

ST. LUCIE LOCAL COORDINATING BOARD FOR THE TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED (LCB)

Regular Meeting

Date and Time: Wednesday, February 15, 2023, 2:00 pm

Location: St. Lucie TPO
Coco Vista Centre
466 SW Port St. Lucie Boulevard, Suite 111
Port St. Lucie, Florida

Public Participation/Accessibility

Participation in Person: Public comments may be provided in person at the meeting. Persons who require special accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) or persons who require translation services (free of charge) should contact the St. Lucie TPO at 772-462-1593 at least five days prior to the meeting. Persons who are hearing or speech impaired may use the Florida Relay System by dialing 711.

Participation by Webconference: Using a computer or smartphone, register at <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/590264449967821914>. After the registration is completed, a confirmation will be emailed containing instructions for joining the webconference. Public comments may be provided through the webconference chatbox during the meeting.

Written and Telephone Comments: Comment by email to TPOAdmin@stlucieco.org; by regular mail to the St. Lucie TPO, 466 SW Port St. Lucie Boulevard, Suite 111, Port St. Lucie, Florida 34953; or call 772-462-1593 until 1:00 pm on February 15, 2023.

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
 2. Pledge of Allegiance
 3. Roll Call/Self-Introductions
 4. Comments from the Public
 5. Approval of Agenda
 6. Approval of Meeting Summary
 - *November 16, 2022 Regular Meeting*
-

7. Action Items

- 7a. Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan (TDSP)/Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan (Coordinated Plan) Annual Update:** The annual update to the TDSP/Coordinated Plan, which addresses the transportation needs of older adults, persons with disabilities, low income persons, and children at risk, will be reviewed. A roll call vote is required.

Action: Approve, approve with conditions, or do not approve.

- 7b. Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) Redesignation:** Consideration of the St. Lucie County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) continuing as the CTC for St. Lucie County.

Action: Endorse, endorse with conditions, or do not endorse.

8. Discussion Items

- 8a. Regional Commuter Bus Pilot Program:** A presentation on proposed express bus service connecting St. Lucie County with Palm Beach County.

Action: Discuss and provide comments to Staff.

9. Recommendations/Comments by Members

10. Staff Comments

11. Comments from the Public

- 12. Next Meeting:** The next St. Lucie LCB meeting is a regular meeting scheduled for 2:00 pm on May 3, 2023.

13. Adjourn

NOTICES

The St. Lucie TPO satisfies the requirements of various nondiscrimination laws and regulations including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Public participation is welcome without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, disability, income, or family status. Persons wishing to express their concerns about nondiscrimination should contact Marceia Lathou, Title VI/ADA Coordinator, St. Lucie TPO, 772-462-1593 or lathoum@stlucieco.org. Persons who require special accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) or persons who require translation services (free of charge) should contact Marceia Lathou at 772-462-1593 at least five days prior to the meeting. Persons who are hearing or speech impaired may use the Florida Relay System by dialing 711.

Items not included on the agenda may also be heard in consideration of the best interests of the public's health, safety, welfare, and as necessary to protect every person's right of access. If any person decides to appeal any decision made by the St. Lucie TPO Advisory Committees with respect to any matter considered at a meeting, that person shall need a record of the proceedings, and for such a purpose, that person may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made which includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based.

Kreyol Ayisyen: Si ou ta renmen resevwa enfòmasyon sa a nan lang Kreyòl Ayisyen, tanpri rele nimewo 772-462-1593.

Español: Si usted desea recibir esta información en español, por favor llame al 772-462-1593.



Coco Vista Centre
466 SW Port St. Lucie Blvd, Suite 111
Port St. Lucie, Florida 34953
772-462-1593 www.stlucietpo.org

ST. LUCIE LOCAL COORDINATING BOARD FOR THE TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED (LCB) Public Hearing/Training Workshop

Date: Wednesday, February 15, 2023

Time: 2:00 pm; immediately following the LCB Regular Meeting

Location: Coco Vista Centre
466 SW Port St. Lucie Boulevard, Suite 111
Port St. Lucie, Florida

Participation/Accessibility

Participation in Person: Public comments may be provided in person at the meeting. Persons who require special accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) or persons who require translation services (free of charge) should contact the St. Lucie TPO at 772-462-1593 at least five days prior to the meeting. Persons who are hearing or speech impaired may use the Florida Relay System by dialing 711.

Participation by Webconference: Using a computer or smartphone, register at <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/590264449967821914>. After the registration is completed, a confirmation will be emailed containing instructions for joining the webconference. Public comments may be provided through the webconference chatbox during the meeting.

Written and Telephone Comments: Comment by email to TPOAdmin@stlucieco.org; by regular mail to the St. Lucie TPO, 466 SW Port St. Lucie Boulevard, Suite 111, Port St. Lucie, Florida 34953; or call 772-462-1593 until 1:00 pm on February 15, 2023.

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Opening Public Comment
4. Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (FCTD)/Local Coordinating Board (LCB) Overview

TPO staff will present an overview of the FCTD and LCB.

5. Transportation Disadvantaged (TD)/Coordinated Transportation Overview

The Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) will present an overview of the coordinated transportation system.

6. South Florida Commuter Services (SFCS) Overview

A representative from SFCS will present an overview of shared-ride options for employment transportation.

7. Voting Conflicts of Interest

A representative from the St. Lucie County Attorney's Office will present an overview regarding the appropriate separation between the roles of persons who are both committee members and private citizens.

8. Closing Public Comment

9. Adjourn

NOTICES

The St. Lucie TPO satisfies the requirements of various nondiscrimination laws and regulations including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Public participation is welcomed without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, disability, income, or family status. Persons wishing to express their concerns about nondiscrimination should contact Marceia Lathou, the Title VI/ADA Coordinator of the St. Lucie TPO, at 772-462-1593 or via email at lathoum@stlucieco.org.

Persons who require special accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) or persons who require translation services (free of charge) should contact Marceia Lathou, 772-462-1593, at least five days prior to the meeting. Persons who are hearing or speech impaired may use the Florida Relay System by dialing 711.

Items not included on the agenda may also be heard in consideration of the best interests of the public's health, safety, welfare, and as necessary to protect every person's right of access. If any person decides to appeal any decision made by the St. Lucie LCB with respect to any matter considered at this meeting, that person shall need a record of the proceedings, and for such a purpose, that person may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made which includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based.

Kreyol Ayisyen: Si ou ta renmen resevwa enfòmasyon sa a nan lang Kreyòl Aisyen, tanpri rele nimewo (772) 462-1593.

Español: Si usted desea recibir esta información en Español, por favor llame al 772-462-1593.



ST. LUCIE LOCAL COORDINATING BOARD FOR THE TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED (LCB)

REGULAR MEETING

Date: Wednesday, November 16, 2022

Time: 2:00 pm

Location: St. Lucie TPO
Coco Vista Centre
466 SW Port St. Lucie Boulevard, Suite 111
Port St. Lucie, Florida

MEETING SUMMARY

1. **Call to Order**

Chairwoman Townsend called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm.

2. **Pledge of Allegiance**

Chairwoman Townsend led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. **Roll Call**

Self-introductions were made, and a quorum was noted with the following members present:

Members Present

Commissioner Cathy Townsend, Chair
Carolyn Niemczyk, Vice Chair
Noah Brown
Ronda Cerulli
Robert Dadiomoff
Dalia Dillon
Robert Driscoll

Representing

Elected Official, TPO-appointed
Elderly Community
FDOT District 4
Economically Disadvantaged
Veterans Community
Florida Dept. of Elder Affairs
Local Private For-Profit
Transportation Industry

Eleanor Eberhart-Chin
 Nelson Merchan-Cely
 Stefanie Myers
 Marty Sanders
 Anna Santacroce
 Angel Young

Children at Risk
 Citizen Advocate
 Local Medical Community
 Public Education Community
 Citizen Advocate-Transit User
 Florida Division of Vocational
 Rehabilitation

Others Present

Kyle Bowman
 Peter Buchwald
 Yi Ding
 Marceia Lathou
 Rachel Harrison
 Lakeshia Brown
 Adolfo Covelli
 Karen Deigl
 Andrew Dietz
 Ciara Forbes
 Melody Hearn
 Tracy Jahn
 Anthony Rodriguez
 Chris Stephenson

Representing

St. Lucie TPO
 St. Lucie TPO
 St. Lucie TPO
 St. Lucie TPO
 Recording Specialist
 MV Transportation
 St. Lucie County
 Senior Resource Association
 CTS Engineering
 St. Lucie County
 Family Care Council
 St. Lucie County
 MV Transportation
 Senior Resource Association

4. **Comments from the Public** – Ms. Hearn introduced herself as the governor-appointed co-chair of the local Family Care Council regional office. She praised St. Lucie County for its part in establishing and maintaining the Advantage Ride Program, noting that many individuals with developmental disabilities were not able to navigate the fixed route bus network. Ms. Hearn then described her efforts to advertise the program.

5. **Approval of Agenda**

* **MOTION** by Ms. Cerulli to approve the agenda.

** **SECONDED** by Ms. Myers Carried **UNANIMOUSLY**

6. **Approval of Meeting Summary**

- August 17, 2022 Regular Meeting

* **MOTION** by Ms. Myers to approve the Meeting Summary.

DRAFT

** **SECONDED** by Ms. Cerulli Carried **UNANIMOUSLY**

7. **Action Items**

*Action Items were addressed after the Discussion Items.

7a. Election of Vice Chairperson: Election of the Vice Chairperson for 2023.

Ms. Lathou invited the LCB secretary to conduct the election.

* **MOTION** by Mr. Dadiomoff to elect Carolyn Niemczyk to serve as LCB Vice Chairwoman for 2023.

** **SECONDED** by Ms. Myers

There were no other nominations and the nominations were closed.

** **MOTION** to elect Carolyn Niemczyk to serve as Vice Chairwoman of the LCB for 2023. Carried **UNANIMOUSLY**

7b. 2023 Meeting Schedule: The determination of dates and times of LCB meetings for 2023.

Ms. Lathou presented the proposed dates and times for LCB meetings in 2023, noting specifically the date for the Annual Public Hearing and Training Workshop.

* **MOTION** by Mr. Driscoll to approve the 2023 Meeting Schedule.

** **SECONDED** by Mr. Dadiomoff Carried **UNANIMOUSLY**

7c. 2022 Annual Operating Report (AOR): A review of the results of the 2022 Annual Operating Report (AOR), which summarizes trip-related statistics for the coordinated system.

Ms. Petagno explained the purpose and scope of the Annual Operating Report and then provided statistics related to the provision of services in 2022.

Mr. Sanders inquired about the trip statistics for 2019, and Ms. Petagno indicated that she would send that information to the members via TPO staff.

DRAFT

Ms. Petagno described recent community outreach efforts in which the Transit staff had participated, noting that she would be happy to participate in further events at the request of the LCB members, and then commented on several improvements that had been made to assist riders in their use of the system. She relayed anecdotes illustrating the impact the Transit services have on local residents and provided her contact information to the members.

* **MOTION** by Mr. Dadiomoff to approve the 2022 AOR.

* * **SECONDED** by Ms. Myers Carried **UNANIMOUSLY**

8. **Discussion Items**

*Discussion Items were addressed immediately after Item 4.

8a. Advantage Ride Program Report: A presentation of statistics on Advantage Ride, a program to increase transportation options for persons with intellectual or developmental disabilities.

Mr. Covelli indicated that St. Lucie County Transit had received a Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged Innovation Award for the Advantage Ride Program, which the Transit division administered in partnership with the Senior Resource Association (SRA) of Indian River County. He then invited his colleagues from SRA to continue the presentation. Ms. Deigl introduced herself and then described the purpose of the Advantage Ride Program and its development. She explained the mission of SRA, provided an overview of the services it provides, and then introduced Mr. Stephenson. Mr. Stephenson outlined several objectives of the Advantage Ride Program, presented ridership statistics, and concluded with details about the program's marketing.

Chairwoman Townsend congratulated Mr. Covelli on his recent appointment as St. Lucie County Transit Director.

In response to Vice Chairwoman Niemczyk's questions, Mr. Stephenson described the training that Advantage Ride drivers receive, indicating that there had been just one complaint out of 66,000 trips due to a rider's emotional inability to be dropped off early. He then described the database used to record riders' preferences.

In answer to Mr. Brown's question, Mr. Stephenson described the application process for the program and how SRA coordinated with St. Lucie County to facilitate that process.

DRAFT

Vice Chairwoman Niemczyk commended the program and inquired about the advertising for it. Mr. Stephenson summarized the outreach efforts conducted thus far, with Ms. Deigl noting that SRA had recently hired a marketing director who would be producing a comprehensive outreach plan for the program.

Chairwoman Townsend likewise commended the program, and Mr. Stephenson noted that there was no longer a waiting list due to the receipt of additional program funding. Discussion ensued regarding the prospects for continued funding, with Ms. Deigl indicating that the recent grant award represented a large portion of the entire amount of funding available for similar programs statewide. Chairwoman Townsend explained several factors impacting the state of transportation in St. Lucie County, including the significant rate of population growth and the proportion of residents without cars, and praised the efforts of the Transit staff.

Mr. Merchan-Cely initiated a discussion of outreach to non-English-speaking riders. Mr. Stephenson indicated the availability of a dedicated language line in Indian River County along with marketing materials produced in several of the languages used locally. In response to Chairwoman Townsend's question about language services during the actual trips, Mr. Stephenson explained that the staff can sometimes assign a driver with a knowledge of the relevant language if they know of a rider's language needs in advance. Ms. Deigl also commented that drivers could call into the language line during a ride if needed.

Mr. Merchan-Cely noted that many people in the community had no awareness of the program and would not know to reach out, remarking also that translation services were not always adequate. Mr. Covelli described the outreach done so far by the Transit staff and requested that Mr. Merchan-Cely work with them to better reach the Spanish-speaking community. Chairwoman Townsend suggested that Mr. Merchan-Cely reserve a spot on his radio show or in his newsletter to discuss the program. Ms. Young shared her professional experiences reaching out to individuals with low levels of literacy and expressed agreement with the suggestion to advertise via radio, agreement that was echoed by Mr. Brown. Ms. Myers referenced the 211 phone service that connects residents with a menu of health and human services, suggesting that community leaders use social media and other methods of outreach to share the availability of that service.

Chairwoman Townsend encouraged Mr. Merchan-Cely to discuss further marketing ideas with the Transit staff. She also suggested that Transit

DRAFT

staff identify cultural leaders who might be willing to work with them to promote Advantage Ride. Mr. Covelli noted that Transit staff had attended eight neighborhood meetings in the past month as part of their outreach efforts. Mr. Brown indicated that South Florida Commuter Services would be willing to assist with outreach efforts as well.

8b. Electric Vehicle Charging Station Plan Update: A review of a plan to identify the need for electric vehicle super-charging stations at various locations in the TPO area.

Ms. Lathou provided an explanation of the levels of electric vehicle (EV) charging along with examples and an overview of several studies showing the demand for public charging facilities. Ms. Lathou displayed a map illustrating the availability of Level 3 EV charging in St. Lucie County before enumerating the criteria used to site potential EV charging station locations on the Plan. She once again displayed a map with the resulting locations overlaid with the historically disadvantaged areas of the County and then provided a discussion of various factors impacting the future demand for and supply of EV charging stations, including technological advancements and private-sector initiatives. Ms. Lathou concluded with a number of considerations identified in the Plan.

In response to Vice Chairwoman Niemczyk's question, Mr. Covelli explained that Florida Power & Light had declined to install charging facilities at the Intermodal Station at no cost due to the Station's distance from I-95 but offered to provide an estimate for the installation of such facilities if the City of Port St. Lucie were willing to finance it.

Vice Chairwoman Niemczyk suggested the installation of charging stations at the Port St. Lucie City Center, and Ms. Lathou explained that the focus of the present Plan had been to provide charging facilities at extended-hours locations. Vice Chairwoman Niemczyk then commented on the value of the Plan in light of the significant increase in local development.

Chairwoman Townsend inquired as to whether there had been any discussions regarding the Plan with Fort Pierce Utilities Authority. Ms. Lathou explained that those types of conversations could begin once the Plan was approved by the TPO Board. Chairwoman Townsend recommended that the Fort Pierce hotel district be removed from the list of potential EV charging station locations due to the occurrence of illegal activity in the vicinity. Discussion ensued regarding alternative sites nearby, such as the Greyhound bus station and the former outlet mall on Okeechobee Road.

DRAFT

In response to Mr. Dadiomoff's comment regarding a charging facility on Midway Road, Ms. Lathou noted the plan to construct mobility hubs along I-95, a proposal that would be discussed as part of a later agenda item. Chairwoman Townsend identified several potential locations for EV charging on Midway Road.

8c. Sustainable Transportation Plan Scope of Services: A review of a scope of services for consultant assistance to develop a Plan to implement an electric vehicle charging network along I-95.

Ms. Lathou began the presentation by defining sustainable transportation. She explained the TPO's systematic planning efforts toward sustainable transportation as resulting in a recommendation to develop an Automated/Connected/Electric/Shared-Use (ACES) network along I-95. Ms. Lathou indicated that the Sustainable Transportation Plan would help develop this network of mobility hubs by identifying and coordinating opportunities for "shovel-ready" projects that are eligible for high-priority funding from various sources. Ms. Lathou concluded with the Plan's consultant, timeline, and cost.

9. Recommendations/Comments by Members – Mr. Brown reported on the development of the monument sign to be installed at the Jobs Express Terminal and noted that South Florida Commuter Services would soon be conducting a user survey for the facility. He then summarized the organization's participation at the recent City of Port St. Lucie Target Zero event.

Chairwoman Townsend announced the dates of the public swearing-in ceremonies for new St. Lucie County Commissioners Jamie Fowler and Larry Leet and re-elected City of Port St. Luce Councilman Anthony Bonna.

10. Staff Comments – Ms. Lathou directed the members' attention to the fliers that had been provided along with the agenda packet and which advertised a University of Florida/FDOT survey regarding self-driving vehicles. Chairwoman Townsend requested that staff email her the flier so that it could be posted on the County's website.

11. Comments from the Public – None.

12. **Next Meeting:** The next St. Lucie LCB meeting is a regular meeting and public workshop scheduled for 2:00 pm on February 15, 2023.

13. **Adjourn –** The meeting was adjourned at 3:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted:

Approved by:

Rachel Harrison
Recording Specialist

Commissioner Cathy Townsend
Chairwoman



AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

Board/Committee:	St. Lucie LCB
Meeting Date:	February 15, 2023
Item Number:	7a
Item Title:	Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan (TDSP)/Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan (Coordinated Plan) Annual Update
Item Origination:	Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (FCTD)
UPWP Reference:	Task 3.8 – Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) Program
Requested Action:	Approve the TDSP Annual Update, approve with conditions, or do not approve. Roll call vote required.
Staff Recommendation:	Because the draft 2023 TDSP/Coordinated Plan Annual Update helps to meet the needs of the transportation disadvantaged community and is consistent with state and federal guidelines, it is recommended that the draft 2023 TDSP/Coordinated Plan Annual Update be approved.

Attachments

- TPO Staff Report
- Draft 2023 TDSP/Coordinated Plan Annual Update

MEMORANDUM

TO: St. Lucie Local Coordinating Board for the Transportation Disadvantaged (LCB)

THROUGH: Peter Buchwald
Executive Director

FROM: Marceia Lathou
Transit/ACES Program Manager

DATE: February 2, 2023

SUBJECT: **Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan (TDSP)/Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan (Coordinated Plan) Annual Update**

BACKGROUND

Florida's Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) Program was created to ensure the delivery of efficient, cost-effective and quality transportation services for TD persons. TD persons are those who cannot obtain transportation on their own, either because of a physical or mental disability, income limitations, or age.

Locally, the TD planning program is administered by the St. Lucie Local Coordinating Board for the Transportation Disadvantaged (LCB) with support provided by the St. Lucie Transportation Planning Organization (TPO). Transportation is provided by St. Lucie County, the Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC), through the County's contracted public transportation provider, MV Transportation.

The Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (FCTD) requires that the TPO designate or re-designate a CTC every five years. The St. Lucie Board of County Commissioners (BOCC), the CTC for St. Lucie County since 1990, was re-designated by the FCTD effective July 1, 2018. This re-designation required the development of a Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan (TDSP) to address the public transportation needs of the TD population.

The TDSP covers a five-year period with annual updates required for the interim years. The TDSP, which fulfills the federal requirement for a Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan (Coordinated Plan), is jointly developed by the TPO, CTC, and MV Transportation. The TDSP/Coordinated Plan and annual updates require approval via roll call vote.

ANALYSIS

Notable changes to the current TDSP Annual Update in comparison to the original TDSP include the following:

Demographic Changes

- The General TD Population in St. Lucie County is approximately 130,321 or 38% of the total population compared to 120,587 or 39% of the total population as documented in the original TDSP.
- The Critical Need-Severely Disabled TD Population is approximately 13,405 compared to 12,446 as documented in the original TDSP.
- The percentage of zero-vehicle households is five percent compared to 6 percent in the original TDSP.
- The percentage of St. Lucie County residents with incomes below the poverty line is 11 percent compared to 18 percent in the original TDSP.

Service Changes

- Microtransit zone expanded to include the Port St. Lucie Intermodal bus station; this allows riders to access three additional fixed routes
- New grant added for Advantage Ride program
- List of Coordinated Contractors updated
- TD eligibility application updated with new St. Lucie County office address and email address.
- Newly acquired vehicles and updated mileage added to the Vehicle Inventory
- Transportation disadvantaged trip rates revised

The CTC will provide additional details on the service changes during the presentation of this item at the LCB meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

Because the draft 2023 TDSP/Coordinated Plan Annual Update helps to meet the needs of the transportation disadvantaged community and is consistent with state and federal guidelines, it is recommended that the draft 2023 TDSP/Coordinated Plan Annual Update be approved.



St. Lucie County Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan (TDSP)

A Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan

Prepared by:
St. Lucie Transportation Planning Organization (TPO)
St. Lucie County Transit Department

February 15, 2023

Draft

TITLE VI STATEMENT: The St. Lucie TPO satisfies the requirements of various non-discrimination laws and regulations, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Public participation is welcome without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, disability, income, or family status. Persons wishing to express their concerns about non-discrimination should contact Marceia Lathou, the Title VI/ADA Coordinator of the St. Lucie TPO, at 772-462-1593 or via email at lathoum@stlucieco.org.

Kreyol Ayisyen: Si ou ta renmen resevwa enfòmasyon sa a nan lang Kreyòl Ayisyen, tanpri rele nimewo (772) 462-1593.

Español: Si usted desea recibir esta información en español, por favor llame al 772-462-1593.

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	1
DEVELOPMENT PLAN	2
A. Introduction to Service Area	2
1. Background of the TD Program	2
2. CTC Designation Date/History	2
3. Organization Chart	2
4. Consistency Review of Other Plans	4
5. Public Participation	6
B. Service Area Profile/Demographics	7
1. Service Area Description	7
2. Demographics.....	9
a) <i>Land Use</i>	9
b) <i>Population/Composition</i>	9
c) <i>Transit Orientation Analysis</i>	10
d) <i>Employment</i>	10
e) <i>Major Trip Generators/Attractors</i>	13
f) <i>Inventory of Available Transportation Services</i>	13
C. Service Analysis	14
1. Estimates and Forecasts of Transportation Disadvantaged Population	14
2. Special Needs Population	16
3. Transportation Disadvantaged State-Wide Service Analysis	17
4. Barriers to Coordination	18
D. Mission Statement, Goals, Objectives, and Strategies.....	18
E. Implementation Plan.....	19
SERVICE PLAN	22
A. Operations	22
1. Type, Hours, and Days of Service	22
2. Accessing Services	24
a) <i>Eligibility</i>	25
b) <i>Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) Eligibility</i>	26
c) <i>Prioritization</i>	26
d) <i>Cancellations/No Shows</i>	27
3. Transportation Operators and Coordination Contractors	27
4. Public Transit Utilization	28
5. School Bus Utilization.....	28
6. Vehicle Inventory	28
8. Inter-County Services	28
9. Emergency Preparedness and Response.....	28
10. Educational Efforts/Marketing	29
11. Acceptable Alternatives	29
12. Service Standards	29
13. Local Complaint and Grievance Procedures/Process.....	32
14. Community Transportation Coordinator Monitoring Procedures of Operators and Coordination Contractors.....	33
15. Coordination Contract Evaluation Criteria	33
B. Cost / Revenue Allocation and Rate Structure Justification	33
1. Cost Revenue Allocation	33
2. Passenger Fare Structures	34

List of Figures

Figure 1: St. Lucie County TD Services Organization Chart 3
Figure 2: St. Lucie County Location 7
Figure 3: TDSP Study Area 8
Figure 4: Transit Orientation Index Analysis 11
Figure 5: The TD Population 14

List of Tables

Table 1: Major Employers 12
Table 2: Common Transportation Disadvantaged Trip Destinations 13
Table 3: General TD Population 15
Table 4: Critical Need-Severely Disabled Population 15
Table 5: Daily Trips for the Critical Need Population 15
Table 6: Ongoing System Improvements and Review 20
Table 7: Implementation Actions and Strategies 21
Table 8: Transportation Operator and Coordination Contractors 27

Appendices

- Appendix A: Mission Statement, Goals, Objectives, and Strategies
- Appendix B: Area Regional Transit Formerly Called Treasure Coast Connector Rider’s Guide
- Appendix C: TD Eligibility Application
- Appendix D: TD Eligibility Criteria
- Appendix E: Vehicle Inventory
- Appendix F: System Safety Program Plan Certification
- Appendix G: Local Coordinating Board (LCB) Grievance Procedures
- Appendix H: Rate Model Calculation Spreadsheet
- Appendix I: Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations
- Appendix J: Summary of Comments
- Appendix K: TDSP/Coordinated Plan LCB Roll Call Vote & Plan Certification
- Appendix L: St. Lucie County LCB Membership Certification

INTRODUCTION

The St. Lucie Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan (TDSP) addresses the public transportation needs of the transportation disadvantaged (TD) population in St. Lucie County. The TD population consists of persons who are unable to transport themselves or to purchase transportation, including elderly, low-income, disabled persons, and at-risk children.

Completion of a TDSP is a requirement for receiving certain public transportation funds. The TDSP complies with applicable state regulations as well as federal regulations for a Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan (Coordinated Plan). The TDSP is required for funding from the State TD program. The Coordinated Plan is required for funding from the Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program. TDSP/Coordinated Plan elements include a development plan, service plan, and quality assurance component.

A TDSP covers a five-year period with annual updates required for years two through five. The TDSP is due within 120 calendar days after the execution of a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (FCTD) and the Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC). The current MOA became effective on July 1, 2018.

This TDSP was jointly developed by staff from the St. Lucie Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) and the St. Lucie County CTC. The Local Coordinating Board for the Transportation Disadvantaged (LCB) approves the TDSP, and it is submitted to the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged for final action. The TDSP is used by the CTC and the LCB to maintain and improve transportation services for the transportation disadvantaged and to serve as a framework for performance evaluation.

This TDSP was developed in accordance with the requirements outlined in the FCTD *Instruction Manual for the Memorandum of Agreement and the Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan 2007/2008*.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN

A. Introduction to Service Area

1. Background of the TD Program

Chapter 427 of the Florida Statutes establishes the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (FCTD). The FCTD is an independent agency tasked with carrying out the mission of ensuring the availability of efficient, cost-effective, and quality transportation services for transportation-disadvantaged persons. The FCTD appoints an Executive Director who serves under its direction and supervision. This position employs and oversees personnel who carry out the daily functions of the FCTD. The staff office is located in Tallahassee. The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) provides administrative and fiscal services to the FCTD.

At the local level, the FCTD accomplishes its mission through qualified Community Transportation Coordinators (CTCs) and designated planning agencies. Each county within the State of Florida has a CTC whose primary responsibility is the arrangement or provision of transportation services to transportation-disadvantaged persons within the service area. A planning agency may serve one or more CTCs. The planning agency provides an avenue to ensure that TD planning is accomplished within the service area and provides staff support and resources to enable the LCB to fulfill its responsibilities.

2. CTC Designation Date/History

The St. Lucie Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) has been the designated CTC since 1990. The County, through its Transit Department, contracts service providers to deliver the public transportation trips and transportation disadvantaged services.

In 2018, the FCTD approved the continuation of the County as the St. Lucie County CTC and subsequently entered into a new five-year Memorandum of Agreement with the County.

3. Organization Chart

Figure 1 provides an organization chart of the St. Lucie County CTC and FCTD process.

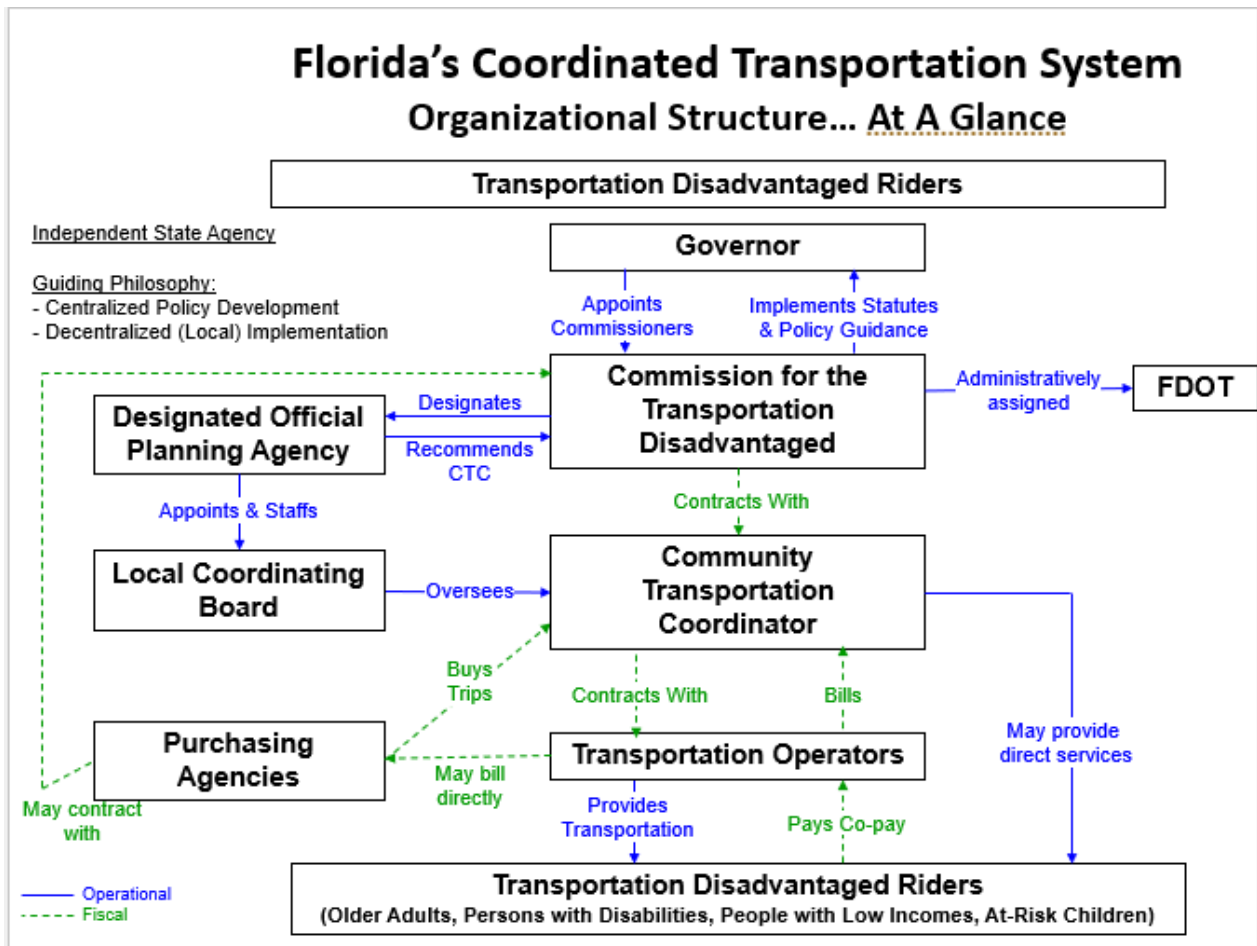


Figure 1: St. Lucie County TD Services Organization Chart

4. Consistency Review of Other Plans

The following plans were reviewed to determine consistency and identify existing goals, objectives, and policies that support TD issues. Brief descriptions are provided of selected goals, objectives, and policies related to transit:

St. Lucie County Comprehensive Plan

One of the goals of the St. Lucie County Comprehensive Plan is to provide a safe and efficient integrated multi-modal transportation system which addresses the future needs of St. Lucie County for movement of people and goods, and which considers social, economic, energy and environmental effects including greenhouse gas emissions of the transportation system. Another goal of the Plan is to provide public transportation for the transportation disadvantaged population of St. Lucie County in a safe and convenient manner.

City of Port St. Lucie Comprehensive Plan

The stated purpose of the Transportation Element of the City of Port St. Lucie Comprehensive Plan is to plan for a safe, convenient multimodal transportation system that places emphasis on public transportation systems, where feasible. One of the policies in the Transportation Element is to encourage transit services that address the needs of persons with disabilities, elderly persons, people with special needs, and people who depend on public transit for their mobility.

City of Fort Pierce Comprehensive Plan

One of the goals of the City of Fort Pierce Comprehensive Plan is to provide a safe, convenient, effective, and energy efficient multimodal transportation system which is coordinated with the future land use and provides mobility of people and goods. An objective related to this goal requires the City to coordinate with regional agencies and transit providers to support and enhance the transit service to increase transit use, increase the transit mode split, reduce vehicle miles traveled, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and promote a multimodal transportation system.

Smart Moves 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)

A review of all relevant local and regional transportation studies was conducted during the preparation of the Smart Moves 2045 LRTP. The LRTP summarizes the TDSP and discusses the current, and future needs of the transportation disadvantaged, mainly the need to travel across county lines and regionally.

St. Lucie County Transit Development Plan

The County's Transit Development Plan, branded the Bus Plus Plan, represents the community's vision and public transportation goals. It is to be used as a strategic guide for the Fiscal Year 2020–2029 planning horizon. It identifies public transportation service improvement priorities for the County, determines the operating and capital costs to implement these service improvement priorities, and outlines a strategy for implementation.

Transportation Improvement Program

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) prioritizes state-and federally funded transportation projects for a 5-year time frame, including projects that improve the transportation system on a recurring basis, such as road resurfacing, as well as specific one-time projects that build new sidewalks, bus terminals, and roadways.

Consistency with the TDSP is evident in the TIP's allocation of funds. All available TD funds are budgeted in the project priorities. The TIP includes a breakdown of the Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) Program funding. There is a list of transit priorities that support the equipment, service operations, and infrastructure needed for the continued and expanded transit system in St. Lucie County. In addition, there is a section on Transportation Alternatives (TA), including projects such as sidewalks. These TA projects support the TD population by enhancing the safety and walkability of a particular road or intersection for its users.

Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council Strategic Regional Policy Plan

The Strategic Regional Policy Plan emphasizes transportation's relationship to the overall regional system, e.g., the complex interrelationship between land use and the achievement of mobility and accessibility goals.

FCTD Five/Twenty Year Plan

The 2005 State of Florida Transportation Disadvantaged Plan provides a framework for the growth of Florida's Transportation Disadvantaged program. The plan has been developed in cooperation with the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD) and is designed to help the CTD fulfill its mission and achieve its vision.

Transportation Connectivity Study

The Transportation Connectivity Study identified gaps in the multi-modal network that created barriers in access to essential services and developed solutions to address the gaps. The Study also identified Major Activity Centers (MACs), which are large geographic areas that contain clusters of essential services and thus attract large numbers of residents and non-residents.

Florida Transportation Plan

The Florida Transportation Plan (FTP) is the single overarching plan guiding Florida's transportation future. Updated every five years, the FTP is a collaborative effort of state, regional, and local transportation partners in the public and private sectors.

Automated/Connected/Electric/Shared-Use (ACES) Vehicles For Transit Study

The Automated/Connected/Electric/Shared-Use (ACES) Vehicles for Transit Study acknowledged that though there is a great deal of uncertainty and speculation on the potential impacts of ACES, its influence must be factored into transit planning priorities. The Study's recommendations were based on a flexible approach.

5. Public Participation

The development of the TDSP represents a coordinated and collaborative effort among transportation providers, passengers, advocates, social service agencies, and other community groups. The public involvement process has been mainly accomplished through the LCB, the County's ongoing outreach strategies through social media, travel training, and project-specific stakeholder engagement. The LCB consists of elected officials, social services representatives, and citizen advocates who guide and assist the CTC in the coordination of TD services.

The TDSP was prepared with input from the general public, which was gathered through meetings with the above-mentioned partners and at a regular meeting of the LCB on February 15, 2023. A Summary of Comments on the TDSP is included in Appendix J. Public notice was provided for the February 15, 2023 LCB meeting in the local newspaper of the largest general circulation.

B. Service Area Profile/Demographics

1. Service Area Description

St. Lucie County is located in the southeastern portion of Florida. The County is bordered to the north by Indian River County, to the west by Okeechobee County, to the south by Martin County, and to the east by the Atlantic Ocean. St. Lucie County consists of 572 square miles of land area. Incorporated areas include Fort Pierce, Port St. Lucie, and St. Lucie Village. Figure 2 below is a location map. The TDSP study area is shown in Figure 3.



Figure 2: St. Lucie County Location

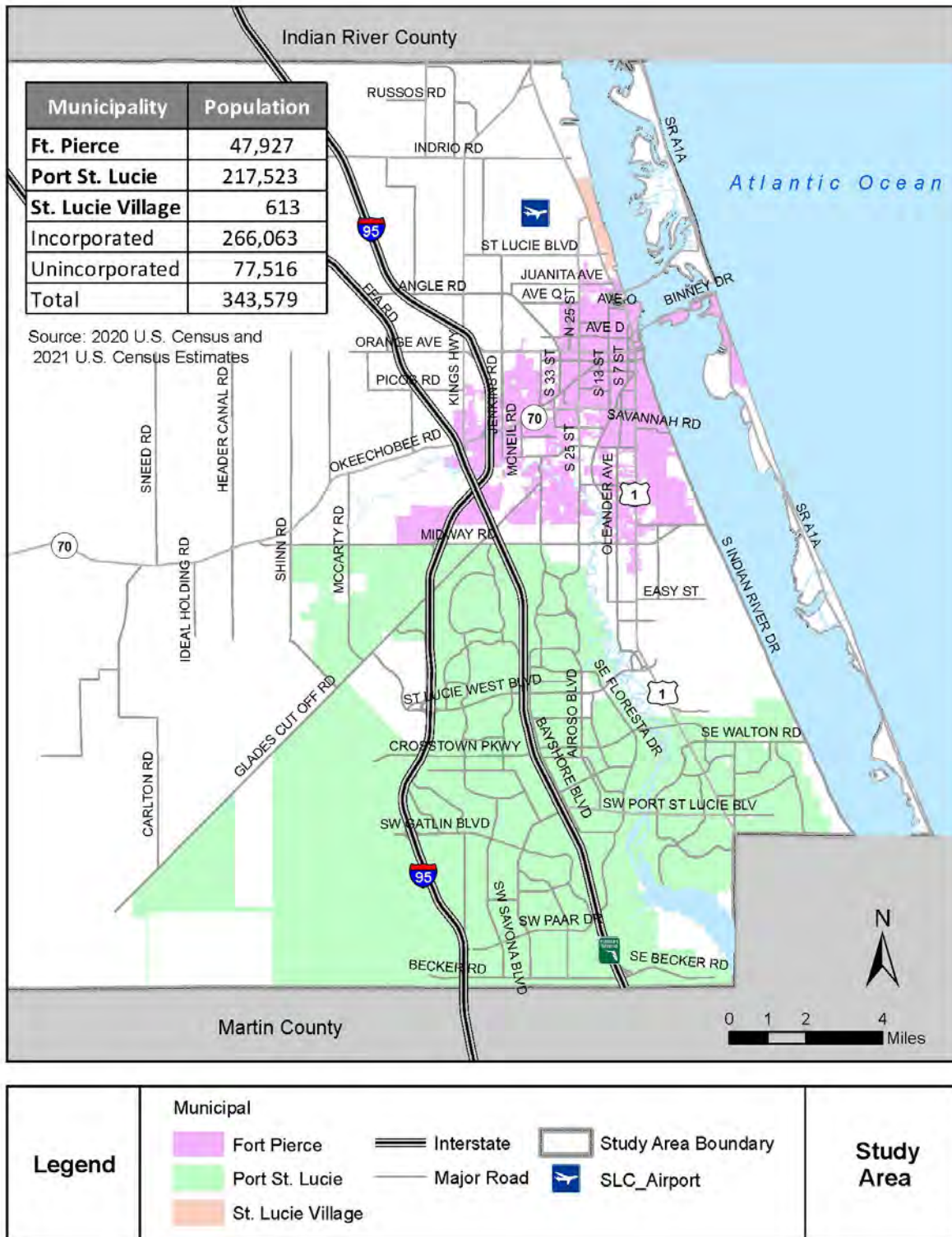


Figure 3: TDSP Study Area

2. *Demographics*

a) Land Use

Of the three municipalities in the County, Port St. Lucie is the most populated. Port St. Lucie is comprised largely of residential uses, accommodated mostly within low-density, single-use areas. Major commercial roadways include US 1, Port St. Lucie Boulevard, Gatlin Boulevard/Tradition Parkway, and Prima Vista Boulevard/St. Lucie West Boulevard. Various gated communities are located in the St. Lucie West and Tradition Parkway areas.

The City of Fort Pierce is characterized by low-density single-family residences, but the housing stock generally is older than in Port St. Lucie. US 1, Okeechobee Road, Virginia Avenue, and Orange Avenue are the major commercial streets in Fort Pierce. Downtown Fort Pierce consists mostly of low-density commercial development on the waterfront.

St. Lucie Village is the third incorporated area in St. Lucie County. St. Lucie Village is an enclave of residences located along Old Dixie Highway.

Unincorporated St. Lucie County includes various pockets of low-density residential land uses in the northern and central parts of the County, and agricultural land uses in the western area of the County. A north/south barrier island known as Hutchinson Island generally separates the County from the Atlantic Ocean. Hutchinson Island is characterized by higher density development than that found on the mainland.

The large geographic size of St. Lucie County combined with the dominance of low-density residential land uses presents a challenge to providing demand response service.

b) Population/Composition

The US Census Bureau provides annual estimates of population and other demographics at the local level. Based on the 2021 Census estimate, the St. Lucie County population is approximately 343,600, which represents a four percent increase from the 2020 Census of 329,200. The percentage of persons 65 years and older was 24 percent, which is higher than the statewide percentage of 21 percent. The median household income for St. Lucie County was approximately \$59,800 compared to approximately \$61,800 statewide. Persons living below the poverty level comprised 11 percent of the population of St. Lucie County versus 13 percent statewide.

Based on a land area of 572 square miles and a 2021 Census estimated population of approximately 343,600, St. Lucie County has a population density of approximately 600 persons per square mile. While this number would seem to indicate that 600 persons live on each square mile of land area, the density within the county varies dramatically because much of the population lives in the eastern

part of the County. Therefore, density is only a raw gauge to measure a population's distribution across a land area.

c) Transit Orientation Analysis

A transit orientation analysis was developed to assess the locations of those persons who are more likely to use public transportation. Generally, this includes those who, because of their age, cannot drive (or prefer not to drive) automobiles. It also includes those who cannot afford to drive. The analysis is based on the following four demographic categories:

- Youth (age < 18)
- Older adult (age > 65)
- Poverty (Households with income at or lower than the poverty level)
- Zero-vehicle households

Using the 2021 U.S. Census estimates and the 2020 Census as data sources yields the following countywide percentages:

- Youth – 20%
- Older adults - 24%
- Poverty – 11%
- Zero-vehicle households – 5%

Figure 4 shows areas of St. Lucie County in which one or more of the above percentages are exceeded. For example, an area in orange indicates high concentrations of youth, older adults, persons living below the poverty level, or households without access to an automobile. The map indicates TOI levels (0–1: Low, 2: Medium, and 3: High). Areas with TOI levels of 3, the highest rating, have concentrations of persons who would be most likely to use public transportation and include areas near US-1, much of Fort Pierce, near Airoso Boulevard and Prima Vista Boulevard, and near Tulip Boulevard.

d) Employment

According to the 2021 U.S. Census estimates, the mean travel time to work for St. Lucie County workers age 16+ was approximately 29 minutes, which compares with the average of 28 minutes for workers statewide. This reflects the fact that many workers in St. Lucie County travel outside the County for employment.

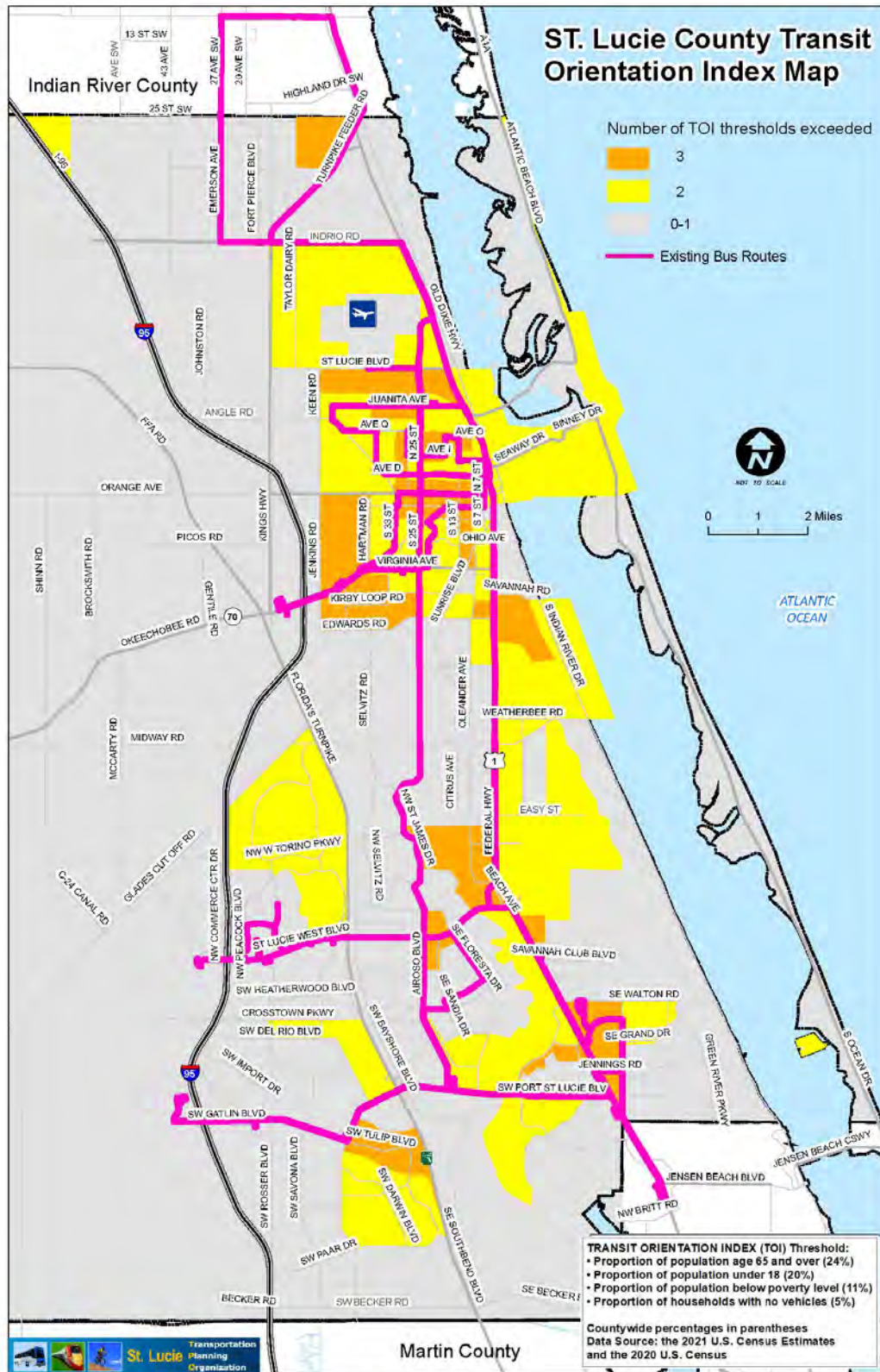


Figure 4: Transit Orientation Index (TOI)

Table 1 lists the major employers in St. Lucie County. Much of this employment is located on sites scattered throughout the County.

Table 1: Major Employers

Company Name	Employer	Product / Service	Location
School Board of St Lucie County	5,564	Education	Fort Pierce
Indian River State College*	2,338	Higher education	Fort Pierce
Lawnwood Regional Medical Center & Heart Institute	1,615	Healthcare services	Fort Pierce
Teleperformance	1,600	Call center	Port St. Lucie
City of Port St Lucie	1,164	City government	Port St. Lucie
Wal-Mart Distribution Center	890	A dry goods distribution center	Fort Pierce
Cleveland Clinic Martin Health	850	Healthcare services	Stuart
St. Lucie Medical Center	850	Healthcare services	Port St. Lucie
St. Lucie County	797	County government	Countywide
Florida Power & Light Company	772	Electric utility	Port St. Lucie
Change Healthcare	549	Call center	Port St. Lucie
Convey Health Solutions	450	Call center	Fort Pierce
St. Lucie County Fire District	434	Fire protection	Fort Pierce
New Horizons of the Treasure Coast	408	Healthcare services	Countywide
Maverick Boat Co Inc	406	Boat manufacturer	Fort Pierce
Blue Goose Construction / Growers	400	Agriculture/ Contractors	Fort Pierce

Sources: Updates provided by employers to the Economic Development Council of St. Lucie County, 2/21/19.

e) Major Trip Generators/Attractors

Major trip generators/attractors in St. Lucie County include Healthcare Facilities, Shopping/Leisure, and Schools/Government Centers. Because St. Lucie County does not have a regional mall, residents in the southern part of the County generally shop at the Treasure Coast Square Mall located in Martin County, and residents in northern St. Lucie County shop in Indian River County. A list of Common Transportation Disadvantaged Trip Destinations is shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Common Transportation Disadvantaged Trip Destinations

Healthcare Facilities	
St. Lucie Medical Center	HANDS of St. Lucie County
Martin Emergency Center of St. Lucie West	Florida Community Health Centers, Inc.
Lawnwood Regional Medical Center	New Horizons of the Treasure Coast, Inc.
St. Lucie County Health Department	Lake Whitney Medical & Professional Campus
Cleveland Clinic Tradition Hospital	
Shopping/Leisure	
St. Lucie West	Fort Pierce (commercial centers)
Port St. Lucie Community Center	Port St. Lucie (commercial centers)
Mid-Florida Credit Union Event Center	Treasure Coast Square Mall
Libraries-All Branches	
Schools/Government Centers	
Port St. Lucie City Hall	St. Lucie County Administration Building
Fort Pierce City Hall	St. Lucie County Community Services Department
Indian River State College Main Campus	Social Security Administration
Indian River State College, St. Lucie West	Florida Department of Children & Family Services
St Lucie County Walton Road Annex	St. Lucie County Tradition Annex
Other Destinations	
United Against Poverty	Council on Aging of St. Lucie, Inc Port St. Lucie
Treasure Coast Food Bank	Mustard Seed Ministries

f) Inventory of Available Transportation Services

An inventory of transportation options in St. Lucie County and statewide is available at the Find a Ride Florida website <https://findarideflorida.org/>. This resource is developed and maintained by the University of Florida and the Florida Department of Transportation.

C. Service Analysis

1. Estimates and Forecasts of Transportation Disadvantaged Population

One of the required elements of the service analysis section of the TDSP is the forecast of the TD population for the service area.

As shown in Figure 6, TD population groups include all disabled, elderly, and low-income persons and children who are “high-risk” or “at-risk.” Disability refers to physical or mental limitations that may affect a person’s ability to access transportation. Income refers to the financial ability of a person to purchase transportation. As Figure 2 shows, there are overlaps among the disabled, elderly, and low-income populations.

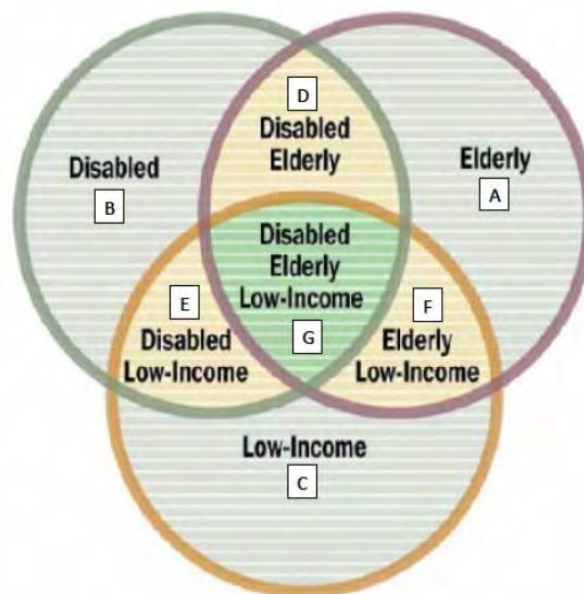


Figure 5: The TD Population

To serve as an aid in the development of TD population and travel demand estimates, the University of South Florida Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR) developed a spreadsheet tool that enables users to input the most current US Census Bureau socio-economic data. Once the user input is complete, a series of formulas are used to project TD population estimates and future travel demand.

The General TD population includes estimates of all disabled, elderly, and low-income persons and children who are “high-risk” or “at-risk.” As shown in Table 3, the General TD population in St. Lucie County is estimated, using the CUTR tool, to be 130,321 persons, or approximately 38 percent of the total population.

General TD Population	% of Total	
Non-Duplicated General TD Population Estimate	130,321	38%

Table 3: General TD Population

The Critical Need TD population includes persons who, due to severe physical limitations or low incomes, are unable to transport themselves or purchase transportation and thus are dependent upon others to obtain access to health care, employment, education, shopping, social activities, or other life-sustaining activities. The Critical Need-Severely Disabled TD population in St. Lucie County is estimated to be 13,405, as shown in Table 4.

Critical Need -Severely Disabled TD Population			
	<i>Not Low Income</i>	<i>Low Income</i>	<i>Totals</i>
<i>Non-Elderly</i>	1,935	775	2,709
<i>Elderly</i>	9,444	1,251	10,695
TOTAL	11,378	2,026	13,405

Table 4: Critical Need-Severely Disabled Population

Daily trip rates are applied to the Critical Need-Severely Disabled TD population to calculate daily and annual travel demand. This methodology uses trip rates for persons who live in households without any vehicles available from the 2009 National Household Travel Survey (NHTS). As shown in Table 5, the Critical Need-Severely Disabled TD population daily trip demand is estimated to be 4,351 trips.

<u>Low Income & Not Disabled</u>	28,611		
27.2% without auto access	7,782		
25% without transit access	1,946		
Calculation of Daily Trips			
		Daily Trip Rates	Total
Total Actual Critical TD Population		Per Person	Daily Trips
<i>Severely Disabled</i>	13,405	0.049	657
<i>Low Income ND</i>	1,945	1.899	3,694
Totals	15,350		4,351

Table 5: Daily Trips for the Critical Need Population

Within the CUTR tool, forecasts of the General TD population and the Critical Need-Severely Disabled TD population were developed based on US Census American Community Survey (ACS) data and projections by the Bureau of Economic and Business Research (BEBR).

The Critical Need-Severely Disabled TD population is projected to increase to 17,511 by 2025, with a demand for 4,735 daily trips or more than 1.48 million annual trips.

2. Special Needs Population

In addition to using the CUTR methodology to estimate overall disability needs, the Census data was used to estimate the number of persons with cognitive disabilities. The term cognitive disabilities are related to a range of intellectual impairments that impact an individual's ability to perform daily functions. The Census asks about six disability types: hearing difficulty, vision difficulty, cognitive difficulty, ambulatory difficulty, self-care difficulty, and independent living difficulty. Respondents who report any one of the six disability types are considered to have a disability. According to the 2021 U.S. Census estimates, approximately ten percent of the population of St. Lucie County has some type of disability.

It is important to note that many adults with cognitive disabilities can live productive lives in the community with minimal support from family, friends, and social services agencies, while other adults require a high degree of support. Therefore, the presence of a disability does not necessarily mean an individual needs specialized paratransit services, nor does it mean that the individual meets the paratransit eligibility criteria based on a transportation provider's policies.

The six disability types covered by the Census are:

- Hearing difficulty --deaf or having serious difficulty hearing.
- Vision difficulty --blind or having serious difficulty seeing, even when wearing glasses.
- Cognitive difficulty --because of a physical, mental or emotional problem, having difficulty remembering, concentrating, or making decisions.
- Ambulatory difficulty --having serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs.
- Self-care difficulty --having difficulty bathing or dressing.
- Independent living difficulty --because of a physical, mental or emotional problem, having difficulties doing errands alone such as visiting a doctor's office or shopping.

Public transportation is essential to being able to access employment, educational, health, and social opportunities to participate actively in the community. However, the demand for TD trips, as summarized in the need's assessments above, far outweighs the supply of trips. A result of this imbalance of supply/demand is that TD trips must be scheduled based on availability, with preference given to serving riders with life essential needs. This process, known as trip prioritization, can lead to economic disadvantage and social exclusion for TD persons who are unable to access public transportation due to lack of availability.

3. Transportation Disadvantaged State-Wide Service Analysis

In December 2017, a Transportation Disadvantaged State-Wide Service Analysis was prepared by CUTR for the Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD). The Analysis examines the design and provision of the state's TD services, identifies "gaps" in service accessibility/connectivity and examines strategies of how to assist in addressing these gaps. The study also provides an examination of the state's transportation disadvantaged populations, with specific emphasis on individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). The APD, through its waiver transportation services, works with local communities and private providers to assist IDD individuals and their families.

Assisting in the development of the Analysis was a Transportation Task Force comprised of the following membership:

- a) The director of the Agency for Persons with Disabilities or his or her designee.
- b) The executive director of the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged or his or her designee.
- c) The community transportation coordinators for Alachua, Jackson, Miami-Dade, and Pinellas Counties.
- d) Two individuals who currently use transportation disadvantaged services, one appointed by the agency director and the other appointed by the executive director of the commission.
- e) A representative of the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council.
- f) A representative of Family Care Council Florida.

The Transportation Task Force presented background on their areas of expertise, provided input to CUTR staff, and reviewed and commented on progress reports and drafts of the final report. Several preliminary recommendations were prepared and presented to the Task Force for discussion, refinement, and prioritization. The following section describes the four (4) recommendations in order of priority approved by the Task Force:

1. Redesign of the APD Transportation Business Model
2. Develop and Implement Mobility Management Single Point Information Center (MIC) Pilot Projects
3. Establish an Innovative Service Development Discretionary Grant Program for Transportation Services for Persons with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities
4. Establish a TD/IDD Transportation Sensitivity Training and Travel Training Resource Program

4. *Barriers to Coordination*

While there are no federal, state, or local government policies in place that prohibit, hinder or prevent the coordination of both inter-and intra-county coordination, several barriers currently exist that make coordination difficult at best. These include:

- Funding for transportation services has not kept up with the ever-increasing travel demand. The result is that CTCs are struggling to maintain their existing service levels and do not have the financial resources to expand inter-county service.
- Local, nonprofit, and social services agencies are still being impacted by insufficient funding levels and continually face increased demand for their services, which resulted in increased demand for transportation-disadvantaged travel that cannot be met.
- Improved access to transit is needed along strategic corridors, which could be accomplished through the implementation of transit-supportive land use and complete street design.
- The implementation of new mobility options such as micro-transit and ridesharing requires collaboration among a wide range of public and private partnerships.
- Many St. Lucie County TD clients desire to travel outside the County's boundaries. The Area Regional Transit (ART) Route #1 provides service into Martin County, and Route #7 travels into Indian River County; both routes connect with either Martin or Indian River Counties' fixed-route transit system. In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), TD service is provided service within $\frac{3}{4}$ mile surrounding the fixed-route system.
- Often the lack of adequate pedestrian access to and from bus stops limits the ability of TD passengers to access the fixed-route transit services safely.

The elimination or reduction of the above barriers to enhanced integration of the paratransit and fixed-route systems is intended to be addressed through the TD program and other initiatives.

D. Mission Statement, Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

The TDSP Mission Statement, Goals, Objectives, and Strategies shown in Appendix A were reviewed.

E. Implementation Plan

The St. Lucie County TDSP Implementation Plan, as detailed in Tables 6 and 7, builds upon the County's program of providing services with modern, clean, and efficient vehicles and equipment by utilizing ongoing upgrades and replacements within available funding capacity. Specific capital projects and activities are listed in the implementation schedule.

Increasing system efficiency is a primary component of this Implementation Plan. If a paratransit trip has an origin and destination within the fixed route corridor, it will be necessary for the passenger to use the fixed-route unless that patron is unable to utilize the fixed route system based on eligibility criteria. Diverting trips to the fixed route system will help increase capacity on the paratransit system and reduce trip costs within the coordinated system, resulting in a more efficient system.

Tables 6 and 7 provide an overview of ongoing system improvements and review steps, and a timeline for actions and strategies to meet the TDSP goals.

Implementation Date	Ongoing System Improvements and Review
Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Increase fixed-route utilization ➤ Continue to monitor trip rates and adjust as needed ➤ Maintain or increase the number of passengers per vehicle hour ➤ Manage the cost per passenger trip ➤ Manage the cost per vehicle hour ➤ Pursue alternative funding sources to provide additional transportation services and capital equipment ➤ Continue to coordinate with Martin County and Indian River County regarding the provision of Inter-county transportation services ➤ Continue to educate passengers on the cancellation and no-show policies ➤ Ensure that transportation services are provided following the FCTD and FDOT safety standards and recommendations ➤ Ensure that all system drivers are adequately trained in system safety and security preparedness and response ➤ Continually review current training, available training opportunities, mandatory annual training requirements, and safety/security best practices ➤ Conduct annual safety reviews ➤ Ensure the drug and alcohol testing requirements are being implemented ➤ Continue to maintain existing and pursue additional transportation coordination agreements ➤ Raise awareness of Transportation Disadvantaged population needs for accessibility ➤ Identify needs and opportunities for the private sector, public sector, and non-governmental organizations to participate in funding the coordinated transportation system ➤ Partner with agencies to maximize the electronic dissemination of marketing and educational materials ➤ Coordinate with FDOT Mobility Managers and APD.

Table 6: Ongoing System Improvements and Review

Action/Strategy	Responsible Agency	Timeframe
Adopt the Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan	LCB	Annually
Maintain/renew existing and pursue additional Transportation Coordination Agreements	CTC	Ongoing
Pursue alternative funding sources to provide additional transportation services and capital equipment	CTC / TPO / Transit Provider	Ongoing
Coordinate quarterly meetings of the Treasure Coast Transit Meeting (TCTM)	Transit Provider	Ongoing
Advocate for the inclusion of TD considerations in local site plan and development review processes	CTC / TPO / Transit Provider	Ongoing
Submit Trip/Equipment and Planning grant applications for funding	CTC / TPO	Annually
Complete Annual Operating Report and Annual Expenditure Report	CTC / TPO	Annually
Implement innovative pilot programs for after-hours transportation service	CTC	Ongoing
Conduct monitoring of Coordination Contractors	CTC	Annually
Train social service organization staff to conduct travel training exercises with riders	CTC / Transit Provider	Ongoing
Coordinate with South Florida Commuter Services (SFCS) on continuing development of vanpools, carpools, and other transportation demand management	CTC / TPO / Transit Provider	Ongoing
Identify park and ride lots within St. Lucie County	CTC / TPO / SFCS / Transit Provider	Ongoing
Pursue Section 5310 funding (transportation for elderly persons and persons with disabilities)	CTC	Ongoing
Select projects for 5310 funds using project selection committees	CTC / TPO	Ongoing
Install bus shelters	CTC / Transit Provider	Ongoing
Promote transit services through various media	CTC / TPO / Transit Provider	Ongoing
Maximize the efficiency of the transit system	CTC / Transit Provider	Ongoing
Ensure the safety and security of the transit system	CTC / Transit Provider	Ongoing

Table 7: Implementation Actions and Strategies

SERVICE PLAN

A. Operations

1. Type, Hours, and Days of Service

The fixed-route service is called Area Regional Transit (ART). Information on this service is provided below. Additional information on services is provided in the St. Lucie Alternative Transportation System *Rider's Guide* in Appendix B of this document and on the website SLCART.org.

There are currently eight (8) fixed routes providing public transportation service in St. Lucie County. One route runs along US 1, two (2) routes operate circulator service in Fort Pierce, three (3) routes serve the Port St. Lucie area, one route connects with Indian River County, and one route operates as an express route between the Intermodal in Fort Pierce and the Intermodal at the Port St. Lucie Community Center. Routes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 operate from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Monday - Friday, Saturday from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Route 7 operates from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday - Friday only. Route 8 operates from 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Monday - Friday. No service is provided on Sundays. All routes run at one-hour frequencies.

In addition to the eight fixed routes, ART is presently operating a pilot program, funded through the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), providing micro-transit door-to-door service on-demand. The "ART On-Demand" service operates in the South Port St Lucie/Gatlin/Tradition area (approximately a 10 square mile area). The service area was expanded in March 2022 to include the Port St. Lucie Intermodal Facility which connects riders with three additional fixed routes. This service operates from 6:00 a.m. to 7:45 p.m. Monday - Friday and 7:00 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. on Saturdays. There is no service on Sundays.

The routes are described as follows:

Route 1

Route 1 operates along US 1 from the Fort Pierce Intermodal Center to the Treasure Coast Square Mall connecting with Martin County. This route connects with Routes 2, 3, 7, and 8 at the Fort Pierce Intermodal Center, Route 4 at Town Center Plaza, and Route 6 at Rio Mar and Prima Vista Crossings.

Route 2

Route 2, known as the "North Fort Pierce Residential," route provides service from Ave D to Juanita Avenue. This route connects with Routes 1, 3, 7, and 8 at the Fort Pierce Intermodal Center.

Route 3

Route 3, known as the “South Fort Pierce Business” route, provides service along Orange Avenue and Okeechobee Road. This route connects with Routes 1, 2, 7, and 8 at the Fort Pierce Intermodal Center.

Route 4

Route 4, known as the “Port St. Lucie Downtown Trolley,” route provides service along Port St. Lucie Blvd to the eastern part of Port St. Lucie. This route connects with Route 1 at Town Center Plaza and Routes 5, 6, and 8 at the Port St. Lucie Intermodal Center.

Route 5

Route 5, known as the “Port St. Lucie/Gatlin Blvd” route, provides service along Port St. Lucie Blvd west to Gatlin Blvd to Tradition. This route connects with Routes 4, 6, and 8 at the Port St. Lucie Intermodal Center. This Route also stops at the Jobs Express Terminal.

Route 6

Route 6, known as the “Prima Vista/St. Lucie West Blvd” route, provides service along Prima Vista Blvd east and west to St. Lucie West Blvd to I-95. This route connects with Routes 4, 5, and 8 at the Port St. Lucie Intermodal Center and Route 1 at the Rio Mar and Prima Vista Crossings stops.

Route 7

Route 7, known as the “Lakewood Park” route, connects with Indian River County at the Intergenerational Center. This route also connects with Route 1, 2, 3, and 8 at the Fort Pierce Intermodal.

Route 8

Route 8 is TCC’s newest route and is referred to as the “25th Street/St. James/Airosa” express route. Presently, this route provides service between the Fort Pierce Intermodal and the Intermodal at the Port St. Lucie Community Center. It operates Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. and from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. This route also connects with Route 1, 2, 3, and 7 at the Fort Pierce Intermodal. This route connects with Routes 4, 5, and 6 at the Port St. Lucie Intermodal Center.

ART On-Demand

“ART On-Demand” is a pilot program providing micro-transit service in the South Port St. Lucie/Gatlin Blvd. / Tradition area. This service provides door-to-door trips within a ten-mile area and includes the Port St. Lucie Intermodal Facility where riders can connect with 4 different fixed routes. Trips are scheduled and dispatched via an app, or they can be arranged via the phone. This service operates from 6:00 a.m. to 7:45 p.m. Monday - Friday, and 7:00 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. on Saturdays.

Paratransit

The Door-to-Door service in St. Lucie County operates from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Monday - Friday and from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Saturday, except holidays.

Direct Connect

Direct Connect is St. Lucie County's supplementary service program for the transportation disadvantaged. Beginning mid-2017, Direct Connect provides demand-response transportation for trips to and from work, job training, school, and non-emergency healthcare. The program's service hours align with the County's public transit system to fill service gaps when regular transit services are not in operation. With the addition of Direct Connect to the traditional portfolio of transit services, county transportation disadvantaged residents now have twenty-four hours per day, seven days per week essential mobility service. Now with Direct Connect, St. Lucie County provides the most comprehensive transportation disadvantaged service coverage in Florida.

Direct Connect service is provided through third-party qualified contract carriers offering wheelchair accessible vehicles and conventional taxi service. Program clients can reserve trips on their own or, if needed, book trip reservations through the County CTC office. Direct Connect copays are \$20 monthly.

Advantage Ride

In 2020, the County developed and achieved competitive grant funding to deploy a new transportation service, Advantage Ride Treasure Coast. In March 2021, Advantage Ride merged with a similar program operated through Senior Resource Association (SRA). The combined program is called the Treasure Coast Developmental Mobility Advantage Ride Program. This regional transportation program provides rides to qualified individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) within St. Lucie, Martin, Indian River, and Okeechobee counties. The program supports greater access and cross-county mobility through on-demand, door-to-door, scheduled trips and has a reciprocity component allowing Martin, Indian River, and Okeechobee qualified riders the same services. The grant funding for Advantage Ride was not renewed in July 2020, due to the repeal of the MCORES bill. The program was continued with funding from St. Lucie County BOCC and SRA's grant from the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council. In 2022, SRA in partnership with St. Lucie County received an Innovation and Service Development grant from the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD) to continue the Advantage Ride program. This allowed St. Lucie County to serve all riders who were previously on the waiting list.

2. Accessing Services

The demand response service through County's Contracted Provider is a shared-ride, paratransit, origin-to-destination service. The service provides:

- ADA complementary service for eligible individuals who are not able to use the fixed-route system because of a disability or other limitations

- Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) Service for senior, disabled, or low-income individuals who have no other means of transportation nor can afford to pay for private transportation. Because of limited funding and the number of individuals in St. Lucie County qualifying for this service, trips must be prioritized
- Rural Transportation for individuals who live outside the urbanized area in St. Lucie County

Once an individual receives approval to use demand response services, transportation can be scheduled by calling 772-462-1778. Riders will be asked to provide the date, time, and address of their destination and contact phone number.

The County's Contracted Provider requests riders to provide at least twenty-four hours (24-hour) notice for trip reservations. Reservations can be made up to two weeks in advance.

a) Eligibility

To be considered for paratransit service, an individual is required to fill out an application (attached), verified by a physician, if disabled, regarding the nature of the disability and why the individual cannot use the fixed-route system. Self-declarations shall not be allowed. The application comes in two different formats, English, and Spanish. The individual seeking either ADA, TD, or rural transportation must complete the application in its entirety. The first page of the application is for general information, such as name, address, phone number, date of birth, Medicaid number if applicable and questions regarding TD eligibility. This page ascertains whether the person has transportation by their own means or means of others and if their annual income exceeds 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines for households or individuals. The second page of the application ascertains the person's type of disability, and what mobility aids are needed. Pages three through five of the application ask questions to determine if there are any limits the applicant may have in using the fixed route. The application also includes four separate medical verification forms to be completed by the applicant's medical provider. The forms are specific to the individual's type of disability.

The County's Eligibility Specialist will review the applications to determine which program, if any, the individual is qualified. All programs have a three (3) year certification period. After three (3) years, individuals with permanent disabilities will be contacted by the County's Eligibility Specialist to update their information. If an individual is incapable of filling out the application himself or herself, the County's Eligibility Specialist will assist them in filling out the application. The eligibility determination process for the application takes approximately twenty-one (21) days to complete. If an individual is qualified for other services, the individual will be notified.

Should an individual be denied services, a notification will be provided explaining the reason for denial and advising the individual of the procedures to follow should they wish to appeal.

b) Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) Eligibility

The application process enables the reviewer to determine if the trip can be funded or performed by another agency or person or if the applicants can transport themselves. If this is, the case TD eligibility is denied. The reviewer can also determine the person's age, disability according to ADA, income, and if the person can use the fixed route system.

A person with one of the following conditions would qualify for services:

- If the person is 67 or over or;
- Cannot manipulate the fixed route due to disability or;
- Income is below 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines for households or individuals,
- All the above must also demonstrate that the trip cannot be funded or performed by themselves, sponsored by another agency or person, then the eligibility would be approved.

If the person has a disability according to ADA and cannot manipulate the fixed route, their income is below 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines for households or individuals and the trip cannot be funded or performed by themselves, another agency or person, then the eligibility would be approved.

If an individual has a problem paying the fare, St. Lucie County will evaluate the individual according to their ability to pay and, if they qualify, provide them with a pass to ride the system. Presently, this is not a factor due to the entire system being fare-free.

c) Prioritization

The County's Contract Providers manage trips that are funded by the Transportation Disadvantaged Trust Fund according to locally established prioritization policies. Medical trips have the highest priority for the trip schedule. Following medical trips, employment trips, and nutritional trips (including food-shopping trips) receive the next highest priority. Recreational trips may be accommodated if there is trip availability.

The above prioritization could result in trip denials. According to the Annual Operating Report (AOR) for Fiscal Year, July 1, 2021 -June 30, 2022, the number of unmet trip requests was 4,952 compared to 5,762 unmet trip requests in the previous fiscal year.

As required under federal law, ADA trips are not included in the prioritization process. ADA eligible trips are provided without prioritization and cannot be denied. In addition, trips that are provided with FTA Section 5311 funds may not be prioritized and must be made available to the "general public" that lives in a rural area.

d) Cancellations/No Shows

All scheduled trips (reservations) must be canceled at least two hours before the scheduled arrival of the bus. Failure to give adequate notice that a trip will not be taken constitutes a misuse of the service and will be classified as a “no-show.” No-show/late cancellations represent 10 percent (10%) or more of a passenger scheduled trips, and the rider has four (4) or more no-shows in a calendar month, this will result in a violation. The “No Show” penalties are as follows:

- First violation: A phone call and warning letter
- Second violation: Passenger will receive two (2) weeks suspension of service and a phone call and letter by mail
- Third violation: Passenger will receive a 30-day suspension and, if applicable, loss of subscription of service. (They will have to call for all future reservations and will not have automatic time and dates for standing orders). This will be done by a phone call and letter by mail.

3. *Transportation Operators and Coordination Contractors*

St. Lucie County has an agreement with one transportation operator that provides public transportation services for the fixed route and demand response services. Every three years, the County publishes a Request for Qualifications to identify and select the public transportation provider.

St. Lucie County has established coordinated contractual service agreements with specialized transportation providers that offer transportation services to their individual clientele. Table 8 shows the Transportation Operator and Coordinated Contractors in St. Lucie County.

2022-2023		
Name	Contact Person	Service(s)
<i>Transportation Operator</i>		
MV Transportation	Anthony Rodriguez	A/W
<i>Coordinated Contractors</i>		
2 nd Chance Community Health Services	Johnny Brown	A
An Answer to Care	Grace Walter	A/W
ARC of St Lucie County	Keith Muniz	A/W
Aurora of the Treasure Coast, Inc.	Ann Meier	A
Council of Aging of St Lucie, Inc	Darrell Drummond	A/W
JusTranzit School Bus, Inc.	Deidre Butler	A/W
St. Lucie County Veterans	Jake Walton	A/W
A = Ambulatory W = Wheelchair S = Stretcher		

Table 8: Transportation Operator and Coordination Contractors

4. Public Transit Utilization

Public transit utilization is an integral part of the overall CTC network. TD clients who can utilize the fixed route and whose origin and destination are within the fixed route service area are required to use the fixed route as their primary mode of transportation.

5. School Bus Utilization

The County School Board buses are utilized on a limited basis under the coordination system. Services provide trips for summer camp activities and disaster emergency evacuations.

6. Vehicle Inventory

Appendix E contains the fleet inventory.

7. System Safety Program Plan Certification

Appendix F contains the System Safety Program Plan certification of the County's Contract Provider.

8. Inter-County Services

St. Lucie County shares an urbanized boundary with Martin County. Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funding allocations are shared between the counties. Fixed route services are offered by the County's Contract Provider on the US 1 corridor into Martin County, terminating services at the Treasure Coast Mall in Jensen Beach. St. Lucie County also connects with Indian River County in Vero Beach via Route 7.

9. Emergency Preparedness and Response

The CTC participates with the St. Lucie County Public Safety, Division of Emergency Management for natural disaster/emergency preparedness, response, and recovery. The county has also developed the "St. Lucie Medical Needs Shelter Plan" that specifically delineates the roles and responsibilities of various County departments in the evacuation and sheltering of special needs residents. The County's Contract Provider, working with the St. Lucie County Emergency Operations Center, assists in transporting special needs residents to shelter locations.

10. Educational Efforts/Marketing

The St. Lucie County CTC attends both formal and informal meetings with sponsoring social service agencies, community associations, advocacy groups, and others to educate potential users and sponsoring agencies. There are brochures/rider guides describing the available transportation services. These materials are distributed to social service agencies, medical offices, and riders.

11. Acceptable Alternatives

St. Lucie County continues to investigate and implement acceptable alternatives to address existing transportation barriers.

12. Service Standards

In order to assess the quality assurance of the delivery of transportation services, it is necessary to have service standards and policies established. The FCTD has several requirements for its transportation providers. The requirements are the basis for the following criteria and guidelines used in the annual review of the CTC by the FCTD and reviewed by the LCB.

Drug and Alcohol Testing

The St. Lucie County CTC complies with applicable Federal Transit Administration requirements for all those in safety-sensitive positions. In addition, the CTC Maintains a Drug-Free Workplace policy.

Escorts and Children

Children under age 12 or individuals requiring special assistance must have an escort/personal care attendant (PCA). The escort/PCA must be an adult and must be able to provide necessary assistance to the passenger.

Child Restraints

All passengers under the age of five (5) or under 45 pounds must be secured in a child restraint device. If the assigned vehicle does not have a child restraint device, a device must be provided by the passenger's family or sponsoring agency.

Passenger Property

Passengers are responsible for all personal property. Passengers traveling will be allowed to transport any personal property that can be placed in their lap or stowed under the seat in one boarding.

Transfer Points

Vehicle transfer points will be located in a safe, secure place.

Local Toll-Free Phone Number/Consumer Comment

The local number for compliments, comments, or complaints is 772-462-1778 ext#4. This number is posted on the bus with numbers three inches high. If complaints

cannot be resolved locally, individuals do have the option to contact either the CTC office at 772-462-1777 or the statewide Transportation Disadvantaged Ombudsman Hotline at 1-800-983-2435.

Vehicle Cleanliness

The interior of all vehicles shall be free from dirt, grime, oil, trash, torn upholstery, damaged or broken seats, protruding metal or other objects or materials that could soil items placed in the vehicle or provide discomfort for the passenger. All vehicles shall be cleaned (interior and exterior) on a regular schedule.

Billing

All payments to transportation contractors will be made in a timely manner.

Passenger/Trip Data

For demand response services, the CTC management entity will collect and store in a database the name, phone number, address, funding source, eligibility, and special requirements of each passenger.

Seating

Vehicle seating will not exceed the manufacturer's recommended capacity.

Driver Identification

Drivers are required to wear identification badges. Drivers are also required to wear uniforms. Drivers are required to announce and identify themselves by name and company in a manner that is conducive to communications with specific passengers, except in situations where the driver regularly transports the rider repeatedly.

Passenger Loading Assistance

For demand response services, drivers will assist passengers to and from the ground floor and door-to-door when requested. Drivers will assist all passengers needing assistance from the threshold of their homes to a securely seated position on the vehicle. Drivers will offer their assistance to any passenger who appears to need assistance or who requests assistance with boarding or alighting from the vehicle.

Smoking, Drinking, and Eating

Smoking, eating, or drinking on-board the vehicle is prohibited. Exceptions are permitted when required due to an existing medical condition.

Passenger No-Shows

All scheduled trips (reservations) must be canceled at least two hours before the scheduled arrival of the bus. Failure to give adequate notice that a trip will not be taken constitutes a misuse of the service and will be classified as a "no-show." No-show/late cancellations represent 10 percent (10%) or more of a passenger scheduled trips, and the rider has four (4) or more no-shows in a calendar month, this will result in a violation. The "No Show" penalties are as follows:

- First violation: A phone call and warning letter

- Second violation: Passenger will receive two (2) weeks suspension of service and a phone call and letter by mail
- Third violation: Passenger will receive a 30-day suspension and, if applicable, loss of subscription of service. (They will have to call for all future reservations and will not have automatic time and dates for standing orders). This will be done by a phone call and letter by mail.

Communication Equipment

All vehicles will be equipped with two-way communication devices.

Vehicle Air Conditioning and Heating Equipment

All vehicles in the coordinated system must have working air conditioning and heating. Should a vehicle incur a problem, it will be repaired as soon as possible. If a vehicle's air conditioning or heating is not functioning properly and if there are no other vehicles available, the passengers will be transported, rather than canceling a trip. Passengers with health conditions affected by air conditioning or lack thereof will be notified if their vehicle's air conditioning is not working, and the passenger will be allowed to decide whether to take the trip.

First Aid Policy

All Transit vehicles are equipped with a first aid kit. County Transit drivers are instructed to request 9-1-1 assistance through their dispatcher for any significant passenger incident.

Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation

Drivers are instructed to request 9-1-1 assistance through their dispatcher for any significant passenger incident.

Pick-Up Window

Please be ready at least ninety (90) minutes before your scheduled appointment. When you have booked your trip, the reservationist will give you a service window of 30 minutes after the bus is due to arrive during that time. For example, if your Service Window is 9:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m., the earliest time your ride will come will be 9:00 a.m., and the latest is 9:30 a.m. The bus may arrive at any time in between, so you must be ready and waiting for the vehicle's arrival. Drivers operate on a schedule allowing a maximum of five (5) minutes to wait after arriving at the pick-up location.

On-Time Performance

The locally developed standard for on-time performance is that 90% of all completed trips will be completed on time.

Advance Reservations

There will be a minimum 24-hour notice requirement to schedule trips.

Public Transit Ridership

As part of the CTC Evaluation, the LCB is required to establish an annual percentage goal increase for trips provided within the public transit system.

Complaints

The complaint procedure is outlined in the Local Complaint and Grievance Procedures/Process section.

Accidents

The locally developed standard for accidents is no more than 1.5 accidents per 100,000 miles.

Road calls

The locally developed standard for road calls is there should be no less than 10,000 miles between each road call.

Call-Hold

The locally developed standard for answering telephone calls is that all calls should be answered within three rings.

Driver Background Checks

All drivers in the coordinated system must have a pre-employment background check through the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA). Only those drivers with an "Eligible for Employment" background check from AHCA ("Eligible for Employment" as defined by AHCA policies and procedures) are hired.

Driver Training

All operators, supervisors, and safety-sensitive positions shall receive drug and alcohol safety training. Additional training shall consist of driver safety, passenger relations, wheelchair securement, fire safety, and other topics, as deemed necessary. At a minimum, passenger relations and driver safety training shall be conducted annually.

Oxygen Transport

Passengers may travel with portable oxygen equipment providing it can be managed by the passenger, is self-administered, and is small enough that it can be safely stowed when the vehicle is en route.

Service Animals

Service animals are allowed on-board when accompanying individuals with disabilities.

13. Local Complaint and Grievance Procedures/Process

The locally developed standard for complaints is no more than one complaint per 1,000 trips. The LCB annually evaluates the CTC based upon the number of complaints.

The local number for compliments, comments, or complaints in 772-462-1778 extension #4. This number is posted inside all vehicles with numbers three inches high. If complaints cannot be resolved locally, individuals do have the option to

contact either the CTC office at 772-462-1777 or the statewide Transportation Disadvantaged Ombudsman Hotline. The number for the Ombudsman is 1-800-983-2435 or email CTDOmbudsman@dot.state.fl.us.

The St. Lucie County Local Coordinating Board has adopted a grievance procedure. A copy of the Grievance Procedures is provided in Appendix G. There has also been a formal grievance process developed by the Florida Commission for Transportation Disadvantaged. This grievance process may be used if all local options have been attempted without resolution. The Commission's grievance <http://www.dot.state.fl.us/ctd/>

14. Community Transportation Coordinator Monitoring Procedures of Operators and Coordination Contractors

The CTC completes annual coordination contractor onsite monitoring, including inspection of operations (vehicle maintenance, employee training, and personnel records) and insurance documentation to ensure compliance with the FCTD System Safety Program Plan and FDOT standards. The CTC notifies the contractors with recommendations or findings.

15. Coordination Contract Evaluation Criteria

The CTC requests semi-annual operating reports from the coordination contractors to gauge performance throughout the year. If service levels are determined to be ineffective, the CTC may opt to exclude the provider from future contract renewal.

B. Cost / Revenue Allocation and Rate Structure Justification

1. Cost Revenue Allocation

A rate structure is developed to show fully allocated costs of providing transportation-disadvantaged trips. The rate structure is based on the type of trip in the service area.

Wheelchair trips are the costliest due to the amount of time to board and disembark wheelchair individuals.

Appendix H contains the proposed Cost Revenue Allocation and Fare Structure Justification worksheets. The current rates are:

- Ambulatory \$24.54
- Wheelchair \$42.07

2. Passenger Fare Structures

The ongoing support of the St. Lucie County Board of County Commissioners has made it possible for the County's Fixed Route and Paratransit Buses to provide service at no cost to the riders.

Appendix A

Mission Statement, Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

TDSP Mission Statement, Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

The mission of the St. Lucie Transportation Disadvantaged Program is:

To provide a safe, efficient, and affordable coordinated transportation system that enhances mobility and accessibility for all users.

The following goals, objectives and strategies have been adopted to achieve the mission above.

GOAL 1: Maximize the coordination of transportation services for the transportation disadvantaged and social services organizations.		
	Estimated Date of Completion	Responsible Agency
<i>Objective 1.1— Minimize the duplication of transportation disadvantaged services provided within and outside the County.</i>		
Strategy 1.1.1— Continue to work with CTCs and coordinated contractors in the region to facilitate inter-county trips.	Ongoing	CTC
<i>Objective 1.2— Bring the social service organizations that provide transportation into the coordinated system through purchase of services contracts, coordination contracts, and/or joint use agreements.</i>		
Strategy 1.2.1— Annually advise transportation providers about the nature and benefits of coordinated transportation services and request that the providers enter into purchase of service contracts, coordination contracts, and/or joint use agreements.	Ongoing	CTC

	Estimated Date of Completion	Responsible Agency
<i>Objective 1.3— Identify and address actual or perceived barriers to coordination of transportation services.</i>		
Strategy 1.3.1 — Participate in programs and activities conducted by FDOT, APD, and coordinated contractors.	Ongoing	CTC/TPO/Transit Providers
Strategy 1.3.2 — Meet with the local medical community to advocate the prioritization of TD trips	As needed	CTC
Strategy 1.3.3 — Continue networking and expand outreach to the local community through various organizations and agencies.	Ongoing	CTC

GOAL 2: Plan for the expansion of the coordinated transportation system as necessary to meet the demand and needs of the transportation disadvantaged.

	Estimated Date of Completion	Responsible Agency
<i>Objective 2.1— Assure the provision of adequate vehicle capacity to meet the demand for transportation disadvantaged services.</i>		
Strategy 2.1.1— Continue to compare current capacity with needed capacity identified in transit capital acquisition/replacement plans.	Ongoing	Transit Providers/ Other Agencies
<i>Objective 2.2 Assure the provision of adequate operating capacity to meet the demand for transportation disadvantaged services.</i>		
Strategy 2.2.1— Continue to compare current personnel to needed personnel to provide for the overall efficiency of the system and conduct employee training that optimizes the use of resources.	Ongoing	Transit Providers/ Other Agencies

GOAL 3: Provide for the most cost-effective provision of transportation disadvantaged services.

	Estimated Date of Completion	Responsible Agency
<i>Objective 3.1— Seek to minimize the costs required to operate and administer transportation disadvantaged services.</i>		
Strategy 3.1.1— Continue to transfer capable individuals to the fixed route system.	Ongoing	Transit Providers/ Other Agencies
Strategy 3.1.2— Continue to enforce the no-show policy for the demand response service.	Ongoing	Transit Providers
Strategy 3.1.3— Continue travel training outreach to the local community and mobility management training for agencies.	Ongoing	Transit Providers/ Other Agencies

GOAL 4: Promote land use planning which encourages multi-modal transportation services and minimizes energy consumption.

	Estimated Date of Completion	Responsible Agency
<i>Objective 4.1— Continue to support procedures that require the consideration of multi-modal transportation system impacts and infrastructure.</i>		
Strategy 4.1.1— Continue involvement by transit agency staff in local development review processes and educate local agency staff on the needs of transit.	Ongoing	CTC
Strategy 4.1.2 – Raise awareness related to transit accessibility and the needs of the Transportation Disadvantaged population.	Ongoing	CTC/TPO/Transit Providers

<p>Objective 4.2 — Consider the potential for sponsored transportation services, especially for developments with a significant elderly population.</p>		
<p>Strategy 4.2.1 — In cooperation with local jurisdictions, include the consideration of the potential for sponsored transportation services in the goals, objectives and policies of the adopted comprehensive plans.</p>	Ongoing	CTC
<p>GOAL 5: Stimulate the use of private funds and services in meeting the needs of the transportation disadvantaged.</p>		
<p>Objective 5.1 – Identify the needs and accommodate opportunities for private sector, public sector, and non-governmental organization participation in funding the coordinated transportation system.</p>		
<p>Strategy 5.1.1 –Encourage major employers or major transit attractors to provide a safe bus waiting area for employees/passengers.</p>	Ongoing	CTC/Transit Providers
<p>Strategy 5.1.2 – Identify transit opportunities by advertising available funding matches for privately-sponsored transportation services and advise on the benefits of the coordinated system and the opportunities to join.</p>	Ongoing	CTC/Transit Providers
<p>Strategy 5.1.3 – Develop feasible projects utilizing public/private partnerships to fill service gaps.</p>	Ongoing	CTC/Transit Providers
<p>Strategy 5.1.4 – Promote the state Voluntary Dollar Program designed to encourage donations to the TD program when registering/renewing vehicle tags.</p>	Ongoing	CTC/TPO/Transit Providers

GOAL 6: Provide education and marketing of TD services to current riders, the general public, agency sponsored clients, visitors, and other potential customers.

	Estimated Date of Completion	Responsible Agency
<i>Objective 6.1 – Maximize the accessibility of service information including alternative delivery formats such as auditory enhanced and alternative languages.</i>		
Strategy 6.1.1 – Provide service information according to the Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan.	Ongoing	Transit Providers
<i>Objective 6.2 – Utilize the electronic dissemination of marketing and education materials, including, but not limited to the Internet, social media, e-mails, listservs, websites, etc.</i>		
Strategy 6.2.1 – Partner with other agencies to maximize the electronic dissemination of marketing and educational materials.	Ongoing	CTC/TPO/Transit Providers
<i>Objective 6.3 –Ensure that all websites and other electronic media are compliant with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, as amended in 1998. (Under Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, 29 U.S.C. 794(d), agencies must give persons with disabilities, employees and members of the public access to information that is comparable to the access available to others. This includes access to electronic and information technology applications.)</i>		
Strategy 6.3.1 – Annually review websites and other media for compliance.	September 2022	CTC/Transit Providers

GOAL 7: Operate a safe and secure transportation system.		
<i>Objective 7.1 – Ensure that services are provided in a safe and secure manner in accordance with all FCTD, FDOT, and U.S. DOT standards and regulations.</i>		
	Estimated Date of Completion	Responsible Agency
Strategy 7.1.1 – Continually review regulations and update operations plans and procedures on equipment, bus safety, drugs, and alcohol, wheelchair, maintenance manual, and System Safety Program Plan.	As needed	CTC/Transit Providers
Strategy 7.1.2 – Develop, implement, maintain, and annually update a System Safety Program Plan and Security Program Plan.	As needed	CTC/Transit Providers
Strategy 7.1.3 – Monitor coordinated contractors to ensure compliance with FCTD regulations.	Ongoing	CTC
<i>Objective 7.2 – Establish and maintain, as part of the bus system safety program, an accident/incident procedure that ensures sufficient review, evaluation, and continual improvement.</i>		
Strategy 7.2.1 – Continue to review and evaluate accidents and provide the necessary equipment or training. Incorporate improved procedures in the System Safety Program Plan based on the reviews and evaluations.	Ongoing	CTC/Transit Providers
<i>Objective 7.3 – Continually review accident/incident data to identify trends that may need to be addressed through training or procedural changes.</i>		
Strategy 7.3.1 – Continue to review accidents/incidents to identify trends and provide the necessary equipment or training based on the review.	Ongoing	CTC/Transit Providers

Appendix D
TD Eligibility Criteria

**St Lucie County Policy as to the Eligibility of Clients Using Transportation
Disadvantaged Trust Fund (TDTF) Services**

January 2023

Transportation Disadvantaged Trust Fund (non-sponsored) monies may be used to fund trips for properly identified clients when:

- **No other funding is available** for appropriate trips as defined in the approved Prioritization Policy when another purchasing agency is usually responsible for transportation or;
- **No other means of transportation is available**, including but not limited to relatives, friends, neighbors, or free services offered by some institutions or;
- **Public Transit** - The client cannot use fixed-route public transit or is not available.
- **Physical or Mental Disability/Age** – All clients referred for TDTF trips shall meet the referring agency's minimum requirements and or may be frail or elderly (67 years or older) or might have a physical or mental disability as outlined in the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- **Income Status** – All clients referred for TDTF trips shall not exceed 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines for households or individuals if they do not meet the referring agency's minimum requirements.
- **No Self-declarations** to the Community Transportation Coordinator shall be allowed. The application process used by the referring agency shall substantiate the client's ability to meet the criteria established therein as well as in their individual criteria.
- **Ability to Pay** – If a client cannot pay the fare for transportation, the CTC will evaluate the client based on information collected via the CTC 'Application for Assistance' and Affidavit.

Clients shall be enrolled by the agency which most appropriately meets their disability or age group.

Appendix E
Vehicle Inventory

St. Lucie County Board of County Commissioners

FY 22-23 Vehicle Inventory

Vehicle #	Year	Vehicle Make Size Type	VIN	WC	Current Mileage	Expected Retire Date	Funding Source
1201	2012	Gillig 29'	15GGE2711C1092446	yes	234,598	2024	5309
1202	2012	Gillig 29'	15GGE2713C 1092447	yes	273,104	2024	5309
1203	2012	Gillig 29'	15GGE2719C 1092436	yes	335,618	2024	5309
1204	2012	Gillig 29'	15GGE2710C1092437	yes	359,699	2024	5309
1205	2012	Gillig 29'	15GGE2712C1092438	yes	373,703	2024	5309
1206	2012	Gillig 29'	15GGE2714C1092439	yes	360,855	2024	5309
1207	2012	Gillig 29'	15GGE2710C 1092440	yes	354,109	2024	5309
1208	2012	Gillig 29'	15GGE2712C1092441	yes	312,216	2024	5309
1209	2012	Gillig 29'	15GGE2714C1092442	yes	348,889	2024	5309
1210	2012	Gillig 29'	15GGE2716C1092443	yes	54,575	2024	5309
1211	2012	Gillig 29'	15GGE2718C1092444	yes	323,390	2024	5309
1401	2014	Eldorado 31'	1N9MNAC62EC084384	yes	212,130	2026	5307
1402	2014	Eldorado 31'	1N9MMAC64EC084385	yes	213,133	2026	5309
1801	2019	Gillig 40'	15GGD271XK3190039	yes	194,161	2031	5307
1802	2019	Gillig 40'	15GGD2716K3190040	yes	177,888	2031	5307 5339
F2201	2022	Eldorado 31' bus	1N9MNABM9NC084074	yes	40,582	2032	5307
F2202	2022	Eldorado 31' bus	1N9MNABMONC084075	yes	31,337	2032	5307
F2203	2022	Eldorado 31' bus	1N9MNABM2NC084076	yes	23,582	2032	5307
13 01	2014	Champion 27'	5WEXWSKK8 EH775871	yes	120,909	2023	5309
13 02	2014	Champion 27'	5WEXWSKKX EH775872	yes	170,748	2022	5309
13 03	2014	Champion 27'	5W EXWSKK 1EH775873	yes	173,625	2023	5309
13 05	2014	Champion 27'	5W EXWSKK5EH775875	yes	187,042	2023	5307
13 06	2014	Champion 27'	5WEXWSKK7EH775876	yes	169,612	2022	5307
13 12	2014	Champion 31'	5W EASSKM2EH768434	yes	173,517	2022	5307
13 14	2014	Champion 31'	5WEASSKM6EH768436	yes	164,562	2023	5307
13 15	2014	Champion 31'	5W EASSKM8EH768437	yes	151,935	2022	5307
13 16	2014	Champion 31'	5WEASSKMXEH768438	yes	73,597	2022	5307
13 18	2014	Champion 31'	5WEASSKM8EH768440	yes	136,758	2023	5307

13 20	2013	Champion 23'	1GB6G5BL3D1173719	yes	116,414	2022	5307
17 02	2019	Goshen Coach 29'	1HA6GVBG5HN009283	yes	119,814	2026	5310
P2201	2020	Ford Transit Van 22'	1FDVU4X89LKB75784	Yes	18,495	2027	5310
P1101	2011	Gulfstream Goodwill	1GB6G5GXB1162698	yes	104,603	2028	5310
F0901	2009	Jewish Federation	1GBE4V1G07F425717	yes	15,519	2028	5310
21 01	2021	Ford 23'	1FDFE4FN0MDC20433	yes	76,318	2028	5307
21 02	2021	Ford 23'	1FDFE4FN2MDC20434	yes	77,812	2028	5307
21 03	2021	Ford 23'	1FDFE4FN6MDC20436	yes	75,264	2028	5307
21 04	2021	Ford 23'	1FDFE4FN8MDC20437	yes	85,573	2028	5307
21 05	2021	Ford 23'	1FDFE4FNXMDC20438	yes	81,197	2028	5307
21 06	2021	Ford 23'	1FDFE4FN1MDC20439	yes	83,562	2028	5307
20 01	2019	Braun Van	2C7WDGBG3KR801017	yes	45,765	2025	5307
20 02	2019	Braun Van	2C7WDGBG1KR803056	yes	43,728	2025	5307
20 03	2019	Braun Van	2C7WDGBG9KR808280	yes	50,307	2025	5307
20 04	2019	Braun Van	2C7WDGBG6KR803070	yes	38,292	2025	5307
20 05	2019	Braun Van	2C7WDGBG0KR803064	yes	49,338	2025	5307
20 06	2019	Braun Van	2C7WDGBG2KR799390	yes	48,612	2025	5307
20 07	2019	Braun Van	2C7WDGBG4KR803021	yes	51,210	2025	5307
20 08	2019	Braun Van	2C7WDGBG5KR801147	yes	46,000	2025	5307
20 09	2019	Braun Van	2C7WDGBG4KR801088	yes	54,702	2025	5307
20 10	2019	Braun Van	2C7WDGBG5KR803013	yes	40,989	2025	5307
P2202	2022	Braun Van	2C4RC1CG7NR103796	yes	8,385	2028	5307
P2203	2022	Braun Van	2C4RC1CG7NR103801	yes	14,667	2028	5307
P2204	2022	Braun Van	2C4RC1CG7NR103779	yes	3,282	2028	5307
P2205	2022	Braun Van	2C4RC1CG7NR103782	yes	3,680	2028	5307
S - 01	2007	Ford 500	1FAFP24127G114707	s/v	140,814	2020	5307
S - 02	2012	Ford Escape	1FMCUOC74CKB19586	s/v	68,012	2022	5307

S - 03	2012	Ford Escape	1FMCUOC72CKB19585	s/v	44,583	2022	5307
S - 04	2012	Ford Escape	1FMCUOC70CKB19584	s/v	36,160	2022	5307
S - 05	2019	Chevy Malibu	1G1ZB5ST9KF195742	s/v	35,086	2024	5307
S - 06	2020	Chevy Malibu	1G1ZB5STOLF022533	s/v	35,217	2025	5307
S - 07	2020	Chevy Traverse	1GNERFKW2LJ121814	s/v	29,400	2025	5307



AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

Board/Committee:	St. Lucie LCB
Meeting Date:	February 15, 2023
Item Number:	7b
Item Title:	Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) Redesignation
Item Origination:	Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (FCTD)
UPWP Reference:	Task 3.8 – Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) Program
Requested Action:	Endorse, endorse with conditions, or do not endorse.
Staff Recommendation:	Because the St. Lucie CTC has ensured that cost- effective, efficient, innovative, and coordinated transportation services are provided to the transportation disadvantaged population in St. Lucie County, it is recommended that the LCB endorse the redesignation.

Attachments

- TPO Staff Report
- St. Lucie CTC Letter of Interest

MEMORANDUM

TO: St. Lucie Local Coordinating Board for the Transportation Disadvantaged (LCB)

THROUGH: Peter Buchwald
Executive Director

FROM: Marceia Lathou
Transit/ACES Program Manager

DATE: February 2, 2023

SUBJECT: **Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) Redesignation**

BACKGROUND

The Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (FCTD) requires that the TPO recommend the designation of a CTC every five years. The CTC provides Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) and other public transportation services throughout the County.

The St. Lucie Board of County Commissioners (St. Lucie BOCC) has been the CTC in St. Lucie County since 1990. The St. Lucie County Transit Department fulfills the daily function of the CTC. The St. Lucie BOCC contracts with MV Transportation for the provision of TD public transportation services.

ANALYSIS

The current Memorandum of Agreement with the FCTD designating the St. Lucie BOCC as the CTC ends on June 30, 2023. In order to renew this contract, the St. Lucie TPO must recommend redesignation of the St. Lucie BOCC as the CTC for St. Lucie County by resolution. The St. Lucie BOCC has expressed a desire to continue in its role as the CTC for St. Lucie County as indicated in the attached correspondence.


The St. Lucie CTC has been responsible for ensuring that coordinated transportation services are provided to the transportation-disadvantaged


population in St. Lucie County. The CTC arranges for the provision of transportation services in a manner that is cost-effective, efficient and reduces fragmentation and duplication of services. Furthermore, the CTC has initiated several innovative mobility projects which have received statewide recognition as best practices.

RECOMMENDATION

Because the St. Lucie CTC has ensured that cost-effective, efficient, innovative, and coordinated transportation services are provided to the transportation disadvantaged population in St. Lucie County, it is recommended that the LCB endorse the redesignation.

TO: Members of the Local Coordination Board

THROUGH: Adolfo Covelli, Transit Director 

FROM: Tracy Jahn, Fiscal and Grants Supervisor 

DATE: January 12, 2023

SUBJECT: Designation of the St. Lucie County Community Transportation Coordinator

BACKGROUND:

The Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (FCTD) requires the Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) to designate a Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) every five years. The CTC coordinates and provides public transportation services throughout the County for the Transportation Disadvantaged (TD). The St. Lucie County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) has been the CTC in St. Lucie County since 1990. Under BOCC direction, the St. Lucie County Transit Department provides day-to-day CTC functions and services. Pursuant to Chapter 427 F.S., the BOCC is required to submit a letter of interest to the TPO Board indicating its desire to retain CTC authority or the TPO Board fills the CTC through a competitive process.

The BOCC conducts county transit operations using a full brokerage system. Under this system, St. Lucie County is the recipient of state and federal transportation grants though contracts the actual transit operations to a third-party operator. MV Contract Transportation currently operates county transit operations including paratransit service, which serves the Transportation Disadvantaged population.

For the past five years, the CTC has established and maintained excellent working relationships with federal, state, and local agencies developing innovative approaches to transportation services for elderly, disabled and socio-economic at-risk populations. The CTC annually conducts workshops for the local coordinated contractors and transportation providers, delivering detailed information regarding the FCTD Annual Operating Report obligation and its requirements.

Accomplishments:

1. In order to reduce accessibility barriers to public transit, the CTC secured FDOT and county funding to convert the fixed-route and paratransit services to fare-free. Since September 2017, the public transit systems ridership has increased by approximately sixty-six (66) percent. In 2020, FDOT awarded the third and final year of grant funding allowing the continuation of the fare-free pilot program. An analysis of the program

recommended that it be extended another three years. The analysis evaluated the impact of the program on the transit service and community goals and summarized the advantages and disadvantages of continuing or terminating the pilot. It was determined that the pilot program is a proven success and has positively impacted the community, specifically with regard to traffic relief and providing mobility options to vulnerable populations. Based on the analysis, the St. Lucie County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) has opted to continue supporting the fare-free program that was originally scheduled to end in August 2020.

2. The CTC has received FDOT Service Development funding commitments for (a). Continue pilot funding for Route 7, (b). A second flex route microtransit service in populated areas characterized as “transit deserts” (c). selective grant funding to rebrand the entire system.
3. The CTC has embarked on a rebranding project for the entire transit system to help establish and identify the portfolio of transportation services available to the public. As a result of an extensive public involvement effort, Area Regional Transit (ART), was selected as the new brand. The brand is both inspired by and reflective of the strong arts and cultural history of St. Lucie County. The CTC has rebranded all bus stop signs around the county, along with its bus shelters, bus schedules and other print collateral. The CTC has also begun to rebrand all the vehicles with new ART logos and designs.
4. The CTC secured FCTD and county funding to deploy a timely pilot program, Advantage Ride - a regional service for the transportation disadvantaged individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The program provides safe, reliable transportation for individuals to access services such as therapy, jobs, education, and job-training programs. The CTC has partnered with neighboring Indian River County CTC, Senior Resource Association (SRA), to maximize resources and ensure the success of this regional program. When grant funding was unavailable in 2021 due to the adoption of Senate bills 100 and 1126, the CTC secured county funding to continue the program. With the return of the Innovation and Service Development grants, SRA in partnership with the CTC has received additional funding to keep the program running through 2023.
5. The CTC has continued the off-hours demand response service known as Direct Connect. The CTC contracts with Direct Connect transportation service providers that offer wheelchair accessible vehicles and Uber, a national transportation network company. Today, TD residents have transportation service coverage 24 hours per day, seven days per week using the county’s portfolio of traditional and non-traditional transit programs. Direct Connect provides TD trips to employment, education/job training, non-emergency healthcare, and life essential destinations including food shopping. Since Direct Connect has become operational, the FCTD and FDOT have requested the CTC to advise other Florida CTC’s how to initiate similar off-hours, ride share programs for their agencies.
6. The CTC continues to improve public transit accessibility. In 2021 the CTC contracted with Stephen Cooper, P.E. & Associates to evaluate the county’s inventory of roughly 200 bus stops and two intermodal transfer facilities to complete an ADA assessment and

transition plan. The phasing plan was adopted by the Local Coordinating Board and the BOCC and is titled the St. Lucie County Transit ADA Transition Plan. The plan provides a comprehensive and detailed assessment of St. Lucie County's bus stops and facilities as they relate to compliance with the ADA and Florida Accessibility Code (FAC) requirements. Improvements have been ranked in importance and the county is looking forward to making significant changes in accessibility, security, and operations in the coming years. Projects will be completed in phases in conjunction with the county's transit partners as funding becomes available.

7. The CTC continues to improve public transit infrastructure by purchasing six new bus shelters that are scheduled to be installed in Port St. Lucie in 2023. The improvement project represents a partnership between the county and the city in which the city will install the covered shelters, which contain seats, a trash can and bicycle racks. The CTC is engaging in a similar partnership with the City of Fort Pierce, whereby the CTC openly procured and purchased the city's preferred shelters and then delivered seven new shelters and three replacement shelters to the city for installation.
8. The CTC incorporates community outreach as a priority best practice. Over the course of 2022, the CTC and staff appeared at 49 off-site venues and information distribution campaigns throughout the St. Lucie County.

Funding:

St. Lucie County derives the majority of its federal capital funding through the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) 5307 grant program. The county also receives funding through a variety of other FTA programs including 5339, 5310 and 5311. For 2022, FTA grant funding represented \$4,808,416 equaling 44% of annual transit spending.

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) is the county's second largest outside funding source supporting public transit. The FDOT Service Development funding program helped seed improved, or new, transit services included in the list of accomplishments above. In 2022, FDOT funding contributions totaled 18% of the county's public transit expenditures.

St. Lucie County receives operating and capital funding assistance through the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged FCTD. FCTD funds support the county's paratransit service and Advantage Ride program. Last year, FCTD funding totaled \$693,689 equaling 6% of overall transit expenditures.

St. Lucie County and its city partners contribute a significant amount of public transit funding through the Municipal Service Taxing Unit (MSTU). The MSTU has been a critical source of funding since its inception in late 2003. Originally, the MSTU was commissioned to help fund the County's fixed-route. Today, MSTU funds are used as a backstop and local match source for all public transit services. For every one-dollar of funding derived through the MSTU, the county receives two-dollars in outside funding. Last year, the MSTU generated \$2,873,948 directly supporting transit programs. St. Lucie County BOCC also contributes money from the county's

general fund to support public transit. In 2022, the County general fund commitment was \$1,200,000.

Often, specific transit service programs are funded through a variety of sources. For example, Advantage Ride derives outside funding through the FCTD Innovation and Service Development Grant Program. The county “flex” microtransit pilot in Tradition has funding through the FDOT Service Development Grant. The CTC’s best practices, affirmative relationships with various public funding agencies, and a creative approach to program funding has made many of the county’s new transit initiatives possible.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Local Coordinating Board endorse continuing St. Lucie County as the Community Transportation Coordinator for the next five-year term.

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

Board/Committee:	St. Lucie LCB
Meeting Date:	February 15, 2023
Item Number:	8a
Item Title:	Regional Commuter Bus Pilot Program
Item Origination:	TPO Staff
UPWP Reference:	Task 3.2 – Transit Planning
Requested Action:	Discuss and provide comments to Staff.
Staff Recommendation:	Because regional bus service would enhance mobility options for St. Lucie County residents and visitors and because significant numbers of users of the service are expected to be transit-dependent, it is recommended that the proposed Regional Commuter Bus Pilot Program is discussed, and comments are provided to Staff.

Attachment

- Staff Report

MEMORANDUM

TO: St. Lucie Local Coordinating Board for the Transportation Disadvantaged (LCB)

THROUGH: Peter Buchwald
Executive Director

FROM: Marceia Lathou
Transit/ACES Program Manager

DATE: February 2, 2023

SUBJECT: **Regional Commuter Bus Pilot Program**

BACKGROUND

The Jobs Express Terminal on Gatlin Boulevard near I-95 supports regional commuter trips to and from the St. Lucie TPO area. The facility provides bus access, electric vehicle charging, and parking spaces for users of carpools, vanpools, and various transit options.

According to the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) report *Summary of Employment, Demographics, and Commuting Patterns for St. Lucie County, Florida (May 2022)*, 61% of workers who live in St. Lucie County work outside the county; approximately 15,500 of these workers are employed in Palm Beach County. There are 30,700 workers who live outside St. Lucie County and who work within the county; almost 4,000 of these workers live in Palm Beach County. This is a significant outflow/inflow of commuters daily. Since these are mostly single-occupancy vehicle trips, the need exists for express bus service during commute hours.

The U.S. Census American Community Survey (ACS) is a comprehensive data source on commuting patterns associated with work travel; the limitation of this data is that only travel to work is considered, and not all trips made throughout the day, nor trips by unemployed individuals. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) estimates that commutes account for less than 20% of all trips taken. Since most travel is not work-based travel, but data on such

journeys is not readily available, the needs of transit-dependent populations must be considered in the development of regional bus routes.

ANALYSIS

A coordinating committee consisting of staff from the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), Cambridge Systematics (FDOT consultant), Palm Beach County transit agency Palm Tran, St. Lucie County, and the St. Lucie TPO have convened to consider establishing a regional commuter bus pilot program to and from the Jobs Express Terminal and Palm Beach County.

This pilot program would operate Monday through Friday on the I-95 corridor providing two non-stop trips in the morning and again in the evening between the West Palm Beach Intermodal Transit Center and the Jobs Express Terminal with a potential start date of September 2023. It is anticipated that FDOT would fund the pilot program at 100 percent, therefore a local match would not be required.

The pilot program would operate for a minimum of one year and potentially two years depending on funding availability. As a pilot program, valuable real-time data, including passenger data, will be collected and monitored by the coordinating committee to support future regional service planning needs along the corridor.

RECOMMENDATION

Because regional bus service would enhance mobility options for St. Lucie County residents and visitors and because significant numbers of users of the service are expected to be transit-dependent, it is recommended that the proposed Regional Commuter Bus Pilot Program is discussed, and comments are provided to Staff.