

**HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
2035 PLAN REVISIT - INTERAGENCY WORKING GROUP (IWG)
FEBRUARY 11, 2011 (FRIDAY) AT 1:30 P.M.
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY CENTER, 601 E. KENNEDY BLVD.
18th FLOOR BOARD ROOM**

MEEETING SUMMARY

IWG members and alternates attending:

Ming Gao:	FDOT 7
Bob Campbell (alt):	Hillsborough County
Jean Dorzback:	City of Tampa
Nadine Jones:	Aviation Authority
Brad Parrish (alt)	Temple Terrace
Charles Stephenson	Temple Terrace
Ben Money (alt)	City of Tampa
Mike Williams (alt):	Hillsborough County
Sue Chrzan	Tampa-Hillsborough County Expressway Authority
Brian Smith:	Pinellas County MPO
Tim Palermo (alt)	HART
Calvin Thornton (alt)	City of Tampa
Ray Chiaramonte:	Hillsborough County MPO
Beth Alden (alt):	Hillsborough County MPO

Others attending:

Richard Formica	Ned Baier
Bill Thomas	Chris Weber
Karen Kress	L. Potier-Brown
Jared Schneider	Trish Thompson
Vivian Bacca	Arlene Brown
Pam Flaherty	Clint Shoupe
Christina Hummel	Jeff Rogel
Gladys Will	Bill Roberts
Alan Denham	Randy Goers
Matthew Le Brasseur	Nina Mabillean

The meeting was called to order at 1:35 pm by Ray Chiaramonte, MPO Director. All attending introduced themselves. There were no public comments.

Beth Alden, MPO staff, introduced the study purpose and background of the results of the November 2010 referendum. A copy of the presentation slides is attached.

Ned Baier with Jacobs, consultant to the MPO, gave an overview of the research that will be conducted into cost reduction strategies and alternate funding sources, using the summary memo provided in the meeting agenda packet.

Ben Kelly with the Kenney Group, consultant to the MPO, gave an overview of the focus group research that will be conducted with randomly selected registered voters around Hillsborough County, and described similar research previously conducted by the Kenney Group. A copy of the presentation slides is attached.

Ray Chiaramonte opened the meeting to discussion by the working group members and to comment from members of the public attending the meeting. Suggestions and comments included the following.

Suggestions and Comments for Funding Source and Cost Reduction Strategy Research

- Funding sources must consider the need for operational funding.
- Consider reducing or replacing the property tax.
- Bicycle and pedestrian improvements are comparatively inexpensive and make a package of improvements multimodal.
- Why should rural areas have to pay for road widenings they don't want?
- Don't include funding for controversial projects.
- The sales tax is regressive.
- Consider increasing the gas tax or creating a tax on vehicle miles travelled.
- Consider capturing the increased property tax value that would be created around rail stations.
- Intersection improvements are a good idea but reducing left turns could be a tough sell. We could use more red light running cameras.

Suggestions and Comments for Focus Group Research

- It's unusual for so much of our metro area to be unincorporated. The referendum passed in the Tampa but not in the unincorporated area. Why?
- Pinellas is also considering a sales tax referendum, in the 2012-2013 timeframe. Hillsborough should ask its voters if they feel they would benefit from regional transit connections, such as being able to get to the beaches and Orlando.

- Were voters in November aware of the non-transit improvements that were to be funded?
- Did packaging transit projects and non-transit projects together lead to confusion? How do you get such a message across?
- Would voters be interested in a policy not to widen roads past six lanes?
- How do voters feel about toll lanes?
- Do voters understand how expensive multilane highways are?
- How do voters want to receive information?
- Ask about public trust in local agencies and officials.

Other Suggestions and Comments

- Stakeholder outreach needs to be conducted as well as this focus group research. Consider visiting PTA meetings.
- How do demographics affect public opinion? Ten thousand Baby Boomers turn 65 every day. Seniors don't want to wait years for transportation improvements. Seniors become trapped in their homes if they're unable to drive. Also drivers age 20-30 are driving 10% less than ten years ago.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 3:15 pm.

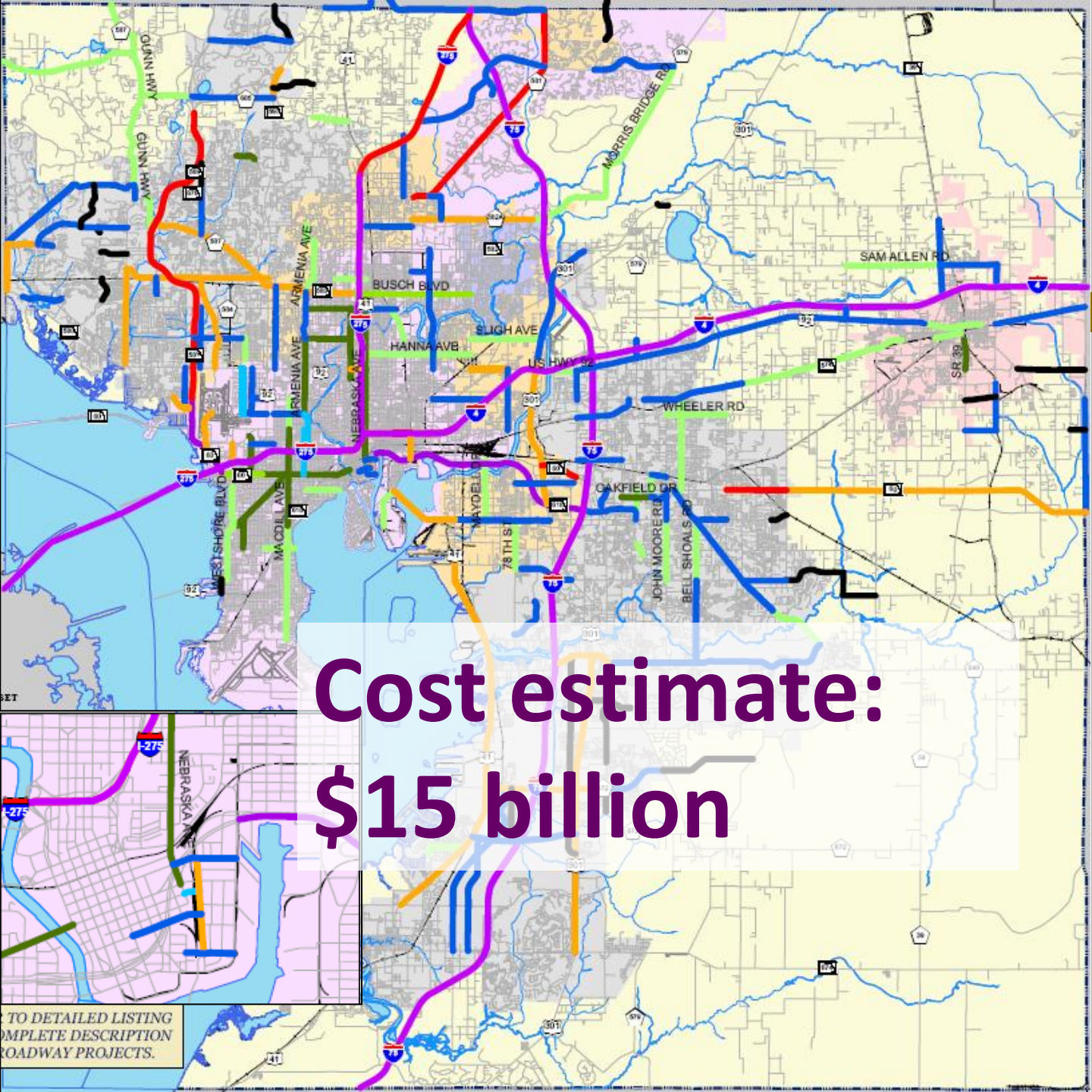
Where do we
go from here



Revisiting the
Long Range Plan



Major Roadways: Projects Needed



**Cost estimate:
\$15 billion**

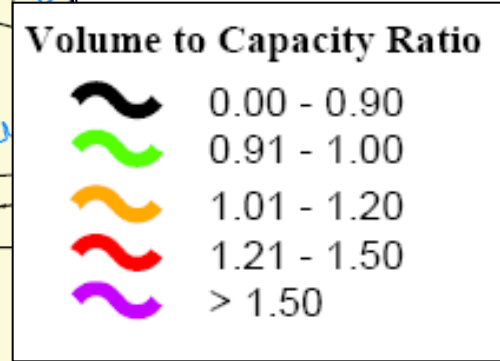
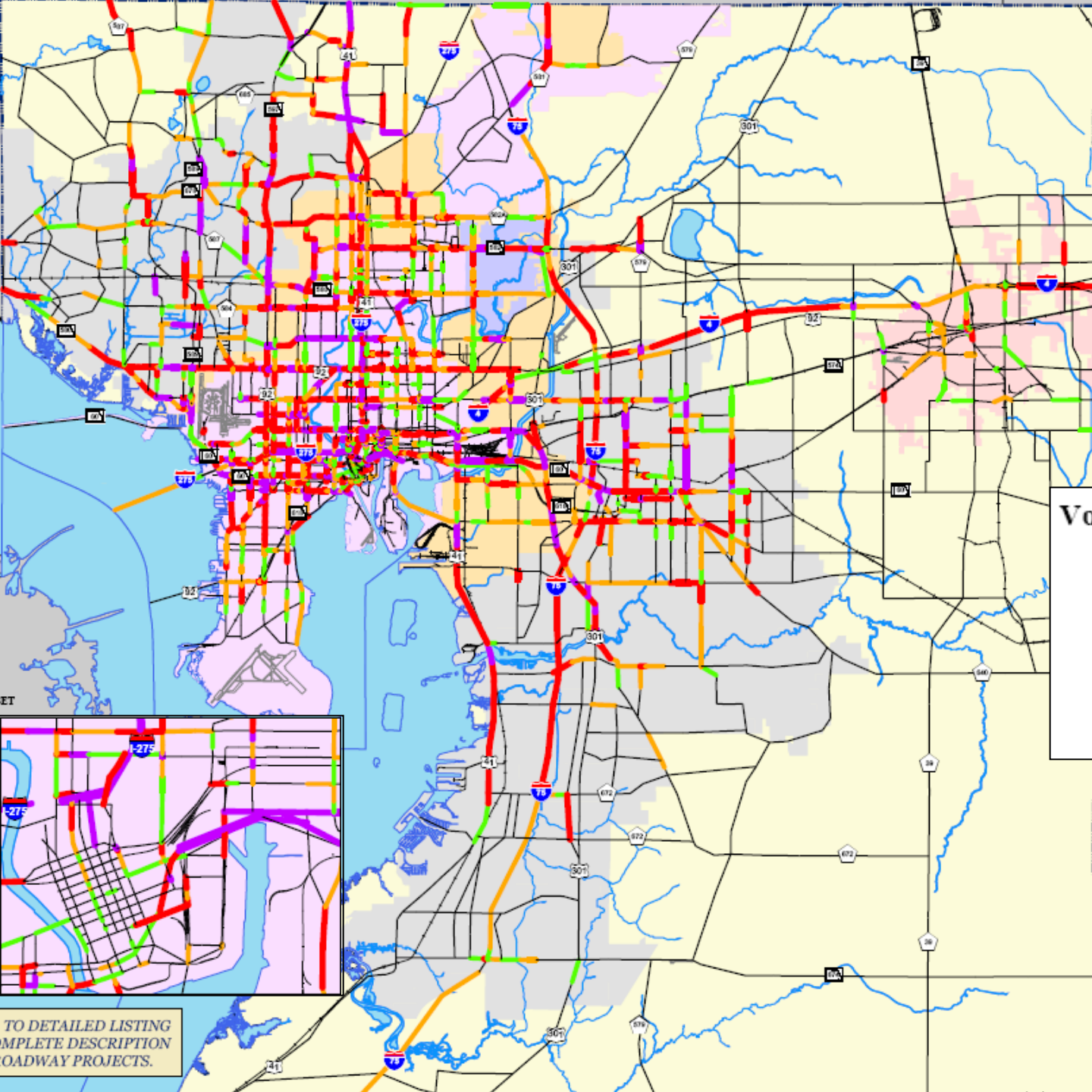
LANEAGE

-  2 Lanes
-  3 Lanes
-  4 Lanes
-  6 Lanes
-  8 Lanes
-  10 + Lanes
-  2 Lanes Enhanced
-  4 Lanes Enhanced
-  6 Lanes Enhanced
-  2 Lane Frontage Roads
-  Gandy Blvd (PCA)

TO DETAILED LISTING
COMPLETE DESCRIPTION
ROADWAY PROJECTS.



Still-Congested Roads 2035



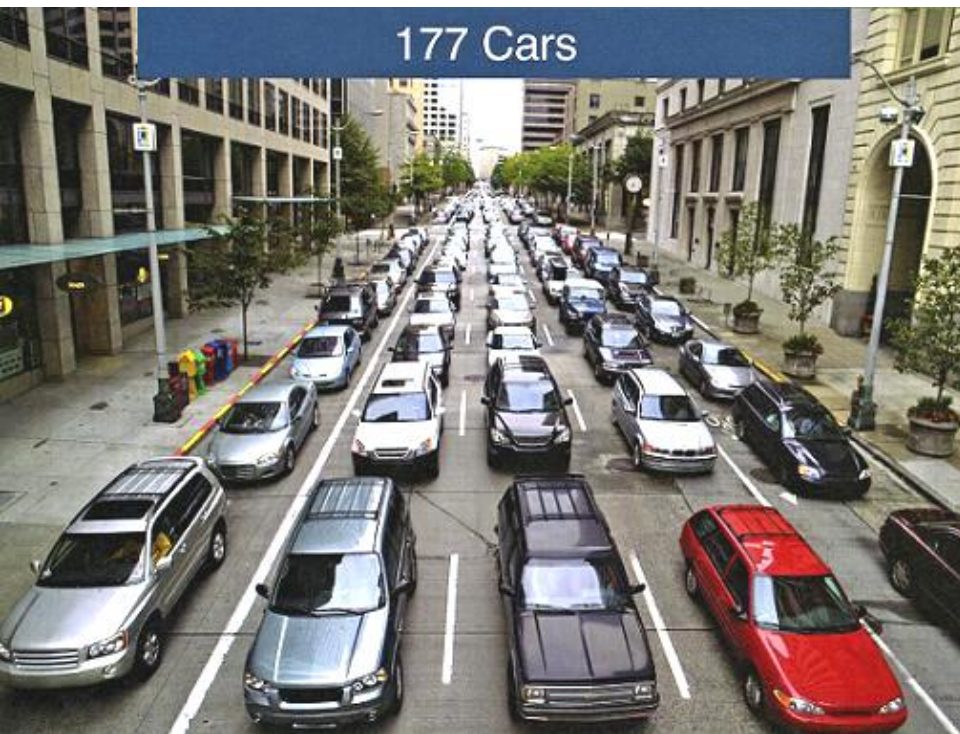
TO DETAILED LISTING COMPLETE DESCRIPTION ROADWAY PROJECTS.

2035 LRTP
3

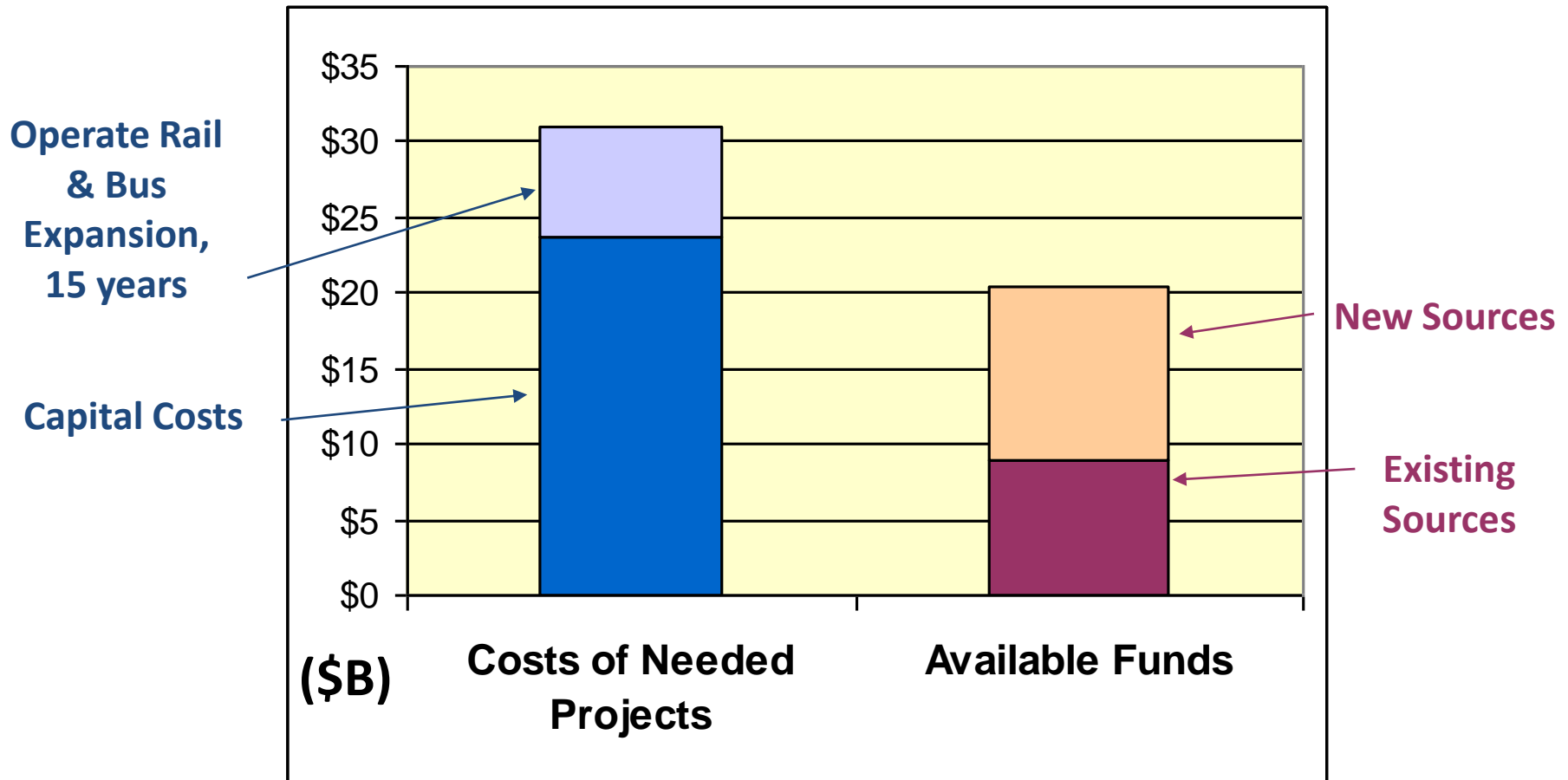


Transit Adds Capacity

**You can't always add a vehicle lane,
but you can add another car to the train**

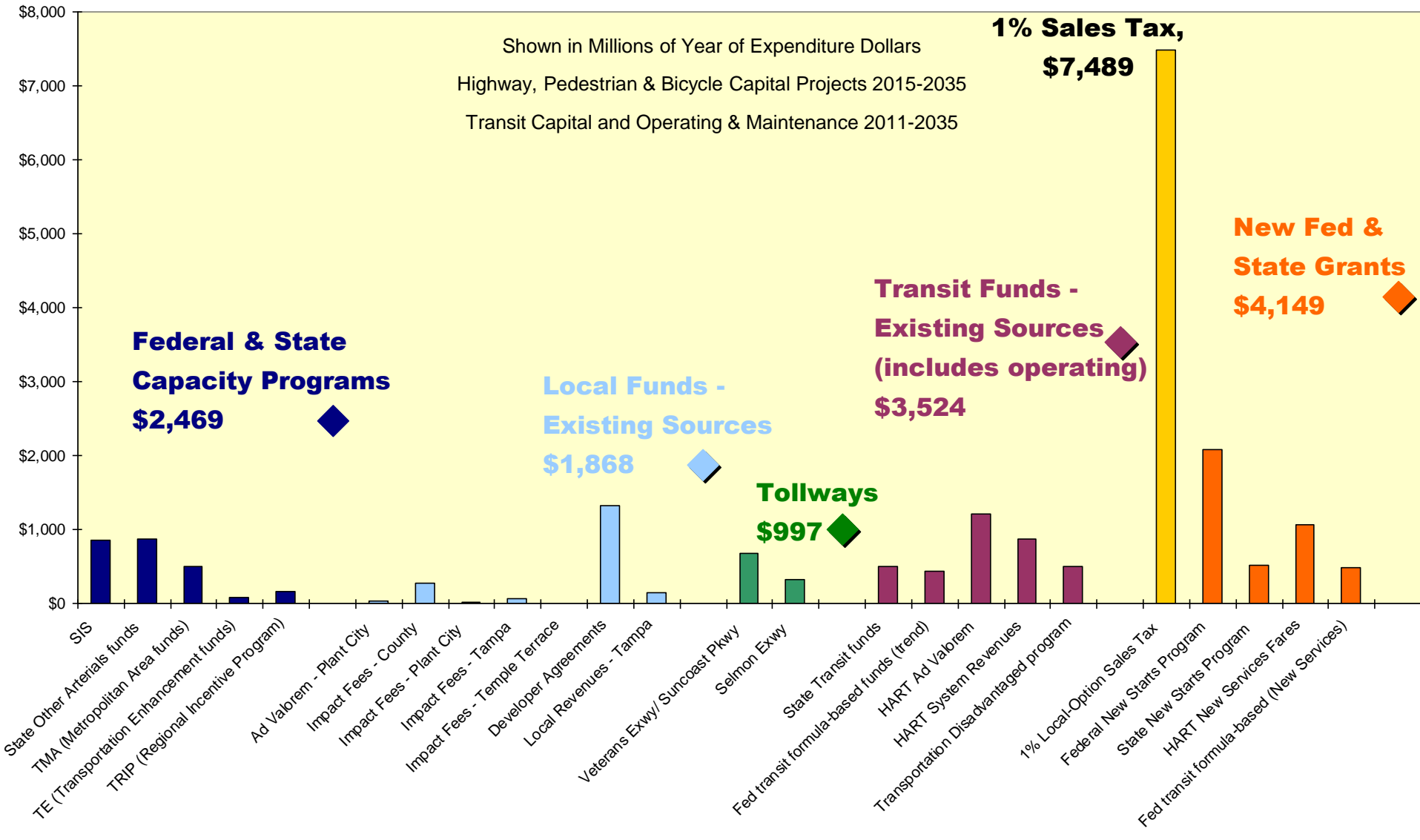


2035 Affordability Outlook



Note: Costs shown are not inflated to year of expenditure.

Potential Funding Sources for 2035 Affordable Projects



Understanding the Voters

#1 Issue: the economy & jobs

- 53% of “no” voters agreed that “We can’t afford it – this is a bad time to raise taxes for anything” was their prime reason
- 52-54% of “yes” voters thought “will create 25,000 jobs” and “will make region attractive to businesses” a good reason-
when prompted



Understanding the Voters

Transportation is still a top concern

- 72% say traffic & transportation are a high priority for local officials to address
- Only 11% of “no” voters said they voted no because “it’s not needed/ transit not necessary”
- Only 18% said “take no additional steps”



Not an Uncommon Experience

Phoenix 2 failed countywide attempts. 2 cities passed, then countywide passed in multijurisdictional approach.

Denver Failed 1997. Bonded existing tax to build first rail segment. Passed 2004.

Seattle Failed 2007 to pass “big package” using 2 taxes. Scaled back, passed 2008.

Tampa Failed 1995 to pass taxes for schools, & public safety. Combined - 1996.

St Louis, Charleston, others



Would any of those strategies work here?

Phoenix: Separate referenda in different jurisdictions, but with a coordinated regional plan & outreach campaign

Denver: Find a way to build one rail segment and demonstrate it works

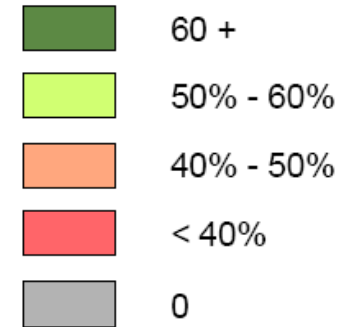
Seattle: Scale back spending, pick key projects



The Voters Have Spoken!

What did they say?

VOTERS APPROVING THE TRANSPORTATION TAX (PERCENTAGE OF BALLOTS CAST)



**Passed in
Tampa &
Temple
Terrace**

**What are the
key projects
elsewhere?**

88% Percent of Population is
Inside Urban Service Area

DOWNTOWN INSET



The Voters Have Spoken!

What did they say?

Frugality was a theme

- “Light rail costs are too high for limited riders” was a convincing argument for more than half of “no” voters
- *Is there a way to reduce the transit costs?*
Commuter rail on existing tracks could be $\frac{1}{4}$ the cost of light rail to build.

The Voters Have Spoken!

What did they say?

Opposition to taxes: another theme

- 41% of “no” voters offered a version of “don’t want to pay more taxes” when asked an open-ended question about why they voted the way they did.
- 20% of “no” voters would prefer seeking a lower tax so some vital improvements can be made
- *Can a tax freeze be part of this?*
E.g., not increasing the local gas tax



The Voters Have Spoken!

What did they say?

Confusion about the Plan

- “Rail plan not finalized, too many missing details” was a convincing argument for more than half of “no” voters
- *Nail down the details well in advance.
Peer-review the cost estimates.*

Revisiting the Plan in 2011

- **Listen to the public** – with focus groups of randomly selected voters from geographic areas around the county
- **Cost reduction strategies** – where will CRT or BRT work as well at less cost?
- **Alternate funding/ financing approaches** – such as DBOM for first segment
- **Interagency Taskforce** – with regional participants



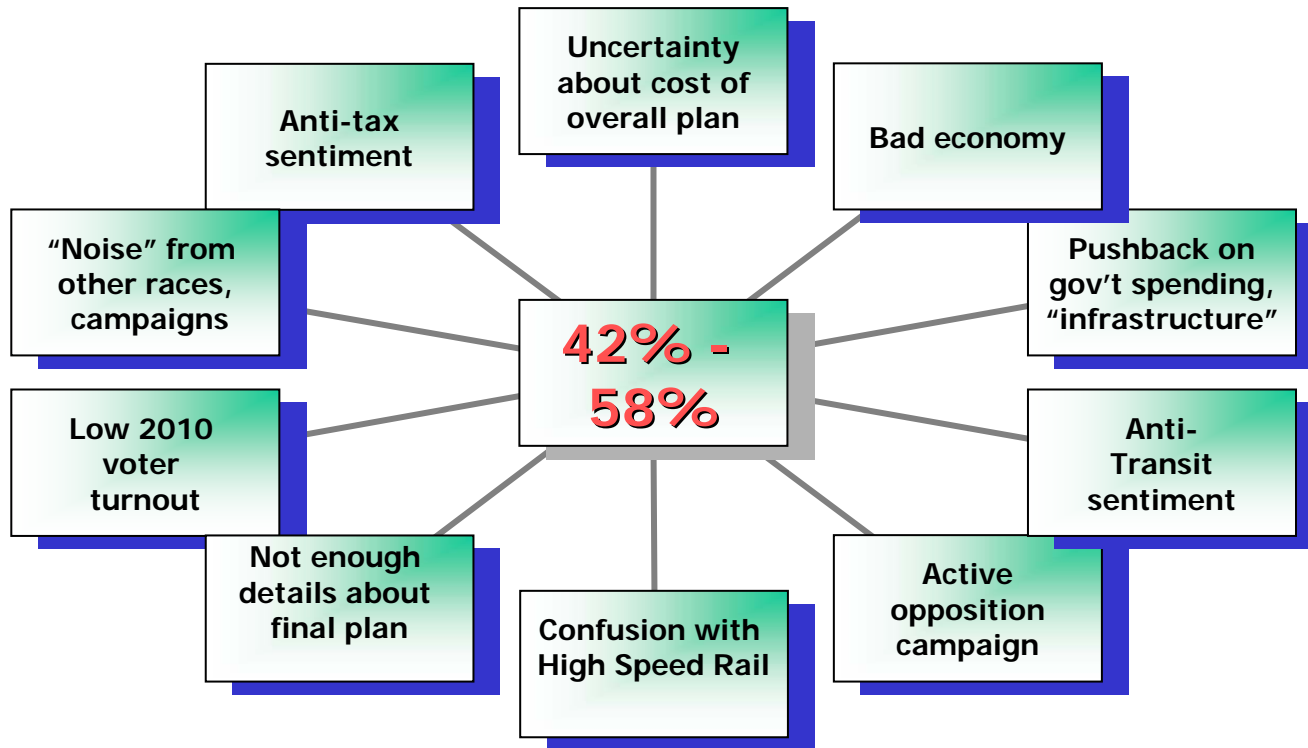


Interagency Working Group
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2035 Long Range Transportation Plan

Focus Group Public Opinion Research Overview

The Context: The November 2010 transportation tax election outcome was due to many factors



Q:

Does the election outcome reflect broader community sentiment about improving the regional transportation system, addressing traffic congestion and investing in transit?



Research objectives

Working in parallel with the technical review process on potential cost reduction strategies and potential funding strategies, the public opinion research objectives are:

- Gather qualitative data on the perceptions of transportation issues – locally, and regionally.
- Better understand the challenges and opportunities—and needs and desires—for transportation improvements in different areas within Hillsborough County
- Get input from Hillsborough County voters on how they view various strategies and options for the LRTP



Focus Group Basics

Interactive, small-group discussions

Allows for a more in-depth conversation than polls or surveys

Can ask probing questions, follow-ups, and provide clarifications

In terms of public opinion, focus groups provide insights on the why people think the way they do, instead of telling us how many or how much

. . .However, cannot provide “quantitative” conclusions



Case Study: Denver – “FasTracks”/RTD regional transportation expansion

Focus groups for 2004 campaign strategy

- Understand contrasts and similarities among voters in different parts of the region
- Key messaging for campaign formed in focus groups
 - Traffic congestion didn't impact most voters personally
 - Solutions should be about trains, not busses
 - Heavily favored transit over roads
 - Desire for a regional system

Focus Groups FasTracks' implementation & update (1/2011)

- Update on regional perceptions of FasTracks
- Understand priorities in terms of timeline & funding
 - Voters still want a regional system that connects to key destinations



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Methodology: Phase I focus groups March 7-10

8 groups arranged by county sub-areas (organized by ZIP codes)

- NW Hillsborough (incl. Carrollwood, Citrus Park)
- NE Hillsborough (incl. Temple Terrace, New Tampa)
- Town & County & Egypt Lake
- Central & East Tampa (incl. Downtown)
- South & West Tampa, including Westshore
- East Hillsborough (incl. Plant City, Dover, Fishhawk Ranch)
- Greater Brandon (incl. Palm River, Mango)
- South Shore (incl. Apollo Beach, Ruskin, Sun City Center)

Randomly selected active voters

- Balance of gender, party affiliation, age in each area

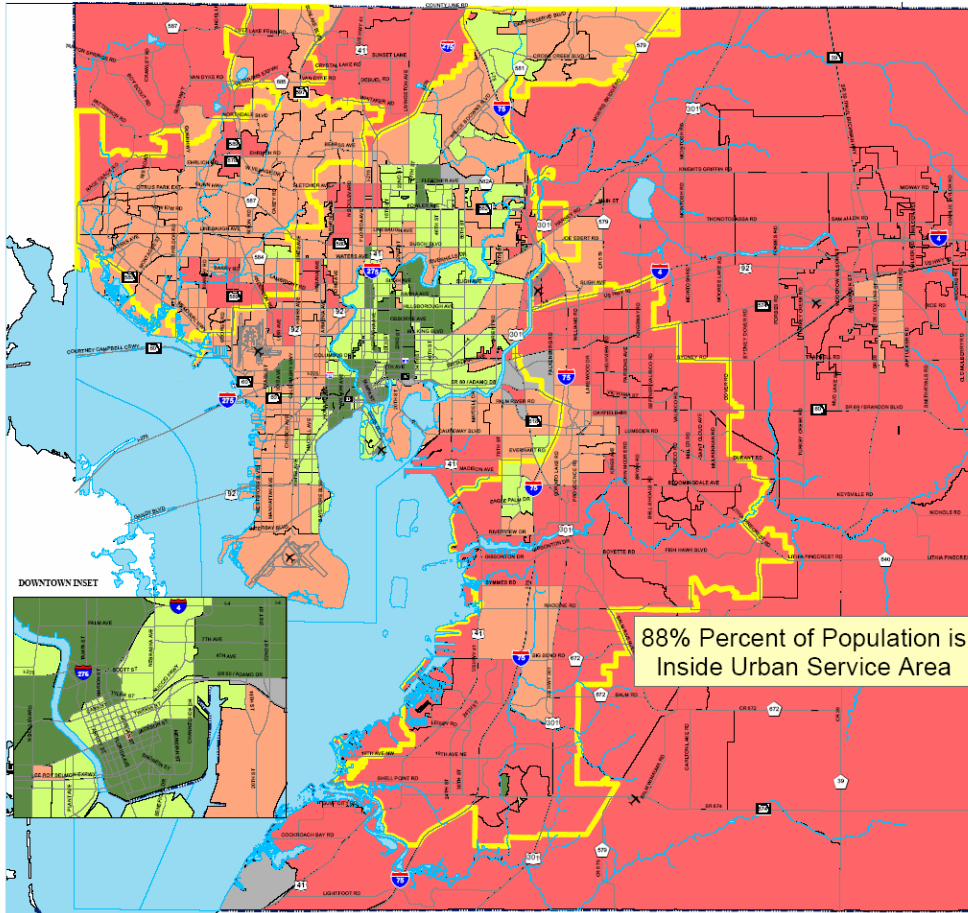
Structured around Discussion Guide

- Build upon recent quantitative research
- Discussion framework for all 8 groups, to give each group the same structure
- Discussion w/ IWG is key input to drafting discussion guide
- Analyze transcripts & tapes for themes, messages, contrasts, reactions

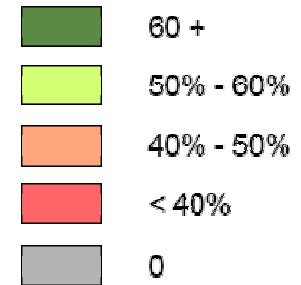
Report back at IWG meeting on April 8

Interagency Working Group

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VOTERS APPROVING THE TRANSPORTATION TAX (PERCENTAGE OF BALLOTS CAST)





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Potential areas of inquiry:

- **Test findings from regional surveys before and after 2010 election**
 - Top issues in county sub-areas, and relationship to transportation
 - Attitudes about traffic, transportation as a regional priority, influence of the economy, details of the MHF plan
- **What's the transportation need or project that should be solved or completed first?**
 - Tension between parochial needs and regional needs
- **Willingness to pay for different options and strategies?**
 - Context of other pressing needs, such as schools



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Potential areas of inquiry

- Perceptions of different modes (options for cost savings to be explored in the LRTP revisit)
- Perceived pros and cons of an incremental or demonstration line approach, vs a comprehensive “all-at-once” approach?
 - Contrasts in perceptions between sub-areas
- Attitudes about funding options—sales tax? gas tax? Other sources?
- Attitudes about public/private partnerships to implement a strategy



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2035 Long Range Transportation Plan

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