

**MEETING MINUTES
BROWARD METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
LOCAL COORDINATING BOARD
FOR THE TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED
Monday, September 15, 2025, 2:00 p.m.
100 West Cypress Creek Road, Suite 850
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33309**

Members and Alternates Present

Chair Caryl Shuham, Commissioner of Hollywood
Vice Chair Charlotte Mather-Taylor, Area Agency on Aging
Barbara Bateman, Florida Department of Health – Broward
Hugh Chen, Private Transportation
Maria Chiari, Florida Department of Children and Families
Sam Cox, Alternate, Persons Over 60
Manny Fuentes, Alternate, Broward County Elderly & Veterans' Services Division
Sue Gallagher, Children's Services Council
Jerome Hill, Agency for Health Care Administration
Jake McEntyre, System User
Shatara Piedrasanta, Community Action Agency
Ismir Ripley, Florida Department of Transportation
Milory Senat, Agency for Persons with Disabilities

Members and Alternates Absent

Torey Alston, Broward County School Board
Vish Deonarine, Alternate, Career Source Broward
Marie Dorismond, Alternate, Florida Department of Transportation
Hazel Dumervil, Alternate, Private Transportation
Alexis Harrison, Alternate, Florida Department of Education – Vocational Rehabilitation
Lori Mandke, Alternate, Area Agency on Aging
Ruth Masters, Alternate, Broward County School Board
Prudence Mollica, Florida Department of Education – Vocational Rehabilitation
Natasha Parks, Alternate, Florida Department of Children and Families
Denise Payne, Alternate, Citizen Advocate
Michelle Ramirez, Career Source Broward
Demetria Rawls, Alternate, Children's Services Council
Nancy Scott, Alternate, System User
Reginald Shagoury, Alternate, Florida Department of Health – Broward
Pauline Spence, Alternate, Agency for Persons with Disabilities
Owen Walker, Broward County Elderly & Veterans' Services Division

MPO Staff

Rebecca Schultz, Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) Administrator
Amanda Christon, Transit Manager

Also Present

Paul Strobis, Paratransit Manager, Broward County Transit (BCT)

REGULAR ITEMS

(All Items Open for Public Comment)

1. Call to Order, Roll Call and Recognition of Quorum

Chair Shuham called the meeting to order at 2:03 p.m.

2. Approval of Minutes – May 19, 2025

Motion made by Mr. Hill, seconded by Mr. McEntyre, to approve the minutes of May 19, 2025. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

3. Approval of Agenda

Motion made by Ms. Senat, seconded by Mr. Cox, to approve the Agenda. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

4. Public Comments

None.

ACTION ITEMS

1. MOTION TO APPROVE the 2026 LCB Meeting Schedule

Chair Shuham noted that MPO Staff requests the first Local Coordinating Board (LCB) meeting of 2026 be moved to February 2, 2026, and the September meeting date be rescheduled for September 28, 2026. The proposed meeting dates are as follows:

- February 2, 2026
- May 18, 2026
- September 28, 2026
- October 19, 2026

Motion made by Ms. Bateman, seconded by Mr. Hill, to approve the schedule for 2026. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

2. MOTION TO APPOINT Grievance Committee

Rebecca Schultz of Broward MPO Staff explained that in the event a member of the public wishes to report a grievance against Broward County Transit (BCT), the Transportation Options (TOPS) program, or similar entities, the Grievance Committee would hear that item.

The following individuals volunteered to serve on the Grievance Committee: Ms. Gallagher, Ms. Hill, Ms. Piedrasanta, and Ms. Senat.

Motion made by Ms. Gallagher, seconded by Mr. Fuentes, to approve. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

NON-ACTION ITEMS

1. Paratransit Update and Transportation Disadvantaged Grant Tracking Report – Paul Strobis, BCT Paratransit Manager

BCT Paratransit Manager Paul Strobis reported that Broward County's fiscal year (FY) 2026 budget process is underway. The Florida Legislature made several changes to revenue streams that affect BCT's operating budget, which meant Broward County was required to make changes to fill gaps.

One key change was the removal of revenue streams used to fund Broward County's penny surtax. This led to a reduction of BCT's operating budget by approximately \$40 million, most of which was achieved through vacancies. There were no recommended cuts in service, although the long-term impact is still being evaluated. The final public hearing for Broward County's FY 2026 budget is scheduled for Tuesday, September 16, 2025 at 5:01 p.m.

The Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) program saw another year with strong ridership, providing over 276,000 TD trips over the Trip and Equipment Grant cycle, which ran from July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025. Broward County overmatched these grant funds by \$2.8 million, which reflects their commitment to fully funding the Paratransit program.

BCT was also able to provide nearly 20,000 bus passes to individuals and families earning low incomes. Because of the significant number of bus pass and Paratransit trips, BCT is able to continue its growth under the state formula for Trip and Equipment Grant funds, receiving an increase in these grant dollars in the current year.

The biannual Conference for the Transportation Disadvantaged was held the first week of September 2025. BCT did not attend this conference, although former BCT Transit Division Director Tim Garling was inducted into the Florida Public Transportation Association (FPTA) Hall of Fame in recognition of his years of service.

Chair Shuham requested an update on funding cuts affecting Tri-Rail service. Mr. Strobis explained that the state budget eliminated operating funds for this agency, and the three South Florida counties have been asked to fill this gap in funding, which is approximately \$65 million. There are ongoing discussions between the South Florida Regional Transportation Authority (SFRTA), which operates Tri-Rail, and the three

counties. SFRTA currently has reserve funds which will be used to provide uninterrupted service through June 2027; however, due to the timing of the funding cut, the three counties are working to determine what they can do to provide assistance.

Amanda Christon, Transit Manager for the Broward MPO, added that funding in Miami-Dade County which had been earmarked for their Strategic Miami Rapid Transit (SMART) corridor has been provided to SFRTA. She did not know at this time whether or not Broward County has similar plans. The Miami-Dade Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) is directly connected to Miami-Dade County, which is not the case for Broward County and the Broward MPO.

Chair Shuham recalled that at the most recent MPO Board meeting, representatives of local governments and organizations were encouraged to send letters to Florida's governor to request reinstatement of Tri-Rail funding. She encouraged the Local Coordinating Board (LCB) members to do the same.

Ms. Gallagher asked if the recently passed federal funding bill is expected to have any effects on transportation in South Florida. Mr. Strobis replied that there has been an increase in federal funding, although it has not yet been determined how this funding will be applied at the state level. No significant cuts have been made to public transit funding thus far.

Mr. Strobis further clarified that in addition to funding cuts to SFRTA, Florida's budget removed funding sources for state matching funds for federal grants. Projects will now have to be able to provide a 50% local match rather than the previous 25% if they wish to qualify for federal assistance. It is possible that surtax funds may be used to leverage projects in this manner.

It was also noted that the South Florida Institute on Aging, which was represented on the LCB, was also affected by funding cuts and terminated all their services at the end of August 2025.

2. SoFloGo: Regional Transit App by South Florida Regional Transportation Authority (SFRTA)

Ms. Christon provided a brief presentation on SoFloGo, which is a new multiple-ticketing, payment, and trip planning mobile app for all four regional transportation options, including Tri-Rail, BCT, Miami-Dade Transit, and Palm Tran.

Ms. Christon explained that the Broward MPO serves as a facilitator and connector which plans, funds, and prioritizes projects. They have been the primary force behind the creation of the SoFloGo app since 2010, providing federal funds to upgrade BCT's backoffice technology and serving as the main coordinator between all four transportation entities. The intent is for SoFloGo to be a complete app for mobility

services, ultimately hoping to integrate ride-sharing services such as Uber and Lyft as well as the TD program in the future.

Because Tri-Rail is the connecting entity that brings the four transit properties together, they served as project manager for the development of the app. Ms. Christon reviewed the roles of the participating agencies, recalling that Miami-Dade Transit was the first provider to offer payment through the EZ Card. In 2013, the Broward MPO received \$3.6 million in federal funding which was provided to BCT so they could enlarge their mobile ticketing presence, upgrading backoffice operations and integrating the EZ Card system.

As mobile apps and phone payment became more common, the MPO reached out to SFRTA to request that they manage the continued development of the project. This took approximately four years and resulted in the creation of the SoFloGo gap.

Ms. Christon reviewed the app itself, which allows for regional trip planning and provides combinations and connections of different modes of transportation as well as mobile ticketing, real-time travel information, and service alerts for all four agencies.

Chair Shuham asked if there has been consideration of adding Water Taxi service as an option on the SoFloGo app. Ms. Christon confirmed that this is a possibility for the future, although at present the Water Taxi does not offer general transit feed information about its trips, which means their technology would need to be normalized before it can be integrated into the app.

Chair Shuham also asked if individuals with special transportation needs can identify these needs on the app to ensure that the transportation options listed will be available to them. Ms. Christon replied that this is not yet available, but emphasized the importance of integrating this information in the future. Mr. Strobis added that the first phase of the app is intended to address fixed-route service before addressing additional needs such as reduced fares or Paratransit services. There are different criteria in each South Florida county in order to meet qualifications for these services.

Aretha Wimberly, representing Save Broward, noted that Broward County public schools are considering use of BCT in order to mitigate their driver shortage and other transportation-related shortfalls. She asked if the app would consider this possibility so parents can track BCT routes if they are used by students. Ms. Christon replied that at present, there are no plans for the SoFloGo app to integrate Broward County public school transportation; it applies to fare-based public transit only.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

1. Member Comments

None.

- 2. Monthly LCB Operating Reports – April-June 2025**
- 3. Planning Related Grant Agreement Tasks Quarterly Progress Report**
- 4. Upcoming CTD Business Meetings – <https://www.fdot.gov/ctd/ctd-home>**
- 5. Attendance Roster – Members and Alternates**

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 2:45 p.m.

NEXT MEETING: October 20, 2025