

New North Transportation Alliance (NNTA)
 Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
 Wednesday, March 9, 2022
 USF Center for Urban Transportation Research

Attendance by video conference or phone:

Raymond Mensah, Chairman	USF Parking & Transportation Services
Kenneth Boden	Tampa Bay Area Regional Transit Authority
Christopher Bowen	RD Management
Marie Bowen	USF Parking & Transportation Services
Alicia Burden	James A. Haley VA Hospital
Lynda Crescentini	Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Authority
Ray Gonzalez	USF Facilities Management
Chadaphan Hanwisai	USF Facilities Management
Sara Hendricks	NNTA/Center for Urban Transportation Research
Arlinda Karuli	Commute with Enterprise
Karen Kress	Tampa Downtown Partnership
Eric Larson	Soaring City Innovation Partnership
Rich Piccininni	USF Facilities Management
Mark Sharpe	Soaring City Innovation Partnership
Phil Winters	NNTA/Center for Urban Transportation Research

Welcome/Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 8:34 a.m. by Chairman Raymond Mensah, who welcomed members. Mr. Mensah asked if there were any changes to the January 12, 2022 meeting minutes.

Approval of Minutes

There was a motion and second to approve minutes from the NNTA meeting held on January 12, 2022. The minutes were approved with no changes.

Presentation: RITHM@Uptown Update

Presenter: Christopher M. Bowen, RD Management, LLC

Mr. Bowen updated the board on the acquisition and redevelopment of the former University Mall, now named RITHM@Uptown, which is over 100 acres. All the approvals for zoning and plan development are complete and the construction of buildings has begun. Mr. Bowen explained that RITHM is an acronym for Research, Innovation, Technology, Habitat and Medicine. It has been designed to create a green, innovative community. The first project is a \$65 million apartment building that is on the University side. University Square Drive connects RITHM with the University of South Florida. The Uptown Innovation corridor includes USF, Temple Terrace, I-275 to I-75, to Busch Blvd. and beyond Fowler and Fletcher and includes all the neighborhoods in that area.

Tampa Innovation Partnership has expanded and is now called Soaring City Innovation Partnership. They will help develop the ecosystem and framework of the Uptown Innovation corridor.

At RITHM, stormwater management is very robust and will include fountains and splash pads and park-like ponds where people can gather in community. Construction of a new hotel will begin by the end of 2022. It will be a dual-brand Marriott with 200 keys and will include spectacular views of USF and Busch Gardens.

The last acquisition was the Burlington property that is on the University side and is near the medical community. Since Burlington didn't want to leave, they decided to make a retail space that will include Burlington, Sprouts and other food and beverage uses. This site will no longer be focused on retail, but only have retail as an amenity to the Innovation community.

When the development is done, there will be over 4,000 apartments, over 3 million square feet of office space, hotels, a movie theatre, entrepreneurial business incubator, USF research lab space, and more.

Macy's and the Sears auto center will be demolished in the next few months and will be replaced by one of the largest office towers in the area, with the capacity of several million square feet, and will be mixed-use with experiential activities and food and beverage on the street.

Mr. Bowen said that they plan to use the parking garages in an innovative way to create density and connectivity on the site.

Soaring City Innovation Partnership has opened the Black Box Exxcelerator which is a community funding accelerator and has received the first contribution from Florida Blue to grow resilient communities in urban neighborhoods. They are working with major organizations in the area such as USF, Busch Gardens, Moffitt Cancer Center, Advent Health, James A. Haley VA Hospitals and Research Center, Yuengling, Pepsi, and University Area Community Development Corporation. Soaring City is expanding the board at the executive level to bring on more corporate members.

Ms. Hendricks opened the floor for questions. Ms. Hendricks indicated the NNTA supports the Soaring City Innovation Partnership in the development of the community and desires that the area improve mobility for all users through strengthening the transportation system so that people would not need a car to travel. We anticipate improved public transportation and encourage bicycling and walking.

Mr. Bowen described that RD Management has been working with FDOT for the last 7 years and continues to promote the planning and development of Fowler Avenue to be an urban boulevard that is bike and pedestrian focused. He stated they are talking with Snap Transportation System to look at an innovative transportation concept for the median of a redesigned Fowler Avenue. Mr. Sharpe shared the need for a robust transportation circulator to assist people in the area to go to nearby destinations without having to use a car. On demand service and other options are being considered to not only transport people a half mile in the Uptown district, but also to transport them to the airport or downtown. RITHM plans to create a "Vet Tech" trail to connect James A. Haley VA Hospital to the Uptown corridor that will facilitate shuttles, pedestrians, and bicyclists.

Ms. Crescentini indicated that HART and City of Tampa have been studying more North/South routes and the BRT study, which looks at transit North on Florida Avenue to Fowler Ave. HART would like to be included in the conversation about further developments. HART recently received a \$300,000 grant from the Federal Transit Administration to increase Transit Oriented Development (TOD) for improved community development.

Presentation: Highlight Best Workplaces for Commuters member, James A. Haley Veterans Hospital
Presenter: Kenneth Boden, Commute Tampa Bay, TBARTA

Mr. Boden and Ms. Arlinda Karuli of Commute with Enterprise presented the 2021 report to James A. Haley VA concerning their use of vanpools by Commute with Enterprise. James A. Haley VA Hospital has been a Best Workplace for Commuters (BWC) member for 2021 and 2022. They offer their employees fully subsidized transportation through HART and PSTA, and full vanpool benefits with the assistance of the federal voucher and \$400 per month subsidy from TBARTA. TBARTA also offers emergency ride home (ERH) for anyone utilizing transit, carpooling or bicycling. Anyone may register for ERH and get different company coupons and discounts at <https://www.tbarta.com/en/commute-tampa-bay/commute-tampa-bay/>

The James A. Haley vanpool program currently includes 70 vehicles and serves those with a mid- or long-range commute with over 318 people using the vanpool, saving money, and reducing parking usage, congestion, and CO2 emissions. Participants save money on gasoline, tolls, auto insurance, wear and tear on their vehicle, time, and stress. For discussion purposes, a projection of increasing vanpooling to 10% of Haley employees would double the number of vanpoolers to 600 employees and 129 vans.

Other employers can also participate in vanpooling for their employees. Businesses can contact TBARTA for more information. The Internal Revenue Code enables employers to offer Qualified Transportation Fringe Benefits to employees in the amount up to \$280 per employee per month pre-tax. This can reduce an employer's payroll tax. Chris Bowen commented that there is a great savings advantage for an employer who utilizes vanpooling to not have to build a parking garage and the costs to maintain it.

NNTA member round robin updates on activities and announcements

Ms. Hendricks shared that Tampa Downtown Partnership is developing a non-motorized traffic count program in cooperation with the Florida Department of Transportation to promote bicycle and pedestrian transportation in the area and collect important data.

Ms. Hanwisai announced that the athletics team presented to the Board yesterday and the recommended site for a new USF football stadium is on the Northeast side, which is between USF Sycamore Drive and USF Holly Drive.

Soaring Innovation Partnership will host a roundtable discussion at RITHM on March 31, 2022.

March is Florida Bicycle Month. Friday, March 11, 2022 is Bike with the Temple Terrace Mayor in the morning. Love to Ride is a platform to log your bike miles for the month of March. See more information at www.LoveToRide.net/TampaBay. Also, for a limited time, get the Commuter Benefits Guide for Employers for free, which highlights Qualified Transportation Fringe Benefits. Go to www.Bestworkplaces.org to get a copy.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:58 a.m.

Next Meeting

The next NNTA meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 11, 2022.