Meeting of the MPO Board
Tuesday, April 3, 2018, 9:00 a.m.
Hillsborough County Center, 601 E. Kennedy Blvd., 26th Floor

Watch the HTV live-stream. Send comments in advance on Facebook.*

I. Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance & Invocation

II. Public Comment - 3 minutes per speaker, 30 minutes total; as needed, additional time may be provided later in the agenda.

III. Committee Reports, Online Comments (Gena Torres, MPO Staff)

IV. Consent Agenda
A. Approval of Minutes – March 6, 2018
B. Committee Appointments
C. Letter of support for Upper Tampa Bay water quality enhancements in conjunction with Howard Frankland Bridge project – requested by Technical Advisory Committee
D. MPO Advisory Council 2018 Call for Freight Projects – approved by Policy Committee
E. Memorandum of Understanding Between TBARTA, FDOT, HART, PSTA & MPOs – approved by Policy Committee

V. Action Items
A. Comments on Regional Transit Feasibility Plan (Rich Clarendon, MPO Assistant Executive Director)
B. Public Participation 2016-17 Measures of Effectiveness Report (Brandon Berry, MPO Staff)
C. MPO Executive Director Annual Evaluation (Cameron Clark, MPO Attorney)

VI. Status Reports
A. Invision Tampa Streetcar Study (Milton Martinez, City of Tampa)

VII. Executive Director’s Report
A. PlanHillsborough 2018 Strategic Planning Retreat Outcomes
B. New location for Tampa Bay TMA Leadership Group: May 11, 9:30 am, Pasco County Utilities Building, 19420 Central Boulevard, Land O Lakes
C. Revised date for MPO Regional Planning Best Practices Study Board Workshop at St. Pete College Collaborative Labs: Friday, June 1

VIII. Old & New Business

IX. Adjournment
X.  Addendum

A.  South Coast Greenway Open House Flyer for April 3 & 4

B.  Community Gardens Tampa Bay Conference Flyer for April 6-7 – sponsored by the MPO Garden Steps project with a grant from the American Public Health Association and Aetna Foundation

C.  Update of 2018 Legislation

D.  MPO Regional Coordination Structure – Research & Best Practices Study – Technical Memorandum One: Context & Directions

E.  Correspondence
   1. Biweekly Fatality Report from FDOT District 7 Secretary
   2. Advance Notification (environmental screening) of project on SR 600/Gandy Blvd from East of 4th Street in Pinellas County to Westshore Blvd in Hillsborough County

F.  Articles Relating to MPO Work
   1. Tampa City Council members call for comprehensive transit reform
   2. Community Gardens Helping Tampa Neighborhood
   3. Proposal to Extend Florida’s Bike Trails Through South Hillsborough County

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

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Committee Reports

Meeting of the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) on March 14

The committee approved and forwarded to the MPO Board:

✓ Public Participation Plan Measures of Effectiveness Report, including a recommendation to expand accessibility with real-time engagement such as more live streaming of meetings;
✓ Comments and questions on the Regional Transit Feasibility Plan.

They also heard reports from:

• The Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council on hurricane evacuation and resiliency to climate change;
• The City of Tampa on the Invision Tampa Streetcar study; members asked how this project relates to the Regional Transit Feasibility Plan.

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

The committee approved and forwarded to the MPO Board:

✓ Letter of support for Upper Tampa Bay water quality enhancements in conjunction with the Howard Frankland Bridge Project.
  o TAC members were interested in the potential acreage of seagrass recovery, and that Tampa Bay Estuary Program already has a working relationship with FDOT on this effort.
✓ Comments on the Regional Transit Feasibility Plan
  o Members asked if having to choose between steel-wheel transit or BRT was necessary, and for more information the study schedule.
✓ Public Participation Plan MOE Report
  o Supportive of using Instagram and other social media tools.

The TAC also received presentations on:

  o Invision Tampa Streetcar Study – there was interest in how the extension of the streetcar was coordinated with TBNExt, The Heights Mobility Plan and the MPO’s study of Tampa/Florida.
  o I-75 Diverging Diamond Interchanges – members were impressed with the safety and congestion benefits of diverging diamonds.

The TAC chair was invited to participate in the Plan Hillsborough Retreat on March 23rd at Stetson Law School.

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

The committee heard status reports on the:
- Invision Tampa Streetcar Study – comments and questions from committee members included the hours of operation, speed of the new vehicles, headways and the process to secure funding.
- Complete Street Corridor Screening from FDOT – members asked questions relating to the new design of FDOT road sections; speed limits; the need for greater separation on higher speed roadways; and the process for context classification.

BPAC members also received public comments on the need for bike lane maintenance in the Town N’ Country area, on Sheldon Road and adjacent roadways. These have been forwarded to the proper maintenance authorities.

Meeting of the Livable Roadways Committee on March 21

A verbal report will be provided at the board meeting.

Meeting of the Policy Committee on March 27

The committee **approved and forwarded to the MPO Board:**
- Memorandum of Understanding between TBARTA, FDOT, HART, PSTA, & MPOs – with one dissenting vote.
- MPO Advisory Council 2018 Call for Freight Projects
- MPO Executive Director’s Annual Evaluation

They received a presentation on potential Comments on the Regional Transit Feasibility Plan, and after extensive discussion, concluded that this is a good round-up of questions, but asking questions is only the first step. The MPO should help with pulling answers together. Some answers may be available already; other answers will require information and responses from multiple agencies, and regional collaboration will be needed to develop the right path forward for Tampa, Hillsborough, and the region.

They also heard a status report on State Funding for Transit, and asked for the slides to be distributed to the board members.

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

A verbal report will be provided at the board meeting.

Meeting of the TBARTA MPO Directors on March 23

The directors focused on the agenda for the July 13 joint meeting of the TBARTA MPO Chairs with the Central Florida MPO Alliance, which will be held at Hillsborough Community College’s Plant City campus, beginning at 10am. Topics may include connecting the Tampa and Orlando markets; how Brightline got started; and the Tampa Bay TMA’s tri-county growth scenarios, allowing with the annual updates of regionally significant project priorities.
Tampa Bay Transportation Management Area (TMA) Leadership Group Executive Summary

Representing the MPOs in Pasco, Pinellas, & Hillsborough Counties

Summary for 3.9.18 meeting

Based on the importance and reach of the conversations that happen at the TMA Leadership Group, we are looking to keep our stakeholders aware of the outcomes of these meetings. The following is a summary of the most recent meeting highlights; you can find the full agenda online. This meeting was also videotaped, which you can watch on YouTube.

The group heard several updates on the status of Regional Express Bus initiatives, and other topics relating to transit connections

- Members had stated at a previous meeting that they would like to see more regional express bus routes developed as soon as possible
- Starting in June, PSTA will extend its existing express route from the Gateway to Tampa International Airport via the Howard Frankland Bridge, and will extend another express route from downtown St. Petersburg to downtown Tampa via the Gandy
  - The services will run during peak travel times with the intent to seek funding to expand
- HART discussed its planned park-and-ride express route from Wesley Chapel to Tampa International Airport
  - There was some confusion about the overlap between this route and the planned BRT route in the RTFP
- The City of Tampa presented its plans for the new streetcar route study, which identified a preferred north-south extension from Tampa Heights through the center of downtown, serving numerous businesses and city parking garages
  - The city is requesting approval into FTA’s Small Starts Project Development this month
- FDOT discussed its intermodal studies throughout the region, which look to identify ideal transfer points between various modes of transportation
  - Also mentioned was an FDOT pilot study of shoulder-running express bus in Pinellas County that is nearing completion

An initial discussion of transportation project priorities for funding in the coming year was taken up and final decisions on priorities will be made at the May meeting

- Group members discussed whether to take off projects that were funded, or leave the projects on the list until construction is complete
- The group also discussed how to define priorities
The MPO directors noted that the priority list has been integrated into the priority lists of the MPOs, and that list is transmitted to the Florida Department of Transportation for funding. However, there were members who felt the priorities should include big-picture vision projects and also legislative asks that may not be under the purview of FDOT.

The group tentatively agreed to put both the CSX project and the BRT project from the Regional Transit Feasibility Plan on the priority list, although the scale/phasing and order of those projects will be determined in May.

Scott Pringle of Jacobs, the consultant for the Regional Transit Feasibility Plan, provided a response to requests for information group members had made at the previous meeting in February.

For the past few months, the Regional Transit Feasibility Plan discussion has revolved around two possible catalyst projects:

- Shoulder-running bus rapid transit along the I-275 Corridor including Wesley Chapel, USF, Tampa, Gateway, St. Petersburg
  - This was the consultant’s suggested catalyst plan due to cost effectiveness and coordination with Tampa Bay Next interstate modernization.
- Commuter rail in the northern corridor following the CSX rail line, from Downtown Tampa to USF
  - This project is preferred by some members due to its potential for passenger rail service linking Hernando and Pasco County with Tampa, and transit-oriented development possibilities along the route.

At the March meeting, Pringle brought back information in response to several requests, but two main ones: To look at the US 41 corridor and a 41-mile CSX route to be able to compare to the 41 miles along the I-275 corridor, and to look at a 12-mile CSX project with a connection directly to USF.

- Original CSX suggested route (downtown Tampa to USF)
  - 9-mile route
  - $620 million estimated capital cost
  - 3.6 million annual ridership
  - $11 cost per trip
- Tampa with direct connection to USF
  - 11.2-mile route
  - $780 million estimated capital cost
  - 3.7 million annual ridership
  - $11 cost per trip
- Tampa to SR 54 near US 41
  - 16-mile route
  - $1.19 billion estimated capital cost
  - 4.6 million annual ridership
  - $13 cost per trip
- Tampa to Brooksville
  - 45-mile route
  - $2.62 billion estimated capital cost
  - 4.7 million annual ridership
- $28 cost per trip
  - Tampa to Oldsmar, Clearwater, and St. Petersburg
    - 50-mile route
    - $3.32 billion estimated capital cost
    - 7.8 million annual ridership
  - $22 cost per trip

- Pringle also clarified the full costs from various funding sources in the I-275 concept, which includes between $920M and $1.15B in money that FDOT would spend in the future interstate modernization projects to accommodate shoulder-running BRT.

- The discussion that resulted from this presentation focused mainly on how relevant the numbers from the CSX routes were to the eventual actual costs.
  - Pasco Commissioner Jack Mariano felt that the numbers should take the possibility of private investment and resulting development around rail stations into account.
  - Pringle noted that the study had requested that the projects be looked at using criteria for funding established by the Federal Transit Administration to compare applications from across the country, and that the FTA criteria was what he focused on.
  - FDOT District 7 Secretary David Gwynn clarified that the formula for FTA funding was very specific and is only calculated based on the elements that Pringle had looked at.

**Pasco MPO Director Craig Casper and Hillsborough MPO Director Beth Alden discussed right-of-way for CSX and interstate transit, respectively.**

- A few highlights of the CSX presentation:
  - There are two major CSX subdivisions that are up for sale:
    - One from Hernando County to Busch Boulevard in Tampa
    - One from Busch Boulevard west to Clearwater and curving south into St. Pete
    - There may be additional available subdivisions, including one in South Tampa, but that remains unknown.
  - The CSX line cannot accommodate light rail within existing right-of-way, only commuter rail and CSX would retain usage of the tracks for freight service.
  - Gwynn noted that, were the region to agree on the need to purchase CSX right-of-way, that would not be within FDOT’s purview and would need an act of the state legislature.
    - He also noted the legislature wouldn’t make that purchase without a project to go with it.
  - Alden’s presentation focused on how right-of-way on the interstate has been handled in other communities.
    - Communities included South Florida and Minneapolis/St. Paul.
      - In South Florida, express bus service was added in managed lanes on I-95 between Miami and Ft. Lauderdale, and ridership increased 22% year-over-year.
      - In the Twin Cities, bus-only shoulders (of which there are now 334+ miles constructed) provided 9 minutes of travel time savings on average. Ridership also increased 9 percent over two years.

**TBARTA Executive Director Ray Chiaramonte gave an update on the MPO Regional Coordination Best Practices Study.**

- The study is moving from Phase I, which examined existing conditions and directions, to Phase II, which will identify best practices from peer regions and develop case studies.
• A second workshop will be held June 1 at Collaborative Labs, and a third workshop is tentatively planned for September
• The study is scheduled for completion in December

The group also decided to meet in Pasco at the next meeting May 11
The Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), Hillsborough County, Florida, met in Regular Meeting, scheduled for Tuesday, March 6, 2018, at 9:00 a.m., in the 26th Floor Conference Room, Frederick B. Karl County Center, Tampa, Florida.

The following members were present:

Lesley Miller Jr., Chairman
Charles Klug for Paul Anderson
Harry Cohen
Theodore Trent Green
Ken Hagan
Mel Jurado
Joe Lopano
Guido Maniscalco (arrived at 9:54 a.m.)
David Mechanik
Sandra Murman
Cindy Stuart (arrived at 9:25 a.m.)
Luis Viera
Joseph Waggoner
Stacy White

The following members were absent:

Pat Kemp
Rick Lott

I. CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE, AND INVOCATION

Chairman Miller called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Commissioner White led in the pledge of allegiance to the flag and gave the invocation.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

Attorney Ricardo Fernandez, Tampa Heights resident, did not support the Jacobs Engineering Incorporated bus rapid transit (BRT) study/concept and commented on the use of express toll lanes on the Veterans Expressway.
TUESDAY, MARCH 6, 2018

III. COMMITTEE REPORTS AND ONLINE COMMENTS

Ms. Gena Torres, MPO, submitted materials; spoke to the committee reports; and relayed electronic comments received from Ms. Josephine Amato, who thanked MPO staff for their efforts to improve school bus safety, and Messrs. Dale Tindale, who was concerned with Interstate 275/Howard Frankland Bridge traffic congestion, Christopher Vela, who argued against the BRT study/proposal, and Mauricio Rosas, who opined the County was perpetuating sprawl without adding transportation infrastructure.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of Minutes – February 6, 2018
B. Committee Appointments
C. Community Transportation Coordinator Annual Evaluation Report

Commissioner Murman moved approval, seconded by Councilman Cohen, and carried twelve to zero. (Members Maniscalco and Stuart and had not arrived; Members Kemp and Lott were absent.)

V. ROLL-CALL VOTE: TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) AMENDMENT FOR HART FOWLER/NEBRASKA/FLORIDA AVENUES CORRIDOR STUDY

Commissioner Murman felt the amendment could enhance the Regional Transit Feasibility Plan (RTFP). Ms. Beth Alden, MPO Executive Director, acknowledged HART had made the request. Ms. Sarah McKinley, MPO, stated the funding amount was $2.5 million, and, following talks, noted the amendment was a text edit since HART had already allocated the funds. Chairman Miller sought a motion to approve the item. Commissioner Murman so moved, seconded by Mr. Mechanik. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried twelve to zero. (Members Maniscalco and Stuart and had not arrived; Members Kemp and Lott were absent.)

VI. ACTION ITEM

A. 2018 TITLE VI NONDISCRIMINATION PLAN UPDATE

Dr. Johnny Wong, MPO, gave a presentation. Chairman Miller called for a motion to adopt. Councilman Cohen so moved, seconded by Mr. Mechanik, and carried twelve to zero. (Members Maniscalco and Stuart and had not arrived; Members Kemp and Lott were absent.)
VII. STATUS REPORTS

A. University of South Florida (USF) Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR) Update and Autonomous Vehicle Transit Feasibility Study for USF Campus

Dr. Robert Bertini, executive director, CUTR, delivered a presentation. Citing previous collaborations with THEA, Mr. Waggoner praised CUTR’s objective findings/reports.

B. Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Environmental Programs Update

Mr. Daniel Lauricello, FDOT, shared a presentation; distributed information; verified FDOT was waiting for Tampa’s completion of Segments 1-6 to begin construction for Dale Mabry Highway, from Netpune Street to Henderson Boulevard; and continued the presentation. Talks occurred on sea grass acreage, Old Tampa Bay water quality, an upcoming Tampa Bay Estuary Program presentation to the MPO, working with the Environmental Protection Commission on utilizing demolition materials for an artificial reef program, the 230-foot proposed bridge length, and the bridge’s positive effects on water circulation.

C. MPO Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 through FY 2020 – Call for Projects

Ms. Allison Yeh, MPO, delivered a presentation. Commissioner White preferred more Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) involvement in the UPWP project submittal process. Mr. Lopano supported separating the bicycle lanes. Commissioner Murman suggested UPWP projects be vetted through the BOCC. On prompt, Ms. Alden defined the term “traffic count.” After talks, Commissioner White directed Ms. Alden to apprise Mr. John Lyons, Director, Public Works, of the discussion that day regarding the status report.

VIII. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT

A. Plan Hillsborough 2018 Strategic Planning Retreat, March 23, 2018, 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Stetson University College of Law Tampa Law Center, 1700 North Tampa Street

B. Tampa Bay Transportation Management Area Leadership Group: March 9, 2018, 9:30 a.m., Tampa International Airport, Aviation Authority Boardroom, and SkyConnect Tour
C. Next Policy Committee Meeting: March 27, 2018, 9:00 a.m., 18th floor, and Board Meeting: Tuesday, April 3, 2018, 9:00 a.m., 26th floor

D. New Date for MPO Regional Planning Best Practices Study Board Workshop at St. Petersburg College Collaborative Labs: Friday, June 1, 2018

Ms. Alden disseminated a flyer and gave the report. Commissioner Murman wondered about using RTFP maps for further corridor/connection analysis and requested reports on Florida Senate Bill 852, and Florida House Bill 585, should the legislation be adopted. Citing the County’s Perils of Flood Assessment, Commissioner White asked MPO staff to augment what the County was doing. Senior Assistant County Attorney Cameron Clark solicited MPO executive director evaluations by the end of the week.

IX. OLD BUSINESS AND NEW BUSINESS – None.

X. ADDENDUM

A. All Hazards Recovery Plan Workshop Flyer

B. Legislative Update from the MPO Advisory Council

C. Potential Fiscal Impacts of Changes in School Bus Service in Hillsborough County

D. Project Fact Sheets
   1. County Road 672/Big Bend Road Box Culvert Replacement Project
   2. U.S. Highway 92 (U.S. 92)/Dale Mabry Highway Resurfacing, from McKay Avenue to Cleveland Street
   3. U.S. 92/Hillsborough Avenue Drainage Improvements, from North Nebraska Avenue to North 13th Street

E. Correspondence
   1. To the Federal Highway Administration (FHA) on Resilience and Durability to Extreme Weather Pilot Program (EWPP)
   2. From the FHA on Authority to Obligate Funds – Resilience and Durability to EWPP
   3. From the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity on TIP for FY 2018 through FY 2022
   4. From FDOT on FDOT-Owned Vacant Structures
5. From FDOT: Biweekly Fatality Report from District 7 Secretary, February 23, 2018

F. Articles Relating to MPO Work

1. “Leave Your Car at Home, See Cost-saving and Health Benefits, Community Leaders Say – Bay Area’s Commuter Challenge is February 19-23”

2. “Learn How BRT (and Rail) Could Work in Tampa Bay”

XI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:10 a.m.

READ AND APPROVED: ______________________________

CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:
PAT FRANK, CLERK

By: ______________________________
Deputy Clerk

dy
Board & Committee Agenda Item

**Agenda Item**
Committee Appointments

**Presenter**
None – Consent Agenda

**Summary**

The Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) shall be responsible for providing information and overall community values and needs into the transportation planning program of the MPO; evaluating and proposing solutions from a citizen’s perspective concerning alternative transportation proposals and critical issues; providing knowledge gained through the CAC into local citizen group discussions and meetings; and establishing comprehension and promoting credibility for the MPO Program. Councilman Cohen re-appointed the following citizen:

- Dennis Levine

The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) shall be composed of technically qualified representatives for the purpose of planning, programming and engineering of the transportation system within the Hillsborough County Metropolitan Planning Organization area boundary. The following individuals have been identified to serve on the TAC:

- Mariann Abrahamsen *(City of Temple Terrace - Primary)*
- Troy Tinch *(City of Temple Terrace - Alternate)*

**Recommended Action**
That the MPO confirm the above appointments.

**Prepared By**
Wanda West

**Attachments**
None
Agenda Item
Letter of support for Upper Tampa Bay water quality enhancements in conjunction with Howard Frankland Bridge Project

Presenter
Ed Sherwood, Tampa Bay Estuary Program (TBEP)

Summary
Tampa Bay has been recognized as one of the few examples of a coastal ecosystem in recovery despite continued urbanization and population growth. Seagrass coverage continues to expand and now has approached levels last observed in the 1950s. Periodic setbacks have been observed in some of the Bay and there are a number of efforts underway in response to these water quality challenges.

The FDOT is currently working to modify the Courtney Campbell Causeway. There are additional projects to address circulation and flushing including alterations to existing causeways and bridges, as well as the planned Howard Frankland bridge replacement project. TBEP is seeking letters of support to continue to work in partnership with FDOT to find opportunities to further improve Old Tampa Bay’s ecology.

Recommended Action
That the MPO send a letter of support for finding opportunities to improve water quality and to protect and restore Tampa Bay

Prepared By
Gena Torres

Attachments
1. Draft letter of support - as recommended by MPO Technical Advisory Cmte.
2. Memo from Tampa Bay Nitrogen Management Consortium on Old Tampa Bay
April 3, 2018

Secretary David Gwynn
Florida Department of Transportation, District Seven
11201 N. Malcolm McKinley Drive
Tampa, FL 33612

Dear Secretary Gwynn,

At the March 19th meeting of the MPO’s Technical Advisory Committee, a presentation was made by the Tampa Bay Estuary Program on opportunities to further restore the ecosystem of Old Tampa Bay.

Already, FDOT has shown its support, by modifying the eastern portion of the Courtney Campbell Causeway, leading to better water quality and measurable environmental improvements. Because of this commitment, Tampa Bay has been recognized as one of the few international examples of a coastal ecosystem in recovery, despite urbanization and population growth.

Another opportunity exists to benefit the Bay ecosystem, during the replacement of the Howard Frankland Bridge. If alterations to the western causeway can be made during the bridge replacement project, improved circulation in the Feather Sound area will help reverse harmful algal blooms, fish kills, and limited seagrass recovery that has been experienced there.

The MPO encourages the FDOT to investigate opportunities while plans are underway for the Howard Frankland Bridge replacement. Please contact me or Ed Sherwood of the Tampa Bay Estuary Program for further information.

Many thanks for your consideration of this opportunity.

Sincerely,

Beth Alden, AICP
Executive Director
MEMORANDUM

TO: FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FROM: TAMPA BAY NITROGEN MANAGEMENT CONSORTIUM
Santino Provenzano, TBNMC Industry Co-Chair
Jeffrey Greenwell, TBNMC Government Co-Chair
Ed Sherwood, TBEP Executive Director, TBNMC Facilitator
Maya Burke, Science Policy Coordinator, TBNMC Facilitator
Anthony Janicki, Janicki Environmental, Inc., TBNMC Support Contractor

SUBJECT: OLD TAMPA BAY

Tampa Bay has been recognized as one of the few international examples of a coastal ecosystem in recovery despite continued urbanization and population growth within its watershed. Baywide seagrass coverage continues to expand and now has approached levels commensurate to the extent last observed in the 1950s, a recovery goal set by the community through the Tampa Bay Estuary Program’s (TBEP) Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan. However, periodic setbacks have been observed in some of the Bay’s extent, particularly in the Old Tampa Bay (OTB) management segment.

Compared to other areas of the Bay, OTB’s recovery has lagged. Results from the 2017 Water Quality Assessment Report Decision Matrix indicate that the chlorophyll-a target in OTB has been exceeded for a third consecutive year and was not in compliance with FDEP regulatory criteria. The decision support approach developed by the Tampa Bay Estuary Program calls for cautionary alert and the development of specific recommendations in response to these results. If the OTB segment exceeds FDEP regulatory criteria for a second straight year in 2018, then additional compliance steps will also be necessary for the Tampa Bay Nitrogen Management Consortium and its many member government and industries within the Old Tampa Bay watershed. The primary ecological challenges in OTB include:

- organic sediment (muck) accumulation in the upper portions of OTB;
- limited seagrass expansion in distinct, poor circulation areas of OTB;
- alteration of freshwater inflows from managed channels discharging to OTB; and
- the annual recurrence of nuisance algal blooms (*Pyrodinium bahamense*).

A number of efforts have been completed or are underway in response to these persistent water quality challenges. For example, TBEP and SWFWMD developed an integrated ecosystem model to determine potential management actions that could further enhance OTB’s recovery. TBEP and FWC FWRI recently completed a project to better understand the life history, bloom initiation and distributions of
Pyrodinium bahamense, the primary alga of concern in this portion of the bay. Subsequent work to examine the potential of filter-feeding oysters and bivalves to serve as a biological control for future algal blooms is underway. The City of Clearwater is working to remove point source discharges to OTB as part of a larger groundwater replenishment project and the City of Safety Harbor recently completed a habitat restoration project that provides additional stormwater polishing near downtown.

Much has already been done in the Tampa Bay region to kick-start the Bay’s recovery (e.g., wastewater treatment plant upgrades, enhanced stormwater regulations, residential fertilizer use ordinances, etc.), but the 2017 Water Quality Assessment results emphasize the importance of expanded efforts to reduce the potential for future algal blooms in OTB. This includes ramping up traditional approaches to curtail nutrient inputs from all sources in the watershed, while also considering the implementation of biologic controls such as filter-feeding oysters and bivalves, and larger scale physical alterations to enhance circulation and increase flushing.

The FDOT is currently working on one such project to modify the Courtney Campbell Causeway (see recent local news story here: http://www.fox13news.com/news/local-news/courtney-campbell-upgrades-cause-traffic-headaches). Additional projects to address circulation and flushing issues in OTB could benefit both the bay as well as partner entities and permit holders throughout the watershed. Opportunities for potential projects include alterations to existing causeways and bridges, as well as the planned Howard Frankland bridge replacement project currently in design and permitting. The FDOT has proven to be an invaluable asset to the Tampa Bay Nitrogen Management Consortium (TBNMC) and an important contributor to its remarkable successes. We look forward to future opportunities to build upon the legacy of water quality improvements and continued partnership to protect and restore Tampa Bay.

The TBEP and the TBNMC stand ready to assist FDOT in exploring opportunities to further improve OTB’s ecology. Please do not hesitate to contact either Ed Sherwood (esherwood@tbep.org) or Maya Burke (mburke@tbep.org), TBNMC facilitators, on developing a collaborative path forward for any future projects that FDOT may be considering for the OTB segment.
Board & Committee Agenda Item

**Agenda Item**
MPO Advisory Council 2018 Call for Freight Projects

**Presenter**
Rich Clarendon

**Summary**
Hillsborough MPO has been invited to participate in the Florida Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council’s (MPOAC’s) new Freight Priorities Program. The purpose of the program is to assemble the combined input of the Florida MPO/TPOs and to highlight their top priority freight projects, which will be offered as a list to the Florida Department of Transportation for consideration of future funding.

This is a good opportunity to highlight freight projects already included in our core planning products at a statewide level. Available funding could consist of all roadway funding sources available to FDOT (e.g., Strategic Intermodal System funds; Discretionary Intermodal funds, National Highway Freight Program funds).

Staff has identified three projects that meet the criteria. Projects must fall on a state highway, and have a PD&E (project development and environmental study) completed or underway. Our proposed three projects are eligible, ready for funding, and represent top priorities in the Hillsborough+Polk Freight Logistics Zone Strategic Plan (as adopted October 2017).

1. **I-4**: express toll lanes from Selmon Connector to East of Branch Forbes Road (TIP Priority #40)
2. **US 92**: widening from US 301/I-4 to CR 579 and from Park Rd to County Line Road (TIP Priorities #48 & 49)
3. **I-75**: express lanes from south of US 301 to north of Fletcher Avenue, a distance of approximately 15.5 miles (identified as a need in the 2040 long range plan, but not a current TIP priority)

The final list must be transmitted by April 6, 2018. Upon receipt, the MPOAC’s consultant will review the projects for consistency with the criteria; aggregate the list of freight priority projects; then prepare and present it to the MPOAC Freight Committee (April/May), MPOAC Staff Directors and Governing Board (June). After final approval, the list of statewide priority projects will be transmitted to FDOT for consideration of inclusion into their 5-Year Work Program.
**Recommended Action**
Approve list to be transmitted to MPOAC Freight Committee

**Prepared By**
Lisa K. Silva, AICP, PLA

**Attachment**
Program Fact Sheet
Program Overview

The Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council (MPOAC), in partnership with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), has developed the Freight Prioritization Program (FPP) to identify and promote high priority freight projects within the planning boundaries of Florida’s Metropolitan/Transportation Planning Organizations for consideration in FDOT’s 5-Year Work Program and other potential funding sources. The FPP’s objective is to foster collaboration among the MPOAC’s members and to develop a comprehensive list of projects that represents the unified input of the MPOAC. The MPOAC will update and endorse the FPP’s final list on an annual basis.

Requirements for Project Inclusion

MPOAC member organizations can submit up to three (3) freight projects annually to be included. Projects must:

- Be located within the planning boundary of the proposing MPO/TPO;
- Demonstrate an improvement to the movement of goods statewide;
- Be identified as a freight priority for its residing region;
- Have progressed through or are currently undergoing a Project Development and Environment (PD&E) study; and
- Demonstrate that it is incorporated in adopted plans.

To help ensure these requirements are met, a checklist must be completed with each project submission. The checklist helps evaluate how well a project addresses the goals of FDOT’s Florida Transportation Plan.

How it Works

Development of the FPP consists of three (3) key steps: Project Submittal and Verification; List Development and Endorsement; and Transmittal to FDOT for Consideration.

1. Project Submittal and Verification - March
   Each year, the MPOAC will ask its members to submit up to three (3) projects by mid-March. Project information will be verified by the MPOAC Freight Committee for completeness. Requests for additional information may be made if project information is incomplete.

2. List Development and Endorsement - April
   The freight priority list will be developed based on all submitted and verified projects. A letter recommending formal endorsement of the list will be prepared by the MPOAC Freight Committee Chair in April. The list will be presented to the MPOAC Governing Board for final endorsement in June.

3. Transmittal to FDOT for Consideration - June
   After the MPOAC Governing Board endorses the freight priority list in June, it will be transmitted with a formal letter of endorsement to FDOT Central Office and to each District Freight Coordinator for consideration as part of the annual Work Program update.
Potential Funding Sources
The intent of the FPP is to promote the advancement of freight projects on state facilities within FDOT’s 5-Year Work Program. Available funding would consist of all roadway funding sources available to FDOT (e.g., Strategic Intermodal System funds; Discretionary Intermodal funds, National Highway Freight Program funds).

Frequently Asked Questions
Why is this program important?
As the association representing all MPOs and TPOs in Florida, the MPOAC has the opportunity to promote the freight priorities of its members. This is critical following the creation of the National Highway Freight Program by the FAST Act, the continued advancement and implementation of FDOT’s Freight Program, and the ongoing challenges facing each MPOAC member related to urban goods movement. The FPP ensures that the MPOAC’s members can communicate their priorities to FDOT on an annual basis.

How will projects on the FPP’s final list be ordered?
Alphabetical by MPO/TPO. There will not be any ranking. All FPP projects represent high priority projects as established by each MPO/TPO for the given year.

Can this program be used to promote our project in pursuit of other funding opportunities?
In addition to FDOT’s 5-Year Work Program, the state and its partners pursue available grant programs (e.g., INFRA Grants, TIGER Grants). While these competitive grant programs are not part of the funding the FPP is designed to influence, inclusion of a project on this statewide list of priority freight projects could be leveraged as part of a grant application process.

How do I know if my project is qualified for the FPP?
The provided checklist will contain all the requirements for inclusion on the FPP’s list. Key eligibility questions relate to a project being on a state facility and being ready for design and/or construction. Other questions on the checklist help MPOAC members describe why their project is a freight priority.

How likely is it that projects receive funding?
While funding allocations are not guaranteed, the FPP provides MPOAC members an opportunity to engage and promote freight-specific priorities to FDOT’s Freight, Logistics and Passenger Operations Office, which can increase the likelihood of funding.

How do projects require a completed PD&E process?
The FPP is intended to influence funding allocations within FDOT’s 5-Year Work Program. This could be the new 5th year, or any changes to earlier years. Requiring a completed PD&E process ensures the project has progressed through the planning process and is ready for design and/or construction (i.e. funding).

What happens if a project(s) does not receive funding?
The FPP is designed to be updated annually. If an organization does not receive funding for a project, they have the option to either submit the same project the next year or to submit a different one as new information arises.

How does the MPOAC’s FPP link to other initiatives, such as the Florida Freight Advisory Committee (FLFAC)?
The FLFAC currently has two (2) MPO representatives. The FPP’s final list will be provided to the FLFAC through those representatives. The FLFAC has been focused on funding allocations for key statewide freight priority, making their review of the freight priority list critical.

Need More Information?
For more information about the MPOAC please contact Carl Mikyska, carl.mikyska@mpoac.org, or visit www.mpoac.org.
Board & Committee Agenda Item

**Agenda Item**
Memorandum of Understanding Between TBARTA, FDOT, HART, PSTA, & MPOs

**Presenter**
Ray Chiaramonte, TBARTA Executive Director

**Summary**
With the Florida Legislature’s action last year to re-focus the mission of the former Tampa Bay Area Regional Transportation Authority on transit, and on the core metropolitan-area counties around Tampa Bay, the newly reconstituted TBARTA board has asked for the opportunity to lead the next steps arising from the Regional Transit Feasibility Plan (see [http://tbregionaltransit.com](http://tbregionaltransit.com) for more information).

The Pinellas MPO and the Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA) have requested some additional language to clarify the relationship of TBARTA’s upcoming planning activities with the federally-mandated work of the MPOs and state-mandated transit agency plans.

A number of comments and questions about the proposed Regional Transit Feasibility Plan have been received by Hillsborough MPO staff, and will be discussed under a separate agenda item. If TBARTA will take the lead role on the next steps, it is appropriate to ask TBARTA representatives how they would propose to respond to these questions and comments.

**Recommended Action**
Support the proposed Memorandum of Understanding, with the edits requested by Pinellas MPO and PSTA, and request TBARTA representatives appear at a future Hillsborough MPO meeting to address comments and questions about the Regional Transit Feasibility Plan’s recommendations and next steps.

**Prepared By**
Beth Alden, MPO Executive Director

**Attachments**
Draft of Memorandum with edits requested by Pinellas MPO and PSTA
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
Between
TAMPA BAY AREA REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY
FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FORWARD PINELLAS
HILLSBOROUGH AREA REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY
HILLSBOROUGH METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
PASCO COUNTY PUBLIC TRANSIT
PASCO METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
PINELLAS SUNCOAST TRANSIT AUTHORITY

I. PARTIES
This Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) is entered into between the Tampa Bay Area Regional Transit Authority (“TBARTA”), the Florida Department of Transportation (“FDOT”), Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Authority (“HART”), Pasco County Public Transit (“PCPT”), Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (“PSTA”), Hillsborough Metropolitan Planning Organization (“Hillsborough MPO”), Pasco Metropolitan Planning Organization (“Pasco MPO”), and Forward Pinellas (Pinellas Metropolitan Planning Organization).

II. PURPOSE
The purpose of the Regional Transit Feasibility Plan (RTFP) is to identify a catalyst regional transit project, as well as outline projects that can be implemented following the initial catalyst project, within Hillsborough, Pasco, and Pinellas Counties. The RTFP will provide the foundation of the regional transit vision, through a technical evaluation process to determine a project that is the most competitive for federal and state funding.

The development of the RTFP is funded by FDOT and administered by HART. HART will continue to administer the RTFP until the conclusion of the study as outlined in the RTFP’s Scope of Services. Public, agency, and stakeholder engagement will continue as planned to achieve input and recommendations on the RTFP, by the contractor.

Chapter 343, Part V, Florida Statutes (F.S.) requires TBARTA to identify regional transit service needs and opportunities over a 10-year period through the development of a Regional Transit Development Plan (“RTDP”). The RTDP will encompass the five-county TBARTA region, consider the results of the RTFP, the local transit agency Transit Development Plans (TDPs), the Florida Transportation Plan, the Strategic Intermodal System, and other applicable transit plans and regionally significant studies.

The purpose of this MOU is to define each Party’s responsibilities related to the RTFP development and approval process.

III. PARTY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
NOW, THEREFORE, the Parties hereby mutually agree and express their understanding that:

1. RTFP Roles
   a. TBARTA will be the primary recipient of the RTFP, with all rights and obligations thereto as mandated by Florida Statutes. The results of the RTFP Draft Implementation Plan will be formally submitted for acceptance and approval by the TBARTA Governing Board.
b. HART will continue to administer the execution of the RTFP, including all public outreach, until the Scope of Services under the contract is complete.

c. FDOT will continue to provide technical support, as needed, to execute the completion and implementation of the RTFP.

d. TBARTA will assume primary responsibility for the implementation of the RTFP, and will continue to seek input, in an advisory capacity, from the five MPOs and five transit agencies in its designated service area, as well as any other applicable public or private entities.

e. The Metropolitan Planning Organization(s) will have the responsibility of determining whether to include the RTFP and its component project or projects in the Cost Feasible Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), and to advance one or more phases of the RTFP through the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to be eligible for federal funding. The MPOs will also have responsibility for ensuring development of a coordinated and complementary multimodal transportation network to support the RTFP.

2. RTFP Coordination and Engagement

a. TBARTA will closely monitor the planned public outreach related to the RTFP, and ensure that the governing bodies of the following agencies/entities have the opportunity to offer input and recommendations:

i. Forward Pinellas

ii. HART

iii. Hernando County Transit (the Hernando Board of County Commissioners (BOCC))

iv. Hillsborough County MPO

v. Manatee County Area Transit (MCAT, the Manatee BOCC)

vi. Pasco County MPO

vii. PCPT (the Pasco County BOCC)

viii. PSTA

b. Upon conclusion of the public outreach and the execution of any necessary revisions, the TBARTA Governing Board shall formally request concurrence of the RTFP Implementation Plan for the regional transit system and the proposed catalyst project from the governing boards of the following agencies:

i. Forward Pinellas

ii. HART

iii. Hillsborough MPO

iv. Pasco MPO

v. PCPT

vi. PSTA

3. Through this MOU, the Parties express their mutual intent to adhere to the outline of commitments to be made in this process and imposes no legally enforceable contractual obligation on any Party.

4. This MOU shall take effect when approved by all Parties on the last date shown below.
APPROVED AND ADOPTED BY EACH Party on the date shown below:

TAMPA BAY AREA REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY

BY: ____________________________________
    Ramond Chiaramonte, Executive Director

Date: ____________________________________

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

BY: ____________________________________
    David Gwynn, District VII Secretary

Date: ____________________________________

FORWARD PINELLAS

BY: ____________________________________
    Whit Blanton, Executive Director

Date: ____________________________________

HILLSBOROUGH AREA REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY

BY: ____________________________________
    Jeffrey Seward, Interim Chief Executive Officer
    Commissioner Les Miller, Chair

Date: ____________________________________

HILLSBOROUGH METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

BY: ____________________________________
    Beth Alden, Executive Director

Date: ____________________________________
Board & Committee Agenda Item

Agenda Item
Comments on Regional Transit Feasibility Plan

Presenter
Rich Clarendon, MPO Staff

Summary
Last month, the MPO 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 transportation agencies.

Prepared By
Rich Clarendon, AICP

Attachments
Presentation slides
Regional Transit Feasibility Plan: Comments & Questions

March 2018
Regional Transit Feasibility Plan

- Now in public comment phase
- TMA & others looking for Hillsborough MPO’s opinion
- Many questions raised by community members
- This is round-up of questions & comments
- ... to begin working together on answers!
1. FDOT’s offer to develop transit facilities in the interstate right-of-way is valuable and should not be passed up.
It Takes a Team to Create Bus-Only Shoulders: ex. MnDOT’s “Team Transit”
Systematic & Incremental

334+ miles today of bus-only shoulders

<20 miles added per year, steadily since 1992

½ of MetroTransit routes now use these shoulders, and report it saves 5-15 minutes per trip

Complemented by ramp meter bypass lanes, and 106 P&R facilities with 58% utilization
Outcomes for Transit

Avg. Travel Time savings (‘97 study):
• 9 minutes from shoulder use
• 10 minutes from ramp meter bypass use
• 17 minutes from HOV lane use

Majority of riders perceive travel time savings from shoulders.

Ridership on shoulder routes increased 9% over two years while ridership system-wide dropped 6½ %.

Would like more info about safe travel speeds on shoulders – is there national research?
2. By trying to serve too many purposes, the proposed catalyst project might not do a good job serving any well.
Express BRT on Interstate - Best Serves...

❖ Longer Regional Trips
❖ Fewer Stops
❖ Commuters
❖ Stations in Interstate ROW
❖ Transit hubs
Arterial BRT – Best Serves ...

❖ Core transit market
❖ Local development
❖ Street-Level Stations
❖ Trips < 10 miles long
Must Express BRT vehicles exit Interstate to access street-level stations?

- How much time will be added to trip, at 19 street-level stations?

If they don’t, can peds & bikes get safely to stations in Interstate right-of-way?

Stations next to Interstate ramps have worked for suburban PnR lots (Houston, San Diego, LA)

- Do they work for urban stations relying on walk/bike/bus access?
Arterial BRT & Interstate Express BRT

- Both are proposed in the 9-mile segment north of downtown Tampa
- Will they compete for riders?
- Shouldn’t they be studied as a package to ensure they complement each other, & each serves its market well?
  - Peak Period: operate both Express & Arterial BRT on parallel facilities? Off Peak: integrate?
- Is there an opportunity to leverage our local dollars even further by bundling complementary services into one grant application, in the future?
3. Improving regional transit is needed but cannot come at the expense of under-funded local bus service; cannot rob Peter to pay Paul.
“Tampa Bay spends far less on transit each year than any other major metro area. It is the only top-20 metro region to spend less than $213 million annually. Its $141 million operating budget is on par with Bridgeport, CT and Buffalo, NY, each of which have 1.5 million fewer people.”

“Tampa Bay’s system reaches the same number of jobs as those in places like Boise, ID, or Chattanooga, TN – except it serves five times as many people.”
Will Express BRT consume $$ needed to operate local bus service or Arterial BRT?

Need to grow the pie
- PPPs for station development
- Grants – which require ....
- Local funding to match the grants. How to make that a net increase for transit?
Growing the pie….

- Will likely require Hillsborough County Commission support
- ... And therefore will need to demonstrate how unincorporated county residents can benefit from transit improvements
- Can we look more broadly at strengthening shoulders on freeways throughout region? I-75? I-4? Selmon & Veterans Expressways?
- Would the TMA consider another BRT corridor, as part of a comprehensive package?
- Does it make sense for TBARTA to be the only implementer?
4. Rubber-Tire vs. Steel-Wheel Transit
(Or when’s the best time to plant a tree?)
❖ What does research say about BRT influencing **land use, economic development & ROI** around stations?

❖ What does research say about BRT vs. rail attracting **riders**, and why?

❖ Does **operating in Interstate** right-of-way have an effect?
Is the CSX corridor not worth preserving as a ROW asset for the future?

- Downtown-USF travelshed very congested today, few options
- Will CSX sell/lease sections?
- What is the appraised value? What is its value for freight? For transit?
- Will CSX negotiate with anyone besides FDOT?
- Will CSX consider South Tampa line?
5. Other Questions
In other communities whose first New Starts/Small Starts project was BRT, were there further major capital investments in transit service?

- If yes, what elements were most critical to the success of the initial “catalyst” project?

Timing assumptions: example timelines for BRT & rail?

Relationship of catalyst project to other Tampa Bay projects?

- HART’s & PSTA’s cross-county express services = incremental steps towards regional vision
- Local connections: Invasion Tampa Streetcar; Westshore, Downtown & University Area Circulators; future arterial BRT projects
- How dependent is regional system on feeders & connections?
Questions about Next Steps

❖ Does implementation have to be one big project? Can it be segmented and phased?
  o Shorter segments could qualify for Small Starts program, which has a much shorter queue of projects than the New Starts program

❖ If agencies want to implement part of the regional system, can they request a portion of FDOT’s $5 million set-aside for PD&E?
  o If yes, what will be required?

❖ Can agencies propose projects on other lines on the RTFP map besides the proposed “catalyst”?
  o Would such projects have to meet FTA New Starts/Small Starts criteria? Could they be less capital-intensive and compete for other state funds?

❖ What is the role of the TMA Leadership Group in ensuring New Starts/Small Starts applications from our region don’t compete with each other in Washington DC?
Committee Comments

❖ Citizens Advisory Committee - ☑ Supported, also asked:
  • Impact of catalyst on job creation?
  • Reliability of federal funding?

❖ Technical Advisory Committee - ☑ Supported, also asked:
  • Necessary to choose between BRT & Rail?
  • When will RTFP come back for committee action?
Recommended Action:

Transmit MPO comments to Consultant Team, TMA Leadership Group, TBARTA, HART, others.

Request TMA Leadership Group work together on answers.
Board & Committee Agenda Item

**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**

**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 MPO Board

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>Metrics</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<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>
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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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<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>Metrics</td>
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<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of MPO public forums, workshops and community meetings at which</td>
<td>Number and origin of participants at such public forums,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>displays, presentations, discussions, and feedback occurred</td>
<td>workshops, and community meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of participants at public forums, workshops and community</td>
<td>Number of participation opportunities offered to American Indian</td>
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<td>meetings held in historically underserved areas or with such</td>
<td>entities, such as the Seminole Tribe of Florida</td>
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<tr>
<td>populations</td>
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<td>Number and origin of participants at monthly MPO and committee meetings</td>
<td>Number of persons on the MPO mailing list receiving regular</td>
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<td></td>
<td>agendas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of draft plans, reports, other preliminary documents or surveys</td>
<td>Developing maps with updated, community-specific demographic</td>
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<td>posted to MPO website for public comment</td>
<td>and socioeconomic data within the MPO’s geographic boundaries</td>
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<td></td>
<td>at the census tract, block group, or zip code level</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ensuring the MOE report details representative public involvement</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Listing all MPO committee members’ demographic data, including race,</td>
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<td>ethnicity, age, and whether or not they are disabled</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of returned comment cards distributed with Newsletters and other</td>
<td>Number of verbal comments received at open forum discussions,</td>
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<tr>
<td>MPO publications</td>
<td>public hearings, and at any other opportunities for public</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of phone, fax, mail, and email inquiries or comments cards</td>
<td>interaction</td>
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<td>received</td>
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<tr>
<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</td>
<td>Documented revisions to plans based on citizen input</td>
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<tr>
<td>the MPO</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Periodic public involvement process surveys</td>
<td>Update the PPP in conjunction with, and at the outset of, each</td>
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<td>LRTP update</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:

**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>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3: Documents, packets and informational pages available through PlanHillsborough.org</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current &amp; Archived Newsletters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current &amp; Archived Meeting Packets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informational Pages &amp; Hot-Linked Informational Sites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPO-Produced Reports &amp; Documents Published to Website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</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>
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<td></td>
</tr>
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<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>
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<td>Aug 12, 2016</td>
<td>Walk Bike News: Issue 22</td>
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<td>Aug 17, 2016</td>
<td>Walk Bike News: Issue 22 (en Espanol)</td>
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<td>Nov 3, 2016</td>
<td>Walk Bike News: Issue 23</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 7, 2016</td>
<td>Walk Bike News: Issue 23 (en Espanol)</td>
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<td>Feb 9, 2017</td>
<td>Walk Bike News: Issue 24</td>
<td>3359</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr 4, 2017</td>
<td>Walk Bike News: Issue 24 (en Espanol)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 7, 2017</td>
<td>Walk Bike News: Issue 25</td>
<td>2935</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Hillsborough Rides</strong></td>
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</tr>
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<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>
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<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>
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</tr>
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<td>Dec 2, 2016</td>
<td>Hillsborough Rides: Issue 21</td>
<td>3367</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec 14, 2016</td>
<td>Hillsborough Rides: Issue 21 (en Espanol)</td>
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<tr>
<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>
<tr>
<td>Jun 6, 2017</td>
<td>Hillsborough Rides: Issue 23</td>
<td>4143</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Connections to Tomorrow</strong></td>
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<td>Aug 1, 2017</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep 5, 2017</td>
<td>Connections to Tomorrow 2</td>
<td>4938</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 9, 2017</td>
<td>Connections to Tomorrow 3</td>
<td>4422</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov 2, 2017</td>
<td>Connections to Tomorrow 4</td>
<td>5061</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec 7, 2017</td>
<td>Connections to Tomorrow 5</td>
<td>4421</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Jul 3, 2017</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>White</td>
</tr>
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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>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6: Other MPO Email Communications via Constant Contact

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Distribution</th>
</tr>
</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></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>
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<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 newspaper¹. 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>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>Total</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>2,716</td>
<td>289</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>2,335</td>
<td>151</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

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\(^2\) 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 home\textsuperscript{4}.

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.

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).
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 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 Awards</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>Hillsborough Area Regional Transit’s 2017 Florida #Automated #Vehicles #Summit was a big success! #VisionZERO813</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vision Zero Action Plan Workshop 3 – Paint Saves Lives Photo Album</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We’re making great strides on our #GardenSteps for the #HealthiestCitiesChallenge!</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Bullard Parkway Complete Streets Study is currently underway</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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>
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 reconsideration 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 neutral 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. Per a recommendation from the MPO’s Technical Advisory Committee, the MPO will explore utilizing Instagram to share photos of projects and events.

9. **Update and expand accessibility to real-time engagement** through video streaming and other online access options.

Per a recommendation from the MPO’s Citizens Advisory Committee, the MPO will evaluate ways to offer additional online video streaming options for its MPO Board meetings and public hearings. Currently all MPO Board meetings are streamed online through Hillsborough TV, available through cable providers and online at [https://www.hillsboroughcounty.org/HTVlive](https://www.hillsboroughcounty.org/HTVlive). All Board meetings are also uploaded to the MPO’s YouTube profile, although there is some lag in receiving and uploading these videos. Furthermore, beginning in 2016, the MPO has streamed its TIP
Public Hearings through sites such as GoToMeeting and Facebook. The MPO will explore additional options for updating and expanding accessibility such as publicizing Hillsborough TV’s schedule including rebroadcasts, continuing to offer a chat room during public hearings, and live-streaming TMA Leadership Group meetings.
Board & Committee Agenda Item

**Agenda Item**
MPO Executive Director's Annual Evaluation

**Presenter**
Cameron Clark, MPO Attorney

**Summary**
Based on discussion at the January Policy Committee meeting, the MPO attorney prepared and distributed a questionnaire to board members concerning the annual performance review of the MPO executive director. The attorney will provide a summary of the responses.

Because the MPO Board has a staffing services agreement with the Planning Commission, administration of any performance-based merit increase directed by the board will be handled by the Planning Commission Executive Director.

Last year, the board chose to award a merit increase consistent with the performance standards used for all of the Planning Commission and MPO staff. As an agency, the Planning Commission continues to budget for merit increases on par with Hillsborough County.

**Recommended Action**
Accept the summary and transmit to the Planning Commission Director for consideration of any merit increase consistent with agency standards.

**Prepared By**
MPO Staff

**Attachments**
To be distributed at board meeting
Board & Committee Agenda Item

**Agenda Item**
Invision Tampa Streetcar Study

**Presenter**
Milton Martinez, P.E., City of Tampa

**Summary**

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 St/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.

**Recommended Action**
None; for information only.

**Prepared By**
Rich Clarendon, AICP

**Attachments**
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 also will 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 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**

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 Cotanchobee 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 Extension & Modernization

Regional Transit Plan Top Performing Project Corridor

Preferred Alignment Options

Existing System Modernization

Regional Transit Plan

Top Performing Project Corridor

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.
Are there parks or schools that you would like to walk to? You’re invited to a community conversation to share your ideas for a new South Coast Greenway walking and biking path – similar to paved trails you see in parks!

April 3, 2018 @ 6:00 - 7:45 pm
78th Street Community Library
7625 Palm River Rd
Tampa, FL 33619

April 4, 2018 @ 5:30 - 7:30 pm
Gardenville Recreation Center
6215 Symmes Rd
Gibsonton, FL 33534
The Coalition of Community Gardens and Garden Steps present

Grow Community Gardens - Tampa Bay Conference!

Learn about:
- Funding a community garden
- Setting up a healthy garden
- The health benefits of growing and eating fresh veggies

FREE RECEPTION
Friday, April 6
6:30 pm - 8:30 pm
socialize with presenters, light refreshments

CONFERENCE
Saturday, April 7
9 am - 3 pm
exciting speakers
panel discussion, keynote speaker, presentations, breakout sessions, lunch provided

TICKETS ARE ONLY $10!
If you're considering starting a community garden, you won't want to miss this conference!

View conference details
Autonomous Vehicles—HB 353 (Reps. Fischer/Brodeur) and SB 712 (Senator Brandes) Although these bills are not identical, SB 712 would exempt an autonomous vehicle being operated in autonomous mode from a certain prohibition on the operation of a motor vehicle if the vehicle is actively displaying certain content that is visible from the driver’s seat while the vehicle is in motion; authorize a fully autonomous vehicle to operate in this state regardless of whether a licensed human operator is physically present in the vehicle; authorize the Secretary of Transportation to enroll the state in any federal pilot program or project for the collection and study of data for the review of automated driving systems. **HB 353 Died in the House Governmental Accountability Committee and SB 712 Died in the Senate Banking and Insurance Committee.**

Bicycle & Pedestrian Safety—HB 117 (Rep. Stone) would revise and provide requirements for a driver of motor vehicle overtaking bicycle, pedestrian, or nonmotorized vehicle; would revise requirements for turning at intersections; would revise and provide requirements for persons riding bicycles in groups; would require Class E driver license examination to address bicycle and pedestrian safety; and would provide penalties. **HB 117 Died on the House Calendar.**

**Budget—Governor Scott’s Recommended Budget:** $1 Billion for Transportation System Expansion; $1 Billion for Maintenance and Operations; $616 Million for Resurfacing; $568 Million for Transit Program Improvements; $67.7 Million for Bridge Repairs and Replacement; $186 Million for Safety Initiatives; $151.3 Million for Bicycle & Pedestrian Trails. **The State Budget includes:** $3.7 billion for Transportation System Expansion; $1 billion for Maintenance and Operations; $598 million for Transit Program Improvements; $67.7 million for Bridge Repairs and Replacement; $186 million for Safety Initiatives; and $151.3 million for Bicycle and Pedestrian Trails. **Local projects include:** Hillsborough County Big Bend/I-75 Interchange Improvements ($5 million), TBARTA ($1 million), and Hillsborough County South Coast Trail Enhancement ($450,000). **VETOED:** Hillsborough County School Sidewalks & Safety Enhancements ($2 million); Hillsborough County Orient Road ($2 million).

Charter County & Regional Transportation System Surtax—HB 243 (Reps. Avila/Perez) and SB 688 (Senator Garcia) While 31 counties are eligible to levy the surtax, it is only levied in Duval and Miami-Dade counties. HB 243 and SB 688 would allow Miami-Dade County to use surtax proceeds for specified purposes related to fixed guideway rapid transit systems and bus systems; would authorize use of surtax proceeds for refinancing existing bonds; and would prohibit use of such proceeds for non-transit
purposes. HB 243 Died in the Senate Community Affairs Committee and SB 688 Died in the Senate Appropriations Committee.

Community Redevelopment Agencies—HB 17 (Rep. Raburn) and SB 432 (Senator Lee) Although these bills are not identical, HB 17 would provide reporting requirements; revise requirements for operating community redevelopment agencies; prohibit creation of community redevelopment agencies after date certain; would provide phase-out period; create criteria for determining whether community redevelopment agency is inactive; provide hearing procedures; authorize certain financial activity from inactive community redevelopment agencies; revise requirements for use of redevelopment trust fund proceeds; revise county and municipal government reporting requirements. SB 432 would prohibit a person from lobbying a community redevelopment agency until he or she has registered as a lobbyist with that agency; authorize community redevelopment agencies to adopt rules to govern the registration of lobbyists; and would require ethics training for community redevelopment agency commissioners. HB 17 Died in the Senate Community Affairs Committee and SB 432 Died in the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Tourism and Economic Development.

Developments of Regional Impact (DRIs)—SB 1244 (Senator Lee) and HB 1151 (Rep. La Rosa) would amend statewide provisions related to existing developments of regional impact (DRIs), largely repealing most state oversight functions and shifting such responsibilities to local governments. This legislation preserves vested rights and other protections for existing DRIs. SB 1244 was substituted for HB 1151 and passed, and subject to the Governor’s veto powers will go into effect on July 1, 2018.

Dockless Bicycles—HB 1033 (Rep. Toledo) and SB 1304 (Senator Young) would largely preempt regulation of dockless sharing companies to the state, specifically prohibiting local governments from imposing taxes or requiring business licenses; would have also attempted to prohibit exclusive agreements between bike sharing companies and local governments. HB 1033 Died in the Senate Banking and Insurance Committee and SB 1304 Died in the Senate Community Affairs Committee.

Growth Management—HB 207 (Rep. McClain) and SB 362 (Senator Perry) These bills would require local governments to address the protection of private property rights in their comprehensive plans; requiring the comprehensive plan to include a private property rights element that sets forth principles, guidelines, standards, and strategies to achieve certain objectives; provide a deadline by which each local government must adopt a private property rights element; require the state land planning agency to approve the private property rights element adopted by each local government if it is substantially in a specified form. HB 207 Died in the House Agriculture and Property Rights Subcommittee and SB 362 Died in the Senate Community Affairs Committee. HB 883 (Rep. Ingoglia) originally filed to address
Community Development Districts was amended to include restrictions on Urban Service Boundaries and Community Redevelopment Agencies. HB 883 Died in Senate Messages.

Impact Fees—HB 697 (Rep. Miller) and SB 324 (Senator Young) SB 324 was amended to specify that a local government may not collect impact fees prior to the issuance of a building permit and to codify existing case law on the validity of impact fees. SB 324 Died on the Senate Calendar and HB 697 Died in the Senate Community Affairs Committee.

Local Tax Referenda—HB 317 (Rep. Ingoglia) and SB 272 (Senator Brandes) Although these bills are not identical, SB 272 would revise the voter approval threshold required to pass a referendum to adopt or amend local government discretionary sales surtaxes to at least 60% of the electors voting on the ballot when the referendum is held at any date other than a general election. HB 317 Died in the Senate Community Affairs Committee and SB 272 Died in Senate Rules Committee.

Metropolitan Planning Organizations—HB 575 (Rep. Beshears), SB 984 (Senator Brandes), HB 807 (Rep. Diamond) HB 575 would reduce the maximum number of MPO voting members from 25 to 15 for those MPO’s with populations over 500,000, with the exact number determined on an equitable geographic-population ratio basis, based on an agreement among the affected units of general-purpose local government and the Governor, as required by federal regulations. All MPO’s would be required to comply with changes by July 1, 2019. SB 984 would provide an incentive to merge MPO’s by removing the cap on the maximum number of voting members (currently twenty-five) while maintaining the base number of voting members (currently five members) serving on the MPO, after July 18, 2018; and would preserve current law with the number determined on an equitable geographic-population ratio basis. HB 807 is similar to SB 984, and would provide an incentive to merge MPO’s by removing the cap on the maximum number of voting members (currently twenty-five) while maintaining the base number of voting members (currently five members) serving on the MPO, after July 18, 2018; would preserve current law with the number determined on an equitable geographic-population ratio basis. Amendments were filed late by Senator Brandes to SB 100, SB 382, and HB 141 to prohibit an MPO to adopt a weighted voting structure, among other things. A point of order was called and those amendments were then withdrawn (see Transportation). HB 575 & HB 807 both Died in the House Government Accountability Committee. SB 984 Died in the Senate Transportation Committee.

Motorcycle & Moped Riders—SB 346 (Senator Perry), HB 583 (Rep. Clemons) would increase the age at which persons who are operating or riding upon a certain motorcycle or a moped are exempt from protective headgear requirements; would require a moped registered to a person under a specified age to display a license plate that is unique in design and color. SB 346 Died in the Senate Subcommittee on Transportation, Tourism & Economic Development. HB 583 Died in the House Subcommittee on Transportation & Infrastructure.
Private Property Rights—SB 292 (Senator J. Rodrigues) would exempt from the definition of “public utility” a property owner who owns and operates on that property a renewable energy source device with a capacity of up to 2.5 megawatts and who produces and provides or sells renewable energy from that device to users located on the property. SB 292 Died in the Senate Communication, Energy and Public Utilities Committee.

Red Light Cameras—SB 176 (Senator Hutson), SB 548 (Senator Campbell), and HB 6001 (Rep. Avila) would repeal provisions relating to the installation and use of traffic infraction detectors to enforce specified provisions when a driver fails to stop at a traffic signal, provisions that authorize the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, a county, or a municipality to use such detectors, and the distribution of penalties collected for specified violations. SB 176, SB 548 & HB 6001 all Died in the Senate Transportation Committee.

School Hazardous Walking Conditions—SB 188 (Senator Steube) would require district school boards to provide transportation to certain students; revise the speed and road conditions that meet the requirements for a hazardous walking condition; require a district school superintendent to request a review of a hazardous walking condition upon receipt of a written request from a parent of a student. SB 188 Died in the Appropriations Subcommittee on Pre-K-12 Education.

Smart City Challenge Grant—SB 852 (Senator Brandes) and HB 633 (Rep. Fischer) would create a new program within the Department of Transportation with an appropriation of $15 million to encourage communities to implement technology solutions to the most pressing mobility challenges; would qualify any governmental agency responsible for the movement of goods and services in Florida, including local governments, transportation planning organizations (TPOs) and state universities as eligible for receiving funding. SB 852 Died on the Senate Calendar and HB 633 Died on the House Calendar.

Statewide Alternative Transportation Authority—HB 535 (Reps. Avila and J. Grant) and SB 1200 (Senator Young) would rename the Florida Rail Enterprise (FRE) as the Statewide Alternative Transportation Authority; would revise annual allocations for the Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP) beginning FY 2021-22 from FRE to provide the first $60 million in documentary stamp taxes for alternative transportation systems, of which $25 million would be allocated to TBARTA for the design and construction of alternative transportation systems on a local or private fund 50/50 matching basis; and $35 million to the Statewide Alternative Transportation Authority, of which $25 million would be used in Miami-Dade County. The remaining $10 million would be available for use in any county or
counties. **HB 535 Died in the House Transportation, Tourism Appropriations Subcommittee and SB 1200 Died in the Senate Appropriations Committee.**

**Strategic Intermodal System (SIS)—SB 1188** (Senator Rouson) and **HB 1277** (Rep. Willhite) would authorize rapid bus service operating in express toll lanes on the interstate highway system as an eligible expenditure for SIS funding; would not increase SIS funding for Tampa Bay but would provide a new opportunity to access greater capacity and faster service from existing transportation assets. **SB 1188 Died in the Senate Community Affairs Committee and HB 1277 Died in the House Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee.**

**TBARTA—HB 2451** (Rep. Gruters) would provide a non-recurring appropriations of $1 million to TBARTA from the State Transportation Trust Fund. **HB 2451 passed--$1 million appropriation in the Budget (see Budget).**

**Texting While Driving—HB 33** (Rep. Toledo) and **SB 90** (Senator Perry) would strengthen the current ban on texting, emailing, and instant messaging while driving, by changing the current enforcement of the ban from secondary to primary. Any violation of the ban that causes a crash would result in the addition of six points to the offender’s driver license record. **HB 33 Died in the Senate Communication, Energy and Public Utilities Committee and SB 90 Died in the Senate Appropriations Committee (see Using of Wireless Devices While Driving).**

**Tourist Development Tax—SB 658** (Senator Brandes) and **HB 585** (Rep. Fine) would authorize counties imposing the tourist development tax to use revenues from the tax to acquire, construct, extend, enlarge remodel, repair, improve, maintain, operate or finance public facilities if the public facilities are needed to increase tourist-related business activities and are recommended by the county tourist development council. **SB 658 Died in the Senate Appropriations Committee and HB 585 Died in the Senate Community Affairs Committee.** The all-encompassing Tax Package, **HB 7087** (Rep. Renner) was passed authorizing counties imposing a tourist development tax to use the tax revenues for public facilities if needed to increase tourist related business activities including: roads, water & sewer, solid waste, drainage, and pedestrian facilities. At least $10 million in tourist development tax revenue must be received in the prior year; must be approved by a 2/3 vote of the county governing board; no more than 70% of the cost may be paid with the revenue; at least 40% of all tourist development tax revenues must be used to promote tourism; and a positive impact on tourism must be demonstrated. **Effective July 1, 2018.**
Traffic Infraction Detectors—SB 176 (Senator Hutson), HB 6001 (Rep. Avila), SB 548 (Senator Campbell) would repeal provisions relating to the definitions of “local hearing officer” and “traffic infraction detector,” respectively and relating to the installation and use of traffic infraction detectors to enforce specified provisions when a driver fails to stop at a traffic signal, provisions that authorize the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, a county, or a municipality to use such detectors and that cap fines and provide for the deposit and use of fines, and the distribution of penalties. SB 176, HB 6001, and SB 548 all Died in the Senate Transportation Committee.

Transportation—SB 1104 (Senator Brandes), HB 141 (Rep. Harrison), HB 1287 (Rep. Drake) would revise provisions relating to contracting and negotiation between the Department of Transportation and local governmental entities for acquisition, construction, or operation of turnpike projects; exempting a law enforcement officer from paying a toll on a toll facility when operating an official vehicle while on official law enforcement business; and HB 1287 was amended to prohibit an MPO from adopting a weighted voting structure, among other things. HB 1287 died in the Senate Transportation Committee, SB 1104 died in House Messages, and HB 141 passed (without any MPO restrictions) and subject to the Governor’s veto powers will be effective on July 1, 2018.

Transportation Disadvantaged—SB 770 (Senator Garcia) would authorize community transportation coordinators, in cooperation with the coordinating board, to plan for and use regional fare payment systems under certain circumstances which enhance cross-county mobility for specified purposes for certain persons who are unable to transport themselves or to purchase transportation. SB 770 Died in the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Tourism and Economic Development.

Tree & Vegetation Trimming—HB 521 (Edwards-Walpole) and SB 574 (Senator Steube) would prohibit local governments from requiring permits or other approvals for tree and vegetation maintenance within certain rights-of-way managed by water management districts, water control districts, or special districts. HB 521 Died in Senate Messages. SB 574 Died in the Senate Environmental Preservation & Conservation Committee.

Using Wireless Communication Devices While Driving—SB 90 (Senator Perry) is similar to HB 33 (see Texting While Driving) and would revise the legislative intent relating to the authorization of law enforcement officers to stop motor vehicles and issue citations to persons who are texting while driving; would require deposit of fines into the Emergency Medical Services Trust Fund. SB 90 Died in the Senate Appropriations Committee and HB 33 Died in the Senate Communication, Energy and Public Utilities Committee.
Attached is the latest bi-weekly fatality report. Unfortunately we had 20 lives lost on our roads during this period. Of those, 9 were vulnerable road users (3 motorcyclists, 3 bicyclists, and 3 pedestrians). I noticed that a number of the crashes were high speed rear end crashes, some involved one driver crossing over the centerline and striking another vehicle, and others involved someone not being seen in a crosswalk or entering the road on foot or on bicycle. I wonder if any of those were caused by drivers who were momentarily distracted. I can only imagine that at least some were of that nature, and someone lost their life because of it. Set the example and don’t drive distracted.

One of the people who was killed was an 80 year old man out on a motorcycle ride. He leaves behind 10 grandchildren, 15 great grandchildren, and 2 great-great grandchildren. I am sure they will miss their grandfather, great-grandfather and great-great grandfather.

Thank you for keeping safety at the forefront of all that you do.

David W. Gwynn, P.E.
District Seven Secretary
Florida Department of Transportation
11201 N. McKinley Drive
Tampa, FL 33612
813-975-6039
District Seven’s Bi-Weekly Crash Report Update - A Summary of Traffic Fatalities that has occurred on public highways in the Tampa Bay Region. For more information, please note that the names of victims highlighted in blue are hyperlinked to news stories as published by the media and text highlighted in green are hyperlinked to obituaries as available. “Safety Doesn’t Happen by Accident.” Suggestions and/or ideas to enhance safety are welcomed here or by contacting Matthew Nance at 813-975-6747 or Matthew.Nance@dot.state.fl.us. Please note the word “here” is hyperlinked to District Seven’s Innovation Share Point Site.

March 11, 2018

Janet Vajen, 75, The Villages: Janet was driving with her husband on U.S. 19 when they attempted to turn left onto Lake Tarpon Drive and struck an oncoming vehicle. She was taken to Bayfront Health St. Petersburg where she died from her injuries.

March 9, 2018

Wendall Lamar McMillan, 56, Largo: Wendall was driving west on Ulmerton Road when he was rear-ended by a drunk driver. His vehicle left the roadway and struck a light pole. He was pronounced dead at the scene. He served with honors in the United State Marine Corps. He is survived by his children, partner, and many friends and family.

Gary B. Ezell, 65, Pinellas Park: Gary was crossing, mid-block, across Park Boulevard when he was struck by an oncoming vehicle. He was transported to Bayfront Medical Center where he later died from his injuries.

March 8, 2018

Teo Kulic, 17, Saint Petersburg: Teo was driving on 49th Street N at 70th Avenue N when he was struck in the intersection by a pickup truck. He is survived by his parents, siblings, and extended family.

Marsha Dawn Wertz, 71, Tampa: Marsha was attempting to cross Waters Avenue when she was hit by a vehicle. She died at the scene.

James Phillip Massingale, 35, Brooksville: James was driving north on U.S. 41 when, for unknown reasons, he crossed the raised, grass median into oncoming traffic. He collided with an oncoming vehicle and was ejected from his vehicle. He was taken to Regional Medical Center Bayonet Point where he later died from his injuries on March 10th.
March 6, 2018

**Gertrude Minneman, 80, Perryville MD**: Gertrude was a passenger in a vehicle driving east on I-4 when the vehicle was rear-ended. This caused the vehicle to overturn, throwing Gertrude from the vehicle. She was taken to South Florida Baptist Hospital where she died. “She was like my second mom…I was always at her home eating and lots of laughing!”.

**Claiborne C. Courtright, 24, Largo**: Claiborne was driving his pick-up truck on 16th Avenue in Largo when he attempted to make a left turn onto Seminole Boulevard. He collided with an oncoming vehicle. He was pronounced dead at the scene.

March 4, 2018

**Brett Thomas Hitchcock, 40, Parrish**: Brett was driving south on U.S. 301 when, for unknown reasons, he entered the northbound lane and collided head-on with an oncoming truck. He is survived by his parents, son, sister, niece, and nephews.

**Jose Z. Zertuche-Garcia, 53, Wimauma**: Jose was driving his truck north on U.S. 301 when an oncoming vehicle, driven by Brett Hitchcock, entered his lane and collided with his truck head on.

March 3, 2018

**Alfred Boutin Jr., 80, Brooksville**: Alfred was driving his motorcycle on County Line Road when a pickup truck making a left turn entered his path. He hit the truck and was thrown off his motorcycle. He died at the scene. He loved traveling with his wife on their motorcycle around the Eastern United States. He is survived by his children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, great-great-grandchildren and many friends and family.

**Jennifer Nicole Vince, 34, Wildwood**: Jennifer was traveling on County Road 39 when, for unknown reasons, she drifted into the opposite lane, over-corrected and struck an oncoming vehicle. She loved anything to do with music and was a world champion swimmer in the Special Olympics. “She always had a kind, sweet and caring word for others when they needed it. She was a truly special human being and I enjoyed high school that much more because of her kindness.”.

March 2, 2018

**Saijah I. Coleman, 22, Tampa**: Saijah was a passenger in a vehicle that turned into the path of an oncoming vehicle on Lumsden Road in Brandon. Her vehicle was overturned, coming to rest on its roof. She was a beloved daycare teacher: “She was so kind, playful, caring and treated my son as if he were her own. She will be greatly missed.”.
March 1, 2018

Ronin Alexander Forrester, 18, New Port Richey: Ronin was crossing Ridge Road near Regency Park Boulevard in a crosswalk when he was struck by a vehicle. He was taken to Morton Plant North Bay Hospital where he was pronounced dead.

John “Johnny” Pittman, 30, New Port Richey: John was driving his motorcycle on Little Road when he lost control of his bike while rounding a curve. He struck a curb and was thrown off his bike. He was transported to Regional Medical Center Bayonet Point where he died. He is survived by his children, parents and family.

February 28, 2018

Brittany Louise Lajoie, 27, New Port Richey: Brittany was struck by a vehicle while crossing U.S. 19 near State Road 52. She was taken to Regional Medical Center Bayonet Point with serious injuries. She died on March 2nd.

Yu Zhen Zhang, 61, Scarborough, Ontario: Yu was riding his bicycle on Double Branch Road when he entered the path of an oncoming vehicle at the Hillsborough Avenue intersection. He was ejected from his bicycle and died at the scene.

February 27, 2018

Tyler James Husseman, 23, Valrico: Tyler was crossing the northbound I-75 entrance ramp at SR 60 in a marked crosswalk when he was struck by an oncoming vehicle. He was ejected from his bicycle and died at the scene of the crash.

Keith B. Booker, 43, Tampa: Keith was fleeing from a police stop when he lost control of his vehicle, ran off the road into a cemetery and struck two trees. He was found dead in his vehicle.

February 26, 2018

Willie Bennett Jr., 53, Saint Petersburg: Willie was driving his motorcycle on 16th Street North in St. Petersburg when a pickup truck turned in front of him. He collided with the truck and was thrown from his motorcycle. He died at the scene.
February 27, 2018

Mr. Chris Stahl, Environmental Manager
Florida State Clearinghouse
Department of Environmental Protection
3900 Commonwealth Boulevard, Mail Station 47
Tallahassee, FL 32399-3000

RE: Advance Notification
SR 600/Gandy Boulevard from East of 4th Street to Westshore Boulevard
Financial Project Number: 441250-1-22-01
ETDM Number: 14335
Pinellas and Hillsborough Counties, Florida

Dear Mr. Stahl:

We are sending this Advance Notification (AN) Package to your office for distribution to State agencies that conduct Federal consistency reviews (consistency reviewers) in accordance with the Coastal Zone Management Act and Presidential Executive Order 12372. We are also distributing the AN Package to local and federal agencies. Although we will request specific comments during the permitting process, we are asking that agencies consistency reviewers examine the attached information and provide us with their comments.

This is a Federal-aid action. The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried out by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) pursuant to 23 U.S.C. §327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated December 14, 2016 and executed by the Federal Highway Administration and FDOT. FDOT will determine what type of environmental documentation will be necessary. The determination will be based upon in-house environmental evaluations and comments received through coordination with other agencies. Please provide a consistency review for this project in accordance with the State's Coastal Zone Management Program.

In addition, please review this project’s consistency, to the maximum extent feasible, with the approved Comprehensive Plan of the local government to comply with Chapter 163 of the Florida Statutes.

FDOT District 7 is submitting this project through the Programming Screen of the Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM) Environmental Screening Tool (EST) in coordination with this AN Package. The project is listed as 

**#14335 – SR 600/Gandy Boulevard from East of 4th Street to Westshore Boulevard.**

ETAT members should review this project on the ETDM website. Non-ETAT agencies can review this project at the public access website located at: http://etdmpub.fla-etat.org/.
We are looking forward to receiving your comments on the project. Consistency reviewers have 45 days from the Programming Screen Notification to provide their comments. Once you have received their comments, please submit a consistency determination for the State of Florida within 60 days of the Programming Screen Notification. If you need more review time, send a written request for an extension to our office within the initial 60-day comment period.

Your comments should be submitted via EST if you are an ETAT representative, emailed to the District contact, or via mail addressed to:

Kirk Bogen, P.E.
Environmental Management Engineer
Florida Department of Transportation, District 7
11201 N. McKinley Drive / MS 7-500
Tampa, FL 33612-6456

Your expeditious handling of this notice will be appreciated.

Sincerely,

Ed McKinney
Planning and Environmental Administrator
Tampa City Council members call for comprehensive transit reform

Mar 15, 2018, 12:30pm EDT

Some Tampa City Council members are calling for more transit reform in the region than what is currently being proposed under the Jacobs Engineering Regional Premium Transit Feasibility Plan.

Hillsborough County Metropolitan Planning Organization Executive Director Beth Alden presented those plans during a meeting Thursday.

“I don’t have a problem with the plan per se,” said Tampa City Council member Mike Suarez. “If we’re going to spend that much money ... let’s look at more [urban connections].”

The regional transit plan, which is still being updated based on public input, currently recommends a 41-mile bus route along Interstate 275 between St. Petersburg and Wesley Chapel. Suarez said he’d like to see stops along that route planned at street level so residents could have better access by foot or bike and to encourage transit-oriented development around stations.

The Jacobs plan lists 19 of its 21 planned stops along the 41-mile corridor as along city streets, but the plan isn’t final, and critics worry that won’t actually be the case. Alden touched on the issue Thursday, pointing out that stops off the highway would require buses to exit, navigate city roads and then re-enter the highway, costing valuable time along a route.

She suggests a combined approach, using local bus service along routes like Florida and Tampa avenues from downtown and Fowler Avenue from the University of South Florida to I-275, to complement local trips.

In a separate presentation to the council Thursday, Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Authority interim CEO Jeff Seward said the agency is studying those routes for potential bus rapid transit.

Talking points from Jacobs Engineering have centered on cost and feasibility and emphasize that a bus route would be a first-step catalyst project not a “one and done” plan.

Alden emphasized the value offered. The 41-mile bus route would require highway expansion and improvements by creating dedicated lanes through some corridors, express lanes in others and hardened shoulders along some spans. The Florida Department of Transportation is tentatively planning to include those necessary enhancements into its interstate modernization process currently known as Tampa Bay...
Tampa City Council members call for comprehensive transit reform - T...

Next.

“We believe that FDOT’s offer ... is a very valuable offer and we shouldn’t pass that up,” Alden said.

Leveraging FDOT’s highway plans would slash the regional bus route cost from about $1.3 billion to $500 million.

The regional transit plan is not entirely counting out a 12-mile commuter rail route along existing CSX tracks connecting USF to downtown Tampa.

Tampa City Council member Harry Cohen said gridlock throughout the region will get worse over the next several decades and transit is a crucial part of solving that problem.

“It’s not a question of which [transit mode,]” Cohen said. “It’s really a question of how do we utilize all of these.”

While Jacobs Engineering is still pushing the bus solution in its regional transit plan, the firm’s project manager, Scott Pringle, recently acknowledged the plan could include two catalyst projects.

Janelle Irwin
Reporter
Tampa Bay Business Journal