



Item #13

DATE June 2, 2021
TO GCTD Board of Directors
FROM Matt Miller, Planning Manager *MM*
SUBJECT Receive Presentation on 2021 Community Economic Impact of GCTD

SUMMARY

The attached Economic Impact Report quantifies and describes how local jobs and incomes are generated through the operations, maintenance of buses and capital projects at GCTD using the “My Economic Impact Tool” developed by the American Public Transportation Association (APTA). The tool is provided to help transit agencies communicate the important role that continued and sustained investment in public transit plays in their local economies. The Economic Impact Report for Gold Coast Transit District uses budget information from the fiscal year 2019-2020, and includes information on the following areas:

- Direct and In-direct jobs supported by both agency operations and capital expenditures
- Direct and subsequent (multiplier) effects to the local economy
- Overview of the diverse occupational mix of jobs supported by transit investments
- GCTD’s role during the COVID-19 pandemic

A presentation summarizing key highlights of the Economic Impact Report for GCTD was presented at the April Technical Advisory Committee.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the GCTD Board of Directors receive and file this report and presentation. This report is for information only.

GENERAL MANAGER’S CONCURRENCE

Steven P. Brown
General Manager

GOLD COAST TRANSIT DISTRICT

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GCTD'S IMPACT ON THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

Economic Impact Report
June 2021



GOLD COAST TRANSIT DISTRICT

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The operations of Gold Coast Transit District (GCTD) play a significant role in the economy of Ventura County. This report describes how local jobs and incomes are generated by the operation of GCTD. The agency's ongoing investment in its service operations, maintenance, and capital projects in fiscal year 19-20 supported **433 jobs representing \$28 million of worker income in the service region. This impact can also be seen as supporting \$56 million of area business sales.** This activity includes people employed directly by the agency or in public transit construction projects, as well as jobs as contractors and suppliers who provide goods and materials to the agency. Income earned by employees is also present in the economy, supporting local businesses such as restaurants and retail stores. Thus, public money invested in public transit not only supports improved access for residents and visitors, but it also returns to the community in the form of additional jobs and income.

- GCTD operating and capital budget has supported 235 direct jobs plus 93 indirect and 105 induced jobs.
- Those jobs combined provide approximately \$28 million in personal income.
- A total of 211 jobs in 14 various sectors are supported by GCTD's **operations budget**.
- A total of 24 jobs in 14 various sector types are supported by GCTD's **capital budget**.
- In the Gold Coast Transit District service area, the industry that relies most heavily on transit for access to their workforce is the retail trade industry across all jurisdictions, except Port Hueneme.

II. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Economic Impact report is to demonstrate the specific economic value of Gold Coast Transit District to the local area. This Economic Impact Study helps stakeholders better understand how essential investing in transit is to the local economy. The study may also serve a variety of purposes from general knowledge of GCTD's impact and contribution to the local economy, to data that could support transit funding discussions, to long-range public transportation investment and planning strategies.

III. ABOUT GOLD COAST TRANSIT DISTRICT

Gold Coast Transit District provides public fixed-route and paratransit service in the cities of Ojai, Oxnard, Port Hueneme, Ventura and the unincorporated areas of Ventura County. The fleet includes 61 buses, all powered by clean natural gas supplied by an on-site CNG fueling station, and 28 paratransit vehicles with 80% powered by natural gas. In FY 19-20 GCTD, the largest public transportation operator in Ventura County, provided 2.9 million fixed-route passenger trips and 95,277 GO ACCESS trips. Like transit agencies across the country, GCTD experienced ridership declines due to the COVID-19 outbreak and public health directives. Following the State of California Stay At Home Orders, the County of Ventura instituted the "Stay Well at Home" order on March 20, 2020.

The order limited non-essential activities to prevent and reduce community transmission of the disease. As a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic and related restrictions, fixed-route and GO ACCESS ridership declined by 16% and 19%, respectively.

Despite the unprecedented economic impact brought by the COVID-19 pandemic, GCTD recognizes the important role its services play and continues to provide service to critical jobs and services ensuring access to the community.

Mission

GCTD's mission is to provide safe, responsive, convenient, efficient, and environmentally responsible public transportation that serves the diverse needs of our community.

Statistics

- Service Area: Ojai, Oxnard, Port Hueneme, Ventura & County of Ventura
- Population Served: 375,000
- FY 19-20 Average Weekday Passengers: 9,175
- FY 19-20 Fixed-Route Annual Passengers: 2.9 million
- FY 19-20 Fixed-Route Annual Revenue Miles (approx.): 1.9 million
- FY 19-20 GO ACCESS Paratransit Annual Passengers: 95,277
- 61 - fixed-route buses
- 28 - paratransit buses and vans



Board of Directors

The District is governed by a Board of Directors. Each of the District's member jurisdictions appoints one elected official from its governing body to serve on the Board of Directors and a second to serve as an alternate member. The Board of Directors regular monthly meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month at 10:00 a.m.

GCTD's Leadership

The District's General Manager is appointed by, and reports to, the Board of Directors. The General Manager is charged with carrying out the Board's policies and directives and has full charge of the operation of the District's services, facilities, and administration of business affairs. The District's Management Team is comprised of (listed in alphabetical order by department):

- **General Manager - Steven P. Brown**
- Assistant General Manager – vacant
- Director of Finance – Dawn Perkins
- Director of Human Resources – Debbie Williams
- Director of Planning and Marketing – Vanessa Rauschenberger
- Director of Operations and Maintenance – James Beck

Employees

The District has **205** employees, the majority of whom operate or maintain buses. Service Employees International Union Local 721 represents all bus operators, most maintenance employees and five administrative staff members. Teamsters Local Union 186 represents Operations and Maintenance Supervisors. GCTD contracts with MV Transportation for the operation of GO ACCESS Paratransit.

IV. METHODOLOGY

The Economic Impact analysis was based on the spending budget of \$27,053,900 in FY 19-20 and an economic impact model for the region through *My Economic Impact Tool* provided by the American Public Transportation Association (APTA).

GCTD's operating and capital budget expenditures for FY 19-20 were used as inputs for this analysis. Because the largest component of the operating budget is salaries and wages and the capital budget is primarily made up of major maintenance and rehabilitation, equipment purchases; the impacts of the two budgets will be different.

GCTD provides capital and operating data to the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) National Transit Database (NTD). The National Transit Database provides comprehensive reports of GCTD's operating and capital expenses. The reports also were used as inputs in APTA's *My Economic Impact Tool*. *My Economic Impact Tool* provides an economic

model of the local economy which is required to track these effects and show how they lead to a broad mix of job types, affecting a range of businesses. APTA provides its members with an economic accounting framework and model that can track each agency's unique pattern of capital and operations spending and apply locally specific economic multipliers to show the broad range of jobs and income generated by it. This tool can be accessed at www.apta.com/myeconomicimpact.

Using GCTD's operating and capital budgets, My Economic Impact tool generates the following categories of effects to illustrate GCTD's impact on the local economy.

- a. **Direct Effects** - jobs and wages for GCTD's own workers;
- b. **Indirect Effects** - purchases from vendors who supply equipment, materials, and services, thus supporting jobs and wages at vendor companies; and
- c. **Induced Effects** - the re-spending of worker wages on consumer purchases, which support additional jobs and wages in retail and service sectors of the economy.

This study also notes the extent to which commuters depend on transit to get to work, as that indicates the extent of transit-dependent jobs and wages in the region (dependency effects).

V. ECONOMIC IMPACT

The section below summarizes the local economic impact of GCTD's transit service in the categories of: **Operations & Maintenance (O&M)** and **Capital Investment**. The summary report is shown in table 1. The four key metrics reported on are jobs, labor income (wages and fringe benefits), output (sales), and the value-added portion of "sales." Output is a measure of sales from production. Value added is the difference between output and inputs and represents the value of labor and capital used to produce the output.

For direct effects, output will equate to the value of the total GCTD operations and maintenance budget. Value added is also composed of wages paid to workers less gross operating surplus (profits). However, in the case of transit agencies, there is no profit and so value added is set to be the same as payroll.

Table 1: Local Economic Impact of Gold Coast Transit District in FY 19-20

Impact Type	Employment	Labor Income (\$ in millions)	Value Added (\$ in millions)	Output (\$ in millions)
Direct Effect	235	\$19.22	\$19.70	\$30.08
Transit Operations & Maintenance	211	\$17.99	\$17.99	\$26.88
Transit Capital Investment	24	\$1.23	\$1.71	\$3.20
Indirect (Supplier) Effect	93	\$5.20	\$6.18	\$12.17
Driven by Operations & Maintenance	89	\$4.98	\$5.79	\$11.51
Driven by Capital Investment	4	\$0.23	\$0.39	\$0.66
Induced (Income Re-spending) Effect	105	\$4.52	\$8.56	\$14.01
Driven by Operations & Maintenance	99	\$4.24	\$8.03	\$13.14
Driven by Capital Investment	7	\$0.28	\$0.53	\$0.87
Total Effect	433	\$28.95	\$34.44	\$56.26
Driven by Operations & Maintenance	399	\$27.21	\$31.81	\$51.53
Driven by Capital Investment	35	\$1.74	\$2.63	\$4.73

DIRECT EFFECTS

The direct effects include the direct activities of Gold Coast Transit District's operations. The direct effect is usually defined in terms of output or employment. GCTD's operating budget is largely salaries, wages and benefits paid to employees, the majority of whom operate or maintain buses.

Operations & Maintenance (O&M) Investment:

For O&M in table 1 above, the Direct Effect indicates that GCTD has supported **211 staff; GCTD's annual payroll for those staff is \$17 million; the agency produces \$26 million in transit services;** and the value-added on those services is \$17 million.



In fact, GCTD's fixed-route transit and GOACCESS services have created and retained jobs contributing to worker income during the pandemic. GCTD conducted a survey in August 2020 asking current and former riders for feedback on their priorities as it relates to COVID-19. Cleaning buses was listed as a top priority of passengers, to which GCTD responded by recruiting five new facility and bus cleaners to ensure that buses are sanitized and ready for service. These jobs were a direct result of the pandemic and contribute to increases in employment opportunities and personal income in the local economy.

Additionally, GCTD contracts with MV



Transportation to provide ACCESS Paratransit Service. The annual operational

expenses for MV Transportation are over \$3.9 million **employing approximately 35 personnel.**

During the pandemic, GCTD was able to retain jobs and further contribute to the local community. GOACCESS Paratransit and its services contractor, MV Transportation, partnered with the team from Ventura County Area Agency on Aging (VCAAA) to deliver meals to vulnerable populations, many of whom were not able to leave their home or place of shelter. Together, they delivered over 100,000 meals since

Example to illustrate GCTD's direct

impact: GCTD uses its operations and maintenance budget to provide fixed route and GO ACCESS transit services. GCTD uses energy to operate its administrative facility to maintain the vehicles and the CNG fuel station to help keep buses moving. Inputs are the costs of operating the facility, the operational budget used to provide fixed route operations and support the MV Transportation contract. Since GCTD does not make profits, value added is the compensation to employees operating the vehicles.

the program began in March until it ended in July. These types of responses allowed MV Transportation to keep operators' jobs while the demand for service was reduced, all while benefiting vulnerable populations in the local community.

Capital Investment:

In table 1, **Direct Effects under Capital indicate some 24 jobs from construction firms and construction related jobs. The most significant capital project in GCTD's history is the completion of the new Administration and Operations Facility. The construction of the new facility was completed in 2019.** GCTD celebrated the ribbon cutting on July 13th, 2019 and operations began on July 28, 2019 from 1901 Auto Center Drive in north Oxnard. The final stages of the construction provided indirect jobs and income to the local community.



INDIRECT EFFECTS

The indirect effects capture the impacts on firms that supply the activity defined in the direct effects(s).

Operations & Maintenance (O&M) Investment:

In table 1, under O&M, the Indirect Effect reflects GCTD's 'outside of agency' purchases that are adjusted for "local" procurement. This amounts to 89 jobs, up 23% from FY 17-18 Economic Impact report year, across various sectors that provide goods & services; with annual labor income of \$4.9 million, up 63% from FY 17-18 Economic Impact report year; **local indirect transactions represent \$11 million in local sales; and the value-added on**

those sales is \$5.79 million. The jobs and labor income increases are a direct result of operating a facility five times larger than the old facility located at 301 E. Third Street.

As a result of the move, there was an increase in contract service expenses from a variety of sources mainly software and technology maintenance contracts. These contract services include expenses for computer



hardware/software maintenance, office equipment maintenance, temporary help, janitorial, security, landscape, and other services.

Maintenance costs for FY 19-20 were 31% higher than FY 18-19 primarily due to higher costs of utilities for the new facility as well as disinfecting buses for passengers. Additionally, maintenance of vehicles makes up a significant portion of GCTD's budget. Maintenance costs amounted to \$4,199,157 in FY 19-20 which included contracted maintenance repairs and services, repair parts, and operations and maintenance of the CNG station.

Capital Investment:

For Indirect Effects under the *Capital context*, **this amounts to 7 local jobs across various sectors that provide goods & services; with annual labor income of \$230,000; local indirect transactions represent \$660,000 in local sales;** and the value-added on those sales is \$390,000.



During FY 19-20, GCTD added \$7,122,170 in capital assets. Some of the major additions included \$2,893,479 for 5 compressed natural gas-powered buses, \$237,018 for 8 electric powered vehicles, and \$1,936,497 for the Bus Repower initiative. The 8 Zero Emission battery electric Nissan Leaf's were purchased from Team Nissan in the City of Oxnard directly contributing to local jobs and worker income.

INDUCED EFFECTS

The induced effects capture the impacts of spending by households receiving income based on direct and indirect effects. These have influences on the local economy from changes in household spending whenever income (earned income) changes. When consumer spending increases, and some portion of that is with local businesses, jobs are created, and those jobs are paid wages and benefits.

*Driven by GCTD's Operations & Maintenance and Capital Investment, **105 local jobs have been sustained and are associated with an increase in local household spending, paying \$4.5 million in wages and benefits, associated with \$14 million in local sales** and \$8.5 million in value-added on those sales.*



Approximately 84 percent of employees live within GCTD's service area and about 96 percent live within the Ventura County region, including the service area. Earned income among employees who work and reside within the service area and the County contribute to the overall consumer spending benefiting the overall economy of Ventura County.

Another induced effect is the savings that individuals gain from riding public transportation. The average annual savings is \$10,160 for individuals who ride public transportation, according to the American Public Transportation Association's (APTA) June Transit Savings Report (APTA, June 2018). When individuals ride public transportation their travel costs are lowered freeing up a greater share of their disposable income to be spent on living expenses like food and housing, more pertinent and imperative during challenging economic times such as a pandemic.

JOBS IMPACT BY SECTOR AND BY OCCUPATION

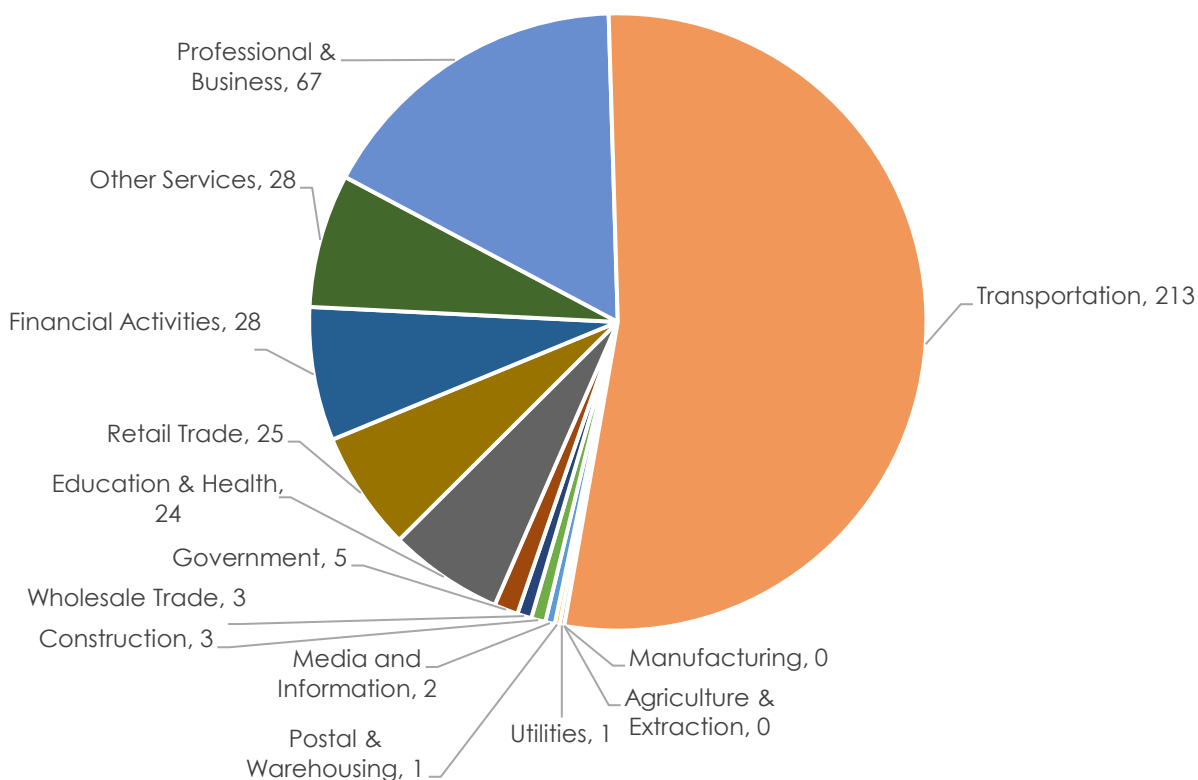
This economic impact analysis reports on the jobs by sector and occupation type that are supported by GCTD's operations and capital budget. GCTD's operations and capital budget supports jobs in 14 different sectors and in 23 various occupation areas within the local economy of GCTD's service area.

Note that jobs reported under “Other Services” for Direct Effects are primarily in maintenance and repair services, while those reported as “Other Services” under Induced Effects correspond to industries supported by consumer spending, such as restaurants. “Other Service” in both Direct and Induced Effects are combined in the first two graphs below.

JOBS BY SECTOR – OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE

A total of 400 jobs in 12 various sectors within the local economy of GCTD’s service area is supported by GCTD’s operations budget. Jobs in the Transportation sector occupy the greatest number of combined total jobs at 213 jobs. The second highest sector is Business and Professional Services which comprise of 67 jobs. The third sector with highest jobs is Financial Activities and Other Services with combined total of 28 jobs each between all three categories.

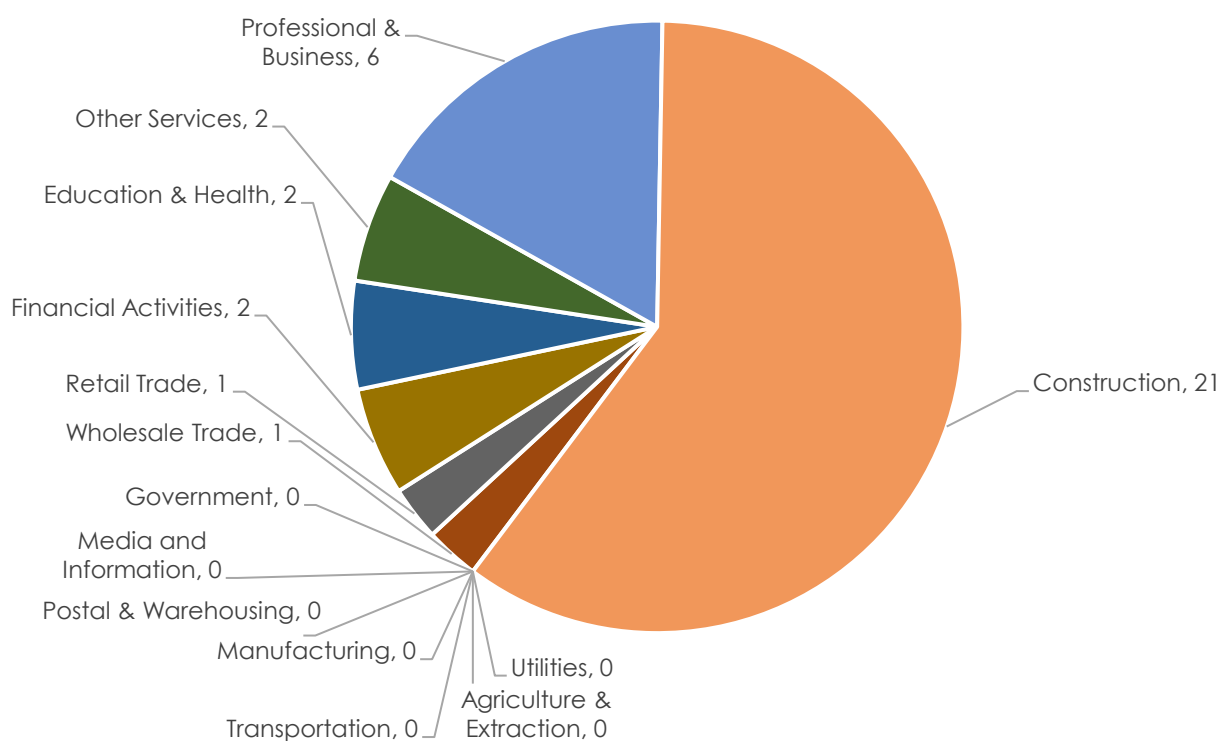
Figure 1: Jobs by Sector, Operations & Maintenance (FY 19-20)



Jobs by Sector - Capital

A total of 35 jobs in 7 various sectors are supported by GCTD's capital budget within the local economy of GCTD's service area. The Construction sector comprises the most jobs within direct, indirect and induced jobs at a total of 21 jobs. Professional and Business amount to 6 jobs as the second highest. The Other Services, Education & Health, and Financial Activities sectors amount to 2 jobs each as the third highest sector.

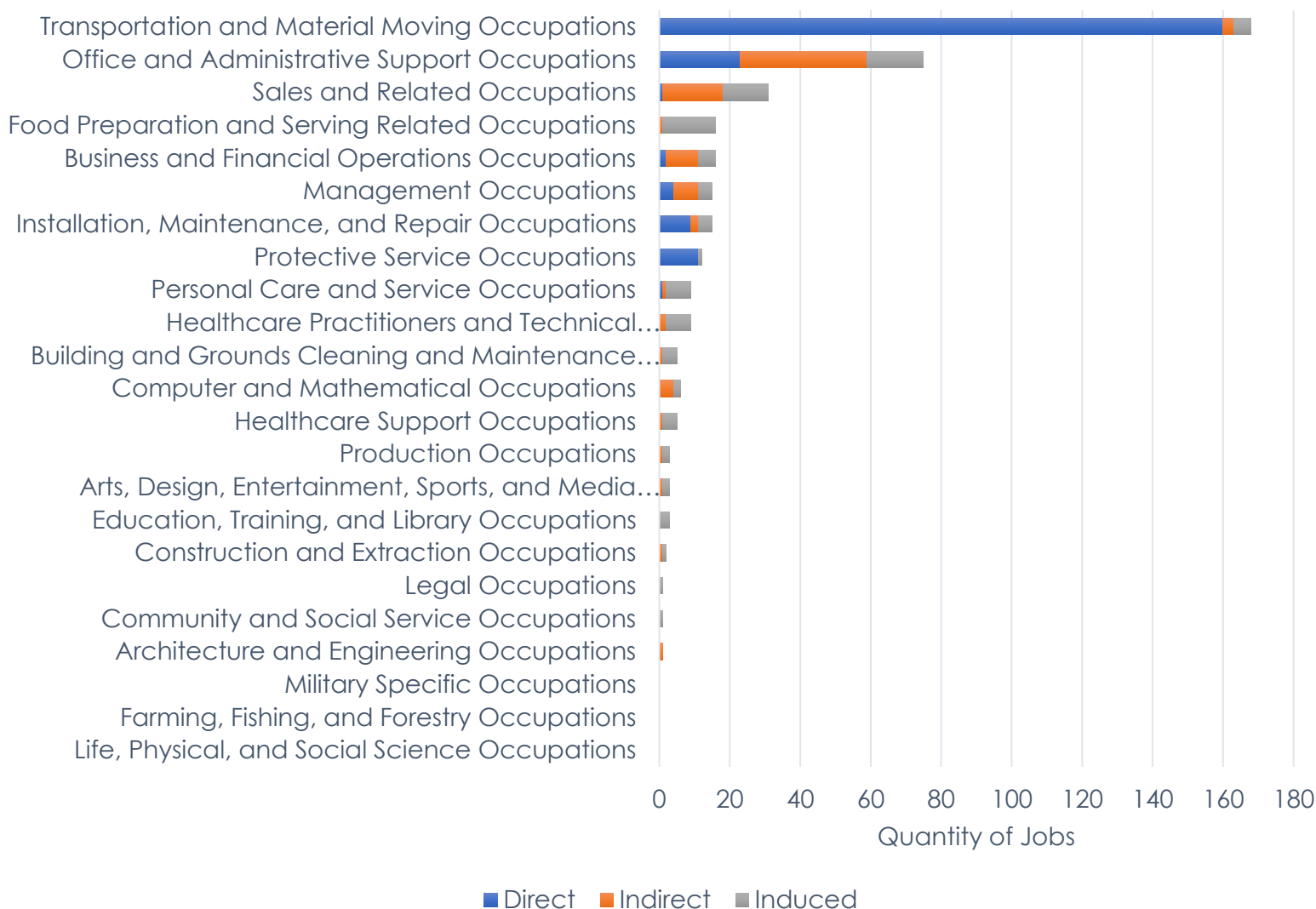
Figure 2: Jobs by Sector, Capital (FY 19-20)



Jobs by Occupation – Operations & Maintenance

A total of 397 local jobs in 23 various occupations are supported by GCTD's operations budget within the local economy of GCTD's service area. Within Operations & Maintenance, the highest number of jobs are in Transportation and Material Moving Occupations for a combined total 168 direct, indirect and induced jobs. The second highest occupation type is Office & Administrative Support for a combined total of 76 combined jobs for all categories. The third highest occupation type is Sales and Related with 31 jobs.

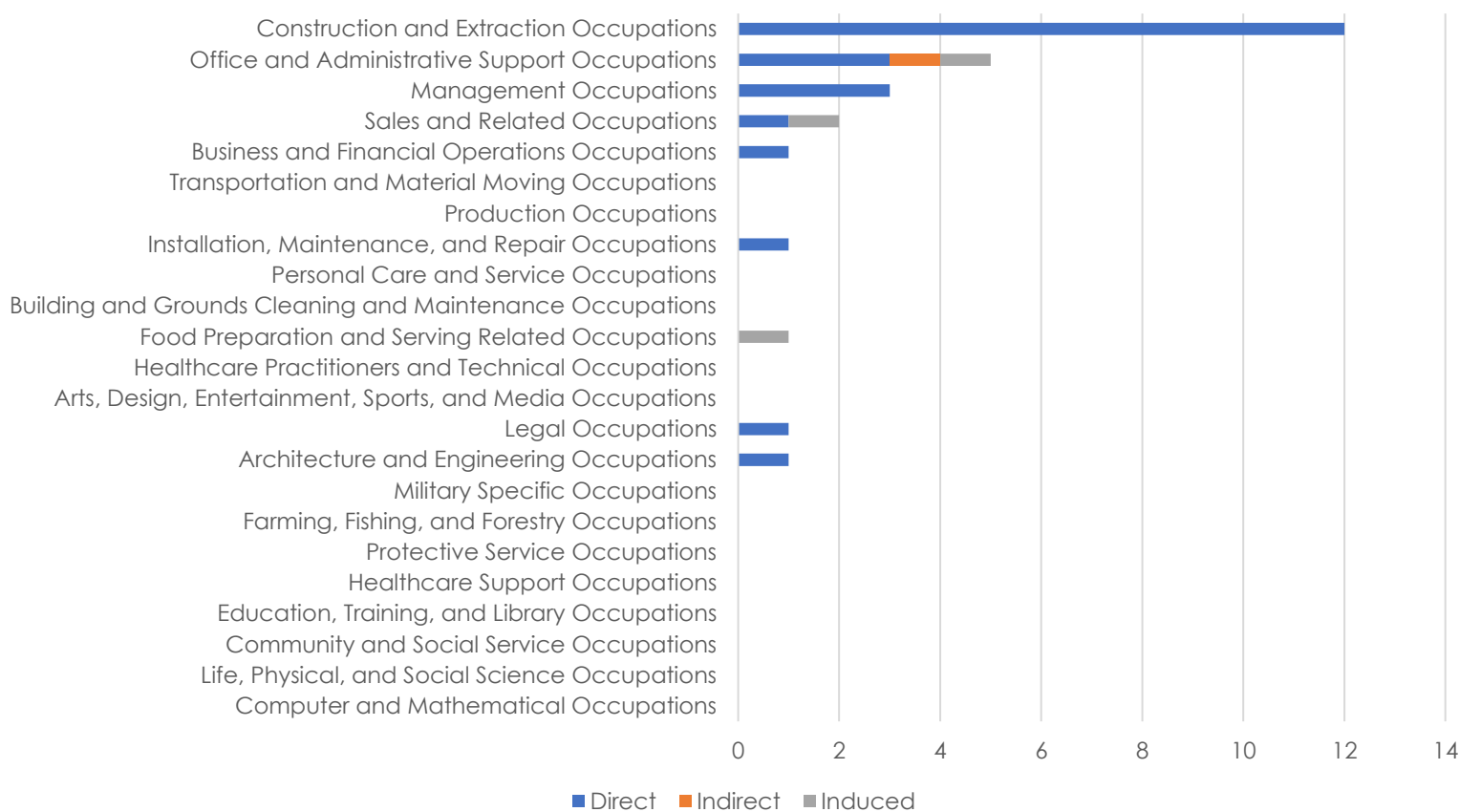
Figure 3: Jobs by Occupation, Operations & Maintenance



Jobs by Occupation – Capital

A total of 34 local jobs in 23 various occupations are supported by GCTD's capital budget within the local economy of GCTD's service area. 12 jobs are created within the Construction and Extraction occupations. The next highest category in which jobs are created is Office and Administrative Support which comprises 5 jobs. Several of the jobs are within, Management, Business and Financial Operations, Sales & Related Occupations.

Figure 4: Jobs by Occupation, Capital (FY 19-20)



VI. GCTD'S ADDITIONAL ROLE IN ENABLING JOB ACCESS

Public transportation systems improve labor market by providing access to employment opportunities. Employers benefit through access to an expanded pool of job seekers where jobs may be filled faster and at a lower search cost. This provides improved productivity through access to more qualified workers. Similarly, job seekers benefit from access to employment opportunities by virtue of being able to commute to jobs.

The U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey publishes data on “Means of Transportation to Work by Industry”¹. This data provides estimates of the percentage of workers in each industry who commute to work using public transportation within each jurisdiction. These counts provide a picture of the scale of the transit-using workforce on which employers depend, as well as insight into certain industries that may be particularly more reliant on public transit for access to their workforce.

Figure 5: Commute to Work using Public Transportation, by Industry

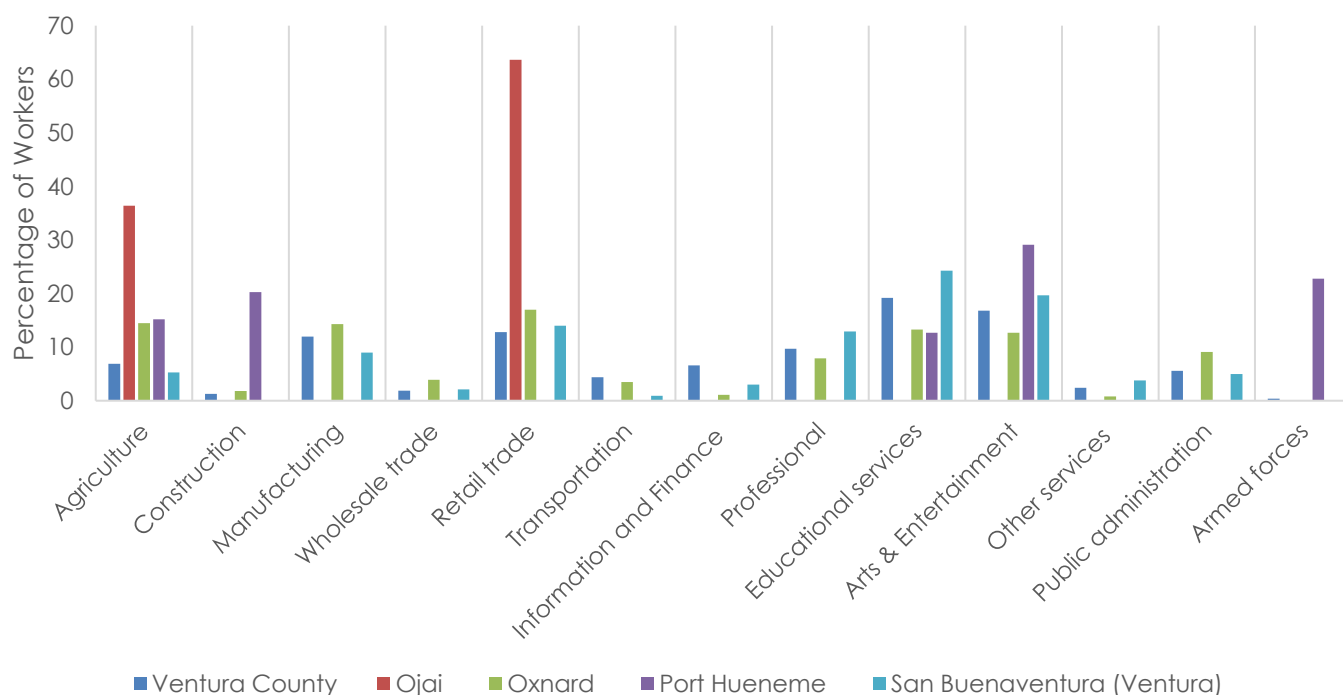
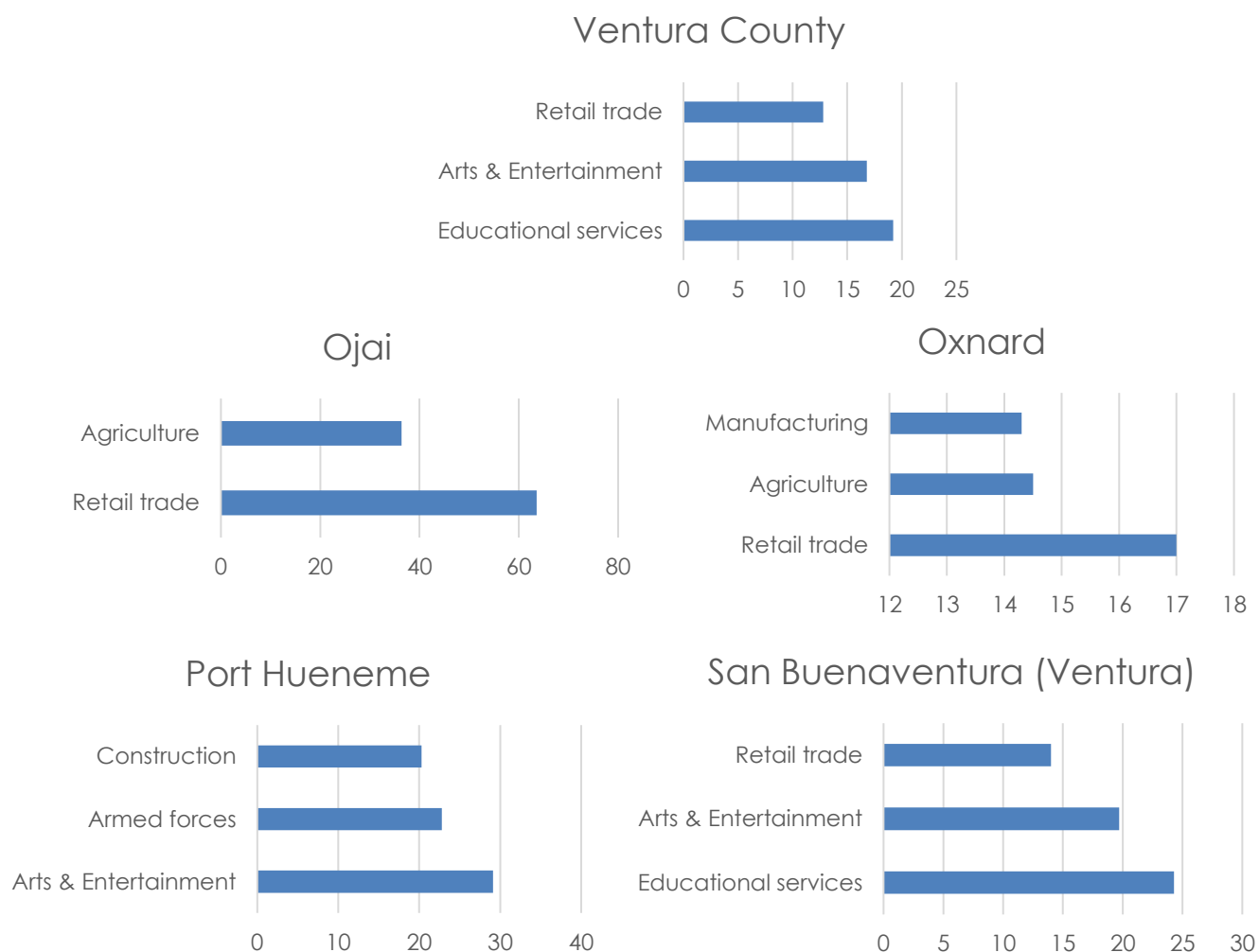


Figure 5 presents the percentage of transit using workforce for each of the 14 industries within each jurisdiction in the Gold Coast Transit District service area and Ventura County overall. The Ventura County data represents all of Ventura County and is not aggregated to only represent unincorporated areas within Gold Coast Transit District service area. Additionally, the data includes trips on service from other public transportation operators including Ventura County Transportation Commission (VCTC) Intercity service, Ojai Trolley, Metrolink and Amtrak, operate within GCTD's service area.

In addition to the role of GCTD's spending in generating area jobs, the services of Gold Coast Transit District also support additional jobs by offering a commuting option for workers traveling to and from work. Figure 6 provides the top three industries that rely most heavily on public transit for access to their workforce per jurisdiction. **In the Gold Coast Transit District service area, the industry that relies most heavily on transit for access to their workforce is the retail trade industry across all Cities (except Port Hueneme) and the County in GCTD's service area.**

Figure 6: Top three industries that rely most heavily on public transit for access to their workforce per jurisdiction.



While Retail Trade is in the top three industries for the cities of Ojai, Oxnard, Ventura and the County of Ventura, commute to work using public transportation is also relied heavily on by workers in the Agricultural industry in all jurisdictions. 6.9% of Ventura County workers access Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining industry occupations using transit. More specifically, 36.4% workers in Ojai, 14.5% in Oxnard, 15.2% in Port Hueneme and 5.3% in Ventura commuted to agricultural jobs.

A large portion of commutes to work were made across all 14 industries within the cities of Oxnard and Ventura while only select industries rely on transit in other cities. Oxnard and Ventura are the two largest cities within the GCTD service area where majority of riders reside and use transit to access jobs.

VII. GCTD'S ROLE DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

In August 2020, GCTD conducted a passenger survey to better understand rider travel behavior during the COVID-19 pandemic. Of those surveyed, 61% noted that the purpose of their trip was to work, where 35% essential workers indicated that they took public transportation to critical jobs in the food and agriculture industries.



Public transit also provides critical access to essential services such as food, health care, and other activities that support community livability and contribute to the overall economy. According to the August 2020 COVID-19 Passenger Survey, 64% of the trips were made to purchase groceries and essential supplies, 61% of the trips were made to commute to work, 49% of trips were for medical purposes, another 32% were for banking services, and 13% are school trips that help ensure the continued economic health of our community.

In January 2021, the State of California lifted the Stay At Home Order² which allowed Ventura County to resume services and activities with required modifications. Many businesses including GCTD are operating under limited capacity. GCTD is encouraging the public to only make essential trips and has limited capacity on all vehicles to better comply with social distancing requirements on the bus.

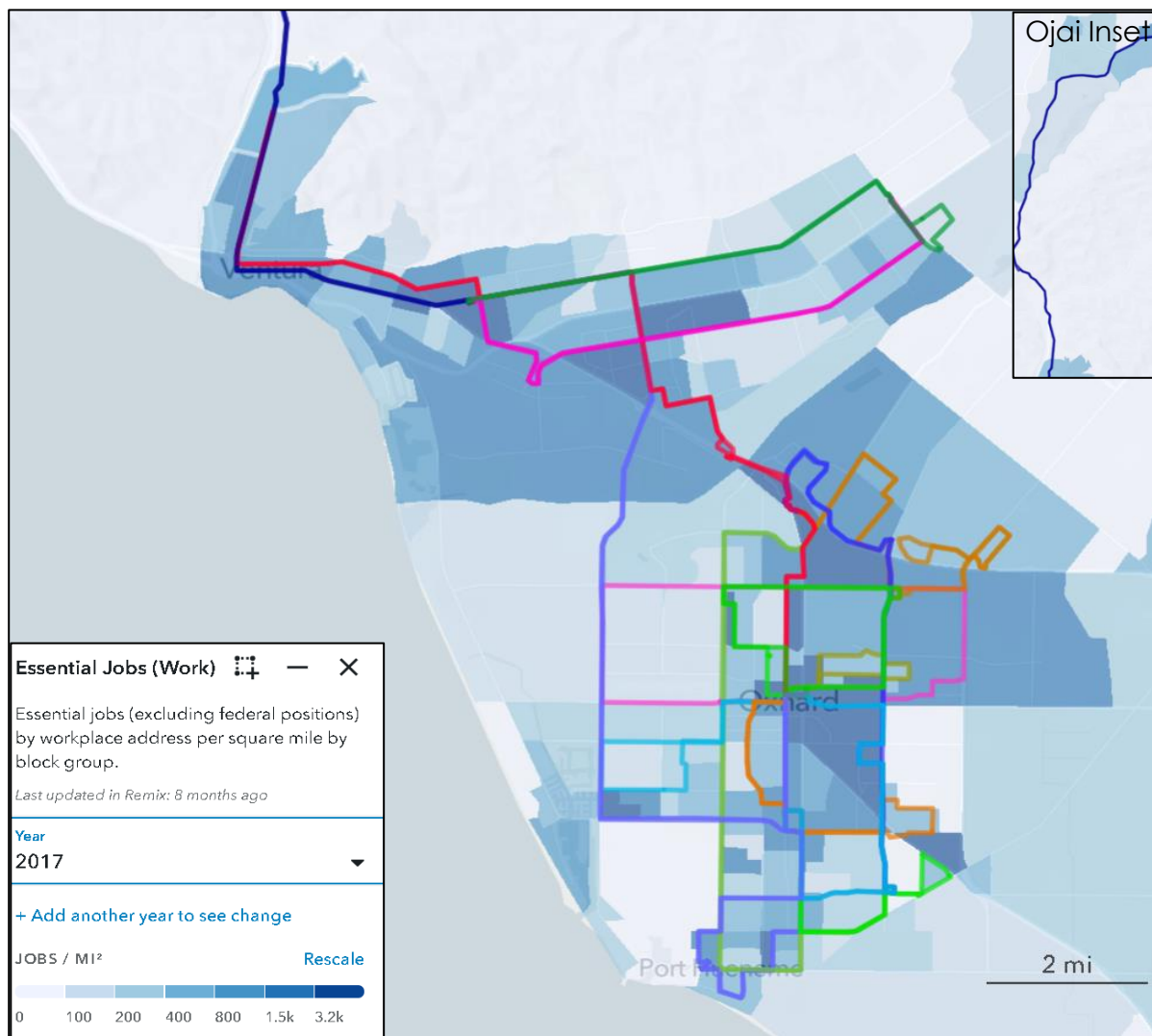
Although COVID-19 vaccination is underway, ridership is unlikely to return quickly to pre-COVID level, as study from home, limited employment opportunities, individuals limiting retail trips, and work from home habits may have had a lasting impact on commuting patterns. However, in a recent survey, current and former riders were asked how soon they would feel comfortable riding Gold Coast Transit buses when the "Stay Well at Home" order is lifted, 62% indicated immediately. GCTD has taken several measures to

2. Ventura County Recovers, Coronavirus Latest News & Updates "[State of California Lifts Regional Stay at Home Order for All Regions. Ventura County in the State's Purple Tier Effective Immediately.](#)" January 2021.

increase sanitation of buses and improve safety for operators and passengers including hiring sanitation workers for enhanced cleaning, installing protective shields between the farebox and the operator, requiring back-door boarding and halting fare collection. As GCTD and the community recovers from the effects of the pandemic, GCTD will continue to provide essential transportation service to the community ensuring access to jobs and critical services.

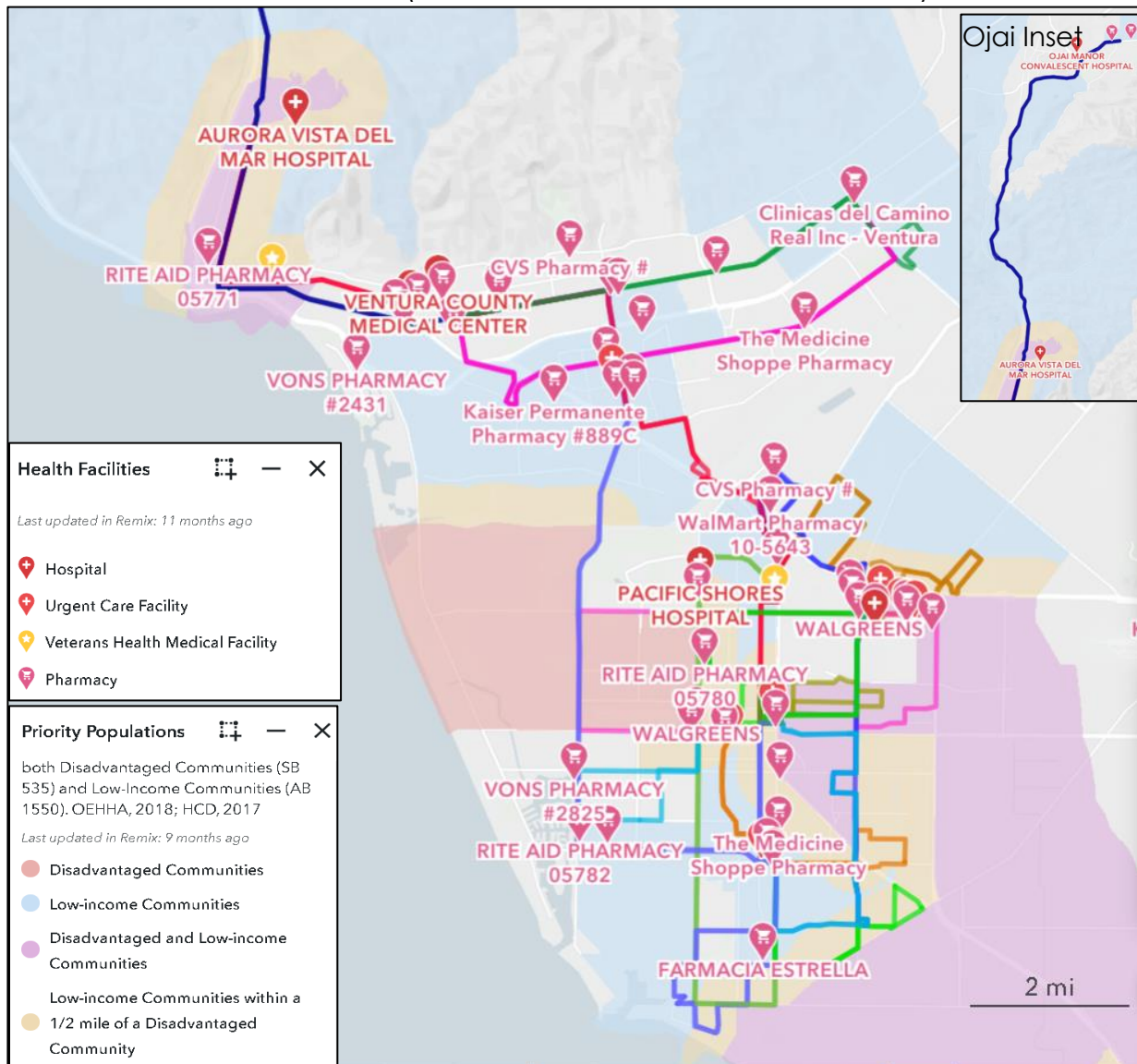
Additionally, GCTD provides a safe and sustainable transportation option for workers commuting to essential jobs as the service covers most essential jobs' destinations. Figure 7 illustrates GCTD routes serving essential jobs including industries of Agriculture, Forestry Fishing and Hunting; Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction; Utilities; Manufacturing; Wholesale Trade; Retail Trade; Transportation and Warehousing; Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services; Health Care and Social Assistance; and Accommodation and Food Services.

Figure 7: Map of GCTD Routes serving essential jobs (Source: Remix, U.S Census LEHD LODES).



During the pandemic, hospitals, urgent care facilities, veterans health medical facilities, and pharmacies are locations for critical services and supplies and they are also locations where essential workers work and provide care to those effected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Figure 8 illustrates GCTD routes providing access to health facilities for priority populations. Priority populations include low income communities defined by AB 1550 as census tracts that are either at or below 80% of the statewide median income or at/or below the threshold designated as low income (HCD 2017). Figure 8 also illustrates disadvantages communities defined by SB 535 as census tracts with high environmental burdens such as air pollution. GCTD service's offer a transportation option for these communities to reach crital services and supplies and for essential industries relying on transit to access their workforce.

Figure 8: Map of GCTD routes providing access to health facilities within disadvantaged and low-income communities (Source: Remix, HCD 2017, OEHHA 2018).



VIII. COMMUNICATING TO THE COMMUNITY

As demand for transportation increases, helping the public become more aware of our economic impact and value in the community is key to gaining support for investment in our transit systems. These are ways GCTD could use this information in the future.

- *Funding for projects and programs*
 - by informing legislators and voters about the public return on investment from funding transit projects and services.
- *Policy making*
 - by better informing the public so that they can better understand the value of local transit services to the community and economy.
- *Long-range planning*
 - by better informing stakeholders about economic opportunities and risks associated with alternative transit system scenarios.

IX. CONCLUSION

GCTD's contribution to the economy of Ventura County is significant in terms of employment, income, economic output, and increased labor mobility. **Public transit is a vital resource for the community as well as generator of jobs, and direct investment in the local economy.**

This study also demonstrates that employers and employees rely on GCTD for commuting. Without GCTD, those persons would likely be either underemployed or unemployed. The population of Ventura County is expected to grow by nearly 10% from approximately 860,000 in 2018 to 935,000 in 2050.³ With growth, demand for transportation services will increase, requiring additional funding for public transportation services. The purpose of this report is to help provide information on the existing economic impact of GCTD's operations on the local economy and demonstrate how investment in transit can return the investment to the community.