



# MEMORANDUM

AGENDA ITEM #VI.F

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DATE: FEBRUARY 27, 2017

TO: COUNCIL MEMBERS

FROM: STAFF

SUBJECT: DECEMBER 16, 2016 TRI-RAIL COASTAL LINK MEETING UPDATE

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The South Florida Regional Planning Council hosted a very successful event on December 16th, 2016 at the Broward County Convention Center: The Tri-Rail Coastal Link Update and Conversation. The meeting was sponsored by Broward County. There were 218 registrants prior to the event and the total number of attendees was 155. A full summary of the meeting is attached and some highlights are provided below.

### Meeting Objectives:

- To develop a shared understanding of the Tri-Rail Coastal Link (TRCL) project, project status, and critical issues; and
- To improve stakeholder coordination within Broward County and regionally.

### Issues Summary and Next Steps:

Broward County has a unique opportunity to build upon the work being done in Miami-Dade County, and provide a regional rail service to its residents along the Florida East Coast (FEC) corridor. The TRCL project is ready to enter into the project development phase. Broward County would need a local financial plan that identifies operating funds for the project to move into this next phase. Implementing the project in Broward County will require leadership and vision, and a working group comprised of local and regional stakeholders is a recommended next step to move the project forward.

<u>Issue</u>	<u>Potential Solution</u>
Local operating funds	Locals reach agreement on source of local operating funds so that TRCL can enter into project development phase
Vision and leadership	Working group is established to facilitate collaboration
Crossing at New River	FDOT conducts New River crossing study as part of TRCL project development ensuring the vitality of the marine industry
Access agreement	FECL provides access fee and reaches agreement with SFRTA

### Recommendation

Information only.



## **TRI-RAIL COASTAL LINK UPDATE AND CONVERSATION MEETING SUMMARY**

The meeting took place on Friday, December 16, 2016, from 7:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. at the Broward County Convention Center, Palm Room A. It was sponsored by Broward County and hosted by the South Florida Regional Planning Council (SFRPC).

**MEETING OBJECTIVES:** To develop a shared understanding of the Tri-Rail Coastal Link project, project status, and critical issues; and to improve stakeholder coordination within Broward County and regionally.

**REGISTRATION:** There were 218 registrants prior to the event. Total number of attendees was 155.

**WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS:** Isabel Cosío Carballo, Executive Director, SFRPC; The Honorable Patricia T. Asseff, Chair, SFRPC; and the Honorable Michael Udine, Broward County Commissioner, District 3, made introductory remarks and recognized the registered elected officials. John Kaliski, Cambridge Systematics, served as moderator and facilitator.

### **REGIONAL PARTNERS PERSPECTIVE: HOW DOES TRI-RAIL COASTAL LINK FIT INTO A REGIONAL SOLUTION?**

**The Honorable Susan Haynie, Chair, Southeast Florida Transportation Council (SEFTC), and Mayor, City of Boca Raton**

- Presented the regional partners perspective with a presentation, titled “Three Counties, One Travelling Public: A Regional Cooperation Model”; and
- Described the Coastal Link Project as a key solution to regional transportation challenges.

### **Isabel Cosío Carballo, Executive Director, SFRPC**

- Presented the objectives of the Seven50: SE Florida Prosperity Plan (“seven counties, 50 years”) as a blueprint for growing a more prosperous, more desirable Southeast Florida during the next 50 years and beyond;
- Described the need to develop a “Region in Motion” featuring a range of transportation and transit choices; and
- Spoke to the need for further regional collaboration to find solutions to Southeast Florida’s transportation challenges.

## **TRI-RAIL COASTAL LINK OVERVIEW AND UPDATE**

**Gerry O’Reilly, P.E., District Secretary, Florida Department of Transportation, District 4**

- Presented an update on the TRCL project and described it is as being ready to enter into the project development phase immediately;
- Described the three items that needed resolution to move the project forward: a local financial plan for operating funds, an access agreement, and a source of funds for paying the access fee; and
- Identified the need for an Indemnification and Liability release for Tri-Rail to operate on the FEC, which is a legislative issue.

**Jack L. Stephens, Executive Director, South Florida Regional Transportation Authority (SFRTA)**

- Presented an update on the TRCL project and the Downtown Miami Link;
- Described the critical relationship between the Tri-Rail Downtown Miami Link (TRDML) and the TRCL project;
- Described the collaborative effort to finance the project between Miami-Dade County, City of Miami, SFRTA, OMNI CRA, Overtown/Park West CRA, Bayfront Park Trust, and the Miami Downtown Development Authority;
- Stated that the Miami Central Station is expected to be completed by the third quarter of 2017, by which time Tri-Rail can begin providing service to the downtown Miami area, and potentially go north along the FEC; and
- Spoke of the need in Broward County to identify a new crossing of the New River to protect vital marine industry interests.

*Questions and Answers* – John Kaliski, opened the floor to questions. Robert Larsen, representing Flagler Village; Vincent Scuterllaro, representing Southern Boating magazine; Commissioner Romney Rogers, representing District Four in the City of Fort Lauderdale; and Phil Purcell, of the Marine Industries Association of South Florida asked about the New River crossing and how the issues associated with the crossing could be addressed. Secretary O’Reilly responded and said that the issue would be studied once the TRCL project development study is underway, and that the project development study would identify a solution that would take into consideration the efficiency, effectiveness, environmental, and public impact of the various proposed solutions. He mentioned that a tunnel or bridge could be in the realm of potential alternatives. Barry Somerstein, attorney with Greenspoon Marder; Cary Goldberg, Chair of Envision Uptown Inc. and SFRPC Board Member; and Commissioner Tom Green, representing Wilton Manors; asked about station location, planning, and funding. Mr. Stephens said that there is a federal process that requires station selection to be done in a specifically mandated manner. He said that developing Transit Oriented Development criteria and eventually pursuing partnerships with the development community will part of the future success of the stations.

**MOVING FROM CONCEPT TO IMPLEMENTATION IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY**

**Aileen Bouclé, Executive Director, Miami-Dade Metropolitan Planning Organization**

- Presented on Miami-Dade’s Strategic Miami Area Rapid Transit Plan (SMART);
- Described the County’s commitment to transit and advancing the NE Corridor to Aventura as part of the overall SMART plan;
- Described Miami-Dade MPO’s commitment to working regionally with the MPOs and the Counties in the SE Florida Region; and,
- Spoke of the necessity for the region to follow other national examples (such as Houston, Denver, Atlanta, New York, Seattle, San Diego, and San Francisco) and work collaboratively.

**The Honorable Francis X. Suarez, Vice-Chairman, Miami-Dade Metropolitan Planning Organization and City of Miami Commissioner, District 4, and President, Miami-Dade League of Cities**

- Described transit as the highest priority for Miami-Dade County and the MPO;
- Described the Downtown Miami Link as a potential building block for the six corridors that are part of the SMART plan, and an as important project to support as part of the larger vision;
- Recognized the work and leadership of Alice Bravo in supporting the Downtown Miami Link;
- Described the collaborative partnership that came up with the \$69 million necessary to make the Downtown Miami Link a reality; and

- Shared the details of the City of Miami’s Transportation Trust Fund, as an example of a creative tool for local governments to raise funds to support local transit projects.

**The Honorable Steven L. Abrams, Vice-Chair, South Florida Regional Transportation Authority, and Palm Beach County Commissioner, District 4**

- Described how the project took shape in 2012 when the SFRTA received a planning grant to create a vision at an offsite meeting in Minneapolis, Minnesota, as part of the Sustainable Communities Initiative;
- Described the All Aboard/Brightline project as a unique opportunity to provide expanded Tri-Rail service; and,
- Emphasized the need for creative approaches to local funding to implement all phases of the Coastal Link project.

**BRIGHTLINE UPDATE**

**François Illas, Vice President, Corporate Development, Florida East Coast Industries (FECI).**

- Presented an update on the Brightline service, with Miami as the southern terminus, and Orlando as the northern terminus, with stops in downtown Fort Lauderdale and West Palm Beach;
- Identified the need for Transit Oriented Development guidelines to be formalized around the stations;
- Described Brightline as a European style rail service, with an emphasis on providing efficiency of service and supporting the vibrancy of local communities; and
- Stated that Brightline will be operational by the Summer of 2017.

**Break**

**Moderated Stakeholder Conversation: What Is Needed to Move Ahead in Broward County and the Region?**

Mr. John Kaliski moderated the following panel.

- The Honorable Tim Ryan, Chair, South Florida Regional Transportation Authority, and Broward County Commissioner, District 7
- The Honorable Chip LaMarca, Broward County Commissioner, District 4, and Steering Committee Co-Chair, Greater Fort Lauderdale Alliance Six Pillars Initiative
- The Honorable Richard Blattner, Chair, Broward Metropolitan Planning Organization, and City of Hollywood Commissioner, District 4
- Bertha Henry, Broward County Administrator
- George I. Platt, Chair, Broward Workshop Transportation Committee
- Gerry O’Reilly, P.E., District Secretary, Florida Department of Transportation, District 4
- Jack L. Stephens, Executive Director, South Florida Regional Transportation Authority
- François Illas, Vice President, Corporate Development, Florida East Coast Industries

**Commissioner Tim Ryan**

- Described the 85-mile Coastal Link project as having the potential to provide significant economic benefit to the region; and
- Suggested a workshop as potentially useful to determine appropriate local sources of funding.

**Commissioner Chip LaMarca**

- Emphasized the need to work across party lines to accomplish major transportation projects, and to leverage federal and state dollars.

**Commissioner Richard Blattner**

- Described regional partnership and collaboration as integral to the success of the TRCL project.

**Administrator Bertha Henry**

- Described the project as feasible, but identified issues that needed to be addressed;
- Described the County Board and Administration as both being supportive of having a stop at the airport;
- Identified meeting the east/west needs for transportation solutions as being as important as the north/south connectivity; and
- Described a vital need to meaningfully address the river crossing in order to engage sufficient support for the TRCL project in Broward County.

**Mr. George Platt**

- Urged the need for leadership, vision, and expediency to support the project;
- Advocated for making transit the number one priority for Broward County; and
- Suggested the formation of a working group, comprised of representatives from FDOT, Broward County Commission, Regional Planning Councils, FECL, Broward MPO, Miami-Dade County, Palm Beach County, and the private sector.

**Secretary O'Reilly, Mr. Stephens and Mr. Illas** agreed on the need for vision and leadership, which was the key to the success of the Downtown Miami Link.

*Questions and Answers* – John Kaliski, opened the floor to questions. Mayor Josh Levy, City of Hollywood, asked about phasing of the project. Secretary O'Reilly responded, saying that the next logical phase north of Aventura would be the crossover at Pompano Beach. A representative from the Broward County School Board commented that the routing of school buses should be considered in the development phase of the project.

**The Honorable Quentin "Beam" Furr, Councilmember, South Florida Regional Planning Council, Broward County Vice-Mayor and County Commissioner, District 6**

- Thanked Broward County for sponsoring the event, and the South Florida Regional Planning Council for hosting;
- Emphasized the need for leadership and collaboration to move the project forward and suggested a leadership role for the SFRPC.