



# Connecting Florida

## Transit + Florida's Economy



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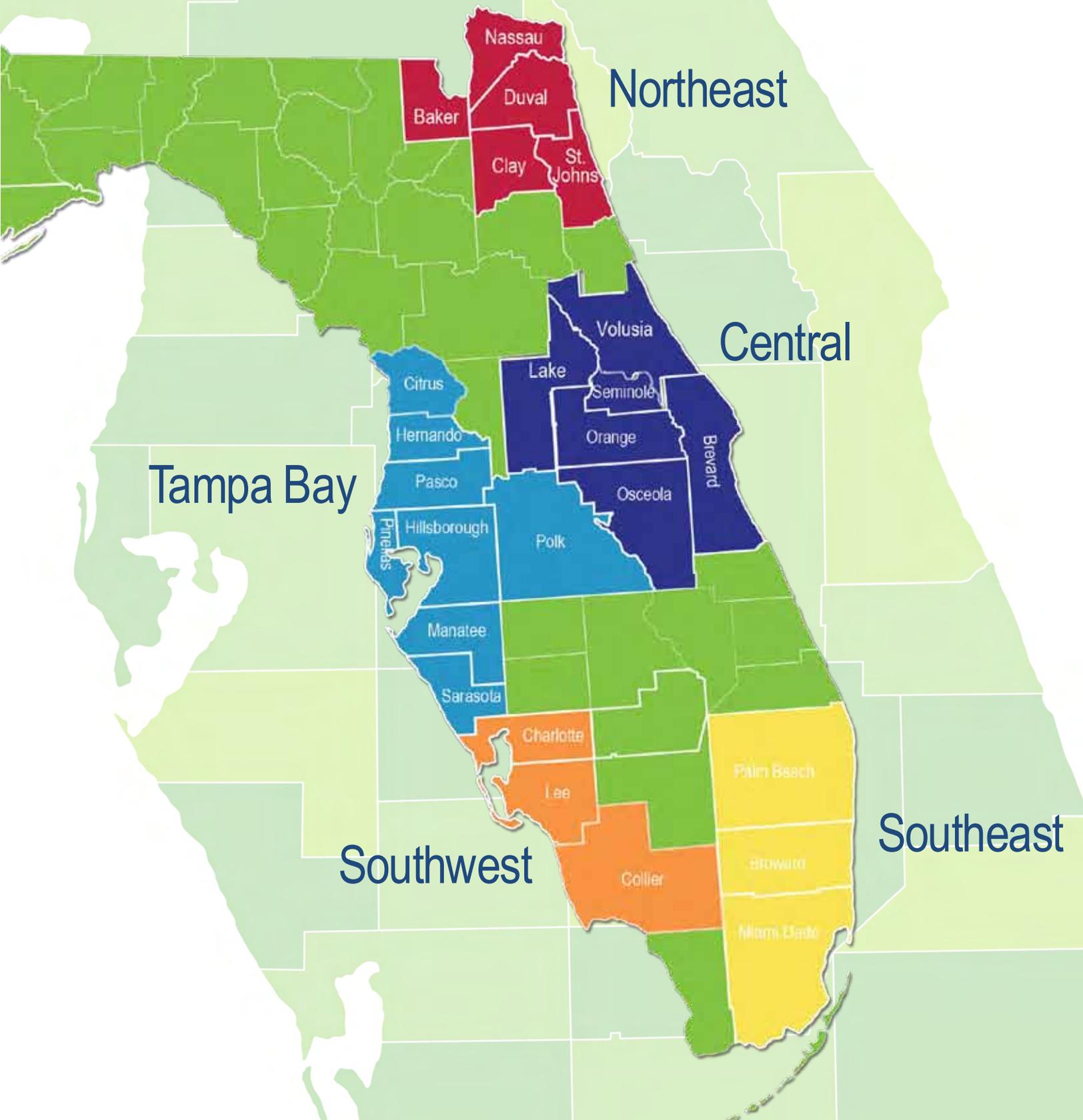
# Connecting Florida

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APRIL 2010

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# Florida's Five Largest Metropolitan Regions Collaborate to Build a Future for Transit.



April 2010

Dear Readers,

This report provides compelling information on how we as communities plan to move forward with better mobility, sustainable neighborhoods, and better economic health through implementation of our transportation plans. If Florida is to compete for the jobs of the future and to attain the high quality of life that residents want and need, leadership must move ahead and make strategic transportation investments today and coordinate these investments with land use.

Nearly two years ago, the five Urban Land Institute District Councils in Florida formed a partnership with the ULI/Curtis Regional Infrastructure Project to analyze the links between transportation and land use in our state. Very quickly it became apparent that despite impressive gains in transit ridership, the missing component was a fully integrated transportation system—with a strong transit element for the larger urban areas. Achieving such a system will require a clear vision and strong leadership at all levels.

Under the banner of Connecting Florida, ULI members in the five study areas have worked with their local regional planning councils, metropolitan planning organizations, transit authorities, local governments, and other interested parties to convene meetings, programs, and initiatives focused on transit and land use. ULI's commitment to best practices led our efforts. When the Florida Legislature met for a December 2009 Special Session to consider transit funding and authorization, ULI provided meaningful information on the benefits that regionally integrated transit systems can bring to our state's economic health and sustainability.

Increase in Transit Boardings, 2000–2008	
Southeast Florida	41%
Central Florida	25%
Tampa Bay region	47%
Jacksonville	24%
Lee and Collier counties	86%
<i>Source: National Transit Database.</i>	

We would also like to give special acknowledgment to ULI Southeast Florida/Caribbean's former chair, Debbie Orshesky, for having the vision to bring all five District Councils together for this work and for having the stamina to chair the effort locally.

ULI will continue to share best practices, help implement the transportation plans, and make the crucial links to land use and compact development. We are committed to the goal of ULI as a convener of ideas, meetings, and programs, as we fully and responsibly support transportation for Florida's future. We hope you will join us in these vital efforts.



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# Regionally Integrated Transit Systems and Florida's Future

## PART I

**FLORIDIANS LIVE IN NEIGHBORHOODS AND WORK, PLAY, AND SHOP IN REGIONS THAT ARE LARGER THAN ANY ONE NEIGHBORHOOD, CITY, OR COUNTY.** For the most part, Florida's road system has historically done a good job of connecting Floridians to where they want to go. However, any complete transportation system requires balance, especially as the population and number of jobs in Florida's metropolitan regions grow. Transit service must also operate at the neighborhood, community, and regional levels. At the regional level, moreover, transit requires *speed* to provide the level of service Floridians expect from their transportation systems. Finally, coordinating transit service with land development maximizes the investment in both, creating a regionally integrated transit system.

### The Five Elements of a Regionally Integrated Transit System

**400 Cars = 8 Buses = 1 Commuter Train**

1. **Commuter rail and express buses**– to connect workers to jobs in multicounty metropolitan regions.
2. **Light rail and bus rapid transit**– to move quickly around urban areas.
3. **Local buses and streetcars**– to move through neighborhoods and connect to regional transit systems.
4. **Intercity passenger rail and bus service**– to connect metropolitan regions.
5. **Walkable land use**– to get from transit to your destination: land development and design that support walking also support transit users!

It's a new day for transit in Florida. State government's support for commuter rail and the federal government's announced investment in high-speed rail are game-changers for the state. In addition, each of Florida's five largest metropolitan regions is examining the opportunities and challenges ahead for boosting transit service. Commuter rail, bus rapid transit, light rail, high-occupancy toll (HOT) lanes, expanded bus service, and walkable communities are hot topics across the state. To make the most of Florida's momentum for expanding regionally integrated transit systems, the public and private sectors need to work together, forming a partnership that will shape Florida's metropolitan regions and the state's economy for decades to come.

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February 22, 2010



- 1 RENTAL CAR CENTER
- 2 TSA MOVIE STATION
- 3 METROLINK CONNECTOR STATION
- 4 PEDESTRIAN CONCOURSE
- 5 REGIONAL COMMUTER & INTERCITY RAIL PLATFORM (TRI-RAIL & AMTRAK)
- 6 REGIONAL COMMUTER & INTERCITY RAIL BUILDINGS (TRI-RAIL & AMTRAK)
- 7 BICYCLE LOCKER FACILITY
- 8 GROUND TRANSPORTATION CENTER SUPPORT BUILDING & POLICE STATION
- 9 INTERCITY BUS TERMINAL - GREYHOUND & OTHERS

### MIAMI INTERMODAL CENTER



At the Miami Intermodal Center, buses, trains, cars, and bicycles can access the airport.

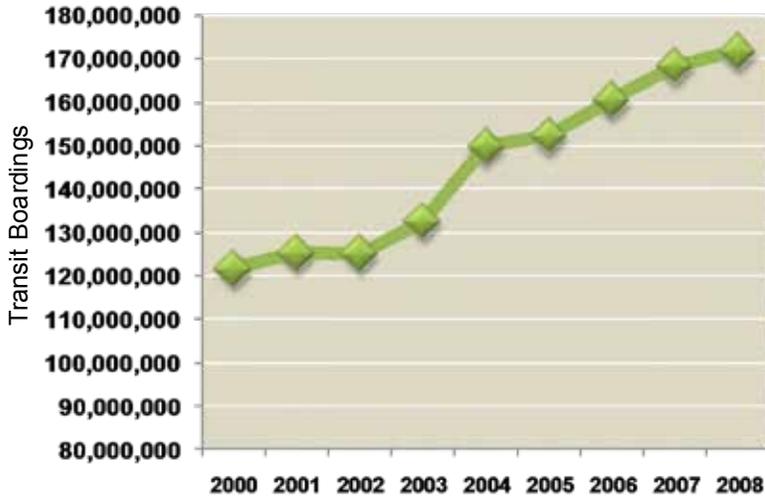
Yet, all this talk about trains and fast buses would mean little if Floridians didn't want to get on board. Florida's transit systems, however, **set ridership records** throughout the 2000s. Even in the smallest of the five largest metropolitan regions, southwest Florida, transit boardings now total over 4 million trips a year. In southeast Florida, transit boardings number well over 170 million trips annually. While the Great Recession has probably caused transit use to decline in 2009—the economic doldrums have depressed nearly all travel—transit service will increase in importance as the state finds its economic footing and the economic recovery gains momentum.



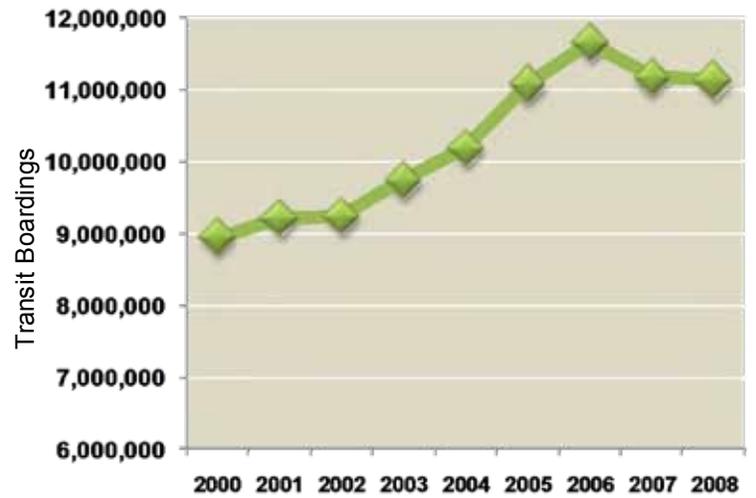
Buses run in their own lanes on the South Miami-Dade Busway.

# Figure 1. Transit Ridership Increased Significantly over the Last Decade

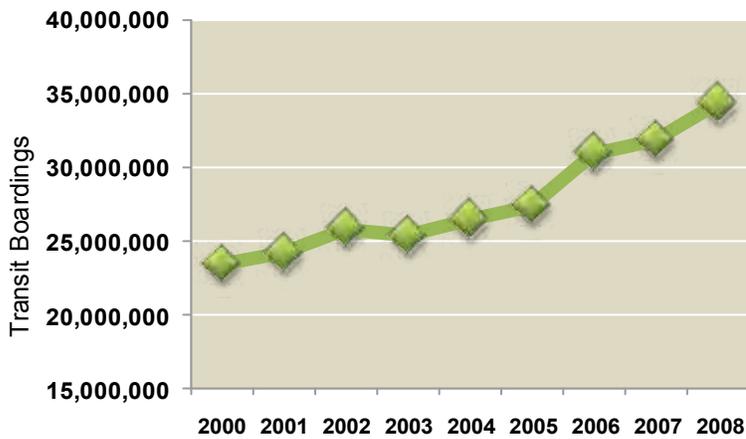
## Southeast Florida Transit Ridership



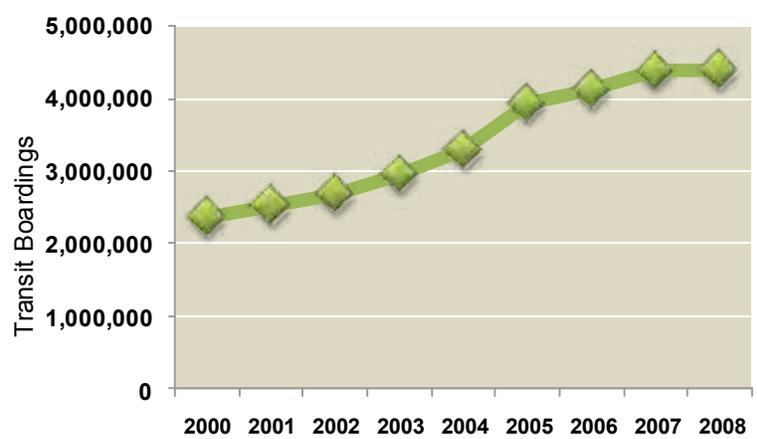
## Jacksonville Transportation Authority Ridership



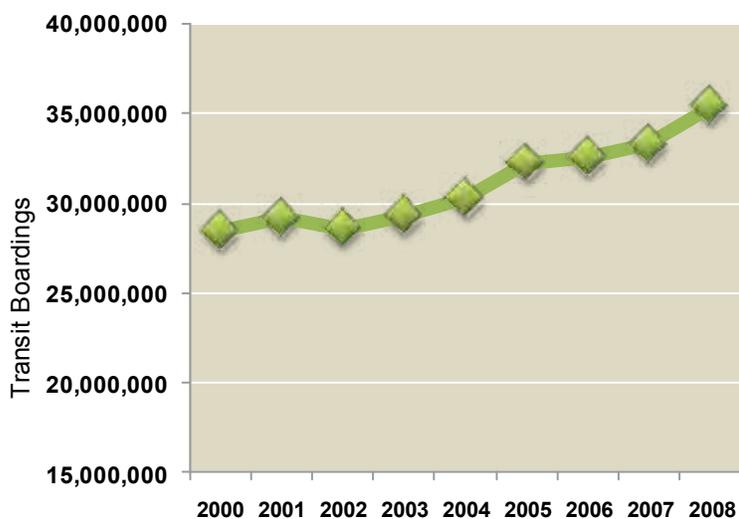
## Tampa Bay Region Transit Ridership



## Lee & Collier Counties Transit Ridership



## Central Florida Transit Ridership



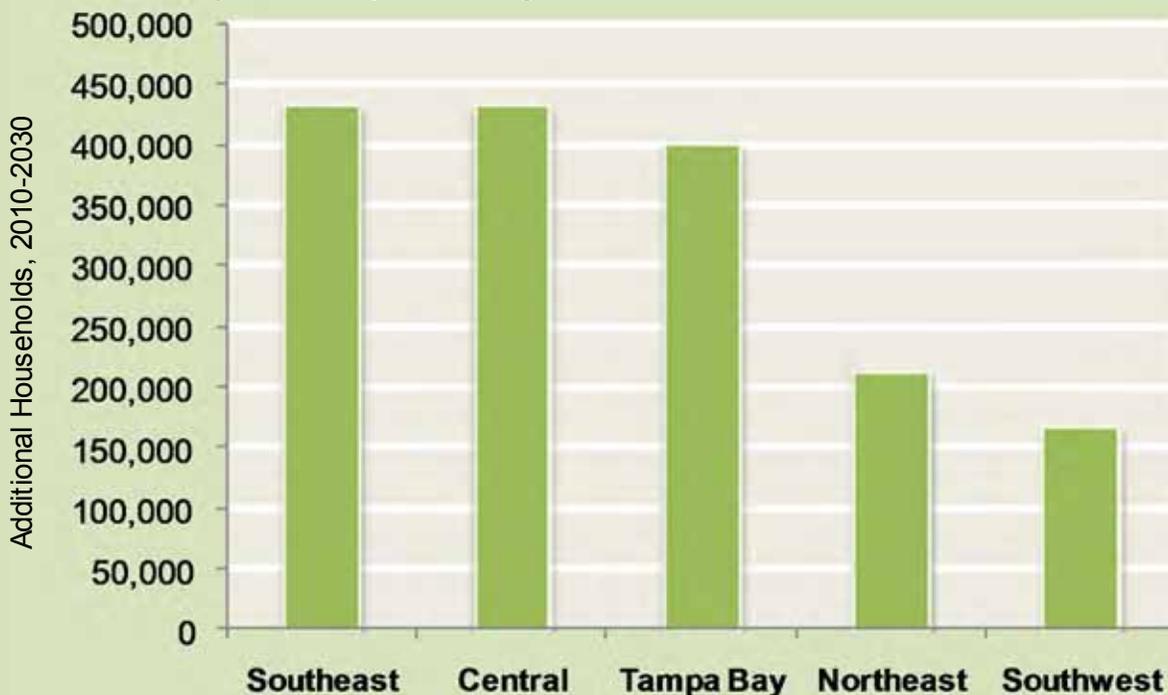
SOURCE: National Transit Database and Collier Area Transit.

# Regionally Integrated Transit Systems and Economic Vitality

**FLORIDA'S FIVE LARGEST METROPOLITAN REGIONS DRIVE FLORIDA'S ECONOMY.** They are home to 82 percent of the state's population and over 83 percent of the state's jobs, and they are expected to absorb at least 80 percent of the 5 million additional people projected to live in the state by 2030. The future of the state of Florida depends on how well these metropolitan regions provide for and support their growing populations. New initiatives strengthening the transportation connections between and within Florida's five largest metropolitan regions will help determine the state's future.

Regionally integrated transit systems coordinated with compact development and metropolitan intensification will benefit not only Florida's economy, but also the state's environment and quality of life. For a state long associated with tourism and attracting in-migrants, quality of life is one of Florida's most significant economic assets.

**FIGURE 2. In the Next 20 Years, Florida's Five Largest Metropolitan Regions are Projected to Experience Significant Growth in the Number of Households**



SOURCE: Florida Demographic Database, August 2008; Florida Demographic Conference, October 2009

**Roads will not be enough.** A robust transportation system is a key ingredient in any vibrant economy. Florida's road system has not kept up—and will not be able to keep up—with population growth and vehicle travel unless additional transit options are provided. Both population growth and

travel growth outstripped the road system between 2000 and 2007. And the consequences of trying to keep up with population growth can be extreme: if Florida's roads had kept pace with population growth between 2000 and 2007, this would have meant constructing an additional 29,000 miles of highway lanes, major roads, and local streets. Instead, Floridians got increasing congestion.

**TABLE 1. Vehicle Travel Outpaced Florida's Population and Roads between 2000 and 2007\***

Increase in vehicle miles traveled (VMT)	35%
Increase in population	17%
Increase in lane-miles of all roads	6%

\*Florida's VMT peaked in 2007, declining by 3.6 percent in 2008 with the slowing economy.

SOURCES: FHWA, Highway Statistics; Florida Demographic Database.

The population growth that is coming to Florida's metropolitan regions provides an opportunity to build a modern, balanced transportation system. Intensification of development—done right—can make transit service more efficient, while at the same time increased transit use will take pressure off the roads. Because of the strange physics of congestion, even what seems like a small increase in transit use can provide significant benefits to highway users—trucks, cars, and buses alike.

**Regionally integrated transit systems coordinated with compact development and metropolitan intensification will benefit not only Florida's economy, but also the state's environment and quality of life.**

## **World-class regions have world-class transit systems.**

From Dallas to Beijing, Charlotte to Madrid, Denver to Salt Lake City to Phoenix and even to little Eugene-Springfield, Oregon, metropolitan regions around the world realize that in order to compete, they must provide complete transportation systems that offer choices and alternatives. Rapid transit is no longer a unique attribute of America's older, 19th-century metropolitan areas—New York



Everyone rides free on Miami's Metromover.

City's subways may be America's most famous, but you can take the subway in Los Angeles, too. Twenty-three of America's large and medium-sized cities now operate modern light-rail systems, and 25 separate commuter rail systems transport workers and visitors. Finally, developing networks of high occupancy toll (HOT) lanes and other dedicated routes are turning the workhorse of transit—the bus—into a vehicle for regional speed and reliability.

Highlighting the importance of world-class transit service to business, *Forbes* magazine recently introduced a “green commuter” category to its annual ranking of the best and worst American cities for commuters. Metropolitan regions with high levels of transit use get a boost in the overall ranking, hurting the standing of most of Florida's metropolitan regions.

### State and Federal Governments Get Behind Passenger Rail Service in Florida

With the state legislature's historic vote in support of commuter rail service in southeastern and central Florida in December 2009, Florida took a significant step toward regionally integrated transit systems. The legislation clears away the final legal hurdles for SunRail, central Florida's new commuter rail line, to begin service in 2013 and provides support for southeast Florida's Tri-Rail commuter rail service. The state legislature also created two important tools to manage Florida's future passenger rail systems: the Florida Statewide Rail Commission will advise the FDOT and the legislature, and the Florida Rail Enterprise within FDOT will oversee all state-owned passenger rail systems.

The federal government recognized Florida's reinvigorated commitment to regional transit and the state's leadership on high-speed rail. In January 2010, the Tampa-to-Orlando high-speed rail corridor earned top recognition in the Obama administration's new High-Speed Intercity Passenger Rail Program, launched by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). The \$1.25 billion federal grant will help fund 84 miles of new track connecting Tampa to Orlando, with several intermediate stops at major tourist destinations. When completed in 2014, travelers will have the choice of 16 round trips per day on trains reaching speeds of up to 168 miles per hour. Next up for high-speed rail planning is the 240-mile Orlando-to-Miami corridor.



- Corridor Development Program
- Long-Term Vision for High-Speed Passenger Rail

**TABLE 2. Florida Ranks at or Near the Bottom in *Forbes Magazine's* Analysis of the Best and Worst Commutes in the Nation's 60 Largest Metropolitan Areas**

<b>Metro Region</b>	<b>Overall Commuter Ranking</b>	<b>"Green Commuter" Ranking</b>	<b>Travel Time Ranking</b>
Salt Lake City	1	13	11
Charlotte	30	35	24
Denver	32	21	33
Phoenix	36	16	44
<b>Jacksonville</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Miami</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>47</b>
Dallas	56	38	45
<b>Orlando</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>Tampa Bay</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>41</b>

The "green commuter" ranking is based on the percentage of commuters who carpooled, walked, biked, or took transit to work in 2008.

SOURCE: Forbes.com, 2010.

**With transit, families can choose to save.** No one expects Floridians to simply abandon their cars. The automobile will continue to provide essential mobility and flexibility for many Florida families. The cost of car ownership is far from trivial and will only get more expensive. The American Automobile Association (AAA) calculates that the annual cost in 2009 of owning and operating an automobile ranged from \$5,500 for a small sedan driven 10,000 miles to nearly \$11,500 for an SUV driven 20,000 miles. The AAA's formula for 2009 sets gas prices at \$2.30 per gallon. Looking into the future, the U.S. Energy Information Administration projects that world oil prices—and thus gas prices—will return to the heights seen in 2007 and 2008 by 2015. Using the car less or owning fewer cars can free up dollars that families can spend elsewhere. With regionally integrated transit systems, families will have more choices about how much they spend on transportation.

**High-quality transit lowers consumer spending on transportation.** Like Florida's roads, regionally integrated transit systems will require significant public investment to both build and operate. All roads do not "pay for themselves"; through the gas tax and other funding mechanisms, high-use roads subsidize low-use roads. Similarly, not all of the links of regionally integrated transit systems will pay for themselves. The ultimate economic measure is the efficiency and effectiveness of the entire transportation system of roads, rails, paths, and sidewalks that connects people and freight to the places they want or need to go.

FIGURE 3. **World Oil Prices Will Return to 2008 Levels by 2015, According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration**



SOURCE: U.S. Energy Information Administration, *International Energy Outlook*, 2009.

Recent studies comparing metropolitan regions in the United States show that even with higher subsidies for transit service, consumers and taxpayers spend less overall on transportation in regions with high-quality transit service. In communities building high-quality transit systems, residents annually pay, on average, an additional \$376 in transit subsidies and fares but save \$1,040 on vehicles, parking, and roads. Investing taxes and fares into transit, by one calculation, provides a 277 percent annual return on investment!

**Investing in transit creates jobs.** Tracking federal stimulus spending funded by the ARRA in 2009 provides a real-time analysis of job creation from transit investments. In just the first year, stimulus funds produced 16,419 direct “job-months” for every billion dollars of capital investment in transit, about twice the number of jobs created by the ARRA’s investment in highways. When operating spending and indirect jobs are included, every billion dollars of annual spending on transit in the United States generates 36,000 jobs, according to a 2009 study by the American Public Transportation Association that analyzes the longer-term



Riders line up to board a Tri-Rail commuter train.

impacts of transit investment. Just as important as job creation, ***transit connects workers to jobs and jobs to workers***: a robust transit system increases labor availability and productivity.

**TABLE 3 Annual Transportation Expenditures per Capita in Basic and High-Quality Transit Regions in the United States**

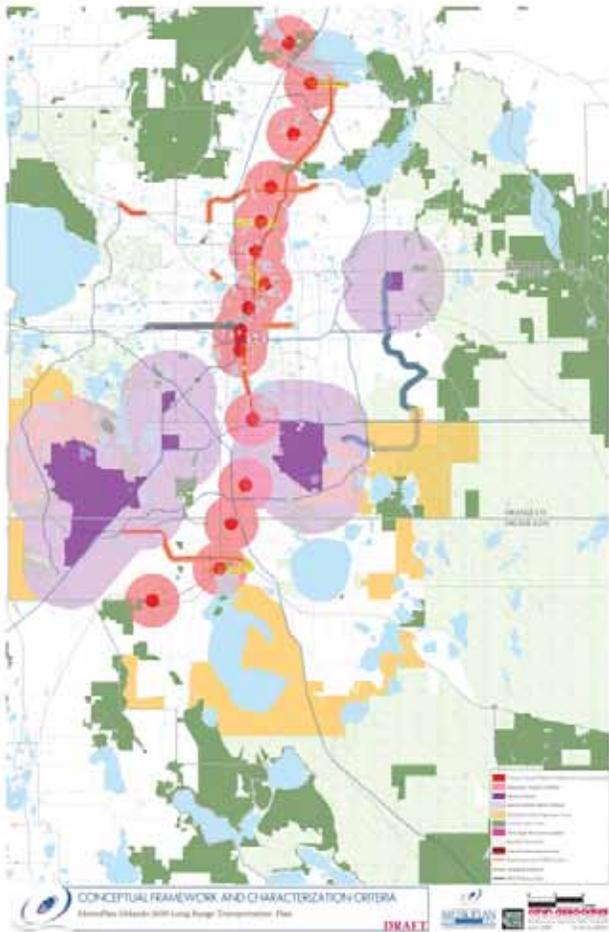
<b>Expenses</b>	<b>Basic Transit</b>	<b>High Quality</b>	<b>Transit Savings</b>
Vehicles (excluding taxes spent on roads)	\$3,500	\$2,860	\$640
Parking	\$2,000	\$1,800	\$200
Road subsidies (from general taxes)	\$300	\$100	\$200
<i>Total Automobile</i>	<i>\$5,800</i>	<i>\$4,760</i>	<i>\$1,040</i>
Transit subsidies	\$82	\$350	(\$268)
Transit fares	\$22	\$130	(\$108)
<i>Total Transit</i>	<i>\$104</i>	<i>\$480</i>	<i>(\$376)</i>
<b>Totals Transportation</b>	<b>\$5,904</b>	<b>\$5,240</b>	<b>\$664</b>

SOURCE: Victoria Transport Policy Institute, 2010.

## Transit and the Importance of Land Use

An overwhelming majority of transit users start their transit trip by walking; an even larger number reach their final destination through walking. Feeling comfortable and safe walking from origin to destination, therefore, is a critical element of regionally integrated transit systems. In addition, clustering development around transit stations or stops improves the efficiency of a transit system, allowing for higher-quality service, which, with supportive planning and development policies, increases property values. Compact development provides the ingredients for walkable and transit-supportive land use patterns.

Clustering development around transit stations or stops improves the efficiency of the transit system, allowing for higher-quality service, which, with supportive planning and development policies, increases property values.



**Pedestrian safety is a transit issue.** Studies show that walkable environments shaped by compact development are also safer for pedestrians, an important consideration given that Florida’s pedestrian fatality rate (per 100,000 people) is over 85 percent higher than the national average. All of Florida’s five largest metropolitan regions are counted among the most dangerous places in the country for walking, according to a 2009 study by the Surface Transportation Policy Project and Transportation for America. Addressing pedestrian safety through land use will be a part of developing regionally integrated transit systems.

Metroplan Orlando coordinates transportation and land use through a conceptual framework.

### What is compact development?

Compact development is walkable. It encompasses residential and commercial development and can be adapted to urban, suburban, and even rural settings. Single-family houses, townhomes, and apartments all have a place in compact development. Compact development means neighborhoods or employment centers with most or all of the following:

- concentrations of population and/or employment;
- medium to high densities appropriate to context;
- a mix of uses;
- interconnected streets;
- creative approaches to parking, including “park once” strategies;
- pedestrian-, bicycle-, and transit-friendly design; and
- access and proximity to transit.

**Build development that meets future needs.** Market trends reveal a growing demand for smaller houses in walkable communities. According to a forthcoming ULI study on the future of housing, two groups will exert the most impact on housing in the coming decades: the baby boomers and the equally large group of young adults forming new households. As they age, baby boomers will be seeking smaller homes with nearby conveniences, but they will face weakened markets for their large homes in the suburbs. For younger adults, homeownership competes with other objectives such as living in vibrant urban settings, staying “connected,” and a greater sense of community. These trends indicate that there will be an excess of large-lot, single-family houses; demand for new housing will be defined by smaller houses on smaller lots, townhomes, and apartments. National trends are also taking hold in Florida: as compared to previous decades, the 25-to-44 age group and the 65-and-up age group are both projected to increase significantly in the coming decades.

### Supportive Land Uses at Tri-Rail’s Boca Raton Station Add Vitality to the Area



Within walking distance of Tri-Rail’s Boca Raton station is Village Plaza, a new retail center. Tri-Rail riders can start their day with coffee or a workout at the fitness center, just steps away from the train. Combining errands and access to the metropolitan region adds to the vitality and convenience of the area.

**Transit tied to land use also provides environmental benefits.** Developing around transit service will help protect urban areas from underdevelopment and rural and environmentally sensitive areas from overdevelopment. By reducing driving, developing around transit can also have significant climate change benefits. Compact development patterns with transit service can reduce carbon emissions from 20 to 40 percent in comparison to auto-only development patterns.

**Start now with transit-ready development.** Although many of Florida’s planned new transit services will take years to reach opening day, coordinating future transit service with land use can begin now. From the development perspective, there is little reason to wait for the train, streetcar, or rapid bus to arrive. Instead, communities can get started planning and building **transit-ready development**—compact development combined with “place making”—that will synergize both existing and future transit service.

## Building Regionally Integrated Transit Systems

Regionally integrated transit systems are not built in a day. Successful systems are the product of long-term, collaborative efforts. Florida and each of the state’s metropolitan regions will find their own way to bring the necessary ingredients into the mix:

- coordination at the local, metropolitan, and regional levels;
- state government support;
- stable funding sources for capital and for operations and maintenance;
- private sector leadership; and
- linkages between transit and compact development.

Collaborative partnerships will be needed to develop plans, policies, regulations, and investment strategies that integrate high-quality transit service with compact development.

Collaborative partnerships will be needed to develop plans, policies, regulations, and investment strategies that integrate high-quality transit service with compact development. As the ingredients come together, Florida’s metropolitan regions will become more competitive. Florida’s advance planning for high-speed rail is an example of how federal dollars are courted by having a vision and taking the steps needed to make it a reality. Economic investment, too, will take note that in Florida the public and private sectors are working together to create the transportation system of the future: a balanced and robust transportation system that promotes Florida’s quality of life, environmental health, and economic vitality.



The Skyway people-mover provides a leafy ride in Jacksonville.

Using 95 Express, Brickell Key Shuttle buses, and Tri-Rail, I save money on gas, make better use of my time, and eliminate stress. I can plan menus or balance my checkbook on the way to work, the drivers are punctual and friendly, and I have met fellow commuters. My overall experience has been excellent.

*-Michelle Oropesa*



I have been riding Tri-Rail from Boca Raton to Miami for the past four years. My train commute is 'quiet time'—free from office interruptions and traffic congestion. I work on documents, research, think about issues, and prepare for my practice as a real estate and construction law attorney. When I arrive at the office, my day is already planned so I can hit the ground running.

*-Leonard O. Townsend, Esq.*

Tampa Bay faces a historic opportunity to take the next step in implementing a diverse transportation system: a step that tells our young people they do not need to relocate to more progressive communities to find work and build a future; a step that tells businesses that we are building infrastructure to connect people and places and that we are going to fight to keep and multiply jobs in our community; and a step that tells the rest of the state and the world that we aim to lead our way out of these economic doldrums.

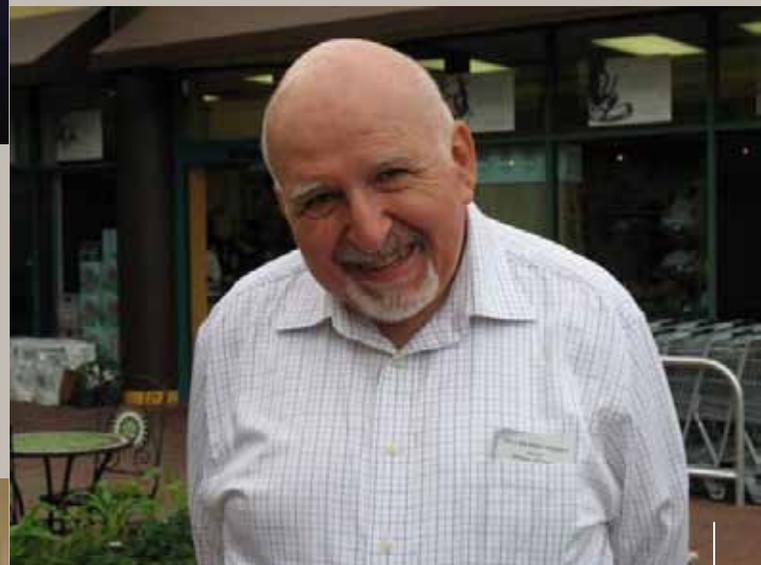
*-Ronnie E. Duncan, Chairman, TBARTA; President & CEO,*



*Vertical Integration*

We can leave the car behind and walk or ride our bikes to a SunRail station. Then we will head out for appointments, shopping, dining, or sightseeing. It's the kind of healthy, energy-efficient lifestyle we want.

*-Stephen & Kristin Pategas*



We use Collier Area Transit to get to medical appointments, libraries, shopping centers, and volunteer work with the Naples Smart Growth Coalition. We really appreciate this service and encourage our friends to use it. Because we walk a little more, it decreases our carbon footprint so we're living a healthier, environmentally friendly life. At the same time, the service improves traffic, especially during the winter months.

*-Mr. & Mrs. Morton Rosenberg*

## Faces of transit.

## PART II

# Transit in Florida's Five Largest Metropolitan Regions

### EACH OF FLORIDA'S FIVE LARGEST METROPOLITAN REGIONS HAS A TRANSIT STORY TO TELL.

The following provides an overview of transit service today and key plans for the future, charts efforts at regional cooperation and coordination, and looks at recent successes and longstanding challenges. Activities in all five of these metropolitan regions show a growing understanding of the importance of regionally integrated transit systems to the state's quality of life and economic health.

Brief profiles of “new transit metros”—Charlotte, Dallas, Denver, Phoenix, Salt Lake City, and Eugene-Springfield, Oregon—introduce metropolitan regions outside of Florida that have embarked on reimagining and reinvigorating their transit systems since 1990. The selected metropolitan regions are, for the most part, historically fast-growing areas that are roughly the same size as Florida's metropolitan regions. As Florida moves forward on transit, the new transit metros can provide valuable lessons on how to:

- build momentum for change;
- pay for significant new investments;
- select and deploy new technologies;
- organize to provide regionally integrated transit systems; and
- coordinate with land development.

### NEW TRANSIT METRO: CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA

- **Population of Metropolitan Region in 2008:** 1,701,600.
- **Annual Transit Boardings on the Charlotte-Area Transit System in 2008:** 22,720,940.
- **Transit System Today:** 9.6-mile LYNX light-rail line, historic trolley, and bus service.
- **Opening of LYNX Light-Rail Line:** November 2007.
- **10 Millionth Rider on LYNX:** December 2009.
- **Transit Plans for 2030:** 25 miles of commuter rail, 21 miles of light rail, 16 miles of streetcar, 14 miles of bus rapid transit, and an expanded network of buses and other transit services.

**“Do not treat transportation as a project, treat it as a process that can never stop,”** *Patrick McCrory, mayor of Charlotte*, on the lessons learned from building Charlotte's light-rail system and successfully attracting new development.

# SOUTHEAST FLORIDA

Miami • Fort Lauderdale • West Palm Beach  
MIAMI-DADE • BROWARD • PALM BEACH

**POPULATION OF SOUTHEAST FLORIDA IN 2008:** 5,414,772.

**TRANSIT SYSTEM TODAY:** 23 miles of heavy rail, 72 miles of commuter rail, 20 miles of separated busways, express bus service in HOT lanes, people-mover loops, and county bus service.

**TRANSIT PROVIDERS:** South Florida Regional Transportation Authority (Tri-Rail); Miami-Dade Transit (Metrorail, Metromover, and bus); Broward County Transit (bus); and Palm Tran (bus).

**THE GLEAMING HIGH RISES OF MIAMI SYMBOLIZE TO THE WORLD THE AMENITIES OF FLORIDA'S URBAN LIFESTYLE.** Along with urban densities come congestion and work commute times (travel times to work) above the national average, but southeast Florida also boasts transit use that exceeds the national average. Southeast Florida is the state's transit leader, providing lessons for the other metropolitan regions on both what to emulate and what to try to avoid.

Modern regional transit service in southeast Florida began with a burst of activity during the mid-1980s. Miami-Dade County saw the completion of the original Metrorail system in 1985 and the first loop of the Metromover automated people-mover in 1986. In 1987, FDOT launched what would become the Tri-Rail commuter rail line as a temporary project to provide relief during a major I-95 construction project. By the early 1990s, however, the momentum for growth stalled.

Southeast Florida is poised to take its “starter system” for regional transit to the next level, to build the system that matches the region's economic needs and global reputation.

As the 21st century began, southeast Florida had a “starter system” in place. Regional transit, however, had limited success in catalyzing new development. Riders on Tri-Rail, running along an industrial and commercial corridor, had views of mostly the backs of factories and abandoned industrial land.

In 2003, state legislation transferred Tri-Rail to the new South Florida Regional Transportation Authority (SFRTA), which completed construction on a second track in 2006, significantly improving service and boosting ridership. With Tri-Rail on the brink of drastic cuts, a new state law

designated a more stable source of operating funds for SFRTA in December 2009. In addition, municipalities are looking at land uses that better complement Tri-Rail service.



Miami-Dade Transit provides express service on hybrid buses.

In November 2002, voters in Miami-Dade County approved a half-cent increase in the sales tax to fund the People's Transportation Plan (PTP), with oversight provided by the Citizen's Independent Transportation Trust. Among its projects, the PTP is providing the majority of funding for the 2.4-mile Metrorail extension, scheduled to open in 2012, to the new Miami Intermodal Center at the Miami International Airport.

## NEW TRANSIT METRO: DALLAS-FORT WORTH-ARLINGTON, TEXAS

- **Population of Metropolitan Region in 2008:** 6,303,407.
- **Regional Transit Provider:** Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART).
- **DART's Transit System Today:** 45 miles of light rail, 34 miles of commuter rail, 84 miles of HOV lanes, plus 130 bus routes serving 13 cities and 700 square miles.
- **Planned Expansions:** Double to 90 miles of light rail by 2013; by 2030, add 27 miles of commuter rail service and develop 97 miles of enhanced and rapid bus corridors.
- **DART Governance:** 15-member board appointed by member-city councils according to population.

The Dallas-Fort Worth metropolitan region, a historically fast-growing region seemingly epitomized by the sprawling western landscape of single-family houses, pickup trucks, and football fans, is also home to internationally award-winning regional transit service. The new era of transit began in 1983 when voters in Dallas and surrounding cities approved a one-cent local sales tax to create and support Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART). Twenty miles of the DART "starter" light-rail system opened in 1996 and 1997, as did ten miles of the Trinity Railway Express.

In 2000, voters approved \$2.9 billion in long-term bonds for rail expansion and, with over \$1 billion in federal grants, the next phase of expansion was on. Commuter rail service soon connected downtown Dallas to downtown Fort Worth and extensions to the light-rail system began opening in 2002. DART grew into a full-service regional transit agency providing high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes, regional rail and bus service, and also local bus and vanpool connections.

DART also earned its international reputation for encouraging transit-oriented development around its rail stations. A new live-work-play transit lifestyle is taking root in the region, and station areas have attracted approximately \$7 billion in planned, announced, and existing private development. DART is an active partner in the development process, working with member cities on land use planning and urban design and with landowners and developers to promote transit-oriented development.

But the new kid on the transit block in southeast Florida is the I-95 Express high-occupancy toll (HOT) lanes. Because tolls promise a congestion-free trip, registered vanpools and express buses can provide fast, reliable service between Broward County and downtown Miami. Riders on the three new 95 Express Bus Rapid Transit routes, opened in January 2010, travel in comfort while staying connected with Wi-Fi access.

Other significant transit projects planned or under study in the region include the following:

- Fort Lauderdale's 2.7-mile downtown circulator streetcar line, the Wave: seeking funding from a mix of federal, state, and municipal sources supplemented by a special assessment district of the benefiting property owners, service could begin as early as July 2013.
- South Florida East Coast Corridor Transit Analysis Study: extending from downtown Miami to Jupiter, the 85-mile-long corridor would put commuter rail service through or near the heart of 28 densely populated municipalities. Recognizing the importance of land use from the start, the FEC Railway study is working with each municipality to facilitate future development around the stations, including looking at station design and supportive land use regulations.
- Expanding Tri-Rail service to Jupiter.
- Additional HOT lanes on I-595 and I-95, including 48 miles in Broward County.
- Metrorail extensions and intermodal connections.

Southeast Florida is poised to take its "starter system" for regional transit to the next level, to build the system that matches the region's economic needs and global reputation. The decades of effort are just now beginning to create a truly regionally integrated transit system including supportive land development.

# TAMPA BAY REGION

Tampa/St. Petersburg/Clearwater • Lakeland • Bradenton/Sarasota/Venice  
HILLSBOROUGH • PINELLAS • POLK • PASCO • SARASOTA • MANATEE • HERNANDO • CITRUS

**POPULATION OF TAMPA BAY REGION IN 2008:** 4,144,000.

**TRANSIT SYSTEM TODAY:**  
County bus systems and a local streetcar line.

**TRANSIT BOARDINGS IN 2008:** 34,350,837.

**HIGH-SPEED RAIL:** Tampa-to-Orlando line scheduled to begin service in 2014.

**PLANS FOR 2035:** 116 miles of rail and bus rapid transit, 226 miles of express bus service, and 170 miles of special lanes for buses, carpool vehicles, and toll-paying vehicles.

**AS COMMUTERS, CYCLISTS, AND PEDESTRIANS, TAMPA BAY RESIDENTS HAVE LONG SUFFERED FROM FRUSTRATING COMMUTES, POOR SIDEWALKS AND PEDESTRIAN WALKWAYS, UNFRIENDLY ROADWAYS FOR BICYCLISTS, AND LIMITED TRANSIT SERVICE.** Transit riders today depend mostly on buses and express buses to get around the region. Despite the impediments, transit ridership has expanded significantly in the last decade.

Should local planners try to reduce automobile trips by enhancing rail and bus options throughout the region? Eighty percent of Tampa Bay residents said “Yes” in a June 2009 scientific survey.

Major advances in federal, state, and local policy are moving Tampa Bay’s transit opportunities forward. The federal government’s funding for high-speed rail, state government’s creation of the Tampa Bay Area Regional Transportation Authority (TBARTA), and the ONE BAY regional visioning partnership all indicate that Tampa Bay is ready to take a major leap forward in creating a regionally integrated transit system.

The state legislature created TBARTA in 2007. Charged with providing mobility by expanding multimodal transportation options throughout the region, TBARTA is authorized to plan, own, and operate a wide range of transit types and roads, including toll roads, and to support “transit-oriented development nodes.” TBARTA adopted its first master plan in May 2009. Promoting “seamless travel” across the region, the plan’s long-term vision knits the Tampa Bay Region together with hundreds of miles of light rail, commuter rail, bus rapid transit and express buses, plus highway lanes that provide congestion-free travel for buses, carpools, and toll payers.

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## NEW TRANSIT METRO: DENVER-AURORA-BOULDER, COLORADO

- **Population of Metropolitan Region in 2008:** 3,046,000.
- **First Link of New Light-Rail Transit System:** 1994.
- **Transit System Today:** 35 miles of light rail, plus extensive bus service.
- **Denver Regional Transportation District, Transit Boardings in 2008:** 101,175,756.
- **Plans for 2015:** Build 122 miles of new commuter rail and light rail, 18 miles of bus rapid transit, and enhanced bus service for easy, convenient bus/rail connections.

The Denver region entered the era of modern light rail with a 5.3-mile central corridor that opened in 1994. Reaching the suburbs became an early priority, and the next light-rail line traveled 8.7 miles to Littleton, opening in 2000. A program known as T-Rex made the next leap in regional transit service, adding 19 miles of light rail to the system. Ridership has consistently met or exceeded expectations.

Voters endorsed the success of regional transit with the approval in 2004 of a dedicated sales tax for FasTracks. The program will spread light rail, commuter rail, and bus rapid transit service across an eight-county region. A regional transit district (RTD), governed by a publicly elected board, builds and oversees management of the system. In addition to drawing on sales tax and fare revenues, the RTD has successfully courted federal funds and actively seeks out public/private partnerships.

Light rail's push on property values was proven in the recent downturn. In October 2008 the Denver property market as a whole had dedined from its peak by 7.5 percent, but home values near light-rail stations *increased* by an average of 4 percent.

“Seamless travel” also soon became the buzz word in the wake of the federal government’s January 2010 announcement of funding for the Tampa-to-Orlando high-speed rail service. To leverage this investment, high-speed rail needs to link to local and regional transit service, connecting the region’s tourist destinations and centers of population and employment.

Helping think through the ties between transportation and land use is ONE BAY, a diverse coalition of partners that has tapped over 10,000 residents to develop a regional vision for growth. ONE BAY’s work on the natural and built environments coupled with TBARTA’s plan for mobility gives Tampa Bay a head start on building a more sustainable and livable community in the future.

Preparations for the critical next step—funding—move forward, too. The Hillsborough County Commission is considering ballot language for a transportation referendum in November 2010. The proposed one-cent sales tax will support rail and other transportation projects, including improvements to pedestrian ways, roads, intersections, and bus service. Surrounding counties also have local funding options under study.

### Long-Term Regional Network



TBARTA's plans call for an extensive network of rail, bus, and special toll lanes.

# CENTRAL FLORIDA

Orlando/Kissimmee • Deltona/Daytona Beach/  
Ormond Beach • Palm Bay/Melbourne/Titusville

ORANGE • BREVARD • VOLUSIA • SEMINOLE • OSCEOLA • LAKE

**POPULATION OF  
CENTRAL FLORIDA IN  
2008:** 3,089,131.

**TRANSIT SYSTEM TODAY:**  
LYNX bus system serving  
Orange, Osceola, and  
Seminole counties; LYMMO  
circulator in downtown  
Orlando; county bus  
systems for Brevard,  
Volusia, and Lake.

**ANNUAL TRANSIT  
BOARDINGS IN 2008:**  
35,408,914.

**COMMUTER RAIL IS COMING TO CENTRAL FLORIDA!** SunRail, Florida's second modern commuter rail line, is scheduled to begin service in 2013. Extending 61 miles through Orange, Seminole, Volusia, and Osceola counties, the rail line will connect riders to the Florida Hospital and Orlando Health employment centers and Orlando's central business district, and will allow them to make transfers to the LYNX and VoTran transit systems and even Amtrak. FDOT's economic analysis shows that just the construction and operation of SunRail alone will bring over 11,500 jobs (in person-years) to the region over the next 30 years.



The potential impact of transit-oriented development (TOD), however, dwarfs the economic benefits from SunRail's construction and operation. Looking 20 years out, land within one-half mile of SunRail's 17 stations has the promise to attract housing, offices, and shops that could raise property values to over \$18 billion (2008 dollars) and add thousands more construction jobs. FDOT works closely with local communities to support development opportunities near SunRail's stations, including making TOD studies easily available on SunRail's website.

Regional transit projects like SunRail are only the beginning, as transportation planners in central Florida prepare for the coming decades of population growth and the economic and environmental constraints of continuing to develop around the automobile. Other high-priority transit projects include a new light-rail line running east-west across Orange County, including a station at the Orlando International Airport, and innovations to bus service. In addition, high-speed rail will soon connect Tampa to Orlando; when plans to extend the line to Miami are realized, central Florida will be the hub of modern passenger rail service in the state.

With its How Shall We Grow? regional vision, central Florida has also rethought its land use in ways that are significantly influencing decisions

Regional transit projects like SunRail are only the beginning, as transportation planners in central Florida prepare for the coming decades of population growth and the economic and environmental constraints of continuing to develop around the automobile.

## NEW TRANSIT METRO: PHOENIX-MESA-SCOTTSDALE METROPOLITAN AREA

- **Population of Metropolitan Region in 2008:** 4,221,023.
- **Annual Transit Boardings in 2008:** 72,441,962.
- **Opening of First METRO Light-Rail Line:** December 2008.
- **Number of Boardings on METRO during Its First Year of Service:** 11,300,000.
- **Transit System Plans for 2030:** Six additional high-capacity transit corridors of light rail, bus rapid transit, or other transit mode totaling 37 additional miles of service.

Modern regional transit in the Phoenix area got its start, ironically, in 1985, when voters in Maricopa County approved Proposition 300, which included a 20-year half-cent sales tax designated mostly to freeways. Proposition 300, however, reserved a small portion of the tax revenue for the Valley Metro Regional Public Transportation Authority (RPTA), mandated to plan, develop, and operate regional transit service in the county.

Voters again showed their support for regional transit with the Phoenix Transit 2000 tax, a half-cent sales tax supporting light rail in the city of Phoenix, and Proposition 400, which expanded the half-cent sales tax for regional transit to Maricopa County in 2004. Generating billions of dollars a year, the sales tax funds the RPTA as it builds out the transit elements of the metropolitan region's long-range transportation plan.

Valley Metro today integrates neighborhood, local, and express bus service, but the big leap in regional transit service came in December 2008 with the opening of Phoenix's first light-rail line. Branded METRO, the 20-mile "starter line" connects the downtown Phoenix and Tempe shopping districts, arts and sports venues, major employment centers, and educational institutions. Ridership during METRO's first year exceeded expectations by over a third on weekdays and Saturdays and by over 60 percent on Sundays.

METRO is also an active partner in supporting the cities of Phoenix, Tempe, and Mesa as they facilitate transit-oriented development (TOD). Under METRO's adopted TOD policy, the agency may advocate for needed amendments to general plans and land development regulations.

about transportation. This nationally recognized visioning and public outreach process, led by myregion.org, produced a shared set of land use principles that include preserving open space, providing transportation choices, fostering distinct places to live, and creating housing opportunities. Analysis shows that the How Shall We Grow? land use principles, in comparison to existing land use trends, reduce the miles and hours spent in cars, improve air quality, and better support transit service.

Such significant results convinced Metroplan Orlando—the organization that conducts regional transportation planning for Orange, Seminole, and Osceola counties—to adopt the How Shall We Grow? land use principles for future transportation planning and decision-making.

In addition, central Florida has an advantage in implementing its regional vision and transportation plans. In most of Florida, county borders define transportation planning and most public transit service. Metroplan Orlando and the Central Florida Regional Transportation Authority, which runs the LYNX bus service, cover the entire core of central Florida, transcending county borders. The entire region coordinates transportation planning under the MPO Alliance, which also includes Brevard, Volusia, Lake, Polk, and Ocala counties.



A separate traffic lane is reserved for the LYMMO circulator bus in downtown Orlando.

# SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

Cape Coral/Fort Myers • Naples/Marco Island • Punta Gorda  
LEE • COLLIER • CHARLOTTE

**POPULATION OF  
SOUTHWEST FLORIDA IN  
2008:** 1,058,000.

**TRANSIT SYSTEM TODAY:**  
County bus and dial-a-ride  
services.

**ANNUAL TRANSIT  
BOARDINGS IN 2008:**  
4,540,315.

With some of the fastest growth rates in the state during the boom of the 2000s, southwest Florida burgeoned from a collection of small cities into a metropolitan region of over 1 million inhabitants. With all this development came new transportation challenges and transportation services. Travel increased throughout the area, especially along the corridors linking the counties, weaving together the communities of the metropolitan region.

Any examination of regionally integrated transit systems must include the phenomenal success of Collier Area Transit (CAT). Launching fixed-route bus service in 2001, today CAT runs weekday and weekend service on nine routes, providing 1.2 million trips in 2008. Ridership on Lee County Transit also grew an impressive 37 percent between 2000 and 2008, and introducing fixed-route bus service in Charlotte County is under discussion.

Although the counties provide the area's public transit service, transit plans acknowledge the new metropolitan travel patterns. Transit service that strengthens regional ties within and across counties is identified as a high priority. Rail has even attracted attention as future thinkers eye the Seminole Gulf Rail corridor, connecting all three counties, for its potential for a range of transportation improvements from freight rail to new passenger service.



Collier Area Transit's buses include racks for bicycles.

Highways continue to be the backbone of transportation in southwest Florida. Expanding I-75 from four to six lanes is complete along a 30-mile stretch running through Lee and Collier counties. Long-term plans for I-75 envision a true multimodal corridor, but in the near term it will be an open freeway, without special lanes for buses, carpools, or toll-paying vehicles. Without careful land use planning, this freeway capacity may encourage highway-oriented development patterns that can overwhelm pedestrian, bicycle, and transit connections and lead to worsening congestion.

Many who chose southwest Florida in the last decades came because the region was not home to the big cities of Florida. It was a region where

Part of the growing pains of becoming a metropolitan region is recognizing that the simple small towns have changed. Success as a metropolitan region requires a diversity of housing and jobs and new efforts linking housing, jobs, services, and travel corridors.

## NEW TRANSIT METRO: EUGENE-SPRINGFIELD, OREGON

- **Population of Metropolitan Region in 2008:** 346,560.
- **Annual Transit Boardings in 2008:** 11,587,710.
- **New EmX Green Line Bus Rapid Transit Route Linking Eugene and Springfield:** 2007.
- **Number of Boardings on EmX during First Year in Service:** 1,500,000.

While rail-based transit service sometimes seems to get all the attention, the Eugene-Springfield metropolitan area shows what smaller regions can do to create robust transit service that incorporates new bus technologies. The Lane Transit District runs over 50 bus routes that connect people to destinations across the metropolitan region, including six “rural routes” that reach into outlying districts.

The “emerald” of the Lane Transit District, however, is its new bus rapid transit service. The EmX Green Line runs in dedicated lanes and connects downtown Eugene to downtown Springfield. Providing service as frequently as every ten minutes between the two major hubs of the metropolitan region, the EmX Green Line also serves a major university and hospital center.

The EmX Green Line is planned so that it can be the “backbone” for future EmX expansion. Ultimately, the metropolitan region envisions a 60-mile network of bus rapid transit service that rivals the convenience of rail without the cost.

housing, jobs, and services were within an easy drive. Part of the growing pains of becoming a metropolitan region is recognizing that the simple small towns have changed. Success as a metropolitan region requires a diversity of housing and jobs and new efforts linking housing, jobs, services, and travel corridors.

New types of development need to be integrated into older patterns, an effort underway with events like the Transit-Oriented Development Design Competition announced in spring 2010 and sponsored by Lee County, the city of Fort Myers, the Southwest Florida Regional Planning Commission, Florida Gulf Coast University, and Reconnecting Lee County. And communities need to face the impact of land use on infrastructure and service costs, a topic being addressed in Collier County’s Master Mobility Plan. Still in its beginning stages, Collier County is creating a guide for land use, public service, and infrastructure decisions with the goal of reducing vehicle miles traveled while preserving environmental quality.



LeeTran buses advertise the beauty of nature in southwest Florida.

Those responsible for regional transportation planning in southwest Florida—the county-based metropolitan planning organizations or MPOs—understand the metropolitan transformation. The MPOs for Lee County and Collier County joined an interlocal agreement in 2004 designed to coordinate their efforts, and proposals to include the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO are under discussion. Coordination among the MPOs and local governments advances too, but there is a need to do more. Regionally integrated transportation systems will help diversify the metropolitan region’s economy in a way that moves beyond depending on building and tourism.

# NORTHEAST FLORIDA

## Jacksonville

DUVAL • ST. JOHNS • CLAY • NASSAU • BAKER

**POPULATION OF  
NORTHEAST FLORIDA IN  
2008:** 1,315,218.

**TRANSIT SYSTEM TODAY:**  
County bus service, limited  
intercounty transit service,  
and the Skyway people-  
mover.

**JACKSONVILLE  
TRANSPORTATION  
AUTHORITY, TRANSIT  
BOARDINGS IN 2008:**  
11,140,439.

To understand the future of transportation in the greater Jacksonville metropolitan area, start with the natural features: the St. Johns River, the beaches, and expansive open spaces of natural lands. With large tracts of uninterrupted land bisected by the St. Johns River and a roadway network defined by I-95, I-10, and I-295, development since the 1950s has spilled out from the downtown core along the major transportation corridors. Today, downtown Jacksonville is still the second-largest employment center in the region, but much of the existing and new employment inhabits suburban pockets along the interstates and major highways.

Transportation is a challenge in northeast Florida. Sustainable transportation is an even greater challenge. The average commute time in northeast Florida is over 25 minutes and driving continues to increase as residents locate in areas farther and farther from employment and services. Transit use is low, though climbing, and pedestrian safety continues to be a significant concern.

### What's the best solution to reducing traffic in north Florida?

- Improving mass transit: 30 percent
- Building new roads: 28 percent
- Developing communities where people don't have to drive so much: 26 percent

Responses to the 2008 North Florida Transportation Survey, from a representative sample of Clay, Duval, Nassau, and St. Johns County residents.

Northeast Florida, however, recognizes the value gained by taking meaningful steps toward building a sustainable regional transportation system, including significant investments in transit that serves regional and local travel. One of the region's assets, moreover, is the Jacksonville Transportation Authority (JTA). An independent state agency, JTA is charged with planning, building, and operating roadways and operating transit for the Duval County area. This forward-thinking notion of combining roadway and transit in one agency, supported by a half-cent local-option sales tax, is helping the area make real progress on plans for improved regional transit options.

Northeast Florida, however, recognizes the value gained by taking meaningful steps toward building a sustainable regional transportation system, including significant investments in transit that serves regional and local travel. One of the region's assets, moreover, is the Jacksonville Transportation Authority (JTA).

## NEW TRANSIT METRO: SALT LAKE CITY METROPOLITAN AREA

- **Metropolitan Population in 2008:** 1,112,866.
- **Utah Transit Authority, Transit Boardings in 2008:** 41,713,708.
- **Transit System Today:** 64 miles of light rail and commuter rail service, a new bus rapid transit line, and bus service.
- **Plans for 2015:** Add or extend four light-rail lines and a new commuter rail line for an additional 70 miles of rail service.

Sandwiched between the Great Salt Lake and the Wasatch Mountains, the Salt Lake City metropolitan region runs for miles south to north, not unlike how many of Florida's major metropolitan regions hug the coasts. The area has also experienced rapid growth in recent decades, attracting residents and visitors with its many outdoor amenities. As the region confronted its limitations and opportunities, Utah earned acclaim for being on the cutting edge when it comes to thinking regionally about transportation and land use.

Three forces converged during the mid-1990s to change the course of transportation and land use in the Wasatch Front: growing concerns about quality of life in the region, a desire for transportation alternatives, and preparations for the 2002 Winter Olympics. Under the umbrella of Envision Utah, the region came together for a ten-county scenario planning and public outreach process, which produced the Quality Growth Strategy in 1999. Among its key values, the Quality Growth Strategy called for transportation choices—good roads and good transit—and more housing and employment near transit stops.

Also in 1999, the first miles of modern light-rail service opened connecting the region's southern reaches to downtown Salt Lake City. Called TRAX and built and operated by the Utah Transit Authority, a second line opened in 2001. Today, the Utah Transit Authority, which also provides commuter rail, bus, and ski bus service up and down the mountains, serves an area of 1,400 square miles covering six counties. Under construction or planned are four new light-rail lines and expanded commuter rail service, all scheduled to be open by 2015. Developers such as those building the massive Daybreak master-planned community tout their sustainability bona fides through being able to walk to a planned new TRAX station or to the village center for a loaf of bread.

JTA has restructured its bus network to streamline regional routes, has added local community shuttle service, and is designing two bus rapid transit (BRT) corridors. Exploring the future of commuter rail, JTA recently completed a feasibility study and is preparing for a formal alternatives analysis. Anticipating new transit service, Jacksonville's city council adopted a transit-oriented development ordinance in 2008 and has embarked on ambitious efforts to rewrite the planning and zoning codes to facilitate compact development patterns and "housing choice" for the region.

Elevating this transportation and land use conversation to the regional level, Reality Check First Coast completed a seven-county visioning and planning effort in May 2009. Through the Reality Check exercise, residents, the business community, and elected officials set in motion a series of efforts to rethink and reshape the region to create a more sustainable future and increase "choice" for housing and mobility. Investigating means to implement the regional vision, JTA and the Florida Department of Transportation have recently completed an evaluation of a multicounty regional transportation entity.



Trolley buses in Jacksonville harken back to the time of streetcars.

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## **ABOUT CONNECTING FLORIDA**

Part of the ULI/Curtis Regional Infrastructure Project, Connecting Florida is a collaborative effort of the five Florida ULI District Councils and includes members from the public, private, and nonprofit sectors. The Florida ULI District Councils shaped the Connecting Florida project around regional transit systems because without a strong commitment to regional transit, Florida's long tradition of growth management cannot move the state beyond automobile-oriented land use patterns. By combining the Institute's resources into a statewide effort that works at both the state and metropolitan levels, Connecting Florida supports the growth of sustainable and globally competitive communities.

## **ABOUT THE ULI/CURTIS REGIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT**

Supported by ULI trustee James J. Curtis, the ULI/Curtis Regional Infrastructure Project is a three-year initiative launched with the goal of better linking infrastructure, land use, and sustainability at the regional level. The Curtis Project emphasizes developing leadership and models for improved infrastructure decision making. After a competitive application process, ULI selected four District Councils to participate: ULI SE Florida/Caribbean for the Connecting Florida initiative, ULI Minnesota, ULI Seattle, and ULI Chicago. The Curtis Project organizes and guides the work of integrating infrastructure and land use around three principles:

- Convene the resources of the private, public, and nonprofit sectors.
- Take advocacy into the implementation stage.
- Advance technical innovations.

## **ABOUT ULI**

The Urban Land Institute is a 501(c) (3) nonprofit research and education organization supported by its members. The mission of the Urban Land Institute is to provide leadership in the responsible use of land and in creating and sustaining thriving communities worldwide. Founded in 1936, the Institute now has nearly 30,000 members in 95 countries worldwide, representing the entire spectrum of land use and real estate development disciplines, working in private enterprise and public service. As the preeminent, multidisciplinary real estate forum, ULI facilitates the open exchange of ideas, information, and experience among local, national, and international industry leaders and policy makers dedicated to creating better places.



**Urban Land  
Institute**

# Connecting Florida

## Transit + Florida's Economy

The five largest metropolitan regions in the state of Florida drive its economy—and Florida's future depends on how well they support and provide for their populations. New initiatives strengthening the transportation connections between and within the five largest metropolitan regions in the state will help determine its future. Building regionally integrated transit systems will be an important part of sustaining economic vitality in Florida's metropolitan regions, enhancing the economy of the entire state.

***Connecting Florida: Transit and Florida's Economy*** lays out the case for regionally integrated transit systems and explains why transit service and compact, walkable land development go hand in hand. Following assessments of transit in each of Florida's five largest metropolitan regions, brief profiles of recent transit expansions in new transit metros—Charlotte, Dallas, Denver, Phoenix, Salt Lake City, and Eugene-Springfield, Oregon—provide models for building, organizing, and funding regionally integrated transit systems.

It's a new day for transit in Florida. Southeast Florida is the state's transit leader, providing lessons for the other metropolitan regions on what to emulate and what to try to avoid. Transit in the Tampa Bay region is poised to take a huge leap forward with the innovative Tampa Bay Area Regional Transportation Authority and its newly adopted regional transportation plan, while central Florida is on the verge of enjoying the fruits of its long effort to open SunRail, its first modern commuter rail line. Northeast and southwest Florida, though smaller metropolitan regions, also show growing understanding of the importance of regionally integrated transit systems to Florida's quality of life and economic health.

***Connecting Florida: Transit and Florida's Economy*** is a joint product of Florida's five ULI District Councils and the ULI/Curtis Regional Infrastructure Project.

