

CHARLOTTE COUNTY TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED
LOCAL COORDINATING BOARD (LCB)
MEETING
May 1, 2025

Minutes of a regular meeting held in a hybrid format on May 1, 2025 utilizing TEAMS remotely and in-person at the Transit Facility, 545 Theresa Boulevard in Port Charlotte, FL 33954.

MEMBERS PRESENT IN-PERSON

M. Suzanne Roberts, *Virginia B. Andes Volunteer Community Clinic - Medical Community Representative (LCB Vice Chair) - chairing*
Stacy Booth, *FDOT, District One Modal Development Office*
Lynn Dohler, *Children-at-Risk Representative*
Lynda Faieta, *Public Education-School Transportation (alternate)*
Donna Fain, *Agency for Persons with Disabilities*
Carmen Henry, *Regional Workforce Development*
Matthew McGee, *Veteran Services Manager*
Maricela Morado, *Area Agency on Aging-Florida Department of Elder Affairs*
Michael Stahler, *Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA)*

MEMBERS PRESENT REMOTELY

Joseph Sabatino, *Citizen Advocate*
Shery Stahnke, *Goodwill, Economically Disadvantaged Representative (alternate)*

ABSENT MEMBERS

Commissioner Ken Doherty, *Charlotte County Commissioner (LCB Chair) - excused*
Leigh Ann Bellamy, *Division of Blind Services*
Dottie Fulton, *Citizen Advocate-User - excused*
Pamela Jordan, *Representative for Elderly Interests*
Tabitha Larrauri, *Department of Children & Families*
Cheryl Sytsma, *Disabled Interests Representative*
Vacant, *Local Private-for-Profit Transportation Industry Representative*

STAFF AND OTHERS PRESENT

Lakshmi N. Gurram, *MPO Director*
Bekie Leslie, *MPO Administrative Services Coordinator*
Wendy Scott, *MPO Planner*
Sierra Ray Scott, *Administrative Support – STTAR*
Heidi Maddox, *Charlotte County Transit*
Betty-Ann Sherer, *Charlotte County Transit*
Jill Turner, *Charlotte County Transit*

OTHERS PRESENT REMOTELY

William Roll, Kimley-Horn (MPO LRTP consultant)

1. Call to Order & Roll Call

LCB Vice Chairperson Suzanne Roberts called the regular LCB Meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. An in-person quorum was present.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

3. Public Comments on Agenda Items

There were no public comments on agenda items.

4. Consent Agenda:

- A. Approval of Minutes: January 9, 2025 LCB Public Meeting**
- B. Approval of Minutes: January 9, 2025 Regular LCB Meeting**
- C. Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD) Annual Planning Grant to the MPO**

Marcela Morado made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as corrected. Michael Stahler seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

5. Transportation Disadvantaged Trust Fund (TDTF) Trip and Equipment Grant

Each year, a portion of the State Transportation Disadvantaged Trust Fund (TDTF) is allocated to each Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) to provide trips and equipment for non-sponsored TD service.

The (draft) funding amount for FY 2025-2026 Trip and Equipment Grant plus Voluntary Dollar funding (commencing July 1, 2025) is provided below:

Trip & Equipment Grant allocation	\$ 555,005
Local Match	<u>\$ 61,667</u>
Total Funding	\$ 616,672
 Voluntary Dollar	 \$ 106
Local Match	<u>\$ 11</u>
Total	117
 Grand Total	 \$ 616,789

Jill Turner noted that these figures reflected the draft allocation from the Legislature.

6. FY 2021/2022-FY 2025/2026 Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan/Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan (TDSP/CPT-HSTP) Third Annual Update Including Rate Model Calculations

On March 30, 2021, the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD) designated the Charlotte County Board of County Commissioners (BCC) as the Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) for Charlotte County for a five-year period commencing July 1, 2021. A new Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan (TDSP) was approved by the LCB on September 9, 2021. This document also serves as the Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan (CPT-HSTP) for purposes of Federal transportation legislation requirements. The attached change pages will serve as the third annual update to the current document and require approval by the LCB prior to submission to the CTD. Staff will revise Table of Contents page numbering if needed once updated materials are approved.

Update Actions:

- Revision of Cover Page with date of third annual update
- Revision of MPO office address, pg. 1
- Revision of driver contract date, pg. 9
- Revisions to coordinated partner list, pg. 10
- Correction of “locker rooms” to “lockers,” pg. 12
- Revision of most recent TDP information, pg. 13
- Revision of information on the LRTP 2050 currently under development, pg. 14
- Revision to Public Participation Plan adoption date and LRTP 2050 Update, pg. 15
- Inclusion of LRTP 2050 information and transit rider survey information, pg. 16
- Update of new transit service area graphic from 2025 TDP and population estimates, pg. 17
- Addition of impacts from Hurricanes Helene and Milton, pg. 20
- Removal of FGCU location in Herald Court in Downtown Punta Gorda, pg. 21
- Trip Attractor corrections in Table I-1, pgs. 22-24
- Removal of C.A.R.E. and Veterans’ Van as Coordinated Partners, pg. 26
- Addition of Hope Hospice, pg. 27
- New language and revised graphic reflecting 2025 TDP and deletion of the Veteran’s Van language, pg. 31
- Addition of language regarding Hurricane Helene and Hurricane Milton, pg. 32
- Removal of Try Transit Day language and correction to annual SSP review, pg. 35
- Assorted Transit updates regarding new software and current procedures, pg. 40
- Addition of recent software improvements and the Charlotte Rides mobile cell phone app which allows for some same day trips, plus new policy name change and office hours, pg. 41
- Corrections to Transportation Operators and Coordination Contractors section and revised bus inventory date, pgs. 42-43
- Insertion of new 2025 Bus Transit System Annual Safety and Security Certification, (letter dated February 13, 2025), pg. 44
- Removal of language regarding Veterans Van and Special Needs List, pg. 45

- Addition of language regarding the new Charlotte Rides mobile cell phone app and deletion of fare box reference, pg. 50
- Change date of driver manual and lower to 2 hour advance reservation, pg 52
- Removal of language regarding Veterans Van, pg. 53
- Most recent CTC Evaluation date, pg. 58
- Insertion of new Transit Organizational Chart in Appendix B, pg. 63
- Insertion of new Bus Inventory as Appendix G, pg. 77
- Insertion of new TD Rate Model 5-Year Comparison and Rate Model Calculations in Appendix H, pgs. 78-86 (*please see final revisions below*)
- Insertion of Appendix J, 2025 CTC Evaluation (once approved), pgs 89-97
- Insertion of new TD application, pgs 111-117

(Note: The entire draft document will be available upon request and will be posted on the MPO website post-meeting approval once revisions are incorporated.)

After the LCB Meeting packet was distributed, revised rate model calculations were finalized following CTD staff review. Those changes were distributed to LCB members via email, in a large hard copy version at the LCB meeting, as well as enlarged on the meeting screen:

[Final Rate Model Calculations](#)

These revised final rate model calculations were scrolled on screen while Heidi Maddox explained them. She noted that figures listed under the contracted transportation services category had grown to reflect expected increased costs in the new driver/bus washer contract (which was now filed with the County Purchasing Department). Wendy Scott stated that the other change pages reflected routine updates.

Michael Stahler made a motion to approve the third annual update to the FY 2021-2022/FY 2025-2026 Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan (TDSP) / Charlotte County Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan (including the rate model calculations) as corrected; allowing Transit staff to make minor technical adjustments to the rate model and other items per CTD staff guidance. Carmen Henry seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

7. 2025 CTC Evaluation

Pursuant to Florida Statutes, Chapter 427, and Florida Administrative Code, Rule 41-2, the Local Coordinating Board (LCB), with the assistance of the Official Planning Agency (OPA), conducts an annual performance evaluation of the Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC). In Charlotte County, the designated CTC is the Charlotte County Board of County Commissioners (BCC), the governing board of the County Transit Division. This year, the CTC Evaluation was conducted on February 24-26, 2025.

The CTC Evaluation document was developed utilizing sections of the CTC Evaluation Workbook and sample materials provided by the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD). This year's review involved a bus inspection and ride-along, as well as

examination of documentation provided by Transit Division staff. Additionally, surveys of riders and a vendor were conducted.

[\(1\) 2025 CTC Evaluation](#)
[\(2\) Transit App Screenshots](#)

Wendy Scott applauded the customer care given on the evaluation ride by the bus driver, Troy Peterson, especially related to the attention given to a wheelchair passenger with extreme nerve pain issues. She also referenced screenshots provided as examples of what the new Charlotte Rides mobile phone app allowed passengers to view related to their trips.

Maricela Morado made a motion to approve the 2025 CTC Evaluation. Michael Stahler seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

8. Community Transportation Coordinator Quarterly Reports for October-December 2024 and January-March 2025

Due to the timing of the 2024 holiday period, the CTC presented two quarters of information to the LCB Members (covering October-December 2024 and January-March 2025). These quarterly reports were informational items that described recent activities of the Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC).

[October-December 2024 and January-March 2025 Quarterly Reports](#)

Betty-Ann Sherer began the presentation with a side-by-side ridership comparison that showed a steady increase over time. Zinnia Vargas commented on the impact to revenues of the County's new accounting systems. She noted that newer figures would be reflected in the next quarter.

Discussion followed regarding recent issues with the coordinated partner program including the lack of younger volunteer drivers (especially with the Veterans Van), difficulty meeting many federal requirements, a participant request to pause participation (C.A.R.E.) and the necessity to conduct driver testing (Homeless/now St. Vincent DePaul CARES). Suzanne Roberts asked for examples of the program obstacles encountered. These included insurance requirements and driver drug testing and physicals. Heidi Maddox indicated that at this point, Transit is not looking to begin other coordinated partner programs. Matt McGee noted that the Veteran Services Office staff was involved with promoting transit trips for veterans within the County.

Betty-Ann Sherer discussed trip purpose in rank order: employment, medical and life-enhancing. Despite the lack of Water Fest and Air Show programs this year, the numbers still had remained strong. Suzanne Roberts stated that on the medical side, the Charlotte County Transit program was a godsend to the Virginia B. Andes Community Clinic clients.

Unmet trip figures were also discussed. Regarding compliments and concerns, The Transit staff respects every request from passengers. Sometimes there are unfounded concerns. Videos are analyzed and corrective action plans are developed. Unfortunately, given busy staff schedules, thank yous are not always counted.

The new [Beach Shuttle](#) pilot program was recently launched with 314 passengers to date. It operates in West County between Tringali Recreational Center on SR 776 and Chadwick Park. Regarding the new Charlotte Rides mobile app, numbers were continuing to climb.

9. [Long Range Transportation Plan \(LRTP\) Update](#)

Every five years, the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO is required to develop the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). The LRTP includes the multimodal elements including transit. The LRTP Consultant utilizes the information that is gathered during the development of Charlotte County's Transit Development Plan (TDP) which has a ten-year planning horizon. The LRTP will contain a twenty-five-year planning horizon that will extend to 2050. This agenda item was presented as an informational item.

The Draft 2050 Needs Assessment includes input from the public and various stakeholders from the County. Staff received input from three public workshops held on February 10, 11, and 12 gathered feedback from more than 50 participants to help shape the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). Additionally, on April 7, 2025, MPO staff and the MPO's consultant hosted a Consensus Building Workshop with over 37 stakeholders, aiming to build consensus on key issues.

Additional outreach activities include a short survey and an interactive mapping exercise available on the MPO's website at www.ccpghmpo.gov. These are designed to gather further community input on the transportation network. MPO staff and the Consultant will meet with the Steering Committee to review the Needs Assessment and provide comments to support development of the draft Cost Feasible Plan. The Draft Needs Assessment projects will be presented at the May 19, 2025 MPO Board meeting for their review and approval.

After discussing recent workshops, Laks Gurram introduced MPO consultant William Roll who gave an LRTP 2050 presentation remotely.

[LRTP Needs Plan Presentation](#)

Even if invited stakeholders or other members of the public had been unable to attend the first Consensus Building Workshop (CBW), they still have the opportunity to participate in the second CBW on June 9, 2025. Public comments on the LRTP will continue to be taken until October 2, 2025 when MPO Board approval is scheduled.

Maricela Morado made a motion to recommend MPO Board approval of the 2050 LRTP Needs Assessment. Lynn Dohler seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

10. Citizen Comments

No public comments were given.

11. [Staff Comments](#)

Wendy Scott gave the following report:

(1) Thanks to everyone for participating in the LCB Meeting today. All member vacancies are filled except the representative for the Private-For-Profit industry.

(2) Congratulations to Laks Gurram who has been appointed as the permanent MPO Director. The MPO Staff's biggest challenges currently are holding the May 19th MPO Board Meeting and continuing to develop the 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and the cost feasible portion of the study (projects that actually can be funded). We are currently advertising to fill a multi-modal planner position that will combine transit, bicycle, pedestrian and perhaps a little aviation planning. Please spread the word.

(3) The Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD) intended to participate in the FDOT Legislative Day at the Capitol in Tallahassee on February 19, 2025, however it was cancelled due to weather conditions. However, scheduled meetings inside the Capitol with lawmakers and their staffs were not impacted. The Commission held a quarterly CTD Business Meeting on March 31, 2025 in Tallahassee. Discussion Items included: (1) FDOT's Transportation Disadvantaged Services Report, (2) CTD Compliance with Governor Recommendations, (3) TD Trust Fund Grant Programs, and (4) Adverse Incidents Reporting. A while ago, I also monitored the Commission's virtual kickoff/entrance meeting for Charlotte County Transit's Quality Assurance (QA) Review. The firm of Thomas Howell Ferguson is conducting this effort virtually and focusing on grant compliance. All CTC reviews statewide must be completed by June 30, 2025.

(4) Before handing off to MPO, Transit and Fiscal staffs, I just want to thank all of you for your efforts to make our local transit service awesome! Since my Florida Retirement DROP service stops at the end of August, although I'll draft the September LCB packet, I won't be working the September meeting. It has been wonderful working with each and everyone of you! I applaud all that you and your agencies and organizations do to make Charlotte County a better place for all the citizens.

Jill Turner noted that Charlotte County Transit would be taking the following items to the Board of County Commission (BCC) meeting on May 13, 2025:

- FTA Section 5310 grant application (Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities)
- FTA Section 5311 grant application (Rural)
- BCC Resolution to serve as the Charlotte County Community Transportation Coordinator for the time period July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2031
- Transit Service Development Grant application for three microtransit zones (Murdock/Port Charlotte/Punta Gorda for 3 to 4 mile radius areas)

Suzanne Roberts asked Heidi Maddox if Sunday trips might be considered in the near future. Heidi Maddox responded that it was not currently under consideration.

12. Member Comments

Many LCB Members expressed their thanks and well wishes to Wendy Scott regarding her upcoming retirement.

Stacy Booth gave the following FDOT report:

FDOT – Charlotte County LCB Meeting

Meeting date 05/01/2025

Time 10:00 am

Meeting location: 545 Theresa Blvd, Port Charlotte, FL 33954

Topics:

Agenda topic Federal Grants for Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 24 / State Fiscal Year 2024/2025

FTA Section 5310, 5311, and 5339 applications –The due date for applications was Friday, December 15, 2023, 36 applications were received.

The Department has awarded the following grants funding to Charlotte County:

- State Block Grant in the amount of \$408,325.
 - Was fully executed March 4, 2025
- 5310 Operating Grant in the amount of \$100,000.
 - This project needed a TIP/STIP amendment. It could not go to the January board due to that meeting being a dual meeting, so it went to the March MPO Board and was approved. It then moved on to a STIP approval with Central Office. At some point, there was a note inserted into the project stating “Managed By Steps To Recovery”. It is unknown who inserted that and we are currently in the process of removing the note and moving forward with the STIP approval. Funds will be encumbered in June and the contract will be fully executed in June.
- 5311 Operating Grant in the amount of \$82,800.
 - This one will also be encumbered in June and the contract will be fully executed in June.

Agenda topic Federal Grants for Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 25 / State Fiscal Year 2025/2026

FTA Section 5310, 5311, and 5339 applications – We are awaiting allocations from the FTA before we can move forward with creating our Program of Projects and submitting our recommendations to Central Office for the applications we want to award. We are hoping to have those by mid-May, but there is no set timeframe that has been provided.

Agenda topic Training Opportunities

2025 Professional Development Workshop & Transit Safety and Operations Summit hosted by FPTA/FDOT/CUTR: This summit will be held June 9-11, 2025. The registration link is not yet open but should be available in April.

Round 3 of the FDOT triennial reviews began in 2024. We began with agencies that receive only FTA Section 5310 funding with the larger agencies to follow. There are currently 29 agencies to review throughout the District.

Reviews in Progress:

- Charlotte County's Triennial began April 1, 2025.

----- end FDOT Report -----

A brief discussion followed on FDOT District One's Congestion Management Multimodal Planning (C3MP) efforts regarding Advanced Air Mobility. Wendy Scott distributed information to the LCB Members post-meeting.

Carmen Henry gave an update on her agency's Summer Youth Project initiative. The project has enrolled 500 students with a waiting list in most Counties. It is designed for participants to gain foundational work skills, and 100% of funding for participant's salaries and other costs is covered. She requested that Charlotte County Transit staff provide a representative to enroll in and teach use of the new Charlotte Rides app to the Summer Youth Project participants.

Lynda Faieta discussed a recent oil spill on Bermont Road that closed the roadway in both directions. Four school buses were impacted, and tremendous delays resulted.

LCB Vice Chair Suzanne Roberts stated that it had been a pleasure working with Wendy Scott. She encouraged LCB Members to participate in a retirement reception post-meeting.

13. Adjournment (Next Meeting – September 4, 2025) at the Charlotte County Transit Facility, 545 Theresa Blvd., Port Charlotte, FL 33954)

The next LCB meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 4, 2025 at the Transit Facility located at 545 Theresa Blvd. in Port Charlotte, FL 33954. The meeting was adjourned at 11:24 a.m.