



**WATERBORNE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
MEETING AGENDA**

February 24, 2022 – 1:00 p.m.

Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council
4000 Gateway Centre Blvd #100, Pinellas Park, FL 33782

THE PLANNING COUNCIL AND METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION FOR PINELLAS COUNTY

1. **CALL TO ORDER**
2. **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**
3. **WATERBORNE LRTP AMENDMENT**
4. **WATERBORNE POLICY, RESTART AND PHASING**
5. **WATERBORNE RECOMMENDATIONS**
6. **DISCUSSION / NEXT STEPS**
7. **ADJOURNMENT**

ATTACHMENT: DECEMBER 17TH MEETING SUMMARY

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.



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DRAFT ADVANTAGE PINELLAS LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN WATERBORNE TRANSPORTATION SECTION

Our residents look to the advantages of a resilient and accessible community as a guide for investing in transportation modes that are reliable and help relieve traffic congestion. An example of a mode uniquely available to a coastal county is waterborne transportation. Waterborne transportation is of countywide interest and significance, as it serves as a key transportation asset within Pinellas County. As such, this amendment to the Advantage Pinellas Long Range Transportation Plan is to recognize the importance of waterborne transportation within the county. Waterborne transportation:

- Provides for congestion reduction and serves as a more environmentally friendly alternate mode of travel.
- Is positioned as a key economic driver for many of Pinellas County's businesses and major destinations near the Tampa Bay waterfront. Pinellas County stands to benefit considerably from strengthened waterborne transportation services.
- Serves residents and visitors with a meaningful alternative to vehicular travel, and as such should be planned as part of the county's transportation network.
- Will be evaluated through continued monitoring and reporting to show the value and return on investment that the service provides to Pinellas County and its communities.

Waterborne assets within Pinellas County have included the Clearwater Ferry, Hubbard's Ferry (formerly the Tampa Bay Ferry & Water Taxi) and the Cross Bay Ferry and have served Pinellas County and the Tampa Bay Region as a critical means of both worker and visitor mobility, especially during peak tourist season, which draws more than 15 million visitors annually.

The Clearwater Ferry operates on the Gulf Coast side of the county and is used to access employment and entertainment. The waterborne routes connect our unique communities of Dunedin, Downtown Clearwater and Clearwater Beach, with stops situated along the Intracoastal Waterway. The main roadway to Clearwater Beach can be heavily congested, particularly during peak tourist season, and accessing this regional destination can be a challenge. The Clearwater Ferry provides a reliable option to reach both employment and attraction destinations, unimpeded by roadway congestion and expensive parking.

The Hubbard's Ferry is also located on the Gulf side of the county and provides service from Ft. Desoto Park to Egmont Key and to Shell Key, which expands access to those recreational amenities.

The Cross Bay Ferry is located on the Tampa Bay side of the county and started as a pilot project in 2016. This regionally-funded effort was designed to lay the foundation for permanent ferry service connecting downtown St. Petersburg to downtown Tampa (with potentially additional future locations) across Tampa Bay. As the ferry service provides access to our two largest downtowns in the region, it

can be used for commuting and to visit many events and community focal points on either side of the bay. The Cross Bay Ferry service program is a collaboration between St. Petersburg, Tampa, Hillsborough County, and Pinellas County. Administration of the ferry began under as a responsibility of the City of St. Petersburg, and in 2021 shifted to Hillsborough County.

The Cross Bay Ferry docking area is located in the North Yacht Basin in St. Petersburg and near the Tampa Convention Center in Tampa. It can be accessed by public transportation, cycling and walking. Ample public parking is nearby. With only three bridges and limited land crossings between Hillsborough and Pinellas, the Cross Bay Ferry offers a scenic and reliable mode for travelers to avoid sometimes very lengthy roadway bottlenecks in the region, helping to reduce vehicular travel demand and congestion. According to local surveys from the City of St. Petersburg regarding usage of the Cross Bay Ferry, the average passenger spends an estimated \$40 once they reached their destination of either Tampa or St. Petersburg, contributing \$1.6 million annually in sales to local economies, and as such serves as a key economic driver within Pinellas County.

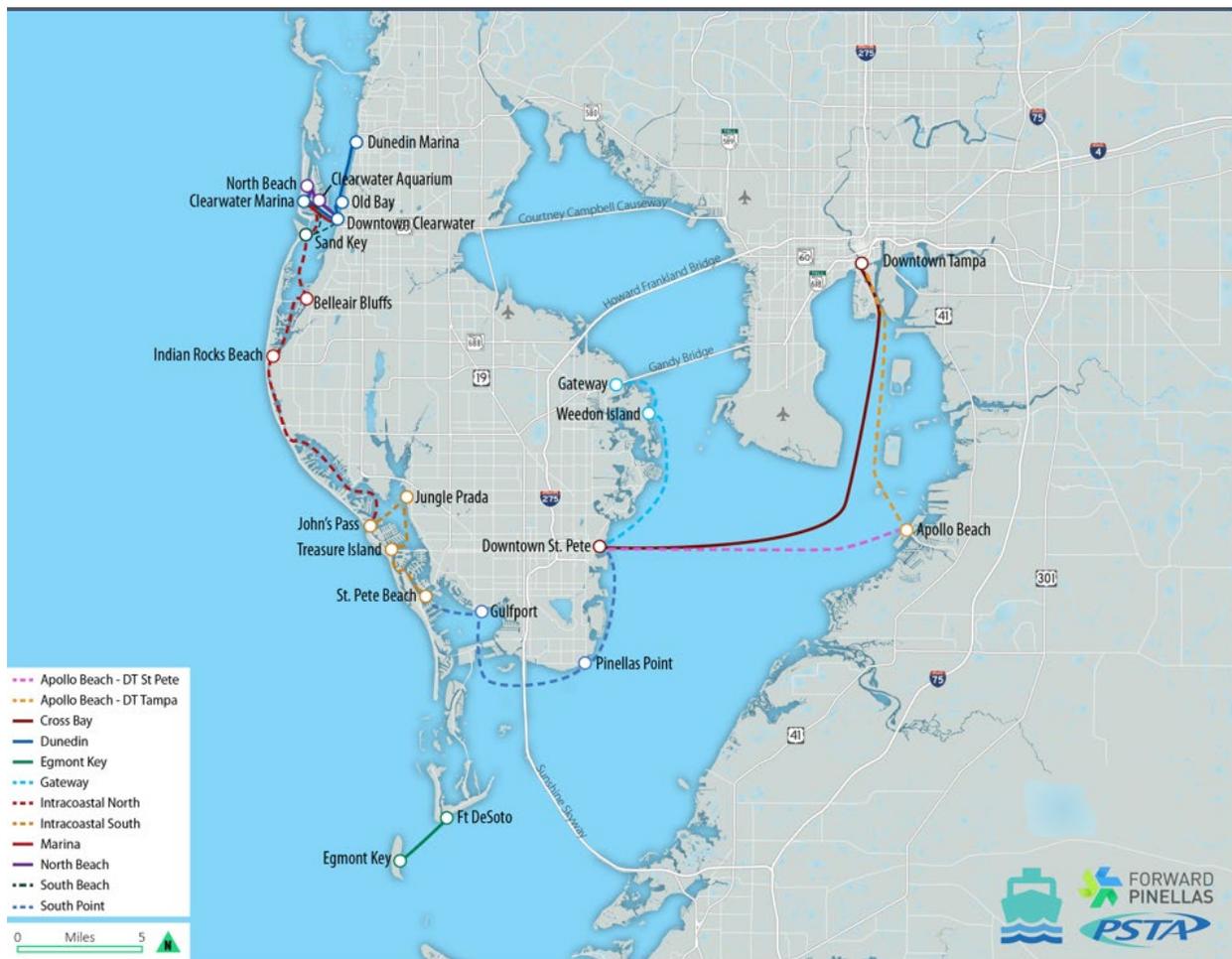
The Pinellas County MPO previously studied waterborne transportation in 2003-04, including developing a system plan and phased implementation strategy. At the time, the Pinellas County MPO Board decided that the private sector should be the driver of waterborne service, not the public sector. More recently, in response to sustained private sector efforts to establish successful waterborne transportation services, Forward Pinellas convened its Waterborne Transportation Committee in 2020. In establishing the committee, Forward Pinellas recognized the increasingly important role of waterborne transportation as an economic driver in Pinellas County by increasing accessibility to destinations given its constrained roadway network and capability to provide a viable alternative to vehicular travel.

One of the key issues under the Enhancing Beach Community Access SPOTlight emphasis area has been the subject of expanding waterborne transportation in Pinellas County and regionally. Over the last few years, various public and private entities have funded and operated waterborne transportation service. While there appears to be a desire to continue and expand service, there is also an issue of funding uncertainty, unclear public investment priorities and program oversight. Forward Pinellas has established waterborne transportation as a priority since 2016, and the committee was created to discuss the role of the public sector in providing continuing support for service development, operations and monitoring by examining the different funding, operating and administrative arrangements for waterborne transportation. The goal of the committee is to support the success and expansion of waterborne transportation within Pinellas County and regionally, with the intent of creating an integrated transportation network within the county. Recommendations of the committee to the Forward Pinellas board would address potential policies, funding criteria and strategies, and administrative roles and responsibilities for program performance.

Advantage Pinellas recognizes the important role that waterborne transportation can play in our multimodal transportation system. Improving the waterborne transportation system supports Goal 6 of the Plan: "Achieve an efficient, effective, equitable, safe and complimentary multimodal transportation network in Pinellas County and throughout the Tampa Bay Region that provides viable travel options for all transportation users." This goal is supported by Policy 6.2.6: "Forward Pinellas recognizes the opportunity for waterborne transportation to facilitate connectivity and access to destinations that reduces demand on the roadway network, particularly during peak tourist season. Forward Pinellas supports the continued development and expansion of waterborne transportation options throughout coastal Pinellas County and the Tampa Bay region." Through this Plan, funding has been identified in the Cost Feasible Transportation Plan to improve both local and regional transit services that could include an expansion of the waterborne transportation network. Advantage Pinellas allocates \$1.5M annually for transit capital

projects. In addition, \$500K is set aside annually for regional transit capital investments. As waterborne projects are identified and included in the LRTP, they will also be eligible for discretionary and formula grant funds reserved for waterborne transportation projects.

Advantage Pinellas includes a waterborne system plan that reflects existing waterborne routes as well as future unfunded needs for waterborne transportation. This system plan was developed in consultation with stakeholders through the Waterborne Transportation Committee and can be seen in **Figure XX**. The system plan will be used to prioritize funding for future waterborne routes within the county and regionally. In addition to the system plan, a Countywide Policy for Waterborne Transportation has been developed in consultation with the Committee that aims to establish clear criteria for the phasing, expansion, and maintenance of waterborne transportation options in Pinellas County so that continued service may adequately serve our residents, visitors, and businesses alike into the future. These efforts should be considered with the intent to expand services in an environmentally sustainable way that includes the long-term adoption of hybrid electric vehicles to continue and expand upon existing services.



As waterborne service is integrated into the countywide transportation network, continued monitoring and reporting is key to ensuring that the service is providing a valuable return on investment. A series of reporting and evaluation metrics will be established to determine the effectiveness of funded waterborne projects. These include establishing deadlines for the implementation of projects that have received county and/or municipal funding, as well as evaluation cycles to ensure the funding is being effectively utilized. Forward Pinellas has committed to working with local, regional and state partners to identify

potential future ferry services and to develop funding programs to help advance the expansion of this transportation asset for our communities. Through the work of the Forward Pinellas Waterborne Transportation Committee and our partners, we will continue to support the success and expansion of the waterborne transportation system within Pinellas County.



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THE PLANNING COUNCIL AND METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION FOR PINELLAS COUNTY

Countywide DRAFT Policy for Waterborne Transportation

Background:

Since 2015 waterborne transportation has served as a key transportation asset within Pinellas County serving residents and tourists with a meaningful alternative to vehicular travel. These waterborne assets have included the Clearwater Ferry, Cross Bay Ferry, and Hubbard's Ferry, and have provided a viable means of resident and tourist mobility during peak tourist seasons, which bring up to 15 million visitors annually. This in turn has also positioned waterborne transportation as a key economic driver for many of Pinellas County's businesses and key destinations. For example, according to a survey of Cross Bay Ferry riders conducted by the City of St. Petersburg, the average passenger spends an estimated \$40 at each destination, contributing \$1.6 million annually in sales to local economies. Given this information, Pinellas County and its municipalities stand to benefit from incorporating waterborne transportation service into the county's transportation network, as well as continuing waterborne transportation services that reflect the county's geography and economic drivers.

This policy effort aims to establish clear criteria for the continued funding, including capital expansion, operations and maintenance of waterborne transportation options in Pinellas County so that continued service may adequately serve our residents, tourists, and businesses alike. Given the nature of potential grant funding sources for waterborne initiatives, such as the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) Passenger Ferry Grant, which requires a minimum 20% local match to receive federal funds, local dollars must be allocated to waterborne transportation to develop and sustain the system. An explanation of eligible expenditures, local funding requirements, and a description of reporting and evaluation processes are included below. These efforts should be considered with the intent to expand services in an environmentally sustainable way that includes the long term adoption of hybrid electric vehicles to continue and expand upon existing services.

Eligible Expenditures:

Eligible expenditures for new and existing waterborne transportation projects include expenses related to the acquisition of vessels, operations and maintenance, and support infrastructure in the form of docks, ramps, pilings, etc.

For those eligible expenditures to be considered for funding, several criteria must first be established to determine if a location is consistent with the vision of the Waterborne Transportation System Plan. The following is a proposed scoring matrix of criteria that will be used to determine the local government funding contribution based on the matrix final score using the measurable factors listed below. *NOTE: Regardless of the scoring matrix, all new projects must fall within the established System Plan within the Forward Pinellas LRTP to qualify for funding.*

Eligible Expenditure Criteria	Description	Score (1-5)	Max Score Possible for Each Criteria
Contributes to Local Redevelopment Efforts	Proposed stop in an activity center or multimodal corridor.	5	5
Managing Local Congestion	AM/PM peak VC ratio greater than the countywide average within a 0.25 mile radius of the proposed stop.	10	10
Proximity to Transit	Falls within a 0.25 mile radius of existing transit service (Multiplier x 1) Falls within a 0.25 mile radius of frequent local service (Multiplier x 3)	5	15
Frequency of Service	Frequency below 30 minute or better threshold (multiplier x 1) Frequency of 30 minutes or better (multiplier x 2)	3	6
Near Major Attractors (Business Hubs, Restaurants, Hotels, or other Major Economic Drivers for Pinellas County)	10 or more businesses within a 0.5 mile radius (multiplier 0.5) 20 or more businesses within a 0.5 mile radius (multiplier x 1.5) 30 or more businesses within a 0.5 mile radius (multiplier x 3)	5	15
Presence of Bicycle and Pedestrian Infrastructure	Sidewalks within 0.25 miles (multiplier x 1) Bicycle facilities within 0.25 miles (multiplier x 3)	3	12
Tourism	Destination within VSPC Top Ten Tourist Destinations (Multiplier x 1) Destination within VSPC Top 5 Tourist Destinations (Multiplier x 3)	5	15
Local Match of Funds	Local Match of Funds	10	10
MAX Score			88

Reporting and Evaluation:

In addition to establishing clear funding criteria for waterborne transportation, it is also important to establish a series of reporting and evaluation metrics to determine the effectiveness of funded waterborne projects. These include establishing deadlines for the implementation of projects that have received county and/or municipal funding, as well as evaluation cycles to ensure the funding is being effectively utilized. If it is determined that projects are unable to meet required deadlines or are unable to

meet required evaluation criteria, funds for the project shall be terminated. The evaluation mechanisms for waterborne transportation shall include the following:

- i. All waterborne transportation projects that receive funding through this policy must be implemented at the desired service location within three years of being funded.
- ii. An annual survey of riders for the first three years of service, and as necessary thereafter, to determine travel patterns and impacts to local economies, like the work done by the City of St. Petersburg regarding the Cross-Bay Ferry, must be conducted to determine usage characteristics and benefits.
- iii. Waterborne transportation projects shall be subject to monthly reporting similar to the Cross-Bay Ferry. This could include monthly documentation of metrics such as the following:
 - Passenger Count
 - On Time Departures
 - Delayed Departures
 - Average Trip Duration
 - Fare Distribution
 - Monthly Passenger Miles of Capacity
 - Monthly Passenger Miles Utilized
 - Monthly Revenue Summary
 - Any Incidents or Missed Sailings
- iv. Continued reevaluation of “Eligible Expenditures” scoring matrix to ensure service is continuing to meet the criteria for funding.
- v. The completion of an effectiveness assessment every three years to adequately assess contributions made by the county and municipalities towards waterborne efforts. This should include an evaluation of the following:
 - Who is being served by this service?
 - What is the current ridership and how does it compare to other waterborne transit options countywide and regionally?
 - What is the revenue trend for the location of service?
 - What is the rationale for continued service at this location?
- vi. Local funding subsidy for waterborne transportation shall be replaced by a dedicated funding source within 5 years of restored service in Clearwater/Dunedin. It is the goal of this policy framework to off-set as much local general revenue funding as possible. This may include public-private partnerships in the form of advertising, promotions, and sponsorship revenues that would replace a portion of local government operating assistance.
- vii. PSTA and Forward Pinellas will produce a subsidy profile each year that shows the level of public subsidy relative to operating costs.



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DRAFT COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Forward Pinellas staff have developed the following recommendations for consideration by the Waterborne Transportation Committee:

- The Forward Pinellas Waterborne Transportation Committee recommends the Forward Pinellas Board amend the Advantage Pinellas 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan to include the Waterborne Transportation System Plan and an expanded section on waterborne transportation. While there is currently a short section on waterborne transportation within the LRTP, additional detail on a systemwide vision will aid in setting priorities for waterborne projects moving forward.
- The Forward Pinellas Waterborne Transportation Committee recommends the Forward Pinellas Board adopt the Countywide Policy for Waterborne Transportation. This policy establishes clear criteria for the prioritization of waterborne transportation options employed in Pinellas County so that continued and expanded service may adequately serve our residents, visitors, and businesses alike. Given the nature of eligible grant funds for waterborne efforts, it is essential that local governments contribute a share of funding to countywide waterborne transportation. Strategies for determining eligible expenditures, phasing and evaluation of services are included in the policy.
- The Forward Pinellas Waterborne Transportation Committee recommends the establishment of a sustainable phasing strategy that uses federal and state grants to support waterborne service development and expansion as an integrated component of the public transportation system. The phasing strategy will require local operating commitments and a match for capital grants, which is a condition for expanding service. Determination of route feasibility will be based on funding availability and a multi-year commitment; operational and infrastructure cost estimates; and ridership forecasts for proposed routes identified in the system plan. Identification of viable funding options will be facilitated through continued coordination with federal, state, regional and local government partners.
- The Forward Pinellas Waterborne Transportation Committee recommends that the Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA) serve as the administrative and contracting entity for waterborne transportation service within Pinellas County. PSTA is an eligible recipient of federal, state, and local funds, enabling the agency to contract with one or more private operators for service delivery. Regional waterborne transportation services that connect Pinellas County to other jurisdictions may be administered by other entities.
- The Forward Pinellas Waterborne Transportation Committee recommends Forward Pinellas staff engage in continued monitoring and reporting of waterborne transportation services and their cost-effectiveness using data provided by PSTA and any selected operator(s) of waterborne services. The Committee will continue to play a role in supporting existing and future service coordination and collaboration and will be convened as necessary to review and discuss findings and next steps. These continued efforts will play a key role in implementation of a system plan for waterborne transportation services throughout the County. The goal is to create an integrated transportation network that provides quick, accessible, and reliable service for the entire County, which is in line with the goals and objectives outlined in Advantage Pinellas.

**FORWARD PINELLAS
WATERBORNE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY
DECEMBER 17, 2021**

Committee Members in Attendance:

Mayor Cookie Kennedy, City of Indian Rocks Beach, Committee Chair, Forward Pinellas Vice Chair

Commissioner Janet Long, Pinellas County, Forward Pinellas Secretary

Councilmember David Allbritton, City of Clearwater, Forward Pinellas Treasurer

Councilmember Brandi Gabbard, City of St. Petersburg

Mayor Julie Ward Bujalski, City of Dunedin

Commissioner Suzy Sofer, City of Belleair Bluffs

Also Present:

Whit Blanton, Executive Director, Forward Pinellas

Christina Mendoza, Principal Planner, Forward Pinellas

Tina Jablon, Executive Secretary, Forward Pinellas

Rodney Chatman, Planning Division Manager, Forward Pinellas

Jared Austin, Principal Planner, Forward Pinellas

Other Interested Parties in Attendance:

Brad Miller, Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA)

Cassandra Borchers, PSTA

Chris Leffert, Florida Department of Transportation, District 7 (FDOT)

Michael Hetrick, Pinellas County

Brent Hall, Pinellas County Public Works

Trisha & Dennis Rodriguez, Clearwater Ferry Services

Micah Maxwell, City of Clearwater

Ed Turanchik, HMS Ferries

Cheryl Stacks, City of St. Petersburg

The Forward Pinellas Waterborne Transportation Committee met in the Magnolia Room at the Florida Botanical Gardens, 12520 Ulmerton Road, Largo.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 1:04 p.m. by the Committee Chair Cookie Kennedy.

2. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Attendees introduced themselves

3. WATERBORNE COMMITTEE RECAP

Whit Blanton opened the meeting by thanking everyone for attending and shared that this meeting is being used to present a recommendation for a system plan, for a phasing program, and for a countywide waterborne transportation funding policy, requested by the County Administrator. He conveyed that a recommendation was not necessary today but was important to present the information the committee will need to form a recommendation, hopefully by February 2022. He stated that the goal is to start ferry service again in fiscal year 2023 and to do that with as much anticipation and preparation as possible. He further emphasized the need to align this effort with the budget season which kicks off in February/March 2022, and the need to be ready to identify what is needed for that restart plan from our local government partners.

Christina Mendoza continued with the recap of the previous meeting. She provided an overview of the action steps which have already been completed, as well as research updates. Also discussed was the PSTA Systemwide Integration, an overview of the Ridership Forecast, as well as an overview of the Ferry Restart of Service Plan.

She noted that the recommendations presented to the committee at the last meeting had been revised and were being shared today. A draft waterborne section of the LRTP was developed as well as a draft of the waterborne policy, and by winter of 2022, the goal is to finalize the waterborne policy and LRTP section, then to host meetings where service and expansion/phasing can be evaluated and to measure and celebrate service success (as needed). The first version of the Waterborne Travel Demand Forecasting report was received and under review. PSTA has been working on a revised Restart of Service Plan with a focus on Clearwater / Dunedin existing service first.

4. REGIONAL WATERBORNE VISION

Ed Turanchik, HMS Ferries, shared some history on the Cross Bay Ferry, beginning when the Florida Legislature passed the Commuter Rail Act in 1988, which included a mandate to evaluate both commuter rail and ferry service for Tampa Bay. In 1991, Mr. Turanchik became Chairman of the Tampa Bay Commuter Rail Authority, which had to look at Waterborne Transportation in the Tampa Bay area as part of the statutory mandate. In 2011, a study of Tampa Bay Ferry service was completed and provided a wealth of ridership information. A public-private partnership was developed between HMS Ferries, Hillsborough County and South Swell Development Group, Inc in 2014. The Board of County Commissioners approved \$1 million for FY 2021-2022 and additionally approved budgeting \$2.7 million for FY 2022-2024 to complete permitting and design. The Cross Bay Ferry Plan provides for:

- Permanent evening and weekend ferry service between south Hillsborough County, St. Petersburg and Tampa.
- Permanent daily commuter ferry service from south Hillsborough County to MacDill Air Force Base.
- \$175 million commitment by HMS to all operating costs plus repairs and maintenance of ferries.
- Free land for terminal and access road by Mosaic.

The Cross Bay Ferry service plan consists of two ferries running inner city service between south Hillsborough County, Tampa and St. Petersburg; weeknights between 6:00 p.m. to 11:45 p.m.; weekends from 1:00 p.m. – 11:00 p.m. on Saturday and 11:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Sunday with additional service for sporting and special events.

Next Steps include:

- Support continuation of current Cross Bay Ferry service.
- Develop seamless connectivity between the Ybor Street Car, SunRunner & Cross Bay Ferry and market these services as providing regional connectivity for 2022-2023 season.
- Support development and funding of Tamp Bay Ferry Partnership project.
- Make use of ‘excess capacity’ of the Partnership project to “test” different markets once the project is implemented.

Mr. Turanchik stated that the next “best” potential regional market for service is St. Petersburg/Westshore with commuter and potentially off-peak service.

Councilmember Brandi Gabbard affirmed support of any expansion of the service as there is potential for the future, connecting with MacDill Air Force Base, for economic development opportunities, employment opportunities, job retention and attraction. She further conveyed that these are all critically important to our future, especially in the defense arena.

Commissioner Janet Long commented that after reading through all the documents provided, there is no mention in any of the documents referencing electrification. She urged HMS to commit to reducing the carbon footprint by utilizing electric ferries.

Mr. Turanchik responded that in order to meet the time requirements of the FTA grant application, which required an existing service and a matching dollar amount, electric vehicles were not included in the application proposal at this time. He committed that HMS will reevaluate the technology options as a part of the permanent service to see what kind of vessels can be used in this service, looking at all vessel options.

5. RESTART PLAN OPTIONS OVERVIEW

Brad Miller, PSTA, shared that in response to Commissioner Long’s last statement, the new federal infrastructure law that was passed, with a significant increase in waterborne funding, prioritizes electric and sustainable zero emissions transportation of all kinds, including ferries. He further noted that currently, their focus is on hybrid electric vessels with a potential future focus on all electric vessels.

Mr. Miller provided an overview of the changes that have been made since his last presentation in August. He described how all waterborne services that touch Pinellas County are now envisioned in the plans as we move forward with the Waterborne Transportation Committee. The primary focus has been on the Clearwater Ferry restart and much work has been completed, however, PSTA has included the funding needed for

the Cross Bay Ferry from St. Petersburg to Tampa, and in the future, the South Pinellas Ferry, with service to Madeira Beach, connecting those communities.

He then discussed the long-term vision for new hybrid electric ferry vessels and new docks. This is the long-term vision he wants to reach. With the current funding structure, which is largely made up of the general funds of the cities, the County and PSTA, Mr. Miller felt this vision is a little too tall of a mountain to climb right now. He then described the current effort as a road map, or ferry channel map, on how we might ultimately get to that vision, with other scenarios along the way.

Lastly, he reminded the committee to focus on the most immediate operating needs we hope to get secured this spring and approved in the budgets next year, so we can start on this path. He felt strongly regarding the progress made on funding already and wanted to recognize that. For example, PSTA & FDOT have spent almost \$200,000 on planning and development work in 2021. Also, Pinellas County and the City of St. Petersburg funded, for the 5th season, \$350,000 for the Cross Bay Ferry.

Providing focus over the next year is the major take away from this meeting today. PSTA has budgeted and is ready to provide some necessary investment in the Clearwater Ferry boats, \$100,000 State of Good Repair funding to get the boats in good condition. PSTA has held off on providing \$100,000 until assurance that there is operating funding available to operate these new and improved vessels, and \$450,000 is needed to be approved to operate the Clearwater Ferry annually. It was impossible to get this amount of funding secured for 2021, however Barry Burton, Pinellas County Administrator requested, that if PSTA could present a comprehensive plan, he would be open to considering recommending the plan to the County Commission for FY2023. Cross Bay funding will also have to be approved.

Mr. Miller presented incremental plans, or four steps to get to the ultimate vision plan, the *High Investment + Increased Frequency Plan*. The 1) "Restart" Plan and 2) Low Investment Plan are plans PSTA feels are accomplishable. The 3) Low Investment + Increased Frequency Plan and 4) High Investment + Increased Frequency Plan are not possible right now with the current funding structure, until a more sustainable funding source is identified for the operating expense.

Ferry Service Investment: Restart

- 1) Restart Plan (FY2023) - \$930,000 Annual + \$100,000 Capital
 - Cross Bay Ferry - \$380,000
 - Clearwater Ferry - \$450,000 + \$100,000

Ferry Service Investment: Low

- 2) Low Investment Expansion - \$1,605,000 Annual + \$3.5 million Capital
 - Cross Bay Ferry - \$405,000
 - Clearwater Ferry - \$820,000
 - Madeira Beach Ferry - \$390,000

Ferry Service Investment: Low & Frequent

3) Low Investment Expansion - \$2,890,000 Annual + \$2.1 million Capital

- Cross Bay Ferry - \$510,000
- Clearwater Ferry - \$1.6 million + \$600,000 Capital
- Madeira Beach Ferry- \$780,000+ \$1.5 million Capital
-

Ferry Service Investment: High & Frequent

4) High Investment Expansion - \$3,712,000 Annual + \$49.8 million Capital

- Cross Bay Ferry - year round
- Clearwater Ferry - 7 days a week, new hybrid-electric ferries, new docks
- Madeira Beach Ferry- 7 days a week, new hybrid-electric ferries, new docks

Commissioner Long questioned how Savannah, GA funds their river ferry.

Councilmember Suzy Sofer wanted to know if the Tampa Hybrid Boat-Plane testing was going to affect the funding being sought this PSTA transportation project. Mr. Miller responded that the funding in the infrastructure package is only eligible for publicly operated transportation and services and is unsure if they would be directly competitive with PSTA.

Continued discussion questions were appropriately answered.

6. WATERBORNE POLICY, RECOMMENDATION AND UPDATES

Jared Austin, Forward Pinellas staff, shared a presentation on a possible framework for a meaningful Waterborne Transportation policy that can be used to secure funding for a number of projects that may come our way. He described how waterborne assets serve as a viable means of resident and tourist mobility during peak seasons, positioning waterborne transportation as a key economic driver. He outlined the process to develop a policy that establishes clear criteria for the continued funding, expansion and maintenance of waterborne transportation options. By doing this, eligible expenditures can be identified, however certain criteria need to be met in order for funding to be applied to any given project. For example, service(s) must be identified in the Long Range Transportation System Plan in order for any of the criteria to be applied and any of the funding to go to any of the projects. Service evaluation and criteria scoring was reviewed as well as how the team derived at the scoring breakdown, which was based on how the Penny for Pinellas is broken down based on population.

Mayor Bujalski shared some valuable feedback regarding the evaluation criteria scoring and asked for consideration to the scoring as each area is different and does not apply everywhere and a level of fairness should be considered.

Councilmember Brandi Gabbard shared her disappointment in not receiving the recommended policy information sooner, for the opportunity to review it before the meeting and feels the approach is backwards. Ferry service should be part of a broader transportation multimodal system. She feels “proximity to transit, managing local congestion and competitive travel times” should be a higher criteria score, whereas the funds match and bike/ped infrastructure should be a lower criteria score. Councilmember Gabbard suggested that the committee members review the policy suggestion further and schedule one on one meetings with management to further discuss and evaluate the criteria, taking into consideration individual feedback.

Commissioner Suzy Sofer agreed with the suggestion, as she too feels that this is transportation and should be evaluated based on ridership and participation versus how much money will be invested.

7. DISCUSSION/NEXT STEPS

Mr. Blanton thanked the committee for their feedback and expressed its importance on developing this policy.

Chair Kennedy suggested a joint meeting with the Tourist Development Committee (TDC).

8. ADJOURNMENT 3:05 pm