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## *Hillsborough County Transportation Task Force*



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# A G E N D A

Transportation Task Force Meeting  
Monday, October 12, 2009

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|---------------------------------|---|
| Welcome and Introduction        | Commissioner Ken Hagan<br>Chair, TTF  |
| Overview TTF Draft Report       | Lucia Garsys<br>Assistant County Administrator<br>Planning & Infrastructure |
| Transit Projects and<br>Funding | David Armijo<br>HART Executive Director                                     |
| Financial Need                  | Mike Merrill<br>Assistant County Administrator<br>Utilities and Commerce    |
| Final Edits of Report           | Andrea Henning<br>Collaborative Labs  |
| Recommendations to<br>BOCC      | Lucia Garsys  |
| Public Comments                 | Commissioner Ken Hagan  |

## Welcome and Introduction

**Commissioner Hagan:** Good afternoon and welcome to the October 12, 2009 Transportation Task Force meeting. Today, we are moving one step closer to finalizing our recommendations. Ideally the goal would be to approve the report and recommendations today. If not, we have one more meeting scheduled for next Monday and we would present our recommendations to the BOCC on November 4 at our regular board meeting. No formal action is likely to be taken at the November 4, meeting but it would probably happen at our next meeting on December 2nd at which time we would look to pass a resolution to put this issue on the ballot, it will not be the actual ballot language but will be the first formal action by the board.



## Overview – TTF Draft Report

**Lucia Garsys:** Where we have been is that here has been a smaller group of the task force that has drafted the report you have in front of you. The goal today is to put this in a condition you are comfortable with presenting to the board. It has been a great journey and I appreciate all of your work, you have all done a great job and it has been a true pleasure working with you. Each member of the task force has had input on this document so we ask you now to consider it.



There have been two questions raised that we were asked to take a closer look at. The 1% tax issue and sunset provision are questions that continue to be asked and we have been asked to work with HART and look at this issue in terms of continuous revenue stream and the 1% issue. Mike Merrill is here to give you an update on what those findings are.

**Mike Merrill:** We have been meeting with the folks from HART and the city to try and answer specific questions on the issue of whether or not we sunset the 1% or choose a lower percentage, what are the specifics. I am not going to advocate one way or the other, strongly – it has more to do with how fast do you want to build, how much do you want to build, etc. What is on the table right now is a fairly aggressive program. The assumption is if we are going to build a large program, we want to get it out of the ground as soon as possible because things do get more expensive as time goes on. It is common for forecasts to be exceeded by up to 50% according to a study by the federal government.



We don't know optimized routes, capital markets, inflation, federal funding, and changes in technology so that is why other areas like Denver; have made contingency allowances for these items.

The scenarios we looked at were a 1% tax with 75% going to transit and 25% going to non-transit with sunset; .5% with 100% going to transit and no sunset and an initial tax of 1% and dropping to .5% after 30 years.

Under the 1% option, as currently developed the cash flows are right on the edge and even a small bump either way effects cash flow. Operations will take a significant portion of the revenue as time goes on therefore sunset really does not appear to be an option. Unless the projects are scaled back you are not going to be able to operate with a 30 year sunset. Then you may face going back to the voters or looking for another funding source.

Time is not our friend when it comes to building things. Tax exempt debt can be our friend because we are able to borrow inexpensively and begin right away as opposed to a pay as you go approach. In looking at other systems a good formula is to hire the best people to do the work, have strong governance and find a way to balance bureaucracy and adaptability.

**Speaker:** What is the underlying inflation for the unit cost of operations? **Answer:** 2.5% is the inflation rate assumed. **Speaker:** What was the overall inflation rate projected into revenue projections? **Answer:** 2.5% **Speaker:** Historically fringe and labor costs are higher.

**Mike:** We just did the gross stress test because of time.

**Speaker:** How do I read that over time, those are projected short falls each year?

**Mike:** The model is built and all factors and sources of revenue are built in and it works its way down to the bottom line showing all expenses and all revenue that is either a negative or positive cash balance. It represents what happens over time with ending cash balance.

**Speaker:** Is it cumulative going forward?

**Speaker:** You ran this with the full 6 line program under the assumption there was a commitment to that.

**Mike:** We took the HART model and for purposes of stress testing it for today we just changed two components.

**Speaker:** The criticality of that assumption is something we all need to take into consideration. I am not sure we were there as a group in terms of the six lines, I get real uncomfortable where if we are going to project to the public that we are going to be moving ahead with six corridors – we should really consider that – implying there are commitments beyond the two corridors that we currently have on the table – we don't want to imply that we are promising this and not being able to deliver – beyond two I think we are making a mistake because there is no data and we have not seen it to back up the validity of it.

**Mike:** The fragility is under the sunset scenario, you have the ability to manage projects and cash flows.

**Speaker:** It's fragile if we say we are doing it but not if we say these are our first two projects and we are looking at these others.



**Speaker:** They are potential projects.

**Mike:** These are planning numbers; we did not have the time to go through the debt assumptions. As a planning document it is not completely balanced and optimized.

**Commissioner Hagan:** We need to distinguish between HART's planning numbers and Mikes. I was having concerns because it seemed like every meeting there was a different line being added. We need to clarify what is in our recommendations.

**Mike:** The purpose of this was just to show what the effect of sunseting was on the project.

**Lucia:** This core group has a recommendation on page 5 that speaks to what this core group has been talking about –

**Speaker:** The problem is the difference between that language and the maps that appear in the draft and says that they are recommended.

**Speaker:** Looking at the exhibit appendix B.5, the only two lines that have dates are Downtown/ USF and Downtown/Westshore. We have a number of chicken and the egg problems because we don't have all the answers.

**Lucia:** It is called recommended and it should not be, recommended puts it into a category it does not need to be.

**Speaker:** This exhibit is not making a representation about timing except for the first two; a lot of this debate has to do with how the referendum language is written. Maybe we need to change the word recommended.

**Speaker:** I think we can fix it and give us all some comfort – None of us want to infer these recommendations can all be done – the exhibits should be supportive of the language. At the end of the day we have to figure out what the public is going to support.

**Speaker:** If we get too specific or we don't deliver in time then we have a problem. Do you think we should do anything with the descriptors on the maps?

**David Armijo:** The purpose of the maps is to put together what could be a plan. We tried to take the best of TBARTA and MPO and we are inclined to say that the first two lines are going to have the best information. If you look at the plan we put forward and the financial assumptions, there is a partnership with the state and federal government and we could be looking at 12 different alignments and each one of them will go through the same analysis. They are consistent with the MPO plan.

**Speaker:** In the executive summary we have a reference to appendix B as recommendations.

**David:** Highly recommended based on work that was



already done.

**Speaker:** It is semantics and when people are out on the campaign trail doing 30 and 60 second spots, things can get confusing. We do not have any idea if any of these are eligible for federal funding.

**Speaker:** It seems that there has been a lot of work over the last 10 years on the first two lines, Can we just change the color coding on the maps to show they are future possibilities? Make it clear that two of these are absolute hopefuls and the others will be considered for the future. I think it is conceivable that a lot of this could change in the next 10 years. What is really going to make the difference is when the BOCC puts the nuts and bolts into wording the referendum.

**Speaker:** Thank you to those of you that did the work on this document. Does it help us if we get more specific in terms of federal funding? We are under the gun.

**David:** This is still a very fluid process and we have tried to put the best projects out there. We still believe and we have been very conservative, all things being equal we are going in for less money that what is required – how do we put it into the financial package, we have assumed there will not be any.

**Speaker:** The map is what is going to go into the paper, how can we adjust the maps to reflect our intent? I am concerned about dates and deadlines being put out there now when we do not have information.

**Commissioner Hagan:** I have never wanted to associate dates because I did not want people to have a reason to oppose it. Does the motion get us any closer to where we want to be?

**Speaker:** I will second the motion with the agreement that staff will work on the map issues.

**Speaker:** My understanding is that it will go through East Tampa but did not know exactly what the alignment would be.

**Speaker:** The last report I looked at showed a track running down Main Street; is that still a part of the project?

**Speaker:** Is there any way we can just define the Downtown to USF and Downtown to Westshore and not have to name every other community?

**Commissioner Sharpe:** Regional connectivity should be reflected, how we are going to transition from this first system to Polk and Pasco? I think I like the idea of naming the communities.

**Lucia:** There is more than just light rail, there are other pieces of this, what we are discussing here is just the rail line.

**Speaker:** I think it is important that we highlight the main corridors.

**Speaker:** How is downtown being defined?

**David:** We want to make sure there is connectivity to the street car and other elements. In my mind I have looked at this as an entity in and off itself.

### ***Executive Summary:***

NO COMMENTS

### ***Task Force Guidelines:***

NO COMMENTS

### ***Recommendations:***

NO COMMENTS

## ***A Successful Referendum***

**Speaker:** The nexus for the change is that it is wonderful we have consensus but there are a number of different plans and issues that are out there. We need to listen to the public and what they support because if we don't the referendum will not pass.

**Speaker:** We need to make sure it is well coordinated and timely because of all the other things that are going on.

**Commissioner Sharpe:** How many education meetings have we had so far? At some point, we have to take this information and move forward.

**Speaker:** We have to educate the people that 1% and no sunset is the way to go. We need to sell this concept of a penny forever.

**Commissioner Sharpe:** There should be a lot of coordination between what we are doing and what others are planning on doing in this regard.

**Speaker:** Execution is important, if we are implying there is going to be continuous or ongoing polling, then we are going to have to figure out how to make that happen.

**Lucia:** We can not do this on our own we have to work together like we have been all along.

**Speaker:** You have to have private partners as part of this process. It was my understanding that the chamber was going to be highly involved in this process – the private sector needs to be involved in driving this process.

**Commissioner Hagan:** I had a lengthy phone conference with Tampa Bay Partnership and I know they have quite a few things going on with the private sector.

**Commissioner Sharpe:** Let's inform and educate but do this in concert with TBARTA, Tampa Bay Partnership, HART, MPO – we have to bring this together or we are going to have nothing. One single plan that is accepted by all these organizations.

### ***Governance and Accountability***

**Speaker:** If we are recommending a governing body, we should be specific.

**Speaker:** One thing that is very important to the people of the community is that there is a citizen oversight committee so that anyone can be a part of the committee.

**Speaker:** We don't want to make it so that a city council person or county commissioner cannot serve on the board.

**Speaker:** I want it to be separate from government control so that anyone who wants to can be a part of it.

**Speaker:** We tried to create a framework and balance.

### ***Appendix A – Charter County Transportation System Surtax***

NO COMMENTS

### ***Appendix B – Recommended Transit Projects***

**Lucia:** We are going to include the slide identified by Mike Merrill. We are going to get rid of the recommended word on appendix b and c - they are potential projects as are the non-transit projects.

**Speaker:** We should make a motion that this task force sunset.

**Speaker:** What if the commission has questions for us after we disband?

**Speaker:** That is why I want there to be a vote to abolish the task force so it does not go on and we can speak as we need to about the issue.



### **Public Comments**

**Speaker:** I have a lot of problems with the recommendations. I think it is a mistake to take the citizen word out at the end and you should make it clear that there will be citizens involved for oversight. I believe we need to have some kind of light rail – I have followed the economic development issues and feel that 100% should go to transit and when you start looking at the incremental tax increase being \$140.00 a year on average, but you have to add that to the sales tax they already pay. If you put the roadway projects in, they are controversial, some of them I would find very hard to support. We have not collected all the impact fees we are legally allowed to levy. Why should I pay taxes twice for the same project? There are some real logistical issues imbedded in what goes out to the public. We are not collecting maximum gas tax, trails were promised in the last CIP and they have not been done yet. My point is that by taking the approach that we need to have something in there for everyone, you create specific points to nuke the program.

**Speaker:** Westshore Alliance had a meeting and we wanted to let you know that anticipating the action you took today, the Westshore Alliance unanimously supports the recommendations of the task force and I want to thank you for the hard work you have done.

**Commissioner Sharpe:** Comments were very helpful. I am still concerned about point one and that is citizen oversight. I think we should keep the word citizen, it is a perception issue. I think you have done a herculean job, and you have exceeded what I thought was possible, I want to say thank you to all of you that have hung in and been to all these meetings. It is nothing short of a miracle that you were able to get so much done in such short amount of time.

**Speaker:** We were all struggling with specificity of the oversight group, and in some ways I was comfortable with where we were at including a balanced group with members of the public but the commission is going to need to attach the specificity as a board.

**Commissioner Sharpe:** We have already spoken about the county being responsible for taking in the revenue and there will be numerous agencies that are going to have legal responsibility and this is a citizen oversight committee to give the people a voice.

**Speaker:** On the issue of impact fees – there is information the legislature is considering, but for the public, the perception that this is a way for the public to continuously pay and developers getting a break is going to be an issue that is going to have to be dealt with. Some clarification between mobility impact fees and whether the public is going to pay for it and the developers are going to get a break.

**Commissioner Hagan:** All of your recommendations were done considering having some balance and flexibility to deal with changing circumstances and events and conditions. Thank you all for your time, involvement and leadership in this, I appreciate all of you're a hard work and I am optimistic we will be successful next year. Special thanks to Lucia, she has worked extremely hard and deserves most of the credit.