26- and 60-minute frequencies, and the **Route 5/6** pair varies among frequencies mostly in the 13-35 minute range.



Clockface frequencies make the timetable much more legible and the service easier to understand for customers, especially on infrequent routes. Knowing that the headway is spaced consistently throughout the day makes it easier to adjust your travel plans. Clockface headways also make it easier to coordinate transfers reducing the time a customer needs to wait when transferring between buses.

With only one route that is clockface on weekdays and two on weekends, this makes the schedule harder for SCT customers to understand. Streamlined, clockface schedules are an opportunity to enhance the customer experience.

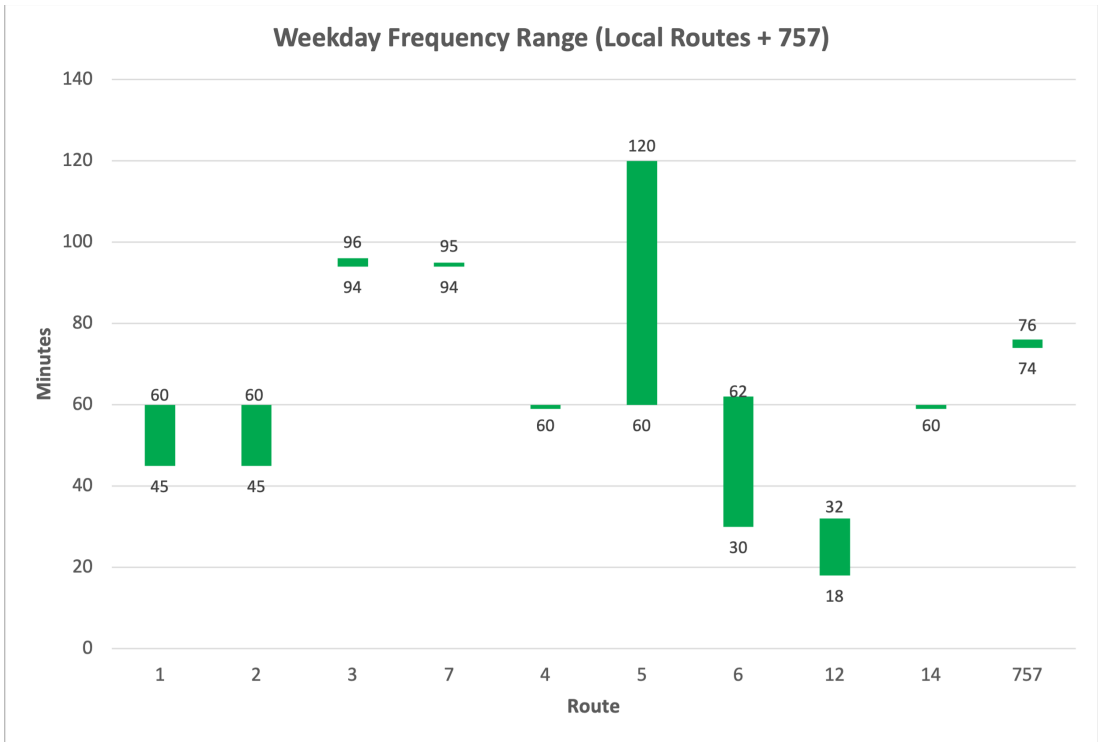
Figure 52: Weekday frequency range by route



While riders may have access to more frequent service on corridors that are served by multiple routes, frequencies on these routes' unique segments is even lower. This requires riders to not only consult the timetable or digital trip planning tool for the next trip, but also understand which route to board if they're traveling outbound past the shared segment. In addition to more frequent service, fewer branched routes or simplified route numbering may make the service more attractive.

Weekend frequencies are similar or slightly lower than on weekdays. (See Figure 53.) **Route 12** similarly varies between trips with headways between 18 and 32 minutes (compared to 10 to 32 minutes on weekdays). On the paired routes' shared trunks, **Route 1/2**, **Route 3/7**, and **Route 4/14** operate at the same intervals as described above. The **Route 5/6** pair does not have any intervals under 30 minutes on weekends, but is clockface all day at 30 minutes. With 48% of general public trips internal to the service area taking place on weekends, according to the Market Assessment travel demand analysis, increasing weekend frequencies along with weekdays can help to grow SCT's customer base.

Figure 53: Weekend frequency range by route



Most of SCT's seven commuter routes operate on weekdays only with peak-only, trip-based service. **Routes 797** and **799** operate a total of five trips in the morning and five in the afternoon into the evening. **Routes 796, 791,** and **792** operate three trips during both periods, while **Route 794** only has one trip in the morning and two in the evening. **Route 757** to North Hollywood is the only SCT commuter route to operate all day and on weekends. Weekday frequencies vary between trips, with intervals ranging from 26 to 87 minutes for service to Los Angeles and as high as 104 minutes for return trips to Santa Clarita. Weekend frequencies are more consistent, with 74- to 76-minute intervals between trips.

CURRENT SHELTER AMENITIES AND QUANTITY

Figure 54: SCT bus stop with shelter



Figure 55: SCT basic bus stop without amenities



Stop amenities can greatly improve the waiting experience, especially on routes with low frequencies where riders will be waiting for longer. Figures 54 and 55 show examples of SCT bus stops with and without shelters and other stop amenities. The analysis below is based on stops within Santa Clarita's jurisdiction and ignores commuter bus stops in Los Angeles. The majority of bus stops within the service area have seating, a trash receptacle, and lighting present, while only 28% of bus stops have a shelter present. However, analyzing amenities in terms of the percent of daily riders boarding at a stop with that amenity present allows for a more nuanced prioritization of investment than just sheer quantity of benches or shelters. **SCT currently does a good job with these amenities, with 96% of average weekday riders in Spring 2023 boarding at a stop with lighting, 85% at a stop with seating, and 65% at a stop with a shelter.** Along with ensuring state of good repair and upkeep for existing stop amenities, SCT should work to expand the number of stops with lighting, benches, or shelters as funding allows and demand warrants. It is recommended that SCT prioritize future stop amenity investments

based on ridership and set targets for a percent of average daily riders who are sheltered or have seating. For example, increasing the percent of weekday customers with a shelter from 65% to 75% would require the addition of 23 new shelters at the highest ridership stops (excluding nine with obvious right-of-way constraints or serving only schools).

In terms of service information available at bus stops, about 80% of stops have a QR code for customers to scan. 8% of stops have simple Bus Finder information devices with a strip of dots for real-time arrival countdowns and other key information. (See example to the right.) A limited number of stops, at the McBean Regional Transit Center, the Newhall Metrolink station, and Lyons Ave / Main St, have dynamic monitors with real-time info. **Between the Bus Finder units and the real-time displays, 36% of weekday customers in Spring 2023 had access to real-time bus information without the use of a smartphone QR code.**



As one of the most important factors in service attractiveness, improving frequencies on key routes can attract more customer to the SCT system. Additionally, providing clockface schedules can reduce barriers to use for new customers or those with varying travel patterns.

While SCT does a good job of providing shelters and other basic stop amenities at its highest-ridership stops, wider deployment of real-time information units can help to improve the customer experience for riders who are not able to use the smartphone bus tracker.



SCT has recently completed projects to improve service information available at bus stops. A majority of bus stops now have signs with a QR code that leads to real-time bus arrival information for smartphone users.

SCT Bus Finder



Boarding the Bus

FARE MEDIA

Paying the fare is the first “onboard” experience customers have when traveling. SCT currently has two fare payment instruments outside of cash. Fare products and tiers are shown in Table 5.

Transit Access Passes (TAP): TAP is a contactless smart card system administered by Metro and accepted by other transit operators across Los Angeles County, allowing for transfers between participating transit networks. TAP cards are available as physical cards (with a \$2 fee for a new card issuance) that can be reloaded by visiting TAP Pass Sale Outlets, Metro Rail and BRT stations, or their website. There is also a TAP app allowing for mobile payments from smartphones and watches.



Token Transit: SCT tickets and passes can also be purchased using the Token Transit app. While the Token Transit platform is used by transit agencies across the country, locally it is only available for SCT service and cannot be used to transfer to other transit networks within LA County (unlike TAP). Notably, users can send passes to others via text message – bringing flexibility to parents and caretakers.

Table 13: Santa Clarita Transit Fares

Service		Full Fare	Senior / Disabled	Day Pass	Monthly	
					SCT-Only (& Reduced)	EZ Transit (& Reduced)
Local Routes (+ Stations Links and School Routes)		\$1.00	FREE	\$2.50	\$34.00 (N/A)	--
Commuter	North Hollywood (Route 757)	\$3.00	\$1.50		\$110.00 (\$55.00)	\$176.00 (\$70.50)
Commuter	Warner Center (Routes 791 & 796)	\$4.00	\$2.00		\$150.00 (\$75.00)	\$198.00 (\$80.00)
Commuter	Century City & Los Angeles (Routes 792 & 797 and 794 & 799)	\$4.50	\$2.25		\$170.00 (\$85.00)	\$220.00 (\$89.50)
Commuter	Interagency Transfer	\$0.55				
Dial-A-Ride (Seniors, and general public after 6pm)		\$2.00	\$2.00			
Access Services	within Santa Clarita	--	\$2.00			
Access Services	to SFV & LA	--	\$2.75			
Access Services	to Antelope Valley	--	\$3.50			

Children 5 and under ride for free on all services. Personal Care Assistants ride free on Dial-A-Ride.

For **local routes**, riders can purchase a single ride (\$1.00), a day pass (\$2.50) and a monthly pass (\$34.00). Children (5 and under), seniors (60 and older), and persons with disabilities may ride local routes for free.

Pricing for **commuter routes** differs based on the route and whether the destination is North Hollywood, Warner Center, or Downtown / Westside Los Angeles. For monthly passes, riders can purchase Metro's **EZ Transit Pass**, which can be used across 23 transit systems in the Greater LA region - based on the fare level that is purchased. Riders may also purchase a **SCT-only pass**, which is only valid on one chosen commuter route. If riders do not use a pass, there is a surcharge of \$0.55 for interagency transfers. Those riding commuter routes may transfer to a non-SCT bus within two hours of boarding the SCT commuter bus for \$0.55. When transferring from a non-SCT bus to a SCT commuter bus, regular riders receive a \$1.00 credit and reduced fare riders receive a \$.50 credit for the inbound ride. Interagency transfers are only valid on TAP cards – those using cash do not benefit from this system and may be required to pay full fare. Children may ride commuter routes for free while seniors and persons with disabilities are eligible for reduced fares.

Riders also have access to unlimited rides on any SCT routes (and with other participating transit agencies) with a valid **Metrolink** weekend, weekly, or monthly pass. One-way Metrolink tickets include one SCT boarding and round trip tickets include two boardings. Riders can purchase one-way tickets, round-trip tickets, weekend passes, 7-day passes, or monthly passes through the Metrolink App, ticket machines, or online.

SCT's commuter fare structure and its transfer interface with Metro is fairly complicated and may be unclear to potential riders. Commuters must choose between three commuting passes, which all have their own separate choices. For riders looking to commute and transfer to another transit agency's local service, they must then navigate the interagency transfer system. With more complicated commuter bus and regional transfer fare policies, a significant barrier is presented to riders looking to utilize transit for long distance travel. SCT should reevaluate its presentation of information to reduce barriers to entry and better meet the demand of commuters or other riders traveling to or from Santa Clarita.

A single ride on **SCT's Dial-A-Ride** service costs \$2.00 for the general public, seniors, persons with disabilities, and accompanied companions. **Access Services**, usable by eligible riders under the Americans with Disabilities Act, provides services to Santa Clarita (\$2.00), the San Fernando Valley (\$2.75), the LA Basin (\$2.75), and Antelope Valley (\$3.50). Children and personal care attendants ride for free for both services. Across all SCT services, reduced fares are not offered for students.



SCT's local base fare (\$1.00) is at the lower end among peer agencies in the region. It aligns with Glendale Beeline and is only slightly more than Pasadena Transit (\$0.75). Operators with higher local base fares in the region include Santa Monica BBB (\$1.10), AVTA and Gold Coast Transit (\$1.50), and Metro (\$1.75).



Seniors, customers with disabilities, and children under six receiving free fares represented 12% of all local fixed route boardings in fiscal year 2023 (July 2022-June 2023). An additional 5.2% of FY2023 local route boardings were recorded as free, likely due to fare evasion, operator courtesy, or other reasons.

Overall, SCT's fare policies allow for affordable access to quality mobility products for a variety of customers and travel needs, although some barriers are present. SCT offers a more competitively priced base fare than some local peers. Local routes are relatively inexpensive and seniors and persons with disabilities ride free – a rare occurrence in the area. Commuter routes are also reasonably priced, with reduced fares costing half – or less – of the regular passes. However, SCT's commuter fare structure, with its integration with Metro, should be reevaluated for its presentation of information.



SCT should explore funding opportunities and the policy implications for offering a reduced or free pass program for (non-low-income, non-disabled) youth and/or college students. While fare-paying middle and high school students constitute an important part of SCT's local bus ridership when school is in session, free or reduced youth fares would make SCT more equitable and grow ridership.

SCT should also be mindful of current and future equity concerns regarding mobile payment technology or cashless fare policies. Even with near universal smartphone ownership rates nationwide (85-90+%), there are still many older, low-income, or disabled Americans on the other side of the 'digital divide' and it essential to provide equitable access to mobility across all aspects of the transit customer experience.



LA Metro offers a TAP-based "GoPass" program that offers free local bus rides for young people who attend participating K-12 schools or community college. GoPass is also accepted by 14 other LA County operators, including AVTA, Glendale, and Pasadena.

Outside LA County, OCTA offers free passes for youth attending participating schools in Orange County. Gold Coast Transit in Ventura County also offers free rides to youth under 18 and to college students.

San Diego County's two operators (MTS and NCTD) also offer free youth passes. Some of these programs are currently offered on a pilot basis or are only funded through a certain time period.

Riding the Bus

The customer’s experience on SCT buses is heavily influenced by the length of the trip, meaning the **speed of the bus** is an important consideration. Bus speed is largely determined by **traffic**, the **number of turns**, **route directness**, and the **time spent boarding and offloading passengers**. Riders perceive any delay on the bus to be longer than its actual duration, so anything that slows down travel time can significantly degrade the customer experience.

BUS SPEEDS

The speed of the bus is the number one factor affecting overall travel time. It affects transit’s competitiveness and determines the amount of transit service that can be provided within a constrained budget. A number of factors contribute to bus operating speeds:

Street design and the built environment: The number of intersections, type of intersection (signalized, stop sign, or non-signalized), street continuity, and street width all impact speed. Ironically, transit and pedestrian oriented development can significantly slow down the bus, while auto-centric development patterns, as mostly seen in the Santa Clarita Valley, can mean faster bus speeds.

Stop spacing: As discussed previously, SCT has an average stop spacing between 0.25 and 0.33 miles. While shorter stop spacing means shorter walks for customers, it also means slower travel times as buses must slow down and stop more frequently. SCT local services strike an appropriate balance between the two.

Dwell time: The amount of time stopped at a bus stop or intersection can slow down travel time.

Traffic signal delay and congestion: Traffic congestion, especially during peak travel periods for work or school, can significantly slow down travel time. As part of the operator survey conducted for this report, operators cited Soledad Canyon Road and routes operating between Magic Mountain and McBean Regional Transit Center as major sources of congestion. Furthermore, operators expressed concern over the impact of new development on traffic. If SCT wishes to reduce this type of delay, they can implement tools such as signal priority, bus bulbs, queue jumps, or dedicated bus lanes.

Across the spring and summer of 2023, the average speed across all SCT services was 20 mph, with minimally higher average speeds during the summer.

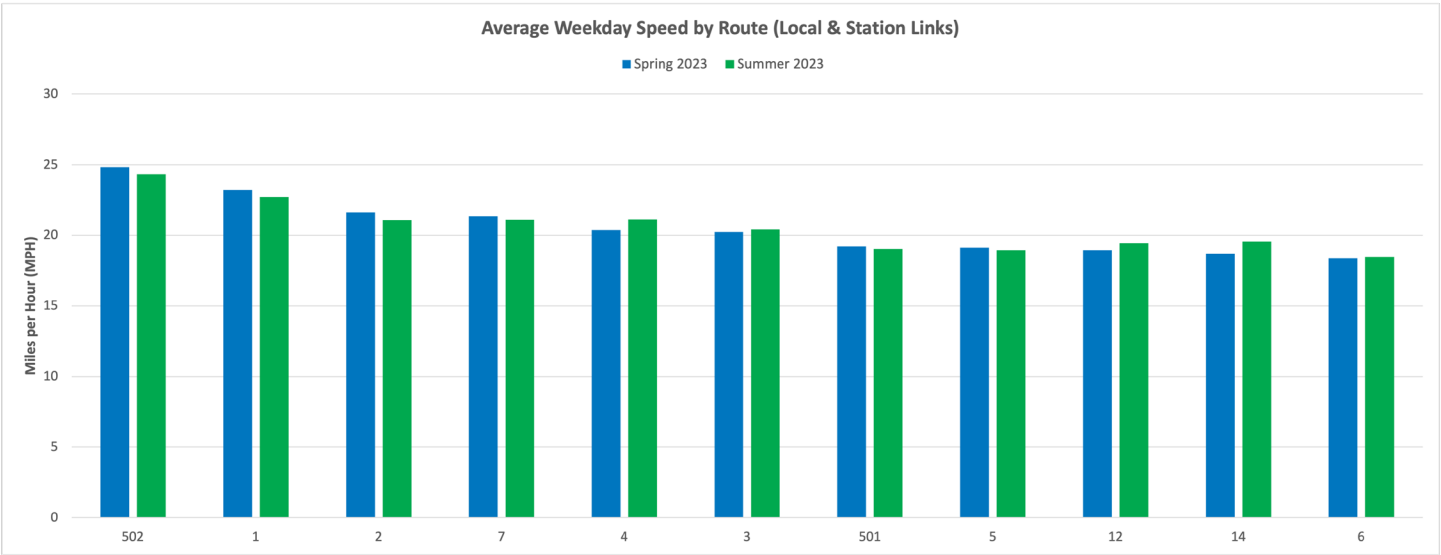
Across the week, weekend average speeds are only slightly faster than weekdays. The variation across seasons and the week is partially due to school service routes, some of which are among the slowest in the system, and the Hotel Trolley. However, weekend routes still have a higher average speed when not accounting for school service.

Weekday speeds, shown in Figure 56, vary across SCT’s service tiers. Local routes, with an average speed of **19 mph**, do not vary widely among themselves. Six of the nine routes saw an average speed between 18 and 21 mph. Routes 1, 2, and 7 saw the fastest average speeds, in the 21-24 mph range.



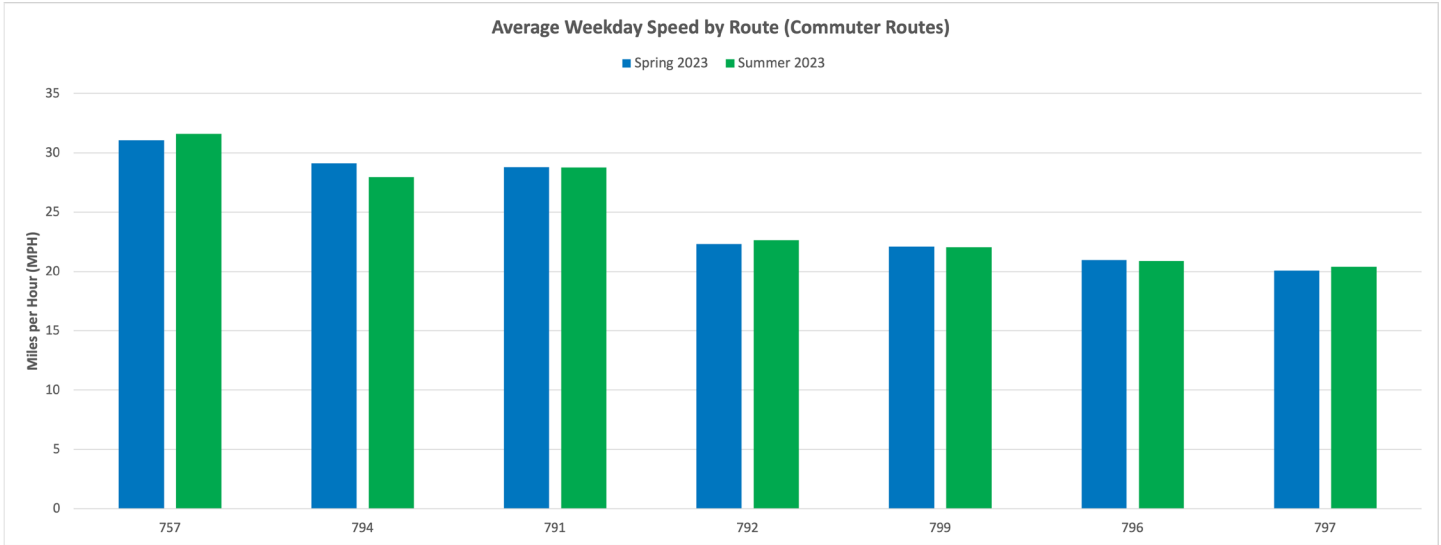
Notably, Route 757 (the only weekend commuter route) averaged nearly 50 mph on weekends, a testament to the impact of weekday freeway congestion in the City of Los Angeles.

Figure 56: Average weekday speeds for Local and Station Links routes



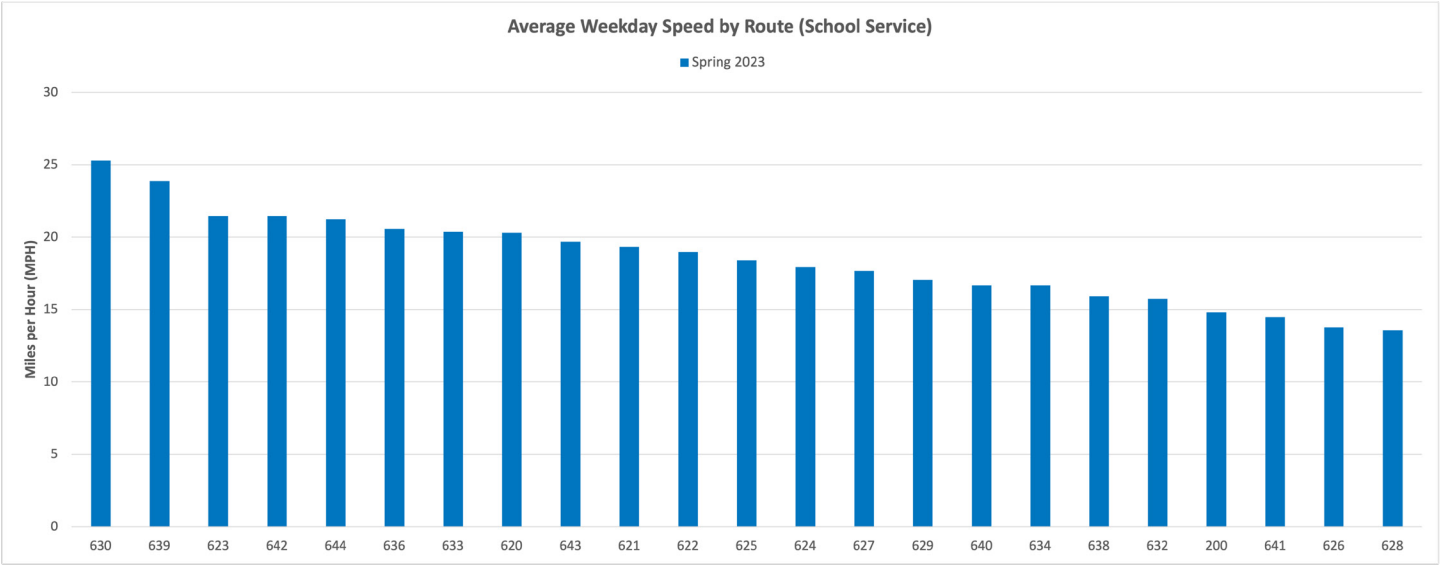
Commuter routes, with an average route speed of **25 mph**, have a bit more variability. (See Figure 57.) Routes 757, 794, and 791 have the highest average weekday speeds, in the 28-32 mph. Average weekday speeds on the other four commuter routes are similar to the best performing local routes, despite their long freeway-running segments.

Figure 57: Average weekday speeds for Commuter routes



School service routes have the slowest average tier speed at **18 mph** and vary widely between routes, with the lowest speeds around 12 miles per hour and the highest speeds around 25 miles per hour. (See Figure 58.)

Figure 58: Average weekday speeds for Supplemental School Service routes



SCT’s average bus speeds are typical for the geography and development patterns of Santa Clarita and likely do not negatively affect the customer experience. However, these speeds may drop as the significant growth and development of the Santa Clarita Valley can lead to congestion. SCT should continue to monitor speeds, identify any problem routes or route segments, and consider transit priority measures as warranted and funding allows. Additionally, the City of Santa Clarita should work with regional partners such as Caltrans, SCAG, LA County Public Works, Metro, and others to identify any opportunities to improve bus speeds on freeways.

DIRECTNESS

Travel time is also affected by the directness of a route, and deviations from a route’s primary alignment play a significant role in increasing overall travel time. Route deviations usually exist to provide “front door” service to neighborhoods, shopping plazas, medical centers, or employers that lie off the main corridor. In removing the potential walk riders would have to access those destinations, travel time is increased. Due to the Santa Clarita Valley’s terrain, winding roads, and low-density development, SCT’s local routes are often indirect as deviations must be made to serve key destinations. For example, **Routes 4, 12, and 14** take major deviations in order to serve key shopping centers, schools, and transit centers. **Route 7** is an example of a shorter deviation which serves schools, apartments, business parks, and shopping such as Walmart. Deviations’ benefit to customers and ridership generation should be weighed against the impact to through-customers.

Industry best practice says there should be **no more than five passenger-minutes of delay** per boarding gained along a deviation. In other words: the onboard load entering the deviated segment times the duration of the segment, divided by new boardings along the segment, should be less than or equal to five. For example,

Route 7's counter-clockwise loop deviation onto Alta Vista Avenue and Kelly Johnson Parkway, shown in Figure 59, adds approximately 1.5 miles, or 5-6 minutes of travel time, to each inbound trip. With nine scheduled daily trips and only 2-3 all-day boardings generated along the segment per weekday in Spring or Summer 2023, this deviation exceeds the recommended delay threshold even with only a small handful of passengers onboard entering the segment. On trips where the segment generates no boardings, passengers may perceive travel time through the loop as even more impactful.

Figure 59: Route deviation example (Route 7)



ON-TIME PERFORMANCE

While frequency is a major factor in customers trying transit, service reliability is the number one factor that retains ridership – **riders have to be able to rely on SCT to get them where they need to go**. SCT defines “on-time” as any departure from a bus stop between zero to five minutes late from the schedule. If a bus leaves earlier than scheduled, it may leave riders behind. On the other hand, a late bus can mean a missed transfer, causing significantly longer delays.

A common industry standard for on-time performance is 85%. Attempting to achieve a higher percentage results in slowing down running times – creating a balancing act between reliable service and competitive travel times. SCT currently uses a **90%** standard. To note, only two routes – 2 and 14 – operated at or close to the OTP target in 2023. Overall weekday OTP for the local routes averaged 74% across spring and summer 2023. OTP was lower for the commuter routes, averaging 68% on time. Average OTP was lowest on the school service and hotel trolley routes, at 57% and 58%, respectively. (See Figures 60-62 for average weekday OTP by tier.)

Figure 60: Average weekday on-time performance for Local and Station Links routes

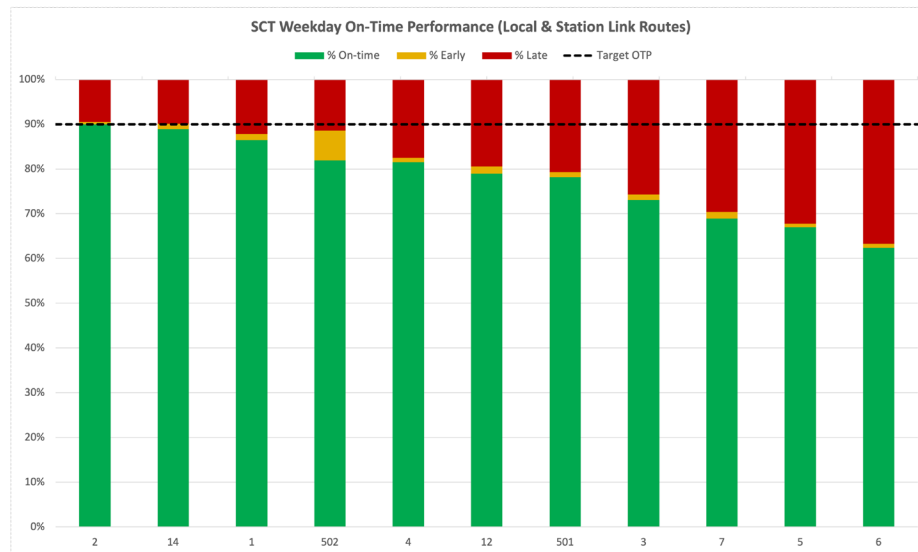


Figure 61: Average weekday on-time performance for Commuter routes

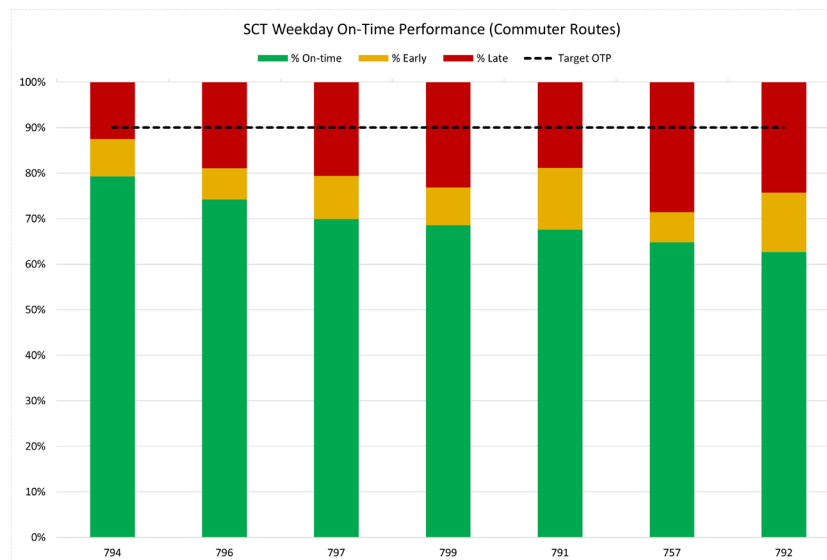
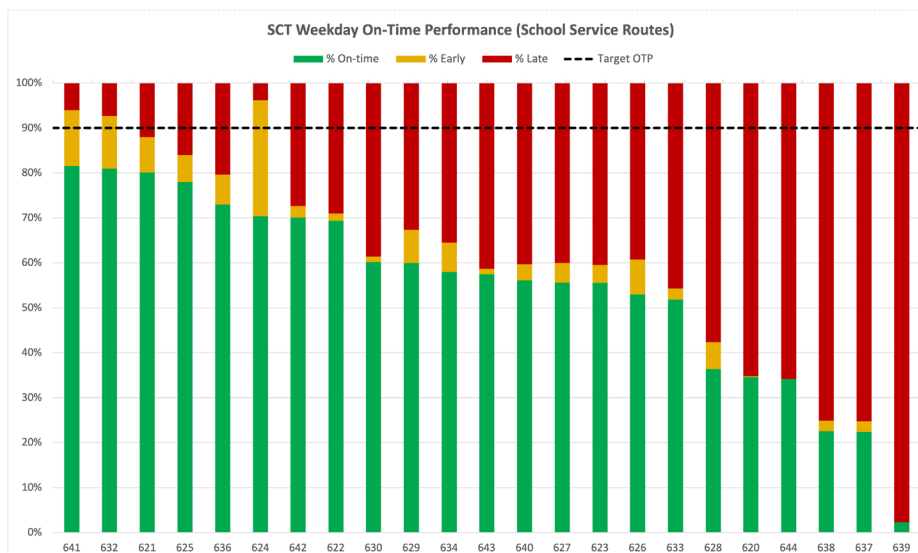


Figure 62: Average weekday on-time performance for Supplemental School Service routes



Across the spring and summer of 2023 and all routes and day types, **75% of all timepoint departures were on-time** with 22% of them being late or very late. Seasonality has no significant effect on system OTP, as routes operating during the summer have a 3% increase in on-time departures compared to the spring. However, seasonality has a more significant impact on select routes. Routes 7 and 12 had an almost 10% increase in on-time departures in the summer and Route 791 saw a 13% increase. While less significant, Routes 3, 4, 14, 757, and 794 saw around 4-6% increase in on-time departures.

Day type has a clearer effect on system OTP. Routes are **more likely to be late on weekdays** compared to weekends – almost 20% of departures during the weekday are late compared to 12% on weekends. All routes operating on weekends had a lower percent of late timepoint departures on Saturdays and Sundays and improved OTP as compared to weekdays, with the exception of the Hotel Trolley. Routes 3, 5, 6, 7, 12, and 501 all had 10-16% more late departures on weekdays than on weekends. The weekend OTP improvement was greatest on Routes 5 and 7, with a 16% increase.



Weekday OTP across Spring and Summer 2023 was highest on the Station Links routes, with a tier average of 81%, followed by local routes (74%), commuter routes (68%), Hotel Trolley (58%), and school service routes (57%).



Below-target OTP on commuter routes is likely caused by freeway congestion in Los Angeles, reducing bus speeds. School service OTP is likely reduced by longer dwell times with a high number of boardings at relatively few stops and other factors (such as bus operators waiting for students if school dismissal was delayed).

Given the relatively high speeds on the local routes, any OTP challenges in this tier could be caused by factors such as inadequate or excessive scheduled running times, individual operator behavior, or peak-period congestion on arterial roads and parkways in Santa Clarita.

TRANSFER CONNECTIONS

Figure 63: A bus leaving the McBean Regional Transit Center



SCT's bus network design is similar to that of the hub-and-spoke model, where multiple routes connect together through one central location. In this case, the McBean Regional Transit Center, and to a lesser extent the Newhall Metrolink Station, are the hubs in SCT's network. Unlike a traditional model, Routes 4, 14, and 12 serve both hubs and offer some crosstown service. Routes 5 and 6 offer a more complete crosstown service, as it serves both hubs and goes beyond to Stevenson Ranch. While SCT's network may not be as reliant on transfers as a fully hub-and-spoke model would be, there is still a large reliance on transfers at the City's two major hubs.

The transfer experience is influenced by factors discussed elsewhere in this report:

Accessing the stop: What is the quality of the pedestrian environment?

Waiting for a bus: What are the stop amenities? At what frequency does the bus operate at?

Reliably making the desired transfer connection: Is the bus operating at the desired on-time performance? Furthermore, how does the fare structure affect transfers?

Metrolink

Figure 64: Vista Canyon Metrolink station and Multi-Modal Center



Ensuring SCT local route schedules allow for timed transfers to and from Metrolink, as much as possible, will likely increase transit's mode share for Metrolink station access/egress.

Making transfers within SCT's network is especially important for those traveling long distances or commuting to work. Ensuring that service to SCT's hubs and Metrolink stations is offered at the right time of the day, is frequent enough, and aligns well with commuter route and Metrolink schedules is paramount for facilitating smooth transfers.

Santa Clarita's four Metrolink commuter rail stations, at Newhall, Saugus (Santa Clarita Station), Canyon Country (Via Princessa Station), and Vista Canyon, are important transfer locations for SCT riders.¹ In a 2022 Metrolink customer survey, 85% of Metrolink riders boarding or alighting at one of Santa Clarita's three stations accessed their initial station by driving a car or getting dropped off. Only 7% utilized Metro, SCT, or other transit mode to reach the station at the beginning of their trip. On a station level, station access by transit was highest at Newhall at 14%. When leaving the station (whether in Santa Clarita, or elsewhere for an outbound trip), 45% of riders were picked up or drove themselves away, and 23% used transit. This imbalance would suggest Santa Clarita's Metrolink customers mostly reach their local station by car and use transit to reach their final destination in the San Fernando Valley, Burbank, Glendale, or Downtown Los Angeles (or vice versa, for trips to Santa Clarita).

The Newhall Metrolink station, which has more local service that is better synced with Metrolink's schedule, has the highest number of riders utilizing transit to and from the station. The Via Princessa Metrolink station, and to a lesser extent the Santa Clarita Metrolink station, are less accessible by transit. The Station Links routes, which primarily serve the Santa Clarita station, only have one trip that arrives to the station at least 10 minutes before an inbound trip leaves, and only has three trips that leave from the station within 10 minutes after the train is scheduled to arrive. The Via Princessa station receives very little transit support, as no bus arrives or leaves within 10 minutes of a train's arrival or departure.

Santa Clarita's three existing Metrolink stations averaged just 11,000 weekday boardings per month in the first nine months of 2023. With 7% more alightings than boardings across the three stations in that time period, there are more people riding Metrolink to Santa Clarita than away from it. In fact only 47% of the 2022 Metrolink survey respondents using one of the three stations in Santa Clarita reported living in a community in the SCT service area. This is an important consideration when deciding how transit can better serve the needs of those traveling long distances to and from the Santa Clarita Valley.

¹ While the Vista Canyon Metrolink Station opened in Fall 2023 and is not yet served by any SCT bus routes, it is likely to become an important hub in the future.

Bike Share

Figure 65: Santa Clarita bikeshare bicycle and dock



Santa Clarita's top performing bike share stations were in The Promenade shopping center, Valencia Heritage Park, the Iron Horse Trail, and the South Fork Trail.

Santa Clarita is a desirable location for recreational biking, offering impressive infrastructure, trails, and open space. In Metrolink's 2022 customer survey, riders emphasized the importance of utilizing Metrolink services to access Santa Clarita's recreational bicycle environment. In a 2017 survey conducted by Santa Clarita's Economic Development Division about a potential bikeshare program, three-quarters of respondents indicated that they would like to see a bike sharing program or service in Santa Clarita. While most respondents expressed a desire to utilize the program for recreational purposes, a large number stated that they would like to see bike sharing stations near public transit stations and bus stops.

From December 2018 to March 2020, Santa Clarita administered a bikeshare program operated by the Zagster company under the Pace brand. The company suspended operations in March 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and officially ceased operations, in Santa Clarita and around the country, in May 2020. An August 2019 report for the first eight months of that year showed the program featured 50 bikes at 12 stations and had generated 3,262 trips or an average of 408 per month. 62% of trips were taken on weekdays, with a median trip distance of 1.6 miles.

SCT and other city departments should continue to support active transportation and micromobility options in the city. Reinstating a bike share program in Santa Clarita can be an important factor in promoting multimodal travel and transit usage. The City should evaluate the public's desire for a new bikeshare program, its cost of operation, and the cost to the customer.

How Riders Use the Network

The factors discussed previously all impact the riders' experience using SCT service, which then directly correlates with SCT's ridership – customers will continue to ride the bus if a quality experience is provided. In other words, ridership reflects SCT's success as a transit network.

Ridership Trends

Since the 2018 TDP, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a major impact on SCT ridership – reflecting national trends. However, ridership on SCT's local routes has fully recovered, exceeding the local bus ridership recovery of any of the local peers or larger regional agencies. Commuter routes have seen less success in recovery, with only 54% of 2018's annual ridership seen in 2022. (Compared to 93% for SCT local bus.) See Figures 66 and 67. Both the local and commuter services continued to recover at a similar pace in 2023 as compared to 2022. Over the first nine months of 2023, SCT's commuter bus ridership was 59% of the same period in 2018 (96% for local bus). This slow recovery of commuter bus ridership suggests that more people are working from home, their employment location has changed to somewhere not easily served by SCT's commuter routes, and/or they're choosing other modes for the journey to work. This TDP will consider the results of public input and the Market Assessment analyses in developing commuter service recommendations that seek to maximize service efficiency and effectiveness while providing a positive customer experience for workers, students, and other traveling to south to Los Angeles.

Figure 66: SCT monthly local bus ridership vs. peers

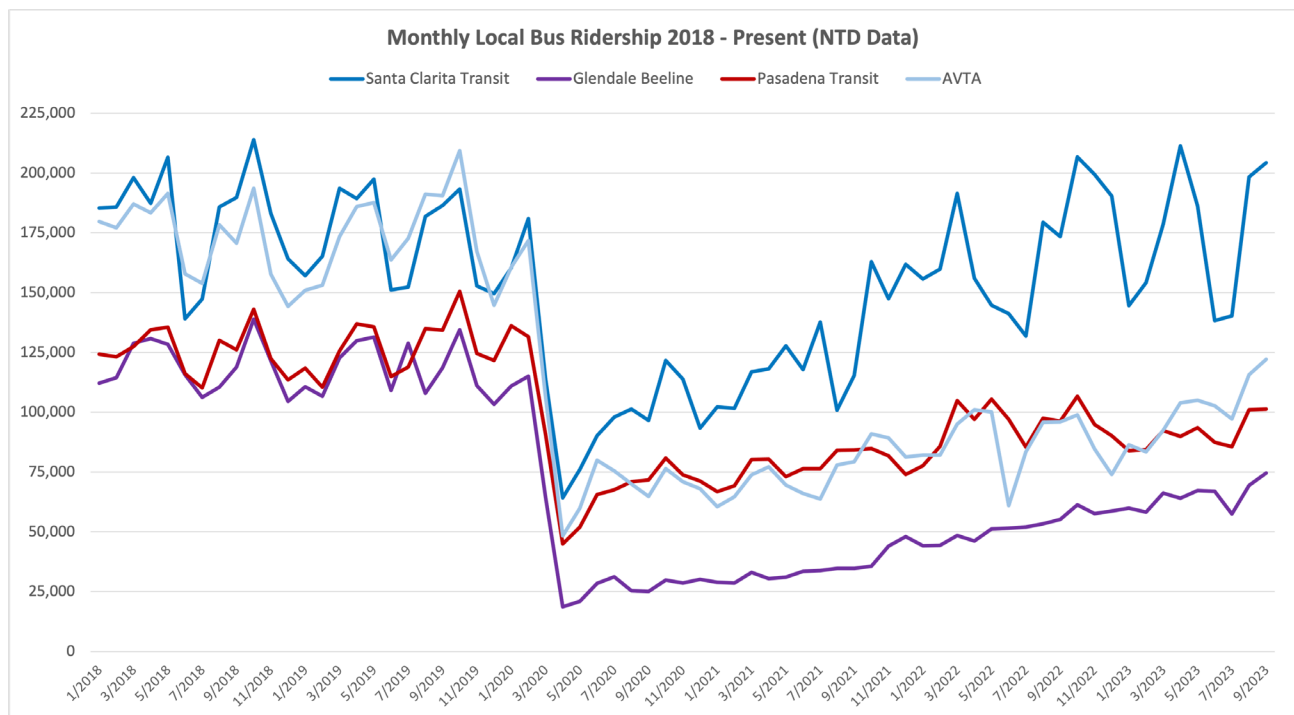
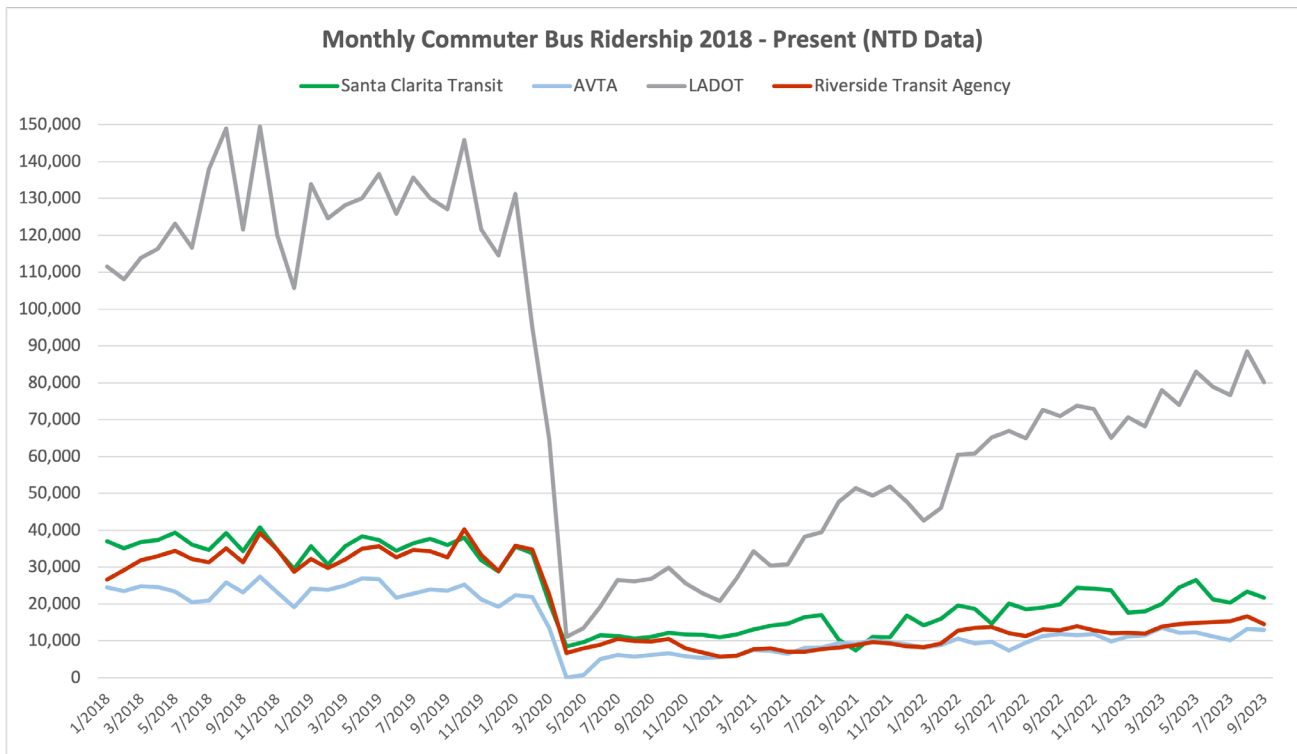


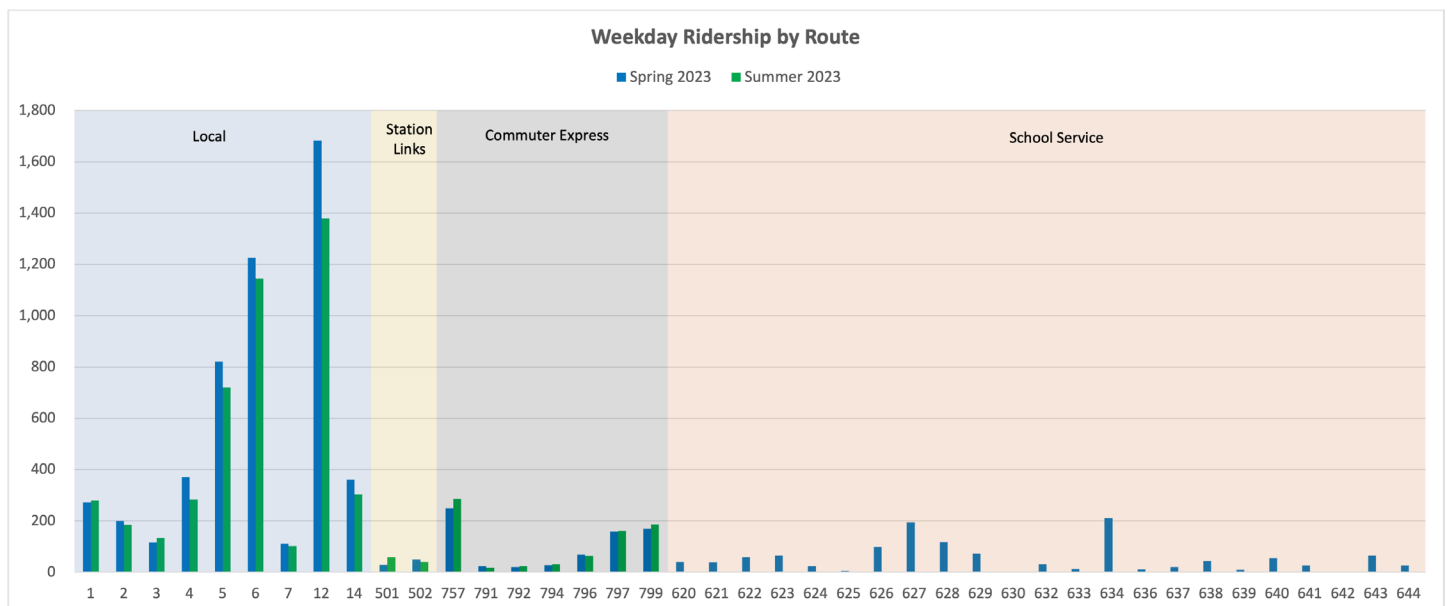
Figure 67: SCT monthly commuter bus ridership vs. peers



Ridership by Route

Ridership by route can be an important indicator of effective service; a route with high ridership likely provides effective service to the area it serves. A route with low ridership may indicate a poorly designed route and an inefficient use of resources. However, it is important to note that routes with limited service are likely to have lower ridership – requiring careful consideration when looking at low performing routes. Nevertheless, ridership data can still provide insights into which routes should be evaluated further. Average weekday ridership is shown in Figure 68.

Figure 68: SCT weekday ridership by route



Weekday ridership is highest on **Routes 12, 6, and 5**. Routes 12 and 6 have the highest local bus frequencies and serve key destinations in Valencia, Newhall, and Canyon Country. Notably, Route 5 has more than double the ridership of Routes 1 and 2 while operating less frequently. Optimizing and improving high ridership routes can have a significant impact on the overall network.

Routes 3 and 7 have the lowest ridership, but do provide coverage to northern Valencia, northern Saugus, and Six Flags Magic Mountain. While Six Flags Magic Mountain is a top employer and major attraction, the routes that directly serve it generate little ridership. This may be due to the routes' alignments, transfer opportunities, or schedules not aligning with Six Flag employee or visitor travel patterns. Additionally, the nearby Route 3 and 7 stop on Magic Mountain Pkwy is more than a third of a mile from the park's main entrance with no sidewalks on the park's driveway. The employee entrance at the rear of the property is served directly by **Route 501** (Station Links), but the peak-only service with few trips may limit its usefulness for employees. Direct access to the park is only available with the summer hotel trolley service.

In February 2024, Routes 3 and 7 will be extended to serve the new Five Points Community, which may increase ridership and demand on these routes. However, this extension did not come with an investment in additional vehicle on the route or discontinuation of coverage elsewhere, resulting a 10-minute to decrease to the combined trunk frequency.

As previously stated, commuter routes have struggled to recover ridership since COVID. **Routes 757, 799, and 797** are the only commuter routes with more than 100 boardings per day. **Route 757** in particular performs much better than all the commuter routes and some local routes – namely due to its all-day service span (vs. peak-only trips) and weekend service.



Routes 12, 6, and 5 accounted for 72% of average weekday local bus ridership in Spring 2023.

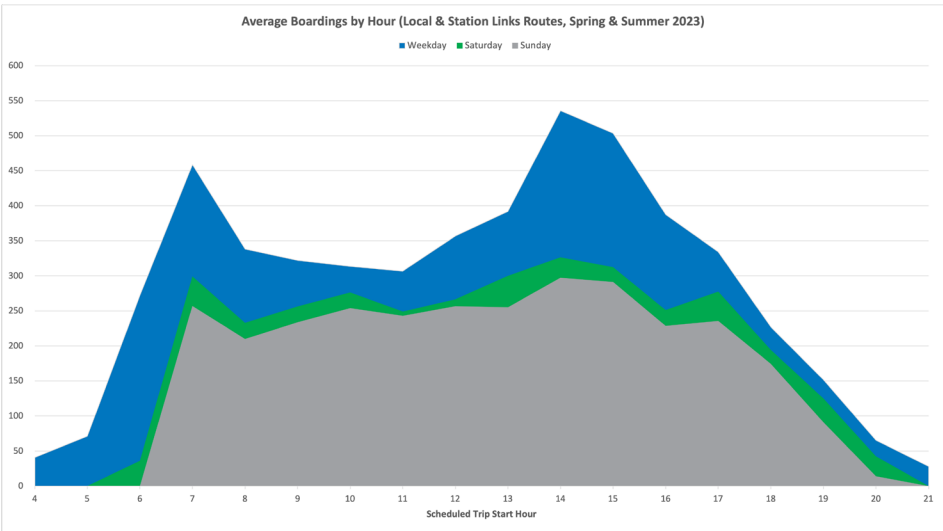
Ridership by Day Type and Time Period

Analyzing ridership trends by day type and time period can help SCT to better serve current and potential customers’ mobility needs and how to efficiently allocate resources.

Seasonality has a substantial impact on average weekday ridership. Spring 2023 ridership, when school was in session, was **31%** higher than in Summer 2023. Even without the school service, average weekday boardings on local and station links routes were **11%** higher in the summer than spring of 2023.

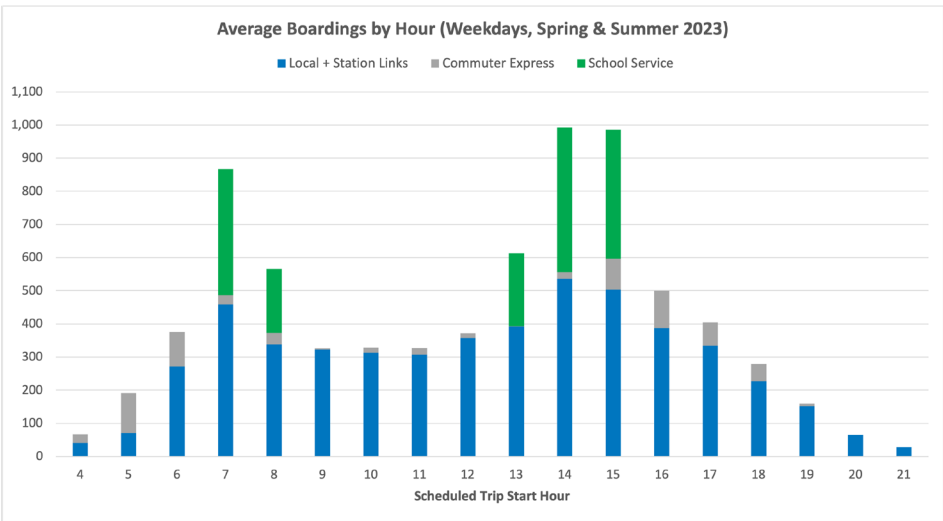
Weekday ridership on local and station links routes is highest in the AM and PM peak periods with single-hour average boardings highest in the 7 AM and 2 PM hours. Together those two hours account for around 20% of average weekday boardings on the 11 local and stations links routes across Spring and Summer 20023. Ridership declines in the evening period as service levels drop. (See Figure 69.) Ridership on the school service and commuter routes is entirely peak-oriented, given the limited spans and specific purposes for those services. As shown in Figure 70, the school service routes in particular are a major source of weekday ridership, but only in five peak-period hours.

Figure 69: Average boardings by hour for local and station links routes



A key finding from the Market Assessment travel demand analysis was that general public travel in the service area continues into the evening at a greater rate relative to SCT local bus service levels, suggesting that SCT may be able to better serve residents’ mobility needs with more evening service.

Figure 70: Weekday boardings by hour and tier



Ridership by Stop

Stop-level ridership shows where transit demand is high and helps identify the top destinations and transfer locations within the Valley. Collectively, the **top 20 stops (representing 3% of all stops) generated 42% of average weekday boardings** in Spring 2023. (See Figure 71 for a breakdown of the number of stops by average boardings.) Stops along major corridors such as Soledad Canyon Road and Sierra Highway are major ridership generators – accounting for 15% and 10% of Spring 2023 weekday boardings, respectively. Transit centers are also well represented; the McBean Regional Transit Center alone accounts for 15% of weekday boardings. See Figure 72 for a map of average weekday boardings by stop within the SCT service area.

Figure 71: Number of stops by average daily weekday boardings

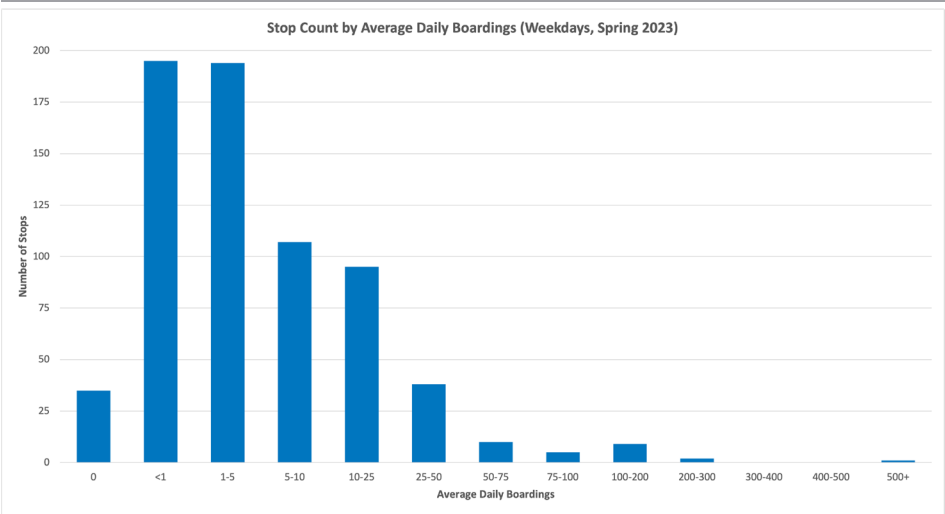
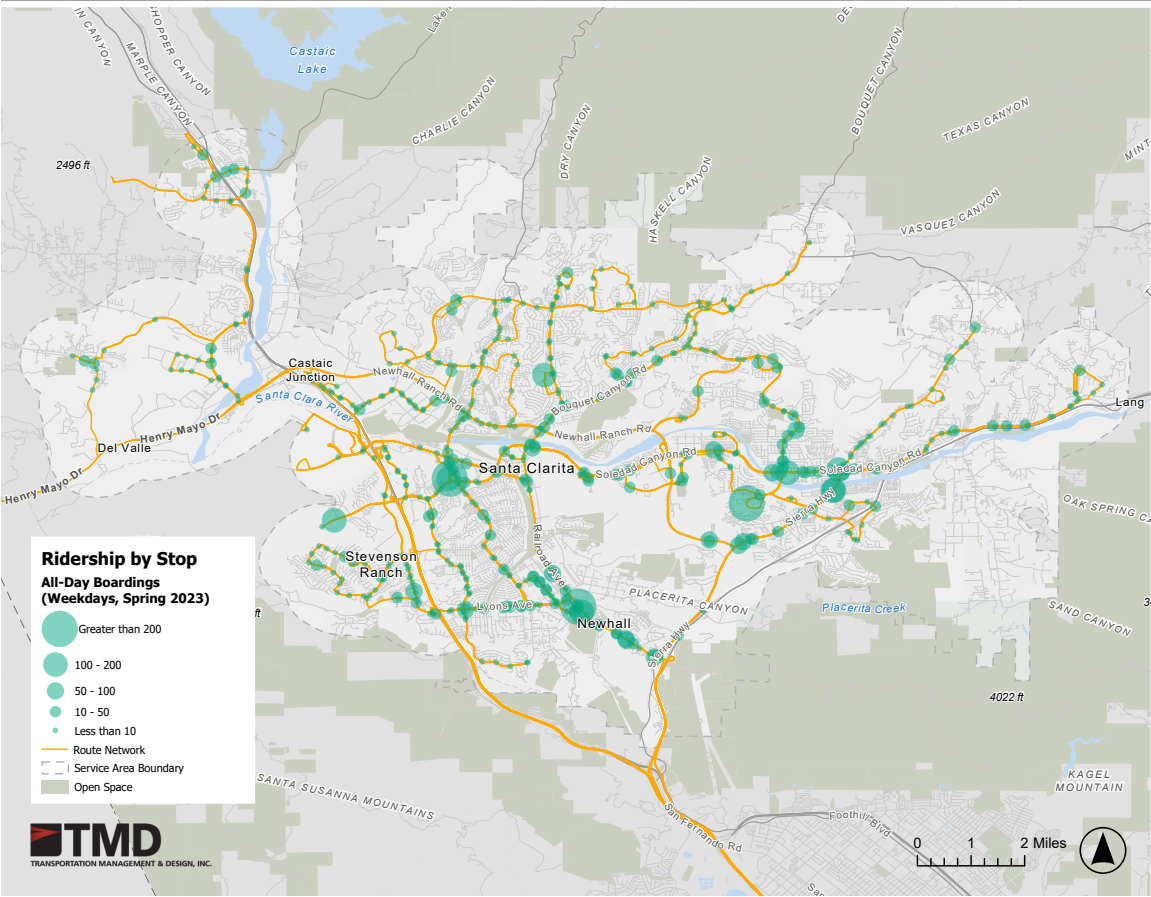


Figure 72: Average weekday ridership by stop in Spring 2023



Average Trip Length

Average trip length can help to answer a number of questions:

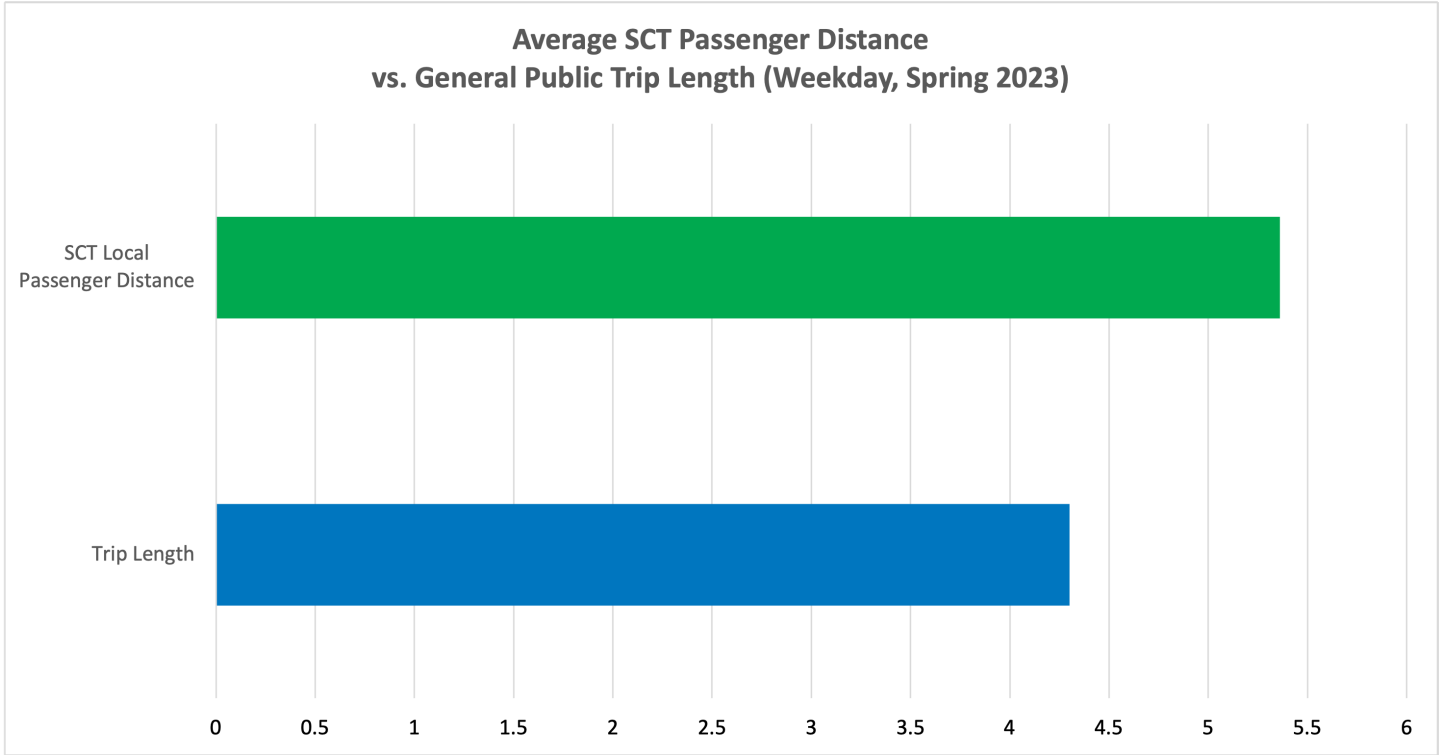
- Are riders using routes for local trips or to travel longer distances?
- Should longer routes be kept as a single service, or can they be replaced by smaller routes that better reflect travel patterns?
- Are buses experiencing capacity issues? Buses are fuller and experience less seat turnover when riders travel longer distances.
- Is there an adequate farebox recovery for SCT’s service? A shorter trip length means a large number of riders are boarding the bus, increasing revenue.

Across the spring and summer of 2023 and all day types, the average trip length was **7.4 miles**, with riders typically traveling a half-mile longer on weekdays on average when the commuter service is operating. As with average route speeds, the school service routes have a significant impact on average trip length, as students are traveling much shorter distances. Without the school service routes, the average weekday trip length was **7.7 miles** systemwide. Conversely, average weekday trip lengths were only 5.0 miles when not including the commuter services.



The average trip length for all public travel within the service area, according to the Market Assessment’s Replica analysis, is about a mile shorter than the average distance an SCT rider travels. This suggests that residents may be using other modes to travel shorter distances. SCT can serve more of this demand by increasing frequency and ensuring routes serve key destinations directly and throughout the day.

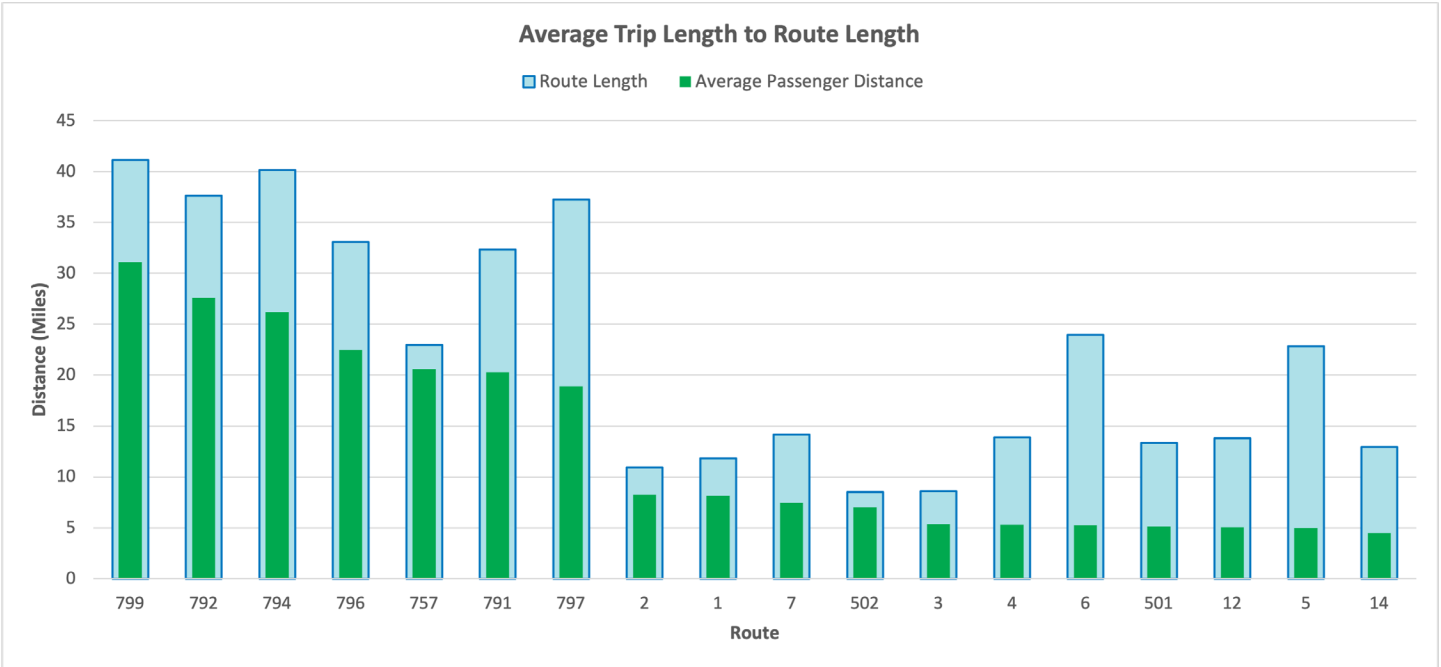
Figure 73: Average SCT local bus passenger distance vs. general public travel



On weekdays, local routes have an average trip length of **5.4 miles**, as shown in Figure 73. Routes 1 and 2, which serve the outlying communities of Castaic and Val Verde, have a significantly higher trip length at around 8 miles. Commuter routes have an average trip length of **22.7 miles**, with the shortest average length on Route 757 at 19.2 miles on weekdays. Interestingly, average trip lengths were 4-5 miles longer for Route 757 on weekends, despite it serving more of Santa Clarita on weekdays. Average trip lengths on the six other commuter routes

(in three pairs) varied by route destination (western San Fernando Valley, West L.A., or Downtown L.A.) and by coverage in Santa Clarita. Route 799 had the longest average trip length at **31.3 miles**, as it extends further into Downtown L.A. than its paired route (Route 794 to Union Station). School service routes have the shortest average trip length at **3.9 miles**, with Routes 639 and 633 having significantly longer trip lengths, at 10.3 and 6.9 miles, respectively. See Figure 74 for average passenger trip lengths vs. one-way route distances on all routes.

Figure 74: Average trip length vs. one-way route length



The long trip lengths of SCT’s routes are not especially surprising given the local land use and travel patterns and orientation of the commuter service routes.



Santa Clarita has experienced a remarkable recovery in local bus ridership, suggesting a desire for improved fixed route service. Across seasons, ridership fluctuates greatly with the high ridership numbers for SCT’s school service and a bump from students on local routes.

Service Performance

As previously mentioned, ridership alone is not a good basis for comparing the efficiency and effectiveness of routes – they provide different levels of service across different distances. Performance metrics should measure **ridership**, **revenue**, and **cost** on a per unit basis; this establishes an even playing field across routes. A **strong service performance** indicates that SCT is maximizing its use of resources while **low performance** suggests a mismatch between demand for service and the resources used to deliver it.

Productivity

Productivity, the most common metric for measuring performance, highlights the **number of passengers carried per service hour**. Generally, routes that carry 10 passengers an hour and under are considered **poorly performing** while routes that carry 30 and above are considered as **performing very well**.

Systemwide productivity averaged **19.9 passengers per revenue hour** in Spring 2023 and **16.3** per hour in Summer 2023. The higher performance in spring was due to the school routes, which are the most productive in the system by far. Weekend productivity was nearly identical between the spring and summer, at around **16 passengers per hour** on Saturdays and around **15** per hour on Sundays. Route-level productivity is shown in Figure 75, and tier-level productivity is shown in Figure 76.

However, boardings per revenue hour is not necessarily the best way to judge express or commuter bus productivity as the trips are longer and don't have the same seat turnover. Alternatively, average boardings per one-way trip can offer a better measure of this tier's performance. By this measure, Route 799 to Downtown Los Angeles is the strongest commuter route, averaging 19-20 boardings per trip. This is followed by Route 797 at 17 boardings per trip and Route 796 at 12 boardings per trip. As previously noted, Route 757 performs similarly across all day types and averages around 10 boardings per trip on weekdays and weekends.

Figure 75: Average weekday productivity by route

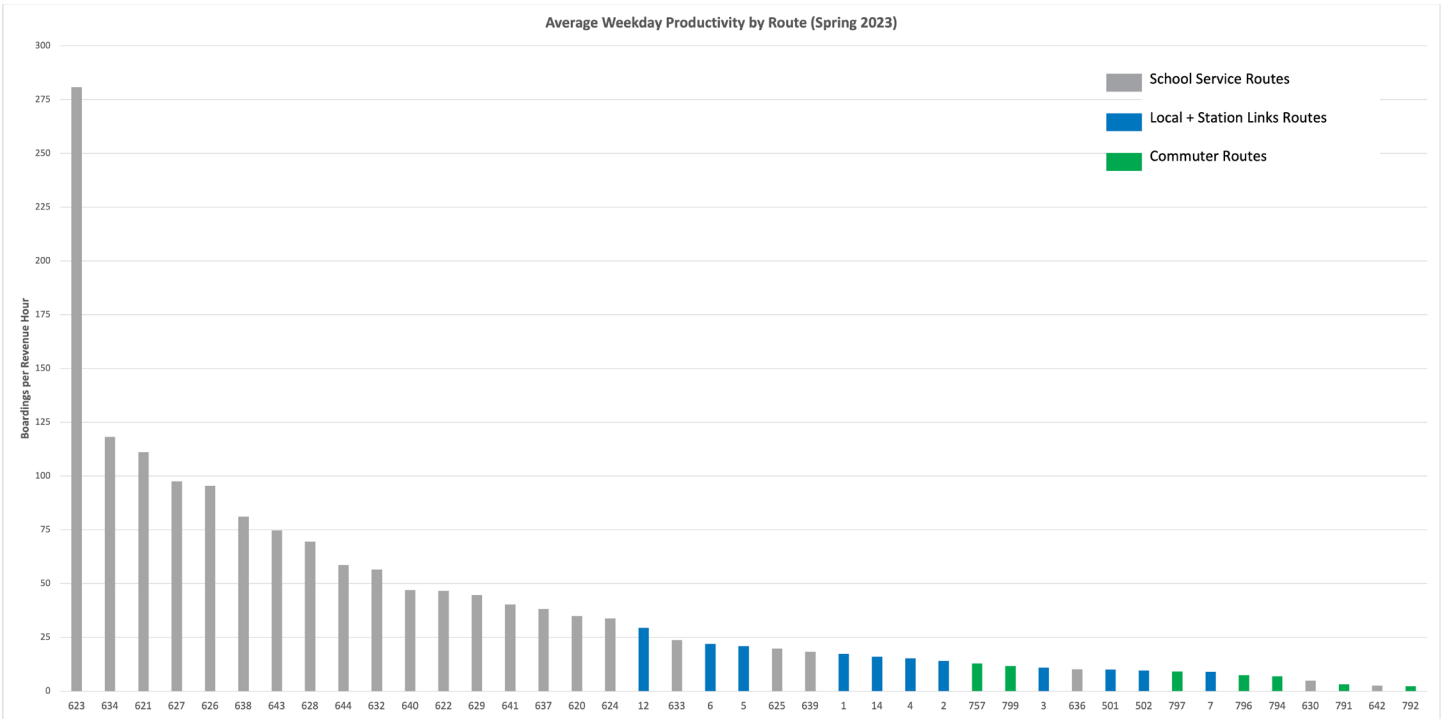
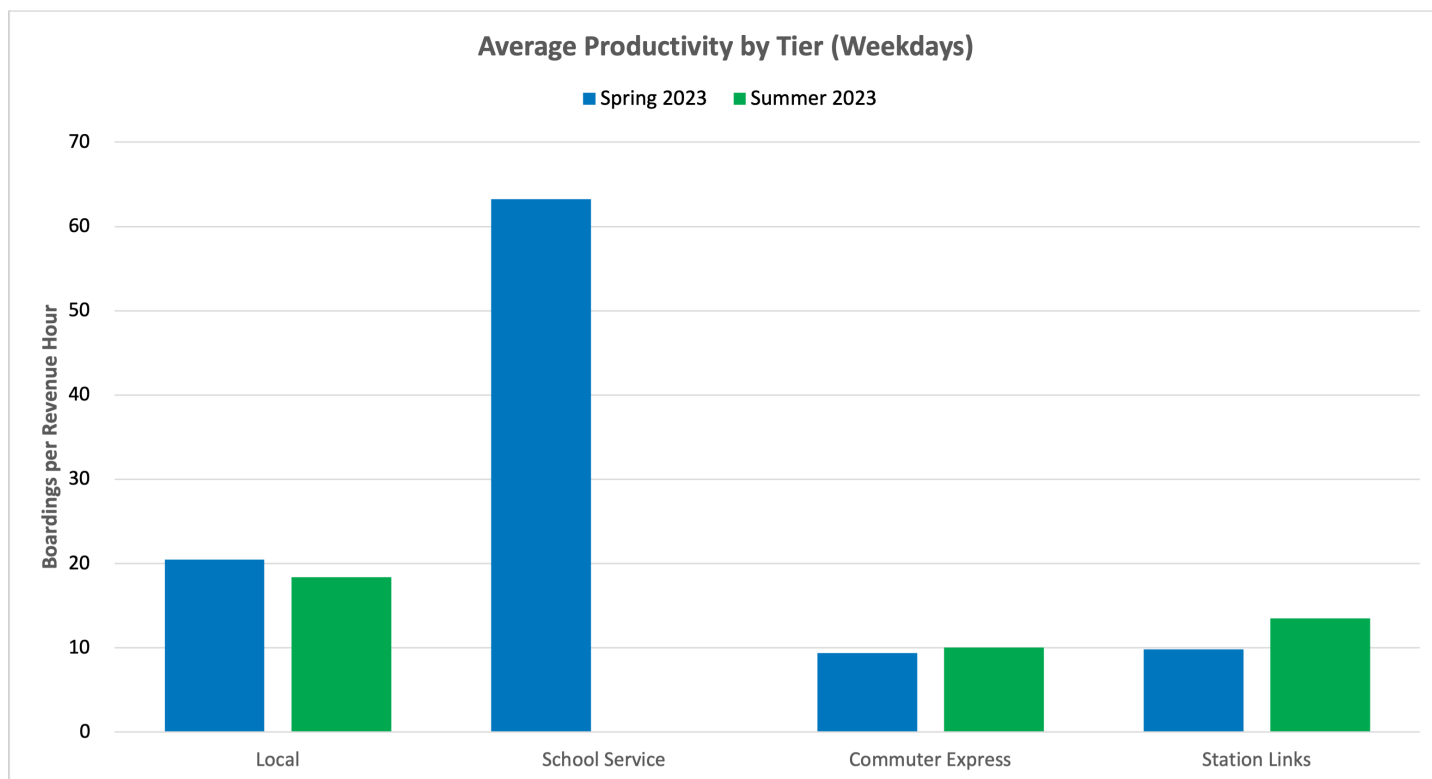


Figure 76: Average weekday productivity by tier



Along with being the highest-ridership local routes, Routes 5, 6, and 12 are the most productive in their tier and average more than **20 passengers an hour** on weekdays. Route 12 has the highest weekday productivity at 29.1 in Spring 2023. Route 7 is the least productive local route, averaging 9 passengers per hour. Productivity drops significantly from weekdays to the weekend, with Routes 1, 2, 4, and 14 seeing a 25% or more decrease in productivity.

School service routes perform **remarkably well**. More than half of the routes carry 30 or more riders an hour, with a **tier average of 63.2**. Notably, Route 623 has a productivity of 280.8, followed by Routes 634 and 621 with productivities of 118.2 and 111.2, respectively.

With the exception of local routes 3 and 7, the Station Links and commuter routes are the **lowest performing year-round routes** in the system. The two Station Links routes averaged around 10 boardings per revenue hour in Spring 2023, increasing to **13.5** in the summer. Between Spring and Summer 2023, the commuter routes increased from an average of **9.4** to **10** boardings per hour at a tier level.

Among the commuter routes, routes 757 and 799 are the only routes that carry more than 10 passengers an hour while Routes 791 and 792 carry fewer than three. Notably, average productivity on Route 757, which is the only commuter route that operates on weekends, increases by more than 40% on weekends with much less service – suggesting a demand for more regional service on weekends.

Passenger Loads

Passenger load identifies the number of riders on the bus at any time. While high loads can indicate a successful route, too many passengers results in overcrowding - negatively impacting the customer experience. While loads are often analyzed relative to bus capacity or seat quantity, crowding is subjective and depends on agency service standards and passenger preference. Depending on transit mode, vehicle type, and the local market, transit customers may choose to stand before every seat is filled or perceive an only partially-filled vehicle as crowded.

During the spring and summer of 2023, SCT had an average stop-level load of **6.1** and **5.5** passengers, respectively. The difference between seasons can be largely attributed to the school service routes, which had an average stop-level load of **13.1 passengers**. Of the top ten SCT routes based on average stop-level load across the spring and summer 2023 periods, nine of them were school service routes, ranging from 15 to 34.5 passengers. The other route in the top 10 was the Beach Bus service, which saw a stop-level average load of 16.2.

Local routes saw an average load of **5.3 passengers** with Routes 12, 6, and 5 recording above-average loads. Routes 6 and 12 recorded the highest max loads, with 12 instances of loads above 60 passengers. Route 6 had the highest max load in the system at 81 passengers. Conversely, Routes 2, 3, and 7 had the lowest averages. On an hourly basis, onboard loads were highest for the local routes in the PM peak.

Station Links routes have the lowest average stop-level loads at **3.8 passengers**. Route 501 averaged 5 passengers while Route 502 averaged 2.8 passengers onboard leaving each stop. Furthermore, the average load on Route 501 more than doubled from spring to summer – likely due to the Route’s connection with Six Flags Magic Mountain. This increase is especially clear in the 10 AM hour, when average loads for the two Stations Links routes doubled from 5.9 to 12.1 between the spring and summer.

On a tier basis, commuter routes had the second-highest average passenger load at **7.2 passengers**. This ranged from Route 799 which averaged 13.5 passengers on board, to as low as 2-3 passengers on Routes 791 and 792. While Route 757 saw slightly below-average loads on weekdays, at 5.9 passengers, the route averaged 10.8 on Saturdays and 9.2 on Sundays. This is likely due to the lower Route 757 service levels on weekends and suggests there is all-week demand among SCT’s customers for connections to Los Angeles. Route 757 productivity also rises on weekends with fewer trips.



Notably, the routes with the lowest average stop-level loads were the only ones to see an increase from spring to summer in 2023. This may be due to their connection with recreational opportunities such as Six Flags Magic Mountain.

Financial Performance

Identifying the average cost SCT pays to operate service per rider can help inform whether resources are being allocated efficiently across the service area. Three metrics for assessing this are the average operating cost per boarding, subsidy per passenger (or net cost per boarding), and farebox recovery ratio. The cost per boarding metric adds a cost dimension to productivity, to benchmark route utilization against the cost to operate it. Longer, less-patronized routes, like SCT’s commuter routes, will have a higher cost per boarding than shorter routes with more turnover. Subsidy per passenger deducts fare revenue from the equation to indicate the amount of public funds, or subsidy, needed to make up the shortfall in operating cost on a per passenger basis. Farebox recovery, which helps inform the financial effectiveness of routes, identifies how much of SCT’s operating cost is covered by passenger fares.

A breakdown of the average cost per boarding by route is shown in Figure 77. The average cost per passenger in Spring 2023 (March- May 2023) was **\$4.47** for local and station links routes, with Routes 6 and 12 having the lowest cost per boarding at \$3.13 and \$3.25 per boarding, respectively. Among the local and station links routes, Route 7 had the highest cost per boarding at \$9.52 per passenger. Commuter routes had the highest cost per passenger in Spring 2023, averaging **\$7.43** per passenger. Route 757 had the lowest at \$5.65 per passenger while Route 791 averaged around \$20 per boarding and Route 792 averaged nearly \$32 per boarding. School service routes recorded a cost of **\$1.61** per passenger – the lowest average monthly cost per passenger. However, this varied widely within the tier, with schools ranging from \$0.77 to \$22.16. Generally, routes with high ridership, like local routes 6 and 12, have a lower cost per boarding.

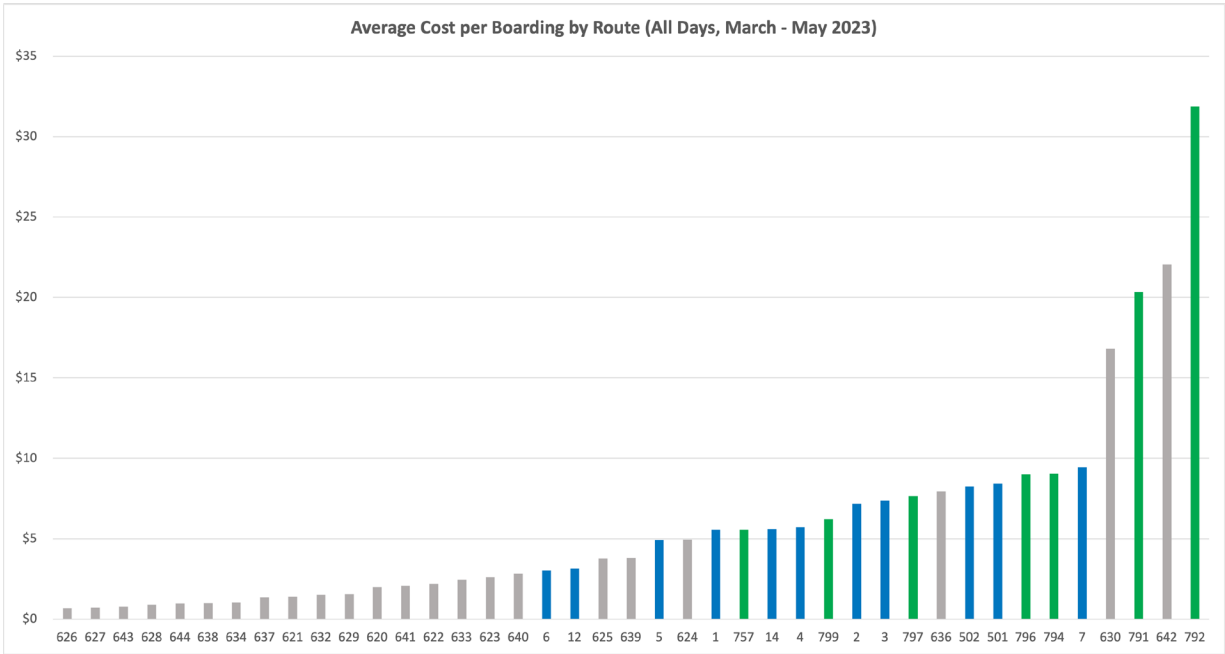


SCT’s farebox recovery for local bus service is in line with similarly-sized peers in the state, while SCT’s commuter bus farebox recovery is well above average.

Among California transit agencies operating +/- 25% of SCT’s annual revenue miles, the average farebox recovery ratio in 2022 was 6.2% for local bus service and 11.4% for commuter bus.

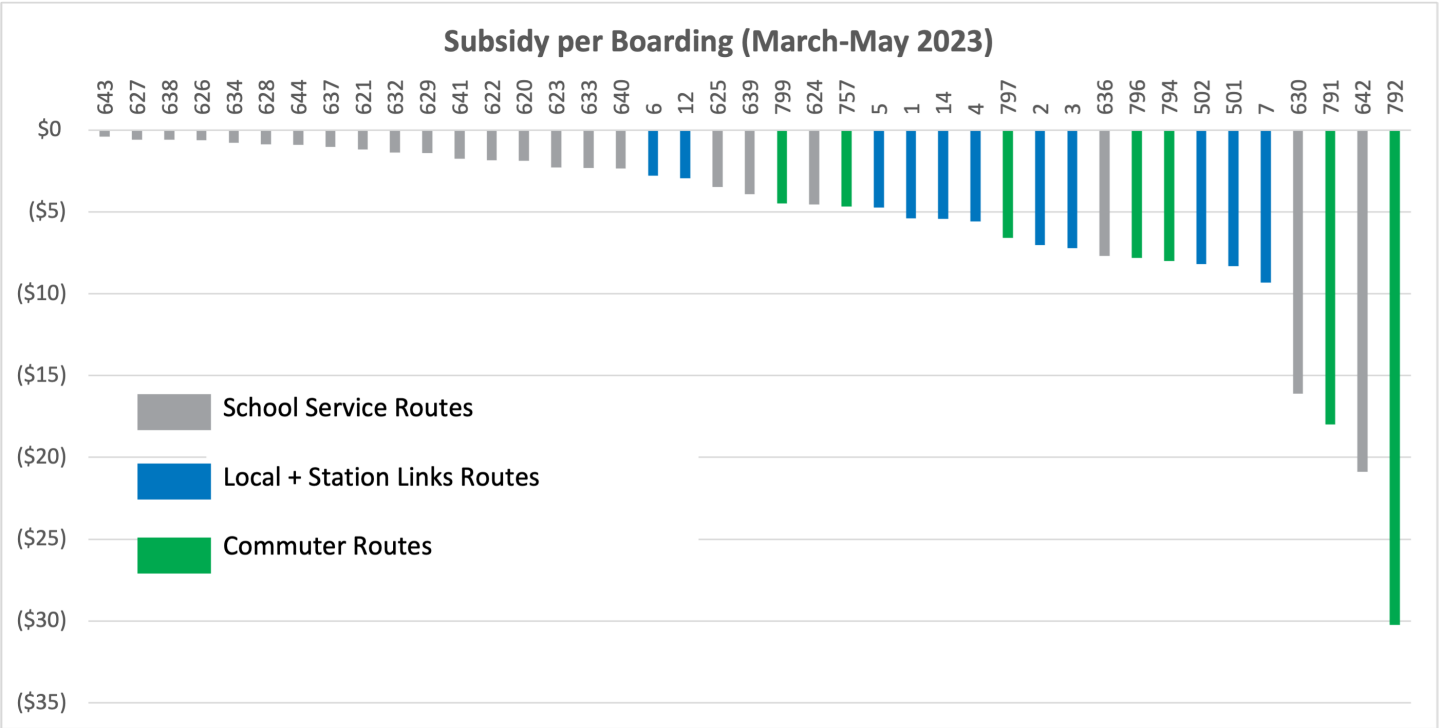
Source: 2022 NTD data for SCT plus 14 other local bus peers and three other commuter bus peers.

Figure 77: Average cost per boarding by route



On a tier level, the subsidy per passenger in March-May 2023 was lowest on the school routes at **-\$1.31** per boarding. The local and station links routes averaged **-\$4.18** per passenger and the subsidy was highest on the commuter routes at **-\$6.16** per passenger. A breakdown of the average subsidy per boarding by route is shown in Figure 78. While the top 17 of the 41 total routes were all school service routes, subsidy varied among the remainder of the routes. Local Routes 6 and 12 outperformed some school routes in terms of subsidy per passenger, while commuter Routes 757 and 799 outperformed all of the location and station links routes except for 6 and 12. With the very high subsidy per passenger on Routes 791 and 792, these services in particular should be reviewed more closely for opportunities to reduce cost or increase ridership.

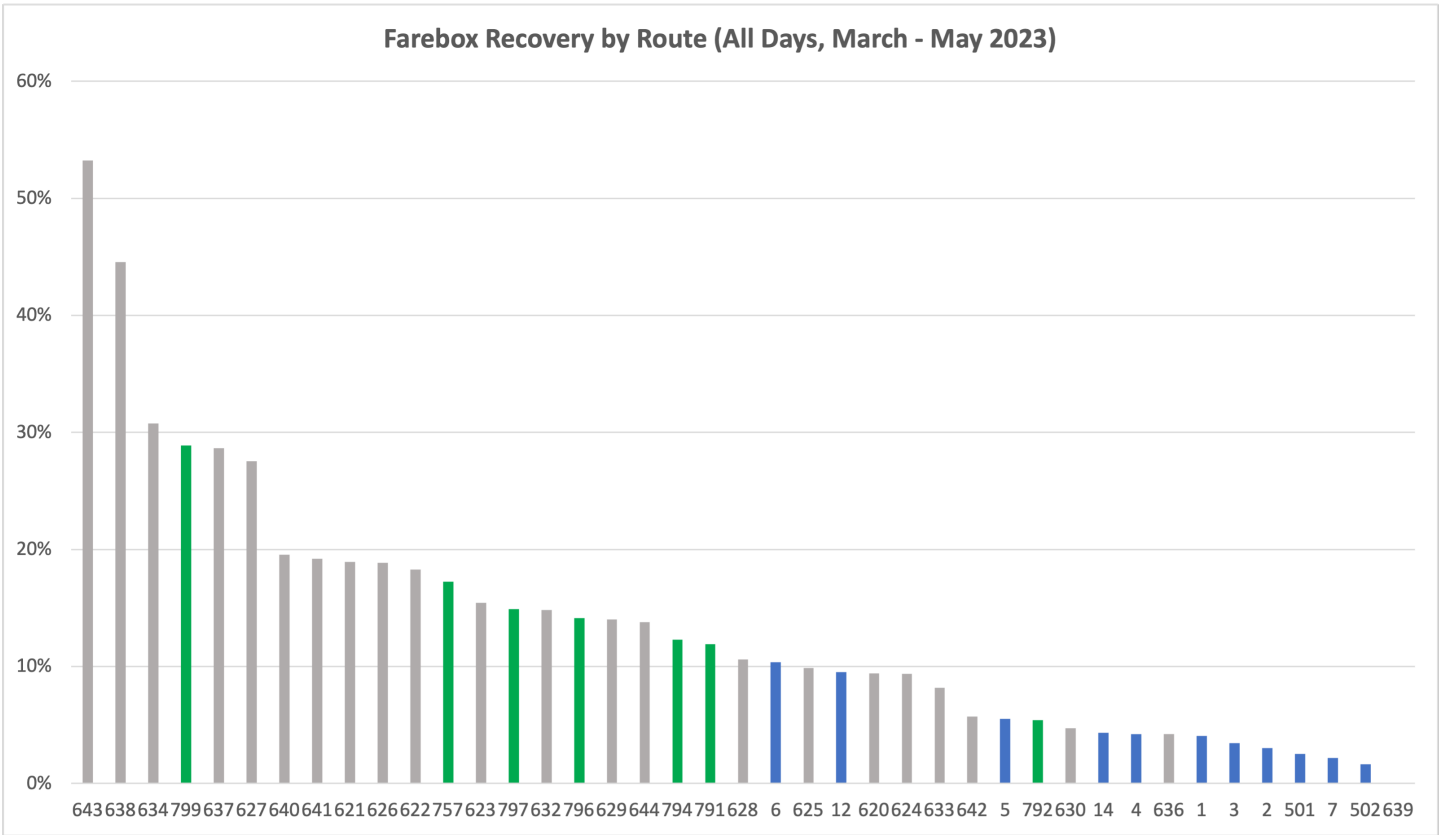
Figure 78: Average Subsidy per Boarding by Route



Average farebox recovery for the local and station links routes was **6.4%** for local routes and station links in Spring 2023 (March-May 2023), the lowest farebox recovery by tier. Only Route 6 had a farebox recovery over 10% while both station links routes and three local routes had farebox recoveries below 4%. Farebox recovery by route is shown in Figure 79.

Commuter routes had an average farebox recovery of **17.1%**, with Routes 757 and 799 having the best recovery at 17.3% and 28.9%, respectively. At **18.2%**, school service routes recorded the best farebox recovery. Five out of the 23 routes had a farebox recovery over 25%, with Route 643 recording a recovery of 53%. (If the local and school routes are combined, SCT's non-commuter bus farebox recovery ratio in Spring 2023 was **7.1%**.)

Figure 79: Farebox recovery by route



Schedule Construction / Recovery Time

Recovery time, a primary factor affecting route efficiency, measures the time the bus spends at the end of the line to allow for schedule recovery and for operator breaks (layover). Schedule recovery helps “reset” buses that may be running late or early, allowing them to get back on track with the set schedule.

The industry best practice for combined layover and recovery time is around **10%-15%** of the in-service running time. For example, a route with a 50-minute one-way travel time would be scheduled with 5-8 minutes of recovery time. However, when developing clockface schedules, the regular round trip cycle time and preferred frequency may drive the actual layover duration, along with the desire for any timed transfers or pulsing at a central hub.

Most of SCT's non-tripper-based routes (i.e., the local routes plus 757) have layover percentages between 10 and 20%. However, this can vary slightly throughout the day on some routes due to the non-clockface schedules and alternatives patterns and running times. See Table 6 for a breakdown of running times vs. layovers with explanations of any key schedule construction nuances for each route.

Routes 4 and 14, the only routes with all-day clockface schedules on weekdays, have the highest layover percentages at 29% and 40%, respectively. Independent of any timed-transfer or pulsing considerations, both routes could expand their alignment coverage slightly and still fit within the two-bus, 120-min round trip cycle time while maintaining adequate recovery and layover.

Many of the other routes have varying running times and layover durations throughout the day, due to additional coverage for special destinations served on select trips or varying traffic conditions (e.g., Route 757). Routes 5 and 6, which share much of their alignments but are not interlined outside of a few trips, have the widest range of running times and layover durations. Compared to all other local routes, Routes 5 and 6 have the highest percentage of late timepoint arrivals, according to the OTP data. However, an inconsistent schedule is not the sole cause of late arrivals, as other factors such as traffic conditions, dwell times, and operator behavior should be considered.



Along with identifying opportunities to schedule routes with clockface frequencies and improving timed transfers for Metrolink and route pulsing at MRTC, SCT should also examine the public presentation of routes with shared alignments. Ensuring clear information on a customers' available route choices, destination(s) served, and the similarity or differences between paired routes is a key component of the customer experience.

Table 14: Weekday running times and layover durations

Route	Weekday Round Trip Running Time	Layover	Layover Percent	Notes
1	68	10	15%	-Route 1 & 2 are interlined, switching routes after each complete round trip. Together they operate on a 150-min. cycle with 19 total minutes of layover (12.7%). -All layover taken at MRTC
2	63	9	14%	
3 (Inbound) & 7 (Outbound)	84-85	10	12%	-Five Points-bound (IB) Route 3 trips are interlined with Seco Cyn-bound (OB) Route 7 trips, and vice versa. -All layover taken mid-route at MRTC in the Five Points-bound direction (IB); Outbound Route 3 trips are scheduled for one extra minute at MRTC.
7 (Inbound) & 3 (Outbound)	82-83	12-13	14-16%	
4	93	27	29%	-Routes 4 & 14 share much of their alignments and are shown together on the public timetable, but are scheduled independently of one another. -Both routes take mid-route layover at MRTC in both directions and receive up to several additional minutes at the ends of line.
5	148-162	16-31	10-20%	-Routes 5 & 6 share much of their alignments and are shown together on the public timetable, but are scheduled independently except for a few trips on a few vehicle blocks at certain times. -Running times and headways vary throughout the day on both routes.
6	152-177	15-24	8-15%	
12	101	10	10%	-All layover taken at MRTC at one end of the line.
14	86	34	40%	-See Route 4 above.
757	82-108	10-15	11-21%	-All trips take layover at NoHo Station (usually 10 mins). -Vehicle blocks continuing in service to NoHo after returning to SC take 5 minutes layover at MRTC.

Service Level Analysis

As transit agencies recover from the COVID-19, many have increased service levels to what they were before the pandemic and look to continue the increase. While ridership for local routes has recovered significantly since 2019, service levels have not. Scheduled annual revenue miles were down **18.7%** for local service and **34.2%** for commuter routes in fiscal year 2023 vs. fiscal year 2019. (July through June). SCT has recovered nearly all of its local bus ridership despite offering less service, suggesting the organization can retain and grow local ridership with future service increases. See Figures 80 and 81 for a comparison of monthly revenue hours and miles for local and commuter routes from 2018 through June 2023.

Figure 80: Monthly revenue miles, local vs. commuter routes

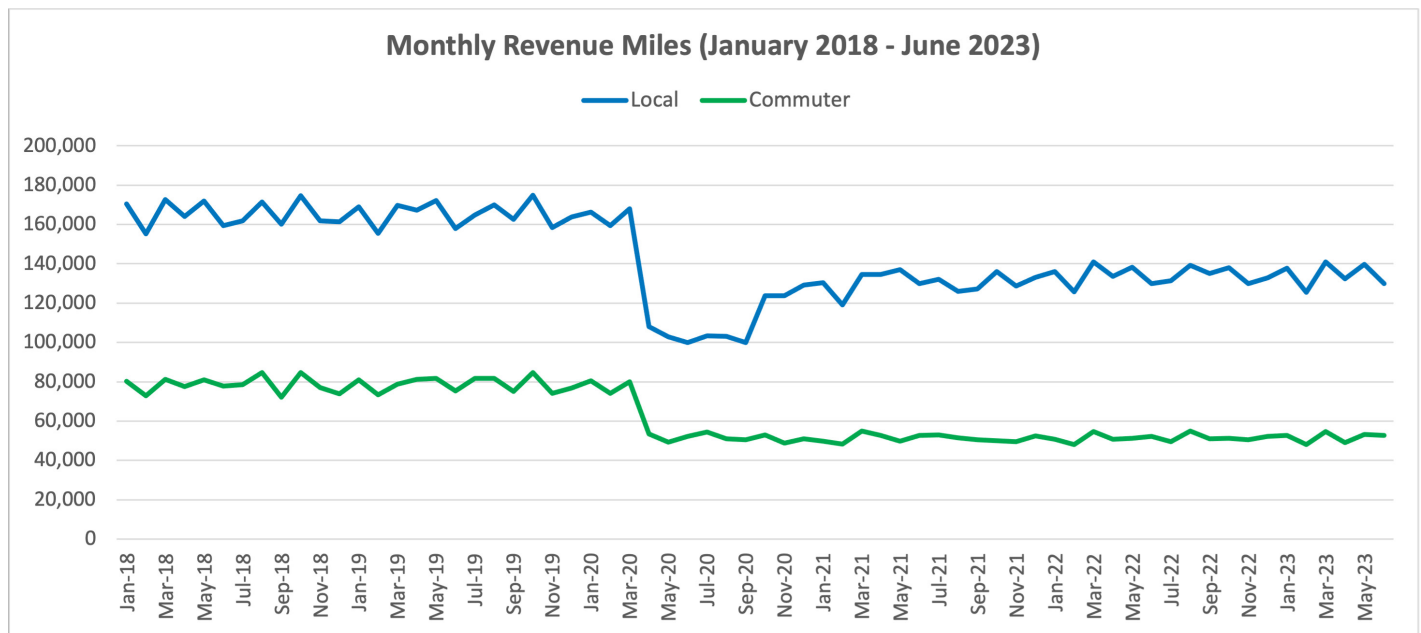
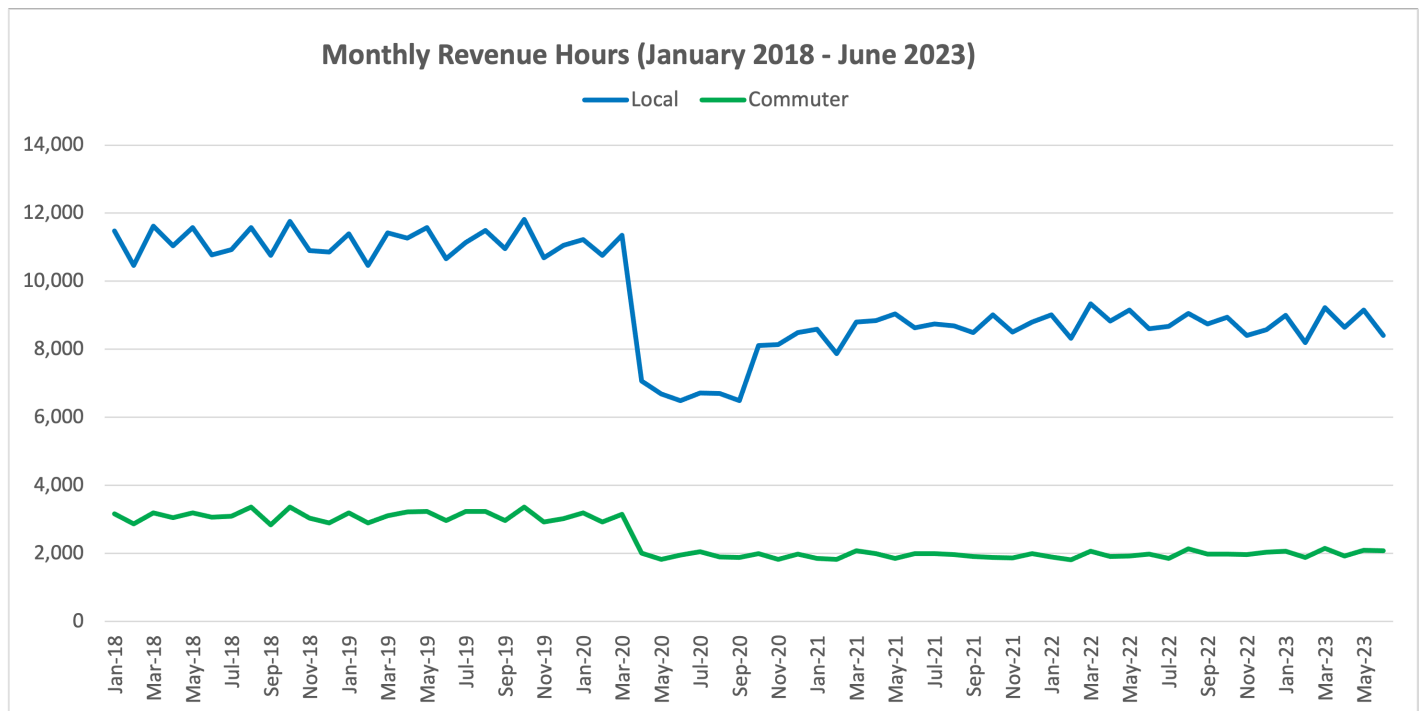


Figure 81: Monthly revenue hours, local vs. commuter routes



Results of operator survey and feedback

An important part of evaluating SCT's service is to gather feedback and suggestions from those with daily, first-hand experience – SCT's bus operators (employed by contract operator MV Transportation). Bus operators were asked to participate in a survey which included a variety of questions pertaining to their assigned route. This survey - conducted between mid-August and November 1, 2023 – gathered feedback from **45** operators. Feedback from various discussions with operators will be used to supplement the results from the survey.

KEY FINDINGS

Increased Service Frequency. Operators overwhelmingly want to see more service – particularly on **Routes 5 and 6**. They stated that more service should be provided in the mornings, afternoons, and peak times associated with work and school. This aligns with their concerns about overcrowding and issues staying on time during those peak times.

Extended Service Span. Routes should begin **earlier in the day**, and end **later at night**. During discussions, operators pointed towards major employment centers such as Six Flags Magic Mountain and Valencia Town Center requiring later service for workers.

Separate Routes 5 and 6. When asked about potential changes to route alignment, operators suggested splitting up Routes 5 and 6 due to issues with long length and **on time performance**.

Issues Staying on Time. Operators have issues **sticking to the assigned schedule**. Soledad Canyon Road and routes operating between Magic Mountain and McBean Transit Center were cited as locations for OTP challenges. They also spoke about current issues with traffic and concerns with the impact of new development on congestion.

Layover & Recovery Time. Operators expressed a perception of inadequate layover and recovery time, particularly at the McBean Transit Center.

Increased Bus Quality. Operators want to see higher quality buses, citing issues with maintenance, radios, GPSs, and speed.

Increased Stop Visibility and Safety. Operators expressed that in certain locations they have difficulty seeing benches and riders at bus stops. Many mentioned the need for **improved lighting**, especially during late hours.

Comments From Riders. The most common comments and questions operators receive from riders entailed **bus tardiness, increasing the number of buses**, and **returning service to pre-COVID levels**.

Restoration of Service to Pre-Pandemic Levels. Operators also expressed the desire to see SCT restore service to pre-pandemic levels.



SCT's routes vary in productivity and financial performance from poor to excellent, with some services meeting or exceed peer averages. With improvements to service levels, and optimized schedule construction to utilize resources most efficiently, SCT has an opportunity to grow ridership and provide a more effective service across the markets and use cases it serves.

GO! Santa Clarita and Paratransit

Alongside the local and commuter fixed route services, SCT offers demand response service through its **Dial-A-Ride** and **Access Services** programs, along with the **GO! Santa Clarita** on-demand service.

GO! Santa Clarita

Figure 82: GO! Santa Clarita vehicle



OVERVIEW / CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

GO! Santa Clarita is an on-demand transit service similar to that of other rideshare service such as Uber or Lyft. Using the **TripShot app**, riders can enter the desired origin and destination locations that are **within the SCT service area**. The goal of GO! Santa Clarita is to provide service within 15 minutes of a rider's request.

Fares: Regular fares are \$2.00 while reduced (senior and persons with disabilities) fares are \$1.00 per trip. These can be paid for through TAP card, or the Token Transit app.

Service Hours: Monday through Friday (6:00 AM – 8:00 PM), Saturday (8:00 AM – 10:00 PM), and Sunday (8:00 AM – 9:00 PM).

Similar to SCT's fixed route service, pickups and drop-offs for Go! Santa Clarita are "on-time" if they are between zero to five minutes late compared to the schedule. Across the six month period of March to August 2023, **36% of pickups were on time** while only **15% of drop-offs were on time** – far below SCT's target of reaching 90% on-time performance.



Nearly 40% of requested GO! trips were cancelled across the six-month March-August 2023 analysis period. Cancelled trips occurred throughout the day and across weekdays and weekends with no overarching pattern. Single-hour cancellation rates were highest on Weekdays from 10-11 AM at 52%. SCT staff have identified that some DAR users may request both services and ride whichever arrives first. DAR cancellations and no-shows averaged 26% of requests during that same time period.

SCT should continue to monitor trip cancellation rates to identify any opportunities to reduce inefficiencies from duplicative requests, whether through comingled services, same-day DAR reservations, or local bus improvements to attract some DAR customers to fixed route service.

ORIGINS AND DESTINATIONS

The top origins and destinations for Go! Santa Clarita are dense residential neighborhoods like the American Beauty Condos, shopping centers like the Golden Valley Shopping Center, and more particular destinations such as the Santa Clarita Metrolink Station, Six Flags Magic Mountain, and Old Town Newhall. On weekdays, the Santa Clarita Metrolink Station and MRTC together accounted for just over 5% of pickup. The Santa Clarita Metrolink Station accounted for 4.1% of weekend pickups. Six Flags Magic Mountain was the top destination on all days, accounting for 4.0% of weekday drop-offs and 6.4% of weekend. The only top location not directly served by a fixed route service is the Golden Valley Shopping Center.



Offering increased service along Golden Valley Road was a common comment in the operator survey.

While most drop-off locations for completed GO! trips in the six-month analysis period (March-August 2023) were in areas close to fixed route service, a 18.7% of weekday trips and 20.1% of weekend trips ended more than a half-mile, or 10 minute, walk from the current fixed route network. Along with the Golden Valley Shopping Center, the most common drop-off locations outside the half-mile walkshed of the fixed route network were housing developments and apartment complexes around the service area. Drop-off locations at Six Flags Magic Mountain that were technically outside the fixed route walkshed were also common. See Tables 7-10 for a list of top origins and destinations for weekdays and weekends on GO!.

With the high cost of operation for on-demand services such as GO! Santa Clarita, it is important to study the travel patterns of those who utilize the service to understand how fixed route service can better serve them. The majority of pick-up and drop-off locations are already directly served by transit, meaning that levels of service and/or travel patterns may not be adequately met by fixed route services. Furthermore, places like Golden Valley Shopping Center, which is not currently served by transit, may be considered as a destination to serve.

Table 15: Top weekday pickup locations for GO!

Weekday Pickups	Total	% of Total	Daily Average
Santa Clarita Metrolink Station	419	3.4%	3.2
American Beauty Condos	373	3.1%	2.8
Plaza at Golden Valley Shopping Center	335	2.8%	2.5
Canyon Center (Shopping Plaza)	330	2.7%	2.5
River Ranch Townhomes / Riverpark Apartments / Park Sierra	278	2.3%	2.1
Canyon Country Plaza Shopping Center	230	1.9%	1.7
McBean Regional Transit Center	214	1.8%	1.6
Centre Point Village Shopping Center	194	1.6%	1.5
Valencia Town Center (and Surrounding Retail)	183	1.5%	1.4
Old Town Newhall Area	181	1.5%	1.4

Table 16: Top weekday destinations for GO!

Weekday Drop-offs	Total	% of Total	Daily Average
Six Flags Magic Mountain	481	4.0%	3.6
Plaza at Golden Valley Shopping Center	471	3.9%	3.6
Canyon Center (Shopping Plaza)	300	2.5%	2.3
American Beauty Condos	296	2.4%	2.2
River Ranch Townhomes / Riverpark Apartments / Park Sierra	257	2.1%	1.9
Valencia Town Center (and Surrounding Retail)	236	1.9%	1.8
Centre Point Village Shopping Center	209	1.7%	1.6
Old Town Newhall Area	200	1.6%	1.5
Valencia Marketplace + Walmart (The Old Rd)	200	1.6%	1.5
Canyon Country Plaza Shopping Center	196	1.6%	1.5

Table 17: Top weekend pickup locations for GO!

Weekend Pickups	Total	% of Total	Daily Average
Plaza at Golden Valley Shopping Center	167	4.3%	3.2
Santa Clarita Metrolink Station	157	4.1%	3.0
Six Flags Magic Mountain	149	3.9%	2.9
Valencia Town Center (and Surrounding Retail)	144	3.7%	2.8
Canyon Country Plaza Shopping Center	110	2.8%	2.1
Centre Point Village Shopping Center	98	2.5%	1.9
American Beauty Condos	88	2.3%	1.7
Canyon Center (Shopping Plaza)	88	2.3%	1.7
River Ranch Townhomes / Riverpark Apartments / Park Sierra	85	2.2%	1.6
Old Town Newhall Area	74	1.9%	1.4

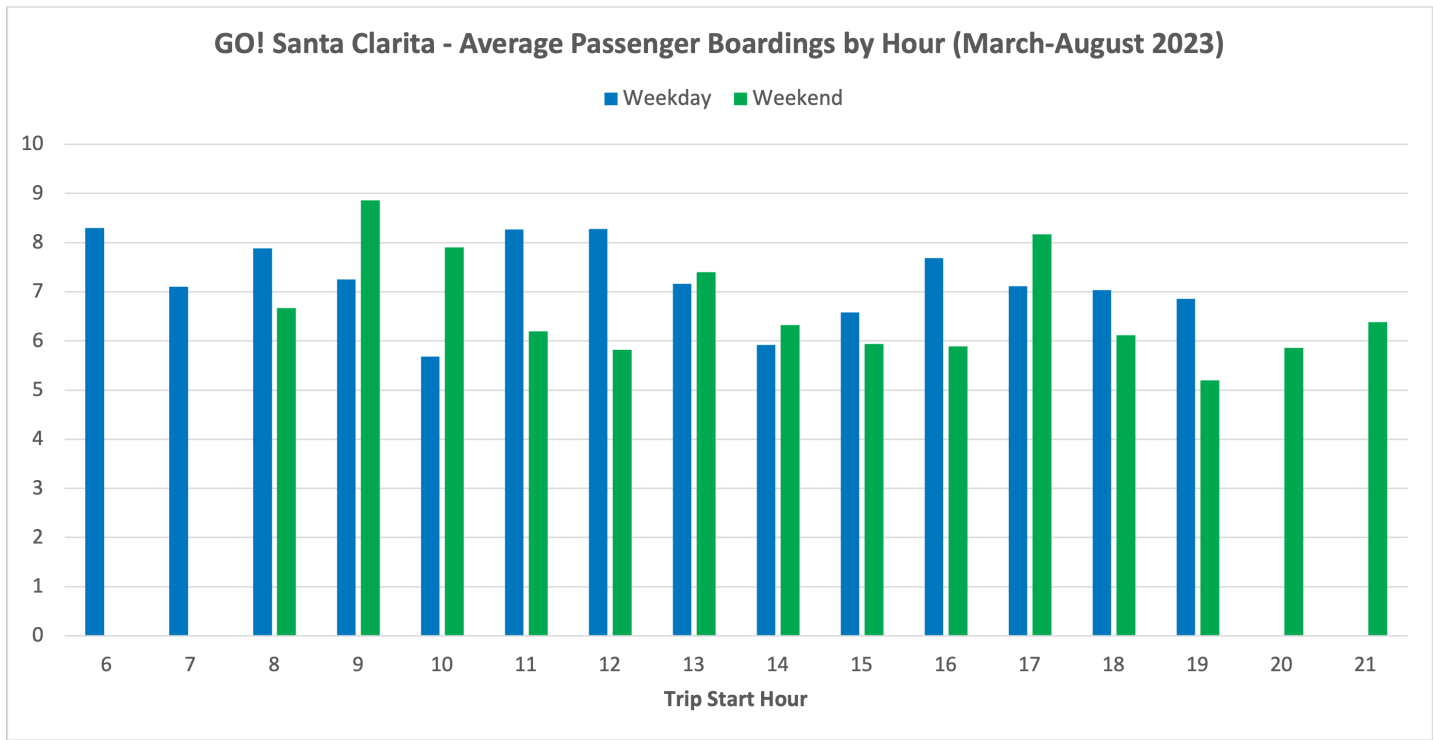
Table 18: Top weekend destinations for GO!

Weekend Drop-offs	Total	% of Total	Daily Average
Six Flags Magic Mountain	248	6.4%	4.8
Valencia Town Center (and Surrounding Retail)	146	3.8%	2.8
Plaza at Golden Valley Shopping Center	141	3.6%	2.7
American Beauty Condos	133	3.4%	2.6
Centre Point Village Shopping Center	99	2.6%	1.9
Santa Clarita Metrolink Station	96	2.5%	1.8
Canyon Center (Shopping Plaza)	91	2.4%	1.8
Old Town Newhall Area	90	2.3%	1.7
Canyon Country Plaza Shopping Center	88	2.3%	1.7
River Ranch Townhomes / Riverpark Apartments / Park Sierra	87	2.2%	1.7

RIDERSHIP

From March to August of 2023, Go! Santa Clarita transported a total of **18,182** passengers, averaging **103** passengers per weekday and **89** per weekend day. Weekdays averaged **7.3** boardings per hour over the 14-hour service span and weekends averaged **6.6** boardings per hour over the 14-hour Saturday and 13-hour Sunday service span. Note: due to data limitations, these figures are boardings per hour of service span and not per vehicle revenue hour as fixed route productivity is measured. With four vehicles in service for the GO! service every day, actual productivity would be around a quarter of the figures above, or around 1.8 passengers per vehicle revenue hour on weekdays. Average daily ridership for both weekdays and weekends was highest in July among the six months analyzed. Ridership is fairly consistent across the course of the day on both weekdays and weekends with no peaks. (See Figure 83.)

Figure 83: Average GO! boardings by hour



FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

Average monthly cost per trip from March 2023 to August 2023 was **\$33.04**. Cost per trip decreased 14% between March and August 2023 as ridership increased. Average costs per trip ranged from as low as \$29.94 per trip in June and as high as \$39.57 in April. Average farebox recovery across July and August 2023 was **2.7%**.²

² Full farebox data was not available prior to July 2023.

Paratransit

In addition to the on-demand GO! service, SCT operates Dial-a-Ride, a reservation-based demand response service. Dial-A-Ride provides curb-to-curb service for eligible customers with disabilities and, unlike many other paratransit services, also to seniors and the general public. General public customers are able to ride after 6 PM until the end of service. Calling the Dial-A-Ride phone number, riders can schedule a trip **anywhere within the SCT service area**. Riders can also make a reservation for this service - up to seven days in advance. Customers with disabilities must be registered through the broader Los Angeles County Access Services Inc. (ASI) program.

Fares: Fares are \$2.00 for all riders and companions. Children under 5 and personal care attendants ride for free. These can be paid for through TAP card, or the Token Transit app. Access Services-eligible customers pay \$2.75 for trips continuing outside the Santa Clarita Valley via transfer. Transfer trips longer than 20 miles cost \$3.50.

Service Hours: Monday through Friday (4:30 AM – 10:00 PM), Saturday (7:00 AM – 9:30 PM), and Sunday (7:30 AM – 9:00 PM). Dial-A-Ride is also available to the general public after 6:00 PM.

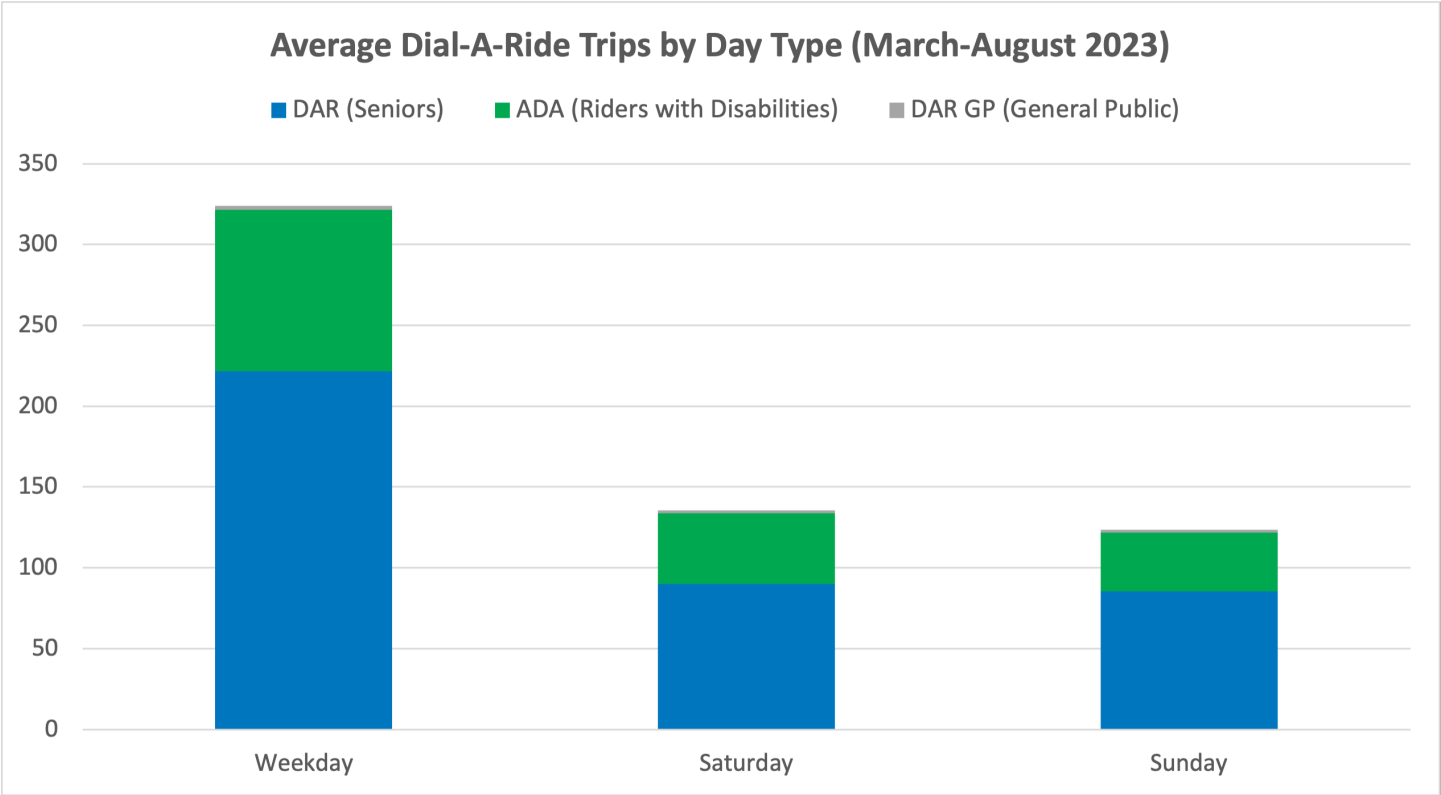
Service Area: As mandated by the ADA, SCT’s paratransit service is offered within three-quarters of a mile of fixed route bus stops. Customers with disabilities who are eligible for the wider Los Angeles County ASI program may travel to areas in the county outside the SCT service via transfer using one reservation. For these customers, this hand-off to another L.A. County paratransit operator takes place at the Olive View Medical Center in Sylmar, and is limited to eight specific times on weekdays and three times on weekends or holidays.

Figure 84: Santa Clarita Transit Dial-A-Ride Vehicle



RIDERSHIP

Figure 85: Average Dial-A-Ride trips by day type



From March to August of 2023, SCT’s paratransit services completed around 8,000-9,000 trips per month, for all three customer types combined (seniors, riders with disabilities, and the general public), averaging 324 trips per weekday. (See Figure 85.) Weekend trip counts were much lower, with around 135 average trips per Saturday and 124 per Sunday. Most trips were requested by seniors, accounting for **68.3%** of all trips. Access Services (customers with disabilities) accounted for **30.9%** of trips, with less than one percent of trips requested by the general public. With an average of only 2-3 general public trips per weekday and 1-2 trips per weekend day, very few general public transit customers are utilizing Dial-A-Ride. However, they only have access to the service for four hours on weekdays, 3.5 hours on Saturdays, and two hours on Sundays.



The general public Dial-A-Ride (DAR GP) service is available until 10 PM on weekdays, but the GO! On-Demand service ends at 8PM. Among the 340 weekday DAR GP trips completed over the six-month analysis period, 49% were scheduled between 8-10 PM.

ORIGINS AND DESTINATIONS

Destinations for senior Dial-A-Ride trips were analyzed to better understand where these customers are traveling, as some riders may be able and willing to use fixed route transit instead if it serves their mobility needs conveniently. (Access Services riders with disabilities, by eligibility, are unable to utilize the fixed route system, and Dial-A-Ride general public trips represent a very small proportion (<1%) of ridership.)

The top weekday destination, by far, for senior Dial-a-Ride users was the SCV Senior Center, representing around 17% of trips in the March-August 2023 period. This was followed by major health care destinations and shopping locations like Walmart (Golden Valley Rd) and Star Nail beauty supply (Avenue Paine) at 1.5% or less of drop-offs. Top weekend destinations included churches, the previously mentioned Walmart, and the Valencia Town Center mall. Figures 86 and 87 show the density (as a percent of all trips in the March-August 2023 period) of weekday and weekend Dial-A-Ride destinations by block group for senior customers.

Figure 86: Dial-A-Ride weekday destination share by block group

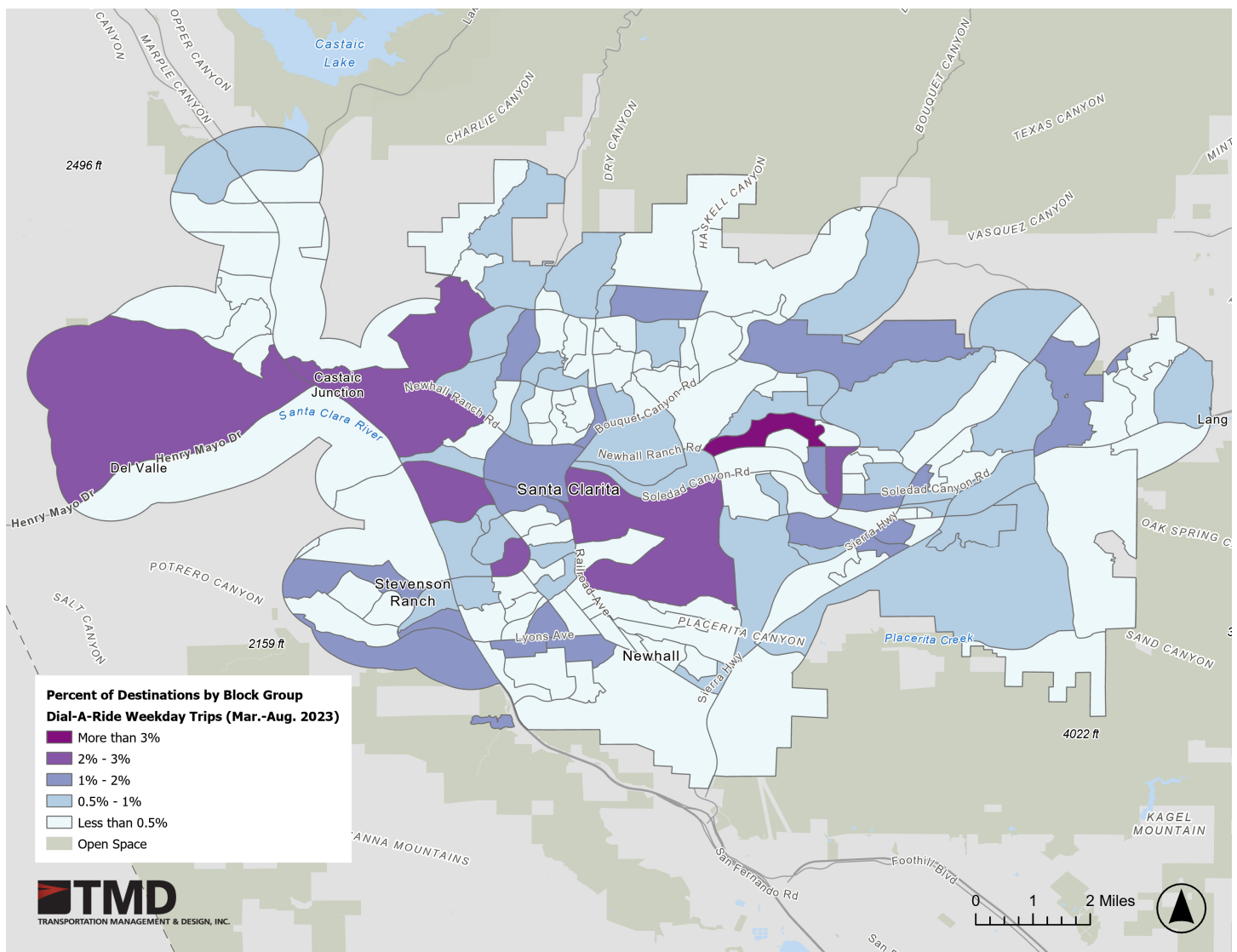
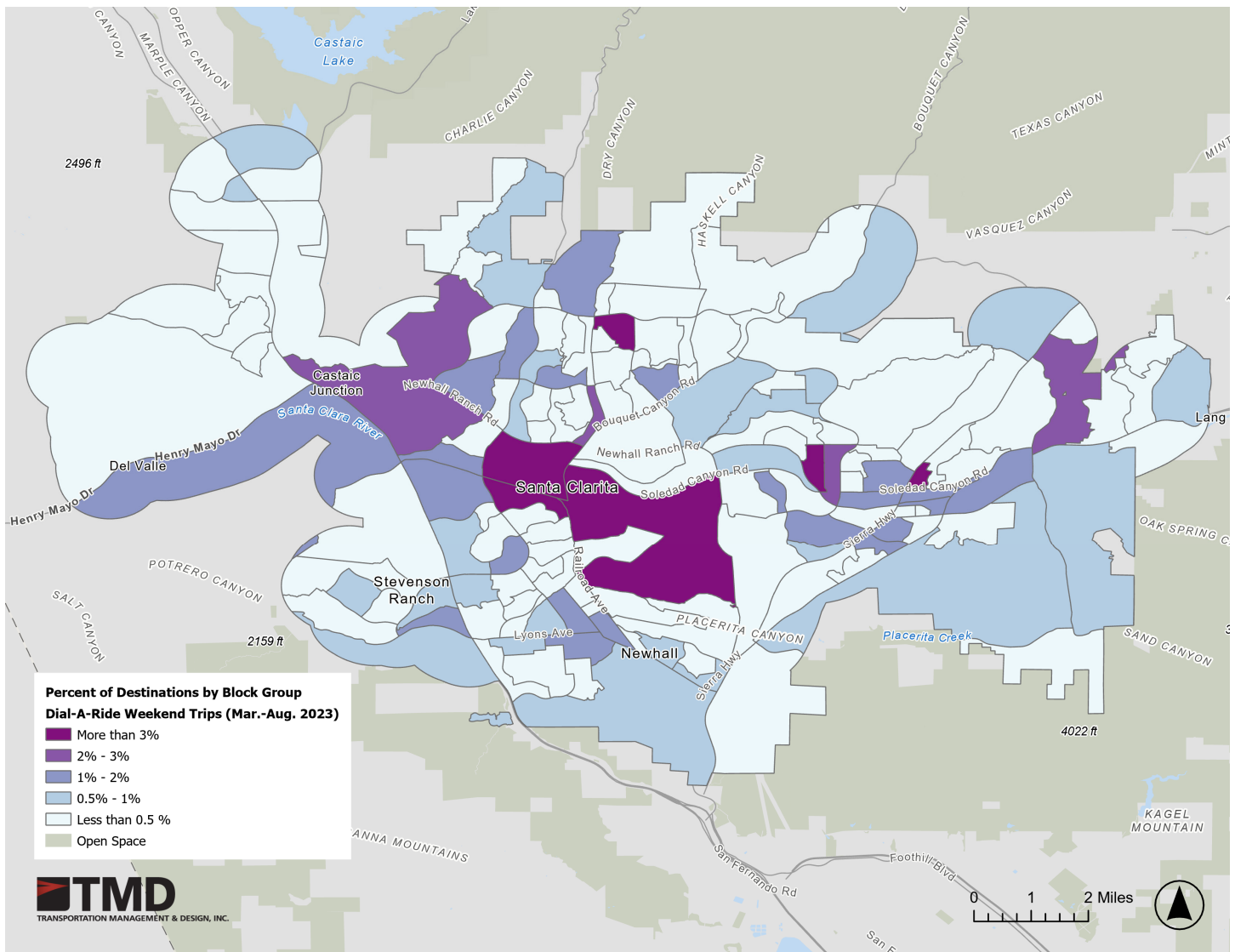


Figure 87: Dial-A-Ride weekend destination share by block group



ON-TIME PERFORMANCE

Compared to SCT's fixed route service and GO! Santa Clarita, the agency's paratransit services have different definitions of "on time". Access Services trips are on time if they arrive for pick-up between one minute early and 21 minutes late. Dial-A-Ride trips are on time if they arrive for pick-up between 15 minutes early and 15 minutes late.

Across the six-month period of March-August 2023, trips for all three of the Dial-A-Ride customer streams averaged well above SCT's 90% OTP goal. OTP was inversely proportional to ridership, with general public trips averaging **96.7%** on time, ADA trips averaging **94.8%** on time and trips for seniors averaging **92.0%** on time.

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

Average monthly cost per trip from March 2023 to August 2023 was **\$48.49** for SCT's paratransit services. When accounting for the split of trips between the different paratransit services, the average monthly cost per trip for Dial-A-Ride was \$33.53 and \$14.97 for Access Services.

The Average monthly farebox recovery from March 2023 to August 2023 was **1.9%** for all paratransit services. The recovery ratio was higher for senior and general public Dial-A-Ride trips at **2.3%** combined, and **1.2%** for Access Services trips. While this metric helps to put the cost of paratransit services in context, trip-based demand response services have much higher costs and utilize different vehicle types than fixed route transit. Paratransit services are also mandated by federal law and are an important mobility option for people with disabilities. However, given that SCT offers this service to senior and members of the public who might otherwise use fixed route transit, understanding the cost of providing this service is important.

OPERATIONAL (IN)EFFICIENCIES

Paratransit and on-demand services like Go! Santa Clarita have been the subject of scrutiny and research over the years. As seen in the financial analysis, operating these kinds of services is expensive and some agencies may be motivated to make changes to their model. However, as noted above, agencies are mandated to deliver this service and it is an important component of providing equity in public mobility. On the customer side, ease of use and same-day service is a common demand.

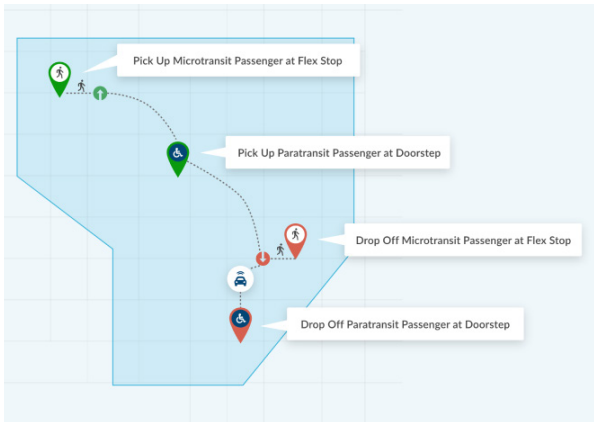
A large factor driving the high cost of paratransit operations is the duplicative nature of the services offered. SCT operates two demand response services with overlapping use cases at some times and for some customers. Seniors have access to both Dial-A-Ride and GO! at all times, and members of the general public have access to both Dial-A-Ride and GO! in the evening. Not only is this costly and operationally inefficient, it may be a cause for confusion for riders when presented with different options with different service models, rules, and information. However, it is important to note that Dial-A-Ride and GO! do not operate with the same hours and service and some senior Dial-A-Ride users might prefer or need the traditional reservation-based dispatching over GO!’s smartphone-based on-demand model.

Many researchers and agencies have turned to the commingling of paratransit and on-demand services to address operational inefficiencies and enhance the customer experience. Agencies such as Green Bay Metro, High Valley Transit, and FAST have made efforts to combine services, vehicles, drivers, and platforms for planning and reserving trips. Furthermore, there is a great amount of flexibility with commingling – paratransit and on-demand riders are not required to share a ride, but drivers can make on-demand trips in between scheduled paratransit trips. Whatever strategy is taken, combining SCT’s on-demand and paratransit has the opportunity to reduce the cost per trip and provide an improved experience for riders.



SCT’s on-demand and paratransit services models deserve further evaluation and discussion from a policy standpoint. Given the high Dial-A-Ride ridership by seniors, providing lower-cost fixed route mobility or commingling Dial-A-Ride and GO! may present an opportunity to reduce costs.

Figure 88: Paratransit/microtransit comingling example (Source: RideCo)





The current GO! ridership relative to the four vehicles assigned to the service may not allow for the absorbing of much additional capacity from current Dial-a-Ride senior customers. But adding a fifth vehicle to GO! may offer some cost savings with enough DAR senior riders choosing this service instead.

Key Findings

While each route serves a clear role in the network, there are exciting opportunities for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery to attract more riders and make better use of existing resources. Facing limited resources, SCT must make difficult decisions about how to allocate resources across the service area to maximize access and to provide a high-quality customer experience. Improving efficiency and effectiveness is not always just about seeing better numbers. When a bus serving an under-performing route is reallocated to a route that has a higher productivity, SCT can provide heightened mobility for more people and create additional revenue which can subsequently be reinvested back into the network. This can create a positive feedback loop that can build on SCT's impressive post-COVID ridership recovery on local routes.

The following strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges summarize the key takeaways from this Service Evaluation. These will inform the development of the needs assessment and further sections of the TDP.

Strengths

- There is a clear desire for expansive fixed route service and multimodal travel. SCT's impressive local bus ridership recovery and recreational opportunities show wide support for transit.
- SCT's school service is a major generator of ridership and revenue. Maintaining and strengthening this service, when applicable, should be a priority.
- Santa Clarita is a major hub for new opportunities. Whether it is housing, careers, or recreation, the City is a regional draw for new residents and visitors.
- Trip characteristics such as stop spacing, bus speeds, and recovery time are generally optimal for this service configuration and network.

Weaknesses

- The network is not entirely approachable for new riders. The schedules, route alignments (and destinations served on different versions of paired routes), and fare structure may be confusing for new riders or those traveling outside the service area and connecting to regional transit services.
- Low frequencies and a limited number of timed transfers between SCT routes or with other services makes transfers more challenging for riders.
- Slow service level recovery. While local bus ridership levels have returned to pre-pandemic levels, service levels have not.
- Some routes or services are inefficient from a financial or productivity standpoint.

Opportunities

- Improve operating efficiency. Optimizing and aligning schedules, commingling on-demand and paratransit services, and adjusting route alignments can improve operational efficiency and reduce costs.
- Improve timed transfers between SCT services and connections to Metrolink and other regional travel options.
- Attract more riders to the commuter services by improving access in Santa Clarita, serving new destinations in the Los Angeles area, or providing more service outside of the weekday peak periods.
- Better alignment with travel patterns. It is important that SCT route alignments serve key destinations as

directly as possible and reflect local travel patterns.

- The City of Santa Clarita, and the surrounding valley, is experiencing rapid growth and development that will create new opportunities for service and ridership.
- Santa Clarita's recreational opportunities call for expanded multimodal travel options.
- Expand the weekday service span and add more weekend service. Travel and survey data shows an increased interest in travel outside of the typical commuting periods.

Challenges

- Fare structure. While SCT offers competitive pricing and free or reduced fares for vulnerable populations, it reduces farebox recovery.
- SCT's on-demand and paratransit services are largely duplicative, resulting in operational inefficiencies and impacting the customer experience.
- With rapid growth in the Santa Clarita Valley, it is a challenge to balance serving new developments effectively (and with attractive service) with operational and financial efficiency.
- The geography and development patterns of Santa Clarita affect the success of transit within the City.
- The recent bus operator strike may have created challenges involving operations, operator turnover, and/or negative public perception of transit locally.
- Like any other agency, SCT has a limited number of resources – requiring careful consideration of service tradeoffs and regular review of system performance and public mobility needs.

Figure 89: Santa Clarita Transit Trolley at Six Flags Magic Mountain



Public Outreach

Outreach Overview

From the outset of the TDP process, inclusive and robust public outreach and engagement have been a key objective for SCT. The Santa Clarita Valley is quickly changing, with new residents, developments and destinations, and travel patterns that have shifted since COVID. This makes public and stakeholder input even more important and helps to ensure that the recommendations reflect community wishes and mobility needs and that residents feel invested in the project and its outcome.

TDP public outreach occurred in two phases and included website and social media updates, an onboard rider survey, a targeted community survey, virtual stakeholder meetings, in-person bus operator workshops, in-person City councilmember briefings, in-person pop-up events, a draft plan online survey, and in-person and virtual public meetings.

- Phase one occurred at the beginning of the project and sought to inform the public about the project and collect input from riders, the general public, stakeholders, and bus operators.
- Phase two occurred after the development of the draft service concepts and sought to collect feedback on the proposed changes from riders, the general public, stakeholders and City leadership, and bus operators.

In order to finalize a TDP that reflects the vision of Santa Clarita's residents, the draft service concepts were updated based on the feedback received from community members, bus operators, stakeholders, and commuter bus riders. The community's valuable feedback has helped in the creation of a Final TDP that reflects the community's diverse interests and future mobility needs.

Outreach Methods and Timeline

PHASE I

Onboard Rider Survey

During the first week of October 2023, SCT began conducting a system-wide onboard survey. Survey collection was paused between October 8, 2023 and January 8, 2024 due to the MV Transportation bus operators strike. Survey collection was completed on January 25, 2024.

A total of 800 current local and commuter bus riders were asked what improvements they would like to see in their bus service.

- **Local Bus Riders:** 30% of riders said they want more weekend service, 23% said more frequent weekday service, and another 23% said they want service that operates later into the evening.
- **Commuter Bus Riders:** 34% of riders stated that they want more frequent weekday service while 22% said earlier service.

Community Survey

In early Spring 2024, SCT conducted a statistically-valid household survey to gauge community opinion on transit within the Santa Clarita Valley. The survey was first distributed via mail to randomly-selected individuals within Santa Clarita. After the goal of 300 sampled responses were collected, the community survey was opened to the public for anyone else to complete online.

SCT collected 321 responses from randomly-selected households and an additional 200 were collected from other members of the public. Residents were asked to indicate what would make SCT more appealing for them to use.

- **Streamlined Service:** When respondents who previously used SCT services were asked why they stopped using public transit, **20% stated that it takes too long to complete a trip.**
- **More Frequent Service & Service to New Areas:** Community members indicated that more frequent service and more routes serving places they need to go would make it more appealing for them to use SCT. **When asked to indicate their top three most desired service improvements, 35% of respondents included more frequent service, 29% included more routes to serve places I need to go, and 19% included stops closer to their home.**
- **Bus Stop Amenities:** A majority of respondents indicated that bus stop amenities like shade at transit stops would make SCT more attractive. **When asked to indicate their top three most desired amenities, more shade at transit stops was the most common answer with 37% of respondents including it.**
- **Improved Pre-Trip Experience:** Having schedules that are easier to read and an improved app or website for better trip planning would also make SCT more appealing for community members. **After shade at transit stops, easier to read schedules (24%) and an improved trip-planning app or website (23%) were the next most common responses among the top three most-desired amenity improvements.**



As part of the survey, respondents were given the opportunity to provide free response feedback for SCT:

“Santa Clarita GO! was economical, convenient, and the bus drivers were always polite and nice.”

“[I would like] more direct buses to popular destinations in town.”

“I’d like the city to work with Metrolink to encourage the use of commuter trains.”

Bus Operator Workshop & Survey

On August 17, 2023, SCT met with bus operators to gather feedback from them regarding current services and collect their input for the TDP. Including bus operators in the TDP outreach process was a key objective for SCT. These valuable and dedicated employees are driving the routes every day and observe first-hand what is and is not working from a route design or service performance standpoint. They are also the first ones to hear feedback or concerns from riders and come to understand how people are using the transit system.

Along with the operator drop-in session, a brief survey was available to operators between August 17 and November 1, 2023. A total of 45 surveys were collected. The key findings of the in-person and survey feedback were:

- **More Frequent Service:** Operators stated that more service is needed – namely during work commute and school times and especially on Route 5 and Route 6.
- **Extended Service Span:** To make service more attractive for workers with earlier or later commutes, operators want to see routes that begin earlier in the day and end later at night.
- **Separate Route 5 and Route 6:** To mitigate perceived issues regarding long route lengths and challenges maintain on-time performance, operators suggested splitting the two routes.
- **Restoration of Service to Pre-Pandemic Levels:** Operators expressed the desire to see SCT restore service to pre-pandemic levels. They also stated that this is a common comment received from riders.

Round 1 Stakeholder Meeting

On November 14, 2023, SCT hosted a stakeholder workshop with representatives from nine organizations who serve the Santa Clarita Valley or are major employers:

- The Master's University
- Santa Clarita Valley Bicycle Coalition
- Metrolink
- Henry Mayo Hospital
- College of the Canyons
- SCV Chamber of Commerce
- Amazon
- Santa Clarita Economic Development
- North Los Angeles County Transportation Coalition JPA

The purpose of this meeting was to spread project awareness among these organizations and their constituents and to solicit feedback about the current SCT system and opportunities for improvement.

Stakeholders spoke about improving **first- and last-mile connections**, emphasizing **multimodal transportation** and the **integration of tourism and transit**, and wanted to see **service offered earlier in the morning and later into the evening**.

The project team also met with SCT's Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) at the group's September 2023 meeting. SCT provided an overview of the TDP project and timeline and solicited input from meeting attendees about the mobility needs of people with disabilities in Santa Clarita and what is and is not working for current riders with disabilities. Primary concerns included the current service hours for Access paratransit ending too early and a desire for technology improvements, including the ability to pay for discounted transit fares using the Access Rider ID card.³

PHASE II

Community Pop-Up Events

On May 22-23, 2024, SCT hosted pop-up events to gather feedback on the TDP's draft service concepts at various key locations within Santa Clarita. Each pop-up event featured poster boards outlining the TDP process, showcasing the draft plan concepts, and offering interactive feedback opportunities. SCT also distributed flyers with links to web info on the TDP and the draft plan survey.

Meeting transit riders and members of the public where they are and intercepting them as they go about their days provides an opportunity to collect

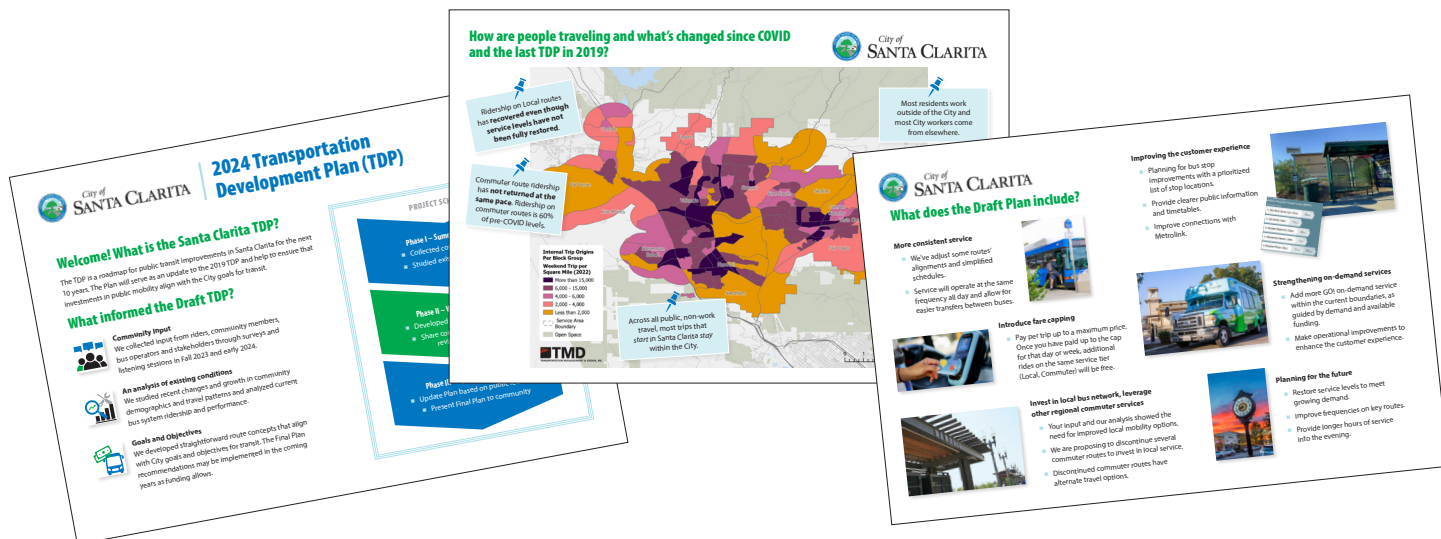


³ Currently, the Access Rider ID card can be used at TAP validators for eligible free rides on Metro and other participating agency services. However, it does not allow for stored value for use on fixed route services that still require a fare for customers with disabilities (e.g., SCT's Commuter Express routes). The Access Rider ID card formerly allowed for stored value that could be used for Access paratransit trips, but this has been discontinued.

candid feedback and increase participation over dedicated public meetings. This format can also help to foster a more inclusive and equitable outreach process, as many community members may not have the time or ability to attend a public meeting.

Pop-up locations included:

- Santa Clarita Valley Senior Center
- McBean Regional Transit Center (AM and PM pop-ups)
- College of the Canyons
- Newhall Metrolink Station



Key themes from the community feedback included:

- **Local Route Concepts:** A majority of attendees were pleased with the local route concepts (namely the Route 5 and Route 12 recommendations) and were curious about how they would change access for residents.
- **Commuter Route Concepts:** A large number of attendees expressed their disappointment with the proposed discontinuation of commuter routes to Downtown Los Angeles and Warner Center.
- **Learning about SCT Services:** Some of pop-up attendees, especially at the College of the Canyons, who do not regularly use SCT services learned about SCT's local routes and the GO! Santa Clarita service. There was notable enthusiasm for GO! among those just learning about the service.

Phase II Bus Operator Workshop

On May 22, 2024, SCT met again with bus operators to gauge their thoughts and opinions on the draft TDP concepts. Around 15 bus operators were present at the workshop and suggested modified alignments for some routes and provided feedback to improve the GO! Santa Clarita service.

Most of these bus operators suggested a modified routing of the proposed Route 5 to directly serve the Walmart on Carl Boyer Drive. **This feedback was integrated into the final TDP recommendations.**

Phase II Stakeholder Workshop

On June 5, 2024, SCT reconvened the stakeholder working group to share the draft service concepts and collect feedback. Organizations in attendance included:

- The Master’s University
- College of the Canyons
- Santa Clarita Valley Bicycle Coalition
- SCV Chamber of Commerce
- Metrolink
- FivePoint
- Henry Mayo Hospital
- LA County Public Works

Stakeholders were also asked to rank the proposed changes in terms of importance to them or their network. The local route alignment and frequency changes, fare capping, and long-term frequency improvements were **highly ranked** while long-term evening service, increasing GO! Santa Clarita service and discontinuing commuter services **ranked lowest**.

In addition to the stakeholder group, SCT briefed members of the Santa Clarita City Council in March 2024 to outline the TDP process and gather feedback and insights. Overall, City Council members wanted to see **increased GO! Santa Clarita service, improved service frequency, improved access to major employers, and expanded access to alternative modes of transportation and active transportation.**

Virtual Public Meeting

On June 10, 2024, SCT hosted a virtual public meeting to share the draft TDP’s concepts and gather feedback from attendees. Most of the attendees either approved of the local route recommendations or had not reviewed them in depth. A majority of the 28 attendees were SCT commuter bus riders and expressed their **disappointment with the discontinuation of the commuter route to Downtown Los Angeles.**

These riders shared feedback about the current Route 799 service and their high satisfaction with the service, citing safety, convenience and a sense of community among regular riders and familiar operator faces. These riders did not want to use Metrolink as an alternative, citing safety concerns (on both Metrolink and with transferring to Metro Rail or Bus) and the slightly higher fares on Metrolink. Many riders expressed that they would pay more to keep Route 799 and suggested discontinuing certain trips with low ridership.

Draft TDP Survey

SCT conducted an open survey to understand public perception of the draft TDP service concepts. This survey, available from May 13 to June 24, 2024, was available online with paper copies in English and Spanish available at the Phase II outreach events. The survey was advertised during pop-up events and public meetings, on the SCT website, and on social media.

A total of 158 surveys were collected. It is important to note that the vast majority of respondents were commuter riders who responded negatively to the commuter service discontinuation concept – particularly Route 799. Outside of the negative responses to the discontinuation of commuter routes, respondents liked the **improvements to schedule** and **website information and improving local frequencies** in the long-term.



The Draft TDP survey also included an opportunity for free responses. Comments included:

“Even though I never use local service, I like the improvements proposed and the proposed amenities at the stops (shade is a good example of an upgrade that would benefit everyone).”

“I’m not a fan of this plan. It prioritizes local service over commuter service. There are many people who commute between the SCV and DTLA. Let’s make the bus a more appealing option.”

“I strongly support keeping the commuter buses into the greater Los Angeles area. I am a regular [Route] 799 rider and am in support of a cost increase for the commuter buses in order to keep them.”

“Extend local service longer on the weekends during summer.”

Plan Framework

Needs Assessment

2019 TDP REVIEW

The project team reviewed the 2019 TDP’s recommendations for implementation status and consideration in the 2024 TDP. The 2019 TDP included 14 recommendations for SCT. These are shown in Table 19 and shaded by implementation status. Green items were implemented, yellow items were partially implemented or are ongoing, and red items have not been implemented. Prior TDP recommendations not already implemented were reviewed and considered for inclusion in the new TDP if they align with identified needs, plan priorities, and financial constraints.

Table 19: 2019 TDP Recommendations

Number	Recommendation	Implemented
1	Provide fixed-route service to the new Senior Center at Five Knolls (scheduled for completion in Spring 2019).	Yes
2	Provide limited-stop service on Soledad Canyon Road connecting the MRTC to the Vista Canyon Transit Center.	No
3	Divide the commuter bus service into two legs – west side and east side.	No
4	Utilize smaller vehicles as “neighborhood shuttles” with connections to trunk routes.	GO! On-Demand Service
5	Introduce a local transfer policy.	No
6	Improve late-night transportation options.	No
7	Link COC’s Canyon Country campus with future Vista Canyon Transit Center and Metrolink station.	No
8	Promote the link between transit and cycling to make transit more attractive.	Ongoing
9	Provide service to the new Castaic High School.	Yes
10	Determine how to integrate service to Newhall Ranch/FivePoint into the transit system.	Yes (Routes 3/7 extension in February 2024)
11	Improve/enhance bus stops.	Ongoing
12	Implement bus/signal prioritization along Soledad Canyon Road.	No
13	Bring FlyAway service (to LAX) to the McBean Regional Transit Center.	No
14	Extend service into Needham Ranch.	No

PLAN PRIORITIES

Following the collection of public input and the Community Profile and Demand Analysis and Service Overview and Evaluation in the first phase of the project, the project team identified three plan priorities for the TDP and future service changes. These shaped the plan recommendations and will help to guide future implementation and prioritization. These plan priorities, or goals, are presented below alongside their associated objectives, triggers, and types of actions that support the priority.

1.

Serve newly developed and growing areas appropriately.

Objectives	Triggers	Actions
» Deliver service to changing areas in line with current demand » Anticipate future demand via population, job, or destination growth	» New destinations or job center openings » Population and/or density threshold » Number of requests for service	» Local fixed route alignments: new route, modify alignment, or route extension » Increase fixed route frequencies » Additional on-demand/circulation services

2.

Ensure service equity for low-income and/or disadvantaged communities.

Objectives	Triggers	Actions
» Equitably provide service to disadvantaged communities » Ensure Transit is maximizing opportunities to connect residents with opportunities (jobs, education, healthcare social services)	» Identification of vulnerable population concentrations not currently served by transit » Identification of missing connections between these concentrations and important community destinations	» Local fixed route alignments: new route, modify alignment, or route extension » New community circulation service

3.

Improve service attractiveness (and community's perception of transit).

Objectives	Triggers	Actions
» Position SCT as mobility option of choice » Elevate SCT's position in community among other City services	» Identify community mobility needs not adequately served by existing services » Identify any missed transfer connections or poor connectivity points in local network	» Enhance local community circulation: destinations frequency and span » Improve multi-modal connections and active transportation options » Improve bus stops and add amenities » More on-demand mobility options

SANTA CLARITA TRANSIT NEEDS

Along with the plan priorities, the project team identified eight needs for Santa Clarita Transit. These needs, shown in Table 20, are accompanied by the source(s) that informed their inclusion, potential recommendations that were considered as part of the plan development process, and indication of which plan priorities they support.

Table 20: Santa Clarita Transit Needs

Transit Need	Source(s)	Possible Intervention(s) Considered	Priority Alignment
Local Frequency and Span Improvements	Service Evaluation, Community Survey	» Add additional service on key routes to make service more attractive and convenient » Extend spans on key routes earlier in AM or later in PM	1, 3
Improve Bus Schedules and Service Presentation	Service Evaluation, Community Survey	» Introduce clockface frequencies on all regular routes, to allow for pulsing/timed transfers at MRTC » Adjust presentation of timetables for simplicity, legibility, and consistency across routes » Review route pairings and numbering scheme for opportunities to rename/reassign for customer legibility	1, 2, 3
Commuter Service Improvements	Service Evaluation, Community Survey, and stakeholders	» Adjust commuter route alignments to improve collection at SCV end and enhance service attractiveness » Adjust commuter service levels to match demand and ensure resources are balanced appropriately between service tiers	3
Metrolink Alignment	Service Evaluation, Community Survey, and stakeholders	» Regularly review and update SCT local and station links schedules to align with Metrolink Antelope Valley Line schedule » Introduce SCT bus connection to new Vista Canyon Metrolink Station	3
Dial-A-Ride/ On Demand Improvements	SCT input and Service Evaluation	» Ensure GO! coverage area meets community needs » Explore comingling Dial-A-Ride and GO! services for operational efficiency and improved customer experience » Expand GO! hours and eliminate evening general public service on Dial-A-Ride	2, 3
Customer Amenities	SCT input, Service Evaluation, and Community Survey	» Develop prioritized list of bus stops for new amenities » Ensure list of current stop amenity assets is up to date and develop maintenance/replacement plan	1, 2, 3
ZEB Rollout	SCT input	» Ensure 2020 ZEB Rollout Plan aligns with current needs and fleet replacement timelines	3
Fare Policy Updates	Service Evaluation	» Streamlined customer information for fare prices, especially with commuter routes » Introduce fare capping (pay-as-you-go up to a set maximum)	2, 3

Service Plan

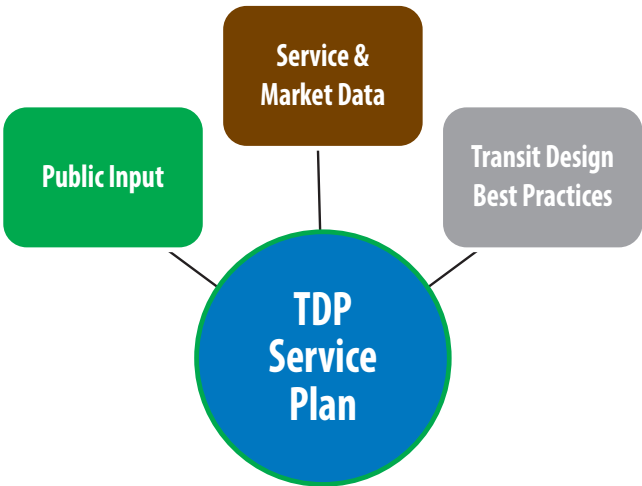
Service Plan Overview

The Service Plan includes the proposed service, operational, or organizational changes recommended as part of the 2024 TDP. These recommendations are the culmination of the public input process and the Community Profile and Demand Analysis and Service Overview and Evaluation described in the preceding sections. The draft service concepts were presented to the public for consideration and SCT made several changes and refinements to them. These changes are summarized in the following section.

Overall, the Service Plan focuses on improvements to the core of the SCT system, the local network. These improvements include frequency and span of service enhancements, alongside route alignment changes that support more direct travel, enhanced connectivity, or service to new areas. These local route changes are accompanied by proposed minor reductions in commuter bus service, to right-size service levels to current demand and offset some of the investment required to improve the local bus network within the Santa Clarita Valley. Lastly, the Service Plan includes recommendations for the future of SCT’s Dial-A-Ride demand response service and the GO! Santa Clarita microtransit service, along with a recommendation for improved presentation of public schedules and website information.

DATA SOURCES AND INPUT INFORMING THE RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations presented in the Service Plan were informed by public and stakeholder input throughout the outreach process as well as several data sources. These include items reviewed in the Community Profile and Demand Analysis and Service Overview and Evaluation, such as current service characteristics, ridership and service performance, and community conditions attributes like population and demographics, job and destination locations, and general travel demand patterns. These inputs were combined with transit service design best practices such as streamlined route alignments, clockface headways (i.e., evenly distributed and consistent intervals between trips) and a customer-first perspective that places an emphasis on route and system legibility, simplicity, and predictability, along with leveraging resources to benefit the greatest number of customers possible.



DRAFT TO FINAL CHANGES

The draft service concepts presented to the public and stakeholders in the spring and summer of 2024 were revised to reflect community feedback and ensure the final plan met public expectations and mobility needs. Changes include:

- Recommendations to discontinue commuter Routes 791/796 to Warner Center and Routes 794/799 to Downtown Los Angeles were modified following extensive rider feedback. The final recommendation is to eliminate several under-performing trips on both route pairs but still keep these routes in operation.

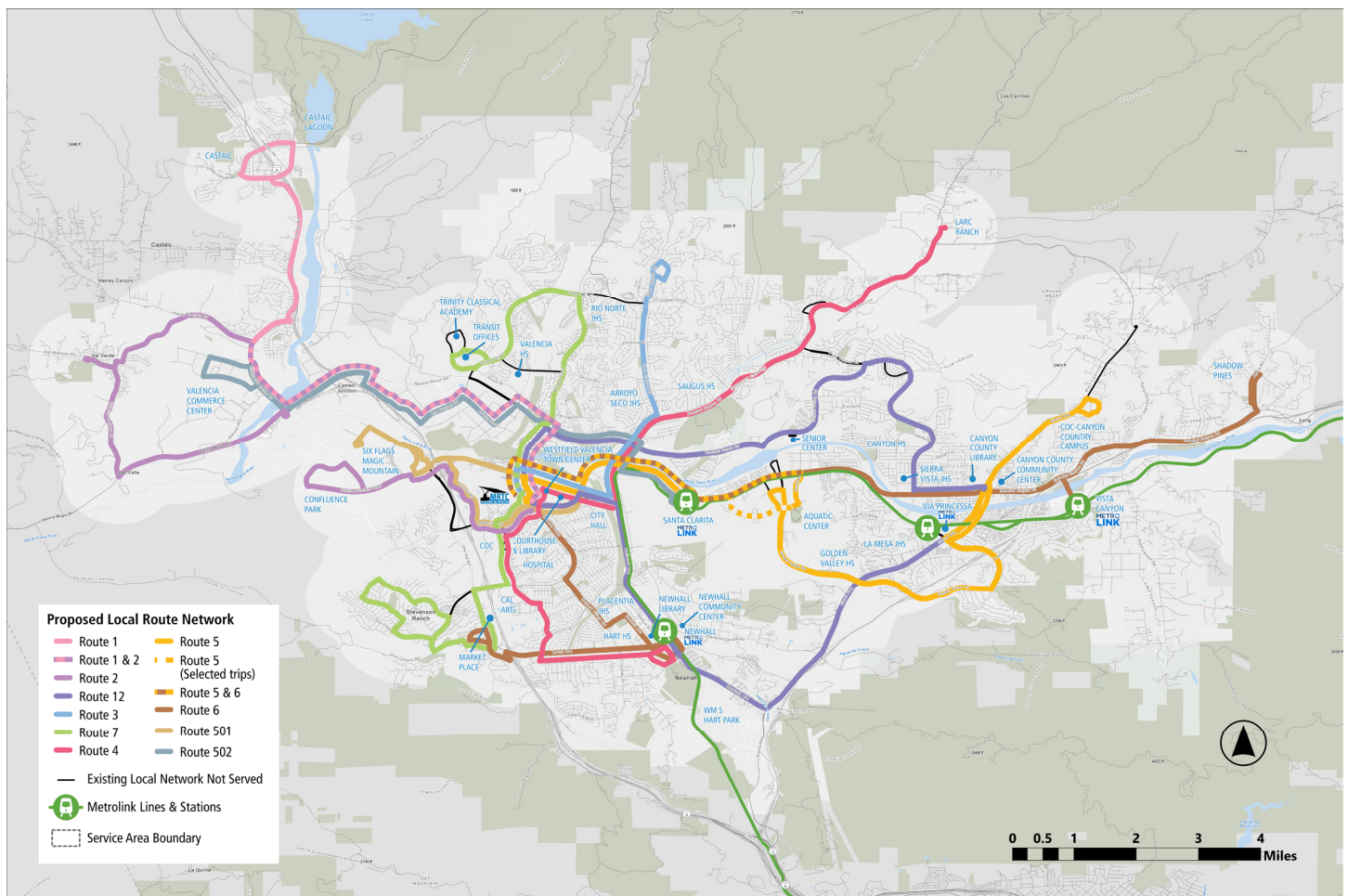
- A service concept for a new Station Links route between the Newhall Metrolink Station and the new Needham Ranch Parkway industrial park has been added.
- The proposed alignment for Route 5 was modified to serve Carl Boyer Drive between Centre Pointe Parkway and McKeon Drive to provide improved access to the Walmart and other businesses in the Centre Point Village shopping plaza.

Fixed Route Recommendations

NETWORK OVERVIEW

The proposed SCT local route network is shown below in Figure 90. With a few exceptions (areas with black lines on the map), the proposed local network preserves SCT's extensive coverage across the Santa Clarita Valley. Several route segments have been modified or incorporated into other routes to better match travel patterns or public input. The most notable change in local route coverage is the addition of service on Golden Valley Road and Via Princessa between Centre Pointe Parkway and Sierra Highway. No alignment changes are proposed for the Commuter Express routes. One change is recommended to school Route 636 and the plan also includes a new Station Links or employee shuttle service concept. Details on each route's proposed change can be found in the Route-by-Route subsection.

Figure 90: Proposed Santa Clarita Transit Local Route



ROUTE BY ROUTE CHANGES

The 2024 Santa Clarita Transit (SCT) Transportation Development Plan (TDP) is a roadmap for improving and expanding transit service in the Santa Clarita Valley over the next 10 years. The following section provides an in-depth look at the TDP route recommendations with alignments, existing and proposed service parameters (frequency and span), and explanations for each recommendation.

The proposed network responds to changing travel patterns and recent growth in Santa Clarita and was shaped by feedback received from riders, community members, stakeholders, and bus operators. The plan is focused on improving connections to key destinations and job centers and guiding the City’s public mobility investment toward a bus network that is more convenient and dependable for its riders. The long-term vision for Santa Clarita Transit includes more frequency and span improvements to align with customer needs and expectations.

Route Info

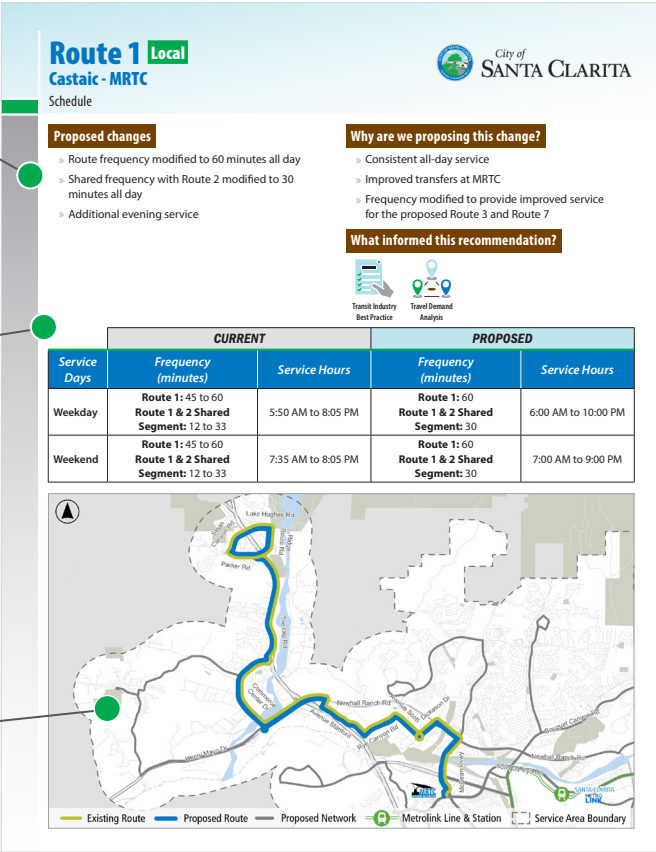
This section provides an overview of the proposed changes to each route. This includes a description of any alignment or schedule-related changes, with reasons for the proposed changes. Our service concepts are based on community input and the data-driven existing service and mobility market analyses we conducted in late 2023 and early 2024.

Schedule Recommendation

The schedule section presents the current (February 2024) and proposed frequencies and hours of service (or span), for weekdays, Saturdays, and Sundays.

Route Map

Each route’s existing alignment is shown in green and the proposed route is in blue. The maps also depict the rest of the proposed network in gray, with the Metrolink Antelope Valley Line and stations shown in bright green (double line).



Service Type and Concepts Category

Each SCT route is categorized as a local, commuter, Station Links, or supplemental school service route. These routes all perform different roles and functions in the SCT network.

Each route's proposed concept is organized into one or more categories: a **schedule** change, an **alignment** change, **consolidation** with another route, or **discontinuation** of service.

List of Acronyms

AVTA - Antelope Valley Transit Authority

COC - College of the Canyons

MRTC - McBean Regional Transit Center

What informed these recommendations?



Transit Industry Best Practice



Travel Demand Analysis



Current Ridership



Public/Stakeholder Input

Routes

1 Castaic - MRTC

2 Val Verde - MRTC - FivePoint

3 Seco Canyon - MRTC

4 LARC Ranch - MRTC - Newhall Metrolink Station

5 COC Canyon Country Campus - Golden Valley Rd - MRTC

6 Shadow Pines - MRTC - Valencia Marketplace

7 Stevenson Ranch - MRTC - Copper Hill

12 MRTC - Newhall - Canyon Country

14 Plum Canyon - Newhall Metrolink Station

636 MRTC - Rancho Pico Jr High School/ West Ranch High School

791/796 Santa Clarita - Warner Center

794/799 Santa Clarita - Burbank/Downtown LA

Route 1 Local

Castaic - MRTC



City of
SANTA CLARITA

Schedule

Proposed changes

- » Route frequency modified to 60 minutes all day
- » Shared frequency with Route 2 modified to 30 minutes all day
- » Additional evening service

Why are we proposing this change?

- » Consistent all-day service
- » Improved transfers at MRTC
- » Frequency modified to provide improved service for the proposed Route 3 and Route 7

What informed this recommendation?

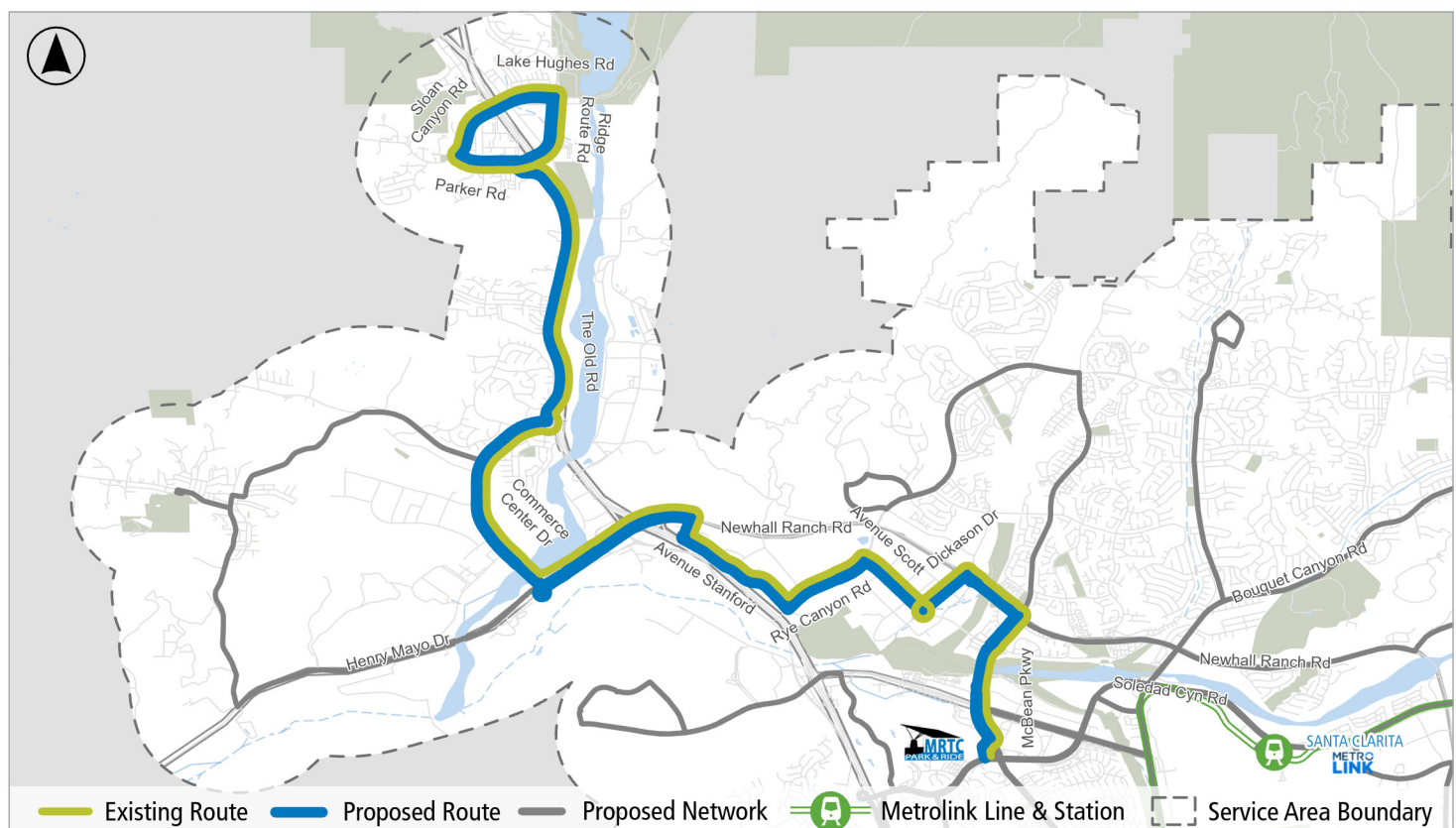


Transit Industry
Best Practice



Travel Demand
Analysis

	CURRENT		PROPOSED	
Service Days	Frequency (minutes)	Service Hours	Frequency (minutes)	Service Hours
Weekday	Route 1: 45 to 60 Route 1 & 2 Shared Segment: 12 to 33	5:50 AM to 8:05 PM	Route 1: 60 Route 1 & 2 Shared Segment: 30	6:00 AM to 10:00 PM
Weekend	Route 1: 45 to 60 Route 1 & 2 Shared Segment: 12 to 33	7:35 AM to 8:05 PM	Route 1: 60 Route 1 & 2 Shared Segment: 30	7:00 AM to 9:00 PM



Route 2 **Local**

Val Verde - MRTC - FivePoint



City of
SANTA CLARITA

Alignment and Schedule

Proposed changes

- » Extend service to FivePoint, replacing the current Route 3 & 7
- » Route 2 frequency modified to 60 minutes all day
- » Shared frequency with Route 1 modified to 30 minutes all day

Why are we proposing this change?

- » Consistent all-day service
- » Improved transfers at MRTC
- » Frequency modified to provide improved service for the proposed Route 3 and proposed Route 7

What informed this recommendation?

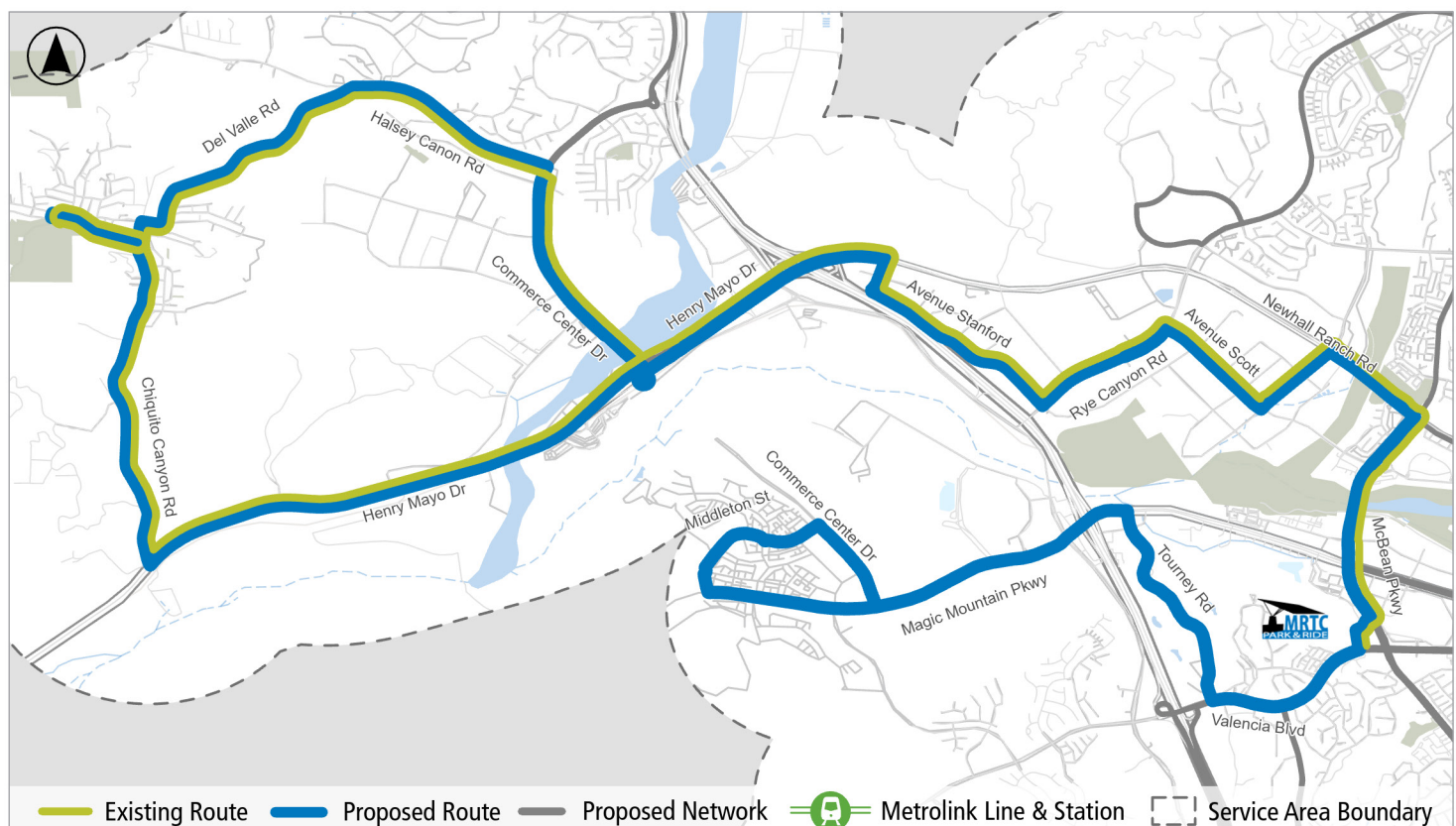


Transit Industry
Best Practice



Travel Demand
Analysis

	CURRENT		PROPOSED	
Service Days	Frequency (minutes)	Service Hours	Frequency (minutes)	Service Hours
Weekday	Route 2: 45 to 60 Route 1 & 2 Shared Segment: 12 to 33	5:50 AM to 7:35 PM	Route 2: 60 Route 1 & 2 Shared Segment: 30	6:00 AM to 8:00 PM
Weekend	Route 2: 45 to 60 Route 1 & 2 Shared Segment: 12 to 33	7:20 AM to 7:35 PM	Route 2: 60 Route 1 & 2 Shared Segment: 30	7:00 AM to 8:00 PM



Route 3 **Local**

Seco Canyon - MRTC



City of
SANTA CLARITA

Alignment and Schedule

Proposed changes

- » Streamlined to operate between MRTC and Seco Canyon
- » Service between MRTC, Magic Mountain, and FivePoint replaced by the proposed Route 2
- » Frequency improved to 60 minutes all day with service beginning an hour earlier in the morning on weekdays

Why are we proposing this change?

- » Consistent and improved all-day service
- » Improved transfers at MRTC

What informed this recommendation?

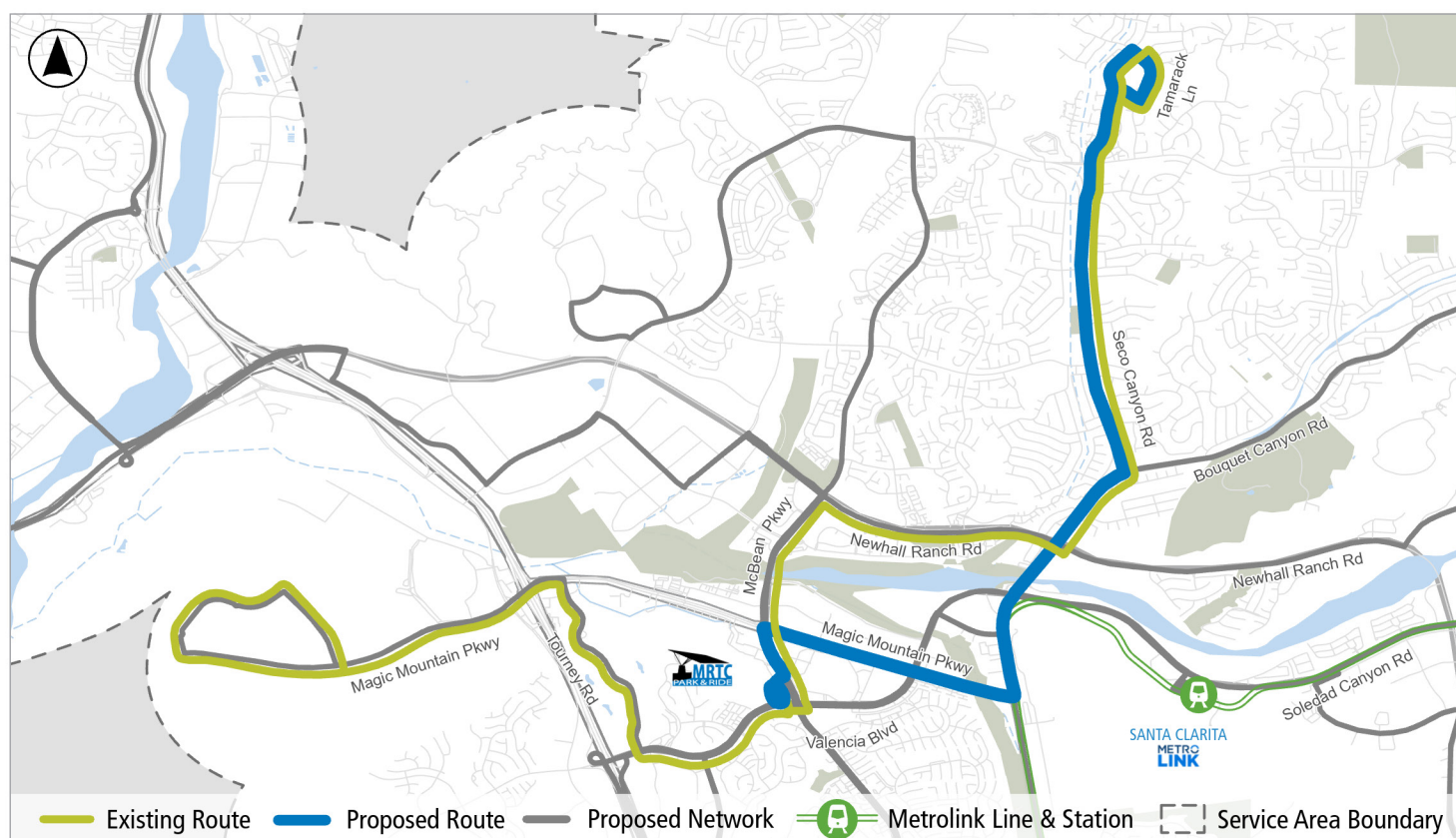


Transit Industry
Best Practice



Travel Demand
Analysis

	CURRENT		PROPOSED	
Service Days	Frequency (minutes)	Service Hours	Frequency (minutes)	Service Hours
Weekday	Route 3: 95 Route 3 & 7 Shared Segment: 26 to 60	7:40 AM to 10:00 PM	60	6:00 AM to 10:00 PM
Weekend	Route 3: 95 Route 3 & 7 Shared Segment: 26 to 60	7:40 AM to 10:00 PM	60	7:00 AM to 9:00 PM



Route 4 Local

LARC Ranch - MRTC - Newhall Metrolink Station



City of
SANTA CLARITA

Consolidation and Schedule

Proposed changes

- » Route 4 frequency improved to 30 minutes all day with the discontinuation of the current Route 14
- » Service will operate an hour earlier and later on weekdays
- » SCV Senior Center will be served all day by the proposed Route 12

Why are we proposing this change?

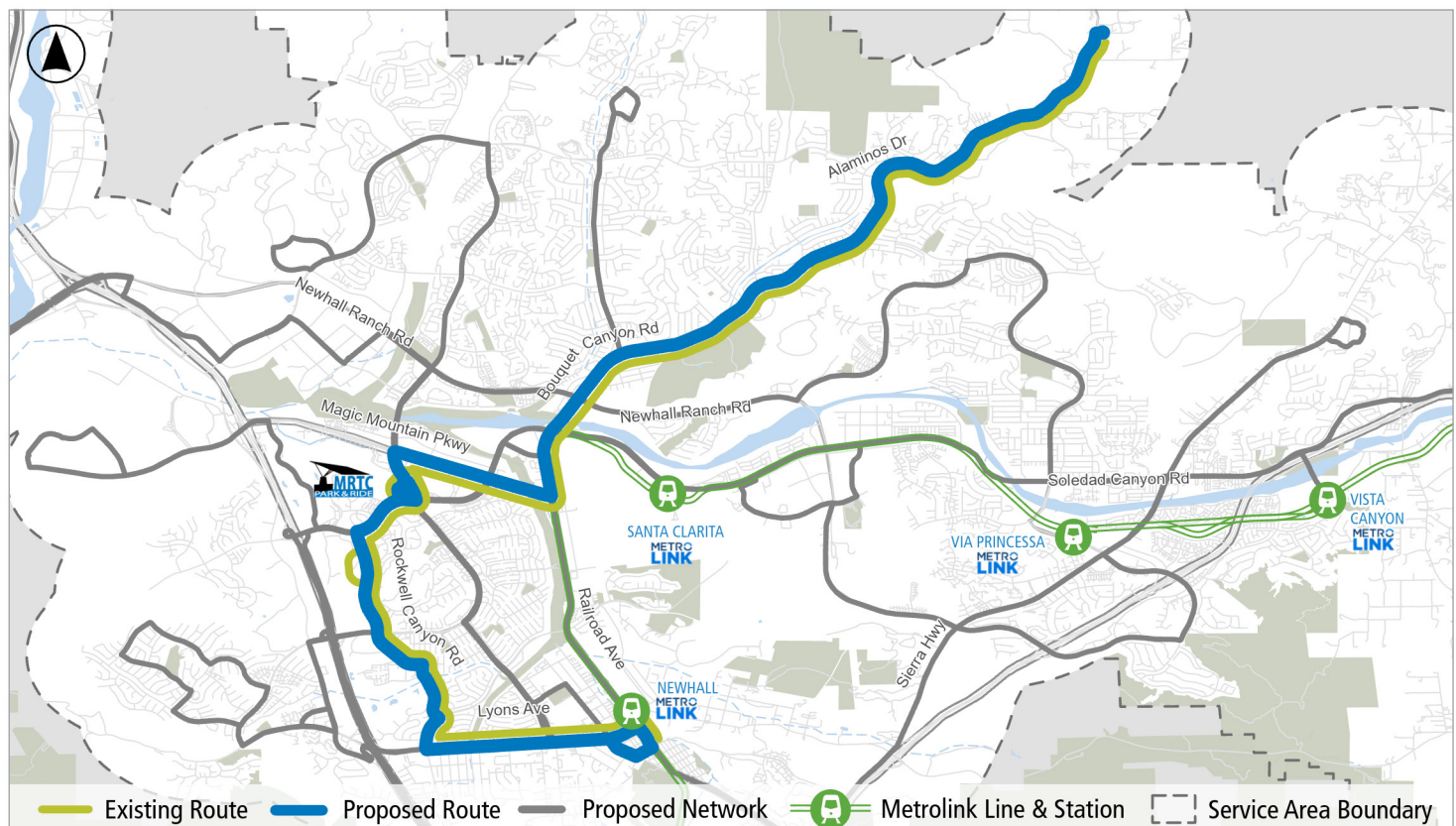
- » Consolidation with the current Route 14 improves legibility with a single route number
- » Consistent and improved all-day service
- » Improved transfers at MRTC

What informed this recommendation?



Transit Industry
Best Practice

	CURRENT		PROPOSED	
Service Days	Frequency (minutes)	Service Hours	Frequency (minutes)	Service Hours
Weekday	Route 4: 60 Route 4 & 14 Shared Segment: 30	7:15 AM to 8:15 PM	30	6:00 AM to 9:00 PM
Weekend	Route 4: 60 Route 4 & 14 Shared Segment: 30	7:15 AM to 8:15 PM	30	7:00 AM to 9:00 PM



Route 5 Local

COC Canyon Country Campus - Golden Valley Rd - MRTC

Alignment and Schedule



City of
SANTA CLARITA

Proposed changes

- » Streamlined to operate between MRTC and COC-Canyon Country Campus via Golden Valley Road
- » NEW local service provided to destinations along Golden Valley Road
- » Route frequency adjusted to 60 minutes all day
- » Route 6 frequency improved to 30 minutes and there will be three trips per hour on the combined segment of proposed Route 5 and 6 between MRTC and Soledad Cyn Rd/Ruether Ave

Why are we proposing this change?

- » NEW connections provided to in-demand destinations along Golden Valley Road
- » Streamlining improves route legibility and reliability
- » Consistent all-day service
- » Improved transfers at MRTC
- » Improves service between MRTC and Santa Clarita Metrolink Station to three trips per hour in each direction all day

What informed this recommendation?



Transit Industry
Best Practice



Current
Ridership

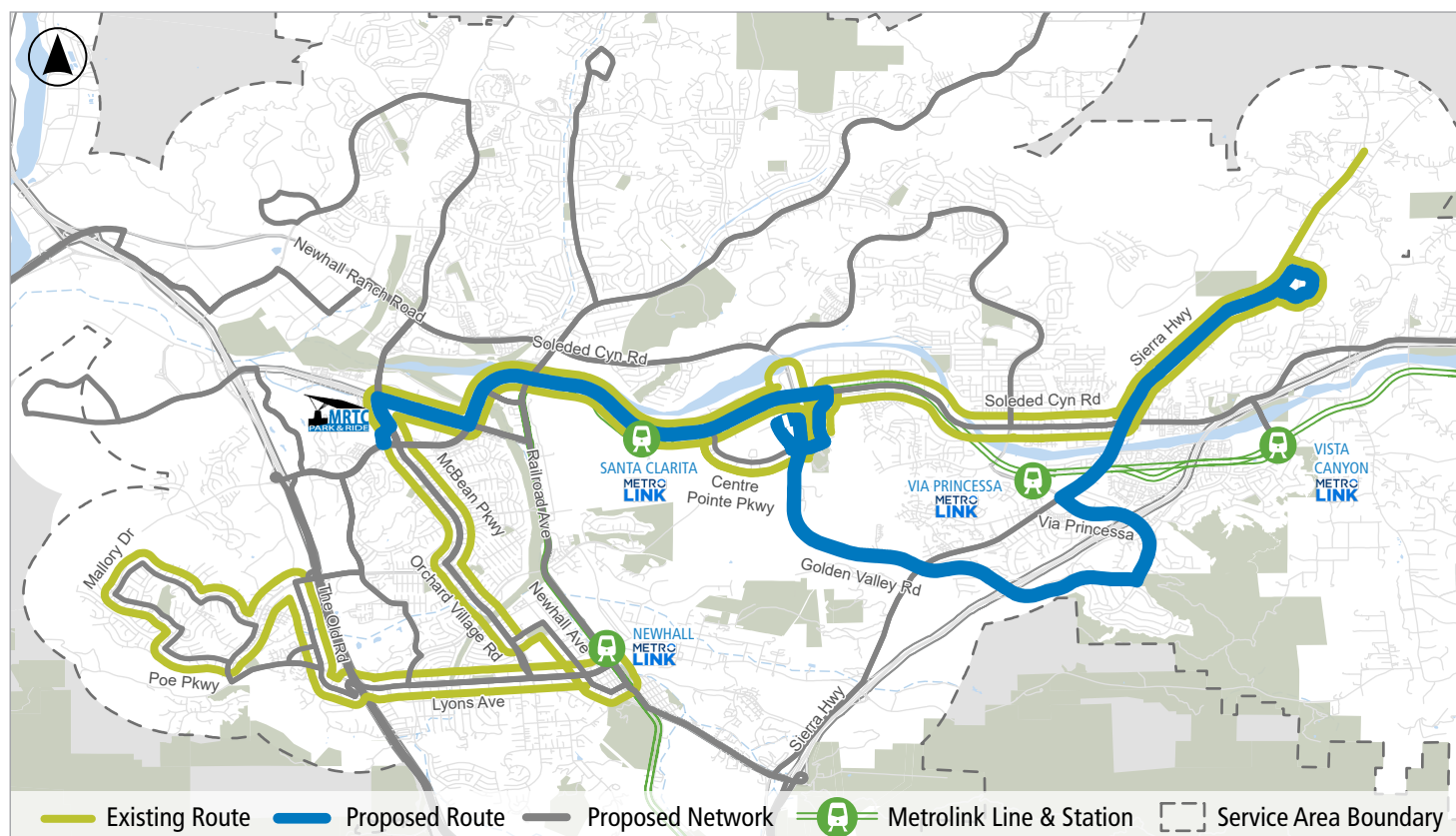


Travel Demand
Analysis



Public /
Stakeholder Input

	CURRENT		PROPOSED	
Service Days	Frequency (minutes)	Service Hours	Frequency (minutes)	Service Hours
Weekday	Route 5: 48 to 122 Route 5 & 6 Shared Segment: 13 to 82	5:05 AM to 9:25 PM	60	6:00 AM to 10:00 PM
Weekend	Route 5: 60 to 120 Route 5 & 6 Shared Segment: 28 to 32	7:30 AM to 8:00 PM	60	7:00 AM to 8:00 PM



Route 6 Local

Shadow Pines - MRTC - Valencia Marketplace



City of
SANTA CLARITA

Alignment and Schedule

Proposed changes

- » Streamlined to operate between Shadow Pines and the Valencia Marketplace (The Old Rd/Pico Cyn Rd) via MRTC
- » Provides NEW local service to the Vista Canyon Metrolink station
- » Service to Stevenson Ranch replaced by the proposed Route 7
- » Frequency adjusted to 30 minutes all day

Why are we proposing this change?

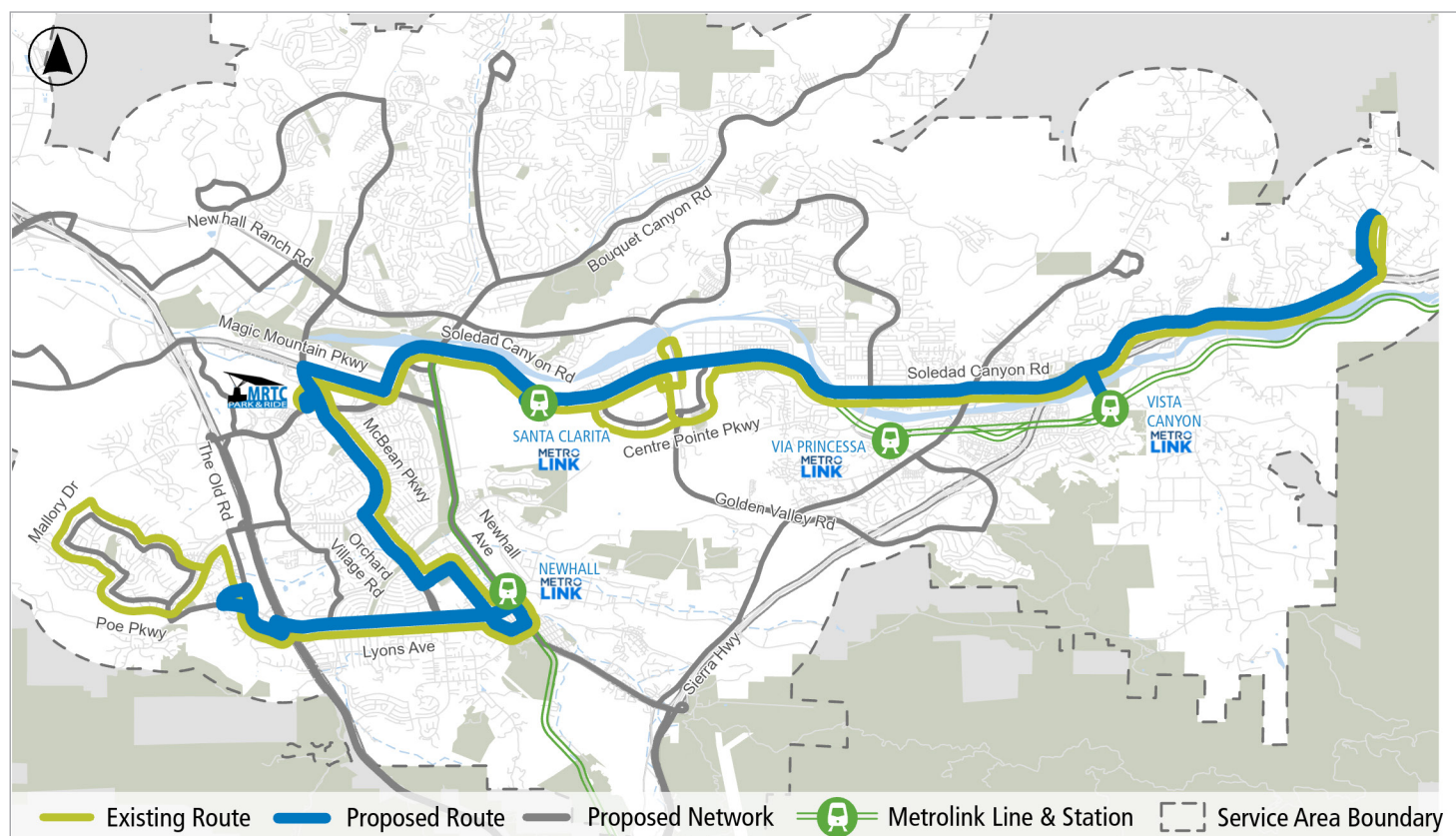
- » Provides connection to the new Vista Canyon Metrolink Station
- » Streamlining improves route legibility and reliability
- » Improved all-day service with consistent 30-minute headways on key east-west corridor
- » Improved transfers at MRTC

What informed this recommendation?



Transit Industry
Best Practice

	CURRENT		PROPOSED	
Service Days	Frequency (minutes)	Service Hours	Frequency (minutes)	Service Hours
Weekday	Route 6: 19 to 88 Route 5 & 6 Shared Segment: 13 to 82	6:40 AM to 10:25 PM	30	5:00 AM to 10:00 PM
Weekend	Route 6: 30 to 62 Route 5 & 6 Shared Segment: 28 to 32	7:10 AM to 8:30 PM	30	7:00 AM to 9:00 PM



Route 7 Local

Stevenson Ranch - MRTC - Copper Hill

Alignment and Schedule



City of
SANTA CLARITA

Proposed changes

- » Streamlined and extended to operate between Stevenson Ranch and Copperhill
- » Service between MRTC and FivePoint replaced by the proposed Route 2
- » Route frequency improved to 60 minutes all day with earlier morning service

Why are we proposing this change?

- » NEW direct service between Stevenson Ranch and COC and Valencia Town Center
- » NEW connections provided to housing and shopping along Copperhill Drive
- » Consistent and improved all-day service
- » Improved transfers at MRTC

What informed this recommendation?

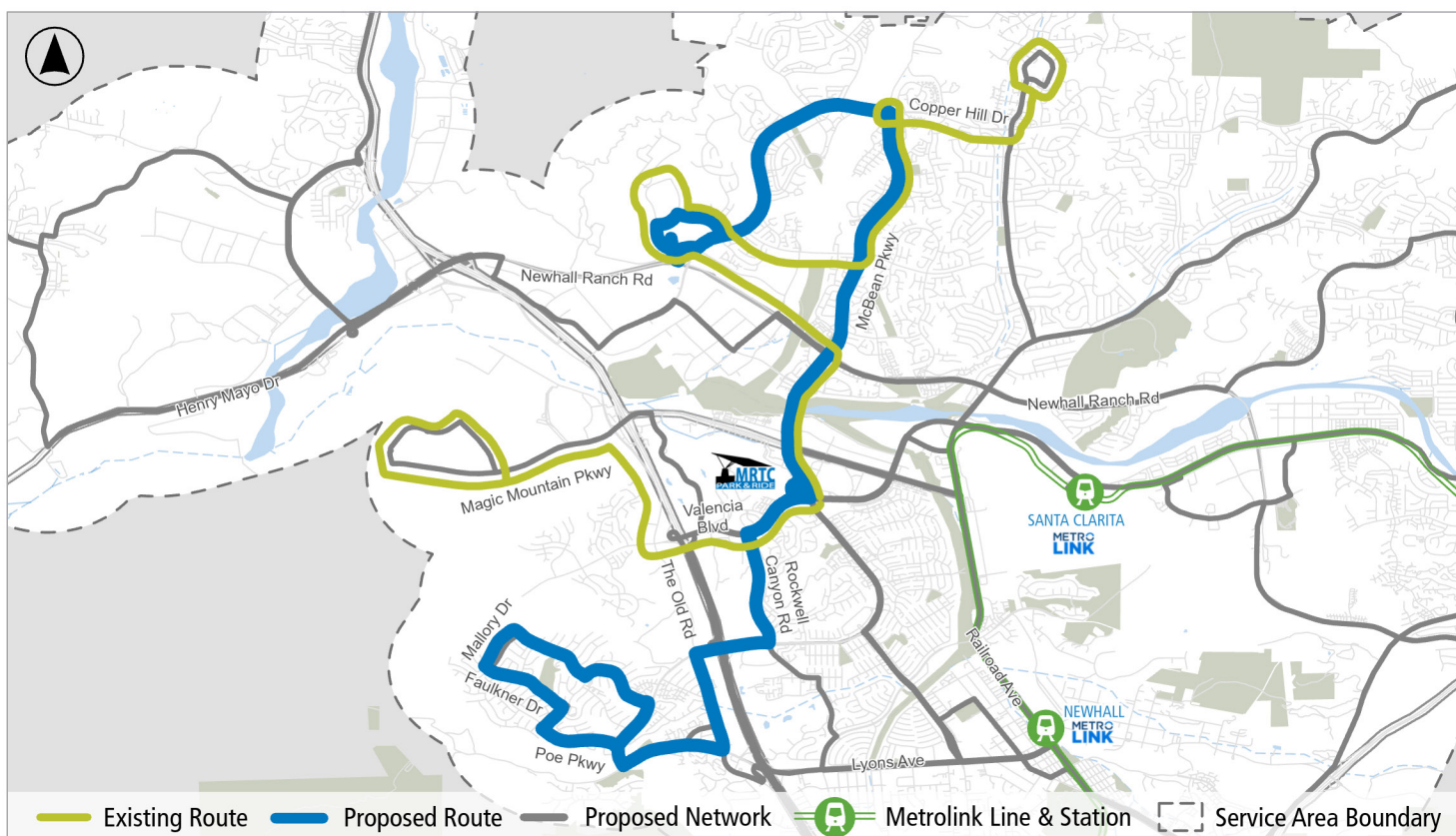


Transit Industry
Best Practice



Travel Demand
Analysis

	CURRENT		PROPOSED	
Service Days	Frequency (minutes)	Service Hours	Frequency (minutes)	Service Hours
Weekday	Route 7: 95 Route 3 & 7 Shared Segment: 26 to 60	8:00 AM to 9:30 PM	60	6:00 AM to 9:00 PM
Weekend	Route 7: 95 Route 3 & 7 Shared Segment: 26 to 60	8:00 AM to 9:30 PM	60	7:00 AM to 9:00 PM



Route 12 Local

MRTC - Newhall - Canyon Country

Alignment and Schedule



City of
SANTA CLARITA

Proposed changes

- » Extended to form a bidirectional loop to MRTC via Golden Valley Road, Newhall Ranch Road, and McBean Parkway
- » Provides all-day service to the SCV Senior Center and other destinations along Golden Valley Road
- » Frequency adjusted to 30 minutes all day

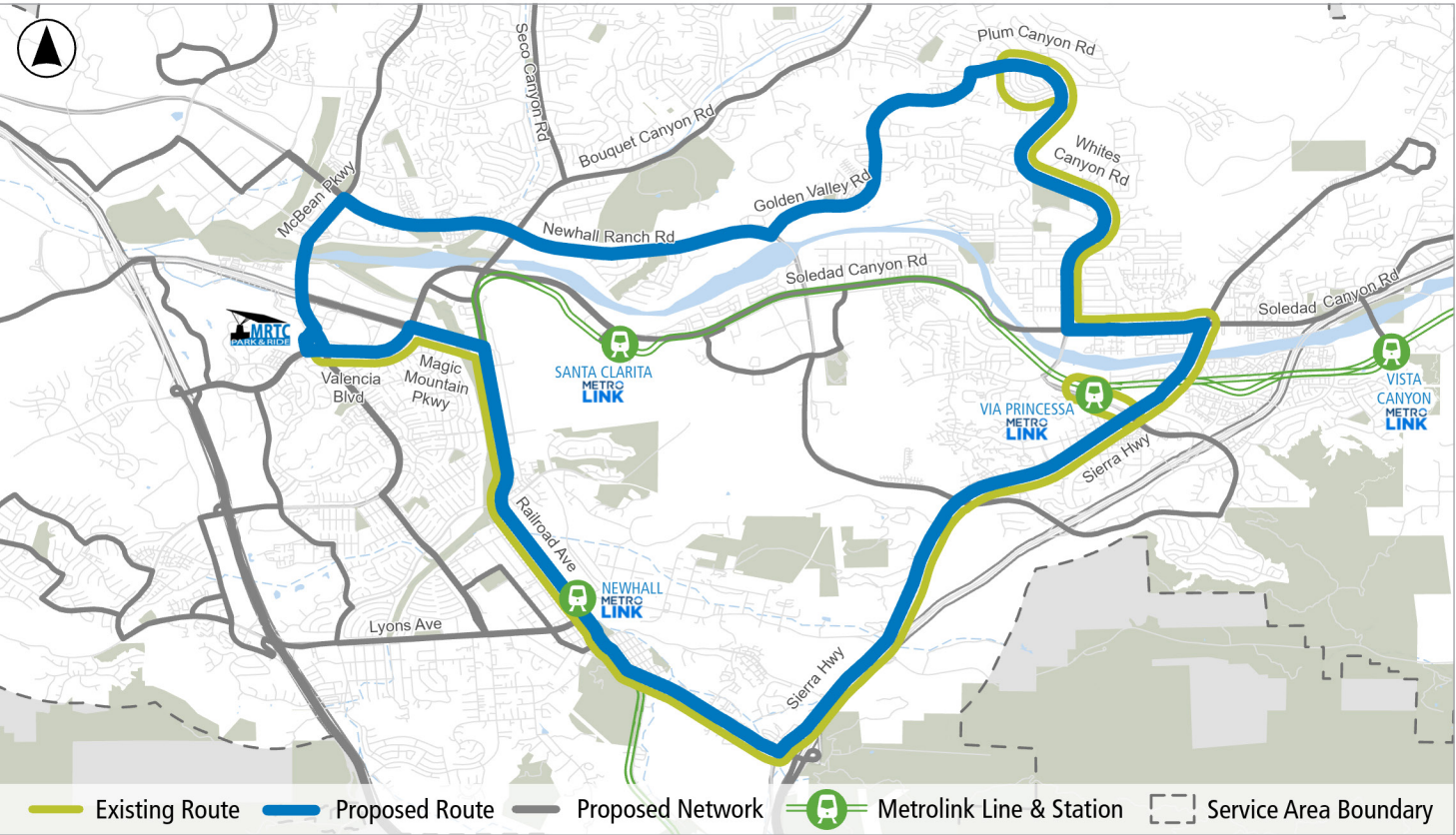
Why are we proposing this change?

- » Provides all-day service to in-demand destinations like the SCV Senior Center along Golden Valley Road
- » Consistent all-day service
- » Improved transfers at MRTC

What informed this recommendation?

Transit Industry
Best Practice
 Current
Ridership
 Travel Demand
Analysis
 Public /
Stakeholder Input

	CURRENT		PROPOSED	
Service Days	Frequency (minutes)	Service Hours	Frequency (minutes)	Service Hours
Weekday	10 to 32	5:15 AM to 9:35 PM	30	5:00 AM to 10:00 PM
Saturday/ Sunday	18 to 32	6:45 AM to 9:35 PM	30	6:30 AM to 9:30 PM
		7:10 AM to 8:55 PM		



Route 14 Local

Plum Canyon - Newhall Metrolink Station



City of
SANTA CLARITA

Discontinuation

Proposed changes

- » Route discontinued
- » The proposed Route 4 and Route 12 will provide service along Route 14's existing alignment, with Route 12 providing all-day service to the SCV Senior Center

Why are we proposing this change?

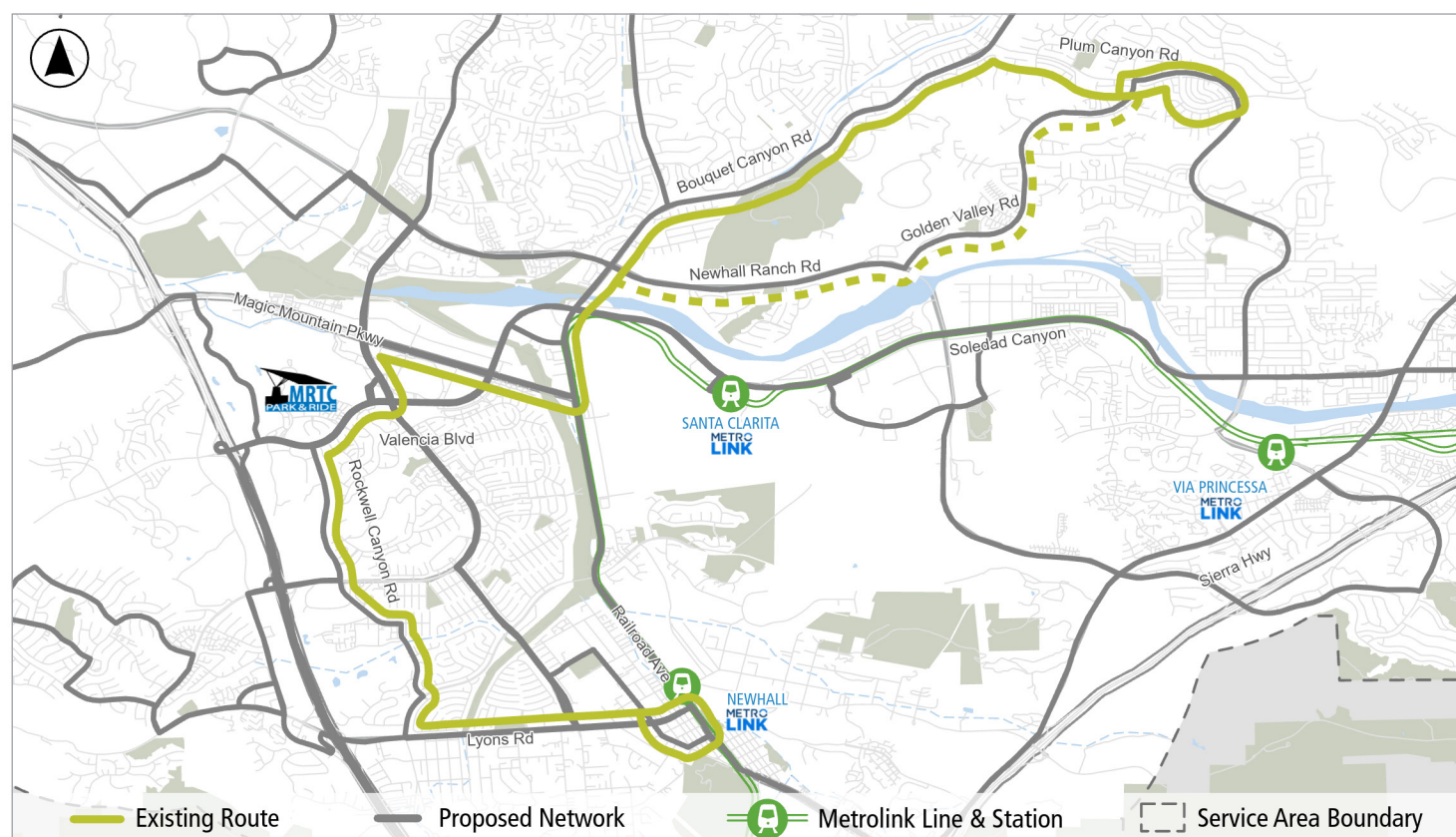
- » Improved route legibility and attractiveness of the proposed Route 4

What informed this recommendation?



Transit Industry
Best Practice

CURRENT			PROPOSED	
Service Days	Frequency (minutes)	Service Hours	Frequency (minutes)	Service Hours
Weekday	Route 14: 60 Route 4 & 14 Shared Segment: 30	7:20 AM to 7:45 PM	--	--
Weekend	Route 14: 60 Route 4 & 14 Shared Segment: 30	7:20 AM to 7:45 PM	--	--



Route 636 School Service

MRTC - Rancho Pico Jr High School/West Ranch

High School Alignment



City of
SANTA CLARITA

Proposed changes

- » Streamlined to operate directly between the McBean Regional Transit Center and West Ranch High School/Rancho Pico Junior High School

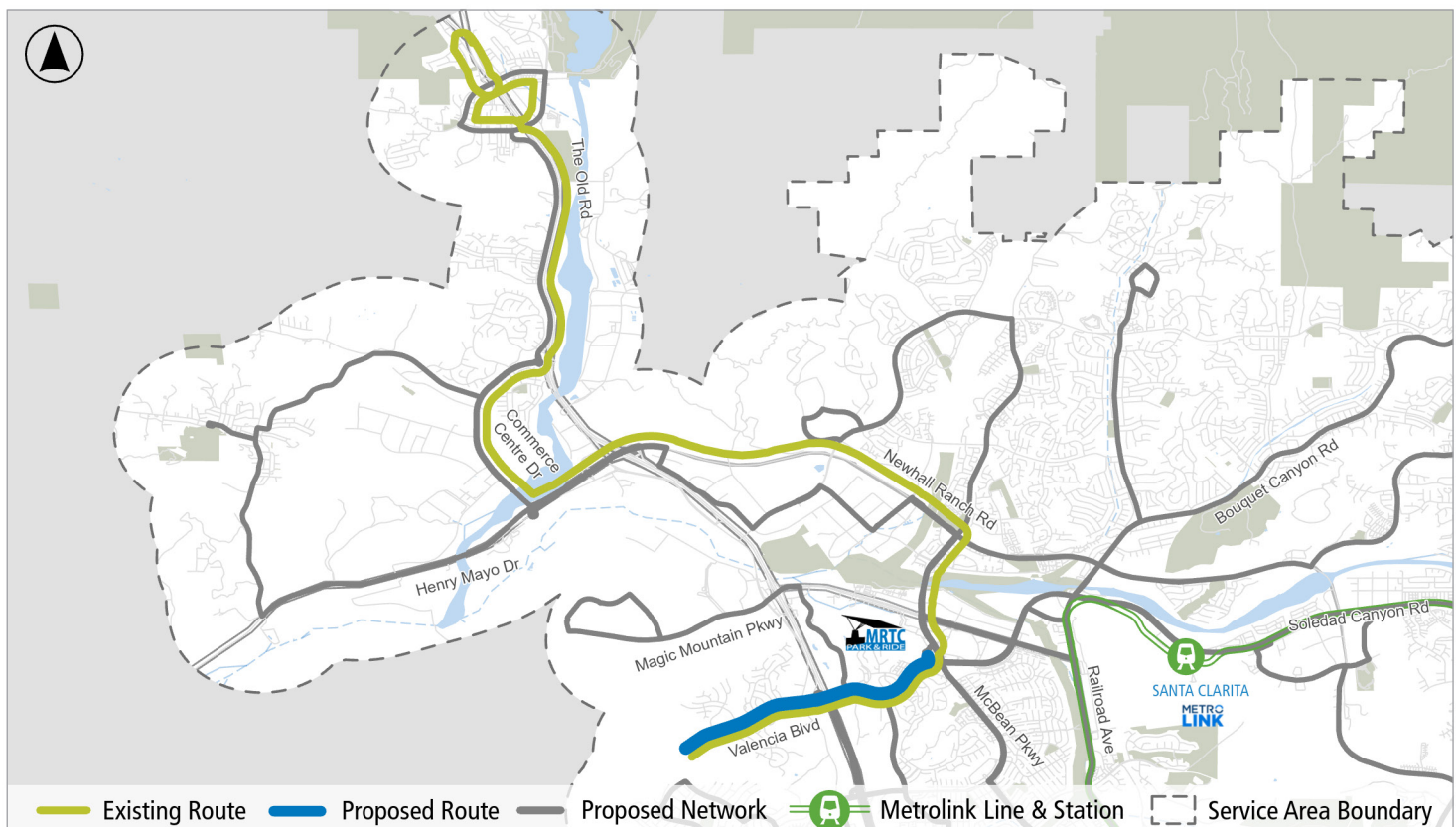
Why are we proposing this change?

- » Provides a more direct service
- » Students riding the current Route 636 can use local Routes 1 or 2 as an alternative and transfer at MRTC for the proposed Route 636 to West Ranch High School or Rancho Pico Jr. High School

What informed this recommendation?



	CURRENT		PROPOSED	
Service Days	Daily Trips	Service Hours	Daily Trips	Service Hours
Weekday	AM: 1 PM: 1	AM: 7:20 to 8:14 PM: 3:10 to 4:00	AM: 1 PM: 1	AM: 7:20 to 8:14 PM: 3:10 to 4:00
Weekend	--	--	--	--



Route 791/796 Commuter

Santa Clarita - Warner Center

Schedule Change



City of
SANTA CLARITA

	CURRENT		PROPOSED	
<i>Service Days</i>	<i>Daily Trips</i>	<i>Service Hours</i>	<i>Daily Trips</i>	<i>Service Hours</i>
Weekday	791 - AM: 3, PM: 3 796 - AM: 3, PM: 3	791 - AM: 6:50 to 8:30, PM: 2:20 to 6:15 796 - AM: 5:25 to 8:30, PM: 3:35 to 7:30	791 - AM: 2, PM: 2 796 - AM: 2, PM: 2	791 - AM: 6:50 to 8:35, PM: 2:20 to 4:30 796 - AM: 5:25 to 7:20, PM: 3:35 to 5:55
Weekend	--	--	--	--

Proposed changes

- » This route is proposed for a schedule change, with discontinuation of the third AM and third PM trip in both directions
- » SCT is exploring partnerships with outside agencies that would add a stop in the Santa Clarita Valley
- » These partnerships could allow for service to CSUN, De Soto Ave, Warner Center and Ventura Blvd in Woodland Hills and Tarzana

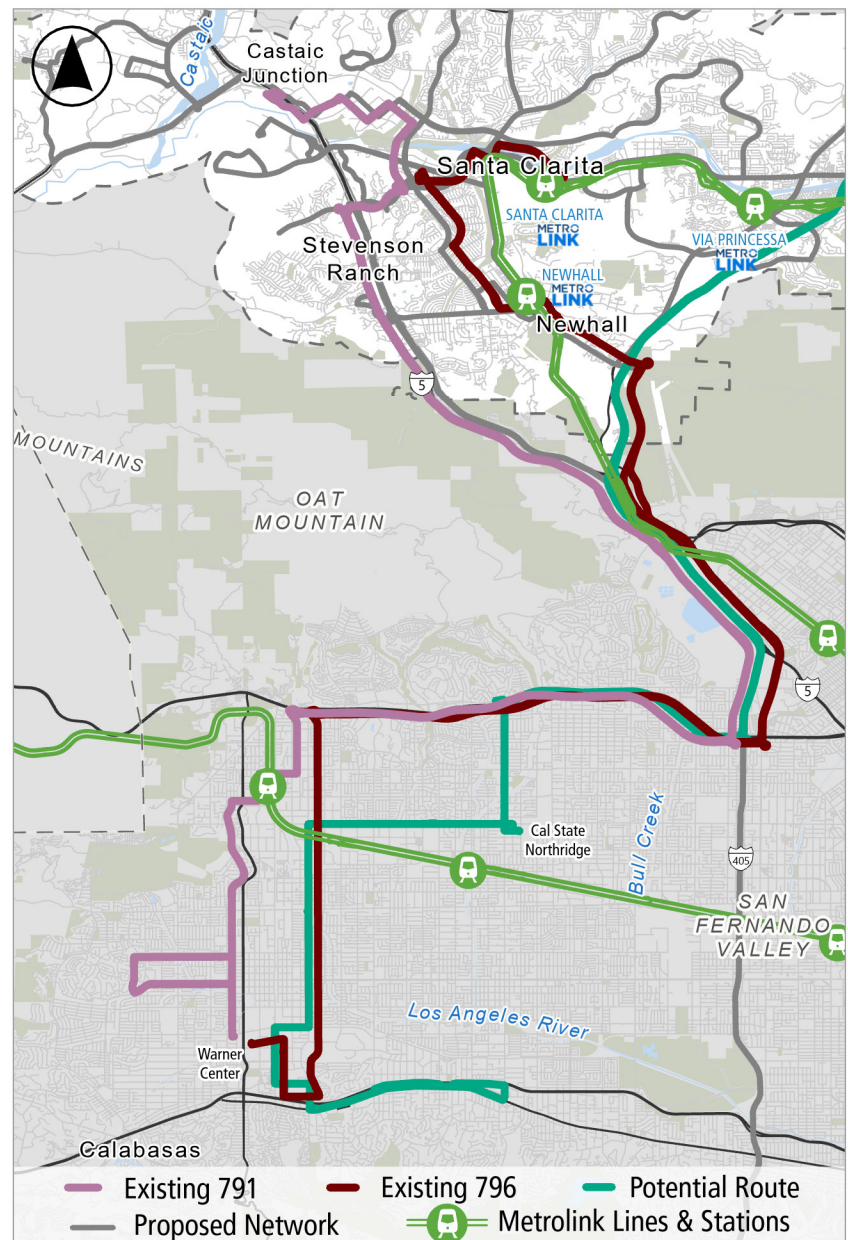
Why are we proposing this change?

- » Low ridership
- » Frees up resources for reinvestment in the rest of the SCT network

What informed this recommendation?



Current
Ridership



Route 794/799 Commuter

Santa Clarita - Burbank/Downtown LA



City of
SANTA CLARITA

Schedule Change

	CURRENT		PROPOSED	
Service Days	Daily Trips	Service Hours	Daily Trips	Service Hours
Weekday	794 - AM: 1, PM: 2 799 - AM: 5, PM: 6	794 - AM: 6:50 to 7:55, PM: 4:20 to 6:20 799 - AM: 4:55 to 8:30, PM: 3:20 to 8:05	794 - AM: 1, PM: 1 799 - AM: 3, PM: 4	794 - AM: 6:50 to 7:55, PM: 4:20 to 5:30 799 - AM: 4:55 to 7:40, PM: 3:20 to 7:10
Weekend	--	--	--	--

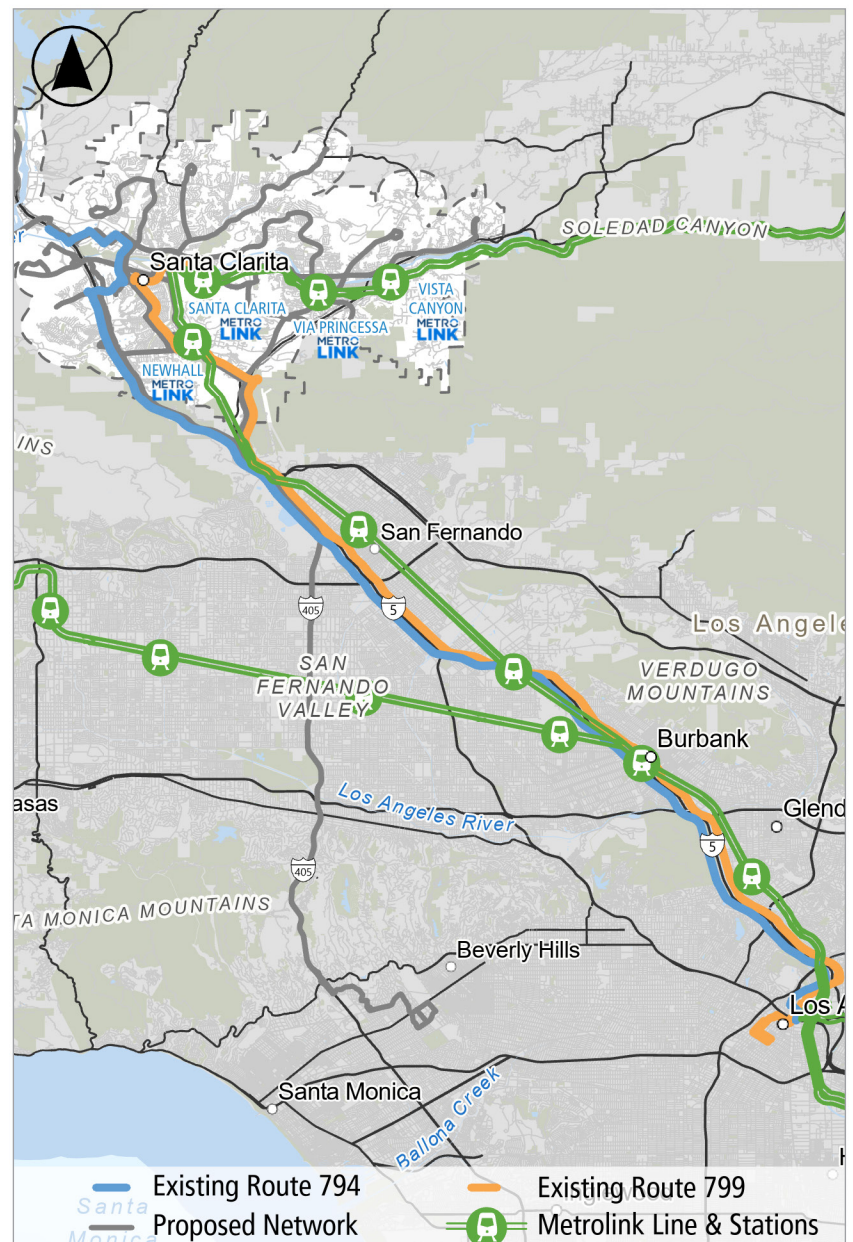
Proposed changes

- » This route is proposed for a schedule change, with discontinuation of the last two peak-direction trips (Route 799) in both the AM and PM and the second PM trip in the off-peak-direction (Route 794)
- » As an alternative, customers can utilize all-day Metrolink service between Santa Clarita and Burbank or Downtown Los Angeles
- » Route 794 customers can transfer from Metrolink to the SCT local network or utilize GO! for service to their destination in Valencia
- » Route 799 customers can transfer from Metrolink to Metro A, B, or D line rail service or a local Metro or LADOT Downtown DASH bus at Union Station for destinations in Downtown LA

Why are we proposing this change?

- » Low ridership
- » Frees up resources for reinvestment in the rest of the SCT network

What informed this recommendation?



PLAN BENEFITS AND IMPACTS

Any change to fixed route coverage or service levels carries both benefits and potential impacts to current riders. This section summarizes these benefits and impacts for the proposed network.

Benefits

In support of the plan priorities of ensuring developing areas of the community are served by transit and promoting equitable access to public mobility, the proposed local network increases the share of the population with access to transit, including low-income, senior, and minority residents. Additionally, the proposed network increases the share of employed residents with access to transit and share of jobs that are accessible transit. These changes are shown in Table 21.

Table 21: 2024 TDP Population and Job Access Impacts

Category	Service Area Total ⁴	Quarter Mile Access (5-min walk)		Half Mile Access (10-min walk)	
		Existing	Proposed	Existing	Proposed
Total Population	230,213	53.8%	58.0%	85.0%	89.6%
Employed Residents	107,800	53.0%	57.0%	84.7%	90.0%
Minority Population	102,676	55.3%	60.0%	85.3%	90.3%
Seniors	28,179	53.9%	56.9%	85.8%	89.5%
Under 200% of Poverty Threshold	45,127	62.2%	64.7%	90.1%	92.7%
Jobs	69,300	65.4%	68.7%	91.6%	95.2%

In addition to the improved access to transit for Santa Clarita residents and employment locations, full implementation of the proposed TDP fixed route changes is expected to increase system ridership by an estimated 9.4% on a weekly basis above the Spring 2023 average daily ridership analyzed as part of this study.⁵

Impacts

With the proposed changes to the local fixed route network, some current riders will see a change to their current trip. They may need to access the bus from a different stop or make a transfer to reach their destination. The proposed local network was designed around regular cycle times and clockface frequencies, allowing for consistent all-day service and pulsed, timed transfers at MRTC. This service improvement will reduce overall travel time for many trips, increasing the attractiveness of using Santa Clarita Transit and therefore increasing ridership.

A small number of riders will lose access to their current stop and will need to utilize GO! Santa Clarita as an alternative. A summary of current riders, based on spring 2023 average weekday boardings, who will be outside a quarter- or half-mile radius of the proposed local route network is shown below in Table 22. **These 46 riders outside of a quarter mile walk and 37 riders outside of a half-mile walk represent 0.8% and 0.6% of boardings, respectively.** As part of plan implementation and future service changes, SCT should ensure ample

⁴ The service area is defined as a three-quarter-mile buffer around the current local fixed route network (February 2024).
⁵ Ridership growth was estimated using an industry-standard elasticity factor applied to the proposed change in revenue miles for each bus route. Bonuses were applied to routes that would receive new coverage and/or improved connectivity with the rest of the system. This estimated ridership growth does not include the proposed Needham Ranch Parkway shuttle, the supplemental school service routes, GO! Santa Clarita, or Dial-a-Ride. The estimates are also independent of any societal, economic, or public health considerations that would impact transit ridership on a local, regional, or national level.

and clear notice is provided to current riders whose regular routes or stops will change. Through posted flyers at impacted stops, rider alerts, or onboard or transit center ambassadors, SCT can reach current riders and mitigate confusion surrounding any upcoming service changes or route reorganizations.

Table 22: Current Riders Not Served by Proposed Network

Route	Riders Excluded (Average Weekdays, Spring 2023)		
	Quarter Mile	Half Mile	Notes
5	38	37	» All boardings are at stops on the segment proposed for discontinuation (Sierra Highway between COC-CCC and Vasquez Canyon Road, outside of city limits.) » All but the two outermost stops are within the current GO! service area.
7	6	0	» Stops proposed for discontinuation include the pair at The Old Road/Silver Aspen Way (Westridge Village) and on Decoro Drive between McBean Parkway and Copper Hill Dr. » All stops are within a half mile of the proposed network and served by GO!.
12	1	0	» Less than one average boarding per weekday at the Via Princessa Metrolink Station stop. » This station is planned for eventual closure anyway, and the stop is within a half mile of the proposed network and also served by GO!.
14	1	0	» The two stops on Plum Canyon Road between Golden Valley Road and Bouquet Canyon Road see less than one boarding per day each. » Both stops are within a half mile of the proposed network and also served by GO! Santa Clarita.

Other Recommendations

DIAL-A-RIDE AND GO! SANTA CLARITA

SCT's senior Dial-A-Ride and GO! Santa Clarita microtransit service are both very popular and have been well-received by the community and current riders. However, these services are more expensive to deliver on a per rider basis than fixed route bus service and the project team identified several opportunities for improvement.

Dial-A-Ride

The SCT Dial-A-Ride (DAR) service is currently available to residents 60 years or older or who have a certified disability. As with most paratransit-style response services, reservations are required at least a day in advance and no same-day on-demand requests are permitted. At the same time, SCT offers the GO! service, which can be requested on demand for immediate pick-up. SCT currently pays for these trips differently (on a per trip basis for DAR and a per vehicle revenue hour basis for GO!), but it is recommended that SCT explore comingling these two services through policy changes and procurement of a new scheduling and dispatching software.

For customers, this would help to simplify and streamline what are essentially duplicative services and provide for more travel flexibility for seniors and customers with disabilities. Across the U.S., many riders of reservation-based services for older adults or people with disabilities find that the reservation requirements and policies limit their mobility options if their plans change or they wish to make spontaneous or same-day plans for shopping or social outings, etc. Under this commingled operation, SCT would still prioritize DAR trips to ensure customers with disabilities are not denied travel and that the service remains compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

From an operational standpoint, comingling of DAR and GO! allows for the balancing of resources and vehicles between the two services (with different demand patterns) to improve efficiency and reduce vehicle downtime. For example, a vehicle otherwise assigned solely to DAR could complete a GO! trip when the operator would otherwise be deadheading to the next DAR pickup or waiting for a client's medial appointment to conclude. Balancing resources between the two services may help to reduce trip denials or wait times on GO! and increase ridership.

Further analysis is needed to determine the exact operational cost impacts from comingling. It has the potential of reducing the ongoing operation costs of providing on demand services, but it will carry costs related to procuring a new dispatch software, and staff time for training and implementation of the policy change.

GO! Santa Clarita

As part of the comingling recommendation outlined above, there is an opportunity with procurement of new dispatch and reservations software to improve the GO! customer experience. The current platform for GO! does not allow for pre-scheduled trips or pick-up time negotiation and limits wait times to 20 minutes. If no vehicle is available at the requested pick-up location within that 20-minute window, the trip is denied. While this ensures shorter wait times it does not give the customer an opportunity to accept the trade-off of a longer wait, nor does it place them in a queue or waitlist for pickups beyond the 20-minute dispatch window. Adjusting these parameters to allow for longer wait times brings the opportunity of increasing ridership with customers willing to accept a wait longer than 20 minutes and provides a more transparent customer experience that can improve satisfaction with the service.

Several service changes are also recommended for the GO! microtransit service. The first GO! Santa Clarita recommendation is to extend the service hours for GO! and eliminate the Dial-A-Ride General Public (DAR-GP) in the evening. Weekday service would be extended by two hours to operate until 10 PM and Sunday hours would be extended by one hour to mirror Saturdays and operate until 10 PM. With later evening GO! service, the reservation-based DAR-GP service that begins at 6 PM (operating until 10 PM on weekdays, 9:30 PM on Saturdays, and 8 PM on Sundays) becomes redundant. Continuing to offer it just adds complexity for new customers seeking to understand the available service options. Additionally, its current usage is low and the on-demand GO! service is a more attractive option for the majority of customers. This recommendation will add 11 revenue hours per week per vehicle, or 44 weekly revenue hours with today's four assigned vehicles.

The second GO! Santa Clarita recommendation is to add additional all-day vehicles to the service to meet unmet demand. While the comingling recommendation would require a change to the current cost allocation for contract operations of the two services, this recommendation assumes a certain vehicle and revenue hour allocation to GO!. SCT analyzed completed trips and trip denials data to better understand current capacity and potential unmet demand. Across the March-August 2023 analysis period, each GO! vehicle completed around two trips per hour over most of the service span, with an average in-service duration for completed trips of 22 minutes on weekdays and 19 minutes on weekends. (Remaining time



in each hour is spent deadheading to the next pickup, idle if there are no requests, or idle or deadheading following a canceled trip.)

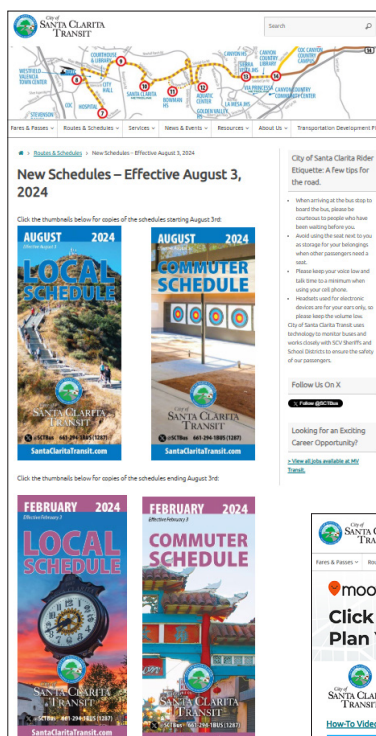
An analysis of more recent data for trip denials in May and June 2024 indicates that at least six or seven users are denied a pickup each hour due to vehicle availability, with PM peak period denials as high as 18-23 users per hour on weekdays and 10-20 users per hour on Saturdays. The data was filtered to account for only service availability-related denials and count multiple denials for the same user within a short duration as a single event. Available data did not indicate whether the user was ultimately provided with a trip or not, but the data does indicate there is unmet demand for the GO! service.

It is recommended that SCT add additional capacity to GO! in an iterative fashion, as resources allow. As a starting point, three additional all-day vehicles are recommended for weekdays and two additional vehicles on weekends. Based on spring and summer 2023 performance and assuming all other factors the same, this increase would allow for SCT to deliver an average of 69 additional trips per weekday and 36-38 additional trips per weekend day (over the current service span hours; additional hours would allow for further ridership growth). Assuming these additional vehicles are in service all day over the proposed 16-hour weekday/14-hour weekend service span, the recommendation would add 48 revenue hours per weekday and 28 revenue hours per weekend day for a total of 296 additional weekly revenue hours. The additional span and vehicles recommendation for GO! represents an 87% increase over the current 388 weekly revenue hours. (See the Financial Plan chapter for more information.)

WEBSITE AND SCHEDULE INFORMATION

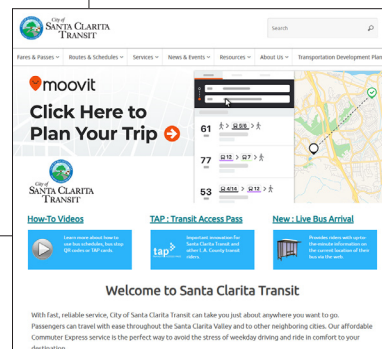
A key theme that emerged across the outreach process is a public desire for improved website information and bus schedules. SCT's website currently includes clear information about the services available, how to ride them, and how to plan your trip. Legible PDF timetables are available and posted with each service change. However, there are also opportunities for streamlined and improved public information, which requires additional staff time and possible costs from an additional administrative staff position or contractor. Public information recommendations include:

- More frequent updating of the SantaClaritaTransit.com website, and removal of outdated schedule information at the outset of each service change
- Simplification of the fare information to remove confusion for first-time riders, especially for the Commuter Express routes
- Overall simplification of the website to reduce redundant information or navigation links and prioritize the most important information for riders



Purchase Passes	
Local Fare	
All local routes, Metrolink Station Routes, and Supplemental School Day Service routes	
Cash	
Full Fare	\$1.25
Full Fare using TAP card or Token Transit	\$1.00
Reduced Fare*	FREE
Children 5 and under	FREE
Passes***	
Day Pass	\$2.50
Monthly Pass	\$34.00

Commuter Express Fare – North Hollywood "NoHo"	
Commuter Express Route 757	
Cash	
Full Fare	\$3.50
Full Fare Using TAP card or Token Transit	\$3.00
Reduced Fare*	\$1.75
Reduced Fare using TAP card or Token Transit*	\$1.50
Children 5 and under	FREE
Interagency Transfer	\$0.55
Monthly Pass***	
EZ Transit Pass – Zone 3 – Full Fare	\$176.00
EZ Transit Pass – Zone 3 – Reduced Fare**	\$70.50
SCT only to NoHo – Zone 3 – Full Fare	\$110.00
SCT only to NoHo – Zone 3 – Reduced Fare*	\$55.00



Capital Plan

Along with the recommendations outlined in the Service Plan chapter, the TDP also includes recommendations for capital improvements to support the proposed service enhancements. The primary focus of these proposed capital improvements are bus stops, which can be divided into two categories: requisite stop additions or removals to support local route alignment changes in the Service Plan and prioritized enhancements to existing stops. Details on these two categories can be found below.

Bus Stop Recommendations

BUS STOP ADDITIONS AND REMOVALS

The TDP's proposed Service Plan for the SCT local routes includes several alignment changes that will bring service to new areas, requiring new bus stops, and the discontinuation of several route segments, requiring removal of existing stops.

Stop Additions

Serving new areas of the Santa Clarita Valley means new bus stops must be placed. SCT reviewed the proposed route alignments and analyzed segments without current service for future stop placement concurrent with Service Plan implementation. SCT identified stop locations for these route segments based on best-practice stop spacing of 0.25 to 0.33 miles. This balances convenient walk access with avoiding too many stops too close together (which requires buses to stop more often and reduces average speeds and increases operating and capital costs for bus stop maintenance and amenity upgrades). Importantly, the project team closely considered the local context alongside the optimal stop spacing guidelines, with attention paid to the location of intersections, traffic signals, and safe pedestrian crosswalks, along with sidewalk availability, proximity to key destinations and other factors related to roadway design, geometry, or other space constraints.

SCT has identified 47 locations requiring new stops for the proposal local network. At a minimum, these new stop locations will require a bus stop sign, lighting, and QR code sign for real-time info. These locations should be further reviewed for suitability and need for further amenities, such as shelters, as part of implementation and afterward using ridership data. Twelve of these 47 proposed stop locations already have some infrastructure or stop amenities present, which will help to reduce implementation cost. These include two locations on Golden Valley Road with shelters and benches already installed and the stop ready for activation. Others already have allocated space and roadway infrastructure completed, such as cutouts and/or concrete bus pads.

These 47 stop locations are located along the proposed version of the following routes:

- **Route 5:** Along the new segment on Golden Valley Road and Via Princessa, east of Sierra Highway, and on Carl Boyer Drive for serving Walmart. (26 stops)
- **Route 6:** At the route's proposed western terminus on Constitution Avenue at Fountain Glen Court (one stop, behind the Stevenson Ranch Plaza shopping center)
- **Route 7:** Along the new segment on Copperhill Drive between McBean Parkway and Decoro Drive, and relocation of the Kelly Johnson Parkway/W. Rye Canyon Road stop (#11384) for closer access to Walmart (eight stops)
- **Route 12:** Along the new segment on Plum Canyon Road, Golden Valley Road, and Newhall Ranch Road (12 stops)

Additionally, there are existing stops in the system that will be served by different routes under the TDP Service Plan. Those stops with signs indicating which route(s) stop there will need to be updated.

Stop Removals

Along with establishing new bus stops on route segments that are not presently served, the TDP Service Plan necessitates discontinuation of stops on route segments that will no longer be served by SCT. The removal of these stops should be coordinated around implementation of the new stops and future service planning to allow for the repurposing of shelters or other assets at new locations where feasible and to ensure there would be no plans to reactivate a stop shortly after removing assets from the stop location. At discontinued stop locations without amenities, it may be prudent to only remove the SCT sign and leave the metal signposts in place in the concrete to avoid unnecessary cost and effort in the future should service be reintroduced at that location. SCT has identified 35 stop locations that will need to be deactivated as part of full TDP Service Plan implementation. These 35 stop locations include:

- Route 4/12: Stops on the discontinued segment of Plum Canyon Road between Bouquet Canyon Road and Golden Valley Road and stops on Heller Circle and Alaminos Drive (Eight stops)
- Route 5: Stops on Sierra Highway along the discontinued segment beyond the College of the Canyons (four stops)
- Route 5/6: Stops along the discontinued segment of Stevenson Ranch Parkway between Hemingway Avenue and The Old Road (three stops), plus the Golden Valley Road/McKeon Drive stop (to be replaced by a stop on Carl Boyer Drive at Walmart)
- Route 7: Stops along the discontinued segments on Copper Hill Drive between Seco Canyon Road and McBean Parkway, Decoro Drive between McBean Parkway and Copper Hill Drive, and on Constellation Road and Kelly Johnson Parkway in the Rye Canyon Business Park (19 stops)

BUS STOP AMENITIES

As noted in the Service Evaluation chapter, SCT currently does a good job with stop locations and amenities, with 96% of average weekday riders in Spring 2023 boarding at a stop with lighting, 85% at a stop with seating, and nearly 66% at a stop with a shelter. However, there are still opportunities for improvement, and it is best practice to monitor ridership by stop relative to the location of bus stop amenities and prioritize enhancements based on ridership and other criteria. This helps to ensure the investment will benefit the greatest number of riders and reduce expenditure on stops with little or no regular ridership. Additionally, bus stop improvements were a key theme in the public and stakeholder outreach process, with riders and advocates sharing their desire for more shelters, shade, and real-time information at SCT's bus stops.

As part of the goal of improving the customer experience and elevating SCT's perception in the community, this TDP includes a prioritized list of existing bus stops that are recommended for amenity upgrades. This process began with a review of SCT's existing bus stop inventory data with the amenities present at each stop, such as signage, lighting, seating, shelters, trash receptacles, and real-time information signage or displays.

At a minimum, this TDP calls for ensuring that all active bus stops have an SCT sign, an informational QR code sign, and adequate lighting. Among SCT's 571 active bus stops that are within the Santa Clarita Valley and under local jurisdiction (i.e., not an SCT commuter route stop in the City of Los Angeles) and not proposed for discontinuation, there are as many as 50 without blue SCT bus stop signs. Similarly, there are as many as 123 stops without the QR code signs and 82 without lighting. However, some may have received signage or lighting installations since SCT's last bus stop inventory was collected and the list should be confirmed as part of Capital Plan implementation.

In a world with limited resources, not every bus stop can be improved with a full set of customer amenities. Nor should they be, where ridership is extremely low or space constraints with the bus stop footprint, sidewalk, or roadway preclude shelter placement, etc. To that end, this TDP presents a scoring method to help prioritize the allocation of bus stop improvements across the service area. This method, based on existing ridership and two other criteria, is outlined below:

- 1. Daily Average Boardings:** The average number of customers utilizing a bus stop per weekday is the primary factor in determining bus stop amenity need, as it is SCT's goal to leverage investments to benefit the greatest number of customers. While daily average boarding activity is important, other factors are considered as well. These secondary factors, described below, provide additional points to the stops meeting the criteria and contribute to the overall prioritization score for improvements.
- 2. Transfer Location**
 - a) **Major Transfer Location:** If a bus stop is within a 0.25 mile, or five-minute, walk to three or more routes, the prioritization score receives a 50% increase to the daily boarding count.
 - b) **Minor Transfer Location:** If a bus stop is within a 0.25 mile, or five-minute, walk to one or two routes, the prioritization score receives a 25% increase to the daily boarding count.
- 3. Equity Priority Location:** If a bus stop is within an equity priority Census block group, the prioritization score receives a 25% increase to the daily boarding count. For this TDP, an equity block group is defined as one where the share of minority and/or low-income residents is greater than the SCT service area average.

The prioritization score given to each bus stop is then used to create the prioritized list of bus stops for amenity improvements. For example, if a bus stop averages 50 boardings per weekday and is a major transfer location within an equity priority location, it would receive a score of 87.5 points. (50 boardings + (50 x 50%) + (50 x 25%) = 87.5 points). This methodology ensures an efficient use of capital funding and maximizes the benefits to current riders and the community as a whole, with an eye toward equity and improving mobility for Santa Clarita's most vulnerable residents.



Using these calculated prioritization scores for active, local route bus stops within Santa Clarita, and the bus stop inventory data for current amenities, SCT is able to then identify which stops should receive what amenities to achieve ridership-based amenity targets (i.e., how many stops should receive an amenity to reach a target of X % of average daily riders boarding at a stop with that amenity). The recommended targets for each amenity and the number of stops needed to achieve that target are presented in Table 26.⁶ The addition of 20 shelters would bring SCT to the proposed target of 75% of riders having a shelter at their stop and the addition of nine bus monitors would provide real-time information sources to 50% of riders. As noted in the table, many more blue SCT bus stop signs, QR code signs, and lighting additions are needed to reach the proposed 100% goal. However, as noted above, the SCT bus stop inventory data should be reviewed and updated for sign presence and lighting. Additional fieldwork and site assessment is recommended to confirm lighting presence and whether existing street lighting or lighting from nearby structures suffices for a safe and convenient wait experience.

Table 23: Bus Stop Amenity Targets and Improvement Needs

Bus Stop Amenity	Target (% of Avg. Weekday Boardings)	Current Stops with Amenity (of 571)	Current % of Weekday Boardings with Amenity (Spring '23)	Add'l Stops Needed for Target
SCT Bus Stop Signs	100%	520	72.2%	51
QR Codes	100%	448	67.6%	123
Lighting	100%	489	96.0%	82
Shelter	75%	170	65.8%	20
Seating	75%	362	85.0%	--
Trash Bins	75%	389	88.3%	--
Bus Finders or Monitors	50%	51	36.2%	9

Other Capital Improvements

BUS STOP FOR ANTELOPE VALLEY ROUTES IN SANTA CLARITA

As part of the draft Service Plan development, SCT explored discontinuation of its commuter route service to Warner Center and the western San Fernando Valley and a partnership with another transit agency to provide this connection. Antelope Valley Transit Authority's (AVTA) Route 787 provides a similar service to SCT's Route 791/796 pair, with the additional benefit of service to California State University, Northridge (CSUN). However, AVTA Route 787 does not currently stop in the Santa Clarita Valley, nor is there an existing bus stop adjacent to State Route 14 (the Antelope Valley Freeway) suitable for this purpose.

While the final TDP Service Plan does not recommend full discontinuation of SCT Routes 791/796 and only a reduction in trips, SCT should still consider a partnership with AVTA to supplement existing service and provide Santa Clarita Valley residents with a direct transit connection to CSUN. Adding a Santa Clarita stop to AVTA Route 787 would likely require either deviating AVTA service to the Old Town Newhall area or adding a new stop near SR-14.

The latter option is preferable, especially if SCT can identify grant funding opportunities to construct a stop. The

⁶ Stops were reviewed for space/right-of-way constraints, jurisdictional considerations, or other factors. Those with issues that might limit feasibility of shelter installation, for example, were skipped for the next highest scoring stop. Additionally, stops primarily used by the supplemental school routes were skipped as their ridership is not all-day or year-round, and concentrated around a few weekday trippers when school is in session.

existing park and ride at the southwest corner of Newhall Avenue and Sierra Highway is a potential candidate. If this site is pursued for improvement, SCT will need to conduct further site review, including a parking utilization analysis to understand if the lot can accommodate customers parking to ride the AVTA service. Alternatively, the nearby vacant parcel on the east side of Sierra Highway could be suitable as a park and ride or transit hub with space for additional, compatible development.

NEWHALL METROLINK STATION BUS STOP CUTOUT

In response to stakeholder feedback regarding safety and traffic congestion, the TDP proposes construction of a bus cutout at the Railroad Avenue and Market Street bus stop near the Newhall Metrolink Station (Stop ID 11898). Northbound Railroad Avenue at this location is currently configured with two, 10-foot travel lanes and a striped, bus-only zone that is slightly narrower than the travel lanes (approximately nine feet in width). Given the 8.5-foot width of SCT's Gillig and New Flyer transit buses, operators must be careful to fully clear the number two travel lane on northbound Railroad Avenue when making this stop. Even if buses are fully berthed in the bus-only lane at the stop, it provides much less clearance from passing vehicles than the 12- to 13-foot width typical of bus stop cutouts elsewhere in the SCT system.

Construction of a dedicated cutout at this stop will help to improve safety for SCT operators, riders and pedestrians, and motorists on Railroad Avenue. However, it would require construction of the sidewalk boarding island between the street and railroad station parking lot and carries significant cost. Preserving adequate sidewalk and bus stop platform width may also require reconfiguration of the passenger loading zone lane in the station parking lot, further increasing cost and project complexity. Given these challenges, this recommendation is considered a low priority and longer-term project for City consideration.

Figure 91: Railroad Avenue & Market Street Bus Stop



Source: Google Maps

Implementation Plan

Recommendations Prioritization

The recommendations presented in the 2024 TDP are not all equal in cost, benefit to riders and the community, or ease of implementation. As such, SCT developed a criteria-based weighting for each of the recommendations to provide a prioritization and guide implementation phasing. Each recommendation was considered for its benefit to current riders, advancement of equity goals, responsiveness to TDP public input, and overall benefit to the transit network, and then assigned a score on a three-point scale. Scores were then totaled to rank the recommendations for prioritization. The results are shown below in Table 23. (Note: Any route not shown in the table was not recommended for modification.)

Table 24: TDP Recommendations Prioritization Scoring

Tier/Category	Recommendation	Rider Benefits	Equity	Public Input	Network Benefit	Total Score	Rank
Local Fixed Route	Route 5 changes	3	3	3	3	12	1
Local Fixed Route	Route 12 changes	3	3	3	3	12	1
Local Fixed Route	Route 6 changes	3	3	2	3	11	3
GO! Santa Clarita	Additional Span Hours and discontinue DAR-GP	3	2	3	3	11	3
Local Fixed Route	Routes 1/2/3/7 changes	2	3	2	3	10	5
Local Fixed Route	Routes 4/14 changes	2	3	2	3	10	5
GO! Santa Clarita	Add Additional Vehicles	3	2	3	2	10	5
GO!/DAR	Comingle GO! and DAR	3	3	2	2	10	5
Capital	Bus Stops	3	2	2	3	10	5
Website/Schedule	Website/Schedule Info	3	1	3	2	9	10
Commuter Bus	Route 799/794 (DTLA) changes	1	3	2	2	8	11
Commuter Bus	Route 796/791 (Warner Center) changes	1	3	2	2	8	11
School Routes	Route 636 changes	1	2	2	2	7	13
Station Links	Needham Ranch Pkwy Shuttle	1	2	1	1	5	14

Implementation Phasing

Implementation of the Service Plan recommendations will be driven by the recommendation prioritization, available resources in the SCT operating budget, and necessary service change groupings (i.e., some fixed route changes are intertwined and must be implemented concurrently to preserve coverage or network usefulness). A preliminary implementation phasing summary is presented in Table 24, with key notes including ridership impact estimates for the fixed route changes. Phase 1 recommendations include the fixed route changes, to be implemented over several service changes, as well as bus stop improvements and GO! span improvements. Phase 2 recommendations are lower priority due to cost or other factors, while Phase 3 and 4 recommendations are lowest priority and/or aspirational goals for long-term service improvements. It is recommended that SCT review and update this phasing alongside any projected budget changes and continue public engagement and comment opportunities through implementation to ensure service changes meet community mobility needs and expectations.

Table 25: TDP Service Plan Preliminary Implementation Phasing

Tier/Category	Recommendation	Phase	Notes
Local Fixed Route	Route 4/14 and Route 12 Changes	1	» Route 12 improvement is a high priority » Need to implement Route 12 change concurrently with Route 14 discontinuation to maintain SCV Senior Center and Plum Canyon area service » Route 14 discontinuation should be current with Route 4 change – new schedule, signage/info for Route 4 » Ridership Impact: Estimated growth of 11.4% in weekly ridership above Spring 2023 levels for Routes 12 and 14 improvements.
Local Fixed Route	Route 5/6 change (and Route 7 change)	1	» Adding Golden Valley Rd service is a high priority » Need to implement Routes 5 and 6 changes concurrently » With removal of Route 5/6 coverage in Stevenson Ranch, the Route 7 change may need to happen at the same service change, but this requires further review » Alternatively, Route 6 could keep the existing Stevenson Ranch alignment until Route 7 could be implemented (may increase the operating cost for Route 6 in the interim) » Ridership Impact: Estimated growth of 8.1% in weekly ridership above Spring 2023 levels for Routes 5 and 6 improvements.
Local Fixed Route	Route 1/2 and Route 3/7 Changes	1	» Improving Route 3 and 7 frequencies to enhance route attractiveness are medium priorities » Route 2 change needs to occur concurrently with 3/7 changes to preserve FivePoint coverage » With Route 2 change, need updated schedule for Route 1 at the same service change » Ridership Impact: Estimated growth of 9.1% in weekly ridership above Spring 2023 levels for Routes 1, 2, 3, and 7 improvements.
Commuter Bus	Route 799/794 (DTLA)	1	» Implement concurrently with first local service change to offset cost increase » Ridership Impact: Estimated decrease of 7.5% in weekly ridership below Spring 2023 levels for Route 799/794.

Tier/Category	Recommendation	Phase	Notes
Commuter Bus	Route 796/791 (Warner Center)	1	» Implement concurrently with first local service change to offset cost increase » Ridership Impact: Estimated decrease of 6.7% in weekly ridership below Spring 2023 levels for Route 796/791.
Capital	Bus Stop Improvements	1	» Bus stop additions/removals (e.g., activating stops on Golden Valley Rd for proposed Route 5) need to be concurrent with local fixed route changes » Amenity improvements to existing stops to align with capital budget
School Routes	Route 636	1	» Near-term priority (negligible, if any, cost impact) » Implement in August 2025 for 2025-2026 school year (or in February 2025, if feasible)
GO! Santa Clarita	Add Additional Span Hours and discontinue DAR-GP	1	» First priority for GO! » Later hours aligns with public input and makes service more attractive overall » Less expensive than additional all-day vehicles, and helps to advance goal of streamlining/comingling demand response and microtransit services by eliminating DAR-GP
Website/Schedule	Website/Schedule Info	1 or 2	» Implement based on staff availability/resources
GO!/DAR	Comingle GO! and DAR	2	» Priority for advancing system simplification/streamlining goal but need to fully understand cost implications » Consider in context of contract expirations and timeline
GO! Santa Clarita	Add Additional Vehicles	2 or 3	» Lower priority given high cost » Will increase GO! ridership and make service more attractive, but comes at higher cost per rider than fixed route
Station Links	Needham Ranch Pkwy Shuttle	3	» Lower priority » Recommend identifying outside funding source (employers, grant funding, or other opportunity); city resources should be invested in core transit network
Commuter Bus	Route 757 (NoHo)	4	» Long-term goal: Add additional frequency (at least every 30 minutes) and span » Near-term: High priority to align schedule with local routes pulse at MRTC and amend public timetable to show starting and ending at NoHo (No cost impact)
Local Fixed Route	All routes	4	» Long-term goal: improve frequency on all local routes to 30-min or better, with 15-min service on highest-ridership routes

Financial Impacts

Implementation of the TDP recommendations requires careful consideration of SCT’s forecasted budget and available resources and the cost impacts of the service changes. SCT has developed preliminary projections of the resource requirements for the fixed route and GO! changes recommended in this plan. As shown below in Table 25, the local route improvements combined with the commuter route reductions offset represent a 21.7% increase in weekly revenue hours (20.5% without the Needham Ranch Parkway Shuttle). As noted previously, the full set of GO! recommendations would add a significant increase to the current microtransit revenue hours and increase the overall revenue hour change to a 30.8% increase on a weekly basis. Outside of these service changes, other operating cost increases may result from additional staffing needs for the website and schedule information improvements, as well as ongoing software costs for a new comingled paratransit/microtransit dispatch software. With commingling, the cost allocation for DAR and GO! service will need to be reconsidered under a future operating contract.

The capital plan discussed in the following section also brings impacts to SCT’s capital budget, with the addition and removal of bus stop locations and amenity upgrades.

Table 26: Weekly Revenue Hour and Mile Projections

Route	Weekly Revenue Hours		Weekly Revenue Miles		Weekly Change	
	Current	Proposed	Current	Proposed	Current	Proposed
1 + 3	230	216	3,856	3,803	-6.1%	-1.4%
2	134	192	2,429	2,931	43.8%	20.7%
4	176	384	2,565	5,422	118.5%	111.4%
5	320	212	3,857	3,106	-33.8%	-19.5%
6	320	600	6,122	8,346	87.3%	36.3%
7	99	206	1,481	2,565	108.4%	73.2%
12	445	648	7,060	9,078	45.5%	28.6%
14	176	-	2,160	-	-100.0%	-100.0%
501	22	22	267	267	0.0%	0.0%
502	26	26	328	328	0.0%	0.0%
503 (New: Needham Ranch Pkwy Shuttle)	-	30	-	306	-	-
Local/Station Links Subtotal	1,947	2,535	30,123	36,153	30.2%	20.0%
757 - NoHo	162	162	5,141	5,141	0.0%	0.0%
796 - Warner Center	43	43	963	963	0.0%	0.0%
791 - Warner Center (Reverse)	34	34	996	996	0.0%	0.0%
796/791 Reductions	-	(25)	-	(654)		
797 - UCLA	91	91	1,355	1,355	0.0%	0.0%
792 - UCLA (Reverse)	39	39	1,108	1,108	0.0%	0.0%
799 - DTLA	87	87	2,113	2,113	0.0%	0.0%
794 - DTLA (Reverse)	17	17	609	609	0.0%	0.0%
799/794 Reductions	-	(37)	-	(1,024)		
Commuter Subtotal	474	411	12,285	10,607	-13.2%	-13.7%
Fixed Route Total	2,421	2,946	42,407	46,759	21.7%	10.3%

Route	Weekly Revenue Hours		Weekly Revenue Miles		Weekly Change	
	Current	Proposed	Current	Proposed	Current	Proposed
GO! Santa Clarita - Existing	388	388				
GO! Santa Clarita - Add'l Span	-	44				
GO! Santa Clarita - Add'l Vehicles	-	296				
GO! Santa Clarita Subtotal	388	728				
Fixed Route + GO! Total	2,809	3,674	42,407	46,759	30.8%	10.3%

Next Steps

The preceding Transportation Development Plan for the City of Santa Clarita Transit builds on the 2019 TDP and is the culmination of an extensive outreach, engagement, and analysis process. This plan reflects recent changes and developments in the Santa Clarita Valley and is responsive to post-COVID changes in travel demand and commute patterns and an evolving landscape of public mobility products and technologies. While it will serve as a roadmap for the City's transit investments over the next 10 years, it is also intended to be a living document that can be updated in response to changes in community conditions, transit ridership, or funding. As SCT identifies available funding and timelines for implementing the proposed service changes, it will be critical for the City to make all necessary preparations in advance and anticipate key milestones. Key focus areas for plan implementation include the following:

Pre-Implementation

- Establish timeline for implementation around established service change/operator shakeup intervals
- Develop new service schedules (including public timetables, vehicle blocking and operator runcuts)
- Identify and procure software vendor for commingling Dial-a-Ride and GO! and strengthening both services
- Coordinate with the operating and maintenance (O&M) contractor (currently MV Transportation) regarding any anticipated changes in O&M staffing relative to the proposed service levels
- Implement all necessary bus stop additions, removals, or relocations
- Conduct public outreach and any requisite final public hearings for the proposed service changes
- Create promotional/informational updates for the service changes, including print materials and website/social media updates

Post-Implementation

- In the initial days after a major service change, consider deploying customer ambassadors on certain routes and/or at key transfer points to familiarize riders with the changes and provide wayfinding/trip-planning support
- Monitor ridership and customer feedback for success (consider post-implementation rider survey or rider focus groups)
- Monitor OTP and other service metrics to ensure service efficiency and reliability; provide feedback to Operations as needed or make minor adjustments to route running times
- Make route adjustments in future service changes as needed to ensure service is serving customers effectively and using resourcing efficiently
- Focus on advancing City goals for transit and monitor progress; develop an updated TDP for 2029