

Transit in Washington State

COVID-19 UPDATE ON:

Response | Impacts | Moving Forward

Washington State Transportation Commission
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Mission: WSTA advances the value of public transit through **public education and outreach, advocacy of positive and effective public policy** and fostering the **collaboration and professional development** of public transit employees.

- Formed in 1981
- 31 Members from our largest member; King County Metro to our smallest member; Garfield County Public Transportation
- Combined WSTA members provided over 240 million annual boarding and have a combined service areas covering 86% of the state's population.

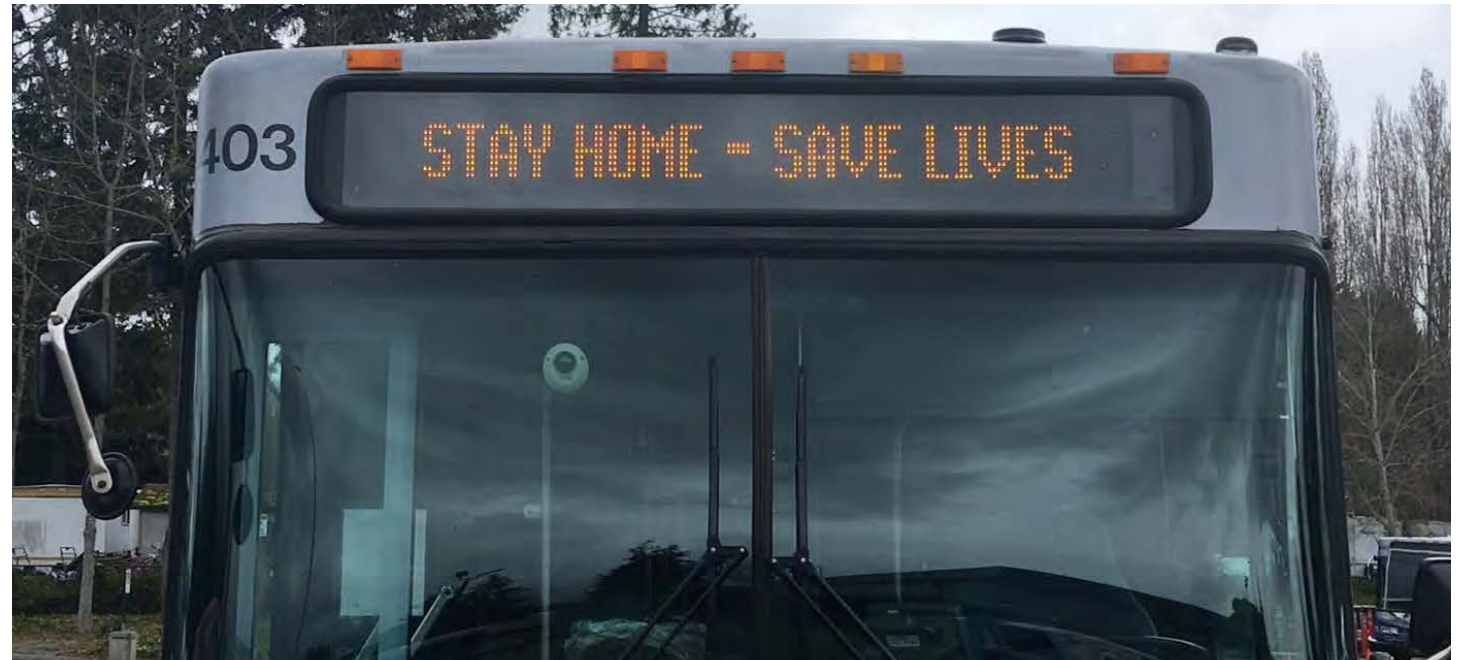
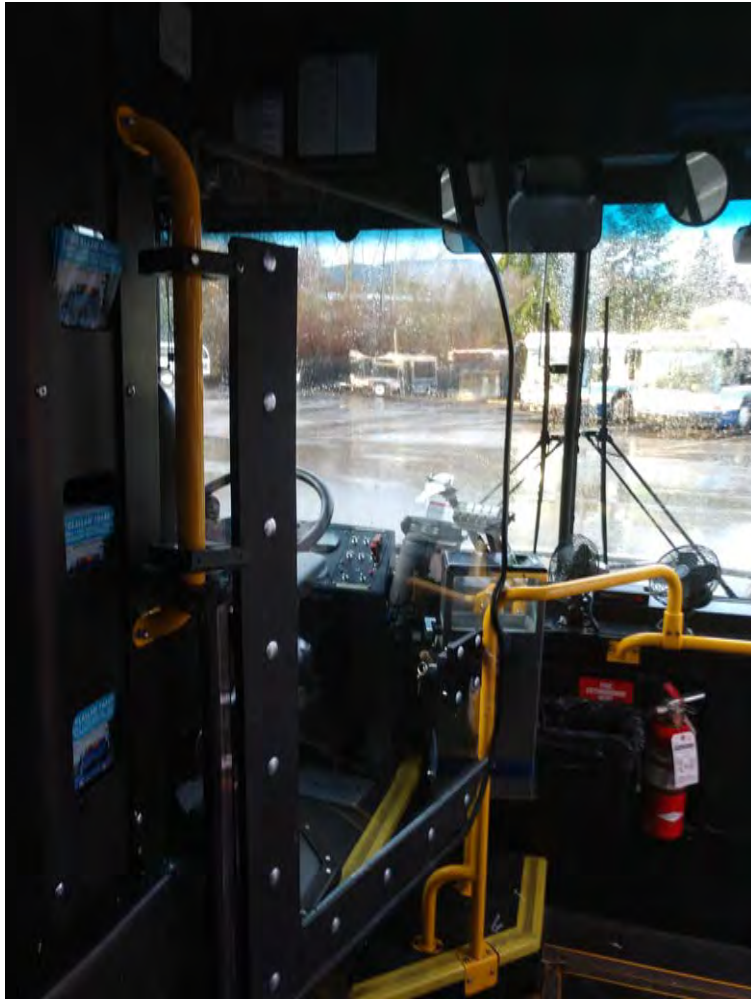
COVID-19 UPDATE ON:

Response | Impacts | Moving Forward

- It is important to remember the COVID-19 Pandemic is not over and we are still responding and recovering at the same time.
 - Measures taken to protect drivers & passengers
 - Daily cleaning
 - Zero Fare
 - Rear door boarding
 - Driver barriers
 - Reduced service levels
 - Balancing between essential & non-essential riders
 - Pandemic leave
 - Food and medicine delivery

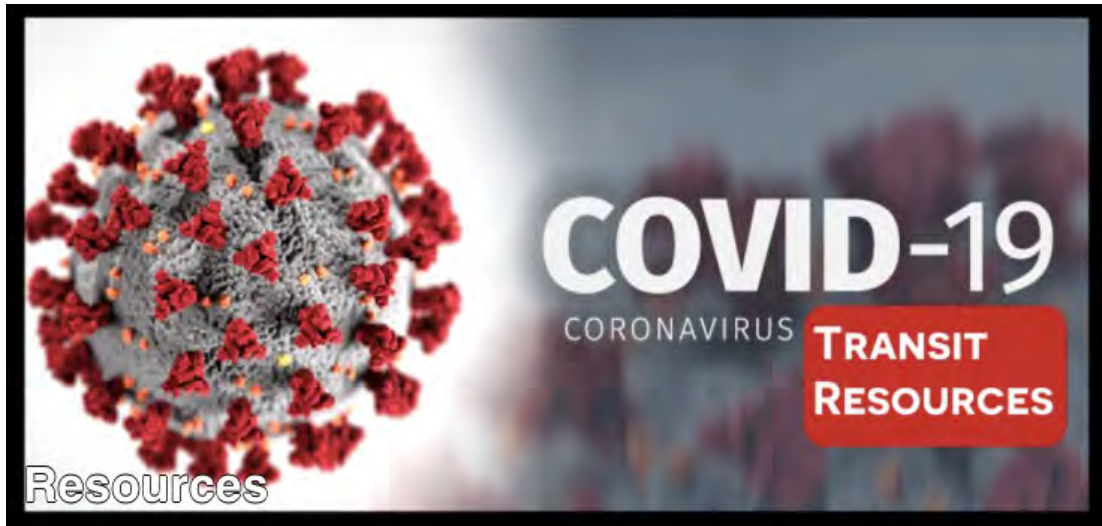
COVID-19 UPDATE ON:

Response | Impacts | Moving Forward



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Response | Impacts | Moving Forward



[CDC Guidelines for Reopening Mass Transit](#)

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released coronavirus guidance for when agencies should increase or open service.

[CDC Reopening Mass Transit Guidelines](#)

[CDC Transit Cleaning Guidelines](#)

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released a series of coronavirus guidance documents for transit agencies. The agency provided tailored resources for:

[Bus Transit Operators](#)
[Rail Transit Operators](#)

[MRSC - Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Resources for Local Governments](#) [CLICK HERE](#)

[WSDOT Update: 3.16.2020](#)

- **How does the Governor's ban on gatherings of more than 50 people affect transit?**

While we don't know yet, we've asked for the Governor's Office to clarify what the ban means for transit. We will share that response as soon as possible.

- **Is there extra flexibility in FTA federal funds to respond to COVID-19?**

- WSTA delivered 130,000 face masks to 40 transits in 3 states
- WSTA Weekly Calls with Small/Midsize Agencies
- WSTA frequent meetings with the dept. managers of:
 - HR, Finance, Operations, Maintenance, Marketing/Comms, and the General Managers
- WSTA serving as a clearinghouse of resources

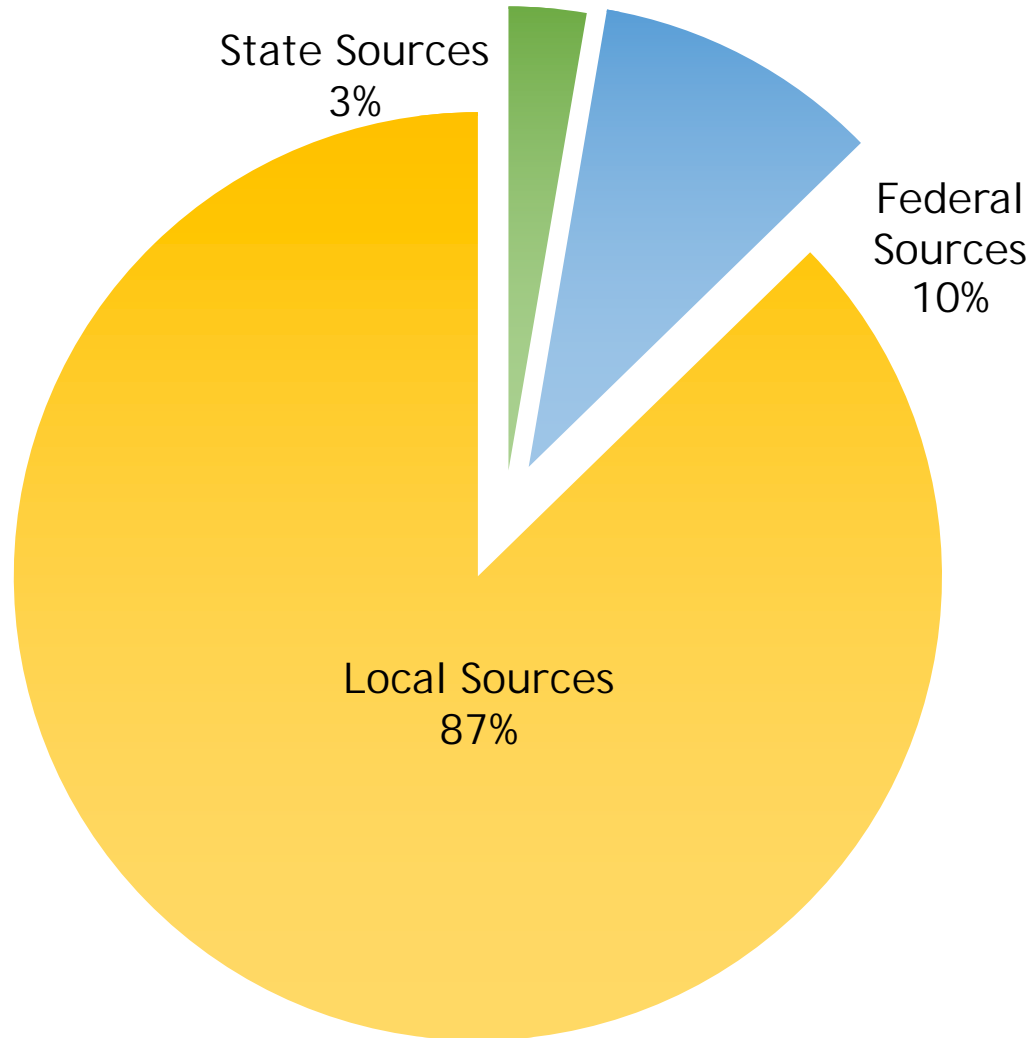
COVID-19 UPDATE ON:

Response | Impacts | Moving Forward

- Topline Takeaways:
 - Impacts are deep and long lasting; Ridership, Revenue, Workforce
 - Revenues unpredictable and therefore hard to budget & plan
 - Uncertainty with ridership needs/trends make for harder planning
 - Workforce shortages struggles across the organizational chart

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Response | Impacts | Moving Forward



Baseline Statewide Transit Funding Understanding

- Federal & State Sources are mostly competitive grants
- Local Source, ~70% Sales Tax & Fares

COVID-19 UPDATE ON:

Response | Impacts | Moving Forward

- Sales Tax revenue fell by nearly 20% statewide and 25% in the Puget Sound in the beginning months of COVID.
- Fares fell by 80-100% in the beginning months as agencies went zero fare.
- Federal relief and recovery plan assist in keeping the doors open:
 - CARES, CRESSA and ARPA

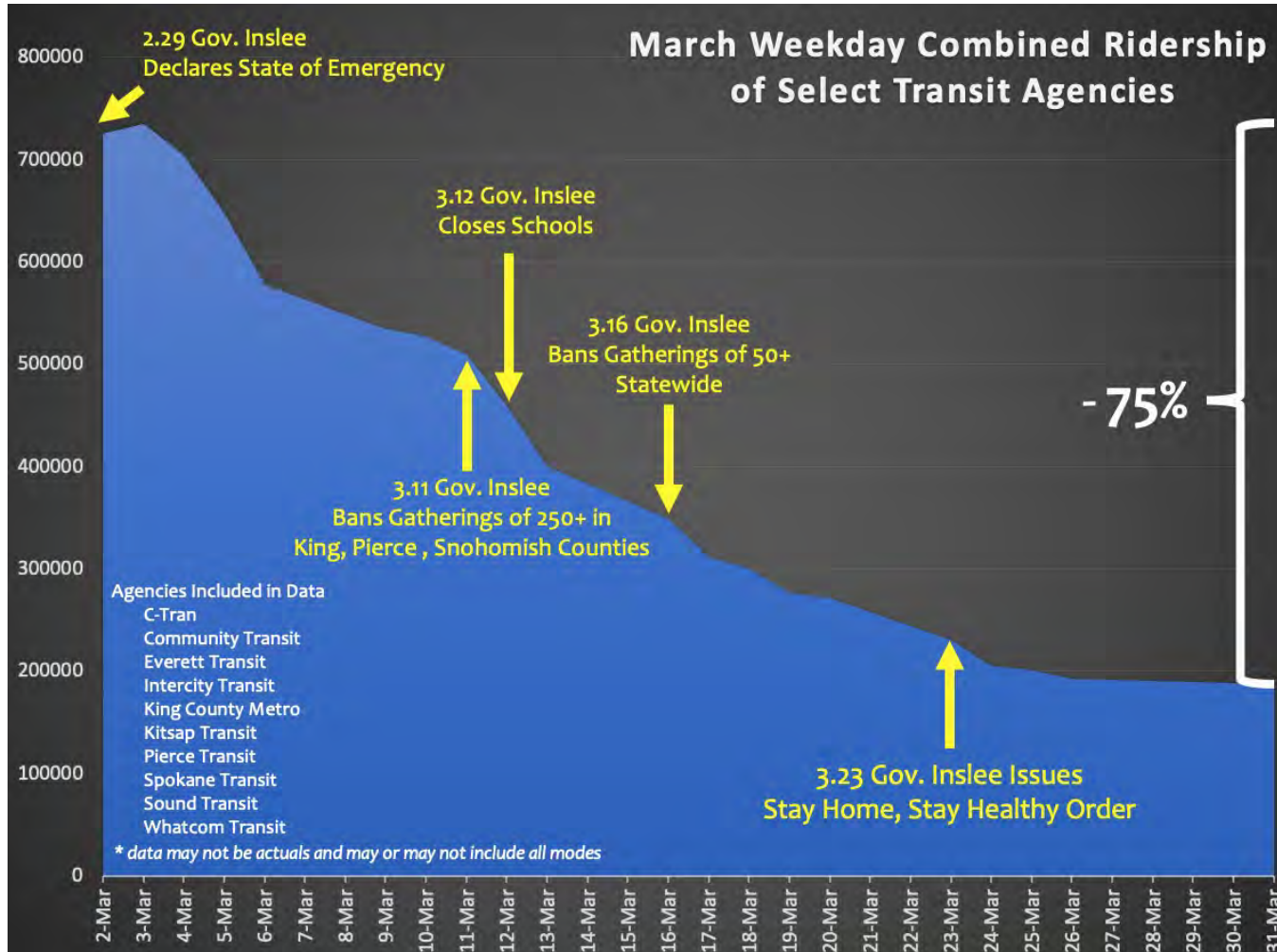
COVID-19 UPDATE ON:

Response | Impacts | Moving Forward

- Federal Government Relief and Recovery Funding
 - CARS ACT - March 2020
 - \$700 Million for WA State Transits
 - CRRSAA ACT - December 2020
 - \$752 Million for WA State Transits
 - ARP Act - March 2021 - ARPA:
 - \$1.1 Billion for WA State Transits

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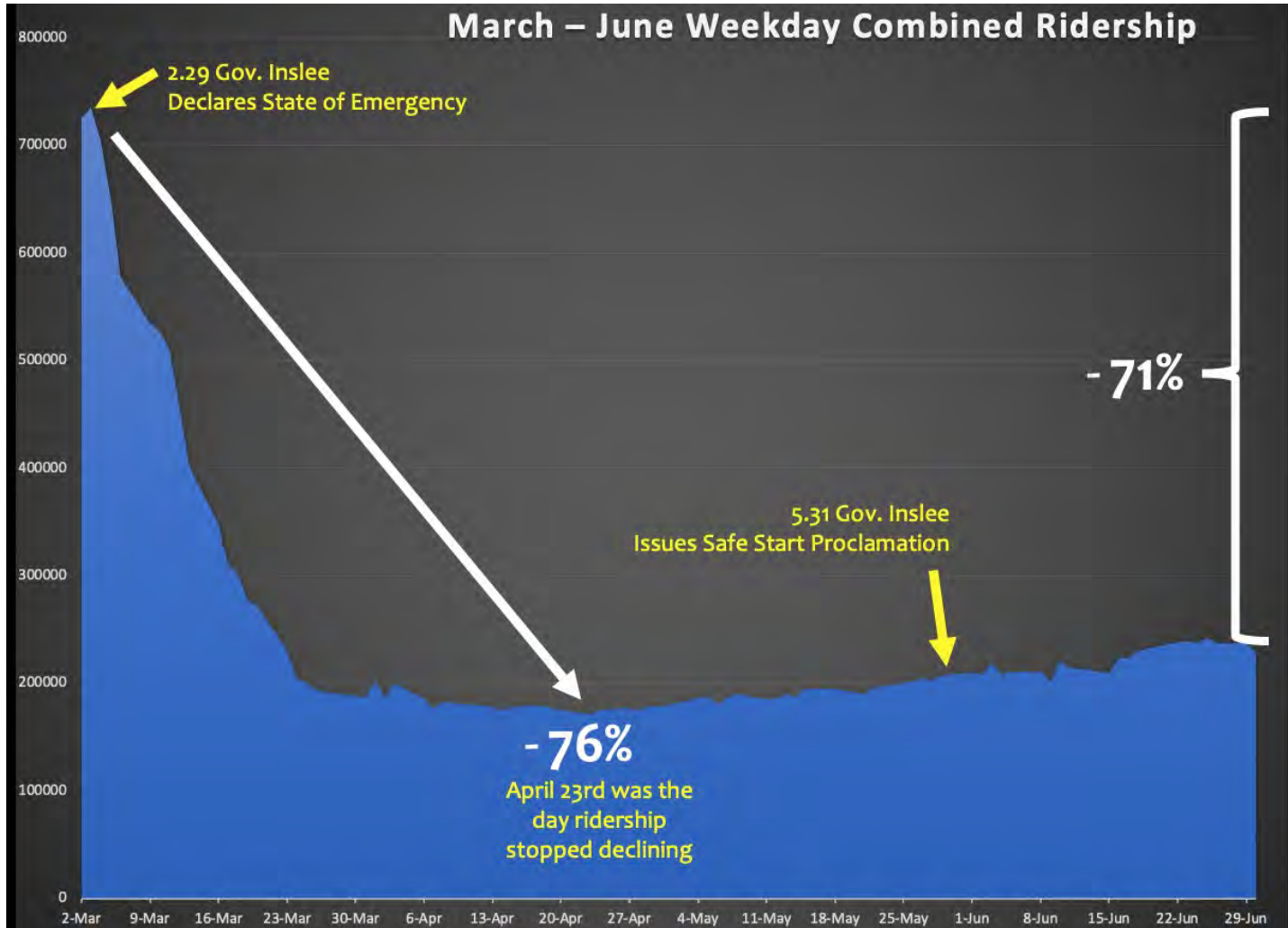
Response | Impacts | Moving Forward



Ridership in the first 30 days

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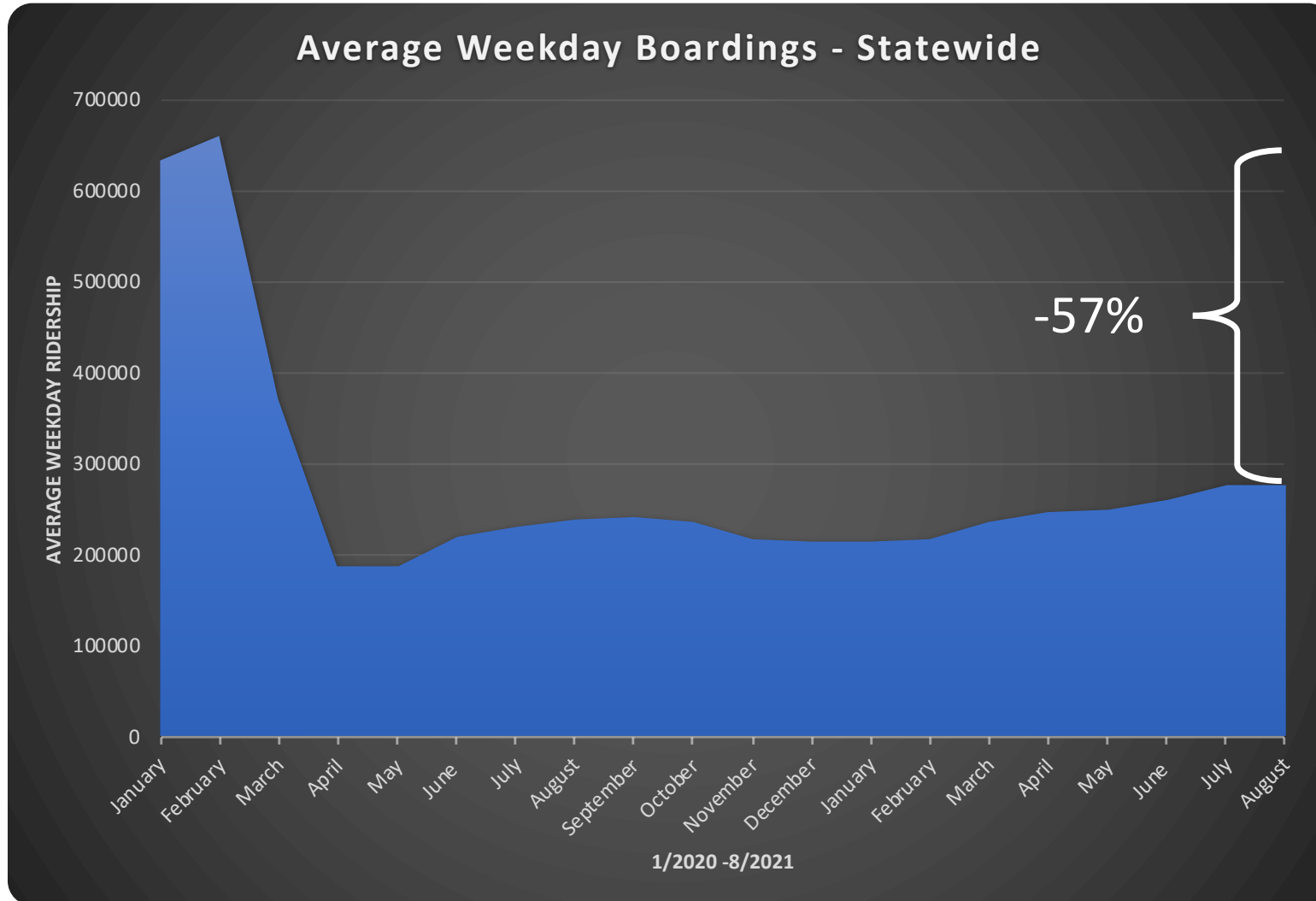
Response | Impacts | Moving Forward



Ridership in the first 4 months

COVID-19 UPDATE ON:

Response | Impacts | Moving Forward



Ridership To Date

COVID-19 UPDATE ON:

Response | Impacts | Moving Forward

The Ever-Changing Conditions and the Challenges it caused

- Wave, after wave, after wave, after wave....etc.
- Federal, State, Local - Who's in charge?
- Mask mandates and the varied reactions.

COVID-19 UPDATE ON:

Response | Impacts | Moving Forward

- Continued Safety Protocols
 - Daily cleanings, driver berries and Vaccines, etc..
- Service Levels vs. Workforce Needs
 - Statewide service levels remain 90% Pre-COVID.
 - Lagging workforce preventing agencies from bringing service levels back.
 - Vaccine Mandates may cause a temporary reduction in service.
- The future movement of people and goods still unknown
 - Ridership/movement of people/economy still not settled.

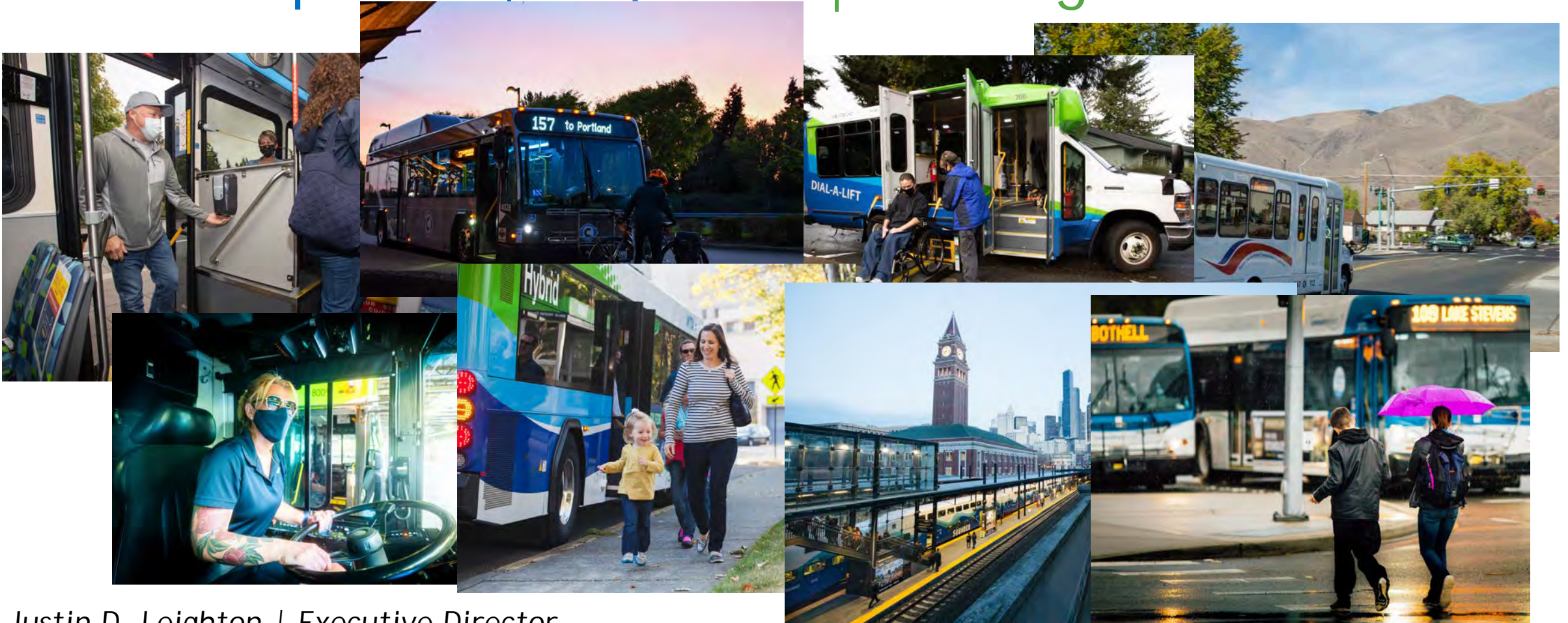
COVID-19 UPDATE ON:

Response | Impacts | Moving Forward

- Vaccine Mandates, Which Agencies?
 - Intercity Transit, Sound Transit, King County Metro, Community Transit, Pullman Transit
- Federal Mandate Is Pending
 - Impacts all private and public entities with 100+ employees
- Working Together - Sharing Ideas and Issues:
 - WSTA hosted nearly 250 various meetings in 2020, 2021
 - Webinars/Virtual Conferences and Meetings

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