

Annual Report

2018



Plan
Hillsborough

Message from the Executive Director



*Melissa Zornitta, AICP
Executive Director*

At Plan Hillsborough, our goal with everything we do is to make our community a better place to live, work, and play. Whether it is reviewing a site plan zoning for a specific piece of property or a large scale regional project, all have the same goal of trying to advance the community's vision as outlined in the Comprehensive Plans and the Long Range Transportation Plan. These guide how we will grow, what transportation choices we will have and how we will protect our community assets. As I reflect on our work in 2018, I see small and large steps towards those goals across the community.

There are big projects like our record-breaking outreach on It's TIME Tampa Bay. Coordinating with Pinellas and Pasco MPOs, we worked together to develop three very different transportation investment scenarios to see how they would influence our community's growth. We received unprecedented input from the community with nearly 10,000 people across the three counties weighing in. It was exciting to tackle this project in a new way with this regional approach and to get such valuable feedback from the community. This shapes not only the

Long Range Transportation Plan, which will be updated in 2019, but also the policy initiatives studied for the Comprehensive Plans.

Smaller projects also have a big impact on the evolution of our community. Studies of specific roadway corridors like North Alexander Street in Plant City and proactive plan amendments in the City of Tampa have been opportunities to look at trends and make sure our land use plans are reflective of changes in our community. Examples, such as the Fowler Avenue Study, are important to make sure the vision for how roadways will transform and redevelop guides the type of transportation and infrastructure improvements that will be made. And projects like Garden Steps look at how, even at the more micro neighborhood level, we can influence the land use and transportation system to support people having access to healthy food.

I hope as you review our annual report you will see the breadth and depth of planning that our agency has tackled over the last year. Whether large or small, we hope these projects have a meaningful impact on the future of our community. We look forward to the opportunity to continue to shape the future – with your help – in 2019.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Melissa Zornitta".

2018 Hillsborough County City-County Planning Commissioners

Mitch Thrower, Chair
Jacqueline S. Wilds, Vice Chair
Nigel M. Joseph, Member-at-Large
Matthew Buzza*
Amber K. Dickerson, AICP, School District Ex-Officio*
John Dicks
Derek L. Doughty, PE
Christopher Farkas, School District Ex-Officio*

Theodore Trent Green, RA
Karen Kress, AICP
Michael Maurino
Shaun Metzger*
Cody Powell
Tony Rodriguez, AICP, MacDill AFB Ex-Officio
Jennifer Willman

** Members for part of FY 2018*



Welcome to **PLAN HILLSBOROUGH**

Community planning touches nearly every facet of our lives – where we live and work, how we get around, opportunities for recreation, and how we access needed services. How our community grows and changes in the future is shaped by the plans we make today.

At the heart of a Tampa Bay region of more than 2.8 million residents, Plan Hillsborough provides long-range planning for Unincorporated Hillsborough County and the cities of Tampa, Temple Terrace, and Plant City. Each of these local jurisdictions is required to have a long-range Comprehensive Plan, adopted by local elected officials.

Our Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) identifies high priority projects and funding forecasts for improving all types of transportation over the next 20+ years, in anticipation of growth of more than 600,000 new residents by 2045. The LRTP is pivotal in securing state and federal funding for transportation.

The Comprehensive Plan and LRTP work hand in hand to guide our community's future. Incremental projects and steps, along with updates to the plans, advance our vision and goals.

Public engagement is at the center of all we do. Plan Hillsborough and its partners take great pride in involving as many citizens as possible -- of all races and ethnicities and at all socio-economic levels -- in planning for our future.

Learn more about Plan Hillsborough inside.

**PLANNING
FOR
THE
FUTURE**



**Vibrant
Neighborhoods**



**Transportation
Alternatives**



**Protecting
Habitats**



**Urban, Suburban and
Rural Lifestyles**



**Walk and Bike
Safety**



**Recreational
Opportunities**



**Thriving Urban
Core**



**Less Traffic and
Cleaner Air**



**Conserving
Resources**

Our Work

Plan Hillsborough conducts long-range land use, transportation, infrastructure, and environmental planning that guides how and where we will grow, what transportation choices we will have, and how to protect our community assets. With a common goal of advancing the community's vision for the future, we are responsible for developing state-mandated Comprehensive Plans as well as a Long-Range Transportation Plan spanning a planning horizon of 20+ years. Updates to these plans are intended to keep pace with changes and emerging trends. The agency also oversees plan amendments and conducts specialized studies and consistency reviews for requested changes to the comprehensive plans.

Online or in-person, Plan Hillsborough can help you access key information and answers to frequently asked questions such as:

- > What are the allowable uses and density for my property?
- > What development is occurring or planned nearby?
- > What transportation projects are being built over the next five years with state and federal funds?
- > How do I request a change to the Comprehensive Plan?
- > How can I access county and city demographic data, population, and growth trends?
- > Where can I find information on permits?
- > What can I do to make my community more pedestrian and bicycle-friendly?

BUILDING THRIVING COMMUNITIES

Get Involved

We encourage public involvement at meetings, special forums, and events. You also might consider joining one of several committees reporting directly to our boards. Plan Hillsborough is available to speak to neighborhood and civic associations on a wide variety of topics, and you can keep up to date on the latest news and events by subscribing to our monthly **Connections to Tomorrow** e-newsletter!

Meet Our Staff



Plan Hillsborough staff has expertise in a wide range of planning topics, from land use and transportation to infrastructure, GIS mapping, and environmental protection, to name just a few. This allows us to study complex issues comprehensively from different perspectives, while also making us better able to assist our customers more efficiently.



Inspiring Future Planners

Plan Hillsborough also prides itself in developing future leaders through our annual **Future Leaders in Planning (FLiP)** student program. Designed to introduce high school students to urban planning as a potential career, the intensive program is a big hit with students and parents. Our agency also provides numerous internships for college students and two working fellowships each year to USF Masters in Urban and Regional Planning students.

VISIT OUR LIBRARY

Stop by and visit Hillsborough County Center's best kept secret, the research and public library located on the 18th floor. Citizens, planners, and historians will find an extensive collection of maps and historical urban plans, mid-century photographs, and local historical studies - plus a curated collection of best-selling books and the best reading nook around.

SEARCH PLAN AMENDMENTS

View current amendment requests and access historical data going back to the year 2000 using our new plan amendment search tool, online at planhillsborough.org

ACCESS HEALTH DATA

The Hillsborough Health Atlas is your one-stop resource for the latest health data and demographics. The online public mapping tool tracks chronic diseases such as asthma, access to healthcare and transportation, and environmental health, to highlight just a few. Access at planhillsborough.org.

FY 2018 By the numbers



55

PLAN AMENDMENTS

- 18 Unincorporated Hillsborough County
- 5 Temple Terrace
- 24 Tampa
- 8 Plant City

number of amendments to the Future Land Use Map or text of the Comprehensive Plan, to change the density, intensity or range of allowable uses for a property or land area

SPECIAL PROJECTS

independent land use or planning projects conducted for a client government or partner organization

15

CONSISTENCY REVIEWS

reviews of proposed rezonings, annexations, right-of-way vacations, and port permits to ensure consistency with Comprehensive Plan goals, policies and objectives

356

420

presentations to community groups

9,575

respondents to It's TIME Tampa Bay survey, giving input on future growth and transportation scenarios



1

U.S. response record for MetroQuest survey



3,220

clients served

\$260,000

new grants secured



11,197 followers



2,300 likes



94,268 web visits



10,630 email subscribers

15 AWARD RECIPIENTS

honored at the 36th Annual Planning & Design Awards

Consolidated Strategic Planning



Plan Hillsborough's 2018-2023 Strategic Plan was developed with input and direction from the three boards it serves - the Hillsborough County City-County Planning Commission, the Hillsborough Metropolitan Planning Organization, and the Hillsborough River Interlocal Planning Board. The development process began in March with a survey of board members followed by a retreat to identify strategic priorities and strategies for the next five years.

Learn more online at planhillsborough.org

Strategies were developed to guide improvements in each of the priority areas. By creating a consolidated plan that provides direction across and between boards, Plan Hillsborough is focused on continuously improving the quality and efficiency of its work. The consolidated Strategic Plan also enhances how we engage with the public and our planning partners, by leveraging resources to create and sustain a thriving future and quality of life for our community. Semi-annual internal reviews are conducted along with regular updates to the boards to evaluate progress.

Seven strategic priority areas emerged:

- Linking Land Use and Transportation
- Enabling Transportation Choices
- Citizen Engagement
- Opportunities for Regional Collaboration
- Planning Partnerships
- Internal Agency Enhancements
- Technology and Innovation

Melissa Dickens, AICP, Strategic Planning and Policy Manager



Regional Collaboration

2018 marked the first time that the MPOs of Hillsborough, Pinellas, and Pasco counties collaborated in developing potential growth and transportation scenarios for 2045.

With 2.8 million residents, Tampa Bay is already one of the 20 most populated regions in the country and growing rapidly. By 2045, the population will increase by another one million residents. Planning for such intensive growth and associated transportation needs -- *both within Hillsborough County and regionally* -- is no easy task. Locally, the Hillsborough MPO coordinated closely with the cities of Tampa, Temple Terrace, Plant City, and Hillsborough County.

The year-long regional planning effort began with a comprehensive study identifying regional population and growth estimates and trends – how many new residents are expected, where job clusters are likely to be, and overall patterns of growth through 2045.

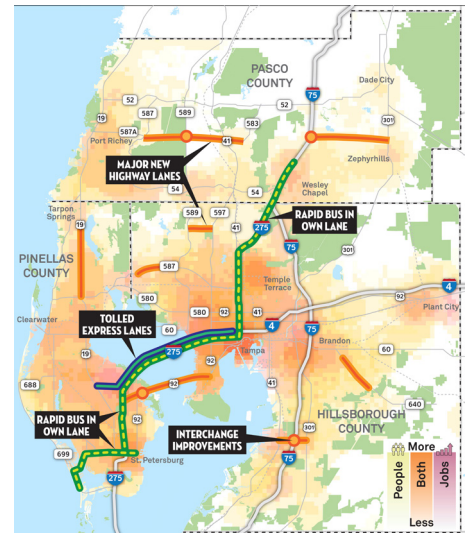
Together, the tri-county partners developed three distinct growth and transportation scenarios that were shared with the community through an intensive, multi-media public engagement campaign.

Results showed strong interest in statewide and local/regional rail transportation, and re-investing in neighborhoods and downtowns, among other priorities. Based partly on survey response, a “hybrid scenario” for regional growth and transportation will be developed in the first quarter of 2019. While there is no single transportation solution, the hybrid scenario is an important step in prioritizing strategies. Priorities for funding will be the focus of a second public engagement campaign in 2019 to gather additional input before preparing the 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan for adoption in November.

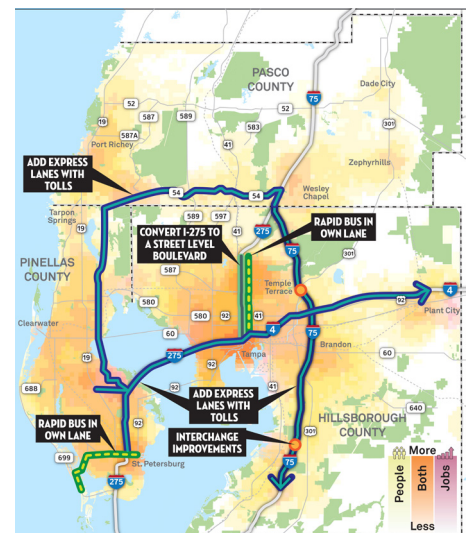


Beth Alden, AICP
Metropolitan Planning Organization Executive Director

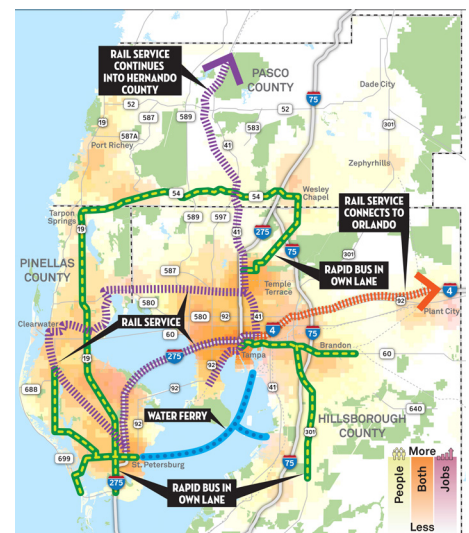
SCENARIO A



SCENARIO B



SCENARIO C



It's TIME Tampa Bay

Waiting for more
transportation choices?



Transportation • Innovation • Mobility for Everyone

Take the survey at

itstimetampabay.org

& you could win
a cool prize!

Survey findings and guidance for the 2045 Plan:

Growth/Land Use

- Enhance land use and transportation linkages in comprehensive plans
- Reinvest in neighborhoods
- Strengthen downtowns and create more downtown-like spaces
- Minimize sprawl

Transit

- Consider options for incorporating rail including high speed rail connections to Orlando and other Florida metro areas; Tampa Streetcar expansion; and other rail or fixed guideway transit
- Rail should connect to Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and express buses

Roads & Highways

- Continue to explore elevated express lane projects and possible strategies for Downtown Tampa interchange and SR 54/US 41 interchange in Pasco County
- Tolls should be used for congestion management rather than raising revenue
- New, expanded interchange ramps should be added

Other Transportation Elements

- Promote walk/bike modes and safety
- Demonstrate how technology advances can be realistically and safely implemented



Nearly 10,000 survey respondents

provided input on growth and transportation scenarios for the Long Range Transportation Plan.

Produced in English and Spanish, the It's TIME Tampa Bay campaign was rolled out in an extensive multi-media campaign (print, radio, online) that also featured media interviews, presentations, and interactive displays at major events.

The It's TIME social media promotional campaign garnered 265,000 Facebook impressions, 46,000 Twitter impressions, and 54,000 on Instagram.

Lynn Merenda, Community Relations Coordinator



2045 Population and Employment Projections



Every five years, the Planning Commission develops population and employment projections to support the MPO's Long Range Transportation Plan, the Comprehensive Plans, and infrastructure master plans. These projections use trends and policy direction to guide where new growth and redevelopment should occur in the three cities and unincorporated county. For the first time, the Planning Commission has incorporated a real estate market analysis into this process to ensure the projections are grounded not only in adopted policy but also in market realities. Making the projections as realistic as possible is important as local governments use them to make infrastructure and growth decisions.

Shawn College, AICP, Strategic Planning, Environmental and Research Division Director

Partners: Hillsborough County, City of Tampa, City of Temple Terrace, and City of Plant City

Collaboration with Economic Development



Throughout 2018, the Planning Commission had the opportunity to partner with the Hillsborough County Economic Development Department on several projects. The two agencies worked together in developing policies for the Comprehensive Plan that reflect goals for job creation and retention. Shaped by stakeholder feedback, the proposed policies will be moving through the adoption process in 2019. Input from Economic Development, particularly their Agribusiness and County Extension (IFAS) staff, was also important in the recently completed East Rural Assessment to ensure it reflects the types of agricultural production in our community and results in data helpful to the agricultural community and planners.



Steve Griffin, AICP, Team Leader

Partners: Hillsborough County Economic Development Department, UF/IFAS Extension Hillsborough County

Community Resiliency



Preparing for major storm events and sea level rise is paramount as a coastal community. Plan Hillsborough has been working with the City of Tampa and Hillsborough County on addressing these issues in the Comprehensive Plan. Amendments to the Tampa Comprehensive Plan to comply with the Peril of Flood Act were recognized by the Future of the Region Awards in 2017. Work has begun with the county and USF on a comprehensive sustainability study that will address state requirements as well as other resiliency issues. The MPO won a major national grant to plan for reducing our transportation infrastructure's vulnerability to flooding. After evaluating the impacts at the county and regional level, the MPO will incorporate the findings into the LRTP to make our community more resilient.

Allison Yeh, AICP, LEED GA, Executive Planner and Sustainability Coordinator

Garden Steps



Garden Steps Hillsborough is one of 50 national finalists for the Healthiest Cities and Counties Challenge, a two-year initiative to support communities in their collaborative efforts to cultivate, support and sustain healthier spaces. As a first-round winner, Garden Steps received a \$10,000 community grant to jumpstart implementation in 2016.

Photo Credit: UACDC

Garden Steps was established in 2016 to improve community health in Hillsborough County by connecting and growing a network of community gardens, while addressing the social, physical and policy infrastructure needed for healthy communities to thrive. Cultivating pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access to these gardens was accomplished in partnership with the Hillsborough Metropolitan Planning Organization. Over the past 24 months, the program has supported two pop-up community gardens in urban 'food deserts,' engaged a network of neighborhood champions, and sponsored events to promote healthy eating and living.

Michele Ogilvie, Executive Planner



Partners: Florida Department of Health in Hillsborough County, City of Tampa, Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Authority, and Community Garden Coalition

Vision Zero



As part of its ongoing efforts to promote traffic safety, the Hillsborough MPO developed a Vision Zero Action Plan based on the common principle that death and injury on the streets is preventable. Last year, 169 people died in traffic crashes in Hillsborough County. Vulnerable road users -- those who walk, bike, or motorcycle -- are over-represented in those fatalities. The Tampa Bay area was ranked the 2nd deadliest metro region for pedestrians and bicyclists by Smart Growth America. MPO-sponsored events, such as Walks of Silence and painted intersections, are raising awareness of the problem and ways to reduce traffic-related fatalities and injuries.

Gena Torres, Executive Planner

Partners: FDOT, HART, City of Tampa, City of Plant City, City of Temple Terrace, Hillsborough County Public Schools, Tampa Downtown Partnership, CUTR, Westshore Alliance, Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office, and Tampa Police Department

School Transportation Safety Study



Transportation safety and mobility is a top priority for the Hillsborough MPO's School Transportation Working Group, composed of local jurisdictions, school district staff and other partners. Ten Hillsborough County schools were selected for a comprehensive safety and mobility assessment. Field reviews identified the potential for improving the walking and bicycling environment. Schools were analyzed and prioritized based on numerous factors and recommendations made for projects that could significantly improve school safety. The cities, county, school district, and FDOT are identifying opportunities to implement recommendations in upcoming work programs. Recommendations already have been instrumental in helping Sulphur Springs Community School secure a \$264,000 Safe Routes to School Grant for the construction of new sidewalks.

Lisa Silva, AICP, Principal Planner



Partners: Hillsborough County, City of Tampa, City of Plant City, City of Temple Terrace, Hillsborough County School District, and FDOT

Fowler Avenue Land Use Study



Fowler Avenue is a major corridor in fast-growing North Tampa and a gateway to the University of South Florida. The goal of the Fowler Land Use Study is to help develop a unified vision for redevelopment of the corridor. Along with studying existing conditions, zoning, future land use, and transportation plans, the Planning Commission is engaging local property owners and businesses in discussions about how to encourage higher density, mixed-use development that will be part of a new Innovation District.

Pedro Parra, Principal Planner

North Alexander Street Land Use and Market Study



"The North Alexander Street Corridor Study was a great opportunity to make sure our land use plans kept up with the changes made to this roadway and continue to guide positive investment to the City of Plant City."

When Alexander Street was extended north of Plant City, it opened up opportunities for future annexations and development. At Plant City's request, the Planning Commission conducted a land use study and real estate market analysis for the new corridor. The existing conditions assessment identified a variety of options for future land use scenarios. With input from land owners and the community, the study made recommendations for changes to both density and intensity of projected land uses in this area as compared to the Northeast Plant City Area Master Plan. The City Commission received the study; Planning Commission staff is moving forward on implementing the recommendations with continued community dialogue.



Jay Collins, AICP, Special Area Studies Manager

Temple Terrace



Once a week a Planning Commission staff member works at Temple Terrace City Hall to more directly serve residents and support the activities of the Temple Terrace Community Development Department. In January, the municipality suffered the unexpected loss of a senior planner, jeopardizing the timely completion of short- and long-range planning tasks already underway. To assist the city during this challenging time, the Planning Commission increased its presence at City Hall from one to three days a week until new staff was on board and fully trained. As with all our client governments, cooperation and collaboration is strong between the Planning Commission and Temple Terrace.

Mark Hudson, AICP, Executive Planner

Proactive Plan Amendments



Changes throughout the community often necessitate amendments to the adopted future land use map. Evolving conditions and trends may alter plans for a neighborhood or corridor. As redevelopment occurs, for instance, an increasing trend toward online shopping might prompt higher development densities or changes in retail uses. Planning Commission staff work proactively in identifying needed changes. Several examples from this year include studying the Transitional Use-24 Category in the City of Tampa to ensure more compatible future development, while also identifying opportunities for additional infill development by increasing densities on North Tampa Street near West Yukon Street.

Jennifer Malone, AICP, Senior Planner



New Plan Amendment Search Tools



With the goal of making it easier to find key information, a new search tool was added to the Plan Amendment section of the Plan Hillsborough website. This tool allows users not only to search current amendments being requested, but also to access historical plan amendment data going back to the year 2000. Amendments for Unincorporated Hillsborough County, Tampa, Temple Terrace, and Plant City can all be accessed from the Plan Amendments sub-page on **planhillsborough.org**

Jason Krzyzanowski, Programmer/Analyst

Hillsborough Health Atlas



Plan Hillsborough continues to enhance the data and resources available to the community through the Hillsborough County Health Atlas. This public mapping tool is a collaboration with the Health Department and provides citizens with demographic data and indicators measuring transportation access, access to healthcare and healthy foods, environmental health, and emergency preparedness. New this year is the addition of information on urban “heat islands,” identifying county “hot spots” and temperature variances. Excess heat can exacerbate chronic conditions such as asthma and contributes to the formation of ground-level ozone, and is an important factor to consider in community health planning.

Wade Reynolds, AICP, Senior Planner



Commuter Challenge Week



#CommuterChallenge18
February 19 - 23



Plan Hillsborough staff were enthusiastic participants in the 2018 Commuter Challenge Week, organized by the agency in collaboration with the Tampa Downtown Partnership. Held in February, dozens of employees and board members opted to commute on foot or by bus, bike, or carpool, experiencing alternative transportation options first-hand. Over 200 trips were recorded that week by staff participants choosing to travel by modes other than driving alone. Community partners and citizens got involved and shared their alternative commuting stories on social media. The event was recognized as a finalist for the 2018 Urban Excellence Design Awards.

Tatiana Gonzalez, CNU, Senior Planner



Plan Hillsborough digs in at McKay Bay

Twice in 2018, Plan Hillsborough volunteered with Tampa Bay Watch at McKay Bay to build oyster bars, which are similar to naturally occurring reefs found along bay shorelines. Restoring oyster reefs has numerous ecological benefits; oysters filter pollutants from water and provide critical habitat and shelter for threatened and endangered species. Staff first volunteered in May as part of the Hillsborough 100 Conservation Challenge, a showcase of conservation projects throughout the county. For National Community Planning Month in October, staff returned to McKay Bay to continue the oyster shell reef they had started. It was a treat to see the fruits of our labor in the form of barnacles surrounding the mesh bags we had placed underwater five months earlier. Improving the health of Tampa Bay makes the hard work and many volunteer hours well worth it!



Roger Mathie, Senior GIS Analyst



*Planning Commission Executive Director
Melissa Zornitta with mentee Katrina Corcoran.*

Plan Hillsborough continues to provide guidance to the local planning community through the APA Florida Sun Coast mentoring program, which supports USF Master of Urban and Regional Planning students, as well as mid-career planners looking to move into leadership. Over the past few years, staff has mentored 19 coach-protégé pairs, providing resume review, career insight, leadership tips, and job shadowing opportunities. “Plan Hillsborough’s commitment to our students is a major driver in our program’s continued success,” said Dr. Evangeline Linkous, USF MURP Professor. “We especially appreciate the shadowing experience. This is often a student’s first foray into the world of a practicing planner, and the opportunity helps them immensely in determining their future career path.”



Photo: Jim Webb, thewebbworks.com



**Plan
Hillsborough**
planhillsborough.org



Planning
Commission



Metropolitan
Planning
Organization



Hillsborough
River Board



813-272-5940



www.planhillsborough.org



601 E. Kennedy Blvd. 18th FL
Tampa, FL 33602

At 82, Ruskin crabber August "Gus" Muench (left) has no plans to retire. He pulls crab traps on the Little Manatee River 5 days a week and runs an ecotourism business called Gus' Crabby Adventures. Pictured right is guest first mate Bob Martinez.