

For immediate release: February 18, 2015

## PSTA Board Maps Out “Streamlined” Future for Pinellas Transit

**Who:** [Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority](#) (PSTA) Board of Directors

**What:** Holds strategic planning workshop

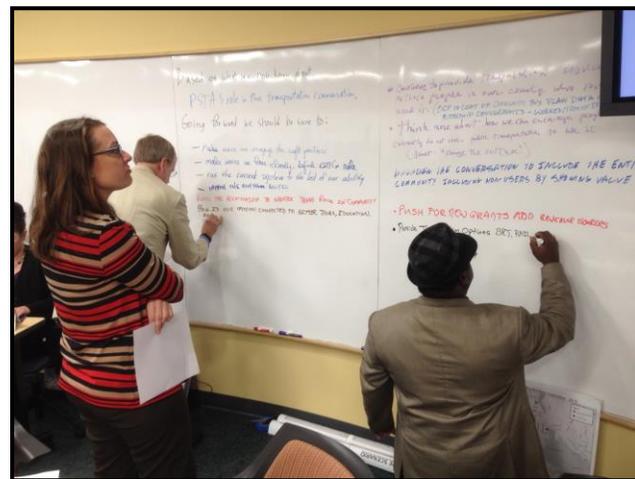
**When:** February 18, 2015

**Where:** [Epicenter at St. Petersburg College, 1380558<sup>th</sup> St. North, Clearwater, FL](#)

**Why:** To develop plans for further streamlining of PSTA operations and to address agency funding options

On a day when morning traffic was gridlocked along both US 19 and Ulmerton roads in Pinellas County, the PSTA Board of directors participated in a special interactive workshop to help streamline and improve the county’s mass transit system. The facilitated workshop included in-depth discussion and brain-storming to develop new options for service and financial efficiencies for PSTA.

Prior to the November, 2014 Greenlight Pinellas ballot initiative, PSTA developed and approved a comprehensive Community Bus Plan to reduce travel times and allow the agency to operate more efficiently within its financial resources. While PSTA has been fiscally prudent while improving the Pinellas bus system, increasing its net income each of the past 8 years while growing ridership and customer amenities, the new streamlined system it is planning will represent an overall reduction in total public transportation services within the County.



PSTA leaders put their ideas and goals on large whiteboards as part of Wednesday’s brainstorming session.

The workshop was held at the Collaborative Labs at St. Petersburg College in Clearwater where the board members filled wall boards with ideas and goals for moving PSTA forward. The leaders also reviewed recent events and lessons learned following the Greenlight referendum failure. The Board examined several new bus system scenarios, all of which include changes to the current service. Through thoughtful discussion and debate, the board agreed that the existing PSTA route network should not continue as it is. “We have said all along the status quo is not an option. We continue to examine ways to improve efficiencies and provide better service to more customers, but that means changing the way we deliver service,” explained PSTA CEO Brad Miller.

To that end, PSTA staff presented options that involve ways to expand revenues and cut costs in several areas including advertising, private-sector outsourcing and grants. “The future PSTA system may not be as big as what we have now, but it still needs to be efficient, cost effective, and customer-focused. Doing that may mean some service reductions to some routes, but also improving overall service areas where we are the most productive,” said Bill Jonson, PSTA Board Chair and Clearwater City Council Member.

By the end of the day, the leaders agreed to pursue policy changes that will maximize the transit agency’s resources and still provide efficient, cost-effective transportation. The Board maintained support for PSTA to continue leading the transportation conversation in Pinellas and to focus on incremental improvements rather than the wholesale changes outlined in the Greenlight Pinellas plan.

[PSTA B-Roll](#)

Media Contact:

Bob Lasher  
External Affairs Officer  
[blasher@psta.net](mailto:blasher@psta.net)  
(727) 540-1874 Office  
(727) 580-7135 Cell

# # #

The Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority is the public transit provider for Pinellas County, providing more than 14.5 million rides per year. PSTA operates nearly 40 bus and trolley routes with a fleet of 203 vehicles. To learn more about the services offered by PSTA, or for schedule and fare information, passengers are invited to call the PSTA InfoLine at (727) 540-1900, or visit [www.PSTA.net](http://www.PSTA.net). PSTA is an equal opportunity employer.