



Hillsborough TPO

Transportation Planning Organization

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Plan Hillsborough

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601 E Kennedy Blvd
18th Floor
Tampa, FL, 33602

Special Meeting of the TPO Board

Wednesday, January 25, 2023 @ 4:00pm
Hillsborough County Center, 601 E. Kennedy Blvd., 26th Floor

All voting members are asked to attend in person, in compliance with Florida's Government in the Sunshine Law. Please RSVP for this meeting. Presenters, audience, and members in exceptional circumstances may participate remotely.

This meeting may be viewed on Hillsborough Television (HTV) by visiting Spectrum: 637, Frontier: 22 or live stream from [Hillsborough County's Live YouTube Channel](#) or the County website's [Live Meetings](#) link, also found in the County [Newsroom](#). The agenda packet, presentations, and any supplemental materials are posted on the [TPO's online calendar](#).

Public comment opportunities:

To speak during the meeting - No later than 30 minutes before the meeting, please sign up [here](#) or phone 813-756-0371 for assistance. Provide the phone number you will call in from, so that we can recognize your call in the queue. You will receive an auto-reply confirming we received your request, along with instructions.

Comments may also be given up to 5pm the day before the meeting:

- by leaving a voice message at (813) 756-0371
- by e-mail to tpo@plancom.org
- by visiting the event posted on the [Facebook page](#).

Advance comments will be provided in full to the board members and verbally summarized during the meeting by TPO staff.

Rules of engagement: Professional courtesy and respect for others at this meeting are expected, and failure may result in dismissal from the meeting. For more information on expectations for participation, please see the TPO's [Social Networking & Media Policy](#).

Agenda

- I. **Call to Order**
- II. **Roll Call & Declaration of Quorum** (Gail Reese, TPO Staff)
 - A. Vote of Consent for Remote Member Participation – *if applicable*
- III. **Public Comment on Agenda Items** – *15 minutes total, with up to 3 minutes per speaker, as determined by the Chair. Staff will unmute you when the Chair*

recognizes you. As needed, the Chair may allow for additional time later in the agenda.

IV. Comments Received in Advance of Meeting (Davida Franklin, TPO Staff)

V. Action Items

- A. [Reconsideration of Submitting Grant Application for the Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program](#) (Amber Simmons, TPO Staff)

VI. Adjournment

The full agenda packet is available on the MPO's website, www.planhillsborough.org, or by calling (813) 272-5940.

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Persons needing interpreter services or accommodations for a disability in order to participate in this meeting, free of charge, are encouraged to contact Joshua Barber, (813) 273-3774, ext. 313 or barberj@plancom.org, three business days in advance of the meeting. If you are only able to speak Spanish, please call the Spanish helpline at (813) 273-3774, ext. 211.

Se recomienda a las personas que necesiten servicios de interpretación o adaptaciones por una discapacidad para participar en esta reunión, o ayuda para leer o interpretar los temas de esta agenda, sin costo alguno, que se pongan en contacto con Joshua Barber, (813) 273-3774, ext. 313 o barberj@plancom.org, tres días hábiles antes de la reunión. Si sólo habla español, por favor llame a la línea de ayuda en español al (813) 273-3774, ext. 211.

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If a person decides to appeal any decision made by the board, he or she will need a record of the proceedings, and for such purpose 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.



Hillsborough TPO Transportation Planning Organization

Board & Committee Agenda Item

Agenda Item:

Reconsideration of Submitting Grant Application for Reconnecting Communities Pilot (RCP) Program

Presenter:

Amber Simmons, TPO Staff

Summary:

At the TPO Board meeting of January 11, board members asked staff to find out whether the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) would be willing to award a RCP grant if the TPO decided to change the scope of the study to be funded by the grant such that the study no longer evaluates the I-275 Boulevard Conversion option.

Staff received the following response in short order:

Thank you for contacting USDOT regarding the Hillsborough County Metropolitan Planning Organization's application to the FY22 Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program, "I-275 North Corridor Vision - Reconnecting Communities Impacted by the Development of I-275."

Based on the application USDOT received, any award would require consideration of the at-grade option among other alternatives. In order to ensure fairness, USDOT does not allow this type of substantive application change after the application deadline.

Can you please confirm whether Hillsborough County Metropolitan Planning Organization would like to withdraw the FY22 application?

Today's meeting will allow the board members to discuss and vote on whether to withdraw the application.

Background:

The TPO Board directs its executive director to develop and execute grant applications and take other actions in support of the TPO's adopted [Unified Planning Work Program](#) (UPWP). The staff submits multiple grant applications for the TPO every year. The UPWP is a federally required document which lists the several grants that make up the TPO's budget, the anticipated funding amounts and what they are proposed to be spent on, including specific planning studies and other deliverables. The Board reviews and votes on an update of the UPWP every May.

The TPO Board initially decided to conduct the I-275 Boulevard Conversion study in May 2019, adding it to the UPWP on the request of the TPO's Citizens Advisory Committee. During 2019 and early 2020, staff coordinated with FDOT and a



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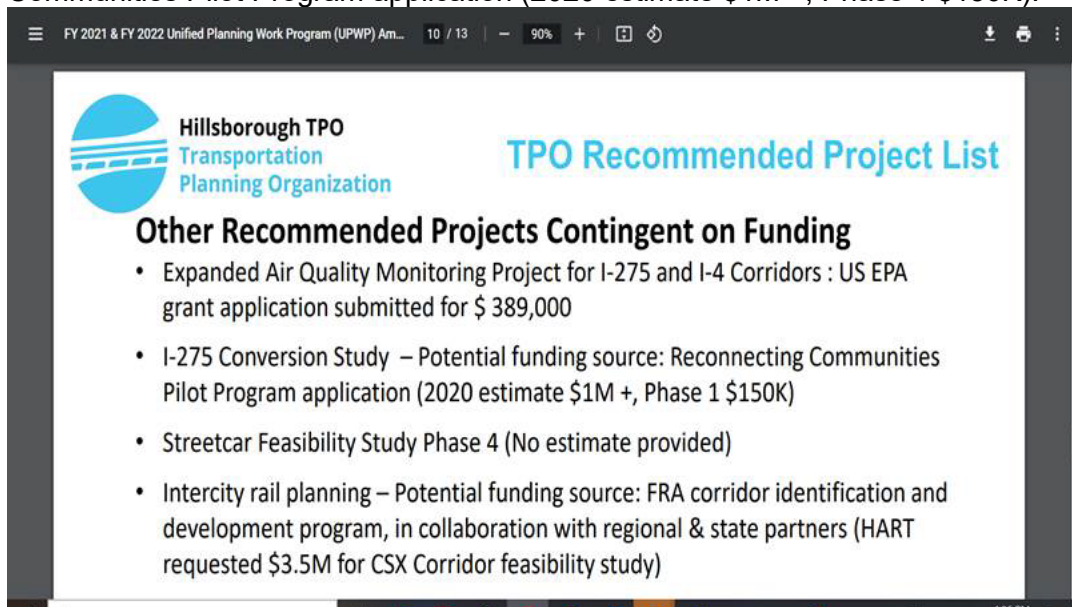
consultant who had done similar studies, and ascertained that the technical analyses that would be needed for such a study would cost upwards of \$1 million, about a third of the TPO's budget. In April and May 2020, the Board conducted an annual review of the UPWP, including the TPO budget and a list of potential planning studies; discussed the estimated full cost of the I-275 Conversion study as well as the cost for a Phase 1; and decided not to include any phase of the study in the UPWP. In 2021, Congress created the Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program as part of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, and TPO staff suggested to the Board in December 2021 that the TPO apply for the new RCP grant program to fund the study.

The I-275 Conversion Concept Study was then added back to the UPWP in May 2022 by action of the TPO Board approving the UPWP for FY 23 & FY 24, contingent on funding through the RCP program. Specifically, a study of the "I-275 Conversion Concept" was added to Task 2.7 under Required Activities. The inclusion of this study in the TPO's Work Program was noted in slides presented by staff during the meeting and also included in the agenda package distributed a week in advance. [The presentation](#), a total of 13 slides, included four slides that listed all the TPO's proposed planning projects for FY 23 & FY 24. The slides showed, starting with Slide 8:

- Critical Path Projects
- Other Recommended Projects
- Other Recommended Projects Contingent on Funding
- FY 22 projects that will conclude in FY 23

When the Board approved the UPWP, it directed staff to move forward with these projects, including any supporting grant applications, as stated in the Resolution Approving the FY 23 & FY 24 UPWP on page 7 of the UPWP document.

There were four projects listed on the "Other Recommended Projects Contingent on Funding" slide. One was, "I-275 Conversion Study – Potential funding source: Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program application (2020 estimate \$1M +, Phase 1 \$150K)."



The image is a screenshot of a presentation slide. At the top left is the Hillsborough TPO logo, which consists of a blue circle with white horizontal lines. To the right of the logo is the text "Hillsborough TPO Transportation Planning Organization". At the top right of the slide is the title "TPO Recommended Project List" in blue. Below the title is the sub-section "Other Recommended Projects Contingent on Funding" in bold black text. Underneath this sub-section is a bulleted list of four projects. The slide is displayed in a window titled "FY 2021 & FY 2022 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Am..." with a page number of 10 / 13 and a zoom level of 90%.

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TPO Recommended Project List

Other Recommended Projects Contingent on Funding

- Expanded Air Quality Monitoring Project for I-275 and I-4 Corridors : US EPA grant application submitted for \$ 389,000
- I-275 Conversion Study – Potential funding source: Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program application (2020 estimate \$1M +, Phase 1 \$150K)
- Streetcar Feasibility Study Phase 4 (No estimate provided)
- Intercity rail planning – Potential funding source: FRA corridor identification and development program, in collaboration with regional & state partners (HART requested \$3.5M for CSX Corridor feasibility study)

If the Board does not withdraw the grant application and if the grant is awarded, the Board will need to take two more actions before the TPO can proceed with this study:

1. The RCP grant funding amount must be added to the UPWP by amendment before the funds can be used.

2. An annual review and update of the UPWP, including the list of studies to be conducted in the fiscal year that begins July 1, will be conducted and voted on by the Board in May 2023.

Recommended Action:

Consider withdrawing the RCP grant application

Prepared By:

Amber Simmons and Beth Alden, TPO staff

Attachments:

Presentation slides



Federal Highway Administration

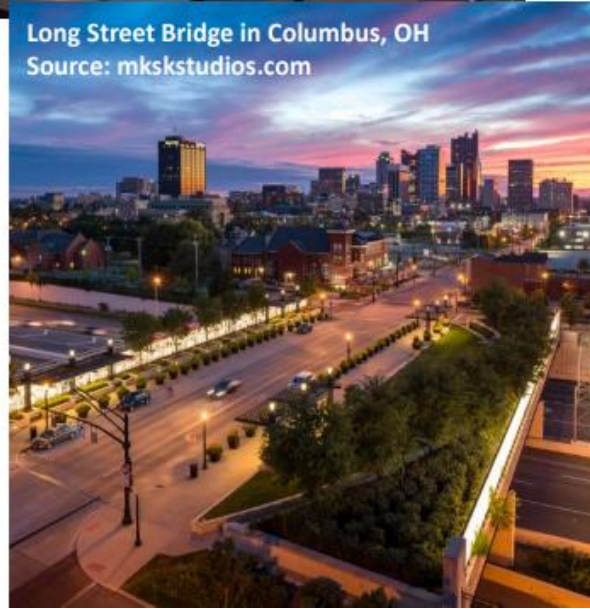
City Walk Birmingham, AL. Source: citywalkbham.com



Cap Park over I-579 in Pittsburgh, PA. Source: pgh-sea.com



Long Street Bridge in Columbus, OH
Source: mkskstudios.com



Riverfront Parkway in Chattanooga, TN. Source: CNU.org





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TPO Proposal:

“This proposal is for a planning study to look at the feasibility of options to make I-275 a better neighbor, including the possibility of re-envisioning the highway as an at-grade boulevard.”

Also stated in the proposal:

“The study will look through the lens of the community to envision a new, vibrant community which may live with the presence of a major interstate but connects the pulse of the neighborhoods with better access to employment, healthcare, groceries, schools, places of worship, parks, and recreation. While noise walls, additional green space, dedicated pedestrian and bicycle lanes, mid-block crossing and roadway safety treatments are all possibilities, our intent is to hear from the community, and ask how they see I-275 disconnecting their communities and what may help them reestablish a “whole” community that is not bifurcated by a highway.”



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TPO Proposed Budget:

\$800,000

Consultant modelling of traffic impacts, transit, emissions, safety, other objective considerations

“Technical analysis of the alternative design concepts, including modelling of traffic impacts, transit ridership, emissions, safety performance outcomes, walk/bike level-of-traffic-stress, and other objective considerations will be conducted by a consultant procured by the TPO for that purpose, using professionally accepted methodologies. The consultant will also be responsible for coordinating with public entities to document other potential impacts to the transportation system, such as implications for tourism, goods movement, emergency evacuation, first responders, and public health outcomes. The consultant will identify potential steps to minimize or mitigate negative impacts. Alternative design concepts will be compared with a no-build future scenario as well as existing conditions.”

\$60,000

FL Housing Coalition: Analyze displacement risk and gentrification mitigation strategies

\$97,000

TPO: Project management plus materials/supplies/media for community engagement

In-Kind

Staff and volunteer hours valued at \$254,000 primarily for community engagement and envisioning alternative design concepts. Also includes staff review of land use and equity impacts.



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January 11th, Board requests additional information

Response from USDOT received January 17th

Thank you for contacting USDOT regarding the Hillsborough County Metropolitan Planning Organization's application to the FY22 Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program, "I-275 North Corridor Vision - Reconnecting Communities Impacted by the Development of I-275."

Based on the application USDOT received, any award would require consideration of the at-grade option among other alternatives. In order to ensure fairness, USDOT does not allow this type of substantive application change after the application deadline.

Can you please confirm whether Hillsborough County Metropolitan Planning Organization would like to withdraw the FY22 application?

Best wishes for a pleasant MLK Jr. Day holiday upcoming,

Team Reconnecting Communities



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Recommended Action:

Consider withdrawing the RCP grant application.