



# The State of Transit in Southern Arizona

## **AzTA Conference 2025**

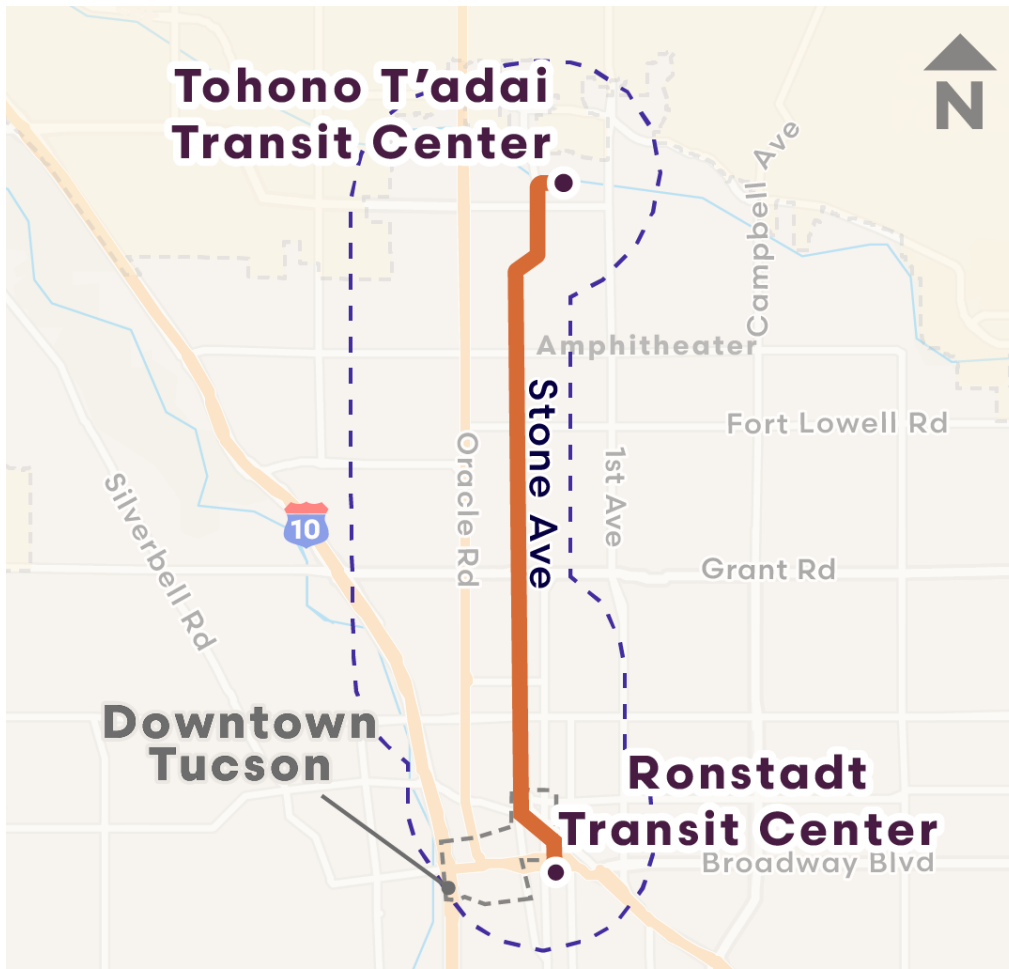




# What's Happening in Southern Arizona?

- Bus Rapid Transit
- Fare Free Update
- 100% Alternative Fuel Bus Fleet

# Tucson Rapid Transit *Stone Ave Segment*



## LEGEND

### Potential Corridors

- Stone Ave
- Tucson

### Study Area

- BRT Study Area

- ✓ Community support
- ✓ Travel time savings
- ✓ More direct connection to destinations
- ✓ More transformative for multimodal safety
- ✓ Lower traffic volumes
  - ✓ Potentially meets Tucson Road Re-Design (Diet) Guidelines
- ✓ Higher reinvestment potential\*

# Five Years Fare Free

- **Increased Ridership Across the System**
  - Sun Tran FY24: 9M plus
  - Sun Van FY24: 289K
  - Sun Link FY24: 1M plus
- **Keeping Southern Arizonans Moving**
- **Funding Challenges**
  - \$10-\$12M in farebox revenue
  - Overall Budget of \$100M plus





# Bus Fleet Transition

- **2023 Low/No Grant:**
  - \$21.4M to replace final 39 diesel buses with CNG
  - Fleet mix when completed will be 165 CNG buses and 20 battery electric buses
- **New Compressed Natural Gas Fuel Station at Northwest Yard:**
  - \$12M capital cost (FTA grant off-set)
  - \$0.80 per gallon fuel cost for CNG buses
  - 1.6M gallons of fuel per year
- **New Electric Charging Infrastructure:**
  - Lower fuel cost than diesel
  - Opening in CY2026





*Getting you where you want to go*



# Strategic Plan FY25 Scorecard

Strategic Plan	Key Performance Indicator	FY25 Jul-Dec	FY25 Goal
Service Excellence	<b>On-time performance</b> <b>Bus</b> <b>Paratransit</b> <b>GO!</b>	<b>82%</b> <b>88%</b> <b>92%</b>	95%
Stewardship of Resources	<b>Mountain Line's emissions</b>	<b>2,864</b> tons GHG	2,841
Investing in Mountain Line Workforce	<b>Employee engagement score</b>	<b>76%</b>	77%
Enhanced Safety Culture	<b>Vehicle accidents that were preventable</b>	<b>51%</b>	40%
Community Engagement	<b>Community value of Mountain Line services</b>	<b>93.1%</b> (FY19)	93.1% (FY26)
Financial Health	<b>Non-federal dollars spent on Operations</b>	<b>68%</b>	67%

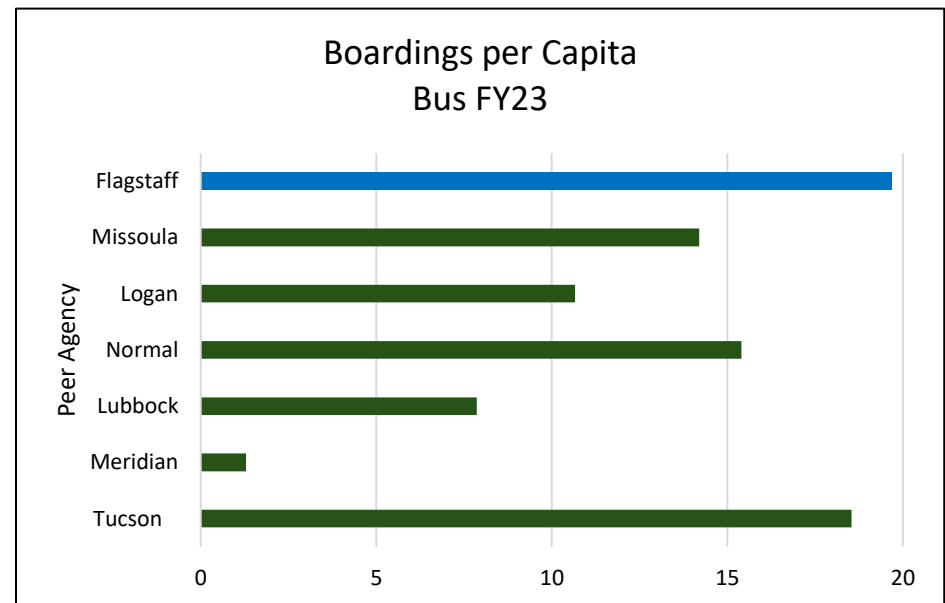
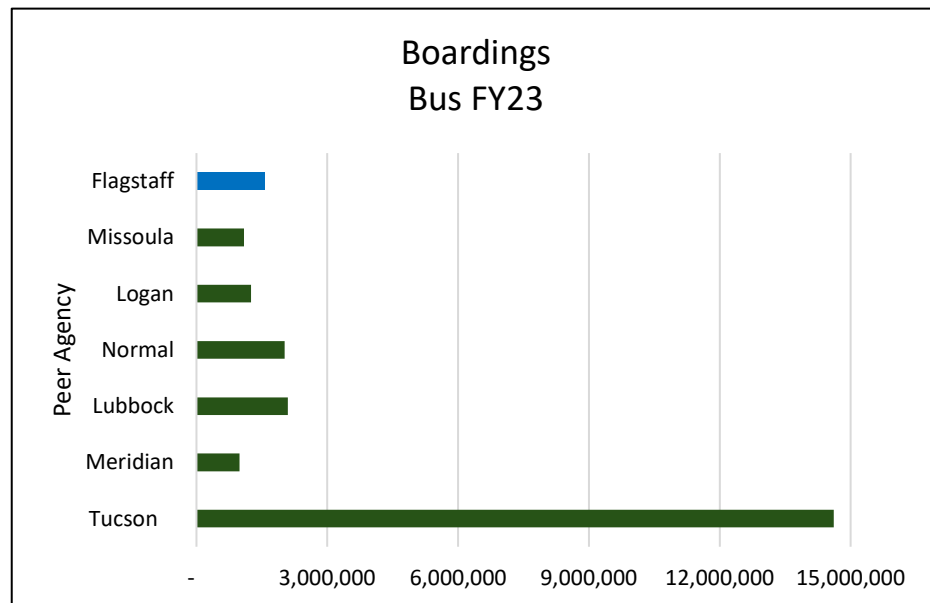
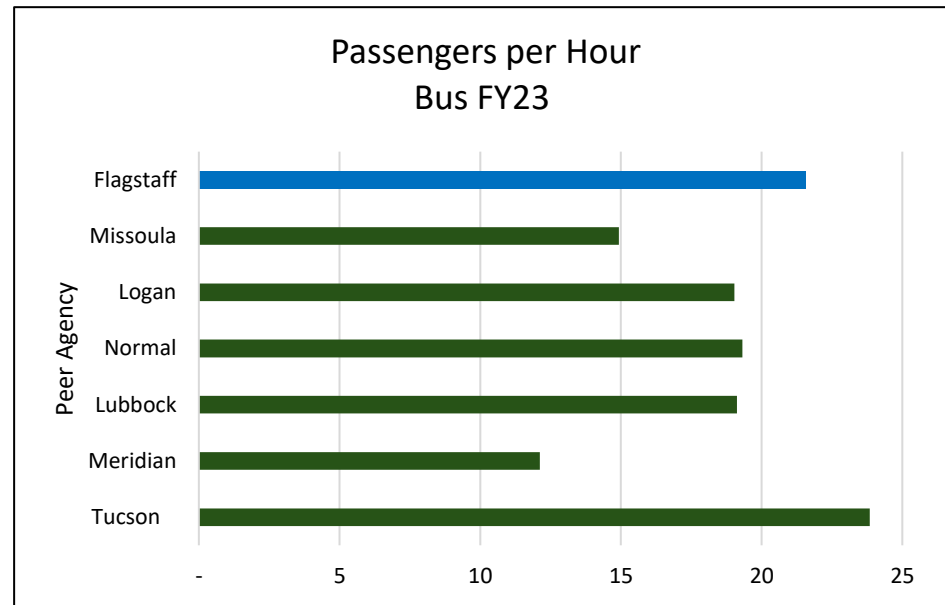
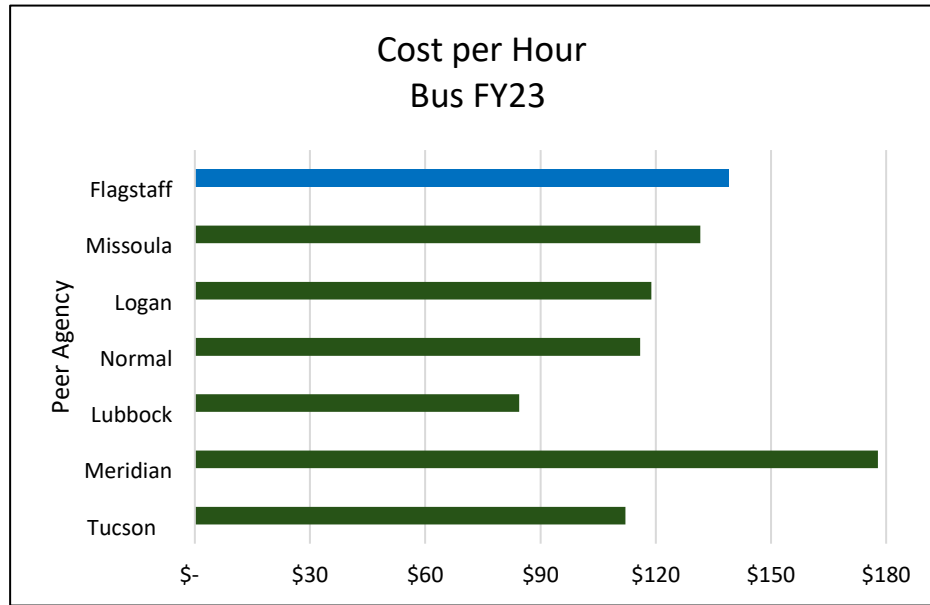
Green indicates we met our goal.

# Financial and Service Performance Benchmarks

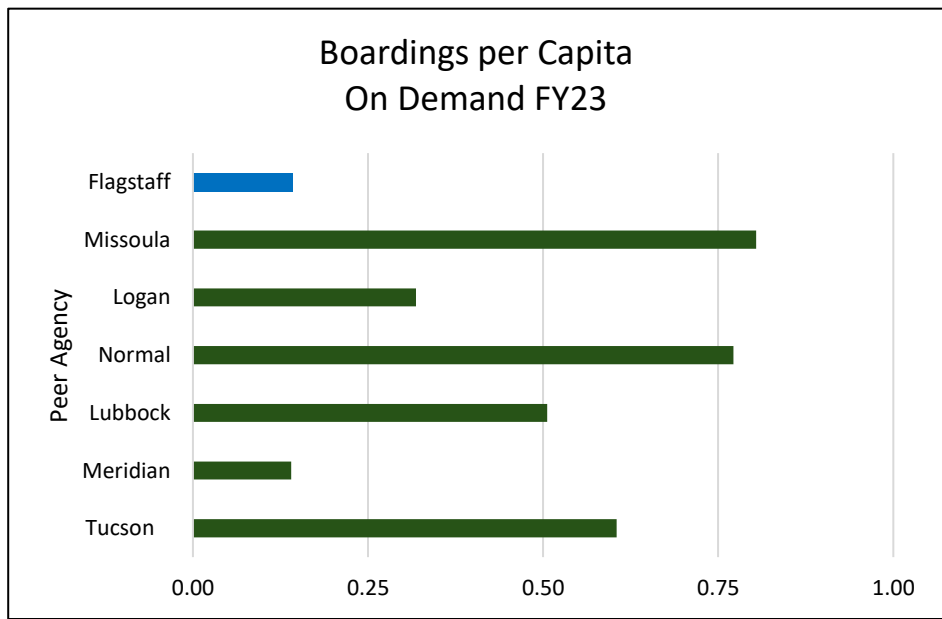
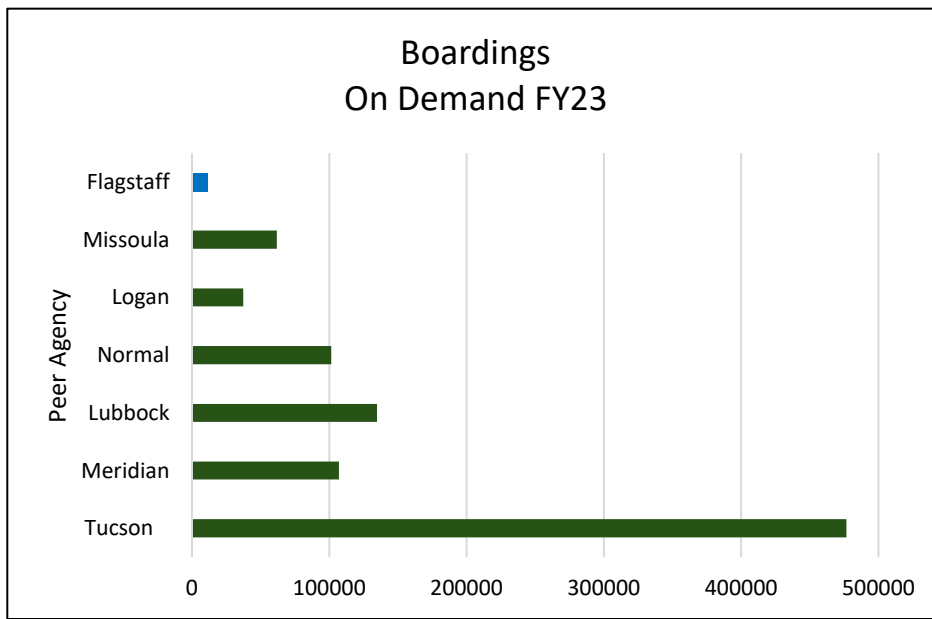
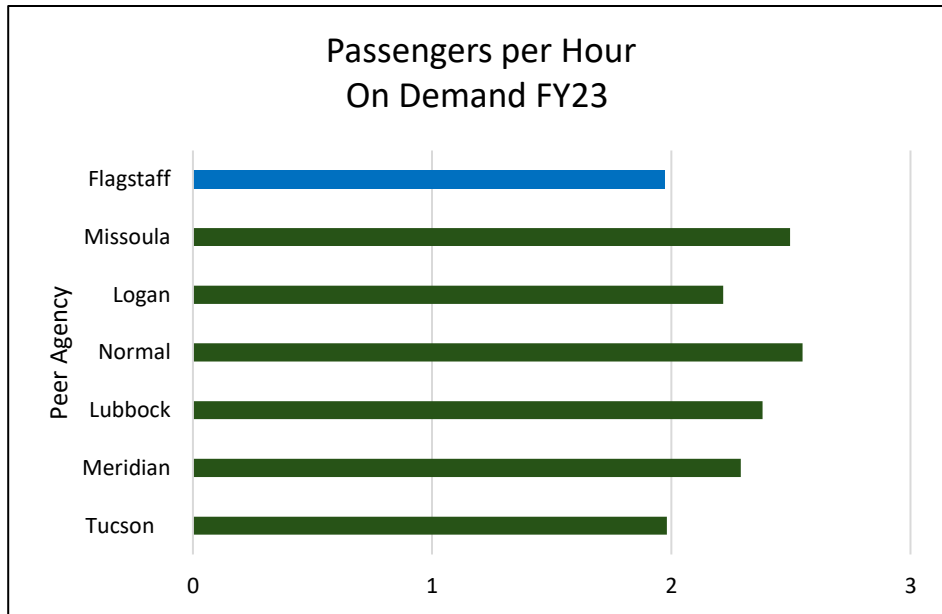
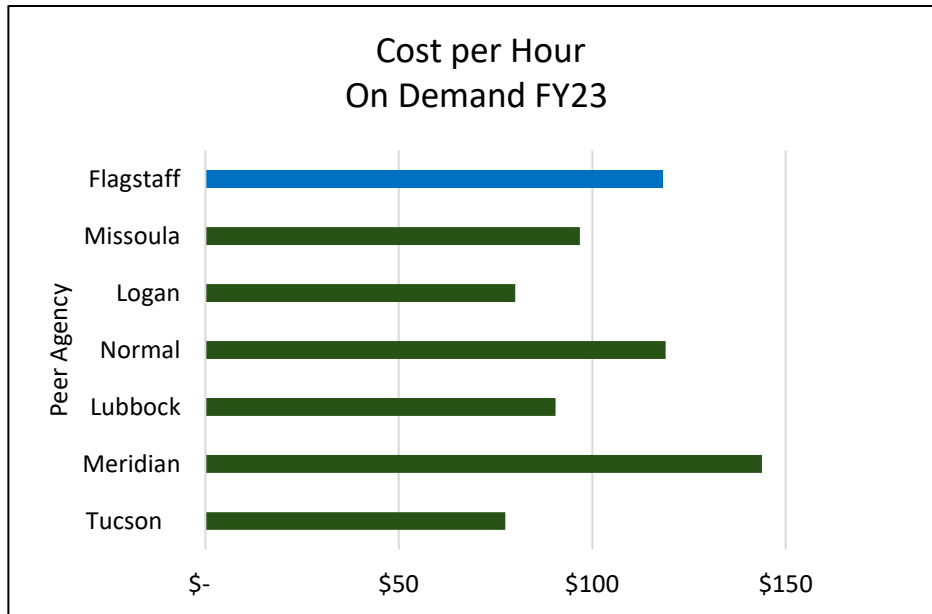
	FY2023 Actual	FY2024 Actual	FY2025 July-Dec Actual	FY2025 Goal
<b><u>Fixed Route - Bus</u></b>				
Cost per Passenger	\$ 6.36	\$ 6.53	\$ 5.99	\$ 6.02
Total Trips	1,569,968	1,630,830	921,351	2,009,103
<b><u>Demand Response - Paratransit</u></b>				
Cost per Trip	\$ 53.97	\$ 75.57	\$ 58.20	\$ 52.08
Total Trips	11,362	11,191	6,957	15,186
<b><u>Demand Response - Microtransit</u></b>				
Cost per Trip	\$ 28.19	\$ 16.94	\$ 17.99	\$ 12.42
Total Trips	1,306	1,019	1,161	1,300
<b><u>Taxi Program - City</u></b>				
Cost per Trip	\$ 19.60	\$ 19.03	\$ 16.80	\$ 14.18
Total Trips/Vouchers	6,383	8,404	4,145	8,500
<b><u>Taxi Program - County</u></b>				
Cost per Trip	\$ 28.63	\$ 33.03	\$ 33.02	\$ 33.39
Total Trips/Vouchers	454	437	251	450
<b><u>Vanpool Program - County</u></b>				
Cost per Trip	\$ 3.63	\$ 2.91	\$ 2.02	\$ 4.17
Total Trips	14,972	19,309	12,003	25,000



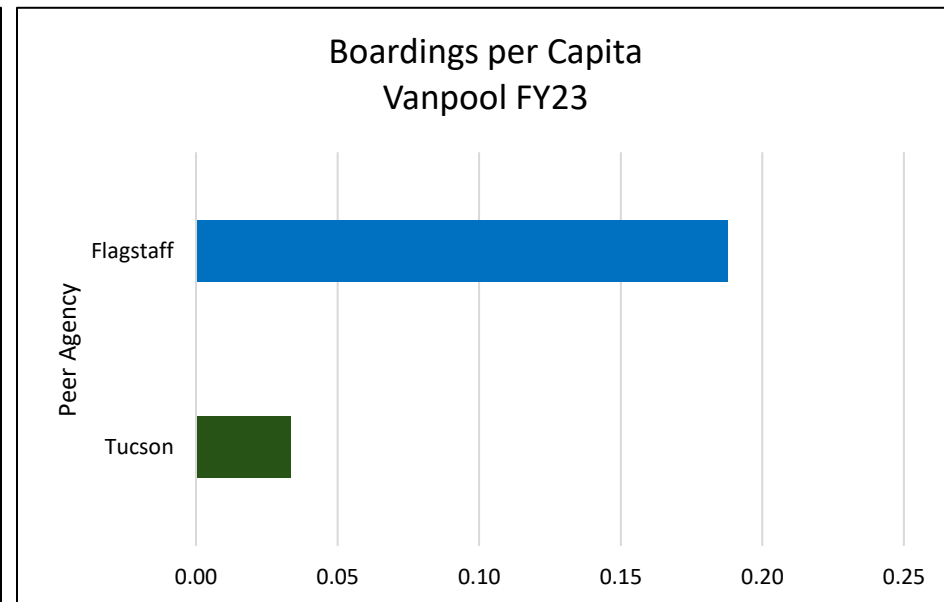
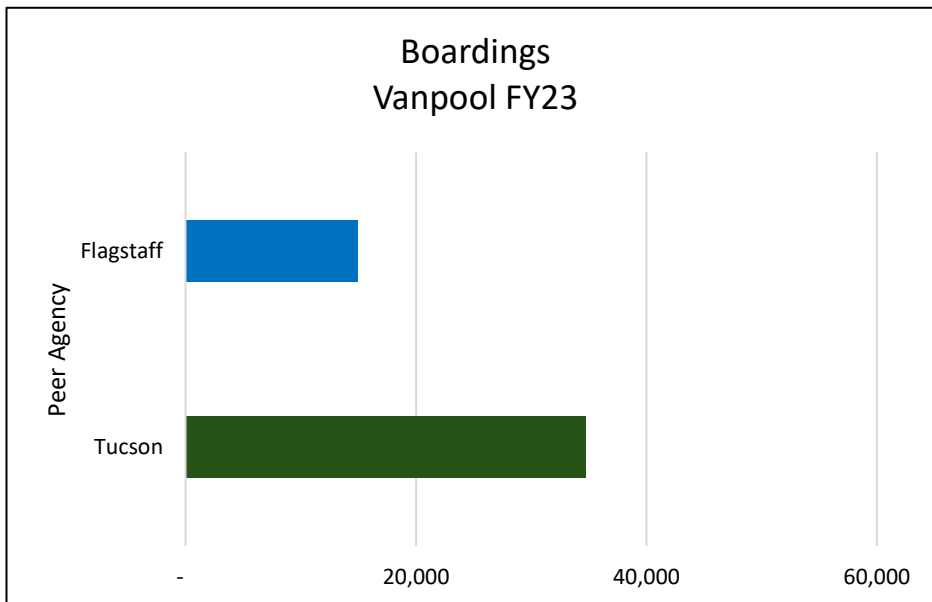
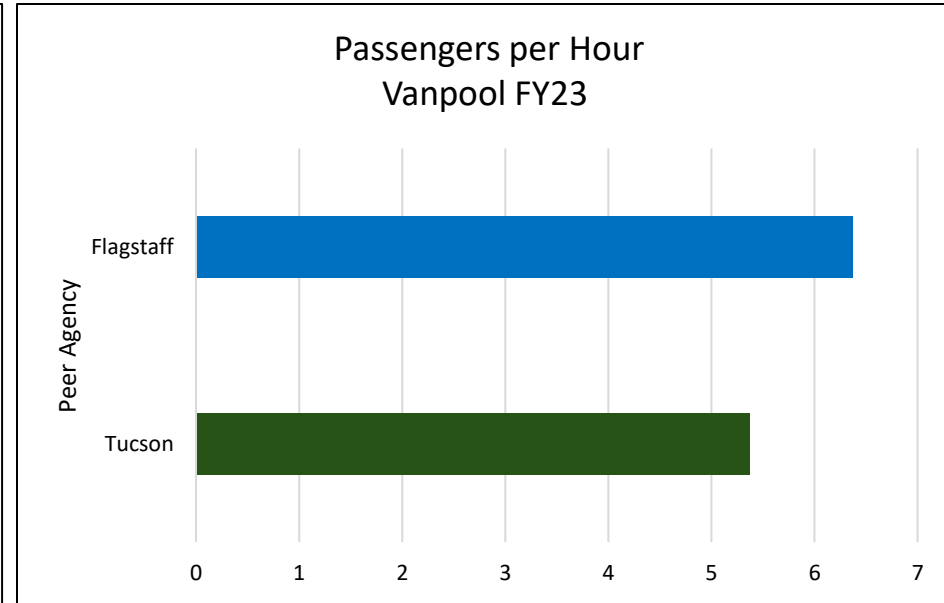
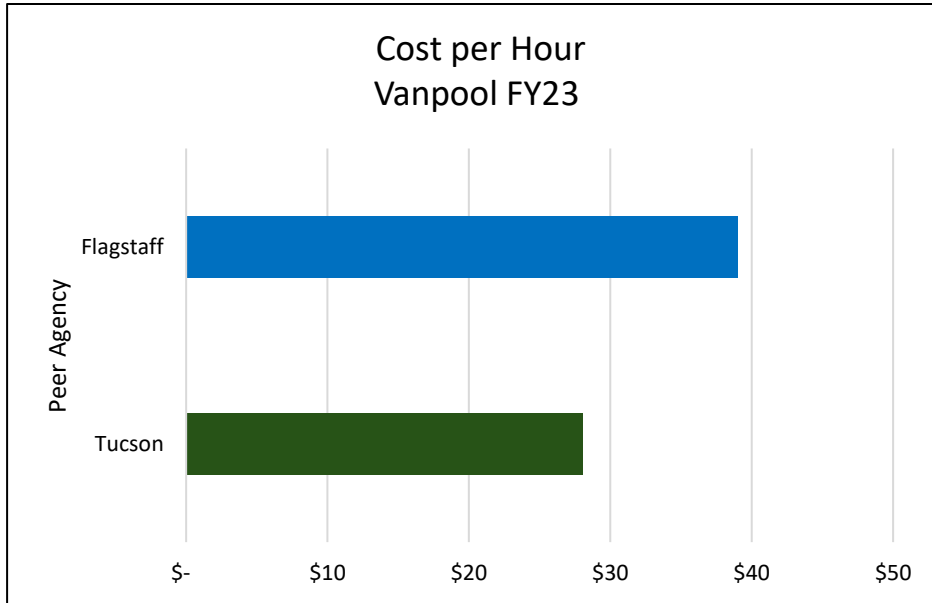
# Peer Agency – Bus



# Peer Agency – On Demand



# Peer Agency – Vanpool



# TRANSIT-ION

AzTA 38<sup>th</sup> Annual  
Statewide Transit Conference  
April 15, 2025





# HISTORY OF REGIONAL TRANSIT FUNDING POLICY

## 2003 Regional Transportation Plan



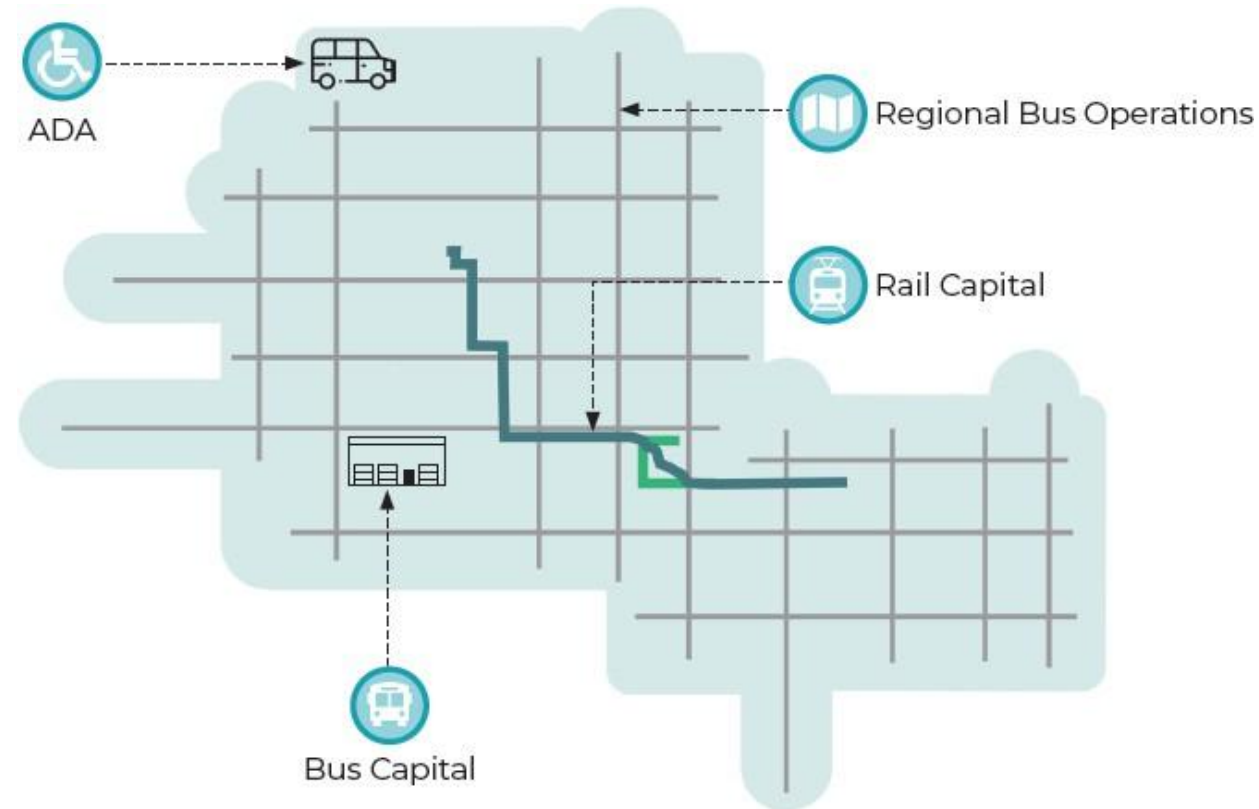
The 2003 RTP, the basis for Prop 400, initially took a **long-range plan-based approach**, with regional funding identified for regional bus operations and capital, and rail capital investments.



Prior to Prop 400, transit service varied greatly throughout the region, due in large part to **unevenness in local funding** from jurisdiction to jurisdiction.

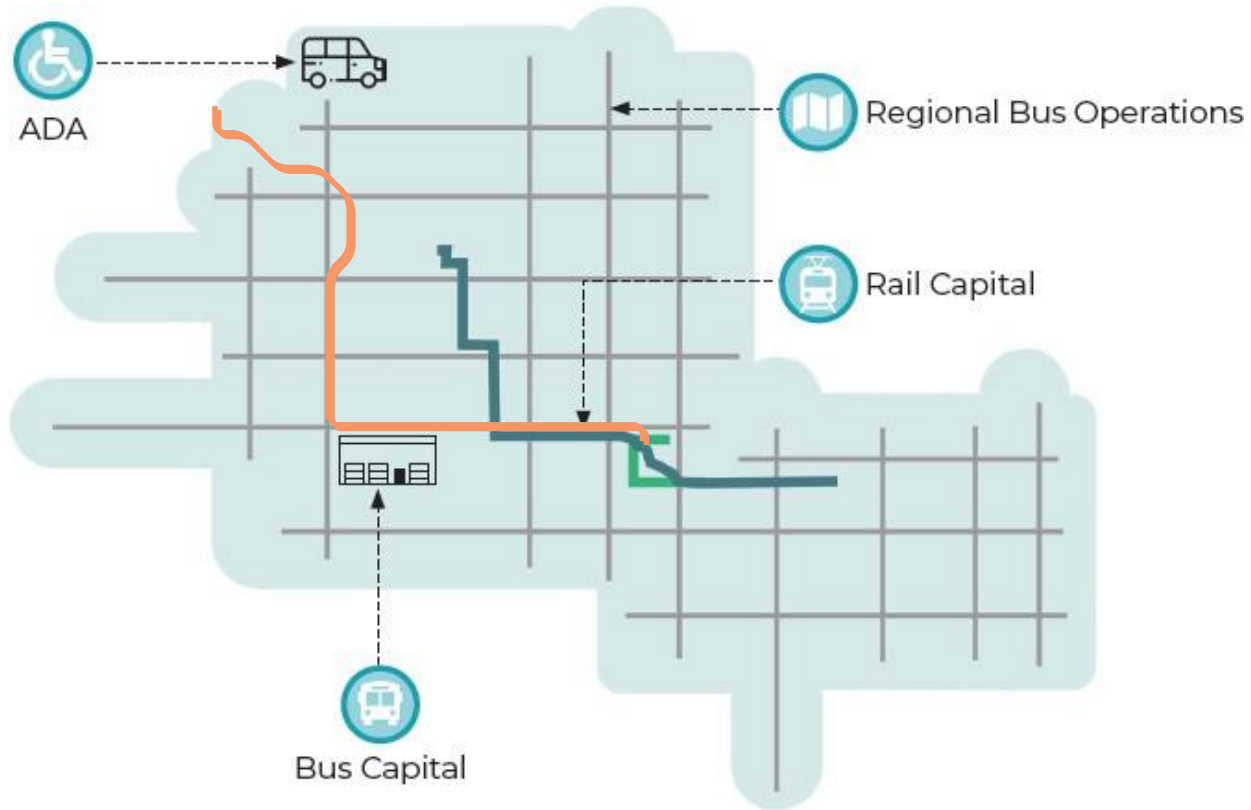


The RTP sought to remedy this by committing regional funding to enable a **consistent level of service for key routes** — known as “supergrid routes” — across the region.



# FIXED ALLOCATION APPROACH TO REGIONAL TRANSIT FUNDING

## Fixed Allocation-Based Approach



1

The significant cuts caused by the recession forced a shift to **the fixed allocation-based funding approach**.

2

Under this approach, allocations were **fixed at calculated shares** for regional fixed route, express, and paratransit bus services.

3

While this model provided financial stability, its static nature **did not allow the region to respond to changes in transit demand**.

4

The inherent **incentivization of locally-focused service** rather than regionally-focused service.

# SUMMARY

## EVOLUTION OF REGIONAL TRANSIT FUNDING POLICY



Initially under proposition 400, the TLCP took a **plan-based funding approach**



Shifted to a **fixed allocation-based funding approach**, following the Great Recession

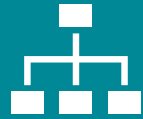


The Proposition 479 TLCP considers a **new framework** for regional transit funding policy

# THE PROP 479 TLCP



Policymakers intentionally focused on transit funding policy during the RSTIIP development.



Direction provided to explore a more flexible concept that encourages investment to enhance performance.



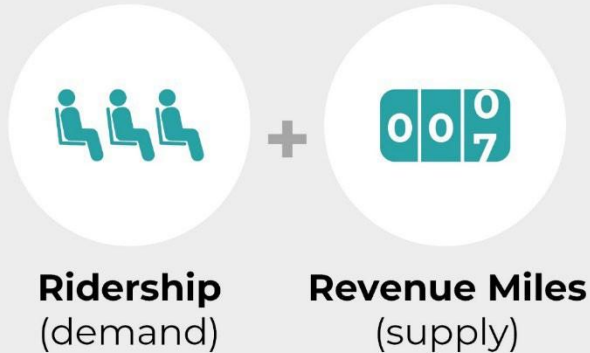
The new multifaceted framework centers on a formula-based approach for distributing bus operation funds.



# BUS TRANSIT OPERATING ASSISTANCE

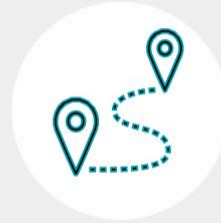
*Regional funding would no longer be tied to specific routes but focused on services that comprise the backbone of the regional fixed route transit network.*

## FORMULA



Incentivized to allocate funding to productive and efficient service.

## BASELINE ("Floor")



Maintain regionally funded fixed route service at Prop 400 levels.\*

To minimize uncertainty, a funding base also is provided.

## SEED



Four-year emerging market pilot funding program.

Funding available for new routes to serve emerging markets.

# REGIONAL SERVICES

*Jurisdictions receiving bus operating assistance will not be required to fund regional services from the allocation of operating assistance.*

## EXPRESS BUS



Express (commuter) bus service to be funded through a regional decision-making process.

## ADA PARATRANSIT



Regional ADA funding applied to the federal definition of ADA service.

## REGIONAL TRANSIT OPERATIONS SUPPORT



Activities supporting regional transit operations, including regional safety and security and the regional call center.

Ensures prioritization of and consistency in the provision of truly regional services that span multiple jurisdictions.

[pstone@azmag.gov](mailto:pstone@azmag.gov)

