

January 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

Much of the meeting's discussion focused on FDOT's five-year tentative work program (July 1, 2019, - June 30, 2024) and the department's US 19/Gandy Boulevard PD&E

- Projects added or advanced in the five year work program included:
 - Adding lanes & reconstruction on I-275 from 54th Ave S to Roosevelt Blvd
 - Lanes & interchange improvements on Gandy & US 19
 - Pedestrian overpass on US 19 at Harn Blvd
 - Complete Street improvements on Rosery Road in Largo, 34th Street South in St. Petersburg, and on St. Petersburg Drive in Oldsmar
 - Bus on shoulder pilot project on I-275
 - A downtown transportation network analysis in downtown St. Petersburg
 - A corridor study for Main Street/SR 580 in Dunedin and Clearwater
- Projects deferred included project engineering for adding lanes on Gandy Blvd from 4th St to west of Gandy Bridge, and interchange construction on US 19 from 66th Ave N to 118th Ave N was moved out of the work program
- Consultants presented on the study of US 19 from 66th Ave N to 118th Ave N, including the Gandy Blvd intersection
 - The recommended alternative would:
 - Keep Gandy elevated over US 19 and adding additional turn lanes
 - Include consistent bike lanes throughout that reflect new design standards, as well as widened sidewalks and updated crosswalks
 - Widen US 19 from 66th Ave N to 80th Ave N
 - Construct dual left turn lanes on every approach and dual right turn lanes on the westbound approach
 - A new signal with dual left turns and pedestrian accommodations at the Gateway Centre
 - Right of way acquisition is scheduled to begin in 2023, with the estimate for the full right-of-way at \$77M
 - Interim design right-of-way would be much less expensive and extensive at \$12.2M
 - Commissioner Karen Seel said she felt the turn lane improvements were the most essential part of the project
 - Board member comments focused on the sizable amount of right-of-way required for the project and associated costs and impacts to local businesses
 - They expressed a desire for the public and property owners to be made aware far in advance of any right-of-way acquisitions
- The board unanimously supported the work program after hearing the US 19/Gandy PD&E update, and recommended that the interim project be implemented first before the full-scale project

- That interim project would focus on interchange improvements at 19/Gandy instead of the full scale auxiliary lanes in order to reduce right-of-way impacts to surrounding businesses
- Subsequent to the board meeting, FDOT announced several modifications to the work plan due to budgetary impacts of Hurricane Michael and declining gas tax revenue projections

The board received an update on the Advantage Pinellas Plan

- This included key takeaways from the statistically valid survey of Pinellas County residents
 - According to the survey, the biggest barriers to transit were reliability, frequency, and efficiency
 - Residents want a safe, efficient system, with 70% saying timing traffic signals is top priority
 - Residents want easy access to destinations and believe transit improves economic value
- The update also included socioeconomic data forecasts, with population expected to grow 9.9% by 2045 – 92K, about the size of the City of Largo - and employment expected to grow 11% in the same period
- As a transition to the PSTA financial status update, Forward Pinellas staff gave a brief overview of funding sources available through 2045 for transportation projects, including the current gas tax, Penny for Pinellas, and state and federal funding. Most all of the funding projections shown will be needed just to maintain today’s current situation.

The board also received a status update from PSTA Chief Financial Officer Deborah Leous

- Ahead of the joint PSTA/Forward Pinellas / BCC workshop on January 18, Leous discussed PSTA’s transit revenue forecast, which has the agency depleting its reserves in FY22 despite a high level of efficiency
- The current plan to begin to address this shortfall involves cutting lower-performing routes and using the resources from those routes on the highest performing routes
 - Longer-term, this plan would still require additional funds of about \$5M a year so is not sustainable with current funding levels
 - If new funding were obtained, PSTA would invest in projects serving transit supportive areas, tourist oriented areas, and regional services
- Leous noted some of the areas of strategic investments, such as spending PSTA’s own local funds on buses rather than federal funds to eliminate extensive federal requirements that increase costs
- Board members participated in an extensive discussion of whether five cities that do not pay into PSTA services but benefit from routes should become paying members, which would provide an influx of about \$4.1M/year
 - Discussion also touched on the millage cap in place for PSTA
 - There was also a suggestion that school bus transportation and PSTA could have an overlap and synergy

The board welcomed new members for 2019: Pinellas County Commissioner Karen Seel, Clearwater Councilmember David Albritton, Belleair Bluffs Commissioner Suzy Sofer and Tarpon Springs Commissioner Jacob Karr

- Seel replaces Commissioner Charlie Justice, Albritton replaces former Councilmember Doreen Caudell, Sofer replaces South Pasadena Vice Mayor Arthur Penny representing the inland communities, and Karr replaces Oldsmar Mayor Doug Bevis representing Tarpon Springs, Safety Harbor and Oldsmar

The Forward Pinellas Executive Director presented an update on several ongoing items

- FDOT will be bringing back the updated analysis of interchange options for US 19 north of Tampa Road for staff review in late February, with a presentation to the board in following months
- [The Gateway Master Plan](#) is moving into the final phase of the study, with final recommendations being developed to come before the board in the spring
- Forward Pinellas staff is working with FDOT and the Town of Indian Shores to plan for bike lanes and sidewalks on Gulf Boulevard with appropriate drainage, as well as the City of St. Pete Beach on bike and pedestrian accommodations as the city undergrounds utilities
- Forward Pinellas staff will be meeting with City of Clearwater staff in the coming weeks to work on moving the Memorial Causeway and Busway plan forward
- The legislative subcommittee of the board will be discussing strategic intermodal system dollars and how a legislative change would be needed to spend them on non-fixed guideway transit
- Transportation funding and the TBARTA-supervised MPO regional coordination study were also mentioned briefly in advance of the Jan. 18 funding & coordination workshop

Other Items

- Outgoing CAC Member Bob Henion was recognized for his longtime service to the CAC, and retiring Forward Pinellas Transportation Planning Analyst Marc Hanger was recognized for 28 years of service to Pinellas County
- The board unanimously approved a Countywide Plan Map amendment to a Clearwater Community Church-owned site on Belcher Road from Residential Low Medium to Public/Semi-Public, making it consistent with the rest of the larger parcel
- The board incorporated previously-approved performance measures & targets into the Transportation Improvement Program
- TBARTA is managing the second phase of a \$5 million PD&E study for the Regional Transit Feasibility Plan catalyst project; the agency is also seeking consultants to develop the regional Transit Development Plan

Action Sheet

January 9, 2019

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

- **Consent Agenda** (vote: 12-0)
Approved to include the following:

- A. Approval of Minutes of the November 14, 2018 Meeting
- B. Approval of Committee Appointments (CAC, LCB and TCC)
- C. Approval of Community Transportation Coordinator Annual Evaluation
- D. Acceptance of Year-End Financial Report

- **Proposed Amendment(s) to FY 2018/19 – FY 2022/23 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**
Following a staff description, the board, in its role as the metropolitan planning organization, approved an amendment to the TIP by roll call vote to incorporate the adopted pavement, bridge and system performance measures and targets. (vote: 12-0)

- **Regular Countywide Plan Map Amendment(s)**
One case was recommended for approval:

1. CW 19-01 – Pinellas County (vote: 12-0)

- **FDOT FY 2019/20-2023/24 Draft Tentative Work Program**
(vote: 10-0, Councilmember Gabbard had left the meeting and Commissioner Long had stepped out)

Following a presentation by FDOT staff and some discussion, the board, in its role as the metropolitan planning organization, approved the Draft Tentative Work Program.