

Forward Pinellas Multimodal Priority List

Proposed Program Structure

July 2020

Program Purpose

One of the most important things we do as an agency is to work closely with the public and our partners at the state, local and regional levels to develop plans and advance transportation projects that serve the needs of Pinellas County's residents, businesses and visitors. Serving as the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for Pinellas County, Forward Pinellas develops an annual priority list to advance transportation projects. This is achieved through a competitive process that prioritizes projects for state, regional and local sponsors to receive state and federal funding. This process has evolved over time, and will likely continue to evolve into the future, to address the complex and changing realm of publicly funded transportation projects. Through this program, Forward Pinellas strives to fund projects of countywide significance that improve mobility and accessibility for all users of our transportation network, while supporting the land use and redevelopment vision for the county and its many diverse communities.

The multimodal priority list is for projects seeking a wide array of federal and state funding sources that support and reinforce the Countywide Land Use Plan through their implementation. However, if a local government would like to specifically seek Transportation Alternatives (TA) and Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP) funding, there are separate prioritization processes for those programs that reflect their unique nature of the funding. If an applicant is unsure which funding would be best suited for their project, they are encouraged to contact Forward Pinellas staff before submitting an application to discuss their options.

While local matching dollars are not always required for state and federal funding, the intent of Forward Pinellas is to leverage our partners' local funding resources to draw state and federal funding sources into our communities when possible. Projects that demonstrate the ability to use local resources to bring additional funding into the county will be viewed favorably through this program, although that is just one consideration, as outlined in the prioritization process below.

Forward Pinellas has established six overarching goals to guide decision making for our agency through this program. These goals are consistent with Advantage Pinellas and the Countywide Plan, the two main guiding documents for our agency, and are not listed in any particular order. These goals set the framework for how the projects evaluated for this program will be prioritized against one another and ultimately advanced for funding.

- A. Improve Safety
- B. Enhance Equitable Outcomes
- C. Improve Mobility
- D. Foster Economic Growth
- E. Protect the Environment
- F. Improve Resiliency

Projects will be prioritized according to these overarching goals and by other factors, as outlined below. These goals are not intended to replace any of the criteria or requirements of existing funding programs. Any project considered must also meet the requirements of the funding program and the project sponsor must agree to continue to meet those requirements through project completion. It should be noted that investments in technological applications are supported by each of the above goals. Projects will be reviewed with a consideration given towards the extent to which emerging technologies are included in the project.

Funding Capacity

The multimodal priority list advances projects that will be considered for addition to the FDOT 5 Year Work Program. As this is a five-year programming document, the projects included in the Work Program are generally considered to be funded with anticipated revenues. Additional revenues within the five-year period are not expected. Projects advanced through the multimodal priority list will be considered for the new 5th year of the Work Program. While funding may be available before the new 5th year, project sponsors should not expect to have their project scheduled any earlier than that new 5th year. Economic conditions may warrant earlier project implementation but may also defer projects out to a longer time frame. Project sponsors must be willing to accept this uncertainty and remain flexible throughout project implementation. It is recognized that this may affect local matching resources, but project sponsors must commit to local funding resources pledged through their grant applications to ensure the timely receipt of state and federal funding resources as they become available.

Project Prioritization

The broad categories below will be used to evaluate and rank the project applications to determine which of them are advanced for funding consideration by the Florida Department of Transportation.

- A. Ability of the Project to Meet the Goals of the Program
 - a. Improve Safety
 - b. Enhance Equitable Outcomes
 - c. Improve Mobility
 - d. Foster Economic Growth
 - e. Protect the Environment
 - f. Improve Resiliency
- B. Countywide Significance of the Project
- C. Project Readiness
- D. Project Coordination and Support

While projects will be competitively scored, projects will be grouped into scoring ranges. This will allow the Forward Pinellas Board to choose to advance projects that serve a diverse range of modes and serve all areas of the county.

Eligible Applicants

Entities that are eligible to submit applications and receive funding directly are limited to the following:

- A. Any incorporated municipality within Pinellas County
- B. Pinellas County Government

- C. Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority
- D. Tampa Bay Area Regional Transit Authority
- E. Florida Department of Transportation

Any other entity that wishes to receive funding through this program must partner with an eligible applicant and determine how to receive and expend funds in compliance with the requirements of the funding source being sought.

- a. Applicants must acknowledge and agree to comply with the specific requirements of the identified fund source prior to receiving funds programmed through the Work Program.
- b. Applicants must provide the expertise and staff resources necessary or partner with a qualified agency to provide the resources to successfully deliver projects within the constraints of the fund source requirements.
- c. Applicants must identify and maintain a staff position that serves as the single point of contact for FDOT and Forward Pinellas through project implementation.
- d. Forward Pinellas will coordinate with FDOT to include state-sponsored projects in the competitive review process.

Timeline

- Call for Projects Issued – Summer 2020
- Local Government to notify Forward Pinellas of intent to submit application – August 21, 2020
- Applications Due - December 11, 2020
- Staff review and meetings with applicants – January 2021
- TCC review and Recommendation – February 2021
- Forward Pinellas Board Review and Approval – March 2021
- Transmittal Deadline to FDOT for Feasibility Review – March 31, 2021
- Selected projects added to Priority List – June 2021

Eligible Projects

Eligible Projects are as follows:

- A. Projects must demonstrate a public benefit towards moving people or goods within Pinellas County
- B. Projects must be publicly accessible and provide direct benefits to the public transportation infrastructure and operations
- C. Projects must be in, or consistent with, Advantage Pinellas, the long range transportation plan for Pinellas County.
- D. Eligible capital infrastructure projects may include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Street and roadway modifications
 - i. May include capacity, intersection or operational improvements
 - ii. May include highway or local roadway improvements
 - 1. Local roadway projects must demonstrate that they are of countywide significance, per the scoring criteria
 - 2. All roadway projects must demonstrate how they support implementation of the Countywide Land Use plan

- iii. Resurfacing projects are not eligible without a substantial multimodal improvement, above and beyond the maintenance of the roadway surface.
 - b. Transit infrastructure enhancements and expansion
 - i. May include bus replacements, capital for additional buses, infrastructure to support bus rapid transit services, off-board collection system capital costs, construction of intermodal centers, capital for ride sharing vehicles, transit signal priority or related technology capital, and capital funding for waterborne or aerial transportation services
 - ii. Operational funding for transit services are not eligible for this program.
 - c. Construction of safety improvements along roadways of countywide significance or areas identified as on the high injury network/hotspots
 - d. Transportation improvements that provide greater transit access or safety for residents of low-income and disadvantaged communities
 - e. Technology improvements such as Intelligent Transportation Systems, transit signal priority, alternative fuels infrastructure, innovative uses of technology as it pertains to the improvement and maintenance of the reliability of the transportation system, and technology applications for transportation micromobility, ridematching and traffic management centers.
 - f. Standalone bicycle and pedestrian improvements are not eligible. Forward Pinellas has committed to funding projects identified in the Active Transportation Plan through this program. Those identified projects will be added by Forward Pinellas in priority order as identified in the Active Transportation Plan and will not be added through this program.
- E. Eligible non-capital projects may include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Planning activities and studies for all modes
 - b. Transportation demand or traffic management programs

Eligible projects must meet the eligibility requirements of the funding sources and programs that are ultimately programmed by FDOT.

Funding Award Limits

The minimum request for funding is \$300,000. While there is no maximum request for funding for this program, it should be noted that available funding may be limited and the most competitive projects will be those that do not seek full funding through this program, absent a local match or public-private partnership.

Maximum Number of Applications

The maximum number of applications that can be submitted by any eligible agency for funding consideration is three (3).

Local Agency Program (LAP) Requirements

In order to receive funding, the agency receiving the funding must be LAP certified. If the applicant is not LAP certified, they must demonstrate a willingness to obtain LAP certification (for the agency or project-specific certification) within a reasonable time frame or provide a plan for how they will partner with a

LAP certified agency to complete the project on their behalf. This requirement does not apply to transit agencies.

Matching Requirements

There is no local match required for this program. However, it should be noted that those projects that utilize local funding to help secure state and federal resources will be given additional consideration in the development of the final listing of projects advanced for funding.

Project Selection Criteria

Projects are prioritized based on their ability to provide the greatest transportation benefit and performance for the countywide network in Pinellas County. Projects will be scored against the criteria included in the scoring matrix and grouped into categories based on the total number of points received. The advancement of projects for funding will be at the sole discretion of the Forward Pinellas Board and will consider the ultimate project scoring, as well as other factors including modal and geographic diversity.

This next section is intended to give additional details to support the scoring matrix. Please refer to the scoring matrix for a simplified version of the details below.

Ability of the project to meet the principles of the program.

- Does the project provide a safety benefit to the public?
 - Max 6 points. To be awarded on a sliding scale depending on the project and will include all modes of transportation. The exact points will be recommended by Forward Pinellas staff.
 - This may include projects that have enhancements that provide a safety benefit for all users, including motorists, transit riders, cyclists, pedestrians and freight users. Such enhancements may include street lighting, access management improvements, crosswalk treatments, and advance traveler notification systems.
- Any improvement on an uncontrolled access facility where the speed limit is 35 mph or less, that includes safety benefits for nonmotorized users. Or, if the project includes physical separation for non-motorized users on any facility with a speed limit exceeding 35 mph.
 - 0 or 4 points.
 - Physical separation may include a buffered sidewalk or bike lane. Substandard bike lanes with flexible post separation will not be considered eligible for these points.
- Does the project improve mobility to or within an Environmental Justice (EJ) area, as identified by Forward Pinellas?
 - 0 or 3 points
 - A map of EJ areas can be found at: https://forwardpinellas.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/2045-EJ-Report_Final.pdf.
- Does the project support access to workforce/educational facilities (PTEC, SPC, etc.)?
 - 0 or 2 points
- Does the jurisdiction within which the project is located have a commitment to support the Countywide Affordable Housing Strategy?
 - 0 or 1 point

- Does the project support an affordable, workforce, senior or low income housing strategy adopted by a local government?
 - 0 or 1 point
- Does the project improve mobility to a USDA-designated low income and low access census tract?
 - 0 or 1 point
 - USDA-designated low income and low access census tracts can be found here: www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-access-research-atlas/
- Is the project within a quarter of a mile of a PSTA route with a Passengers per Revenue Hour above the network-wide median for 2019?
 - 0 or 1 point
 - Contact Forward Pinellas Staff to access this data
- Does the project intend to improve traffic flow?
 - 0 or 1 point
 - This is intended to cover all modes of transportation. If the project provides an alternative to single-occupant-vehicle (SOV) travel, then the point would be received. A point would also be received for technology projects that improve the flow of traffic.
- Does the project provide a new service or facility that does not currently exist? Or, does the project provide a significant expansion or upgrade of an outdated facility?
 - 0 or 1 point
 - This may include transit services that are above/beyond existing services or the development/upgrade/replacement of transit centers. This does NOT include replacement of vehicles currently in operation.
- Does the project complete a gap in the network?
 - 0 or 1 point
 - This covers all modes of transportation.
 - Must physically touch the ends of the gap the project intends to close.
- Is the project supportive of the designated investment corridors, as identified in Advantage Pinellas?
 - 0 or 1 point
 - This covers all modes of transportation.
 - Information on Advantage Pinellas and the investment corridors can be found here: <https://forwardpinellas.org/guiding-plans/long-range-transportation-plan/>
- Does the project improve mobility to and within the Gateway area, as defined by the Gateway Area Master Plan?
 - 0 or 1 point
- Does the project improve mobility in the US 19 corridor?
 - 0 or 1 point
- Does the project enhance access and mobility to or within Activity Centers or Target Employment Centers, as designated on the Countywide Plan Map?
 - 0 or 1 point
- Does the project support the maintenance of the transportation network in a state of good repair?
 - 0 or 1 point

- Does the project improve the movement of tourists and visitors through and to Pinellas County?
 - 0 or 1 point
- Does the project improve access to the beaches?
 - 0 or 1 point
- Does the project intend to improve air quality through less vehicle idling or encourage alternatives to SOV?
 - 0 or 2 points
 - This covers all modes of transportation
- Does the project include drainage improvements that would enhance the quality of stormwater runoff?
 - 0 or 1 point
- Does the project avoid and minimize wetland and surface water impacts to the maximum extent practicable?
 - 0 or 1 point
- Does the project improve mobility on a designated evacuation route?
 - 0 or 1 point
 - This may include technological solutions to improve traffic flow, advance traveler notification systems, additional capacity on evacuation routes, and may also include the procurement of additional transit vehicles that could be used to assist in an emergency evacuation situation.
- Does the project include consideration or impacts of sea level rise and inundation?
 - 0 or 1 point
- Does the project include a commitment to design to the 100 year flood?
 - 0 or 1 point
- Has the project applicant signed on to the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council Climate Compact?
 - 0 or 1 point

Countywide Significance of the Project

- Is the project located on the High Injury Network, as defined by Safe Streets Pinellas?
 - Max 1 point
- Is the roadway along which the project is located/travels along classified as a Minor Arterial, per the Federal Functional Classification System?
 - 0 or 1 point
- Is the roadway along which the project is located/travels along classified as a Major Arterial, per the Federal Functional Classification System?
 - 0 or 2 points
- Is the roadway along which the project is located/travels along classified as a Principal Arterial or Interstate, per the Federal Functional Classification System?
 - 0 or 3 points
- Does the project improve access to an employment land use category, as identified on the Countywide Plan Map?
 - 0 or 1 point

- The project must physically touch the parcels included in the Employment Category designation
- Is the project located within, or directly connecting to, a Multimodal Corridor, as designated on the Countywide Land Use Plan?
 - 0 or 1 point
 - The project must physically touch the parcels included in the Multimodal Corridor designation
- Does the project improve access to/through a designated Community Redevelopment Area?
 - 0 or 1 point
 - The project must physically touch the CRA or be included within it

For Non-Transit Projects:

- Is a concept plan complete?
 - 0 or 1 point
- Is the PDE complete?
 - 0 or 1 point
- Is the design complete?
 - 0 or 1 point
- Is all necessary ROW acquired?
 - 0 or 2 points

For Transit Projects:

- Is a concept plan complete, including ridership estimates?
 - 0 or 1 point
- Has an operating plan been developed?
 - 0 or 1 point
- Is all necessary ROW and/or property acquired?
 - 0 or 2 points

Coordination and Support

- Does the application include a letter of support from local community/neighborhood association?
 - 0 or 1 point
- Does the application include a letter of support from neighboring local governments/partners?
 - 0 or 1 point
- Does the application include financial support from neighboring local governments/partners?
 - 0 or 1 point
- Does the project include financial support from a public or private entity (not including a match from the applicant agency)?
 - 0 or 4 points

Project Scoring

Projects will be grouped into categories with those that receive scores in a similar range. The ranges will be as follows:

Low	Fewer than 25 points
Medium	25-35 points
Medium-High	36-50 points
High	More than 50 points

Forward Pinellas staff will conduct an initial review of the applications received and assign points for each application. Staff will then meet with each applicant to review the scoring of each project and answer any questions about points assigned.

The projects will be advanced to the Forward Pinellas Board in the scoring categories above, without individual points reflected. As previously stated, the selection of projects to advance for funding consideration will be at the sole discretion of the Forward Pinellas Board. The ultimate selection of projects may not be in exact ranking order of the points received as adjustments may be made in order to account for geographic equity, modal distribution and other considerations that the Board may take into account at the time of approval.

For questions, please contact Chelsea Favero at cfavero@forwardpinellas.org or 727-464-8250.