BROWARD COUNTY TRANSIT COMPREHENSIVE OPERATIONAL ANALYSIS VIRTUAL KICKOFF MEETING

Tuesday, February 6, 2024 | 6 – 7 pm | Virtual (Zoom)

MEETING OVERVIEW

Broward County Transit (BCT) is seeking the community's input on transit service in our area to inform its Comprehensive Operational Analysis (COA). At this virtual kickoff meeting, BCT shared an overview of the project, reviewed key findings from the existing conditions analysis, discussed participants' experience with the transit system and priorities for future improvements with Mentimeter live polling, and previewed the online community survey.

The virtual kickoff meeting was held on February 6, 2024 from 6 to 7 pm via Zoom, available online and by phone. Mentimeter live, interactive polls were used to get participant input, and participants were invited to submit additional comments and questions using the chat and Q&A functions of the Zoom meeting. The agenda included:

1. Welcome

2. Project Overview

3. Existing Conditions Analysis Overview

4. Discussion

5. Online Survey

6. Closing

57 people registered to attend the event and 25 people attended the meeting, in addition to BCT staff and the consultant team. The meeting was recorded and the meeting video, summary, and polling results were shared with the project mailing list—including everyone who registered for the event—and posted to the project website, broward.org/BCT/COA.

MEETING NOTES

Welcome

Attendees were welcomed to the virtual kickoff meeting by Tim Crobons, the project manager at Nelson\Nygaard. He reviewed the meeting agenda and introduced the project team. Coree Cuff Lonergan, the CEO and General Manager of BCT, kicked off the discussion. She thanked attendees for participating and noted their feedback is invaluable in helping BCT understand what the community's needs are and how they can best serve them. She asked them to engage in the questions and keep an open mind in this process.

Housekeeping items were discussed, including that videos and microphones were turned off for participants; questions and comments could be submitted using the meeting chat or Q&A; the meeting will be recorded and posted to the project website; and the project team is here to listen to the community.

Project Overview

Tim provided an overview of the COA to start the meeting. A COA is an assessment of the transit system to determine where improvements can be made for operational effectiveness and efficiency across the network, changing travel patterns, and development patterns, typically conducted every 5-10 years. It is meant to respond to how Broward County is evolving. Key inputs for the COA include:

- Data Inputs and Analysis: How is the community growing and changing?

- Market Analysis and Travel Needs: Where is transit most needed? Where is the biggest demand for transit in the community? How are people moving around and where can transit best fit those needs?

- Public and Stakeholder Input: What does the community say is needed to help them get around most effectively by transit?

- Premium Mobility Plan (PREMO) Network: How should the rest of the transit system evolve as BCT's PREMO network—a 15-year capital investment in premium transit services like rail and bus rapid transit (BRT)—is implemented?

The COA is for the entire BCT system, covering all of Broward County and all modes of transit. The focus is on non-premium service not included in PREMO to make sure the entire county, beyond those premium services, is well covered and effectively linked to the PREMO network.

The project goals are to:

- <u>Modernize the Network:</u> Update the route network based on projected demand and PREMO.

- <u>Boost Ridership:</u> Evaluate how to increase annual ridership and make the system more attractive.

- <u>Update Service Standards and Performance Criteria:</u> Update BCT's internal service standards and performance criteria for optimal network performance.

- <u>Identify Inefficiencies:</u> Identify operational and/or systemic inefficiencies and provide solutions.

Key project deliverables will include:

- Current ridership data for the entire system.

- Current passenger travel patterns, including trip origins and destinations.

- Updated BCT service standards and policies.

- Near-term (< 5 years), mid-term (6-10 years), and long-term (11-15 years) service plans.

Recommendations may include changes to route alignments, new routes, eliminated routes, changes in frequency, changes to service hours, or introduction of new modes like Mobility on Demand.

BCT has been working on other major initiatives that relate to the COA. Tim Crobons explained the role of the recent PREMO initiative and Transit Development Plan (TDP) and how the COA works with those projects, summarized in the following table. The COA will operationalize the vision established in the TDP and integrate all transit services with the premium services from the PREMO network.

	Premium Mobility Plan (PREMO)	Transit Development Plan (TDP)	Comprehensive Operational Analysis (COA)
Purpose	Develop the new premium transit network as the backbone of the system	Align transit network vision and BCT strategic goals with changing population and development trends	Alternatives development and evaluation for the rest of the network beyond PREMO
Type	Major Capital Projects	Strategic Vision	Operational enhancements Modifications to existing service (routes, modes, frequencies)
Modes of Transit	Premium Transit (Commuter Rail, LRT, BRT, High Frequency Bus)	All modes	Focus on non-premium (Local Bus, Commuter Shuttles, Express Bus, Mobility-on-Demand) and integration with new premium services
Areas Served	Countywide	Countywide	Countywide
Timeframe	15 years (2023-2038)	10 years (FY 2024 – 2033)	15 years (2025 – 2040)
Frequency	Every 10-15 years	Minor update annually, Major update every 5 years	Updated every 5-10 years
Why	To evaluate and refine long-term goals	State funding requirement Establish big picture direction	Operationalize the TDP vision and integrate with PREMO network

Tim Crobons reviewed the project schedule.

- Phase 1 – Customer Needs and System Analysis (September 2023 – February 2024): This phase provides the basis for recommendations with onboard customer surveys, data collection, network analysis, and a State of the System report. It also includes the first round of public engagement, focused on understanding transit needs through this virtual meeting, an online survey, and a series of community pop-up events in February and March.

- Phase 2 – Draft Recommendations (March – August 2024): Based on the analysis and input from Phase 1, draft network recommendations will be developed and presented to the community in Summer 2024. There will be another round of engagement with a virtual meeting, online survey, and community pop-up events that will focus on getting feedback on the draft network.

- Phase 3 – Final Plan (September – December 2024): The final plan will be developed once feedback is received on the draft content, which will be revised to better align with community priorities. This will include near-term, mid-term, and long-term service plans.

Existing Conditions Analysis

Several data collection efforts have been underway since Fall 2023, including:

- Origin & Destination Survey (Fall 2023): Tablet-based onboard surveys were conducted with BCT customers to better understand their travel patterns. Over 7,400

surveys were completed. The resulting data is currently being processed and will provide BCT with current data on where customers are traveling, where they start their trip, how they ride the bus (including transfers), and how they end their trip.

- Automatic Passenger Counters (Fall 2023 – Early 2024): These devices were used on BCT buses to collect data on ridership for every route in the BCT system every day of the week. The resulting data is currently being processed and will provide BCT with updated stop-level ridership data.

- Customer Surveys at Transit Centers and on Buses (Fall 2023): The team has been talking to riders at transit centers and on buses about what is working and what is not and what kinds of improvements they want to see in the system.

Tim described a few key trends in Broward County that will inform transit service plans. Broward County has been growing quickly, with population growth of 12% from 2010 to 2019. The population is expected to grow over 15% by 2045. Employment grew even faster over that period, up 23% from 2010 to 2019, with 21% expected growth by 2045. Unemployment is down from a 14% peak during COVID to less than 3% today. The percent of people at or below the Federal poverty level decreased from 15% in 2015 to 13% in 2023. Based on the market analysis, all areas of higher population/employment density are served by the current bus network, though there may be opportunities to improve service offered to those areas. Additional details on these and other trends will be available in the State of the System report.

Discussion

A group discussion was facilitated using Mentimeter live polling. Participants were invited to respond to the polls using their smart phones, or to submit responses through the meeting chat.

Before jumping into the substantive questions, participants practiced using the Mentimeter tool with two warm up questions:

- Question 1 - Warm Up: How many people who live in Broward County and are employed also work in Broward County?

- Question 2 - Warm Up: What is your favorite place in Broward County to hang out on a weekend morning?

The results for the Mentimeter poll for each transit-related question are shown at the end of this summary. Key themes included:

- Main reasons participants use BCT service are to get to work, run errands, avoid the stress of driving, or get to locations where driving and parking is more difficult, like downtown and the airport.

- Most participants get to bus stops or transit centers by walking or rolling.
- The top factors that discourage participants from riding transit are that it takes too long, it is not reliable, or service is infrequent.
- Participants would be more likely to ride transit more in the future if there were more frequent service (every 10-15 minutes or faster), better connections and timed transfers, dedicated bus lanes, shade and shelters and bus stops, tap to pay fares, and technology to more accurately track bus locations.
- More service at all times of day would be appreciated, but the times participants most often said there is not enough service are 1) overnight, 2) early morning, 3) evening, and 3 (tie)) late night.
- Additional destinations participants would like to get to by transit include Weston, Davie, the airport, casinos, west Broward County, West Dania, Cooper City, and Tri-Rail stations.
- When asked to prioritize tradeoffs for investing in transit improvements, participants preferred:
  - More frequent service (over expanding to new areas)
  - Traditional fixed route service (over on-demand rideshare service)
  - More late and early service (over more service during the day)
  - Faster routes that run along major roads (over slower routes that come closer to my door)
  - More weekday service (over more weekend service)
- The types of improvements that are most important to participants are 1) improving existing route frequency and 2) better connections between routes (timed transfers).
- Participants' top requests for BCT to improve their transit experience included more frequent service (every 15 minutes or faster), better real time information about bus arrival on the app, timed transfers, tap to pay, and a more comfortable bus stop experience with shelter, shade, seating, and fans.

Online Survey

An online survey for the COA is available now through March 24. It includes multiple choice and map-based questions asking for input on improvements for specific routes and priorities for overall system improvements. It is available at bit.ly/BCTCOAsurvey. A video of the survey was shown and participants were encouraged to take the survey and share the link with their communities.

Closing

Tim closed the meeting reminding everyone to take the online survey and share it with their networks, look out for project updates through the project mailing list, and participate in the next round of engagement about draft network concepts this summer. More information is available on the project website at broward.org/BCT/COA and community members can contact the project team at bctcoa@broward.org.

Q&A RESPONSES

Participants submitted questions through the Q&A tool and the chat, these included:

Q: Does Broward County Transit Bus accept Credit Card onboard or just cash and Mobile Payment only?

A: Currently, BCT only accepts cash onboard for fare payment. Customers can also use our Mobile Ticketing App to purchase mobile tickets and present mobile tickets when they board the bus. The BCT Mobile Ticketing App accepts payments using credit/debit card, Google Pay and Apple Pay. More information about the BCT Mobile Ticketing App is available here https://www.broward.org/BCT/Pages/Mobile-Ticketing-App.aspx . BCT has plans to accept debit/credit cards onboard in the future.

Q: Bus locations should be displayed in real time. Currently they are not. Do the buses have GPS, or not?

A: The BCT MyRide Broward App does show bus locations. More information about the BCT MyRide Broward App is available here https://www.broward.org/BCT/MyRide/Pages/default.aspx .

Q: Is there some kind of API that could integrate with Google Maps like in some other places?

A: Yes, BCT is working on sharing our real time bus information with Google.

Does management compare bus GPS locations/times to where the buses are actually supposed to be? Many times the earliest scheduled loop of a bus doesn't even happen. BCT apparently doesn't even know this is happening unless/until someone emails in a complaint.

A: Please contact BCT Customer Service and provide us more detail to be able to answer your question.

Will the QR be advertised at all shelters and all buses and tri rail stops?

A: The survey will be promoted at pop-up events at transit centers and community events and flyers will be posted at transit centers.

CHAT COMMENTS

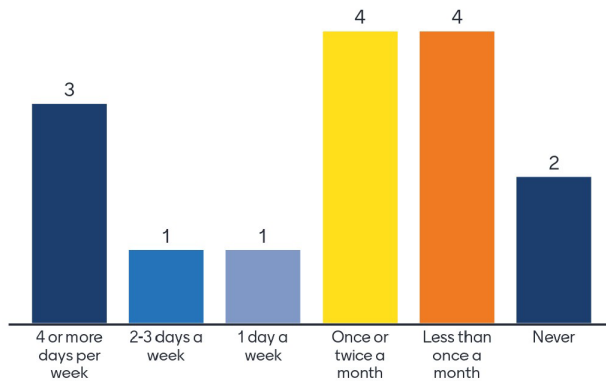Participant comments submitted through the chat included:

- "I really love the new Gillig BRT 40' buses because the motor sound is amazing and the operators are professional! Keep it up!"
- "Miami-Dade Transit is starting it's SMART South Dade TransitWay project in Homestead."
- "Thank you for this session and the opportunity for input."
- "See https://humantransit.org/basics/the-transit-ridership-recipe regarding why high frequency is so critical to sustained high ridership."
- "SOMETHING TO GO OVER:
  - New bus route with primarily travels on Griffin Road: Everglades Holiday Park to Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport, Everglades Holiday Park to US 1 (Federal Hwy) & Griffin Rd via FLL, or Everglades Holiday Park to FLL Tri-Rail
  - New US 1 Breeze route extension from Aventura Mall to Camino Real & Dixie Hwy
  - Modified route 23 during off-peak hours and new 40 ft buses (Gillig or NABI) without any community shuttles being used on that route. Some service needs to make stops at Weston Branch Library or Weston Town Center
  - New Streetcar service that serves A1A and Downtown Fort Lauderdale
  - Express service to Palm Beach County
  - New 75 Express route: CB Smith Park - Government Center Metrorail Station via I-75 Park and Ride
  - FREE FARES FOR BLIND!
  - Extra SECURITY onboard the bus and security guard will be on the bus for safety and unruly passengers."
- "Reach out to major employers, hospitals, malls, etc. to participate."

MENTIMETER POLL RESULTS

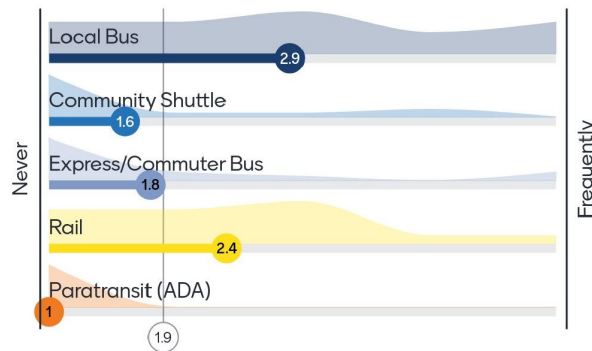*Questions 1 and 2 were warm up questions for participants to learn how to use the Mentimeter polling tool.*

Question 3 - How often do you use BCT service?
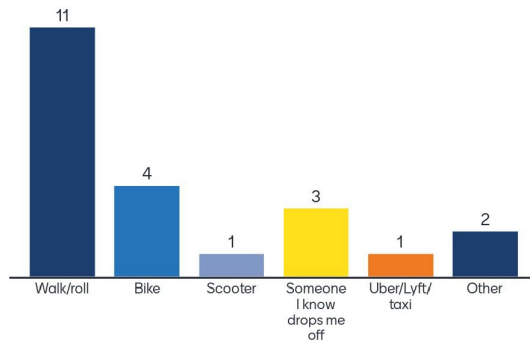
How often do you use BCT service?

4 or more days per week	2-3 days a week	1 day a week	Once or twice a month	Less than once a month	Never
3	1	1	4	4	2

Question 4 - What types of transit service do you use in Broward County?

What types of transit do you use in Broward County?

Never ← → Frequently

- Local Bus — 2.9
- Community Shuttle — 1.6
- Express/Commuter Bus — 1.8
- Rail — 2.4
- Paratransit (ADA) — 1

1.9

Question 5 - When you ride BCT how do you usually get to the stop or transit center?

When you ride BCT, how do you usually get to the stop or transit center?

Bar chart values: Walk/roll 11, Bike 4, Scooter 1, Someone I know drops me off 3, Uber/Lyft/taxi 1, Other 2

Question 6 - What are the main reasons you use BCT service?

What are the main reasons you use BCT service?

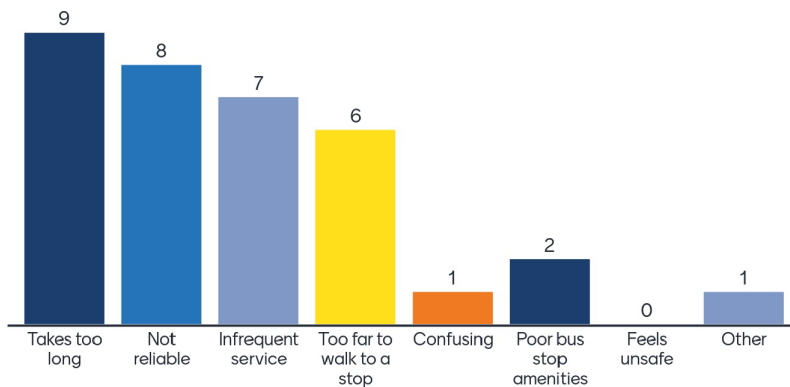|			
Work	Commute to/from work	Bad drivers. Stress free	For work mainly
Move between FTL and Miami. Go to the beach. Grocery shop.	Get to the airport without having to drive/park.	don't have a car and uber is expensive	Drop car for service

What are the main reasons you use BCT service?

Errands	I'm a transit enthusiast and I'm a YouTuber called The Transit Channel	Driving is stressful	To get downtown
Airport			

Question 7 - What discourages you from using BCT service?

What discourages you from riding transit?

Bar chart values:
- Takes too long: 9
- Not reliable: 8
- Infrequent service: 7
- Too far to walk to a stop: 6
- Confusing: 1
- Poor bus stop amenities: 2
- Feels unsafe: 0
- Other: 1

Question 8 - What would make you more likely to use BCT service in the future?

What would make you more likely to ride transit more in the future?

On time service	Frequent service	Dedicate bus lanes to improve timing	More direct bus routes
More frequent, better connections	New BRT and Rail service!	Reliability and shade for stops	Frequency of 10 minutes or better on my main routes. Don't have to worry about missing the bus or planning my day around bus schedule.

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What would make you more likely to ride transit more in the future?

Dedicated bus lanes to improve timing	Faster, better destination selection, better frequency	If the buses didn't have to go to terminal hubs. If the frequency was sub 10 min. If transfers were better timed. If the bus stops had fans in the summer.	Frequency every 10-15 minutes; greatly increased reliability; earlier weekday service
Improved route coverage	Quicker times to get there and more frequent pickups. Like if I didn't have to wait 30 minutes for a pickup.	Better tech info available	Accurate easier live tracking so I don't miss a bus

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## What would make you more likely to ride transit more in the future?

Smarter transit. Curretly busses are schedulednto arrive at the same time, so you mustnwait again to make your connection or run like Usan bolt

Shade and seating at bus stops!!!

tap to pay

Yes! Tap to pay

Lower fares

Wifi on tansit

Question 9 - Which times of day have enough transit service available and which need more service?

Which times of day have enough transit service available and which need more service?
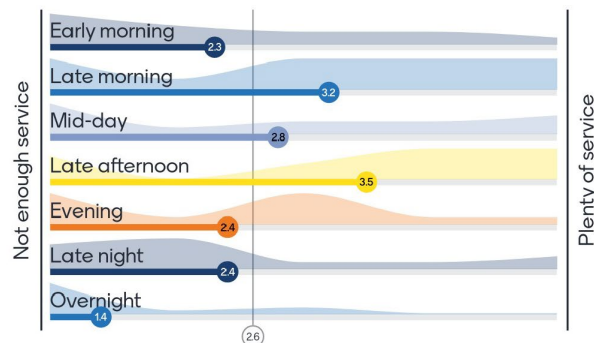
Question 10 - Are there additional destinations you would like to get to by transit?

Are there additional destinations you would like to get to by transit?

There are large coverage gaps in Weston and Davie	Airport	Plantation to FLL Airport, in a more direct way than currently	Out west.
Casinos	at least one non-sterling route in west davie/cooper city. More direct lines in West Dania.	Yes, Weston. NO service in the AFTERNOON	New route that travels to Griffin Road from Everglades Holiday to FLL or US 1

Are there additional destinations you would like to get to by transit?

Tri-rail stations	Airports

Question 11 - How would you prioritize these tradeoffs for investing in transit improvements?

How would you prioritize these tradeoffs for investing in transit improvements?

More frequent service

11

Expand service to new areas

2

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How would you prioritize these tradeoffs for investing in transit improvements?

On-demand rideshare service

3

Traditional fixed route service

9

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How would you prioritize these tradeoffs for investing in transit improvements?
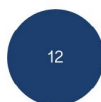
More service during the day

6

More late and early service

7

How would you prioritize these tradeoffs for investing in transit improvements?

Faster routes that run along major roads

12

Slower routes that come closer to my door

0

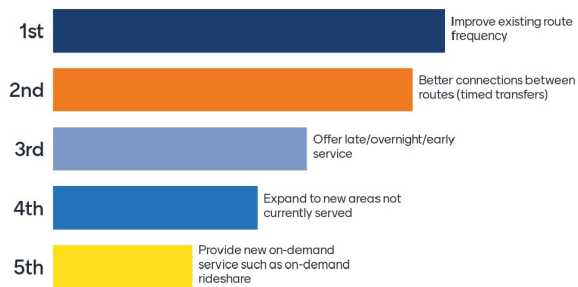## How would you prioritize these tradeoffs for investing in transit improvements?

More weekday service

9

More weekend service

3

Question 12 - What types of transit improvements are most important to you?

What types of transit improvements are most important to you?

Rank	Improvement
1st	Improve existing route frequency
2nd	Better connections between routes (timed transfers)
3rd	Offer late/overnight/early service
4th	Expand to new areas not currently served
5th	Provide new on-demand service such as on-demand rideshare

Question 13 - What is your top request for BCT to improve your transit experience?

What is your top request for BCT to improve your transit experience?

New Proterra buses!	On time frequent service	Please provide shelters and ideally fans at bus stops	Frequency should never be greater than every 15 minutes
Less circuitous local routes	Frequent service	Better real time information and marketing/info	Make it faster to get from point A to B (faster trips and transfers)

What is your top request for BCT to improve your transit experience?

Improve frequency of major routes to 10 minutes all day or better	Frequent service	Tap to pay. Frequency10 or less. Less hubs. Every stop NEEDS bench and shelter, my older neighbors need dignity. Better tracking also the app is so bad for 2024.	Does BCT accept credit card onboard the bus
Payment options	Frequency	Late night 95 express service	Tap pay and better communication on where and when bus arrives

What is your top request for BCT to improve your transit experience?

Sceduling busses to make connection, instead of busses crossing each other at the same time

75 express to MIA