

Forward Pinellas (Pinellas Planning Council/Metropolitan Planning Organization)

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Department Purpose

Forward Pinellas is a land use and transportation planning agency. The agency is charged with addressing countywide land use and transportation concerns, as both the Pinellas Planning Council and Pinellas County Metropolitan Planning Organization. Forward Pinellas not only provides a forum for countywide decision-making on transportation and land use issues, but also assists Pinellas County's 24 cities and unincorporated Pinellas County with technical support, regional coordination and policy advice and guidance.

The Pinellas Planning Council (PPC) is a dependent special district of the Board of County Commissioners. The Board of County Commissioners approves its budget and certifies its millage. The Pinellas Planning Council has existed in some form since 1965. It was reconstituted in its current form in 1988 by a special act of the State Legislature (Chapter 88-464, Laws of Florida), and approved by countywide referendum as an amendment to the Pinellas County Charter. In September 2014, the Pinellas Planning Council (PPC) unified its membership with the Pinellas County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), as stipulated by Chapter 2012-245, Laws of Florida. The merged board is charged with addressing both countywide land use and transportation concerns within the boundaries of Pinellas County, and it has re-branded itself Forward Pinellas. Both the PPC and the MPO continue to exist as regulated separate organizations. The agency's staff are PPC employees, and the PPC is reimbursed by the MPO for applicable operating costs and staff services.

The PPC annually adopts a countywide ad valorem tax, with the corresponding millage levy authorized by the Board of County Commissioners. The maximum tax levy authorized by the Special Act (Chapter 2012-245, Laws of Florida) is one-sixth of one mill (.1666), with the FY23 millage levy of .0210 mils at 12.6% of the authorized levy. For FY24, no millage change is proposed.

Fund: 9991 - Pinellas Planning Council-Fund						
Revenues						
Major Object	FY20 Actual	FY21 Actual	FY22 Actual	FY23 Budget	FY23 Estimate	FY24 Request
Taxes	\$1,245,617	\$1,336,028	\$1,427,033	\$2,211,780	\$2,211,780	\$2,471,080
Charges for Services	\$1,254,848	\$1,125,118	\$1,043,829	\$1,462,260	\$1,498,250	\$1,830,060
Interest Earnings	\$1,786	\$2,551	\$37,725	\$290	\$290	\$4,990
Revenues Total	\$2,502,251	\$2,463,697	\$2,508,587	\$3,674,330	\$3,710,320	\$4,306,130
Expenditures						
Major Object	FY20 Actual	FY21 Actual	FY22 Actual	FY23 Budget	FY23 Estimate	FY24 Request
Personnel Services	\$1,933,765	\$1,999,006	\$1,907,008	\$2,328,780	\$2,004,430	\$2,603,000
Operating Expenses	\$552,752	\$510,502	\$649,061	\$1,576,700	\$905,400	\$1,868,090
Capital Outlay	\$10,849	\$15,197	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Constitutional Officers Transfers	\$34,605	\$37,074	\$38,479	\$43,360	\$43,360	\$68,740
Reserves	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$357,900	\$0	\$1,620,540
Expenditures Total	\$2,531,971	\$2,561,779	\$2,594,548	\$4,306,740	\$2,953,190	\$6,160,370
FTE Count	n/a	n/a	n/a	19.0	19.0	20.0

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Budget Analysis

Excluding reserves, the FY24 Budget for Forward Pinellas reflects an increase of \$590,990 (15.0%) to \$4.5M from the FY23 Budget.

The Forward Pinellas revenues are supported by Ad Valorem Taxes. Ad Valorem tax revenues increase by \$259,300 (11.7%), which is consistent with countywide forecast assumption for FY24.

Personnel Services increase by \$274,220 (11.8%) to \$2.6M. The change to Personnel Services includes a general salary increase of 4.5% of salary, a state-mandated increase to retirement contributions, a 10.0% increase in employer-paid health benefits, an additional increase of up to \$600 to the base for all positions, a one-time payment of up to \$600 for eligible employees, and budgeted lapse savings. The County will also increase the lowest wage for County employees to \$18.00/hour beginning in FY24. The personnel increase also includes one additional Principal Planner FTE funded by MPO.

Operating Expenditures increase by \$316,770 (19.6%) to the total of \$1.9M as compared to the FY23 Budget, which is primarily attributed to the Multimodal Fee Study, a joint study with Housing and Community Development.