

Join the BPAC Zoom Meeting

Time: August 17, 2020 08:30 AM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

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BICYCLE PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE (BPAC) MEETING AGENDA

AUGUST 17, 2020 – 8:30 a.m.

Virtual Meeting

THE PLANNING COUNCIL AND METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION FOR PINELLAS COUNTY

1. **CALL TO ORDER**
2. **INTRODUCTIONS AND ROLL CALL** (8:30 – 8:40)
3. **PUBLIC COMMENTS** – *Please limit comments to 3 minutes* (8:35 – 8:40)
4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES – June 15, 2020** (8:40 – 8:45)
5. **FORWARD PINELLAS EXECUTIVE SUMMARY – July 08, 2020** (8:45 – 8:50)
6. **CITY OF ST. PETERSBURG MICROMOBILITY ORDINANCE** (8:50-9:10)
7. **FDOT DREW STREET PROJECT UPDATE** (9:10-9:30)
8. **US 19 NORTH PLANNED UNDERPASS** (9:30-9:50)
9. **BPAC BUSINESS** (9:50 -10:10)
 - A. Florida Bicycle Association (FBA)
 - B. Friends of the Pinellas Trail
 - C. Virtual Bike Your City Update
 - D. BPAC Yearly Topics / Issues Schedule
 - E. Trail User Concerns Regarding Power Lines
 - F. Virtual Tri-County BPAC Meeting on September 15
10. **AGENCY REPORTS** (10:10 – 10:20)
11. **OTHER BUSINESS** (10:20 – 10:30)
 - A. SPOTLight
 - B. Membership
 - C. Correspondence, Publications, Articles of Interest
 - D. Suggestions for Future Agenda Topics
 - E. Other
12. **ADJOURNMENT** (10:30)

NEXT BPAC MEETING – SEPTEMBER 21, 2020

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.

Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee – August 17, 2020

4. Approval of Minutes



SUMMARY

The meeting summary for the June 15, 2020 meeting is attached for review and approval.

ATTACHMENT(S): BPAC Meeting Summary – June 15, 2020

ACTION: Approval of Meeting Summary

**FORWARD PINELLAS
BICYCLE PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY
JUNE 15, 2020**

The following is a summary of the Forward Pinellas Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) held on June 15, 2020. This was a Zoom Virtual Meeting, using the Forward Pinellas Zoom platform.

BPAC Members Present

Brian Smith, Chairman	At Large Citizen Representative
Becky Afonso, Vice Chair	North County Citizen Representative, Oldsmar
Daniel Alejandro	Largo Citizen Representative
Julie Bond	CUTR
Dr. Lynn Bosco	At Large Citizen Representative
Joseph Camera	Pinellas County Schools
Kimberly Cooper	St. Petersburg Citizen Representative
Lucas Cruse	St. Petersburg Bicycle Pedestrian Coordinator
David Feller	North County Citizen Representative, Oldsmar
Lyle Fowler	PC Parks & Conservation Resources (PCR)
Byron Hall	Pinellas Park Citizen Representative
Edward Hawkes	At Large Citizen Representative
Chip Haynes	Clearwater Citizen Representative
Alan Johnson	South Beaches Citizen Representative
Charlie Johnson	St. Petersburg Citizen Representative
Paul Kurtz	At Large Citizen Representative
Jacob Labutka	PSTA
Caroline Lanford	Pinellas County Planning Department
Stephen Lasky	At Large Citizen Representative
Lauren Matzke	City of Clearwater
Rick Perez	City of Largo
Ron Rasmussen	Pinellas Park Citizen Representative
Derek Reeves	City of Pinellas Park
Joan Rice	Pinellas County Public Works Traffic
Michael Siebel	At Large Citizen Representative
Jim Wedlake - phone	Seminole Citizen Representative
Georgia Wildrick	Largo Citizen Representative

BPAC Members Absent

Scott Daniels	Pinellas Trails, Inc.
Win Dermody	Clearwater Citizen Representative
Felicia Donnelly	City of Oldsmar
Deputy Eric Gibson	Pinellas County Sheriff's Office
Annette Sala	At Large Citizen Representative
Bert Valery	North Beaches Citizen Representative
Robert Yunk	At Large Citizen Representative

Others Present

Alex Henry	FDOT
Reid Powers	PSTA
Commissioner Jeff Gow	City of Dunedin
Tom Washburn	Pinellas County Public Works Traffic
Gina Harvey	Pinellas County Public Works Traffic
Dyllan Furness	St. Petersburg Citizen
Joy Hancock	Bike Florida
George Hunt	Auxiliary Ranger
Christina Mendoza	Forward Pinellas Staff
Amy Elmore	Forward Pinellas Staff

Al Bartolotta
Chelsea Favero
Whit Blanton
Angela Ryan
Maria Kelly

Forward Pinellas Staff
Forward Pinellas Staff
Forward Pinellas Staff
Forward Pinellas Staff
Forward Pinellas Staff

1. CALL TO ORDER & INTRODUCTIONS

Chairman Brian Smith called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. and Ms. Angela Ryan reviewed the Zoom meeting guidelines. The attendees were announced by Ms. Maria Kelly, there were 42 attendees.

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments provided.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The summary from the May 18, 2020 meeting was approved with no corrections.

4. FORWARD PINELLAS ACTIONS

Mr. Al Bartolotta, Forward Pinellas Planning Division Manager, reviewed the highlights of the Forward Pinellas Board meeting for the June 10, 2020. The Forward Pinellas Board received a presentation by Craig Fox of the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) regarding the planned roundabout in downtown Palm Harbor at the intersection of Florida Avenue and Alternate US 19. The Board also approved the proposed Transportation Improvement Program for FY20/21-24/25, which included the planned Florida Avenue/Alt. US 19 roundabout. It was announced that PSTA received federal funding for the Central Avenue BRT, which is scheduled for construction in 2022.

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN EVALUATION REPORT

Mr. Bartolotta addressed the committee regarding the Public Participation Plan Evaluation Report. The Public Participation Plan (PPP) guides the agency's public involvement activity in its role as the metropolitan planning organization (MPO). The evaluation report is a requirement of the PPP and is conducted in the year following adoption of the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). This version of the evaluation report covers the years 2017 - 2019. Forward Pinellas carries out a robust citizen participation program that includes staff participation in various public workshops, citizen and business group meetings and social media outreach. These activities are identified in the evaluation report. A link to the draft 2020 PPP Evaluation Report can be found on the Forward Pinellas website.

6. PROJECT PRIORITY LISTS

Ms. Chelsea Favero, Forward Pinellas staff, reviewed the Project Priorities List with the committee. As FDOT develops its Five-Year Work Program, projects from the Multimodal Priority List and the Transportation Alternatives (TA) Program Priority list are transmitted to FDOT to be considered for scheduling in the state work program, based on available funding. The priority lists are approved by the Forward Pinellas Board each year and are included in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The top regional priorities and multi-use trails of the Tampa Bay Transportation Management Area (TMA) leadership Group are also included in the TIP. Forward Pinellas staff recently developed a competitive scoring process that aligns project application criteria with the goals of the Advantage Pinellas Plan. This scoring process will be applied to all new application submittals. Questions were taken and appropriately answered.

7. FDOT PROCESS FOR IDENTIFYING UNCONTROLLED CROSSWALK LOCATIONS AND TREATMENTS

Mr. Alex Henry from FDOT District 7 addressed the committee regarding the FDOT process for identifying uncontrolled crosswalk locations and appropriate treatments. Marked crosswalks at uncontrolled and mid-block locations can be an effective tool in enhancing pedestrian safety and mobility. FDOT often assesses locations where crosswalk improvements are needed. When requests are received to evaluate a potential crossing location, there are several factors to be taken into consideration before a crosswalk is warranted. These factors include the number of people already crossing at there; whether there is sufficient

distance between the new location and the nearest existing crosswalk; proximity to nearby signalized intersections and lighting considerations. The next step is to design the crosswalk based on surrounding conditions and select the appropriate control device(s). Mr. Henry went on to explain the differences between the RRFB's and pedestrian hybrid beacons (PHBs) and High Intensity Activated Crosswalk (HAWK) beacons and where they are typically used. FDOT will continue its educational campaigns to increase public awareness of RRFB's and Hawks. Questions were taken and appropriately answered.

8. GATEWAY MASTER PLAN

Ms. Christina Mendoza, Forward Pinellas staff, shared a presentation that provided an overview of the Gateway Master Plan. The Gateway area is a primary economic engine of Pinellas County and the Tampa Bay region. The area includes four local government jurisdictions and is home to a large number of high-wage jobs. It is easily accessible to regional highways, downtown St. Petersburg and Tampa. But the prosperity of the area is challenged by a segregated and automobile-centric development pattern. With financial support from Pinellas County, the cities of Largo, Pinellas Park and St. Petersburg and the Florida Department of Transportation, Forward Pinellas engaged a consulting team to begin development of a Master Plan for the Gateway/Mid County area of Pinellas County in 2018. A final draft of the plan was completed last year. The Master Plan identifies opportunities for more efficient, economy-boosting land use patterns that will allow for increased multi-modal connectivity. It promotes the creation of mixed-use districts that put people closer to their destinations while reducing congestion and creating a more transit and pedestrian friendly environment. The Draft Gateway Master Plan and the draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) are complete and comments are being incorporated, with hopes for local adoption of the MOU by Fall of 2020. In moving forward with the implementation phase, the website has been updated and development of performance measures and report structure will begin. Questions were taken and appropriately answered.

9. BPAC BUSINESS

A. Florida Bicycle Association (FBA)

Vice-Chair Becky Afonso gave an update on the Florida Bicycle Association, and shared a few updates. First, due to the pandemic, a lot of the legislative bills were not sent to the governor. However, the E-bike bill (HB 971) was forwarded to him for signature. Second, filing deadlines for Senate and the House Chamber elections was Friday, June 12th, with the first primary election scheduled for August 18th and the general election November 3rd. Third, the annual membership meeting for the FBA is scheduled for July 25th. More information will become available on the FBA website (floridabicycle.org) in the next couple of weeks as to whether this will be a virtual meeting and the platform being used.

B. Friends of the Pinellas Trail

Mr. Jim Wedlake, Auxillary Ranger gave an update for the Friends of the Pinellas Trail. The Friends of the Pinellas Trail has a new website. Mr. David Feller has been working with the website developer and the new URL is <https://friendsofthepinellastrail.org/> and the team would like some feedback from BPAC members.

9. AGENCY REPORTS

• Pinellas Trail Loop/Duke Energy Trail (North & South Gaps)

Ms. Joan Rice with Pinellas County Public Works Traffic discussed the Belleair Road Feasibility Study that was recently completed. With the pandemic, many of Public Works' engineering studies have been delayed. The preliminary engineering report for the North Trail Gap is planned for 2022. The design is planned for 2023 and the construction is planned for 2025. The last section of the North Gap is between Enterprise Road and John Chesnut Park. It is under review and construction will begin before the end of the year. The section south of Sunset Point Road is still under construction but the progress is visible. With regards to the Haynes Bayshore to 126th Avenue section, the public involvement meetings just kicked off. The PD&E for 126th Avenue that appeared in the Gateway presentation has been delayed due to the need to host public meetings.

• Clearwater Bicycle Pedestrian Program

Ms. Lauren Matzke with the City of Clearwater shared that there were no significant updates in the city and that she is available if there are any questions regarding any of the projects the city is

currently working on. A Project Visioning Team meeting for the Ft. Harrison Avenue Complete Streets Project was held. The meeting went well, and the initial concepts are out for review, and they are collecting comments from the Visioning team. The next step is to take the concepts to City Council for comment and approval. Funding is available to move forward as soon as approved.

- **Largo Bicycle Pedestrian Program**

Mr. Rick Perez, City of Largo, shared that the Westbay Drive Multimodal Improvement Project is moving ahead of schedule and should be completed this summer with new bus shelters, sidewalks and light posts. The downtown plaza on Westbay Drive and Seminole Boulevard is nearing completion by July. The Rosery Road Complete Streets Project Phase I is continuing and should be completed in 2021, with design for phase II to begin next year.

- **St. Petersburg Bicycle Pedestrian Program**

Mr. Lucas Cruse, St. Petersburg Transportation, gave a quick update on the 18th Avenue South Complete Streets Study. The alternatives analysis is underway. The City BPAC meeting will be held via Zoom on June 17th.

- **Pinellas County Schools**

Mr. Joseph Camera, Pinellas County Schools, shared information regarding transporting schoolchildren; specifically (e.g., fleet demand, number of drivers and safety measures). He also discussed the Pinellas County Schools call center and how to report hazards, complaints or comments. The subject of the reports received vary from the behavior of students at a stop to predator reports. Joseph and his team address these concerns and complaints daily.

- **FDOT District 7 Updates**

Mr. Henry shared that FDOT recently kicked off development of their first ever district wide Bicycle Pedestrian Master Plan. This plan will specifically identify bike/ped needs as well as priorities and design guidance for bike facilities. They met with some of the larger local agencies over the last couple of weeks and will schedule meetings with the smaller agencies very soon. He also indicated that the US19 Frontage Road Study has slowed down due to the pandemic and the inability to hold public forums.

- **Pinellas Trail Security Task Force (PTSTF)**

The July 14th meeting for the PTSTF has been cancelled and a request has been made for reports to be sent to Angela Ryan.

10. OTHER BUSINESS

A. SPOTLight Emphasis Areas Update

Mr. Bartolotta shared that regarding the Gateway Master Plan and the presentation just seen, staff is looking to get feedback on the next steps of the implementation plan. Regarding US19, the 34th Street South resurfacing/land repurposing project is currently under design. As for US19 North, there has been a lot of discussion regarding the intersection improvements north of Curlew Drive. Next year staff will set up a workshop to share more information and discuss some of the conceptual intersection designs developed by FDOT.

B. Membership

There were no comments regarding this item.

C. Correspondence, Publications, Articles of Interest

There were no comments regarding this item.

D. Suggestions for Future Agenda Topics

There were no comments regarding this item.

E. Other

Members were reminded that the July meeting has been cancelled.

Ms. Ryan attempted to share a video with the members regarding “enjoying the pinellas trail”, but the video did not work, therefore we will send out the link.

Mr. Bartolotta shared that the governor’s order allowing virtual meetings will expire at the end of June and meetings will go back to in-person forums. It is anticipated that the first floor conference room will be used for the Forward Pinellas advisory committees. It provides enough space to accommodate CDC social distancing guidelines. The BPAC will need a quorum of 8 members attending in person in order to hold the meeting and allow for others to participate virtually.

Mr. Daniel Alejandro gave a thank you shout out to Joan Rice and her team for coordinating the upgrades made at the corner of Rosery Road and Highland Avenue in Largo, advancing the connection of the Pinellas Trail to Eagle Lake Park.

Ms. Ryan asked the committee for suggestions, comments or ideas regarding options for holding the Bike Your City event later in the year.

13. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Smith adjourned the meeting at 11:13 am. The next BPAC meeting is scheduled for Monday, August 17, 2020

Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee – August 17, 2020

5. Forward Pinellas Executive Summary – July 08, 2020



SUMMARY

The July 08, 2020 Executive Summary will be provided for your information. A staff member will review actions taken by the Forward Pinellas Board at that meeting.

ATTACHMENT(S): Executive Summary for July 08, 2020

ACTION: None Required, Informational Item Only



Board Meeting Summary & Action Sheet

July 8, 2020

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

THE PLANNING COUNCIL AND METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION FOR PINELLAS COUNTY

The Forward Pinellas Board held this public meeting virtually on July 8, at 1 p.m. to ensure public safety in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Please see the following link for more information about virtual meeting [policies and procedures](#).

Commissioner Eggers asked to take a moment of silence for Independence Day, as well as those families and individuals affected by COVID-19, as well as the police officers and those protesting for change over the past few weeks' events.

Forward Pinellas Director announced the promotion of Rebecca Stysly to Finance and Accounting Analyst 1.

Forward Pinellas Director announced that the [Resilient Tampa Bay Transportation Project](#), a regional effort between Forward Pinellas, Hillsborough MPO, Pasco MPO, the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council, and the Florida Department of Transportation, received the [National Association of Development Organizations' 2020 Excellence in Transportation Award](#).

PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS

The board unanimously approved a modification to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

- The proposed amendment would add a resurfacing project (445886-1) along I-275 from the Sunshine Skyway Bridge to the Maximo Point Bridges. This is a new project, with preliminary engineering being added to the TIP for \$1,362,942 in FY 2021. This project will not affect any current projects in the FY 2019/20-2023/24 TIP.

PRESENTATIONS AND/OR ACTION ITEMS

Commissioner Long presented updates for the PSTA Activities Report.

- On Wednesday, July 8, 2020, the PSTA unveiled their new brand for the Central Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (CA-BRT) – “SunRunner.”

Commissioner Seel presented updates for the TBARTA Activities Report.

- On June 22, 2020, TBARTA adopted the Envision 2030 Regional Transit Development Plan.

Bill Ball, from Tindale-Oliver, presented on the [TBARTA Envision 2030 Regional Transit Development Plan](#).

- Ball introduced and compared economic and financial impacts of three investment scenarios for Envision 2030: Scenario 1: Status Quo; Scenario 2: Low-Impact; Scenario 3: High-Impact.
- TBARTA adopted the unfunded Regional Transportation Vision Network, the Status Quo Scenario, and continued evaluation of calls to action in collaboration with local partners.

Forward Pinellas Board unanimously adopted the [Multimodal Prioritization Projects Approval Process](#)

- Forward Pinellas develops an annual list of transportation priorities for state and federal funding. Moving forward, Forward Pinellas will apply a competitive scoring process to align the selection of priorities with the county's land use goals and Advantage Pinellas. Forward Pinellas will score projects on Safety, Equity and Health, Mobility, Economics, Environment, and Resiliency, as well as their countywide significance and public and local government support.
- The Call for Projects opens on July 10, 2020 and will go to the Forward Pinellas Board for approval in March 2021. Click Here for more information: <https://forwardpinellas.org/2020-call-for-projects/>

Amy Elmore, Forward Pinellas' Communications and Outreach Manager, presented the [Communications Road Map and Monthly Communications Report](#)

- The Communications Road Map is a strategic plan that outlines objectives and target metrics to achieve the overall goal of engaging more residents and stakeholders into our overall planning processes.
- Each month, a Communications Report will be included in the informational items for the board, so they can see how Forward Pinellas is progressing with their communications goals.
- The board and residents are encouraged to get involved by following Forward Pinellas on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#), stay up to date with our blogs, and invite us to speak at other meetings throughout our community.

SPOTlight Update:

Indian Shores Gulf Blvd Sidewalk Update

- The Mayor and Town Council of Indian Shores would like to have a sidewalk built from 191st Avenue to Whitehurst Avenue as part of a drainage project to reduce ponding after rains. The ponding is occurring on the shared bicycle and pedestrian path, creating hazardous situations. Drivers also frequently use the shared bike/ped path to pass vehicles waiting to turn left, adding to the safety hazard.
- FDOT has an \$8 Million drainage project currently underway that will fix much of the ponding issues. This project will also include additional signage and incorporating green pigment paint into the pavement where pedestrians and cyclists operate, due to constraints that hinder construction of a sidewalk at this time.
- The Mayor and Town Council are seeking a larger project to add a sidewalk with lateral separation from the roadway as part of a more complete drainage project. Forward Pinellas will continue working with the Town, FDOT and other partners as appropriate on how best to fund and advance this project.

US 19 Pedestrian Throughway/Underpass Update

- Based on direction from the Forward Pinellas Board, FDOT has been working to create pedestrian crossings every quarter mile on US 19 from State Road 580 to County Road 95, which is in the design phase. They can only accommodate a half-mile spacing for this segment, which includes design of a pedestrian throughway/underpass on US 19 south of Republic Drive and additional at-grade and overpass crossings further to the north. FDOT and Forward Pinellas have received concerns from local business owners that visibility would be an issue and this section of the road is not utilized by pedestrians.
- The director reported that FDOT cannot relocate the underpass and still meet the board's direction and pointed to the video animations prepared by the Department showing little visual impact.

- After discussion about the amount of pedestrian usage today and in the future, the board said it would like to study the issue further and asked that it be placed on a future agenda to review additional information and provide further direction to the Department, as desired.

Drew Street Preliminary Engineering Scope of Services

- A preliminary engineering study for Drew Street – from Osceola Street to US 19 - is underway and is currently in the data gathering phase. The goal is to present an analysis of option and obtain consensus on improvements from all partners, Pinellas County, the City of Clearwater, and FDOT. This phase should be complete in nine months.
- In addition, FDOT is working on closing sidewalk gaps where right-of-way is available as quickly as they can.

Safe Streets Pinellas Online Campaign

- The Virtual Safe Streets Pinellas Campaign has already reached 10,000 people online and residents have made over 200 comments on transportation issues they are seeing in their community.
- Board members are encouraged to follow Forward Pinellas on social media and help spread the word about this campaign.

Public Participation Plan (PPP) Evaluation Report

- Forward Pinellas has participated in an average of 150 meetings, workshops and public events each year from 2017- 2019.
- From 2018 – 2019, there was a 12% increase of unique page views for the Forward Pinellas Website, and Forward Pinellas Facebook posts reached more than three times higher. **Forward Pinellas Equity Assessment**
- Forward Pinellas will complete an equity assessment for its organization, its structure, committees, public outreach methods, projects, work products, and the outcomes of our planning activities. Staff is just beginning to develop the scope of work. UNITE Pinellas will serve as an external sounding board to help guide us through this process. We will begin conducting interviews with key stakeholders in our minority and disadvantaged communities to help shape the work plan. Our goal is to bring back this scope for board approval in September 2020.

Other Items

- TMA Leadership Group Meeting will be held on July 10, 2020 virtually.
- The MPO Chairs Coordinating Committee and the Joint Chairs Coordinating Committee will follow the TMA meeting on July 10th – Regional priorities Update & Summit with Central Florida MPO Alliance Virtual Meeting.
- The next board meeting will be September 9, 2020. Virtual options for participation will be available. Please visit our website for more information: www.forwardpinellas.org
- A preliminary engineering study for Drew Street – from Osceola Street to US 19 – is underway and is currently in the data gathering phase. The goal is to present an analysis of options and obtain consensus on improvements from all partners, Pinellas County, the city of Clearwater and FDOT. This phase should complete in nine months.
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Other Items

- TMA Leadership Group Meeting will be held on July 10, 2020 virtually.
- The MPO Chairs Coordinating Committee and the Joint Chairs Coordinating Committee will follow the TMA meeting on July 10th – Regional priorities Update & Summit with Central Florida MPO Alliance Virtual Meeting.
- The next board Meeting will be September 9, 2020. Virtual options for participation will be available. Please visit our website for more information: www.forwardpinellas.org

Action Sheet

July 8, 2020

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

- **Consent Agenda** (roll call vote: 12-0)
Approved to include the following:
 - A. Approval of Minutes of the June 10, 2020 Meeting
 - B. Approval of Committee Appointments
 - C. Map Adjustment – City of Clearwater – Official Acceptance
 - D. Approval of Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD) Agreement and Adoption of Associated Resolution
 - E. Approval of Procurement #20-01 Forward Pinellas Planning Consultants Selection
 - F. Approval of Procurement #20-03 Auditing Firm Recommendation
 - G. Approval of the Pinellas Planning Council Work Plan

- H. Approval of Annual Budget and Millage Rate for FY 21 and Adoption of Associated Resolution
- I. Approval of Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Amendment
- J. Approval of Counts, Cras Data and Level of Service Program Scope of Services

- **Amendment to the FY 2019/20-FY 2023/24 Transportation Improvement Program**

Following a presentation by FDOT and public hearing, the board, in its role as the metropolitan planning organization approved the amendment to the TIP. (roll call vote: 12-0)

- **Multimodal Prioritization Process**

Following a presentation by Forward Pinellas staff, the board approved the new Multimodal Prioritization Process as outlined. (roll call vote: 12-0)

SUMMARY

In October 2019, the St. Petersburg City Council voted in support of a one-year pilot program for e-scooter deployment within the city limits. The e-scooter pilot was designed to study the implementation of e-scooters and to inform the development of a regulatory ordinance to amend the city code. The micromobility ordinance defines micromobility and creates regulations and licensing requirements for e-scooters and hoverboards.

The implementation of the e-scooter pilot program was carefully designed to provide safeguards to the public. The micromobility ordinance prohibits e-scooters from areas such as the new Pier and from obstructing public rights-of-way and building entrances; requires users to be 16 years of age or older; and identifies vendor permitting and parking requirements.

Operator agreements with the selected vendors will be presented to City Council for approval on August 20. If approved, e-scooters will be available for public use by early October.

A representative from the City of St. Petersburg will provide an overview of the pilot program and ordinance and answer questions from the committee members.

ATTACHMENT: None

ACTION: None, Information only

SUMMARY

In October 2018, the Clearwater City Council voted in support of the Complete Street Concept Plan for Drew Street, funded in part by a grant provided through the Forward Pinellas Complete Streets Program. The concept plan encompasses the Drew Street corridor from North Osceola Avenue to US Highway 19.

As Drew Street is under the jurisdiction of FDOT for a significant portion of the planning area, FDOT recently launched a corridor study and concept evaluation for the corridor. The purpose of the project is to review the concept plan and other plans associated with Drew Street and to provide an engineering fatal flaws analysis of the impacts of the concept plan on the surrounding areas.

Upon completion of the study, a long-range plan for the corridor will be defined and steps for implementation identified. In addition to this plan, site specific improvements such as sidewalks, crosswalks, intersection modifications and intelligent transportation system (ITS) applications will be advanced as standalone projects or as part of a resurfacing project(s).

A representative from FDOT will provide an overview of the study and answer questions from the committee members on the scope of the project.

ATTACHMENT: None

ACTION: None, Information only

SUMMARY

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) is in the design phase of partially controlled access improvements to US 19 between SR 580 and CR 95 that will include removal of the traffic signal at Republic Drive and a new interchange at Curlew Road. Funding for construction is scheduled for 2022. The design includes a pedestrian throughway (underpass) south of Republic Drive, a U-turn overpass at Boy Scout Road, and a pedestrian overpass at Northside Drive in response to direction from the Forward Pinellas Board in 2018 to accommodate pedestrian/bicycle crossings every one-quarter to one-half mile.

Concerned about the impact of the planned underpass on the visibility of their businesses, a group of adjacent property owners requested that the existing plans be modified to relocate the underpass. In response to this request, Forward Pinellas asked FDOT to evaluate the feasibility of relocating the planned underpass. After completing this evaluation, FDOT informed Forward Pinellas staff that the proximate location of the planned on/off ramps did not allow for the relocation.

Forward Pinellas staff has also expressed concern that, in addition to contradicting the Board's direction regarding the spacing of crossing locations, relocating the underpass compromises the safety of pedestrians, bicyclists and transit users who travel the corridor. This issue and the findings of the FDOT evaluation were discussed with the Forward Pinellas Board at their July meeting. Based on the discussion, Forward Pinellas staff is bringing the matter to the advisory committees for input before returning to the Board for a follow-up discussion and/or action in September.

At this meeting, Forward Pinellas staff will present the crossing design plans for this section of US 19 and review the planning and design context for the underpass. The presentation will include baseline demographic data of the project area and planning analysis data for the future land-use designations. The presentation will also include existing and proposed trail connections, as well as crash data for this section of U.S. 19.

ATTACHMENT: FDOT US 19 Proposed Pedestrian Crossing Assessment

ACTION: As deemed appropriate based on discussion

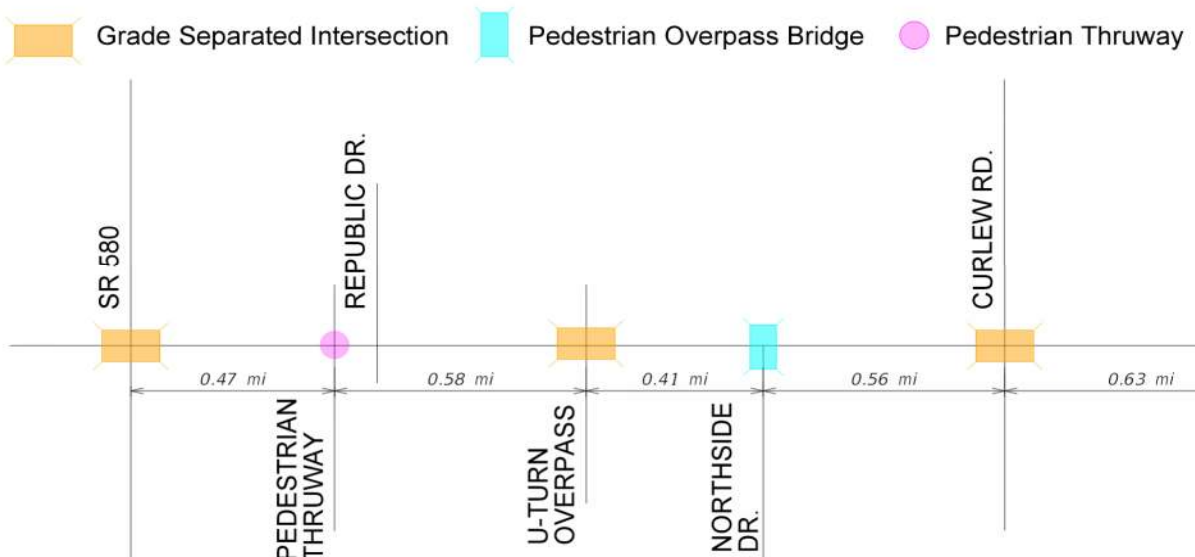
256774-2/-3, US 19 from SR 580 to CR 95 Grade Separation Location Assessment

The current design for this section of US 19 includes four grade separated crossings, three with both vehicle and pedestrian accommodations and one specifically designated for pedestrians, called a pedestrian thruway (shown below for renderings). In addition to the designated thruway, the design also provides a pedestrian overpass to allow pedestrians to safely cross over or under US 19. Early discussions with the locals indicated a desire for available pedestrian crossings at ¼ mile spacing. However due to limited Right-of-Way and geometric constraints, this was not feasible in this section of US 19 so a goal of ½ mile spacing was identified.

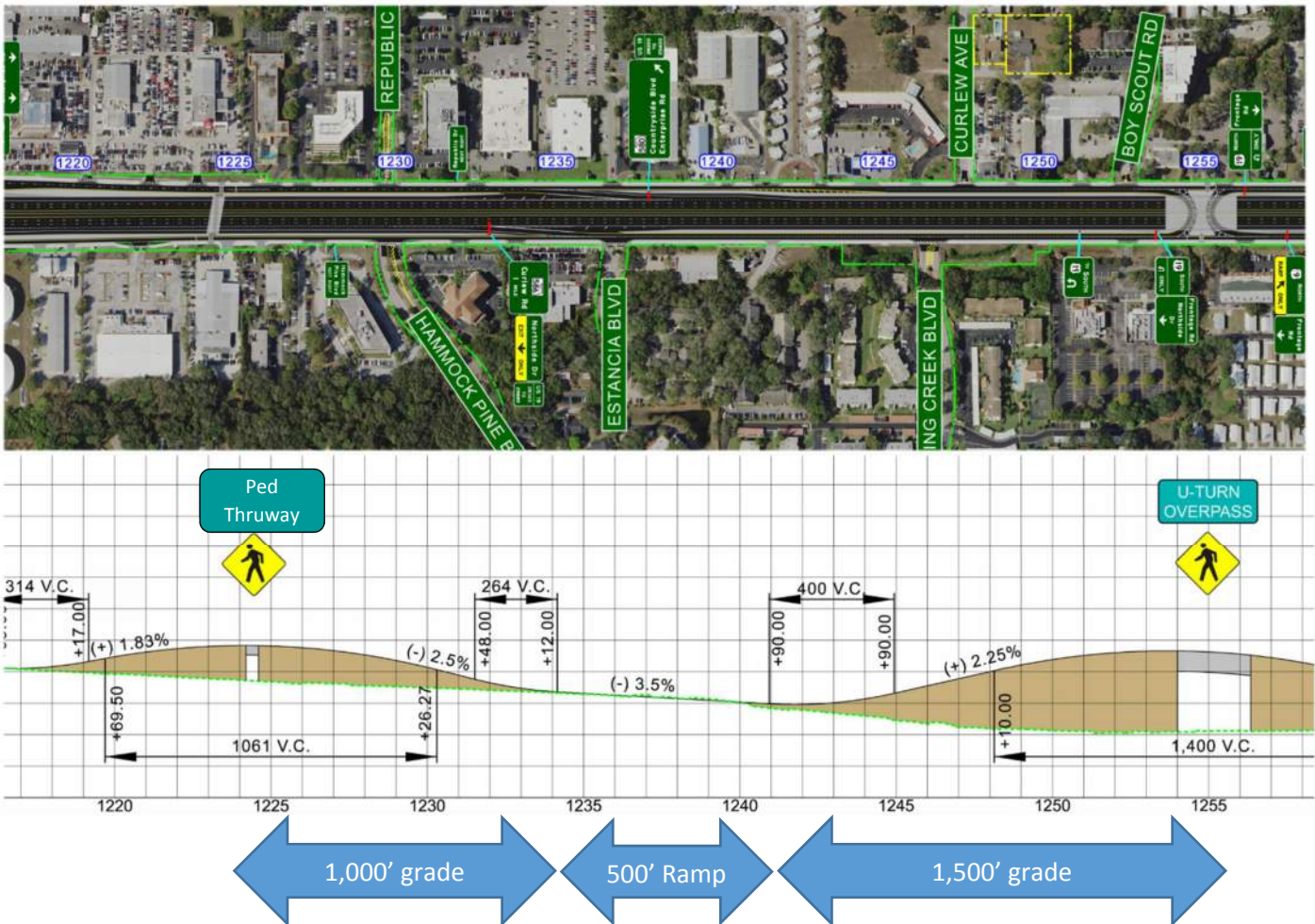


The locations of these crossings are shown on the graphic below. The pedestrian overpass at Northside Drive cannot be moved due to Right-of-Way constraints and the overpass at SR 580 is existing and cannot be moved. The distance between these points is 1.5 miles, which requires two pedestrian crossings to meet the Department’s ½ mile spacing goal. The pedestrian thruway is located approximately 2,500’ (0.47 mile) north of the existing overpass at SR 580 and 3,000’ (0.58 mile) south of the proposed U-Turn Overpass near Boy Scout Road which is approximately 2,150’ (0.41 mile) south of the proposed pedestrian overpass at Northside Drive. These distances are in-line with the Department’s ½ mile spacing goal for pedestrian crossing on US 19.

US 19 PEDESTRIAN CROSSING OPPORTUNITIES



The design for US 19 is controlled largely by the vertical profile as it transitions from elevated sections where pedestrian and vehicles can cross underneath to at-grade sections where slip ramps can connect mainline and frontage lanes. In general, it takes approximately 1,000' to 1,500' to transition from an overpass to an at-grade section of roadway and each ramp requires approximately 500' to transition from mainline to frontage (or vice-versa). See graphic below illustrating the profile and the vertical constraints.



If the Pedestrian Thruway was shifted north 450' to Republic Drive, there would not be sufficient distance to develop the ramps that connect northbound and southbound mainline with the frontage roads. The elimination of these ramps would reduce access to the frontage lanes and reduce the overall level of services of the system. Additionally, the U-Turn overpass cannot be shifted any further north because it is constrained by the location of the pedestrian overpass at Northside Drive and two pairs of ramps that are required to meet traffic and access needs south of Curlew Road.

In order to meet the goal of ½ mile spacing for pedestrian crossings of US 19, the only location for the pedestrian thruway is the location currently shown in the plans, 450' south of Republic Drive.

Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee – August 17, 2020

9. A.-B. BPAC Business



A. Florida Bicycle Association (FBA)

Vice Chair Becky Afonso, who is also the FBA Executive Director, will provide an update on FBA activities. Information on the FBA is available at floridabicycle.org.

B. Friends of the Pinellas Trail (formerly Pinellas Trails, Inc.)

A representative from Friends of the Pinellas Trail may take this opportunity to provide an update.

C. Virtual Bike Your City Update

Forward Pinellas will provide an update on the 2020 Virtual Bike Your City plan.

D. BPAC Yearly Topics/Issues Schedule

Forward Pinellas will discuss the idea to have a yearly topics/issue plan with the Committee.

E. Trail Users Concerns Regarding Power Lines

Forward Pinellas will ask for feedback from the Committee on this topic.

F. Virtual Tri-County BPAC Meeting 15 September 4PM

This year's Tri-County BPAC meeting will be held virtually on September 15, 2020 at 4p.m. A Zoom meeting invite will be sent out prior to the meeting date.

ATTACHMENT(S): None

Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee – August 17, 2020

10. Agency Reports



Updated information on the following programs or projects of interest to the BPAC will be provided at the meeting.

- Pinellas Trail Loop/Duke Energy Trail (North & South Gaps)
- Clearwater Bicycle Pedestrian Program
- Largo Bicycle Pedestrian Program
- St. Petersburg Bicycle Pedestrian Program
- Pinellas County Schools
- FDOT District 7
- Pinellas Trail Security Task Force (PTSTF)

Minutes of the July 14, 2020 meeting provided. The next meeting of the PTSTF is scheduled for October 13, 2020

ATTACHMENT(S): July 14, 2020 PTSTF meeting minutes

ACTION: None Required, Informational Item Only

PINELLAS TRAIL SECURITY TASK FORCE
MEETING Summary
July 14, 2020

The following is a summary of the July 14, 2020 Forward Pinellas - Pinellas Trail Security Task Force meeting, which was held virtually, via Zoom platform. The Security Task Force meets quarterly during the year.

IN ATTENDANCE

Officer Ron Wolfson, Chairman	St. Petersburg Police Department & Volunteer Coordinator
Chief Doyle	Belleair Police Department
Tony Boone	Tarpon Springs Police Department
Carol Gray	Pinellas County Parks and Conservation Resources Chief Ranger
Caroline Lanford	Pinellas County Planning
Larry Thomas	Pinellas County Animal Services
James Abaka	Pinellas County Risk Management
Lynn Abbott	Pinellas County EMS & Fire Administration
Joan Rice	Pinellas County Public Works Traffic Division
Scott Daniels	Friends of the Pinellas Trail
Bert Valery	Friends of the Pinellas Trail
Jim Wedlake	Pinellas Trail Auxiliary Ranger
Bill Romanski	Pinellas Trail Auxiliary Ranger
Phyllis Romanski	Pinellas Trail Auxiliary Ranger
Stuart Schwartzreich	Pinellas Trail Auxiliary Ranger
Steve Edwards	Guest
Robert Feigel	Forward Pinellas Staff
Al Bartolotta	Forward Pinellas Staff
Sarah Caper	Forward Pinellas Staff
Angela Ryan	Forward Pinellas Staff
Maria Kelly	Forward Pinellas Staff

1. CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Chairman Ronald Wolfson, St. Petersburg Police Officer, called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Ms. Angela Ryan reviewed the Zoom meeting guidelines and the attendees were announced by Ms. Maria Kelly, there were 20 attendees.

2. APPROVAL OF MEETING SUMMARY – January 14, 2020

The summary from the January 14, 2020 meeting was approved with no corrections.

3. PRESENTATION: SAFE STREETS PINELLAS

Mr. Sarah Caper, Forward Pinellas Staff, shared a presentation with the committee regarding launching the local Vision Zero initiative, "Safe Streets Pinellas". Vision Zero is a safety movement of communities across the world based on the idea that no one should be killed or seriously injured while using public roadways. Safe Streets Pinellas will bring people together to analyze collision data, test theories, conduct demonstration projects and develop an Action Plan that will help Pinellas County get to zero deaths on its roadways. A Safe Streets Pinellas kick-off event was originally scheduled for March but was postponed due to COVID-19. Plans are underway to develop engagement strategies that are appropriate for the current situation. Questions were taken and appropriately answered.

4. A. QUARTERLY REPORT FROM PINELLAS TRAIL PARK RANGER

Chief Ranger Carol Gray, Parks and Conservation Resources (PCR), reported several incidents related to the trail over the last two quarters. In January, there was a bike accident at Orange Street and Shore Drive whereby the biker veered off the pavement. The Palm Harbor Fire and Rescue Department and Sunstar responded. Right-of-way inspections were conducted. On February 21st, contractors were laying fiberoptic cable near Wellsprings Park. This was reported to Public Works. On March 3rd, a male biker was stung by a wasp which caused a crash near Bear Creek in St. Petersburg. The on-site ranger rendered first-aid. A wasp swarm was reported by a citizen near Gibbs High School. A ranger monitored it. There was a report of possible illegal burning at 116th and 124th Terrace in Largo on an adjacent property. The Largo PD responded. On March 24th, a subject was passed out on the trail at the 38th Avenue overpass and reported to the St. Petersburg Police Department. Activity in the Duke Energy right-of-way was reported to Developmental Review Services. Graffiti was seen on private property at the Belleair Forest Condo. The attending ranger attempted to notify the property owner to have it removed. On April 8th there was a possible fall at Stevenson's Creek Bridge. Clearwater Fire and Rescue and Sunstar responded. They transported a female subject. On April 14th potentially illegal dumping of vegetation was identified just north of the Tyrone Boulevard overpass. The adjacent property owner was advised that the debris had to be removed and was issued a copy of the County's tree trimming guidelines. On April 23rd, a citizen's complaint was received about transient activity behind their privacy fence at 400 Crystal Beach Avenue. A Trail Ranger responded. On April 28th, there was a report of a subject sleeping on the Trail at 20th Street in St. Petersburg. He was likely intoxicated. This incident was reported to the St. Petersburg Police Department. On May 14th there was a potential encroachment concern at 651 Alternate US 19 in Palm Harbor. This incident was reported to Public Works. On May 26th, possible illegal dumping was identified south of Walsingham Road. A park ranger identified discarded palm tree trimmings but was unable to determine where they came from. On May 29th, Trail rule signage was installed at Stevenson's Creek Bridge. The signage is intended to support the efforts of park rangers and Clearwater Police Department. Most recently, an electric type scooter caught fire and was abandoned in the area of Ulmerton Road near Taylor Park, leaving a large charred marking on the trail. Also, it was noted that the 911 markers are continually being added to the trail.

5. LAW ENFORCEMENT AND AGENCY REPORTS

A. Sheriff's Office

No one attended from the Pinellas County Sheriff's Department.

B. Belleair

Chief Rick Doyle from the Belleair Police Department shared Officer Daniels report of eight incidents on the Trail. The only significant one was a woman who was intoxicated and fell off her bike. Chief Doyle also responded to Bert Valery's comment regarding lack of information as to who is at fault for bike/ped accidents involving a motor vehicle. He said most of the time there are conflicting stories, and this makes it difficult to determine who is at fault. Most of the time it is left up to the parties involved to hash out, unless there is witness collaboration, in which case they can definitively fault someone.

C. Clearwater

Officer No one attended from the City of Clearwater Police Department.

D. Gulfport

No one attended from the Gulfport Police Department.

E. Largo

No one attended from the Largo Police Department, however a report was received by Forward Pinellas staff. Officer V. Tran reported 37 incidents, but there was no indication if any were trail related or if it was just the trail marker being referenced in the report.

F. St. Petersburg

No one attended from the St. Petersburg Police Department.

G. Tarpon Springs

Officer Tony Boone, from the Tarpon Springs Police Department, reported an assist fire call, assist citizen call for someone in a sleeping bag under the bridge at U.S.19 and the trail. A crash at MLK and the trail with no indication as to who was at fault. Officer Boone would like to get the bike officers and vehicle officers more involved with the violations along the trail for some better education and enforcement.

H. Animal Services

Mr. Larry Thomas, Pinellas County Animal Services, reported there were no reported calls for service on the Trail.

I. Public Safety Services

Ms. Lynn Abbott, Pinellas County EMS & Fire Administration, reported there were 121 calls that translated into 70 incidents where 20 of those were bike related, some involving intoxication. There were six motor vehicle/bike involved incidents. Calls have gone down since this time last year, probably due to COVID.

J. Pinellas County Risk Management

Mr. James Abaka, Pinellas County Risk Management, reported that Risk Management does a comprehensive trail inspection twice a year. Beginning at Ulmerton Road heading north to Tarpon Springs and south to Tropicana Field, they completed the first inspection on March 18th and 19th. Heading south first, using yellow spray paint, they identified cracks and hazards on the trail. Once identified, they notified Public Works. Under the Park Boulevard underpass, they identified a large area of bat droppings which has created a very strong smell in the area. Under the Tyrone Boulevard overpass, drainage issues were identified. Both incidents were turned over to Public Works. On the north section, old and new cracks were identified. The next inspection is scheduled for the fall in September or October.

K. Volunteer Patrol Programs and Updates

Chair Wolfson stated that the volunteers have not been active since March due to COVID and he hopes they resume soon based on what is happening. Chief Ranger Gray noted that the volunteer program has been suspended due to COVID for the safety of the volunteers. Bert Valery commented on the Auxiliary Rangers. The Rangers are outdoors in carts assisting with the Trail but keeping in the CDC guidelines.

6. AUTOMATIC TRAIL COUNTERS

Ms. Angela Ryan, Forward Pinellas staff, reviewed the counter reports for January through May 2020. She referred to the new year to date (YTD) information provided in the attached summary report. Also included with the summary report was information on the increased number of trail users since COVID began. There was a 134% increase of trail uses YTD in May.

7. REPORT ON TRAIL CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY

Ms. Joan Rice, Pinellas County Public Works (PCPW), shared an update on the Trail construction activity. One item not included on the report provided in the agenda was the intersection of Live Oak Street and Disston Avenue where the Trail will be closed for resurfacing. Regarding the North Loop Gap at Countryside, design plans are 100% complete and being reviewed. Construction will begin before the end of the year with completion expected in 2022. Regarding the South loop between Haynes Bayshore and 126th Avenue, some funding for design and all construction funding has been received. Design for this section will begin in 2022. Construction will begin in 2025. On the Ream Wilson Trail the bridge over Alligator Creek has been completed. The section south of Sunset Point Road will be completed by November 2020. The 71st Street trail connector is a City of St. Petersburg project with design scheduled in 2022 and construction scheduled in 2024. Regarding the trail connection from the San Martin Bridge to Gandy Boulevard, the PD&E Study is almost complete. The public hearing on the project had to be postponed due to COVID. Updates will be forthcoming. The Courtney Campbell Trail overpass is in design with construction planned for 2024. The Howard Frankland Bridge Trail construction will begin early and completion is scheduled for 2024. The Gandy Bridge Trail is in the PD&E stage. The Harn Boulevard/US 19 overpass is in design review with construction planned for 2021. Construction of the Bayway South Trail will be completed in 2021 with FDOT taking the trail all the way to the toll plaza. The Stevens Avenue to Race Track Road section of the Oldsmar Trail will be under construction by the end of the year. The section between Hayes Road and Stevens Avenue has been postponed.

8. REPORT ON TRAIL COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES

Ms. Ryan shared information on the Bike Your City event that was postponed. It will be scheduled in October as a virtual event. More information to come. Mr. Scott Daniels provided information regarding the 30th Anniversary of the Pinellas Trail, which was in the process of being planned for December 5, 2020. However due to the corona virus, the gathering cannot take place. Friends of Pinellas Trail has been working with Pinellas County to be sure the word gets out about the 30 year trail anniversary.

9. OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Ryan shared a letter from a citizen and frequent user of the Pinellas Trail, regarding the reckless behavior of bicycle groups on the Pinellas Trail and at the Fred Howard Park. BPACS and Security Task Forces are encouraged to remind bicyclists of the importance of obeying the rules of the road and report any misconduct.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Wolfson adjourned the meeting at 10:19 a.m. The next PTSTF meeting is scheduled for October 13, 2020.

A. SPOTLight Emphasis Areas Update

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

B. Membership

There is currently one vacancy on the BPAC membership list for a Pinellas County Health Department representative. There are no citizen vacancies.

ATTACHMENT: BPAC Membership List

ACTION: None Required, Informational Item Only

C. Correspondence, Publications, Articles of Interest

American Trails – Safe Management of Power Line Trails – June 2003

NYT – I’ve Seen a Future Without Cars and It’s Amazing – July 2020

Rails to Trails – Utilities: Types of Trail and Utility Co-Use – July 2020

Pinellas Trail Usage Report – May 2020

Pinellas Trail Usage Report – June 2020

Pinellas County Fatalities Report – June 2020

D. Suggestions for Future Agenda Topics

This item is provided to allow Committee members to suggest topics for future BPAC agendas.

E. Other

If any member has other business to discuss, they may address it under this item.

BICYCLE PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP LIST**Voting****St. Petersburg Area (St. Pete/Gulfport/So Pasadena/Tierra Verde)**

1. Mike Milvain (06/13/18)
2. Kimberly Cooper (10/13/99) (reappointed 5/9/18)
3. Charles Johnson (06/14/17)

Clearwater Area

4. Chip Haynes (04/13/11)
5. Robert Yunk (02/09/05)
6. Win Dermody (03/12/14)

Dunedin Area

7. Charles Martin (04/08/09)

Pinellas Park and Mid-County

8. Ronald Rasmussen (12/13/06)
9. Byron Virgil Hall, Jr., (12/13/06)

Largo Area

10. Daniel Alejandro (10/12/16)
11. Georgia Wildrick (08/16/06)

North County Area (Tarpon Springs/Palm Harbor/Ozona/Oldsmar/Safety Harbor)

12. David Feller (07/11/18)
13. Becky Afonso (Vice Chair) (10/08/14)

At Large Area

14. Paul Kurtz (12/11/13)
15. Mike Siebel (03/14/12)
16. Brian Smith (Chairman) (12/12/12)
17. Lynn Bosco (11/14/12)
18. Steve Lasky (11/14/12)
19. Ed Hawkes (11/18/98)
20. Annette Sala (03/12/14)

Seminole Area

21. Jim Wedlake (05/12/10)

Beach Communities

22. Bert Valery (10/1983-10/1998) (reappointed 07/10/02)
23. Alan Johnson (05/09/18)

Technical Support

1. County Traffic Department (Joan Rice – representative; Gina Harvey and Casey Morse – alternates)
2. Pinellas County Planning Department (Caroline Lanford – representative)
3. PSTA (Jacob Labutka – representative; Heather Sobush and Reid Powers – alternates)
4. City of Clearwater (Lauren Matzke - representative)
5. City of St. Petersburg (Lucas Cruse – representative; Cheryl Stacks - alternate)
6. City of Largo (Rick Perez – representative; Diane Friel - alternate)
7. City of Oldsmar (Felicia Donnelly – representative)
8. City of Pinellas Park (Derek Reeves – representative)
9. Pinellas County School System (Joseph Camera- representative, Autumn Westermann- alternate)
10. Pinellas County Health Department (Vacant – representative)
11. Friends of the Pinellas Trails (Scott Daniels – representative)
12. CUTR (Julie Bond - representative)

Sheriff's Office /Police/Law Enforcement Representatives

1. Pinellas Park Police Dept.
2. St Petersburg Police Dept.
3. Largo Police Dept.
4. Sheriff's Office – Deputy Eric Gibson
5. Clearwater Police Dept.

Non-Voting Technical Support

13. FDOT (Alex Henry - representative)
14. County Parks and Conservation Resources (Lyle Fowler – representative; Spencer Curtis – alternate)

*Dates signify appointment

American Trails

Safe Management of Power Line Trails

An update on planning and managing trails along power lines.

Trails are often built in utility corridors of all kinds, from underground pipelines to electric power lines overhead. Over the years some articles have raised concerns, apparently unfounded, about electromagnetic fields (EMF) emanating from power lines. But other factors are more important when managing utility line trails.

by Gary Holisko (<https://www.americantrails.org/presenters-and-authors/gary-holisko>), Senior Environmental Coordinator, BC Hydro Engineering

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More

From an operational perspective, EMF is not much of an issue for trail activities. Use is transient, so exposure is limited. What people react to is what they notice. Working for an electric utility, and being a supporter of public uses on powerline rights of way, I deal with a number of concerns and questions about high voltage lines and people. I see three kinds of concerns expressed about public use of powerline rights of way:

Safety

First and foremost, electricity can be hazardous to your health if you come into direct contact with it! Do not go near downed power lines! If you are near lines which have come down, do NOT walk away! Shuffle! 'Step potential' can make you part of the circuit. Because the voltage decreases in an outward direction from where the wire contacts the ground, it means the voltage can be higher at one foot, and lower at your other foot if they are separated (by walking). It is the difference in voltage that creates the 'step potential' and will cause a circuit to be formed using your body which can be fatal. Therefore, either stay put until the power is turned off, or shuffle away. Stay at least 10 metres (33 ft) away from downed lines.



()

In our part of the world, we have many-fast growing, tall trees that tend to get knocked over during high winds and storms. They also knock down power lines. (So do drunk drivers, but that's another story.) Because transmission lines carry large volumes of power, rights of way are kept clear of tall growing vegetation both to avoid power outages, prevent forest fires and avoid possible electrocutions (sap in trees is an excellent conductor).

Some people who are given better access to transmission towers via trails, etc. have this peculiar idea they should therefore climb them! Although rare (and obviously stupid!), it causes concern to the extent that some authorities require fencing be put around the base of the tower.

Electro magnetic fields

Over 25 years of research and hundreds of millions of research dollars have not proven a direct connection between magnetic fields and harmful health effects, but the research continues. There are several government web links which can update you on the current state of knowledge.

Induction from the power lines

BC Hydro and municipal parks people receive more inquiries on this subject than anything else related to public use along our high voltage transmission line rights of way. Touching a grounded metal object (e.g. a sign) can cause a person (who is not grounded, unless they are walking bare foot) to create a small shock like walking across a carpet and touching a door knob. Vehicles parked (the tires insulate the vehicle) on the right of way can also acquire a small electric charge. Longer vehicles (trucks, tractor trailers) will attract a larger charge, and of course a larger shock. This can be an important consideration for horse owners. One suggestion is to create a connection to ground, for example by a chain.

We call these 'nuisance shocks' because while they are below the level to be considered a safety issue, they are none the less annoying.

Of the three, EMF gets the headlines, but it is really the other two which we tend to deal with on an operational basis, in terms of both providing the protection to the public and managing complaints.

A related concern is the impact of powerlines on property values. A recent Wisconsin EIS suggested impacts from zero to 14 percent. Two studies (Ignelzi & Priestley, 1992, California, and Hamilton & Schwann, 1995, British Columbia) found that where the rights of way were used for public uses that property values either were not affected or in fact enhanced by having park or open space adjacent.

Published June 01, 2003

About the Author

- Gary Holisko (<https://www.americantrails.org/presenters-and-authors/gary-holisko>)

Diversity

American Trails advances the development of diverse, high quality trails and greenways for the benefit of people and communities.

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I've Seen a Future Without Cars, and It's Amazing

Why do American cities waste so much space on cars?



By **Farhad Manjoo**

Opinion Columnist

July 9, 2020

As coronavirus lockdowns crept across the globe this winter and spring, an unusual sound fell over the world's metropolises: the hush of streets that were suddenly, blessedly free of cars. City dwellers reported hearing bird song, wind and the rustling of leaves. (Along with, in New York City, the intermittent screams of sirens.)

You could smell the absence of cars, too. From New York to Los Angeles to New Delhi, air pollution plummeted, and the soupy, exhaust-choked haze over the world's dirtiest cities lifted to reveal brilliant blue skies.

Cars took a break from killing people, too. About 10 pedestrians die on New York City's streets in an ordinary month. Under lockdown, the city went a record two months without a single pedestrian fatality. In California, vehicle collisions plummeted 50 percent, reducing accidents resulting in injuries or death by about 6,000 per month.

As the roads became freer of cars, they grew full of possibility. Rollerblading and skateboarding have come back into fashion. Sales of bicycles and electric bikes have skyrocketed.

But there is a catch: Cities are beginning to cautiously open back up again, and people are wondering how they're going to get in to work. Many are worried about the spread of the virus on public transit. Are cars our only option? How will we find space for all of them?

In much of Manhattan, the average speed of traffic before the pandemic had fallen to 7 miles per hour. In Midtown, it was less than 5 m.p.h. That's only slightly faster than walking and slower than riding a bike. Will traffic soon be worse than ever?

Not if we choose another path.

Rather than stumble back into car dependency, cities can begin to undo their worst mistake: giving up so much of their land to the automobile.

The pandemic should not stop us. There is little evidence that public transit is responsible for the spread of the coronavirus in New York or elsewhere; some cities with heavily used transit systems, including Hong Kong, have been able to avoid terrible tolls from the virus.

If riders wear face masks — and if there are enough subway cars, buses, bike lanes and pedestrian paths for people to avoid intense overcrowding — transit might be no less safe than cars, in terms of the risk of the spread of disease. In all other measures of safety, transit is far safer than cars.

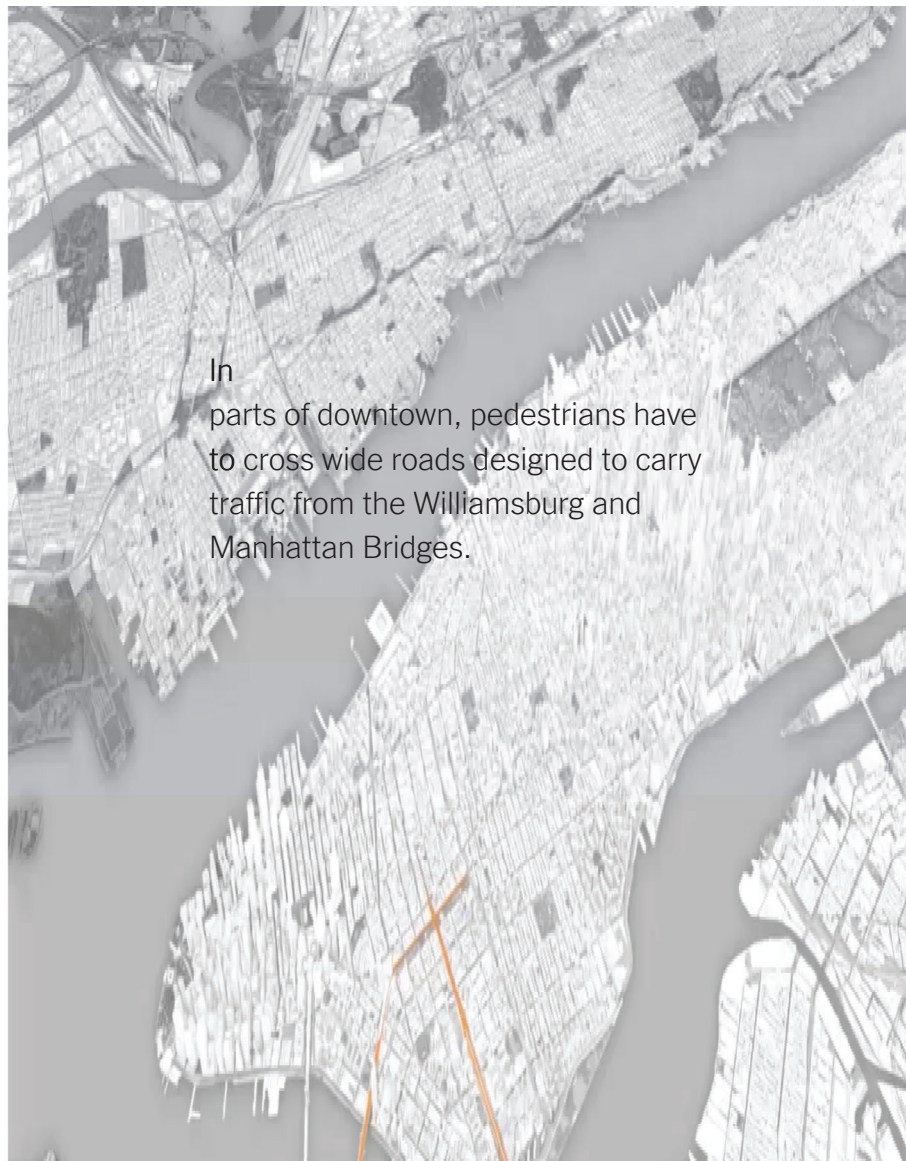
What's that you say? There *aren't* enough buses in your city to avoid overcrowding, and they're too slow, anyway? Pedestrian space is *already* hard to find? Well, right. That's car dependency. And it's exactly why cities need to plan for a future of fewer cars, a future in which owning an automobile, even an electric one, is neither the only way nor the best way to get around town.

A few weeks ago, I began talking to Vishaan Chakrabarti, a former New York City urban-planning official and the founder of Practice for Architecture and Urbanism, a Manhattan-based architecture firm. Like other urbanists, Chakrabarti believes that the pandemic has created an opportunity for New York and other cities to reduce their reliance on cars.

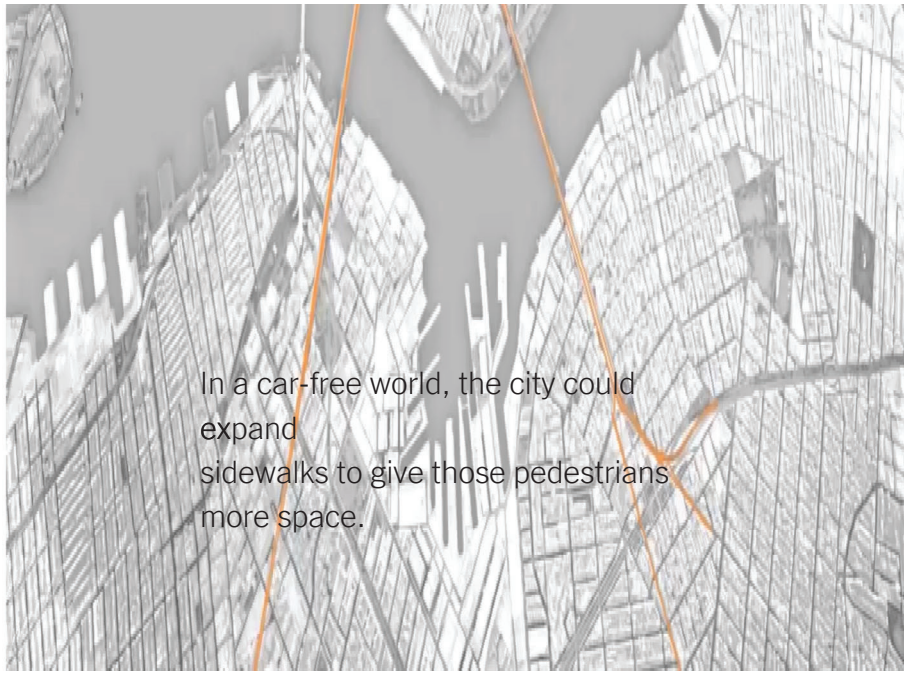
Manhattan, already one of the most car-free places in the country, is the best place to start. Chakrabarti's firm, known as PAU, had been working on an intricate proposal to show what it might look and feel like to live in a city liberated from cars, to show how much better life in New York might be with one simple change: Most cars would be banished from Manhattan.

PAU's proposal would not ban all motor vehicles, just privately owned cars. There would still be delivery trucks, paratransit, emergency vehicles, and taxicabs and rideshare cars, if you needed them.

But private cars account for so many of Manhattan's vehicles that banning them would instantly improve life for just about everyone who lives and works in New York.



In parts of downtown, pedestrians have to cross wide roads designed to carry traffic from the Williamsburg and Manhattan Bridges.



In a car-free world, the city could expand sidewalks to give those pedestrians more space.

Two-way bike lanes could replace car lanes in both directions. A concrete barrier would protect bikers.

Dedicated bus lanes, free of car traffic, would efficiently shuttle people in and out of Manhattan and relieve congestion on

You already know what's terrible about cars: They're dirty. They're dangerous. They're expensive to buy and maintain, and environmentally hazardous to produce and operate. Automobiles kill around 90,000 Americans every year — about 40,000 in car accidents, and an estimated 50,000 more from long-term exposure to air pollution emitted by cars.

But Chakrabarti is among a group of urbanists who've been calling attention to a less-discussed problem with cars. Automobiles are not just dangerous and bad for the environment; they are also profoundly wasteful of the land around us, taking up way too much physical space to transport too few people. It's geometry.

In most American cities, wherever you look, you will see a landscape constructed primarily for the movement and storage of automobiles, not for the enjoyment of people: endless wide boulevards and freeways for cars to move swiftly; each road lined with parking spaces for cars at rest; retail establishments ringed with spots for cars; houses built around garages for cars; and a gas station, for cars to feed, on every other corner.

In the most car-dependent cities, the amount of space devoted to automobiles reaches truly ridiculous levels. In Los Angeles, for instance, land for parking exceeds the entire land area of Manhattan, enough space to house almost a million more people at Los Angeles's prevailing density.

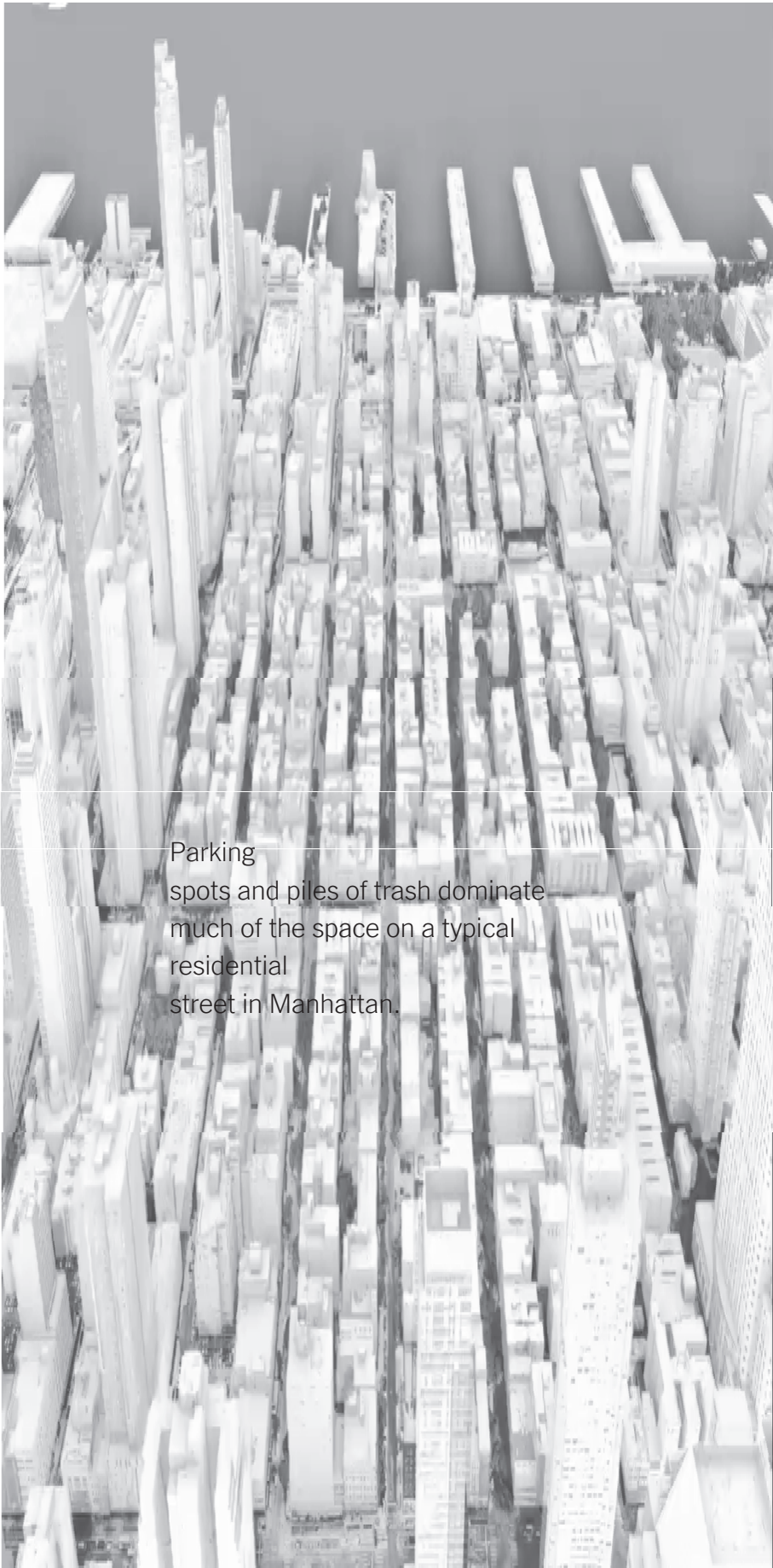
This isn't a big deal in the parts of America where space is seemingly endless. But in the most populated cities, physical space is just about the most precious resource there is. The land value of Manhattan alone is estimated to top \$1.7 trillion. Why are we giving so much of it to cars?

Without cars, Manhattan's streets could give priority to more equitable and accessible ways of getting around, including an extensive system of bike "superhighways" and bus rapid transit — a bus system with dedicated lanes in the roadway, creating a service that approaches the capacity, speed and efficiency of the subway, at a fraction of the cost.

Eliminating most cars in Manhattan would also significantly clean up the air for the entire region. It would free up space for new housing and create hundreds of acres of new parks and pedestrian promenades, improving the fundamental health, beauty and livability of America's largest metropolis.

There have been several proposals to ban cars in Manhattan, and the city has been working on a system to impose a toll on cars south of 60th Street. (This congestion-pricing project was scheduled to start early next year, but it has been delayed by the pandemic.)

What distinguishes PAU's proposal is its visual appeal. Chakrabarti says his firm aimed to show, at a street level, how much better life without cars might be for most New Yorkers. "This is an amazing way to live," he said.



Parking spots and piles of trash dominate much of the space on a typical residential street in Manhattan.

Any proposal to ban cars had better look amazing, because in America, the automobile has never been just a way of getting from A to B. More than a century of car ads and a good deal of hagiographic cultural propaganda has done a job on a lot of us. For many Americans, cars are not just a consumer product but a rite of passage, a symbol of national pride, and an expression of liberty nearly as fundamental as anything promised in the Bill of Rights.

I know, because I, too, have long loved cars. I love them viscerally, the way a dog loves a bone, or an Instagrammer loves a sunset, and I am as surprised as anyone to be calling for their eradication from cities.

As a teenager growing up in Southern California, America's center of car culture, I spent endless hours lusting after the vehicles in car magazines; these days my appetites are whetted digitally, with ridiculously detailed car-review videos on YouTube. My current ride is a car that only European automobile nerds would appreciate: an apple-red Volkswagen Golf R, a "hot hatch" that does 0 to 60 in under five environmentally disastrous seconds, which I bought only because driving it very fast touched me in unmentionable places.

Yet when I got my speedy ride, I quickly realized it was kind of pointless, because most of the time there's too much traffic where I live to go any faster than a golf cart. This is the drab reality of driving you'll never see in car ads — a daily, rage-inducing grind of traffic, parking and shelling out to fill up; an option that many people choose not for any love affair with cars, but often because driving is the least-inconvenient way of getting around where they live and work.

I was receptive to Chakrabarti's proposal because in the last few years, I've grown increasingly disillusioned about America's tolerance for the public health and environmental damage caused by cars, not to mention the frustrations of commuting by car. And I'm losing hope that the car industry will be able to fix the damage anytime soon.

I've spent much of the last decade watching Silicon Valley take on that industry, and I once had great expectations that techies would soon make cars substantially cleaner, safer, more efficient, more convenient and cheaper to operate.

But many of their innovations are turning into a bust — or, at the very least, are not making enough of a difference. Uber and Lyft once promised to reduce traffic through car-pooling. In fact, ride-hailing services have greatly worsened traffic in many big cities.

Tesla turned the electric car into a mainstream object of lust — but most of the rest of the auto industry is struggling to get consumers to switch over from gas, so it could take 15 years or more to electrify America's entire fleet. The largest automakers still make most of their profits from dangerous, gas-guzzling S.U.V.s that will be on the roads for years to come, and automakers continue to mount aggressive legal and lobbying campaigns against mileage standards.

Electric cars are no environmental panacea — they are more efficient than gas-powered cars, but they still consume a lot of resources to produce, and if they result in people driving more, they may not greatly reduce overall emissions.

Then there's the accident-free, self-driving car — the auto industry's holy grail. Don't hold your breath: The dream is proving to be far trickier than many carmakers imagined, and cars will remain reliably deadly for years to come.

When he wanted to underscore the unexpected nature of invention, Steve Jobs was fond of using a version of a line widely attributed to Henry Ford: "If I'd asked customers what they wanted, they would have told me, 'A faster horse!'" Silicon Valley's collective quest for a better car has begun to look similarly narrow: What if Ubers and Teslas are just faster horses — and what if the real way to revolutionize transportation is to think beyond the car entirely?

A more straightforward campaign against the automobile has been winning results around the world. This is a movement by urban planners, community groups and far-thinking elected officials to reduce the amount of land cars occupy.

The effort has resulted in the wresting of major tracts of land away from cars in some of the world's largest cities. Late in Michael Bloomberg's tenure as mayor, Janette Sadik-Khan, the transportation commissioner, pedestrianized large sections of New York City, including Times Square, and created hundreds of miles of new bike lanes. Last year, the city banned cars from part of 14th Street in Manhattan, resulting in faster crosstown bus service.

Market Street in San Francisco has been turned into a car-free promenade. And in Paris, Mayor Anne Hidalgo has made taking away land from cars the centerpiece of her politics, and it's working. Traffic in Paris has fallen by 40 percent in the last decade; last month, Hidalgo handily won re-election.

Manhattan reimaged

How communities might redesign various types of streets.

Residential streets like 46th Street in Hell's Kitchen

Mid-block pedestrian crossing

It's good urban policy, but it's also a matter of equity and justice. Chakrabarti often refers to a concept he calls "street equity."

Imagine you'd like to transport 50 people from one end of Manhattan to the other. If you were to send them by bus, you could stuff everyone in a single bus car — taking up around 450 square feet of road space, about the size of a tiny studio apartment. But if you were going to send 50 people by automobile, you'd need a lot more road. For 50 people, each driving alone, you'd need 2,750 square feet of space — basically a McMansion of roadway to transport 50 fat cats.

What does it take to move 50 people?

50 cars

55 square feet per person

One bus

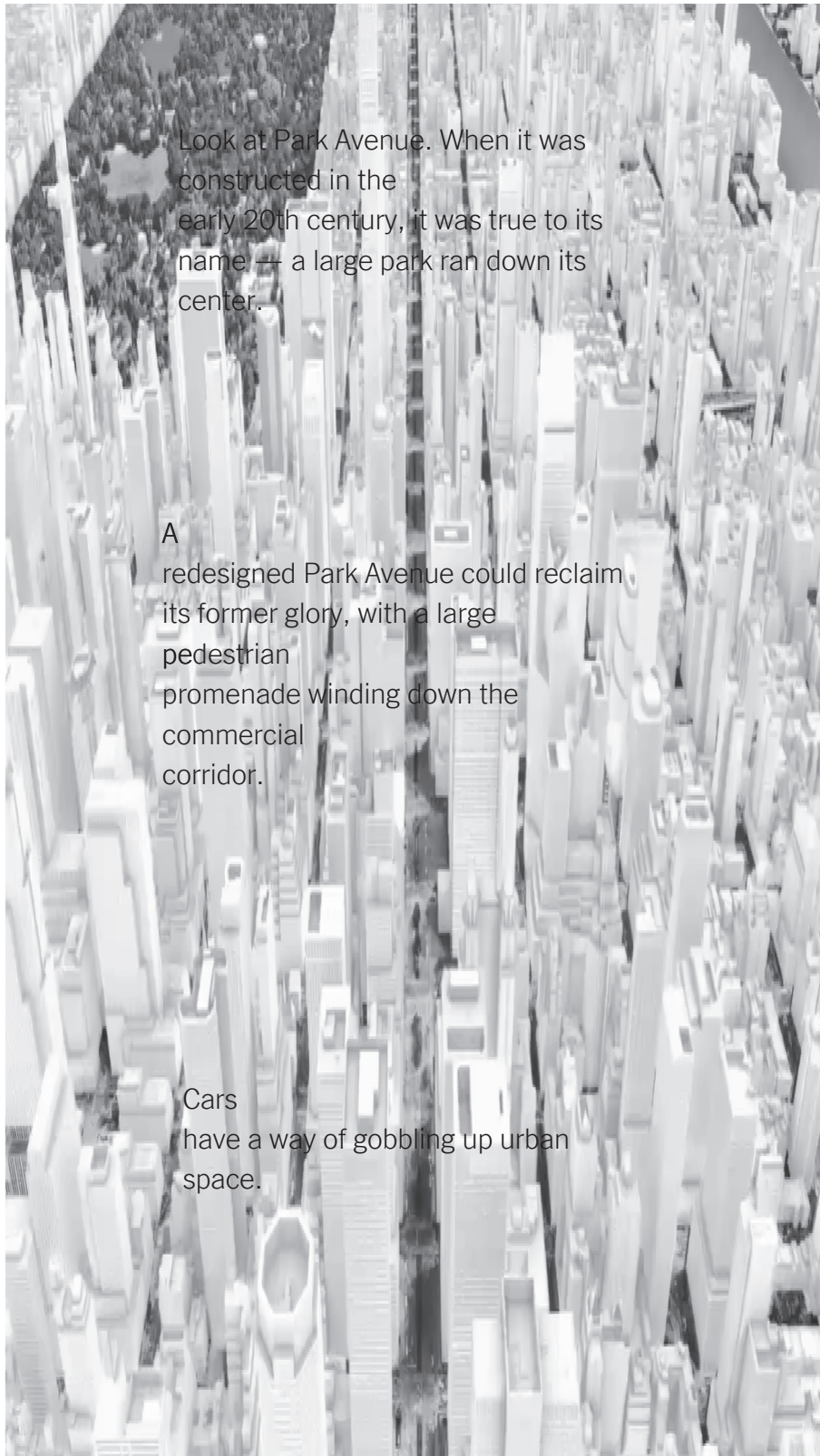
9 square feet per person

50 bicycles

15 square feet per person

And cars take up space even while they're not in use. They need to be parked, which consumes yet more space on the sides of streets or in garages. Cars take up a lot of space even when they're just *looking* for parking.

Add it all up and you get a huge number: In addition to the 2,450 acres of roadway in Manhattan, nearly 1,000 more acres — an area about the size of Central Park — is occupied by parking garages, gas stations, carwashes, car dealerships and auto repair shops. There is three times more roadway for cars on Manhattan as there is for bikes. There's more road for cars than there is sidewalk for pedestrians.



Look at Park Avenue. When it was constructed in the early 20th century, it was true to its name → a large park ran down its center.

A redesigned Park Avenue could reclaim its former glory, with a large pedestrian promenade winding down the commercial corridor.

Cars have a way of gobbling up urban space.

The amount of space devoted to cars in Manhattan is not just wasteful, but, in a deeper sense, also unfair to the millions of New Yorkers who have no need for cars.

More than half of the city's households do not own a car, and of those who do, most do not use them for commuting. Of the 1.6 million commuters who come into Manhattan every weekday (or, who did, before the virus), more than 80 percent make the trip via public transit, mostly trains and buses, or by walking or biking. Only around 12 percent of daily commuters get to the island by car.

"It really does feel like there is a silent majority that doesn't get any real say in how the public space is used," Chakrabarti told me.

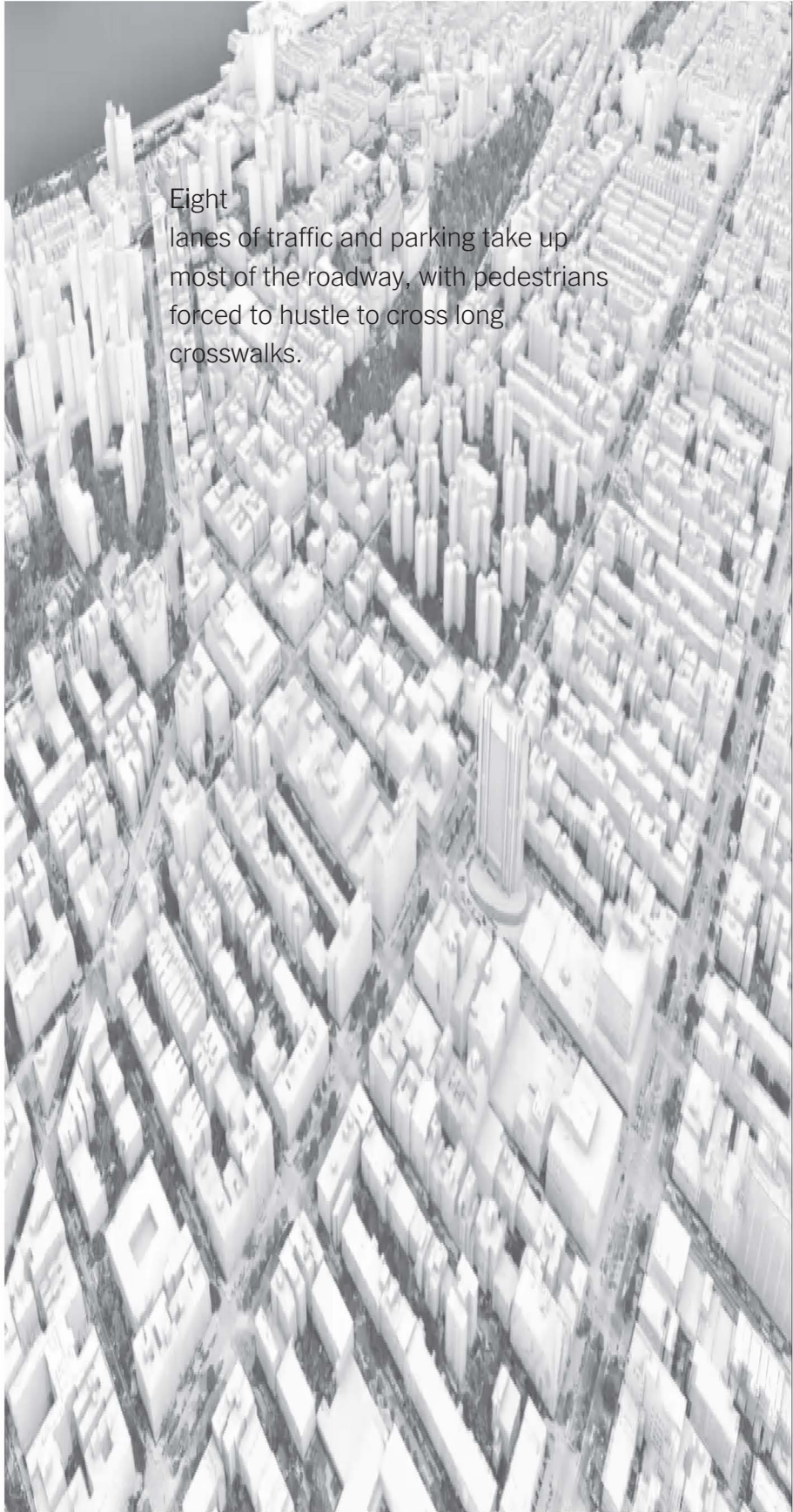
New York's drivers are essentially being given enormous tracts of land for their own pleasure and convenience. To add to the overall misery of the situation, though, even the drivers are not especially happy about the whole deal, because despite all the roadway they've been given, they're still stuck in gridlock.

And they most likely will be forever, because cars are not just greedy for physical space, they're insatiable. There is even a term for the phenomenon: "induced demand," which holds that the more land you give to cars, the more attractive driving becomes, leading to more traffic, leading to more roads — an unwinnable cycle that ends with every inch of our cities paved over.

In that sense, even drivers should have an interest in fostering alternatives to driving.

"The one thing we know for sure, because we understand geometry, is that if everyone drives, nobody moves," Brent Toderian, the former chief planner for the city of Vancouver, British Columbia, told me. Even if you're a committed daily driver, "it's in your best interest for walking, biking and public transit to be as attractive as possible for everyone else — because that means you're going to be able to drive easier."

Indeed, PAU's plan bears this out. Banning private cars on Manhattan would reduce traffic by as much as 20 percent on routes that start and end within New York's other boroughs — that is, in places where cars would still be allowed — according to an analysis by traffic engineers at Buro Happold, a consulting firm that studied PAU's plan.



Eight lanes of traffic and parking take up most of the roadway, with pedestrians forced to hustle to cross long crosswalks.

How would people get around in a Manhattan without private cars?

Mostly on foot, by bus or by subway; often on a bicycle, e-bike, scooter, or some future light, battery-powered “micromobility” device (things like one-wheeled, self-balancing skateboards); and sometimes, in a pinch, in a taxi or Uber.

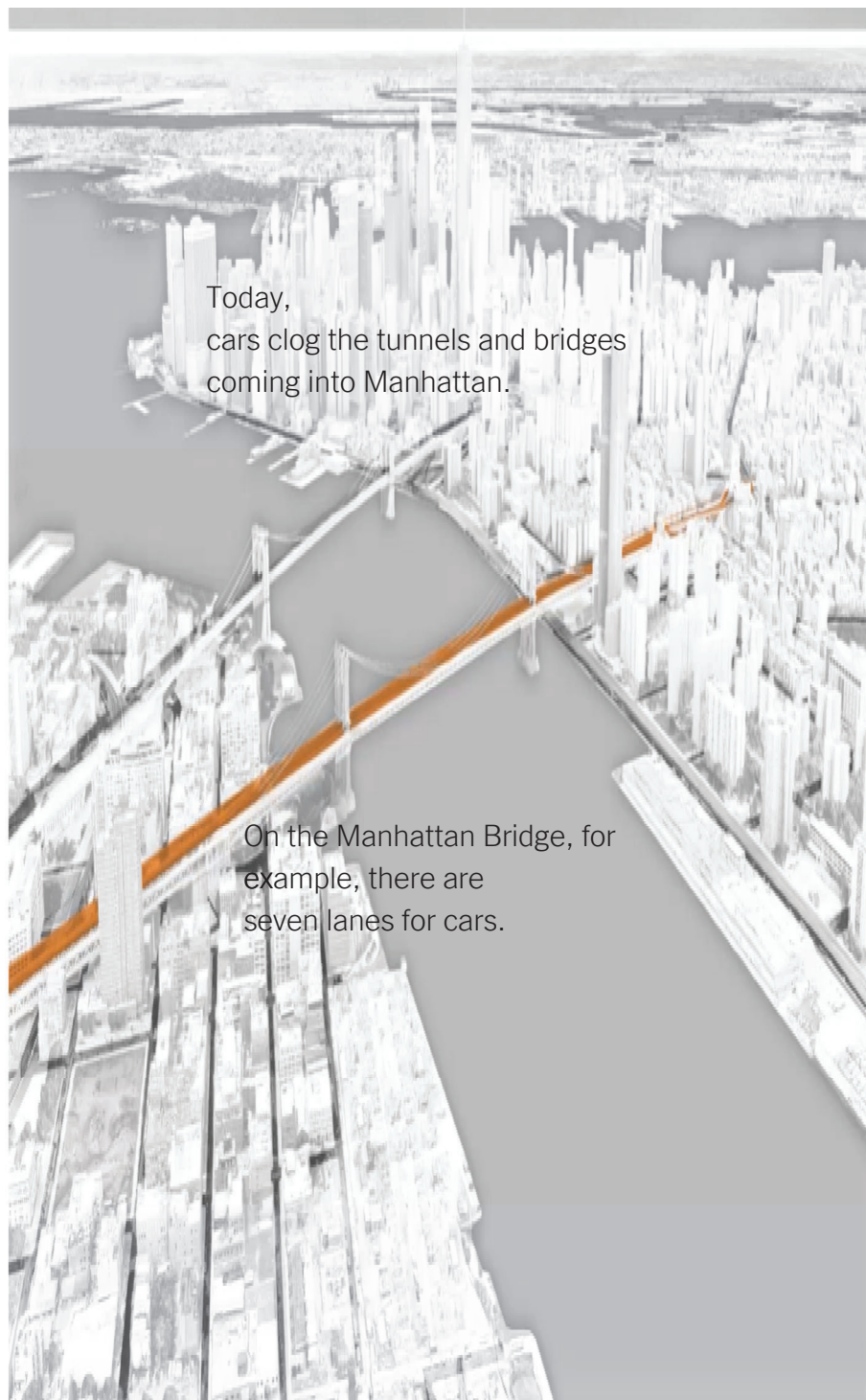
Some of these may not sound like your cup of tea. Buses are slow, bicycles are dangerous, and you wouldn't be caught dead on a scooter, let alone a one-wheeled skateboard. But that's only because you're imagining these other ways of getting around as they exist today, in the world of cars.

Cars make every other form of transportation a little bit terrible. The absence of cars, then, exerts its own kind of magic — take private cars away, and every other way of getting around gets much better.

Under PAU's plan, road traffic in a car-free Manhattan would fall by about 60 percent. The absence of cars would allow pedestrians, buses and bikes to race across New York at unheard-of speeds. Today, a bus trip from uptown to downtown — for instance, from Harlem to City Hall — takes an hour and 48 minutes. With the sort of rapid bus system PAU imagines, and without cars in the way, the same trek would take 35 minutes.

The plan wouldn't improve just Manhattan. A ban on private cars on the island would ripple across the Hudson, altering transportation and livability across the wider metropolitan region.

Note: Assuming a traffic reduction of 60 percent in Manhattan and 8 percent outside of the borough. Source: Practice for Architecture and Urbanism, estimates from Buro Happold



Today,
cars clog the tunnels and bridges
coming into Manhattan.

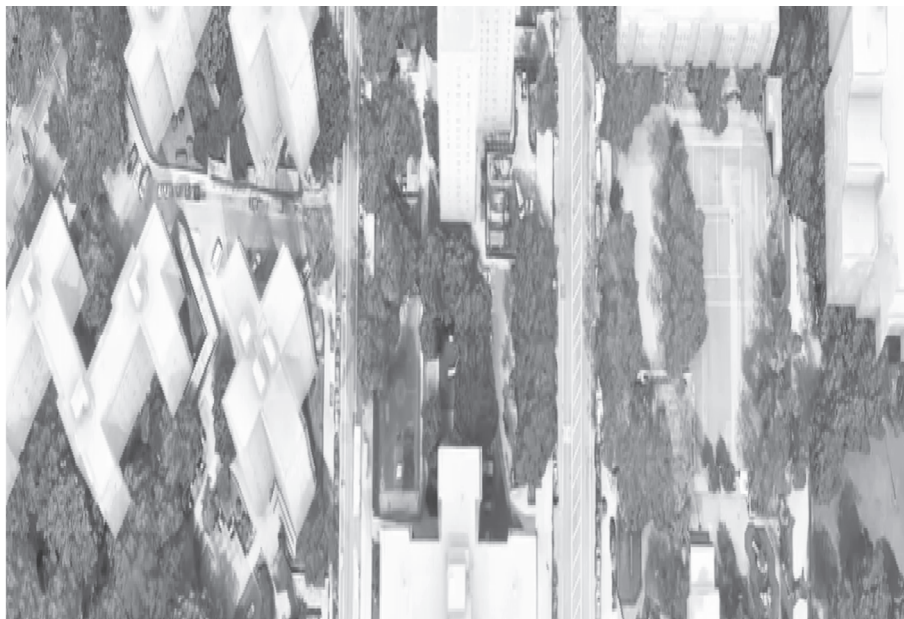
On the Manhattan Bridge, for
example, there are
seven lanes for cars.

A new layout would replace four of
them with bus
lanes, paths for cyclists and a
pedestrian promenade. Three lanes
would go to
taxis and ride-share vehicles. The
middle lane of traffic would switch

Source: Practice for Architecture and Urbanism

The public health effects would ripple across the region, too. The most polluted air in New York hangs over the Bronx and Queens, in communities largely populated by immigrants and people of color. New York City has some of the dirtiest air in the nation, estimated to cause 3,000 premature deaths annually.

Among other ailments, long-term exposure to polluted air is thought to increase the deadliness of Covid-19. Much of the unhealthy air is caused by traffic sitting idle on the roads leading to Manhattan. Buro Happold estimates that PAU's plan would lead to a 50 percent reduction in toxic air pollution in Manhattan, and a 20 percent reduction in the other boroughs.





It's
easy to forget that Manhattan is an
island because roads block the view of
the
waterfront.

An expanded greenway would connect
with the one on
the island's west side, making it easier
for people to bike, run and walk
around
Manhattan's
perimeter.

Source: Practice for Architecture and Urbanism

Given how completely automobiles rule most cities, calling for their outright banishment can sound almost ludicrous. (We can't even get some people to agree to wear masks to stop the spread of a devastating pandemic.)

Instead of fighting a war on cars, Toderian told me, urbanists should fight a war on car *dependency* — on cities that leave residents with few choices other than cars. Alleviating car dependency can improve commutes for everyone in a city.

Chakrabarti acknowledges the political risks of trying to ban private cars. But Manhattan, he points out, is a special place. With a population that is already quite used to getting along without cars, the island is just about the only place in the country where you could even consider calling for the banishment of cars. Manhattan could be a place for all of America to witness how reducing an urban area's reliance on cars can lead to a better life.

At the moment, many of the most intractable challenges faced by America's urban centers stem from the same cause — a lack of accessible physical space. We live in a time of epidemic homelessness. There's a national housing affordability crisis caused by an extreme shortage of places to live. And now there's a contagion that thrives on indoor overcrowding.

Given these threats, how can American cities continue to justify wasting such enormous tracts of land on death machines?

Animations, illustrations and source material provided by Practice for Architecture and Urbanism with contributions from Vishaan Chakrabarti, Ruchika Modi, Julia Lewis, Skylar Bisom-Rapp, Junxi Wu, George Distefano and Mateo Fernández-Muro. Buro Happold provided additional source material with contributions from Francesco Cerroni, Alice Shay and Gabriel Warshaw. Satellite imagery provided by Google.

Produced by Gus Wezerek.

Office Hours With Farhad Manjoo

Farhad wants to chat with readers on the phone. If you're interested in talking to a New York Times columnist about anything that's on your mind, please fill out this form. Farhad will select a few readers to call.

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Correction: July 12, 2020

An earlier version of this article misstated the modes of transport used by commuters to Manhattan. More than 80 percent of them make the trip via public transit or by walking or biking, not by public transit only.

Farhad Manjoo became an opinion columnist for The Times in 2018. Before that, they wrote the State of the Art column. They are the author of "True Enough: Learning to Live in a Post-Fact Society."

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A version of this article appears in print on

July 12, 2020

, Section SR, Page 4 of the New York edition with the headline: I've Seen A Future Without Cars, And It's Amazing



[Home](#) > [Build Trails](#) > [Trail-Building Toolbox](#) > [Basics](#) > Utilities

Utilities



Utility lines on the north end of the Suncoast Trail. — Photo CC [Daniel Oines](https://www.flickr.com/photos/dno1967b/6717674211/) via Flickr

Sharing a trail corridor with a utility is not only an efficient use of space, but it also has the potential to defray the costs associated with trail development, among many other advantages. Many types of utilities, including water, sewer, natural gas, electric and fiber optic, can have their lines buried or encased near or beneath a trail, while telecommunications, cable and electric utilities can run above a corridor using air rights. Of course, utility and recreational trail co-use is not without its complications, specifically when faced with the unique needs of utility companies and the potential concerns of adjacent landowners and trail users. However, with properly negotiated maintenance and land agreements, utilities can have a minimal effect—and even offer a host of benefits—on the trail, its neighbors and its users.

Types of Trail and Utility Co-Use

Preexisting Utility Easement with Railroad

It is not uncommon for utility companies to negotiate easements with railroads while the line is still active—well before rail-trail plans are developed. Utility companies prefer rail corridors for the transport or transmission of their utility for the same reason they prefer rail-trails: the uninterrupted corridors are the ideal conduit for linear energy and telecommunications infrastructure. When rail service ceases, the utility remains, but the original easement may be

transferred to the organization that acquires the corridor for trail use through [railbanking](#) ([/build-trails/trail-building-toolbox/funding/](#)) or another method. Sometimes trail development is even an explicit allowable use in the existing easement.

In Denton, Texas, the local water provider and cable company had their utilities installed beneath a corridor while it was still owned by the railroad. When the corridor was railbanked, the companies transferred the licensing of the space to the trail management agency. The corridor is now open to the public as the [Denton Branch Rail Trail](#) (<http://www.traillink.com/trail/denton-branch-rail-trail.aspx>), and most trail users are probably unaware of the successful utility co-use below their feet.

Rail Corridor Sold to Utility Company

Because of the attractiveness of long railroad lines to utility companies, these companies will sometimes purchase entire rail corridors in a single transaction to prevent the piecemeal sale of the property. Utility companies, which are often natural monopolies, generally have the resources to make sound financial offers to the abandoning railroad. However, this usually shouldn't preclude a trail from sharing the space. If the utility only requires subsurface or air rights, or can be contained in an above-ground encasement with room for an adjacent trail, the utility company, trail managing agency and community can potentially benefit from a partnership or easement.

Occasionally, beneficent utility companies will donate the ground space to a trail management organization instead of charging a fee. In the case of the [St. Ignace to Trout Lake Trail](#) (<http://www.traillink.com/trail/st-ignace-to-trout-lake-trail.aspx>), Michigan Bell was willing to work with trail supporters at the state and local level when the railroad would not. The Soo Line denied the idea of railbanking their line when approached and instead sold the 26-mile corridor in a single transaction to the telephone company. Michigan Bell then delayed laying their fiber optic cables in order to organize the transfer of their property to the Forest Service. For allowing Michigan Bell's perpetual easement, the Forest Service paid no costs to acquire the corridor.

Non-Rail-Trails in Utility Corridors

Neglected, unused space along a utility corridor developed separately from a rail line may also become a beautiful trail or functional cut-through with the proper negotiations. Frequently, this is done with pipelines or overhead electric corridors. Consider the popular [Power Trail](#) (<http://www.traillink.com/trail/power-trail.aspx>) in Fort Collins, Colo., which shares its four-mile paved route with overhead power lines. The [Albertson Parkway](#) (<http://www.traillink.com/trail/albertson-parkway.aspx>) in San Jose, Calif., which was once an unsightly utility corridor with a history of attracting crime, was developed into a winding bike path with pleasant landscaping through the negotiation of an easement with PG&E. The trail now sees frequent use from hikers, bikers and dog walkers. Similarly, the [Tolt Pipeline Trail](#) (<http://www.traillink.com/trail/tolt-pipeline-trail.aspx>), located on the edge of the Puget Sound region of Washington, was developed on top of one of Seattle's primary water pipelines and now attracts visits from equestrian users and mountain bikers.

Negotiations

When a company pursues the installation of their utility along an existing trail, the corridor's value must first be determined. As is the case with [valuing rail corridors for sale \(/build-trails/trail-building-toolbox/acquisition/corridor-valuation/\)](#), this is no easy task. The value of a corridor can vary based on its length, width, surface material, landscaping, amenities and traffic, in addition to the utility's specific needs. How often will utility maintenance or construction likely lead to trail damage or closings? All these factors must be considered by the trail management organization and the utility.

In general, bringing in a real estate appraiser who has experience with utility right-of-ways to get an estimate is recommended. Appraisers should be equipped with accurate maps of the corridor showing, at a minimum, all boundaries and anywhere the trail crosses a road, railroad track or another trail. The utility company will most likely send their own appraiser to value the corridor, so it is advantageous to have a second opinion to counter that assessed value.

The next step is to form the easement or other type of agreement. This may be time consuming, as every corridor is different, and parties to the negotiations may substantially disagree. Furthermore, as these are legal agreements, lawyers should always be involved. Often, an existing utility right-of-way was itself established through easements with adjacent property owners. In these cases, their permission will most likely also be required.

Any compensation that a trail management group or municipality receives for an easement or license is to be used only in the ways outlined in the memorandum of understanding. For the [Washington & Old Dominion Trail \(/http://www.trailink.com/trail/washington-and-old-dominion-railroad-regional-park-%28wod%29.aspx\)](#), the agreed-upon value ranges from \$2 to \$4 per foot per year for the various licenses along the corridor. Possible uses for the compensation include, but are not limited to, trail repair, maintenance, employee salaries, legal costs and future trail development.

The ultimate reward to a trail-managing agency or organization for successfully negotiating with a utility company is often worth the trouble. In Pennsylvania, the York County Department of Parks & Recreation was paid the one-time lump sum of \$500,000 for their easement with MCI to build the [Heritage Rail Trail County Park \(/http://www.trailink.com/trail/heritage-rail-trail-county-park.aspx\)](#). Now, the department is reimbursed on a yearly basis by the other utilities sharing the corridor, amounting to a few thousand dollars a year. As per their utility crossing fee schedule, all labor and material used in the construction, reconstruction and repair of the crossings; the hiring of employees to maintain the county's various interests in the trail and trail traffic; and the cost of professional services related to the easement are paid for by the utility companies.

Benefits

For Trails

As described above, earning revenue through the collection of annual fees is one of the main benefits of a partnership between a trail-owning agency and a utility company. On the W & OD Trail in suburban Virginia outside Washington, D.C., AT&T pays \$250,000 a year (\$7,000 per trail mile) for their telecommunications easement. In this case, the [Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority \(/http://www.nvrpa.org/\)](#) owns the corridor but allows the utility full access on the condition of compensation. Since third party access means the possibility of trail damages or closings when the utility company comes in for installation or maintenance, the yearly payment is used for reimbursement. It can also fund future trail development and general upkeep.

One other potential benefit is the donation of unused ground space by a utility company to a trail management organization, completely cutting the normal costs associated with trail acquisition for the community. In other cases, the utility will instead provide gift-in-kind services or materials as compensation for their access. This can include

trail surfacing, general repair work or overall maintenance. Furthermore, having a utility nearby could mean providing services to trail users that were previously unavailable, such as restrooms along the trail or lighting in tunnels.

For Utility Companies

Because utility companies regularly seek out long, linear corridors as sites for their services, they usually do not take much convincing to see the benefits of trail and utility co-use. However, there are other potential benefits for the utility company. Development of a trail has the potential to make a utility space more functional and visually attractive, making neighbors less likely to oppose current or future utility plans. Supporting and being close to public space like a trail also establishes the company and its workers as a part of the community. By working with landowners and trail supporters at the local level, a utility company can improve its public relations and, in turn, business.

A trail also can provide uninterrupted access to a utility. Utility personnel, who might be able to travel along the trail to their work sites, could more easily reach lines and fixtures. Depending on the type of surface used for the trail, it could even allow access for maintenance-related vehicles. Partnering with a trail management agency generally also means communicating directly with a single partner instead of hundreds of property owners along the line. Therefore, repairs and adjustments can be made more quickly without the need to organize multiple meetings.

Concerns

Despite all these benefits, proposed utility co-use can be met with opposition from neighbors and trail users for many reasons. Most commonly, there are complaints of compromised visual integrity of the trail. If the easement is made for a subsurface utility like water, buried electric or sewer, this will not be a problem. Such lines can be buried either directly under or adjacent to the trail, making all but maintenance invisible. In some cases, overhead utilities can actually improve the views of a trail; for example, power lines open the canopy, displaying vistas that were previously masked. If the utility company is not willing to negotiate to protect views from the trail, federally funded projects may be able to gain viewshed protection under statutes like section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act or section 102 of the National Environmental Policy Act.

Land use by the utility company can also become a substantial issue, especially if the utility company owns the corridor. Construction activity or maintenance to the property could mean trail damage or the closure of the trail at unpredictable times. Some utility companies may use pesticides or other materials harmful to the environment in order to improve access to their equipment. Such problems can be alleviated by open communication and by requests for specific permits or licensing in the easement or land agreement. As previously mentioned, financial compensation is also an option.

The electric and magnetic fields (EMFs) (<http://www.niehs.nih.gov/health/topics/agents/emf/>) surrounding overhead power lines can also raise concerns in the community. EMFs are the invisible areas of energy associated with the use of electric power. As proximity to power lines increases, the strength of the EMFs likewise increases. Fortunately, the association between field strength and an increased risk for adverse health effects is weak at best, and transiently being near power lines while using a trail should not be cause for concern.

Electric utility companies may require additional precautions to preserve public safety when faced with the request for construction of a trail on their land. Dangerous electrical equipment can be blocked off from trail users with anti-climbing poles, and a designated buffer space between the trail and transmission towers might be mandated. Signage describing the risks of being in proximity to high-voltage lines could also be a requirement. For the City of San Jose's

trail system (<http://www.sanjoseca.gov/index.aspx?NID=585>), agreements between the city and utility company outline mutual safety objectives for trail projects. All these safety precautions are paid for by the utility company, which is also liable for any damages or injuries to the trail and its users. In general, proper signage, fencing and buffer zones in Utility Corridors with above-ground easements should make trails perfectly safe.

Topics in this section:



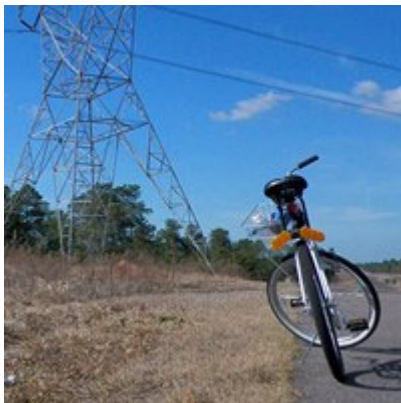
[Trail-Building Basics](#)

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[Rail-with-Trail](#)

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Pinellas Trail User Count Data Summary

Automated Trail Counter Data Collection Period:
May 1 – May 31, 2020 (31 days)

May 2020

31-Day Count Total: **265,869**

Daily Average Users: **8,576**

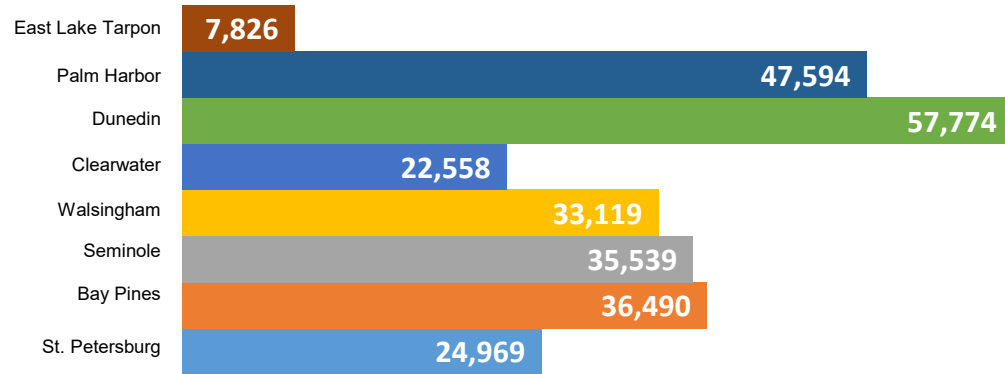
Highest Daily Totals:

#1 – Saturday, May 2nd (Dunedin - 3,296)

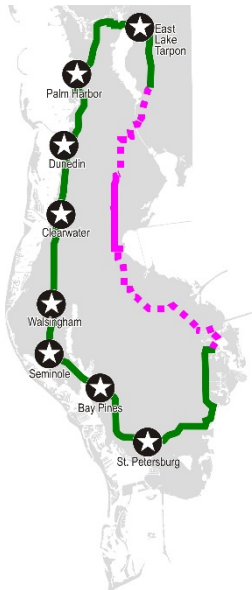
#2 – Saturday, May 16th (Palm Harbor - 2,366)

#3 – Saturday, May 2nd (Bay Pines - 2,213)

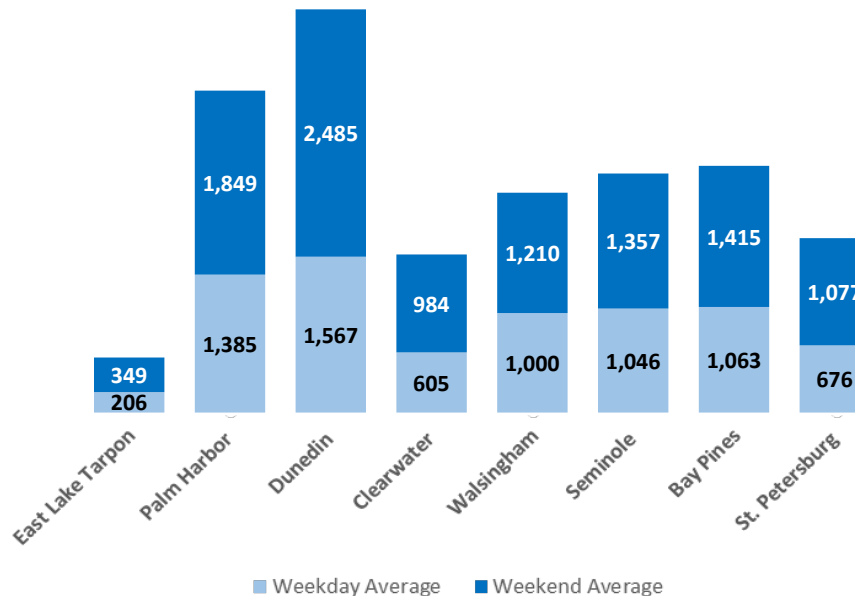
May Trail Users by Counter Location



Counter Locations



Weekday & Weekend Profile

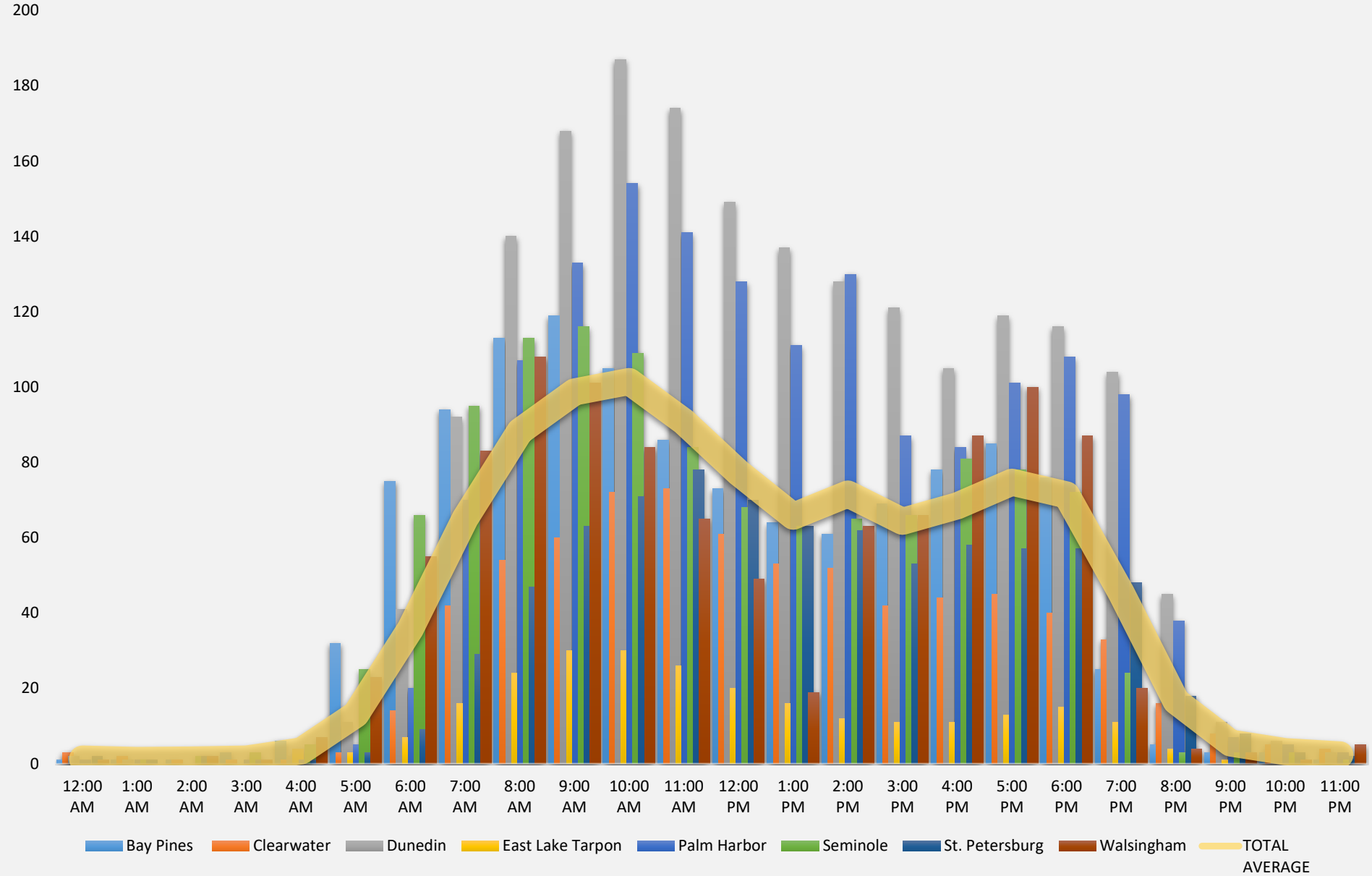


Trail User Mode Split

Counter Location	Walking (Pedestrian)	Bicycling (Bicycle)
East Lake Tarpon:	7%	93%
Palm Harbor:	21%	79%
Dunedin:	14%	86%
Clearwater:	23%	78%
Walsingham:	25%	75%
Seminole:	26%	74%
Bay Pines:	13%	87%
St. Petersburg:	9%	91%

Source: Forward Pinellas May 2020
National Weather Service: [May 2020](#)

May 2020 Average Hourly Counter Report



Pinellas Trail User Count Data Summary

Automated Trail Counter Data Collection

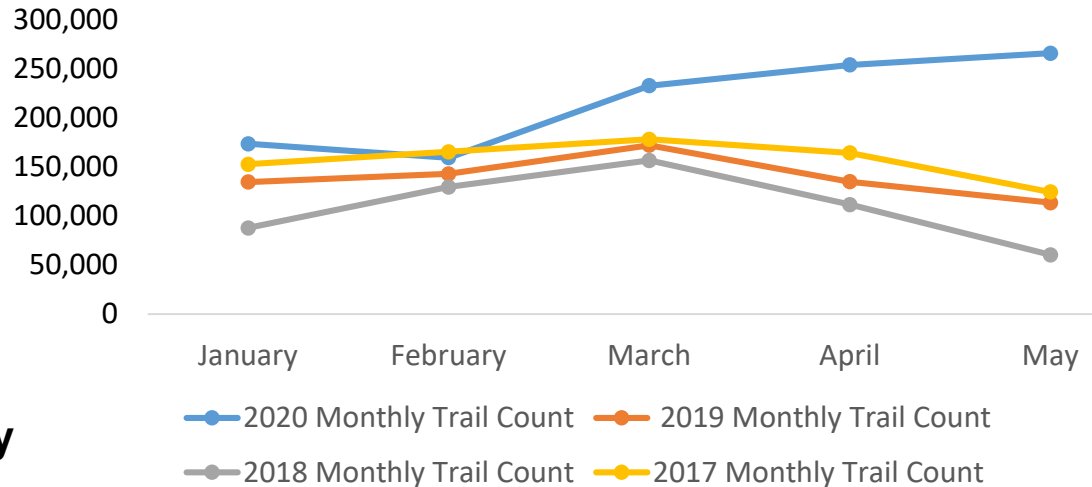
Period: January – May, 2020 Data*



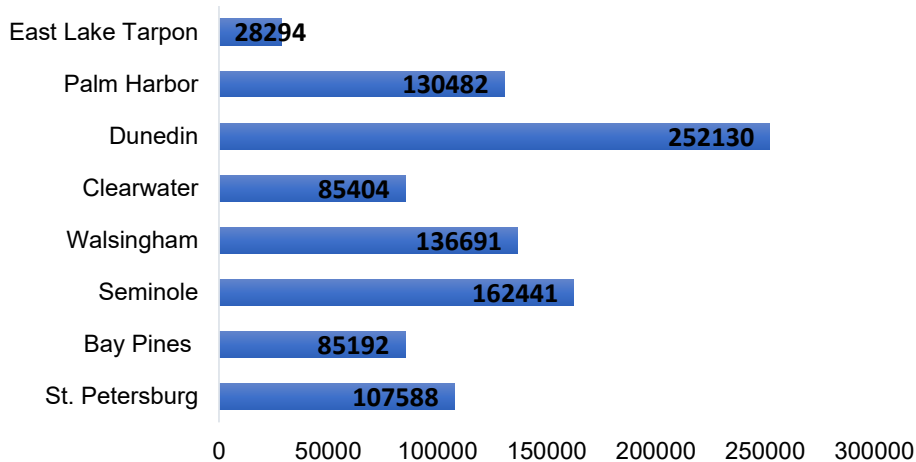
**Jan-May, 2020 Total Count:
1,085,324**

** Technical issues with the Clearwater Counter resulting in several missing days of data during February and March.*

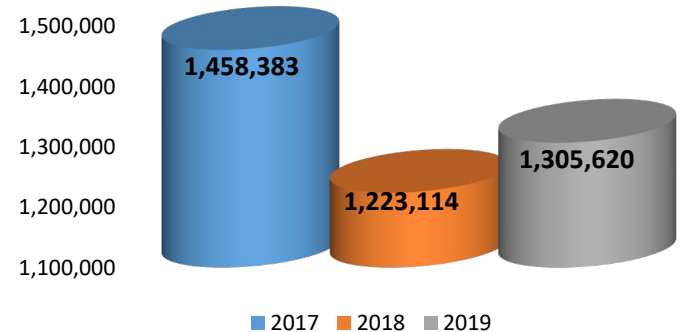
Monthly Trail Counts 2017 - 2020



Counter Data Year to Date by Location



Pinellas Trail Use 2017 - 2019



** 2010 – 2016 Survey Data & 2017-2019 Counter Data. Technical issues with several counters in 2019 resulting in several missing days of data during 2019.*

Pinellas Trail User Count Data Summary

Automated Trail Counter Data Collection Period:
June 1 – June 30, 2020 (30 days)

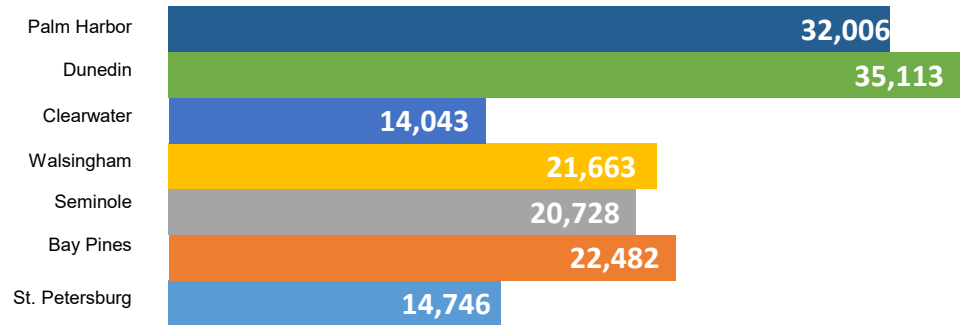
June 2020

30-Day Count Total: **160,781***
Daily Average Users: **3,281**

Highest Daily Totals:

- #1 – Saturday, May 2nd (Dunedin - 3,296)
- #2 – Saturday, May 16th (Palm Harbor - 2,366)
- #3 – Saturday, May 2nd (Bay Pines - 2,213)

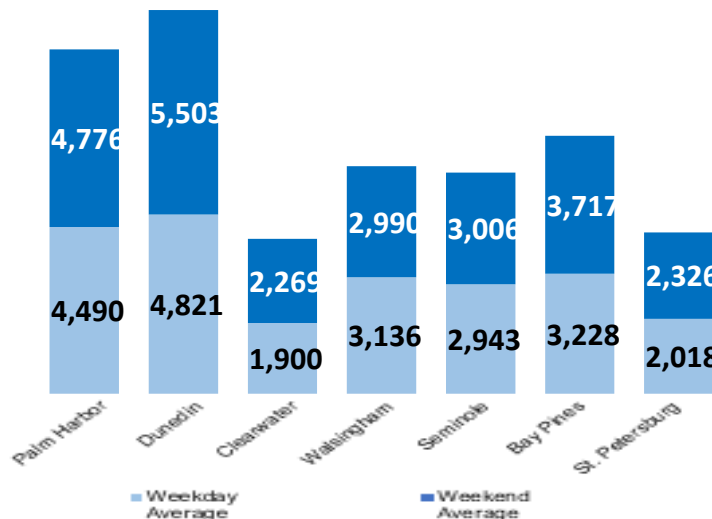
June Trail Users by Counter Location



Counter Locations



Weekday & Weekend Profile



Trail User Mode Split

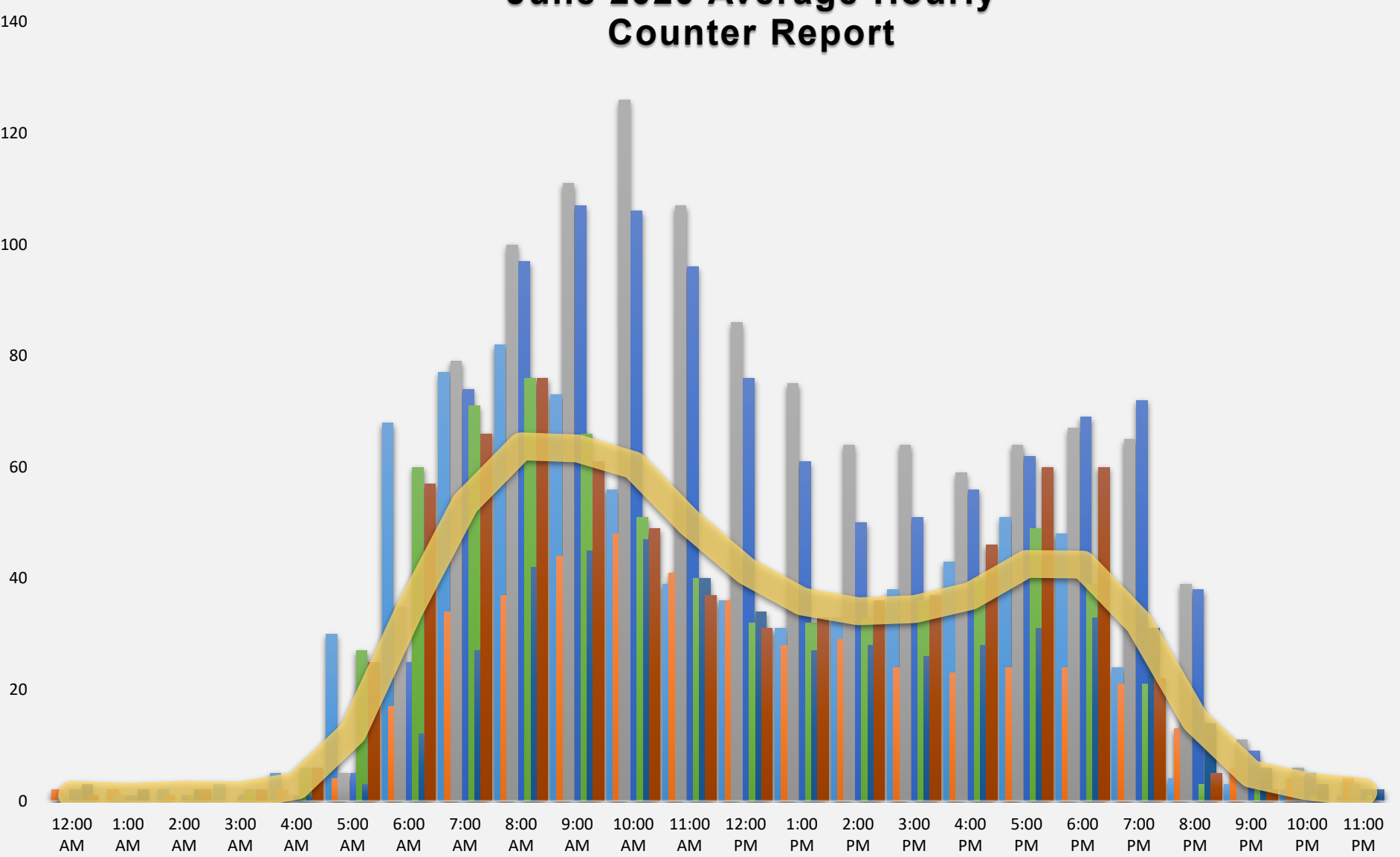


Counter Location	Pedestrian (%)	Bicyclist (%)
Palm Harbor:	18%	82%
Dunedin:	8%	92%
Clearwater:	20%	80%
Walsingham:	21%	79%
Seminole:	15%	85%
Bay Pines:	5%	95%
St. Petersburg:	2%	98%

Source: Forward Pinellas June 2020
National Weather Service: [June 2020](#)

*East Lake / Tarpon Counter Data Not Available for June 2020

June 2020 Average Hourly Counter Report



■ Bay Pines
 ■ Clearwater
 ■ Dunedin
 ■ Palm Harbor
 ■ Seminole
 ■ St. Petersburg
 ■ Walsingham
 — TOTAL AVERAGE

Pinellas Trail User Count Data Summary

Automated Trail Counter Data Collection

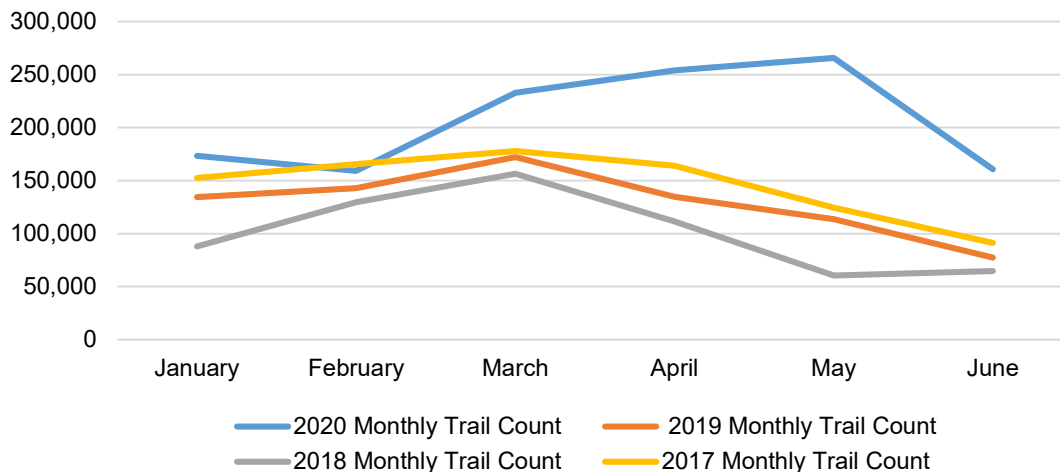
Period: January – June, 2020 Data*



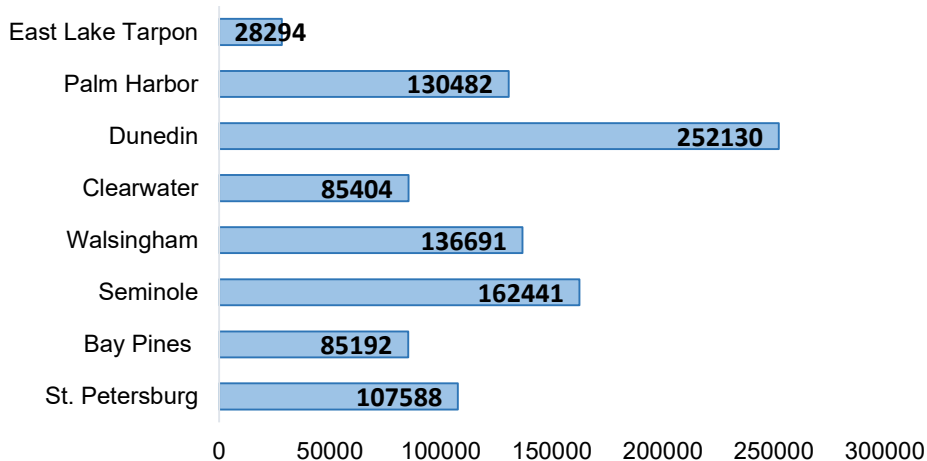
**Jan-June, 2020 Total Count:
1,246,105**

** Technical issues with the Clearwater and East Lake / Tarpon Counters resulting in several missing days of data during February, March and June.*

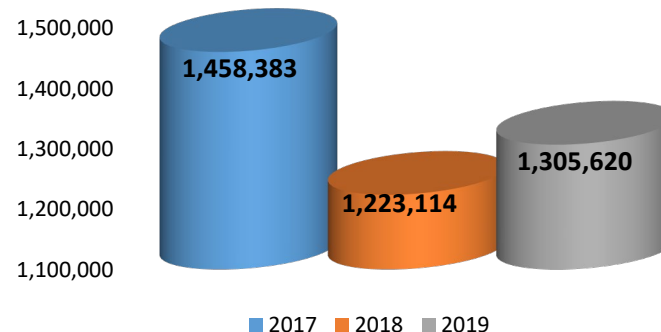
Monthly Trail Counts 2017 - 2020



Counter Data Year to Date by Location



Pinellas Trail Use 2017 - 2019



* 2010 – 2016 Survey Data & 2017-2019 Counter Data. Technical issues with several counters in 2019 resulting in several missing days of data during 2019.

Locations of Reported Traffic Fatalities

