

NOMINEES



Planning Organization Of The Year



Planning Organization of the Year

Nominators from organizations across the State submitted planning organizations or entities, such as city planning departments, for consideration to the TransPlex Award Committee.

Nominators described how the organization:

- Was a leader in transportation planning in Florida during 2020
- Made a significant contribution to Transportation Planning in Florida in 2020 or made a continuing commitment to, and significant achievements in, Transportation Planning in Florida over a period of years
- Helped achieve Florida Transportation Plan (FTP) and/or Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) goals and objectives

Additionally, the nominators were asked to share other considerations such as how the organization:

- Demonstrated resourcefulness, collaboration and/or partnerships
- Employed cost effective strategies
- Increased safety
- Led to the enhancement of resilience and/or sustainability
- Overcame challenges and utilized opportunities presented by the project
- Reduced congestion
- Supported the integration of new technology

Planning Organization of the Year Narratives

Narratives supporting these nominees follow in alphabetical order. In the table below, the narratives are also linked to their names.

| Nominees |
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| Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency |
| Broward MPO |
| City of Sarasota Transportation Planning/ Engineering |
| City of Tampa |
| Collier County Government |
| FDOT Central Office |
| Forward Pinellas |
| Hillsborough MPO |
| Mark & Marianne Barnebey Planning and Development Lab |
| Marlin Engineering, Inc. |
| MetroPlan Orlando |
| Miami-Dade TPO |
| Tallahassee-Leon County Planning Department |
| Tampa Bay Area Regional Transit Authority |



Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency

In a year in which the COVID-19 Pandemic has forced local governments to focus even more on cost-effective strategies, the Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency (IA) has kept 31 active (planning, design, or construction) projects in motion, in spite of an initially projected \$13.6 million shortfall, for fiscal years 2021 to 2025, due to decreased sales tax revenues from COVID-19. In line with its promise to the voters of Leon County, these projects will seek to reduce congestion by improving roadways, provide recreation opportunities and alternative transportation options through new greenway trails and bicycle facilities, increase quality of life and social infrastructure by building new parks and public spaces for the community to gather. When completed, these 31 projects and subprojects will provide over 22 miles of improved roadways; almost 79 miles of new bicycle and pedestrian facilities; over 400 tree plantings, and approximately 200 acres of new park and public spaces, providing destinations for all transportation users. Blueprint IA has also embraced new technologies to spread public information communicate with members of the public. In 2020 a new Blueprint website launched (www.blueprintia.org), with easy to find sources of information, meeting agendas, and an interactive projects map, allowing members of the public to learn about all the projects that Blueprint IA will complete over the next 20 years, see their location, and easily find contact info for project managers. Social Media accounts on Facebook and Twitter have also been created for Blueprint IA, ensuring that whatever platform members of the public choose to get their information from, they are able to find and receive updates from Blueprint IA. Blueprint's commitment to meaningful public engagement on projects has not waived, despite significant challenges presented by the COVID-19 Pandemic. Engagement has moved to the digital realm, and a combination of surveys, live Q&A sessions, digital whiteboards, and traditional presentations have ensured that the voice of the public is incorporated into projects. In total Blueprint provide well-over 30 opportunities for members of the public to engage on projects, outside of normal meetings. Another standout planning process undertaken by Blueprint IA in 2020 was the prioritization of the Tallahassee-Leon County Greenways Master Plan. After conducting a review of local and national bicycle and pedestrian prioritization, Blueprint developed a set of criteria that prioritized the remaining Greenways projects through metrics that promoted connectivity, safety, equity, ecotourism, multimodality, and leveraging. As a result, this prioritization process will contribute to the development of over 100 miles of Greenways projects by 2040. Blueprint regularly collaborates with local, regional, and State partners to achieve project goals. In 2020 collaboration opportunities were pursued in relation to streetscaping on North Monroe Street, roadway improvements and park facilities around a new stormwater project, and several trail projects.



Broward MPO

The Broward MPO continues to lead Florida through our contributions to Transportation planning. We always focus on innovation, resourcefulness, and collaboration. 2020 presented many challenges yet we continued to succeed and included are only some of our outstanding efforts:

With In-person events suspended, public outreach pivoted to Speak Up Broward Online: an interactive conversation with the community. The participation spiked compared to traditional in-person events. Our Board/committee meetings became virtual while maintaining the highest standard. We overcame challenges (state and federal regulations, ADA compliance, public involvement) presented with hosting online meetings by creating detailed user manuals for board/committee members and public meeting staff training. Meetings have transitioned from an online-only setting to a hybrid, or partially virtual, setup.

We created an inventive Let's Go Broward Scavenger Hunt in partnership with FDOT in support of the Annual Mobility Week. The county-wide social media challenge encouraged the public to get to know their community, explore the region, find landmarks, and learn about Complete Streets projects through active transportation. The virtual challenge attracted national attention.

We celebrated program success through a virtual groundbreaking for the Prospect Road Complete Streets Project. The story-telling webpage served to engage the communities where the project is located and highlight the transformational design elements along Prospect Road. The Complete Streets Initiative "BTactical" focuses on delivering Quick Build projects and comprehensive longer-term street projects. "BTactical" supports partner agencies implementing pilot projects, testing innovative treatments, generate public awareness, and support efforts to increase multimodal safety, accessibility, and connectivity.

Addressing safety and new technology, the MPO developed dashboards for federally mandated performance measure targets using the mySidewalk platform as well as community profiles for the 31 municipalities in Broward. These user-friendly dashboards and community profiles are on the MPO website and open to the public.

The Complete Streets and Localized Initiatives program is using technology to expedite the implementation of local projects. Automating the application and project prioritization process based on objective criteria requires the applicant's minimal effort and creates a more easily accessible process.

Our innovative Interactive TIP Tool provides project location maps, detailed financial information features, and city reports not available prior to implementing this interactive software. To assist its transportation partners in using tool, the MPO provides training classes.

We are advancing innovation through Mobility Hubs. Mobility hubs are places of connectivity where different modes of transportation come together in areas we live, work, and play. Construction is complete for the Downtown Fort Lauderdale Mobility Hub with \$3.5 million in improvements. The MPO has partnered with many cities in our region for future hubs.

We are looking to future innovation with Vision 2100 which outlines a vision for Broward out to the year 2100 considering future transit markets and available technologies. It discusses Land Use, Transportation, Technology, and Resiliency and how to address future plans, programs, and policies. It is intended to establish a guiding document for future MTP updates for consistency in investment and identification of transportation projects.

**Please visit the hyperlinks within the text for more information*



City of Sarasota Transportation Planning/ Engineering

The City of Sarasota's Planning Department has made a continuing commitment to transportation planning in Florida over a number of years by planning for a series of 11 roundabouts on US 41 through the City to improve safety for all modes of travel while improving vehicle throughput, making the transportation system more resilient to emergencies, and reducing emissions. The Bayfront Connectivity Plan (reconnecting Sarasota's downtown neighborhoods with Sarasota Bay across US 41) was adopted by the Sarasota City Commission in 2007. Since that time the City's Planning and Engineering staff have been working closely with the FDOT on designing and construction three (3) major roundabout projects that were constructed in 2020: US 41 at Fruitville, US 41 at 10th St, and US 41 at 14th St. There are five (5) additional roundabouts currently programmed in the TIP in various stages of planning and development on US 41 in the City: US 41 at Gulfstream, US 41 at Myrtle St, US 41 at Martin Luther King Jr. Way, US 41 at Main St, and US 41 at Ringling Blvd.



City of Tampa

The City of Tampa Mobility Department demonstrated excellence in transportation leadership during 2020, and prior. Under the leadership of Mayor Jane Castor, the Department's team made significant contributions to transportation planning in Florida and helped achieve the vision of the FTP & SHSP.

Vision Zero: The City recently wrapped up construction on an HSIP project on 34th Street in East Tampa, a high-risk neighborhood in Tampa's urban core. The project added pedestrian and bicycle safety features as well as three modern roundabouts. The Department also hired the City's first Vision Zero Coordinator, was accepted into the National Vision Zero Network, and formed a vision zero task force in the Mayor's office.

Transit: The City has led the planning and development of the extension and modernization of the Tampa Streetcar system. The City recently secured a \$67M capital grant from FDOT to help offset local matching costs for the FTA small starts program. The City also released an RFP for a mass transit public private partnership to extend the streetcar from Downtown Tampa to the Westshore Business District and Tampa International Airport.

Urban Greenways: The City substantially completed and fully funded for the remainder of the Green Spine cycle track, connecting a dozen urban core neighborhoods with a premium facility for bicycle transportation. Additionally, the City applied and was awarded a \$24M BUILD grant from USDOT to expand the world-famous Tampa Riverwalk along the west side of the Hillsborough River in West Tampa.

Pilot Projects and Parking: Early in 2020, Mayor Castor sought to help residents and small businesses impacted by the economic shutdown by rolling out "Lift Up Local," a unique program of multi-disciplinary pilot projects focused on cutting red tape to keep businesses open safely. The Department directly led major components of the program, including: (1) A temporary suspension of sidewalk café permitting citywide, allowing businesses to immediately utilize public and private outdoor spaces for their operations with self-enforcement and continuous monitoring by public officials. (2) Full closures of city streets in high pedestrian areas, to accommodate overflow of restaurant seating while still encouraging proper social distancing and table spacing. (3) Pop-up Parklets - on-street parking spaces were converted to temporary outdoor seating for adjacent businesses. LUL proved to be a lifesaver for many businesses, helping to keep them afloat during the economic shutdown.

Proactive Community Engagement: The City recently launched a grassroots public engagement effort aimed at crafting a comprehensive long-term vision for transportation, growth and development over the next 30 years. The master planning process, named Tampa M.O.V.E.S., represents an acronym of the City's core values for the future: Mobility for All, Economic Opportunity, Vision, Equity and Safety. Virtual listening sessions will be held each week through April 2021. This information will be used to build the City's Master Mobility Plan and Citywide Vision Plan. These accomplishments in 2020 speak to the culture of leadership, compassion and teamwork throughout the organization, from the very top to the very bottom.



Collier County Government

Improved connectivity and safety have been longtime priorities for Collier County Growth Management - Transportation Planning. In 2008, Collier County completed the East of 951 Horizon Study for Bridges to evaluate missing bridge connections on Golden Gate Estates roadways based on system-wide infrastructure needs. The study ranked 12 bridge locations based on criteria related to emergency response, service efficiency and mobility.

Since that Study, only 1 bridge was constructed. In 2018, County voters approved a one-cent infrastructure sales surtax and funds were collected starting in 2019. The remaining 11 bridges were designated to receive proceeds from the surtax. In 2020, Bridge #2 was placed in the County's work program for construction.

The County's Transportation Planning Team then began the 2020 Reevaluation Study to confirm the validity of the remaining 10 bridge locations. The team focused on the same criteria in the original study, e.g., reducing travel/response times, improving connectivity, and establishing more evacuation routes in the Golden Gate Estates Area.

The team interviewed all the public service agencies and reconfirmed the continued importance of the bridge locations. To quantify the benefits, a geographic information system (GIS) application was used to identify and measure travel distances with and without the new bridges. Additionally, the existing and proposed residential parcels that could be reasonably expected to benefit from the new bridges were identified and quantified.

The Study found that there were significant benefits to each bridge location for emergency vehicle response times and residents route choice options. While the benefits are easily understood, the Study did consider that there are negative impacts to existing/future residents. Just as the team was ready to bring the analysis to the public, the COVID-19 pandemic shut-down public meetings. Virtual public meetings have now become the new normal, but in the early summer of 2020, they were an innovative approach to public participation.

The team knew the adjacent property owners did not perceive any benefits to the bridges on their dead-end streets. Any benefits in trip length reduction, reduced response times for 1st responders, enhanced access, and connectivity, did not outweigh their perceived negative impacts. The team also understood that statistics and data about the greater community good were not what property owners wanted to hear and could not be easily conveyed virtually.

The team developed and held 7 virtual neighborhood meetings. These meetings were designed to share important project information and provide an opportunity for citizens to share concerns, ask questions and provide comments for the Study record. The team mailed meeting notifications to all affected homeowners and, using COVID-19 precautions, placed door hangers on every home within the project limits. This effort was well received by residents and allowed for the public involvement to continue even through the pandemic. Through the innovative public involvement, the team was able to hear the concerns of all the stakeholders and effectively evaluate all aspects of each location. The team will recommend approval of the Study and the construction of 5 bridges in the early spring of 2021.

FDOT Central Office

The FDOT Public Transportation and Transportation Data and Analytics Offices conducted research-based studies integrating non-motorized data collection and access to transit in coordination with six of Florida's transit agencies. Two innovative efforts were undertaken 1) focused on improved coordination, roles and responsibilities, and equity for Safe Access to Transit and 2) Pedestrian and Bicycle Data Collection at Transit Stops. Both studies identified best practices in the utilization of emerging datasets, technologies, and policies to support effective transit operations with a focus on Safety, Mobility, and Innovation.

In 2018 FDOT began deploying a statewide pedestrian/bicycle data collection program. Through outreach to transit agencies a prototype deployment was developed using multiple detection devices. Data was collected using infrared devices, bicycle tube counters and high-resolution video cameras to blanket the sidewalks, bike lanes and bus stops on both sides of the roadway. Video detection software was then used to track and count pedestrian and bicycle paths: to/from the stops; getting on/off the buses; crossing mid-block or just passing by.

Twelve hours of pedestrian/bicycle paths were reported visually on a still video. The reactions from researchers and transit operators were immediate: "data can provide justification for safety messaging to prevent mid-block crossings", "early morning video highlights the need for lighting" and "kiss-and-ride behavior on-video noted for future improvement". After reviewing the existing literature and communicating with nationally recognized transportation data experts, a significant finding is that there are currently no agencies in the country using on-street transit bicycle and pedestrian traffic data in combination with transit operations. One expert said, "this project is a great example of data fusion and validation, something greatly needed in the travel survey world."

Fusing pedestrian and bicycle crash data with actual volumes and paths opens the door to new understanding of the causal factors for crashes. For most transit users who begin and end their trips on foot, the lack of safe, pedestrian-oriented infrastructure, combined with suburban, segregated land use characteristics, creates an inhospitable environment in which to walk or bike to a bus stop. The Don't Stop at The Stop: Actualizing Safe Access to Transit study provides recommendations and action items to address the social impacts of transit dependency and the needs of disadvantaged communities. Whether via administrative silos, incomplete design and development review processes, undefined agency roles and responsibilities, or basic lack of coordination, there are continuous missed opportunities to incorporate transit-supportive infrastructure and countermeasures that could mitigate obvious safety concerns for those who access stops.

Since most patrons will walk/bike ¼-mile or more to access high-frequency, reliable transit service, addressing infrastructure also helps to address first-mile/last-mile accessibility. This report introduces potential roles and responsibilities of transit agencies, County and Municipal planning, private property owners, and other entities within various distance thresholds of stops where safety issues for pedestrians and bicyclists all too often occur.

These two studies have clearly set the table for a data-driven, socially responsible discussion to fulfill the need for safe, comfortable, and convenient access to transit in the State of Florida.

Forward Pinellas

Forward Pinellas made significant strides in 2020 in the realms of safety, equity, mobility, economic resilience, and community livability, furthering the goals and objectives of the FTP and SHSP. An overarching example is “Advantage Pinellas”, an interagency collaboration to address multi-modal mobility, economic opportunity, and housing affordability countywide. This adopted 25-year strategic plan aims to improve communities by making them safer and more equitable.

To confront the lack of affordable housing in Pinellas County and the ripple effects that touch everyone in the community, Forward Pinellas partnered with Pinellas County to convene community leaders and subject matter experts for “Homes for Pinellas”, an engaging and compelling five-part webinar series. In Pinellas, the number of jobs is growing twice as fast as the number of homes, straining access to affordable housing by the county’s workforce. Homes for Pinellas has resulted in productive conversations about ways to deliver, improve, and sustain affordable homes, inclusive of household transportation costs. To build on the program’s momentum, Forward Pinellas created a website for housing information (<https://www.forwardpinellas.org/advantagepinellas/>) and introduced a draft Countywide Housing Compact to unify Pinellas’ 25 local governments in addressing the issues.

A top priority of Forward Pinellas is safety for everyone who uses the transportation system. In 2020, Forward Pinellas partnered with local governments, community organizations, residents, and others to launch “Safe Streets Pinellas”, a Vision Zero initiative. The initiative included a virtual “Safe Streets Summit”, an eight-week social media campaign, a web-based interactive map for capturing input, transportation trivia events, a virtual art contest, and online pledges. They hosted a virtual “Bike Your City” scavenger hunt with more than 550 participants to promote bike advocacy. Outreach for Safe Streets Pinellas was complemented by a new website, blogs, and email blasts. The draft “Safe Streets Pinellas Action Plan” highlights areas of concern and provides tools to help make our communities safer and mobility options more equitable.

In 2020, in partnership with local governments, Forward Pinellas launched four demonstration projects to test safety strategies and performance. One project applied near-miss technology to examine recorded ‘close calls’ on our roadways and risky behaviors involved (for example, speeding and red-light running). The analysis informed recommended countermeasures, including signal timing changes. Another demonstration project brought attention to a new Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon in the location of a recent fatal crash. During the RRFB installation, Forward Pinellas, Pinellas County, and the City of Clearwater hosted an outdoor event with a ceremony honoring the victim and public education/input opportunities. Other safety initiatives conducted by Forward Pinellas in 2020, included an outdoor committee workshop, frontage road study along US 19 and a detailed analysis of traffic and safety issues along Drew Street, a high-crash corridor.

A significant arrival in Pinellas County in 2021 will be the Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority’s SunRunner bus rapid transit line in St. Petersburg. Forward Pinellas developed the Downtown St. Petersburg Mobility Study and a transit-oriented development plan to inform project development and support decisions for complementary land use and development within the transit corridor.



Hillsborough MPO

When it comes to MPO of the year Hillsborough county has stood out amongst the most. In response to COVID-19, our agency pivoted to a completely remote work schedule on March 17 to protect the health and safety of citizens and staff. The agency was able to adapt so quickly thanks to an already established remote work policy and in-place technology. Public access to staff expertise and data continued seamlessly via phone and email, and public comments continued to be heard at all meetings of the MPO's Committees and Board.

The work of the MPO did not skip a beat. Vision Zero shifted public engagement activities outdoors and deep-dove into data and audits of high-crash roads. The annual public hearing for the Transportation Improvement Program, along with smaller outreach meetings, shifted to creative online platforms, announced by roadside signs, flyers in laundromats, direct mail. The MPO Board dug into the pluses and minuses of tolls on new express lanes, taking advantage of the online meeting environment to invite guest speakers from around the country.

The Nondiscrimination Plan was one of many project highlights in 2020. The plan was created to help after the wave of social injustice that occurred in the Spring of 2020. The MPO committee members and staff took a new look at racial equity in local planning. A Racial Equity Resolution was approved that acknowledges that planning decisions of the past have had negative consequences on communities of color.

The MPO's first Smart Cities Mobility Plan is currently underway as well. These technologies will help improve safety on the network of roads and help reduce congestion at a much better price. The MPO will continue to reach out to the public to collect input about how this technology is impacting the community.

The second phase of the Garden Steps project kicked off in January 2020 with a workshop dubbed "Making Stone Soup," in which the attendees each discussed what they can bring to the table to help expand access to fresh, healthy foods in Tampa's food deserts. The MPO was proud to receive a \$50,000 grant from the Aetna Foundation to support this work, which expands access through education, local agriculture, and walk/ bike connections.

In addition to completing key projects this year the MPO also won many awards for our hard work.

- The international Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE), Florida Section, chose the MPO's Speed Management Action Plan for its John W. Barr Transportation Achievement Award.
- The National Association of Development Organizations recognized our Resilient Tampa Bay project with an Excellence in Regional Transportation Award.
- The Florida MPO Advisory Council selected two of our projects for 2020's nine Noteworthy Practices: Resilient Tampa Bay, and our TriMPO Growth Scenarios and Survey, "It's Time Tampa Bay."

Based off all that was going on in 2020, our organization was able to still succeed in so many areas. Our MPO stood tall and continued to make sure our citizens and stakeholders did not go without!



Mark & Marianne Barnebey Planning and Development Lab

FSU's Mark & Marianne Barnebey Planning & Development Lab (BPDL) provides technical assistance to communities and institutions through applied research and graduate studio projects. Over its 30+ year history, the lab has provided the Florida Department of Transportation with guidance and support through cutting edged research, staff- and student-led applied policy development projects, and service on various workshop panels and committees. The BPDL also supports FDOT in employee recruitment by preparing students for transportation internship opportunities, such as the successful Transit Fellows program. Over the past year, BPDL has continued this tradition of excellence in research and service despite significant challenges posed by COVID-19.

Some recent transportation-related projects completed for FDOT include:

- Multimodal Mobility in North Florida (2020) examines existing conditions and opportunities for increasing high-capacity transit along the North Florida Corridor.
- Assessment of Planning Risks and Alternative Futures for the Florida Transportation Plan (2019) looks at the influence of different uncertainty areas on Florida's future transportation system and how these risks should be addressed in FDOT transportation planning processes.
- Assessing the Property Value Impacts of SunRail Stations (2019) updates and quantifies the property value changes and development-related tax revenues associated with SunRail station areas.
- Shared Mobility and Urban Design (2019) provides design guidance for accommodating all aspects of shared mobility including ride-hail, rideshare, and mass transit drop-off and pick-up, livery points, fueling, and parking.
- Transit Accessibility for Special Populations (2018) provides a model process for evaluating and improving transit stops and routes for their utility to populations with enhanced accessibility needs.
- Autonomous Vehicle Policy Guide for Public Transportation in Florida Metropolitan Planning Organizations (2018) offers guidance to MPOs on policy for autonomous vehicles in public transportation.
- Post-Millennial Behavior and Long-Range Planning (2017) looks at behavioral trends and preferences of the Post-Millennial Generation and their impact on the state's transportation system and understanding.

Notable projects completed for regional transportation planning agencies include:

- Shared Mobility and Urban Design: Tampa Bay Area Case Studies (2019). Completed for Plan Hillsborough.
- Transit-Oriented Development & SunRail Riders: What's the Connection? (2018). Completed for Metroplan Orlando. The BPDL also provides an essential role in teaming with researchers from other disciplines to ensure that their FDOT-funded efforts integrate planning considerations. A few highlighted open projects include:
 - A System of Systems Approach to Understanding the Changing Nature of Transportation.
 - Development of a Resilience Index for the Florida Surface Transportation System.
 - Assessment of Transportation Systems Resilience for Vulnerable Communities and Populations.

It should be noted that the BDPL completed the Multimodal Mobility study and supported the ongoing College of Engineering-led projects during the COVID-19 pandemic. The BDPL applied creative approaches to meet scope expectations for field data collection, expert panel input and community engagement to ensure the high-level professional quality expected from our clients.

By continuing our legacy of quality work and ensuring the consistent mentoring of future transportation professionals in the midst of COVID-19, the BDPL is worthy of this year's award. More information on the Mark & Marianne Barnebey Planning & Development Lab is available at <https://coss.fsu.edu/barn/>.



Marlin Engineering, Inc.

MARLIN Engineering has worked with FDOT, MPO/TPO's and various local cities to plan, design and construct a holistic multimodal transportation network throughout Florida.

MARLIN Engineering is working with FDOT to establish a permanent non-motorized counting program in the state. Worked with various agencies to incorporate sidewalks, shared use pathways, and bicycle facilities throughout Florida, including: South Miami, Miami Beach, Cutler Bay, Palmetto Bay, Fort Lauderdale, Hollywood, Port St. Lucie and Pompano Beach to name a few.

MARLIN employs cost effective strategies, includes alternatives for sustainability and resiliency, improves safety, integrates and explores new technologies, and demonstrates resourcefulness, collaboration and establishes new partnerships to achieve the goals of any project, including the goals establish in the FTP.



MetroPlan Orlando

MetroPlan Orlando leads transportation planning in Central Florida through innovation, technical excellence, effective partnerships, and robust public engagement. The year 2020, which challenged organizations to operate during a crippling pandemic, illuminated our MPO's strengths in collaboration and resourcefulness.

Here are a few examples demonstrating why MetroPlan Orlando deserves consideration for Planning Organization of the Year.

1. Developing a Bold Transportation Vision

The year was already significant, with development of a \$27.9 billion plan establishing the long-range vision for transportation in Orange, Osceola, and Seminole counties. The 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) is guided by five goals to advance a diverse, vital regional transportation system. Our MTP goals and objectives included FDOT's FTP & SHSP goals/objectives and expanded on them. We identified additional goals focusing on public health, environment, equal access, and economic prosperity. The 2045 Plan put unprecedented emphasis on multimodal transportation solutions for our growing region and strengthened commitments to safety and connections to essential services.

2045 Plan development included coordination with government and transportation partners, as well as stakeholders from community sectors not ordinarily at the table for transportation decisions. When the pandemic shut down in-person meetings, MetroPlan Orlando convened online presentations and discussions that kept partners, stakeholders, and citizens involved through final approval of the plan in December 2020.

2. Taking Involvement to the Community

The pandemic reshaped communication and collaboration across the region. MetroPlan Orlando resolved to keep committee and board meetings on schedule. We pivoted to an online conferencing platform, trained and supported participants, and made meetings accessible to the public. Our techniques expanded later, as we moved to a calendar of hybrid meetings and online workshops. We were pleased that meeting participation rates for members and citizens improved.

Before COVID-19 halted in-person community outreach, we had explored engaging the public online to offer convenience and increase attendance. Our first large online event came in June with the annual Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) public meeting. Our 2020 online meeting drew more than five times the participation of the 2019 in-person TIP meeting. MetroPlan Orlando continued to lead in online events throughout 2020. We extended our outreach by livestreaming meetings and webinars and posting videos to YouTube, where they continued attracting viewers.

3. Keeping Innovation Flowing

While the unique circumstances of 2020 re-directed many efforts, MetroPlan Orlando continued to provide planning leadership through innovative programs. Among these is the Regional Transportation Systems Management & Operations (TSMO) Program to apply multimodal transportation strategies and technologies across the central portion of the state for better efficiency, safety, and utility. TSMO techniques help manage such things as work zones, traffic incidents, special events, and traffic signal coordination. Efforts throughout 2020 established the Regional TSMO Program, composed of eight MPOs and TPOs and led by MetroPlan Orlando. A memorandum of understanding was presented in February 2021.

Throughout a challenging year, MetroPlan Orlando led and supported the goals of our local, state and federal partners. Recognizing its significant contributions, we submit this nomination for the Organization of the Year Award.



Miami-Dade TPO

In 2020, the Miami-Dade TPO was one of the leaders in the State of Florida. The TPO adapted and progressed through the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic to continue delivering its mission and essential functions under emergency conditions, including the migration of TPO agency staff to remote working operations and abilities to carry out the metropolitan planning process. This is a summary of the agency's accomplishments: During the COVID-19 pandemic, the TPO completed 36 virtual TPO Governing Board and advisory committee meetings, approving major documents and advancing critical priorities of the agency. As a result of the pandemic reshaping daily life, the TPO initiated and completed a Telecommuting Study focusing on the concept of telecommuting as part of a long-term overall strategy to reduce congestion and improve mobility in Miami-Dade County. As a result of COVID-19 the TPO temporarily suspended all in-person outreach activities and special events in mid-March and implemented a virtual outreach series called the "Taste of Transportation Virtual Lunch Series". This virtual strategy focused on implementing the outreach events based on the 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan's designated Transportation Planning Areas and will continue through 2021.

The TPO continued reaching major milestones in the implementation of the SMART Plan in 2020:

1. Prioritization and funding adoption for SMART Plan projects totaling over \$244 million;
2. Eleven SMART Plan Demonstration projects were successfully prioritized, funded, and approved, totaling close to \$8 million in local, state, and federal funds;
3. The TPO assisted the Miami-Dade County Department of Transportation and Public Works in the successful funding request of \$100 million from the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) Small Starts program for the 20-mile South Dade Transitway. The FTA awarded Miami-Dade County \$1,040,000 for TOD planning for TOD along the Transitway Corridor Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project that is anticipated to begin service in 2022; and
4. Two groundbreaking events took place on SMART Plan Corridors in 2020. In August, the Tamiami Station Park and Ride along the East-West Corridor and in September, the Brightline Aventura Station on the Northeast Corridor.

The TPO continued completed federal required programs including the FYs 2021 & 2022 Unified Planning Work Program, FY 2021-25 Transportation Improvement Program, Transportation Alternatives Program, and Safe Routes to Schools. The TPO completed 11 studies during the year, a significant portion of which were part of the SMART Moves Program with partner municipalities.

The TPO annually continues to be a partner towards the implementation of the Florida Transportation Plan (FTP) and Strategic Highway Safety Plan goals and objectives by committing to eliminate fatalities and serious injuries on our roadways. The Rolling 5-Year average on all Federal Performance Measures for Miami-Dade County has improved from 2016 to 2019.

TPO staff attended the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and FTA Peer Exchange, which is a part of the joint FHWA-FTA Transportation Planning Capacity Building (TPCB) Program to participate in regional implementation of enhanced transit systems. The TPO Executive Director, Aileen Bouclé participated in the FDOT District 6/TPCB Virtual Peer Exchange on Managed Lanes.



Tallahassee-Leon County Planning Department

Like most transportation planning agencies, the Tallahassee-Leon County Planning Department transitioned to teleworking in March 2020, but quickly embraced a new normal. Transportation planning efforts continued to be widespread, from creating a virtual Bike Month to completing the Welaunee Arch Master Plan which included coordination of land uses and environmental stewardship with electric vehicles, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, complete streets, and congestion reduction. TLCPD led the establishment of a permanent micromobility program with local leaders, transitioning a temporary micromobility pilot program into a permanent fixture during uncertain conditions based on the community benefit that the program would provide to meet changing transportation needs and implications for planned infrastructure in the future, and supported the MPO in the planning process of the Tallahassee- Leon County Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.

Throughout 2020, TLCPD advanced priorities to reduce the number of crashes and increase safety, consistent with FTP objectives, through context classification planning, implementing the most appropriate facility types, and addressing congestion and conflict through planning and education. Other strategies implemented include integration of land use and transportation that support the SHSP strategy to create urban and rural built environments to support and encourage safe bicycling and walking.

To adapt to virtual working and engagement, TLCPD turned to creative and resourceful measures, with a priority on not only meeting current transportation efforts, but to expand them. These innovative techniques are repeatable and scalable at the state level. The Welaunee Arch Master Plan outreach included 26 virtual charrettes, requiring collaboration of different divisions in both the City and County to ensure proper stakeholder engagement. For Bike Month, it meant providing information and education in new ways. What normally is a month full of in-person rides, outreach events, and education opportunities evolved into something new. Resources that would normally be provided hands-on were now shown through videos, and routes were provided on a route map, instead of on a ride led by a leader. All of the virtual engagement was shared on social media and on various TLCPD maintained websites, for quick, on demand access to the public.

Implementing a new shared micro-mobility program and integrating new technology and types of mobility during a pandemic required innovation. Tallahassee shifted from a pilot to a permanent program, and that brought changes to the local program while the industry was adapting to new challenges. TLCPD partnered with micromobility vendors to find pathways to success that would benefit both the vendors and the community. Planners coordinated with vendors on sanitation and user safety. The creative solutions implemented by TLCPD provided a model of micromobility program management, that lead other municipalities to follow our example. This program also brought another first- the sharing of micro-mobility data with FDOT for the 2020 Source Book.

TLCPD also continued the effort of evaluating corridors using the FDOT Context Classification Guide to plan the implementation of complete streets. TLCPD staff co-presented the Complete Streets Workshop at the CNU Florida Summit along with Dover Kohl and Associates and Hall Planning and Engineering.



Tampa Bay Area Regional Transit Authority

2020 was a momentous year of planning accomplishment for TBARTA, the Tampa Bay Area Regional Transit Authority. We tackled multiple projects, diverse in scope, but all unified within TBARTA's mission to advance regional planning by fostering collaboration and innovation to improve regional mobility for residents, workers, and visitors in Hillsborough, Pinellas, Pasco, Manatee and Hernando counties.

The highlight is completion and adoption of Tampa Bay's first Regional Transit Development Plan, Envision 2030. Approved by the TBARTA Board in June, Envision 2030 furthers objectives of the Florida Transportation Plan (FTP) through a long-term strategy centered on regional transit collaboration. Recommendations on planning, operations, funding, and branding demonstrate how a regional transit approach can benefit Tampa Bay. Envision 2030's Regional Transit Vision Network illustrates a combination of local (county), regional (TBARTA), and state (FDOT) transit responsibilities for bus rapid transit, express bus, rail and ferry service. The plan further demonstrates how this regional approach has benefited similar areas across the United States, and better positions Tampa Bay to apply for much-needed federal transit funding, addressing the "growing investment needs" objective identified in the FTP's 2020 Policy Element.

While all of Tampa Bay can benefit through Envision 2030, workers and employers gain the most. Currently, an average of 274,000 workers commute daily across our county lines, a number projected to grow by nearly 100,000 by 2045. Projections conclude a regional transit system will increase access to jobs for the average citizen by 58% (within a one-hour commute), with workers from low-moderate income areas gaining access to 50,000 additional jobs. This specifically meets the "evolving workforce needs" objective in the FTP's Policy Element.

While Envision 2030 is the master plan, other accomplishments contribute to TBARTA's qualifications as Planning Organization of the Year. They include the I-275 Bus Rapid Transit Project. This interstate BRT will connect Pasco, Hillsborough, and Pinellas counties. In 2020, the PD&E study advanced 3 recommended route alignments, 13 proposed station locations, and potential station designs. Public participation through in-person and virtual charrettes (implemented in response to COVID 19 public safety needs) fostered local collaboration. Upon projected completion in 2021, the plan enables TBARTA to apply for up to \$282 million in FTA Capital Investment Grant funds.

Innovative Transit Technology. Under direction from the Florida Legislature, in June TBARTA completed the Innovative Transit Technology Feasibility Study on air taxis, aerial gondolas, and hyperloop. With direction from the TBARTA Board, TBARTA is now accepting proposals for the Pinellas County Aerial Gondola Feasibility Study. Future transit plans must include innovative solutions, an objective the FTP identifies and TBARTA is addressing.

Regional Transportation Disadvantaged Service. TBARTA planned, then implemented, a new county-to-county service that serves those most in need: those who are transportation disadvantaged because of age, income or disability. TD Tampa Bay began operating in December, through an Innovation Development Grant from the Florida CTD.

TBARTA's 2020 planning demonstrated a commitment to meeting both current and future objectives of the Florida Transportation Plan. We appreciate your consideration as Planning Organization of the Year.