



Final Report

February 4, 2013

TAMPA BAY REGIONAL COLLABORATION COMMITTEE

www.tbrpc.org/tbrcc/

Introduction

The TBRPC established an ad-hoc committee for 2012 to address improved regional collaboration. The committee first met on April 9th and held an additional organizational meeting on May 14th. The committee settled on six topics to “study” and to determine if further or improved regional collaboration would be beneficial. The topics are airports, seaports, transportation planning, health insurance, branding, and amateur sports development. All topics were addressed with the exception of seaports that was postponed due to leadership changes. Roundtables were conducted on Airports (June 18, 2012), Transportation Planning (September 10, 2012), Branding (October 19, 2012), and Amateur Sports Development (November 18, 2012). Presentations and minutes can be found at www.tbrpc.org/tbrcc/.

RCC Mission Statement: To develop a process for assessing opportunities to collaborate on regional endeavors within the Tampa Bay area.

TBRPC Councilmembers feel that the strength in regionalism is leveraging the individual resources to the benefit of all. The old coaching cliché TEAM – Together Everyone Achieves More – is a simple way to express the concept. The region can achieve more if we are working together where appropriate and reduce internal competition where it is deleterious to growing the region’s market share and competitive advantages.

Issues: It was a difficult process to narrow the issue areas that should be addressed. The issue areas chosen vary in scope and the process to vet each issue varied. Two primary venues were used for gathering information from stakeholders - Roundtables and Council Meeting presentations. Roundtable meetings are used when the amount of time or level of detail was too great for the time that can be allotted at a regular council meeting.

Outcomes: A Findings and Recommendations Report. This report identifies and recommends actions or next steps that should be taken by the region or the Council to enhance regional collaboration on the selected issues. Specific actions to be undertaken by TBRPC are identified. The report will be distributed to the Governor, Bay Area Legislative Delegation, local governments, and/or other appropriate stakeholders.

Next Steps: Recommended next steps and actions are outlined on the following two pages. Actions identified in the report are summarized by issue area. These recommendations and actions are categorized as either actions for the region to undertake or actions for which TBRPC should perform.

Summary of Recommendation and Actions

The committee's priority recommendations and action items appear in summary below. The dove "☪" symbol denotes regional actions or "processes" to be promoted or supported by the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council. The arrow "▶" symbol denotes TBRPC specific actions. These recommendations/actions along with additional recommendations and action items are included in the report's issue area summaries that follow.

Airports:

☪ **Promote coordinated marketing.** Each airport should have a consistent regional message in all its in-house marketing.

☪ **Improved Connectivity.** Support TBARTA regional transit planning efforts with an emphasis on utilizing transit to better connect the existing airports and more importantly the airports with destinations, attractions, and beaches.

Seaports:

☪ **Promote collaboration** between Port Manatee, Port of Tampa, and Port of St. Petersburg

▶ **Support regional seaports' efforts to engage the cruise industry** to explore opportunities and identify barriers to expansion.

Transportation Planning

☪ **Promote TBARTA and West Central Florida Metropolitan Planning Organization's Chairs Coordinating Committee (MPO CCC) collaboration on "one plan"** that is recognizable as the region's transportation blueprint.

☪ **Support efforts to revamp the transportation revenue structure.**

▶ Support MPO CCC High Priority Transportation Initiatives list.

▶ Take a position on revenue enhancement concepts (MPO Advisory Revenue Study) and future local transportation referendums that will improve regional mobility and connectivity.

Health Insurance

▶ Conduct a survey to determine the potential need for a health insurance consortium. How are local governments insured? How are they containing costs? Have they considered consortiums? Would they consider a consortium?

▶ Continue research in 2013.

Area Branding

✧ **Support and encourage Convention and Visitors Bureaus to develop a regional tag line.** It is okay for each city and county to protect and promote its sub-brand but efforts should be made to build and not dilute the regional brand. For example, St. Petersburg / Clearwater: *A Tampa Bay Community* or Historic Dade City: *A Tampa Bay Community*

✧ **Sell the Destination.** All of the tourist development councils and boards (CVBs) are focused on their local products. They try to put out the best product within their means. The resource area which is most conducive to collaboration is marketing.

▶ Convene a forum where the airports, seaports, tourism, and sports marketing managers share ideas and identify areas for collaboration or to expand the cliché a “TEAM Building” exercise.

Amateur Sports Development and Marketing

✧ **Promote development of super-regional events** that involve bed stock and facilities from multiple counties.

▶ Develop a concept paper that outlines steps to grow the region’s successful and growing amateur sports industry.

Airports

Overview:

The Tampa bay region has three major airports. Tampa (TIA) is the 30th busiest US airport based on Passengers in 2011 with 16 million. By comparison, Orlando has twice as many passengers. Sarasota Bradenton (SRQ) handles just over one million and St. Pete / Clearwater (PIE) has less than one million. For reference, Fort Myers (RSW) has nearly twice the passengers as SRQ and PIE combined. All of the airports are modern and experience high levels of customer satisfaction.

Tampa has increased its effort to attract international flights and currently has about 1/3 the number flights as Orlando. With close proximity to TIA, St. Pete / Clearwater has been attracting the newer airlines that serve secondary markets. SRQ is about half-way between Tampa and Fort Myers which gives it tough competition on all levels.

These airports are all economic drivers and complementary to other RCC issue areas of transportation, branding, and sports marketing. Two tourist related growth areas that the airports should be aware of is the region as a “medical destination” and amateur sports destination.

Background Presentations:

St. Petersburg-Clearwater International Airport (PIE) - Mr. Noah Lagos, Executive Director

Sarasota-Bradenton International Airport (SRQ) - Mr. Rick Piccolo, President and CEO

Tampa International Airport (TIA) - Mr. Joe Lopano, CEO

Recommendations:

Due to vastly different organization/governance structures, it is unlikely that any consolidation of the three airports is imminent. However, all three airports could benefit by coordinating “selling the Tampa Bay Brand.” In order for the smaller two airports to grow and be competitive, the entire regional market must expand. While each airport holds some competitive advantages in certain areas like cargo or international flights, the region’s air service could benefit from collaboration such as the region competing for certain services as opposed to the three airports competing against each other.

- Sell the Destination. All three airports and even somewhat our Orlando neighbors are selling the same product - Florida weather and attractions. In Tampa Bay our emphasis is on beaches and attractions.
- Unify marketing. Each airport should be encouraged to have a consistent regional message in

all its in-house marketing.

- Promote the development of the region as a “medical treatment destination.”

Transportation Planning

Overview:

There are numerous agencies in the Tampa Bay region that are required to develop a transportation master plan of something similar. These agencies include TBARTA, MPO CCC, FDOT, RPCs. This doesn't include specialized plans of the airports, seaports, transit providers, etc.

Major concerns have always surrounded the number of MPOs in the West Florida region. Should they be consolidated? Are there efficiencies in mergers? Will local concerns be addressed at the regional level? The MPO CCC was established to address these concerns.

To many, the lack of “one” plan to point to as the regional transportation blueprint has been a hindrance in securing special project funding and development and promoting regional transit.

Recent research shows that our current revenue system for funding transportation projects and maintenance is broken. The current system based primarily on fuel taxes will likely produce less and less money funding in future years due to a relative reduction in vehicle miles traveled and increased fuel economy and alternative fuels.

Background Presentations:

Strengthening Florida's Role as a Global Hub - Mr. Michael Williamson, Cambridge Systematics, Inc. (8/13/2012)

A Path for Freight Planning: The Changing Face of the Florida Department of Transportation - Mr. Juan Flores, State Freight and Logistics Administrator, Florida Department of Transportation (9/10/2012)

Roundtable (9/10/12)

Transportation Planning and Decision Making - Mr. Don Skelton, District Secretary, FDOT District 7 (retired)

Regional Priorities - Ms. Beth Alden, Asst. Director, Hillsborough MPO (representing the West Central Florida MPO Chairs Coordinating Committee)

Regional Transportation Coordination Efforts - Mr. Bob Clifford, Executive Director, TBARTA

Polk Rail Study - Ms. Jennifer Stults, Intermodal Systems Development Manager, FDOT
District 1

High Priority Major Transportation Initiatives - Mr. Hugh Pascoe, Representing the West Central Florida Coordinating Chairs Committee (of Metropolitan Planning Organizations) (11/12/2012)

Florida Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Committee (MPOAC) Transportation Revenue Study - Mr. Michael P. Howe, Executive Director, Sarasota/Manatee Metropolitan Planning Organization (12/10/2012)

Recommendations:

The number of organizations conducting transportation planning is not as important as collaborating on “one plan” that is recognizable as the region’s transportation blueprint. This will help legislative and public outreach efforts. It will help voters in each jurisdiction understand that their “links” are vital to the region’s transportation system.

- Promote the recognition of a “unified” transportation master plan.
- Support MPO CCC High Priority Transportation Initiatives list.
- Take a position on revenue enhancement concepts (MPO Advisory Revenue Study) and future local transportation referendums that will improve regional mobility and connectivity.
- Improved Connectivity. Support TBARTA regional transit planning efforts with an emphasis on utilizing transit to better connect the existing airports and more importantly the airports with destinations, attractions, and beaches. Connectivity of airports may be more efficiently served by private for hire carriers (limos/shuttles) than by public transit. Demand for such interconnectivity will likely be highly seasonal in nature and not easily predictable/repeatable enough to be served by dedicated public transit rolling stock.
- Explore regional transit service solutions. TBARTA could become the Regional Transportation Planning and Transit Service Provider agency with the existing local providers (HART/PSTA/Pasco/MCAT/SCAT) providing local access as feeders to the intra and inter county/city services run by TBARTA. More efficient services and better opportunity as a region to leverage federal, state and local investments to eventually deploy some form of commuter rail and approach transportation as a full spectrum passenger/freight mobility issue and not just buses, rail or POVs.
- The region needs to be opportunistic during the period of strong leadership positions in the Legislature to address regional transportation needs.
- ONE BAY Livable Communities Working Group (OBWG) should continue to develop

information and strategies to initiate and enhance transit oriented development along the expansion of the transit system(s) in Tampa Bay. OBWG should monitor the decisions regarding statewide transportation corridors consistent with the ONE BAY recommendations and guiding principles.

Health Insurance

Overview:

In good financial times and even more so in bad, health care costs are a major concern for local governments and not-for-profit organizations. It seems the smaller the organization, the more difficult affordable health care insurance is to obtain. The concept of health care purchasing consortiums is a concept that often gets mentioned as a potential solution. Metropolitan Washington DC has had such a consortium for 20 years

Background Presentations:

Metropolitan Washington (DC) Health Care Coalition Briefing - Mr. David Robertson, Executive Director, Metropolitan Washington (DC) Council of Governments (9/10/2012).

Recommendations:

- Explore the potential for health insurance consortiums to reduce health insurance costs for local governments.

Area Branding

Overview:

Each county in the region is selling the same product in different ways. Each emphasizes their strengths but promotes nearby regional assets to enhance their appeal. For example, Hillsborough promotes Pinellas' beaches. Obviously visitors do not care which county an asset is located.

The region needs a common regional brand. One issue to overcome is the parochialism that some communities do not like having Tampa in the regional name.

Background Presentations:

Area Branding Roundtable - October 19, 2012

Hillsborough County - Mr. Kelly Miller, President and CEO, Tampa Bay and Company

Manatee County - Mr. Elliot Falcione, Executive Director, Bradenton Area Convention and Visitors Bureau

Pasco County - Mr. Eric Keaton, Public Communications Manager, Visit Pasco County

Pinellas County - Mr. DT Minich, Executive Director, St. Petersburg/Clearwater Area Convention and Visitors Bureau

Recommendations:

Those working in airport, seaport, tourist development, sports marketing and the like should be encouraged to sell the Tampa Bay brand. Returning to our old coaching cliché TEAM – Together Everyone Achieves More – there may not be a better example where everyone working together could really expand the pie.

- Develop a regional tag line: It is okay for each county to protect its sub brand but efforts should be made to not dilute the regional brand. For example, St. Petersburg / Clearwater: *A Tampa Bay Community* or Historic Dade City: *A Tampa Bay Community*. *Several candidate options for the region's moniker include: Suncoast, West Central Florida, and Tampa Bay. There seems to be preference for including a known geographic reference.*
- Sell the Destination. All of the tourist development councils and boards are focused on their local products. They try to put out the best product within their means. The resource area is most conducive to collaboration is marketing. Local jurisdictions should identify unique events to market as regional destinations like Tony Jannus, Gasparilla, the beaches. What are our unique regional assets to market?
- Convene a forum where the airports, seaports, tourism, and sports marketing managers share ideas and identify areas for collaboration or to expand the cliché a “TEAM Building” exercise.

Amateur Sports Development and Marketing

Overview:

The amateur sports industry is exploding in the Tampa Bay region and nationally. There are numerous segments like performance and training academies; youth travel team sports, adult fantasy camps, and more. Pinellas County alone estimates more than 90,000 room nights per year are related to sports travel.

Nationally, sports travel is a growing industry. Visitor Spending in 2011 was \$7.68 billion with a 6.5% growth rate, events increased 10% from 2010 to 2011 and Sports Visitors in 2011 were estimated at 23.9 million [*NASC/Ohio University Industry Study, 2011*]

Background Presentations:

Amateur Sports Development and Marketing Roundtable - November 16, 2012

Hillsborough County - Mr. Rob Higgins, Executive Director, Tampa Bay Sports Commission

Manatee County - Mr. Joe Pickett, Executive Director, Bradenton Area Sports Commission

Pasco County - Mr. Eric Keaton, Public Communications Manager, Visit Pasco County

Pinellas County - Mr. Angel Natal, Senior Sports Sales Manager, St. Petersburg/Clearwater Sports Commission

Recommendations:

- Promote development of super-regional events that involve bed stock and facilities from multiple counties.
- Explore the development of a strategy to grow the region's successful and growing amateur sports industry. Strategy may include: inventory of sports facilities; facilities improvement plan; and bed stock inventory and forecast.

Regional Collaboration Committee

Commissioner Larry Bustle, Chair, Manatee County
Commissioner Victor Crist, Vice Chair, Hillsborough County

Council Member Doreen DiPolito, City of Clearwater
Commissioner Bill Dodson, City of Plant City
Mr. Robert Kersteen, Gubernatorial Appointee
Commissioner Janet Long, Pinellas County
Commissioner Jack Mariano, Pasco County
Council Member Janice Miller, City of Oldsmar
Mayor Bob Minning, City of Treasure Island
Councilman Wengay Newton, City of St. Petersburg
Mr. Andy Nunez, Gubernatorial Appointee
Mr. Tim Schock, Gubernatorial Appointee
Ms. Barbara Sheen Todd, Gubernatorial Appointee