

APPENDIX 1

Citrus Connection 2021–2025 Strategic Plan

TARGET AREA/ACTION ITEMS	BUDGET	TIMELINE
<p>TA 1 <i>Enhance public perception of Citrus Connection through a targeted marketing and rebranding plan.</i></p>		
<p>Action Items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce a calm/productive rider experience. “Why would I want to do this?” - Predictability of service, another option to get somewhere easily and efficiently. “It’s an enjoyable ride.” • Facilitate a culture shift toward walkability, mass transit, and healthier choices. • Develop a community survey to 17 municipalities, gathering need/interest data. -data is the key • Intentional messaging to expand perception of transit by highlighting new initiatives, respective of geographic locale. -Communicating “We are all in this together, we are here to serve our people.” • Maximize marketing opportunities being certain to: (1) Attract a broader user-base education on how Citrus Connection meets their needs; and (2) Make marketing visibility adequately desirable on the Squeeze and other less conventional expansions. • Produce “Pre-Ride Experiences” videos to educate riders for ease-of-use education by rider category and market by August 31, 2024. • Enhance Brand Guide to include consistent messaging implemented across all audience-groups and platforms. 		
<p>TA 2 <i>Identify new and untapped funding sources.</i></p>		
<p>Action Items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for “fare share” target of 33%; any additional services to be fully funded by local municipality. • Identify outlier fund sources including private, corporate, grants, and partnerships (HUD). • Request that the county commission consider a ballot initiative to create a ½ cent sales tax for funding capital expenditures on November 4, 2026. • Explore potential funding sources from Tourism Development Council (TDC). • Pursue additional grant eligibility from Indigent Healthcare Fund agencies to help meet client needs. 	-	

<p>TA 3 <i>Increase opportunities for county-wide exposure of Citrus Connection through connectivity with key leaders in the 17 municipalities of Polk County.</i></p>		
<p>Action Items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop “front-line” community engagement opportunities to determine needs and scope for current and future services. • Utilize county-wide rider and anchor institution survey data to target specific needs i.e.: HOA, Library, Coffee Shop, Retail, and Church. • Leverage relationships with Polk Vision, Chambers, leadership programs, Ridge Leagues, Polk County Public Schools, and organizations of the like to expand communication across the county. 		
<p>TA 4 <i>Increase ridership by combining prioritized and necessary elements to enhance the customer experience.</i></p>		
<p>Action Items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine routes to better serve the communities in NE area. • Discuss micro-transit opportunities for individual cities, if desired, upon request. • Explore opportunities to offer specialized publicly noticed micro-transit across county. i.e.: events, activities, TigerTown Express (Winter Haven), Sun-n-Fun, etc. 		
<p>TA 5 <i>Cultivate community partnerships with Citrus Connection through management and board engagement.</i></p>		
<p>Action Items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pursue opportunity to partner with Polk County in development of new maintenance site in East Polk County. • Increase partnerships with local learning institutions including colleges, high schools, technical schools, etc. • Create a robustly-funded college/trade school internship program for all semesters. • Explore a model for rotating unfunded internship programs viable for high school students. • Create a menu of options to be determined by experts in transit, including hour time for identified routes in conjunction with local municipalities. • Establish partnerships through new leadership at Florida Polytechnic University and Florida Southern College. 		
<p>TA 6 <i>Increase internal communication through systemic processes.</i></p>		
<p>Action Items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement structured initial and mid-year reporting process to communicate strategic plan progress at board meetings. • Review employee survey instrument for efficacy. 		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase pre-meeting communication on pertinent initiatives between management and board. • Increase multi-level team meetings to improve communication among all staff. 		
<p>TA 7 <i>Examine wages and benefits to maximize rider experience.</i></p>		
<p>Action Items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a comprehensive and comparative compensation and benefits study, including industry and employee engagement. 		

Revised April 30, 2024.