

Pinellas Park, Florida, September 20, 2010

The Pinellas County Transportation Task Force was held on September 20, 2010 at 1:33 P.M. at the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council, Suite 100, 4000 Gateway Centre Boulevard, Pinellas Park, Florida with the following participants present:

Karen Williams Seel, Chairman, Pinellas County Commissioner (BCC and MPO)
Alan Bomstein, President and CEO, Creative Contractors
Mark Carlson, Senior Vice-President of Investments, Merrill Lynch
Jeff Danner, City of St. Petersburg Councilmember (PSTA and MPO)
Vincent Dolan, President and CEO, Progress Energy Florida
Ronnie Duncan, TBARTA Chair
Lou Galdieri, COO, Mease Dunedin and Countryside Hospitals
Ben Godwin, Senior Vice-President of Real Estate and Corporate Services, Tech Data Corporation
Stephan Heimburg, PE, The Heimburg Group, Inc.
Dan Hester, President and CEO of Special Asset Department, Florida Capital Bank
Frank Hibbard, City of Clearwater Mayor, TBARTA Vice-Chair (MPO)
R. B. Johnson, City of Indian Rocks Beach Mayor, PSTA Chair
Helen Levine, Regional Vice-Chancellor of External Affairs, USF St. Petersburg
Robert Pergolizzi, Principal, Gulf Coast Consulting
Craig Sher, Executive Chairman, Sembler Company
Kenneth T. Welch, Pinellas County Commissioner (PSTA and MPO)
Ted Williamson, Founding Partner, Williamson Dacar Associates
Dan Mann, Lighthouse of Pinellas

Late Arrivals

Niel Allen, Realtor, Century 21 Coast to Coast Realty
Tim Bogott, CEO, Tradewinds Resort
Peggy O'Shea, School Board Member

Not Present

Joe DeLuca, Vice-President, Times Publishing Company, Tampa Bay Partnership Board
Cathy Harrelson, Conservation and Coastal Task Force Chair, Suncoast Sierra Club
Judy Mitchell, President, Peter R. Brown Construction, Inc.
Stan Vittetoe, Vice-President of Workforce and Continuing Education and St. Petersburg College Clearwater Campus Provost

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Also Present

Tim Garling, Executive Director, PSTA

Bob Clifford, Executive Director, TBARTA

Mike Meidel, Director, Economic Development

James Moore, Senior Vice President and National Director of Community Planning and
Urban Design, HDR Engineering

Brian K. Smith, MPO Executive Director

Ed Smolik, Mease Dunedin and Countryside Hospitals

Other interested individuals

Michael P. Schmidt, Deputy Clerk

AGENDA

- I. Welcome/Introductions – Karen Seel
- II. Approval of Minutes
- III. Guiding Principles – Karen Seel
- IV. Update:
 - a. Presentations to Cities and Chambers
 - b. Subcommittee Collaborative Lab
- V. Pinellas By Design:
Mike Meidel, Director, Economic Development
- VI. Transit-Oriented Development:
James Moore, Senior Vice President and National Director of
Community Planning and Urban Design, HDR Engineering, Inc.
- VII. Unfunded Transportation Needs:

Tim Garling, Executive Director, PSTA

Brian Smith, Executive Director, Planning Department, MPO

Bob Clifford, Executive Director, TBARTA

Next Transportation Task Force Meeting
October 18, 2010, 1:30 p.m.
TBRPC Office
- VIII. Adjourn

WELCOME/INTRODUCTIONS

Chairman Seel called the meeting to order at 1:33 P.M. and welcomed the attendees. A sign-in sheet has been filed and made a part of the record.

MINUTES OF THE JUNE 21, 2010 MEETING – APPROVED

Upon presentation by Chairman Seel of the minutes of the June 21, 2010, Transportation Task Force meeting, Mr. Duncan moved, seconded by Commissioner Welch and carried, that the minutes be approved as submitted.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES – APPROVED

Upon presentation by Chairman Seel of the Guiding Principles of the Pinellas County Transportation Task Force, Councilmember Danner moved, seconded by Mr. Duncan and carried, that the principles be approved as submitted.

UPDATE

PRESENTATIONS TO CITIES AND CHAMBERS:

Chairman Seel discussed the Transportation Task Force presentations, which were presented to the coalition of beach communities, the Cities, and the Chambers of Commerce by various Task Force members to educate and engage, solicit feedback, and ensure community input in the process; whereupon, she related that the presentations were well received and invited those who had given presentations to share their experiences. During the update, Mrs. O'Shea and Messrs. Bogott and Allen entered the meeting.

- Mayor Hibbard related that he had met with the Clearwater Chamber, the Beach Chamber, and the Town of Belleair; that there was good participation by the elected officials and citizens; and that the citizens desired more information relating to routes.
- Mr. Duncan related that he had visited with the Cities of Safety Harbor and Dunedin; that many people are not aware of what is

going on in the transportation world; that the elected officials and citizens were interested in how the changes will affect them; and that the process keeps the citizens informed and should continue.

- Commissioner Welch related that he had presented to the St. Petersburg Council of Neighborhood Associations; that people want easily digestible information relating to the Plan; and that communication should continue with information provided to citizens in an easily understandable and non-technical format.
- Councilmember Danner related that he had presented to the Cities of St. Petersburg, Gulfport, and South Pasadena; that the audience was engaged and asked many questions; and that they understand the challenges of the transportation network as it exists and the challenges that PSTA has with its funding source.
- Mr. Smolik related that he spoke with the Dunedin and Safety Harbor Chambers of Commerce; that they recognized transportation as the backbone of business development; that they were interested in how the system would move people throughout the area, especially how it would serve employees; and that discussion took place regarding how people in other parts of the country have addressed transportation and tourism development.
- Mr. Pergolizzi related that he had presented to the Largo City Commission, the Largo Mid-Pinellas Chamber of Commerce, and the Greater Clearwater Chamber of Commerce; that most attendees were positive and upbeat; and that comments centered on how the transportation system will be funded.
- Mrs. O'Shea indicated that the biggest concern related to the financing, including who would pay for the system and how; and that the citizens need to be educated regarding how the system can benefit Pinellas County.

- Chairman Seel related that she had presented to the Barrier Islands Government Council and to the Tarpon Springs Chamber of Commerce; and that the Tarpon Springs Chamber was less interested in tourism issues and more concerned with how the system would benefit local residents, e.g., those residents who may wish to travel from Tarpon Springs to St. Petersburg to attend a baseball game.

SUBCOMMITTEE COLLABORATIVE LAB:

Chairman Seel discussed the Subcommittee Collaborative Lab, which took place Monday, August 30, from 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon at the EpiCenter in Largo. She related that elected officials, along with county residents who had no previous experience with transportation planning, reviewed present and future transportation projects in four geographic regions of the county to include road programs, transit, sidewalks, trails, and rail to determine priorities; whereupon, she related that the Subcommittee Collaborative Lab Report had been emailed to the members for their review.

PINELLAS BY DESIGN

Mr. Meidel conducted a PowerPoint Presentation titled *Pinellas by Design – The Pinellas Community's Plan for Redevelopment*, a copy of which has been filed and made a part of the record, and discussed the development of the Plan. He related that Pinellas by Design was originally presented to the County Commission in November 2005; and that the current effort to review and update the Plan is being headed by the Pinellas Planning Council and County staff working with developers, business leaders, environmental groups, and neighborhood representatives.

Mr. Meidel discussed the local economy, reporting that it has changed significantly in the last five years; and that population trends have remained flat. He explained that land is required whether a company wants to redevelop a parcel or erect new construction, thus economic development really ends up being a real estate transaction. Mr. Meidel discussed issues which stifle economic growth, which include the county approaching physical build out, the lack of suitable land for light manufacturing and office development, and the high percentage of county structures over 40 years old; whereupon, he discussed the necessity of a countywide redevelopment strategy.

Mr. Meidel indicated that Pinellas County needs to foster an environment where high-wage jobs are created, communities are revitalized, and natural resources are protected in order for the county to be a *community of quality communities*; and that in order to do so, the following issues need to be addressed:

- How to educate the community about the issue.
- How to revise development codes.
- How to obtain intergovernmental coordination and consistency.
- How to obtain public and private investment.

He discussed the overall strategy of Pinellas by Design, including the plan strategies of economic issues; real estate issues; and plan, code, and design issues, including:

- Plan Strategies for Economic Issues – Create and sustain economic strength necessary for quality redevelopment and provide sufficient facilities to attract, expand, and retain high-wage employers.
- Plan Strategies for Real Estate Issues – Redevelop aging and obsolete uses to provide the real estate needed to ensure that Pinellas County remains economically strong and maintains a high quality of life.
- Plan Strategies for Plan, Code, and Design Issues – Revise plans, regulatory processes, and standards, recognizing the unique needs of redevelopment and encouraging the implementation of urban design standards.

Thereupon, Mr. Meidel provided general and statistical information relating to measuring the economy and discussed how the size and quality of the economy both relate to employee earnings; whereupon, he reiterated that the county needs to attract and retain high-quality employers who want to locate or expand their businesses within the county.

Mr. Meidel discussed employment districts within the county, relating that 12 districts were identified which are in development; that five potential districts were identified that had either “scrapeable” or underutilized land; and that corridors are being mapped in an effort to align transit corridors with employment districts. He related that in order to deal with issues relating to redevelopment financing, land values need to be addressed; and that the gap between the development of redeveloped land versus Greenfield land needs to be considered; whereupon, he indicated that redevelopment costs can rarely be justified in land values without

public intervention; and that incentive programs in concert with public and private cooperation will be required.

Mr. Meidel related that although Pinellas County is densely populated, it is not an urban county; that the term “urban” does not relate to size or density but pertains to the structure and organization of the county; and that transit opportunities need to be combined with redevelopment areas to include walkable, mixed-use transit-oriented nodes; whereupon, he provided further information relating to plan, code, and design issues, including:

- Range of Centers, Corridors, and Districts.
- Model Codes and Standards.
- Plan and Regulatory Enhancements.
 - Streamlined approval processes.
 - Administrative approval procedures.
 - Specific LDR (land development regulations) recommendations.
 - Special redevelopment districts.

Mr. Meidel indicated that Pinellas County and 22 municipalities passed a resolution in support of Pinellas County’s proposed redevelopment plan; and that a Housing and Urban Development Grant would provide funding to update the Plan with any required changes; whereupon, he presented information relating to the Pinellas by Design website.

Mr. Meidel presented statistical information regarding the population of the county, relating that it has declined by approximately 1.4 percent and the overall employment rate has declined by approximately 12.8 percent since 2001; whereupon, he discussed the hardships the county has faced over the past several years, relating that Pinellas County has fared better than other locales; and that the county relies on the diversity of the local economy and the incentive packages it provides to businesses.

Mr. Meidel presented statistical and financial information regarding wages in Pinellas County and related that, after adjustments for inflation, the total amount of earned income in the local economy remains relatively flat when compared to past years; that the loss of employment in Pinellas County tends to affect lower wage jobs; and that while the average wage in Pinellas County for 2009 was \$40,000.00, opportunities for entry-level workers continue to diminish.

Mr. Meidel discussed the need for Research and Development industries, the Incumbent Worker Training Program, the Targeted Employment and Development Land Study, government surplus land for economic development, the Toytown Property, and the proposed Airco project; whereupon, he presented information relating to land assembly and the

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Brownfield Program, relating that the Program is a way to develop reclaimed lands that have real or perceived environmental troubles, pointing out that additional incentives are available for the developer and the employer.

Mr. Meidel indicated that in 2006, four new future land use categories focusing on redevelopment were created; and that in 2007, a Countywide Rule amendment was enacted to allow an increase in temporary lodging densities subsequent to certain conditions being met and within specific future land use categories; whereupon, he expressed that increased hotel densities provide benefits to the local community by helping to preserve tourism and, as a result, help to preserve the quality of life for county residents.

Mr. Meidel indicated that in 2007/2008, the county approved a set of model comprehensive plan policies and land development codes; and that the term “livable communities” is used to describe urban environments where walking, bicycling, and transit service is safe, comfortable, and efficient and where the physical environment offers an interesting and unique experience from the standpoint of street, land, and building design; whereupon, he indicated that in 2009 an economic element was added to the economic development of the County’s Comprehensive plan allowing many of the principles of Pinellas by Design and related studies to be codified.

Mr. Meidel discussed One Bay, which is an effort to develop a shared regional vision for the seven-county Tampa Bay region to answer the question, how can the overall region prosper from a position of strength, diversity, opportunity, and economic vitality over the long term as the area continues to grow; whereupon, he briefly discussed the recommendations of One Bay and its guiding principles.

Concluding his presentation, Mr. Meidel restated that transit-oriented development (TOD) is the creation of compact, walkable communities centered around high-quality transit systems and is the keystone of the entire Pinellas by Design program; whereupon, he indicated that transit corridors will provide one of the few new opportunities for land assembly and density; and that opportunities for heavier industrial uses will be required.

TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Moore conducted a PowerPoint Presentation titled *Transit-Oriented Development for Tampa Bay*, a copy of which has been filed and made a part of the record, and related that his presentation explaining transit-oriented development in the Tampa Bay area is geared toward a general audience; whereupon, he related that he is speaking on behalf of the

Urban Land Institute (ULI); and explained that ULI is a non-partisan, non-political membership organization that provides leadership in the responsible use of land and in creating and sustaining thriving communities; and that, locally, ULI Tampa Bay has 250 members and serves the seven-county region, sharing best practices and lessons learned through programs, advisory panels, and other activities.

Mr. Moore indicated that transit in Tampa Bay is a hot topic across the region; and that as commutes become longer and traffic gets worse, residents are realizing that more asphalt will not solve the region's problems; and that regional leaders are looking at transit as part of the solution. He related that the regional transit plan calls for various forms of new transit in conjunction with special lanes for buses and carpools; and that systems will be designed to link key employment and population centers throughout the region; whereupon, he related that the following types of transit are planned:

- High Speed Rail
 - Planned for Region – Super-Regional Service
- Light Rail
 - Planned for Region – Regional Connections
- Enhanced Bus
 - Existing and Planned – Regional Connections
- Streetcar
 - Existing and Planned – Local Service

Mr. Moore briefly discussed each mode of transit, and related that the integration of a super-regional system to a regional system could be a critical issue going forward; and that bus rapid transit has an advantage over light rail transit because of its flexibility and reduced expense. He presented information relating to how transit expands options, supports economic growth, and focuses investment; and related that investment and opportunity will occur in areas where transit stations are constructed; whereupon, he discussed the key characteristics and benefits of transit-oriented development, including:

- Compact and Close to the Station
 - People within a half-mile radius are five times as likely to walk to a major transit stop than others.
- A Balanced Mix of Uses
 - Jobs, housing, shops, and restaurants within an easy walk of a transit station.
- Safe, Walkable Streets

- Walking, biking, and transit use are safe, attractive alternatives to driving.
- Attractive Buildings and Public Spaces
 - Buildings, plazas, and squares designed to reinforce community character.

Thereupon, he outlined the four types of transit-oriented development, including:

- Neighborhood TODs
 - Designed to serve as neighborhood centers with two to three-story buildings and low to moderate density housing.
- Community TODs
 - Designed to serve community needs. Places with a mix of shopping, entertainment, offices, and moderate density housing.
- Regional TODs
 - Higher intensity regional centers with concentrations of jobs, shopping, and housing.
- Downtown TODs
 - Transit will support the revitalization of downtowns – the places with the highest concentrations of jobs, housing, shopping, and cultural uses.

Mr. Moore indicated that the long-term goal of transit-oriented development is helping communities become more livable, prosperous, and sustainable; whereupon, he discussed how transit-oriented development could conserve resources, serve new markets, cut costs, expand options, and focus growth.

Mr. Moore related that after extensive interviews, local residents indicated that what they desire in the bay area is unachievable without transit; whereupon, he indicated that reducing the pressure to develop outlying areas is a benefit of concentrating development. He related that even though housing costs in the Tampa Bay area are relatively affordable, transportation costs are among the five worst in the country; and that transit-oriented development helps to control the mobility costs within a region. Mr. Moore related that transit-oriented development provides further benefits such as allowing residents the flexibility to decide how they wish to travel throughout the community, the possibility of giving up an automobile; and the health benefits realized by getting more exercise.

UNFUNDED TRANSPORTATION NEEDS

Referring to a PowerPoint Presentation, a copy of which has been filed and made a part of the record, Mr. Garling related that he would cover the following topics in his presentation:

- Review of Transit Plans
- Current Operating and Capital Funding Shortfalls
- Unfunded Transit Needs: 2011–2035
 - Bus and Rail
 - Howard Frankland Bridge

Referring to the Alternatives Analysis, which is a planning study to identify and evaluate alternative transit modes and potential alignments, Mr. Garling indicated that it is a partnership between the Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA), Pinellas Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), and Tampa Bay Area Regional Transportation Authority (TBARTA); and that based on a comprehensive assessment of costs, benefits, and impacts, the study will develop recommendations regarding the precise costs of a transit line and where it should be located.

Mr. Garling presented information relating to the proposed Cross-Bay Express Bus Service, PSTA Premium Bus Network, and PSTA Supporting Bus Network. He related that with the advent of high-speed rail, the proposed Cross-Bay Express Bus Service would connect the western terminus of the proposed high-speed rail line to Pinellas County, including its beaches, tourist areas, and communities; and that the proposed PSTA Premium Bus Network would be a high frequency bus network that would connect Pinellas County's main activity centers, would utilize high-quality, attractive buses, and would hopefully attract people currently driving automobiles; whereupon, Mr. Garling related that a transit system works best when residents can leave their homes, board public transportation, and arrive at their destination; and that an underlying network of buses, trolleys, and circulator services would be needed to accomplish that task.

Thereupon, Mr. Garling presented general, statistical, and financial information pertaining to the following three graphs:

- Transit Plan Total Operating and Capital Revenue Projections
(comparison of Costs and Revenues)
- Transit Plan Operating Budget Projections
(comparison of Operating Costs and Operating Revenues)
- Transit Plan Capital Budget Projections
(comparison of Capital Costs and Capital Revenues)

Mr. Garling related that PSTA is currently funded by property tax revenues, which have decreased by 30 percent during his tenure; that PSTA offers a high level of service even with reduced revenues; and that despite financial constraints, ridership continues to grow, demonstrating that public transportation is desired by residents and can be highly successful; whereupon, he related that inadequate and shrinking funding sources hamper efforts to move forward, thereby reducing transit-oriented and economic development opportunities.

Mr. Garling discussed unfunded needs related to the ability to expand public transportation, and related that PSTA has projected out over 25 years to see how the future would appear if a sustainable funding source were obtainable; that a one-cent sales tax could provide the necessary funds to build a transit system based on the Alternatives Analysis; and that the use of federal funds for rail combined with fare box revenues would negate the need for property tax revenue; whereupon, he related that the system would only operate within Pinellas County; that it would not cross the Howard Frankland Bridge; and that a \$200 million surplus would be realized over a 25-year period and would not include property tax.

Thereupon, Mr. Garling related that constructing 25 miles of rail would be a challenging task; and recommended that as the various stakeholders consider a long-range funding plan, they only plan to fund what is feasible to build; whereupon, he related that as the lines are built, people are going to want more; whereupon, he related that although none of the plans discussed include building a rail line across the Howard Frankland Bridge, the issue is being studied through the Alternatives Analysis; that getting a connection across the bay will require partnership between Hillsborough and Pinellas counties; and that local, state, and federal funding will be required to finance the project.

Concluding his presentation, Mr. Garling reiterated that even though a sprawled community is not conducive to an effective transit system, utilizing proper land use designations while designing a transit-oriented development system is a key to success; and only those systems that lead to improved transit-oriented development will deliver the sought after economic development; whereupon, he related that while no perfect plan exists, the time to take action is now.

PINELLAS 2035 – LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Mr. Smith conducted a PowerPoint Presentation titled *Pinellas 2035 – Long Range Transportation Plan*, a copy of which has been filed and made a part of the record, and provided background information regarding the Metropolitan Planning Organization;

whereupon, he provided an overview of its responsibilities, indicating that the MPO is required to review transit together with issues such as land use, air quality, and congestion management to ensure everything fits together.

Mr. Smith discussed the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), and indicated that its purpose is as follows:

- Guides the use of state and federal dollars for transportation projects in Pinellas County.
- Identifies transportation needs and the improvements necessary to address them.
- Establishes a transportation policy framework in coordination with city and county comprehensive plans.
- Addresses available revenue and costs associated with projects identified in the LRTP.
- Addresses capital projects and operations/management of the transportation system, which includes all major modes of travel.

Thereupon, Mr. Smith discussed key transportation issues such as safety and security, energy and climate change, sustainability, economy/jobs, regional demands, and funding; whereupon, he presented information relating to transit (bus and rail), highways, trailways, and bicycle and pedestrian improvements.

TBARTA VISION – A BALANCED MULTIMODAL SYSTEM

Mr. Clifford conducted a PowerPoint Presentation titled *TBARTA Vision – A Balanced, Multimodal System*, a copy of which has been filed and made a part of the record. Referring to slides representing all segments of the proposed network, he provided background information relating to the long-term vision of TBARTA, expressing that together with the planned spending of dollars, a great deal of activity, excitement, and enthusiasm exists relating to moving the region forward with a transportation network.

Mr. Clifford presented information relating to various transportation networks, including areas served, miles covered, connectivity, projected expenditures, and similar information. He related such a large-scale project will require local, state, federal, and private sector funding, pointing out that funds will not only be required to construct the system but also to provide for its continued operation; whereupon, he expressed that a thriving economy and a good quality of life are the major reasons for creating the transportation network.

SCHEDULE

Chairman Seel related that discussion at the next meeting will pertain to revenue sources; and recommended that the members concentrate discussion on unfunded road projects; whereupon, she related that the next regular meeting will be held on October 18, 2010 at the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council Office; confirmed with the members that the final meeting would be held either November 15 or 29, 2010; and that her office would contact the members to determine the best date.

In response to query by Mr. Carlson, Mr. Garling, with input by Chairman Seel, agreed that at the next meeting, expert information would be provided regarding a cost-benefit analysis of the different transportation systems as each relates to current population and density.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:22 P.M.