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MPO Takes Lead in Vision for Future Public Transportation

Tampa, FL, May 17, 2006 – The Hillsborough County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) will conduct a multi-modal mass transit study as part of its Long Range Transportation Plan Update. The study will focus on new and creative transit technologies, including bus rapid transit, commuter rail and new bus service to address long-term growth and transportation needs in the Cities of Tampa, Temple Terrace, Plant City and unincorporated Hillsborough County.

The recommendation for the study was the result of a year long effort by the MPO's Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), a group of dedicated volunteers who review and provide consensus opinion from the public's perspective on plans that the MPO will be considering. Charged with the task of exploring long-term, innovative solutions to meet the congestion challenges of Hillsborough County, the CAC presented their findings to the MPO at its May 2nd Board Meeting. The recommendation was unanimously approved by the MPO Board at its May 2nd meeting.

“As the cost of gas and road construction continues to skyrocket, the need for innovation in technology and approach to mass transit is becoming more apparent to everyone,” said MPO Chair Shawn Harrison. “The MPO will take the lead in defining a vision for mass transit, reviewing the possibilities and making recommendations for implementation of cost-affordable mass transit for our community.”

The Metropolitan Planning Organization is a transportation policy-making board comprised of representatives from local government and transportation authorities. Mandated by federal and state law, the MPO is responsible for establishing a continuing, cooperative and comprehensive transportation planning process for the Cities of Tampa, Temple Terrace, Plant City and unincorporated Hillsborough County. This board is responsible for establishing transportation priorities to meet short-term (next 5 years) and long-term (next 20 years) needs for the area. Public participation is an integral part of the planning process and is always welcome.

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