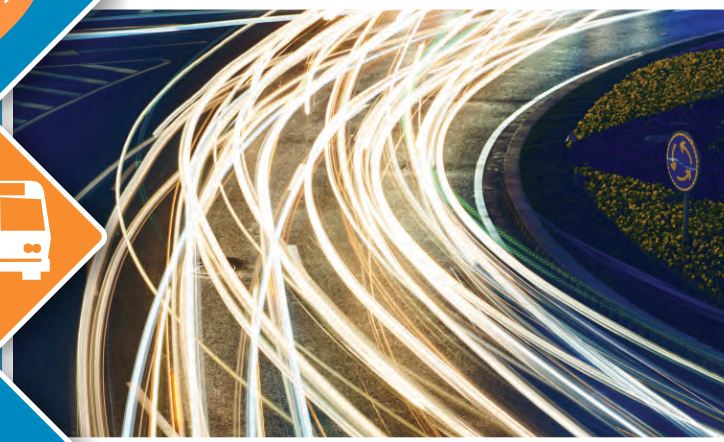


Community Transportation Plan

Findings and Recommendations

June 2015





Preface

Following *GO Hillsborough's* extensive citizen feedback, it is apparent that citizens believe Hillsborough County is facing a potential transportation crisis. In fact, it is the top concern for citizens, even twice that of jobs and our local economy.

Citizens clearly realize Hillsborough County's population is projected to grow 40 percent more in the next 25 years -- a half a million more people -- and at the same time, it is suffering from significant shortfalls in transportation funding. They consistently indicate that our community must start planning and paying for transportation improvements now to before things get any worse.

Without new revenue, roads will continue to go unrepaired and the backlog of maintenance needs will grow exponentially. Congestion, traffic flow, and intersection bottlenecks will worsen even more, and the transit system will remain woefully inadequate. As transportation degrades, we will lose good jobs and property values will start to decline. Within the near future, it will become simply intolerable to those that live, work, and visit here.

Rather than just sit in traffic and do nothing, *GO Hillsborough* is recommending a fair, balanced, and community-driven transportation plan that will fix our roads first, relieve congestion, redesign transit, and make our lives better. *GO Hillsborough* recommends funding this by placing a dedicated ½ percent sales tax referendum on the November 2016 election ballot. This will create \$117.5 million annually and \$3.5 billion over 30 years. At the same time a ½ percent sales tax is implemented, new growth will pay an increased and equitable share for its transportation impacts, too.

The *GO Hillsborough* Community Transportation Plan will:

- ◆ Fix and maintain existing roads
- ◆ Relieve traffic flow and congestion, including intersection bottlenecks
- ◆ Build and widen roads
- ◆ Double transit service
- ◆ Make walking and biking safer

While this new revenue doesn't meet all of our needs, it meaningfully improves the lives of all Hillsborough County citizens. It will fund 100% of the backlog and future maintenance and 100% of bike and sidewalks safety needs. Since roads and transit go hand in hand to relieve traffic flow, it will expand and improve roads, including synchronizing all traffic signals, and redesign and improve our transit system with bus rapid transit (BRT), flex and express bus services, and modernized streetcar through downtown Tampa and on to the Tampa International Airport or University of South Florida (USF).

The *GO Hillsborough* Community Transportation Plan is based on consensus and is truly community-driven. It is viable and sustainable and can be supported by a majority of the citizens of Hillsborough County.



Transportation is the top concern for citizens — twice that of jobs and our local economy.

- We are 11th highest in traffic congestion in the country; among the highest number of bicycle and pedestrian injuries and deaths in the country
- Only 2 cents of every \$1 of property tax the County collects goes to transportation
- We have a \$750 million backlog and future maintenance needs on roads, intersections and bridges, with insufficient revenue
- We have a bus system that lacks adequate frequency, coverage and convenience
- We are not serving the needs of a generation of workers who desire premium transit choices

GO Hillsborough recommends a fair, balanced and community-driven transportation plan that will fix our roads first, relieve congestion, redesign transit, and connect job, commercial and entertainment centers.

- 1/2 percent sales tax referendum on the November 2016 election ballot (\$117.5 million per year, or \$3.5 billion over 30 years, present value)
- New growth pays an increased and equitable share of its impact simultaneously

The Proposed Plan will:

- Fund 100% of backlog and future maintenance needs and 100% of bike and sidewalk safety needs throughout the County and cities
- Relieve congestion, traffic flow and bottlenecks with new and widened roads and intersections as well as building ridership and improving bus transit service, including Bus Rapid Transit and Express and Flex lines
- Enable the City of Tampa to use its new revenue allocation to fund a modernized streetcar as a demonstration of the effectiveness of light rail technology
- Use this new revenue to partner with FDOT and THEA along major corridors to connect people to employment, commercial and residential centers

1/2 Percent Local Option Transportation Sales Tax Recommended New Revenue Distribution by Jurisdiction over 30 years		
JURISDICTION	ESTIMATED NEW REVENUE	PERCENTAGE OF ESTIMATED NEW REVENUE*
HART**	\$881,250,000	25%
Hillsborough County	\$1,946,857,000	55.23%
City of Plant City	\$60,630,000	1.72%
City of Tampa	\$592,905,000	16.82%
City of Temple Terrace	\$43,357,000	1.23%
Total	\$3,525,000,000	100%

**Read the full
Community Transportation Plan
at www.GOHillsborough.org**

*Information adjusted based on FY 2015 estimates from the "2014 Local Government Financial Information Handbook" published by the Florida Legislature Office of Economic and Demographic Research. **HART distribution is based on the CIT model allocation to Hillsborough County School District pending the finalized 2015 Transit Development Plan.



Executive Summary and Recommendations



Executive Summary

Citizens rank transportation as their number one concern in Hillsborough County, nearly double that of the next highest issue (jobs and our local economy), and the community is facing critical choices related to worsening traffic flow. We are experiencing significant shortfalls in funding just as our population is expanding and congestion is rapidly increasing, putting greater pressure on our already declining and bottlenecked transportation system. Across our Cities and throughout the County, roads and intersections are now failing and the transit system is inadequate and unable to provide sufficient relief. The reality is that Tampa Bay has now become the 11th worst area for traffic congestion in the U.S. We must do something now or it will continue to get worse.

Worsening Congestion & Insufficient Revenue

It is important to realize that Hillsborough County is the size of Rhode Island with 30 percent more people, and a wide diversity of lifestyles and transportation needs. Our current population is 1.3 million, and it is expected to grow to at least 1.8 million over the next 25 years – a population as big as eight U.S. states and Washington, D.C.

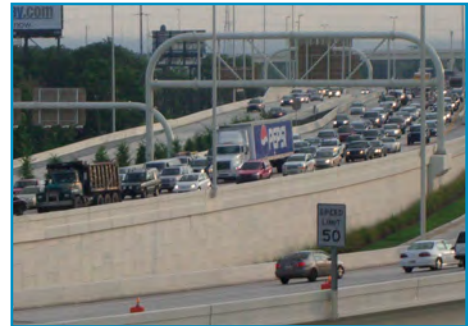
Geographically, Hillsborough County is the center of the region. No other county in the Tampa Bay region has as many people or jobs, so Hillsborough County bears the burden of a tremendous amount of traffic on its transportation network, which includes over 12,000 lane miles of roads, 700 bridges, and 600 signalized intersections. Many commuters that reside in surrounding counties travel on City and County roads to reach employment, entertainment, commercial, and education centers, worsening our congestion problems. The issue is compounded by travel options primarily limited to driving.

Over the last 20 years, more than half of the Community Investment Tax (CIT) has been spent on transportation. Although the stadium was built first, the CIT also paid for schools, libraries, parks, fire stations and other public safety needs. This enabled Hillsborough County to invest \$1.3 billion in transportation projects, including \$950 million for road and related improvements, without cutting other essential services. The reality is, however, that two thirds of the available County budget is dedicated to public safety and constitutional offices, leaving very limited financial resources for transportation without reallocating funding from other equally important and competing needs.

With the existing ½ percent CIT now nearly fully committed and only two cents of every County property tax dollar committed to transportation, there is \$750 million in unmet road maintenance and safety needs. This does not even consider additional needed road and transit improvements. In fact, Hillsborough Area Regional Transit (HART) continues to be underfunded and under-utilized and cannot serve over half of the County or nearly 40 percent of jobs. To make matters worse, federal, state and developer funding is inadequate, particularly without significant local matching funds.

Creating a Community-Driven Transportation Plan

Recognizing this dire circumstance, the Board of Hillsborough County Commissioners (BOCC), the mayors of Plant City, Tampa, and Temple Terrace, and the Chair of the HART Board of Directors, collectively referred to as the Policy Leadership Group (PLG), came together to create a community-driven transportation plan that will provide traffic flow relief and improve transit service options which support job creation and economic prosperity for all residents.





Parsons Brinckerhoff was asked to conduct community engagement, validate and analyze project needs, costs and funding data, and to make recommendations for a Community Transportation Plan.

Citizen engagement began in November 2014 with six focus group discussions and the creation of a visual identity as a cornerstone for outreach and communications. The effort, now known as *GO Hillsborough*, then hosted more than 1,900 people at 32 open-house style workshops, and four telephone town hall meetings with nearly 24,000 people participating. Online and social media platforms were established and telephone comment lines brought near daily interactions, emails, and notes, including nearly 3,000 “likes” on Facebook. The I-Neighborhood app, a map application feature on the website, allowed citizens to review and comment on projects. In late April 2015, a statistically valid public opinion survey was conducted with 600 likely voters in the November 2016 election. Another 12 community meetings are planned for late summer to focus on integrating specific project priorities with a new revenue source into the Community Transportation Plan.

On a parallel course, data was collected from each of the jurisdictions, validated, and analyzed. The projects reflect \$8.3-10.1 billion dollars of need over the next 30 years. During community engagement, additionally a minimum of \$2.5 billion in potential projects were identified as well. The table below shows the costs of each project type category or program, based on the initial projects and programs, as well as minimum costs of projects added from community feedback.

11,944 Website Visits

GOHillsborough.org



184 YouTube
Video Views

f 2,737 Facebook Likes

264 Twitter Followers



849 I-Neighborhood App
Visitors



Programmatic and Project Costs

Category Type	Cost (Low)	Cost (High)
Maintenance	\$933.6 million	\$933.6 million
Transit	\$4.68 billion	\$5.75 billion
Roads	\$3.22 billion	\$5.45 billion
Sidewalk/Bike	\$173.9 million	\$338.8 million
Total	\$9 Billion	\$12.47 Billion

Costs include projects identified by the PLG and citizen projects



Key Findings

Citizen input, including multiple focus groups and statistically valid public opinion surveying, has been remarkably consistent, and reflects a general community consensus. The feedback that is most topical and relevant to the policy decisions under discussion by the PLG is listed below.

Key Finding #1

The Car Culture is ingrained throughout Hillsborough County, including the Cities of Plant City, Tampa, and Temple Terrace

Citizen input and community feedback is clear on this point, and a community transportation plan must acknowledge that the automobile is currently the dominant means of transportation used by them. In fact, during the public opinion surveying, the top response to traffic congestion relief is to “expand road capacity” with wider or new roads by both the City of Tampa and the rest of Hillsborough County citizens. Additionally, the bus transit system is viewed as inadequate and in need of redesign and higher ridership. With that said, very few spoke negatively toward HART specifically when finding flaws in the transit system.

Key Finding #2

Status Quo is Not Acceptable or Sustainable

Citizen input and community feedback in the Cities and the unincorporated County strongly indicates that traffic flow, congestion, and roadway conditions are getting worse every day and must be addressed now. Further, a “do nothing” approach is not embraced by citizens as they consider the lack of ongoing, reliable maintenance intolerable, and have a sense of urgency in addressing transportation. Citizens also question the lack of alternative forms of transportation, including transit, and the community’s failure to leverage new technologies.

Key Finding #3

Citizens share values and willingness to support one another’s priorities

Citizen input reflected community values, including safety, quality of life and choice, as much as different priorities by areas of the community. In fact, when priorities were viewed on a map of the County, neighbor to neighbor discussions occurred and understanding emerged, often centering on how values and priorities could be achieved.



Key Finding #4

Consensus exists around Citizen Priorities by Category and Allocation

The top priority in the County and the Cities was maintenance and resurfacing, including bridges. Citizen input and community feedback also strongly reflected that a community-driven transportation plan should relieve traffic by 1) building and widening roads, including intersections; 2) redesigning and improving transit; and, 3) making walking and biking safer.

Key Finding #5

"Light Rail" is not seen as a viable alternative for unincorporated Hillsborough County right now

While there is some support within the City of Tampa for premium transit, (colloquially known as "light rail" which is one of several types of transit technology), the majority of citizens indicate that they are skeptical because of the extremely spread out nature of the County. To these citizens, without dense concentrations of residential or work-hubs, rail transit is inefficient, lacks baseline ridership, and is too expensive.

Many have also questioned where such a system could physically be placed given the roadway limitations with lanes being maxed out to property lines and the option of underground placement infeasible in Florida. Citizen input on rail transit seemed most positive when it either connects to the Tampa International Airport, or has a "branch" configuration throughout the County, or includes an elaborate bus feeder system to a main rail line.

Key Finding #6

Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) is supported but questions surround implementation and use

Citizen input and community feedback were positive toward BRT and express bus service operating in its own lane and/or mixed lanes. Questions surrounded particular routes and limited stops, parking, and concerns about getting from the bus to the ultimate destination. Essentially, the lack of density and concentrated employment center practicalities were concerns, but most feedback indicated this incremental step was the most likely approach to be embraced by the community.

Key Finding #7

Current revenue is insufficient to properly fund transportation needs in this community

- ◆ Federal funding continues to decline as a percentage of overall transportation funding
- ◆ State funding is increasingly focused on strategic regional and statewide facilities leaving little for local needs
- ◆ In Hillsborough County alone, with existing funding sources, the resurfacing funding backlog is \$80 million and growing by \$15 million per year
- ◆ Local gas tax is not indexed for inflation and loses buying power every year



Key Finding #8

½ Percent Local Option Transportation Sales Tax is the preferred level and source that a majority of citizens are willing to support for new revenue

Citizen input and community feedback reflected general concern relative to any tax increase but a strong willingness to consider a sales tax. Additionally, public opinion surveying found that 52 percent of likely voters are willing to support a ½ percent sales tax rather than one percent (only 41% support), property tax (only 36% support), or gas tax (only 18% support).

- ◆ A ½ percent sales tax will generate \$117.5 million annually
- ◆ Sales tax may be used for all transportation categories, including both capital and operating
- ◆ A gas tax does not create enough revenue to address the vast needs that citizen input has identified nor is it supported by public opinion survey
- ◆ Property tax is not shared by tourists, visitors, or out of County commuters nor is it supported by citizen input or community feedback

Key Finding #9

Citizens want to be assured that new growth will pay an increased and more equitable share of the transportation impacts it creates

Citizens strongly indicated their concern that new growth has not historically, nor is currently paying its own way. Further, it is clear from the public opinion survey that when new development is required to pay increased fees, citizens are more likely to support the referendum.

Key Finding #10

Long term success in any community depends on larger scale premium transit and/or BRT connections between residential, commercial, and entertainment centers

When establishing premium transit, citizens strongly agree that transportation resources should be leveraged with other public and private entities. Currently, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and the Tampa-Hillsborough Expressway Authority (THEA) are developing plans to accommodate transit solutions to co-fund premium transit through both public and private sources. The unincorporated County and the City of Tampa have major opportunities to combine and leverage their more modest resources with other sources such as FDOT and THEA into premium transit, good jobs, and targeted businesses and industries.

Key Finding #11

Citizens want additional input into specific project priorities as well as ongoing, consistent communication and oversight

While citizen input indicates a willingness to support one another's priority categories, they also want further input and discussion about the prioritization of the current project list.

Recommendations for a Viable and Sustainable Community-Driven Transportation Plan

These recommendations are based upon the above findings and the totality of the citizen input and community feedback, including both qualitative and quantitative assessment, as well as technical data analysis and expertise. Recognizing that improvements to roads and transit go hand in hand in relieving traffic flow, we believe that an approach that addresses road and transit needs, including building ridership, and positions the community for premium transit, is a fair and balanced plan that the entire community can support. When implemented, we believe that these 15 recommendations will:

- ◆ Address backlog and future maintenance needs throughout the County and Cities
- ◆ Serve to relieve congestion, traffic flow and bottlenecks; redesign and improve transit, and make walking and biking safer throughout the County and Cities
- ◆ Facilitate economic development; the productive movement of goods and services; and interconnectivity with employment, commercial, and residential centers
- ◆ Position Hillsborough County to incrementally expand community-wide transportation choices and new transportation technologies
- ◆ Positively impact the daily lives of the people of Hillsborough County

Recommendation #1

Employ a transportation plan and funding strategy that 1) addresses the car-oriented experience of unmet maintenance and resurfacing needs, congestion, bottlenecks, poor traffic flow, and desire for new roads and road widening, while 2) redesigning and improving transit ridership, BRT, flex service, and express bus alternatives, and 3) developing a modernized streetcar or similar technology from downtown to the Tampa International Airport and/or downtown to the University of South Florida area.

Recommendation #2

Rather than a full percent, place a ½ percent Local Option Transportation Sales Tax referendum on the November 2016 election ballot dedicated to fixing and maintaining existing roads, relieving traffic flow and congestion, including intersection bottlenecks, building and widening new roads, redesigning and improving transit, and making walking and biking safer.

- ◆ This will create \$117.5 million annually

Recommendation #3

Limit the authorization of the ½ percent Local Option Transportation Sales Tax to 30-year sunset.

- ◆ This will create \$3.5 billion of local revenue
- ◆ This time frame is necessary to best enable securing state, federal, and other grants and funding sources which will provide the ability to leverage additional and significant revenue beyond what is generated by the sales tax
- ◆ Based upon a conservative estimate of federal, state and other matching funds available across the categories listed, ½ percent may reasonably leverage an additional \$881 million dollars (25 percent) over 30 years
- ◆ It will provide the ability to fully address maintenance needs and to implement road improvements and transit

Recommendation #4

Working across jurisdictional boundaries to ensure community balance and fairness, new revenue should be deployed in the following manner, targeting a two-third/one-third split between maintenance and roads to transit.

- ◆ Fund backlog and future Maintenance program at 100%
- ◆ Fund Sidewalk and Bike safety program at 100%
- ◆ Equally split remaining new revenue between Transit and Road projects
- ◆ Consider specific project lists in three successive 10-year increments; projects funded in the initial 10-year period will be finalized in the next few months following community engagement, including HART's 2015 Transit Development Plan, jurisdictional review, and before the approval of placing the referendum on the ballot

½ Percent Local Option Transportation Sales Tax

Recommended Community-wide Revenue Distribution by Category over 30 Years

Category	New Revenue	Cross-Jurisdictional Targeted Percentages of Total New Revenue
Maintenance* ^	\$840,271,671	23.8%
Transit**	\$1,272,770,444	36.1%
Road**	\$1,272,770,444	36.1%
Sidewalk/Bike Safety ^	\$139,187,441	3.9%
Total	\$3,525,000,000	100.0%

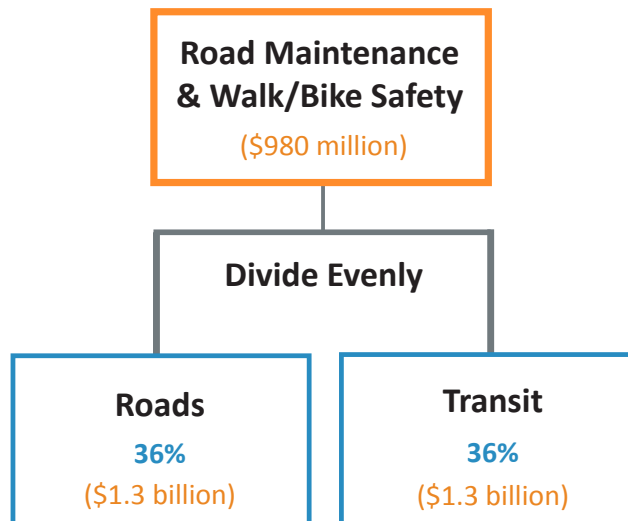
* Reduced total program cost by assumed funding match of 20% for Sidewalk/Bike and 10% for Maintenance.

^ The total program need in both the Maintenance and Sidewalk/Bike categories is less than the citizen recommended allocations would have provided.

** Transit and Road projects are funded equally with the remaining new revenue.

Recommended Community-wide Distribution

Overall 2/3 : 1/3
Roads:Transit





Recommendation #5

The County and Cities' allocation should be based on the State of Florida's Sales Tax Distribution Formula for Local Governments, with HART receiving a 25% allocation** to ensure that they reach a service level that is at least two times their current one.

½ Percent Local Option Transportation Sales Tax **Recommended New Revenue Distribution by Jurisdiction over 30 years**

Jurisdiction	Estimated New Revenue	Percentage of Estimated New Revenue*
HART**	\$881,251,000	25%
Hillsborough County	\$1,946,857,000	55.23%
City of Plant City	\$60,630,000	1.72%
City of Tampa	\$592,905,000	16.82%
City of Temple Terrace	\$43,357,000	1.23%
Total	\$3,525,000,000	100%

* Information adjusted based on FY 2015 estimates from the "2014 Local Government Financial Information Handbook" published by the Florida Legislature Office of Economic and Demographic Research.

** HART distribution is based on the CIT model allocation to Hillsborough County School District pending the finalized 2015 Transit Development Plan.

Recommendation #6

Hillsborough County must ensure that new growth pays an increased and equitable share of its impact on transportation by preparing an ordinance that will go into effect simultaneously with a ½ percent Local Option Transportation Sales Tax. Further, we recommend a strong consideration of employment of a mobility fee land use tool that incentivizes development and redevelopment in urban areas that can fund multi-modal projects.

- ◆ This will also facilitate a better nexus between land use and transportation planning



Recommendation #7

Establish a dedicated maintenance fund program and codify maintenance policies in conjunction with all of the local jurisdictions. Additionally, develop and publish annual resurfacing project rankings so that the citizens know where roads of interest stand in priority and when they may anticipate improvements will occur.

Recommendation #8

Working across jurisdictional boundaries and in partnership with HART and other agencies, including FDOT and THEA, the City of Tampa should contribute at least 10% of their ½ percent allocation toward co-funding the modernization of the streetcar or other premium transit service within the City of Tampa and ensure its interconnections to employment, commercial and entertainment centers.

Recommendation #9

Working across jurisdictional boundaries and in partnership with HART and other agencies, including FDOT and THEA, Hillsborough County should contribute at least 10% to BRT within the unincorporated County, and ensure its interconnections to employment, commercial and entertainment centers.

Recommendation #10

Working across jurisdictional boundaries and in partnership with HART, and other agencies, including FDOT and THEA, Plant City should contribute at least 10% of their ½ percent allocation toward co-funding express bus and circulator service to, from, and within Plant City and ensure its interconnections to employment, commercial, and entertainment centers.



Recommendation #11

Working across jurisdictional boundaries and in partnership with HART and other agencies, including FDOT and THEA, Temple Terrace should contribute at least 10% of their ½ percent allocation toward co-funding BRT and/or express bus services to, from, and within Temple Terrace and ensure its interconnections to employment, commercial, and entertainment centers.

Recommendation #12

Beginning in late summer, conduct additional community engagement to solicit further citizen input and to prioritize the initial 10-year list of specific projects for the referendum. Similar to the previous community outreach, this additional community engagement should include 12 community meetings and website/social media tools.

Recommendation #13

Continue to build public trust, confidence, and accountability by creating processes that allow citizens to be notified and updated as specific projects are planned, changed, updated, and/or completed.

Recommendation #14

Hillsborough County, all of the Cities, and HART should realign and finalize prioritized project lists with other appropriate transportation agencies to further improve traffic flow, bottlenecks, and transit as well as plan for congestion relieving economic development and future projects across jurisdictions.

Recommendation #15

Develop and implement policies regarding alternative forms of transportation and new transportation technologies, such as improved transit, automated control vehicles, private provision transportation services, and tolling.

Recommended Timeline/Next Steps

June-July 2015

Parsons Brinckerhoff presents
Recommendations to PLG
PLG Considers/Refers to BOCC

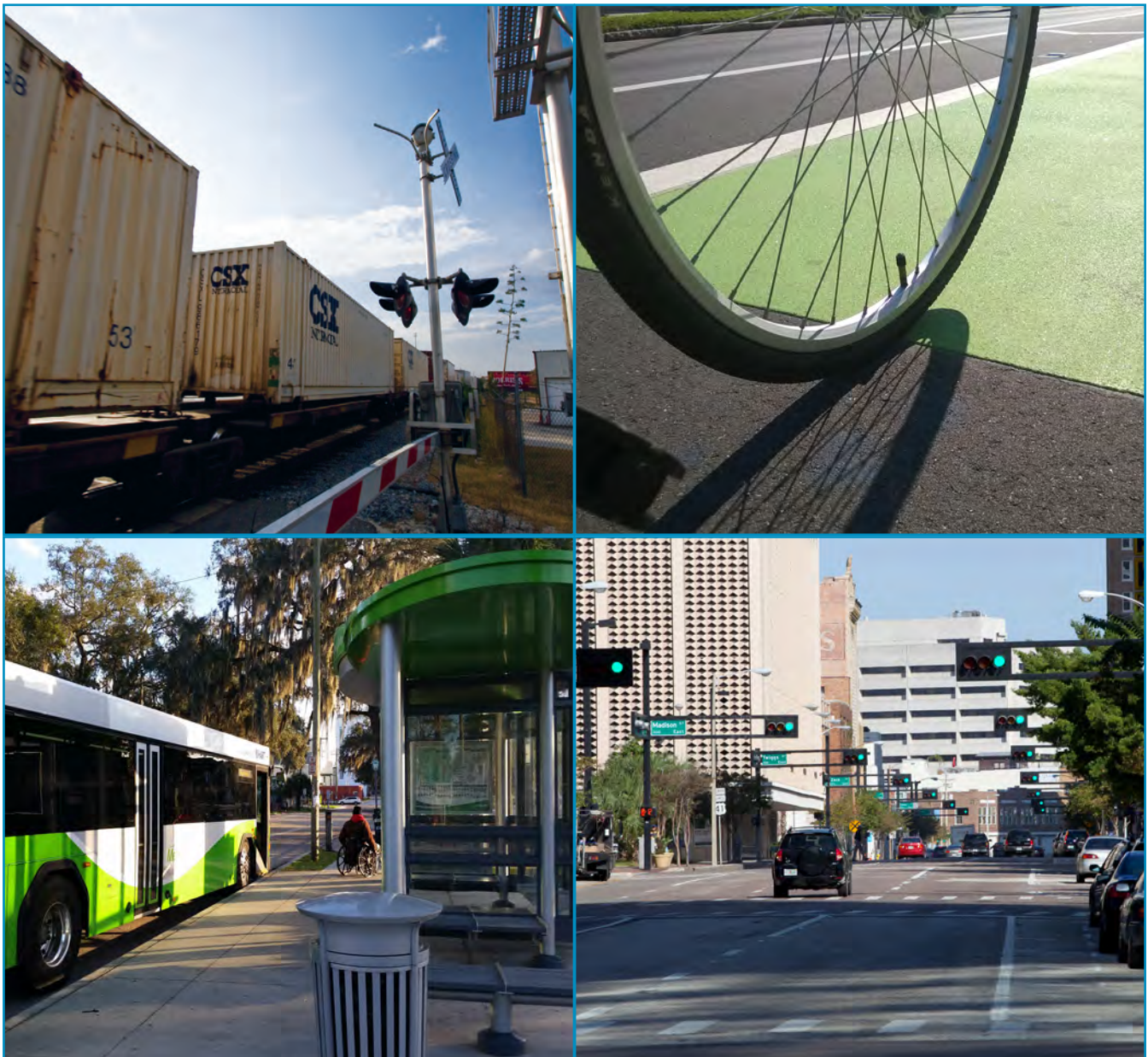
August-September 2015

Integrating Project Specifics
Aligning with Jurisdictional Partners
BOCC Consideration and Direction

October-December 2015

BOCC holds final Public Engagement
Meetings to finalize Community
Transportation Plan

BOCC makes decision whether
or not to place a referendum on
November 2016 Ballot



ESTIMATED TIMELINE*

Sept 2014	Oct 2014	Nov 2014	Dec 2014	Jan 2015	Feb 2015	Mar 2015	Apr 2015	May 2015	June 2015	July 2015	Aug 2015	Sept 2015	Oct 2015	Nov 2015	Dec 2015	Jan 2016	...	Nov 2016														
	MPO Long-Range Transportation Plan									HART Transit Development Plan																						
Stakeholder/Opinion Leader Meetings																Technical: Research, Validation, Analysis, Scenarios Development		Draft Community’s Transportation Plan Recommendations										Finalized Plan				
Visual Identity & Communication Tools Preparation																GO Hillsborough Public Engagement										GO Hillsborough Workshops on Specific Projects		Finalize Plan, Draft Ordinance & Place on Ballot*				
																	Private Sector Advocacy*															

*Assumes appropriate board approvals