

THE PLANNING COUNCIL AND METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION FOR PINELLAS COUNTY

The Forward Pinellas Board held this public meeting in person on January 12, 2022, at 1 p.m. in the Magnolia Room at the Pinellas County Cooperative Extension.

The board unanimously approved amendments to the FY 21/22-25/26 Transportation Improvement Program

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) is requesting that Forward Pinellas approve six amendments to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Five of these projects are new, including new LED lighting, pedestrian crossings, and resurfacing. One amendment is for the addition of local funding as part of the advancement of the Skinner Blvd. Complete Streets project in the City of Dunedin. These amendments will not affect any other projects in the TIP.

- Mr. Whit Blanton requested clarification from FDOT on whether the resurfacing project on SR 688 from US 19 to 49th St. N. would include a remedy to the current bike lane that is inconsistent with the FDOT Design Manual. FDOT subsequently confirmed that the bicycle lanes on this segment would be widened to 7' to be consistent with the Florida Design Manual.

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

- The board recommended approval of the following amendments to the Countywide Plan Map:
 - An amendment from the City of St. Petersburg to amend the vacant property at the northwest corner of 6th Street S. and 32nd Ave S. from Residential Medium and Multimodal Corridor to Residential High to allow for the development of multifamily residential units. (13-0)
 - Mr. Craig Taraszki and Mr. Mark Rios represented the applicant and provided clarification to questions from the board.
 - Commissioner Merz clarified with Mr. Taraszki that “non-residential amenities” could include a clubhouse, community garden, or other amenities that supported the residential dwellings.
 - Mayor Buljalski clarified with Mr. Rios that the highest building would be four stories and requested input from board members representing the City of St. Pete.
 - Councilmember Gabbard, Councilmember Driscoll, and Councilmember Floyd agreed that even with this height, the proposed amendment would be compatible with the surrounding community.

- An amendment from the City of Dunedin to amend the property at Keene Rd. and 1900 Virginia Ave. from Residential Low Medium and Preservation to Recreation/Open Space and Preservation to facilitate the use of the property as the Gladys E. Douglas Preserve. (13-0)
- An amendment from the City of Oldsmar to standards within their existing Activity Center (Town Center Redevelopment Plan) at the property South of Tampa Road and north of SR 580 to allow for a density/intensity bonus in the Town’s local Community Redevelopment District (CRD), specifically in the Town Center Commercial Residential (TCCR) zoning district. (13-0)
 - Oldsmar Mayor Eric Seidel spoke about the benefits and community support for this project and ensured that any developments would include significant public input.
 - Oldsmar City Manager Felicia Donnelly presented the intent of Oldsmar’s Downtown and redevelopment efforts.
 - Commissioner Eggers clarified with Ms. Donnelly that the amendment does not change the density of the area, currently allowing six stories, but rather provide an ability to place residential where only commercial is currently allowed, and filling a need for more housing.
 - Mayor Buljalski clarified that this property is in a Coastal High Hazard Area and requires strict standards.
 - Commissioner Merz clarified that “mixed-use” would include commercial units on the first floor and residential on higher floors.
 - Vince Albanese and Matt Clarke, Oldsmar residents, were in favor of this amendment and reiterated the incredible demand for housing.
 - Former Mayor of Oldsmar, Doug Bevis, also spoke in favor of this incentive bonus and amendment.

PSTA staff provided an update on the SunRunner Rising Development Study

As staff completes the SunRunner Rising Development Study, the consultant team requested comments from the Forward Pinellas Board on the station area buildout scenarios, the value capture analysis, and specific infrastructure improvements that will ensure robust multimodal connectivity to the SunRunner transit line. The final study results will come back to the board in the Spring of 2022 for approval.

Whit Blanton provided an update on the Downtown St. Petersburg Mobility Study

Through this joint effort between Forward Pinellas, the City of St. Petersburg, and the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), the focus of the Downtown St. Petersburg (DTSP) Mobility Study is to identify and evaluate project concepts and improvements to the transportation network including two-way street conversions, redesign or removal of the interstate spurs, transit, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure improvements, and other safety and mobility enhancements. Forward Pinellas provided

an update on the comments provided after significant public and stakeholder outreach and will present the final Action Plan to the board in the next few months.

The board unanimously approved the Scope of Services for the Target Employment and Industrial Lands Study

In an effort to retain and attract companies providing high-wage primary employment opportunities, known as target employers, Forward Pinellas has selected Renaissance Planning Group and SB Friedman Development Advisors to assist with the effort to update the existing Target Employment and Industrial Land Study.

- Commissioner Merz asked to pull this item from the Consent Agenda. He clarified with staff that the intent of the survey for target employers included in this scope will include regional, and possibly national employers in order to have a comprehensive assessment of the employment landscape and ensure Pinellas can retain and attract desired employers.
- Mayor Buljalski requested staff also include information about how remote work will impact these companies' needs.

The board welcomed new Board Members, including City of St. Petersburg Councilmember Gina Driscoll, representing PSTA and Councilmember Richie Floyd, who's appointment was pending City Council approval the day after the meeting. They also recognized the excellent work of former board members, City of St. Petersburg Councilmember Darden Rice, who served as the 2021 Forward Pinellas Chair, and Pinellas County Commissioner Pat Gerard.

The board unanimously supported putting together an informational piece on SB 962 and HB 981 and gather more information from our delegation to proactively address this bill.

SPOTlight Updates

- Staff is currently developing a scope for the Investment Corridor Transition Plan for Alt. US 19. More information will be provided at the March Board Meeting.
- The City of Clearwater told Forward Pinellas and FDOT to do no further work on the proposed Clearwater Memorial Causeway Busway to preserve the existing median landscaping along the causeway and close the contract. This will return the state funding allocated for the project.
- Over the next month, Forward Pinellas staff will hold individual meetings with committee members to discuss the Waterborne Transportation Policy in an effort to answer questions and find consensus.
- Forward Pinellas is currently planning the Gulf Blvd. Safety Study in St. Pete Beach and Treasure Island.
- Forward Pinellas, in collaboration with FDOT, Pinellas County, and the City of Dunedin, have decided to install a full traffic signal as a temporary safety solution at the SR 580/Skinner Blvd and Pinellas Trail Crossing.

Other Items

- The Clearwater Multimodal Transit Center is a significant priority for PSTA and CEO Brad Miller ensures they will continue to search for funding. PSTA announced the purchase of 60 electric buses over the next five years. PSTA is allowing students and faculty to ride for free. Staff continues to explore waterborne transportation options. This Spring Break, PSTA will collaborate with Clearwater for a free Park-and-Ride.
- TBARTA is supporting the Pinellas Aerial Gondola Feasibility Study, the US 19 Regional Rapid Transit Feasibility Study, and the Regional Mobility-On-Demand Feasibility Study. In addition, the Sun Coast Transportation Planning Alliance (SCTPA) and Transportation Management Area Leadership Group (TMA) directed TBARTA to lead a feasibility study and financial analysis for possible CSX rail projects.
- On December 10, 2021, transportation leaders from the SCTPA and TMA held a joint meeting with FDOT to discuss the future of passenger rail in the Tampa Bay region. View more information in this blog: <https://forwardpinellas.org/blog/directors-blog/next-steps-for-passenger-rail-in-florida-and-tampa-bay/>
- Forward Pinellas board members are invited to attend legislative days in Tallahassee on February 1-2, 2022.
- Six local governments have adopted the Safe Streets Pinellas Action Plan. Forward Pinellas encourages all remaining governments to adopt the resolution and commit to zero deaths and serious injuries on our Pinellas roadways by 2045.
- Future Board Meetings will be held in the Palm Room in downtown Clearwater.

Action Sheet

January 12, 2022

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

- **Consent Agenda** (vote: 11-0)
Approved to include the following:
 - A. Approval of Minutes of the November 10, 2021 Meeting
 - B. Approval of Committee Appointments
 - C. Authorization to Distribute Annual Report
 - D. Approval of Scope of Services and Interlocal Agreement for Urban Design Services Pilot Program
 - E. Approval of Scope of Services for Target Employment & Industrial Land Study Update
 - F. Approval of the Scope and Fee for the Forward Pinellas Geofencing Pilot Project
 - G. Approval of Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Amendment

Item 5E of the Consent Agenda was pulled to be discussed and handled independently. Ultimately it was approved. (vote: 11-0)

- **Approval of Amendments to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**
Following a presentation by Jensen Hackett, FDOT, the board, in its role as the metropolitan planning organization, approved the amendments to the TIP as outlined. (roll call vote: 11-0)

- **Countywide Plan Map Amendment(s)**
Three cases were approved:
 1. CW 22-01 – City of St. Petersburg (vote: 11-0)
 2. CW 22-02 – City of Dunedin (vote: 11-0)
 3. CW 21-14 – City of Oldsmar (vote: 11-0)

- **Forward Pinellas Legislative Committee Update**
Following an update by the Executive Director, the board voted in favor of the Executive Director writing a letter in response to SB 962 and HB 981 concerning Industrial Land regulations that would significantly expand preemption by the state. (vote: 9-0; Commissioner Eggers had left the meeting and Commissioner Long had stepped out)