

# Central Florida Partnership "Regional Leadership Mission to Charlotte, NC"

**Date of Event:** January 14, 2009

**Audience Description:** Members of Leadership Orlando Class 76, Board of Directors of the Central Florida Partnership, Central Florida Commuter Rail Commission, Central Florida Transportation Corridors "Task Force," Core Strategy Team (CST) for Commuter Rail, *myregion.org* and Congress of Regional Leaders.

## **A. Summary of Event:**

- 137 business and community leaders traveled by charter aircraft to Charlotte, North Carolina, to "Ride Their New Train" in support of SunRail - Central Florida Commuter Rail. The send off breakfast, served as the debut of the brand identity, SunRail, with recognition given to three Central Floridians who submitted the proposed name during an extensive community outreach program.
- Once in Charlotte, guests rode the 9.1-mile "Blue Line," the first leg in Charlotte's light rail system - just one year old and already exceeding ridership and economic development projections.
- A special luncheon program was held featuring briefings by Charlotte leaders and transportation experts who shared the success story of their project.

## **B. Key Speakers:**

- In Orlando - Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer, Chair of the Central Florida Commuter Rail Commission and Noranne Downs, District 5 Secretary, Florida Department of Transportation
- In Charlotte - The Honorable Patrick L. McCrory, Mayor of Charlotte; Debra Campbell, Charlotte's Director of Planning; Danny Pleasant, Director of Charlotte Department of Transportation; Keith T. Parker, CEO of Charlotte Area Transit System; and Bob Morgan, President of the Charlotte Chamber of Commerce

## **C. Key Issues Identified in Charlotte:**

- Communicate the benefit in Economic terms: (nearly \$2 billion)
- Communicate the entire Rail vision, not just the "spine"
- Integrate Land Use and Transit decision
- Communicate the long-term impact

## **D. Next Steps:**

- Coalesce Regional Leaders in support of SunRail
- Get Florida Governor Charlie Crist on board
- Secure at least 21 votes in the Florida Senate for approval in 2009 Legislative Session