



Hillsborough TPO Transportation Planning Organization

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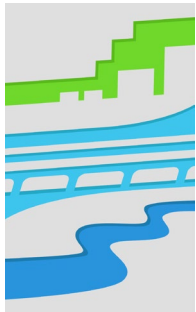
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Plan Hillsborough

planhillsborough.org
planner@plancom.org

813 - 272 - 5940
601 E Kennedy Blvd
18th Floor
Tampa, FL, 33602

Meeting of the Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee

Wednesday, March 27, 2024, 5:30pm. – 7:30pm

County Center, 18th Floor – Plan Hillsborough Committee Room

Please RSVP [here](#) for this meeting.

Microsoft Teams meeting:

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 264 127 587 151

Passcode: jreDLK

Or call in (audio only) 1-813-498-2121

Phone Conference ID: 338 143 612#

- Presentations, full agenda packet, and supplemental materials [posted here](#), or phone us at 813-756-0371 for a printed copy.
- Please mute yourself after joining the conference to minimize background noise.
- Technical support during the meeting: Michael Rempfer 813-793-2348
- Rules of engagement:

Professional courtesy and respect for others at this meeting are expected. Failure to do so 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 & Introductions**
- II. **Roll Call and Declaration of Quorum** (Gail Reese, TPO Staff)
- III. **Public Comment – 3 minutes per speaker, for a maximum of 30 minutes.**

Public comments are welcome and may be given during this hybrid meeting by logging into the website above and clicking the “raise hand” button. Comments may also be provided before the start of the meeting by e-mail to gordonb@plancom.org. Written comments will be read into the record, if brief, and provided in full to the committee members.

- IV. **Members’ Interests & Future Topic Requests**
- V. **Approval of Minutes: February 28, 2024**
- VI. **Action Items**

A. **Gulf Coast Corridor Support Letter** (Ben Gordon, TPO Staff)

VII. Status Reports

- A. Preliminary Draft of FY25 & 26 Unified Planning Work Program (Amber Simmons (TPO Staff))
- B. BPAC Multimodal Counts Next Steps (Ben Gordon, TPO Staff)

VIII. Old Business and New Business

IX. Adjournment

X. Addendum

- A. [TPO Summary and Committee Reports](#)
- B. [FDOT Downtown Tampa Interchange Construction Open House March 5-7](#)
- C. [FDOT Widening Sun Coast Parkway from South of Van Dyke Rd to SR52C.](#)
- D. [Friends of Union Station Letter to FRA](#)
- E. [Letter of Comment to FRA regarding Amtrak Daily Long-Distance Service Study](#)
- F. [Inaugural Slow Roll Bike Ride](#)

The full agenda packet is available on the TPO'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 Connor MacDonald, (813) 946-5334 or macdonaldc@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) 272-5940 or (813) 273-3774 and dial 1.

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 Connor MacDonald, (813) 946-5334 o macdonaldc@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) 272-5940 o (813) 273-3774 ext. 1.

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**HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY
TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION
BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE
HYBRID MEETING OF FEBRUARY 28, 2024**

I. Call to Order

Vice-Chair Jim Shirk called the meeting to order at 5:33 PM

Members Present: Jim Shirk, Katrina Corcoran, Christopher Fellerhoff, Abigail Flores, Joel Yap, Alain Watson, John Marsh, Brent Buffington, Samantha Flores, Jonathan Forbes, Peter Davitt, David Aylesworth, Martin (Mike Disco) Santiago, Victoria Klug, Sally Thompson, David Cillitti

Members Excused/Absent: Tim Horst, Cpl. Julian Anderson, Daniel Rodriguez, Jason Jackman, John Kubicki, Faye Miller

Others Present: Ben Gordon, Connor Trejos-MacDonald, Wade Reynolds, Vishaka Shiva Raman, Gail Reese (TPO Staff); Katie Habgood (Patel Green and Assoc); Brendyn Littleton, Edward Newsome (Possible Future Member); David Dunigan (public)

An in-person quorum was met (9)

II. Public Comment (3 minutes per speaker) (Timestamp 0:00:00) – None

III. Member's Interest

- Critical Mass February ride on Friday, March 1, 2024
- Ride with the Mayor, Walk/Bike Tampa in March
- Hillsborough Greenways Foundation Committee meeting is on March 6, 2024

IV. Approval of Minutes

Sally Thompson moved to approve the minutes from January 24, 2024; seconded by Alain Watson. The motion passed unanimously.

V. Action Items

A. Multimodal Counts Report (Katie Habgood, Patel Green)

- Went over traditional counts vs. multimodal counts
- Looked at the High Injury Network corridors
- Showed the count locations, cameras used, and how they were mounted
- Reviewed the post-collection processing
- Went over the initial results – most users on foot and most users on bikes
- Went over analysis recommendations and the questions that came out of the data collection

Discussion:

Clarification was asked if there are more bikes on sidewalks than in the bike facility and if a conclusion can be drawn between the quality of the facility versus the sidewalk. People are going to be where they feel safe. It was asked if the sample was representative of weekdays and weekends. The count was taken during a school day if locations are near a school. It was asked what the next step is for using this data. It was asked if there was data collected on how many vehicles went through the areas during the same time. It was asked if the data collection is the scope of the project and analysis would be a different project. Correct, the analysis would be a separate project that has not been scoped at this time. It was asked if these areas are also socially disadvantaged. It was noted that this data could be overlaid on previous data collection of the HIN.

David Aylesworth moved to accept the report and forward it to the TPO Board for their approval, seconded by Katrina Corcoran. The voice vote passed unanimously.

B. Consideration of New Citizen at Large Membership Application (Ben Gordon, TPO Staff)

- Consider new member: Edward Newsome spoke about his background and interest in the committee
- Consider new member: Brandyn Littleton spoke about his background and interest in the committee

Discussion:

Both people were thanked for coming. Ben Gordon offered a member discussion and then a poll of the members.

There was a discussion about the balance of representation; the number of seats available; possibly adding an additional seat to the committee. Victoria Klug offered to step down to allow both candidates to serve.

Katrina Corcoran moved to accept both applicants for committee membership pending the offered resignation of Victoria Klug, seconded by Sally Thompson. The voice vote passed unanimously.

VI. Status Reports**A. 2024 Safety Performance Targets (Connor Trejos-MacDonald, TPO Staff)**

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

Discussion:

It was asked if this report had already come before the committee before it went to the Board for approval. Due to timing, no. It was offered to bring it to this committee earlier in 2025. There was discussion about the upward trending numbers. Serious injuries are down, and fatalities are up.

There was discussion that this is a trend coming out of the pandemic. There have been several factors indicating the trends including slower response times and heavier vehicles. It was suggested that serious injuries and fatalities be looked at as a whole. Additional information can be looked into for the trends. It would be interesting to see how many of the crashes are due to people not paying attention, people not knowing the rules of the road, and more people on e-bikes and scooters. Both motorists and cyclists are not paying attention. There was a comment that the easiest thing to determine is death and serious injury is more difficult to establish. It was asked if the methodology is standard across the country for all MPOs. There is no national standard, but this one is supported. It was noted that as a committee, the recommendations on what can be done by the TPO should be emphasized. There is no real punishment if the targets are not met, and it has to be data-driven. Setting a target of 0 would receive pushback from Federal Highway. There was discussion about the funding for the projects being recommended in the plan in the LRTP.

B. Access 2050 LRTP Outreach Survey (Harmoni McGee, TPO Staff)

- Updated the LRTP, looking to get help shaping the future of transportation
- Potentially 2 million people living in the area by 2050; need to plan for that
- Review of what the LRTP is
- Noted that the survey is looking for priorities and how they will be funded
- Looked out how people can take it; the members are taking the survey now
- Went over the survey
- Reviewed the incentives

Discussion:

It was asked what the point of this survey is to the BPAC as all the projects are road widening and not contributing to Vision Zero. To get input and suggestions on where else the outreach can be done. It was noted that some of the priorities are not widening.

VII. Old Business and New Business

A. The next meeting is March 27, 2024

VIII. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 PM

A recording of this meeting may be viewed at:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCsojHyZb_mkYIU3o32Tbg4w/videos



Hillsborough TPO Transportation Planning Organization

Board & Committee Agenda Item

Agenda Item:

Gulf Coast Corridor Support Letter

Presenter:

Ben Gordon, TPO Staff

Summary:

Hillsborough County's South Coast Greenway is one segment of the wider Gulf Coast Trail, a project linking communities along the west coast of Florida from Pinellas County to Collier County. The project is roughly 40% complete and would benefit from a higher ranking in the FDOT SUN Trail network, a statewide system of high-priority paved trail corridors for bicyclists and pedestrians. Sun Trail rankings are competitive, and a show of support from the TPO's advisory committees may help to encourage increased investment in the Gulf Coast Trail.

Recommended Action:

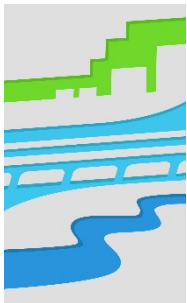
Encourage committee members to send emails encouraging the SUN trail coordinator to rank the Gulf Coast Trail higher for funding.

Prepared By:

Ben Gordon, TPO Staff

Attachments:

Florida Gulf Coast Corridor – TPO letter of support for SUN Trail funding.



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March 20, 2024

Robin Birdsong
SUNTrail Statewide Coordinator
Florida Department of Transportation
605 Suwannee Street, MS 19
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Re: Florida Regional Trail Priorities – Gulf Coast Trail

Dear Ms. Birdsong,

The Hillsborough Transportation Planning Organization supports the development of a trail network that links communities across the state using dedicated paths for walking and cycling. We understand that Florida's first corridor, the Coast-to-Coast Trail, is nearly complete, and that the Office of Greenways and Trails is updating the state's priority list for future projects.

We ask for your consideration of placing the Gulf Coast Trail at the top of the state's priority list. The Gulf Coast Corridor is a logical extension of Central Florida's Coast-to-Coast Trail and will connect all of Central Florida with coastal communities from Tampa Bay to Sarasota to Fort Myers and Naples.

The Gulf Coast Corridor has been well-planned and includes many segments that are ready for engineering and construction. The cities and counties of this region have a long history of collaborating to plan, fund and build regionally significant multi-use trails, through the Sun Coast Transportation Planning Alliance. In just Hillsborough County alone, many Gulf Coast Corridor segments are already in place or underway, including the South Coast Greenway, the Expressway Authority's Selmon Greenway, Tampa's Green Spine, and FDOT's I-275 Greenway and Dale Mabry Highway pedestrian overpass.

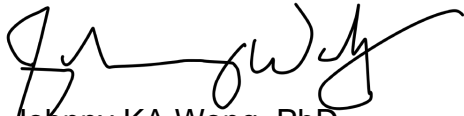
Completing and linking the Gulf Coast Corridor trail segments will connect Tampa Bay's largest city to the statewide network. It will provide new access for people from around the state to Tampa's beautiful walk/bike facilities such as the Downtown Riverwalk and Bayshore Boulevard (the longest continuous sidewalk in the world), as well as cultural destinations such as the Florida Aquarium, historic Ybor City, new mixed-use districts such as Water Street and Midtown Tampa, and countless museums, parks, and reinvested neighborhoods.

In addition, completing the Gulf Coast Corridor through Tampa will expand access to the statewide trail network for tens of thousands of Tampa residents. A number of Tampa's neighborhoods have borne the brunt of historic patterns of underinvestment in black and brown communities and suffer worse public health. Connecting the SUN

Trail system through Tampa is more than just a new transportation choice in an area with a vast number of destinations waiting to be unlocked, it will also provide a long-needed opportunity for exercise and a new pathway to greenspaces for city dwellers.

For these reasons, we encourage you to consider placing the Gulf Coast Trail at the top of the state's priority list for SUNTrail funding.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Johnny KA Wong', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Johnny KA Wong, PhD
Executive Director
Hillsborough Transportation Planning Organization



Hillsborough TPO Transportation Planning Organization

Board & Committee Agenda Item

Agenda Item:

Preliminary Draft of FY 25-26 UPWP

Presenter:

Amber Simmons, TPO Staff

Summary:

The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) is a federal and state mandated document that defines the transportation planning activities, products and budget to be developed by the Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) and other transportation planning agencies. It is the basis for allocating federal, state, and local funds for transportation planning activities within Hillsborough County and describes how the TPO will use its federal and state planning funds. This UPWP covers a two-year period from July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2026.

The UPWP is required by federal law under Title 23 CFR 450.314 and Title 49 CFR 613.100 when federal funds are used for transportation planning. The UPWP and associated processes are also required by state law under Chapter 339.175 governing TPOs. The UPWP is reviewed by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT).

Staff will provide an overview of the draft document on the [TPO website](#). The final document will be presented at the TPO Board meeting on May 8, 2024 for adoption following state timeline requirements, and will incorporate the comments received from review agencies. Additional information can be found at [Unified Planning Work Program | Plan Hillsborough](#).

Recommended Action:

None; for information and comment

Prepared By:

Amber Simmons, TPO Staff

Attachments:

[Presentation Slides](#)



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Hillsborough TPO Transportation Planning Organization

Board & Committee Agenda Item

Agenda Item:

BPAC Multimodal Counts Next Steps

Presenter:

Ben Gordon, TPO Staff

Summary:

During the planning phase of Hillsborough TPO's recent multimodal traffic count study, the Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee recommended including five additional locations drawn from its Top Ten Dangerous Locations list. This status report will provide a concise overview and discussion of the study results for these targeted locations and their surroundings, and discuss potential next steps.

Recommended Action:

None. For information only.

Prepared By:

Ben Gordon, TPO Staff

Attachments:

1. [Bicycle and Pedestrian Count Summary Sheet](#)
2. [Vehicular Counts Summary Sheet](#)



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Florida Department of Transportation

RON DESANTIS
GOVERNOR

605 SUWANNEE STREET
TALLAHASSEE, FL 32399-0450

February 9, 2024

Re: FDOT Construction Open House (In-Person and Virtual)
Downtown Tampa Interchange (I-275/I-4) Safety and Operational Improvements Project
(Financial Project Numbers: 445057-1-52-01, 445056-1-52-01, 445056-2-52-01)

Dear Community Members:

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District Seven invites you to attend and participate in a Construction Open House. The FDOT's contractor, The Lane Construction Corporation, has begun construction activities as part of the Downtown Tampa Interchange (I-275/I-4) Safety and Operational Improvements project in Hillsborough County.

The project improvements include community spaces, trail connections, underpass improvements, lighting, aesthetics, and roadway improvements listed below.

Southbound I-275 to Eastbound I-4

- Providing a two-lane exit and constructing a new exit ramp bridge (to the inside of the interchange) from southbound I-275 to eastbound I-4
- Adding a 5th lane (auxiliary) along eastbound I-4 between I-275 and the Selmon Expressway exit*
- Providing a 2-lane exit to the Selmon Expressway*
- Changing the eastbound exit ramp from I-4 into Ybor City/East Tampa by relocating access at 14th/15th Streets instead of 21st/ 22nd Streets
- Widening the existing eastbound I-4 frontage road (13th Avenue) to two lanes

Westbound I-4 to Northbound I-275

- Widening the existing single lane ramp from westbound I-4 to northbound I-275 to two lanes
- Adding an additional merge lane on northbound I-275 between I-4 and the Martin Luther King Jr. exit

Westbound I-4 to Southbound I-275

- Widening the existing two-lane ramp from westbound I-4 to southbound I-275 to three lanes
- Widening the shoulders on southbound I-275 between Palm Avenue and Jefferson Street
- Shifting the exit ramp from southbound I-275 into downtown Tampa to the west of the current alignment

The open house will be held in-person and as a virtual option. Participants will have the opportunity to ask questions to FDOT staff on the improvements and construction activities in-person and virtually via the online chat. The meetings will provide identical information, so you only need to attend one.

*Improvements may be completed under separate construction contract

Improve Safety, Enhance Mobility, Inspire Innovation

www.fdot.gov

Virtual/Online Meeting Option

Tuesday, March 5, 2023, 11a.m. – 1p.m.

Those who wish to attend virtually can register at www.TampaBayNext.com. A video highlighting the project improvements will be shown at 11:00 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 12:00 p.m., and 12:30 p.m. Staff will be available throughout the meeting time to receive feedback and answer questions via the online chat function. Display boards and exhibits showing the project improvements will be available for viewing during the meeting and will be posted online at www.TampaBayNext.com and www.FDOTTampaBay.com.

In-Person Meeting

Thursday, March 7, 2024, 5p.m. – 7p.m.

Hillsborough Bar Association Chester H. Ferguson Law Center
1610 N. Tampa St.
Tampa, FL 33602

Format: Display boards and exhibits showing the project improvements and construction activities will be available in an open house format. An informational presentation will run continuously during the open house. FDOT staff will be available to answer questions.

Complimentary on-site parking and designated handicap parking are available. Hillsborough Area Regional Transit (HART) bus routes 1 and 6 provides bus services to access the meeting site.

Public participation is solicited without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, disability, or family status. Persons requiring special accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act to participate in this open house or persons who require translation services (free of charge) are asked to advise the agency at least seven (7) days prior to the open house by contacting: Roger Roscoe, FDOT Title VI Coordinator, at 1(813) 975-6411 or 1(800) 226-7220, or Roger.Roscoe@dot.state.fl.us. If you are hearing or speech impaired, please contact the agency using the Florida Relay Service, 1(800) 955-8771 (TDD) or 1(800) 955-8770 (Voice).

Comuníquese Con Nosotros: Nos importa mucho la opinión del público sobre el proyecto. Si usted tiene preguntas o comentarios, o si simplemente desea más información, por favor comuníquese con nuestro representante, Manuel Flores, (813) 975-4248, Manuel.Flores@dot.state.fl.us, Departamento de Transportación de la Florida, 11201 North McKinley Drive, Tampa, FL 33612.

For more information about the Downtown Tampa Interchange (I-275/I-4) Safety and Operational Improvements Project, please visit the website at <https://www.fdot.com/project/839/445057-1-52-01>.

Sincerely,
Gregory Deese, P.E.

Resident Engineer – District 7 CCEI Construction
Florida Department of Transportation



Widen Suncoast Parkway (SR 589) From South of Van Dyke Road to SR 52 Hillsborough and Pasco Counties, Florida



Project Development & Environment (PD&E) Study

FPID Number: 448068-1-22-01 ETDM Number: 14503

Newsletter 1 – February 2024

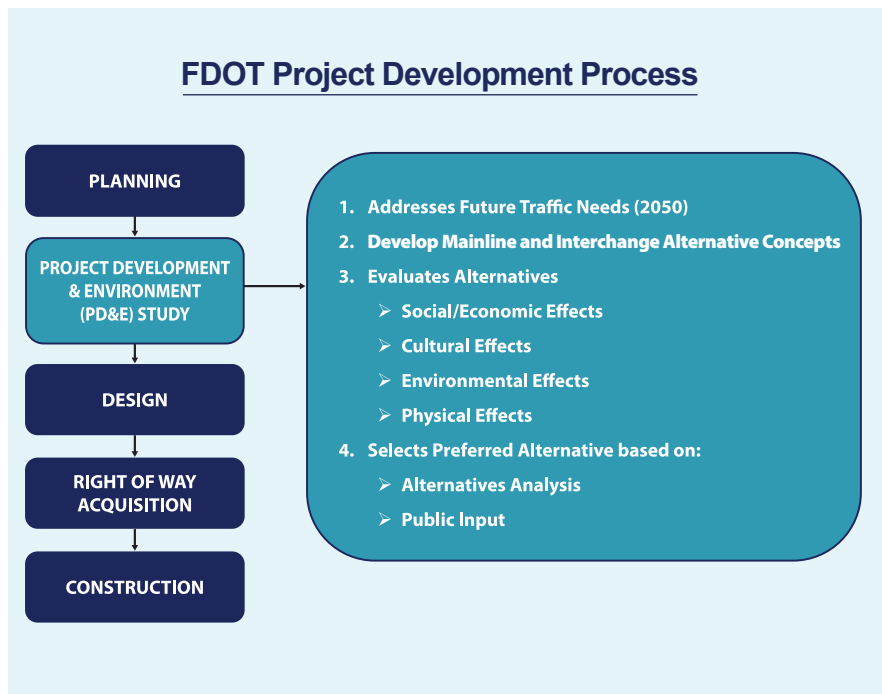
About this Study

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), Florida's Turnpike Enterprise (Enterprise), is conducting a Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study along Suncoast Parkway (State Road (SR) 589) from south of Van Dyke Road to SR 52, Mile Post (MP) 13 to 29 in Hillsborough and Pasco Counties. The study will evaluate alternatives for the widening of the Suncoast Parkway, from four lanes to eight lanes between south of Van Dyke Road and SR 54 and from four lanes to six lanes between SR 54 and SR 52. Improvements to the existing interchanges and a potential new interchange within the study corridor will be evaluated. The Suncoast Parkway study area extends approximately sixteen (16) miles as shown in the project location map on the next page. For more information on this project, please visit the project website at www.SuncoastParkwayPDE.com.

What is a PD&E Study?

A PD&E Study is an environmental and engineering process conducted to determine social, economic, cultural, physical, and environmental impacts associated with a proposed transportation improvement project. An important component of the process is public and agency involvement. The process follows federal and state laws and regulations. It requires the combined efforts of professional engineers, planners, and scientists who collect and analyze project-related information to develop the optimal solution for a community's transportation needs while minimizing impacts. The key components of the PD&E process are existing conditions, future traffic needs, alternatives development, environmental and engineering evaluations, public and agency input, documentation, and study recommendations.

The project development process begins with planning studies and ends with a constructed project. The FDOT project development process is a comprehensive process involving Planning, Project Development and Environment (PD&E), Design, Right of Way (ROW), and Construction phases. It is important to understand the sequence and interrelation between these phases to successfully deliver a project.



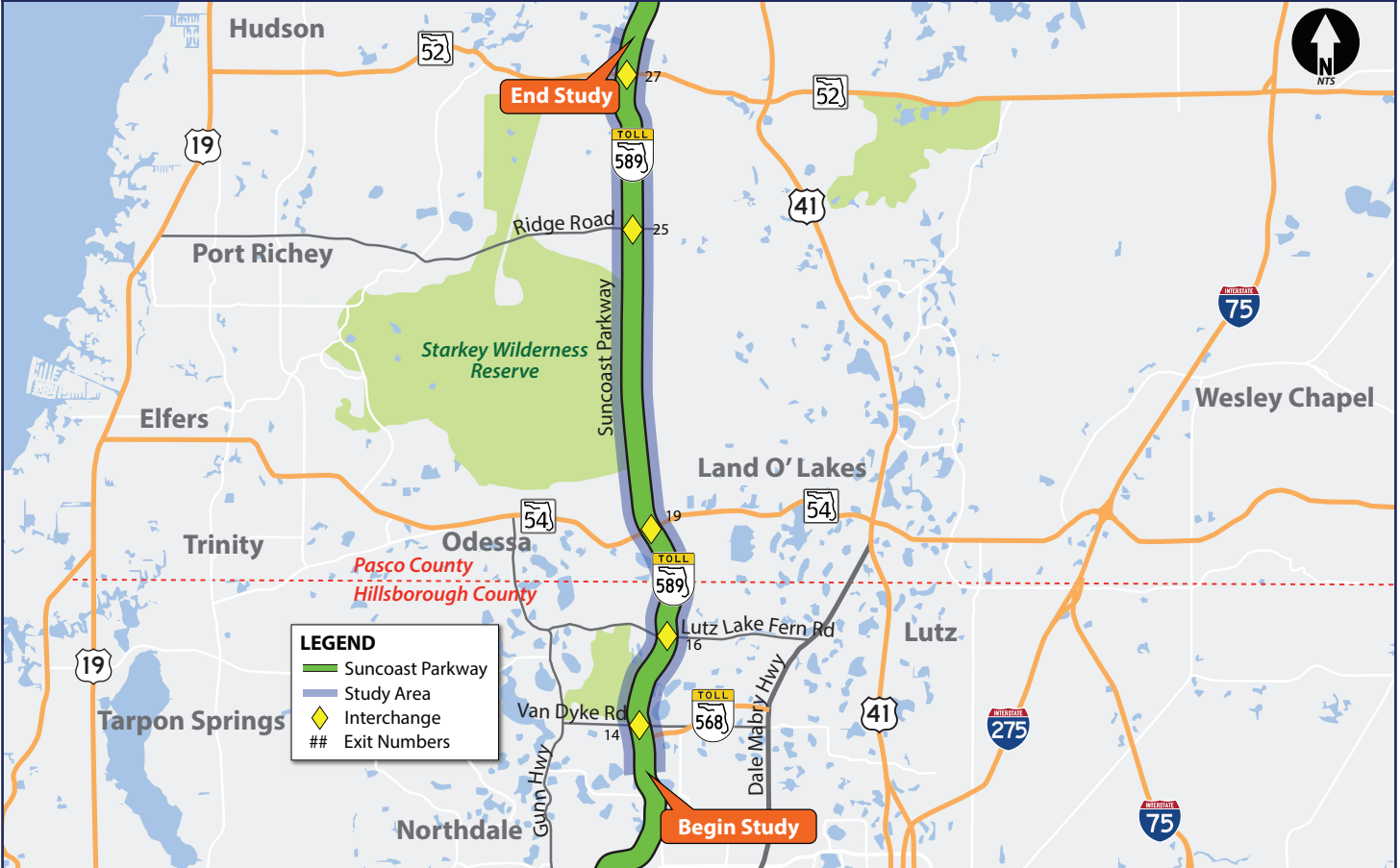
Purpose and Need

Suncoast Parkway (SR 589) is a four (4) lane (two (2) lanes in each direction) limited access facility within the study limits. By 2050, the population within Hillsborough County is expected to grow by 30%. Within the same time period, the population within Pasco County is expected to grow by 38%. In response, the Florida's Turnpike Enterprise has identified the need to widen (increase capacity) this portion of Suncoast Parkway to accommodate increasing traffic volumes generated from the anticipated growth, while enhancing safety and improving emergency and evacuation response times.

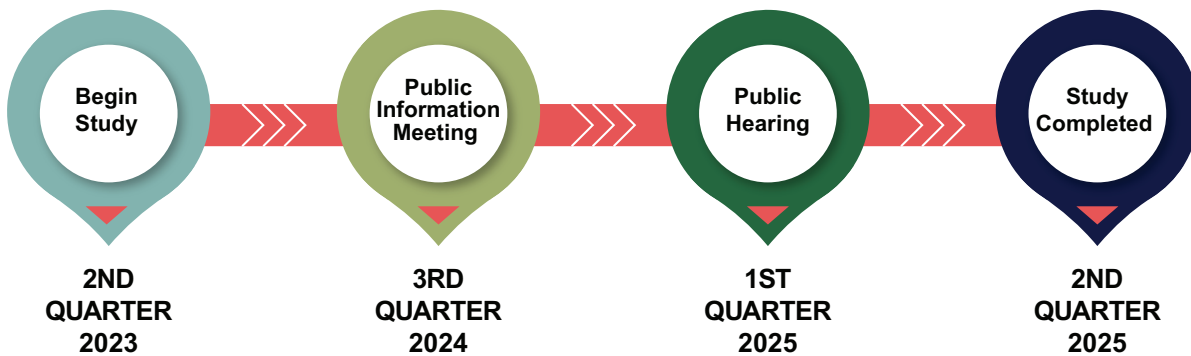
Public Participation

Florida's Turnpike Enterprise encourages the public to get involved by providing comments, questions, and suggestions to the study team. Project information will be available through newsletters, the project website, public inquiries, public meetings, and a public hearing. Please contact the Project Manager, Anil Sharma, P.E., using the contact information provided on the next page to request more information or to be added to the mailing list.

Project Location Map



Project Schedule & Opportunities to Participate



PROJECT CONTACTS

Anil J. Sharma, P.E.
Project Manager
Consultant to Florida's Turnpike Enterprise
P.O. Box 613069
Ocoee, FL 34761-3069
(407) 264-3041
Email: Anil.Sharma@dot.state.fl.us

Rax Jung, Ph.D., P.E.
Project Development Engineer
Florida's Turnpike Enterprise
P.O. Box 613069
Ocoee, Florida 34761-3069
(407) 264-3870
Email: Rax.Jung@dot.state.fl.us

Scan the QR code for more information about this project



www.SuncoastParkwayPDE.com

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President
Pritchett Steinbeck Group

Jerel McCants, AIA
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Martz Creative

Jackson McQuigg
Atlanta History Center

Robert Modys, AICP CNU-A
Benesch

Jeff Houck
1905 Family of Restaurants

Casey Bauer
Tampa Downtown Partnership

Steve Sayles
Bright House Networks (ret.)

Ex-Officio Members

Dennis Fernandez
City of Tampa

Marley Wilkes
City of Tampa



February 28, 2024

Federal Railroad Administration
Amtrak Daily Long-Distance Service Study
contactus@fralongdistancerailstudy.org

ATTN: Public Comments

RE: Proposed Chicago-Florida Service Must Include Tampa

Federal Railroad Administration:

We are submitting these comments following our review of the meeting materials published to the Amtrak Daily Long-Distance Service Study website earlier this month.

The study materials show that a new Chicago-Miami train is proposed to bypass Tampa. Our city was not invited to participate in the study, so we want to take this opportunity to voice our support for future connections to Tampa Bay – and Tampa specifically.

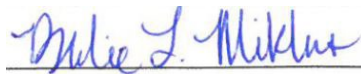
With 3.3 million residents and rapidly increasing, Tampa Bay stands out as one of the fastest-growing major metropolitan areas in the United States. Tampa boasts the highest ridership among all Silver Star stops. Further, Florida's Gulf Coast, especially Tampa Bay, maintains much stronger connections with the Midwest compared to the state's east coast. A considerable segment of our population possesses familial and economic bonds with Midwestern states along the I-75 corridor.

One solution to potential operating concerns is splitting the train into two separate west and east coast sections after entering Florida, thereby equitably serving both coasts. This approach has been previously implemented successfully in the operations of the Florida to New York *Silver Star* and *Silver Meteor* services, as well as the former Florida to Chicago *Floridian* service.

The City of Tampa and Amtrak have recently invested millions of dollars at Tampa Union Station for renovations and a new high-level platform. We believe that FRA's route plan should use these fresh investments in rail infrastructure in Tampa, not bypass them.

We urge you to amend your proposed Chicago-Miami route and include Tampa.

Sincerely,



Brandie Miklus, AICP
President

Cc: The Honorable Amit Bose, Administrator, Federal Railroad Administration
The Honorable Kathy Castor, U.S. Representative, 14th Congressional District of Florida
The Honorable Darren Soto, U.S. Representative, 9th Congressional District of Florida
The Honorable Jane Castor, Mayor, City of Tampa
Jean Duncan, Administrator, Infrastructure and Mobility, City of Tampa
Johnny Wong, Executive Director, Hillsborough Transportation Planning Organization
David Gwynn, Secretary, Florida Department of Transportation District 7
Scott Drainville, Chief Executive Officer, Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Authority
Friends of Tampa Union Station Board Members



Hillsborough TPO Transportation Planning Organization

Commissioner Gwen Myers
Hillsborough County
TPO Chair

Mayor Andrew Ross
City of Temple Terrace
TPO Vice Chair

Paul Anderson
Port Tampa Bay

Councilman Alan Clendenin
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Commissioner Pat Kemp
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HART

Joe Lopano
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Nigel M. Joseph
Planning Commission

Greg Slater
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Joshua Wostal
Hillsborough County

Patricia Rendon
Hillsborough County
School Board

Johnny Wong, PhD
Executive Director

March 6, 2024

Federal Railroad Administration
Amtrak Daily Long-Distance Service Study
contactus@fralongdistancerailstudy.org
ATTN: Public Comments

RE: Proposed Chicago-Florida Service

Federal Railroad Administration:

The Amtrak Daily Long-Distance Service Study third meeting series materials, currently available for public comment, includes a new route from Chicago to Miami. This is commendable and would provide a valuable connection between the Midwest and the Southeastern United States. However, the route notably does not include a connection in Tampa.

With 3.3 million residents and rapidly increasing, the Tampa Bay area is one of the fastest-growing major metropolitan areas in the United States. Currently, Tampa boasts the highest ridership among all Silver Star stops, which connects our community to key destinations along the East Coast. Including an Amtrak connection between the Tampa Bay region and the Midwest would facilitate greater interstate commerce exchange and provide a valuable multimodal option for prospective travelers. The selected route option and proposed alignments noted in the materials do not recognize the strong service demand and strategic value that this stop would provide.

The City of Tampa and Amtrak have recently invested millions of dollars into Tampa Union Station for modernization and renovations, including a new high-level platform to facilitate boardings and alightings. These enhancements reflect the current interest in rail service that could be reinforced by adding a Tampa stop to the proposed Chicago-Florida connection. The Hillsborough TPO would be happy to participate in discussions and explore solutions to integrating Tampa into the route. I am available at wongj@plancom.org or (813) 313-9835 if you have any questions or would like to discuss this further.

Sincerely,

Johnny Wong, PhD
Hillsborough TPO
Executive Director

cc: Brandie Miklus, AICP, President, Friends of Tampa Union Station
Todd Stennis, Director, Governor Affairs – South, Amtrak



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UNIVERSITY AREA SLOW ROLL

*In celebration of
Florida Bike Month*

Join local dignitaries
on a casual bike ride!

Thursday, March 28, 2024
8 to 10 a.m. @ UACDC
14013 N. 22nd Street
Tampa, FL 33613

MARCH 28



Plan
Hillsborough

8:00 a.m.

Bike Lights • Safety Information
Refreshments • Fun Activities

9:00 a.m.

Group ride departs UACDC



There will also be
a survey for you to
share your vision
for the future of
Hillsborough County.