

2019

# ANNUAL REPORT



Plan  
Hillsborough  
[planhillsborough.org](http://planhillsborough.org)

Hillsborough County City-County Planning Commission  
Hillsborough Metropolitan Planning for Transportation  
Hillsborough River Interlocal Planning Board & Technical Advisory Council

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# Letter from the *Executive Director*



This year we celebrated the 60th anniversary of the Planning Commission. Since October 1959, the Hillsborough County City-County Planning Commission has been guiding the growth and development of our community. The role of the Planning Commission has evolved into a partnership with each jurisdiction and the community stakeholders we serve, as illustrated by many of the projects highlighted in this year's Annual Report. As we look back, we find many successes that moved our community toward its long range vision.

In the agency's formative years, we had an influence on infrastructure projects that shaped our community's future. The Planning Commission weighed in on the I-75 corridor and surrounding development, the Crosstown Expressway, campus location studies for Hillsborough Community College, a zoning ordinance for Tampa International Airport, and the Master Plan

for the University of South Florida to name a few. More recently, localized roadway corridor studies such as Bullard Parkway's Complete Street, the East Fowler Avenue Land Use study, and the North Alexander Street Extension study have focused on the need for context sensitive roadway design that supports the land use vision along the roadway while fostering safety and walkability.

Throughout the years, planning for the preservation of our assets and neighborhoods became a focus for the organization. The Planning Commission completed the first major historic preservation study in the City of Tampa, as well as the first detailed neighborhood design plan studies for Davis Islands and Hyde Park. Our work supported the creation and planning for a number of Community Redevelopment Areas in the City of Tampa; this work continues through the update of the Ybor City Vision completed this year. In Unincorporated Hillsborough County, the Planning Commission supported 22 community plans that were developed and adopted in the Comprehensive Plan. Support of Plant City and Temple Terrace's downtown redevelopment plans have been a major focus of our work as well.

The Comprehensive Plans for all four jurisdictions are at the core of our mission. Updates to the plans over the years have brought many successes in shaping the growth that comes to Hillsborough County. In the early 1990s, the concept of the Urban Service Area was adopted, which has had a major influence on not only where new development would occur but also how infrastructure would be linked. The Imagine 2040 Comprehensive Plans for the Cities of Tampa, Temple Terrace, and Plant City were recognized nationally by the American Planning Association in their Comprehensive Plans for Sustaining Places program.

Another major highlight is the people we get to work with—the talented and committed staff who are passionate about working towards a thriving and sustainable future, citizens who are so invested in the success of our community, and tremendous volunteers who serve on the Planning Commission. You will see many of their faces in this Annual Report. This important work could not be accomplished without their support, skills, and commitment. **A big thank you to all who contributed to the Planning Commission's success for the last 60 years, and in particular, in 2019.**

*Melissa Zornitta, AICP*

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## 2019 HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY CITY-COUNTY

### PLANNING COMMISSIONERS

*Mitch Thrower, Chair*

*Jacqueline S. Wilds, Vice Chair until Oct. 2019*

*Nigel M. Joseph, Vice Chair*

*Derek L. Doughty, Member-at-Large*

*Steven Bernstein*

*Giovanny Cardenas*

*Amber K. Dickerson, AICP (Ex-Officio)*

*John Dicks*

*Theodore Trent Green*

*Karen Kress, AICP*

*Michael Maurino, CNU-A*

*Cody Powell*

*Tony Rodriguez, AICP (Ex-Officio)*

*Jennifer Willman until Oct. 2019*





# About *PLAN HILLSBOROUGH*

*Community planning touches nearly every facet of our lives—where we live and work, what transportation options we have, opportunities for recreation, how and where we will grow, and how to protect our community assets.*

## WHO WE ARE

Plan Hillsborough provides staff support to the Hillsborough County City-County Planning Commission, the Hillsborough Metropolitan Planning Organization, and the Hillsborough River Interlocal Planning Board. We serve over 1.4 million residents in Unincorporated Hillsborough County and the cities of Tampa, Temple Terrace, and Plant City.

## WHAT WE DO

With a common goal of advancing the community's vision for the future, each of these local jurisdictions is required to develop a long-range Comprehensive Plan to be adopted by local elected officials. Working in tandem with the Comprehensive Plans, the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) directs federal and state dollars towards transportation investments we value in our community, and it must be updated every five years.

Together, the Comprehensive Plan and the LRTP guide our community's future with each spanning a horizon of 20 years. Our agency also oversees plan amendments and conducts specialized studies and consistency reviews for requested changes to the Comprehensive Plans to allow us to keep pace with emerging trends and innovative ideas. In anticipation of the 600,000 new residents expected by the year 2045, the plans we make today will shape how our community adapts to this rapid growth.



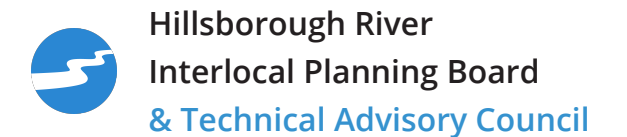
## OUR BOARDS



Promotes, coordinates, collaborates with, and facilitates the involvement of all people in comprehensive planning and visioning to improve economic development opportunities and quality of life in our community.



A long-range transportation policy-making board made up of local government and transportation agency representatives planning for more than \$1.5 billion in state and federally funded multi-modal transportation investments in the first five years of each 20+ year plan.



Responsible for promoting collaborative planning, regulation, and development along the river corridor while ensuring the environmental health of the river running through Hillsborough County and the cities of Tampa and Temple Terrace.



# FY 2019 BY THE NUMBERS

## plan amendments

number of plan 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

**12**  
Unincorporated Hillsborough County

**30**  
City of Tampa

**2**  
Temple Terrace

**6**  
Plant City

## special projects

**\$300,000**  
new grants secured

**18**  
award recipients honored at the 37th Annual Planning & Design Awards

**295**  
consistency reviews of proposed rezonings, annexations, right-of-way vacations, and port permits to ensure consistency with the Comprehensive Plan

## community

**2,562**  
clients served

**211**  
presentations to community groups

**5,000**  
respondents to the It's TIME Hillsborough survey

**84**  
MPO board and committee meetings

**NEW IN 2019:** Independent Oversight Committee (IOC) meetings



## GET INVOLVED

### Public engagement is at the center of all we do.

Plan Hillsborough and its partners take great pride in involving as many citizens of all races, ethnicities, and socio-economic levels in planning for our future. We invite and encourage public involvement at meetings, special forums, and events. You can even join one of several committees that reports directly to our boards. Plan Hillsborough is available to speak to neighborhood and civic associations on a variety of topics.

Stay up-to-date on the latest news and events by subscribing to our monthly e-newsletter *Connections to Tomorrow*.

### VISIT [PLANHILLSBOROUGH.ORG](http://PLANHILLSBOROUGH.ORG)

We can help you access key information and answer questions like:

- What are the allowable uses and density for my property?
- What development is occurring or planned near my property?
- What transportation projects are being implemented over the next five years?
- How do I request a change to the Comprehensive Plan?
- Where can I find information on permits?
- What can I do to make my community more pedestrian and bicycle-friendly?



## social

**113,048**  
web visits

**11,898**  
twitter followers

**2,605**  
facebook likes

**13,215**  
email subscribers





# 2045 TRANSPORTATION PLAN

TRANSPORTATION • INNOVATION • MOBILITY FOR EVERYONE



BETH ALDEN, AICP | MPO EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

After nearly two years of preparation, including two rounds of public input surveys with over 15,000 participants, the **2045 Long Range Transportation Plan** was adopted at the MPO Public Hearing in November 2019.

Our team created an investment strategy for funding flexible transportation options, delivering innovative solutions, and promoting mobility in our region. This long-range transportation plan for Hillsborough County presents an investment approach that details

Our 2045 LRTP surveys generated more than:

**15,000 SURVEY PARTICIPANTS**

transportation priorities and associated funding for the next 25 years.

It's TIME Hillsborough 2045 is organized around our five mission directives for the county and surrounding region: maintaining a state of good repair and promoting resiliency; reducing crashes through the Vision Zero initiative; alleviating congestion for commuters and visitors; providing multimodal transportation options; and stimulating economic development. This plan is a culmination of the voices in our community and the hard work our staff has done to create funding scenarios that reflect the public's needs while balancing our constraints. Staff targeted outreach efforts to Communities of Concern and other constituents whose voices we don't often hear. As we strive towards our objectives, we will continue collaborating with our neighbors and regional partners to prioritize and fund transportation options in Hillsborough County that benefit the millions of residents and visitors who live, work, and play in the Tampa Bay area. We are excited to present the 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan as our response to the challenges that uniquely face a region poised for continued growth in West Central Florida.



DIEGO GUERRA | COMMUNITY PLANNER II

## COLLABORATIVE WATER RESOURCES

Water is a significant and interconnected resource; rainwater, stormwater, surface water, groundwater, and wastewater all provide value to our community. To protect and improve our water resources, Planning Commission and Hillsborough County staff are working together on the "One Water" approach for future updates to the County's Comprehensive Plan. Additionally, Hillsborough County is developing new programs, such as green infrastructure initiatives, to integrate the built environment's water cycle with the natural water cycle.

One Water seeks to create guiding language to maximize water resources and transition away from the siloed Elements-based model. Instead, modifications to the County's Comprehensive Plan will address water-related language holistically and will serve as a framework for innovative water resource solutions.

The project team includes members from cross-functional departments at Hillsborough County, who continue to be tremendous partners in refining updates to the Comprehensive Plan.





## IN THE ZONE

REZONINGS REVIEWED IN 2019: 252



JIWUAN HALEY, AICP |  
SENIOR PLANNER



JENNIFER MALONE, AICP | SENIOR PLANNER

The Cities of Tampa, Plant City, and Temple Terrace and Unincorporated Hillsborough County have official zoning maps that designate all properties within each jurisdiction with a specific zoning district. The purpose of the rezoning process is to change the designation of a property from one zoning district to another, with all applications facing review by Planning Commission staff for consistency with the local Comprehensive Plans. The first step in the rezoning process starts with our staff meeting with client government staff members and with applicants for privately initiated rezoning cases. From here, an analysis phase is conducted, where staff thoroughly researches and visits each site where a rezoning is proposed before issuing a recommendation. Each recommendation made is presented at a public hearing before the respective jurisdiction's decision-making body who will hear arguments from all sides and will vote to approve or deny the rezoning request.



## PROACTIVE PLAN AMENDMENTS

A priority of the City of Tampa is the protection and promotion of the City's parkland and greenspace. To continue to ensure the protection of the City's parkland is not compromised, Tampa City Council directed the staffs of the Planning Commission and the City of Tampa to analyze the Future Land Use of the parks listed on the City's official Dedicated Park List. In many cases, the Future Land Use of the parks would allow for the potential of residential or commercial uses. This began a multi-year process of publicly initiated plan amendments that will place the Future Land Use of "Recreational/Open Space" on the City's parkland to provide the dedicated parks additional, long-term protections.



# STRATEGIC PLAN ACCOMPLISHMENTS



In 2018, Plan Hillsborough adopted its first Strategic Plan developed by the Planning Commission, MPO, and River Board. The plan outlines our agency's priorities for the next five years and determines how we can leverage our resources, enhance the work of our staff, and increase effectiveness in serving our citizens. Over a year after its adoption, we have already begun to see positive results emerge from each of our seven Strategic Priorities.

## 1 PLANNING PARTNERSHIPS

We developed collaborations with the Downtown Partnership and client governments, participated in planning events at Universities, and developed service projects with community groups, like Garden Steps, to address planning topics that engage and educate.

## 2 ENABLING TRANSPORTATION CHOICES

We implemented the Vision Zero Action Plan with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) who funded several high crash corridor studies. The 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan was adopted, helping our community plan for a number of future transportation choices.

## 3 LINKING LAND USE & TRANSPORTATION

Our agency established new ways to connect mobility planning to community vision in the East Fowler Land Use Study, supporting the City of Tampa and HART Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Grant, and the Plant City Mixed Use Gateway. We utilized a proactive approach to map amendments and enhanced coordination with economic development and real estate experts on planning projects.

## 4 REGIONAL COLLABORATION

We held a 2045 Regional Environmental Workshop as part of the LRTP, shared information with Pinellas County and others on Comprehensive Plan updates, and supported regional planning efforts for the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council, Activity Based Model, One Bay, Tampa Bay Transportation Management Area, and the River Board.

## 5 TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Integrating emerging technologies has increased efficiency and strengthened public communications. Recent additions include the Comprehensive Planning Update Database, and presenting a "Tool of the Month" at each General Staff meeting.

## 6 CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT

We increased citizen engagement by talking face-to-face with citizens at workshops for Vision Zero, Ruskin Community Character Study, and Ybor Vision 2020. By leveraging the power of social media, we achieved record participation for the It's TIME Hillsborough transportation survey.

## 7 INTERNAL AGENCY ENHANCEMENTS

After conducting an agency Climate Survey to identify and address areas for improvement, we instituted cross-team project kickoffs and liaisons and publicized team leader notes to enhance transparency. We also provided leadership and development training sessions and offered post-conference information sharing.



MELISSA DICKENS, AICP | STRATEGIC PLANNING AND POLICY MANAGER

# HILLSBOROUGH RIVER PLANNING



SHAWN COLLEGE, AICP | DIRECTOR, STRATEGIC PLANNING, ENVIRONMENTAL & RESEARCH

The Hillsborough River Interlocal Planning Board met in each of the four quarters of 2019, while its Technical Advisory Council (TAC) met ten times over the course of the year. Both the River Board and the TAC continued to review and monitor activities and actions in the Hillsborough River Corridor to ensure it remains an environmental, recreational, commercial and aesthetic asset to the community. The River Board and TAC reviewed 16 Port Authority permits for consistency with the River Master Plan and advised on the regulatory compliance of the Jean Street Shipyard. To understand the potential impacts of climate change on the Hillsborough River, the River Board coordinated with Libby Carnahan of the Florida Sea Grant and the University of Florida IFAS Extension. Other efforts included promoting the use of "watergoats" as one method of preventing trash from entering the river, investigating issues related to sea wall installation and replacement, and coordinating on water supply planning efforts. The River Board was proud to award the 2019 Hillsborough River Stewardship Award to Bob Luce who tirelessly removes debris from the river with his canoe.



photo courtesy of Bob Luce





# YBOR CITY VISION 2020

## MASTER PLAN UPDATE

Ybor City, one of only two nationally recognized landmark districts in Florida, is known for its numerous cigar shops, historic architecture, lively downtown, and celebrated multi-cultural community. The city even boasts a protected wild chicken population, free to roam the city as they did when they were first introduced to the neighborhood. While Ybor has thoughtfully preserved its unique heritage, the district has undergone significant economic development and investment since the last update in 2010 that has evolved the community's needs and challenges.



DAVID HEY, AICP | EXECUTIVE PLANNER



The City of Tampa and the Ybor City Development Corporation (YCDC) tasked the Planning Commission with creating a new Vision Plan for the Ybor City Community Redevelopment Areas (CRA) of the City of Tampa with the specific needs of the community in mind. The plan sets out to protect Ybor's unique identity, enhance livability, attract investment, and improve mobility within the district while strengthening connections outside of it. The plan will also serve as a guide to future growth and evolution in the district.

*Vision 2020 resulted in a five-year action plan focused on the following planning assessments:*

- Vehicular, Transit and Pedestrian Facilities
- Infrastructure
- Public Open Space
- Land Use Transitions / Heavy Commercial / Industrial Uses
- Law Enforcement Activity
- Code Violations
- Retail Uses and Needs Assessment
- Vacant and Underused Sites
- Regulatory Analysis
- Health Community Design Assessment

# COMMUNITY VULNERABILITY STUDY

Hurricanes, storms, and other potentially disastrous weather events will always be a threat to the people living in the Tampa Bay area. In order to address planning needs for the threat of flooding and sea level rise, we are managing a Community Vulnerability Study to aid Hillsborough County with meeting local, state and federal planning requirements with a focus on understanding the consequences, impacts, strategies, and implementation plans. This is not only to meet regulatory requirements, but to bolster preparations to save life and property in future times of crisis. The primary focus is directed toward the study of vulnerabilities for flooding, which includes a list of potential vulnerabilities in the built environment (property, infrastructure, etc.) and the public's health. The team also found public health issues in specific areas indicating various vulnerable populations will become increasingly at risk due to future conditions associated with sea level rise.



## FHWA GRANT FOR RESILIENT TAMPA BAY TRANSPORTATION PILOT PROJECT

The Hillsborough MPO, in collaboration with Forward Pinellas, Pasco MPO, Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council and the Florida Department of Transportation District 7, was awarded a \$250,000 grant from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) which will help us meet new federal mandates and inform the regional and county Long Range Transportation Plans. Recognizing that transportation facilities do not terminate at political boundaries, the coalition will explore ways to improve the resiliency and reliability of the transportation system and reduce the stormwater impacts of surface transportation in the tri-county area.



ALLISON YEH, AICP, LEED GA | EXECUTIVE PLANNER



## FOCUSING ON MAJOR CORRIDORS

The Planning Commission developed the E Fowler Avenue Corridor Land Use Study for the Tampa Innovation Partnership (!p), an emerging district in northern Tampa centered around the University of South Florida. The district is currently undergoing a major transformation from transportation to commercial and residential areas from I-275 to E Fowler Avenue as the main corridor. The district's Executive Director requested the Planning Commission's assistance in planning for future land uses and incorporating mixed-use designs with appropriate density along the corridor. Planning Commission staff reviewed literature of recently finished or ongoing corridor redevelopment projects within Innovation Districts across the United States, parcel and acreage build out data analysis, and buildout calculation methodology for parcels adjacent to, or within 300 feet of E Fowler Avenue.

For !p, the need to create an innovation district, with E Fowler Avenue as the main gateway, is clear. The corridor connects Bruce B Downs Boulevard, University Square Mall, McKinley Drive, and I-75, intersecting the Cities of Tampa and Temple Terrace and Hillsborough County. The information learned from the study will help redesign the underperforming corridor and create a desirable, robust mixed-use space resulting in a live, work, play environment for a network of innovative and creative companies and its associated workforce.



JAY COLLINS, AICP | SPECIAL AREA STUDIES MANAGER

Big changes are also in store for the Mixed Use Gateway along the James L. Redman Parkway (SR 39). The City of Plant City asked the Planning Commission to create new land development regulations that will promote the integration of land uses, safe traffic flow, and create a strong community presence and sense of place on this southern entry into Plant City.



## RUSKIN COMMUNITY PROFILE STUDY

Ruskin residents now have a new tool to use in promoting community development. The Community Profile completed in August 2019 analyzed Ruskin's Downtown, College Avenue Corridor (between US41 and I-75 interchange) and South Shore Corporate Park. The profile provides an analysis of market and economic development trends affecting demand for new development and redevelopment through 2023. Included in the report are sections on Ruskin's business environment, economic/employment relating to current employment (industrial, office and retail), unemployment, zoning, and future land use buildout analysis.

Ruskin is an unincorporated Census Designated Place located in southern Hillsborough County bordering Tampa Bay and Little Manatee River to the west and south, I-75 to the east and 19th Avenue to the north. Although it is one of the fastest-growing communities in Hillsborough County, 91% of its residents work outside of Ruskin and 80% of those working within Ruskin live outside the community. Ruskin has excellent transportation access with a major interchange on I-75. Amazon's location of a distribution center in South Shore Corporate Park (since 2005) has increased the area's visibility to the development community.

Planning Commission staff started work on the same kind of project for the Gibsonton area at the end of 2019. The study is expected to be complete mid-2020.



TATIANA GONZALEZ, CNU-A | SENIOR PLANNER





SARAH MCKINLEY | PRINCIPAL PLANNER

## MOBILITY STUDIES

Over the last ten years, the SouthShore area (encompassing Apollo Beach, Gibsonton, Ruskin, Riverview, Sun City Center, Wimauma, and Boyette) has experienced significant growth and development, and this growth is expected to continue. In 2014, the Hillsborough County MPO and HART conducted a SouthShore Transit Circulator Study that developed transit priorities for the area. Since then, HART has undergone an overhaul of their transit system known as Mission MAX, which actually decreased service in the SouthShore area. The MPO conducted another SouthShore Transit Study in 2018 to reevaluate the previous study and make recommendations based on the current needs of the community which will culminate in updated costs and a phased implementation plan.

Further north in the City of Temple Terrace, home to one of the first master planned golf communities in the country, residents can use golf carts to travel on local streets in the City. However, there are two large state roads at Fowler Avenue and 56th Street which cannot be crossed by a golf cart due to the speed of the roadway and the added difficulty of having to cross six lanes of traffic. These roads also separate the main population center from two grocery stores, a potentially very popular destination for golf cart drivers. The MPO sponsored a low speed electric vehicle study to evaluate seven potential crossing locations to determine if required Department of Transportation criteria could be satisfied in the hope of increasing mobility choices for Temple Terrace residents.



## GARDEN STEPS

#HEALTHIESTCITIESCHALLENGE

In our busy and over-scheduled lives, we often don't have time to slow down and consider whether what we are eating is healthy, fresh, and sustainably farmed. Most of us are never involved in the labor intensive and time-consuming process of growing our own food, but Hillsborough Metropolitan Organization's Garden Steps project is starting to change that.

Garden Steps began as part of the national Healthiest Cities & Counties Challenge, a two-year competition to support communities in their collaborative efforts to become healthier places to live, work, learn, play, and pray. Garden Steps focuses on creating community gardens with easy pedestrian and bicycle access in identified food deserts in the City of Tampa. The goal was to improve health equity

and population health by increasing easy access to fresh fruits and vegetables. Most notably, the Garden Steps initiative sponsored the first annual Grow Community Gardens – Tampa Bay Conference with 120 attendees, installed two pop-up gardens with community volunteers, and instituted a pedestrian wayfinding pilot project installed in coordination with the City of Tampa.

On February 12, 2019, Garden Steps was selected as first runner-up in the Healthiest Cities & Counties Challenge and received \$50,000 to continue their work. Garden Steps hopes to continue making a measurable impact in the community by increasing pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access to a network of community gardens. Through these initiatives, we will see a measurable improvement in nutrition, reduced hunger, chronic disease prevention, and improved behavior among youth in school.

Our agency has also started incorporating the national Health in All Policies (HiAP) initiative, a new approach to planning where we consider how land use and transportation plans and policies impact human health. By working to establish policies that positively influence social and economic conditions and support changes in individual behavior, we can improve health for large numbers of people and in ways that can be sustained over time.



WADE REYNOLDS, AICP | SENIOR PLANNER





## FLORIDA COMMISSION FOR THE TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED PLANNING AGENCY OF THE YEAR



The Hillsborough MPO's Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board (TDCB) was recognized as the CTD Planning Agency of the Year at the Florida Public Transportation Association's and Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged's (CTD) annual conference held September 15-18 in Orlando. The board received the award based on excellence in training, planner participation, timeliness, inclusiveness in planning efforts and involvement in the Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) community. They received recognition for promoting inclusiveness and supporting the needs of the transportation disadvantaged, including persons with disabilities, seniors, low income, and children at risk. Some of the highlighted initiatives included holding forums with social service agencies, participation in the annual TD training, travel to the TD Legislation Day in Tallahassee, providing grant deliverables and quarterly reports, outreach, and inclusion of TD items on the MPO Board agenda. The MPO is grateful for the opportunity to engage and support the TD community.



MICHELE OGILVIE, AICP | EXECUTIVE PLANNER



JOHNNY WONG, PHD |  
SENIOR PLANNER

## PLANNING FOR EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES

Autonomous (self-driving) vehicles may change the way we travel and the urban form of our cities in the coming decades. The integration of this technology with current transit options could challenge a range of current planning assumptions, from the municipal ownership of public transportation assets to the local land-use plan policies required to accommodate such use. Where

and how will passengers be picked up and dropped off? Where can shared use vehicles be stored?

The Florida State University (FSU) Department of Urban and Regional Planning (DURP) presented the results of their Shared Mobility Study, funded in part by the Planning Commission and FDOT, at the Planning Commission August Meeting. A series of urban design templates and accompanying policy guidance to facilitate and incentivize urban, suburban, and rural adaptation for shared mobility solutions and autonomous transit services was developed.

At the University of South Florida (USF), the MPO sponsored an exploratory feasibility study on the USF campus using autonomous transit vehicle technology. The study identified areas of the campus that would best be served by a light, autonomous vehicle and provided a proof of concept and coordinated with the !P Innovations Unleashed study.

Also in 2019, the MPO began building a Shared Data & Analytics Platform to share real-time traffic and speed data among local agencies. MPO staff negotiated an arrangement with FDOT's Civil Integrated Management Office to receive HERE data, collected from GPS devices like in-dash navigation apps in cars, at no cost to the MPO, amounting to an \$80,000 savings each year. The first phase platform should be operational early in 2020.



**CONDUCTED BY SECOND YEAR PLANNING STUDENTS, THE FSU GRADUATE CAPSTONE STUDIO PROJECT HAS HELPED CONTINUE THE CONVERSATION OF HOW NEW TECHNOLOGY WILL IMPACT MOBILITY, LAND USE AND DESIGN AS AUTONOMOUS AND SHARED TECHNOLOGY GROWS IN BOTH POPULARITY AND MARKET SHARE.**





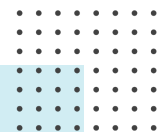
# SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL NATIONAL CONFERENCE & GULF COAST SAFE STREETS SUMMIT



LISA SILVA, AICP, PLA | PRINCIPAL PLANNER

*This partnership provides a regional approach to prioritize the Complete Streets initiative throughout the local jurisdictions along the Gulf Coast of Florida. As we continue to elevate our individual efforts, working together with our sister counties will lead to regionally significant transportation facilities and safety programs for all modes of transportation and for all ages and abilities.*

The Gulf Coast Safe Streets Summit is a collaborative event of the Hernando/Citrus, Hillsborough, Pasco, Pinellas, and Sarasota/Manatee Metropolitan Planning Organizations, the Polk County Transportation Planning Organization, the Florida Department of Transportation, the USF Center for Urban Transportation Research, and Walk Bike Tampa. This year the event was held in partnership with the Safe Routes to School National Conference at the Hilton Tampa Downtown. Over 420 active transportation and public health advocates and practitioners from across the country, including City of Tampa Mayor Jane Castor, came together for the three-day conference to discuss transportation safety, valuable networking, sharing best practices, and learning how to create healthy, equitable communities.



KATRINA CORCORAN, AICP | COMMUNITY PLANNER II

## LINKING LAND USE & TRANSPORTATION

Plan Hillsborough is involved in several projects that link land use and transportation. HART, in collaboration with Plan Hillsborough and the City of Tampa, was awarded an \$800,000 Federal Transit Administration (FTA) pilot program grant to evaluate ties between Transit Oriented Development (TOD) and Land Use policies to help cultivate TOD along designated transit emphasis corridors. TOD can include a mix of commercial, residential, office, and entertainment centered around or near a transit station. Dense, walkable, mixed-use development near transit attracts people and adds to vibrant, connected communities.

The TOD grant will be used to analyze potential transit station locations along the Florida Ave, Nebraska Ave, and Fowler Ave corridors. Adopted TOD policies will be tested, refined, and ultimately adopted into the Comprehensive Plans to be easily applied to proposed station locations as our public transportation network expands in the future.

Staff also participated in meetings and provided comments on the County's Preliminary Land Use and Transportation (PLAT) studies, conducted on several corridors. These studies examine planned development pattern and form, how people use the road, and the market's potential for growth. They also provided feedback on the update to the Corridor Preservation Plan, examining how typical cross sections, context classification, and access management can be used within right-of-way on the county's roadways.

Furthermore, staff examined the MPO's 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) for consistency with all four jurisdictions' Comprehensive Plans and reviewed the Unincorporated Hillsborough County Community Plans, taking a deeper dive into the commonalities the communities share and how that relates back to both transportation and future land use.



## VISION ZERO



Each day, Hillsborough County residents travel roads with the highest traffic fatality rate per capita among large counties in the United States. On average, at least one person walking and biking is involved in a crash every day. The Hillsborough County MPO, in partnership with a coalition of community and agency stakeholders, joined Vision Zero, an international movement to end road deaths and serious injuries. At the core of the movement is the belief that death and injury on city streets is preventable – traffic crashes aren't accidents but are the result of poor behavior combined with unforgiving roadway designs.

### ONE TRAFFIC DEATH IS TOO MANY

We have accomplished a number of community engagement initiatives by engaging with victims of traffic violence and their families to provide them with a support system and platform for their voices to be heard. By recruiting community leaders and helping organize outreach events like the Day of Remembrance, Walk of Silence, Ride of Silence, and participating in the Gulf Coast Safe Streets Summit, we have brought increased awareness to the Vision Zero movement. Furthermore, we have instituted safety improvements during road resurfacing projects, painted murals to bring attention to high-risk intersections, and added leading pedestrian intervals to more intersections.

## BOX CITY

Plan Hillsborough staff took the Box City planning experience to summer camp at the Tampa Heights Junior Civic Association and Dowdell Middle School in Palm River, where elementary and middle school kids learned about the importance of community planning. Each camp voted on their city's name, Heaven and Astro World, respectively. As their box cities came to life, they discussed important considerations like transportation and land use planning for residential, commercial, industrial, public facilities, and green spaces. Part of the program was also dedicated to Vision Zero, which culminated in the summer camp festival.



## FUTURE LEADERS IN PLANNING

Designed as an opportunity for high school students to explore urban planning as a potential career, FLiP, Future Leaders in Planning, offers a broad exposure to planning. Through a series of speakers, interactive planning activities, and tours on foot, bus, streetcar, and boat, FLiP provides the chance to network with and learn from professionals in planning and related government services fields in both the public and private sectors as well as connect with other students considering a similar career path. Students receive broad exposure to planning from multiple perspectives, including comprehensive planning, economic development, environmental protection, historic preservation, community redevelopment, transportation, geographic information systems, safety, education, research, and more.



GENA TORRES | EXECUTIVE PLANNER



SHARON SNYDER | ADMINISTRATIVE SPECIALIST II





# COMMUTER CHALLENGE WEEK

WANDA WEST | COMMUNITY RELATIONS COORDINATOR

Plan Hillsborough was proud to continue participating in Commuter Challenge Week, organized in partnership with the Tampa Downtown Partnership. Held every February, the Commuter Challenge encourages everyone to try a different mode of transportation whether it be on foot, by bus, bike, or carpooling. More than half of Plan Hillsborough staff and many other local commuters participated so they can now say they literally “walked the walk” when it comes to transportation options and their accessibility. Participants also helped improve traffic, burn calories and save money!



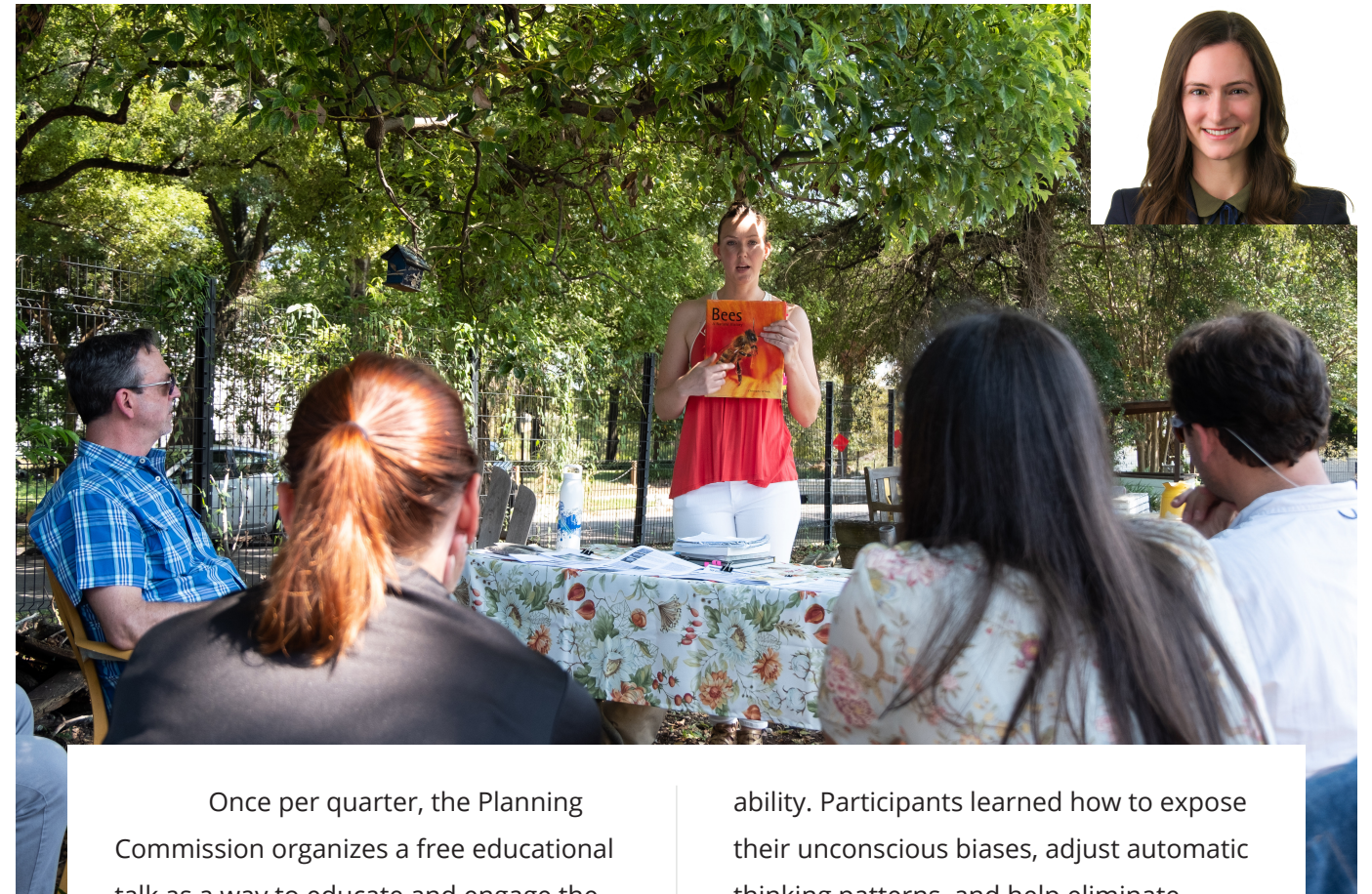
**Follow us**  
Connect with us on social media to see all the great things we do throughout the year!

**facebook**  
*Planning Commission – Hillsborough County*  
*Hillsborough MPO*  
*Vision Zero Hillsborough*  
*HC Transportation IOC*

**twitter**  
*Plan Hillsborough @PlnHillsborough*  
*Planning Commission @HillsCoPlanCom*  
*Hillsborough MPO @HillsboroughMPO*

# INFO BBQ SERIES

CAROLINE CHARLES | COMMUNITY RELATIONS COORDINATOR



Once per quarter, the Planning Commission organizes a free educational talk as a way to educate and engage the public in important conversations. Each Info BBQ (Brown Bag Quarterly) takes place at a different location and features various speakers on topics ranging from health, the environment, individual behaviors, transportation, planning, and more.

In August, we were pleased to welcome Jeffrey Lorick, Compliance Manager in the Pinellas County Office of Human Rights for a training on implicit bias to understand the assumptions, stereotypes, and unintentional actions (positive or negative) we make toward others based on identity labels like race, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, or

ability. Participants learned how to expose their unconscious biases, adjust automatic thinking patterns, and help eliminate discriminatory behavior.

October’s Info BBQ featured guest speaker Miriam Jenkins at the beautiful Tampa Heights Community Garden to educate us on bees and other pollinators. Participants came away with a greater understanding of the role bees play in our food production and the man-made factors affecting their health.

These are just a few of the types of talks we have held, with many more planned for 2020. Join us for one of our upcoming Info BBQ’s to be a part of the conversation! View the calendar on [planhillsborough.org](http://planhillsborough.org) for more information.



## PLANNING & DESIGN AWARDS

Every year, the Planning & Design Awards honors projects that contribute to a better quality of life in our community and serve as models to learn from and emulate. With the emphasis on the importance of great planning in our own region, our awards program is held in October to align with the many national festivities held during the American Planning Association's (APA) National Community Planning Month and celebration of Great Places in America! Established in 2006, #PlanningMonth highlights the role of planners and the importance of good planning in our communities.

This year, we hosted the 37th annual Planning & Design Awards in celebration of excellence in planning in Hillsborough County and commemorated the Planning Commission's 60th year of public service. We are proud to have served the Cities of Tampa, Temple Terrace, Plant City and Unincorporated Hillsborough County since October 1, 1959.

SANDY MORTELLARO | OFFICE MANAGER



### Award Winners

#### Award of Outstanding Contribution to the Community

*The Portico*

#### Jan Abell Award of Outstanding Contribution in Historic Preservation

*Casa Oliva*

#### Awards of Excellence

*Art on HART*

*Green Spine Cycle Track Design*

*Keep Tampa Bay Beautiful WaterGoat*

*More in Ybor Community Engagement Campaign*

*E 131st Avenue Preliminary Land Use and Transportation Study*

#### Awards of Merit

*Park Tower*

*Midtown Tampa*

*Carter G Woodson PK-8 Leadership Academy*

*Hillsborough County Peril of Flood Studio*

*Spurlino Family YMCA at Big Bend Road*

*Dr. Kiran C Patel High School*

*Hillsborough County Redevelopment Incentives for Pilot Project Areas*

#### Hillsborough River Stewardship Award

*Bob Luce*

#### Chairman's Awards

*Sparkman Wharf*

*The Sail Plaza at the Tampa Convention Center*

#### Executive Director's Award

*Joe Lopano, CEO & Tampa International Airport*



LYNN MERENDA | PUBLIC RELATIONS STRATEGIST

## PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Collaboration is critical in planning for a thriving future for our community. At Plan Hillsborough, we collaborate among our teams and with our partner agencies and jurisdictions each day. It's also the key to driving citizens to be engaged in the planning process.

### GET PEOPLE TALKING

There's always a limit to time and resources, which is why public-private partnerships can make all the difference. With the launch of the It's TIME Hillsborough survey during the summer, it was important to find the right marketing partners. What better way to kick off this important transportation survey than with Jack Harris and Aaron Jacobson at a News Radio WFLA AM Tampa Bay morning live remote broadcast at Fred's Market Restaurant in Riverview? Bringing in our partner transportation agencies, Melissa Zornitta and Beth Alden were joined by transportation

leaders like Joe Lopano, CEO of Tampa International Airport, and FDOT District 7 Secretary David Gwynn for live on-air interview segments throughout the morning. The kick off momentum was extended with:

- Radio cross promotions on both iHeartRadio (on-air promotion June through July 15) and Beasley Media Group (July promotion) with negotiated partnerships including bonus media and provision of prize incentives.
- Kids Day 2019 – A Beasley Media Group event and our biggest event during the survey period, with 15,000 diverse people attending at Raymond James Stadium, generating hundreds of surveys taken in one day and setting us up for a strong finish in our final week!

Without these amazing community and media partners, we would not have been able to achieve the more than 5,000 survey respondents received in such a short time.





# PLAN HILLSBOROUGH LIBRARY

LIBRARY SERVICES



READING NOOK



REFERENCE BOOKS



DEMOGRAPHICS



RESEARCH

The Planning Commission Library was established in 1959 as part of the Hillsborough County City-County Planning Commission to serve as a research library for planners, historians, and elected officials. The library maintains an extensive collection of early urban plans, photographs from the mid-century, along with historical studies about Hillsborough County and the City of Tampa. All aspects of urban and regional planning are included in the collection such as:

- The histories of communities in the county
- Transportation studies including rail studies and mass transit
- Environmental studies including green building
- A large collection of Presidential papers related to the implementation of public policies

Researchers, doctoral students, and other historians often visit this library to use resources found nowhere else in the country. Terry Eagan, Planning Commission Project Manager and Librarian, is available to assist in detailed research projects including mapping and spatial analysis, demographic research, residential, and commercial permitting. We also maintain an extensive collection of Census products and frequently assist grant writers and business analysts in determining the overall business climate of the county.



TERRY EAGAN | PROJECT MANAGER II & LIBRARIAN



*Due to increased population growth, the 13th Judicial Circuit Court asked the Planning Commission to assist in revising service boundaries for their two courthouses in downtown Tampa and Plant City to eliminate case overcrowding. Our staff used the 2045 Traffic Analysis Zone (TAZ), provided the maps and demographic analysis for the years 2015 and 2030, and prepared several alternative service areas to reduce congestion with guidance from the circuit court staff as to where the boundary should be.*

## WORKSHOPS & LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES



TONY GARCIA, AICP | DIRECTOR, COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING & REVIEW

From Planning Commissioners to our planning and support staff, we remain committed to new learning opportunities and engaging with others on the emerging trends and innovations affecting our daily work, and therefore, our future communities. Our staff was invited to present at numerous conferences throughout the year where they were able to share their knowledge, and learn from and engage with other planners, commissioners, students, citizens, and city officials in Florida and throughout the country. Among the highlights, Melissa Zornitta and Melissa Dickens attended the American Planning Association's 2019 National Planning Conference in San Francisco where they spoke on the topics of political expression & planning ethics and strategies for creating tomorrow's planning leaders. Beth Alden traveled to Georgia for the Transportation Research Board Conference where she was a panelist on the topic of performance & data in transportation decision making. Back in Florida, Terry Eagan presented on the upcoming 2020 Census and the benefits it can bring to Hillsborough County, and Tony Garcia presented to Leadership Brandon about growth and development in their area.

Ongoing education and engagement is not limited to our staff; our Planning Commissioners met several times this year after their usual meetings for special workshops to delve into topics that will help them make more informed decisions. Their meetings included workshops on the Community Vulnerability Study, Civil Service transition, the 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan, and more to explore how different studies and projects affect the community's future.



## KNOWLEDGE SHARING



MARK HUDSON, AICP | EXECUTIVE PLANNER,  
TEMPLE TERRACE & PLANT CITY LIAISON

At Plan Hillsborough, we always strive to be a “people first” agency. Through developing and retaining top talent, we have acquired a diverse staff in various stages of their careers with employees ranging from 20 years of service to just a few months. To pass on the knowledge and wisdom of our senior staff, we instituted knowledge sharing sessions to mentor new employees. Creating a secession process has helped ensure smooth transitions as some of our staff retire and junior staff move up to become the agency’s new leaders.

In addition to our commitment to sharing knowledge within our agency, the Planning Commission has a liaison who holds office hours one day a week at both the Plant City and Temple Terrace City Halls. Our liaison works directly with residents, jurisdictional staff, and appointed and elected officials to guide the long-range planning activities and future growth patterns for both cities. Working directly alongside each city has enabled us to build strong relationships with each local government and allows the public greater accessibility to our services.

Plan Hillsborough also had the privilege of hosting Major Michael Chavarria, USAF, on August 16 for the Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce’s Operation Partnership: Civilian Career Day. The program gives military members transitioning out of service the opportunity to spend a day with a Chamber member. Major Chavarria experienced a typical workday at Plan Hillsborough and was exposed to a wide variety of careers in planning and related fields. Plan Hillsborough thanks Major Chavarria for his dedicated service to our country and wishes him the best in his upcoming civilian career.

## FELLOWS & INTERNS

With the start of each new academic year, we welcome two bright students from the University of South Florida’s Masters in Urban and Regional Planning (MURP) Program as Plan Hillsborough fellows to gain real world experience in their chosen career field. One fellow is assigned to the MPO and the other to the Planning Commission. While they absorb a great deal of knowledge from our seasoned staff, they also lend fresh insight and their unique talents to many of our projects. Throughout the year, we also have one or more interns who are in a planning related program. Past interns have worked for the Public Engagement team, MPO, and the Strategic Planning, Environmental & Research team. Some of our former fellows have even become permanent staff members, including Vishaka Shiva Raman, a Community Planner for the MPO.

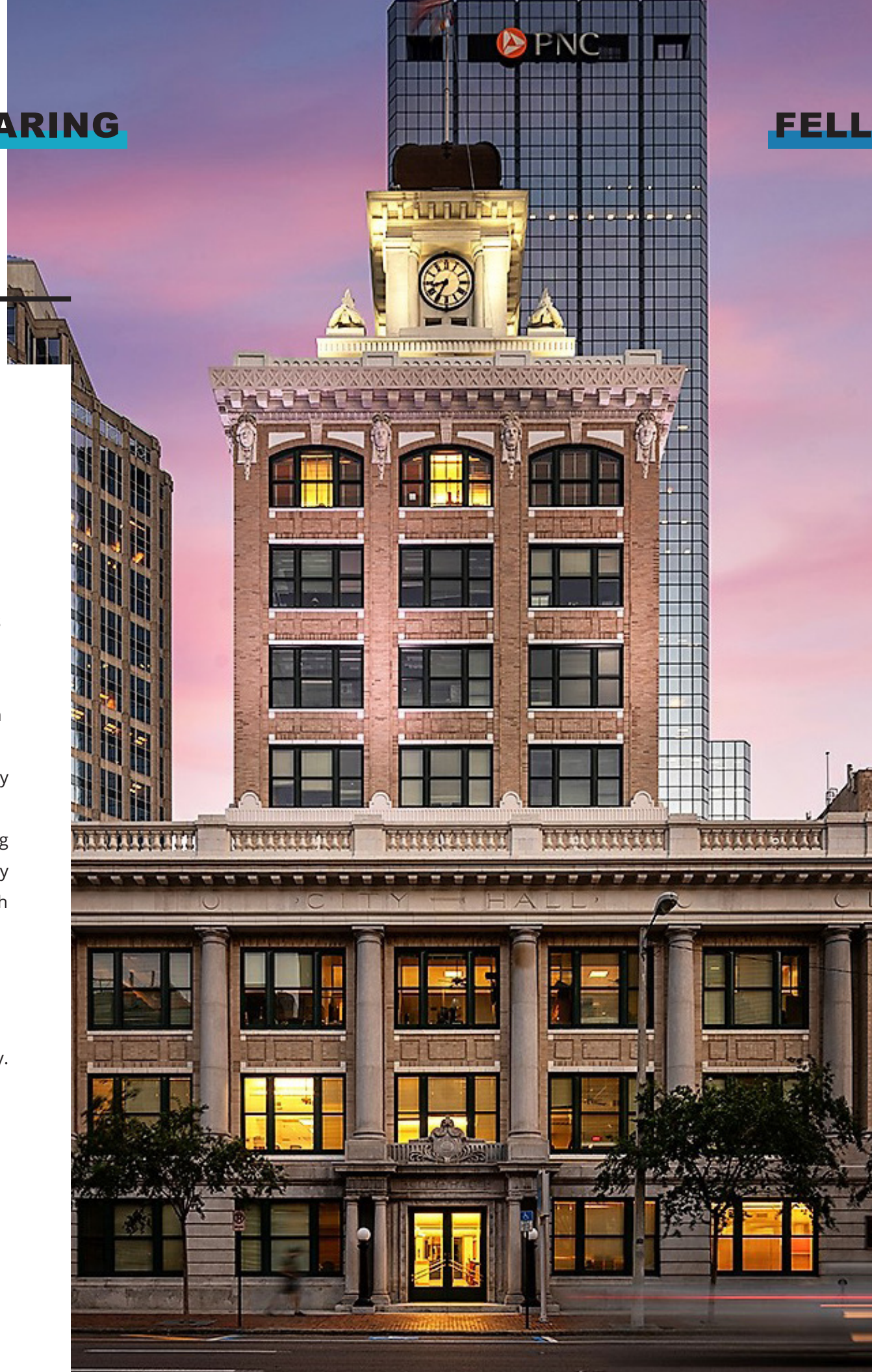
In May 2019 we began collaboration with graduate students from Florida State University’s Department of Urban & Regional Planning (DURP) on a studio project to develop urban design templates and policies for shared mobility. The effort culminated in a shared mobility and urban design report that was undertaken as a graduate capstone project by second year planning students.



RICH CLARENDON | MPO ASSISTANT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Plan Hillsborough Interns





## GREAT AMERICAN CLEANUP:

### EARTH DAY



In honor of Earth Day, the agency participated in the Great American Cleanup sponsored by Keep Tampa Bay Beautiful. A team of staff volunteers spent their Saturday morning picking up trash along the trails, shoreline, and boat ramp at Riverhills Park in Temple Terrace. The cleanup is a call to action to create more sustainable communities by focusing on activities that impact individuals in need, provide aesthetic community improvements, and improve the environment.



ROGER MATHIE | PROJECT MANAGER |

## PAPERLESS OFFICE

Our agency has made significant strides to reduce unnecessary paper use. We have scanned all of our personnel and Pcard files, instituted a paperless interoffice POR system, created office forms that do not need to be printed out, and greatly reduced the number of copies of meeting agendas. As part of our Earth Day activities, the agency had its first paperless Planning Commission meeting on April 8 with staff and Planning Commissioners embracing an entirely digital format. All together, these efforts have realized a \$5,000 annual reduction in paper costs.



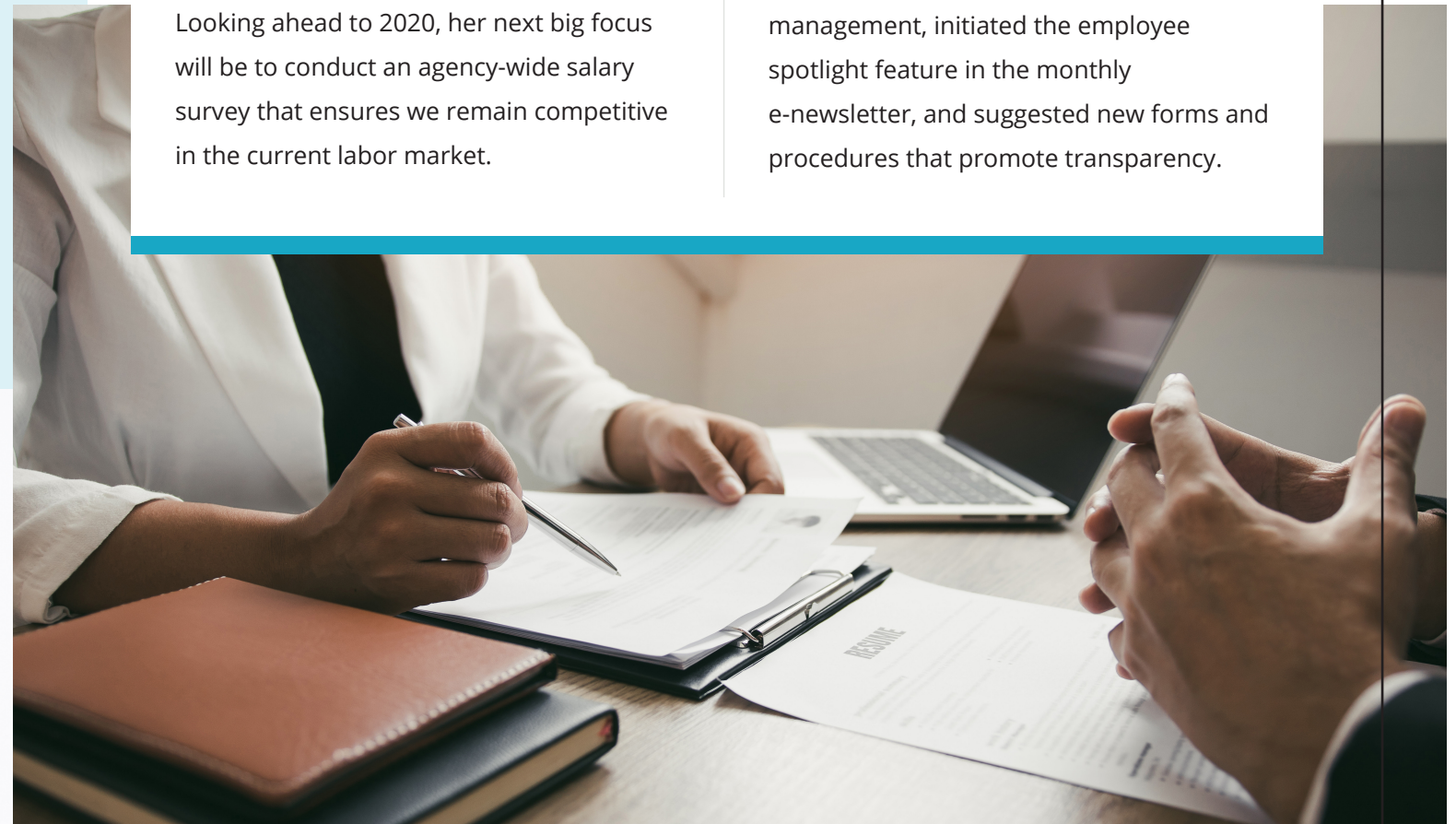
## NEW IN-HOUSE HR CAPABILITIES

One of the greatest additions to our agency this past year has been our new in-house Human Resources capabilities led by Mrs. Meghan Betourney. Having a designated HR specialist for Plan Hillsborough has brought expertise to specialized functions such as training, compensation, recruiting, and employee relations. Employees are able to receive more individualized support and the agency is able to promptly respond to personnel processes and effectively adapt to new challenges. During 2019, Mrs. Betourney created a personnel policies manual tailored exclusively to Plan Hillsborough's needs. Looking ahead to 2020, her next big focus will be to conduct an agency-wide salary survey that ensures we remain competitive in the current labor market.



MEGHAN BETOURNEY, SPHR | ACCOUNTABILITY PROJECT MANAGER

She also chairs the agency's new Culture Committee, formed to create an environment of inclusion and accountability within the agency. The committee collaborated extensively with staff to enhance the Annual Performance Assessment process and defined exactly what we mean by *accountability* at Plan Hillsborough, creating clear expectations among all employees. Furthermore, they have made recommendations on new policies regarding performance management, initiated the employee spotlight feature in the monthly e-newsletter, and suggested new forms and procedures that promote transparency.








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