



Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Authority

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2009 – New Projects, New Opportunities

From gas prices to the housing crisis, if the events of the past year demonstrate anything, it's that the Tampa Bay area is in need of serious solutions to the problems we're facing. One of those solutions must be improvements in transportation.

As Chairman of the Board of Hillsborough Area Regional Transit, I see the opportunities transit can provide for our future economic growth – opportunities that are not years away, but set to take shape in 2009.

HART is working on five initiatives right now that can provide new jobs for our area, allow workers better access to employment, invest in our infrastructure, bring federal dollars back home and lay the groundwork for even more improvements to come.

Move more people, faster and more efficiently

The North-South Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service is in design and engineering, with work expected to begin in late 2009. Existing service is also being addressed, with a goal of 4% ridership growth in 2009, and service changes in the spring, summer and fall to further improve service delivery and efficiency.

Expand our transportation infrastructure

The new administration has placed a priority on infrastructure, and HART has projects that are ready to go. The extension of the TECO Line Streetcar System to Whiting Street will give people in Ybor City and the Channel District more direct access to downtown, expanding employment opportunities and making residential developments more attractive to current and future residents. HART is also moving toward a new bus operations facility that will accommodate the needs of our growing fleet of vehicles.

Seek new funding

HART expects to secure a federal grant for the East-West BRT line in 2009. As the possibility of rail transit in Hillsborough County comes closer to reality, HART is in the process of re-evaluating the previously approved plan from 2002 with an eye toward requesting federal funding for the state's first light rail line.

Engage the public

We are planning meetings throughout the year, and a major community survey to gauge residents' wants and needs when it comes to transit. HART has kicked off the year with a redesigned and improved website, new-look buses and will soon begin a new advertising campaign that will help to increase the awareness of HART's mission and role in the community.

LETTER FROM HART BOARD CHAIR RON GOVIN
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Tap the Board

HART Board of Directors will be called upon to take a more active role in the coming year. We will take part in community outreach, so we hear first-hand what matters to our customers. The structure of the Board will also be revised, with emphasis on committees and a planned retreat to bring a laser-focus to transit issues.

There is much to do in the coming year. HART is up to the challenge, and we ask for your support and input in creating transit solutions that will make a difference in our community now and in the years to come.

On behalf of the staff and Board of Directors of HART, I wish you a happy and prosperous 2009.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ron Govin', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Ron Govin
Temple Terrace City Councilman
HART Board of Directors Chairman