

SARASOTA COUNTY GOVERNMENT

Sarasota County Area Transit

TO: Sarasota County Commission
THROUGH: Thomas A. Harmer, County Administrator
FROM: Rocky A. Burke, Director, Sarasota County Area Transit
DATE: October 19, 2016
SUBJECT: Update on Englewood Beach public transportation

RECOMMENDED MOTION(S) OR ACTION(S):

Sarasota County Area Transit will provide an update on Englewood Beach public transportation.

BACKGROUND:

During a Comprehensive Operations Analysis (COA) public outreach session, the Englewood community identified a need for a new fixed route to serve an area within both Sarasota County and Charlotte County. Charlotte County Transit currently provides only Dial-a-Ride reservation service to this area, while Sarasota County Area Transit (SCAT) provides service with Route 16, but no service to Englewood beaches.

In November 2015, SCAT participated with the Englewood community as part of the Waterfest event. Through this collaboration, we learned that bus service to the Englewood beaches is not only feasible, but such service could offer an alternate transportation choice to limited beach parking.

The new Route 16 proposed in the COA would provide more direct service between Englewood and Venice Train Depot, while a new fixed route would serve the beach, commercial areas, and Old Englewood Village along West Dearborn Street.

During the COA process, SCAT met with Charlotte County Transit and discussed opportunities for meeting this demand, including possible funding to extend service from Sarasota County into Charlotte County. Charlotte County Transit does not have the vehicles nor personnel to provide fixed route bus service within Charlotte County, however grant funding may be available.

Charlotte County has received funding through the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) grant Section 5307 for the Sarasota-Bradenton Urbanized Area (UZA), which includes Sarasota County, Manatee County, and the western Charlotte County Cape Haze and Englewood areas. The FTA includes population from this portion of Charlotte County to determine the amount of funding for the Sarasota-Bradenton UZA, but this is the first year (FY 2016) that the FTA apportioned funding specifically for Charlotte County Transit under its special rule for operating assistance.

Charlotte County has offered to provide this grant funding in the amount of \$109,000 annually for capital and operating expenses to operate the extended SCAT route into Charlotte County. The grant is based on population and we expect that Charlotte County will continue to receive this grant unless their population decreases.

RELEVANT PRIOR BOARD ACTION:

1. February 7, 2014 (Joint Meeting with the Charlotte County Commission) - The Board discussed public transit, including Englewood and North Port/Port Charlotte Connector routes).
2. July 12, 2016 - The Board accepted the Comprehensive Operations Analysis (COA) Study, which includes the implementation of an Englewood Beach Circulator in 2017 (5-0 vote).
3. August 22, 2016 (Budget Workshop) - The Board considered the COA Implementation Plan and directed the County Administrator to proceed with the next steps. (4-1 vote, Commissioner Robinson voted “No.”)

ANALYSIS/NEXT STEPS:

SCAT and Charlotte County staff met with the Englewood Chamber of Commerce on September 15, 2016 to discuss proposed routing for an Englewood Beach route. Charlotte County staff also participated in public meetings held as part of the COA outreach. Going forward, SCAT will continue working with the Englewood community and Charlotte County staff to develop a potential route and schedule to serve Englewood Beach beginning in April 2017.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Power Point presentation

Sarasota County

Area Transit

Update on Englewood Beach Public Transportation

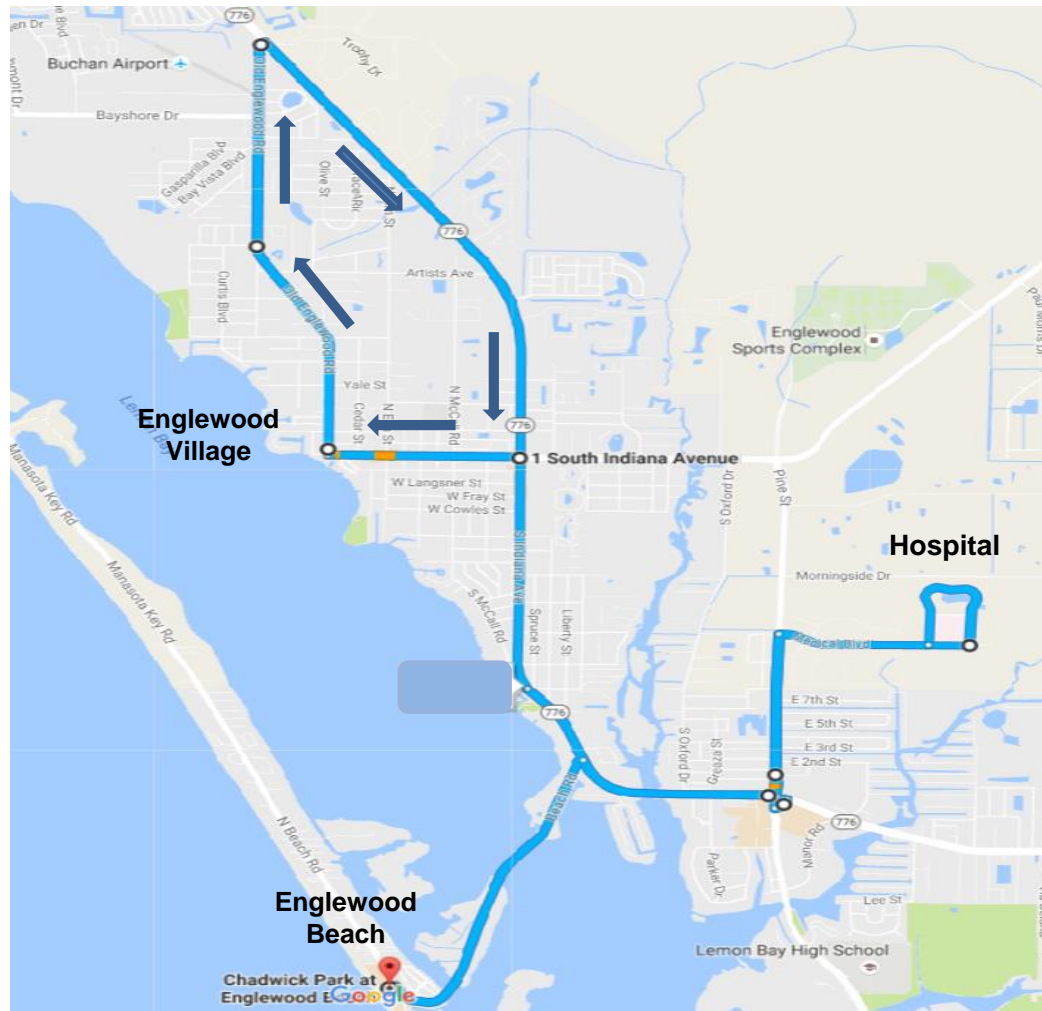
Sarasota County Commission and Charlotte
County Commission Joint Meeting
October 19, 2016

Charlotte County and Sarasota County Beach Route Collaboration

- SCAT is working with Englewood Chamber and Charlotte County Transit to develop a beach route
- Funding for project is from Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5307 formula grant for the Sarasota-Bradenton Urbanized Area (UZA)
- A portion of the UZA extends to Cape Haze and Englewood within Charlotte County
- FY 2016 is the first year the UZA includes an apportionment for Charlotte County Transit
- Proposed service scheduled to begin April 2017

Proposed Englewood Beach Route Service Area

- Every 60 minutes or better
- Service to Englewood Beach, Dearborn Street, Old Englewood Village, Englewood Community Hospital



Proposed Route 16 Reconfiguration

- Every 90-minutes
- More direct and quicker trip between Englewood and Venice
- Would connect with proposed Englewood Beach route

