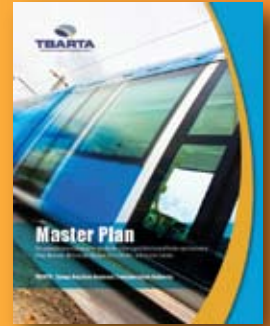




TRANSIT CENTER

TBARTA MASTER PLAN

In January, the Tampa Bay Area Regional Transportation Authority (TBARTA) Board endorsed the Regional Transportation Master Plan Preliminary Mid-Term and Long-Term Vision networks for 2035 and 2050. Both feature rail, bus rapid transit, express bus and managed lanes, complemented by substantial local transit service. These networks are designed to provide choices for people to conveniently move between home and work, to educational and medical facilities, and to enjoy the area's many recreational, sports and cultural assets. Connections to employment centers will provide new options for where people live. A better, multi-faceted transportation network will encourage economic development throughout the region, and support redevelopment in communities that want or need to change. This spring, the TBARTA Board will hold town hall meetings to discuss the Master Plan Vision with the public prior to its approval. Please visit www.tbarta.com or call **813/217-4048** for more information.



HART SPRINGS INTO BETTER SERVICE



To improve service on some of its most heavily-used routes, Hillsborough Area Regional Transit (HART) is planning to increase frequency on weekdays and weekends on several routes, and new Sunday service on one route, beginning March 29th. Late night service will be restored on Route 30 (Town 'N' Country) between Tampa International Airport (TIA) and the Northwest Transfer Center, with increased frequency on Saturdays and Sundays, and on weekdays between Downtown and TIA. Route 18 (30th St.) will have new Sunday service. Other frequency improvements will be made on Route 1 (Florida Ave.), Route 6 (56th St.), Route 8 (Progress Village/Brandon), Route 12 (22nd St.), Route 36 (Dale Mabry/Himes), and Route 39 (Busch Blvd.). For HART schedules, please visit www.gohart.org or call **813/254-HART (4278)**.

CONGRESSMAN MICA: PASSENGER RAIL IS COST EFFECTIVE



Transportation infrastructure projects are important in 2009, as Congress prepares a new five to six year transportation bill. The new bill will replace the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act (SAFETEA-LU) that expires in September 2009. United States Congressman John Mica is encouraging local leaders to plan concertedly to obtain rail infrastructure dollars which he anticipates being part of the new transportation bill. He feels a strong need to plan for a regional network to include various transportation

modes such as light and heavy rail, bus, bus rapid transit, and managed roadway lanes.

Congressman Mica indicates that passenger rail is very "cost effective," noting the following:

"On I-4, one additional lane for 20 miles will cost about \$1.5 billion. In Central Florida, we're building 61 miles of commuter rail. I'm taking an existing right of way. I'm not destroying the environment. The entire system is about \$620 million. I'll still have to widen I-4, I-275, I-95, but if you go down to South Florida you see you've got to have other alternatives. It's energy, the environment, and the economy. The environment, how much more can we pave? It does have consequences as far as global warming and the quality of life."

(Source: Getting Rail Out Of The Station, Tampa Tribune, 12/14/08)



PHOENIX CELEBRATES GRAND OPENING OF LIGHT RAIL

Light rail cars rolled into Phoenix, Arizona on December 27th, and the city celebrated with free parties and entertainment at the new stations. Nearly four years in the making, the 20-mile starter line of the Valley Metro system now connects Phoenix with Tempe and Mesa. Downtown restaurants, normally desolate on many weekends, were buzzing with people. An estimated 90,000 people celebrated by riding the rails on opening day. Free for the first five days, rides normally cost \$1.25.

Valley Metro is on track to meet or beat its projection of about 26,000 riders per day. Students, commuters and sports fans are trading their cars for the train. The light rail project got its start in 1985, when voters in Maricopa County approved an increase in taxes. Phoenix has joined Dallas and Charlotte as the newest cities with light rail systems, preparing to attract new employers with skilled jobs, noting that some major corporations will not move their headquarters to a city that only has buses. Federal funds paid for nearly half of the \$1.4 billion system; city and special regional taxes paid the rest. For more information on the Phoenix light rail system, visit www.valleymetro.org/metro_light_rail.



TECOLINE STREETCAR EXTENSION ON TRACK

“Streetcar extension plans are right on track,” said HART Project Manager, Lynda Mifsud, at the December Tampa Historic Streetcar Board of Director’s meeting. Currently the TECO Line Streetcar System includes 2.4 miles of track linking Downtown, Channelside and Ybor City. The proposed phase extends the existing line from its current terminus in front of the Tampa Convention Center into the core of Downtown Tampa, running north on Franklin Street to Whiting Street at the Fort Brooke Parking Garage. A future phase would extend the streetcar line further north, through Tampa Heights and back to Ybor City, completing the loop.

Design considerations for the extension include a passing track and single-track configurations to support staging of at least six streetcars. The \$5.4 million cost estimate includes track work, roadway improvements to comply with ADA requirements, landscaping, traffic signage, stormwater and wastewater utility relocations, and a boarding station. The new station is expected to be open in 2010. For more information, visit www.tecolinestreetcar.org or call **Lynda Mifsud** at **813/254-HART (4278)**.

