

**Position Statement on
The Central Florida Commuter Rail Project
December 2008**

The Tampa Bay Partnership fully supports the completion of the Central Florida Commuter Rail Project. We feel strongly that working through the remaining issues is an urgent matter that will provide for an inclusive and unified voice for bringing commuter rail to Central Florida.

The Partnership has worked diligently to understand the issues, convene groups and find common ground for progress. Our guiding principles have been clear and steadfast – think regionally by collaborating with our Super-Region Partners, facilitate open and direct dialog among stakeholders, focus on the quality of life along with our economic well-being, and finally, to think long-term.

The Partnership also knows how important the Central Florida Commuter Rail Project is to the success of TBARTA and to the future of a state-wide multi-modal transportation system.

We fully endorse the current process to achieve agreement from all stakeholders on the following:

- Support for Commuter Rail. Providing transit alternatives to move residents and visitors efficiently and effectively within and between regions is essential to our economy as well as to building connectivity within our state.
- Support for the Integrated Logistics Center. Developing critical infrastructure for our region's important logistics and distribution industry is important to support our growing population and to increase our international opportunities.
- Support for Developing and Connecting our City Centers. Investing in building and connecting our city centers through multi-modal options is a key economic development objective that is essential to offer the high quality-of-life that will attract and retain the talented workforce that our region needs. We look forward to exploring long-term solutions and funding options that reroute freight rail traffic out of the downtown cores and help to facilitate connectivity within and between regions.

We all share the same core beliefs about our future and how our regions are stronger together. This is why the Tampa Bay Partnership will continue to pledge its support for the process that successfully brings the Central Florida Commuter Rail Project to completion. The Tampa Bay Partnership will be supporting and participating in the Regional Summit on Connectivity, convened by the City of Lakeland, and will work with all stakeholders to address the remaining issues prior to the start of the upcoming legislative session.