



**LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE
MEETING AGENDA**

October 10, 2018 – 11:00 a.m.

315 Court Street, 5th Floor

Board of County Commissioners Conference Room

THE PLANNING COUNCIL AND METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION FOR PINELLAS COUNTY

1. **CALL TO ORDER**
2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM SEPTEMBER 12, 2018**
3. **AMERICAN PLANNING ASSOCIATION POLICY AND ADVOCACY CONFERENCE**
4. **POTENTIAL STATE LEGISLATIVE AREAS OF INTEREST AND PRIORITIES**
5. **OTHER ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION OR INTEREST**
6. **ADJOURNMENT**

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Appeals: Certain public meetings result in actions taken by the public board, commission or agency that may be appealed; in such case persons are advised that, if they decide to appeal any decision made at a public meeting/hearing, they will need a record of the proceedings, and, for such purposes, they may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based.

FORWARD PINELLAS LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY SEPTEMBER 12, 2018

Committee Members in Attendance:

Vice Mayor Doreen Caudell, City of Clearwater, Forward Pinellas Chair
Mayor Doug Bevis, City of Oldsmar (late arrival)
Councilmember Brandi Gabbard, City of St. Petersburg
Commissioner Charlie Justice, Pinellas County

Also Present:

Whit Blanton, Executive Director
Sarah Caper, Principal Planner
Tina Jablon, Administrative Secretary
Chelsea Hardy, County Attorney's Office
Darryl Henderson, Clearwater Regional Chamber of Commerce, VP Public Policy & Economic Development
Brian Lowack, Intergovernmental Liaison, Pinellas County
Cheryl Reed, City of Largo
Matthew Herndon, Florida House District 68

Absent:

Mayor Cookie Kennedy, City of Indian Rocks Beach, Forward Pinellas Treasurer

The Forward Pinellas Legislative Committee met in the Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners 5th Floor Conference Room.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 11:05 a.m. and those present introduced themselves.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM MARCH 14, 2018

Commissioner Justice moved, seconded by Councilmember Gabbard, that the summary from the March 14, 2018 meeting be approved (vote 3-0).

3. LEGAL OVERVIEW

Chelsea Hardy provided a legal overview regarding the authority and scope of the committee, Sunshine Law requirements, out of area travel and lobbying guidelines. The upcoming fact-finding mission trip to Indianapolis was discussed.

4. REVIEW OF PREVIOUS COMMITTEE WORK

Whit Blanton outlined the accomplishments of the previous committee during the 2018 Florida Legislative Session. He explained the committee had two main objectives. Those included outreach and coordination of efforts with local partners and identifying transportation project priorities and preparing materials. He provided the rationale for doing so and suggested doing much the same this year.

5. LEGISLATIVE SCHEDULE AND KEY DATES

Whit Blanton provided an overview of important dates to remember for the 2019 session. The Florida Legislative Session will end on May 3, 2019. He advised that the Pinellas Legislative Delegation meetings have not been finalized to date. Forward Pinellas staff will attend those meetings as needed.

6. 2019 AREAS OF INTEREST

Whit Blanton reviewed the highlights of the draft Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council (MPOAC) legislative policy positions. Specifically, gas tax indexing for inflation, Strategic Intermodal System funds eligibility and funding of transit projects were discussed.

The committee discussed other potential areas of interest for 2019, which included recommendations from the Citizens Advisory Committee and Florida Bicycle Association regarding the use of hand-held devices while operating a motor vehicle and texting while driving.

Whit Blanton discussed the possibility of legislative action or advocacy regarding the merger of the MPOs in the Tampa Bay region, and potential considerations relative to Forward Pinellas. He recommended asking the legislature to refrain from passing any bills related to MPOs this session, pending further information and outcomes from the MPO Regional Coordination and Best Practices Study and outreach with stakeholders and the public .

Whit Blanton encouraged the new committee members to bring ideas of legislative/policy topics to monitor and consider addressing this session.

The meeting adjourned at 12:23 p.m.

Legislative Committee – October 10, 2018

3. American Planning Association Policy and Advocacy Conference



SUMMARY

The American Planning Association (APA) held its annual Policy and Advocacy Conference on September 23-25. Executive Director Whit Blanton attended the conference and will provide information on potential areas of interest on the national level for Forward Pinellas. APA has identified four policy areas for Congress to address:

1. Invest in infrastructure that builds strong and vibrant communities for all.
2. Expand housing choices and affordability with policies that support inclusive growth and greater access to economic and social mobility.
3. Provide high-quality federal data that supports effective local planning and decision making.
4. Promote healthy and safe communities through good planning and strategic public investments.

APA members distributed the attached handout of specific Congressional budget appropriations requests during the Planners Day on the Hill event on September 25th. Whit Blanton met with staff representatives of Senators Nelson and Rubio, and Representatives Castor and Crist, to share APA's legislative positions and information about regional transportation efforts in Tampa Bay. Additional information on APA and its legislative priorities is available online at <https://planning.org/policy/priorities/>.

ATTACHMENT(S): APA Handout

ACTION: None required; informational item only; or as deemed appropriate by the committee

Help Communities Address the Nation's Housing Challenge



Good planning is essential for increasing housing options, boosting affordability, and unlocking opportunities. Good federal policies create partnerships with local leaders that can ensure communities get the housing they need in the places that work best. Better policies can address a host of current obstacles by:

- Reducing the cost to build housing
- Reducing residents' living expenses
- Supporting community development and revitalization
- Meeting new market demands while addressing past market failures
- Ensuring we live up to the promise of housing for all

The Nation's Housing Crisis

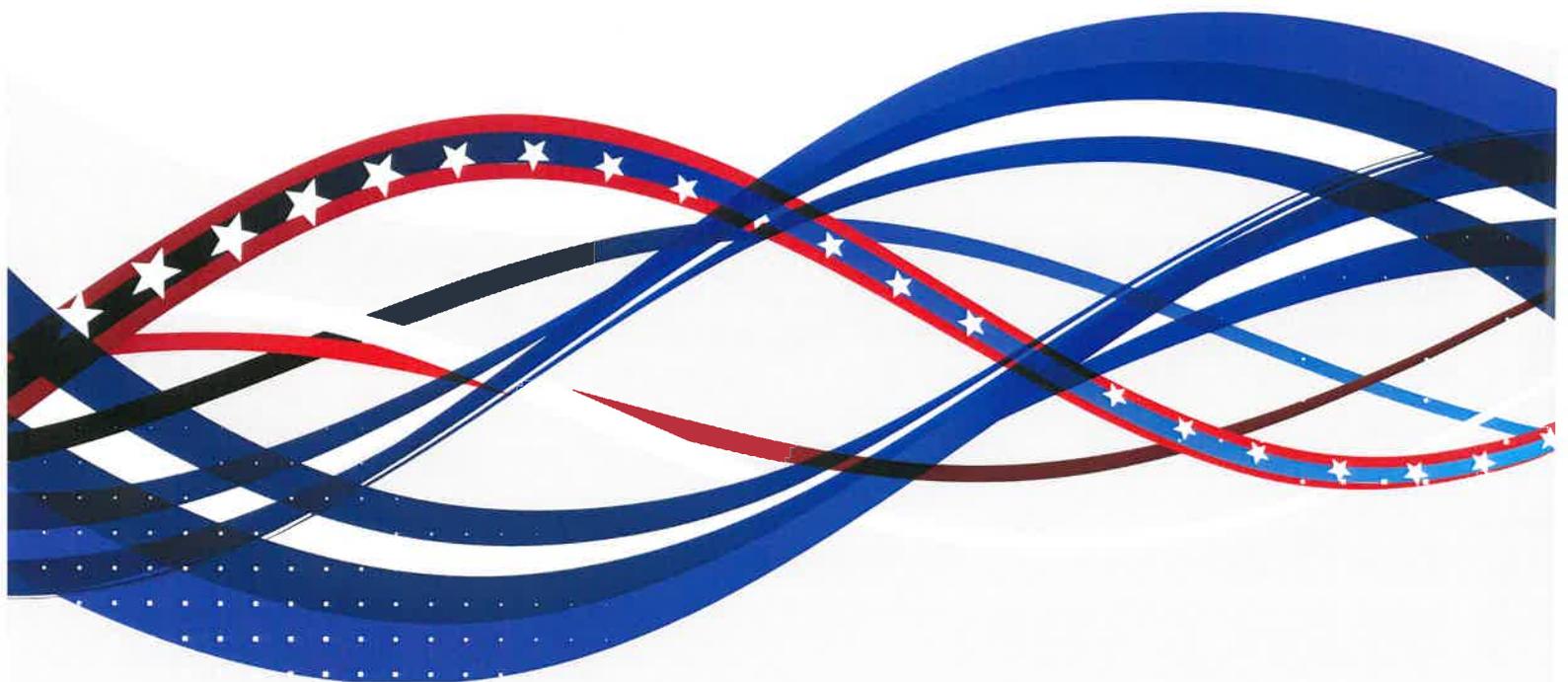
The national housing crisis varies in scope and specifics from city to city and market to market, but overall, current policies too often undermine the goal of ensuring housing choice and affordability for all.

In many places, rising costs outpace wages. Nationally, housing production is below historic averages. Demographics have shifted. In some areas, existing housing faces challenges related to finance, availability, and quality.

The lack of quality housing options reinforces inequality and limits access to opportunities. Limited housing affordability in many places hurts the economy and constrains social and economic mobility. Addressing this crisis must be a priority for policy makers.

Strong federal policies will help planners meet these challenges.

Learn more at [planning.org/policy](https://www.planning.org/policy).





What Can Congress Do?

Support and fund proven federal tools

ASK: Support bipartisan, Senate-passed funding levels for essential T-HUD programs in final FY 2019 spending legislation. Support at least \$1.35 billion for HOME, \$3.3 billion for CDBG, \$1 billion for TIGER/BUILD, and \$2.6 billion for Transit Capital Investment Grants.

Programs like the HOME Investment Partnership and Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) are cornerstones of the federal partnership with local communities. Likewise, vital transportation programs help local governments ensure well-connected housing that supports broader opportunity and access. The FY 2018 omnibus legislation was an important step in boosting the role of these programs. Final FY 2019 appropriations present an opportunity to ensure these programs maintain and expand their role in addressing the nation's housing crisis.

Put housing at the top of the congressional agenda, see chart below

A decade has passed since the nation's housing markets were shaken in the Great Recession. Today, housing faces a host of new challenges and federal policy has not kept up. Now is the time for national leadership. As the agenda for the end of 2018 and the upcoming 116th Congress comes into focus, federal housing policy can be advanced by:

Identifying innovative policy solutions.

ASK: Support and co-sponsor The Task Force on the Impact of the Affordable Housing Crisis Act, S. 3231.

For millions of Americans, housing problems have profound negative consequences. Federal housing policies have significant implications for and connections to a range of other critical issues, from transportation to social equity. New policies from states and localities may have implications for effective federal policy. Congress needs to take a thoughtful, objective look at the issues and available solutions and to encourage careful housing policy evaluations at all levels of government.

Expanding policies that help communities address critical housing needs.

New tools and fresh approaches are needed to help solve the housing crisis. A new housing agenda should build on proven approaches and ensure new policies are effective.

The tax code has been a powerful tool. Congress should explore a range of critical policy issues, including: making the Low Income Housing Tax Credit more effective; targeting similar tax credits for renters, increased production, or various income levels; and maximizing the use of Opportunity Zone investments created in 2017's tax reform legislation.

Planning is a vital tool and essential part of local communities' good decisions on housing policy. Federal planning requirements at HUD and DOT can play a role in evaluating obstacles and opportunities and advancing locally driven solutions.

Federal Funding for Key Housing and Transportation Programs

Selected Programs	FY17	FY18 Omnibus	FY19 Budget	FY19 House	FY19 Senate
CDBG	\$3.0b	\$3.3b	\$0	\$3.3b	\$3.3b
HOME	\$950m	\$1.36b	\$0	\$1.2b	\$1.36b
Choice Neighborhoods	\$137m	\$150m	\$0	\$150m	\$100m
TIGER	\$500m	\$1.5b	\$0	\$750m	\$1b
New Starts	\$2.4b	\$2.65b	\$900m	\$2.6b	\$2.6b

Learn more at planning.org/policy.

SUMMARY

Following the September legislative committee meeting, staff reached out to partners requesting that they share their legislative agendas, requests or local bills related to land use, economic development/redevelopment or transportation. Staff is currently in the process of collecting that information and will share the information received with the committee.

Staff has also started to develop a flyer an informational flyer on local gas taxes in Florida.

ATTACHMENT(S): Draft gas tax flyer

ACTION: None required; informational item only; or as deemed appropriate by the committee

Indexing Local Fuel Taxes to Inflation for Better Transportation Outcomes

Taxes on fuel are a primary source of funding for transportation in Pinellas County.

When someone buys gas in Pinellas County, 18.4 cents per gallon goes to the federal government, 17.7 cents per gallon goes to the state and 7 cents per gallon goes to Pinellas County. These taxes generally go into transportation trust funds that pay for transportation projects throughout the country, state and county, respectively.

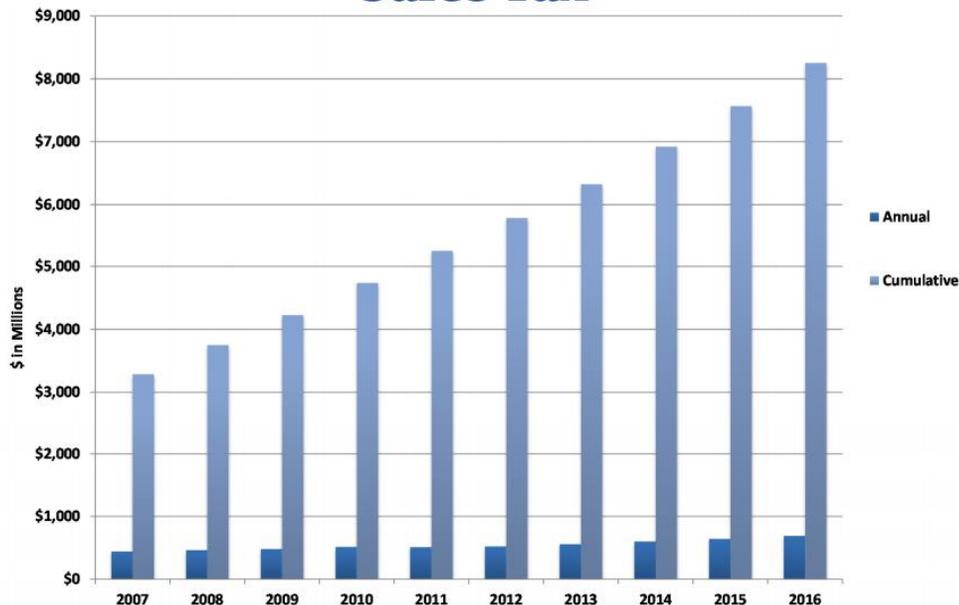


The state indexes the state gas taxes to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) every January, meaning that prices motorists pay rise in proportion to inflation. Local fuel taxes are not indexed. Indexing local fuel taxes to the CPI requires an act of the Florida Legislature. Indexing fuel taxes are important to local governments because it allows revenues to be adjusted as costs for materials and services rise with inflation.

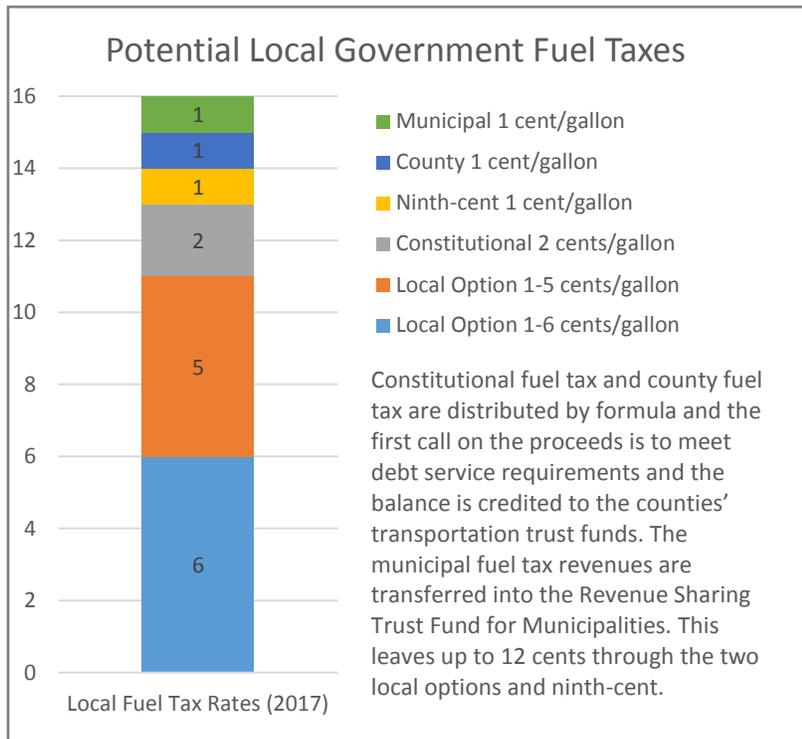
The State of Florida produced a chart showing the impact of indexing the fuel sales tax.



Impact of Indexing Fuel Sales Tax



In 2015-16, indexing the state fuel tax resulted in about \$690 million additional revenue to the Florida Department of Transportation.



Local governments may opt to use up to 12 cents per gallon in fuel taxes, using the local options and ninth-cent fuel taxes, none of which are indexed.

Local gas taxes are used for transportation purposes like operations and maintenance of roadways.

Pinellas County receives approximately \$27 million in gas tax revenues, which varies depending on the amount of fuel purchased in the county. The ninth-cent is dedicated countywide to supporting the Intelligent Transportation System.

The other revenues are split between the county and local governments based on an interlocal agreement.

The table below shows the gas tax rates in Florida for selected counties.

County	Local Option (1-6 cents)	Local Option (1-5 cents)	Ninth-Cent
Brevard	0.06	0.00	0.00
Broward	0.06	0.05	0.01
Duval*	0.06	0.00	0.00
Hillsborough	0.06	0.00	0.01
Lee	0.06	0.05	0.01
Manatee	0.06	0.05	0.01
Miami-Dade*	0.06	0.03	0.01
Orange	0.06	0.00	0.00
Pasco	0.06	0.05	0.01
Palm Beach	0.06	0.05	0.01
Pinellas	0.06	0.00	0.01
Polk	0.06	0.05	0.01

* County levies 0.5% sales tax for transportation

Local governments have a growing responsibility to fund transportation projects with limited resources. This issue affects local governments throughout the state. Forward Pinellas (and its partners) seek support to index the local gas taxes to inflation, matching the policy for the state fuel sales tax.

Sources: Florida Department of Transportation, Office of Comptroller – General Accounting Office, Florida’s Transportation Tax Sources: A Primer, January 2017; Transportation Funding Sources, Spring 2017; Florida Department of Revenue, 2018 Fuel Tax Rates and Estimated Fuel Tax Collection/Distribution