



SunRail Open House for New Poinciana Station Generates Excitement but Raises Questions?

On Saturday May 19, 2018 SunRail held an open house for their new Poinciana Station which will be opening in July. The event generated a lot of excitement with people reportedly arriving early to tour the train and new facility. The southern expansion of SunRail is part of a major expansion for passenger train service in Central Florida that include new facilities as part of Orlando Airport Expansion that could lead to direct passenger rail; connection between Poinciana, Kissimmee and points south towards Miami.

Orlando Sentinel featured an article describing these expansion plans which may be read at <http://prfsc.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Orlando-Sentinel-Sunrail-article.pdf> .

Orlando TV9 covered the event. You can view the news report at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pbLtkOW8Zes&feature=youtu.be> .

As quoted in the TV9 news report, questions remain about the lack of Lynx bus connections to get Poinciana residents to and from the new Poinciana station. The FDOT spokesman is quoted in the report saying that initial traffic estimates provided by Lynx were not high enough to justify addition of more service to connect residents living in the Poinciana Villages and Solivita directly to the Poinciana station but Lynx service will be provided to connect them to the downtown Kissimmee station instead.

For residents in Poinciana they have heard this before. For years they were told that Poinciana could not support a hospital. After many years of fighting on the part of the residents a hospital was finally built and within a year the demand for services justified a doubling of capacity. Poinciana residents were told traffic studies would not justify the building of the Poinciana Parkway. The parkway was finally built and the traffic volumes far exceed the original estimates. Poinciana was told that its kids were not smart enough to go to college. Valencia College opened in Poinciana and it is doing very well. Poinciana's New Dimensions High School is recognized as one of the top high schools in the nation. Poinciana is not identified as a city but an unincorporated community. It is split between Polk and Osceola Counties. Polk County is

not a stakeholder in Lynx nor SunRail. Poinciana has some of the worst traffic problems in the State of Florida if not the nation. Between the two counties and surrounding neighborhoods Poinciana boasts a population approaching the size of Kissimmee. And studies say that potential Poinciana bus ridership cannot justify new connections to the Poinciana SunRail Station? Something is wrong with their study.

A solution to this problem exists. It is described at <http://prfsc.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Possible-Solution-for-Poinciana-Bus-Link-to-New-Sunrail-Station.pdf>.

Why can't the residents of Poinciana ask the two counties along with Lynx and SunRail to get together to fund a solution to this problem? Poinciana's State Representative John Cortes will be holding a town hall meeting Thursday May 24, 2018 6:30 PM at New Dimensions High School 4900 Old Pleasant Hill Road Poinciana Fl. 34759. Polk County will be holding a Community Meeting at the APV Community Center on Marigold Avenue 10AM Wednesday June 13, 2018. Come out to both meetings and tell Poinciana's elected officials that we want access to the new Poinciana SunRail Station so that we can take public transportation and leave our cars at home and not have to fight Poinciana Traffic. Just like everything else this is not going to happen unless the people make it happen.