

Join the STSC Zoom Workshop

June 2, 2021 9:00 am

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SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY
COMMITTEE (STSC) AGENDA
June 2, 2020 - 9:00 a.m.

Virtual Workshop

THE PLANNING COUNCIL AND METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION FOR PINELLAS COUNTY

1. **CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS**
2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
3. **FORWARD PINELLAS EDUCATIONAL PROJECT**
4. **EQUITY ASSESSMENT**
5. **OTHER BUSINESS**
 - A. Crash Data Analysis
 - B. SPOTLight Emphasis Area Update – New Forward Pinellas Website
 - C. STEPS Program – Minutes
 - D. Safe Routes to School
 - E. Request for Future Agenda Topics
6. **ADJOURNMENT**

Next Meeting: OCTOBER 6, 2021

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School Transportation Safety Committee – June 2, 2021

2. Approval of Minutes



SUMMARY

The meeting summary for the March 3, 2021 meeting will be reviewed at the October 6, 2021 in -person meeting.

ATTACHMENT(S): None

ACTION: None

SUMMARY

In response to board member interest in educational outreach, Forward Pinellas staff has created the “City by Design” education unit, led by our former University of South Florida intern and former public-school teacher, Austin Britt. This education unit is intended to be taught by teachers within Pinellas County Schools, or by Forward Pinellas staff at outreach opportunities. The document and its accompanying teacher-lead presentation is designed to be taught both in the classroom or virtually in one class per week sessions over the course of a nine-week semester.

The City by Design education unit comes complete with step-by-step lesson plans for teachers to follow, all necessary handouts and documents, as well as grading rubrics to allow for simple integration into the teacher’s established curriculum. This educational unit was designed in alignment with the Florida Sunshine State Standards to allow teachers to utilize this tool consistent with state-assessed standards in content areas such as science, math, English/language arts, social studies, technology, and art.

Students will complete the first three modules in which they will learn about urban planning topics, such as land use categories and specifications, housing, resilience, transportation, and micromobility, as well as bicycle and pedestrian safety and infrastructure.

After completing the three main modules, students will be given the task of proposing a site redevelopment project for Tropicana Field utilizing the knowledge they have gained about urban planning and addressing requested needs from actual stakeholders in a real-world case study.

This project was designed to spur student interest in the field of urban and regional planning, as well as to inform students about issues in community planning, and how key factors influence public debate in a community or region. The goal is to engage students in high quality, hands-on, student-centered learning, which has been shown to increase student knowledge retention. Forward Pinellas staff plans to work with the Pinellas School Board and District to gauge interest and define steps for adding this to the appropriate curriculum.

ATTACHMENT(S): None

ACTION: None Required, Informational Item Only

SUMMARY

Forward Pinellas is conducting an equity assessment of its agency operations and planning activities. The goal is to ensure that its mission to “provide leadership to align resources and plans that help to achieve a compelling vision for Pinellas County, our individual communities and our region” is both inclusionary and equitable. As part of this assessment, Forward Pinellas will conduct research, stakeholder engagement, and analysis for the development of a forward-looking strategic plan to enhance equity within Forward Pinellas staff, governance and committee structure, as well as Forward Pinellas work products. The equity assessment will research the systems, policies, and practices that have resulted in inequity, particularly among ethnic minorities, in Pinellas County, and develop a series of actions to ensure that our work as the countywide planning agency is inclusive and results in equitable outcomes for the entire community.

At the March committee meeting, Forward Pinellas staff provided a comprehensive overview of the Equity Assessment. Since that time, staff has developed a public survey (available here: <https://form.jotform.com/210915483348156>) to help inform the Equity Assessment, and has partnered with the School District to disseminate that survey to parents through the PeachJar platform. Forward Pinellas staff will provide an update on the activities that have happened since the last presentation to the committee.

ATTACHMENT(S): None

ACTION: None Required, Informational Item Only

School Transportation Safety Committee – June 2, 2021

5. A- E. Other Business

A. Crash Data Analysis

Recap and Update:

The Crash Data Management System (CDMS) is a database maintained by Forward Pinellas that includes information on all reported crashes in Pinellas County, including their location. This information is available in a format that can be sorted by a variety of factors, including type of crash (pedestrian, bicyclist, distracted-driving-related, etc.), time of day and age of the driver. Forward Pinellas makes this database available to its local government partners for their use and also provides the analysis of that data to other interested parties upon request. New layers (traffic volumes and crash rates) have been added to the CDMS system which will enhance the usability and analysis of the data, especially for the School Hazard Reporting Annual project.

B. Pinellas SPOTlight Emphasis Areas Update

Forward Pinellas staff will provide a brief update on the status of activities related to the three SPOTlight emphasis areas.

C. STEPS Program – Minutes

The School Transportation and Enhanced Pedestrian Safety (STEPS) Committee is facilitated by the Pinellas County School Board and was created as a forum to discuss and address traffic safety issues around Pinellas County Schools. The STEPS committee consists of technical planning/engineering staff from the local governments and agencies throughout the County. Attached are meeting summaries and agendas from their meetings since the last STSC.

ATTACHMENT(S):

- STEPS February 2021 Minutes (meeting cancelled)
- STEPS March 2021 Minutes (meeting cancelled)
- STEPS April 2021 Minutes
- STEPS May 2021 Minutes

D. Safe Routes to School

Florida's Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Program works to improve the safety of children walking or bicycling to and from school through infrastructure improvements, enforcement activity, and safety education. Below are links to recent information regarding SRTS initiatives and activities.

ATTACHMENT(S): Senate Transportation Bill Is Good News for Safe Routes to School

E. Request for Future Agenda Topics

The STSC members may discuss any suggestions for future agenda topics.

STEPS Meeting Minutes for April 21, 2021

School Transportation & Enhanced Pedestrian Safety Committee

April 21, 2021 10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

WPSC or on Microsoft Teams

I. INTRODUCTIONS-ATTENDANCE

Andy Hill, Casey Morse, Frances Leong Sharp, James Long, Jeffery Wasilewski, Joan Rice, Joe Camera, Litianyu Zhu, Mahshid Arasteh, Marvin Jefferson, Matthew Atwell, Melissa Mehling, Norm Runkles, Rodney Due, Susan Sams, Sandra Knoebel, Terry Huberty, Tim Jacobson and Tony Boone.

II. APPROVAL OF January 20, 2020 Meeting Minute

Norm Runkles approved January's minutes.

Marshal Touchton seconded them.

III. NEW GENERAL BUSINESS

Summer Bridge – There are approximately only 20 schools that will not be providing Summer Bridge this summer. Most schools will be operating from June 21st – July 15th, Monday through Thursdays. See attached Summer Bridge Operational Information. PSC will be providing transportation this summer.

Construction – Many construction projects are planned during summer break. These projects are set to continue the best they can with Summer Bridge in session. Tim Jacobson, Oldsmar mentioned work being done near Oak Leaf Blvd. Joe Camera, PSC Transportation will be in contact with Mr. Jacobson regarding Forest Lakes bussing.

Hazardous Walk Through – These reviews are scheduled for May 25th South County, May 27th Mid County, June 1st North County. The times for all 3 dates are 9:30am-11:30am.

Please contact Autumn Westermann, PCS Transportation for more details: (727) 547-7100 ext.4779 or by email at westermann@pcsb.org.

Blanton, Crossing guard – A site review was conducted with Jerry Reynolds and Matt Atwell, both PCS General Managers on 3/23/2021. 16 walkers + 2 parents. 9 bike riders were traveling East through the intersection of 62nd and 54th Ave N. Kenneth City has a new City Manager. A request was sent to the new Manager requesting police presences and reconsidering the crossing guard position.

Ozona ES – Citizen contacted the commissioners. Several sites visited have been conducted, no issues have been seen as of yet. Pennsylvania Avenue will have a parking lot and drive completed to assist with the parent pick up line.

OPEN:

Plato Academy @ Seminole – James Long, Largo. There have been speeding complaints on 126th Ave. There are no school signs near the school. This is partially City and County jurisdictions. Casey Morse will investigate this more and reach out to Mr. Long.

Need Crossing Guards - We are in a desperate need of Crossing Guards. Please encourage others to help find and employ Crossing Guards. They are extremely important and needed.

IV. **COMMITTEE BUSINESS/UPDATES**

Terry Huberty retires 4/21/2021 – 1996 Co-founder of the STEPS committee has retired.

V. **OLD GENERAL BUSINESS**

Crash Data – See attached documentation.

VI. **NEXT MEETING/ADJOURNED**

Adjourned at 11:11 a.m.

*** **May 19, 2021** at WPSC located at 11111 Belcher Road South, Largo

or “Microsoft TEAMS” at 10:30a.m.***

All STEPS meetings are scheduled for the 3rd Wednesday of the month

STEPS Meeting Minutes for May 19, 2021

School Transportation & Enhanced Pedestrian Safety Committee

May 19, 2021 10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

WPSA or on Microsoft Teams

I. INTRODUCTIONS-ATTENDANCE

Mahshid Arasteh, Matt Atwell, Rodney Due, Andy Hill, Sandra Kneobel, Russell Ferlita, Tim Jacobson, Marvin Jefferson, Benn Lofton, Melissa Melching, Judy Michalio, Norm Runkles, James Ryan, Jerry Reynolds, Susan Sams, Frances Leong Sharp, Marshal Touchton, Michael Ulbrich, Jeff Wasilewski, Litianyu Zhu.

II. APPROVAL OF April 21, 2020 Meeting Minute

Norm Runkles approved. Jeff Wasilewski seconded.

III. NEW GENERAL BUSINESS

Timers for lights - Casey Morse shared the times the school zones will be operating in the summer.

For ES flashers: AM - On from 8:00 to 8:35
PM – On from 1:25 to 2:00

For MS flashers: AM – On from 8:00 to 8:35
PM – On from 1:25 to 2:00

For HS flashers: AM – On from 7:30 to 8:05
PM – On from 11:55 to 12:30

Melissa Mehling, St Pete Police Dept will have 43 locations scheduled to be open. A.M. 7:40-8:40, P.M. 1:20-2:20 or 2:20 to 3:20 depending on that school's dismissal time.

Norm Runkles, Clearwater Police Dept will run his flashers from 8:00 – 8:45am and 2:50 – 3:30pm.

Summer Bridge – Mt. Vernon was accidentally left off the original listing of Summer Bridge sites on our website. A final listing of summer bridge sites (as of 5/21/2021) will be attached to this email. (There were no changes from the list I previously sent)

IV. COMMITTEE BUSINESS/UPDATES

V. OLD GENERAL BUSINESS

Crash Data – 2021 Fatal map is attached to these minutes. Sandra Knoebel has shared a Pinellas Trail User Count Data Summary from Forward Pinellas as well.

VI. NEXT MEETING/ADJOURNED

*** **June 16, 2021** at WPSA located at 11111 Belcher Road South, Largo
or “Microsoft TEAMS” at 10:30a.m.***

All STEPS meetings are scheduled for the 3rd Wednesday of the month



Senate Transportation Bill Is Good News for Safe Routes to School



The Senate Environment and Public Works (EPW) released their transportation bill this past weekend. On Wednesday, May 26, the Committee will meet to consider the bill and amendments.

Safe Routes Partnership collaborated with the League of American Bicyclists on two central issues - funding for bicycling, walking and rolling infrastructure plus improvements to safety for vulnerable road users. We are pleased to announce that on both counts, we were successful in securing significant wins that, if passed into law, would mean \$7 billion – nearly \$3 billion of which would be new -- in federal funding for walking, biking, and rolling over the next five years.

Assuming the Senate bill passes out of the EPW Committee, it will then await provisions to be added by other Committees and then go to the Senate floor. The House is expected to act soon as well, meaning it's possible we could actually have a complete transportation bill becoming law this year.

This is a bipartisan Senate bill and due to the negotiation between Republicans and Democrats, lacks some of the more progressive provisions from President Biden's American Jobs Plan. You may hear other organizations critical of that. While we would also like to see more emphasis on equity, climate and multimodal efforts, the Senate bill is a strong and solid bill for walking, rolling, and bicycling. And with bipartisan support, the Senate bill represents a real chance for significant change in federal transportation policy and funding.

Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)

The Transportation Alternatives program is responsible for roughly half of all federal transportation dollars that go to bicycling, walking and rolling infrastructure. Working with our Senate Champions, Senators Ben Cardin (D-MD) and Roger Wicker (R-MS), we were successful in securing:

- Increased funding that will continue to grow over the life of the bill: Currently TAP is capped at \$850 million a year. The Senate bill would increase funding by 60% to \$1.38 billion in 2022, and would increase each year up to \$1.49 billion in 2026. Across all five years, it would mean a \$2.5 billion increase for sidewalks, bike lanes, Safe Routes to School programming, and trails.
- Protecting more TAP money: Under current law, states can transfer up to 50 percent of their Transportation Alternatives dollars out of the program. On average, states [transfer roughly 20 percent of funding](#) to other uses, which takes funding away from local governments looking to improve safety. The Senate bill would only allow transfers if a state has held a competition, provided technical assistance to applicants, and did not have enough quality applicants to use all the funding.
- Help with the Local Match: Small, rural and low-income communities can be deterred from applying for TAP funds they must cover 20 percent of the project's cost. Under this bill, states would have more flexibility with matching requirements. They could use federal safety funds as the local match for projects that improve safety – including all Safe Routes to School

projects. In addition, states would also be able to meet the 20 percent match across all TAP projects, meaning that if a larger community provides a higher local match, the state can then allow a lower match to a high-need community.

- Prioritization of High-Need Communities: The bill requires states to prioritize high-need communities in the application process. States would define what constitutes high-need in their state—such as high-poverty schools or low-income or rural communities.

Safe Routes to School

The bill recodifies the Safe Routes to School program so it would be placed in current law and expands it to cover high schools. It also strengthens the language in the federal Surface Transportation Program and the Highway Safety Improvement Program to make it clear those funds can be used for Safe Routes to School projects—rather than just relying on TAP funding. We are working with Senate allies and hope to secure an amendment that would require states to have a full-time Safe Routes to School coordinator.

Safety for People Walking, Rolling and Biking

Walking and biking make up 12 percent of transportation trips, but pedestrians and bicyclists make up 20 percent of fatalities. Even though this trend has been worsening for several years, states spend just one percent of their safety dollars on improving safety for people walking, rolling and biking (called “vulnerable users” in the Senate bill). With the leadership of Senator Carper (D-DE), the Senate bill makes a number of changes that would make it safer to walk, bike and roll:

- Create a Safety Plan: Every state would be required to do a Vulnerable Road User Safety Assessment to study where and when these fatalities and serious injuries are occurring, including a demographic breakdown to ensure equity considerations are incorporated. States must identify projects and strategies to reduce the risk to people bicycling, walking and rolling.
- Ensure Funding Goes to Vulnerable User Safety: States in which vulnerable users represent 15 percent or more of all roadway fatalities would be required to spend 15 percent of their federal Highway Safety Improvement Program dollars on vulnerable user safety. Based on 2016-2018 fatality rates, 28 states would be required to spend more than \$200 million on improvements like sidewalks, bike lanes, crosswalks, and more.

- Creating Safe Systems Approaches: The bill overhauls the entire federal safety program to include and consider the [safe systems approach](#), which builds the safety and protection of vulnerable road users into road planning from the start. It also specifically makes Safe Routes to School projects (both infrastructure and programming) eligible for all federal safety funding.
- Improving Knowledge: Finally, the bill requires the Federal Highway Administration to do additional research to identify infrastructure and policy interventions that can improve safety for vulnerable road users and encourage more bicycling and walking.



What Else is in the bill?

- Complete Streets: The bill requires states to develop standards for complete streets, and includes planning funding to do bicycling, walking, and complete streets plans.
- Climate: The bill is bipartisan and reflects the priorities of both sides. Even so, it includes significant investment in reducing climate change and will create a new performance measure requiring states to report on efforts to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions.
- Equity: The bill also integrates equity into many of the programs, such as safety, to ensure better access and safety for communities who have been left out in the past. It requires that funding to improve air quality is focused on low income communities most affected by poor air quality, such as communities by ports and freight routes.

- Reconnecting Communities Program: The bill includes funding to remove highways that divide communities (often low-income or communities of color) and to establish neighborhood connections—which can include walking and biking.
- Improving Access: The bill includes a pilot program to help measure the accessibility and connectivity of a community's transportation. For instance, how easy is it for people to get to everyday destinations, whether they bike, walk, drive or take transit. The hope is that this data will help communities plan better, and that the program will lead to better planning.