



# TRANSIT NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES



## TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

MAY 2007

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# **TRANSIT NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES**

## **PLANNING APPROACH**

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### **INTRODUCTION**

The Hillsborough MPO Transit Study aims to explore the benefits, tradeoffs and feasibility of creating a more robust transit concept to serve the mobility needs of residents in Hillsborough County. Based on previous studies, preliminary analyses and public comment, a Transit Needs and Opportunities map has been developed. The map identifies the major corridors and subareas to be considered for premium transit, and includes a range of technologies such as commuter rail, light rail and bus rapid transit. From this framework, a set of Alternative Transit Concepts were developed and evaluated to facilitate the creation of a preferred transit scenario that best addresses the land use, economic, mobility and environmental goals of the community.

### **TRANSIT NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES**

In order to understand the transit needs of Hillsborough County residents, two public workshops and several facilitated small group work sessions were conducted in February and March. The findings of the workshops are documented in the Transit Scenarios Workshops summaries. All of the public input generated during the series of workshops were consolidated into a single Consolidated Public Input map and formed the foundation of the Transit Needs and Opportunities map.

The Consolidated Public Input map highlighted the major corridors within the urbanized core and extended connections to activity centers of regional significance. Through the evaluation process, the study team identified areas that serve as effective gateways (Brandon, Westshore, USF, and SouthShore) to the core. The Transit Needs and Opportunities map was derived from the evaluation and prioritization of the corridors, activity centers and gateways based on identified need, development or redevelopment capacity, ability to connect to activity centers, past studies, and an overall organization for countywide transportation access and service.

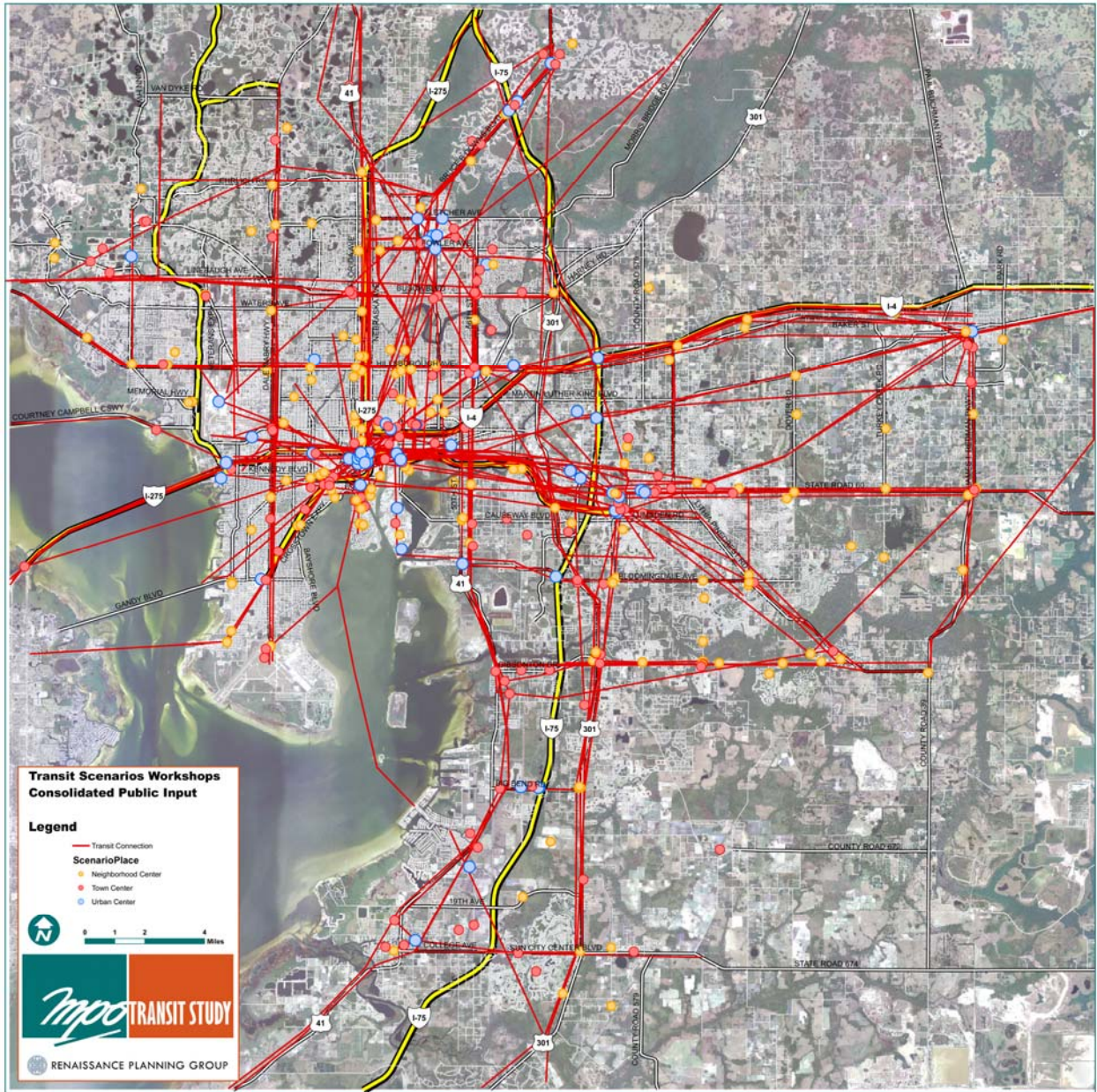
The major corridors identified through this process were as follows: New Tampa to Downtown, Downtown to Westshore (and connecting to St. Petersburg), Lutz to Downtown (I-275 corridor), South Tampa to Plant City (Crosstown Expressway and US 60 corridor), Downtown to Plant City (I-4 corridor),

Carrollwood to MacDill AFB (Dale Mabry corridor), Central Tampa to Westchase (Busch Blvd corridor), SouthShore/Sun City to Brandon (US 301 corridor) and SouthShore/Apollo Beach to Downtown (US 41 corridor). These major corridors were evaluated and assigned specific transit technologies in a studio process with county staff and consultants. The major corridors identified in the public workshops were represented by the Needs and Opportunities map with specific transit technologies (Light Rail, Commuter Rail and Premium Bus) based on existing and future land use patterns and transit service characteristics.

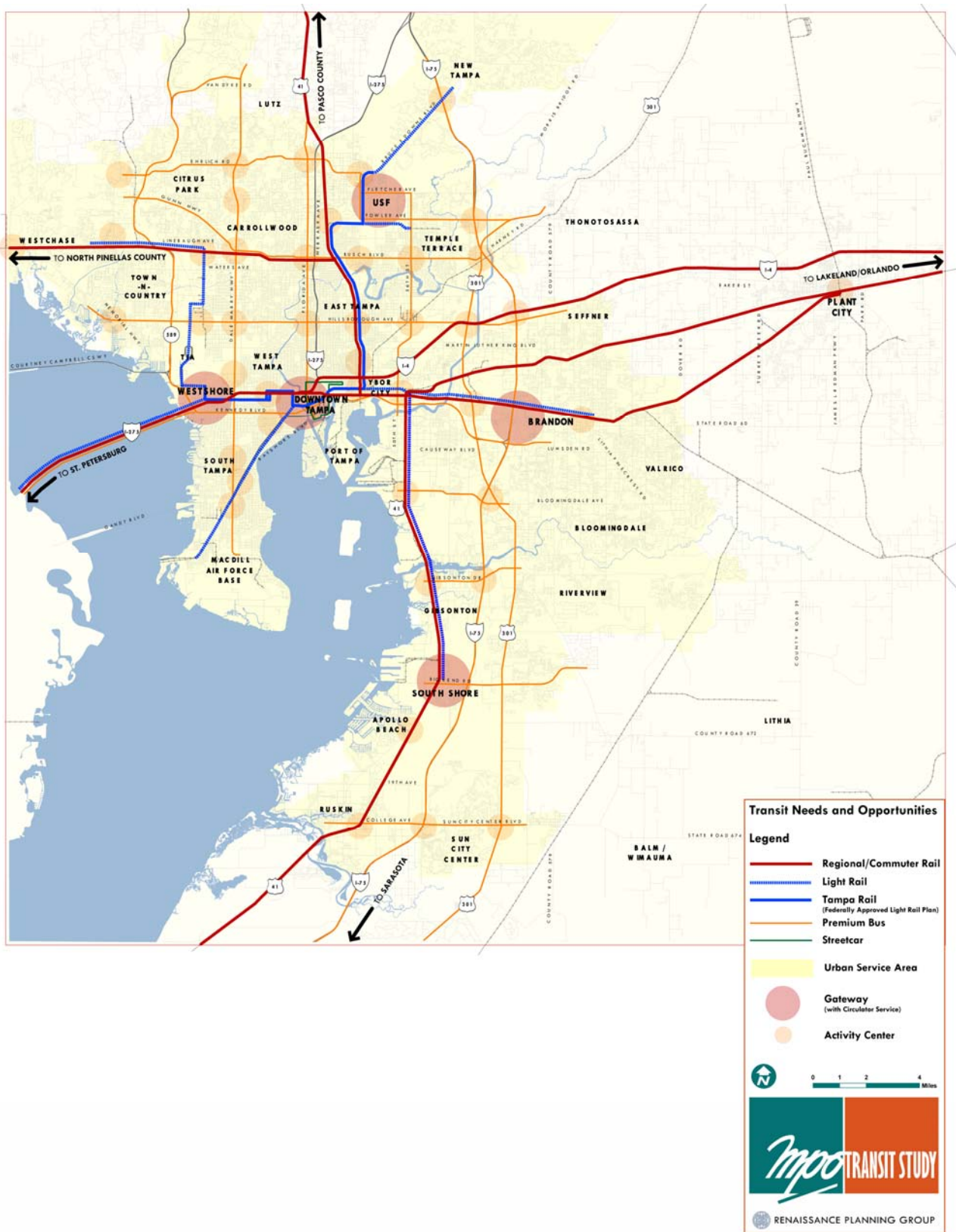
The Needs and Opportunities map highlights the need for a more robust and agile light rail based system in the urbanized core of the county that is supported by a commuter rail based regional network to provide peak travel and long distance service. The light rail and commuter rail networks are both supported by a premium bus system that consists of high priority fixed route bus service, express/commuter bus service, feeder bus service, and bus rapid transit. The objective is to create convenient connections between activity centers of local and regional significance, especially to Downtown Tampa. Other regional activity centers such as Westshore, Brandon, USF and Southshore are treated as gateways that allow for transition between the regional commuter rail network and the local light rail network. With higher degree of connectivity and transit supportive development patterns, these subcenters could achieve greater regional significance.

The Transit Needs and Opportunities map illustrates the ability of transit to serve existing needs and to support future growth and development in Hillsborough County. Transit can provide the needed mobility improvements in the urbanized areas of the county or the needed connection between suburban regional centers and subcenters with major activity centers and downtown. The benefits and trade-offs of any one of these approaches or the composite of all three approaches is the focus of the next phase of this transit study. The Consolidated Public Input and Transit Needs and Opportunities map are included on the following pages:

**Figure 1: Transit Scenarios Workshops Consolidated Public Input**

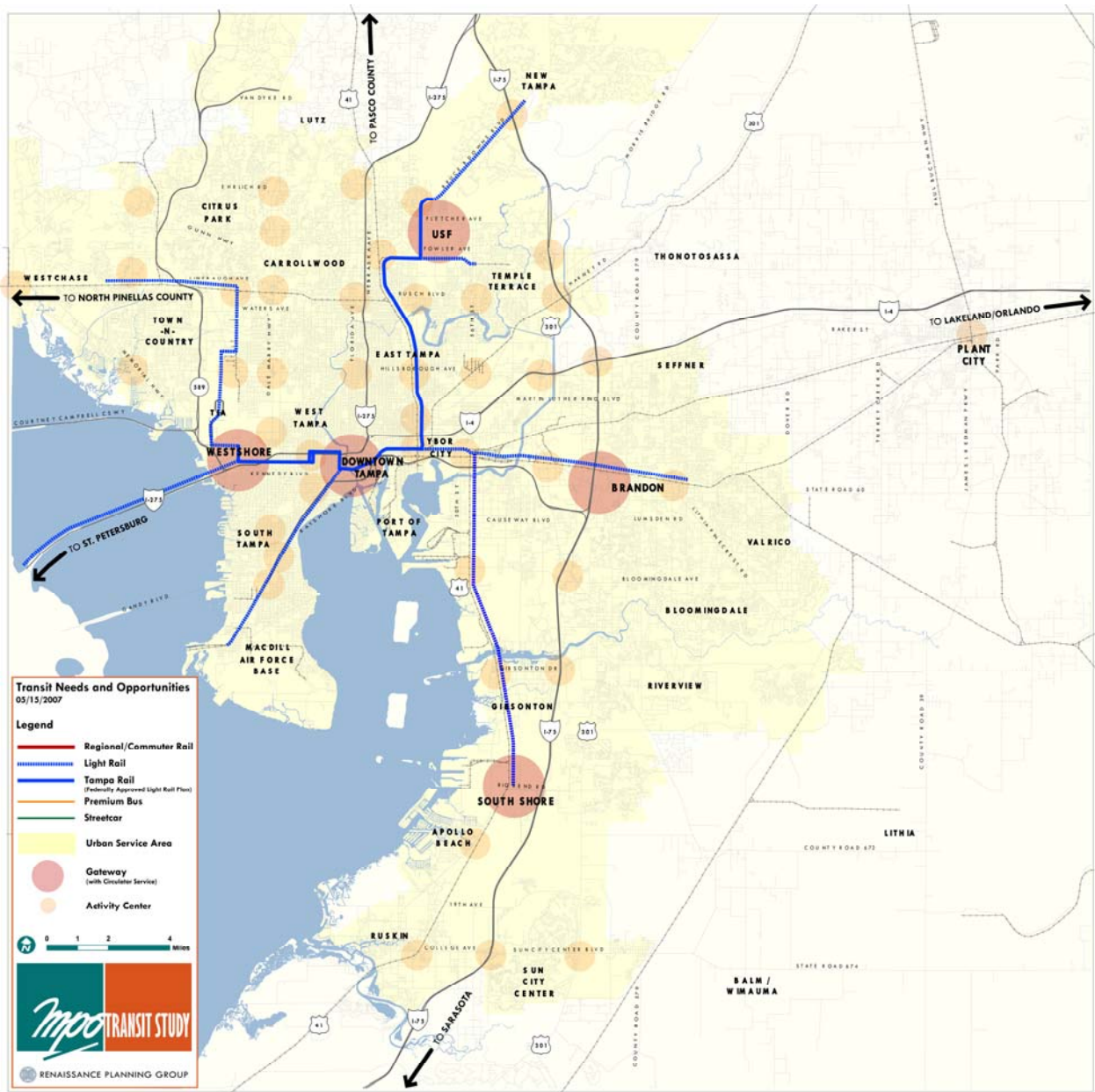


**Figure 2: Transit Needs and Opportunities**

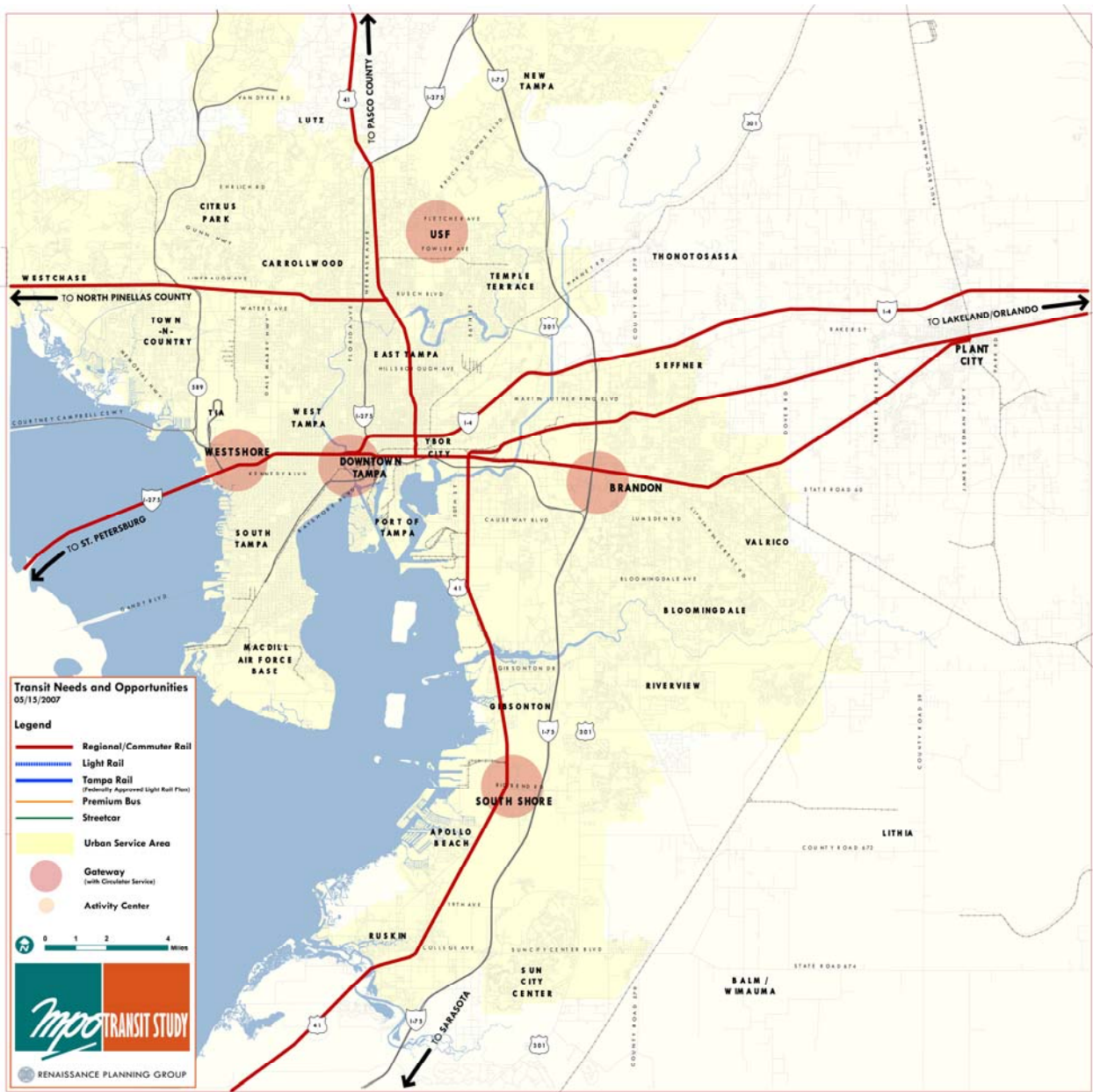




**Figure 3: Transit Needs and Opportunities – Light Rail**



**Figure 4: Transit Needs and Opportunities – Commuter Rail**



**Figure 5: Transit Needs and Opportunities – Premium Bus**

