



# SCTPA

Sun Coast Transportation Planning Alliance

## TMA LEADERSHIP GROUP

A Subcommittee of the SCTPA Representing the MPOs in Hillsborough, Pasco & Pinellas Counties

**March 24, 2023 - 9:30 a.m.**

**Quarterly Meeting Host: Pasco MPO**

**Chair: Kathryn Starkey, Pasco MPO**

**Vice-Chairs: Dave Eggers, Forward Pinellas/ Vacant, Hillsborough TPO**

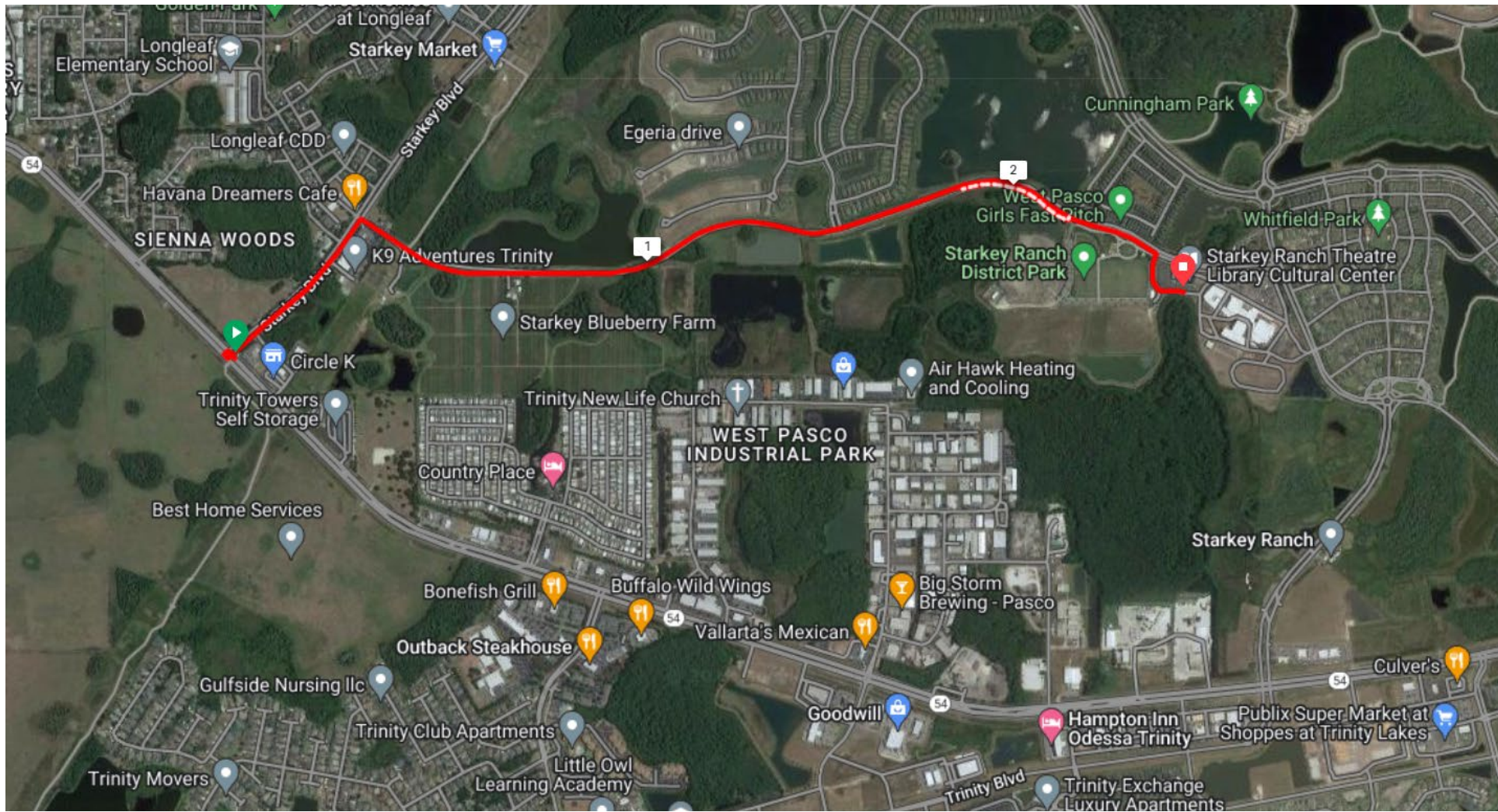
Starkey Ranch Theatre Library Cultural Center  
12118 Lake Blanche Dr, Odessa, FL 33556

Live-stream (view only):

<https://pascocountyfl.webex.com/pascocountyfl/j.php?MTID=mdc7e5241eab05ee2f45454f0c460678d>

## AGENDA

1. **Call to order & welcome** – Commissioner Kathryn Starkey, TMA Leadership Group Chair
2. **Public comment** – *3 minutes per speaker, please*
3. **December 09, 2022 meeting summary approval**
4. **[FDOT Rail System Plan and MPOAC Freight/Rail Committee Updates](#)** – Holly Cohen, Florida DOT, and Elizabeth Watkins, Hillsborough TPO
5. **Potential Memorandum of Understanding to Investigate Merger of Tampa Bay TMA MPOs** – Whit Blanton, Forward Pinellas
6. **Prioritizing livable communities in a regional context: [the Atlanta example](#)** – Beth Alden, Hillsborough TPO
7. **Old & new business**
  - Next meeting: Friday, June 23<sup>rd</sup>, meeting of SCTPA and TMA Leadership Group, Hernando/Citrus hosting
  - Gulf Coast Safe Streets Summit – November 2 & 3 in Pasco County
8. **Adjourn**



We recommend going from State Route 54, turn north onto Starkey Blvd and at the first light turn right on Lake Blanche Road. This will avoid traffic within the development, in particular the traffic generated by parents taking their children to school.



Entrance into the facility





Plan  
Hillsborough



## Tampa Bay Transportation Management Area (TMA) Leadership Group

Representing the MPOs in Pasco, Pinellas, & Hillsborough Counties

Friday, December 09, 2022 | Meeting Summary & Action Sheet

[TMA Leadership Group Public Meeting Video](#)

[TMA Leadership Group Public Meeting Presentations](#)

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The Tampa Bay Transportation Management Area (TMA) Leadership Group held this public meeting at the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council on December 9, at 9:30 a.m.

### **Review and Approve Major Regional Transportation Priority Projects**

**Chelsea Favero, Forward Pinellas**

**ACTION: The TMA Leadership Group voted to accept the priority list, apart from the replacement of HART's Heavy Maintenance Facility, for which a separate letter of support will be prepared.**

Discussion:

TMA members raised the question about whether HART's Heavy Maintenance Facility should be on this priority list. Discussion centered on whether the project is a local transit matter or regional.

- Bus services to adjacent counties cannot be expanded without addressing current vehicle maintenance needs. In comparison, the SunRunner was placed on the priority list and subsequently funded because it is part of a larger regional system. HART needs a heavy maintenance facility for basic system service first.
- Replacement of the facility will cost \$100 million, of which \$75 million is currently committed. In response to comments, HART staff stated that an application is in works for a RAISE grant to fill the gap of \$25 million. Another potential funding program is as the Bus/Bus Facility grant, which can help close the \$25 million gap.
- The PSTA Transit Intermodal Center was recently partially funded by a RAISE Grant for \$20 million; however, it was never specifically on this priority list. A goal of this list is the inclusion of a specific project with an identified funding source and to demonstrate regional support for the grant application.
- The Regional Priority List as proposed did not pass. (vote 4:4).
- A new motion was passed to accept all other items on the priority list, besides replacement of the HART Heavy Maintenance Facility, and that a separate letter of support for the HART's project be provided. (vote 7:1).

### **MPO Formation Parameters and Options for Tampa Bay**

## **Beth Alden, Hillsborough TPO**

**ACTION: the TMA Leadership Group voted to accept the motion to direct staff to further investigate the formation of a regional MPO.**

Discussion:

- With the completion of the 2020 Census, all urbanized areas are required to re-evaluate their apportionment plans. Formation of a regional MPO serving the Tampa-St. Petersburg urbanized area has long been a topic of discussion, dating to the early 1990s.
- It was noted that consideration of geographical and population size in a regional voting structure could be advantageous. Staff presented the legal and procedural requirements to formation of a regional MPO, along with a possible regional governance voting breakdown by jurisdiction within the three counties as an initial topic for discussion.
- There is a need to gather more information about the composition of each county (e.g., landmass vs. density) and maintain discussion on the merger, which may be significant economically.
- FDOT Secretary David Gwynn stated that speaking regionally, across county lines, will have more impact when applying for funding.
- Motion to direct staff towards preliminary investigation of the MPO formation. Motion passed. (vote: 7:1)

## **Election of Officers for 2023**

**ACTION: The TMA Leadership Group voted unanimously to approve the following motions:**

- **Commissioner Kathryn Starkey for Chair, Pasco County**
- **Commissioner Dave Eggers for Vice Chair, Pinellas County**

Discussion:

A motion is needed in March for election of the second Vice Chair position, representing Hillsborough County.

## **Public Comment**

- Sharon Calvert, President of Fix Roads First, requested the board to reject a grant application regarding the I-275 Boulevard Concept, set forth by the Hillsborough TPO. She alleged the grant would remove a portion of I-275 to make room for an at-level boulevard (It was later clarified at the SCTPA Meeting, immediately following, that this claim is not accurate and that the grant is to enable examination of a variety of options to address the physical barrier of the interstate to existing neighborhoods).
- Andrew Morris of Madeira Beach requested that cities be allowed by the state legislature the ability to place a sales tax on the ballot for transit advancement.

**The next TMA Leadership Group Meeting will be held on March 24, 2023, location TBD.**

**Meeting Adjourned at 10:39 am.**

# Potential Timeline

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Outreach to all governments in the planning area</li><li>✓ Apportionment Plan</li><li>✓ Business model &amp; typical budget</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Bylaws &amp; Structure</li><li>✓ Operating Procedures &amp; Financial Controls</li><li>✓ HR Procedures &amp; Organizational Chart</li><li>✓ Coordination with FHWA/FTA re: how to maintain TMA certification</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Interlocal agreement approvals</li><li>✓ Office space &amp; equipment</li><li>✓ Staff services agreement(s)</li><li>✓ Draft UPWP, PPP, TIP, and LRTP</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Governor approval of de/designation</li><li>✓ Grant agreements &amp; financial accounts</li><li>✓ Begin operations, convene board and committees</li><li>✓ Adopt UPWP, PPP, TIP and LRTP</li></ul>

# Creating a Tampa Bay Metropolitan Planning Organization

## Memorandum of Understanding

### *Working Draft*

March 24, 2023

**Whereas**, the Tampa Bay metropolitan area of Pasco, Pinellas and Hillsborough County has a combined population of over 3 million and is projected to grow by more than one million people over the next 20 years;

**Whereas**, the Pasco, Pinellas and Hillsborough County Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) or Transportation Planning Organizations (TPO) all function within the single Tampa-St. Petersburg Urban Area that covers much of the population within all three counties;

**Whereas**, since 1990 the Governor of Florida has desired that the three MPOs in the urban area consolidate into a single MPO unless they can sufficiently justify why they need to remain separate due to their complexity, unique conditions, and diversity within the region while also fostering a strong cooperative regional transportation planning process that addresses shared data, identifying regional needs, coordinated project development, and establishment of regional transportation priorities;

**Whereas**, the West Central Florida Chairs Coordinating Committee is established in state statutes (now Sun Coast Transportation Planning Alliance or SCTPA) and has interlocal agreements among the six MPOs serving the broader West Central Florida region and a subcommittee known as the Tampa Bay Transportation Management Area Leadership Group (TMA LG) serving the Pasco, Pinellas and Hillsborough MPOs that establish such a regional coordination and prioritization process;

**Whereas**, the pending sunset of the Tampa Bay Area Regional Transit Authority (TBARTA) will leave a void in regional transportation planning and project development, without dedicated staff and a governing board assigned to advance regional transportation activities and priorities;

**Whereas**, the process for forming a new regional MPO involved a number of steps to create required establishing planning documents as well as changing the hosting arrangements and MPO boundaries. As there is little precedent in Florida to rely on for guidance regarding de-designating an MPO, it will be important from a federal transportation funding cashflow to have a new MPO fully up and running at such time as existing MPOs are de-designated;

**Whereas**, the State of Florida has long demonstrated a lack of proper funding for regional planning bodies, such as TBARTA, regional planning councils and water management districts, there will need to be a substantial and long-term local commitment to provide sustainable funding for a regional MPO to be effective;

**Whereas**, the Florida Department of Transportation has committed through its approved PL distribution formula in 2014 that any MPOs in Florida that merge will continue to receive the base amount of planning funds (PL) due to each MPO prior to the merger.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:**



- The Pasco, Pinellas and Hillsborough County MPOs agree to investigate the formation, organizational and governance structure of a new regional MPO to serve the urban area of Pasco, Pinellas and Hillsborough Counties as reflected by the 2020 Census, with the goal of certifying the MPO by July 1, 2027. Other key steps toward formation may occur sooner than that date.
- A regional MPO serving these counties will augment and enhance the current functions of the existing MPOs in the urban area as currently represented by the Pasco MPO, Forward Pinellas and the Hillsborough TPO. It is important that while a regional MPO may provide a stronger and more collaborative regional focus and planning process that at the same time the existing long range transportation planning responsibilities be maintained at the county level for sub-regional, jurisdiction focused projects to avoid creating a local void in planning and technical assistance activities.
- A regional MPO must reflect proportional representation on its governing board based on the population of local governments within the MPO planning boundary, consistent with Florida Statutes that place requirements on the total number of voting members and the percentage that must represent the respective Boards of County Commissioners.
- The governance structure of a regional MPO may include representatives of transportation agencies as voting members, but their inclusion will reduce the number of local government elected officials as voting members on the governing board.
- Outreach to all local governments in the Metropolitan Planning Area is an important step in the regional MPO formation process and individual MPOs will develop a coordinated presentation and engagement strategy to fully inform and seek input from all affected local governments.
- The formation and certification of a new regional MPO will require the creation and adoption of multiple planning, development and policy documents for the region that are consistent with federal and state laws and regulations, including:
  - Apportionment Plan that describes to voting representation of the MPO's regional planning boundary and member local governments
  - Unified Planning Work Program (a two-year budget of planning activities)
  - Long Range Transportation Plan (20-25 year financially feasible plan for transportation)
  - Public Participation Plan (how it will involve the public in decision-making)
  - Transportation Improvement Program (a five-year work plan for transportation projects with funding by phase)
  - Congestion Management Process (a strategic means of evaluating the causes and strategies for improving traffic congestion)
  - Title VI process and Continuity of Operations Plan (addressing ADA complaints and emergency operations)
  - Interlocal agreements and/or staff services agreements with one or more host agencies (if the MPO is not fully independent), and interlocal agreements to receive funding and provide planning services to any number of local governments in the region.

- Those planning products shall reflect the work of the individual MPOs currently in place but will need to be substantially revised and restructured to reflect the new planning boundaries of the MPO as a truly regional entity covering the tri-county urban area.
- The MPOs in their current formation have demonstrated competent leadership and effectiveness in planning for countywide and local transportation needs and priorities in their respective planning areas, building trust and collaborative partnerships with local community stakeholders and land use planning agencies that will need to be sustained with the formation of a regional MPO. Therefore, the regional MPO will consider staff services agreements with the planning agency in each county to support outreach and engagement as well as coordination on land use, transportation operations and safety.
- As each existing MPO is currently hosted by another agency, the impacts to those agencies and their staffs should be considered; the interlocal agreements with those organizations will need to be updated. Those existing host agencies may present an opportunity for continuing long range transportation planning at a county or jurisdictional level.
- There will be substantial start-up costs to form a regional MPO based on case study examples elsewhere in the United States requiring funding to hire staff, secure office space, purchase equipment and produce necessary planning products and administrative documents.
- A regional MPO will need a recurring local funding source from member agencies or the host local government to develop a budget pay for staff salaries, planning activities, facilities and other related administration costs to augment federal and state funds that are paid on a quarterly reimbursement.
- To retain and continue to attract quality staff for transportation planning through what may be a multi-year transition period, existing staff at the time of formation of a regional MPO will be offered positions with the new MPO and with their county governments/planning agencies.

**SIGNATURE BLOCK FOR TMA MEMBERS**

**Hillsborough Transportation Planning Organization**

**Pasco Transportation Planning Organization**

**Forward Pinellas**