

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Palm Tran, Palm Beach County's public transportation agency, serves more than 3,500 bus stops and provided more than 10 million rides in 2007. Palm Tran is proposing to construct a Satellite Bus Facility with a 7,600 ft² maintenance/bus storage building, a parking area for 27 buses and 31 cars to serve the 25,000+ citizens of western Palm Beach County. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) is considering a grant application for financial assistance to Palm Tran for the Satellite Bus Facility in accordance 49 U.S.C. 5309 Capital Investment Grants and Loans. The proposed facility will reduce the number of round trip miles for buses serving the western county area, enabling Palm Tran to meet the agency mission in the western region of Palm Beach County in a cost effective manner.

The purpose of the Palm Tran Satellite Bus Facility project is to provide maintenance/fueling facilities for buses serving the rural communities of western Palm Beach County. This facility is needed because currently, to perform preventive maintenance, the buses are driven to the West Palm Beach facility (80 miles roundtrip), a spare bus is sent from West Palm Beach to Belle Glade to cover the bus scheduled for preventative maintenance, and then both buses have to make the trip back. Costs associated with travel, towing, and increased maintenance frequency are over \$400,000 more than for buses serving the eastern county. The Proposed Action would significantly reduce wear and tear on the buses, reduce response time to breakdowns and minimize service interruptions, and lower Palm Tran's operational costs.

Three Alternative Sites and a No Build Alternative were analyzed in accordance with 23CFR 771.119. The three sites that were identified were: 1) Pahokee Fleet Property, 2) Pahokee Animal Care and Control Property, and 3) West County Governmental Center and Correctional Facility (Proposed Action). The following factors were taken into consideration when picking the alternative sites in accordance with the Purpose and Need:

- The site must be located in the western portion of Palm Beach County.
- The site must provide easy access to the roads served by existing Palm Tran bus routes.
- Impacts to social and economic resources, cultural resources, physical resources, and natural resources must be minimal.

The Pahokee Fleet Property and Pahokee Animal Care and Control Property were not chosen because they were closer to residential development than the Proposed Action, had aesthetic and environmental justice issues, and were located along only a single bus route. The No Build Alternative was not chosen because the costs for Palm Tran to continue operating as currently being done will affect Palm Tran's ability to provide effective, safe, and reliable public transportation to west county residents, especially in light of recent tax cuts.

The West County Governmental Center and Correctional Facility was chosen as the Proposed Action because it met the requirements of the purpose and need and would not incur significant social, economic, cultural, physical, or natural resources impacts. In addition, this site is located at a nexus of the existing bus routes and was therefore a logical location for placement of the maintenance facility.