

April 10, 2019

Please note that this summary has not been approved as the official minutes of the board.

THE PLANNING COUNCIL AND METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION FOR PINELLAS COUNTY

The board considered a list of draft annual priorities, to be brought back for adoption in June after revisions

- The Forward Pinellas priority list is submitted each year to FDOT for inclusion in its next five-year work program
- New projects in the priority list include:
 - The St. Petersburg 22nd Street S. Complete Streets project that was awarded funding in this year's Forward Pinellas grant program
 - Bus replacement capital funding for PSTA, up to \$1.5M
 - US 19 transit corridor investments to support express transit from Eckerd College to the Gateway area
 - A Gateway to New Port Richey segment is being considered as well, but coordination with the Pasco County MPO to include on its priority list is ongoing
 - Gulf Boulevard improvements in Indian Shores to construct sidewalk with drainage improvements
 - A cycle track on Gulf Boulevard in St. Pete Beach
 - An aerial transit feasibility and operations plan for Clearwater and downtown St. Petersburg
 - Funding for a downtown intermodal center in the City of Clearwater
- Staff also recommended removal of the waterborne transportation capital grant from the priority list, as it has been unsuccessful in receiving funding in prior years through the priority list process
 - Another possible source of funding is Tourist Development Council funds

Forward Pinellas staff presented an update on development of the Advantage Pinellas Plan

- The presentation included an update on scenarios for autonomous vehicles - a slow scenario, a medium scenario, and an aggressive scenario for integrating A/V into the transportation system
 - In each scenario, vehicle miles traveled increased, but vehicle hours traveled decreased
- Much of the discussion following this item focused on constrained roads, which are not able to be expanded because of physical, environmental or policy reasons
 - There are three roadways currently classified as policy-constrained: Alternate US 19, East Lake Road, and Ulmerton Road
 - Can still add turn lanes or make interchange improvements, but cannot provide additional general purpose travel lanes
 - To add capacity to the roads would require an action of the board that originally constrained the roads
 - Other roadways are classified as non-constrained, which indicates there is need for expansion
 - US 19, I-275, Gandy Boulevard from west of 19 across the bridge, Starkey Road, and Forest Lakes between SR580 and SR584
 - There will be a statement in the Advantage Pinellas Plan that says expansion is not anticipated for other roads, but no official stance will be taken to constrain them
 - East Lake Road specifically was discussed as a road that may need creative solutions or to be un-constrained, especially with the upcoming Gateway Expressway connection to the Bayside Bridge

Board members discussed positions on transportation and land-use related bills currently making their way through the process in this year's legislative session

- The board approved sending a letter to the Pinellas County Legislative Delegation encouraging the legislature to:
 - Preserve the Sadowski Affordable Housing Trust Fund to the maximum extent possible by approving relevant funding in the Senate's proposed budget
 - Invest in meeting the existing transportation backlog in Florida's urbanized and congested areas rather than build new toll roads through rural areas described in the proposed MCORES program as defined in SB 7068 and HB 7113
 - Reconcile differences in the House and Senate bills to make distracted driving a primary offense
 - Pass SB 542, which supports micro-mobility but enables some local control over launching scooter sharing services
 - Pass SB 336, which requires local referenda to occur in a general election, but not the overly restrictive two-thirds majority requirement under HB
- There was specific discussion about the need to support SB 542 and SB 336 and send a positive message to the legislature rather than just opposing the corresponding house bills

City of Dunedin staff and consultants presented an update on the Skinner Boulevard Complete Streets project, the planning component of which was funded in the 2017 Forward Pinellas Complete Streets grant program

- The project encompasses Skinner Boulevard from Alternate US 19 to Bass Boulevard
 - Safety concerns are seen as an obstacle to the transformative potential of the corridor, which goes through downtown Dunedin and the city's redevelopment area
- Three concepts were presented to the public for input:
 - No-build
 - Lane modification
 - Two successive roundabouts on MLK Avenue and Douglas Avenue
- Three public workshops were held with over 150 attendees, along with many other community stakeholder meetings
 - The double roundabout concept was the most popular, with the no-build concept being least popular
 - The roundabouts would be one lane with defined access points
 - FDOT recently approved a golf cart crossing on Skinner Boulevard, which was a priority among participants
- There was discussion among board members of concerns regarding roundabouts, and whether there is enough understanding among residents of how to use them
 - City staff noted this concept had been extremely popular in public workshops

Dunedin Mayor Julie Ward Bujalski provided an update on the issue of traffic backups to Honeymoon Island State Park

- City of Dunedin staff met with state parks staff to discuss the backup from the entrance to the park on Curlew Road
- The parks staff agreed to add two additional entrance lanes with toll booths, which is estimated to increase flow by 50%
 - Having a SunPass-enabled entrance is not feasible at this time
- Planning and design is already funded for these additional entrances, but cost of construction is estimated at \$500K
 - Finding funding for construction from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection is unlikely due to reconstruction of parks in North Florida after Hurricane Michael

- Bujalski asked that Forward Pinellas send a letter supporting finding funding for the project, which was agreed upon by the board

Commissioner Janet Long presented the PSTA activities report

- The report included an update on a public hearing for proposed route cuts, which PSTA is hoping to avoid
 - For the interim time, PSTA is considering dipping into the reserves to fund the routes until a solution can be reached
- Long discussed a meeting the previous evening with the City of St. Pete Beach over the Central Avenue BRT project in which concerns of the city were addressed, namely regarding the city's reluctance to provide its share of funding for the BRT
 - The St. Pete Beach City Manager and PSTA CEO will be putting an agreement in writing to resolve the city's concerns

Other Items

- The board approved two subthreshold amendments to the Countywide Plan: a property in the City of Clearwater going from Public/Semi-Public to Residential Low Medium, and a property in unincorporated Pinellas County going from Residential Low Medium and Preservation to Recreation/Open Space
- Forward Pinellas staff presented the preliminary FY20 agency budget, which will come back to the board in July for final approval
- The Gateway Master Plan process is wrapping up and will come before the board with recommendations this summer
- FDOT has been looking at options for interchanges north of Tampa Road on US 19, with the alternative interchange concepts currently being reviewed by the right-of-way department
- Becky Afonso of the Florida Bicycle Association recognized Forward Pinellas with the association's 2018 Supporting Agency of the Year Award

Action Sheet

April 10, 2019

At its April meeting, the Forward Pinellas Board took the following official actions:

- **Consent Agenda** (vote: 9-0)
Approved to include the following:
 - A. Approval of Minutes of the March 13, 2019 Meeting
 - B. Approval of Committee Appointments (LCB and TCC)
 - C. Authorization for Executive Director to Distribute Letter on Complete Streets
- **Subthreshold Countywide Plan Map Amendment(s)**
Two cases were recommended for approval:
 1. CW 19-07 – City of Clearwater (vote: 9-0)
 2. CW 19-08 – Pinellas County (vote: 9-0)
- **Forward Pinellas Legislative Committee Update – Federal and State Legislative Updates**

Following a staff presentation, and at the recommendation of the Forward Pinellas Legislative Committee, the board approved sending a letter to the Pinellas Legislative Delegation urging action on bills of concern in a manner consistent with the Forward Pinellas policy position statements. (vote: 8-0)

- **SPOTlight Update**

To continue its pursuit of Enhancing Beach Community Access, the board heard from Dunedin Mayor Bujalski regarding the entrance to Honeymoon Island State Park. She outlined the issues related to traffic congestion at Florida's most popular state park, and efforts to date to resolve them. The board agreed by consensus to send a letter to the Department of Environmental Protection and other relevant agencies urging them to identify funding necessary to take corrective action.