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TBARTA Awarded \$1 Million by Florida Legislature for Regional Transit Development Plan

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TAMPA, Fla. (March 19) – On Friday, March 16, Governor Rick Scott signed the \$88.7 billion Securing Florida’s Future budget for 2018-2019, which included \$1 million in funding for the Tampa Bay Area Regional Transit Authority (TBARTA) to create the Tampa Bay region’s first Regional Transit Development Plan.

The Florida Legislature restructured TBARTA from Transportation to Transit Authority last year and required it to develop a Regional Transit Development Plan (RTDP) covering Pinellas, Pasco, Hernando, Hillsborough, and Manatee Counties. Local transit agencies are required by law to create and submit a Transit Development Plan (TDP) for their service areas to the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) that evaluates existing and anticipated demands over a 10-year horizon. While this new regional approach will meet the same statutory requirements as local TDPs, the focus will be on identifying how to best serve regional transit needs and a regional project prioritization process with funding scenarios for implementation.

“It is exciting for TBARTA to be moving forward with putting together this important plan for the future of transit across our region,” said Jim Holton, TBARTA chairman. “We owe it to our leaders in Tallahassee, as well as the support we received locally, for advancing our request to fund this effort.”

The TBARTA RTDP will fit within an overlapping and coordinated transit planning process, which will also include the Regional Transit Feasibility Plan that will determine that regional transit catalyst project for the three-county Transportation Management Area (TMA) of Pasco, Pinellas, and Hillsborough Counties. The RTDP will also encompass the regional transit priorities of Hernando and Manatee Counties and address how their regional connectivity fits into the regional transit system cohesively.

“The value added in a regional TDP approach is greater collaboration on shared initiatives such as best practices and transit policies, innovative approaches and pilot programs,” said Ramond Chiamonte, TBARTA executive director. “This can provide a much greater impact on the region’s ability to obtain funding at the state and federal levels.”

The process of selecting a consultant to perform the technical work and public engagement for the RTDP is expected to begin in late Spring 2018 and the project completed in Fall 2019.

For more information about TBARTA and the Regional Transit Development Plan, contact Michael Case, Principal Planner, at michael.case@tbarta.com or 813-282-8200.

TBARTA was created to plan and develop a multimodal transportation system that will connect five counties of the Tampa Bay region – Hernando, Hillsborough, Manatee, Pasco, and Pinellas. For more information, visit www.TBARTA.com.