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## **Public input helps identify top regional transit projects**

*Regional Transit Feasibility Plan team will do more public engagement as it continues to narrow its recommendations*

**Tampa Bay, FL, Sept. 29, 2017** –The team behind the Regional Transit Feasibility Plan has recommended the top projects (connection + transit mode = a project) to take to the next step of the evaluation process, which is designed to identify the most competitive catalyst project(s) for federal and state funding.

After holding a series of community workshops and studying options – which included such possible modes as express bus, bus rapid transit, light rail/modern streetcar, and commuter rail - the team ranked the technical merit of each of the 15 projects that proceeded from Step One.

The public is encouraged to provide comments by visiting <http://www.tbregionaltransit.com> and taking an online survey. In addition to the survey, the project team will be coordinating numerous opportunities for the public to provide their comments and suggestions in the coming months.

A draft implementation plan is scheduled to be completed in January 2018. Then, after an eight-month community vetting process that focuses heavily on getting more feedback from the public, the final implementation plan will be completed by October 2018 with a proposed "catalyst" project(s), completing a two-year planning process that began in fall 2016.

Next, the region will begin coordination with the Federal Transit Administration and the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) as options are considered for how to pay for the project.

"Thank you to everyone who attended one of our community workshops and helped us identify which connections are most important for this region," said Katharine Eagan, Chief Executive Officer of HART, the agency administering the plan. "We'd still like to hear from others in the community, which is why the public comment period will continue uninterrupted through October 2018."

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

"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 see all the displays from the community workshops, click [here](#).

To learn more about the Regional Transit Feasibility Plan and to vote on your favorite regional connections, visit the project website at <http://www.TBRegionalTransit.com>.

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