



Ribbon cutting ceremony for the Selmon Expressway Extension

4. Measuring Participation Opportunities

Public input is a critical component of the success of the TPO's initiatives, and the agency consistently evaluates its participation opportunities for convenience and accessibility to the public. A participation opportunity is a situation where a citizen can provide public input, either directly to staff or in a format such as a written or emailed comment that staff receives and responds to. Citizens can participate at a regularly scheduled forum or community meeting, project workshops, events at which the TPO attends, online, or over the phone.

Participation at TPO Public Forums, Workshops and Community Meetings

As in years past, actively pursuing public outreach to obtain citizens' feedback is a major priority for the TPO. The TPO is committed to providing multiple avenues for citizens to interact with the agency, in person, in ways that are convenient and sensitive to their available time.

The main paths to participation include attending a regularly scheduled TPO or committee meeting, applying to become a member of a TPO committee, attending a public workshop on a specific topic sponsored by the TPO, and interacting with the TPO at fairs and exhibitions.

All TPO board and advisory committee meetings from 2020 to 2021 were publicly noticed, open to the public, and an opportunity for public comment. Public hearings were held during public meetings of the TPO Board and counted as one meeting during this cycle. Table 7 contains summary information of the committee meetings held in 2020 and 2021.

Table 7: TPO committee meetings held during 2020 and 2021

Board/Committee	2020			2021		
	Meetings	Attendees*	Public Comments	Meetings	Attendees*	Public Comments
TPO Board	11	273	35	11	634	117
TPO Policy Committee	3	58	1	9	342	23
Citizens Advisory Committee	11	278	6	11	348	5
Technical Advisory Committee	11	190	1	11	65	1
Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee	12	311	8	12	296	4
Livable Roadways Committee	11	348	2	11	279	5
Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board	6	106	0	6	120	2
Intelligent Transportation Committee	4	52	0	4	67	1
Independent Oversight Committee	4	n/a	n/a	N/A	82	8
Joint TAC/CAC Meeting	1	30	0	1	37	0
Sun Coast TPA/TMA	4			4		
Total	78	1646	53	80	2270	166

*From March 2020 and through 2021, public participation was virtual due to Covid restrictions

Public Outreach Events at which displays, presentations, discussions and feedback occurred

Beyond regularly scheduled meetings, the TPO hosted or participated in 84 external public meetings or events in 2020 and 2021, reaching over 3486 people. This represents a 65% decrease from the previous period. This decrease can be attributed to restrictions arising from the covid pandemic. The TPO also began tracking the number of event participants that staff members interacted with in 2017. In 2020 and 2021, the events with the highest number of attendees included:

Highest-Attended Events in 2020

1. 2021 Nondiscrimination Plan Field Outreach [December 2020] (350 survey participants)
2. FHWA Data Business Plan Update [July 8] (200 attendees)
3. Fancy Women Bike Ride [September 20] (66 attendees)
4. Holiday Vision Zero Showcase [December 5] (60 attendees)
5. Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council [March 9] (50 attendees)

Highest-Attended Events in 2021

1. Rep. Castor Telephone Town Hall [December 15] (1,000 listeners)
2. 2021 Nondiscrimination Plan Field Outreach [January 29] (350 attendees)
3. FDOT Conference: TransPlex [April 16] (100 attendees)
4. USF to Green ARTery Trail Neighborhood Outreach [August 25] (100 attendees)
5. Leadership Tampa [March 24] (60 attendees)

The TPO joined governments and nonprofit organizations worldwide to observe the World Day of Remembrance. Held in 2020 and 2021, the TPO organized the event as part of its Vision Zero program. Participants held signs with the names of their loved ones as they silently walked along Bruce B. Downs Blvd. Each year, the event involved the reading aloud of the names of more than 200 victims. Approximately 50 individuals participated in each event.

The complete list of events that TPO sponsored or participated in are located in Appendices 2 (2020) and 3 (2021).

Attendance at events in Environmental Justice (EJ) areas

Of the 84 meetings that the TPO hosted or participated in, at least 17 were held in EJ areas. EJ areas in Hillsborough County are census tracts one standard deviation above the county's median in concentration of one or more of the following characteristics: low-income, race, and ethnicity (Hispanic and Latino).

Due to Covid 19 restrictions, there was no in-person sign-in sheet tracking for zip codes from March 2020 – December 2021. Therefore, we do not know the origin of virtual participants and do not have significant zip code data.

TPO Board and Committee Meeting Participation

Number and origin of participants

A total of 3916 participants attended TPO Board and committee meetings in 2020-2021. This is approximately a 3% decrease from the previous cycle.

Public Turnout for the Transportation Improvement Program Annual Hearings (2020-2021)

The 2020 TIP public hearing was fully virtual due to covid pandemic restrictions. The hearing had 107 registered attendees that tuned in. It received 136 views on YouTube and 36 speakers, donors or commenters participated¹. Public Attendance was complemented by 3 Facebook comments, 1 voicemail message on the TIP hotline, and 30 emails.

The 2021 TIP hearing, held as a hybrid meeting, attracted 333 views on Facebook and 20 speakers, donors or commenters participated. The hearing received 3 Facebook comments, 1 Twitter comment, 3 voicemail messages regarding the TIP and its projects, and 24 emails.

The **update of the 2020 Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan (TDSP)** included a workshop for coordination contractors to discuss unmet client transportation needs and explore potential solutions to address these needs. This was the second year that Hillsborough's coordination contractors engaged in a roundtable discussion. Five agencies participated, discussing their transportation needs.



Number of persons on the TPO mailing list receiving regular agendas

The number of individuals on the TPO mailing list who received regular agendas decreased 25% during the 2020-2021 cycle due to an adjustment to covid restrictions. In December 2021, the last month of the cycle in which all committee meetings were held, approximately 940 individuals received an agenda mailed through Constant Contact.

¹ Donors provided their time to allow a speaker to speak for longer. Commenters made written comments.

Surveys, Draft Documents and Plans Available for Public Comment

From 2020-2021, the TPO hosted seven surveys, seeking comments from the public and its committees.

One survey involved the annual **Evaluation of the Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC)** draft report. The report was completed and approved by the Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board. The CTC is a state transportation program for seniors, persons with disabilities, low-income people and children at-risk to access essential needs. The evaluation revealed that the CTC continues to provide quality TD service exceeding five service performance standards. The evaluation included a customer survey that continues to record a 97 percent satisfaction rate with the service of the Sunshine Line.

The TPO publishes all its reports online at PlanHillsborough.org. Prior to TPO Board adoption, these reports and documents are kept in draft status; once adopted, a date of adoption is added. At any time, visitors to a project page are encouraged to contact the project manager through an email link or send general questions to planner@plancom.org, which is then distributed to the appropriate staff member for response. Several project pages also contain links to surveys, off-site information pages, and public comment forms. The presence of these additional resources is determined by the needs of the project.

Increasing Public Participation Efforts with Minorities, Low-Income Individuals, and the Transportation Disadvantaged

Ensuring the MOE report reflects representative public involvement

The Public Participation Plan 2022 Update will be provided to a member of the public to review for readability. And the agency's hybrid environment will encourage remote participation from a wider, more diverse audience.

Listing all TPO committee members' demographic data

As part of the Public Participation Plan, TPO staff collects demographic data to determine whether committee demography reflects that of Hillsborough County. This information is published as an [appendix to the 2022 Public Participation Plan](#).

Participation opportunities offered to American Indian entities

The TPO continues to ensure that tribal contacts receive agenda packets and Transportation Improvement Plan documents. The TPO has identified the contacts and placed them in its Constant Contact database. They also receive the TPO's monthly electronic newsletters which contain articles of transportation plans and projects. Lastly, tribal governments participate in the State's Efficient Transportation Decision Making process, which uses a web-based tool to provide information and map data to, and solicit comments from, agencies potentially affected by future plans and projects.