



2035 Pinellas County Long Range Transportation Plan

Summary Report

**Pinellas County
Metropolitan Planning
Organization**



Plan Adoption: December 9, 2009

About the MPO

The Pinellas County MPO was established in 1977 following the passage of the Federal Highway Act of 1974. Metropolitan Planning Organizations were mandated by the Act for urban areas with populations of 50,000 or more to develop plans, policies and priorities that serve to guide local decision making on transportation issues. This includes development of a 20-year Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), a five-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), a Unified Planning Work Program and related transportation planning studies and projects.

The Pinellas County MPO is governed by an 11-member board of elected officials representing municipal governments, the Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners and the Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA). The district secretary of the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District 7 Office also has a seat on the board and serves as a non-voting member.



2035 Pinellas County Long Range Transportation Plan Summary Report

Produced by the
Pinellas County Planning Department

For the Pinellas County
Metropolitan Planning Organization

2010

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Getting There From Here

- Where should your transportation dollars be spent?
- How do we make the County's transportation system safer?



These are among the questions addressed in the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), the blueprint for Pinellas County's future transportation system. The current Plan was adopted with a 2035 horizon year by the MPO board on December 9, 2009. The LRTP is required by Federal Law in order for the County to receive Federal and State funding for transportation improvements. The LRTP guides the use of State and Federal dollars for transportation projects in Pinellas County and is the focal point of the MPO's planning programs and activities.

A Modal Shift

The 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) reflects a renewed emphasis in transit planning with unprecedented commitments in bus and rail system improvements.



Buoyed by increased local and regional cooperation, the LRTP includes a planned rail system as well as the enhancement of the Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority's (PSTA) existing bus system, which calls for significant reductions in headways (i.e., waiting times at bus stops). The intent is to reduce the dependence on single-occupant vehicle travel while providing viable mobility choices throughout Pinellas County. The LRTP has also placed greater emphasis on transportation investments and land use policies designed to create and sustain transit-supportive, walkable communities.

Plan Goals Place Emphasis on Safety, Efficiency and Quality of Life

The MPO's Long Range Transportation Plan and associated programs are guided by five goals shown below, which are designed to address the mobility needs of Pinellas County and the Tampa Bay region.

- Provide for a safe, secure and energy efficient "multi-modal" and "intermodal" transportation system that serves the transportation needs of Pinellas County while enhancing the quality of life for its citizens.
- Promote "livable community" concepts that allow for people to travel freely and safely



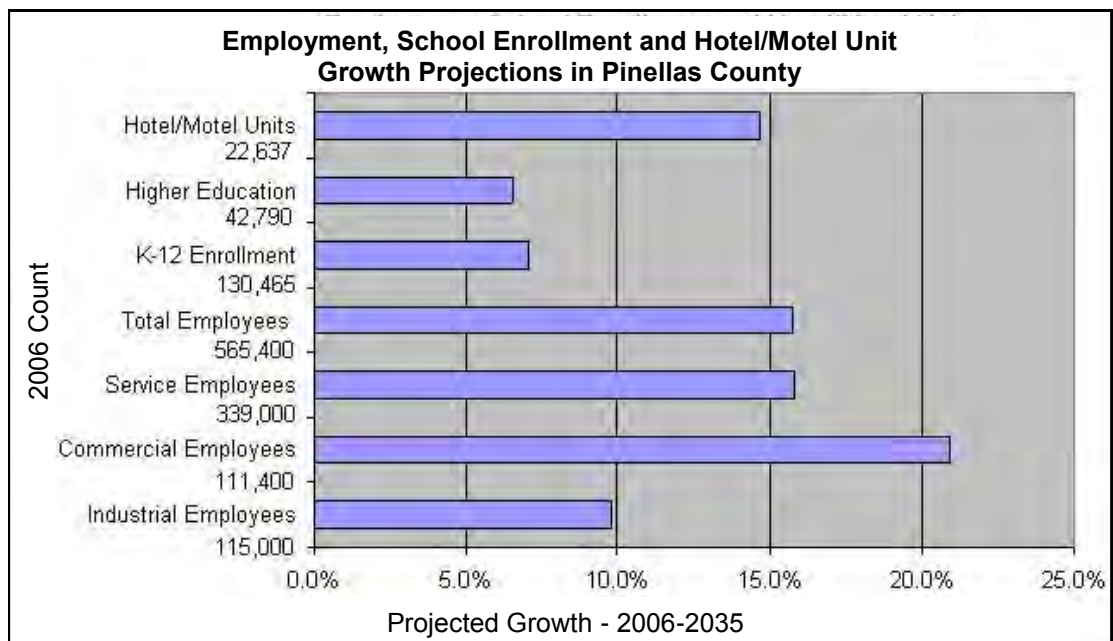
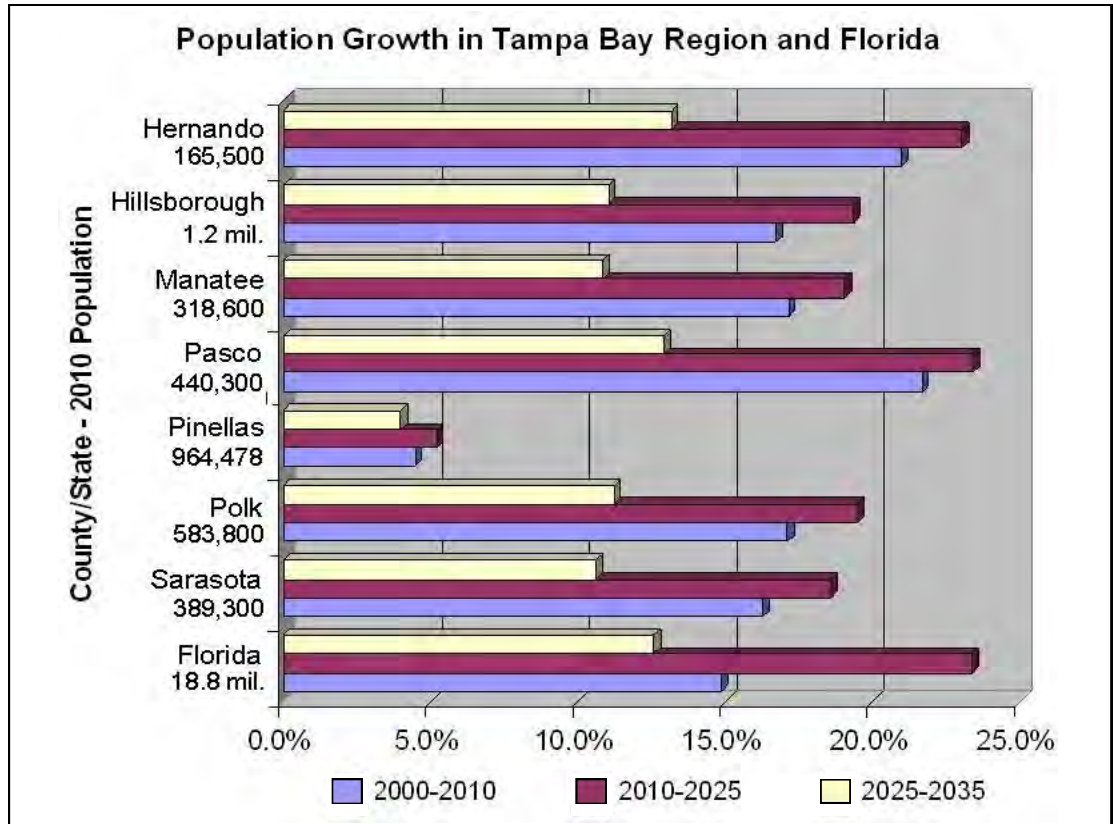
in the urban environment through non-motorized travel modes such as walking, bicycling and skating.

- Contribute to the economic vitality of Pinellas County through the provision of a transportation system that provides for the effective movement of people and goods to and from major employment centers and intermodal facilities.
- Ensure coordination of state, regional and local transportation plans.
- Develop and implement plans and programs that are responsive to the transportation needs and interests of Pinellas County citizens while raising public awareness about the role and responsibilities of the MPO.

Forecast for Pinellas - Stable Population, Growing Economy

With over three thousand people per square mile, Pinellas County is the most densely populated county in Florida. With less than five percent of its land area available for new development, the County's population growth is expected to continue to be relatively flat compared to other counties in the region as well as the State. The population in Pinellas County is expected to grow by no more than nine percent by 2035.

Conversely, the County's overall employment base is projected to grow by over 15 percent by 2035 with commercial employment increasing by over 20 percent. This underscores the need for the Long Range Transportation Plan to ensure the future transportation system is able to support a growing local and regional economy as well as the needs of a redeveloping community.



Transportation and Land Use - Making the Connection

Land development patterns as well as site design are inexorably linked to the function of a community's transportation system. Areas where land development is not accommodating to transit users, walkers and bicyclists (e.g., segregated

land uses, lack of connectivity between properties, buildings oriented to the rear of the properties with large parking lots adjacent

to the street) force people to make the choice to drive rather than use an alternative travel mode. In addition to causing more roadway congestion, energy consumption and air pollutants emitted from vehicles, auto-centric land use and design contribute to the erosion of a community's economic viability and sense of place.



Combined, these strategies reduce the dependence on driving, shorten travel distances, improve air quality, reduce energy consumption and promote healthier lifestyles.

The types of land development policies and standards advocated by the MPO are detailed in the *Livable Communities Model Comprehensive Plan Objectives and Policies* and the *Livable Communities Model Land Development Code* that were published in 2006 and 2008, respectively.

What is a Livable Community?

"Linking transportation and land use planning to create a better quality of life through the creation of distinctive urban environments that offer mobility and lifestyle choices and a place where people want to work and live."

- *Planning To Stay, Pinellas County Comprehensive Plan*

Understanding the importance of the relationship between mobility and land use, the MPO emphasizes the need for local land development codes to provide for better integration of land uses that are interdependent, such as housing, commercial centers and job sites, in the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP).



In addition, the LRTP recognizes the importance of providing accommodations for pedestrians, bicyclists and transit users within individual site developments as well as road rights-of-way.

The publications provide a tool kit for local governments to create and sustain bicycle and pedestrian friendly communities with compact and diverse land uses, interesting destinations and attractive site and street design that create a unique sense

of place for residents and visitors. Several local governments in the County are moving forward with plans to implement regulatory codes within their jurisdictions that mirror or are similar to the land development standards advanced in the *Livable Communities Model Land Development Code*. The MPO's model policies and land development code publications are available online at www.pinellascounty.org/mpo/livablecommunity.htm.



Transit Plan Combines Faster Bus Service and Rail

Across the Country, people are realizing the benefits of what a robust public transportation system can do for their communities. These benefits include boosting local economies, reducing air pollution resulting from auto emissions and providing people with a more affordable alternative to driving their cars.

Recognizing these benefits, the MPO has embraced public transportation in its 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). The future transportation system identified in the LRTP calls for a network of more frequent or “premium” bus service throughout the County and to neighboring counties. It also includes a passenger rail system connecting the downtowns of Clearwater and St. Petersburg through the Gateway area with a connection to the planned Hillsborough County rail sys-

tem via the Howard Frankland Bridge.

In addition to rail, the LRTP includes several improvements to the existing Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA) bus system that will allow for faster service with less wait time between buses.



Earlier morning and later evening service will be provided on many routes. Premium bus service would be added along major corridors to provide even faster more direct routes between major destinations. People would be able to access premium bus and also rail service through the improved regular bus system.

A Matter of Economics

- For every \$1 invested in public transportation, \$4 in economic returns is generated.
- Every \$1 billion invested in public transportation supports and creates 36,000 jobs.
- Every \$10 million in capital investment in public transportation yields \$30 million in increased business sales.

- American Public Transportation Association, 2010

Planned Transit Routes and Rail Alignments

The Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) premium bus and rail networks are shown on pages five and six. They identify the transit improvements planned for implementation between 2015-2035. The bus lines shown on the Premium Bus Network map include 20 routes along major roads providing faster, more frequent bus service utilizing advanced technology bus-rapid-transit vehicles in addition to traditional buses and trolleys.

The Rail Network map identifies cost feasible rail lines connecting the downtowns of Clearwater and St. Petersburg, the Gateway area and Hillsborough County and unfunded rail lines along the existing CSX Railroad corridor, US Highway 19 North and Roosevelt Boulevard. An alternatives analysis study will evalu-

ate rail and other premium transit modes and various alignments for a connection between the downtowns of Clearwater and

St. Petersburg. It will also evaluate the CSX Railroad corridor between downtown Clearwater and the southern terminus as a possible alignment as well as various corridors traversing the Gateway area. Another study is examining a connection between Pinellas County transit services and downtown Tampa via the Howard Frankland Bridge. This line would also connect Pinellas County with the Florida High Speed Rail system between Tampa and Orlando.



TRANSIT NETWORK

Cost Feasible
Premium Bus
Network

Gulf of Mexico

2035 Long Range
Transportation Plan



Pinellas County MPO

LEGEND

- Premium Bus Route (A-T)
- Existing Route (Enhanced)
- Existing Park and Ride Lot



TRANSIT NETWORK

Cost Feasible Plan Rail Network

2035 Long Range Transportation Plan



Pinellas County MPO

LEGEND

Rail Transit

Unfunded Rail

Rail Park and Ride

Rail Station

Other Planned Rail



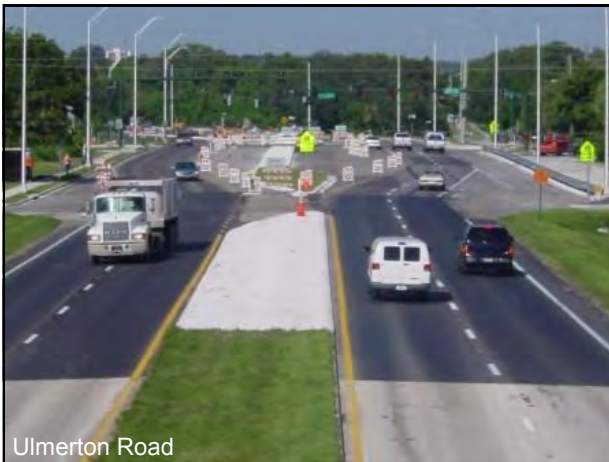
Road Building Narrows Down to Few Key Corridors

Since the 1980s, the MPO has made a concerted effort to expand the capacity of the major State roads in the County, including US Highway 19, SR 686/Roosevelt Boulevard, SR 694/Gandy/Park Boulevard and SR 688/Ulmerton Road. These roads are among the top priorities of the MPO when it comes to the allocation of Federal and State funding.

The 2035 Plan is narrowing in on the remaining projects needed to implement the long term plan for these corridors. This includes the conversion of US Highway 19 to a partially controlled access road in mid and north County, the extension of SR 686/Roosevelt Boulevard from Ulmerton Road to connect

with CR 296 (Future SR 690) and the six laning of Ulmerton Road.

Priority projects such as these are identified through analysis of existing traffic data as well as through the regional transportation analysis (RTA) traffic forecasting model. Among the primary considerations in prioritizing roadway funding include reduction of traffic congestion, safety, impact on the state's Strategic Intermodal System, emergency evacuation, regional connectivity, intermodal access, environmental impact and goods movement.



Ulmerton Road



US Hwy 19

L RTP Cost Feasible Road Improvements 2009 - 2035 (Funding Committed or Earmarked)

Road	From	To	Exstg. or Committed Lane Config.	Planned Lane Configuration
16th Ave. SE	Seminole Blvd.	Donegan Rd.	2U	2E
16th Ave. SE	Donegan Rd.	Lake Ave.	2U	2E
16th Ave. SE	Lake Ave.	Starkey Rd.	N/A	2E
22nd Ave. S.	58th St. S.	34th St. S.	4U	4E
46th Ave. N.	80th St.	62nd St.	2U	2E

Note:

In lane configuration columns: D = Divided; U = Undivided; P = Partially controlled access (includes interchanges, frontage roads); E=Enhanced (e.g., curb, gutter, drainage, intersection, sidewalk, bike lanes)

Continued on Page 8...

LRTP Cost Feasible Road Improvements 2009 - 2035 (Funding Committed or Earmarked)

Road	From	To	Exstg. or Committed Lane Config.	Planned Lane Configuration
58th St.	11th Ave. S.	22nd Ave. S.	2U	2E
62nd Ave. N.	49th St.	66th St.	2U	2D
62nd Ave. N.	34th St.	49th St.	2U	4D
102nd Ave.	137th St.	125th St.	2U	2E
102nd Ave.	125th St.	113th St.	2U	2E
102nd Ave.	113th St.	Seminole Blvd.	4D	4E
126th Ave.	34th St.	US Hwy 19	N/A, 2U	2D/4D
142nd Ave.	Starkey Rd.	Belcher Rd.	N/A	2E
142nd Ave.	Belcher Rd.	66th St.	2U	2E
Alt. US Hwy 19	Anclothe Blvd.	Live Oak St.	2U	2E
Bayway Bridge/SR 682	e/o Gulf Bd.	w/o SR 679	2D	4D
Belleair Rd.	US Hwy 19	Keene Rd.	2U	2E
Belcher Rd.	NE Coachman Rd.	Druid Rd.	4U	4E
Belcher Rd.	38th Ave. N.	54th Ave. N.	2U	2D
Bryan Dairy Rd.	Starkey Rd.	72nd St.	4D	6D
CR 296 (Future SR 690)	US Hwy 19	e/o SR 686 at 40th St.	6D	4P
Disston Ave. Ext.	Woodhill Dr.	Meres Blvd.	N/A	2U
Forest Lakes Blvd.	SR 580	SR 584	2D	4D
Gandy Blvd. (ROW only)	US Hwy 19	w/o Grand Ave.	6D	6D
Gandy Blvd.	9th St. N.	28th St. extended	4D/6D	6D
Gandy Blvd.	w/o 9th St.	e/o 4th St.	4D	6P
Gulf Blvd.	Walsingham Rd./Indian Rocks Bridge	Park Blvd.	2U	2E
Gulf Blvd.	At John's Pass (Bridge Replacement)		4D	4D
Haines Rd.	US Hwy 19	I-275	2U	2E
Highland Ave.	East Bay Dr.	Belleair Rd.	2U	2E
Huey Ave. Ext.	Cypress St.	Pine St.	N/A	2U
I-275 PD&E Study	Sunshine Skyway Bridge	Gandy Blvd.	4F/6F/8F	2 SU

Note:

- 1) First column: ROW=Right-of-way acquisition; PD&E = Project Development and Engineering
- 2) In lane configuration columns: D = Divided; U = Undivided; P = Partially controlled access (includes interchanges, frontage roads); aux. = auxiliary lane; E=Enhanced (e.g., curb, gutter, drainage, intersection, sidewalk, bike lanes); F=freeway; SU=Special use lane

Continued on Page 9...

LRTP Cost Feasible Road Improvements 2009 - 2035 (Funding Committed or Earmarked)

Road	From	To	Exstg. or Committed Lane Config.	Planned Lane Configuration
I-275 NB Bridge Replace.	4th St.	Pinellas Co. Line	4F	4F
Indian Rocks Rd.	Walsingham Rd.	W. Bay Dr.	2U	2E
Keystone Rd.	US Hwy 19	East Lake Rd.	2U	4D
Meres Blvd.	Alt. US Hwy 19	US Hwy 19	N/A, 2U	2U/2D
Nursery Rd.	Highland Ave.	Belcher Rd.	2U	2E
Nursery Rd.	Belcher Rd.	US Hwy 19	2U	2E
SR 686	e/o 40th St.	w/o 28th St.	N/A	6P
SR 686 (Ramps)	NB interchange (Ramp P)	WB SR 686	4P	4P+2 aux.
SR 686/Roosevelt Bd.	at 49th St. interchange		n/a	2U ramp
SR 686/Roosevelt Bd.	49th St.	n/o Ulmerton Rd.	4D	6P
SR 686/Roosevelt Bd.	n/o Ulmerton Rd.	e/o 40th St.	N/A	4P
SR 686/Roosevelt Bd.	Ulmerton Rd.	28th St.	4D	6D
SR 686/Roosevelt Bd.	w/o I-275 interchange	SR 686/Roos. Bd. w/o 9th St.	4D	6D
Starkey Rd.	E. Bay Dr.	Ulmerton Rd.	4D	5D/6D
Starkey Rd.	Ulmerton Rd.	Bryan Dairy Rd.	4D	6D
Starkey Rd./Park St.	Bryan Dairy Rd.	84th Lane	4D	6D
Starkey Rd./Park St.	84th Lane	Tyrone Blvd.	4D	6D
Sunset Point Rd.	Alt. US Hwy 19	Keene Rd.	2U	2E
Ulmerton Rd./SR 688	e/o 49th St.	w/o of 38th St.	4D/6D	6D
Ulmerton Rd./SR 688	w/o 38th St.	w/o of I-275	4D/6D	6D
Ulmerton Rd./SR 688	e/o Wild Acres Rd.	El Centro Ranchero	4D	6D
Ulmerton Rd./SR 688	e/o 119th St.	w/o Lake Seminole Bypass	4D	6D
Ulmerton Rd./SR 688	Lake Seminole Bypass	e/o Wild Acres Rd.	4D	6D
US Hwy 19	n/o Sunset Pt. Rd.	s/o Countryside Blvd.	6D	6P
US Hwy 19	n/o SR 580	n/o CR 95	6D + 2 aux.	6P
US Hwy 19	n/o Whitney Rd.	n/o Gulf To Bay Blvd.	6D/5P	6P
US Hwy 19	n/o 49th St.	s/o 126th Ave	6D	6P
Walsingham Rd.	119th St.	Old Ridge Rd.	2U	2E

Note:

- 1) NB = northbound; WB = westbound
- 2) In lane configuration columns, D = Divided; U = Undivided; P = Partially controlled access (includes interchanges, frontage roads); aux. = auxiliary lane; E=Enhanced (e.g., curb, gutter, drainage, intersection, sidewalk, bike lanes)

MAJOR ROAD NETWORK

2035 Lanes COST FEASIBLE PLAN

Lane/Median Type

- 2 Lane Undivided
- 4 Lane Undivided
- 2 Lane Enhanced
- 4 Lane Enhanced
- 2 Lane Divided
- 4 Lane Divided
- 6 Lane Divided
- 8 Lane Divided
- 4 Partially Controlled
- 6 Partially Controlled
- 6 Lane Auxiliary
- 1 Lane One Way
- 2 Lane One Way
- 3 Lane One Way
- 4 Lane One Way
- 4 Lane Freeway
- 6 Lane Freeway
- 8 Lane Freeway

Enhanced = Improve to Urban Standards
(e.g., curb, gutter, sidewalk, bike lanes intersections)

Gulf of Mexico

Old Tampa Bay

Downtown Clearwater

Downtown St Petersburg



2035 Long Range Transportation Plan



Pinellas County MPO



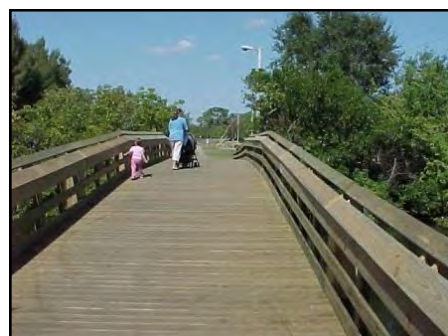
Closing the “Loop” Priority One for Trailways Plan

The centerpiece of the MPO’s Pinellas Trailways Plan is the Pinellas Trail Loop, which incorporates the existing and planned sections of the two longest trail corridors, the Pinellas Trail and the Progress Energy Trail. The Loop is 75-miles long and connects



all the major cities and an assortment of popular destinations within the County as well as connections to adjacent counties. The Loop includes 15 defined segments from which individual projects can be identified and prioritized for funding. A goal of the MPO Bicycle Advisory Committee is for the Loop to be constructed in its entirety within 10 years.

The Trailways Plan is the element of the Long Range Transportation Plan used to identify and prioritize trail projects for Federal, State and local funding. The Plan is also intended to further the MPO’s objective to encourage bicycling and walking for commuting as well as recreational uses. While the Pinellas Trail and its extensions provide the mainline network, community trails link residential neighborhoods with destinations such as parks, shopping centers and schools. Community trails also serve to increase access to the Pinellas Trail Loop throughout the County.



Pinellas Trailways Projects

Planned Cost Feasible Projects (2015 to 2035) Pinellas Trail Loop and Pinellas Trail Extensions	Length (Miles)
Chesnut Park Connector (L)	1.8
Progress Energy A, Tampa Rd. to US Hwy 19 (L)	4.5
Progress Energy C, Ulmerton Rd. to I-275 (L)	3.6
Progress Energy E, I-275 to Weedon Island (L)	2.5
North Bay Trail, Rio Vista Connection to Friendship Tr. Bridge (L)	0.9
37th Street Trail (P)	4.6
Bayway Trail North, toll plaza to Gulf Blvd. (P)	1.0
Bayway Trail South (P)	4.8
Brooker Creek Trail (P)	2.6
Treasure Island Causeway Trail Connection (P)	0.5

Notes:

(L) Pinellas Trail Loop Project

(P) Pinellas Trail Extension



Continued on Page 12...

Pinellas Trailways Projects

Planned Cost Feasible Projects (2015 to 2035) Community Trails	Length (Miles)
142nd Avenue Trail	3.4
62nd Avenue Trail	4.3
Bayshore Trail	2.2
Belleair Causeway Trail	2.7
Booker Creek Trail, 8th St. S. to Bayboro Harbor and 1st Ave S. to 13th Ave N.	2.0
Clearwater Beach Trail, Hamden Dr. to city limits	0.8
Courtney Campbell Connection	2.0
Courtney Campbell Recreation Trail	5.0
CSX Trail	3.8
Cultural Facilities Trail	4.2
Curlew Road Trail	4.3
Druid Trail, Glen Oaks Park to Progress Energy Trail	2.4
Dunedin Community Trail	3.5
Edgewater Trail	2.0
Elfers Trail	1.1
Enterprise Trail	2.9
Freedom Lake Trail	1.1
Friendship Trail	2.5
Friendship Trail Bridge Rehabilitation	1.1
Gateway Nature Trail	5.4
Gulf Beaches Bike Path	21
Howard Park Trail	3.7
Lake Maggiore Trail	1.9
Lake Seminole Trail	4.7
Landmark Trail	6.8
Largo Brick Trail	1.7
Largo Central Park Trail	5.9
Main Street Trail	2.0

Planned Cost Feasible Projects (2015 to 2035) Community Trails	Length (Miles)
Meres Trail	2.7
North Greenwood Loop	1.8
Old Coachman Trail	0.7
Oldsmar Trail <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Segment G, Forest Rd./Pine Ave N. to Forest Lakes Bd./Racetrack Rd. Segments D, E and F, Tampa Rd. to RE Olds Park Segments H and L2, RE Olds Park to Forrest Lakes Bd. Segments B and C, north side of RE Olds Park to Harbor Palms Park Segment A1, Sheffield Park to Curlew Rd. 	13
Oldsmar/Safety Harbor Crossings Trail	2.6
Ross Norton Connection	0.5
Seminole St. Petersburg College Trail Spur	0.7
Skyway Trail, Pinellas Trail to 22nd Ave S.	0.9
Skyway Trail Extension, 34th Ave S. to 54th Ave S.	1.0
South Bay Trail	2.5
South Beaches Trail	8.3
Starkey Wilderness Trail	2.7
Taylor Trail	1.8
Treasure Island Causeway Trail	1.7
Trinity Trail	1.7
Weedon Island Trail	1.0
Whitcomb Bayou Trail	2.8

Note:

A Community Trail is a local paved bicycle/pedestrian corridor designated and restricted to non-motorized traffic and designed to be built to a width less than 15 feet and to standards providing a high degree of safety, efficiency and comfort for the user while reflecting the unique circumstances of the trail's location.

PINELLAS TRAILWAYS PLAN

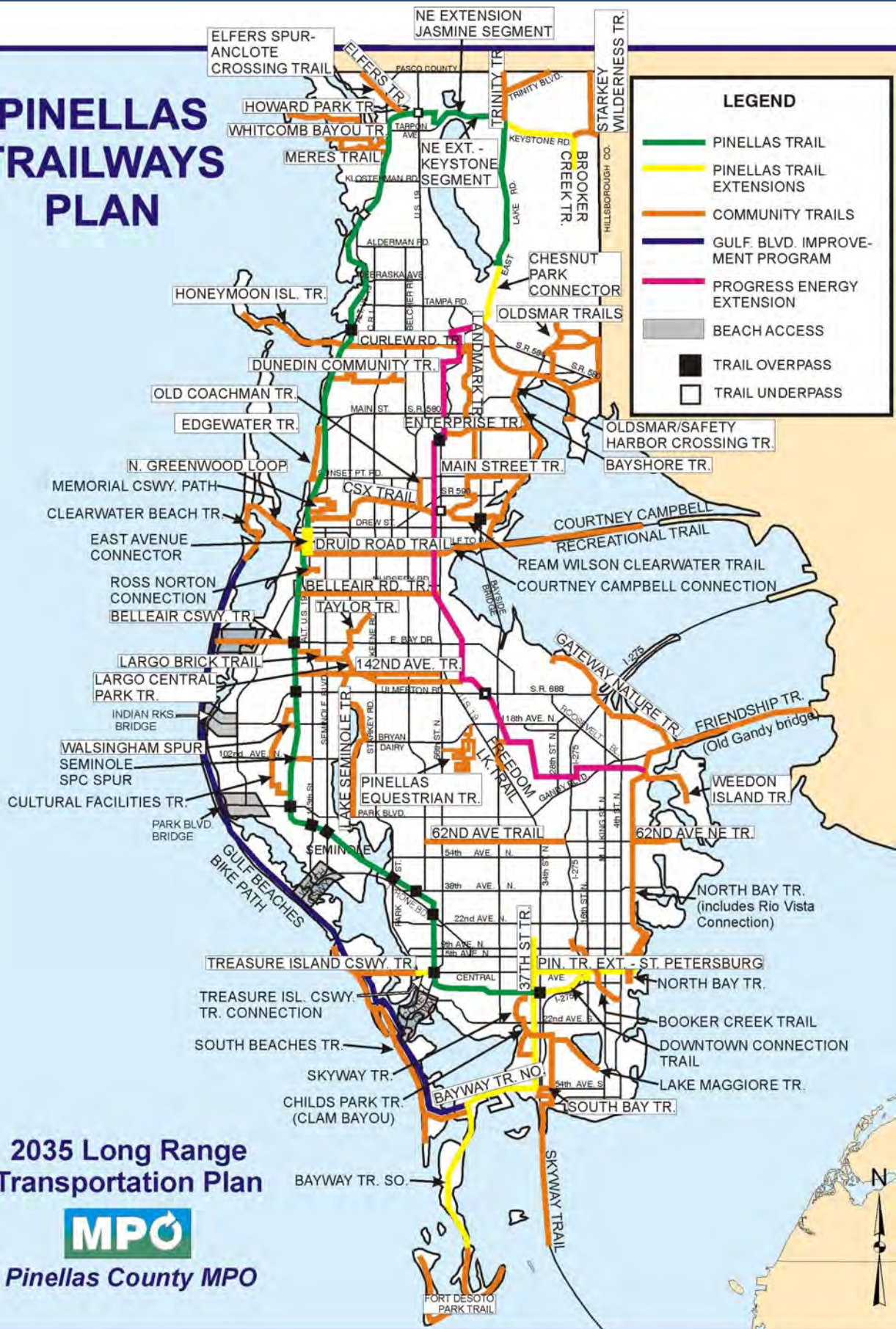
2035 Long Range
Transportation Plan



Pinellas County MPO

LEGEND

- PINELLAS TRAIL
- PINELLAS TRAIL EXTENSIONS
- COMMUNITY TRAILS
- GULF BLVD. IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM
- PROGRESS ENERGY EXTENSION
- BEACH ACCESS
- TRAIL OVERPASS
- TRAIL UNDERPASS



Smarter Transportation Through ITS

Intelligent transportation systems (ITS) are advanced technology approaches to improving travel conditions, safety and traffic management. Examples of ITS applications in Pinellas County include the following:

- Automated fare boxes on Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA) buses;
- Pre-paid toll (Sun Pass) system on the Skyway Bridge; Dynamic message signs on I-275;
- Pedestrian-controlled count down signals located throughout the County; and
- High intensity activated crosswalk (HAWK) signals located in St. Petersburg and Largo.

A major emphasis of local ITS initiatives is on arterial roadway management through the

phased implementation of advanced traffic management system (ATMS) and freeway management system applications such as cameras and communication systems to monitor traffic, optimize signal timings and control the flow of traffic. The map on the following

page identifies the ITS implementation phases for the County's major road network. Phase one is the highest priority. ITS applications on most of these corridors have been completed or will be completed within the next two years.



Completed ITS Projects

Corridors where ITS applications have been completed include the following:

- US Hwy 19, Pasco CL to SR 580;
- SR 686/Roosevelt Bd., Alt. US Hwy 19 to Ulmerton Rd.
- Gulf-To-Bay Blvd., Damascus Rd. to Hillcrest Ave;
- E. Lake/McMullen Booth Rd., Pasco CL to Gulf-To-Bay Bd.;
- Gandy Bd., from I-275 to west of Gandy Bridge;
- 49th St., US Hwy 19 to Roosevelt Bd.; and
- Belcher Rd., Klosterman Rd. to Gulf-To-Bay Bd.



The Pay Off

A March, 2007 study by Gord and Associates evaluated the effects of several intersections on US Highway 19 North and Gulf-To-Bay Boulevard/SR 60 where adaptive signal control systems were installed. Below are some of the findings. Adaptive signal control systems coordinate control of traffic signals across a signal network, adjusting the lengths of signal phases based on prevailing traffic conditions.

- **US Highway 19 North**

- Annual savings of \$4.2 million in labor and \$600 thousand in fuel consumption for a total annual savings of \$4.8 million.
- Injury accidents reduced by 41% and rear end accidents were reduced by 40%.

- **Gulf-To-Bay Boulevard**

- Annual savings of \$1.8 million in labor and \$755 thousand in fuel consumption for a total annual savings of \$2.5 million.
- Injury accidents reduced by 41% and rear end accidents were reduced by 5%.

INTELLIGENT TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM (ITS) CORRIDORS



2035 Long Range Transportation Plan



Pinellas County MPO

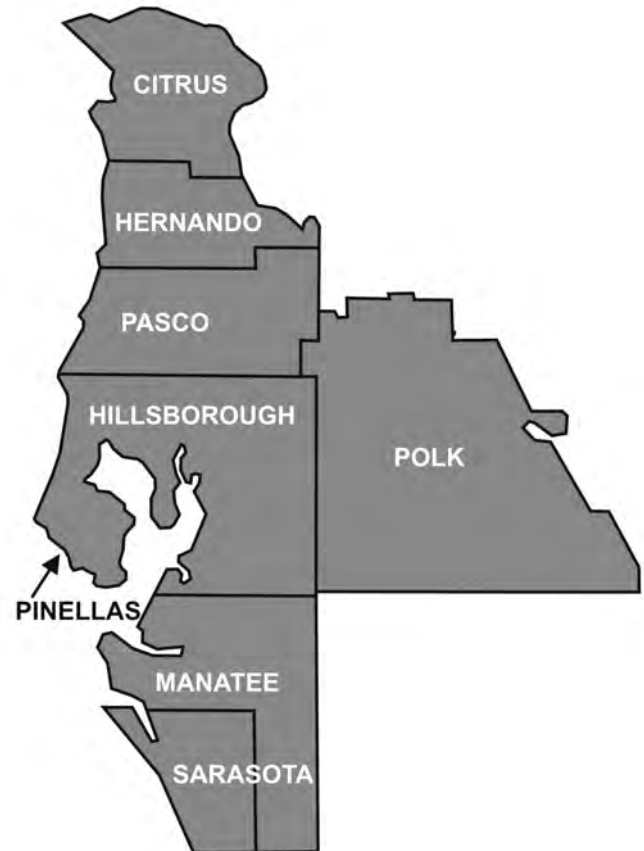
Bay Area Counties Work Together on Regional Plan

In a growing region with over four million people, the coordination of transportation planning in the Tampa Bay area is critical in meeting the diverse travel needs of its residents and visitors.

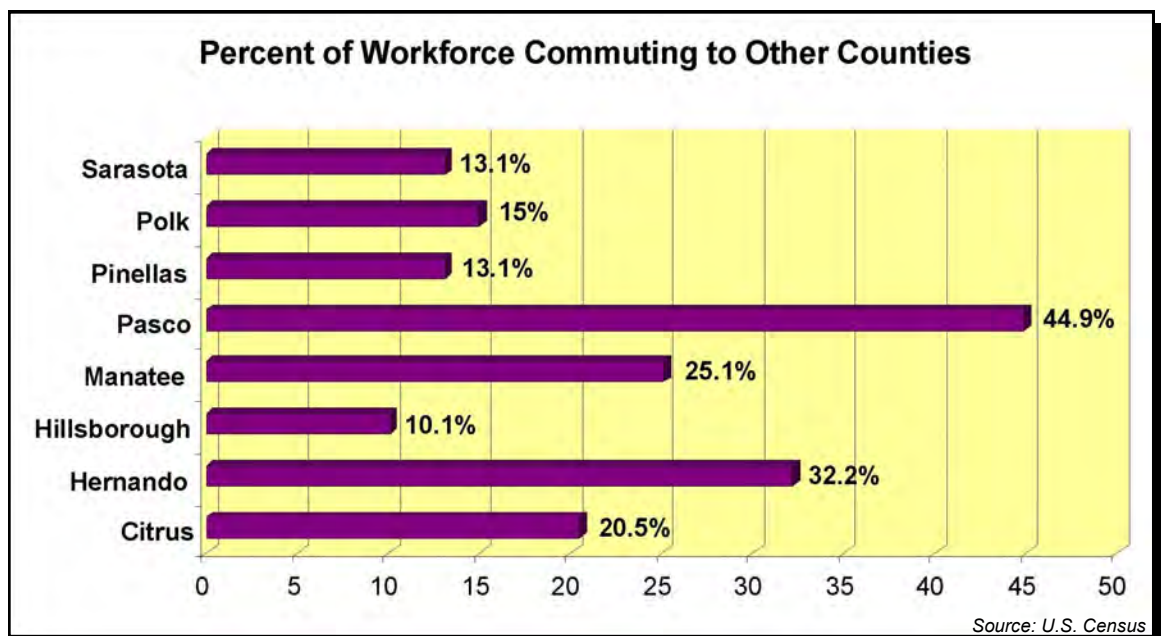


The Pinellas County MPO is an active partner in the regional transportation planning process, participating as a member agency in the West Central Florida (WCF) MPO Chair's Coordinating Committee (CCC). The CCC plays a central role in determining the makeup of the region's future transportation system.

The WCF MPO Chairs Coordinating Committee (CCC) is comprised of the Hernando, Hillsborough, Pasco, Pinellas and Sarasota/Manatee County MPOs, the Polk County Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) and Citrus County, which is a voting member for Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP) issues only. The CCC is responsible for the development and implementation of the Regional Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), which provides policy guidance and identifies priority improvements for the regional transportation system, including highways,



public transit and railways, over a 20 year period. The Regional LRTP is updated every three to five years to coincide with the plan updates of the member MPOs.



Regional Plan Focuses on Priority Corridors

The Regional Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) identifies priority corridors, as listed below, that are most important in terms of serving key travel markets between the region's counties. They provide the basis for regional funding decisions.

- Hernando/Citrus Travel Market - SR 44, US 19, SR 50, I-75, Suncoast Parkway II
- Pasco/Hernando Travel Market - US 19, I-75, SR 56, SR 54, Suncoast Parkway
- Pinellas/Pasco Travel Market - US 19, I-275
- Hillsborough/Pasco Travel Market - SR 54, SR 56, I-75, Veterans Expressway/Suncoast Parkway, Bruce B Downs Bd, future rail linking downtown Tampa to USF and Wesley Chapel
- Pinellas/Hillsborough Travel Market - I-275, CR 296 (Future SR 690), Roosevelt Blvd, Gandy Blvd, future rail linking downtown Tampa to Clearwater and St Petersburg
- Pinellas/Manatee Travel Market - I-275
- Sarasota/Manatee Travel Market - US 41, US 41 Bypass, I-75, University Parkway, US 301, Sarasota/Bradenton Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)
- South Sarasota Travel Market - US 41, I-75
- Tampa/Lakeland Travel Market - I-4, SR 60, US 92, Polk Parkway, High Speed Rail, Tampa/Lakeland Commuter Rail
- South Brandon Travel Market - I-75
- Lakeland East (Polk) Travel Market - I-4, US 98, US 27, Polk Parkway, SR 693 Ext.



TBARTA Forges Multimodal Partnership

Among its regional planning efforts, the MPO also works with the Tampa Bay Area Regional Transportation Authority (TBARTA) and its member governments to develop long range solutions to the area's transportation challenges. The TBARTA was created by the State legislature on July 1, 2007 for the purpose of planning and developing a multimodal transportation system to improve mobility and expand transportation options for passengers and freight throughout the seven-county region. Its voting members include representatives of Pinellas, Hillsborough, Pasco, Hernando, Citrus, Sarasota and Manatee Counties, the cities of St. Petersburg, Tampa and Bradenton, the West



Central Florida Chairs Coordinating Committee and three gubernatorial appointees. In May, 2009, TBARTA adopted mid and long-range plans for a future transit network and supporting facilities. The plans follow a goal of creating a framework for a seamless, linked transportation network using a variety of travel modes (e.g., highways, rail, bus, ferry) where they are most effective.

A Competitive Edge

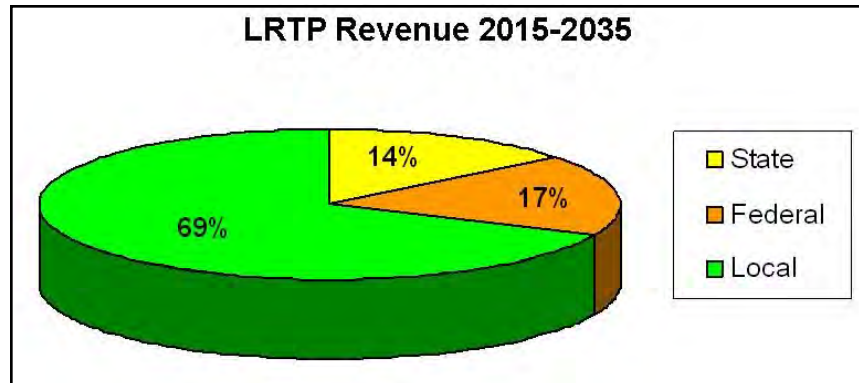
In member surveys conducted by the Tampa Bay Partnership, transportation was named the number one issue affecting the region's economic competitiveness.

- Tampa Bay Partnership, 2006.

The Balance Sheet - Need for Transit Revenue

Projects identified in the MPO Long Range Transportation Plan (L RTP) with “committed” funding are near term improvements scheduled in the five year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Projects identified in the L RTP as “cost feasible” are planned for implementation between 2015 and 2035. Funding for these longer range projects is based on the assumption that existing transportation funding levels from Federal, State and local sources will continue to be available.

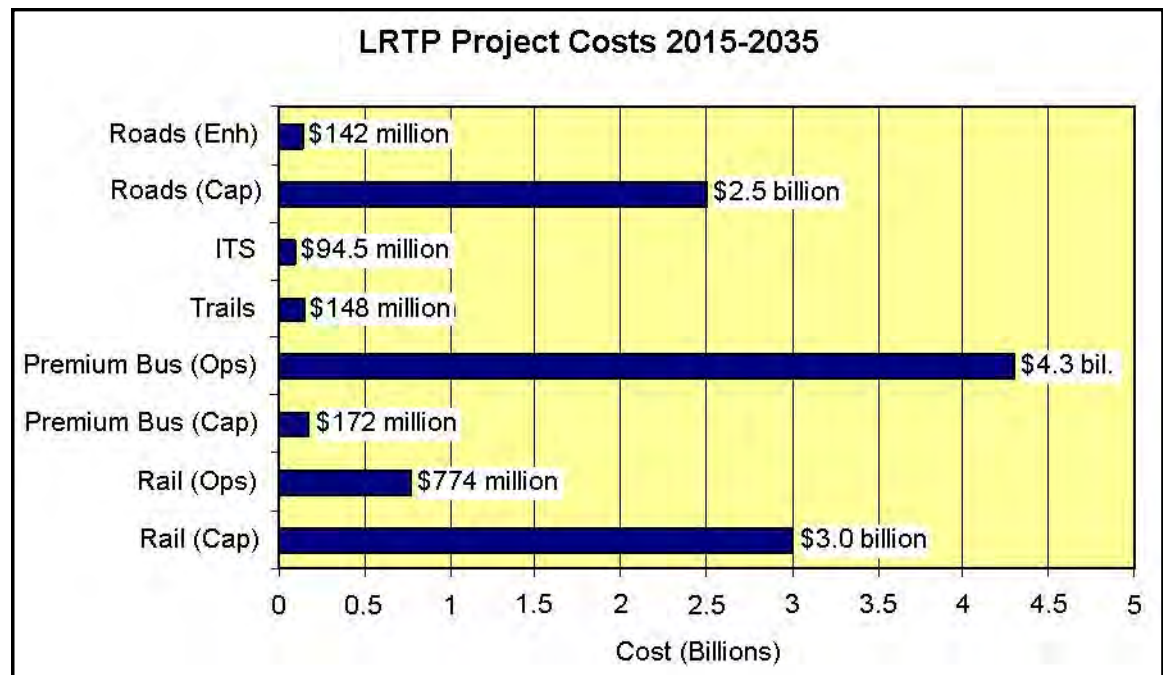
and local fuel tax revenue and Penny for Pinellas infrastructure sales tax and transportation impact fee revenue from the County and municipal governments.



The cost of maintaining existing transit service is funded primarily through ad valorem and farebox revenue in addition to State fuel taxes. Federal fuel tax revenue appropriated

through the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) provides capital funding for transit.

In addition, for the planned cost feasible rail and bus improvements, the L RTP is also relying on a one percent transit system surtax that would require a voter approved referendum. This represents the largest portion of local funding identified for the cost feasible projects and is reflected in the 69 percent local share of L RTP revenue shown above. Existing funding sources assumed to be available for the cost feasible projects include State, Federal



Notes:

- 1) Enh = Enhancements (e.g., curb, gutter, drainage, intersection, sidewalk, bike lanes)
- 2) Cap = Capacity for roads, Capital for premium bus and rail
- 3) ITS = Intelligent Transportation Systems
- 4) Ops = Operations
- 5) Premium Bus = high speed bus service utilizing advanced technology bus-rapid-transit vehicles in addition to traditional buses and trolleys

Need for Pedestrian Improvements Top List of Citizen Concerns

During the process of updating the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) to the 2035 horizon year, the MPO distributed and collected surveys throughout Pinellas County to gauge public opinion on an assortment of transportation issues. The need for expanding sidewalks along major roads surfaced as a high priority among the respondents with 69 percent rating it as “very important” or “extremely important”.

Pedestrian safety improvements at major intersections was another major concern, with 65 percent of the respondents rating it as “very important” or “extremely important”. These survey results represent over 410 responses collected from April to July, 2009. Approximately 500 additional responses to

variations of this survey were collected in 2008 and 2009. The surveys were posted online and distributed at public libraries and various workshops and meetings sponsored by the MPO and/or where MPO staff members were in attendance. The results of the surveys shaped the development of the 2035 LRTP in terms of transportation policies, strategies and capital improvements.



Transportation Improvements	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important	Extremely Important
Transit					
Bus route expansion	12%	19%	22%	24%	23%
More frequent bus service	12%	20%	23%	20%	25%
Rail line	15%	13%	21%	18%	32%
Elevated light rail	19%	19%	18%	16%	29%
Rail/Light Rail Connections					
Downtown Clearwater to Downtown St. Petersburg	12%	14%	26%	20%	28%
Gateway Area to Tampa	12%	12%	25%	23%	28%
North County along US 19	11%	14%	23%	27%	24%
Bicycle/Pedestrian Improvements					
Expansion of off-road trails	18%	20%	25%	18%	19%
Expansion of off-road bicycle lanes	11%	20%	23%	24%	23%
Expansion of sidewalks along major roads	5%	14%	22%	26%	33%
Ped. safety improvements at major intersections	3%	10%	22%	24%	41%
Road improvements					
Widening of major roads	25%	20%	22%	18%	16%
US 19, partially controlled access improvements from Park Blvd. to Pasco County	14%	19%	27%	22%	18%
Ulmerton Road - 6 laning	28%	17%	25%	16%	13%
118th Avenue, partially controlled access improvements from US 19 to planned Roosevelt Blvd/CR 296 Connector	21%	24%	25%	17%	13%
Adding/lengthening turn lanes at road intersections	16%	18%	27%	22%	18%
Improved signal timing	5%	9%	18%	22%	45%



Pinellas County
Metropolitan Planning Organization
600 Cleveland Street, Suite 750
Clearwater, FL 33755
www.pinellascounty.org/mpo

For questions or comments regarding this publication and/or to be placed on the MPO's mailing list, contact the MPO office (mpo@pinellascounty.org or 727-464-8200).

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