

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
Committee Action
Item 6a
Update on Transit Development Plan (TDP) Process

Objective:

To provide an update on the Transit Development Plan (TDP) Process.

Considerations:

To receive State Block Grant Funds for transit system operations, each transit agency must develop a Transit Development Plan (TDP) Major Update every five years. The TDP is a 10-year plan for transit needs, cost and revenue projections, and community transit goals, objectives, and policies. The TDP serves as Collier Area Transit's planning, development, and operational guidance document, and the major update is developed in coordination with the MPO's Long-Range Transportation Plan.

CAT Staff has been working with the Consulting Team of Stantec and MPO Staff to update the plan. The consultant has made steady progress on the update by producing the Public Involvement Plan, consistent updates to each section of the TDP, as well as identifying new peers for comparison of transit systems. CAT and the MPO Staff have been providing comments and feedback on these working documents produced so far and ask the PTAC for any further input.

Recommendation:

Review and provide feedback regarding updates to the CAT Major TDP.

Attachments:

1. TDP Mission Goals Objectives Memo
2. TDP Stakeholder Memo Analysis
3. Peer Selection Methodology
4. TDP Situational Appraisal
5. TDP Plans Policies and Programs Memo

Prepared by:  Date: 8/12/2024
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Approved by:  Date: 08/12/2024
Brian Wells, PTNE Division Director

Date: August 1, 2024

Reference: Contract 18-7432 MP Professional Services Library – Metropolitan Planning
Transit Development Plan (TDP) Major Update
Purchase Order/Work Order No. 4500229353
Project No. 33804.6.2.3

Document: Mission, Goals, and Objectives – for review

The Mission, Goals, and Objectives section of the TDP provides guidance on prioritization and decision-making. While they are forward-looking, they also recognize current operational challenges, administrative constraints, and most importantly identify opportunities to improve, become more efficient, and implement effective business controls.

The working group has reviewed the mission, goals, and objectives and provided input. The following represents the updated direction.

Mission, Goals, and Objectives

The vision, mission, goals, and objectives of Collier Area Transit serve an important part of the Transit Development Plan, serving as guidance in the decision-making processes, informing construction of long-term plans, and in consideration of allocating limited resources. Individually, the vision, mission, goals, and objectives serve distinct functions in this guidance. They create an operating framework where the guidance starts with the overarching direction in the vision and mission, identified goals and specific objectives, leading to detailed individual initiatives.

In this major update of the Transit Development Plan, each goal, objective, and initiative has been reviewed and updated. These updates reflect CAT's continued development and efforts towards improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the transit services provided to the residents, visitors, and public in Collier County.

CAT's mission statement provides a direct and concise description of CAT's purpose and principal functions. At the highest level, it provides the largest view of CAT's commitment to its customers and clients, policymakers, and stakeholders. Every decision, plan, and goal reflect CAT's mission and serves to direct the everyday workings of the agency.

CAT's vision statement supports its mission with a forward-looking focus, reflecting the next five to ten years. The vision statement sets the pace and focus directing staff and resources aligning larger policy goals, preparing for emerging trends, and providing a framework for long term investments. Both the mission and vision provide a view of CAT's directives and most importantly, provide the framework for the development of recommendations in this plan. Building on the framework provided by the vision and mission, goals and objectives provide more specificity, adding measurable steps and actions necessary to achieve those goals.

Together, the mission, vision, goals, and objectives provide a necessary evaluation of CAT performance and support comparisons in peer analysis. The goals and objectives provide context for evaluation and support comparisons with similar focus.

How Goals and Objectives are Developed

CAT relies on goals and objectives to aid in the decision-making process. In order to do this, the goals and objectives must remain relative and reflect the current conditions of Collier County and align with the course set by policy makers. Goals and objectives are reviewed annually and updated as needed.

CAT Public Transit Vision

Collier Area Transit provides effective and efficient multimodal mobility services to meet the mobility needs of workers, residents, visitors, to support economic, environmental, and community benefits.

CAT Public Transit Mission

To provide safe, accessible, reliable, convenient, and courteous mobility services to our customers.

Goal 1 Operate reliable, convenient, and cost-effective mobility services that safely and efficiently meet the mobility needs of Collier County’s workers, residents, and visitors.

Objective 1.1 Improve efficiency, service quality, and level of service to adequately serve workers, residents, and visitors while contributing to the economic vitality of the county.

Initiative 1.1.1 Operate east/west corridor service to provide access to jobs, education, healthcare, community services, and recreation.

Initiative 1.1.2 Operate north/south corridor service to provide alternative access to jobs, education, healthcare and community services, and recreation.

Initiative 1.1.3 Improve peak weekday service frequency to 45 minutes or better on CAT routes.

Initiative 1.1.4 Evaluate the feasibility of premium transit services within corridors where density of demand and activity warrants frequent service.

Initiative 1.1.5 Provide mobility-on-demand service in areas with lower density of demand than is productive for fixed route service and to access areas that are not able to be served by fixed route.

Objective 1.2 Provide adequate bus stop amenities at all stops according to bus stop threshold and accessibility guidelines within available fiscal capacity.

- Initiative 1.2.1 Pursue funding and partnership opportunities to maintain and improve existing bus stops. Build on needs plans including the Immokalee Transportation Network which identify gaps.
- Initiative 1.2.2 Install and maintain bus stop amenities in accordance with Title VI Equity Analysis, ADA compliant Passenger Amenities Program and Bus Stop Amenities Guidelines.
- Initiative 1.2.3 Install a minimum of ten ADA-compliant, accessible bus stop shelters per year. Explore opportunities to use tools such as Cartegraph Overall Condition Rating as a measure.
- Initiative 1.2.4 Coordinate and partner with Collier County and local governments to include sidewalks and bus stop shelters in design and construction of roadway projects and new developments.
- Initiative 1.2.5 Monitor and implement the recommendations from the CAT Bus Stop ADA Assessment.

Objective 1.3 Structure transit service with a focus on providing job access for workforce and access to mobility for persons with no or limited access to a private automobile.

- Initiative 1.3.1 Improve transit service for areas with high mobility needs per the transit orientation index (TOI) as identified, updating as census data becomes available.
- Initiative 1.3.2 Provide efficient transit and mobility access to major employment centers, development corridors, and other significant activity centers as funding allows, coordinating with major employers.
- Initiative 1.3.3 Focus transit and mobility services in areas with high employment, and with high dwelling unit densities with connections to targeted job-housing locations to serve the workforce, including Golden Gate Estates and areas located in the eastern portion of the county.
- Initiative 1.3.4 Focus improved service frequency on transit routes that serve high mobility needs communities; target service frequency of hourly or better where demand and fiscal capacity allow; apply mobility on demand solutions for areas with lower population densities and where fixed-route service is not productive and cost-effective.

Objective 1.4 Create an optimized interconnected multimodal mobility network designed to fit the range of needs and conditions for the service market.

- Initiative 1.4.1 Coordinate with FDOT Commuter Services to promote, enhance and expand carpool and vanpool strategies and services to connect workforce communities with employment locations within the service area; identify properties for park-and-ride in areas with high mobility demand as funding is available. Implement recommendations from the current park-and-ride study.
- Initiative 1.4.2 Coordinate with the CAT Connect paratransit program to identify and target areas with high transportation disadvantaged (TD) ridership and lower density of demand and develop programs to shift TD riders to a mobility on demand for all solutions with connections to the fixed-route network.
- Initiative 1.4.3 Require local governments and FDOT to provide accessible sidewalks, bus stops, and other bus stop improvements within roadway projects and all new developments.
- Initiative 1.4.4 Coordinate with community improvement organizations that support investments in enhanced mobility such as: the Immokalee CRA, Bayshore Gateway Triangle CRA, Naples CRA, Opportunity Naples, Golden Gate Estates Civic, Immokalee Chamber of Commerce, and the Greater Naples Chamber of Commerce to affect improvements in mobility through increased funding participation, roadway and sidewalk improvements, new developments, to assure transit and mobility services are integral to economic development planning and decision-making.
- Initiative 1.4.5 Make transit and mobility reviews a part of the development and redevelopment review and approval process within the county and cities. Require development community, as part of the development review and approval process, follow guidelines on bus stop siting and design, land use, and roadway design factors that affect transit design; and to coordinate with CAT for transit services during the development process. Include CAT as a reviewing agency within the development review and approval process. Consider adding a transit component to traffic impact studies.
- Initiative 1.4.6 Develop and adopt a transit level of service (LOS) policy and guidance to provide a framework and metrics for improving, modifying, funding transit services through coordination with the Growth Management Division.

Objective 1.5 Provide coordinated transportation services between Collier and adjacent counties to support workforce commutes to major employment centers and facilitate connections to both transit networks in support of regional economic and community benefits.

- Initiative 1.5.1 Identify high travel volumes between Collier and adjacent counties; develop regional services for travel markets that have high transit propensity and support regional community and economic benefits, including Immokalee and East Naples communities, key destinations in Lee County including SW Florida Regional Airport (RSW) and VA facilities.
- Initiative 1.5.2 Coordinate with LeeTran and FDOT to identify funding for expanding cross-county public transportation services.

Objective 1.6 Enhance transit services targeted at tourists, seasonal residents, and the workforce that supports this market.

- Initiative 1.6.1 Broadcast CAT television commercials, radio advertisements, digital advertisements, and social media advertising, monitor ridership in relation to marketing and advertising efforts to determine ridership increases attributable to marketing efforts.
- Initiative 1.6.2 Develop CAT branded services and amenities within the coastal markets to better attract ridership by visitors, seasonal residents, and workers.

Objective 1.7 Enhance awareness of CAT services and accessibility to service information for riders, workers, residents, and visitors.

- Initiative 1.7.1 Continue to leverage technology applications to increase and enhance awareness of CAT services and to connect riders with CAT services.
- Initiative 1.7.2 Obtain professional services for a market study and development of marketing strategies and best practices to increase awareness of CAT, CAT services, CAT image, and increase market share in terms of model split ridership. This effort should leverage use of technology, social media, transitional media, branding, and develop and provide strategies to attract interest in CAT to build choice ridership and build the image of CAT as a service.
- Initiative 1.7.3 Continue to partner with the Chamber of Commerce to develop and disseminate information and materials to businesses, residents, and visitors about the value of CAT services, the benefits of riding CAT, and information about how to access and use CAT services.

Initiative 1.7.4 Provide travel training for persons interested in using the CAT system. Develop a train-the-trainer program to create ambassadors for transit services.

Initiative 1.7.5 Conduct outreach activities at community events, schools, and other organizations to teach students and the public how to use CAT and the benefits of CAT services.

Initiative 1.7.6 Coordinate with County Public Information to garner relationships with local media and news outlets to keep the community aware and involved.

Goal 2 Increase the resiliency of Collier County, protecting our infrastructure and natural resources, by providing attractive and convenient mobility alternatives that will reduce adverse carbon and environmental impacts within our communities.

Objective 2.1 Provide services and programs to reduce vehicle miles traveled with Collier County.

Initiative 2.1.1 Coordinate with the Collier MPO's Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee and local non-profit and/or-profit groups to expand the use of bicycles as a commute and mobility option, including bicycle share programs.

Initiative 2.1.2 Coordinate with Collier County Driver License and Motor Vehicle Service Centers to promote CAT fixed-route services to person unable to obtain a driver's license or with an unsafe and/or inoperable vehicle.

Initiative 2.1.3 Encourage and support partnerships with stakeholders, including employers and conduct outreach at major activity centers (educational, government, healthcare, retail, residential, commercial) to provide education and awareness of CAT services and benefits, and incentives to use CAT services rather than drive.

Objective 2.2 Design mobility service to reduce environmental impacts.

Initiative 2.2.1 Transition fleet to alternative fuels vehicles.

Initiative 2.2.2 Transition to smaller cleaner vehicles and match service delivery to demand by time of day using a mobility on demand strategy where and when service area and demand characteristics warrant; this may include converting low productivity (appropriate sized) fixed-route service to mobility on demand and/or transitioning fixed route to mobility and on demand at certain times of the day.

Objective 2.3 Improve resiliency for extreme weather events and changing environment, supporting emergency preparedness and resiliency.

Initiative 2.3.1 Use electric vehicles as back-up power for emergency facilities.

Initiative 2.3.2 Explore solar powered canopies to energize the maintenance building and buses and provide shade.

Goal 3 Build meaningful partnerships that increase awareness and education of and about mobility options and increase the viability of mobility services to promote livability and enhance economic and social well-being.

Objective 3.1 Develop marketing strategies to increase awareness of CAT services and to increase ridership.

Initiative 3.1.1 Participate in local job fairs and outreach/partnerships with employers to increase knowledge about the transit system and to encourage use.

Initiative 3.1.2 Develop marketing materials and programs to demonstrate the value and role of transit as a mobility option, including benefits accruing to personal finances, access to opportunities, and reduction of regional carbon emissions.

Initiative 3.1.3 Continue CAT outreach strategies including public relations campaign, television, radio, and social media advertisements, designed to promote transit ridership along service corridors and promote sustainability, enhancing CAT visibility.

Initiative 3.1.4 Conduct an on-going program of outreach and education targeted at governments, employers, community organizations, community services, healthcare services to build and foster partnership to provide, fund, and support mobility services.

Objective 3.2 Focus intergovernmental relationships to improve and expand regional mobility.

Initiative 3.2.1 Continue to coordinate and partner with LeeTran to improve and expand cross-country 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 access to key activity centers.

Initiative 3.2.2 Coordinate with FDOT Commuter Services to enhance and expand carpool, vanpool and other strategies and services to connect workforce communities with employment locations within the region; identify properties for park-and-ride lots in areas with high mobility demand as funding is available.

Goal 4 Coordinate the development and provision of mobility services with local, regional, state planning efforts and through public and private partnerships.

Objective 4.1 Coordinate integrated land use and transportation planning efforts to incorporate transit needs into the development review and approval process.

Initiative 4.1.1 Work with Collier County to implement recommendations listed in the Collier County Transit Impact Analysis.

Initiative 4.1.2 Participate in planning and development review meetings to ensure that county and city policies support transit services and funding needs.

Initiative 4.1.3 Meet quarterly with staff from the Collier County Transportation Engineering and Planning departments to identify upcoming utilities, roadway, and/or stormwater projects, planning studies, and site developments that will affect the provision of transit services.

Initiative 4.1.4 Coordinate with Community Development to draft a Transit Element or a transit sub-element within the Transportation Element or incorporated alternative means alternative means of transportation into the Growth Management Plan through other appropriate modifications.

Goal 5 Use technologies and innovation in service deliver to improve productivity, efficiency, reliability, and cost-effectiveness of mobility services and operations.

Objective 5.1 Explore, monitor, test, and deploy technology applications to enhance mobility services, increase awareness of CAT services, and ease of access to CAT services.

Initiative 5.1.1 Improve customer information systems, including at kiosks and on the CAT website, through directly curated and through available mobile applications, to enhance availability of and access to CAT service information and trip planning, to support increased ridership.

Initiative 5.1.2 Explore and acquire cloud-based Software as a Service (SaaS) and/or Mobility as a Service (MaaS) functionalities to support mobility on demand services, directly operated and/or operated through contract or partnership, to serve the public and augment or replace ADA paratransit services where and when warranted based on costs, productivity, and service quality.

Goal 6 Monitor and improve mobility service quality and service standards.

Objective 6.1 Develop ongoing processes to measure and monitor service quality.

- Initiative 6.1.1 Use a Route Monitoring System to examine fixed-route services on an annual basis and make revisions to low-performing services as needed, including transition to mobility on demand solutions where and when warranted.
- Initiative 6.1.2 Conduct surveys at least every two years to obtain passenger information including user demographics, travel behavior characteristics, transfer activity, and user satisfaction.
- Initiative 6.1.3 Maintain an ongoing process public involvement process to solicit and assess input through online reviewed, calls/comment cards, discussion groups, surveys, and CAT booths at community events.
- Initiative 6.1.4 Maintain on ongoing process for operators to communicate transit service comments and suggestions to identify passenger needs and improve services and service performance; comments to be reviewed monthly by service planning and operations.
- Initiative 6.1.5 Manage the CAT fleet of fixed-route vehicles to maintain an average fleet age per the Transit Asset Management (TAM) Plan and the FTA useful life benchmark by vehicle type.
- Initiative 6.1.6 Maintain an ongoing process for operators to communicate potential vehicle maintenance problems to be logged with the preventive maintenance program to identify and invest problems early.

Goal 7 Maximize the use of all funding sources available, including through partnerships with businesses, employers, and other institutions to increase and improve access to mobility services and mobility workers, residents, visitors.

Objective 7.1 Increase and expand revenue sources.

- Initiative 7.1.1 Explore opportunities for generating advertising revenue on and inside the buses.
- Initiative 7.1.2 Educate the public and local decision-makers on the importance of public transportation and the need for financial support.
- Initiative 7.1.3 Submit grant applications available through federal, state, local, and private sources.
- Initiative 7.1.4 Annually seek to identify and obtain available alternative revenue sources for the provision of new and improved transit services.
- Initiative 7.1.5 Serve on and coordinate with the Collier County Tourist Development Council (TDC) and to explore the potential for using tourist development tax revenue to expand and improve transit service for Collier County's tourist and visitors, help enhance awareness of CAT services, develop public-private partnerships to design and fund transit services that serve visitors and employees.
- Initiative 7.1.6 Explore and advocate for opportunities to leverage and enhance share of funding from existing taxes and fees to be assigned to transit. Explore means to secure impact fees, development fees, and new taxes to be secured for supporting transit, maintenance, and expansion of transit services.
- Initiative 7.1.7 Partner with a local non-profit organization to raise funds, underwrite costs of adopting infrastructure for the purpose of "adopting a shelter" or "adopting a rider."

Date: August 1, 2024

Reference: Contract 18-7432 MP Professional Services Library – Metropolitan Planning
Transit Development Plan (TDP) Major Update
Purchase Order/Work Order No. 4500229353
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Document: Stakeholder Interviews 1:1- Interim Analysis

This an early summary of the stakeholder interviews conducted to date. This information will be updated as the remainder of the interviews are conducted.

Stakeholder interviews will begin with a brief introduction and explanation of the work being done on behalf of the Collier MPO and CAT. Interviewer will provide contact information and explain how the responses will be used in the Transit Development Plan. A summary of the interview is provided to the stakeholder for review prior to being finalized.

The following stakeholders have been identified for personal interviews.

Policy Makers:

- Commissioner Rick LoCastro, District 1 ([scheduled](#))
- Commissioner Chris Hall, District 2 ([declined](#))
- Commissioner Burt Sanders, Vice Chair, District 3 ([July 8, 2024](#))
- Commissioner Dan Kowal, District 4 ([July 2, 2024](#))
- Commissioners William McDaniel, District 5 ([July 10, 2024](#))
- Council Member Linda Penniman, City of Naples ([July 3, 2024](#))
- Councilman Berne Barton, City of Naples ([July 2, 2024](#))
- Council Member Greg Folley, City of Marco Island ([no response](#))
- Council Member Tony Pernos, Everglades City ([no response](#))
- Rich Blonna, Marco Island ([July 18, 2024](#))

Community Partners:

- Top private employers (Arthrex), NCH
- School Board, universities and education centers

Interview Questionnaire

Introduction. Collier Area Transit is updating its Transit Development Plan. This is a state requirement which requires a review of the transit agency's performance and development of goals and objectives. As a stakeholder and policymaker, your participation is greatly appreciated. [\(explain how responses will be used\)](#)

1. How familiar are you with transit overall? [\(prompts for overall sentiment towards transit\)](#)
2. Do you have any specific discussion points about transit in Collier Area Transit you would like to raise. [\(asks if there are any identified issues or topics needed to be addressed\)](#)
3. How would you rate your awareness of CAT, are you familiar with how to use transit or where it operates? [\(specific awareness of CAT transit services\)](#)
4. What do you view as the role of transit in Collier? Connect workers with jobs? Primarily for persons without cars? Relief for limited parking, roadway congestion? [\(captures community fit, continues previous stakeholder questions\)](#)
5. What would you consider transit priorities? Increase areas served? Increasing service frequency, adding bus shelters, introducing mobility-on-demand, connecting service with sidewalks, bicycles, and multi-use paths? [\(can support recommendations\)](#)
6. Who should transit target as primary customers? Persons without access to a vehicle, community, the environment, businesses, tourism? [\(identify beneficiaries\)](#)
7. How best do we pay for transit services? User fees? Including improvements through new developments, partnerships with major employers, businesses, institutions, and increased advertising? Is there an opportunity to consider innovative funding strategies to help fund transit? [\(discusses financial options\)](#)
8. Would service expansion be considered if a municipality funded it?
9. Can you comment on the outlook for transit?

Date: July 8, 2024

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Document: Stakeholder Interview – Collier County Commissioner Burt Saunders (Policy Maker)

Commissioner Burt Saunders was interviewed via telephone on July 8, 2024. The interview began with a brief introduction of the Transit Development Plan and the CAT organization. This memo represents a summary of Commissioner Saunders's comments.

Interview Questionnaire

10. How familiar are you with transit overall?

Commissioner Saunders stated the Board of County Commissioners has had several meetings where CATConnect Paratransit Service was discussed. He noted there had been concerns expressed, especially by persons from blind services who experienced trouble with scheduling and routing. Commissioner Saunders stated staff had acknowledged there were opportunities to improve the delivery of services.

Regarding Fixed Route services, Commissioner Saunders stated there is likely a need to expand services to meet growing areas of demand and growth. He noted there are people trying to access jobs at hotels and other service jobs that require a long commute. He observed most of those jobs are in areas away from where the workforce resides. He added many of those workers will rely on transit because it is significantly less expensive than driving a vehicle to those jobs.

Commissioner Saunders referenced FDOT's Commuter Services program as another option for connecting workers with jobs. He stated Commuter Services provides vanpools and carpools which could help meet those demands. He felt this area should be further developed as part of the transit system overall. He added the County could support some of those efforts to address congestion, commuter traffic, and connecting workers with jobs.

11. Do you have any specific discussion points about transit in Collier Area Transit you would like to raise.

Commissioner Saunders commented on CAT overall, stating although he was not familiar with the operational aspect of transit, he felt they were operating well. He noted he has received communications from constituents requesting bus shelters at various locations. He expressed concern over the heat and rain which make waiting for transit difficult on riders. Commissioner Saunders added bus shelters were important to CAT operations and more are needed for persons riding transit in Collier.

12. How would you rate your awareness of CAT, are you familiar with how to use transit or where it operates?

Commissioner Saunders stated he is not particularly familiar with CAT routes in the County. He stated he relies on staff to manage the program and bring forward policy issues. He added he has not ridden transit in Collier but is sufficiently aware of their operations.

13. What do you view as the role of transit in Collier? Connect workers with jobs? Primarily for persons without cars? Relief for limited parking, roadway congestion?

Commissioner Saunders stated CAT has a responsibility to fulfill all those roles including connecting workers with jobs, providing a service for persons without cars, and to address and reduce congestion. He felt all roles should be part of CAT's mission to address transportation needs in the County and it was not necessary to exclude one over another. He stated not one of those roles was more important than another.

Commissioner Saunders stated it was important for CAT to provide various services to relieve congestion, especially during commute times.

14. What would you consider transit priorities? Increase areas served? Increasing service frequency, adding bus shelters, introducing mobility-on-demand, connecting service with sidewalks, bicycles, and multi-use paths?

Commissioner Saunders stated he recognized CAT had several priorities. He noted more fixed route service reaching areas of new development, and adding more service during periods of heavy demand were important and should be prioritized. He added, operating efficiently and effectively were also transit priorities that should be tracked.

He added that there was recognition that Collier County was very spread out and this could be a challenge to provide more fixed route transit service to outlying areas. He felt the demands and challenges of transit need to consider all those priorities.

15. Who should transit target as primary customers? Persons without access to a vehicle, community, the environment, businesses, tourism?

Commissioner Saunders felt all of CAT's customers were important and thought it was not necessary to differentiate between them to provide good services. He stated serving the general public included all of those customers. He noted that the cost of transportation can be very high for some people and should be considered when developing transit services.

He added the benefits of transit extend beyond just the riders. When more people use public transit, it takes vehicles off the road addressing congestion. He noted when connecting people and jobs, both the employers and employees benefit.

Commissioner Saunders commented on FDOT's Commuter Program as a potential solution for addressing some needs at large employers. He felt some employers such as hotels and service industry jobs require transit outside regular commute times, noting nights and weekends or very early mornings. He noted these could be better served by vanpools or similar service.

Commissioner Saunders indicated there was an opportunity to tailor transit service to a community's needs. He was hopeful this would reduce the cost of transportation for users.

16. How best do we pay for transit services? User fees? Including improvements through new developments, partnerships with major employers, businesses, institutions, and increased advertising? Is there an opportunity to consider innovative funding strategies to help fund transit?

Commissioner Saunders did not object to exploring other options for funding transit. He felt there were models around the state that could be explored and studied and developed into options. He stated the State was successfully funding some transit services tied to employers that should be investigated.

17. Would service expansion be considered if a municipality funded it?

Commissioner Saunders stated that while he did not oppose looking into funding participation agreements, he felt this could impact operations. He noted that if some transit was subsidized it could impact the entire system. He stated transit's mission is to replace vehicles on the road and connecting people with jobs and services with reasonable user fees. He stated funding transit was part of funding local government functions.

18. Can you comment on the outlook for transit?

Commissioner Saunders commented that the current environment is focused on cost cutting and not sufficiently on operating efficiently. He stated some elected officials may be looking to eliminate programs that are not self-sustaining. He stated he would not be in favor of reducing transit, but the current climate may not be supportive of service expansion and increases.

He encouraged CAT to align with the business community and their goals.

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Document: Stakeholder Interview Commissioner Dan Kowal (Policy Maker)

Councilman Barton was interviewed on July 2, 2024, via Zoom. The interview began with a brief introduction of the Transit Development Plan and the CAT organization. This memo represents a summary of Councilman Barton's comments.

Interview Questionnaire

19. How familiar are you with transit overall?

Commissioner Kowal stated he had no real experience using the CAT system in the 20+ years of living in Collier County. He noted however, he was familiar with transit and used it often growing up in Pittsburgh. He stated growing up transit was important to him and very valuable especially when he could not drive. He recalled transit being seamless as he traveled between towns, connecting at hubs. He felt it was convenient and a reliable form of transportation.

In Collier however, he felt the operating conditions were too varied, noting how big Collier County was and the mix of rural and urban conditions. He stated people are moving out to rural areas of the County where you are completely car dependent. He noted there are significant gaps where transit may not make sense.

Commissioner Kowal stated there were large swath of populated areas where we need to figure out how to provide resources. He stated CAT needed a targeted plan to get reach people who are very far out, so they do not have to drive everywhere. The County needs to plan for businesses that are relocating to the area to allow them to access more of the workforce. He stated CAT needs to connect centralized service areas and major employers. Commissioner Kowal expressed concern at the number of employers including Arthrex and other new companies that moving to the Ave Maria area with limited transit resources. He stated the economic growth compounded with 2 new towns and 2 more villages with over 9,000 new homes to be built in the area will result in increased demand for all services, including transit. Commissioner Kowal noted this is in addition to the 2 existing industrial parks which continue to grow. He noted, in addition the Great Wolf Lodge, Paradise Sports and a new soccer team franchise, and the numerous new hotels approved and already under construction – all will continue to put pressure on transit to address congestion and connect people, jobs, and places to live.

20. Do you have any specific discussion points about transit in Collier Area Transit you would like to raise.

Commissioner Kowal stated he had no general comments. He felt CAT was well managed.

He noted most recently CATConnect was before the Board. He stated some Lighthouse participants were not happy and had expressed concerns about CATConnect service. He stated some were concerned the routes were inefficient, passing drop off points only to turn around. He stated staff was able to explain the automation that programs trips and address their concerns.

He added that Lighthouse illustrates the future demand of paratransit services. They have approximately between 200 – 300 participants that require disability services and this continues to grow. He explained this creates a need to add more vehicles into service. Commissioner Kowal stated listening to the Lighthouse, he felt more could be done to help the customers understand trip information. He noted the vehicles already have a great deal of technology and he thought it could be used to provide some (audible or visual) queues for passengers to give them trip information while they are onboard.

21. How would you rate your awareness of CAT, are you familiar with how to use transit or where it operates?

Commissioner Kowal stated he generally knows where CAT operates, and he sees the CAT vehicles and bus stops. He felt CAT needs to do prepare for the developing transit in high growth areas. He stated the Board recognizes the opportunity transit provides to address growth and supported giving bonus densities for developments near places where transit is.

He noted on Marco Island, a hotel there had partnered with CAT to accommodate their staff that operated late. He stated this was a good example of an employer working with transit. He wanted to encourage staff to continue to work with employers to connect the workforce with employment opportunities. Commissioner Kowal suggested CAT survey large employers in the area to understand where their workforce is coming from use that data to create transit service that meets their needs.

Commissioner Kowal noted tourist should also use transit. He stated the bed tax collected by the Tourist Development Council could support the demand created in service industry jobs. He felt the funding of transit should be shared across industries that create some of the demand. He expressed concern that transit funding relies too heavily on ad valorem taxes. Commissioner Kowal stated there is an opportunity with all the new hotels (including boutique hotels), manufacturing, and industry coming to Collier to be creative in funding transit.

Commissioner Kowal noted that in his law enforcement background, he saw the opportunity to leverage growth to pursue grants. He felt transit could use grants to build relationships with the private sector to fund transit. He added grants could be used strategically to fund early needs and give programs time to fully develop. He stated a business approach to identifying funding opportunities, including grants would be needed to address growth and demand for transit.

22. What do you view as the role of transit in Collier? Connect workers with jobs? Primarily for persons without cars? Relief for limited parking, roadway congestion?

Commissioner Kowal stated one of transit's primary role should be connecting people with employment opportunities. He added it was important to also provide transit for life sustaining trips and needed community services. He felt this was an important to maintain the quality of life in Collier County.

23. What would you consider transit priorities? Increase areas served? Increasing service frequency, adding bus shelters, introducing mobility-on-demand, connecting service with sidewalks, bicycles, and multi-use paths?

Commissioner Kowal stated those all could be priorities. However, he was aware of the need for shared bike paths, sidewalks, and shared-use paths in areas to the east of the County. He stated there are people living near Naples that bicycle to work. He added, CAT needs to understand where the daily travelers are going and support as much of that as possible. He cautioned against trying to serve all areas in Collier County, especially where there is low ridership. He noted, with limited resources you need to address areas where you can serve the highest number of people and have the greatest impact – connecting people with jobs.

24. Who should transit target as primary customers? Persons without access to a vehicle, community, the environment, businesses, tourism?

Commissioner Kowal stated he recognized there are people in Collier County who depend on public transit for life sustaining trips. He felt this was an important service. He added service industry jobs rely that rely on transit including school workers, restaurant servers, and housekeepers are important people to serve.

25. How best do we pay for transit services? User fees? Including improvements through new developments, partnerships with major employers, businesses, institutions, and increased advertising? Is there an opportunity to consider innovative funding strategies to help fund transit?

Commissioner Kowal felt that diversifying how transit is funded was important. He felt connecting the demand, including with large employers, with providing the service needed to be addressed. He stated leveraging grants to offset some initial investment costs was a good business practice. He felt state and federal grants could be leveraged with public-private partnerships if they could be sustained. He felt the continued growth in the County would increase demand for transit, and that needed to be planned for.

26. Would service expansion be considered if a municipality funded it?

He felt that this warranted more discussion because municipalities represented a relatively small segment within county. He contrasted this with most of the Collier County being unincorporated citing Immokalee as an example. He stated Immokalee would benefit from more transit than most of the incorporated cities. He recognized Immokalee does not have a large tax base that could contribute so he questioned how effective that would be. He thought it should be vetted for future consideration. He felt addressing how larger businesses that are creating demand for transit could contribute could be a better focus.

27. Can you comment on the outlook for transit?

Commissioner Kowal felt the outlook for transit included continued growth in the East and Northeast portions of the County. He felt that with this growth, transit should be preparing to address demand with transit hubs. He stated connecting new growth areas with services was important to addressing congestion.

Date: July 10, 2024

Reference: Contract 18-7432 MP Professional Services Library – Metropolitan Planning
Transit Development Plan (TDP) Major Update
Purchase Order/Work Order No. 4500229353
Project No. 33804.6.2.3

Document: Stakeholder Interview Collier County Commissioner William McDaniel (Policy Maker)

Commissioner William (Bill) McDaniel was interviewed via telephone on July 10, 2024. The interview began with a brief introduction of the Transit Development Plan and the CAT organization. This memo represents a summary of Commissioner McDaniel's comments.

Interview Questionnaire

28. How familiar are you with transit overall?

Commissioner McDaniel indicated he is not too familiar with CAT operations in any detail. He knows it is an important community service. He noted there has not been a great deal of discussion about transit as in the past.

29. Do you have any specific discussion points about transit in Collier Area Transit you would like to raise.

Commissioner McDaniel stated he understood the constraints of transit operating in Collier County. He noted Collier's geography and widely disbursed population areas, lower density were challenges for transit. He compared more densely populated areas such as Miami and other large cities where the intensity of development and congestion make transit more viable.

Commissioner McDaniel provided an example, noting a resident who needs to take several buses with long connections when traveling in from Immokalee. He felt this use of transit in this case was cumbersome and difficult for people who rely on public transit. He felt there should be better, more efficient options, especially when considering the expense. He added there is a role for transportation companies such as Uber to meet some of those needs more efficiently.

30. How would you rate your awareness of CAT, are you familiar with how to use transit or where it operates?

Commissioner McDaniel stated CAT had good visibility. He noted, no operation is perfect working 100% of the time. He added they were performing as expected.

Commissioner McDaniel stated transit met a need for persons who cannot afford a car or cannot drive for a variety of reasons. He noted, especially for persons with limited mobility, the very elderly, and persons with developmental disabilities, transit is providing an important service.

He added overall as Collier County continues experience continued growth; he expects transit to help reduce the strain on roadways and other transportation infrastructure.

31. What do you view as the role of transit in Collier? Connect workers with jobs? Primarily for persons without cars? Relief for limited parking, roadway congestion?

Commissioner McDaniel felt all the above roles represented important considerations. He felt no one role should be prioritized, rather a rational business approach to meeting needs and demands should be developed and pursued. He noted each role has different needs and resources should be directed in an efficient manner.

32. What would you consider transit priorities? Increase areas served? Increasing service frequency, adding bus shelters, introducing mobility-on-demand, connecting service with sidewalks, bicycles, and multi-use paths?

Commissioner McDaniel noted it was difficult to prioritize one need over another. He stated these likely all represented an area that needed to be considered when budgeting and allocating resources. He noted the operational efficiency of transit including downtime, area covered (land mass), and frequency needs to be discussed.

He noted this question should consider the importance of regional coordination with Lee County. Speaking to church group in Immokalee, he was made aware of the need for additional connecting service between Lehigh Acres and Immokalee. He stated he would like to see an additional route connecting to Lee County where there is significantly more affordable housing. He added both communities would benefit greatly from more transportation options.

33. Who should transit target as primary customers? Persons without access to a vehicle, community, the environment, businesses, tourism?

Commissioner McDaniel commented, that just like the previous question, CAT needs to consider all customers in the development of its services. He stated while there is no one-size fits all, transit systems should have options and alternatives that serve demand with the appropriate size vehicle, service, and resources.

Commissioner McDaniel added the state has several programs including vanpools that he felt reflected the need for different options. He stated vanpools worked directly with employers to address their needs and their workforce. He noted this is an example where the service and vehicle met the need of the customer. He commented both the rider and the employer benefited from the service.

34. How best do we pay for transit services? User fees? Including improvements through new developments, partnerships with major employers, businesses, institutions, and increased advertising? Is there an opportunity to consider innovative funding strategies to help fund transit?

Commissioner McDaniel stated there was no “best” way to pay for transit. He felt transit was increasingly an expensive service that competed for other county needs. He recognized that user fees needed to be a part of providing service.

Commissioner McDaniel recognized there was an economic balance to be maintained. Transit services should be priced to encourage the use of public transit, making it more desirable than driving a single occupancy vehicle that adds to congestions, traffic, and pollution.

He added there was a financial benefit to transit relieving the demand and congestion on roads and potentially delaying costly investments in the construction of more transportation infrastructure.

Commissioner McDaniel stated there should be more discussion on transit financing, options, and the use of incentives to drive ridership. He added he would like to a more discussion surrounding equitable user fees rather than just a flat fee regardless of cost. He noted there did not appear to be any discussion regarding incentives. He stated he would not support a mandate that asked municipalities to contribute to transit funding.

35. Would service expansion be considered if a municipality funded it?

Commissioner McDaniel responded he could envision where a municipality may have a specialized need that they would want to fund. He mentioned how Marco Island as a barrier island could have a need related to the service industry jobs located there and the need to bring workers onto the island. He stressed this would have to be studied and a strong business case presented for it have support.

36. Can you comment on the outlook for transit?

Commissioner McDaniel felt the outlook for transit will focus on transitioning. He felt with the increasing use of artificial intelligence (AI) and connected and automated vehicles (AV), significant changes can be expected. He noted public transit needs to be on the forefront of technology to help build a more responsive and efficient system. He noted there had been some discussion regarding technology and the scheduling software, but he felt it was still developing.

Commissioner McDaniel expressed concern over the cost and expense of providing transit service. He felt there was insufficient information presented for policymakers to consider. He noted other areas discussion cost-benefit ratios that help to justify continued investments and expansion of services. He did not feel he had that information when discussing transit services.

He acknowledged, providing transit in Collier County was challenging with a population distribution that was cumbersome due to the layout of the county. He noted there weren't concentrated areas of high density that needed to be served by transit. Rather, he commented, Collier's population and even growth patterns appear to be disbursed throughout the County.

Commissioner McDaniel expressed frustration at how some studies were presented to the Board of County Commissioners. He referred to a regional fare study that did not concern operational perspective of charging fares. Rather, the study focused on rider sentiment which was biased.

He added, the Board has not seen a study where the cost benefit analysis for transit has been presented. He felt the Board needed to fully understand how the investments in transit were balanced against the services provided in a variety of areas. He noted there were some intrinsic fixed costs which should be balanced against benefits such as reducing congestion and pollution. He stated he has never seen an analysis of that kind.

Commissioner McDaniel added, the idea of employer contributions may be neutral. He noted employers can subsidize transit, but they will equally pay higher wages to attract talent. He stated businesses see this as a cost of doing business in place like Collier County.

Commissioner McDaniel gave an example, noting he did not know what the annual ridership of CAT was. He felt this information provided important context in decision making. He felt business metrics such as the rate of return on transit investments should be part of any recommendation. He felt discussions regarding route changes and timing needed to be considered as business decisions. He noted he could not recall ever having those discussions, adding as technology helps with operational efficiency, there was an opportunity to measure productivity and see improvements.

Overall, Commissioner McDaniel stated he was neither optimistic nor pessimistic about the future of transit. Rather, he stated he wanted to see more information with a stronger business model for evaluating performance.

Date: July 3, 2024

Reference: Contract 18-7432 MP Professional Services Library – Metropolitan Planning
Transit Development Plan (TDP) Major Update
Purchase Order/Work Order No. 4500229353
Project No. 33804.6.2.3

Document: Stakeholder Interview Council Member Linda Penniman, City of Naples (Policy Maker)

Council Member Linda Penniman was interviewed via telephone on July 3, 2024. The interview began with a brief introduction of the Transit Development Plan and the CAT organization. This memo represents a summary of Council Member Penniman's comments.

Interview Questionnaire

37. How familiar are you with transit overall?

Council Member Penniman started the interview commenting on the evolving role of e-bikes. She wanted to stress that a discussion on e-bikes and their role within the transportation network and particularly within transit should be further explored. She noted that FDOT has a white paper on e-bikes and this information should be shared and discussed at the Collier MPO. She added that e-bikes can be a transportation alternative allowing the workforce to access more jobs, create more flexibility, and connect more people with jobs. She felt there had not been sufficient information and discussion on their emerging role.

Council Member Penniman stated her familiarity with CAT primarily came from her role at the MPO. She felt there had been a great deal of discussion on serving people with handicaps, limited mobility and with no other transportation options. She was somewhat familiar with CAT operations as a whole and she has observed CAT buses in circulation throughout the County. She stated she was familiar with transit, having grown up in an area with public transportation.

38. Do you have any specific discussion points about transit in Collier Area Transit you would like to raise.

Council Member Penniman stated she would like to see e-bikes further vetted and additional information should be provided to policymakers and other decisionmakers. She noted that e-bikes were growing in popularity and provide another transportation option. She added they allow users to travel farther and provide more flexibility and reliability that traditional fixed-route transit that operates on a schedule. She felt it was an excellent option for individual mobility.

Council Member Penniman commented the role of private transportation providers that are providing on-demand services. She felt there was a role for these private providers to supplement transit service in some areas. She stated these options should be explored and discussed as part of developing plans for transit.

Council Member Penniman stated overall her impression of transit services was heavy influenced by her use of transit growing up. She stated many people who come from areas with robust transit

systems and may have a bias when discussing transit in Collier. She stated places with robust transit evolved over many years with concentrated areas of populations to serve. She noted these conditions are very different from transit in the City of Naples and Collier County.

39. How would you rate your awareness of CAT, are you familiar with how to use transit or where it operates?

Council Member Penniman stated she is aware of CAT operations. Through her work on the MPO she was part of some discussions regarding transit and paratransit services. She noted that the MPO has been diligent in including transit in discussions and plans as part of a multimodal approach. She commented her work on the MPO was very important and had been reappointed. She felt being part of discussions at the MPO was important to the coordination between the City, the County and the MPO.

40. What do you view as the role of transit in Collier? Connect workers with jobs? Primarily for persons without cars? Relief for limited parking, roadway congestion?

Council Member Penniman stated CAT role must include getting people to work every day. She felt connecting people and jobs was critical to CAT's role in the County, as well as to the businesses that need workers.

She commented on her experience working in Immokalee. She noted that people in Immokalee are solving the transportation gap by organizing their own carpools and vanpools. She stated that this has become part of the culture where transportation options are very limited. She felt there should be a way to support these areas with dependable, safe, public transportation. She recognized this would be a significant challenge for CAT, noting the long travel distances, the hours of operations, and other constraints.

She stated providing public transit has its challenges everywhere, not just in Collier. She noted in places where it snows, people wait for buses in very cold conditions. Effective transit must account for all these operating conditions and still be extremely punctual for people to use it and rely on it.

Council Member Penniman expressed a desire to see the appropriate size vehicle in operation. She felt the larger buses were not appropriate for circulating on every route. She noted having appropriate size vehicles, vans, and other smaller vehicles could be shown to be more operationally effective. She was also concerned how empty buses may be perceived as an inefficient use of transit resources.

41. What would you consider transit priorities? Increase areas served? Increasing service frequency, adding bus shelters, introducing mobility-on-demand, connecting service with sidewalks, bicycles, and multi-use paths?

Council Member Penniman stated transit must be operationally efficient. It must be flexible, responsive, and light. She felt there should be a reasonable business approach to meeting demand. She added transit was an integral part of the whole transportation network in Collier County, adding CAT should foster confidence in the system.

In discussing the financing of transit, Council Member Penniman stated this is an area that needs to further be discussed. She noted that for a rider, a dollar may represent a significant amount of their budget or cost of getting to work. She felt transit has a role in facilitating access to jobs but there is also an opportunity to work with employers who are benefiting from the workforce to connect people and jobs.

Council Member Penniman stated CAT needs to study how transit is monetized in other places.

She noted the City of Naples has very limited land which is very expensive. She added it also has an ongoing demand for service workers and there are good paying jobs in Naples. She noted the high cost of living within the City means workforce and affordable housing are not located nearby. She stated this also applies to other areas of Collier County with over 54,000 vehicles traveling into Collier County on I-75 from Lee County almost daily. She felt there needed to be more coordination with Lee County policymakers.

Council Member Penniman stated there was nexus between available work, affordable/workforce housing, and areas where new jobs are coming. She added that nexus should be studied and addressed in upcoming plans. She felt supporting economic development, job creation, and transportation connections was important to the area.

Council Member Penniman stated CAT needs to identify opportunities and develop plans to capitalize on them. She noted she was part of a discussion at the MPO regarding the use of railroad tracks near Goodlett-Frank Road which could be used to connect trails with roads and transit to improve traffic circulation. She felt the use of e-bikes made this even more viable.

She added, when people are driving, they must focus on operating the vehicle. When people are riding in transit, either on a bus or rail, there is an opportunity to do other things and use that time productively. They can make calls, read, or do other things while someone else drives. She noted the time in a car is wasted.

42. Who should transit target as primary customers? Persons without access to a vehicle, community, the environment, businesses, tourism?

Council Member Penniman felt connecting people and work is critical to transit service in Collier. This should be a focus for CAT.

43. How best do we pay for transit services? User fees? Including improvements through new developments, partnerships with major employers, businesses, institutions, and increased advertising? Is there an opportunity to consider innovative funding strategies to help fund transit?

Council Member Penniman stated CAT needs to better monetized the transit system. She suggested transit approach the Chamber of Commerce and bring them into the discussion. Their role in the business community will be helpful in connecting economic development activities with transit services that will support them.

She felt that employers like Arthrex are forward thinking and will support transit as part of their business model. She felt employers could support transit as an option.

Council Member Penniman stated she would like to see more information and discussion surrounding the penny-sales tax. She felt it was important to understand how much community support there was for transportation initiatives funded by the penny sales tax. She felt transit could be better supported by these initiatives. She felt people would be supportive of efforts that connect people with jobs and that included supporting transit.

She added, bringing the business community into the finance discussion would be helpful and important to getting them to participate in transit as a solution. She noted, transit cannot be funded by transit users who have limited transportation options and limited financial resources.

Council Member Penniman stated, ideally transit would be readily accessible and connect major activity centers. She added, providing transportation options for people who simply did not want to drive was an important goal. She felt older populations would benefit if there was a transportation option such as transit that meant they did not have to drive everywhere.

44. Would service expansion be considered if a municipality funded it?

Council Member Penniman did not see a problem with municipalities funding transit within their areas. She felt every community has to make decisions that address their constituents needs and concerns. She did note, there needed to be further discussion before CAT elects to pursue this and examine how the service would connect through the County. She felt there needs to be transparency in who is paying for the additional services and how that would work within the transit system.

She stated financing transit is important and should be carefully planned out and defensible. She felt the penny sales tax needs to be discussed as an option for transit.

45. Can you comment on the outlook for transit?

Council Member commented the outlook for transit, stating it was very complex. She noted she was reading “The Great Displacement: Climate Change and the Next American Migration” by Jake Bittle and considering the implication for Naples, Collier County and Southwest Florida. She felt while some growth will continue, but there is a movement of people who are relocating due to storms, the high cost of living, and other factors. She felt this trend should be discussed. She stated the community needed to be prepared for emerging trends.

She felt the need for affordable workforce housing was an important consideration for Collier overall impacting several areas. She added this included transportation and especially CAT as they work to support connecting people and jobs.

She noted she would like to see more cooperation and collaboration between Lee and Collier Counties. She expressed concern at the amount of people commuting into Collier because of where affordable housing is located. She stated the coordination between Lee and Collier needed to focus on transportation impacts, facilitating connecting jobs and workforce housing as well as the congestion, traffic, and safety in the transportation network including I-75.

She stated she would like to see FDOT’s white paper on e-bikes as she sees this as a continuing trend.

She concluded, there is a place for transit in Collier County as part of its transportation network that supports growth economic activity, building and construction. She felt there needs to be continued discussion on how CAT will connect with employment centers. She hoped that the issues she raised would be further discussed and fully vetted.

Date: July 2, 2024

Reference: Contract 18-7432 MP Professional Services Library – Metropolitan Planning
Transit Development Plan (TDP) Major Update
Purchase Order/Work Order No. 4500229353
Project No. 33804.6.2.3

Document: Stakeholder Interview Councilman Berne Barton, City of Naples (Policy Maker)

Councilman Barton was interviewed on July 2, 2024, in person at his offices in Naples, Florida. The interview began with a brief introduction of the Transit Development Plan and the CAT organization. This memo represents a summary of Councilman Barton's comments.

Interview Questionnaire

46. How familiar are you with transit overall?

Councilman Barton referenced his role on the Collier MPO and as a representative for the City of Naples as his primary source of knowledge about CAT. He felt transit was an important part of the transportation network and should be used to address the traffic and congestion issues Collier is experiencing. He noted the City of Naples was not growing, stating rather that the population of approximately 20,000 within the City has been stable. He noted there is some redevelopment, but very little development or expansion. He contrasted this with the growth experienced throughout the Collier County and pressure from development. Councilman Barton felt the continued growth in Collier County continues to be part of the CAT discussion.

He added that he was familiar with CAT and frequently saw CAT vehicles operating within the City. He noted although he has not used CAT, he recognizes transit is imperative for access to jobs within the City.

47. Do you have any specific discussion points about transit in Collier Area Transit you would like to raise.

Councilman Barton did not have any specific discussion points to raise. He stated his constituents had not raised any concerns regarding CAT service. He was confident if his constituents had experienced any problems with CAT service, they would have made them known to the City.

48. How would you rate your awareness of CAT, are you familiar with how to use transit or where it operates?

Overall, he felt CAT was an effective operation. He noted CAT operates within the City with no bus pull offs, but they manage not to significantly impede the flow of traffic, limiting how long they stay pulled over and holding traffic. He stated he see the CAT vehicles in operation and feels there is an appropriate level of service within the City.

49. What do you view as the role of transit in Collier? Connect workers with jobs? Primarily for persons without cars? Relief for limited parking, roadway congestion?

Councilman Barton noted he had limited personal experience with CAT, but overall, felt CAT provided a valuable service. He indicated connecting workers who live outside the area with jobs within the City of Naples was an important objective for CAT. He added CAT provides options for a variety of Collier County residents and having alternatives/options is important.

50. What would you consider transit priorities? Increase areas served? Increasing service frequency, adding bus shelters, introducing mobility-on-demand, connecting service with sidewalks, bicycles, and multi-use paths?

Councilman Barton stated he had limited information with which to make a recommendation but felt the CAT service area was very large and growing. He noted the County was expanding considerably with growth in the North and Northeast corridors, citing Ave Maria as an example. He felt there was continued growth already approved in these areas, with more expected to come. He noted connecting the workforce that may reside further away from jobs will become increasingly important, especially given the cost of housing within the City of Naples.

Councilman Barton noted there could be some interest in premium services. He stated for example providing express service to the airport (RSW) and other major destinations could serve tourists and visitors. He felt CAT adequately evaluated service needs.

51. Who should transit target as primary customers? Persons without access to a vehicle, community, the environment, businesses, tourism?

Councilman Barton stated Collier County is experiencing a major affordable housing challenge. He stated trend continues to move the workforce away from jobs in the City and the County as a whole. He stated the City of Naples' economic needs surround the tourism industry and in the service industry sectors. He added filling these jobs creates traffic and congestion which could be helped with efficient transit service. He felt that the workforce continues to move further away from jobs in Collier County.

He stated although service workers primarily use transit, he felt there was an opportunity to provide transit service that appealed to tourists and visitors.

52. How best do we pay for transit services? User fees? Including improvements through new developments, partnerships with major employers, businesses, institutions, and increased advertising? Is there an opportunity to consider innovative funding strategies to help fund transit?

Councilman Barton expressed the responsibility to be a good steward of taxpayer's money. He expressed an interest in seeing some of the industries prospering from tourism contribute in some way to supporting transit. He stated part of the solution of funding transit should include those benefiting from the economic activity in Collier including tourism, lodging, airlines, and developers. He noted this should include efforts to provide affordable housing for workers.

53. Would service expansion be considered if a municipality funded it?

Councilman Barton felt municipalities could participate in the funding, noting those are discussions for those policymakers. He did not think this would apply to the City of Naples due to the relatively small size of the City.

54. Can you comment on the outlook for transit?

Councilman Barton felt the outlook for transit needed to consider the rapid growth in the County and the traffic congestion as a top issue. He stated a robust transit system was needed to alleviate commuter traffic, traffic congestion, and to help take vehicles off the road. He felt visitors and tourism to be part of the community and should be considered in any future plans.

He noted that preserving the City of Naples and Collier County's unique qualities including its pristine environment was critical to its continued success and economic competitiveness.

Councilman Barton was positive about embracing technology in general but wanted to see CAT take a business approach to its implementation and use. He stated the adoption of technology, including adoption of electrical vehicles should be fully vetted. The technology should be proven with documented results before CAT makes significant investments.

He added that maintaining a livable community and preserving Collier County's resources were important to its economic property and maintaining the current standard of living. He added it is the reason people continue to move here and we all have a responsibility to continue to safeguard resources, maintain a high standard of living, and make wise investment decisions.

Date: July 18, 2024

Reference: Contract 18-7432 MP Professional Services Library – Metropolitan Planning
Transit Development Plan (TDP) Major Update
Purchase Order/Work Order No. 4500229353
Project No. 33804.6.2.3

Document: Stakeholder Interview Councilman Rich Blonna, City of Marco Island (Policy Maker)

Councilman Rich Blonna was interviewed via telephone on July 18, 2024. The interview began with a brief introduction of the Transit Development Plan and the CAT organization. This memo represents a summary of Councilman Blonna's comments.

Interview Questionnaire

55. How familiar are you with transit overall?

Councilman Blonna stated he has been working closely with CAT to bring enhanced transit service to Marco Island during the winter tourist season. He stated he has been looking at the feasibility of trolley service with a loop route to service the most heavily visited areas on Marco Island. He added this work had led to a better understanding of the constraints and challenges of providing transit.

He noted there are significant challenges to cost sharing and operations which have made it difficult.

Overall, he noted while his interactions with CAT have been focused on the trolley service he has a high-level understanding of transit operations in Collier County. He noted he is also involved with Conservation Collier and as a liaison to various committees which keep him very busy.

He added he had recently become aware of the Public Transit Advisory Committee (PTAC).

56. Do you have any specific discussion points about transit in Collier Area Transit you would like to raise.

Councilman Blonna stated his work trying to implement transit on Marco Island is a clear example of how transit solutions are difficult to implement. He stated public funding, and the state and federal grant restrictions offer little opportunity to tailor services to a community's needs, be creative, or partner to fund transit solutions.

Councilman Blonna stated he would like to address the congestion and safety concerns during the peak winter season. He noted 2 trolleys in operation in a loop configuration could allow visitors on Marco Island to travel between the most frequented areas along 4 connected roadways. Ideally visitors could come on to the island and park their car and not move it until they left. He added or better yet, they could take a taxi or Uber and not bring any more cars onto the island.

Initially, he proposed a shared funding model where the business community through advertising revenue could be used along with fares and a discounted rate from CAT to fund a pilot. He stated after speaking with CAT, it was obvious the bureaucracy is inflexible. He added, Marco Island cannot create a separate pool of resources specific to its needs. It is all part of the larger county-wide system.

Councilman Blonna noted CAT staff had been very helpful and he appreciated working closely with them. He stated CAT staff is bound by bureaucracy and the service request for Marco Island is an outlier, making the service a challenge to implement. He noted this was in addition to some hesitancy with the City Council. He stated there was a clear contrast between public and private initiatives. He added, he was confident the pilot project would work.

Councilman Blonna explained he is a supporter of transit solutions and visited Anna Maria Island to observe the trolley system there. He said it was a great experience and helped him develop some of his approach. He stated they arrived at Anna Maria, stayed in a beach front cottage and took the trolley everywhere without ever moving his car. He added he is still researching how the service was started by Manatee County and then transferred to their Chamber of Commerce. Councilman Blonna said he is interested in learning more, especially the lessons learned from implementing the service.

He concluded, noting there is potential to connect other parts of the county. He pointed to Donna Fiala Eagle Lakes Community Park and the opportunity to connect with bicycle paths. He expressed support for transit connections with bicycles, putting bicycle racks on buses. He stated connecting these modes was important.

57. How would you rate your awareness of CAT, are you familiar with how to use transit or where it operates?

Councilman Blonna expressed he had a high level of awareness of CAT. He noted he took part in a free ride day and rode Route 21 to Marco Island. He felt it was important to experience the service firsthand. He stated that riding transit provided a beautiful perspective where you can see over cars into the distance and see the natural areas. It provided a wider view of the natural resources surrounding the area.

He added, there are some misconceptions about who is riding transit and the fear of overcrowding. He stated the positive impact of transit, reducing the number of cars on the roadway, eliminating the need to find parking at popular destinations, and the comfort and ease of riding transit are consistently understated. He stated, there is also an important opportunity for people coming to work in Marco Island. He added, employers and the workforce, visitors and residents can all benefit from transit service on Marco Island.

58. What do you view as the role of transit in Collier? Connect workers with jobs? Primarily for persons without cars? Relief for limited parking, roadway congestion?

Councilman Blonna responded transit can have a role in all the options presented with the proposed trolley service. He stated he is focused on Marco Island, but this pilot provides an example of how transit can meet community needs.

He stated Marco Island and the trolley pilot could operate over just a few blocks in a loop, connecting riders with shopping, dining, and even City Hall.

Councilman Blonna commented on the area's demographics which show an aging population which will become depend on transit. He noted right now, this demographic may be hesitant about implementing transit solutions, but trends support developing transit. He added, Marco Island is attracting younger residents and more cosmopolitan people who travel and are familiar with transit, including international visitors. He stated even work patterns are changing, where some workers can choose to work from home and given an option may not want to drive. He added multiuse development is also changing how much people depend on cars. Councilman Blonna stated he understood transit was not the solution for everything, but he added it needed to be part of the mix of solutions.

He added Marco Island needs to develop different transportation options.

59. What would you consider transit priorities? Increase areas served? Increasing service frequency, adding bus shelters, introducing mobility-on-demand, connecting service with sidewalks, bicycles, and multi-use paths?

Councilman Blonna agreed all the options listed where areas where CAT needed to develop. He stated mobility on demand was not popular on Marco Island and he stated it may have limited application.

He stated the hotels and condo would likely not use the traditional fixed route bus service or the larger buses, but they would support branded, smaller vehicles that reflected the local character.

Councilman Blonna stated service aimed at tourist, that was temporary such as during the winter season would make sense and help with congestion.

Councilman Blonna was confident the beach trolley will be well supported once it is implemented which is why a pilot project is so important. It will demonstrate how transit can relieve congestion, demand for limited parking, and allow people to get around Marco Island without a vehicle.

60. Who should transit target as primary customers? Persons without access to a vehicle, community, the environment, businesses, tourism?

Councilman Blonna agreed all the customers mentioned should be fully explored.

He stated visitors have needs very different from the workforce that may be accessing jobs on the island. Marco Island is removed and difficult to access. He noted workforce traveling in from Golden Gate, Immokalee, and other outlying areas can find Marco Island too far. He added professional staff, government workers, fire, and police – he did not see them using public transit based on their profession.

Councilman Blonna was confident CAT was looking at all their customers and trying to make sure to connect the service with the riders. He noted, this was not always possible.

61. How best do we pay for transit services? User fees? Including improvements through new developments, partnerships with major employers, businesses, institutions, and increased advertising? Is there an opportunity to consider innovative funding strategies to help fund transit?

Councilman Blonna stated the finance side of transit was complicated. He felt that advertising revenue could be increased to reflect market rates. He noted the current rates are substantially lower than they should be. He added fares appeared to be flat across the board, rather than reflecting the service. He stated this was an area that could also be updated to better reflect a market approach. Councilman Blonna suggested improved business relationships with government agencies, businesses, and other groups could help to underwrite some of the costs.

Councilman Blonna stated Marco Island has lowered taxes the past few years resulting in less funding for projects such as the trolley. He stated he would continue to advocate for transit on Marco Island during season.

62. Would service expansion be considered if a municipality funded it?

Councilman Blonna stated Marco Island would likely not fund service expansion without some incentive. He stated there was an opportunity to engage the business community. And while he did not think the business community would agree to outright fund transit service, he felt if they could underwrite the cost through advertising.

He noted sharing costs brings stakeholders together.

63. Can you comment on the outlook for transit?

Councilman Blonna stated the outlook for transit is greatly dependent on who is moving along the 951 corridor. He felt the growth in the eastern part of Collier County will continue to drive growth and that growth will look for alternatives to just driving.

He added the lack of parking will also impact how people visit and frequent popular destinations. If people find it too difficult to park and there is no transit option, they are likely to go elsewhere.

Councilman Blonna was confident newer residents to Collier County will have an impact on the demand for transit. He stated people will want options to driving and the added benefits of reduced congestion, impacts to the environment, and time savings will make transit more desirable. He stated this would be bolstered by new residents who come from places with lots of transit. He stated as long as the transit service matches the demand and character of the location he was positive on the outlook for transit.

Date: **August 1, 2024**

Reference: **Contract 18-7432 MP Professional Services Library – Metropolitan Planning
Transit Development Plan (TDP) Major Update
Purchase Order/Work Order No. 4500229353
Project No. 33804.6.2.3**

Document: **Peer Selection Methodology – for review**

Your review of the attached Situational Appraisal is requested.

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1 Peer Selection Methodology

1.1 Introduction

The following memorandum is an update to the original peer selection undertaken in 2020 as part of the previous TDP. Updating and re-analyzing past selected agencies as well as being open to adding new agencies are important during the process of selecting relevant and useful peers for comparison, as this allows Collier Area Transit (CAT) to continually improve and compare itself with relevant peers. It is also important that the chosen peers reflect areas and agencies that can be thought of as aspirational to help CAT identify a path forward for improvement. As a result of this process, nine new peers have been selected for consideration.

The peer selection process followed the methodology provided by the Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP) Report 141: A Methodology for Performance Measurement and Peer Comparison in the Public Transportation Industry and recommended by the FDOT TDP Handbook (2022). Peer comparisons use selected performance indicators, effectiveness measures, and efficiency measures to illustrate the performance of the CAT fixed route system relative to the peer group. The peer identification methodology and the identified peers are described below.

Best practice typically dictates that a peer group is comprised of eight to ten peers, for the purposes of this TDP, 16 agencies have been selected for the first level assessment. It is crucial to make sure that the right peer agencies are selected to provide credible comparisons that can provide insight and trigger action, compared to badly chosen peers which can produce irrelevant results.

1.2 Initial Peer Group

An initial peer group of agencies similar to CAT was formed, and likeness scores were calculated to determine their similarity and appropriateness. For this TDP update, all agencies included in the previous TDP report were retained, along with additional agencies deemed similar to CAT. This initial peer list consisted of 16 transit agencies as shown in the following table:

Table 1-1: Transit System Peer Review Selection

Transit System	Location	Peer Description
The M (Montgomery Area Transit)	City of Montgomery, AL	From Previous TDP
TTA (Tri-State Transit Authority)	Huntington, WV	From Previous TDP
The Wave Transit System	City of Mobile, AL	From Previous TDP
ART (Asheville Redefines Transit)	City of Asheville, NC	From Previous TDP
GCT (Gwinnett County Transit)	Lawrenceville, GA	From Previous TDP
PCPT (Pasco County Public Transportation)	New Port Richey, FL	From Previous TDP
The Wave (Cape Fear Public Transportation Authority)	Wilmington, NC	From Previous TDP
Breeze Transit (Sarasota County Area Transit)	Sarasota, FL	Newly Added



LeeTran (Lee County Transit)	Fort Myers, FL	Newly Added
Bayway (Bay County Transportation)	Pensacola, FL	Newly Added
GoLine (Indian River County)	Vero Beach, FL	Newly Added
Citrus Connection (Lakeland Area Mass Transit District)	Lakeland, FL	Newly Added
CARTA (Charleston Area Regional Transportation Authority)	North Charleston, SC	Newly Added
ECAT (Escambia County Area Transit Authority)	Pensacola, FL	Newly Added
CCRTA (Cape Cod Regional Transit Authority)	Hyannis, MA	Newly Added
GTA (Greensboro Transit Authority)	Greensboro, NC	Newly Added

The selection of potential peers was conducted using the peer selection methodology outlined in the FDOT TDP Handbook, employing validated 2022 National Transit Database (NTD) data and the Florida Transit Information System (FTIS). The pool of potential peers consisted of transit agencies located in the southeastern United States, specifically those with coastal characteristics in their geographic profiles.

From the newly identified transit agencies, Breeze Transit (Sarasota, FL), LeeTran (Fort Myers, FL), Bayway (Pensacola, FL), GoLine (Vero Beach, FL), and Citrus Connection (Lakeland, FL) were chosen because they are situated within Florida, either in coastal counties or counties near Collier County. Additionally, CARTA (North Charleston, SC), ECAT (Pensacola, FL), and CCRTA (Hyannis, MA) were selected based on their recommendation as top peers to CAT according to the FTIS Urban iNTD tool. It is worth noting that ART was also recommended but was already included in the previous TDP peer group.

1.3 Overview of Methodology

The methodology for selecting the final peer group adheres to the guidelines outlined in the TCRP report. This process involves comparing data values for CAT and potential peer agencies using various indicators to calculate likeness scores for each indicator between CAT and each potential peer agency. The first stage was the primary review, which involved initially selecting indicators and scoring their likeness to CAT, then a comparison was made from the new peers against the previous TDP peers to determine whether the new peer group had a similar likeness and provided a good comparison overall to CAT. A secondary review was initiated to provide further insight to the primary likeness score where 2 new indicators were used. Results were then drawn utilizing the likeness score from the primary review, referencing the secondary review, and weighing the location and demographic of the locations to determine the results. This comprehensive approach ensures a robust and well-rounded peer selection process. The methodology recognizes that peers will not be identical in all categories, accommodating variations and allowing for similarity in only a few key categories.

The methodology outlined in the TCRP report identifies fourteen indicators for selecting peer agencies, primarily based on demographic characteristics and other exogenous variables, as utilized in the FTIS tool. While adhering to the TCRP guidance for peer selection, our approach slightly diverges in the factors used to assess potential peers. Rather than focusing primarily on exogenous variables, we prioritized various transit system performance measures as the primary criteria for peer selection. These performance indicators were considered more relevant for comparing peers, particularly in the context of enhancing transit system effectiveness. Nonetheless, demographic variables were still integrated into the peer selection process, although greater emphasis was placed on transit performance indicators.



As such, the potential peer agencies were analyzed based on the following 14 indicators: 8 operating characteristics and 6 exogenous variables.

- Operating Characteristic Indicators
 - Vehicles Operated in Maximum Service
 - Annual Passenger Miles Traveled
 - Annual Vehicle Revenue Miles
 - Annual Vehicle Revenue Hours
 - Number of Revenue Vehicles
 - Total Revenue Miles Operated
 - Total Operating Expense
 - Percent Service Demand Response
- Exogenous Variables
 - Service Area Population
 - Service Area Density
 - Service Area
 - Population Density
 - Urban Area Population
 - Population Growth Rate

The selection of these indicators for primary transit peer analysis ensures a comprehensive and robust assessment of both operational performance and contextual factors. Key operational characteristics such as vehicles operated in maximum service, annual passenger miles traveled, and total operating expenses provide critical insights into efficiency, capacity, and financial health within transit operations. Metrics like percent service demand response and annual vehicle revenue hours are essential for evaluating service quality and responsiveness to demand.

Given the growing emphasis on operational efficiency and the increasing adoption of demand response services, the percentage of service demand response serves as a particularly noteworthy indicator. It helps gauge where agencies stand in this evolving process, acknowledging disparities between agencies at different stages of implementing demand-responsive solutions.

Including exogenous variables such as service area population, density, and population growth rate contributes to a comprehensive understanding of the demographic and geographic contexts influencing these transit systems. This holistic approach ensures a well-rounded comparison, capturing both internal performance metrics and external factors that impact transit operations.

To create a chart that scores each category comparing CAT to other transit systems, a likeness score for each factor was calculated. This likeness score is a representation of the difference between two data values. Data values that are identical between the peer agency and CAT result in a score of 0 (which is very rare and highly unlikely), while a score of 1 represents a percentage difference of 100%, indicating that the value for one agency is twice the amount of the other. In essence, the larger the difference between the values of the agencies, the higher the score, and vice versa. Peer agencies that have larger differences in values should be avoided and are undesirable due to greater dissimilarity between factors but could still potentially be used with caution after screening for potential prominent differences that could deem them an unsuitable peer.



The likeness score is determined by calculating the percentage differences between the values for CAT and the peer agency, using the following formula:

$$\text{Likeness Score} = \frac{|F_{\text{cat}} - F_{\text{peer}}|}{\max(F_{\text{cat}}, F_{\text{peer}})}$$

Where:

- F_{cat} = the target agency's value for a given factor,
- F_{peer} = the peer agency's value for the same factor, and
- $\max(F_{\text{cat}}, F_{\text{peer}})$ = the maximum of the two values being compared.

As per the scoring guidance provided in the TCRP Report, the likeness scores are rated as such:

- **0.00 – 0.50: Good score**; none or small difference percentages, ideal matches to use
- **0.51 – 0.75: Satisfactory score**; smaller difference percentages, decent matches to use
- **0.76 – 0.99: Mediocre score**; larger difference percentages, could be used but check for anomalies
- **More than 1: Poor score**; large differences percentages, poor match, avoid using if possible

The 2022 data values for each of the 14 indicators and 17 transit agencies, including CAT, can be found in the data tables in Appendix A, and the corresponding likeness scores calculated for each indicator and agency in Appendix B. The likeness scores are highlighted according to the score breakdown as previously described, in that the good scores are in green, satisfactory scores are in yellow, decent scores that require more investigation are in orange, and poor scores are in red. This breakdown helps to easily identify which peers are more similar to CAT in which aspects.

1.4 Normalizing Cost Data

To accurately reflect cost values, cost data was normalized to reflect the impacts of differences in labor costs between geographical regions. It is important to consider labor cost differences as it allows for conclusions to be drawn with more certainty that the cost differences between agencies are due to internal agency efficiency variances rather than external cost variation. Labor costs are also typically the largest component of an agency's operating costs.

To adjust for differences in labor costs between counties, average labor wage rates were used to recalculate cost data. Annual average weekly wages for 2022 were obtained from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages. All occupation types were included in the average calculation as agencies have no control over general labor environments in the county, which the cost data is being adjusted for, as opposed to the industry-specific labor rates that the agencies have some control over. Including all occupations also allows for an agency to analyze how much of its labor is spent in comparison to the county's average wages, as well as to adjust its costs to reflect changes in the county's overall cost of living. The peer agencies' cost data was adjusted for labor cost differences by multiplying the labor cost portion of the agencies' operational expense values from NTD by the ratio between Collier's average labor cost over the peer agency county's average labor cost.



1.5 Comparison of Results with Previous TDP

As multiple transit systems were analyzed, calculations were performed to assess differences between the previous peer group from the 2020 TDP and the newly added peer agencies. For each potential peer, the sums of the exogenous variables and operating characteristics were calculated separately to identify which peers were most like CAT for each of the categories of indicators. An average score was then computed for easier comparison between the peer group from the previous TDP and the new potential peers using the following formula:

$$\text{Total Likeness Score} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n \text{Factor Likeness Score}_i}{n}$$

Where:

- **Total Likeness Score** = the average score representing overall similarity.
- **Factor Likeness Score_i** = the likeness score for the *i*-th factor.
- **n** = the total number of factors.

The results indicated that the newly added peers had a higher average score in operational characteristics compared to the previous TDP peer group. While this suggests that the new peers are less similar to Collier County overall in terms of operational characteristics, it is still a valuable comparison. Focusing on operational characteristics is crucial as they directly impact service delivery and customer satisfaction. Additionally, the new peer group includes 9 peers compared to the 7 in the previous group, which can slightly elevate the average score due to the larger sample size.

Moreover, many of the new peers possess coastal features, which is a significant consideration for Collier County. These similarities in geographic characteristics can provide more relevant insights and best practices tailored to coastal areas. Exogenous factors such as demographics, which are major considerations for the new peer agencies, and operational characteristics such as service delivery modes and vehicle utilization are also critical. Coastal and geographic locations are necessary to consider due to their unique environmental and operational challenges. The exogenous variables for the new peer agencies are low, with an average score of 2.89, indicating closer data values to that of Collier County for these external factors. This is beneficial as it ensures that the newly added peers reflect similar contextual influences, further supporting their relevance. Therefore, despite the higher scores in operational characteristics, the new peer agencies remain a relevant and useful selection for the TDP update.

Table 1-2: Average of Likeness Score Sums by Peer Group

Peer Group	Average for Operating Characteristics	Average for Exogenous Variables	Average for All Indicating Factors
Previous TDP Peers	2.45	3.67	6.99
New Peers Considered	2.87	2.89	5.75



1.6 Stage 2 Secondary Screening

A secondary screening of the potential peer group is recommended to fully account for all potential factors and allow for the most comparable peers to be chosen. Two new variables were introduced to the 16 peers: service area type and fare revenue. These secondary factors provide a more nuanced and comprehensive evaluation of transit performance, ensuring that peers are truly comparable in all relevant aspects to CAT.

Service area type significantly impacts performance and influences demand patterns and requirements. Of the eight service area types based on the FDOT TDP Handbook, six were characterized for the 16 peers and are as follows:

- Type 2: Agency provides service to multiple urban areas (may also include non-urban areas) and is the primary service provider within at least one urban area's central city.
- Type 3: Only agency operating within an urban area and has no non-urban service.
- Type 4: Agency is the primary service provider in the urban area's central city, where other agencies also provide service to portions of the urban area. Urban areas with multiple central cities (e.g., Tampa–St. Petersburg) may have more than one type 4 agency.
- Type 5: Agency provides service into an urban area's central city, but its primary service area does not include a central city.
- Type 6: Agency provides service within an urban area but does not provide service to a central city.
- Type 7: Only agency operating within an urban area and providing non-urban service.

Fare revenue values were evaluated to determine revenue generation, service affordability and accessibility, and subsidy requirements. Comparing agencies with similar fare revenue structures highlights effective fare policies and strategies, ensuring that transit services remain financially sustainable and accessible to the public.

By incorporating service area type and fare revenue as secondary screening factors, the analysis ensures a fair and comprehensive comparison with the primary agency, CAT. This approach helps compare the primary review of the operational characteristic and exogenous variables and identify truly comparable peers and provides a deeper understanding of the factors influencing transit performance, ultimately supporting more informed decision-making for CAT.

2 Final Peer Group Selection

An initial set of 16 potential peer agencies was identified for CAT (see Table 1-1). From this group, poor comparing peers were filtered out based on the overall likeness scores from the primary review, supplemented by additional likeness scores from the secondary review. Peers with many high scoring factors or higher overall likeness scores were removed as it meant they have less similarity to CAT. 11 peers with the lowest scores in the primary review were selected as the CAT peer group. As shown in the likeness score tables in Appendix B, the potential peers all do well as most of the individual factors score well (below 0.5). The exogenous factors appear to compare more poorly in contrast to the operating factors, as there are more satisfactory and mediocre scores. There are very few poor-scoring factory-agency pairs;



ART and GTA with poor scores for the percent service demand response factor, and The M and The Wave Transit System have poor scores for the population growth rate factor. As such, these agencies were removed from the final peer group.

The last table in Appendix B shows averages and sums of the likeness scores grouped by operational, exogenous, and all factors, as well as by peer group. The likeness scores in each column are formatted in order from the lowest and best scores to the highest and worst scores in a green to red color scale. This table depicts which agencies score better across all factors. Most of the peer agencies from the previous TDP scored poorly for exogenous and all factors. The M, TTA, and ART consistently had poor scores across all groups, and were removed from consideration for the final peer group, along with GCT and PCPT.

The secondary review, which accounted for service area type and fare revenue, was necessary but less significant than operational characteristics, from the primary review, in this TDP. Consequently, if the secondary review led to a substantial increase in the peer likeness score, it was disregarded. This decision was based on the fact that only two indicators were used in the secondary review, making them less critical compared to the primary review.

Subsequently, upon conducting the secondary review, one peer agency was found to have incomplete NTD data. The 2022 NTD data for GoLine was missing the fare revenue information, which is one of the two indicators used in the secondary review. As such, this agency was also eliminated from the final peer group.

The following table lists the final 10 selected peers, their likeness score, and their selection reasoning.

Table 2-1: Average of Likeness Score Sums by Peer Group

Peer Agency	Likeness Score	Reasoning for Top 10 Selection
Breeze Transit (Sarasota County Area Transit), Sarasota, FL	6.98	Likeness score and location of the peer is desirable.
LeeTran (Lee County Transit), Fort Myers, FL	7.80	Likeness score from the primary review was substantially lower and location of the peer is desirable.
Bayway (Bay County Transportation), Pensacola, FL	6.03	Likeness score and location of the peer is desirable.
ECAT (Escambia County Area Transit Authority), Pensacola, FL	6.05	Likeness score
CCRTA (Cape Cod Regional Transit Authority), Hyannis, MA	6.30	Likeness score
CARTA (Charleston Area Regional Transportation Authority), North Charleston, SC	6.06	Likeness score
Citrus Connection (Lakeland Area Mass Transit District), Lakeland, FL	5.68	Likeness score and location of the peer is desirable.
The Wave (Cape Fear Public Transportation Authority), Wilmington, NC	5.49	Likeness score
The Wave Transit System, City of Mobile, AL	6.81	Likeness score
PCPT (Pasco County Public Transportation), New Port Richey, FL	6.35	Likeness score

It is important to note that three of the selected peers were peers from the previous TDP: The Wave Transit System, PCPT, and The Wave, while the remaining peers are new.



3 Characteristics of Peer Systems

The following are brief descriptions of the transit agencies in the final new peer group for comparative purposes. The peer and trend analysis were conducted with this set of peers. The data values in the agency profiles were all obtained from NTD 2022 data. The total operating cost values included in these agency profiles are the original cost values from NTD and are not adjusted for labor cost differences. The recalculated operating costs used for likeness scoring can be found in Appendix A. The service type information in the profiles was gathered from each transit agency's respective website.

Baseline Transit Agency: CAT (Collier Area Transit), Naples, FL

Services provided: Fixed-route bus and paratransit services

Service area population (2022): 384,902 people

Service area population density (2022): 172 persons per square mile

Annual revenue hours (2022): 124,701 hours

Annual ridership (2022): 746,338 unlinked trips

Operating costs (2022): \$12,194,270

Fleet (2022): 53 vehicles at maximum service



Peer Transit Agency: Breeze Transit (Sarasota County Area Transit), Sarasota, FL

Services provided: Fixed-route bus, trolley, on-demand rideshare, and paratransit services

Service area population (2022): 517,423 people

Service area population density (2022): 848 persons per square mile

Annual revenue hours (2022): 304,917 hours

Annual ridership (2022): 2,080,349 unlinked trips

Operating costs (2022): \$27,790,551

Fleet (2022): 107 vehicles at maximum service



Peer Transit Agency: LeeTran (Lee County Transit), Fort Myers, FL

Services provided: Fixed-route bus, trolley, ADA paratransit, and transportation disadvantaged services, as well as an employer vanpool program

Service area population (2022): 802,178 people

Service area population density (2022): 978 persons per square mile

Annual revenue hours (2022): 303,204 hours

Annual ridership (2022): 2,231,974 unlinked trips

Operating costs (2022): \$28,031,267

Fleet (2022): 91 vehicles at maximum service



Peer Transit Agency: Bayway (Bay County Transportation), Pensacola, FL

Services provided: Fixed-route bus, rideshare, and on-demand services

Service area population (2022): 179,168 people

Service area population density (2022): 236 persons per square mile

Annual revenue hours (2022): 55,418 hours

Annual ridership (2022): 349,281 unlinked trips

Operating costs (2022): \$5,098,436

Fleet (2022): 26 vehicles at maximum service



Peer Transit Agency: ECAT (Escambia County Area Transit Authority), Pensacola, FL

Services provided: Fixed-route bus, seasonal trolley, and ADA paratransit services

Service area population (2022): 241,661 people

Service area population density (2022): 1,280 persons per square mile

Annual revenue hours (2022): 156,107 hours

Annual ridership (2022): 842,731 unlinked trips

Operating costs (2022): \$13,589,817

Fleet (2022): 86 vehicles at maximum service



Peer Transit Agency: CCRTA (Cape Cod Regional Transit Authority), Hyannis, MA

Services provided: Fixed-route bus, on-demand, ride-hail, seasonal train, reservable medical transportation, and ADA paratransit services

Service area population (2022): 228,996 people

Service area population density (2022): 582 persons per square mile

Annual revenue hours (2022): 178,475 hours

Annual ridership (2022): 605,951 unlinked trips

Operating costs (2022): \$17,215,743

Fleet (2022): 133 vehicles at maximum service



Peer Transit Agency: CARTA (Charleston Area Regional Transportation Authority), North Charleston, SC

Services provided: Fixed-route bus, fixed-route shuttle, seasonal shuttle, on-demand, and ADA paratransit services

Service area population (2022): 356,082 people

Service area population density (2022): 2,580 persons per square mile

Annual revenue hours (2022): 230,727 hours

Annual ridership (2022): 2,212,089 unlinked trips

Operating costs (2022): \$22,952,085

Fleet (2022): 77 vehicles at maximum service



Peer Transit Agency: Citrus Connection (Lakeland Area Mass Transit District), Lakeland, FL

Services provided: Fixed-route bus, ADA paratransit, and transportation disadvantaged Medicare transportation services

Service area population (2022): 724,777 people

Service area population density (2022): 9,413 persons per square mile

Annual revenue hours (2022): 157,376 hours

Annual ridership (2022): 693,018 unlinked trips

Operating costs (2022): \$21,434,610

Fleet (2022): 71 vehicles at maximum service



Peer Transit Agency: The Wave (Cape Fear Public Transportation Authority), Wilmington, NC

Services provided: Fixed-route bus service and mobility assistance program

Service area population (2022): 230,310 people

Service area population density (2022): 1,152 persons per square mile

Annual revenue hours (2022): 102,655 hours

Annual ridership (2022): 710,993 unlinked trips

Operating costs (2022): \$8,592,522

Fleet (2022): 43 vehicles at maximum service



Peer Transit Agency: The Wave Transit System, City of Mobile, AL

Services provided: Fixed-route bus service and mobility assistance program

Service area population (2022): 203,900 people

Service area population density (2022): 1,488 persons per square mile

Annual revenue hours (2022): 114,952 hours

Annual ridership (2022): 495,899 unlinked trips

Operating costs (2022): \$10,804,979

Fleet (2022): 37 vehicles at maximum service



Peer Transit Agency: PCPT (Pasco County Public Transportation), New Port Richey, FL

Services provided: Fixed-route bus and ADA paratransit services

Service area population (2022): 584,067 people

Service area population density (2022): 782 persons per square mile

Annual revenue hours (2022): 110,773 hours

Annual ridership (2022): 601,717 unlinked trips

Operating costs (2022): \$10,599,068

Fleet (2022): 42 vehicles at maximum service



Appendix A – Primary Review Data Values for All Factors and Potential Peers

Indicating Factor Values for Operating Characteristics										
Agency Name	Location	Peer Group	Vehicles Operated in Maximum Service	Annual Passenger Miles Traveled	Annual Vehicle Revenue Miles	Annual Vehicle Revenue Hours	Number of Revenue Vehicles	Total Revenue Miles Operated	Total Operating Expenses	Percent Service Demand Response
CAT(Collier Area Transit)	Naples, FL	Target	53	6,128,249	2,371,843	124,701	73	\$ 2,371,843	\$ 12,194,270	58%
The M(Montgomery Area Transit)	City of Montgomery, AL	Previous TDP	25	1,567,963	1,382,282	86,390	28	\$ 1,382,282	\$ 9,987,208	24%
TTA(Tri-State Transit Authority)	Huntington, WV	Previous TDP	33	3,874,462	1,183,447	70,293	55	\$ 1,183,447	\$ 6,625,367	30%
The Wave Transit System	City of Mobile, AL	Previous TDP	37	3,380,866	1,605,194	114,952	55	\$ 1,605,194	\$ 10,804,979	46%
ART(Asheville Redefines Transit)	City of Asheville, NC	Previous TDP	19	4,039,338	1,287,477	100,062	33	\$ 1,287,477	\$ 10,550,615	0%
GCT(Gwinnett County Transit)	Lawrenceville, GA	Previous TDP	54	10,719,532	2,388,912	134,989	92	\$ 2,388,912	\$ 22,947,660	9%
PCPT(Pasco County Public Transportation)	New Port Richey, FL	Previous TDP	42	3,564,565	1,852,338	110,773	63	\$ 1,852,338	\$ 10,599,068	40%
The Wave (Cape Fear Public Transportation Authority)	Wilmington, NC	Previous TDP	43	2,108,293	1,505,790	102,655	65	\$ 1,505,790	\$ 8,592,522	44%
Sarasota Breeze (Sarasota County Area Transit)	Sarasota, FL	New	107	10,819,212	4,551,933	304,917	150	\$ 4,551,933	\$ 27,790,551	69%
LeeTran (Lee County Transit)	Fort Myers, FL	New	91	12,768,415	4,756,395	303,204	141	\$ 4,756,395	\$ 28,031,267	51%
Bayway (Bay County Transportation)	Pensacola, FL	New	26	2,396,995	752,218	55,418	40	\$ 2,202,931	\$ 13,589,817	48%
GoLine (Indian River County)	Vero Beach, FL	New	27	5,765,570	1,210,921	71,197	37	\$ 1,210,921	\$ 5,402,008	48%
Citrus Connection (Lakeland Area Mass Transit District)	Lakeland, FL	New	71	4,147,701	2,372,575	157,376	94	\$ 2,372,575	\$ 21,434,610	42%
CARTA(Charleston Area Regional Transportation Authority)	North Charleston, SC	New	77	11,394,692	3,152,002	230,727	134	\$ 3,152,002	\$ 22,952,085	26%
ECAT(Escambia County Area Transit Authority)	Pensacola, FL	New	86	4,610,071	2,202,931	156,107	90	\$ 2,202,931	\$ 13,589,817	48%
CCRTA(Cape Cod Regional Transit Authority)	Hyannis, MA	New	133	7,170,207	2,826,345	178,475	192	\$ 2,826,345	\$ 17,215,743	59%
GTA(Greensboro Transit Authority)	City of Greensboro, NC	New	76	9,159,005	3,695,161	257,346	104	\$ 3,695,161	\$ 27,555,354	0%



Indicating Factor Values for Exogenous Variables								
Agency Name	Location	Peer Group	Service Area	Urban Area Population	Population Density□	Population Growth Rate□	Service area population	Service area density
CAT(Collier Area Transit)	Naples, FL	Target	2,025	449,527	1,850	5.60%	348,902	172
The M(Montgomery Area Transit)	City of Montgomery, AL	Previous TDP	135	251,158	1,731	-1.25%	205,764	1,524
TTA(Tri-State Transit Authority)	Huntington, WV	Previous TDP	92	202,754	1,573	1.30%	144,339	1,569
The Wave Transit System	City of Mobile, AL	Previous TDP	137	320,855	1,453	-0.33%	203,900	1,488
ART(Asheville Redefines Transit)	City of Asheville, NC	Previous TDP	45	294,013	1,183	2.88%	93,350	2,074
GCT(Gwinnett County Transit)	Lawrenceville, GA	Previous TDP	143	5,180,179	2,029	1.57%	702,116	4,910
PCPT(Pasco County Public Transportation)	New Port Richey, FL	Previous TDP	747	2,861,173	2,953	2.81%	584,067	782
The Wave (Cape Fear Public Transportation Authority)	Wilmington, NC	Previous TDP	200	268,625	1,888	5.21%	230,310	1,152
Sarasota Breeze (Sarasota County Area Transit)	Sarasota, FL	New	610	825,572	2,042	5.97%	517,423	848
LeeTran (Lee County Transit)	Fort Myers, FL	New	820	654,405	1,972	9.21%	802,178	978
Bayway (Bay County Transportation)	Pensacola, FL	New	758	398,813	1,519	2.21%	179,168	236
GoLine (Indian River County)	Vero Beach, FL	New	217	186,637	1,759	7.01%	163,662	754
Citrus Connection (Lakeland Area Mass Transit District)	Lakeland, FL	New	77	280,346	1,921	0.87%	724,777	9,413
CARTA(Charleston Area Regional Transportation Authority)	North Charleston, SC	New	138	706,884	2,085	3.23%	356,082	2,580
ECAT(Escambia County Area Transit Authority)	Pensacola, FL	New	189	398,813	1,519	2.21%	241,661	1,280
CCRTA(Cape Cod Regional Transit Authority)	Hyannis, MA	New	394	313,064	917	3.23%	228,996	582
GTA(Greensboro Transit Authority)	City of Greensboro, NC	New	136	338,928	2,050	2.42%	297,878	2,190



Appendix B – Primary Review Likeness Scores for All Factors and Potential Peers

Likeness Score for Operating Characteristics												
Agency Name	Location	Peer Group	Vehicles Operated in Maximum Service	Annual Passenger Miles Traveled	Annual Vehicle Revenue Miles	Annual Vehicle Revenue Hours	Number of Revenue Vehicles	Total Revenue Miles Operated	Total Operating Expenses	Percent Service Demand Response	Average Operational Likeness Score	Total Operational Likeness Score
CAT(Collier Area Transit)	Naples, FL	Target	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
The M(Montgomery Area Transit)	City of Montgomery, AL	Previous TDP	0.53	0.74	0.42	0.86	0.62	0.42	0.11	0.59	0.53	2.59
TTA(Tri-State Transit Authority)	Huntington, WV	Previous TDP	0.38	0.37	0.50	0.82	0.25	0.50	0.37	0.48	0.46	2.93
The Wave Transit System	City of Mobile, AL	Previous TDP	0.30	0.45	0.32	0.89	0.25	0.32	0.05	0.21	0.35	2.04
ART(Asheville Redefines Transit)	City of Asheville, NC	Previous TDP	0.64	0.34	0.46	0.88	0.55	0.46	0.13	1.00	0.56	3.47
GCT(Gwinnett County Transit)	Lawrenceville, GA	Previous TDP	0.02	0.43	0.01	0.91	0.21	0.01	0.47	0.85	0.36	2.44
PCPT(Pasco County Public Transportation)	New Port Richey, FL	Previous TDP	0.21	0.42	0.22	0.89	0.14	0.22	0.01	0.31	0.30	1.78
The Wave (Cape Fear Public Transportation Authority)	Wilmington, NC	Previous TDP	0.19	0.66	0.37	0.88	0.11	0.37	0.28	0.24	0.39	1.87
Sarasota Breeze (Sarasota County Area Transit)	Sarasota, FL	New	0.50	0.43	0.48	0.59	0.51	0.48	0.57	0.16	0.47	3.72
Lee Tran (Lee County Transit)	Fort Myers, FL	New	0.42	0.52	0.50	0.59	0.48	0.50	0.60	0.12	0.47	3.73
Bayway (Bay County Transportation)	Pensacola, FL	New	0.51	0.61	0.68	0.56	0.45	0.07	0.11	0.17	0.39	3.16
GoLine (Indian River County)	Vero Beach, FL	New	0.49	0.06	0.49	0.43	0.49	0.49	0.56	0.17	0.40	3.18
Citrus Connection (Lakeland Area Mass Transit District)	Lakeland, FL	New	0.25	0.32	0.00	0.21	0.22	0.00	0.50	0.28	0.22	1.78
CARTA(Charleston Area Regional Transportation Authority)	North Charleston, SC	New	0.31	0.46	0.25	0.46	0.46	0.25	0.47	0.55	0.40	3.21
ECAT(Escambia County Area Transit Authority)	Pensacola, FL	New	0.38	0.25	0.07	0.20	0.19	0.07	0.17	0.17	0.19	1.50
CCRTA(Cape Cod Regional Transit Authority)	Hyannis, MA	New	0.60	0.15	0.16	0.30	0.62	0.16	0.30	0.02	0.29	2.30
GTA(Greensboro Transit Authority)	City of Greensboro, NC	New	0.30	0.33	0.36	0.52	0.30	0.36	0.06	1.00	0.40	3.22



Likeness Score for Exogenous Variables										
Agency Name	Location	Peer Group	Service Area	Urban Area Population	Population Density□	Population Growth Rate□	Service area population	Service area density	Average Exogenous Likeness Score	Total Exogenous Likeness Score
CAT(Collier Area Transit)	Naples, FL	Target	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
The M(Montgomery Area Transit)	City of Montgomery, AL	Previous TDP	0.93	0.44	0.06	1.22	0.41	0.89	0.66	3.96
TTA(Tri-State Transit Authority)	Huntington, WV	Previous TDP	0.95	0.55	0.15	0.77	0.59	0.89	0.65	3.90
The Wave Transit System	City of Mobile, AL	Previous TDP	0.93	0.29	0.21	1.06	0.42	0.88	0.63	3.79
ART(Asheville Redefines Transit)	City of Asheville, NC	Previous TDP	0.98	0.35	0.36	0.49	0.73	0.92	0.64	3.82
GCT(Gwinnett County Transit)	Lawrenceville, GA	Previous TDP	0.93	0.91	0.09	0.72	0.50	0.96	0.69	4.12
PCPT(Pasco County Public Transportation)	New Port Richey, FL	Previous TDP	0.63	0.84	0.37	0.50	0.40	0.78	0.59	3.53
The Wave (Cape Fear Public Transportation Authority)	Wilmington, NC	Previous TDP	0.90	0.40	0.02	0.07	0.34	0.85	0.43	2.58
Sarasota Breeze (Sarasota County Area Transit)	Sarasota, FL	New	0.70	0.46	0.09	0.06	0.33	0.80	0.41	2.43
Lee Tran (Lee County Transit)	Fort Myers, FL	New	0.60	0.31	0.06	0.39	0.56	0.82	0.46	2.75
Bayway (Bay County Transportation)	Pensacola, FL	New	0.63	0.11	0.18	0.61	0.49	0.27	0.38	2.28
GoLine (Indian River County)	Vero Beach, FL	New	0.89	0.58	0.05	0.21	0.53	0.77	0.51	3.04
Citrus Connection (Lakeland Area Mass Transit District)	Lakeland, FL	New	0.96	0.38	0.04	0.85	0.52	0.98	0.62	3.72
CARTA(Charleston Area Regional Transportation Authority)	North Charleston, SC	New	0.93	0.36	0.11	0.42	0.02	0.93	0.46	2.79
ECAT(Escambia County Area Transit Authority)	Pensacola, FL	New	0.91	0.11	0.18	0.61	0.31	0.87	0.50	2.98
CCRTA(Cape Cod Regional Transit Authority)	Hyannis, MA	New	0.81	0.30	0.50	0.42	0.34	0.70	0.51	3.09
GTA(Greensboro Transit Authority)	City of Greensboro, NC	New	0.93	0.25	0.10	0.57	0.15	0.92	0.48	2.91



Agency Name	Location	Peer Group	Average Operational Likeness Score	Sum of Operational Likeness Scores	Average of Operational Sum by Peer Group	Average Exogenous Likeness Score	Sum of Exogenous Likeness Scores	Average of Exogenous Sum by Peer Group	Average Likeness Score for All Factors	Total Sum of Likeness Score for All Factors	Average of Total Sum by Peer Group
CAT(Collier Area Transit)	Naples, FL	Target	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
The M(Montgomery Area Transit)	City of Montgomery, AL	Previous TDP	0.53	2.59	2.45	0.66	3.96	3.67	0.59	8.24	7.04
TTA(Tri-State Transit Authority)	Huntington, WV	Previous TDP	0.46	2.93		0.65	3.90		0.54	7.57	
The Wave Transit System	City of Mobile, AL	Previous TDP	0.35	2.04		0.63	3.79		0.47	6.59	
ART(Asheville Redefines Transit)	City of Asheville, NC	Previous TDP	0.56	3.47		0.64	3.82		0.59	8.27	
GCT(Gwinnett County Transit)	Lawrenceville, GA	Previous TDP	0.36	2.44		0.69	4.12		0.50	7.01	
PCPT(Pasco County Public Transportation)	New Port Richey, FL	Previous TDP	0.30	1.78		0.59	3.53		0.42	5.94	
The Wave (Cape Fear Public Transportation Authority)	Wilmington, NC	Previous TDP	0.39	1.87		0.43	2.58		0.40	5.67	
Sarasota Breeze (Sarasota County Area Transit)	Sarasota, FL	New	0.47	3.72	2.87	0.41	2.43	2.89	0.44	6.16	5.75
LeeTran (Lee County Transit)	Fort Myers, FL	New	0.47	3.73		0.46	2.75		0.46	6.48	
Bayway (Bay County Transportation)	Pensacola, FL	New	0.39	3.16		0.38	2.28		0.39	5.44	
GoLine (Indian River County)	Vero Beach, FL	New	0.40	3.18		0.51	3.04		0.44	6.22	
Citrus Connection (Lakeland Area Mass Transit District)	Lakeland, FL	New	0.22	1.78		0.62	3.72		0.39	5.51	
CARTA(Charleston Area Regional Transportation Authority)	North Charleston, SC	New	0.40	3.21		0.46	2.79		0.43	5.99	
ECAT(Escambia County Area Transit Authority)	Pensacola, FL	New	0.19	1.50		0.50	2.98		0.32	4.48	
CCRTA(Cape Cod Regional Transit Authority)	Hyannis, MA	New	0.29	2.30		0.51	3.09		0.38	5.39	
GTA(Greensboro Transit Authority)	City of Greensboro, NC	New	0.40	3.22		0.48	2.91		0.44	6.13	



Situational Appraisal Technical Memo No. 1

Date: July 1, 2024

Reference: Contract 18-7432 MP Professional Services Library – Metropolitan Planning
Transit Development Plan (TDP) Major Update
Purchase Order/Work Order No. 4500229353
Project No. 33804.6.2.3

Document: Situational Appraisal – Technical Memo No. 1 - Action Required

Your review of the initial Situational Appraisal is requested.

The organization of this document presents an outline of the content to be included in the final draft of the TDP. As such, there are areas where additional data and analysis are still in development. Those areas are noted and will be updated as the document develops. An example of this can be found in the peer analysis section. The peer analysis was initiated to identify comparable transit agencies that share similar conditions and serve as a good peer to mirror. The value of peer analysis is to measure operating effectiveness and to provide aspirational direction. CAT however has some unique attributes that will require further evaluation and discussion. This is noted in this document.

This document contains a snapshot of CAT performance based on NTD data and other source material. Review of this information and other conditions should be reviewed as a starting point for the TDP.

We look forward to discussing this more.

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1 Baseline Conditions

The baseline conditions analysis provides a detailed report on the existing and projected future conditions of the service area. The foundation of the transportation development plan will be based on the contextual information presented in this section. The collected data will also be used in the Situational Appraisal to provide the basis for transit improvement considerations.

The following topics were reviewed and analyzed for Collier County in the context of the TDP:

- Study Area
- Population Profile
- Demographic Characteristics
- Transportation Disadvantaged Population
- Labor and Employment Characteristics
- Educational Attainment
- Tourism
- Major Trip Generators
- Major Developments
- Existing and Future Land Use
- Commuter Travel Patterns
- Roadway Conditions

Data collected for select population, demographic, and socioeconomic characteristics are supported by various maps and tables. Primary data sources include the U.S. Census Bureau, specifically from the 2020 Decennial Census and the 5-Year American Community Survey (ACS), Collier County, Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged, Collier Area Transit, and the Regional Economic Research Institute at Florida Gulf Coast University, supplemented by local and regional agency sources as necessary.



1.1 Study Area

Collier County is in southwest Florida, east of the Gulf of Mexico. The county is bordered on the northwest, northeast, east, south, respectively by Lee, Hendry, Broward, Miami-Dade, and Monroe counties. Collier County has three municipalities: Everglades City, Marco Island, and Naples, the County seat.

In terms of geographical area, Collier County is the largest county in Florida with a land area of approximately 1,996.8 square miles.¹ A significant portion of the county area is designated as protected lands (more than 1,875 square miles), primarily in the eastern and southern parts of the county.

Figure 1-1 shows the extent of the study area. Due to the size of Collier County, a study area has been produced as outlined by the red boundary, which covers the existing transit network along with the core populated areas of the County and excludes some of the park land. For presentation purposes moving forward in this document, some of the map figures will be zoomed to the study area extent to show greater detail and avoid wasted space.

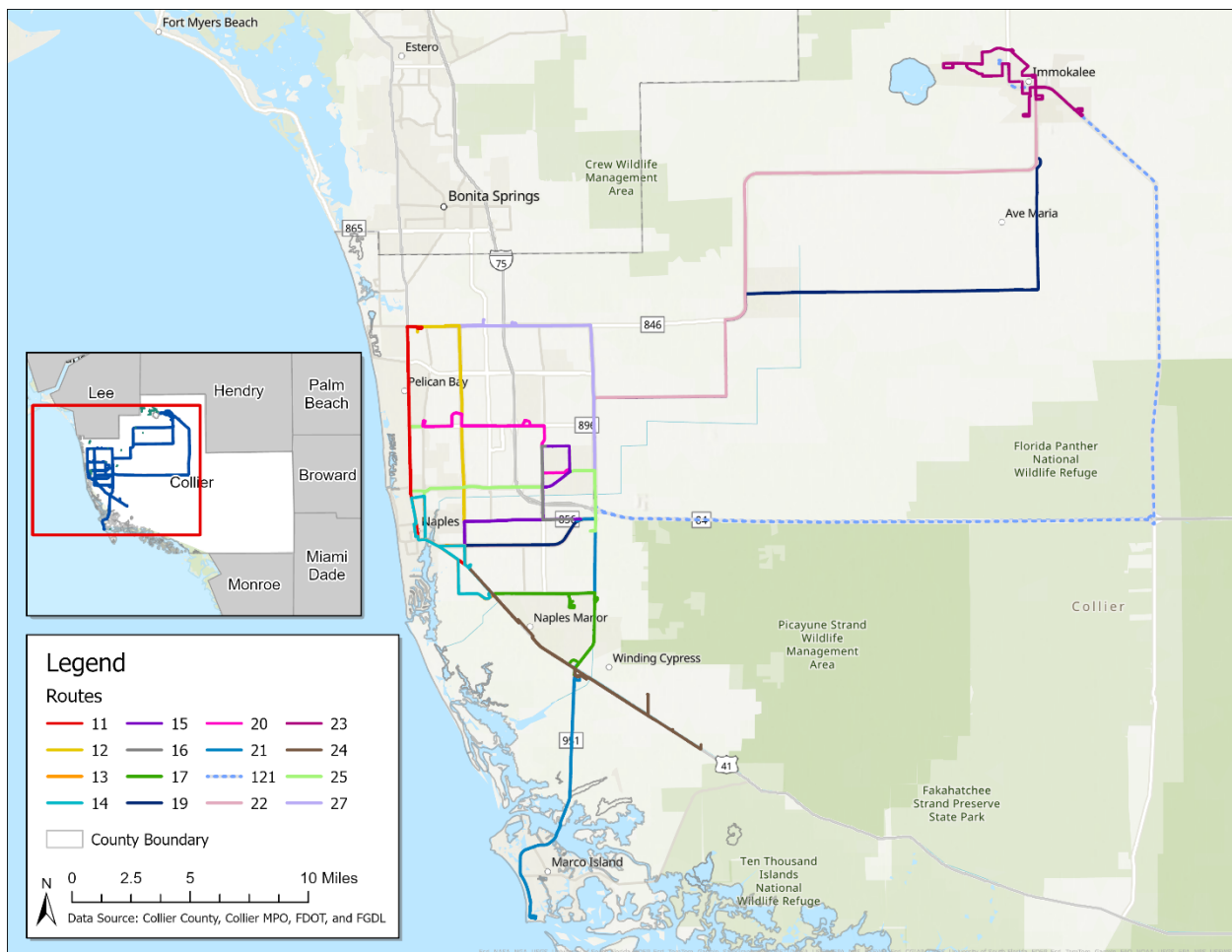


Figure 1-1: Map of Study Area

¹ US Census Bureau 2020 Decennial Census.



1.2 Population Profile

As of the 2020 Decennial Census, Collier County was ranked the 19th most populous county in Florida. As per the US Census Bureau 2020 Decennial Census, the county population accounts for 1.74% of the total state population in 2020 and is estimated to grow to 1.83% by 2050 based on State population projections.²

The Collier County population has been steadily increasing over the last few decades, as shown in Figure 1-2 below. There was a slight dip in the census population count in 2020 compared to the projected values for the previous years, likely due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Collier County's population is projected to continue increasing steadily.

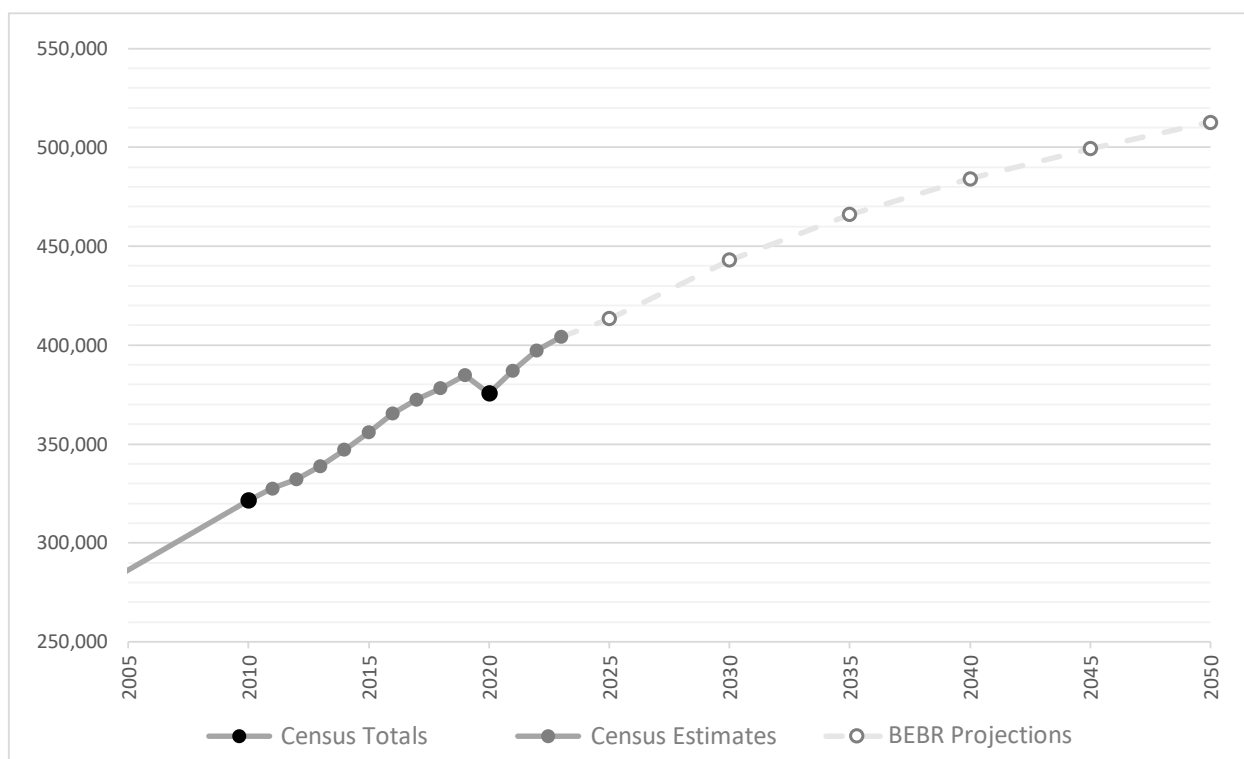


Figure 1-2: Population totals, estimates, and projections for Collier County (Source: US Census Bureau population estimates and BEBR population projections).

² US Census Bureau 2020 Decennial Census.



Collier County's population has been increasing during the past few decades; however, the overall growth rate is expected to slow over the next couple of decades, like state-wide conditions. In general, the county has consistently experienced and will continue to have higher rates of growth compared to that of Florida, as shown in Figure 1-3 below.

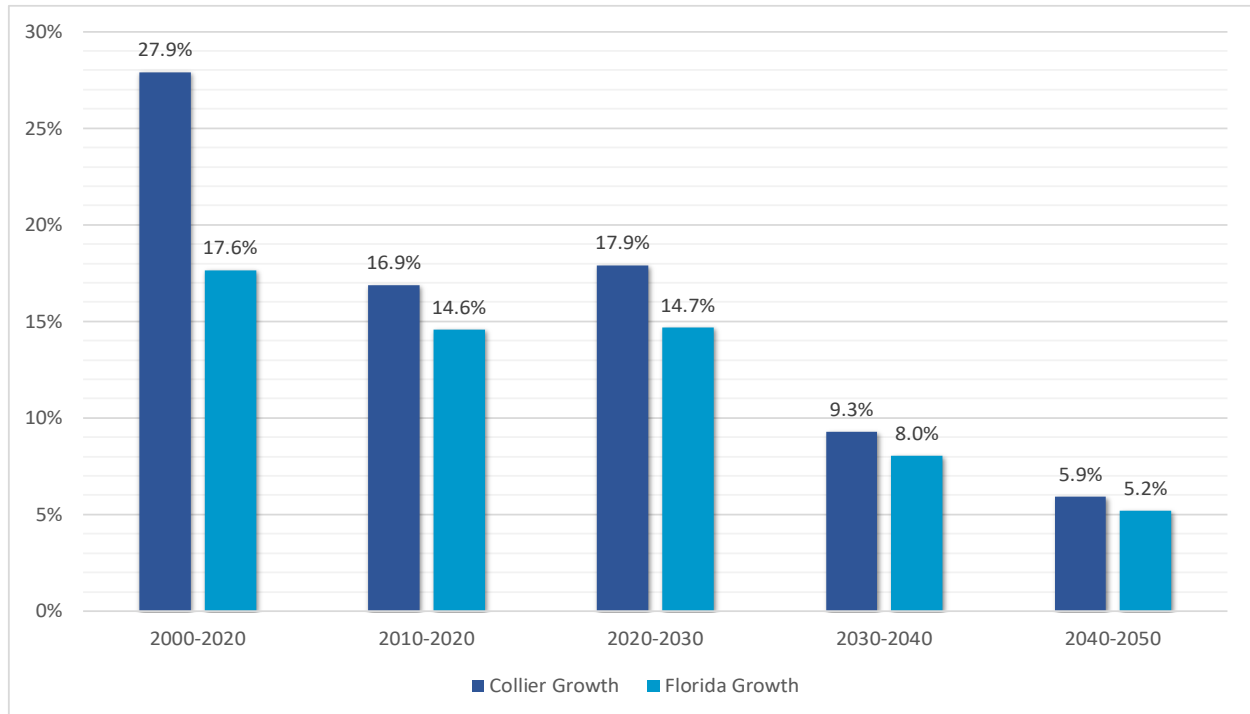


Figure 1-3: Historical and Projected Decennial Population Growth Rates

Collier County typically receives a significant number of tourists and seasonal residents, impacting the travel patterns and increasing traffic congestion during the peak season periods. The County developed annual population projections for the fiscal year and peak season periods to better plan for seasonal demand impact on public services. Figure 1-4 displays these projection values; with annual fiscal year population values reflecting the permanent resident population and peak season population values estimated with a constant adjustment factor.

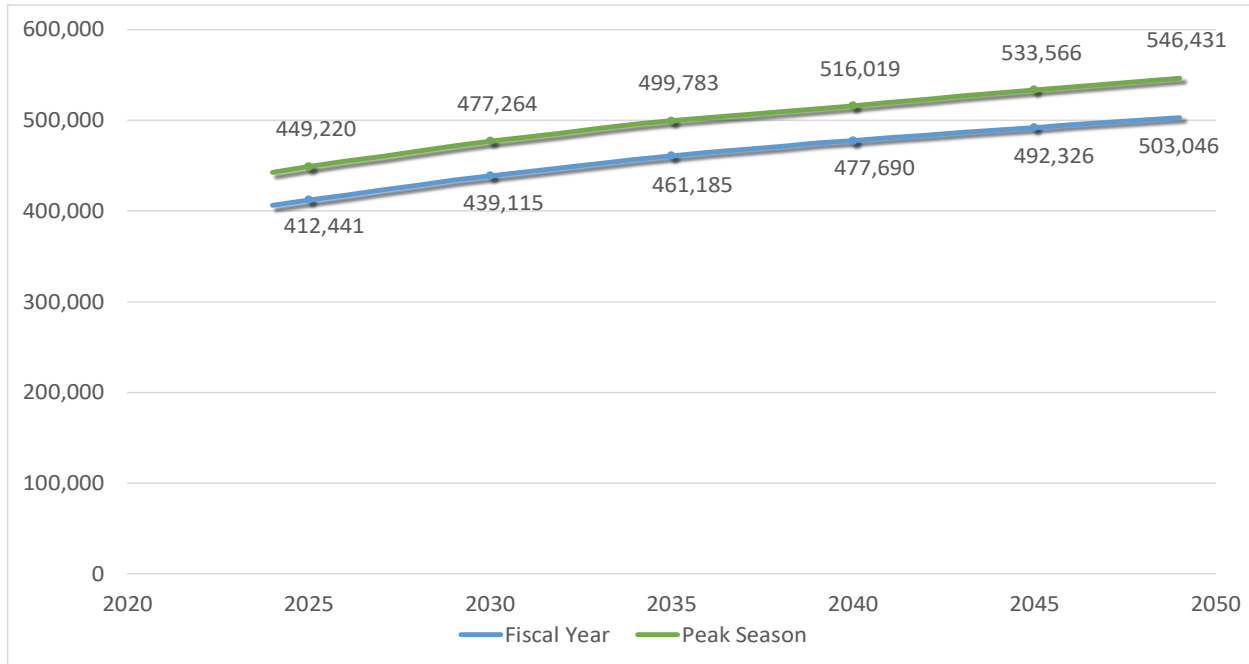


Figure 1-4: Collier County year by year population projections.

Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZ) were used to analyze statistics and change at a smaller geographic unit. Estimated population, employment, and dwelling density values for 2024 and 2035 were interpolated from 2015 values and 2045 projections. Employment will be discussed in a later section.

Figure 1-5 and Figure 1-6 depict the population densities at the TAZ level for 2024 and 2035 respectively. The estimated population distribution of Collier County in 2024 is highly concentrated in the central business and residential districts of Naples, Naples Manor, Immokalee, Pelican Bay, Ave Maria, Winding Cypress, and Marco Island. The distribution pattern remains very similar for the 2035 estimated projections. The areas with higher population values are all located near, if not along, the existing transit network, which means that the current network is doing well in providing service in the more populated areas.

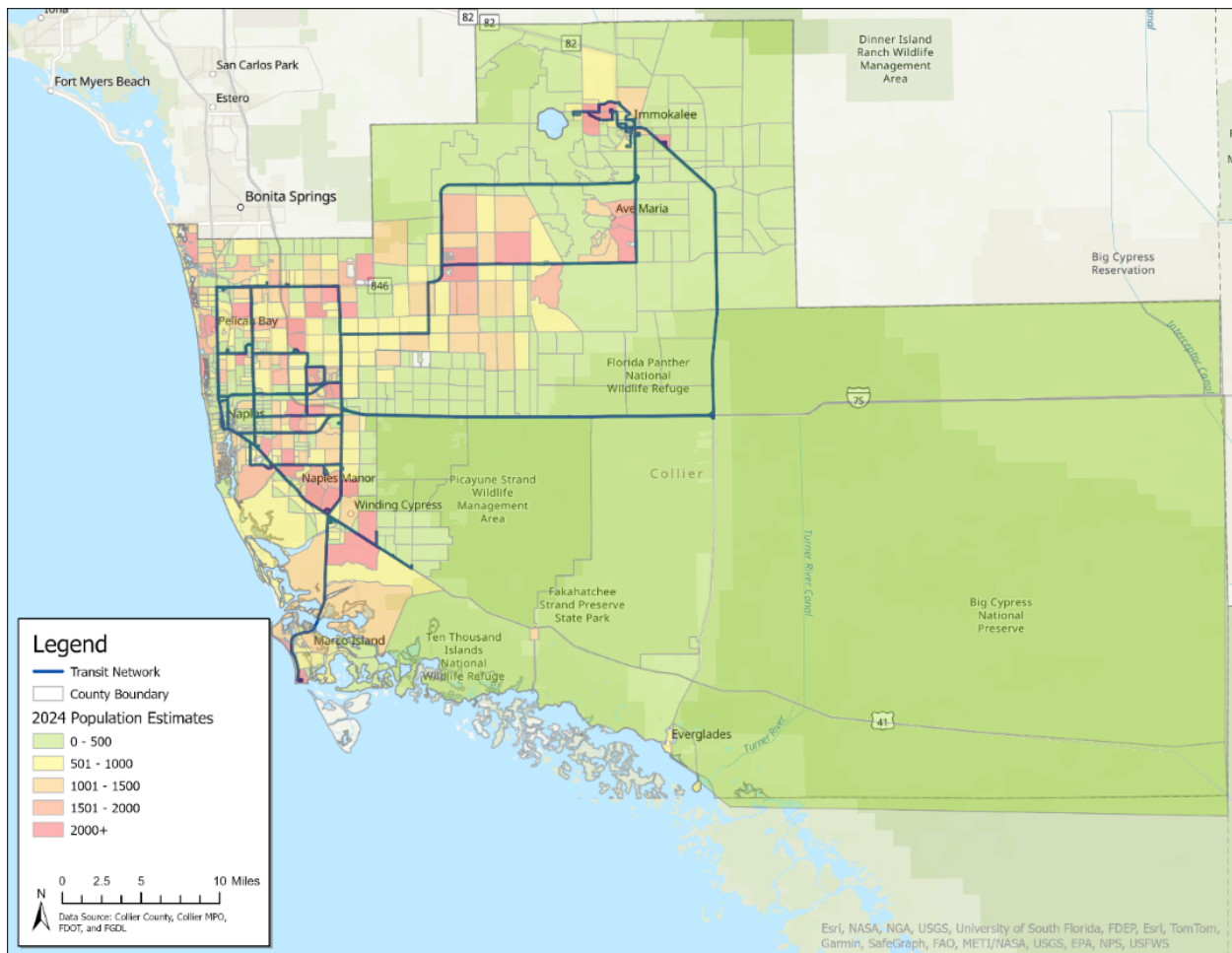


Figure 1-5: Estimated Population Density in Collier County in 2024

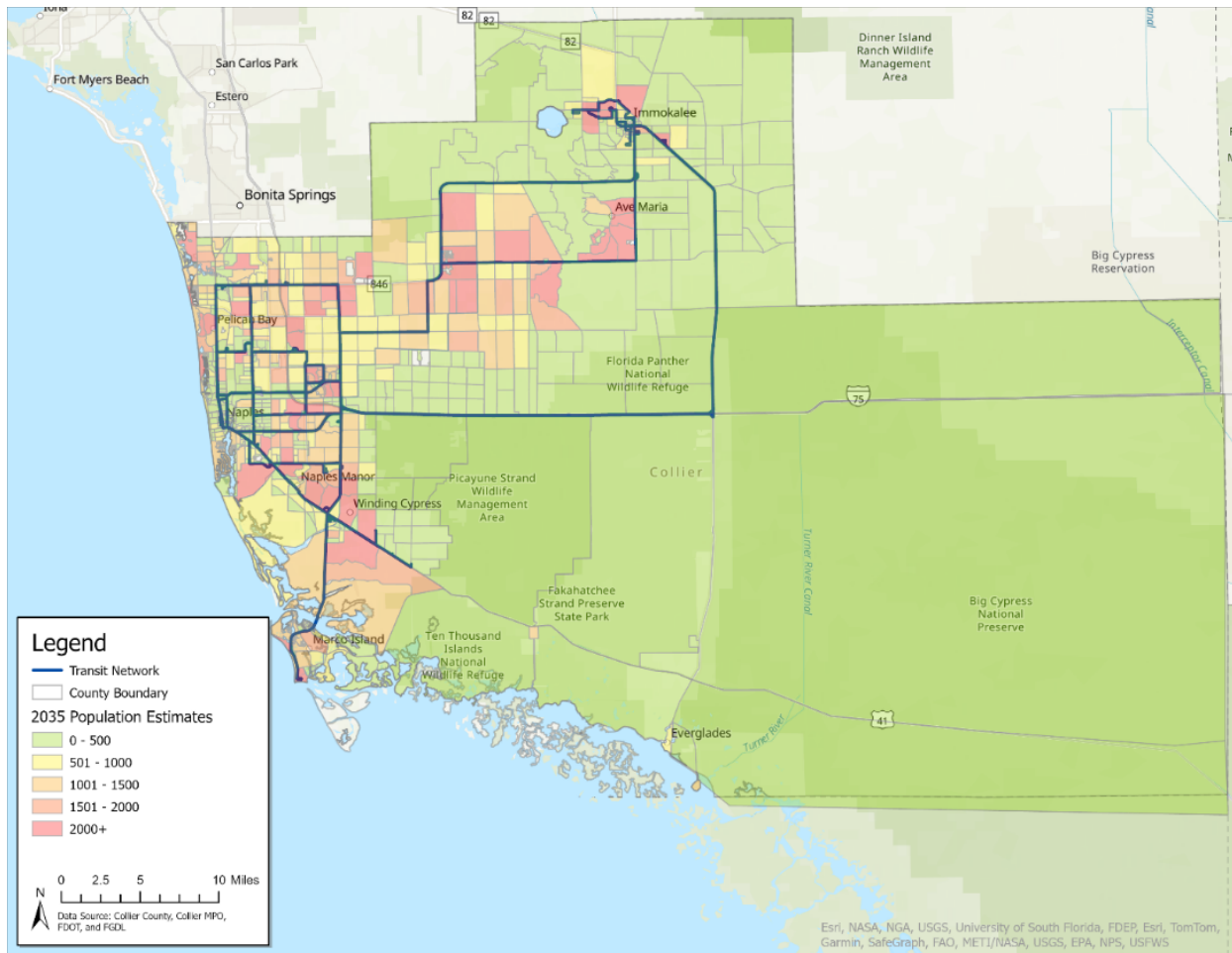


Figure 1-6: Estimated Population Density in Collier County in 2035

Figure 1-7 shows the population growth increase between the 2024 and 2035 population estimates. This growth change map indicates high growth rates for the TAZs within and around the urban communities of Naples Manor, Marco Island, Immokalee, Ave Maria, and Orangetree (west of Ave Maria). Orangetree specifically is surrounded by a significant number of TAZs with population growth rates greater than 100 people, depicted in red in the map. These areas of high growth indicate potential for more transit demand as the population increases. The agricultural areas next to these communities appear to have little to no growth or even decreasing population, specifically outside of Immokalee and in the parks or nature reserves, which is expected as there are limited residential areas and less dwelling units there.

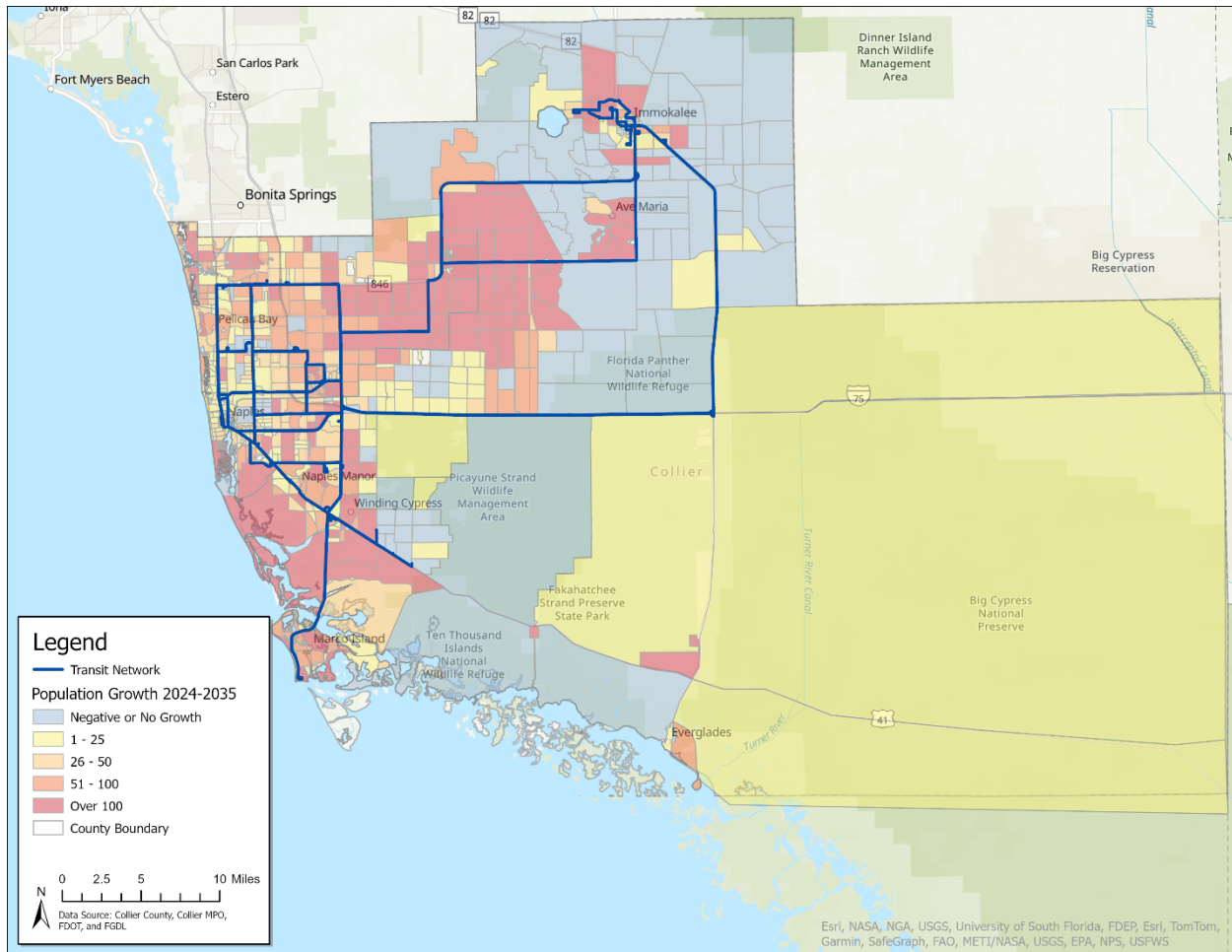


Figure 1-7: Population Growth Between Estimated Population Densities from 2024 to 2035

Figure 1-8 and Figure 1-9 illustrate the dwelling unit densities at the TAZ level for 2024 and 2035 respectively. Like the population distribution in Collier County, high dwelling unit densities are seen in and around Naples Manor, Pelican Bay, Marco Island, Ave Maria, and Immokalee, indicating greater resident occupancy and transit demand in these regions. Higher dwelling unit densities are also observed along the Gulf of Mexico coast along the west end of Collier County. This distribution pattern remains very similar for the 2035 estimated projections. Again, following population density patterns, areas with higher numbers of dwelling units are all located near, if not along, the existing transit network, indicating that the current network is doing well in providing service in the more populous residential areas.

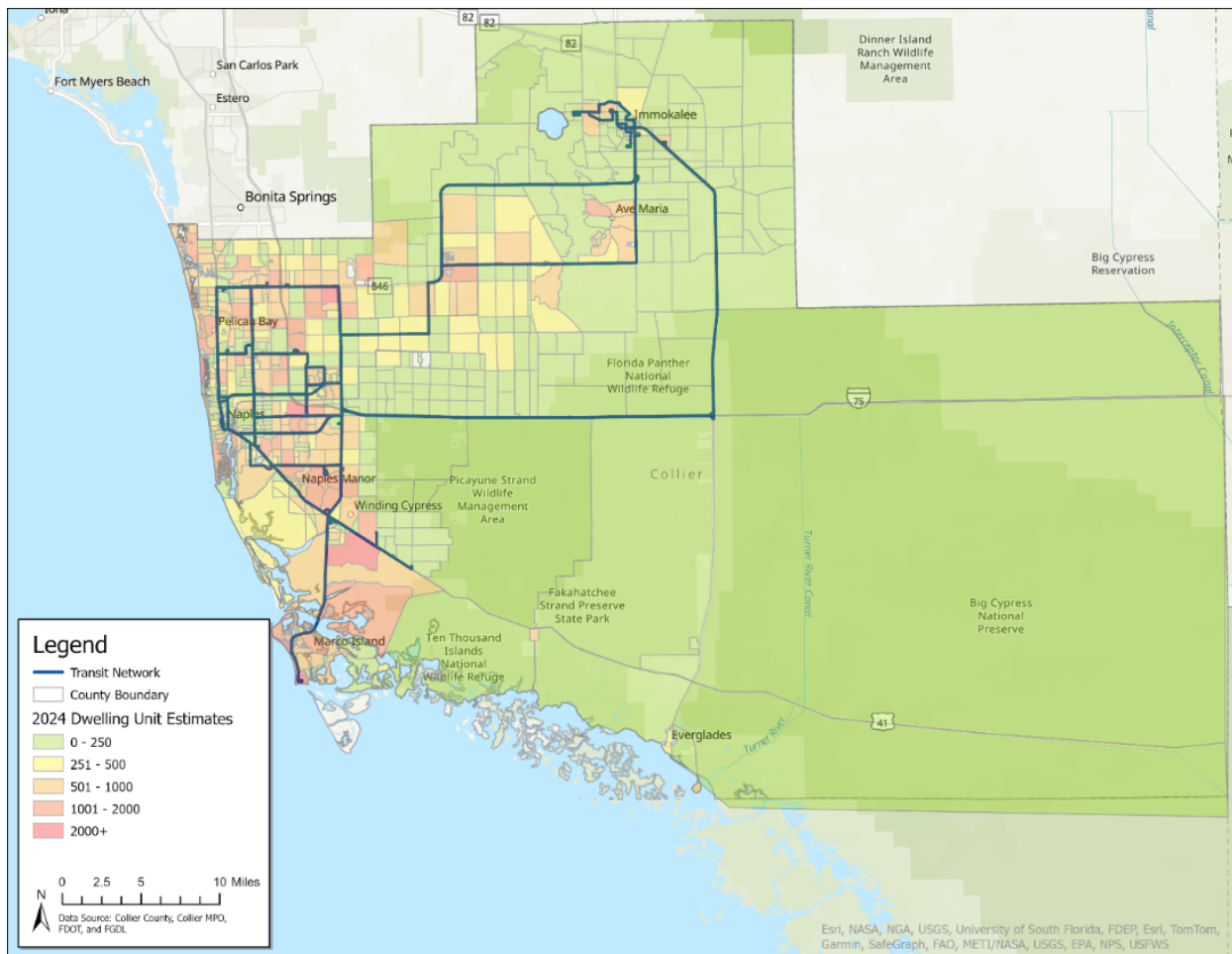


Figure 1-8: Estimates for Number of Dwelling Units in Collier County in 2024.

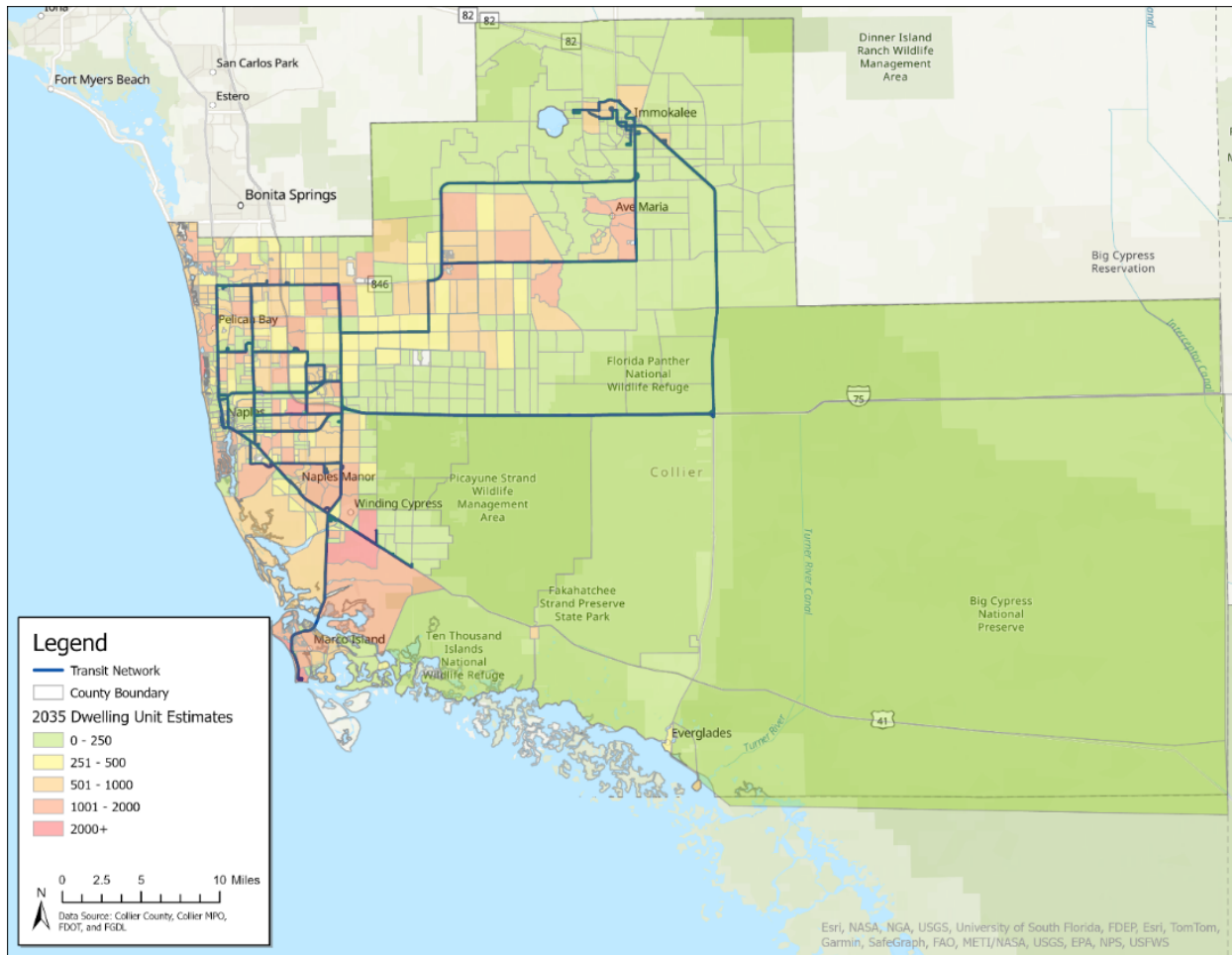


Figure 1-9: Estimates for Number of Dwelling Units in Collier County in 2035.

Figure 1-10 shows the increase in dwelling units between the 2024 and 2035 estimates. This growth change map indicates high growth rates for the TAZs within and around the urban communities of Naples Manor, Marco Island, Immokalee, Ave Maria, and Orangetree (west of Ave Maria). Orangetree specifically has a large number of TAZs with dwelling unit increases of more than 50 units, depicted in orange and red in the map. The areas with high increases in dwelling units are in line with the planned unit development areas in Figure 1-26 shown in a later section. As with population growth, the agricultural areas next to these communities appear to have little to no increase or even a decrease in dwelling units, specifically outside of Immokalee and in the parks or nature reserves, which is expected as there are limited residential areas and less dwelling units there.

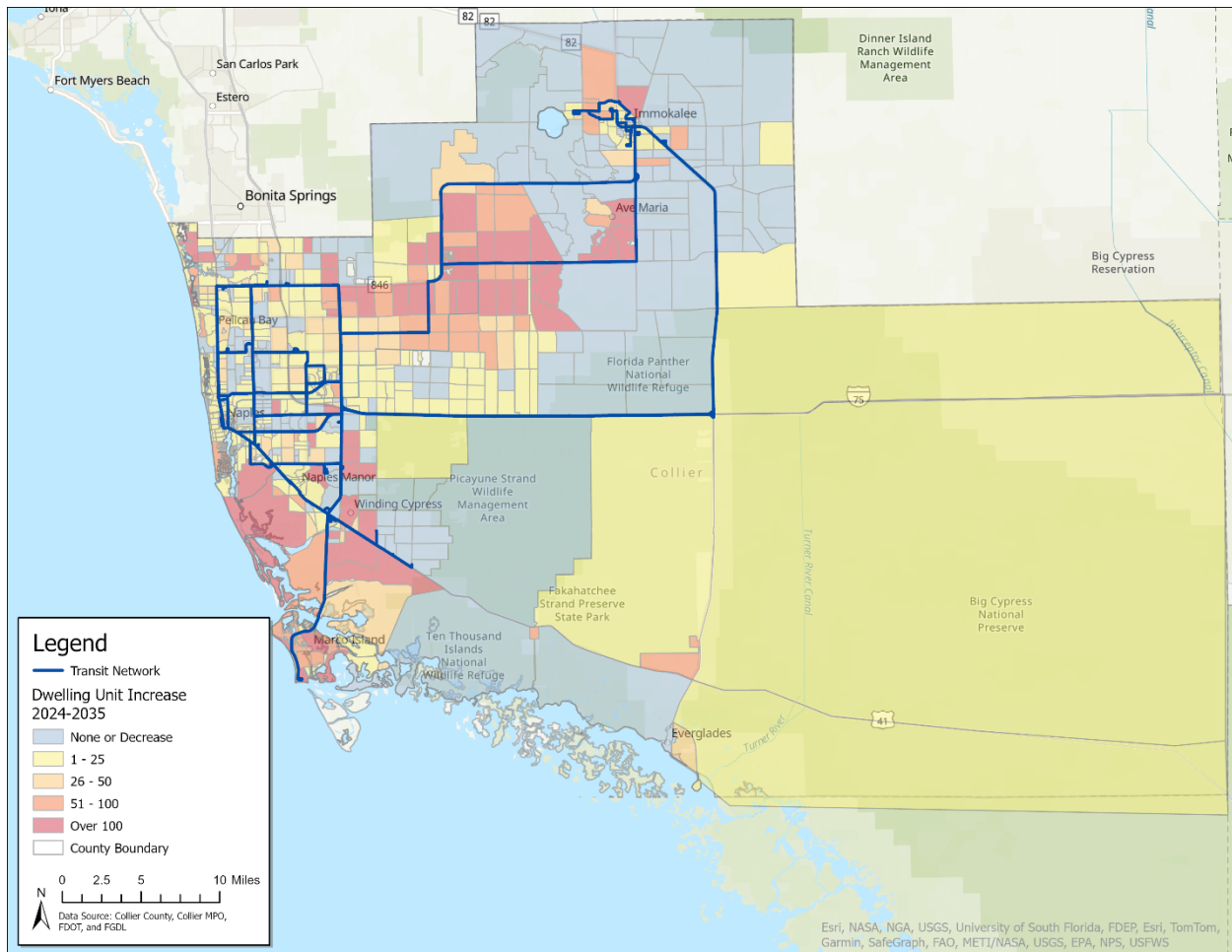


Figure 1-10: Dwelling Unit Increase Between Estimated Number of Dwelling Units from 2024 to 2035

1.3 Demographic Characteristics

Demographic characteristics such as age, household income, poverty status and the number of vehicles available in a household are key indicators to helping understand transit propensity. Table 1-1 summarizes these characteristics pulled from data from the United States Census Bureau in the years of 2010, 2018, 2020 and 2022.



Table 1-1: Collier County Demographic Characteristics

Characteristic	2010	2018	2020	2022
Gender				
Male	49.7%	49.3%	49.2%	49.5%
Female	50.3%	50.7%	50.8%	50.5%
Ethnic Origin				
White	85.8%	88.1%	84.5%	73.2%
Black or African American	6.6%	7.0%	6.8%	6.5%
Other	6.4%	3.6%	3.6%	5.6%
Two or more races	1.1%	1.3%	5.2%	14.6%
Hispanic Origin				
Not of Hispanic/Latino origin	74.8%	72.5%	72.0%	71.4%
Hispanic or Latino origin	25.2%	27.5%	28.0%	28.6%
Age				
<15 years	20.0%	18.8%	18.6%	18.2%
15-59 years	62.1%	59.9%	59.1%	59.8%
60+ years	17.9%	21.3%	22.3%	22.0%
Household Income				
Under \$10,000	7.2%	6.3%	5.8%	4.9%
\$10,000-\$49,999	40.9%	35.8%	33.2%	28.9%
\$50,000 or more	51.9%	57.9%	61.0%	66.2%
Poverty Status				
Above poverty level	86.2%	85.9%	87.2%	87.5%
Below poverty level	13.8%	14.1%	12.8%	12.5%
Vehicle Available in Household				
None	4.3%	4.3%	4.2%	4.3%
One	21.1%	20.6%	20.1%	20.3%
Two	42.5%	41.0%	40.5%	40.3%
Three or more	32.1%	34.1%	35.2%	35.2%

Source: 2010 ACS 5-year estimates, 2018 ACS 5-year estimates, 2020 ACS 5-year estimates, 2022 ACS 5-year estimates

A significant portion of the population owns two or more vehicles, and many individuals have an annual income exceeding \$50,000. Combined, these statistics may indicate a lower propensity to use transit among the community. Household income reveals an increasing disparity between the rich and poor, as those earning over \$50,000 have increased from 52% to 66%, while those earning under \$10,000 have only decreased by 2%. Moreover, the percentage of the population living above the poverty line has only shown a slight increase.



In Figure 1-11, changes in income brackets are shown over time.

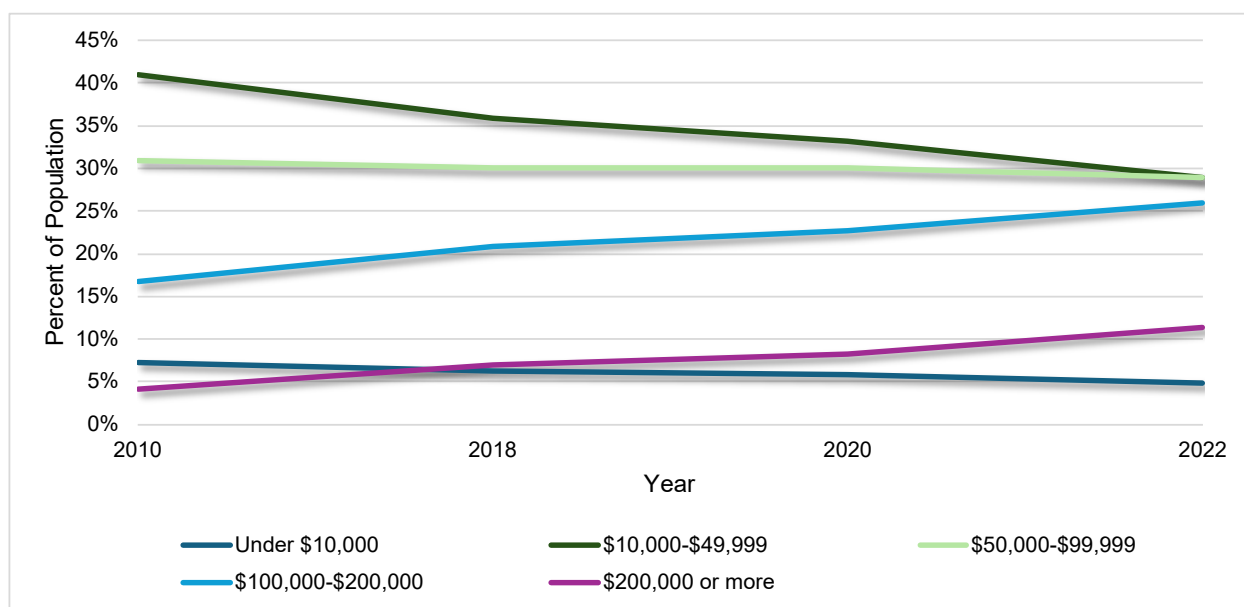


Figure 1-11: Household Income Over Time in Collier County

Source: 2010 ACS 5-year estimates, 2018 ACS 5-year estimates, 2020 ACS 5-year estimates, 2022 ACS 5-year estimates

The percentage of people earning under \$10,000 annually decreased from 7.2% in 2010 to 4.9% in 2022, a change of about 2%. Conversely, the percentage of individuals earning \$100,000 or more annually increased by about 10%. This indicates a faster rate of income growth among higher earners. As incomes rise, fewer people may rely solely on public transportation due to increased affordability of private vehicles or alternative options. The percentage of individuals earning between \$50,000-\$99,999 annually has remained stable, representing a group that might still prefer public transit for its convenience and cost-effectiveness, especially in urban areas with high traffic congestion and parking costs.

The age distribution among males and females has remained relatively consistent from 2000 to 2022, with a balanced ratio between genders and each gender representing about half of the population. The ethnic majority within this demographic remains Caucasian. Over time, it was observed that there was a slight decrease in the youth population and an increase in the senior population, which again highlights the growing need for accessible services. Notably, there is an increasing trend in the portion of the population aged sixty and over, which could potentially lead to a heightened demand for fixed-route transit and paratransit services. Figure 1-12 below further depicts the distribution of population across gender and age groups. It shows that Collier has an aging population, with the more senior age groups outweighing the youth age groups. This would be important to consider, as it could be one reason contributing to the increase in the transportation-disadvantaged population over the years.



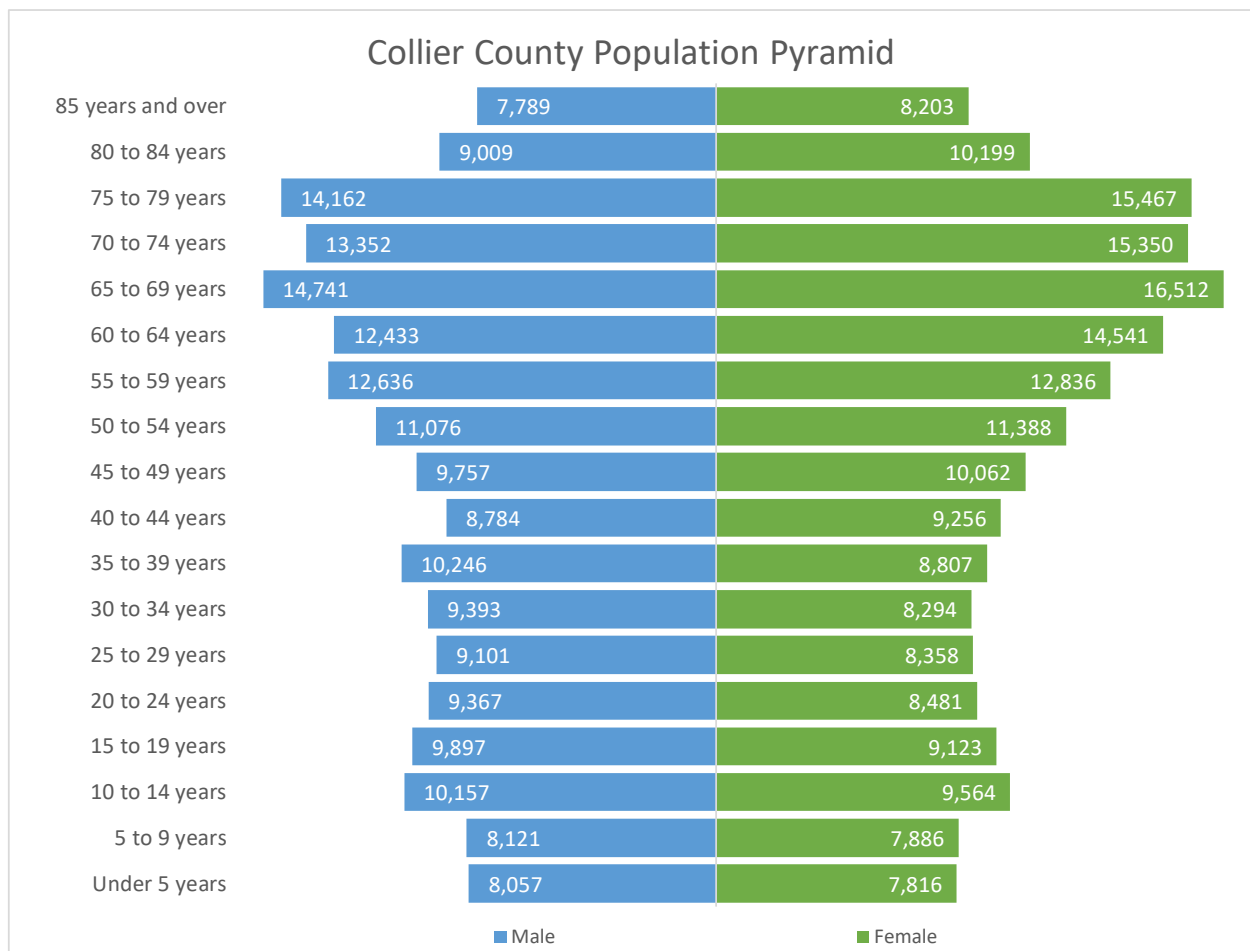


Figure 1-12: Population Age Distribution in Collier County

Consistently since 2010, over 95% of households in Collier County have at least one vehicle or more and the percentage of households without access to a private vehicle is very low at less than 5% of the total number of households. However, this demographic characteristic is important as it can potentially identify areas of the county that may be more reliant on public transit and may require more service. Figure 1-13 below shows the distribution of no-vehicle households throughout Collier County, at the census block groups geographic level. It appears that the current transit network services these areas well, although not quite reaching the areas further north-west of Pelican Bay and north-east of Immokalee and the conservation areas. Everglades seems to have a few households with no vehicle but there is a lack of transit service in that area as the existing network does not provide service to much the southern area of Collier County.

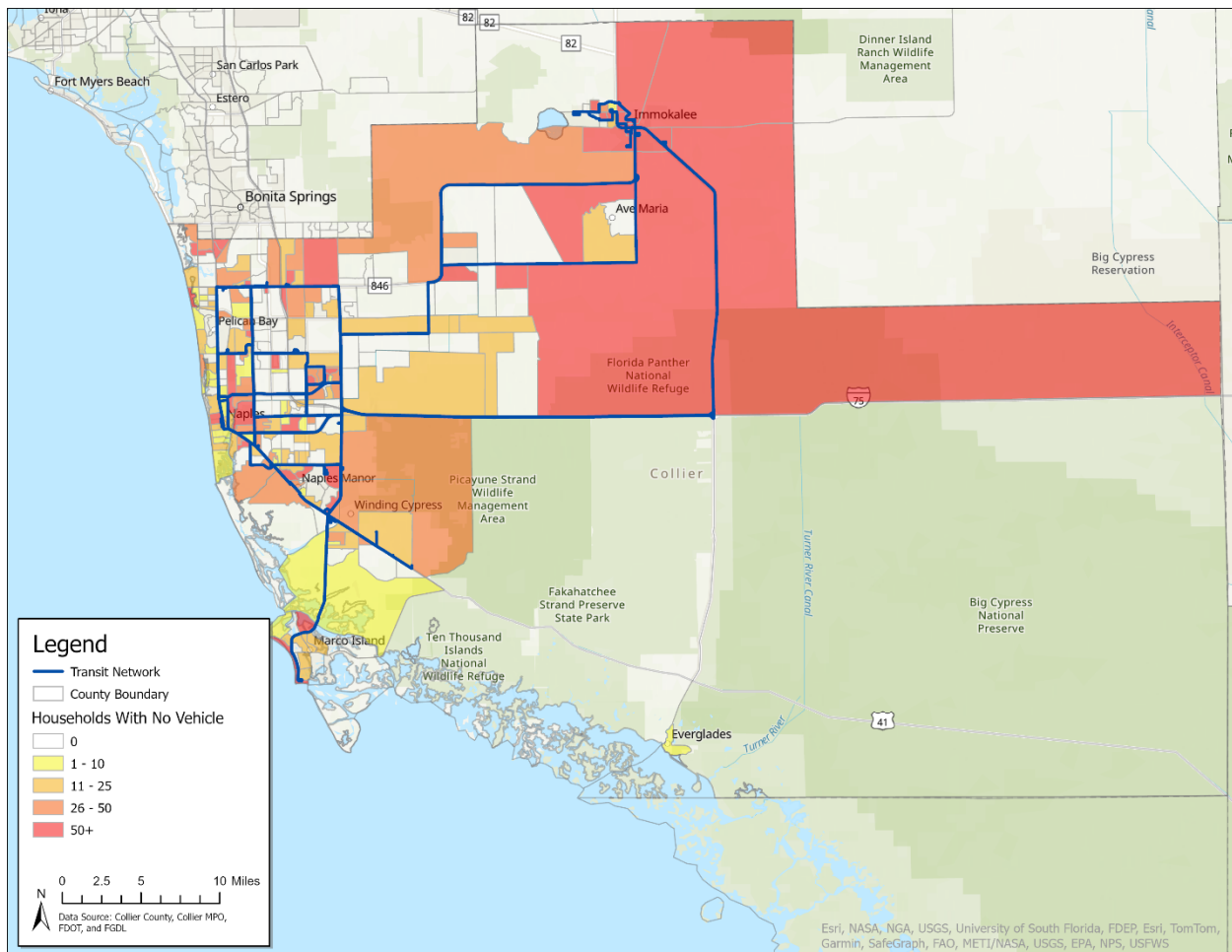


Figure 1-13: Distribution of Households with No Vehicle in Collier County in 2022.

1.4 Transportation Disadvantaged Population

CAT's paratransit service, CAT Connect, serves the Category I Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) population, including those with disabilities, the elderly, low-income individuals, and high-risk children as defined by CTD, providing door-to-door shared ride public transportation. After a passenger requests a drop-off time, they are given a two-hour pick-up window determined by a customer service representative.



Table 1-2 shows the trend in the size of the potential TD population and the number of TD passengers between 2021 and 2025 in Collier County based on the most recent Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged Annual Operations Report. Due to updates in the forecasted numbers in the 2023-2027 Collier County Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan, the potential TD population figures for 2021 to 2025 are now based on the 2021 U.S. Census ACS 5-year Estimates, replacing the forecasted numbers from the 2018-2022 plan.

Table 1-2: Forecasted Collier County transportation disadvantaged population.

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	% Change (2021-2025)
Potential TD Population	14,309	14,489	14,671	14,856	15,043	5.1%
Total Daily Trips by the Critical Need TD Population	4,020	4,088	4,157	4,228	4,299	6.9%

Source: Collier County Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan Major Update 2023-2027

The potential TD population has risen nearly 5.1% from 14,309 in 2021 to 15,043 in 2025, and the number of daily trips increased by 6.9% in this period. This gives a strong indication of the growing need for paratransit services in the upcoming years.

Table 1-3 shows the total number of TD trips served between 2019 to 2023.

Table 1-3: Collier County transportation disadvantaged trips served

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	% Change (2019-2023)
TD Trips Served	117,585	104,137	113,598	109,044	133,799	13.8%

Source: Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged 2020 Annual Operating Report, Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged 2022-2023 Annual Operating Report

The number of TD trips served through CAT's brokered system, as the Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) for Collier County, increased 13.8% from 117,585 in 2019 to 133,799 in 2023. This demonstrates the increasing desire and need for more paratransit trips in the region.



Figure 1-14 shows the number of TD passengers served during the five-year period from 2019 to 2023.

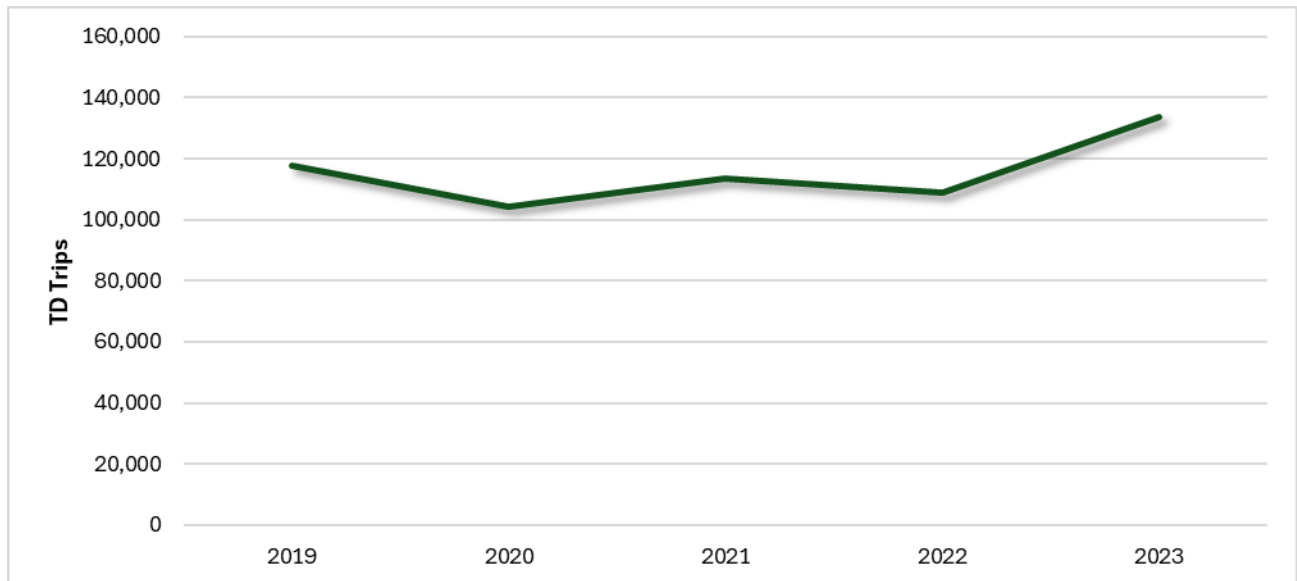


Figure 1-14: Collier County transportation disadvantaged trips, 2019–2023 (Source: Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged Annual Operations Reports (AOR))

During this time, the total number of TD passengers showed an upward trend, with occasional dips in ridership observed in 2020 and 2022. These declines were likely due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic resulting in decreased trips. Notably, the most significant increase in TD trips served (22%) occurred between 2022 and 2023. As the TD trips continue to grow, it will be important to ensure that enough services are provided to support this part of the community as well as ensuring fixed-route service options, which are more cost-effective, are accessible for all types of users.

As shown in Figure 1-15 below, TD trips have just increased in line with population growth.

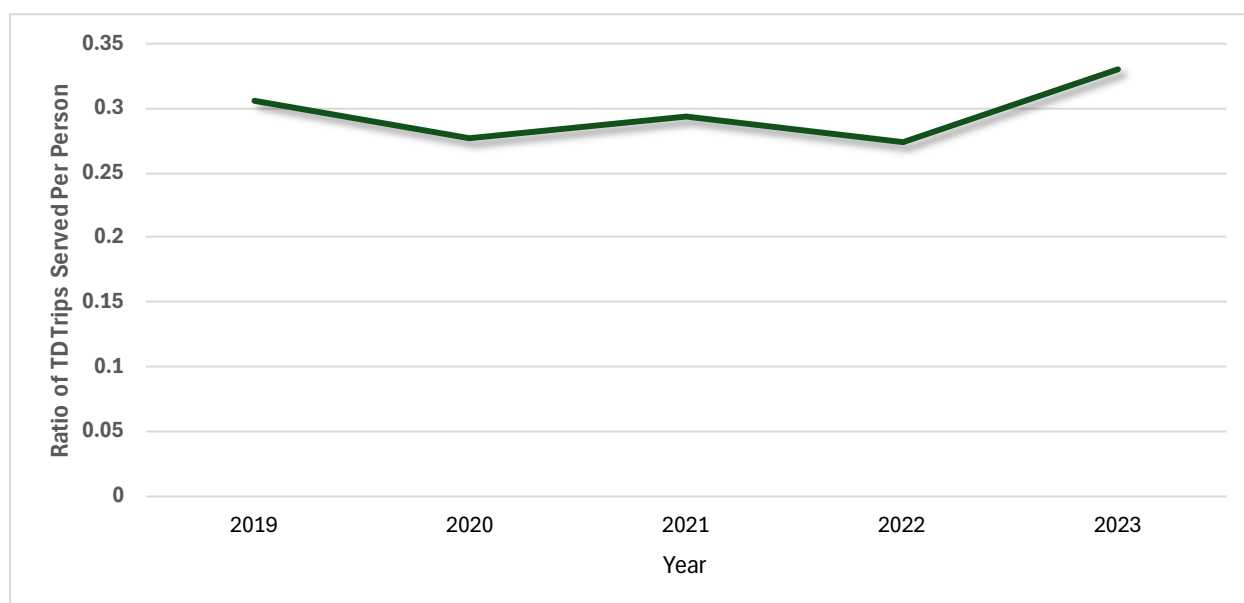


Figure 1-15: Ratio of TD Trips to Total Population

1.4.1 RECENT IMPROVEMENTS TO PARATRANSIT SERVICES

Several improvements have been implemented to the paratransit services in Collier County as outlined by the CAT Connect Paratransit Service Report. First, accessible bus stops have been added to improve ADA accessibility. Ecolane, a paratransit software, has been implemented, and Travel Trainings provided by CAT have been conducted. Additionally, improvements to the phone systems have resulted in a decrease in average queuing time and a reduction in abandoned calls.

1.5 Labor and Employment Characteristics

The employment sector distribution in Collier County not only reflects the economic vitality and job market trends but also serves as a critical indicator of transit dependency and the necessity for inclusive transportation planning. Figure 1-16 and Figure 1-17 show the estimated employment distribution in 2024 and 2035 respectively. As commercial areas and places of employment grow and develop, urban communities such as Pelican Bay, Naples and Naples Manor, Ave Maria, Immokalee, and Marco Island will experience an increase in employment numbers. This is depicted in the employment density maps, as the TAZs around these urban communities have higher employment numbers compared to the rest of the County, represented by yellow, orange, and red. These TAZs are mostly located along the existing transit network, which means that the current network is doing well in providing service in the more employment-dense areas.

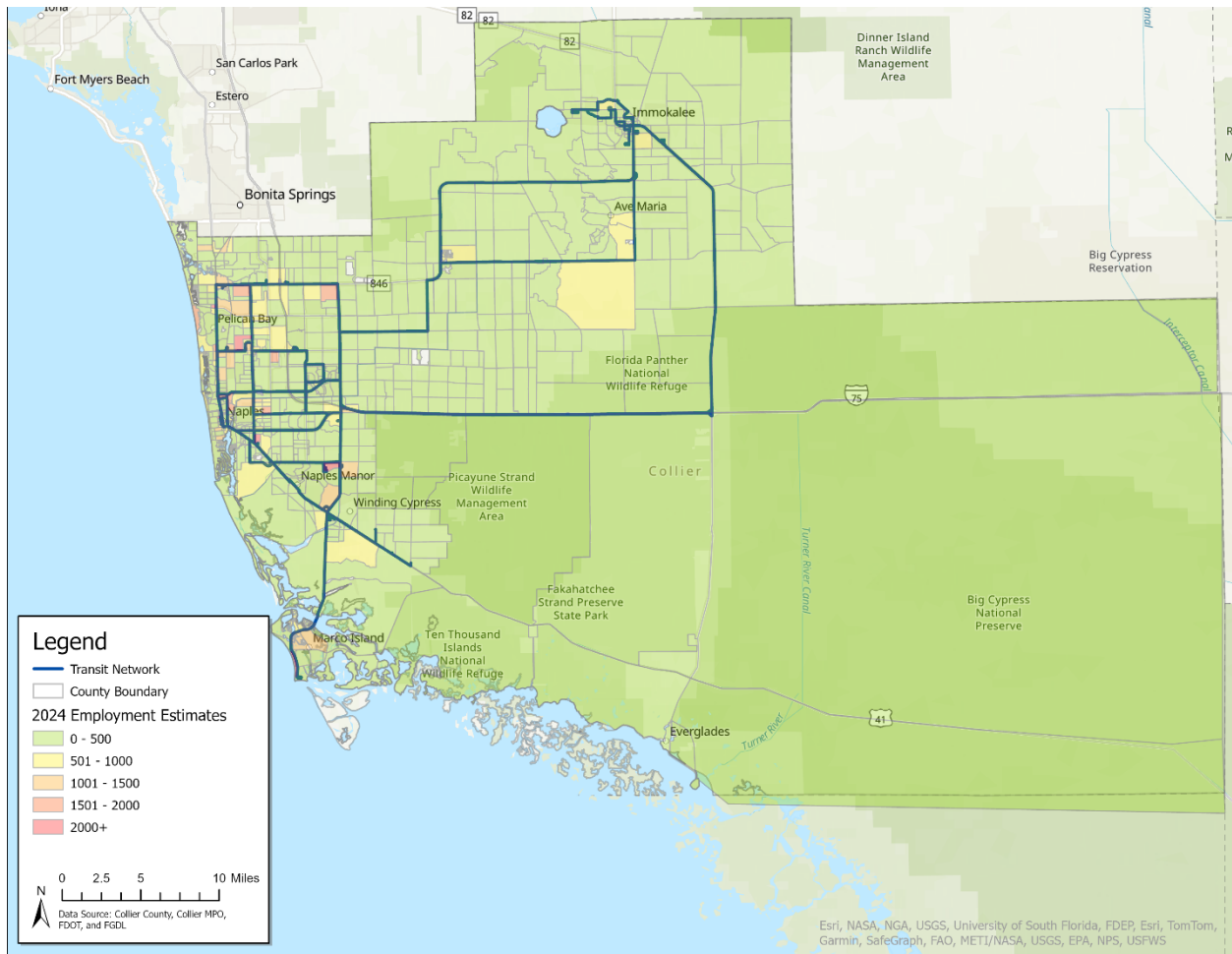


Figure 1-16: Collier County Employment Distribution 2024

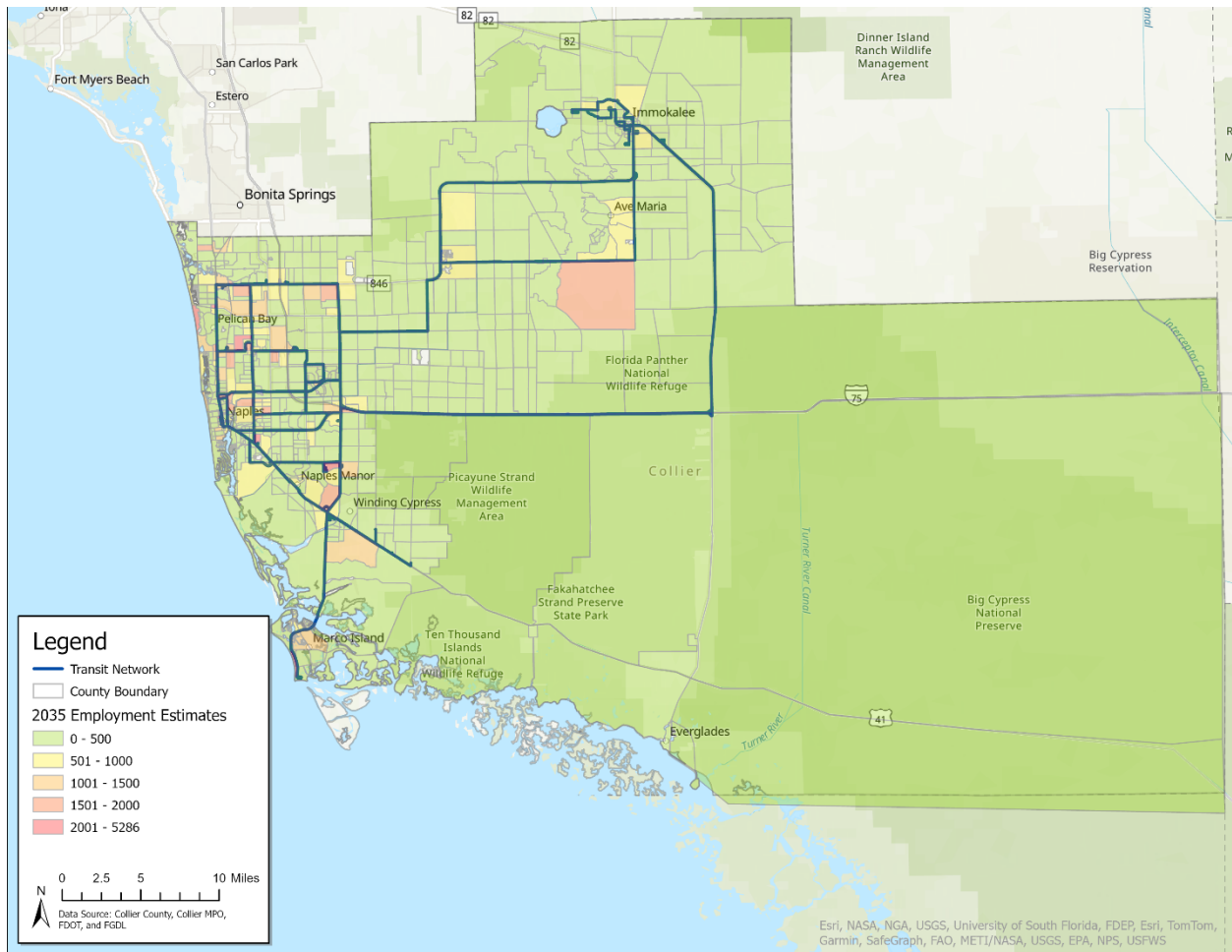


Figure 1-17: Collier County Employment Distribution 2035

Figure 1-18 shows the employment growth increase between the 2024 and 2035 population estimates. This growth change map depicts high growth rates for the TAZs within and around the urban communities of Naples Manor, Marco Island, Immokalee, Ave Maria, and Orangetree (west of Ave Maria). Although the rate of employment growth is more dispersed across the county as compared to population growth and dwelling unit increase, the high growth areas are still centered around the urban communities and along the existing transit network. Areas of high growth indicate potential for more transit demand as employment opportunity increases, generating more trips to get to these destination points. A unique high growth area is the Big Cypress National Preserve, which may impact transit service considerations as there is currently little service around that area of the county. The agricultural areas next to these communities appear to have little to no growth or even decreasing population, specifically outside of Immokalee and in the parks or nature reserves.

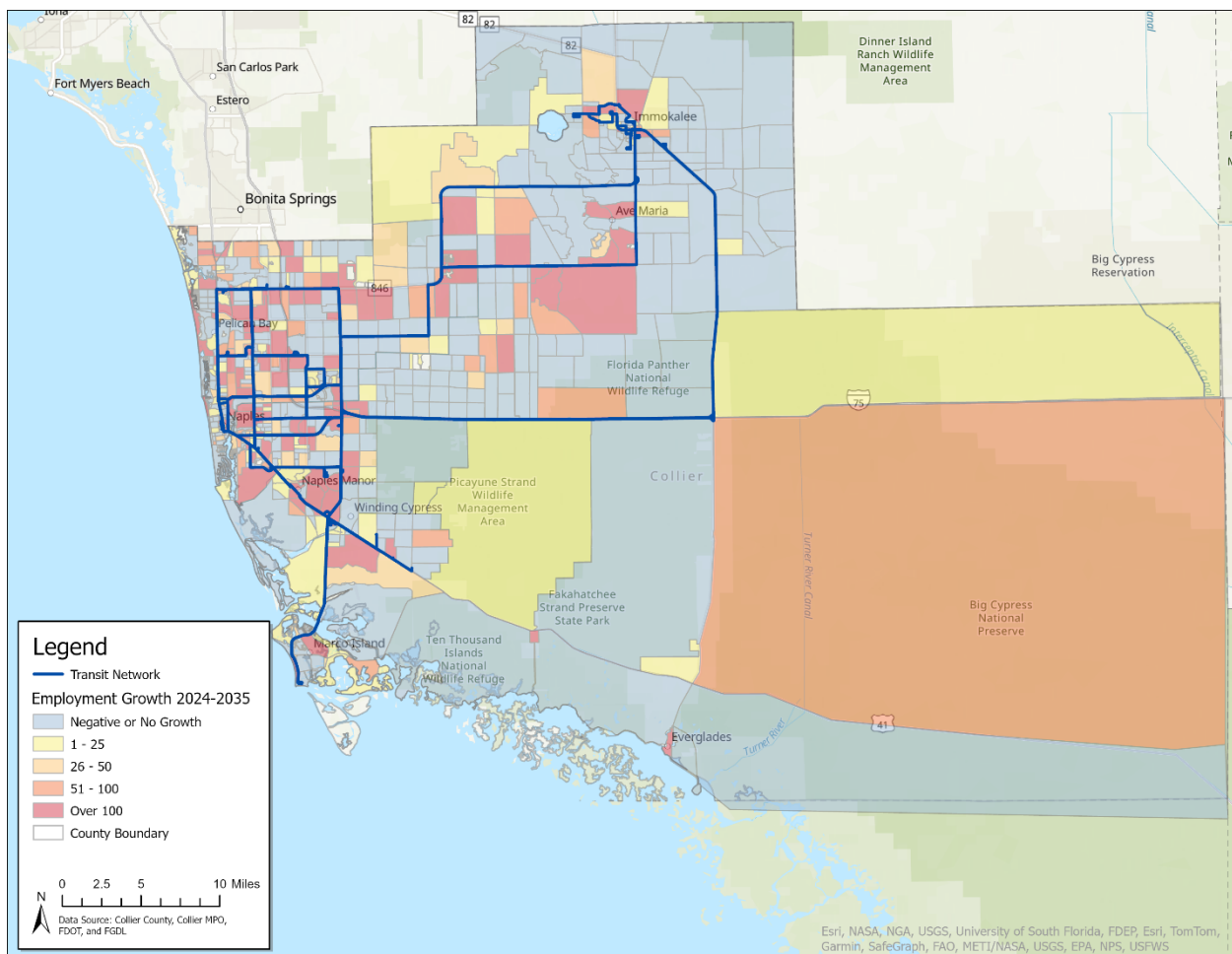


Figure 1-18: Employment Growth Between Estimated Employment Densities from 2024 to 2035

Figure 1-19 illustrates the distribution of employment across various sectors in Collier County in 2010, 2020 and 2022, offering insights into which sectors most influence the mobility requirements of the residents in before, during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

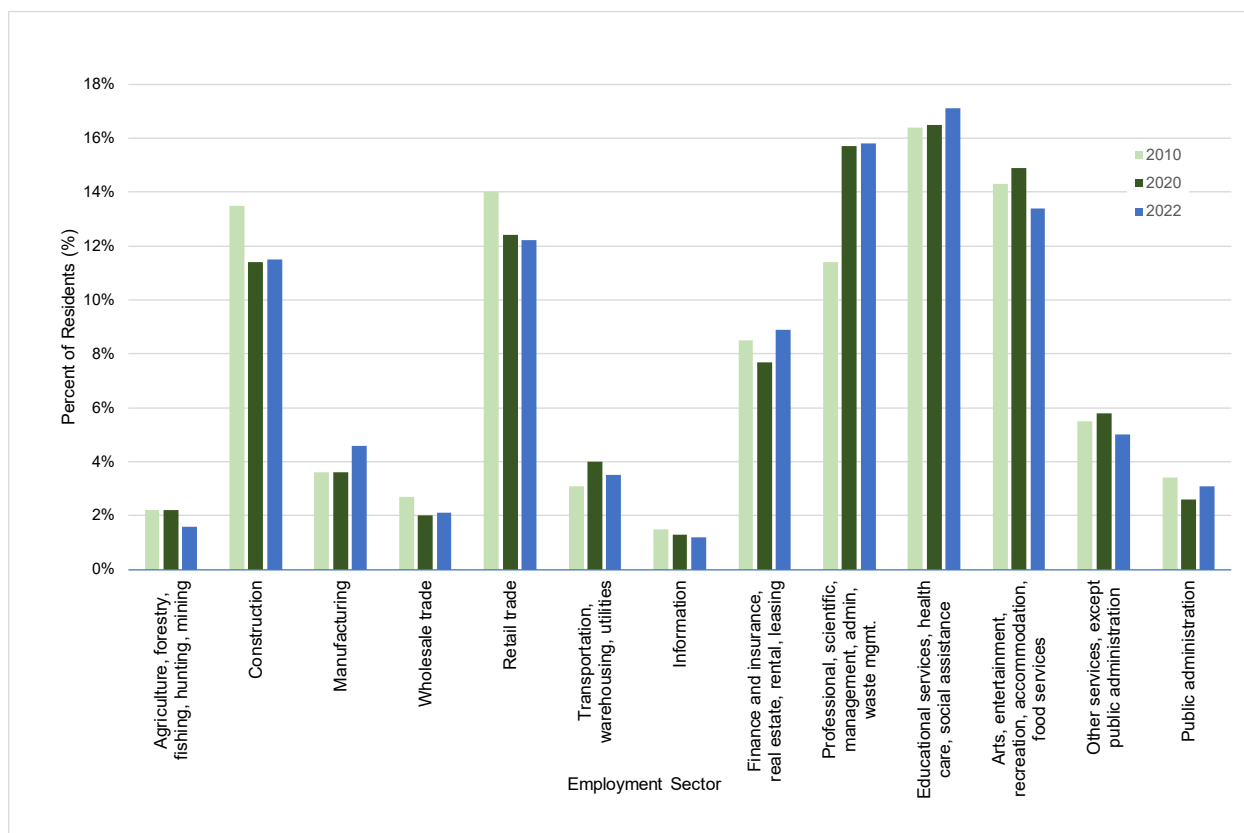


Figure 1-19: Collier County Labor Force Distribution by Service Area, 2010, 2020, and 2022

Source: 2010 ACS 5-year estimates, 2020 ACS 5-year estimates 2022 ACS 5-year estimates

As seen from Figure 1-19, the largest employment sectors in Collier County from 2010 to 2022 were the educational services, health care and social assistance sectors at around 16-17% of the workforce. Following closely are professional, scientific, management, administrative, waste management services and the arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services sectors, each accounting for approximately 11-15% of the workforce. From Figure 1-11, a greater percent of the population earns more than \$50,000. Thus, over time, more residents in Collier County can afford personal transportation, which may reduce their reliance on public transit. This observation also presents itself *Figure 1-13*; most of Collier's households own two or more cars. In contrast, sectors such as agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, mining, and transportation and warehousing, and utilities have experienced a downtick in their share of the workforce from 2010 to 2022. These types of jobs tend to have less employees working from home, leading to a lower reliance on personal vehicles or transit options in the County. Overall, the figure highlights the need for targeted transit solutions that cater to the unique needs of each employment sector, ensuring equitable access to mobility for all residents, regardless of income level.

Lee County is the primary residence for Collier County residents working outside their home county. According to recent data from the Greater Naples Chamber, 7,881 net commuters and 32,257 total inbound



commuters traveled from Lee County to Collier County in 2023. This highlights the interconnectedness of the two counties' labor markets.

Figure 1-20 shows the unemployment rates in years ranging from 2010-2022 based on ACS 5-year estimates.

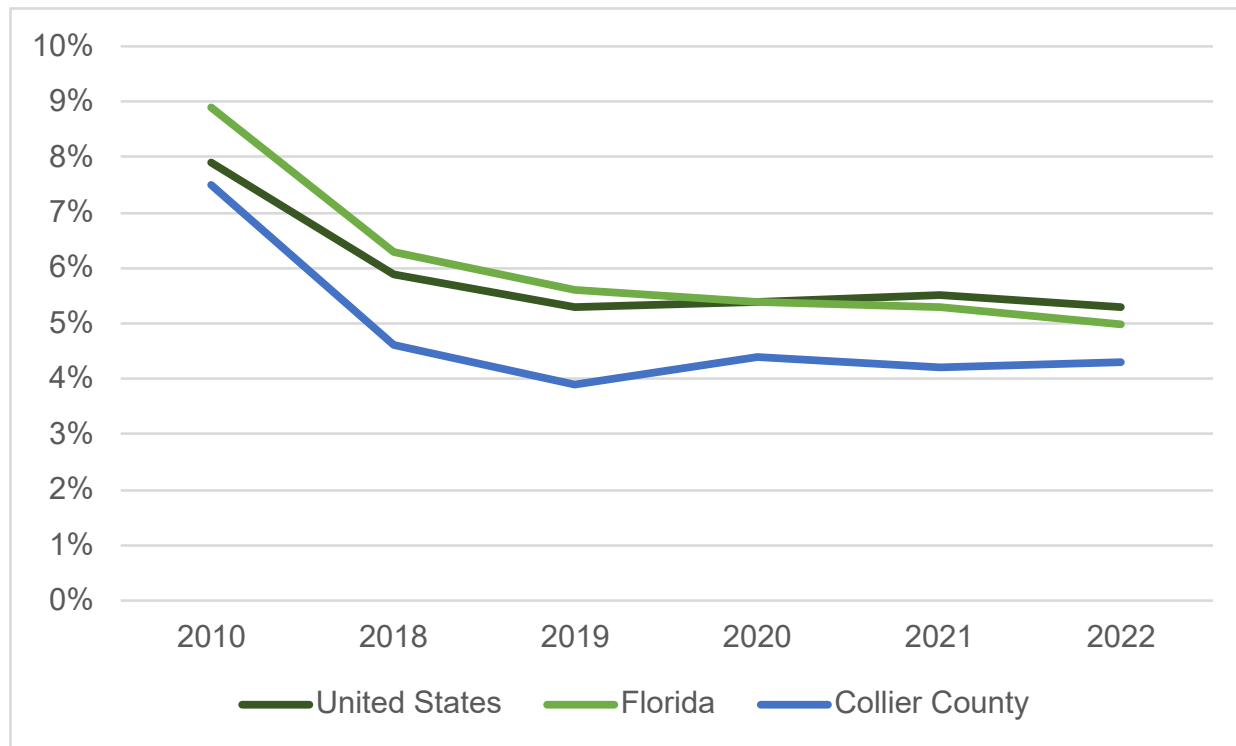


Figure 1-20: National, State and County Unemployment

In 2010, Collier County experienced higher unemployment rates. However, since then, there has been a consistent decline year by year. Collier County's unemployment rates consistently outperformed both national and state-wide averages. Even during the pandemic, when many regions faced economic challenges, Collier County maintained lower unemployment rates. Lower unemployment rates often correlate with economic recovery. When the economy improves, people are more likely to engage in various activities, including using public transportation.

1.6 Educational Attainment

A review of income levels and poverty incidence in Collier County follow educational attainment. Studying the level of educational attainment often identify areas with persons who may rely on public assistance, frequent social service agencies, and reside within areas of affordable workforce housing. Studying trends in this area has helped CAT consider services as well as future demand.



Levels of educational attainment in the county can correlate with earnings potential and job security. This influences mobility need. Figure 1-21 shows the educational attainment of residents ages 25 years and older in Collier County.

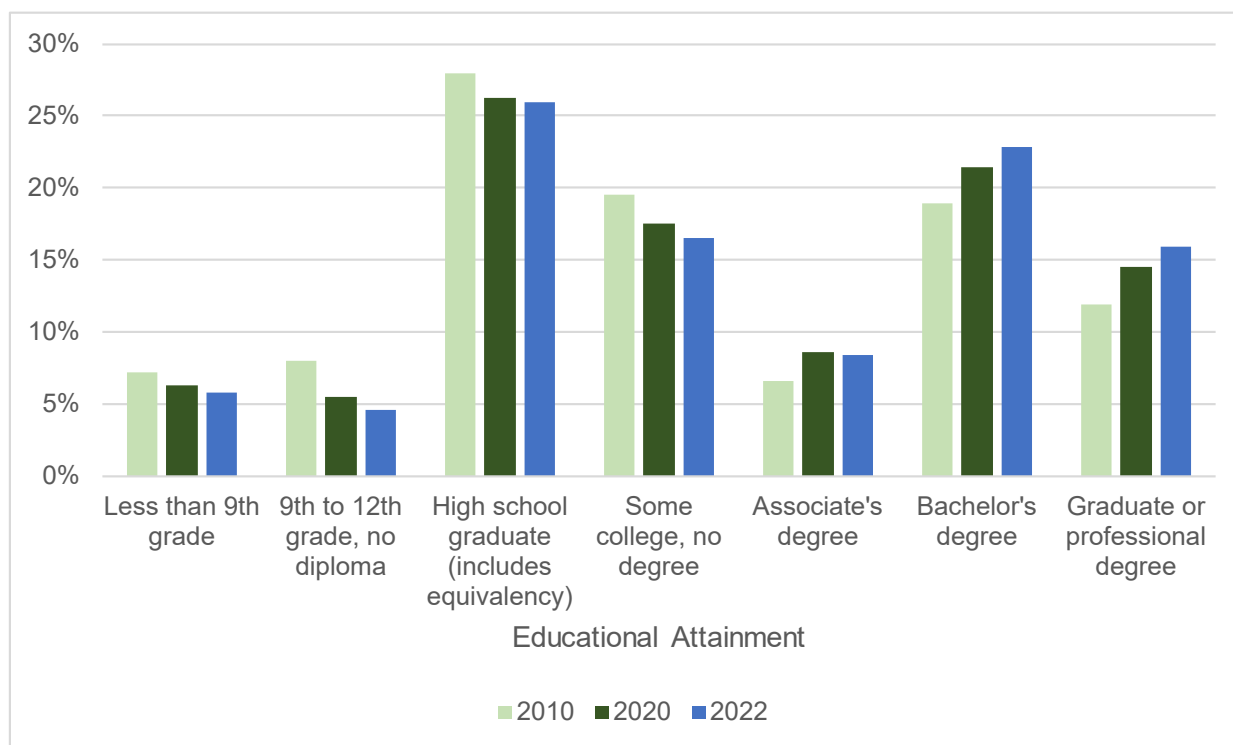


Figure 1-21: Educational Attainment in Collier County

As seen from the Figure 1-21 above, more residents have obtained a bachelor's degree over time from 2010-2022. Despite this, while those obtaining bachelor's and graduate degrees are increasing in the County, approximately 30% of the population does not have a college degree which indicates around a third of the population with potentially lower potential earnings and an increased likelihood of requiring transit service.

1.7 Tourism

Tourism plays a vital role in shaping transportation needs and services within Collier County. Tourists arrive in Collier County year-round, but the peak season spans from March to August. There are two distinct groups of visitors: seasonal residents who live in Naples for more than 4 months (typically October - April) and those visiting the area as tourists. The Tourist Development Council (TDC) makes a distinction between these groups, as seasonal residents tend to own properties while vacationing visitors do not.

Tourists often rely on public transit, especially those accustomed to using it in their communities. Seasonal visitors and residents contribute to increased transportation demand. According to the Collier County Tourist Development Council, in 2023, through October, Collier County welcomed 2.3 million visitors, generating an economic impact of \$3.01 billion. This substantial economic impact underscores the importance of efficient transportation services.



Collier County boasts pristine beaches, attracting sun-seekers and water enthusiasts. Tourists may use various services such as the Breeze Beach Shuttles, bike routes, and bicycle rentals as first mile/last mile access to transit hubs. However, it's worth noting that tourism numbers have shown some fluctuations. For instance, in March 2023, Collier County experienced a 20% year-over-year decline in visitors compared to March 2022. These fluctuations in visitor numbers can impact transportation needs and usage patterns throughout the year.

Figure 1-22 and Figure 1-23 show key tourist destinations by mapping major points of interests in Collier County in relation to transit line locations in the region. Attractive destinations include airports, beaches, museums, boating areas, and parks. While a grand majority of points of interest lie around the Naples region, there could be more extensive access to the beaches in Marco Island.

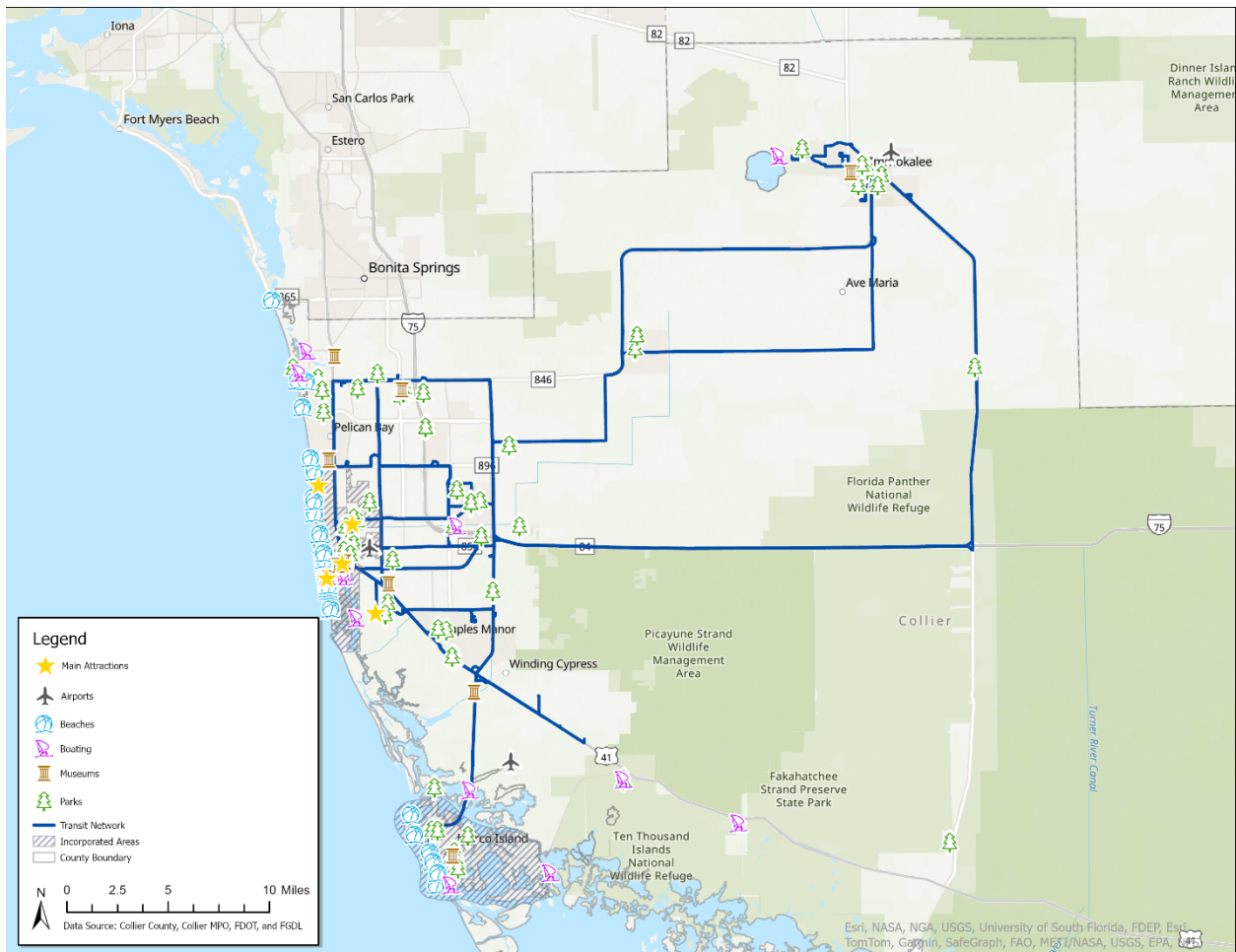


Figure 1-22: Transit Access to Point of Interest Destinations in Collier County

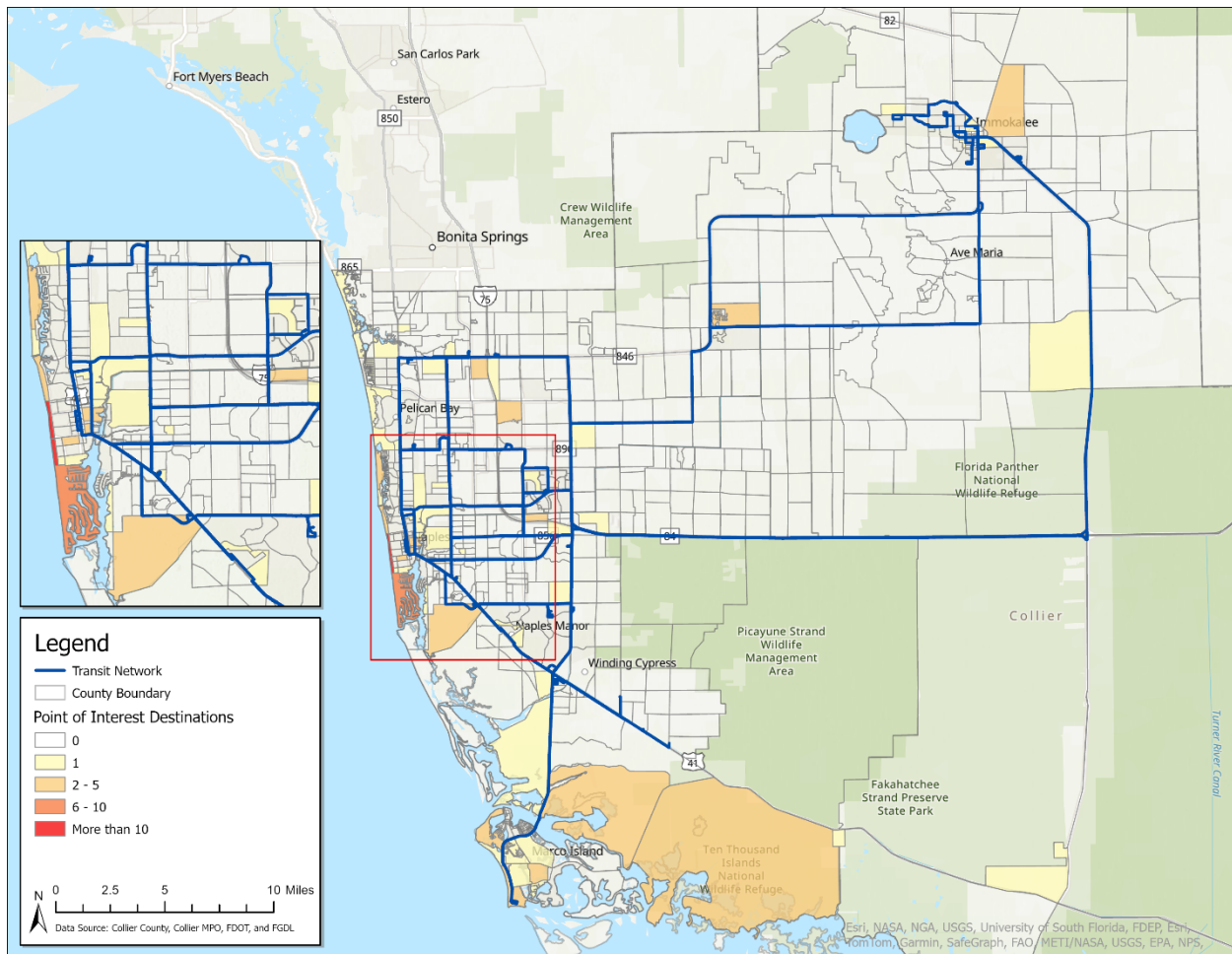


Figure 1-23: Density Map of Point of Interest Destinations by TAZ

More recently, a study in June 2024 by Florida Gulf Coast University on Regional Economic Indicators (Southwest Florida Economic Outlook, Regional Economic Research Institute, FGCU, 2024) found that seasonally adjusted real tourist tax revenues for coastal counties were up 14% in March 2024 compared to March 2023. In addition, airport passenger activity also increased 12% from April 2023 to April 2024. This would suggest that tourists are increasingly coming to the coastal areas of Florida such as Collier and spending more money when they do so, demonstrating their affluence and therefore likely limited propensity to take transit.

1.8 Major Trip Generators

Understanding the major trip generators within the county can help determine where to provide the most transit service. Table 1-4 displays the top employers in Collier County by the number of employees. The largest employers operate in the educational, government, and healthcare industries. Arthrex, NCH Healthcare System, Publix Supermarket, and Gargiulo are the 4 largest private sector employers in the county. On the other hand, all Gargiulo locations lack public transit access, as most of them are situated in rural or industrial areas, however, the location beside Old 41 Road has access from Route 600. Due to all Publix locations being near commercial centers, most, if not all, locations are accessible by transit. Similarly, most, if not all, public-school and local government buildings in the county are surrounded by residential or



commercial hubs areas that have access to public transit stops. As development expands to accommodate more housing and commercial demand (see Section 3.8), it will be necessary for CAT to consider expanding their public transit services.

Table 1-4: Top Employers in Collier County in 2023

Employer	Number of Employees
Collier County Public Schools	5810
Collier County Local Government	5045
Arthrex	3983
NCH Healthcare System	3288
Publix Super Market	2935
Gargiulo	2082
Pacific Tomato Growers	872
Walmart	807
Marriott International, Inc.	669
Moorings Park	657
Downing-frye Realty Inc.	605
McDonald's	545
Vi at Bentley Village	494
Asg	447
David Lawrence Center	423
Philharmonic Center For The Arts	412
Naples Lake Country Club	402
Walgreens	389
Ave Maria School of Law	372
Heartland Health Care Center Ft Myers	372
Aa Stucco & Drywall Inc.	350
Home Depot	350
Seminole Casino Hotel Immokalee	350
CVS Pharmacy	349
Twineagles Pro Shop	333

(Source: Regional Economic Research Institute at Florida Gulf Coast University (2023)).



Figure 1-24 and Figure 1-25 show the distribution of top employer locations in Collier County and their distribution relative to existing transit lines. While most places of employment are accessible to transit, there exists many points of interest north of Pelican Bay and North or Immokalee which are further from a transit line. An extension of transit lines along Route 29 and 41 towards Everglades City would be important as well and increase commercial zones in that area.

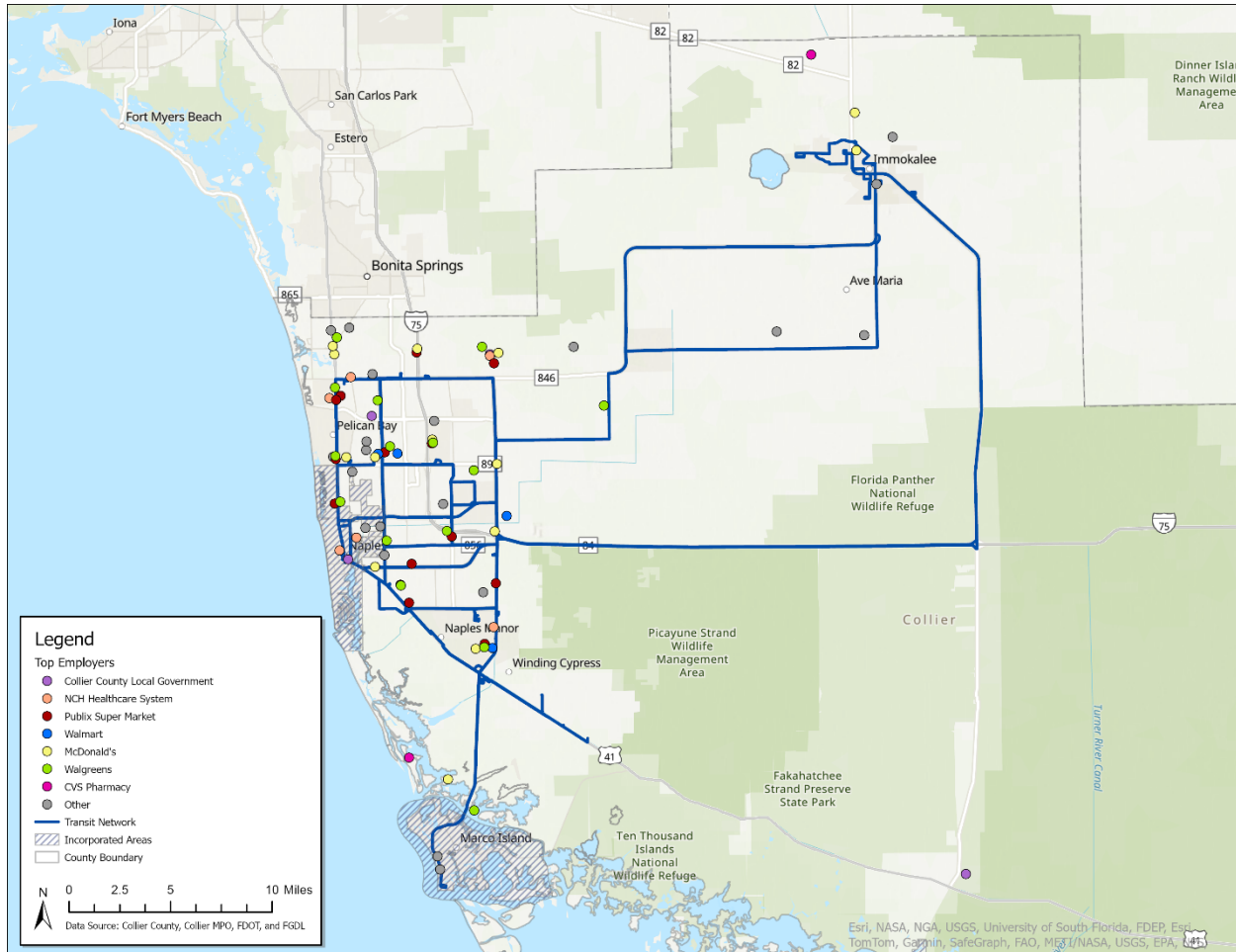


Figure 1-24: Transit Access to Top Employers in Collier County in 2023

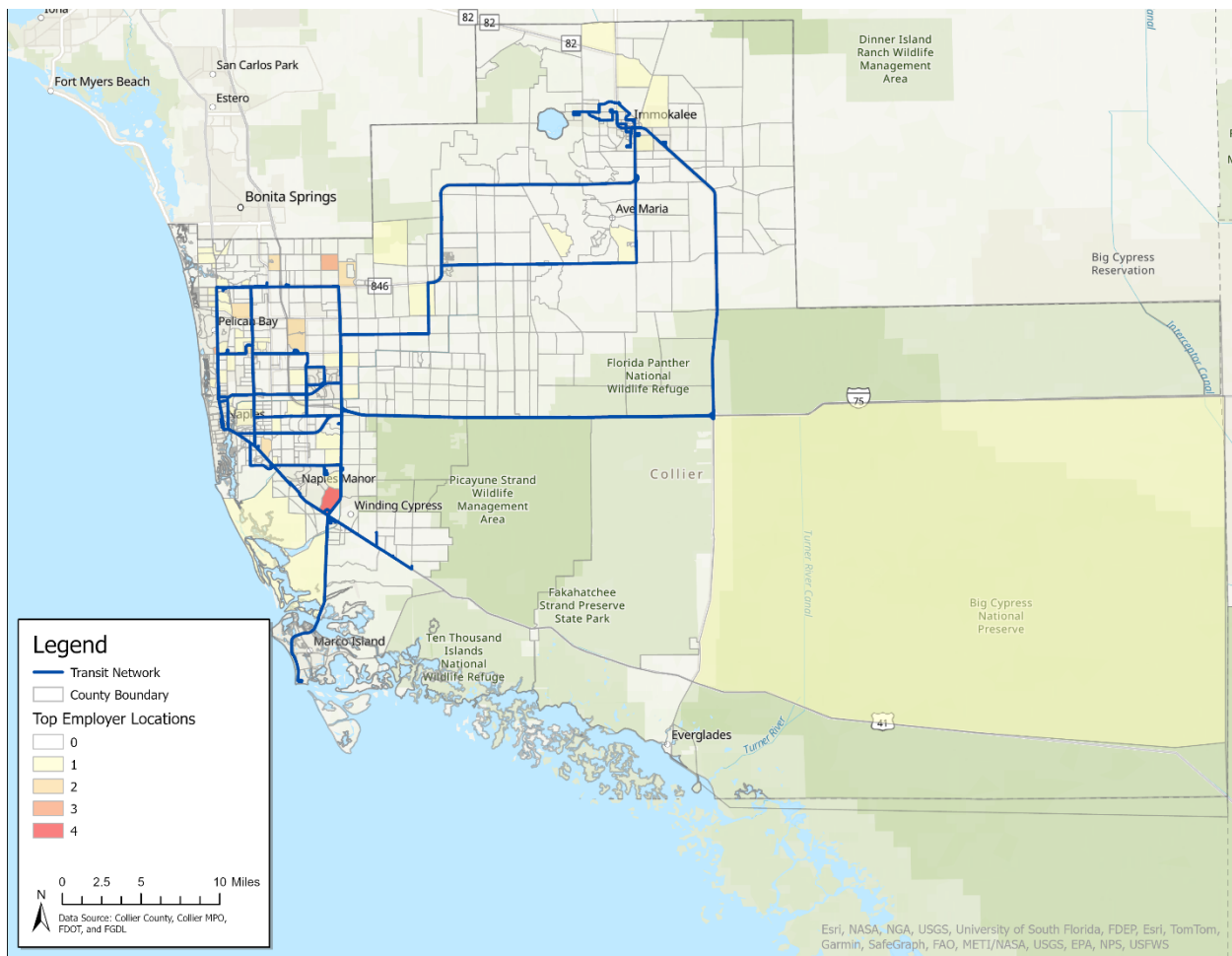


Figure 1-25: Density Map of Top Employer Locations by TAZ

1.9 Major Developments

Table 1-5 shows the top 10 planned unit developments (PUDs) by acreage. Transit lines running adjacent to each proposed development are also outlined. Figure 1-26 shows the Developments of Regional Impact (DRIs) in Collier County as of May 3, 2024. These developments are noted for potential impacts to existing and future travel demand and *Table 1-5* shows which routes currently serve these developments in the existing CAT transit network as of May 3, 2024.

Most of the proposed developments have transit services running adjacent to them. However, it's crucial to note that a significant portion of these developments are gated communities, which presents unique challenges for public transit access. Gated communities, which are prevalent in Collier County, often have restricted entry points and private roads that can limit direct access for public transit vehicles. Since most of these developments seek to expand residential areas, it will be important to ensure either an expansion of existing transit routes or the addition of new transit lines to serve these areas effectively. This may require innovative solutions to overcome the access limitations posed by gated communities.

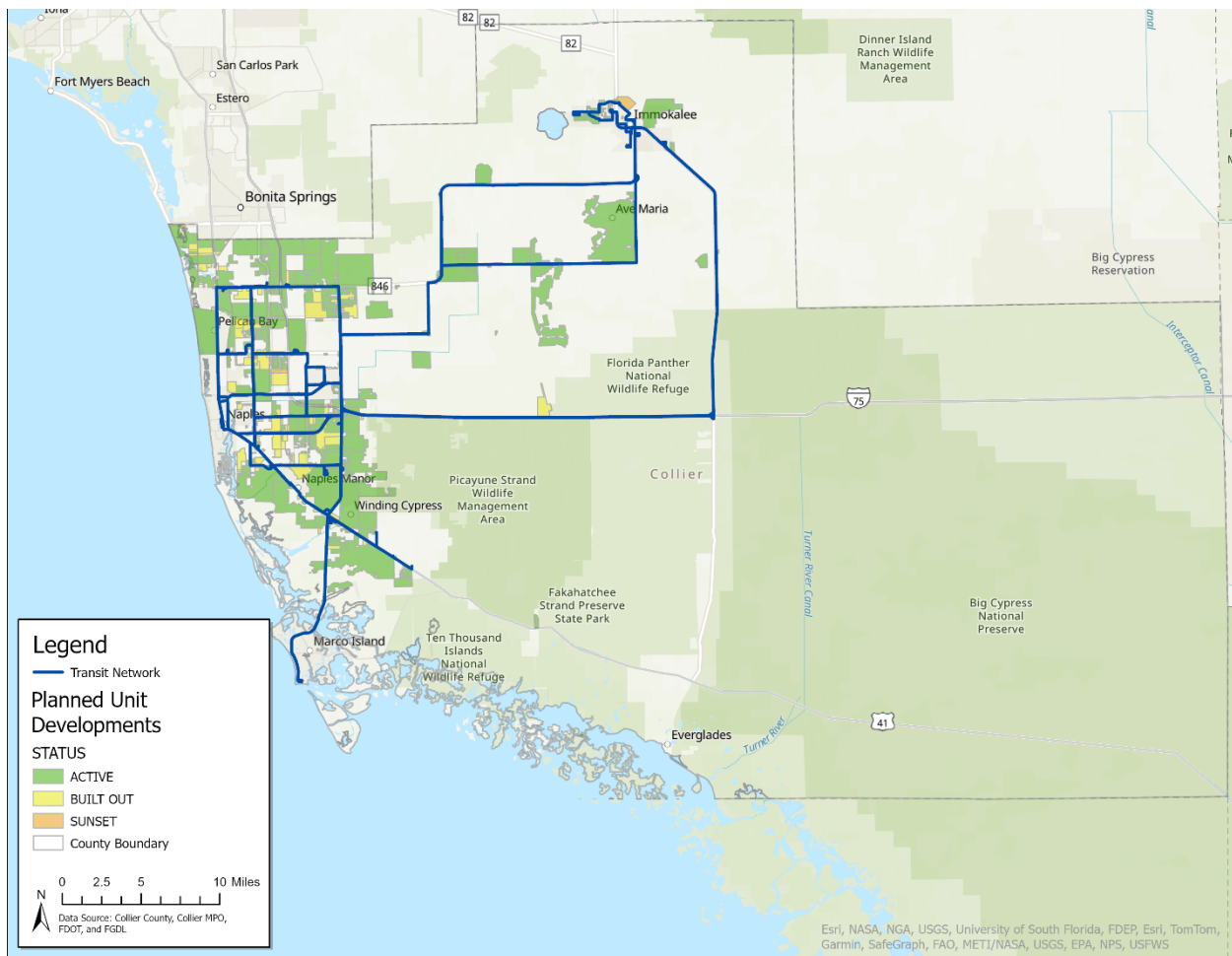


Figure 1-26: Status of Planned Unit Developments in Collier County

Table 1-5: Top Ten Planned Unit Developments in Collier County by Area

Planned Unit Development	Acres	Transit
Town of Ave Maria SRA	5928	Routes 19/22/23
Marco Shores/Fiddler's Creek	4215	Routes 21/24/121
Lely Resort	2880	Routes 17/21/24/121
Heritage Bay	2562	Route 27
Sabal Bay	2518	Routes 13/14/24
Hacienda Lakes	2264	Routes 17/21/121
Pelican Marsh	2191	Routes 11/12/27
Orange Tree	2131	Routes 19/22
Pelican Bay	2114	Routes 11/25/29
Winding Cypress	1960	Routes 12/17/21/24/121

Source: Collier County GIS Hub



1.10 Existing and Future Land Use

With a large land area, much of Collier County consists of agricultural land or park space. A significant portion of Collier County's land area is currently zoned for agriculture or open space (more than 90% all together; 38% and 54% respectively). About 5% of the land area is zoned for planned unit development (PUD), allowing for a significant amount of new or upcoming developments that would impact transit use and demand. The Naples and Marco Island are both zoned as incorporated areas. The land use varies more in Immokalee and the urban communities surrounding Naples, including Palm River, Naples Manor, Golden Gate, and so on. Excluding agriculture, open space, PUD, and incorporated area zoning, these areas consist of 76% residential, 12% commercial, 9% industrial, and 3% civic and institutional zoned land.

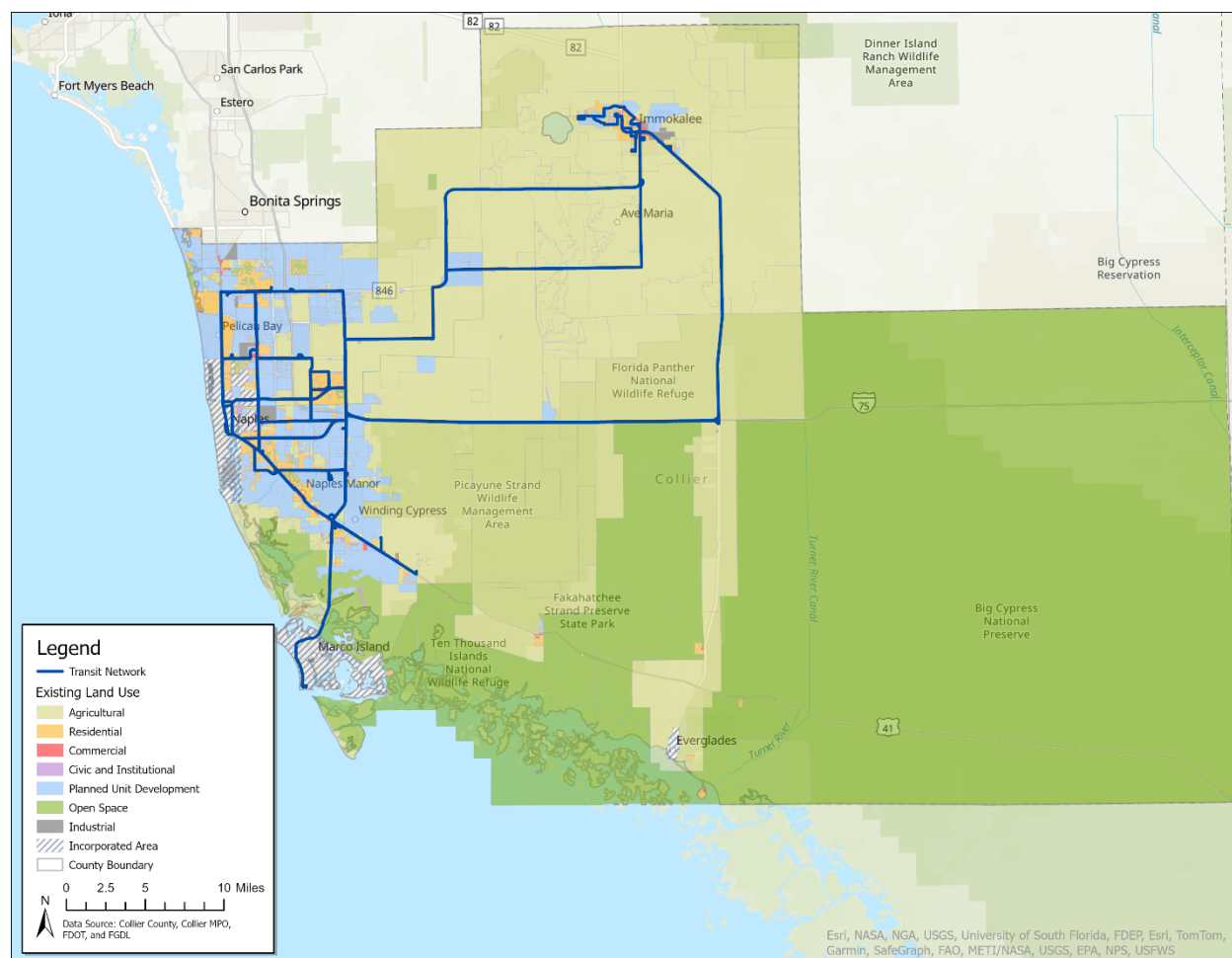


Figure 1-27: Existing Land Use Zoning Areas in Collier County

As the County grows and develops, land use areas are redesignated consequently to accommodate for development needs and purposes. In the County's future land use designations, open space or conservation designation areas are expanding, specifically in the Big Cypress National Preserve as it now includes the Florida Panther National Wildlife Refuge where it was previously zoned as agricultural land. A notable amount of agricultural land has been rezoned as rural or estates designation, which is defined as low density residential development with limited agricultural activities. The PUD areas are zoned as urban



residential land. The future land use designation also adds a new category of mixed-use activity in replacement of commercial and civic and institutional zoning.

A more detailed breakdown of future land use designations shows that conservation continues to occupy the largest portion (59%) of the County's acreage. It is still followed by agricultural/rural uses at 18%, but at a significantly smaller percentage compared to existing agricultural area. Estate designation and residential uses each constitute another 7% of the land. Noteworthy is the presence of sending and receiving areas, comprising of 3% and 2% of the land respectively, which serve as mechanisms to steer development away from environmentally sensitive regions towards designated growth areas.

Although the predominant land use remains focused on conservation and agriculture, mixed-use zoning holds immense potential for fostering transit-oriented development. Transit planning should prioritize serving receiving areas, ensuring that transit infrastructure supports the anticipated influx of development in these zones. Meanwhile, transit routes passing through sending areas should aim to minimize ecological impact and focus on connecting these areas to transit hubs and receiving districts.

Residential and estates areas present opportunities for creating walkable, mixed-income neighborhoods that are well-connected to transit services. Transit-oriented design principles should be integrated into the planning and development of these areas, emphasizing pedestrian-friendly streetscapes, mixed-use zoning, and access to public transportation. Additionally, transit routes serving these neighborhoods should offer frequent and reliable service, catering to the diverse needs of residents across different income levels and demographics.

Figure 1-28 and Table 1-6 depict future land use designation in Collier County as of 2024. The figure shows more generalized categories of land use. The table includes more detail including finer subcategories of land designations along with percentage breakdowns for each designation, sorted by acreage.



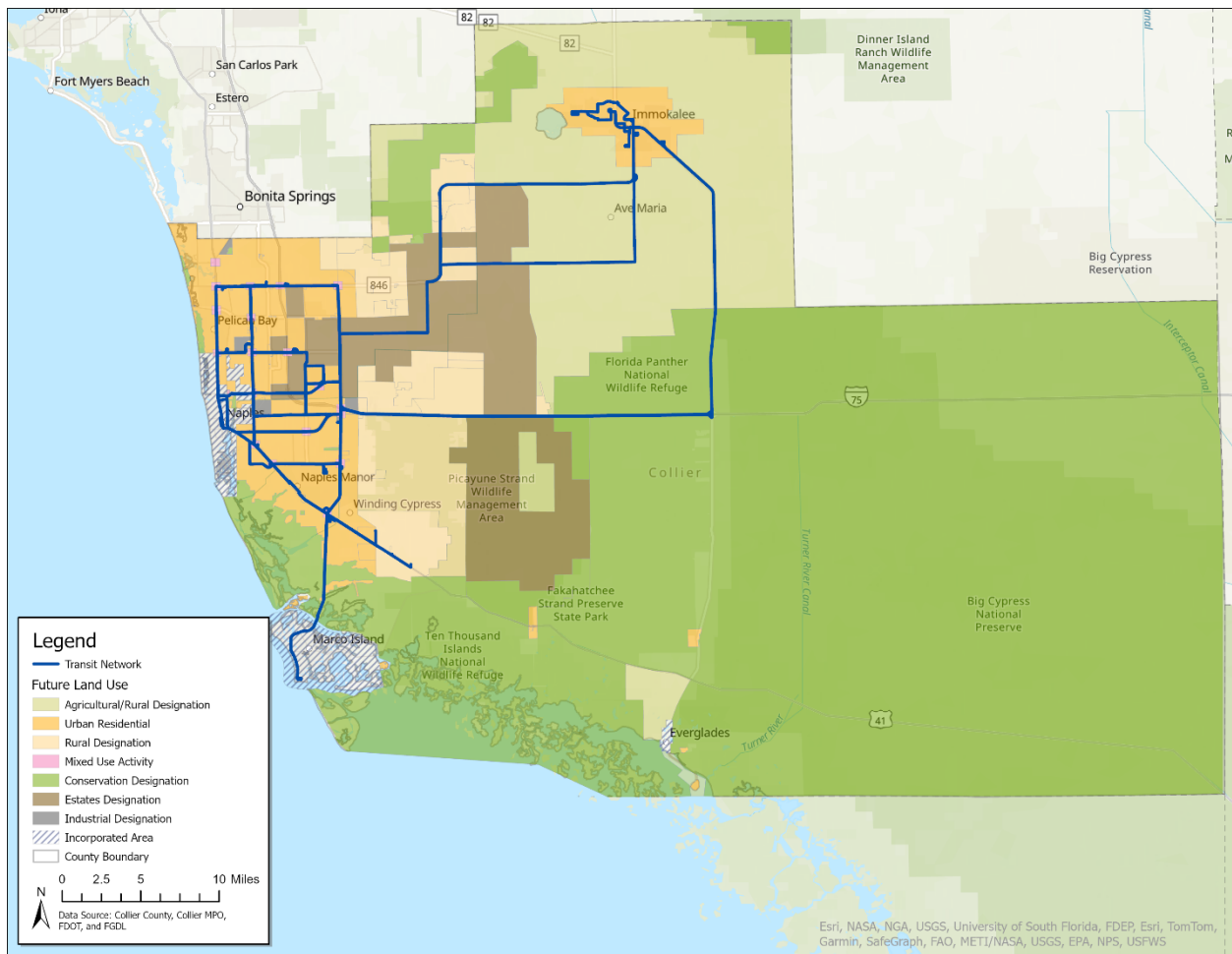


Figure 1-28: Future Land Use Designation in Collier County as of 2024

Table 1-6: Future Land Use in Collier County

Future Land Use	Acres	% of Area
Conservation	856,551	59%
Agricultural/Rural	257,645	18%
Estates Designation	101,302	7%
Residential Uses	95,936	7%
RF-Sending	44,843	3%
Incorporated Area	25,941	2%
RF-Receiving	22,672	2%
Urban Coastal Fringe Subdistrict	11,775	1%
RF-Neutral	8,836	1%
Mixed Use	3,079	<1%
Rural Settlement Area District	2,824	<1%
Immokalee Road Rural Village Overlay	2,778	<1%
Industrial District/Rural Industrial District	1,839	<1%
US 41 East Overlay	1,526	<1%
Bayshore/Gateway Triangel Redevelopment	1,190	<1%
Interchange Activity Center Subdistrict	454	<1%
Commercial	249	<1%
Livingston Rd/Veterans Memorial Blvd E Resi Subdistrict	36	<1%
Carman Drive Subdistrict	15	<1%
Orange Blossom/Airport Crossroads Comm'l Subdistrict	10	<1%
Corkscrew Island Neighborhood Coml Subdistrict	9	<1%
Ivy Medical Center Subdistrict	4	<1%
Total	1,440,427	100%

Source: Collier County GIS Hub



1.11 Commuter Travel Patterns

Understanding mode choices of commuters is essential to understanding the frequency and need of transit options in Collier County. In Table 1-7, journey-to-work characteristics and commuter flow patterns were compiled based on Census data for residents 16 years or older.

Table 1-7: Journey-to-Work Characteristics

Characteristic	2010	2020	2022
Place of Work			
Worked inside county	89.5%	89.3%	89.3%
Worked outside county	8.1%	8.4%	8.3%
Mode to Work			
Drive alone	75.3%	74.0%	74.0%
Carpool	12.3%	12.0%	10.9%
Public transit	1.6%	1.1%	0.5%
Walk	1.2%	1.1%	0.7%
Work at home	6.1%	9.4%	11.7%
Taxicab, motorcycle, or other means	2.5%	1.7%	1.7%
Travel Time to Work			
<10 minutes	11.6%	10.6%	10.0%
10-19 minutes	33.1%	29.7%	29.1%
20-29 minutes	24.2%	24.7%	24.9%
30-44 minutes	18.9%	22.2%	22.8%
45+ minutes	12.2%	12.8%	13.2%
Departure Time to Work			
6:00-8:59 AM	67.8%	65.9%	64.8%
Other times	32.2%	34.1%	35.2%

Source: 2010 5-year estimates, 2018 5-year estimates, 2022 5-year estimates

As shown in Table 1-7, more people work inside the county. As time passes, less people use public transit or walk and more work at home. A consistent percentage of people drive alone (74-75%). Travel times to work remain consistent, although longer commute times are steadily increasing. Finally, a consistent number of residents (around 65-67%) leave for work between 6AM-8:59AM.



1.12 Roadway Conditions

To be further evaluated.

2 Transit Performance

This section evaluates transit services in Collier County, including an overview of current services, trend analysis, and peer comparison. It examines existing transit operations, infrastructure, and other key providers. Additionally, it reviews performance trends over the past five years and compares CAT service with peers using standard criteria.

2.1 Existing Transit Services

2.1.1 FIXED ROUTE SERVICES

As of 2024, Collier Area Transit (CAT) operates 18 existing fixed routes bus routes services that operate throughout Collier County. CAT's service area largely consists of the urbanized part of Collier County, including the City of Naples and the City of Marco Island. Unincorporated rural communities in the County that receive transit service include Ave Maria and Immokalee. Service is provided 7 days a week, all year round except for 6 holidays. Daily service typically begins between 5:30 AM and 6:00 AM and ends later in the evening between 7:30 PM and 8:00 PM for most routes. No services are provided on major holidays, including on Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, and Labor Day. In 2023, the service's annual ridership was 729,767. CAT's services also include Route 600, also known as the LinC Lee-Collier which connects transit lines in Leaside County and Collier County. Route 600 is interlined with LeeTran's Route 240 and connects to LeeTran's Route 140.

Table 2-1 shows the existing transit lines in Collier County as of 2024.



Table 2-1: Existing Fixed-Route Services in Collier County

Count	Route	Services
1	11	US 41 – Creekside
2	12	Airport – Creekside
3	13	NCH – Coastland Mall
4	14	Bayshore – Coastland Mall
5	15	Golden Gate City
6	16	Golden Gate City
7	17	Rattlesnake – Edison College
8	19	Golden Gate Estates - Immokalee
9	19 Express	Golden Gate Estates - Immokalee
10	20	Pine Ride
11	21	Marco Island Connector
12	121	Express Immokalee to Marco Island
13	22	Immokalee Circulator
14	23	Immokalee Circulator
15	24	US 41 East – Charlee Estates
16	25	Golden Gate Parkway – Goodlette-Frank road
17	27	Immoaklee Road
18	600	Creekside Transfer Center – Coconut Point Mall

Source: Collier County Website

In addition to fixed-route services, CAT operates the Paradise Beach Trolley. This service runs every Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from mid-February to the end of April. It shuttles passengers from the Conner Park Parking Lot on Bluebill Avenue to Delnor-Wiggins Pass State Park and Vanderbilt Beach, operating from 8 am to 3 pm and from 4:30 pm to 7 pm. Figure 2-1 shows a map with the current transit routes in Collier County as of 2024.



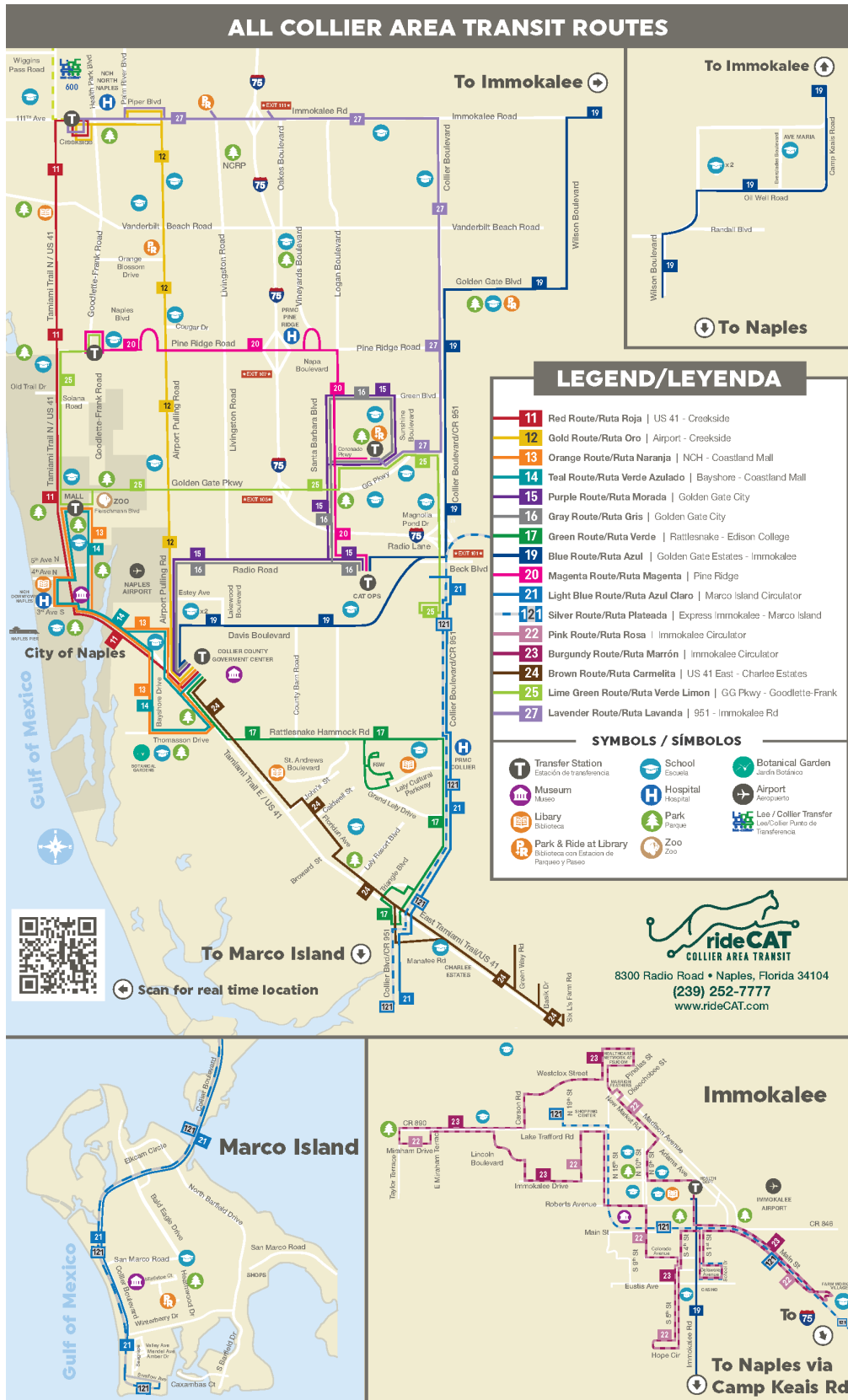


Figure 2-1: Existing CAT Services



2.1.2 PARATRANSIT SERVICES

Collier County also provides paratransit (shared ride, door-to-door) services with the CATConnect program for the Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) with funding from the Florida Department of Transportation, Agency for Persons with Disabilities and Florida Commissions for the Transportation Disadvantaged. Those who qualify for CATConnect include those under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), visitors unable to use the CAT bus service and TD individuals. TD individuals are counted as those who because of a mental or physical disability, income status, or age are unable to transport themselves or to purchase transportation and are, therefore, dependent upon others to obtain access to healthcare, employment, education, shopping, social activities, or other life-sustaining activities.



The CATConnect paratransit service is administered by Collier County Public Transit & Neighborhood Enhancement (PTNE) Division and provides shared, door to door transportation service for medical appointments, work, school and select other trips depending on the funding program requirements.

In the June 2024 CATConnect Paratransit Service Report, it was found that paratransit ridership was on an increasing trend, with a significant increase from 2022 to 2023 of 35.8%, see Figure 2-2. Collier County overall has 7% fewer vehicles than peer systems but higher passengers per trip compared to peer agencies.

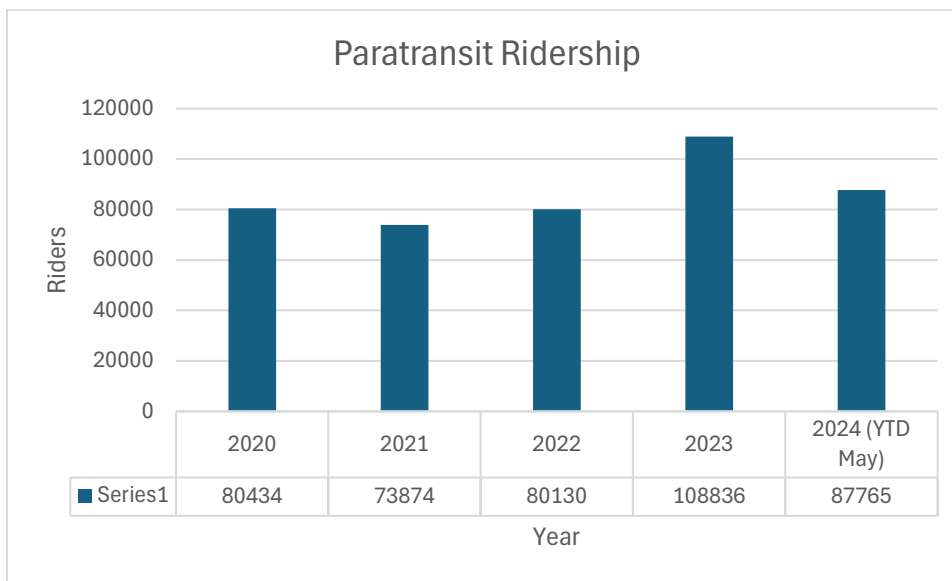


Figure 2-2: Paratransit Ridership



2.1.3 TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS

The 10-year transit development plan underscores the introduction of mobility-on-demand services as a top priority. In July 2021, CAT transitioned to the Ecolane scheduling software, replacing the previous RouteMatch system for paratransit services. This new system automates scheduling, dispatching, and real-time updates, enhancing operational efficiency and service reliability. Further enhancing user convenience, the CATconnect Mobile App launched in March 2022 allows passengers to schedule, monitor, and manage their trips. Additionally, CATCash has been integrated into the mobile app, providing a convenient account-based system for fare payments, and eliminating the need for cash handling on each ride. The app also allows users to view and edit trip details, as well as access records of past and upcoming trips.

In response to evolving transportation needs, CAT is exploring the use of electric shuttles as an environmentally friendly alternative to traditional buses. Additionally, the agency is considering ride-share-type alternatives to buses in certain areas to enhance flexibility and accessibility.

CAT has committed to upgrading its technology infrastructure, including the Computer Aided Dispatch/Automated Vehicle Locator (CAD/AVL) system, Mobile Data Terminals (MDT) for operators, Automatic Voice Annunciation (AVA) systems for ADA compliance, and Automated Passenger Counters (APC) for streamlined fare collection. These upgrades aim to integrate seamlessly with CAT's Mobile Ticketing system operated by Masabi using ITxPT standards, ensuring a cohesive and efficient transit experience for passengers.

2.1.4 FARE STRUCTURE

As of 2024, CAT uses Genfare fareboxes on all their transit vehicles which accept cash, reloadable smartcards, and paper transfer tickets. Mobile tickets for CAT buses can also be purchased on the RideCAT mobile application or Transit App.

The fare structure as of 2024 is presented in Table 2-2.



Table 2-2: Fare Structure in Collier County (2024)

Fare Category	Fare	Reduced Fare
One-Way	\$2.00	\$1.00
Children 5 years of age and younger	Free	Free
Marco Express	\$3.00	\$1.50
Transfers – up to 90 minutes	Free	Free
Day Passes	\$3.00	\$1.50
Smart Card Pass		
15-Day Pass	\$20.00	\$10.00
30-Day Pass	\$40.00	\$20.00
Marco Express 30-Day Pass	\$70.00	\$35.00
Discounted Pass		
Summer Paw Pass (Valid June 1 – August 31 for students. Price includes Smart Card)	\$30.00	
30-Day Corporate/Perk Pass (300+ Employees)	\$29.75	
Smart Card Media Fees		
Smart Card	\$2.00	
Registration	\$3.00	
Replacement with Registration	\$1.00	

Source: RideCAT website; Collier County

The Reduced Fares are for members of Medicare, Disabled Community, those 65 years and older, children 17 and under, high school and college students and active / retired military personnel. ID is required. This fare would also apply to the subcontracted transportation provider with the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged that provides transportation services under the non-emergency transportation Medicaid Contract for Collier County. Discount Passes are for persons eligible under the identified programs.

2.1.5 TRANSIT FACILITIES

There are currently two passenger transfer stations and five passenger transfer points provided on the CAT system. The first transfer station located at the Intermodal Transfer Facility also known as the Radio Road Transfer Station which is located at 8300 Radio Road in Naples as shown in *Figure 2-3*. This building is also a facility for the CAT Connect Paratransit program. At this facility, bus operations and bus transfers occur.





Figure 2-3: CAT Radio Road Transit Facility (Source: Google Street View)

The second passenger transfer station operated by CAT is the Government Center Transfer Station located at 3355 Tamiami Trail in East Naples, as shown in Figure 2-4 below, which accommodates pedestrians, cyclists, and "kiss-and-ride" passengers. This location provides in-person customer service, schedules, and pass sales, and is served by routes 11-17, 19, 22, and 24. Although parking is free, it is not an official park-and-ride site. The facility includes a busway with a turn-around, six sawtooth bus berths, a passenger platform with benches and trash receptacles, restrooms, snack machines, an air-conditioned lobby, and a customer service area.



Figure 2-4: Intermodal Transfer Station (Source: Google Street View)

Collier County plans to build a third transfer facility in the Immokalee Community on a vacant parcel owned by the county. The proposed site, approximately 1.7 acres in size, is currently a grass field adjacent to a green wooded area. It features an asphalt/concrete driveway providing access to the Health Department and a maintenance shed. The bus transfer station will enhance passenger and transit efficiency with new bus bays, canopy-covered shelters for passengers, a waiting platform with benches and trash receptacles, vending machines or options for food trucks, restroom facilities for passengers and drivers, and ADA improvements. Currently, passengers transferring at this location use a shelter located in a parking lot shared by visitors to the Health Department, County Library, and the David Lawrence Center.

Other transfer point locations within Collier County include Walmart Plaza; Pine Ridge and Goodlette-Frank Rd (Magnolia Square Plaza); Coastland Center; Creekside (Immokalee Road); and the Health Department in Immokalee. CAT also has dedicated parking spaces at the Orange Blossom Library, Golden Gate Parkway Library, Golden Gate Estates Library, Marco Island Library, and Immokalee Library.

In addition, the 2020 Park and Ride Study identified and prioritized sites for potential park and ride facilities. These facilities are designed to provide areas where commuters can park and access public transit, carpools, or vanpools, helping to address traffic congestion and parking constraints. The locations of these areas include Creekside, the Government Campus, Coastland Center Mall, Freedom Square, Physicians regional, the Golf Course near VA Hospital, Immokalee Health Department, Beach Lot at Pine Ridge Road, and Radio Road Transfer.

2.1.6 VEHICLE INVENTORY

Table 2-3 below provides a summary of the 74-vehicle fleet at CAT, with a breakdown by make and model and some key statistics. This represents a 155% increase in fleet size from 2013 when there were 29 vehicles. It is understood that even with this fleet size expansion, CAT still currently struggles to provide the services required, which is likely due to the large service that the agency serves.

The age of the fleet generally can be considered quite near end of life, with the average expected date of retirement only 2 years away in 2026 with many already being beyond their expected retirement age. With ongoing fleet electrification plans, it is likely that many of the fleet will be replaced in the near term with electric buses which would drastically improve the fleets lifespan.

Table 2-3: CAT Vehicle Inventory 2024

Make	Model	Vehicle Type	Number of vehicles	Average Miles/Yrs.	Average Cost	Average Federal funding	%	Average Expected Date of Retirement
CHEVROLET			5	42,893	\$105,141	80%		2021
	Glaval	D	5	42,893	\$105,141	80%		2021
FORD			33	47,160	\$77,985	81%		2026
	Challenger	D	15	51,191	\$79,663	75%		2025
	Escape	F	1	6,543	\$23,170	100%		2031
	F-150 XL	G	1	28,897	\$21,888	100%		2029
	F-150 XLT	G	1	22,859	\$26,200	92%		2028
	Glaval	D	4	58,034	\$83,093	80%		2023



Impulse	D	6	66,666	\$82,161	80%	2026
Taurus SEL	F	1	6,080	\$26,667	73%	2029
Transit	F	2	24,053	\$22,874	100%	2030
Villager 7.3L V8	C	2	21,902	\$204,781	100%	2032
FREIGHTLINER		1	25,265	\$138,632	90%	2028
Legacy	C	1	25,265	\$138,632	90%	2028
GILLIG		31	63,453	\$433,013	98%	2028
G27B102N4	A	10	69,016	\$393,761	98%	2026
G27D102N4	A	3	84,276	\$410,091	98%	2026
G27E102H2	A	4	24,542	\$476,193	100%	2035
G27E102N2	A	12	68,768	\$440,861	96%	2031
G30B102N4	A	2	50,336	\$530,207	100%	2022
VPG		4	18,749	\$50,173	80%	2020
MV1	F	4	18,749	\$50,173	80%	2020
Total System		74	51,866	\$227,864	88%	2026

(Source: Collier Area Transit Vehicle Inventory Report-1st Half February 2024)

2.1.7 SAFETY

There isn't much discussion of the safety and security in any of these documents. It's a required expenditure under the FTA grants. Annually 5307 grants must commit 1% of their federal allocation to safety and security improvements. It may be helpful to add this point – open to discussion.

2.1.8 ON-BOARD SURVEYS

Documentation of trends between our 2019 and 2024 on-board surveys with a transit user market data summary

2.1.8.1 Survey Characteristics

To be further evaluated.

2.1.8.2 Trip Purpose

To be further evaluated.



2.1.8.3 Origin and Destination Characteristics

To be further evaluated.

2.1.8.4 Passenger Travel Characteristics

To be further evaluated.

2.1.8.5 Transit Dependency

To be further evaluated.

2.1.8.6 Passenger Demographic Information

To be further evaluated.

2.1.9 PLACEHOLDER FOR PRIVATE BUS DISCUSSION

To be further evaluated.

2.2 Comprehensive Operations Analysis 2021 - Recap

The purpose of a Comprehensive Operations Analysis (COA) is to review the transit network and assess how best the agency can improve services and efficiency, particularly in relation to day-to-day operations. This assists with increasing value for the agency and ensuring that the transit system is as effective and efficiency as possible in the shorter term. Generally, the COA is thought of as feeding into the TDP where the TDP sets the longer-term strategic goals and identifies the needs help the transit system grow, evolve, and improve overtime.

The COA conducted in 2021 analyses the fine details of the transit operations, assessing elements such as service enhancements and optimization. This can include repurposing routes, moving service from less productive areas and routes, and enhancing well performing routes.

The key takeaways in relation to route optimization from the extensive analysis undertaken in the COA that have been implemented to date are summarized below:

- Elimination of Route 12B – low productivity and requires additional bus



- Re-alignment of Route 19 - Maintain service on Collier Boulevard and Immokalee Road with select trips to Ave Maria via Oil Well Road
- Route 21 alignment changes – maintaining service on Collier Boulevard between Marco Island and Walmart but removing service on San Marco Road.
- Route 25 alignment changes – A low ridership route moved to travel on US41 between Pine Ridge Road and Golden Gate Parkway. Removing service on Collier Boulevard and Goodlette Frank Road
- Removal of Route 28 – consolidating Route 28 with Route 19.
- Route consolidation of 20 and 26. Routes 20 and 26 were the two lowest performing routes in terms of trips per revenue hour. By combining, all day service can be provided at 90minute frequency.

2.3 Transit Usage

2.3.1 ROUTE RIDERSHIP BY MONTH

Trends for the FY2020-FY2023 years are assessed in this section. Only routes active in 2024 are displayed in the graphs below. Ridership per month from the most recent full financial year is presented below in Figure 2-5 below.

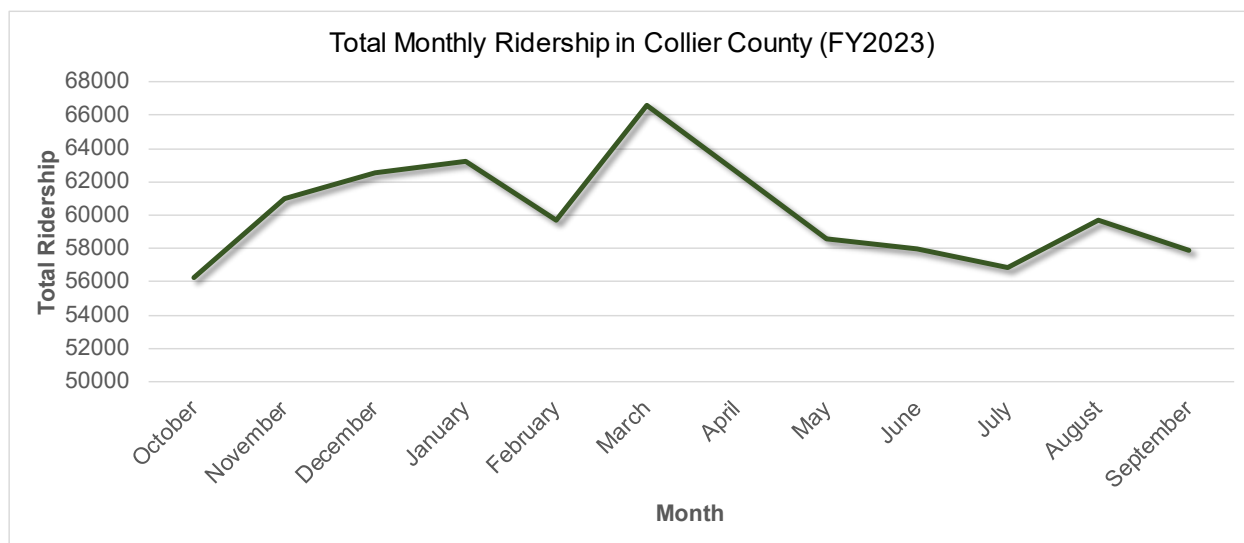


Figure 2-5: Total Monthly Ridership in Collier County during FY2023

As seen from the graph above, total ridership peaks in the holiday season (December-January) and March. Ridership then dips starting in May as the peak tourist and visitor season declines. This trend could indicate that more tourists are populating the buses during the peak seasons.



Figure 2-6 displays the total ridership for each route throughout the 2023 fiscal year.

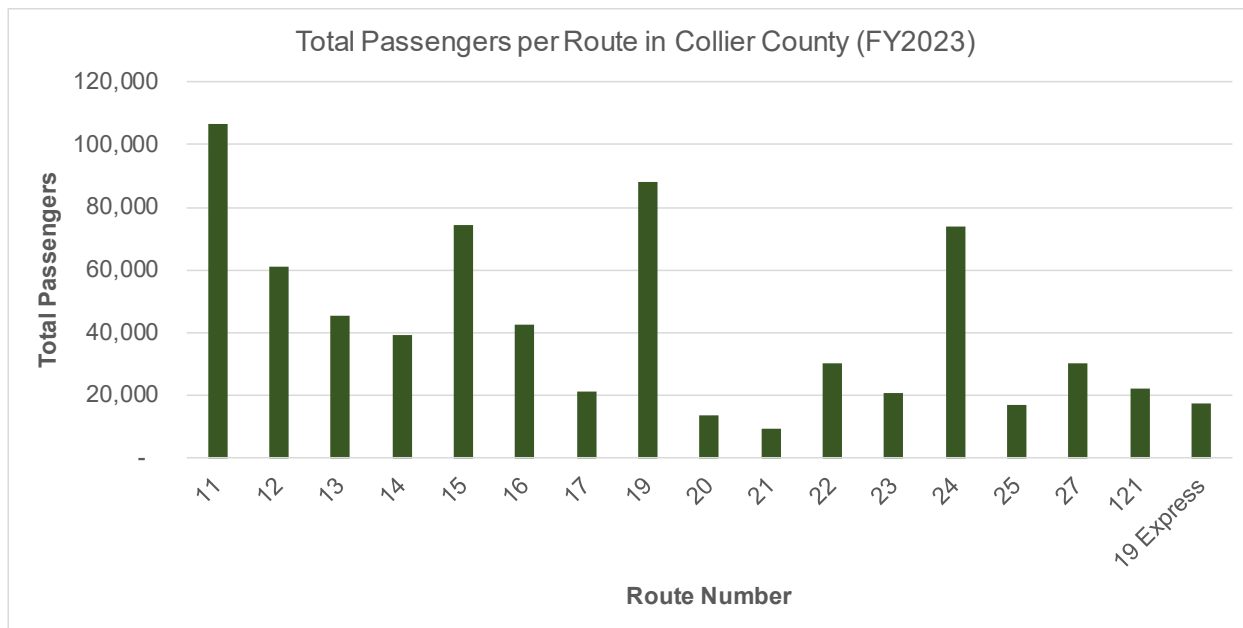


Figure 2-6: Total Passengers per Route in Collier County during FY2023

When examining the total number of passengers per route, Routes 11, 19, and 24 are the three most well-used routes. This is logical, as Route 11 passes through the Central Business District (CBD) in Naples, Route 19 is the only route serving Immokalee, and Route 24 serves the Collier County Government Center.

In contrast, Routes 20, 21, and 25 are the least used routes, presenting opportunities to reroute or merge them to better accommodate demand.

Figure 2-7 below shows a graph of the passengers per revenue hour in Collier County.

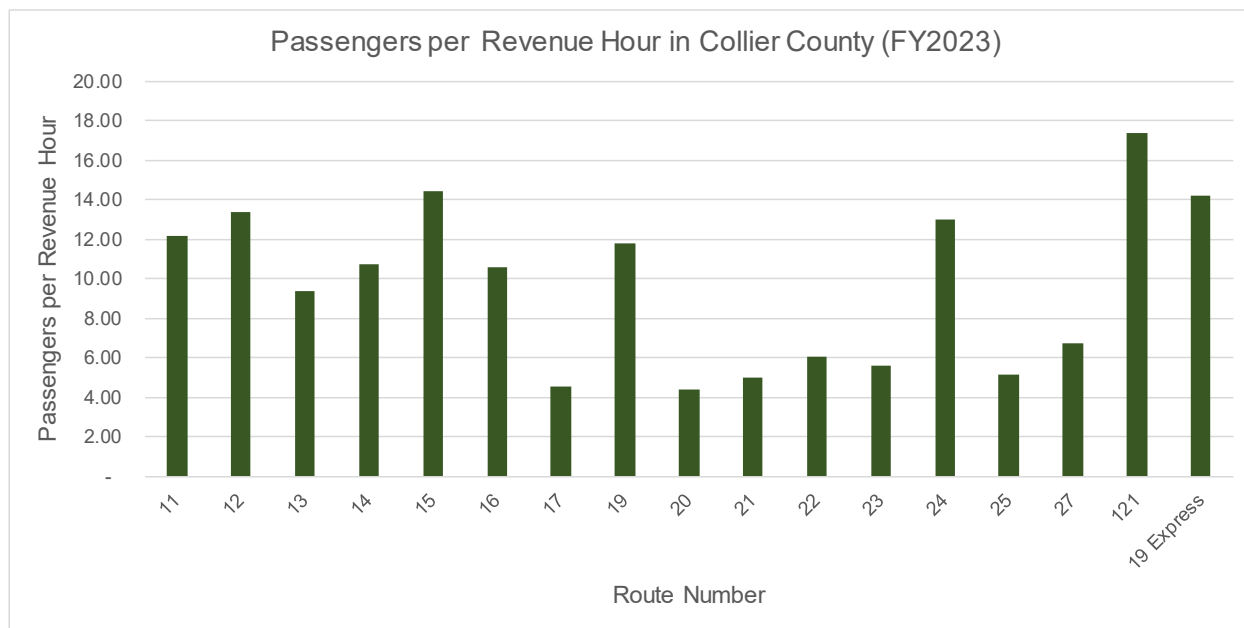


Figure 2-7: Passengers per Revenue Hour in Collier County during FY2023

Routes 121, Route 19 Express and Route 15 have the highest number of passengers per revenue hour, indicating that these routes may serve areas with higher transit dependency or demand and have schedules and frequencies of these routes likely align well with passenger needs. Routes 17, 20 and 21 have the lowest passengers per revenue hour. CAT might consider reallocating resources from low-performing routes to high-performing ones or to support the high-performing routes with increased frequency or extended hours. There may be opportunities to adjust the low-performing routes to better serve potential riders or connect to more popular destinations.

In Figure 2-8 below, ridership was averaged by season to determine seasonal variations for each route.

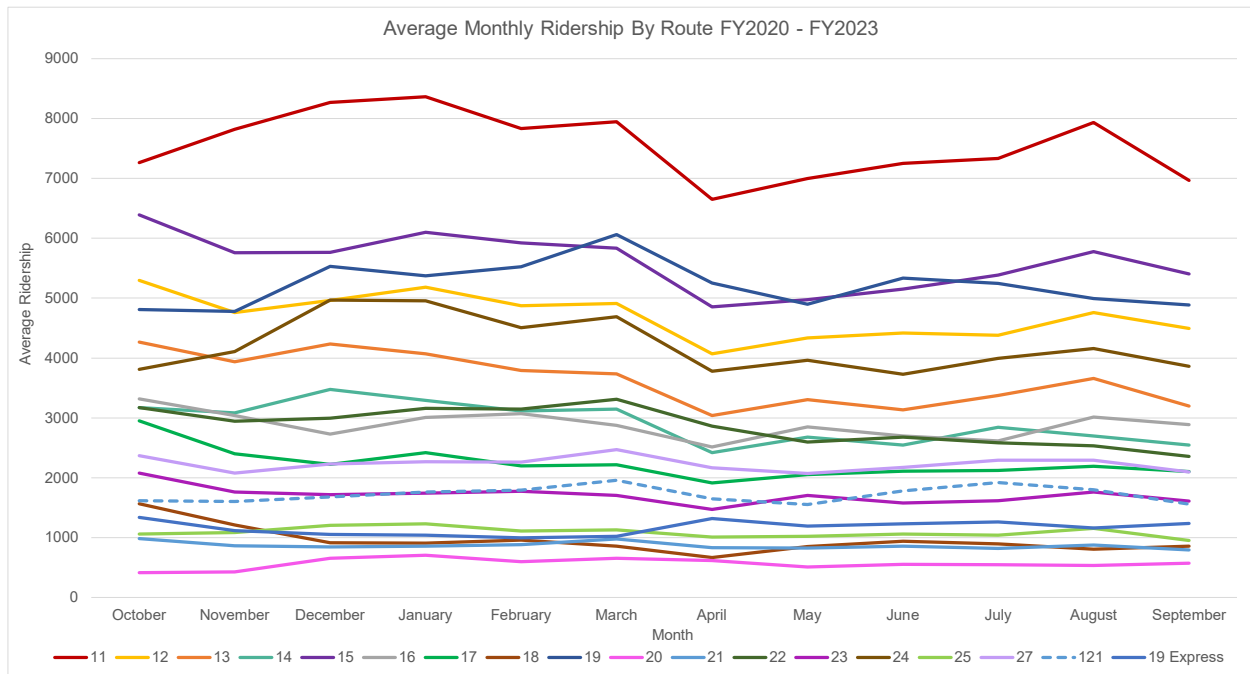


Figure 2-8: Seasonal Variation of Average Monthly Ridership

Other than Route 29, which is the beach shuttle with ridership only during the winter, most routes do not show significant seasonal variation. Route 29 also has lower ridership compared to other routes. Despite winter being a peak tourist season, the lack of significant ridership fluctuations suggests that tourists and seasonal residents may not be heavily utilizing the public transit system. This could be due to several factors like higher spending power of tourists visiting a wealthy area like Collier County. While ridership in the winter tends to be slightly higher than in the later months, promoting transit use among visitors and residents requires improvements to the accessibility and visibility of transit information. For instance, offering a transit pass could incentivize visitors to use the public transportation system.

Figure 2-9 and Figure 2-10 highlight the routes with the highest ridership and riders per revenue hour, focusing on those within or near the core of the city, such as Naples or the Naples Airport. Notably, routes 11, 12, 15, 19, 24, and 121 were selected for this analysis for these reasons.

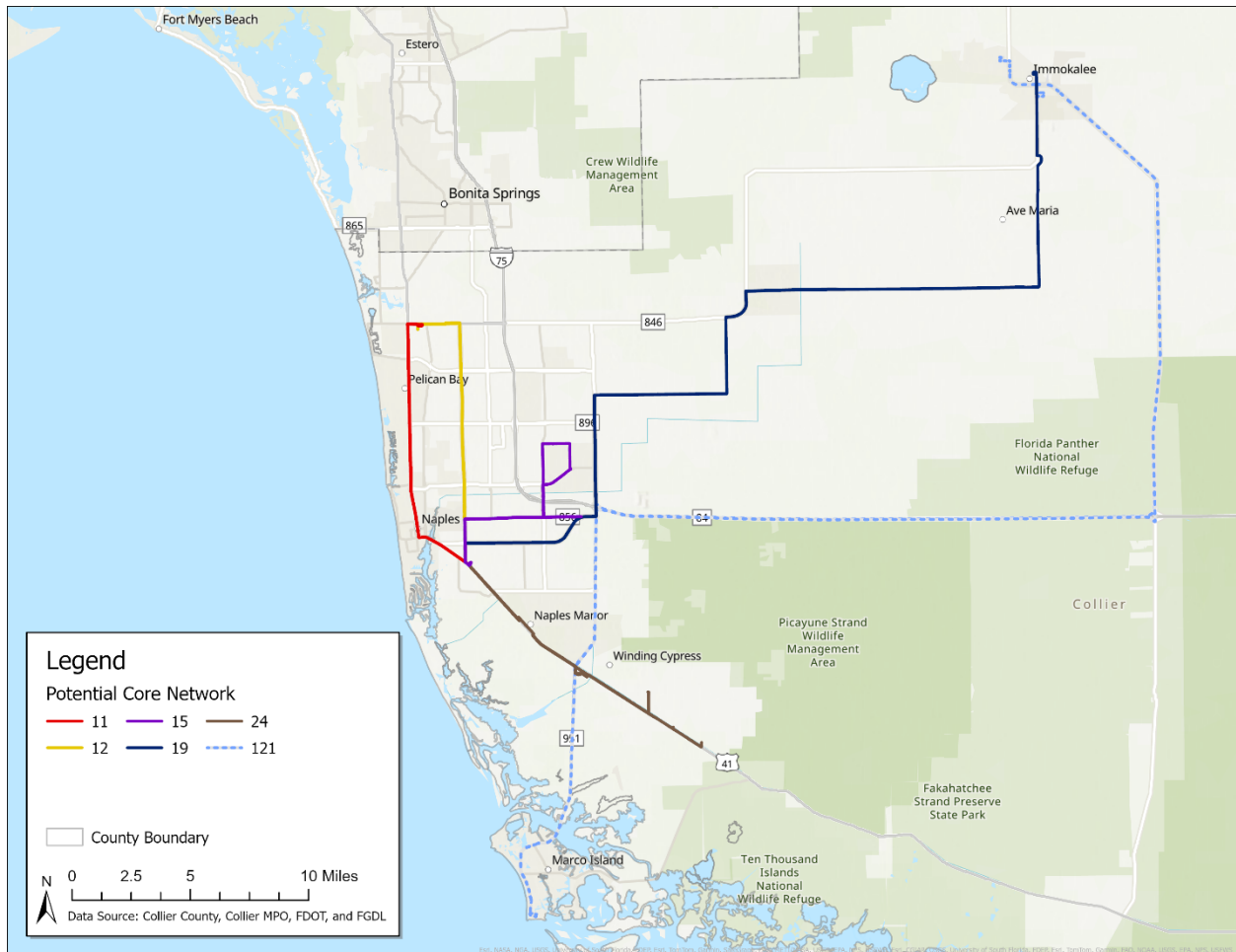


Figure 2-9: Top Ridership Routes in Collier County in FY2023

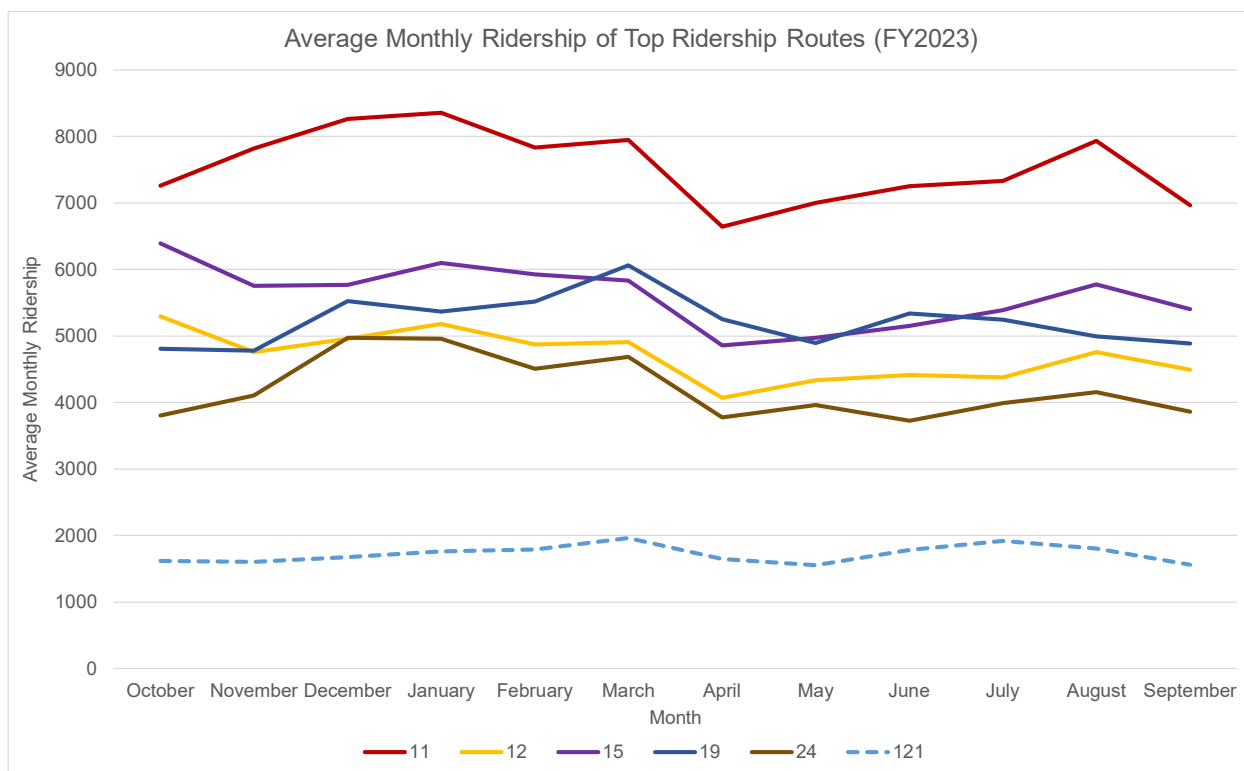


Figure 2-10: Average Monthly Ridership of Top Ridership Routes in Collier County in FY2023

The ridership pattern for these potentially “core” routes is highest between October to February, during the winter season. Ridership dips in April at the end of the peak tourist season. The ridership pattern suggests that tourists and seasonal residents may be contributing to increased usage of these core routes during the peak winter season. This aligns with the general tourism patterns in Collier County.

2.3.2 ROUTE PRODUCTIVITY

To be further evaluated using APC data.

2.4 Trend and Peer Comparison Analysis

This section provides the results of the trend analysis of key performance, effectiveness, and efficiency measures for the CAT system for the past 5 years. In addition, comparisons have been provided to peer agencies to show how CAT stacks up against similar systems.

This evaluation was conducted using data directly from the National Transit Database (NTD) across several different variables for transit performance. These system performance measures are recommended by the FDOT TDP Handbook for general performance, efficiency, and effectiveness, as listed and categorized in the table below.



Table 2-4: System Performance Review Measures

Performance Measures	Effectiveness Measures	Efficiency Measures
Unlinked Passenger Trips	Unlinked Passenger Trips per Capita	Operating Expense per Capita
Passenger Miles Travelled	Passenger Miles Travelled per Capita	Operating Expense per Unlinked Passenger Trip
Vehicle Revenue Miles	Vehicle Revenue Miles per Capita	Operating Expense per Passenger Miles Travelled
Vehicle Revenue Hours	Unlinked Passenger Trips per Vehicle Revenue Mile	Operating Expense per Vehicle Revenue Miles
Vehicles Operating/Available at Maximum Service	Unlinked Passenger Trips per Vehicle Revenue Hour	Operating Expense per Vehicle Revenue Hours
Operating Expense		Vehicle Revenue Miles per Vehicle
Fare Revenue		Farebox Recovery Ratio
		Average Fare

The peer selection process followed the methodology provided by the Transit Cooperative research Program (TCRP) Report 141: A Methodology for Performance Measurement and Peer Comparison in the Public Transportation Industry and recommended by the FDOT TDP Handbook (2022).

The guidance recommends a minimum of 4 agencies and for the purposes of this TDP, 12 agencies have been selected for a first level assessment. It is crucial to make sure that the right peer agencies are selected to provide credible comparisons that can provide insight and trigger action, compared to badly chosen peers which can produce irrelevant results.



An initial peer group should be formed of agencies that are similar to CAT and then likeness scores calculated to determine similarity and appropriateness. For this TDP update, all previous agencies that were included in the prior TDP update were included as well as additional agencies that were deemed to be similar in nature to CAT. This initial long list consisted of:

Table 2-5: Transit System Peer Review Selection

Transit System	Location
The M (Montgomery Area Transit)	City of Montgomery, AL
TTA (Tri-State Transit Authority)	Huntington, WV
The Wave Transit System	City of Mobile, AL
ART (Asheville Redefines Transit)	City of Asheville, NC
GCT (Gwinnett County Transit)	Lawrenceville, GA
PCPT (Pasco County Public Transportation)	New Port Richey, FL
The Wave (Cape Fear Public Transportation Authority)	Wilmington, NC
Sarasota Breeze (Sarasota County Area Transit)	Sarasota, FL
LeeTran (Lee County Transit)	Fort Myers, FL
Bayway (Bay County Transportation)	Pensacola, FL
Indian River County	Vero Beach, FL
Lakeland Area Mass Transit District	Lakeland, FL

It is acknowledged as part of the methodology that peers will not be exactly like one another in all categories and the approved methodology is built to allow for that and allow for similarity in only a few other categories.

Stage 2 Peer Comparison

To be further evaluated.



2.4.1 PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Data for select system characteristics were taken from NTD to assess the general operating performance of the CAT system and its chosen peers. All of the performance indicators are based on exact data values from the NTD database without any additional calculation or alteration.

2.4.1.1 Unlinked Passenger Trips

Unlinked passenger trips (UPT) refer to the number of people riding only one public transit vehicle from origin to destination, counting a new trip each time a vehicle is boarded no matter how many transfers are made. UPT data represents the market demand for service, and a higher number of passenger trips is considered a positive metric. UPT numbers for CAT decreased by almost 30% from 0.95 million trips in 2018 to 0.65 million in 2021 but increased to 0.75 million in 2022. The growth in trips from 2021 to 2022 suggests service improvements have started to take effect as ridership has returned following the COVID pandemic.

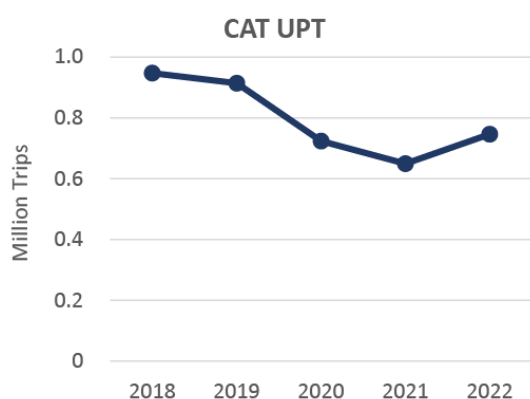


Figure 2-11 Unlinked Passenger Trips trend

2.4.1.2 Passenger Miles Travelled

Passenger miles travelled (PMT) denotes the total distance travelled by all passengers using the service. As with UPT, higher PMT is also a positive metric. PMT numbers for CAT follow the same trend as the UPT numbers, decreasing about 30% from 7.4 million miles in 2018 to 5.3 million in 2021, but increasing to 6.1 million in 2022. This is directly reflective of passenger trips which is to be expected.



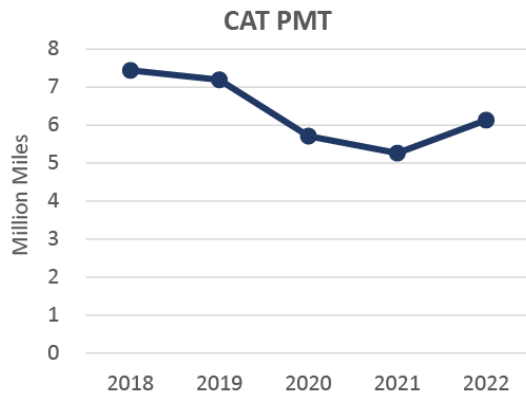


Figure 2-12 Passenger Miles Travel trend

2.4.1.3 Vehicle Revenue Miles

Vehicle revenue miles (VRM) detail the total distance travelled where the transit service was operating in revenue service, which excludes deadhead travel, training operations, and charter services. VRM as a metric itself is not indicative of positive or negative performance and should be analyzed in relation to productivity and cost-effectiveness measures. The slightly decreasing trend in vehicle revenue miles suggests that services are being withdrawn, and with the lack of riders and passenger miles in 2020 and 2021 but a relatively stable amount of service being provided suggest that a major cost recovery issue would have occurred that is likely still impacting the agency.

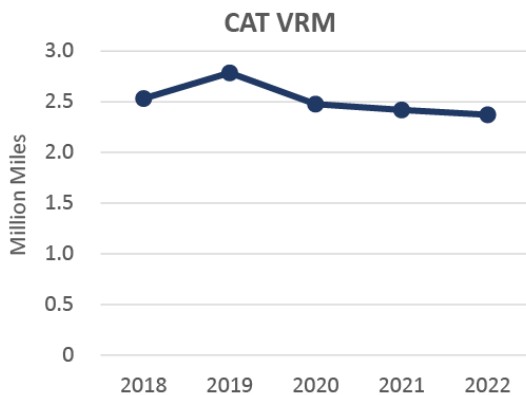


Figure 2-13 Vehicle Revenue Miles trend

2.4.1.4 Vehicle Revenue Hours

Vehicle revenue hours (VRH) represent the total travel time that transit vehicles have operated during revenue service. Like with VRM, VRH as a metric itself is not indicative of positive or negative performance and should be analyzed in relation to productivity and cost-effectiveness measures. Given that VRH has gone up slightly compared to decreasing VRM, this would suggest that routes that serve longer distances and cover more miles, possibly towards more rural areas have been restricted and instead shorter routes with more service has replaced it.

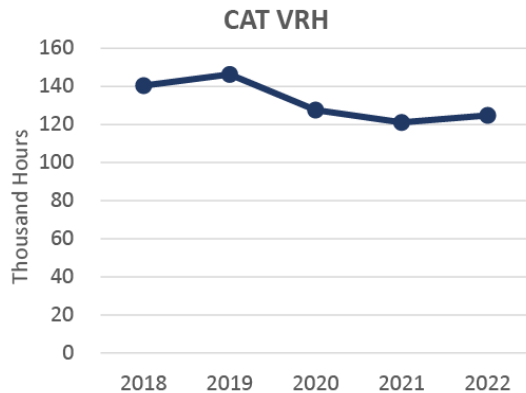


Figure 2-14 Vehicle Revenue Hours trend

2.4.1.5 Vehicles Operating/Available at Maximum Service

Vehicles operating or available at maximum service counts the number of vehicles that are required for (VOMS) or are available to (VAMS) the transit agency to operate at peak full service. VOMS is important for assessing fleet size, directly relating to the network structure and availability of service. VOMS/VAMS numbers can impact the number of routes and frequency of service offered by the transit agency. VOMS helps to determine the required vehicle demand during maximum service versus the vehicles available. Given that VAMS have decreased and VOMS has increased since 2021 to 2022, this would suggest that CAT are operating very close to the line in terms of not having enough vehicles to provide service.

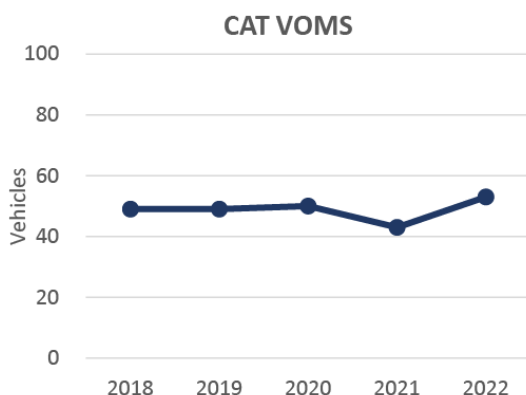


Figure 2-15 Vehicles Operating in Maximum Service trend

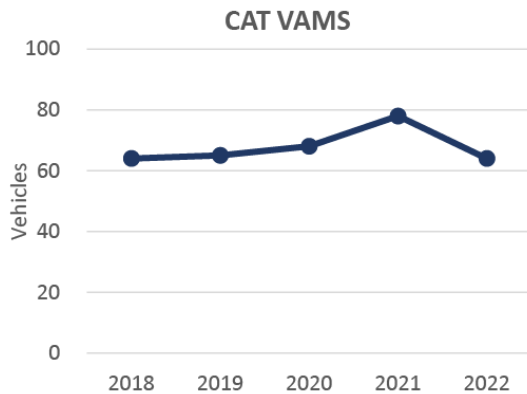


Figure 2-16 Vehicles Available in Maximum Service trend

2.4.1.6 Operating Expense

Total operating expense considers all costs associated with operating the transit service, including operational, maintenance, and administrative costs. Operating expenses have shown a general increase in trends since 2018 which is to be expected as service gets more expensive to deliver. Operating expense should be analyzed in relation to fare revenue and farebox recovery rates to determine how much of the cost of the service is being recuperated.

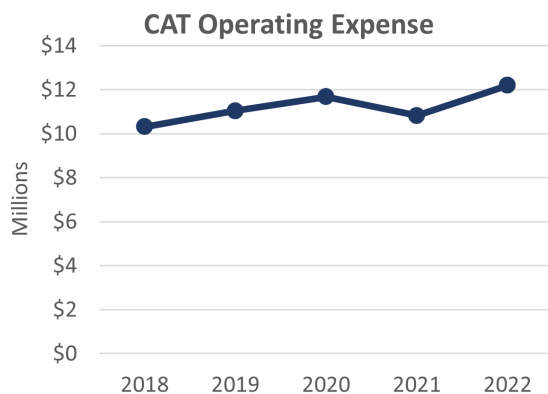


Figure 2-17 Operating Expense trend

2.4.1.7 Fare Revenue

Fare revenue is the total amount of revenue generated from fare-paying transit service users. Ignoring the blip in 2020 with the COVID-19 pandemic, since then fares revenue has been steadily increasing which would be in line with passenger trips also increasing. As with operating expense, fare revenue is at its most useful when analyzed in relation to operating expense and farebox recovery rates.



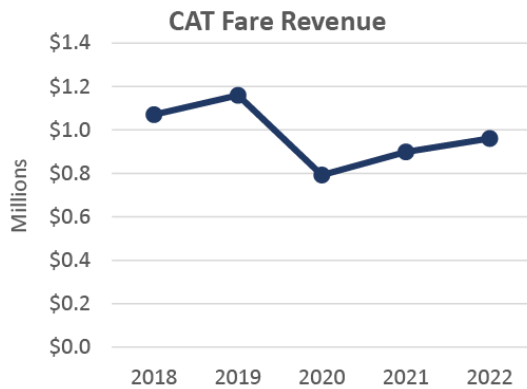


Figure 2-18 Fare Revenue trend

2.4.2 EFFECTIVENESS MEASURES

Service effectiveness is represented by performance characteristics in relation to the population, as the selected indicators demonstrate to what extent service-related goals are being achieved. This includes service supply, service consumption, and quality of service.

2.4.2.1 Unlinked Passenger Trips/Passenger Miles Travelled per Capita

UPT per capita is calculated by dividing UPT by the service area population, measuring transit usage within the service area. Similarly, PMT per capita is derived from dividing PMT by the service area population. Higher values represent a greater utilization of service.

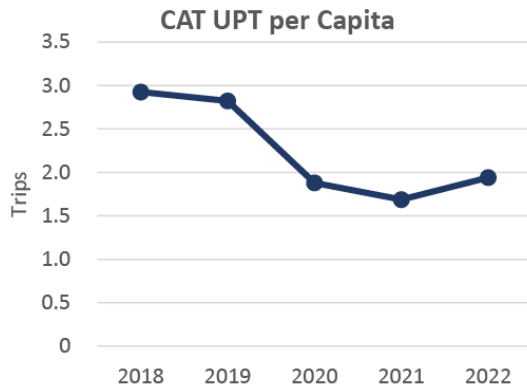


Figure 2-19 Unlinked Passenger Trips per Capita trend

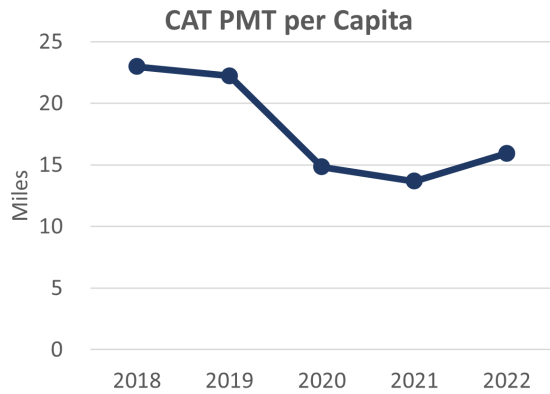


Figure 2-20 Passenger Miles Travelled per Capita trend

2.4.2.2 Vehicle Revenue Miles per Capita

VRM per capita is calculated from the dividing VRM by the service area population, measuring the supply of service provided based on the population of the service area.

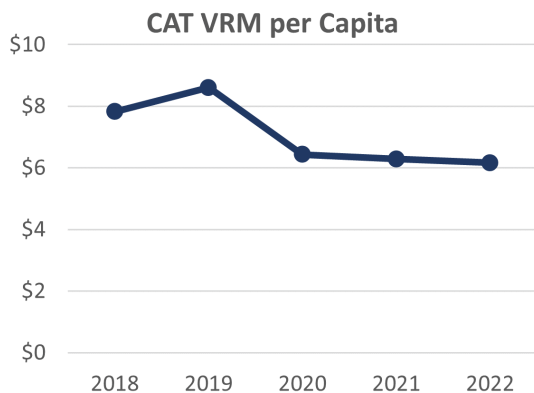


Figure 2-21 Vehicle Revenue Miles per capita trend

2.4.2.3 Unlinked Passenger Trips per Vehicle Revenue Mile/Vehicle Revenue Hour

Dividing UPT by VRM or VRH can serve as other indicators for productivity and service consumption, measuring the utilization rates per unit of provided service. Higher values are desirable as it reflects that there is greater utilization of service.

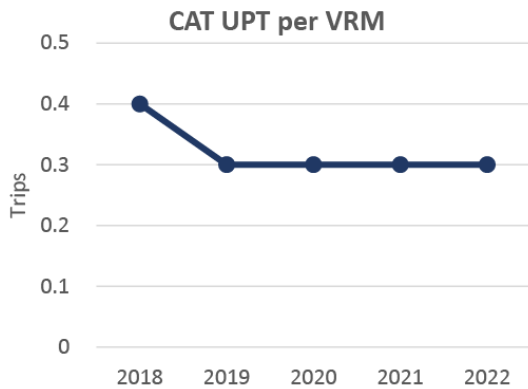


Figure 2-22 Unlinked Passenger Trips per Vehicle Revenue Mile trend

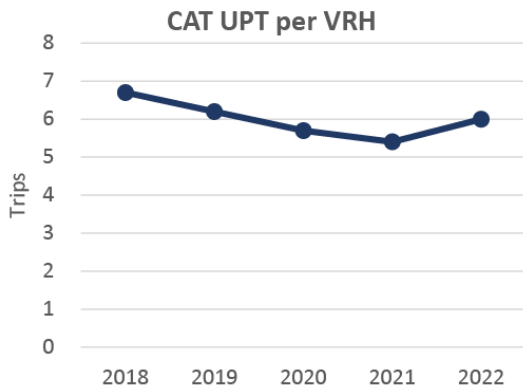


Figure 2-23 Unlinked Passenger Trips per Vehicle Revenue Hour

2.4.3 EFFICIENCY MEASURES

Service efficiency revolves mostly around operating expenses and a few other indicators, in essence, how much it costs to provide and run the service. Most of the efficiency measures are calculated by dividing the total operating expense by other performance measures.

2.4.3.1 Operating Expense per Capita

Operating expense per capita reflects the total investment spent on provided transit services in relation to the service area population. The metric itself reflects greater investment in transit with higher values, however, there are many additional underlying considerations including productivity, demand, and utilization.

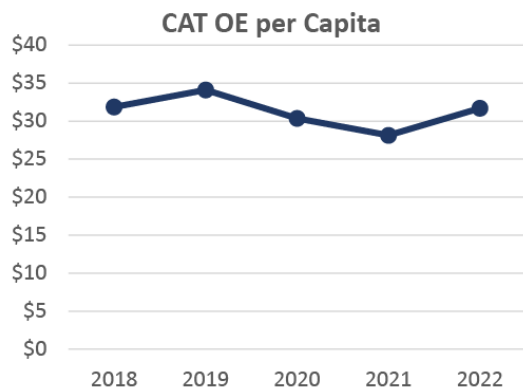


Figure 2-24 Operating Expense per Capita trend

2.4.3.2 Operating Expense per Unlinked Passenger Trip/Passenger Mile Travelled

This metric indicates the average cost to provide service for each UPT/PMT, showcasing the market demand for the service and how service is delivered. The lower these values, the better, as it is ideal to minimize cost per trip.

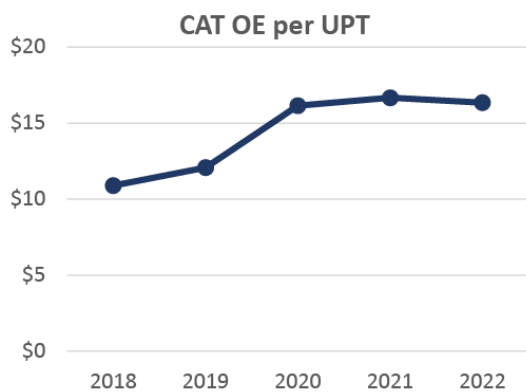


Figure 2-25 Operating Expense per Unlinked Passenger Trip trend



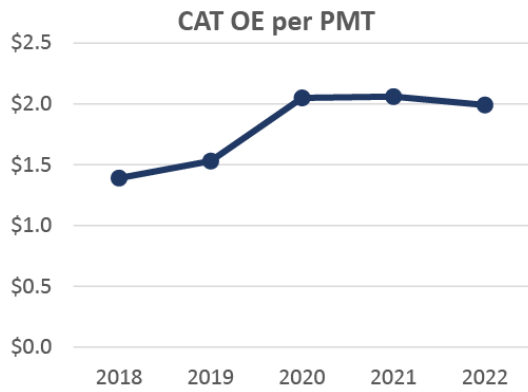


Figure 2-26 Operating Expense per Passenger Mile Travelled trend

2.4.3.3 Operating Expense per Vehicle Revenue Mile / Vehicle Revenue Hour

These metrics are average cost calculations for every service mile or hour, evaluating the efficiency of transit service delivery.

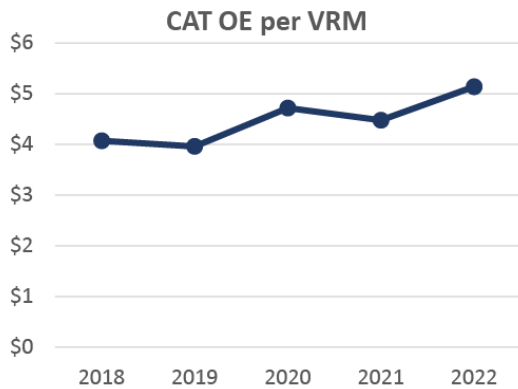


Figure 2-27 Operating Expense per Vehicle Revenue Mile trend



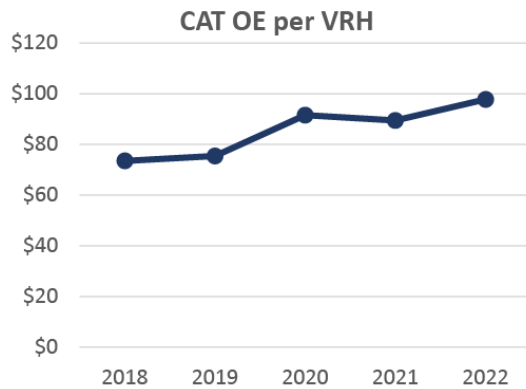


Figure 2-28 Operating Expense per Vehicle Revenue Hour trend

2.4.3.4 Vehicle Revenue Miles per Vehicle

VRM per vehicle is the average service provided by each vehicle in operation during maximum service, derived from dividing VRM by VOMS. It is an indication of vehicle utilization, but there are other contextual considerations to be made including fleet size and age.

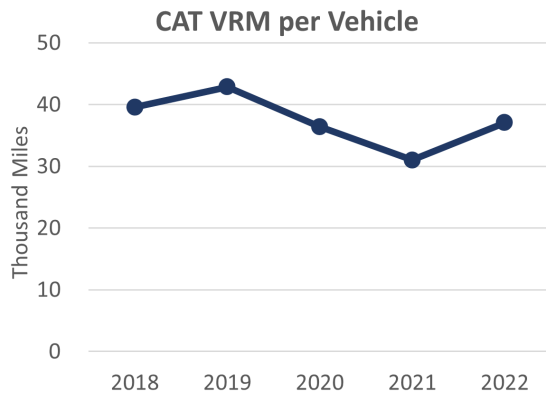


Figure 2-29 Vehicle Revenue Miles per Vehicle trend

2.4.3.5 Farebox Recovery Ratio

Farebox recovery ratio is the percentage of the total operating expenses that are funded by fare revenue from service users, equating fare revenue over operating costs. Higher farebox recovery is desired as that means a greater percentage of the operating costs are covered by passengers compared to other funding sources. The farebox recovery ratio of approximately 8% demonstrates a low level of recovery and therefore a transit network that is costing the federal government a lot to operate.

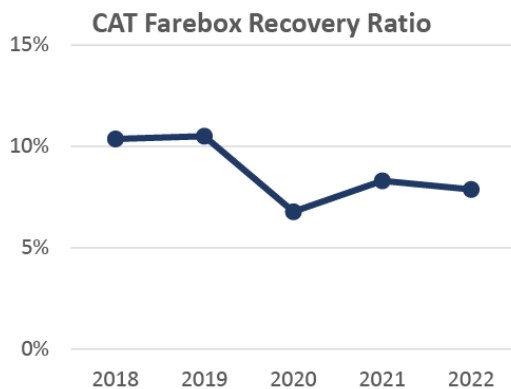


Figure 2-30 Farebox Recovery ratio trend

2.4.3.6 Average Fare

Average fare is the average amount paid per passenger per trip and is calculated by dividing fare revenue by UPT. The metric itself is not necessarily indicative of performance but is a good comparison to other transit systems in terms of fare cost.

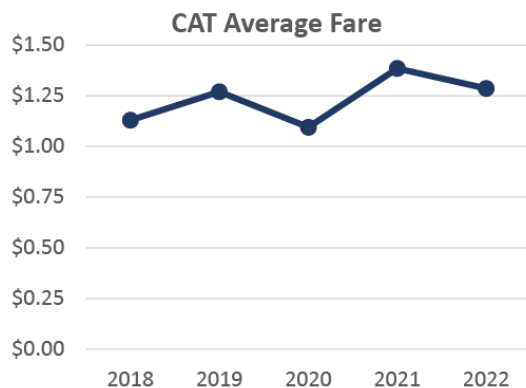


Figure 2-31 Average Fare trend

2.4.4 KEY FINDINGS

Generally, there seems to be a consistent pattern within the past 5 years amongst majority of the performance measures. The values decreased from 2018 to 2021 but increased in 2022. It is likely that the Covid-19 pandemic had a significant impact on the CAT transit system performance in those years, especially in 2020 at the start of the pandemic, which would explain why several metrics saw steeper decreases from 2019 to 2020 compared to the other years. 2021 likely saw increases as the transit systems learned how to handle and plan around the pandemic.

Additional findings to be reported as analysis is completed.



Date: July 1, 2024

Reference: Contract 18-7432 MP Professional Services Library – Metropolitan Planning
Transit Development Plan (TDP) Major Update
Purchase Order/Work Order No. 4500229353
Project No. 33804.6.2.3

Document: Local Plans, Policies, and Programs – Review Required

The guidance provided by the FDOT requires, at a minimum the TDP be consistent with the Florida Transportation Plan, local government comprehensive plans, and the local MPO's LRTP. Plan coordination and implementation is a key element of the TDP. When completed, the TDP will coordinate with the goals and objectives of Collier County's comprehensive plans and that of the local governments including Marco Island, City of Everglades City, and the City of Naples.

Plan Review

The Transit Development Plan builds on the review of relevant local, state, and federal plans, studies, and policies identified. Connecting policies and practices across various partnerships strengthens the TDP, the resulting recommendations, and the future planning of transit service. Many of the plans reviewed are updated periodically. Where possible to most current updates are referenced for review.

The various plans identified provide context for transit service and how Collier Area Transit (CAT) meets the expectations of its various and diverse stakeholders. To evaluate and capture how transit service is accounted for in various planning documents, the analysis is broken down into local plans, regional plans, and state and federal plans.

The plans review section includes an accompanying [table](#) of plans and key policy recommendations which will support the analysis and resulting recommendations.

Local Plans

Various local municipalities within Collier County, as well several public agencies develop transportation plans which include references to transit, rely on transit in Collier, or include CAT service. These plans include Comprehensive Plans

- City of Naples Comprehensive Plan (2023)
- City of Marco Island Comprehensive Plan (2021)
- City of Everglades City 2045 Comprehensive Plan (2022)
- Collier County Comprehensive Plan (2023)
- CAT Ten-Year Transit Development Plan 2021 – 2030 (2020)
- CAT TDP FY 2022 Annual Progress Report (2023)
- Collier MPO Bicycle Pedestrian Master Plan (2019 and 2022 update)

- *CAT Comprehensive Operations Analysis - July 2021 – in review*
- Collier County Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan (2023)
- Collier County Transit Impact Analysis (2020)

Regional Plans

- Collier County 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan (2020)
- CAT Regional Service and Regional Fare Study (2024)
- Strategic Regional Policy Plan SWFRPC (2011)

State and Federal Plans

- Florida Transportation Plan 2055 FTP (2020)
- Florida State Management Plan (2023)
- FDOT Design Manual (2024)
- *Moving Florida Forward – Infrastructure Initiative (2023) – in review*
- Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) ACT (2015)
- The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) (2021)
- *Implications to Public Transportation of Emerging Technology (2016) NCTR – in review*

Additional plans and laws maybe added throughout the review process and development of recommendations in the TDP.