

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



³ Pew Research Center. (2018, Jan 31). Mobile fact sheet. Retrieved from <http://www.pewinternet.org/fact-sheet/mobile/>.

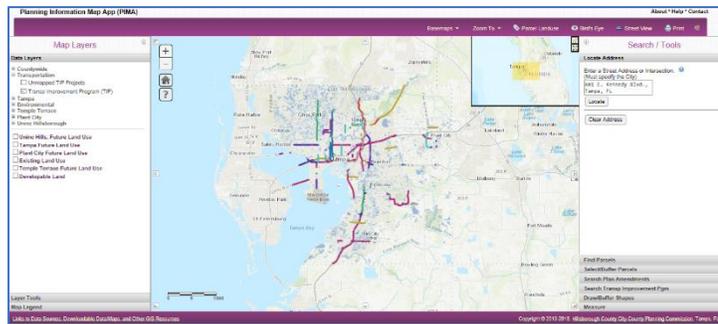
not have broadband at home, and approximately 51% of the US population has no landline phone at home⁴.

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

Website Streamlining and Additions

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

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



⁴ Selyukh, A. (2017, May 4). The daredevils without landlines – and why health experts are tracking them. *NPR*. Retrieved from <https://www.npr.org/sections/alltechconsidered/2015/12/03/458225197/the-daredevils-without-landlines-and-why-health-experts-are-tracking-them>.

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

	2016 Views	2017 Views	% Change (2016-2017)
http://www.planhillsborough.org/metropolitan-planning-organization-mpo/	11,000	9,300	-15%
http://www.planhillsborough.org/traffic-counts/	2,125	3,634	71%
http://www.planhillsborough.org/vision-zero/	998	3,612	262%

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

Social Networks

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

Facebook

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

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

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



Table 13: @HillsboroughMPO Posts with Top Facebook Interactions

Year	Post content	Number of engagements
2016	June 2016 MPO Board Meeting Event (Annual TIP Hearing)	87
	June 2016 MPO Board Meeting Thank-you Post	68
	March 2016 MPO Board Meeting Event	51
	Second Place High School Student Walk Bike Safety Contest PSA Video	47
	#TBT to last year's Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council Future of the Region Awards	44
	2017	Hillsborough Area Regional Transit's 2017 Florida #Automated #Vehicles #Summit was a big success!
	#VisionZERO813	104
	Vision Zero Action Plan Workshop 3 – Paint Saves Lives Photo Album	81
	We're making great strides on our #GardenSteps for the #HealthiestCitiesChallenge!	68
	The Bullard Parkway Complete Streets Study is currently underway	48

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

Table 14: @VisionZeroHillsborough Posts with Top Facebook Interactions

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

Twitter

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

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

