

PINELLAS ASSEMBLY TRANSPORTATION INTEGRATION TASK FORCE

AGENDA

**December 18, 2003
4:00 P.M.**

**Raymond James
800 Carillon Parkway
Tower 3 – 3rd Floor
St. Petersburg, FL**

- I. Call to Order**
- II. Review of Minutes of December 1st**
A copy of the minutes are attached.
- III. Discussion with Ken Hartman,
District VII Secretary**
- IV. Finalize Committee White Paper
Updated draft attached**
This White Paper is to be presented to the Assembly Group on January 9th, but must be provided to the County offices for distribution before that. The deadline had been December 12st.
- V. Review of Financial/Bonding Program proposed
by Don Crane**
Don Crane has invited Gene Branagan, FDOT Finance Manager, and Brady Sneath, Finance Director for the Hillsborough Expressway Authority to meet with the committee to discuss this proposal.
- VI. Other Business**
A chart documenting transportation program costs is attached for committee reference
- VII. Adjournment**

White Paper for the Transportation Integration Task Force of the Pinellas Assembly Transportation Integration Committee

Issue Statement:

The Pinellas community will have completed specific actions to create mobility improvements for the County. These improvements will occur in the next five years and prepare us for the future. The actions taken will reflect the transportation importance of Pinellas County to the entire Tampa Bay community as it relates to the seamless movement of people and goods. These actions, which will flow from a decision-making mechanism and structure, will be planned to enhance the quality of life of our community. Our quality of life enhancements will ensure the safety of our community, the improvement of the environment and the economic strength of Pinellas County

Task Force Objective:

The Task Force recognizes that transportation in the future must be approached differently by Pinellas County. To date, Pinellas County has been developed based upon automobile travel and the continued opportunities for that are becoming very limited. Due to the fact that the county is so established in development, the provision of transportation facilities must be critically tied into planned use patterns that are more conducive to alternate means of traveling. It is recognized that there is considerable commitment to a highway network, and some further improvements to it. However, there is now the need to focus on other means of travel, such as transit, walking, bicycles or other means of conveyance. In order for these means of traveling to work well, land use and development must be modified in the future. Land use patterns at both the local level and the countywide level should facilitate this means of travel to make it easier for people to have this choice. The committee recognizes this direction is important, from not only a quality of life perspective, but also from an economic perspective. From a quality of life perspective, there is the growing awareness within the County that people desire to travel with a free choice of mode of transportation beyond the automobile. Concerning economics, as the County builds out, the use of these alternate modes of travel will provide the County continued opportunities to have development, or redevelopment that would not occur due to the highway system limitations. The committee observes that this direction will have an effect on not just the type of transportation service, but also who will be providing it, and how. There will be a challenge to the County and the cities to define how this will occur. This report is focused upon that challenge.

Task Force Members:

Frank Murphy, Baycare, Clearwater (Chairman)
Don Crane, St. Petersburg
Roy Harrell, Holland & Knight, St. Petersburg
Jim Holton, Madeira Beach
Joe Kubicki, St. Petersburg
Julio Maggi, Echelon, St. Petersburg
Kevin Schuyler, Raymond James, St. Petersburg (Vice Chairman)
Ed Hawkes, Dunedin
Joel Giles, Carlton Fields, St. Petersburg
Brian Smith, Staff Support, County
Pete Pensa, Staff Support, City
Eva Abdujar, Recording Clerk, St. Petersburg

Finding and Facts

The Committee during the course of several months convened 8 fact-finding sessions concerning the status of transportation in Pinellas County. Through those sessions, the committee gained an understanding of the issues

and the various government initiatives that were responding to those issues. The committee evolved into a good general understanding of the practical concerns with what can really be done concerning transportation in Pinellas County. Several themes begin to evolve that have helped the committee to focus its efforts. One theme is that of quality of life, and that perspective for the citizens of Pinellas County. There appears to be a strong sense of interest in matters that come under this heading of quality of life. In addition, the committee has observed that what were viewed as solutions 30 years ago are no longer viewed in the same light. Therefore, the committee sees the County expanding from a focus on highway improvements, to a focus on other means of travel, such as transit, bicycle, and pedestrian modes. It is also observed that whatever direction is taken with respect to transportation initiatives, there is the need to view the governance and the revenue sources in that regard. It was with these considerations in mind that the committee has developed a series of findings and facts which are the subject of this section of the report.

TRAFFIC CONTROLS

The committee has evaluated in some depth the situation of traffic controls within Pinellas County. Traffic Controls encompass signage (both regulatory, and non regulatory), controls during construction, railroad crossings, school crossings, traffic signals, pavement markings, roadway median openings, traffic calming, to name several of a multiplicity of functions. The State Department of Transportation controls these functions on the State highway System. However, on the County roadway system, these traffic controls are governed by the County in the unincorporated area, and the various municipalities in their jurisdictions. It should be noted that there is another level of roadways referred to as local roads. These are controlled by whichever jurisdiction they fall within. This is the system within which the 790 traffic signals within Pinellas County are operated. The committee concluded that most of the items under the subject of traffic control would be appropriately handled at the local jurisdictional level (City or County) because of the community level of sensitivity. However the committee identified the functions of the Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) portion of the traffic signal system which includes approximately 400 signals, which should be separated out for countywide management, since the management of traffic on the major arteries should be a priority that should not vary from one jurisdiction to the next. The committee believes as a minimum there should be a central agency or committee that is managing the equipment and software that is used for the ITS throughout Pinellas County. The committee believes this agency should be the County. In addition, the County should administer protocols that place a priority on the efficient movement of traffic, both under normal conditions, and under conditions where traffic needs to be adjusted due to incidents or special situations. The committee further concludes that the financial responsibility for the signal system should be placed at the county level ~~with one cent of the gas tax assigned to it~~. However it must be emphasized that there are many functions such as the priority for pedestrian movement or special events that have a community interest. These system decisions that affect such concerns should be approached in a way that takes into account those community concerns. Therefore, whatever decision making procedure is used for the countywide signal system, there needs to be a provision for input or involvement from local agencies.

ROADWAY CAPACITY

The committee has assessed the committed plans for roadway improvement as identified in the MPO plan. There is already a regional roadway network which would provide considerable capacity for the movement of traffic, not only in the County, but also to locations outside the County. While it is recognized that Pinellas County is built to a point where there are limited opportunities for new roadway corridors, there are several existing corridors that are identified for capacity expansion. This would include such corridors as US 19, Ulmerton Road, the Roosevelt/118th Ave. connectors and Gandy Blvd.

Specifically US 19 is to be a controlled access roadway, with service roads, from SR 580 to 49th Street. US 19 is the subject of a channelized median program in conjunction with an added lane project. The combination of these initiatives will make US 19 an excellent north/south artery through Pinellas County. Since this is a State corridor, the funding for this program has been derived through the efforts of the MPO and FDOT. Most of the improvements for US 19 are either in place or programmed for the next 5 years. The exception is the section of

US 19 between SR 60 and Whitney Road. At this time there is not adequate funding committed for the construction work in that area.

Ulmerton Road is the major east/west artery of the County and it is programmed to be a 6 lane arterial. It should be noted that there is considerably less right of way in this corridor than US 19, and considerable less opportunity for improvement. Funding is also needed for construction of key sections of this roadway. These sections are from west of 38th Street to I275, and from west of Belcher Road to west of Keene Road.

The third regional capacity initiative is in the Roosevelt Blvd. Area. The MPO plan defines an expressway that would connect the south end of the Bayside Bridge to I-275. This is referred to as the new Roosevelt Connector. To provide system continuity, the 118th Ave. connector is a proposed expressway that would connect US 19 to the new Roosevelt Connector. With this initiative, a traveler can proceed north on the interstate from St. Petersburg, then proceed west on the Roosevelt/118th Connector System to US 19 and proceed north. This will all be done without the driver encountering a traffic light. It should be noted there is very little construction money that is assigned or available to this connector system.

The fourth capacity corridor is the conversion of Gandy Blvd. to a controlled access facility. This corridor would start at US 19 and proceed east to the causeway. Included within this corridor would be a major interchange at the crossing of 4th and 9th Streets, which would be the priority improvement in this corridor. The preliminary corridor evaluations have been completed, but there are no funds committed to the design or construction of this improvement.

In summary, the priorities for capacity improvements are: US Hwy 19, Ulmerton Road, Roosevelt/118th Ave Connectors, and Gandy Blvd. It must be emphasized these corridors are all identified in the MPO plan and the FDOT program. The strategic issue for these projects is the funding requirements. It should be noted from the background materials in the appendix of this report that these projects would total \$1.1 billion. The committee would note that while other road improvements have been identified, these road improvements which are located on the State system, would provide considerable Countywide benefit to the County, and should be the subject of not only local the gas tax commitment, but also federal and State revenue initiatives, and possibly in some form, a toll initiative. A suggested approach would be as follows: U.S. 19 would continue to be funded by special allocation efforts from federal and State Sources. The same approach could apply to the completion of the Ulmerton Road corridor. However, the Roosevelt/118th connector system improvements should be evaluated with respect to the feasibility of whether the system can be implemented using revenues that are generated from some form of toll and bonding system. ~~It is understood that the Gandy Blvd. improvements could be accomplished from that same toll revenue, and that this needs to be a part of the feasibility evaluation.~~ The committee would question the feasibility of this full connector system without some form of toll revenues.

TRANSIT

The committee has carefully evaluated the history of mass transit in Pinellas County, and the current operations of not just the PSTA bus system, but also several specialized trolley systems. The committee noted that there was considerable interest in the County in using alternative means of transportation, other than car travel. However, the committee also notes that the current bus system is not viewed as an attractive option or an adequate response to that interest. Traditional bus service does not appear to be what the general public is interested in. The committee notes that if the County is to proceed forward, making mass transit a viable alternative, it has to be provided in a way that people will be attracted to use the system, as opposed to using it because there is no other alternative. This would mean that service must be focused and designed in response to what peoples needs are, and that that service be attractive and enjoyable to use. The committee notes the success of the Gulf Beach trolley in that regard. Since this trolley service was installed, its ridership has steadily climbed and it is an example of the type of service that people would prefer.

Another aspect of the transit situation is the fact that PSTA does not include all of the communities in Pinellas County. The cities of Treasure Island, St. Pete Beach, Belleair Beach, Belleair Shores and Kenneth City and the unincorporated areas of Tierra Verde and South Pasadena Fire Department are not included in the authority service area. For transit to be truly effective as a mode, there should be an agency that can function countywide with a revenue source that is countywide.

The Committee is also aware of the Pinellas Mobility Initiative, which is a program bought forward under the sponsorship of the MPO. This program will provide a significant transportation alternative with the use of a guideway technology connecting key points throughout the County. This system has been approved by the MPO to proceed into the preliminary engineering phase. As Pinellas County looks toward its future, this is the type of transportation that must be provided. In addition to this guideway system, there is the need to emphasize other forms of transit service. There needs to be not only the expansion of such service as the Gulf Beaches Trolley to provide such services as the connectivity from the Gulf Beaches to Downtown St. Petersburg, but also there is the need to provide premium express service to move the commuters and other non-leisure travelers to and from their destination that is competitive with the automobile. Such services would set up a transition of use leading to that of the Guideway System.

The Committee believes that the appropriate steps should be taken to ensure not only that the funding is provided for the next phase of this guideway system, but that activities be initiated to identify the corridors that should be preserved for the system, and with development plans then focused along those corridors, thereby increasing the feasibility of that transit program. In that regard, the first phase of that system should include the corridor beginning in the Clearwater Beach/Downtown Clearwater area traveling east to the St. Petersburg/Clearwater Airport, and then south to the downtown St. Petersburg area. This would be followed by a second phase that would run from downtown St. Petersburg west to the Tyrone area and then north to downtown Clearwater, which will form a complete loop.

The committee believes that there is the priority need to focus on Governance and the revenue source for this initiative. It makes sense that one agency should be responsible for mass transit at the trolley level, at the bus level, and the guideway level of service. This makes sense, not only from a governance and coordination of service perspective, but in terms of how the revenue may be applied. The committee is aware of the fact that there is available to Pinellas County the use of a transit surtax, which is a sales tax of up to 1 percent that maybe applied if consent from a referendum is obtained. The committee has concluded that this revenue source can not only support all that is envisioned with respect to mass transit requirements, but also the funding need for the other modes that might be in support of this system. The committee concludes that a new countywide form of transit governance is needed that has the ability to provide these services. The transit governance should take into account a membership that reflects the revenues that would be provided to the system by the Board of County Commissioners. However the committee also concludes that the governance of that transit agency must be carefully designed so that the decisions are community based. This is extremely important in that this form of transportation has considerable interaction with communities and development that is along the system corridors.

GULF BLVD ENHANCEMENT

The committee recognizes that Gulf Blvd, which connects the 12 beach communities of the County, is a significant economic development feature. There are 5 million tourists a year that visit Pinellas County, and their primary objective in doing so is the Gulf Beaches. It must also be recognized that this same environmental feature is a significant attraction and amenity to the residents of the County. The third point in that regard is that there are many businesses that either locate to this area, or stay in this area due to the Gulf Beaches. A special Gulf beaches Trolley service has been instituted that has proved to be very successful and furthers the concept

of the Gulf beaches as a unified corridor with connecting destinations. It is for these reasons that the committee believes Gulf Blvd. should be prioritized for enhancement as a corridor. This enhancement would include those various initiatives that come under the heading of livable community and quality of life provisions. This corridor should not only be attractive, but it should be functional for people to use. The corridor should not only be the subject of design features including way-finding signs, landscaping, streetscape, and utility undergrounding, but also such community features as characteristic trolley service, bicycle friendly provisions, and pedestrian safety provisions are critical. These initiatives should all be followed with a common theme of design, function and communication. The committee recognizes that Gulf Blvd. must then be approached as not just a transportation corridor, but as an experiential corridor that is treated as a significant quality of life component of the County. Funding for this corridor should be viewed as a countywide responsibility but should be approached as a financial partnership with the 12 beach communities, where those communities provide a share of the funding. ~~Therefore it is concluded that in addition to one of the pennies from the gas tax being allocated to this program, that the beach communities should also provide a local match to ensure a fair assessment of financial responsibilities.~~

CORRIDOR BEAUTIFICATION AND STREETScape

The committee finds that a significant aspect to transportation is that of quality of life. Transportation improvements are made and provided for so that people can travel through the County pursuing their various destinations during the course of the day. The committee believes that this transportation purpose should be approached on a comprehensive basis. Attention should be given to how people make their trip, or their experience of the trip, rather than just getting people from one point to another. The committee believes that the corridors that people use should be landscaped, and include other streetscape provisions that make the people's experience in the corridor not only pleasing, but also non-aggravating. It is recognized that that people spend a considerable amount of their time traveling by car, transit, walking or by bike, and the committee believes that this time should be viewed as more than just functional. It is felt that if landscaping and streetscaping are incorporated into all of the transportation work, there will be two benefits. The first benefit is that it will be easier to implement the concept if it is approached on an across the board basis. The second point is there will be considerable savings if certain basic ingredients are incorporated in all projects. It is the committee's conclusion that all the arterial corridors in the County should be subject to landscaping and streetscaping provisions, and that provisions with a revenue set-aside, should be made for the installation, maintenance, and ongoing upkeep of such a program.

LIVABLE COMMUNITIES

The committee has concluded that the approach to transportation must be broad based and comprehensive. Transportation can no longer be viewed as a subject that is of a single mode and which does not take into account interaction with development and the community. It is for this reason that the committee believes that as part of the transportation program the concept of a livable community should be embraced. There is now the public awareness and expectation of the fact that transportation should now include as a priority not just transit service, but also bicycle provisions, pedestrian provisions, and any other means whereby people can travel. This means that provisions need to be made for following the transit initiatives, the railways plans, and the sidewalk and pedestrian initiatives that have been identified by the MPO. An example of this type of facility is the Pinellas Trail, which is a 15 foot wide paved non-vehicular corridor running through the entire urban area of the County. 100,000 people a month use this Trail with two thirds of those trips being for a work, school, shopping or social purpose. Another example of the growing awareness of the priority for these alternative modes is the 15 million dollar program underway to construct sidewalks and pedestrian crossings along the entire length of US 19, from Tarpon Springs to St. Petersburg. A third initiative highlighting this interest in the County is the MPO's Pedestrian Committee proposal to establish pedestrian safety zones where pedestrian movement would be prioritized over expedited vehicle movement in areas that justify such treatment. These programs show the growing focus that is being placed by the communities in the county on livable community provisions. Funding

is needed to assist the communities and the county in responding to their need. In conjunction with this, the approach to development needs to be adjusted to be focused on a broader concept, rather than approaching each development in isolation. It has come to be recognized that a sense of place is important in that regard. A sense of place is really the responsibility of the community through its government or governments. How the public places including structures and open space, and connecting ways are defined, sets the basis for what the private sector does, not only in response to regulations, but also in response to this public interest or demand. As Pinellas County becomes more urbanized, this aspect of the development of a community becomes more of a priority. It is therefore the conclusion of the committee that in conjunction with the broad initiatives to provide transportation facilities, there must also be an initiative by the MPO, the County and local agencies that is supported by policy and funding that focuses on a sense of place and provides a way for people to move in a non-vehicular way within and through the communities of the County with a sense of place. ~~This program should be funded with the allocation of 2 cents from the local option gas tax.~~

TRANSPORTATION REVENUES

The committee recognizes that additional revenues are needed to fulfill the public's expectation for a transportation system that maintains and expands on the quality of life of the residents and visitors. There are several options as to how these revenues can be pursued. Each of these revenue sources have different purpose expectations, different procedures, different effects upon individuals, and generate different amounts of money. Currently there is in State law the unused authority to levy an additional 6 cents on the sale of gasoline. Five of those cents falls under a procedure requiring an agreement among the County and the cities as to how the funds are allocated. The County Commission has the authority to establish up to 5 cents per gallon, but the distribution of these funds would then be governed by this interlocal agreement. The other part of that gas tax concerns one penny, which is called the 9th cent, and is subject to a different procedure. This other 1-cent must be approved by the BCC, but does not require an agreement between the cities and the County. The total annual revenue that can be derived from these sources is \$21 million.

The committee in reviewing the law and its purpose has concluded that this gas tax initiative should be project driven. That is, State law makes it clear that this option was created to respond to needs that were developed from a comprehensive plan. The committee believes that should be the primary factor behind discussions on this tax. There has been discussion as to a percentage split between the cities and the County, but there has been no resolution on this question. It is the committee's conclusion that the first determination should be what the gas tax is for in terms of projects, or programs, and once this is established then any split or division of funds should be based upon the furtherance of those projects or plans.

Related to this gas tax option is the need to extend the current local 6 cents gas tax that is due to expire in 2007. Local agencies are reliant on 4 cents of these funds for the operation and maintenance of the local highway systems. The committee believes this option should be extended and consideration should be given to applying the available 2 cents (currently tied to bonded indebtedness until 2007) to ~~new traffic operations and other~~ projects that would be proposed as part of the additional gas tax proposal. Consideration could also be given to bonding this revenue source to support roadway capacity or other projects. However, this proposal is qualified by the fact that this gas tax source has to date been used for the maintenance and operation of the County Highway System. Therefore, before it is assumed 2 cents can be applied to further bonded indebtedness or ~~capacity~~ transportation improvements, consideration must first be given to the system maintenance requirements.

Another revenue source is entitled The Transit Surtax. This is an up to 1 percent sales tax that can be authorized by the BCC through a referendum. This tax is for the purpose of a guideway transit system and related bus improvements and operations. A section of this law does allow for 25 percent of the revenues of this source to

be used for non-transit. However, that provision does not apply in Pinellas County. The committee does conclude that the legislation should be fixed to make this provision available to this county. Since the transit surtax, if approved at its full amount, can generate 116 million dollars a year, this would be a very significant revenue source, and more than adequate to fund a proposed guideway system in the future. The committee believes that the transit surtax is a viable revenue source that should be considered by the County to fund the transit program.

The other potential source for transportation projects is that of tolls. The public has not viewed the use of tolls in Pinellas County positively in the past. However, if an acceptable means of provision were presented, this could significantly help with the construction of highway facilities. But the committee notes that tolls must be carefully structured because if they do not collect revenues as expected, then replacement revenues are taken from the existing gas tax revenues for that area, which could affect the funding of other projects. The committee believes the use of the toll procedure should be explored for the Roosevelt /118th Ave. Connector System, but caution would be appropriate due to the impact this would have on other revenue sources if it were not successfully carried out. Another option to consider is increasing toll on the Skyway Bridge, where there is considerably more control on trip diversions. The funds from this expanded Skyway Bridge Toll Program could be applied to other facilities designated to receive those funds, such as the Roosevelt/118th Ave. Connector System.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The committee using as the basis the findings and facts stated in the previous section have drawn the following conclusions and recommendations.

TRAFFIC CONTROLS

- There should be one County-wide entity in charge of the ITS portion traffic signal system , which would encompass approximately 400 traffic signals within Pinellas County. Pinellas County is a logical agency for that purpose. The County should be responsible for the provision and operation of that system, and should be funded for that purpose.
- The balance of the local traffic signals and traffic controls should remain under the jurisdiction of the local communities.
- With the County responsible, there should be an advisory procedure established, where local agencies can provide input to signal system operation.
- ~~One cent of the gas tax should be assigned to the County for this function.~~

ROADWAY CAPACITY

- A continued priority should be placed on improvements to key roadways in the County that include US Hwy 19, Ulmerton Road, and Roosevelt/118th Ave. Connectors and Gandy Blvd. Consideration should be given to ~~applying one cent of~~ applying the local gas tax to these State corridors as a means of leveraging Federal and State Funds, which are necessary to fully accomplish these improvements.

TRANSIT

- Transit governance must be modified to function on a countywide basis encompassing all jurisdictions in the County .
- This governance should take into account the significant role Pinellas County will have in the revenue sources.
- The transit surtax should be considered as a viable revenue source for future transit improvements.
- The Pinellas Mobility initiative should be funded for the next phase of development and in addition, measures should be taken to ensure that the identified corridors and related right of way are preserved for this future system.

- Intermediate transit service improvements should be implemented concerning expanded trolley service and premium express bus service where the focus is on providing a service that attracts riders that have an alternative.

GULF BLVD. ENHANCEMENT

- The Gulf Blvd enhancement project should be funded and implemented as a countywide project in partnership with the beach communities.
- ~~One cent of the local option gas tax~~ Countywide funds should be assigned to this program with the understanding that the beach communities will provide matching funds for the improvements.

CORRIDOR BEAUTIFICATION

- A program should be established and funded for corridor beautification and streetscape improvements throughout Pinellas County.
- ~~A portion of a one cent of the gas tax should be allocated to this program.~~

LIVABLE COMMUNITY

- The MPO should be directed to establish a policy and program to restructure and emphasize the provision of transportation services that further the livable community initiative in Pinellas County.
- This initiative would include focused transit service, the Trailways projects, bicycle provisions, pedestrian provisions and sense of place provisions for communities.
- ~~Two cents of the local option gas tax should be assigned to fund this program.~~

TRANSPORTATION REVENUES

- It is recognized that the transit surtax should be considered the viable revenue source for the Pinellas Mobility Initiative. With the referendum to be held at a later date, once the program has been defined in enough detail, to be taken to the public for a decision.
- The Local Option Gas Tax of 5 cents and the 9th cent gas tax for a total of 6 cents should be instituted based upon a program of projects
- The priorities for this funding should be traffic controls, regional roadway capacity improvements, Gulf Blvd. enhancement initiative, corridor beautification and streetscaping, and Livable Community Initiatives.
- The committee believes a program of projects should be developed following these priorities and then the funding would be divided among the assigned implementing agencies to carry these projects out.
- The current 6 cent local option gas tax should be extended beyond 2007. As part of that action, the approximately 2 cents that are encumbered due to bonded indebtedness, should be considered for use in conjunction with funding the above program of projects.
- A suggested funding allocation by program could be as follows:

PROGRAM	FUNDING	ANNUAL REVENUES
Traffic Controls – assign to Countywide entity- the County	1 cent gas tax	\$21M
Roadway Capacity – match for Federal/State funds	1 cent gas tax	\$21M
Transit	Transit Surtax (1%)	\$116M
Gulf Blvd. Enhancement- with match from beach communities	1 cent gas tax	\$21M
Corridor Beautification	1 cent gas tax	\$21M
Livable Community – community level funding	2 cent gas tax	\$42M
Gas Tax extension (6¢) – 2¢ could be assigned to roadway capacity but only after an evaluation of highway system maintenance responsibilities.	2 cent allocation	\$42M
Skyway Toll increase for roadway capacity	\$2.00	To be determined

ISSUES ASSIGNED TO THE TASK FORCE TO ADDRESS BY THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

- A. How should our new gas tax revenue be apportioned to State/Countywide needs versus municipal projects?

The committee believes the first step is to identify a program of projects through the MPO. Based upon that, funding would then be apportioned or assigned based upon the projects and programs

- B. What (specifically) is the federal/state funding leveraging potential from any new revenue?

The committee believes there is considerable opportunity to obtain federal and State funds. Critical to that initiative is the need to pass the Local Option Gas Tax to leverage those funds.

- C. How should local funding requirements expected for mass transit development fit into any county commission-controlled revenue options?

The committee believes that establishing a countywide agency is critical to the funding efforts for mass transit, both in the short haul, and in the long haul. The committee further believes that the best revenue source in the long haul for the PMI is the transit surtax, which is a 1 percent sales tax authorized by a referendum.

- D. What transit governance and PSTA tax structure changes should occur (if any) in connection with mass transit development?

The committee believes that transit governance should be countywide, and a modification to the special act to the PSTA is an appropriate means to accomplish that. However, the committee assumes this would encompass a countywide referendum and that the agency membership and service delivery approach will be refocused.

- E. Recognizing the reality of limiting tax burden and public acceptance, what should the county tax revenue strategy be relative to gas taxes (new and authorized), Penny for Pinellas, impact fees and a potential transit sales surtax?

The committee recognizes that there are several revenue options that are possible that will need to be coordinated in terms of not only scheduling, but in terms of the relationship to programs. In conjunction with other revenue sources that the committee has recommended, it is considered extremely important that the Penny for Pinellas be extended, and impact fees be retained or replaced with a revenue source that is development based.

- F. What should be the highest priority countywide investments with existing and new revenue streams?

The committee's statement as to priorities for investment are as follows:

- A Traffic Controls**
- B Regional Roadway Capacity**
- C Transit (not from gas tax)**
- D. Gulf Blvd Enhancement**
- E Corridor Beautification and Streetscape**
- F. Livable Communities Projects**

- G. What changes (if any) should be made to existing distributed traffic control authority to facilitate the best areawide traffic management?

The committee believes that the traffic signal system should be operated by a countywide entity (with provision for local participation), with the other non-signal functions to remain at the local jurisdiction level.

LIST OF APPENDIXES

- A. Subjects Considered
- B. Committee Minutes
- C. The Alternative Revenues Report
- D. MPO Plan
- E. US 19 Improvements
- F. Pinellas Mobility Initiative
- G. MPO Trailways Plan
- H. MPO Sidewalk Assessment Plan
- I. Roadway Landscape Beautification
- J. Gulf Blvd. Enhancement
- K. Highway Capacity Improvements
- L. Traffic Control System graphic

APPENDIX A

SUBJECTS CONSIDERED

The Task Force convened and conducted a series of eight fact-finding sessions. That included the following subject areas:

- A. Alternative Transportation Revenues
- B. The MPO and the MPO's Long Range Plan
- C. US 19 Improvements
- D. City and County jurisdictional responsibility for traffic control
- E. Land Use and development pattern documentation.
- F. The Tampa Bay Partnership approach
- G. The State High Speed Rail program
- H. Pinellas Mobility Initiative
- I. The Transit Initiative of St. Petersburg and Clearwater
- J. The current GIS mapping and data system
- K. Liveable Community provisions.
- L. Trail and Bikeway provisions
- M. The PSTA program
- N. The St. Petersburg /Clearwater International Airport Program
- O. Pedestrian provision
- P. The current US Hwy 19 Improvement Program
- Q. Corridor Landscape and Beautification Initiatives
- R. The Gulf Blvd. Beautification/Enhancement program
- S. The CUTR program
- T. The Economic/Redevelopment Initiative
- U. Major unfunded transportation projects in Pinellas County.

For each of these subjects, the Task Force invited guest speakers in to discuss with them in depth the subjects as they relate to Pinellas County. From these discussions, a concept evolved as to how these various subjects would fit together. It was clear that with each of these subjects, there were the questions of integration, or how agencies within Pinellas County work together.

To: Chairman Frank Murphy
Pinellas County Transportation Task Force Members
From: Don Crane
Re: Meeting with Secretary Hartmann December 18, 2003
Date: November 20, 2003

Five months ago we asked for a meeting with Ken Hartmann. Several weeks ago I suggested that we also meet with Mr. Spratt, Keith Wicks, Jim Ely and Brady Sneath. There are several reasons for the meeting:

The Task Force appears to be headed toward a recommendation to fund highway projects that could include:

US 19
Roosevelt Connector
118th Avenue North

We need an agreement between the County and FDOT on the details of these highways and other highway, such as:

The cost of major sections of a corridor project (interchanges, overpasses, and the sections between)
Funds available
Funding shortfalls
Construction dates

The County and FDOT should be on the same page even though it is difficult to project numbers and dates with certainty. We are not on the same page now. Secretary Hartmann has a large aerial of central Pinellas County.

Each of the professionals I have suggested brings a different discipline and perspective to the discussion. Funding options are the greatest challenge. Some examples are:

Increasing the local option 6-cents gasoline tax for small projects
Bonding the 6-cents local option gasoline tax up to \$300 million for several projects
Waiting to see what becomes of the renewal of Tea 21 – that is a real gamble and will not fund our needs
Hope that additional funds will come to Pinellas County from Congress. I doubt if funds will be allocated that will be sufficient to address the huge funding shortfall.
Skyway funds from this year's legislation - \$55 million?
An increase in the toll on the Skyway – That is a political gamble but our Tampa Bay appointed and elected officials have the influence to increase the toll

Attached are some financing suggestions provided to me by Brady Sneath, Chief Financial Officer for the Tampa-Hillsborough Expressway Authority. Before joining the Authority, Brady was responsible for transportation finance at FDOT for a number of years. Brady is considered one of the foremost authorities in Florida on creative funding options that work. You will find his suggestions interesting. It is my opinion that Brady can show us how a combination of funding options will take a twenty year plus highway program and cut it in half. Pinellas County will have the best highway system in the state. We would then be in a position to begin to implement a light rail system.

The first step is for the Task Force and the guests I have suggested to meet and spend the necessary time to understand our options.

Since 1965, two Pinellas County toll road projects have been killed. Over twenty years ago Congressmen Young & Kelly brought about \$70 million (Priority Primary Funds) to Pinellas County to finish US 19. It appears that US 19 from Countryside to 118th Avenue is still short \$184 million over the next 20 years.

This is the most important meeting the Task Force will have unless there is a follow up meeting to discuss the details. This is a highway program that will benefit the entire county.

ESTIMATE OF PROGRAM COSTS

ITS SIGNAL SYSTEM

Capital Cost - \$53 million
20 Year O & M - \$48.6 million

CAPACITY PROJECTS

US Hwy 19 – Whitney Rd to SR 60	184, 254, 000
Roosevelt Connector	392, 399, 220
Ulmerton Road Segments	84, 700, 000
118 th Ave. Connector	250, 000, 000
Gandy Blvd.	<u>186, 018, 000</u>
	<u>\$1,097,371,220</u>

MOBILITY INITIATIVE (Transit)

	<u>Capital</u>	<u>O&M – Year</u>
Guideway System	\$1,430M	\$10-15 M
	PE 12 M	
Trolley System	\$5.5M	\$2.9M
Express Bus System	\$20M	\$4.8M

GULF BLVD.ENHANCEMENT

\$75M – Full Treatment
50M – Limited Treatment

CORRIDOR BEAUTIFICATION

\$30 M*

LIVABLE COMMUNITY INITIATIVE

Trails	\$68M Full MPO Plan
Sidewalks	\$25M*
Bike Lanes	\$25M*

* These numbers may be low and need further refinement and will need to be community based