Tampa Bay Transportation Management Area (TMA) Leadership Group
A Subcommittee of the SCTPA
Representing the MPOs in Hillsborough, Pasco & Pinellas Counties

MASKS ARE REQUIRED IN PSTA FACILITIES
LIVE STREAMING WILL BE AVAILABLE – LINK TO BE SENT OUT SEPARATELY

Chair: Kimberly Overmann, Hillsborough MPO
Vice-Chairs: Kathryn Starkey, Pasco MPO/ Dave Eggers, Forward Pinellas

Meeting Objectives:
- Review annual major priority projects
- Discuss funding flexibility
- Discuss the federal infrastructure legislation

1. 9:30 Welcome and Introductions
   Public Comment
   Approval of June 25th Meeting Summary

2. 9:45 Review of Proposed 2022 Priorities – Chelsea Favero, Forward Pinellas

3. 10:00 Flexibility of Transportation Funding – Beth Alden, Hillsborough TPO

4. 10:45 Federal Infrastructure Bill – Whit Blanton, Forward Pinellas

5. 11:10 Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons – Whit Blanton, Forward Pinellas

6. 11:15 Regional Transportation Roundtable

7. 11:30 Adjourn

Next Meeting: December 10, 2021 9:30am
Pasco Location TBD
Appeals: Certain public meetings result in actions taken by the public board, commission or agency that may be appealed; in such case persons are advised that, if they decide to appeal any decision made at a public meeting/hearing, they will need a record of the proceedings, and, for such purposes, they may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based.

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PSTA Offices - 3201 Sherer Dr., St. Petersburg, FL
The Tampa Bay Transportation Management Area (TMA) Leadership Group held this public meeting at the Florida Department of Transportation District 7 Headquarters on June 25, at 9:30 a.m.

**Election of 2021 Chair and Vice Chair(s)**

- The TMA Leadership Group voted to make Commissioner Kimberly Overman the Chair for 2021, with Commissioner Kathryn Starkey and Commissioner Dave Eggers elected to serve as Vice Chairs.

**Regional Priorities in the Tri-County Area**

*Pasco County MPO, Carl Mikyska and Tina Russo*

- Carl Mikyska reviewed the projects being prioritized for Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP) funding. These projects must provide a mobility benefit to the regional transportation network and be matched at least 50% by a local government. TRIP projects are prioritized by a working group consisting of MPO, local government and FDOT staff. Because the TRIP list covers the entire CCC region, the list has sections for both FDOT Districts 1 and 7. Three (3) new projects are being proposed for addition to the TRIP priority list in FDOT District 7, and two (2) new projects in FDOT District 1.
- Tina Russo reviewed the Multiuse Trail (MUT) priority projects. Like TRIP, the MUT priority list covers the entire CCC region, so projects from both FDOT Districts 1 and 7 are on the list. These projects benefit from the collective advocacy in the region for statewide funding resources and support the statewide trails network.

**Discussion:**

Commissioner Overman noted that there are more than $1 billion in projects on the list for just the FDOT District 7 area, demonstrating the regional commitment to trails.
Commissioner Starkey discussed potential opportunities for the co-location of trails in Tampa Bay Water corridors and encouraged early coordination amongst partners for future connections.

Commissioner Kemp pointed out that the Upper Tampa Bay Trail has been on the priority list for a long time and is a high priority for Hillsborough County to connect to the Coast to Coast Trail.

ACTION: The TMA Leadership Group voted unanimously to approve the TRIP and MUT priority lists.

**Continued Discussion of Priority-Setting for Intercounty Transit**

- Beth Alden provided a brief introduction to this item
- Kenyatta Lee, FDOT Chief of Modal Development and Chris Leffert, FDOT District 7 Transit Administrator spoke briefly on their roles in FDOT and how they can be a resource to the MPOs and transit agencies in transit planning and implementation.
- Cheryl Stacks, City of St. Petersburg Transportation Department, provided a presentation on the Cross Bay Ferry. This included an overview of the 2020-2021 operating season, ridership information and future expansion plans that will be managed by Hillsborough County.
- Cassandra Borchers, Chief Development Officer with PSTA, provided an overview of the new transit service in Pinellas whereby the buses on the 100X route will operate on the shoulders of the interstate during congested conditions. This service is just now starting and updates on how it is operating will be brought back in the future.
- Lorena Hardwick, HART, provided a brief update on the agency’s strategic plan and their next steps.
- Whit Blanton, Forward Pinellas, presented the group with some examples of cost sharing methods that other transit agencies in the country are using for regional and inter-county services.

Discussion:
Commissioner Starkey asked for a conversation to begin about how to address new forms of transportation and the rules regulating them on state roadways. It was noted that while both state statutes and federal regulations are involved, e-bikes, golf carts and other “micromobility” devices are becoming more and more prevalent and the regulation of them is becoming an increasing issue. She said the federal, state and local governments need to think differently about how to address micromobility.

Following some observations from FDOT District Secretary David Gwynn, Mayor Bujalski suggested that golf carts should not be allowed to share a crossing with pedestrians because of the potential for conflicts.
Whit Blanton mentioned that Forward Pinellas has recently completed a Knowledge Exchange Series on the topic of micromobility and that he would share a copy of it with the group after the meeting.

Commissioner Eggers proposed that safety be kept in mind as everyone in the region invests in new trails and gave an example of safe crossings lagging behind new trail construction.

Commissioner Overman explained that Hillsborough County is developing a cost estimate and timelines for implementing passenger rail service in the CSX right of way. They’ll be working with the regional partners to define roles and responsibilities as that work progresses.

Secretary Gwynn proposed holding a workshop for the region to talk about the need for regional transit and how it could work. Representatives from Central Office would be included, as well as district officials, to develop a roadmap to regional transit. Secretary Gwynn further stated that FDOT recognizes that the CSX corridor is a valuable asset, but the region needs to present a united front to CSX on what it wants for the rail lines and how they would be used. The details need to be worked out before even approaching CSX. This workshop will be scheduled in the coming months and all TMA representatives will be invited to participate.

Commissioner Kemp noted the great partnership between the local governments in the implementation of the Cross Bay Ferry project. She noted that Hillsborough County will be taking the lead on the service going forward, taking over the contract from the City of St. Petersburg so that no new procurements are needed. The plan is to extend the service by one month each year, until it runs year-round in 2024.

Commissioner Overman expressed her appreciation for the examples of how others are implementing regional transit services.

Whit Blanton mentioned that Forward Pinellas will be hosting a work session with its legislative delegation in August. Since there are some members of the delegation that also represent portions of Pasco and Hillsborough counties, Pinellas would like to invite the staff directors and MPO board members, or their designees, to listen in and participate as well. A ‘save the date’ will be forwarded after the meeting.

**OTHER ITEMS**

The next TMA Leadership Group Meeting will be held on September 17th in Pinellas. A precise location is to be determined.

**OFFICIAL ACTION ITEMS**

At its June meeting, the TMA Leadership Group approved the Transportation Regional Incentive Program and Multiuse Trails Priority Lists.
Meeting Adjourned at 11:20am.
Agenda Item 2

REVIEW OF PROPOSED 2022 PRIORITIES

SUMMARY

This agenda item is to review proposed changes to the list of major priority projects for 2022. At this time, staff is not recommending any additions to the priority list, as there are still a number of priorities that can still benefit from the collective advocacy of the region. Changes proposed to the list are to bring the project descriptions more in alignment with MPO priorities. This item is for discussion only and a final priority list will be brought back to the TMA Leadership Group for action in December.

ATTACHMENTS: PROPOSED 2022 LIST OF PRIORITY PROJECTS

ACTION: NONE REQUIRED; INFORMATIONAL ITEM ONLY
Funded Priorities

❖ Howard Frankland Bridge Replacement
❖ Gateway Expressway
❖ I-75 Interchange at Overpass
❖ I-75 Interchange at Big Bend Road
❖ I-275/SR 60/Westshore Interchange
❖ Central Avenue Bus Rapid Transit

Top Priorities for the Tampa Bay Region

❖ I-75 Interchange at Gibsonton
❖ I-275 Safety & Operational Improvements north of at downtown Tampa/I-4 Interchange
❖ I-275 Express Lanes from I-375 to Gandy Blvd.
❖ Regional Rapid Transit in the I-275 Corridor
❖ Support HART’s exploration and negotiation for use of the CSX right-of-way for passenger transportation
Agenda Item 3

FLEXIBILITY OF TRANSPORTATION FUNDING

SUMMARY

This agenda item is to report back on recent and proposed changes in Florida Department of Transportation funding policies that relate to the TMA Leadership Group’s position on transit funding, drafted a year ago. The changes are in the programs of Florida New Starts, District Dedicated Revenue, and the Strategic Intermodal System. Comments on the Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) Policy Plan have been prepared, for consideration of transmittal as a group or as individual MPOs.

ATTACHMENTS:
- PRESENTATION SLIDES
- LETTER OF COMMENT ON SIS POLICY PLAN (DRAFT FOR HILLSBOROUGH TPO)

ACTION:
PER DISCUSSION
Funding Flexibility

A TMA Leadership Group Position Statement
The TMA Leadership Group supports the need to expand funding for the region’s woefully underfunded transit agencies, rather than reallocating resources.

State legislative budget earmarks do not result in new funding for transit unless they are specifically funded through state general revenue.

Instead, budget earmarks shift limited dollars away from the essential transit services that are a high priority to HART, PSTA, PCPT, and TBARTA.

- A 2020 $1.5 million earmark for TBARTA operations required that work on HART’s maintenance facility be postponed.
- A 2020 $1 million earmark for TBARTA to conduct studies of innovative transit solutions took funds assigned to improve PSTA’s 100X express bus service that connects Pinellas to Tampa.
- The FDOT chose these projects for postponement in the context of raising questions about whether the local agencies had additional funds in place to complete those particular projects. But in the absence of earmarks, the funds would likely have been used for projects similar to the above.

The shift of state dollars away from essential transit services worsens existing transit revenue shortfalls. Worth noting, Tampa Bay spends far less on transit than any other major metro area, providing service on par with Sheboygan, WI and Chattanooga, TN, communities one-fifth our size and is the largest metro without a fixed-guideway rapid transit system.

Tampa Bay Partnership has identified poor workforce access to jobs, education, and upward mobility, resulting from the lack of adequate essential transit services, as one of the region’s greatest obstacles to prosperity.
The TMA provides the following suggestions to address these challenges.

1. Use state general revenue (not the transportation trust fund) to support TBARTA
   • TBARTA's regional tasks and responsibilities were mandated by the state legislature without state funding. It is up to the local governments to fund them, the local governments, facing shortfalls, need more tools; see #4.
   • Provide $1.5 million for annual operations directly to TBARTA - which was created as an agency of the state -- and not as part of the FDOT's budget.
   • If general revenue is not available, specify that funding for TBARTA is to be taken off-the-top of the transportation trust fund statewide, rather than falling entirely on the FDOT District 7 budget and thereby the local transit agencies.

2. Provide greater flexibility in the use of transportation trust fund dollars
   • Make transit an eligible and prioritized use of funding allocated to the Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) and the state highway system.
   • This is especially important in sub/urbanized areas where highway expansion will impact adjacent communities. Transit expands the capacity to move people with much less impact.

3. Allow bus rapid transit (BRT) to be an eligible expense under 341.303 FS
   • Change "intercity rail" to "fixed-guideway transit," and define "fixed-guideway" as being at least 50% in dedicated ROW, such as a bus in its own lane.
   • This puts BRT on a level playing field with Miami's TriRail and Orlando's SunRail, including state match of local construction funds, plus 7 years of operations.

4. Allow local communities to invest in their future
   • Transportation funding shortfalls in Florida's major metros, including Tampa Bay, are in the hundreds of millions of dollars, affecting maintenance and safety too.
   • Consider indexing the local-option fuel tax to inflation, similar to the state fuel tax.
   • Consider expanding the Charter County & Regional Transportation System Surtax to allow municipalities over 150,000 in population (or the largest municipality in a county) to enact a surtax by referendum.
   • Importantly, encourage and support local governments to use the existing tools created by the legislature for local funding of transportation improvements.
Florida New Starts Program

New flexibility! 1-for-1 match to local dollars, for transit projects that are eligible for FTA CIG, whether or not the local government actually seeks FTA CIG funding. This means that these capital costs can now be funded 50-50 state-local!

Option 1: If FTA CIG $ is sought, use FTA’s Project Development (PD) process and coordinate with FDOT.

Option 2 (new): If FTA CIG $ is not sought, use FDOT’s PD&E process.

Option 1
Funding committed:
- Stcar. Mod. & Ext.

Possible projects:
- TBARTA RRT
- Downtown-Westshore
- CSX Joint Use, Downtown-USF

Option 2
Possible projects:
- HART Arterial BRT
Other FDOT support for operations

**NEW!** MPOs can now request FDOT District Dedicated Revenue for operational costs for these projects, for up to five years.

- The share borne by FDOT declines over the five years.
- Near parity with the Orlando Sunrail project, which received an initial commitment of seven years of operations support.

MPOs should identify this on their TIP priority lists.

- The down-side: District 7 is currently using District Dedicated Revenue to build Vision Zero projects.
SIS Policy Plan Update

Focus Areas:
❖ Safety
❖ Resilience
❖ Technology & Innovation
❖ Urban Mobility & Connectivity
❖ Rural Mobility & Connectivity

presented by
Gerald Goosby
SIS Planning Manager

presented to
Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council

Your Florida. Your vision. Your plan.

July 29, 2021
IDEAS FOR IMPROVING SAFETY

Increase emphasis on safety as a factor for setting priorities among potential SIS projects

Provide more flexibility to include safety features as part of SIS capacity projects

Address high-risk emphasis areas (e.g., lane departure, commercial vehicles, and modal conflict)
 IDEAS FOR IMPROVING URBAN MOBILITY AND CONNECTIVITY

Redefine capacity to include mobility and reliability improvements

Prioritize projects that improve interregional travel on the SIS including multimodal travel options between Florida’s large urban areas

Provide flexibility for use of SIS funds off-SIS to improve performance of the SIS
Proposed Letter of Comment

- Support funding for safety; encourage Vision Zero Plan for SIS
- Support use of SIS funds for transit and for parallel and connecting roads
- Change “interregional” transit to “regionally significant” transit
- Include transit corridors, not just stations
Discussion
September 14, 2021

Ms. Lori Marable, Strategic Intermodal System Coordinator
FDOT District Seven, MS 7-500
11201 N. McKinley Dr.
Tampa, FL 33563

Re: Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) Policy Plan Update

Dear Lori,

Thank you for providing this update to the TPO and its advisory committees. We would like to stay closely involved as the Department updates the SIS Plan, and want to offer the following comments for the Department’s consideration now:

• We support the Plan’s focus on resilience, technology and innovation, urban mobility and connectivity.

• We are especially pleased to see that SIS funds may be used to support safety improvements. We encourage the Department to prepare a Vision Zero Action Plan for the SIS.

• We are also very pleased at the growing flexibility for use of SIS funds on parallel and connecting roads and on transit. For example, interconnected traffic management systems can improve safety and operations across jurisdictions. Growing use of transit modes is also essential as metropolitan populations continue to rapidly increase and space for lanes does not.

• We ask that the SIS Plan include not just “interregional” transit, such as connections between the Tampa Bay region and the greater Orlando region, but regionally significant transit in general, including corridors and not just stations. This would be consistent with the Plan’s stated focus on urban mobility, which is essential for Florida’s economy, with the majority of state gross domestic product coming from metropolitan areas.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment. Please contact me or Rich Clarendon if further information is needed.

Sincerely,

Beth Alden, AICP
Executive Director

Cc: Roger Roscoe, FDOT
Agenda Item 4

FEDERAL INFRASTRUCTURE BILL

SUMMARY

Earlier this year, the Federal Legislature passed a framework for new infrastructure bill. While the details of the bill are still being finalized, the draft framework includes a number of details regarding funding programs and how each program may look. This presentation will provide an overview of the infrastructure bill framework and insight into some of the details released so far.

ATTACHMENTS:  
PRESENTATION ON THE FEDERAL INFRASTRUCTURE BILL  
OVERVIEW OF FEDERAL FUNDING PROGRAM COST SHARING PROPOSAL

ACTION:  
NONE REQUIRED; INFORMATIONAL ITEM ONLY
APA Legislative Update: Transportation Reauthorization

Presented in partnership with the APA Transportation Planning Division
APA's national network of planning advocates

Be part of the action
planning.org/advocacy
Join the Transportation Planning Division

planning.org/divisions
Two-Track Legislative Process

5-year Surface Transportation Reauthorization

Supplemental Infrastructure Funding

Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill (Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act)

Dem-Only Budget Reconciliation
Current Status

Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill
✓ Passed Senate

Pending:
House Floor Vote

Reconciliation
✓ Instruction Resolution Passed Senate

Pending:
Instruction Resolution in the House
Committee Action in Senate, House
Floor Votes in Senate, House
What Happened to the Earlier Bills?

Senate EPW, Commerce Bills Inserted into Bipartisan Bill
House-Passed INVEST Act Not Conferenced
Some INVEST Act Provisions Possible in Reconciliation

What’s Next?

House Procedural Vote and Reconciliation Instruction
Vote Next Week
Questions About Sequencing and Timing
September 30 Deadline ... Extension?
Negotiating (and Passing) Reconciliation
Infrastructure Bill – Building on the Base Program

Core Formula Programs
STBG
Planning
Highway Safety
CMAQ
Freight
Carbon Reduction (NEW)
PROTECT (NEW)

Key Grant Programs
Congestion Relief
PROTECT
Rural
EV Infrastructure
Bridge
Healthy Streets
Reconnecting Communities
Vision Zero
CIG
RAISE
INFRA
Infrastructure Bill Overview

Funding increases and expanded resources for MPOs and planning; Boosts for regional suballocation

- Full 5-year Surface Transportation Reauthorization
- $550b in Additional Infrastructure Spending beyond Reauthorization
- 32% Increase from FY20 levels in Core Planning Funding over 5 years
- New Suballocation for Smaller Communities (50K – 200K)
- Suballocation Increase for TAP Funds
- New $50m / yr. Congestion Relief Program with Funding Directly for Metros
- Local, Regional Suballocation Set Aside in New Carbon Reduction Program
- Planning Set Aside in Key Programs, Including Resilience, Equity
- VMT National Pilot
Infrastructure Bill Overview

First-ever Climate Program, Increased Resilience Focus, Support for EVs

- New $6.4 billion formula and grant funding program for carbon reduction. 65% of program funding would be suballocated to regions and localities.
- New PROTECT program for resilience projects includes $1.4 billion in competitive grant funding with a dedicated $140m set aside specifically for planning.
- A $7.3 billion formula funding program for resilience and hazard mitigation will also be created.
- $2.5 billion new competitive grant program to build out alternative fuel corridors and electric vehicle charging.
- $5 billion for a new Electric Vehicle Formula Program to provide money to build electric vehicle charging infrastructure.
- Electric vehicle charging eligible for funding through the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBGP) and purchase of zero-emission vehicles eligible in CMAQ.
- New Climate Planning Provisions.
- Funding for STORM Act ($500m) & BRIC ($1b).
Infrastructure Bill Overview

Expanded funding for Bike and Pedestrian Programs with Significant Program Reforms

- Increases TAP funding to 10% of the STBG
- Boosts suballocation of funds to MPOs to 59%
- Makes small MPOs serving urbanized areas with populations of 200,000 or less eligible for funding
- Encourages prioritization of high-need areas as defined by the state, such as low-income, transit-dependent, or rural
- Improves Technical Assistance, Federal Match Requirements
- Limits Ability of States to Reallocate TAP Funds
- Adds Micromobility, Bikeshare Eligibility in CMAQ
Infrastructure Bill Overview

New Safety Program, Increased Safety Funding, and Targeting for Vulnerable Populations

- The Safety program funding increase
- New requirements for vulnerability assessments, plans, and targeting funding to areas of greatest need
- The Safe Routes to School program will be codified and expanded to high schools
- A new complete streets program and a $5 billion Safe Streets and Roads for All safety planning program is created with $400 million per year set aside for local vision zero planning.
Increased Support for Transit and Rail

• New housing coordination plans will help MPOs and local governments improve the connection of transit and land use planning

• An eleven-fold increase in rail funding with $66b, including $12b for non-Amtrak intercity rail projects

• Increased transit funding, including annual funding levels of roughly $14b, $7b annual increase for Capital Investment Grants and one-time supplement funding of $10.3b for transit grants and $8b for CIG

• Increased funding for RAISE and INFRA grants
Infrastructure Bill Overview

New Transportation Equity Program
Established, Equity Focus
Included in Core Programs and Planning

- $1 billion Reconnecting Communities program created to tackle transportation equity issues and address past infrastructure that has segregated and divided neighborhoods
- Include dedicated funding of $150 million specifically for planning
- Equity targeting in the TAP program
- Vulnerable community assessment and targeting in Safety programs
- Clean Port environmental justice funding
Infrastructure Bill Overview

Boost for Broadband and Support for Smart Cities, Data, Innovation

- $65b for broadband, including mapping and planning provisions
- $55b for water infrastructure
- Planning and implementation of smart cities technologies supported with a $500 million SMART grant program for regions and localities
- States encouraged to develop “human capital” workforce development plans through MPOs and connected to transportation plans
- MPOs will be eligible for a new pilot programs focused on using data and public engagement innovations in project prioritization and improving travel demand data and modeling
- $2 billion rural grant program aimed at connectivity; safety and reliability of moving people and freight; economic growth; and quality of life
House Bill in Reconciliation

• Funding, Not Policy
• Reconnecting Communities
• EVs
• Transit and Rail
Register Now!

• Virtual Planners’ Day on Capitol Hill
• Keynotes from Capitol Hill and the Biden Administration
• Burnham Forum
• Deep Dives on Reconciliation, Reauthorization, and Recovery

Register at planning.org/conference/policy
Questions & Discussion

Jason Jordan, APA Public Affairs Director
@jasonljordan | govtaffairs@planning.org

Madhu Narayanasamy, AICP, APA Transportation Planning Division, Vice Chair for Policy
## Proposed Cost Sharing for Funding Programs in Infrastructure Bill

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Name</th>
<th>Proposed Funding</th>
<th>State Cost Share</th>
<th>Eligible Applicants</th>
<th>Eligible Activities</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bridge Investment Program</td>
<td>$3.3 Billion</td>
<td>10-20%</td>
<td>States, MPOs, local governments, special purpose districts, Federal land management agencies, Tribal governments, or a multijurisdictional group of these entities</td>
<td>Projects to replace, rehabilitate, preserve, or protect bridges on the National Bridge Inventory.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Safe Streets and Roads for All Program</td>
<td>$5 Billion</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>MPOs, municipalities, tribal governments, and multijurisdictional groups</td>
<td>Developing &quot;Vision Zero&quot; action plans and other improvements to reduce crashes and fatalities, especially for cyclists and pedestrians.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Infrastructure Project Assistance Program</td>
<td>$5 Billion</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>States, MPOs, local governments, special purpose districts, Tribal governments, a partnership between Amtrak and any of these entities</td>
<td>Funding for all modes of surface transportation. This program supports multi-modal, multi-jurisdictional projects of national or regional significance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Electric Vehicle Formula Program</td>
<td>$2.5 Billion</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>States, MPOs, local governments, special purpose districts, territories, tribes</td>
<td>Acquisition and installation of publicly accessible infrastructure for electric vehicle charging, hydrogen fueling, propane fueling, or natural gas fueling along a designated alternative fuel corridor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Surface Transportation Grant Program</td>
<td>$2 Billion</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>State governments, MPOs, local units of government, Tribal governments, and multijurisdictional groups of these eligible entities</td>
<td>Projects in rural areas that increase connectivity, improve safety and reliability, and generate regional economic growth.</td>
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<td>Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-saving Transportation (PROTECT) Program</td>
<td>$980 Million</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>States, MPOs, local governments, special purpose district, tribes, Federal land management agency that applies jointly with a State, and multijurisdictional groups of these eligible entities</td>
<td>Resilience planning, or for the implementation of resilience projects that improve the ability of existing infrastructure to withstand natural disasters and weather events, community resilience and evacuation route projects, and at-risk coastal infrastructure projects.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Culvert Removal, Replacement, and Restoration Program</td>
<td>$1 Billion</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>States, local governments, or Tribal governments</td>
<td>Removal, replacement, and restoration of culverts or weirs to address flow of water through roads, bridges, railroad tracks, and trails.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program</td>
<td>$1 Billion</td>
<td>20-50%</td>
<td>States, local units of government, Tribal governments, MPOs, and non-profit organizations</td>
<td>Planning and capital construction for to make changes to highways, viaducts, or other principal arterial facilities that create a barrier to community connectivity, including barriers to mobility, access, or economic development, due to high speeds, grade separations, or other design factors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthy Streets Program</td>
<td>$500 Million</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>States, MPOs, local governments, tribes, and nonprofits (if partnered with an eligible entity)</td>
<td>Projects that improve the safety, health outcomes, natural environment, and quality of life in low-income communities and disadvantaged communities.</td>
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<td>Strengthening Mobility and Revolutionizing Transportation (SMART) Grant Program</td>
<td>$500 Million</td>
<td>Not specified</td>
<td>States, municipalities, Tribal governments, transit agencies, tool authorities, and MPOs</td>
<td>Conducting demonstration projects focused on advancing &quot;smart&quot; community technologies through aspects like ITS infrastructure and connected vehicle technology.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wildlife Crossing Pilot Program</td>
<td>$350 Million</td>
<td>Not specified</td>
<td>State highway agencies, MPOs, local units of government, regional transportation authorities, and others</td>
<td>Projects that seek to achieve a reduction in the number of wildlife-vehicle collisions, or those that improve habitat connectivity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital Construction Grant Program</td>
<td>$350 Million</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>The owner of an eligible facility can partner with a State, local government, Tribal government, MPO, or non-profit organization</td>
<td>A removal, retrofit, or mitigation of an eligible facility or the replacement of an eligible facility with a new facility.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Congestion Relief Program</td>
<td>$250 Million</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>States, MPOs, and cities with an urbanized area of more than one million people.</td>
<td>Programs that reduce highway congestion, reduce economic and environmental costs associated with that congestion, including transportation emissions, and optimize existing highway capacity and usage of highway and transit systems.</td>
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Agenda Item 5

RECTANGULAR RAPID FLASHING BEACONS

SUMMARY

In each of the last two Florida Legislative sessions, bills have been introduced to further regulate the placement and function of Rectangular Rapid Flash Beacons (RRFBs) throughout the state. There is concern that these bills could actually make pedestrians crossings less safe, even though the intent behind them is to improve safety. Whit Blanton, Executive Director of Forward Pinellas, has drafted a letter to the Legislative Delegation to express concern with the legislation proposed thus far, and to bring more awareness to the effectiveness of these safety devices. The letter is included here for the information of TMA Leadership Group members and for discussion purposes.

ATTACHMENTS: LETTER ON PEDESTRIAN SAFETY AND MID-BLOCK CROSSING LEGISLATION

ACTION: AS DEEMED APPROPRIATE, BASED ON DISCUSSION
September 14, 2021

Rep/Sen
Address
Address
Address

RE: Pedestrian Safety and Mid-Block Crossings Legislation

Dear Representative/Senator __________ –

In the last several years, the Florida Legislature has introduced and advanced bills that purport to be about pedestrian safety by restricting use of certain safe crossing devices at mid-block crosswalks. These bills actually run counter to improving pedestrian safety, using a tragic fatality to keep Florida’s roadways “dangerous by design” and inaccessible for everyone needing to use a public roadway. Introduced as HB 1113 and SB 1412 in the 2021 Session, they would require certain lighting and location changes to mid-block crosswalks, or state and local governments would be forced to remove the protective flashing beacon devices, thus leaving mid-block crossings unprotected and less safe for users.

Known as Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs), the yellow flashing pedestrian crossing devices increase the visibility of people crossing a roadway to make vehicle drivers aware of their legal right and presence at an approved crossing location. The RRFBs are a recommended practice in the Federal Highway Administration’s Everyday Counts Safety Program and acknowledged as an effective safety device in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). Federal approval to change the lights from yellow to red is considered extremely unlikely. They are recognized by the Florida Department of Transportation, the state’s MPOs and many local governments as a cost-effective tool in the transportation safety toolbox to help combat Florida’s nationally recognized status as the least safe state for people walking or bicycling.

On behalf of our partners in state and local government across Tampa Bay we urge you to consider the following points in your consideration of potential legislation concerning mid-block crossings and RRFBs:

- Since their start in 2004, RRFBs have proven to increase motorist response to people using crosswalks from 18% to 88%. Their success starting in St. Petersburg has led to more than 300 devices located throughout Pinellas County on state and local roadways, with hundreds more in counties large and small across Florida and the U.S. The unfunded mandate of removing these devices will be an enormous fiscal burden on state and local governments.

- The human cost will be much greater. Bicycle and pedestrian fatalities on our roadways are rising rapidly, and while no traffic control device is 100% capable of preventing serious injuries and fatalities, RRFBs have a proven safety record of reducing fatalities and crashes. They save lives every day, but that doesn’t make the press.

- The FDOT and many local governments in Florida have adopted Vision Zero goals of no traffic deaths on our roadways. The use of RRFBs as approved is one part of the solution involving engineering, education, and enforcement to meet those goals and defined safety targets.

- Restricting these RRFBs and removing mid-block crossings is an equity concern because data show the great majority of fatal and serious crashes involving vulnerable road users (people on foot, bicycle or motorcycle) occurs in minority and underserved neighborhoods. In these neighborhoods,
residential areas are often separated from commercial areas by higher speed multilane roads.

The prior legislation has brought greater awareness to the issue of mid-block crossings, RRFBs and pedestrian safety in general. We agree that there should be some restrictions on the location of mid-block crossings with RRFBs based on sound professional engineering. FDOT’s Traffic Engineering Manual calls for both flashing beacons and RRFBs to be limited to roadways with marked, special emphasis crosswalks, four or fewer through lanes (with a refuge island required on five lane facilities with two-way left turn lanes), and a posted speed limit of 35 MPH or less. It is not a simple measure for state or local governments to change the posted speed limit on a roadway without supporting data and analysis that follows specified criteria.

But rather than legislating against a specific safety device that has been proven effective, the Legislature should turn its focus instead to other legal remedies to protect vulnerable road users, fund educational efforts adequately and provide more flexible transportation funding options to regions and communities. Those measures would go a much longer way toward improving safety on our roadways.

Thank you for your interest and concern. Please contact me or the following individuals if you have any questions or would like to have a dialogue.

Sincerely,

Whit Blanton, FAICP
Executive Director

Add names and contact info for:

Beth Alden, Hillsborough TPO
Pete Yauch, ITE
Evan Mory, St. Pete
Danni Jorgenson, Tampa
Tom Washburn, Pinellas County
Charles Barmby, Lakeland