



PINELLAS SUNCOAST TRANSIT AUTHORITY
 3201 SCHERER DRIVE, ST. PETERSBURG, FL 33716
WWW.PSTA.NET 727.540.1800 FAX 727.540.1913

TRANSIT RIDERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
 AGENDA – NOVEMBER 17, 2015; 4:00 PM
 PSTA AUDITORIUM

| | | | <u>TIME</u> | <u>PAGE</u> |
|----|--|---------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| 1. | CALL TO ORDER | | 4:00 | |
| 2. | PUBLIC COMMENT | | 4:00 | |
| 3. | OUTGOING TRAC MEMBERS | | 4:05 | |
| 4. | CHAIR’S REPORT | | 4:10 | |
| 5. | ACTION ITEMS | | 4:15 | |
| | A. October 20, 2015 Meeting Minutes | CHAIR MANN | | 2 |
| | B. Elect 2016 New Officers | 5 min CHAIR MANN | | 6 |
| | C. Transportation Alternatives Pilot Program | 10 min BRAD MILLER | | 7 |
| | D. Central Ave BRT Federal Application | 10 min CASSANDRA BORCHERS | | 10 |
| | E. Service Redesign Phase 2: Williams Park & Budgeted Service Enhancements | 20 min CASSANDRA BORCHERS | | 13 |
| 6. | FUTURE MEETING SUBJECTS | | 5:00 | |
| | • Intergovernmental Project Coordination | | | |
| | • Williams Park Public Outreach | | | |
| | • Shelter Match Program | | | |
| | • New Member Introductions/Photos | | | |
| | • By-Laws & Robert’s Rules | | | |
| 7. | OTHER BUSINESS | | 5:00 | |
| 8. | ADJOURNMENT | | 5:00 | |

THE NEXT MEETING IS JANUARY 19, 2015 AT 4:00 PM



ACTION ITEM

5A: October 20, 2015 Meeting Minutes



Action: Approve Meeting Minutes

Staff Resource: Terri Rick, Administrative Assistant



-
- Staff recommends approval of the minutes of the October TRAC Committee meeting.
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Attachments:

1. Minutes



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TRANSIT RIDERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES – OCTOBER 20, 2015

The Transit Riders Advisory Committee (TRAC) of the Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA) held a meeting in the Auditorium at PSTA Headquarters at 4:00 PM on this date. The purpose of the meeting was to approve the September 15, 2015 minutes, the 2016 TRAC meeting schedule, and the revised TRAC By-Laws, as well as to provide information on System Redesign Phase 2 – Williams Park, East Lake Transportation Alternatives Pilot, Driver Training, and 2015 American Bus Benchmarking Group (ABBG) Customer Service Results. The following members were present:

Present:

Elaine Mann, Committee Chair
Catherine Baranowski, Alt. South
Lugene Blancher, Mid County
Sonny Flynn, Beaches
Gloria Lepik-Corrigan, North County
Vivian Peters, Mid County
Jaksa Petrovic, Professional
Kimberly Rankine, DART
Christian Smith, Alt. Student
Demetrius Sullivan, South County
Lori Thomas, South County
Carson Zimmer, Alt. Professional

Absent:

Stephanie Leishman, Committee Vice-Chair
LeeAnn McIlravey, Mid County
G.W. Rolle, South County

Also Present:

Bill Jonson, PSTA Board Chairperson
Brad Miller, CEO
PSTA Staff Members
Members of the Public

CALL TO ORDER

Committee Chair Elaine Mann opened the meeting at 4:05 PM.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Mann took public comment from Chari Mercier of St. Petersburg.

ACTION ITEMS

Approval of Minutes – Mr. Blancher made a motion, seconded by Ms. Flynn to approve the minutes of the September 15, 2015 meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

2016 TRAC meeting Schedule – Ms. Baranowski made a motion, seconded by Ms. Lepik-Corrigan to approve the meeting schedule, as amended. The motion passed unanimously.

TRAC By-Laws – The By-Laws for the TRAC were originally established December 19, 2014. The By-Laws are occasionally updated by staff as the need arises. The proposed modifications staff is recommending relates to membership, contact information, quorum notice, and amendments to the By-Laws. Ms. Baranowski made a motion, seconded by Mr. Petrovic to recommend approval of the changes to the By-Laws, as amended. The motion passed unanimously.

INFORMATION ITEMS

System Redesign Phase 2 – Williams Park – Cassandra Borchers, Chief Development Officer, presented proposed route changes to the Williams Park and downtown St. Petersburg area.

PSTA has worked closely with the City to examine the best way to serve downtown through a grid network and provide better access to key downtown destinations. Bus service will be removed from Williams Park and redistributed throughout downtown. Next steps include public engagement to gather rider comments about the proposed changes. City Council and PSTA Board endorsements are expected in late November, and PSTA is planning for a February 14, 2016 service change.

East Lake Transportation Alternatives Pilot Program – Mr. Miller presented information on alternative transportation options in the East Lake Area in lieu of the discontinued East Lake Connector, one of the lowest performing routes. Due to the fact that the East Lake neighborhood is the largest neighborhood in Pinellas County without public

transportation, it has been chosen for a pilot program utilizing options such as taxicabs and transportation network company services.

Committee members received a fact sheet with additional information about the services, such as cost savings to PSTA, provisions for people with disabilities, and future expansion of the program, as well as information regarding background checks, drug screening, fingerprinting and insurance requirements.

Driver Training – In response to past requests by the TRAC, Mike Gloss, Superintendent of Safety, Security and Training, presented information on the training received by new PSTA bus drivers. He said drivers participate in an eight-week new operator training course totaling 320 hours.

Mr. Gloss covered a long list of the types of training drivers receive and explained how staff handles driver complaints by providing counseling and additional training for the driver as necessary.

2015 ABBG Customer Service Results – Cyndi Raskin-Schmitt, Director of Communications, presented the ABBG Customer Satisfaction Survey 2015 results. As a member of the ABBG, PSTA is compared to other transportation agencies of similar size throughout the country. The survey is conducted annually and includes 26 standardized questions and three additional questions specific to PSTA services.

The survey showed that PSTA achieved comparable to high scores all across the board compared to other agencies, excelling in Driver Helpfulness, Resolving Problems and Vehicle Cleanliness. While PSTA scores were slightly lower than last year, they were still well above average and in an acceptable range.

FUTURE MEETING SUBJECTS

The committee was provided with a list of upcoming meeting subjects.

OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:20 PM. The next meeting will be held on November 17, 2015 at 4:00 PM.



ACTION ITEM

5B: Elect 2016 New Officers



Action: Elect 2016 New Officers

Staff Resource: Elaine Mann, Committee Chair



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- The Committee will elect new Officers for the Transit Riders Advisory Committee (TRAC).
-

Attachments: None

ACTION ITEM

5C: Transportation Alternatives Pilot Program



Action: Recommend Approval of a 6-Month Pilot Program to Partner with Private Transportation Providers in East Lake and Pinellas Park to Provide Discounted Transportation to PSTA Bus Services at a Cost Not to Exceed \$40,000

Staff Resource: Brad Miller, CEO

TRAC

Background:

- On August 26, 2015, the PSTA Board voted to discontinue the unproductive East Lake Connector flex route bus service, saving more than \$400,000 in annual operating costs. The Board also voted to examine ways to provide improved transportation alternatives for customers in specific areas of Pinellas Park.
- Per the PSTA Board's directive, staff carefully developed multiple transportation alternative plans for all affected customers including those formerly serviced by the East Lake Connector and those in Pinellas Park needing access to PSTA's primary bus routes.
- The East Lake neighborhood of Pinellas County is now the largest neighborhood in the County without any public transportation service and in Pinellas Park there are low-income and senior living communities without easy access to PSTA's primary routes along US 19, Park Boulevard, and 70th Avenue North.
- For this reason, in response to the PSTA Board directive, it was chosen for a 6-month Pilot program utilizing taxicabs and transportation network company services to provide transportation alternatives for East Lake and Pinellas Park residents and citizens needing to travel these areas as their destination from other PSTA bus routes.

Pilot Program

- PSTA is proposing a 3-tiered option of services to test for 6-months. If the pilot is considered successful, PSTA will work to expand it to different areas.
 1. **Day-Before Reserved Taxi Service** – For the same price as a PSTA bus ride, \$2.25, a taxi ride between the Shoppes at Boot Ranch or Tarpon Mall and a destination within East Lake will be provided.

2. **Same Day Transportation Network Company Service** – PSTA will offset up to \$3.00 of a Transportation Network Company (TNC) trip between the Pinellas Park Transit Center on 70th Avenue and a destination within a specified zone of Pinellas Park. Discussions with the TNC Uber have indicated this PSTA offset will allow the average trip in Pinellas Park to cost \$4.00.
3. **Same Day Taxi Cab Service** – PSTA will offset up to \$3.00 of a Taxi Cab trip between the Shoppes at Boot Ranch or Tarpon Mall and a destination within East Lake and in the specified zone of Pinellas Park to and from the Pinellas Park Transit Center. Discussions with two taxi providers indicate this PSTA offset will allow the average taxi cab trip in East Lake to cost \$8.00-\$9.00 and slightly less in Pinellas Park.

The Pilot program is proposed to run beginning on Monday, February 1, 2016 through July. If the program is determined to successfully provide transportation options to customers, PSTA will develop plans to expand the service to other areas of Pinellas County.

Analysis

- At the PSTA Board's request, PSTA staff has spent significant time reviewing insurance, background check, and other requirements to ensure PSTA requires the same requirements to all providers of these services.
- PSTA has also been researching how these types of alternative transportation may be provided in other parts of the County.

Contracts

- PSTA has drafted the attached contract and negotiated with two taxi companies and a Transportation Network Company who have all agreed to the same provisions to provide this Pilot program.
- Regardless of the provider, PSTA will provide the same discount opportunity (up to \$3.00 per trip) and require their system to only provide these discounted trips to and from the PSTA transfer location between 7:00 AM and 7:00 PM.

Fiscal Impact:

- The pilot program is estimated to cost PSTA less than \$40,000 per year, one tenth of the prior cost of the flex route bus.

Informational Item

- This information is provided to the TRAC and Planning Committees this month, followed by further discussion and a recommendation at your November meeting, and then approval at the PSTA Board in December.

Attachments: None

ACTION ITEM

5D: Central Ave BRT Federal Application



Action: Recommend Approval of the 2016 Central Avenue Bus Rapid Transit Project to Apply for Entry into Project Development Under the Federal Transit Administration Smalls Starts Program

Staff Resource: Cassandra Borchers, CDO
Heather Sobush, Planning Manager

TRAC

Background:

- The Central Avenue corridor was first identified for premium transit in the Major Investment Study completed in 2000. Numerous subsequent plans have reconfirmed the need for premium transit in the corridor and ultimately identified Bus Rapid Transit as the preferred service type.
 - Pinellas Mobility Initiative – 2003
 - Downtown St. Petersburg East-West Transit System Study – 2003
 - Central Avenue Corridor Alternatives Analysis – 2007
 - Countywide BRT Plan – 2009
 - Pinellas Alternatives Analysis (AA) – 2012
 - Community Bus Plan – 2013
 - TBARTA Master Plan – 2009 and future updates
 - 2035 and 2040 Long Range Transportation Plans (LRTPs)
- BRT service along the Central Avenue corridor is included in the LRTP vision map and on the priority transportation project list for the Tampa Bay urbanized area.
- Additionally, the City of St. Petersburg is investing in the Central Avenue Corridor through its Central Avenue Revitalization Plan, Central Avenue Art in Transit project, and Economic Development Initiatives in partnership with the Chamber of Commerce.
- The Central Avenue BRT Project is currently the number one priority on the PSTA Legislative Agenda to obtain state matching grants to complete environmental clearance and design engineering required prior to an Expedited Grant Agreement with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

Summary:

- **To advance the Central Avenue BRT project and be eligible to compete for future Federal funding through the Small Starts program, PSTA must request permission from the FTA to enter into Project Development (PD).**
- PSTA staff renewed conversations with City of St. Petersburg transportation staff to discuss project options, where the city staff expressed a willingness to discuss options for exclusive bus lanes on 1st Avenue North and 1st Avenue South based on traffic analysis conducted by the city. These exclusive lanes would allow the project maintain eligibility as a Federal Small Starts BRT project at limited costs.
- PSTA recently revised a PD schedule based on a meeting and comments from FTA staff in Washington in October 2015. The first step of this process is to request permission to enter into PD.
- The technical work to be completed under the PD phase includes:
 - Documentation required to apply to enter the PD process
 - NEPA documentation including alternative and technology element finalization
 - On-street roadway design, including ITS engineering, to minimize/negate traffic impacts
 - Ridership estimates and analysis
 - Community and neighborhood benefit/impact analysis including estimated economic development
 - Determination of vehicle specifications and Buy America options
 - Station/Stop Design and location finalization
 - Operations plans development including run cutting and system integration for seamless connectivity to the rest of the PSTA network
 - Conceptual service branding elements required for BRT projects
 - Public engagement including coordination with local city and private investments in the corridor
 - Preparation and submittal of Federal Small Starts application

Fiscal Impact:

- PSTA has set aside funding for long range planning related to the Central Avenue BRT project through its Federal formula grants and has met with FDOT officials to request the balance of funding required to complete environmental and design work prior to construction.

- Local capital commitments required for this project (estimated at a total cost of \$16.5 million) are approved in the FY 2016 budget under the capital reserve (\$4 million).

Recommendation:

- Staff recommends the PSTA committee and Board approve the creation and submittal of an application to the FTA to enter PD.
-

Attachments:

1. PowerPoint (to follow)

ACTION ITEM

5E: Service Redesign Phase 2: Williams Park & Budgeted Service Enhancements.



Action: Recommend Approval of the 2016 February Service Redesign:

- 1) Transform Downtown St. Petersburg routes from a hub system at Williams Park to a grid network serving all of downtown.**
- 2) Proposed service improvements to Routes 5, 7, and 22 based on public comment.**

Staff Resource: Cassandra Borchers, CDO

TRAC

Background:

- Williams Park has been utilized for bus transfer activity since 1952 and currently serves as a hub for 16 routes in the PSTA system.
- The City of St. Petersburg has long desired to make the park more accessible to the greater community for recreational use. The City received a federal earmark to examine other options for a downtown intermodal center.
- PSTA's 2013 Community Bus Plan recommended transforming the entire county-wide system from a hub to a grid network with most transfers occurring on-street to improve service efficiency.
- PSTA's Path Forward Plan, approved in 2015, includes a system redesign and incremental expansion of premium transit services consistent with the Bus Plan.
- Additionally, the FY 2016 Budget includes \$200,000 for system service enhancements.

Summary:

- The redesign of routes serving downtown St. Petersburg included an evaluation of travel patterns, ridership and stop activity, transfer activity, and performance for routes currently serving Williams Park.
- PSTA staff has worked closely with the City of St. Petersburg to ensure consistency of the recommendations with city plans across the downtown, including providing better access to other key downtown destinations.
- The proposed service redesign removes most bus service from Williams Park and redistributes it along the downtown grid network.

- Staff will present with results from the public engagement activities conducted since mid-October, including open house workshops (60+ attendees) and stakeholder presentations (8+ groups).
- Formal endorsements of the plan to relocate routes within downtown are expected from the St. Petersburg Area Chamber of Commerce, Central Avenue Council, and the City of St. Petersburg City Council.
- Comments collected were generally positive, especially from the business community.
- Riders were also generally positive, but have concerns about specific access points for the downtown circulator (Route 32), public information on the change and locations for transferring between routes, and ensuring there are adequate shelter/wait amenities provided at stops. Riders would also generally prefer more late night service, when given a choice between additional early morning, late night or weekend service.
- Staff will present a four-week outreach plan to address public information distribution through PSTA Ambassadors
- Based on recommendations from the public and additional technical analysis, staff recommends the following improvements for the February 2016 service change:
 - Route 5: Double Sunday service to match Saturday service. Improves frequency and extends service hours on Sundays.
 - Route 7: Extend evening service to better match key transfers to Routes 4 and 19. Includes three more hours of service Monday-Friday with last trip leaving Downtown approximately 9:45 PM.
 - Route 22: Based on public comments during and after Phase I implementation, extend evening service Monday-Saturday to provide better access to job opportunities.

Fiscal Impact:

- The Williams Park redesign is anticipated to be revenue neutral to the FY 2016 PSTA budget with the exception of additional resources as programmed in the FY 2016 budget.

Recommendation:

- Staff recommends the committee endorse the transformation of Downtown St. Petersburg from a hub system at Williams Park to a grid network serving all of downtown.
- Staff also recommends service the committee endorse enhancements to Routes 5, 7, and 22.

Attachments:

1. PowerPoint



February 2016 Route Redesign

Creating a Grid System for Downtown St. Petersburg

Transit Riders Advisory Committee
Planning Committee
November 17 and 18, 2015

Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA)
St. Petersburg, Florida

Williams Park Transit Center

- Williams Park History and Use
 - Used for bus transfer since 1952
 - Hub for 16 routes in PSTA System
- Desire to relocate from Williams Park
 - Bus layover and transfer activity affect:
 - Recreational use of the park
 - Other vehicular traffic around the park
 - Downtown Intermodal Facility Study
 - Opportunity to examine other hub options
 - Few initial options still available

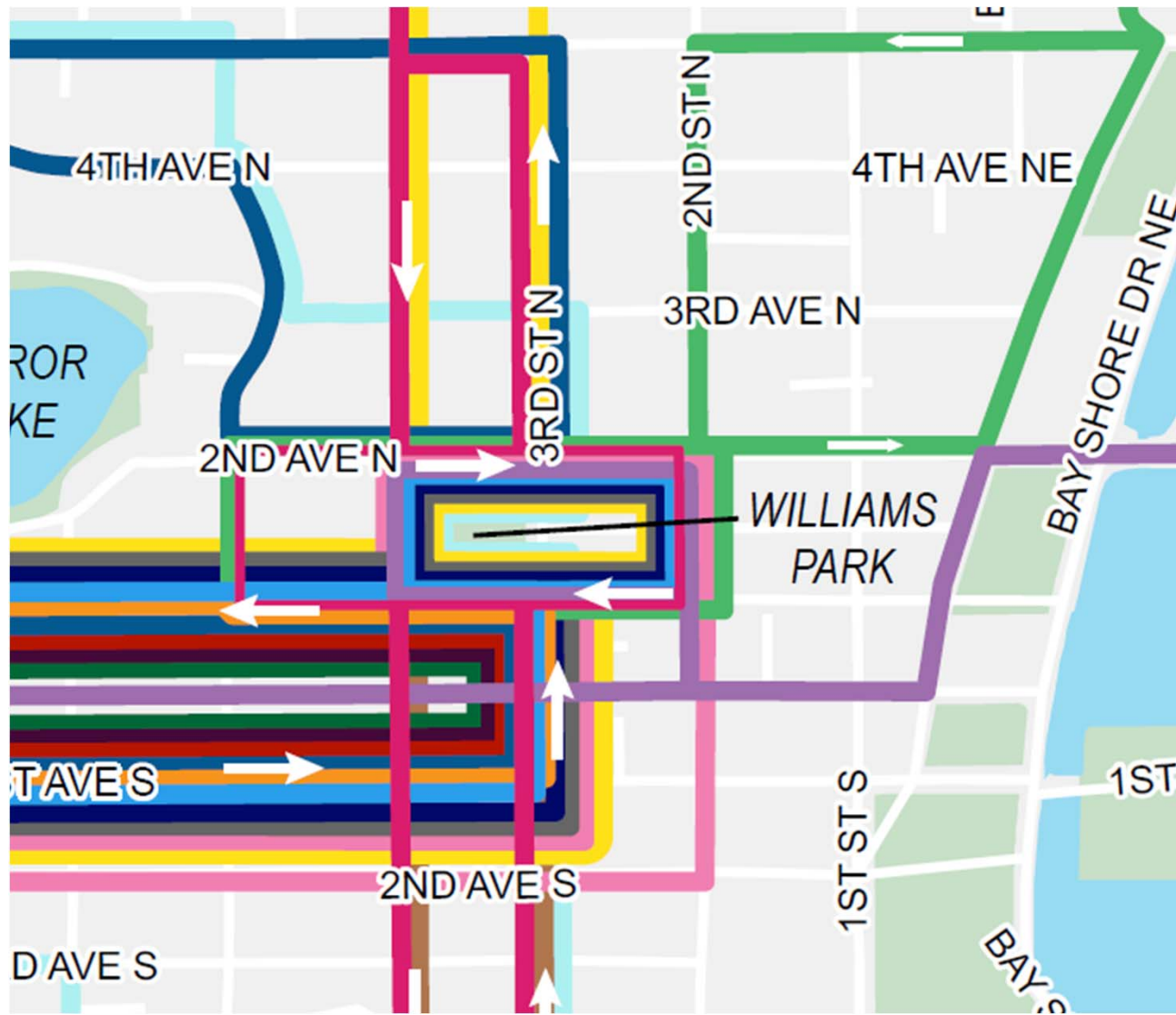


PSTA Plans

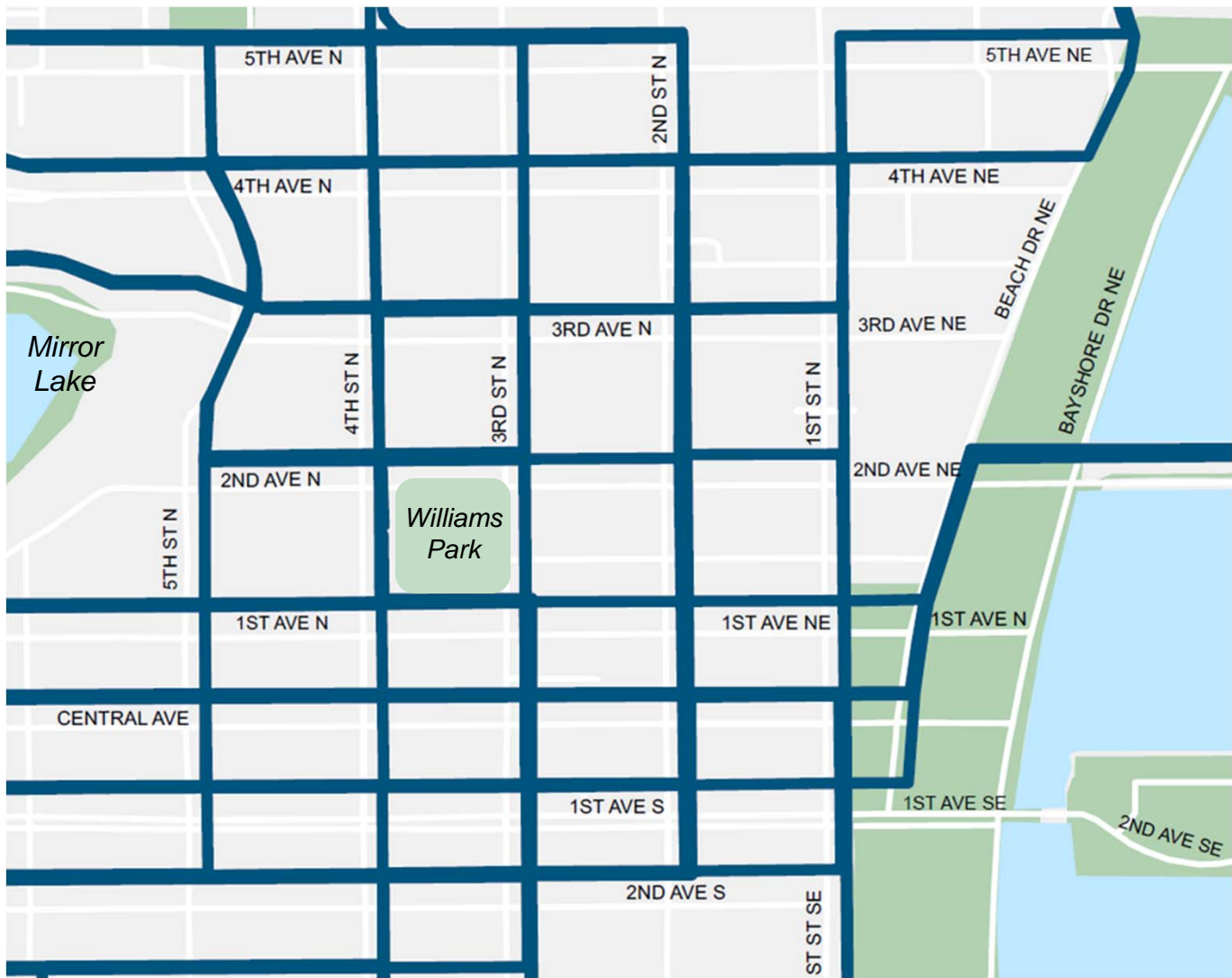
- PSTA Community Bus Plan 2013
 - Transformation from Hub to Grid Network
 - Removing route deviations needed to access hubs improves service efficiency
 - Suggested further review to enhance greater circulation in Downtown St. Petersburg.
- PSTA Path Forward Plan 2015
 - Financial Stewardship – 5 year Balanced Budget
 - **Customer Oriented Service**
 - ****Service Redesign****
 - Incremental Expansion



TODAY: Downtown Bus Circulation

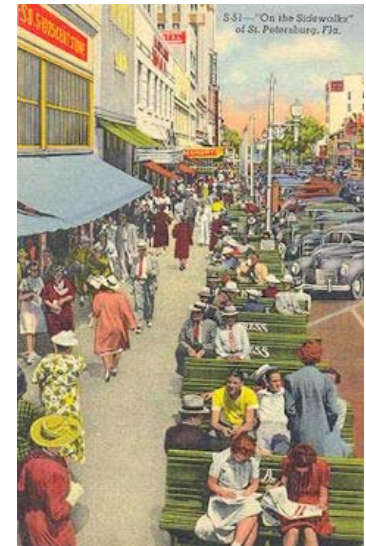


PROPOSED: Downtown February 2016



General Schedule 2015 - 2016

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| October/November | Public Workshops |
| Nov/Dec 2015 | Final City Council and PSTA Endorsements |
| Jan/Feb 2016 | Install New Bus-Stop Signs and Markers |
| Before February 5, 2016 | Prepare Williams Park for Localtopia |
| February 14, 2016 | New Routing Begins |
| Spring 2016 | Continue to Install Transit Amenities throughout Downtown Redesign Downtown Circulation Options |



Public Engagement

- 7 Public Workshops
 - More than 60 attendees
- Outreach Partners:
 - Chamber of Commerce
 - Neighborhood Associations
 - Transportation Task Force
 - Office of Urban Affairs
 - City Staff



Other Presentations

- City of St. Petersburg Community Planning and Preservation Committee – 10/13/15
- Pinellas County Economic Development Council – 10/15/15
- St. Petersburg Downtown Business Association – 10/21/15
- Florida Redevelopment Association – 10/22/15
- St. Petersburg Chamber Transportation Task Force – 10/27/15
- Pinellas MPO Technical Coordinating Committee – 10/28/15
- Pinellas MPO Citizens Advisory Committee – 10/29/15
- Central Avenue Council – 11/10/15
- Magnolia Heights Neighborhood Assoc. 11/17/15



Public Engagement Comments

- Positive support from business community
- Rider comments
 - Generally positive/constructive
 - Maintain alignment for Route 32 w/direct access to Publix/CVS
 - More Night and Weekend service needed
 - Route 7 most frequently mentioned
 - Route 5 next most frequently mentioned
 - Downtown Circulation Nights and Weekends
 - Ensure public information is clear for new transfer locations
 - Provide comfortable wait areas (shelters)



Plan for Park Shelters

- PSTA and City staff joint effort
- Planned for over night Saturday, January 30, 2016
 - Least disruption to traffic (bus and vehicular)
 - Allows for additional City Parks and Rec work to be ready for Localtopia



Public Information and Outreach

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| January 2016 | <p>Produce Detailed Brochure Outlining Changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Distribution by in-park “PSTA Ambassadors”• Available at all Customer Service Centers <p>Begin Public Notifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Behind the Driver Notices (on buses)• Web and Social Media• Press Releases and Media Information |
| Week of January 18 | PSTA Ambassador, CSR, and Operator Information Training |
| January 25 – February 13 | <p>PSTA Ambassadors in Williams Park</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Varying times of day to connect with each route/run• Distribute Brochure and Answer Questions• Minimum 4 Ambassadors for each ‘shift’ |
| February 14, 2016 | New Routing Begins |
| February 14 – 20, 2016 | <p>PSTA Ambassadors at Williams Park and Grand Central</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Minimum 2 Ambassadors for each shift |

COMING SOON!

February 14, 2016

- NEW Routing in Downtown
- Service Improvements
 - Route 5: Double Service on Sundays to match Saturday
 - Route 7: Extend evening service (3 more hours of service)
 - Route 22: Extend evening service (coordinate w/mall closing)
- NEW Stops and Bus Access Throughout Downtown
- NEW (Minimized) Bus Recovery Areas



SPRING 2016

- NEW Shelters
- Downtown Circulation Study
- System Redesign On-Board Survey

