



# South Central Regional Transit

Executive Director's Report

Board Handbook

# Board of Directors Handbook

## Board of Directors Handbook

DECEMBER 2025



South Central Regional Transit District

The Handbook provides an overview of the District's history, board representation, services provided, short-range financial and service plan, and challenges that lie ahead.

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# Board of Directors Handbook

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS HANDBOOK

South Central Regional Transit District

### **PURPOSE OF THIS HANDBOOK**

This handbook serves as a governance reference for the Board of Directors of the South Central Regional Transit District (SCRTD). It defines the Board's role, authority, and responsibilities, and clarifies the relationship between the Board and the Executive Director. This document is intended to guide effective governance, policy leadership, and fiduciary oversight.

### **MISSION**

The mission of the South Central Regional Transit District (SCRTD) is to strengthen communities, facilitate economic and educational activities, and promote health and safety through safe and efficient regional transportation services.

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*"Teamwork is the essence of good governance. It is necessary to form a team within a party and within the administrative system."*

*- Narendra Modi -*

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## TRANSIT SERVICE HISTORY

- In 2003, Governor Richardson signed into law the Regional Transit District Act. This legislation authorized the creation of RTDs in New Mexico.
- In 2004, Governor Richardson signed legislation that allowed City and County Governments that were members of an RTD to go to the voters for approval to implement a Gross Receipts Tax (GRT) of up to ½ of one percent for transportation services.
- In 2008, the South Central Regional Transit District was certified by NMDOT.
- In 2014, the District initiated a pilot transit operation with four bus routes with financial support from members, community groups, and Dona Ana County. Additionally, a transit tax initiative was attempted but failed, limiting the funding available to support the transit system.
- In 2015, the District initiated a two-year commuter rail study and completed a Five-Year Financial and Service Plan.
- In 2016, the District, with a two-year funding agreement with Dona Ana County, initiated transit service on four bus routes from Las Cruces to Sunland Park, Anthony, and Chaparral. Later that year, the District secured a 5311 grant to support the operation of bus service in Dona Ana County and a 5310 grant to enhance the Purple route operating from Anthony to Sunland Park with connections to El Paso's Westside Transit Center.
- In 2017, the District extended service to connect to El Paso County from Chaparral and Sunland Park. With additional funds, service frequency was improved. These actions improved ridership across all bus routes in the service area.
- In 2018, transit service frequency increased on three of the four routes, and ridership grew by 61 percent. Further, the District updated its Five-Year Financial and Service Plan to reflect new services and grant funding programmed or received.
- In 2021, transit service ridership following the pandemic doubled, reaching 53,343 riders.
- In 2023, ridership doubled again, reaching 101,756 rides for the year. The Copper bus route was added to a growing fleet, improving connections across the bus network.
- In 2025, ridership reached over 164,003 riders, with ridership growing 774 percent from 2016.
- In 2026, a ninth bus route was added in late December. The Board of Directors will review and approve a new ten-year Service and Financial plan.

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## ROLE OF THE REGIONAL TRANSIT DISTRICT

The South Central Regional Transit District is responsible for coordinating, developing, and integrating public transit services within its member area and with neighboring jurisdictions. In fulfilling this role, the District:

- **Coordinates regional transit services** across member governments to improve efficiency, reliability, and system performance.
- **Develops and maintains a unified and seamless transit network** that consolidates and integrates previously fragmented transit services for the benefit of residents within the District's service area.
- **Coordinates transit services with other transportation providers and modes** within and adjacent to the District, including connections with:
  - City of Las Cruces RoadRUNNER Transit;
  - New Mexico Park and Ride Services (Silver and Gold routes);
  - City of El Paso Sun Metro; and
  - El Paso County Area Transit Services (EPATS)

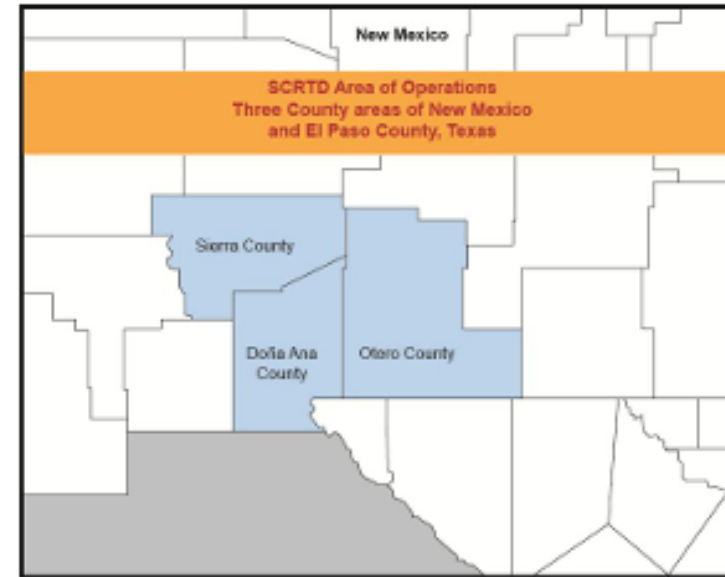
Through these coordinated efforts, SCRTD supports regional mobility, improves access to employment, education, healthcare, and essential services, and strengthens transportation connectivity across southern New Mexico and neighboring regions.

## OUR SERVICES

### OVERVIEW

The Transit District's official boundary includes Dona Ana, Otero, and Sierra counties; its service connections extend beyond these borders to El Paso County and a few riders from Ciudad Juárez, Mexico. Additionally, the District transit service connects with other transit agencies, including the City of El Paso's Sun Metro and El Paso County Transit, the City of Las Cruces Roadrunner, and NMDOT Park-and-Ride's Gold and Silver routes. The District plays an active and critical role in connecting these services from the north to the southern edge of Dona Ana County, forming an interconnected transit network.

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## BUS ROUTES

The District operates fixed-route bus service across its service area through a network of named routes that connect communities within southern New Mexico and support regional mobility. Service is generally provided Monday through Friday. The Board of Directors establishes fare policy, including standard adult fares, discounted fares for seniors, students, and individuals with disabilities, and transfer policies.

SCRTD's route network includes the **Green, Red, Blue, Turquoise, Purple, Copper, Magenta, Yellow, and Silver** routes. Each route is designed to serve distinct travel markets while supporting local access and regional connectivity.

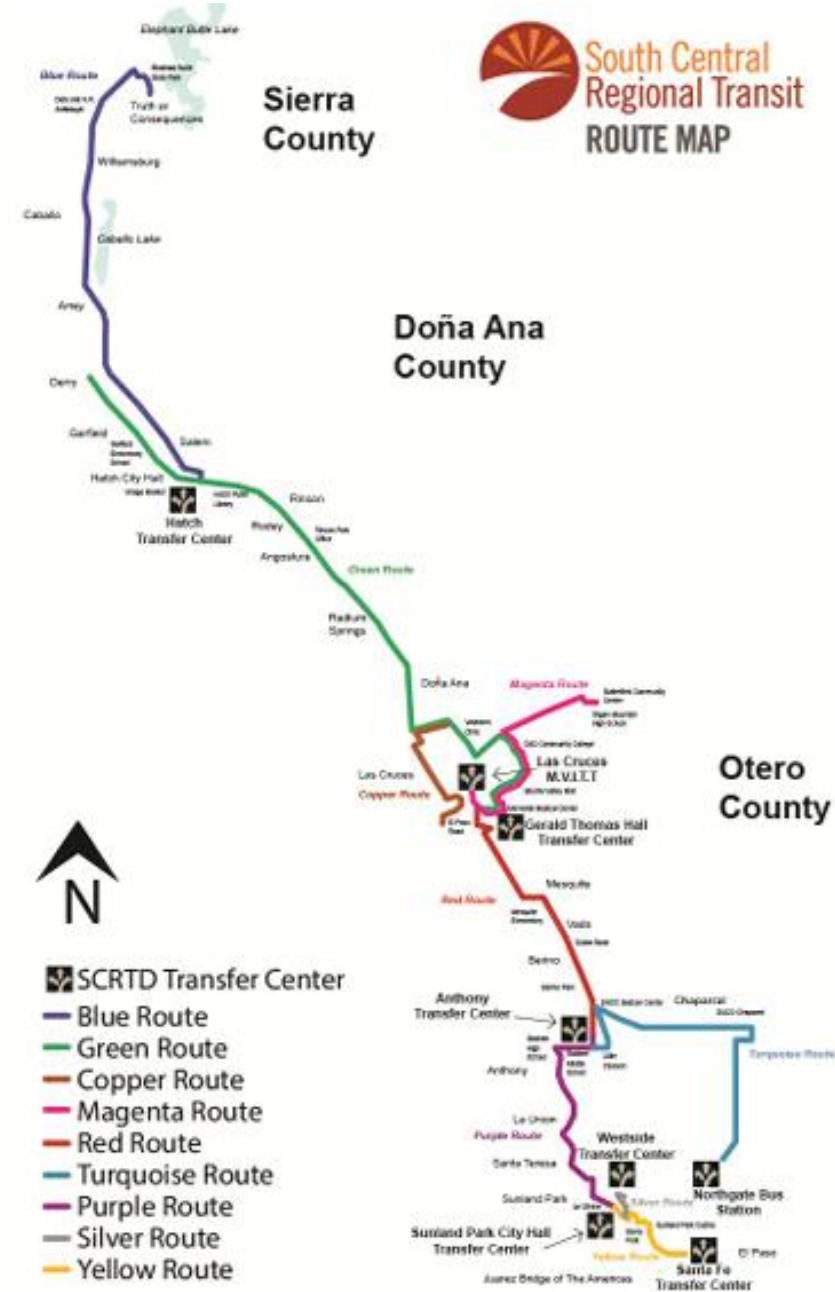
- **Green Route** provides service from northern Doña Ana County, including communities such as Garfield, Salem, Hatch, Rincon, and Radium Springs, with connections to the Village of Doña Ana and the City of Las Cruces.
- **Red Route** operates between Las Cruces and Anthony. It serves as a primary north-south corridor, providing access to downtown Las Cruces, New Mexico State University, Doña Ana Community College, and communities throughout the Mesilla Valley.
- **Blue Route** provides regional service linking communities in Sierra County with Hatch, supporting long-distance travel and access to services and connections within northern Doña Ana County.

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- **Turquoise Route** provides service within and beyond Anthony, connecting residents to educational institutions and regional transfer points, including Doña Ana Community College campuses and the Northgate Transit Center.
- **Purple Route** operates between Anthony and Sunland Park, serving communities such as La Union and Santa Teresa and providing connections to transit services in El Paso.
- **Copper Route** provides service within the greater Las Cruces area, supporting local mobility and connections to other SCRTD routes and regional destinations.
- **Magenta Route** serves the East Mesa area of Las Cruces, providing access to employment, education, healthcare, and other community destinations while linking with the broader SCRTD network.
- **Yellow Route** operates between Sunland Park and downtown El Paso, providing cross-border regional connectivity and access to employment, government services, and regional destinations.
- **Silver Route** operates between Sunland Park and the Westside Transfer Terminal in El Paso, providing connections to regional transit services and supporting mobility between New Mexico communities and El Paso's westside.

This route structure supports SCRTD's mission to provide safe, reliable, and coordinated transit services, improve access to essential destinations, and strengthen regional connectivity across southern New Mexico and the greater border region.

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## LONG RANGE PLAN

The District is in the process of executing a ten-year planning initiative that will significantly expand upon the 2020 Ten-Year Financial and Service Plan. The planning document, or Request for Proposals, was developed with the support of the New Mexico Department of Transportation. The plan will help update the previous planning document with data and transportation planning analyses generated from regional transportation planning for our regional partners, as well as data from the first four years of transit service in previously unavailable areas. The plan will include capital projects and the development of the District's Zero Emission Plan initiative. This will consist of expanding the current Battery Electric Bus Fleet from seven to thirteen vehicles in the spring of 2026.



The Sunland Park Facility has charging stations for the eight battery electric vehicles. A separate charging station is used for the five EVs used in the fixed route and the new Micro Transit service.

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## TRANSIT FACILITIES

The South Central Regional Transit District maintains and operates dedicated transit facilities to support the delivery of safe, reliable, and efficient transit services across its service area. These facilities provide essential functions, including vehicle storage, operations coordination, employee training, maintenance activities, and passenger transfer connections. Together, they form the backbone of the District's regional transit system.



**ANTHONY TRANSIT FACILITY (CIRCA 2018-2025)**

The Anthony Transit Facility was initiated during the District's early years of fixed-route service and supported the initial expansion of transit operations in northern Doña Ana County.

The facility functions as a key operation and transfer location, enabling route connections and supporting day-to-day service delivery for Anthony and the surrounding communities.

The Red, Turquoise, and Purple routes operate Monday through Saturday from this location. The facility has four garage doors and can park up to fifteen buses and a dozen or more parking spaces.

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## **SUNLAND PARK TRANSIT AND TRAINING FACILITY (CIRCA 2020–2025)**

The Sunland Park facility was initiated as part of the District's long-term capital investment strategy to modernize transit infrastructure and expand regional service capacity.

The facility supports operations in southern Doña Ana County. It serves as a hub for operator training, fleet staging, and coordination of regional and cross-border services connecting New Mexico and El Paso, Texas. The facility also supports the District's workforce development and long-term sustainability goals.



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## Microgrid Solar Array – Sunland Park Facility

The Sunland Park Transit and Training Facility includes a planned on-site solar microgrid consisting of approximately **300 to 600 solar panels** paired with **battery energy storage**, designed to generate renewable electricity to support facility operations and electric vehicle charging.

Funded in part by state and federal grants, the microgrid is intended to enhance operational resilience, reduce long-term energy costs, and support the District's transition to zero-emission transit technologies. The system is designed to provide on-site power during normal operations and to improve operational continuity during grid outages.

## Site Preparation and Environmental Review

Vegetation removal associated with the Sunland Park solar microgrid was limited to the defined project area, encompassing **slightly over one acre**, and was completed as part of site preparation activities. The work was conducted in accordance with applicable environmental review requirements and funding conditions, including coordination with relevant state and federal agencies. Measures were taken to minimize impacts on surrounding areas and ensure compliance with environmental standards for safety, habitat, and long-term site management.

## FUTURE LAS CRUCES FACILITY – VENUS SITE (2026-2028)

To accommodate continued growth in ridership, fleet expansion, and service demand, the District is planning to develop a third transit facility in Las Cruces, commonly referred to as the **Venus facility**. This future facility is intended to expand operational capacity within the urban core of Doña Ana County and support long-range maintenance, fleet, and service needs. Planning for the Venus facility is consistent with the District's Ten-Year Service and Financial Plan and reflects a phased approach to system expansion.

The strategic development of these facilities supports SCRTD's mission to strengthen regional mobility, improve operational efficiency, and ensure the long-term sustainability of transit services across southern New Mexico.

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## MESILLA VALLEY INTERMODAL TRANSIT TERMINAL

The Mesilla Valley Intermodal Transit Terminal (MVITT) serves as a transfer center for buses operating across the city of Las Cruces, with connecting service to the five SCRTD bus routes that operate north to Hatch, East Mesa to the Butterfield Trail Community Center, and to NMSU and the Town of Mesilla.



Mesilla Valley Intermodal Transit Terminal

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## OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### Structure

The Regional Transit District Act requires the board to include at least one member from each member government. It prohibits any government from holding a majority of seats if the district consists of more than three governments. Expanding upon the Act, SCRTD's contract and bylaws allocate votes based on population. The following is the list of current Board Members across the following governments:

**Board of Directors Roster**  
(January 2019)

Member Government	Name	Title
City of Anthony		Mayor
Dona Ana County	Manuel Sanchez	Commissioner, District 5
City of Las Cruces	Vacant	Councillor, District 4
Town of Hatch	Robert Martinez	Trustee
Town of Mesilla	Russell Hernandez	Mayor
City of Sunland Park	Javier Perea	Mayor
Village of Williamsburg	Majorie Powey	Trustee

Full member governments must appoint as many elected officials to the board as they have seats. Board members, in turn, may appoint unelected officials as alternates to serve in their absence. Nevertheless, the Regional Transit District Act requires that only elected officials may vote to acquire land or issue bonds. Board members are expected to serve at least one year, unless their term in office expires or their member government replaces them.

## ROLE OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors serves as the governing authority of SCRTD. The Board is responsible for setting policy, adopting the annual budget, approving significant capital investments, ensuring legal and fiduciary compliance, and providing strategic direction for the District.

## POLICY VS. OPERATIONS

The Board governs policy and strategic oversight. Day-to-day operations, personnel management, contract administration, and execution of Board policies are the responsibility of the Executive Director. Individual Board members do not direct staff or contractors outside of formal Board action.

## RESPONSIBILITIES & OPPORTUNITIES

The Regional Transit District Act establishes the Board of Directors' authority. While the Act allows the board to delegate certain powers by resolution, only the board can:

- Adopt board policies and procedures;

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- Approve the purchase of land by negotiated sale;
- Take legal action that does not involve traffic or toll violations;
- Establish fare policy;
- Issue bonds; and
- Approve route or schedule changes that affect 25 percent or more of SCRTD's transit system.

The Act also gives the board additional powers, further detailed in SCRTD's contract and bylaws. These documents set the rules and expectations for:

- Establishing committees;
- Scheduling, advertising, calling, conducting, and adjourning board and committee meetings;
- Appointing officers;
- Meeting attendance;
- Adopting an annual budget;
- Conducting an annual audit;
- Procuring materials, equipment, labor, construction, professional services, and legal counsel;
- Entering into joint use and service agreements with other governments;

In addition to serving as a good reference for board members, the American Public Transportation Association's Transit Board Member Handbook highlights another key role for board members—system innovation. An engaged board can significantly impact the future of its organization by implementing SCRTD's long-term strategic vision incorporated in the Ten-Year Financial and Service Plan.

## **BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE**

The Board of Directors currently meets monthly on the fourth Wednesday at 1:30 p.m. at the Dona Ana County Commission Chambers. Board meetings are led by the Chair or Vice Chair, who are elected to their respective offices each January. The Executive Director and most managers are present, and the Board Liaison records the minutes. All meetings allow for public comment.

A majority of board members constitutes a quorum and is required for the board to act on items within its authority. To ensure a quorum, each board member, upon appointment to the board, must select an alternate to attend board meetings in their absence. When an absence arises, the board members are responsible for notifying the board and arranging their alternate's attendance.

To ensure compliance with the State of New Mexico Open Meetings Act, the board adopts an Open Meetings Resolution each year that includes the meeting schedule for the upcoming fiscal year. Each meeting's agenda packet is typically finalized and emailed to the board five days before the meeting, and, in the event of cancellation, notice is also distributed by email. All meeting agendas and supporting documentation is posted on the SCRTD.org website.

## **MEETINGS AND PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY**

The Board meets regularly in accordance with the New Mexico Open Meetings Act. Meetings are publicly noticed, agendas are posted in advance, and public comment is provided at each meeting. The Board adopts an annual Open Meetings Resolution.

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## **FINANCIAL OVERSIGHT**

The Board is responsible for adopting the annual operating and capital budgets, approving grant agreements, accepting federal and state funds, and ensuring the completion of independent financial audits. The Board maintains oversight of financial risk and long-term sustainability.

## **CAPITAL PLANNING AND ASSETS**

SCR TD manages significant public assets, including transit facilities, fleet vehicles, and supporting infrastructure. The Board oversees capital planning, facility development, fleet modernization, and major procurements.

## **ETHICS AND CONDUCT**

Board members are expected to act in the public interest, comply with all applicable ethics laws, avoid conflicts of interest, and conduct themselves in a manner that reflects positively on the District.

## **RELATIONSHIP TO THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Per SCR TD's founding contract, the intergovernmental agreement, the Executive Director oversees the district's day-to-day affairs and may be hired or removed by the board. The Executive Director is required by the contract to "...see that all policies, directions and orders of the board are carried out"; however, the agreement also stipulates that such direction must come from the board in total: "Unless the board has authorized such exercise of authority, decisions or instruction of individual board members or committees shall not be binding on the Executive Director."

These clauses highlight the unique relationship between the Executive Director and the Board of Directors. The Executive Director's role is to act on policies adopted by the board. In doing so, the Executive Director has day-to-day control over many of the topics covered in this handbook, including hiring employees, contracting for and operating services, communicating with customers, developing a budget, auditing financial records, and administering board meetings. This frees the board to focus on more broad-based policies that will contribute to SCR TD's long-term success.

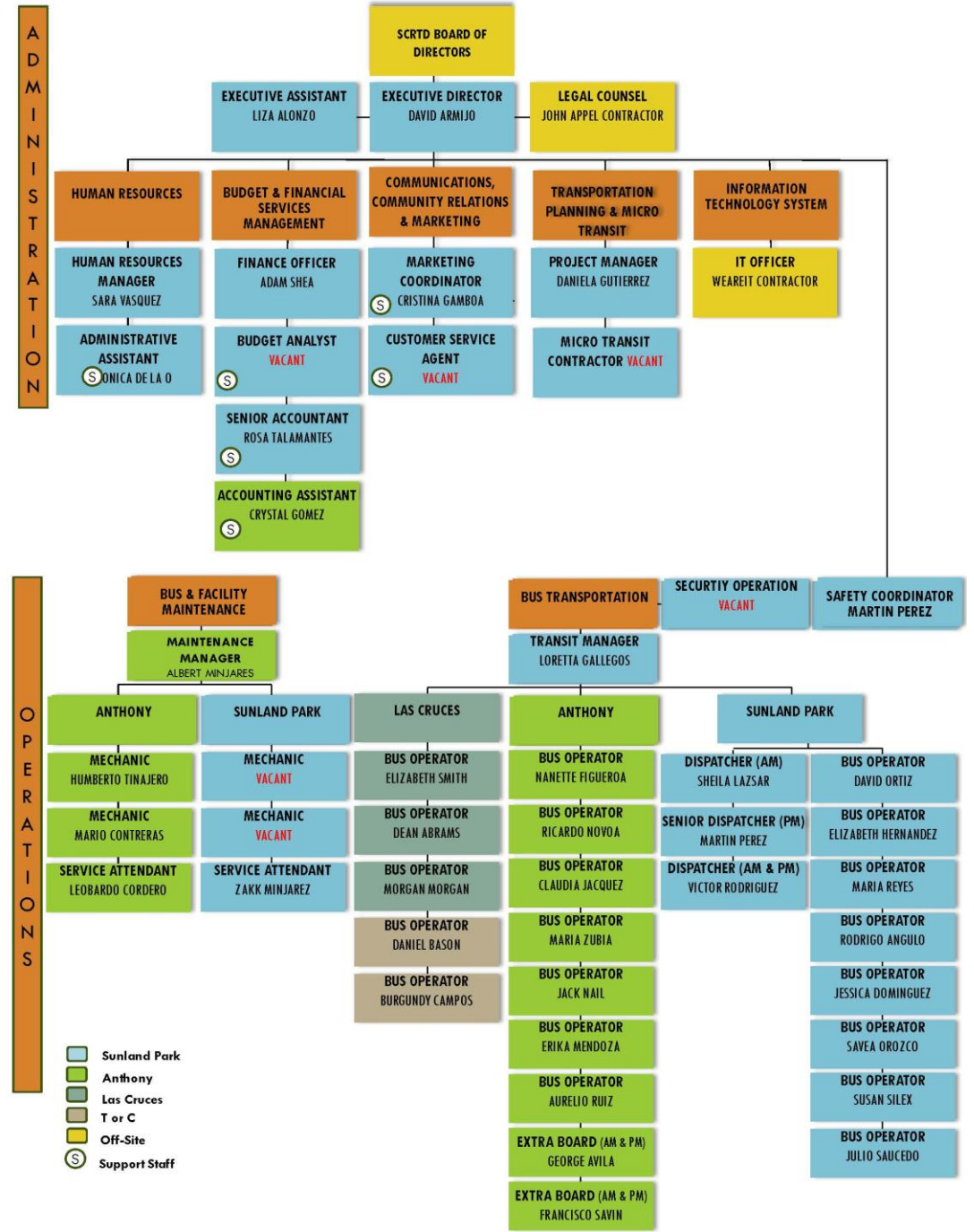
## **OUR EMPLOYEES**

The employees are the core of the District, working day in and day out to transport bus riders, maintain equipment, and provide customer service in support of District goals and objectives. Administratively, staff handle back-office functions, ensuring invoices are paid to vendors and operations comply with federal, state, and local laws.

Initially, the District contracted out services and hired only the Executive Director and bus operators. Today, the District maintains a staff of 47 budgeted positions. The organization chart depicts the staff and functional responsibilities of the organization.

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SCRTD ORGANIZATIONAL CHART (SEPTEMBER 2025) OVERVIEW



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## OUR FINANCES

The District operates its Budget from July to June with funding from Membership Fees, State grants and Dona Ana County. Expenses are programmed to match the revenue available for the Budget Year. Below is the current annual budget approved by the Board of Directors.

South Central Regional Transit District FY2026 BUDGET			
	FY2025	FY2026	GROWTH
<b>Expenditures</b>	\$3,010,157.00	\$ 3,246,649.00	\$ 236,492.00
<b>Revenues</b>	\$3,158,278.26	\$ 3,878,720.00	\$ 720,441.74

Appendix A: Intergovernmental Agreement – Approved November 2006

Appendix B: Bylaws – Updated 2018

Appendix C: Ten-Year Financial and Service Plan – 2026 (Pending)