

# Transit Future Concepts

*with you in mind*

*Preliminary transit concepts take the long view to 2050*

This issue of Transit Center focuses on transportation choices that will influence the shape and quality of Hillsborough County communities. Building upon public input provided during a series of MPO Transit Study workshops, three Transit Future Concepts were developed. Each concept envisions transit connections between our key activity centers and provides sustainable ways to accommodate new residents and jobs. From these concepts, a single, comprehensive Transit Future will emerge.

To learn more about previous MPO Transit Study efforts, visit our web site [www.mpotransit.org](http://www.mpotransit.org).



Lifestyles & Perspectives.....pg 2



Community Voices.....pg 3



Where We Are Growing.....pg 4



Transit Futures.....pg 5-7



Transit Benefits All of Us.....pg 8-9



Future That You See.....pg 11-12

## Growth and Our Future

Population growth projections for the county and the region are fueling a community conversation about how Hillsborough County should grow. In 2050, the number of new county residents will roughly match the population of Atlanta, Houston or Dallas. These projections raise important questions about how to accommodate this growth while maintaining the viability and livability of our cities, neighborhoods and rural areas.

Adding to the conversation is how to accommodate the escalating regional trips to and from Hillsborough County's major employment centers. By 2050, the Tampa Bay region's population will increase by approximately three million residents to over seven million.

There's no question that growth within and outside Hillsborough County will place additional demands on our infrastructure, but are there smarter ways to move people and support growth in our communities?

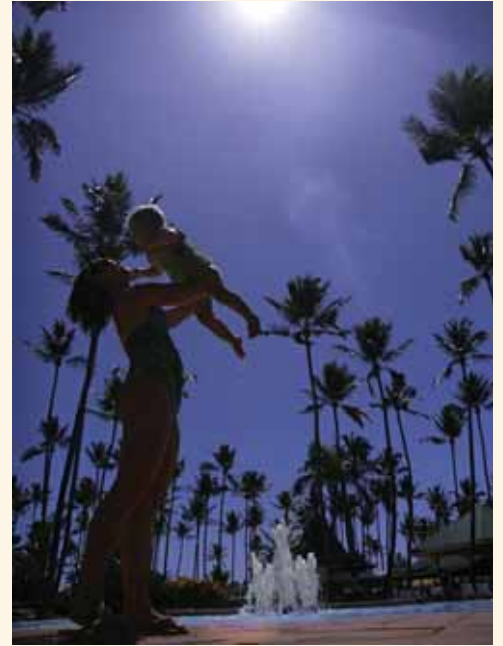
TRANSIT CENTER

# Put More Living in your life

## Lifestyles Made Better with Transit

Transportation affects each one of us in a personal way. No matter where you live, time spent in traffic means less time doing the things you really want to do, like being with your family, producing at work, staying fit or contributing to your community.

At the same time transit frees your hands from the steering wheel by offering another way of getting around, it also can enhance the livability and sustainability of our communities.



### Active Seniors

"When we moved to Sun City Center we wanted to maintain our active lifestyle. Light rail is great for trips to the university library, Performing Arts Center and regional malls."



### Nature Advocate

"Growth is pressuring the conversion of rural areas for new housing. I support a transit investment that allows more development opportunities in urban areas so that future generations can experience nature."

### City Dweller

"I've lightened my expense and used the savings for a great downtown condo. I occasionally rent a car for weekend trips."



### Suburban Family

"Now that we can easily get to downtown, my family enjoys more weekend trips to festivals, sporting events and museum exhibits. I feel better that we're using the car less and doing more to keep Hillsborough green."



### Business Owner

"Traffic tie-ups were presenting real obstacles to attracting and keeping skilled workers. With transit as an option, we won't have to relocate in order to grow and prosper."



### Commuter

"I drive to the park and ride lot at the train station and shave 30 minutes off my morning commute by using the train. Now there's time to read the newspaper."



# Community Voices

## Community Values

Values define what we stand for and what is important to us as individuals, organizations and communities. The Transit Future Concepts are rooted in a set of core community values that the MPO learned about in a series of focus group workshops last year. Hillsborough County has a long tradition of richly diverse communities, often with unique perspectives on lifestyle and the quality of places. But along with differences are common threads that weave us together as one community. The focus groups illuminated our shared values and spoke of those values in terms of growth, transportation and quality of life. Our shared values are embodied in the photos and captions on this page.



"I want more quality time spent with my family and friends, and less time in traffic."



"I like a growing economy, but if traffic grows with it, will gridlock choke the economy?"



"Traffic cuts through my community. I want to feel safe on my street, and I want my child and my parents to be safe, too."



"Give me more reliable travel times."



"I want goods and services to be more accessible, especially since I don't drive."



"Let's grow our small towns and save some open space rather than sprawling everywhere."

### Transit Scenarios Workshops Consolidated Map

The community came together in March to share their ideas on how important places should be linked with transit (for example, light rail and bus service). Connections to future places were also envisioned. The map above compiles all the ideas that resulted from the workshops.

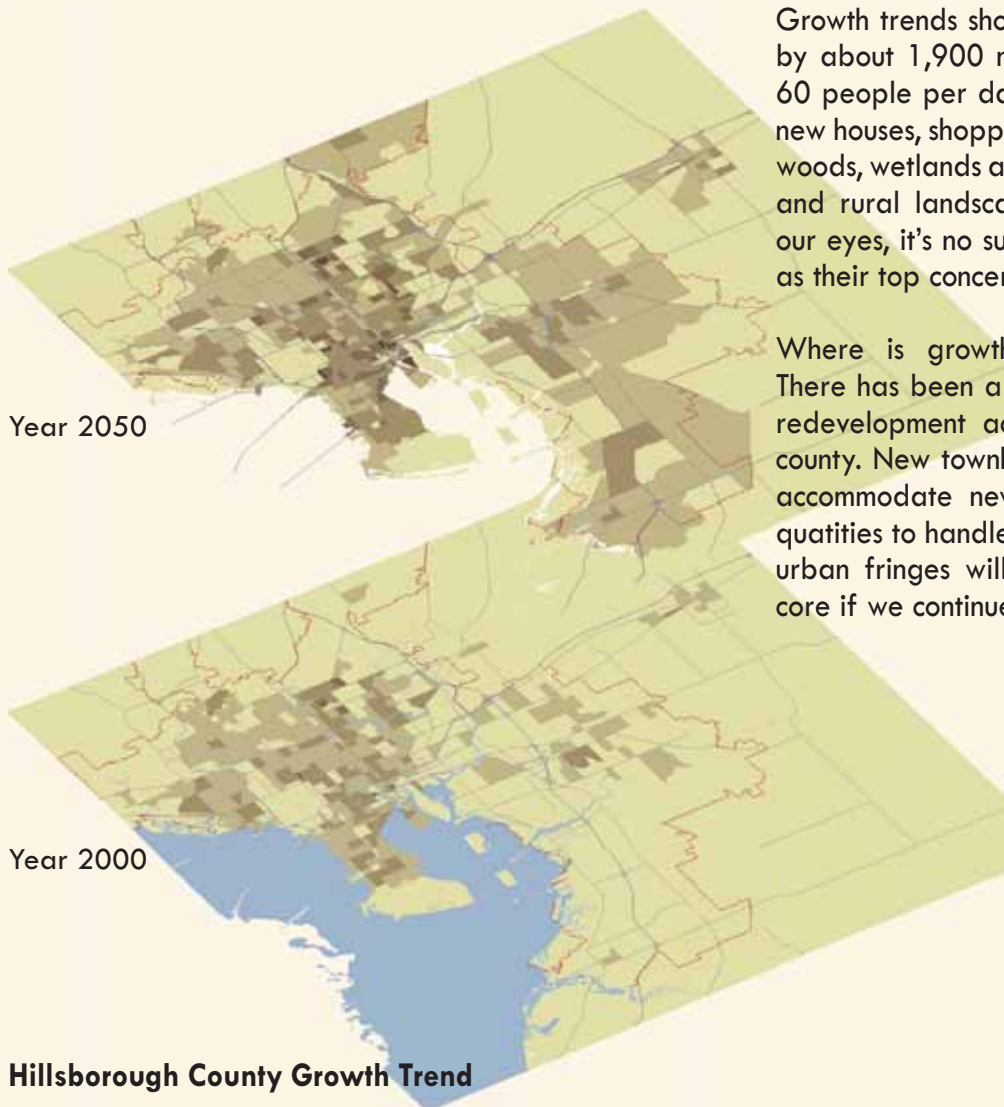


# Where We Are Growing

## Current Trends Provide View of 2050

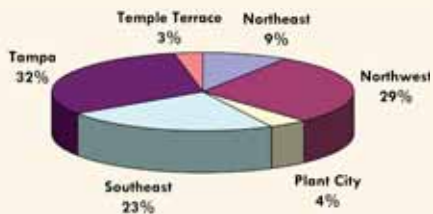
Growth trends show that Hillsborough County is growing by about 1,900 new residents per month or more than 60 people per day. Very often when newcomers arrive, new houses, shopping centers and roads take the place of woods, wetlands and farms. With so many new households and rural landscapes that seemingly transform before our eyes, it's no surprise that area residents rank growth as their top concern.

Where is growth occurring in Hillsborough County? There has been a fair amount of infill development and redevelopment activity within urbanized areas of the county. New townhouses and condos in these areas help accommodate new residents however, not in sufficient quantities to handle all of our growth. Development at the urban fringes will increasingly outpace Tampa's urban core if we continue the present development trend.

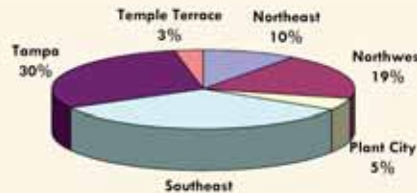


### Hillsborough County Growth Trend

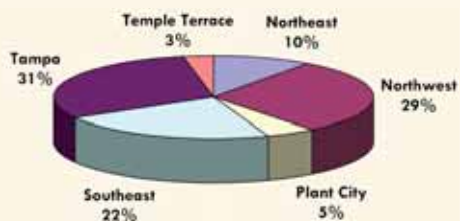
Households 2000



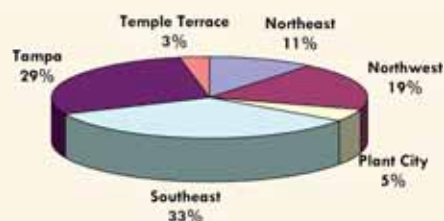
Households 2050



Employment 2000



Employment 2050



Projected population and jobs growth trends suggest that in 2050 there will be a shift from the built areas in the urban core to the suburban and rural areas.

# Finding A Better Way

## What if a Mobility Strategy Allowed More With Less?

Current growth and development patterns suggest a future where the county's green and rural places account for a greater share of land developed for new homes and jobs. An alternative to greenfield development is to tap the unmet potential of existing urban places to meet the needs of tomorrow's population. Infill development and redevelopment in neighborhoods near transit stations would make efficient use of existing infrastructure and community facilities, such as schools, parks and libraries.

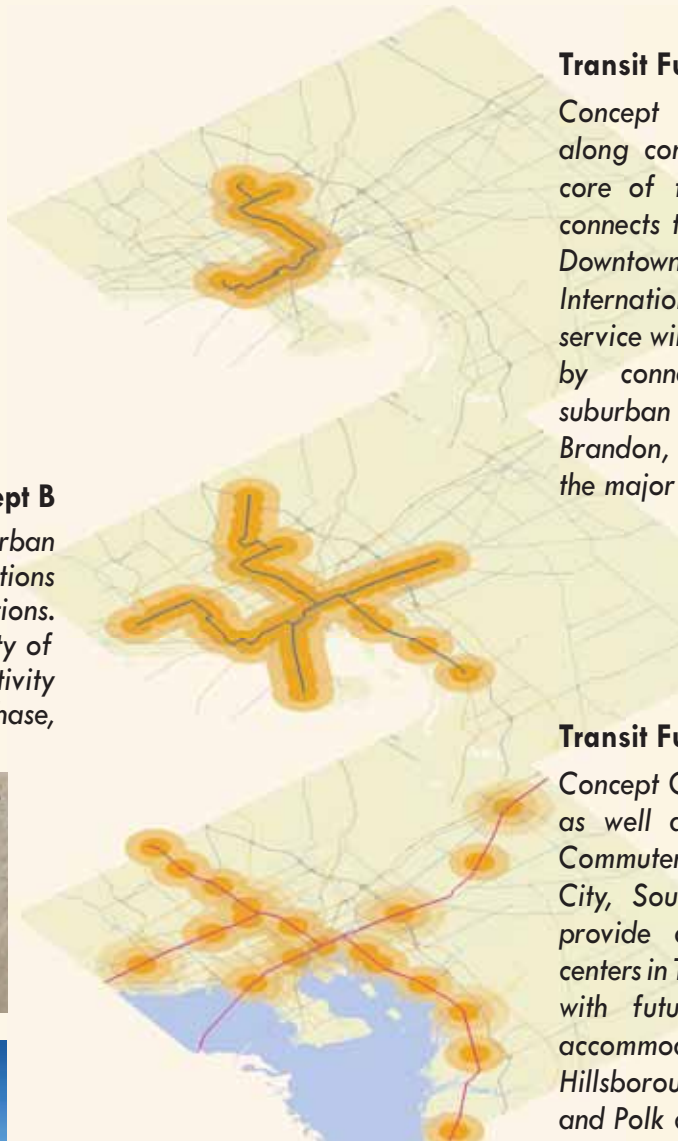
**Transit-Oriented Neighborhoods** include a mix of housing, retail and employment that are arranged to encourage pedestrian activity and provide greater concentration of uses within direct access to the transit system. A strong relationship between transit and the area around transit stations allow station area neighborhoods to be walkable, high quality living environments.

Each of the **Transit Future Concepts** introduced below advances a balanced strategy for transit mobility and future land use in Hillsborough County. Every Transit Future Concept assumes the support of the road network, bus system with feeder and circulator buses, sidewalks, bikeways and multi-use trails that contribute to the mobility of a diversity of users.



### Transit Future Concept B

Concept B builds on Concept A's urban area focus, plus direct rail connections between major suburban locations. Transit spokes radiate from the City of Tampa to provide improved connectivity to Brandon, New Tampa, Westchase, and SouthShore.



### Transit Future Concept A

Concept A focuses transit service along congested corridors in the urban core of the City of Tampa. Light rail connects the University of South Florida, Downtown Tampa, Westshore and Tampa International Airport, while premium bus service will supplement the transit network by connecting activity centers and suburban areas such as Seminole Heights, Brandon, New Tampa and Westchase to the major employment areas.



### Transit Future Concept C

Concept C connects major county centers as well as provides regional linkages. Commuter rail connections from Plant City, SouthShore, Lutz and Westchase provide access to major employment centers in Tampa's urban core. Connectivity with future regional rail transit will accommodate commuters to and from Hillsborough, Manatee, Pasco, Pinellas and Polk counties.

### Hillsborough's Transit Future

Hillsborough's Transit Future will be created through further evaluation of the Transit Future Concepts. Ultimately, one, all, or some combination of the elements presented in these concepts will be selected as Hillsborough's Transit Future.



# Transit Future Concepts

## Features and Characteristics

### Hillsborough County Population Density

\* The current growth projections indicate that by 2050 the population of Hillsborough County will have increased by over one million people and over 750 thousand jobs. These concepts illustrate that one-fifth or one-half of the growth can be accommodated within walking distance and up to one half mile of transit stations.

Three Transit Future Concepts have been prepared to help determine a consolidated Transit Future for Hillsborough County. The study's evaluation process allow us to analyze the concepts to identify how they can best enhance mobility, economic vitality and overall quality of life within our communities.

For example, when the county's projected 2050 growth trend (described on page 4) is compared to each concept, transit can support about one-fifth to over one-half of the future growth within station area neighborhoods.

### Concept A

Miles of transit way: 23 miles

Number of stations: 26

% of 2050 population growth projection: 17%\*

% of 2050 employment growth projection: 23%\*

### Concept B

Miles of transit way: 54 miles

Number of stations: 57

% of 2050 population growth projection: 40%\*

% of 2050 employment growth projection: 39%\*

### Concept C

Miles of transit way: 93 miles

Number of stations: 20

% of 2050 population growth projection: 30%\*

% of 2050 employment growth projection: 29%\*

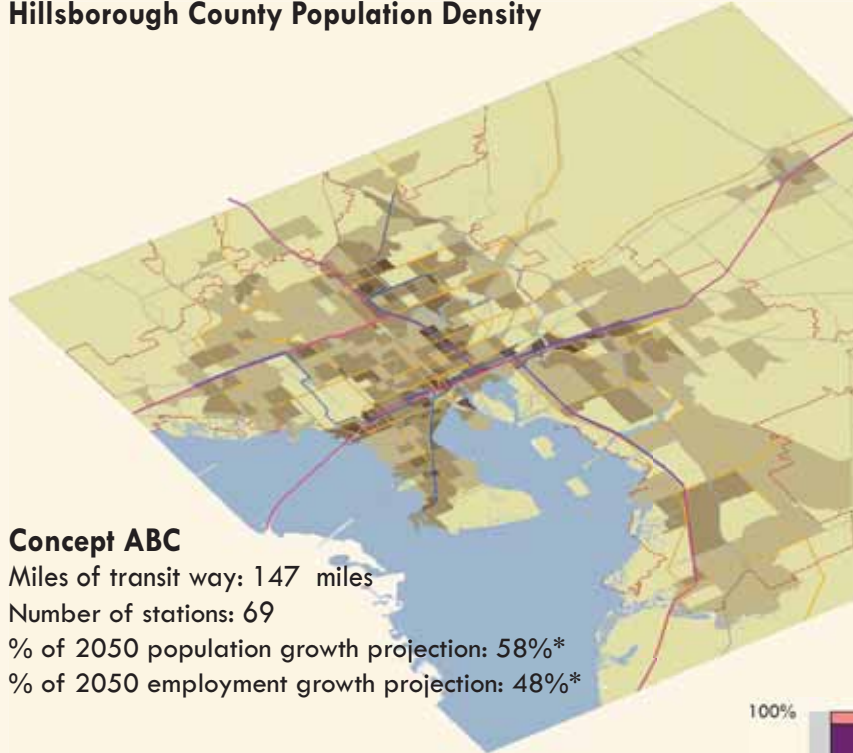
### Mobility

The Transit Future Concepts enhance mobility by offering an alternative to travel on congested roads and result in time savings to the rider. The transit system supports and improves access to major employment and activity centers and links Hillsborough County to the region. The transit system directs and encourages higher density growth in urban centers and provides convenient travel choices between these areas. Another mobility enhancing aspect is the walkable character of station area neighborhoods. A mixture of residences, shops and workplaces oriented to each other and the transit station allow people easy walking access to places in their station area neighborhood, as well as to those along the entire transit system. A network of local, feeder and circulator bus service enhances accessibility to points beyond station area neighborhood.

# Transit Future Concepts

## Features and Characteristics

### Hillsborough County Population Density



### Quality of Life

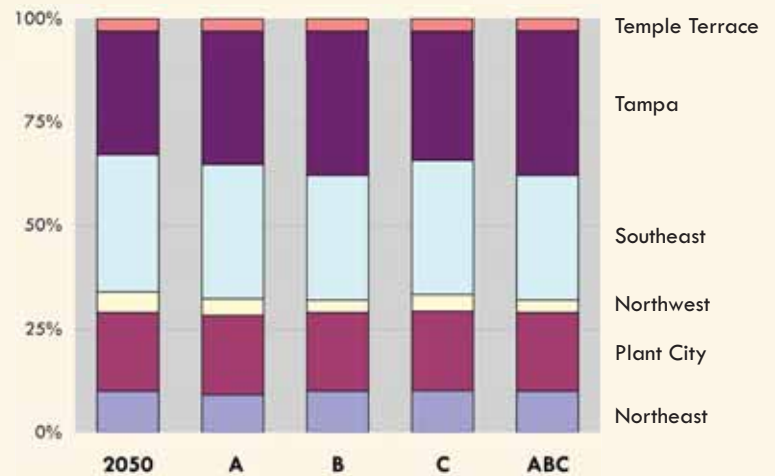
Quality of life means different things to different people. In a basic sense, it requires things like clean air, safe streets, access to opportunity and freedom to move. On a grand scale, the Transit Futures Concepts contribute to quality of life ideals by providing expanded opportunities for mobility and increasing economic competitiveness in regional and global markets. The concepts are a means to new mixed use areas and revitalized neighborhoods that offer jobs, goods and services that are closer to where people live. A smaller urban footprint means that more rural places and the natural functions they support can be conserved for future generations. With convenient transit, families can own fewer cars and have more time for things in our lives that matter most.

### Economic Vitality

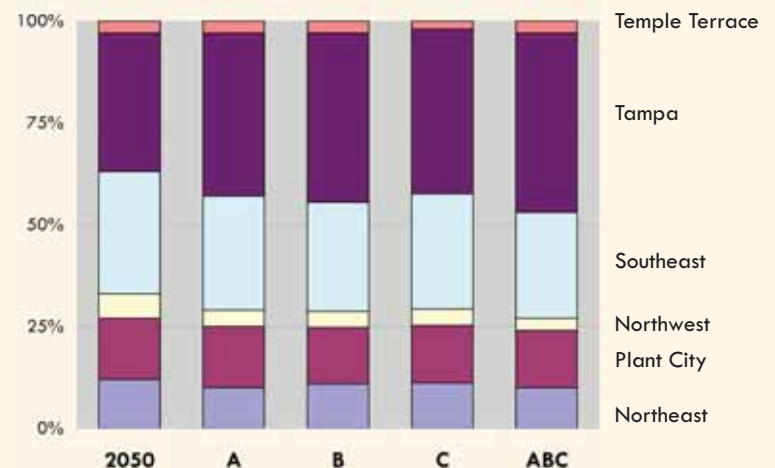
Land development rules tied to the traffic carrying ability of roads are a limiting factor to development. Transit not only adds capacity to the transportation network by providing another efficient way for people to travel but also opens opportunities for development where growth is desirable. Under the current trend, capacity constraints would drive development to greenfields at the urban periphery. Aside from eroding the rural and suburban areas, the major concern with this future is that people will need to use increasingly congested roads in the urban area for the daily commute to work.

As compared to the growth trend, the Transit Futures Concepts illustrate the ability for the county's urbanized areas (i.e. City of Tampa) to remain competitive and expand their capacity to accommodate new jobs and population growth. Likewise, the suburban areas maintain their current rate of growth (i.e. Southeast and Northwest county) and are better able to accommodate it through transit.

The 2050 Household and Employment Projections chart (right) shows that the relative percentage remain about the same compared to the Trend (page 4).



2050 Household Projections by Area/Concept



2050 Employment Projections by Area/Concept





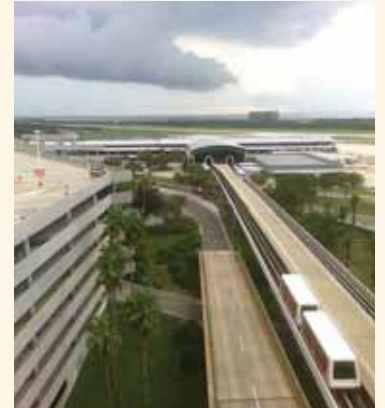
# Even if You Don't Ride

## A Transit Future Can Benefit You

A comprehensive transit system is an investment that will serve the whole community, even people who choose to drive instead of using transit. Hillsborough's Transit Future Concepts have broad purposes that extend beyond mobility. By supporting greater access, opportunity and choice, the concepts promote economic vitality and quality of life for all.

### Benefits of Transit

- Provides an alternative to the automobile in heavily traveled corridors.
- Supports efficient land use patterns through higher density infill development and redevelopment.
- Promotes walkable, self-contained station area neighborhoods that serve as focal points of community life.
- Minimizes air and water pollution as well as energy consumption.
- Enhances access to jobs and education.
- Enhances viability of economic development with better access to jobs and services throughout the Tampa Bay area.
- Enables a higher standard of living by allowing households to spend less on transportation.
- Provides better connectivity to adjacent counties of Manatee, Pasco, Sarasota, Hernando, Polk and Pinellas
- Enhances accessibility to arts, culture, sports and entertainment venues, colleges and universities and transportation hubs such as Tampa International Airport and Port of Tampa
- Improves competitiveness with other cities to keep our future work force in Tampa Bay.





# Imagine the Possibilities

## Transit-Oriented Development

### Walkable & Accessible

Premium transit builds great neighborhoods! The walkable character of these places is by design so that people can quickly and easily walk to destinations, including the transit station.

### Special, Sustainable & Irresistible

The transit technology and station locations influence the range of land uses and level of development intensity within each station area neighborhood. Generally, these areas will span one-quarter to one-half mile around the station (the equivalent of a five to ten minute walk). Efficient and creative use of space makes transit neighborhoods special and irresistible places where people want to live, work and play.

### Permanent, Predictable, Powerful

Station area neighborhoods centered around rail transit are very attractive to private investment. New housing, shops and offices often arrive in advance of transit system construction.

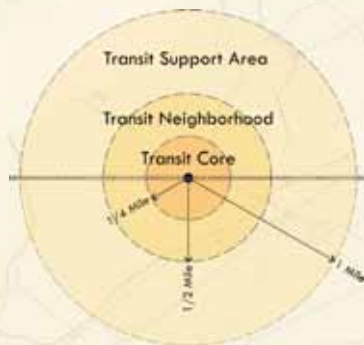
COMMUTER/REGIONAL RAIL



LIGHT RAIL



### BUS



One-quarter to one-half mile represents a five to ten minute walk.



# All Aboard!!

## The MPO Transit Study

### Mobility, Economic Vitality & Quality of Life

Along with mobility, the study is tuned into ways that transit service can help sustain Hillsborough's economic vitality and quality of life. The MPO Transit Study is being conducted to assess countywide mobility needs and provide long term solutions to the year 2050.

### Why?

Without plans for mobility choices, local and regional population growth will further congest roads and have negative effects on mobility, economic vitality and quality of life in Hillsborough County.

### Which transportation modes does the study address?

Transit is the emphasis of the study. The study assumes the support of a background network of bus, pedestrian and bicycle ways and roads.

### Who?

The Hillsborough County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), a federally mandated agency responsible for long range transportation planning in Hillsborough County.

### Ways to be Involved...

During the current phase of the study, the MPO continues to seek feedback on the Transit discussions. Presentations are scheduled for the MPO Transit study committees and the MPO Board and Sub-committees. For more information on MPO Transit Study, please visit the study web site at [www.mpotransit.org](http://www.mpotransit.org) or call 813.272.5940.



## Next Steps

### A Comprehensive Transit Future

The merits of these Transit Future Concepts will be examined and meld into a draft Comprehensive Transit Future that will be considered for adoption by the MPO Board. An implementation strategy for the Transit Vision would have to be developed, along with detailed engineering studies and cost evaluation before the transit system could be implemented. An open public participation process would ensure opportunity for public input on transit system decision-making.

### Getting There: Implementing the Vision

Turning the Transit Vision into reality will require focused and ongoing leadership, development of a realistic strategy, the creation and adoption of institutional reform, such as comprehensive plan amendments that support station area neighborhoods and mechanisms for public and private partnerships for transit system funding.

## Cornerstones of Implementation





# Do you see a Transit Future? (continued from back cover)

5. If you answered yes to question 3, how would you most likely access the transit station? (please check)
- a. Walk \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Drive and park my car in a park and ride lot \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Be driven and dropped off by someone else \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. Bike and park my bicycle \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. Bike and bring my bicycle to my next destination \_\_\_\_\_
  - f. Take a bus \_\_\_\_\_

6. Do you think that a comprehensive transit system will help solve Hillsborough County's mobility and growth issues? Yes No

7. I do not see a Transit Future for Hillsborough. Other ways to solve Hillsborough County's mobility and growth issues should be explored. Agree Disagree

*E-mail more your style?*

Visit the project web site at [www.mpotransit.org](http://www.mpotransit.org) to submit your comments via e-mail.

---

---

---

---



No Postage  
Necessary if  
Mailed in the  
United States



**BUSINESS REPLY MAIL**  
FIRST-CLASS MAIL PERMIT NO 8861 TAMPA FLORIDA

POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE

THE PLANNING COMMISSION  
P.O. BOX 1110  
TAMPA, FLORIDA 33601-1110





PRSRT STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
TAMPA, FL  
PERMIT 295

601 East Kennedy Boulevard 18th Floor  
P.O. Box 1110  
Tampa, Florida 33601-1110  
085101

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

## Do you see a Transit Future?

Your input is valuable to help guide recommendations and decision-making for the MPO Transit Study. Please complete the questionnaire below and return it with any additional comments you may have to the address provided by September 17, 2007. To mail, tear this page from the newsletter, fold to show the MPO's address below, secure the loose end with tape and place in a U.S. mail box. Postage is provided. Thank you!

1. I envision a comprehensive transit system in Hillsborough's future. Agree    Disagree
2. If a comprehensive transit system were built, do you feel it would benefit you? Yes    No
3. Would you and/or other members of your household use it? Yes    No
4. If you answered yes to question 3, which destinations listed below should be served by transit?  
(Please rate by importance with 1 being most important and 5 being least)
  - a. Work places \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Entertainment/cultural events \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Tampa International Airport \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. Schools, colleges, universities \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. Shopping \_\_\_\_\_
  - f. Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

Questionnaire continued on reverse side...