

## The PTSTF Meeting for July 13, 2021

PTSTF Committee Members – Please note, this is an in-person meeting located at EMS Building at 12490 **Ulmerton** Rd., Room #130, **Largo**, FL (same place as before the move to Zoom). We respectfully request each committee member contact us to notify us prior to the meeting if they **are not** able to attend.

Furthermore, we request your respective departments strive to find a meeting replacement in the event your attendance is not feasible at this meeting. Please contact us: Angela Ryan ([aryan@forwardpinellas.org](mailto:aryan@forwardpinellas.org)) and Maria Kelly ([mkelly@forwardpinellas.org](mailto:mkelly@forwardpinellas.org)).



**PINELLAS TRAIL SECURITY TASK  
FORCE (PTSTF) MEETING AGENGA**  
**July 13, 2021 - 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 ARE ENCOURAGED, BUT ARE NOT REQUIRED**

1. **CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS**
  2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES – April 13, 2021**
  3. **MICROMOBILITY KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE SERIES**
  4. **PINELLAS TRAIL VISIONING STUDY**
  5. **QUARTERLY REPORT FROM PINELLAS TRAIL PARK RANGER**
  6. **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
  7. **REPORT ON TRAIL USER COUNT DATA**
  8. **REPORT ON TRAIL CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY**
  9. **REPORT ON TRAIL COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES**
  10. **OTHER BUSINESS**
  11. **ADJOURNMENT**
- **NOTICE TO LAW ENFORCEMENT REPRESENTATIVES - IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND THE MEETING, PLEASE E-MAIL YOUR INCIDENT/OFFENSE REPORT TO ANGELA RYAN, [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 – OCTOBER 12, 2021**

*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.*

*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 – July 13, 2021**

**2. Approval of Minutes – April 13, 2021**



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**SUMMARY**

The summary minutes of the April 13, 2021 Pinellas Trail Security Task Force meeting are attached.

**ATTACHMENTS:** Pinellas Trail Security Task Force Summary Minutes – April 13, 2021

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

**PINELLAS TRAIL SECURITY TASK FORCE  
MEETING Summary  
APRIL 13, 2021**

The following is a summary of the April 13, 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 Jose Medina           | Clearwater Police Department                          |
| Officer V. Tran               | Largo Police Department                               |
| Officer Daniels               | Belleair Police Department                            |
| Lynn Abbott                   | Pinellas County Public Safety Services                |
| Chief Ranger Carol Gray       | Pinellas County Parks and Conservation Resources      |
| Lyle Fowler                   | Pinellas County Parks and Conservation Resources      |
| Christine Dorrier             | Pinellas County Parks and Conservation Resources      |
| Caroline Lanford              | Pinellas County Planning                              |
| Joan Rice                     | Pinellas County Public Works Traffic Division         |
| Madison Moyer                 | City of St. Petersburg Transportation Planner         |
| Lucas Cruse                   | City of St. Petersburg Bicycle Pedestrian Coordinator |
| Scott Daniels                 | Friends of the Pinellas Trail                         |
| David Feller                  | Friends of the Pinellas Trail                         |
| Jim Wedlake                   | Friends of the Pinellas Trail/Auxiliary Ranger        |
| Bill Romanski                 | Pinellas Trail Auxiliary Ranger                       |
| Phyllis Romanski              | Pinellas Trail Auxiliary Ranger                       |
| Stuart Schwartzreich          | Pinellas Trail Auxiliary Ranger                       |
| Austin Britt                  | Forward Pinellas Staff                                |
| Sarah Caper                   | Forward Pinellas Staff                                |
| Chelsea Favero                | 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. Maria Kelly announced the attendees, of which there were 23.

**2. APPROVAL OF MEETING SUMMARY – January 12, 2021**

The summary from the January 12, 2021 meeting was approved with no corrections.

**3. PRESENTATION: SAFE STREETS PINELLAS ACTION PLAN**

Ms. Sarah Caper, Forward Pinellas staff, shared a PowerPoint presentation with the committee regarding the Safe Streets Pinellas Action Plan and the next steps. Over the past year, efforts to develop a Safe Streets Action Plan, which is the Forward Pinellas Vision Zero Effort, have been underway. The Action Plan includes collision data

analysis, the identification of a High Injury Network (HIN), engineering and non-engineering countermeasures and implementable strategies to move towards zero deaths and serious injuries on Pinellas roadways. A 16-member taskforce with a representative from each of the advisory committees was instrumental in putting together this Action Plan through demonstration projects, community outreach projects and workshops. The Action Plan will be updated once all of the demonstration projects are completed and is intended to be evaluated on a regular basis so adjustments can be made as needed. Ms. Caper mentioned that the Forward Pinellas Board approved the action plan at the March 10, 2021 meeting. Questions were taken and appropriately answered.

#### **4. MICROMOBILITY IN PINELLAS COUNTY: E-BIKES AND E-SCOOTERS REGULATION AND ENFORCEMENT**

Ms. Angela Ryan, Forward Pinellas staff, shared a presentation, on the Knowledge Exchange Series (KES): A Guide to Mobility in Pinellas County. Through the KES, Forward Pinellas has been working with local government partners to discuss planning topics that guide their development of policy and regulatory practices. The topic currently being discussed is Micromobility transportation and how local governments are regulating e-bikes, e-scooters and skateboards. Micromobility activity is on the rise, and while expanding recreational and economic opportunities, local governments have been confronted with significant regulatory challenges such as where to park safely, where to ride and at what speeds to ensure public safety. Forward Pinellas would like to produce a “Guide to Micromobility in Pinellas County” as a resource for local governments to consider when developing micromobility policy and regulations in their communities, and enlist the help of the law enforcement on the PTSTF to gain law enforcement perspectives to micromobility, with an emphasis on current e-bikes regulations. A survey was sent out the PTSTF Officers asking for their input. Mr. Lucas Cruse commented that reading the micromobility statute that basically says scooters have the same rights and duties as bicyclists, with the notion that local jurisdictions can regulate into law or “can adopt ordinance governing the operation of” motorized scooters on streets, highways, sidewalks and sidewalk areas, with no mention of trails. Ms. Madison Moyer commented that St. Petersburg did take their time in developing the e-scooter program and making sure they were cognizant of what other cities have done along with the technology that was available with the shared devices and to be inclusive of sidewalk and trail usage. There has been a great deal of education pushed out and there has been decent compliance with sidewalk and trail use rules through the city ordinance currently in place. Lyle Fowler with Pinellas County Parks and Conservation Resources commented to say what Parks is experiencing. With exploding numbers, the biggest issue is the visitor interaction, along with some ambiguity in the law, there are wide differences in Trail patron courtesy and law enforcement. So, devices withholding, there is a strong element of human behavior which Parks is unsure of how to address. Along with misinformation being spread on social media, there is a lot of animosity from Trail users and it seems to stem from speeds where micromobility devices are exceeding the 20-mph speed limit on the Trail. This leads to complaints that law enforcement is not present on the Trail enforcing speed limits, but there are also issues about Trail users not stopping for stop signs or lights. Parks is receiving substantial emails and complaints about e-bikes and e-

scooters and are basing their enforcement on the state's definition of a bicycle. Rangers are not providing enforcement on devices, its more the rider and trail courtesy or the lack thereof. Questions were taken and appropriately answered.

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

Chief Ranger Carol Gray, Parks and Conservation Resources (PCR), reported on December 17 & 18, a subject was camping under the 38<sup>th</sup> Avenue overpass. There was an apparent language barrier, but the subject finally understood and was given information for assistance. December 19<sup>th</sup>, an elderly female was feeling ill on the Trail and Dunedin Fire and Rescue responded and Sunstar transported. On January 6, 2021, a motorized vehicle was observed traveling at a high rate of speed across the 34<sup>th</sup> Street overpass and St. Petersburg police were notified. On January 20<sup>th</sup>, a Ranger encountered a deer hit by a vehicle and FWC responded to assist. There were no reports in February. In March, illegal camping was addressed at PT216 and 217 and the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office (PCSO) responded. On March 24<sup>th</sup>, illegal camping was addressed at PT577 where the PCSO responded again. April 4<sup>th</sup> a bicyclist was injured north of Alt 19 underpass. The bicyclist refused assistance from EMS and walked to Wall Springs to request a ride.

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

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

No one attended from the Sheriff's Office

### **B. Belleair**

Officer Daniels with the Belleair Police Department reported six subject stops for being on the Trail after dark and a bicycle vs e-bike collision which did result in injuries. The officer believes one of them may have been intoxicated. Also, assisted Largo PD with gunshots fired call, where they had a subject run on the Trail that they believe was involved with this incident.

### **C. Clearwater**

Officer Jose Medina from the City of Clearwater Police Department reported in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter, there were many narcotics related cases that occurred around the downtown area running along the Trail. A majority of those cases involved homeless people in the area. Investigations were conducted by patrol officers and bike team officers. Also had a death investigation at the Trail and 8<sup>th</sup> Street, near Lakeview Ave. That individual was homeless, and no foul play was found.

### **D. Gulfport**

No one attended from Gulfport.

### **E. Largo**

Officer V. Tran of the Largo PD reported the gunshot report from Belleair was not on the Trail, but actually at a different location. There were nine calls for service for the first quarter, two patrol checks in the Pinellas Trail area, three traffic stops using

the Pinellas Trail as a reference location. There was a suspicion call at 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue and the Trail.

**F. St. Petersburg**

Ms. Ryan read the St. Petersburg report stating nothing significant to report in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter.

**G. Tarpon Springs**

Ms. Ryan read the Tarpon Springs report stating nothing significant to report in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter, but they did want to share information regarding Trail Safety, and that the city did install signage to at the end of a street to prevent people from crossing over the median and the Trail.

**H. Animal Services**

Ms. Ryan read the Animal Services report stating they had no incidences in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter

**I. Public Safety Services**

Ms. Lynn Abbott, Pinellas County EMS & Fire Administration, shared that 34 EMS calls with 11 bike related but none were condition related. One skateboard incident and three motor vehicle collisions, one sexual assault in Dunedin, three sick persons, 3 pedestrian calls, none condition related, and two intoxications. There is a 911 report that will be emailed out to the committee members.

**J. Pinellas County Risk Management**

No one attended from Risk Management.

**K. Volunteer Patrol Programs and Updates**

Chair Wolfson stated that the volunteers are slowly beginning to come back but must be fully vaccinated to come back to work. There are currently five volunteers back working now. Chief Gray reported that the Auxiliary Rangers are still in a phased return status. Those who can volunteer independently can return, those who report to a work site cannot return yet. Currently there are six or seven Auxiliary Rangers conducting bike patrols.

**7. AUTOMATIC TRAIL COUNTERS**

Ms. Angela Ryan, Forward Pinellas staff, reviewed the counter reports and wanted to share that reports are showing with just January and February 2021 alone, that there were over 378,000 people on the Trail. Questions were taken and appropriately answered.

**8. REPORT ON TRAIL CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY**

Ms. Joan Rice, Pinellas County Public Works (PCPW), shared an update on the Trail construction activity. Construction continues on the North Loop between Enterprise Road and John Chesnut Park. This project will take about two years to complete. Regarding the South Loop, a virtual public meeting is scheduled for May 13, 2021 at 6:00 pm through the Pinellas County website. Finally, the Duke Energy Trail south of Sunset Point suffered some setbacks and should be ready in May.



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

Scott Daniels, Friends of the Pinellas Trail, Jim Wedlake filling in, shared that the new trail guide is coming along, and they hope to go to print soon.

**10. OTHER BUSINESS**

**11. ADJOURNMENT**

Chairman Wolfson adjourned the meeting at 9:53 a.m. The next PTSTF meeting is scheduled for July 13, 2021, and we hope to meet in person.

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**SUMMARY**

Through its Knowledge Exchange Series (KES), Forward Pinellas works with local government partners to address emerging planning topics through applied research and best practices that guide the development of policy and regulatory practices. To date, these topics have included microbrewery development in downtown areas, addressing the challenges of developing “missing middle” housing and advancing urban agriculture. Micromobility transportation is the subject of the next KES topic. “Micromobility” generally refers to a range of lightweight transportation devices operating at low speeds, typically up to 15 mph. These include electric bicycles as well as electric skateboards and scooters, although bicycles will not be addressed as part of this effort.

The rise of micromobility activity that has taken hold in many communities across the country demonstrates the emerging popularity of these devices. But while expanding recreational and economic opportunities, they have confronted local governments with significant regulatory challenges. Matters of placement, parking and speeds are some of the common issues local governments are faced with in the effort to regulate them in a manner that ensures the protection of public safety.

For this KES initiative, Forward Pinellas has developed “*A Guide to Micromobility in Pinellas County*” a research based practical application resource for local governments to consider when developing micromobility policy or regulatory codes in their communities. This has been developed in collaboration with local government partners and with assistance from the City of St. Petersburg and the City of Tampa. Forward Pinellas staff will provide an overview of the KES with emphasis on soliciting feedback from the committee on next steps.

**ATTACHMENT(S):** None

**ACTION:** None required; informational item only

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**SUMMARY**

The Fred Marquis Pinellas Trail is a linear trail currently extending from St. Petersburg to Tarpon Springs. The multiuse trail, created along a portion of abandoned CSX railroad, provides a unique, protected greenspace for walking, jogging, skating, and biking. With the goal of completing the 75-mile trail loop in the near future, the Trail serves as a linear park and multimodal transportation pathway directly linking eight municipalities and numerous unincorporated communities.

The Trail just celebrated its 30th anniversary in December 2020. While prior years showed Trail user counts averaging above 70,000 each month, 2020 saw an incredible increase due to the Covid-19 pandemic with users at record highs of over 250,000 in May and an average of 180,000 trail users per month in 2020. These numbers highlight the importance of recreation, nature, non-motorized mobility, and group exercise bonding during a stressful time of isolation and unknowns.

The Pinellas Trail has the potential to serve as the backbone of a comprehensive trail system like few others in the state of Florida. As such, Pinellas County is developing a holistic visioning plan which will ensure this regional asset reaches its full potential for a unique, integrated system of trails connecting communities, residents, businesses, recreation/nature opportunities and commuters. In association with the, “Pinellas Trail Visioning Study”, is a trail courtesy education awareness program intended to kick-off in October 2021, which will provide practical suggestions to allow everyone to share and enjoy the Trail. Pinellas County staff will provide an overview of the Pinellas Trail Visioning Study and respond to any committee member questions.

**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:

- March 2021
- April 2021
- May 2021

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

# Pinellas Trail User Count Data Summary

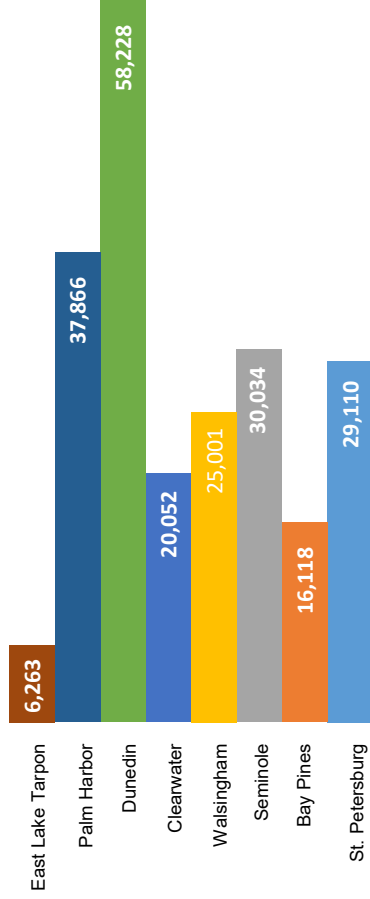


Automated Trail Counter Data Collection Period:  
March 1<sup>st</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> (31 days)

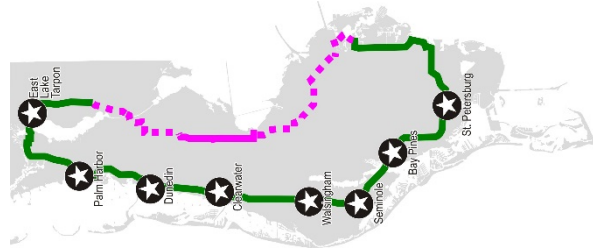
## March 2021

- 31-Day Count Total: **222,672\***
- Daily Average Users: **7,183**
- Highest Daily Totals:
  - #1 – Saturday, March 13<sup>th</sup> (Dunedin - 3,273)
  - #2 – Saturday, March 27<sup>th</sup> (Palm Harbor - 2,055)
  - #3 – Saturday, March 6<sup>th</sup> (St. Petersburg - 1,667)

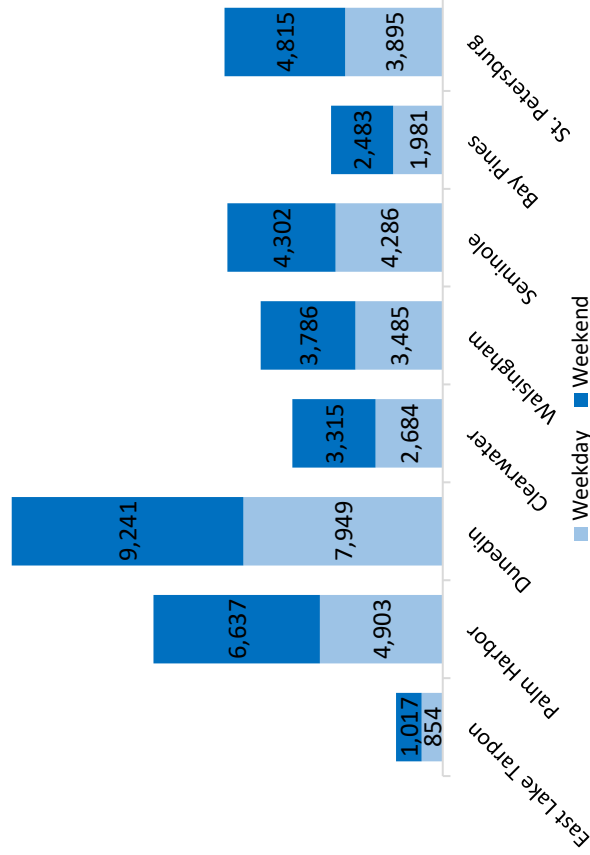
## March Month Trail Users by Counter Location



## Counter Locations



## Weekday & Weekend Profile



## Trail User Mode Split

| Counter Location  | Walking (Pedestrian Icon) | Bicycling (Bicycle Icon) |
|-------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| East Lake Tarpon: | 24%                       | 76%                      |
| Palm Harbor:      | 25%                       | 75%                      |
| Dunedin:          | 28%                       | 72%                      |
| Clearwater:       | 22%                       | 78%                      |
| Walsingham:       | 25%                       | 75%                      |
| Seminole:         | 33%                       | 67%                      |
| Bay Pines:        | 24%                       | 66%                      |
| St. Petersburg:   | 35%                       | 65%                      |

Source: Forward Pinellas March 2021  
National Weather Service: [March 2020](#)

\*Bay Pines counter technical issues, only 1/2 of March data provided.



# Pinellas Trail User Count Data Summary

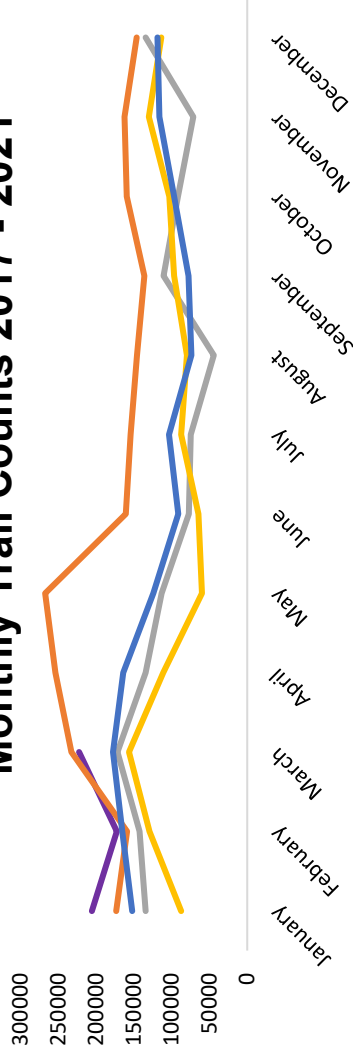
Automated Trail Counter Data Collection

Period: January – March 2021 Data\*

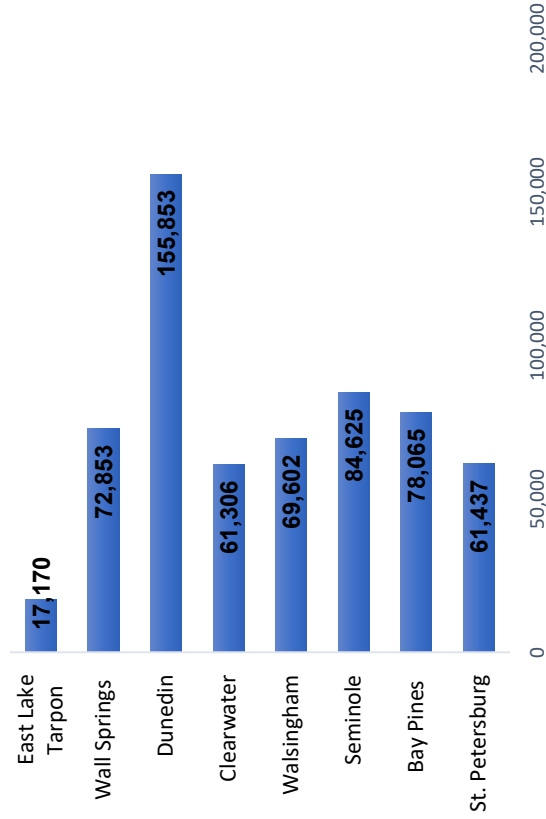


**Jan-Mar, 2021 Total Count:  
600,911**

## Monthly Trail Counts 2017 - 2021

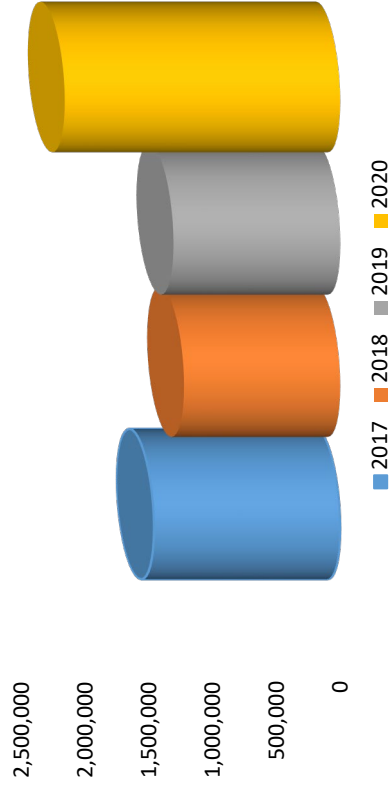


## Year to Date Data Per Location



\* 2010 – 2016 Survey Data & 2017-2021 Counter Data. Technical issues with several counters in 2019 resulting in several missing days of data during 2019.

## Pinellas Trail Use 2017 – 2020



# Pinellas Trail User Count Data Summary



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

## April 2021

30-Day Count Total: **169,543\***

Daily Average Users: **5,651**

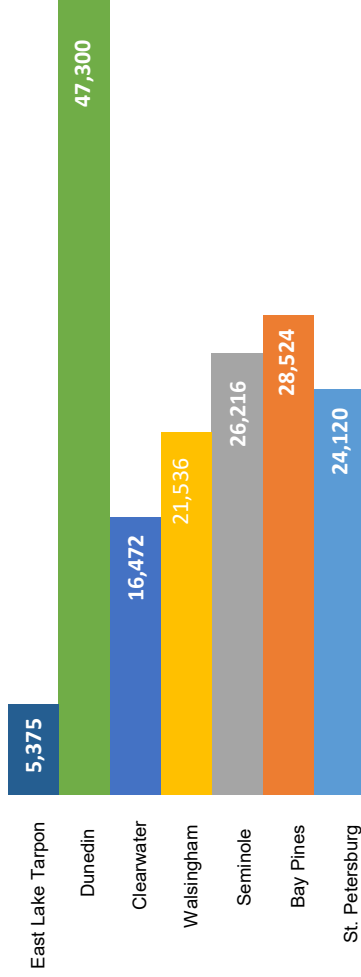
Highest Daily Totals:

#1 – Saturday, April 3<sup>rd</sup> (Dunedin – 2,727)

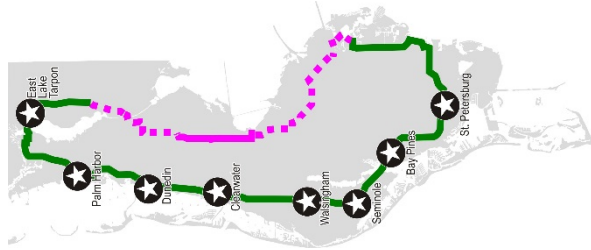
#2 – Sunday, April 4<sup>th</sup> (St. Petersburg – 1,374)

#3 – Saturday, April 10<sup>th</sup> (East Lake Tarpon - 263)

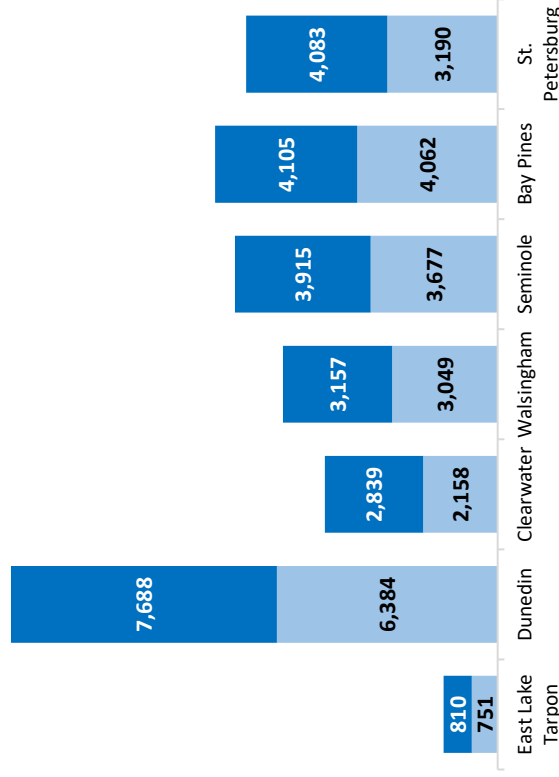
## April Trail Users by Counter Location



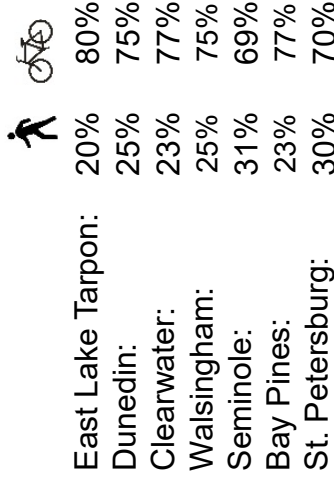
## Counter Locations



## Weekday & Weekend Profile



## Trail User Mode Split



Source: Forward Pinellas April 2021  
National Weather Service: [April 2020](#)

\*Technical issues with Palm Harbor counter resulting in several missing days of data





# Pinellas Trail User Count Data Summary

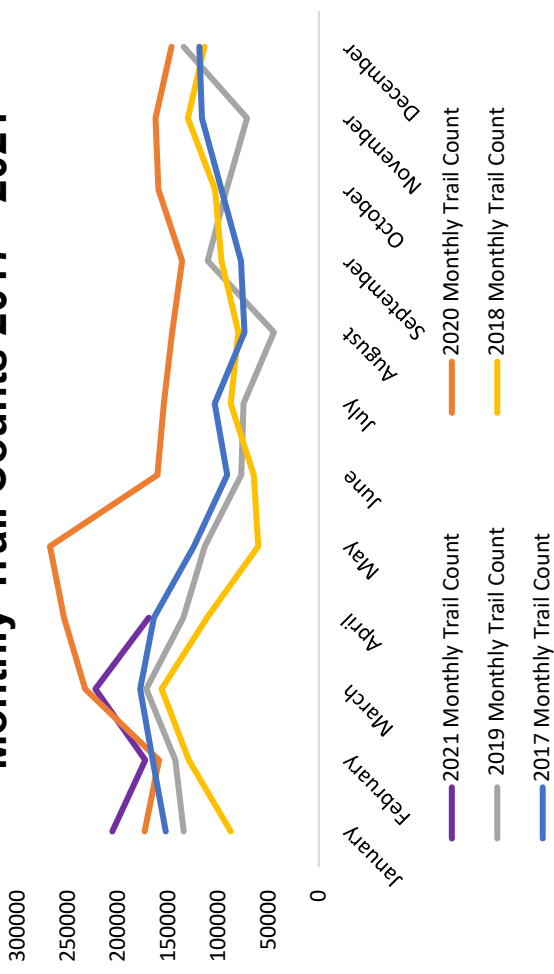
Automated Trail Counter Data Collection

Period: January – April, 2021 Data\*

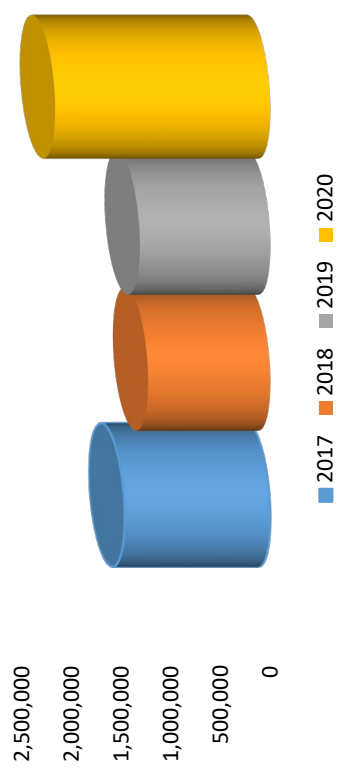


**Jan-Apr, 2021 Total Count:  
770,4547\***

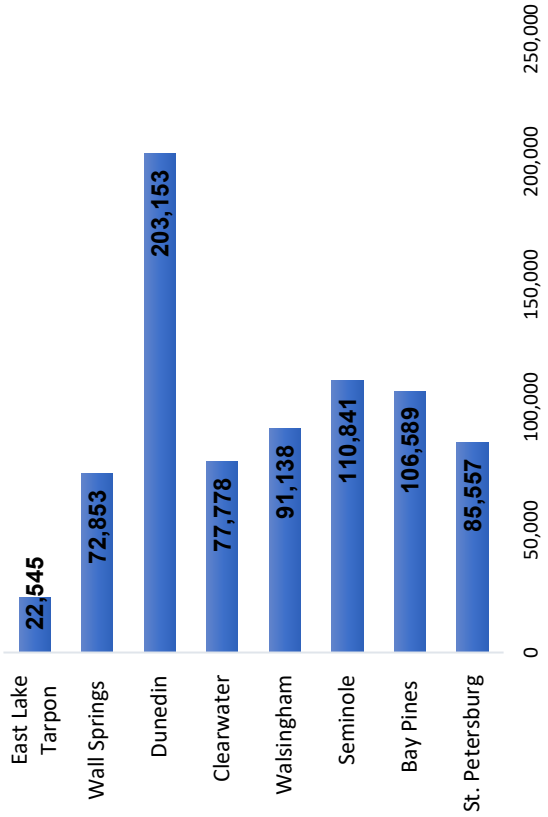
## Monthly Trail Counts 2017 - 2021



## Pinellas Trail Use 2017 – 2020\*\*



## Year to Date Data Per Location



Technical issues with Palm Harbor Trail Counter resulting in several missing days of data. \*\*Technical issues with several counters in 2019 resulting in several missing days of data during 2019.

# Pinellas Trail User Count Data Summary



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

## May 2021

31-Day Count Total: **\*168,237**

Daily Average Users: **5,427**

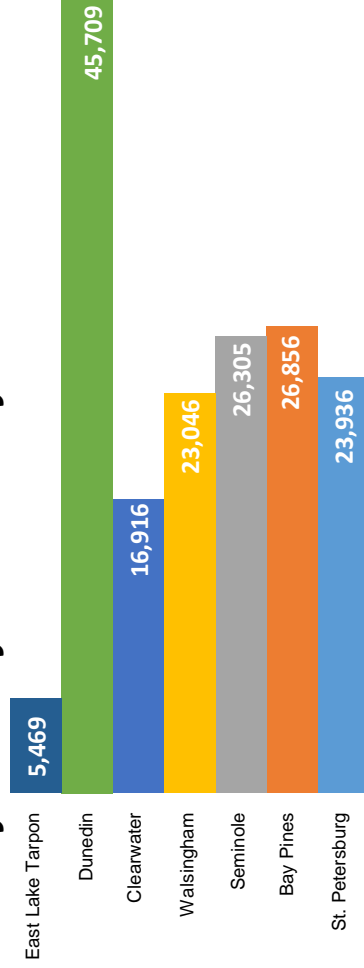
Highest Daily Totals:

#1 – Saturday, May 9<sup>th</sup> (Dunedin – 2,350)

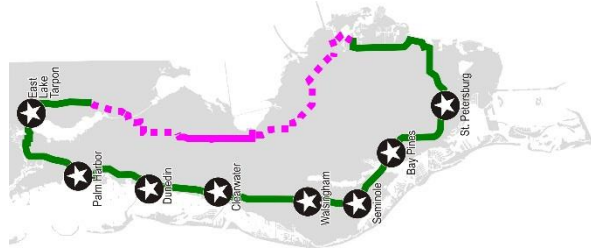
#2 – Saturday, May 1<sup>st</sup> (St. Petersburg – 1,243)

#3 – Saturday, May 22<sup>nd</sup> (Seminole - 1,223)

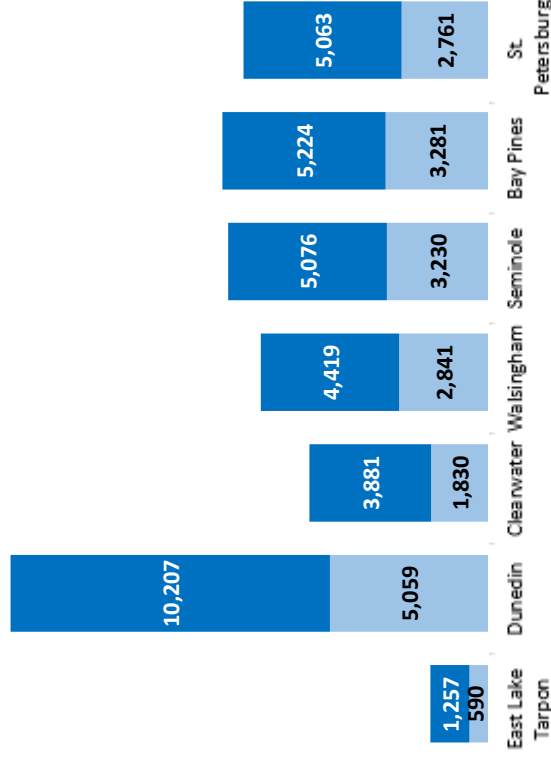
## May Monthly Trail Use by Counter Location



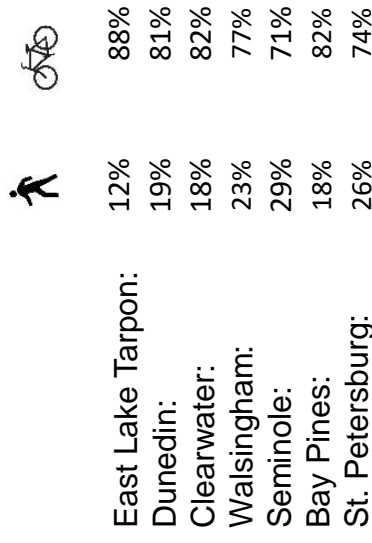
## Counter Locations



## Weekday & Weekend Profile



## Trail User Mode Split

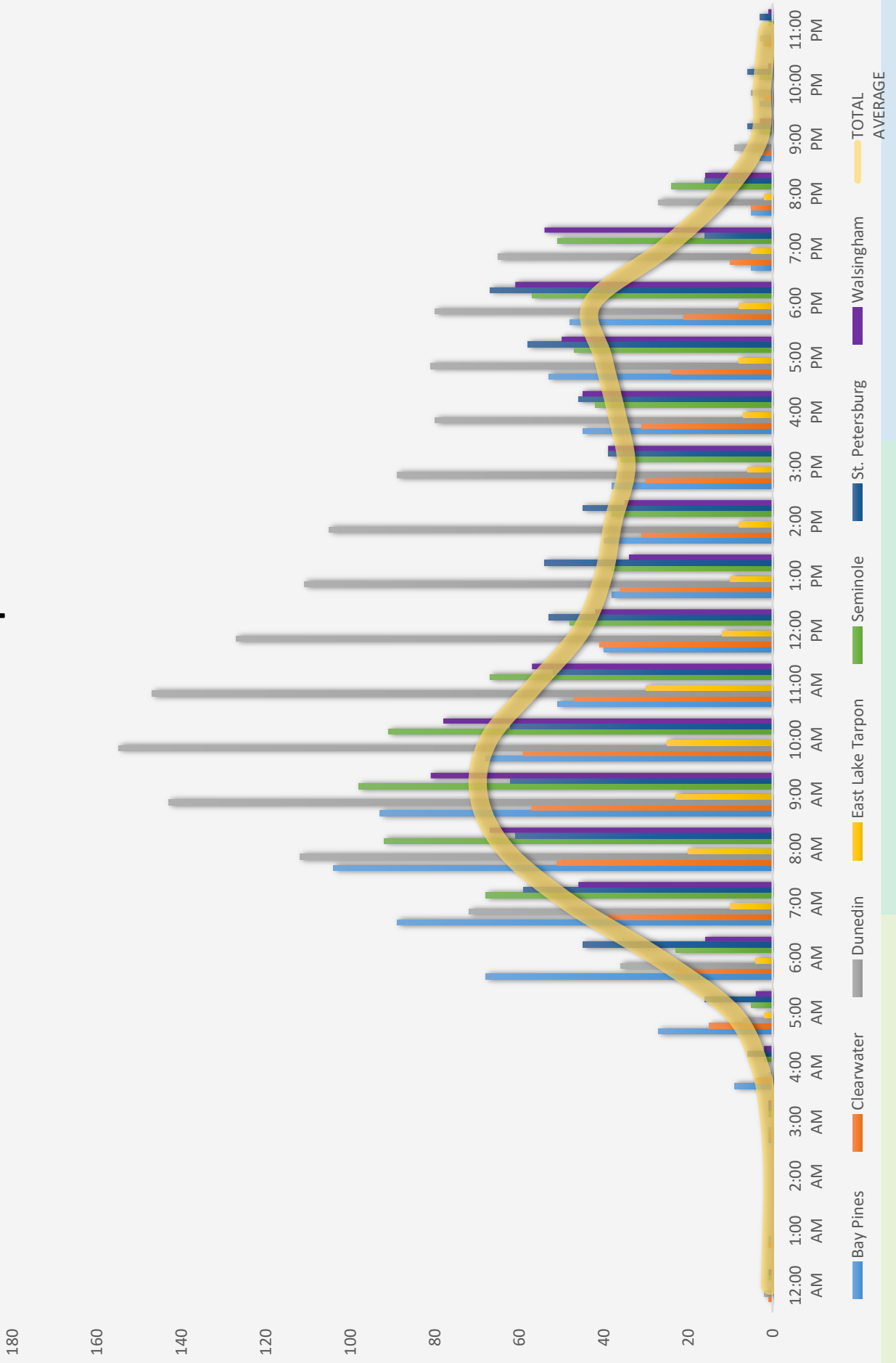


Source: Forward Pinellas May 2021

National Weather Service: [May 2020](#)

\*Palm Harbor counter technical issues, no data provided.

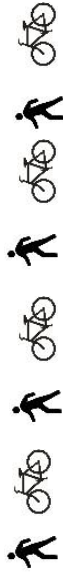
# May 2021 Average Hourly Counter Report



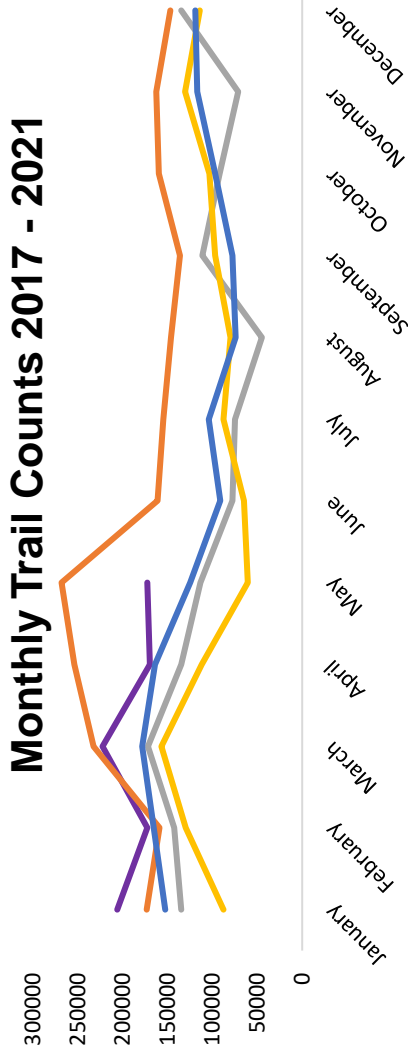
# Pinellas Trail User Count Data Summary

Automated Trail Counter Data Collection

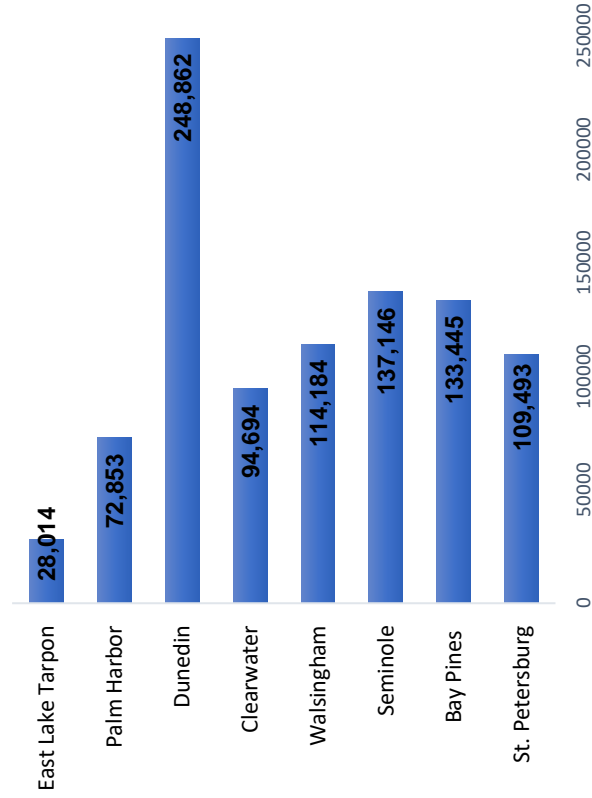
Period: January – May 2021 Data\*



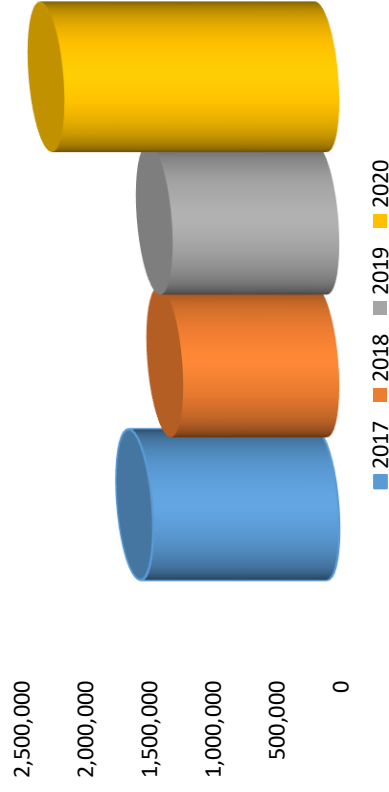
**Jan-May 2021 Total Count:  
939,031**



## Year to Date Data Per Location



## Pinellas Trail Use 2017 – 2020



\* 2010 – 2016 Survey Data & 2017-2021 Counter Data. Technical issues with several counters in 2019 resulting in several missing days of data during 2019.

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TRAIL CONSTRUCTION  
PROJECTS JANUARY 2020

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Pinellas Trail North Loop<br>Gap Countryside | Enterprise Rd to Chesnut Sr. Park; SUN Trail;<br>Construction has begun, Est. Complete Fall 2022<br><a href="#">(link)</a>  |
| Pinellas Trail South Loop Phase 3 & 4        | Haines Bayshore to Ulmerton Rd to 126th Ave;<br>Segments of South Loop has will receive SUN<br>Trail and FDOT Funding; Design in 2022;<br>Construction 2024 ( <a href="#">Pinellas County, Florida -<br/>Pinellas Trail South Gap Alignment Development</a> ) |
| 71st Street Trail Connector                  | Pinellas Trail to 38th Avenue N; Design 2022,<br>Construction 2024  |
| San Martin Bridge & Trail connection         | PD&E Study Public Hearing September 2021<br><a href="#">(link)</a>  |
| Courtney Campbell Trail Overpass             | Trail Overpass at S.R. 60/Bayshore Blvd; SUN<br>Trail; Design Underway; Construction 2024   |
| Howard Frankland Bridge Trail                | FDOT include trail with new bridge construction;<br>Design-Build Project; Est. Construction start 2020<br>and completed 2024 <a href="#">(link)</a>   |
| Gandy Bridge Trail                           | FDOT to include trail with new bridge construction;<br>PD&E Study Underway  |
| Harn Boulevard Overpass                      | Pedestrian Overpass;<br>Design Underway; Construction start 2021; Est.<br>Complete early 2023 <a href="#">(link)</a>  |
| Bayway Trail South                           | SR 679 & Tierra Verde Bridge Replacement Est.<br>Complete Fall 2021 <a href="#">(link)</a>  |
| Oldsmar Trail Phase 6                        | Douglas Rd (Stevens Avenue to Race Track Rd)<br>Design complete; Construction start summer<br>2021; section from Hayes Rd to Stevens<br>Avenue postponed.   |

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**10. Other Business**

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

*Bike Travel is Surging Around the World – March 2021*

*How to Design Lifesaving, Low-Speed, Zones - Streetblog USA – June 2021*

*US Not Doing Enough to Stop Stoned Driving - Streetblog USA – June 2021*

**B. Suggestions for Future Agenda Topics**

This item is provided to allow committee members to suggest topics for future PTSTF agendas.

**C. Other**

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

# Bike Travel Is Surging Around the World. Will It Last?

Written by

CHRISTINE GILBERT

Updated 03/18/21

Fact-Checked by

JILLIAN DARA

TripSavvy / Alison Czinkota

*It's time to rethink travel with a lighter footprint in mind, which is why TripSavvy has partnered with [Treehugger](#), a modern sustainability site that reaches more than 120 million readers each year, to identify the people, places, and things that are leading the charge in eco-friendly travel. Check out the 2021 Best of Green Awards for Sustainable Travel [here](#).*

This past November, a friend asked if I'd bike with her to Tigre, a river town about 40 kilometers away from Buenos Aires where I live. Tigre is a popular day trip for its artisan craft market, the mate museum, and boat tours around the delta, and most visitors reach it by train. I had never biked 40 kilometers, nor had I done an overnight bike trip (the other part of my friend's plan); a trip like this was something I'd considered in the past but never embarked on due to one reason or another. But this time was different—we had spent most of the year at home or within a short distance of it, so when case counts began to decrease and quarantine restrictions eased, we were eager to get out and explore.

It took us three and a half hours to reach the center of Tigre, including our stops for lunch and viewing street art along the river. It wasn't as efficient as the train (which only takes an hour), but it was far more healing after a long winter quarantine to have the sun on our skin and to be moving of our own will and leg power. We felt freed mentally and physically. I noticed a marked difference in my mental state upon returning to my apartment in Buenos Aires. The sense of despair I had been feeling for much of the year had dissipated.

I felt less stressed than I had in a long time and empowered, capable of handling new challenges in the pandemic.



## The Rise in Bike Travel Around the World

As the world locked down a year ago due to the COVID-19 pandemic, people searched for a way to stay healthy, sane, and socially distant. Like me, they found it on a bicycle. Countries from [South Africa](#) to [Italy](#) saw bike sales skyrocket. The NPD Group, a market research company, reported the U.S. had a 121 percent spike for the year in leisure bike sales.<sup>1</sup> And when this rapid rise in bicycle transit became apparent last spring, cities and countries around the world rushed to accommodate two-wheeled travelers.

Some countries, like France, began providing biking subsidies to citizens for repairs of up to 50 euros in designated bike shops, and many city governments around the world began expanding cycling infrastructure.<sup>2</sup> London, Brussels, and Bogota all saw new bike lanes added to main thoroughfares and reduced speed limits for the cars driving alongside them.<sup>3</sup>

Even in countries where governments were slower to promote biking during the pandemic, citizens started biking anyway. Bike activists in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, and Nairobi, Kenya, petitioned governments to expand biking infrastructure, while many more citizens began cycling on streets without bike lanes to avoid mass transit lines and potential contagion.<sup>4</sup> The cyclists of these countries showed that while government support helped to grow the bike boom to an extent, the real fuel for it came from individuals themselves.

While many of these riders were using their bikes as an alternative commute to get to work, seek healthcare, or tend to other essential needs, others bought bicycles or broke out their existing ones simply for a safe and fun way to explore their home cities and countries outdoors. Before the onset of the pandemic, bicycle travel in itself had a strong appeal, offering a multitude of benefits to travelers.

“It was a way to get exercise, a way to connect with your surroundings more,” says Jim Taylor, Ph.D., a sport psychologist and consultant to USA Triathlon. “You really can’t enjoy your surroundings when you’re going 70 mph.” Those long-standing benefits of bike travel were further amplified by the challenges and stresses of the pandemic, driving more people into saddles this past year.

## Is This Trend of Bike Travel Sustainable?

At some point, life will return to a version of normal where people will feel comfortable enough to travel via more traditional modes, such as planes,

trains, and other shared spaces, whether for vacations or day-to-day activity. But during the pandemic, bikes became essential to many.

“One of the most unsettling aspects of the pandemic is that it’s not something that we can control,” says Taylor. “We have this innate need [for control]. Biking at a very fundamental level gives us a sense of control in terms of moving our bodies, being healthy...a way to get away from all the pressures and the stresses of the pandemic. Overall, it just has this very broad psychological, emotional, and physical benefit.”

That loss of our control pushed us on to our bikes. Biking became a source of refuge for millions of people when cars, trains, and other modes of transit felt unsafe. But when a sense of normalcy returns, what will that mean for this turn toward leisure bike travel?

“My guess is that the amount of time spent biking will decline some,” says Taylor. “At the same time, the sheer number of volume and miles being ridden now compared to past years, it’s never going to go back to the way it was.”

Data from Rails to Trails Conservancy (a nonprofit that works to transform rail corridors into trail networks) supports his projection. The organization tracked [weekly trail use](#) of cyclists in the U.S. in 2020. Every week since the pandemic’s onset, except one, trail ridership increased. The peak last year was in the first week of April with ridership increasing 217 percent year over year from 2019; by mid-December, it had dropped to a 26 percent increase from the same time in 2019.

Still, that 26 percent is a significant increase from the previous year. Perhaps the greatest takeaway of bike travel during the pandemic is simply realizing we can do it and that it’s a viable option for short and sometimes long trips.

“More people are realizing you don’t need to drive three blocks to go to the supermarket,” Taylor says.

But does he think there will be a large shift to bike travel from other forms of travel post-pandemic? “I think the pandemic’s been around long enough that some of the habits have been retrained and other habits have been ingrained. I certainly expect [leisure bike travel] will continue,” he says, though he projects it to be mostly half-hour to one-hour rides for the general population.

Thomas Barwick / Getty Images

## 4 Reasons the Enthusiasm for Bike Travel Is Here to Stay

As we continue to predict what trends from the past year will end and which ones will stay, we're hoping that bike travel is among the few that stick around. Undoubtedly, more traditional modes of travel will make a comeback, reducing the need or desire of some people to travel by bike. So, what *will* be the driving force to encourage two-wheeled travel? Here are four reasons that this trend could live on.

### The Environmental Impact

There's one obvious benefit and reason as to why biking hopefully becomes a norm for some people: It's a great eco-friendly mode of travel. [A study](#) by the Environmental Change Institute and Transport for London in 2019 compared the effects of replacing short journeys (eight kilometers or less) by car with bikes in Cardiff, Wales. They found that walking or cycling could replace up to 41 percent of car trips overall, leading to a lowering of CO2 emissions in the city by nearly five percent. Other studies have measured the same thing in Barcelona, New Zealand, and the U.S. with similar statistics.

Due to bike travel's ability to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change recommended switching from car commuting to biking as a way to stop the global temperature from rising. As more studies come out, more benefits of biking continue to be discovered. A [Swedish study](#) found that 111,000 car commuters in Stockholm could realistically switch to biking, thereby reducing black carbon and nitrogen oxide in the air and saving 449 years of life for the general population per year.

### [The Environment Healed During the Pandemic. Is That Progress Sustainable?](#)

Those benefits of cleaner air, less traffic congestion, and fewer carbon emissions are hard to ignore. And, of course, switching from cars to bikes for shorter distances is easier to do than longer ones. But there's no doubt that many people will continue to choose their two wheels over four for the health of the environment when they need to get somewhere.

### Mental Health Benefits

For some, mental health will become a driving force. In Buenos Aires, there was a strict quarantine in the beginning months of the pandemic that heavily contributed to declines in mental health. After 100 days of a lockdown in which locals could only leave home to purchase food or medicine, the National

University of La Matanza [conducted a survey](#) on the effects of the quarantine on residents' mental health. They found 43.8 percent of those surveyed said they needed psychological attention due to anxiety, sadness, hopelessness, and emotional instability directly tied to their pandemic experience.

### [Lack of Travel Got You Feeling Down? You're Not Alone](#)

When the quarantine eased and we could exercise outside again, we got on our bikes; so much so that the bicycle became the most used form of transportation in the country according to Google Maps analytics. In Buenos Aires, bike ridership [increased 98 percent](#). This was partially due to public transportation still being restricted to only essential workers, but also because people needed to be outdoors.

### Improvements to Bike Infrastructure

Another key to preserving the enthusiasm in bike travel comes back to national and local governments. While popup lanes in Buenos Aires have served to reduce road congestion and pollution, governments must enact permanent changes for lasting effects.

In Buenos Aires, the city municipality has declared the goal of having residents take one million bike rides per day by 2023.<sup>5</sup> Throughout the pandemic, the city worked in tandem with the Bloomberg Initiative for Global Road Safety to expand biking infrastructure, going from 227 kilometers of bike lanes in September 2020 to 267 kilometers by January 2021.<sup>6</sup> One major change has been the addition of bike lanes to major roads like Corrientes and Córdoba avenues, as opposed to only side streets, which is where the majority of them were pre-pandemic.

To encourage bike ridership, the city could keep speed limits lower for cars sharing the road with bike lanes, as well as turn painted lanes into protected lanes. How many of these changes the municipality follows through with will directly link to the rise or decline of leisure bike travel.

### The Appeal of Bike Travel

And for others, the challenge and novelty of taking a long-distance leisure trip by bike will be reason enough, whether they're new to that type of travel or they've enjoyed it in the past. French-Canadian Yvan Frasier had been traveling for a year and a half from Canada's Northwest Territories to the tip of South America when the pandemic hit, and he got sidelined in Argentine

Patagonia. When asked if he thinks a greater amount of the global population will continue taking long-distance bike trips post-pandemic, he's optimistic: "I think [the pandemic] just made a lot of people realize that life is pretty fragile. I guess that's why people want to just go out in nature and bike and have some good simple, healthy experiences."


Frasier particularly enjoys the social and emotional components of it as well. He cites meeting new people, the ability to learn on the road, and the daily physical challenges a long bike trip entails as some of the reasons for choosing bike travel over other forms of travel.

### [How to Plan Your First Bikepacking Trip](#)

We don't know exactly how or when our lives will return to the pre-2020 version of normal, but hopefully biking as a means of travel is here to stay for many people, staying top of mind when we need to go somewhere. In other words, next time you're planning a trip—whether to the grocery store or farther to a neighboring city—ask yourself: Can I bike there?



## How To Design Life-Saving, Low-Speed Zones

By Nikita Luke and Siba El-Samra | May 24, 2021 | 



Low-speed zones are a key solution for effective speed management, and for creating more accessible, livable urban spaces. Photo: WRI México/Flickr

This piece originally [appeared on City Fix](#) and is reprinted here with permission.

**A**s the COVID-19 pandemic has altered urban landscapes and pushed many people toward active mobility, there's increased urgency to make roads safer for walking and cycling. Many cities are now tasked with protecting more vulnerable users in addition to creating safe public spaces that will enable economic recovery and allow residents to enjoy the outdoors. At the same time, there are long-term reasons to support this transition.

“Walking and cycling are among the most sustainable ways to get around cities – but not if they are extremely dangerous,” said Claudia Adriazola-Steil, Acting Director of Urban Mobility and Director of Health & Road Safety at WRI Ross Center for Sustainable Cities.



Traffic crashes remain a leading cause of death worldwide, and the number one cause of death and serious injury for young people aged 5 to 29. Speed is one of the main risk factors in road crashes; in low- and middle-income countries, in particular, vehicle speeds are the **leading factor** in almost half of all traffic fatalities. Even small increases in speed significantly increase the probability of death or injury.

But we know what works. Low-speed zones are a key solution for effective speed management. A low-speed zone is a defined area – such as a school zone, neighborhood or commercial district – that aims to improve the safety of vulnerable users through traffic-calming measures. And by supporting safe active travel, these zones reap a variety of other benefits, ranging from better air quality, to economic recovery to broader sustainability.

## How to Design Effective Low-Speed Zones



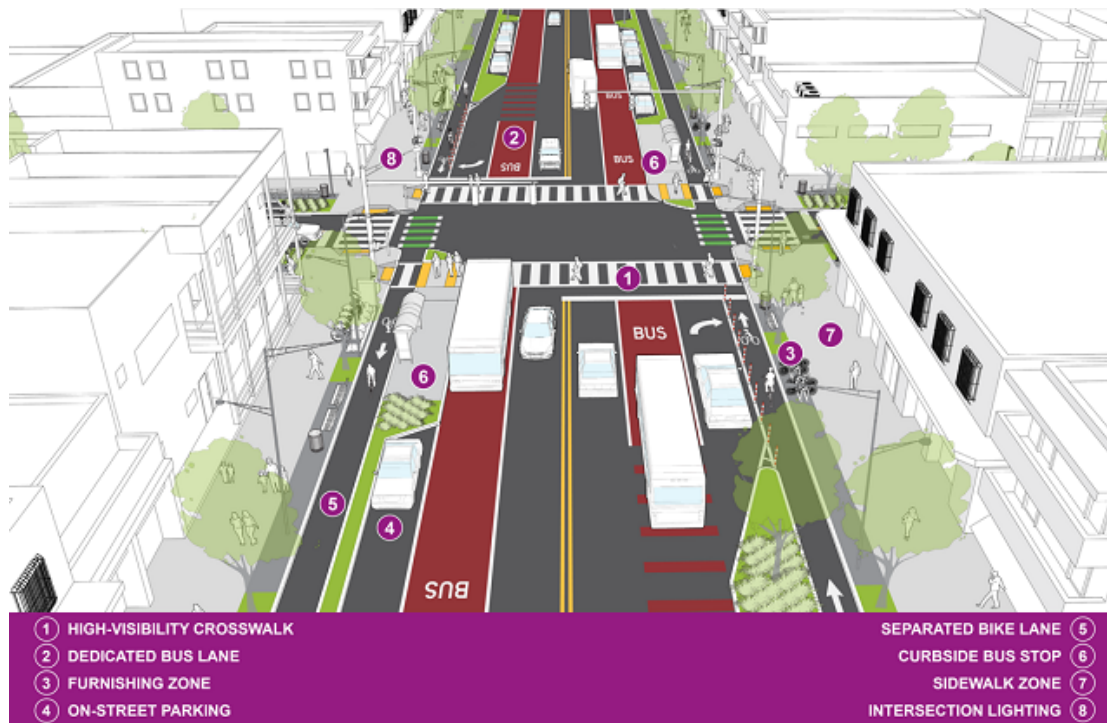
A [new guide by WRI and the World Bank](#) sets out guidelines for planning, designing, implementing and evaluating low-speed zones. Below are examples of design considerations for low-speed zones in diverse settings to help create safer, thriving urban spaces.

### 1. High-Density, Mixed-Use Streets

High-density, mixed-use streets are hubs of activity and community interaction and are often traffic-dense. Therefore, prioritizing the comfort and safety of vulnerable users over



motorists should be the goal here. These streets must provide adequate and clear separation between transport modes to ensure safety for the most vulnerable, like pedestrians and cyclists, while allowing smooth traffic flow.



Example of low-speed zone features in a high-density, mixed-use street.

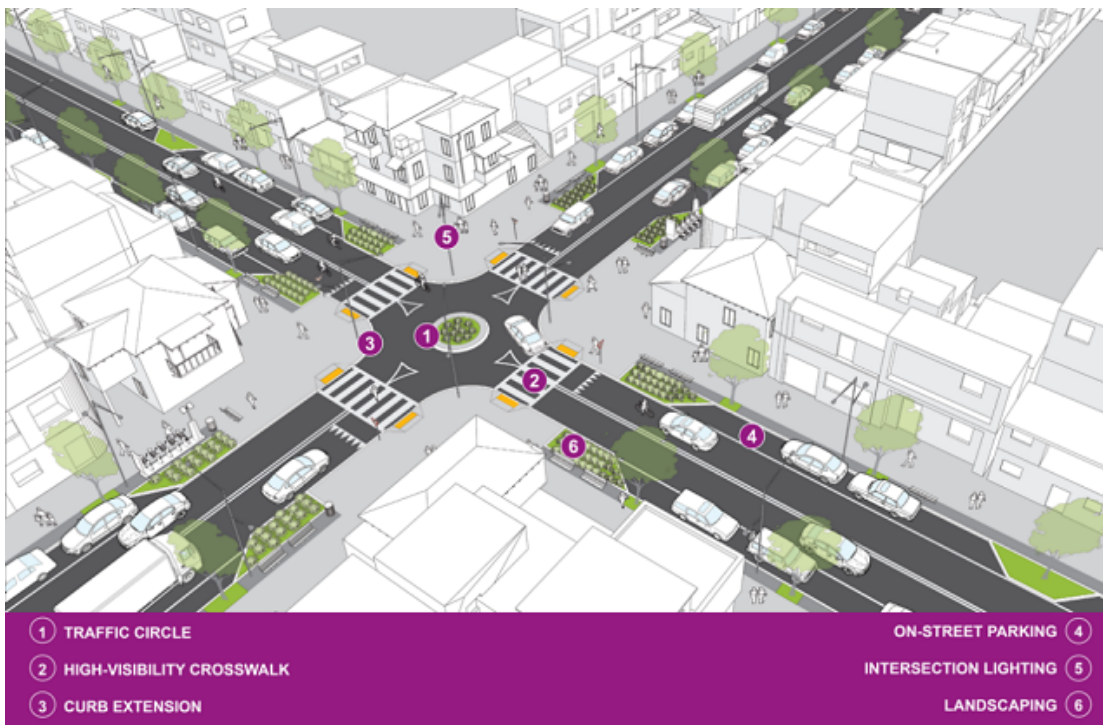
**Target speeds** for these streets are 20-30 km/h, and it's important to provide both visual and physical cues to encourage drivers to slow down. Examples include elements that narrow lanes and slow vehicles at key points, such as center medians and curb radii less than 4.5 meters.

In addition to slowing speeds, the visibility of pedestrians and cyclists should be increased through **high-visibility crossings**, and **pavement markings** that extend through intersections and at **midblock crossings** where needed. Other **design elements**, like street furnishings, can further promote pedestrian and cyclist priority and foster social, economic and cultural activity.

## 2. Residential Streets

Residential streets should provide safe, accessible spaces for social interaction and frequent travel by all types of users. These streets should focus less on traffic flow and more on providing a safe environment for families walking around the neighborhood or children playing on the roadside. These streets function best with an assigned target speed of 20-30km/h, but generally have less traffic density and fewer vehicle types.





Example of low-speed zone features in a high-volume residential street with a traffic circle.



Example of low-speed zone features in a high-volume residential street with a protected bike lane.

Wide sidewalks, layered planting of trees and shrubs, and appropriate street lighting improve overall pedestrian comfort, walkability and safety. As with other street types, it's important here to visually and physically narrow the roadway for drivers to encourage slower speeds. One of the [many](#) ways to do this, especially in a residential setting, is to

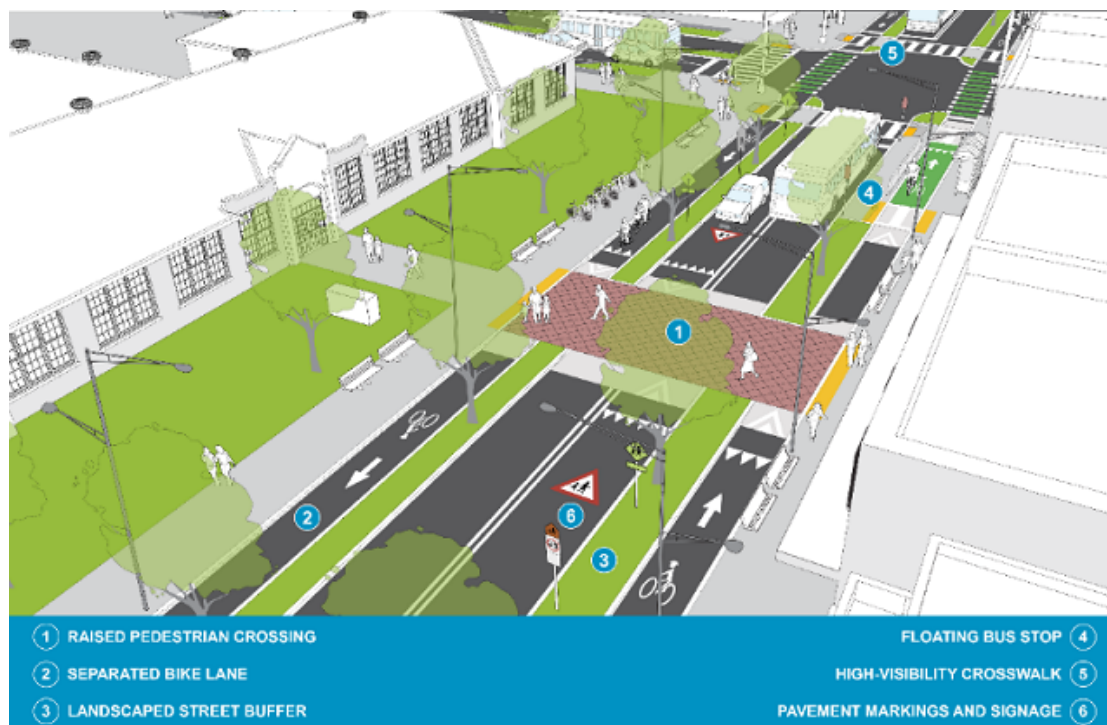
accommodate on-street parking. Not only does this improve accessibility for residents, it helps with “perceptive” narrowing of streets and creates a buffer zone between bike lanes or sidewalks and vehicular traffic.



For safety at intersections, street space and crossing locations should be clearly designated for each transport mode. Access to public transportation should also be carefully considered and accommodated through bus stops and public bike-share docking stations or parking areas that allow safe and efficient queuing, boarding and docking. Bus stops, driveways and intersections are locations that frequently generate conflicts between cyclists and other road users. These areas should be **designed** to improve visibility and easily convey which user has the right of way.

### 3. School Zones

Slowing speeds near schools is crucial. The number of children injured or disabled as a result of road traffic crashes is estimated to be around **10 million each year**. Children are more vulnerable to collisions than adults due to their size, limited impulse control and slower reaction time.



Example of low-speed zone features in a school zone.

Speeds in a school area should be no more than 20km/h. Streets must be equipped with visual, physical and regulatory cues such as traffic signs, high-visibility and **raised crossings**, curb extensions, and detectable road markings that alert drivers to the presence of children

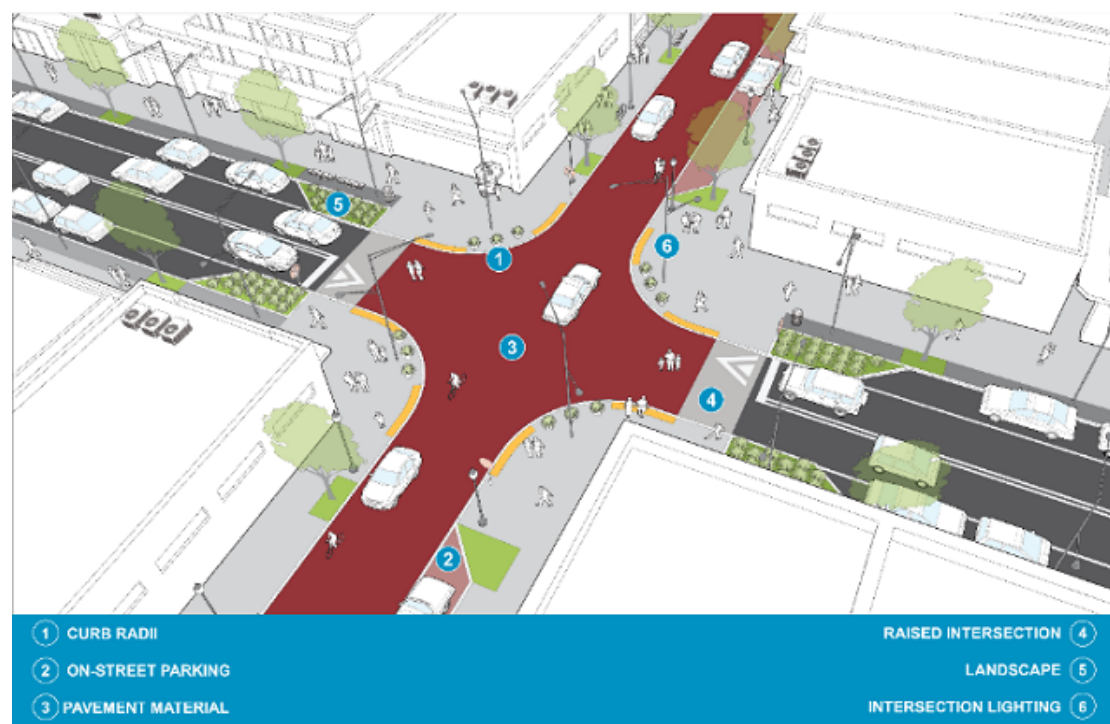


and reduce their speeds. Children are often obscured by parked cars, tall landscaping and other street elements, so sightlines are also important to consider. Parking restrictions near crossing locations should also be considered to reduce overall vehicle traffic.

[SARSAI](#), the winner of the [2018-2019 WRI Ross Center Prize for Cities](#), implemented many of these elements to help reduce traffic injuries among children in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania, and other African cities by 26% through targeted interventions in school areas.

#### 4. Shared Streets

Shared streets comingle pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles in the same space and work best in commercial areas with high pedestrian traffic, allowing easy access to commerce and essentially expanding public space into the street. Low vehicle volumes and speeds not exceeding 10km/h are essential here.



Example of low-speed zone features in a shared street.

Shared streets generally do not have vertical curbs, signs and as many pavement markings that clearly segregate modes. Instead, raised intersections and texture changes are used to mark the transition to a shared street. These design cues help all users advance with caution and practice safer vehicular speeds in the zone. The use of street furnishings, [public installations](#) and lighting also adds functionality and vitality. Data from the Netherlands indicates that well-designed shared streets can reduce the incidence of crashes by up to [50%](#).

At the same time, it's important to realize the added concern this type of street could impose on the disabled community and the need to [design shared streets mindfully](#) for those with vision and mobility impairments, including with elements like tactile walking surfaces, readily detectable edges and warning surfaces, and audible information at key areas like crosswalks.

As the above examples show, the most important first step in designing a low-speed zone is assessing existing road conditions and context. What best fits the purpose of the area and users? Then, speed-calming solutions that suit those conditions can be implemented to accommodate all street users safely, comfortably and efficiently. Choosing the right set of traffic-calming interventions within an identified zone can make all the difference in saving lives, as well as creating more accessible, livable urban spaces.

*This week marks the 6<sup>th</sup> UN Global Road Safety week. Join WRI and the World Bank on May 20 at 9am EDT to officially launch the Low-Speed Zone Guide and discuss an upcoming comprehensive Global Speed Management Guide for policymakers. Register [here](#).*

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*Siba El-Samra is an urban mobility associate for health and road safety at WRI Ross Center for Sustainable Cities.*

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Filed Under: [Bicycling](#), [Car-Free Streets](#), [Complete Streets](#), [Infrastructure](#), [Open Streets](#), [Pedestrian Infrastructure](#), [Pedestrian safety](#), [Promoted](#), [Road Design](#), [sneckdowns](#), [Speed](#), [Traffic Calming](#), [Transportation Policy](#), [Promoted](#)

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# STREETSBLOG

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## STUDY: U.S. Not Doing Enough To Stop Stoned Driving (or to Boost Transit)

By Kea Wilson | Jun 22, 2021 | 



Image: Pixnio, CC

**C**ar crash rates increased after the legalization of marijuana in Western states, a pair of new studies finds — but increasing access to transit may be the only sure-fire way to rein in stoned driving, especially without increasing police harassment of people of color.

In a set of [linked studies](#) from the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety and Highway Loss Data Institute, researchers found that new marijuana legalization policies in California,

Colorado, Nevada, Oregon, and Washington were correlated with a 6-percent increase in injury-causing car crash rates in the months that followed.

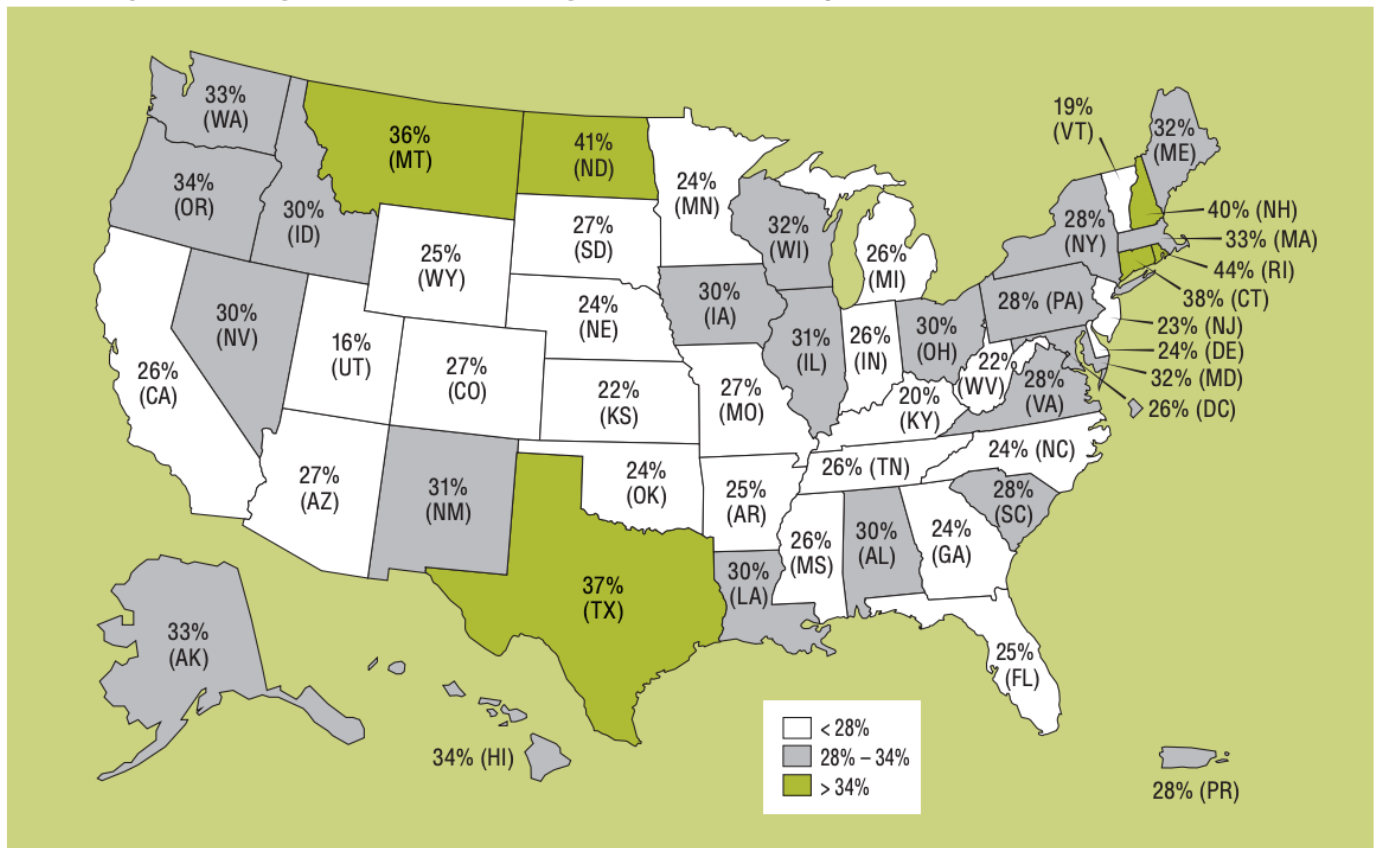
That might not seem like huge jump — again, we’re talking car crash *rate*, not sheer crashes — but the team behind the study says America simply can’t afford to add to its impaired driving death totals, especially as policymakers continue to fail to curb the drunk driving epidemic.

“America has been stuck at about 10,000 [alcohol-related] deaths per year for a decade, and we haven’t been able to fix it,” said David Harkey, president of the Institute. “The last thing we want to do is have new substances introduced to the population in a way that that makes those numbers any worse.”

But Harkey was careful to note that addressing stoned driving won’t be as simple as restricting access to cannabis — because stoned driving, on its own, may not even be the real problem.

Figure 7

#### Alcohol-Impaired-Driving Fatalities as a Percentage of Total Fatalities, by State, 2019



Source: FARS 2019 ARF

Image: [NHTSA Crash Stats](#)

In the second study in the series, IIHS looked at emergency room data in three states that had recently legalized weed, and found that drivers who used marijuana alone “were no more likely to be involved in crashes than drivers who hadn’t used the drug” — but drivers who had marijuana *and* alcohol in their systems were *five* times more likely to have been put in the hospital by a collision. (Drivers who had only consumed alcohol were only three times more likely.)

### **Stoned drivers, stalled technology**

The findings underscore the thorny challenges of keeping impaired drivers off the road in a country that consistently fails to give people alternative ways to get around when they’ve indulged in mind-altering substances.

Though marijuana consumption alone might not necessarily make a driver more likely to be involved in a crash, [many researchers](#) still [agree](#) that *any* cannabis consumption is probably a bad idea for motorists, because marijuana users who also drink are [highly likely](#) to consume both substances at the same time. In addition, cannabis has been shown to inhibit driver reaction times and make stoned motorists more likely to weave between lanes than sober ones — though interestingly, stoned drivers also tend to [slow way down](#) and stop tailgating other motorists.

To compound the problem even further, law enforcement officers have yet to find efficient ways to tell whether or not a driver is stoned *at all*, much less set meaningful legal standards for how much weed is *too* much weed to safely get behind the wheel for drivers with varying tolerance levels.

Blood, saliva and urine tests can take multiple days to process, and they don’t tell doctors whether the driver blazed up a week ago or just moments before buckling in. [Emerging breathalyzer technology](#) that detects THC on a driver’s breath can reliably tell whether she’s *smoked* marijuana in the last three hours or so, but not whether she’s consumed an *edible* cannabis product — and the devices can’t yet tell how *much* marijuana she’s eaten or inhaled. Researchers are studying whether cognitive assessments in the field might be a better way to tell if someone is too high to drive — think a next-gen version of the “walk and turn” test for alcohol-impaired motorists —but for now, there’s no gold standard for evaluating unsafe levels of marijuana intoxication for road users, either in the right of way or in the lab.

Even if such a gold standard did exist, there's no guarantee that it would be applied equitably to everyone — especially given how [racist and violent](#) the enforcement of marijuana-related offenses has always been in the U.S. In the wake of the George Floyd protests, states across the country are repealing [pretextual stop laws](#) that allow law enforcement officers to approach suspects simply because they claim they smell the odor of marijuana; in the context of a structurally racist police force, such dangerously subjective policies notoriously lead to over-enforcement of BIPOC communities that can [all too easily escalate](#) to the murder of the “suspect” by the officer. Whether or not researchers ever discover more scientific ways of determining THC intoxication levels in the field, few advocates are keen to give police even more authority and tools to harass people of color, even if they recognize that stoned drivers pose a danger to other road users.

### Transit as a DUI-Reduction Strategy

Still, Harkey says that America has to do something about the rise of smoke on our roads, especially as more and more states continue to legalize it: a whopping [45 states](#) have at least decriminalized marijuana for medical use, and it's fully legal for recreational use in 18 of them.

“It's early, but all the results are trending in the wrong direction,” said Harkey. “Across all the studies we're doing, the results consistently seem to indicate that marijuana is having an increased risk on road safety. Policymakers need to understand that that risk is there, and they need to figure out how to support dealing with that increased risk, whether it's supporting research to better understand THC impairment, or providing support to law enforcement to get more impaired drivers off the road, —no matter what they consumed.”

But Harkey also says for those who are hesitant to lean on enforcement-based solutions — [or those who want police out of traffic enforcement altogether](#) — there's another way to reduce drug- and alcohol-impaired driving: decreasing *driving*, period, by investing robustly in transit.

“Zero tolerance does not mean you can't go out and have a good time and consume various products that might impair you — or consume marijuana for medical purposes,” said Harkey. “You just have to have a way to get home that doesn't involve getting behind the wheel.”

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Filed Under: California, Car crashes, Colorado, Driving, Drunk Driving, Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, Nevada, Oregon, Washington state, Promoted