



## 2017-2021 STRATEGIC PLAN



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## About the Plan

The individual members of the California Transit Association focus on moving people from where they are to where they need and choose to be. And the Association focuses on the same concept on a different scale. Our members have spoken loudly from throughout our ranks that the Association shall support their work to bring fully funded, efficient and effective public transit systems to all California citizens.

The following pages reflect the role of the Association to help produce that vision. This is the third iteration of a planning process that began in 2005 – which at the time represented an evolutionary step in the Association's work to reflect the collective vision of its members from a statewide perspective.

California's economic vitality and social strength depend on the ability of all our citizens to move freely and easily within and between our growing and increasingly congested communities. For the Association's members, that means a strategy ensuring our transit networks can operate in the most beneficial legal and regulatory environment. Therefore, our Strategic Plan makes strategic advocacy its top priority, with an added emphasis on provision of adequate financial resources for our state's public transit services.

Right behind the primary focus of advocacy, our members want information and services to help improve the effectiveness of their own organizations. The Strategic Plan therefore continues the Association's rich history of member participation to develop mutually beneficial conferences, committees, work groups, training sessions, and other forums. Our members, our leadership, and our Association staff will work together to communicate, share information, build consensus, innovate, and develop Association policy.

Finally, the Association's management functions will share the high standards that each of our members cherish within their own organizations. These include a healthy participatory constituency, well represented governance, accountability, and sustainability.

By developing this Strategic Plan for the Association, all of our members have thus come together to strengthen public transit services for all of California's citizens. They also share the vision that the plan on the following few pages is essential to the successful development of a healthy, effective, and vibrant public transit presence throughout California.

## VISION, MISSION, AND CORE VALUES

### Vision Statement

This statement contains our long-range vision for the transit industry and portrays the desired future the Association seeks to achieve.

***Our Association's vision is:***

Fully funded, efficient, and effective public transit systems operating in a balanced transportation network.

### Mission Statement

This statement describes how the Association will accomplish its vision.

***Our Association's mission is:***

Support the needs of California's public transit systems through advocacy and education.

### Core Values

These describe how the Association's members and staff will conduct themselves and the business of the Association.

***Our Association's core values are:***

- Ethical Behavior
- Honesty
- Integrity
- Accountability
- Service to the Public
- Informed Participation
- Consensus-Based Decision Making & Inclusiveness



## California Transit Association's Strategic Goals Statements 2017-2021



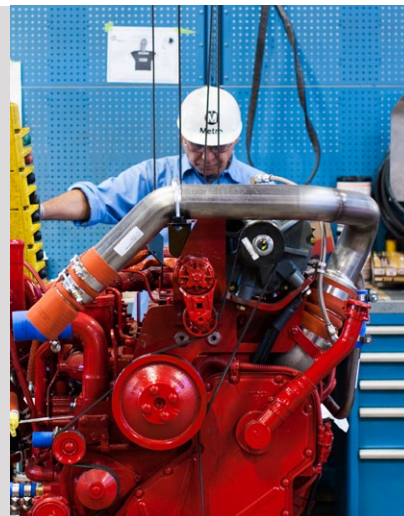
### **STRATEGIC GOAL 1** **ADVOCACY**

Influence state and federal decision makers to enact policies and funding solutions supporting, expanding, developing and advancing public transit.




### **STRATEGIC GOAL 2** **MEMBER SERVICES**

Provide members with timely services, tools and opportunities to enhance the strength and effectiveness of their organizations.



### **STRATEGIC GOAL 3** **ORGANIZATIONAL MANAGEMENT & DEVELOPMENT**

Strive for excellence, innovation and stability.



Influence state and federal decision makers to enact policies and funding solutions supporting, expanding, developing and advancing public transit.

## **STRATEGIC GOAL 1 ADVOCACY**

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## Objectives

### A. Outcome

**Existing transit funds are protected.**

#### Indicators

1. No existing transit funds, including TDA, PTA, STA, Cap and Trade or Proposition 1A or 1B funds, are eliminated, terminated, shifted, diluted, or otherwise used for non-transit purposes, without specific repayment terms.
2. All previous loans or shifts of transit funds are paid back to the appropriate account from which the funds were taken, plus interest.

### B. Outcome

**New transit funds are secured.**

#### Indicators

1. New sources of sustainable transit funding are identified and enacted to meet the needs identified by the Association, without diluting existing recipients.

### C. Outcome

**Laws and regulations supporting transit are enacted and those impeding transit's ability to meet the public's mobility needs are defeated.**

#### Indicators

1. Sponsored bills and policies contained in the Association's annual State and Federal Legislative Programs are enacted.
2. All high-priority supported bills are enacted and opposed bills are defeated.
3. Relevant bills, laws and regulations are reported to members.

### D. Outcome

**Public and private partnerships are used to successfully influence favorable policy outcomes.**

#### Indicators

1. Mutually beneficial relationships between the Association, its members, and public & private partners are formed.

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## E. Outcome

**Enhanced public awareness of transit and its daily positive impact on the lives of all Californians.**

### Indicators

1. Available polling data indicates increased public support for transit compared to previous year.
2. The number of *iTransit* program followers grows annually and followers are engaged.

## Menu of Tactics

1. Annually develop and adopt State and Federal legislative programs based on the objectives listed above, that identify and respond to mid-to-long-term legislative or regulatory threats to and opportunities for public transit, and also including general policies to be supported or opposed and specific legislative or regulatory goals for sponsorship.
2. Lobby in support of or against legislation, regulations, and budget & policy developments identified in the State or Federal legislative programs, as appropriate, and enlist the similar efforts of members of the Association where necessary.
3. Monitor, analyze and report to members on all bills, regulations and budget or policy developments that do or could affect public transit.
4. Develop and improve relationships with key legislators, staff and administration officials.
5. Continually inform legislators, staff, administration and regulatory agency officials about public transit, with an emphasis on how funding works and transit's sustainable funding needs, including:
  - members connecting locally and in Sacramento to build relationships with legislators, educating them on key issues and promoting the Association's priorities
6. Conduct ongoing research into and assessment of transit's unfunded needs for increased and sustainable operations and maintenance, as well as capital funding, to preserve the current system and expand the system to achieve local, regional and state policy goals.
7. Identify and advocate for alternative and increased transit funding sources, new ways to incentivize transit use and better transit funding delivery systems.
8. Develop messaging products, a media relations program, and resources for advocates and members that position public transit as a bi-partisan policy priority deserving continued state support, and improve the way legislators, administration officials, other state decision-makers, and the California public, perceive the Association and public transit.



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9. Build stronger partnerships with like-minded public and private organizations, including:
    - building coalitions to support the Association's funding and policy priorities
    - convening a roundtable group of businesses to support public transit
  10. Continue and strengthen the *iTransit* program, including by:
    - evolving the messages and tool-kits to assist local agencies in promoting public transportation to individuals and influential groups that can impact funding, land-use and related decisions
    - growing the database of individual supporters of public transit
    - educating and mobilizing supporters as appropriate by working with member agencies to activate their riders and local community groups
    - members forming relationships with partner organizations and promoting the *iTransit* program via social media and agency advertising
  11. Increase opportunities for transit to influence local planning efforts (i.e., land use and development decisions) through the state legislative and regulatory process.





## STRATEGIC GOAL 2 MEMBER SERVICES

Provide members with timely services, tools and opportunities to enhance the strength and effectiveness of their organizations.

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## Objectives

### A. Outcome

**Challenges and opportunities that affect members are identified and addressed.**

#### Indicators

1. Needs assessments and analyses are completed.
2. Appropriate experts are brought together.
3. Information is distributed.
4. Action results are implemented.

### B. Outcome

**Members benefit from substantive education, training and networking that include a broad range of perspectives and encourage innovation.**

#### Indicators

1. Well-planned and executed annual Federal Lobby Day, Spring Legislative Conference and legislative visits, Fall Conference & Expo, Transit 101, and various informational webinars and other opportunities are provided.
2. Attendance at all events remains stable or grows year-over-year.
3. Costs are managed in execution of conferences through development and implementation of a balanced budget.
4. Evaluation results indicate stable or growing satisfaction levels year-over-year.
5. Communication mediums are analyzed continually and recommended improvements are implemented.

### C. Outcome

**Members are supported in their efforts to increase ridership and improve the rider experience.**

#### Indicators

1. Information is delivered and disseminated at events and through communications, focused on increasing ridership and improving the rider experience.
2. Online forums and resources are provided for sharing challenges to, and best practices and solutions for increasing ridership and improving the rider experience.



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## Menu of Tactics

1. Monitor policy and operational trends in transportation that affect transit, including communications from member organizations and legislative or regulatory developments, assign important new or evolving issues to standing committees (or appoint task forces as necessary) for analysis and development of recommendations, take positions as appropriate.
2. Disseminate analysis and information to members, as relevant, when it becomes available and mobilize members as needed.
3. Continually evaluate and utilize the most effective communication mediums.
4. Provide members with the tools (including digital media and the *iTransit* program) to promote the Association and public transit.
5. Provide enhanced or additional opportunities for Business Members to connect with public agency members and showcase their innovative products and services.

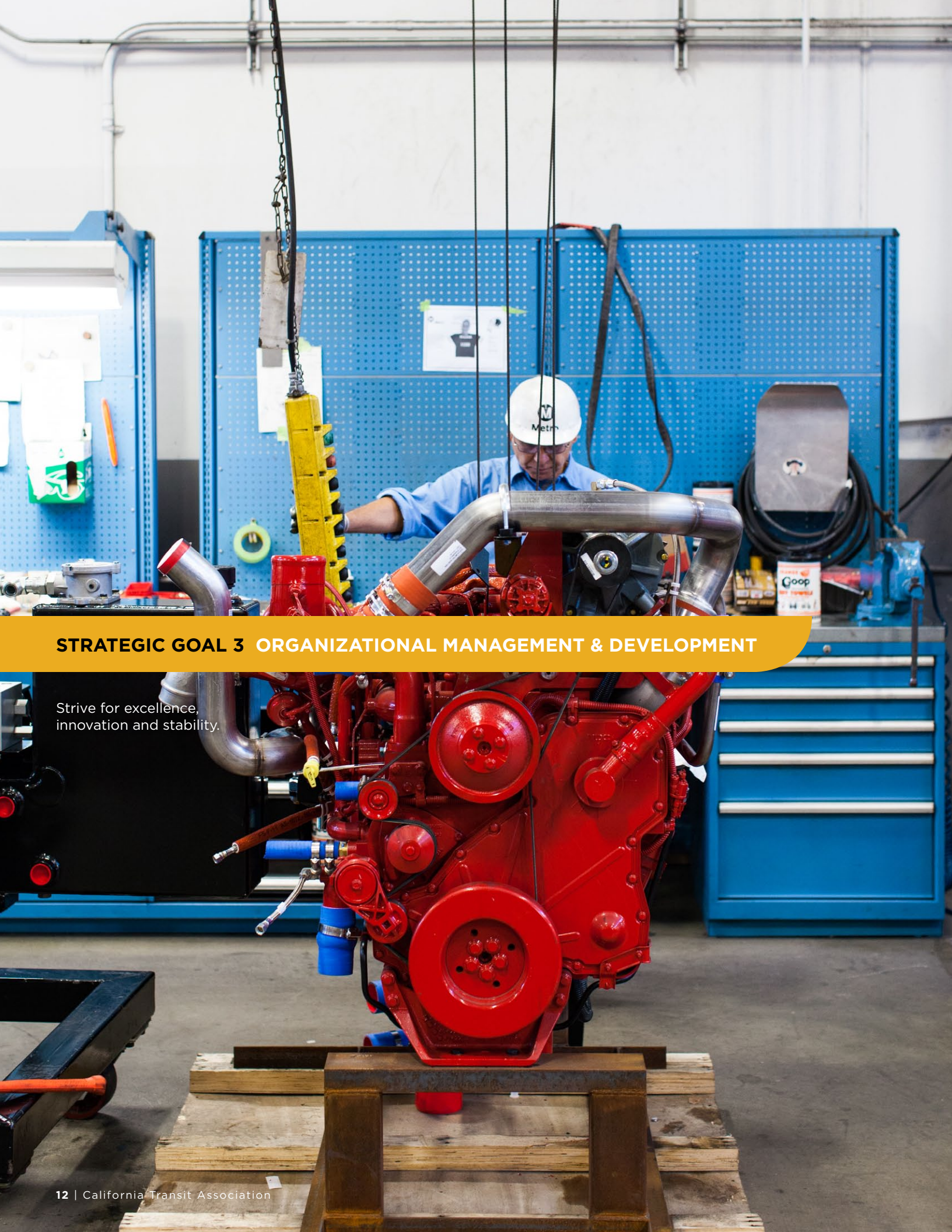




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6. Develop and offer distance learning opportunities to educate and train personnel at all levels of public transit organizations.
  7. Encourage greater attendance at events by making them more easily accessible and affordable, and by improving marketing of registration for such events.
  8. Develop and maintain partnerships with grant-making and other fund-providing agencies and organizations, and facilitate member access to such funds.
  9. Offer peer-to-peer exchange, networking and substantive education opportunities, including high-quality webinars and conferences, focused on mid-level and upper-level managers and technical staff, and transit agency governing board members, based on input from a broad number of perspectives, where common problems and innovative ideas can be shared and solutions developed and disseminated.
  10. Provide opportunities for small organizations to learn from the large organizations and the large to learn from the small, including through the development and dissemination of:
    - best practices
    - online forums
    - a reference library
    - comparative analysis
    - technology solutions
    - a clearinghouse of and links to existing research, messaging and training opportunities
  11. Continually assess the effectiveness of our educational opportunities.







### STRATEGIC GOAL 3 ORGANIZATIONAL MANAGEMENT & DEVELOPMENT

Strive for excellence,  
innovation and stability.

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## Objectives

### A. Outcome

**Increased overall membership.**

#### Indicators

1. A high-rate of member retention and a net increase in new members over the previous year is annually achieved.
2. Outreach efforts to all segments of the industry are conducted.

### B. Outcome

**Members in every legislative district in the state join the Association.**

#### Indicators

1. At least one member has joined from every state legislative and congressional district.

### C. Outcome

**Continued financial stability and accountability.**

#### Indicators

1. Annual operating budget and year-end reconciliation are balanced.
2. Financial policies, including management of reserves, are adhered to.
3. Audit opinions are unqualified.
4. Dues revenue annually meets or exceeds previous year.

### D. Outcome

**Increased member satisfaction.**

#### Indicators

1. Association products and services are increasingly utilized by members.
2. Annual satisfaction survey is conducted, showing positive results and improvements in all advocacy, member service and organizational management areas.

### E. Outcome

**Contracted staff and vendors are skilled and experienced to meet the organization's needs.**

#### Indicators

1. Performance evaluation of management firm occurs annually.
2. Process is in place to ensure knowledge transfer between existing and any new contracted staff.

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## F. Outcome

**Communication and information analysis capabilities are consistently reviewed and enhanced by appropriately incorporating new and innovative technology.**

### Indicators

1. Communication is enhanced and information sharing and analysis capabilities are improved.
2. Leadership and skills in information technology are strengthened.

## G. Outcome

**Increased inclusiveness and participation by all facets of Association's diverse membership in conferences, committees, policy development and organizational leadership.**

### Indicators

1. Demographics of attendance reflect broader participation.
2. Review of committee rosters, appointments, chairs and decision-making processes occurs formally every two years.

## Menu of Tactics

1. Develop and submit to the Executive Committee annually a staff and committee Work Program designed to achieve the objectives of the Strategic Plan as much as possible given current resources and effort, based on the tactics listed in the plan, concurrent with a budget and forecast based on available resources and current effort, and identifying additional resources and/or effort required to achieve more of the Strategic Plan's objectives.
2. Continually review and adjust the reserve policy, as needed.
3. Continually review and adjust, as necessary, the Association's organizational and governance structure and resource allocation to ensure accomplishment of the advocacy and member services strategic goals.
4. Approach the business of the Association methodically and deliberately, using internal quality control measures and effective management techniques, learning from other organizations (like state transit associations, academia, thought leaders), and ensuring adequate contracted staff and consultant capacities to meet Association needs.
5. Conduct annual member satisfaction surveys.
6. Conduct annual management firm performance evaluations.
7. Ensure committee or task force members are inclusive of a broad range of perspectives and serve as advisors on development of conference programs and other member services, to ensure offerings are cutting-edge, timely and provide usable information and services that retain existing and attract new members.



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8. Increase number of new members through the development of targeted campaigns to identify and recruit viable prospect candidates, including from every congressional and legislative district in the state.
  9. Provide affordable and relevant conferences by emphasizing investment in quality speakers and presentations representing innovative and relevant ideas, and increasing value for participating Business Members, exhibitors and sponsors, while obtaining a net profit.
  10. Promote conferences, committee activities, products, services and leadership opportunities, to increase participation of the Association's diverse membership.
  11. Offer innovative and new products and services to better serve our members.
  12. Strengthen leadership in information technology functions, including:
    - improving the membership database to better track member needs and activities
    - attaining higher levels of website functionality to better serve member needs
  13. Look for opportunities to generate additional revenue consistent with adopted policy.
  14. Identify and utilize web-based technologies for webinars, blogs, committee work, e-learning and other member support services.
  15. Develop a proactive, positive media relations campaign to support the media and message development tactics in Strategic Goal 1, Advocacy.



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## Implementation of the Strategic Plan and Timeline

The Association actively uses the Strategic Plan to guide its activities and assess its performance. This includes the efforts of the Association's leadership, staff, and committees; the ways in which time, money and other resources are programmed; the considerations that go into decision making; and, how progress and results are tracked and reported to the Association's leaders and the membership at large.

As our tactical implementation of the Strategic Plan, staff prepares an annual Work Program, which contains specific activities by which each of the strategic goals will be implemented in a given year, including performance measures. Staff also prepares an annual budget and forecast, which detail how revenues match expenditures to support the strategic goals and produce the results called for in the Work Program. The Work Program and budget are submitted to the Executive Committee each November for adoption and implementation in each upcoming calendar year.

Progress reports are made regularly at meetings of the Association's Executive Committee and to the full membership via publications and the website.

The Strategic Plan is occasionally revised and fine-tuned during its five-year life to respond to changing conditions that impact the organization and to keep the plan relevant in guiding the Association to fulfill its mission and best serve its members.

## Towards a New Plan

In 2015, the Association's Executive Committee determined a path towards a Strategic Plan for 2017 to 2021 that updated its then extant 2012 to 2016 Strategic Plan through the use of a professional facilitator. A Strategic Planning Task Force was formed to recommend a scope, schedule and list of vendors for consideration by the Association's Finance & Management Committee. After a competitive bid process overseen by the Task Force, the Executive Committee subsequently approved the Finance & Management Committee's recommendation to engage a strategic planning facilitator—ACS Quantum Strategies.

After reviewing background materials and interviewing Association staff, the planning vendor participated in a kick-off meeting with the Task Force to outline the project's scope. Part of the plan, as directed by the Task Force, was to conduct interviews with select Executive Committee members and stakeholders. Informed by the background information and interviews, ACS Quantum Strategies then on July 29, 2016 conducted a facilitated meeting with the entire Executive Committee to confirm and/or modify existing strategic goals and objectives, and to identify new goals and objectives.

This facilitated meeting produced an edited draft strategic plan, which was distributed to the Association membership and stakeholders for review and comment via online survey. Results from the survey were fine-tuned and incorporated into an updated version of a final draft plan. The revised final draft plan was reviewed and approved by the Executive Committee on September 23, 2016, and the final plan was distributed to the Association membership during its Annual Fall Conference and Expo on November 16, 2016.

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## Process for Periodic Review and Update

This Strategic Plan is a “living” document, and shall be used continually to guide our Association’s staff and Executive Committee actions, not only over the five-year horizon of the document, but within each year itself. As such, the Executive Committee is committed to a formal, annual assessment of the plan’s goals, objectives and tactics, informed in part by yearly membership satisfaction surveys, and will make changes from year-to-year as necessary to ensure that the Association is meeting the needs of its members going forward.

The annual review takes place by each July to inform staff’s development of the annual Work Program and budget, submitted to the Executive Committee each November.

In addition to these annual reviews, the Executive Committee will also conduct a comprehensive analysis and update of the whole Strategic Plan once every five years. This assessment would take into account, amongst other factors, fundamental shifts in the needs of the public transit industry, as well as any major changes in the political or economic environment in which the Association and its members operate.

Thus, the membership should expect to see annual updates to this plan, and to participate in a major reassessment every five years.

## Acknowledgements

### Executive Committee

Chair—Mike R. Wiley, *Sacramento Regional Transit District*

Vice Chair—Carl Sedoryk, *Monterey-Salinas Transit*

Mona Babauta, *SolTrans (Solano County Transit)*

Kate Breen, *San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency*

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Michael Hursh, *Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District*

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Debra Johnson, *Long Beach Transit*

Kevin Kane, *Victor Valley Transit Authority*

Karen King, *Golden Empire Transit District*

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Pam O’Connor, *Santa Monica’s Big Blue Bus*

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