

## Terrycomm of Melbourne working on Florida Department of Transportation's big SunRail project in Central Florida as a supplier of radio communications

By Ken Datzman

The Florida Department of Transportation's long-awaited SunRail commuter-line construction project in Central Florida is creating jobs and spurring both public and private investments in that region.

And a local company has sliced a piece of the action.

SunRail is a 61.5-mile commuter-rail transit project currently under construction in greater Orlando. It will be built in five segments with 12 stations linking DeBary to Sand Lake Road, south of Orlando.

The first phase of construction includes double-tracking, signal improvements, stations, and an operations control center. Phase two will serve five additional stations, north to DeLand and south to Poinciana.

SunRail commuter service to the public is expected to begin in 2014, when phase one opens. The project was designed to ease traffic gridlock in Central Florida and will run along a stretch of existing rail freight tracks in Orange, Seminole, Volusia, and Osceola counties.

"When I go through Orlando and Sanford and other areas of Central Florida, I see a lot of SunRail construction," said businessman Don Smith, president of Terrycomm Inc. of Melbourne. "Construction seems to be moving along at a good pace. There is a lot of advertising on billboards in Central Florida promoting the SunRail project. It's a huge undertaking."

Terrycomm of Melbourne, a nearly 20-year-old family business, is a benefactor of the SunRail project, which broke ground last year in Altamonte Springs.

Terrycomm is currently handling all of the radio communication products. The company is supplying construction crews with radios to meet strict safety procedures that are in place as miles of new rail is being delivered and installed at various locations.

"Safety is paramount on this project. There are a lot of internal safety checks," said Smith, whose company's clients include Florida East Coast Railway.

On May 1, The Florida Department of Transportation began promoting "Train Safety Awareness Week." The public-service campaign is designed to educate consumers about safe driver and pedestrian behaviors around railroad tracks.

Also the event kicked off SunRail's new safety campaign that is reaching out to Central Floridians with the "railroad safety message."

Florida ranks among the nation's top states for railroad fatalities and the SunRail campaign is working to remind the community that "Trains can't stop quickly but you can. Be Smart. Be safe."

Smith says he's in the Sanford area almost every day with his company's involvement in SunRail.

"That's where construction is really going strong. There is heavy equipment everywhere."

Construction workers tend to be rough on their equipment at a job site. So Terrycomm designed a heavy-duty field radio system kit that SunRail workers carry with them. The waterproof kit looks like an ammo storage box.

"It has an antenna connection. There's a battery with a battery charger inside the box. They are using a hand-held high-powered radio which allows them to reach a greater distance, around a five-mile range," said Smith, adding, "The rail industry nationwide has its own set of frequencies."

The construction workers' vehicles have to be equipped with radio communication, too. "We are modifying some of their vehicles so they will have a speaker on the outside of the vehicle. If they are parked and are outside the vehicle, they will be able to hear the radio communication."

RailWorks Corp., North America's leader in track and transit systems construction, and joint partner Archer Western are constructing SunRail. RailWorks has also assumed maintenance duties for SunRail.

RailWorks is in a hiring mode for the Orlando project. It has a number of openings posted on its website, for project engineers, signal maintainers and other skilled employees.

"The project has given our company a boost," said Smith, "and is helping balance some other areas of our business."

Terrycomm is a leading supplier and integrator of land-mobile radio systems, as well as narrowband wireless broadband equipment and services. The firm installs communication systems around the world.

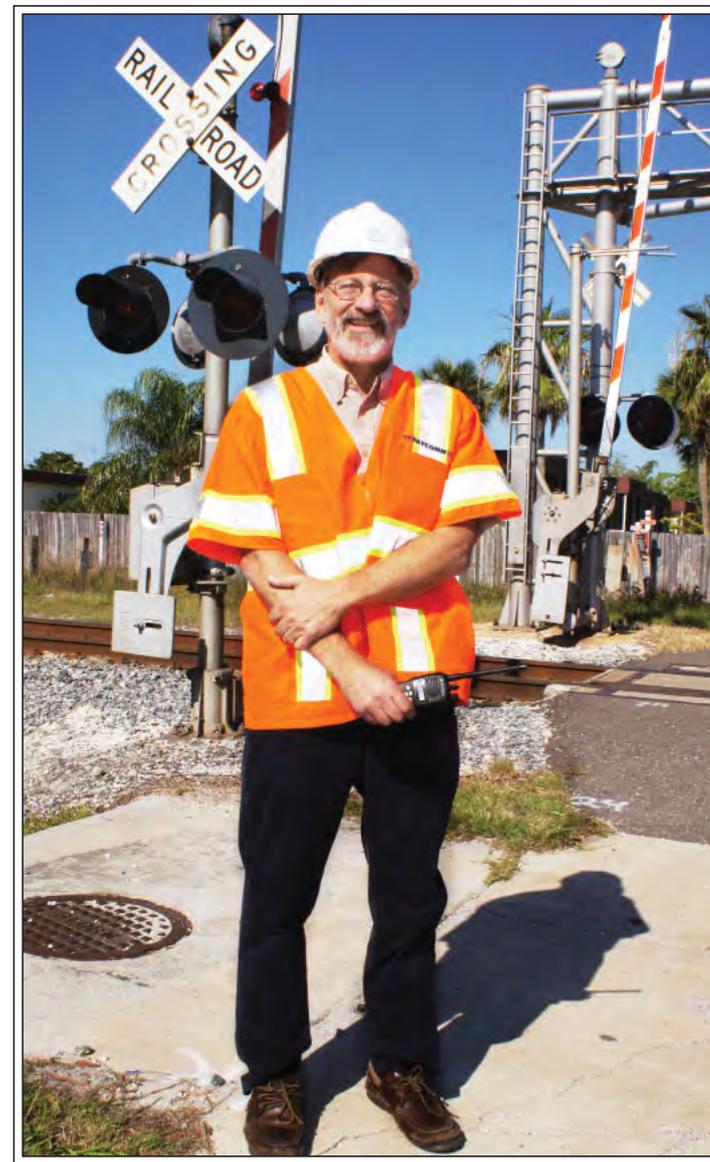
"We're not the standard communications company. Businesses typically come to us when they can't find the right solution in the marketplace," said Smith, whose firm has contracts with multiple public school systems in Central Florida supplying them with two-way radios.

Construction of the rail line, which parallels the highly congested Interstate 4 corridor in Orange, Seminole and Volusia counties, has put about 800 people to work, according to the Florida Department of Transportation.

Also, it has spurred a \$250 million investment in a 176-acre health village at Florida Hospital that will enable thousands of medical researchers, hospital employees, patients and their families to take transit to work or when seeking medical care.

The Florida Hospital rail station is one of the 12 stations planned for the first phase of SunRail. "I was just on that site," said Smith. "That station is going to play an important role in moving people about."

Across the entire rail line, more than two dozen — retail, office, government, and residential — development projects within a 10-minute walk of the new transit stations are planned or underway — repre-



BBN photo — Adrienne B. Roth

Don Smith is president of Terrycomm of Melbourne, a nearly 20-year-old family business. His company is getting a boost from the new SunRail commuter-rail system project under construction in Central Florida. Terrycomm is supplying the construction crews with radios and has designed a heavy-duty, waterproof field radio-system kit for SunRail workers.

senting roughly \$1.6 billion in public and private investments altogether.

"People are now seeing the progress of the SunRail project, which is great. Part of the concept is that it will eventually run up and down the East Coast. That was the original plan," said Smith.

The total cost of the system is estimated at \$615 million for construction plus roughly \$432 million to purchase the right of way and tracks from CSX. It is being funded by the federal government, the state, and the four Central Florida counties.