



# AGENDA CMC

**Congestion Management Committee  
Collier County Transportation Management  
Services Department  
South Conference Room  
2885 South Horseshoe Drive  
Naples, Florida 34104**

**NOTE: THIS IS AN IN-PERSON MEETING**

**March 20, 2024  
2:00 p.m.**

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Roll Call**
3. **Approval of Agenda**
4. **Approval of January 17, 2024 Meeting Minutes**
5. **Open to Public for Comment on Items Not on the Agenda**
6. **Agency Updates**
  - A. FDOT
  - B. MPO
  - C. Other
7. **Committee Action**
  - A. Endorse CMC Bylaws Amendment
8. **Reports and Presentations (May Require Committee Action)**
  - A. Regional Transit Service and Fare Study
  - B. Transit Development Plan Update
9. **Member Comments**
10. **Distribution Items (No presentation)**
11. **Next Meeting Date:**

*May 15, 2024, 2 p.m.*
12. **Adjournment**

**PLEASE NOTE:**

*The meetings of the advisory committees of the Collier Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) are open to the public and citizen input is encouraged. Any person wishing to speak on any scheduled item may do so upon recognition of the Chairperson. Any person desiring to have an item placed on the agenda should contact the MPO Director at least 14 days prior to the meeting date. Any person who decides to appeal a decision of the advisory committee will need a record of the proceedings pertaining thereto, and therefore may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceeding is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, any person requiring special accommodations to participate in this meeting should contact the Collier Metropolitan Planning Organization 72 hours prior to the meeting by calling (239) 252-5814. The MPO's planning process is conducted in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Related Statutes. Any person or beneficiary who believes that within the MPO's planning process they have been discriminated against because of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability, or familial status may file a complaint with the Collier MPO Title VI Coordinator, Ms. Suzanne Miceli, (239) 252-5814 or by email at: [Suzanne.Miceli@colliercountyfl.gov](mailto:Suzanne.Miceli@colliercountyfl.gov), or in writing to the Collier MPO, attention: Ms. Miceli, at 2885 South Horseshoe Dr., Naples, FL 34104.*

**CONGESTION MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE of the  
COLLIER METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION  
MEETING MINUTES**

**January 17, 2024, 2:00 p.m.**

**1. Call to Order**

**Ms. Lantz** called the meeting to order at approximately 2:01 p.m.

**2. Roll Call**

**Ms. Miceli** called the roll and confirmed a quorum was present in the room.

**CMC Members Present In-Person**

Lorraine Lantz (*Vice-Chair until item 7.A.*) (*Chair as of item 7.A.*)

Leandro A. Goicoechea (*Vice-Chair as of item 7.A.*)

Alison Bickett

Dan Lammers (*for John Lambcke*)

Dave Rivera

Dayna Fendrick

Don Scott

Karen Homiak

Omar De Leon

**CMC Members Absent**

Justin Martin

**MPO Staff**

Sean Kingston, Principal Planner

Suzanne Miceli, Administrative Support Specialist II

**Others Present**

Victoria Peters, FDOT Community Liaison

Alexander Showalter, Collier Area Transit

**3. Approval of the Agenda**

*Mr. Goicoechea moved to approve the agenda. Ms. Bickett seconded. Carried unanimously.*

**4. Approval of the November 15, 2023 Meeting Minutes**

*Mr. Goicoechea moved to approve the November 15, 2023 minutes. Mr. Scott seconded. Carried unanimously.*

**5. Public Comments for Items not on the Agenda**

None.

**6. Agency Updates**

**A. FDOT**

**Ms. Peters** said she had no updates to give and asked if there were any questions.

**Mr. Rivera** and **Ms. Bickett** inquired about a City of Naples bike detection project that had been categorized by FDOT as a purchase and construction project when it was a purchase only project. **Ms. Peters** informed them that it had recently been updated as a purchase only project.

**B. MPO**

**Mr. Kingston** announced that the Work Order for the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) by Jacobs Engineering and the Work Order for Safe Streets 4 All (SS4A) by TY Lin were being presented for approval at the February 9, 2024 MPO Board meeting. He explained that SS4A is a federal grant that MPO was awarded to be applied toward studies that will assist in the creation of safer streets for the Collier MPO region.

**Mr. Kingston** also mentioned that the prospective incoming MPO Executive Director had withdrawn her application, and that Ms. McLaughlin's contract was scheduled to end on March 9, 2024. He noted that the subject would be discussed at the February 9, 2024 MPO Board meeting.

**C. Other**

(i) City of Naples

None.

(ii) Collier County Public Transportation & Neighborhood Enhancement (PTNE)

None.

(iii) Collier County Transportation Planning

None.

(iv) Collier County Traffic Management Center (TMC) Operations

None.

(v) Lee County MPO

None.

**7. Committee Action**

**A. Elect Chair and Vice-Chair**

**Mr. Kingston** explained that this item was for the Committee to elect a Chair and Vice-Chair for calendar year 2024. The CMC Bylaws require that the Committee elect a Chair and Vice-Chair at the first regularly scheduled meeting of each year when a quorum is attained. He explained that any Committee member may nominate or be nominated as Chair/Vice-Chair. Elections shall be decided by the majority vote of Committee members present. The Chair and Vice-Chair shall serve a one-year term or until a successor is elected. At the time, Lorraine Lantz was the current Vice-Chair. There was no Chair.

*Mr. Rivera moved to nominate Ms. Lantz as Chair. Mr. De Leon seconded. Carried unanimously.*

*Mr. Rivera moved to nominate Mr. Goicoechea as Vice-Chair. Ms. Homiak seconded. Carried unanimously.*

**B. Congestion Management Project Applications – Preliminary Rating and Ranking of Projects**

**Mr. Kingston** stated that this item was for the Committee to review the results of the submitted Evaluation Criteria and Scoring Matrices and make a preliminary rating and ranking of submitted project applications. Initially, there had been four submitted applications, but since the January 17, 2024 CMC agenda was distributed, two more projects were added for a total of six projects. The new project list had been emailed to the Committee. Six of the eleven voting CMC members had submitted Evaluation Criteria and Scoring Matrices for the project applications received for funding in the total amount of approximately \$5.4 million. Projects were rated by

points under 12 criteria which were calculated to determine a ranking of priority. Staff computed the total number of points for each application and divided that by 6 to determine the average.

**Mr. Kingston** reviewed the Evaluation and Scoring Matrix Table, which can be viewed in the [January 17, 2024 CMC Agenda](#). He said that the remainder of the schedule for the 2023/2024 Congestion Management Call for Projects would be as follows: January 2024 was the CMC preliminary rating and ranking of projects, March 2024 would be the CMC final rating and ranking of projects, April 2024 the projects would be presented to the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) and the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) for review and endorsement following presentations by submitting agencies, in May of 2024, the MPO Board would do a preliminary review of the projects and presentations by submitting agencies, and in June 2024, the final list of prioritized projects would be presented to the MPO Board for approval.

**Mr. Kingston** mentioned that if the Committee did not have questions or concerns about the preliminary Congestion Management Project Applications list, a final rating and ranking of projects could be decided right then.

*The Committee agreed that the preliminary rating and ranking list for the 2023/2024 Congestion Management Call for Projects was satisfactory and determined it as the final rating and ranking of projects.*

*Mr. De Leon moved to approve the 2023/2024 Congestion Management Project Applications – Final Rating and Ranking of Projects. Mr. Scott seconded. Carried unanimously.*

**8. Reports and Presentations (May Require Committee Action)**

None.

**9. Member Comments**

**Ms. Fendrick** mentioned that the Naples Pathways Coalition recently completed a road diet project in Everglades City. A vehicular lane was converted to a buffered bike lane. It was completed and will be maintained by the city’s road maintenance people.

**Mr. Lammers** introduced himself as Committee Member, John Lambcke’s (Collier School Transportation) alternate, and mentioned that Mr. Lambcke’s absence was due to his attendance at the Florida Association for Pupil Transportation (FAPT) Conference in Tallahassee to address such issues such as requesting a stop arm exemption for some school bus stop locations in Collier County to avoid traffic congestion, as well as improvements to parent drop-off logistics.

A group discussion followed regarding how the state was looking to change school start times in 2026 for elementary, middle, and high schools, and how that would impact student transportation, safety, and traffic congestion.

**Mr. Goicoechea** mentioned that he believed the projects on the 2023/24 CMC Project list were very good and well worth the funding.

**Mr. De Leon** mentioned that Collier Area Transit (CAT) was starting their Transportation Development Plan (TDP) Major Update on Friday January 19, 2024, in partnership with Collier MPO, and that he was working with Dusty Hansen, MPO Senior Planner. He explained that the TDP is a 10-year horizon plan to look at current and future service and will assimilate into the Long-Range Transportation Plan.

**10. Distribution Items (No presentation)**

None.

**11. Next Meeting Date**

*March 20, 2024, 2:00 p.m. –Transportation Management Services Bldg. South Conference Room, 2885 S. Horseshoe Dr., Naples, FL, 34104 – in person.*

**12. Adjournment**

There being no further comments or business to discuss, **Ms. Lantz** adjourned the meeting at 2:36 p.m.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**  
**COMMITTEE ACTION**  
**ITEM 7A**

**Endorse Amendment to CMC Bylaws**

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**OBJECTIVE:** For the Committee to endorse an amendment to the CMC Bylaws.

**CONSIDERATIONS:** The County Transportation Management Services Department (TMSD) has requested changes to the CMC Bylaws to reflect the Department's new organizational structure.

The proposed amendment is shown in ~~strike through~~/underline in **Attachment 1** and as a clean version in **Attachment 2**.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** That the Committee endorse the proposed amendment to the CMC Bylaws.

**ATTACHMENT(S):**

1. CMC Bylaws Amendment in ~~strike through~~/underline
2. CMC Bylaws Amendment Clean Version

Prepared By: Anne McLaughlin, MPO Director

BYLAWS  
for  
Congestion Management Committee  
of  
COLLIER METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION



The following Bylaws guide the proper functioning of the Collier Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) Congestion Management Committee (CMC). The intent is to provide procedures and policies to assist the CMC to accomplish its purpose.

**SECTION I NAME**

The name of this Committee shall be the Congestion Management Committee (CMC) of the Collier Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO).

**SECTION II PURPOSE**

- A. The CMC shall serve the MPO in an advisory capacity on technical matters relating to the update of the MPO's Congestion Management Process (CMP) and the coordination of the CMP with regional Congestion Management System and Intelligent Transportation System architecture.
- B. The functions of this CMC shall include, but not be limited to, the following:
  - 1. To promote coordination among the MPO, Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) and CMC in the identification and resolution of common transportation problems;
  - 2. To identify potential multimodal projects that will reduce congestion on the network and/or improve the intelligent transportation system;
  - 3. To review studies, plans, programs, or public information documents for potential impacts to congestion on the network and/or impacts to the intelligent transportation system and advise the MPO thereof;
  - 4. To make priority recommendations for Congestion Management System/Intelligent Transportation System (CMS/ITS) projects to the MPO;
  - 5. To review and update the Congestion Management Process (CMP) as needed;
  - 6. To help review and update the Congestion Management Process component of the Long Range Transportation Plan;
  - 7. To assist in the development and evaluation of performance measures of potential priorities,
  - 8. To monitor CMS/ITS projects' performance after implementation.

**SECTION III MEMBERSHIP APPOINTMENT AND TERM OF APPOINTMENT**

**A. Members:**

The CMC shall be composed of eleven (11) voting members appointed by the division, department or agency that they represent. CMC voting and non-voting members may designate an alternate to replace them in their absence.

**B. Appointment and Term of Appointment:**

Each member agency representative shall be duly appointed by the member agency and shall serve at the pleasure of his or her member agency. The MPO Staff shall be notified by the Department Director/Administrator of the member agency in writing, including electronic communication of the appointment or replacement of a member agency's representative.

**C. Alternate Member:**

An official alternate member can be designated by the affected voting- member agency by providing such designation in writing to the MPO. The so designated alternate member has the capacity to act on behalf of the voting member. The alternate member may vote only in the absence of the official voting member on a one-vote-per-member basis.

**D. The Voting Member Agencies are as follows:**

**1. VOTING MEMBER AGENCIES**

~~Collier County Transportation Management Services DepartmentGrowth Management  
Department~~

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~~Transportation Planning DivisionTraffic Operations -  
Safety  
Traffic Operations - Traffic Management  
CenterDivision~~

~~Collier County Public Services Department~~

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~~Public Transit & Neighborhood Enhancement (PTNE) Division~~

~~Collier County Administrative Services Department  
Emergency Management Division~~

~~Collier County Public Schools  
Transportation Department~~

~~City of Naples  
Engineering/Planning Representative  
Traffic Operations Representative~~

~~City of Marco Island  
Public Works Department~~

~~Collier MPO's Citizen Advisory Committee~~

~~Collier MPO's Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee~~

~~Lee County MPO~~

The MPO staff will be responsible for maintaining a current list of the names of voting members.

#### **SECTION IV OFFICERS, DUTIES AND TERMS OF OFFICE**

##### **A. Officers and Terms of Office:**

1. A Chair and a Vice-Chair of the CMC shall be elected at the first regularly scheduled meeting of each calendar year when a quorum is attained and shall hold the offices until their successors are elected.
2. Any voting member may nominate or be nominated as an officer. All elections shall be held by the majority vote of voting members present.

##### **B. Chair Duties:**

1. The Chair and Vice-Chair shall be voting members of the CMC.
2. The Chair shall preside at all meetings and shall be responsible for the conduct of such meetings. In the absence of the Chair or Vice-Chair, the respective alternate may only act as a regular voting member of the Committee.

##### **C. Vice-Chair Duties:**

1. The Vice-Chair shall, during the absence of the Chair, have and exercise all of the duties and powers of the Chair.
2. The Vice-Chair shall also perform such duties as may be assigned by the Chair.

##### **D. Absenteeism of an Officer:**

If both the Chair and Vice-Chair are absent from a meeting, the Committee shall elect a voting member present to be the Chair for that meeting. No Alternate member of the Chair or Vice-chair can assume the responsibilities of his/her official roles.

1. Any vacancy in an office created by a resignation or replacement of an Officer shall be filled by a majority vote of voting members.
2. The Officer so elected shall fill the remainder of the unexpired term of the vacant office.
3. If, at any time, the Committee believes that an Officer is not performing his/her duties in accordance with Section IV, Subsection B, it may recommend the removal of the Officer to the MPO. An officer may be removed from office by the MPO Board at a regular MPO meeting by a simple majority vote.

**SECTION V MEETINGS**

**A. Regular Meetings:**

The CMC shall meet bimonthly at a date, time and place acceptable to a majority of the voting membership. The date or time may be changed by a majority vote if seven (7) calendar days notice is given to the voting members.

**B. Special Meetings:**

Special meetings may be called by the Chair with a minimum of three (3) calendar day's notice, indicating the reason for the meeting and notifying all member agencies.

**C. Notice of Meetings:**

A minimum of seven (7) calendar days notice shall be given for regular meeting. Agendas should be sent with meeting notices and, whenever possible, minutes of the previous meeting, at least seven (7) calendar days prior to any regular meeting and at least three (3) calendar days prior to any special meeting.

**D. Agendas:**

MPO staff is responsible for preparing agendas for each CMC meeting. Members may request to place items on the tentative agenda by notification to the MPO staff.

**E. Quorum:**

1. In order to conduct official business, a quorum shall consist of at least three (3) of the voting members being physically present at each meeting.
2. A vote of a majority of the participating voting CMC members shall be required to take affirmative action on issues before the committee.

**SECTION VI AMENDMENTS**

**A. Amendments**

Recommended amendments to these Bylaws may be endorsed by an affirmative vote of the CMC, provided a copy of the proposed amendment(s) shall have been sent to every member at least seven (7) calendar days prior to a vote for endorsement by the CMC. All proposed amendments shall be voted on at regular meetings. Any and all amendments to the Bylaws will become effective upon adoption by the Collier MPO.

**B. Prior Agreement:**

These Bylaws supersede and replace any and all Bylaws previously adopted by the Congestion Management Committee.

**C. Effective Date:**

The Bylaws for the Congestion Management Committee of the Collier Metropolitan Planning Organization were hereby endorsed in an open session with a quorum present and voting on March 20, 2024, ~~2021~~ by the Congestion Management Committee and adopted by the Collier Metropolitan Planning Organization on ~~March 12, 2021~~ April 12, 2024.

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CONGESTION MANAGEMENT ~~SYSTEM/~~  
~~INTELLIGENT TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM~~ COMMITTEE

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
~~Anthony Khawaja~~ Lorraine Lantz  
CMC Chair

COLLIER METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
~~Councilwoman Elaine Middelstaedt, Esq.~~ William L. McDaniel, Jr., MPO Chair

ATTESTED BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
Anne McLaughlin  
MPO Executive Director

COUNTY ATTORNEY

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Scott R. Teach  
Deputy County Attorney

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for  
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Traffic Operations – Traffic Management Center  
Public Transit & Neighborhood Enhancement (PTNE) Division

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Transportation Department

*City of Naples*  
Engineering/Planning Representative  
Traffic Operations Representative

*City of Marco Island*  
Public Works Department

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*Collier MPO's Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee*

*Lee County MPO*

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**A. Amendments**

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**B. Prior Agreement:**

These Bylaws supersede and replace any and all Bylaws previously adopted by the Congestion Management Committee.

**C. Effective Date:**

The Bylaws for the Congestion Management Committee of the Collier Metropolitan Planning

Organization were hereby endorsed in an open session with a quorum present and voting on March 20, 2024 by the Congestion Management Committee and adopted by the Collier Metropolitan Planning Organization on April 12, 2024.

CONGESTION MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Lorraine Lantz  
CMC Chair

COLLIER METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
William L. McDaniel, Jr., MPO Chair

ATTESTED BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
Anne McLaughlin  
MPO Executive Director

COUNTY ATTORNEY

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Scott R. Teach  
Deputy County Attorney

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**  
**REPORTS & PRESENTATIONS**  
**ITEM 8A**

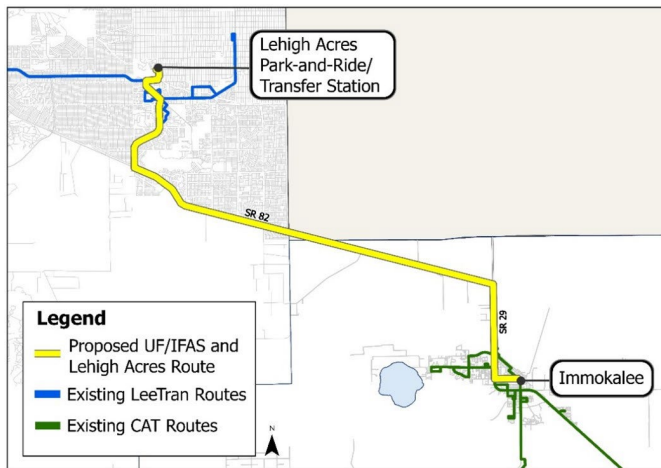
**Draft Regional Transit Service and Fare Study**

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**OBJECTIVE:** For the Committee to receive a report on the draft Regional Transit Service and Fare Study.

**CONSIDERATIONS:** The Collier Area Transit (CAT) Regional Service and Regional Fare Study (the “Study”) was developed by Jacobs Engineering with participation by the Collier MPO, CAT and Lee County Transit (LeeTran). The Study evaluated existing travel patterns and identified areas that would benefit most from an additional regional transit service. One source of information was the Collier MPO Origin-Destination Report, in which the Congestion Management Committee was involved.

Based on the results of the regional travel patterns, market analysis and public outreach, the Study recommends the UF/IFAS and Lehigh Acres route for a new connection between CAT and LeeTran.



The proposed route is recommended to follow a separate fare structure, where the route is owned and operated by CAT, and CAT will:

- Charge CAT fares aboard the regional bus
- Retain all revenue collected through the route.

The Study is in draft form and County Public Transit and Neighborhood Enhancement (PTNE) staff have submitted comments that need to be addressed. Next steps include reviews by the County’s Public Transit Advisory Committee, the MPO’s TAC and CAC, acceptance by the MPO Board and approval by the BCC.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** N/A Report for informational purposes.

**ATTACHMENT(S):**

1. Draft Regional Transit Service and Fare Study (appendices not included)

Prepared By: Anne McLaughlin, MPO Director



# Collier Area Transit Regional Service and Regional Fare Study

DRAFT REPORT

March 2024



## Executive Summary

### Introduction

The Collier Area Transit (CAT) Regional Service and Regional Fare Study (hereinafter, the “Study”) was performed with the Collier Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and CAT to evaluate the prospect of implementing a new regional transit corridor for CAT to provide a new service between Collier County and Lee County, connecting to the Lee County Transit (LeeTran) system. Since there is only one existing regional transit connection operated by LeeTran, the LinC route, this Study will propose a new regional connection operated by CAT.

### Vision and Goals

The vision and goals identified in the CAT Ten-Year Transit Development Plan (TDP) were used to develop the regional vision and goals for the Study.

The Regional Transit Vision Framework developed included a regional transit vision, goals, and performance measures to be used for decision making and preparing strategic plans. The vision statement used the CAT TDP vision statement and modified it to a regional vision for CAT to expand and provide cross-county services. The regional goals developed include:

- To improve and expand regional mobility services with a focus on commuter express routes, connecting workers to employment centers, and facilitating access to key activity centers.
- To improve and enhance intergovernmental relationships and expand regional travel services.

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***Regional Transit Vision: To provide effective and efficient multimodal mobility services cross-county and connect the transit networks to facilitate the needs of workers, residents, and visitors to support economic, environmental, and community benefits.***

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The performance measures developed included:

- Decrease travel time for cross-county transit service.
- Increase coverage to serve areas cross-county, connecting workers to employment centers and key activity centers.
- Increase frequency of transit service.
- Develop a plan for funding improved or expanded cross-county services.
- Receive positive feedback and customer satisfaction.
- Enhance the working relationship between CAT and LeeTran to address regional transit plans.
- Develop a plan for integrating a compatible farebox system between CAT and LeeTran if joint fare structure is desired.
- Implement new technologies for improving account-based payment systems.
- Establish an interlocal agreement or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for terms and conditions of any future regional service.
- Implement new regional transit routes to facilitate travel between Lee and Collier Counties.



## Regional Travel Pattern and Market Analysis

The approach of this Study was to evaluate existing travel patterns and identify areas that would benefit most from an additional regional transit service. These areas were identified through a complete analysis of various sources, including the Collier MPO Origin-Destination (O-D) Report (hereinafter, “O-D Report”) data, United States (U.S.) Census data, demographics, key activity centers and workforce commutes, existing plans, and existing ridership. This analysis led to the development of priority O-D pairs that were evaluated against existing transit needs. As a result, five candidate corridors were developed and included:

- University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS) and Lehigh Acres Route
- Interstate 75 (I-75) Premium Express Option 1: Collier County Government Center to Gulf Coast Town Center Route
- I-75 Premium Express Option 2: Pine Ridge Road to Southwest Florida International Airport (RSW) and the Forum Route
- I-75 Premium Express Option 3: Collier County Government Center to RSW and the Forum
- Urban Estates and Bonita Springs Route

A quantitative and qualitative methodology was developed to evaluate and rank the candidate corridors. The ranking criteria was based on scoring factors, including but not limited to U.S. Census data, O-D Report data, proximity to key activity centers and transfer stations, and reduction in user travel time. Each of the candidate corridors were evaluated and ranked to determine which corridor would provide the greatest benefit based on cross-county transit needs. Table ES-1 summarizes the scores for each candidate corridor.

**Table ES-1. Candidate Corridor Ranking**

Ranking	Candidate Corridor	Score	Percentage
1	UF/IFAS and Lehigh Acres Route (Immokalee to Lehigh Acres)	220/270	81.48%
2	I-75 Premium Express – Option 2 (Pine Ridge Road to RSW and the Forum)	178/270	65.93%
3	I-75 Premium Express – Option 3 (Collier County Government Center to RSW and the Forum)	168/270	62.22%
4	Urban Estates and Bonita Springs Route (Livingston Road/Imperial Parkway Route)	133/270	49.26%
5	I-75 Premium Express – Option 1 (Collier County Government Center to Gulf Coast Town Center)	128/270	47.41%

## Public Input

A public survey was performed to collect public input from residents and current transit riders in Collier and Lee counties regarding the proposed candidate corridors. Public outreach also included in-person surveys, as well as agency and CAT bus operator interviews. This feedback, coupled with the regional travel pattern and market analysis, was used to determine the recommended corridor to implement as the new cross-county transit route.

There were 199 responses to the public survey. Overall, the most-preferred candidate corridor for implementation was the I-75 Premium Express – Option 2, ranked at 30%; whereas, among those who



currently ride either CAT or LeeTran buses, the UF/IFAS and Lehigh Acres Route received the highest ranking, at 31%, indicating it was the most-preferred route by riders who currently use the bus.

## Fare Policy Analysis

Existing agreements between other transit agencies within the State of Florida that provide regional connectivity with their neighboring counties were analyzed to evaluate their policies, best practices, and successful strategies. These neighboring policies were evaluated for terms and conditions between agencies, such as cost allocation, route agreements, fare agreements, revenue allocation, agency responsibilities, split revenue (if applicable), and the resulting financial and operational implications of separate and joint fare structures.

This fare policy analysis summarized the pros and cons of separate and joint fare structures, as was used to help facilitate the decision-making process for the proposed recommended corridor. Table ES-2 summarizes the benefits and disadvantages of implementing a separate fare structure.

**Table ES-2. Advantages and Disadvantages of a Separate Fare Structure**

Fare Policy Type	Advantages	Disadvantages
Separate Fare Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ No additional fees caused by analyzing/distributing revenue shares.</li> <li>▪ No need to develop an interlocal agreement for fare/revenue shares.</li> <li>▪ No “lost fares” or disagreements over fares due to changes in costs and payment programs.</li> <li>▪ Immediate revenue collection (no delay in money distribution).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Requires riders to purchase multiple bus passes when traveling between jurisdictions.</li> <li>▪ May cost riders more money if frequently traveling between jurisdictions (for example, must buy a monthly pass from each agency or the daily fare capping).</li> <li>▪ If both agencies operate the same route, inconvenience to riders to determine the amount of funds to load on each bus pass.</li> <li>▪ If both agencies operate the same route and fares vary, overcrowding may occur on the less-expensive bus.</li> </ul>

Table ES-3 summarizes the benefits and disadvantages of implementing a joint fare structure.

**Table ES-3. Advantages and Disadvantages of a Joint Fare Structure**

Fare Policy Type	Advantages	Disadvantages
Joint Fare Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Seamless payment options that may be used across jurisdictions. This is only applicable if the regional pass is valid on all routes in both counties, including local and regional.</li> <li>▪ May encourage ridership.</li> <li>▪ May provide cost savings for riders frequently traveling between jurisdictions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Potential for “lost fares” if one jurisdiction decides to adopt a fare-free policy (for example, the case with the Manatee-Sarasota agreement).</li> <li>▪ Additional administrative fees (split proportionately based on responsibilities) due to analyzing/distributing revenue shares between transit agencies.</li> <li>▪ Requires additional staff hours and responsibilities including:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Development and approval of an interlocal agreement</li> <li>- Assign personnel for host agency, project manager, and administrative staff</li> <li>- Meetings and coordination</li> <li>- Consistency with hardware and software systems and updates</li> <li>- Establishment of a shared bank account</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Delay in money distribution/revenue collection.</li> </ul>

Since the proposed additional regional route would be operated by a CAT bus and there is only one existing regional route, which is operated by a LinC bus, it is recommended to maintain the existing separate fare structure, where each agency charges their own fares and retains revenues on their respective vehicles. Under the separate fare structure, CAT will operate the new route and charge CAT fares. CAT will be responsible for all capital and annual costs related to the operation of the route, except for the costs associated with the bus stop in Lee County.

The separate fare structure provides the most cost-effective option, avoiding the need to develop an agreement for shared revenue collection and distribution and installing compatible fare collection systems on vehicles. A meeting was held between CAT and LeeTran staff, and they concluded that a separate fare structure is the best policy to use for the proposed route.

CAT and LeeTran should reevaluate the pros and cons of a joint fare structure when implementing additional regional routes. However, only one additional regional route is proposed as part of this Study, and maintaining a separate fare structure is recommended at this time.

## Recommendation

Based on the results of the regional travel patterns, market analysis, and public outreach, the UF/IFAS and Lehigh Acres route is the recommended route for a new connection between CAT and LeeTran. This proposed route received the highest overall ranking in the candidate corridor evaluation and demonstrated the most significant need for a new transit connection. It is recommended that CAT and LeeTran retain a separate fare structure for this route.

It is recommended that the UF/IFAS and Lehigh Acres Route provide pickup and drop-off service at the following locations:

### Collier County Bus Stops:

- **Immokalee Health Department Transfer Facility:** This is an existing CAT bus stop transfer station in Immokalee that connects Immokalee Circulators (Routes 22 and 23) and Route 19. The Immokalee Health Department has funding from a Tiger Grant awarded in 2018 to construct a bus transfer station with amenities that will provide parking and a bus turnaround within the site. This facility is under construction and expected to be completed by late 2024. This transfer station will serve as the starting point for the proposed route and will serve as a turnaround point for the route's inbound and outbound service. This bus stop is located at 419 North 1st Street, Immokalee, Florida 34142.
- **UF/IFAS satellite campus bus stop:** This stop is proposed along the existing southbound right-turn lane to the campus located at 2685 FL-29, Immokalee, Florida 34142. This stop is proposed for the inbound service between the Lehigh Acres bus stop to the Immokalee Health Department bus stop.

### Lee County Bus Stop:

- **Lehigh Acres Park-and-Ride Transfer Facility:** This facility is under construction and expected to be completed by early 2025 as a park-and-ride lot and a transfer station for the Lehigh Acres area (Lee County 2023). This facility will serve as a turnaround point for the route's inbound and outbound service. The park-and-ride will be located at 1121 Village Lakes Boulevard, Lehigh Acres, Florida 33972.

The recommended route schedule is provided in Table ES-4. At least one vehicle is recommended to be purchased to operate the new route. It is recommended to perform public outreach to collect input on specific details of the new route to obtain feedback from riders anticipated to use the proposed route. The public survey is recommended to obtain input on preferred times of service, service frequency, and stops and to provide insight into the anticipated demand for the proposed route. Adjustments to the proposed route schedule should be evaluated based on public comment.

Table ES-4. Proposed UF/IFAS and Lehigh Acres Route Schedule

Outbound			Inbound				
Immokalee Health Department	Anticipated Drive Time <sup>a</sup>	Lehigh Acres Park-and-Ride Transfer Facility	Anticipated Drive Time <sup>a</sup>	UF/IFAS Satellite Campus	Anticipated Drive Time <sup>a</sup>	Immokalee Health Department	Layover
6:00 a.m.	40 minutes	6:40 a.m.	40 minutes	7:20 a.m.	15 minutes	7:35 a.m.	10 minutes
7:45 a.m.	45 minutes	8:30 a.m.	35 minutes	9:05 a.m.	10 minutes	9:15 a.m.	10 minutes
9:25 a.m.	40 minutes	10:05 a.m.	35 minutes	10:40 a.m.	10 minutes	10:50 a.m.	130 minutes
1:00 p.m.	40 minutes	1:40 p.m.	35 minutes	2:15 p.m.	10 minutes	2:25 p.m.	10 minutes
2:35 p.m.	40 minutes	3:15 p.m.	35 minutes	3:50 p.m.	10 minutes	4:00 p.m.	10 minutes
4:10 p.m.	45 minutes	4:55 p.m.	35 minutes	5:30 p.m.	10 minutes	5:40 p.m.	10 minutes
5:50 p.m.	40 minutes	6:30 p.m.	30 minutes	7:00 p.m.	10 minutes	7:10 p.m.	

<sup>a</sup> Anticipated drive time is estimated based on Google Maps drive time at each departure time period, using the longest duration from the range identified. An additional 5 minutes was added to the drive time for traffic delays.

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## Acronyms and Abbreviations

ADA	Americans With Disabilities Act
B&A	Boarding and Alighting
Breeze	Sarasota County Transit
CAT	Collier Area Transit
FDOT	Florida Department of Transportation
F.S.	Florida Statute
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
FY	Fiscal Year
GIS	Geographic Information System
GoPasco	Pasco County Transit
HART	Hillsborough Area Regional Transit
I-75	Interstate 75
JTA	Jacksonville Transit Authority
LeeTran	Lee County Transit
LinC	LeeTran Route 600
L RTP	Long-Range Transportation Plan
MCAT	Manatee County Area Transit
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
O-D	origin-destination
PSTA	Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority
QR	Quick response
RSW	Southwest Florida International Airport
RWG	Regional Working Group



## Collier Area Transit Regional Service and Regional Fare Study

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SHS	State Highway System
SIB	State Infrastructure Bank
SIS	Strategic Intermodal System
SR	State Road
STIP	State Transportation Improvement Program
TDP	Transit Development Plan
TIP	Transportation Improvement Program
TRIP	Transportation Regional Incentive Program
UF/IFAS	University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences
U.S.	United States
USC	United States Code
USDOT	United States Department of Transportation
ZCTA	Zip Code Tabulation Area

## 1. Introduction

Regional interconnectivity is a vital aspect for a balanced transportation system and contributes to the economic health and mobility of communities. As the population of Southwest Florida continues to grow, the demand for reliable and efficient transit service has increased. Regional connections have become more of a priority due to the increasing number of cross-county commuters each year. The number of residents traveling between Collier County and Lee County for work has grown in tandem with the population, thus creating increased demand for reliable, cross-county transit services.

Currently, there is only one regional transit connection between Collier County and Lee County. The connection is facilitated by Lee County Transit (LeeTran), which connects to a bus stop in Collier County. As the demand for regional transit increases, additional regional connections are needed between Collier County and Lee County. The Collier Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and Collier Area Transit (CAT) initiated the Regional Service and Regional Fare Study (hereinafter, the "Study") to evaluate a new regional transit connection for CAT to provide service to Lee County, connecting to the LeeTran system.

The Study included the development of a regional transit vision and goals statement and a regional decision-making framework. The Study evaluated existing regional travel patterns and performed a market analysis to develop potential regional corridors. A ranking methodology was developed, and the recommended corridor that would provide the greatest benefit based on cross-county transit needs was determined.

The Study also included the evaluation of financial and operational impacts of implementing a joint fare structure for CAT and LeeTran to provide a "regional pass" for riders traveling between the counties. The Study concludes with a recommendation and plan for CAT and LeeTran to proceed with implementing the proposed regional route as well as a recommendation for the fare policy.

## 2. Vision and Goals

By evaluating a new cross-county transit connection between Collier and Lee counties, this Study aligns with CAT's vision to meet the needs of riders and advances their goal to increase connectivity between the transit networks. CAT's vision, identified in their Ten-Year Transit Development Plan (TDP), is to provide "effective and efficient multimodal mobility services to meet the mobility needs of workers, residents, and visitors, to support economic, environmental, and community benefits." Additionally, their regional goal initiative (Initiative 3.2.1) with LeeTran is to "Continue to coordinate and partner with LeeTran to improve and expand cross-county mobility services to support workforce travel demand with a focus on commuter express routes, connecting workers to employment, and provide connections strategically to the transit networks in Lee and Collier counties to facilitate the access to key activity centers" (Tindale-Oliver 2020a).

The Study also aligns with CAT's goal for improving regional mobility services by evaluating the option of a regional pass for riders that frequently travel between both counties, without having to purchase separate bus passes in both Collier and Lee counties. The regional pass was evaluated to serve CAT and LeeTran local or regional routes and evaluated financial and operational implications of administering a joint fare structure to provide a regional pass to improve regional mobility.

CAT's vision and goals, as identified in the TDP, were used to develop the Regional Transit Vision Framework. The Regional Transit Vision Framework was developed with CAT and Collier MPO and includes a regional transit vision statement, goals, and performance measures that can be used for decision making and preparing strategic plans. Refer to Figure 2-1 for the Regional Transit Vision Framework.

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*Regional Transit Vision: To provide effective and efficient multimodal mobility services cross-county and connect the transit networks to facilitate the needs of workers, residents, and visitors to support economic, environmental, and community benefits.*

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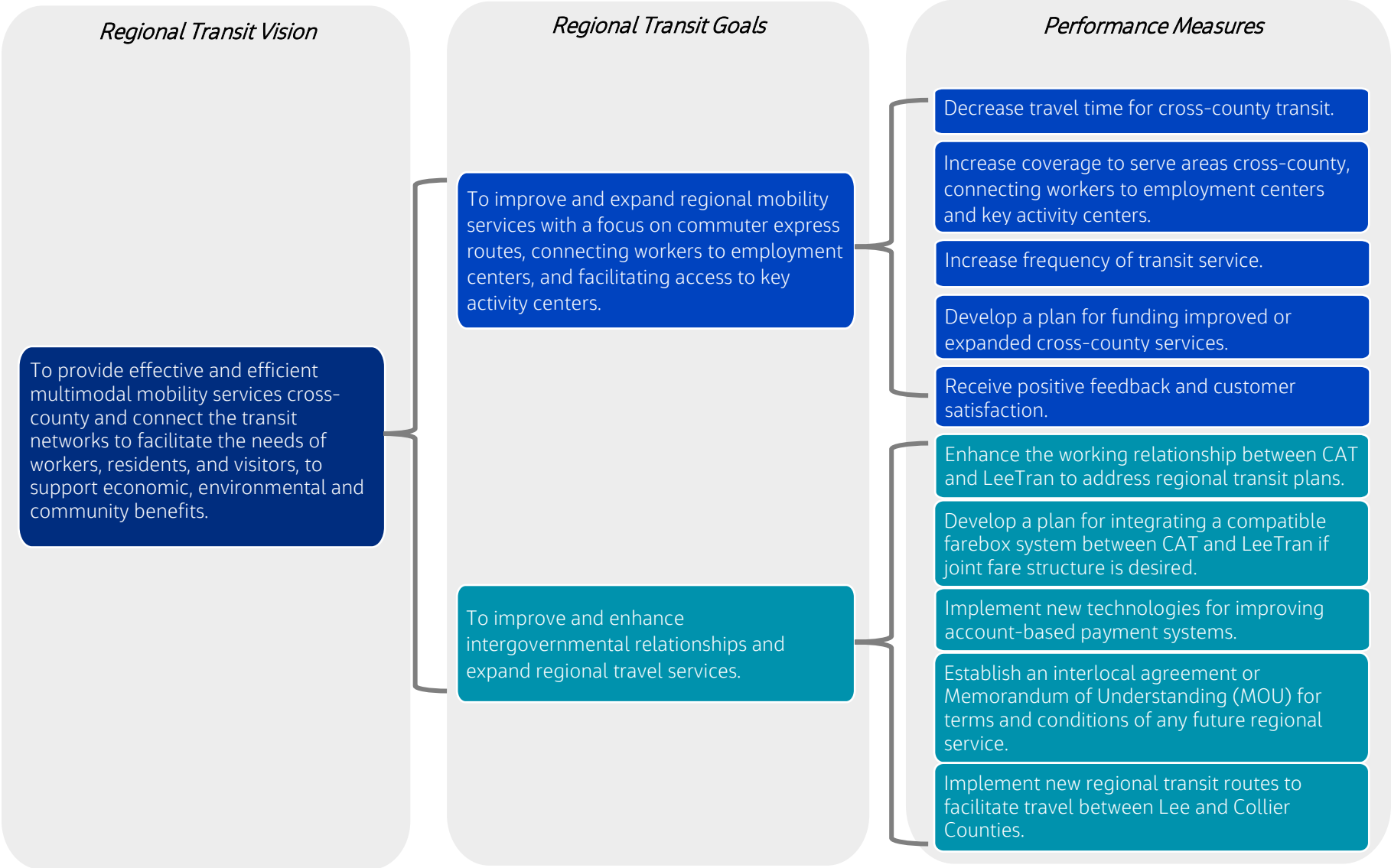


Figure 2-1. Regional Transit Vision Framework

### 3. Methodology

Data from CAT and LeeTran were collected to evaluate and plan for a new regional service and regional fare structure. Data included information such as:

- Geographic information system (GIS) files of existing and future/planned transit networks
- Ridership and fare data for the last five fiscal years (FYs)
- Annual operating and capital cost data
- Annual revenue hours and miles
- Applicable reports, studies, and documents

A transportation services inventory was developed to assist with the evaluation of existing conditions and available services. Existing travel patterns between Collier and Lee counties were analyzed for movements that would benefit most from an additional regional transit service. To evaluate the transit needs for a new connection between Collier and Lee counties, travel patterns and cross-county transit needs were evaluated using:

- Origin-Destination (O-D) Data
- CAT and LeeTran Ridership
- Key Activity Centers and Workforce Commutes
- United States (U.S.) Census Data and Demographics
- Existing TDPs

The ridership and fare data, annual operating and capital costs, and annual revenue were used to develop a proposed route for the recommended regional corridor as well as to develop cost estimates to implement the route and evaluate potential funding opportunities.

## 4. Base Transit Conditions

A base transit condition was established by evaluating existing conditions from current and latent demand. This includes the existing transit routes and stops as well as limited express routes and other transportation services in both Collier and Lee County. The existing transit routes for CAT and LeeTran are identified on Figure 4-1.

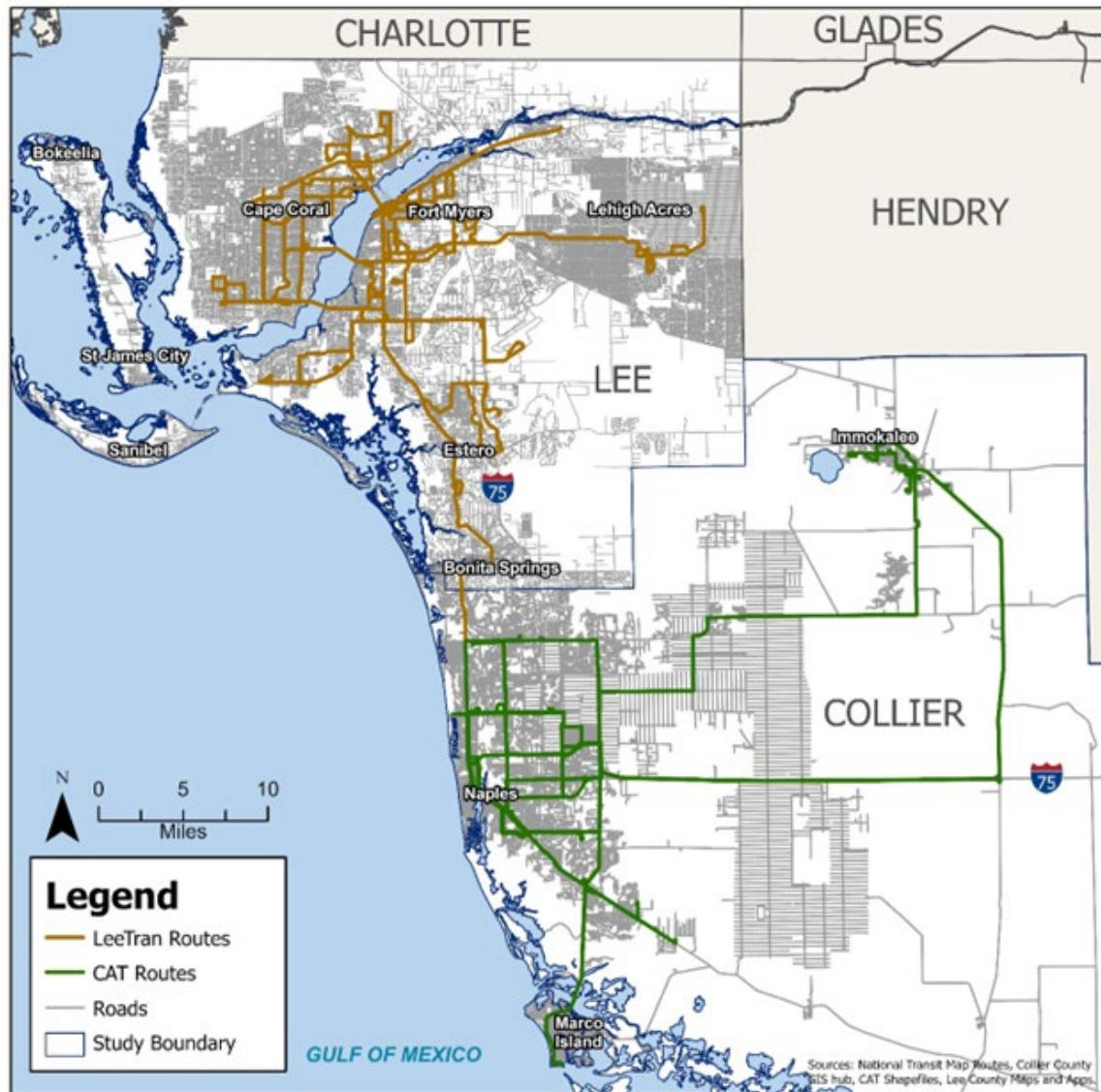
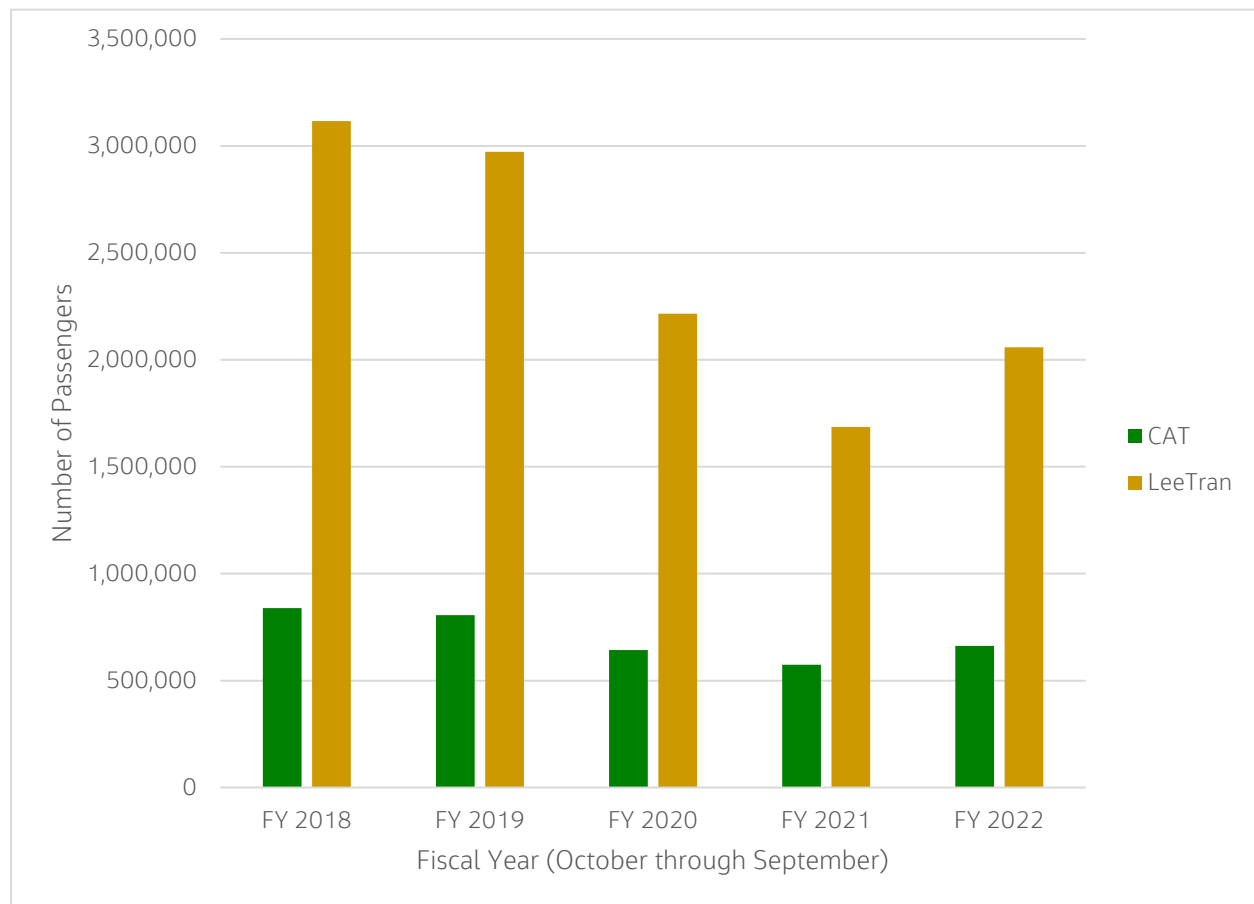


Figure 4-1. Existing CAT and LeeTran Routes

### 4.1 Existing Transit Services in Collier County and Lee County

CAT's existing transit network serves Collier County, including connections to Immokalee, Ave Maria, and Marco Island. The LeeTran system serves the Lee County area, including Fort Myers, Cape Coral, Lehigh Acres, Estero, and Bonita Springs. According to 2022 U.S. Census data, Lee County has a population of approximately 822,453, and Collier County has a population of approximately 397,994 (United States

Census Bureau n.d.). With an overall higher population, LeeTran experiences higher ridership of transit services than CAT. Figure 4-2 displays the average yearly number of passengers from FYs 2018 to 2022 that rode CAT and LeeTran buses.



**Figure 4-2. CAT and LeeTran Yearly Passenger Counts**

LeeTran also provides a regional connection between Collier and Lee counties, known as “LinC,” that operates as Route 600. LinC currently serves as LeeTran’s only direct cross-county connection, beginning at Coconut Point Mall in Lee County, traveling along U.S. 41, and ending at the Creekside Transfer Station in Collier County on Immokalee Road. This regional connection is currently owned and operated by LeeTran and serves as a north-south connection for the western portions of both counties.

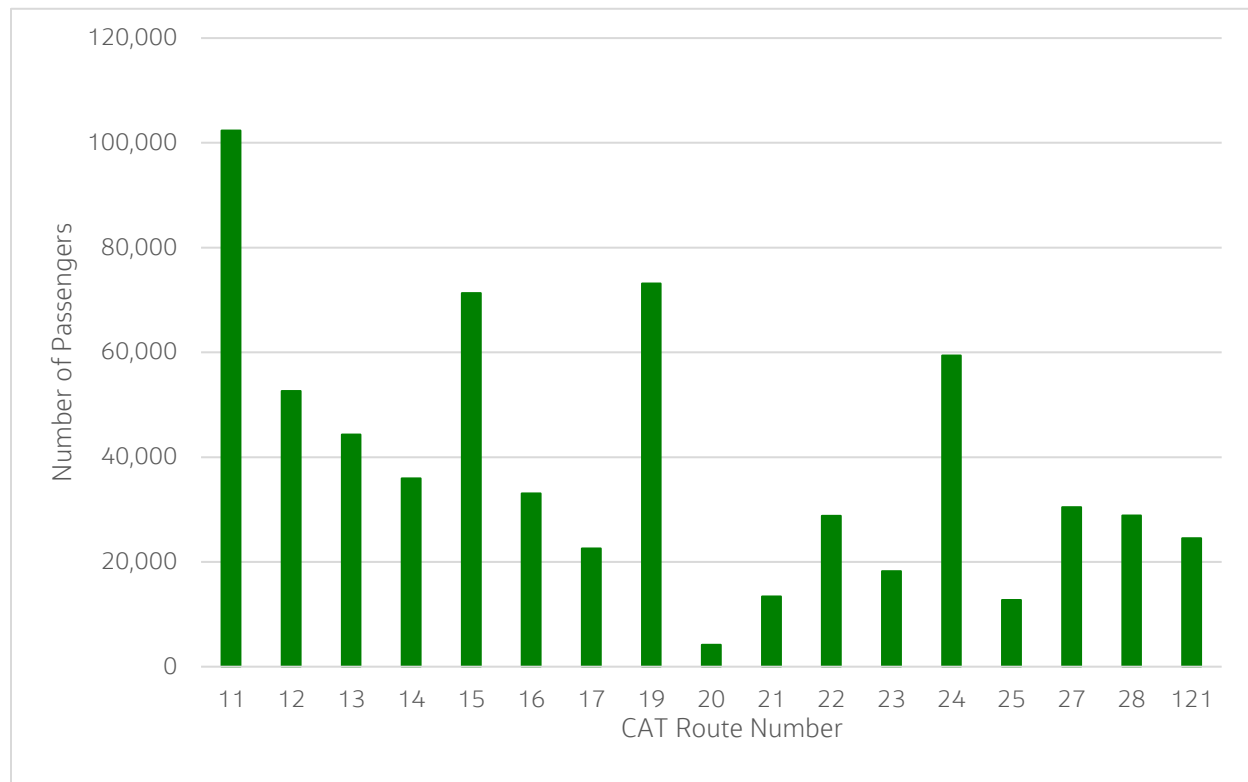
To aid in establishing the base condition, available transportation providers serving Collier and Lee counties and their service areas were evaluated. These formal and informal transportation services are summarized in Appendix A, Transportation Services Inventory.

## 4.2 Cross-County Transit Needs and Demand

The TDPs for Collier and Lee counties evaluated transit needs and demand for a 10-year projection (2021–2030) and included recommendations for regional interconnectivity-based public outreach, transit demand, and a situation appraisal. These TDP’s have identified proposed future networks and/or changes to existing routes to improve cross-county transit services. The recommendations identify corridors that

would serve the most significant passenger needs and where adjustments to the existing network would be the most beneficial.

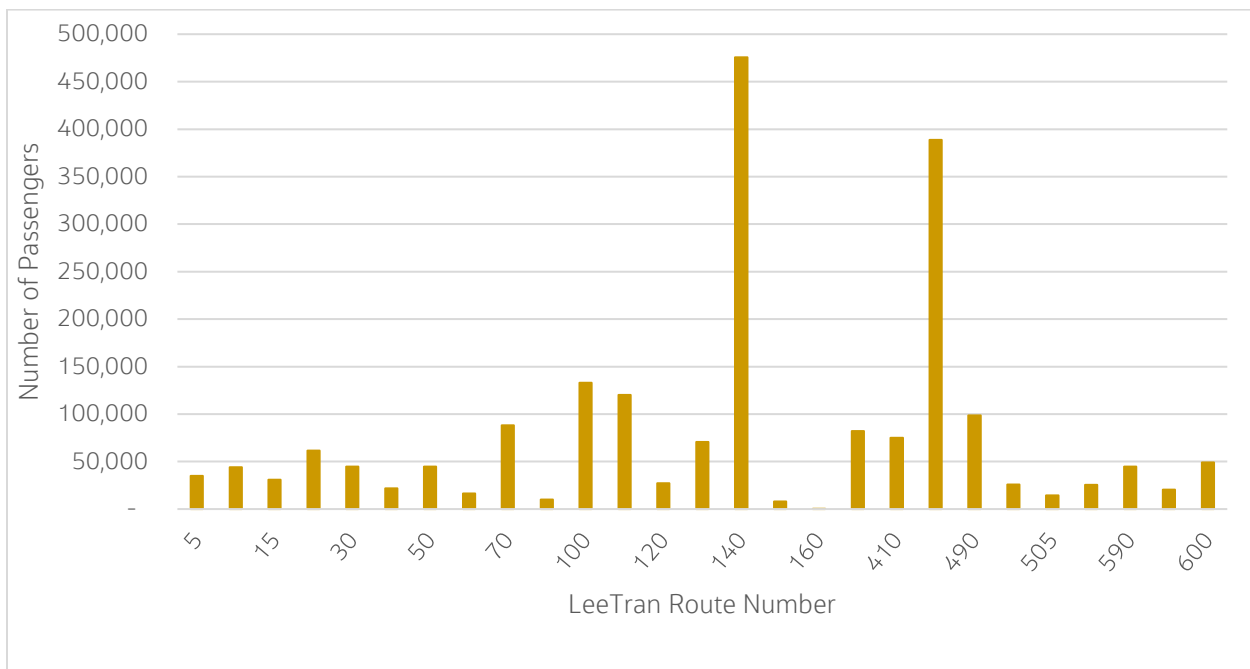
Currently, LinC operates as the only cross-county bus route connecting Collier and Lee counties. The data collected by Collier County shows that the most-used CAT bus route is Route 11, which provides service along U.S. 41, from the Collier County Government Center to the Creekside/LinC Transfer Station. This bus route connects to the LinC bus route, providing the transit connection to Lee County. Figure 4-3 identifies total ridership by CAT route for FY 2022 and indicates Route 11, the connecting route with LinC, has the highest ridership.



**Figure 4-3. CAT Ridership by Route**

Additionally, Figure 4-4 identifies total LeeTran ridership by route for FY 2022. The most-used LeeTran route, Route 140, provides service from Merchants Crossing in Fort Myers to the Coconut Point Mall in Estero. This bus stop provides a transfer onto Route 600 (LinC), which connects to Collier County. Ridership for Route 600 is ranked 11th out of a total of 28 routes.

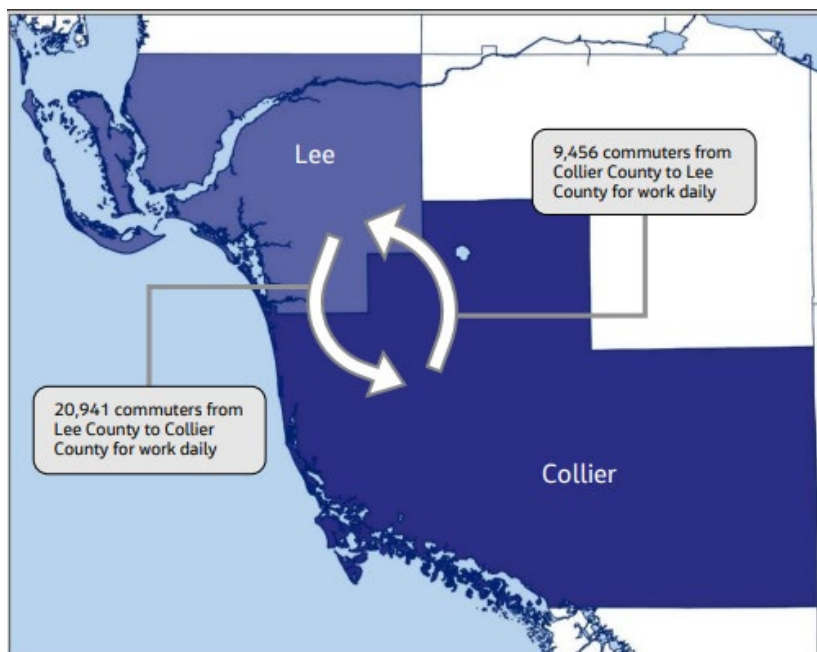




**Figure 4-4. LeeTran Ridership by Route**

Route 420 also has significant ridership and operates as a seasonal beach tram from November to April, providing service to Fort Myers Beach.

The U.S. Census commute flow data from the American Community Survey show that, between 2011 and 2015, approximately 9,456 people commuted from Collier County into Lee County for work daily, while approximately 20,941 people commuted from Lee County to Collier County (United States Census Bureau 2015), as illustrated on Figure 4-5.



**Figure 4-5. Daily Collier-Lee County Trips**

### 4.3 Existing Conditions and Fare Policy Between CAT and LeeTran

CAT uses Genfare fareboxes on all their transit vehicles. These fareboxes accept cash, reloadable smartcards, and paper transfer tickets. Mobile tickets for CAT buses may also be purchased on the RideCAT mobile application. CAT has a contract in place and is working to convert all Genfare fareboxes to new Masabi fareboxes.

According to the LeeTran TDP (2021–2030), LeeTran uses newly installed Genfare Fast Fare Systems fareboxes, which offer flexible payment options to passengers on all fixed-route services in the LeeTran network. Fast Fare accepts cash, smartcards, and account-link tags, fobs, and stickers. Additionally, Fast Fare also offers mobile ticket options using Genfare’s Mobile Link program. The Mobile Link program has payment processing fees of \$0.05 per transaction and 5% of the transaction amount. For the period between July 1, 2022, and June 30, 2023, LeeTran paid a total of \$14,601.80 in fees. This averages \$1,216.82 per month (Huff, pers. comm. 2023).

Beginning March 1, 2011, Collier County and Lee County entered an interlocal agreement to provide a transit service connecting LeeTran to a CAT bus stop. This route, Route 600 (LinC) is operated by LeeTran and serves as the only existing regional public transit connection, providing service from Coconut Point Mall in Lee County to the Creekside Transfer Station in Collier County.

The fare policy in this interlocal agreement stated that “all fares charged to passengers along the designated route will be based upon LeeTran’s current fare structure,” and LeeTran will retain all fares collected by their bus (Collier County Board of County Commissioners 2011). The agreement also states that no transfers or prepaid passes may be used between CAT and LeeTran systems when using this route, though each separate agency must honor their own valid prepaid passes, permits, tickets, and transfers.

As part of this agreement, CAT was leasing a vehicle to LeeTran to use for the LinC route. However, the bus has been returned to CAT and LeeTran now operates the route with their own vehicle. Therefore, the interlocal agreement has since been dissolved; however, the separate fare structure is still intact as LeeTran now fully owns and operates this route (Showalter, pers. comm. 2023a).

Table 4-1 summarizes the fare fees and pass types offered by CAT and LeeTran.

Table 4-1. CAT and LeeTran Fares and Passes

Transit Agency	Regular Fare Prices	Discounted Fare Prices
CAT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ One-way Fare: \$2.00</li> <li>▪ Marco Express: \$3.00</li> <li>▪ Day Pass: \$3.00</li> <li>▪ 15-day Pass: \$20.00</li> <li>▪ 30-day Pass: \$40.00</li> <li>▪ Marco Express 30-day Pass: \$70.00</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ One-way: \$1.00</li> <li>▪ Marco Express: \$1.50</li> <li>▪ Day Pass: \$1.50</li> <li>▪ 15-day Pass: \$10.00</li> <li>▪ 30-day Pass: \$20.00</li> <li>▪ Marco Express 30-day Pass: \$35.00</li> <li>▪ Student Summer Pass (valid June 1 through August 31 for students): \$30.00</li> <li>▪ 30-day Corporate Pass (300+ Employees): \$29.75</li> </ul>

Transit Agency	Regular Fare Prices	Discounted Fare Prices
LeeTran	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ One-way Fare: \$1.50</li> <li>▪ All-day Pass: \$4.00</li> <li>▪ 7-day Pass: \$15.00</li> <li>▪ 31-day Pass: \$40.00</li> <li>▪ 12-trip Pass: \$13.50</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ One-way: \$0.75</li> <li>▪ 7-day Pass: Senior/Disabled \$11.00; Student \$12.00</li> <li>▪ 31-day Pass: Senior/Disabled \$23.00; Student \$25.00</li> <li>▪ 12-trip Pass: Senior/Disabled \$6.50; Student \$6.75</li> </ul>

Source: (Collier Area Transit 2023; LeeTran 2023)

The regular fare for the LinC route is \$1.50 for a one-way adult fare. Passengers using the LinC route pay this fare when boarding at any stop along this route, as all stops along the LinC route are considered LeeTran bus stops, even if they are geographically located in Collier County.

#### 4.4 Transit Planning Landscape

The TDPs for Collier and Lee counties evaluated transit needs and demand for a 10-year projection (2021–2030). These TDPs included recommendations for regional interconnectivity and identified proposed future networks and/or changes to existing routes to improve cross-county transit services. The *Collier Area Transit Ten-Year Transit Development Plan 2021–2030* (Tindale-Oliver 2020a) identifies two “regional corridors” to provide additional service between Collier and Lee counties, which include:

- The **University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS) and Lehigh Acres Route** to provide a new connection between Immokalee, the UF/IFAS Research and Education Center, and Lehigh Acres. Note, this route is also identified in the Collier MPO 2045 Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) as a Transit Need.
- The **I-75 Premium Express**, which would provide a connection between Collier and Lee counties through a managed transit lane (restricted/controlled access) on Interstate 75 (I-75).

The Lee County TDP for LeeTran also includes these corridors as the two proposed regional routes and identifies the Lee-Collier Commuter Express on I-75 as a midterm (3- to 10-year), cross-county need using existing lanes on I-75 or managed lanes if constructed. Note that these regional corridors are also evaluated further as part of this Study to determine their priority ranking as a potential cross-county transit route that may be incorporated into the existing CAT system.

## 5. Transit Investment and Policy Assessment

Agreements between other transit agencies within the State of Florida that provide regional connectivity with their neighboring counties were analyzed to evaluate their policies, best practices, and successful strategies. These neighboring cross-county transit policies, interlocal agreements, and Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) were evaluated for terms and conditions between agencies such as cost allocation, route agreements, fare agreements, revenue allocation, agency responsibilities, split revenue (if applicable), and the resulting financial and operational implications of separate and joint fare structures. These counties' policies and the analysis are summarized in Appendix B.

### 5.1 Fare Policy Comparison and Lessons Learned

After analyzing the various types of interlocal agreements and policies of neighboring counties, the benefits and disadvantages of the different policies were evaluated. The evaluation included financial and operational implications of administering separate and joint fare structures, payment programs, and administrative costs. Lessons learned were developed based on research and coordination and interviews with the neighboring county agencies.

To maintain the terms of the current fare policy between CAT and LeeTran, which is a separate fare structure, all fares for the new connection operated by the CAT bus would be separate from LeeTran. The new route would operate similarly to the LinC route, except the new route will be served by a CAT bus, and CAT may charge their own fares and retain all revenues earned by their vehicle.

Alternatively, another way to operate a separate fare structure between CAT and LeeTran would be to retain all revenues collected by each agency's respective vehicle, but the bus would charge the fare rate based on the county of pickup, similar to the interlocal agreement between Manatee County Area Transit (MCAT) and Sarasota County Transit (Breeze) (refer to Appendix B). One of the lessons learned from using a separate fare structure where the fare is determined by the location of pickup is that if fares vary (for example, one agency goes fare-free), overcrowding may occur on the less-expensive bus. Table 5-1 summarizes the benefits and disadvantages of implementing a separate fare structure.

**Table 5-1. Advantages and Disadvantages of a Separate Fare Structure**

Fare Policy Type	Advantages	Disadvantages
Separate Fare Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ No additional fees caused by analyzing/distributing revenue shares.</li> <li>▪ No need to develop an interlocal agreement for fare/revenue shares.</li> <li>▪ No "lost fares" or disagreements over fares due to changes in costs and payment programs.</li> <li>▪ Immediate revenue collection (no delay in money distribution).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Requires riders to purchase multiple bus passes when traveling between jurisdictions.</li> <li>▪ May cost riders more money if frequently traveling between jurisdictions (for example, must buy a monthly pass from each agency or the daily fare capping).</li> <li>▪ If both agencies operate the same route, inconvenience to riders to determine the amount of funds to load on each bus pass.</li> <li>▪ If both agencies operate the same route, and fares vary, overcrowding may occur on the less-expensive bus.</li> </ul>

To develop a joint fare structure between CAT and LeeTran, there are several financial and operational implications that would need to be considered. Table 5-2 summarizes the benefits and disadvantages of implementing a joint fare structure.

An anticipated operational impact to administer a joint fare structure between CAT and LeeTran is the difference in farebox systems used. CAT is converting from Genfare to a Masabi farebox system by late 2024 or early 2025, meanwhile LeeTran is contracted to use Genfare for the next 7 years (Showalter, pers. comm. 2023). Therefore, they may face complications with incompatibilities between the two systems. This could result in either the inability to or increased costs for new hardware and programming to implement a seamless payment system between the two jurisdictions.

**Table 5-2. Advantages and Disadvantages of a Joint Fare Structure**

Fare Policy Type	Advantages	Disadvantages
Joint Fare Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Seamless payment options that may be used across jurisdictions. This is only applicable if the regional pass is valid on all routes in both counties, including local and regional.</li> <li>▪ May encourage ridership.</li> <li>▪ May provide cost savings for riders frequently traveling between jurisdictions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Potential for “lost fares” if one jurisdiction decides to adopt a fare-free policy (for example, the case with the Manatee-Sarasota agreement).</li> <li>▪ Additional administrative fees (split proportionately based on responsibilities) due to analyzing and distributing revenue shares between transit agencies.</li> <li>▪ Requires additional staff hours and responsibilities including:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Development and approval of an interlocal agreement</li> <li>- Assign personnel for host agency, project manager, and administrative staff</li> <li>- Meetings and coordination</li> <li>- Consistency with hardware and software systems and updates</li> <li>- Establish a shared bank account</li> <li>- Delay in money distribution/revenue collection</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Each participating agency will have a loss in profit due to sharing revenues earned by regional pass with adjacent county.</li> </ul>

Analysis of the Regional Revenue Collection and Inter-Jurisdictional Mobility Project and discussions with Hillsborough Area Regional Transit (HART) provided additional insight and lessons learned regarding terms and conditions that need to be evaluated when developing an MOU for a joint fare structure. Refer to Appendix B for a summary of terms and conditions.

To administer a joint fare structure, these financial and operational terms and conditions will need to be negotiated, established, and documented in an MOU. Once all financial and operational terms are established, the MOU would require approval by each agency’s Board of County Commissioners prior to execution. HART indicated a lesson learned during their MOU process was to keep terms open to allow for adaptation and improvement to accommodate obstacles experienced during the implementation process.

Another lesson learned from the Regional Revenue Collection and Inter-Jurisdictional Project was that the project was costly in personnel hours during its initial implementation as there was a significant learning curve for the employees assigned. Initially, it took three to five people to set up and manage the project in its initial stages, and there was an initial revenue loss of approximately \$300,000 during the transition. A lesson learned by HART was to establish a designated project manager and accountant rather than having several people take on different roles and responsibilities. HART identified that there were many nuances that took additional internal coordination by having different employees assigned to different roles and responsibilities, and the process would have been more efficient with one designated project manager. HART determined, after the initial learning-curve phase was completed, their program would require the support of a full-time, designated project manager and approximately 50% of an accountant full-time equivalent.

It is recommended to perform a cost-benefit analysis when deciding to implement a joint fare structure. However, this could be challenging since there are benefits that are not quantifiable. Putting a value to qualitative benefits would be subjective and would be based on agency input and public opinion. A cost-benefit analysis would include factors such as:

- Qualitative: ridership satisfaction, ease of use, and encouragement/increase of ridership
- Quantitative: administrative fees, bank account fees, potential loss of revenue, and start-up costs (hardware, software, mobile application development, and so forth)

Since the policy would result in an initial loss of revenue, it is not recommended to pursue a joint fare structure until both agencies value the qualitative benefits despite the costs. Pursuing a joint fare structure in the future may be based on factors such as number of and ridership of regional routes, demand for additional regional routes, and ridership survey feedback and requests.

## 5.2 Fare Policy Recommendation

Since the proposed additional regional route would be operated by a CAT bus and there is only one existing regional route, which is operated by a LinC bus, it is recommended to maintain the existing separate fare structure, where each agency charges their own fares and retains revenues on their own respective vehicles.

A meeting between CAT, LeeTran, and Collier MPO was held on November 21, 2023, to discuss the fare policy for the proposed route and advantages and disadvantages of a separate versus joint fare structure. As a result of the meeting and fare policy analysis, it was agreed to pursue a separate fare structure for the new regional route. The separate fare structure will follow the policy used with the existing LinC route operated by LeeTran. The separate fare structure provides the most cost-effective option, avoiding the need to develop an agreement for shared revenue collection and distribution and installing/replacing compatible fare collection systems on vehicles.

Under the separate fare structure, CAT will operate the new route and charge CAT fares. CAT will be responsible for all capital and annual costs related to the operation of the route, except for the costs associated with the bus stop in Lee County. All fares collected by the new route will be retained by CAT, the existing LinC route will continue to be owned and operated by LeeTran, and each agency would now be responsible for one of the two cross-county transit services between Collier and Lee counties.

After the new regional route is established, it is recommended to evaluate ridership on this route as a percentage of the overall regional ridership. It is also recommended that ridership feedback be obtained from both Collier County and Lee County residents to gauge their values related to seamless payment and/or regional pass options. CAT and LeeTran should reevaluate the pros and cons of a joint fare

structure when additional regional routes are proposed. However, since only one additional regional route is proposed as part of this Study a separate fare structure is recommended.

For long-term goals, if a joint fare structure is desired by both agencies, it is recommended to begin discussions between CAT and LeeTran and document a plan and vision for revenue sharing in the future. Developing an agreement on the terms and conditions of a joint fare structure and revenue sharing will be a long and iterative process. Therefore, beginning conversations early will expedite the process when both agencies are ready to implement. When implementing a joint fare structure, it is recommended to develop a seamless payment option such as the Flamingo Fares application managed by HART. A similar payment program could help facilitate cross-county travel and provide an efficient process for CAT and LeeTran.

## 6. Regional Travel Pattern and Market Analysis

A comprehensive regional travel pattern and market analysis was performed to develop priority O-D pairs that could be developed into candidate corridors for the proposed cross-county transit route. Existing travel patterns between Collier and Lee counties were analyzed for movements that would benefit most from a new regional transit service. Travel patterns and cross-county transit needs were evaluated using:

- O-D Data
- CAT and LeeTran Ridership
- Key Activity Centers and Workforce Commutes
- U.S. Census Data and Demographics
- Existing TDPs

The Collier MPO Origin-Destination (O-D) Report (hereinafter, "O-D Report") data were used and sorted to identify trips between Collier and Lee counties to identify regional travel patterns. The Collier County and Lee County planning communities were used in this analysis and are referred to as subareas. Highest-frequency trips between Collier and Lee counties were analyzed for the number of daily trips generated between subareas. These high-frequency O-D pairs were then evaluated to identify priority pairs that would benefit most from a new regional transit connection.

Based on the O-D Report data, the top-four trips from Collier County to Lee County were:

- North Naples to Bonita Springs
- Urban Estates to Bonita Springs
- City of Naples to Bonita Springs
- Immokalee to Lehigh Acres

The top-four trips from Lee County to Collier County were:

- Bonita Springs to North Naples
- Fort Myers to North Naples
- Estero to North Naples
- Lehigh Acres to Immokalee

Each of these origins in Collier and Lee counties were evaluated for their top-three cross-county destinations. Bonita Springs was the most frequent destination for three of the top-four origins in Collier County, so Bonita Springs was evaluated as the destination in three separate O-D pairs. Additionally, North Naples was the most frequent destination for three of the top-four trips from Lee County and was evaluated similarly. This analysis is summarized in Appendix C. The goal of the analysis was to identify priority O-D pairs to be evaluated as potential regional transit corridors.

The U.S. Census and demographic data were used to evaluate O-D pairs for those who use public transit. U.S. Census data for the following characteristics were used:

- For workers 16 years old and older
  - Who use public transportation as means to get to work
  - Who use public transportation as means to get to work and are below 100% of the poverty level
  - Who use public transportation as means to get to work and work outside their county of residence
- Who live in a household with no vehicles available



In addition to the evaluation of O-D Report data and U.S. Census data, key activity and major employment centers were identified to determine workforce commutes. The existing TDPs and LRTPs for both Collier and Lee counties were also evaluated for existing commuter patterns and public transportation demand. Both the CAT and LeeTran TDPs identify two regional transit corridors as future needs. These regional corridors were evaluated to serve as potential regional connections between Collier County and Lee County and were evaluated as candidate corridors.

## 7. Candidate Corridor Development

The Collier MPO O-D Report data were used to identify existing cross-county travel patterns. According to the O-D Report, more than 90,000 trips per day begin in Collier County and end in Lee County, with an additional 38,000 daily trips passing through Collier County (Tindale-Oliver 2022).

Since the data from the O-D Report were collected from all trip types (for example, car, truck, taxi, transit, and so forth) the travel patterns did not identify transit-related trips only. To evaluate transit needs, the O-D pairs were analyzed against U.S. Census and demographic data for those who reported using public transportation as their means to get to work. The O-D pairs were also evaluated against factors such as key activity and major employment centers and workforce commutes to identify routes to support regional and economic benefits.

For the O-D pairs that were not already identified as a recommended route in the latest Collier County and Lee County TDPs and LRTPs, these O-D pairs were identified as potential candidate corridors. Figure 7-1 displays the methodology used to evaluate the top O-D pairs to identify potential candidate corridors.

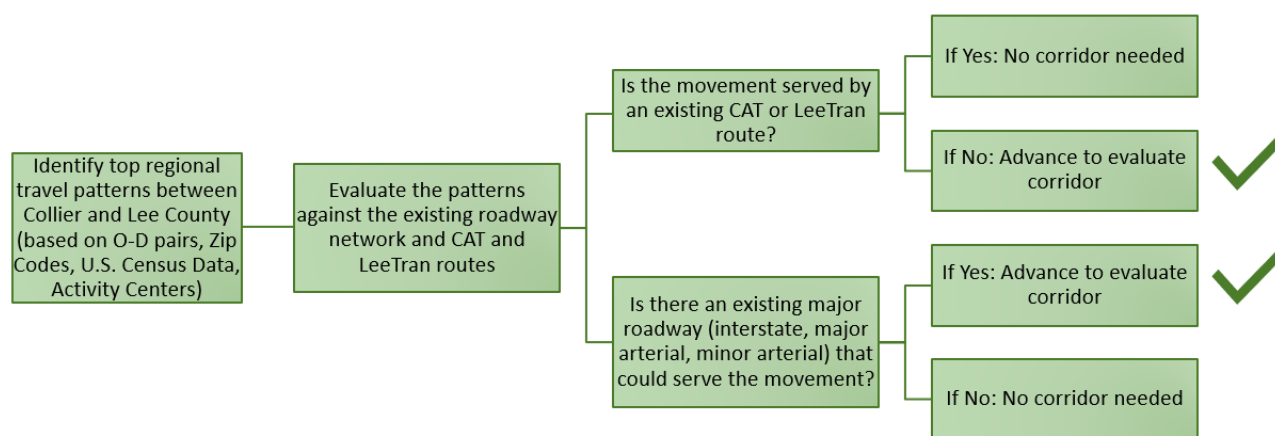


Figure 7-1. Candidate Corridor Development Methodology

The candidate corridors were developed based on the O-D Report data for cross-county travel, then evaluated against key activity centers, workforce commutes, U.S. Census data, and existing ridership data. The two proposed regional corridors identified in the CAT and LeeTran TDPs were evaluated as candidate corridors, and the travel pattern and market analyses determined if any additional candidate corridors should be evaluated. Additional candidate corridors were developed using identified priority O-D pairs evaluated against the existing transit networks, the existing corridors identified in the TDPs, and the U.S. Census data.

Additionally, feedback from public involvement and outreach was evaluated for additional potential candidate corridors that were not identified by the regional travel pattern and market analyses. However, no new regional candidate corridors were identified based on public comments.

### 7.1 UF/IFAS and Lehigh Acres Route

The proposed UF/IFAS and Lehigh Acres Route (refer to Figure 7-2) is a candidate corridor that would connect Immokalee in Collier County to Lehigh Acres in Lee County. This route was identified in both the CAT and LeeTran TDPs. According to the Collier MPO O-D Report data, 2,600 trips occur between this O-D pair daily. This proposed route would connect Immokalee to the UF/IFAS campus in Collier County and

Lehigh Acres in Lee County via County Road 846, State Road (SR) 29, and SR 82. The TDPs identified the endpoint in Lehigh Acres at the new Lehigh Acres Park-and-Ride Transfer Facility at the intersection of Williams Avenue and Village Lakes Boulevard. This park-and-ride is expected for completion in early 2025 (Lee County Government 2023). The TDP identified the other endpoint in Immokalee at the Immokalee Health Department. The County plans to improve the Immokalee Health Department Transfer Station to construct a bus bay with shelter and amenities, which received Tiger Grant funding.

Based on the O-D Report data, 42% of all external travel from Immokalee to Lee County ends in the Lehigh Acres subarea, making it the largest proportion of external trips from Immokalee. Due to the current absence of regional transit connection between the two subareas, if commuters travel from Lehigh Acres to Immokalee via public transit, they must first travel to Fort Myers, then to Naples on the LinC bus, and finally transfer to another bus that would take them to Immokalee. The addition of a regional connection between these two isolated subareas would reduce travel time by 91.7% for commuters using public transit.

Additionally, based on U.S. Census data, the Immokalee area (Zip Code Tabulation Area (ZCTA) 34142) consistently ranks highest for populations that use public transit as their main mode of transportation, are below the poverty level, and work outside of their county of residence.

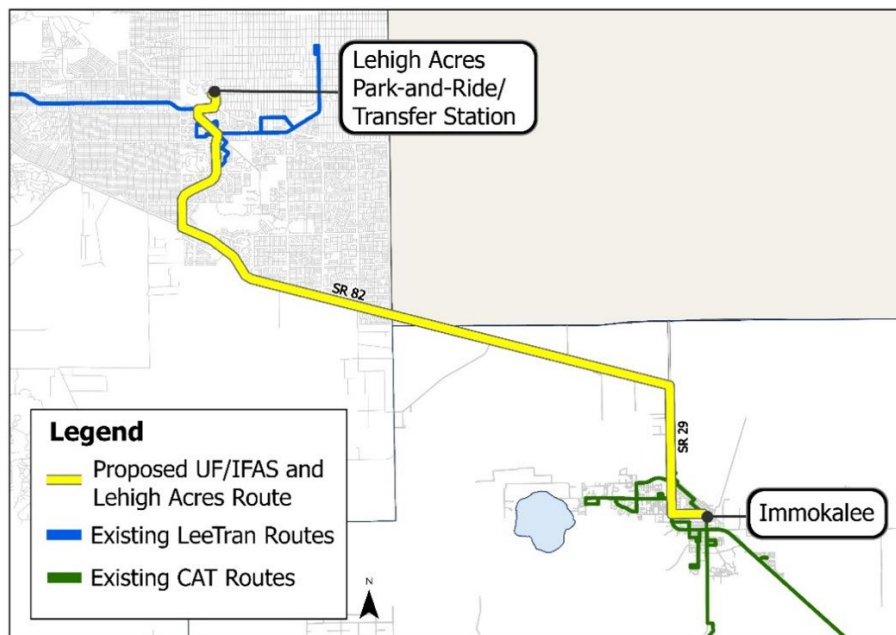


Figure 7-2. Proposed UF/IFAS and Lehigh Acres Route

## 7.2 I-75 Premium Express

The proposed I-75 Premium Express provides a direct route between Collier County and Lee County via I-75. According to the CAT and LeeTran TDPs and the LeeTran Evolve Network GIS data, the endpoints for this corridor in Collier County and Lee County vary.

- The CAT TDP identifies the Lee County endpoint at Gulf Coast Town Center in the San Carlos subarea and the Collier County endpoint at the Collier County Government Center.
- Section 9, page 9-8, of the LeeTran TDP identifies the Lee County endpoint at Southwest Florida International Airport (RSW) in the Airport/Gateway subarea, but also identifies the Lee County endpoint at Florida Gulf Coast University when referencing the CAT TDP.

- The LeeTran Evolve Network GIS data identify the endpoint in Collier County connecting to CAT Route 20 near I-75 on Pine Ridge Road.

Due to the various endpoints identified for this corridor, three potential alignment options were evaluated. Options 1 and 2 were based on the TDPs and Evolve Network GIS data. Option 3 was developed as a result of an O-D data analysis discussion with CAT, LeeTran, Collier MPO, and Lee MPO.

**Option 1:** This route would connect the Collier County Government Center in Collier County and the Gulf Coast Town Center in Lee County (Figure 7-3).

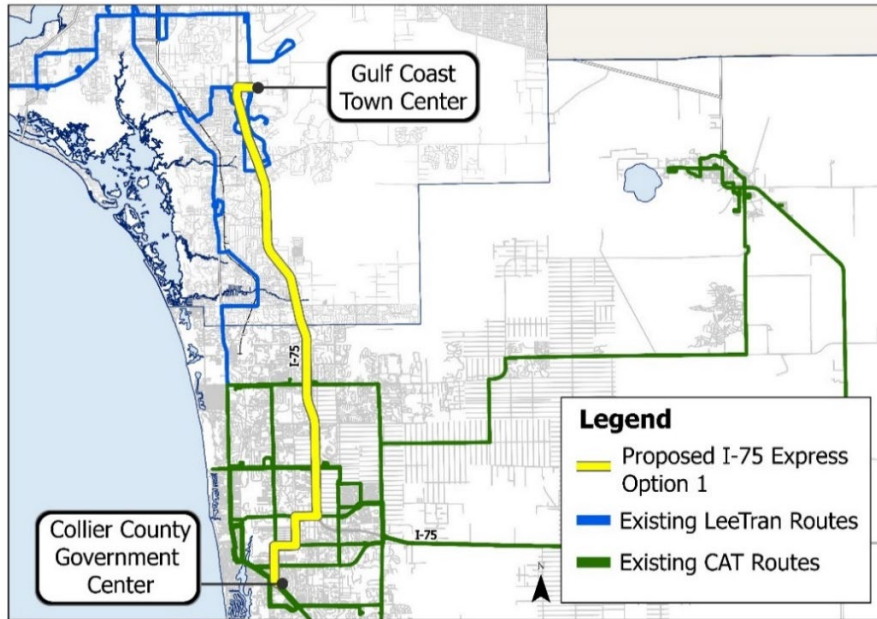


Figure 7-3. Proposed I-75 Premium Express – Option 1

**Option 2:** This route would connect at Pine Ridge Road near the I-75 interchange in Collier County and provide two drop-off locations in Lee County, RSW and the Forum on Colonial Boulevard (Figure 7-4).

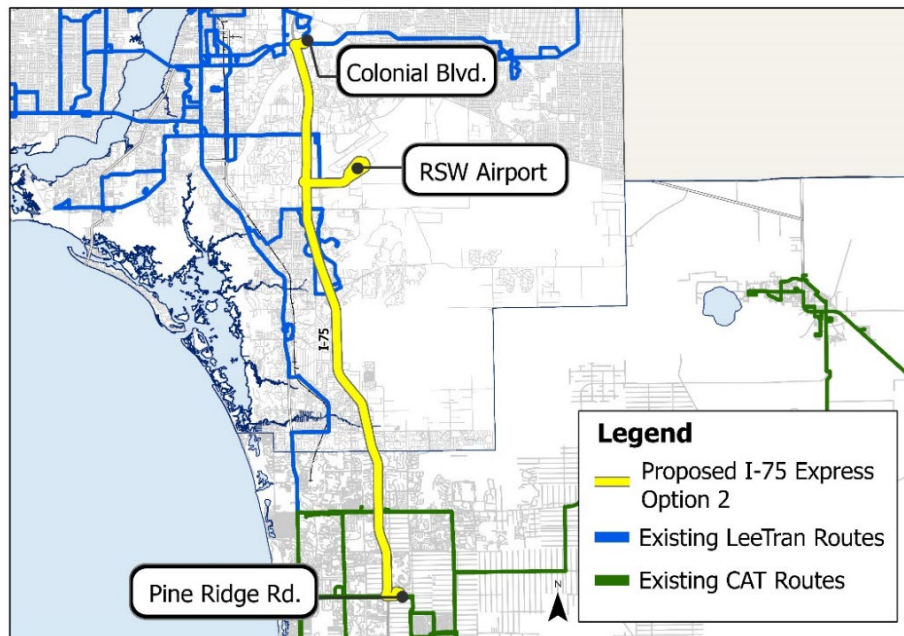


Figure 7-4. Proposed I-75 Premium Express – Option 2

**Option 3:** This route would connect the Collier County Government Center with two drop-off points in Lee County, at RSW and the Forum on Colonial Boulevard.

### 7.3 Urban Estates and Bonita Springs

The Urban Estates subarea produces the second-greatest number of external trips from Collier County to Lee County, with Bonita Springs as the top destination, generating more than 6,000 trips daily. Currently, there is no existing regional transit route connecting these two planning communities. If travelers want to get to Bonita Springs via public transit, they will first need to travel west to the Creekside Transfer Station to board the LinC bus, which provides a drop-off point in Estero. A potential regional corridor from Urban Estates would be beneficial to populations in eastern Collier County that currently do not have a regional service connecting to Lee County.

The proposed route from Urban Estates to Bonita Springs (as shown in Figure 7-5) would use Livingston Road (Collier County) and Imperial Parkway (Lee County) as its main thoroughfares and connect to the existing LinC bus in Bonita Springs. This would eliminate the need for travelers whose origins are east of Livingston Road to travel west to the Creekside Transfer Station first for the LinC bus.

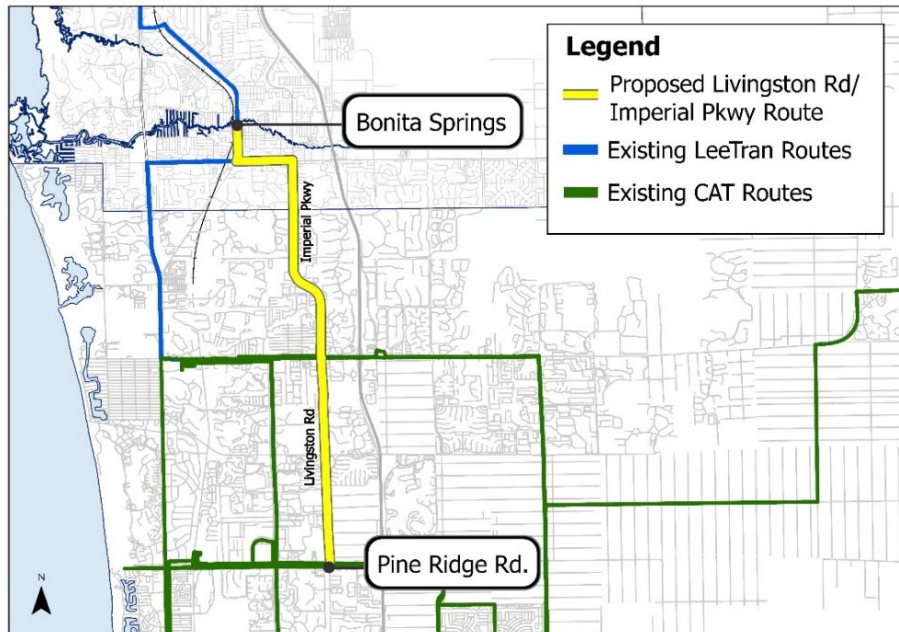


Figure 7-5. Urban Estates and Bonita Springs

An alternative to this route would continue north into Estero, connecting with the existing LinC route at the Coconut Point Transfer Station. Final endpoints will be determined if this corridor is recommended to move forward as the recommended route.

## 8. Public Involvement

Public input was collected to obtain feedback, and public participation was encouraged throughout the planning process. The following public engagement methods were used:

- Public input surveys (online and paper format)
- Interviews of CAT bus riders
- Interviews of bus operators
- Agency input

Public outreach methods for the Study included email notifications, printed advertisements, website links, news articles, and social media posts. All materials were provided in English and Spanish versions, and a contact email was provided for those who needed assistance in Creole, to ensure public engagement materials were accessible to all community members. This included published materials such as email blasts, printed advertisements, and webpages.

### 8.1 Public Input Survey

A regional public input survey was developed for distribution in Collier and Lee counties. Survey questions were developed in coordination with CAT, LeeTran, and Collier MPO. Questions were developed to obtain public input on each of the proposed candidate corridors and provide participants with an opportunity to identify any additional routes to evaluate. Survey questions were developed to obtain feedback on transit-related origins and destinations, frequency of cross-county travel, purpose of travel, and frequency of use for existing routes and candidate corridors.

The public involvement feedback was evaluated for potential candidate corridors that were not identified by the regional travel pattern and market analyses. However, no new regional candidate corridors were identified based on public comments.

#### 8.1.1 Survey Advertisements

A survey advertisement was prepared and included website links and quick response (QR) codes to the English and Spanish online surveys and included a contact for assistance in Creole. The survey advertisement was posted at various CAT and LeeTran bus stops as well as onboard their buses. Paper copies of the survey were also provided aboard CAT buses. The survey advertisement was also provided via email to CAT stakeholders and posted on various webpages and social media outlets including:

- Collier County and Lee County MPO Websites
- Lee County MPO Newsletter
- CAT Webpage
- CAT Facebook Page
- Collier County Facebook Page (English and Spanish versions)
- Collier County X (formerly Twitter) Page

Lee County MPO sent survey information to various boards and committees including their:

- Technical Advisory Committee
- Citizen Advisory Committee
- Bicycle Pedestrian Coordinating Committee
- Traffic Management and Operations Committee
- Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board



In addition to local agency notifications, the regional survey was also posted by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Transit Office on the following platforms:

- FDOT Commute Connector App: A message was sent to app users in the Collier/Lee County range.
- Social Media: Multiple posts were made to Instagram, Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), and LinkedIn up until the survey end date.

Appendix D provides copies of all survey advertisement distributions.

### **8.1.2 Onboard Survey Results**

Paper copies of the onboard survey were provided on select CAT buses to collect feedback from bus riders in Collier County. These surveys were available from November 20, 2023, to January 3, 2024. There were no onboard paper surveys received, as all participants elected to take the online version.

### **8.1.3 Online Survey Results**

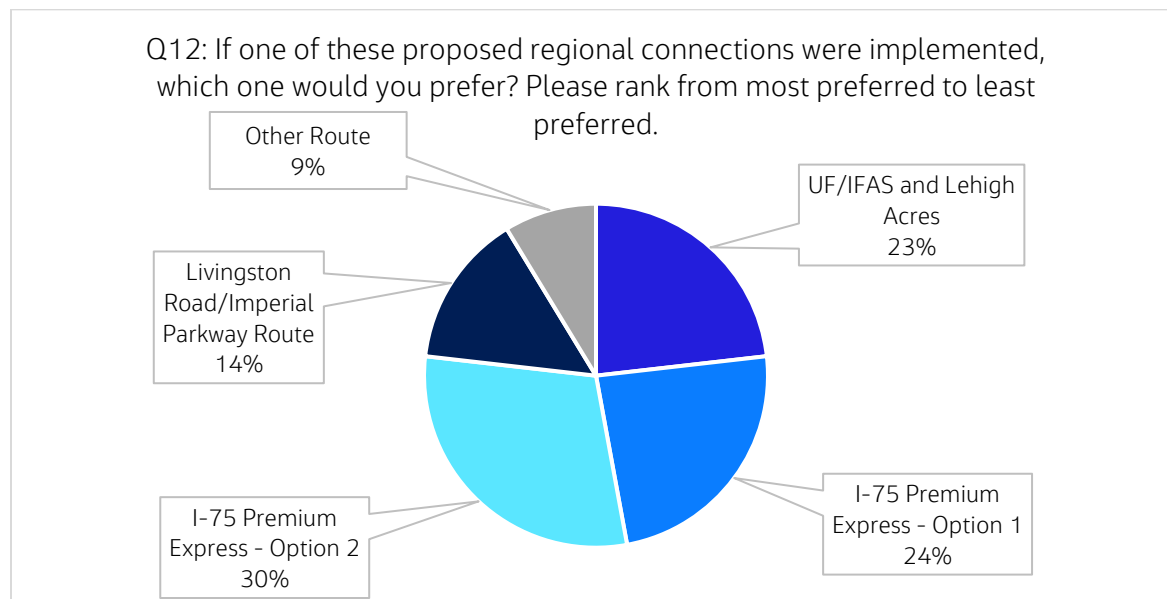
The online survey was available from November 20, 2023, to January 3, 2024. Copies of the online survey responses are provided in Appendix D, in the Online Survey Summary section. In total, there were 199 responses to the online survey, with 194 responses to the English version and 5 responses to the Spanish version. No requests for a Creole translation of the survey were received.

Since the survey was distributed to both current transit riders and non-transit riders and a large majority of participants (approximately 70%) identified they do not typically ride the bus. Therefore, the survey results were sorted for:

- Results from all participants (199 total)
- Participants who currently ride CAT or LeeTran buses (59 of the 199 responses).

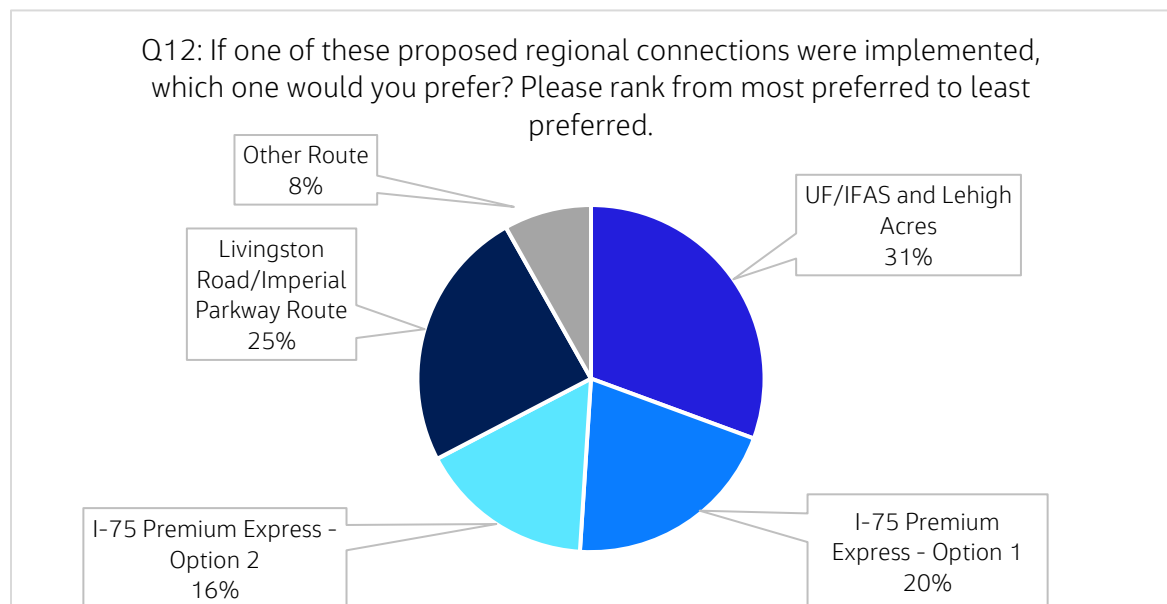
Questions 12 and 13 asked participants to rank the proposed corridors or propose a different route to serve their needs. In Question 12, participants were asked to rank the proposed regional routes in order of most preferred to least preferred. A summary of first-place rankings for all participants is shown on Figure 8-1. The top choice was I-75 Premium Express – Option 2, with 30% of the first-place rankings.





**Figure 8-1. Question 12 Responses – All Participants**

Among bus riders only, the top choice was the UF/IFAS and Lehigh Acres Route, with 31% of the first-place rankings (refer to Figure 8-2).



**Figure 8-2. Question 12 Responses – Bus Riders Only**

In Question 13, participants were asked to propose any additional cross-county routes they would like to see implemented to satisfy their regional transit needs. They were asked to provide starting points, endpoints, and main roadways of travel.

Of these responses, some of the suggested routes would align with one or more of the proposed candidate corridors. For instance, one participant suggested to connect Immokalee to Colonial Boulevard in Fort Myers. Therefore, the proposed UF/IFAS and Lehigh Acres route would serve that O-D pair by providing a

connection from Immokalee to Lehigh Acres in Lee County, where riders may then connect to a LeeTran bus that will go to Colonial Boulevard.

Responses to this question did not result in a significant need to evaluate an additional route, as many of the suggested routes either already aligned with a proposed corridor or were outside the extent to which the new regional route will reach.

## 8.2 Interviews

Interviews of bus operators and riders at select bus stops were performed by CAT staff to obtain input on the proposed candidate corridors and identify any additional transit needs and service gaps. Feedback obtained from these interviews were used to help determine regional transit needs between CAT and LeeTran. Copies of interview questions and responses are provided in Appendix D.

### 8.2.1 Bus Operator Interviews

A LeeTran bus operator who operates the LinC route was interviewed. The operator was asked questions regarding ridership, anticipated traffic delays, and route logistics for each candidate corridor. They were also given an opportunity to provide their own suggestions for cross-county services. Key takeaways from this interview included:

- The LinC bus is typically very crowded during peak morning hours.
- The LinC bus becomes less crowded after 10:30 a.m.
- Connections between LeeTran and CAT are sometimes difficult to manage because of communication issues.

### 8.2.2 Bus Stop Interviews

Two interviews were conducted at the Creekside Transfer Station in Collier County to obtain input from existing riders about regional service needs. The key takeaway from the first interview is that the participant indicated that they began their trip in Lehigh Acres (Lee County) and their final destination was in Immokalee (Collier County). For this trip, the rider must complete a total of five transfers. This participant ranked the UF/IFAS and Lehigh Acres Route as most preferred.

The second interviewee identified the Urban Estates and Bonita Springs Route as their preferred route since they were traveling from Old U.S. 41 in Bonita Springs to Immokalee Road in North Naples. No transfers were required to complete their trip using the LinC route.

## 8.3 Agency Reviews

Agency input was received throughout the planning process from CAT, LeeTran, Collier MPO, and Lee MPO staff. Several meetings were held on the travel pattern and market analyses and the candidate corridor development process. Meetings between CAT and LeeTran were conducted to facilitate discussions regarding the fare policy for the proposed route and analysis of separate versus joint fare structures.

In a meeting on November 22, 2023, the travel pattern and market analyses were discussed with CAT, LeeTran, Collier MPO, and Lee MPO. Key takeaways from this discussion included:

- Both counties indicated that the identified O-D pairs based on the data analysis are consistent with observed traffic patterns in Collier and Lee counties.

- The proposed candidate corridors are viable options for a new regional route and should be evaluated further.

Further coordination was performed regarding the UF/IFAS and Lehigh Acres Route as the recommended route. All team members agreed to move forward with developing the recommended corridor.

## 9. Candidate Corridor Evaluation and Ranking

A quantitative and qualitative methodology was developed to evaluate and rank the candidate corridors to determine the recommended corridor to implement as the new cross-county transit route. The candidate corridors evaluated included:

- UF/IFAS and Lehigh Acres Route
- I-75 Premium Express – Option 1: Collier County Government Center to Gulf Coast Town Center
- I-75 Premium Express – Option 2: Pine Ridge Road to RSW and the Forum
- I-75 Premium Express – Option 3: Collier County Government Center to RSW and the Forum
- Urban Estates and Bonita Springs Route

The ranking criteria were developed with scoring factors including but not limited to U.S. Census data, O-D Report data, proximity to key activity centers and transfer stations, and reduction in user travel time. The ranking criteria helped identify the candidate corridor recommended for implementation.

The evaluation criteria developed provide a numerical scoring for each candidate corridor evaluated. The evaluation used a weighted point system that was applied using a score of 0 to 10 with a weight from 1 to 3. The score weighting assigned was based on the following criteria to serve cross-county transit needs:

1. Basic benefit
2. Moderate benefit
3. Extreme benefit

A total score was then generated based on the scores and weights for each question, with a maximum possible score of 270 points. A percentage was then calculated to give the candidate corridor an overall score.

Attachment 2 of Appendix C includes the completed Corridor Evaluation Forms for each candidate corridor. Table 9-1 summarizes the scores for each candidate corridor. The UF/IFAS and Lehigh Acres Route ranked first, indicating it would provide the greatest benefit based on cross-county transit needs.

**Table 9-1. Candidate Corridor Ranking**

Ranking	Candidate Corridor	Score	Percentage
1	UF/IFAS and Lehigh Acres Route (Immokalee to Lehigh Acres)	220/270	81.48%
2	I-75 Premium Express – Option 2 (Pine Ridge Road to RSW and the Forum)	178/270	65.93%
3	I-75 Premium Express – Option 3 (Collier County Government Center to RSW and the Forum)	168/270	62.22%
4	Urban Estates and Bonita Springs Route (Livingston Road/Imperial Parkway Route)	133/270	49.26%
5	I-75 Premium Express – Option 1 (Collier County Government Center to Gulf Coast Town Center)	128/270	47.41%

## 10. Scenario Development and Recommendations

A proposed plan for the UF/IFAS and Lehigh Acres Route was developed, which included aspects such as bus stop locations, service frequency, span of service, turnaround, layovers, rest areas, and vehicles. The proposed route was developed as a new CAT-operated route. During the process of route development, it was determined the quickest route through Lehigh Acres to reach the park-and-ride transfer station is to take Homestead Road South, which decreases the travel distance by approximately 1.7 miles.

### 10.1 Proposed Stops and Schedule

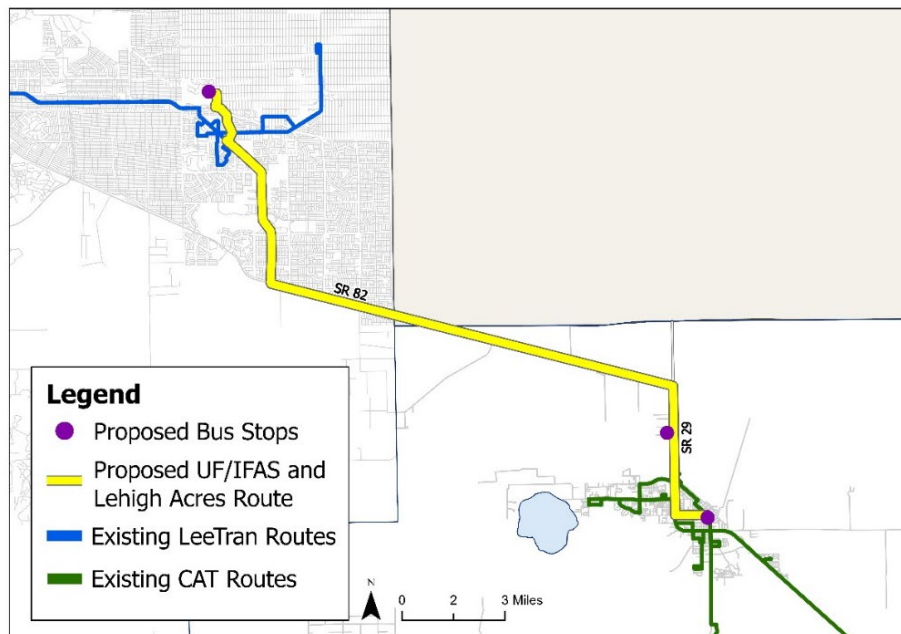
It is recommended that the UF/IFAS and Lehigh Acres Route, as identified in Figure 10-1, provides pickup and drop-off service at the following locations:

#### Collier County Bus Stops:

- Immokalee Health Department Transfer Facility: This is an existing CAT bus stop transfer location in Immokalee that connects Immokalee Circulators (Routes 22 and 23) and Route 19. The Immokalee Health Department has funding from a Tiger Grant awarded in 2018 to construct a bus transfer station with amenities that will provide parking and a bus turnaround within the site. This facility is under construction and expected to be completed by late 2024. This transfer station will serve as the starting point for the proposed route and will serve as a turnaround point for the route's inbound and outbound service. This bus stop is located at 419 North 1st Street, Immokalee, Florida 34142.
- UF/IFAS Satellite Campus bus stop: Based on public comment from the CAT TDP, a bus stop at the UF/IFAS satellite campus was identified for the proposed route between Immokalee and Lehigh Acres. However, it was noted that roadway constraints prevent buses from entering and exiting the campus (Tindale-Oliver 2020).
  - A bus stop is recommended along the existing southbound right-turn lane to the campus located at 2685 FL-29, Immokalee, Florida 34142. This stop is proposed for the inbound service between the Lehigh Acres bus stop to the Immokalee Health Department bus stop. It is recommended that the addition of bus stop amenities be evaluated once the service and stop are implemented and passenger count data are available.

#### Lee County Bus Stop:

- Lehigh Acres Park-and-Ride Transfer Facility: This facility is under construction and expected to be completed by early 2025. The new facility will operate as a park-and-ride lot and a transfer station for the Lehigh Acres area (Lee County 2023). This facility will serve as a turnaround point for the proposed route's inbound and outbound service. The park-and-ride will be located at 1121 Village Lakes Boulevard, Lehigh Acres, Florida, 33972; it will be adjacent to the Lehigh Acres Park on Williams Avenue. The new facility will include four bus bays, parking, bicycle storage, a staff restroom, a covered waiting area, and technology-driven amenities (Lee County 2024). The LeeTran routes will be rerouted to connect to this park-and-ride once the facility is constructed. Passengers traveling from Immokalee to Fort Myers may transfer onto a LeeTran bus at this transfer station.



**Figure 10-1. Proposed UF/IFAS and Lehigh Acres Route with Bus Stops**

Maintenance of each bus stop will be the responsibility of the county agency in which it is located. Thus, the Immokalee Health Department transfer station will remain the responsibility of CAT, and the new Lehigh Acres Transfer Facility will be maintained by LeeTran. The proposed bus stop at the UF/IFAS Satellite Campus is in Collier County and, thus, would be maintained by CAT.

It is recommended to provide, at the minimum, transit service during the peak AM hours and peak PM hours. Refer to Table 10-1 for a recommended route schedule. The proposed route offers 11 hours of daily service, 7 days per week, with 3 hours and 50 minutes of deadhead (includes driving to and from the CAT facility on Radio Road and a daily 2-hour and 10-minute break). The proposed route begins at 6:00 a.m. in Immokalee to provide workers traveling to Lehigh Acres time to travel to work. The last departure from Lehigh Acres is at 6:30 p.m. to provide workers who may be using transit traveling from other areas time to get to the bus stop after a typical workday finishing at 5:00 p.m. For individuals that live in Lehigh Acres and work in Immokalee, the earliest morning bus departs Lehigh Acres at 6:40 a.m., and the latest evening bus departs Immokalee at 5:50 p.m. to accommodate riders who may be traveling to and from other areas. These recommended times are based on a standard work schedule of 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and were compared to existing CAT route schedules. These recommended start and end times align with the existing service hours for other bus routes servicing this area and other parts of Collier County.

The number of service days was determined based on the assumption that the route would operate 7 days per week, except on major holidays when CAT does not offer any bus service. These holidays include New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day (CAT 2023). If CAT wishes to reduce the number of operating days for the new route, it is suggested to limit service on Sundays to not interfere with commuter needs during typical working days.

Table 10-1. Proposed UF/IFAS and Lehigh Acres Route Schedule

Outbound			Inbound				
Immokalee Health Department	Anticipated Drive Time <sup>a</sup>	Lehigh Acres Park-and-Ride Transfer Facility	Anticipated Drive Time <sup>a</sup>	UF/IFAS Satellite Campus	Anticipated Drive Time <sup>a</sup>	Immokalee Health Department	Layover
6:00 a.m.	40 minutes	6:40 a.m.	40 minutes	7:20 a.m.	15 minutes	7:35 a.m.	10 minutes
7:45 a.m.	45 minutes	8:30 a.m.	35 minutes	9:05 a.m.	10 minutes	9:15 a.m.	10 minutes
9:25 a.m.	40 minutes	10:05 a.m.	35 minutes	10:40 a.m.	10 minutes	10:50 a.m.	130 minutes
1:00 p.m.	40 minutes	1:40 p.m.	35 minutes	2:15 p.m.	10 minutes	2:25 p.m.	10 minutes
2:35 p.m.	40 minutes	3:15 p.m.	35 minutes	3:50 p.m.	10 minutes	4:00 p.m.	10 minutes
4:10 p.m.	45 minutes	4:55 p.m.	35 minutes	5:30 p.m.	10 minutes	5:40 p.m.	10 minutes
5:50 p.m.	40 minutes	6:30 p.m.	30 minutes	7:00 p.m.	10 minutes	7:10 p.m.	

<sup>a</sup> Anticipated drive time is estimated based on Google Maps drive time at each departure time period, using the longest duration from the range identified. An additional 5 minutes was added to the drive time to account for traffic delays.

Note: Proposed schedule and number of trips are subject to change based on public input for service needs.

## **10.2 Layover and Rest Areas**

It is recommended to hold the layover/rest area at the new Immokalee Health Department transfer station once it is constructed. Since the route is primarily intended to assist with workforce commutes, an additional layover is proposed between 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. However, it is recommended to adjust the proposed schedule and number of trips based on public input for service needs, then reevaluate once the route is implemented based on passenger count data.

## **10.3 Vehicles**

At least one vehicle will need to be purchased to operate this new route. Based on CAT's fleet size and the number of vehicles operating at the same time, a second bus may also be evaluated to ensure there are sufficient buses in adequate condition to serve all CAT routes, while keeping up with backup vehicle requirements and maintenance needs. CAT currently uses the Jacksonville Transit Authority (JTA) agreement for purchasing new buses.

Since CAT stores all their buses at the CAT Operations Facility on Radio Road, the bus operating this proposed route will return to the CAT facility each evening after the last service, as the Immokalee Circulator (Route 23) does. If Collier County's Fleet location in Immokalee is improved to include a CAT storage facility in the future, it is recommended to store the bus at that location.

## **10.4 Recommended Public Outreach**

It is recommended to collect input on specific details of the route before a new bus route is introduced to obtain feedback from riders anticipated to use the proposed route. A public survey is recommended to obtain input on preferred times of service, service frequency, and stops and to provide insight into the anticipated demand for the proposed route and to evaluate adjustments to the proposed route based on public comment.

Feedback should be solicited both online and in person. The online surveys are recommended to have English and Spanish versions available, along with an option for Creole translation. In-person surveys are recommended at select bus stops in Immokalee and Lehigh Acres. Since both areas have large Spanish-speaking populations, it is recommended in-person surveys be performed by a bilingual staff member.



## 11. Cost Estimate and Funding Needs

Table 11-1 provides the daily revenue and platform miles and hours per vehicle used to develop the cost estimate. Revenue and platform miles were determined using Google Maps, and hours were derived from the sample schedule shown in Table 10-1.

**Table 11-1. Daily Revenue and Platform Miles and Hours for the UF/IFAS and Lehigh Acres Route**

Travel Type	Miles	Travel Type	Hours
Daily Revenue Miles	333.3	Daily Revenue Hours	11.0
Deadhead Miles	87.2	Deadhead Hours	3.8
Daily Platform Miles	420.5	Daily Platform Hours	14.8

Tables 11-2 and 11-3 provide conceptual-level cost estimates for implementing the new regional route based on anticipated capital and annual operating expenses. The capital and annual operating costs were developed assuming only one new bus will be purchased to operate the route. If a second bus is purchased, the capital and operating costs will need to be updated to reflect an additional vehicle and its associated costs.

**Table 11-2. Capital Cost Estimate for the UF/IFAS and Lehigh Acres Route**

Expense	Cost
30-foot Diesel Bus	\$571,000.00
Fare Collection Equipment	\$7,700.00
Bus Stop Improvements <sup>a</sup> (UF/IFAS satellite campus bus stop only)	\$50,000.00
<b>Total Capital Cost (2024 Dollars)</b>	<b>\$628,700.00</b>

<sup>a</sup>Includes design and permitting

The initial capital cost of implementing this new service is estimated at \$628,700. The cost of a new bus was determined from CAT’s existing contract with JTA, in which CAT is contracted to purchase new buses for approximately \$571,000 (Showalter, pers. comm. 2024). Cost of fare collection equipment was estimated using Collier County Contract No. 18-7266 pricing for Masabi hardware and software and accounted for inflation from 2018 to 2024 using an inflation factor from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. The cost for farebox equipment includes onboard validators, software license fees, mobile routers, internal Wi-Fi antennas, and external cellular and global positioning system antennas and excluded the one-time implementation cost for deploying a new farebox collection system for CAT as identified in the contract.

Since the planned improvements for the Immokalee Health Department Transfer Facility and the Lehigh Acres Park-and-Ride Transfer Facility will include amenities such as signage, shelter and benches, trash cans, and boarding and alighting (B&A) areas, bus stop improvements were not included as a capital cost at these two bus stops. The capital cost only includes costs associated with bus stop improvements at the proposed UF/IFAS Satellite Campus bus stop. Although it is recommended to evaluate passenger count data before installing additional amenities beyond signage, bus stop improvements including a shelter, trash can, bench, B&A area, and curb paint for the CAT logo design were included for estimating purposes. Costs for bus stop improvements were determined based on recent project cost data. Any right-of-way or easement requirements to construct bus stop amenities at the UF/IFAS Satellite Campus bus stop in

compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards will need to be evaluated based on existing right-of-way and survey data and were not included in the cost of bus stop improvements.

Based on the *Useful Life of Transit Buses and Vans Report*, the expected life of a 30-foot diesel bus is approximately 12 years but may vary based on factors such as mileage, and the expected life for a fare collection device is approximately 7 years (FTA 2007). Useful life for bus stop amenities varies based on the type of equipment. Recurring capital costs will need to be accounted for based on the useful life of the equipment or amenities.

**Table 11-3. Annual Operating Cost Estimate by Revenue and Platform Hours for the UF/IFAS and Lehigh Acres Route**

<b>Annual Cost Type</b>	<b>Annual Operating Cost</b>
Total operating cost per revenue hour	\$450,000.00
Total deadhead cost (hours)	\$155,000.00
<b>Total operating cost per platform hour</b>	<b>\$605,000.00</b>

The annual operating cost for the new route is estimated at \$605,000 and was developed using data provided by CAT. CAT's current operating cost for a route is approximately \$112 per hour (Showalter, pers. comm. 2024). This operating cost was used to determine the yearly operating cost for the proposed route based on its daily hours of operation and number of service days per year. Annual operating costs include but are not limited to diesel fuel, materials and supplies, maintenance, and bus operator salaries.

## **12. Funding Opportunities**

Tables 12-1 and 12-2 identify a list of potential federal and state funding opportunities for the new regional route. Potential federal and state grant funding opportunities were identified from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and FDOT. Since the proposed route uses SR 29 and SR 82, both of which are identified within the FDOT's State Highway System, additional funding options are available at the state level. Terms and conditions should be evaluated, which may include requirements such as matching federal and state funding with local funds.

## 12.1 Federal Funding

Funding opportunities are available at the federal level from the FTA. Potential grants to help fund the proposed regional corridor are summarized in Table 12-1.

Table 12-1. Federal Funding Programs

Federal Funding Program	Agency	Description	Terms	Potential Eligible Status	Website Source
Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities Program – 5339(b)	FTA	This program provides funding opportunities for capital projects associated with replacing, rehabilitating, and/or purchasing buses and other related equipment.	<p>Funds remain available for obligation for four fiscal years.</p> <p>The federal share of eligible capital costs is limited to 80%, or 85% of the cost of a low- or no-emission transit bus.</p>	<p><i>Eligible Projects:</i> Purchasing buses to operate the new regional route.</p> <p><i>Eligible Recipients:</i> Local government entities that operate fixed-route bus service.</p>	<a href="https://www.transit.dot.gov/bus-program">https://www.transit.dot.gov/bus-program</a>
Low or No Emission Grant Program – 5339(c)	FTA	This program provides funding to state and local governments for the purchase or lease of zero- or low-emission transit buses and related supporting facilities.	<p>The federal share of the cost of leasing or purchasing a transit bus is not to exceed 85% of the total cost of the total transit bus. The federal share in the cost of leasing or acquiring low- or no-emission bus-related equipment and facilities is 90% of the net project cost.</p> <p>The bus purchased using these funds must be a zero- or low-emission vehicle.</p>	<p><i>Eligible Projects:</i> Purchasing zero- or low-emission transit buses to operate the new regional route. Note: CAT could use this grant to purchase a zero-emission bus to operate an existing route best served by zero emissions (with access to charging), then use another bus within the fleet for this proposed route.</p> <p><i>Eligible Recipients:</i> Direct or designated recipients of FTA grants; local government authorities.</p>	<a href="https://www.transit.dot.gov/lowno">https://www.transit.dot.gov/lowno</a>

Federal Funding Program	Agency	Description	Terms	Potential Eligible Status	Website Source
Formula Grants for Rural Areas - 5311	FTA	Aids states to support public transportation in rural areas with populations of less than 50,000, where many residents rely on public transit.	<p>Federal share is 80% for capital projects and 50% for operating assistance.</p> <p>States must spend at least 15% of their yearly apportionment on the development of intercity public transportation.</p>	<p><i>Eligible Projects:</i>                      Planning; Public transportation capital projects; operating costs of equipment and facilities for use in public transportation.                      Note: The population of Immokalee is less than 50,000.</p> <p><i>Eligible Recipients:</i>                      States; subrecipients include state or local government authorities and public transit agencies.</p>	<p><a href="https://www.transit.dot.gov/rural-formula-grants-5311">https://www.transit.dot.gov/rural-formula-grants-5311</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grants/fact-sheet-formula-grants-rural-areas">https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grants/fact-sheet-formula-grants-rural-areas</a></p>

## 12.2 State Funding

Funding opportunities at the state level are offered through FDOT. Potential funding opportunities are summarized in Table 12-2.

Table 12-2. State Funding Programs

State Funding Program	Agency	Description	Terms	Potential Eligible Status	Website Source
Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP)	FDOT	Encourages regional planning by providing state matching funds for improvements to regionally significant transportation facilities.	<p>The FDOT will pay up to 50% of the non-federal share of project costs for public transportation facility projects. Eligible projects must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Serve national, state, or regional functions as an integrated system.</li> <li>▪ Be identified in the local government’s comprehensive plan as a capital improvement (in compliance with Part II, Chapter 163, F.S.).</li> <li>▪ Be identified in the MPO’s LRTP, STIP, and TIP.</li> <li>▪ Align with the Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) (Section 339.64, F.S.).</li> <li>▪ Comply with local policies regarding corridor management.</li> <li>▪ Have local, regional, or private matching funds.</li> </ul> <p>Requires participants to form an interlocal agreement and develop a transportation plan that prioritizes regionally significant facilities.</p>	<p><i>Eligible Projects:</i> Costs associated with forming an interlocal agreement between separate transportation jurisdictions for a regional transit route. Capital costs associated with the regional transit route (includes buses, equipment, and bus stop facilities).</p> <p><i>Eligible Recipients:</i> Two or more contiguous MPOs; one or more MPOs and one or more contiguous counties that are not members of an MPO; two or more contiguous counties that are not members of an MPO.</p>	<p><a href="https://www.fdot.gov/programmanagement/LP/TRIP/Default.shtm">https://www.fdot.gov/programmanagement/LP/TRIP/Default.shtm</a></p> <p><a href="https://fdotwww.blob.core.windows.net/sitefinity/docs/default-source/programmanagement/lp/trip/tripfactsheet2019.pdf?sfvrsn=de1eb8_8">https://fdotwww.blob.core.windows.net/sitefinity/docs/default-source/programmanagement/lp/trip/tripfactsheet2019.pdf?sfvrsn=de1eb8_8</a></p> <p><a href="https://m.flsenate.gov/Statutes/339.2819">https://m.flsenate.gov/Statutes/339.2819</a></p>

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State Funding Program	Agency	Description	Terms	Potential Eligible Status	Website Source
State Infrastructure Bank (SIB) Loans	FDOT	Provides loans and credit enhancements for transportation improvement projects. Provides 50% of project cost or 50% of non-federal share. Includes flexible repayment plans.	<p>Projects must benefit mobility or be on the State Highway System (SHS). Projects from TRIP are also eligible.</p> <p>Projects must meet guidelines under Title 23, United States Code (USC) or be eligible capital projects defined under Section 5032 or Title 49 USC.</p>	<p><i>Eligible Projects:</i> Capital projects associated with purchasing equipment for public transit use (includes buses). Projects that seek to improve public transportation service (includes bus shelters).</p> <p><i>Eligible Recipients:</i> Public transit agencies.</p>	<p><a href="https://www.fdot.gov/commptroller/pfo/sib.shtm">https://www.fdot.gov/commptroller/pfo/sib.shtm</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.fdot.gov/commptroller/pfo/sib-fags.shtm">https://www.fdot.gov/commptroller/pfo/sib-fags.shtm</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/49/5302">https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/49/5302</a></p>
State Public Transit Block Grant Program	FDOT	FDOT awards funds eligible by FTA Sections 5311 and 5339.	Must be incorporated into MPO plan and TIP. Design, construction, and land acquisition of public transit facility capital projects.	<p><i>Eligible Projects:</i> Purchasing buses to operate the new regional route; Public transportation capital projects; operating costs of equipment and facilities for use in public transportation. Note: The population of Immokalee is less than 50,000.</p> <p><i>Eligible Recipients:</i> Public transit agencies.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Welcome/index.cfm">http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Welcome/index.cfm</a> (under 341.052 f.s.)</p>

F.S. = Florida Statute; STIP = State Transportation Improvement Program; TIP = Transportation Improvement Program

## 13. Conclusion and Recommendations

With the growth in both Collier County and Lee County, the need for additional regional transit options has increased. The O-D pair that demonstrated the most significant need was Immokalee and Lehigh Acres. This route was identified as a transit need in both the CAT and LeeTran TDPs, and both Immokalee and Lehigh Acres demonstrate a significant transit need, with large portions of their populations reporting they rely on public transit as their main mode of transportation. Additionally, there is currently no public transit route that connects these two areas directly. It is recommended that CAT pursue implementing the proposed UF/IFAS and Lehigh Acres Route to provide this transit connection between Collier and Lee counties.

The proposed route is recommended to follow a separate fare structure, where the route is owned and operated by CAT, and CAT will:

- Charge CAT fares aboard the regional bus
- Retain all revenue collected through the route

It is recommended to collect public outreach on specific details of the proposed route to obtain feedback on preferred times of service, frequency, and stops and to obtain insight on anticipated demand. In addition, costs should be evaluated after public feedback is collected if additional stops are requested which may increase the routes travel distance and impact operating time. With the introduction of this proposed regional transit service, commuters will have access to a direct route connecting Immokalee and Lehigh Acres. As a result, the proposed route will support economic growth between these communities and provide needed connectivity for commuters who rely on public transit.



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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**  
**REPORTS & PRESENTATIONS**  
**ITEM 8B**

**Transit Development Plan Update**

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**OBJECTIVE:** For the Committee to receive a report on the Transit Development Plan.

**CONSIDERATIONS:** The MPO-funded Major Update to Collier Area Transit’s (CAT) Transit Development Plan (TDP) is underway. Stantec is the consultant. The TDP is updated every five years and incorporated in the MPO’s Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). The TDP provides a ten-year plan for transit and mobility needs, cost and revenue projections, and community transit goals, objectives, and policies.

Development of the TDP, which is anticipated to be completed in June of 2025, will include various public participation and input opportunities. Anyone interested in being included in notifications for public participation and input opportunities can notify Collier MPO ([collier.mpo@colliercountyfl.gov](mailto:collier.mpo@colliercountyfl.gov) or 239-252-5850) or simply monitor the “Latest News” section of Collier MPO’s website (<https://www.colliermpo.org>).

The TDP is jointly managed by the MPO and the County Public Transportation and Neighborhood Enhancement Division. The Project Managers are Dusty Hansen and Alexander Showalter.

Staff will provide a brief status report at the meeting.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** N/A. Report for informational purposes.

**ATTACHMENT(S):**

None.

Prepared By: Anne McLaughlin, MPO Director