Board Meeting Summary & Action Sheet

January 11, 2023

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

THE PLANNING COUNCIL AND METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION FOR PINELLAS COUNTY

The Forward Pinellas Board held this public meeting in person on January 11, 2023, at 1 p.m. in the Palm Room at the Pinellas County Communications Building.

The board unanimously approved the Target Employment & Industrial Land Study (TEILS) Update.

Forward Pinellas, Pinellas County Economic Development, Pinellas County Housing and Community Development, Renaissance Planning Group, and SB Friedman Development Advisors, updated the TEILS to address present challenges and identify strategies that can more effectively balance competing countywide interests. The TEILS work has identified several key target industry clusters throughout the county that pay higher than average wages, are export-oriented, and contribute substantially to the gross regional product of Pinellas County.

Jared Austin of Forward Pinellas, Katharine Ange of Renaissance Planning Group, and Geoffrey Dickinson of SB Friedman Development Advisors provided an overview of the work completed and draft recommendations for approval. Updates to the Countywide Plan will be incorporated in spring 2023, based on report findings.

- Jared noted there must be a local process; working with local community to ensure target areas remain designated as so. Areas outside of those target areas are up to the community's discretion.
- Katharine Ange recommended that small area planning be done within Target Employment Centers (TECs) to suggest where residential needs can be accommodated, ahead of the market.
- Mayor Bujalski inquired about how cities can get assistance to identify appropriate properties for businesses outside of TECs. The TEILS Working Group can work with cities to determine the appropriate uses. Additionally, Pinellas Economic Development is positioned to assist in this effort.
- Executive Director Whit Blanton noted that having the TEILS in place provides a framework that is essential in developing the next Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and allows us to be more competitive for grant funding (e.g., can be aligned with regional stormwater upgrades).
- Commissioner Scott asked what the process is for regularly updating data to ensure targets are being met? Data will be updated in conjunction with the LRTP update cycle, which is every five years. The TEILS Working Group is responsible for tracking trends.
- Councilmember Driscoll noted this project helps modernize zoning, and recommended incorporating the marine science to marine work pipeline into the report, as well as looking at current companies who need space and guidance for growth.

- Joe Furst, Owner and Managing Principal of Place Projects in the Warehouse Arts District, provided public comment. He applauded the TEILS team for their community engagement work and supports the report's vision for the local TEC.
- Lisa Lanza provided public comment with requests for Hercules Industrial Park. She requested a bicycle path to connect Hercules with its neighborhoods and Dunedin, affordable housing, employment opportunities, and protection of recreation areas. She also thanked the board for past completed stormwater projects.

The board unanimously approved the Letter of Comments on Draft Tentative Five-Year Work Program for transmission to FDOT.

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District 7 is developing the new Five-Year Work Program for Fiscal Years 2023/24 - 2027/28. The Work Program outlines federal- and state-funded transportation projects, considers the project priorities adopted annually by Forward Pinellas, and is a major part of the MPO's Transportation Improvement Program.

FDOT staff, Jensen Hackett and Justin Hall, provided an overview of the highlights included in the Draft Tentative Work Program and public comments. Forward Pinellas staff provided a letter of official comments for the board's consideration and transmittal to FDOT.

- Mayor Bujalski expressed concern over the timing of obtaining temporary construction easements along Curlew Rd. at Alternate US 19 relative to the construction of planned advance signage for the entrance of Honeymoon Island State Park. FDOT staff responded that the standard duration for acquiring the easements is 12-18 months, but they can work with contractors to move the signage portion of the project up in the timeline so that the two projects align.
- Mayor Bujalski inquired about improvement plans for the intersection of Edgewater Drive and Main Street in Dunedin, considering a recent pedestrian fatality. This intersection has poor visibility and is part of the Alt US 19 Corridor Study. Commissioner Eggers reinforced those comments, noting he had pointed out this concern previously. FDOT staff responded that the short-term plan is to install rapid flashing beacons at the crosswalk, within a month, and to then convert the east-west crosswalk to move the crossing over to a north-south crossing because of safety concerns at that location. Mayor Bujalski noted it would be beneficial to have a conversation regarding reconfiguring the entire intersection because much of foot traffic is on the south side of Main Street rather than the north side. Whit Blanton stated that Forward Pinellas has been working with FDOT to prioritize intersections along Alt 19 as a result of the 2018 corridor study that covered about 30 miles. He said this intersection in Dunedin should be advanced in the priority list along with another project in Tarpon Springs, as soon as practical.

The board unanimously approved the adoption of the Public Participation Plan (PPP).

The PPP is a federally required master document that guides agency staff in soliciting input from the public and incorporating their input into our planning activities. Chelsea Favero provided an overview

of the outreach tools included in the final PPP and summarized public comments provided from the public comment period. One of the biggest additions to the document is the incorporation of audience-sensitive tools that agency staff can reference when targeting specific demographic groups. A summary of public comments includes praise and a request for Forward Pinellas to conduct outreach in places where people already congregate.

- Commissioner Michael Smith recommended Forward Pinellas reach out to libraries for programming, especially for younger generations.

The board recommended approval of one amendment to the Countywide Plan Map.

Case CW 23-01 – A request from the City of St. Petersburg to amend a 4.4-acre property at 2624, 2642, 2702, 2710, 2714, 2720 & 2730 Union St. and Lakewood Estates Section H, Block B, Lots 6-11 and Block C Lots 6-12 and Lots 20-26 from Public/Semi-Public to Residential Low Medium. It is the intent of the applicant to allow for the development of single-family homes on the entirety of the amendment area.

The board unanimously approved the recommendation of the Legislative Committee to send a letter to Senator Hooper with concerns regarding Senate Bill 64.

Senate Bill 64 would place a cap of 20% on the use of Transportation Trust und dollars being spent for public transit**.** The board's direction to staff was to identify concerns relating to the potential effects this cap may have on advancing public transportation projects in areas without a dedicated transit funding source, such as the Tampa Bay region.

The board unanimously approved the appointment of Commissioner Janet Long to the Legislative Committee.

SPOTlight Updates

- Executive Director Whit Blanton provided updates on the US 19 Corridor. The final report for US 19 Regional Rapid Transit Project, headed by TBARTA, has been received. The project has been significantly scaled back to more appropriately accommodate projected ridership and increase competitiveness for funding. A proposal will be presented to the board this spring. Additionally, work is continuing on the innovative interchange concepts for northern US 19 to determine if there are feasible options to building grade-separated interchanges north of Tampa Road.
- An Employer Survey will be administered in the coming months in the Gateway Area to ask about a commute options program using funding from the Florida Department of Transportation.
- The Waterborne Transportation Committee wants to revisit restarting and testing the water taxi service between Dunedin, Clearwater, and Clearwater Beach. Presently, the two cities are on board for local funding support, but not the County. PSTA could potentially assume administrative responsibility of the service to ensure consistency. The operator of the

Clearwater Ferry has provided a revised proposal, which has lower costs than initially discussed with PSTA. Forward Pinellas will work with Brad Miller of PSTA and County administration on next steps.

- The Forward Pinellas Strategic Business Plan is being updated. It serves as a guide for budgeting and professional evaluation of staff. Key areas include development & growth, planning analytics (e.g., before & after studies), engagement and establishing stronger partnerships, regional collaboration, and setting priorities for investment.

Other Items

- PSTA Report
    - The Board approved officers for 2023: Councilmember Gina Driscoll - Chairperson, Mayor Dan Saracki - Vice-Chair, and Commissioner Rene Flowers - Secretary/Treasurer.
    - PSTA's 2022 Employee Engagement Survey had increased survey participation and revealed more employee engagement from prior years.
    - Councilmember Gina Driscoll shared a 1-month update on SunRunner which included survey findings and ridership numbers. Notably, there has been a 30% increase of ridership on weekdays and 60% on weekends on the corridor. PSTA is also tracking which stops experience the most use, such as 1st Ave/5th Street. A full report is available upon request.
    - Commissioner Janet Long requested data on changes in crash patterns along the SunRunner routes. A more in-depth report will be provided at the 6-month update.
- Regional Activities Report
    - The Transportation Management Area Leadership Group (TMA) and Suncoast Transportation Planning Alliance (SCTPA) voted on regional transportation priorities, which will be provided to the board in February.
    - Discussion regarding a regional transportation planning organization is ongoing. Needs to be seen if there is sentiment to move in that direction in Hillsborough and Pasco Counties. Forward Pinellas will meet in a workshop with the Board of County Commissioners and report developments.
    - Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council is hosting a Resiliency Leadership Summit, on May 4 & 5th. The three MPOs will speak on how the multimodal transportation planning and priority program is contributing to a more resilient Tampa Bay.
- The board welcomed new board members Mayor Alan Johnson, Councilor Chris Burke, Vice Mayor Jarrod Buchman, Commissioner Brian Scott, and Councilmember John Muhammad.
- Public comments:
    - Sharon Calvert, President of Fix Our Roads First, expressed dissatisfaction over the removal of lanes on specified roads. Specifically,she objective to the lane removal on 34th Street South and the lane(s) removed to accommodate the SunRunner route on the 1st Avenues in St. Petersburg.

- Gina Foti, a business owner in the Warehouse Arts District, noted her appreciation of her voice being elicited and heard at the TEILS Update meetings.

Action Sheet

January 11, 2023

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

- **Consent Agenda** (vote: 12-0; Councilmember Floyd had not yet arrived)
  Approved to include the following:

  A. Approval of Minutes of the November 9, 2022 Meeting
  B. Approval of Committee Appointments
  C. Authorization to Distribute 2022 Annual Report

- **Adoption of the Public Participation Plan**
  Following a presentation by Forward Pinellas staff, Chelsea Favero, the board, in its role as the metropolitan planning organization, adopted the new Public Participation Plan. (vote: 13-0)

- **Countywide Plan Map Amendment(s)**
  One case was approved:
  1. CW 23-01 – City of St. Petersburg (vote: 13-0)

- **Approval of Target Employment & Industrial Land Study Update**
  Following a presentation by Forward Pinellas staff, Jared Austin, and consultants Katharine Ange (Renaissance Planning Group) and Geoffrey Dickinson (SB Friedman Development Advisors) the board accepted the final draft report and approved the recommendations as described. (vote: 13-0)

- **Draft Tentative Five-year Work Program - Comments**
  Following a presentation by FDOT, Jensen Hackett, the board authorized staff to transmit the Letter of Comments to FDOT concerning the Draft Tentative Five-year Work Program. (vote: 13-0)

- **Forward Pinellas Legislative Committee Update & Appointments**
  Following an update by the Executive Director, the board authorized staff to send a letter of comments to Senator Hooper regarding SB 64 which would require that no more than 20 percent of annual revenues from the State Transportation Trust Fund be committed annually for public transit projects.. (vote: 13-0)

  Additionally, the board appointed Commissioner Long as a member of the Forward Pinellas Legislative Committee. (vote: 13-0)