

**HILLSBOROUGH TRANSPORTATION
PLANNING ORGANIZATION BOARD
HYBRID MEETING FEBRUARY 14, 2024
DRAFT MINUTES**

I. Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance *(Timestamp 0:05:46)*

Chair Myers called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM and led the pledge of allegiance. The meeting was held in person and virtually via WebEx.

II. Roll Call *(Gail Reese, TPO Staff) (Timestamp 0:06:16)*

The following members were present: Commissioner Gwen Myers, Mayor Andrew Ross, Commissioner Michael Owen, Commissioner Joshua Wostal, Commissioner Harry Cohen, Councilmember Alan Clendenin, Councilmember Lynn Hurtak, Councilmember Guido Maniscalco, Mayor Nate Kilton, School Board Member Patricia Rendon, Charles Klug, Gina Dew, Greg Slater, Justin Willits, Planning Commissioner Nigel Joseph, Commissioner Pat Kemp

The following members were absent/excused:

A quorum was met in person.

III. Approval of Minutes *(Timestamp 0:06:58) – January 10, 2024*

Councilmember Maniscalco moved to approve the minutes of the January 10, 2024 meeting, seconded by Commissioner Cohen. The voice vote passed unanimously.

IV. Public Comment On Agenda Items *(Timestamp 0:07:11)* (up to 3 minutes per speaker) Additional comments made via [Social Media](#) and [Email](#) may be requested.

Rick Fernandez – Speaking in an individual capacity regarding the Robles Park barrier. Is requesting a meeting with FDOT regarding the form the barrier will take. The community would like input as to what that barrier will be. Noted that FDOT has requested direction from the TPO before speaking with Mr. Fernandez. Emphasized that options for the barrier and landscaping need to be discussed with the community.

Chris Vela – Lives in Ybor City. Conveyed his knowledge of the interstate system's impact on neighborhoods. Discussed the “redlining” done in his neighborhood several years ago that rated the neighborhoods poorly resulting in interstates going through them. Noted that there is a correlation between the low-rated neighborhoods experiencing higher noise impacts. Stated that the highways are structural racism. Said that FDOT does not know how to address the problem. Stressed that the communities need to be able to put feedback into the solutions to offset the negative impacts.

Paula Meckley – President of the Tampa Garden Club. The club’s mission is green space. Expressed that if there is an opportunity to make the situation better for the neighborhood and the environment should be taken. Noted how the trees act as natural filters and the park

environment will benefit from filtering water and providing natural habitat. The Tampa Garden Club supports putting trees and plants in and is willing to help.

Lena Young Green – Asked that the TPO Board support the neighborhood, particularly those who live by the park. The neighborhood has been in front of the Board about the interstate and the impact it has on Tampa Heights. Spoke about the park and the issue of heat islands. There will be impacts in the neighborhood with the concentration of particulate matter in the neighborhood. Her husband passed from a disease that impacts people of color and her son is an asthmatic. Asked that the Board approve a decision that will improve the health of the neighborhood.

Kitty Wallace – Is the Tampa Heights Community Garden coordinator. Spends much of her time in the park and has since 1970. The section of the park by the interstate is a perfect place where trees could mitigate much of the impact from the interstate. She is advocating for this type of solution in Robles Park and Tampa Heights. Some people believe in trees and are willing to help.

Alex Whitacre – is a USF student. Has conducted studies of the Tampa Tree Canopy Study and the Tampa Stormwater Study. Understands the effects of the heat islands and concrete on the environment. Many studies show that trees will mitigate noise; a combination of plants and trees can reduce sound, reduce heat, increase air quality, and increase soil health. Studies show that trees benefit from being planted near highways by absorbing higher decibel noise. The park is a green space that everyone deserves. The lessening of green space in marginalized communities has had a significant impact.

Dominique Cobb – Spoke about the importance of trees. African American communities have been continuously marginalized in public policy and decision-making. Ms. Cobb's family has resided in the Robles Park neighborhood for multiple generations. The park by where the wall is going was once a place for kids to play and now it is not an entertainable space today. She is an East Tampa advocate and business owner. She has requested to have leisure space in her neighborhood. Noted that the community of the Tampa Housing Authority is nearby, and it is being gentrified. It is the hope that the residents will return and be able to have a space of leisure. Requested that the trees be added to the park instead of removing more trees. They help the environment and make an impact on the community. It was noted that in Public Policy, there is fair and there is doable. Fair hasn't always happened, but the TPO Board can direct what is doable.

Linda Saul-Sena – Past Chair of the MPO and 20-year veteran of Tampa City Council. Is now the Co-Chair of the Preservation Roundtable. Advocating for preserving quality in the community; the quality of more than buildings but neighborhoods. This is a great neighborhood and a great park. The Board can preserve the quality of the park by advocating for a vegetative barrier instead of one that is pure cement. It is the way to go environmentally and socially.

Julia Gorzka Freeman – Co-Chair of the Preservation Roundtable. Resident of Riverside Heights. Preserving the trees is in alignment with the City of Tampa's precise goal of planting 30,000 trees city-wide by the year 2030. Moving forward looking at the trees as an option is a no-brainer.

Discussion:

It was asked if this topic would be discussed at this meeting and noted that the Chair requested this topic be brought back to the Board at this meeting. It was noted that Secretary Gwynn answered questions regarding this topic. It was asked if the Board would be able to give the OK for FDOT to meet with the community on the Robles Park wall topic. That can be done at the end of the meeting. A summary was given of Secretary Gwynn's comments from the FDOT standpoint; the wall is going to be concrete but will also be heavily landscaped.

V. Committee Reports and Advance Comments (Rick Fernandez, CAC Chair and Harmoni McGee, TPO Staff) (timestamp 0:30:13) Additional social media and email comments may be requested

A. Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting on February 7, 2024 (Rick Fernandez, CAC Chair)

- A written, detailed report has been provided to the TPO Board
- Action Items
 - Went over the public comments and FDOT presentation regarding the Robles Park wall. Provided the amended motion made by the CAC which passed 13 – 1.
 - Approved the TIP Amendment unanimously
 - Recognized the Safety Performance Targets, approved the 2024 Traffic Performance Targets 12 – 2
- Status Reports
 - FDOT report on Gibsonton Road

B. Livable Roadways Committee Meeting on January 17, 2024

- Approved Action Items
 - Election of Officers, Attendance Review and Declaration of Vacancies
 - 2050 Plan Needs Assessment for Freight & Goods Movement and Hillsborough County Truck Route Plan
- Heard Status reports on
 - 2050 Needs Assessment for Major Projects

C. Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) Meeting on January 24, 2024

- Approved Action Items
 - Election of Officers, Attendance Review and Declaration of Vacancies
 - Consideration of New Citizen at Large Membership Application
 - 2050 Plan Needs Assessment for Freight & Goods Movement and Hillsborough County Truck Route Plan

D. Technical Advisory Committee Meeting on February 5, 2024

- Approved Action Items
 - TIP Amendment: HART Fixed Guideways, Fowler Avenue from 51st Street to Riverhills Drive
 - 2024 Safety Performance Targets
- Heard Status reports on
 - Gibsonton Drive from Fern Hill Drive to US301 PD&E
 - 2040 LRTP Needs Assessment for Major Projects

VI. Consent Agenda

A. Committee Appointments (Timestamp 0:38:33)

- TAC – Lama Alfaseeh, by the Hillsborough County Community and Infrastructure
- LRC – OmarPeerzada by HART
- BPAC – Joel Yap by the Department of Health and Allison Nguyen as alternate; Brent Buffington by the City of Temple Terrace

Councilmember Maniscalco moved to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Commissioner Cohen. The voice vote passed unanimously.

VII. Action Items

A. **TIP Amendments: HART Fixed Guideway 5309/5337, Fowler Ave from 51st St to Riverhills Dr** (Vishaka Shiva Raman, TPO Staff) *(Timestamp 0:38:55)*

- Went over project overview for HART Fixed Guideway
- Looked at the summary of changes – add the project to the TIP
- Went over project overview for Fowler Ave
- Looked at the summary of changes – project limits, changing fund programs, reducing programmed funding by \$5,000
- Review of the project timeline
- Went over outreach for amendment

Recommended Action: Approve the TIP Amendments to add HART Fixed Guideway FTA Section 5309/5337 project, and update termini and funding Fowler Ave from 51st St to Riverhills Dr project.

Discussion:

Clarification was requested for the streetcar refurbishment funds. This is new funding and not a reallocation.

Commissioner Kemp moved to approve the TIP Amendments, seconded by Councilmember Maniscalco. The roll call vote passed 15 – 0.

B. **2024 Safety Performance Targets** (Connor Trejos-MacDonald, TPO Staff) *(Timestamp 0:45:19)*

- Review of why the performance measures exist and the categories
- Showed the 5 required categories and 2 elected by Hillsborough County TPO; these are reported on a 5-year rolling average
- Went over the targets within each category
- Looked at the report card – met 6 of the 7 targets
- Went over takeaways
- Reviewed what the TPO can do to make additional improvements
- Looked at the 2024 proposed performance targets

Recommended Action: Approve the CY 2024 Safety Performance Targets.

Discussion:

Clarification was asked if this is the first year in five years that the numbers dropped this year. Yes. It was asked if this is a trend around the country. This will be brought back. It was suggested

that the non-motorized fatalities be relabeled as bicycle/pedestrian. It was noted that these fatalities continue to rise. This is not part of a national trend; Hillsborough County is one of the worst in the nation for bicycle/pedestrian deaths. It was asked how motorized bikes and scooters are classified. They are under motorcycles. It was noted that motorists speed by workers who get out of their vehicles (such as garbage trucks). It was requested that numbers be brought back regarding fatalities on roads where significant investment has been made; the before and after numbers; and a high-level report to see what kind of impact is being seen by these investments. It was brought up that one of the best ways to reduce bike/ped fatalities is to increase transit corridors.

Councilmember Maniscalco moved to approve the CY 2024 Safety Performance Targets, seconded by Commissioner Cohen. The roll call vote passed 15 – 0

VIII. Status Reports

- A. **2050 Plan Needs Assessment for Major Projects** (Wade Reynolds, TPO Staff;) (*Timestamp 0:59:30*)
- Went over where the list of major projects comes from
 - Reviewed the 2045 Cost Feasible Projects
 - Looked at the new projects for 2050 that will be tested against the models and some projects that are coming off the list as they are already far enough along or have been previously tested.
 - Went over the next steps – modeling, survey, narrowing down the list, determining funding levels, and determining Cost Feasible projects

Discussion:

It was noted that the airport to downtown transit is not on this list and is something that the City of Tampa is going to push for. Support was requested for intermodal support for when Brightline reaches Tampa. The airport concurred with this.

Commissioner Cohen moved to receive the report, seconded by Councilmember Clendenin. The voice vote passed unanimously.

IX. Executive Director's Report (*Timestamp 1:05:45*)

- A. TMA Leadership Group meeting on February 16, 2024 at 10:00 AM at the airport.
- B. Legislative Update – Tracking SB1032 and HB7049, both have stalled. The legislative tracker believes that all the transportation bills currently in committee may get merged into one.
- C. Follow-up on previous information requests: Amtrak presentation on potential service between Tampa and Miami, trying to arrange the meeting for March. CSX; has not able to connect with them to commit to participating in a study.

X. Old Business & New Business (*Timestamp 1:07:57*)

- A. Next TPO Board meeting is March 13, 2024

- B. Commissioner Cohen – there is an interest from the public to talk to FDOT about Robles Park regarding the landscaping and the wall. Noted that the Board should encourage FDOT to talk with the community.

XI. ADJOURNMENT – The meeting adjourned at 11:03 AM

The recording of this meeting may be viewed on YouTube: [Meeting Recording](#)

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Committee Reports

Livable Roadways Committee Meeting on January 17

The LRC approved action items:

- Election of Officers, Attendance Review and Declaration of Vacancies
- 2050 Plan Needs Assessment for Freight & Goods Movement and Hillsborough County Truck Route Plan
 - LRC moved to approve the report with the addition of reviewing community plans for Unincorporated County and the adopted City of Tampa Truck restrictions and the map.

The LRC heard status reports on:

- 2050 Needs Assessment for Major Projects

Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) Meeting on January 24

The BPAC approved action items:

- Election of Officers, Attendance Review and Declaration of Vacancies
 - The Committee voted to maintain Tim Horst as Chair, Jim Shirk as Vice Chair, and Peter Davitt as Officer at Large
 - The seats for the City of Temple Terrace and City of Tampa Parks and Recreation were declared vacant
- Consideration of New Citizen at Large Membership Application
 - The Committee voted to encouraged the sole applicant, Brandyn Littleton, to attend the February meeting before a vote on membership approval
- 2050 Plan Needs Assessment for Freight & Goods Movement and Hillsborough County Truck Route Plan
 - Members expressed concern about potential conflicts between truck route improvements and bike/ped accommodations

Technical Advisory Committee Meeting on February 5

The TAC approved action items:

- TIP Amendment: HART Fixed Guideways 5309/5337, Fowler Avenue from 51st Street to Riverhills Drive
 - Members asked about the increase in costs and why the limits did not go all the way to the Hillsborough River. FDOT responded that costs have increased in a variety of projects, and the portion excluded will be taken up in another project.
- 2024 Safety Performance Targets
 - Members asked about the source of the data (Signal 4). FDOT requires the use of Signal 4 but the numbers are not the same as those from the Florida Dept. of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles. Staff will bring back the differences in methodology to the TAC and update the targets prior to Board action if there are any changes to the data.

The TAC heard status reports on:

- Gibsonton Drive from Fern Hill Drive to US301 PD&E
 - Members asked about the limits to the project and the need to include the portion of Boyette Rd east of US 301. The project does include this.
 - Members also asked if there is a Spanish translation for the Public Hearing on this project. FDOT staff replied that they have a translation service available.
- 2040 LRTP Needs Assessment for Major Projects

A verbal summary will be given for the following:

TPO Special Meeting on February 6

Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting on February 7