



The Plan Hillsborough website on a mobile device

3. Measuring Visibility & Productivity

This chapter measures the visibility and productivity of TPO projects and reports during the 2021-2021 evaluation cycle. Visibility corresponds to the efforts and products the TPO produces to increase the agency's engagement with the public. Productivity is the output of the TPO's tasks.

A definition about visibility and productivity – knowing that our agency exists is a first step in being visible. A wide distribution of the work we do is an effective tool to be more visible to the public and at the same time demonstrating the impressive number of studies and plans the TPO have completed.

Number of TPO Publications Produced

Each year the TPO produces plans, projects and studies outlined in its yearly Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). The resulting documents are made available to the public as reports, technical memoranda, and maps. Feedback on these documents is solicited through public meetings, presentations to the TPO’s committees, and online engagement. Overall, there were 17 reports and studies produced in the 2020-2021 cycle (**Table 1**).

Table 1: Documents Produced from 2020-2021

Document Title	Published or Adopted
2020 Calendar With a Look Back at the Past Year	Jan 2020
Community Transportation Coordinator Evaluation	Feb 2020
Garden Steps Action Plan	Mar 2020
Resilient Tampa Bay: Transportation Pilot Program Project	Jun 2020
Transportation Improvement Program FY 2020 – 2024	Jun 2020
Public Participation Plan Measures of Effectiveness Report	Jun 2020
Public Participation Plan	Jun 2020
Managing Speed on Hillsborough’s High Injury Network	Jul 2020
2019 Independent Oversight Committee Annual Report	Oct 2020
Plant City Transit Feasibility Study Final Report Executive Summary	Dec 2020
2021 Calendar With a Look Back at the Past Year	Jan 2021
Community Transportation Coordinator Evaluation	Feb 2021
Vision Zero Corridor Studies - Unincorporated Hillsborough County	Feb 2021
Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan - Minor Update	Jun 2021
Transportation Improvement Program FY 2021 – 2025	Jun 2021
Nondiscrimination and Equity Plan	Aug 2021
Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan - Major Update	Oct 2021

TPO Publications Available Online

The TPO continues to maintain a strong presence on the internet to publicize plans, studies, regular meetings, and special meetings. For example: all agenda packets for committee meetings are posted on the PlanHillsborough.org website typically one week before the meeting takes place. The PlanHillsborough.org website includes an archive of current and past newsletters dating back to 2011, as well as agenda packets for the current and past two calendar years.

During the 2020-2021 period, the TPO continually expanded its online library of completed and pending plans, studies, maps and documents. Table 2 shows the number of 2020 and 2021 publications found on the PlanHillsborough.org website.



Table 2: Number of publications available online

	2020	2021
Current & Archived Newsletters	103	115
Current & Archived Meeting Packets	891	971
TPO-Produced Reports & Documents Published to Website	10	7
Total	1004	1093

TPO Outreach Products and Materials

Newsletters & Press Releases

In August 2017, the Plan Hillsborough agency consolidated all five of its publications into one monthly newsletter titled *Connections to Tomorrow*. The consolidated newsletter reduced the treatment of Plan Hillsborough emails as spam/ clutter.

Connections to Tomorrow contains featured stories covering topics of interest along with an events schedule and archive of stories featuring Plan Hillsborough's agencies. *Connections to Tomorrow* is archived on the PlanHillsborough.org website as well as on Constant Contact, an email marketing platform. This allows viewers to click through to project pages and other sources of interest directly from within the website-hosted newsletter.

Virtual links to these newsletters are promoted online through Facebook and Twitter. The TPO honors requests for Spanish translations of its newsletters, which it began providing for each of its three newsletters from August 2016 to July 2017. Requests for Spanish translations of newsletters may be made via email or phone.

Newsletters and committee agenda packets continue to be sent via Constant Contact. Electronic distribution presents some significant advantages:

- Minimized printing and mailing costs
- Quicker access to information
- Allowing members of the public to easily self-subscribe to any or all mailing lists
- Enables the TPO to generate statistics on how many recipients opened, clicked links on, and forwarded newsletters.

Users can sign up to receive the Connections to Tomorrow newsletter via PlanHillsborough.org, by emailing or calling a staff member, or by signing up through a link included in newsletters shared online. The TPO offers an option for users to receive a Spanish version of the newsletter, which may be requested via phone or email. In addition, there is a drop-down tool available at the top of PlanHillsborough.org in which a language selection can be made, and translations are accessible in over 100 different languages.

As of December 2021, the mailing list database contained 17,917 mailing addresses, which amounts to approximately 34% more than during the previous evaluation period.

Agendas Produced for the TPO Board and Committees

Notices of agendas for regularly scheduled Board meetings and committee meetings are sent to all members as well as those who have expressed interest in receiving agendas. Individuals can sign up for an agenda by emailing or calling a staff member at any time.

Over the 2020-2021 cycle, a total of 50,947 agenda notices were emailed to the TPO's email list.

Disadvantages include the potential that committee members or interested members of the public without internet access will be unable to view these materials. To mitigate this, the TPO provides printed agendas at the beginning of each committee meeting. The agency also provides a large-print version of its Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board packet.



See Appendix 2 for statistics on the number of newsletters distributed via Constant Contact, press releases over this period, and other notifications sent in 2020 and 2021.

Public Information Pieces

During the 2020-2021 cycle, the TPO continued to distribute public information pieces developed both in-house and in collaboration with other agencies. Public information pieces such as brochures and calendars provide the public with useful information about plans and projects, examples of the TPO’s role in major transportation efforts across the county, and details on how citizens can get involved, including the dates of the public meetings of the TPO board and its advisory committees throughout the year.



The TPO printed 2,400 calendars in 2020 and 2021.

Safety Education Materials

To support the Vision Zero coalition’s efforts, the TPO continued to distribute promotional materials to the public. Hundreds of Vision Zero reflective slap-bands were distributed at events visited by the TPO.



Tables 3 and 4 summarize the TPO’s public information materials, and the promotional materials created to support Vision Zero.

Table 3: Other TPO Brochures, Maps and Public Information Pieces

Brochures, Maps and Flyers	Year	Printed Copies
2020 Calendar With a Look Back at the Past Year	2020	1,200
Ride Guide	2020	2,000
2045 "It's TIME Hillsborough" Long Range Transportation Plan Executive Summary		1000
Sun Coast Transportation Alliance 2045 Transportation Plan Executive Summary		2000
2021 Calendar With a Look Back at the Past Year	2021	1,200
English/Spanish Flyers for the TIP Public Hearing	2021	17,500

Table 4: TPO Vision Zero Promotional Materials

Promotional Materials	Date	Number Printed/Distributed
Vision Zero Reflective Slap Bracelets	2021 & 2021	6,000



Media Coverage of the TPO

Newspaper Advertisements and Public Notices

After the acquisition of *The Tampa Tribune* by *The Tampa Bay Times* in 2016, Hillsborough County is primarily served by *The Tampa Bay Times*. According to the 2021 Nielsen Scarborough Report, clients.tampabay.com/2021/Times.MarketPresentation.2021.pdf



The Tampa Bay Times has a weekly circulation of 531,300 and a Sunday circulation of 597,300.

The agency also published notices in *La Gaceta*, a tri-lingual English, Spanish, and Italian newspaper. According to lagacetanewspaper.com/advertising/, *La Gaceta* reaches approximately 726,000 Hispanics living in Tampa Bay.



The Florida Sentinel Bulletin is another publishing source for the TPO. The paper is the only African-American publication in Florida. It prints twice weekly. Through door-to-door and news rack sales in Hillsborough, Pasco, Polk and Pinellas counties.

In compliance with state requirements, the TPO advertised Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board meetings in the *Florida Administrative Register*, published weekly on the internet free of charge by the Florida Department of State as a means of increasing public access to Florida government. Although the publication does not provide readership numbers, two posts were made to this online source in 2020 and 2021.



Table 5 contains all the public hearing and meeting notices posted in newspapers by the TPO between 2020 and 2021. **Table 6** contains the circulation numbers for these publications.

Table 5: Public Meeting Notices Published in Newspapers by the TPO in 2020 and 2021

Publication(s)	Date Published	Notice or Announcement
Tampa Bay Times	February 9, 2020	Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board – Notice of Meeting/Workshop Hearing
Tampa Bay Times	May 10, 2020	TPO June 30 Public Hearing Notice (TIP & PPP)
Tampa Bay Times	Feb. 21, 2021	Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board – Notice of Meeting/Workshop Hearing
Florida Administrative Register	March 2021	Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board – Notice of Meeting/Workshop Hearing
Tampa Bay Times	April 25, 2021	TPO June 9 Public Hearing Notice (TIP & PPP)
Florida Sentinel Bulletin	April 30, 2021	TPO June 9 Public Hearing Notice (TIP & PPP)
La Gaceta	April 30, 2021	TPO June 9 Public Hearing Notice (TIP & PPP)
Tampa Bay Times	May 2, 2021	TPO Fictitious Name Notice
Tampa Bay Times	May 30, 2021	TPO June 9 Public Hearing Notice

Table 6 Daily and weekly circulation of newspapers in which the TPO posted notices

Newspaper	2019 Circulation (Daily & Weekly)
Tampa Bay Times – Weekly	531,300 [1]
Sunday Circulation	597,300 [2]
La Gaceta – Weekly	18,000 [3]
Florida Sentinel Bulletin	22,000 [4]

Sources:

- [1] Tampa Bay Times (March 2020)
- [2] La Gaceta (March 2020)
- [3] Florida Sentinel Bulletin (April 2021)
- [4] Florida administrative Register(April 2021)

Advertisements and Public Notices Placed in Publications With Primarily Minority Audiences

Two meeting notices were placed in newspapers with minority populations during the 2020-2021 cycle: *La Gaceta and Florida Sentinel Bulletin*.

Public Meeting notice signs and Mass Mailings

For the 2020 and 2021 TIP public hearings, the TPO placed notice signs in areas affected by major capacity projects detailing the location, date, and time of the hearing. Also, the flyers provided several ways for members of the public to give comments without having to attend the hearing itself, including by mail, e-mail, phone/ voice message, and social media. Flyers detailing projects in were mailed in each of the past two years to between 7500 and 18,000 property owners residing near upcoming major projects.

Online Advertisements, Social Media, Public Notices

To keep up with the changing news habits of the public, the TPO continued providing notices, announcements and information via email, Facebook, Twitter, and its regularly updated website.

Print Media Coverage of the TPO

Due to elected officials serving on the TPO board and its public forum for transportation issues, the media frequently covers the TPO. Therefore, the TPO and its programs appear in 1232 articles from 2020 and 2021. This is an increase of 195% from the previous 2018-2019 cycle. Most articles appear in Tampa Bay Business Journal (118 articles) and The Tampa Bay Times (87 articles). Topics include the Transportation Sales Surtax, proposed projects for the I-275 and I-4 interchange, the West Shore interchange project, the Tampa West Riverwalk extension project, and pedestrian safety.

Meetings Broadcast on Television and Online

TPO public hearings are broadcast on Hillsborough Television (HTV), produced by Hillsborough County Government, and available on major cable providers in the Hillsborough County area as well as on the web at youtube.com/c/HillsboroughCountyMeetings/live. All 22 of the TPO's Board meetings were televised in 2020 and 2021. These meetings were broadcast live, close-captioned, and later rebroadcast throughout the corresponding month. Live and replays of televised meetings are noticed on the online HTV calendar.

In August 2017, TPO staff began uploading TPO Board meetings to its [YouTube channel](#). As of the end of 2021, this channel contains all TPO Board meetings held between August 2017 and December 2021, Independent Oversight Committee meetings, and some of the Tampa Bay TMA Leadership meetings. In 2020, the TPO began uploading all committee meetings as well. Combined with TIP Public Hearings, these meetings have received approximately 2882 total views as of the end of 2021. The TPO makes efforts to increase the viewership of its meetings and hearings for members of the public who cannot attend, by providing the live-stream link at the top of the Board meetings and Public Hearings meeting agendas, which can be accessed from the agency's PlanHillsborough.org homepage.

