

# SCR TD NEWS

A monthly newsletter brought to you by (South Central Regional Transit District) [scrtd.org](http://scrtd.org)

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## Transit Funding Vote



The county commission has voted not to automatically renew their contract with the South Central Regional Transit District (SCR TD). Funding from the county for the rural transit service will end in 120 days if the SCR TD cannot negotiate a new contract with the county.

Currently, funding for transit is largely provided out of the county's "Hold Harmless" Gross Receipt Tax. According to an agreement with the county, SCR TD could receive up to \$750,000 of the estimated \$12 million dollars generated annually by this tax. The SCR TD only used about \$500,000 in the first year of Hold Harmless GRT funding and has brought in another \$500,000 through grants.

Ridership is increasing every month. New record so far for April is almost 1000 rides in just the first two weeks. The system is on track to exceed the goal for 24,000 rides in year two. This year's funding request is only \$350,000 and the SCR TD expects to use those funds to garner over \$600,000 in grant money. Ridership is booming, money is coming in, the request for local funds is dropping. Just as the system is beginning to blossom, the county commission is threatening to withhold its support.

Please consider coming to the Board of County Commissioners meeting on May 9<sup>th</sup>.

In the meantime, email or call the county commissioners.

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Tell them that the transit service is rapidly growing and deserves continued funding in order to add service where it is needed in the unincorporated areas of the county and to connect all area transit providers into a robust, seamless, regional system. Continued use of a small portion of the county's Hold Harmless GRT to support public transit will be beneficial to all of us who live in Doña Ana County—people will get to medical appointments, education, workforce training, and jobs. The money the SCR TD brings into the county will be spent in the county to hire drivers, pay for gas and repairs, print schedules, purchase uniforms, phones, and other equipment, and generally to contribute to the economic well being of the county.

It is the right approach to a critical public service and we need to keep it rolling. Hope to see you on May 9<sup>th</sup>.

## Ridership Reaches New High



SCR TD is experiencing record ridership for April with over 2000 riders traveling on five routes throughout Dona Ana and Otero counties.

Service connections to El Paso's Northgate and Westside Transit Centers has contributed to the growth as has installation of new bus stops, improved scheduling and marketing. Ads in the Camino Real newspaper has helped in expanding the reach of SCR TD communication to the communities of Dona Ana and El Paso counties.

Additional bus service is planned in the months ahead with additional trips on the Turquoise bus route and the initiation of new bus service to Hatch, NM via the new Green route.

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