

*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**

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The Forward Pinellas Board held this public meeting in person on August 10, 2022, at 1:12 p.m. in the Palm Room at the Pinellas County Communications Building.

**Forward Pinellas staff provided an update on the Target Employment and Industrial Land Study (TEILS) Update**

Forward Pinellas Principal Planner Jared Austin provided a status update on the Target Employment and Industrial Land Study (TEILS) Update project that was initiated in January of this year. Mr. Austin introduced the project management team, which included Pinellas County Economic Development, Pinellas County Housing and Community Development, Renaissance Planning Group and SB Friedman Development Advisors. Mr. Austin then discussed the following preliminary findings:

- The TEILS update has begun to narrow its focus on the market demand and suitability of existing Class A office space and industrial lands throughout Pinellas County and their ability to support the desired target employment clusters.
- Pinellas County captures 38,000 businesses within the six-county Tampa Bay region, which translates to about 470,000 jobs representing 26% of the overall jobs captured.
- From 2011 – 2021 Pinellas County experienced a slow recovery from the recession, only adding 54,000 jobs, which resulted in a 45% increase in the office sector and 30% in the industrial sector.
- Pinellas County has a strong mix of both jobs and housing; however, to maintain the desired jobs-housing ratio, Pinellas County needs to create about 134,000 new jobs by 2050.
- The region has about 40 million square feet of Class A office space, with Pinellas County capturing about 24% of the regional Class A inventory.
- The next steps will be to finalize the suitability analysis in August, synthesize the key findings and recommendations from stakeholder meetings, develop policy recommendations based on sound data and stakeholder engagement, and present the TEILS update findings and recommendations to the various committees and the board for adoption in November.
  - Commissioner Eggers appreciated the presentation and wanted to know if there is a different invite group between the last meeting in July and the August 9<sup>th</sup> meeting, as the attendance seemed to be a little light. Mr. Austin explained that it is the same invitation group and expects greater attendance at the next meeting when policy recommendations will be discussed.

- Commissioner Merz shared he had the pleasure of attending three of the TEILS meetings and enjoyed the varied discussion and information that was collected and incorporated into the presentations shared.
- Councilmember Gabbard shared praise for the great work staff has accomplished on the TEILS update project.

### **Jeff Baker with Duke Energy provided an update on the Pinellas Trail Overpasses within the Duke Energy Easement**

Mr. Baker with Duke Energy addressed the attendees regarding Duke Energy's concern with potential conflicts between the company's future space and capacity needs in the corridor and the addition of vertical structures to accommodate proposed trail overpasses. These concerns are specifically related to the proposed overpass at the SR 60 crossing, but potentially extend to other locations within the corridor, including at SR 580. He explained that the Duke Energy Trail uses an easement that is one of three major north-south energy utility corridors in Pinellas County, and the only one with right-of-way available for capacity growth to meet future energy demand. Mr. Kim Craven, also with Duke Energy, noted that Duke Energy does not believe there are health safety concerns with the proximity of the trail to the high-capacity energy lines, but Duke Energy is concerned with the potential to lose physical space that may be needed to accommodate the infrastructure to support future energy needs in the county.

Brian Hunter with FDOT shared that there are options for an at-grade crossing concept that will improve safety for trail users at SR 60 and Old Coachman Road. The concept being developed would shift that crossing slightly to the east to provide a wider area for the pedestrians and bicyclists that use the trail. Duke Energy has given approval for FDOT to proceed with the at-grade concept within their right-of-way. The SR 580 crossing is on the list of priority projects and FDOT has committed to taking a closer look at potential improvements to that in consultation with Duke Energy to explore the possibility for a future elevated crossing.

### **Forward Pinellas staff shared a presentation on the Safe Streets and Roads for All Grant**

A funding program from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the Safe Streets and Roads for All grant provides \$1B annually for five years for local governments to plan and implement safety improvements on roadways within their communities. With the first round of funding currently open for applications, Forward Pinellas is preparing an application in coordination with Pinellas County and the cities of Dunedin, Gulfport, Largo and Oldsmar. Forward Pinellas Planning Manager Chelsea Favero provided an overview of the grant application being developed, which will seek funding for each local government partner to conduct a detailed evaluation of a specific area of their communities, to identify implementable solutions to improve safety. Forward Pinellas will manage the grant funds on behalf of each local government, and the effort will include a significant public engagement component to fully involve the community throughout the planning process. Upon completion of each of the planning

efforts, Forward Pinellas has committed to assisting the local partners in securing funding to construct the projects identified through the grant program.

- Mayor Kennedy inquired if staff will be reaching out to the communities who are not currently involved with the grant. Ms. Favero responded that the grant information was shared with the agency's Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC). A number of local communities have reached out to the agency staff expressing a desire to participate, and staff reached out to some of the other communities to gauge their interest. Due to the September 15<sup>th</sup> due date, the participants for this grant application are set; however, it was noted that this grant program is expected to be available for four more years and other communities will have an opportunity to participate in those future funding cycles.
- Whit Blanton added that along with the 12 local governments already adopting the Safe Streets Resolution, the Barrier Islands Government Council (BIG-C) adopted the resolution at its July meeting, and Pinellas Park is working towards adding it to a future City Council agenda. On August 29<sup>th</sup>, Mr. Blanton will attend a Clearwater City Council Workshop in hopes of securing their adoption and will also be reaching out to Seminole. Those are the remaining jurisdictions yet to adopt the safety resolution.

### **The board approved the Amended FY23 Annual Budget for the Pinellas Planning Council**

At the June meeting, the Forward Pinellas Board adopted Resolution 22-05, which approved the FY23 budget and millage rate for the Pinellas Planning Council. On July 1, 2022, the Pinellas County Property Appraiser's office updated the property tax revenue projections to 13.1%, which increased the tax revenue line item of the budget by \$20,950. The Pinellas Planning Council budget has been updated to include a creative salary adjustment structure proposed by County Administrator Barry Burton that includes the following components:

- An increase equivalent to 3% of the midpoint of the employee's associated pay range.
- An additional base salary increase of \$0.58/hour (which is \$1,206.40 for a regular employee working 40 hours per week annually). This equates to an additional 2% overall and will be distributed this way so it's the same amount to all eligible employees.
- An additional non-recurring pay supplement of \$1,200, also equating to 2% overall, is to be funded from the PPC's reserves and to be paid in two installments during FY23.

The next step is a review and budget/millage rate adoption at public hearings conducted by the Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners in September.

### **The board recommended approval of three amendments to the Countywide Plan Map**

- The board recommended approval of three amendments:
  - A request from the City of Clearwater to amend the property at 1640 Gulf to Bay Blvd. from Office to Retail & Services to allow for the construction of a car wash on a portion of an existing parking lot. (8-0)
  - A request from the City of Tarpon Springs to amend the property at 100 & 108 North Ring Avenue from Residential Low Medium to Activity Center to allow for the adaptive reuse of a vacant historic structure and residential property. (8-0)
  - A request from Pinellas County to amend the property at 36750 US Highway 19 North from Residential Very Low, Residential Low Medium, and Recreation/Open Space to Residential Low Medium and Recreation/Open Space to convert a portion of the Osprey North Golf Course for new residential development. (8-0)

### **SPOTlight Updates**

- The construction of a roundabout at the intersection of Alt. 19 and Florida Avenue is proceeding and should be underway in the coming months. As the project concept was being developed in recent years, there was a lot of discussion and community engagement about the roundabout concept. The community, engineering team, Forward Pinellas staff, and FDOT all developed consensus that the construction of a roundabout at this location was the best decision given the traffic flow and redevelopment objectives in that area.
- TBARTA is currently conducting a public survey on a proposed aerial gondola linking downtown Clearwater and Clearwater Beach. The results of that survey will help inform the direction the proposed project will take in the future.
- St. Pete Beach and Treasure Island are about to initiate work on a Safety Study for Gulf Blvd., which will begin in September under the project management of Forward Pinellas.

### **Other Items**

- Forward Pinellas welcomed Kyle Simpson, AICP as the New Active Transportation Planner. Kyle comes to us from the City of St. Petersburg where he started his career in planning.
- PSTA – Cassandra Borchers shared that the SunRunner is opening on October 21<sup>st</sup>. Event invitations will be distributed shortly. This will be the first true Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project in the region. In June, PSTA staff shared a presentation on the electrification of their fleet. PSTA is working to purchase 60 new electric buses over the next five years. PSTA will be receiving an \$18 million grant from the Bus and Bus Facilities Program to support the purchase of 12 to 14 electric buses. PSTA has also partnered with the City of St. Petersburg and FDOT on an award of \$360,000 for the CRA in South St. Petersburg at 22<sup>nd</sup> Street with access to the SunRunner Station. She shared the news that PSTA will receive a \$20 million federal grant toward a new multimodal center in Clearwater.

- Commissioner Long shared that TBARTA expressed a desire to hear directly from CSX regarding their plans in Tampa Bay. Until then, the staff is continuing with a released Request for Qualifications to solicit consultant support to study the CSX corridor for potential future rail transit service. Work continues on the US 19 regional rapid transit study. In continuation of the Gondola Study, the City of Clearwater selected two possible downtown terminal locations, and the team is completing technical work on those preferred alignments, developing cost estimates, and evaluating financing options. Regarding the I-275 Regional BRT, FTA approved a Documented Categorical Exclusion for the environmental work. TBARTA's FY 2023 Budget will be considered during the August Board meeting. Demand for the Commute Tampa Bay vanpool program is strong and growing. There were 188 vanpools in July, a 20% increase from the prior year.
- The procurement process for Forward Pinellas to procure new planning consultants will begin in the coming months. Some of the language in the agency's procurement documents will need to be modified, and a Request for Proposals is scheduled to be released by February 2023.
- A Call for Projects will be issued for the Complete Streets Grant Program, the Transportation Alternatives Program and the Multimodal Projects Priority list later this fall.
- FDOT is working with Forward Pinellas on a Safety Workshop for elected officials To be held on October 14<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm at the EPICenter at St. Petersburg College located at 13805 58<sup>th</sup> St. N. in Clearwater. The discussion is "How We Move the Safety Needle on Our Roadways" and will be targeted toward elected officials. A companion workshop with our Technical Coordinating Committee and other technical partners will be held later in October.
- The MPO Advisory Council held a meeting on July 28<sup>th</sup> in Gainesville, which was attended by Commissioner Michael Smith, MPO Planning Manager Chelsea Favero, and Executive Director Whit Blanton. The MPOAC has a policy institute for new governing board members that has been temporarily suspended but will be reinstated next year.
- Commissioner Merz shared that he had an opportunity to invite AMSkills to attend and present at a recent Safety Harbor Commission meeting. AMSkills is looking at other ways to identify and train people for the work force and looking into how those trained people can benefit and get involved with individual communities.
- David Ballard Gedes Jr. addressed the board protesting the construction of the roundabout at Alt. 19 and Florida Avenue in Palm Harbor.

## Action Sheet

August 10

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

- **Consent Agenda** (vote: 8-0)

Approved to include the following:

- A. Approval of Minutes of the June 8, 2022 Meeting
- B. Approval of Committee Appointments
- C. Acceptance of the Quarter Three Financial Report
- D. Acceptance of the Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan (TDSP) minor updates
- E. Approval of the Scope and Fee for Traffic Counts Collection and Analysis

- **Countywide Plan Map Amendment(s)**

Three cases were approved:

1. CW 22-15 – City of Clearwater (vote: 8-0)
2. CW 22-17 – City of Tarpon Springs (vote: 8-0)
3. CW 22-16 – Pinellas County (vote: 8-0)

- **Approval of Updated FY23 Annual Budget for the Pinellas Planning Council**

Following a presentation by Rodney Chatman, Forward Pinellas staff, the board approved the update for budget for FY 23. (vote: 7-1; Commissioner Eggers dissenting)