Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)
Planning Tasks for Fiscal Years
2026/27 – 2027/28

Polk Transportation Planning Organization

DRAFT
January 14, 2026

INTRODUCTION

As part of the Polk Transportation Planning Organization's (TPO) FY 2026/27 through FY 2027/28 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), the TPO will focus on the planning activities outlined below. These projects are based on the TPO's planning requirements pursuant to state and federal regulations, as well as the direction of the TPO Board, Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and Transportation Adviser Network (TAN). This list of tasks and projects does not constitute a complete list of all the activities the TPO will undertake in support of the UPWP. Instead, the list represents the major, or significant planning activities the TPO will work on over the next two years and is intended to foster discussion with the committees and TPO Board. A more comprehensive list of tasks and projects will be outlined in the Draft UPWP document which will be published for committee and Board review and approval at our March and April meetings.

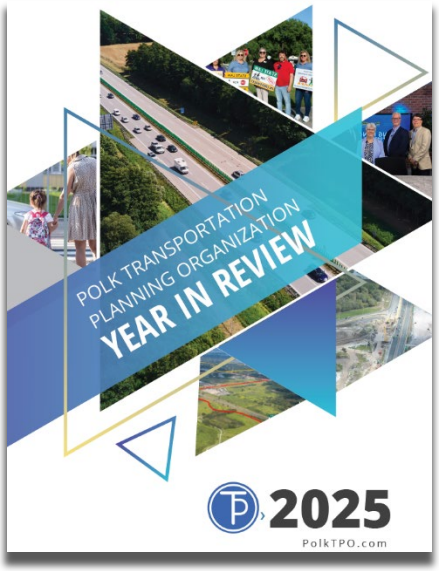
1.0 ADMINISTRATION

1.1 PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

- **TPO BOARD & COMMITTEE MEETINGS AND WORKSHOPS –** Includes the preparation and distribution of planning documents, meeting materials, as well as providing technical assistance in support of TPO Board and committee meetings. This task includes coordination with federal, state, and local TPO partners.

- **ANNUAL REPORT –** The TPO will prepare an annual report that highlights the key achievements and work of the TPO throughout the year in implementing the tasks and work products from the adopted Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) or grant budget.

- **CONSULTANT SUPPORT SERVICES –** The TPO is proposing to allocate funding for consultant services for in-house support for the TPO to assist staff in implementing the UPWP. These services would be on an as-needed basis and work will be conducted by the TPO's current list of approved general planning consultants.



2.0 SURVEILLANCE ACTIVITIES

2.1 DATA DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT

- **STATE OF THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM REPORT –** The Polk TPO will publish a State of the Transportation System Report that highlights the travel conditions on Polk County's transportation system. This annual report provides an overview of the current state of the county's roadways, transit systems, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and it also provides a regional comparison on traffic growth. The Report is prepared in support of the TPO's Congestion Management Process and the Federally required transportation performance measures and targets that have been adopted by the Polk TPO. Key findings in the report highlight the status of road congestion, public transportation ridership trends and planned growth of the County's multi-use trail network. The Report serves as a vital tool for the TPO's local governments, planners and the community to understand the current transportation system.

- **TRANSPORTATION MULTI-MODAL DATABASE –** The TPO will prepare and publish a Transportation Multi-Modal Database to include system performance information such as roadway capacity, traffic volume, level of service, as well as the presence of bicycle and pedestrian features and access to transit services. This information will help the TPO monitor travel conditions in support of its Congestion Management Process. The TPO will publish a report that graphically summarizes this information and highlights the critical information and key trends.

- **TRANSPORTATION DATA COLLECTION PROGRAM –** The TPO will collect information for various modes of transportation in support of the Transportation Multi-Modal Database and State of the Transportation System Report and the TPO's Congestion Management Process Performance Standards. This includes the TPO's Traffic Count Program which consists of 740 traffic count stations on the state, county and city major roads throughout Polk County.

3.0 SYSTEMS PLANNING

3.1 LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

- **2050 LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN UPDATE –** The Polk TPO is required to update the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) every five years. The TPO branded the LRTP update *Envision 2050* and adopted the Plan on December 9, 2025. With adoption complete, the plan now moves into the implementation phase, where the TPO will begin prioritizing projects for funding and development in coordination with local governments, the Florida Department of Transportation and regional partners. There are also some projects envisioned for the new UPWP that the TPO will undertake in support of the recently adopted Envision 2050 and are highlighted below.

- **I-4 INTERMODAL PASSENGER RAIL STATION FEASIBILITY AND PLANNING STUDY –** High speed rail has been envisioned for the I-4 corridor between Tampa and Orlando for more than 50 years and has been in the TPO's Long Range Transportation Plan as an unfunded transportation need since 2002. The planned service in the I-4 corridor would include a stop in Polk County. More recently in 2023 Brightline extended its service from South Florida to Orlando International Airport and is currently evaluating service between Tampa and Orlando. In 2025 FDOT announced it will begin a PD&E Study to evaluate passenger rail service along the "Sunshine Corridor" between Orlando International Airport and I-4 that would accommodate both Brightline and SunRail. Included in TPO's FY 2024/25 – 2025/26 UPWP is a project called the I-4 Intermodal Passenger Rail Station Feasibility and Planning Study. This Study will evaluate the opportunities and needs for Brightline service in Polk County and identify several viable candidate station locations along the I-4 corridor. The TPO amended the FY 2024/25 – 2025/26 UPWP in order to fund this important project at $500,000. It is likely the TPO will only begin this project in FY 2025/26, so there is a need to de-obligate a large portion of these funds in FY 2025/26 so they can be available in FY 2026/27 to support the completion of this project.

- **SUNRAIL EXTENSION –** The Polk TPO first evaluated the extension of SunRail into Polk County in 2014 in conjunction with our 2035 Long-Range Transportation Plan. Since that time, SunRail service has been implemented in the Orlando Urban Area and has been expanded to within four (4) miles of the Polk County Line. On April 14, 2022, the Polk TPO Adopted Resolution 2022-04 which supports the extension of SunRail into Polk County and requests that FDOT prepare a Transit Concept and Alternatives Review (T-CAR) in support of the extension. In 2023, FDOT completed the T-CAR Study which identifies infrastructure needs; ridership projections, capitol, operation and maintenance costs; and a financial analysis for the SunRail Extension. On October 12, 2023, the Polk TPO Adopted Resolution 2023-11 which accepts the findings of the T-CAR Study and requests FDOT further evaluate the concept and

proceed with a Project Development and Environmental (PD&E) Study. FDOT is taking the lead on the PD&E Study and kicked off the project in early 2025.

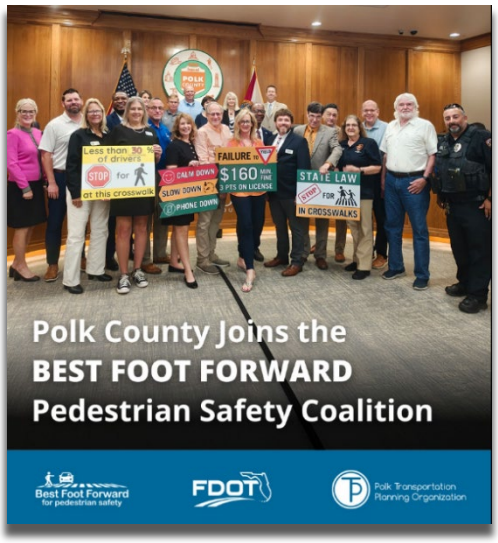
- **SUNRAIL EXTENSION (Transit Supportive Planning) –** In 2023 the Polk TPO's adopted Transportation Priority Projects requested funds for a study to evaluate the proposed station locations for the proposed SunRail Extension in Polk County. Funding for this project was added to the referenced PD&E Study in response to this request. This study which is being led by FDOT will include a detailed evaluation of the existing and proposed land uses in close proximity to the proposed station locations identified in FDOT's TCAR project. The study will also identify the multi-modal connectivity needs at each proposed station, as well as an evaluation of bus rapid transit (BRT) in the US 92 corridor as an extension of SunRail services. This is a project the TPO will continue to support and will be included as part of the TPO's UPWP for FY 2026/27 – 2027/28.

3.2 SHORT-RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

- **BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN TACTICAL PLAN IMPLEMENTATION –** The Polk TPO will continue collaborating with Polk Vision in implementing a tactical plan for improving bicycle and pedestrian safety in Polk County. The tactical plan emphasis areas include lighting and visibility, street crossings, sidewalks and bikeways, trails, and school focused safety.

- **VISION ZERO ACTION PLAN –** In 2023 Polk County applied for and received a federal Safe Streets for All (SS4A) grant for a Vision Zero Action Plan. The Action Plan will identify the top 20 most dangerous roads and intersections in Polk County and develop projects and strategies to make them safer. When completed, this Action Plan will enable Polk County and the municipalities the ability to apply for SS4A grants for implementation of the improvements recommended in the Plan. The Polk TPO will help to oversee and administer this grant for Polk County and therefore will be included as a planning task in the TPO's UPWP.

- **BEST FOOT FORWARD –** In 2025 Polk TPO supported pedestrian safety in 2025 by participating in two Best Foot Forward crosswalk enforcement events. Best Foot Forward is a regional pedestrian safety initiative that works with law enforcement, local governments and community partners to improve driver yielding behavior and reduce crashes at marked crosswalks. In June of last year, Polk TPO supported this commitment by passing a resolution in support of Best Foot Forward's pedestrian safety program. On July 31, Polk TPO staff joined the Best Foot Forward team and the Winter Haven Police Department Traffic Unit, where officers stopped 26 drivers and educated them on Florida's law



requiring motorists to yield to pedestrians in marked crosswalks. On Aug. 6, Polk TPO partnered with Polk Vision, Bartow City Commissioner and TPO Chair Trish Pfeiffer and the Bartow Police Department at Shumate Drive and East Clower Street in Bartow. The event emphasized safe driving and walking in school zones and busy crossing areas. Together, these efforts reinforced Polk TPO's commitment to safer, more walkable communities and aligned directly with the goals of Vision Zero Polk. The TPO will continue to support the efforts of Best Foot Forward and has included this as task in the new UPWP.

3.5 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS

- **IMPLEMENTING THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN –** For the new UPWP there will be continued focus on implementing the Polk TPO's Adopted Public Participation Plan (PPP). The TPO will continue to provide methods of engaging the public through various forms of media. These methods include the use of interactive community forums, Facebook, live interactive television broadcasts and developing short videos of key transportation projects and concepts. These methods will be especially useful as the TPO conducts public outreach for its plans and programs, as well with the TPO's Transportation Adviser Network. The PPP was last updated in 2023 and will receive a comprehensive update in 2026. This will be included as a major task in the new UPWP.

3.6 REGIONAL PLANNING AND COORDINATION

- **REGIONAL PLANS –** The TPO will participate in the regional planning efforts of the Sun Coast Transportation Planning Alliance (SCTPA), and Central Florida MPO Alliance (CFMPOA) to ensure coordination with the TPO's regional transportation plans, projects and priorities.

- **REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONS PROGRAM (RTSMOP) –** This task also supports the facilitation of cooperation and coordination of the Regional Transportation Systems Management and Operations Program (RTSM&O), and advances TSM&O planning with neighboring M/TPOs in Central Florida. TSM&O is the application of multimodal transportation strategies and technologies intended to maximize the efficiency, safety, and utility of the existing transportation network. It includes a set of projects and strategies that use technology and real-time operational procedures, that when integrated at the state, regional and local levels, enhances the movement of people and goods, all with a positive impact on individual and national economic prosperity.