



Regional Coordination Plan 2015



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Introduction to SWART

The Southwest Area Regional Transit District (SWART) is the provider of transportation services in the southwest Texas region. In conjunction with Del Rio Transit (serving the County of Val Verde and City of Del Rio), SWART serves the nine-county Middle Rio Grande Valley area. In recent years, economic, political, and infrastructural conditions have challenged SWART's funding, service quality, and staff retention.

SWART Mission Statement

SWART's mission is to provide safe, accessible, affordable, and seamless transportation services to enhance the quality of life and promote community and economic development in the southwest Texas region.

Public Transit Services

SWART strives to provide safe and reliable transit services to the general public for Dimmit, Edwards, Kinney, La Salle, Maverick, Real, Uvalde, and Zavala Counties. SWART operates a demand-response service within eight of the nine counties. It also provides intercity services within its entire nine-county district and in some cities outside the district, including San Antonio and Laredo. SWART accepts requests for demand-response service as few as one business day prior to the desired trip date, or up to 60 days in advance. Fares vary by pick-up location, drop-off location, and time of day.

The agency has a fleet of 62 vehicles and an annual budget of approximately \$3.5 million. It is funded by federal Section 5310 and 5311 programs, local counties, planning grants from the State of Texas, the Medicaid Transportation Program, transit fares, and other local match opportunities.

Regional Goals Summary

SWART aims to enhance transit services to better address the need for public transportation in the area. SWART's main goal is "to improve efficiency of service and strengthen economic development throughout the region through coordination, technological improvements, and investment."¹

The objectives required to achieve SWART's goals are divided into three categories:

- Coordination.
- Training and technology.
- Investment.

Each group of objectives is discussed in this section.

Increase Coordination

SWART is currently working to improve coordination with local schools, nutrition centers, medical facilities, and other governmental organizations in the region. Coordination with businesses can also lead to transportation solutions for workers. The following objectives outline specific coordination efforts that SWART has initiated or plans to initiate:

¹ The main goal is quoted from SWART's webpage: <http://paseoswart.org>

- Expand weekday service.
- Establish regularly scheduled intercity services, especially into Uvalde for students and into Kerrville for veterans.
- Increase coordination among transportation providers and human service agencies.
- Coordinate with Lucky Eagle Casino, Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities (MHDD) centers, Eagle Pass medical facilities, and Eagle Ford Shale companies.

Improve Training and Technology

SWART works to maintain high technological standards and capabilities both on agency vehicles and at site locations. SWART has the follow objectives:

- Continue the Travel Training and Travel Ambassador Program.
- Update and improve current bus technology to adhere to the current state of the practice.
- Facilitate training on diverse professional development subjects, including (but not limited to) management, finance, staff supervision, dispatching, scheduling, and vehicle maintenance.

Increase Investment

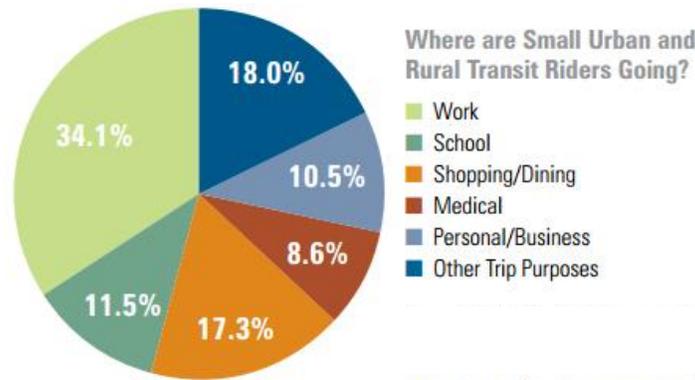
Strategic partnerships and efforts can help SWART alleviate future financial constraints and improve service quality. The following objectives list specific efforts SWART has initiated or plans to initiate to improve financial sustainability and increase local investment in the agency's services:

- Increase awareness of SWART services to the public.
- Create partnerships with local area businesses.
- Increase advertising sales revenue.
- Establish local financial support from Middle Rio Grande municipalities.
- Increase awareness of mobility management programs.

Importance of Public Transportation

Each year, millions of people rely on public transportation to move them from point A to point B. In 2015, SWART provided 158,725 trips throughout the Middle Rio Grande region. Riders use public transportation for purposes such as commuting to work, attending medical appointments, attending school, or participating in recreational activities. According to the American Public Transportation Association (APTA), over one-third of riders in rural or small urban areas use public transportation to commute to work. Source: APTA Profile of Public Transportation Passenger Demographics and Travel Characteristics

Figure 1 shows the average U.S. rural and small urban transit trips by purpose.



Source: APTA Profile of Public Transportation Passenger Demographics and Travel Characteristics

Figure 1. Trip Purpose for Rural and Small Urban Transit—U.S. Average

Traditionally, public transportation is associated with large urban areas. Subways, buses, and light rail dominate a large portion of available mass transit services throughout the United States. Despite the fact that public transportation is typically considered an urban amenity, transit services to rural and small urban areas are important and serve a significant need. Rural transit services include flex-route and demand-response services. **Error! Reference source not found.** Figure 2 illustrates the three main kinds of transit services in rural areas.

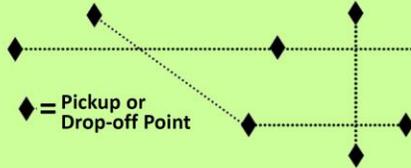
Beyond providing mobility and allowing people to travel that might otherwise be homebound, financial benefits are associated with public transportation. Public transportation in rural areas has a positive economic impact on local businesses. A 1999 study for the Transportation Research Record analyzed several rural communities with rural transit services. The results show that rural public transportation increased business activity in those communities. The study indicates that communities with the greatest economic growth had transit systems that provided transportation to employment and allowed community residents to “live independently” (1). Another study, completed in 2004 by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, concluded that public transportation in rural areas can “increase the local customer base for a range of services, including shopping malls, medical facilities, and other transportation services” (2). The report states the economic benefit/cost ratio as 3.1 to 1—for every \$1 spent on rural transit, surrounding communities derive \$3.10 worth of financial benefit.

Rural Transit: Descriptions of Common Types of Transit Service

(Examples only, may not represent all transit services operated by rural transit agencies)

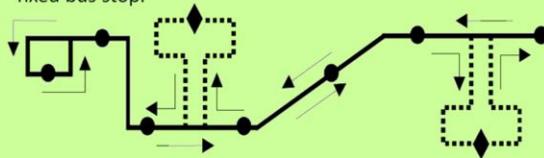
Demand Response, Many Origins to Many Destinations

1. Service most often operated by advance reservation as a shared ride from curb at origin location to curb at destination.
2. May be provided for the general public or special transit markets (i.e. Age 65 and over, people with disabilities); may also supplement other transit service.
3. Service may serve large geographic area or be limited to a small area.



Route Deviation or Flexible, Few Origins to Few Destinations

1. Service operates on a fixed schedule with defined bus stops; however, the driver can deviate (flex) from the route within a pre-established distance (usually ¼ to 1½ miles or longer in rural areas) to provide curb-to-curb service by passenger request.
2. Route deviations must be limited to ensure ability to maintain on-time service.
3. Advance notice is needed to request boarding or alighting at a stop other than a fixed bus stop.



Fixed Route, Linear Origins to Linear Destinations or Transfers

1. Service utilizing a bus or van along an established route with a set schedule and where passengers board and alight only at marked stops.
2. Bus stops are spaced about every 2 to 5 city blocks in urban centers, every ¼ to ½ mile in less dense areas.
3. Local fixed route service must include complementary demand response for people with disabilities.



Source: Texas A&M Transportation Institute

Figure 2. Rural Transit: Descriptions of Common Types of Transit Service

SWART's Regional Background and Demographics

The Middle Rio Grande region is composed of Dimmit, Edwards, Kinney, La Salle, Maverick, Real, Uvalde, Val Verde, and Zavala Counties. As of 2013, the total population of the nine counties was 168,235, 82.9 percent of whom identify as Hispanic or Latino. The Middle Rio Grande planning region is comprised of 14,339 square miles southwest of metropolitan San Antonio to the Texas-Mexico border, between Eagle Pass and Del Rio. The region's population density is 11.8 residents per square mile, and the land surface form topography is irregular plains and high hills. This section outlines the region's demographics, its labor force, and the available community facilities.

Demographics

According to the 2013 5-Year American Community Survey (ACS), the Middle Rio Grande region grew from a population of 157,014 in 2010 to 168,235 in 2013—an annual growth rate of 2.4 percent. This growth is greater than the 10-year period annual growth rate of 0.2 percent—154,381 in 2000 to 157,014 in 2010. According to 2013 5-Year ACS, approximately 27 percent of the region's population earns a total income below the established federal poverty level, making the region one of the poorest in the country.

In demographic terms, the Middle Rio Grande contains a higher percentage of younger and older persons than Texas as a whole. A greater proportion of residents are below 19 and over 65 compared to Texas' average. In addition, the income-generating population within the 18-to-64 age range in the region is less than the state average. This is reflected in the economic environment of the region. Texas State Data Center statistics indicate that the 2013 estimated male and female population distribution was 49.6 percent and 50.4 percent, respectively. Table 1 shows the ethnic composition of the district.

Table 1. Ethnicity Percentage of Middle Rio Grande Region

Ethnicity	Percentage
White	15.50%
Black	0.60%
Hispanic	82.90%
Other	1.00%

Source: 2013 5-Year American Community Survey Estimates

People who have grown up in the region typically cannot find employment and move away during their income-producing years but return to the area during their retirement years. This pattern results in communities with more consumers of public services (particularly public education and pediatric and geriatric health services) and fewer income-generating producers. The region's schools, hospitals, and health care facilities are stressed, and local taxpayers experience greater burden than the statewide average due to heightened public service demand.

Unemployment rates are as much as three times as high as state averages and more than double national averages. This has a direct correlation with the low education levels in the area. Only 63.1 percent of the adult population (25 and older) completed 12 or more years of formal education. Less than 14 percent of the region's population has a college degree, and less than 4 percent has graduate or professional degrees.

In economic terms, the Middle Rio Grande area has some of the lowest per-capita income levels in the United States. Four of its nine counties are among the poorest counties in Texas and the nation. The mean per-capita and household incomes are 61 percent of those in the state and 54 percent of those in the nation. Slightly more than one-fourth of residents earn incomes below the federally established poverty level.

All of these factors are reflected in unusually high rates of teenage pregnancy, substance abuse, and welfare dependency.

Ninety-eight percent of the region’s population clusters in and around its 22 municipalities. Nearly half of the area’s 168,235 residents live in the cities of Del Rio, Eagle Pass, and Uvalde. Maverick County is the region’s largest county with a population of 54,880 persons, and Val Verde County has a population of 48,730. Uvalde’s population is 26,578, according to the 2013 ACS. Additionally, Del Rio and Eagle Pass are major points of entry to Mexico.

Median Age

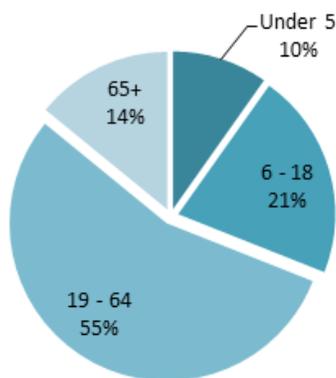
Table 2 shows the age of the Middle Rio Grande population. The median age of the Middle Rio Grande population, according to the 2013 5-Year ACS estimate data, is 32.7 years old. Figure 3 shows the Middle Rio Grande population compared to that of Texas.

Table 2. Middle Rio Grande (MRG) Region Age Composition

Age	MRG Pop.	Percentage	Texas Pop.	Texas Percentage
Under 5	16,770	9.82%	2,323,995	8.79%
6–18	36,151	21.17%	5,113,144	19.33%
19–64	93,728	54.89%	16,032,317	60.62%
65+	24,094	14.11%	2,978,737	11.26%

Source: Texas State Data Center

MRG Pop. by Age



Texas Pop. by Age

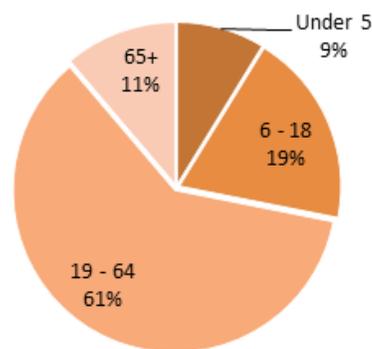


Figure 3. Middle Rio Grande Population Compared to State of Texas Population

Education

Table 3 shows the education of the Middle Rio Grande population. The education attainment of the Middle Rio Grande region is lower than that of the state as a whole. The percentage of the population with less than a high school education is 36.9 percent in the region, higher than the statewide

18.8 percent. The region’s percentage of people with a bachelor’s degree or higher is 13.3 percent, half of the state’s average of 26.6 percent. The data do not separate the number of people with associate’s degrees, which would increase the number of degree holders.

Table 3. Education Attainment in the Middle Rio Grande Region

Educational Attainment	Number of Persons	Percentage
Less than High School	36,792	36.90%
High School Graduate (Includes Equivalency)	25,078	25.20%
Some College	24,600	24.70%
Bachelor’s Degree	9,465	9.50%
Master’s Degree	2,794	2.80%
Professional School Degree	657	0.70%
Doctorate Degree	263	0.30%
Total Population Age 25 Years and Older	99,649	

Median Family Income and Per-Capita Income

In 2013, the regional median household income, according to ACS, was \$34,839, compared to \$26,186 in 2010. Regional per-capita income based on the 2013 ACS was \$15,899, compared to \$14,524 in 2010. The area has a poverty rate of 26.7 percent for all persons, according to the 2013 ACS.

Labor Force

The labor force in the region has seen an influx of workers in most sectors, with the largest increase in natural resources, mining, and hospitality sectors. Growth trends are important to note in regard to public transportation, both in terms of the overall working population and work travel patterns. Unemployment rates can also be an indicator of economic viability. Unemployment rates in the region are higher than the state’s unemployment rate of 6.3 percent in 2013.

Size of the Labor Force and Growth Trends

Table 4 shows the 2013 employment distribution of the Middle Rio Grande population, according to the ACS.

Table 4. Employment by Occupation in the Middle Rio Grande Region

Occupation for Employed Civilian Population 16 Years and Over	Number of Persons	Percentage
Employed Civilian Population 16 Years and Over:	61,429	
Management, Business, and Financial Operations Occupations	4,956	8.1%
Professional and Related Occupations	9,854	16.0%
Health Care Support Occupations	2,496	4.1%
Protective Service Occupations	3,619	5.9%
Food Preparation and Serving-Related Occupations	3,824	6.2%
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	2,925	4.8%
Personal Care and Service Occupations	2,973	4.8%
Sales and Related Occupations	5,713	9.3%
Office and Administrative Support Occupations	8,016	13.1%
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	1,147	1.9%
Construction, Extraction, and Maintenance Occupations	8,213	13.4%
Production Occupations	2,642	4.3%
Transportation and Material-Moving Occupations	5,051	8.2%

Unemployment Rates and Workforce

Table 5 shows the 2013 unemployment rates for the Middle Rio Grande population 16 years and over in the labor force, according to the ACS.

Table 5. County-Level Unemployment Rates in the Middle Rio Grande Region

County	Employed	Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
Dimmit County	3,882	625	13.9%
Edwards County	942	93	9.0%
Kinney County	1,167	179	13.3%
La Salle County	2,090	264	11.2%
Maverick County	19,497	2,728	12.3%
Real County	974	171	14.9%
Uvalde County	10,291	1,222	10.6%
Val Verde County	18,595	2,129	10.3%
Zavala County	3,991	553	12.2%
Total	61,429	7,964	11.5%

Labor Skills Needed

Table 6 lists the industry sectors in order of greatest employment percentage change. Oil and natural gas extraction in the Eagle Ford Shale region is included in the first category, natural resources and mining. An increase in hotels and extended stay hotels has followed the energy production boom in response to the increase in workers in the region. These fall into the second category listed, leisure and hospitality.

Table 6. Industry Sector by Percentage Change in the Middle Rio Grande Region

Industry Sector	2013	2014	Emp.	Pct.
	1st Qtr.	1st Qtr.	Chg.	Chg.
Total, All Industries	55,852	57,626	1,774	3.18
Natural Resources and Mining	3,962	4,456	494	12.47
Leisure and Hospitality Group	5,746	5,971	225	3.92
Information	282	292	10	3.55
Financial Activities Group	1,446	1,487	41	2.84
Manufacturing	3,137	3,212	75	2.39
Education and Health Services	16,862	17,073	211	1.25
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	10,751	10,859	108	1
Public Administration	6,148	6,192	44	0.72
Other Services	695	689	-6	-0.86
Professional, Business, and Other Services	1,806	1,750	-56	-3.1
Construction	1,062	1,005	-57	-5.37

Work Force and Transportation

Table 7 shows the mode choice of all working individuals over the age of 16 in the region. A large majority of the working population drives to work alone. Several counties have a significant portion of the population that carpool; for example, nearly one in five workers in La Salle County carpool to work. Despite high levels of alternative commuting in some parts of the region, the percentage of workers

using public transportation is relatively low throughout the region. These percentages typically do not include medical trips, with a demographic that is older and likely out of the workforce. The Other category contains workers that used a motorcycle, used a bicycle, walked, or answered “other means.” Real County has the largest number of telecommuters (workers that work from home).

Table 7. Workforce Transportation Means by County

County	Drove Alone	Carpooled	Public Transportation	Other	Worked from Home
Dimmit	80.9%	8.5%	1.1%	4.4%	5.2%
Edwards	72.3%	3.9%	0.0%	14.7%	9.1%
Kinney	78.2%	6.4%	0.6%	7.1%	7.8%
La Salle	67.8%	20.3%	0.0%	7.5%	4.5%
Maverick	77.8%	13.7%	0.8%	6.3%	1.4%
Real	62.8%	9.3%	0.0%	12.8%	15.2%
Uvalde	80.2%	12.4%	0.1%	4.0%	3.2%
Val Verde	76.9%	13.1%	0.4%	6.3%	3.3%
Zavala	73.1%	15.6%	0.1%	5.2%	6.0%

Retail Sales

Table 8 shows 2010 and 2014 retail sales in the Middle Rio Grande region. According to the Texas Workforce Commission, gross retail sales usually have a direct relationship to per-capita income. All of the counties in the Middle Rio Grande region increased their gross sales by at least 116 percent between 2010 and 2014. This increase could correspond to the increase of median family income and per-capita income, discussed previously.

Table 8. 2010 and 2014 Retail Sales Comparison in the Middle Rio Grande Region

County	2010 Gross Sales	2014 Gross Sales	Percentage Change	2010 Amt. Subject to Sales Tax	2014 Amt. Subject to Sales Tax	Percentage Change
Dimmit	\$93,574,982	\$201,911,551	215.78%	\$36,259,826	\$75,479,118	208.16%
Edwards	\$15,743,084	\$18,382,354	116.76%	\$3,458,678	\$4,288,938	124.01%
Kinney	\$10,427,487	\$12,882,387	123.54%	\$3,917,150	\$4,445,697	113.49%
La Salle	\$94,491,513	\$217,038,086	229.69%	\$17,392,826	\$40,431,770	232.46%
Maverick	\$570,027,401	\$701,320,353	123.03%	\$264,330,710	\$325,978,255	123.32%
Real	\$15,109,426	\$19,757,716	130.76%	\$7,774,605	\$11,576,806	148.91%
Uvalde	\$326,956,539	\$369,519,644	113.02%	\$131,502,109	\$154,229,474	117.28%
Val Verde	\$470,606,838	\$594,369,640	126.30%	\$194,777,738	\$223,423,497	114.71%
Zavala	\$44,762,109	\$60,434,448	135.01%	\$13,887,748	\$20,136,680	145.00%

Community Facilities

The following description of community facilities provides a general scope of existing regional and municipal facilities.

Housing

All major municipalities in the economic development district operate and maintain public housing facilities.

Water and Waste Water

Adequate water delivery and wastewater treatment facilities exist in all but a few small enclaves where septic tanks are still used.

Higher Education Institutions

The two post-secondary educational institutions in the district are Sul Ross State University–Rio Grande College and Southwest Texas Junior College.

Sul Ross State University–Rio Grande College

Sul Ross State University–Rio Grande College, part of the Texas State University System, offers 13 bachelor’s degree programs and eight master’s degree programs. The campus is housed in Del Rio, Eagle Pass, and Uvalde on the Southwest Texas Junior College campuses.

Southwest Texas Junior College

Southwest Texas Junior College offers associate’s degrees and certificates in 14 different programs including business, computer science, and mechanical technician fields. Southwest Texas Junior College is housed in Uvalde and has satellite campuses in Del Rio, Eagle Pass, Hondo, Pearsall, and Crystal City.

Industrial Parks

The district has numerous industrial parks. Eagle Pass has two; Del Rio, Uvalde, and Carrizo Springs each have one. As of 2012, Cotulla has an area designated as an industrial area. The five counties of La Salle, Dimmit, Zavala, Uvalde, and Maverick have been designated as a federal Empowerment Zone. This designation allows businesses to apply for and receive grants in exchange for location in the zone or hiring people from the zone

Medical Facilities (Including Hospitals and Clinics)

Table 9 lists hospitals and clinics by county district.

Table 9. Hospitals and Clinics by County

Facility Type	Rural/Low-Income Clinic(s)	Hospital
District	Uvalde	Uvalde
	Eagle Pass	Eagle Pass
	Campwood	Carrizo Springs
	Leakey	Del Rio
	Cotulla	Crystal City
	Del Rio	

Emergency Response

The Middle Rio Grande Development Council oversees the 911 program in Dimmit, Edwards, Kinney, La Salle, Maverick, Real, Uvalde, Val Verde, and Zavala Counties. Additionally, the municipalities of Eagle Pass, Uvalde, and Del Rio have full or paid fire protection teams. Crystal City, Carrizo Springs, Big Wells, Cotulla, Rock Springs, Brackettville, Sabinal, Utopia, Concan, Leakey, and Encinal each have a volunteer firefighting force.

In addition to fire protection, a majority of counties provide emergency medical technician services, including Dimmitt, La Salle, Maverick, Uvalde, Val Verde, and Zavala Counties. While the remaining counties either have a volunteer staff or rely on service from a neighboring county, all residents have access to services. Emergency response is a very important issue in the region due to sporadic climate changes that cause flooding and hail damage to homes and businesses throughout the region.

Programs for Low-Income Population and Senior Citizens

The Middle Rio Grande Development Council partners with the Area Agency on Aging (AAA). AAA supports the following services:

- Congregate meals.
- Home-delivered meals.
- One-way trips.
- Health maintenance vision care.
- Legal awareness contacts.
- Elder abuse publicity efforts.
- Health education programs.
- Legal assistance service.

Employment and Industry

Analysis of the region's economy reveals that education and health services account for the largest sector of employment. The absence of traditional employment opportunities in the region (e.g., agriculture related) may also contribute to this trend. Federal, state, and local governments and school districts, however, continue to be principal employers in most of the smaller communities of the region.

In recent years, agriculture has declined, but it still represents a vital segment of the economy and has numerous support industries. To offset losses in agricultural production, agricultural properties are used for recreational purposes more frequently. Activities include hunting, bird watching, water sports, and nature hikes. The regional tourism and recreation service industry associated with hunting and other recreation benefits from economic spillover gains and has begun to witness growth on a year-round basis.

The competitive advantage that the border communities have due to their proximity to a huge Mexican market continues to allow the border economic development foundations to attract business and economic development projects to the region. However, limited and slowly developing infrastructure improvements to roadways and ports of entry have limited the economic potential of the border region.

Border retailers continue to rely on Mexican shoppers for a significant portion of their trade, while the tourism and recreation segments of the economy rely on the adjacent San Antonio metropolitan area as a primary trade area. Similarly, San Antonio retailers and service vendors derive trade opportunities from the Middle Rio Grande region. The absence of major retailers and other vendors of goods and particular services in the Middle Rio Grande area forces the populace to trade beyond the region, often forcing some to relocate outside the region.

The local economies in the region continue to be driven by small business. In order to attract new development, municipalities offer tax abatements, sewer tapping fee waivers, and other incentives. In addition, the prospects for economic development in Dimmit, La Salle, Maverick, Uvalde, and Zavala Counties have been enhanced by their designation as federal Empowerment Zones. Particular attention needs to be given to those areas that are suffering most from unemployment/underemployment and other economic distress.

Regional Transportation Stakeholders

The Middle Rio Grande region contains two transit agencies that service the nine-county area—SWART and the City of Del Rio. Greyhound also provides intercity routes throughout the Highway 90 corridor through Valley Transit, a contracted provider. In addition, other private transportation providers in the area provide medical transportation, regional tours, and other transportation services. SWART is the regional transportation lead agency for the Middle Rio Grande region.

City of Del Rio

The City of Del Rio operates public transit consisting of one fixed route within the city limits and demand-response service within the city limits and for Val Verde County. The demand-response service is a curb-to-curb service with priority given to elderly and disabled patrons. The service is funded by Section 5311 and 5310 funding and has an annual budget of approximately \$1.2 million. SWART provides intercity routes to and from Del Rio to locations outside Val Verde County. The rates of service for the City of Del Rio are (per person):

- Free for persons who are eligible for Medicaid transportation.
- \$1.00 per one-way local trip for persons 55 years or older and the disabled.
- \$2.00 per one-way local trip for the general public.
- \$10.00 per one-way trip, traveling under 90 miles.
- \$15.00 per one-way trip, traveling over 90 miles.

Other Transportation Providers

SWART operates in conjunction with other transit operators. SWART operates most closely with the City of Del Rio in Val Verde County. Figure 4 shows the City of Del Rio and SWART's service areas.

Table 10 lists the transportation providers in the region and each provider's entity designation. Many of these providers have a small service area and have very limited clientele demographics. SWART is listed more than once to designate the different types of services provided and to show the specific parts of the region in which those services are rendered.

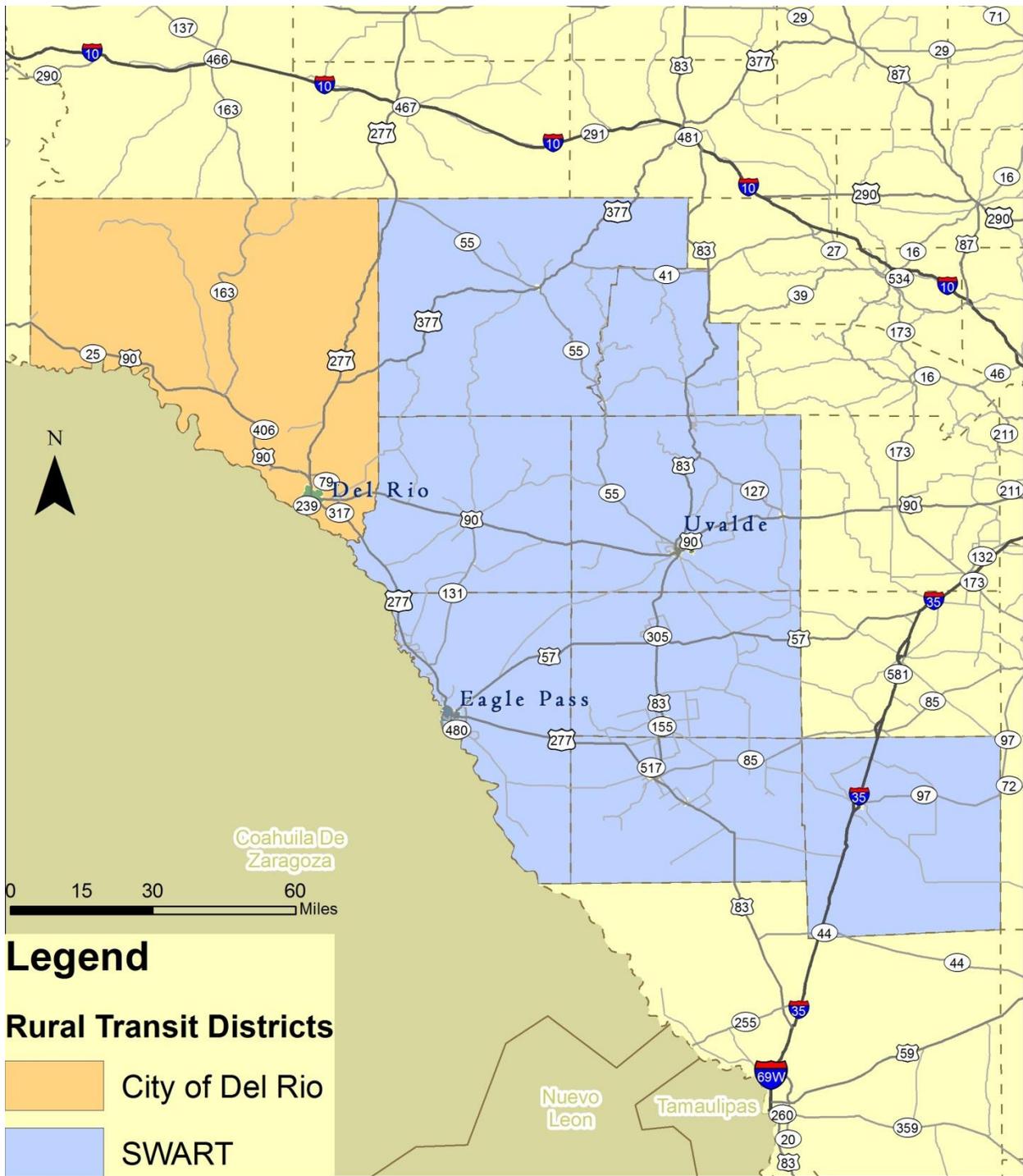


Figure 4. City of Del Rio and SWART Service Areas

Table 10. Transportation Providers in the Middle Rio Grande Region

Agency Name	Type of Service	Type of Entity	Area of Service
Southwest Area Regional Transit District	Rural Public Transit, Medical Transportation, Job Access, Elderly/Disabled Transportation	Rural Transit District	Dimmit, Edwards, Kinney, La Salle, Maverick, Real, Uvalde, and Zavala Counties
City of Del Rio	Rural Public Transit, Medical Transportation, Job Access, Elderly/Disabled Transportation	Rural Transit District	Val Verde County
Avance Head Start	Charter School Transit, Head Start Transit, Early Head Start	Private, Non-profit	Edwards, Kinney, Real, Uvalde, and Zavala Counties
County of Uvalde	Elderly Nutrition Support Services—Transit	Private, Non-profit	Uvalde County
Community Child Development	Head Start Transit, Early Head Start Transit	Private, Non-profit	Dimmit, Maverick, La Salle, and Frio Counties
Community Services Agency	Elderly Nutrition Support Services—Transit	Private, Non-profit	Dimmit County
County of Kinney	Elderly Nutrition Support Services—Transit	County Government	Kinney County
County of La Salle	Elderly Nutrition Support Services—Transit	County Government	La Salle County
County of Maverick	Elderly Nutrition Support Services—Transit	County Government	Maverick County
County of Real	Elderly Nutrition Support Services—Transit	County Government	Real County
City of Del Rio	Elderly Nutrition Support Services—Transit	Municipality	Del Rio
County of Zavala	Elderly Nutrition Support Services—Transit	County Government	Zavala County
Texas Department of Health and Human Services	Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services, Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services, Medical Transportation Program	State	Dimmit, Edwards, Kinney, La Salle, Maverick, Real, Uvalde, Val Verde, and Zavala Counties
Hill Country MHDD	MHDD	Private, Non-profit	Dimmit, Edwards, Kinney, La Salle, Maverick, Real, Uvalde, Val Verde, and Zavala Counties
Greyhound (Contracted through Valley Transit)	Intercity Bus Services	Intercity Provider	Dimmit, Edwards, Kinney, La Salle, Maverick, Real, Uvalde, Val Verde, and Zavala Counties
Ride Aid Transportation	Medical Transportation	Intercity Provider	Dimmit, Edwards, Kinney, La Salle, Maverick, Real, Uvalde, Val Verde, and Zavala Counties
Aguila Express	Taxi Service	Private	Eagle Pass
Eagle Shuttle	Tourist Transportation	Private	Eagle Pass

Regional Coordination Activities

SWART Workshops and Fairs

SWART held several workshops and participated in job fairs and back-to-school fairs throughout 2015. These events were intended to notify and publicize to the public the transportation options that are available from SWART and what service changes may be occurring. These events also provided an outlet to gather input directly from the public and note any feedback or suggestions. SWART uses social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter as well as conventional means like fliers and public notices to advertise public workshops and appearances. Table 11 lists the dates of public outreach.

Table 11. List of Public Outreach Events for 2015

Date	Event	Location	Attendees
8/27/2015	SWART La Salle County Public Forum	Cotulla, TX	1
8/17/2015	Uvalde County Nutrition Center Outreach	Uvalde, TX	20
8/14/2015	SWART Vida Y Salud Health Fair	Crystal City, TX	81
8/13/2015	SWART Back-to-School Fair	Carrizo Springs, TX	156
8/10/2015	SWART Back-to-School Fair	Brackettville, TX	63
8/5/2015	SWART Back-to-School Fair	Crystal City, TX	132
7/30/2015	SWART Monthly Meeting	Eagle Pass, TX	20
7/30/2015	9th Annual Back-to-School Navigation/Health and Social Services Fair	Eagle Pass, TX	132
7/30/2015	SWART Monthly Meeting	Eagle Pass, TX	22
7/29/2015	SWART Edwards County Public Forum	Rocksprings, TX	1
7/28/2015	SWART Back-to-School Fair	—	38
7/20/2015	SWART Back-to-School Fair	La Pryor, TX	29
7/20/2015	SWART Back-to-School Fair	Batesville, TX	47
7/15/2015	SWART Kinney County Public Forum	Brackettville, TX	2
7/13/2015	SWART Real County Public Forum	Leakey, TX	0
7/9/2015	SWART Dimmit County Public Forum	Carrizo Springs, TX	4
7/6/2015	SWART Maverick County Public Forum	Eagle Pass, TX	0
4/28/2015	Transportation Town Hall Meeting	Uvalde, TX	—
11/13/2014	Red, White and You Veterans and Non-veterans Job Fair	Eagle Pass, TX	8
8/28/2014	SWART Utopia Workshop	—	3
—	SWART Uvalde County Public Forum	Uvalde, TX	0
—	SWART Zavala County Public Forum	Crystal City, TX	0
—	Quemado School Fair	—	33
—	SWART Back-to-School Fair	Uvalde, TX	86

Job fairs and back-to-school fairs had the highest attendance numbers. County public forums attracted fewer attendees. To offset the lack of attendees at some of the events, SWART continues to elicit feedback via an online survey provided in both English and Spanish.

Other Coordination Activities

Beyond public meetings and outreach, SWART works to coordinate public transportation in the district through documentation, goal setting, working with public officials, developing training, and striving to offer competitive compensation to its employees. This section describes these ongoing internal coordination efforts.

Documentation

SWART maintains the current and updated progress of agency goals on a yearly basis. A list of goals and progress is available on the SWART website, providing a transparent and accessible process to the public. Maintaining and recording progress on both agency goals and regional goals can help facilitate a positive and productive working dialogue with regional stakeholders and transportation providers.

The ongoing task is to continue documenting agency goal progress and coordination that has historically been in practice in the form of interlocal agreements or memorandums of understandings.

Client Goal

As the lead transit district in the region, SWART strives to maintain a high level of service to patrons. These efforts need to be maintained because changes in service or other changes affect riders across the region.

The ongoing tasks are to:

- Continue outreach and informational efforts throughout the service area.
- Improve communications and outreach through local newsletters, community meetings, social media, and other platforms that may help inform the general public.

A 2014 assessment showed an interest and need for public transportation throughout the region and to nearby cities such as San Antonio and Laredo. SWART offered such service at the time of assessment; therefore, an information gap is apparent from the public survey results.

Public Officials/Regional Political Support

Political support in the region has improved since the 2012 Regional Coordination Plan. Recent changes in leadership in the Middle Rio Grande Development Council have brought about improved relationships and support for public transportation.

The ongoing task is to focus on full participation from district counties, specifically participation from southern counties such as La Salle and Maverick Counties.

Training

Training has improved since the 2012 Regional Coordination Plan. The majority of SWART's training (85 percent) is conducted in-house, including cardiopulmonary resuscitation, passenger assistance, first

aid, and defensive driving. Other trainings are conducted by separate entities such as the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), the Texas A&M Transportation Institute, and the South West Transit Association for areas such as supervisory training, vehicle maintenance, and security.

The ongoing tasks are to:

- Continue coordinating with school districts and charter schools to share training and recruit temporary employees from those partners' pool of drivers.
- Continue coordinating with the Texas Workforce Commission and the Southwest Texas Junior College to gain adequate training for commercial driver's license operators, mechanics/technicians (alternative fuels, lifts, etc.), and automation, with the ultimate goal of developing a trained workforce to support transportation occupational demands.
- Organize and continue efforts for student internship program through Southwest Texas Junior College and Sul Ross University.

Competitive Compensation

Transit systems struggle to compete with trucking providers servicing the oil industry in the region. As of 2015, SWART's starting compensation has been increased to \$10.50 per hour plus a benefits package including health insurance. SWART is working to increase the starting compensation to at least \$12 per hour and include a better health care package as well. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, median salaries for truck drivers (53-3032 Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers) in Texas were \$17.97 per hour in 2014. According to an *Austin American-Statesman* article, truck driver salaries around the Eagle Ford Shale area are even higher, starting at around \$50,000 (\$24.04 per hour). Benefits such as health insurance and 401K plans may also be provided. Unlike transit, the work schedule for these jobs is very demanding, with work hours ranging from 70 to 80 hours a week at times.

The ongoing task is to determine local and alternative funding streams to assist with compensation increases for specialized rural public transit drivers, dispatchers/schedulers mechanics, and trainers.

Gaps in Services

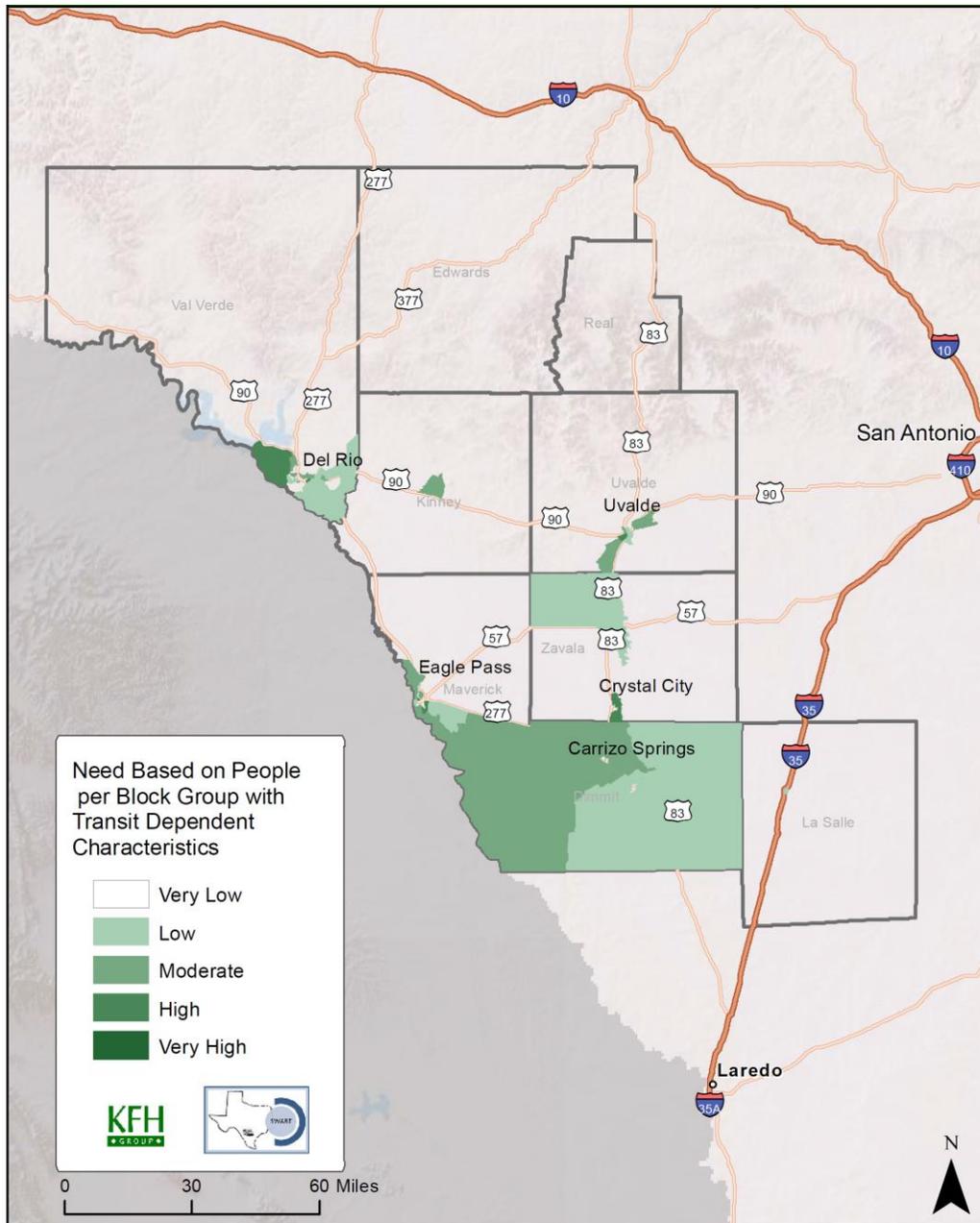
In 2014, the KFH Group conducted a transportation needs assessment to analyze service gaps in the SWART service area. The assessment included a survey of the public, transit riders, transportation providers, and health and human service agency partners. In addition to survey sampling, a land use and population analysis was conducted to identify transit need areas based on the following demographic characteristics:

- Persons 60 years of age and older.
- Persons with disabilities.
- Zero-car households.
- Youths.
- Persons living below the poverty level.

Gaps According to the Public

The public survey collected 158 responses from electronic or hardcopy responses. Of the responses, 45.5 percent identified themselves as being between the ages of 36 and 64; 32.7 percent of responses were from people aged 65 and older. In addition, nearly one-third of respondents reported living in a household earning less than \$1,805 per month.

A majority (58.6 percent) of public survey respondents indicated that they use SWART public transportation; 45 percent of respondents stated that there were several places in the region that were not accessible without driving. The main reason these destinations require driving, according to 65 percent of respondents, was that “there are no other transportation services available for the trip.” Destinations included cities such as Uvalde, Eagle Pass, Del Rio, and Carrizo Springs, all served by public transportation. The major destinations indicated outside of the SWART service area included San Antonio, Laredo, and the Lower Rio Grande Valley. The areas listed are not located within the SWART service area; however, SWART does have regular routes to San Antonio and Laredo (3). The survey results related to destinations indicate a need for additional marketing of SWART services, not a service gap. Figure 5 is a needs index map.



Source: KFH Group

Figure 5. Needs Index Map

Gaps According to Providers

The KFH Group reported that providers identified the following service gaps:

- Expanded weekend service:
 - Currently, weekend services are limited to Saturday service, with a few counties having limited Sunday service once a month. Saturday services are mostly confined to medical destinations such as dialysis centers with reduced hours of operation.

- Weekends provide an opportunity to coordinate more transit throughout the area to provide transportation to non-medical trips such as shopping or recreational activities.
- Regularly scheduled intercity services, particularly into Uvalde for college students and into Kerrville for veterans. Greyhound, via Valley Transit, provides intercity bus services throughout the SWART area.
- Greater coordination among transportation providers and human service agencies.
- Coordination between SWART and Lucky Eagle Casino, MHDD centers, and Eagle Pass medical facilities.
- Eagle Ford Shale (EFS) support services and EFS companies.
- Travel Training and Travel Ambassador Program.
- Onboard cameras.
- Electronic fare boxes.
- Training in management, financial, supervisory, dispatching, scheduling, and vehicle maintenance functions.
- Wireless capability at SWART facilities outside of Uvalde.

EFS has significantly impacted SWART in a number of ways. A major growth in population has produced a greater need for public transportation. Congestion has also increased in the area, causing schedule delays for transit services. Pavement conditions have eroded along heavily traveled routes, causing increased maintenance costs to SWART. Population estimates are hard to determine in the area. Temporary housing units, known locally as man camps, are not counted in estimated population counts. Additionally, the viability and longevity of the shale make forecasting population trends difficult.

The City of Del Rio operates its own local transportation, as does Val Verde County. The City of Del Rio's unmet needs identified by the KFH Group include the following:

- Airline service to the Del Rio airport.
- A local Passenger Service and Safety (PASS) training specialist.
- Greater coordination with the Veterans Administration.

Gaps According to Health and Human Service Agencies

The survey conducted by the KFH Group for human service agencies garnered a low response rate. However, several key needs were identified by the responses that were collected. Human service agencies noted that more coordination is needed between such agencies and SWART. The lack of coordination stems from previous political barriers that existed before the formation of SWART.

SWART successfully accommodates the transportation needs of Medicaid-eligible riders. Non-eligible riders with medical conditions struggle to access transportation services, according to the KFH Group report. This report says that most human service agency clients are unaware of the transportation services available to them and/or lack the confidence to use the services. A public awareness campaign or ambassador program may help with this problem.

Regional Goals

In its brief existence, SWART has improved on many aspects of its day-to-day operations and services, most notably customer experience, transportation service, and staff development. Three of SWART’s goals that require ongoing attention involve a regional perspective. These areas include the marketing of SWART’s services, community and regional partnerships, and an increase of fiscal responsibility and investment. SWART can further its efforts to achieve regional goals by implementing objectives relating to regional goals, ultimately producing a more efficient and connected regional transportation system.

This section describes the regional goals assessed through the regional coordination planning process. The regional goals are divided into three sections:

- Increase coordination.
- Improve training and technology.
- Increase investment.

Each goal is supported by objectives and activities that are in various stages of implementation.

Increase Coordination

SWART currently works with a wide variety of organizations around the Middle Rio Grande region. Increased coordination can develop additional transportation options, creating a more efficient regional transit system. The following objectives outline activities to improve coordination efforts and transit services.

Objective: Expand Weekend Service

Table 12 lists the activities for this objective.

Table 12. Activities for Objective: Expand Weekend Service

Activity	Measurement	Responsible Staff and Entity	Completion Date
Continue coordination with local area nutrition centers involving recreational weekend trips	Number of annual weekend trips/passengers	SWART and nutrition centers	Ongoing
Continue coordination with area school districts	Number of annual trips/passengers	SWART	Ongoing

All local area nutrition centers formally provided transit services for elderly residents and patrons until 2014. Financial challenges forced many nutrition centers to cease provision of transportation services and sell their transit vehicles. In 2014 and 2015, the nutrition centers coordinated with SWART to provide weekend trips to San Antonio, Kerrville, and other regional places of interests. This transportation service was open to any resident within the SWART service area and not limited to nutrition center patrons. This service availability helped to expand weekend service in the region and provided additional options for transportation. Weekend options are a welcome addition for transit-dependent users and can help increase community support for public transportation.

Public transportation options for people to travel out of the city limits and beyond the Middle Rio Grande region are important to local school districts and members of the community at large. In 2014 and 2015, SWART coordinated trips for several out-of-town activities, including football games, stock shows, visits to the Capitol, fish hatcheries, job fairs, and other activities. Trips are open to everyone, including non-students, that resides in the SWART service area.

Additionally, SWART plans to provide information on transit services available during school Parent-Teacher Organization meetings and other special group meetings. A continuation and expansion of these efforts can provide enhanced transportation options and increased economic and recreational opportunities for riders.

Objective: Establish Regularly Scheduled Intercity Services, Especially into Uvalde for Students and into Kerrville for Veterans

Table 13 lists the activity for this objective.

Table 13. Activity for Objective: Establish Regularly Scheduled Intercity Services

Activity	Measurement	Responsible Staff and Entity	Completion Date
Coordinate with Greyhound, and continue publicity efforts to the general public about existing services	Public input	SWART	Ongoing

In 2014, Greyhound announced an expansion of routes including routes along Highway 90 from Del Rio into San Antonio and toward Eagle Pass. Coordination with Greyhound presents an opportunity to expand transit options in the area. A working partnership can enhance the overall public transportation experience for riders across the region.

Objective: Improve Coordination among Transportation Providers and Human Service Agencies

Table 14 lists the activity for this objective.

Table 14. Activity for Objective: Improve Coordination among Transportation Providers and Human Service Agencies

Activity	Measurement	Responsible Staff and Entity	Completion Date
Perform outreach by SWART/KFH Group Survey	Coordination efforts	SWART	Ongoing

Greater coordination among the human service agencies in the area can help SWART generate additional revenue. For example, in spring 2014, SWART partnered with Community Development Health, Inc., to provide transportation for patients to CDH, Inc., clinics beyond the limits of Real and Edwards Counties. CDH, Inc., entered into a contract agreement with SWART to pay fares for all patients not eligible for Medicaid. Similar partnerships throughout the region could be beneficial for improving transportation services.

Objective: Coordinate with Kickapoo Lucky Eagle Casino, MHDD Centers, Eagle Pass Medical Facilities, Middle Rio Grande Development Council, and EFS Companies

Table 15 lists the activity for this objective.

Table 15. Activity for Objective: Coordinate with Kickapoo Lucky Eagle Casino, MHDD Centers, Eagle Pass Medical Facilities, Middle Rio Grande Development Council, and EFS Companies

Activity	Measurement	Responsible Staff and Entity	Completion Date
Meet with key stakeholders in the region	Additional revenue	SWART	Ongoing

Kickapoo Lucky Eagle Casino

Kickapoo Lucky Eagle Casino is the only operating casino in Texas. The casino employs 700 staff members and draws visitors from central and south Texas (4). SWART previously partnered with Lucky Eagle Casino, managed by the Kickapoo Indian Tribe, to provide shuttle service for employees while a new parking garage was being constructed. This effort helped to establish a working relationship that can lead to further transportation efforts. Currently, SWART is working with the casino to provide a fixed route from outlying areas such as Uvalde and Carrizo Springs. The casino is also working with the City of Del Rio transportation to provide fixed-route service. Current and future efforts can help expand the transportation network throughout the region.

United Medical Center

United Medical Center is health care center accredited by The Joint Commission and operates nine clinics out of Del Rio, Brackettville, and Eagle Pass. SWART is currently collaborating with United Medical Center locations in Eagle Pass through a contract based on referrals. This type of working relationship could produce further/sustainable revenue for SWART.

Middle Rio Grande Development Council (MRGDC)

MRGDC is the regional planning commission and council of governments for the nine-county Middle Rio Grande region. SWART has improved its working relationship with MRGDC and is currently listed on MRGDC’s 211 information referral system. MRGDC also purchased several bus wraps with SWART in summer 2015, providing additional revenue.

Eagle Ford Shale

SWART could possibly benefit from the economic activity generated by the EFS region. Coordination with EFS companies to provide public transit via commuter routes for workers could generate revenue for SWART and help relieve congestion by reducing single-occupancy vehicle traffic. EFS might also be a source of in-kind donations to assist SWART in covering the additional costs incurred because of EFS-related activities, such as increased vehicle maintenance costs.

Improve Training and Technology

SWART has made several significant improvements to training and technology. The agency now has the ability to track its fleet through global positioning system (GPS) technology and uses a state-of-the-art software system to manage day-to-day operations. As the lead transit agency in the region, SWART’s

collaboration with other transportation providers is important and serves a vital interest for the region, particularly in the area of training. Technological improvements are also important to enhancing the customer experience and creating an improved regional transportation network. The following objectives outline activities to improve training and technology.

Objective: Improve Travel Training and Travel Ambassador Program

Table 16 lists the activity for this objective.

Table 16. Activity for Objective: Improve Travel Training and Travel Ambassador Program

Activity	Measurement	Responsible Staff and Entity	Completion Date
Organize training sessions with providers in the region	Number of training sessions	SWART	Ongoing

SWART is working to create a seamless training program with the City of Del Rio and other public and private transportation providers in the area. The objective of the trainings is to provide the technical guidance necessary to meet TxDOT and Health and Human Services requirements. Part of this goal is to assure that contracted taxi companies and other public and private providers have the proper training and insurance credentials to be compliant with state regulations. SWART could eventually form working relationships with these providers through subcontract agreements. Meeting this objective could improve the safety of passengers using public transportation, improve transportation efficiency, and create a more seamless service delivery system in Del Rio, Eagle Pass, Uvalde, and throughout the region.

Objective: Update and Improve Current Bus Technology

Table 17 lists the activity for this objective.

Table 17. Activity for Objective: Update and Improve Current Bus Technology

Activity	Measurement	Responsible Staff and Entity	Completion Date
Install onboard cameras and introduce electronic fares via smartcard or tablet payment systems; introduce wireless capabilities at all SWART facilities and buses	Number of payments via electronic means	SWART	Ongoing

SWART plans to update its fare system to include the ability for riders to pay onboard via credit card. Bus operators will be able to accept a fare through a wireless tablet using a rider’s credit card. This will help expand accessibility to more patrons and make the payment process easier. Updating wireless capabilities at all SWART facilities and on all SWART vehicles is necessary for the onboard payment process. Other options include cellular connections such as Long-Term Evolution (commonly known as 4G LTE) technology.

Additionally, SWART intends to install onboard cameras on all transit vehicles. Cameras increase security for the operator and passengers and can help maintain accountability for both SWART and passengers. This objective aims to produce a more comfortable and accessible experience for SWART users and bus operators.

Objective: Improve Financial Management and Record Keeping

Table 18 lists the activity for this objective.

Table 18. Activity for Objective: Improve Financial Management and Record Keeping

Activity	Measurement	Responsible Staff and Entity	Completion Date
Update software to include financial management suite; encourage electronic record-keeping protocols at the state level	Current software utilization compared to industry standard	SWART	90% complete

As of 2015, SWART uses Shah Software’s Transportation Manager NewGen® software. This software contains different modules that can be added to suit the needs of the transit agency. SWART’s suite includes GPS tracking, inventory monitoring for vehicle inspections and maintenance, and a feature to track vehicle operator training. SWART anticipates adding additional features of the software in the near term, including a financial management module, electronic timesheets, and a calling feature, allowing operators to notify riders when the bus is in the vicinity.

Currently, the Health and Human Services Commission requires hardcopy manifests with signatures from bus operators for medical transportation trips. Additionally, the commission requires that contracted agencies store hardcopy records for 10 years. The need to store hardcopy records may introduce a future challenge because of the space required. A change to electronic signatures and electronic storage of medical transportation manifests could help ease any space restraints for SWART and other transit agencies in Texas. This change would have to occur at the state level.

Increase Investment

The potential for economic investment and development is present throughout the region. As the region’s largest transportation provider, SWART plays an increasingly important economic role. SWART must examine its current financial state and plan accordingly for a viable and sustainable organization.

Objective: Increase Awareness of SWART’s Services to the Public

Table 19 lists the activity for this objective.

Table 19. Activity for Objective: Increase Awareness of SWART’s Services to the Public

Activity	Measurement	Responsible Staff and Entity	Completion Date
Conduct public awareness campaigns aimed at increasing awareness of SWART services	Increase of riders	SWART	Breaking ground

The 2014 public rider survey conducted by the KFH Group showed a knowledge gap relating to the services SWART provided and the areas served. SWART could benefit from increased awareness campaigns targeting the public. Some examples of outreach include:

- Educational workshops for students at elementary schools, middle schools, high schools, and college campuses on how to ride and use SWART’s services safely.
- Education workshops for elderly and disabled patrons at nutrition centers and other establishments.
- Informational fliers placed in local businesses and community centers, detailing the services SWART provides and how to use those services.

Objective: Create Partnerships with Local Area Businesses and Organizations

Table 20 lists the activity for this objective.

Table 20. Activity for Objective: Create Partnerships with Local Area Businesses and Organizations

Activity	Measurement	Responsible Staff and Entity	Completion Date
Work with key businesses in the Middle Rio Grande area to create mutual partnerships that benefit both SWART and businesses	Number of business partnerships obtained	SWART	Breaking ground

Throughout the past decade, more major retailers have moved into the region. In-kind donations from retailers such as Walmart, Walgreens, HEB, and Family Dollar can generate alternative revenue. The Texas Main Street Program (TMSP) also provides an opportunity for SWART to connect with local businesses in downtown areas. The initiative is part of the Texas Historical Commission and provides resources to help revitalize Texas’ downtown areas in small towns and cities through economic development. As of 2015, Eagle Pass, Del Rio, Uvalde, and Cotulla are members of TMSP.

One current example includes AVANCE Head Start, a childcare provider in the region. SWART’s partnership functions on a referral system for all Head Start families and includes provision of both medical and public transportation. AVANCE has also purchased several bus wraps for advertising.

Objective: Increase Alternative Sources of Dedicated Revenue

Table 21 lists the activity for this objective.

Table 21. Activity for Objective: Increase Alternative Sources of Dedicated Revenue

Activity	Measurement	Responsible Staff and Entity	Completion Date
Increase the number of alternative revenue sources, such as bus advertisements, donations, private grants, and bequests	Increase in advertising revenue	SWART	Ongoing

Bus Advertisements

As of 2015, SWART currently offers bus wraps to advertise businesses and services. SWART has experienced increased advertising sales and could continue to increase this revenue in the future.

Sample Advertising Rates

Taps, Citibus, and Waco Transit market the agency’s advertising service on their websites. Figure 6 shows the types of advertising that can be placed on the exterior of SWART’s buses. Table 22 lists the costs associated with bus wrap advertising at TAPS, Citibus, and Waco Transit. Table 23 shows SWART’s advertising fees. SWART could increase its advertising fees, pending market analysis, to increase this source of revenue.

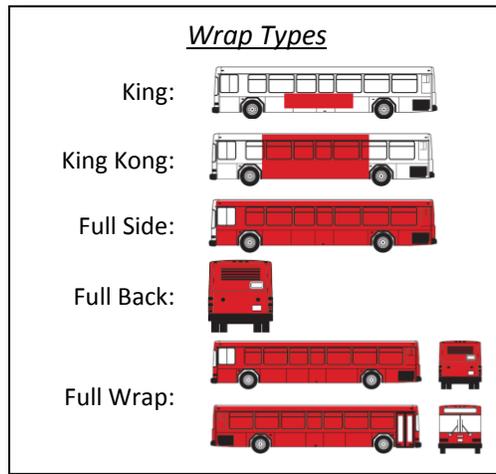


Figure 6. Types of On-Vehicle Bus Wrap Advertising

Table 22. Sample Advertising Fees

Wrap Type	TAPS		Citibus		Waco Transit	
	Fee/Month	Printing Fee	Fee/Month	Printing Fee	Fee/Month	Printing Fee
King	\$435	\$275	\$300	\$225	\$325	\$375
King Kong	\$520	\$454	\$600	\$2500	\$650	\$1100
Full Side	\$600	\$790	\$700	\$4450	—	—
Window	—	—	—	—	\$125	\$146
Full Back	—	—	\$500	\$750	—	—
Full Wrap	—	—	\$1000	\$8250	\$1000	\$9000

Table 23. SWART’s 2015 Advertising Fees

	<i>Fee/Month</i>	<i>Printing Fee</i>
King	\$150	\$180
King Kong	—	—
Full Side	\$225	\$1135
Window	—	—
Full Back	\$175	\$257
Full Wrap	\$400	\$2390

Fundraising Events

SWART intends to plan fundraising events, such as a gala, festival, or flea market, to generate additional revenue and raise awareness of SWART’s services. Successful events, once established in the community, can become a sustainable source of revenue while providing a great opportunity for community engagement.

Bequests and Estate Planning

Donations from bequests either in a monetary form or from other assets are alternative revenue sources that SWART is considering. Donated assets would help SWART and directly help the communities and riders within the SWART service area.

Package Delivery

Greyhound Lines, Inc., provides package express service available at select bus terminals in Texas and across the country. The package express service allows customers to ship small packages on fixed routes if there is space available on the bus. Packages are normally shipped to the destination terminal (counter to counter) or can also be delivered to the address location (door to door). Package delivery remains an avenue of additional revenue that SWART can potentially explore, especially since Greyhound does not service parts of the Middle Rio Grande region.

Objective: Establish Local Financial Support from Middle Rio Grande Municipalities

Table 24 lists the activity for this objective.

Table 24. Activity for Objective: Establish Local Financial Support from Middle Rio Grande Municipalities

Activity	Measurement	Responsible Staff and Entity	Completion Date
Gather support from municipalities in the region willing to dedicate a sales tax percentage for improved services	Number of municipalities	SWART	Breaking ground

Municipalities in the area can vote to dedicate a sales tax percentage for supporting transit in their area. A financial feasibility study is required to determine the viability and specifics of this revenue source. This strategy could be a key part of the solution for future funding challenges.

Objective: Establish Self-Sufficient Financial Strategies and Investments

Table 25 lists the activity for this objective.

Table 25. Activity for Objective: Establish Self-Sufficient Financial Strategies and Investments

Activity	Measurement	Responsible Staff and Entity	Completion Date
Purchase additional property; work with financial institutions on financial planning and investment opportunities	Growth of SWART assets	SWART	Early stages

SWART must consider long-term financial strategies to help prepare for any changes in service and revenue. One financial strategy involves the purchase of one of SWART’s facilities in Eagle Pass. SWART currently leases the property, but the amount of staff and vehicles operating at the site makes the facility a prime opportunity for growth and investment.

Currently, SWART leases a section of the property in Uvalde to AVANCE Head Start. This working relationship is an example of a revenue stream that SWART can implement at other sites. SWART will work to obtain a tenant to rent space in Crystal City, which would provide an additional dedicated revenue stream.

SWART is also exploring traditional investment opportunities with financial institutions in the area. A sound financial plan moving forward can strengthen SWART’s position for expansion and any unforeseen revenue fluctuations.

Objective: Increase Mobility Management Engagement with Transportation Providers in the Region

Table 26 lists the activity for this objective.

Table 26. Activity for Objective: Increase Mobility Management Engagement with Transportation Providers in the Region

Activity	Measurement	Responsible Staff and Entity	Completion Date
Inform businesses and municipalities about how they can contribute to encouraging mobility management solutions	Number of mobility management programs	SWART	Breaking ground

Mobility management focuses on the “creation of partnerships among transportation providers in a particular region, so as to expand the range of viable options that communities have for transportation” (5). Examples include vanpool programs, in which the transportation provider provides a van for riders to carpool, splitting the cost among them.

SWART is currently funded by federal, state, and local revenues. The two largest sources of revenue for SWART are currently Section 5311 federal revenue and medical transportation revenue. The *Increase Investment* goals focus on increasing “other transportation revenues,” “non-transit related revenue,” and “passenger fare revenue.” Figure 7 and Figure 8 show the proportion of revenue sources, and Figure 9 shows the expenses separated by general function.

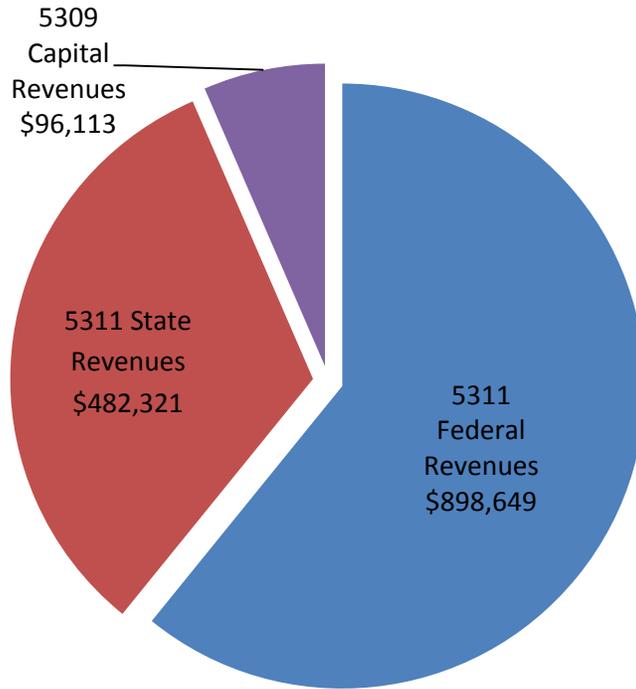


Figure 7. 2015 Federal and State Revenues

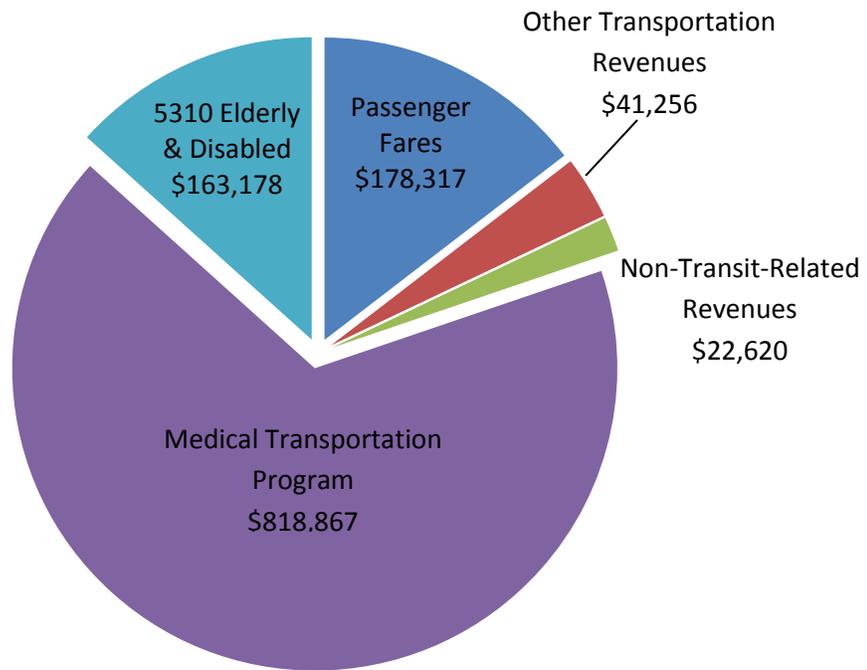


Figure 8. 2015 Local Investment

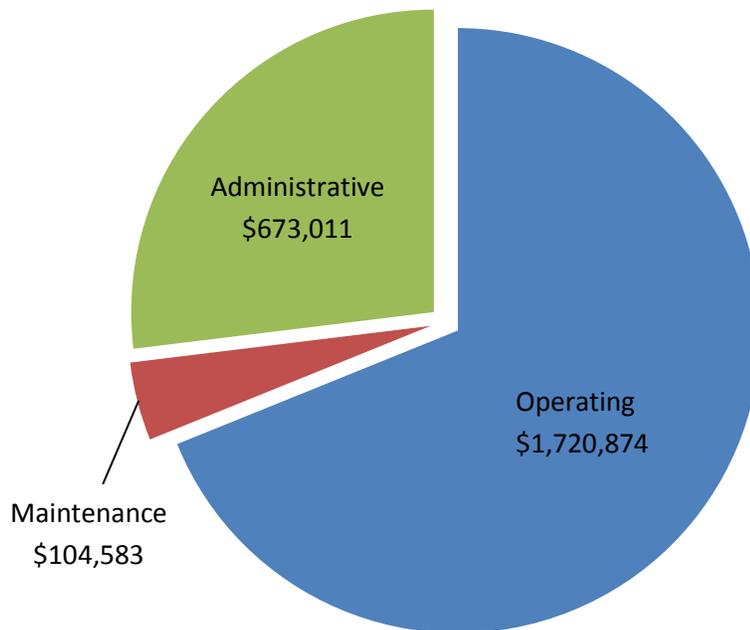


Figure 9. 2015 Expenses by General Function

Levels of Coordination

SWART coordinates with several providers, governmental organizations, and centers throughout the region. Coordination in the region is necessary to establish the levels of service that the Middle Rio Grande region currently has. SWART currently coordinates with the City of Del Rio in providing service training workshops and anticipates expanding that effort to include transportation providers in Val Verde County.

American Medical Response (AMR) is the Medicaid broker assigned to the area. SWART coordinates with AMR and provides medical transportation trips in accordance with a set rate negotiated by SWART. AMR also coordinates with Ride Aid, a medical transportation provider, for Medicaid trips.

Levels of Service

This section documents SWART’s costs to provide service in 2015. This section also forecasts the future cost associated with 3 percent annual growth for five years and the future costs associated with two service growth scenarios.

2015 Level of Service

In 2015, SWART spent nearly \$2.8 million dollars to provide nearly 159,000 unlinked passenger trips. This section summarizes the agency’s performance in 2015 and presents a breakdown of the cost to provide service.

Table 27 lists SWART’s 2015 vehicle hours and vehicle miles. Table 28 lists SWART’s 2015 unlinked passenger trips. Table 29 summarizes SWART’s 2015 operating expenses. SWART’s total operating expenses consist of variable costs (operating, maintenance, and fuel) and fixed costs (administrative and facilities maintenance). Table 30 presents SWARTS performance management metrics for 2015.

Table 27. 2015 SWART Vehicle Hours and Vehicle Miles

Vehicle Hours		% Change 2014–2015	
Revenue	47,343		-17%
Total Vehicle	57,717		-18%
Deadhead Hours	10,374		-20%
Deadhead Ratio	18.00%		-2%
Vehicle Miles		% Change 2014–2015	
Revenue	937,582		-20%
Total Vehicle	1,120,233		-14%
Deadhead Miles	182,651		38%
Deadhead Ratio	16.30%		61%

Table 28. 2015 SWART Passenger Statistics

Unlinked Passenger Trips		% Change 2014–2015	
General Public	64,016		-8%
Medical Transportation Program	38,261		-11%
5310 Elderly and Disabled	31,334		67%
Job Access and Reverse Commute Program	25,114		62%
Unlinked Passenger Trips Total	158,725		0.27%
Average Weekly Passenger Trips	3,052		0.26%
Passengers per Revenue Mile	0.17		21%
Passengers per Revenue Hour	3.35		21%

Table 29. 2015 Operating Expenses by Expense Type

Total Operating Expenses		
Variable Costs	Operating	\$1,720,874
	Maintenance	\$104,583
	Fuel	\$297,470
	<i>Variable Costs Subtotal</i>	<i>\$2,122,927</i>
Fixed Costs	Administrative	\$673,011
	Facilities Maintenance	\$3,453
	<i>Fixed Costs Subtotal</i>	<i>\$676,464</i>
Total Operating Expenses		\$2,799,392

Table 30. 2015 SWART Performance Measures

Operating Statistic	
Operating Cost per Passenger	\$17.64
Operating Cost per Revenue Hour	\$59.13
Operating Cost per Revenue Mile	\$2.99
Subsidy per Passenger	\$16.51
Fare Recovery Ratio	6.37%

Future Service Growth Scenarios

SWART’s demand for service has grown an average of 6 percent per year since the agency’s inception in 2012. While growth is not certain, forecasting potential future costs helps strategize resource allocation and determine future agency goals and policies. This section describes three growth scenarios and presents the forecasted potential costs, vehicle hours and miles, and total unlinked passenger trips associated with each scenario through the year 2020 to present the potential maximum level of performance and cost associated with specific service enhancements. To emphasize simplicity, the scenarios presented in this section assume that growth occurs broadly and at the same rate for all metrics. In actuality, growth per metric will not be identical.

Scenario A: Basic Growth

Scenario A assumes that SWART will experience continued growth without significant surges in demand and without adding additional service. Despite an average annual growth of 6 percent, in 2014, demand for service (as shown by annual passenger trips) declined by 8 percent. Therefore, 6 percent annual growth may not be a sustainable growth rate. Therefore, Scenario A assumes that demand for service and vehicle miles and hours will increase by 3 percent annually through 2020. Table 31 outlines future hours, miles, and passenger trips assuming 3 percent annual growth for each metric.

Table 31. Hours, Miles, and Passengers Trips Assuming 3 Percent Annual Growth through 2020

		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Hours	Revenue	47,343	48,763	50,226	51,733	53,285	54,884
	Total	57,717	59,449	61,232	63,069	64,961	66,910
Miles	Revenue	937,582	965,709	994,681	1,024,521	1,055,257	1,086,915
	Total	1,120,233	1,153,840	1,188,455	1,224,109	1,260,832	1,298,657
Unlinked Pass. Trips		158,725	163,487	168,391	173,443	178,646	184,006

Increases in vehicle miles and hours require additional maintenance and fuel. Therefore, this scenario assumes that variable costs (operating, maintenance, and fuel) will increase at the same rate as service—3 percent each year through 2020. Additionally, this scenario assumes that the cost of consumables (fuel, tires, etc.) will remain constant.

In 2015, fixed costs were equivalent to 32 percent of variable costs. Scenario A assumes that fixed costs (mostly administrative expenses) will continue to reflect the same ratio of variable costs through year 2020.

Table 32 presents SWART’s 2015 costs and the agency’s potential future costs calculated according to these assumptions. Figure 10 graphically presents the growth in costs under Scenario A, organized by variable, fixed, and total cost.

Table 32. Scenario A—Future Costs Assuming Annual 3 Percent Demand Increase

Total Operating Expenses		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Variable Costs	Operating	\$1,720,874	\$1,772,500	\$1,825,675	\$1,880,445	\$1,936,859	\$1,994,965
	Maintenance	\$104,583	\$107,720	\$110,952	\$114,281	\$117,709	\$121,240
	Fuel	\$297,470	\$306,394	\$315,586	\$325,054	\$334,805	\$344,849
	<i>Variable Costs Subtotal</i>	<i>\$2,122,927</i>	<i>\$2,186,615</i>	<i>\$2,252,213</i>	<i>\$2,319,780</i>	<i>\$2,389,373</i>	<i>\$2,461,054</i>
Fixed Costs	Administrative	\$673,011	\$693,202	\$713,998	\$735,418	\$757,480	\$780,204
	Facilities Maintenance	\$3,453	\$3,557	\$3,663	\$3,773	\$3,886	\$4,003
	<i>Fixed Costs Subtotal</i>	<i>\$676,464</i>	<i>\$696,758</i>	<i>\$717,661</i>	<i>\$739,191</i>	<i>\$761,366</i>	<i>\$784,207</i>
Total Operating Expenses		\$2,799,392	\$2,883,373	\$2,969,874	\$3,058,970	\$3,150,739	\$3,245,262

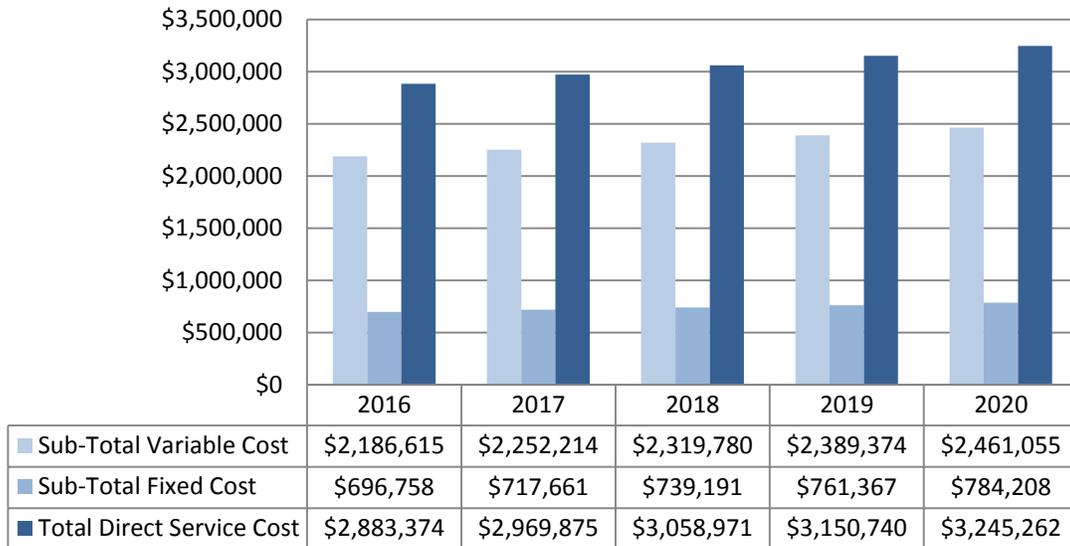


Figure 10. Scenario A—Future Costs by Cost Type Assuming Annual 3 Percent Demand Increase

Scenario B: Service Available Seven Days per Week

In 2014, the KFH Group conducted surveys through the SWART service area and in the city of Del Rio. Among other findings, it was determined that riders were interested in SWART providing weekend transit service. Scenario B assumes that the agency will begin to offer full transit service seven days per week and 365 days per year. While it is likely that if SWART expands service, it will not be as broad as this scenario assumes, the resulting forecasted hours, miles, passenger trips, and costs present a potential maximum for each metric.

Scenario B assumes that demand for service will be equal on every day of the week. In order to forecast costs related to expanded service, 2015 costs must be expanded to reflect increased service provision. To calculate expanded 2015 costs, each cost is divided by the number of days service is currently provided.² To determine the cost of providing service every day of the year, the cost of service per service day is multiplied by the number of days in a calendar year—365. Table 33 summarizes the calculations used to expand 2015 costs to estimate the cost of providing service seven days per week and 365 days per year in 2015. Table 34 presents the same calculations to estimate the additional hours, miles, and passengers trips that would have occurred if service were provided seven days per week and 365 days per year in 2015.

² SWART provides service 52 weeks per year. Fifty-two divided by five (Monday through Friday service) results in 255 total days of service per year under current service provision.

Table 33. Expanded 2015 Costs to Achieve Cost of Daily Service

<i>Operational Costs</i>	2015 Standard Service		Per Week Day of Service		Total Assuming 7 Days/Week Service
Operating	\$1,720,874	/ 255	\$6,749	× 365	\$2,463,212
Maintenance	\$104,583	/ 255	\$410	× 365	\$149,697
Fuel	\$297,470	/ 255	\$1,167	× 365	\$425,791
Administrative	\$673,011	/ 255	\$2,639	× 365	\$963,329
Facility Maintenance	\$3,453	/ 255	\$14	× 365	\$4,943
Total	\$2,799,392	/ 255	\$10,978	× 365	\$4,006,973

Table 34. Expanded 2015 Hours, Miles, and Passenger Trips to Achieve Daily Service Stats

<i>Operational Statistics</i>	2015 Standard Service		Per Week Day of Service		Total Assuming 7 Days/Week Service
Revenue Hours	47,343	/ 255	186	× 365	67,765
Total Hours	57,717	/ 255	226	× 365	82,615
Revenue Miles	937,582	/ 255	3,677	× 365	1,342,029
Total Miles	1,120,233	/ 255	4,393	× 365	1,603,471
Unlinked Pass. Trips	158,725	/ 255	622	× 365	227,195

Future costs, hours, miles, and passengers trips are calculated using expanded 2015 statistics, as presented in Table 33 and Table 34. As in Scenario A, the future calculations assume that demand for service will increase by 3 percent annually through 2020, that variable costs (operating, maintenance, and fuel) will increase at the same rate as service demand, that the cost of consumables (fuel, tires, etc.) will remain constant, and that fixed costs (mostly administrative expenses) will continue to reflect the same ratio of variable costs through year 2020. Unlike Scenario A, fixed costs increase to 33 percent of the variable costs under Scenario B because service is provided seven days per week and 365 days per year. Lastly, Scenario B assumes that the cost of facilities maintenance will remain unchanged from 2015 actual costs.

Table 35 lists the future hour, miles, and passenger trips according to these assumptions. Table 36 presents SWART’s 2015 expanded costs (assuming seven days per week and 365 days per year service) and the agency’s potential future costs calculated according to these assumptions. Figure 11 graphically presents the growth in costs under Scenario B, organized by variable, fixed, and total cost.

Table 35. Future Hours, Miles, and Passenger Trips Assuming Service Seven Days per Week and 365 Days per Year

		2015 Expanded	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Hours	Revenue	67,765	69,798	71,892	74,049	76,271	67,765
	Total	82,615	85,093	87,646	90,275	92,983	82,615
Miles	Revenue	1,342,029	1,382,290	1,423,759	1,466,471	1,510,466	1,342,029
	Total	1,603,471	1,651,575	1,701,122	1,752,156	1,804,720	1,603,471
	Unlinked Pass. Trips	158,725	227,195	234,010	241,031	248,262	255,710

Table 36. Scenario B—Future Costs Assuming Service Seven Days per Week and 365 Days per Year

Total Operating Expenses		2015 Expanded	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Variable Costs	Operating	\$2,463,212	\$2,537,108	\$2,613,221	\$2,691,618	\$2,772,367	\$2,855,538
	Maintenance	\$149,697	\$154,188	\$158,814	\$163,578	\$168,486	\$173,540
	Fuel	\$425,791	\$438,565	\$451,722	\$465,273	\$479,232	\$493,608
	Variable Costs Subtotal	\$3,038,700	\$3,129,861	\$3,223,757	\$3,320,470	\$3,420,084	\$3,522,686
Fixed Costs	Administrative	\$963,329	\$992,229	\$1,021,996	\$1,052,656	\$1,084,236	\$1,116,763
	Facilities Maintenance	\$3,453	\$3,557	\$3,664	\$3,774	\$3,887	\$4,003
	Fixed Costs Subtotal	\$966,783	\$995,786	\$1,025,660	\$1,056,430	\$1,088,123	\$1,120,766
Total Operating Expenses		\$4,005,483	\$4,125,647	\$4,249,417	\$4,376,899	\$4,508,206	\$4,643,452

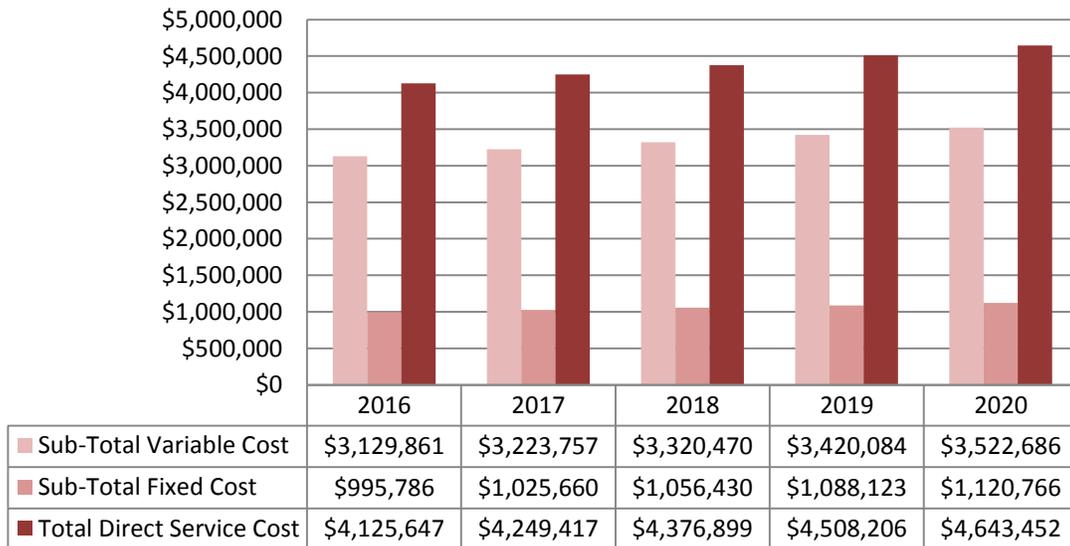


Figure 11. Scenario B—Future Costs Assuming Service Seven Days per Week and 365 Days per Year

Scenario C: Standard Service plus School Transportation

Public transportation acts as a vital link for students. To accommodate this segment of the population, SWART could increase the amount of service available in the morning and afternoon to provide transport to and from home and school for students. Scenario C explores the future costs associated with adopting such service. Specifically, this scenario assumes that SWART will begin offering two additional morning hours of service and two additional afternoon hours of service Monday through Friday—a total of four additional service hours per weekday.

As in Scenario A, this calculation assumes that demand for service will increase by 3 percent annually through 2020, that variable costs (operating, maintenance, and fuel) will increase at the same rate as service demand, that the cost of consumables (fuel, tires, etc.) will remain constant, and that fixed costs (mostly administrative expenses) will continue to reflect the same ratio of variable costs through year 2020. Unlike Scenario A, fixed costs for service provided seven days per week and 365 days per year increase to 33 percent of the variable costs under Scenario C. Lastly, Scenario C assumes that the cost of facilities maintenance will remain unchanged from 2015 actual costs.

Scenario C assumes that demand for service will be equal on every day of the week. As under Scenario B, to forecast future costs related to the addition of school service, 2015 costs must be expanded to reflect increased service provision. To calculate expanded 2015 costs, each cost is divided by the number of hours service is currently provided. To calculate the number of hours that SWART currently offers service, it is assumed that SWART offers 12 hours of service each weekday and that a year contains 255 weekdays. To determine the total hours of service provided under this assumption, 12 hours is multiplied by 255 weekdays. This calculation determines that under the above assumptions, SWART provides 3,060 hours of service per year. To determine the cost of a single hour of service, each service cost is divided by the total annual service hours. This calculation results in the cost of service per service hour. To determine the cost of providing service for an additional four hours every week day of the year, the additional number of service hours (4 hours multiplied by 255 days of service per year) is multiplied by the cost per service hour.

In summary, the assumptions discussed are as follows:

- SWART averages 12 hours of service per day Monday through Friday.
- Assuming 12 hours of service per weekday and 255 days per service year, SWART's total service hours are 3,060.
- The total cost per hour for current service is \$916.
- Four additional service hours per 255 service days is 1,020.
- Total service hours per year with four additional service hours per weekday are 4,080.

Table 37 summarizes the calculations used to expand 2015 costs to estimate the cost of providing service for four additional hours Monday through Friday. Table 38 presents the same calculations to estimate the additional hours, miles, and passengers trips that would have occurred if service were provided for four additional hours per day Monday through Friday in 2015.

Table 37. Expanded 2015 Costs to Achieve Cost of Additional Weekday School Service

<i>Operational Costs</i>	2015 Standard Service		Per Week Day Hour of Service		Total Assuming +4 Service Hours per Weekday
Operating	\$1,720,874	/ 3,060	\$562	× 4,080	\$2,294,499
Maintenance	\$104,583	/ 3,060	\$34	× 4,080	\$139,444
Fuel	\$297,470	/ 3,060	\$97	× 4,080	\$396,627
Administrative	\$673,011	/ 3,060	\$220	× 4,080	\$897,348
Facility Maintenance	\$3,453	/ 3,060	\$1	× 4,080	\$4,604
Total	\$2,802,450	/ 3,060	\$916	× 4,080	\$3,736,600

Table 38. Expanded 2015 Hours, Miles, and Passenger Trips to Achieve Four Additional Service Hours Monday through Friday

<i>Operational Statistics</i>	2015 Standard Service		Per Week Day of Service		Total Assuming 7 Days/Week Service
Revenue Hours	47,343	/ 3,060	15	× 4,080	63,124
Total Hours	57,717	/ 3,060	19	× 4,080	76,956
Revenue Miles	937,582	/ 3,060	306	× 4,080	1,250,109
Total Miles	1,120,233	/ 3,060	366	× 4,080	1,493,644
Unlinked Pass. Trips	158,725	/ 3,060	52	× 4,080	211,633

Future service costs are calculated using the 2015 cost of providing service for an additional four hours each weekday (as presented in Table 37) as a base cost. As in Scenario A and B, this calculation assumes that demand for service will increase by 3 percent annually through 2020, that variable costs (operating, maintenance, and fuel) will increase at the same rate as service demand, that the cost of consumables (fuel, tires, etc.) will remain constant, and that fixed costs (mostly administrative expenses) will continue to reflect the same ratio of variable costs through year 2020. Under Scenario C, fixed costs represent 32 percent of the variable costs. Lastly, Scenario C assumes that the cost of facilities maintenance will remain unchanged from 2015 actual costs.

Table 39 lists the future hours, miles, and passenger trips according to these assumptions. Table 40 presents SWART’s 2015 expanded costs (assuming four additional service hours per 255 yearly service days) and the agency’s potential future costs calculated according to the previously discussed assumptions. Figure 12 graphically presents the growth in costs under Scenario C, organized by variable, fixed, and total cost.

Table 39. Future Hours, Miles, and Passenger Trips Assuming Four Additional Service Hours per 255 Yearly Service Days

		2015 Expanded	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Hours	Revenue	63,124	65,018	66,968	68,977	71,047	73,178
	Total	76,956	79,265	81,643	84,092	86,615	89,213
Miles	Revenue	1,250,109	1,287,613	1,326,241	1,366,028	1,407,009	1,449,219
	Total	1,493,644	1,538,453	1,584,607	1,632,145	1,681,109	1,731,543
	Unlinked Pass. Trips	158,725	211,633	217,982	224,522	231,257	238,195

Table 40. Scenario C—Future Costs Assuming Four Additional Service Hours per 255 Yearly Service Days

Total Operating Expenses		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Variable Costs	Operating	\$2,294,499	\$2,363,334	\$2,434,234	\$2,507,261	\$2,582,478	\$2,659,953
	Maintenance	\$139,444	\$143,627	\$147,936	\$152,374	\$156,945	\$161,654
	Fuel	\$396,627	\$408,526	\$420,782	\$433,405	\$446,407	\$459,800
	Variable Costs Subtotal	\$2,830,570	\$2,915,487	\$3,002,952	\$3,093,040	\$3,185,831	\$3,281,406
Fixed Costs	Administrative	\$897,348	\$924,268	\$951,996	\$980,556	\$1,009,973	\$1,040,272
	Facilities Maintenance	\$3,453	\$3,557	\$3,664	\$3,774	\$3,887	\$4,003
	Fixed Costs Subtotal	\$900,801	\$927,825	\$955,660	\$984,330	\$1,013,860	\$1,044,276
Total Operating Expenses		\$3,731,371	\$3,843,312	\$3,958,612	\$4,077,370	\$4,199,691	\$4,325,682

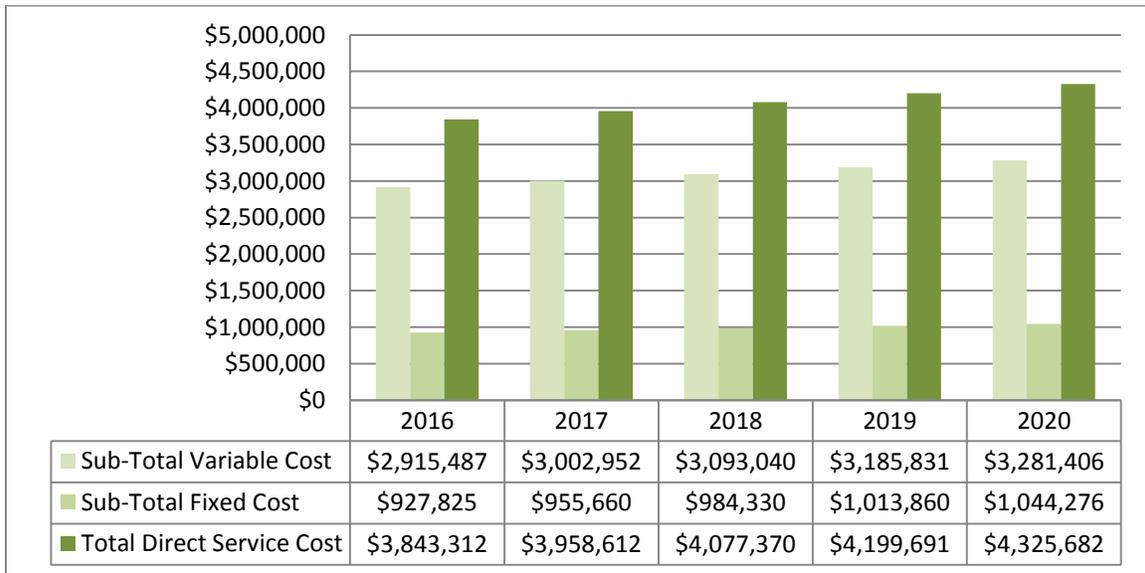


Figure 12. Scenario C—Future Costs Assuming Four Additional Service Hours per 255 Yearly Service Days

Summary of Future Service Growth Scenarios

This section presented three potential service growth scenarios:

- Scenario A: maintain the existing level of service with basic growth in demand for service.
- Scenario B: expand the level of service to offer service seven days per week and 365 days per year.
- Scenario C: expand the level of service to provide school-focused service Monday through Friday (four additional hours per weekday).

According to the strategies developed as part the agency’s coordination planning efforts, it is likely that SMART will make future service modifications that represent some elements of each scenario presented in this section.

Figure 13 shows the total cost for each future service scenario by year from 2016 through 2020.

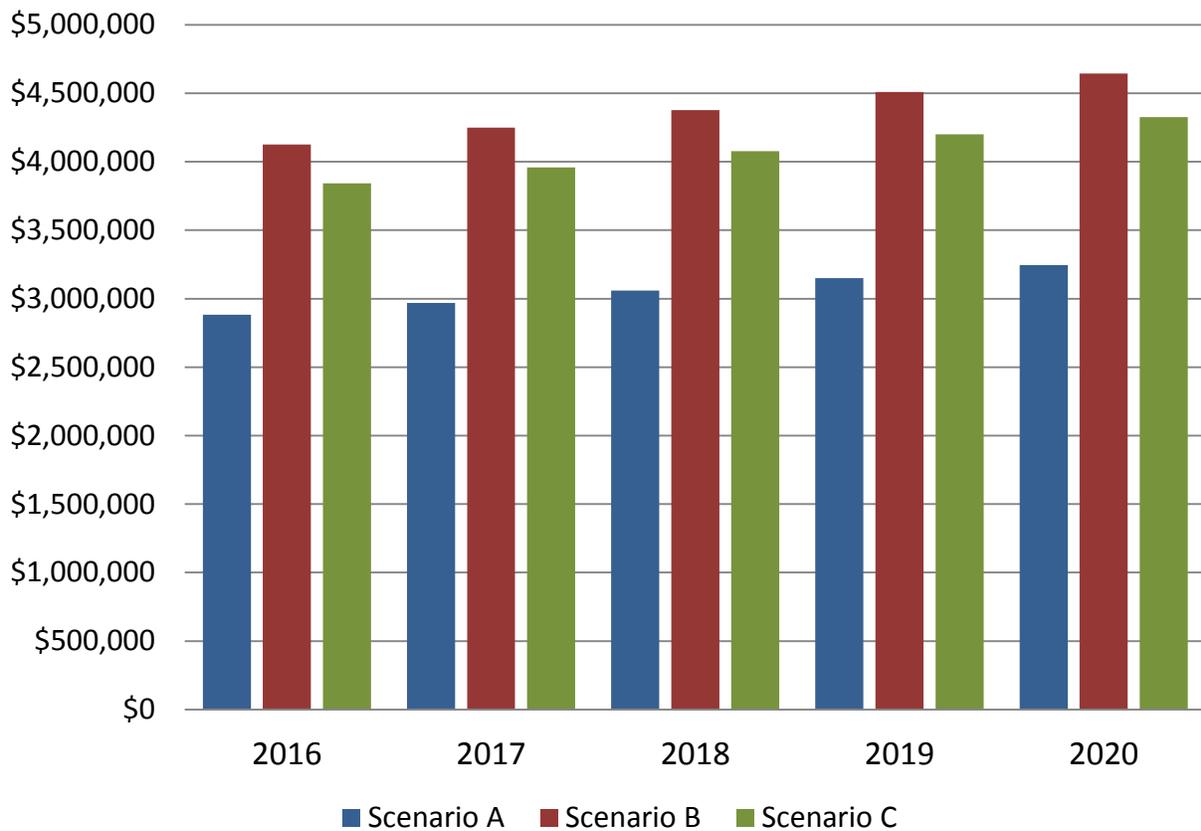


Figure 13. Comparison of Scenario Costs 2016–2020

Future Outlook: 2020 and Potential Urbanized Area Designations

Currently, no urbanized areas exist within the nine-county Middle Rio Grande region. The addition of urbanized areas to the region has significant funding and federal regulation impacts. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, urbanized areas are defined as “50,000 or more people”(6). Two micropolitan statistical areas have reached that threshold and could be designated as urbanized by 2020—Del Rio and Eagle Pass. Table 41 shows yearly total micropolitan statistical area population estimates for the region’s three largest cities – Del Rio, Eagle Pass, and Uvalde.

Table 41. Future Population Projections

Micropolitan Statistical Area	2010	2015	2020
Del Rio	48,879	51,217	53,256
Eagle Pass	54,258	58,947	63,502
Uvalde	26,405	27,543	28,593

Source: Texas State Data Center

A census designation of rural, small urban, or urban is a significant factor in determining eligibility for federal and state grant funding. Rural areas are eligible to draw from Federal Transit Administration Section 5311 Formula Grants for Rural Areas funding for operational and capital expenditures. When areas are designated urban, the funding structure changes, and the transit provider can no longer draw Section 5311 funds for those areas. Other funding options, such as Section 5307 Urbanized Area Formula Funding, exist. These funding options are:

- **Section 5307 Urbanized Area Formula Grants:**
 - Section 5307 funding can be used for capital projects, planning, Job Access and Reverse Commute Programs, and operating expenses in urbanized areas with a population of 200,000 people or less. SWART will be able to use Section 5307 funds for operating expenses because future forecasts for the Middle Rio Grande area do not anticipate any urbanized areas near 200,000 people.
 - Funding match requirements:
 - Federal share is 80 percent for capital assistance.
 - Federal share is 50 percent for operating assistance.
 - Federal share is 80 percent for Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) non-fixed-route paratransit service, using up to 10 percent of a recipient’s apportionment.
- **Section 5339 Bus and Bus Facilities:**
 - Section 5339 funding provides capital funding for purchasing, replacing, or rehabilitating buses or for constructing bus maintenance facilities. Previously, this section was labeled Section 5309 funding. Funding from this section is especially important for SWART’s plan to expand and build a new maintenance facility.
- **Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities:**
 - Section 5310 provides funding for expanding mobility services for seniors and persons with disabilities. The New Freedom Program (Section 5317) was consolidated into Section 5310

funding. Funding can be used for traditional and non-traditional capital projects in addition to ADA funding for paratransit.

- **Section 5314 Technical Assistance and Standards Development:**
 - Section 5314 provides funding for technical assistance and the development of voluntary and consensus-based transit standards. This includes technical assistance for compliance with ADA standards or other industry-based or voluntary standards. Grants from this section require a 20 percent match.

The likelihood of Eagle Pass becoming an urbanized area is a potential change that SWART and the City of Eagle Pass should monitor and anticipate. Transit services throughout an urbanized area are not eligible for Section 5311 funding for rural areas. Instead, if Eagle Pass is designated an urbanized area, to continue providing service in the Eagle Pass area, SWART will continue to apply to TxDOT to receive Section 5307 grant funding for small urbanized areas (areas between 50,000 and 200,000 people). SWART's matching requirements will remain the same—20 percent state/local match for capital, planning, and administrative costs in exchange for 80 percent federal funds. Small urbanized area funding can also be used for operating costs. Using these funds for operating costs requires a 50/50 match.

Despite matching similarities, the formula to award Section 5307 funding is different from the rural allocation. For Section 5311 rural funding, formula grants are based on the population of the area and the overall land area of the district. For Section 5307 small urban funding, the formula is based on the population of the area and the density (persons per square mile) of the small urbanized area.

A working relationship between SWART and the City of Eagle Pass has the potential to increase the likelihood of obtaining revenue assistance in the form of a municipal tax allotment, fee-based contract(s), or other means. It is important for the city to plan accordingly and expect these changes as 2020 draws closer. These scenarios are presented in this document as next steps for future planning activities and to generate awareness of upcoming challenges beyond this document's five-year scope.

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