

Hi All,

I am going to this meeting with Mariella on Aug. 3 and hope that some of you can join me. Mariella will drive and we will leave about 8:00 AM and return about 11: 00 AM. Whether you can come or not,, please write a letter to Beth Alden, MPO staff member and ask her to distribute it to all board members before the meeting on Aug. 3rd (since it is BEFORE the meeting, it is legal and she can distribute it). Mariella's note explains the situation. Below is the note that I have sent.

P.S. The greenway would be available to residents of SCC for bike riding, walking and use of all facilities.

Lyn

Dear Ms. Alden,

Please distribute the note below to all MPO board members before the hearing that will be held on Aug. 3, 2010.

As you amend the MPO 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan, please make 2 changes:

(1) include all 6 segments of the South Coast Greenway multi-use paved trail in the "Cost Affordable" (funded) projects

(2) raise the priority of this paved trail into the top 20% of projects so construction can begin soon

The 2035 Plan funds several other paved trails, but none in south county. Many miles of paved trails have already been built in this county, but none in south county. There is funding available in the form of federal funds for this greenway that has been in the planning since 1995. It would connect several town and business centers, link several parks, nature preserves and public beaches and provide students with safe bicycle routes to several schools.

Sincerely,
Marilyn Safian
Sun City Center, 33573

From: Mariella Smith <insightgraphics@earthlink.net>
Date: July 15, 2010 8:48:57 AM EDT
To: Smith Mariella <insightgraphics@earthlink.net>
Subject: **Save the South Coast Greenway trail!**

Please send letters (see sample letter below) **& attend the hearing to save the South Coast Greenway:** a multi-use paved trail planned to run from Ruskin to Tampa. Connected with side trails to Sun City Center, Apollo Beach, Balm, Gibsonton, Riverview, and other communities; and connecting several schools, libraries and shopping centers ([see map](#)); this trail would provide a safe system for alternative transportation — bicycles, skaters, baby-strollers, wheelchairs and pedestrians — *IF* we can persuade the Metropolitan Planning Organization ([MPO](#)) to get it built.

Our county's 25-year Transportation Plan is being amended at a public hearing August 3. This is our only chance to get the South Coast Greenway built in our lifetime. Only 2 of the 6 segments are funded so far. We need the whole trail listed among the funded projects in the 2035 Plan.

The [2035 Long Range Transportation Plan](#) spells out which transportation projects will and won't get built in the next 25 years, within a \$12-billion budget drawn from various federal, state & local sources, as well as contracts with developers, and funds from the proposed penny transit tax.

When the 2035 Plan was adopted on December 9, 2009, it included \$9 million for this Greenway. (At that hearing [we were asking for connecting bikeways on Shell Point & 19th](#) to be funded as well. Those bikeways are now being added - Yay! - but much of the Greenway trail is being dropped in the proposed amendments.) The \$9 million originally in the 2035 Plan for the South Coast Greenway was supposed to come from the [new transit tax](#) (the penny sales tax on the ballot this November), but they have since determined that the transit tax cannot be used to fund paved trails like this, and they dropped all funding from this project except for previously committed funding of 2 segments from other sources (the 1/2-cent CIT tax plus the Waterset developer's commitment).

Two segments are not enough -- we need all 6 segments funded in this 25-year plan, or we won't see it completed in our lifetime. There is plenty of money in this \$12-billion Plan for this Greenway -- there is a \$16-million SURPLUS in federal funds, and we only need \$4 million to cover the 4 segments that are not already funded by the CIT tax and the developer commitment.

Please speak up for the South Coast Greenway. The MPO board must get this message from MANY of us, in order to move them.

• **Attend the public hearing August 3, 9:00 a.m.,** at [County Center](#) 2nd floor (601 E. Kennedy Blvd.)

Please come -- it won't take long!

Call me if you want to carpool (Mariella: 645-4218)

• **Write your [MPO Board Members](#)** (see sample letter below).

• **E-mail these MPO Board members directly:**

Joe Affronti <JoeAffronti@verizon.net>, Rose Ferlita <ferlitar@hillsboroughcounty.org>, Kevin Beckner <becknerk@hillsboroughcounty.org>, Ken Hagan <hagank@hillsboroughcounty.org>, Mark Sharpe, <sharpem@hillsboroughcounty.org>, Joseph Caetano <Joseph.Caetano@tampagov.net>, Rick Lott <rlott@plantcitygov.com>, Joe Waggoner <joe@tampa-xway.com>, John Wheat <jwheat@TampaAirport.com>, Councilman Thomas Scott <thomas.scott@tampagov.net>

• Also copy Ray Chiramonte, MPO's Executive Director <rayc@plancom.org>

• Also copy MPO staff member, Beth Alden <aldenb@plancom.org> **by Monday, July 26**, and ask her to distribute it to all MPO board members before the hearing.

Questions? Call me, Mariella Smith, 645-4218

Sample Letter:

To: "MPO Board Members via Beth Alden" <aldenb@plancom.org>

Subject: Please fund the South Coast Greenway in MPO 2035 Plan!

Staff: Please distribute this letter to all board members of the MPO for their consideration prior to the Public Hearing on August 3.

Dear MPO Board members,

As you amend the MPO 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan (at the Public Hearing on August 3) please make 2 changes:

(1) include all 6 segments of the [South Coast Greenway](#) multi-use paved trail in the "Cost Affordable" (funded) projects, and

(2) raise the priority of this paved trail into the top 20% of projects so construction can begin soon.

Let's be fair: The 2035 Plan funds several other paved trails, but **none in south county**. Many miles of paved trails have already been built in this county, but **none in south county**.

This paved trail has been planned since 1995 (Greenways Master Plan, South Shore Areawide Systems Plan, and the Community Plans of Ruskin, Apollo Beach & Gibsonton). It connects several schools and the South Shore campus of HCC ([see map: http://www.box.net/shared/aitgag7ll7](http://www.box.net/shared/aitgag7ll7)). **These schools need safe bicycling routes for their students.** Together with its network of connecting on-road bikeways, the paved trail connects businesses & town centers and links several ecotourist destinations (ELAPP nature preserves, parks, rivers, public beaches) making it valuable to visitors as well as residents.

Our roads are among the [deadliest](#) in the nation for bicyclists & pedestrians. Safe biking & walking paths are imperative. With oil getting more costly and dangerous to obtain, our multi-modal transportation plan must include non-motorized alternatives, which run on infrastructure that is much cheaper to build & maintain than rail & roads.

There IS money available in the \$12-Billion Plan for this Greenway trail — especially since the trail's cost has gone down. When the Plan was adopted last December, it allocated \$9 million for segments 1 - 4 of this trail. The proposed amendments only fund segments 1 & 2, even though new estimates (in [Appendix E](#)) now show the cost for *all 6 segments* is less than \$8 million. Last December the Plan allowed \$9 million for this trail, so surely there is still \$8 million within the same \$12-billion Plan -- enough to build the *whole* South Coast Greenway Trail.

Within the \$12-billion Plan, several projects are shifting from one funding source to another, but the total available funds remains the same. While this Greenway is moving OFF the transit tax funding source, other projects are moving ONTO the transit tax — freeing up the funds they were previously allocated, such as federal funds that can be used for this trail.

The Plan now has a \$16-million SURPLUS in federal funds, and we only need \$4 million of that to complete this trail. (Segments 1 & 2 are already funded with \$2 million in county [CIT](#) funds and \$2 million in developer funds. Segments 3 through 6 are listed as unfunded needs, with a total cost of \$4 million.)

Please take an inclusive county-wide view, take note of the broad public support for this trail, and give the long-awaited South Coast Greenway a high priority and full funding within the MPO 2035 Plan.

Sincerely,
Your name & address

***References:**

[Map of South Coast Greenway](http://www.box.net/shared/aitgag7ll7) & connecting Bikeways:
<http://www.box.net/shared/aitgag7ll7>

[Detailed map of Phases 1 - 4:](http://www.box.net/shared/zrdduyn3k3)
<http://www.box.net/shared/zrdduyn3k3>

[Map of all Greenways and bikeways](http://www.box.net/shared/hqu6dg1ya0), built and planned:
<http://www.box.net/shared/hqu6dg1ya0>

MPO's [draft amendments](#) to the 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan:
http://www.hillsboroughmpo.org/pubmaps/pubmaps_folders/draft-publications/lrtp-draft-amendments/

[2035 Long Range Transportation Plan](http://www.mpo2035.org/intheplan.html), adopted December 9, 2009:
<http://www.mpo2035.org/intheplan.html>

[Newspaper article](#) about this issue:

<http://www.theobservernews.com/news/front-page-news/426-southshore-roundtable-asserts-greenway-support-as-funding-landscape-quakes.html>

Please forward this message to anyone who wants a Greenway trail in south county!