

**MEETING MINUTES
LOCAL COORDINATING BOARD
FOR THE TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED of the
COLLIER METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

**Collier County Government Center
Admin Building F, IT Training Room, 5th Floor
3299 Tamiami Trail East, Naples, FL 34112
September 10, 2025 | 1:30 p.m.**

1. CALL TO ORDER

A. Roll Call

Chair Pernas called the meeting to order at approximately 1:30 p.m.

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

Members Present

Tony Pernas, MPO Board Member, Everglades City, *Chair*
Brett Nelson, Children at Risk (*arrived after Roll Call*)
Idela Hernandez, Rep. Citizens Advocate/User or Non-User (*arrived during Item 5.A.*)
Patti Warren, Fla. Dept. of Edu./Div. of Vocational Rehab Services
Sarah Gualco, Area Agency on Aging SWFL-FL Dept. of Elder Affairs
Stacy Booth, Florida Dept. of Transportation

Members Absent

Carmen Henry, Southwest Florida Regional Workforce Development Board, *Vice-Chair*
Charles Lascari, Rep. Disabled
Cheryl Burnham, Florida Association for Community Action
John Lambcke, Collier Schools Transportation Director
Julia Manning, Local Medical Community
Leah Watson, Agency for Persons with Disabilities
Michael Stahler, Florida Agency for Health Care Administration
Oscar Gomez, Veterans Services
Tabitha Larrauri, Fla. Dept. of Children and Family Services

MPO Staff

Dusty Hansen, Planner II
Suzanne Miceli, Operations Support Specialist II

Others Present

Omar De Leon, Public Transit Manager, Collier Area Transit
Alex Showalter, Collier Area Transit
Elena Ortiz-Rosado, Collier Area Transit

Mari Maldonado, Collier Area Transit
Nolan Begley, MV Transportation
Keyla Castro, Collier Area Transit

B. Pledge of Allegiance

2. OPEN TO THE PUBLIC FOR COMMENTS ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

None.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Ms. Gualco moved to approve the agenda. Ms. Booth seconded. Passed unanimously.

4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Approval of May 7, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes

Ms. Gualco moved to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes for May 7, 2025. Ms. Booth seconded. Passed unanimously.

5. BOARD ACTION

A. Endorse the Transfer of the MPO's Previous Years' Unspent TD Planning Grant Revenue to the CTC to Support TD Operations

Ms. Hansen said that the Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) has been reporting to LCB of funding shortfalls that limit its ability to meet demand for transportation disadvantaged (TD) trips. At the last MPO Board meeting, during an approval item for the MPO's FY26 TD Planning Grant, a Board member commented that it would be more helpful for MPO's funds to be used to provide direct assistance to TD individuals, as opposed to planning to assist TD individuals.

There are many restrictions tied to the use of the MPO's funds. Generally, planning funds must be used for their designated planning purpose. The MPO's Surface Transportation Block Grant funding, which gets programmed toward construction of eligible projects, cannot be used for operations.

But the MPO does have a fund that accumulates unused grant revenue from its TD Planning Grants, called the TD Reinvestment fund. There is currently \$30,139.34 in the MPO's TD Reinvestment fund.

By way of background, the MPO enters into a TD planning grant with the CTC every year to fund the MPO's role as the designated official planning agency and administrator of LCB. Unlike the MPO's other grants, which are reimbursed by expense incurred, the TD planning grant reimburses the MPO at a fixed rate per task or document completed, referred to as a "deliverable."

The MPO uses the TD grant revenue to pay for MPO staff salaries/fringe benefits for time spent working on LCB, to pay for required legal ads for LCB meetings, and travel/registration expenses for the CTD's mandatory annual TD training event. After expiration of the grant, any unused grant revenue is transferred to the TD Reinvestment account to be used for future TD planning efforts. The annual unused amounts range from nothing to \$14,000, with an average of \$6,400. The amounts in the TD Reinvestment account have historically been used to contribute toward the cost of consultant services to prepare the major update to the Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan, which occurs every five years.

MPO Staff has evaluated its expected grant revenue and expenses for the next few years and is comfortable transferring the appx. \$30K to the CTC to support TD operations. Staff consulted with the CTD, the County grants office, and the office of management and budget, and determined that the TD reinvestment funds can be transferred to the CTC to support operations.

Staff requested LCB's endorsement of the transfer. Staff is seeking MPO Board approval of the transfer at its next meeting on Friday. **Mr. De Leon** added that the amount being offered by the MPO would cover approximately 600 trips. **Chair Pernas** commented that while the transfer is helpful, it does not seem to be a long-term solution. **Ms. Hansen** confirmed and added that there may be times when the MPO is in need of the TD Reinvestment funds for TD planning.

***Mr. Nelson** moved to endorse the transfer of the MPO's TD Reinvestment funds to support TD operations. **Ms. Gualco** seconded. Passed unanimously.*

B. Review and Approve the CTC's Draft FY 2024-25 Annual Operating Report for Submittal to the CTD

Ms. Hansen said that the CTC is required to prepare and submit an annual operating report to the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD) every year, and provided a presentation on the draft Annual Operating Report (AOR) (which can be accessed in the September 10, 2025 LCB agenda packet).

The AOR is required by Florida Statutes and includes data for the CTC and its coordinated contractors; the CTD uses the information to evaluate performance of the TD system locally and state-wide. The CTC currently has 3 coordinated contractors: Hope Hospice, Easter Seals, and Sunrise.

In the last fiscal year, there were a total of 151,572 trips. 63% of those trips were ADA trips, which means the origin and destination of the trip was within $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile of CAT fixed route bus service. 37% of the trips were transportation disadvantaged trips, meaning the origin or destination was outside of the ADA corridor. In looking at the purpose for the paratransit trips for FY25: 41% of trips were for education, training or day care; 24% were for medical appointments; 17% were for group activities, personal business, or other; 15% were for employment; and 3% were for nutrition access/grocery shopping. In looking at the provider type for paratransit trips: 80% of the paratransit trips for last fiscal year was provided by CAT's transportation operator, MV; and the other 20% of trips were provided by the CTC's coordinated contractors.

Some general data on the coordinated system: although commendations to the CTC appear to be down last year, the number of complaints also dropped significantly from the prior year, from 96 to 59. Passenger no shows are also down by almost 1,400 to 7,557. Unmet trip requests were down from 248 to 118. In terms of performance measures set forth in the Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan, the accident rate has dropped 59% from 3.12 to 1.27 in FY25 (the CTC's goal is no more than 1.2). The miles between vehicle road calls (or vehicle service) has increased to 40,190 (the CTC's goal is no less than 10,000 miles). For vehicle mileage, vehicle miles were up 18% to appx. 1.97 million in FY25. In terms of finances, expenses have increased by about 17% to appx. \$8.5 million in FY25. Revenues increased by 19% to appx. \$8.1 million in FY25. The cost per paratransit trip rose by 20% to \$56.08 in FY25.

The draft must be submitted to the CTD by September 15. The CTD then reviews it and confirms approval or advises of changes needed. The CTD approved AOR is brought back to LCB for final review and approval in December.

Mr. Nelson moved to approve the draft AOR. Ms. Hernandez seconded. Passed unanimously.

6. REPORTS & PRESENTATIONS

A. Collier Area Transit Fare Study

Mr. De Leon provided a presentation on a fare study currently being conducted by Collier Area Transit (CAT) with the assistance of a consultant (which can be accessed in the September 10, 2025 LCB agenda packet.) An important component of evaluating CAT's fare structure includes making sure that rates are reasonable and equitable, and also ensuring that CAT can obtain revenue toward sustaining service. Both fixed-route and paratransit fares were being evaluated, and a variety of fare structures were presented.

A group discussion followed regarding financial challenges that many paratransit riders face, ensuring that those that need paratransit service the most are able to access it, and the complexities of determining whether an income ceiling should apply to paratransit services.

Mr. De Leon urged LCB members to participate in a survey being conducted for the fare study, and **Ms. Hansen** indicated that she would follow up after the meeting with an email to LCB members that included the survey link.

B. Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) Reports

a. Update on On-Time Performance and Safety Measures

Ms. Maldonado provided a presentation on the CTC's on-time performance (OTP) (which can be accessed in the September 10, 2025 LCB agenda packet). She described improved alignment and operational adjustments, including run cut expansion, additional drivers, same-day vehicle reassignment, and extra routes, which have improved OTP from approximately 68% to an average of approximately 82%. TD trip demand and trips provided continue to increase.

Mr. Begley, Fixed-Route Manager, provided an update on safety. Efforts continue to provide education and reduce preventable accidents, including employee engagement through monthly meetings, display of safety KPIs, and increased management presence and engagement with drivers. Safety metrics are also tracked and addressed. The efforts are having a positive impact.

b. CTC Quarterly Report

Mr. De Leon said that the information contained in the report in the packet was addressed during the previous agenda item, and asked if there were any questions. There were none.

C. MPO Quarterly Progress Report

Ms. Hansen reviewed the MPO Quarterly report (which can be accessed in the September 10, 2025 LCB agenda packet), mentioning LCB activities, such as the annual updates to the LCB Bylaws and the Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan, approval of the MPO's TD Planning Grant application, and the annual CTC evaluation.

D. FDOT Report

Ms. Booth reported that within our area, grant applications were submitted by CAT for Section 5310, 5311, and 5339 grants. Easter Seals Naples submitted a grant application for a Section 5310 grant. Both agencies' applications have been recommended to Central Office and are awaiting approval. However, not all of the requested funds are available to be awarded. The 5339 application for CAT has been programmed and approved.

FDOT would be hosting the annual Grant Management Workshop on September 18, 2025 virtually. It would be an opportunity to learn about how to apply for FFY26/SFY27 Federal Transit Administration (FTA) grants and ask questions.

A triennial review of CAT by FDOT is scheduled for November 4, 2025. It will be followed by an FTA review.

7. OTHER BUSINESS

None.

8. DISTRIBUTION ITEMS

A. List of Commonly Used Acronyms for LCB

This item was distributed.

9. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Ms. Warren inquired about travel training opportunities for paratransit. **Mr. De Leon** responded that the CTC could provide training and requested Ms. Warren to coordinate with himself or Ms. Maldonado.

10. NEXT MEETING DATE

December 3, 2025, at 1:30 p.m., Regular Meeting, Collier County Government Center, County Administration Bldg. F, IT Training Room, 5th Floor, 3299 Tamiami Trail E., Naples, FL 34112.

11. ADJOURNMENT

*No further business being conducted, **Chair Pernas** adjourned the meeting at 2:36 p.m.*