



**PLANNERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PAC)  
MEETING AGENDA**

February 1, 2021 – 1:30 p.m.

Magnolia Room at Florida Botanical Gardens  
12520 Ulmerton Road, Largo

**THE PLANNING COUNCIL AND METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION FOR PINELLAS COUNTY**

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1. **CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS**
2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES – January 4, 2021**
3. **REVIEW OF FORWARD PINELLAS AGENDA FOR February 10, 2021**

**PUBLIC HEARINGS**

**Countywide Plan Map Amendment(s)**

- A. [Case CW 21-04 City of Largo](#)

**REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS**

- B. [CPA Actions and Tier I Countywide Plan Map Amendments](#)

4. **PLANNING TOPICS OF INTEREST**

- A. [Pinellas County Employment Sites Program](#)
- B. [Coastal High Hazard Area \(CHHA\) Density Increases and Floodplain Management](#)
- C. [Forward Pinellas Complete Streets Grant Program Awards](#)
- D. [Countywide Housing Strategy Update](#)
- E. [Legislative Update](#)

5. **OTHER PAC BUSINESS/PAC DISCUSSION AND UPCOMING AGENDA**

- A. [Pinellas SPOTlight Emphasis Areas Update \(Information\)](#)
- B. [Forward Pinellas Board Workshop Update \(Information\)](#)
- C. [Residential Equivalent Use Standards \(Information\)](#)

6. **ADJOURNMENT**

**NEXT PAC MEETING – MONDAY, MARCH 1, 2021**

*Public participation is solicited without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, disability, or family status. Persons who require special accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act or persons who require translation services (free of charge) should contact the Office of Human Rights, 400 South Fort Harrison Avenue, Suite 300, Clearwater, Florida 33756; [(727) 464-4062 (V/TDD)] at least seven days prior to the meeting.*

*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.*

**Planners Advisory Committee – February 1, 2021**

**2. Approval of Minutes – January 4, 2021**



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**SUMMARY**

The Summary Agenda Action Sheet for the January 4, 2021 PAC meeting is attached for committee review and approval.

**ATTACHMENT(S):** PAC Summary Agenda Action Sheet for the January 4, 2021 meeting

**ACTION:** PAC to approve the Summary Agenda Action Sheet from the January 4, 2021 meeting.

**PAC AGENDA – SUMMARY AGENDA ACTION SHEET**  
**DATE: JANUARY 4, 2021**

ITEM	ACTION TAKEN	VOTE
<p>1. <u>CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL</u></p>	<p>The PAC held its January 4, 2021 meeting in the Magnolia Room at the Florida Botanical Gardens; 12520 Ulmerton Road, Largo.</p> <p>The Vice Chair, Frances Leong Sharp, called the meeting to order at 1:32 p.m. and the members introduced themselves.</p> <p>Committee members in attendance included Kyle Brotherton, Derek Reeves, Corey Gray, Rick Perez, Jan Norsoph, Frances Leong-Sharp, Zain Husain, Marshall Touchton, Brandon Henry, Heather Sobush and Patricia McNeese.</p> <p>Forward Pinellas staff included Rodney Chatman, Linda Fisher, Nousheen Rahman, and Tina Jablon.</p>	
<p>2. <u>MINUTES OF REGULAR PAC MEETING OF NOVEMBER 2, 2020</u></p>	<p>Motion: Jan Norsoph            Second: Kyle Brotherton</p>	<p>11-0</p>
<p>3. <u>REVIEW OF FORWARD PINELLAS AGENDA FOR JANUARY 13, 2021 MEETING</u>  <u>PUBLIC HEARINGS</u>            A. CW 21-01 – City of Tarpon Springs</p>	<p>Motion: Jan Norsoph            Second: Derek Reeves</p>	<p>11-0</p>
<p>B. CW 21-03 – City of Tarpon Springs</p>	<p>Motion: Jan Norsoph            Second: Rick Perez</p>	<p>11-0</p>
<p><u>REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS</u>            C. CPA Actions and Tier I Countywide Plan Map Amendments</p>	<p>None required; informational item only.</p>	
<p>4. <u>OTHER PAC BUSINESS/PAC DISCUSSION AND UPCOMING AGENDA</u>            A. Pinellas SPOTlight Emphasis Areas Update (Information)</p>	<p>Rodney Chatman reminded the PAC members that the Forward Pinellas Board will be holding a workshop on January 29<sup>th</sup>. He also reminded the members that the SPOTlight emphasis areas were originally developed during a board work session five years ago. He advised that the emphasis areas will likely be modified at the upcoming workshop to focus less on current initiatives and add new ones to focus on in the coming years.</p>	

6. <u>UPCOMING EVENTS</u>	The PAC Vice Chair highlighted the upcoming events of interest.	
7. <u>ADJOURNMENT</u>	The meeting was adjourned at 1:43 p.m.	

Respectfully Submitted,

\_\_\_\_\_  
PAC Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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**SUMMARY**

From: Public Semi-Public  
To: Office  
Area: 7.39 acres m.o.l.  
Location: 6021 142<sup>nd</sup> Avenue North

The proposed amendment is submitted by the City of Largo to amend a property from Public/Semi-Public (is intended to recognize institutional and transportation/utility uses that serve the community or region, especially larger facilities having acreage exceeding the thresholds established in other plan categories, which are consistent with the need, character, and scale of such uses relative to the surrounding uses, transportation facilities, and natural resource features, and may include residential as part of the mix of uses) to Office (intended to accommodate areas developed, or appropriate to be developed, with office uses, low-impact employment uses, and residential uses (subject to an acreage threshold), in areas characterized by a transition between residential and commercial uses and in areas well-suited for community-scale residential/office mixed-use development).

The subject property is located on 142nd Avenue North, to the east of 60th Street North and west of 58th Street North. Currently, the subject property is used as administrative offices for St. Petersburg College (SPC). SPC is in the process of consolidation and has found that it does not have a need for the current building, which is largely vacant. The building is proposed to be sold and reused as general office use, hence the proposed amendment.

**FINDINGS**

Staff submits the following findings in support of the recommendation for approval:

- A. The Office category is appropriate for the proposed use of the property and is consistent with the criteria for utilization of this category.
- B. The proposed amendment either does not involve, or will not significantly impact, the remaining relevant countywide considerations.

Please see accompanying attachments and documents in explanation and support of these findings.

**LIST OF MAPS & ATTACHMENTS:**

- Map 1 Location Map
- Map 2 Jurisdictional Map
- Map 3 Aerial Map
- Map 4 Current Countywide Plan Map

Map 5 Proposed Countywide Plan Map

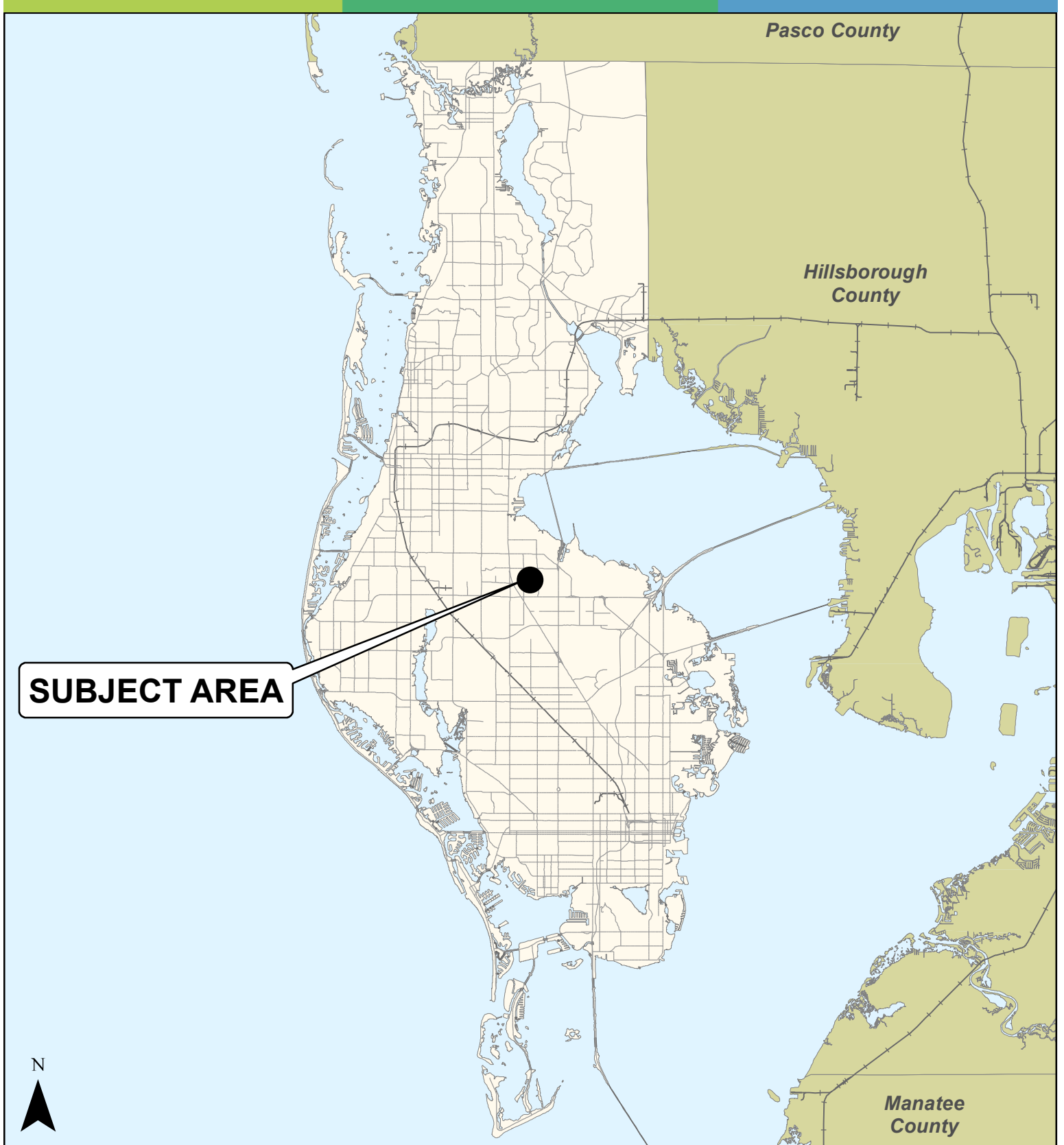
Attachment 1 Forward Pinellas Staff Analysis

**MEETING DATES:**

Planners Advisory Committee, February 1, 2021 at 1:30 p.m.

Forward Pinellas, February 10, 2021 at 1:00 p.m.

Countywide Planning Authority, March 9, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

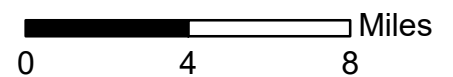


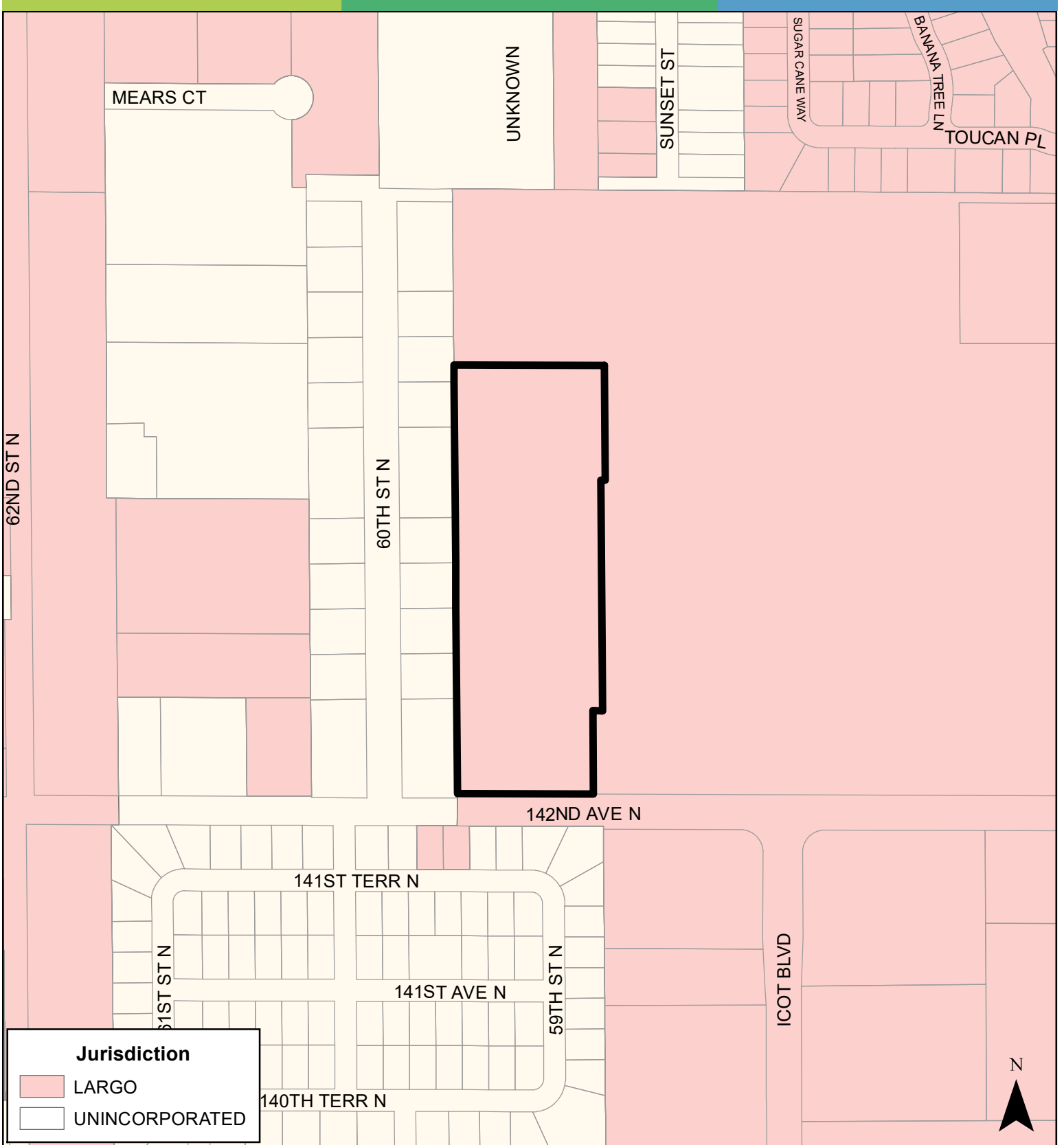
**JURISDICTION:** Largo

**AREA:** 7.39 Acres

**FROM:** Public/Semi-Public

**TO:** Office



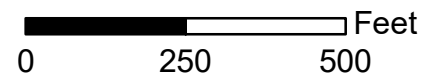


**JURISDICTION:** Largo

**FROM:** Public/Semi-Public

**AREA:** 7.39 Acres

**TO:** Office





# Case CW21-04

## Map 3: Aerial Map

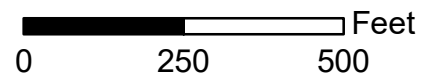


**JURISDICTION:** Largo

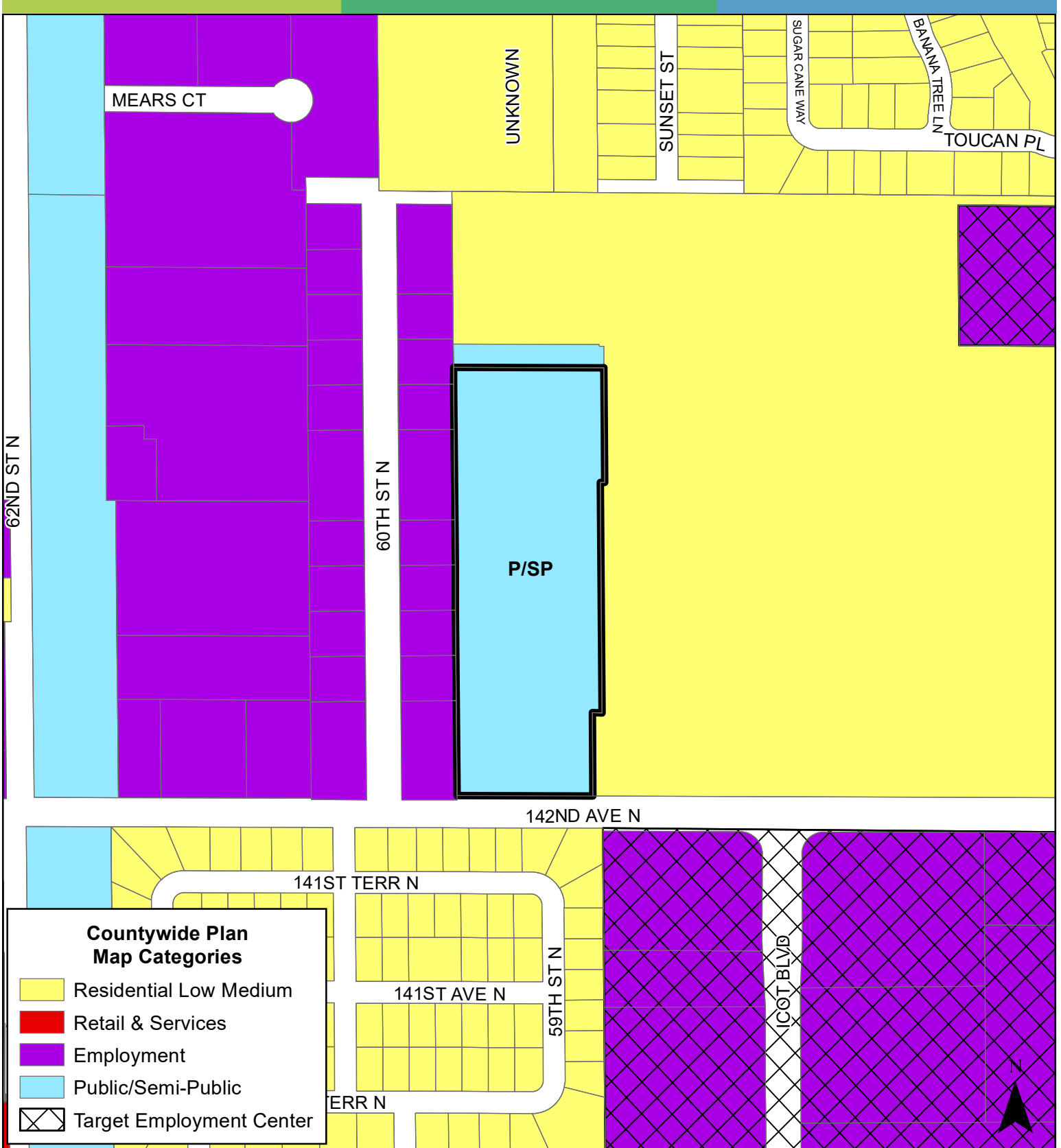
**FROM:** Public/Semi-Public

**AREA:** 7.39 Acres

**TO:** Office





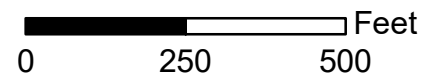


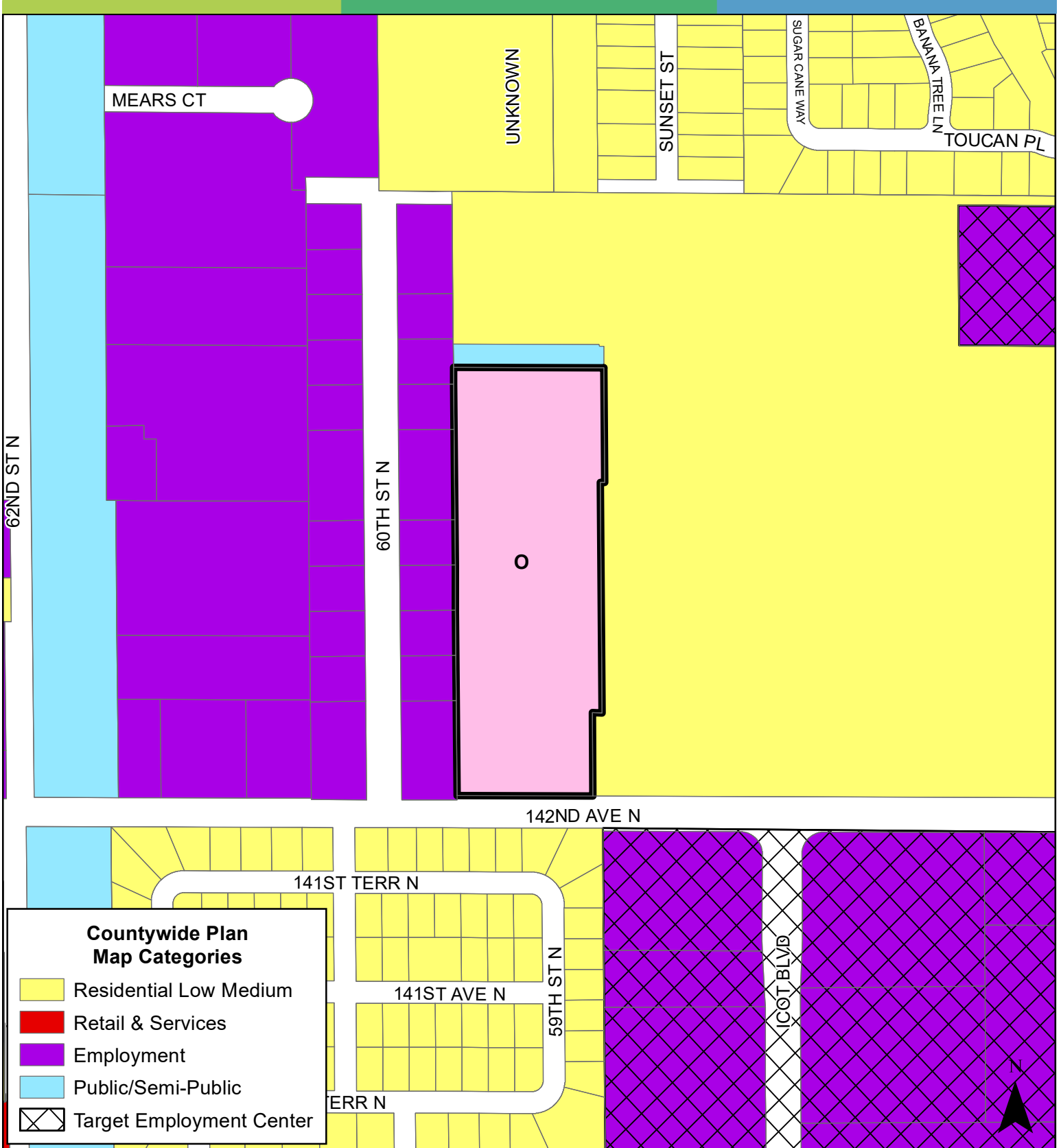
**JURISDICTION:** Largo

**FROM:** Public/Semi-Public

**AREA:** 7.39 Acres

**TO:** Office



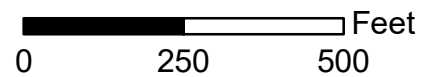


**JURISDICTION:** Largo

**FROM:** Public/Semi-Public

**AREA:** 7.39 Acres

**TO:** Office



**CW 21-04**  
**Forward Pinellas Staff Analysis**

**RELEVANT COUNTYWIDE CONSIDERATIONS:**

- 1) **Consistency with the Countywide Rules** – The proposed amendment is submitted by the City of Largo and seeks to amend the designation of approximately 7.39 acres of property from Public/Semi-Public to Office

The subject property is located on 142<sup>nd</sup> Avenue North, to the east of 60<sup>th</sup> Street North and west of 58<sup>th</sup> Street North. Currently, the subject property is used as administrative offices for St. Petersburg College (SPC). SPC is in the process of consolidation and found that it does not have a need for the current building, which is largely vacant. The building is proposed to be sold and reused as general office use, hence the proposed amendment.

The Countywide Rules state that the Office category is “intended to accommodate areas developed, or appropriate to be developed, with office uses, low-impact employment uses, and residential uses (subject to an acreage threshold), in areas characterized by a transition between residential and commercial uses and in areas well-suited for community-scale residential/office mixed-use development.”

The proposed use is consistent with the permitted uses and locational characteristics of the proposed category. The locational characteristics of the Office category are “generally appropriate to locations where it would serve as a transition from an urban activity center or more intensive nonresidential use to low density residential or public/semi-public use; and in areas where the size and scale of office and residential use is appropriate to free standing office, medium density residential or a combination thereof.” The subject property is located to the west of a Target Employment Center, with office uses that are analogous to the proposed amendment. Furthermore, it is surrounded by low density residential uses, such as those mentioned in the locational characteristics of the Office category.

This amendment can be deemed consistent with this Relevant Countywide Consideration.

- 2) **Adopted Roadway Level of Service (LOS) Standard** – The amendment area is located near a roadway segment where the existing Level of Service is operating at a LOS “D” or better; therefore, those policies are not applicable.
- 3) **Location on a Scenic/Noncommercial Corridor (SNCC)** – The amendment area is not located within a SNCC; therefore, those policies are not applicable.

- 4) **Coastal High Hazard Areas (CHHA)** – The amendment area is not located on a CHHA; therefore, those policies are not applicable.
- 5) **Designated Development/Redevelopment Areas** – The amendment area is not located within a designated development/redevelopment area; therefore, those policies are not applicable.
- 6) **Adjacent to or Impacting an Adjoining Jurisdiction or Public Educational Facility** – The amendment area is not adjacent to a public educational facility; therefore, those policies are not applicable. The amendment area is adjacent to Unincorporated Pinellas County. County staff have been contacted and found no issues with the proposed amendment.
- 7) **Reservation of Industrial Land** – The proposed amendment area does not involve the reduction of land designated as Industrial or Employment; therefore, those policies are not applicable.

**Conclusion:**

On balance, it can be concluded that the proposed amendment is deemed consistent with the Relevant Countywide Considerations found in the Countywide Rules.

**Planners Advisory Committee – February 1, 2021**

**3B. CPA Actions and Tier I Countywide Plan Map Amendments**

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**SUMMARY**

This information is presented in order to better, and more systematically, apprise the Forward Pinellas Board of final action(s) by the Board of County Commissioners, in their role as the Countywide Planning Authority (CPA) on matters that have been previously considered. This summary also includes the Tier I Countywide Plan Map Amendments that have been administratively reviewed by Forward Pinellas staff.

**CPA Actions January 2021:**

There were no items that went before the CPA in January.

**Tier I Countywide Plan Map Amendments January 2021:**

- FLUM 21-01, City of Largo, satisfies the Tier I provisions of Section 6.1.2.1 of the Countywide Rules
- FLUM 21-02, Pinellas County, satisfies the Tier I provisions of Section 6.1.2.1 of the Countywide Rules

**ATTACHMENT(S):** None

**ACTION:** None required; informational item only.

## **4A. Pinellas County Employment Sites Program**

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### **SUMMARY**

In November 2017, the voters of Pinellas County approved the fourth round of Penny for Pinellas, a one percent sales tax to fund infrastructure improvement projects countywide between 2020 and 2029. Through an Interlocal Agreement between Pinellas County and the 24 municipalities, more than \$80 million has been dedicated to assist in economic development capital projects. The first program will focus on the construction and/or redevelopment of industrial and office buildings, which are of critical importance to maintaining a strong local economy. Pinellas County Economic Development is administering the award of these funds through a competitive, countywide process known as the Employment Sites Program.

Teresa Brydon from Pinellas County Economic Development will give a presentation on the new program. Proposals will be accepted from developers that demonstrate the capacity to successfully develop, market and manage the proposed project, and can include site acquisition and preparation, vertical construction, and infrastructure development.

The program will be coordinated with the Countywide Plan, with priority given to projects along Premium, Primary, and Secondary Future Corridors; within Urban Centers; and within Target Employment Centers. In particular, the Countywide Plan allows local governments to offer an intensity bonus to manufacturing, office, and research/development uses within Target Employment Centers; while few communities currently take advantage of this option, those that do will compete more favorably.

### **ATTACHMENT(S):**

- [Pinellas County Employment Sites Program Website \(link\)](#)
- Penny IV Affordable Housing and Economic Development Program Guidelines

**ACTION:** None required; informational item only.



PINELLAS COUNTY, FLORIDA

# **Penny IV Affordable Housing and Economic Development Program Guidelines**

Effective December 10, 2019





PINELLAS COUNTY, FLORIDA

# **Penny IV Affordable Housing and Economic Development Program Guidelines**

Effective December 10, 2019

**PINELLAS COUNTY, FLORIDA**  
**Penny IV Affordable Housing and Economic Development Program Guidelines**

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# 1. Funding Description

## Background and Purpose

Penny IV Countywide Affordable Housing and Economic Development Capital Project Funds (“Penny IV Funds”) are to be utilized to support the development and preservation of affordable housing and to facilitate economic development and high-quality growth of the local economy through strategic investments in capital projects.

Penny IV Funds are provided through an extension of the Infrastructure Sales Surtax, a voter-approved 1.0% sales tax that is dedicated to infrastructure improvement projects in Pinellas County. Penny IV was approved by 83% of Pinellas County voters on November 7, 2017. The approved ballot language included “land acquisition for affordable housing” and “capital projects to support economic development” as permissible uses of funds.

On August 1, 2017, prior to the vote on the Penny IV ballot initiative, an Interlocal Agreement, between Pinellas County Government and the 24 municipalities was approved regarding the allocation of proceeds from the 2020-2029 infrastructure surtax. Under the Interlocal Agreement 8.3% of the net proceeds of the surtax shall be dedicated to countywide investments in the areas of Economic Development Capital Projects as authorized in Section 212.055(2)(d)3, Florida Statutes, and “Housing” land acquisition in support of affordable residential housing as authorized in Section 212.055(2)(d)(1)(e), Florida Statutes. The Board of County Commissioners (“BCC”) established a joint review committee (“JRC”) to develop guidelines for the use of Penny IV Funds for affordable housing and economic development capital projects. These guidelines were produced in coordination with the JRC and serve as guidelines for County staff and other program partners regarding the use of 8.3% of Penny IV Funds for countywide affordable housing and economic development projects. These guidelines are intended to be supplementary to other policy documents published by the County and does not replace overarching County policies and goals for affordable housing, economic development or specific requirements for other programs, including other Penny IV tax proceeds.

## Uses of Funds

The two categories of Penny IV Funds discussed herein, those that can be utilized for land acquisition to support affordable housing and those that can be utilized for economic development purposes, will jointly be referred to as “Penny IV Funds.” It should be noted, however, that each category of funds has separate eligible and ineligible uses and unique procedural and administrative requirements. The eligibility and requirements of the specific type of funds utilized for the general project categories described herein will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Penny IV Funds are to be allocated on an annual basis to fund the following two Penny IV Programs:

- **Penny IV Affordable Housing Program:** This program provides Penny IV Funds to strengthen the local economy by stimulating the housing construction sector, providing affordable housing for those meeting income requirements to address Pinellas County’s housing needs. The goal of the program is to increase the number of designated affordable housing units meeting eligibility requirements (“Assisted Units”) throughout Pinellas County by supporting the development of new affordable units and preservation/rehabilitation of existing affordable units. Mixed-use projects are eligible to apply to the Affordable Housing Program but awarded funding can only be utilized to support the housing units.
- **Penny IV Economic Development Program:** This program provides Penny IV Funds for strategic investment in economic development capital projects to address identified challenges which prevent or limit desired economic development. The goal of the County is to facilitate a strong and robust local economy that provides growth opportunities for existing target industry businesses and attracts new target industry employers to Pinellas County<sup>1</sup>. Eligible projects include the construction, expansion or rehabilitation of office and industrial buildings, site-readiness projects, and public infrastructure projects. Mixed-use projects are eligible to apply to the Economic Development Program but awarded funding must be utilized only for the office and/or industrial space(s) that meet criteria related to the building/floorplate, geographic location, etc. of target industry tenants.

The economic development provision of the statute as limited by the ballot allows funding of capital projects supporting economic development that have a general public purpose of improving local economies. As documented in the studies and reports cited below, there is a nexus between workforce housing and economic development. Economic benefits include the provision of housing available and attainable to the local workforce; creation of local construction industry related jobs including design and development, construction contractors, laborers, and material suppliers; improved employee recruitment and retainment opportunities for businesses; increased amounts of household income available for non-housing spending on goods and services in the community; reduced employee commute distances resulting in lower household transportation costs and less traffic congestion. Based on the economic benefits of affordable housing, eligible expenditures of these funds include construction costs to produce and preserve affordable units. Flexibility in the types of

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout this document, target industry is to be defined as follows “An export-oriented industry with a majority of its products or services sold outside of Pinellas County (preferably outside Florida) and whose average annual wages are above the Pinellas County average annual wage.

allowable project expenses will yield additional opportunities to address the countywide need to invest in capital projects that create more housing that is affordable.

Florida Policy Institute, August 2016, *Insufficient Affordable Housing Limits Florida's Economic Potential*.

Florida State University Center for Economic Forecasting and Analyses, Julie Harrington, Ph.D. March, 2017 *An Economic Analysis of the SHIP and SAIL Funds by County in Florida-Final Report*.

Enterprise Community Partners, Inc. and Local Initiatives Support Corporation, Inc. (2010) *Affordable Housing for Families and Neighborhoods: The Value of Low-Income Housing Tax Credits in New York City*.

Joint Center for Housing Studies, Harvard University & Center for Workforce Preparation, U.S. Chamber of Commerce. (2005) *Strengthening Our Workforce and Our Communities through Housing Solutions*.

Maxfield Research, Inc. and GVA Marquette Advisors. (2001) *Workforce Housing: The Key to Ongoing Regional Prosperity, A Study of Housing's Economic Impact on the Twin Cities*. Minneapolis, MN: Family Housing Fund.

National Association of Home Builders. (2010) *The Local Economic Impact of Typical Housing Tax Credit Developments*.

Cohen, R. & Wardrip, K. (2011) *The Economic and Fiscal Benefits of Affordable Housing*. *Planning Commissioners* Journal. 83.

## 2. Penny IV Affordable Housing Program

The County will provide funds under the Penny IV Affordable Housing Program for the development and/or preservation of affordable housing. The goal of the Penny IV Affordable Housing Program is to increase and preserve the number of affordable housing units throughout Pinellas County.

The County is committed to providing quality affordable housing for a range of income levels through partnerships with the Housing Finance Authority of Pinellas County ("HFA"), local municipalities and the private sector including lenders, builders, developers and community groups. Housing developed under this program will seek to provide homes for a diverse population, including seniors, families and the local workforce. All units will be fairly and affirmatively marketed.

The Penny IV Affordable Housing Program builds on previous County-led efforts to support affordable housing throughout the county. Utilizing revenue from the infrastructure surtax revenue generated under Penny III (approved by referendum in 2007), the County created the Penny for Pinellas Land Assembly Fund ("Penny III LAF") in 2015 and has allocated a total of \$18 million. Administrative support of the Penny III LAF has been provided by the HFA through an interlocal agreement with the County. The previous Penny III authorization (2010 – 2019) did not include the ability to utilize economic development funds for capital improvements to support the development of affordable housing.

As a result of including the ability to utilize Penny IV Funds for economic development in the ballot, and the relationship between workforce housing and economic development, the County is now able to expand the eligible forms of assistance to most efficiently utilize the funds and maximize the opportunities to incentivize and support the production and preservation of Assisted Units. In doing so, the goal is to support projects with the greatest benefit to Pinellas County. To that end, the County aims to affirmatively engage with the affordable housing community, local municipalities, and any other groups interested in affordable housing to promote the use of Penny IV Affordable Housing Program funds and support more, higher impact affordable housing projects.

### Eligible Projects

The Penny IV Affordable Housing Program may be used to support development or preservation/rehabilitation of affordable housing Assisted Units that meet target incomes. Projects should have a minimum number of 10 Assisted Units to receive Penny IV Funds. There is no maximum to the number of Assisted Units that may be included in a project. The total number of Assisted Units (above the minimum program requirement of 10 units) shall be determined based on the amount of funding assistance provided, the type of funding assistance provided and the overall project costs. Projects may include Assisted Units in one or more buildings that are under common ownership, management and financing, and can potentially be included as part of a mixed-use and/or mixed-income building.

Funding from the Penny IV Affordable Housing Program can be provided to support affordable housing in all areas and communities within Pinellas County. Buildings, structures and other site improvements may be privately or publicly owned.

## TARGET INCOME FOR ASSISTED UNITS

Units supported by Penny IV Affordable Housing Program funds are considered Assisted Units. Occupancy, income limits, rent limits and affordability period requirements apply to Assisted Units as outlined by program requirements and applicable state and federal regulations. The rent that can be charged for Assisted Units must be at or below the applicable rent limits based upon household income and the number of bedrooms in the unit.

Affordable Housing Program projects must meet the minimum affordability requirements set out in the State statute of 30% of total housing units must be affordable for households earning less than 120% area median income ("AMI") adjusted for household size

According to Resolution 19-6 passed by the BCC on February 26, 2019, BCC preferences are for projects in which:

- 40% of the Assisted Units will benefit households making 60% of the AMI or less; or
- 100% of Assisted Units will benefit households making 80% of the AMI or less; or
- Other shares of units that benefit other AMI levels (up to 120% AMI) if data shows those AMI levels have substantial need for such housing

The County reserves the right to evaluate developments that do not meet these parameters on a case-by-case basis to determine eligibility.

## FINANCIAL NEED

All proposals will be required to submit a detailed financing plan which must document a financial need with sufficient returns (i.e., a lack of funding which would prevent the project from providing affordable units while achieving financial viability which cannot be obtained from other sources) as well as financial feasibility once Penny IV Affordable Housing Program funds are provided. Projects must have identified funding sources to complete the development.

## Eligible Uses of Funds

### 1. Land Acquisition

Penny IV Affordable Housing Program funds may be used for land acquisition to support development and preservation of affordable units. In addition to direct acquisition costs, other eligible expenses associated with acquisition of land, infrastructure and buildings may include, but are not limited to items such as property assessments, standard fees and closing costs, and transaction costs.

Land acquisition is an eligible use per Florida statute section 212.055(2)(d)(1)(e). To ensure long-term affordability, all land acquired with Penny IV Affordable Housing Program funds will remain owned by a local government or special district. The local government or special district may enter into a ground lease with a public or private person or entity for the construction of the residential housing project. Affordability of units must be maintained in perpetuity for Land Acquisition Projects.

In the case of mixed-use projects, Penny IV Affordable Housing Program funds can only be used to purchase the portion of land that will be used for housing that meets target income requirements.

Alternatively, in circumstances where the ultimate mix of uses is not final, funds may be used to acquire the entire property, and the fund later reimbursed with other non-Penny IV Funds based on the proportion of uses, when determined.

## 2. Housing Construction and Rehabilitation

Penny IV Affordable Housing Program funds may be used for capital projects associated with the development, construction and major rehabilitation of housing units affordable to the local workforce. Eligible uses may include the hard costs associated with capital site improvements, including infrastructure and building construction and major rehabilitation of existing units. Affordability of units under this category is a minimum of 15 years from the date of occupancy.

### INELIGIBLE USES

Penny IV Affordable Housing Program funds may not be used for, financing, administrative or operating costs. Depending on which particular source of Penny IV Funds utilized, whether those dedicated to land assembly for affordable housing or those dedicated to economic development, other restrictions may apply.

## Public Policy Goals for Affordable Housing

Assuming a project satisfies the eligibility threshold criteria, including target income(s) for Assisted Units, the County will consider compliance with the following public policy goals in the evaluation and selection of a project. The long-standing policy of the County is to not utilize a point system but rather to evaluate each application on its own merits. The County reserves the right to modify the public policy goals/guidelines for the Penny IV Affordable Housing Program through BCC Resolution.

The County has three tiers of project prioritization:

### Tier 1 Prioritization:

- Mixed-income projects with approved entitlements and financing located in designated Premium, Primary, and Secondary Corridors from the Forward Pinellas Land Use Strategy Map<sup>2</sup>
- Rental housing
- Mixed-use affordable housing projects supportive of economic development
- Projects that provide Assisted Units consistent with Resolution 19-6:
  - 40% of the Assisted Units will benefit households making 60% of the AMI or less; or
  - 100% of Assisted Units will benefit households making 80% of the AMI or less; or
  - Other shares of units that benefit other AMI levels (up to 120% AMI) if data shows those AMI levels have substantial need for such housing

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<sup>2</sup> Throughout this document, the phrase “within Premium, Primary, and Secondary Corridors from the Forward Pinellas Land Use Strategy Map,” includes the area up to ½ mile from the parcel boundary adjacent to the corridor on either side.



## **Tier 2 Prioritization**

- Projects that will preserve and improve the existing affordable housing stock
- Redevelopment projects that eliminate blighting conditions and improve the community by utilizing the site for new housing
- Projects located within Premium, Primary, and Secondary Corridors from the Forward Pinellas Land Use Strategy Map
- Projects providing more than 30% Assisted Units
- Acquisition and or rehabilitation housing projects that create or extend affordability periods of 20 years or more
- Projects that include units with two (2) or more bedrooms
- Senior housing projects
- Projects where the improvements themselves will also demonstrate long-term economic investment/impacts
- Developments in which the owners demonstrate a real long-term economic interest in the project, as evidenced by the developer's significant equity investment or personal guaranties
- Mixed-income projects located in Community Redevelopment Areas ("CRA") in Pinellas County
  - Projects with other local government financial support (both in-kind and cash)
  - Projects located outside of the Coastal High Hazard Area and/or 100 Year Flood Plain

## **Tier 3 Prioritization:**

- Projects located in an area of Pinellas County with a demonstrated shortage of affordable housing, as evidenced by a County-approved market study
- Projects with the lowest ratio of County contribution per unit financed
- Projects owned by locally designated Community Housing Development Organizations

## **Form of Assistance**

There are no minimum or maximum assistance size thresholds. The amount of assistance will be based in part upon the amount needed to make the Assisted Units affordable to qualified tenants or homebuyers, and the availability and desired disbursement of funds. However, for Land Acquisition Projects, the contribution cannot exceed total land acquisition costs.

Two forms of assistance are available:

1. Land acquisition assistance will be in the form of direct acquisition by or on behalf of the County. The land will be provided for housing in the form of a long-term ground lease.
2. Capital assistance funds provided for affordable housing will require security agreements including, but not limited to, mortgages, promissory notes, affordable housing development agreements, and land use restriction agreements to assure compliance with occupancy, affordability and affordability period requirements.

## 3. Penny IV Economic Development Program

Under the Penny IV Economic Development Program, the County will provide funds for strategic investment in economic development capital projects to address identified challenges which prevent or limit economically beneficial real estate (re)development from occurring. The goal of the County is to facilitate a strong and robust local economy that provides growth opportunities for existing businesses and attracts new target industry employers to Pinellas County.

The County is committed to supporting economic development and facilitating the growth of the local economy through partnerships with local municipalities and the private sector. **The County's primary objective is to strengthen the local economy by attracting new higher-wage primary jobs to Pinellas County through the active recruitment, expansion, and retention of target industry businesses.** Another primary objective is to achieve a business climate that promotes and supports local business retention, expansion and diversity; and to support and promote a healthy environment for both existing and new target industry companies.

The County engaged a consultant to conduct market research to inform policy regarding the deployment of Penny IV Funds for economic development. This research indicated that there are strong local submarkets for industrial and office within Pinellas County. However, while there is potential demand for future development, attraction and retention of targeted industry employers will likely be limited by various factors including:

- 1) Competition for target industry employers from other markets
- 2) Presence of obsolete buildings that do not meet modern target industry employers' needs
- 3) Unavailability of sites
- 4) Inadequate infrastructure
- 5) Financial feasibility of new office and industrial development
- 6) Lack of workforce housing

Given the challenges related to economic development, each year the County may allocate a portion of Penny IV Funds to specifically fund the Penny IV Economic Development Program and support economic development initiatives throughout Pinellas County, as permissible under the regulating ordinances and Interlocal Agreement.

The Penny IV Economic Development Program builds on previous County-led efforts to support economic development throughout Pinellas County. However, this is the first major initiative to fund capital projects to support real estate redevelopment to promote opportunities for target industry employers. The County aims to engage with the development and business community, local municipalities, and any other groups interested in economic development to promote the use of the Penny IV Economic Development Program.

### Eligible Projects

The Penny IV Economic Development Program may be used to fund capital projects to support economic development, in three primary project categories.

- **New Construction, Expansion, and/or Rehabilitation of Office and Industrial Buildings** – Capital projects to support new construction, expansion and/or rehabilitation of office and industrial space to meet the needs of target industry users. Program can also be used for projects that will convert existing commercial buildings to office/industrial buildings suitable for target industry users. Project expenditures can include all allowed capital expenditures related to development including but not limited to, site preparation, infrastructure development, and vertical construction. Applications will be accepted from private, non-profit, and/or public development entities that present a defined project that meets the County's economic development goals. Applications will be evaluated based on individual proposals and the extent to which the proposed project supports the County's goals.
- **Site-Readiness** – Capital projects to support publicly-led land assembly and/or site preparation to create publicly-owned development-ready office and/or industrial development sites for future development. Applications will be accepted from public entities that present a defined project. Applications will be evaluated based on individual proposals and strategic longer-term goals.
- **Public Infrastructure** - Capital projects to support publicly-led infrastructure projects that support the recruitment, retention, and expansion of target industry companies. Projects can include, but are not limited to, regional stormwater systems, water/wastewater installations/upgrades, roadway/access improvements/new construction. Projects must serve areas that are currently/planned to be designated for target industry uses, and individual proposals must clearly describe the nexus between the project and the County's economic development goals. Projects funded under this category should benefit multiple development sites or multiple target industry companies.

Buildings, structures, land and other site improvements may be privately or publicly owned. Funding can be provided to support capital projects for economic development in all areas and communities within Pinellas County.

## FINANCIAL NEED

All proposals for **New Construction, Expansion or Rehabilitation of Office and Industrial Buildings** will be required to submit a detailed financing plan which must document a financial gap (i.e., a lack of funding which would prevent the project from achieving financial feasibility with sufficient returns to the developer, as well as financial feasibility once Penny IV Economic Development Program funds are provided). Sufficient returns to the developer will vary by project type and will be determined during the review process based on market conditions and data. Projects must have other identified funding sources to complete the development.

## Eligible Uses of Funds

Penny IV Funds can be utilized to facilitate economic development initiatives through strategic investment in capital projects. Eligible uses of funds include but are not limited to the following capital projects ("Eligible Costs"):

- Land acquisition
- Site-preparation costs (e.g., demolition, environmental remediation)
- Regional and site stormwater solutions (e.g., vaulted stormwater detention and/or retention)
- On and Off-Site Utilities (e.g., dual-feed electricity, fiber optic lines, natural gas, etc.)
- Construction of new office and industrial buildings and space
- Substantial rehabilitation of existing buildings
- Construction of structured parking

- Public infrastructure (e.g., water, sewer, roads)
- Other extraordinary development capital costs

## INELIGIBLE USES

Funds from the Penny IV Economic Development Program may not be used for the following purposes:

- Non-capital expenditures, including but not limited to operating and maintenance expenses and cash incentives

## Public Policy Goals for Economic Development

Assuming a project satisfies the eligibility threshold criteria, the County will consider compliance with the following public policy goals in the evaluation of a project. Preference will be given to developer-led projects. The County reserves the right to modify the public policy goals for the Penny IV Economic Development Program at any time. The primary overarching goal of this program is to assist the private sector in developing new space for target industries. Projects that will yield new desired square footage in the shortest amount of time will be prioritized.

**For new construction, expansion, or rehabilitation projects, priority will be given to projects based on the following preferences:**

- Projects that create modern office and/or industrial space that meet the needs of target industry users
- Projects that demonstrate the strongest link to target industry job creation/retention
- Projects that demonstrate the lowest public subsidy per projected target industry job
- Projects that would assist with a specific target industry employer project with the greatest potential for the largest number of high-wage jobs
- Projects that include unique proposals that would enhance the County's ability to create/retain target industry jobs or would otherwise contribute to an improved local economy (e.g., R&D facilities, business incubators, Sensitive Compartmented Information Facility)
- Projects which utilize higher percentages of the allowable floor area ratio (FAR) on a given site.
- Properties with appropriate entitlements (e.g. zoning, land use, etc.) to support desired project outcomes
- Projects located within the Target Employment Center as identified on the Countywide Plan Map, or Urban Center Activity Centers as identified on Land Use Strategy Map as adopted in the Countywide Plan or within Premium, Primary, and Secondary Corridors from the Forward Pinellas Land Use Strategy Map
- Projects with additional local government support (e.g., in-kind services, regulatory relief, and/or financial resources)
- Projects that will generate higher returns on investment, both fiscally to local governments, and in economic impact for the county as a whole

**For public site-readiness projects, priority will be given to projects based on the following preferences:**

- Properties located within the Target Employment Center as identified on the Countywide Plan Map, or Urban Center Activity Center as identified on Land Use Strategy Map as adopted in the Countywide Plan, or within Premium, Primary, and Secondary Corridors from the Forward Pinellas Land Use Strategy Map

- Properties with easy access to major transportation facilities including interstate and/or airport
- Properties with appropriate entitlements (e.g., zoning, land use, etc.) to support desired project outcomes
- Properties that can be assembled to meet minimum size requirements of modern industrial and office users. Prototypical size requirements are as follows:
  - For suburban-office Locations
    - Preferred minimum gross square footage – Over 35,000
    - Preferred minimum floor plate square footage – 35,000
  - For urban-office Locations
    - Preferred minimum gross square footage – 25,000
    - Preferred minimum floor plate square footage – 25,000
  - For flex industrial
    - Preferred minimum square footage – 50,000
    - Minimum ceiling clear heights of 30 feet or more
  - For manufacturing industrial
    - Preferred minimum square footage 100,000
    - Minimum ceiling clear heights of 30 feet or more
- Properties with underutilized building to land ratio (<0.2 FAR) or properties with aging or functionally obsolete buildings
- Properties that would assist with a specific targeted industry employer project and with the greatest potential for the largest number of high-wage jobs in target industries
- Properties with additional local government support (e.g., in-kind services, regulatory relief, and/or financial resources)

**For public infrastructure projects, priority will be given based on the following preferences:**

- Projects located within the Target Employment Center as identified on the Countywide Plan Map, or Urban Center Activity Centers as identified on Land Use Strategy Map as adopted in the Countywide Plan or within Premium, Primary, and Secondary Corridors from the Forward Pinellas Land Use Strategy Map
- Projects with additional local government support (e.g., in-kind services, regulatory relief, and/or financial resources)
- Projects that demonstrate the strongest link and largest impact to target industry job creation/employment as demonstrated by the number of target industry businesses and employees that will benefit
- Projects that support the retention, recruitment, or expansion of specific target industry companies
- Projects that reduce existing flooding and/or provide increased stormwater capacity
- Projects that will create or improve commuter and/or freight access

## Form of Assistance

There are no minimum or maximum assistance size thresholds for the Economic Development Program. The amount of assistance will be based in part upon the amount required to make the project financially feasible (NOTE: Financial need cannot exceed total verified eligible costs or the financial gap, whichever is less). All funding will be awarded with clear performance requirements and reimbursement and other appropriate default provisions if such requirements are not met. Funding may be awarded in the form of grants, forgivable loans, or other such form deemed appropriate by the Board of County Commissioners.

## 4. Awarding of Funds, Monitoring and Reporting

The County and Awardee will both have ongoing responsibility to monitor and report on project impacts, including, but not limited to, the total commercial square footage, total jobs created, wages, capital investment and affordable housing units developed, as applicable. The County will provide an annual summary report outlining new awards from the previous year and ongoing performance of its disbursed funds to the BCC.

For housing projects receiving Penny IV Funds, the Awardee will be responsible for submitting documentation of project compliance including annual reports, verification of household income, etc. to the County. In addition to document submission, the County may also conduct monitoring through on-site visits and unit inspections. The County may conduct monitoring using its own staff or may retain the services of a third-party. To the extent possible, the County will align its reporting schedule and requirements with those for other major affordable housing programs (i.e., those for State funds or State-allocated tax credits).

## 5. Application Review Process

The County will create a standard application form (Application) for each of the Penny IV Programs. The County will solicit or accept Applications from development teams (“Applicants”) that are committed to delivering housing and/or economic development projects that align with policy goals outlined in the Penny IV Affordable Housing and Economic Development Program Guidelines.

Applicants and completed Applications will be reviewed against program guidelines. Selected projects must meet the County’s goals for supporting affordable housing and/or growth of the local economy. Applicants must demonstrate the capacity to successfully develop, market and manage the proposed project in accordance with all local, county, state and federal laws and guidelines. No commitment can be made until all financial, property and development information has been assembled, reviewed and approved by or on behalf of the County. Funds will be formally committed to a project when a “Written Agreement” has been executed between the Applicant and the BCC, or in the event the Applicant is the BCC, a resolution will formally commit the funds.

Penny IV projects under the Affordable Housing and New Construction or Expansion or Rehabilitation of Office and Industrial categories must have a financial gap that is closed once Penny IV Funds are included and have identified funding sources to complete the development. Projects applying under the Site Readiness and Public Infrastructure categories may be multi-phased and project review will consider that the financial gap may not be completely closed for the entire project, but that identified funding sources are committed to complete the phase.

**Submission of an Application does not constitute an award commitment nor eligibility for reimbursement of any costs incurred in the preparation or submission of the Application.** The County is not obligated to award funds at any time. Approvals and rejections of Applications will be made by written notice.

**4B. CHHA Density Increases and Floodplain Management**

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**SUMMARY**

As was discussed at an earlier PAC meeting, the City of St. Petersburg is the first community in Pinellas County to adopt a mitigation program that is designed to allow the City Council to consider approving targeted increases in multifamily residential development in the Coastal High Hazard Area (CHHA). This approach mandates the construction of buildings that are more resilient to storm surge and sea-level rise, mitigate for service and infrastructure needs during and immediately following a major storm event, and enable safe re-occupation of buildings as quickly as possible following an evacuation.

In recent weeks, Forward Pinellas staff has held informal discussions with floodplain managers from around the county who have concerns about residential density increases in the CHHA. The nature of these conversations has focused on strategies that Forward Pinellas could consider adopting to further protect floodplains from increased development.

It is our understanding that most communities do not address potential impacts to floodplain management during the future land use map amendment phase of the development process. Our experience is that these concerns are typically addressed during site plan approval or a similar local process that involves a development order.

We respectfully request the input of the PAC on this matter. More specifically, we ask that you come prepared to discuss your thoughts on potentially involving floodplain managers in the Countywide Plan Map amendment process.

**ATTACHMENT(S):** None

**ACTION:** None required; informational item only.



**4C. Forward Pinellas Complete Streets Grant Program Awards**

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**SUMMARY**

The Forward Pinellas Complete Streets Grant Program provides federal funding to local governments for the development of concept plans and construction projects aimed to support redevelopment and economic opportunity by making roadways safer and more accessible for all users. Up to \$100,000 is awarded for concept plans and up to \$1 million is awarded for construction plans on an annual basis. The program was launched in 2016. In its 5<sup>th</sup> year, a Call for Projects was released in the summer of 2020 with a deadline for submittal by October 23, 2020. The received submitted are as follows:

**Concept Planning Applications:**

- City Tarpon Springs requests \$100,000 for Disston Avenue
- City of St. Petersburg requests \$100,000 for 6<sup>th</sup> Street Bikeway

**Construction Applications:**

- City of St. Petersburg requests \$1,000,000 for 22<sup>nd</sup> Street South from 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue South to 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue South

The complete streets grant applications can be found here:

<http://forwardpinellas.org/projects/completestreets/>

A subcommittee of Technical Coordinating Committee members, Planners Advisory Committee members and Forward Pinellas staff met in November to review the applications and recommend projects to be advanced for funding. A summary of that meeting is included with this item. The subcommittee recommended that the City of Tarpon Springs application receive the \$100,000 grant to complete a concept plan for Disston Avenue. The subcommittee also recommended that the City of St. Petersburg receive the \$1,000,000 grant for the construction of complete street project for 22<sup>nd</sup> Street South from 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue South to 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue South. The recommendation of the subcommittee will be brought to the Forward Pinellas Board for approval on February 10, 2021.

**ATTACHMENT(S):** Complete Streets Subcommittee Review Meeting Summary

**ACTION:** None required; informational item only.

## **Complete Streets Subcommittee Review Meeting Summary**

**Date: November 30, 2020**

**Time: 2:30 p.m.**

**Location: Pinellas County Planning Conference Room**

### **Subcommittee Members;**

**Austin Britt, Planning Intern, Forward Pinellas**

**Caroline Lanford, AICP CTP, Principal Planner, Pinellas County**

**Derek Reeves, AICP, Principal Planner, City of Pinellas Park**

**Heather Sobush, AICP Director of Planning Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA)**

**Joan Rice, Professional Engineer, Pinellas County**

**Marcie Stenmark, AICP, Community Development Director, City of Safety Harbor**

**Nousheen Rahman, Planning Analyst, Forward Pinellas**

**Recorder: Angela Ryan, Principal Planner, Forward Pinellas**

The purpose of this memorandum is to summarize the subcommittee meeting held on November 30, 2020 for the Forward Pinellas Complete Streets grant program. A total of three (3) grant applications were received in response to the Complete Streets Call for Projects. This call for projects was issued on July 10, 2020 and distributed to all members of the Technical Coordinating Committee and Planners Advisory Committee, advertised on the Forward Pinellas website, distributed via agency social media accounts and was discussed at various public meetings with the board and other local government officials. A copy of each grant application received was posted to the Forward Pinellas website and provided to each subcommittee member in advance of the meeting.

The grant program is divided into two separate programs with up to \$100,000 available for concept planning applications and \$1 million available for construction projects. Two applications were submitted for the concept planning grant and one application was submitted for the construction grant.

With the understanding that complete streets are contextually sensitive and may include varying elements due to a variety of factors, the application criteria for both programs was developed to be intentionally broad. Applicants were asked to provide data points in their applications to help committee members quantify some of the redevelopment potential and low income and minority populations served by the proposed projects. This allows for each project to be evaluated based on its ability to serve as a catalyst for transformational land use change, and not just on its ability to provide a variety of specific accommodations for various modes.

The concept planning application included two required items for an application to be eligible.

- The application must include a letter or resolution from the applicant’s elected board, documenting community support for the project.
- The application must demonstrate how the project will be a catalyst for transformative change.

Each applicant was asked to provide a variety of information about the project, including an evaluation of existing conditions, how the project would improve conditions for multiple modes, the presence of any underserved communities and how the jurisdiction planned to move the concept plan forward for construction/implementation in the future. The most significant requirement for these applications was that each demonstrate how the project would help to transform the surrounding area, including the percentages of each land use category along the project corridor, percentages of vacant land and descriptions of how the parcels along the corridor are underdeveloped and underutilized and how they would benefit from the treatments.

For the construction applications, the following requirements applied:

1. The application must include a letter or resolution from the applicant’s elected board, documenting community support for the project.
2. Project must provide/improve accommodations for multiple modes of travel.
3. Application must demonstrate how the project will be a catalyst for transformative change.
4. Application is Local Agency Program (LAP) certified or provides documentation of an agreement with a LAP certified agency to complete construction. If the applicant is not currently LAP certified, the applicant must agree to make continued progress towards receiving that certification, or to develop an agreement with a LAP certified agency, immediately following notice of award from this program. The agency must have LAP certification in place at least one year prior to receipt of construction funding.
5. Documentation that 100% of right-of-way has been acquired, or that an agreement is in place with applicable property owners to utilize their property for a portion of the project.

Construction applicants were also asked to provide similar information in their applications for concept planning projects, including an assessment of existing conditions, a description of the proposed improvements, a detailed cost estimate and the identification of any underserved communities along the corridor. The most significant requirement for these applications was that each demonstrate how the project would help to transform the surrounding area, including the percentages of each land use category along the project corridor, percentages of vacant land and descriptions of how the parcels along the corridor are underdeveloped and underutilized and how they would benefit from the treatments.

**EVALUATION COMMITTEE COMMENTS – CONCEPT PLANNING PROJECTS:**

*The City of Tarpon Springs Disston Avenue Complete Streets Project*

The City of Tarpon Springs applied for the concept planning award of \$100,000 for the development of a complete street plan along Disston Avenue. The project proposal aligns with the City of Tarpon Springs’ goal to revitalize historic neighborhoods, and the economic goals to infill residential development and encourage economic growth. Tarpon Springs has requested the grant to develop a planning level study to work with the public and community stakeholders to develop a context sensitive concept for Disston Ave which both retains character and culture of the neighborhood and provides north/south continuity.

The proposed plan would likely include: streetlighting, wider multi-use sidewalk, landscaping, wayfinding elements, bike lane connections and improvements, and crosswalk improvements.

The subcommittee noted the project is in an underserved area and directly abutting a Community Redevelopment Area (CRA). The disadvantaged residents and historical element for the project area was well-highlighted in the application and of importance regarding equity considerations. Specifically, there is an economically disadvantaged minority community residing within the project area. The subcommittee was impressed with the detailed demographic analysis conducted for the application in the project area which thoroughly characterized the community. The subcommittee recognized that the City of Tarpon Springs has already conducted extensive public engagement and outreach for this project. It was noted that addressing this project area is important for providing safer multi-modal transportation. Specifically, Disston Ave is part of a larger connected system with main arterials as well as proximity to the Pinellas Trail. The subcommittee noted that the existing mobility needs for the community in Tarpon Springs within the project area was well demonstrated in the application. The subcommittee highlighted how the application provided a strong case for the project resulting in transformative land-uses and economic improvements. Overall, the subcommittee was impressed with the application material as it appeared the staff with Tarpon Springs are dedicated to improving this segment of the city.

#### *The City of St. Petersburg 6<sup>th</sup> Street Bikeway Complete Streets Concept Planning Study*

The City of St. Petersburg applied for the concept planning award of \$100,000 for the 6th Street Bikeway - Complete Streets Concept Planning Study. This proposal would identify the preferred roadway configuration for 6th Street between Roser Park and Mirror Lake through downtown St. Petersburg. The project is part of the larger strategy to reduce vehicle speeds, encourage placemaking and walkable urban form through redevelopment and improved pedestrian safety. The scope of work for the concept planning project includes: alternatives development and screening, technical analysis, a public dialogue to guide the design choices, and the selection of the safest and most comfortable design configuration and economical use of public space. Specific project considerations include lane repurposing, intersection configurations, traffic control and pedestrian crossing location improvements.

The subcommittee noted that the application materials demonstrated a need for the project due to safety concerns. A major concern identified in the application was safety risk from crashes. The subcommittee recognized an important part of this project is the SunRunner BRT project in the corridor and the inclusion of additional transit opportunities. The subcommittee held a discussion on some areas of downtown St. Petersburg having more connectivity and how this project appears to be a gap in the broader transportation network. The subcommittee noted the project area is within a portion of the city with land use features which are relatively permanent, such as the hospital, but other portions of the project area may attract new businesses and employment opportunities because of the completed project. Overall, the subcommittee noted that this project is part of a larger plan to improve safety and mobility in St. Petersburg and recognized the effort to improve safety by lowering vehicle speeds.

#### **Evaluation Subcommittee Recommendation:**

The Evaluation subcommittee was impressed with quality of the applications received in the fifth year for funding. Given the intent of the program to fund projects that demonstrate a strong potential to serve as a catalyst for economic transformation upon implementation, the subcommittee recommends

funding the application from the **City of Tarpon Springs**. The subcommittee recognized the City of Tarpon Springs' application was targeted towards improving a minority and low-income area and to improve safety and increase transportation options for the subject community. The subcommittee recognized significant transformative land use opportunities from the project application. The significant work on the application by the City was also recognized as a strong case for funding this application as the City has already dedicated resources to conducting public participation and outreach for the project.

#### **EVALUATION COMMITTEE COMMENTS - CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS:**

##### *The City of St. Petersburg 22<sup>nd</sup> Street South Complete Streets Project*

The City of St. Petersburg submitted a construction application requesting 1 million for the 22<sup>nd</sup> Street South Complete Streets project. This project traverses on 22nd St. South from 11th Ave South to 18th Ave South. The project is derived from the Warehouse Arts District Deuces Live Joint Action Plan. The proposed project would create a 2-lane road with widened and buffered sidewalks for pedestrians and bicyclists. It would connect 22<sup>nd</sup> St. to the north with the Pinellas Trail and planned improvements along 18<sup>th</sup> Ave South. The project would be a catalyst for land use change as part of the ongoing redevelopment of Deuces Live Main Street area. The core element for the project is to make 22<sup>nd</sup> St. South a livable street with wider and more comfortable places to walk.

The subcommittee noted the high quality of the application and the important emphasis on safety. The subcommittee recognized that the project is within an Environmental Justice area and the project would be an important benefit for economically disadvantaged people. Specifically, project design aspects such as lighting improvements will be important for safety and wider sidewalks will be important for pedestrian mobility. The subcommittee viewed the additional bus stop inclusion a beneficial part of the project application. The project location in proximity to a high crash area was recognized as being a strong component for the overall corridor redesign. Overall, the subcommittee recognized the transformative land use potential from the project within the Warehouse Arts District.

##### ***Evaluation Subcommittee Recommendation:***

As the intent of the Complete Streets program is to fund projects that demonstrate a strong potential to serve as a catalyst for economic transformation upon implementation, the subcommittee recommends funding the application from the **City of St. Petersburg**. The subcommittee found that the application provided a strong rationale for improving mobility, safety and increasing land use opportunities within the corridor because of the project. The subcommittee found the City of St. Petersburg's construction application would provide positive change within this portion of the city through more livable and walkable streets.

#### **4D. Countywide Housing Strategy Update**

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##### **SUMMARY**

As previously discussed with PAC, Pinellas County and Forward Pinellas are partnering to build a countywide strategy to address the critical shortage of affordable housing in the county. Working with the 25 local governments, the strategy will build upon existing county and local efforts to create affordable housing units through direct investment, public-private partnerships, more diverse market-rate development, and other tools.

On December 11, we concluded a successful five-part virtual summit called Homes for Pinellas, which brought together community leaders, developers, subject matter experts, and the public to discuss the challenges, opportunities and best practices for creating housing that is affordable to everyone, and the importance of linking housing to employment and transit. The sessions are available for viewing online at <https://www.homesforpinellas.org/summit>.

A key conclusion of the summit was the need for the communities of Pinellas to better coordinate their efforts in order to maximize available housing resources. The final session proposed a countywide housing compact that all local governments will be encouraged to sign, agreeing to work together as a county to develop a central data repository, joint public outreach program, common definitions and terminology, and a toolkit of regulatory strategies to increase the diversity and affordability of housing. Forward Pinellas staff will further discuss the upcoming housing compact effort during the PAC meeting.

**ATTACHMENT(S):** None

**ACTION:** None required; informational item only.

## **4E. Legislative Update**

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### **SUMMARY**

The 2021 State Legislative Session begins on March 2. As we have in the past, Forward Pinellas staff will update the PAC on bills of interest to local government planning.

Nearly 300 bills have already been filed, including:

- [House Bill \(HB\) 55](#) / [Senate Bill \(SB\) 284](#) – Preempts local design requirements for residential buildings, discussed further below
- [HB 59](#) / [SB 496](#) – Requires a Private Property Rights element to be adopted into local comprehensive plans
- [SB 266](#) – Preempts local regulation of home-based businesses
- [HB 291](#) / [SB 522](#) – Reinforces preemption of local vacation rental regulation

#### *Proposed Building Design Legislation*

HB 55, sponsored by Representative Overdorf, and SB 284, sponsored by Senator Perry, are identical bills that would prohibit local zoning and development regulations relating to building design elements for any residential dwelling, such as the appearance of roofs, porches, windows, entry doors, garage doors, and architectural style. The only exceptions are for designated historic properties or as needed to meet requirements of the National Flood Insurance Program.

The bills are similar to unsuccessful legislation proposed during the 2020 session, which would have affected one- and two-story residential buildings, but now extend the prohibition even further to include all residential buildings. The proposed legislation would undermine local governments' ability to determine the character of their own communities. Forward Pinellas strongly opposed the legislation in 2020, and has included the issue in its draft 2021 policy positions.

#### *Follow-up on Last Year's HB 1339*

HB 1339, signed into law on June 9, 2020, allows a local government to approve an affordable housing development on any parcel designated for residential, commercial, or industrial use, notwithstanding any other law, local ordinance, or regulation to the contrary. While the new law departs from a longstanding countywide policy to reserve industrial land for employment-related land uses, some local governments have begun exploring using the new options it provides.

On December 10, staff from Forward Pinellas and the Pinellas County Economic Development participated in a presentation to the St. Petersburg Committee of the Whole (COW), as the City

considered whether to develop local policies for implementing the new law. St. Petersburg staff recommended that the City wait to develop its own policies until Forward Pinellas convenes a working group of planning directors in early 2021 to develop a coordinated set of recommended best practices. The COW concurred with the recommendation.

Forward Pinellas staff are currently drafting a scope of services for consultant assistance to support the working group by conducting case studies of peer communities and developing recommended policies. We anticipate completing the study by mid-2021 and proposing any needed amendments to the Countywide Rules at that time.

**ATTACHMENT(S):** Forward Pinellas Adopted 2021 Policy Positions

**ACTION:** None required; informational item only.





## Policy Positions – 2021

Adopted January 13, 2021

### PROTECT TRUST FUNDS.

- Trust funds such as the Sadowski Housing Trust Fund and the State Transportation Trust Fund are established with a clear purpose. These trust funds should be protected and not subject to transfers to the Budget Stabilization Fund and the General Revenue Fund. **Forward Pinellas supports protecting funding intended for affordable housing and other specific purposes from being transferred to other sources.**

### SUPPORT FLEXIBLE AND SUSTAINED TRANSPORTATION FUNDING.

- Taxes on fuel are a primary source of transportation funding for local governments. Increasing fuel efficiency, more electric vehicles in the fleet, and rising roadway maintenance and operating costs are placing pressure on local governments to search for additional funding. Local fuel taxes are not indexed to the Consumer Price Index to account for inflation, as state fuel taxes are, and therefore, revenues are declining at a faster rate. **Forward Pinellas supports the Legislature permitting the indexing of local fuel taxes for inflation to better keep pace with transportation needs like it has done for state fuel tax revenues.**
- The Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) receives the vast majority of state transportation funding. As our highway network continues to mature in urban areas like Pinellas County, and reaches a point where expansion is not a feasible or affordable option, **Forward Pinellas supports increased flexibility for SIS funds for premium or express transit operating on the SIS roadway, but not necessarily on its own fixed guideway, to enhance mobility on the SIS.** This is consistent with the legislative position of the Florida Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council.
- The Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP) is a valuable transportation funding mechanism based on state and local participation through regional collaboration. Forward Pinellas believes in fostering stronger regional transportation planning and decision-making and **supports sustained funding of \$250 million per year for the TRIP program** as a way to strengthen regional partnerships to improve mobility.
- Increasing flexibility of funds in urban areas enables MPOs and transit agencies to collaborate on priorities and direct resources to projects where they are most needed. In contrast, the use of legislative earmarks merely reallocates funding from existing priorities, reducing funding for needed local transit projects. **Forward Pinellas supports the Tampa Bay Transportation Management Area position calling for increased flexibility for state transportation funding programs in urban areas while discouraging the use of earmarks.**

#### **SUPPORT SAFETY FOR USERS OF ALL TRANSPORTION MODES.**

- Distracted driving poses a threat to the safety of motorists and non-motorized users. Between 2015 and 2019, 42 fatalities and 480 incapacitating injuries happened in Pinellas County related to distracted driving crashes (Crash Data Management System). **Forward Pinellas supports legislation that expands upon the adopted Texting While Driving law by prohibiting distracted driving by addressing the use of wireless communications devices with clear definitions and clarification on what it means to be stationary and operating.**
- Rectangular rapid flashing beacons (RRFBs) at pedestrian crossings have proven effective at reducing injuries and fatalities for vulnerable road users. Studies by the National Academies of Science and the Federal Highway Administration show that RRFBs increase driver yielding rates between 73-96% and reduce pedestrian collisions by 47%. **Forward Pinellas supports continued local authority over the use of RRFBs.**
- Safe Streets Pinellas is a collaborative effort to create a transportation system that is safe for everyone. On average, two people are killed or seriously injured each day in Pinellas County (Crash Data Management System). Forward Pinellas created Safe Streets Pinellas, a sustained effort of education, research and transportation facility improvements, based on the vision that not one person should be killed or seriously injured using our roadways. **Forward Pinellas supports state funding to address high injury corridors, conduct demonstration projects, and educate the public to ensure that Pinellas County streets are safe.**

#### **MAINTAIN MPO AUTHORITY FOR APPORTIONMENT STRUCTURE.**

- State-mandated changes to metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) are a recurring concern to Forward Pinellas and other MPOs statewide. **Forward Pinellas opposes one-size-fits all changes that would usurp local authority to determine the most appropriate structure of MPOs consistent with federal law and consultation with the Governor.**

#### **SUPPORT HOME RULE.**

- Florida is a diverse state characterized by unique communities. Pinellas County is an example of that with its many downtowns, beach communities and neighborhoods. Home rule allows local governments to align the values of a community to its ordinances and other governing elements. **Forward Pinellas supports home rule and opposes bills that erode the ability of local governments to reflect the wishes and desires of their communities.**
- In 2011, the Florida Legislature passed legislation curtailing the ability of local governments to regulate vacation rentals, defined as residences that are rented out to visitors on a short-term basis. Preemption of this local authority impairs the ability of communities to determine their own character and protect neighboring homes from the impacts of incompatible tourist-related uses. **Forward Pinellas supports the restoration of local authority to regulate vacation rentals.**
- Building design is essential to community character. Particularly for mature communities such as those in Pinellas County, where neighborhoods are established and new development is primarily infill and redevelopment, design standards ensure that new residential structures fit in aesthetically and functionally, without disrupting quality of life for existing residents. **Forward Pinellas supports local authority to regulate community character through building design.**

#### **SUPPORT STATE AND FEDERAL ASSISTANCE WITH ADDRESSING THE EFFECTS OF COVID-19.**

- Local grants enabled by the Federal CARES Act provide a financial lifeline for residents and businesses impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, extensive program requirements have created a backlog for counties processing grant requests, jeopardizing their ability to use their full funding before the end of the calendar year, when any unused funds will revert to the U.S. Treasury Department. **Forward Pinellas supports extension of the federal CARES Act program deadline.**
- Among the many challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic is the need for local government agencies to continue to safely conduct public business in the Sunshine when holding public meetings at a physical location can create public health and safety issues. Along with other local governments and agencies, Forward Pinellas demonstrated that its board and committees could meet virtually while maintaining a high level of accessibility to the public. **Forward Pinellas supports amendment of the Sunshine Law to allow expanded opportunities for virtual public meetings.**

#### **SUPPORT STATE FUNDING ASSISTANCE WITH LOCAL RESILIENCY PLANNING.**

- The Resilient Tampa Bay Transportation Study, of which Forward Pinellas was a partner along with other MPOs and regional agencies, found that 19% of the Tampa Bay region's roadways are highly or moderately vulnerable to storms, sea level rise, and heavy precipitation. The State can take a leadership role by providing funding to harden infrastructure, conduct vulnerability assessments on transportation projects, incentivize resilient development, and support research and mitigation for sea level rise. **Forward Pinellas supports state funding assistance to address the impacts of climate change and increase the resiliency of our communities.**

**Planners Advisory Committee – February 1, 2021**

**5A. Pinellas SPOTlight Emphasis Areas Update**

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**SUMMARY**

Forward Pinellas staff will provide a brief update on the status of the activities related to the three SPOTlight Emphasis Areas.

**ATTACHMENT(S):** None

**ACTION:** None required; informational item only.