



For Immediate Release

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NEWLY RELEASED REPORT IDENTIFIES THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF PUBLIC TRANSIT SERVICES IN ST. CLAIR COUNTY AND OTHER KEY FINDINGS

Direct Economic Impact of St. Clair County Transit District's Operations is \$129.5 Million Annually

BELLEVILLE, Ill. (Oct. 16, 2025) ... The St. Clair County Transit District (SCCTD), in conjunction with Citizens for Modern Transit (CMT), commissioned a six-month ***Economic Impact of St. Clair County Transit District*** study to help quantify the impact public transit has on the economic viability of the local community. The newly released report reveals that SCCTD's operations have a direct economic impact of \$129.5 million each year in St. Clair County, Ill. This and other key findings highlight how the benefits of public transit extend beyond the ride, making it imperative that continued investment is made by the elected officials in Illinois.

The study was conducted by Robert M. Lewis, FAICP, CECD. He is an independent consultant and assistant professor of Urban Planning & Development at Saint Louis University.

SCCTD is a relatively small enterprise that employs eight people. Yet, it contracts with Bi-State Development and its Metro Transit enterprise to provide public transportation services in St. Clair County by way of 11 MetroLink stations and 14 MetroBus routes – and with Southwestern Illinois College (SWIC) to offer paratransit services through the Alternative Transportation System (ATS) and on-demand, micro-transit via the SCCTD Flyer. SCCTD also works to maintain and expand the MetroBikeLink System, consisting of 39+ miles of interconnecting trails and bike paths that seamlessly connect to six Metro Transit Centers – linking individuals to jobs, education, healthcare, entertainment, trails and other destinations throughout the bi-state region.

Overall highlights of the study relative to accessibility, employment and economic impacts are as follows:

- SCCTD contributes \$129.5 million to the local economy each year in St. Clair County, Ill., through its transit services and related activities.
- SCCTD – in partnership with Bi-State Development and Southwestern Illinois College – provides nearly 3.3 million transit trips on average each year. MetroBus riders account for 51% of all riders with 45% taking MetroLink, 3% taking paratransit and 1% taking micro-transit service.
- SCCTD and Metro Transit together support 450 jobs in an average year in order to provide transit services in the county. The two agencies collectively spend \$77.5 million a year on operations.
- In recent years, capital investments in the transit system have averaged approximately \$34.5 million per year, with most of that driven by the MetroLink expansion project that will extend the light rail system 5.2 miles from the existing Shiloh-Scott Transit Center in Shiloh to MidAmerica St. Louis Airport in Mascoutah.

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FINDINGS OF ECONOMIC IMPACT STUDY FIRST AND FINAL ADD

- Transit riders contribute an estimated \$17.5 million in spending annually within St. Clair County that can be attributed to their transit trips.
- This “direct spending” leads to annual multiplier effects that benefit the St. Clair County economy to the tune of \$157.4 million in additional economic activity annually. This spending supports another 770 jobs in the local community, while triggering multiplier effects totaling 940 additional jobs elsewhere in Illinois and another 1,710 in the St. Louis metropolitan area.
- Major corporations and their respective employees are taking advantage of transit services and investments at increased levels. These include, but are not limited to, Gulfstream Aerospace Corp. in Sauget, Tyson Foods in Caseyville and Southwestern Illinois College in Belleville, as well as the Boeing Plant in Mascoutah, which is located near MidAmerica St. Louis Airport where MetroLink will be accessible by mid-2026.

“Public transportation goes far beyond simply getting people where they need to go,” commented Ken Sharkey, managing director for SCCTD. “We will be leveraging these study findings to help riders, non-riders, elected officials and stakeholders better understand the highly quantifiable and positive impacts of transit whether you ride or not, the role of state funding and how important it is for Illinois to continue to invest.”

To learn more about SCCTD or gain access to the complete *Economic Impact of St. Clair County Transit District* study visit www.SCCTD.org.

About St. Clair County Transit District

The St. Clair County Transit District (SCCTD) was founded in 1981 and contracts with Bi-State Development to provide public transportation services in St. Clair County, Ill., by way of 11 MetroLink stations and 14 MetroBus routes and with Southwestern Illinois College to offer paratransit services as well as on-demand, micro transit via the SCCTD Flyer in seven communities. SCCTD has also established and maintains the ever-evolving MetroBikeLink System of interconnecting trails and bike paths that seamlessly connect to six Metro Transit Centers – linking individuals to jobs, education, healthcare, entertainment, trails and other destinations throughout the bi-state region. To learn more, visit www.SCCTD.org or follow the District on Facebook, X, Instagram or LinkedIn.

About Citizens for Modern Transit

Citizens for Modern Transit (CMT) is the St. Louis region’s transit advocacy organization. Established in 1985 to help bring light rail to St. Louis, CMT’s mission is focused on championing, challenging, encouraging and advocating for public transit in an effort to drive economic growth and improve quality of life. To help support this mission, the organization works to develop ridership programming, transform spaces around transit stops, help secure local and federal transit funding, serve as a strong and effective voice on transit-related issues and opportunities, and ensure safe, convenient, user-friendly and affordable access to the area’s integrated public transportation system. To learn more, visit www.CMT-STL.org or follow the organization on Facebook, X, Instagram or LinkedIn.

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