

Tallahassee Transit Renaissance

Reinventing Tallahassee's Transit Services



Executive Summary

November 2005

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Tallahassee Transit Renaissance is a comprehensive plan designed to implement changes to the current transit system that will improve and expand service delivery, customer amenities, system design and community perception. The Renaissance is comprised of six components that focus on various aspects that will be developed during the next three years. The six components are as follows: Communications, Technology, Service, Facilities/Amenities, revenue Opportunities and Transit Excellence. This plan further outlines the six components by identifying the purpose, implementation tactics and budget of each activity.



Based on the community survey, conducted by VancoreJones Communications Inc., there is widespread support for the Tallahassee Transit System. A majority of the residents view the system as a key component of the city's resources. The survey also revealed that the community supports a change and further expansion of the transit system; even if it requires more financial resources (72% of the community would support an increase in tax dollars used for transit). Based on this survey and industry research, the transit system believes that the activities that are found in the Tallahassee Transit Renaissance will not only begin to move the Tallahassee Transit System towards meeting the communities needs, but be widely accepted by the community as a important resource that adds to the quality of the city.

As part of the 2005 Transit Development Plan (TDP), the Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR) conducted additional surveys, interviews and workshops that focused on the existing vs. needed services. Frequent riders and non-users indicated that their perception of the Tallahassee Transit System was less than optimal, regardless of their support. Therefore, even though residents support the system, they do not view it as a resource for all residents to use. Specifically, the following perceptions were frequently expressed.

- The Tallahassee Transit System image is outdated
- The vehicles, service, facilities and amenities are out-of-date and unattractive
- Scheduling and route maps need improvement
- Services should be expanded and redesigned to reduce transfers

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While both surveys show community support for transit, both indicate the system must transform to better meet the needs of a more diverse customer base. To truly be an effective component of the community's resources, the transit system must be seen as a resource for everyone.

Based on these surveys, industry research, the TDP and the Comprehensive Operational Analysis (COA), transit system staff are confident the implementation of the Tallahassee Transit Renaissance Plan will move the transit system towards meeting the community's needs while gaining wide acceptance by the community as an important resource that adds quality of life to the city and surrounding region.

Goal

The Tallahassee Transit Renaissance will establish objectives to move the transit system towards providing the very best service for our community. With an innovative, first-class transit system, transit will be a positive component to the economic development of the community by increasing ridership and providing an exceptional transit system for future residents and businesses. Tallahassee is constantly expanding with the vision of the Mayor, City Commissioners, City Manager and other leaders. Through vision, direction and support these leaders encourage growth of Florida's Capital City with a modernized mass transit system.

The Plan

This plan has been created to provide a road map for the implementation of the reinvention of the Tallahassee Transit System. It is based on defined goals and objectives developed by transit staff and the Center for Urban Transit Research (CUTR). Each outlined activity is designed to assist in fulfilling the overall mission of the Tallahassee Transit Renaissance. The plan extends from September 2005 through 2008.

To reinvent the Tallahassee Transit System, initial steps involve a fresh branding identity with a new name, logo and bus paint scheme. This will improve community perception and pave the way for more substantive projects. Based on community focus group, industry and transit staff feedback our recommendation for a new name is "StarMetro." In addition, the recommended new logo is:



Objective

- To achieve a high level of transit excellence exceeding city, county, state, federal and industry standards
- To expand transit services to meet the changing needs of the surrounding area
- To increase awareness of the transit system's new direction to the communities within Tallahassee and the surrounding counties
- To create a consistent, positive image of the Tallahassee Transit System
- To increase community support that encourages feedback on transit improvements
- Enhance current and implement new facilities for the Tallahassee Transit System
 - C.K. Steele Plaza, Transit Access Centers (TAC), Bus Shelters, Park-N-Ride Lots and applicable satellite facilities
- To improve employee ownership, recruit and retain qualified staff

Components

1) Communications

The Tallahassee Transit System has developed this component of the renaissance to create a new community perception of what transit is and what it has to offer. To begin this process, a new image must be defined, one that sheds the old perception of an out-of-date transit system and presents a new identity that marks the renaissance. The transit system will reinvent itself with a new name, logo, driver uniforms, and paint schemes. Also, it will develop ways to better communicate its services and, provide forums for the community to provide feedback on performance and needs.

2) Technology

The Tallahassee Transit System has developed this component of the renaissance to implement new technologies that allow for efficient service design, real-time customer information, service tracking/performance and accurate data collection for future planning. The technologies proposed create a network that provides information to various audiences. Internally, the main goals are to enhance service design and planning. With accurate information readily available, better decisions will be made. To the community, these technologies will be invaluable to how and when someone could use mass transit. Real-Time Customer Information would allow anyone, anywhere to access information about transit services. This section discusses each of the approaches necessary to establish a comprehensive technological network that provides various real-time information services to the community, which enhances overall service.

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3) Service

To meet the needs of a growing community, expansion of transit services is essential. The majority of the Tallahassee Transit Renaissance is dedicated to service improvements and expansion. There are two areas of improvements: direct customer service and service design. This section discusses proposed service improvements to existing routes, proposed new routes, commuter services and innovative service design. Transit system staff will explore and analyze innovative approaches to service design to increase efficiency by creating more direct routes, cross-connecting services and specific destination routes, such as the Tallahassee Regional Airport.

4) Amenities

The Tallahassee Transit System has developed this component of the renaissance to enhance and expand current amenities to better accommodate the new direction of growth. Current transit facilities are aging and will require extensive renovation to make them more modern, providing better amenities. Bus stop shelters must be enhanced to provide better amenities. Modernized amenities will attract a wider variety of customers and improve the current community perception of Tallahassee Transit.

5) Opportunities

The Tallahassee Transit System has identified several revenue opportunities that would provide alternative forms of funding. By extending current partnerships and exploring joint ventures, the transit system can generate revenues that would allow for future expansion and growth. Current advertising partnerships should be expanded to include advertising through proposed technology infrastructure. More partnerships with local entities would offer increased contracts for services. Adequate funding is crucial in order for the Tallahassee Transit System to be able to implement proposed activities.

6) Excellence

This section focuses on organizational development to achieve transit excellence. As part of the reinvention and improvements to the Tallahassee Transit System's identity, image, and services, the transit system will strive to achieve a high level of quality in the provision of its services. Public involvement conducted for the TDP uncovered a desire for Tallahassee's transit system, especially being in Florida's capital city, to serve as a model for excellence in transit. The actions presented in this section seek to achieve this idea through improvements to staffing, training, and performance measurement.

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Activities

The Tallahassee Transit System will implement a series of communications, technology, service, infrastructure and expansion activities to reach the defined objectives.

COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITIES	COST	TIMELINE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hire consulting firm to assist with Marketing Activities • Redefine Mission Statement • Develop Communications/Marketing Plan • Develop New Transit Logo, Name and Branding • Marketing of New Image • Marketing of New Transit Services • Create New Uniforms • Implement New Bus Paint Schemes • Foster Better Community Involvement • Enhance Transit Schedule Information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$50,000/Year \$75,000/1st Year Consultant Consultant Consultant \$95,000 \$150,000 \$16,000 \$216,000 n/a Internal Cost 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> October 2005 through December 2008 November 2005 December 2005 October 2005 October 2005 October 2005 2nd Quarter 2006 Begin October 2005 Immediate Begin November 2005

TECHNOLOGY ACTIVITIES	COST	TIMELINE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement Transit Planning Software • Implement Advance Farebox System • Purchase 10 Additional Fareboxes for New Service • Establish Customer Wi-Fi Access • Implement A Comprehensive SmartBus System • Establish a Driver Training Simulator Program • Implement Informational TV Screens on Buses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$200,000 \$748,000 \$115,000 \$ 54,000 \$3,500,000 \$500,000 Vendor Paid 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> February 2006 February 2006 April 2006 2nd Quarter 2006 Phased in, begin 2nd Quarter 2006 3rd Quarter 2006 2007

TRANSIT SERVICE ACTIVITIES	COST	TIMELINE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement New Service Improvements • Implement Limited Commuter Service to SouthWood • Explore Viability of Additional Commuter Services • Improve Planning Coordination and participation with Other departments and agencies • Improve Community Bus Operation Awareness • Explore Innovative Service Designs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Specific to Service</i> \$46,828/Annual \$103,656/Annual \$0 \$1,000 \$0 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Specific To Service</i> December 2005 3rd Quarter 2006 Immediate December 2005 Immediate

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FACILITIES ACTIVITIES	COST	TIMELINE
• Bus Replacement and Expansion Plan	\$5,272,085	On-Going
• Rehabilitation of C.K. Steele Plaza	\$8,000,000	TBD
• Rehabilitation of Administration, Operations and Maintenance Facility	\$1,000,000	Begin October 2005
• Implement Improved Bus Shelters	\$396,012	October 2005
• Implement 50 New Bus Shelters	\$534,000	4 th Quarter 2006
• Implement Shelter Enhancements – Solar Lighting, Solar Bus Stop Poles and New Benches	\$225,000	2 nd Quarter 2006
• Vinyl Printing and Cutting Machine	\$50,000	3 rd Quarter 2006
• Improve Equipment and Facility Cleanliness	\$0	Immediate
• Implement Transit Access Center	\$800,000	TBD
• Implement Remote Transfer Facilities	\$200,000	TBD
• Implement and Improve Transit Security	\$626,600*	TBD

REVENUE OPPURTUNIES ACTIVITES	COST	TIMELINE
• Establish and Enhance Partnerships	n/a	Immediate
• Continue and Expand Advertising Partnerships	n/a	Immediate
• Dedicated Funding	n/a	TBD
• Explore Lease Development of Multimodal Land Downtown	n/a	On-Going
• Rental Use of Driver Simulator	n/a	TBD on Simulator Purchase

EXCELLENCE ACTIVITIES	COST	TIMELINE
• Explore Regional Structuring	\$0	Immediate
• Foster Individual & Team Pride	\$0	Immediate
• Reorganize to Implement New Direction (Temp Drivers to Full-Time Savings)	-\$159,830/Annual	Immediate
• Enhance Employee Training – New Safety & Training Coordinator Position	\$49,400/Annual	Immediate
○ 8 hours expanded driver training	\$30,000/Annual	Immediate
• Develop Effective Performance Measures – New Performance Analyst Position	\$52,000/Annual	Immediate
• Become an Industry Leader – New Business Systems Analyst Position	\$57,200/Annual	Immediate

Renaissance Action Items
Summary of Capital Requests

The Tallahassee Transit Renaissance identifies a capital and operating investment of over \$29,000,000 in the next three years. While funding for various projects has been identified, the transit system will need additional capital assistance for projects that require local match to federal assistance or, for projects that no federal or state funding is available.

Below are various action items that are requested by the Tallahassee Transit Director to be considered to fully implement the Tallahassee Renaissance Transit Renaissance (*These action items are listed in order of priority*).

Non-Fiscal Action Items

1. Approve FY2005 Transit Development Plan
2. Adopt the concept of Tallahassee Transit Renaissance

Fiscal Action Items

Total Capital Assistance Needed - \$3,500,000

FY06 - \$3,050,000

FY07 - \$ 350,000

FY08 - \$ 100,000

3. Approve Use of City Funds to Implement New Bus Paint Schemes:
 - a) 94 Vehicles @ **\$216,000**
4. Approve Use of City Funds to Purchase Four New Buses and Rehab Four Existing Buses for New and Expanded Services:
 - a) Four (4) Expansion Buses @ **\$1,300,000**
 - b) Four (4) Bus Rehabilitations @ **\$ 80,000**
5. Approve the Use of City Funds to Implement a Marketing Campaign for the New Transit System Name and Services:
 - a) New System and Service Marketing Campaign @ **\$150,000**

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6. Approve the Use of City Funds to Implement a Vinyl Printing and Cutting machine for Use of Bus Painting, Marketing Signs and Advertising Signs:
 - b) Vinyl Machine, Computer Equipment and Software @ **\$50,000**

7. Approve the Use of City Funds to Implement Ten Additional Farebox Systems:
 - a) 10 Farebox Systems @ **\$115,000**

8. Approve the Use of City Funds to Implement Solar Lighting Enhancements:
 - a) 39 Shelter Solar Lighting Systems @ **\$80,000**
 - b) 75 Bus Stop Solar Lighting Systems @ **\$75,000**

9. Approve Use of City Funds to Purchase and Implement a Driver Simulator System. City funds would be used to match half of the cost, the remaining half will be provided by FTA New Start Grant:
 - a) 50% Local Match for Driver Simulator @ **\$250,000**

10. Approve Use of City Funds to Implement 35 New Bus Shelters:
 - a) 35 Bus Shelters @ **\$534,000**

11. Approve the Use of City Funds to Implement Two Remote Transfer Locations:
 - a) FY07 - Remote Transfer Center @ **\$50,000**
 - b) FY08 - Remote Transfer Center @ **\$50,000**

12. Approve Use of City Funds to Implement Free Internet Wireless Access System at Select Bus Shelters, Transfer Centers and On Buses:
 - a) Wi-Fi System @ **\$50,000**

13. Approve Use of City Funds to Implement New Bus Stop Benches:
 - a) 200 Bus Stop Benches @ **\$100,000**

14. Approve Use of City Funds to Assist With C.K. Steele Plaza Rehabilitation:
 - a) Preliminary Engineering and Design @ **\$400,000**

Renaissance Action Items
Transit Staff Restructuring

The Tallahassee Transit Renaissance identifies the need for a transit staff restructuring that will reduce its dependence on temporary drivers and make funding available for three new key positions that support the transit system's new growth. Below are the two action items requested by the Tallahassee Transit Director:

1. Approve Restructuring of Fixed Route Driver Staffing
 - a) Increase Full-time Fixed Route Driver Positions to 102
(Add 27 driver positions) @ \$759,594
 - b) Eliminate Temporary Drivers Positions @ -\$919,594
- Total Restructuring Savings \$159,830***

**Information based on FY 2004 figures from DRAFT Inquiry into TalTran Overtime from the Office of the City Auditor – This one of four recommendations made in the September 2005 analysis.*

***In addition, nine more full-time drivers will be needed for expanded and new service. Such costs are included in the annual operating cost estimates related to the specific service and are not included in this cost reduction model due to the impact.*

2. Approve the Expanded Administrative Staff Structuring:
 - a) Add Business Systems Analyst Position @ \$52,000
 - b) Add Performance Analyst Position @ \$49,400
 - c) Add Safety & Training Coordinator Position @ \$57,200
- Total Additional Structuring Cost \$158,600***

**Savings from driver restructuring applied creates a positive \$1,230 surplus in personnel funds when combined with the administrative staffing recommendations.*

Renaissance Action Items
Designation of Annual Operating Allocation

The Tallahassee Transit Renaissance identifies the designation of the approved \$500,000 allocation for operating expenses (with an additional 3% annual increase). Below are the designations recommended by the Tallahassee Transit Director (*Items are in order as found in the renaissance plan*).

1) Retain marketing consultant firm assistance enhancing the transit system identity.

Total three year cost = \$175,000	<i>FY 2006</i>	<i>FY 2007</i>	<i>FY 2008</i>
Initial and On-Going Marketing and Consultant Services	\$75,000	\$50,000	\$50,000

2) New transit system marketing/promotion.

(First year cost only) = \$75,000	<i>FY 2006</i>	<i>FY 2007</i>	<i>FY 2008</i>
Promotional items, community events, renaissance benchmark promotions, dissemination of information for new transit system and	\$75,000	\$10,000	\$10,000

3) Driver simulator annual operating maintenance and updates.

Total three year cost = \$37,000	<i>FY 2006</i>	<i>FY 2007</i>	<i>FY 2008</i>
Annual Maintenance and Operations Expenses for Driver Simulator	\$7,000	\$15,000	\$15,000

4) Annual expense for providing free wireless internet access to customers.

Total three year cost = \$4,000	<i>FY 2006</i>	<i>FY 2007</i>	<i>FY 2008</i>
Annual Maintenance and Operations Expense for Wi-Fi	\$0	\$2,000	\$2,000

5) Exterior vinyl print/cutting machine maintenance and operations.

Total three year cost = \$22,000	<i>FY 2006</i>	<i>FY 2007</i>	<i>FY 2008</i>
Materials, maintenance, waste disposal, training and operations	\$6,000	\$8,000	\$8,000

6) Maintenance and security of remote transfer locations.

Total three year cost = \$3,000	<i>FY 2006</i>	<i>FY 2007</i>	<i>FY 2008</i>
Remote Transfer Location Security and Maintenance	\$0	\$1,500	\$1,500

7) Employee and Driver Enhanced Training.

Total three year cost = \$90,000	<i>FY 2006</i>	<i>FY 2007</i>	<i>FY 2008</i>
Enhanced On-Going Driver Training Program	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000

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8) Federal New Start funds (operating only) have been identified that create a 50/50 funding mechanism for the new services listed below.

Total three year cost = \$1,118,453

I) Increase of Service Frequency on Existing Routes				
a) Route 9 (<i>High Rd</i>)	Farebox Recovery	Local Match	Federal Match	Total Cost
*FY 2006 @	\$41,667	\$68,623	\$12,110	\$122,440
FY 2007 @	\$50,000	\$50,643	\$50,643	\$151,286
FY 2008 @	\$50,000	\$52,912	\$52,912	\$155,825
Three Year Total	\$141,667	\$172,179	\$115,666	\$429,511
II) Increase of Service Frequency on Existing Routes				
a) Route 11 (<i>FAMU Area</i>)	Farebox Recovery	Local Match	Federal Match	Total Cost
*FY 2006 @	\$33,333	\$78,563	\$13,864	\$125,760
FY 2007 @	\$40,000	\$57,720	\$57,720	\$155,439
FY 2008 @	\$40,000	\$60,051	\$60,051	\$160,103
Three Year Total	\$113,333	\$196,334	\$131,635	\$441,302
III) New Route Between FSU-FAMU-Governor Square Mall				
a) New Route (<i>non-transfer</i>)	Farebox Recovery	Local Match	Federal Match	Total Cost
*FY 2006 @	\$41,667	\$78,017	\$33,436	\$153,120
FY 2007 @	\$100,000	\$139,256	\$139,256	\$378,512
FY 2008 @	\$100,000	\$144,934	\$144,934	\$389,868
Three Year Total	\$241,667	\$362,208	\$317,626	\$921,501
IV) Limited Commuter Service Between Downtown and SouthWood				
a) Commuter Service	Farebox Recovery	Local Match	Federal Match	Total Cost
*FY 2006 @	\$18,750	\$56,375	\$11,275	\$86,400
FY 2007 @	\$25,000	\$46,828	\$46,828	\$118,656
FY 2008 @	\$25,000	\$48,608	\$48,608	\$122,216
Three Year Total	\$68,750	\$151,811	\$106,711	\$327,272
V) Full Commuter Service – Connection To Be Determined				
a) Commuter Service	Farebox Recovery	Local Match	Federal Match	Total Cost
*FY 2006 @	\$7,500	\$25,050	\$25,050	\$57,600
FY 2007 @	\$30,000	\$103,656	\$103,656	\$237,312
FY 2008 @	\$30,000	\$107,216	\$107,216	\$244,431
Three Year Total	\$67,500	\$235,922	\$235,922	\$539,343

*Federal assistance will not begin until July 2006. Because of this, the Tallahassee Transit System will provide the full cost between the start dates (specific to each new service) and June 2005.