Meeting of the Livable Roadways Committee
Wednesday, October 17, 2018, 9:00 a.m.

I. Call to Order

II. Public Comment - 3 minutes per speaker, please

III. Approval of Minutes – September 19, 2018

IV. Action Items
A. MPO Autonomous Transit Feasibility Study for USF Campus (Brian Pessaro, Center for Urban Transportation Research)

V. Status Reports
A. Eco District (Sean Barbeau, Center for Urban Transportation Research)
B. District 7 Freight Plan, Sub Area Study & Local Freight Improvements (Brian Hunter, FDOT)
C. Multimodal Level of Service Evaluation (Sarah McKinley, MPO)

VI. Old Business & New Business
A. LRC Next Meeting: November 28, 2018

VII. Adjournment

VIII. Addendum
A. MPO Meeting Summary & Committee Report
B. How the Media Fails Bicyclists -Streetsblog USA

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I.  CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being established, Chair Green called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m. and the Pledge of Allegiance took place. The meeting was held in the Plan Hillsborough Room on the 18th Floor of the County Center Building.

Members Present: June Farrell, Trent Green, Cal Hardie, David Hey, Gus Ignas, Arizona Jenkins, Karen Kress, Michael Maurino, Carlos Ramirez, Neale Stralow, Chris Thompson, Linda Walker, Charles White, Mike Williams

Others Present: Lisa Silva – MPO; Sharon Snyder – Planning Commission; Alex Henry, Ming Gao – FDOT

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

II.  APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Approval of the August 15, 2018 minutes (Maurino - Stralow). The motion passed unanimously.

III.  ACTION ITEMS

A. Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM) Review #14345 – US41 at CSX Grade Separation (Allison Yeh, MPO)

Ms. Yeh presented the Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM) Review #14345 – US41 at CSX Grade Separation, which will evaluate the capacity and operations improvements on US41 from south of Causeway Blvd intersection to north of the intersection and the grade separation of US41/SR45 at CSX railroad crossing south of Causeway Blvd. The purpose of Ms. Yeh’s presentation is to solicit input from the Committee regarding the project’s potential effects on the natural, physical, cultural and community resources.

Discussions followed regarding the definition of grade separation (overpass); what is the time frame for construction (fully funded in the 5th year); and if the project will separate freight traffic from regular traffic or will it facilitate freight traffic better (improvements will help both).

Action: Solicit committee and public comments.

IV.  STATUS REPORTS
A. Multimodal Centers Planning (Ming Gao, FDOT)

Mr. Gao presented the Multimodal Centers Planning which includes five study areas: Downtown Tampa, Gateway District, University Area (USF), Wesley Chapel and the Westshore District. A multimodal center is a centralized hub or facility serving multiple modes of transportation and provides a connection between existing and future local and regional transportation services.

Discussions ensued regarding if mega-bus/greyhound are included in the planning (yes, in Wesley Chapel area); the conversation should be about the expense of the multimodal center in Westshore being a deterrent, not the ability to find space for it; the feasibility of running a transit option along the same road as the food delivery truck road by the airport (FDOT is looking at all options); the need to make transit use easier and riders shouldn’t need to switch modes along their journey; the airport people mover needs to be more ADA friendly; the need for buses from Wesley Chapel to the airport (HART began service recently - 275LX); the study being put on pause due to the Bright Line proposal; the possibility of a multimodal center in Land O’ Lakes (if there is a need in the future, it will be considered); the need for inter-agency coordination (the agencies and stakeholders have been working together since the very beginning); and the need for commitment from the local governments to work together on plan amendments (the process will continue).

As a public transit user, Mr. Ignas stated the enormous need to do something with the transit problem in the Tampa Bay region, not just continue to do studies. Mr. Maurino agrees everyone is frustrated and wants to get something done. He feels it is important for the Committee to communicate there are plans, but no action or money. Mr. Hey recommended adding a comment about transit from Brandon to an intermodal center to include the unincorporated County residents in this plan. Mr. Hey also commended FDOT on their work on Jackson Street.

B. It’s Time Tampa Bay: Committees weigh in; Outreach Progress Report (Lisa Silva, MPO)

Ms. Silva presented the It’s Time Tampa Bay presented and asked Committee members who haven’t taken the survey to do so. Only two Committee members still needed to take the survey and did so during the presentation. Ms. Silva encouraged members to ask their families and friends to take the survey.

Discussions followed regarding the date of the drawing for tickets (at the October 2nd Board meeting). Mr. Maurino noted Ms. Silva presented at the Westshore Alliance meeting last week and it was very well received. Mr. Jenkins stated Uber and Lyft aren’t ADA compliant.

V. OLD BUSINESS & NEW BUSINESS

A. Next LRC Meeting – October 17, 2018

B. Mr. Hardie provided a crosswalk update on Bayshore Blvd. The three crosswalks, located midway between Brevard and Swann and Dakota and Delaware will be installed by the end
of November. The City of Tampa is in the final planning steps for the RFP crosswalk at Howard and four other locations south of Howard, which are still being determined. Another long-term project is a signal at Euclid.

C. It’s National Roundabouts Week. Mr. Hardie presented a drone video, made by KCA, of one of the roundabouts on 40th Street. Since the roundabouts was installed, total crashes have decreased 59% in the first two years. This video and other roundabout information is available on the City of Tampa’s website.

Discussions ensued about the time of day of the video (9:00 am); the cost of construction of a signalized intersection (initial costs are approximately $300K); and the initial cost is more but there aren’t maintenance and replacement costs. Mr. Hardie will provide Ms. Silva with the link to the City’s roundabout page on their website.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:25 a.m.
Agenda Item
MPO Autonomous Transit Feasibility Study for USF Campus

Presenter
Brian Pessaro, Center for Urban Transportation Research at USF

Summary
In recent years, enormous strides have been and are being made in the development of automated vehicle technologies. Although still very much in its infancy, autonomous transit has the potential to change the way that transit service is provided.

The MPO, recognizing the interest in autonomous and connected vehicle technology as a mobility tool, included in its planning work program a feasibility study for a transit circulator using this technology. The University of South Florida (USF) was selected as a setting for this study given their research expertise, campus traffic operations, and proximity to the Tampa IP Innovation Partnership.

Mr. Pessaro will provide a summary of the project including, data collection, student surveys, and recommended routes and service cost. Research on legal requirements, liability, and funding will also be discussed. The MPO will provide this report to the Tampa IP Partnership, FDOT and local jurisdictions to assist in coordinating future transportation services in and around the USF area. The full report can be found on the MPO website at:

http://www.planhillsborough.org/usf-campus-autonomous-transit-feasibility-study/

Recommended Action
Approve USF Autonomous Transit Feasibility Study

Prepared By
Allison G. Yeh, AICP, LEED GA

Attachments
USF Autonomous Transit Feasibility Study – summary sheet
PURPOSE of the STUDY
Recognizing the importance of autonomous and connected vehicles to our transportation future, the Hillsborough MPO sponsored a study on the feasibility of implementing autonomous transit shuttles on the USF campus.

WHY USF?
43,500 students and 14,000 faculty and staff roam the USF campus each day. The campus is nearly 3 square miles. Autonomous shuttles can offer an extra mobility option (e.g., remote parking shuttle). With a campus-wide speed limit of 25 mph, USF is an ideal setting to test autonomous shuttles.

TRANSPORTATION DATA
A variety of transportation data were analyzed to better understand campus trip patterns including Bull Runner bus passenger data, Share-a-Bull bike share data, and SAFE Team night time escort data.

SURVEY DATA
374 student surveys were collected. Over 60% of students said they were likely to use a driverless vehicle.

Top 3 Service Requests included:
- Night time shuttle service
- Remote parking shuttle
- Campus circulator
Recommended Routes

Cost & Funding
Estimated cost for 12-month demo: $700,000
Assumes 2 shuttles with safety attendants
Potential funding sources:
- USF Student Green Energy Fund
- Federal Transit Administration Automation Research Funds
- Foundation Grants
- Florida Department of Transportation Service Development Funds
- Advertising revenue

Other Considerations
- No special permit required in Florida to own/operate autonomous vehicles
- USF would be covered under the State’s liability insurance
- Extra signage recommended for campus
- Current state of technology limits ability of shuttles to make left turns through signalized intersections

Next Steps
Conduct 2-week demo in Fall 2018
Secure funding for 12-month demo
Prepare and issue Requests for Proposals

For more information contact:
Allison Yeh, AICP, at (813) 272-5940 or yeha@plancom.org
Brian Pessaro at (813) 974-5113 or pessaro@cutr.usf.edu

View the full report at:
http://www.planhillsborough.org/usf-campus-autonomous-transit-feasibility-study/
Board & Committee Agenda Item

**Agenda Item**
EcoDistricts

**Presenter**
Sean Baraoidan, Real Building Consultants

**Summary**
EcoDistricts is a trademarked, comprehensive strategy to accelerate sustainable development at the neighborhood scale by integrating building and infrastructure projects with community and individual action. They are an important scale to accelerate sustainability — small enough to innovate quickly and big enough to have a meaningful impact.

District-scale projects, such as district energy, green streets, smart grid, demand management and resource sharing, are well known. However, the widespread deployment of these strategies has been slow to develop due to a lack of comprehensive policy or implementation frameworks at the municipal level.

EcoDistricts (formerly Portland Sustainability Institute) launched in 2009 as an initiative to help cities remove these implementation barriers and create an enabling strategy to accelerate neighborhood-scale sustainability.2 Success requires a comprehensive approach that includes active community participation, assessment, new forms of capital and public policy support.

EcoDistricts can be found in metropolises such as Audubon Park Garden District in Orlando, Florida and Midtown Atlanta, Georgia.

**Recommended Action**
For discussion and comment.

**Prepared By**
Michele Ogilvie, MPO staff

**Attachments**
None
Agenda Item
District 7 Freight Plan, Sub Area Study & Local Freight Improvements

Presenter
Brian Hunter, FDOT

Summary
The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Freight Coordinator will provide an update on local freight improvements in District 7. Including the Sabal Park Area Freight Analysis, which seeks to develop a plan of viable alternatives to enhance freight connectivity and minimize conflicts. Since freight-related decisions made in Hillsborough County can have a wide-range of impacts beyond its jurisdiction, a regional approach was used.

This effort analyzes existing, potential and proposed industrial development in the Sabal Park Area, and the related transportation networks to determine the necessary infrastructure needs to accommodate future regional and statewide freight demands in an efficient manner throughout the area. The Sabal Park Area is defined as SR 574 to the north, I-75 to the east, the Crosstown Expressway to the south and Orient Road to the west.

The study provides an analysis of alternatives based on the objectives outlined below:

- Examine freight movements throughout the study area and relevant surrounding areas with an emphasis on impacts to the area’s roadway system
- Focus on freight industry movements to identify impacts to the area’s roadway system
- Describe products and market and its relation to the economy of the Tampa Bay Region
- Determine the origin and destination of truck traffic moving through the study area and its commerce areas
- Determine the appropriate facilities to match the current and projected freight movements
- Identify specific recommendations to match roadway capacities to future demand

The study objective is to identify recommendations for the efficient movement of goods to ensure economic competitiveness of the region and the state. The end product will be the definition of necessary improvements, and conceptual designs with cost estimates. For more information www.tampabayfreight.com.
**Recommended Action**
None, Information only.

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

**Attachments**
None
Board & Committee Agenda Item

**Agenda Item**
Multimodal Level of Service Update

**Presenter**
Sarah McKinley, MPO Staff

**Summary**
In 2017 the MPO created a White Paper looking into methodologies and best practices in calculating Level of Service (LOS) for bicycle, pedestrian and transit. From the recommendations in that report the MPO has been working with a consultant to update the methodologies used for calculating bicycle and pedestrian LOS. The effort has focused on establishing a Level of Traffic Stress (LTS) standard and apply this to the transportation network. The goal is to have a new minimum standard, and through the database maintained by the MPO, highlight corridors and intersections that could be enhanced for safety.

The MPO currently uses Florida Department of Transportation guidance that was established over 20 years ago. With new minimum design standards it became time to revisit the methodology. The updated standards will better reflect the new innovations in bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

The task is expected to be finalized in December.

**Recommended Action**
None; for information only

**Prepared By**
Sarah McKinley, MPO Staff

**Attachments**
None
MPO Board Meeting Summary  
Wednesday, September 5, 2018

CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE & INVOCATION

Chairman Les Miller called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. Commissioner Stacy White led the Pledge of Allegiance and gave the invocation. The meeting was convened on the 2nd floor of the County Center.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – July 31, 2018

A motion was made by Councilman Guido Maniscalco to approve the June minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Cindy Stuart and carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Jim Davison voiced his opinion regarding data the MPO’s Executive Director’s, Ms. Beth Alden, presented to the Tampa City Council explaining what a one-cent sales tax petition on the ballot in November would pay for in the 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). He provided board members with a report that he prepared showing a comparison of the All for Transportation Petition Category Funding versus the Hillsborough County MPO 2040 LRTP Category Funding.

Since there seemed to be discrepancies in what was presented versus the information Mr. Davison reported, Commissioner White made a motion for staff to provide a response to Mr. Davison’s report by the end of September to each board member. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Sandra Murman. Following brief discussion, the motion carried unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS, ONLINE COMMENTS

Ms. Gena Torres, MPO Staff, presented the committee reports. Committees approved and forwarded to the MPO Board committee appointments and comments to the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) on the West Busch Boulevard Multimodal Safety Study Letter of Comment provided on the Consent Agenda. Committees also approved the TIP Roll-forward Amendment. In addition, committees accepted, except for the CAC voting 7 to 5, the Westshore Mobility Plan. Approval of the South Coast Greenway Connector was unanimously approved by the committees.

The Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee was happy to learn that the FDOT is working to fill the sidewalk gap on the Courtney Campbell Causeway, which will lead to a complete path on the north side.

The Policy Committee discussed the 2018 Florida Transportation Earmarks Veto List.

The Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board approved the continued contract with the Agency for Community Treatment Services.

Other items discussed at committee meetings include: crash modification factors for complete street improvements, the north Alexander Street Corridor Land Use and Marketing Study, and FDOT’s Strategic Intermodal System Designation Changes.
In October, the committees will discuss FDOT’s 2045 Cost Feasible Plan with consideration for a letter of comment.

The TMA Leadership Group Facilitation Decision Making members discussed creating a one MPO one vote decision making mechanism and establishing a rotating Chair.

The TBARTA MPO Chairs’ Coordinating Committees Staff Directors transmitted the updated priority list for regional trails and the Transportation Regional Incentive Program to FDOT’s District Office along with the resolutions supporting preservation of transit right-of-way in the I-4 Corridor. The items were adopted at the July meeting of the CCC and Central Florida MPO Alliance.

Ms. Torres provided a summary of all comments that were received from citizens. Board members were provided copies of all comments in full in their meeting folders. No Facebook comments were received. There were no questions following the committee reports and online comments provided by Ms. Torres.

Following the Ms. Torres’s report, there was an inquiry regarding the Courtney Campbell sidewalk gap and FDOT examining possible solutions for a complete path on the north side.

Mr. Stephen Benson, FDOT Representative, stated there is a gap on the north side of the Causeway that runs between the airport and Rocky Point that was not connected when the Court Campbell was originally built. They are going to see if there is a simple way to make the connection, even though there is a bridge structure, a sea wall, and possibly environmental impacts.

Commissioner Miller acknowledged that Ms. Alden was attending a conference and Mr. Rich Clarendon, Assistant Executive Director was filling in for her.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

A. Committee Appointments
B. West Busch Blvd. Multimodal Safety Study Letter of Comment

Councilman Luis Viera pulled item V. B. West Busch Boulevard Multimodal Safety Study Letter of Comment.

A motion was made by Commissioner Murman to approve the committee appointments on the Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded by Councilman Cohen and carried unanimously.

Following the motion, there was discussion on item V. B. Councilman Viera commended Ms. Alden and the Board for supporting the vision of more safety on Busch Blvd. He brought to the Board’s attention the tremendous support there is from organizations in the community for more emphasis on pedestrian friendly features and lower speed limits on Busch Boulevard. He also encouraged members to push for the changes.

Mrs. Stuart thanked Councilman Viera for pulling the item and stated that the School Transportation Working Group received a presentation on the study from FDOT and had concerns; therefore, the School District has also written a letter to FDOT to ensure that surrounding schools are included in the work that is being done on Buch Boulevard.

Councilman Cohen informed members that the Policy Committee spent a lot of time at their last meeting on the recommendations that were included in the letter regarding safety concerns and they stand behind the recommendations. Everyone’s assistance is needed to get the work completed since Busch Boulevard crosses so many jurisdictions.
Commissioner Murman also thanked Councilman Viera for bringing the item forward for discussion and gave a shout-out to Sheriff Chad Chronister for starting a new program at specific hot spots around the County to educating people on safety. Commissioner Murman suggesting having a conversation with the Sheriff to offer education in additional areas of the County.

Commissioner Miller reiterated concerns for Chamberland High School students and people not utilizing crosswalks and crossing in the middle of the street.

A motion was made by Councilman Viera to approve item V. B., West Busch Blvd. Multimodal Safety Study Letter of Comment as presented on the Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Stuart and Councilman Maniscalco and carried unanimously.

**ROLL-CALL VOTE: TIP ROLL-FORWARD AMENDMENT**

Staff received information late on Tuesday afternoon regarding one of the amendments, prior to the MPO Board meeting and provided revised documentation at the meeting. Amendment #27 in the series of the Roll-forward projects was not recommended to go forward and was deleted from the Roll-forward amendment.

A motion was made by Councilman Cohen to accept the Roll-forward amendment as revised. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Murman and carried unanimously with a roll call vote (Mayor Rick Lott and Mr. Joe Waggoner were not in attendance).

**ACTION ITEMS**

**A. West Tampa Multimodal Plan**

Mr. Chris Keller, Tindale Oliver, provided an overview on the City of Tampa’s Walk-Bike Plan Phase VI, which is also known as the West Tampa Multimodal Plan. The study is identifying opportunities to enhance the multimodal network, improve connections between existing and planned pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and identify opportunities to implement complete streets strategies throughout West Tampa.

Following the presentation, Councilman Maniscalco stated that he was glad to see the recommendations for the improvements, especially along Columbus Drive, and hope they can be moved forward.

Commissioner Kemp expressed concerns about jurisdictional issues, safety regarding where trail ways are being placed and agreed with Councilman Maniscalco’s comments regarding the much needed improvements for the West Tampa District. She is glad to see ideas for economic development, quality of life and walkable community improvements.

Mr. Keller stated there was limited right of way and they are trying to make the best of the space that is available. They looked at opportunities to address speed issues and continued coordination on jurisdictional items will assist in moving recommendations forward.

Mr. Trent Green inquired about the Plan’s boundaries and coordination with other proposed projects being completed in the Westshore area. Mr. Keller stated that they looked at connections and additional enhancements that would be able to connect into the future intermodal facility and are in harmony with other plans.

A motion was made by Commissioner Murman to support the Plan’s recommendations. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Pat Kemp and carried unanimously.
B. South Coast Greenway Connection Feasibility Study

Mr. Wiat Bowers with Atkins provided an overview of study. Implementation of the South Coast Greenway Connector Trail will assist in completing a major component of the greenways and trails system in eastern Hillsborough County, and provide additional mobility options for the Palm River, Clair Mel, Progress Village and Gibsonton areas.

Following the presentation, Commissioner Murman thanked Mr. Bowers for his report and stated that citizens in south county really want the South Coast Greenway Trail. She also wanted to know if there is anything that can be done to expedite the project would be great. Mr. Bowers stated that the County has a PD&E Study for the segment to the south and they will prioritize the next steps.

A motion was made by Commissioner Murman to accept the South Coast Greenway Study. The motion was seconded by Councilman Maniscalco and carried unanimously.

STATUS REPORTS

A. Tampa Bay Next Quarterly Update

Secretary David Gwynn provided the FDOT quarterly update on the Tampa Bay Next Program. There has been a great deal of public engagement and a lot of feedback has been received, with the consensus that doing nothing is not an option to fix safety and congestion problems in the area. The Secretary provided information on two nearer term projects: (1) I-275 North of I-4 and (2) the area of the Westshore Interchange. He also provided information on projects that are currently under construction or procurement and the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS). The Gateway Expressway project will be completed in 2021. There will be an Industry Forum on September 17, 2018 for proposers who are interested in putting together a design-build proposal for the Howard Frankland Bridge. FDOT is working on enhancing bicycle and pedestrian connections as well. They are looking to improve some of the interchanges that have operational problems and provide opportunities for transit within existing right of way.

Two SEIS Public Workshops are scheduled: (1) December 10th, and (2) December 13th. The next Tampa Bay Next quarterly update will be held prior to the workshops.

The Secretary stated that FDOT has shown willingness to provide funding where they can. They want to work with the community on transit, but the first step in having a viable plan is clear indication from the local community about what transit projects they would like to pursue, and FDOT is ready to partner on the projects.

Following the presentation, Councilman Cohen thanked the Secretary for the public outreach that has taken place and expressed concerns about the slide that depicted the new Howard Frankland Bridge. He stated the Howard Frankland Bridge should be something iconic that everyone can be proud of. The presentation included a generic drawing; however, Secretary Gwynn stated the design build teams will propose different designs, and they do not want to have one bridge that looks completely different from the other bridge.

Commissioner White wanted to make sure that everything possible is done for the ecological health of Tampa Bay. He would like FDOT to communicate with Ed Sherwood, the Executive Director of the Tampa Bay Estuary Program regarding design ideas on the new bridge. He also suggested speaking with the Environmental Protection Commission (EPC) staff regarding the opportunity to utilize demolition material for the EPC’s Artificial Reef Program.

Mr. Joe Lopano complimented the Secretary on his willingness to change plans as he receives community
Commissioner Kemp thanked Secretary Gwynn for FDOT’s community engagement as well. She would like to have SunRail make a presentation to the board, and she expressed concerns about the Downtown Interchange.

B. Resilient Tampa Bay: Transportation Vulnerability Assessment

Mrs. Allison Yeh, MPO Staff, provided a brief overview on the Resilient Tampa Bay project. The Hillsborough MPO, in collaboration with the Pinellas MPO, Pasco MPO, Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council, and the FDOT District 7, was awarded a Federal Highway Administration Resilience and Durability to Extreme Weather grant to assess the tri-county surface transportation system. The project was officially kicked off on August 10th.

Each MPO is currently conducting their 2045 Transportation Plan (LRTP) update. New federal requirements state that LRTP updates must work on improving the resiliency and reliability of the transportation system and reducing or mitigating the storm water impacts of surface transportation. This pilot project will assist in meeting the new federal mandate as well as inform the LRTP updates for three MPOs and the regional LRTP.

Future updates will be provided on the project. Additional project information can be found on the MPO website: http://www.planhillsborough.org/resilient-tampa-bay-transportation/

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT

In Ms. Alden’s absence, Mr. Rich Clarendon, Assistant Executive Director, provided the Executive Director’s report. The Tampa Bay Transportation Management Area Leadership Group will meet FDOT’s District 7 Office on Friday, September 7th.

Mr. Clarendon provided a brief update on the It’s Time Tampa Bay interactive survey. The survey was launched at the end of July and has received over 5,600 responses from people in Pasco, Pinellas, and Hillsborough Counties.

Following the Executive Director’s Report, Commissioner Murman mentioned that she received several calls from constituents about the flyers that went out in the TRIM notices for It’s Time Tampa Bay. She is concerned about giving away free tickets if a person completes the survey. She requested the County Attorney confirm and report back on the legality of the giveaway. In the future, she would like for items of this nature to be vetted to the Board before it goes out to the public.

OLD & NEW BUSINESS

The next Board meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 2nd on the 26th floor of the County Center with a presentation on the Smart Cities project and Integrated Corridor Management.

In lieu of a November meeting, the meeting will be held on October 30th. There will be a presentation on the Brightline Rail Project to connect to Orlando.

Mr. Lopano reported that he had an opportunity to ride on a Brightline train from Miami to Ft. Lauderdale and suggested that board members try it out.

Commissioner Kemp stated that two months ago she made a motion to have a presentation on the Market Study and the information has not been presented. She would like to see the presentation on the agenda for next month’s meeting.
ADJOURNMENT

A quorum was maintained for the duration of the meeting. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:39 a.m.
Media coverage of cycling deaths consistently suggests that the deaths are acceptable and the victims were at fault, a new study shows.

University of South Florida researchers Julie Bond and Erin Sheffels used a scientific technique called “critical discourse analysis” in their review of 189 news reports of 94 bicycling deaths in Hillsborough County, Florida, between 2009 and 2018 — and discovered substantial bias.

The articles, Sheffels said, “reflect an assumption that responsibility for safety lies on the bicyclist.”

Here are some patterns they identified:

Lack of agency for the motorist

Reporters had a habit of distancing the driver from the death. In 111 cases, the accounts referred to the “truck,” “car” or “vehicle” as the actor in the collision.

For example, one account read:

[The cyclist] was standing on the corner of Waters Avenue and Florida Mining Boulevard at 2:14 p.m., when a Mack truck made a sharp right turn and hit [the cyclist], deputies said.

In many cases, driver's name did not appear in the story at all.

"In almost all the articles motorist agency was eliminated from the story," Sheffels said Thursday in a webinar explaining the findings.

Sentence constructions were also subtly biased. The reporters often used passive construction to avoid singling out blame: "A bicyclist was hit by a car," rather than “John Doe stuck the bicyclist with his car.” Other studies have shown that
passive language has a major impact on the way people assign blame in other situations, such as how jury members review sexual assault cases.

**Framing the deaths as unconnected**

Media accounts tended to treat each death as isolated, rather than part of a larger pattern with an identifiable set of causes. Hillsborough County is one of the most dangerous areas in the country for cyclists. But many reports offered no wider framework to understand the deaths, Bond and Sheffels found.

Of the 189 account analyzed, 133 treated the cycling deaths as an isolated event, unconnected from any wider public concerns. “Episodic” coverage — they called it — creates the impression that cycling deaths are “normal,” and to be accepted, rather than part of a wider epidemic.

In addition, these accounts typically reflected “an assumption that responsibility for safety lies on the bicyclist.” This “narrative functioned to remove blame from the motorist,” said Sheffels.

Roughly 30 percent of the stories did connect the death to wider concerns like infrastructure or motorist or cyclist education. News coverage was much more likely to be “thematic,” the study found, in hit-and-run deaths, because then the crash was seen as a crime.

**Socioeconomic status and marginalization**

Cyclists were implicitly blamed for their own deaths in a majority of the media coverage. But Bond and Sheffels found that the socioeconomic status of the cyclist affected how likely they were implicitly blamed.

When the victim was poor — most Hillsborough County cycling deaths were in low-income neighborhoods — he or she was more likely to be characterized as being at fault.

Status wasn’t always apparent, but news reports often carried clues by referring to where a victim lived or his or her profession. Other “identity markers” included attire, gender, age, socioeconomic status.

“All of those traits can stigmatize bicyclists,” Sheffels said.

In cases where the victim had more social capital, coverage tended to be more sensitive, for example, offering accounts from family members.

Media accounts that blame cyclists for their own deaths are a national problem. When 22-year-old Sylvia Bingham was killed by a truck driver in Cleveland in 2009, the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* noted that “she was not wearing a helmet at the time of the accident,” even though a doctor said it would not have made a difference.

Often, the media bias stems from insensitive initial information given to the press by police. In New York City, for example, Citi Bike rider Dan Hanegby was blamed by a police spokesperson for “swerving” into traffic before he was hit by a tour bus in 2017. Video footage of the crash released much later showed that Hanegby never veered from his path.

Police even blame cyclists in non-fatal incidents, suggesting that drivers have hegemony over the roads. Many reports show how the media and local officials conspire to create a “fear of cyclist” that is not supported by any statistical evidence.

A similar study earlier this year by MacEwan University Professor Heather Magusin, studying media coverage of pedestrian deaths in Canada, identified