

## **Transportation Technology Forum Summary September 28, 2017**

The Forward Pinellas Transportation Technology Forum explored current, emerging and potential future transportation technologies. Forward Pinellas will continue to keep this conversation going, particularly in the SR 60 corridor.

State Senator Jeff Brandes opened the forum with a vision of the future. Senator Brandes discussed the potential of automated vehicles and how everyday activities could be affected by this change, including the safety implications of removing the human element of crashes.

A series of presentations followed:

- Florida Department of Transportation District 7 Secretary David Gwynn began with a discussion of how we arrived at this point and explored where we will go next. Secretary Gwynn introduced statewide initiatives including the Florida Automated Vehicles Summit in November and other District 7 projects, ranging from the Mobility Innovation & Technology Team to the Downtown Tampa Connected Vehicle Pilot Program.
- Darryl LeClair, Echelon LLC, and Steven Dale, Creative Urban Projects, presented on urban gondolas and cable transit. They touted these systems as ecologically friendly, electrically propelled and with a small footprint. Dale discussed the track record of success, with the largest ropeway manufacturers being operational for more than 100 years and with no deaths due to lift malfunction since 1993.
- Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA) Chief Development Officer Cassandra Borchers reviewed transit's evolution throughout the country, including being mobility managers, the need for innovative partnerships, integrating technological advancements and thinking outside the bus. For example, High Occupancy Toll lanes were built in conjunction with transit in Los Angeles, providing revenue to the transit system. PSTA operates a Direct Connect Pilot Program with Uber, United Taxi and Care Ride as a first mile, last mile solution and is exploring other transit innovations.
- Representatives from the Hillsborough Area Transit Authority (HART) discussed how HART is thinking beyond the bus. Lucian Campillo spoke about their Regional Inter-Jurisdictional Mobility Project introducing smart farebox and farecard technology into multiple transit systems in the region. Shannon Haney then discussed autonomous and connected vehicle testing currently underway in downtown Tampa.
- Tom Nocera of St. Pete Tampa Aerial Transit LLC introduced aerial personal rapid transit using passive MagLev technology from SkyTran. This system uses elevated guideways, and stations can fit inside buildings or can be in the open air. Mr. Nocera said that speeds in urban areas will initially align with those on roads or highways.
- The presentations ended with Brian Pessaro of the Center for Urban Transportation Research introducing a new study funded by the Hillsborough Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) identifying areas of the University of South Florida campus that could be served by a driverless shuttle. He discussed potential legal and insurance restrictions to operating a driverless shuttle on campus and service options they will explore. Johnny Wong of the Hillsborough MPO then presented on the significance of sharing data, what that could mean for the future of transportation planning and introduced the Regional Big Data Working Group.

The format of the forum shifted into a moderated panel discussion. Panel participants Secretary Gwynn, Darryl LeClair, Steven Dale, Cassandra Borchers, Lucien Campillo and Tom Nocera were asked audience questions. Questions included the status of Intermodal Facilities, integration of presented technologies into transit service and how the aerial transit options would function in a hurricane or high wind situation. Due to time restrictions, questions were posted of the participants after the forum, and the answers will be made available on the Forward Pinellas website.

The Transportation Technology Forum closed with next steps, which include posting the forum presentations on the Forward Pinellas website and following up with the Forward Pinellas Board and other elected officials on how Pinellas County would like to explore and advance transportation technologies.