

## 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

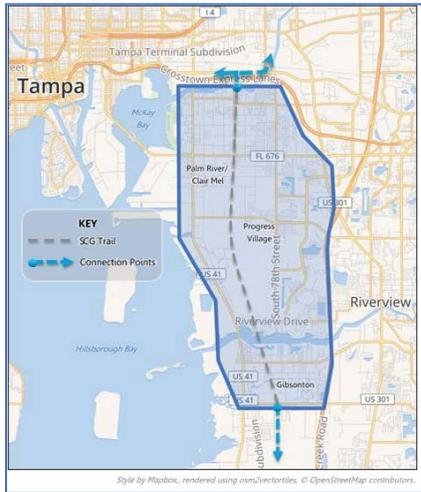


events hosted or attended by the MPO between 2018 and 2019, and staff distributed thousands of promotional and informational materials created to spread word about the initiative, including their quarterly reports. The first issue was distributed Spring of 2018. The purpose of the reports is to track 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:



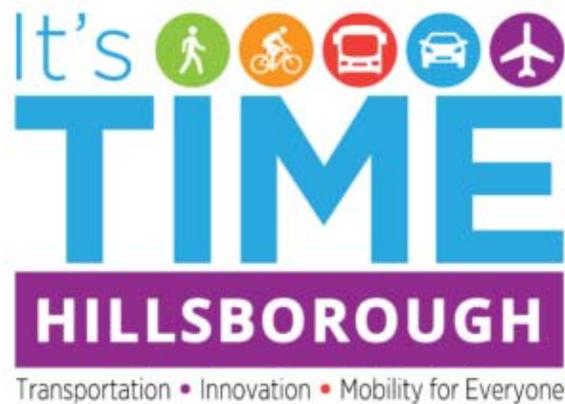
- Community Impacts on FDOTs' Plans for I-275 & I-4 (45 participants)
- FDOT/MPO/City of Tampa Traffic & Safety Workshop – Downtown Tampa Interchange (27 participants)
- Traffic & Safety – FDOT Plans for I-275 & I-4 (17 participants)



## 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.