

**HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
2035 PLAN REVISIT – INTERAGENCY WORKING GROUP
JULY 13, 2012 1:30 P.M.
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY CENTER, 601 E. KENNEDY BLVD.
18th FLOOR BOARD ROOM
MEETING SUMMARY**

Attendees:

James Shirk	Bike/Ped Advisory Committee
Philip Hale	HART
Don Schings	Sun City Center
Sam Sudman	Sun City Center
Pierre Mathurin	Livable Roads Committee
Randy Goers	City of Tampa
Krista Kelly	Planning Commission
Brad Parrish	City of Temple Terrace
Lee Royal	FDOT
Linda Walker	HART
Chelsea Favero	Pinellas MPO
Bob Lasher	PSTA
Darcy Foster	Hillsborough Aviation Authority
Allison Yeh	Planning Commission
Cassandra Borchers	Lochner
Phil Compton	Sierra Club
Jeff Rogo	Bay Area Apartment Association
Melissa Zornitta	Planning Commission
Mike Williams	Hillsborough County Public Works
Lucia Garsys	Hillsborough County
Calvin Thornton	City of Tampa
Bob Gordon	City of Temple Terrace
Sylvia Castillo	HART
Kathleen Riley	Sierra Club
Ray Chiaramonte	Hillsborough MPO staff
Beth Alden	Hillsborough MPO staff
Rich Clarendon	Hillsborough MPO staff
Katie Habgood	Jacobs/ MPO consultant
Scott Pringle	Jacobs/ MPO consultant
Jennifer Straw	Jacobs/ MPO consultant
Ben Kelly (phone)	The Kenney Group/ MPO consultant

Presentation:

Beth Alden welcomed everyone, and gave a brief background of the study. Ray Chiaramonte provided an update on the legislative efforts in Tallahassee and a summary of the conference he recently attended. Jennifer Straw presented on the best practices research conducted over the past weeks, and Ben Kelly presented the methodology for the statistically valid survey and the potential questions.

Questions/comments from Interagency Working Group (IWG) participants:

Project Mix/Selection and Distribution of Funds

Question/Comment:

In regards to the Minnesota Department of Transportation's investment scenarios for the state plan, Minnesota's methodology may be a good example of determining how to make transportation choices with limited funds. Balancing risk with a spending mix is critical to this area, and it's especially critical to communicate the connection between the two publicly to test what's most important with people.

Question/Comment:

It was noted by voters that the 2010 referendum project list was not specific enough, and should be specific through the life of the plan when it goes out to the public, as opposed to planning for flexibility in later horizon years.

Question/Comment:

Ray Chiaramonte commented that confusion with the 2010 referendum effort and project list may have been partially due to the list being developed too late to be effectively communicated to the public. Any future effort would require a large public education component.

Accountability

Question/Comment:

What criteria are used to define a "major change" to Orange County's (Measure M) expenditure plan, requiring a public vote?

Response: Consultant staff will research and document.

Public Outreach/Education

Question/Comment:

The organization that markets a referendum plan might not communicate the message or the project package in the most appropriate or accurate way.

Question/Comment: How specific were the campaign websites about the project list?

Response:

Consultant staff was unable to determine the specificity but will contact some of the agencies to discuss.

Statistically Significant Survey

Question/Comment:

The questions about the “minor topics” were deemed too complex for the purposes of this survey. Several meeting attendees suggested they be removed.

Response: Complex questions in the survey can help indicate people’s perceptions and their needs while identifying their location in the county. The questions give a good idea of uninformed gut reactions which can provide a “temperature reading” for policy makers.

Question/Comment:

The geographic areas should not be divided by commission districts, but by city boundaries and then known areas of the unincorporated county, such as Carrollwood or Riverview, etc.

Question/Comment:

Because HART is in the midst of a study regarding merging HART and PSTA, the question pertaining to the merger should not be included in this survey.

Question/Comment:

Support was shown of using the term “Tampa Bay area” in the survey.

Response: It was deliberate and is meant to include and relate to all residents of Hillsborough County, incorporated and not

Question/Comment:

Will those taking the survey understand the nuance between light rail transit and commuter rail transit?

Response: That question is a placeholder for asking about a larger, regional system (as opposed to a single demonstration line).

Question/Comment:

Mentioning a future water ferry might be confusing as the service is undefined.

Response: The water ferry question resulted from enthusiastic discussion during the focus groups in March. Ben is interested in seeing how receptive the phone survey respondents are to this idea compared to their geography.

Question/Comment:

Overall, the survey is too long.

Response: The survey is long, but Ben assured the group members it is a draft, and he is working on making it shorter.

Question/Comment:

If the survey only uses telephone landlines, will it reach a diverse enough audience? Does it exclude non-English speakers?

Response: Ben is hoping to get good representation with the traditional phone survey, and while cell phone users are included, there are no special accommodations for non-English speakers at this time.

Question/Comment:

Are some of the questions meant to be educational? Could some seem biased (ie. referring to a “strong” transit system)?

Response: The survey is not intentionally educational or biased. There is not enough time to add much context to the questions.

Question/Comment:

In regards to the first question of the survey that terminates the survey if the respondent is a government employee or member of the media, due to the large number of people employed at/by MacDill Air Force Base or the university, this may inadvertently leave out two large groups of transportation users.

Response: That question might need some more thought.

Question/Comment:

Is there a way to administer the survey using social media?

Response: Some new methodologies are coming out, and there may be some opportunities for qualitative focus groups to go online as an adjunct survey. However, at this time there is not a widely available and tested online survey instrument that provides statistically valid results.

Question/Comment:

Are there other ways for survey respondents to connect with the surveyors if they are interested in responding but not available when called? Will messages be left? Can respondents set up a more convenient time to take the survey? Sometimes people with cell phones don't like using too many minutes.

Response: The surveyors will call back three to four times, and are more than happy to set up an interview time. Surveys, by their nature, are intrusive, and those administering the survey are trained

Question/Comment:

Is there concern over the timing of the survey in regards to the upcoming November elections? Is it possible the election might change voters' opinions on transportation issues?

Response: The timing should be okay to not get caught in the political static, it takes advantage of the perceived weakening power of the anti-tax message. This timing is required to determine which projects will be broadly supported by the community. It allows time to get into more detail, to tweak the possible project list through more feedback, and to coordinate with other agencies.

Question/Comment:

Ben and Beth asked for any additional comments to be submitted to Beth by Friday, July 20. The survey will then be administered, and results will be compiled at the end of July.