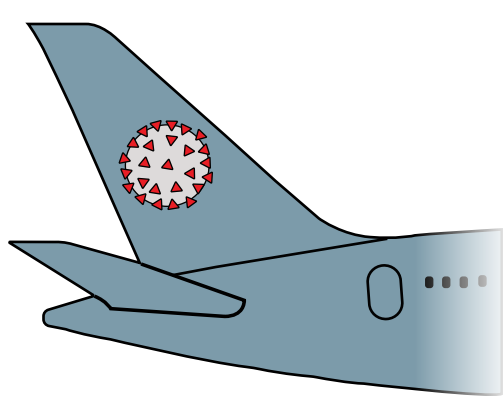


Airlines struggle as COVID-19 soars



Ben Scott/Missourian

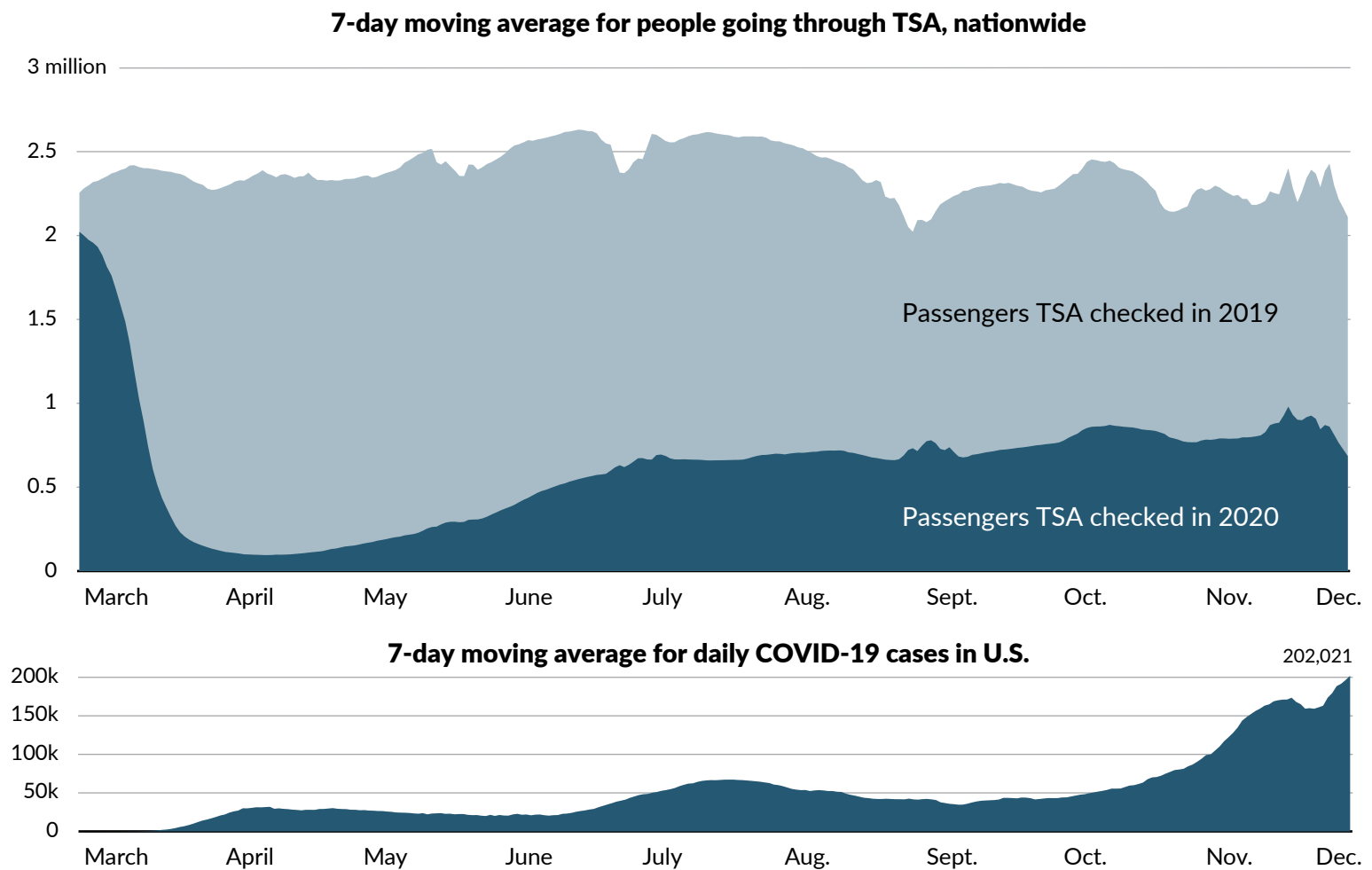
COVID-19 spurred nationwide lockdown orders in March, causing an immediate drop in business for airlines. The industry is still recovering from the lockdown orders. Any progress made toward that recovery may be stifled by another increase in COVID-19 cases this winter.

Fewer people pass through TSA gates nationwide in 2020

Since March, total flights in 2020 have decreased compared to 2019. In April, flights dropped by **276%** compared to April 2019. Total passenger numbers declined in the second quarter of 2020.

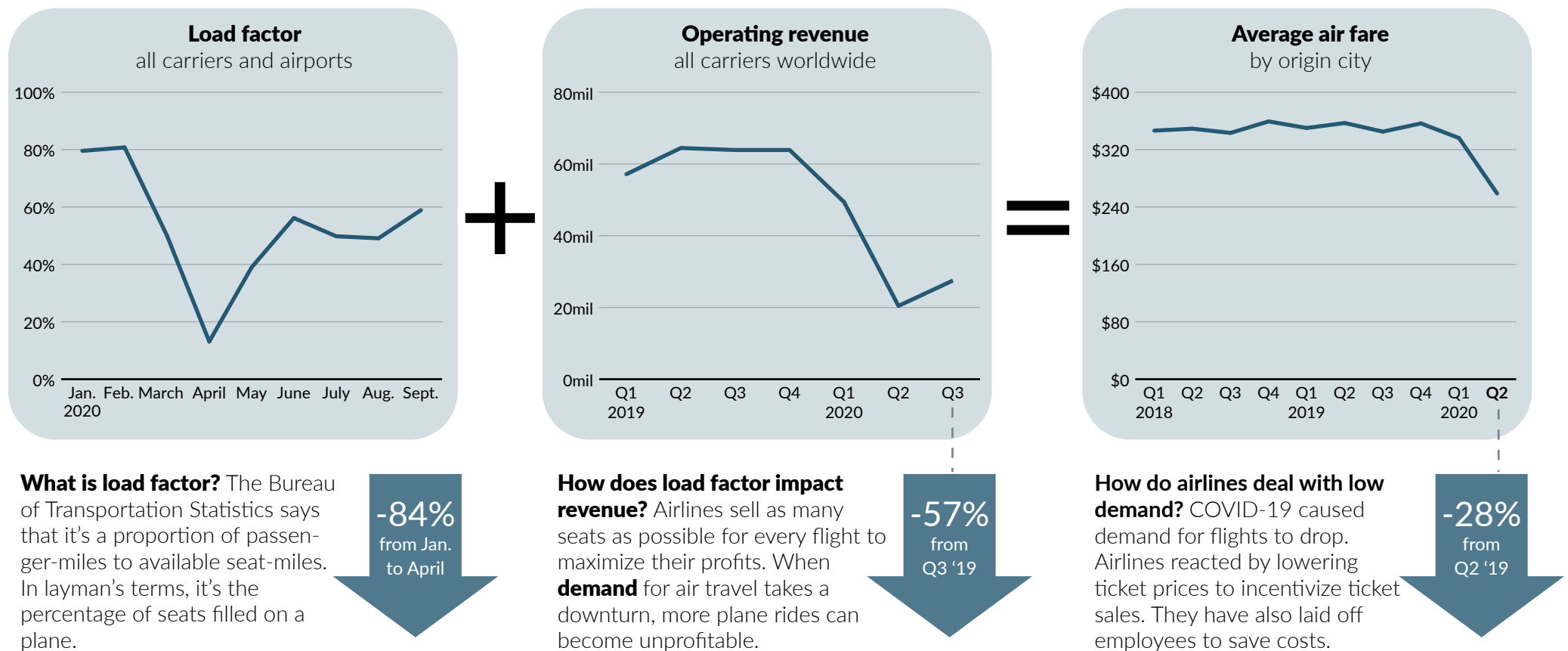
Passengers rise as pandemic heightens

Airlines are slowly seeing more people on flights, even as daily COVID-19 cases in the U.S. reach record highs. COVID-19 cases and total passengers began to further increase during the holiday season.



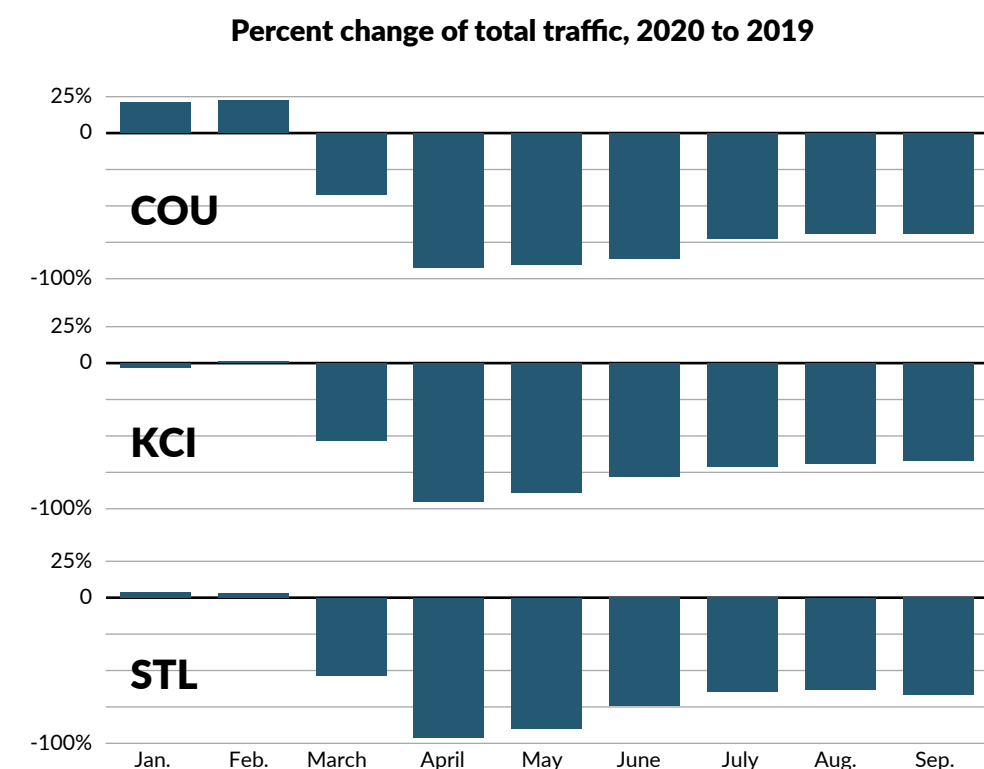
Lower load factor on planes leads to lower average air fares

Airlines lowered air fares to combat the drop in demand for plane tickets. However, the price drop didn't solve all financial problems for airlines since people are still wary of the risks of traveling during a pandemic. Airlines also have had to cut down on total flights and employment to counteract their sinking revenue.



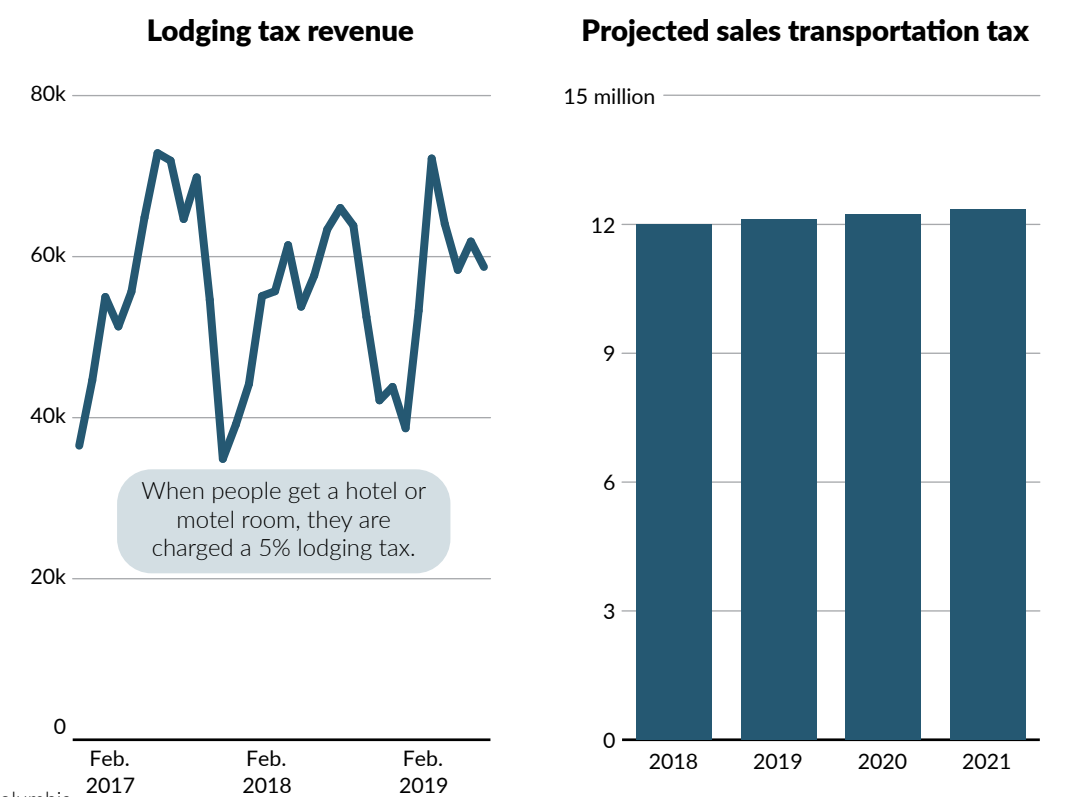
MO airports endure steep traffic decline

Total traffic refers to the sum of an airport's enplanements and deplanements. Kansas City International and St. Louis Lambert International both see much more traffic than Columbia Regional Airport. A percent change standardizes how COVID-19 hit each airport.



Columbia airport braves the COVID-19 wave

In 2017, the city increased the lodging tax to help fund its new airport terminal, which broke ground this November. The city also got **\$18.7 million** in CARES act funding to put toward the airport, which has allowed the city to shift sales transportation tax revenue from the airport and toward buses and road upkeep.



Sources: Transportation Security Administration, Center for Disease Control, Bureau of Transportation Statistics, Columbia Regional Airport, Kansas City International, St. Louis Lambert International, City of Columbia, Missourian reporting