

**New North Transportation Alliance  
Advisory Board Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, April 10, 2013 8 a.m.  
USF Center for Urban Transportation Research**

**Attendance**

John Schueler	USF, Executive Director for Corporate Development	Randy Stribling	Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Authority (HART)
Cathy Valdes	Hillsborough County Public Schools	Lynda Crescentini Fredric Zerla	HART University Square Civic Association and THAN (Tampa Homeowners an Association of Neighborhoods)
Charles White Tony Garcia	Hillsborough County Hillsborough Planning Commission		representing Tampa Council Member Lisa Montelione
Brandie Miklus Christina Kopp	Jacobs (consultant) Tampa Bay Area Regional Transportation Authority (TBARTA)	Michael Maurino	USF Facilities Planning and Construction CUTR, NNTA Co- Director
Brad Parrish Gena Torres	City of Temple Terrace Hillsborough Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)	Barbara Donerly Julie Bond	CUTR, NNTA Co- Director
Randy Kranjec Wit Ostrenko	Hillsborough MPO Museum of Science and Industry (MOSI)	Sara Hendricks Jennifer Iley	CUTR, NNTA Co- Director CUTR
Ben Money Rick Fallin	City of Tampa USF Parking and Transportation Services	Lorraine Duffy-Suarez Jason Bittner	Hillsborough County Public Schools CUTR
Lucas Cruse Domingo Noriega	CUTR URS (consultant)	Phil Winters	CUTR

**Welcome/Introductions**

Barbara Donerly, Chair of the NNTA, welcomed attendees and asked for round robin self-introductions of NNTA members and visitors.

**Approval of February Minutes**

The February meeting minutes were approved.

**Presentation, Evaluation of Feasibility for High Occupancy Vehicle Lanes on Bruce B. Downs Blvd.  
Gena Torres, Hillsborough Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), Lauren Brooks, URS  
(consultant), and Domingo Noriega, URS**

Gena Torres introduced the study and gave some background regarding why the MPO decided to look at high-occupancy vehicle lanes (HOV) as an option for Bruce B. Downs Blvd. (BBDB). The study is to address both congestion mitigation and crash reduction. The MPO will focus efforts and its limited resources on those roads that do not function well. Experience and studies show that if we widen roads there will still be congestion. Improving roadway conditions is not just about increasing traffic speed. Traffic crashes affect roadway function. As speed on a roadway increases, the chances of a motorist, pedestrian or bicyclist surviving a collision decreases. A first goal of the study is to make the system more reliable by minimizing crashes. A second study goal is to get people out of their cars by improving travel alternatives. Then traffic will flow more. A third goal is to identify operational improvements that can be deployed during peak travel periods, such as high-occupancy vehicle lanes (HOV). The MPO is not looking to widen BBDB but use the existing lane capacity in a new way. Arterial roadways such as BBDB are more challenging to implement HOV due to the many intersections and driveways. MPO interviewed other cities, such as Alexandria, Denver, and Houston to learn from their experience. Initial carpool/transit mode share and effective enforcement strategies are important to HOV lane success.

Lauren Brooks said URS will evaluate the potential dedication of lanes on BBDB as HOV from Bearss Ave to I-75 during peak hours. The study will include looking at the implementation and enforcement of HOV in FL and nationwide, and factors that support TDM strategies. They will collect traffic data during peak hours to supplement existing data and measure average vehicle occupancy to gauge level of participation in transportation demand management (TDM) strategies already occurring. They will estimate potential differences in operating speed between HOV and non-HOV, look at possible termini of HOV lanes, cost estimates, signage, pavement marking, and engage NNTA as a stakeholder group. The study began in March will be completed in September. There are three meetings planned. A kick-off meeting and two other meetings scheduled to coincide with milestones of project.

Domingo Noriega said URS has completed the traffic counts and is now summarizing the data. Their data show that BBDB carries 45-55,000 vehicles per day.

Wit Ostrenko asked about how to gauge the public's willingness to shift to alternative modes of travel and the need for a marketing plan. Domingo said they will use simulation modeling. Lauren said URS will also test different scenarios to gauge the potential impact of HOV: one without any TDM, a second with modest TDM participation, and a third with ideal TDM participation to estimate impact on congestion. Brad asked what amount of traffic is expected to use the HOV lane. Domingo estimated 15-20 percent of the traffic in one direction, ideally. Lauren said they will look at enforcement and public education plans. Phil asked if consideration will be given to the HOV termini, such as ultimately connecting through to I-275 via Fowler or Busch. Domingo said that determining termini are part of study. Phil also suggested slugging as an option and how to accommodate that. Slugging is successful in Washington, D.C. It is like hitch hiking. Carpools that are not prearranged but formed at designated pick-up locations. Slugging can be highly successful where there is a requirement for three occupants per carpool in an HOV lane and also where there are strong numbers traveling to particular destinations. Jason Bittner asked about facility design, particularly treatments for left turning traffic. Dom said that

the HOV lane could be on the inside or outside lanes, but each alternative has issues that would need to be investigated. At some point the HOV lane must be flexible to accommodate left turns.

**Presentation, Vision Plan for the Terrace Park/University Square Community**  
**Tony Garcia, Hillsborough Planning Commission**

Tony provided handouts of the Vision Plan. The results of the planning process have also been presented to the Planning Commission and to the Tampa City Council. NNTA members Fred Zerla and Lisa Montelione have been actively involved in the process and Wit Ostrenko arranged for MOSI to be a host location for some of the public workshops. FDOT District 7 also provided meeting space. The Hillsborough Planning Commission led the visioning process because the City of Tampa did not have the resources presently to do it. Initiated largely through the efforts of Lisa Montelione, the completed Vision Plan will now be handed off to City of Tampa land development coordination division. Tony showed aerial views of the study area and provided brief history of the area going back to the 1940's. Tampa Industrial Park was originally an airfield. The industrial park never came to fruition as a true industrial center but the university area has among the greatest potential for job creation and development opportunities. The role of community planning is to advance general livability principles, enhance existing neighborhoods, and support revitalization. Planning coordinators strive to make the visioning process open and transparent. They conducted a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) analysis in several phases and meetings. USF interns identified over 300 businesses along major study area corridors through a survey. They contacted 90 of those businesses and got input from them. A class taught by USF Professor Strom conducted a survey of housing conditions and streetscapes, collecting demographic and socioeconomic data. City of Tampa employees representing different divisions were part of process as was City of Temple Terrace and stakeholders attending a total of ten workshops. Transportation strategies identified in the Vision Plan include major gateways, intersection improvements, safety improvements, neighborhood street sidewalks, and Busch Blvd access improvements. The Terrace Park/University Square neighborhoods now have a tangible plan that can serve as a placeholder for implementing improvements as funds become available.

**Update: Results of the University Area Transit Circulator Study**

**Randy Kranjec, Hillsborough Metropolitan Planning Organization, and Brandie Miklus, Jacobs**

Brandie provided a brief recap of the study to date. Randy provided a summary handout with a map of locations of the identified proposed routes. The purpose of the study was to identify transit service enhancements that would complement HART's existing service and provide better access to destinations within the University Area. The MPO collaborated with transportation service providers within the study area, held a public workshop, and engaged members of the New North Transportation Alliance. Five proposed route options were identified, that served different types of trip purposes, with service headways of 30 minutes or less. Annual operating costs for each route option were estimated, ranging between \$490,000 and \$670,000 per year. The study is complete.

Randy said that, from a technical standpoint, Option D, the green route on the map, that serves Livingston Avenue and the area to the north and west of the USF Tampa Campus, seemed to make the

most sense. However, input that the MPO received from students at the Complete Streets Summit at USF on April 2 indicated that the green route does not give students much more service than they already get from HART and Bull Runner. The students preferred Option B, the brown route because it would give them an opportunity to go to Temple Terrace to shop.

Brandie said that in their study they looked at existing services, destinations, where people live and work, trip purpose, time of trip, and the characteristics of various service options. While the technical data collection, analysis, and screening of potential service alternatives are complete, no decisions have been made regarding the circulator. The next step would be for interested businesses and organizations within the University Area to collaborate to develop funding source options for the service. If some new service concept results, the data and background studies are there to support decision making. This might be some combination of two or more employers in the area. Then possibilities for branding the service would be addressed. Also a combination of two or more of the identified route options could be blended, such as Options B and E.

Michael Maurino asked if having three different service providers: HART, Bull Runner and a third circulator in the same area would not cause customer confusion with different fares, routes and service policies. Randy said that HART currently does not have the funds presently to operate a circulator. Barbara said the Bull Runner is not open for use by anyone who is not a USF student or staff member due to liability. Temple Terrace residents have few options. Existing transit routes do not serve east/west connections well. At the same time, east/west routes are becoming the most congested.

### **Staff and Board updates**

Barbara Donerly thanked participants of the USF Complete Streets Summit.

Julie Bond said that WeCar on the USF Tampa campus is officially open to the public. WeCar St. Petersburg is also open to students and the public. The name WeCar has changed to Enterprise Carsharing.

Jason Bittner announced that on April 11 a major Southeast regional bicycle summit will be held downtown at the Convention Center. U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary LaHood and several FDOT District secretaries will be there, in addition to representatives of the National Highway and Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). NHTA's and downtown Tampa's bicycle and pedestrian safety initiatives will receive attention at this high profile event. There is online registration and workshops will be held in afternoon.

Rick Fallin said that Bull Runner ridership is down about 2 percent overall. Ridership on the new F route to the south is up significantly. The C route, which typically carries 50 percent of all ridership, is consistent. Interior campus ridership is what accounts for the decrease. This may be due to the opening of Juniper Poplar dormitories in which students do not have to cross campus to access services. Rick also said that his office receives requests for service that are consistent with what Randy Kranjec heard from students at the Complete Streets Summit—service to the east of USF Tampa Campus is needed. Brad Parrish thanked Julie Bond for her work on a public service announcement on bike safety for the City of Temple Terrace.

Fred Zerla said he appreciated the cooperation with Terrace Park on the community plan. THAN continues to work with the Mayor and zoning administrator because the Code has inconsistencies and ambiguities and needs to be updated.

Cathy Valdes said that the School District would be interested in BBDB HOV initiative because the school must deal with traffic constraints along BBDB in their busing operation.

Wit Ostrenko said the MOSI long range plan 2025 passed their Board. The state legislature will also be considering in its next session, a bill for an Enterprise zone focused on science, technology, engineering, art and math, "STEAM". Art refers to the digital arts, games, media technology, and simulations. Wit also thanked Temple Terrace for installing bike lane on Riverhills Drive.

Phil Winters announced that the FL Commuter Choice Summit will be held at USF starting April 10-12. Many presentations will be given that are of potential interest to NNTA, including South Florida Commuter Services' "Cash for Commuters Program" an incentive program to change travel behavior. Rick Fallin will also be a speaker.

Sara Hendricks said that Barbara and she attended a focus group meeting with vRide, the vanpool provider for TBARTA. Discussion focused on the needs of commuters and new services that meet those needs. Barbara added that vRide is considering lowering the age limit to be a vanpool driver to 21. This would allow more in the USF community to use the service. Vanpooling may dovetail with the BBDB HOV service concept.

**Meeting Adjourned at 9:30 a.m.**

**Next Meeting**

The next NNTA meeting will be Wednesday, June 12, 2013 at CUTR.