

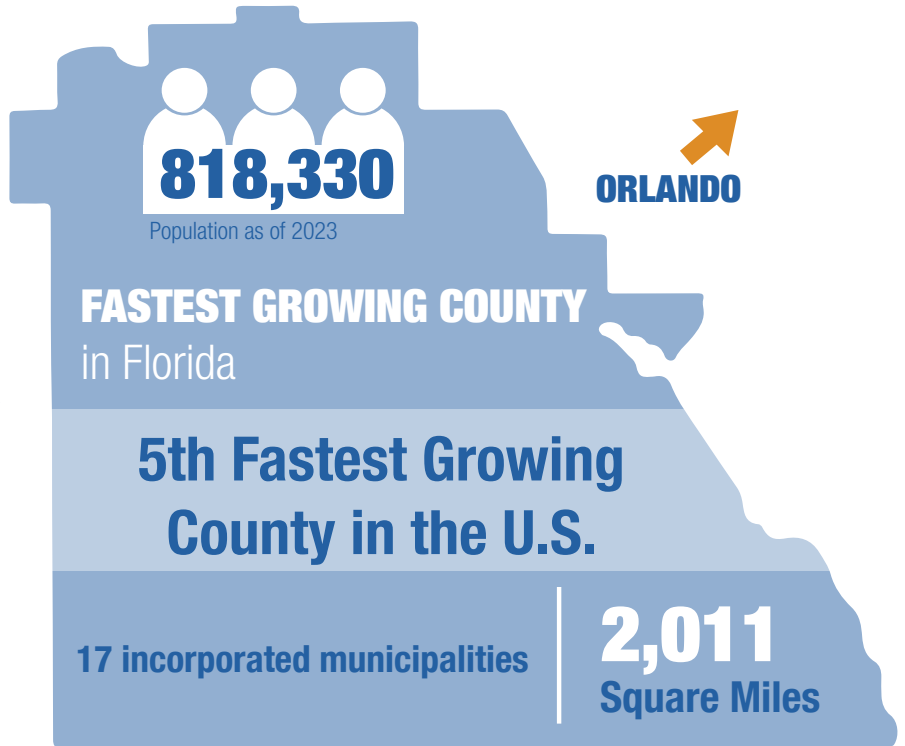
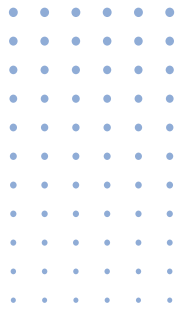
2024 POLK TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION YEAR IN REVIEW



Drawer TS-05, P.O. Box 9005
Bartow, FL 33831-9005
Phone: (863) 534-6486

www.PolkTPO.com

POLK COUNTY BY THE NUMBERS



POLK TPO NEW DIRECTOR AND STAFF UPDATES



Images: (Left) Ryan Kordek (Right) left to right, back row: Angela Kaufman, Cindy Mitchell and Isai Chavez. Front row: Lorenzo Thomas, KC Rivera and Julia Davis.

In January of 2024 Ryan Kordek was named executive director of the Polk Transportation Planning Organization. During his 28-year career with the TPO, he has served in every planning role from a Transportation Planner, Senior Transportation Planner, Principal Transportation Planner and 16 years as the Polk TPO Transportation Planning Administrator.

Julia Davis, former Senior Transportation Planner, now fills the role of Transportation Planning Administrator. In the past year Polk TPO team also welcomed new staff including Angela Kaufman, Isai Chavez, KC Lynn Galloway Rivera and Cindy Mitchell.

2024 PRIORITY TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS ::::



In June, the TPO Board approved the 2024 Priority Transportation Projects for Polk County. The TPO's Priority Projects are provided to the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to be considered for state and federal funding. The priorities consist of 28 projects and include candidate highway, intersection, transit, bicycle, pedestrian and multi-use trail projects. Key regional highway projects consist of State

Road 60 widening in eastern Polk County, U.S. Highway 98 in Lakeland and U.S. Highway 17/92 between U.S. Highway 27 and Osceola County. The TPO requested design funding for the Lakeland Intermodal Center near downtown Lakeland and several regional multi-use trail projects including the Old Dixie Trail which is part of Florida's SUN Trail network between Auburndale and Lake Alfred.

STATE ROAD 60 WIDENING ::::

In support of the project, the Polk TPO Board approved TPO Resolution 2024-06 in June requesting the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to advance construction to complete the four-lane widening of State Road 60 across Central Florida. State Road 60 is one of only four major east-west regional state roads south of Interstate 4 on the Florida Peninsula. Much of the highway is already four-lanes or more; however, there is a 27-mile section in the Polk and Osceola Counties that is still two-lanes between County Road 630 and U.S. Highway 441. State Road 60 is strategically significant in the State of Florida for freight distribution and hurricane evacuations. The two-



SR 60 in Polk and Osceola Counties. CR 630 - US 441

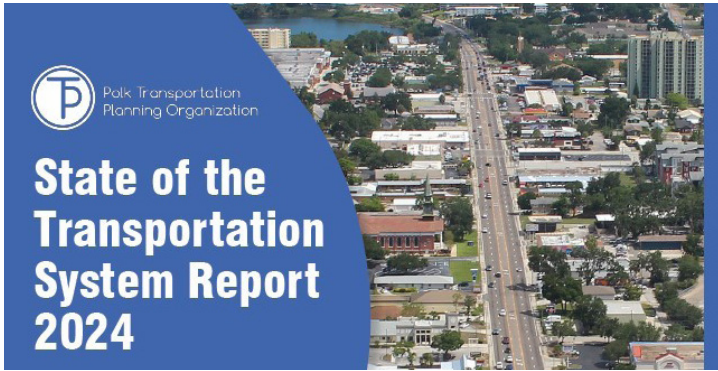
lane portion of State Road 60 has had a history of severe crashes. In the last five years, there have been 17 fatal crashes on the two-lane section of State Road 60 in Polk and Osceola counties with 14 of the 17 crashes being either head-on or sideswipe collisions. Since the TPO Board approved its resolution, the Central Florida Metropolitan Planning Organization Alliance (CFMPOA) (which includes Osceola County) has adopted a similar resolution of support for the corridor. Likewise, the Sun Coast Transportation Planning Alliance which is comprised of the MPOs/TPOs in the Tampa Bay Area added State Road 60 widening in Polk and Osceola counties as one of their top transportation priorities for the region.

ENVISION 2050 ::::



The Polk TPO have started updating the Long Range Transportation Plan and branded the plan – Envision 2050. The TPO have adopted a goal, objectives, performance measures and indicators for the plan and will soon begin a robust public involvement campaign in support of the effort.

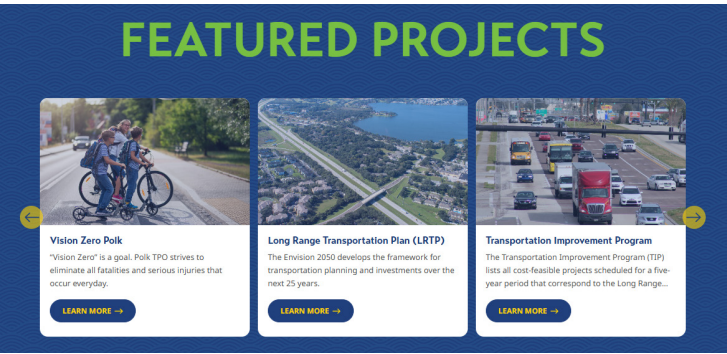
STATE OF THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM REPORT



The 2024 State of the Transportation System Report was presented in fall of 2024, highlighting performance measures and targets for Polk County's transportation network. 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.

Key findings in the report emphasize improvements in road congestion, an increase in public transportation ridership and planned growth for multi-use trails, which have funds dedicated for construction of up to an additional 18 miles of new trails. It serves as a vital tool for local governments, planners and the community to understand the current transportation system and guide the decision-making processes. By continuously monitoring and analyzing the system's performance, the Polk TPO aims to create a safer, more efficient and sustainable transportation network for all residents and visitors.

UPDATED TPO WEBSITE VISIT WWW.POLKTPO.COM



In September of 2024 the Polk TPO launched a newly designed website. The goals in the development of the new site focused on creating a space for residents and government agencies to have access to the latest in transportation planning information. The new site includes news and updates on transportation projects and safety initiatives. Visitors can easily locate information, including PDF's of current programs and plans, for plans such as the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). Meetings, workshops and opportunities for public input are regularly posted to the site.

JOINT MEETING OF THE CENTRAL FLORIDA MPO ALLIANCE AND THE SUNCOAST TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ALLIANCE :::::

Polk TPO assisted in hosting the June joint meeting of the Central Florida Metropolitan Planning Organization Alliance (CFMPOA) and the Suncoast Transportation Planning Alliance (SCTPA) at the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Bartow Conference Center.

One of the actions taken during the meeting included the adoption of a resolution supporting passenger rail in the Interstate 4 corridor throughout Central Florida.



June 14, 2024 joint meeting of the Central Florida MPO Alliance (CFMPOA) and the Suncoast Transportation Planning Alliance (SCTPA).

TRANSPORTATION RESILIENCY AND CARBON REDUCTION PLAN :::::



Polk TPO completed its Resiliency and Carbon Reduction Plan, which evaluates the vulnerability of the transportation system to hazards such as flooding and wildfires. This plan addresses the impacts of these hazards and identifies which are eligible for resilience/carbon funding to prioritize solutions. Building on statewide efforts by the Florida Department of Transportation, the plan aims to enhance the local transportation system's resiliency and reduce carbon emissions through innovative infrastructure solutions and community-driven initiatives.

The study will further examine the issues faced by each Tier one roadway. Tier one roadways carry the most traffic, serve as evacuation routes and connect to critical facilities like hospitals, shelters and disaster recovery centers.

Identify mitigation measures and resilience improvements to reduce the impact of hazards. Potential measures include raising road elevations, improving stormwater management systems and burying power lines underground.

TRANSPORTATION SAFETY PRESENTATION

“SAFE STOP” PROGRAM

The TPO Board welcomed special guests Polk County Sheriff Grady Judd and Superintendent Fredrick Heid during the December board meeting who gave presentations on transportation safety. The presentations focused on the need to improve safety measures within Polk County to protect its residents.

Sheriff Judd presented details on the “Safe Stop” program. Polk County Public Schools partnered with the Polk County Sheriff’s Office to have cameras installed on Polk County school buses to crack down on drivers who illegally pass while they’re stopped.

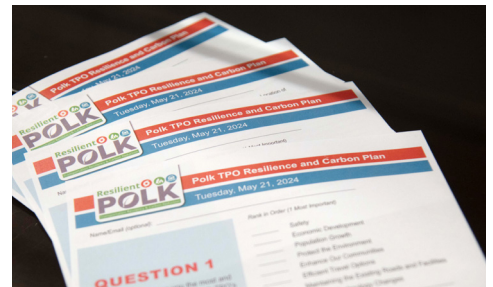
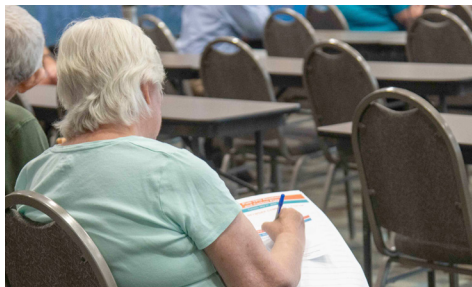
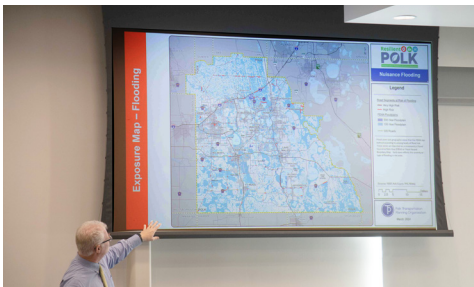


Polk Sheriff Grady Judd and Superintendent Frederick Heid speak to the TPO Board.

Superintendent Heid shared that the program came about due to the number of student fatalities from traffic-related incidents within the district last year. The goal of this program is to address dangerous driving behavior and improve the safety of Polk County students as they travel to and from school.

TPO ADVISER NETWORK FORUM

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION



May 21, 2024, Adviser Network community forum

The Polk TPO hosted an Adviser Network community forum on May 21 at the Lake Myrtle Sports Complex in Auburndale. Speakers at the forum included staff from Polk TPO, Kimley-Horn and FDOT.

The forum focused on the efforts to develop resiliency and carbon reduction plans within Polk County. Attendees were able to participate by asking questions and provide input to assist in identifying goals and strategies to help Polk TPO to create a more reliable and sustainable transportation system that meets the needs of everyone in our growing community.

BIKE SAFETY

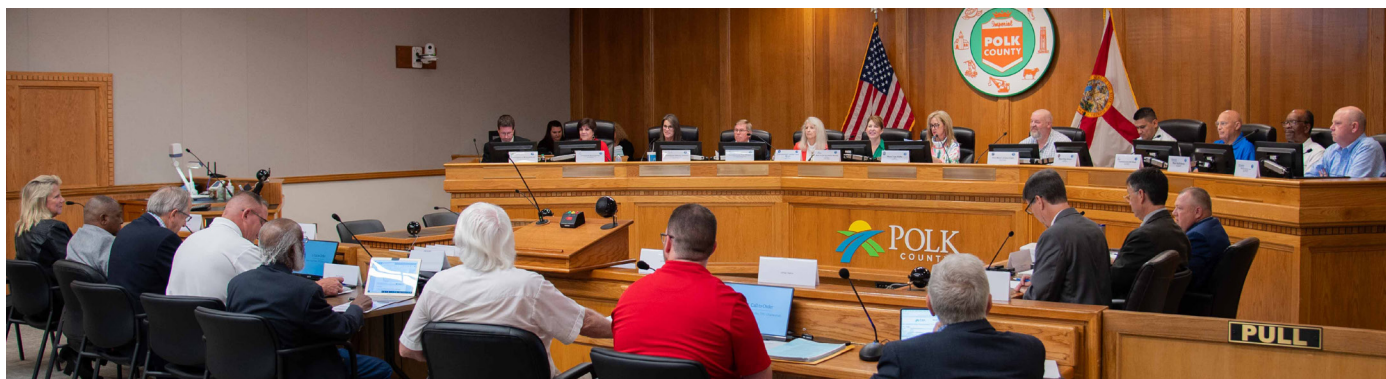
SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN ON SAFETY :::::

Be Safe. Be Seen.



In support of Vision Zero Polk, Polk TPO is committed to making roads safer for everyone. A social media campaign was established featuring an animated bike safety video created by the Polk TPO highlighting the importance of being visible when riding in low light conditions. The video highlighted how having the right attire, gear and lights can make all the difference. The video was shared on various social media platforms including Facebook and YouTube. The video is available for viewing on the Vision Zero page located at www.polktpo.com.

TPO BOARD EXPANDS TO 23 VOTING MEMBERS



Dec. 19, 2024, Polk TPO Board Meeting

At the December TPO Board meeting the board amended its Bylaws increasing the board’s voting members from 19 to 23 seats. This was the last step in a two-year process to increase the board’s voting membership and was based on the TPO’s Membership Apportionment Plan that was approved by the Governor and FDOT in 2024. Due to significant population increases in the northeast portion of the county, Winter Haven and Haines City each gained an additional seat. The cities of Davenport and Lake Alfred were also granted seats on the TPO.

Since the Decennial Census in 2000 a goal of the TPO has been to maximize the local government participation in the TPO planning process for Polk County’s seventeen cities. At nearly 120,000 residents, the City of Lakeland holds the greatest number of seats on the TPO with six voting members. Seven cities under 5,000 residents in population share two voting seats where the voting membership is rotated among the respective cities on an annual basis.

POLK TPO BOARD



The TPO Board is comprised of elected officials, including all five county commissioners and representatives from municipalities in Polk County.

Chair, Trish Pfeiffer, City of Bartow Mayor
Vice-Chair, Sara Roberts-McCarley, City of Lakeland City Commissioner

Polk County

Commissioner Martha Santiago
Commissioner Michael Scott
Commissioner Bill Braswell
Commissioner Rick Wilson
Commissioner Becky Troutman

City of Auburndale

Commissioner Jordan Helms
Commissioner Keith Cowie

City of Bartow

Mayor Trish Pfeiffer

City of Davenport

Vice Mayor Jeremy Clark

City of Haines City

Mayor Omar Arroyo
Commissioner Vernel Smith

South County Bloc

Council Member Adam Greenway, City of Frostproof
Commissioner Jim Watts, City of Fort Meade
Vice Mayor Collins Smith, City of Mulberry

City of Lakeland

Mayor Bill Mutz
Commissioner Guy LaLonde, Jr.
Commissioner Sara Roberts McCarley
Commissioner Stephanie Madden
Commissioner Bill Read
Commissioner Mike Musick

City of Lake Alfred

Vice Mayor Nancy Daley

City of Lake Wales

Mayor Jack Hilligoss

City of Winter Haven

Mayor Nat Birdsong
Mayor Pro-Tem Brian Yates
Commissioner Lucretia Tracy Mercer

Central County and Ridge Bloc

Mayor Steven Metosh Sr., City of Eagle Lake
Mayor Joe LaCascia, City of Polk City
Mayor Marlene Wagner, Town of Lake Hamilton
Commissioner Willie Quarle, Town of Dundee

Advisory Members

FDOT District 1 Secretary L.K. Nandam
Polk TPO Executive Director Ryan Kordek
Polk TPO Attorney Heather Bryan