



## **Possible Solution for Poinciana Bus Link to New Sunrail Station**

**Here is a suggestion for a possible solution to the need to connect the 60,000 persons living in Poinciana Villages 1,2,5,3,7 and 8 plus Solivita with the new Poinciana Sunrail Station on something other than the one time per day each way route 306 solution. This possible solution was not discussed at the May 7 PRFSC meeting nor has it been presented to or endorsed by Citrus Connection, Lynx, Polk or Osceola County.**

**There appears to be a great deal of interest in the Poinciana SunRail Station from the residents of Poinciana. When the SunRail speakers spoke at the Poinciana Library in March 2018 the room was filled to overflow and that was mostly people from Solivita alone. People from the other Poinciana Villages complained that the room was filled with Solivita people and there was no room left for them.**

**There is an old saying that if you build a better mousetrap the world will beat a path to your door. The negative corollary to that is that if the dogs will not eat the dog food you will go out of the dog food business pretty quickly. The same holds true for public transportation systems like SunRail. If the system provides good service and is easily accessible people will use it. If the service is not so good, or if people cannot access it then people will not use it.**

**New Bus Route to link With SunRail**

**Poinciana is blessed with pretty good bus service routes and schedules today for people wanting to get around the community. Poinciana also offers good bus service east to Kissimmee using the 26 route or west to Polk County using the 416. From what we have been told, the ridership numbers are pretty good on the Poinciana routes. Sadly, none of those routes serving the Poinciana Villages or Solivita provide good connections to the new SunRail Station. What will be required is a new route that can be easily accessible for all of Poinciana including Solivita. The potential for such a route exists.**

**Today most of the existing Poinciana bus routes from both the Polk and Osceola side provide good connectivity to the Poinciana Medical Center. The Poinciana Medical center provides a large parking lot and has surrounding land than could provide expansion. Poinciana Medical center also provides a destination location not only for Poinciana residents but also for commuter workers coming from outside Poinciana, especially from the Kissimmee area. There is a need for many healthcare workers at the Poinciana Medical center, the Medical Arts building located next to the hospital and the senior citizens residential facility located to the northeast of the hospital on Marigold. It is adjacent to a bank and small shopping plaza offering a Walgreens, shops and food restaurants. It is also conveniently located across the street from Solivita. Solivita is a large 55+ community where many residents own and use golf cars which are not allowed to use public roads nor are they allowed to cross Cypress Parkway. Solivita residents have long sought a safe way to leave their Golf Cars in Solivita and have access to the medical and commercial facilities located across Cypress Parkway.**

**A possible solution would be to provide a regular schedule bus service that could start/stop at the Solivita Freedom Park parking lot. The Solivita parking lot is accessible to both cars and golf cars from inside Solivita and provides parking for both. By picking up passengers starting at the Solivita Parking lot and then crossing Cypress Parkway**

**to the Poinciana Medical center, the bus could pick up passengers from all of Solivita and either safely discharge them across Cypress Parkway or allow them to meet up with passengers coming by either car or bus from all of Poinciana Villages and transport them to the Poinciana SunRail station. From the Poinciana Medical Center parking lot it is a 15.5 mile route up Poinciana Parkway using 17/92 and Old Tampa Highway to arrive at the new Poinciana Sunrail station. Even at rush hour the trip would take 30 minutes or less each way because there are not but two major intersections and light to moderate traffic even at rush hour. It would be convenient to everybody and provide reliable and timely service between the center of Poinciana and the new station. Although a scheduled fixed route, it could be started using smaller 15 passenger buses and expanded to larger capacity buses as the need arises. Two buses at peak rush hour travel times could provide service in each direction meeting the commuter trains coming to and from Poinciana at half hour intervals both morning and night. A single bus would be all that would be required for meeting demands during non peak hour periods.**

#### **How can we make this happen?**

**Funding to pay for this route would need to be provided by both Polk and Osceola Counties. The Polk County side of Poinciana today consists of almost 6,000 Solivita residents plus an additional 25,000 residents in the Polk Poinciana villages. These people want to use public transportation just like the Osceola people so it is only right that Polk County become a partner in this endeavor as well as Osceola? In fact Polk County has even more to gain. Not only is significant home building taking place in Poinciana Villages 7 and 8 plus Solivita but if you look at Kinney Harmin Rd on the north end of Poinciana parkway in Polk County there already exist housing developments at Sereno and Providence but in addition new large developments being planned. What better way to encourage new home buyers to move to Polk County than to be able to offer**

**convenient and efficient bus service connecting to commuter rail servicing Osceola and Orange Counties? There are many well-paying jobs available in the areas of Osceola and Orange Counties served by Sunrail. Providing an efficient bus access to SunRail would open up that Polk housing market to more affluent families than could be attracted without access to good commuter transportation.**

**Poinciana is unique in many ways. It is a large bedroom community split between Polk and Osceola counties. Although it has a large suburban population it is unincorporated served only by a homeowner's association local government. The upside potential for Poinciana is tremendous. For examples, just look at the Poinciana Medical Center, the Poinciana Parkway and the new Poinciana Valencia College Campus? People said that there was no need for a hospital in Poinciana. They finally obtained approval to build it and within a year they had to double the size because the demand was so great. For the Poinciana Parkway it took many years and a lot of hard work putting together a joint effort by the developer, Osceola Expressway authority, the two counties and the state. The results speak for themselves far exceeding the original traffic and revenue projections. The new Poinciana Valencia Campus just opened last year and it has already achieved popularity and success. With proper feeder accessibility using bus connections this can be repeated in the case of the Poinciana Sunrail Station? The SunRail stakeholders, including the state and Osceola County have plenty to gain and little to lose. From an investment standpoint Polk County has even more to gain in terms of new housing development and residents for a small price. Can everybody work together to make this happen?**

**As was done in the case of the Poinciana Parkway a valid first step could be the formation of a Poinciana Sunrail Workgroup. If we can do this then I think we will be successful?**