



## PINELLAS TRAIL SECURITY TASK FORCE (PTSTF) MEETING AGENDA

January 11, 2022 - 9:00 a.m.

Pinellas County Emergency Services Center  
12490 Ulmerton Road, Room 130  
Largo, FL 33774  
(Telephone: 727-582-2000)

THE PLANNING COUNCIL AND METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION FOR PINELLAS COUNTY

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### FACE MASKS WILL BE ENCOURAGED BUT NOT REQUIRED

1. **CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS**
2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES – October 12, 2021**
3. **PINELLAS TRAIL SPEED STUDY**
  - Pinellas County Trail Rules on Speeding
4. **QUARTERLY REPORT FROM PINELLAS TRAIL PARK RANGER**
5. **LAW ENFORCEMENT AND AGENCY REPORTS**
  - Sheriff's Office
  - Belleair
  - Clearwater
  - Gulfport
  - Largo
  - St. Petersburg
  - Tarpon Springs
  - Animal Services
  - Public Safety Services
  - Pinellas County Risk Management
  - Volunteer Patrol Programs and Updates
6. **REPORT ON TRAIL USER COUNT DATA**
7. **REPORT ON TRAIL CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY**
8. **OTHER BUSINESS**
  - Future Meeting Topics:
    - Trail Planning
    - Trail Operations
    - Trail Enhancements
    - Electric Bikes and Electric Scooters

## 9. ADJOURNMENT

- **Notice to Law Enforcement Representatives – If you are unable to attend the meeting, please e-mail your Incident/Offense Report to Angela Ryan at [aryan@forwardpinellas.org](mailto:aryan@forwardpinellas.org). If you would prefer, you can fax the report to the Pinellas County MPO at (727) 464-8212.**

*Thank You*

### **NEXT PTSTF MEETING – APRIL 12, 2022**

*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 three 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.*

*Forward Pinellas is committed to making our documents accessible to all audiences. If you have accessibility concerns, please contact [aelmore@forwardpinellas.org](mailto:aelmore@forwardpinellas.org) or call 727-464-4880. Visit <https://forwardpinellas.org/legal/website-accessibility-statement/> for more information.*

**Pinellas Trail Security Task Force – January 11, 2022**

**2. Approval of Minutes – October 12, 2021**



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**SUMMARY**

The summary minutes of the October 12, 2021 Pinellas Trail Security Task Force meeting are attached.

**ATTACHMENTS:** Pinellas Trail Security Task Force Summary Minutes – October 12, 2021

**ACTION:** Approval of the October Meeting Summary

**PINELLAS TRAIL SECURITY TASK FORCE  
MEETING SUMMARY  
OCTOBER 12, 2021**

The following is a summary of the October 12, 2021 Forward Pinellas - Pinellas Trail Security Task Force meeting, which was held virtually, via Zoom platform. The Security Task Force meets at least quarterly during the year.

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Officer Ron Wolfson, Chairman	St. Petersburg Police Department & Volunteer Coord.
Officer Michael Hughbanks	St. Petersburg Police Department
Deputy Terrance Fallahee	Pinellas County Sheriff's Office
Lynn Abbott	Pinellas County Public Safety Services
Chief Ranger Carol Gray	Pinellas County Parks and Conservation Resources
Vanessa Boback	Pinellas County Animal Control
Lucas Cruse	City of St. Petersburg Bicycle Pedestrian Coordinator
Joan Rice	Pinellas County Public Works Traffic Division
Jim Wedlake	Pinellas Trail Auxiliary Ranger
Scott Daniels	Friends of the Pinellas Trail
David Feller	Friends of the Pinellas Trail
Stuart Schwartzreich	Pinellas Trail Auxiliary Ranger
Clive Bailey	Guest - Silver Rider
Alexis Boback	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.

**2. APPROVAL OF MEETING SUMMARY – July 13, 2021**

The summary from the July 13, 2021 meeting was approved with one correction, Item 6a, Sherriff's Deputy Fallahee gave the report.

**3. PRESENTATION: PTSTF STRATEGIC PLANNING DISCUSISION**

Ms. Angela Ryan, Forward Pinellas staff, shared a presentation on the results of the committee survey sent out to the law enforcement affiliates of the Pinellas County municipalities and other members associated with the Pinellas Trail Security Task Force. The purpose of the survey was to generate feedback on agenda topics, meeting duration and frequency, and overall committee purpose. In pursuit of designing meetings which are meaningful and informational for committee members, the survey results were utilized to generate an open forum discussion. In regard to the survey question, "what meaningful topics would members like included in the agenda" over 60% of members shared they would like the meetings to predominantly mimic the existing meeting content. Furthermore, the majority of members supported the member report initiatives surrounding the Pinellas Trail, Pinellas Trail community activities and trail count data, as well as the park ranger, law enforcement and agency reports. Committee members suggested retaining the existing content on the Pinellas Trail construction and maintenance activities and including

new information on Pinellas Trail rules as established by Pinellas County. Planning virtual meetings and adding additional meeting reminders were prominent ideas to encourage meeting participation, as well as quarterly meetings being the preferred frequency. With respect to virtual meetings, comments were made about in-person meetings being more effective, however, the suggestion to hold alternate in-person and virtual meetings was the preferred strategy. Questions were taken and appropriately answered.

#### **4. QUARTERLY REPORT FROM PINELLAS TRAIL PARK RANGER**

Chief Ranger Carol Gray, Parks and Conservation Resources (PCR) provided the following reports. First, on July 31<sup>st</sup>, a Park Ranger contacted Clearwater PD regarding five men loitering and laying on the Pinellas Trail in the area of A Street. Second, on August 5<sup>th</sup>, at the US19 and Pinellas Trail underpass in Tarpon Springs, a subject was camping or sleeping on the trail. The subject left after a verbal warning. Third, on August 30<sup>th</sup>, two subjects were sleeping and loitering and became aggressive after a verbal warning. Tarpon Springs PD responded and issued a trespass warning. Fourth, on September 7<sup>th</sup> in Dunedin, adjacent to 1292 Bay Shore Boulevard, there were signs of illegal camping. In response, trash was removed, and vegetation was trimmed. Fifth, on September 8<sup>th</sup>, in the Azalea area just south of 58<sup>th</sup> Street near Pinellas Trail marker 102, there were signs of illegal camping; as a result, trash and debris was removed. Sixth, on September 15<sup>th</sup> in the Belleair-Largo area, north of Ponce de Leon, remnants of illegal camping were removed from the area in close proximity to Pinellas Trail marker 404. Seventh, on September 25<sup>th</sup> in the Largo area, north of Rosery Road, there was a bike crash involving a cargo style rental bike in which EMS responded. Eighth, on October 1<sup>st</sup> in Clearwater at Grant Street, there was illegal dumping, and the City of Clearwater was notified via their online program, "SeeClickFix" hotline and the trash was removed.

#### **5. LAW ENFORCEMENT AND AGENCY REPORTS**

##### **A. Sheriff's Office**

Deputy Terrance Fallahee reported that for Q3, the Sheriff's Office responded to 86 events. A majority of the reports were due to an abandoned/illegally parked vehicle. In addition, there were three pedestrian versus vehicle crashes at Skinner Boulevard and the Pinellas Trail at the location of the passive detection Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon. Joan Rice with Pinellas County Public Works noted that PCPW is conducting a video monitoring of this trail crossing, noting that bicyclists and vehicles have been observed travelling through the intersection with little caution.

##### **B. Belleair**

Belleair PD submitted a report that was shared with the members by Ms. Ryan. It was reported that a subject ran from their police jurisdiction using the Pinellas Trail where the individual was ultimately apprehended. Also, it was reported that two suspicious individuals were identified on the Pinellas Trail after dark when the Trail is closed. Lastly, there was one vandalism event in which the Belleair PD aided with the investigation.

##### **C. Clearwater**

No one attended from Clearwater.

##### **D. Gulfport**

No one attended from Gulfport.

#### **E. Largo**

Officer V. Tran of the Largo PD submitted a report that was shared with the members by Ms. Ryan. In Q3, there was a total of thirteen PD calls. On July 21<sup>st</sup> a robbery occurred, and a victim was pushed off an e-bike by several juveniles. The juveniles took the e-bike, while the victim sustained minor injuries from the fall. Four juveniles were apprehended shortly thereafter, and the e-bike was returned to the victim. This incident occurred in the area of West Bay Drive and the Pinellas Trail.

#### **F. St. Petersburg**

Officer Hughbanks shared that this was his first meeting and an opportunity to see what information is needed and shared for the PTSTF meetings. He reported that most of the Pinellas Trail PD calls were traffic related; however, there was one commercial burglary creating some activity of directive patrols on the Trail. He is looking forward to attending the next meeting and providing additional Trail related data.

#### **G. Tarpon Springs**

Officer Anthony Boone was not in attendance.

#### **H. Animal Services**

Sergeant Vanessa Boback was in attendance for Animal Services, and reported that on September 1<sup>st</sup> there was a reported dog bite between 49<sup>th</sup> Street S and 58<sup>th</sup> Street S. The area was patrolled for ten days and Animal Control was unable to locate the dog.

#### **I. Public Safety Services**

Ms. Lynn Abbott, Pinellas County EMS & Fire Administration, indicated in Q3 there were 50 total calls with 44 unique events related to the calls. In breaking down the calls, there were three falls, four motor vehicle crashes, six bike and motor vehicle incidences and 16 bike incidences. Furthermore, due to no fault of the Pinellas Trail infrastructure or operation, there were three assaults, two overdoses, one mental health call, and nine sick calls. Lastly, there were six cancellations due to bad addresses or no patient found, and 15 refusals for assistance.

#### **J. Pinellas County Risk Management**

James Abaka was not in attendance but sent in a report that Risk Management will be completing their 2<sup>nd</sup> Trail Safety inspection on November 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup>.

#### **K. Volunteer Patrol Programs and Updates**

Chair Wolfson stated that a minimal number of volunteers are back, but they are trying to get things back to baseline. Currently, park ranger volunteers are working in the phased return when said volunteer can conduct their work remotely and report to reporting sites. In community conversation, the volunteer director hopes to see the volunteers come back full-time. All volunteer rangers are required to conduct a training orientation upon returning. Auxiliary Ranger Stu Schwartzreich made note that on the physical Trail, there has been less graffiti.

## **6. AUTOMATIC TRAIL COUNTERS**

Ms. Angela Ryan, Forward Pinellas staff, reviewed the counter reports for June, July and August 2021. The trends for these three months are similar for the trends being seen for the rest of the year in that high use continues, with the highest use along the Dunedin section of the Pinellas Trail. Questions were taken and appropriately answered.

## **8. REPORT ON TRAIL CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY**

Ms. Rice shared that since the last meeting there are no new updates to the construction activity on the Pinellas Trail and opened the floor to questions. In regard to an inquiry on the North Gap, Ms. Rice stated that construction continues with another year to finish. In regard to a question on the pedestrian overpass located near Tampa Road, the proposed work will require a new bid and contractor which will be out on bid shortly. Ms. Rice explained that in a response to public feedback reporting some poor human behavior on trails in Pinellas County, the Pinellas County Public Works department has implemented a "Trail Courtesy Campaign" underway through the fall and early winter. Specifically, there are eight weeks of social media and website notifications, as well as signs along the Pinellas Trail reminding people to be more courteous. Each week there are different signs with different reminders.

## **9. REPORT ON TRAIL COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES**

Scott Daniels, Friends of the Pinellas Trail, provided a brief update. First, Mr. Daniels informed the committee there has been great feedback regarding the new Facebook page and organization website from people who use the Pinellas Trail. Second, on September 28<sup>th</sup>, the Friends of the Pinellas Trail hosted a successful, well-attended community meeting using the Zoom platform with several speakers and guests to discuss happenings with The Pinellas Trail.

## **10. OTHER BUSINESS**

Jim Wedlake, Auxiliary Ranger spoke, requested support from the Sheriff's Office, stating that with more a variety of vehicles and devices on the trails, negative attitudes from wide ranging trail users has created a problem. He indicated that collectively, the rangers feel that a greater visible presence by the Sheriff's Office could go a long way in helping to alter these attitudes; and he formally requested that the Sheriff's Office have more visible patrols. Mr. Wedlake also requested a response or feedback from the Sheriff's Office on the availability of additional patrols. Deputy Fallahee commented that there are patrols on the Trail with a visible presence in vehicles and on bike. There are two patrols in the north county and five patrols in the south county.

Lucas Cruse with the City of St. Petersburg shared the following updates. First, trail counters located near Tropicana Field are collecting data and additional counters are going online in the Tyrone area in St. Petersburg. Second, he stated that a new St. Petersburg bike map is available in paper form and on the website. Third, the current construction project at 31<sup>st</sup> Street and I-275, has resulted in the City working with FDOT to add a new signal, bike lanes and RRFB's. He stated that the public should look for changes to the area around the Dali Museum with green markings and trail reconfigurations. Fourth, the SunRunner Project is progressing with additional bus stop stations being constructed. Fifth, bike lanes have been added to Central Avenue. Sixth, the "Halloween on Central" event is on October 31<sup>st</sup> from 12:00 – 5:00 pm. Lastly, he has informed the committee park rangers that Coast to Coast Trail use has increased.

A question arose about businesses adjacent to the Trail and permitting these businesses Trail access points. Joan Rice responded that PCPW is working on what would be needed to allow these access points.

Ms. Ryan also commented that the eight trail counters Forward Pinellas has on the Trail have been able to be used to collect speed data and with this data a speed analysis has been conducted using a multitude of factors. Ms. Ryan will present the research on the speed study at the next PTSTF meeting.

## **11. ADJOURNMENT**

Chairman Wolfson adjourned the meeting at 10:12 a.m. The next PTSTF meeting is scheduled for January 11, 2022.



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## **Summary**

Responding to comments received from citizens, Forward Pinellas staff recently conducted a speed study on the Pinellas Trail. Specifically, the agency has received comments regarding the concern that bikes, e-bikes, and e-scooters are surpassing the 20 mile per hour (mph) trailspeed limit and may be causing unsafe trail conditions.

The speed study included data collected from seven fixed trail counters located on the Pinellas Trail during February, March and April of 2021. These months were selected for analysis due to the high volume of trail users to provide the highest concentration of data. Furthermore, the data showed that cyclists represented an average of 70% of use at the seven trail counters which provided a significant depth of data for analysis. The analysis spans across six speed bands ranging from 0-30 mph, and includes total trail usage per speed band by location, total users going 20 mph+ by location, and peak weekday and weekend usage hours. In general, the percentage of people going 20 mph+ was less than 1%, with a deviation at the East Lake trail counter where 3.6% of trail users were travelling over 20 mph.

Forward Pinellas staff will provide a presentation on this study and identify next steps. Following this presentation, staff will facilitate a conversation with the committee on the Pinellas County rules regarding speeds on the Trail.

**ATTACHMENT(S):** None

**ACTION:** None Required, Informational Item Only

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**SUMMARY**

This item will include the monthly data summary reports for the automatic trail counters along the Pinellas Trail. Note that average hourly data has been included with the reports.

**ATTACHMENT:** Pinellas Trail User Count Data Summary Reports:

- September 2021
- October 2021
- November 2021

**ACTION:** No Action Required, informational item only

# Pinellas Trail User Count Data Summary

Automated Trail Counter Data Collection Period:  
September 1<sup>st</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> (30 days)

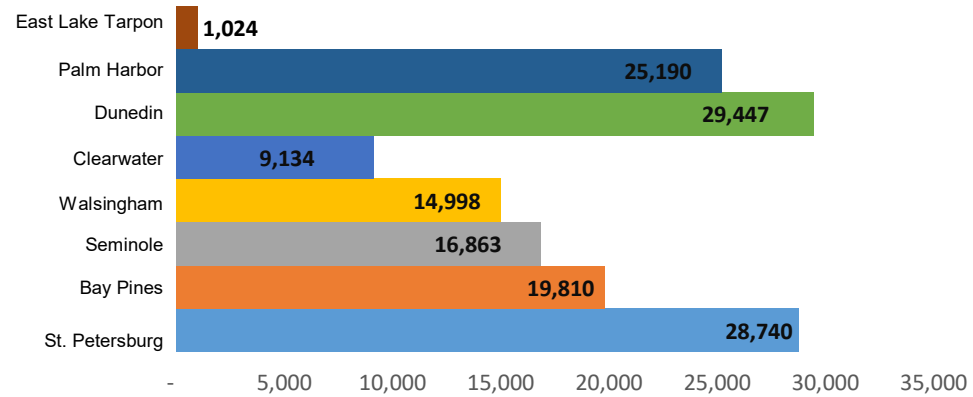
## September 2021

30-Day Count Total: **145,206**  
Daily Average Users: **4,840**

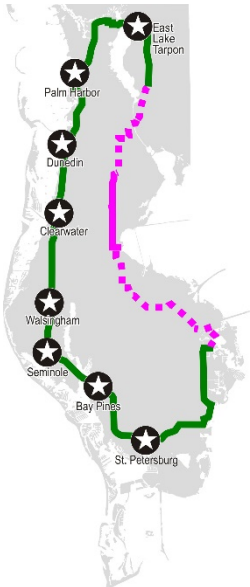
Highest Daily Totals:

- #1 – Saturday, September 25<sup>th</sup> (St. Petersburg – 1,941)
- #2 – Saturday, September 4<sup>th</sup> (Dunedin – 1,905)
- #3 – Sunday, September 5<sup>th</sup> (Palm Harbor – 1,414)

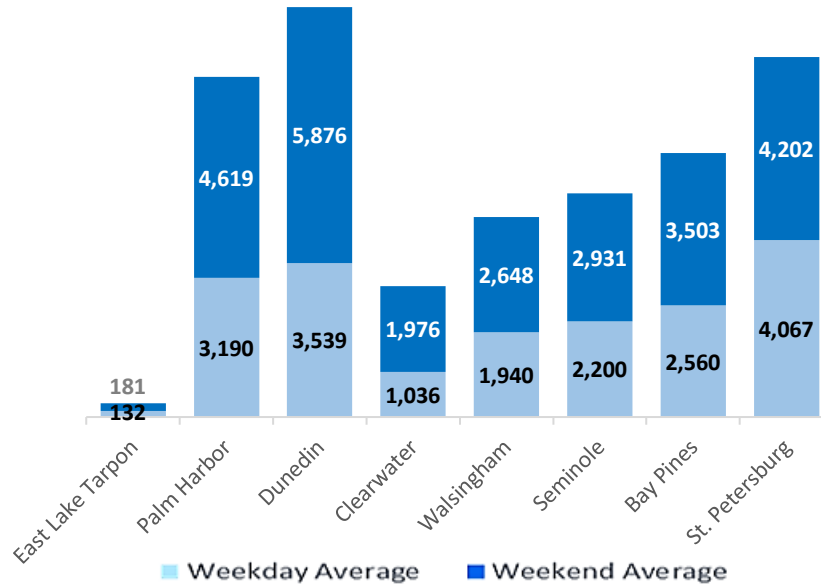
## September Trail Users by Counter Location



## Counter Locations



## Weekday & Weekend Profile

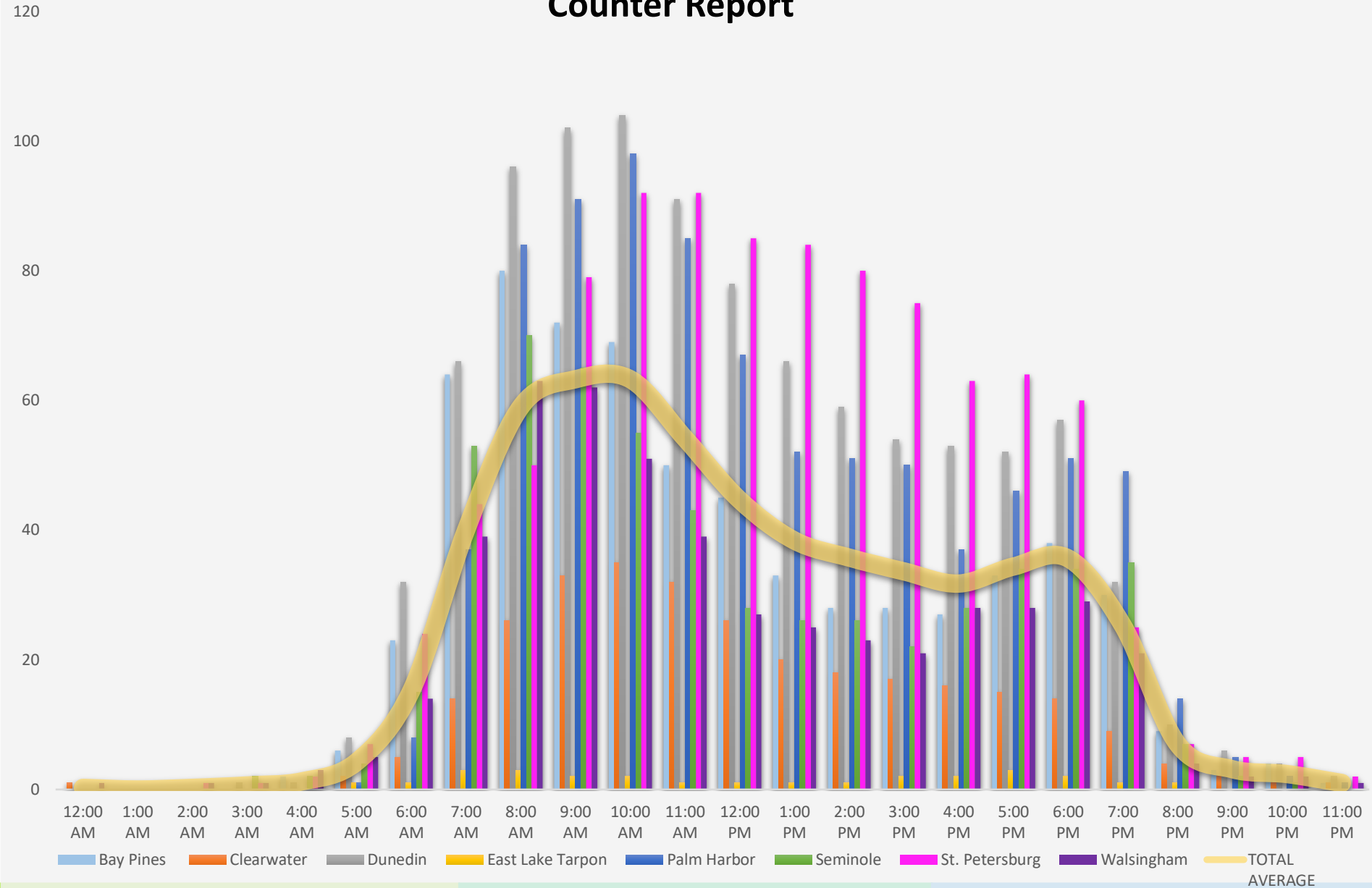


## Trail User Mode Split

Counter Location	Walking (Pedestrian)	Bicycling (Bicycle)
East Lake Tarpon:	1%	99%
Palm Harbor:	20%	80%
Dunedin:	16%	84%
Clearwater:	1%	99%
Walsingham:	7%	93%
Seminole:	18%	82%
Bay Pines:	16%	84%
St. Petersburg:	53%	47%

Source: Forward Pinellas *September 2021*  
National Weather Service: [September 2021](#)

# September 2021 Average Hourly Counter Report



# Pinellas Trail User Count Data Summary

Automated Trail Counter Data Collection

Period: January – September, 2021 Data\*

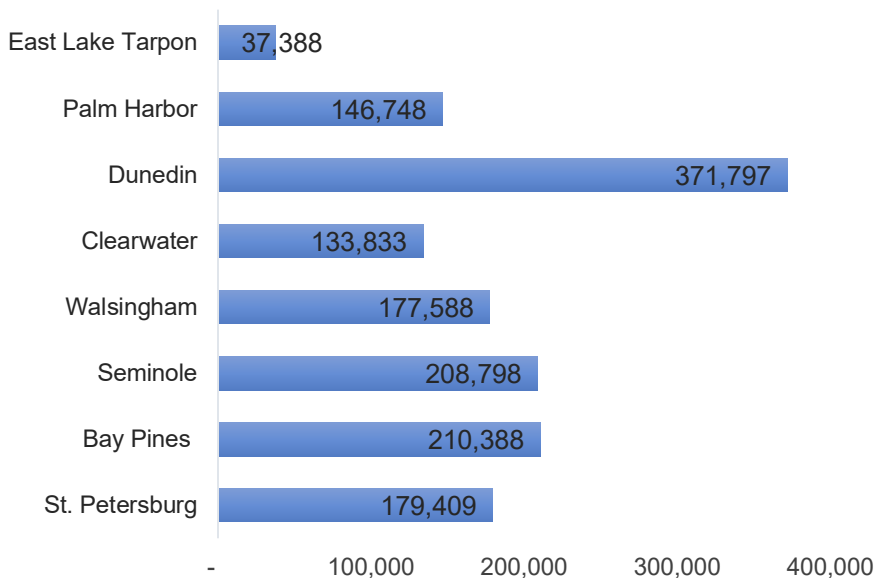


**January-September 2021**

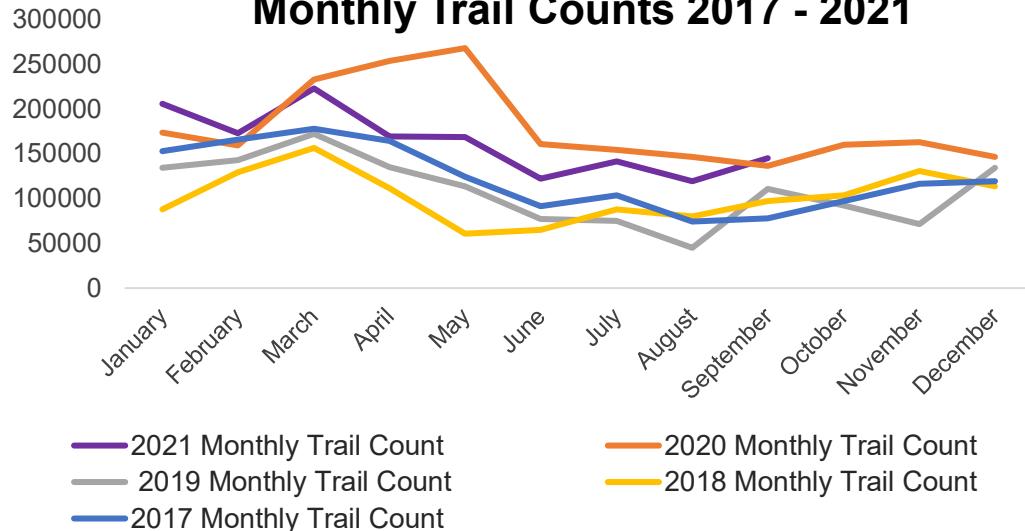
**Total Count:**

**1,465,949**

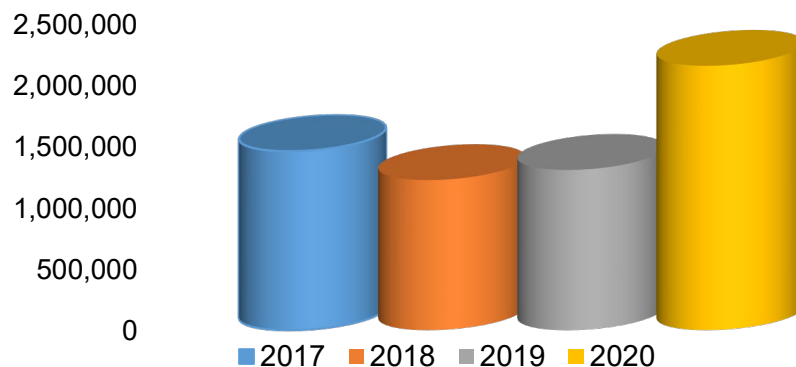
## Year to Date Data Per Location



## Monthly Trail Counts 2017 - 2021



## Pinellas Trail Use 2017 – 2020



\* Technical issues with several counters in 2019, 2020 and 2021 resulting in several missing days of data.

# Pinellas Trail User Count Data Summary

Automated Trail Counter Data Collection Period:  
October 1<sup>st</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> (31 days)

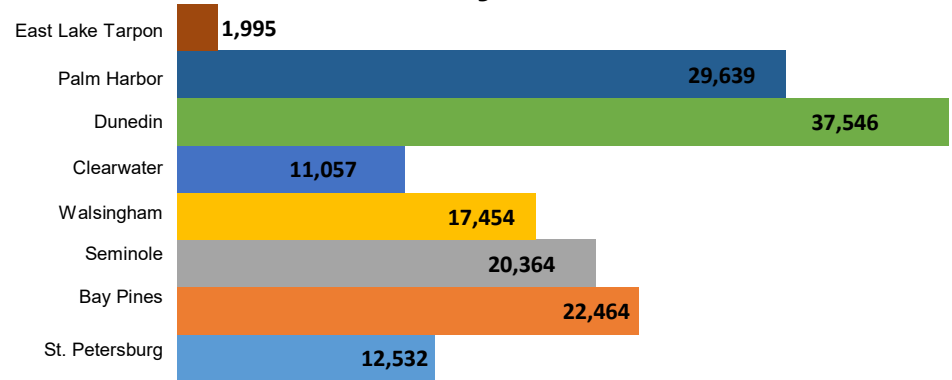
## October 2021

31-Day Count Total: **153,051**  
Daily Average Users: **4,937\***

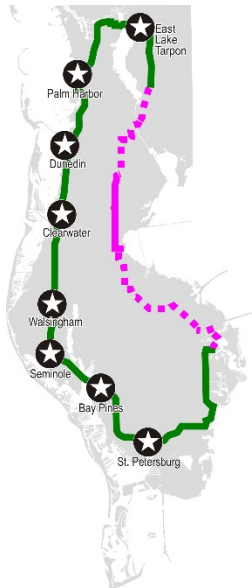
Highest Daily Totals:

- #1 – Saturday, October 9<sup>th</sup> (Dunedin – 2,005)
- #2 – Sunday, October 17<sup>th</sup> (Palm Harbor – 1,539)
- #3 – Saturday, October 23<sup>rd</sup> (St. Petersburg – 807)

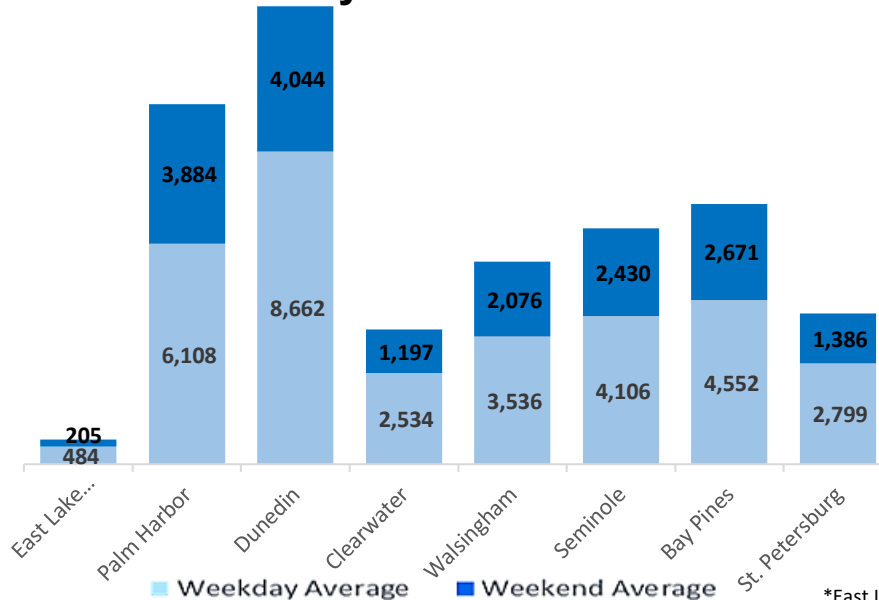
## October Trail Users by Counter Location



## Counter Locations



## Weekday & Weekend Profile



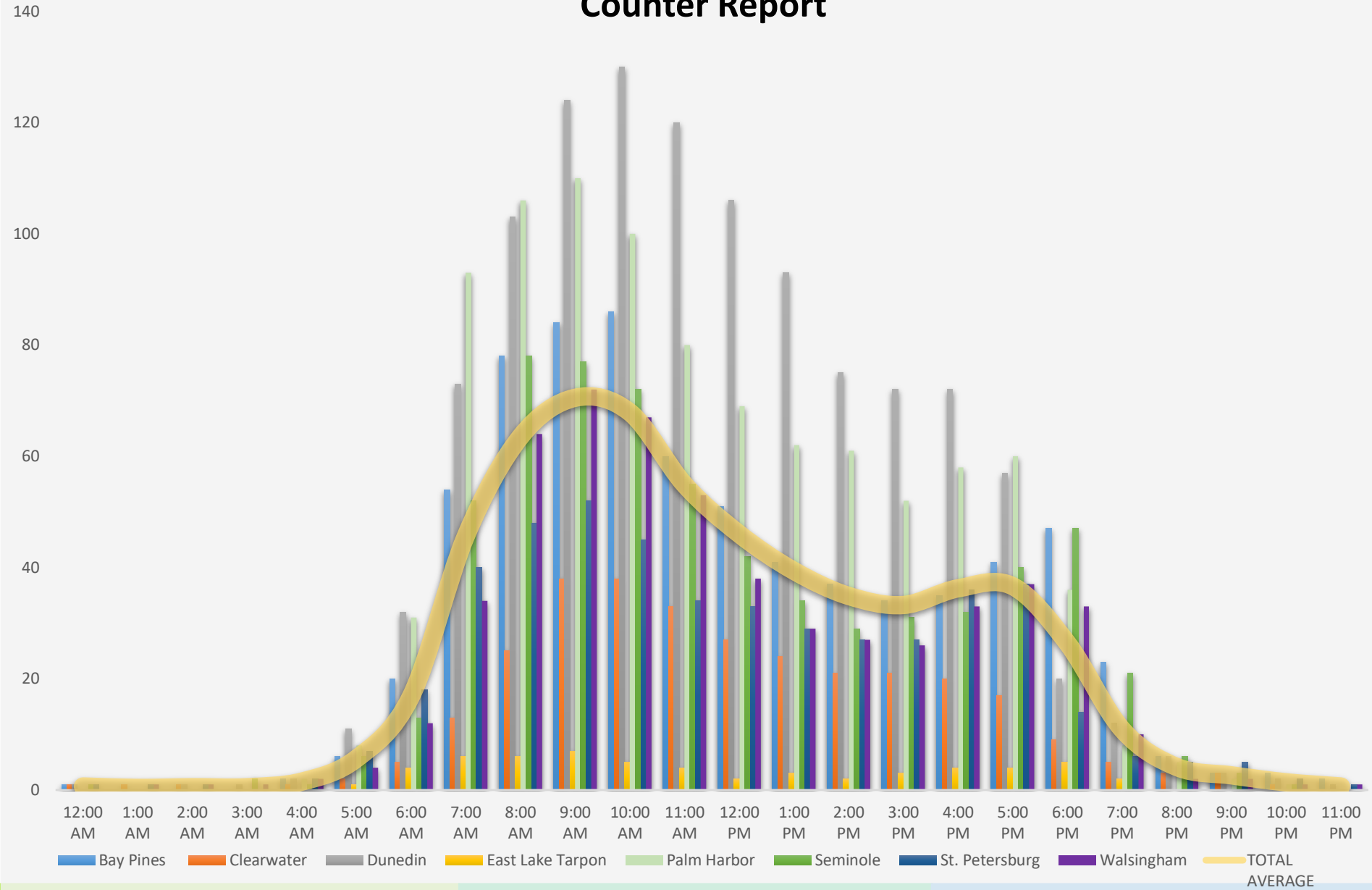
## Trail User Mode Split

Counter Location	Walking (Icon: Person)	Cycling (Icon: Bicycle)
Palm Harbor:	19%	81%
Dunedin:	15%	85%
Clearwater:	2%	98%
Walsingham:	8%	92%
Seminole:	21%	79%
Bay Pines:	16%	84%
St. Petersburg:	43%	57%

Source: Forward Pinellas *October 2021*  
National Weather Service: [October 2021](#)

\*East Lake Tarpon Counter provided only partial count for cyclists in October 2021.

# October 2021 Average Hourly Counter Report



# Pinellas Trail User Count Data Summary

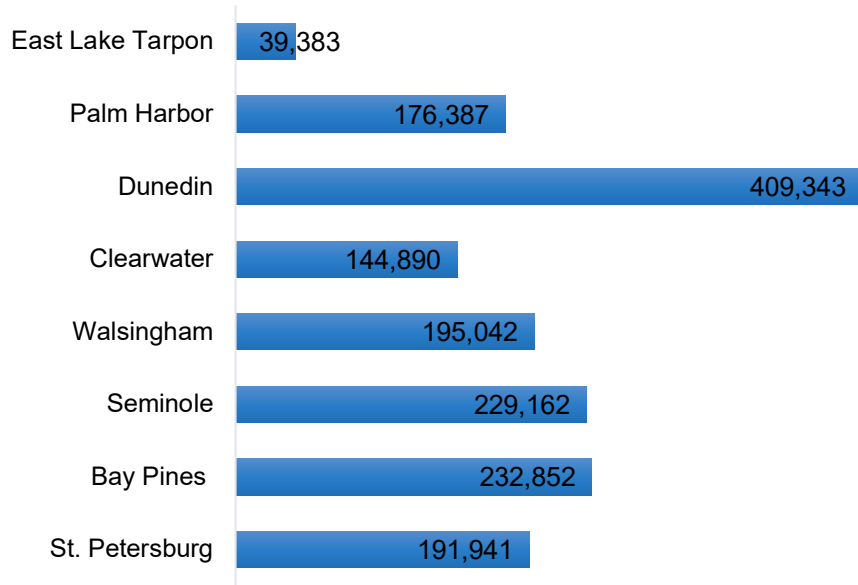
Automated Trail Counter Data Collection

Period: January – October 2021 Data\*

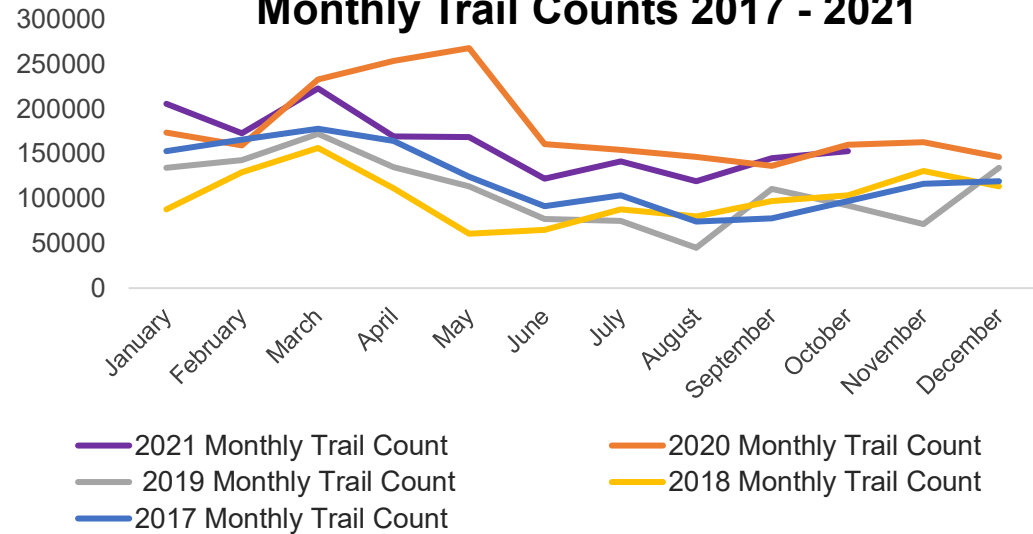


**January-October 2021  
Total Count:  
1,619,000**

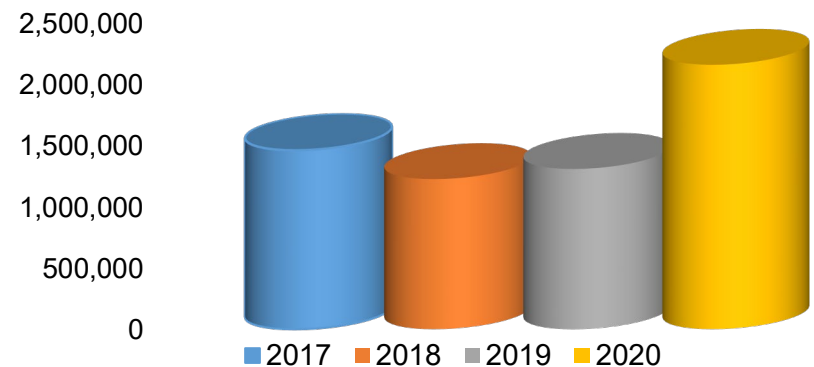
## Year to Date Data Per Location



## Monthly Trail Counts 2017 - 2021



## Pinellas Trail Use 2017 – 2020



\* Technical issues with several counters in 2019, 2020 and 2021 resulting in several missing days of data.



# Pinellas Trail User Count Data Summary

Automated Trail Counter Data Collection Period:  
November 1<sup>st</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> (30 days)

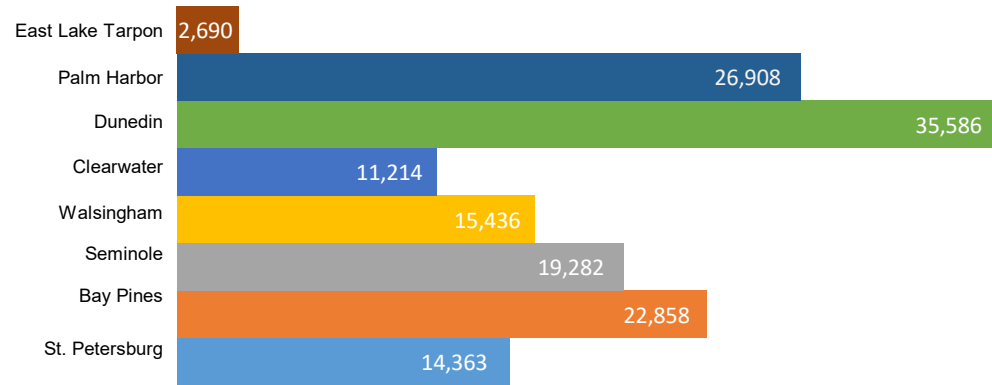
## November 2021

30-Day Count Total: **148,337**  
Daily Average Users: **4,939\***

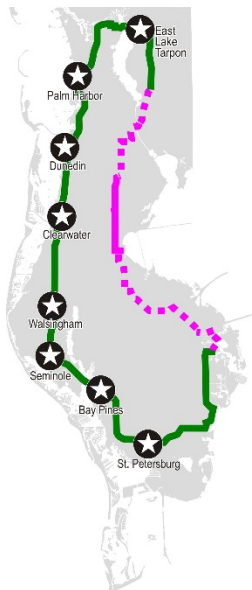
### Highest Daily Totals:

- #1 – Saturday, November 26<sup>th</sup> (Dunedin – 1,813)
- #2 – Sunday, November 7<sup>th</sup> (Bay Pines – 1,366)
- #3 – Saturday, November 6<sup>th</sup> (Palm Harbor – 1,235)

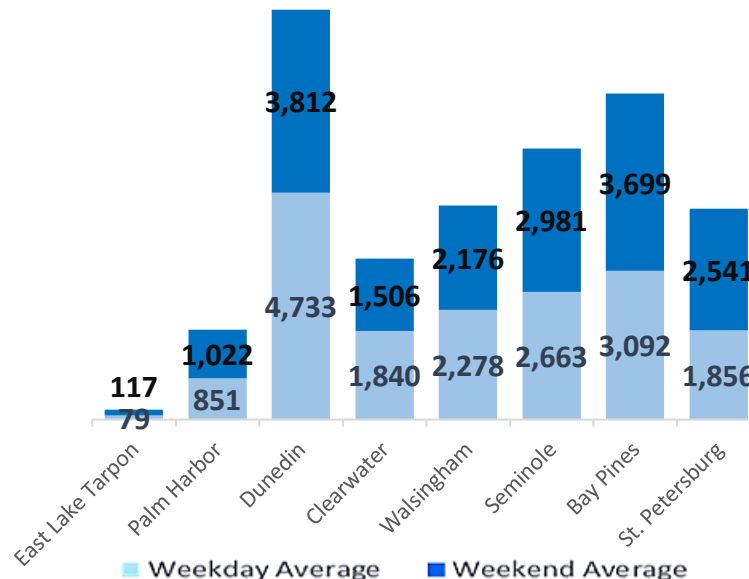
## November Trail Users by Counter Location



## Counter Locations



## Weekday & Weekend Profile



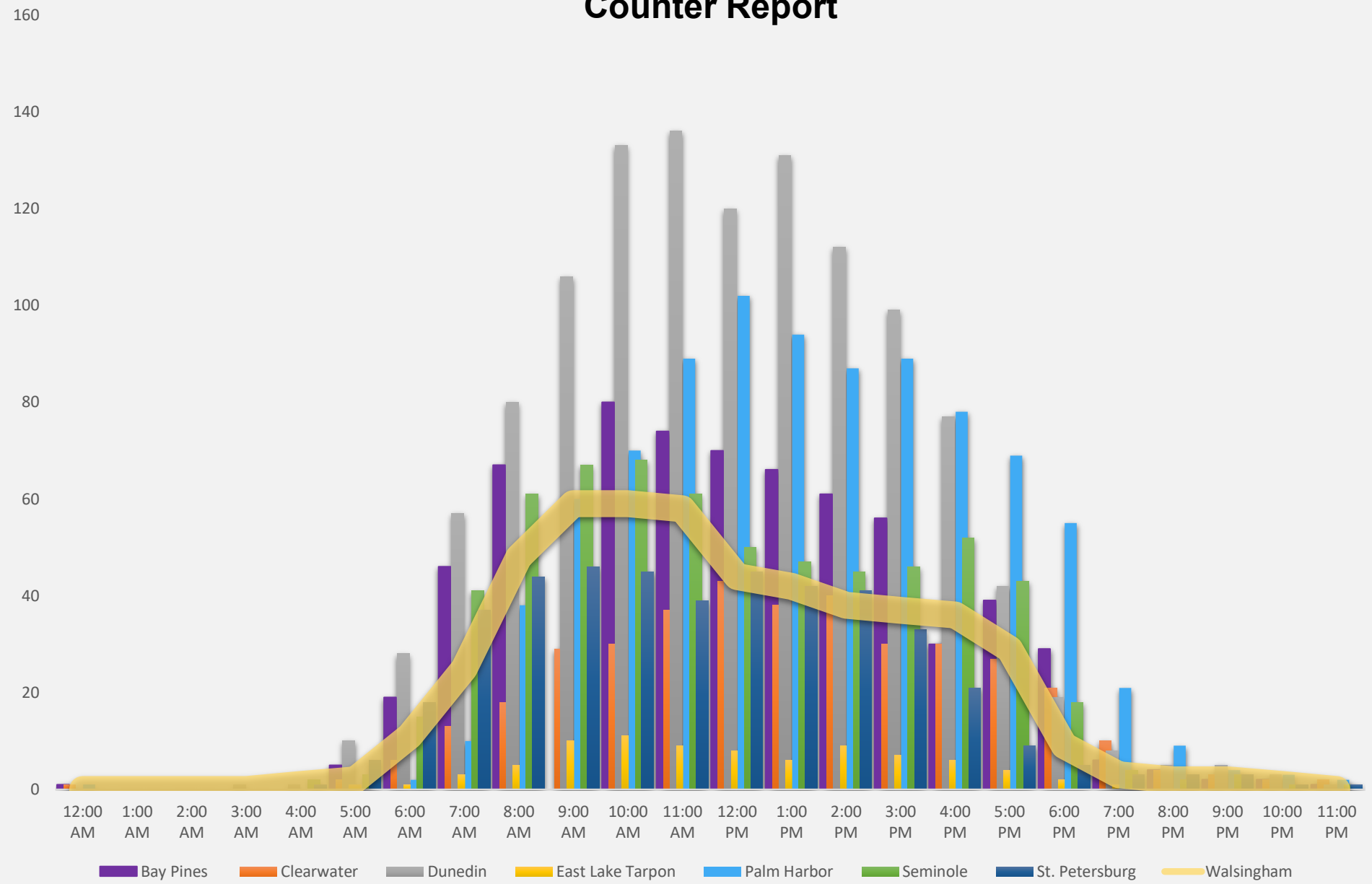
## Trail User Mode Split

Counter Location	Walking (Pedestrian)	Cycling (Bicycle)
Palm Harbor:	20%	80%
Dunedin:	18%	82%
Clearwater:	4%	96%
Walsingham:	8%	92%
Seminole:	25%	75%
Bay Pines:	25%	75%
St. Petersburg:	19%	81%

Source: Forward Pinellas *November 2021*  
National Weather Service: [November 2021](#)

\*East Lake Tarpon Counter did not provide count data for cyclists in November 2021.

# November 2021 Average Hourly Counter Report



# Pinellas Trail User Count Data Summary

Automated Trail Counter Data Collection

Period: January – November 2021 Data\*

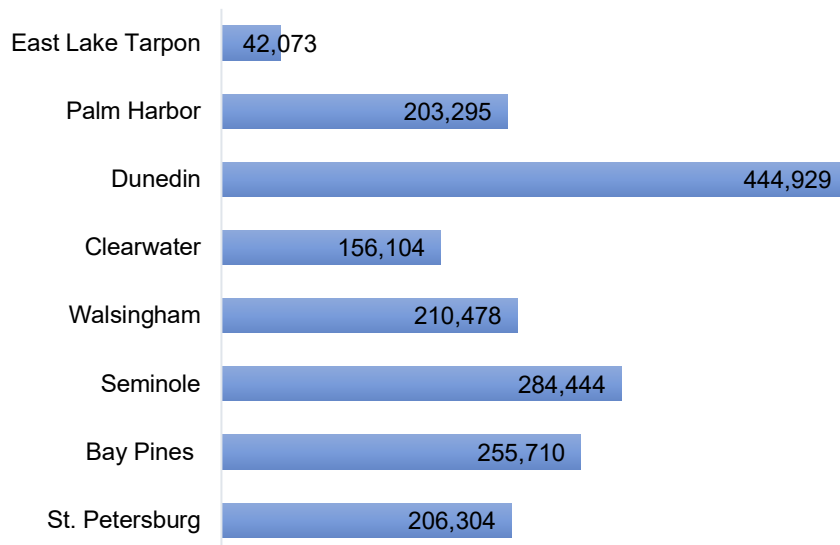


**January-November 2021**

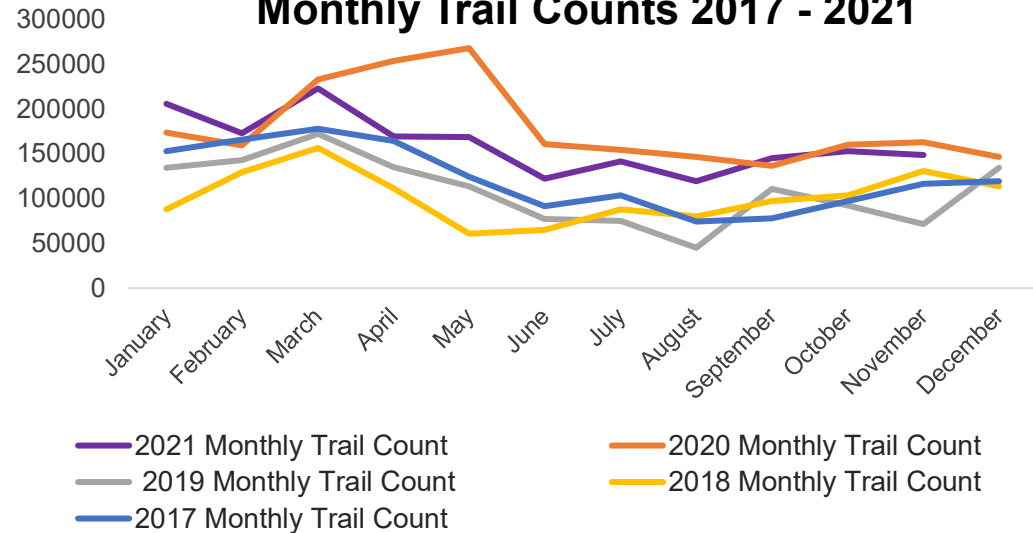
**Total Count:**

**1,767,337**

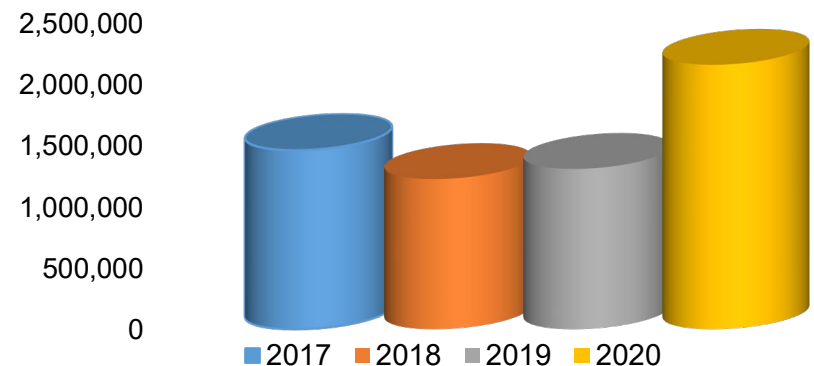
## Year to Date Data Per Location



## Monthly Trail Counts 2017 - 2021



## Pinellas Trail Use 2017 – 2020



\* Technical issues with several counters in 2019, 2020 and 2021 resulting in several missing days of data.

**7. Trail Construction Activity Report**

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TRAIL CONSTRUCTION  
PROJECTS JANUARY 2022

Pinellas Trail North Loop Gap Countryside	Enterprise Rd to Chesnut Sr. Park; SUN Trail; Construction underway, Est. Complete Fall 2022 <a href="#">(link)</a>
Pinellas Trail South Loop Phase 3 & 4	Haines Bayshore to Ulmerton Rd to 126th Ave; Segment of South Loop has will receive SUN Trail and FDOT Funding; Design in 2022; Construction 2024
71st Street Trail Connector	Pinellas Trail to 38th Avenue N; Design 2022, Construction 2024
San Martin Bridge & Trail connection	Bridge Replacement; Design 2022; Construction 2024
Courtney Campbell Trail Overpass	Trail Overpass at S.R. 60/Bayshore Blvd; SUN Trail; Design Underway; Construction 2024
Howard Frankland Bridge Trail	FDOT include trail with new bridge construction; Design-Build Project; Construction underway; Est. late completion 2025 <a href="#">(link)</a>
Gandy Bridge Trail	FDOT to include trail with new bridge construction; PD&E Study Underway
Harn Boulevard Overpass	Pedestrian Overpass; Construction Underway; Est. Completion 2023 <a href="#">(link)</a>
Bayway Trail South	SR 679/Pinellas Bayway from north of Bunces Bridge to north of Madeira Circle. New two-way bicycle lane. Design underway; Est. construction start 2022
Oldsmar Trail Phase 6	Douglas Rd (Stevens Avenue to Race Track Rd) Design complete; Est. Construction end of 2020; section from Hayes Rd to Stevens Avenue postponed.

**10. Other Business**

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**A. Correspondence, Publications, Articles of Interest**

*E-Scooters and E-Bikes Safety Challenges*

*Guidance for Safer Bike Facilities*

*WHO Decade Road Safety Plan*

**B. Suggestions for Future Agenda Topics**

- Trail Planning
- Trail Operations
- Trail Enhancements
- Electric Bikes and Electric Scooters

**C. Other**

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

The New York Times

# *As E-Scooters and E-Bikes Proliferate, Safety Challenges Grow*

A surge in electric-powered mobility devices during the pandemic is likely to become a

By Winnie Hu and Chelsia Rose Marcus

Oct. 11, 2021

The coronavirus pandemic has upended many of the familiar routines that make up everyday urban life, bringing tectonic shifts in office culture, classroom learning and online shopping.

Now it is transforming the way people move around the nation's largest city. A boom in electric-powered mobile devices is bringing what is likely to be a lasting change and a new safety challenge to New York's vast and crowded street grid.

The devices have sprouted up all over. Office workers on electric scooters glide past Manhattan towers. Parents take [electric bikes](#) to drop off their children at school. Young people have turned to electric skateboards, technically illegal on city streets, to whiz through the far corners of New York.

Though many of these riders initially gave up their subway and bus trips because of the lower virus risk of traveling outdoors, some say they are sticking with their e-mobility devices even as the city begins to move beyond the pandemic.

"I use the scooter for everything, it's really convenient," said Shareese King, 41, a Bronx resident who deleted the Uber app from her phone after she started running her errands on an electric scooter.

Electric bikes, scooters and other devices are in many cases made for urban life because they are affordable, better for the environment, take up little, if any, street space for parking and are just fun to use, said Sarah M. Kaufman, the associate director of the Rudin Center for Transportation Policy and Management at New York University.

"In cities, many people understand there is a right-size vehicle for getting around — and that's human size — you don't need to put out an S.U.V.'s worth of carbon emissions just to go to work," she said.

Across the nation, cities have increasingly embraced electric bikes and scooters as a way to get more people out of cars and fill the gap in urban transportation systems for trips that are too far to walk but too close for the subway or bus, according to transportation officials and experts.

Even before the pandemic, electric scooter share programs had spread to over 100 cities, including Los Angeles, Washington and Atlanta, since 2017, according to the [National Association of City Transportation Officials](#). Total rides surged 130 percent to 88.5 million in 2019 from 38.5 million the year before.

Many cities saw scooter ridership soar during the pandemic. Seattle's [scooter share program](#) has grown to 1.4 million rides since beginning just over a year ago. In Portland, Ore., rides nearly doubled to 762,812 this year through September from 385,422 rides for the same period in 2020.

Still, the e-mobility boom has brought significant safety challenges to New York's already congested streets. At least 17 people have been killed while riding electric mobility vehicles this year, according to city officials. Revel, which operates an electric moped share program in the city, voluntarily shut it down for a month last year after three riders were killed.

E-mobility crashes have also killed three pedestrians this year, including the actress Lisa Banes, who was [knocked down by a hit-and-run scooter rider on the Upper West Side](#).

Many pedestrians and cyclists complain about e-bike and e-scooter riders who speed, ride on sidewalks and run red lights and go the wrong way on streets.

"The e-bikes, they don't mind which way they have to go, how they go, where they go, even if they go on the sidewalk or the opposite way on a street," said Jacqueline Aybar, 53, who recently had a near miss with an e-bike in a Queens crosswalk. "Now when you're crossing the street, it's not just looking for a car, you have to look to see if any bike is coming."

City and state officials have scrambled to keep up with the rapid e-mobility expansion. Most e-bikes and e-scooters only became legal on city streets last year, though delivery workers have long ridden them. Unlike cars, they are not registered or licensed or required to have insurance or cited by automatic speeding cameras.

#### **Editors' Picks**

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Other kinds of e-mobility devices are illegal, including skateboards, unicycles, hoverboards and Segways.

"I know there is a concern and a perception about the safety of new forms of e-mobility devices," said Hank Gutman, the city transportation commissioner. "That is an issue we are looking at."

City officials said they have installed more protected bike lanes, launched a [public education campaign](#) about which e-mobility devices are legal and set strict safety guidelines and closely monitored the city's first e-scooter share pilot program in the Bronx.

The [city speed limit](#) is up to 25 m.p.h. for e-bikes and 15 m.p.h. for e-scooters. Riders are required to stay off sidewalks and are allowed to travel in bike lanes and on those streets that have a top speed of up to 30 m.p.h. They must stop at red lights, go in the same direction as traffic and yield to pedestrians.

While the overall numbers of electric bikes and scooters in New York are not tracked, many companies and stores have reported increasing sales. [Unagi](#), a high-end electric scooter company, has seen a tenfold increase in its New York City sales and subscription plans, which provide personal scooters for \$49 a month.

[Chartior](#), in SoHo, has sold thousands of its premium electric scooters and gets about 60 calls a day for new orders, its owner, Ben Hen, said.

At Bicycles NYC on the Upper East Side, some customers saved up money during the pandemic they would have spent on Metro Cards to buy an electric bike, said Sajari Hume, a sales manager. The store sells up to 10 electric bikes a month.

In the Bronx, George Diaz bought a \$550 electric scooter last year to avoid being exposed to the virus on a crowded bus commute. Now he takes it whenever he can. “It saves me money,” said Mr. Diaz, 28. “I’m not around so many people.”

As e-mobility has boomed, city officials have sought to increase access to low-cost rides. The Bronx [e-scooter share program](#) started in August with three companies — Bird, Lime and Veo — and has already surpassed 175,000 rides.

Lime started the second electric moped program in the city in April, which has been used for nearly 200,000 trips. The Revel program has seen nearly 4 million trips since March 2020, the company said.

Citi Bike, the bike-share program, has 4,500 e-bikes that are used up to three times more often per day than pedal-only bikes. E-bike rides have more than doubled to 6.7 million this year from 2.7 million rides in all of 2020.

“For someone like me, who’s not necessarily an athlete, the e-bikes can give you a bit of power,” said Emily Collins, 30, who started riding e-bikes during the pandemic.

But the influx of electric bikes and scooters has also brought more conflict to the streets at a time when [traffic deaths have risen](#) to the highest level in nearly a decade because of more cars, more speeding and reckless driving.

Jose Cortes, who has been using an e-bike to make DoorDash deliveries since March after losing his job at a deli, was hit by a driver in Brooklyn. “I worry all the time,” said Mr. Cortes, 39, who fractured his collarbone.

Samuel I. Schwartz, a former city traffic commissioner, said the city needed a comprehensive plan to address the e-mobility boom. “The streets were not made for the



e-mobility vehicles,” he said. “We have to look at this systematically and not just single out e-bikes and e-scooters. We have to redefine our streets.”

City officials are testing the electric scooters in the northeast Bronx by providing up to 3,000 stand-up and sit-down e-scooters, unlocked through phone apps. Each scooter starts at \$1 and costs either 30 or 39 cents per minute depending on the company, with discounts for low-income residents. Scooters are parked in designated corrals or on sidewalks.

The city requires program users to be at least 18 years old, and to complete safety training and pass a safety quiz on the app.

Some residents complain that people ride on sidewalks, fight over the scooters and leave them everywhere. “I think they bring more problems to the community,” said Awilda Torres, 76, a retired hospital worker.

But others count on the scooters.

Tyasia Washington, 29, rides one from her home to the closest subway station, where she boards a train to her marketing job in Manhattan. “It’s a long walk,” she said.

Ms. King, the scooter convert, said she would like to see even more scooters. After parking one outside a grocery store, she came out five minutes later to find that someone else had rented it.

“I had to start walking until I found another one,” she said.

Winnie Hu is a reporter on the Metro desk, focusing on transportation and infrastructure stories. She has also covered education, politics in City Hall and Albany, and the Bronx and upstate New York since joining The Times in 1999. [@WinnHu](#)

# CENTER FOR TRANSPORTATION STUDIES

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## New guidance will help designers create safe, effective bike facilities

*October 25, 2021*

Many cities across the US are rapidly adding separated bike lanes (SBLs) to their transportation networks. The popularity of these specialized pathways has increased because of their many benefits: reducing crash risk, increasing safety and comfort, and encouraging more people to use bicycles as transportation.

Despite the growing demand for SBLs, current design guidance was incomplete. In a recent research project, U of M researchers filled gaps in SBL design guidance and provided engineers and policymakers with much-needed information for making critical decisions on bicycle infrastructure installations and improvements. The project was sponsored by the Minnesota Local Road Research Board and the Minnesota Department of Transportation.

“The results of this project provide substantial information that will help planners and designers to create the safest and most effective bicycle facilities in a wide range of urban contexts,” says Paul Oehme, City of Lakeville public works director and the project’s technical liaison.

The research team was led by John Hourdos, director of the U’s Minnesota Traffic Observatory. The team began by gathering, reviewing, and synthesizing existing SBL guidance to determine critical knowledge gaps. Next, the researchers conducted interviews to gather additional information: They interviewed planners and designers to learn about their challenges (particularly focusing on safety, comfort, and connectivity), transit drivers about their experiences and challenges with SBLs, and the leaders of bicycle advocacy organizations for their perspectives on bicycle users’ experience. Finally, they surveyed hundreds of Minnesota bicyclists to gather their perceptions of safety and comfort with different SBL designs and their input on winter riding and winter lane maintenance.

The project findings validated existing guidance that strongly emphasizes the SBL as the highest-quality bikeway facility available. “Our research confirmed that the majority of potential cyclists prefer design options that maximize separation from vehicles,” Hourdos says. “The implication is that designs that reduce risk by maximizing separation are also most likely to promote new demand: More cyclists lead to more new facilities.”

In addition, the bike user survey revealed important information about key differences among cyclists. “People who cycle are not a monolithic group,” says Greg Lindsey, a professor with the Humphrey School of Public Affairs and the project’s co-investigator. “Some are confident and fearless in traffic, but many others are interested but concerned. Designers should cater to these concerned riders whenever possible to foster greater demand, and keep in mind that people who cycle prefer to minimize interactions with traffic between their origin and destination.”

The bike user survey also shed light on the challenges of wintertime cycling. Icy roads were the most common reason for not riding in winter; ice was an even bigger concern than fresh, unpacked snow. Because people who cycle prefer to ride on clear and dry pavement, prioritizing lane clearance during winter could be the most important maintenance practice for increasing SBL use during the winter.

The report provides four “tradeoff matrixes” to help designers balance objectives and manage complex contexts when designing SBLs. The matrixes include separation buffer design, the design of mixing zones, tradeoffs related to combinations between barrier and mixing-zone designs, and the design of bus stops.

Ultimately, the project showed that SBL design is a highly local and context-specific infrastructure issue, and that there is no one best SBL design. “The need for separation is the guiding concept, but all else is context,” Lindsey says. “As designers brainstorm, they are making trade-offs among constraints while exercising the enormous flexibility that exists within the still-evolving design guidance for bicycle networks.”

*Writer: Megan Tsai*

# WHO kicks off a Decade of Action for Road Safety

28 October 2021  
Departmental news

Reading time: 3 min (747 words)

WHO is kicking off the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030 today in Geneva, with the ambitious target of preventing at least 50% of road traffic deaths and injuries by 2030. WHO and the UN regional commissions, in cooperation with other partners in the UN Road Safety Collaboration, have developed a Global Plan for the Decade of Action, which is released today.

Globally, over 3500 people die every day on the roads, which amounts to nearly 1.3 million preventable deaths and an estimated 50 million injuries each year – making it the leading killer of children and young people worldwide. As things stand, they are set to cause a further estimated 13 million deaths and 500 million injuries during the next decade, particularly in low- and middle-income countries. These unacceptable numbers, both in absolute and relative terms. Road traffic crashes have remained a major cause of death globally, even though every one of those deaths and injuries is preventable.

“The loss of lives and livelihoods, the disabilities caused, the grief and pain, and the financial costs caused by road traffic crashes add up to an intolerable toll on families, communities, societies and health systems,” said Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General, “So much of this suffering is preventable, by making roads and vehicles safer, and by promoting safe walking, cycling and greater use of public transport. The Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety lays out the practical, evidence-based steps all countries and communities can take to save lives.”

Recognizing the importance of the problem and the need to act, governments from around the world declared unanimously – through UN General Assembly Resolution 74/299 – the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030 with the explicit target to reduce road traffic deaths and injuries by at least 50% during that period.

“One of the best ways to save and improve lives is to make our streets safer -- but that work often doesn't get the attention it deserves,” said Michael R. Bloomberg, founder of Bloomberg LP and Bloomberg Philanthropies and WHO Global Ambassador for Noncommunicable Diseases and Injuries. “Bloomberg Philanthropies has been working

to improve road safety since 2007 by strengthening laws, increasing enforcement, redesigning streets, and using data. I'm glad to say that the WHO's ambitious global plan for road safety includes many of the strategies that we've used to save lives, and it will help encourage governments around the world to make road safety the high priority it should be."

This Global Plan describes the actions needed to achieve that target. This includes accelerated action to make walking, cycling and using public transport safe, as they are also healthier and greener modes of transport; to ensure safe roads, vehicles and behaviours; and to guarantee timely and effective emergency care. It is aimed to inspire countries, including governments and partners to act boldly and decisively, using the tools and knowledge gained from the last Decade of Action to change course.

"More than 50 million people have died on the world's roads since the invention of the automobile. This is more than the number of deaths in World War One or some of the worst epidemics." says Dr Etienne Krug, the Director of the Department of the Social Determinants of Health. "It is time to put in action what we know works and shift to a much safer and healthier mode of transport. This new plan will lead countries onto a more sustainable path."

The Global Plan outlines recommended actions drawn from proven and effective interventions, as well as best practices for preventing road trauma. It should be used as a blueprint to inform and inspire national and local plans that are tailored to local contexts, available resources and capacity. The Global Plan is aimed not only at senior policy-makers, but also other stakeholders who can influence road safety, such as civil society, academia, the private sector and community and youth leaders.

#### NOTE TO EDITORS:

The Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030 will be formally presented on 28 October 2021, during a virtual event to be held from 14:00 to 15:00 Geneva time. This event will provide an opportunity for the WHO Director-General and road safety stakeholders from national and municipal governments, NGOs, and youth groups to make brief remarks on its importance as a tool for preventing road traffic deaths and injuries. To join, register in advance at: <https://bit.ly/3uZpYYB> The event will be held in English.