

# DRAFT

June 17, 2020

David Green, Executive Director  
Tampa Bay Area Regional Transit Authority  
4350 West Cypress Street, Suite 700  
Tampa, FL 33607

[David.Green@TBARTA.com](mailto:David.Green@TBARTA.com)

Re: Envision 2030 Regional Transit Development Plan

Mr. Green,

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the draft TBARTA Regional Transit Development Plan, Envision 2030. As a key partner in the advancement of TBARTA, and an organization who completely supports improving regional transportation options, we have reviewed the document carefully, but continue to have many questions. At this time, while we support the plan's list of regionally significant projects, we believe a more collaborative and visionary process is needed to develop the resources the Plan requires. We are thankful you have proposed more extensive discussions related to any Vision Plans and related Financial Scenarios after the Plan is approved in June and we hope to be included in those discussions.

While the development of the regionally significant transit project list seems to be in good order and not materially different than it has been in the past, the recommendations in the plan regarding funding scenarios have potential negative impacts on local transit agencies. We oppose any funding redistribution that may diminish funding to local transit service. We specifically oppose taking 10-percent of State Transit Block Grant Funding away from PSTA, HART, Pasco, Hernando, and Manatee transit systems requiring each County to reduce its existing local bus services to fund TBARTA activities.

Furthermore, we are concerned with any plans or actions that create multiple levels of administrative costs without improvement to transportation service. This includes the proposal for TBARTA to assume responsibility for routes such as PSTA's 100X and 300X and then contract back to a public or private operator. This would indeed cost more than PSTA's current cost per revenue hour to operate these routes and add in a layer of administrative cost. Among our more detailed concerns is (1) the likely underestimated cost for TBARTA to purchase and store new transit vehicles given the region's desire for more fuel efficient, alternative fuel options and (2) that the proposed fare revenue for these routes may be overestimated without significant improvement to service frequency and/or capital investment to ensure trip reliability and congestion resilience.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Instead of reallocating scarce local resources, we recommend and support that TBARTA pursue more Federal and State funding to come to the region, as well as dedicated State funding (outside of currently available funding) for the advancement of regional services. We also recommend that local transportation agencies, including counties, key cities, transit service providers and MPOs be fully engaged in the development of funding plans that change to profile of regional funding.

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We understand that the development of an inaugural TDP is a significant endeavor for any agency. The process used to develop such an important plan is as important as the plan's recommendations and in this case, a more outward-focused and collaborative process is needed. We hope that you will include us as a partner in this discussion and chart a course for TBARTA that the region can fully support.

Sincerely,

Brad Miller, CEO

cc:

PSTA Board

TBARTA Board

Pinellas County Commission

Forward Pinellas Board