

**October 9, 2019**

*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**

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**Forward Pinellas staff presented a final update on Advantage Pinellas before plan adoption at the November meeting, and the board approved opening the draft plan for public comment**

- The outreach results from two years of events around the county and an online MetroQuest Survey revealed residents want a few consistent things
  - Time traffic signals
  - Improve transit service
  - Improve bike/ped infrastructure
  - Maintain roads
  - Limit roadway expansion
- Funds are limited to do these projects
  - Four main buckets of funds: Strategic Intermodal System, Other Arterials, Transportation Management Area Funds (directed by the MPO), and Local Funds
    - SIS Funds and Other Arterials are limited in scope, and local funds are almost entirely committed to local projects
      - Pinellas County leaves almost \$400M on the table because of a lack of state highway capacity projects and/or local matching funds
    - TMA funds are highly flexible, so this plan uses them for non-capacity projects
  - In the history of Pinellas County's long range transportation plans, this is the first time TMA dollars have been fully flexed to non-roadway improvements
    - \$1M/annually to Complete Streets, \$1M/annually to technology, and \$2M annually to transit capital projects
- The cost feasible plan includes:
  - Bike/Ped projects:
    - \$62M for priority corridors
    - Constructing a minimum of 4 overpasses at high-conflict trail crossings
  - Roadway Projects:
    - \$1.7B in county, state and city projects through 2045
    - The only unfunded need is McMullen Booth, due to the county's corridor study of the road being incomplete and therefore no cost estimate yet
  - Transit Projects:
    - \$344M in capital funding
    - \$1.63B in operating
    - Comparable amounts to expand service remain unfunded
      - Does not include CSX or premium regional service
- The draft cost feasible plan is available [on the Forward Pinellas website](#) for public comment through November 12
  - Comments may be sent to [cfavero@forwardpinellas.org](mailto:cfavero@forwardpinellas.org)
- Board members voiced support for projects they felt should be prioritized sooner in the cost feasible plan

- Pinellas Park Mayor Sandra Bradbury said the widening of Forest Lakes Boulevard, scheduled for 2025, should be a higher priority than I-275 because it has been years in the making
  - She also said she felt the roadway enhancement and widening of 22nd Ave. S and 62nd Ave. N should be moved to sooner than the 2026-2030 time frame
- Commissioner Ken Welch said he was happy to see 22nd Ave. S and 62nd Ave. N on the list but hoped the sidewalk gaps would be filled before that time frame
- Commissioner Karen Seel said she was disappointed to see US 19 right of way phase slip from 2021 to 2026
  - Dunedin Mayor Julie Bujalski echoed this, saying that the Curlew and Tampa Road intersections are safety issues

**Florida Department of Transportation staff provided an overview of the district’s Five Year Work Program**

- The work program covers 2021-2025 and inserts the new fifth year of projects, 2025
- Changes to the work program include:
  - Adding lanes and improving pavement on Forest Lakes Blvd from SR 580 to SR 584/Tampa Rd, construction in 2025
  - A roundabout at Alt US 19/SR 595/Palm Harbor Blvd at Florida Ave, construction in 2022
  - Express lanes on I-275/SR 93 from 54th Ave S to S of Roosevelt Blvd, construction deferred a year from 2024 to 2025
  - Intersection improvement at Tarpon Ave from S Huey Ave to US 19, construction added in 2022
  - Bridge replacements at 40th Ave NE over Placido Bayou (construction in 2020) and Ridgemoor Blvd & Brooker Creek at Brooker Creek Bridge (construction in 2025)
  - A Complete Streets project at 22nd St. S from 11th Ave S to 5th Ave S, construction added in 2025
  - Three US 19 interchange projects were deferred:
    - US 19 Tampa Road Interchange (construction deferred from 2025 to 2028)
    - US 19 Alderman Interchange (right of way deferred from 2022 to 2026)
    - US 19 Klosterman Interchange (right of way deferred from 2023 to 2027)
  - Several new resurfacing/maintenance projects
- Board members were concerned by the deferring of the US 19 interchanges
  - The revenue forecasts statewide recently came back with an estimate that reduced revenues by \$25M, so some projects previously in the work program have been removed
  - If the estimates change again for the better, District 7 Secretary David Gwynn assured the board that these projects would be added back in

**FDOT also presented its plans for Tampa Bay Next in Pinellas County, mainly regarding express lanes on I-275**

- FDOT is currently conducting a PD&E reevaluation to look at adding two express lanes in each direction from north of I-375 to south of Gandy Boulevard, and a second express lane from south of Gandy to the Howard Frankland Bridge

- Building the express lanes would require four ponds and taking up to 16 homes
  - Representatives from St. Petersburg expressed concern about a proposed pond site currently located in The Deuces area, which the city has been working on plans to revitalize
  - Commissioner Welch thanked the department for holding a public hearing at the end of September and taking public comment seriously
- The department is finalizing the re-evaluation for approval at the end of this year or in early 2020

**The Forward Pinellas executive director gave an overview of the draft Legislative Priorities for the 2020 session, which the board approved**

- The board’s legislative subcommittee had recommended a list of six main priorities:
  - Support Urban Agriculture
  - Protect Trust Funds
  - Support Flexible and Sustained Transportation Funding
    - Indexing Fuel Taxes
    - Use of SIS funds for transit
    - Using Other Arterials funds for non-capacity projects
  - Stop Distracted Driving
  - Maintain MPO Authority for Apportionment Structure
  - Support Home Rule
- The only major change from the previous year’s legislative priorities is the inclusion of flexible transportation funding

**The board heard updates on the Drew Street Complete Streets concept plan**

- Clearwater Senior Transportation Planner Richard Hartman outlined the current status of the project
  - The community brought the request for the plan to the city, and it was funded in the first round of the Forward Pinellas Complete Streets program in early 2017
  - Public outreach was successful; over 2,700 people responded to two surveys
  - The project area is four miles, and is overseen by multiple jurisdictions
    - Segment 1, from Osceola Avenue to Myrtle Avenue, is within the City of Clearwater
    - Segment 2, from Myrtle Avenue to Keene Road, is under FDOT
    - Segment 3, from Keene Road to US 19, is under Pinellas County
  - The city approved the concept plan in September 2018
- Clearwater resident Mike Riordon spoke for the second consecutive meeting on this issue
  - He expressed frustration with how long the road had been dangerous and ignored by multiple entities
  - Riordon was especially concerned about the section of the road from Keene to Myrtle, which has areas with very little buffer from the road and which are not accessible to people with disabilities
  - He said he would prefer that this be an FDOT project because he did not have confidence in the city to fix the road quickly

- The board discussed how to support the importance of this project to FDOT and the City of Clearwater
  - County Commissioner Dave Eggers, who had walked the road with Riordon, emphasized the importance of the issue and said he saw an opportunity for the County, City of Clearwater and FDOT to work together rather than an impediment that the road was controlled by three different entities
  - Forward Pinellas has asked FDOT to do a full corridor feasibility study
  - The board decided to defer any action on the issue to its November meeting due to the absence of the Clearwater board representative

**The board unanimously approved three land use amendments to the Countywide Plan:**

- An amendment brought forward by the City of Safety Harbor to amend a property at Railroad Ave. and Booth St. from Residential Low Medium to Public Semi-Public in order to expand the local public works facility
  - This had been deferred from the September meeting due to lack of information at that meeting about public input, but that information was resolved to the board's satisfaction at this meeting
- An amendment brought forward by the Town of Belleair to amend property at Indian Rocks Road and Golf View Drive on the Pelican Golf Course from Residential Low Medium to Recreation/Open Space to make the land use consistent between local land use regulations and the Countywide Plan and incorporate parcels into the golf course
- An amendment brought forward by Pinellas County to amend a property at 8095 46th Ave N. from Residential Low Medium to Office to allow a home to be used as a small business office

**Other Items**

- Board members agreed by consensus to forego a nominating committee and nominate the slate of officers at its November meeting
- FDOT is conducting stakeholder interviews for its study of retrofitting frontage roads on U.S. 19
- The board recognized Pedestrian Safety Awareness Week (October 26-November 3) and October as Community Planning Month
- TBARTA has launched [a survey](#) for its Envision 2030 10-year transit plan, which runs through December 31: <https://envision2030.metroquest.com/>
- PSTA has awarded a consultant contract for the Transit Oriented Development strategic plan for the Central Avenue BRT corridor

**Action Sheet**  
**October 9, 2019**

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

- **Consent Agenda** (vote: 11-0)  
Approved to include the following:
  - A. Approval of Minutes of the September 11, 2019 Meeting
  - B. Approval of Committee Appointments (LCB and TCC)
  
- **Countywide Plan Map Amendment(s)**  
Three cases were recommended for approval:
  - 1. CW 19-15 – City of Safety Harbor (vote: 11-0)
  - 2. CW 19-19 – Town of Belleair (vote: 11-0)
  - 3. CW 19-20 – Pinellas County (vote: 11-0)
  
- **Advantage Pinellas – Draft Cost Feasible Plan**  
Following a staff presentation, the board took action to authorize opening the public comment period. (vote: 11-0)
  
- **Adoption of Forward Pinellas Legislative Priorities**  
At the recommendation of the Legislative Committee, the board adopted its Legislative Priorities for 2020 with additional language added to support allowing for flexible spending of funds in the Other Arterials program.
  
- **Establishment of Nominating Committee Discussion**  
By consensus, the board agreed that a Nominating Committee would not be necessary this year and officers would be elected by the full board at the next meeting.