

Joint Transportation Committee Public Transit Fiscal Health Study

- Evaluate the fiscal health of public transportation in Washington state
- Make a comparison with fiscal health of state transportation funding

Study Approach

- Principle information sources:
 - WSDOT Annual Public Transportation reports
 - National Transit System Database
- Consultation with others:
 - WSDOT, Washington Policy Center and Washington State Transit Association (WSTA)
 - Federal Transit Administration (FTA)
 - Imperial College, London—transit consultancy
- An extended period for analysis: 1991-2011

Study approach (con't)

- Transit systems are grouped for comparisons
 - 12 rural systems
 - 11 small urban systems
 - 6 urban systems (King County Metro separated out for some comparisons)
 - Sound Transit
- Dollars are adjusted for inflation in selected graphs
- Assessment is over time

What is transit fiscal health?

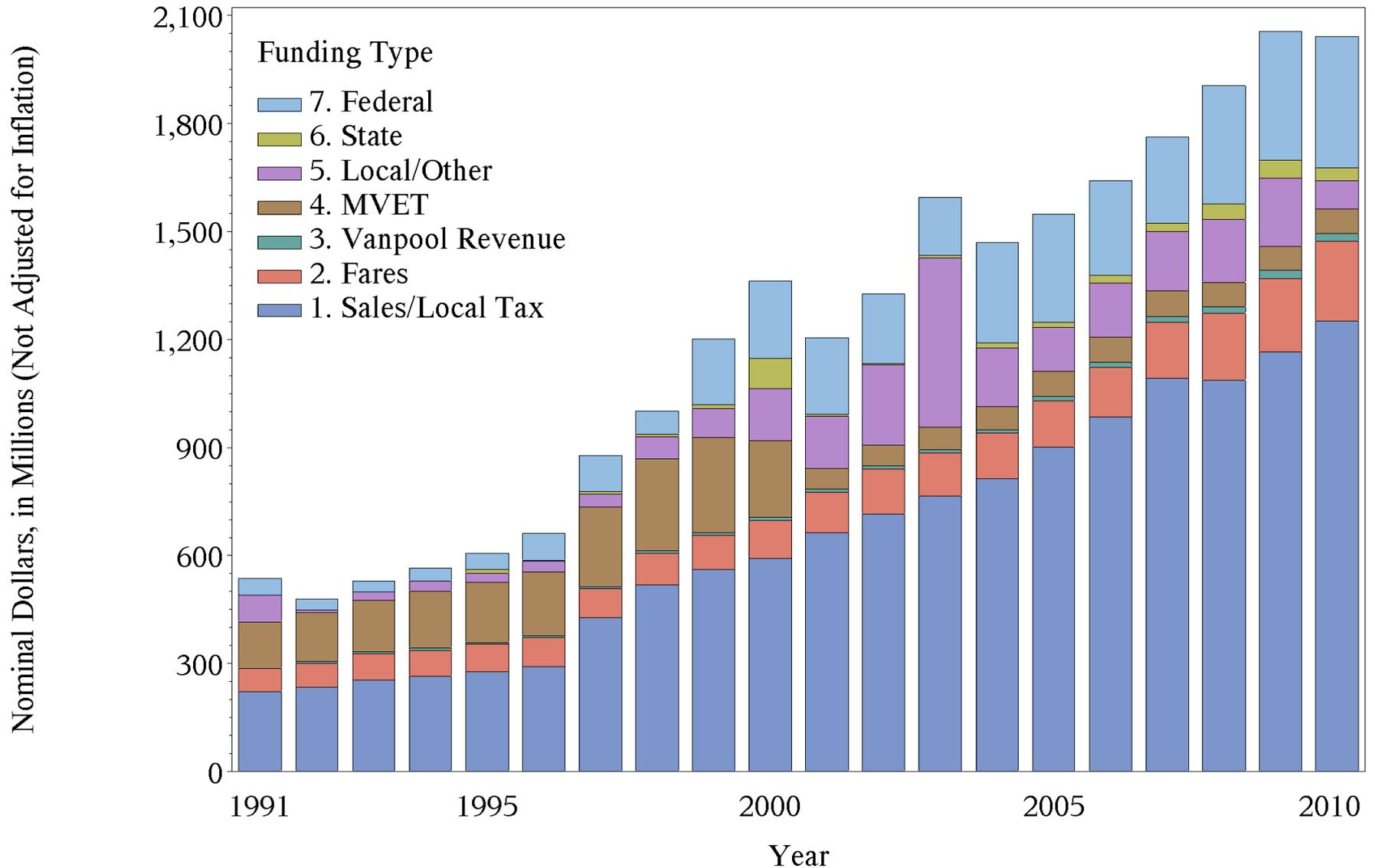
- In many ways, it is in the eyes of the beholder
 - Stable revenues and expenditures?
 - Cost effective service?
 - Customer satisfaction, service quality & frequency?
 - High fare-box recovery & less tax subsidy?
 - Cost containment—cost / hour or cost / rider?
 - Peak hour service / safety-net service?
- Do revenues cover the services the community wants?
- Some measures may conflict with others

Measures of Transit Fiscal Health

- Measures of transit fiscal health analyzed:
 - Revenues
 - Expenditures (operating and capital)
 - Reserves
 - Output (service hours & revenue miles)
 - Ridership
 - Cost per service hour and cost per rider

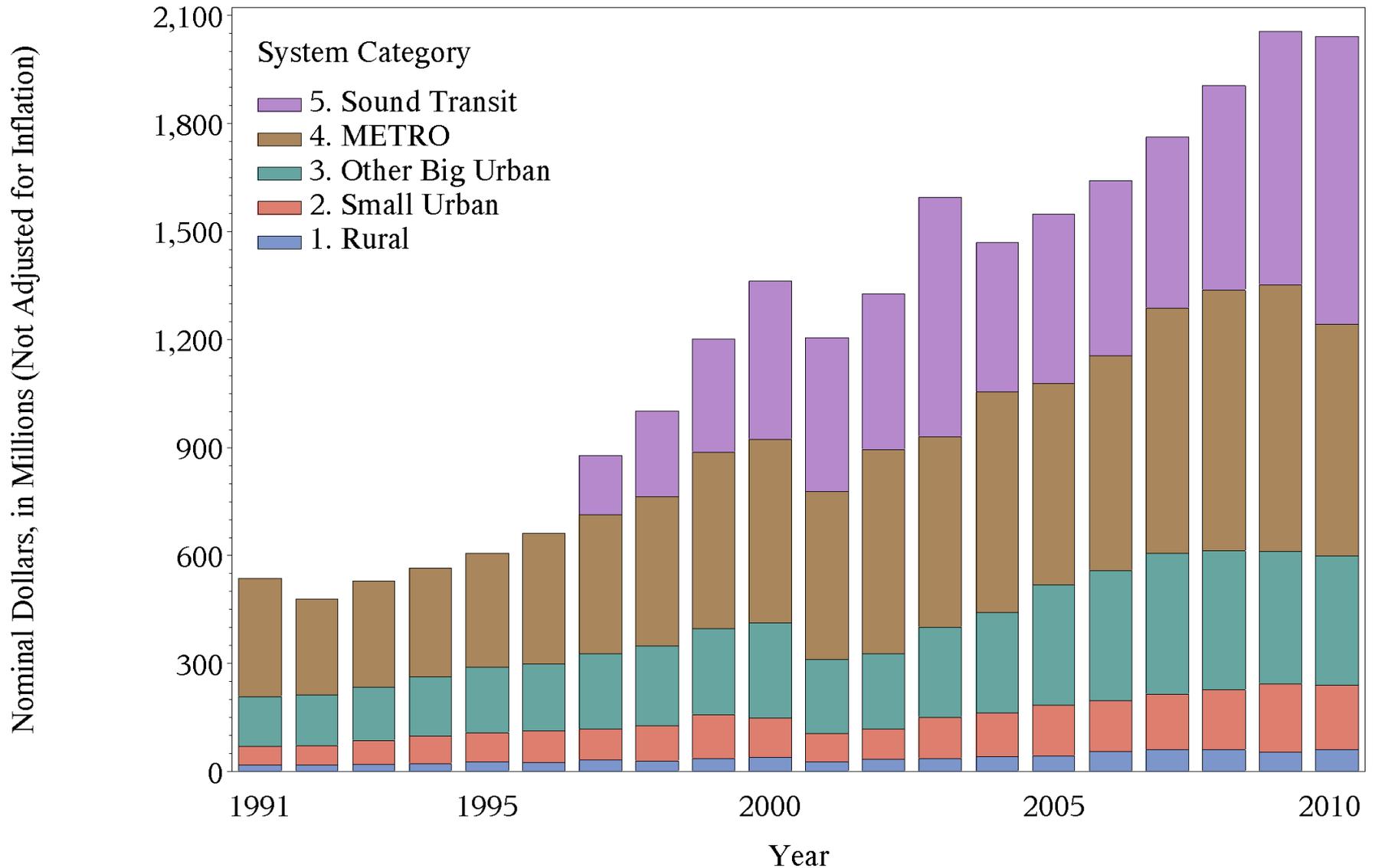
Annual Funding, for All Systems Statewide

Subgrouped by Funding Type



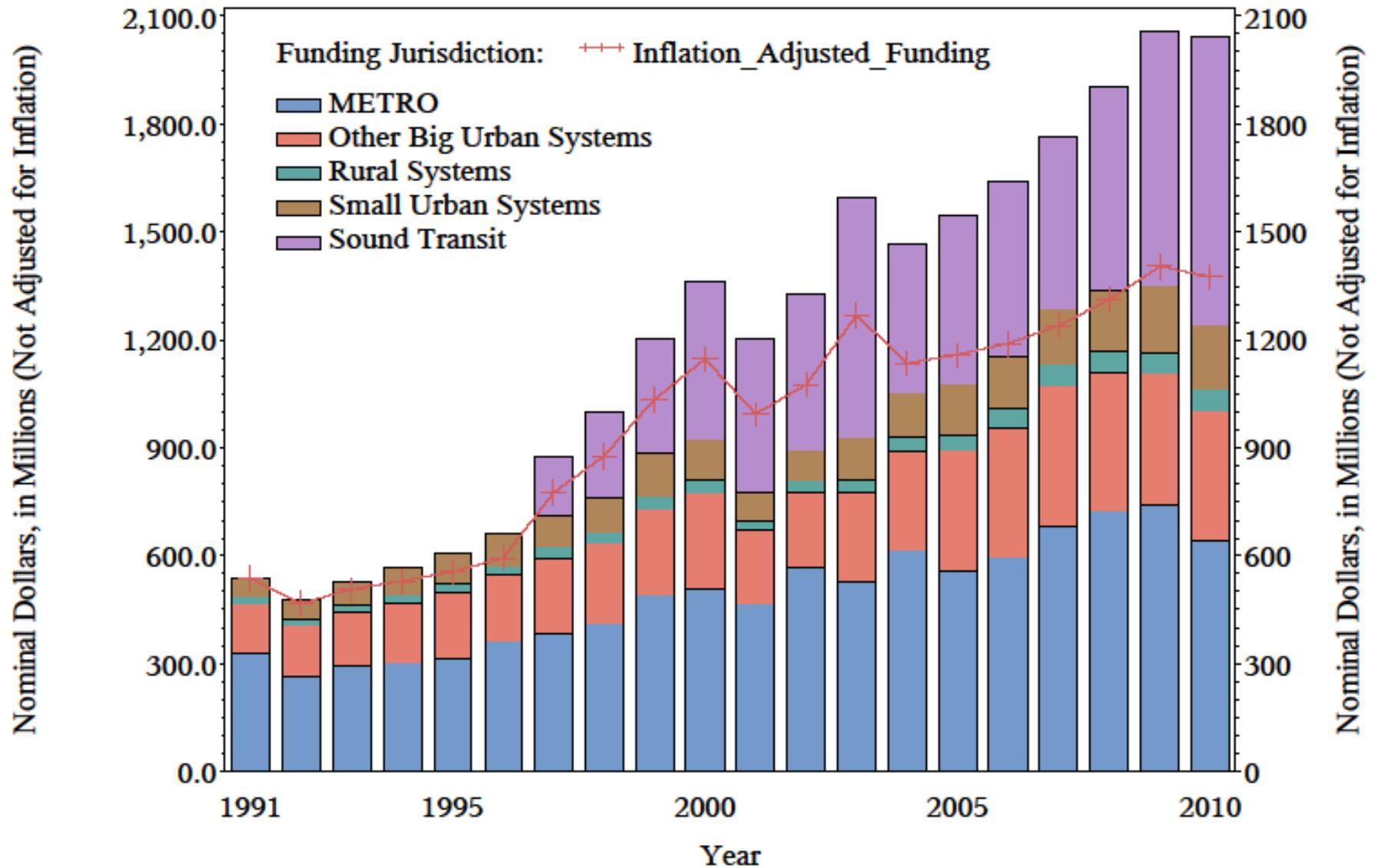
Annual Funding, for All Systems Statewide

Subgrouped by System Category



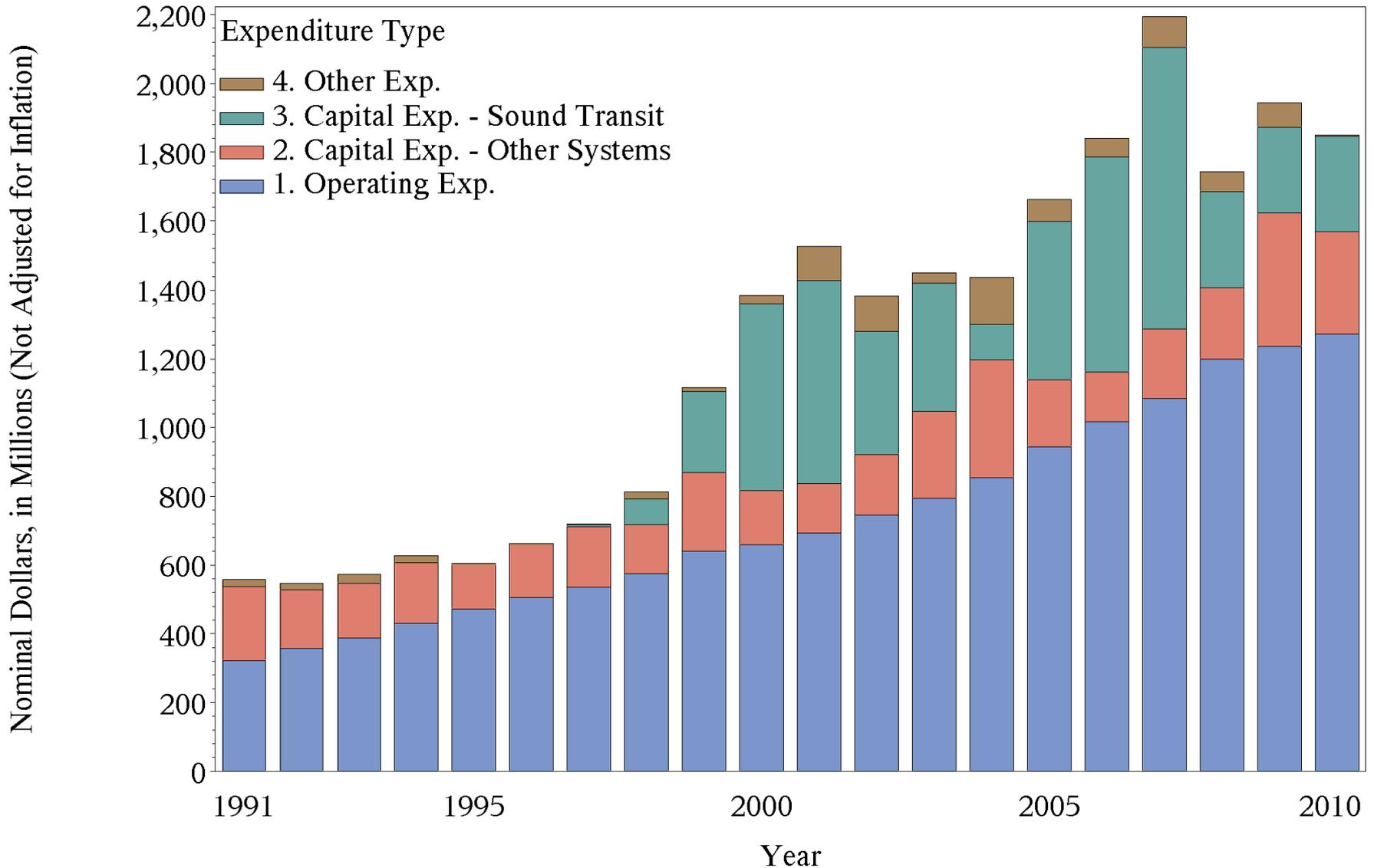
Annual Funding, for All Systems Statewide

Nominal vs. Real (Inflation-Adjusted, 1991=100%) Funding

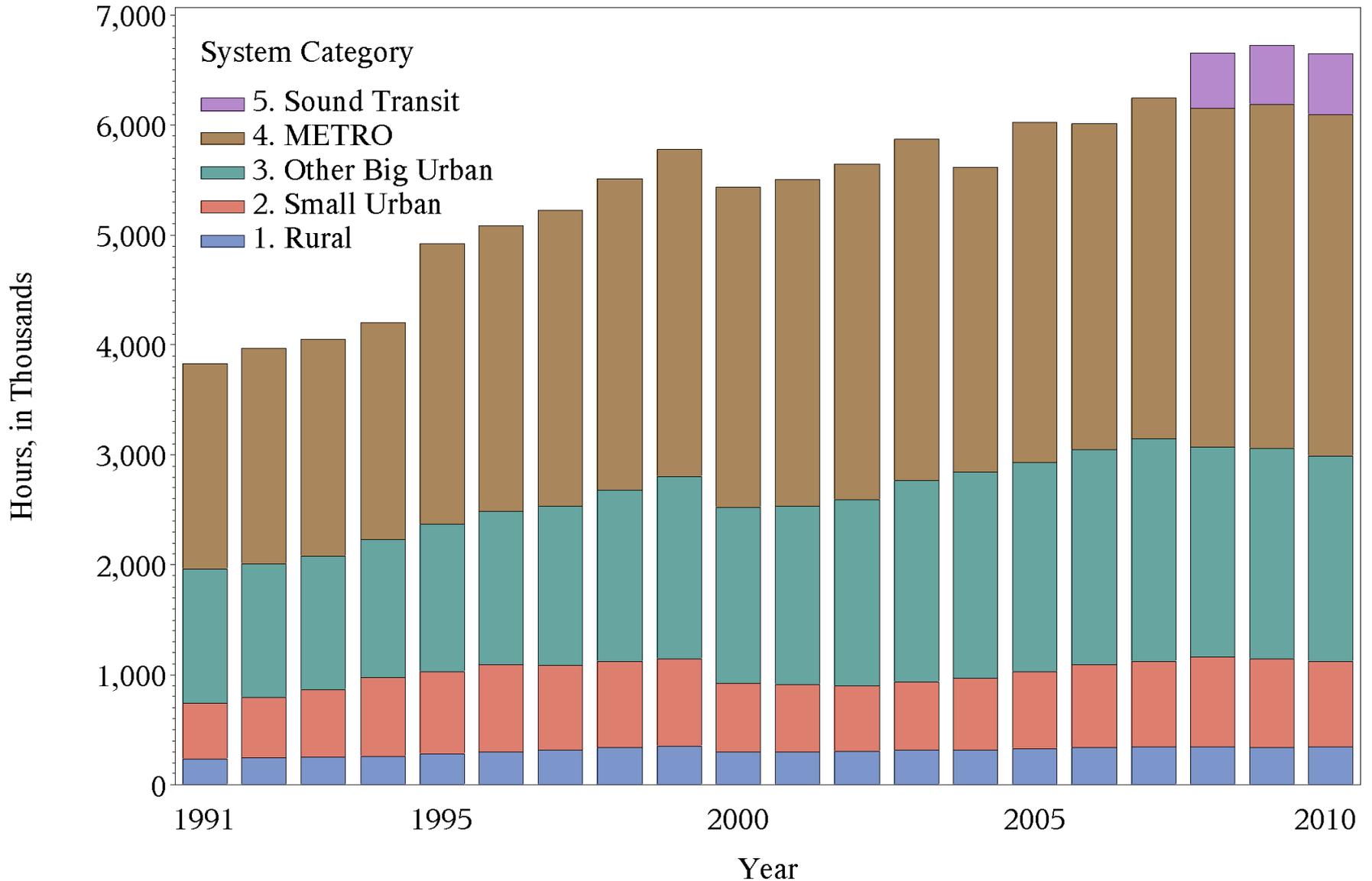


Annual Expenditures, for All Systems Statewide

Subgrouped by Expenditure Type

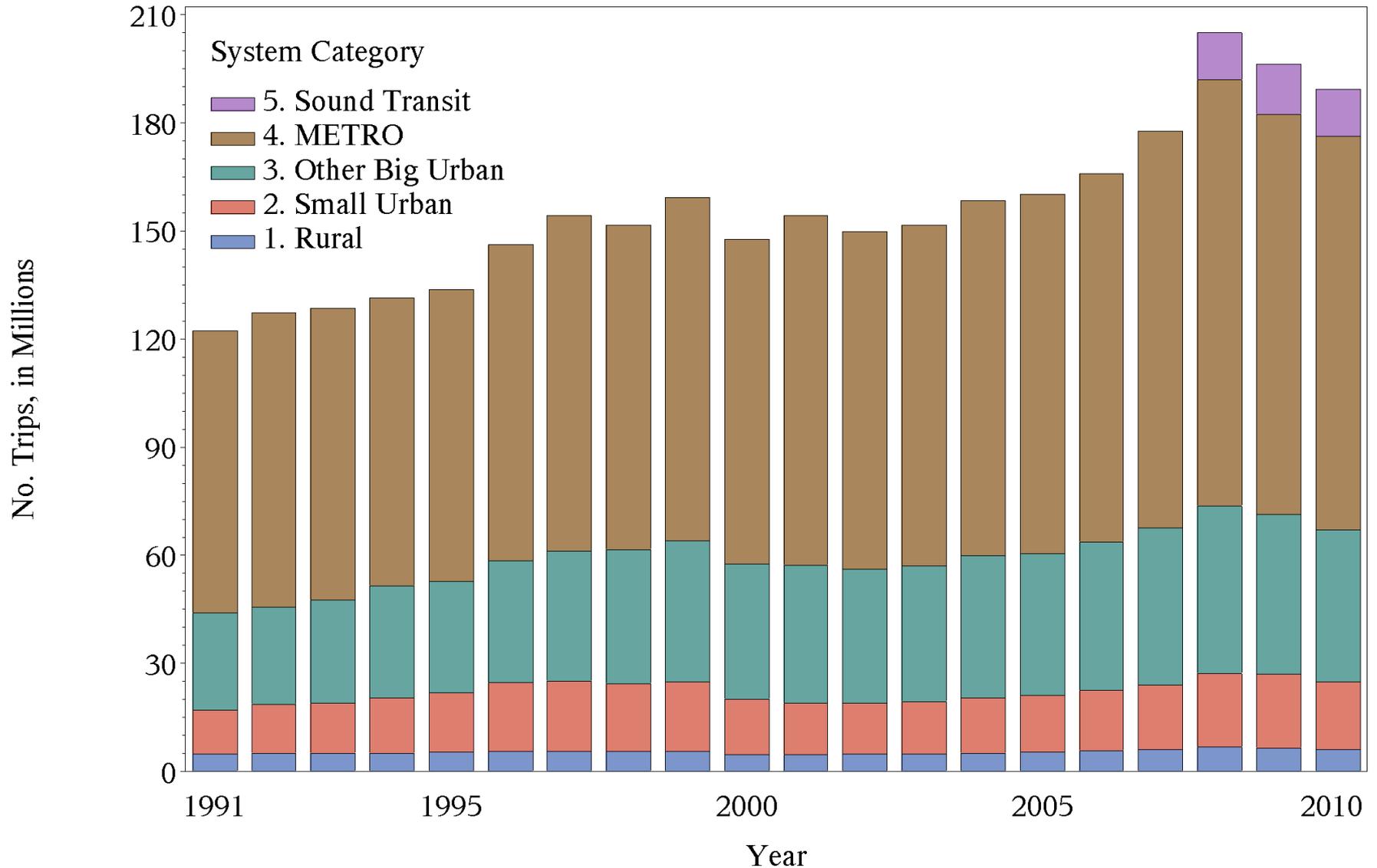


Revenue Vehicle Hours by Year, For All Systems Statewide, Fixed_Route Services Subgrouped by System Category



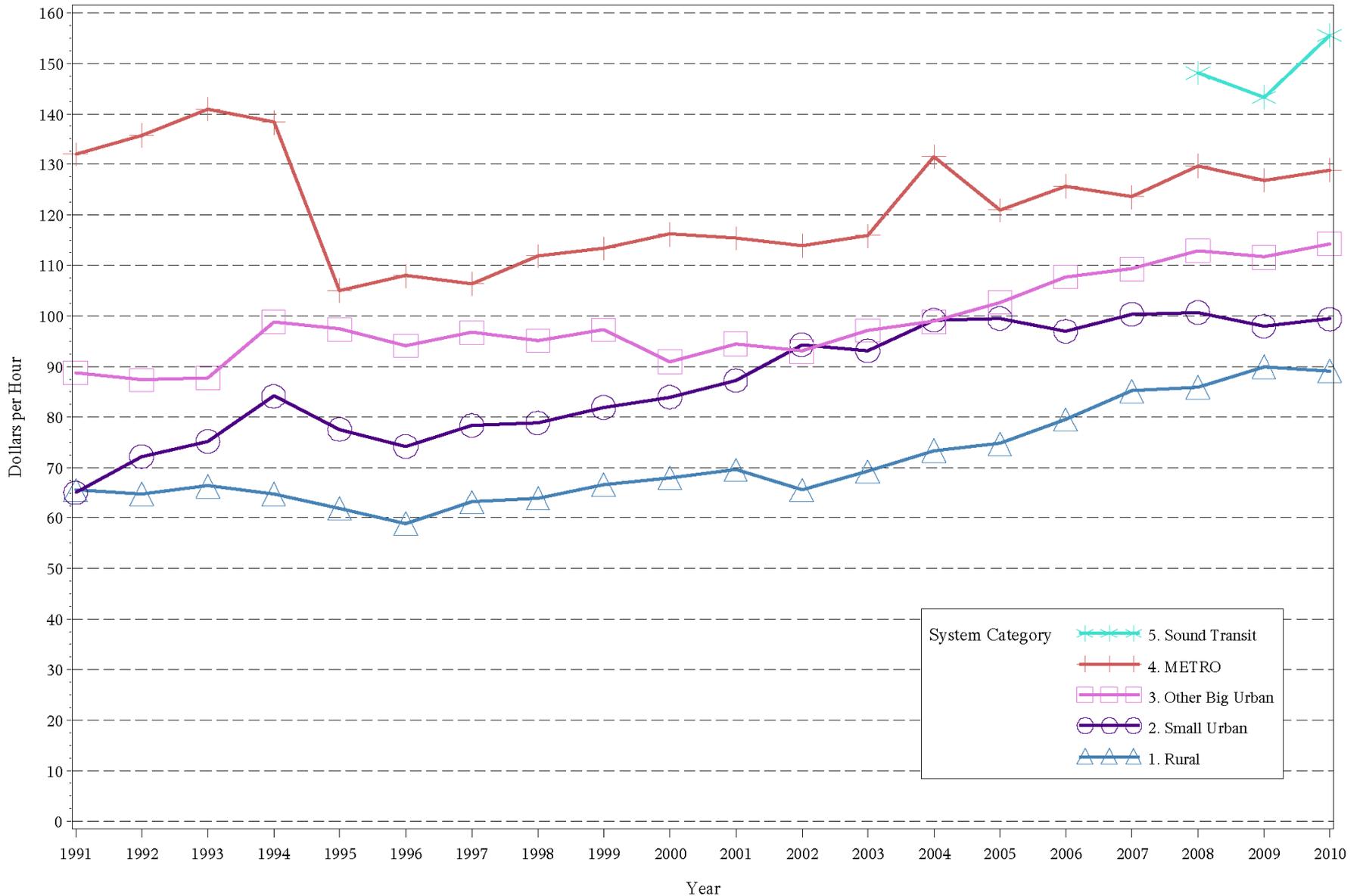
Passenger Trips by Year, For All Systems Statewide, Fixed_Route Services

Subgrouped by System Category



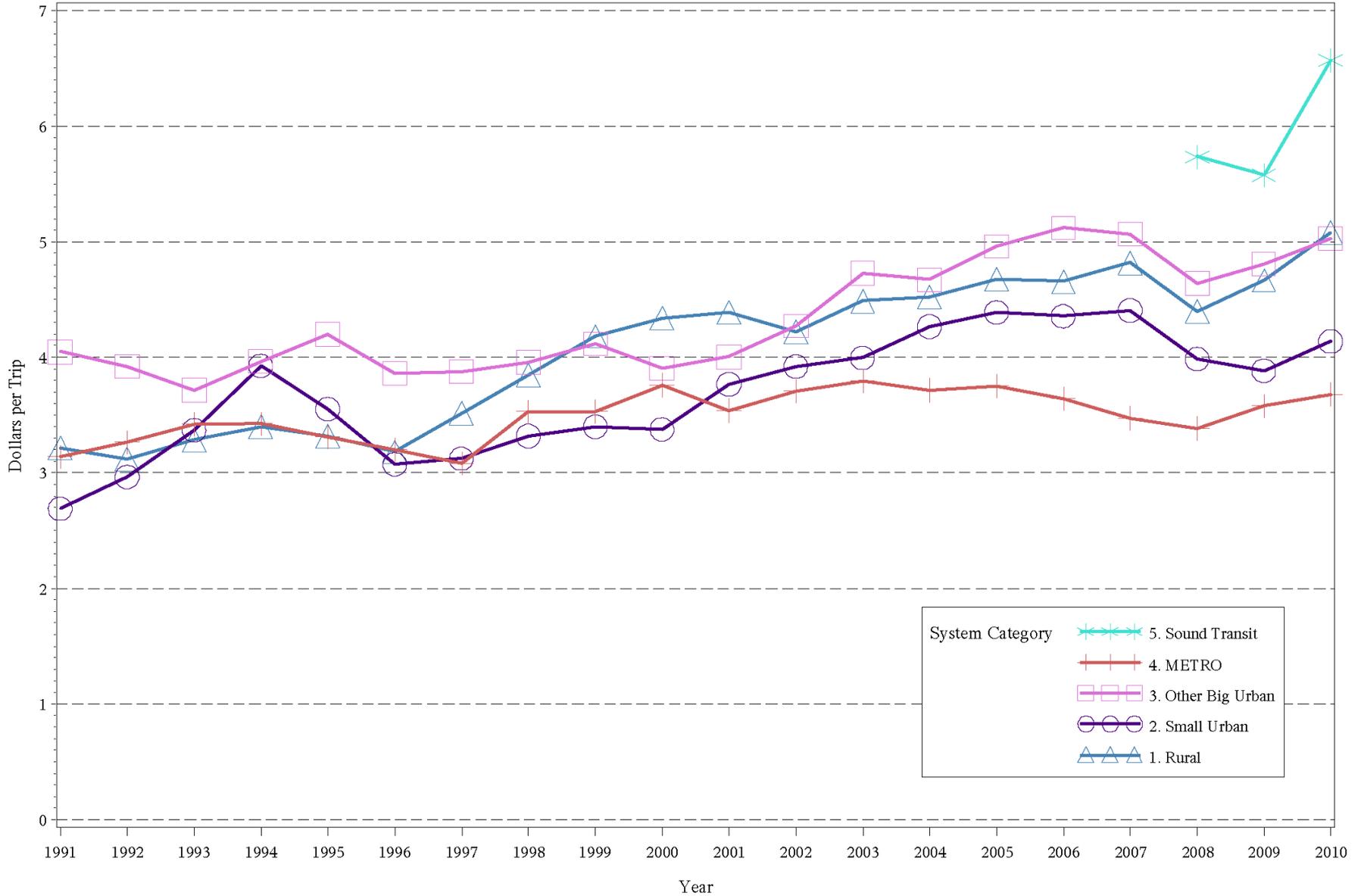
Operating Costs Per Revenue Hour by Year, For All Systems Statewide, Fixed_Route Services

Subgrouped by System Category - Amounts Shown are Real (Inflation-Adjusted), 2005=100%



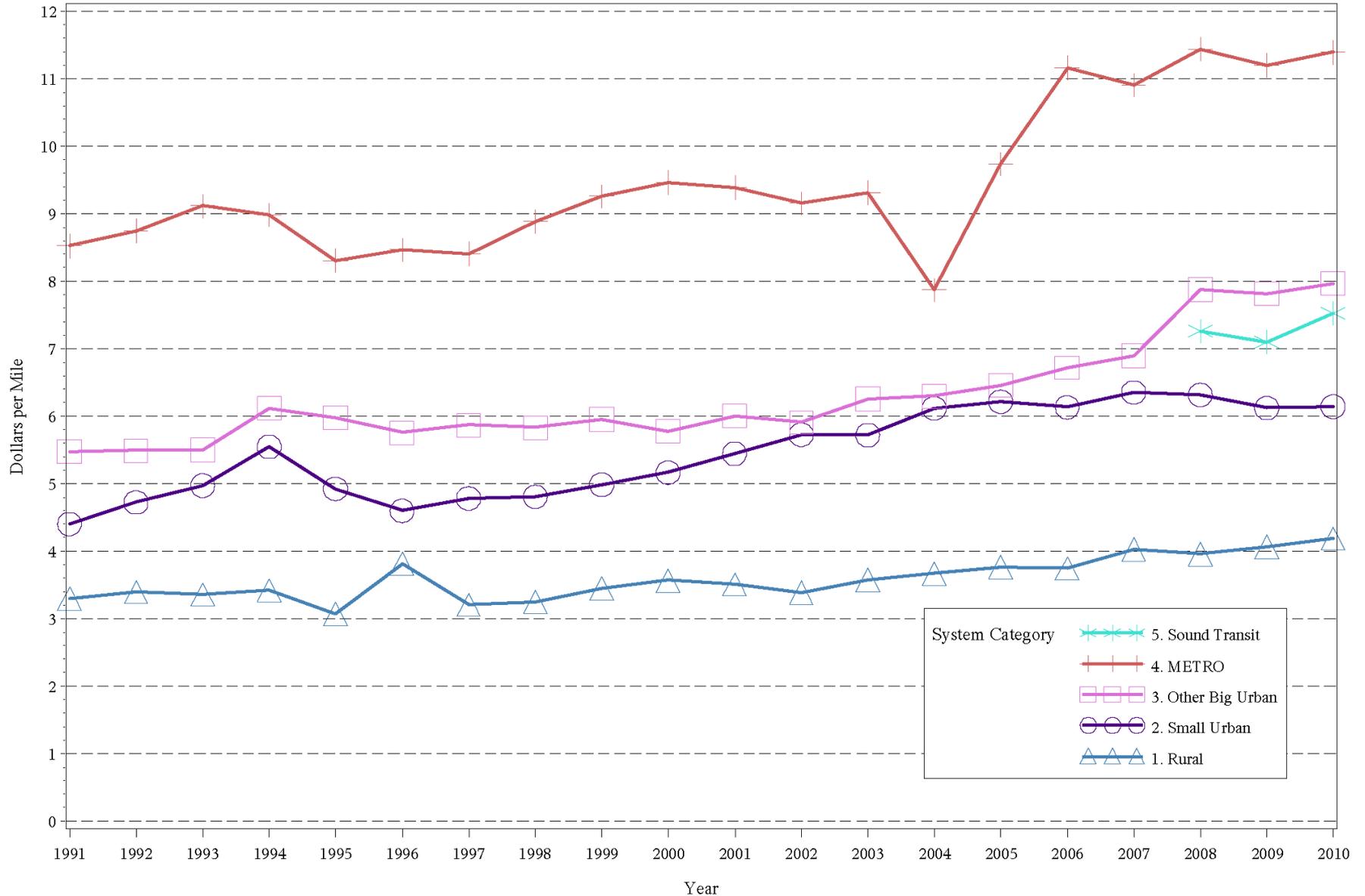
Operating Costs Per Passenger Trip by Year, For All Systems Statewide, Fixed_Route Services

Subgrouped by System Category - Amounts Shown are Real (Inflation-Adjusted), 2005=100%

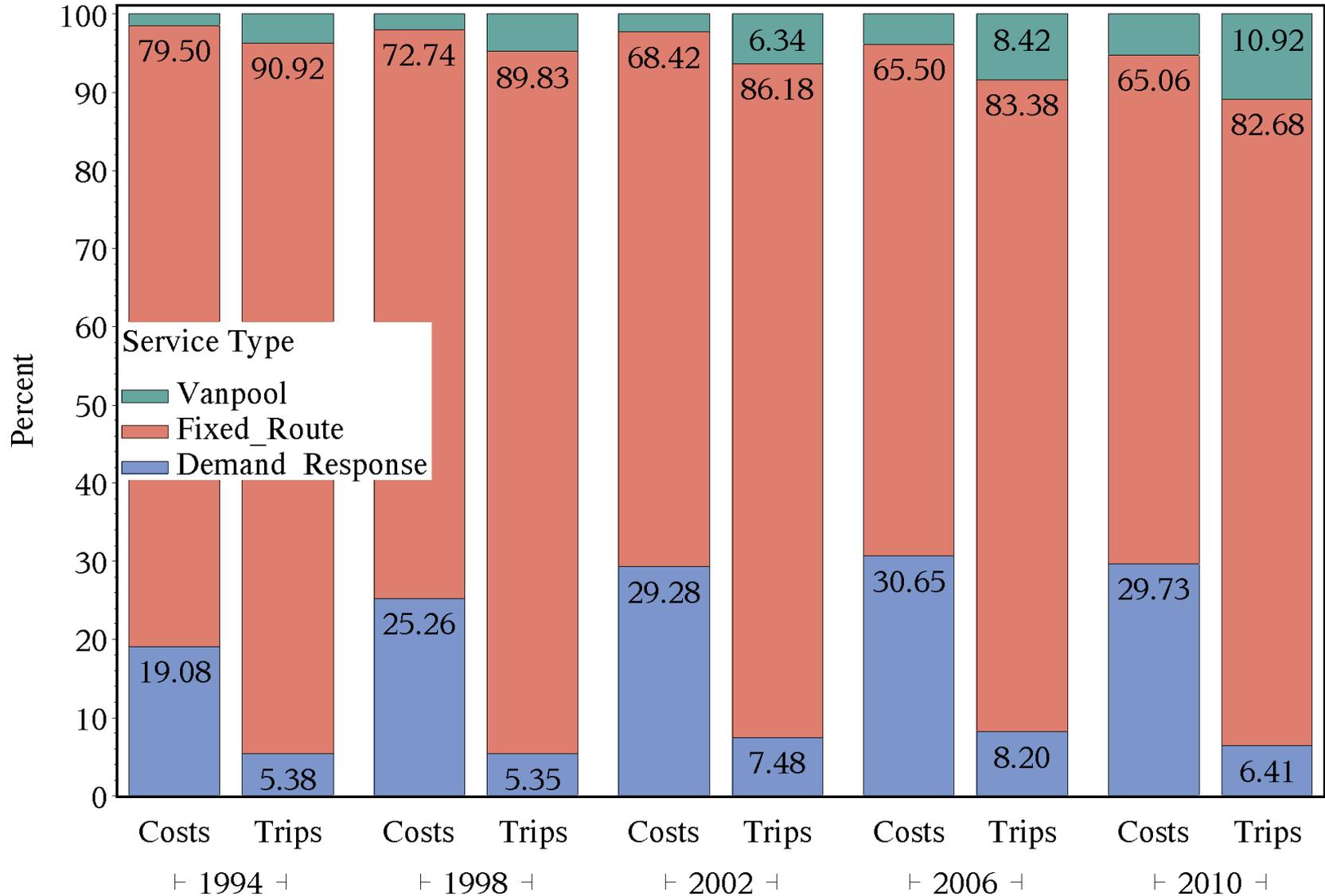


Operating Costs Per Revenue Mile by Year, For All Systems Statewide, Fixed_Route Services

Subgrouped by System Category - Amounts Shown are Real (Inflation-Adjusted), 2005=100%

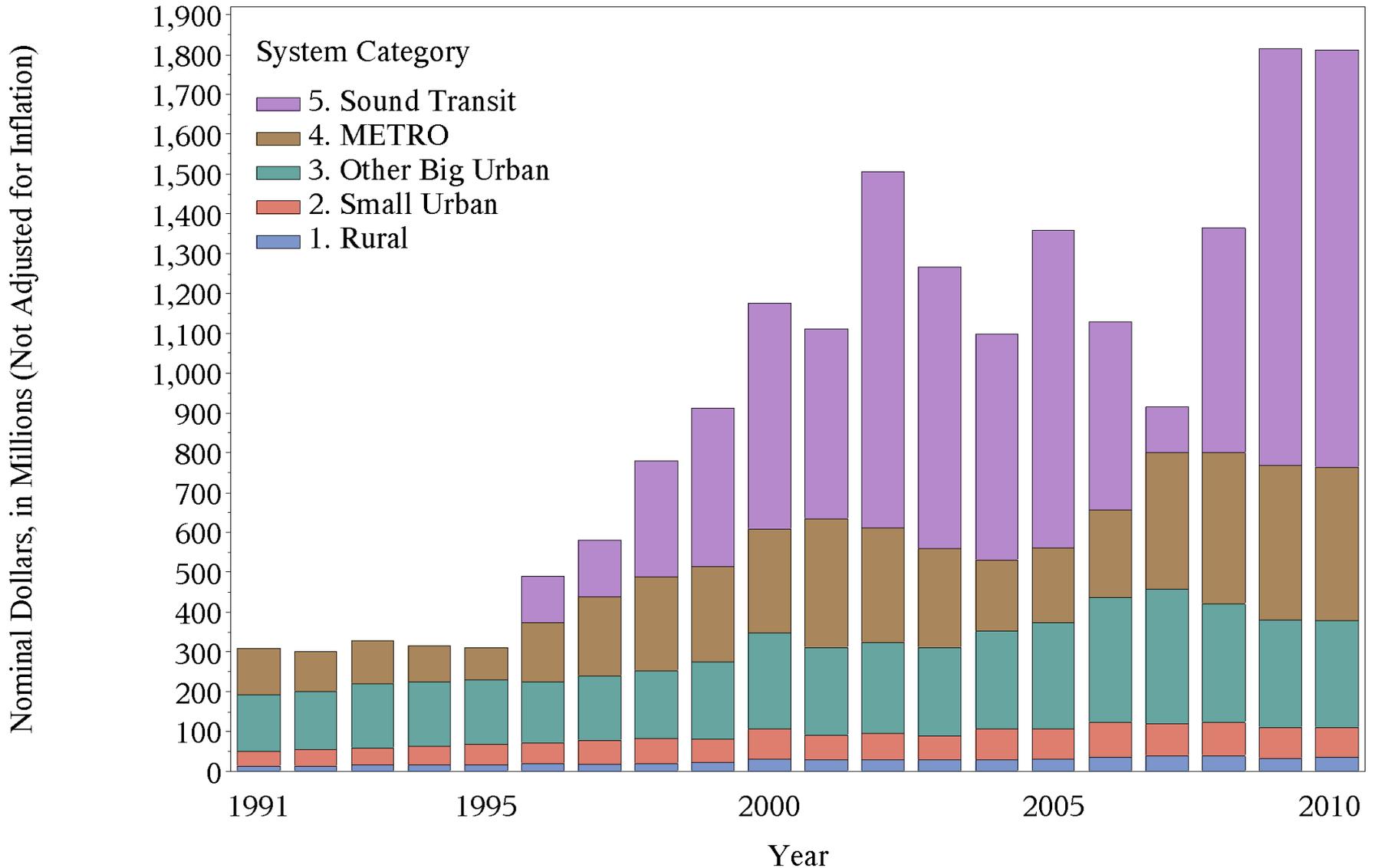


Comparison of Operating Cost Distribution to Passenger Trip Distribution By Service Type, For Small Urban Systems



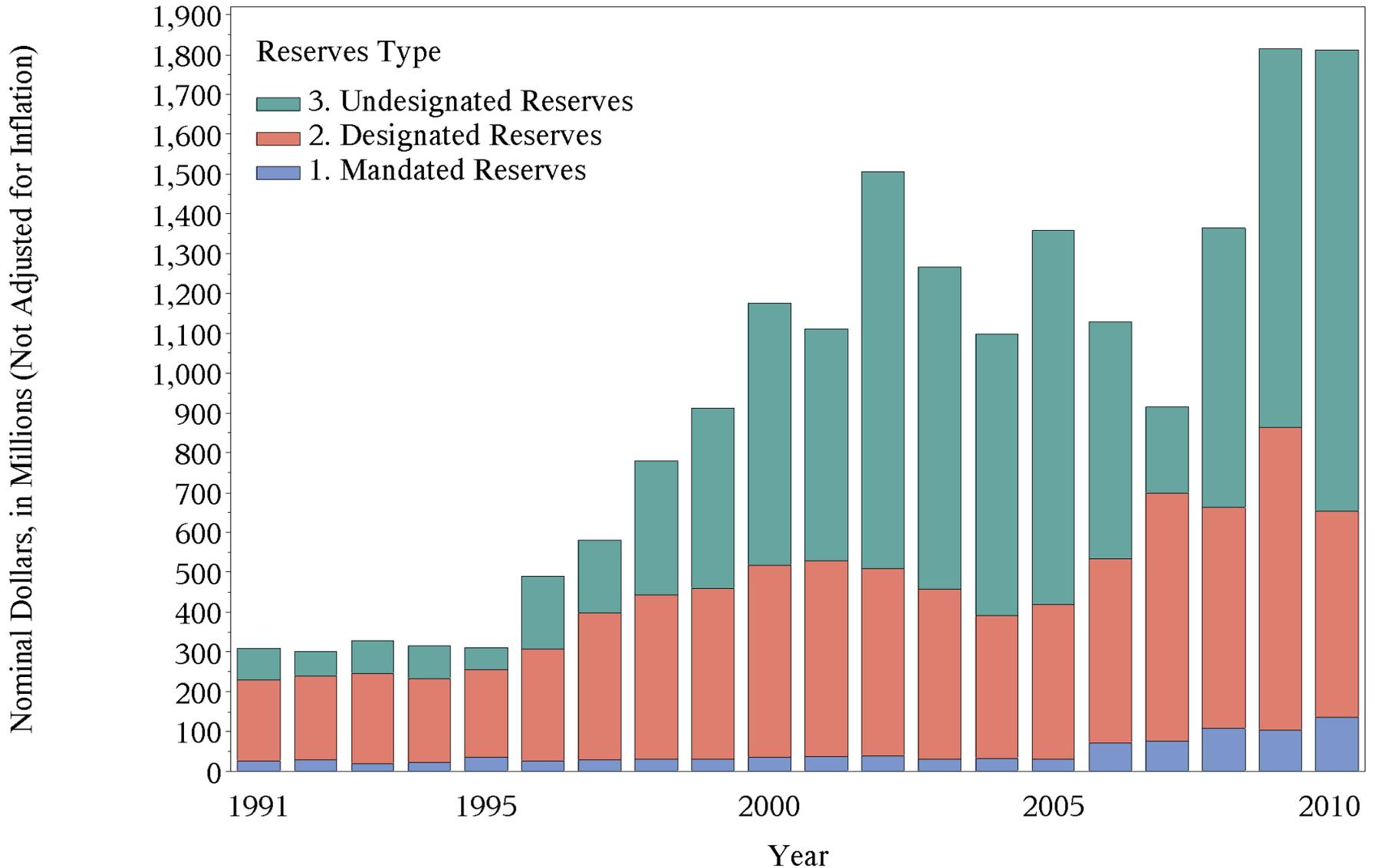
Reserves by Year, For All Systems Statewide

Subgrouped by System Category

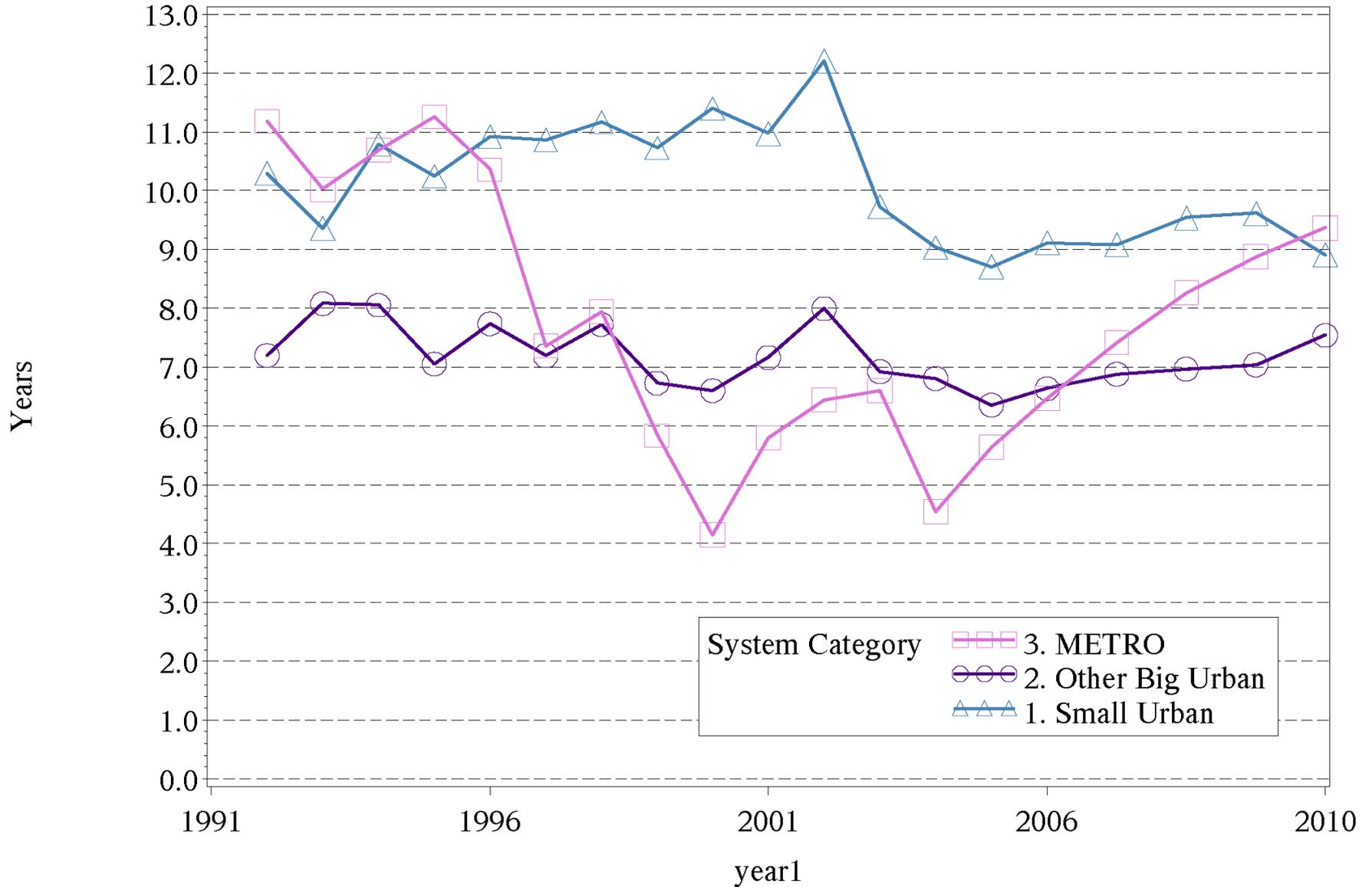


Reserves by Year, For All Systems Statewide

Subgrouped by Reserves Category

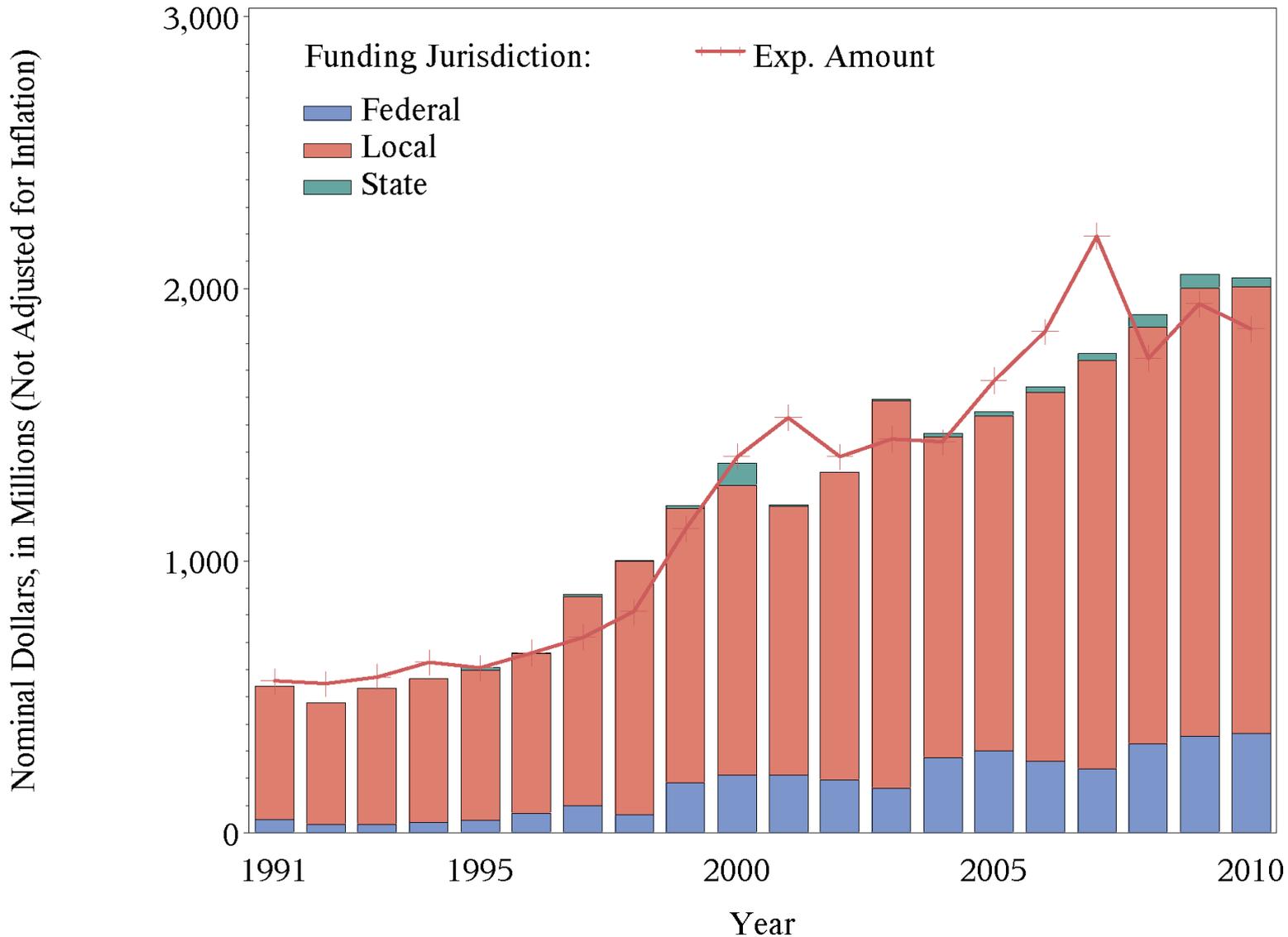


Average Vehicle Age by Year, For Urban Systems Except Sound Transit, Fixed Route Services Subgrouped by System Category

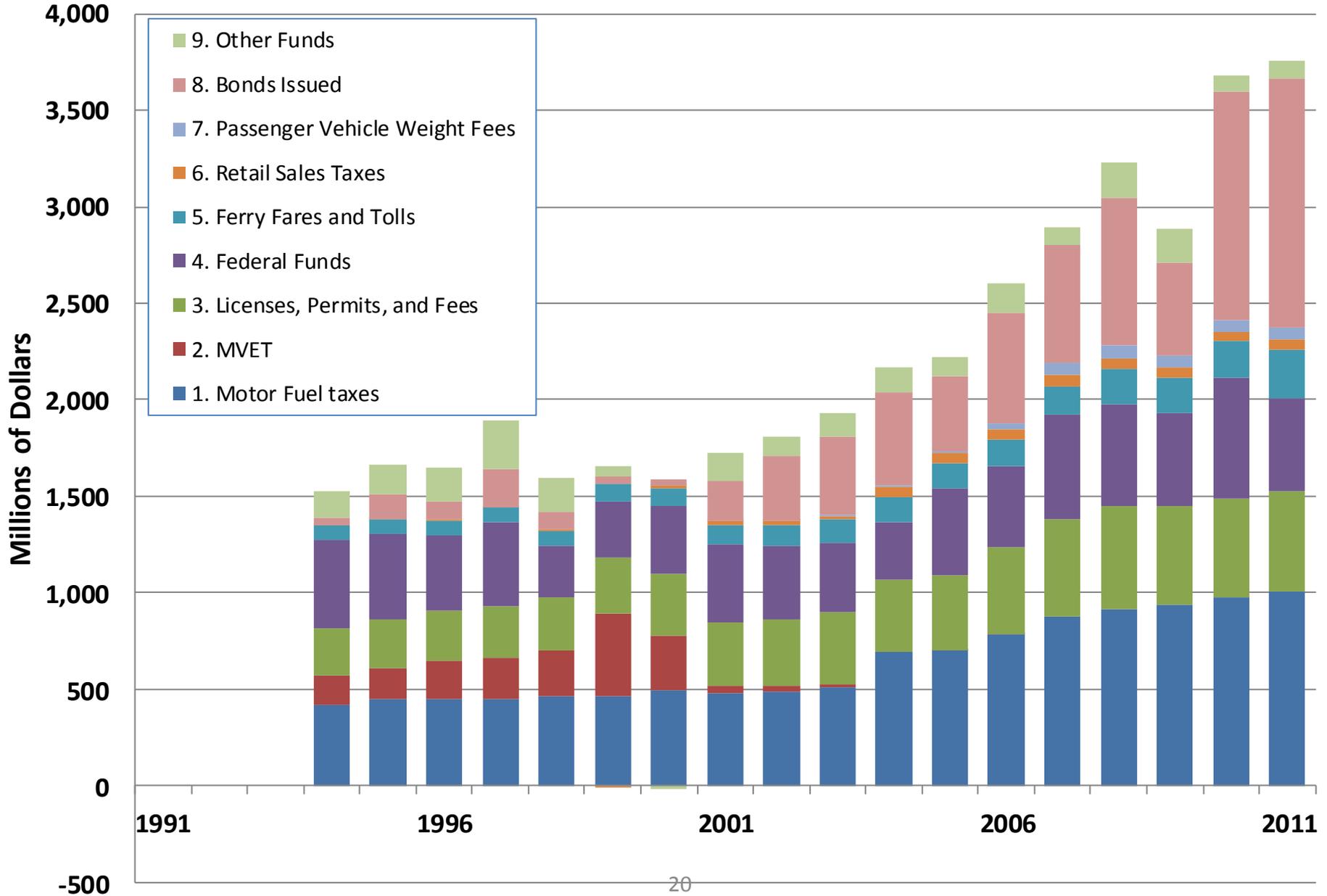


Overall Funding v Expenditures by Year, For All Systems Statewide

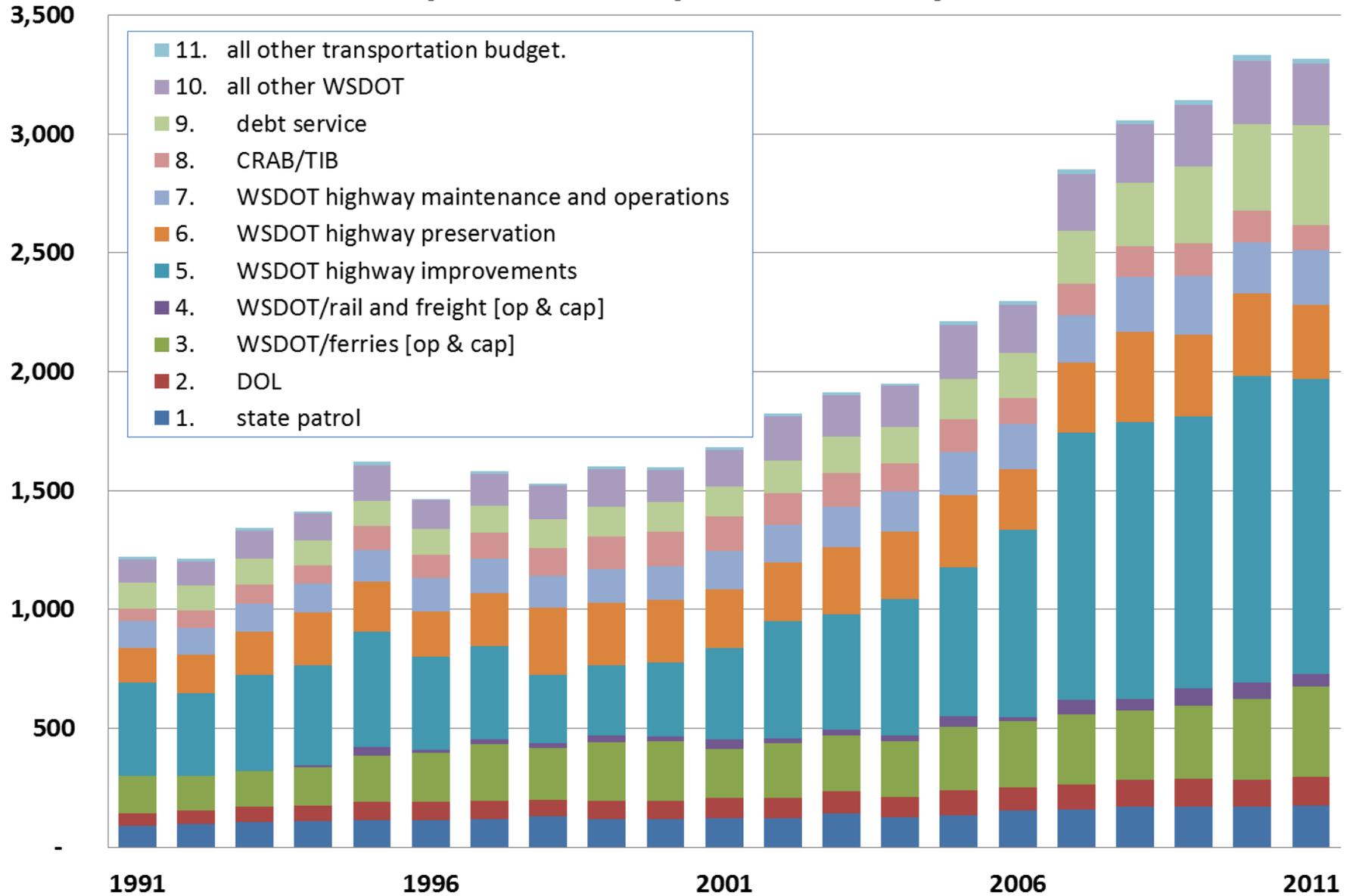
Subgrouped by Funding Jurisdiction



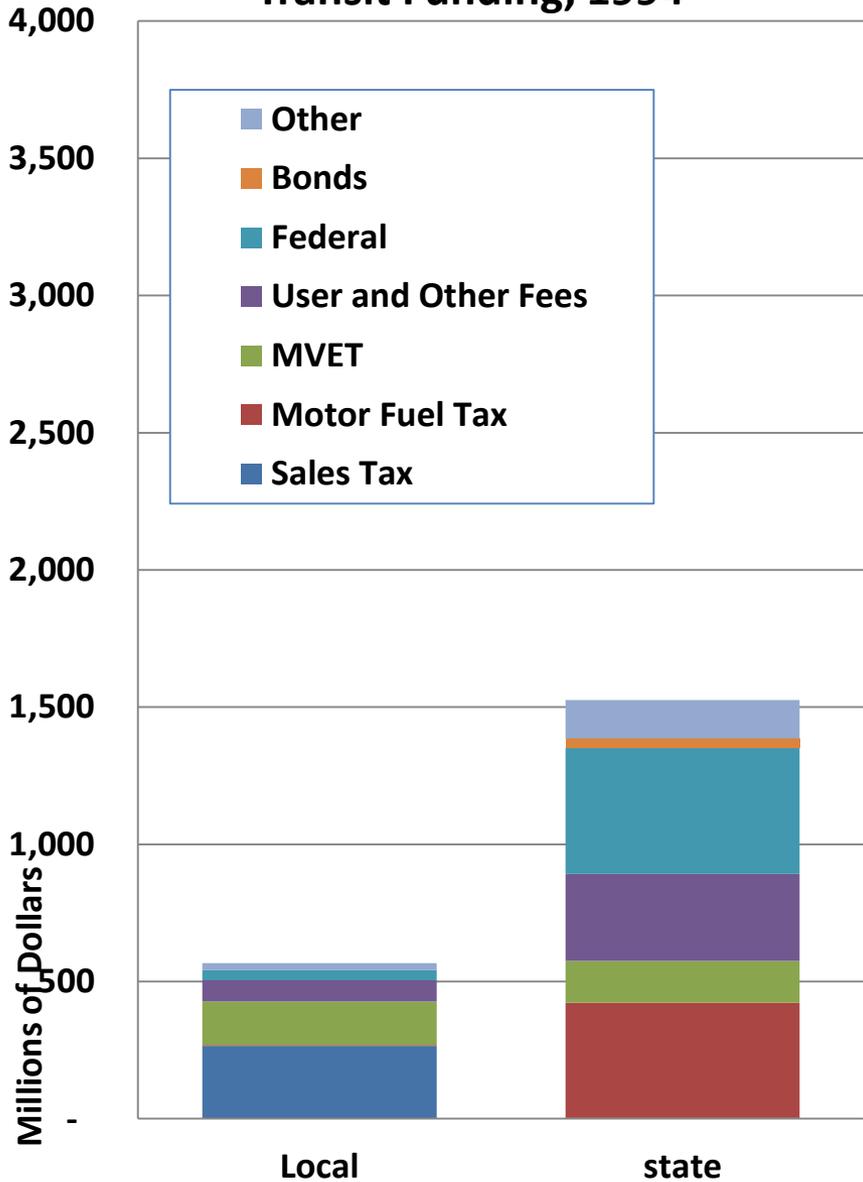
State Resources by Year, Fiscal Year 1994 - 2011



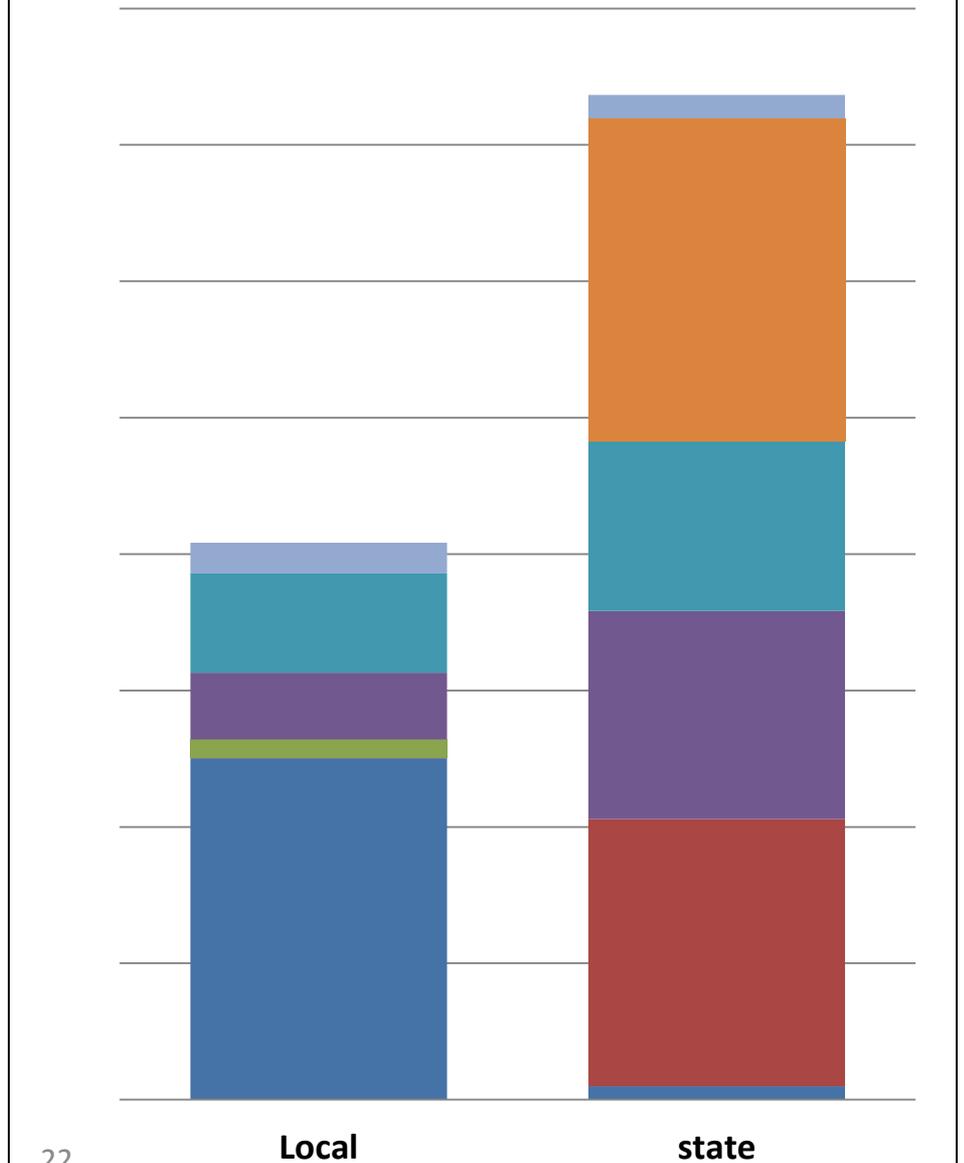
State Transportation Expenditures by Fiscal Year



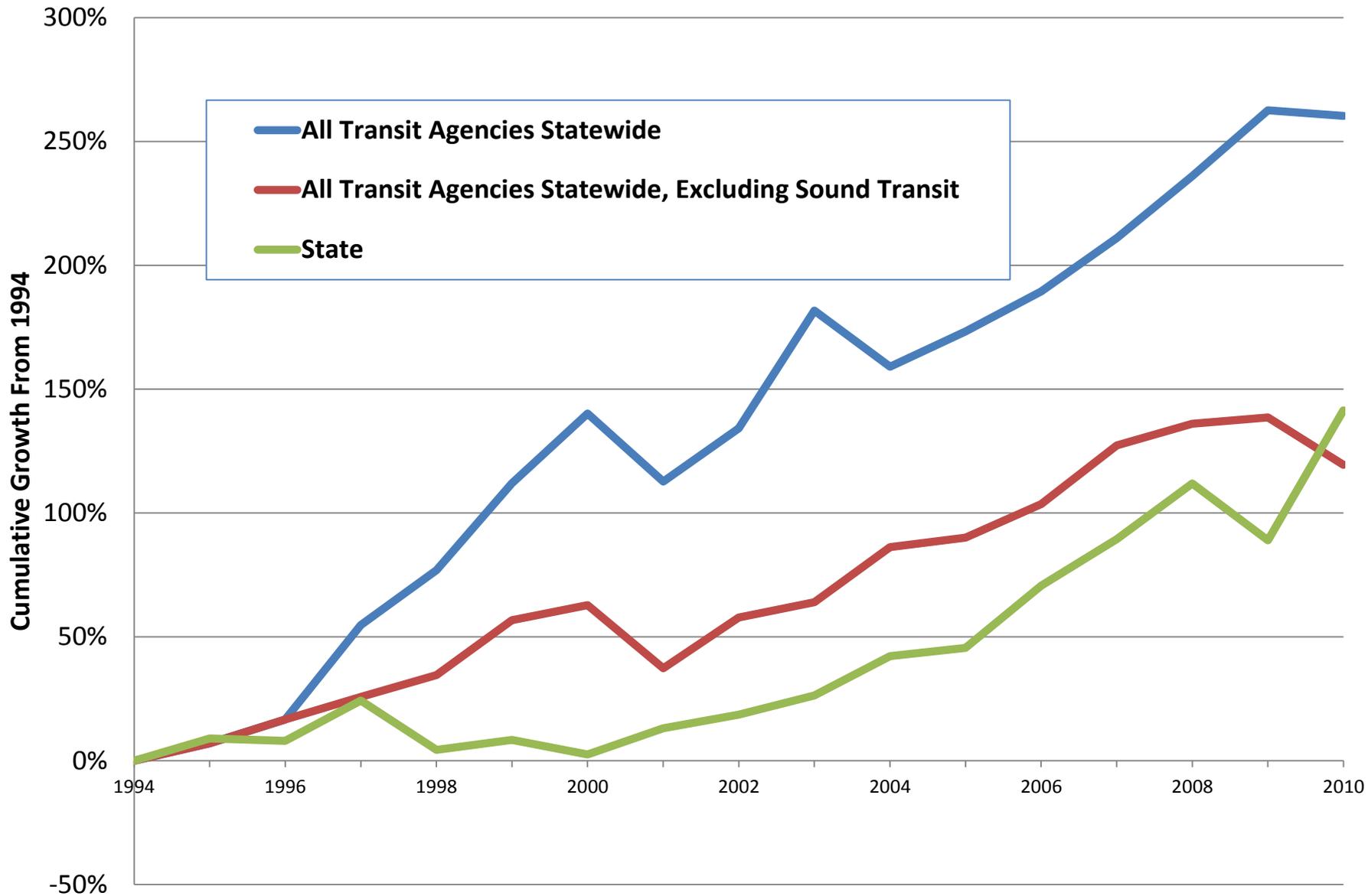
Comparison of State and Local Transit Funding, 1994



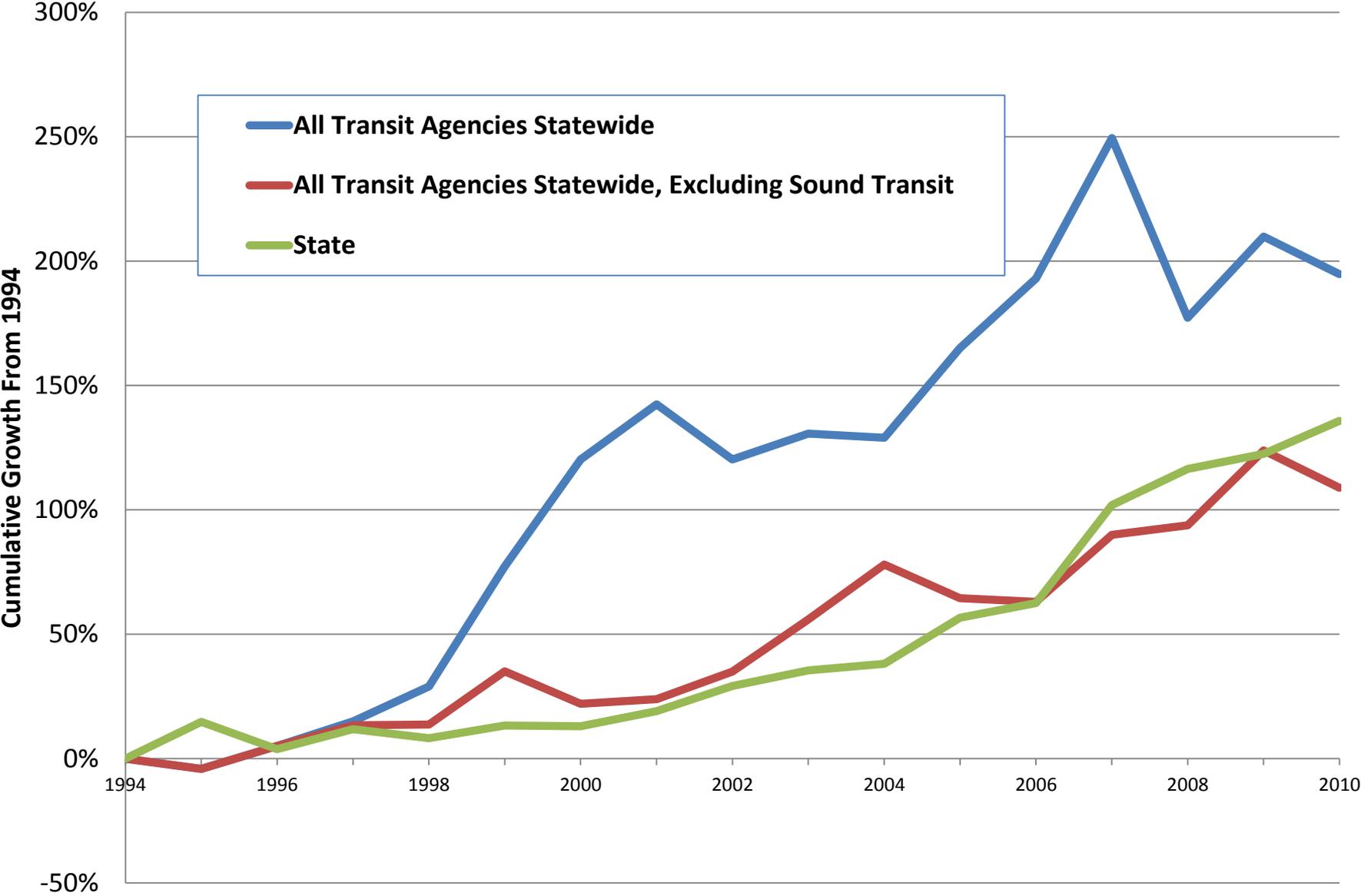
Comparison of State and Local Transit Funding, 2010



Comparison of Growth: Funding for Local Transit Agencies and for State



Comparison of Growth: Expenditures for Transit Agencies and for State



Other factors or indicators of transit fiscal health:

- Vehicle maintenance policies
- Security
- Proper staffing
- Transit's role in the community
- Voter support

Fiscal Health is difficult to assess based on a single measure

- Revenue Growth—affected by sales tax rate and service requirements
- Cost per passenger—what is the nature of the service?
- Reserves—How are they used? What is the capital plan? Other reserve policies?
- Revenue miles per hour:
 - Urban vs. rural operations
 - Well-used service vs. sparsely used service

Next steps in study:

- Add 2011 transit data
- Develop case studies
 - Pierce, Grays Harbor, and Ben-Franklin
 - Capital Reserves of KC Metro and Sound Transit
- Further comparison of transit data with state transportation data
- Other suggestions?

Questions?