

Votran Title VI Program Update 2013



Prepared for Federal Transit Administration

By Votran Staff

(Recipient number 1081)

950 Big Tree Road South Daytona, FL 32119 Prepared: December 2013



U.S. Department
Of Transportation

Region IV

230 Peachtree Street, N.W.
Suite 800
Atlanta, GA 30303

**Federal Transit
Administration**

February 12, 2014

Jim Dorsten
Director of Administration
Volusia County Transit Management
950 Big Tree Road
Daytona Beach, FL 32119

Re: Title VI Program Concurrence – Recipient ID No. 1081

Dear Mr. Dorsten:

This letter is to confirm that we have received the Volusia County Transit Management's (Votran) Title VI Program submitted on January 10, 2014 and documentation provided on February 11th. This Title VI Program submission is required pursuant to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title 49, Chapter 53, Section 5332 of the United States Code; and the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) Circular 4702.1B, "Title VI Program Guidelines for Federal Transit Administration Recipients," effective October 1, 2012.

We have reviewed your program and determined that it meets the requirements set out in the FTA's Title VI Circular 4702.1B. Please plan to submit a Title VI Program by December 1, 2016 by attaching it to your Recipient Profile in FTA's TEAM-Web. Please delete any version of the program in TEAM that this submission is replacing. Your Title VI Program will expire 60 days after the due date, on January 31, 2017. If we have not received required information by the time your Title VI Program expires, Votran may experience delays in processing grants or draw-down restrictions.

Thank you for your ongoing cooperation in meeting all of the FTA civil rights program requirements. A copy of this letter has been attached to your Recipient Profile in TEAM. Please contact me at (404) 865-5471 or at Carlos.Gonzalez3@dot.gov for any questions.

Sincerely,

Carlos A. Gonzalez
Regional Civil Rights Officer

cc: Dr. Yvette G. Taylor, Regional Administrator, FTA Region IV (Electronic)
Monica McCallum, Regional Division Chief, FTA Civil Rights (Electronic)

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INTRODUCTION

In 2002, Volusia County Transit Management, Inc., (d.b.a. “Votran”), submitted a report to the Federal Transit Administration, (FTA), providing for a program to ensure that transit services are equitably distributed, and provide equal access and mobility to any person without regard to race, color, or national origin. This program was approved by the FTA through September 30, 2005. In 2004, 2006, 2010 a Title VI Program update was submitted and accepted by FTA.

This major update has been prepared pursuant to Title VI of the *Civil Rights Act of 1964*; FTA Circular 4702.1 B “Title VI Program Guidelines for Federal Transit Administration Recipients,” (October 1, 2012). Also, this update summarizes the expansion of transit service that has occurred since the last program was approved.

Service delivery review and analyses are typically performed as part of the Title VI program and during the major update to the Transit Development Plan. This document is developed every 5 years. During the intervening period surveys are conducted that when route changes are reviewed.

A comprehensive review of service is conducted as part of the Transportation Development Plan, the most recent having been completed October 2011, approved by Volusia County Council and published online <http://votran.org/FinalTDP.pdf> . These Title VI guiding policies were contained in that document:

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act

Votran is committed to ensuring that no person shall on the basis of race, color or national origin, sex, age, disability, family or religious status, as provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, and the Florida Civil Rights Act of 1992 be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination or retaliation under any Votran program or activity.

Environmental Justice

Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the 1994 U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) Order on Environmental Justice requires that the transportation planning process seeks to identify the needs of low-income and minority populations. Votran is committed to enhancing public involvement activities to identify and address the needs of minority and low-income populations in making transportation decisions. Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

Public transportation providers receiving federal funding from the DOT have a responsibility, under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, to take reasonable steps to ensure Limited English

Proficiency (LEP) persons have meaningful access to benefits, services, information, and other important programs and activities. Persons with LEP include individuals who have a limited ability to read, write, speak, or understand English. Votran is committed to creating a positive environment for persons with LEP and ensuring that they have an opportunity for full participation in public involvement activities.

Special Accommodations

Persons who require special accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) or persons who require translation service to participate in public meeting activities are requested to notify Votran at least forty-eight hours prior to workshops or meetings. Requests for alternative format materials or translation should be made in advance to accommodate the development and provision of these materials. Votran public meeting notices will include the Votran staff contact phone number and deadline date for requesting special accommodations at workshops or meetings.

SECTION 1 – General Reporting Requirements

1.1 Notice to the Public

The Votran Title VI program is posted on the web site. Votran encourages feedback, complaints, comments and enquiries. Contact information is available on the interior of the bus, at our service plazas, on our maps and schedules, on the signs, and through our web site.

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, disability, or marital status in programs & activities receiving Federal financial assistance (42 U.S.C. Section 2000d).

VOTRAN is committed to practicing non-discrimination. If you believe you have been subjected to discrimination you may file a complaint with the VOTRAN Civil Rights Officer at 386-756-7496, or with the Florida Commission on Human Relations at 850-488-7082 or 800-342-8170 (voice messaging), or with the Federal Transit Administration Office of Civil Rights, Attention Title VI Program, East Building, 5th Floor-TCR, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE, Washington, DC 20590

Título VI de la Ley de Derechos Civiles de 1964 prohíbe la discriminación por motivos de raza, color, religion, elgenero, la discapacidad, o el estado civil origen nacional en programas y actividades que reciben asistencia financiera federal (42 USC Sección 2000d).

VOTRAN se ha comprometido a practicar la no discriminación. Si usted cree que ha sido objeto de discriminación puede presentar queja ante VOTRAN Oficial de Derechos Civiles en las oficinas de VOTRAN en 386-756-7496, o con la Comisión de la Florida en relaciones humanas en 850-488-7082 o 800-342-8170 (mensajería de voz), o con la Oficina de Administración de Tránsito Federal de Derechos Civiles, Programa de Atención Título VI, Edificio Este, 5 ° piso-TCR, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20590

1.2 Complaint Procedure

A complaint procedure and the complaint form is established as part of the approved Title VI program. The complaint form appears in Appendix 1.

Title VI Complaint Procedure

1. Any person who believes that he or she, or any specific class of persons, has been subjected to discrimination or retaliation prohibited by the Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, and related statutes, may file a written complaint. All written complaints submitted to Votran's Customer Service Department shall be referred immediately by the Assistant General Manager (AGM) of Customer Service to the Florida Department of Transportation's (FDOT) District Five Title VI Coordinator for processing in accordance with approved State procedures.

2. Verbal and non-written complaints received by Votran's Customer Service Department shall be resolved informally by the AGM of Customer Services. If the issue has not been satisfactorily resolved through informal means, or if at any time the person(s) request(s) to file a formal written complaint, the AGM of Customer Service shall refer the complaint to the FDOT's District Five Title VI Coordinator for processing in accordance with approved State procedures
3. The AGM of Customer Service will advise the FDOT's District Five Title VI Coordinator within five (5) calendar days of receipt of the allegations. The following information will be included in every notification to the FDOT's District Five Title VI Coordinator:
 - (a) Name, address, and phone number of complaint.
 - (b) Name(s) and address (es) of Respondent.
 - (c) Basis of complaint (i.e., race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, familial status or retaliation.)
 - (d) Date of alleged discriminatory act(s).
 - (e) Date of complaint received by Votran
 - (f) A statement of the complaint.
 - (g) Other agencies (state, local, or Federal) where the complaint has been filed.
 - (h) An explanation of the actions that Votran has taken or proposed to resolve the allegation(s) raise in the complaint.
4. Within ten (10) calendar days, the AGM of Customer Service will acknowledge receipt of the allegation(s), inform the Complainant of action taken or proposed action to process the allegation(s), and advise the complainant of other avenues of redress available, such as the FDOT's Equal Opportunity Office (EOO).
5. Within sixty (60) calendar days, the AGM of Customer Service will conduct and complete a review of the verbal or non-written allegation(s) and based on the information obtained, will render a recommendation for action in a report of findings to the General Manager of Votran.
6. Within ninety (90) calendar days of the verbal or non-written allegation(s) receipt, the AGM of Customer Service will notify the Complainant in writing of the final decision reached, including the proposed disposition of the matter. The notification will advise the Complainant of his/her right to file a formal complaint with the FDOT's EOO, if they are dissatisfied with the final decision rendered by Votran. The AGM of Customer Service will also provide the FDOT's District Five Title VI Coordinator with a copy of this decision and summary of findings.

7. The AGM of Customer Service will maintain a log of all verbal and non-written complaints received by Votran. The log will include the following information:
 - (a) Name of Complainant.
 - (b) Name of Respondent.
 - (c) Basis of Complaint (i.e., race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, familial status or retaliation).
 - (d) Date verbal or non-written complaint was received by Votran.
 - (e) Date Votran notified the FDOT's District Five Title VI Coordinator of the verbal or non-written complaint.
 - (f) Explanation of the actions Votran has taken or proposed to resolve the issue raised in the complaint.

1.3 Active Lawsuits or Complaints

Votran has no active lawsuits or complaints alleging discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin with respect to service or other transit benefits. No such lawsuits or complaints have been filed since the previous Title VI report.

1.4 Public Participation Plan

With its authority and mission to serve Volusia County with a full array of mobility options, Votran maintains a program to proactively inform the public and afford public involvement in the early development and implementation state of Votran services, service changes, fare adjustments, capital investments, and planning activities when appropriate in accordance with federal and state rules and regulations. It is the intent of Votran to ensure its actions are reasonable, non capricious, and considerate of public comment in its mission to provide mobility services for the welfare and convenience of residents and visitors.

Votran operates programs without regard to race, color, and national origin.

Votran implements its public involvement program by utilizing continuous communications and various outreach techniques appropriate to the proposed action to be taken and the public groups to be affected. In accordance with Votran's Public Involvement Program, these Administrative Operating Procedures have been developed to ensure proper public input to the development and implementation of Votran mobility services.

There are two types of activities for which procedures are established:

- 1) Activities that require public involvement based on federal and/or state regulations:
and

- 2) Activities for which Votran desires public involvement as part of its overall strategies to provide market driven transportation services.

Below are specific activities that warrant public involvement for the two types of activities.

Fare Increases

Required Activities

Fare increases are increases to the base full adult fare. When the full adult fare is increased, discount fares and fare media may also be increased at the same time. Fare increases are adopted by the Volusia County Council. Once initiated, the General Manager is to conduct the following activities to solicit public input:

1. Prepare notices in the form of press releases and notices on-board buses;
2. Schedule public hearings;
3. Notice public hearings in accordance with notice procedures below;
4. Hold public hearings to gain public input.

Other Activities Related to Fare Increases – Not Required

When deemed appropriate and reasonable, the General Manager may also elect to conduct other activities to solicit public comment, including but not limited to:

1. Hold public workshops in communities affected by the fare increases.
2. Make presentations to local jurisdictions;
3. Make presentations to business and community groups; and
4. Publicize the fare increase via promotions on radio, television, and newspapers.

Service Reductions

Service Reductions occur when Votran does the following to an individual route or to set of routes:

- > Reduce the span of service hours (hours in a day when service operates);
- > Reduce the days in which service operates;
- > Reduce the frequency of service;
- > Elimination of a route, unless the route is a planned service development or experimental services that has been in existence less than two years.

Require Activities

Public involvement is required if any of the above activities impact more than 10% of an individual route total service hours or 10% of an individual route's current ridership. When the General Manager deems that one or both criteria have been met, the following activities will occur.

1. Make presentation to the Volusia County Council;
2. Schedule a public hearing;
3. Publish public hearing in accordance with notice procedures listed below; and
4. Hold public hearing to gain public input.

Other Activities Related to Service Reductions – Not Required

When deemed appropriate and reasonable, the General Manager may also elect to conduct other activities to solicit public comment, including but not limited to:

Hold public workshops in communities affected by the service reductions;

Make presentations to local jurisdictions;

Make presentations to business and community groups; and

Publicize service alternatives via promotions on radio, television and in newspapers.

Capital Investments

Capital Improvement Projects (CIP), shall be programmed in the annual update of Votran's *Transportation Development Plan* and the Volusia Transportation Planning Organization's (VTPO), *Transportation Improvement Program*. VTPO provides a process for early consultation and public involvement to citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of transportation agencies, private providers of transportation, other interested parties, and local jurisdiction concerns. The TPO presents all key issues to its technical committees, and the Citizens Advisory Committee, which is comprised of private citizens in the urban area. Public hearings are also held on the *Long Range Transportation* and the *Transportation Improvement Program* prior to adoption by the VTPO.

The public involvement process will be as follows:

1. Once annually, Votran will develop a Capital Improvement Program (CIP), proposed to be funded with federal funding.
2. The CIP shall then be incorporated into the *Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)*, and submitted to the TPO for Consideration.
3. The TPO then completes a public involvement process that includes consulting with technical and citizens committees, holding a public hearing, and final adoption by the Volusia Transportation Planning Organization (VTPO).

Public comments received regarding the CIP or TIP will be considered by Votran throughout the adoption process and incorporated into final programs.

Public Notice

When formal public notice is warranted for public hearings, Votran shall publish notice at least twenty-one (21), days prior to proposed action(s). The notice shall include:

1. Proposed of public hearing;
2. The date, time, and location of the public hearing;
3. Address and business hours whereby information regarding the action can be available for public review;
4. Contact address and period of time in which written public comment will be received;
5. Contact telephone number for public to gain additional information.
6. Votran maps and schedules are available in large print and audio. Currently Votran is working with Volusia County Community Public Information to provide translation in Spanish.

After the public hearing and at the conclusion of public comment period, the General Manager is charged with summarizing and packaging all public comments for presentation to the Volusia County Council prior to the time action is taken.

Public hearings conducted by the Volusia County Council shall be at regularly scheduled monthly meetings that are published each year for the following year. Public hearings by staff may be conducted at any time on federal or state requirements or based on the impacts to a particular community or customer base. Notice provisions for public hearings shall be the same as those indicated above.

All public comments received through any of the means listed above will be summarized and presented to the Volusia County Council prior to adoption or implementation of the action taken.

Public Outreach Activities

Public outreach is not required but is aggressively pursued by Votran and may take various forms tailored to the specific activity involved. Public outreach activities are designed to increase public awareness of Votran, survey public attitudes regarding transit improvements, and to gain public consensus and support for the importance of public transportation to the quality of life in the region. Votran will seek to maintain a comprehensive and continuous public involvement program to include such efforts as:

- I. Development and update of the *Transportation Development Plan* and *Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan*
- II. Volusia Transportation Planning Organization (VTPO), Coordination – includes participation in the Technical Committee, Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee, Board meetings, and presentations when appropriate to the Citizens Advisory Committee.

- A. Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) – annual submission to the VTPO.
 - B. Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) – annual submission of proposed planning projects to the funding in the UPWP.
 - C. Long Range Transportation Plan – participation and input into development of local jurisdiction transportation system.
- III. Votran Customer Service
- A. Telephone system that consists of Service Representative Response that enables callers to retrieve information regarding Votran services and leave voice messages for further follow up.
 - B. Internet E-mail with response from Votran staff.
 - C. Web site <http://votran.org/>
 - D. Web comment form <http://votran.org/form2.htm>
- IV. Speakers' Bureau – includes presentations by Votran staff to community groups, business organizations, elected officials, and neighborhood/community associations.
- V. Information and Awareness Program – Includes promotions presenting the Votran image in the community to riding and non-riding customers.

1.5 Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

Votran attempts to provide information to LEP Persons in a variety of ways.

1. All Votran printed schedules/user guides, etc. are printed in English and Spanish.
2. Customer Service Surveys are printed in both English and Spanish.
3. A Spanish Language Interpreter is on contract with Votran for translation services.
4. Numerous Votran employees are bi-lingual and available to translate for riders which are LEP persons.

Public notices for inviting the community to meetings concerning the Transit Development Plan and the Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan were translated into Spanish. Onboard survey of approximately 4,500 riders was conducted in English and Spanish. The update process for this important plans invited specific representatives from minority community groups to participate in service review.

Votran has steps to provide language assistance for LEP persons seeking meaningful access to Votran services as required by Executive Order 13166. A Limited English Proficiency person is one who does not speak English as their primary language and who has a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English.

This chapter details the methods that Votran uses for persons who may need language assistance and information for future plan updates.

In developing the plan while determining the Votran's extent of obligation to provide LEP services, Votran undertook a U.S. Department of Transportation four factor LEP analysis which considers the following: 1) The number or proportion of LEP persons eligible in the Votran service area who maybe served or likely to encounter an Votran program, activity, or service; 2) the frequency with which LEP individuals come in contact with an Votran services; 3) the nature and importance of the program, activity or service provided by the Votran to the LEP population; and 4) the resources available to the Votran and overall costs to provide LEP assistance. A brief description of these considerations is provided in the following section.

Four Factor Analyses

1. The number or proportion of LEP persons eligible in the Votran service area who maybe served or likely to encounter a Votran program, activity, or service.

Votran examined the County of Volusia data included in the Census Bureau's American Community Surveys (2006 – 2010 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates) and was able to determine number of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) persons eligible to be served, likely to be served or likely to be encountered through its programs, services or activities. Data for Volusia County indicated that 4.6% of households speak English "less than very well". A further breakdown of the data showed that 3.0% speak Spanish as the primary language. Other languages spoken in households that speak English "less than very well" include Indo-European (0.9%), Asian and Pacific Islander (0.4%) and Other's (0.2%). After reviewing a breakdown of Volusia County Spanish LEP populations by city, (2006 – 2010 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates), it became clear that much of the data was not statistically significant when viewed on a local level. However, the data did appear to indicate a slight concentration of Spanish speaking LEP persons in the city of Deltona (8.6%) and the town of Pierson (12.8%).

2. The frequency with which LEP individuals come in contact with a Votran program, activity, or service

Votran assesses the frequency at which staff and drivers have or could possibly have contact with LEP persons. This includes documenting phone inquiries and verbally surveying drivers. Votran has an occasional request for interpreters and requests for translated Votran documents.

3. The importance of the program, activity, and services to LEP persons

There is no large geographic concentration of any one type of LEP individuals in the Votran service area. The overwhelming majority of the non English speaking persons are Spanish.

Therefore, there is a lack of any social, service, professional and leadership organizations within the Votran service area that focuses on outreach or membership of LEP individuals. System maps have Spanish language information to assist the community to access services.

4. The resources available to Votran and overall costs

Votran assessed its available resources that could be used for providing LEP assistance. This included identifying how much a professional interpreter and translation service would cost on as needed basis, which documents would be the most valuable to be translated if and when the populations supports, taking an inventory of available organizations that the Votran could partner with for outreach and translation efforts, and what level of staff training is needed.

After analyzing the four factors, the Votran developed the approach in the following section for assisting persons of limited English proficiency.

Methods for assisting LEP persons

1. Bus schedules: The primary publication in use for transmitting service description is the published schedule. It contains service description in Spanish specifically on the subjects of: Welcome message containing system overview; fare information and where to buy special passes; travel tips on how to ride the bus. This document is on the web.
2. Persons with disabilities: Votran's Para transit service is described in a guide book which has been approved by the Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board. It is also published in Spanish. A spoken version can be distributed on tape. All of these formats are on the web for download.
3. Language assistance: The online translation applications are used to provide written assistance whenever requested. Customer service staff will identify circumstances requiring an interpreter. The nature of the language assistance varies and each special circumstance is reviewed by the Customer Service manager or an Operations Supervisor.
4. Public Notices: As service change may affect riders in the west Volusia area with higher representation of minorities, the notice is published in Spanish.
5. Special language needs: Votran's Customer Service Manager has service arrangements with travel training providers in order to assist any person who needs interpretation or language assistance.

1.6 Minority Representation On Committees And Councils

Recipients that have transit-related, non-elected planning boards, advisory councils or committees, or similar bodies, the membership of which is selected by the recipient, must provide a table depicting the membership of those committees broken down by race, and a description of efforts made to encourage the participation of minorities on such committees.

As a division of the Volusia County Government, Votran’s decision-making body is the Volusia County Council. Members of the Volusia County Council are elected representatives. Votran appoints a representative for each committee of the Volusia Transportation Planning Organization as follows:

TPO Committees	Gender	Minority
Technical Coordinating Committee	Female	White
Citizens’ Advisory Committee	Male	Black
Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee	Male	White
Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board	Female	White

1.7 Monitoring Sub-recipients

Votran is the FTA designated recipient but does not have any arrangements with sub recipients. All contracted service is monitored in compliance with FTA requirements.

1.8 Title VI Equity Analysis

The continuing limitations of the economic impact to public services led the Volusia County Council to implement a fare increase. The last fare increase was February 2007. The Votran Fare Policy is published on the web at <http://votran.org/farepolicy.htm> . A far reaching effort was made to involve all members of the community in the proposed rate adjustment. The fare equity analysis was provided to the FTA Office of Civil Rights in November 2013. The fare equity analysis was reviewed by the Volusia County Council members during the November 2013 public meeting where they resolved to implement the fare increase.

1.9 Board Approval of Title VI Documentation

The approval by Volusia County Council is pending the satisfactory review of this document by FTA.

SECTION 2. Program Specific Requirements

VOTRAN provides this section according to the FTA guidance for agencies that operate less than 50 fixed-route vehicles in peak operation. As the designated recipient for an urbanized area exceeding 200,000 Population, review and analyses are typically performed as part of the Title VI program and during the major update to the Transit Development Plan. A comprehensive

review of service is conducted as part of the Transportation Development Plan, the most recent having been completed October 2011 and published on our web site. This document is developed every 5 years. The most recent assessment of service was conducted under contract in 2011. No disparities were identified.

Votran has established a service review process in support of the Volusia County budget system. The Executive Committee is challenged to 1) review and evaluate service performance and efficiency, 2) review and incorporate customer requests and comments into service changes, 3) coordinate service change work tasks throughout the organization to ensure proper and timely implementation, 4) assist in prioritizing short service changes, and 5) review equity and accessibility of service.

The administration of service change process is an organization wide responsibility. Coordination of public involvement is provided by Heather Blanck, Assistant General Manager for Planning, Marketing and Customer Service. Final approval of service delivery decisions rests with Steven Sherrer, General Manager, of Votran.

2.1 Service Standards

Votran service standards and policies are outlined below.

Vehicle Load:

Votran addresses vehicle overloads by increasing frequency or placing higher capacity vehicles on overloaded routes. Seasonal or short term unexpected vehicle overloads are handled through the use of “tripper” buses until a system service change can be prepared to increase the scheduled frequency on the targeted route. Votran has a service standard specifying load factors shall not exceed 150% of vehicle capacity in peak period.

Headways:

Votran currently operates 21 fixed-routes, 2 flexible routes, and Paratransit Gold Service for older adults and persons with disabilities. A majority of the routes operate Monday through Saturday. Service spans from approximately 6 a.m. to 7 p.m., with an average of 60-minute headways. There are 4 routes (Routes 3,4,10 and 15) that have 30 minute headways during the daytime service, serving the core area of Daytona Beach and the census tract with the most African Americans.

Some routes begin earlier and/or operate later than others. On weekdays, and Saturdays, service is provided between 6:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. On Sundays and holidays, service is provided

between 7:00 p.m. More detailed service description is in the Table 2.0

Votran must balance the service provided with available funding. The current configuration of service best meets the demand of when and where service is needed. The unique limitations of each route compose the gaps in the overall service network. Votran will address as funding becomes available.

On-time Performance

Votran monitors on-time performance and records the number of early, on-time, and late arrivals at major time points. The on-time service standard is 90%. Fixed route: the technology records “early” as any time point reached more than 59 seconds in advance of the scheduled arrival time; a departure that is 5 minutes or later is recorded as “late”. Paratransit service: any arrival time after the appointment time is recorded as late. System performance is tabulated on a monthly basis and reviewed by management team members.

In addition Votran’s Customer Service Department tracks all complaints. The process includes logging the complaint on a Service Report and assigning a tracking number. The reports are entered into a tracking system and are reviewed regularly by the Complaint Review Committee, which determines the appropriate corrective action.

There are no capacity constraints at this time.

Service Availability

Under the *American with Disabilities Act of 1990*, transit agencies are required to provide access to services via accessible fixed route buses or complementary Paratransit service. For disabled passengers unable to functionally access a fixed route stop, Paratransit services are offered for the ¾ mile legal limits. All fixed route vehicles are equipped for full ADA accessibility.

Service availability was enhanced in the Spring of 2000 with the Bike Rack Program. Votran’s entire fixed route bus fleet are bicycle accessible. Individuals who cannot access a bus stop within a comfortable walking distance and/or those who prefer to combine the use of their bicycle with the convenience of riding a bus, can now access any fixed route bus in the system. Votran’s program further extends customer access to Volusia County’s fixed

route network throughout the service areas. This allows for more transit riders to utilize their bike to get to and from their bus stop.

2.2 Service Policies

The Votran ensures the equitable distribution of capital improvements is guided by the following policies.

Distribution of Transit

Amenities:

Votran participated in the 2013 update to the FDOT document on the subject entitled “Accessing Transit”. Votran is working with a contractor to produce engineering documents for bus stop accessibility improvements in the unincorporated part of Volusia County. The next phase of the project will be the construction of concrete bus stop pads meeting ADA accessibility guidelines. Research findings for the 2011 major update of the Transit Development Plan identified a major need for continued enhancements in transit amenities throughout the service area including shelters, park and ride facilities, and Superstops/Transit Centers. In recognition of these needs, Votran provides the following:

Passenger Shelters:

Over 30 shelters have been installed in commercial and residential areas with high passenger boardings for specific customer needs. As funding becomes available, Votran installs shelters based on the route utilization and customer requests. Partnerships with private interests as well as government jurisdictions are highly important with siting shelters. Oftentimes there is limited public right of way available.

Despite such challenges, Votran’s shelter program includes minority customers. In Volusia County service area, 15 of 30 (50%), are sited within minority census tracts.

Transfer Facilities:

Votran's transfer plaza serves as a transfer hub for eighteen routes in the core of the service area African-American community (Census Tract 819).

Vehicle Assignment

Buses are assigned to all routes for each system service change. Some buses are assigned to specific runs based on load factors (larger buses on more heavily used routes, small buses on less frequently used routes), road factors, and public concern. Buses are assigned to routes based on daily mileage. This technique ensures Votran that all vehicles in the fleet meet the mileage replacement criteria.

2.3 Implementation of Service Changes

Votran continues to monitor service delivery on a monthly basis. Votran continues to research methods to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of all routes.

Internal reviews have been performed annually as the economy continues to pose challenges for continuation of service. Throughout the year the Volusia County Council brings each of their departments to a public meeting to review their levels of service.

Votran has undertaken service reviews in support of the following changes:

FY 10 Flex Service

Votran's new Flex service started in October 2010 as part of an effort to reduce costs, but maintain services in Southeast Volusia. This is a modified Votran Gold Service that replaces routes 42, 43 and 44. Flex buses pick up passengers' curbside within a designated service area and take them to any destination within the Flex service area or to a Votran bus stop. Flex service covers the same geographic area as the previous fixed route service, but riders must make reservations. This call-first, curb-to-curb service is available to the public with fares equivalent to that of Votran's regular service. This service replaces larger buses with more fuel efficient smaller vehicles. 7. The use of Paratransit vehicles to operate the flex service in New Smyrna Beach is estimated to save \$16,585 in fuel costs. See Appendix 2 for more description of this change in mode.

FY 12 System Review

Votran reviewed service to assess service reductions that will achieve the savings necessary for the budget year 2011/12 valued at approximately \$906,992, representing approximately 4.6% of the revenue needed to continue services. None of the proposed service reductions or fare increases was implemented during 2011/12. The internal equity analysis was submitted during the July 2012 Tri-annual Review by FTA.

FY 14 Fare Increase

The continuing limitations of the economic impact to public services led the Volusia County Council to implement a fare increase. The last fare increase was February 2007. A far reaching effort was made to involve all members of the community in the proposed rate adjustment. The fare equity analysis was provided to the FTA Office of Civil Rights in November 2013. Volusia County Council resolved to implement a fare increase that will be phased in over a two year period beginning February 2014.

FY 13 US Frequency Improvements on US Highway 1 - Routes 3 and 4

Volusia County Council voted unanimously in October 2012 to accept FDOT funding for increasing the frequency of service on routes 3 and 4. Frequency of service prior to the improvement was hourly. In June 2013 Votran was able to implement a service improvement on US-1 which resulted in 30 minute frequency of service on Routes 3 and 4. These routes had been operating above capacity on a consistent basis for years. This additional service was a top priority identified in transit planning documents for many years, including: East-side Transportation Study; two successive major updates to the Transit Development Plan; Volusia County Long Range Transportation Plan.

FY 14 Commuter Bus Connections to SunRail Debarry Station

FDOT and the Federal Transit Administration signed the full funding grant agreement marking the official approval for implementing SunRail revenue service, with the expected start date of May 2014. Trains will run on week days every half-hour during peak hours and every two hours during off-peak times. Votran is working closely with the SunRail Technical Advisory Committee to develop the connecting bus routes that will serve the first Volusia County SunRail station located in the City of Debarry. Funding for additional service is 100% covered by the FTA and FDOT for the first seven years of operation.

SunRail activities in progress include:

Debarry Fort Florida Train Station – FDOT has completed platform construction. The remaining work includes installation of all passenger amenities and features of the station.

DeLand Amtrak Train Station – FDOT, Volusia County, the City of DeLand, and Votran are conducting discussions on the development of the DeLand Amtrak Train Station scheduled for implementation under Phase II in 2016.

Fare Policy - FDOT, Votran and Lynx completed the SunRail Fare Policy and are participating in the development of the FTA fare and service equity analysis.

Upgrade Fare Box Equipment - Votran has taken delivery of ten Gillig Hybrid Buses with Odysee / GFI fareboxes as part of the work to make the fare system seamless for SunRail customers.

Votran staff continues to work closely with FDOT to finalize funding and route plans for feeder bus service connecting passengers to SunRail – Final SunRail schedules have not been published. Once schedules are complete, Votran will finalize its feeder bus schedules. The current service plan is for two express routes to operate with limited stops and two regular routes that will utilize existing Votran bus stops with all routes providing access to the Debarry SunRail Station. Funding for feeder bus service will be provided by FDOT.

FY 14 DeLand Intermodal Transit Facility

In 2013, the construction of the new DeLand Intermodal Transportation Facility (ITF) on the west side of Volusia was started. The City of Deland was the direct recipient of Section 5309 funds covering the expenditures for this facility that they own. Votran assisted Deland city staff to establish their direct recipient status.

The DeLand ITF will provide a range of transportation choices for families, workers, tourists, elderly persons, disabled persons to local businesses, FDOT, Stetson University, and the Courthouse. The proposed expansion of SunRail to provide commuter rail service to the DeLand area is scheduled to begin in 2014. This facility will be located off of Woodland Boulevard and Euclid Avenue, near the County Administration Building in the City of DeLand. In addition to Votran services, the facility will have public parking as well as bicycle racks. Connecting bus service to the SunRail station will be provided from this facility.

SECTION 3 - Conclusion and Assessment of Compliance

Votran has reviewed the objectives of the Title VI Program, and has concluded that its Title VI Program, through this report and subsequent monitoring, meets, and exceeds the objectives of providing equal access to transit service and decision making.

Further, Votran has established a program which will evaluate system wide service changes, improvements, and expansions based on the following to ensure that the benefits are distributed equally and are not discriminatory.

1. Service changes will meet Votran's overall mobility goals for the entire community;

2. Service additions are market driven based on the type of service appropriate for a market segment and travel demand;
3. Improvements to existing routes will include alignments to improve connectivity, improved travel time, night and weekend service, and increase frequencies; and
4. Capital equipment and facilities will be equitably distributed throughout the service area.

In the past year, Votran has conducted public outreach for its route adjustment. Efforts were made to be inclusive of all Votran riders, as well as all Volusia County taxpayers in the outreach effort.

The effort was coordinated with local Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board, Volusia County TPO subcommittees, Volusia County Council, and One Voice for Volusia, Human Services Coalition.

Public participation was available in person, in written form, through the mail, through e-mail, fax, or by completing take-ones. Public meeting was held in both South Daytona, and was advertised in Newspapers, Radio ads, Volusia Magazine, TV.

Additional advertising was purchased in local media, as well as participation on local TV and radio shows. Information provided was available to LEP Persons, as well.

APPENDIX 1 – Complaint Form



TITLE VI COMPLAINT FORM

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin in programs and activities receiving Federal financial assistance. Specifically, Title VI provides that "no person in the United States shall, on the ground of **race**, **color**, or **national origin**, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance." (42 U.S.C. Section 2000d). The Environmental Justice component of Title VI guarantees fair treatment for all people and provides for Votran to identify and address, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority and low-income populations, such as undertaking reasonable steps to ensure that Limited English Proficiency (LEP) persons have meaningful access to the programs, services, and information the Votran provides. Votran works to ensure nondiscriminatory transportation in support of our mission to be the Central Florida leader in providing effective, coordinated and integrated multimodal transportation solutions to enhance the social and economic quality of life for all Volusia County citizens. Votran's Contract Compliance Program Office is responsible for Civil Rights Compliance and Monitoring to ensure non-discriminatory provision of transit services and programs

Title VI Complaint Procedure

Any person who believes she or he has been discriminated against on the basis of race, color, or national origin by the Volusia Transit Authority (Votran) may file a Title VI complaint by completing and submitting the agency's Title VI Complaint Form. The Volusia Transit Authority (Votran) investigates complaints received no more than 180 days after the alleged incident. The Authority will process complaints that are complete. Once the complaint is received, Votran will review it to determine if our office has jurisdiction. The complainant will receive an acknowledgement letter informing her/him whether the complaint will be investigated by our office. The Votran has 30 days to investigate the complaint. If more information is needed to resolve the case, the Volusia Transit Authority may contact the complainant. The complainant has 45 business days from the date of the letter to send requested information to the investigator assigned to the case. If the investigator is not contacted by the complainant or does not receive the additional information within 45 business days, the Authority can administratively close the case. A case can be administratively closed also if the complainant no longer wishes to pursue their case. After the investigator reviews the complaint, she/he will issue one of two letters to the complainant: a closure letter or a letter of finding (LOF). A closure letter summarizes the allegations and states that there was not a Title VI violation and that the case will be closed. An LOF summarizes the allegations and the interviews regarding the alleged incident, and explains whether any disciplinary action, additional training of the staff member, or other action will occur. If the complainant wishes to appeal the decision, she/he has 60 days after the date of the letter or the LOF to do so. A person may also file a complaint directly with the Federal Transit Administration, at FTA Office of Civil Rights, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590

Complaint No. _____
Name _____
Home Number _____ Email Address _____
Work Number _____
Address _____
City _____ Zip Code _____

List type of discrimination (please check all that apply):

Race National Origin Color

Other _____

Please indicate your race/color, if it is a basis of your complaint _____

Please describe your national origin, if it is a basis of your complaint _____

Location where incident occurred:

Time and date of incident: _____

Name/Position title of the person who allegedly subjected you to Title VI discrimination:

2

Briefly describe the incident (use a separate sheet, if necessary): _____

Did anyone else witness the incident? Yes () No ()

List witness's. (Use a separate sheet, if necessary.)

Name _____
Address _____
Telephone No. _____

Name _____
Address _____
Telephone No. _____

Have you filed a complaint about this incident with the Federal Transit Administration?

Yes () No ()

If yes, when? _____

AFFIRMATION

I hereby swear/affirm that the information that I have provided in this Title VI Complaint Form is true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information and belief.

Your Signature Today's Date

Action Taken (To be completed by Title VI Investigator)-

Accepted for formal Investigation on ____/____/____ Referred to another department on

____/____/____
Rejected because

Title VI Investigator

Today's Date

Mailing Address:

APPENDIX 2 - 2010 Flex Service Change

Votran 2010 Service Reduction

Public Involvement Process

Background

On March 4, 2010, Votran staff participated in a Mini Budget Workshop to review Votran's budget and options to reduce the County's general fund transfer by 15%. After reviewing possible cost saving options the members of council recommended that they would further consider the following:

Eliminate routes 24, 42, 43, 44, 200 and trolley service.

Eliminate holiday service on Memorial Day, July 4th and Labor Day.

Route 24 travels from Deland to Pierson. Routes 42, 43 and 44 are located within the city limits of New Smyrna Beach. Route 200 is the I-4 Express that serves commuters traveling from Orange City to Orlando.

Communication Plan

A communication plan was developed with guidance from the Volusia County Community Information Department. The plan included internal communication for Votran staff, as well as outreach to Votran's business and community partners and to the general public. The following list represents a wide range of public involvement measures taken during the period from March 4 to June 30:

- County Council Presentations
- News Release & Media coverage
- Public Hearings
- Take-one comment forms
- Direct E-mail messages
- Internet based comment forms
- Surveys on Board
- Comment forms at Public Meetings

The distribution of information via email was coordinated with local agencies including the MPO, VCARD (business members), and One Voice for Volusia (social service agencies and businesses). Meetings were held with the Daytona-Halifax Chamber of

Commerce and every effort was made to respond to requests for information. A detailed listing of these events is provided in Attachment 1.

Public Hearings

A survey of riders was conducted during the week of April 19th, on the proposed routes to be eliminated. The findings of the survey were distributed to County Council members on May 28.

Four public hearings were arranged to seek comment regarding the service reductions proposed for public transit. These meetings were organized in quick succession due to the time constraints of the decision making process. The hearings were to take place in different geographical areas of Volusia County in an attempt to create accessibility for all members of the community, especially the transit dependent population generally served by Votran.

Hearings were scheduled for: New Smyrna Beach on June 21, 2010; Votran business office location in South Daytona on June 22; Pierson Elementary School on June 23; and Deltona City Hall on June 24.

County Council restored funding for the Route 24 and Route 200 during a budget update discussion at the County Council meeting of June 17, 2010. As a result the public hearings identified for Pierson and Deltona were cancelled.

Summary of Comments

The following list summarizes the total number of comments received from the different formats offered for public feedback:

- Surveys: 339 passengers responded to on board surveys in April 2010, with 44 comments
- Various correspondence including phone calls, take-ones, email and web forms: 67 comments
- Public Hearings: 27 citizens attended the June 21 hearing at Brannon Center in New Smyrna Beach; 18 citizens attended the June 22 hearing at the Votran business office in South Daytona. A full transcript of the meetings is attached.

While the consensus of opinion was to continue service, approximately 30% of the public comment participants requested that the County take alternative cost saving actions to preserve service. The alternatives were a range of suggestions in the categories of: reduced frequency of buses; use of smaller vehicles; routing

improvements, increase fares and explore more funding sources. Among all 117 of the recorded comments that were generally opposed to service reductions, many cited the negative impact that reducing transit access for tourism and employment would have on the local economy. More than a few members of the community recommended that transit service should be expanded. Suggested alternatives were similar to those described below at the public hearings.

Analysis of Public Hearings

The New Smyrna Beach hearing was convened at the Brannon Center on June 21, 2010 at 4:00. A total of 27 residents of the area attended to hear and make comments. During the course of the meeting there were questions and comments that conveyed the consensus of this group for seeking alternatives that would allow for continuation of service at reduced cost. Among the recommendations:

LESS FREQUENCY: “Like maybe these three routes, cut them back to like half the amount of routes every two hours. And looking at those, I mean, you could probably have one bus make one route out of the three of them. Cut them back to like every two hours instead of a total elimination.”

SMALLER VEHICLE: “Another thought we had was the possibility of using the gold bus or that size bus since we maybe only have five or six riders at a time. Sometimes probably one to two or maybe none. Where maybe that would be a more fuel efficient way of having a van that had the lift on it for the handicapped and the elderly.”

ALTERNATE SERVICE: “. . . another possibility would be to have an on demand where if this gal over here knew she was going to need a ride, it would be kind of a glorified Gold Service where she could still be picked maybe at the bus stop, which she’s used to getting to anyway.”

CONTINUE SOME KIND OF SERVICE: “We need to find different answers. The other cities are not going to be impacted like we are. We are a retirement community. We have handicapped people in our community and, I’m sorry, but it’s unacceptable. And for being born here and raised here, I’m not accepting it. And I’m not accepting it for my son. I’m not accepting it for my town. So you need to go back and you need to look further. We will accept changes. We will accept reductions. We will not accept just doing away with our -- with what you’re proposing to do away with. It’s not right. We don’t deserve that. My children don’t deserve that. And I hope the city council and the county council are listening.”

The Daytona area hearing was convened at 950 Big Tree in South Daytona on June 22 at 4:00 p.m. A total of 18 residents of the area attended to hear and make comments.

From the beginning of this meeting there were requests to explore options to elimination of service. Among the recommendations:

MARKETING : “. . . maybe we can give more incentives for people to ride, like maybe some kind of Votran rider club where if you ride this much or if you pay this much then you get an incentive or a free -- free week of riding..”

FARE INCREASE: “. . . nobody really wants to raise the fare, but if it's a way of saving service. If the fare went up a quarter a ride, how much money would that generate”

NEGATIVE ECONOMIC IMPACT: “What I thought of is I don't know how many people working in the hotels and the restaurants would lose their job if holiday service was not available, but let's assume that those people, however many they are, didn't have a job anymore so they went on the welfare system. Well, there's food stamps, there's whatever else it is and that's going to cost the county a lot of money, so are they really better off cutting the buses and increasing the welfare cost? This is something the county council, I think, needs to look at.”

ROUTING ADJUSTMENT: “maybe doing a realignment of routes, so that the trolley did continue up and down A1A and would intersect with the regular route also as opposed to the regular route also going up and down A1A.”

ATTACHMENT 1 – Event Log

Event Log

March 2 email notice to public input mailing list about Mini Budget meeting

March 4 A County Council meeting Mini Budget workshop. Following the Votran presentation members of the County Council agreed that cuts were needed but requested further review of the Votran budget

April 19-24 Onboard Survey of Riders

May 28 Ken Fischer memo to County Council Members about public hearings

May 30 Legal notice for public hearings in the News Journal, the Orlando Sentinel, the Deland Beacon

June 1 Press release about Votran Seeks Public input

June 1 Web pop up with notice, background analysis and on-line comment form.

June 2 MPO e-blast to all committees.

June 3 Community Connector e-blast from One Voice Volusia

June 3 Daytona Chamber of Commerce e-blast from Dave Castagnacci

June 3 WESH TV Volusia Co. Transit Wants Input On Proposed Changes - Several Route Eliminations Proposed, POSTED: 1:56 pm EDT June 3, 2010, UPDATED: 3:16 pm EDT June 3, 2010

June 11 Hometown News “Votran seeks public input on proposed route changes”

June 12 Orlando Sentinel “Bus to Orlando might be cut for some Volusia commuters

Interstate 4 express route run by Votran is under the budget ax”

June 12 Orlando Sentinel “Votran meeting schedule on proposed changes” By Ludmilla Lelis, Orlando Sentinel

June 14 WESH TV news item Route 200

June 15 WSBB Radio interview with Ken Fischer

June 15 Orlando Sentinel “Whither mass transit? The gist: Florida’s commitment to trains, buses is lacking”

June 16 Orlando Sentinel “What we think: Whither mass transit” Opinion page half page article.

June 17 Volusia County Council members recommend the County Manager restore the service in the budget for Routes 24 and 200. The trolley will be considered for inclusion in the budget.

June 18 Orlando Sentinel Deland local section “Volusia keeps bus line to downtown Orlando”

June 18 Hometown News “Some Votran routes may fall victim to budget cuts” front page news.

June 18 News Journal “Jobs, Commutes, Beach Parking Money flows from Volusia County” Headline on front page

June 21 New Smyrna Beach Public Hearing attended by 27 persons

June 22 Votran Headquarters Public Hearing attended by 18 persons

June 23 Pierson Public Hearing – scheduled but cancelled per June 17 decisions to restore funding for Route 24

June 24 Deltona Public Hearing – scheduled but cancelled per June 17 decisions to restore funding for Route 200

June 25 – News-Journal article “New Smyrna may lose bus routes”.

June 25 – Hometown News article “Residents unhappy with planned cuts in bus routes”

June 26 – News Journal article “County Manager: Volusia budget avoids ‘slash-and-burn’ cutting

June 26 – News Journal Letter to the Editor “Bus cuts squeeze workers”