

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Board of County Commissioners

June 5, 2023



### Okaloosa County Works to Improve Public Transportation

**(Okaloosa County, Florida)** – Okaloosa County is working to improve the Emerald Coast (EC) Rider Transit System and has initiated a Comprehensive Operations Analysis (COA). This analysis is taking place with support from the Okaloosa-Walton Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) and will be an in-depth evaluation that includes public input.

We encourage the public to utilize EC Rider and participate in an online or in-person survey of their experience. EC Rider has routes throughout the County to serve your transportation needs at various locations. Routes and bus information can be found at [ECRider.org](http://ECRider.org). You can take the short online survey, [here](#).

The contractor for this project, HDR Inc., will be conducting interviews with various stakeholders from municipalities, chambers of commerce and the County to gather a wide range of input to improve efficiencies within the system. Additionally, HDR associates will be riding as passengers on EC Rider's routes during a site visit in June to explore opportunities for further system-wide improvements.

"EC Rider can be a vital part of providing affordable and accessible transportation to residents and visitors," said Okaloosa County Board Chairman Trey Goodwin. "This comprehensive analysis will give us the opportunity to improve the existing system and explore new opportunities through thoughtful collaboration with local officials and other stakeholders."

The results of the survey, interviews, and ride-along will be analyzed to develop a plan to improve the EC Rider experience and a strategy for the implementation of a new plan is expected in early 2024.

This comprehensive analysis is intended to increase the value and efficiency of the public transportation system in Okaloosa County. By examining the performance of bus services, the COA will identify opportunities to repurpose transit resources from low-performing areas. With the ultimate objective to improve transit operations, increase ridership of tourists and residents, and offer a robust, multimodal experience for the EC Rider service area.

For more information go to [ECRider.org](http://ECRider.org).

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OKALOOSA COUNTY PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER NICK TOMECEK  
(850) 585-7059 | [OCPIO@MYOKALOOSA.COM](mailto:OCPIO@MYOKALOOSA.COM)