Public Participation Plan: Measures of Effectiveness Report

Two Year Public Engagement Evaluation for 2018 & 2019

Hillsborough MPO
Metropolitan Planning for Transportation

601 East Kennedy Boulevard, 18th Floor, Tampa, FL 33602-4932
Phone: (813) 272-5940  Fax: (813) 301-7172
www.planhillsborough.org

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Chapter 1: Historical Perspective

The Hillsborough County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) has updated its Public Involvement Plan (PIP, now called the Public Participation Plan or PPP) biennially since 1998. The PIP identifies a proactive public participation process for the transportation planning products of the MPO. This process includes timely public notices, complete access and input to important decisions, and support of early and continuing community involvement. Coinciding with the PIP update, the MPO also evaluates its effectiveness in the utilization of the participation plan.

The MPO continues to utilize four major categories to measure the effectiveness of public participation:

- **Visibility & Productivity**: Visibility corresponds to the initiatives 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 from in-person meetings to virtual meetings and surveys online. The MPO measures the effectiveness of its participation opportunities not just in availability, but in whether the opportunities it produces and events it holds are accessible, time-sensitive, understandable, and meaningful.
- **Public Interest & Feedback**: Public interest and feedback is collected through surveys, comment cards, emails, phone calls, 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 also successfully engaged 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. The measures continue to be intertwined into four major categories, such as tracking the number of notices published in non-English newspapers and recording the number of events held in Environmental Justice areas.

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 several 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. In 2006, the PIP was further amended and renamed the Public Participation Plan (PPP).

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 of the MPO’s planning process, which called for simplifying the document and adding new tools. Revisions included 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. In response, in 2018 the MPO adopted a Nondiscrimination Plan, which addressed requirements under a presidential EJ executive order, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Americans with Disabilities Act and several other statutes. Collectively, these protected populations are called “Communities of Concern.”

The MPO updated its Public Participation Plan (PPP) in June 2018. The plan clarified the requirements, notices, procedures, and strategies that the MPO undertakes in its public participation initiatives. In refining the PPP process, the MPO recognized and integrated the components of the 2018 Title VI/Nondiscrimination Plan Update, which included guidance for engaging with Communities of Concern, Environmental Justice, and Limited English Proficiency populations to enhance the PPP. This allowed for the exploration of some engagement technologies and tools that were suggested.

The Hillsborough 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 Florida’s Government in the Sunshine Law.

Table 1 on page 5 shows the major areas of evaluation for the public participation program, and the corresponding metrics, or Public Participation Measures of Effectiveness.
Table 1: Measures of Effectiveness for the Public Participation Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measuring Visibility and Productivity</th>
<th>Metrics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of MPO publications produced</td>
<td>Number of MPO newsletters and brochures distributed, such as Connections to Tomorrow, Vision Zero Quarters, Bicycle Suitability Maps, Ride Guides and Citizens Guide to Transportation Planning</td>
</tr>
<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>
</tr>
<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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of meetings broadcast on Hillsborough County Television</td>
<td>Number of publications available on the MPO website, at a minimum to include the LRTP, TIP, and an annual list of obligated projects</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measuring Participation Opportunities</th>
<th>Metrics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of MPO public forums, workshops, and community meetings at which displays, presentations, discussions, and feedback occurred</td>
<td>Number and origin of participants at such public forums, workshops, and community meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of participants at public forums, workshops and community meetings held in historically underserved areas or with such populations</td>
<td>Number of participation opportunities offered to American Indian entities, such as the Seminole Tribe of Florida</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number and origin of participants at monthly MPO and committee meetings</td>
<td>Number of persons on the MPO mailing list receiving regular agendas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of draft plans, reports, other preliminary documents, or surveys posted to MPO website for public comment</td>
<td>Ensuring the MOE report details representative public involvement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Increasing Public Participation Efforts with Minorities, Low-Income Individuals, &amp; Transportation Disadvantaged</th>
<th>Metrics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ensuring the MOE report details representative public involvement</td>
<td>Developing maps with updated, community-specific demographic and socioeconomic data within the MPO’s geographic boundaries at the census tract, block group, or zip code level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listing all MPO committee members’ demographic data, including race, ethnicity, age, and whether or not they are disabled</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measuring Public Interest &amp; Feedback</th>
<th>Metrics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of returned comment cards distributed with Newsletters and other MPO publications</td>
<td>Number of verbal comments received at open forum discussions, public hearings, and at any other opportunities for public interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of phone, fax, mail, and email inquiries or comments cards received</td>
<td>Number of visitors to the MPO website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeking feedback that is immediate and project specific</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measuring Input Results</th>
<th>Metrics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of issues identified through public input and responded to by the MPO</td>
<td>Documented revisions to plans based on citizen input</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Periodic public involvement process surveys</td>
<td>Update the PPP in conjunction with, and at the outset of, each LRTP update</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendations to enhance the PPP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Refining the PPP Process | |
|-------------------------| |
| | |
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 further augment MPO public outreach.

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.
Chapter 3: Measuring Visibility & Productivity

This chapter measures the visibility and productivity of MPO projects and reports during the 2018-2019 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 38 reports and studies produced in the 2018-2019 cycle (Table 2).

Table 2: Documents Produced from 2018-2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document Title</th>
<th>Published or Adopted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviated CTC Evaluation</td>
<td>Feb 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Transportation Coordinator Evaluation</td>
<td>Mar 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title VI Non-Discrimination Plan</td>
<td>Mar 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unified Planning Work Program FY 18/19</td>
<td>May 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016 - 2017 Public Participation Plan Measures of Effectiveness Report</td>
<td>Apr 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Atlas</td>
<td>Jun 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Participation Plan 2018 Update</td>
<td>Jun 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation Improvement Program FY 2019 – 2023</td>
<td>Jun 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan</td>
<td>Jun 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation Improvement Plan Public Comment Content Analysis</td>
<td>Jul 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garden Steps Final Report to Healthiest Cities and Counties Challenge</td>
<td>Aug 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MetroQuest Tool for Phase 1 Outreach</td>
<td>Aug 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Transportation Safety Study</td>
<td>Sep 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Coast Greenway Alignment Study</td>
<td>Sep 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TriCounty Vision Summary for the 2045 LRTP</td>
<td>Sep 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Tampa Multimodal Plan - Walk Bike Plan Phase VI</td>
<td>Sep 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King’s Forest Safe Routes to Parks</td>
<td>Oct 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LRTP Phase 1 Outreach Public Engagement Plan – Local &amp; Regional</td>
<td>Nov 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health in All Policies Resolution and Report</td>
<td>Jan 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-Modal Level of Service Update</td>
<td>Mar 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018 MPO State of the System Report</td>
<td>Apr 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan</td>
<td>Jun 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation Improvement Program FY 2019/20 - 2023/24</td>
<td>Jun 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USF Campus Autonomous Transit Feasibility Study</td>
<td>Jun 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temple Terrace Electric Vehicle/Golf Cart Crossing Study</td>
<td>Jul 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TIP Public Comment Content Analysis</td>
<td>Jul 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LRTP Phase 2 Public Outreach Report</td>
<td>Aug 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temple Terrace LEV Best Practices Study</td>
<td>Aug 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Annual Gulf Coast Safe Streets Summit</td>
<td>Nov 2019</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 on 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 2018-2019 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 2018 and 2019.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document Title</th>
<th>Published or Adopted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Automated, Connected, Electric &amp; Shared Mobility Research Paper</td>
<td>Nov 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data &amp; Analytics Portal</td>
<td>Nov 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smart Cities Needs Assessment</td>
<td>Nov 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>System Performance Report</td>
<td>Nov 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vision Zero Needs Assessment</td>
<td>Nov 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2045 Long Range Transportation Plan</td>
<td>Nov 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmentally Friendly Noise Wall White Paper</td>
<td>Dec 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRB Poster Final</td>
<td>Dec 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation Equity Score Card</td>
<td>Work Ongoing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MPO Outreach Products and Materials

**Newsletters & Press Releases**

In August 2017, the Plan Hillsborough agency consolidated all five of its publications into one monthly newsletter titled **Connections to Tomorrow**. The consolidated newsletter reduces the treatment of Plan Hillsborough emails as spam/ clutter. **Connections to Tomorrow** 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. Electronic distribution presents some significant advantages:

- Minimized printing and mailing costs;
- Quicker access to information;
- Allowing members of the public to easily self-subscribe to any or all mailing lists; and
- 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.

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. In addition, there is a drop-down tool available at the top of PlanHillsborough.org in which a language selection can be made, and translations are accessible in over 100 different languages.

As of December 2019, the mailing list database contained 13,417 mailing addresses, which amounts to approximately 61% more than during the previous evaluation period.

Table 4a and 4b 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 2018 to 2019.

Table 4a: 2018 MPO Newsletters Distributed via Constant Contact

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date Sent</th>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Distribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan 10, 2018</td>
<td>Connections to Tomorrow 6</td>
<td>4525</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 8, 2018</td>
<td>Connections to Tomorrow 7</td>
<td>4610</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 9, 2018</td>
<td>Connections to Tomorrow 8</td>
<td>4442</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr 6, 2018</td>
<td>Connections to Tomorrow 9</td>
<td>4467</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 8, 2018</td>
<td>Connections to Tomorrow 10</td>
<td>5006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jun 12, 2018</td>
<td>Connections to Tomorrow 11</td>
<td>5361</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jul 11, 2018</td>
<td>Connections to Tomorrow 12</td>
<td>5067</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug 7, 2018</td>
<td>Connections to Tomorrow 13</td>
<td>4539</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep 11, 2018</td>
<td>Connections to Tomorrow 14</td>
<td>5045</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 4b: 2019 MPO Newsletters Distributed via Constant Contact

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date Sent</th>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Distribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan 9, 2019</td>
<td>Connections to Tomorrow 18</td>
<td>7974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 4, 2019</td>
<td>Connections to Tomorrow 19</td>
<td>8621</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 6, 2019</td>
<td>Connections to Tomorrow 20</td>
<td>7729</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr 4, 2019</td>
<td>Connections to Tomorrow 21</td>
<td>7944</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 22, 2019</td>
<td>Connections to Tomorrow 22</td>
<td>9718</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jun 24, 2019</td>
<td>Connections to Tomorrow 23</td>
<td>8657</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jul 25, 2019</td>
<td>Connections to Tomorrow 24</td>
<td>8288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug 20, 2019</td>
<td>Connections to Tomorrow 25</td>
<td>10639</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep 17, 2019</td>
<td>Connections to Tomorrow 26</td>
<td>11143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 17, 2019</td>
<td>Connections to Tomorrow 27</td>
<td>11238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 13, 2019</td>
<td>Connections to Tomorrow 28</td>
<td>11258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>95,235</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 5: MPO Press Releases via Constant Contact in 2018 and 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date Sent</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Distribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feb 15, 2018</td>
<td>Press Release 02.15.18 – Commuter Challenge18</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 12, 2019</td>
<td>Press Release 03.12.09 – Healthiest Cities Challenge Award</td>
<td>158</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 12, 2018</td>
<td>2045 LRTP Outreach Invite</td>
<td>255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 27, 2018</td>
<td>Vision Zero Speakers Bureau</td>
<td>573</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 4, 2018</td>
<td>SouthShore Transit Study Outreach</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 17, 2018</td>
<td>SouthShore Transit Study – Rescheduled</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jun 1, 2018</td>
<td>Transportation Improvement Program Public Hearing Notice 06.12.18</td>
<td>1942</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jun 7, 2018</td>
<td>SouthShore Transit Reevaluation Study Presentation</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jun 21, 2018</td>
<td>SouthShore Transit Study Mtg 06.28.18</td>
<td>270</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug 1, 2018</td>
<td>Resilient Tampa Bay Transportation</td>
<td>52</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug 7, 2018</td>
<td>Resilient Tampa Bay Transportation – Reminder</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug 21, 2018</td>
<td>Vision Zero Quarterly Meeting August 2018</td>
<td>303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep 6, 2018</td>
<td>SouthShore Transit Study Mtg 09.13.18</td>
<td>970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep 20, 2018</td>
<td>Vision Zero - Walk of Silence 10.08.18</td>
<td>290</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Agendas produced for the MPO Board and committees

Notices of 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 2018-2019 cycle, a total of 42,616 agenda notices were emailed to the MPO’s email list.

Appendix 1 summarizes the statistics for all MPO meeting agendas sent during the 2018-2019 evaluation period.

Public information pieces

During the 2018-2019 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 1,000 copies of its 2018 State of the System Report, which identifies goals related to the condition of the county’s transportation network, during the 2018 to 2019 cycle. In both 2018 and 2019, the agency developed a Year-in-Review calendar summarizing the MPO’s achievements over the prior year. There were 1,200 of the calendars printed in 2018 and 2019.
Promotional materials

To support the Vision Zero coalition’s efforts, the MPO created promotional materials to distribute to the public. Thousands of Vision Zero reflective slap-bands were distributed at fairs and events visited by the MPO. The agency also produced a Vision Zero handout summarizing the importance of the initiative to Hillsborough County, which had a print run of 300.

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 2018 Calendar &amp; Year-in-Review</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>1,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State of the System Report (2018)</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English/Spanish Flyers for the South Coast Greenway Trail Project</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English/Spanish Flyers for the TIP Public Hearing</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>1,381</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indoor Billboards for Vision Zero High Crash Corridors Awareness</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s Time Tampa Bay Survey Rack Cards</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s Time Tampa Bay Survey “Buckslips” in TRIM Notices mailed to property owners</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>430,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vision Zero Information Sheets</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vision Zero Quarterly Reports</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPO 2019 Calendar &amp; Year-in-Review</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>1,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English/Spanish Flyers for the TIP Public Hearing</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>10,348</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s Time Tampa Bay Bifold</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LRTP Flyer for Greater Riverview Chamber of Commerce Newsletter</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>700</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>2018, 2019</td>
<td>6,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roller &amp; Paint Brushes</td>
<td>2018, 2019</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cans of Road Quality Paint</td>
<td>2018, 2019</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vision Zero T-Shirts</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vinyl Banners for Parades/Events</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yellow Safety Message Signs</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bumper Stickers</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Window Clings</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>2,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clay Flowerpots</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Bus Flashing Pins</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light Up Bicycle Flashing Pins</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>950</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 2019 Nielsen Scarborough Report, https://marketing-advertising.tampabay.com/audience-market/, The Tampa Bay Times has a daily circulation of 181,280 and a Sunday circulation of 294,483.

The agency also published notices in La Gaceta, a tri-lingual English, Spanish, and Italian newspaper. La Gaceta an estimated weekly circulation of 18,000, according to http://lagacetanewspaper.com/advertising/

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 2018 and 2019.

Table 9 contains all the public hearing and meeting notices posted in newspapers by the MPO between 2018 and 2019. Table 10 contains the circulation numbers for these publications.

Table 9: Public Meeting Notices Published in Newspapers or Online Periodicals by the MPO in 2018 and 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Publication(s)</th>
<th>Date Published</th>
<th>Notice or Announcement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tampa Bay Times</td>
<td>April 29, 2018</td>
<td>Draft Public Participation Plan Update</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board – Notice of Meeting/Workshop Hearing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida Administrative Register</td>
<td>May 7, 2018</td>
<td>MPO June 12 Public Hearing Notice (TIP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tampa Bay Times</td>
<td>June 1, 2018</td>
<td>MPO June 11 Public Hearing Notice (TIP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida Administrative Register</td>
<td>February 14, 2019</td>
<td>Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board – Notice of Meeting/Workshop Hearing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tampa Bay Times</td>
<td>May 26, 2019</td>
<td>MPO June 11 Public Hearing Notice (TIP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida Sentinel Bulletin</td>
<td>May 31, 2019</td>
<td>MPO June 11 Public Hearing Notice (TIP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Gaceta</td>
<td>May 31, 2019</td>
<td>MPO June 11 Public Hearing Notice (TIP)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 10: Daily and weekly circulation of newspapers in which the MPO posted notices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Newspaper</th>
<th>2019 Circulation (Daily &amp; Weekly)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tampa Bay Times – Daily</td>
<td>181,280 [1]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday Circulation</td>
<td>294,483 [2]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Gaceta – Weekly</td>
<td>18,000 [3]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida Sentinel Bulletin</td>
<td>22,000 [4]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sources:**
[1] Circulation numbers provided by newspaper (Feb 2020)
[2] Circulation numbers provided by newspaper (Feb 2020)
[3] Circulation numbers provided by newspaper (Feb 2020)

Advertisements and public notices placed in publications with primarily minority audiences

Two meeting notices were placed in newspapers with minority populations during the 2018-2019 cycle: *La Gaceta* and *Florida Sentinel Bulletin*.

Public Meeting notice signs and Mass Mailings

For the 2018 and 2019 TIP public hearings, the MPO placed notice signs in areas affected by major capacity projects detailing the location, date and time. These were in conjunction with flyers detailing projects in the draft TIP that were mailed in each of the past two years to between 1,300 and 1,400 property owners residing near upcoming major projects.

Online Advertisements, Social Media, and Public Notices

According to Pew Research Center, 37% of adults prefer an online method for local news, 41% prefer television, and fewer adults prefer print newspaper (13%) or radio (8%)¹. To keep up with the changing news habits of the public, the MPO continued providing notices, announcements and information via email, Facebook, Twitter, and its regularly updated website.

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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. Following an online media search of all mentions of the Hillsborough MPO and its programs, a total of 417 articles appeared in 2018 and 2019 combined. This is an increase of 532% from the previous 2016-2017 cycle. Articles primarily appeared in *The Tampa Bay Times* (89 articles) and Tampa Bay Business Journal (43 articles). Topics of articles in which the MPO appeared between 2018 and 2019 included the Transportation Sales Surtax, safety, proposed projects for Tampa’s I-275 and downtown interchange with I-4, and pedestrians.

**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 [https://www.youtube.com/c/HillsboroughCountyMeetings/live](https://www.youtube.com/c/HillsboroughCountyMeetings/live). All 21 of the MPO’s Board meetings were televised in 2018 and 2019. These meetings were broadcast live, close-captioned and later rebroadcast throughout the corresponding month. First-plays and replays of televised MPO meetings are noticed on the online HTV calendar.

In August 2017, MPO staff created and began uploading MPO Board meetings to its YouTube channel. As of the end of 2019, this channel is a video archive of all MPO Board meetings held between August 2017 and December 2019, Independent Oversight Committee meetings and some of the Tampa Bay TMA Leadership meetings. Combined with the 2017 TIP Public Hearing recorded on the Hillsborough County YouTube profile, these meetings have received approximately 1,231 total views as of the end of 2019. The MPO makes efforts to increase the viewship of its meetings and hearings for members of the public who cannot attend, by providing the live-stream link at the top of the Board meetings and Public Hearings meeting agendas, which can be accessed from the agency’s PlanHillsborough.org homepage.

**Summary of Achievements**

**New Opportunities for Public Engagement**

The MPO also greatly expanded the number of events at which staff had a presence at in 2018 and 2019.

With its longstanding commitment to improving safety and mobility for all users and modes of transportation throughout Hillsborough County, the MPO along with the MPO’s School Transportation Working Group (STWG) made improving safety and mobility for students one of its priorities. To identify opportunities to enhance the safety and comfort of getting to and from
school, the MPO initiated a School Safety Study to prioritize public school areas in order to conduct multimodal safety reviews at ten school areas that will result in a list of actionable safety and mobility improvements. Several meetings were held with school administration, parents, and PSTA Safety Chairs with the focus of educating and encouraging the right behaviors for traffic patterns near schools. In addition, students were encouraged to observe traffic rules when walking and cycling to school.

In 2018, the MPO and the Hillsborough County Public Works completed the South Coast Greenway Connector Study to connect with the Selmon Greenway and planned Tampa Bypass Canal Trail. The trail will provide recreation and non-motorized transportation opportunities for cyclists, in-line skaters, and pedestrians. It links important destinations including parks and recreation facilities, public schools, a community college, nature preserves, shopping, town centers, and neighborhoods. Three engagement opportunities were made available to the public and adjacent residents to seek their input on the project.

Also in 2018, the Garden Steps Project had the privilege to continue its networking opportunities, educational programs, and information gatherings throughout the community. During this period, the MPO, City of Tampa, and the Coalition of Community Gardens teamed up to present veggie cooking demonstrations and tasting for the Senior Connection Centers. The events were held at the Williams Park Community Center, Tampa Heights Community Garden, and the Lee Davis Neighborhood Service Center. The MPO sponsored two of three events for Grow Community Gardens. Approximately 65 people attended each of the events. Two of the events were held in 2018 and the third event is scheduled to be held in 2020.

An essential component of long range transportation planning is a public involvement process that maximizes opportunity for the public at large to engage and provide input to the process. In 2018, the It’s Time Tampa Bay tri-county collaborative effort began and included Pasco and Pinellas County MPOs. Staff contacted a wide variety of community organizations, homeowners' associations, chambers of commerce, business groups, civic and environmental organizations, particularly in the MPO’s communities of concern. Many hosted presentations, distributed information to their members, and communicated with e-blasts to draw attention to the surveys and encourage the public to participate. Social media platforms were used throughout the surveys’ implementation period to encourage residents to visit the survey websites and complete the survey. The MPO posted on their own social media channels and invested in paid social media advertising. A significant port of the advertising budget was spent in Communities of Concern.

In 2019, during the It’s TIME Hillsborough survey initiative, the MPO utilized paid and earned media to heavily promote that they were seeking the public’s input on the 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan. The MPO partnered with News Radio WFLA AM Tampa Bay Live for a remote broadcast with Jack Harris and Aaron Jacobson at Fred’s Market Restaurant. In addition, they participated in a radio cross promotion on both iHeart Radio and Beasley Media Group. At the Kids Day 2019, which is a Beasley Media Group event, and was one of the largest events during the survey period, that had an opportunity to reach the 15,000 people who attended the event at Raymond James Stadium. There was a digital scheduled tied into iHeartRadio & Beasley
Media stations that provided streaming and on click-thru banners linked to the survey on station websites and key station emails. The total audience reached through media coverage was more than 4.6 million.

In 2019, the Independent Oversight Committee (IOC) was created to oversee spending of the penny surtax for transportation. The IOC is guided by a set of bylaws which govern the performance of committee members and ensure a commitment to the principles established by the Hillsborough County Charter. The IOC consists of at least 12 Hillsborough County residents who are appointed by a governing or administrative body. The six agencies receiving surtax funds have entered into an agreement confirming the roles and responsibilities of each. The agreement calls for administrative and other required support to be provided to the IOC by the Hillsborough Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), and legal support by the Hillsborough County Attorney’s Office.

**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 2016-2017 collaborative activities into the 2018-2019 cycle, working with Department of Health, Hillsborough County School Board, and continued its USF fellowship program. In addition, through the Vision Zero initiative, the MPO has continued to engage new and diverse groups in its products. The following projects represent the major collaborative undertakings of the MPO in 2018 and 2019.

When approached by a grassroots coalition of bicycle and pedestrian safety advocates, Walk Bike Tampa, with the idea of developing a Vision Zero Action Plan, the MPO embraced the challenge and completed the Action Plan in December 2017. Since that time, the MPO continues to advance the Vision Zero movement. In 2018, community volunteers, students, partners and staff held signs along 56th Street, one of the highest rates of severe crashes in Hillsborough County, to alert motorists to the dangers of speeding. The signs included messages to slow down, put phones down, that aggressive driving cost lives, and identified locations where people had been hurt or killed. Another event was held along 15th Street, another high crash roadway, to bring attention to presence of cyclist and pedestrians and the lack of continuous sidewalks by painting an intersection mural, a colorful crosswalk, affixing bike lights, and lining flower pots along a gap of missing sidewalk. These examples were just the start of marches to remember the victims, many more intersection mural paintings, neighborhood sign-waving events, speaking to homeowner associations. A few other significant safety events to highlight were the:

- Walk of Silence was held in both 2018 and 2019 to honor the lives lost through traffic violence. In 2018, approximately 75 attendees painted shoes painted white, quietly marching along the Riverwalk. In 2019, participants carried signs bearing the victims’ names and dates of death. Both years, the names of the friends and family members who died in traffic crashes were read aloud.
The Vision Zero Coalition, along with the MPO’s Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee assisted the Tampa Police Department and St. Joseph’s Hospital in handing out free helmets to kids at the Gasparilla Children’s Parade Annual Bicycle & Pedestrian Safety Rodeo.

The Tampa Heights Junior Civic Association and Dowdell Middle School in Palm River requested that their summer camp elementary and middle school students learned about the importance of community and transportation planning. The children received information on what Vision Zero is all about and tips on walking and bicycling safely. An art contest to design an intersection mural was held with bicycles given away to the winning students. At end of the summer, a festival, the intersection mural was painted, and a bicycle rodeo held. The camp would not have been possible without the amazing community volunteers and donations from the Tampa Heights Junior Civic Association, Hillsborough County, the City of Tampa and the Tampa Police Department, Hillsborough School District, the Children’s Board of Hillsborough County, Lyfe-Stile Network, the Andrew Joseph Foundation, the Women's Transportation Seminar – Tampa Chapter, Planning Commission, and Tampa Bay ITE/George F. Young, Inc.

Regional collaboration was needed to pull off the Gulf Coast Safe Streets Summit in both 2018 and 2019. The sold-out summits brought in national experts and local officials and professionals to learn how individually and together we can turn the corner on our serious injury and fatal traffic crashes.

2019 USF Transportation Day/Cyclovia – Alumni Drive was closed to automobile traffic, and the goal of the event was to increase the variety of transportation options available for USF students, faculty and staff, and to promote a behavior change away from driving alone in a car. Staff had the opportunity to conduct a bicycle lane painting activity and promote the Vision Zero initiative. There were over 300 people who attended the event.

The MPO supported the interagency School Transportation Working Group created by the MPO Chairman in 2015 through December 2018. Numerous collaborations lead to improvements on city, county state-owned roadways near schools including Benito, Sulfur Springs, Chamberlain, Farnell, Pride, FishHawk, and Newsome. The MPO and the STWG also supported safety education and outreach at events like the Parent University Choice Expo and Back to School Bash. Improvements and collaboration continue with school district staff, engineers, planners, the Florida Department of Transportation’s Community Traffic Safety Team (CTST), the school district's Circulation Committee, and the School Board's Transportation Team.
The MPO worked collaboratively with Tampa’s Community Gardens Coalition, the DOH, 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. In 2019, the Garden Steps initiative was named as one of the eight runners-up in the Healthiest Cities & Counties Challenge. The MPO received $50,000 in funding to continue planting the seeds for a healthier community through the Garden Steps Initiative. As well as working to improve health equity by creating community gardens with easy pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access in identified food deserts in the City of Tampa. Garden Step events were held at the Williams Park Community Center and the Lee Davis Neighborhood Service Center in conjunction with the Senior Connection Center’s Living Healthy.

Work with the DOH on the cross-sector collaborative, the Health in All Policies project, continued from 2017. A resolution was adopted by the MPO that developed strategies to consider the health impacts of MPO decisions that include chronic and acute health outcomes, mental and physical wellbeing, health behaviors such as physical activity, measures of social cohesion and community connectedness, access to healthcare, employment and educational opportunities and the environment.

FDOT continues to fund projects from the MPO’s priorities. The MPO and its committees participated in FDOT’s Tampa Bay Next Open Houses, which began at the end of 2018.
Chapter 4: Measuring Participation Opportunities

Public input is a critical component of the success of the MPO’s initiatives, 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.

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 a MPO committee, attending a public workshop on a specific topic sponsored by the MPO, and interacting with the MPO at fairs and exhibitions.

All MPO board and advisory committee meetings from 2018 to 2019 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. Table 11 contains summary information of the committee meetings held in 2018 and 2019.

Table 11: MPO committee meetings held during 2018 and 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Board/Committee</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meetings</td>
<td>Attendees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPO Board</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>487</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizens Advisory Committee</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>311</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Advisory Committee</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Committee</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livable Roadways Committee</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>289</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intelligent Transportation Committee</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Oversight Committee</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint TAC/CAC Meeting</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>1,922</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 243 external public meetings or events in 2018 and 2019. This represents an increase of 8% from the previous period. The MPO also began tracking the number of event participants that staff members interacted with in 2017. In 2018 and 2019, the events with the highest number of attendees included:

**Highest-Attended Events in 2018**

1. Labor Day Weekend Florida’s Largest Home Show [September 2-5] (40,000 attendees)
2. Raymond James Stadium Back to School Bash [August 6] (10,000 attendees)
3. Franklin St/Riverwalk/Ashley Walk of Silence [October 22] (5,000 attendees)
4. FL State Fairgrounds Hills School District Choice EXPO [November 4] (3,000 attendees)
5. Bay to Bay Vision Zero Sign Waving [October 11] (1,000 attendees)

**Highest-Attended Events in 2019**

1. WFLA AM Tampa Bay Morning Radio Show [October 4] (100,000 listeners)
2. Kids Day 2019 – LRTP Phase 2 Outreach [July 21] (15,000 attendees)
3. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Parade [January 20] (20,000 attendees)
4. YES! FAIR (Family Abilities Information Rallies) [October 5] (1,200 attendees)
5. Gasparilla Children’s Bike Rodeo [January 19] (1,000 attendees)

The complete list of events that MPO sponsored or participated in are located in Appendices 2 (2018) and 3 (2019).

**Attendance at events in Environmental Justice (EJ) areas**

Of the 243 meetings that the MPO hosted or participated in, at least 45 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).

**MPO Board and Committee Meeting Participation**

**Number and origin of participants**

A total of 4,032 participants attended MPO Board and committee meetings in the 2018-2019. This is approximately a 20% decrease from the previous cycle.

There was a recommendation from the previous MOE to track the origin of public participants at MPO Board and committee meetings. **Tables 12 and 13** provides zip code data for attendees of MPO Board meetings for 2018 - 2019. Data for 2020-2021 will include both the board and committees since the figures for the committees were unavailable for this cycle. The request for this information will be added to the committee sign in sheets.
Table 12: Zip codes of attendees for 2018 MPO Board meetings

2018 MPO Board Meetings (Zip Code Data)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zip Code</th>
<th># of Attendees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>32312, 33547, 33578, 33596, 33606,</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33607, 33615, 33617, 33625, 33647,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33702, 33716, 33760, 34242, 34642</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33011, 33511, 33603, 33604, 33626,</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33675</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33611</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33605</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33612</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33602</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33637</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Not all attendees provided zip codes

Table 13: Zip codes of attendees for 2019 MPO Board meetings

2019 MPO Board Meetings (Zip Code Data)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zip Code</th>
<th># of Attendees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>32827, 33414, 33487, 33509, 33558,</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33569, 33572, 33584, 33592, 33616,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33620, 33634, 33656, 33703, 34691,</td>
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<td>34761, 33309, 33547, 33601, 33615,</td>
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<td>33618, 33701, 33715, 33830, 34639,</td>
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<td>34743</td>
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<tr>
<td>33596, 33619</td>
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<td>33611, 33613, 33624, 33626, 33629</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>33594, 33606, 33610, 33614, 33617</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33637, 33647</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33612</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33609</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33605, 33607</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33602</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33603</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33604</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Not all attendees provided zip codes
Public Turnout for the Transportation Improvement Program Annual Hearings (2018-2019)

The 2018 TIP public hearing attracted 125 attendees and 39 speakers, donors or commenters. Attendance from the public was complemented by five posts on the 2018 MPO TIP Public Hearing Facebook event and 47 emails. The GoToMeeting virtual event also attracted one comment on its live stream chat over the course of the event.

The 2019 TIP hearing attracted 167 attendees and 68 speakers, donors or commenters. There were 40 comments left on the 2019 MPO TIP Public Hearing Facebook event, 3 phone calls, and 117 emails.

Public Turnout for the 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan Public Hearing

Between October 7, 2019, and November 5, 2019, the MPO published a draft of the 2045 update for its 2045 LRTP - It’s Time Hillsborough for public review and comment. The draft LRTP allocated $32.2 billion in available funding through 2045 for MPO investment priority programs, including cost feasible projects in the first five years (2020-2025) and state and local cost feasible and candidate projects through 2045. The comment period culminated on November 5, 2019, following a 30-day review of the draft plan. Public involvement was encouraged through a series of engagement opportunities, including:

- Online surveys (planhillsborough.org/2045lrtp);
- Hard copy surveys;
- Community presentations through June and July; and
- A public hearing meeting (November 5, 2019).

The draft plan was available online at the MPO’s website, and print copies were available at the Planning Commission Library on the 18th floor of the Hillsborough County Center for review. Opportunities to submit comments via email, voicemail, and Facebook were available until November 4, 2019. Public meetings, including the November 5th public hearing, were broadcast live on HTV. The MPO Board voted and adopted the plan at the public hearing on November 5, 2019. Through the 30-day public comment period, the Hillsborough MPO received 25 comments.

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 2018-2019 cycle, largely due to creation of the Independent Oversight Committee. In December 2019, the last month of the cycle in which all committee meetings were held, approximately 1,227 individuals received an agenda mailed through Constant Contact.

Surveys, Draft Documents and Plans Available for Public Comment

From 2018-2019 the MPO hosted five surveys seeking comments from the public and its committees. These surveys included:

- Citizens Advisory Committee Members Effectiveness and Time Management survey - On several occasions in 2018, committee meetings went beyond the scheduled

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2 Donors provided their time to allow a speaker to speak for longer. Commenters made written comments.
agenda time. Most members are comfortable with monthly meetings being 2 – 2½ hours long. There was consensus to have an option for informal discussion in addition to the regular monthly meetings and have CAC reports presented in person at MPO Board meetings by the CAC Chair or a designated member. (13 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 (564 respondents in 2018 and 932 respondents in 2019).

- **MetroQuest: It’s TIME Tampa Bay survey** - Over the summer of 2018, the metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) of Hillsborough, Pinellas, and Pasco County asked citizens of the three counties to identify priorities for land use and transportation and consider three very different scenarios for future growth. (10,000 responses).
- **MetroQuest: It’s TIME Hillsborough survey** – available electronically and hardcopy (Spanish and English). The It’s TIME Hillsborough 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan update involved a collaborative effort, between the Hillsborough Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and Hillsborough Planning Commission to implement a two-phase public engagement process. (5,219 responses)
- **2018 Gulf Coast Safe Streets Summit Evaluation survey** – Positive feedback for a future summit, information presented, and the value was received (35 responses)
- **Citizen evaluation survey**, to solicit feedback from the public on the service of MPO staff who assisted with questions or comments (18 responses)

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. An update on this information should be available after the census is complete and the new data is provided.

The agency continues to maintain a community Health Atlas in order to provide communities and planners information on chronic disease, demographics, food access, transportation, emergency preparedness, and environmental indicators within our communities.

**Listing all MPO committee members’ demographic data**

As part of the 2018 Public Participation Plan, MPO staff collected demographic data to determine whether committee demography reflected that of Hillsborough County. This information is published as an appendix to the 2020 Public Participation Plan.

**Participation opportunities offered to American Indian entities**

The MPO continues to ensure that tribal contacts receive agenda packets and Transportation Improvement Plan documents. The MPO has identified the contacts and placed them in its Constant Contact database. They also receive the MPO’s monthly electronic newsletters which contain articles of transportation plans and projects. Lastly, tribal governments participate in the State’s Efficient Transportation Decision Making process, which uses a web-based tool to provide information and map data to, and solicit comments from, agencies potentially affected by future plans and projects.
Chapter 5: Public Interest & Feedback
Feedback through Comment Cards, Surveys, and Oral Comments

Feedback from the public was received via several sources in 2018-2019: community events, public hearings, meetings, comment cards, the PlanHillsborough.org website, walk-ins from visitors, phone calls, emails, Twitter, and Facebook.

The MPO received 18 responses related to the speed of staff service, satisfaction with information received, and overall quality of service with respect to the agency during the 2018-2019 cycle. Overall, more than 83% of citizens rated their satisfaction in each of these metrics as “excellent”.

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 2018 CTC Evaluation Client survey received a total of 564 responses. The 2019 survey received 932 responses. With a 97% approval rating for 2018 and 98% approval for 2019, 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 2018 and 2019 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 2018 and 2019.

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 96% (from 95% in the previous evaluation period), and the percentage of mobile users who own a smartphone has grown to 81% (from 77%)³.

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.

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, which includes developed as an interactive mapping application that allows users to view transportation projects, descriptions, and funding over the next five years in Hillsborough County. The MPO continues to host a bicycle suitability map and a map of traffic count stations.

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.

In 2019, a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) page was added to the Plan Hillsborough website. This information includes FAQs for Plan Hillsborough, the Planning Commission, the MPO, and the River Board.

**Most Viewed Web Pages**

There were an estimated 510,642 webpage hits on PlanHillsborough.org across 2018 and 2019, which represents a 16.18% increase from the previous period. This increase is partially attributable to the 2045 LRTP update. This webpage was the highest-visited webpage on PlanHillsborough.org in 2019. The most visited MPO-related webpages in 2018 and 2019 are shown in **Table 14**.

**Table 14**: Most Viewed Webpages in 2018 and 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Webpage</th>
<th>2018 Views</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>9,005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.planhillsborough.org/">http://www.planhillsborough.org/</a> GIS maps and data files /</td>
<td>6,779</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.planhillsborough.org/traffic-counts/">http://www.planhillsborough.org/traffic-counts/</a></td>
<td>4,463</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Webpage</th>
<th>2019 Views</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.planhillsborough.org/2045">http://www.planhillsborough.org/2045</a> LRTP/</td>
<td>10,954</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.planhillsborough.org/metropolitan-planning-organization-mpo/">http://www.planhillsborough.org/metropolitan-planning-organization-mpo/</a></td>
<td>9,150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.planhillsborough.org/">http://www.planhillsborough.org/</a> GIS maps and data files /</td>
<td>7,761</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The average website visitor spends 1 minute and 43 seconds on the webpage as of 2018, a slight increase from the 1 minute and 41 seconds in the previous reporting period.
Social Networks
The MPO continued to expand its use of social media in 2018 and 2019, including Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. Social media was used to promote public notices, advance stories of transportation interest in Hillsborough County, and event details.

Facebook
In 2010 the MPO established a Facebook page, which was joined by a Vision Zero Hillsborough page in December 2016, and in 2019 an Independent Oversight Committee page for the Hillsborough County Transportation Surtax. These pages are used to promote news stories, events, newsletters, and meetings of interest to the public. Combined, these pages have approximately 1831 followers as of 2019. Public comments made on these pages are forwarded to MPO staff for response and shared with MPO Board members at their Board meetings.

Continuing from 2015, the MPO hosted a Facebook event one week prior to each MPO Board meeting in 2018 and 2019. This event allowed the public to comment online and have their comments shared during the MPO Board meeting.

The @HillsboroughMPO Facebook page had 180 posts or shares in 2018-2019, resulting in over 46,691 impressions (timeline views) and nearly 2,614 engagements (likes, comments, shares and photo views) with users. The number of engagements made with users slightly decreased (13.8%) between 2018 and 2019. Posts with the highest number of user engagements in 2018 and 2019 are shown in Table 15. The content of all Facebook posts made during this period are contained in Appendices 4 (2018) and 5 (2019).

Table 15: @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>2018</td>
<td>It’s Time Tampa Bay – Transportation</td>
<td>Innovation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Are you 65+, living in Hillsborough County, and lacking regular transportation?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Great news for resiliency planning in Tampa Bay! The Hillsborough MPO</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>This past semester, the MPO worked with USF students in the Sustainable Transportation course.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TODAY! Everyone is welcome to join the Hillsborough MPO’s School Transportation Working Group</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Parts of East Central Ave. between N. Nebraska and 14 Street are about to undergo a “road diet”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>At last -- big victory for long-time advocates and parents asking for middle school crossing guards.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>At the August 6 board meeting, the MPO Board recognized Vision Zero Heroes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WUSF story on MPO-sponsored Garden Steps program, runner up in the national Healthiest Cities &amp; Counties Challenge!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A HUGE thanks to everyone who came out this morning and contributed to the MPO and HART workshop</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The @VisionZeroHillsborough, Facebook page, which launched in December 2016, had 203 posts or shares within the evaluation period. This amount is an increase of 103%. Posts or shares made on this page have resulted in almost 88,559 impressions and over 6,800 engagements since the page launched. Table 16 shows the leading posts by engagement on the @VisionZeroHillsborough Facebook page. All posts made by the @VisionZeroHillsborough Facebook page between 2018 and 2019 are listed in Appendix 6.

Table 16: @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>April 1, 2019</td>
<td>We are at MacFarlane Park School sharing #VisionZero messages! #VisionZero813</td>
<td>502</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 9, 2019</td>
<td>Updates on the Crosswalk- looking smart!</td>
<td>490</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 6, 2019</td>
<td>Remembering Alexis Miranda tonight. Her life ended way too soon,</td>
<td>360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 1, 2019</td>
<td>Special thanks to all the staff, parents &amp; kids</td>
<td>323</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 18, 2018</td>
<td>Webinar: Rural Roundabouts are Saving Lives</td>
<td>265</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Twitter

As with Facebook, the Hillsborough MPO continued using Twitter to bring attention to transportation topics of interest, events, and notices. In December 2019, the Hillsborough MPO had 6,620 followers, an increase of 8.2% 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 825 tweets (a decrease of 22.8% from the last period) between January 2018 and December 2019 and had approximately 1,264 profile visits per month in the same period. In 2018, #CommuterChallenge18 had over a million hashtag impressions.
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 conducted for major initiatives and studies during 2018 and 2019 were designed to seek ongoing public engagement early and often. 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 50 partners spanning the public and private sectors hosted multiple supporting events to support the Vision Zero Action Plan between 2018 and 2019. Vision Zero had a presence at approximately 35 events hosted or attended by the MPO between 2018 and 2019, and staff distributed thousands of promotional and informational materials created to spread word about the initiative, including their quarterly reports. The first issue was distributed Spring of 2018. The purpose of the reports is to track updates in crash data and identify changes in trends, and to not updates on progress toward implementing strategies outlined in the action plan.

Vision Zero continues to build on and support 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.

In addition, between January 2018 and December 2019, to support the initiative, MPO staff participated in several public events related to Vision Zero. Staff participated in sign holding events for two of the Vision Zero Top 20 Severe Crash Corridors to bring awareness to the safety issues and engage the community in raising the bar for better behavior. Four Walks of Silence were held during this period to honor all pedestrian victims of traffic violence.
South Coast Greenway Trail Alignment Study

This multi-use trail study evaluated the possible routes to connect major components 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 and evaluate a multi-use trail. The trail is included in the Florida Shared-Use Nonmotorized (SUN) Trail Network and will generally be required to be an off-road multi-use path. Four Open House style public meetings began the conversation with the community for their ideas. Along with other media and outreach efforts, over 10,000 post cards were mailed to residents a week before the meetings. Two community meetings were held in April, and one open house community meeting was held in June. To spread awareness for the June meeting, 720 mailings were sent. As a result, 50 members of the public attended the April meetings, and eight in June.

The study identified possible routes and costs associated with those scoring highest for connections to neighborhoods, parks, schools, and other amenities as well as public input.

Tampa Bay Express and Tampa Bay NEXT Projects

From 2018-2019, FDOT continued work on a more collaborative and transparent conversation in reducing congestion on I-275 and I-4 at the regional and community level. In 2019, the MPO hosted special briefings to provide information on the Tampa Interstate Study (TIS) Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) that is currently under evaluation by FDOT. Display boards, meeting handouts, and presentations on the Downtown Tampa Interchange (I-275/I-4) improvements and on the Westshore Interchange (I-275/SR 60) reconstruction and West Tampa improvements were provided, as well as a meeting overview presentation and presentation. Briefing Information:

- Community Impacts on FDOTs’ Plans for I-275 & I-4 (45 participants)
- FDOT/MPO/City of Tampa Traffic & Safety Workshop – Downtown Tampa Interchange (27 participants)
- Traffic & Safety – FDOT Plans for I-275 & I-4 (17 participants)
2045 Long Range Transportation Plan

The It’s TIME Tampa Bay survey was Phase 1 of public engagement to create the 2045 LRTP. It represented a collaboration with the MPOs in neighboring Pinellas and Pasco counties to identify land use preferences and transportation priorities. The public engagement survey, conducted in August and September of 2018, considered three different scenarios for future growth. The three scenarios were focused on different investments and accompanying land development strategies, which included New Technologies, Expressway Lanes, and Transit Focus. Nearly 10,000 citizens responded to the online survey, setting a record for participation in a MetroQuest online survey in the United States. The overall goal of the outreach program was to maximize our reach in the community to engage and involve as many people as possible in the long range transportation planning process. Every voice matters. Hearing what citizens want and how they view our future is critical to making the right transportation investments to better serve all members of our community. The outreach program specifically focused on reaching the MPO’s Communities of Concern, to make sure voices who are not traditionally heard from were represented in the Plan. The results helped shape a “hybrid” scenario and tri-county vision that set the stage for updates to the LRTPs in all three counties.

In the second phase, It’s TIME Hillsborough, the MPO collected input on specific projects to achieve the vision from Phase 1. The survey questions focused on Bus Rapid Transit, Major Investments, and what to do with the Downtown Interchange. The survey ran June and July of 2019. Over this two-month timeframe, there were 8,053 visits to the survey link and 5,284 people who answered at least some survey questions. This 64.8% participation rate exceeded the phase 1 survey rate of 55%. Following a standard review and survey clean-up, the final dataset included 5,219 participants. In total, there were 93,758 data points and more than 3,100 comments collected. Results are documented in a summary report, and helped the MPO establish priorities for the 2045 LRTP.
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 2018-2019 cycle, it continued to solicit general feedback from the public in situations where staff provided assistance in answering questions. In 2016-17, MPO staff received 13 citizen evaluations with the great majority (85%) rating the MPO's overall quality of service with respect to other agencies and businesses as “excellent”.

In 2019, staff surveyed and received positive feedback overall from the Citizens Advisory Committee members. Questions included if they found the efforts 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. Among other findings, it showed that over three quarters of the members felt that the time they volunteer to serve on the CAC is worthwhile.

Federal certification review

The Hillsborough MPO last participated in its quadrennial federal certification review in April 2017. The review of metropolitan planning procedures, including public engagement, 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. Recommendations to improve public participation included: 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.

All of these have been implemented. The MPO reviewed its PPP and PlanHillsborough.org website to ensure that the differences between public hearings and meetings are expressed correctly and clarified those differences more explicitly in the 2018 PPP update. The MPO also now has an online glossary of transportation acronyms and terms, and the website features pop-up definitions when users scroll over key terms and acronyms. The MPO's updated Title VI/Nondiscrimination Plan was approved March of 2018. This document contains an evaluation of recent efforts undertaken to ensure representation and diversity among MPO committees and equity in the planning process. Examples include county-wide mapping of environmental justice areas and disadvantaged demographics, as well as the designation of at-large seats on the Citizens Advisory Committee to represent racial, ethnic, age, and gender-based minority groups.
New and ongoing 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 every few months to discuss conditions in major cross-county transportation markets and 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. During this period, the group focused on the Regional Transit Feasibility Plan Study and every other month meetings increased. In 2019, the MPO reviewed its agreement with five other MPOs for regional transportation planning and coordination, reestablishing the MPO Chairs Coordinating Committee (CCC) to lead multi-modal priority setting and formalizing the tri-county TMA leadership group as a committee of the CCC. This group met six times in 2018 and five times in 2019 regional coordination.

MPO Chairs’ Coordinating Committee for West Central Florida

The CCC began meeting in 1993, and was established in Florida Statute in 2001, to coordinate regionally significant projects and decisions and establish 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.

In 2019, the MPOs and TPO revised their interlocal agreement with TBARTA to recognize TBARTA’s mission had changed due to recent state legislation making it a regional transit operator. Therefore, the MPO’s agreed to resume providing staff support to the CCC.

The MPO and the CCC, along with the TMA Leadership Group, worked together to secure $1.4 billion in state and federal funding for the Westshore Interchange. This was a result of consistent regional messaging about the importance of this project.

The CCC priorities for a multi-county network of trails and greenways were also updated during this cycle. The CCC met twice in both 2018 and 2019 on regional coordination initiatives.

Smart Cities Alliance

The Regional Big Data Working Group (RBDWG), organized by the Hillsborough MPO in 2017, consisted of 10-15 analysts from different transportation agencies in Hillsborough, Pinellas and Pasco. The group provided input on data and analytics. Later, the Smart Cities Alliance was created and the RBDWG was dissolved because of its similarities with the Alliance. The Alliance was initiated by the City of Tampa, the Florida Department of Transportation District 7, and the Center for Urban Transportation Research at the University of South Florida. The group has taken on a broader vision to focus on cutting edge technologies that cut across multiple disciplines, including transportation, energy infrastructure, health, and more for the region. The Smart Cities
Alliance meets on an ad hoc basis and has approximately one meeting each quarter. So far, the group has helped create the data & analytics portal, is completing a ramp-metering feasibility study, completing an ‘innovative intersection’ study, and developing a mobile fare payment system for all transportation modes.

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

The previous MPO Measures of Effectiveness report covered the period of January 1, 2016 through December 31, 2017. 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.

Two of the MPO’s most well-attended public meetings during this review period were the TIP Hearings in June 2018 and June 2019. While most public feedback concerned transportation improvements, some comments were about the provision of information and ease of public participation. After both meetings, staff conducted an internal de-brief session to clarify what worked, what did not, and what could be improved upon in future outreach efforts.

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.

The agency has created user-friendly website project page templates to enhance how users view and interact with content digitally. The information will be clearly separated for better readability of project overviews, scopes, public engagement opportunities, future steps, and supporting documentation. The page will also provide an email sign up form, Google Maps, social media links, and project specific calendar events.

In order to assure people with disabilities can access information on our website, ongoing efforts and staff trainings are taking place to make documents on our website compliant with standards established by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

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

These major initiatives, led by the MPOs, TBARTA, and FDOT respectively, were all integrated in the joint tri-county public outreach survey of 2018, “It’s TIME Tampa Bay.” More than 10,000 responses shaped the vision of future growth, highway expansion, and regional rapid transit.

4. Coordinate data products with FDOT and other agencies.

During this period, the MPO consulted with its partner agencies, designed and began to build a shared data and analytics portal. The portal will allow agencies to share traffic management and safety data in real time, and analyze hot spots for strategic investments and prioritization. Over the next two years, a data feed to the MPO website will be created so that members of the public too can track our community’s transportation performance metrics.
In addition, the PIMA Mapping Tool hosted on the Plan Hillsborough website 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.

5. **Provide a glossary of acronyms and reduce acronym use** for major planning documents and in presentations.

To improve readability, the MPO has made an effort to decrease 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.**

During this cycle, MPO staff conducted a Summer Camp at Tampa Heights Junior Civic Association and Dowdell Middle School education elementary, middle, and a few high school students (approximately 60 students) informing them the importance of walking and bicycle safety. In 2019, staff trained volunteers for the Vision Zero Speaker’s Bureau. The volunteers had opportunities to organize mural paintings and schedule a Vision Zero presentation with interested groups or organizations in an effort to spread the word throughout the community on the Vision Zero initiative. These initiatives have formed community relationships and opportunities for repeat invites for community events.

Also during this period, staff conducted an orientation for members of the newly formed Independent Oversight Committee.

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. 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 contacted over 100 community leaders and asked how to best reach their community. With this step, the MPO’s Communities of Concern were engaged during the 2045 LRTP update process when staff invested time and resources to solicit input from these residents. Communities of Concern are areas that have two or more characteristics significantly above the county’s median (e.g. minorities, zero-car households, elderly, children, income, disability status, limited English proficiency). Residents of these areas face unique and sometimes overwhelming obstacles to transportation and engagement. Rather than expecting people to come to us, we went out to the Communities of Concern and met people at community events, neighborhood meetings, and on HART bus rides. Staff also hosted seven pop-up events at major transit transfer centers and local malls. Results of these efforts doubled minority representation when compared to the 2040 Plan update.

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. The latest additions are Vision Zero Hillsborough Facebook page in 2018 and the Independent Oversight Committee’s Facebook page in 2019.

The MPO also tried purchasing ads on Twitter and Facebook to promote the 2019 It’s TIME Hillsborough online survey. This experiment proved to be low-cost and very effective, resulting in the MPO’s highest survey responses ever. In addition, some ad buys were targeted to zip codes with more minority residents, and participation by African Americans was 40% higher, and by Hispanics 70%, than in the MPO’s last comparable survey in 2014.

In follow up with a recommendation from the MPO’s Technical Advisory Committee, to explore utilizing Instagram to share photos of projects and events, staff evaluated the platform and did not find it a best fit for the organization; however as the photo and video library is being built, the subject may be revisited in the future.

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 has evaluated 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. All Board meetings are also uploaded to the MPO’s YouTube profile, although there is some lag in receiving and uploading these videos. Postings or livestreams must be accessible and ADA compliant; for example, it must have captioning for those with hearing impairments. The MPO will continue to explore additional options for updating and expanding accessibility, such as publicizing Hillsborough TV’s schedule including rebroadcasts.
Chapter 8: Summary, Results & Recommendations

Notable Successes in Public Engagement

1. **Gulf Coast Safe Streets Summit** – The MPO hosted the very first safe streets summit for West Central Florida, which was a joint effort by all six MPOs of West Central Florida: Hillsborough, Hernandez/Citrus, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk and Sarasota/Manatee, in partnership with the FDOT, USF CUTR, Bike/Walk Tampa Bay, and Walk/Bike Tampa. The summit was completely sold out and had approximately 244 attendees at the event. The lineup of engaged speakers assured the audience that the work of planners, engineers, health professionals, advocates, law enforcement, and elected officials is helping to make headway in saving lives. They also inspired, humbled, and challenged participants to spread the Vision Zero message and be open to new ideas, in order to be effective in saving lives in the most critical communities.

2. **Local Host and Partner for Safe Routes to School National Conference**: Over 420 participants came together for the three-day conference to discuss transportation, safety best practices and creating health, equitable communities. The **2nd Annual Gulf Coast Regional Safe Streets Summit** was held on the third day, immediately following the wrap of the final session of the conference. The summit was a collaborative event of the Hernando/Citrus, Hillsborough, Pasco, Pinellas, and Sarasota/Manatee Metropolitan Planning Organizations, the Polk County Transportation Planning Organization, the Florida Department of Transportation, the USF Center for Urban Transportation Research, and Walk Bike Tampa. This partnership provides a regional approach to prioritize the Complete Streets initiative throughout the local jurisdictions along the Gulf Coast of Florida. This educational event aimed at encouraging the implementation of Complete Street that are safe and accessible for all.

3. **MetroQuest: It’s TIME Tampa Bay survey** - Over the summer of 2018, the metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) of Hillsborough, Pinellas and Pasco County asked citizens of the three counties to identify priorities for land use and transportation and consider three very different scenarios for future growth. There were approximately 10,000 survey responses.

4. **MetroQuest: It’s TIME Hillsborough survey** – available electronically and hardcopy (Spanish and English). The It’s TIME Hillsborough 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan update involved a collaborative effort, between the Hillsborough Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and Hillsborough Planning Commission to implement a two-phase public engagement process. Over 5,000 responses were received from the survey. In addition, during this outreach period, the MPO and Planning Commission staff interacted with over 16,000 attendees at 34 events, meetings, and presentations.

5. **FHWA Vision Zero Peer-to-Peer with MPOs**: The MPO hosted two Federal Highway Administration peer exchange mini-conferences for the MPO’s around the state and country - one on Vision Zero and one on Safety Target Setting. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Office of Safety convened a day and a half peer exchange in Tampa, Florida. The peer exchange brought together transportation safety practitioners from metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) in Florida (FL), Nevada (NV), New Mexico (NM), Colorado (CO), Oregon (OR), and California (CA) as well as the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and FHWA Division staff to learn and share experiences on regional Vision Zero plans including: MPO Vision Zero Plans – State of the Practice;
Integrating Vision Zero into Transportation Plans; From MPO Vision Zero Planning to Implementation; and Challenges and solutions.

6. **FHWA Safety Target-Setting Workshop**: Working with FHWA’s Office of Safety on a first of its kind one-day workshop on Target Setting for MPO’s. Topics included purpose of safety performance target setting, expectations and responsibilities of the MPOs, rational behind setting targets, and overview of crash trends in Florida. The attendees discussed how they currently setting targets and how programs like Vision Zero can influence target setting. Lastly, there was discussion on how to improve coordination between State and MPO, particularly since the Hillsborough MPO used a methodology to predict performance based on different investment levels for safety projects versus adopting the state FDOT’s target of zero.

7. **Expanding the MPO’s following**

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 2018 and 2019. 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.

8. **Making it Easier to Participate**

The MPO continues 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 2018 and 2019 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. Both events were also streamed through the Hillsborough TV public access channel.

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 two-phase public engagement process for the 2045 LRTP update during this cycle, the MPO utilized MetroQuest as the primary public engagement tool. The interactive nature of the platform allowed users to rank, rate, and comment on a variety of questions. A paper survey in Spanish and English and a PowerPoint presentation was created for in-person meetings and events.

9. **Online Interactive Map Tools**

Several interactive mapping tools are available on the MPO’s website: the TIP Tool, the Health Atlas, the traffic Counts Map, and the Bike Suitability Map. The following tools make it easier
for members of the public to get specific information they are looking for. Data for the tools is continuously uploaded to provide quick and accurate information to the public. The Health Atlas is intended to provide communities and planners a baseline of chronic disease, demographic, transportation, emergency preparedness, and environmental indicators within our communities. The TIP Mapping Tool can be used to find funded transportation projects in the TIP. The traffic counts map tool can be used to find current and historical traffic counts for all major roads. The MPO maintains the consolidated database for the counts. The Bicycle Suitability Map portrays on-road and off-road routes suitable for travel by bicyclists.

Recommendations to Enhance the Public Participation Program

Based on this review, the MPO’s Public Participation Plan has worked effectively during the 2018 - 2019 cycle. As the MPO is committed to continuous improvement and making the best use of limited resources, the following refinements are recommended:

1. **Increase citizen engagement in the Environmental Justice areas to increase agency awareness and expand the agency’s presence in the community by cultivating relationships with nonprofits, faith-based groups, and other community organizations.** This will assist the agency in receiving feedback and input from diverse viewpoints not just for plan updates. Vision Zero outreach and the Garden Steps project will be utilized for continued networking opportunities, educational programs, and informational gatherings throughout the community. Schedule “meet and greet” events to personalize the outreach and assure they are receiving monthly newsletters from the agency. In order to keep the lines of communication open, follow up quarterly to see if there are questions or possible collaborative initiatives.

2. **Utilize short videos to inform** both a broader and more targeted range of participants about a plan, study, or initiative taking place in their area. This will assist in reaching the younger demographic group, who often utilize YouTube. However, it can be challenging for people with limited income who have to consider data consumption. The videos can be embedded in presentations and on the website to help with public education and speakers bureaus. When Vision Zero Coalition members go out and speak to the public, they will be able to bring short videos along with them.

3. **Develop strategies for flexibility in meeting public plan requirements.** With the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020 impacting how MPOs can conduct required outreach, while operating under a declared State of Emergency. A mechanism to hold community forums, hearings, meetings, or workshops, virtually has been included. Meetings will be held in a virtual webinar, and the public will have the opportunity to participate as they would an in-person meeting, but in a virtual capacity. When meetings can only be held virtually in the event of disasters or public health emergency related situations, the process will continue until the Department of Health and Human Services or another form of government states that it is safe to hold in person meetings with the public.

During disaster recovery situation more flexibility be provided in how meetings are conducted utilizing all available technology while maintaining access to decision making. The capability to provide public comments during the meeting by phone will be included in events of this nature.

4. **Seek feedback on our public engagement strategies.** In the past, the MPO has conducted periodic public involvement process surveys. When long answer comments are received, in any
format, we will review the comments and see if there are public engagement process that should be improved. A 45-day period review period is allowed every two years when changes are made to the Public Participation Plan. This information is advertised in the newspaper, as well as, on social media. When surveys are completed, we will add the "how did you hear about this survey" to the process. This will help when making decisions about deciding where it is best to distribute or post surveys.