



EVOLVE

Rethink. Revitalize. Reinvent.



Lee County Transit (LeeTran)
10-Year Transit Development Plan (2021–2030)

Executive Summary

December 2020





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Introduction

The Lee County Board of County Commissioners currently provides public transportation through the Lee County Transit Department, also known as LeeTran. LeeTran provides local and regional fixed-route bus services in Lee County, including connections to Collier County. LeeTran also provides complementary, door-to-door paratransit services for eligible persons with disabilities.

Under the direction of the Board of County Commissioners, LeeTran worked with citizens and stakeholders to prepare a major update of its Transit Development Plan (TDP). As directed in Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.) Rule 14-73.001 – Public Transportation, a TDP is “the applicant’s planning, development and operational guidance document to be used in developing the Transportation Improvement Program and the Department’s Five Year Work Program.” The TDP serves as the strategic vision and guide for public transportation in Lee County over the next 10 years.

As part of this major update, LeeTran conducted a Comprehensive Operational Analysis (COA) to facilitate a more-detailed operational assessment of bus routes and service characteristics to identify opportunities to enhance service effectiveness and efficiencies and implement service changes as appropriate.

Key Elements of the Plan

The TDP comprises two key plan elements—a comprehensive analysis of transit services in the short term and a strategic vision for the future of transit through 2030.

COMPREHENSIVE OPERATIONAL ANALYSIS (COA)

Integrate the COA’s specific operational improvements with the TDP’s larger strategic vision for transit service development

2020 COA

- Assess operational efficiency
- Improve current service near-term
- Save/reallocate resources
- Represent initial years of TDP

TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN (TDP)

Help reimagine the transit network, mobility solutions, and technological opportunities for Lee County for the next 10 years and beyond

2020 TDP

- 10-year strategic vision for transit
- Holistic planning process to improve current service over time
- Funded/unfunded priorities & implementation plan

Transit Goals for Lee County

LeeTran has adopted four major goals for providing transit services in Lee County and connections to Collier County.



Goal 1

Increase transit's market share by providing high-quality service.



Goal 2

Build meaningful community partnerships.



Goal 3

Ensure the long-term viability and stability of the service.



Goal 4

Reduce the environmental impacts of public transit and promote sustainable community values.

Planning for the Operating Environment

Transit service functions best when it responds to the regulatory, geographic, environmental, land use, developmental, political, and socioeconomic factors in the service area. In developing the strategic transit vision for Lee County, the *Evolve* transit plan process included a careful assessment of the existing and anticipated future operating environment. This resulted in short-term and mid-term transit improvements over the next 10 years.

Short-Term Improvements (0 to 2 years) - The COA defines the short-term improvements in the 10-Year TDP. These improvements focus on improving travel times, making service more direct, encouraging more peak-hour ridership, and increasing efficiency (doing more with less).

Mid-Term Improvements (3 to 10 years) - The remainder of the TDP horizon builds upon the re-imagined network, focusing on the core/high ridership network and a support network of local bus, express, and Mobility on Demand services.



Learning from Public Input

Public input was critical to identifying transit needs and developing the 10-year transit improvement plan. Extensive and diverse public involvement was achieved throughout the plan development process, despite the challenges associated with the pandemic.

Adapting Outreach to the Pandemic

In response to the COVID-19 public health crisis, many outreach activities, such as discussion groups and stakeholder interviews, were conducted virtually. An array of virtual platforms was used to ensure safe, easy, and equitable methods for reaching the public and obtaining their feedback.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT SUMMARY

1,404+ Total Participants

27



Stakeholders interviewed

22



LeeTran Bus Operator surveys/discussions

23



Participants in the business/growth discussion group

15



Participants in the social service agency discussion group

1,098



On-Board survey participants

106



General public input survey participants

35



Participants in the first virtual public workshop

33



Participants in the second virtual public workshop

45



Transit priorities public input survey participants



Many participated in email blasts



Many participated in Facebook engagement

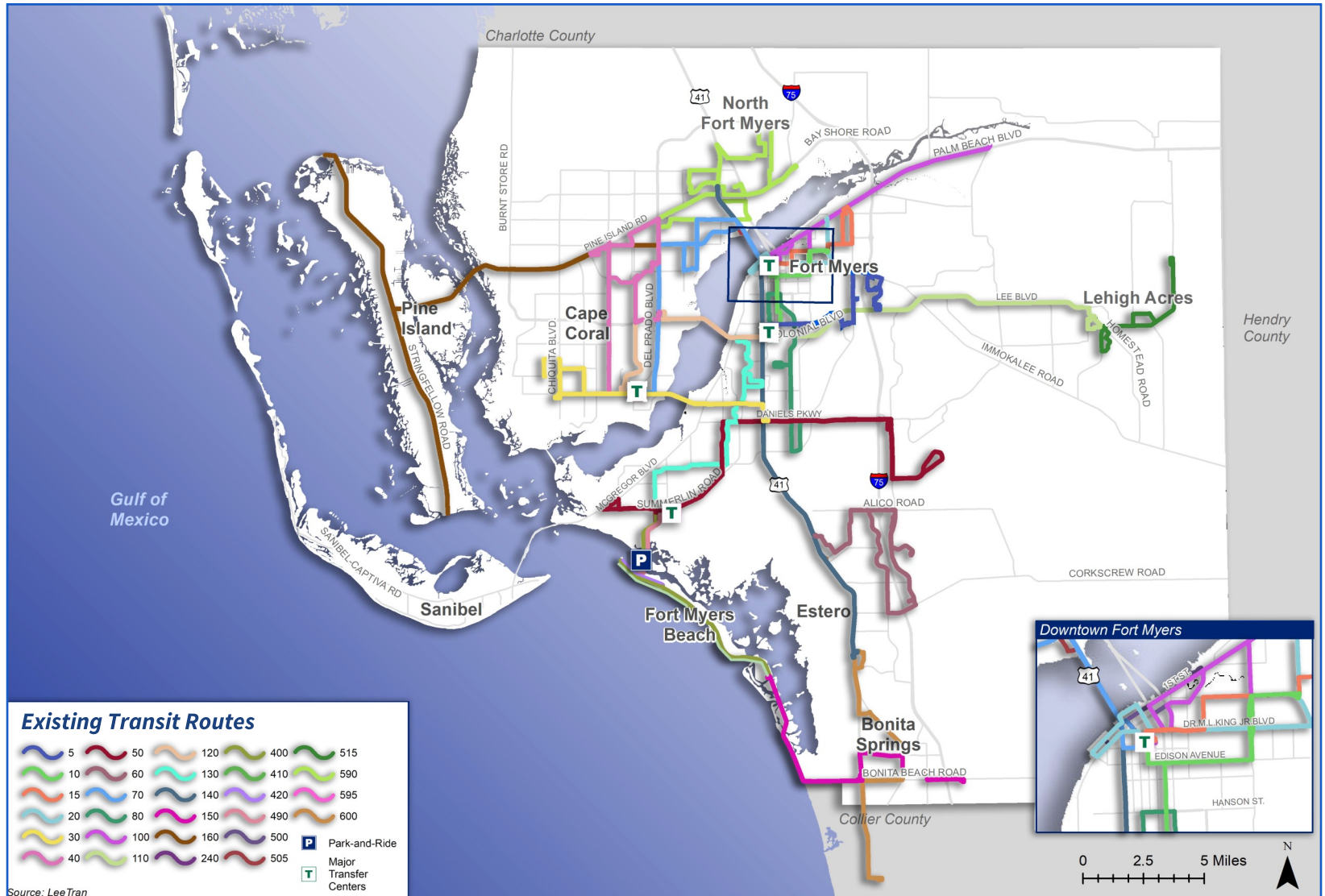
EVOLVE

Rethink. Rejuvenate. Reinvent.



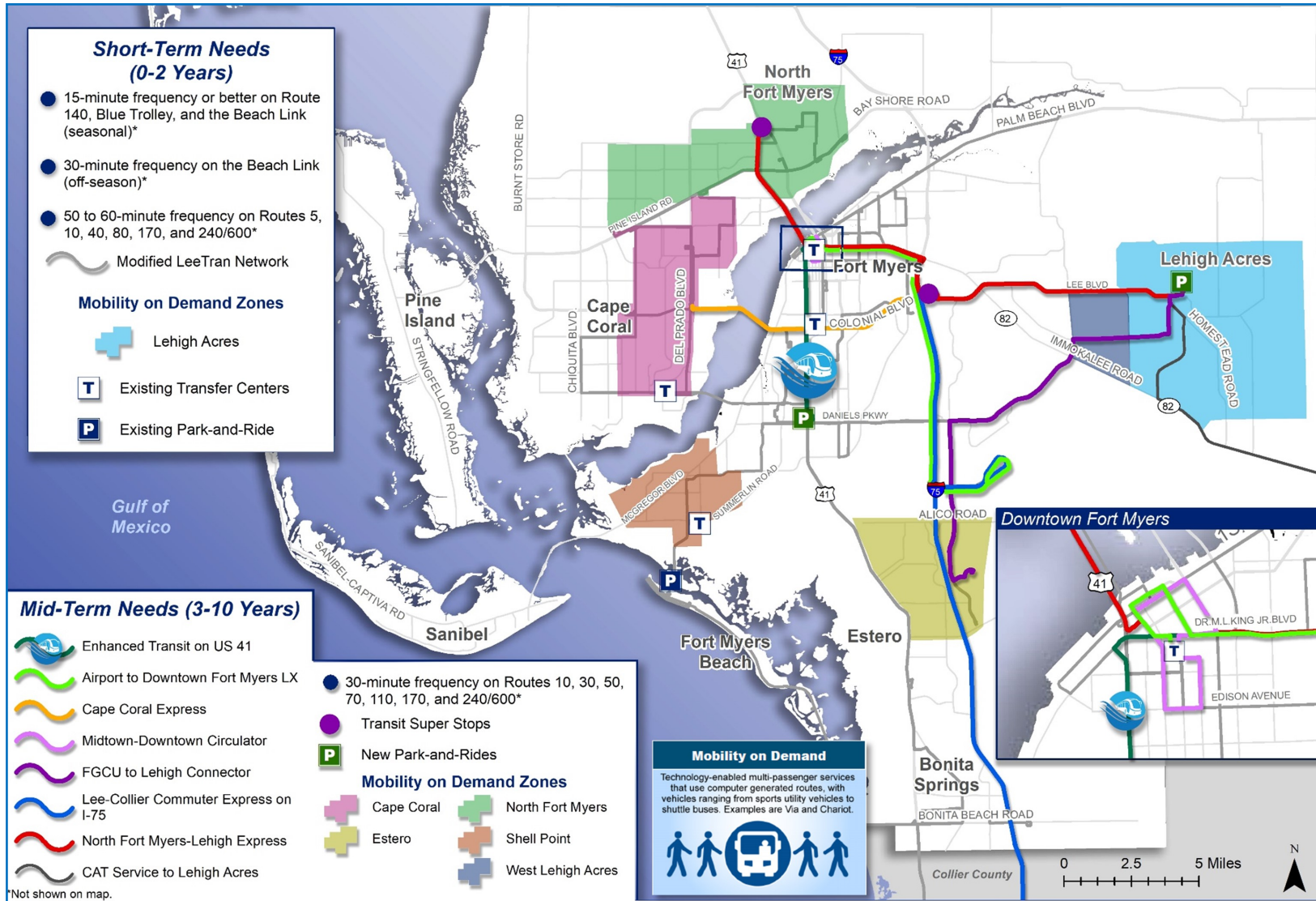
Existing LeeTran Services (2020)

Since 1974, LeeTran has provided service to Lee County. LeeTran currently serves Bonita Springs, Cape Coral, Estero, Fort Myers, Lehigh Acres, North Fort Myers, and northern Collier County (connecting with Collier Area Transit), with 23 routes operating year-round and 3 seasonal routes operating from November to April, as shown in the map below.



10-Year Transit Needs

The transit improvements illustrated on the map below were developed to meet the diverse mobility needs throughout Lee County and include increasing frequency on routes with high ridership, realigning some routes, and implementing new express bus routes, local circulator routes, and Mobility on Demand services.



10-Year Implementation Plan & Unfunded Needs

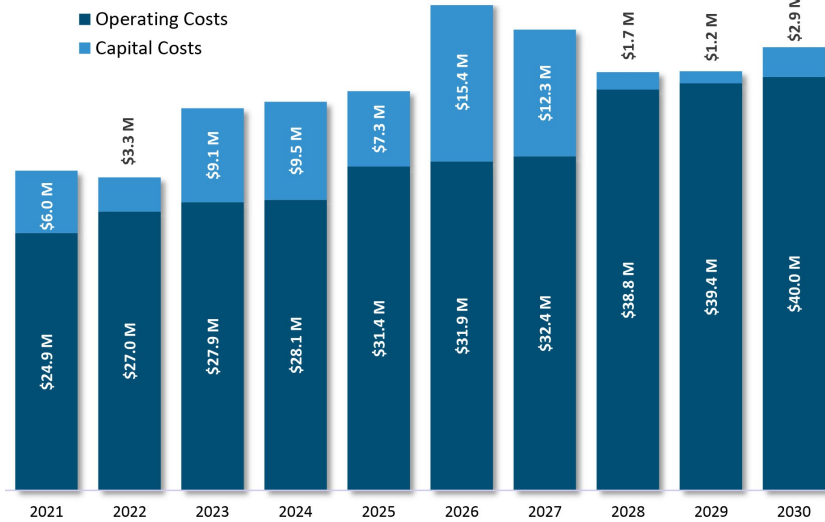
The table below summarizes the implementation plan and the funded and unfunded transit improvements in the adopted 10-Year TDP. Shown for each are the implementation year, annual operating and total capital costs, and the anticipated funding source. Transit improvements may be advanced or delayed as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

Transit Improvements	Implementation Year	Annual Operating Cost (2020\$)	Total Capital Cost (2020\$)	Potential Funding Source
EVOLVE Network				
Service Improvements				
Implementation of redesigned network (from COA)	2022	\$16,378,805	\$28,195,616	Existing
Enhanced transit on US-41 (Route 140)	2022	\$2,731,502	-	Existing
12-min frequency on Blue Trolley	2022	\$86,025	-	Existing
North Fort Myers Mobility on Demand (MOD)	2023	\$233,530	\$220,000	Existing
Shell Point MOD	2023	\$233,530	\$220,000	Existing
Cape Coral MOD	2024	\$233,530	\$220,000	Existing
Esteros MOD	2025	\$233,530	\$220,000	Existing
West Lehigh Acres MOD	2025	\$77,521	\$220,000	Existing
North Fort Myers-Lehigh Acres Express	2025	\$716,672	\$1,010,000	FDOT Service Dev/Local
30-min frequency on:				
Route 10	2025	\$406,404	\$505,000	Existing
Route 110	2025	\$894,252	\$505,000	Existing
Route 240/600	2025	\$1,555,753	\$505,000	FDOT Urban Corridor
Route 30	2028	\$354,036	\$1,010,000	Existing
Route 50	2028	\$1,200,102	\$1,515,000	Existing
Route 70	2028	\$981,438	\$1,010,000	Existing
Route 170	2028	\$735,746	\$1,010,000	Existing
45-min frequency on Route 595	2028	\$522,597	\$505,000	Existing
60-min frequency on Route 150	2028	\$178,890	\$505,000	Existing
Cape Coral Express	Unfunded	\$358,336	\$505,000	Unknown
Midtown-Downtown Circulator	Unfunded	\$1,206,676	\$1,010,000	Unknown
Lee-Collier Commuter Express on I-75	Unfunded	\$716,672	\$1,010,000	Unknown
Airport to Downtown Fort Myers LX	Unfunded	\$832,229	\$1,010,000	Unknown
FGCU-Lehigh Acres Connector	Unfunded	\$832,229	\$1,010,000	Unknown
Capital/Infrastructure/Technology/Policy Improvements				
Rosa Parks Intermodal Center expansion	2021	-	\$3,498,266	Existing
Local transit funding source evaluation	2022	-	\$130,000	Existing
Transit super-stops (two facilities)	2022	-	\$1,500,000	Existing
South Hub Park-and-Ride	2023	-	\$5,339,956	Existing
Bus Stop ADA Accessibility Transition Plan	2023	-	\$350,000	Existing
Lehigh Acres Park-and-Ride	2024	-	\$2,910,000	Existing
Improvements to bus stop Infrastructure and accessibility (yearly)	2021-30	-	\$75,000	Existing
Transit marketing/education program (yearly)	2021-30	-	\$50,000	Existing
Signal priority/queue jumps - US-41 Enhanced Transit	2022-23	-	\$1,422,000	Existing
MOD software costs (5 zones)	2022-25	-	\$125,000	Existing
Additional technology upgrades	Unfunded	-	TBD	Unknown
MOD service expansion	Unfunded	-	TBD	Unknown

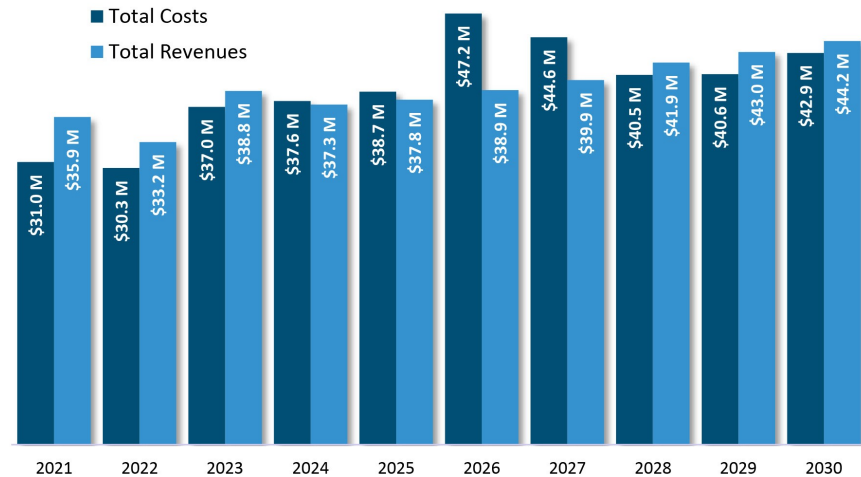
Transit Costs & Revenues

Over the next 10 years, implementing the *EvoIve* plan is projected to cost \$321.9 million for operating existing, enhanced, and new services. An additional \$68.7 million will be needed for capital to support the necessary fleet and capital infrastructure associated with the plan. The costs will continue to be funded primarily with a mix of local, State, and federal sources and with fare revenues generated by existing and new transit services. The plan has projected \$390.8 million in revenues in the next ten years to cover the costs of the plan.

**Total Operating and Capital Costs
EvoIve Plan, 2021–2030**



**Total Costs and Revenues
EvoIve Plan, 2021–2030**



Plan Implementation & Coordination

Adopting the *Evolve* plan is the first step in a longer process of bringing the TDP to reality. Key elements of plan implementation are summarized below.

Plan Implementation – Action Steps



Secure Funding for the Plan – Review each recommendation and outline steps to take in the current year and succeeding years to ensure the best chance possible of obtaining the needed funding.



Establish a Blueprint for Operational Support – Using the operational data developed as part of the COA as a base, establish a blueprint to determine how a recommended alternative will be incorporated into the LeeTran network from an operational perspective.



Engage FDOT as a Partner – Capitalize on LeeTran’s effective and timely coordination with regional representatives during the development of this plan to obtain support from regional partners, especially FDOT. Continue to engage FDOT District 1 transit staff on plan implementation.



Maximize Use of the TDP – Use the adopted TDP as a tool to justify continued investments in transit services and facilities; return on investment from the TDP should span at least the next four years, until the next major update.



Motivate by Using the TDP Annual Progress Report – Use the TDP Annual Progress Reports for the next four years to keep the TDP alive and provide the needed motivation to reiterate plan benefits.

Plan Coordination & Integration – Action Steps



Coordinate with Other Plans – Ensure consistency with key state, regional, and local plan priorities. Consider coordinating the timing of the TDP with the new Transit Asset Management Plan requirement, as both plans are designed to govern investment strategies based on needs.



Inform Other Plans – Use analyses completed during the TDP to help update required plans for ADA access and Title VI service provisions related to how the system will meet or serve older adults, persons with disabilities, and populations that fall under Title VI protections; also use the adopted TDP for subsequent planning efforts such as local comprehensive plans, area redevelopment plans, affordable housing development plans, and Florida’s Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) Needs Plan.



Assess Periodically for Efficiency – Consider an additional service efficiency assessment in 3-5 years after the new system launch and repeat it at least every five years to maintain operational health.

Next Steps

Evolve: Rethink, Revitalize, Reinvent.

With the adoption of this 10-year Transit Development Plan, LeeTran and Lee County have the opportunity to affect positive change for citizens and visitors to the southwest Florida region. The *Evolve* plan lays out a strategic transit vision and short- and long-term actions to get on the path to achieving that vision.

With its location, diversity, and community support for transit, Lee County is well-positioned to collaborate with stakeholders and partners throughout the region to make the *Evolve* plan become a reality.

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