

Questions came from the studio audience, the blog and by a phone. In addition, citizens submitted comment cards during the live event but didn't wish to speak. The purpose of this document is to respond to those questions not addressed during the live event.

## I. Studio Audience

1. **Q:** As you are addressing topics such as housing, transportation, and stewardship, what about promoting public art in these initiatives?  
**A:** The Board of County Commissioners will be considering additional funding requests as part of the FY16 budget development process. See [www.pinellascounty.org/budget](http://www.pinellascounty.org/budget) for additional information regarding this process, including key dates and opportunities for public input.
2. **Q:** Could you place 102<sup>nd</sup> Avenue North overflow traffic onto 110<sup>th</sup> Avenue North to 106<sup>th</sup> Avenue North on Capital Improvements at the 110<sup>th</sup> Avenue North's expense?  
**A:** The Board of County Commissioners will be considering changes to the FY15-24 Capital Improvement Program as part of the FY16 budget development process. See [www.pinellascounty.org/budget](http://www.pinellascounty.org/budget) for additional information regarding this process, including key dates and opportunities for public input. The FY15-24 Capital Improvement Program document ([www.pinellascounty.org/budget/15budget/cip/CIPListing.htm](http://www.pinellascounty.org/budget/15budget/cip/CIPListing.htm)) includes information regarding criteria used to prioritize projects. This criterion will be reconsidered during a work session in the late summer. The Board's strategic plan ([www.pinellascounty.org/strategicplan](http://www.pinellascounty.org/strategicplan)) is also utilized as a tool in helping prioritize projects.

3. **Q:** Can the quality of Lake Tarpon's water be monitored to deal with aquatic weed problem?

**A:** The Southwest Florida Water Management District provides vegetation control in the lake proper and the outfall canal and controls [water hyacinth](#) and [water lettuce](#) in other canals.

If vegetation is causing a drainage issue by impeding the flow of water into the lake, the County will clear the vegetation causing the obstruction; however, funding is not available to monitor and treat the vegetation in the canals for aesthetic or recreational purposes. Residents along privately owned canals can obtain an invasive plant removal permit through the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission. For more information, visit [www.pinellascounty.org/environment/watershed/watershed-lake-tarpon.htm](http://www.pinellascounty.org/environment/watershed/watershed-lake-tarpon.htm).

## II. Blog

1. **Q:** There's been much fanfare about the significant increase of passenger traffic at St. Pete-Clearwater Airport - which the County manages - but what's good news for some has meant increased noise at all hours of the day and night for the communities in the airport flight path. What steps will this Board of County Commissioners take to assure a balance with the activity-growth at the airport and protecting our property values and our quality of life in the noise-impacted communities?  
**A:** In August of 2002, the Board of County Commissioners created an Aircraft Noise Abatement Task Force (Task Force) comprised of airport management, airlines, general aviation, military, and residents of nearby communities. Since its inception, the Task Force has continued to meet quarterly to explore methods of reducing aircraft noise and its impact on residential neighborhoods surrounding the St. Pete-Clearwater International Airport (Airport, PIE). The Airport is committed to reducing the effects and exposure of aircraft noise to the extent possible within the guidelines of the Federal Aviation

Administration (FAA) and continues to work in cooperation with the FAA, airlines, and Task Force to explore and adopt new noise abatement procedures that can help reduce aircraft noise impacts on the community.

All of PIE's operating agreements with the airlines include a provision that strongly encourages them to comply with the conditions contained in PIE's noise abatement program, such as not scheduling flights or conducting aircraft engine run-ups during the Voluntary Quiet Window between 11pm-6am and complying with noise abatement approach and departure procedures. It should be noted that FAA regulations prohibit PIE from mandating noise abatement procedures, fines and curfews; therefore, the noise abatement program is voluntary.

PIE offers a noise complaint hotline that enables residents to log noise complaints via phone or email. Reports are investigated by the Airport Operations Division and requested responses are provided within 48 hours of submission. The Airport provides residents the ability to independently monitor the movement of flights and air traffic patterns within the Tampa Bay region via an internet flight tracking system, referred to as Flight Tracker, which is available via PIE's website at [www.fly2PIE.com](http://www.fly2PIE.com). Flight Tracker is also utilized by the Airport's Operations Division to monitor compliance with FAA approved noise abatement flight procedures.

2. **Q:** This is a great way to have a conversation and feel involved. As a 43 year Pinellas resident and 31 in unincorporated Seminole, I have seen a lot of growth. I know from visiting John Cueva recently the county is working on new codes for redeveloping and repurposing the county because we are out of land. As commissioners you stand on the shoulders of the ones who came before you, like Rainey, Chestnut, Marquis, etc. who had the foresight to purchase available land when they could and make it into the beautiful county park system we have.

**A:** Pinellas County is in the process of updating the Land Development Code for unincorporated Pinellas County. The Land Development Code contains the county's regulations for developing land in the unincorporated areas of Pinellas County. It includes regulations for zoning, site development, landscaping, parking, drainage, the environment and other subjects affecting development. The following website provides more information on the code update and how the public can stay informed and get involved:

[www.pinellascounty.org/Plan/codeupdate/default.htm](http://www.pinellascounty.org/Plan/codeupdate/default.htm).

Some "quick fixes" will be taken to the Board of County Commissioners shortly with public hearings on July 21 and August 18.

3. **Q:** I watched as they purchase Millennium Park and opened it, next door the Tides Golf course has been the subject of a battle to repurpose it into housing we the residents have been fighting it. The golf course business doesn't work anymore, especially because of the high cost of land. Shouldn't the county be trying to purchase it and add it to the park next door and have a linear water front park in the heart of Pinellas that can be used by the generations that will live here after us. Cities like Clearwater, St Pete have their linear waterfront, the county needs to have theirs. The course has a high point and sweeping view I can envision a large band shell near the water with folk sitting on blankets and chairs enjoying concerts. Now or never because land is being chewed up as quick as it comes on the market.

**A:** Presently, approximately 23 percent of Pinellas County's land mass is dedicated to parks, preserves and open space. The Board of County Commissioners will be considering changes to the FY15-24 Capital Improvement Program as part of the FY16 budget development process. See [www.pinellascounty.org/budget](http://www.pinellascounty.org/budget) for additional information regarding this process, including key dates and opportunities for public input. The FY15-24 Capital Improvement Program document ([www.pinellascounty.org/budget/15budget/cip/CIPListing.htm](http://www.pinellascounty.org/budget/15budget/cip/CIPListing.htm)) includes information regarding criteria used to prioritize projects, including potentially purchasing new assets like properties. The Board's strategic plan ([www.pinellascounty.org/strategicplan](http://www.pinellascounty.org/strategicplan)) is also utilized as a tool in helping prioritize projects.

4. **Q:** Supporting better public transportation is a natural fit for each of the points in your strategic plan. We find we use public transportation in many of our cities as well as other countries. It is safe and reliable. It is disappointing to return home and need to arrange transportation from the airport to home. Dunedin has a parking problem. Reliable public transportation could remove many of the work force vehicles from our downtown. It would also assist visitors & residents in enjoying the many features of our town. How will you support this issue?

**A:** The failure of the Greenlight's initiative has impacted many plans. Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority is working on a Bus Rapid Transit pilot project and enhancements to its routes. Questions regarding Dunedin's parking should be referred to the City of Dunedin, please visit [www.dunedingov.com](http://www.dunedingov.com) or call (727) 298-3006.

5. **Q:** Why don't we build a small light rail route to entice citizens as to its benefits? Maybe a big parking lot near Clearwater and a rail route to the airports?

**A:** There are some cities that have built successful light rail starter lines resulting in community-supported expansions. Just like with the larger line proposed in the Greenlight's Pinellas Plan, local funds would be necessary to build a starter line.

6. **Q:** Concerning busing, what has not been addressed live is the subject of second shift workers. Is there a plan to provide second shift transportation, currently not available, leaving citizen workers to hire Uber and Lyft drivers? Please say you are not going to limit Uber or Lyft without first putting in second shift bus transportation.

**A:** Please contact PSTA for information on bus schedules. The website is <http://psta.net> or call (727) 540-1800.

### III. Phone

1. **Q:** I've lived here for 75 years in Holiday Park. Everyone I talk to says the city is ripping everyone off with the dumpster collection. They said I didn't have to do it but I'd still get charged.

**A:** Pinellas County does not provide curbside garbage or recycling collection with the exception of the east Lealman community. The City of St. Petersburg provides curbside garbage and recycling collection to the Holiday Park Neighborhood. To discuss services and collection charges please contact the City of St. Petersburg Sanitation Department at (727) 893-7838 or visit them online at [www.stpete.org/sanitation/index.php](http://www.stpete.org/sanitation/index.php).

2. **Q:** No handicapped parking at her condo – they refuse to add one – is that legal?

**A:** It is difficult to answer your question without further information. Relevant factors to be considered might include the date of original construction of the condo, whether there have been significant renovations in recent years, whether there are sales, leasing, or property management office on site, etc. As these inquiries are fact specific, we encourage you to contact

Pinellas County's Office of Human Rights to discuss further. You can call the Office of Human Rights at 727-464-4880, or, if you wish, you can complete their general inquiry from on-line at:

[www.pinellascounty.org/forms/discrimination.htm](http://www.pinellascounty.org/forms/discrimination.htm)

3. **Q:** When will Ulmerton Road be finished?

**A:** The construction of Ulmerton Road is managed by the Florida Department of Transportation. To get in touch with them, please visit [www.dot.state.fl.us/](http://www.dot.state.fl.us/).

4. **Q:** Why are we being charged a water management system fee for our property taxes when my street has its own?

**A:** The Surface Water Assessment is a user fee for stormwater services in unincorporated Pinellas County which addresses flooding, water quality and the operation and maintenance of county-owned stormwater systems. Visit <http://www.pinellascounty.org/environment/watershed/stormwater-fee.htm> for more information on the Surface Water Assessment, the areas covered and answers to frequently asked questions.

5. **Q:** What are they going to do about home insurance in the county, because I'm told I can't get it due to sinkholes? Why can't we get better evacuation maps? I can't read the ones they send out?

**A:** For information on homeowner's insurance, visit the Florida Office of Insurance Regulation at [www.floir.com](http://www.floir.com). To look up your evacuation zone, use our Know Your Zone application, available online at [www.pinellascounty.org/emergency/knownyourzone.htm](http://www.pinellascounty.org/emergency/knownyourzone.htm) and through the Pinellas County Doing Things for You! mobile app, and simply plug in your address. Also, with our award-winning Storm Surge Protector Application, you can see the impact storm surge flooding can have on your home or business, and neighborhood. Access this online tool at <http://egis.pinellascounty.org/apps/stormsurgeprotector/index.html>.

An overall map of Pinellas County's evacuation zones and evacuation routes is available in our latest Surviving the Storm All-Hazard Guide. You can find a copy of the guide at city halls, fire departments, libraries, county courthouses and tax collector offices, or online at [www.pinellascounty.org/emergency/hurricaneguide.htm](http://www.pinellascounty.org/emergency/hurricaneguide.htm)

6. **Q:** What's being done to correct the drainage problem at Blue Water Cove in Largo? I had to spend \$13,000 on damage.  
**A:** Pinellas County Natural Resources has been notified of issues at this community and will be following up to ensure compliance with stormwater regulations. For more information on how to comply with stormwater regulations and to report issues, visit [www.pinellascounty.org/watershed](http://www.pinellascounty.org/watershed).
7. **Q:** Who do I have to notify to get the county to maintain the right of way and cut the grass, pick up trash?  
**A:** If the right of way is in the unincorporated area of Pinellas County, a resident can call Pinellas County Public Works at (727) 464-3251. If located in a municipality, the resident should contact the municipality directly. Municipal contact information is located online at [www.pinellascounty.org/municipalities.htm](http://www.pinellascounty.org/municipalities.htm). For state roads, residents should contact the Florida Department of Transportation at (727) 725-7950. Residents can also notify Pinellas County of the issue (regardless of location) by using the Pinellas County's Doing Things for You! mobile app or by visiting [www.pinellascounty.org/reportanissue](http://www.pinellascounty.org/reportanissue). The notification will be sent to county staff that will then send it to the correct department, municipality or state agency.
8. **Q:** Public transportation system – why are our buses so large and have such a low ridership?  
**A:** Please contact PSTA for information on buses and ridership. The website is <http://psta.net> or call (727) 540-1800.
9. **Q:** Why aren't the tourism dollars going toward lowering my property taxes?  
**A:** Florida Statute 125.0104 defines the authorized uses of tourist development taxes. See Florida Statute for the [Tourist Development Tax](#). Generally, they are limited to marketing and promoting the destination to tourists, beach nourishment and certain capital projects.
10. **Q:** I live in Highland Lakes. Many of us had wells for watering outside. Those wells have dried. Why are we only given drinking water for use on our lawns and gardening? We need help with our water.  
**A:** Reclaimed water may be an option for you. It is wastewater (discarded water from toilets, sinks, laundries, tubs and showers) that has been cleaned and purified through an advanced wastewater treatment process that eliminates harmful by-products. To find

out if reclaimed water is available in your area and how to connect, visit [www.pinellascounty.org/utilities/reclaimed.htm](http://www.pinellascounty.org/utilities/reclaimed.htm) or call (727) 464-4000.

#### IV. Comment Cards

##### Citizens who didn't wish to speak during the live event submitted comment cards.

1. **Q:** What can we do about the student testing debacle again? What can we do as a community to improve the situation?  
**A:** Pinellas County Schools is a separate entity from the Pinellas County Board of County Commission, which is hosting this public forum. Please visit [www.pcsb.org](http://www.pcsb.org) for information on the county school system.
2. **Q:** This question is in regards to the recent passing of the ordinance requiring crossing the street at designated crosswalks only. If one would look around the campus grounds, one may notice that in front of the school, there are either no sidewalks or bike paths in several areas approaching the school. This represents some safety issues. This requires students on bicycles to ride on the campus south bound roadway from 102<sup>nd</sup> Avenue North to the campus entrance. I would ask each of you to consider how many times you may have been surprised by a bicyclist approaching you on your right hand side? This is just one example of many local areas where this may occur; 102nd Avenue North, 113th Avenue North, etc. As impressive as the map of existing and proposed bike paths is, what can be done in areas of a higher probability of auto/pedestrian to reduce this risk sooner than later?  
**A:** The Pinellas County Pedestrian Safety Action Plan (PSAP) includes several recommendations to improve pedestrian safety. The main recommendations to improve a pedestrians' ability to safely cross our major roadways are as follows;
- Installing enhanced mid-block crosswalks;
  - Installing raised medians and traffic control islands along roadways without raised medians;
  - Making signing, striping, and traffic signal operational improvements to signalized intersections; and
  - Improving street lighting at signalized intersections, major transit stops, high crash corridors, and mid-block crossing locations.

The Plan also includes recommendations for improving driver and pedestrian behavior through the following initiatives;



- A multi-media public education/awareness campaign should be employed to raise awareness of the pedestrian crash problem and improve driver and pedestrian compliance with existing traffic laws;
- Transit infrastructure should be used as a focal point for pedestrian safety education/awareness materials, since most transit trips include a pedestrian component. Many of the highest pedestrian crash concentrations are along transit routes and/or in areas where demographic trends suggest a high propensity for transit use;
- Secondary school Health and Safety curriculum should include traffic safety as this is a public health issue. Non-traditional media, including social networking websites, should be used to educate secondary school students regarding their rights and responsibilities as drivers and pedestrians;
- Driver-oriented enforcement efforts should include a strong educational component and should be coordinated with the court system to ensure tickets are not seen as frivolous. Mass media and roadway signs should be used to “warn” drivers along corridors prior to and during enforcement waves since the principal goal is to educate drivers and pedestrians;
- Pedestrian enforcement should, where feasible, utilize a community policing approach.

In addition to the PSAP, Pinellas County participates in Roadway Safety Assessments/Audits (RSA’s) for corridors that have been identified as hazardous due to the number of crashes, types of crashes, severity of crashes, etc. A RSA is the formal safety performance examination of an existing road or intersection by an independent, multidisciplinary team. It qualitatively estimates and reports on potential road safety issues and identifies opportunities for improvements in safety for all road users. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) works with State and local jurisdictions to integrate RSAs into the project development process for new roads and intersections, and also encourages RSAs on existing roads and intersections.

The aim of an RSA is to answer the following questions:

- What elements of the road may present a safety concern: to what extent, to which road users, and under what circumstances?

- What opportunities exist to eliminate or mitigate identified safety concerns?

Over the past several years, RSA’s have been conducted for the following road segments, intersections, and schools;

- SR 693 (66th Street) from Tyrone Boulevard to Park Boulevard
- 34th Street (US 19) from north of 22nd Avenue North to the south end of Bridge #061
- East Lake Road from Tampa Road to Trinity Boulevard
- Belcher Road from Curlew Road to north of Alderman Road
- US 19/SR 55 from south of Enterprise Road to south of Hammock Pine Boulevard
- US 19/SR 55 from the Pinellas County Line to Jasmine Boulevard
- SR 694/Park Boulevard from US 19 to 66th Street North
- Alternate US 19 from east of Palm Avenue to west of Court Street
- SR 60/SR 595/Chestnut Street (EB) from west of Chestnut Street to east end of the Memorial Causeway
- SR 687/4th St. N. from 106<sup>th</sup> Avenue North to Big Island Gap
- US 19/SR 55 from north of Gandy Blvd. to 49th St. N.
- SR 686/East Bay Drive from Missouri Avenue to west of Highland Avenue
- At Countryside High School
- At St. Petersburg High School
- East Bay Dr (SR 686) from Country Club Drive to Starkey Road
- SR 580/Main Street from Bass Boulevard to west of Pinehurst Road
- SR 60/Gulf-to-Bay Boulevard from Court Street to Bypass Drive
- SR 679/Pinellas Bayway from the north end of Boca Ciega Bridge to SR 682/54th Avenue S.
- All Children’s Hospital (4th Street South to 6th Avenue South)
- Alternate US 19/SR 595 from Monroe Street to Curlew Road
- Alternate US 19/SR 595 from south of Park Street to the Long Bayou Bridge
- Alternate US 19/SR 595 from Whisper Lake Road to Harry Street
- SR 60/Gulf-to-Bay Boulevard at South Belcher Road

There are also studies underway related to increasing pedestrian safety. For example, the Pinellas County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) are jointly funding a study focusing on improving pedestrian safety around transit stops along U.S. Highway 19. The Pinellas County MPO also has a study underway looking at barriers to safe bicycle and pedestrian access to County parks and trails.

The Plan Improvements and Implementation section of the 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) outlines the future plans for bike and pedestrian accommodations throughout the County. I have attached the relevant pages of the plan for your information. The entire 2040 LRTP can be found at [www.pinellascounty.org/MPO/LRTP40/LRTP40.pdf](http://www.pinellascounty.org/MPO/LRTP40/LRTP40.pdf)

3. **Q:** Our parks and preserves took a huge hit during the recent “economic downturn”. I hope that some of that funding will be restored now that there is a bit more treasure in the county’s coffers. In particular, staffing levels are very low in a number of parks, and maintenance activities like prescribed burns and invasive removal, and restoration activities could be stepped up.

**A:** We are working on a new staffing model that will return permanently assigned personnel to the parks vs. the current of or roving maintenance crews. Pinellas County Parks and Conversation Resources Department remains focused on maintaining our parks and preserves for the enjoyment of residents and visitors.