

# Rapid Transit Corridor Studies

## The Jacksonville, Florida Experience



**Nashville Area MPO**

Southeast Corridor High Performance Transit Alternatives Study

# Presentation Outline

1. Introduction
2. Jacksonville
3. Rapid Transit Hurdles
4. Community Involvement
5. Chicken Or The Egg?
6. Funding Issues
7. Lessons Learned



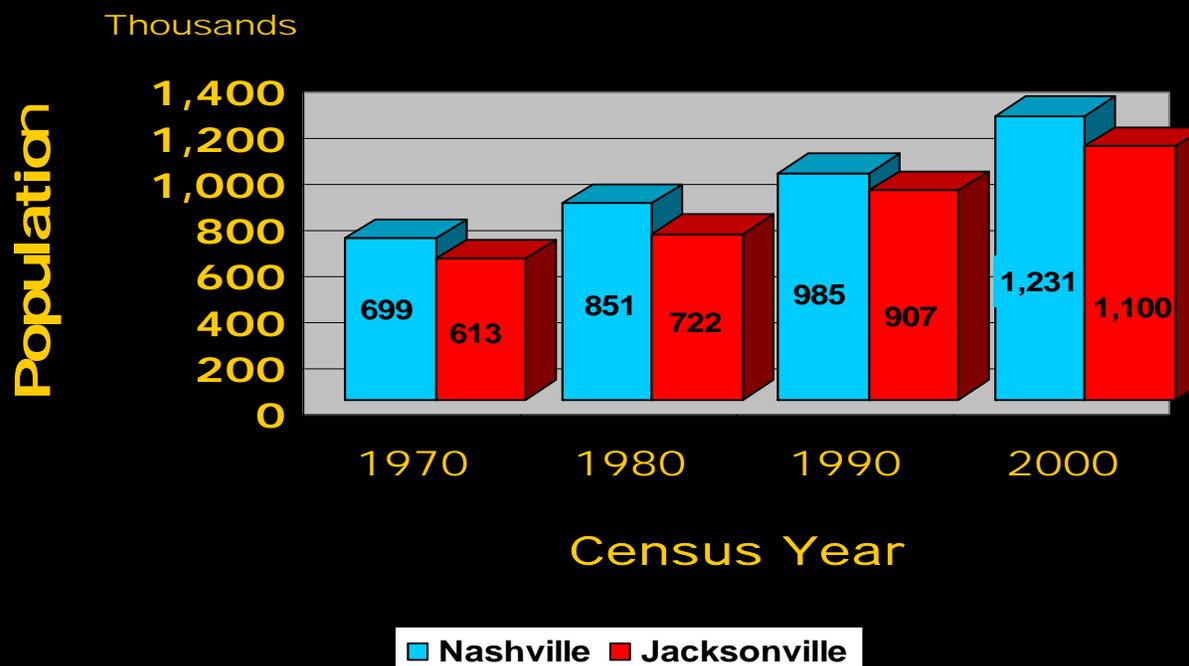
# Introduction

- **Community Profiles**
- **Jacksonville Transportation Authority (JTA)**
- **Jacksonville Rapid Transit Corridor Studies**



# Community Profile

## MSA Population



Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic and Statistics Administration, Bureau of the Census, Table 48, 1990



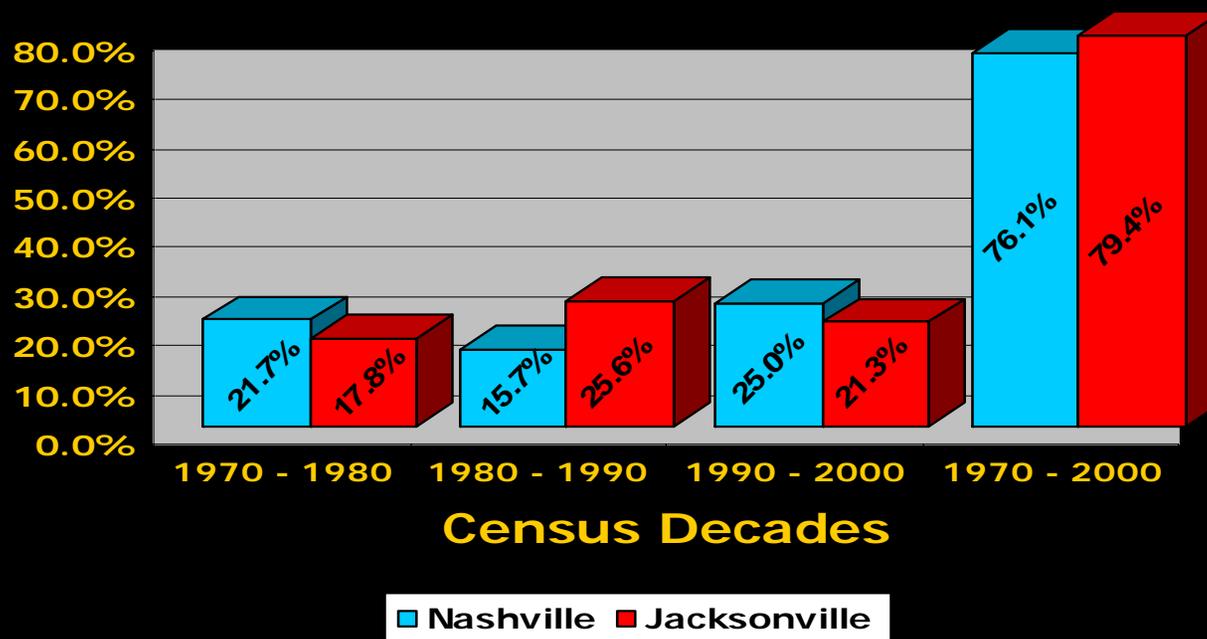
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# Community Profile

## MSA Population Growth



Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic and Statistics Administration, Bureau of the Census, Table 48, 1990



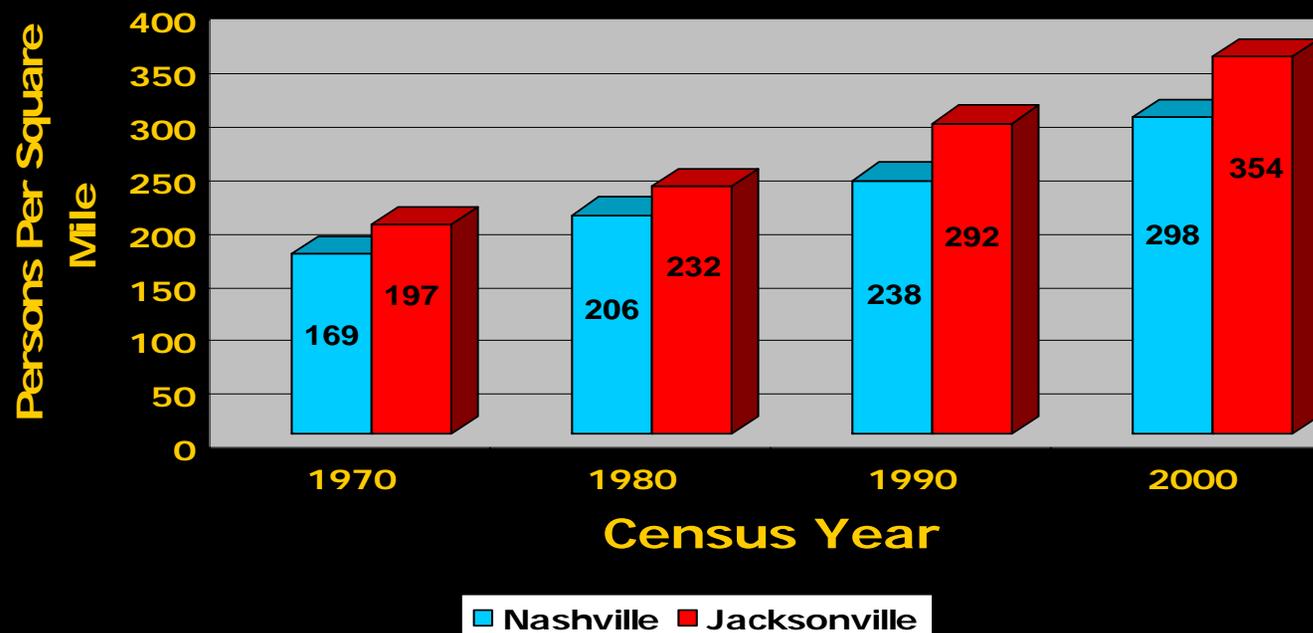
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# Community Profile

## Population Density (Based on 1990 MSA Land Area)



Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic and Statistics Administration, Bureau of the Census, Table 48, 1990



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# Jacksonville



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# JTA Milestones

- **1955 – Jacksonville Expressway Authority**
- **1971 – Acquired Bus Service**
- **1988 – Tolls Removed From Jacksonville Roads & Bridges**
  - **Tolls Replaced With ½ Cent Sales Tax**



# Who Is The JTA?

- **1 of Few Comprehensive Transportation Authorities**
- **What We Do:**
  - **Operate Bus System**
  - **Operate Automated Skyway Express**
  - **Community Transportation Coordinator**
  - **Design & Build Highway & Bridge Projects**
  - **Better Jacksonville Plan Projects**
  - **Rapid Transit Corridor Studies**



# Jacksonville Rapid Transit Corridor Studies

- **Began As Transportation Alternatives Study in 1998**
- **Transportation Alternatives Study Identified 6 Priority Corridors**



# Priority Corridors



# Jacksonville Rapid Transit Corridor Studies

- Study Each Corridor Individually
  - 1st – North/Southeast (2000)
  - 2nd – East/Southwest (2002)
- Conduct Alternatives Analysis/Draft Environmental Impact Statement (AA/DEIS) For Each Corridor

# Jacksonville Rapid Transit Corridor Studies

- **Changed From AA/DEIS To "AA"**
  - **Corridors Very Long**
  - **Modeling Issues**
- **Local Decision Process**
- **JTA Board Decision in January**



# Ridership Forecast

- **Used FCMPO Adopted Standard Transportation Demand Forecasting Computer Model**
  - **Transit Modifications**
  - **Compare Baseline to Build Alternative**

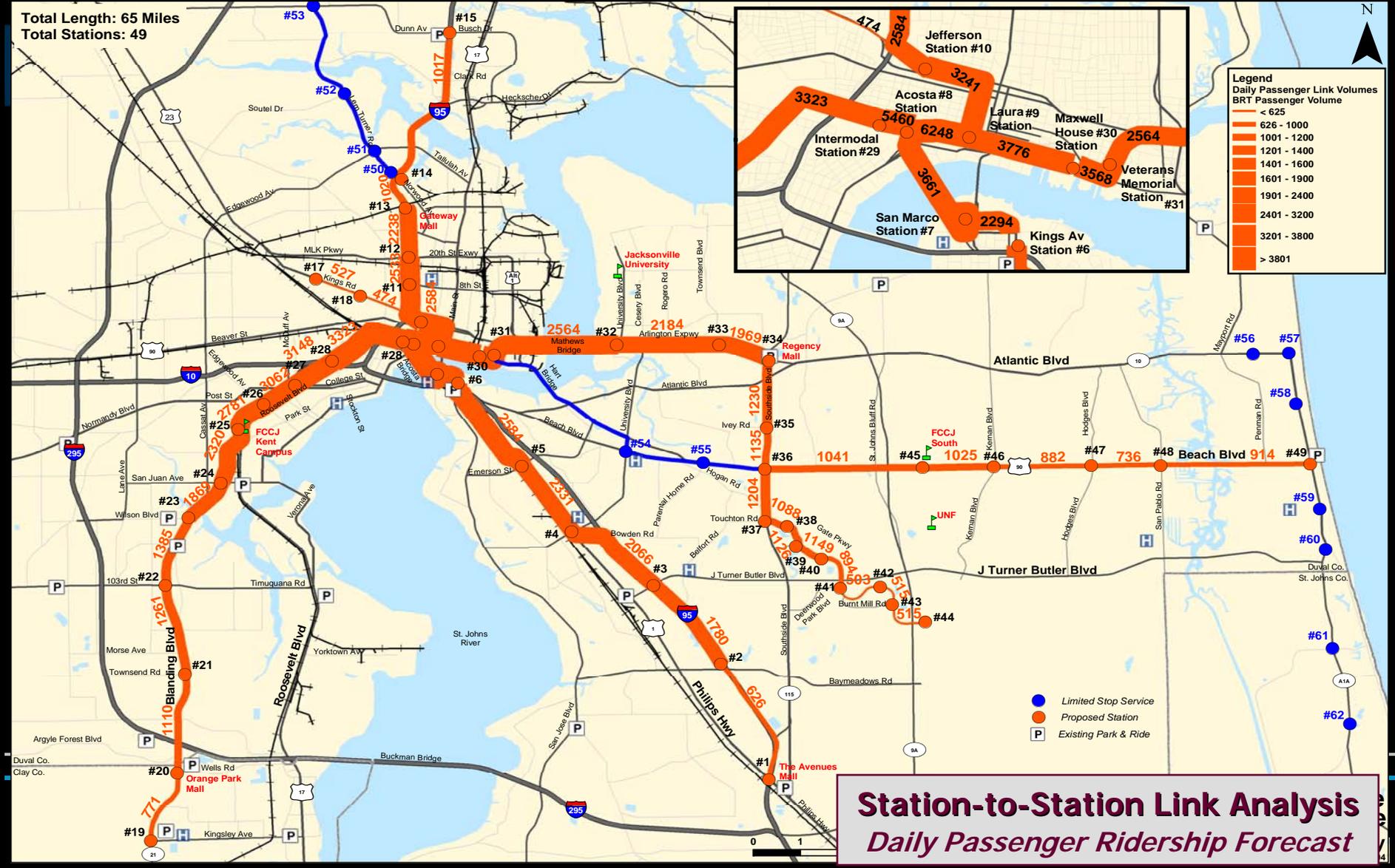


# Baseline Alternative Link Volumes



# Build Alternative Link Volumes

Total Length: 65 Miles  
Total Stations: 49



# Recommended Build Alignments – Year 2025



# Rapid Transit System Facts

- **System Length – 30 Miles**
- **27 Stations**
- **Integrates All Modes**
- **New Daily Transit Riders**
  - **32,000 (vs. No-Build)**
  - **11,000 (vs. Baseline)**



# Mode Selection

- **Initially, Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)**
- **Convert To Light Rail Transit (LRT)**
  - **When Demand Warrants**
- **Reasons For BRT:**
  - **Rapid Implementation – Meet Existing Needs**
  - **System Flexibility With Existing Buses**
  - **Relatively Low Cost**
  - **Ridership Forecast**
  - **Encourages Land Use on Fixed Route System**





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**2. Jacksonville**



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**2. Jacksonville**

# BRT Cost Estimates

- **Capital (Year of Expenditure)**
- **Annual Operation & Maintenance**
- **Right-of-Way (Year of Expenditure)**
- **Cost Per New Transit Rider**



# Rapid Transit Hurdles



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# Rapid Transit Hurdles

- **Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)**
- **Jacksonville**
- **Federal Transit Administration (FTA)**



# FDOT Hurdles

- Previous Master Plans
- Previous PD&E Studies
- Transit Awareness
  - Highway First Mentality



# Jacksonville Hurdles

- **Community Apathy**
  - **"Where's the Need"**
  - **Skyway Issues**
- **Driving Alone Is A Birthright**
  - **"Face it, in the South, cars are like guns. People will only give them up when you pry their cold, dead fingers from the steering wheel."**



# Jacksonville Hurdles

- **Political Awareness**
- **Community Leader “Champions”**
- **Visionaries & Community Vision**
- **Low Ridership Forecasts**
- **Travel Demand Model**
  - **Highway Based – Not Transit Friendly**
  - **Timing – New Model Adopted After N/SE Study Began**



# FTA Hurdles

- **Modeling Issues**
  - **Florida Models**
  - **Transit Forecasting – Not Sensitive To Transit**
  - **Shift Horizon Year Models**
  - **Baseline Development**
- **Previous Track Record (Skyway)**
- **Matching Funds (ROW Issues)**



# Community Involvement



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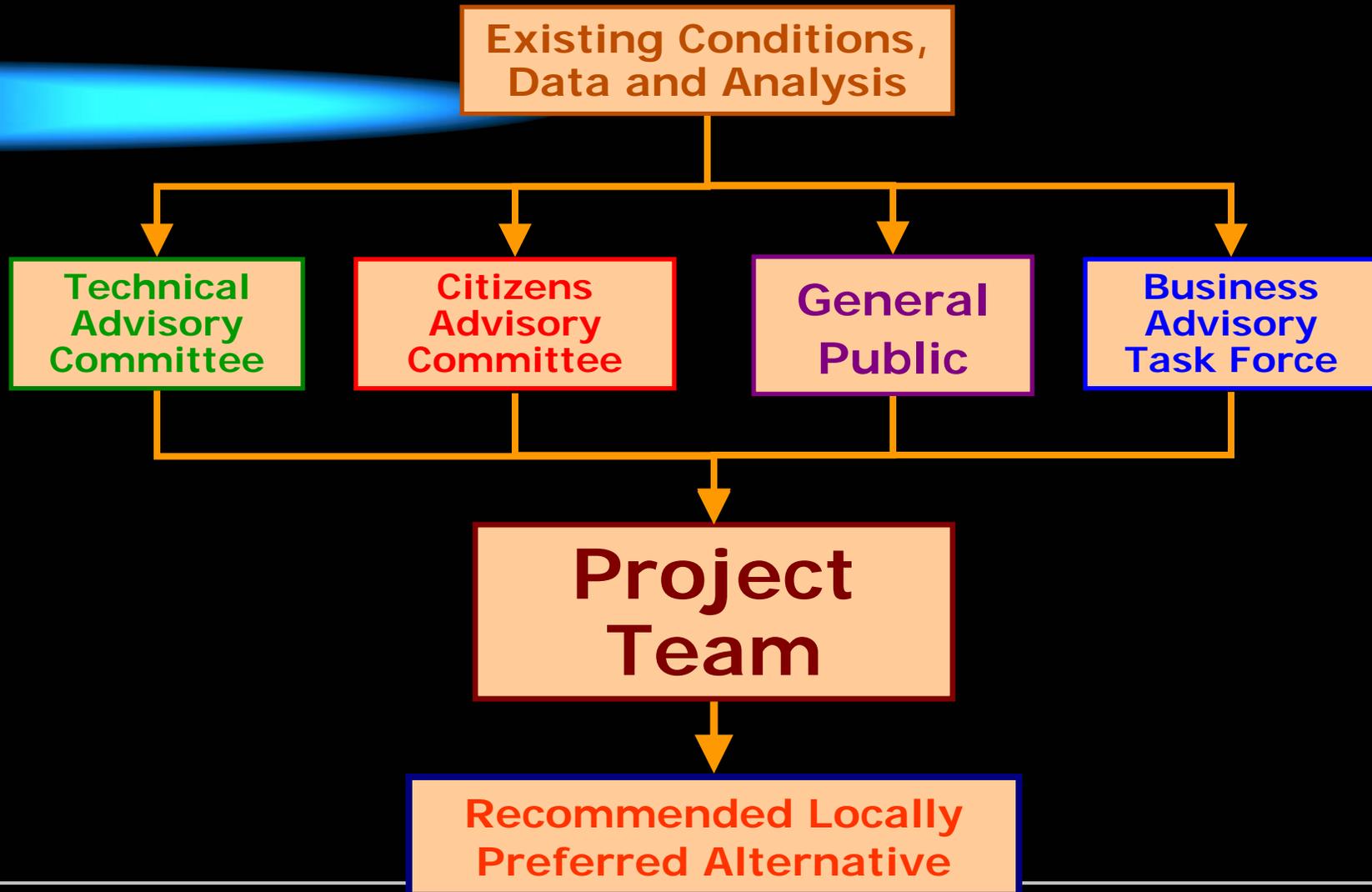
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# Community Involvement

- **Public Meetings**
- **Elected Official Meetings**
- **Government Agencies**
  - **Jacksonville Planning & Development Department**
  - **Florida Department of Transportation**
  - **First Coast Metropolitan Planning Organization**
- **Neighboring Counties**



# Project Structure



# Business Advisory Task Force

## ● Purpose:

- **Actively Engage Land Development Community In Rapid Transit Project**

## ● Objectives:

- **Land Development Community Insight**
- **Guidance Forming Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Policies**
- **Identify & Develop Rapid Transit Champions**
  - **Be Rapid Transit "Cheerleaders"**



# Business Advisory Task Force

## ● Invited Participants

- Business Leaders
- Land Developers and Builders
- Lenders
- Property Appraisers
- Urban and Regional Planners
- Jacksonville Economic Development Commission
- Land Use Attorneys
- Professional Business Organizations



# Business Advisory Task Force

- **Focus Group**
  - **Identified Viability**
  - **"Steering Committee"**
- **Organization Presentations**
  - **Identify Interest**
  - **Build Awareness**
  - **Obtain Input**
  - **Recruit Participants**



# Business Advisory Task Force

## ● Stakeholder Interviews

- Gauge Knowledge and Interest
- Discover Concerns and Agendas
- Develop Relationships

## ● Business Advisory Task Force

- Umbrella Group
- Define Need For Rapid Transit & TOD
- Review Best Practices and Policies
- Develop Policy Recommendations



# Business Advisory Task Force

## ● End Products

- Comprehensive Plan Land Use Category

- Compatible Zoning Code

- Transit Oriented Development Best Practices Guidebook For Jacksonville



# Chicken or the Egg?



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# Land Use/Transportation Interaction In Denver



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## 5. Land Use & Transportation

# Problem Identification

- **How To Marry Transportation and Land Use?**
- **Land Use & Transportation Link: Inextricable, Complex and Dependent on Each Other**
- **Create Synergy Between Land Use & Transportation**



# Land Use Goals

- **Transit Supportive Land Uses**
- **Sustainable, Successful Developments**
- **Increased Mobility**
- **Increased Quality of Life**
- **Reduced Travel Costs**



# Current Land Use Initiatives

- **Met With 3 Developers Interested In TOD**
- **Working With Jacksonville Planning and Development Department On Comprehensive Plan Updates**



# \$ Funding Issues \$



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# Local Funding

- **Better Jacksonville Plan**
  - **The Good, The Bad and The Ugly**
    - **Provides For Transit Right-of-Way**
    - **Rocky Road To Date**
    - **The Next Better Jacksonville Plan?**
- **JTA Funding**
  - **Tied To Better Jacksonville Plan**



# State & Federal Funding

- **FDOT Funding**
  - **District 2 – Very Large, Many Needs**
  - **Current Secretary Favors Transit**
- **FTA Funding – Will They?**
  - **New Starts**
  - **Small Starts**



# Area "Climate"

- ❶ Florida Law Allows Local Governments To Levy a 1 Cent Sales Tax For:
  - ❶ Charter County Transit System Surtax
  - ❶ Local Infrastructure Surtax
- ❷ Consolidated Government
  - ❶ Few Jurisdictions to Coordinate
- ❸ Local Government Comprehensive Planning
- ❹ Comprehensive Transportation Authority (JTA)



# Better Jacksonville Plan

- **Growth Management Task Force:  
*Move Jacksonville Into 21<sup>st</sup> Century***
  - **Purpose – Address Direction of Growth In Jacksonville & How Growth Relates To:**
    - **Land Use**
    - **Transportation**
    - **Economic Viability**
  - **Transportation Committee Recommends A Multimodal Transportation Master Plan**



# Better Jacksonville Plan

- **Mobility 21 Project**
  - **15 Month Planning Study**
  - **“Funding Unconstrained” Multimodal Transportation Master Plan**
  - **“Land Use Unconstrained” – Existing and Future**
  - **Emphasizes Public Involvement**
  - **Citywide Plan Reflecting Priorities and Transportation Linkages**
  - **Many Projects Appear In BJP**



# Better Jacksonville Plan

- **Broad Community Leader Support**
- **\$1 Million Raised For BJP Campaign**
  - **Pass BJP or “We Will Be Just Like Atlanta”**



# Better Jacksonville Plan

- **Vote Held During Primary Elections**
  - **September 5, 2000**
- **Referendum Passed With 57% Approval**
- **City Council Approved Project List**



# Better Jacksonville Plan

## ● Funding

- Voters Approved Additional ½ Cent Sales Tax (From 6.5% to 7.0%)
  - ½ Cent = Approx. \$65 Million Annually
  - Local Infrastructure Surtax
- Added To ½ Cent Sales Tax Approved In 1988 For JTA (Replaced Tolls)
  - Charter County Transit System Surtax
- ½ Cent From Each Surtax Remaining



# Better Jacksonville Plan

- **“Something For Everyone”**
- **\$2.2 Billion Infrastructure Plan**
  - **\$1.5 Billion – Road Projects**
    - **Includes \$100 Million For Rapid Transit Right-of-Way**
  - **Projects To Be Completed In 10 Years**
  - **Bonds Paid Off Within 30 Years**
    - **2018 Is Current Projection**



# Lessons Learned



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# Technical Lessons

- **Begin With A Solid Transportation Demand Model**
  - **Need A Good Predictor Of Transit Demand**
  - **Adopted Model Timing Is Important**
- **Fight For Transit “Windows” In Roadway Projects**



# Planning Lessons

- **Need To Stick To Long Term Vision When Need Is Not Apparent**
- **Stay The Course, Be Persistent**
- **Good Relationship With Planning Department Very Helpful**



# Planning Lessons

- **Early and Often Coordination with Federal Transit Administration**
- **Project in LRTP**
- **Matching Funds Committed**
- **Don't Involve Land Development Community Too Early**



# Overall Lessons

- Identify Champions
  - Government
    - Elected & Appointed Officials
    - Agencies
  - Citizens
  - Business Community
- Take “The Show” To The People

# THANK YOU!!

## Contact Information

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