

**Omnitrans
2025 - 2026 Federal Legislative Platform**

Omnitrans was established in 1976 through a joint powers agreement (JPA) between the County of San Bernardino and fifteen cities in the San Bernardino Valley region: Chino, Chino Hills, Colton, Fontana, Grand Terrace, Highland, Loma Linda, Montclair, Ontario, Rancho Cucamonga, Redlands, Rialto, and San Bernardino. The joint powers agreement implemented a unified transportation authority to serve all parties and to be governed by a 19-member Board of Directors comprised of representatives from 15 cities and four county supervisorial districts.

Omnitrans service area is situated in the southwestern, most densely populated portion of San Bernardino County, covering approximately 480 square miles with a population of over 1.5 million residents. The following facts describe the size, scope and characteristics of the transit services operated by Omnitrans:

- Budget for fiscal year (FY) 25 is balanced at \$111.9 million for operating and \$37.6 million for capital.
- The Omnitrans transit system network is comprised of a family of services including Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), local and express fixed route service, community circulators and first and last mile shuttles, on-demand micro-transit services, and complementary paratransit services as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Services are operated from three agency-owned facilities using a fleet of approximately 250 vehicles.
- Services connect to Riverside and Los Angeles counties and serve 10 Metrolink commuter rail stations and the Ontario International Airport, and the future Brightline West rail connection to Las Vegas.
- During 2024, Omnitrans delivered more than 7 million passenger trips on the fixed route system.

Omnitrans is focused on connecting the communities it serves by providing high quality transit options to support the regional economy and increasing access to opportunity. Additionally, Omnitrans is a large employer in the region with approximately 600 employees. The majority of these are represented by either the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) or the International Brotherhood of Teamsters.

This legislative platform serves as the guiding document to proactively engage in policy and legislative initiatives that will enable Omnitrans to deliver service, projects and programs that meet the needs of the region. This document also guides staff and Omnitrans advocates in federal legislative, regulatory, and administrative matters that are anticipated to be addressed in the upcoming congressional session.

Omnitrans will continue to partner with public and private sector entities to support common objectives in Washington, DC, foster the unity of the Southern California region and support overall transit needs nationally.

Funding

Omnitrans' highest priorities are ensuring long-term funding stability and growth to increase transit ridership, encourage mode shift, support the economy and improve the environment. Omnitrans and its partners will seek the highest level of federal transportation dollars for California, San Bernardino County, and Omnitrans for transit or transit-supportive projects, programs, and initiatives.

Omnitrans Supports Efforts To:

- Maximize, protect and secure new federal funding for transit operations and capital projects.
- Ensure that local agencies and jurisdictions, particularly communities that have been historically underserved and disadvantaged, have equal access to federal investment.
- Assure that authorized funding levels and advanced appropriations provided in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) are maintained to meet critical needs throughout San Bernardino County.
- Encourage federal funding programs that reward self-help counties.
- Ensure that planning and project selection for Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funds is done at the local level, based on local priorities.
- Provide for more predictable federal funding streams through greater emphasis on formula programs rather than competitive discretionary programs.
- Include Omnitrans input on the development of any Surface Transportation reauthorization legislation.
- Protect funding sources for congestion relief and pollution reduction.
- Assure that legislation and regulations impose no unfunded mandates on transit agencies.
- Increase funding for Transit Oriented Development (TOD).
- Increase federal investment in zero-emission technologies.
- Simplify the existing competitive grant programs with consideration of multi-year programming and less complex and expensive application requirements.
- Increase Congressionally Directed Spending and Community Project Funding that supports transit.

Omnitrans Opposes Efforts To:

- Redirect, reduce, or eliminate existing transportation funding programs.
- Introduce legislative and regulatory measures which impede transit agencies' ability to meet public mobility needs.

Transit

Omnitrans seeks to expand transit programs to enhance sustainability for San Bernardino County communities and stakeholders by focusing on mobility options that strengthen the economy and provide access to opportunities.

Omnitrans Supports Efforts To:

- Develop reforms that will accelerate project procurement, promote flexibility and innovation.

- Streamline federal reporting/monitoring requirements to reduce project delivery times.
- Encourage Department of Transportation (DOT) Agencies to promote the use of and support the implementation of zero-emission technologies to power transit.
- Increase incentives for transit agencies that utilize alternative fuels.
- Allow the acquisition of land for public transit operations and maintenance facilities prior to the approval of a National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) document.
- Allow a waiver of “under the hood” requirement on the Commercial Driver’s License test for public transit agency bus operators. (
- Provide for the replacement of aging alternative fuel fleets and the necessary energy infrastructure to support the conversion mandates.
- Allow flexibility in the application of the “spare ratio” requirement for agencies transitioning to zero-emission technologies.
- Advocate for the creation of exemptions to the Federal Buy America and fleet useful life requirements.
- Streamline and provide greater flexibility of Federal Buy America requirements including increased clarification on market availability and technical feasibility of Buy America requirements to prevent any unintended disruption to transit projects and programs.
- Ensure Omnitrans projects and programs that could be associated with 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games in Southern California are eligible for funding assistance, project delivery tools, and regulatory relief.

Transit System Safety

Improving safety perception is critical to increasing transit ridership.

Omnitrans Supports Efforts To:

- Enhance the safety and security of public transit employees and customers onboard vehicles and at transit facilities.
- Address transit operator and passenger safety and security concerns related to inappropriate behavior on transit vehicles and at stations; address the impact of unhoused persons on transit vehicles and stations.

Employment Issues

Omnitrans is a large employer in the region, with approximately 600 employees. Approximately 80% are represented by either the Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1704 or the Teamsters Union Local 166. The safety and well-being of Omnitrans employees is a top priority.

Omnitrans Supports Efforts To:

- Enhance and provide funding for the safety and security of public transit employees and customers onboard vehicles and at transit facilities.
- Create and fund programs that provide training or retraining to individuals to expand the workforce ready to support zero-emissions vehicle deployments.

- Administratively resolve issues with the Department of Labor certifying federal grants to California transit agency recipients related to California Public Employees' Pension Reform Act (PEPRA) of 2013.

Omnitrans Opposes Efforts To:

- Add unfunded mandates related to the expansion of protected sick leaves.

Community Value

Omnitrans provides public transit to 15 cities and several unincorporated areas of San Bernardino County. The provision of successful public transit directly impacts the ongoing success and future development of the region.

Omnitrans Supports Efforts To:

- Encourage federal programs that support the advancement of equity in communities throughout San Bernardino County.
- Increase programs and resources to implement housing near transportation and transit corridors in San Bernardino County.
- Increase the region's resiliency against climate-related hazards.
- Support programs that provide training or retraining to individuals to expand the workforce ready to support zero-emissions vehicle deployments.