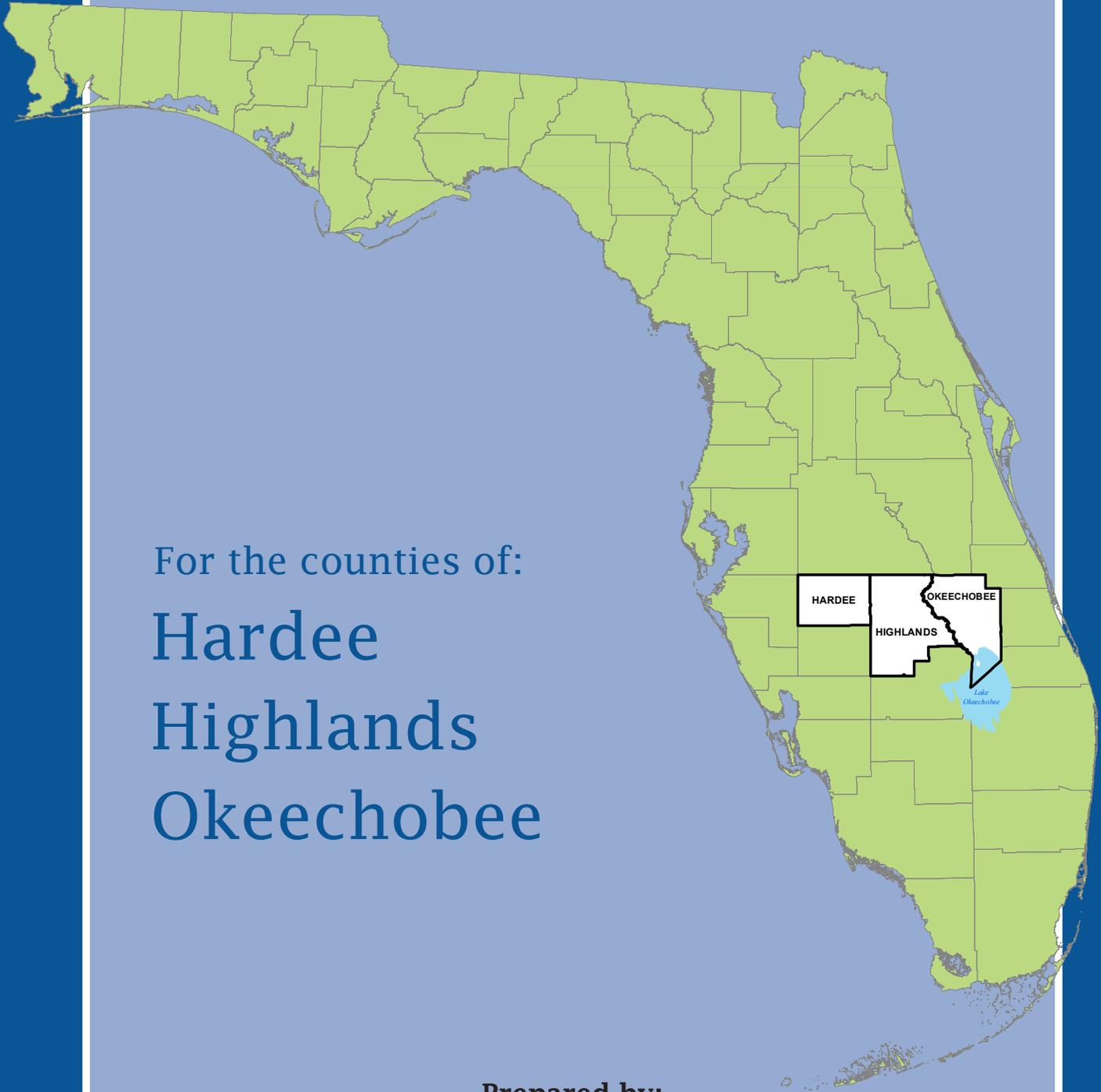


# Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan 2016



For the counties of:

**Hardee**

**Highlands**

**Okeechobee**

Prepared by:

**MV Transportation & Central Florida Regional Planning Council**



Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands,  
Okeechobee Counties, 2016

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TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED  
SERVICE PLAN

(The Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan)

FY 2015-2020

PREPARED BY  
CENTRAL FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL  
AND  
MV TRANSPORTATION, INC.

# Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

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# Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

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Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands,  
Okeechobee Counties, 2016

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*Chapter 427, Florida Statute - Transportation Services Act*

# Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

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## I. DEVELOPMENT PLAN

### A. Introduction to the Transportation Disadvantaged Program

#### 1. Background of TD Program

The purpose of this section is to provide information about the organization and development of Florida's Transportation Disadvantaged program in Hardee, Highlands and Okeechobee counties. This plan shall serve as the Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan under the federal Safe Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU).

In 1989, the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD) was established under Chapter 427, Florida Statute. The Transportation Disadvantaged program requires coordination of federal, state and local government funds utilized for the provision of transportation services for the transportation disadvantaged. This coordination is accomplished through local programs established under Chapter 427, F.S. and Rule 41-2 FAC. Each county within the State of Florida has a Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) whose primary responsibility is the arrangement or provision of transportation services to Florida's transportation disadvantaged population groups. Chapter 427, F.S. defines "transportation disadvantaged" as:

*“those persons who because of physical or mental disability, income status, or age are unable to transport themselves or to purchase transportation and are, therefore, dependent upon others to obtain access to health care, employment, education, shopping, social activities, or other life-sustaining activities, or children who are handicapped or high-risk or at-risk as defined in s.411.202”*

The following sections identify each of the major components of Florida's Transportation Disadvantaged Program.

#### **Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD)**

The Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged is an independent commission housed administratively within the Florida Department of Transportation and reports to the Governor and the Legislature. The purpose of the Commission is to accomplish the coordination of transportation services to the transportation disadvantaged. The Commission is responsible for establishing policies, procedures and standards for the

## Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

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delivery of statewide coordinated transportation disadvantaged services; administering the Transportation Disadvantaged Trust Fund; providing statewide training and technical assistance to local partners in establishing coordinated transportation systems, managing contracts, and developing a five-year plan to address the transportation needs of transportation disadvantaged persons.

The commission works cooperatively with state, local and federal agencies to assure that state agencies purchase transportation services from within the coordinated system unless a more cost-effective provider outside the system can be found. Currently, all of Florida's 67 counties have coordinated systems managed by community transportation coordinators. Some of these community transportation coordinators serve multi-county areas.

The Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD) is comprised of seven (7) members all of whom are appointed by the Governor. Five of the members must have significant experience in the operations of a business and it is the intent of the Legislature that when making an appointment, the Governor selects persons who reflect the broad diversity of the business community in this state as well as the racial, ethnic, geographical and gender diversity of the population of this state. Two of the members must have a disability and use the transportation disadvantaged system.

Each member shall represent the needs of the transportation disadvantaged throughout the state. A member may not subordinate the needs of the transportation disadvantaged in general in order to favor the needs of others residing in a specific location in the state.

Members are appointed to a term of four years and may be reappointed for one additional four year term. According to Florida Statute 427.012, at any given time, at least one member must be at least 65 years of age. The Governor may remove any member of the Commission for cause.

The Chairperson shall be appointed by the Governor and the Vice-Chairperson of the Commission shall be elected annually from the membership of the Commission.

### **Designated Official Planning Agencies (DOPA)**

The designated official planning agency is responsible for transportation disadvantaged planning in a given service area. In the urbanized areas of the state, the planning agencies are metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs). In the rural areas of the state, organizations which are eligible to service as a planning agency are:

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- County or city governments;
- Regional Planning Councils;
- Metropolitan Planning Organizations;
- Local planning organizations that are currently performing planning activities in the service area.

The planning agency is responsible for:

- Preparing a Transportation Improvement Program that includes a TD element.
- Recommending a Community Transportation Coordinator to the TD Commission.
- Appointing a Local Coordinating Board for the Transportation Disadvantaged
- Providing staff support to the Local Coordinating Board
- Preparing and submitting grant applications to the Commission
- Preparing and submitting the Coordinated Transportation Development Plan (TDSP) and its annual updates to the Commission.

The Central Florida Regional Planning Council is the designated official planning agency for the multi-county service area of Hardee, Highlands, and Okeechobee counties.

## **Local Coordinating Board (LCB)**

The designated official planning agency is responsible for appointing a local coordinating board in each county. The purpose of the coordinating board is to identify local service needs and to provide advice and direction to the Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) concerning the coordination of transportation services. Each Local Coordinating Board is recognized as an advisory body to the Commission. The members of the board shall be appointed by the official planning agency. A Coordinating Board shall be appointed in each county, however, when agreed upon in writing by all Boards of County Commissions in each county to be covered in the service area, multi-county Coordinating Boards may be appointed. Hardee, Highlands, and Okeechobee counties has a multi-county Coordinating Board.

The duties of the Local Coordinating Board include:

- Review and approve the Memorandum of Agreement and the Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan drafted by the planning agency and CTC, prior to submittal to the Commission.

# Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

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- Evaluate services provided by the CTC under the approved Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan.
- In cooperation with the CTC, review and provide recommendations to the Commission on funding applications affecting the transportation disadvantaged.
- Review the coordination strategies of service provision to the transportation disadvantaged in the designated service area.
- Evaluate multi-county or regional transportation opportunities.
- Appoint a Grievance Committee to serve as a mediator.
- Prepare an Actual Expenditure Report.
- Review and approve the Coordinated Transportation Development Service Plan (TDSP) and its updates for consistency with approved guidelines, goals and objectives of the Local Coordinating Board.

## **Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC)**

The Community Transportation Coordinator is the agency or organization in each county responsible for ensuring that coordinated transportation services are provided to serve the transportation disadvantaged. The Community Transportation Coordinator may provide all or a portion of transportation disadvantaged service in a designated service area. Community Transportation Coordinators may also subcontract or broker services if it is cost effective and efficient. The Community Transportation Coordinator is responsible for the short-range operational planning, administration, monitoring, coordination, arrangement and delivery of transportation disadvantaged services originating within their designated service area on a full-time basis. In that context they have the following responsibilities:

- Develop, implement and monitor an approved Coordinated Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan.
- Execute uniform contracts for service.
- Collect annual operating data for submittal to the TD Commission.
- Review annually all transportation operator contracts.
- Maximize the utilization of school bus and public transportation services in accordance with Chapter 427.0158.
- In cooperation with a functioning Coordinating Board, review all applications for local government, federal and state transportation disadvantaged funds and develop and implement cost effective coordination strategies.
- In cooperation with the Coordinating Board, develop and negotiate a Memorandum of Agreement for submittal to the Commission outlining the services planned.

# Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

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- Have full responsibilities for the delivery of transportation services for the transportation disadvantaged as outlined in Chapter 427.015(2), F.S.

Based on either negotiations or competitive proposal process, the official planning agency selects a Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) for recommendation to the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged which has final approval.

MV Transportation, Inc. Transportation Services, Inc. is the designated CTC for Hardee, Highlands, and Okeechobee counties. The CTC operates as a full broker and therefore contracts with local carriers to provide transportation service.

## **2. Community Transportation Coordinator Designation Date/History**

The Central Florida Regional Council (CFRPC) first solicited for a Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) by issuing a request for proposals (RFP) in March of 1993. COMSIS (currently known as Transdev Transportation, Inc.) was selected as the CTC for the three county service area.

The Council issued RFP's in 1996, 2000, and in 2003. MV Transportation, Inc. was the only respondent to each of those RFP's and was recommended to remain the CTC through June 30, 2008.

The Council once again issued an RFP for CTC in October of 2007 with a start-up date of July 1, 2008 for the MOA with the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged. Two proposals were submitted and the Council recommended MV Transportation as the CTC for the service area. A protest was filed and the selection process went through the Administrative Procedures Hearing Process. The Administrative law judge recommended that the selection process be conducted over again.

The Council once again initiated the Community Selection Process in March 2009. The Council received four (4) proposals. The selection committee ranked Transdev Transportation, Inc. as the number one proposer and their recommendation was accepted by the Central Florida Regional Planning Council and forwarded to the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged for final action.

On June 18, 2009 the Commission accepted the Council's recommendation of Transdev Transportation, Inc. and entered into a five-year Memorandum of Agreement starting

## Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

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October 1, 2009 and ending September 30, 2014.

In 2007, the Central Florida Regional Planning Council took steps to combine the three counties into a multi-county service area. Each of the County Commissions passed a resolution supporting the request. The request to form a multi-county and service area and multi-county local coordinating board was approved by the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged.

Once again, in 2015, the Central Florida Regional Planning Council conducted a formal request for proposal process for the recommendation of a Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) for the 3-county service area of Hardee, Highlands, and Okeechobee Counties. The result of that process was the recommendation of MV Transportation, Inc. The Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged approved the recommendation and service start-up with the new CTC was November 1, 2015.

## Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

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3. Organization Chart- Insert

# Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

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## 4. Consistency Review of other Plans

To the best of their ability, planning agency staff, reviewed the following local government comprehensive plans, Regional policy Plans, Transit Development Plans, Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged 5 Yr/20 Yr Plans, and other service area plans to make sure that this TDSP is consistent with goals, policies, standards, and other local mandates regarding service provision within the service area.

- a. Local Government Comprehensive Plans – Consistent, to the maximum extent feasible.
- b. Strategic Regional Policy Plan – Consistent, to the maximum extent feasible
- c. Transit Development Plan - N/A
- d. Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged Five-Twenty Year Plan – Consistent
- e. MPO Long Range Transportation Plan - N/A
- f. Transportation Improvement Programs – N/A

## 5. Public Participation

In August of 2005, Congress passed the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for users (SAFETEA-LU), reauthorizing the surface transportation act. SAFETEA-LU requires that the Coordinated Public Transit-Human Service Transportation Plan be developed through a local process that includes representatives from public and private transportation providers, human service agencies, interested parties, and the general public.

## 6. Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan – A Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Transportation Plan

This Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan (TDSP) has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of Chapter 427, Florida Statutes; Rule 41-2, Florida Administrative Code and the guidelines provided by the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged. In addition, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) requires the development and adoption of a “Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan” (CPTHSTP) for recipients of FTA Section 5310 (Elderly and Persons with Disabilities), and 5311(Rural Public Transportation), grant funding programs. The State of Florida has received concurrence from the Federal Transit Administration to allow the Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan to fulfill this requirement. Consistent with the direction given

# Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

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by the State of Florida Department of Transportation, the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged, and the guidelines issued by the Federal Transit Administration, this TDSP has been prepared as a CPTHSTP. This plan was developed through a process that included representatives of public, private and nonprofit transportation and human services providers and participation by the public.

In the State of Florida's Transportation Disadvantaged Program pursuant to Chapter 427, F.S. and Rule 41-2 FAC, a local coordinating board shall be formed and they shall identify local service needs and provide information, advice, and direction to the community coordinator on the coordination of services to be provided to the transportation disadvantaged population. In addition to the requirement of meeting on a quarterly basis, the LCB reviews and approves the Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan, evaluates the services provided in its jurisdiction, and assists the CTC with many issues related to the delivery of transportation disadvantaged services. Rule 41-2.012, FAC outlines the membership of the LCB. This service area follows the multi-county framework outlined in the Rule.

Membership is as follows:

- Three (3) elected officials – one shall serve as Chairperson of the LCB and one shall serve as the Vice Chair.
- A local representative of the Florida Department of Transportation;
- A local representative of the Florida Department of Children and Families;
- A local representative of the public education community which could include, but not be limited to a representative of the district school board, school board transportation office, or Headstart Program in areas where the school district is responsible;
- A local representative of the Florida Division of Vocational Rehabilitation or the Division of Blind Services, representing the Department of Education;
- A person recommended by the local Veterans Service Office representing the veterans of the county;
- A person who is recognized by the Florida Association for Community Action, representing the economically disadvantaged in the county;
- A person over sixty years of age representing the elderly in the county;
- A person with a disability representing the disabled in the county;
- Two (2) citizen advocate representatives in the county; one who must be a person who uses the transportation services(s) of the system as their primary means of transportation;

## Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

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- A local representative for children at risk;
- The chairperson or designee of the local mass transit or public transit system's board, except in cases where they are also the Community Transportation Coordinator;
- "A local representative of the Florida Department of Elderly Affairs;
- An experienced representative of the local private for profit transportation industry;
- A local representative of the Florida Agency for Health Care Administration;
- A representative of the Regional Workforce Development Board; and
- A representative of the local medical community, which may include, but not be limited to, kidney dialysis centers, long term care facilities, assisted living facilities, hospitals, local health department or other home and community based services, etc.

The Local Coordinating Board meetings are advertised in the Florida Administrative Weekly and local newspaper and are held in accessible locations and are open to the public. In addition to the membership listed above, the mailing list for the LCB quarterly agendas include transportation partners, transportation disadvantaged passengers and advocates, human service organizations, faith-based and community based organizations, local school districts and others. The Multi-county LCB seeks input from the public at all its meetings and makes an effort to include many community partners and advocacy groups in the planning, evaluation, and service development processes throughout the year. In addition, an annual public hearing is held and advertised to the public as required under the CTD regulations.

Given that the State of Florida, under the Transportation Disadvantaged program has representation of those entire client groups on each Local Coordinating Board throughout the State, the local coordinating board can serve as the mechanism for meeting the CPTHSTP directive. To enhance the efforts of the Local Coordinating Board's involvement in the process, the Central Florida Regional Planning Council engaged the involvement of other representatives from workforce boards, aging agencies, vocational rehabilitation entities, Highlands County Economic Development Council, Florida's Heartland Rural Economic Development Initiative, and representatives of other civic organizations.

Successful coordination of transportation services depends on an effective planning process that establishes priorities and goals. The multi-county human services plan has three parts to its planning process:

1. Inventory of existing transportation resources
2. Identification of service gaps/barriers
3. Priorities for implementation

## Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

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4. The following service gaps have been identified through on-going meetings with social service agencies, public forums, and identified unmet trip needs.

### Identified Unmet Service Needs

| Service Gap/Financial Gaps                   | Proposed Plan  | Timeline   |
|--|--|--|
| Employment related trips.                    | Continue partnerships with CareerSource Boards, Vocational Rehabilitation Programs, Community Colleges, and Private Sector, to identify community needs and coordinate services.   | Continue monitoring funds that are applicable for employment related use.  |
| General Public Trips                         | Continue to apply for FTA Section 5311 and 5310 operating funds.   | On-going<br>Section 5311 funds are not available for use in the Urbanized area of Highlands County.  |
| Elderly and Disabled                         | Continue to apply for FTA 5310 Operating Funds   | Applications applied for annually.   |
| Resources for Expanded Services              | Coordinate with Mobility Management program.<br>Coordinate with newly formed Heartland Regional Transportation Planning Organization.  | Integrate funding between the TD program and the HRTPO   |
| Extend Service Hours (evenings and weekends) | Work with system carriers to expand service hours to coincide with the needs of clients transported under these programs.  | Service expansion includes service over weekends and evenings coordinated with service needs.  |
| Funding Shortfalls                           | Investigate other funding opportunities. Revise procedures and policies where possible to cut costs. Investigate opportunities for private funding contributions. Encourage participation in the "Voluntary Dollar" program. Investigate voucher opportunities and other mobility options. | The Central Florida Regional Planning Council applied for 5310 operating funds in FY 2014. These funds will be used to help meet the needs of Elderly and Disabled persons with the loss of New Freedom Funds. |
| Coordination Contracts                       | The CTC and LCB will review all existing and new applications for Coordination Contracts.  | CTC will continue to coordinate resources resulting in cost effective, efficient service provision.  |
| Capital Procurement                          | Apply for capital grants for replacement and expansion of vehicle fleet when necessary.  | The CTC and the CFRPC will continue to apply for capital funding.  |

# Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

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## Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Multi County Local Coordinating Board Membership Certification

Central Florida Regional Planning Council  
P.O. Box 2089 – 555 E. Church Street  
Bartow, FL 33830

The Designated Official Planning Agency named above hereby certifies to the following:

1. The membership of the Local Coordinating Board, established pursuant to Rule 41-2.012(3), FAC, does in fact represent the appropriate parties as identified in the following list; and
2. The membership represents, to the maximum extent feasible, a cross section of the local community.

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

| AREA/ENTITY REPRESENTED                           | MEMBER NAME                      | ALTERNATE'S NAME   | TERM                    |
|---|----------------------------------|--|-------------------------|
| Elected Official – Hardee County,                 | Commissioner<br>Russell Melendy  |  | <b>Until Replaced</b>   |
| Elected Official – Highlands County<br>Vice Chair | Commissioner<br>Don Elwell       |  | <b>Until Replaced</b>   |
| Elected Official – Okeechobee County - Chair      | Commissioner<br>Bryant Culpepper |  | <b>Until Replaced</b>   |
| Senior Citizen                                    | Marilyn Hadley                   |  | <b>Reappointed 2012</b> |
| Disabled  | Robert Long                      |  | <b>Appointed 4/13</b>   |
| Citizen Advocate                                  | Cameron Barnard                  |  | <b>Appointed 10/14</b>  |
| Citizen Advocate                                  | Vacant                           |  | <b>Appointed 12/09</b>  |
| Veteran Services                                  | Elizabeth Grinslade              | Larry Pelton 1 <sup>st</sup> ,   | <b>On-going</b>         |
| Community Action                                  | Vacant                           |  |                         |
| Public Education                                  | Vacant                           |  | <b>Appointed 12/09</b>  |
| FL. Dept. of Transportation                       | Michelle Peronto                 |  | <b>On-going</b>         |
| Dept. of Children & Families                      | David Hartzell                   | Bob McPartlan  | <b>On-going</b>         |
| Vocational Rehabilitation<br>(Dept. of Education) | Cathy Viggiano                   |  | <b>On-going</b>         |
| FL. Department of Elder Affairs                   | Joan Cecil                       | Dalia Dillon 1 <sup>st</sup> alt,<br>Zeke Barbosa, 2 <sup>nd</sup> alt.  | <b>On-going</b>         |
| Medicaid (Agency for Health Care Administration)  | Joseph Martinez                  |  | <b>On-going</b>         |
| Early Childhood                                   | Vacant                           |  |                         |
| CareerSource Board                                | Ann Martin                       |  | <b>On-going</b>         |
| Medical Community                                 | Cathie Beasley                   | Audra Wheatly 1 <sup>st</sup> alt.<br>Robert Vaughn 2 <sup>nd</sup> alt. |                         |

# Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

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## B. Service Area Profile and Demographics

### 1. Service Area Description

Located in the south central part of Florida, the three county service area of Hardee, Highlands and Okeechobee Counties has approximately 2,437 square miles of land area. The service area is largely rural except for the Sebring-Avon Park designated urbanized area.

### 2. Demographics

#### a. Land Use

The service area is entirely inland and is mostly rural. Approximately seventy percent (70%) percent of the residents live in the unincorporated areas which increases the distances that need to be traveled to access vital services.

With the exception of Highlands County, the area is without equitable medical and social services for residents. Social service agencies such as Children and Families, mental health, American Red Cross, County Health Departments, County Welfare, Hospice, Rehabilitation facilities for developmentally disabled, senior services, etc. are located in the cities. For medical services, many residents travel to metropolitan areas outside of the service area, including Tampa, St. Petersburg, Ft. Pierce, Palm Beach, Miami, Lakeland, and Winter Haven.

#### Hardee County

Hardee County is located in central Florida, bordered on the north by Polk County, on the east by Highlands County, on the south by DeSoto County, and on the west by Manatee County. Hardee County is a predominantly rural/agricultural county. A slow to moderate population growth rate provides Hardee County with an opportunity not generally available to local governments in Florida. A slower growth rate results in less pressure to develop property in a haphazard manner, and more time to plan to avoid problems associated with rapid growth. Through comprehensive planning which is appropriate to the trends and conditions of Hardee County, local officials can assure that adequate and suitable land, public facilities and

## Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

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services are available to meet demand

Agriculture and mining provide the primary land use as well as the primary economic activity of the county. Mining interests hold substantial portions of the County. Small portions of these areas are currently actively being mined, with the remainder of these mining reserves used for cattle grazing or other agricultural use. Most of the rest of the County is also used for agricultural purposes, including citrus, cattle and produce. Residential development is scattered throughout agricultural areas of the County, including farm homesteads as well as other residential homesteads.

# Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

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| HARDEE | COUNTY | POPULATION | CENTERS | MAP |
|--------|--------|------------|---------|-----|
|--------|--------|------------|---------|-----|

# Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

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## Highlands County

Highlands County is located in Central Florida and occupies a total area of 1,107 square miles (1,029 land; 78 water). It is located northwest of Lake Okeechobee and is bordered by Okeechobee, DeSoto, Glades, Hardee, and Polk counties. Highlands County was established from a portion of DeSoto County in 1921 and named for its rolling countryside. There are three incorporated areas in Highlands; Avon Park, Lake Placid and Sebring. Sebring is the county seat. Highlands County has the largest population 98,786 (based on 2010 Census data) in the service area.

Following the 2010 census, Sebring/Avon Park was identified by the U.S. Bureau of the Census as a new urbanized area in Florida. Federal and state laws require a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to be designated for each urbanized area with a population of 50,000 or more. Highlands County has opted to form a Heartland Regional Transportation Planning Organization for the Heartland of Florida. The proposed region includes DeSoto, Glades, Hardee, Hendry, Highlands, and Okeechobee Counties.

The most notorious event in Highlands County is the “12 Hours of Sebring” auto race, which is the oldest major road race. It takes place at the Sebring International Raceway, located at the Sebring Airport. This race brings international recognition and is an annual March event.

# Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

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INSERT HIGHLANDS COUNTY POPULATION CENTERS MAP

## Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

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### Okeechobee County

Okeechobee County is primarily a rural county, with just one incorporated city; the City of Okeechobee. The majority of the population of Okeechobee County lives in the vicinity of the City of Okeechobee and in the vicinity of Lake Okeechobee. These areas are the most densely developed, have the most extensive local street systems, and are most apt to have access to public supply water and sewer systems.

Okeechobee County is a predominantly rural county, with approximately 465,700 of its 499,200 acres utilized for agricultural activities or held as vacant/undeveloped property. Wetlands, floodplains and other such lands are not broken out separately, but are included in the generalized agriculture and undeveloped existing land use classification, as well as in other existing land use classifications. The agriculture/undeveloped classification accounts for approximately 93 percent of the county's total land area.

# Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

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INSERT OKEECHOBEE COUNTY POPULATION CENTERS MAP

# Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

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Given the very rural nature of the three county service area, providing transportation under the Transportation Disadvantaged umbrella has been challenging. Even though there are urbanized areas developed within the cities in the service area, there is a very high percentage of users that live in remote sections. For purposes of timely (one hour or less travel time on the vehicles) transport of clients for fixed appointment times, clients are scheduled based on available vehicles and vehicle seating capacities. With long-distance travel times, users must sometimes plan to be away from their residences for a long period of the day. Therefore, they are encouraged to bring medications, food, reading materials, etc. to accommodate them for these long periods of time.

In addition to service provided within the three county service area, many trips are scheduled to adjacent service areas. With a lack of non-sponsored funds, trips to destinations outside the service area are restricted to certain times of the day and/or days of the week/month. Average trip miles in this service area are therefore higher than in more urbanized areas.

b. Population/Composition

- Total Population

According to the 2010 Census, the three counties have a combined population of 166,513 persons. Net migration accounts for nearly 80 percent of the population growth in the service area.

TABLE 1  
COUNTY POPULATIONS

| County       | Census 2010 | 2015 BEBR Estimates |
|--------------|-------------|---------------------|
| • Hardee     | 27,731      | 27,645              |
| • Highlands  | 98,786      | 100,748             |
| • Okeechobee | 39,996      | 40,052              |

Source: 2010 Census and Bureau of Economic Business and Research

## Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

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- Population Breakdowns by Age Groups

The service area is similar in character to the State in that it is attractive to the older population.

Table 2  
Hardee County  
Percent Population By Age Group  
2010

|  |        |
|--|--------|
| Total Population 2010                    | 27,731 |
| Persons under 5 years, percent, 2010     | 8.0%   |
| Persons under 18 years, percent, 2010    | 27.7%  |
| Persons 65 years and over, percent, 2010 | 12.9%  |

QuickFacts 2010

Table 3  
Highlands County  
Percent Population By Age Group  
2010

|  |        |
|--|--------|
| Total Population 2010                    | 98,786 |
| Persons under 5 years, percent, 2010     | 5.0%   |
| Persons under 18 years, percent, 2010    | 18.2%  |
| Persons 65 years and over, percent, 2010 | 32.2%  |

QuickFacts 2010

Table 4  
Okeechobee County  
Percent Population By Age Group  
2010

|  |        |
|--|--------|
| Total Population 2010                    | 39,996 |
| Persons under 5 years, percent, 2010     | 6.6%   |
| Persons under 18 years, percent, 2010    | 24.0%  |
| Persons 65 years and over, percent, 2010 | 17.0%  |

QuickFacts 2010

# Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

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- Population Densities

See County Profiles and Table 5 below. Population densities in the service area are significantly less than the State average.

Table 5  
Population Densities/Persons Per Square Mile  
By County

| Area              | Land Area<br>(Square Miles) | Persons Per<br>Square Mile |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| United States     | 3,531,905.43                | 87.4                       |
| State             | 53,926.8                    | 350.6                      |
| Hardee County     | 637.3                       | 43.5                       |
| Highlands County  | 1,028.3                     | 97.2                       |
| Okeechobee County | 773.9                       | 52                         |

Source: Census QuickFacts, 2010

## Income Information

Unemployment percentage figures were well into the double digit numbers as of 2010; a significant increase over the figures of 3.6% – 4.1% in 2006. However, in 2014/2015, rates have leveled off around 6% (Okeechobee County), 8% (Hardee County), and 8% (Highlands County); still above the State average (5.9%) and National average (6.7%). Three out of every five jobs in the service area are ones that pay the lowest wages; retail and services sectors. The service area has a large influx of retirees, both elderly and “early”, many of whom have brought with them relatively stable sources of disposable income. But, because increases in retirement income are almost always tied to the cost of living, their presence does little more than “prop up” per capita income.

Most retirees do not earn a regular wage; many have a strong preference for mobile home living; and, as a group, they increase the demand for expansion in the retail and services sectors of the job market. In the past ten years almost 60% of the new jobs created in the service area came from the three lowest wage earning industries (Agriculture, Retail, Services).

Income levels in the service area are in line with educational attainment, access to jobs and higher education.

## Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

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### Employment Status and Location of Employment

Also See Income Section.

Table 6  
Top Ten Major Private Sector Employers in Hardee County  
(2013)

| EMPLOYER  | NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES |
|---|---------------------|
| Florida Institute for Neurological<br>Rehabilitation<br>Business Line: Healthcare | 550                 |
| Wal-Mart<br>Business Line: Retail   | 288                 |
| Mosaic<br>Business Line: Phosphate  | 277                 |
| C.F. Industries<br>Business Line: Phosphate                                       | 175                 |
| Peace River Electric Cooperative<br>Business Line: Electric Service               | 137                 |
| Wauchula State Bank<br>Business Line: Banking                                     | 121                 |
| Florida Hospital Heartland Division<br>Business Line: Healthcare                  | 111                 |
| Old Castle Mulch<br>Business Line: Manufacturing                                  | 60                  |
| Pacer Marine<br>Business Line: Manufacturing                                      | 60                  |
| First National Bank<br>Business Line: Banking                                     | 38                  |

Source: Enterprise Florida Website, (accessed December, 2015)

## Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

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Table 7

Top Ten Major Private Sector Employers  
In Highlands County  
(2013)

| MAJOR PRIVATE SECTOR EMPLOYERS   | NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES |
|--|---------------------|
| Florida Hospital Heartland Division<br>Business Line: Healthcare                       | 1,300               |
| Highlands Regional Medical Center<br>Business Line: Healthcare                         | 500                 |
| Cross Country Automotive Services<br>Business Line: Roadside Assistance Call<br>Center | 500                 |
| Wal-Mart Sebring<br>Business Line: Department Store                                    | 450                 |
| Medical Data Systems<br>Business Line: Collection Assistance                           | 387                 |
| Delray Plants/Highlands Greenhouse<br>Business Line: Ornamental Plants                 | 350                 |
| Lake Placid Healthcare<br>Business Line: Assisted Living                               | 290                 |
| Alan Jay Network<br>Business Line: Automobile Dealership                               | 290                 |
| Palms of Sebring Assisted Living<br>Business Line: Assisted Living                     | 264                 |
| Lowe's<br>Business Line: Home Improvement Store  | 125                 |

Source: Enterprise Florida Website (accessed December, 2015)

## Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

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Table 8  
Okeechobee County  
Major Private Sector Employers  
2013

| Employer   | Number of Employees |
|--|---------------------|
| Columbia Raulerson Hospital<br>Business Line: Healthcare             | 365                 |
| Walpole, Inc.<br>Business Line: Trucking                             | 300                 |
| Larson Dairy, Inc.<br>Business Line: Milk Producer                   | 225                 |
| McArthur Farms, Inc.<br>Business Line: Milk Producer                 | 160                 |
| Okeechobee Healthcare<br>Business Line: Healthcare                   | 140                 |
| Bank of America<br>Business Line: Banking                            | 93                  |
| Advanced Panch Technologies, Inc.<br>Business Line: Prefab Buildings | 70                  |

Source: Enterprise Florida Website (accessed December, 2015)

### Housing Classifications and Patterns

Conventionally constructed affordable housing units are not being developed in the service area. Demand for such units remains high. Governmental programs that have been implemented have not been effective. The attractiveness of this service area to industries that pay low wages has created a market for affordable units for employees who do not earn enough to purchase or rent expensive housing. The continued viability of the agricultural base of this service area and the inability to provide more farm worker housing has created another need, and market, for affordable units.

There is always a laundry list of lingering issues associated with the housing of low and moderate income groups as well as the aging population of the service area, which complicates questions of affordability and freedom of choice. Fair Housing and Community Development programs aside, historical housing patterns throughout the service area display the scars of past discriminations. Concentrated areas of substandard and deteriorated neighborhood conditions; entirely absent or incomplete infrastructure; ineffective local code

# Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

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enforcement; a general lack of organized, ongoing housing rehabilitation assistance and incentives; and leapfrog annexation patterns isolate low income and minority communities and settlements, and contribute directly to severely deteriorated housing .

The “older”, “retired” population of the service area is attracted to mobile home living and specifically residential mobile home parks.

## Educational Profile of the Service Area

A positive trend for educational attainment for the service area is the increase that each county experienced in terms of percentages of high school graduates. Discouraging education statistics occurred between 1980 and 1990, when each county experienced a decrease in persons possessing a Bachelor’s Degree or higher. However, by the 2010 census, these numbers are on the rise.

The U.S. and Florida saw greater magnitude in both absolute and relative growth in their Bachelor’s degree figures. In the service area, Bachelor’s degree attainment was approximately half those rates. The disparity is similar for people with advanced Graduate degrees – over eight percent in the U.S. and Florida, less than four percent in the service area. The over 65 age population and the workforce population (25-64) have very similar educational levels, both in terms of high school and Bachelor’s degrees.

Table 9

Educational Attainment of Persons 25+ Years of Age, 2010  
By County

| County     | Highest Education Level Attained |                             |
|------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
|            | High School Graduate or Higher   | Bachelor’s Degree or Higher |
| Hardee     | 59.9%                            | 7.5%                        |
| Highlands  | 78.8%                            | 14.6%                       |
| Okeechobee | 71.6%                            | 11.4%                       |

Source: QuickFacts, 2010 Censes

# Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

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## c. Employment

Note: Also see, Employment Status and Location of Employment.

The service area is without any public transportation system. There are limitations to providing transportation to those who are employed if they don't own their own vehicle or are unable to carpool. The Transportation Disadvantaged Community Transportation Coordinator contracts with State agencies that pay for a very limited number of employment trips in the system and, the Local Coordinating Board has prioritized the use of non-sponsored funds for employment as the third priority after medical and education. The higher cost of providing evening service severely impacts provision of service to users for employment purposes. The system is open to the general public; however, service is still limited to availability of vehicles/drivers after hours. The fare structure is the same for general public users and TD users. However, most persons needing transportation for work purposes can't afford the cost of using the TD system as their primary means of transport.

Changes in Federal Legislation (MAP-21) deleted Job Access and Reverse Commute funding under 5316. The funding was absorbed (moved) to the FTA 5311 Operating program for rural public transportation. The same level of service developed for employment related trips under the JARC program will be dependent on whether the requested additional funding is maintained under this program

## d. Major Trip Generators/Attractors

Trip attractors or magnets, are listed below, by county.

### Hardee County

- Hospital,
- Local health care facilities,
- Local government offices,
- Higher educational facilities
- Shopping centers (no local Mall),
- Peace River waterway activities (canoeing).

Many essential trips are demanded and provided on a limited bases to those who need out of county transportation to more urbanized areas for medically related services.

# Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

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## Highlands County

- South Florida Community College,
- Highlands Regional Medical Center,
- Local health care facilities,
- Local government offices,
- Higher educational facilities
- Highlands County Health Department,  
Senior services,
- Sheltered workshop training and employment,
- Local recreational facilities.
- Travel outside the County for essential and  
nonessential services.

## Okeechobee County

- Lake Okeechobee is a major trip attractor (recreational),
- Indian River Community College,
- Raulerson Hospital,
- Local health care facilities,
- Local government offices,
- Higher educational facilities
- County Health Department,
- Rehabilitation training and employment,
- Other local recreational facilities.
- Travel outside the County to urbanized areas for essential and general services.

# Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

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## C. Service Analysis

### 1. Forecasts of TD Population

There are two categories of TD population in the State of Florida, the difference between which are specifically related to funding arrangements. The first group is the “potential TD population” (also known as TD Category I). This potential TD population includes disabled, elderly, low-income persons, and children who are “high-risk” or “at-risk”.

The second group of TD population (also known as TD Category II), includes those persons who are unable to transport themselves or to purchase transportation. These persons are eligible to receive the same subsidies as those in Category I, plus they are eligible to receive TD Trust Fund monies for non-sponsored general trips. Thus, this population group is actually a subset of the potential TD population.

#### Demand for Program Trips

Persons in Category I are eligible to receive governmental and social service subsidies for program trips. A *program trip* is one made by a client of a government or social service agency for the purpose of participating in a program of that agency. Examples of program trips are Medicaid trips, trips to congregate meal sites, or trips to job training facilities.

Program Trip demand is dependent upon the existence of the program to which the potential TD population group is transported. For example, demand for trips to sheltered workshops exists only because there are sheltered workshop programs. Thus, the demand for program trips is equal to the number of trips required to take advantage of the service offered by the program. Therefore, the demand for program trips depends on the funding level for the various social service programs.

#### Demand for General Trips

General trips are trips made by Transportation Disadvantaged persons (Category II) to destinations of their choice (not to agency programs). Examples of general trips are trips to work or grocery stores and non-Medicaid medical trips.

**Service Demand Forecasting for the 3-County is shown below:**

# Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

**DATA INPUT PAGE**

*Yellow cells indicate required data input*

**Area Name:** Hardee County

**Last Year of Census Data Used:** 2010

**Percent Transit Coverage:** 0%

**Number of Annual Service Days:** 365

| County Population By Age | Total Pop by Age | Population Below Poverty Level by Age | Total Population with a Disability by Age | Total Pop with Disability and Below Poverty Level by Age |
|--------------------------|------------------|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| < 5 Years of Age         | 2,140            | -                                     | 29  | 29   |
| 5-17                     | 5,223            | 42                                    | 129                                       | 171  |
| 18-34                    | 5,795            | -                                     | 53  | 53   |
| 35-64                    | 8,443            | 504                                   | 1,157                                     | 1,661  |
| Total Non Elderly        | 21,601           | 546                                   | 1,368                                     | 1,914  |
| 65-74                    | 2,028            | 80                                    | 442                                       | 522  |
| 75+                      |                  |                                       |   |  |
| Total Elderly            | 2,028            | 80                                    | 442                                       | 522  |
| Total                    | 23,629           | 626                                   | 1,810                                     | 2,436  |

| County Population Projections |        |
|-------------------------------|--------|
| 2015                          | 27,645 |
| 2020                          | 27,900 |
| 2025                          | 27,900 |
| 2030                          | 28,100 |
| 2035                          | 28,100 |
| 2040                          | 28,200 |

*5-year growth*      *Annual % Growth*  
255                      0.18%

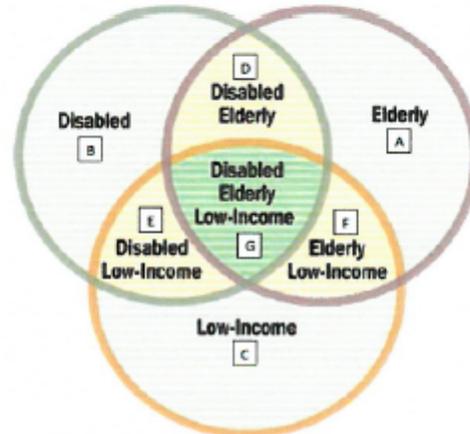
# Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

## CALCULATION OF GENERAL TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED POPULATION

| Hardee County            |                  |                          |                                       |   | Census Data from 2010                     |   |  |  |
|--------------------------|------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|---|---|--|--|
| County Pop. By Age       | Total Pop by Age | % of Total Pop (136,400) | Population Below Poverty Level by Age | % of Total Pop Below Poverty Level by Age | Total Population with a Disability by Age | % of Total Pop with a Disability by Age | Total Pop with Disability and Below Poverty Level by Age | % Total Pop with a Disability and Below Poverty Level by Age |
| < 5 Years of Age         | 2,140            | 9.1%                     | -                                     | 0.0%                                      | 29  | 1.6%                                    | 29   | 1.19%  |
| 5-17                     | 5,223            | 22.1%                    | 42                                    | 0.2%                                      | 129                                       | 0.5%                                    | 171  | 0.72%  |
| 18-34                    | 5,795            | 24.5%                    | -                                     | 0.0%                                      | 53  | 0.2%                                    | 53   | 0.22%  |
| 35-64                    | 8,443            | 35.7%                    | 504                                   | 2.1%                                      | 1,157                                     | 4.9%                                    | 1,661  | 7.03%  |
| <b>Total Non Elderly</b> | <b>21,601</b>    | <b>91.4%</b>             | <b>546</b>                            | <b>2.3%</b>                               | <b>1,368</b>                              | <b>5.8%</b>                             | <b>1,914</b>   | <b>8.10%</b>   |
| 65-74                    | 2,028            | 8.6%                     | 80                                    | 0.3%                                      | 442                                       | 1.9%                                    | 522  | 2.21%  |
| 75+                      |                  | #VALUE!                  |                                       | #VALUE!                                   | 0   | 0.0%                                    | 0  | 0.00%  |
| <b>Total Elderly</b>     | <b>2,028</b>     | <b>8.6%</b>              | <b>80</b>                             | <b>0.3%</b>                               | <b>442</b>                                | <b>1.9%</b>                             | <b>522</b>   | <b>2.21%</b>   |
| <b>Total</b>             | <b>23,629</b>    | <b>100%</b>              | <b>626</b>                            | <b>2.6%</b>                               | <b>1,810</b>                              | <b>7.7%</b>                             | <b>2,436</b>   | <b>10.31%</b>  |

| Double Counts Calculations                        |   |              |
|---|---|--------------|
| E - Estimate non-elderly/disabled/ low income     | From Base Data (I11)                      | 1,914        |
| B - Estimate non-elderly/ disabled/not low income | Subtract I11 from G11                     | (546)        |
| G - Estimate elderly/disabled/low income          | From Base Data (I14)                      | 522          |
| D- Estimate elderly/ disabled/not low income      | Subtract I14 from G14                     | (80)         |
| F - Estimate elderly/non-disabled/low income      | Subtract I14 from E14                     | (442)        |
| A - Estimate elderly/non-disabled/not low income  | Subtract sum of J17, J18 and J19 from C14 | 2,028        |
| C - Estimate low income/not elderly/not disabled  | Subtract I11 from E11                     | (1,368)      |
| <b>Total - Non-Duplicated</b>                     |   | <b>2,028</b> |

| General TD Population                         | % of Total   |             |
|---|--------------|-------------|
| Non-Duplicated General TD Population Estimate | <b>2,028</b> | <b>8.6%</b> |



# Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

**CALCULATION OF CRITICAL NEED TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED POPULATION**

| Hardee County            |   |                                   |  |  | Census Data from: 2010                     |   |
|--------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|--|--|--|---|
| County Pop. By Age       | Total Population with a Disability by Age | % with a Severe Disability by Age | Total Population with a Severe Disability by Age | % of Total Pop with Severe Disability by Age | % of Severe Disability Below Poverty Level | Total Severe Disability Below Poverty Level |
| < 5 Years of Age         | 29  | 6.20%                             | 1  | 0  |  |   |
| 5-17                     | 129                                       | 4.20%                             | 5  | 0.10%  |  |   |
| 18-34                    | 53  | 6.30%                             | 3  | 0.06%  |  |   |
| 35-64                    | 1,157                                     | 13.84%                            | 160  | 1.90%  |  |   |
| <b>Total Non Elderly</b> | <b>1,368</b>                              |                                   | <b>170</b>                                       | <b>0.79%</b>                                 | <b>28.60%</b>                              | <b>49</b>                                   |
| 65-74                    | 442                                       | 27.12%                            | 120  | 5.91%  |  |   |
| 75+                      | 0   | 46.55%                            | -  | #VALUE!                                      |  |   |
| <b>Total Elderly</b>     | <b>442</b>                                |                                   | <b>120</b>                                       | <b>5.91%</b>                                 | <b>11.70%</b>                              | <b>14</b>                                   |
| <b>Total</b>             | <b>1,810</b>                              |                                   | <b>290</b>                                       | <b>1.23%</b>                                 | <b>28.60%</b>                              | <b>63</b>                                   |

| Critical Need - Severely Disabled TD Population |                |            |            |
|---|----------------|------------|------------|
|   | Not Low Income | Low Income | Totals     |
| Non-Elderly                                     | 121            | 49         | 170        |
| Elderly   | 106            | 14         | 120        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                                    | <b>227</b>     | <b>63</b>  | <b>290</b> |

| TRIP RATES USED                          |       |
|--|-------|
| <b>Low Income Non Disabled Trip Rate</b> |       |
| Total                                    | 2.400 |
| LESS                                     |       |
| Transit                                  | 0.389 |
| School Bus                               | 0.063 |
| Special Transit                          | 0.049 |
|  | 1.899 |
| <b>Severely Disabled Trip Rate</b>       |       |
| Special Transit                          | 0.049 |

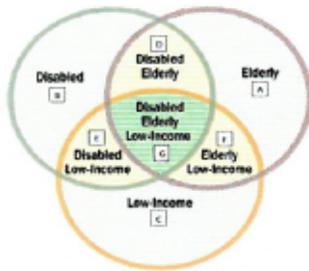
| Calculation of Daily Trips FOR THE CRITICAL NEED TD POPULATION |                             |                  |             |
|--|-----------------------------|------------------|-------------|
| <b>Low Income &amp; Not Disabled = C + F</b>                   |                             |                  |             |
| Assumes 27.2%  | xx % without auto access    | -1,810           |             |
| 100.0%   | xx % without transit access | -492             |             |
|  |                             | -492             |             |
| <b>Calculation of Daily Trips</b>                              |                             |                  |             |
|  |                             | Daily Trip Rates | Total       |
| Total Actual Critical TD Population                            |                             | Per Person       | Daily Trips |
| Severely Disabled  | 290                         | 0.049            | 14          |
| Low Income ND  | (492)                       | 1.899            | -935        |
| <b>Totals</b>  | <b>-202</b>                 |                  | <b>-921</b> |

# Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

**FORECAST OF GENERAL AND CRITICAL NEED TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED POPULATIONS**

**Hardee County**

| General TD Population Forecast                    | 2010          | 2011          | 2012          | 2013          | 2014          | 2015          | 2016          | 2017          | 2018          | 2019          | 2020          |
|---|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| <b>Overlapping Circle Component</b>               |               |               |               |               |               |               |               |               |               |               |               |
| E - Estimate non-elderly/disabled/ low income     | 1,914         | 1,918         | 1,921         | 1,925         | 1,928         | 1,932         | 1,935         | 1,939         | 1,942         | 1,946         | 1,950         |
| B - Estimate non-elderly/ disabled/not low income | -546          | -547          | -548          | -549          | -550          | -551          | -552          | -553          | -554          | -555          | -556          |
| G - Estimate elderly/ disabled/low income         | 522           | 523           | 524           | 525           | 526           | 527           | 528           | 529           | 530           | 531           | 532           |
| D - Estimate elderly/ disabled/not low income     | -80           | -80           | -80           | -80           | -81           | -81           | -81           | -81           | -81           | -81           | -81           |
| F - Estimate elderly/non-disabled/low income      | -442          | -443          | -444          | -444          | -445          | -446          | -447          | -448          | -449          | -449          | -450          |
| A - Estimate elderly/non-disabled/not low income  | 2,028         | 2,032         | 2,035         | 2,039         | 2,043         | 2,047         | 2,051         | 2,054         | 2,058         | 2,062         | 2,066         |
| C - Estimate low income/not elderly/not disabled  | -1,368        | -1,371        | -1,373        | -1,376        | -1,378        | -1,381        | -1,383        | -1,386        | -1,388        | -1,391        | -1,393        |
| <b>TOTAL GENERAL TD POPULATION</b>                | <b>2,028</b>  | <b>2,032</b>  | <b>2,035</b>  | <b>2,039</b>  | <b>2,043</b>  | <b>2,047</b>  | <b>2,051</b>  | <b>2,054</b>  | <b>2,058</b>  | <b>2,062</b>  | <b>2,066</b>  |
| <b>TOTAL POPULATION</b>                           | <b>23,629</b> | <b>23,673</b> | <b>23,716</b> | <b>23,760</b> | <b>23,804</b> | <b>23,848</b> | <b>23,892</b> | <b>23,936</b> | <b>23,980</b> | <b>24,024</b> | <b>24,069</b> |



**Hardee County**

| Critical Need TD Population Forecast                 | 2010            | 2011            | 2012            | 2013            | 2014            | 2015            | 2016            | 2017            | 2018            | 2019            | 2020            |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| <b>Total Critical TD Population</b>                  |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |
| Disabled   | 299             | 291             | 291             | 292             | 292             | 293             | 293             | 294             | 294             | 295             | 295             |
| Low Income Not Disabled No Auto/Transit              | -492            | -493            | -494            | -495            | -496            | -497            | -498            | -499            | -500            | -501            | -501            |
| <b>Total Critical Need TD Population</b>             | <b>-202</b>     | <b>-203</b>     | <b>-203</b>     | <b>-203</b>     | <b>-204</b>     | <b>-204</b>     | <b>-205</b>     | <b>-205</b>     | <b>-205</b>     | <b>-206</b>     | <b>-206</b>     |
| <b>Daily Trips - Critical Need TD Population</b>     |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |
| Severely Disabled                                    | 14              | 14              | 14              | 14              | 14              | 14              | 14              | 14              | 14              | 14              | 14              |
| Low Income - Not Disabled - No Access                | -935            | -937            | -938            | -940            | -942            | -944            | -945            | -947            | -949            | -951            | -952            |
| <b>Total Daily Trips Critical Need TD Population</b> | <b>-921</b>     | <b>-936</b>     | <b>-952</b>     | <b>-968</b>     | <b>-985</b>     | <b>-1,002</b>   | <b>-1,020</b>   | <b>-1,038</b>   | <b>-1,056</b>   | <b>-1,075</b>   | <b>-1,092</b>   |
| <b>Annual Trips</b>                                  | <b>-336,058</b> | <b>-341,737</b> | <b>-347,513</b> | <b>-353,386</b> | <b>-359,358</b> | <b>-365,719</b> | <b>-372,192</b> | <b>-378,780</b> | <b>-385,484</b> | <b>-392,307</b> | <b>-398,466</b> |

Assumes Annual Service Days = 365

Annual Population Growth (as a percent) 0.18%

# Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

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*Yellow cells indicate required data input*

Area Name: Highlands County

Last Year of Census Data Used: 2010

Percent Transit Coverage: 0%

Number of Annual Service Days: 365

| County Population By Age | Total Pop by Age | Population Below Poverty Level by Age | Total Population with a Disability by Age | Total Pop with Disability and Below Poverty Level by Age |
|--------------------------|------------------|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| < 5 Years of Age         | 4,749            | 21                                    | 21  | 42   |
| 5-17                     | 12,718           | 763                                   | 763                                       | 1,109  |
| 18-34                    | 14,694           | 243                                   | 896                                       | 1,139  |
| 35-64                    | 32,762           | 1,479                                 | 5,396                                     | 6,875  |
| Total Non Elderly        | 64,923           | 2,506                                 | 7,076                                     | 9,165  |
| 65-74                    | 16,168           | 185                                   | 3,182                                     | 3,367  |
| 75+                      | 15,578           | 834                                   | 6,568                                     | 7,402  |
| Total Elderly            | 31,746           | 1,019                                 | 9,750                                     | 10,769   |
| Total                    | 96,669           | 3,525                                 | 16,826                                    | 19,934   |

| County Population Projections |         |
|-------------------------------|---------|
| 2015                          | 100,748 |
| 2020                          | 105,800 |
| 2025                          | 105,800 |
| 2030                          | 114,300 |
| 2035                          | 114,300 |
| 2040                          | 120,200 |

5-year growth      Annual % Growth  
5,052                      1.00%

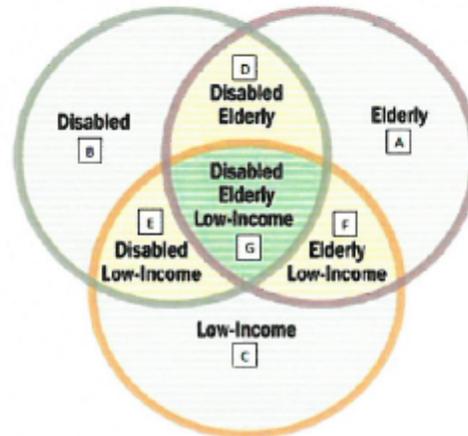
# Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

## CALCULATION OF GENERAL TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED POPULATION

| Highlands County         |                  |                          |                                       |   | Census Data from 2010                     |   |  |  |
|--------------------------|------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|---|---|--|--|
| County Pop. By Age       | Total Pop by Age | % of Total Pop (136,400) | Population Below Poverty Level by Age | % of Total Pop Below Poverty Level by Age | Total Population with a Disability by Age | % of Total Pop with a Disability by Age | Total Pop with Disability and Below Poverty Level by Age | % Total Pop with a Disability and Below Poverty Level by Age |
| < 5 Years of Age         | 4,749            | 4.9%                     | 21                                    | 0.0%                                      | 21  | 0.1%                                    | 42   | 0.21%  |
| 5-17                     | 12,718           | 13.2%                    | 763                                   | 0.8%                                      | 763                                       | 0.8%                                    | 1,109  | 1.15%  |
| 18-34                    | 14,694           | 15.2%                    | 243                                   | 0.3%                                      | 896                                       | 0.9%                                    | 1,139  | 1.18%  |
| 35-64                    | 32,762           | 33.9%                    | 1,479                                 | 1.5%                                      | 5,396                                     | 5.6%                                    | 6,875  | 7.11%  |
| <b>Total Non Elderly</b> | <b>64,923</b>    | <b>67.2%</b>             | <b>2,506</b>                          | <b>2.6%</b>                               | <b>7,076</b>                              | <b>7.3%</b>                             | <b>9,165</b>   | <b>9.48%</b>   |
| 65-74                    | 16,168           | 16.7%                    | 185                                   | 0.2%                                      | 3,182                                     | 3.3%                                    | 3,367  | 3.48%  |
| 75+                      | 15,578           | 16.1%                    | 834                                   | 0.9%                                      | 6,568                                     | 6.8%                                    | 7,402  | 7.66%  |
| <b>Total Elderly</b>     | <b>31,746</b>    | <b>32.8%</b>             | <b>1,019</b>                          | <b>1.1%</b>                               | <b>9,750</b>                              | <b>10.1%</b>                            | <b>10,769</b>  | <b>11.14%</b>  |
| <b>Total</b>             | <b>96,669</b>    | <b>100%</b>              | <b>3,525</b>                          | <b>3.6%</b>                               | <b>16,826</b>                             | <b>17.4%</b>                            | <b>19,934</b>  | <b>20.62%</b>  |

| Double Counts Calculations                        |   |               |
|---|---|---------------|
| E - Estimate non-elderly/disabled/ low income     | From Base Data (I11)                      | 9,165         |
| B - Estimate non-elderly/ disabled/not low income | Subtract I11 from G11                     | (2,089)       |
| G - Estimate elderly/disabled/low income          | From Base Data (I14)                      | 10,769        |
| D- Estimate elderly/ disabled/not low income      | Subtract I14 from G14                     | (1,019)       |
| F - Estimate elderly/non-disabled/low income      | Subtract I14 from E14                     | (9,750)       |
| A - Estimate elderly/non-disabled/not low income  | Subtract sum of J17, J18 and J19 from C14 | 31,746        |
| C - Estimate low income/not elderly/not disabled  | Subtract I11 from E11                     | (6,659)       |
| <b>Total - Non-Duplicated</b>                     |   | <b>32,163</b> |

| General TD Population                         | % of Total    |       |
|---|---------------|-------|
| Non-Duplicated General TD Population Estimate | <b>32,163</b> | 33.3% |



# Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

## CALCULATION OF CRITICAL NEED TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED POPULATION

| Highlands County         |   |                                   |  |  | Census Data from:                          | 2010  |
|--------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|--|--|--|---|
| County Pop. By Age       | Total Population with a Disability by Age | % with a Severe Disability by Age | Total Population with a Severe Disability by Age | % of Total Pop with Severe Disability by Age | % of Severe Disability Below Poverty Level | Total Severe Disability Below Poverty Level |
| < 5 Years of Age         | 21  | 4.20%                             | 1  | 0  |  |   |
| 5-17                     | 763                                       | 4.20%                             | 32   | 0.25%  |  |   |
| 18-34                    | 896                                       | 6.30%                             | 56   | 0.38%  |  |   |
| 35-64                    | 5,396                                     | 13.84%                            | 747  | 2.28%  |  |   |
| <b>Total Non Elderly</b> | <b>7,076</b>                              |                                   | <b>836</b>                                       | <b>1.29%</b>                                 | <b>28.60%</b>                              | <b>239</b>                                  |
| 65-74                    | 3,182                                     | 27.12%                            | 863  | 5.34%  |  |   |
| 75+                      | 6,568                                     | 46.55%                            | 3,057  | 19.63%                                       |  |   |
| <b>Total Elderly</b>     | <b>9,750</b>                              |                                   | <b>3,920</b>                                     | <b>12.35%</b>                                | <b>11.70%</b>                              | <b>459</b>                                  |
| <b>Total</b>             | <b>16,826</b>                             |                                   | <b>4,757</b>                                     | <b>4.92%</b>                                 | <b>20.15%</b>                              | <b>698</b>                                  |

| Critical Need - Severely Disabled TD Population |                |            |              |
|---|----------------|------------|--------------|
|   | Not Low Income | Low Income | Totals       |
| Non-Elderly                                     | 597            | 239        | 836          |
| Elderly   | 3,462          | 459        | 3,920        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                                    | <b>4,059</b>   | <b>698</b> | <b>4,757</b> |

| TRIP RATES USED                          |       |
|--|-------|
| <b>Low Income Non Disabled Trip Rate</b> |       |
| Total                                    | 2.400 |
| Less                                     |       |
| Transit                                  | 0.389 |
| School Bus                               | 0.063 |
| Special Transit                          | 0.049 |
|  | 1.899 |
| <b>Severely Disabled Trip Rate</b>       |       |
| Special Transit                          | 0.049 |

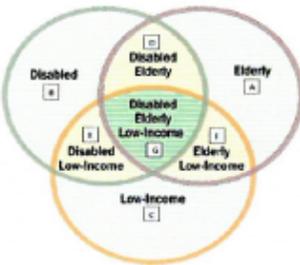
| Low Income & Not Disabled = C + F          |                             |                            |               |
|--|-----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Assumes</b>                             | ###                         |                            |               |
| 27.2%                                      | xx % without auto access    |                            |               |
|  | -4,463                      |                            |               |
| 100.0%                                     | xx % without transit access |                            |               |
|  | -4,463                      |                            |               |
|  |                             | Calculation of Daily Trips |               |
|  |                             | Daily Trip Rates           | Total         |
|  |                             | Per Person                 | Daily Trips   |
| <b>Total Actual Critical TD Population</b> |                             |                            |               |
| Severely Disabled                          | 4,757                       | 0.049                      | 233           |
| Low Income ND                              | ###                         | 1.899                      | -8,476        |
| <b>Totals</b>                              |                             |                            | <b>-8,243</b> |

# Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

**FORECAST OF GENERAL AND CRITICAL NEED TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED POPULATIONS**

**Highlands County**

| General TD Population Forecast                    | 2010          | 2011          | 2012          | 2013          | 2014           | 2015           | 2016           | 2017           | 2018           | 2019           | 2020           |
|---|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| <b>Overlapping Circle Component</b>               |               |               |               |               |                |                |                |                |                |                |                |
| E - Estimate non-elderly/ disabled/ low income    | 9,165         | 9,257         | 9,350         | 9,444         | 9,538          | 9,634          | 9,731          | 9,828          | 9,927          | 10,026         | 10,127         |
| B - Estimate non-elderly/ disabled/not low income | -2,089        | -2,110        | -2,131        | -2,152        | -2,174         | -2,196         | -2,218         | -2,240         | -2,263         | -2,285         | -2,308         |
| G - Estimate elderly/ disabled/low income         | 10,769        | 10,877        | 10,986        | 11,096        | 11,208         | 11,320         | 11,433         | 11,548         | 11,664         | 11,781         | 11,899         |
| D - Estimate elderly/ disabled/not low income     | -1,019        | -1,029        | -1,040        | -1,050        | -1,060         | -1,071         | -1,082         | -1,093         | -1,104         | -1,115         | -1,126         |
| F - Estimate elderly/non-disabled/low income      | -9,750        | -9,848        | -9,947        | -10,046       | -10,147        | -10,249        | -10,352        | -10,455        | -10,560        | -10,666        | -10,773        |
| A - Estimate elderly/non-disabled/not low income  | 31,746        | 32,064        | 32,386        | 32,711        | 33,039         | 33,370         | 33,705         | 34,043         | 34,384         | 34,729         | 35,077         |
| C - Estimate low income/not elderly/not disabled  | -6,659        | -6,726        | -6,793        | -6,861        | -6,930         | -7,000         | -7,070         | -7,141         | -7,212         | -7,285         | -7,358         |
| <b>TOTAL GENERAL TD POPULATION</b>                | <b>32,163</b> | <b>32,486</b> | <b>32,811</b> | <b>33,140</b> | <b>33,473</b>  | <b>33,808</b>  | <b>34,148</b>  | <b>34,490</b>  | <b>34,836</b>  | <b>35,185</b>  | <b>35,538</b>  |
| <b>TOTAL POPULATION</b>                           | <b>96,669</b> | <b>97,638</b> | <b>98,618</b> | <b>99,607</b> | <b>100,606</b> | <b>101,615</b> | <b>102,634</b> | <b>103,663</b> | <b>104,703</b> | <b>105,753</b> | <b>106,813</b> |



**Highlands County**

| Critical Need TD Population Forecast                 | 2010              | 2011              | 2012              | 2013              | 2014              | 2015              | 2016              | 2017              | 2018              | 2019              | 2020              |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Total Critical TD Population</b>                  |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| Disabled   | 4,757             | 4,804             | 4,852             | 4,901             | 4,950             | 5,000             | 5,050             | 5,101             | 5,152             | 5,204             | 5,256             |
| Low Income Not Disabled No Auto/Transit              | -4,463            | -4,508            | -4,553            | -4,599            | -4,645            | -4,692            | -4,739            | -4,786            | -4,834            | -4,883            | -4,932            |
| <b>Total Critical Need TD Population</b>             | <b>293</b>        | <b>296</b>        | <b>299</b>        | <b>302</b>        | <b>305</b>        | <b>308</b>        | <b>311</b>        | <b>315</b>        | <b>318</b>        | <b>321</b>        | <b>324</b>        |
| <b>Daily Trips - Critical Need TD Population</b>     |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| Severely Disabled                                    | 233               | 235               | 238               | 240               | 243               | 245               | 247               | 250               | 252               | 255               | 258               |
| Low Income - Not Disabled - No Access                | -8,476            | -8,561            | -8,647            | -8,733            | -8,821            | -8,909            | -8,999            | -9,089            | -9,180            | -9,272            | -9,365            |
| <b>Total Daily Trips Critical Need TD Population</b> | <b>-8,243</b>     | <b>-8,326</b>     | <b>-8,409</b>     | <b>-8,491</b>     | <b>-8,574</b>     | <b>-8,659</b>     | <b>-8,744</b>     | <b>-8,829</b>     | <b>-8,915</b>     | <b>-8,999</b>     | <b>-9,083</b>     |
| <b>Annual Trips</b>                                  | <b>-3,008,563</b> | <b>-3,059,407</b> | <b>-3,111,111</b> | <b>-3,163,689</b> | <b>-3,217,155</b> | <b>-3,274,099</b> | <b>-3,332,051</b> | <b>-3,391,028</b> | <b>-3,451,049</b> | <b>-3,512,133</b> | <b>-3,567,273</b> |

Assumes Annual Service Days = 365

Annual Population Growth (as a percent) 1.00%

# Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

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**Yellow cells indicate required data input**

Area Name: **Okeechobee County**

Last Year of Census Data Used: **2010**

Percent Transit Coverage: **0%**

Number of Annual Service Days: **365**

| County Population By Age | Total Pop by Age | Population Below Poverty Level by Age | Total Population with a Disability by Age | Total Pop with Disability and Below Poverty Level by Age |
|--------------------------|------------------|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| < 5 Years of Age         | 2,638            | -                                     | 0   | 0  |
| 5-17                     | 6,112            | 236                                   | 430                                       | 666  |
| 18-34                    | 7,345            | 185                                   | 440                                       | 625  |
| 35-64                    | 13,626           | 818                                   | 2,547                                     | 3,365  |
| Total Non Elderly        | 29,721           | 1,239                                 | 3,417                                     | 4,656  |
| 65-74                    | 3,638            | 251                                   | 1,490                                     | 1,741  |
| 75+                      | 2,776            | 201                                   | 1,264                                     | 1,465  |
| Total Elderly            | 6,414            | 452                                   | 2,754                                     | 3,206  |
| Total                    | 36,135           | 1,691                                 | 6,171                                     | 7,862  |

| County Population Projections |        |
|-------------------------------|--------|
| 2015                          | 40,052 |
| 2020                          | 41,500 |
| 2025                          | 41,500 |
| 2030                          | 43,000 |
| 2035                          | 43,000 |
| 2040                          | 44,100 |

5-year growth      Annual % Growth  
                                  1,448                      0.72%

# Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

## CALCULATION OF GENERAL TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED POPULATION

| Okeechobee County        |                  |                          |                                       |   | Census Data from 2010                     |   |  |  |
|--------------------------|------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|---|---|--|--|
| County Pop. By Age       | Total Pop by Age | % of Total Pop (136,400) | Population Below Poverty Level by Age | % of Total Pop Below Poverty Level by Age | Total Population with a Disability by Age | % of Total Pop with a Disability by Age | Total Pop with Disability and Below Poverty Level by Age | % Total Pop with a Disability and Below Poverty Level by Age |
| < 5 Years of Age         | 2,638            | 7.3%                     | -                                     | 0.0%                                      | 0   | 0.0%                                    | 0  | 0.00%  |
| 5-17                     | 6,112            | 16.9%                    | 236                                   | 0.7%                                      | 430                                       | 1.2%                                    | 666  | 1.84%  |
| 18-34                    | 7,345            | 20.3%                    | 185                                   | 0.5%                                      | 440                                       | 1.2%                                    | 625  | 1.73%  |
| 35-64                    | 13,626           | 37.7%                    | 818                                   | 2.3%                                      | 2,547                                     | 7.0%                                    | 3,365  | 9.31%  |
| <b>Total Non Elderly</b> | <b>29,721</b>    | <b>82.2%</b>             | <b>1,239</b>                          | <b>3.4%</b>                               | <b>3,417</b>                              | <b>9.5%</b>                             | <b>4,656</b>   | <b>12.89%</b>  |
| 65-74                    | 3,638            | 10.1%                    | 251                                   | 0.7%                                      | 1,490                                     | 4.1%                                    | 1,741  | 4.82%  |
| 75+                      | 2,776            | 7.7%                     | 201                                   | 0.6%                                      | 1,264                                     | 3.5%                                    | 1,465  | 4.05%  |
| <b>Total Elderly</b>     | <b>6,414</b>     | <b>17.8%</b>             | <b>452</b>                            | <b>1.3%</b>                               | <b>2,754</b>                              | <b>7.6%</b>                             | <b>3,206</b>   | <b>8.87%</b>   |
| <b>Total</b>             | <b>36,135</b>    | <b>100%</b>              | <b>1,691</b>                          | <b>4.7%</b>                               | <b>6,171</b>                              | <b>17.1%</b>                            | <b>7,862</b>   | <b>21.76%</b>  |

| Double Counts Calculations                        |   |              |
|---|---|--------------|
| E - Estimate non-elderly/disabled/ low income     | From Base Data (I11)                      | 4,656        |
| B - Estimate non-elderly/ disabled/not low income | Subtract I11 from G11                     | (1,239)      |
| G - Estimate elderly/disabled/low income          | From Base Data (I14)                      | 3,206        |
| D - Estimate elderly/ disabled/not low income     | Subtract I14 from G14                     | (452)        |
| F - Estimate elderly/non-disabled/low income      | Subtract I14 from E14                     | (2,754)      |
| A - Estimate elderly/non-disabled/not low income  | Subtract sum of J17, J18 and J19 from C14 | 6,414        |
| C - Estimate low income/not elderly/not disabled  | Subtract I11 from E11                     | (3,417)      |
| <b>Total - Non-Duplicated</b>                     |   | <b>6,414</b> |

| General TD Population                         |              | % of Total |
|---|--------------|------------|
| Non-Duplicated General TD Population Estimate | <b>6,414</b> | 17.8%      |



# Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

**CALCULATION OF CRITICAL NEED TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED POPULATION**

| Okeechobee County        |   |                                   |  |  | Census Data from:                          | 2010  |
|--------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|--|--|--|---|
| County Pop. By Age       | Total Population with a Disability by Age | % with a Severe Disability by Age | Total Population with a Severe Disability by Age | % of Total Pop with Severe Disability by Age | % of Severe Disability Below Poverty Level | Total Severe Disability Below Poverty Level |
| < 5 Years of Age         | 0   | 4.20%                             | -  | -  |  |   |
| 5-17                     | 430                                       | 4.20%                             | 18   | 0.30%  |  |   |
| 18-34                    | 440                                       | 6.30%                             | 28   | 0.38%  |  |   |
| 35-64                    | 2,547                                     | 13.84%                            | 353  | 2.59%  |  |   |
| <b>Total Non Elderly</b> | <b>3,417</b>                              |                                   | <b>398</b>                                       | <b>1.34%</b>                                 | <b>28.60%</b>                              | <b>114</b>                                  |
| 65-74                    | 1,490                                     | 27.12%                            | 404  | 11.11%                                       |  |   |
| 75+                      | 1,264                                     | 46.55%                            | 588  | 21.20%                                       |  |   |
| <b>Total Elderly</b>     | <b>2,754</b>                              |                                   | <b>992</b>                                       | <b>15.47%</b>                                | <b>11.70%</b>                              | <b>116</b>                                  |
| <b>Total</b>             | <b>6,171</b>                              |                                   | <b>1,391</b>                                     | <b>3.85%</b>                                 | <b>20.65%</b>                              | <b>230</b>                                  |

| Critical Need - Severely Disabled TD Population |                |            |              |
|---|----------------|------------|--------------|
|   | Not Low Income | Low Income | Totals       |
| <i>Non-Elderly</i>                              | 284            | 114        | 398          |
| <i>Elderly</i>                                  | 876            | 116        | 992          |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                                    | <b>1,161</b>   | <b>230</b> | <b>1,391</b> |

| TRIP RATES USED                          |       |
|--|-------|
| <b>Low Income Non Disabled Trip Rate</b> |       |
| Total                                    | 2.400 |
| LESS                                     |       |
| Transit                                  | 0.389 |
| School Bus                               | 0.063 |
| Special Transit                          | 0.049 |
|  | 1.899 |
| <b>Severely Disabled Trip Rate</b>       |       |
| Special Transit                          | 0.049 |

| CALCULATION OF DAILY TRIPS FOR THE CRITICAL NEED TD POPULATION |                             |                  |               |
|--|-----------------------------|------------------|---------------|
| <b>Low Income &amp; Not Disabled = C + E</b>                   |                             |                  |               |
| <i>Assumes 44.0%</i>   | xx % without auto access    | -6,171           |               |
|  | xx % without transit access | -1,679           |               |
| 100.0%   |                             | -1,679           |               |
| <b>Calculation of Daily Trips</b>                              |                             |                  |               |
|  |                             | Daily Trip Rates | Total         |
| Total Actual Critical TD Population                            |                             | Per Person       | Daily Trips   |
| Severely Disabled  | 1,391                       | 0.049            | 68            |
| Low Income ND  | ###                         | 1.899            | -3,187        |
| <b>Totals</b>  |                             |                  | <b>-3,119</b> |

# Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

**FORECAST OF GENERAL AND CRITICAL NEED TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED POPULATIONS**

**Okeechobee County**

| General TD Population Forecast                    | 2010          | 2011          | 2012          | 2013          | 2014          | 2015          | 2016          | 2017          | 2018          | 2019          | 2020          |
|---|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| <b>Overlapping Circle Component</b>               |               |               |               |               |               |               |               |               |               |               |               |
| E - Estimate non-elderly/disabled/ low income     | 4,656         | 4,698         | 4,724         | 4,758         | 4,792         | 4,827         | 4,862         | 4,897         | 4,932         | 4,968         | 5,004         |
| B - Estimate non-elderly/ disabled/not low income | -1,239        | -1,244        | -1,257        | -1,266        | -1,275        | -1,284        | -1,294        | -1,303        | -1,313        | -1,322        | -1,332        |
| G - Estimate elderly/ disabled/low income         | 3,206         | 3,224         | 3,253         | 3,276         | 3,300         | 3,324         | 3,348         | 3,372         | 3,396         | 3,421         | 3,446         |
| D - Estimate elderly/ disabled/not low income     | -457          | -455          | -459          | -462          | -465          | -469          | -472          | -475          | -479          | -482          | -486          |
| F - Estimate elderly/non-disabled/low income      | -2,754        | -2,774        | -2,794        | -2,814        | -2,835        | -2,855        | -2,876        | -2,896        | -2,917        | -2,938        | -2,960        |
| A - Estimate elderly/non-disabled/not low income  | 6,414         | 6,468         | 6,507         | 6,554         | 6,602         | 6,649         | 6,697         | 6,746         | 6,795         | 6,844         | 6,893         |
| C - Estimate low income/not elderly/not disabled  | -3,417        | -3,447        | -3,467        | -3,492        | -3,517        | -3,542        | -3,568        | -3,594        | -3,620        | -3,646        | -3,672        |
| <b>TOTAL GENERAL TD POPULATION</b>                | <b>6,414</b>  | <b>6,468</b>  | <b>6,507</b>  | <b>6,554</b>  | <b>6,602</b>  | <b>6,649</b>  | <b>6,697</b>  | <b>6,746</b>  | <b>6,795</b>  | <b>6,844</b>  | <b>6,893</b>  |
| <b>TOTAL POPULATION</b>                           | <b>36,135</b> | <b>36,394</b> | <b>36,659</b> | <b>36,925</b> | <b>37,192</b> | <b>37,460</b> | <b>37,731</b> | <b>38,004</b> | <b>38,279</b> | <b>38,556</b> | <b>38,834</b> |



**Okeechobee County**

| Critical Need TD Population Forecast                 | 2010              | 2011              | 2012              | 2013              | 2014              | 2015              | 2016              | 2017              | 2018              | 2019              | 2020              |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Total Critical TD Population</b>                  |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| Disabled   | 3,391             | 3,400             | 3,411             | 3,421             | 3,431             | 3,442             | 3,452             | 3,463             | 3,473             | 3,484             | 3,495             |
| Low Income Not Disabled No Auto/Transit              | -3,679            | -3,699            | -3,703            | -3,715            | -3,728            | -3,740            | -3,753            | -3,765            | -3,778            | -3,791            | -3,804            |
| <b>Total Critical Need TD Population</b>             | <b>-288</b>       | <b>-299</b>       | <b>-292</b>       | <b>-294</b>       | <b>-296</b>       | <b>-298</b>       | <b>-300</b>       | <b>-303</b>       | <b>-305</b>       | <b>-307</b>       | <b>-309</b>       |
| <b>Daily Trips - Critical Need TD Population</b>     |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| Severely Disabled                                    | 68                | 69                | 69                | 70                | 70                | 71                | 71                | 72                | 72                | 73                | 73                |
| Low Income - Not Disabled - No Access                | -3,187            | -3,211            | -3,234            | -3,257            | -3,281            | -3,304            | -3,328            | -3,352            | -3,377            | -3,401            | -3,426            |
| <b>Total Daily Trips Critical Need TD Population</b> | <b>-3,119</b>     | <b>-3,172</b>     | <b>-3,226</b>     | <b>-3,280</b>     | <b>-3,336</b>     | <b>-3,395</b>     | <b>-3,455</b>     | <b>-3,516</b>     | <b>-3,578</b>     | <b>-3,641</b>     | <b>-3,699</b>     |
| <b>Annual Trips</b>                                  | <b>-1,138,562</b> | <b>-1,157,803</b> | <b>-1,177,370</b> | <b>-1,197,268</b> | <b>-1,217,502</b> | <b>-1,239,051</b> | <b>-1,260,983</b> | <b>-1,283,302</b> | <b>-1,306,016</b> | <b>-1,329,133</b> | <b>-1,350,000</b> |

Assumes Annual Service Days = 365

Annual Population Growth (as a percent) 0.72%

# Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

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## 3. Needs Assessment

According to Chapter 427, FS, “Transportation Disadvantaged” is defined as *“those persons who, because of physical or mental disability, income status, age are unable to transport themselves or to purchase transportation and are, therefore, dependent upon others to obtain access to health care, employment, education, shopping, social activities, or other life-sustaining activities, or children who are handicapped or high-risk or at-risk as defined in s. 411.202* A general description of population groups that fit the definition are described below:

### a. Elderly

In defining the composition of the Local Coordinating Boards to oversee this program, Rule 41-2, FAC defines the elderly representative as someone over age sixty (60). The U.S. Census defines elderly as someone 65 years of age or older. This plan will include both age categories.

### b. Economically Disadvantaged

The provision of transportation services for those individuals that are low income and consequently cannot afford adequate transportation is one of the stated goals of the Transportation Disadvantaged program. However, the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged has not provided criterion that can be used to identify low income persons or families.

There are two slightly different versions of the federal poverty measure:

- The poverty thresholds, and
- The poverty guidelines.

The **poverty thresholds** are the original version of the federal poverty measure. They are updated each year by the Census Bureau. The thresholds are used mainly for statistical purposes – for instance, preparing estimates of the number of Americans in poverty each year. (In other words, all official poverty population figures are calculated using the poverty thresholds, not the guidelines.)

## Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

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The **poverty guidelines** are the other version of the federal poverty measure. They are issued each year in the Federal Register by the Department of Health and Human Services. The guidelines are a simplification of the poverty thresholds for use for administrative purposes – for instance, determining financial eligibility for certain federal programs. Poverty guidelines are designated by the year in which they are issued.

## Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

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The 2014 thresholds are used as shown below in Table 10.

Table 10  
Poverty Thresholds  
for 2014 by Size of Family  
and Number of Related Children Under  
18 Years  
(dollars)

| Size of Family Unit                     | Related Children Under 18 Years |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |                     |
|---|---------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------------------|
|   | None                            | One    | Two    | Three  | Four   | Five   | Six    | Seven  | Eight<br>or<br>More |
| One Person<br>(unrelated<br>individual) |                                 |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |                     |
| Under 65<br>Years                       | 12,316                          |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |                     |
| 65 Years<br>and Over                    | 11,354                          |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |                     |
| Two People                              |                                 |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |                     |
| Householder<br>Under 65 Years           | 15,853                          | 16,317 |        |        |        |        |        |        |                     |
| Householder 65<br>Years and Over        | 14,309                          | 16,256 |        |        |        |        |        |        |                     |
| Three People                            | 18,518                          | 19,055 | 19,073 |        |        |        |        |        |                     |
| Four People                             | 24,418                          | 24,817 | 24,008 | 24,091 |        |        |        |        |                     |
| Five People                             | 29,447                          | 29,875 | 28,960 | 28,252 | 27,820 |        |        |        |                     |
| Six People                              | 33,869                          | 34,004 | 33,308 | 32,631 | 31,633 | 31,044 |        |        |                     |
| Seven People                            | 38,971                          | 39,214 | 38,375 | 37,791 | 36,701 | 35,431 | 34,036 |        |                     |
| Eight People                            | 43,586                          | 43,970 | 43,179 | 42,485 | 41,501 | 40,252 | 38,953 | 38,622 |                     |
| Nine People or More                     | 52,430                          | 52,685 | 51,984 | 51,396 | 50,430 | 49,101 | 47,899 | 47,601 | 45,768              |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

# Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

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## c. Physically and Mentally Disabled

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 defines an individual's disability as "a permanent or temporary physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of such individual". The ADA mandates equal opportunity in employment, transportation, telecommunications, and places of public accommodations for individuals with disabilities, which obviously has a significant impact on the provision of transportation services.

The definitions in the ADA make clear that it applies to persons who have substantial impairments, and that these impairments must limit major life activities such as seeing, hearing, speaking, walking, breathing, performing manual tasks, learning, caring for oneself, and working. An individual with epilepsy, paralysis, a substantial hearing or visual impairment, mental retardation, or learning disability would fall under the definition of disabled, but an individual with a minor, non-chronic condition of short duration, such as a sprain, infection, or broken limb, generally would not be considered disabled according to the ADA.

## d. Children with Disabilities

A "child with disabilities" refers to a child who is developmentally disabled, mentally disabled, speech-impaired, language-impaired, or emotionally disabled; a child who has a specific learning disability; or any other child who has been classified under the rules of the State Board of Education as eligible for special education services, with the exception of those who are classified solely as gifted.

"High-Risk Child" or "at-risk Child" means a child with one or more of the following characteristics:

- The child is victim or a sibling of a victim in a confirmed or indicated report child abuse or neglect.
- The child is a graduate of a perinatal intensive care unit.
- The child's mother is under 18 years of age, unless the mother received necessary comprehensive maternity care and the mother and child currently receive necessary support services.
- The child has a development delay of one standard deviation below the

# Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

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mean in cognition, language or physical development.

- The child has a parent or guardian who is developmentally disabled, severely emotionally disturbed, drug or alcohol dependent or incarcerated and who requires assistance in meeting the child's developmental needs.
- The child is drug-exposed.
- The child's family income is at or below 100% of the federal poverty level or the child's family income level impairs the development of the child.
- The child is a disabled child as defined previously.
- The child has been placed in residential care under the custody of the state through dependency proceedings pursuant to Chapter 39, FS.

The Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged requires that each system in the state be evaluated annually. Part of the mandated evaluation criteria is on availability of service; supply versus demand. Forecasting the potential demand for service in this service area resulted in revealing how much potential demand for service would be placed on the system versus what has been supplied in the past year. Having gone through this exercise, it brought to light the need for future planning to begin to meet the potential demand for service.

Transportation Disadvantaged Trust Fund dollars are limited and therefore the LCB has placed a priority on the types of trips provided and establish a daily spending cap for non-sponsored (Category II) users of the system. Additional goals have been established in the Goals and Objectives section of this plan.

#### 4. Barriers to Coordination

Major barriers shared by all three counties in the service area include:

##### a. Geographic Location

There are problems associated with the fact that the service area is largely rural and services are often located outside of the service area. The Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged will only pay a per trip rate or a per mile rate and that type of trip rate does not work well for long distance trips.

## Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

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b. Lack of Public Transportation

No fixed route public transportation system exists in the three county service area, and private taxi service is generally too expensive for transportation disadvantaged citizens to access.

c. Demographics

The demographic composition of the service area includes a high percentage of senior citizens and those that are at the poverty level or below.

d. Availability of Funding

All known available grant funds are accessed, and, all cash match requirements are met; typically by each County Commission. Funding is not stable. Costs have increased due to mandates without assigned funds and fuel and insurance/maintenance costs have skyrocketed. In addition, the lack of operational funds directly impacts the ability of the Coordinator to expand services. Also, in these economically depressed times, local match dollars are scarce therefore the ability to access available funds is becoming difficult.

e. Social Service Agencies Role

Some social service agencies, and/or other entities receiving Federal, State, local funds for transportation remain outside of coordination. This has no apparent detrimental effect on these agencies continuing to receive funding. However, these agencies have an overall impact to the TD provision of service. TD dollars are perceived as dollars to supplant rather than expand transportation services. Many potential purchasers of transportation are unwilling to identify and/or revise budgeting procedures to include transportation dollars as a budget line item. This is largely due to conflicting directives among the varying agencies. When approached for services, the CTC requests how many dollars are available for purchasing transportation. The potential purchaser usually responds that they are requesting services through the TD program for the non-sponsored trip funds. This action is in conflict with the CTC's directive which is to secure sponsored trips and lessen the demand on limited TD dollars.

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### f. Administrative Tasks

Clearly, a very positive aspect of the transportation disadvantaged program has been funds for providing long and short-range planning. However, on the negative side, planning funds have never been increased since inception of the program. Funding levels limit planning effectiveness.

Also on the negative side, the goal of providing cost-effective, efficient transportation has a tendency to be lost because of the rising costs in fuel and insurance over the past few years. Program eligibility processing, funding cuts and Drug/Alcohol Testing/Monitoring are putting a strain on personnel and funding resources.

### 4. Strengths in Coordinated Transportation Services in Service Area

- a. This area benefits from being a multi-county service area and resources are utilized in a cost-effective efficient manner.
- b. Local governments in the service area provide financial support for grants.

## Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

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### D. Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

The goals and objectives contained in this document adapt legislative and administrative requirements as they relate to the transportation disadvantaged (TD) population and provision of service in the service area.

The Florida Coordinated Transportation System is a concerted effort to coordinate, not consolidate, all government funded transportation, to better serve agencies and clients with safe, reliable and cost-effective transportation services. The mission statement of the Commission for the transportation Disadvantaged (CTD) is to:

***“Ensure the availability of efficient, cost-effective and quality transportation services for transportation disadvantaged persons.”***

To that end, the Multi-County Local Coordinating Board developed their mission statement as:

***To identify the transportation disadvantaged population, their needs, and available resources, from which a cost effective, accessible, coordinated transportation service is provided in Hardee, Highlands, and Okeechobee Counties.***

One of the initial tasks in the development of a five-year plan is to identify what the intent of the plan is and what is to be accomplished from the local perspective. With an approved mission statement in place, broad goals and corresponding objectives can be defined. These goals and objectives are based on requirements of Chapter 427, F.S., the CTD, and those established by the Multi-County local coordinating board. Goals and objectives are developed in conjunction with demographic data, demand forecasting and demonstration of current needs, evaluation results, public hearing input, and other service area data, in order to develop strategies for goal attainment.

# Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

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## E. Implementation Plan

### 1. 3-Year Transportation Disadvantaged Improvement Program

| Implementation Date | Estimated Cost | Description of Purchase | Anticipated Funding Source | New or Replacement | Date priority established |
|---------------------|----------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| 2012                | \$80,000       | 2 mini vans             | FTA 5310                   | Replace            | 2010                      |
| 2012                | \$80,000       | 2 mini vans             | TD Trust                   | Replace            | 2010                      |
| 2013                | \$83,000       | 2 mini vans             | FTA 5310                   | Replace            | 2012                      |
| 2014                | \$83,954       | 2 mini vans             | FTA 5310                   | Replace            | 2012                      |
| 2015                | \$70,944       | 2 mini vans             | FTA 5310                   | Replace            | 2012                      |
| 2015                | \$70,944       | 2 mini vans             | CTD Trust Fund             | Replace            | 2015                      |

Source: CFRPC 2016

### 2. Implementation Schedule

#### Goal 1: Identify Eligible transportation Disadvantaged Population

| Objective   | Strategy   | Measure                       | Responsible Party | Implementation Date |
|---|--|-------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| 1.1 Define eligibility guidelines for service area  | a. Adopt CTD and local guidelines                    | c. Number of persons eligible | CTC, LCB          | Annually            |
| 1.2 Survey unmet needs of social service agencies   | a. Develop annual survey tool                        | a. Annual data                | CTC, DOPA, LCB    | Annually            |
| 1.3 Gather eligibility criteria currently used by social service agencies and funding amounts available | a. Compile eligibility criteria<br>b. Identify funds | a. Data gathered              | CTC, DOPA, LCB    | Annually            |

## Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

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### Goal 2: Identify Transportation Demand for Service in the Service Area

| Objective   | Strategy  | Measure                                       | Responsible Party | Implementation Date |
|---|---|---|-------------------|---------------------|
| 2.1 Document trips denied and/or not provided at requested time | a. Track number of trip requests denied/changed | a. Number or percent of trips denied/changed  | CTC               | Ongoing             |
| 2.2 Document demand for types of trips needed.                  | a. Track types of trip requests                 | a. Number or percent types of trips requested | CTC               | Ongoing             |

### Goal 3: Obtain Knowledge of All Available Resources

| Objective  | Strategy  | Measure                                      | Responsible Party     | Implementation Date |
|--|---|--|-----------------------|---------------------|
| 3.1 Develop inventory of known local resources.  | a. Request data   | a. Updated inventory                         | CTC, LCB, DOPA        | Annually            |
| 3.2 Prepare grant applications.  | a. Awareness of grant opportunities.                    | a. Number of grants/amount of resources      | CTC, DOPA, Other      | Annually            |
| 3.3 Seek Match funds.  | a. Resolve Co-pay, seek local government contributions. | a. Amount of match funds available           | CTC, DOPA, LCB, Other | Annually            |
| 3.4 Seek donations from general population.  | a. Information distribution                             | a. Amount of donations                       | CTC, LCB, DOPA, Other | Ongoing             |
| 3.5 Investigate feasibility of public/private partnerships.  | a. Awareness meetings with private sector businesses    | a. Level of participation                    | CTC, LCB, DOPA, Other | Ongoing             |
| 3.6 Develop a method for determining and tracking cost savings of vehicles procured through the Federal Transit Administration Section 5310 grant process. | a. Process developed and savings determined.            | a. Identified amount of savings per vehicle. | CTC                   | Ongoing             |

## Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

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### Goal 4: Ensure Availability of Transportation Services to Eligible TD Population

| Objective   | Strategy   | Measure   | Responsible Party  | Implementation Date |
|---|--|---|--|---------------------|
| 4.1 Determine if current vehicle inventory is adequate for current/future demand for service. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Update current inventory</li> <li>b. Assess needs</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Current Inventory</li> <li>b. Current needs assessment</li> </ul> | <p style="text-align: center;">CTC<br/>CTC, Contract Agencies, DOPA,<br/>LCB</p> | Annually            |

### Goal 5: Ensure Cost Effective/Efficient Service

| Objective  | Strategy   | Measure   | Responsible Party | Implementation Date |
|--|--|---|-------------------|---------------------|
| 5.1 Investigate coordinated services such as gas, insurance. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Seek purchase of gasoline from County government.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Agreement with local government.</li> </ul> | CTC               | Ongoing             |
| 5.2 Identify Barriers.                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Document barriers.</li> </ul>                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Unknown</li> </ul>                          | CTC, LCB,<br>DOPA | Ongoing             |
| 5.3 Timely billing Procedures                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Prompt monthly close-out.</li> </ul>                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Timeframe for close-out.</li> </ul>         | CTC               | Ongoing             |

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### Goal 6: Ensure Quality Service

| Objective   | Strategy   | Measure   | Responsible Party   | Implementation Date |
|---|--|---|---------------------|---------------------|
| 6.1 Meet on-time performance standards                  | a. Adopt standard  | a. Percent standard met                                     | CTC                 | Ongoing             |
| 6.2 Maintain courteous customer relations.              | a. Survey users.   | a. Survey response  | CTC                 | Ongoing             |
| 6.3 Minimize passenger discomfort.                      | a. Maintain vehicles<br>b. Provide appropriate vehicles.     | a. Review of maintenance records<br>b. Passenger wait time. | CTC                 | On-going            |
| 6.4 Minimize passenger travel/wait time.                | a. Maintain appropriate vehicle inventory/proper scheduling. | a. Number of complaints                                     | CTC                 | On-going            |
| 6.5 Meet Federal, State, Local Safety Certifications.   | a. Train and monitor.  | a. Results  | CTC                 | On-going            |
| 6.6 Provide training to drivers and other office staff. | a. Establish training criteria & time frames                 | a. Number of staff trained.                                 | CTC, DOPA, Agencies | On-going            |
| 6.7 Require real-time communications.                   | a. Require radio or cell phone equipment                     | a. Monitor vehicle radio/cell phone equipment.              | CTC                 | Ongoing             |
| 6.8 Maintain accurate Records.                          | a. Monitor records for accuracy.                             | a. Compliance   | CTC, DOPA Agencies  | On-going            |

### Goal 7: Develop Emergency Plans for Evacuation of TD Population

| Objective   | Strategy   | Measure                               | Responsible Party | Implementation Date |
|---|--|---------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| 7.1 Coordinate efforts with local emergency management officials. | a. Contact Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management Personnel. | a. Agreement/Letter of understanding. | CTC               | Annually            |
| 7.2 Educate users/user agencies on emergency procedures.          | a. Send information to users and agencies.                           | a. Distribution of information.       | CTC               | Annually            |

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### Goal 8: Ensure Program Accountability

| Objective   | Strategy  | Measure                             | Responsible Party | Implementation Date |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| 8.1 Comply with CTD and Local policies/standards.   | a. Presentation of policies and standards to LCB. | a. Evaluation Results               | CTC               | Annually            |
| 8.2 Report complaints/comments/grievances by types. | a. Quarterly Reports                              | b. Types & frequency of complaints. | CTC               | Quarterly           |

### Goal 9: Investigate Private/Public Partnerships

| Objective   | Strategy                          | Measure                           | Responsible Party | Implementation Date |
|---|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| 9.1 Encourage public and private agencies to identify and allocate sufficient funds to meet needs of their clients. | a. Seek agency budget information | a. Receipt of budget information. | CTC, Agencies     | Annually            |
| 9.2 Encourage financial contributions into the system.  | a. Resolve co-pay.                | a. Amount of co-pay collected     | CTC               | Ongoing             |
|   | b. Seek private donations.        | b. Marketing tools.               | CTC, DOPA, LCB    | Ongoing             |

# Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

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## PART II

### SERVICE PLAN COMPONENT

#### A. Operations Element

##### 1. Types, Hours, and Days of Service

All service is door to door. Ambulatory and wheelchair service is offered countywide. Drivers are not permitted to assist persons in wheelchairs or stretchers up or down more than one step. In addition to managing paratransit service, MV Transportation, Inc. schedules and manages non-emergency stretcher service through a contract for Medicaid recipients only. Stretcher service is otherwise not provided. Requests for transportation may be made by calling MV Transportation, Inc.. There are five phone lines available to accept reservations, three administrative lines and a facsimile line. No fax or telephone request will be accepted after 5:00 p.m.

##### 2. Accessing Services, including LCB Policies such as Eligibility, Prioritization, and Other Procedures

The Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) maintains an advanced telephone system with toll-free access for all users of the service. The numbers for the CTC reservations system and Administration are:

|              |   |
|--------------|---|
| 863/773-0015 | Hardee County Reservations/Customer Service     |
| 863/452-0139 | Avon Park Reservations/Customer Service         |
| 863/382-0139 | Sebring Reservations/Customer Service           |
| 863/699-0995 | Lake Placid Reservations/Customer Service       |
| 863/357-9900 | Okeechobee County Reservations/Customer Service |
| 800/260-0139 | All Other Area Reservations/Customer Service    |
| 863/382-6004 | CTC Administration Line                         |
| 863/382-8469 | Facsimile                                       |

Passengers can be assured timely service if:

## Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

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- Return trips are scheduled in advance. If the passenger does not know the return time or is not ready at the scheduled return time, a vehicle will be dispatched upon notification; however, the wait for the dispatched vehicle can be up to two hours. When scheduling medical appointments, return times should be verified by the doctor's office before being scheduled.
- As a courtesy to others, passengers should be ready at least one hour prior to the scheduled appointment time. Longer trips will require earlier pickup times. Drivers will wait no more than five minutes for a passenger.
- Passengers must cancel a requested trip no later than one hour before the scheduled pickup time. Trips are canceled by calling the CTC.
- Failure to cancel a trip will be assessed as a no-show. A door hanger indicating the time the vehicle arrived, the vehicle number, and the driver's name will be left for the passenger. The passenger may then receive a written notice explaining that they have been assessed a no-show.
- When scheduling trips, passengers should be specific about the type of service required (i.e., wheelchair, ambulatory, escort.) and the destination (i.e., correct destination name, street address, suite number, and telephone number).

Service is door-to-door. Drivers are required to assist passengers from the door of the trip origin to the door of the trip destination. The driver should not be expected to assist passengers to specific offices, departments, or floors within large medical facilities and cannot provide personal attendant care. Confused passengers or those unable to care for themselves should be accompanied by an attendant or escort.

### a. **Eligibility**

Non-sponsored trips are funded by a Trip/Equipment Grant from the Transportation Disadvantaged Commission. A local match of 10% will be required (generated through the fare box and local sources). With concurrence from the Hardee, Highlands, and Okeechobee County Transportation Board, these funds will continue to be allocated on a daily basis with an equal allocation for each day (Monday through Friday). No TD trips can be scheduled once the daily cap is reached. This service is offered only to those persons who are transportation disadvantaged as defined by Chapter 427, Florida Statutes and persons who met the eligibility criteria outlined in this service plan. Transportation Disadvantaged Trust Fund trips cannot be subsidized by a funding agency.

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## Other Funding Sources

The system is the recipient of Federal Transit Administration 5311 and 5310 funds. These funds are used to pay for public transportation trips. 5311 funds are for public transportation in rural areas and there are no restrictions for the types of trips provided with these funds. However, there is a monthly budgeted amount that can be spent and when the funds run out, service is capped.

5310 operating funds are used to enhance elderly and disabled persons with transportation needs. Therefore, trips are provided to senior citizens and disabled persons using these funds. Eligibility is applied to their use.

Social service agencies within the service area receive funds to transport their clients to services provided by the social service agency. The agency conducts their own eligibility criteria for their clients and pay for the client's trip.

### b. **Prioritization for TD Trust Fund Trips**

TD trips and other funded trips are scheduled strictly on a first-come, first-served basis in accordance with funding policies established by each funding source. The local coordinating board has established a priority for TD trust fund trips as noted below.

### c. **Multi-county LCB prioritization Policy for Non-sponsored trips by Trip Purpose**

In an effort to reduce ridership demands on the current Transportation Disadvantaged system, a prioritized ridership policy for trips funded through the TD Trust Fund "Non-Sponsored Trip/Equipment Grant", has been developed.

Although prioritizing non-sponsored trips based solely on trip purpose seems to be a rational solution to providing transportation to those who most need it and avoiding gross misuse of the system, it does allow for maximum system efficiency or coordination of trips. By scheduling most of the trip routes around medical and life sustaining trips and then filling in the empty seats with shopping or recreational trips whose origins and destinations are along the same routes, maximum coordination

## Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

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and efficiency can be obtained. The goal of the program is to provide the most riders with the most number of trips while utilizing the least amount of mileage. However, the importance of all types of trips in the TD system cannot be overlooked.

The prioritization procedure, which emphasizes the necessity of carrying out the medical and other life sustaining trips on a timely basis without excluding work, recreational, or shopping trips, is followed on a daily basis. The Coordinator shall, to the maximum extent feasible, fulfill the medical and life sustaining trips without significant delay and place less significance on the shopping and recreational trips while maintaining maximum system efficiency. This discretionary policy allows the Coordinator more flexibility in coordinating trips while acknowledging the LCB's commitment to ensuring that the most essential trips are provided. The Coordinator shall place the highest priority on the following TD Trust Fund trips in the appropriate order:

1. Medical
2. Grocery Shopping (life sustaining only)
3. Employment
4. Education
5. Personal Business (bank, post office, etc.)
6. Recreational (includes non-life sustaining shopping)

**d. Reservation Service:**

There is a two (2) business day (excluding weekends and holidays) advance notice requirement for all trips scheduled within the coordinated system, except under special circumstances.

**e. Subscription Service:**

The purchaser or passenger submits a request for subscription service no later than 2:00 p.m. the day before the service is to start. The purchaser will provide the CTC with timely revisions to the subscription.

**f. Demand Response Service:**

The name(s) and address(es) of the passenger(s) to be transported are placed with the CTC by 2:00 p.m. two (2) business days before the day of travel.

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**g. Non-Emergency Medical (Stretcher) Service:**

MV has a contract with MTM (the contract entity for Medicaid transportation) to provide Medicaid transportation. Stretcher service is only provided to Medicaid clients contracted with MTM. No stretcher service is provided using TD Trust Funds or 5311 or 5310 funding.

**h. Hardee, Highlands, and Okeechobee County Passenger Fare Policy**

The Local Coordinating Board approved the passenger fare Policy in 1997.

The policy covers all non-sponsored passengers. Rates are \$1.00 for local and group one-way trips and \$3.00 for all one-way random out of area trips.

- On the go in, or first trip from home to a destination, passengers required to pay a fare will not be transported if they refuse to pay the appropriate fare. On the return trip, passengers will be transported even if they refuse to pay. However, they will be required to pay any amount not paid prior to being transported in the future. Agency sponsored clients are not required to pay a co-pay.

The above guidelines were effective July 1, 1997.

**i. General Public Transportation**

The Community Transportation System is open to the general public through the receipt of Federal Transit Administration 5311 and 5310 Operating grant funds. The FTA requires that trips paid for with these funds be scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis. The general public may access the system by calling the Coordinator's local access number or toll-free number. Once the funds for the month have been depleted, the general public may only access the system by personally paying the fully allocated cost per trip if there is vehicle seating/capacity for the trip request. Those persons who meet eligibility for trip requests under the Transportation Disadvantaged trip eligibility/trip prioritization policy will be processed through that funding source.

**j. Public Awareness of Non-Sponsored Funds**

Brochures describing the coordinated transportation system briefly discussing eligibility criteria and the scope of the services provided are distributed to social service agencies within the designated area. The CTC meets with social service agency staff and advocacy

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groups on a frequent basis, to ensure that those individuals eligible for service have accessibility.

## **I. Other Procedures**

### **1. Driver Training**

New driver certification and training procedures have been developed by MV Transportation, Inc. Transportation. All drivers have been issued a Driver's Training Manual. New drivers receive the manual upon their hiring. They are required to sign for the manual and a copy of the receipt is enclosed in their permanent record. Drivers are required to read the manual and, as part of an initial training, are tested on key points.

Every new driver is required to complete an initial training course administered by the carrier. Before entering service, new drivers are required to complete the initial training, review the training manual, and pass a written test. In addition to a review of the Driver's Training Manual, the course includes an introduction to the CTC organizational structure, an outline of the relevant parts of Chapter 427, F.S., instruction about how to read a driver manifest, the basic rules and regulations and preliminary passenger assistance training.

Drivers are also given passenger assistance and defensive driver training provided by MV Transportation, Inc. Transportation or the carrier during their first 30 days of employment. Passenger assistance training is vitally important as it instructs the driver in how to offer more appropriate services to disabled passengers and can significantly reduce the number of incidents that occur on vehicles. In addition, it addresses the concerns of the disabled and their advocacy groups. MV Transportation, Inc. Transportation uses Passenger Assistance Training developed by the University of Wisconsin's Office of Statewide Transportation Program in the provision of training.

Defensive driver training consists of the National Safety Council and University of Wisconsin defensive driver modules and includes specialized training for minibuss operators. All drivers in the coordinated system must attend the annual training provided by the Community Transportation Coordinator and every two years thereafter. Drivers must also have a good driving record with no more than five points in the last two years. Drivers are required to receive the following training:

## Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

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1. Defensive Driving
2. Passenger Assistance/Sensitivity
3. Substance Abuse Training/testing

All passenger assistance and defensive driving training is conducted or provided by the Coordinator or contract carriers with training credentials. Written tests for these courses have been developed. Failure to pass the written tests disqualifies a driver from operating a system vehicle until a passing grade is achieved.

For safety reasons, drivers may not take passengers in wheelchairs or stretchers up or down more than one step. All passengers must be secured with seat belts or wheelchair tie-downs as appropriate. Three and four wheeled scooters may be transported, but because they are difficult to secure, once aboard, the passenger is requested to transfer to a regular seat.

### **m. Emergency, Accident, and Delay Procedures**

The CTC, through contractual agreements with carriers and in the System Safety Program Plan (SSPP) establishes policies for the handling of emergencies, accidents, and delays.

Carriers are required to notify the CTC and appropriate emergency personnel immediately if an emergency, accident, or delay occurs. Appropriate emergency personnel can include police, fire, and/or ambulance. The carrier must solicit appropriate medical or emergency assistance, if an accident or other emergency occurs. The CTC must also be notified of schedule delays. The carrier must also submit a written accident or incident report and management analysis, within 24 hours.

Drug and alcohol testing is required in the event of bodily injury or property damage in excess of U.S. DOT and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) guidelines.

To handle delays, each carrier is required to have one back-up vehicle for every six vehicles in service. If delays occur, the CTC may reassign trips to other service providers. If an extended delay results, the passenger will be notified and a satisfactory resolution will be reached.

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The Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the Community Transportation Coordinator (MV Transportation, Inc. Transportation) and the Transportation Disadvantaged Commission requires the CTC to develop and implement a Safety System Program Plan (SSPP). The SSPP Certificate of Compliance, as required by Rule Chapter 14-90, Florida Administrative Code, Equipment and Operational Safety Standards Governing Public Sector Bus Transit Systems and is updated annually. In accordance with this rule, the plan assures compliance with the minimum standards established and includes safety considerations and guidelines for the following:

1. Carrier and MV Transportation, Inc. Management
2. Vehicles and Equipment
3. Operational functions
4. Driving requirements
5. Maintenance
6. Equipment for transporting wheelchairs
7. Training
8. Federal, State, and local regulations, ordinances or laws
9. Private contracted service provider

The Safety System Program Plan (SSPP) outlines driver training requirements and vehicle inspection requirements. Required safety equipment for all vehicles is:

- Seatbelts
- Wheel chair securement systems and restraining devices (lap type body belts)
- Dry chemical fire extinguishers (tagged and inspected annually)
- First aid kits
- Two-way radios or equivalent real-time communications devices

The SSPP limits the number of consecutive hours a driver can work, requires defensive driving and passenger assistance/sensitivity training for all drivers. It further requires all subcontracted service providers be certified before providing service in the coordinated transportation system and requires vehicles to undergo biannual safety inspections. The SSPP also includes driver and accident policies.

Extensive record keeping by the Coordinator and the individual subcontractors is also required. Records kept include personnel data, operational reports, dispatching logs, driver trip sheets and reports of accidents, incidents, and service delays.

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### **n. Insurance Requirements:**

Carriers under contract to MV Transportation, Inc. Transportation are required to carry a minimum of \$500,000 in single limit auto liability insurance for dedicated vehicles. Carriers must also maintain \$1,000,000 in general liability coverage and workmen's compensation insurance at the statutory limits.

### **3. Transportation Operators and Coordination Contracts**

MV Transportation, Inc., the CTC, enters into contracts with transportation operators approved by the Multi-county LCB. MV Transportation, Inc. Transportation makes no guarantee as to the total number of vehicles, hours, or trips that a transportation operator will receive. These contracts may be negotiated on a yearly basis if the service provided has been adequate and the contract allows for annual rate changes. The CTC, however, is not bound to renew carrier contracts and may re-bid services at the end of any contract year.

The rate paid to transportation operators/carriers is by trip and is covered in the carrier contract.

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## LIST OF CONTRACTS/CARRIERS FOR HARDEE, HIGHLANDS, AND OKEECHOBEE

### **MV TRANSPORTATION, INC. TRANSPORTATION, INC.**

CTC for Hardee, Highlands, and  
Okeechobee Counties  
4650 U.S. Highway 27, S  
Sebring, FL 33870  
Office 863/382-6004  
FAX 863/382-8469  
Contact: Kelly Kirk-Brooks , General Manager

### **HAYES MEDICAL TRANSPORT**

Provider for Hardee, Highlands, and Okeechobee Counties  
3884 NE Highway 70  
Arcadia, FL 34266  
Office: 863/993-3733  
FAX 863/993-3140  
Contact: Dwain Hayes

### **POSITIVE MOBILITY**

Provider for Hardee, Highlands and Okeechobee Counties (after hours and weekends)  
201 Commercial Court  
Sebring, FL 33876  
Office: 863/655-0030 or 863/381-7765  
FAX 863/655-0062  
Contact: Robert Layne

### **Coordination Contractors**

**Ridge Area Association for Retarded Citizens – Highlands County**  
**Concepts by Visions, Ins. – Highlands County**  
**Sunrise Community, Inc. – Hardee County**

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### **4. Public Transit Utilization**

Mass transit is not available in Hardee, Highlands, or Okeechobee Counties.

### **5. School Bus Utilization**

School buses are not currently utilized in the coordinated system.

### **6. Current Vehicle Inventory** - see attached inventory

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Insert Current Vehicle Inventory

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## 7. **System Safety Program Plan Certificate of Compliance**

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## **8. Intercounty Services**

Transportation is provided to sponsoring agency-approved destinations outside of the service area. All out of service area trips are to be for morning scheduled appointments only. Clients will be transported to the closest medical facility or medical specialist to their home. Out of service area trips are scheduled for specific days of the week. (Please contact the Coordinator for specific schedules.) Clients will be grouped with other clients who have appointments at the same or nearby facility, regardless of appointment times. Requests for trips out of the service area must be made by 2:00 p.m. at least 14 business days (excluding weekends and holidays) prior to the requested trip date.

## **9. Natural Disaster/Emergency Preparedness**

The CTC, through contractual agreements with carriers and in the System Safety Program Plan (SSPP), establishes policies for the handling of emergencies, accidents and delays. Carriers are required to notify the CTC and appropriate emergency personnel immediately if an emergency, accident or delay occurs. Appropriate emergency personnel can include police, fire or ambulance. Carriers must solicit appropriate medical or emergency assistance, if an accident or other emergency occurs. The CTC must also be notified of schedule delays. The carrier must also submit a written accident or incident report and management analysis within 24 hours. If bodily injury and/or property damage exceeds levels outlined in the U.S. DOT guidelines, the driver is required to undergo drug and alcohol testing as per Federal guidelines. If delays occur, the CTC may reassign trips.

The CTC has established guidelines in the event of other natural disasters. The CTC has agreements with the local governments regarding the transport of citizens during and after events such as hurricanes when people are transported to shelters in each county.

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## **10. Education Efforts/Marketing**

Brochures that describe the coordinated transportation system and discuss eligibility criteria and scope of the services provided have been distributed to social service agencies within the designated area. MV Transportation, Inc. meets with social service agencies staff and advocacy groups on a frequent basis, to ensure that those individuals eligible for services are able to access it.

Transportation is offered to the general public on a first-come, first-served basis.

(Please read Public Transportation section of this service plan for the explanation of how to access service.)

## **11. Acceptable Alternatives**

Three (3) coordination contracts have been executed with agencies who have provided fully-allocated cost comparisons between providing their own service and purchasing transportation through the coordinated system. Other agencies are currently using state and federal funds to provide or purchase transportation for their clients without having proven fully-allocated costs and without a coordination contract in place; thereby falling into non-compliance with Rule 41-2.015.

Coordination contracts have been executed with Ridge Association for Retarded Citizens (Highlands County, New Concepts by Visions (Highlands County), and Sunrise Community Services (Hardee County).

The multi county Local Coordinating Board developed a system standard for consideration in reviewing requests for coordination contracts and/or requests by sponsoring agencies to provide transportation services to their clients outside of the coordinated system. This process is outlined in the quality Assurance section of the TDSP (Standard #40). A copy of this standard may also be obtained by contacting MV Transportation, Inc. Transportation at the numbers listed at the beginning of this service plan.

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## **12. RULES AND PROCEDURES FOR FORMAL COMPLAINTS/GRIEVANCES FOR THE HARDEE, HIGHLANDS, AND OKEECHOBEE MULTI-COUNTY TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED PROGRAM**

### Section 1. Creation

- 1.1 There is hereby created a formal complaint/grievance procedure for Hardee, Highlands, and Okeechobee Multi-County transportation disadvantaged program as specified by the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged pursuant to Chapter 427, Florida Statute and Rule 41-2.012, Florida Administrative Code, hereinafter referred to as the Grievance Process. The following rules and procedures shall constitute the grievance process to be utilized in the Multi-County Coordinated Community Transportation Disadvantaged system for Hardee, Highlands, and Okeechobee Counties.

### Section 2. Definitions

- 2.1 As used in these rules and procedures the following words and terms shall have the meanings assigned therein. Additional program definitions can be found in Chapter 427, Florida Statutes and Rule 41-2, Florida Administrative Code.
- (a) Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC): means a transportation entity recommended by a Metropolitan Planning Organization, or by the appropriate designated official planning agency as provided for in Section 427.015(1), Florida Statutes, in an area outside the purview of a Metropolitan Planning Organization and approved by the Commission, to ensure that coordinated transportation services are provided to serve the transportation disadvantaged population in a designated service area. (The current CTC for Hardee, Highlands, and Okeechobee Counties is MV Transportation, Inc. Transportation, located in Sebring.)
- (b) Designated Official Planning Agency (DOPA): means the official body or agency designated by the Commission to fulfill the functions of transportation disadvantaged planning in areas not covered by a metropolitan planning organization. The Metropolitan Planning Organization shall serve as the designated official planning agency in areas covered by such organization. (The Central Florida Regional Planning Council is the DOPA for Hardee, Highlands, and Okeechobee Counties.)

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- (c) Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) (User): means “Those persons who because of physical or mental disability, income status, or age or who for other reasons are unable to transport themselves or to purchase transportation and are, therefore, dependent on others to obtain access to health care, employment, education, shopping, social activities, or other life-sustaining activities, or children who are handicapped or high-risk or at-risk as defined in Section 411.202, Florida Statutes.
- (d) Agency: means an official, officer, commission, authority, council, committee, department, division, bureau, board, section, or any other unit or entity of the state or of a city, town, municipality, county, or other local governing body or a private nonprofit entity providing transportation services as all or part of its charter.
- (e) Transportation Operator: means one or more public, private for profit or private nonprofit entities engaged by the community transportation coordinator to provide service to transportation disadvantaged persons pursuant to a Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan (TDSP).
- (f) Service Complaint: means incidents that may occur on a daily basis and are reported to the driver or dispatcher or to other individuals involved with the daily operations, and are resolved within the course of a reasonable time period suitable to the complainant. Local service complaints are driven by the inability of the CTC or transportation operators to meet local service standards established by the CTC and LCB. All service complaints should be recorded and reported by the CTC to the LCB. If the CTC is also an operator, their statistics on service complaints should be included.
- (g) Formal Grievance: A written complaint to document any concerns or an unresolved service complaint regarding the operation or administration of TD services by the transportation operator, CTC, DOPA, or LCB.
- (h) Administrative Hearing Process: Chapter 120, Florida Statute.
- (i) Ombudsman Program: A toll-free telephone number established and administered by the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged to enable persons to access information and/or file complaints/grievances regarding transportation services provided under the coordinated effort of the Community Transportation Coordinator.

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## Section 3: Objectives

- 3.1 The objective of the grievance process shall be to process, investigate and make recommendations, in a timely manner on formal written complaints/grievances that are not resolved between individual agencies/entities and the customer. It is not the objective of the grievance process to have “adjudicate” or “determinative” powers.
- 3.2 The Community Transportation Coordinator and its service operators and other subcontractors, must post the contact person’s name and telephone number in each vehicle regarding the reporting of complaints.
- 3.3 All documents pertaining to the grievance process will be made available, upon request, in a format accessible to persons with disabilities.
- 3.4 A written copy of the grievance procedure shall be available to anyone upon request.
- 3.5 Apart from this grievance process, aggrieved parties with proper standing may also have recourse through the Chapter 120, Florida Statutes Administrative Hearing Process, or the judicial court system.

## Section 4. Membership

- 4.1 The Grievance Committee shall be composed of a minimum of five (5) members from the Multi-County Local Coordinating Board. Members shall be appointed by the Chairperson. Grievance Committee membership shall include one (1) representative of users/clients. The Chairperson of the Local Coordinating Board reserves the right to make reappointments should any conflict of interest arise.
- 4.2 The Executive Director of the Official Planning Agency, or his/her designee, shall be an advisory member of the Grievance Committee.

## Section 5. Terms of Members

- 5.1 The members of the Grievance Committee shall be appointed for a two (2) year term.

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- 5.2 A member of the Grievance Committee may be removed for cause by the Local Coordinating Board Chairperson who appointed him/her. Vacancies in the membership of the Joint Grievance Committee shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointments. An appointment to fill a vacancy shall only be for the remainder of the unexpired term being filled.
- 5.3 The Grievance Committee shall elect a chairperson and a vice chairperson at the first scheduled meeting of each year. The Chair and Vice Chair shall serve for a one (1) year term, but may serve consecutive terms.
- 5.4 A quorum of three (3) voting members shall be present for official action by the Grievance committee. Meetings shall be held at such times as the grievance committee may determine and/or as necessitated by formally filed grievances.

### SECTION 6: GRIEVANCE PROCESS

- 6.1 Grievance procedures will be those as specified by the Local Coordinating Board, developed from guidelines of the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged, and approved by the Local Coordinating Board as set forth below. The grievance procedures are for the purpose of fact-finding and not exercising adjudicative powers. Therefore, it should be understood that these procedures are for the purpose of “hearing”, “advising”, and “making recommendations” on issues affecting the service delivery and administration of the transportation disadvantaged program in the service area.
- 6.2 Apart from the grievance procedures outlined below, aggrieved parties with proper standing, may also have recourse through the Chapter 120, Florida Statutes Administrative Hearing Process, the judicial court system, the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged, or if they are a Medicaid client, they may request a Medicaid Fair Hearing (see Section 8).
- 6.3 Service Complaints. All service complaints should be recorded and reported by the Community Transportation Coordinator to the Local Coordinating Board. If the Coordinator is also an operator, their statistics on service complaints shall be included. Service complaints may include but are not limited to:
- Late trips (late pick-up and/or late drop-off)
  - No-show by transportation operator

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- No-show by client
- Client behavior
- Driver behavior
- Passenger discomfort
- Service denial (refused service to a client without an explanation as to why)
- Other, as deemed appropriate by the Local Coordinating Boards in the service area.

6.4 Formal Grievance. The customer, in their formal complaint, should demonstrate or establish their concerns as clearly as possible. The formal grievance process shall be open to addressing concerns by any person or agency including but not limited to: purchasing agencies, users, potential users, private for-profit operators, private non-profit operators, the Coordinator, the Designated Official Planning Agency, elected officials, and drivers. Formal grievances may include but are not limited to:

- Recurring or unresolved service complaints.
- Violations of specific laws governing the provision of TD services (i.e., Chapter 427, F.S., Rule 41-2 FAC and accompanying documents, Sunshine Law, ADA).
- Denial of Service
- Suspension of service
- Unresolved safety issues
- Contract disputes
- Coordination disputes
- Bidding disputes
- Agency compliance
- Conflicts of interest
- Supplanting of funds
- Billing and/or accounting procedures
- Other, as deemed appropriate by the Local Coordinating Boards of the service area.

6.5 All formal grievances filed must be written and contain the following:

- Name and address of the customer
- A statement of the grounds for the grievance and supplemented by supporting documentation, made in a clear and concise manner. This shall include a complete description of efforts taken by the customer to resolve the complaint.
- An explanation of the relief desired by the customer.

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If the customer does not supply the above information to substantiate the grievance, no further action will be taken.

- 6.6 Step One: The customer shall first contact the Coordinator and the entity with which they have the complaint. The customer may also contact the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged Ombudsman representative at 1-800-983-2435. (See Section 7 for the Commission Grievance Process). The Coordinator will attempt to mediate and resolve the grievance.
- 6.7 Step Two: If mediation with the Coordinator is not successful, the Coordinator or customer may file an official complaint with the Director of the Designated Official Planning Agency (Central Florida Regional Planning Council) as outlined in Section 6.5 and 6.8.
- 6.8 Step Three: The Designated Official Planning Agency will make every effort to resolve the grievance by arranging a meeting between the involved parties in an attempt to assist them in reaching an amicable resolution. The meeting shall take place within seven (7) working days of receipt of all evidence regarding the grievance. The Designated Official Planning Agency shall prepare a report regarding the meeting outcome. The report shall be sent to the customer and the Chair of the Grievance Committee within seven (7) working days of the date of the meeting.
- 6.9 Step Four: If the Designated Official Planning Agency is unsuccessful at resolving the grievance through the process outlined in 6.8 above, the customer may request, in writing, that their grievance be heard by the Grievance Committee. This request shall be made within seven (7) working days of receipt of the report prepared as a result of the mediation meeting arranged under Step Three above, and sent to the Executive Director of the Designated Official Planning Agency.
- 6.10 Step Five: Upon receipt of the written request for the grievance to be heard by the Grievance Committee, the Executive Director of the Official Planning Agency shall have fifteen (15) working days to contact Grievance Committee members and set a grievance hearing date and location.
- 6.11 The customer and all parties involved shall be notified of the hearing date and location at least seven (7) working days prior to the hearing date by certified mail, return receipt requested.

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- 6.12 Step Six: Upon conclusion of the hearing, the Grievance Committee must submit a written report of the hearing proceedings to the chairperson of the local coordinating board within ten (10) working days. The report must outline the grievance and the Grievance Committee's findings/recommendations.
- 6.13 If the grievance is resolved through the hearing process, steps four through six, the grievance process will end. The final report will be forwarded to the members of the Local Coordinating Board.
- 6.14 Step Seven: If the grievance has not been resolved as outlined in Steps four through six above, the customer may request, in writing, that their grievance be heard by the Local Coordinating Board. This request must be made in writing and sent to the Executive Director of the Designated Official Planning Agency (Central Florida Regional Planning Council), within five (5) working days of receipt of the Grievance Committee Hearing report. The customer may make their request for a hearing before the Local Coordinating Board immediately following the Grievance Committee hearing, however, until the final report is prepared from that meeting, the time frames established for notification of meetings herein apply.
- 6.15 Step Eight: The Executive Director shall have fifteen (15) working days to set a meeting date. Committee members shall have at least ten (10) working days notice of such meeting. The meeting shall be advertised appropriately in the news media and other mandated publications.
- 6.16 The Grievance Committee's report must be received by the Executive Director of the Designated Official Planning Agency within seven (7) working days of the date of the hearing. The report, along with all other support documentation, shall be forwarded to the Local Coordinating Board members at least five (5) working days prior to the Local Coordinating Board meeting.
- 6.17 Step Nine: The result/recommendations of the Local Coordinating Board hearing shall be outlined in a final report to be completed within seven (7) working days of the hearing. The report shall then be forwarded to the customer, members of the Grievance Committee, members of the Local Coordinating Board, and all other persons/agencies directly involved in the grievance process.
- 6.18 If the grievance has not been resolved as outlined in these grievance procedures, the customer may exercise their adjudicative rights, use the Administrative Hearing Process

# Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan for Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee Counties, 2016

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outlined in Chapter 120, Florida Statutes, or request that their grievance be heard by the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged through the Ombudsman program established herein **and the Commission's Grievance Process outlined in Section 7.**

## Section 7: Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged Grievance Process

- 7.1 If the Local Coordinating Board does not resolve the grievance, the customer will be informed of his/her right to file a formal grievance with the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged. The customer may begin this process by contacting the Commission through the established Helpline at 1-800-983-2435 or by mail to: Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged, 605 Suwannee Street MS-49, Tallahassee, FL 32399-0450 or by email at [www.dot.state.fl.us/ctd](http://www.dot.state.fl.us/ctd). Upon request of the customer, the Commission will provide the customer with an accessible copy of the Commission's Grievance Procedures.
- 7.2 If the Commission is unable to resolve the grievance, the customer will be referred to the Office of Administrative Appeals or other legal venues appropriate to the specific nature of the grievance.

All of the steps outlined in Section 6 and Section 7(1) and (2) must be attempted in the listed order before a grievance will move to the next step. The customer should be sure to try and have as many details as possible, when filing a complaint, such as date, times, names, vehicle numbers, etc.

There is an Ombudsman Program, provided by the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged, which is available to anyone who requests assistance in resolving complaints/grievances. The Ombudsman Program may be reached through the toll free Helpline at 1-800-983-2435 or by email at [www.dot.state.fl.us/ctd](http://www.dot.state.fl.us/ctd). By requesting assistance of the Ombudsman Program in resolving complaints, the complaint will still follow, in order, all of the established steps listed in Sections 6 and 7 above. The Ombudsman will document each complaint and upon the request of the customer, file the complaint with the local Coordinator on the customer's behalf, to begin the local complaint process. If the customer has already filed the grievance locally and remains unsatisfied, the Ombudsman will assist the customer with the next step in the complaint or grievance process.

The customer has the right to file a formal grievance with the Office of Administrative Appeals or other venues appropriate to the specific nature of the complaint.

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## LIST OF NAMES AND ADDRESSES OF PERSONS/ENTITIES REFERENCED IN GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) (Coordinator)  
MV Transportation, Inc. Transportation  
1103 U.S. Highway 27, South  
Sebring, FL 33870  
Contact: Kelly Kirk-Brooks, General Manager  
Phone: 863/382-6004

Central Florida Regional Planning Council (Designated Official Planning Agency)  
555 E. Church Street, or P.O. Box 2089  
Bartow, FL 33830  
Contact: Patricia M. Steed, Executive Director  
Phone: 1-800-297-8041

Transportation Disadvantaged  
Grievance Committee Chairperson  
Central Florida Regional Planning Council  
555 E. Church Street or P.O. Box 2089  
Bartow, FL 33830  
Phone: 1-800-297-8041

Service Area Local Coordinating Board Chairperson:  
Commissioner Bryant Culpepper  
Okeechobee County Commission  
304 NW 2<sup>nd</sup> Street  
Okeechobee, FL 34972  
863/763-6441  
FAX 863/402-6835

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## 13. Community Transportation Coordinator Monitoring Procedures for Operators and Coordination Contractors

### a. CTC Evaluation Process

The Hardee, Highlands, and Okeechobee Multi County Local Coordinating Boards evaluate the Community Transportation Coordinator in and of itself, as well as the entire system. Using the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged guidelines, the LCB's evaluate in the areas of

- 1) Cost;
- 2) Availability;
- 3) Competition; and,
- 4) Standards.

### b. CTC Monitoring Procedures of Operators and Coordination Contractors

The CTC is currently contracting with two (2) transportation operators to provide service in the system. Operators are monitored by the CTC, and planning staff and LCB members on occasion, on an annual basis. The CTC monitors operator performance in the areas of:

- Emergency, Accident, and Delay procedures
- Rule Chapter 14-90 Florida Administrative Code
- Carrier and CTC Management
- Vehicles and equipment
- Operational functions
- Driving requirements
- Maintenance
- Equipment for transporting wheelchairs
- Training:
  - defensive driving
  - passenger assistance/sensitivity
  - first aid
  - CPR

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- federal, state, and local regulations, ordinances or laws
- Required Safety Equipment
  - seat belts
  - wheelchair locks and restraining devices (lap type body belts)
  - dry chemical fire extinguisher (tagged and inspected annually)
    - first aid kits.
    - Substance Abuse (Drug and Alcohol Testing)

The Florida Department of Transportation performs a Safety Compliance Review of the CTC annually. Copies of the review are presented to the LCB's for review.

c. Coordination Contract Evaluation Criteria

See Standard number 39.

d. Planning Agency Evaluation Process

The Planning Agency is formally reviewed by the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged.

As part of the Planning Agency Performance Review, LCB members and the CTC will be asked their opinion of their planning agency's support in fulfilling their duties. Additionally, records will be reviewed on-site as it relates to the responsibilities of the planning agency staff.

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## B. RATE CALCULATION MODEL

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## III. QUALITY ASSURANCE

The Multi County LCB utilizes the CTD evaluation workbook to evaluate the CTC. In addition, the following system standards have been developed based on service effectiveness, cost efficiency and effectiveness, vehicle utilization, service availability, reliability, safety and training.

### A. Service Standards

#### 1. Drug and alcohol policy

##### *Commission Standard*

*Testing for safety sensitive job positions within the coordinated system regarding pre-employment, randomization, post-accident, and reasonable suspicion as required by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal transit Administration (FTA).*

##### **CTC Policy**

**All safety sensitive job positions will comply with the pre-employment, randomization, post-accident, and reasonable suspicion testing requirements of the Federal Transit Administration.**

#### 2. Driver Identification

##### *Commission Standard*

*Drivers for paratransit services, including coordination contractors, shall be required to announce and identify themselves by name and company in a manner that is conducive to communications with the specific passenger, upon pickup of each rider, group of riders, or representative, guardian, or associate of the rider, except in situations where the driver regularly transports the rider on a recurring basis. Each driver must have photo identification that is in view of the passenger. Name patches, inscriptions or*

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*badges that affix to driver clothing are acceptable. For transit services, the driver photo identification shall be in a conspicuous location in the vehicle.*

## **CTC Policy**

**Drivers are required to announce and identify themselves by name and company in a manner that is conducive to communications with specific passengers, upon pickup except in situations where the driver regularly transports the rider on a recurring basis. All drivers shall have a name badge displayed at all times when transporting passengers.**

### 3. Adequate Seating

#### *Commission Policy*

*Adequate seating for paratransit services shall be provided to each rider and escort, child, or personal care attendant, and no more passengers than the registered passenger seating capacity shall be scheduled or transported in a vehicle at any time. For transit services provided by transit vehicles, adequate seating or standing space will be provided to each rider and escort, child, or personal care attendant, and no more passengers than the registered passenger seating or standing capacity shall be scheduled or transported in a vehicle at any time.*

## **CTC Policy**

**Vehicle seating does not exceed the manufacturer's recommended capacity.**

### 4. Passenger Boarding/Loading Assistance/Transfer

#### *Commission Standard*

*The paratransit driver shall provide the passenger with boarding assistance, if necessary or requested, to the seating portion of the vehicle. The boarding assistance shall include opening the vehicle door, fastening the seat belt or utilization of wheelchair securement devices, storage of mobility assistive devices, and closing the vehicle door. In door-through-door*

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*paratransit service categories, the driver shall also be required to open and close doors to buildings, except in situations in which assistance in opening/closing building doors would not be safe for passengers remaining on the vehicle. Assisted access must be in a dignified manner. Drivers may not assist wheelchair up or down more than one step, unless it can be performed safely as determined by the passenger, guardian, and driver.*

## **CTC Policy**

**All drivers will provide the passenger with boarding assistance, if necessary or requested, to the seating portion of the vehicle. Boarding assistance shall include holding hands, or allowing the passenger to hold an arm; opening the vehicle door, fastening the seat belt or utilization of wheelchair securement devices, storage of mobility assistive devices, and closing the vehicle door. Passengers may transfer from their mobility device to regular vehicle seating but only with assistance as outlined above. Under no circumstances shall the driver lift the passenger from their mobility device to regular seating (or vice versa). Drivers may not assist wheelchairs or stretchers up or down more than one step, unless it can be performed safely as determined by the passenger or guardian, and driver.**

## 5. Smoking, Eating and Drinking Policy

### *Commission Standard*

*Smoking is prohibited in any vehicle. Requirements for drinking and eating on board the vehicle will be addressed in the local Service Plan.*

## **CTC Policy**

**No smoking is allowed on any vehicle in the transportation system. Eating and drinking on board the vehicle is not allowed.**

## 6. Rider Property

### *Commission Standard*

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*Passenger property that can be carried by the passenger and/or driver in one trip and can safely be stored on the vehicle shall be allowed to be transported with the passenger at no additional charge. Additional requirements may be negotiated for carrying and loading rider property beyond this amount. Passenger property does not include wheelchairs, child seats, stretchers, secured oxygen, personal assistive devices, or intravenous devices.*

### **CTC Policy**

**Passengers shall be allowed to have two pieces of personal property which they can place in their lap or stow under their seat. Passengers must be able to independently carry all items brought onto the vehicle. Passenger property does not include wheelchairs, child seats, stretchers, secured oxygen, personal assistive devices, or intravenous devices.**

#### 7. Child Restraints

##### *Commission Standard*

*Use of child restraint devices shall be determined locally as to their responsibility and cost of such device in the local Service Plan.*

### **CTC Policy**

**All passengers 5 years old and under are required to use a child restraint device. This device must be provided by the passenger.**

#### 8. Toll-free Phone Number

##### *Commission Standard*

*A local toll-free phone number for complaints or grievances shall be posted inside the vehicle. The local complaint process shall be outlined as a section in the local Service Plan including, advising the dissatisfied person about the Commission's Ombudsman Program as a step within the process as approved by the Local Coordinating Board.*

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## **CTC Policy**

**A local toll free phone number shall be posted inside all vehicles within the coordinated system.**

### 9. Escorts and Children

#### *Commission Standard*

*An escort of a passenger and dependent children are to be transported as locally negotiated and identified in the local Service Plan.*

## **CTC Policy**

**Children 15 or younger must be accompanied by an escort. Passengers unable to care for themselves must be attended to by an attendant. Escorts and attendants must be at least 18 years of age and provided by the passenger. The escort must be able to provide the necessary assistance to the passenger. The system does not pay for escort travel.**

### 10. Vehicle Transfer Points

#### *Commission Standard*

*Vehicle transfer points shall provide shelter, security, and safety of passengers.*

## **CTC Policy**

**Vehicle transfer points shall be located in a safe, secured place that provides shelter.**

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## 11. Passenger/Trip Data

### *Commission Standard*

*Passenger/trip data base must be maintained or accessible by the Community Transportation Coordinator on each rider being transported within the system.*

### **CTC Policy**

**For each passenger transported within the coordinated system, the CTC collects the passenger's name, address, telephone number, funding source(s) eligibility, and other special requirements in a database. The passenger must provide the complete destination address, phone number, and times for the appointment and return trip.**

## 12. Pick-up Windows

*Commission Standard - None, requires that a local policy be developed.*

### **CTC Policy for In Service Area Trips:**

**There is a 30-minute pick up window. The passenger should expect the vehicle to pick them up 15 minutes before, to 15 minutes after their scheduled pick up time. There is a 30 minute arrival window. The passenger should expect the vehicle to drop them off at their destination 15 minutes before to 15 minutes after their scheduled arrival time. The 15 minutes after scheduled arrival time is calculated to allow a passenger to arrive in time for appointments.**

### **CTC Policy for Out of Service Area Trips:**

**Out of service area trips are scheduled on specific days. (Please contact the Community Transportation Coordinator for specific schedules.) Clients will be transported for morning medical appointments only. Afternoon appointments will only be provided under special circumstances. Clients will be grouped where possible for out of service area trips regardless of appointment times.**

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## 13. On-time Performance

*Commission Standard - None, requires that a local policy be developed.*

### **CTC Policy**

**The CTC will have an 85% on-time pick up performance standard for all completed trips. The CTC will have an 85% on-time arrival time performance standard for all completed trips.**

## 14. Advance Reservation Requirements

*Commission Standard - None, requires that a local policy be developed.*

### **CTC Policy**

**Passengers are generally required to place reservations two (2) business Days (excluding weekends and holidays) in advance. Exceptions are sometimes made for “urgent” trips and hospital**

## 15. No-Show Policy

*Commission Standard*

*The Community Transportation Coordinator and the Local Coordinating Board shall jointly develop a policy on passenger no shows. Assessing fines to passengers for no shows is acceptable but such policy and process shall be identified in the local Service Plan.*

### **CTC Policy**

**Community Transportation clients should notify the Coordinator as soon as possible when they need to cancel a trip. If the client does not cancel at least 24 hours in advance of a scheduled trip, then the client is classified as a no-show. Cancellations at the door will also be considered a no-show. No-shows occur when the rider is not ready, refuses their ride, or is not at home when the driver arrives. If three no-shows**

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accumulate in a 60-day period, a 30-day suspension will result. If another occurrence happens the suspension will be extended to 45 days. After the third infraction of three no-shows, the suspension is for 60 days.

The following local toll-free phone numbers are accessible for scheduling and canceling trips.

Hardee County 773-0015  
Avon Park 452-0139  
Lake Placid 699-0995  
Sebring 382-0139  
Okeechobee 357-9900  
Toll Free 1-800-260-0139

### 16. Public Transit Ridership

#### *Commission Standard*

*Rule 41-2.012(5)(b) FAC. "...as part of the Coordinator's performance, the local Coordinating Board shall also set an annual percentage goal increase for the number of trips provided within the system for ridership on public transit, where applicable. In areas where the public transit is not being utilized, the Local Coordinating Board shall set an annual percentage of the number of trips to be provided on public transit."*

#### **CTC Policy**

**Not applicable.**

### 17. Out of Service Area Trips

#### *Commission Standard*

*Out of service area trips shall be provided when determined locally and approved by the local Coordinating Board, except in instances where local*

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*ordinances prohibit such trips.*

## **CTC Policy**

**Out of service area trips are provided to social service agency clients (sponsored) only and only when specific services are not available in the service area. Clients will be required to schedule medical or other appointments with facilities within the service area and that are nearest to the trip origin, regardless of funding source and only during the service hours established Monday through Friday. When alternative medical facilities are not available, clients shall schedule morning appointments. Out of service area trips are scheduled on specific days. (Please contact the Community Transportation Coordinator for specific schedules.) Clients will be grouped with other clients who have appointments at the same or different facility, regardless of appointment times.**

## 18. Vehicle Cleanliness

### *Commission Standard*

*Interior of all vehicles shall be free from dirt, grime, oil, trash, torn upholstery, damaged or broken seats, protruding metal or other objects or materials which could soil items placed in the vehicle or provide discomfort for the passenger.*

### **CTC Policy**

**The interior of all vehicles will be free from dirt, grime, oil, trash, torn upholstery, damaged or broken seats, protruding metal or other objects or materials which could soil items placed in the vehicle or provide discomfort for the passenger. Vehicle exteriors shall be washed at least once per week in all seasons. Vehicle interiors shall be swept and cleaned up each day and thoroughly cleaned (scrubbed) at least once per week.**

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## 19. Billing/Invoicing Requirements

### *Commission Standard*

*Billing/invoicing requirements of the Community Transportation Coordinator to subcontractors shall be determined locally by the local Coordinating Board and provided in the local Service Plan. All bills shall be paid to subcontractors within 15 calendar days after receipt of said payment by the Community Transportation Coordinator except in instances where the Community Coordinator is a non-governmental entity.*

### **CTC Policy**

**The CTC reimburses carriers from funds received from funding agencies on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of each month. If the CTC, without reasonable cause, fails to make payments to the subcontractors and suppliers within seven (7) working days after the receipt by the CTC of full or partial payment from the CTC, the CTC shall pay to the subcontractors and suppliers a penalty in the amount of one-half of one percent of the amount due, per day, from the expiration of the period allowed herein for payment. (F.S. 2000/ Ch 287/Part 1/287.0585 Late payments by contractors to subcontractors and suppliers; penalty.)**

## 20. Two-way Communications

### *Commission Standard*

*All vehicles ordered or put into service after adoption of this section of the Rule, and providing service within the coordinated system, shall be equipped with two-way communications in good working order and be audible to the driver at all times to the base. All vehicles that are not equipped with two-way communications shall have two years to be in compliance after May 1, 1996.*

### **CTC Policy**

**All vehicles must have two-way radios or cell phones in good working**

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**order and are audible to the driver at all times when in the service area.**

### 21. Electronic Device Policy

*Commission Standard*

*None*

#### **CTC Policy**

**When driving any motor vehicle on company business, the use of cellular telephones, other personal communications and electronic devices is limited to the following situations:**

- (a) Carrier Employees: The use of cellular phones and other personal communication and electronic devices while operating a vehicle on company business is prohibited. Cellular phones or other personal communication devices must be powered off at all times except when the vehicle is in park and the engine turned off.**
  
- (b) Managers and Road Supervisors: Cellular phones and other communication devices may not be used for any purpose other than for work-related purposes, and then only to the minimum extent necessary to communicate. No personal use of such devices behind the wheel of a vehicle is permitted. When the use of a cell phone or other device presents a risk to safe driving, use of the device is not permitted. Cellular phone use while operating a motor vehicle is prohibited in any jurisdiction that prohibits said use by law.**

**Drivers are required to reference the full policy regarding the use of electronic devices while operating a vehicle in the system. Failure to comply with this policy may result in termination of employment.**

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### 22. First Aid

#### *Commission Standard*

*First Aid policy shall be determined locally and provided in the local Service Plan.*

#### **CTC Policy**

**Drivers are not required to be trained in First Aid.**

### 23. Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)

#### *Commission Standard*

*Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation policy shall be determined locally and provided in the local Service Plan.*

#### **CTC Policy**

**Drivers are not required to be trained in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation techniques.**

### 24. Driver Criminal Background Screening

#### *Commission Standard*

*None. Identified only in the Commission Standards Manual, adopted June 1996.*

#### **CTC Policy**

**All drivers in the coordinated system shall have a favorable Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) Level II background check.**

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### 25. Accidents

*Commission Standard*

*None. Identified in the Commission Standards Manual adopted June 1996.*

#### **CTC Policy**

**The standard for accidents will be 1.2, or less, accidents per 100,000 miles for the evaluation period.**

### 26. Road Calls

*Commission Standard*

*None. Identified in the Commission Standards Manual adopted June 1996.*

#### **CTC Policy**

**The standard for road calls will be an average of 10,000 miles, or more, between each road call. (e.g., the system-wide total, not each individual vehicle.)**

### 27. Call Hold Time

*Commission Standard*

*None. Identified in the Commission Standards Manual adopted June 1996.*

#### **CTC Policy**

**The customer should not be put on hold for more than 3 minutes on average. As a standard, 95% of all incoming calls will be completed within 3 minutes. A daily report will be prepared one random day per week to evaluate this standard.**

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### 28. Non-sponsored Passenger Fare

*Commission Standard*

*None.*

#### **CTC Policy**

**All non-sponsored passengers (TD Trust Fund, 5311 and 5310 funded trips) will be charged a fare per one-way trip. Local service area trips cost \$1.00 per one-way trip. Random out of service area trips cost \$3.00 per one-way trip. Medicaid clients are required to pay the same co-pays for transportation. In addition:**

- **On the “go in”, or first trip from home to a destination, passengers required to pay a fare will not be transported if they refuse to pay the appropriate fare. On the return trip, passengers will be transported even if they refuse to pay. However, they will be required to pay any amount not paid prior to being transported again.**

**Policy approved by the Hardee, Highlands, and Okeechobee Local Coordinating Boards, April 1997.**

### 29. Prioritization of Non-sponsored Trips

*Commission Standard*

*None. The Commission has provided guidelines entitled “Guidelines for Developing Trip Priority Procedures for Non-Sponsored Trips Purchased with TD Commission Funds” prepared by the Center for Urban Transportation Research, College of Engineering, University of South Florida, June 1993.*

#### **CTC Policy**

**List of trip priorities adopted by the Hardee, Highlands, and Okeechobee Local Coordinating Boards, December 1993.**

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- **Medical**
- **Grocery Shopping (life-sustaining only)**
- **Employment**
- **Education/Training**
- **Personal Business (bank, post office, etc.)**
- **Recreational (includes non-life sustaining shopping)**

By giving medical trips number one priority, it is also intended that return trips from medical appointments will be given priority scheduling to ensure that passengers are experiencing the minimum waiting periods feasible. For example, scheduling shopping trips during the time a passenger needs to be picked-up from a doctor's appointment will be given less priority than the return trip from the medical appointment. An effort will be made to accommodate all eligible trip requests using the priority order. The priority order is not intended to eliminate any eligible trip purpose. The goal of the system is to provide transportation to all eligible participants within funding availability. This prioritization policy is based on cost-effectiveness, efficiency, trip purpose, and unmet needs.

### 30. Insurance

#### *Commission Standard*

*The Community Transportation Coordinator shall ensure compliance with the minimum liability insurance requirement of \$100,000 per person and \$200,000 per incident, which are comparable to 768.38(5), Florida Statutes, limits, for all transportation services purchased or provided for the transportation disadvantaged. Any liability insurance coverage in excess of \$1 million per incident must be approved by the Commission before it is included in a Memorandum of Agreement.*

#### **CTC Policy**

**All contract carriers must have \$500,000 per accident combined single limit for bodily injury liability and property damage liability including liability to passengers. In addition, all contract carriers must have \$1 million comprehensive general liability insurance.**

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## 31. Emergency Preparedness

*Commission Standard*

*None*

**CTC Policy – new arrangements need to be made with each county**

**The CTC has established protocol with local Emergency Management officials and has established a local emergency policy and procedure manual to ensure effective coordination and execution of emergency operations before, during, and after an emergency.**

## 32. Eligibility

*Commission Standard*

*It is the intent of the Commission to set forth eligibility requirements for customers of the Transportation Disadvantaged Program. At a minimum, each CTC shall use the following criteria to determine eligibility for Transportation Disadvantaged Trust fund (non-sponsored) monies:*

- ***No other funding available.*** A customer would not be considered eligible for TDTF when another purchasing agency is responsible for such transportation.
- ***No other means of transportation is available.*** As specified by the CTC and the LCB.
- ***Fixed Route Public Transit.*** If the fixed route public transit is available the customer must demonstrate why it cannot be used.
- ***Physical or mental disability.*** A disability as outlined in the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.
- ***Age.*** As specified by the CTC and the LCB.
- ***Individual and Household income status is a specified percent of the poverty level.*** As specified by the CTC and the LCB.

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- ***No self declarations allowed.*** *The CTC will use an enrollment process that substantiates the individual's ability to meet the criteria listed and any other CTC determined criteria.*
- ***Ability to pay.*** *The CTC and the LCB may establish an ability to pay policy for "non-sponsored" customers using a sliding scale based on the customer's income and/or assets status.*  
*Commission approved 5/22/97*

### **CTC Policy**

**See application on next page, which is the CTC approved policy for determining eligibility.**

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Insert CTC Application forms

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### 33. Private Pay Access

*Commission Standard*

*None*

#### **CTC Policy**

**Trip requests from persons who do not meet the definition of transportation disadvantaged but wish to access the system will be scheduled only when vehicle route and seating availability will accommodate the request, and, at the expense of the requesting party. The fare structure shall be the same as provided in the Memorandum of Agreement/Service Plan and approved by the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged.**

### 34. VEHICLE AIR CONDITIONING AND HEATING SYSTEM

*Commission Standard*

*All vehicles ordered or put into service after the adoption of this section of the rule, and providing service within the coordinated system, shall have working air conditioners and heaters in each vehicle. Vehicles that do not have a working air conditioner or heater will be scheduled for repair or replacement as soon as possible. All vehicles that are not equipped with an air conditioner and/or heater shall have two years to be in compliance after May 1, 1996.*

#### **CTC Policy**

**All vehicles operating within the coordinated system must have working air conditioning and heating systems. In the event that a vehicle's air conditioning or heating system fails, the vehicle shall be removed from service immediately and not returned to service until corrective repairs have been made.**

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## 35. SERVICE EFFECTIVENESS

### *Commission Standard*

*Service effectiveness standards should be jointly established by the CTC and LCB. These standards should give the LCB information on how effectively the CTC is operating and can include trips/vehicle mile, trips/vehicle hour, and trips/capita. The data for establishing these standards can be found in the CTC's Annual Operating Report.*

### **CTC Policy**

**Currently, the LCB monitors the CTC and providers' effectiveness by analyzing monthly reports which are modeled after Section II of the Annual Operating Report.**

## 36. Accommodating Mobility Aids and Life Support Systems

### *Commission Standard*

*None. Requires that a local policy be developed.*

### **CTC Policy**

**Riders are permitted to travel with service animals trained to assist them. Service animals include guide dogs used by persons with vision or hearing impairments, and dogs and other animals that provide aid to persons with disabilities.**

**Riders are permitted to travel with respirators and portable oxygen. Travel with this equipment will only be denied if it would violate rules concerning the transportation of hazardous materials (49 CFR Parts 100-199).**

**In general, the transport of common types of portable life support equipment is not prohibited. Cylinders of oxygen used by passengers for health reasons, for example, are not subject to the Hazardous Materials Regulation.**

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**All life support equipment brought onto a Community Transportation vehicle must be able to be operated and maintained by the passenger or by the passenger's escort and must be able to be secured in the vehicle. The Community Transportation driver will not have any contact or provide assistance with the life support equipment.**

## 37. COMPLAINTS

*Commission Standard*

*None*

### **CTC Policy**

**The standard for complaints will be 2.0 (or less) complaints per 1,000 one-way passenger trips.**

## 38. PROCESS FOR IDENTIFYING COST EFFECTIVENESS OF VEHICLES PURCHASED AND OPERATED WITH SECTION 5310 FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION FUNDS

*Commission Standard*

*None*

### **CTC Policy**

**The award and inclusion of Federal Transit Administration Section 5310 vehicles in the Community Transportation Coordinated System has contributed significantly to keeping costs contained. The fact that a contract carrier does not have to contribute capital funds for the purchase of all new vehicles helps to keep the cost per trip maintained both to the system and purchasing agencies. The increases in cost of service experienced thus far are only a fraction of what would be experienced if these vehicles had not been awarded. In addition, the vehicles have contributed to maintaining a certain level of service which might not have been provided if**

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they were not awarded. The vehicles are a tremendous asset to the system.

**When vehicles have reached their useful life as determined by regulations administered by the Department of Transportation, the Central Florida Regional Planning Council will request the titles to such vehicles, ask that a worth be determined for the vehicle(s) and proceed to ask for offers for the vehicle(s). Funds received from the sale of vehicles will be used to off-set the cost for future vehicles or, with the consent of the Local Coordinating Boards, repair of current vehicle(s). Approved February 2001**

### 39. DISTRIBUTION OF GRANT VEHICLES TO CONTRACT CARRIERS

*Commission Standard*

*None*

#### **CTC Standard**

**The following criteria shall be applied when grant vehicles are distributed to contract carriers in the system.**

- **Contract carriers shall submit a complete vehicle inventory in October of each year. The vehicle inventory shall identify the replacement date for each vehicle.**
- **To the best of their ability, the Community Transportation Coordinator shall distribute system trips equally to each primary carrier**
- **In calculating the number of vehicles requested each year through available grant programs, the Coordinator will take into consideration the average trip lengths and vehicle capacity of each contract carrier.**
- **In calculating how vehicles will be distributed to contract carriers, the Coordinator will take into consideration the number of wheelchair positions available per carrier's vehicle inventory.**
- **In calculating how vehicles will be distributed to contract carriers, the Coordinator will review each carrier in terms of how they have**

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**maintained previously awarded vehicles and how they have followed the terms of the vehicle lease agreements.**

- **The Coordinator will bring the final recommendation regarding the distribution of vehicles to the Local Coordinating Board (LCB) for review and approval.**
- **Any changes which would necessitate a different distribution than originally approved by the Local Coordinating Board shall be brought back before the LCB for approval.**

#### 40. **PROCESS FOR CONSIDERING COORDINATION CONTRACTS AND/OR REQUESTS TO PROVIDE TRANSPORTATION SERVICES TO CLIENTS OUTSIDE OF THE COORDINATED SYSTEM**

##### *CTD Standard*

*Rule 41-2.015, and Procedure for Member Department/Purchasing Agency Utilization of Alternative Providers, dated 2/2003*

##### **CTC Standard**

**The following standard was developed prior to the CTD's procedure noted above. The LCB shall use the procedure developed by the CTD and integrate it with the process outlined below.**

**Agencies requesting consideration of a coordination contract and/or request to provide service to TD funded clients outside of the Coordinated Community Transportation system shall provide the following information to the Community Transportation Coordinator. The LCB shall review all requests and make the final recommendation to the Coordinator.**

1. **Identify how clients are currently transported.**
2. **Identify the current cost per trip (one-way) and projected cost per trip (one-way).**
3. **Identify the type of trip(s) needed for clients, current and planned. (i.e., medical, educational, recreational, etc.). Provide the percentage of each type of trip.**
4. **Identify current and planned funding that supports the transportation**

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- component of the clients support. (Federal, State, Local, Private contributions.)
5. **Identify the current number of trips provided. (Daily, weekly, annually.)**
  6. **Identify the number of hours the requested vehicle will operate per day/week.**
  7. **If a coordination contract is entered into with the Coordinator, the requesting agency must adopt the system safety program plan and follow the mandates for driver training and drug and alcohol testing and training. Please explain your agency's substance abuse policy and/or procedure and driver training procedure and how, if at all, it will change under a coordination contract.**
  8. **Identify approximate number of clients who will be served (unduplicated count).**
  9. **Provide a list of other vehicles specifically assigned for transport of clients. (include make, model, year, seating capacity, whether it is wheelchair accessible.)**
  10. **Explain why it isn't feasible to purchase/coordinate transportation services for your clients through the Coordinated Community Transportation System.**

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