

## Moving Forward with PSTA

By: Janet Recca, Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA)

### Bus Arrivals in Real Time

Passengers can now see exactly when their buses will arrive at PSTA terminals thanks to Real Time Bus Information Displays.

PSTA's IT staff installed special 24-inch screens in the Customer Service windows at all three terminals that display arrival information in real time. The data comes directly from each bus as it transmits its exact location to the automatic vehicle location (AVL) system. Future expansion includes large, weather-resistant displays that will be installed outside under the canopies at these locations. Eventually, PSTA envisions a system whereby each bus stop will feature a unique ID and riders will be able to enter the code in their PDAs or web-based phones to discover when the next bus will arrive.

### Introducing Google™ Transit

PSTA is pleased to announce that passengers now have another way to plan a bus trip. Beginning Friday, March 20, 2009 PSTA went online with the Google Transit Trip Planner. Google harnessed the power of their very popular mapping capabilities and first launched their transit module in December of 2005. Currently over 70 transit agencies in 10 countries use their service for trip planning. This easy-to-use, intuitive trip planner can be accessed in over 40 languages. HART is also online, so connecting trips between the two systems can be mapped. Visit [www.PSTA.net](http://www.PSTA.net) and take a test drive today!

### PSTA is Driving Greener with Hybrid Buses

It was no coincidence that PSTA took delivery of a Hybrid Bus on Earth Day. Manufactured by Gillig, these buses offer many environmental benefits including smoother, quieter acceleration; significantly reduced particulate emissions (soot);

*Continued on page 3*



### In This Issue

Moving Forward with PSTA . . . . .	1
Transportation Concurrency Best Practices Guide and Spreadsheet . . . . .	2
Upcoming TBAG Meetings . . . . .	2
What Can We Expect from the New HART BRT Service? . . . . .	4
Pinellas Countywide Bus Rapid Transit Study . . . . .	5
Tampa Bay Applications Group – Brown Bag Meeting . . . . .	6

# Transportation Concurrency Best Practices Guide and Spreadsheet

By: Karen Seggerman, AICP, Kristine Williams, and Pei-Sung Lin – Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR)/USF

Although it has been two decades since concurrency became a statewide mandate in Florida, many local governments still do not have a systematic approach to managing transportation concurrency. Smaller or rural communities, in particular, often lack the technical staff and resources to effectively monitor level of service for concurrency and conduct the necessary transportation impact studies. Adding to this problem is the lack of technical assistance resources for local governments on the mechanics of concurrency management systems. These issues, along with funding backlogs and the rapid pace of growth, have caused many Florida communities to address transportation concurrency in an ad hoc fashion, leading to less than desirable results.

The need for guidance to local governments on transportation concurrency became more urgent with the advent of proportionate fair share options and other changes to Florida's growth management legislation in 2005 and 2007. In recognition of this need, the Florida Department of Community Affairs (DCA) commissioned CUTR to research local transportation concurrency best practices and develop sample methodologies, procedures and agreements that local governments could use in carrying out their concurrency programs. CUTR was also asked to explore methods for evaluating the transportation impacts of comprehensive plan amendments and for achieving improved multijurisdictional coordination in evaluating and mitigating the transportation impacts of development.



The resulting guide presents practical guidance on local transportation concurrency management systems and is particularly useful to local governments that lack a systematic method of monitoring level of service for concurrency and evaluating transportation impacts. It also provides technical assistance on a variety of legislative changes relating to de minimis transportation impacts, compatibility of level of service standards, multi-jurisdictional coordination of methodologies, exemptions from development of regional impact (DRI) requirements, and transportation proportionate fair share mitigation.

The guide begins in Chapter 1 with an introduction to concurrency and issues in current practice. Chapter 2 provides an overview of the planning process for concurrency and considerations for

establishing level of service standards, applying concurrency alternatives, and developing a concurrency management system. Chapter 3 examines the process for implementing transportation concurrency and the mechanics of a concurrency management tracking system. Chapter 4 discusses transportation impact assessment for concurrency, including the implications of various approaches to measuring "impact area" and a suggested traffic impact assessment methodology and example application.

Recognizing that transportation concurrency is best accomplished through coordination, Chapter 5 provides strategies for improved multi-jurisdictional coordination in concurrency management. It provides ideas on how to improve the compatibility of level of service standards and sample methodologies for evaluating transportation concurrency. The chapter also provides guidance on how to address the statutory exemptions from DRI requirements in section 380.06(24), F.S.

*Continued on page 3*

## Upcoming TBAG Meetings

May 14, 2009

August 20, 2009

October 29, 2009

Continued from page 1

and reduced greenhouse gas emissions (including a 50% reduction in nitrogen oxides, which are key components in smog and ground level ozone). Cost saving benefits consist of lower operating and maintenance costs, and 20% fuel reduction compared to diesel models thereby reducing dependence on foreign oil. PSTA will be receiving a total of ten 35-foot hybrids this year, with an additional fourteen to follow, purchased with Economic Stimulus Funds.



## Facts & Figures

### Web site:

www.PSTA.net

### Fleet & Routes:

**Buses:** 205 (includes transit buses, trolleys, and MCI coaches)

**Routes:** 36 (including 2 express routes to Hillsborough County)

**Bus Stops:** 5,691

**Shelters:** 639

### Continued Ridership Growth:

**Ridership:** 12.8 million annually; 37,061 average weekday

**Bikes on Buses Trips:** 398,000 annually; PSTA leads the state in bringing bikes on buses

**Paratransit Trips:** 240,000 annually, 775 average weekday

### Operating Costs and Funding:

**Total Annual Operating Budget:** \$56.2 million

**Funding:** Federal and State grants (10%), passenger fares (19%), advertising and miscellaneous revenue (5%), and Ad Valorem taxes (66%)

Continued from page 2

CUTR researchers produced a model transportation concurrency management tracking system as a companion to the guide. This customizable spreadsheet-based system can be adapted by local governments for use in:

- evaluating and monitoring traffic impacts of developments within a traffic impact area;
- maintaining information on the status of roadway links; and
- generating reports on road link status, development completion and traffic impacts.

The sample tracking system's main functions include (but are not limited to) concurrency checks for single and multiple developments, link-based generalized traffic impact analysis for developments, traffic impact area determination, de minimis trips analysis, and concurrency reports.

The transportation concurrency management system (CMS) spreadsheet was developed in MS Excel for enhanced data visualization and simplicity. It may be a useful tool for small and mid-size local governments to effectively manage transportation concurrency and economic development. The concurrency management system produces a series of reports including a link summary, a concurrency evaluation report for regular and de minimis developments, and a de minimis trips report. Accompanying the spreadsheet is a detailed user guide that provides the user with illustrated step by step instructions.

For further information on the guide contact Karen Seggerman at [seggerman@cutr.usf.edu](mailto:seggerman@cutr.usf.edu), Kristine Williams at [kwilliams@cutr.usf.edu](mailto:kwilliams@cutr.usf.edu), or Pei-Sung Lin at [lin@cutr.usf.edu](mailto:lin@cutr.usf.edu), or call the Center for Urban Transportation Research, 813-974-3120.

## What Can We Expect from the New HART BRT Service?

By: HART Public Information Office

In 2007, the Hillsborough County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) allocated \$40 million to HART under the Transportation Task Force to design and construct the first bus rapid transit (BRT) corridor along Fletcher Avenue near I-75 to Nebraska Avenue to the core of the City of Tampa. The BOCC has also funded development of two regional park-and-ride lots, one connecting with the North/South BRT corridor and a second in the Brandon area to support current express route service and future enhanced service.

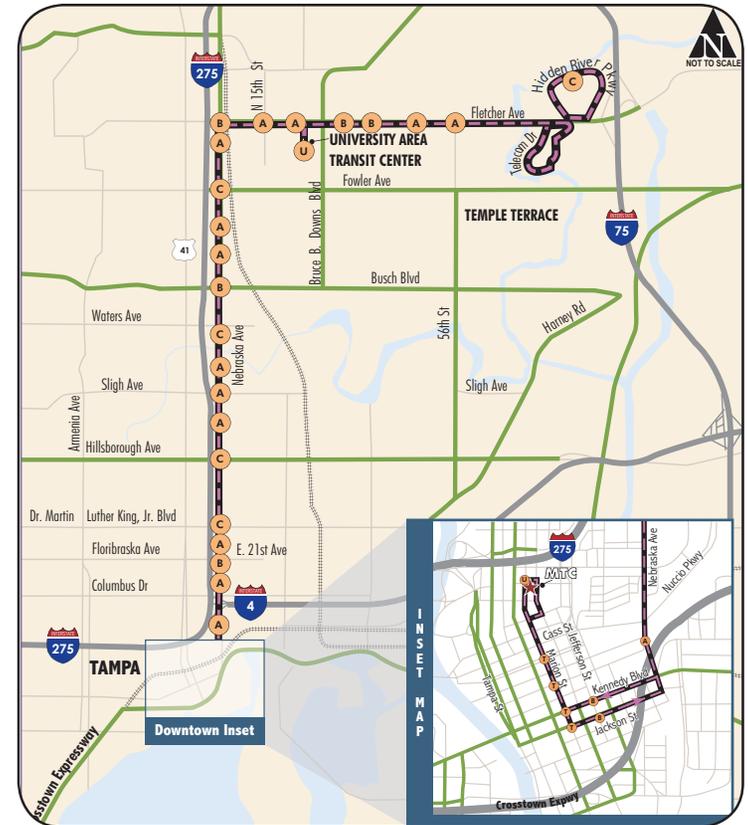
Hillsborough County riders will see BRT improvements including service enhancements (longer hours, more frequent service), bus preferential treatments (transit signal priority, fare card sales machines in some locations), enhanced passenger stations (improved shelters, real-time passenger information, landscaping), and special easy access buses. BRT service is being designed to operate “in-street” – that is, transit vehicles will share the existing roadway with general traffic.

As part of the planning phase of this new service, HART, with HDR Engineering, Inc., is currently facilitating its second study, the project development and environmental (PD&E) study for the proposed North/South BRT corridor. HART is partnering with Hillsborough County in this study and is coordinating its efforts with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), the City of Tampa and the City of Temple Terrace.

HART’s North/South BRT service will improve service convenience on Nebraska Avenue, one of HART’s busiest routes, and extend service along Fletcher Avenue to business parks in Temple Terrace. HART BRT will operate more frequently than current service and travel times will be an estimated 15% faster. New passenger boarding areas and shelters will provide improved rider amenities and enhance the surrounding neighborhood. The proposed service is a significant improvement over what exists today.

As part of the current North/South BRT PD&E study, HART has identified and recommended various station locations, station design, safety enhancements and new branding. Based on the identified station locations, the new BRT route will connect to over 80% of HART’s current bus routes in Hillsborough County.

HART anticipates the new BRT service will increase the frequency of service and increase ridership along HART’s highest ridership route, Route 2 - Nebraska Avenue. The North/South corridor begins in downtown Tampa, will operate north on Nebraska Avenue to Fletcher Avenue, then east on Fletcher Avenue serving the University of South Florida, and two business parks (Telecom Park and Hidden River Corporate Park). There is a planned park-and-ride lot in the vicinity of the Hidden River Corporate Park in Temple Terrace.



The recommended service is to use uniquely styled 40+foot buses operating every 10 minutes during the peak periods and every 15 minutes during the midday. Because BRT service has fewer stops along the route, local service on Route 2 will continue to operate with buses running every 30 minutes throughout the day.

Continued on page 5

Continued from page 4

Key safety features for the project will include well-lit station areas, with highly visible features to identify the BRT stop. The design of bus stops on Fletcher Avenue will reduce the impact on local traffic as buses pull off of the roadway's travel lane. In addition, the BRT system will provide improved sidewalk and ADA accessible boarding areas to allow for the safe boarding of all passengers.

These recommendations stem from several phases of planning, and significant public outreach conducted to date. An Open House was held in November 2008 to reach out to the community for their valuable input. The next Open House is scheduled for May 12, 2009 to present the proposed recommendations to the public. Community and agency working groups have been established to gain insight from leaders representing various public agencies and community organizations.



The final recommendations resulting from this study will be presented to HART in July 2009, at which time the project is expected to progress into final design. Construction is anticipated to begin in mid-2010, with BRT service scheduled to begin operation in late 2011.

For more information regarding these studies or the new BRT service, please contact the HART Engineering department at (813) 449-4715 or e-mail at [hays-evonj@gohart.org](mailto:hays-evonj@gohart.org).

## Pinellas Countywide Bus Rapid Transit Study

By: Brian Smith, Pinellas County MPO

As part of the Pinellas Mobility Initiative (PMI), the Pinellas County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) has been developing a *Countywide Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Plan* to provide enhanced and premium bus transit service in Pinellas County.

Corridors were identified through a process that looked at the Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority's (PSTA) top routes, major travel origins and destinations, existing and future major employment destinations, and existing and future land use. PSTA's top ten routes included Routes 4, 18, 19, 35, 52, 59, 60, 74, 79 and the Suncoast Beach Trolley. Improving service in these corridors will assist in achieving PSTA's 2008 Transit Development Plan (TDP) goal of doubling ridership over the next 10 years.

Service objectives (level of mobility and/or accessibility), service modes, and transit market objectives were then defined for each corridor. Based on the objectives and modes selected for each corridor, detailed implementation plans were developed to define corridor specific enhancements, such as station amenities, improved service hours and frequencies, and bus preferential treatments at intersections. During March 2009, the draft document was in the review and comment period for the various participating committees and the MPO Board. A presentation on the Plan will be made at the May 14, 2009 Tampa Bay Applications Meeting.

The Tampa Bay Applications Group Newsletter is published under contract to the FDOT District Seven Planning Office in Tampa. FSUTMS users and TBAG members contribute all information and material contained in the newsletter. Please contact Kasey Cursey to submit articles for future issues or to get on the mailing list.

**Co-editor:**  
Michael Dorweiler, PBS&J  
5300 West Cypress St.  
Suite 300  
Tampa, FL 33607  
(813) 282-7275  
[mjdorweiler@pbsj.com](mailto:mjdorweiler@pbsj.com)

**Co-editor:**  
Kasey Cursey, Gannett Fleming, Inc.  
9119 Corporate Lake Dr., Suite 150  
Tampa, FL 33634  
(813) 882-4366  
Fax: (813) 884-4609  
[kcursey@gfnet.com](mailto:kcursey@gfnet.com)

FDOT - District Seven  
Intermodal Systems Development  
11201 North McKinley Dr.  
Tampa, FL 33612

# Tampa Bay Applications Group – Brown Bag Meeting

May 14, 2009

FDOT District Seven Office from 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. (Auditorium Opens at 11:30 a.m.)

## Bus Rapid Transit - National Research and Local Projects



### Quantifying Image and Perception of BRT

*Alasdair Cain and Jennifer Flynn, National Bus Rapid Transit Institute at CUTR*

The National Bus Rapid Transit Institute (NBRTI) recently published a study quantifying the importance of image and perception to Bus Rapid Transit (BRT). The study identifies the different tangible and intangible service attributes that influence aggregate public perceptions of BRT and other transit modes. It was concluded that BRT (even in its lower investment forms) can compete with rail-based transit (at least in the perception of the general public) in return for lower capital cost investments.

### BRT Impacts on Surrounding Land Uses and Values

*Victoria Perk and Cheryl Thole, National Bus Rapid Transit Institute at CUTR*

Implementation of BRT has raised questions relating to impacts on land uses and values. The NBRTI has begun examining property values surrounding Pittsburgh's East Busway using a hedonic pricing model. Pittsburgh is one of the oldest BRT systems in the country, while many of the recently implemented systems might be too new to show any effects. As hypothesized, controlling for other factors that affect property values, a small yet statistically significant positive impact on property values was found as distance to the nearest BRT station decreased. Staff will apply this model to other cities with BRT including Boston, and possibly Eugene, Los Angeles, and Cleveland. Additional research has been conducted among cities that operate both BRT and LRT regarding policies/incentives provided to developers interested in developing along transit

lines. The research examines whether incentives are provided for both modes, and also looks at the issue of permanence, and how that may impact developer interest.

### Coordinating the Countywide Bus Rapid Transit Plan with PSTA's 10-Year Vision

*Tim Garling, Executive Director, PSTA  
Brian Smith, Executive Director,  
Pinellas County MPO*

PSTA has worked closely with its partners to develop a 10-year vision. The 2008 TDP includes the goal of "doubling fixed-route transit ridership" from a projected 11.7 million trips in FY 2007/08 to 23.4 million trips in FY 2017/18. The MPO (through the Pinellas Mobility Initiative (PMI)) has developed an enhanced bus network concept that will improve mobility, and be consistent with PSTA's goal of doubling ridership. The MPO has been developing a Countywide Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Plan to provide enhanced and premium bus transit service in Pinellas County. Corridors were identified through a process

that looked at PSTA's top routes, major travel origins and destinations, employment destinations, and land use. This presentation will highlight the major goals for PSTA's 10-year vision and the development of the Countywide BRT Plan.

### BRT-North/South Corridor Project

*Les Weakland, Project Manager II, HART*

This presentation will cover HART's current BRT-North/South corridor project. The project addresses bus rapid transit improvements from the I-75/Fletcher area west along Fletcher Avenue to south on Nebraska Avenue serving the City of Tampa Central Business District (CBD) in the Hillsborough County area. HART is in the process of completing the preliminary engineering report, working on the system branding and developing the Transit Signal Priority (TSP) component. Highlights for the project will be discussed, including the goals, project scheduling and status.