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## **ETC of Central Florida**

The International Drive corridor is very densely developed with resorts and attractions. One of its biggest problems was transportation up and down the corridor. The businesses were having a hard time accommodating guests and the local transit service simply could not meet their needs.

A group of businesses along International Drive, under the name ETC (Efficient Transportation Coalition) of Central Florida, brought me in to consult on public relations, governmental affairs and public policy. I represented the corridor on transit issues dealing with proposed high-speed rail systems and Maglev transportation systems.

Working with the businesses, I came up with a proposal to work with the local governments to pass what is called a Municipal Service Benefit Assessment (MSBA) that would be used to assess a very low property tax while attracting substantial state, local and federal matching money. It was the first taxing district created for transit in the State of Florida. In addition to working with governments, I also sought out local property owners, who had to be convinced that a self-imposed assessment tax was in their best interest as well. The idea was unprecedented. Through my efforts, we matched that revenue with some federal money from the Urban Mass Transit Authority and secured a local match from the both the city and county governments.

Ultimately, we succeeded on all levels. The trolleys are still going up and down International Drive today, alleviating some of the congestion.

In the following years, I was hired to represent six local governments to work to secure transit funding. I identified a lobbyist in Washington who had some experience in securing funding and worked with Congresswoman Corrine Brown and Congressman John Mica to secure \$600 million in appropriations for a light rail system that, unfortunately, was voted down by two county commissioners. Otherwise, it would also be in place today, providing transportation services from Universal Studios to Downtown Orlando.

**– Dick Batchelor**

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Dick J. Batchelor, Michael J. Murphy, and Dustin A. Watkins prepared this case. DBMG cases are developed solely as the basis for marketing. Cases are not intended to serve as endorsements, sources of primary data, or illustrations of effective or ineffective management.

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