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**Regional Transit Feasibility Plan team seeks
your comments on regional transit connections**

Community workshops set for August in Hillsborough, Pasco, and Pinellas

Tampa Bay, FL, August 10, 2017 –The team behind the Regional Transit Feasibility Plan wants to know your thoughts about our region’s best-performing transit connections at community workshops to be held this month in Hillsborough, Pasco, and Pinellas Counties.

The workshops will provide an opportunity for the public to review our region’s best-performing transit connections and how they were identified. They will also provide a chance to offer ideas and comments on the types of transit, such as express bus, bus rapid transit, automated guideway transit, light rail, or commuter rail, that could best work along each connection.

These open-house style workshops are the next step towards determining an implementable regional transit plan with “catalyst” transit projects that could jump-start efforts to improve transportation options in our region.

Prior to these workshops, the public has provided comments on the plan via the project website, an online survey, and small group meetings.

The schedule for the community workshops is below, all to be held from 5:30 to 7:30PM:

Tuesday, August 22, Pasco County, Residence Inn Tampa Suncoast Parkway

Thursday, August 24, Hillsborough County, Tampa Bay History Center

Tuesday, August 29, Pinellas County, Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority

“Our goal with this plan is to identify a regional transit vision for Tampa Bay that can be implemented and includes ‘catalyst’ projects,” said Katharine Eagan, Chief Executive Officer of HART, the agency administering the plan. “Taking the work that’s been done so far directly to the public with these community workshops is a key part of achieving that goal.”

For this plan, the Tampa Bay region is defined as the urbanized areas of Hillsborough, Pasco, and Pinellas Counties. The plan is funded by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and is supported by a number of local governments and agencies, including Hillsborough, Pasco, and Pinellas Counties and their respective transit agencies, HART, PCPT, and PSTA.

The draft plan is scheduled to be completed in January 2018. The team will then spend the next eight months vetting the plan with the community through a process of review and revision, during which all aspects of the plan will be available for public comment and feedback.

In October 2018, the final implementation plan will be identified along with proposed "catalyst" projects and will complete the two-year planning process that began in the fall of 2016. Next, the region will begin coordination with the Federal Transit Administration and FDOT in hopes of receiving federal and state funding to help pay for a portion of the project.

The top five connections as determined through the Step One technical analysis are (not presented in order):

- Westshore to Brandon
- Downtown Tampa to University of South Florida (USF)
- Wesley Chapel to USF, Tampa, and St. Petersburg
- Clearwater, Gateway to St. Petersburg
- South Tampa to Downtown Tampa connection

"People don't notice when they cross county lines while traveling around our region, which is why planning regionally for transit is so important," said Kris Hughes, Planning and Development Director for Pasco County. "This plan is an excellent opportunity to bring transit options to one of the fastest-growing regions in the state, and it's important to gather information and viewpoints from as many people as we can."

To learn more about the Regional Transit Feasibility Plan and the upcoming community workshops, visit the project website at www.TBRegionalTransit.com.

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