

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Transit Development Plan (TDP) analysis presents a comprehensive evaluation of Collier Area Transit (CAT), identifying key performance trends, demographic shifts, and strategic recommendations to enhance transit service.

Collier County ranked 19th in population among Florida counties in the 2020 Census and is projected to grow significantly by 2050. Population density increases in urban areas such as Immokalee, Ave Maria, and Golden Gate suggest rising transit demand, a reflection of where the workforce is growing. Although private vehicle ownership remains high, approximately 5% of households lack access to a vehicle and nearly 20% of the workforce resides in Lee County, emphasizing the need for reliable public transit and regional connectivity.

Over the past five years, CAT has experienced fluctuations in performance, with a decline in key indicators from 2018 to 2021, primarily due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Performance measures began to recover in 2022, reflecting adaptations to pandemic-related challenges and a gradual return of riders.



0.7%
Walk^{***}



7.4%
Drive Alone^{***}



10.9%
Carpool^{***}



Demographics

32.8% of population over 64*
31.6% minority population**



Income/ Home Ownership

10.4% living in poverty*
4.3% zero vehicle households*



Population

380,221 people*
17.5% growth in 10 years (2012-2022)*



Housing/ Community

229,814 housing units*
64% live within 30 minutes of work*



0.3%
Bike^{***}



1.7%
Other^{***}



0.5%
Use Transit^{***}



11.7%
Work from Home^{***}

*2022 5-Year ACS

**2020 Decennial Census

***Commuter Trips

CAT HIGHLIGHTS

Despite the operational challenges posed by rising costs and inflation, CAT has performed well in the following areas:

CAT demonstrates **high vehicle utilization** with the highest VRM per vehicle value among peers.

Operating expenses per UPT, PMT, VRM, and VRH are below peer averages, indicating **efficient service delivery**.

Despite the removal of the last loop for Routes 11, 12, 13, 14 and 17, and the merging of some routes, **ridership increased during the peak season between FY 2023 and FY 2024**.

CAT's operating expenses have increased since 2018, primarily due to inflation, but remain below peer averages, **indicating cost-effectiveness**.

CAT CHALLENGES

CAT's vehicle revenue miles (VRM) and vehicle revenue hours (VRH) are below peer averages, indicating potential service supply limitations. The decrease in VRM suggests service withdrawal, impacting accessibility and convenience, especially in areas with longer routes that have been restricted.

The number of vehicles operating at maximum service (VOMS/VAMS) is below peer averages, **which may restrict the frequency and reliability of service.** The withdrawal of certain services and routes, potentially leads to gaps in coverage and further impact to ridership.

CAT's unlinked passenger trips (UPT) and passenger miles traveled (PMT) per capita are below peer averages, indicating lower service utilization and effectiveness. This suggests that CAT may not be fully meeting the transit needs of its service area population, which could be due to service limitations or lower demand.

CAT's 2022 farebox recovery ratio is approximately 8%, indicating a heavy reliance on external funding sources to cover operating costs.

LEARNING FROM PUBLIC INPUT

Public input was important for identifying transit needs and developing the 10-year transit improvement plan. Diverse public involvement was achieved throughout the plan development process.

Public Involvement Summary

100+ Total Participants

12



Stakeholders Interviewed

6



Participants in business/
growth discussion group

7



Participants in social service
discussion group

90



On-Board survey participants

2



General public input survey participants

3



Participants in two in-person workshops

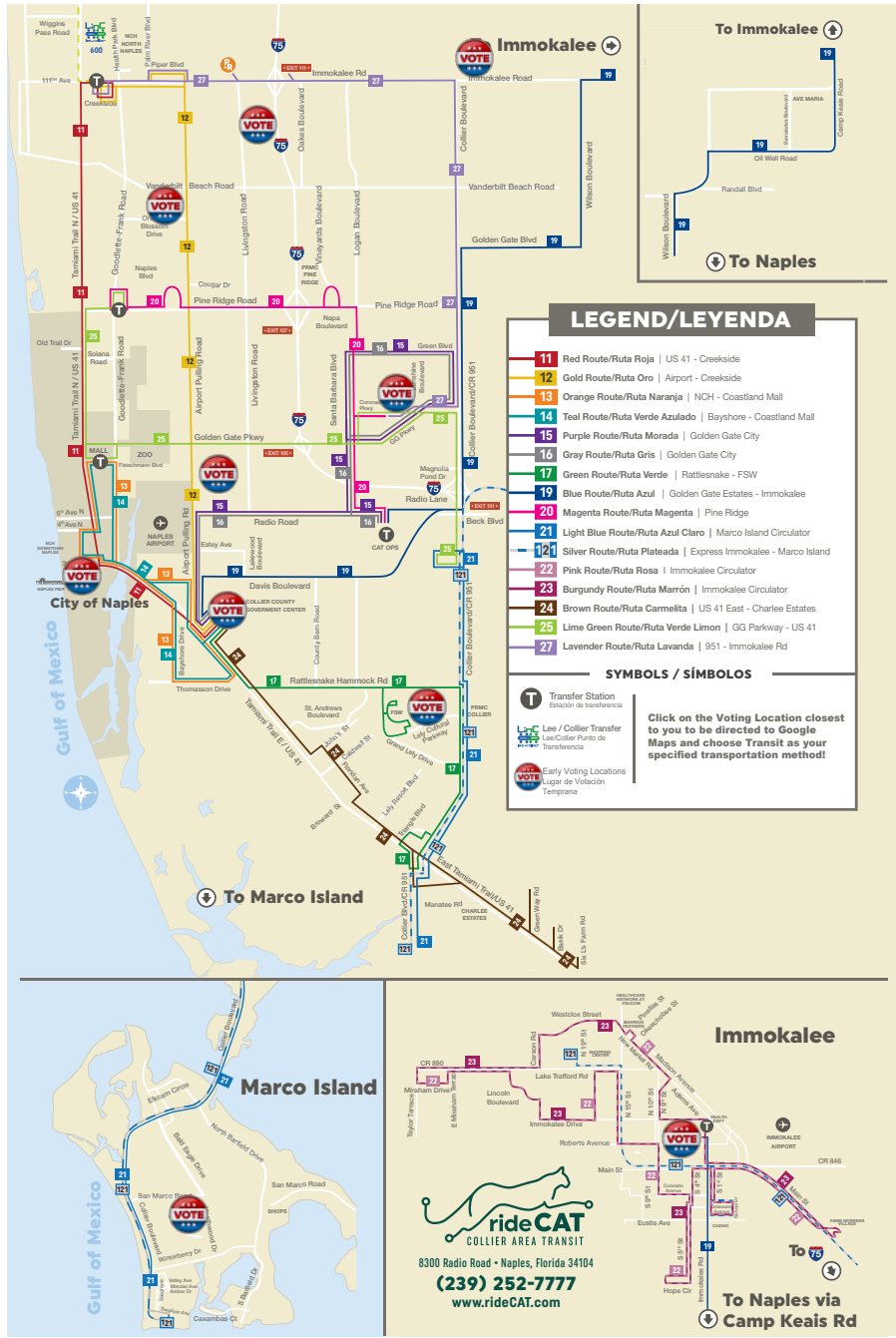
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Workforce Development Board Meetings



EXISTING CAT SERVICES

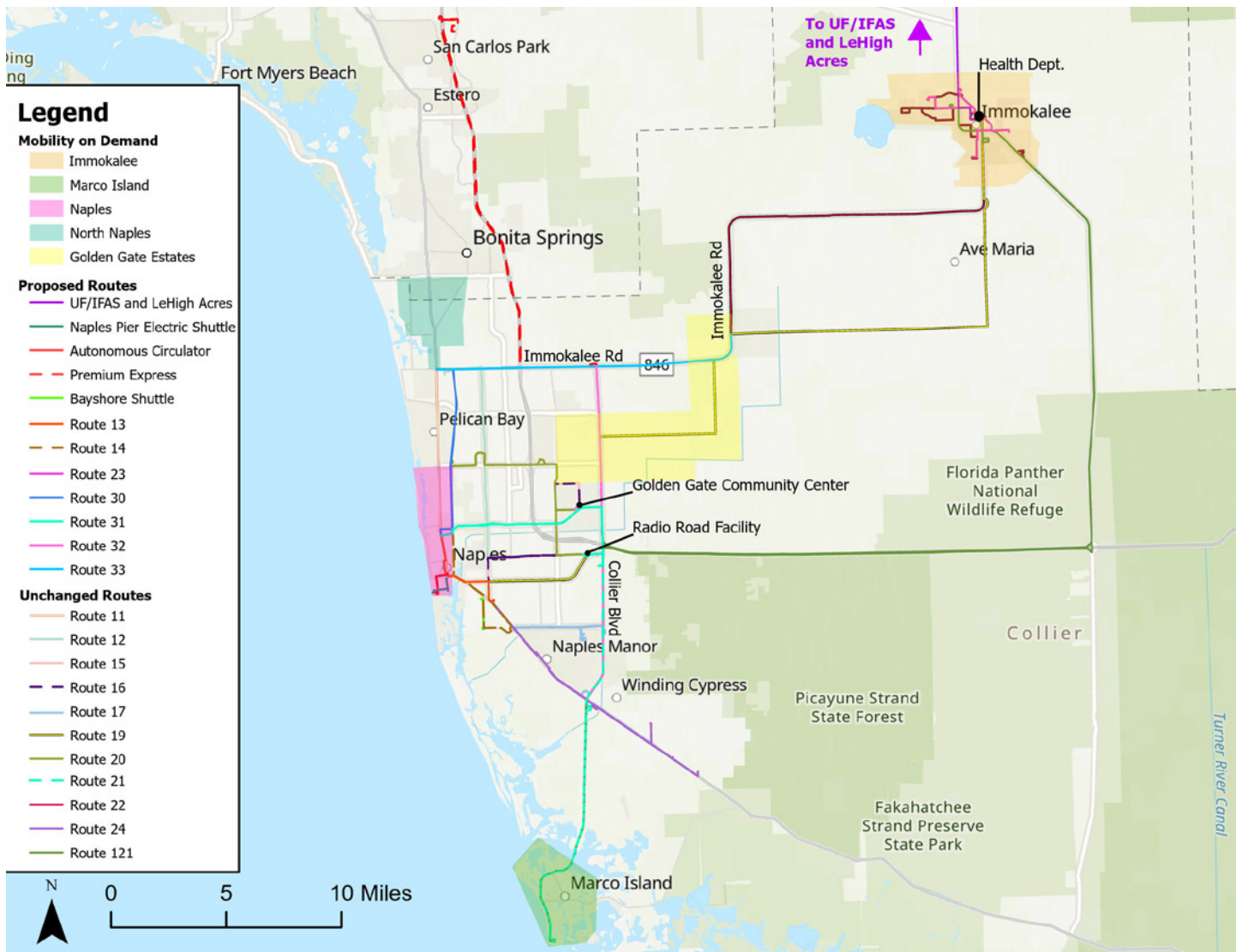
Collier Area Transit (CAT) operates 16 bus routes throughout Collier County, Florida, serving areas including Naples, Marco Island, Golden Gate, and Immokalee. These routes connect key destinations such as government centers, shopping districts, educational institutions, and residential neighborhoods.



EXISTING CAT SERVICES

TRANSIT ENHANCEMENTS

The transit system enhancements proposed for 2026-2035 aim to enhance current CAT services and extend transit coverage to previously unserved areas. These strategies are designed to address the community's transit needs and have been formulated using data collected through public outreach, the transit demand assessment presented herein, and the Situational Appraisal.



PROPOSED TRANSIT NETWORK

10-YEAR IMPLEMENTATION PLAN AND UNFUNDED NEEDS

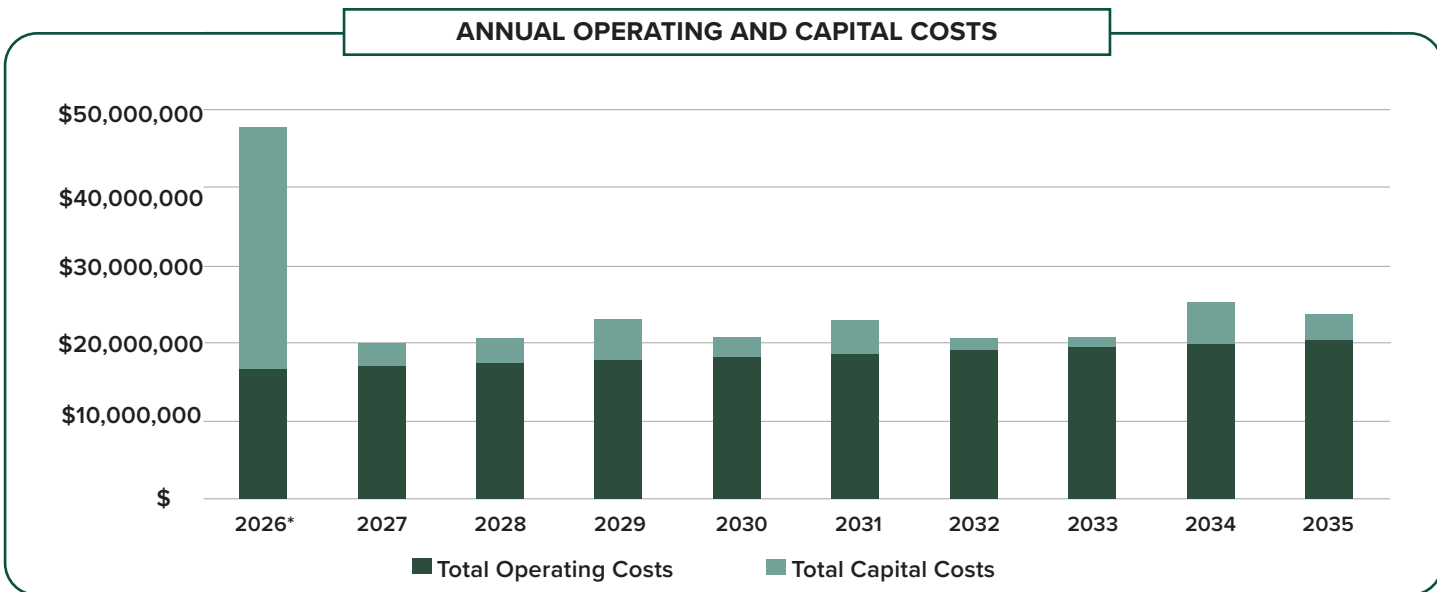
The table below summarizes the implementation plan and the funded and unfunded transit improvements in the adopted 10-Year TDP. Shown for each are the proposed year, the 10-year Year of Expenditure (YOE) operating and capital costs, and the anticipated funding source. Transit improvements may be advanced or delayed as funding circumstances change over time.

| 10- YEAR IMPLEMENTATION PLAN | | | | |
|--|---------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Service Improvements | Proposed Year | 10-Year Operating Cost YOE | 10-Year Capital Cost YOE | Existing or New Revenues |
| Maintain Existing Service | | | | |
| Maintain Existing Fixed-Route Service | 2026 | \$105,095,886 | \$21,883,191 | Existing |
| Maintain Existing Paratransit Service | 2026 | \$79, 585,921 | \$12,637,003 | Existing |
| Replacement Support Vehicles | 2026 | \$0 | \$314,261 | Existing |
| Bus Shelter Rehab | 2026 | \$0 | \$464,100 | Existing |
| Safety & Security Program | 2026 | \$0 | \$1,109,094 | Existing |
| Route Network and New Service | | | | |
| New Bayshore Shuttle | 2027 | \$4,480,750 | \$165,970 | Unfunded |
| New Route 31 (Golden Gate Pkwy) (Split Route 25 E-W) | 2027 | \$6,945,109 | \$0 | Unfunded |
| Realign Route 14 operates at 60 min. headway | 2027 | \$319,523 | \$0 | Unfunded |
| Realign Route 23 headway 60 to 40 minutes | 2028 | \$5,321,808 | \$0 | Unfunded |
| Route 30 (Goodlette Frank Rd) (Split Route 25 N-S) | 2027 | \$6,178,440 | \$0 | Unfunded |
| Route 32 (Collier Blvd) (Split Route 27 N-S) | 2029 | \$4,961,028 | \$631,231 | Unfunded |
| Express Premium Route to Lee County | 2029 | \$5,277,761 | \$631,231 | Unfunded |
| UF/IFAS and Lehigh Acres | 2031 | \$1,348,673 | \$660,343 | Unfunded |
| New Route 33 (Immokalee Rd) (Split Route 27 E-W) | 2031 | \$3,506,569 | \$660,343 | Unfunded |
| Immokalee MOD | 2031 | \$3,035,294 | \$181,632 | Unfunded |

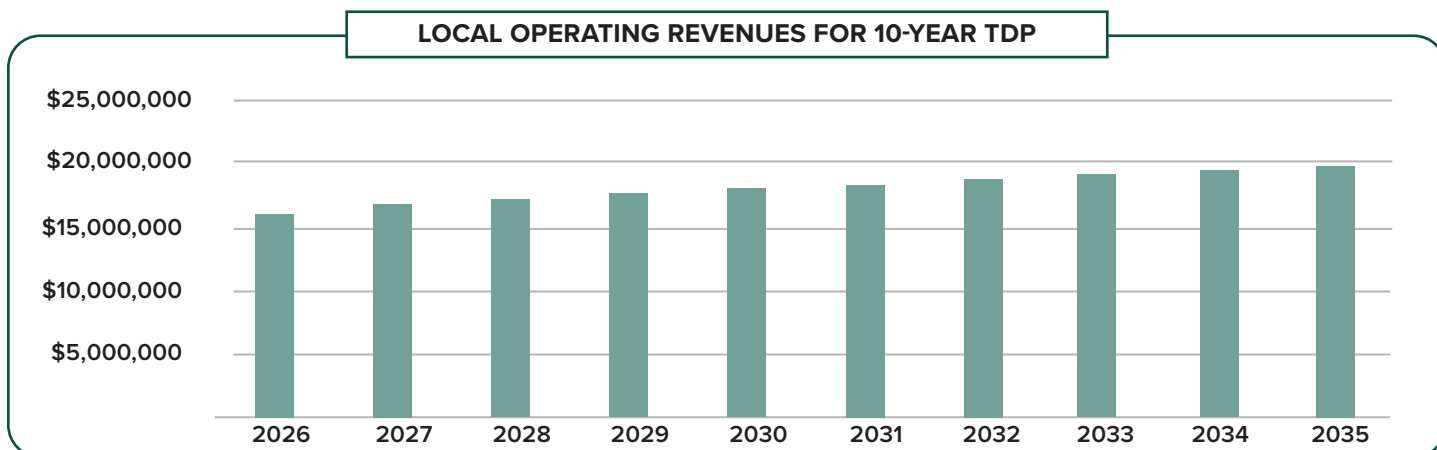
| Service Improvements | Proposed Year | 10-Year Operating Cost YOY | 10-Year Capital Cost YOY | Existing or New Revenues |
|--|----------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Frequency Improvements | | | | |
| Route 15 from 90 to 45 min | 2027 | \$2,759,543 | \$603,402 | Unfunded |
| Route 121 - add one AM, one PM | 2027 | \$1,546,739 | \$603,402 | Unfunded |
| Route 11 from 30 to 20 min | 2027 | \$8,025,908 | \$603,402 | Unfunded |
| Route 12 from 90 to 45 min | 2027 | \$9,822,575 | \$0 | Unfunded |
| Realign Route 13 shorten to 40 min headway | 2027 | \$5,295,288 | \$0 | Unfunded |
| Route 17 from 90 to 45 min | 2027 | \$7,944,903 | \$603,402 | Unfunded |
| Route 16 from 90 to 45 min | 2029 | \$5,020,662 | \$631,231 | Unfunded |
| Route 13 from 60 to 30 min | 2029 | \$4,151,101 | \$0 | Unfunded |
| Route 14 from 60 to 30 min | 2031 | \$4,269,564 | \$660,343 | Unfunded |
| Later Service | | | | |
| Route 19 - Extend to 10:00 PM | 2029 | \$607,255 | \$0 | Unfunded |
| Route 11 - Extend to 10:00 PM | 2031 | \$587,636 | \$0 | Unfunded |
| Route 14 - Extend to 10:00 PM | 2031 | \$533,689 | \$0 | Unfunded |
| Route 24 - Extend to 10:00 PM | 2031 | \$620,390 | \$0 | Unfunded |
| Route 15 - Extend to 10:00 PM | 2031 | \$185,282 | \$0 | Unfunded |
| Route 17 - Extend to 10:00 PM | 2031 | \$1,303,742 | \$0 | Unfunded |
| Other Improvements | | | | |
| Transit Fare Study | Beginning 2025 and every 5 years | \$0 | \$118,258 | Unfunded |
| Zero/Low Emissions Vehicles & Infrastructure | 2025 | Ongoing | | Existing |
| Facilities Improvements | 2026 | \$0 | \$29,437,469 | Existing |
| Bus Shelters | 2026 | \$0 | \$5,586,428 | Existing |
| I-75 Express Study | 2031 | \$0 | \$50,000 | Existing |
| Study: Immokalee Road Corridor | 2026 | \$0 | \$75,000 | Existing |
| Downtown Autonomous Circulator | 2031 | \$1,965,220 | \$0 | Unfunded |
| Electric Naples Pier Shuttle | 2031 | \$3,082,699 | \$181,632 | Unfunded |
| MOD Demand and Operations Requirements Pilot Projects | 2031 | \$0 | \$50,000 | Existing |
| COA Study | Beginning 2028 and every 7 years | \$0 | \$348,427 | Unfunded |
| Total | | \$283,778,959 | \$78,890,796 | |
| Total Funded Projects & Maintenance of Existing Service | | \$184,681,807 | \$71,606,547 | |
| Total Unfunded Projects | | \$99,097,152 | \$7,284,249 | |

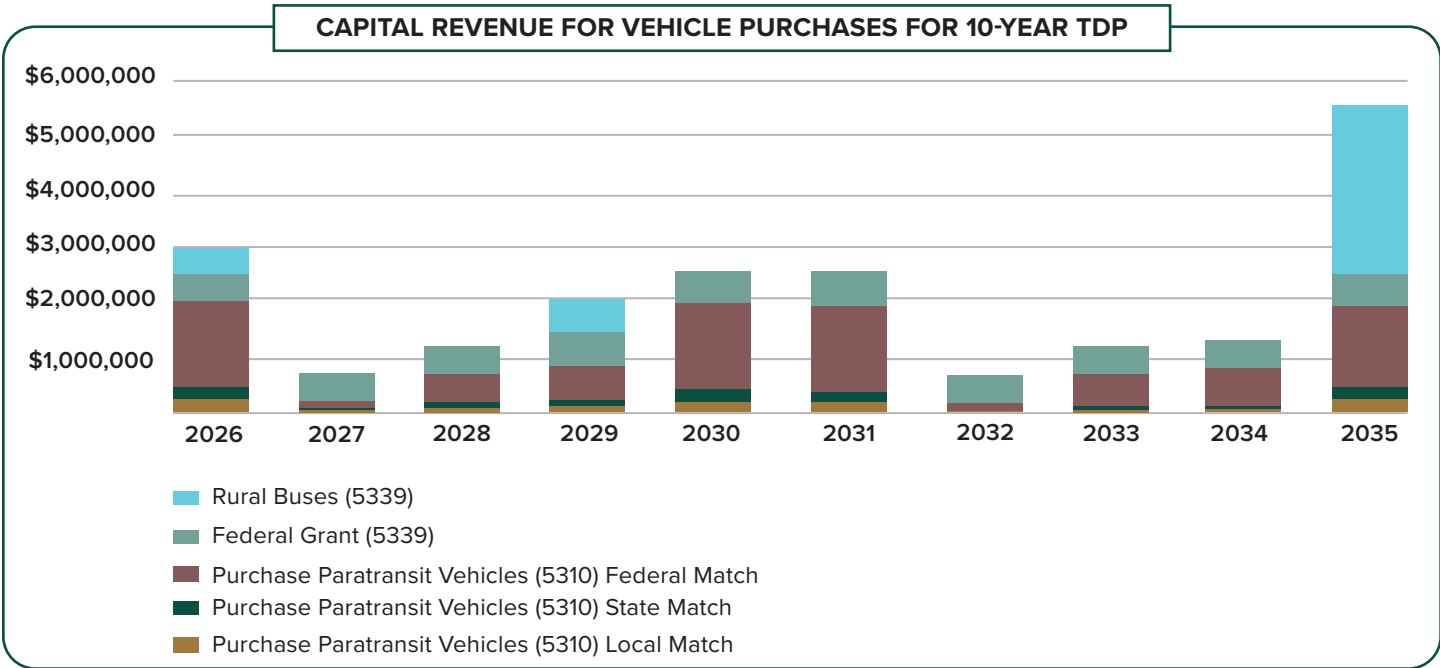
TRANSIT COSTS & REVENUES

Over the next 10 years, implementation is projected to cost \$283.8 million for operating existing, enhanced and new services. An additional \$78.9 million will be needed for capital to support the necessary fleet and capital infrastructure associated with the plan. The costs will continue to be funded primarily with a mix of local, State and federal sources and with fare revenues generated by existing and new transit services.



* 2026 Includes the funding for the construction of the Operations and Maintenance Facility





PLAN IMPLEMENTATION & COORDINATION

CAT's proposed transit system improvements for 2026-2035 focus on service expansion, capital investments, and policy updates. Recommendations include:

Service Improvements:

- Reducing headways on multiple routes to enhance frequency and efficiency, particularly on high-ridership corridors.
- Extending service hours on select routes until 10:00 p.m. to better serve late-night workers and improve accessibility for commuters.
- Realigning key routes to improve connectivity, simplify navigation, and reduce redundancy in overlapping service areas.
- Enhancing paratransit services by optimizing scheduling, improving vehicle availability, and integrating with Mobility-on-Demand (MOD) solutions.

Infrastructure and Capital Investments:

- Developing a new Operations and Maintenance Facility (\$18 million project) to support fleet expansion and improve operational efficiency.

- Upgrading transit stops with shelters, lighting, ADA-compliant infrastructure, and real-time arrival displays to enhance the passenger experience.
- Enhancing park-and-ride facilities with smart technology, such as dynamic pricing, security features, and real-time tracking, to encourage transit use among commuters.
- Continued exploration and piloting of alternative fuel technology to diversify CAT's fleet and assess increased efficiency/cost savings.

Policy and Regional Coordination:

- Conducting a fare study every five years to assess fare structures, evaluate the feasibility of fare capping, and explore integration with regional transit systems.
- Collaborating with LeeTran to establish a regional route (University of Florida/Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences Lehigh Acres Route) that improves cross-county workforce mobility and enhances service efficiency.
- Implementing workforce development initiatives to address driver shortages and improve service reliability.

Moving forward for the next 10 to 15 years, CAT should prioritize the following key actions to implement the recommendations and ensure long-term transit system improvements:

- **Regional Collaboration:** Strengthen partnerships with regional transit agencies, municipalities, and private sector stakeholders to improve service coordination and leverage shared resources.
- **Technology Integration:** Continue investing in intelligent transportation systems (ITS), real-time passenger information tools, and contactless fare payment solutions to enhance user experience and operational efficiency.
- **Expanding park-and-ride facilities** through public-private partnerships and federal/state funding to mitigate congestion and provide convenient transit alternatives. Implementing a real-time parking and transit tracking system to enhance commuter convenience and improve last-mile connectivity.
- **Deploying Mobility on Demand (MOD) and first-mile/last-mile (FMLM)** solutions to bridge transit access gaps in underserved areas and improve mobility for seniors and persons with disabilities.
- **Exploring expanded trolley services** for tourist and high-density areas with community acceptance to alleviate congestion, while integrating smart technology such as dynamic pricing, mobile payment systems, and AI-driven service optimization to improve farebox recovery.

