Meeting of the Citizens Advisory Committee
Wednesday, March 14, 2018, 9:00 AM

I. Call to Order & Introductions

II. Public Comment - 3 minutes per speaker, please 9:05

III. Members' Interests

IV. Approval of Minutes – February 14, 2018 9:10

V. Action Items

A. Public Participation 2016-17 Measures of Effectiveness Report (Brandon Berry, MPO Staff) 9:15

B. Comments on Regional Transit Feasibility Plan (Rich Clarendon, MPO Asst. Exec. Director) 9:35

VI. Status Reports

A. Hurricane Evacuation (Brady Smith, Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council) 9:55

B. Housing + Transportation Affordability Index (Brandon Berry, MPO Staff) 10:15

C. Invision Tampa Streetcar Study (Milton Martinez, City of Tampa) 10:35

VII. Old Business & New Business

A. TBARTA CAC Report (Bill Roberts) 11:00

VIII. Adjournment

IX. Addendum

A. MPO Meeting Summary & Committee Report

The full agenda packet is available on the MPO’s website, www.planhillsborough.org, or by calling (813) 272-5940.

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I. CALL TO ORDER & INTRODUCTIONS

The meeting was called to order by Vice-Chair Bill Roberts at 9:02 AM and was held in the Plan Hillsborough Room on the 18th floor of the County Center Building.

Members present: Ray Alzamora, Vance Arnett, David Butcher, Robert Davila, Amy Espinosa, Ricardo Fernandez (Officer at Large), Barbara Kennedy Gibson, Dennis LeVine, Edward Mierzejewski, Kimberly Overman, Nicole Rice, Rick Richmond, Bill Roberts (Vice-Chair), Cheryl Thole, Wayne Traina, Terrance Trott,


II. PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Cheryl Thole, the newest member of the CAC, introduced herself and discussed her background in urban and regional planning. Ms. Thole was appointed to the CAC by Councilman Viera.

After Ms. Thole’s introduction, Vice-Chair Roberts announced that the CAC had a quorum.

There were no public comments.

III. MEMBERS’ INTERESTS

There were no members’ interests shared.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: Approval of the CAC minutes of January 17, 2018 (Arnett-Fernandez). The motion passed unanimously.

V. ACTION ITEMS

A. Title VI Non-Discrimination Plan (Johnny Wong, MPO Staff)

Dr. Johnny Wong of the MPO presented on the Title VI Non-Discrimination Plan. Dr. Wong discussed that a Title VI plan is required of the MPO under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and Executive Order 12898. The Title VI plan identifies protected populations, expresses how the MPO will engage them, and comes up with a process for measuring disproportionate impacts to
those populations. Dr. Wong showed maps depicting the top quintile of Environmental Justice areas in the county, and provided a definition for Communities of Concern.

To engage with Communities of Concern, the MPO will maintain a database of community groups representing these neighborhoods, host events in their communities, proactively provide translation of key documents and recruit other language assistance resources when requested, facilitate mobility services, and host meetings only at ADA-accessible locations. Dr. Wong showed a snippet of the community groups in the MPO’s database, and explained that the MPO is working with all groups in the database on outreach for the 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan.

To determine plan equity, the MPO has developed a Geographic Information Systems overlay which maps the location of protected populations and proposed projects as a way to visualize communities that may be impacted. The MPO is also utilizing the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Model, which models the impacts of all transportation projects in the LRTP and can compare effects between the county as a whole and Environmental Justice areas.

To kickstart the Title VI Non-Discrimination Plan process, the MPO reviewed recent MPO plans to identify which outreach efforts worked well and which could be improved. Dr. Wong reviewed statistics on prior engagement efforts, discussing the Spanish TIP hotline set up for the 2016 and 2017 June MPO Board Public Hearings, the percentage of events held in Environmental Justice Areas, and engagement with Environmental Justice populations during the 2040 LRTP. Recommendations proposed in the Title VI Non-Discrimination Plan update include exploring new analytical tools to demonstrate how investments affect access to jobs and healthcare, identifying equity baseline conditions and performance targets for the State of the System report, considering equity as a criterion in the TIP prioritization methodology, and developing tools for better understanding of population demographics.

Discussion ensued about the community organization list, how to add a group to the list, whether churches are included in the list, the influence of the Title VI Non-Discrimination Report on the Transportation Improvement Program, impacts of toll lanes on inequities, engaging populations alongside the Florida Department of Transportation, the completeness of the community organization engagement list, whether there is a separate list for the regional stakeholder groups, difficulties of engaging disadvantaged populations, online engagement options, the consulting firm the MPO worked with to develop the Plan, interplay with the FDOT Supplemental Environmental Study, and advocates in disadvantaged communities.

Motion: Approve the 2017 Title VI Non-Discrimination Plan update (Arnett-Alzamora). The motion passed unanimously.

B. TIP Amendment: HART BRT Proposal (FPN#440742-1) (Sarah McKinley, MPO Staff)

Ms. Sarah McKinley of the MPO discussed a TIP amendment for HART’s bus rapid transit proposal along Fowler and Florida Avenues. This study is currently in FDOT’s Work Program for $2.5 million as the East-West MetroRapid Planning, Design & Engineering phase. The study will research opportunities for a more robust BRT-like service along these corridors as part of the Federal Transit Administration’s Small Starts Grants. The study is 100% funded by FDOT, with no match necessary.
Ms. McKinley continued by discussing the study boundaries, which are between downtown and Fowler Avenue along Florida Avenue and between I-275 and USF on Fowler Avenue. The study will explore facilities and enhancement opportunities such as an exclusive guideway, queue jump lanes, and traffic signal priority. The scope of services includes design and engineering, engineering to the 70-90% level, and leveraging existing infrastructure investments toward a local match of approximately $32 million. Ms. McKinley finished the presentation by reviewing the proposed timetable and discussed the deliverables of study corridor recommendations, design and engineering, and an FTA grant application.

Discussion ensued about whether this impacts the East/West design, why the MPO wants to bump this study up, coordination between this plan and the regional transit plan, how this project coordinates with the Heights Mobility Plan, whether this funding is for making modifications, the accuracy and applicability of images shown in the presentation, whether rapid concepts mean fewer stops, and the ridership along these corridors.

**Motion:** Recommend approval of the description change for the Fowler-Nebraska-Florida Corridor Analysis (Alzamora-Davila). The motion passed unanimously.

**V. STATUS REPORTS**

**A. Tampa Bay Next Quarterly Update (Ed McKinney, FDOT)**

Mr. Ed McKinney of FDOT gave an overview of recent Tampa Bay Next developments. He discussed the various moving parts taking place across the region and efforts to determine how these parts move together. He discussed how FDOT has taken part in substantial public engagement, including conversations and listening sessions that have produced feedback. The greatest number of comments have come from Downtown Tampa. FDOT has recognized that the public wants options, including transit and preservation, and every choice comes with challenges. Mr. McKinney stated that FDOT is focused on mobility on all roads, not just interstates, which makes interstate modernization, transit, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, complete streets, transportation innovation, and freight mobility all priorities for the agency. He stated that the agency recognizes the need to address Tampa Bay Next from an inclusive perspective.

Mr. McKinney discussed many of the recent efforts FDOT has undertaken. These efforts include the SEIS interstate study from Westshore to Downtown, moving forward with the I-275 environmental study, the potential for moving express lanes to I-75, and connections with the Regional Transit Feasibility Plan, Tampa Streetcar Extension, Heights Mobility Plan, University Area Multimodal Feasibility study, and the BRT corridor study Ms. McKinley presented earlier. He mentioned that these efforts require building partnerships and having conversations. Mr. McKinney continued with an overview of how FDOT invests in transit, including funding for studies and research, formula-based grants, and competitive grants. He continued with details about the interstate portions of FDOT projects and major multimodal areas. He further discussed recent community conversations about FDOT-owned properties, which included how these properties could be better used. The VM Ybor community asked FDOT to sell 4 properties in its neighborhood boundaries which are in poor shape, which FDOT is currently pursuing. Mr. McKinney concluded by discussing upcoming workshops. There will be a community working group meeting at Armature Works in March 2018 and a Heights Mobility Study workshop in late March or early April 2018.
Discussion ensued about transit hubs in south Hillsborough County and growing traffic in the area, options for express managed lanes, positive changes in attitude at FDOT, making sure plans do not collide, order of plan priorities in decision-making, the I-275 boulevard concept, FDOT’s part in bike lanes along SR 60, widening of major arterials in south and east Hillsborough County, where the bulk of public funding is going with regard to engineering firms, improving mobility through modernizing the interstate, planned designs in south Hillsborough County, environmental analyses, and FDOT priorities.

B. Regional Transit Feasibility Plan (Scott Pringle, Jacobs Engineering)

Mr. Scott Pringle of Jacobs Engineering discussed HART’s Regional Transit Feasibility Plan. The plan used a data-driven approach to identify a draft project in year one of the two-year process, and now the agency wants to listen to the public and understand concerns by reaching out to different venues. He began by responding to concerns generated by early news reports, including that the buses would be stuck in traffic, stations would be inaccessible to the community, and why the agency is moving ahead with a rubber wheel concept specifically. Mr. Pringle stated that 20 of the project’s 30 miles will be a dedicated bus lane, with the remaining miles along the Howard Frankland bridge. Nineteen of the 21 stations will be embedded within the community, which allows economic development around them. The remaining two elevated stations will be in Westshore and at Howard and Armenia Avenues. He stated the justification for the rubber tire concept is that will allow for moving forward now in pursuit of a future vision, and that this project does not replace anything in that vision.

Mr. Pringle continued by discussing that this a catalyst project, not a revision or a replacement for the LRTP and Transit Development Plan. He reviewed the 21 plans that made up the RTFP, and reviewed modes for prioritized corridors. The focused corridors for this project were along a CSX line and along I-275 between Bearss Avenue and St. Petersburg. The FTA cost effectiveness model supports trips that are $10 or lower, and urban rail costs on I-275 were determined to be very expensive. The project team employed value engineering to determine how much capital investment ridership supports.

The I-275 rubber tire project concept looks at opportunities for slight widening, and uses what exists to lower costs. Major costs in this proposal will be in right of way acquisition for stations, as running the bus along the shoulder significantly lowers costs. The proposal estimates 80-95 minute travel between Wesley Chapel and St. Petersburg, along with making space along Florida and Floribraska Avenues transit-only access points to the interstate. This proposal will provide HART an opportunity to receive federal dollars for transit, resulting in a cost split of 50% federal dollars, 25% state dollars and 25% local dollars.

The CSX corridor project concept is a rail opportunity connecting USF with downtown Tampa. These stations will mirror rubber tire routes. By utilizing an active freight corridor and allowing sidings, the project costs will be significantly reduced. Under this proposal, HART will need to have a conversation with CSX about owning or leasing the rail line.

Mr. Pringle stated that both projects are competitive for federal dollars. The rubber tire concept comes with the benefits of a longer length, lower capital cost per mile, and lower maintenance. He showed an image of the rubber tire bus concept, and discussed the opportunities of driverless vehicles arriving when the first fleet of rubber tire vehicles will need to be replaced. Mr. Pringle finished the presentation by mentioning that the community would vet the draft report in Spring-Summer 2018, and public comments would be incorporated in the final plan in Summer-Fall 2018.
Discussion ensued about the results of public comments at the front-end of the RTFP, priorities for projects and modes, whether other similar cities have implemented BRT and done it successfully, the types of vehicles being included, whether median stations means buses will have doors on both sides, using performance measures administered by third parties, creating community buy-in through cohesiveness, artwork and other amenities around stations, whether the plan studied areas with the buses shown in the presentation, whether the bus lanes will be protected and the impact that will have on rider adoption, why the costs for the advanced proposals changed so significantly, how the community can get access to this presentation, and concern with the order of presenting this study to stakeholders.

C. FY19 & FY20 Unified Planning Work Program – Call for Projects (Allison Yeh, MPO Staff)

Ms. Allison Yeh of the MPO presented on the UPWP FY19/20 update. She stated she brought this item to the MPO’s committees to get ideas about the next planning projects. The UPWP is a required document which looks at MPO, FDOT, HART, and Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged funds. It outlines major planning tasks in six major areas. These areas include management activities, system and corridor planning, the LRTP, the TIP, public participation, local/regional coordination and planning. Ms. Yeh continued by outlining some of the projects completed in the FY17/18 cycle, and concluded the presentation by showing the UPWP development schedule, which will conclude with MPO adoption on May 1, 2018 and the UPWP becoming effective on July 1, 2018.

Discussion ensued about whether there is a central repository of common problems or solutions, who to contact about project requests, whether this is a call for looking at projects or a call for solutions, and how these projects are funded.

Project suggestions from committee members included improving the time to reach I-75 from the interchanges at Big Bend Road and Gibsonton Road, a traffic calming study on low-speed roads in the Floribraska Avenue area of Tampa Heights, pedestrian safe crosswalks between two bus stops in front of the Publix on Nebraska Avenue, and addressing traffic throughput at the intersection of Bruce B Downs Boulevard, Bearss Avenue, and Livingston Avenue.

D. Tampa Bay Partnership Regional Indicators Report (Dave Sobush, Tampa Bay Partnership)

Mr. Dave Sobush, Director of Policy/Research at the Tampa Bay Partnership, reported on the organization’s Regional Competitiveness Report. The report was created by business leaders who met to brainstorm and benchmark performance against other regions, including identification of key drivers of economic prosperity.

Job growth in Tampa Bay and Florida in general is strong, and Tampa Bay is second behind Orlando in that measure compared to the 20 benchmark communities in this report. However, the average wage is 65% of the leading market which puts Tampa Bay in 19th place. Tampa Bay residents spend less time in traffic than the average, but the report suggests that the region is heading toward bottlenecks in 2025 and also ranks last in transit supply and ridership. In education, the region conveys respectable degrees but lags behind other markets in retention
of total higher-learning metrics. Additionally, a large share of youth in the region are totally disconnected from the economy.

Although Tampa’s economy is growing faster than any other in Florida, when per-capita rates are taken into consideration Tampa ranks the lowest. The region has a high rate of poverty, and although unemployment is low it is still higher than other benchmark communities in the report. The region ranks third in net migration but is not attracting the millennial generation.

Mr. Sobush ended the presentation by discussing the impacts of educational and transit growth on per-capita incomes. Working with the USF College of Business, the TBP determined that every 1% increase in bachelor’s degrees and 1% increase in graduate degrees increases per-capita income by approximately $300 and $600 respectively, while every one mile increase in transit capacity raises per-capita income by over $200.

Discussion ensued about the key elements of the TBP’s study, catalyst projects, changes to full-time equivalent enrollment, growth in homegrown companies, high rates of disconnected youth, forecasted rates, who the Tampa Bay region is attracting, and representation of blue collar workers in the study.

VII. **OLD BUSINESS & NEW BUSINESS**

A. **TBARTA CAC Report (Vice-Chair Bill Roberts)**

A report was not provided.

B. **Other Business**

No other business was shared.

VIII. **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:49 AM *(Arnett-Overman).*
Agenda Item

Presenter
Brandon Berry, MPO Technician

Summary
Effective public engagement is critical to the MPO’s success. Engaging the community ensures MPO plans and products better reflect the public’s values and preferences. The Public Participation Plan helps balance the professional and technical expertise brought to projects with the community’s input. It helps the MPO gain the broad support needed to ensure that transportation plans and programs are implemented.

The Public Participation Plan (PPP) describes the MPO’s strategies and techniques to inform and engage the public in transportation planning issues, with the purpose of maximizing participation and effectiveness. At least once every two years, the MPO reviews its public participation efforts, using “measures of effectiveness” that fall into the following categories:

- Visibility & Productivity
- Participation Opportunities
- Public Interest & Feedback
- Input Results

The report reviews the MPO’s public engagement efforts during 2016 and 2017. Recommendations produced in this review will lead to amendments to the PPP and set the stage for engaging the public in the update of the Transportation Improvement Program and 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan.

Recommended Action
Recommend the MPO approve the Public Participation Plan: Measures of Effectiveness Report (2016-2017)

Prepared By
Brandon Berry

Attachments
Public Participation Plan: Measures of Effectiveness Report

Hillsborough MPO
Metropolitan Planning for Transportation

Two Year Public Engagement Evaluation for 2016 & 2017

Draft for Committees

Hillsborough County Metropolitan Planning Organization
P.O. Box 1110, 18th Floor, Tampa, FL 33601-1110
Phone: (813) 272-5940 Fax: (813) 301-7172

www.planhillsborough.org
The Hillsborough County MPO has been and continues to be fully compliant with federal and state requirements pertaining to public participation, including: §§450.316, §450.322, §450.324, and §450.326 in Chapter 23 of the Code of Federal Regulations; Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; the Limited English Proficiency Executive Order 13166; Florida Statute 339.175; and The Sunshine Law.
Chapter 1: Introduction & History

Every other year since 1998, the Hillsborough County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) has updated its Public Involvement Plan (PIP). The PIP identifies a proactive public participation process for the transportation planning products of the MPO. This process includes timely public notices, full access and input to key decisions, and support of early and continuing community involvement. Coinciding with the biennial update to the PIP, the MPO also assesses its effectiveness in implementing the participation plan.

The MPO has four major categories for measuring the effectiveness of public participation. These include:

- **Visibility & Productivity**: Visibility corresponds to the efforts and products the MPO produces to increase the agency’s engagement with the public. Productivity is the output of the MPO’s tasks.

- **Participation Opportunities**: Participation opportunities are the full extent of options the public has to interact with the MPO. These opportunities span in-person and virtual opportunities. The MPO measures the effectiveness of its participation opportunities not just in availability, but in whether the opportunities its produces and events it holds are accessible, time-sensitive, and understandable.

- **Public Interest & Feedback**: Public interest and feedback is collected through surveys, comment cards, emails, phonecalls, walk-ins, and other forms intended to provide a range of options for inclusion. To seize new opportunities to receive public input, the MPO has begun engaging with the public over social media and in event-specific chatrooms.

- **Input Results**: Input results are the direct and indirect impacts that public feedback has on the MPO’s reports, plans, and other activities.

Furthermore, the MPO measures its public participation with minorities, low-income individuals, and the transportation disadvantaged. These measures are often woven into the four major categories, such as tracking the number of notices published in non-English newspapers, distribution of the 2017 Ride Guide, and recording the number of events held in Environmental Justice areas.

Table 1 below shows the major categories and corresponding metrics from the 2018 Title VI/Nondiscrimination Plan.

**Table 1: Measures of Effectiveness for the Public Participation Plan (2016)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measuring Visibility and Productivity</th>
<th>Metrics</th>
<th>Range of Measurement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of MPO publications produced</td>
<td>Number of MPO newsletters and brochures distributed, such as Bicycle Suitability Maps, Ride Guides and Citizens Guide to Transportation Planning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of newspaper advertisements and public notices placed in publications with minority audiences</td>
<td>Media inventory of newspaper articles, television and radio coverage</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of West Central Florida MPO Chairs Coordinating Committee brochures distributed</td>
<td>Number of MPO sponsored maps distributed, as well as any other sponsorship or advertisement opportunity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of meetings broadcast on Hillsborough County Television</td>
<td>Number of publications available on the MPO website, at a minimum to include the LRTP, TIP, and an annual list of obligated projects</td>
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<tr>
<td>Measuring Participation Opportunities</td>
<td>Metrics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of MPO public forums, workshops and community meetings at which displays, presentations, discussions, and feedback occurred</td>
<td>Number and origin of participants at such public forums, workshops, and community meetings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of participants at public forums, workshops and community meetings held in historically underserved areas or with such populations</td>
<td>Number of participation opportunities offered to American Indian entities, such as the Seminole Tribe of Florida</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number and origin of participants at monthly MPO and committee meetings</td>
<td>Number of persons on the MPO mailing list receiving regular agendas</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Number of draft plans, reports, other preliminary documents or surveys posted to MPO website for public comment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ensuring the MOE report details representative public involvement</td>
<td>Developing maps with updated, community-specific demographic and socioeconomic data within the MPO’s geographic boundaries at the census tract, block group, or zip code level</td>
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<td>Listing all MPO committee members’ demographic data, including race, ethnicity, age, and whether or not they are disabled</td>
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<td>Number of returned comment cards distributed with Newsletters and other MPO publications</td>
<td>Number of verbal comments received at open forum discussions, public hearings, and at any other opportunities for public interaction</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of phone, fax, mail, and email inquiries or comments cards received</td>
<td>Number of visitors to the MPO website</td>
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<td>Seeking feedback that is immediate and project specific</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of issues identified through public input and responded to by the MPO</td>
<td>Documented revisions to plans based on citizen input</td>
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<td>Periodic public involvement process surveys</td>
<td>Update the PPP in conjunction with, and at the outset of, each LRTP update</td>
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<td>Recommendations to enhance the PPP</td>
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**History**

In 1999, several evaluation measures were adopted by the MPO in response to the Federal Highway Administration’s requirement that the MPO develop a mechanism for evaluating the effectiveness of the PIP.

In 2005, the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act – A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) was enacted, carrying forward a strong federal emphasis on public participation programs. SAFETEA-LU included a number of major modifications, including conducting convenient and accessible public meetings, employing visualization techniques to describe plans, and making public information accessible in electronic formats. With regard to the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), SAFETEA-LU also requires participation among users of pedestrian walkways, bicycle transportation facilities, and those with disabilities. The PIP was further amended and renamed the *Public Participation Plan* (PPP) in 2006.

In 2010, the MPO updated the PPP to more clearly define procedures for notification and public participation, including an extensive review of requirements, transportation terms and acronyms,
an expanded toolbox, and a new Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan. The 2010 PPP was amended in 2012 to incorporate new public involvement techniques and procedural requirements, and was adopted by the MPO along with an updated LEP Plan.

In 2014, the MPO amended its PPP to incorporate recommendations of its 2013 federal certification review, which called for simplifying the document and adding new tools. Revisions include the consolidation of the PlanHillsborough.org agency website, the expansion of MPO committees, the streamlined downloading of the PPP document from the PlanHillsborough.org website, and clarification of the public notice process for TIP amendments.

The passage of the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act in 2015 has led to requirements for the solicitation of comments from public ports, tourism interests, and certain private transportation providers.

Also in 2015, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) updated its MPO Program Management Handbook to fully incorporate principles of Environmental Justice (EJ) in programs and policies. This update came with two requirements for MPOs:

- Ensure and document early, continuous and meaningful opportunities for involvement by minority and low income communities; and
- Scrutinize demographic data to ensure that planning activities will not have disproportionately high or adverse impacts on underserved communities, and where impacts are unavoidable, that documented steps are taken to avoid, minimize or mitigate impacts.

**Refining the Public Participation Plan**

The MPO most recently updated its Public Participation Plan (PPP) in August 2016. This plan clarified the requirements, notices, procedures and strategies that the MPO undertakes in its public participation efforts. To refine the PPP process, the MPO recommended implementing periodic public involvement process surveys, updating the PPP at the outset of each Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) update, and enhancing the PPP.

A recommendation from the previous MOE report was that the PPP be updated in conjunction with, and at the outset of, each LRTP update. The PPP is in the process of being updated as of Spring 2018, and consultant tasks have been authorized to engage the public in the 2045 LRTP update at both the regional and countywide level.
Chapter 2: Public Participation

Guiding Principles

Effective public engagement is critical to the MPO’s success. Engaging the community ensures MPO plans and products better reflect the public’s values and preferences. The Public Participation Plan helps balance the professional and technical expertise brought to projects with the community’s input. It helps the MPO gain the broad support needed to ensure that transportation plans and programs are implemented.

The Public Participation Plan (PPP) describes the MPO’s strategies and techniques to engage the public in transportation planning issues, with the purpose of maximizing participation. The following principles, developed in conjunction with best practice standards for public involvement, guide the PPP.

Provide Opportunities for Involvement

Avenues for involvement will be open, meaningful and organized to provide an environment that encourages convenient public participation. The MPO will consider the needs of the public regarding accessibility, scheduling, location, format, and language of informational materials. This will allow for informed, constructive exchanges between the MPO and the public. Unfamiliar transportation terminology should be used as infrequently as possible, and when unavoidable should be clearly defined. Participants will be provided information so that they clearly understand the trade-offs involved in making transportation decisions, and will be encouraged to confront the many competing transportation objectives.

Be inclusive of constituencies

The MPO will identify potential stakeholders and other interested members of the public for its studies and projects, and will identify strategies to bring information about those studies and projects to identified groups. Efforts to reach new and existing constituencies will include continuing outreach to “Communities of Concern”, defined as communities which require special attention to facilitate their participation in the planning process. More information on how the MPO designates Communities of Concern may be found in the MPO’s 2018 Title VI/Nondiscrimination Plan.

The MPO will continue to engage neighborhoods and groups which may be affected by proposed projects. The MPO is constantly exploring new and creative techniques to better engage the audience in discussion throughout the planning process.

Be responsive to participants

MPO forums will facilitate discussion with the public while being respectful of everyone’s time. Informational materials will be clear, concise, and address the concerns of participants. This
information will be sufficiently detailed to allow citizens to form and express their independent views. The results of all public involvement activities will be documented and given full consideration in all MPO decision-making activities as well as conveyed to implementing agencies for their consideration.

**Provide a transparent and predictable process**

The planning process will be understandable and communicated to citizens well in advance of plan considerations. Citizens should know who makes the final decisions and the pathways for reaching those decisions. The consistency in the MPO participation process will allow staff, citizens, and officials to plan their time and effectively apply their resources.

**Be creative and flexible**

The direction and effectiveness of this program should be reviewed periodically to ensure that it meets the needs of the public and the MPO. This program should continue to evolve and include new avenues of communication to augment MPO public outreach efforts.

**Maximize exposure, minimize costs**

The MPO is committed to coordinating the public participation process with local, federal, and statewide public involvement processes whenever possible. The objective of this coordination is to enhance public consideration of issues, plans, and programs, while reducing redundancies and minimizing costs.

The measures of effectiveness (MOEs) used as part of the evaluation process under these six guiding principles fall into the following categories:

- Visibility & Productivity;
- Participation Opportunities;
- Public Interest & Feedback; and,
- Input Results.

At the conclusion of the review of MPO performance in each of these areas, there is an opportunity to refine the PPP process by formal amendment. Other opportunities to enhance performance may occur as a result of ongoing feedback, periodic surveys, or with the update of the PPP that accompanies the launch of each LRTP update.

In the following chapters, the MPO’s adopted quantifiable measures of effectiveness of its Public Participation Plan are denoted by headings like the one below:

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Content Heading
Chapter 3: Measuring Visibility & Productivity

This chapter measures the visibility and productivity of MPO projects and reports during the 2016-2017 evaluation cycle. Visibility corresponds to the efforts and products the MPO produces to increase the agency's engagement with the public. Productivity is the output of the MPO’s tasks.

Number of MPO publications produced

Each year the MPO produces plans, projects and studies outlined in its yearly Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). The resulting documents are made available to the public as reports, technical memoranda, and maps. Feedback on these documents is solicited through public meetings, presentations to the MPO’s committees, and online engagement.

Overall, there were 36 reports and studies produced in the 2016-2017 cycle (Table 2).

Table 2: Documents Produced from 2016-2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Published or Adopted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MPO Annual Certification Review</td>
<td>Mar 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Road Walk/Bike Connector, Complete Street Study, and Complete Street Health Impact Assessment</td>
<td>Apr 2016 &amp; May 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation Improvement Program FY 2017-2021</td>
<td>Jun 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unified Planning Work Program FY 17/18</td>
<td>Jun 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tampa Innovation District Transit Circulator Study</td>
<td>Jun 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selmon Expressway Western Extension – Gandy Boulevard Assessment</td>
<td>Jun 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan 2016-2021</td>
<td>Jun 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I-275/Busch &amp; I-275/Fowler Innovation Gateway Concept Study – Phase I &amp; II Walk/Bike Plan for the City of Tampa Phase V</td>
<td>Jun 2016 &amp; Jun 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Participation Plan 2016 Update</td>
<td>Aug 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tampa Hillsborough Greenways and Trails Master Plan Update</td>
<td>Aug 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwest Hillsborough County Transit Study</td>
<td>Feb 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Transportation Coordinator Evaluation July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016</td>
<td>Feb 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FHWA Data Business Plan Pilot Project</td>
<td>Feb 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spruce Street Pedestrian and Bicycle Improvements Technical Memorandum</td>
<td>May 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation Improvement Program FY 2018-2022</td>
<td>Jun 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HART Maintenance and Operations Feasibility Study</td>
<td>Jun 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bullard Parkway Complete Streets Study</td>
<td>Jul 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brandon Corridor &amp; Mixed-Use Centers Pilot Project Phase I</td>
<td>Aug 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vision Zero Action Plan</td>
<td>Aug 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dale Mabry Pedestrian Overpass Technical Feasibility Analysis</td>
<td>Aug 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plant City Walk/Bike Plan</td>
<td>Aug 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plant City Roadway Extension Studies</td>
<td>Sep 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multimodal Level of Service White Paper</td>
<td>Sep 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hillsborough-Polk Freight Logistics Zone Strategic Plan 2016-2017</td>
<td>Oct 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR 60/Kennedy Blvd Multimodal Safety Review</td>
<td>Nov 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016 and 2017 Priorities, Tampa Bay Transportation Management Area</td>
<td>2016/2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Transportation Safety Study</td>
<td>Pending</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USF Campus Autonomous Transit Feasibility Study</td>
<td>Pending</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garden Steps Project</td>
<td>Pending</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TBARTA MPO Regional Coordination and Best Practices Study</td>
<td>Pending</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MPO Publications Available Online
The MPO continues to maintain a strong presence on the internet to publicize plans, studies, regular meetings, and special meetings. All agenda packets for regular and committee meetings are posted to the PlanHillsborough.org website, typically one week before the meeting takes place. The PlanHillsborough.org website includes an archive of current and past newsletters dating back to 2011, as well as agenda packets for the current and past two calendar years.

During the 2016-2017 period, the MPO continually expanded its online library of completed and pending plans, studies, maps and documents covering the planning program. The MPO also disaggregated many recent reports by chapter to make website searches more relevant and help documents load faster. **Table 3** shows the number of packets, documents, and newsletters available through the PlanHillsborough.org website as of the last days of 2016 and 2017.

**Table 3**: Documents, packets and informational pages available through PlanHillsborough.org

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Current &amp; Archived Newsletters</strong></td>
<td>69</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Current &amp; Archived Meeting Packets</strong></td>
<td>640</td>
<td>728</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Informational Pages &amp; Hot-Linked Informational Sites</strong></td>
<td>312</td>
<td>338</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MPO-Produced Reports &amp; Documents Published to Website</strong></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>1,034</td>
<td>1,164</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MPO Outreach Products and Materials

**Newsletters & Press Releases**

The MPO continued its three separate eNews publications through July 2017:

- **Rubber Meets the Road**, a quarterly publication providing news about the MPO’s Transportation Improvement Program;
- **Walk Bike News**, a quarterly publication emphasizing livable roadways and complete streets planning;
- **Hillsborough Rides**, a quarterly publication focusing on transit and transportation disadvantaged services.

Beginning in August 2017, the Plan Hillsborough agency consolidated all five of its publications into one monthly newsletter titled **Connections to Tomorrow**. This newsletter contains featured stories covering topics of interest to the MPO’s advisory committees, along with an events schedule and archive of stories featuring Plan Hillsborough’s agencies. **Connections to Tomorrow** is archived on the PlanHillsborough.org website as well as on Constant Contact, an
email marketing platform. This allows viewers to click through to project pages and other sources of interest directly from within the website-hosted newsletter.

Virtual links to these newsletters are promoted online through Facebook and Twitter. The MPO honors requests for Spanish translations of its newsletters, which it began providing for each of its three newsletters from August 2016 to July 2017. Requests for Spanish translations of newsletters may be made via email or phone.

Newsletters and committee agenda packets continue to be sent via Constant Contact. Distribution through this method presents some significant advantages:

- Reduced printing and mailing costs
- Quicker access to information
- Allowing members of the public to easily subscribe to any or all mailing lists.
- Enables the MPO to generate statistics on how many recipients opened, clicked links, and forwarded newsletters.

Disadvantages include the potential that committee members or interested members of the public without internet access will be unable to view these materials. To mitigate this, the MPO provides printed agendas at the beginning of each committee meeting. The agency also provides a large-print version of its Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board packet.

The five Connections to Tomorrow newsletters published in 2017 recorded a 24.6% average open rate, a slight drop from the 30% average recorded among the three separate agency newsletters in the 2014-2015 cycle. However, there is a greater number of subscribers to the Connections to Tomorrow newsletter compared to the three separate publications. Approximately 33% of newsletter viewers open the newsletters on their mobile devices, while 67% open them on their desktops.

Users can sign up to receive the Connections to Tomorrow newsletter via PlanHillsborough.org, by emailing or calling a staff member, or by signing up through a link included in newsletters shared online. The MPO offers an option for users to receive a Spanish version of the newsletter, which may be requested via phone or email.

As of December 2017, the mailing list database contained 7,107 mailing addresses, which amounts to approximately 16% more than during the previous evaluation period.

Table 4 displays statistics on the number of newsletters distributed via Constant Contact. Table 5 displays press releases over this period. Table 6 displays other notifications sent from 2016 to 2017.
### Table 4: MPO Newsletters Distributed from 2016 to 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rubber Meets the Road</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 8, 2016</td>
<td>Rubber Meets the Road: Issue 19</td>
<td>4190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr 5, 2016</td>
<td>Rubber Meets the Road: Issue 20</td>
<td>3763</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jul 15, 2016</td>
<td>Rubber Meets the Road: Issue 21</td>
<td>4203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 3, 2016</td>
<td>Rubber Meets the Road: Issue 22</td>
<td>4139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 2, 2016</td>
<td>Rubber Meets the Road: Issue 22 (en Espanol)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 4, 2017</td>
<td>Rubber Meets the Road: Issue 23</td>
<td>3146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 4, 2017</td>
<td>Rubber Meets the Road: Issue 23 (en Espanol)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr 5, 2017</td>
<td>Rubber Meets the Road: Issue 24</td>
<td>4298</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr 7, 2017</td>
<td>Rubber Meets the Road: Issue 24 (en Espanol)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Walk Bike News</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 10, 2016</td>
<td>Walk Bike News: Issue 20</td>
<td>4201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2, 2016</td>
<td>Walk Bike News: Issue 21</td>
<td>4055</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug 12, 2016</td>
<td>Walk Bike News: Issue 22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug 17, 2016</td>
<td>Walk Bike News: Issue 22 (en Espanol)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 3, 2016</td>
<td>Walk Bike News: Issue 23</td>
<td>3054</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 7, 2016</td>
<td>Walk Bike News: Issue 23 (en Espanol)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 9, 2017</td>
<td>Walk Bike News: Issue 24</td>
<td>3359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr 4, 2017</td>
<td>Walk Bike News: Issue 24 (en Espanol)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>May 7, 2017</strong></td>
<td>Walk Bike News: Issue 25</td>
<td>2935</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hillsborough Rides</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jun 13, 2016</td>
<td>Hillsborough Rides: Issue 19</td>
<td>3853</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep 9, 2016</td>
<td>Hillsborough Rides: Issue 20</td>
<td>3993</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sep 19, 2016</td>
<td>Hillsborough Rides: Issue 20 (en Espanol)</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sep 9, 2016</td>
<td>Hillsborough Rides: Issue 20</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep 19, 2016</td>
<td>Hillsborough Rides: Issue 20 (en Espanol)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec 2, 2016</td>
<td>Hillsborough Rides: Issue 21</td>
<td>3367</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec 14, 2016</td>
<td>Hillsborough Rides: Issue 21 (en Espanol)</td>
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<td>Mar 15, 2017</td>
<td>Hillsborough Rides: Issue 22</td>
<td>2854</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr 4, 2017</td>
<td>Hillsborough Rides: Issue 22 (en Espanol)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jun 6, 2017</td>
<td>Hillsborough Rides: Issue 23</td>
<td>4143</td>
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<td><strong>Connections to Tomorrow</strong></td>
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<td>Aug 1, 2017</td>
<td>Connections to Tomorrow 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sep 5, 2017</td>
<td>Connections to Tomorrow 2</td>
<td>4938</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct 9, 2017</td>
<td>Connections to Tomorrow 3</td>
<td>4422</td>
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<td>Nov 2, 2017</td>
<td>Connections to Tomorrow 4</td>
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<td>Dec 7, 2017</td>
<td>Connections to Tomorrow 5</td>
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<td><strong>Other</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Jul 3, 2017</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>White</td>
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</table>
Table 5: MPO Press Releases via Constant Contact in 2016 and 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Distribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sep 21, 2016</td>
<td>Press Release 09 20 16 – Garden Steps Announcement</td>
<td>212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 30, 2017</td>
<td>Press Release 10 26 17 – Award Winners</td>
<td>1292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 8, 2017</td>
<td>Press Release 11.08 17 – MPO Projects Funded</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Table 6: Other MPO Email Communications via Constant Contact

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Distribution</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mar 23, 2016</td>
<td>Human Service Transportation Forum Invite</td>
<td>503</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 18, 2016</td>
<td>Perimeter Trail Open House</td>
<td>784</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep 28, 2016</td>
<td>Northwest Hillsborough County Transit Study</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 14, 2016</td>
<td>Vision Zero Workshop 1</td>
<td>3335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 18, 2016</td>
<td>Brandon Corridors &amp; Mixed Use</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec 1, 2016</td>
<td>Brandon Corridors &amp; Mixed Use - Reminder</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 11, 2017</td>
<td>Copy of Northwest Hillsborough County Transit Study</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 18, 2017</td>
<td>Vision Zero Workshop 2</td>
<td>1024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 25, 2017</td>
<td>Vision Zero Workshop 2 updated</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 16, 2017</td>
<td>Terrace Park</td>
<td>University Square 02 21 17 Community Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 31, 2017</td>
<td>Vision Zero Workshop 3</td>
<td>742</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr 5, 2017</td>
<td>Innovation Place Mtg 04 11 17</td>
<td>312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 4, 2017</td>
<td>Brandon Mtg notice 5.17.17</td>
<td>313</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 16, 2017</td>
<td>Brandon Mtg reminder 5.17.17</td>
<td>395</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jun 5, 2017</td>
<td>Innovation Place Gateway Mtg June 2017</td>
<td>235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jul 6, 2017</td>
<td>July 2017 MPO Meeting Cancellations</td>
<td>442</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jul 30, 2017</td>
<td>Vision Zero Workshop 4</td>
<td>2982</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jul 31, 2017</td>
<td>Vision Zero Workshop 4 Archive</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep 5, 2017</td>
<td>Brandon Corridors &amp; Mixed Use – Upcoming Meetings</td>
<td>199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep 15, 2017</td>
<td>Vision Zero – Walk of Silence</td>
<td>2280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep 21, 2017</td>
<td>SLR Assessment Tool Workshop 09/20/2017</td>
<td>239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 9, 2017</td>
<td>Brandon Corridors &amp; Mixed Use Pilot Project info email</td>
<td>414</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 24, 2017</td>
<td>Brandon Corridors and Mixed Used Centers – Community Meeting on October 30</td>
<td>447</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec 27, 2017</td>
<td>Gulf Coast Safe Streets Summit flyer</td>
<td>955</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Agendas produced for the MPO Board and committees

Agendas for regularly-scheduled Board meetings and committee meetings are sent to all members as well as those who have expressed interest in receiving agendas. Individuals can sign up for an agenda by emailing or calling a staff member at any time.

Over the 2016-2017 cycle, a total of 36,618 agendas were emailed to the MPO's email list.

Appendix 1 summarizes the statistics for all MPO meeting agendas sent during the 2016-2017 evaluation period.
Public information pieces

During the 2016-2017 cycle, the MPO continued to distribute public information pieces developed both in-house and in collaboration with other agencies. Public information pieces such as brochures and calendars provide the public useful information about plans and projects, examples of the MPO’s role in major transportation efforts across the county, and details on how citizens can get involved.

The MPO printed 1,500 copies of its 2016 State of the System Report, which identifies goals related to the condition of the county’s transportation network, during the 2016 to 2017 cycle. The agency also updated and distributed 4,700 copies of the Tampa Bay Area Regional Transportation Agency (TBARTA) MPO Chairs Coordinating Committee (CCC) Regional Multi-Use Trails brochure. In both 2016 and 2017, the agency developed a Year-in-Review calendar summarizing the MPO’s achievements over the prior year. The 2016 calendar had a distribution of 3,000 and the 2017 calendar a distribution of 1,000.

The Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board, along with its counterparts at the Pasco and Pinellas MPOs, updated the region’s Ride Guide in 2017. The Ride Guide publicizes mobility options available to the transportation disadvantaged. A total of 3,000 copies of the updated Ride Guide were produced in 2017, and distributed at the Hillsborough, Pasco, and Pinellas MPO offices as well as through the Sunshine Line. Additionally, the Ride Guide is hosted on the agencies’ websites for download.

Promotional materials

To support the Vision Zero coalition’s efforts, the MPO created promotional materials to distribute to the public. Approximately 6,000 Vision Zero reflective slap-bands were distributed at fairs and events visited by the MPO, and provided to groups such as the Tampa Downtown Partnership for distribution at their own events. In August 2017, the MPO printed 6,000 Vision Zero-themed bumper stickers that drew focus to transportation safety efforts around several schools within Hillsborough County. The agency also produced a Vision Zero handout summarizing the importance of the initiative to Hillsborough County, which had a print run of 500. A May 2017 Bullard Parkway buffered bike lane painting event included 80 cans of green spray paint, which participants used to create a temporary buffered bike lane. A student video competition sponsored by the MPO to support Vision Zero received over 30 entries in early 2016, which concluded in February of that year with eight winning applicants.

Tables 7 and 8 summarize the MPO’s public information materials, and the promotional materials created to support Vision Zero.
Table 7: Other MPO Brochures, Maps and Public Information Pieces

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brochures, Maps and Flyers</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Printed Copies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MPO 2016 Calendar &amp; Year-in-Review</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>3000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TBARTA/CCC Regional Multi-Use Trails Brochure</td>
<td>2016, 2017</td>
<td>4700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vision Zero Handout</td>
<td>2016, 2017</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPO 2017 Calendar &amp; Year-in-Review</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td>1000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8: MPO Vision Zero Promotional Materials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Promotional Materials</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Number Printed/Distributed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vision Zero Reflective Slap Bracelets</td>
<td>2016, 2017</td>
<td>6000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vision Zero Bumper Stickers</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td>6000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Media Coverage of the MPO

Newspaper Advertisements and Public Notices

After the acquisition of The Tampa Tribune by The Tampa Bay Times in 2016, Hillsborough County is primarily served by The Tampa Bay Times. According to the 2017 Nielsen Scarborough Report, The Tampa Bay Times has a daily circulation of 240,216 and a Sunday circulation of 391,215.

The MPO continued placing public notices in The Tampa Tribune until April 2016, when it began publishing its notices in The Tampa Bay Times. For the MPO’s four-year federal certification review in 2017, the agency also published notices in Centro Tampa, a Spanish newsletter published by The Tampa Bay Times, and La Gaceta, a tri-lingual English, Spanish, and Italian newspaper. Centro Tampa has an estimated daily circulation of 52,000 and La Gaceta an estimated daily circulation of 18,000 as of the end of 2017. The public meeting notice for the MPO’s four-year federal certification review was also posted online, where interested parties who were unable to attend the meeting were provided a comment form in either English or Spanish.

In compliance with state requirements, the MPO continued advertising Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board meetings in the Florida Administrative Register, published weekly on the internet free of charge by the Florida Department of State as a means of increasing public access to Florida government. Although the
publication does not provide readership numbers, two posts were made to this online source in 2016 and 2017. **Table 9** contains all the public hearing and meeting notices posted in newspapers by the MPO between 2016 and 2017. **Table 10** contains the circulation numbers for these publications.

**Table 9**: Public Meeting Notices Published in Newspapers or Online Periodicals by the MPO in 2016 and 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Publication(s)</th>
<th>Date Published</th>
<th>Notice or Announcement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tampa Tribune</td>
<td>February 23, 2016</td>
<td>Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board – February 26 Public Meeting Notice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida Administrative Register</td>
<td>February 23, 2016</td>
<td>Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board – Notice of meeting/workshop hearing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tampa Tribune</td>
<td>April 14, 2016</td>
<td>Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board – April 21 Annual Public Hearing Notice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tampa Bay Times</td>
<td>June 10, 2016</td>
<td>MPO June 22 Public Hearing Notice (TIP) and August 2 Public Meeting (Public Participation Plan update proposal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tampa Bay Times – Hillsborough BayLink Liner</td>
<td>August 17, 2016</td>
<td>Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board – August 19, October 28, and December 9 Public Meeting Notice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tampa Bay Times – Hillsborough BayLink Liner</td>
<td>February 15, 2017</td>
<td>Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board – February 24, April 27 (Annual Public Hearing), June 23, August 25, October 27, and December 8 Public Meeting Notices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida Administrative Register</td>
<td>February 15, 2017</td>
<td>Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board – Notice of Meeting/Workshop Hearing for public meetings on February 24, April 27 (Annual Public Hearing), June 23, August 25, October 27, and December 8.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tampa Bay Times – Classified Display</td>
<td>March 17, 2017 &amp; March 24, 2017</td>
<td>Notice of Public Meetings for Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration Review of Metropolitan Transportation Planning in Tampa Bay Region – March 27 (Pasco County MPO), March 29 (Forward Pinellas), and April 12 (Hillsborough MPO)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tampa Bay Times</td>
<td>April 7, 2017</td>
<td>Notice of Public Meeting to discuss Metropolitan Transportation Planning in Hillsborough County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centro Tampa</td>
<td>April 7, 2017</td>
<td>Spanish Translation of Notice of Public Meeting to discuss Metropolitan Transportation Planning in Hillsborough County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Gaceta</td>
<td>April 7, 2017</td>
<td>Spanish Translation of Notice of Public Meeting to discuss Metropolitan Transportation Planning in Hillsborough County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tampa Bay Times – Hillsborough BayLink Liner</td>
<td>April 20, 2017</td>
<td>Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board – April 27 Annual Public Hearing Notice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tampa Bay Times</td>
<td>June 2, 2017</td>
<td>MPO June 13 Public Hearing Notice (TIP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tampa Bay Times</td>
<td>June 4, 2017</td>
<td>MPO June 13 Public Hearing Notice (TIP) - Correction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 10: Daily circulation of newspapers in which the MPO posted notices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Newspaper</th>
<th>2017 Circulation (Daily)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Tampa Bay Times</td>
<td>240,216 [1]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday Circulation</td>
<td>390,912 [2]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Gaceta</td>
<td>18,000 [3]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centro Tampa</td>
<td>52,000 [3]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources:
[3] Circulation numbers provided by newspapers (Feb 2018)

Advertisements and public notices placed in publications with minority audiences

Two meeting notices were placed in newspapers with minority populations during the 2016-2017 cycle: *La Gaceta* and *Centro Tampa*. The purpose of these notices was to seek citizen feedback on the federal certification review of the MPO taking place in April 2017.

Public Meeting notice signs

For the 2016 and 2017 TIP public hearings, the MPO placed notice signs in affected areas detailing the location, date and time.

Online Advertisements, Social Media, and Public Notices

According to Pew Research Center, nearly twice as many adults received their news online in 2016 as those who received it through a print newspaper\(^1\). To keep up with the changing news habits of the public, the MPO continued providing notices, announcements and information via email, Facebook, Twitter, and its regularly-updated website. Continuing from previous years, the MPO announced major projects and events on its PlanHillsborough.org home page, which become part of a news archive after the projects leave the front page.

Media Coverage of the MPO

By virtue of having elected officials serving on its board, and by providing a public forum in which to discuss transportation issues, the media frequently covers the MPO. A review of the NewsBank website, a website which archives all mentions of search terms in media, indicates that the Hillsborough MPO or its programs appeared in 66 articles in 2016 and 2017. This is a reduction of 11% from the previous 2014-2015 cycle. This reduction is likely due to the acquisition of *The Tampa Tribune* by *The Tampa Bay Times* in 2016. While *The Tampa Tribune* provided approximately 75% of the articles mentioning the MPO in the 2014-2015 cycle, it provided just 24% of those articles in the 2016-2017 cycle.

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Articles primarily appeared in *The Tampa Bay Times* (45 articles) and *Tampa Tribune* (16 articles). The other newspapers in which the MPO was mentioned or quoted include *The Washington Post*, *Business Observer*, *The Bradenton Herald*, *The Post and Courier*, and *Dayton Daily News*. The latter two papers featured a story on the preparedness of the Tampa Bay area for a major hurricane, originally produced by *The Washington Post*. Additionally, MPO staff were interviewed and featured in ABC Action News and Bay News 9 segments covering Vision Zero.

Topics of articles in which the MPO appeared between 2016 and 2017 included the annual TIP hearings and related TBX/Tampa Bay NEXT projects, Hillsborough County’s Vision Zero initiative, the county’s preparedness for a major hurricane, and driverless vehicles.

**Meetings broadcast on television**

MPO public hearings are broadcast on Hillsborough Television (HTV), produced by Hillsborough County Government and available on major cable providers in the Hillsborough County area as well as on the web at [http://www.hillsboroughcounty.org/HTVlive](http://www.hillsboroughcounty.org/HTVlive). All 22 of the MPO’s Board meetings were televised in 2016 and 2017, as well as its yearly Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board public hearings. These meetings were broadcast live, and later rebroadcast throughout the corresponding month. First-plays and replays of televised MPO meetings are noticed on the online HTV calendar.

Although it is not possible to track exactly who views broadcasts of MPO hearings on HTV, estimates from the prior MOE report suggest that 33% of cable subscribers watch the channel. Of those viewers, approximate 60% prefer coverage of public meetings with elected officials, public affairs shows, and features about community history.

In August 2017, MPO staff created and began uploading MPO Board meetings to its YouTube channel. As of the end of 2017, this channel is a video archive of all four Board meetings held between August 2017 and December 2017. Combined with the 2017 TIP Public Hearing recorded on the Hillsborough County YouTube profile, these meetings have received approximately 450 total views as of the end of 2017. The 2017 TIP Public Hearing accounted for the majority of these views, which may be partially attributable to the relative newness of the MPO channel compared to the Hillsborough County channel. The MPO is making efforts to increase the viewership of its meetings and hearings for members of the public who cannot attend, including featuring a YouTube button prominently on the agency’s PlanHillsborough.org homepage.

**Summary of Achievements**

**New Opportunities for Public Engagement**

Expanding on processes first put in place in 2015, the MPO offered new online options for viewing and commenting at its Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) public hearings in 2016 and 2017. Beginning in 2016, MPO staff implemented a GoToMeeting streaming platform that allowed the public to view the hearing and provide comments online in real-time. In 2017, this stream was
accompanied by a Facebook Live video stream and live viewing accessible through the Hillsborough County TV YouTube profile.

The MPO also greatly expanded the number of events at which staff had a presence in 2016 and 2017. In collaboration with the Hillsborough County School Board, the agency developed a School Transportation Working Group (STWG) in 2016 that provides the public opportunities to comment on issues of walk/bike safety and school transit.

**Important collaborative achievements**

Working in collaboration with other agencies increases the MPO’s exposure. Contributing organizations promote MPO projects and events because they are partially responsible for their success. The MPO continued its 2014-2015 collaborative activities into the 2016-2017 cycle, working with the Department of Health and Hillsborough County School Board on a range of new projects, and continued its USF fellowship program. In addition, through initiatives like Vision Zero, the MPO engaged new and diverse groups in its products. The following projects represent the major collaborative undertakings of the MPO in 2016 and 2017.

The MPO began work on the county’s Vision Zero initiative in 2016, which was brought to the MPO by a grassroots coalition of bicycle and pedestrian safety advocates led by Walk Bike Tampa. This initiative to reduce road deaths in Hillsborough County to zero drew in a coalition of over 25 public agencies, private companies, and non-profits. Representatives from participants across the coalition attended four workshops over a year-long span, and many members have continued to spread the word through participation in a speaker’s bureau and attendance at associated events. This initiative culminated in an Action Plan in Fall 2017.

The MPO Chairman created the School Transportation Working Group (STWG) committee in 2016, augmenting its efforts to enhance lines of communication between schools and transportation that began in 2015 by adding a Hillsborough County School Board (HCSB) member as a voting member of the MPO Board. STWG meets monthly to discuss topics such as traffic circulation, school-area speed zones, school busing, and other needs identified by associated councils, alliances and committees. In response to these issues and the removal of non-funded courtesy busing in 2017, the MPO initiated a School Safety Study to develop a priority methodology and assess school areas with high need for multimodal safety reviews.
Continuing from its efforts in 2015, the MPO engaged with the Planning Commission (PC) and Department of Health in Hillsborough County (DOH) to pursue healthier communities across the county. The MPO and DOH performed a health impact assessment of the George Road Walk/Bike Connector and Complete Street Study, and staff of the Planning Commission, DOH and MPO collaborated on a food access and community gardens project as a component of the Planning Commission’s Health in All Policies project in 2017. The MPO pursued its own Health in All Policies approach with DOH staff in 2017, which seeks to consider LRTP projects in the context of their health impacts on nearby populations. In addition, DOH worked with the MPO, Planning Commission, HART, and the City of Tampa on the Garden Steps project. Garden Steps is the group’s submission to the Aetna Foundation’s Healthiest Cities & Counties Challenge, which aims to establish community gardens in food deserts and evaluate conditions around garden sites.

The MPO has expanded involvement with District 7 of FDOT, with the agency producing a Citizens Transportation Academy video series answering common questions about transportation project funding, the metropolitan planning process, and congestion management strategies, among others. FDOT continues to fund projects from the MPO’s 2040 LRTP priorities, primarily through the agency’s Five Year Work Program. The MPO also participated in TBX meetings held by FDOT through the first half of 2016, and staff attended several of the Tampa Bay NEXT community working groups held across the region in 2017.

Hosted by the TBARTA MPO Chairs Coordinating Committee and the TMA Leadership Group, with sponsorship by the Hillsborough, Pinellas and Pasco MPOs, the Regional Planning & Coordination Best Practices Study kicked off in May 2017 with an event at Collaborative Labs in St. Petersburg. The event featured over 150 participants and sought to identify exploration factors and desired outcomes, as well as develop principles, for future exploration of regional transportation coordination. Participants broke into sixteen small groups to discuss these questions under one of four topic frames. At the end of the session, the participants reconvened and identified the top ten outcomes and most important guiding principles under each topic header.
Chapter 4: Measuring Participation Opportunities

Public input is a critical component of the success of the MPO's efforts, and the agency consistently evaluates its participation opportunities for convenience and accessibility to the public. A participation opportunity is a situation where a citizen can provide public input, either directly to staff or in a format such as a written or emailed comment that staff receives and responds to. Citizens can participate at a regularly-scheduled forum or community meeting, project workshops, events at which the MPO attends, online, or over the phone. During the 2016-2017 evaluation period, the MPO developed new opportunities and venues for the public to participate.

Participation at MPO Public Forums, Workshops and Community Meetings

As in years past, actively pursuing public outreach to obtain citizens' feedback is a major priority for the MPO. The MPO is committed to providing multiple avenues for citizens to interact with the agency, in person, in ways that are convenient and sensitive to their available time.

The main paths to participation include attending a regularly-scheduled MPO or committee meeting, applying to become a member of an MPO committee, attending a public workshop on a specific topic sponsored by the MPO, and interacting with the MPO at fairs and exhibitions. In addition, from 2016 to 2017, the MPO expanded online opportunities for citizens to become aware, comment, and share information about transportation topics of interest.

All MPO board and advisory committee meetings from 2016 to 2017 were publicly noticed, open to the public, and provided opportunity for public comment. Public hearings were held during public meetings of the MPO Board and counted as one meeting during this cycle. Compared to the previous 2014-2015 reporting period, there was a 12% increase in attendance and 92% increase in public speakers at committee and MPO meetings in 2016-2017, due primarily to the continued interest in the TBX and Tampa Bay NEXT projects. Table 11 contains summary information of the committee meetings held in 2016 and 2017.
Table 11: MPO committee meetings held during 2016 and 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Board/Committee</th>
<th>2016 Meetings</th>
<th>Attendees</th>
<th>Public Speakers</th>
<th>2017 Meetings</th>
<th>Attendees</th>
<th>Public Speakers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MPO Board</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>853</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>469</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizens Advisory Committee</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>289</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Advisory Committee</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Committee</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livable Roadways Committee</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intelligent Transportation Committee</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Transportation Working Group</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPO Chairs Coordinating Committee</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Information pending</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Information pending</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint TAC/CAC Meeting</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint LRC/BPAC Meeting</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tampa Bay TMA Leadership Group</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>90</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,716</strong></td>
<td><strong>289</strong></td>
<td><strong>90</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,335</strong></td>
<td><strong>151</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Public Outreach Events at which displays, presentations, discussions and feedback occurred

Beyond regularly-scheduled meetings, the MPO hosted or participated in 225 external public meetings or events in 2016 and 2017. This represents an increase of 34% from the previous period. Although the number of attendees at these events was not always available, at least 24,800 attendees were present at events that the MPO participated in. The MPO also began tracking the number of event participants that staff members interacted with in 2017. In that year, the MPO interacted with 2,593 attendees, or approximately 25% of those who attended events in which the MPO was present. In 2016 and 2017, the events with the highest number of attendees included:
Highest-Attended Events in 2016

1. Back to School Health Fair [August 6] (5,000 attendees)
2. Trick or Treat on the Riverwalk [October 29] (5,000 attendees)
3. Family Abilities Information Rallies [October 1] (1,000 attendees)
4. 2016 Neighborhood Conference [July 23] (500 attendees)
5. Clean Air Fair [May 5] (300 attendees)

Highest-Attended Events in 2017

1. School Choice Expo [November 3] (3,500 attendees)
2. Bloomingdale Fall Festival [October 28] (1,000 attendees)
3. All People’s Community Center Fair [October 7] (800 attendees)
4. 2017 Neighborhoods Conference [July 15] (300 attendees)
5. Innovations in Regional Transportation Summit [February 16] (200 attendees)

The complete list of events that MPO sponsored or participated in are located in Appendices 2 (2016) and 3 (2017).

Attendance at events in Environmental Justice (EJ) areas

Of the 225 meetings that the MPO hosted or participated in, at least 53 (23.6%) were held in EJ areas. EJ areas in Hillsborough County are census tracts one standard deviation above the county’s median in concentration of one or more of the following characteristics: low income, race, and ethnicity (Hispanic and Latino). Attendance at events held in EJ areas accounted for 34.7% (8,630 attendees) of attendance at events sponsored by or attended by the MPO during this period.

MPO Board and Committee Meeting Participation

Number and origin of participants

A total of 5,051 participants attended MPO Board and committee meetings in the 2016-2017 cycle.

Due to logistical constraints, a recommendation from the previous MOE to track the origin of public participants at MPO Board and committee meetings was not implemented in this period.

Public Turnout for the Transportation Improvement Program Annual Hearings (2016-2017)

The 2016 TIP public hearing attracted 395 attendees and 185 speakers, donors or commenters^2, the highest numbers of any MPO public hearing in recent history, due primarily to continued intense interest in the Tampa Bay Express Lanes (TBX) Project. Attendance from the public was complemented by 139 posts on the 2016 MPO TIP Public Hearing Facebook event, nine phone calls, and 281 emails, although 159 of

^2 Donors provided their time to allow a speaker to speak for longer. Commenters made written comments.
those emails (57%) were templated responses. The GoToMeeting virtual event also attracted over 70 comments on its live stream chat over the course of the event.

The 2017 TIP hearing attracted 147 attendees and 105 speakers, donors or commenters. There were 22 comments left on the 2017 MPO TIP Public Hearing Facebook event, 3 phone calls, and 33 emails. The GoToMeeting virtual event attracted 62 comments on the live stream chat over the course of the hearing.

Number of persons on the MPO mailing list receiving regular agendas

The number of individuals on the MPO mailing list who received regular agendas increased during the 2016-2017 cycle, largely due to growth in interest. In October 2017, the last month of the cycle in which all committee meetings were held, approximately 1,938 individuals received an agenda mailed through Constant Contact. This is a 33.8% increase from January 2016 (April 2016 for the School Transportation Working Group).

Surveys, Draft Documents and Plans Available for Public Comment

From 2016-2017 the MPO hosted nine surveys seeking comments from the public and its committees. These surveys included:

- **Human Services Transportation Needs** survey, to assist in identifying transportation service gaps for transportation disadvantaged populations within Hillsborough County (31 respondents).
- **Annual CTC Evaluation** surveys, to assess the reliability, service effectiveness, service efficiency, service availability, safety, and user input of Hillsborough County’s Community Transportation Coordinator (860 respondents in 2016 and 958 respondents in 2017).
- **Citizen evaluation** survey, to solicit feedback from the public on the service of MPO staff who assisted with questions or comments (13 respondents).
- **Walkability** survey to assess perceptions of the conduciveness of a route to pedestrian travel and determine perceptions of walkability (150 respondents).
- **MPO Committees Demographic Questionnaire** survey, to assess whether the MPO is meeting representative public involvement on its committees (41 respondents).
- **Brandon Corridors and Mixed-Use Centers** survey, to assess which development patterns citizens believe best accommodate expected growth in populations and jobs (701 respondents).
- **Northwest Hillsborough County Transit Study** survey, a collaboration between HART and the MPO, to collect feedback on transit improvements and respondent demographics (88 respondents).
- **Vision Zero Safety Concerns Map**, an online “Wikimapia” product, which allows members of the public to pinpoint locations of transportation-related safety concerns throughout the county (Over 400 respondents as of December 2017).
The MPO publishes all its reports online at PlanHillsborough.org. Prior to MPO Board adoption, these reports and documents are kept in draft status; once adopted, a date of adoption is added. At any time, visitors to a project page are encouraged to contact the project manager through an email link or send general questions to planner@plancom.org, which is then distributed to the appropriate staff member for response. Several project pages also contain links to surveys, off-site information pages, and public comment forms. The presence of these additional resources is determined by the needs of the project.

Increasing Public Participation Efforts with Minorities, Low-Income Individuals, and the Transportation Disadvantaged

Ensuring the MOE report reflects representative public involvement

The Public Participation Plan 2018 Update will be provided to a member of the public to review for readability.

Developing maps with updated, community-specific demographic and socioeconomic data within the MPO’s geographic boundaries

In conjunction with the Center for Urban Transportation Research at USF, MPO staff participated in the development of Communities of Concern maps during the 2016-2017 cycle. Communities of Concern supplements Environmental Justice as an expanded set of disadvantage-linked characteristics to acknowledge those who may face unique and often overwhelming obstacles related to transportation and engagement in MPO participation processes. A Community of Concern is any block group at least one standard deviation above the median in two or more of the following characteristics:

- Minority population
- Elderly population
- Limited English Proficiency population
- Disability
- Zero vehicle households
- Youth
- Income

Maps detailing the distribution of Communities of Concern and Environmental Justice populations are available in the MPO’s 2018 Title VI/Nondiscrimination Plan.

Listing all MPO committee members’ demographic data

As part of the 2016 Public Participation Plan, MPO staff collected demographic data to determine whether committee demography reflected that of Hillsborough County. The MPO distributed optional surveys to its committee members to determine committee representativeness. This survey yielded 41 responses and was published as an appendix to the 2016 Public Participation Plan.
Participation opportunities offered to American Indian entities

The MPO continued to ensure that tribe contacts received agenda packets and Transportation Improvement Plan documents in 2016 and 2017. These contacts also receive newsletters and invitations to participate in special surveys and studies. A staff member from the Seminole Tribe of Florida contacted the MPO after receiving the Transportation Improvement Program for 2017/18-2021/22 in July 2017 and requested future updates on these projects as well as consultation on any project requiring Section 106 consultation under the National Historic Preservation Act. The staff member further requested that the Tribal Historic Preservation Office be contacted if any archaeological, historical, or burial resources are inadvertently discovered. The MPO has taken steps to ensure that these requests are fulfilled in a complete and timely manner.
Chapter 5: Public Interest & Feedback

Feedback through Comment Cards, Surveys and Oral Comments

Feedback from the public was received via several sources in 2016-2017: community events, public hearings, meetings, comment cards, the PlanHillsborough.org website, walk-ins from visitors, phone calls, emails, Twitter, and Facebook.

The MPO received 13 comment cards related to the quality of staff services, speed of service, and satisfaction with information received during the 2016-2017 cycle. Overall, more than 85% of citizens rated their satisfaction in each of these metrics as “excellent”.

In 2016 and 2017 the MPO received approximately 450 emails and letters, with the clear majority being received in the lead-up to the annual TIP hearing. The most frequent topics of these comments included the TBX and Tampa Bay NEXT projects, traffic conditions on I-275, and the proposed widening of Lithia Pinecrest Road.

Annual Evaluation of the Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC)

Every year, an assessment of transportation disadvantaged services in Hillsborough County is undertaken to determine if these services are meeting client needs. The Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board’s Evaluation Subcommittee developed two client satisfaction surveys and administers them to existing door-to-door and bus pass clients on an annual basis.

To encourage participation in this survey, the cover letter and survey questions are distributed in both English and Spanish, and pre-addressed postage-paid return envelopes are provided.

The 2016 CTC Evaluation Client survey received a total of 860 responses. The 2017 survey received 958 responses. With a 97% approval rating for 2016 and 96% approval for 2017, respondents generally felt satisfied with door-to-door transportation and believed it improved their independence and quality of life.

TIP Hearing Comment Content Analysis

To analyze written public comments on the TIP received during and prior to the 2016 and 2017 TIP hearings, staff employed NVivo qualitative data analysis software. This software is used to provide greater detail about the public’s opinions toward the content of the annual TIP. The results of these analyses were included in the addendum documents to the TIP in both 2016 and 2017.

Visitors to MPO websites and MPO documents

Internet and mobile connectivity of American citizens continued to grow over the two-year evaluation period. According to Pew Research, the percentage of American adults owning a cellphone has grown to 95% (from 92% in the previous evaluation period), and the percentage of mobile users who own a smartphone has grown to 77% (from 67%)³. Approximately 12% of American adults are smartphone-only users and do

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not have broadband at home, and approximately 51% of the US population has no landline phone at home⁴.

Although internet connectivity is growing, citizens who make use of the internet to become involved with the MPO are not necessarily representative of the public at large. Therefore, while the MPO has expanded its online opportunities to connect with the agency, it has retained the use of traditional in-person, phone, and mail comment opportunities as well.

**Website Streamlining and Additions**

From 2016-2017, the MPO made improvements to usability on the PlanHillsborough.org website. Staff began to make report chapter titles more referential to promote more relevant search results. These reports are also often disaggregated by chapter on the website to help documents load faster for those with limited connections or low data capacities.

Additionally, the MPO has expanded the number of interactive maps its features on the PlanHillsborough.org website. The Planning Information Map App (PIMA) is updated yearly with new Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) projects, and the MPO continues to host a bicycle suitability map and a map of traffic count stations. In this evaluation period the MPO introduced a Vision Zero map application that allows members of the public to report and provide details about dangerous corridors and intersections across the county, and a Health Atlas that shows health and health-related information at a sub-county scale across Hillsborough County. The agency also supported Innovation Place (Ip) efforts in north Tampa through a Ip Development Activity map, which shows the redevelopment area, location of Ip partners, and status of developments.

The PlanHillsborough.org website continues to be updated to keep information on projects and meetings current. The front page includes a list of all upcoming MPO committee meetings and hearings, and a slider bar at the top of the page is updated frequently to feature new projects.

**Most Viewed Web Pages**

There were an estimated 439,538 webpage hits on PlanHillsborough.org across 2016 and 2017, and a 36% increase in page views between 2016 and 2017. This increase is partially attributable to the PlanHillsborough webpage’s hosting of interactive FEMA flood zone maps, which had 32,951 pageviews primarily during the days preceding landfall of Hurricane Irma in September 2017. This webpage was the highest-visited webpage on PlanHillsborough.org.

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in 2017. However, even when subtracting out the FEMA flood zone maps webpage views, the number of webpage views increased by 18.3% between 2016 and 2017. The most visited MPO-related webpages in 2016 and 2017 are shown in Table 12.

Table 12: Most Viewed Webpages in 2016 and 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.planhillsborough.org/metropolitan-planning-organization-mpo/">http://www.planhillsborough.org/metropolitan-planning-organization-mpo/</a></td>
<td>11,000</td>
<td>9,300</td>
<td>-15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.planhillsborough.org/traffic-counts/">http://www.planhillsborough.org/traffic-counts/</a></td>
<td>2,125</td>
<td>3,634</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.planhillsborough.org/vision-zero/">http://www.planhillsborough.org/vision-zero/</a></td>
<td>998</td>
<td>3,612</td>
<td>262%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The average website visitor spends 1 minute and 41 seconds on the webpage as of 2017, a slight increase from the 1 minute and 33 seconds in the previous reporting period.

Social Networks

The MPO continued to expand its use of social media in 2016 and 2017, including Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. Social media was used to promote public notices, advance stories of transportation interest in Hillsborough County, and detail events.

Facebook

In 2010 the MPO established a Facebook page, which was joined by a Vision Zero Hillsborough page in December 2016. These pages are used to promote news stories, events, newsletters, and meetings of interest to the public. Combined, these pages have approximately 950 followers as of 2017. Public comments made on these pages were forwarded to MPO staff for response and shared with MPO Board members at the following Board meeting.

Continuing from 2015, the MPO hosted a Facebook event one week prior to each MPO Board meeting in 2016 and 2017. This event allowed the public to comment online and have their comments shared during the MPO Board meeting.

The @HillsboroughMPO Facebook page had 208 posts or shares in 2016-2017, resulting in over 95,000 impressions (timeline views) and nearly 3,000 engagements (likes, comments, shares and photo views) with users. The number of engagements made with users rose slightly (2.2%) between 2016 and 2017. Posts with the highest number of user engagements in 2016 and 2017 are shown in Table 13. The content of all Facebook posts made during this period are contained in Appendices 4 (2016) and 5 (2017).
Table 13: @HillsboroughMPO Posts with Top Facebook Interactions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Post content</th>
<th>Number of engagements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>June 2016 MPO Board Meeting Event (Annual TIP Hearing)</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>June 2016 MPO Board Meeting Thank-you Post</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>March 2016 MPO Board Meeting Event</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Second Place High School Student Walk Bike Safety Contest PSA Video</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>#TBT to last year’s Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council Future of the Region</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Year of Action Plan Workshop 3 – Paint Saves Lives Photo Album</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We’re making great strides on our #GardenSteps for the #HealthiestCitiesChallenge!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Bullard Parkway Complete StreetsStudy is currently underway</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>Hillsborough Area Regional Transit’s 2017 Florida #Automated #Vehicles #Summit was a big success!</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>#VisionZERO813</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vision Zero Action Plan Workshop 3 – Paint Saves Lives Photo Album</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We’re making great strides on our #GardenSteps for the #HealthiestCitiesChallenge!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Bullard Parkway Complete StreetsStudy is currently underway</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The @VisionZeroHillsborough page, which launched in December 2016, had 100 posts or shares within the evaluation period. Posts or shares made on this page have resulted in almost 60,000 impressions and over 2,300 engagements since the page launched. Table 14 shows the leading posts by engagement on the @VisionZeroHillsborough Facebook page. All posts made by the @VisionZeroHillsborough Facebook page between 2016 and 2017 are listed in Appendix 6.

Table 14: @VisionZeroHillsborough Posts with Top Facebook Interactions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Post content</th>
<th>Number of engagements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>November 20, 2017</td>
<td>Walk/bike improvements to Kennedy Boulevard</td>
<td>228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2, 2017</td>
<td>Report on death along Hillsborough Avenue east of 50th Street</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 29, 2017</td>
<td>Announcement of safety improvements at Florida Avenue and Tampa Street</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 26, 2017</td>
<td>Fix to Temple Terrace bike lane and its impact on traffic deaths</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 30, 2017</td>
<td>Richard Retting’s report on distracted driving</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Twitter

As with Facebook, the Hillsborough MPO continued utilizing Twitter to bring attention to transportation topics of interest, events, and notices. In December 2017 the Hillsborough MPO had 6,115 followers, an increase of 23% from the prior period. The Hillsborough MPO is one of the most followed MPOs in the country, with followers including citizens, elected officials, candidates, journalists, bloggers, local businesses, professionals, non-profits, advocates, and other planning organizations.

The @HillsboroughMPO Twitter account had 1,070 tweets between January 2016 and December 2017, and had approximately 2,000 profile visits per month in the same period. In several months of this evaluation cycle a Twitter post made or retweeted by the @HillsboroughMPO account had over 5,000 user impressions. The Hillsborough MPO was mentioned, on average, 100 times per month in tweets made or retweeted by others, with the number of mentions generally surging during the months leading up to the annual summer TIP hearing.
Chapter 6: Public Input Results

During this evaluation period the MPO continued to bolster current ways and determine new avenues to have meaningful input. Comments were received from a variety of sources, ranging from mobile and desktop devices to phone calls and letters. The MPO attempted to respond to all requests for information and questions in a timely manner. When appropriate, the MPO staff recommended that implementing agencies work closely with affected stakeholders to address specific needs or concerns associated with future projects.

Extensive public outreach efforts conducted for major initiatives and studies during 2016 and 2017 were designed to seek the public’s input early and continuously. Public and stakeholder involvement was crucial in identifying issues, developing goals and objectives, proposing alternatives, and prioritizing strategies. These efforts are to maximize the likelihood that final products have broad community support when brought to the MPO for adoption, and reduce the likelihood that plans and studies need to undertake extensive revisions. Some of the highlights of public input in the MPO’s initiatives and studies are summarized below.

Major MPO projects with substantial public input

Vision Zero

Setting a goal of reducing the number of severe crashes in Hillsborough County to zero, the staff of the MPO along with a coalition of over 25 partners spanning the public and private sectors hosted four workshops and multiple supporting events to create a Vision Zero Action Plan between 2016 and 2017. Hillsborough’s Vision Zero began as a grassroots effort by local roadway safety advocates, led by Walk Bike Tampa, who pushed for adoption of Vision Zero resolutions after the death of a Chamberlain High School student who was killed by a car when walking to school.

Public input was sought through an interactive safety concerns Wikimapia on the Vision Zero landing page, which has generated over 400 comments as of August 2017. Wikimapia allows users to add points to a map and describe those points, which are then visible to anyone else who visits that map. Public-identified hotspots show issues of unsafe driving, missing bicycle facilities and sidewalks, and unsafe speeds in areas throughout the county. Additional input was sought through feedback at workshops and a “share your story” feature online and in printed materials. Vision Zero had a presence at over 40 events hosted or attended by the MPO between 2016 and 2017, and staff distributed thousands of promotional and informational materials created to spread word about the initiative.
Vision Zero builds on and supports existing collaborations and citizen-led initiatives, such as the Paint the Intersection program which encourages communities to install traffic-calming murals at intersections and the School Safety Program which brings together FDOT, Hillsborough County, the MPO, Hillsborough County School Board, and Hillsborough County’s cities to perform road safety audits and identify safety strategies around schools. Vision Zero is coordinated with existing safe streets groups such as the Hillsborough Community Traffic Safety Team, Bike Walk Tampa Bay, and Walk Bike Tampa.

Between October 2016 and August 2017, the Vision Zero coalition hosted four public workshops to develop goals and actions for four action tracks. The Paint Saves Lives track pursued low-cost short-term investments in retrofitting and providing pop-up treatments for some of the highest-need corridors and intersections. One Message, Many Voices developed public education strategies and determined effective mediums for implementing those strategies. The Consistent and Fair track pursued community-level education and engineering to reduce dangerous behavior by all road users. The Future Will Not Be Like the Past track pursued changing professional culture that tends to perpetuate problems in the building of new roads and developments. The public, public officials, and representatives from the coalition attended Vision Zero’s four workshops to contribute to these action tracks and receive input from a diverse range of road users. The Vision Zero Action Plan, developed in 2017, features strategies and measures of success developed at the four workshop sessions.

To support the initiative, MPO staff participated in several public events related to Vision Zero. Staff participated in the May 2017 Ride of Silence in Curtis Hixon Park, honoring bicyclists who have been killed on roadways and bringing awareness to prevent future accidents. A Walk of Silence in October 2017 took a pedestrian focus, honoring Alexis Miranda and other pedestrian victims of traffic violence. Action Plan presentations to the Plant City Commission, City-County Planning Commission, Hillsborough MPO, Tampa City Council, City of Plant City, Bloomingdale Homeowners’ Association, Hillsborough County School Board, and FDOT District 7 offices permitted opportunities for additional public comment.

**Brandon Corridors & Mixed-Use Centers Pilot Project**

A collaboration between the Planning Commission and MPO, the Brandon Corridors & Mixed-Use Centers Pilot Project attracted hundreds of public comments and survey responses between late 2016 and 2017.

The purpose of the study was to coordinate land use and transportation planning along major corridors in the Brandon Study Area. In early 2017 community stakeholders were invited to participate in a survey to identify development patterns and rank mobility concerns within the Brandon Study Area, which acquired over 700 responses. These surveys revealed that the community preferred compact urban centers in the northwest of the study area along Brandon Boulevard, with connected urban centers elsewhere. Five community meetings followed, with two focused on the business community and three on the community at large. The final community engagement meeting on
October 30, 2017 attracted 125 residents, business owners, and interested parties. The public was also given opportunity to comment on the final study at any of the seven committee presentations held at the County Center Building in downtown Tampa, which are scheduled at various times and days throughout the week to enable maximum opportunities for public attendance.

Input from the public participation process had a significant impact on the final recommendations of the study. Stakeholder and business input for more frequent bus service, road widenings, intersection and pedestrian safety improvements, and better or new connections were directly adopted into final recommendations. An initial suggestion for a reversible lane along Bloomingdale Avenue was met with concern from the business community about safety for all users and the loss of ability to make left hand turns during peak hours, and was ultimately removed from the final series of recommendations in lieu of improvements to key intersections along Bloomingdale Ave.

**Bullard Parkway Complete Streets Study**

The Bullard Parkway Complete Streets Study was conducted in 2017 and sought to identify alternative options for all users of Bullard Parkway from 56th Street N to Morris Bridge Road. The study team conducted workshops and meetings with City of Temple Terrace staff and City Council, Hillsborough County staff, Hillsborough MPO staff, and residents and business owners in Temple Terrace.

These meetings and workshops, along with recorded comments collected throughout the study period, identified a list of improvement needs such as additional bicycle infrastructure along Woodard Bridge, wider bike lanes with more regular trash removal, and lowering speed limits from 78th Street to Woodard Bridge. Additional public recommendations for intersection changes at Riverchase Drive and golf cart usage along Bullard Parkway were considered within this project as well.

**Tampa Bay Express and Tampa Bay NEXT Projects**

From 2016-2017, FDOT continued work on a traffic management concept via dynamically-tolled express lanes to reduce congestion on I-275 and I-4. Initially called Tampa Bay Express (TBX), FDOT re-launched this initiative as Tampa Bay NEXT in 2017 due to calls for a more collaborative and transparent conversation about the project at the regional and community levels. This reset came with a re-consideration of dynamic express lanes along with other mobility concepts for I-275 and I-4 including a beltway, boulevard conversion, and elevated and reversible lanes.
The MPO participated in ten TBX community engagement meetings during the first half of 2016, drawing in participants from neighborhoods located within TBX study boundaries. Engagement continued in 2017 with additional community meetings as well as MPO attendance at FDOT’s community working group events, held twice for each of six impacted community areas identified by FDOT.

The MPO ensured that citizens had a variety of ways to submit public comment about the TIP hearings, including the TBX (in 2016) and Tampa Bay NEXT (in 2017) projects. Individuals could submit public comments to the MPO Facebook page, via a phone call, in emails to MPO members, at public workshop meetings, and in-person at the public TIP meeting. Turnout at the 2016 TIP hearing, when measured by attendance, number of comments submitted, and number of public speakers, was the highest of any MPO Board meeting in recent history. Numerous organizations arose around TBX and participated, including Sunshine Citizens, the StopTBX coalition, Transit Now Tampa Bay, and YesTBX.

As part of the appendix to the TIP documents adopted in 2016 and 2017, MPO staff performed a content analysis of emailed and in-person comments made at the respective TIP hearings. Of the 281 emailed comments submitted in 2016, 205 (73%) of the comments were in support and 70 (25%) were opposed. The remaining six emails (2%) were miscellaneous comments that did not express approval or disapproval for TBX. While these numbers suggest significant support for the then-TBX project, the analysis revealed that 76% of those supportive comments were templated responses. Of the 70 comments opposed, only 13% were templated. A content analysis of comments made at the June 22, 2016 public hearing revealed that, of 132 speakers, 39 (29.5%) supported TBX, 67 disapproved of TBX (51%), and 26 (19.5%) comments were netural or critiqued the project but stopped short of outright approving or disapproving of the project.

In contrast, emailed comments leading up to the 2017 TIP hearing revealed a much more equal split in support (13) and disapproval (12). MPO staff continued to review the sentiment and themes of public comments at the 2017 public hearing, where there was significantly more disapproval for the project (45 speakers) than support for the project (10 speakers).

Among comments received, there were widely divergent reports of project costs, and a lack of public comments on specific phases. The analysis suggested that this missing information might be indicative of an uninformed public, or a public which lacks access to information about the project. Though collaboration with FDOT, such as the Citizens Academy online video series and the aforementioned regional workshops, both agencies have attempted to better communicate the estimated project costs, phases of the project, and clarify the roles of participants in the process.

The MPO Board voted 12-4 in 2016 to approve the 2016/2017-2020/2021 TIP, with the following conditions on inclusion of TBX:

- A structure of continued communication and feedback whereby FDOT officials regularly update the board on TBX, answer questions, and provide updates on mitigation efforts, community engagement, and status of the Project Development and Environment (PD&E) study.

- A presentation from FDOT on the Re-evaluation Study to the MPO prior to a Public Hearing in Spring 2017 to include considerations and commitments that FDOT is prepared to make, including toll lanes review, design elements, and formation of a community work
group, and that the document will remain open after the public hearing for a 14-day comment period to be followed by FDOT’s assessment of the public comments and input from the MPO, then finalizing the document before it is submitted for approval.

Additionally, the MPO Board requested additional information for making informed decisions in future years, including:

- A final study and report on human impacts and how to pay for replacing them, including a parcel map of all homes, apartments, and businesses, noting those that are considered affordable housing and how they are affected by the project.
- A final neighborhood mitigation plan for displaced residents and businesses, including design elements.
- Completed environmental impact studies for each segment, including the I-275/I-4 PD&E re-evaluation study.
- Traffic and revenue studies that would analyze and provide justification for toll lanes.
- Report on the FDOT-sponsored premium transit study conducted by HART, to include consideration of the CSX-owned rail corridors.
- Status updates on the Federal Civil Rights investigation of the TBX project.
- Losses to the City of Tampa in ad valorem tax revenue using FDOT’s most recent right-of-way acquisition map.
- Cost of operations and maintenance of any community impact mitigation treatments associated with TBX.
- Impact to air quality resulting from TBX prior to any MPO Board vote on funding for TBX segments 5, 6, 7, and 8.

The 2017/2018-2021/2022 TIP was adopted by a vote of 12 to 3 in June 2017.

In 2017, FDOT began a series of Tampa Bay NEXT Community Working Groups for six segments of the Tampa Bay region. The MPO participated in these events by presenting the MPO’s role and answering questions from the public. The Community Working Groups continue to meet to discuss the Tampa Bay NEXT process in 2018.

**Dale Mabry Pedestrian Overpass Technical Feasibility Analysis**

In 2017 the MPO studied the potential for a pedestrian overpass along Dale Mabry Highway crossing I-275. Developing several alternatives, the agency approached the Carver City-Lincoln Gardens Civic Association and the MPO’s committees to assist with assessing the alternatives. This input combined with technical analysis to ultimately recommend a connection directly south of I-275.
Northwest Hillsborough County Transit Study

A collaboration between HART and the MPO, the purpose of the Northwest Hillsborough County Transit Study was to evaluate transit service and characteristics in Northwest Hillsborough County and develop service improvements to tie into HART’s 2017 Transit Development Plan update. The public was engaged through outreach at the Northwest Transfer Center, Town ‘n’ Country Library, and Bravo! Supermarket, fliers left at libraries, HART staff engagement with passengers along study routes, and a link to the survey posted on the MPO’s website as well as sent to neighborhood associations and community groups within the area. This survey yielded 88 responses among respondents who are generally regular transit users.

Respondents to the survey favored an extension of Route 34 to Oldsmar, supported increased frequency along Route 16, were generally supportive of improvements along Route 61 LX, were favorable toward a new route on Ehrlich Road and Bearss Avenue, and supported first mile and last mile service. These results were incorporated into the report’s recommendations, listed below.

- Route 34 Increased Frequency and Extension to Oldsmar
- Route 16 Increase from 40-minute to 30-minute Headways
- Route 61 LX Realignment and Expansion to Pasco County
- New route on Ehrlich Road/Bearss Avenue

Walk-Bike Plan for the City of Tampa Phase V

Walk-Bike Phase V continued work begun in Phase III to develop a continuous perimeter trail linking downtown Tampa to eleven Tampa neighborhoods as well as the Hillsborough River. This study was unique among the MPO’s 2016-2017 studies as it was community-initiated, with the ten-neighborhood Green Artery Team providing much of the original support for the study. The MPO continued its public outreach efforts during and following the study phase, presenting trail options for public consideration. Walk-Bike Plan Phase V ultimately produced a continuous trail map based on user input and technical viability.
School Transportation Safety Study

The MPO began a School Safety Study in 2017 to identify and prioritize school areas in need of multimodal safety reviews. This study was preceded by a Getting to School Survey, which was distributed by the Hillsborough County School District to almost 200,000 households with school-aged children. The survey sought to determine demographics, aspects of the student’s commute, interest in commuting offerings, and student requests. The results of this survey, combined with other data such as the locations of Communities of Concern, school-area pedestrian and bicycle crash history, and the number of students residing in the area, helped to inform priorities for multimodal safety reviews. This study ultimately produced a list of ten school areas for further review, and input from parents, principals and school administrators. Field reviews and recommendations for safety improvements will be forthcoming in 2018.

Innovation Gateway Concept Plan

Between 2016 and 2017, the MPO worked alongside Innovation Place to refine visions for makeovers of the Fowler Avenue/I-275 and Busch Boulevard/I-275 interchanges into Innovation Gateways. In Phase I, the MPO developed preliminary design concepts for themed gateway statements at the intersections which communicated a sense of entry and innovation. Tasks in this phase involved brainstorming with the Innovation Alliance Board and Innovation District Master Plan Joint Planning Group Technical Committee, coordination with the FDOT District 7 Design Engineer related to the Community Aesthetic Features permit, preparing preliminary concepts for each interchange, developing a Preliminary Order of Magnitude Cost Estimate, and producing a final report.

The second phase of the Innovation Gateway Concept Plan sought to refine design concepts for the themed gateway statements. A public meeting was held in April 2017 in conjunction with presentations on the Fowler Avenue Streetscape project, where a sticker board allowed the public to vote on which 4 of the eleven enhancements they felt would be a priority for these interchanges. These sticker boards were also made available to the MPO’s BPAC, CAC, TAC, and LRC committees at their May 2017 meetings, the Innovation Place Advisory Board, and at the University Area Community Development Corporation’s Community Safety Action Plan Kick-Off event in June 2017. This public feedback culminated in a series of planned enhancements for the interchanges, including:

- Underbridge LED lighting
- Pedestrian lighting
- Enhanced crosswalks
- Public art
- Structural gateway elements
• Retaining walls and associated landscaping (at the I-275/Fowler interchange)
• Relocated/replaced CSX fence and associated art panels (at the I-275/Busch interchange)
• Extensive landscaping (at the I-275/Busch interchange)
Chapter 7: Refining the Public Participation Process

Periodic public involvement process surveys and citizen service feedback
In the past, the MPO has conducted periodic public involvement process surveys with its committees. Although the agency did not conduct any surveys of this nature in the 2016-2017 cycle, it continued to solicit general feedback from the public in situations where staff provided assistance in answering questions. MPO staff received 13 citizen evaluations between August 2016 and December 2017, with the majority (85%) rating the MPO’s overall quality of service with respect to other agencies and businesses as “excellent”.

Federal Certification Review
The Hillsborough MPO participated in its four-year federal certification review in April 2017, which ensures that the county remains eligible for federal funding for transportation improvements. The review, which was conducted by officials at the Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration and FDOT, positively cited the MPO for several “noteworthy practices”:

- Vision Zero plan
- Unique MPO activities in the Unified Planning Work Program
- Outreach and participation opportunities for the underserved
- Performance-based scenario planning in the LRTP
- Performance measures in the congestion management process
- Development of a planning information map for the TIP
- A screening tool for TIP priority projects in the TIP
- Leveraging resources, transportation goals and objectives in TMA regional coordination

The MPO did not receive any corrective actions in this review, but did receive public participation-related recommendations. These recommendations include evaluating the participation process to determine when a public meeting versus public hearing is necessary, adding an interactive planning acronym list to the Public Participation Plan, and updating the Title VI Inclusivity Plan.

The MPO responded to the latter recommendation by beginning to update its Title VI/Nondiscrimination Plan in late 2017. It reviewed its PPP and PlanHillsborough.org website to ensure that the differences between public hearings and meetings are expressed correctly, and will clarify those differences more explicitly in the 2018 PPP update. The MPO is currently exploring technological solutions for a searchable glossary of planning terms and acronyms, which the agency will implement in its 2045 LRTP update. The agency also implemented new software to present the 2040 LRTP online document in a “flip book” format, which allows the document to be searched with relevant search terms highlighted for the user.
New and existing regional participation opportunities

Tampa Bay Transportation Management Area Leadership Group (TMA)

The TMA Leadership Group is an advisory group comprising three members of the Hillsborough, Pasco, and Pinellas MPO boards as voting members, along with non-voting advisors from FDOT and TBARTA. The purpose of the Leadership Group is to develop regional consensus priorities for the TMA, including the allocation of federal and state funds. This group meets once every other month to discuss traffic movements between major cross-county transportation markets to ensure the Tampa Bay metropolitan area speaks with one voice on regional transportation prioritization issues and the use of financial resources. The TMA Leadership Group recommends regional priority projects on a recurring basis. All TMA meetings are open to the public and invite public comment.

TBARTA West Central Florida MPO Chairs’ Coordinating Committee

Tampa Bay Area Regional Transportation Authority (TBARTA) and the Central Florida MPO Chairs Coordinating Committee (CCC) continued work to align efforts and prevent duplication in creating a combined regional master plan and regional LRTP. The CCC was created by statute in 1993 to coordinate regionally-significant projects and decisions, and institute a conflict resolution process. The CCC Board includes the Chairs of the area’s five MPOs and one TPO, who are voting members, and non-voting members from FDOT Districts 1 and 7, the Florida Turnpike Enterprise, TBARTA, and the Central Florida, Tampa Bay, and Southwest Florida Regional Planning Councils. The CCC meets twice a year and approves current and future regional priority projects on an annual basis. All meetings are open to the public and invite public comment. In 2017, the Hillsborough MPO funded an update of the TBARTA CCC Regional PPP, expected to be completed in 2018.

Regional Big Data Working Group

The Hillsborough MPO began hosting a twice-annual Regional Big Data Working Group (RBDWG) in May 2017. The purpose of the RBDWG is to bring together transportation and ITS professionals to help collaboratively solve the Tampa Bay region’s transportation systems management and operations problems as well as tackle general data issues facing the region. The kickoff event in May 2017 attracted 21 attendees and discussed issues of multimodal transportation, spatial data analysis, and data management. The group is overseeing an effort to establish a data portal to compile and make transportation data available to the public.

Follow-up on recommendations from the last Measures of Effectiveness report

The previous MPO Measures of Effectiveness report covered the period of January 1, 2014 through December 31, 2015. Below are the recommendations from that report and their status.
1. **Seek feedback that is immediate and project specific**, by asking questions such as “was this informative and helpful to you?” at the conclusion of every survey or public meeting sponsored by the MPO. This would be in lieu of conducting periodic polls on the effectiveness of public engagement. *(Continued from 2012/2013 and 2014/2015 Measures of Effectiveness Reports.)*

The MPO strives to ask attendees at the end of every meeting whether the information provided was informative and helpful to them. This enables the MPO to refine its message to improve understanding and engagement with participants at subsequent meetings. Additional recommendations for obtaining and analyzing public feedback on specific projects is contained in Chapter 8: Summary, Results and Recommendations.

2. **Increase public participation efforts with minorities, low-income individuals, and the transportation disadvantaged.**

In late 2017 the MPO was in the final stages of producing an update to its Title VI/Nondiscrimination Plan. This update contains an evaluation of recent efforts undertaken to ensure representation and diversity among MPO committees and equity in the planning process. These efforts include county-wide mapping of environmental justice areas and disadvantaged demographics, as well as the recent designation of seats on the Citizens Advisory Committee to represent racial, ethnic, age and gender-based minority groups.

The MPO continued translating key documents into Spanish during the 2016-2017 cycle. These translated documents include the entirety of the 2040 LRTP, the adopted FY 16-17 and FY 17-18 TIP documents, the 2016 Public Participation Plan, and others. As part of the 2045 LRTP update, the MPO will translate key messaging and marketing materials into different dialects of Spanish. Translation will be provided for speakers of other non-English languages as requested.

Between December 2016 and February 2017, the MPO conducted a committee demographic questionnaire to collect information on the representativeness of its committees. This survey yielded 41 responses to questions regarding gender, age, race, disability status, and eligibility for governmental assistance as a proxy indicator for household income. The data culminated in a report assessing the MPO’s board and seven committees on composition of race and age for all eight of the MPO’s committees, and proportion of disabled persons on the Livable Roadways Committee, Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee, and Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board.

The MPO will distribute a draft of the Public Participation Plan 2018 Update to a member of the public to review for inclusivity and readability, in addition to seeking feedback from its committees.
and subcommittees. This effort is to ensure that the report is understandable to a range of members of the public.

3. Continue to improve public participation and cooperation with our agency partners through **better education about the planning and project implementation processes**.

The MPO has strived to work closer with collaborating agencies to promote information about its role in the transportation planning process. Over the last two years the MPO has worked with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to provide the public with information about the LRTP, FDOT’s role, and the Tampa Bay NEXT proposal.

As a component of the agency’s Tampa Bay NEXT public engagement, FDOT has begun a webinar series called the Citizens Transportation Academy. This six-webinar series contains information on the metropolitan planning process, how transportation projects are funded, and regional transportation roles and responsibilities, among others. The content of these videos is derived from public priorities heard at FDOT’s Community Working Groups and public outreach events.

The public notices for the 2016 and 2017 TIP public hearings contained lists of major projects within the TIP that were derived from interest among the public. Furthermore, the MPO has published newsletter articles providing further detail about some of the most significant projects.

In addition, early-stage presentations on the MPO’s 2045 LRTP update have provided information about how the LRTP identifies priority projects for funding, how it derives from local comprehensive plans and identifies priorities for the TIP, how it is implemented through the FDOT Five Year Work Program and other capital improvement programs, and how it is coordinated with other regional MPOs. This information is intended to promote the value of this document and participation among members of the public in shaping regional transportation priorities. To kickstart the launch of the 2045 LRTP, a Poll Everywhere phone survey provided to the MPO’s committees in late 2017 helped to identify the drivers of change in affecting growth, strategies for accommodating population growth, and information on where to focus transportation resources.

4. **Continue to expand use of technology designed to facilitate public participation**, such as “virtual” meetings, workshops or hearings, and telephone call-in lines to enable the public to participate remotely from their home or workplace.

During the agency’s 2016 and 2017 annual TIP hearings, MPO staff continued utilizing an online GoToMeeting streaming platform that enabled viewers to view the hearing and provide comments in real-time. This effort joined a Facebook page launched prior to the hearing which allowed citizens to provide comments that would be distributed to MPO board members.

In June 2017, MPO staff launched a Facebook Live video stream which provided citizens an additional option to
remotely view and comment on the annual TIP public hearing. Furthermore, the event was streamed on YouTube via the Hillsborough County TV profile. These efforts complemented existing traditional opportunities to provide remote comment, such as a dedicated voicemail line for TIP comments and written, mailed input.

New layperson-friendly technology continued to be introduced in 2016 and 2017 to complement MPO outreach efforts. The public PIMA Mapping Tool, which allows citizens to view information about both mapped and unmapped TIP projects, relaunched in 2016 with usability improvements. The Vision Zero initiative used a citizen-driven safety concerns mapping tool, which allows users to pinpoint locations of missing sidewalks, missing or unsafe bike facilities, unsafe crossings, excessive driving speeds, and general opportunities for improvement. Users can add comments to these designations, providing additional detail for their concerns. As of December 2017, over 400 members of the public have provided safety concern information through this tool.

5. **Publicize interactive tools and comment forms available on MPO or project-specific web pages** to maximize public feedback.

Both social media and MPO newsletters were utilized to spread information about interactive tools, comment forms, and surveys during 2016 and 2017. Twitter and Facebook were used to promote the Brandon Corridors & Mixed-Use Centers Pilot Project public survey in early 2017, with many related Twitter posts receiving over 1,000 impressions contributing to a total of over 700 completed surveys. Twitter was also utilized to promote Facebook events to collect online comments regarding MPO Board public meetings. The MPO further provided social media support for comment pages on projects produced by partner agencies, such as retweeting FDOT’s 5 Year Work Program and HART’s 2017 “Mission MAX” bus route overhaul. Both the MPO’s newsletters and the later consolidated agency-wide newsletter contained links to provide comments on the Tampa-Hillsborough Greenways and Trails Plan Update, Brandon Corridors & Mixed-Use Centers Pilot Project survey, and other projects.

Vision Zero featured prominently in regional advertising efforts, including a radio PSA produced by Cox Media Group Tampa and student-produced videos on walk-bike safety. Brendan McLaughlin, formerly of ABC Action News, recorded a 45-second radio advertisement that encouraged listeners to visit PlanHillsborough.org to learn more about the initiative. This advertisement complemented media stories on TampaBay.com, 83DegreesMedia.com, and other news websites, as well as Vision Zero workshop coverage aired on local television stations such as Bay News 9 and ABC Action News. This
advertising helped to cause a surge in attendance across Vision Zero’s year-long workshop schedule, increasing the number of attendees from 50 at the first event to 80 at the fourth event. These multi-channel outreach efforts contributed to an increase in the number of community pledges, individuals interacting with the safety concern map, and has inspired several attendees to participate in a speaker’s bureau to spread the Vision Zero message at events across the county.
Chapter 8: Summary, Results & Recommendations
Notable Successes in Public Engagement

1. **Vision Zero**: Hillsborough County’s Vision Zero project was a successful collaboration between over 25 public and private entities, drawing in elected officials, the business community and citizens to determine how to reduce the county’s high number of fatal and severe injury-producing crashes to zero. Over 250 participants in four action tracks helped to shape the Action Plan, which was adopted by Hillsborough County and the cities of Tampa, Temple Terrace, and Plant City in 2017. Following intense support from the public and private businesses, Vision Zero continues to be supported by dozens of representatives from the coalition through a speaker’s bureau and pop-up events.

2. **School Transportation Working Group (STWG)**: The MPO formed a School Transportation Working Group (STWG) comprised of school board members and elected officials aimed at tackling issues of traffic circulation, walk/bike safety, school-pools, and transit. This committee joins previous efforts aimed at enhancing the lines of communication between schools and the MPO, such as the addition of a Hillsborough County School Board member as a voting member of the MPO Board. STWG is a springboard for connecting the MPO with parents and students to get their input on planning issues such as school busing, safe routes to schools, and Vision Zero, among others. The MPO has collected input through STWG and a presence at school-related events such as the School Choice Expo, Parent University, and the Back to School Health Fair.

3. **Continued FDOT Collaboration**: The MPO and FDOT worked together to develop better educational materials and more thoroughly handle public requests for information through projects such as FDOT’s Citizens Transportation Academy.

**Expanding the MPO’s following**

The MPO continued to expand its engagement efforts with the public in 2016 and 2017, with more participants taking part in committee meetings and the MPO attending more events than ever before. The MPO’s 2016 TIP Public Hearing attracted 395 attendees, the highest of any MPO hearing in recent history. More members of the public followed and engaged with the MPO on Twitter and Facebook compared to the previous two-year period, and the number of subscribers to the agency’s online publications and notices grew as well.

The MPO once again received the **All Star Award** from Constant Contact, Inc. in 2016 and 2017. The All Star Award is provided to the top 10% of Constant Contact, Inc’s businesses and nonprofits, recognizing them for success in engaging their customers. Qualifications include consistently high open rates, click-through rates, and low bounce rates.

**Making it Easier to Participate**

The MPO continued to host committee meetings and events that took place on a variety of dates and times to ensure that the public had an opportunity to attend and comment. Both the 2016 and 2017 TIP Public Hearings took place in the evening, and the MPO operated a dedicated phone line in the week leading up to the event to allow the public to call in and leave comments. The MPO continued to operate Facebook event pages in the week leading up to the hearings to solicit comments on the TIP documents, and live streamed the event in 2017 alongside a public chatroom which allowed the public additional opportunities to comment. Both events were also
streamed through the Hillsborough TV public access channel and the online GoToMeeting streaming service.

On its PlanHillsborough.org website, the MPO began disaggregating reports by chapter to help documents load faster and make searches more relevant. It continued to keep its meeting calendar up to date with the latest information about hearings and meetings, and provided downloadable agenda packets for each of its meetings at least one week prior to their occurrence.

During the earliest stage of its 2045 LRTP update in late 2017, the MPO continued the use of live-audience polling technology to solicit feedback to questions about transportation priorities from public meeting audiences and MPO committees. This technology allows users to vote for priorities through their cellphones, and is being piloted for a wider rollout during later stages of the update. The MPO collected over 6,000 surveys during its 2040 LRTP update, and has reflected on that experience to boost the number and range of participants in its 2045 update.

Recommendations to Enhance the Public Participation Program

Based on this review, the MPO’s Public Participation Plan has worked effectively during the 2016-2017 cycle. As the MPO is committed to continuous improvement and making the best use of limited resources, the following refinements are recommended:

1. **Seek feedback that is immediate and project specific**, by asking questions such as “was this informative and helpful to you?” at the conclusion of every survey or public meeting sponsored by the MPO. This would be in lieu of conducting periodic polls on the effectiveness of public engagement. *(Continued from 2012/2013 and 2014/2015 Measures of Effectiveness Reports.)*

For this Measures of Effectiveness update, MPO staff conducted a content review of how other transportation planning agencies across the country solicit public feedback and evaluate their own outreach efforts. Some of the standout recommendations are listed below.

- Collect contact information and survey participants after the project to determine whether they found the effort engaging, whether their time was valued, if they understood the goal and their role, and whether they felt their contribution was reflected in the final project.
- Conduct occasional staff meetings to determine what worked, what did not, and what could be improved upon in future outreach efforts. This can be combined with the MPO’s existing periodic reviews of the public participation log.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of various outreach tools, such as the project website, newsletter and comment cards, at engaging participants. The most effective engagement tools may be used as a primary means for evaluating the effectiveness of project-specific outreach efforts.
- Ask event attendees whether any other members of the public should have been invited to the event.
- Keep a log of comments received from individuals living in a Community of Concern.
It is crucial that the public understand a project or initiative, their role, and how their feedback may influence the process and/or outcomes. Soliciting feedback at the end of a meeting, even if it is as simple as asking participants to raise their hand if they found the event informative and helpful, and how it could be made more so, can help to ensure that the public is fully engaged in the task at hand. The MPO may consider the size and type of the event to determine the degree of public effort these involvement techniques will entail.

2. **Utilize new technology to inform** both a broader and more targeted range of participants about a plan, study or initiative taking place in their area.

Technology such as geofencing, which can send a text message or application pop-up when a user enters a defined transportation project area, or peer-to-peer messaging can be utilized to solicit greater public involvement in MPO projects and initiatives. Assuming user consent, these messages can be helpful at informing the public about a project and how to get involved. These techniques may supplement existing efforts, such as posting public hearing signs near project locations, to lead a greater proportion of the public to participate in the MPO’s studies.

3. **Promote a unified message for responding to citizen questions and concerns** about the 2045 LRTP, Regional Transit Feasibility Plan (RTFP), and Tampa Bay NEXT.

Citizens often cannot distinguish between various transportation planning initiatives, or see planning conducted by different agencies as an opportunity to engage with an amorphous “government.” MPO staff should develop a unified message, as well as coordinate resources with other agencies, to ensure that attendees at any meeting related to the 2045 LRTP, RTFP, and Tampa Bay NEXT can pose questions or comments on any of the three projects addressed. As these efforts are closely tied together, both in visibility and citizen engagement, citizens may have questions about one project that is a component of another. Therefore, the agency should develop a message and process to ensure that citizen input can be addressed in a standard format at any event related to the three projects.

4. **Coordinate data products** with FDOT and other agencies.

The PIMA Mapping Tool hosted by Plan Hillsborough contains many of the same projects as FDOT District 7’s own mapping tool for projects in their five-year work program, although PIMA also includes local projects. The MPO may benefit from reduced overlap and better coordination among products by holding more frequent debriefs with FDOT and any other agencies that provide data product tools. The MPO may also benefit from developing a way to enable the public to submit comments on specific projects in PIMA.

5. **Provide a glossary of acronyms and reduce acronym use** for major planning documents and in presentations.
To increase readability among the public, the MPO may benefit by decreasing the use of acronyms in documents and/or provide a link to a glossary explaining these terms in every major planning document. The MPO may also consider phasing out the use of acronyms in documents intended for the public.

6. **Empower individuals from the community through training and/or one-on-one sessions.**

To improve communication with the public regarding MPO processes and as a means of relationship-building, the MPO might consider offering additional training, orientations, and one-on-one learning opportunities. Continuing the Citizens Transportation Academy on a permanent basis may be one option to kickstart these enhanced learning opportunities. In the MPO staff’s volunteer activities, such as their yearly participation in the Women Build project, staff may consider drawing from a volunteer list of public participants to engage in fun and meaningful community-building activities.

7. **Routinely research best practices** on how to engage and empower the community, craft program messaging, conducting meeting in a way that makes individuals feel valued, and solicit feedback to incorporate best practices into current practices.

The MPO might develop internal reviews of how their programs are being perceived by the community, construct metrics of engagement, and solicit both internal and public feedback to determine how to incorporate best practices into current practices. Focus groups are one way to determine public messaging and evaluate engagement efforts, and can also be a way to further communicate MPO processes.

8. **Continue utilizing and seek new avenues for the use of social media,** including Facebook and Twitter.

The MPO has continued to grow the number of user interactions with its Facebook and Twitter accounts over the prior cycle, and notably launched a Vision Zero page in late 2016. The MPO should consider new ways to engage the public in this technology, and explore other uses for social media in reaching the public. Furthermore, as neighborhood and civic organizations are often not meeting as frequently as they have in the past, the MPO may consider utilizing neighborhood-based networking services to connect with the public on a recurring basis.
**Agenda Item**

Comments on Regional Transit Feasibility Plan

**Presenter**

Rich Clarendon, MPO Staff

**Summary**

Last month, the CAC heard a report on this draft plan, the purpose of which is to:

- Define and validate a regional transit vision,
- Identify a catalyst that begins building the vision and,
- Has the greatest potential for being built (compete for federal and state grants).

The recommended catalyst concept, based on technical evaluation factors, is a rubber-tire Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system on I-275 from Wesley Chapel to St. Petersburg. The BRT would run in a combination of dedicated transit lanes on the shoulders, express lanes on the Howard Frankland Bridge, transit lanes in the Interstate median, and mixed traffic from Bearss Ave. to Wesley Chapel. The concept is a first step towards a regional transit vision that connects three counties and leverages FDOT’s investment in Interstate modernization to establish dedicated transit lanes. It is also designed to meet cost-effectiveness criteria to compete for federal transit grants. The link below describes the concept as presented last month.

Since then, feedback has raised questions about stations, redevelopment potential, and transit that better serves neighborhoods such as Tampa Heights and Seminole Heights.

The draft Regional Transit Feasibility Plan will seek public input and not be finalized until this fall. This agenda item provides the committee with an opportunity to go on record early with questions and concerns.

**Recommended Action**

Provide comments through the MPO to the project team and FDOT.

**Prepared By**

Rich Clarendon, AICP

**Attachments**

Link to Presentation at Feb. CAC Meeting:

Board & Committee Agenda Item

Agenda Item
Hurricane Evacuation in the Tampa Bay Region

Presenter
Brady Smith, Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council

Summary
The threat of storm surge flooding posed by Hurricane Irma in early September 2017 necessitated the first large-scale mandatory evacuations of the Tampa Bay region's coastal areas since the historic 2004 hurricane season. Much has changed in the thirteen years since mandatory hurricane evacuations were last ordered in the Tampa Bay area. The roadway capacity of the region’s evacuation transportation network has increased, as new roads and highways have been added to the network, and existing roadways were widened and improved. Technological improvements, such as intelligent transportation systems, traffic monitoring apps, and crowdsourced travel delay information and fuel availability data, which may be accessed quickly and easily through mobile apps, can give evacuating drivers numerous indicators on which to base each vehicle’s individual evacuation route and timing decisions. In those same 13 years, however, hurricane evacuation zones have increased in size as storm surge modeling techniques have improved, and the potential evacuation population of the region has grown as residential development continues to encroach into the storm surge-vulnerable near-coastal locations.

Mr. Smith will provide an overview of the Hurricane Irma event and describe the unique set of evacuation issues that are caused by a storm that threatens nearly the entire coastlines on BOTH sides of the Florida peninsula. He will also summarize the Hurricane Harvey event that occurred in August along the Texas Gulf Coast just a couple of week prior to Irma’s landfall in Florida. Mr. Smith will briefly ponder the “What If” scenario and possible implications of a Harvey-like storm stalling over the west coast of Florida and drenching the Tampa Bay area with unprecedented amounts of flooding rainfall.

Recommended Action
None; for discussion only.

Prepared By
Allison Yeh, AICP, LEED GA

Attachments
None
Board & Committee Agenda Item

Agenda Item
Housing + Transportation Affordability Index

Presenter
Brandon Berry, MPO Technician

Summary
For most households in the United States, housing and transportation expenses comprise at least half of their income. The concept of the "Green Dividend" is that cities with more compact development, and which feature alternatives to automobile travel, have households who spend less on transportation. This money can then be spent on other essentials, invested, or otherwise used to improve a household’s quality of life. Furthermore, recent forecasts suggest that per capita GRP increases in tandem with transit mile availability. Lower transportation costs may have direct and indirect benefits to accessibility, resources, and quality of life for an area’s residents.

The Housing + Transportation (H+T) Affordability Index is a web map tool which provides information on housing and transportation costs across the United States. The tool was commissioned by the Department of Transportation and Housing & Urban Development and developed by the Center for Neighborhood Technology. The H+T Affordability Index has been used by planning agencies within the US as a livability measure, to assist in selecting corridor projects that will increase livability, and to help identify strategies to reduce the cost of living.

Data within the H+T Index is available at a variety of scales, from the U.S. House District level at the largest to the block group level at the smallest. Features of the H+T Index include comparing two same-scale areas on housing and transportation costs, downloading a demographic and neighborhood characteristics report for a selected area, and viewing an area’s greenhouse gases emission rate. As metrics of affordability, the H+T Affordability Index defines 30% or less of a household’s income spent on housing and 15% or less of a household’s income spent on transportation as affordable. These are aspirational rates and do not constitute an average.

In Hillsborough County, the typical household spends an estimated 33% of their income on housing and 25% of their income on transportation. Housing and transportation together as a total percentage of typical household income fluctuate widely across the county.

Hillsborough County’s affordability rates are not significantly different from other comparable counties in the United States. The typical household in Miami-Dade County spends 58% of its income on housing and transportation, and that rate is 60% in Orlando’s Orange County. Mecklenburg, NC, home to Charlotte, has a lower total of...
53% attributable primarily to lower typical home costs. The same lower rate and logic holds for Atlanta’s county of Fulton, GA. Typical households of comparable counties across the U.S. generally spend 20-25% of their incomes on transportation, with fluctuations in their H+T score primarily attributable to ranging housing costs.

The H+T Affordability Index is updated yearly with new data. The tool can be accessed at https://htaindex.cnt.org/map/.

**Recommended Action**
None. Information Only.

**Prepared By**
Brandon Berry

**Attachments**
None.
Invision Tampa Streetcar Study

Milton Martinez, P.E., City of Tampa

The City of Tampa is conducting the InVision: Tampa Streetcar Feasibility Study to evaluate modernizing and extending the Tampa Historic Streetcar system. The study is designed to advance mobility, livability, and economic development goals presented in the InVision: Tampa Center City Plan and build on recent and on-going studies assessing transportation needs in the City and region.

Based on detailed evaluation of seven alignment options and extensive public engagement, the City identified a north-south corridor through the heart of downtown to Marion Transit Center and north to Tampa Heights as the preferred option for the extension of enhanced transit service. The alignment options within the corridor include either Franklin Street or the Tampa Street/Florida Avenue couplet. The project also includes modernization of the existing historic streetcar system with upgrades to vehicles, stations, and systems, to allow for the delivery of higher quality and more frequent service.

Next, the City will work with the community to prepare more detailed plans for the preferred corridor, modernization of the existing system, and implementation of improved service quality. As part of this effort, the City will evaluate community and environmental impacts, define funding sources, and a timetable for implementation of the initial phase of investment.

None; for information only.

Rich Clarendon, AICP

Project Handout and Map
Next Steps in the Study
During project development phase of the study beginning in 2018, the City will work with the community to prepare more detailed plans for the preferred corridor, modernization of the existing system, and implementation of improved service quality. As part of this effort, the City will evaluate community and environmental impacts, define funding sources, and a timetable for implementation of the initial phase of investment.

The City will also evaluate alternative vehicle technologies including a comparison between using the existing heritage vehicles, introducing new modern streetcars, using conventional rubber tire vehicles, or replacing the existing fixed rail system with some form of rubber tire conventional or autonomous transit vehicle technology.

The implementation plan and funding strategy will consider integration with other elements of the local and regional transit and mobility network, as well as with the findings and recommendations of the Regional Transit Feasibility Plan, the Heights Mobility Study, the Intermodal Facilities Study, and the Tampa Bay NEXT program.

Contact Information
If you have any questions or comments about the study, please contact:
Milton Martinez, P.E.
813.274.8998
streetcar@tampagov.net
www.tampagov.net/streetcar

Project Timeline

PHASE 1 - PROJECT FEASIBILITY
Spring to Fall 2017
- Context & Assessment
- Purpose & Need
- Alignment Evaluation
- Preferred Alignment & Modernization

PHASE 2 - PROJECT DEVELOPMENT
Winter 2017 to Winter 2018
- Request to FTA for Entry into Project Development
- Transit Mode Evaluation
- Alignment Planning & Design
- Modernization Planning & Design
- Costs & Ridership
- Impact Assessment
- Funding & Implementation

Project information
Project information is available for review on the City of Tampa website at: www.tampagov.net/streetcar

Project Highlights

PREFERRED EXTENSION
- 1.3 mile extension through the Downtown Core
- Links to existing and planned regional transit
- Serves 16,000 jobs and 5,500 residents (extension only)
- Connects major entertainment and cultural venues
- Cost: $95 Million*

SYSTEM MODERNIZATION
- New transit vehicles
- Upgrades to existing track and stations
- Improved service frequency
- Longer service hours
- Cost: $68.5 Million*
*costs assume modern streetcar operations

Preferred Extension & Modernization
Based on detailed evaluation of seven alignment options and extensive public engagement, the City identified a north-south corridor through the heart of downtown to Marion Transit Center and north to Tampa Heights as the preferred option for the extension of enhanced transit service. (See Map) The project also includes modernization of the existing historic streetcar system, with upgrades to vehicles, stations, and systems, to allow for the delivery of higher quality and more frequent service.

The intent is that the existing system plus the initial extension will be designed to provide a “one seat” trip from start to end, maximize the exclusive transit guideway operations to allow vehicles to bypass congestion, and offer full-day and evening operations with 15-minute frequencies.

Benefits of Enhanced Transit
The introduction of enhanced transit service along both the preferred corridor and the existing system offers a number of important benefits to the City, including the following:
- Direct connections between employment destinations in the Downtown Core, rapidly developing areas in the north end of downtown and Tampa Heights, new development at Water Street Tampa, and existing urban neighborhoods in the Channel District, Harbour Island, and Ybor City;
- Convenient connections to popular cultural and entertainment destinations including the Amalie Arena, Tampa Museum of Art, Glazer Children’s Museum, Tampa Aquarium, Tampa Theater, Tampa Convention Center, and the Straz Center for the Performing Arts;
- First mile/last mile connections to local and regional transit service at the Marion Transit Center and the planned site of a regional intermodal center south of the downtown interchange; and
- Improved access to major public spaces and event venues, including Catochobee Park, the Riverview, Curtis Hixon Park, Waterworks Park, and the soon to be completed Julian B. Lane Park on the east side of the Laurel Street Bridge.

PREFERRED ALIGNMENT OPTIONS
Modernization and Extension

The City of Tampa is conducting the InVision: Tampa Streetcar Feasibility Study to evaluate modernizing and extending the Tampa Historic Streetcar system. The study is designed to advance mobility, livability, and economic development goals presented in the InVision: Tampa Center City Plan and build on recent and on-going studies assessing transportation needs in the City and region.

Preferred Extension & Modernization

Regional Transit Plan Top Performing Project Corridor

Preferred Alignment Options

Potential Future Extensions

Enhanced transit service along the preferred north-south corridor establishes a strong foundation for future extensions of the system. Future extensions could provide connections as follows (see inset map):

- An extension to the west across the Hillsborough River along or within the I-275 corridor could provide a critical regional connection to the Westshore Intermodal Center and potentially to the Tampa International Airport as defined in the Hillsborough MPO’s Imagine Hillsborough 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan and Transit Assets and Opportunities Study;

- Extensions to the east could create a looping service connecting to the existing system in Ybor City or the Channel District; and

- Extensions to the north could provide connections to northern areas of Tampa Heights, Seminole Heights, and potentially further north to the USF Area.

Depending on the outcome of the Regional Transit Feasibility Plan, which is assessing the feasibility of regional connections between Downtown Tampa, Westshore, the USF Area, and other regional destinations, detailed planning and evaluation of extensions beyond the initial extension will be completed.
CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE & INVOCATION

Chairman Les Miller called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. He led the pledge of allegiance and invocation. The meeting was convened on the 26th floor of the County Center.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Councilman Maniscalco to approve the minutes from the January 10, 2018 meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilman Cohen and carried unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS, ONLINE COMMENTS

Ms. Gena Torres, MPO staff, read the various MPO Committee reports. All of the MPO’s advisory committees supported the long range transportation amendment. She also shared email and Facebook comments received from the public.

Chairman Miller closed the regular meeting and opened the public hearing.

PUBLIC HEARING ON LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN AMENDMENT FOR I-275 OPERATIONAL IMPROVEMENTS AT HOWARD FRANKLAND BRIDGE

Mr. Rich Clarendon, MPO Assistant Executive Director, provided an overview of the proposed amendment to the 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan.

Public Comment was held.

Ms. Karen Michalski spoke in opposition of express lanes.

Ms. Josephine Amato expressed concerns about the state’s pedestrian death rates and recommended better designs for safer bicycle and pedestrian paths.

Commissioner Stacy White requested that Ms. Alden work with County staff to respond to Ms. Amato’s concerns about pedestrian safety.

Commissioner Sandra Murman requested that Ms. Amato contact her office to receive information on the location to send letters of support in Tallahassee.

The public hearing was closed for board discussion.

Commissioner Pat Kemp pointed out tolling situations that are taking place around the world.
Mr. Trent Green inquired about the width of the bicycle and pedestrian lane that was brought up by Ms. Amato. Mr. Bill Jones, Florida Department of Transportation representative, stated that it would be a 12-foot facility and it would have potential bulb outs at certain points along the bridge. In addition, he stated there would be concrete-separated from the travel lanes. Details are being worked out with Pinellas and Hillsborough Counties.

A motion was made by Mr. Waggoner to approve amending the 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan to include express lane ramps as recommended by staff. The motion was seconded by Mayor Jurado and carried unanimously by a roll call vote.

Chairman Miller re-opened the regular meeting. Public comment was held on non-public hearing items.

Ms. Taryn Sabia spoke regarding the Regional Transit Feasibility Plan. She would like to see the community’s vision met. She suggested that the goals that are reflected in the Imagine 2040 Plan be addressed.

Commissioner Kemp commented on Ms. Sabia’s suggestions and wanted her to provide the group additional remarks on economic development.

Chairman Miller reminded members the purpose of the public comment portion of the agenda.

Ms. Karen Michalski voiced concerns about hazardous walking conditions for children and pedestrians and the need for more school buses and sidewalks.

Ms. Josephine Amato addressed the board with concerns of the makeup of the School Transportation Working Group, which is headed by a School Board Member. She feels that the Chair is running a school district agenda and there should be more parents on the working group. She expressed concerns about the distribution of the school bus assets across the district and commented on safe routes to school.

Commissioner White stated that he wholeheartedly agrees with Ms. Amato and that he too has been very vocal that the elimination of courtesy bus service was a wrong decision. Regarding enhancing pedestrian and bicycle pathways in the FishHawk Community, that were mentioned earlier in the meeting, Commissioner White requested that MPO Staff have a discussion with County Staff about safety issues.

Commissioner Murman requested that Ms. Alden work with staff to have more parents added to the working group and stated that the Chair should be bipartisan. She also stated that Ms. Amato would be a great addition to the School Transportation Working Group.

Chairman Miller requested taking the issue of school hazardous walking conditions back to the Policy Committee for discussion.

Commissioner Kemp referenced the role of mobility fees.

Commissioner Miller reminded members if they have subjects they want to appear on the agenda for discussion to please let Ms. Alden know. He also stated that public comment is not a time for debate or discussion on an issue that a person brings up.

CONSENT AGENDA
A. Committee Appointments
B. MPO Chairs Coordinating Committee Interlocal Agreement Update
C. General Planning Consultant Agreement Amendment: Kittelson & Associates
D. Letter Requested by Citizens Advisory Committee Thanking Katharine Eagan, former HART CEO
A motion was made by Commissioner Murman to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded by Councilman Cohen and carried unanimously.

ROLL CALL VOTE: TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) AMENDMENT FOR I-4 RESURFACING

There was no discussion on this item.

A motion was made by Councilman Maniscalco for approval of the TIP amendment to increase the funding to resurface I-4 from East of 50th Street to East of McIntosh Road. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Murman and carried unanimously by a roll call vote.

ACTION ITEM

A. Transportation Improvement Program Amendment for Performance Measure Target-Setting: Safety

Mr. Johnny Wong, MPO Staff, provided information on the TIP amendment update that includes five safety performance measures required by FHWA.

Members expressed concerns about the five-year historical data/averages, the numbers being high in comparison with other regions, and making sure not to place an unfunded mandate on the local governments with respect to the target-setting process.

Ms. Alden stated that our number of crashes is increasing as population and traffic grows. In some cities, the rate of crashes is also increasing, faster than traffic growth, because of the rise in distracted driving. Our local governments and FDOT have worked together very hard to raise awareness of safety issues and have been able to hold the rate steady here in Hillsborough County.

Commissioner White urged Ms. Alden to work closely with County staff and assure that everyone understands what this could equate to operationally.

Ms. Alden stated that if a target of zero crashes for 2018 was adopted by the MPO that it would be an unfunded mandate.

Councilman Cohen stated that it is important in setting these types of goals to make it clear that we are not going to congratulate ourselves and pat ourselves on the back if only 177 people die next year instead of 184.

Commissioner Kemp reminded the group that Hillsborough County has, and has repeatedly had, the second most pedestrian crash deaths and bicycle deaths in the nation. She wanted to know if there would be a follow-up presentation on the information that was presented.

Mr. Wong stated that the information will be provided in the quarterly report on the Vision Zero Action Plan.

Commissioner Kemp stated that she would also like included in the information the road elements that are getting the dollars and what kinds of things are being done in different places.

Mr. Green expressed similar concerns as Councilman Cohen and Commissioner Kemp. He stated that he expressed concerns about the numbers at the Livable Roadways Committee meeting and the group has also requested information on how much is being allocated for safety. He would like to see a comparison of the metrics.
A motion was made by Commissioner Kemp for approval of the CY2018 Baseline Safety Performance Targets. The motion was seconded by Councilman Maniscalco and carried unanimously by a roll call vote.

Chairman Miller reminded members to pay close attention to bills and their location in the legislative process.

**STATUS REPORTS**

**A. Tampa Bay Next Quarterly Update**

Secretary Gwynn provided an update on recent activities. There has been a lot of public engagement. A downtown/urban core community working group will take place late February/early March. In addition, the Heights Mobility Study Workshop will take place late March/early April.

Councilman Cohen said he was informed that the Streetcar Study is not considered a regional solution; but if it intersects with the proposed BRT at a shared station, wouldn’t that provide regional connectivity to Downtown Tampa? Secretary Gwynn stated that it would be part of a regional system, but all the transit in the region would ultimately become part of the regional system, and typical discussion of regional transit includes more than just within an area of a downtown.

Commissioner Kemp suggested Secretary Gwynn come back and present information on how funding from the State works in terms of transit.

Secretary Gwynn stated that they were meeting with staff following the meeting regarding transit funding.

**B. Regional Transit Feasibility Plan**

Scott Pringle, with Jacobs Engineering, provided an update on the vision for the region.

Commissioner White referenced a vote at the HART Board on the plan and inquired about stakeholder agencies conducting their own outreach.

Commissioner Kemp voiced concerns about non-endorsement and that the plan should not be moved forward. She distributed several documents in support of her opinion.

Chairman Miller stated that the MPO Board would not be taking any action on the Plan at the February meeting. He also stated that the vote at the HART Board was not an endorsement or non-endorsement of the plan and that staff will be on the sidelines as the outreach is carried forward to the community.

Mayor Lott stated that he hopes his comments do not appear negative, but until the County Commission finds the resolve to get behind a plan, which is a hard decision, the group will continue looking at pieces of paper with drawings on them and talking about numbers. He also stated that any way Plant City can support, they would love to have the conversation.

Mr. Lopano spoke on behalf of the airport and stated that something needs to be done fast.

Chairman Miller confirmed with Mr. Pringle that public comment will be incorporated into the plan by fall of 2018, and that he would be coming back to the MPO Board during that time. Mr. Pringle stated that he plans to be back several times.
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Ms. Alden provided information on the PlanHillsborough Strategic Planning Retreat that is planned to focus attention on comprehensive and long range planning. The retreat will be held on Friday, March 23 from 1:00 until 4:00 p.m. at the Stetson Law Center. A legislative update was included in the meeting packet addendum. The MPOAC met and discussed the recommendations of the Freight Committee of the MPOs of the state; that committee is going to make a recommendation in the spring to FDOT about significant freight projects, and we will participate and submit projects for consideration.

The Livable Roadways Committee made a motion about a bill for dockless bike sharing. The concern is restricting local governments’ ability to regulate the placement of facilities. This could be an issue with sidewalks complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act. There was an amendment to one of the two bills. The MPO Board agreed for Ms. Alden to have a conversation with the sponsors of the bill. The sponsors are Representative Toledo and Senator Young. Ms. Alden also informed the group of the upcoming Commuter Challenge that all board members are invited to participate in during the week of February 19th through the 23rd.

The Tampa Bay TMA Leadership Group added another meeting to their 2018 meeting schedule. The meeting is scheduled for February 9, 2018 at 9:30 a.m. at the Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority’s administrative office, located at 3201 Scherer Drive in St. Petersburg.

The next MPO Board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 6, 2018 at 9:00 a.m. on the 26th Floor of the County Center.

OLD BUSINESS & NEW BUSINESS

There was no old or new business conducted.

ADJOURNMENT

A quorum was maintained for the duration of the meeting. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:50 a.m.
Meeting of the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) on February 14

The committee approved and forwarded to the MPO Board:

- Title VI Nondiscrimination Plan Update
- TIP Amendment for HART’s Fowler/Florida/Nebraska Corridor Study

They also heard reports from:

- Tampa Bay Next – a member asked how it would benefit South County;
- Regional Transit Feasibility Plan – members inquired about how the recommended alternative compared to what was presented before; if any other metro area has implemented BRT as a starter project; the type of vehicles envisioned to be used; and a concern that shoulder lanes don’t function like a transit running in its own dedicated lane like the CSX corridor;
- Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Call for Projects – members suggested a number of safety and traffic calming planning studies for the next two years;
- Tampa Bay Partnership on the Regional Indicators Report.

Meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) on February 19

The committee approved and forwarded to the MPO Board:

- Title VI Nondiscrimination Plan Update
- TIP Amendment for HART’s Fowler/Florida/Nebraska Corridor Study

The TAC also received presentations on:

- Coast Bike Share
- Tampa Bay Next Quarterly Update
- Regional Transit Feasibility Plan
- The Heights Mobility Plan
- UPWP Call for Projects for FY 2019-20

Meeting of the Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) on February 14

The committee approved and forwarded to the MPO Board:

- Title VI Nondiscrimination Plan Update
- TIP Amendment for HART’s Fowler/Florida/Nebraska Corridor Study

They also heard status reports on the:

- UPWP Call for Projects for FY 2019-20
- Tampa Bay Next update
- Regional Transit Feasibility Plan
- Coast Bike Share
BPAC members expressed their support for bike share programs generally and for our area’s Coast Bikeshare in particular. With regard to bills under consideration in the legislature, members expressed that some of the dockless bikeshare proposals appear to have less accountability to local governments than do current models.

Meeting of the Livable Roadways Committee (LRC) on February 21

The committee **approved and forwarded to the MPO Board:**

- Title VI Nondiscrimination Plan Update

They moved to **request the following UPWP studies in FY19-20:**

- Given that FDOT’s new Complete Street Screening Tool uses adopted local government land use regulations to determine context for each roadway, analyze major roads countywide to determine if additional overlay districts or other land use regulations are needed, to support appropriate context classifications by FDOT;
- A study to determine impacts the proposed Rays Stadium will have on the existing streetcar;
- A study of limited-access highway on/off ramps for additional safety measures to reduce conflicts with non-vehicular traffic;
- A feasibility study for a trail overpass at Courtney Campbell Causeway and Rocky Point Drive.

They also heard status reports on the:

- Tampa Bay Next update
- Regional Transit Feasibility Plan

Meeting of the Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board (TDCB), Feb. 23

The TDCB **approved and forwarded to the MPO Board:**

- Title VI Nondiscrimination Plan Update
- TIP Amendment for HART’s Fowler/Florida/Nebraska Corridor Study

They also:

- **Approved the annual evaluation of the Community Transportation Coordinator,** and were pleased to see an increase in the reliability of the Sunshine Line’s fleet, resulting from the Board of County Commissioners’ investment in replacement buses.
- **Moved to request the following UPWP studies in FY19-20:** a study addressing the mobility of senior citizens.

Meeting of the School Transportation Working Group (STWG) on February 28

The working group heard presentations on:

- Future Leaders in Planning (FLiP)
- Painted Intersections
- School Interlocal Agreement
- MPO School Safety Top Ten Field Review Results

The group’s March 28 meeting will be a **Special Meeting with State Coordinators for Safe Routes to School, Crossing Guard Program.**
Meeting of the Tampa Bay TMA Leadership Group on February 9

The leadership group heard presentations on:

- Cost estimates for the top two projects recommended by the Regional Transit Feasibility Plan:
  - The I-275 rubber-tire project estimate of $455 million is for 11 vehicles, a BRT vehicle maintenance facility, and 15 stations and 6 intermodal centers with walk/bike and traffic signal access and parking;
  - The CSX urban rail project estimate of $621 million is for 4 vehicles, a rail vehicle maintenance facility, 6 stations and 2 intermodal centers with walk/bike access, and buying or leasing the track from CSX, refurbishing the track and adding modern train control.

- Potential processes for developing a funding strategy – including:
  - Incremental investments over time, starting with express bus service as soon as possible;
  - Regionwide prioritization for grants; and
  - Asking local governments begin setting aside funds for transit in a future budget year;

- Potential roles and responsibilities of TBARTA in implementing the Regional Transit Feasibility Plan;

- Potential outreach by the TMA members, including potential points of group consensus, and potential partnership with the Suncoast League of Cities.

Meeting of the TBARTA MPO Directors on February 23

Informational updates were provided on:

- Tri-county long range transportation plan – development of growth scenarios, including land use, transportation, and performance measure outcomes, and timing of public outreach activities;
- Preparations for the first annual Gulf Coast Safe Streets Summit;
- Regional tasks to be included in each MPO’s UPWP for FY 19-20;
- Board approvals for the CCC Interlocal Agreement update;
- Potential agenda items and speakers for the July 13 CCC Board meeting;
- Transportation Regional Incentive Program funding available, and scheduling of a staff meeting to update the regional project priority list.