

2023 Palm Beach CTC Evaluation Executive Summary

In Palm Beach County, the Palm Beach Transportation Planning Agency (TPA) serves as the Designated Official Planning Agency (DOPA), which facilitates an annual evaluation of Palm Tran Connection, the Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC). The CTC evaluation process is dictated by the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD) and includes the following:

- General Questions
- Chapter 427, F.S.
- Insurance
- Rule 41-2.011, F.C.
- Commission Standards and Local Standards
- American with Disabilities Act Compliance
- On-Site Observation of the system
- Surveys
- Level of Cost
- Level of Competition
- Level of Coordination

Below are the key findings and recommendations from the FY 2021 - 2022 CTC Evaluation that was conducted during the months of February, March, April, and May 2023:

Section	Key Findings	Recommendation
<p>General Questions</p>	<p>As identified in previous years, the high demand for paratransit and trip costs continues to increase. ADA far exceeds the required $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile for service area and service hours which impact on-time performance and productivity.</p>	<p>The CTC should continue to develop and implement trainings and workshops to encourage and teach eligible riders how to easily access and transfer to the fixed-route service and Tri-Rail from paratransit.</p>
	<p>The large undeveloped area that divides the eastern urban communities from the western rural communities creates challenges for operating an efficient and convenient transportation system across the entire county.</p>	<p>The CTC should collaborate with LCB Members, use the board as a bridge to connect with riders for ongoing education, and the best method to commute on paratransit, fixed route, and TNCs.</p> <p>Analyze the suburban area in Palm Beach County to facilitate a possible transit feeder service to a fixed route. Replicate the Go Glades on demand model on the east side of the County.</p>
	<p>Employment makes up the largest share in the trip category. Most customers complain about the late pick-up and drop-off. Employment trips impact the customer, the CTC, and the economy.</p>	<p>Continue evaluating resources availability to deliver on-time performance. When feasible implement alternate, less traditional paratransit services such as TNC</p>

Section	Key Findings	Recommendation
	The method to report on-time performance does not complement appointments and window on-time performance. The waiting period is so lengthy it creates frustration.	to alleviate the increased ridership and ensure the OTP is at an acceptable rate.
Chapter 427, F.S.	School buses are not currently being utilized in the coordinated system due to similar peak hours. Charter and private school students oftentimes rely on paratransit services to get to and from school. The size of Palm Beach County and the average one-way trip length being over 15 miles, school buses would not be conducive to the wear and tear of paratransit trips. School buses are currently not a viable cost-effective alternative.	If possible, work with the School District of Palm Beach County to utilize school buses. Develop an agreement with charter and private schools to subsidize costs for paratransit services provided to their students.
	The CTC has a goal of increasing estimated bus pass trips by 10% for paratransit riders. In FY 2020, of all new clients, 17% were issued ADA ID cards, a decrease from 20% in FY 2019, likely due in part to COVID-19 (no new ADA ID cards were issued between April-June 2020).	Continue to evaluate trends and assess the impact of COVID-19 on bus pass trips for TD clients.
	The CTC has begun conducting eligibility interviews to better match riders with the service that best fits their need and to help manage the continued demand for paratransit services in Palm Beach County.	Monitor and report impact of phone eligibility interviews. When conducting eligibility interviews, ensure that safe pedestrian/bicycle routes to access fixed route service is a consideration in whether riders can use fixed route transit.
	There is not currently a formal arrangement with the local WAGES coalition, CareerSource PBC. However, in the past year the CTC implemented an agreement with CareerSource to reinstate a bus stop outside their facility. Palm Tran does not currently prioritize trips. The cost per trip is experiencing an ongoing increase over the years.	Continue to coordinate with CareerSource PBC to determine how to best provide clients with innovative transportation services. CTC should consider formalized a trip prioritization matrix to mitigate potential future conflict.

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Local Standards	<p>The CTC is currently <u>meeting</u> the following goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passenger no shows of <5%. • Call hold time is less than two (2) minutes per call. <p>The CTC is currently <u>not meeting</u> the following goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing public transit ridership goal of 25%. • On time performance goal of 90%. • Roadcalls of ≤1 per 10,000 miles. • Complaint ratio goal of ≤3 per 10,000 trips performed. • At-fault accident goal of ≤1 per 100,000 miles traveled. 	<p>The CTC's Office of Performance Management (OPM) should continue to evaluate current measurable goals and develop a strategic plan to achieve them (i.e., increasing the average on time performance standards, decreasing the amount of complaints, and get able-bodied users of Connection to transition to the fixed-route, if their abilities allow.)</p>
Passenger Surveys	<p>Survey responses indicate concerns with on-time performance; late pick up or return pick up was an issue. Riders are requesting late-hour service.</p>	<p>CTC should consider evaluating rider's origin and destination trips; implement route optimization. Send text notifications to customers when there is a road closure, work zone, crash, or peak hour traffic delay.</p>
	<p>Customers expressed frustration with cash payment system. Asking for improving the payment process.</p>	<p>CTC should consider implementing digital payment/ digital cash to increase efficiency. Incorporate payment hardware like Software like Square, Clover Stripe, and ShopKeep.</p>
	<p>Customers expressed concerns with trip lengths; it can take 2-3 hours to travel 10 miles; some vehicles are overbooked, which increases delays. There are inconsistent instructions between drivers, customers, and guard gate officers.</p>	<p>CTC should consider upgrade their system and software or incorporate Google Map or Waze application.</p> <p>CTC should consider working with customers more closely to standardize gate access for drivers. Consider adding language on the application and interview process to mitigate potential guard gate access barriers.</p>