

TransitNews

Premium Transit Services in Manatee and Sarasota Counties

The Tampa Bay Area Regional Transportation Authority (TBARTA) recently adopted a Regional Transportation Master Plan for Citrus, Hernando, Hillsborough, Manatee, Pasco, Pinellas, and Sarasota counties. The Plan provides the framework for integrated regional transit to serve all parts of the region.

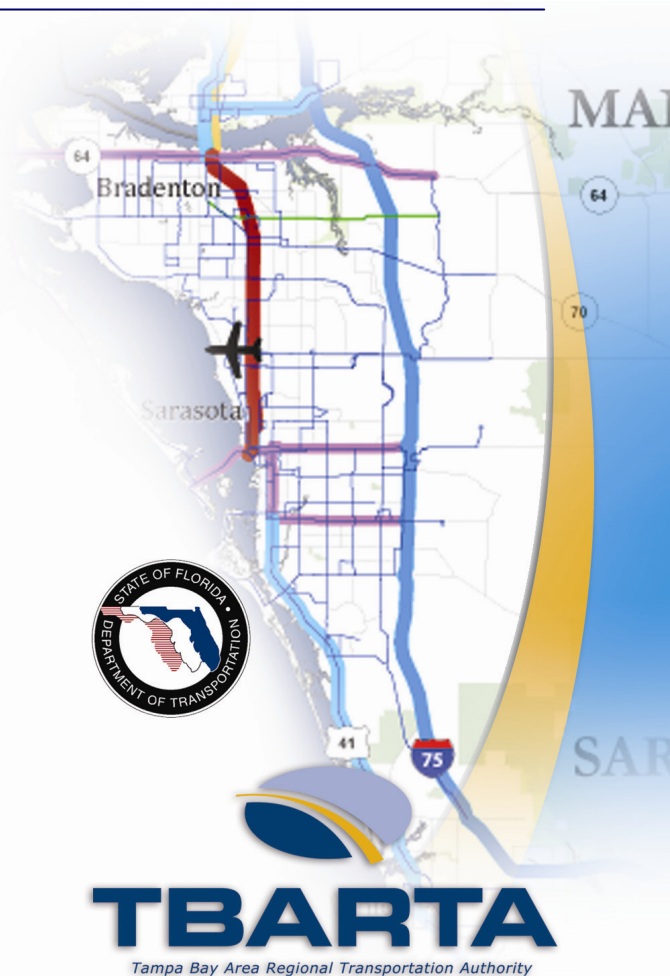
A key element of the TBARTA Master Plan is the extension of the Sarasota Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) corridor north to connect Downtown Bradenton/Palmetto in Manatee County and south from the Sarasota Memorial Hospital to connect Venice and North Port. This corridor is important to the success of the TBARTA Master Plan, as it will:

- Extend premium transit service to major activity centers within Sarasota and Manatee counties.
- Contribute a direct connection for redevelopment areas and to employment centers.
- Begin a spine of transit service investments on which to build.
- Provide a foundation for connection among Sarasota, Manatee, Hillsborough, and Pinellas counties.

TOA will be assisting FDOT District 1 in identifying the appropriate service mode and alignment for the premium transit services that will operate in the corridor study areas. The major work efforts will include the development of a Purpose and Need statement, generation of capital and operations/maintenance cost estimates, corridor evaluation, estimates of 2035 transit ridership, identification of potential economic, social, and environmental impacts, and recommendation of a Locally Preferred Alternative consistent with the TBARTA Master Plan.

While this effort is not a formal Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Alternatives Analysis (AA), the study will follow the guidelines for FTA New Starts and Small Starts to allow data and findings to be transferred and used in a formal AA.

For additional information, contact Bill Ball at bball@tindaleoliver.com.



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Mobility Plans & Fees: What Do They Mean to Transit?

In 2009, the Florida Legislature passed Senate Bill 360 (SB 360), which amended the Growth Management Act to eliminate State transportation concurrency requirements for Dense Urban Land Areas (DULAs). As an alternative to maintaining roadway level of service standards, DULA cities and counties (www.dca.state.fl.us/fdcp/dcp/Legislation/2009/CountiesMunicipalities.cfm) are required to develop Mobility Plans that integrate transportation and land use and identify strategies to fund multi-modal mobility.

One funding strategy, brought forward by SB 360, is the use of a mobility fee. A mobility fee is similar to a transportation impact fee, but it considers bicycle, pedestrian, and transit infrastructure along with roadway capacity. Currently, lack of enabling legislation and anticipated fluctuations in mobility fee revenues make this source less than ideal to fund transit operating. In response, TOA continues to evaluate opportunities to fund transit operations through special assessments and developer mitigation fees. Although operational funding is the critical concern of most transit agencies, additional capital funding and coordination with local agency mobility planning processes also are important.

To optimize local agency mobility planning and mobility fee initiatives, transit agencies should evaluate the completeness of their capital plans and consider measures to develop plans that increase service quality and transit ridership through infrastructure improvements, such as:

- Bus stop facilities
- Bicycle and pedestrian connectivity and safety enhancements
- Bus rapid transit infrastructure (e.g., signal priority, queue jump lanes, off-board fare collection)

Transit agencies also should consider how their adopted Transit Development Plans and ongoing planning processes interact with local government land use planning and land

development codes. As with roadways, public transportation investments should be focused in areas where growth is encouraged and may be more limited in areas where growth is discouraged. Likewise, local governments may consider reducing roadway mitigation requirements for developments that take advantage of existing or planned premium transit service.

Development of comprehensive, fixed-asset capital plans and active participation in the mobility plan and mobility fee development processes will help optimize the outcomes for transit agencies and the communities they serve.

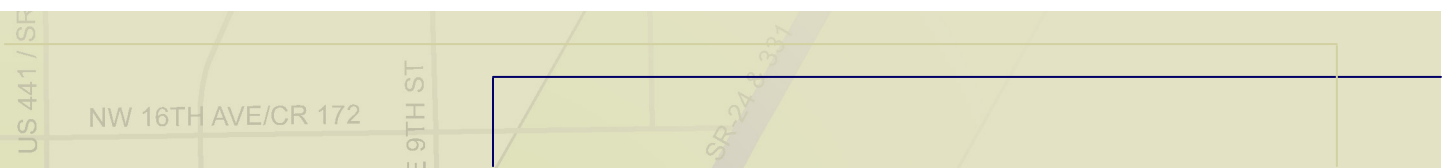
For additional information, contact Demian Miller at dmiller@tindaleoliver.com.

New TOA office in Ft. Lauderdale, FL

TOA is proud to announce the opening of our new office in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. We are excited to have the opportunity to work more closely with our clients in southeast Florida in order to provide them our wide range of solutions.

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TOA Assisting PSTA with Bus Stop Inventory

Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA) maintains an inventory of its 5,000+ bus stops, which is used to track and monitor bus stop infrastructure and amenities and to support PSTA transit services. As a result of numerous recent transit infrastructure improvements, the inventory has not been systematically updated and does not accurately capture upgrades completed at many PSTA bus stops.

To address this, PSTA purchased Trimble GeoXM GPS data collection equipment to accurately inventory its bus stops and requested that TOA design a geodatabase for all PSTA bus stops and conduct training of PSTA staff for collection and management of the bus stop data. The Trimble unit interface allows

users to enter bus stop infrastructure details into the database in a user-friendly and logical format.

The database incorporates general standards for the design and placement of bus stops and amenities that reflect Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) standards and requirements while helping address issues related to accessibility, passenger comfort and safety, security, operations, and other transit supportive infrastructure considerations.

TOA is in the process of training PSTA staff on the Trimble GeoXM device and also will be working with the transit agency to assist in coordinating the data collection efforts for the 5,000 plus bus stops present in the PSTA system.

For additional information, contact Don Kloehn at dkloehn@tindaleoliver.com.

TOA Recognized by BWC in 2010 Race to Excellence

Best Workplaces for Commuters (BWC) is a nationwide program recognizing employers that excel in providing benefits that encourage employees to use commute alternatives. Employers can meet the standard of excellence required to be designated a BWC by offering various commuter benefits. These benefits can take the form of transit pass subsidies, vanpool subsidies, on-site shower facilities, shuttle services, bike racks, etc.

TOA was recognized recently as one of six nationwide Best Workplaces for Commuters to be honored in the top award category for its continued support of its employees and their use of alternative transportation. In addition to providing financial assistance with transit pass purchases, TOA conducts promotional activities throughout the year to encourage the use of alternative transportation. In a recent campaign, "Dumping the Pump is in Our Jeans," employees earned "jeans days" for using alternative transportation. TOA has been designated a Best Workplace for Commuters since 2008.





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New TOA Transit Projects

FDOT District One/Tampa Bay Regional Transportation Authority (TBARTA)

- Regional Transit Corridor Evaluation for Premium Transit Services in Manatee and Sarasota Counties

Volusia County Transit (VOTRAN)

- 2012 Transit Development Plan, Major Update

Hillsborough Area Regional Transit (HART)

- Transit Development Plan Support

Federal Transit Administration (FTA)

- ADA Rail Station Assessments

Gainesville Regional Transit System (RTS)

- Alternative Fuels Study

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