

Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan

MPO



**COUNTYWIDE BICYCLE
AND
PEDESTRIAN MASTER PLAN**

MAY 8, 2006

**PINELLAS COUNTY
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

COUNTYWIDE BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN MASTER PLAN

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INTRODUCTION

A primary goal of the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is a safe and energy efficient “multi-modal” and “inter-modal” transportation system that enhances the quality of life for the citizens of Pinellas County. The term “multi-modal” encompasses all major modes of travel including automobile, trucking, rail, flight, transit, bicycling and walking. Intermodal refers to the inter-connectivity of these modes such as walking to a bus stop or driving an automobile to an airport or train station. Bicycling and walking are integral elements in the MPO’s efforts to meet its goal. Along with transit, bicycling and walking provide a necessary counterbalance to the demand for automobile travel while enabling the transportation system to be more energy efficient, friendlier to the natural environment and more conducive to improving and sustaining quality of life.

The purpose of this Master Plan is to effectively integrate bicycle and pedestrian travel within the County’s transportation system while creating more livable urban environments where there are more viable mobility choices from the standpoint of commuting as well as for recreational purposes. In addition, the Plan seeks to improve bicycle and pedestrian access to major trip generators and destinations such as shopping centers, schools, employment centers, parks, beaches and transit stops. It is also important to note that this Plan fully recognizes the accomplishments and ongoing comprehensive efforts of the MPO and its partner agencies and organizations to make Pinellas County a friendlier place for bicyclists and pedestrians. To that extent, the Plan seeks to build on and further these efforts rather than to suggest any fundamental shifts in MPO policies or programs.

When considering the relatively short distances people drive in their cars, the idea of encouraging bicycling and walking as a means to reduce the demand for automobile travel becomes a more realistic opportunity. A 1995 National Personal Transportation Survey (NPTS) revealed that approximately 40 percent of all trips taken by Americans are less than two miles. The same distance is about a 30-minute walk or 10-minute bike ride. In addition, a 1995 Rodale Press survey indicated that 40 percent of U.S. adults would commute by bicycle as an alternative to driving if safe facilities were available. Local survey data collected by the MPO in 2001 and 2004 found a similar sentiment among local residents.

The environmental benefits of bicycling and walking as commute alternatives are clearly evident when viewed in light of the level of pollution that results from motor vehicle traffic. Motor vehicle emissions account for over 80 percent of the carbon monoxide and nearly 50 percent of the nitrogen oxides released into the air in the United States (*Green Commuter, publication of the Clean Air Council*). It is also important to note that 60 percent of the pollution caused by motor vehicles occurs during ignition, which means that shorter trips, ones that could be substituted by walking or bicycling, are producing more pollutants per mile than longer trips. In contrast, a four-mile round trip by bicycle saves 15 pounds of pollutants (*WorldWatch Institute*).

The environmental degradation caused by motor vehicles also brings to light concerns pertaining to America's personal health. Aside from the harm caused to people breathing in dirtier air, relying on automobile travel for the shorter trips is a lost opportunity for people to live healthier lives. This is particularly important when considering the growing problem of obesity in this country. A 1998 American Medical Association report found that 40 percent of Americans are clinically overweight. Moreover, the Center for Disease Control reported in 1999 that obesity and being overweight are primary contributors to heart disease, diabetes and other chronic conditions. The same report also noted that "walking and cycling have been replaced by automobile travel for all but the shortest distances." The obesity of America becomes a more serious problem knowing that it's increasingly affecting young people. In a survey of 11,631 high school students grades 9-12, only 12.4 percent engaged in physical activity for 20 minutes three or more times per week (*Partnership for a Walkable America*).

Bicycling and walking also have economic benefits. Most importantly, these modes are affordable. Conversely, automobile ownership is becoming increasingly expensive. The annual cost of operating a vehicle is over \$5,000 as reported by AAA Mid-Atlantic. Owning and operating a vehicle represents 13 percent of the average American household's income. The average annual cost of owning and operating a bicycle in the United States is \$120 (*League of American Bicyclists*).

Lastly, bicycling and walking offer intangible benefits to local communities that contribute to the quality of life experiences of its citizens and visitors. Communities that accommodate and encourage these travel modes are seen as being more livable. As a result, they are better equipped to attract businesses, workers and visitors. One of the best local examples of this is downtown Dunedin. The Fred Marquis Pinellas Trail intersects Dunedin's Main Street and has served as a catalyst for the revitalization of the city. Following the construction of the Trail there in the early 1990s, the commercial occupancy rate of Dunedin's downtown area reached 100 percent.

MPO LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

The MPO Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) provides overall direction and documentation for Federal, State and local transportation improvements within Pinellas County. The Plan represents a 20-year planning horizon and has been updated every three years to maintain eligibility for Federal transportation funding. The update period is anticipated to be expanded to a five year period now that the county is classified as a "maintenance" area for air quality purposes. The current Plan, adopted in 2004, provides the policy framework to effectively integrate bicycling and walking into the county's overall transportation system, including all major modes of travel.

The Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) promotes and encourages the growth of bicycling and pedestrian activity through the implementation of capital improvements and various safety, educational and outreach programs coordinated through the efforts of law enforcement agencies, local governments, the Pinellas County School Board, regional planning agencies, transportation agencies, and FDOT. The LRTP also relies

extensively on the efforts of the MPO's Pedestrian Transportation Advisory Committee (PTAC) and Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC) to provide policy direction in the Plan as it relates to their subject areas. These committees provide a forum for citizens, planners, engineers, law enforcement officials and others to discuss topics, initiatives and programs relative to bicycle and pedestrian travel. They also provide recommendations to the MPO Board on matters requiring review, discussion and/or action at their monthly meetings. Both the BAC and PTAC meet on a monthly basis.

In addition to the BAC and PTAC, the School Transportation Safety Committee (STSC) and the Pinellas Trail Security Task Force (PTSTF) play key roles in the development and implementation of MPO policies relative to bicycle and pedestrian travel. The STSC meets monthly to discuss issues that affect transportation movements associated with school activities. The discussions often include increasing public awareness about traffic laws associated with school zones and crossing guards. The committee also addresses specific facility improvements such as eliminating gaps in sidewalks that would allow children a safer route to school. Current events and activities within the community that promote walking or bicycling to and from school are also included in the discussions. The Pinellas Trail Security Task Force (PTSTF) meets at least quarterly to discuss activities relating to the Pinellas Trail. Discussions and topics at the meetings include trail usage counts for the Pinellas and Friendship TrailBridge, law enforcement reports, construction activities, special presentations, community involvement activities, and other relevant issues.

The LRTP calls for continued support of the Pinellas County School Board's effort to provide for the safety of students walking and bicycling to and from school, as well as the Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority's (PSTA) Bikes on Buses Program. The Bikes on Buses Program provides for bicyclists to utilize racks on the front end of PSTA buses to continue their journeys as bus passengers. The Plan also directs the MPO to support the activities of the FDOT-sponsored Community Traffic Safety Team (CTST) in their efforts to address safety issues for bicyclists and pedestrians. Regarding facility expansion, the LRTP seeks to complete the Pinellas Trail and the planned Progress Energy Trail to create an uninterrupted loop around the County. East-west connector trails bridging the planned Progress Energy Trail with the existing Pinellas Trail and regional facilities such as the Friendship Trail are also priorities in the MPO's capital improvement policies.

Provisions within the LRTP ensure that existing and future bicycle and pedestrian improvements are planned in coordination with other agencies. The MPO, BAC and PTAC review roadway design plans as necessary to ensure that bicycle and pedestrian facilities are included where warranted. The MPO will also be coordinating with FDOT and local governments to develop performance indicators for bicycle and pedestrian facilities required for local comprehensive plans and to aid in the process of identifying improvement projects to support walking, bicycling and transit.

The LRTP seeks to encourage the implementation of livable community guidelines, transit-friendly design standards and on-site amenities such as racks and showers to accommodate bicycle commuter traffic through local site plan review processes. The

L RTP also seeks to reduce accident occurrences by monitoring bicycle and pedestrian related crashes and working with the appropriate agencies to implement measures to reduce them.

The L RTP has many provisions that relate specifically to bicycle and pedestrian design standards. Bicycle lanes that have surface markings and signage are necessary along roadways throughout Pinellas County to ensure and encourage safe bicycle movements. Pedestrian crossings shall be designed to maximize pedestrian safety by utilizing advanced technology and equipment such as intelligent transportation systems (ITS) overhead crosswalk signs at mid-block crossing locations, count-down pedestrian crossing signals at signalized intersection locations, etc. The MPO supports the installation of street lighting along roads where heavy bicycle and pedestrian traffic occurs. Both new development and redevelopment projects should provide for safe pedestrian movement between buildings and the surrounding pedestrian network (i.e., sidewalks and trails). The MPO L RTP emphasizes the need to fill gaps between sidewalks and major activity centers, and between sidewalks and transit stops.

FEDERAL LEGISLATION

A renewed emphasis on bicycle and pedestrian travel in the United States has been fueled by Federal Legislation that has designated funding for projects that “humanize” transportation systems while improving their environmental aspects. This emphasis started with the 1991 Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA). Unlike previous Federal transportation programs, ISTEA authorized approximately \$3 billion in Enhancement Program (Section 107) funds through 1996 for non-traditional highway projects (e.g., preservation of historical transportation facilities, landscaping, rails-to-trails programs and bicycle and pedestrian facilities). Bicycle and pedestrian projects have been the major benefactors of this funding source. By 1995, more than 2,300 projects selected for Section 107 funding (54 percent of the total allocation) were for bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

The ISTEA also introduced the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Program, which provided funding for projects that reduced air pollution levels in areas that failed to meet national air quality standards. In “non-attainment” communities, which Pinellas County was at that time, CMAQ funds became a major source of funding for bicycle and pedestrian projects. Pinellas County was designated as non-attainment from the early 1990s through 2005. A significant share of the expenditures for Pinellas County’s most prominent bicycle and pedestrian facility, the Pinellas Trail, has been funded through the CMAQ Program. The ISTEA was succeeded by the Transportation Efficiency Act for the 21st Century (TEA 21) in 1998 and the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Efficiency Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) in 2005. These successor Acts continued the Enhancement and CMAQ Programs and the Federal emphasis on bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Among the most important new programs introduced with SAFETEA-LU is the Safe Routes to School Program. The initiative will receive \$612 million over the life of the Law to make it safer for children to walk or bicycle to school. Communities will be able

to use the funds to slow vehicular traffic on adjacent roadways and fix hazards on pathways or trails near schools while increasing safety through focused enforcement and education programs. Each state is being directed to create a position of a Safe Routes to School coordinator, and the bill also provides funds for a national Safe Routes to School clearinghouse. Each state must set aside between 10 and 30 percent of its Safe Routes allotment for non-infrastructure activities to encourage walking and bicycling.

The Recreational Trails Program is authorized in the law at \$370 million. The program provides funds to the states to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities. New eligible expenditures are authorized, including construction and maintenance equipment, real estate costs, educational costs and trail assessments.

As the new law's acronym implies, safety programs receive particular attention in this reauthorization. The Highway Safety Improvement Program is now a core program, separately funded for the first time. A total of \$5.1 billion is provided for FY 2006 – 2009. Of that total, \$880 million is set aside for the Railway-Highway Crossing Program and \$90 million for rural high-risk roads. The balance will be distributed to the states based on a formula considering lane miles, vehicle miles traveled, and fatalities. These safety funds could be used to improve hazardous conditions for pedestrians and bicyclists along state roadways.

LOCAL TRENDS

Pinellas County is experiencing a socioeconomic shift. The County is increasingly home to younger families with children and higher wage technology-based workers. This shift in population, job growth, scarcity of vacant land and demographics has initiated a change in priorities and needs within the County. Infill development and development of existing downtown activity centers and the creation of urban environments in traditional suburban areas has become a focus for planning activities.

The population growth within Pinellas County, although increasing, has slowed due to limited vacant developable land. Consequently, local governments have shifted their planning focus to infill development and redevelopment. This, in turn, has caused an increase in density in downtown areas and other activity centers. The population density within the county increased from 2,629 to 3,291 persons per square mile from 1990 to 2000, making Pinellas the most densely populated county in Florida.

The population and employment shift between 1990 and 2000 can be recognized through Census data. The population of the County has begun to get younger in the last couple of decades. The percentage of elderly residents age 65 and over declined from 26 to 22 percent. School enrollment experienced a 34 percent increase. During the decade of the 1990s, the county experienced an increase of 108,000 jobs, which is nearly a 30 percent increase. Most of those new jobs are located in the mid-county region, where there is a high concentration of higher paying technology-based employment.

LOCAL BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN INITIATIVES

A resurgence of bicycle and pedestrian activity in Pinellas County took hold in 1989 with the signing of a lease agreement between the County and the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) regarding a 35-mile abandoned CSX railroad line that would become the Fred Marquis Pinellas Trail. The agreement placed responsibility for developing and maintaining the Trail with Pinellas County. The necessary financial support for the Trail came later that year when the Penny For Pinellas infrastructure sales tax was passed through voter referendum. The Penny For Pinellas sales tax has provided nearly \$14 million of the funding spent on the development of the trail as it currently exists. The remaining funding included Federal revenue provided through ISTEA.

Since the construction of the first segment of the Fred Marquis Pinellas Trail, from Seminole City Park to Taylor Park in Largo, completed in 1990, the citizens of Pinellas County have embraced the idea of expanding opportunities for bicycling and walking. Today, the Trail covers over 34 uninterrupted linear miles from St. Petersburg to Tarpon Springs and is used by over 705,000 people each year. Another 114 miles of state, county and municipal trail projects are scheduled for construction over the next five years, from fiscal year 2004/05 to 2009/10. It is important to note that 91 miles of the projects are facilities that connect to the Trail, thereby furthering the objective of the MPO to make bicycling and walking a more viable form of transportation for commuting purposes as well as for recreation throughout the County.

The Friendship TrailBridge was another significant accomplishment in the County's efforts to expand its bicycle/pedestrian network on a regional level as well as a local one. Formerly known as the Old Gandy Bridge, the facility was slated for demolition by the FDOT as part of the project to construct the new two-lane west bound Gandy Bridge. Buoyed by a grassroots effort of local citizens, the Hillsborough and Pinellas County Commissions took over ownership of the Old Gandy Bridge and committed the \$7 million FDOT funding earmarked for the demolition costs to fund the development of the Friendship TrailBridge. It was opened to the public in December 1999.

With the Pinellas Trail established as the backbone of the County's bicycle network, the MPO has looked to on-road facilities to further extend bicycle opportunities to a greater number of people. Local governments such as St. Petersburg and Pinellas County now include the installation of bicycle lanes on existing facilities in the process of carrying out resurfacing and reconstruction projects where feasible. Sunset Point Road, from County Road 1 to U.S. Highway 19, completed in 1996, became the first arterial roadway in the County with designated bicycle lanes. Since then, numerous roads have been striped for bicycle lanes including 1st Avenues North and South and 9th Avenue North in St. Petersburg, County Road 1 in Clearwater and Palm Harbor, and Klosterman Road in Tarpon Springs.

As with bicycle travel, the MPO recognizes the importance of providing a network of sidewalks to encourage walking while ensuring pedestrian activity. Local governments have invested extensively in sidewalk improvements in recent years with Penny for

Pinellas revenue providing the major source of funding. Pinellas County, for example, has expended approximately \$5.5 million in sidewalk improvements since 1998, with \$2.8 million of this amount funding sidewalk projects needed to improve access and safety for pedestrians going to and from local schools. Municipal governments have expended over \$12 million in sidewalk reconstruction/expansion projects. It should be noted that sidewalks are also constructed by developers in accordance with local site plan requirements throughout the County and as part of road reconstruction and resurfacing projects along the adjacent rights-of-way by Pinellas County and FDOT.

The City of St. Petersburg adopted its first Bicycle Pedestrian Master Plan in August 2003. It is the first local agency plan in the County to have defined a prioritization process to build and/or retrofit the roadways with adequate bicycle and pedestrian facilities using state-adopted analysis techniques. The Plan includes the identification of funding sources and an implementation schedule for the construction of needed bicycle and pedestrian facilities to achieve a desired level of service. The maps in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodations section of this document show the improvements that are identified as a part of the City's plan. These maps also show the programmed improvements for pedestrian facilities. Based on the implementation schedule, the City of St. Petersburg will extend its bicycle facilities coverage from the current five percent to 50 percent of its major road network.

The City of Clearwater is in the process of finalizing its updated bicycle and pedestrian plan using a similar prioritization process that was adopted by the City of St. Petersburg. Clearwater collected data on existing roadway conditions, and, using FDOT-adopted Bicycle and Pedestrian level of service models, determined the supply component. Input gathered from public workshops provided the demand component so that priority rankings for roadways could be established. The city will then allocate funds based on the priority rankings calculated in the Master Plan.

To date, Pinellas County has played a primary role in the implementation of the MPO Trailways Plan. This includes funding and constructing of most of the Pinellas Trail, Friendship TrailBridge, Honeymoon Island, Elfers and Fort DeSoto trails. In addition to its trail construction efforts, Pinellas County has installed on-street bicycle lanes on facilities under its jurisdiction. This was a result of the Board of County Commissioners adoption of Comprehensive Plan policies in 1995. These policies called for the inclusion of striped four-foot bicycle lanes on road construction projects, and the consideration of provisions for bicycle lanes, where feasible, on existing facilities in the process of being resurfaced.

Furthering the MPO's objectives toward creating more pedestrian friendly environments, Pinellas County has a long-standing policy of constructing sidewalk facilities as part of its road construction projects. Roads scheduled for resurfacing are also evaluated for sidewalk improvements, which are constructed where feasible. Through the Pinellas County Site Plan Review Process, developers are required to construct sidewalks along arterial and collector roads fronting the site in accordance with the Land Development Code. In addition, the County has established a School Sidewalk Program, whereby sidewalk needs in proximity to schools are identified, prioritized and scheduled for

construction. Lastly, development projects may construct off-site sidewalks in order to meet concurrency management requirements or as a credit toward payment of their transportation impact fees.

SAFETY ISSUES

In November 2004, the Surface Transportation Policy Project (STPP) published its latest “Mean Streets” report, which identified the most dangerous places to bike and walk in the United States. Unfortunately, the Tampa Bay area, including Pinellas County, was ranked second worst in the Country (behind Orlando), based on the danger to pedestrians in 2002-03. Recent fatalities of people crossing busy roads like US 19 have added to the sense of urgency and visibility of safety as an increasingly critical issue facing pedestrians and bicyclists of all ages in Pinellas County.

In 2002-03, there were more than 800 reported motor vehicle crashes in Pinellas County involving pedestrians and bicyclists, an increase of 26 percent over the previous year. Nationwide, in the past 25 years some 175,000 pedestrians have been killed on America's roadways. Although Americans make less than five percent of their trips on foot, 12 percent of all traffic fatalities are pedestrians. Some 60 percent of those deaths occur in places where no crosswalk is available. Though few students walk to school, in 2003 nearly 900 children ages 14 and under were killed and 25,000 injured in pedestrian accidents with vehicles. Each year about 175 children are killed by vehicles in between school and home. At the other end of the age spectrum, Americans 70 and over suffer the highest rate of pedestrian fatalities.

In addition to school children, bicycle and pedestrian safety is also a critical issue for senior citizens. The average age of Pinellas County residents is 43 and, although this number has been on a declining trend since the 1980s, Pinellas remains a county with a high concentration of elderly citizens. According to the 2000 Census, there were 207,563 people age 65 and older living in Pinellas County, comprising 22.5 percent of its population. By comparison, this age group was 17.6 percent of the State's population.

In “Aging Americans: Stranded Without Options,” author Linda Bailey found that 21 percent of those 65 and older do not drive and half of non-drivers in this age group stay home due to a lack of transportation options. Examples of the types of measures necessary to create urban environments in Pinellas County which are friendlier to seniors who choose to walk or ride a bicycle include: providing crosswalks with refuge medians and/or countdown signals; sidewalks that are buffered from the street; parking lots that are easily navigable; bus stops with sidewalks connecting them to surrounding sidewalk network; and increased education and enforcement efforts designed to heighten motorists' awareness of pedestrians and bicyclists.

LIVABLE COMMUNITIES

Post War World II development in Pinellas County, as is typical in many urbanized areas throughout the country, has revolved around automobile ownership. Segregated land uses, low density single-family housing developments, strip commercial

development along major corridors and expansive multi-lane highway systems have been designed for the primary purpose of accommodating the efficient movement of motor vehicles. Much of the efforts in the way of bicycle and pedestrian planning underway in Pinellas County have largely been an attempt to reverse these auto-centric development trends.

In order to effectively integrate bicycle and pedestrian travel into the County's transportation system, transportation and land use planning need to be focused on creating urban environments that offer better mobility choices. This involves shifting the focus of the way streets and land development projects are designed to effectively address the needs of bicyclists and walkers. This concept is the central theme behind the livable communities initiative launched by the MPO through its Livable Communities Task Force in 2002 as part of the effort to update the Transportation Impact Fee Ordinance (TIFO).

The Task Force identified urban design and transportation improvements that were critical elements in the development of livable communities. Amendments to the TIFO in 2005 introduced provisions allowing for development projects to implement these improvements in-lieu of credits that can be applied toward the payment of impact fees. In addition to the development of the TIFO amendments, the Task Force further recommended that model regulatory language be developed for inclusion into local government land development codes to implement livable community design standards through their site plan review processes. This effort is considered essential to beginning to change the pattern of development in the County from segregated auto-centric land uses to more mixed-use projects with quality urban design that is more inviting to transit users and pedestrians.

Creating and sustaining environments that are conducive to bicycle and pedestrian travel is a key ingredient of communities and neighborhoods that are attractive places for people to live, work and play. An increasing number of national studies are showing how well designed communities in terms of land, street and building design provide quality of life benefits and encourage a healthy lifestyle. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, a national program administered by the UNC School of Public Health, Active Living by Design, promotes environments that offer choices for integrating physical activity into daily life. The Program funds community partnerships around the Country to demonstrate how changing community design affects physical activity. The premise of Active Living by Design's advocacy efforts is supported by the following statements and data:

- 🚲 Transportation determines how people move from place to place, the fundamental character of communities and the choices and opportunities people are provided;
- 🚲 The current transportation and land use patterns that promote automobile dependency adversely affect air quality and safety and discourage physical activity;

- 🚲 A balanced transportation system that offers more choices and encourages walking and biking would remove barriers to activity for everyone and make healthy levels of physical activity attainable for large numbers of people during their daily routine;
- 🚲 People who report having access to sidewalks are 28 percent more likely to be physically active. People who report having access to walking/jogging trails are 55 percent more likely to be physically active;
- 🚲 Walking trips increase with well connected streets, a greater number of intersections and blocks, and streets that are calm, narrow, complex and visually interesting;
- 🚲 Recent U.S. Census figures show that Americans are enduring longer commutes, and fewer of them are able to use transit, walking, biking or other means to avoid the drive;
- 🚲 Between 1977 and 1995, trips made by walking declined by 40 percent for both children and adults while driving trips increased to almost 90 percent of the total;
- 🚲 Children's walking trips to school declined by 60 percent between 1977 and 1995, and children between the ages of five and 15 now make only 13 percent of their school trips by walking or riding their bicycles. Children's school trips by bicycle declined from 4.3 percent in 1995 to 2.7 percent in 2001. Almost 70 percent of all children's trips are by car; and;
- 🚲 During 1998-2001, the average annual amount spent on pedestrian/bicycle projects was 87 cents per person, while the average annual amount spent for roads and bridges was more than \$50 per person.

Livable communities are characterized by a diverse mix of land uses, well connected streets, shaded sidewalks, transit stops that are connected to the nearby sidewalk network, compact development with human scale features, and variations in building facades that accommodate walkers and bicyclists. In addition, livable communities provide a unique sense of place for residents and visitors.

MPO PARTNER AGENCIES

In addition to its advisory committees, the MPO works extensively with the agencies mentioned in the following section in the effort to improve the environment for walking and bicycling in Pinellas County. Effective implementation of this Master Plan will require the active involvement of all agencies, along with the MPO advisory committees, local governments and citizens of Pinellas County.

Florida Department of Transportation

The mission of the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) is to provide a safe transportation system that ensures the mobility of people and goods, enhances

economic prosperity, and preserves the quality of our environment and communities. FDOT bears responsibility for many major functions concerning the State's transportation system, including budget, design and construction, facilities management, planning, public information and safety, right-of-way administration and traffic operations.

Florida State Statute 335.065 requires that FDOT establish adequate bicycle and pedestrian facilities wherever and whenever feasible with their construction or reconstruction projects. The FDOT Safety Office is responsible for several programs, including Community Traffic Safety Teams (CTST), and pedestrian/bicycle safety, and produces printed materials for safety and education. The State Safety Office also administers various traffic safety behavioral grant programs under the State and Community Highway Safety Grant Program (Section 402), to address roadway safety, speed control, alcohol-related incidents, traffic records, motorcycle and bicycle/pedestrian safety. The FDOT funds other bicycle and pedestrian safety programs, such as the Florida Traffic and Bicycle Safety Education Program, specifically created to reduce bike and ped crashes among children using training and education. The school crossing guard program was developed by FDOT, and continues to be taught by law enforcement, school board staff, and other appropriate agencies.

Pinellas County School Board

The Pinellas County School District is the 22nd largest school district in the Nation, with 139 public schools in 13 different jurisdictions. There are 400 school crossing guard locations to assist in safe school-related transportation movements. The large district and number of schools creates many opportunities for conflict between non-motorized and motorized transportation modes.

Over the last few years, there has been an increase in traffic and pedestrian-related crashes most likely due to an increase in conflict opportunities. Student safety is becoming one of the major school-related concerns of parents.

The School Transportation and Enhanced Pedestrian Safety Committee (STEPS), which is made up of representatives from the school system, county and municipalities, is assigned the task of reviewing facilities that may affect safe routes to and from school. General and site-specific safety issues in and around schools, roads and intersections are continuously monitored to determine if corrective action is necessary. STEPS also reviews requests for additional crossing guards and traffic devices at potentially dangerous intersections and other areas where children cross the street on their way to and from school.

The Pinellas County School District has also taken steps for public outreach regarding safety concerns within the County. The District Safety and Security Council was formed to coordinate efforts within the district to ensure that safety concerns are acknowledged, addressed and resolved in the appropriate manner. Several Safety Forums were conducted that focused on the need for community

involvement in addressing and solving safety issues within the community.

The district has developed a website, Safety First (www.pcs-safetyfirst.org), which provides materials and links to other sources that focus on safety in and around schools. The website includes a Student Transportation Safety Form for use in reporting concerns about crossing guards, traffic devices, sight obstructions, vehicular traffic patterns and walking paths.

Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority

The Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA) Bikes on Buses Program was developed to actively encourage riders to use bicycles in conjunction with the transit service. Bringing bicycles on the bus allows users to travel greater distances to or from their destinations. This increases the overall service area of the transit system and enhances the interconnectivity of the transportation network.

The Bikes on Buses Program grew over twelve percent in the past year from 163,946 users in 2004 to 183,830 in 2005. PSTA is very responsive in meeting this growing demand: the agency is in the process of retro-fitting all routes with three bicycle carriages on the buses to accommodate the growing demand and to reduce the potential for riders to be left behind with their bicycles when the carriages on the buses they wish to board are fully occupied.

The PSTA recognizes the need to provide pedestrian connections to the transit system. They have been working with Pinellas County and other jurisdictions to retrofit bus stops for improved pedestrian access. The agency commissioned a detailed inventory of all bus stops in the system that addressed sidewalk needs, loading pads, and other characteristics that affect accessibility and the user experience at each stop. As a result of data collected in 2003, PSTA has developed a database showing amenities at bus stop locations to better assist the users of the transit system and address the need for future improvements. This is an important step in addressing the lack of right-of-way accommodations (i.e., paved surface) for people to move between the bus and stop location. PSTA has requested assistance from Pinellas County Public Works to include funds in its Capital Improvement Program to improve pedestrian access where such conditions exist.

Bay Area Commuter Services

Bay Area Commuter Services (BACS) is a private, non-profit organization founded and funded by FDOT to promote transportation alternatives including bicycling and walking within the Tampa Bay area. BACS uses several promotional tools to encourage use of alternative transportation modes. An annual initiative of BACS is Commuter Choices Week, an event that helps to educate workers about alternative ways to get to work. It challenges commuters to try a different mode, such as walking or bicycling, in hopes they will use these modes more frequently throughout the year.

STRATEGY PLAN

The following section addresses each of the major elements of the Master Plan in terms of capital improvements, crosswalk treatments, safety initiatives, livable communities and regional connections, and sets forth actions necessary to meet the MPO's objectives for bicycling and walking in Pinellas County. Implementation of the various strategies will occur in the following ways:

- 🚲 Implementation of FDOT and local government capital improvement programs;
- 🚲 Application of local government site plan review processes;
- 🚲 Application of local government concurrency management systems;
- 🚲 Application of the Transportation Impact Fee Ordinance by local governments;
- 🚲 Community outreach efforts by MPO and partner agencies;
- 🚲 Law enforcement activity; and;
- 🚲 Active involvement of the MPO, its committees, partner agencies and the citizens of Pinellas County.

It should also be noted that the Transportation Impact Fee Ordinance and local Concurrency Management Systems provide opportunities for local governments to implement bicycle/pedestrian improvements as developer incentives. The Transportation Impact Fee Ordinance is applied countywide by all jurisdictions. Provisions introduced through a 2005 amendment allow more flexibility for development projects to implement bicycle and pedestrian improvements, such as crosswalk enhancements, trails, sidewalks, mixed-use development and other similar strategies, as credit toward payment of their impact fees. Regarding concurrency management systems, local governments have the option of allowing developers to implement these strategies to mitigate their traffic impacts and/or to meet the requirements of their land development codes.

Land development requirements and concurrency management systems vary between local governments. Therefore, it is the intent of the MPO to pursue countywide implementation of bicycle and pedestrian strategies listed in the following section through the application of local site plan review processes as well as concurrency management systems.

Trails

The MPO Trailways Plan, shown in Figure 1A, defines the location and type of trails throughout Pinellas County. These trails are intended to accommodate inexperienced as well as experienced bicyclists, walkers, and in-line skaters and to provide regional connections to adjacent counties. The Fred Marquis Pinellas Trail, the Progress Energy Trail, the Friendship Trail and other major trails are defined as 15-foot wide paved facilities that accommodate bicyclists, pedestrians and skaters. Community Trails may be constructed less than 15 feet wide if necessary to improve the compatibility of the facilities with the surrounding community and environment.

The primary source of funding for trail construction projects has been the Penny for Pinellas infrastructure sales tax, which was passed by voter referendum in 1989. The voters also approved its extension through 2010 in 1997. Full implementation of the Trailways Plan, notwithstanding projects currently in state or local work programs, is dependent on the extension of the current Penny for Pinellas Infrastructure sales tax.

Trail Strategies

1. Complete the construction of the planned Pinellas Trail segments and the Progress Energy Trail to create an uninterrupted loop around the County. This is the top priority of the MPO Trailways Plan.
2. Develop east-west connector facilities that bridge the planned Progress Energy Trail with the existing Pinellas Trail.
3. Complete planned work on the Friendship Trail. This is a top priority of the MPO Trailways Plan in terms of regional facilities. It should be noted that segments of this trail provide closure to the Pinellas Trail loop on the east side of the County.
4. Continue to promote the expansion of the Fred Marquis Pinellas Trail and community trails throughout Pinellas County to increase accessibility of these facilities to a greater number of people and to increase the connectivity of these facilities with major destination points. These include parks, shopping centers, major employment sites, hospitals and schools.
5. Utilize the MPO Trailways Plan map, as depicted in the Long Range Transportation Plan and shown in Figure 1B, to define the location and type of trails throughout Pinellas County as well as regional connections to adjacent counties.
6. Maintain standard of 15 foot width on the Fred Marquis Pinellas Trail, the Progress Energy Trail, the Friendship Trail and other major trails to accommodate bicyclists, pedestrians and skaters. Overpasses may be designed 12 feet wide. A narrower width may be used on community trails.

7. Design trail overpasses and underpasses in a manner that is compatible with the surrounding environment.
8. Support controlled access to and from trails to allow for efficient and safe movement along these facilities.
9. Ensure compatibility between road and sidewalk design plans in cases where the facilities affect trail access.
10. Ensure safe transitional connections between trails and sidewalks and other non-motorized transportation facilities such as on-street bicycle lanes. This includes the installation of signs and other visual aids designed to facilitate the safe transition from the trail to and from another transportation facility.
11. Trail amenities such as parking, benches and water fountains shall be installed, where feasible, at strategic locations and in conjunction with other community facilities wherever possible.
12. Utilize public outreach efforts to facilitate community interest and involvement in trail facilities to ensure the maximum benefit to the community, their continued upkeep, and security interests.
13. Ensure that proper maintenance of the trail system occurs on an ongoing basis.

The MPO Trailways Plan, which was recently updated and adopted in 2004 with the Long Range Transportation Plan, identifies future trail facilities planned for construction throughout the County. These facilities are listed below.

Major Trail Facilities

Major trail facilities include those that provide the mainline network for off-road trails in Pinellas County. They are among the highest priorities in terms of capital improvements for bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

PINELLAS TRAIL

As the mainline facility in the County's bicycle and pedestrian facility network, the existing Pinellas Trail is approximately 34 miles in length. Nearly 35 miles of additional trail segments are scheduled and planned that would connect the north and south ends of the existing Pinellas Trail, thereby creating a continuous loop around the County. These projects include the Northeast Extension (Keystone segment), the Progress Energy Trail, North Bay Trail, the downtown St. Petersburg Extension and the Brooker Creek Trail. Completing this entire loop is a top priority of the MPO Trailways Plan.

PROGRESS ENERGY TRAIL

The Pinellas Trail Progress Energy Trail Extension is a proposed 15-foot wide paved trail, with several feet of grassy areas on either side, along a 20-mile corridor of Progress Energy Corporation utility easement. Generally, the Extension would connect the existing terminus of the Pinellas Trail along East Lake Road at John Chesnut, Sr. Park, to the intersection of Tampa Road, S.R. 584, and McMullen Booth Road. The Trail would then proceed south adjacent to U.S. Highway 19, and head easterly crossing East Bay Drive and then Ulmerton Road. The Extension would then proceed southeasterly following the utility easement to cross I-275, terminating at the Weedon Island Preserve. This extension would provide an important connection between Clearwater, the mid-county area and St. Petersburg, enabling a needed continuous link along the county's eastern side.

FRIENDSHIP TRAILBRIDGE

The existing section of the multi-purpose Friendship Trail was converted from the Old Gandy Bridge, under joint ownership of Pinellas and Hillsborough County. The TrailBridge portion spans Tampa Bay, and includes catwalks for fishing. The future Friendship Trail Extension will provide access along the Gandy Causeway to the Weedon Island Trail inside the Preserve, Gateway/Weedon Island Nature Trail, downtown St. Petersburg and the Pinellas Trail Progress Energy Extension.

COURTNEY CAMPBELL RECREATIONAL TRAIL

This is a planned regional trail beginning at the northern terminus of the Bayside Bridge at Gulf-to-Bay Boulevard proceeding east, connecting to the proposed shore line recreation facilities and the existing frontage road facilities along the Courtney Campbell Causeway in Hillsborough County. This facility would also connect to the Clearwater East-West Trail at the point where the trail continues westward, leaving Bayshore Boulevard, and proceeding to Moccasin Lake Park.

OLDSMAR TRAIL

The City of Oldsmar is constructing approximately 11.2 miles of bicycle/pedestrian trails running east-west and north-south within the City of Oldsmar. The trail will be situated through neighborhoods, Progress Energy utility corridors and Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) licensed use lands. The proposed trail is positioned to avoid conflicts with structures and natural features, as well as enhancing the surrounding areas.

The corridor begins at the intersection of Tampa/McMullen Booth Roads, and travels east to the Tampa/Racetrack Road intersection, traversing several neighborhoods. This trail will provide a connection with the Pinellas Trail Progress Energy Trail Extension, the Oldsmar/Safety Harbor Crossing Trail, as well as a regional connection into Hillsborough County.

STARKEY WILDERNESS TRAIL

The planned Starkey Wilderness Trail is 1.9 miles. The regional facility runs through a utility easement between Keystone Road and Starkey Road in Pasco County where it will connect with a planned multi-use trail.

TRINITY BOULEVARD TRAIL

This 1.7 mile regional trail is proposed to run alongside Trinity Boulevard between East Lake Road and Pasco County where it will link to a planned multi-use trail in Pasco County that will eventually connect to the Suncoast Parkway. In addition to providing a regional connection, the Trinity Boulevard Trail will provide bicycle and pedestrian access to and from the Trinity communities area in Pasco County, currently home to over 3,500 families.

TRINITY TRAIL

The Trinity Trail is a planned 0.5 mile regional facility that runs alongside East Lake Road between Keystone Road and the planned Seven Springs Boulevard Trail in Pasco County.

Community Trails

Community trails provide an essential link between residential neighborhoods and destinations, such as parks, commercial areas and schools. The county's hierarchy of bicycle and pedestrian facilities depends on community trails to provide multi-use local connections and recreational opportunities for users of all ages and abilities. There are several community trails in existence, under development and planned in Pinellas County.

BAYSHORE TRAIL

This is an existing community path designed as a six-foot wide sidewalk, also referred to as the Bayshore Linear Greenway Recreational Path. This sidewalk path is marked in ¼-mile increments. The facility begins at the Safety Harbor Marina, leading north to the proposed Oldsmar Trail, and south to the Safety Harbor/Clearwater city limits. Off-road accommodations continue southward to the Clearwater East-West Trail along Bayshore Boulevard.

CLEARWATER EAST-WEST TRAIL

The Clearwater East-West Trail includes an existing and planned facility. The existing section is a combination of paved trail and sidewalks between 6 - 16 feet wide that are marked and signed, located within the City of Clearwater. It begins at the Long Center on Belcher Road, runs eastward, adjacent to Old Coachman Road, and along the north side of the CSX Transportation Railroad. The trail crosses NE Coachman Road, under US 19, near nature parks, and heads toward Del Oro Park after crossing McMullen Booth Road. As the trail travels north to the Clearwater/Safety Harbor city limits, it connects with the Bayshore Trail along Old Tampa Bay. From Safety Harbor to Clearwater, the facility connects several recreational parks, including Marina Park, Cliff Stevens Park, Kapok Park, Wood Valley Park, Moccasin Lake Park, Coachman Ridge Park, Cooper's Bayou Park, Eddie C. Moore Softball Complex, and Del Oro Park.

CLEARWATER EAST AVENUE CONNECTOR

This is an existing section of the Pinellas Trail that is a wide sidewalk extending north and south through downtown Clearwater. Approximately 0.5 mile, it extends from Turner Street to Drew Street.

FORT DESOTO PARK TRAIL

Fort DeSoto Park is an existing facility located on Mullet Key at the very southern tip of Pinellas County. Inside the park, a 6.8-mile recreational trail was completed in November 2001. This 12-foot asphalt trail will eventually be expanded to connect with the Bayway Trail. Currently, the trail fully connects all facilities within Ft. DeSoto Park. The Fort DeSoto Trail begins at the campground, travels south, and then east along Anderson Boulevard to the East Beach Swim Center, as well as west to the North Beach Swim Center and the historic fort.

GULFPORT TRAIL

This existing facility is a community trail that proceeds approximately 1,800 feet south from the Pinellas Trail along 55th Street.

HONEYMOON ISLAND TRAIL

This existing facility is a protected trail along the south side of Causeway Boulevard in Dunedin. A guardrail separates users from the vehicles on the roadway. Major landscaping is located on the south side of the trail as a buffer between the trail and the recreational activities along the Causeway. Specifically, this section begins at the Pinellas Trail at Curlew Road, to the Honeymoon Island State Park entrance on the west-end. At the west-end, there is a loop to provide a turn-around for trail users. In addition, the trail continues into the park. The eastern section of the spur, located on the southern side of the road, is a ten-foot wide sidewalk; the balance to the west is a ten-foot asphalt trail. A six-foot wide passageway for trail users is provided on the south side of the three bridges. This provision is in addition to the existing pedestrian walkways on the north side of each bridge.

MEMORIAL CAUSEWAY PATH

This existing eight-foot wide asphalt path is located in the City of Clearwater. The path runs along the south side of Memorial Causeway for approximately 1.2 miles, linking the mainland to the beaches, spanning the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway between the two bridges at each end of the Memorial Causeway. A pedestrian bridge is being designed to span Mandalay Channel, and serve as a gateway to Clearwater Beach.

RIO VISTA TRAIL

At the intersection of Riverside Drive NE and 83rd Avenue North, this existing trail proceeds south toward a neighborhood park along Turner's Creek. Proceeding southward along Turner's Creek, the alignment travels through the west end of the neighborhood park area. This 0.5-mile Rio Vista Trail connection meets the North Bay Trail at 1st Street Northeast, which provides a needed north-south facility into downtown St. Petersburg from the city's northeastern residential areas.

PINELLAS PARK EQUESTRIAN TRAIL

A series of existing equestrian trails connect several neighborhoods, and Howarth Park and Softball complex. These trails run northward toward CR 296, east to 58th Street, south to 86th Avenue, and west along several roads, including 102nd Avenue, just west of 66th Street.

SUNSHINE SKYWAY TRAIL

This causeway trail extends from the beginning of the southbound approach to the Sunshine Skyway Bridge to the base of the southbound rise of the Sunshine Skyway Bridge.

TREASURE ISLAND BEACH TRAIL

This trail is an existing 10-foot wide paved facility east of the beach. It is accessible from Gulf Boulevard, which also allows for beach area access. The Treasure Island Beach Trail is between 104th Avenue and 119th Avenue, with future plans to extend southward to Blind Pass Bridge. PSTA's Suncoast Beach Trolley travels along the entire length.

142ND AVENUE TRAIL

This planned community trail would begin at the Pinellas Trail and proceed east along 142nd Avenue past 66th Street and U.S. Highway 19, eastward to the Pinellas Trail Progress Energy Extension alignment.

37TH STREET TRAIL

The 37th Street Trail is a planned facility that would provide on-road bicycle lanes or off-road trails along 37th Street between 9th Avenue North and 54th Avenue South. This section of the roadway runs through residential neighborhoods parallel to 34th Street (U.S. Highway 19). This 4.25 mile long trail is also part of the proposed Pinellas Trail extension to serve the south section of the City. Based on its geographic location, the 37th Street Trail will serve as a key connector between the Bayway Trail and Skyway Trail and the current Pinellas Trail, while providing an alternative route to U.S. Highway 19, serving bicycling needs of the users in this area, mainly west side of U.S. Highway 19.

62ND AVENUE TRAIL

This future trail would link Belcher Road (71st Street) to Sawgrass Lake Park (at 25th Street N) along 62nd Avenue, heading east toward I-275. This 4.3-mile trail will also provide connections for schools, hospitals, industrial areas and shopping.

BELLEAIR ROAD TRAIL

This planned east-to-west corridor between Clearwater-Largo Road to U.S. Highway 19, contains a two-lane roadway with considerable open space providing an opportunity for the inclusion of a separated path. This path could be constructed on either the north or south side of the existing roadway and would provide a good east-west connector to the Pinellas Trail.

BOOKER CREEK TRAIL

The planned Booker Creek Trail in the Roser Park area would connect neighborhoods with existing and proposed on- and off-road bicycle facilities. The alignment of this proposed trail would be based on the available rights-of-way along existing I-275, CSX rail line and parkland. This trail's alignment starts at 13th Avenue North (at the intersection of 22nd Street) and follows the available rights-of-way along the existing I-275, existing CSX line and the existing park's right-of-way in a southeasterly direction, with an end point of the trail at 12th Avenue South and 3rd Street. This trail would use available underpasses and overpasses along the alignment to minimize the bicycle/motor vehicle traffic conflicts at some key intersections. This trail also uses the underground passage available on the east side of Tropicana Field.

BROOKER CREEK PATH

This proposed facility would be a protected bike path beginning at Keystone Road in northeast Pinellas County, where the Pinellas Trail Northeast Extension crosses East Lake Road. The Brooker Creek Path would proceed east along Keystone Road and turn south to the Brooker Creek Nature Preserve and the County's Environmental Education Center.

CHILDS PARK (CLAM BAYOU) TRAIL

The Childs Park (Clam Bayou) Trail, currently under construction, starts at the existing Pinellas Trail between 41st and 42nd Streets and runs south through city-owned land and intersects with 22nd Avenue South, traveling through Clam Bayou Park. The trail then turns left at 34th Avenue South with a final end node at the intersection of 37th Street South and 34th Avenue South. The approximate length of this trail is 2.9 miles.

CLEARWATER BEACH TRAIL

This planned facility would connect the existing bike path on the Memorial Causeway southward through Clearwater Beach, then across the Sand Key Bridge to Sand Key Park. The City of Clearwater is also proposing a community trail to connect the existing Pinellas Trail with bicycle facilities on the Memorial Causeway bike path, utilizing Chestnut/Court/Pierce Street Loop.

CULTURAL FACILITIES TRAIL

This proposed trail would include a series of small paths south of Ulmerton Road and west of the Pinellas Trail. The paths are proposed to provide a connection between the Trail and Heritage Park, the Botanical Gardens, the Pinellas County Arts Center and Walsingham Park. The paths would provide linkage to the Trail using City of Largo facilities. The south end of this path would also connect to the McKay Creek loop south of Walsingham Road.

CURLEW ROAD TRAIL

This community trail is proposed adjacent to Curlew Road, connecting the Pinellas Trail and the Honeymoon Island Spur along the western part of the County, with the Oldsmar/Safety Harbor Crossing Trail, Oldsmar's Canal Park and other trails along the McMullen Booth/East Lake Road corridor to the east.

DRUID TRAIL

The City of Clearwater anticipates a major improvement to Druid Road between Ft. Harrison Avenue and U.S. Highway 19. This corridor would incorporate bicycle facilities, and essentially connect the Pinellas Trail Progress Energy Trail Extension with the existing Pinellas Trail. The proposed Druid Trail would provide a direct east/west connection across one of the narrower areas of Pinellas County.

DUNEDIN LOOP TRAIL

This planned community trail includes two proposed alignments. One runs from Alternate U.S. Highway 19 east along Palm Boulevard to Green Way Avenue, then south along Pinehurst Road to Buena Vista Drive extended. The second alignment runs from Alternate U.S. Highway 19 along Buena Vista Drive extended eastward to Pinehurst Road running along the north side of Dunedin High School, east along Solon Avenue to Garrison Jones Elementary and Englebert Recreation Complex to Belcher Road. The planned facility connects the Dunedin Community and Art Centers, Highlander Park and Dunedin High School.

EDGEWATER TRAIL

This proposed trail would be in both jurisdictions of Clearwater and Dunedin. From downtown Dunedin, the trail would head west toward the marina, turn south along Edgewater Drive (Alternate U.S. Highway 19) and proceed to Sunset Point Road. At this point, the trail could potentially head east along Sunset Point Road, and connect to the Pinellas Trail.

ELFERS TRAIL

The planned Elfers Trail would follow the abandoned rail corridor in the City of Tarpon Springs that travels from the existing Pinellas Trail, south of the Anclote River, northwest to the Pasco County line. A trail spur has recently been constructed along part of this alignment, to connect the Pinellas Trail with the North Anclote River Nature Park, a 77-acre property owned by the City of Tarpon Springs. The new spur begins just west of U.S. Highway 19, proceeds northwest along the built-up earthwork of the abandoned rail alignment and, at one location, utilizes an existing concrete railroad bridge.

ENTERPRISE TRAIL

The proposed alignment for the Enterprise Trail would follow Enterprise Road, C.R. 102, from the Pinellas Trail Progress Energy Extension east of U.S. Highway 19, eastward to Philippe Parkway in Safety Harbor, and the Bayshore Trail.

FREEDOM LAKE TRAIL

This proposed community trail links the Pinellas Trail Progress Energy Extension along a drainage ditch to 49th Street, and along the east side of U.S. Highway 19 south to Freedom Lake Park.

FRIENDSHIP TRAIL

As indicated in the previous section, this is a planned regional trail that connects the existing Friendship Trail Bridge to the Weedon Island Preserve, beginning in the approach area for the Trail Bridge at the west end. At that location, the Friendship Trail would go underneath the two highway bridges to reach the south side of the Causeway. As the trail proceeds west, it drops south and away from the roadway as it approaches San Martin Boulevard. The connecting link is Savona Drive, a local road that will connect this neighborhood to San Martin Boulevard. The Friendship Trail would then proceed south to San Martin Boulevard. It is in this vicinity that an intersection is made with the Progress Energy Trail project. The project proceeds further south to the entryway of Weedon Isle Drive, which provides access to the Weedon Island Preserve, for a total trail length of 3.0 miles.

GATEWAY/WEEDON ISLAND NATURE TRAIL

This planned trail alignment begins in the preservation area east of the St. Petersburg- Clearwater International Airport (SPCIA) north of Feather Sound and travels easterly through the preservation area along the Tampa Bay coastline. The trail would cross the roadway facilities associated with Interstate 275, continue through the Gateway preserve and terminate at the Friendship Trail and Gandy Boulevard. Eventually, trail connections would provide access to Weedon Island.

GULF BEACHES BIKE PATH

It has long been desired to connect the Gulf Beach communities with bicycle accommodations. The proposed Gulf Beaches Bike Path would run the entire length of the barrier islands from Sand Key Park in Clearwater to the north, to a connector with the Bayway Trail in the St. Petersburg area. This facility may be developed as a combination protected bike path and bike lane/sidewalk facility. The facility would be designed to maximize connections with public beach access areas.

HOWARD PARK TRAIL

This planned community trail is one of three possible connections from the Pinellas Trail in Tarpon Springs to Fred Howard Park. This alignment would begin at the Pinellas Trail and Tarpon Avenue, then extend west along Riverside Drive, around Kreamer Bayou, to Fred Howard Park. It would continue west to provide access through the Park to the public beach on the Gulf of Mexico.

LAKE MAGGIORE TRAIL

The proposed Lake Maggiore Trail would connect two major north-south roadways (31st Street and 9th Street, i.e. Dr. M.L.K. Boulevard), and travel through neighborhoods and parks. This proposed trail's alignment starts at the intersection of 31st Street South and 35th Terrace South, runs east along 35th Terrace for about 0.3 miles, then follows the alignment of Fairway Avenue South for about 0.75 miles. The trail then follows the alignment of Country Club Way South, and runs along Boyd Hill Nature Park and Lake Maggiore, before it finally meets with the major north-south corridor, Dr. M.L.K. Boulevard. This trail is approximately 2.25 miles.

LAKE SEMINOLE TRAIL

The proposed alignment for this community trail would begin at Lake Seminole Park, proceed north, and link to Largo Central Park Trail, along public lands and right-of-way.

LANDMARK TRAIL

Beginning at Curlew Road, the proposed Landmark Trail would travel along the east side of Landmark Drive south to Enterprise Road, cross over to the west side of Landmark Drive then continue south to Lake Chautauqua Park. At this point, Landmark Drive ends, and the trail would continue south in the undeveloped right-of-way to Union Street, south to Cliff Stephens Park where it would join the East-West Trail, for a total of about 6 miles.

LARGO BRICK TRAIL

This planned trail system would begin at the Pinellas Trail and proceed east along 8th Avenue SW to Largo Central Park.

LARGO CENTRAL PARK TRAIL

The planned Largo Central Park Trail would be an extension of the Brick Trail, proceeding south from the park connection to the By-pass Canal area. Another connection would proceed east along 142nd Avenue to U.S. Highway 19. Although there is land available for further improvement, this corridor is policy constrained and will not be expanded beyond a two-lane configuration. This provides an excellent opportunity for a bicycle-pedestrian pathway, connecting the east and west areas of the City of Largo.

MAIN STREET TRAIL

This future expanded sidewalk trail is planned to connect McMullen Booth Road to Philippe Parkway, S.R. 590, along Sunset Point Road. The Main Street Trail would essentially provide access from the existing bike lanes on Sunset Point Road eastward to Philippe Parkway.

MERES TRAIL

The proposed Meres Trail is one of three possible trail connections from the Pinellas Trail to Fred Howard Park in Tarpon Springs. This alignment would travel east from Howard Park along Sunset Drive to Florida Avenue, continue south on Florida Avenue, and travel east along Meres Boulevard to connect with the Pinellas Trail.

NORTH BAY TRAIL

The planned North Bay Trail begins at the terminus of the Friendship Trail at the Rio Vista Trail Connection. This path would be specifically designed for protected bike use along the 1st Street corridor, providing good connectivity to downtown St. Petersburg, with eventual links to the Pinellas Trail St. Petersburg Extension. This trail is 6.25 miles in length, beginning at 78th Avenue Northeast and 1st Street Northeast, and finishing at Central Avenue in downtown St. Petersburg.

NORTH & SOUTH BAYWAY TRAILS

There are two planned Bayway Trails, North (east-west trail from 54th Avenue S / U.S. Highway 19 in St. Petersburg) and South (north-south trail from Isla del Sol to Ft. DeSoto Park). The Bayway Trail North begins the 54th Avenue South area of U.S. Highway 19 and proceeds west to St. Pete Beach, for a total of 4.0 miles. The beginning area of this trail will be most challenging in terms of location, due to limited right-of-way and motor vehicle movements that exist in the vicinity of that intersection. The new fixed-span Bayway Bridge being developed to the west of this trail, will have trail facilities located on the south side of the bridge. This project would then provide connectivity from St. Petersburg area to the St. Pete Beach area, connecting at its mid-point to the Bayway Trail South.

The Bayway Trail South is 5.0 miles in length, beginning on Isla del Sol, an island area between the St. Petersburg mainland and St. Pete Beach. From its intersection with the Bayway Trail North, this trail will proceed south along the Bayway for its entire length, terminating on the south side of the Bunces Pass Bridge connecting to the Ft. De Soto Park Trail.

OLDSMAR/SAFETY HARBOR CROSSING TRAIL

This planned trail would proceed along the State Road 590 corridor between St. Petersburg Drive and Philippe Parkway, connecting the Oldsmar Trail with the Bayshore Trail.

SEMINOLE SPC TRAIL SPUR

The current concept plan for St. Petersburg College Seminole Campus includes proposals for sidewalks along Old Ridge Road, which would connect to the Pinellas Trail Spur on the south side of 102nd Avenue North from the trail. The proposal also includes trail parking along Old Ridge Road adjacent to existing wetlands, which includes a potential site for nature trails within a proposed county park area.

SKYWAY TRAIL EXTENSION

This planned community trail would proceed south from the Pinellas Bayway along the Interstate 275 / U.S. Highway 19 alignment and connect to the existing bike path on the causeway.

SOUTH BAY TRAIL

The proposed South Bay Trail is 3.0 miles in length and would proceed south along 37th Street to the 54th Avenue South area in St. Petersburg. There are a few options for the alignment, and the city may consider using this trail project to support the revitalization effort that is presently underway by the community to improve this corridor. Opportunities for various community trail connections exist, as well as connecting to the Pinellas Trail, the Pinellas Bayway, Ft. DeSoto Park, Lake Maggiore, Gulf Boulevard and St. Pete Beach, and the Skyway Trail.

SOUTH BEACHES TRAIL

The City of St. Pete Beach has proposed a trail that would parallel the beach, with access to businesses along Gulf Boulevard at varied intervals. A connection to the Pinellas Trail along the Treasure Island Causeway would provide access from Johns Pass southward to Pass-a-Grille.

TAYLOR TRAIL

This proposed trail would begin at the Taylor Property on Belleair Road, between Lake Avenue and Keene Road in Largo. From this parkland, the trail would travel west to Largo Recreational Complex, to Highland Avenue, heading south across West Bay Drive to Largo Central Park, the library and fairgrounds.

TREASURE ISLAND CAUSEWAY TRAIL

The planned Treasure Island Causeway Trail will provide connectivity from Treasure Island Beach toward the existing Pinellas Trail within St. Petersburg. The Treasure Island Causeway Trail would begin at Gulf Boulevard and proceed east along 107th Avenue, joining the Treasure Island Causeway, about 2.0 miles. As this trail proceeds easterly, it traverses the Causeway and enters the mainland of St. Petersburg on Central Avenue.

TREASURE ISLAND CAUSEWAY TRAIL CONNECTION

This planned trail connection would begin at the Treasure Island Causeway, and connect to the existing Pinellas Trail in the Pasadena Avenue area. This connection would end at the Central Avenue/Pasadena Avenue/1st Avenue South overpass, for a total of 0.4 mile.

WEEDON ISLAND TRAIL

This proposed trail would provide access into the Weedon Island Preserve from the Pinellas Trail Progress Energy Trail Extension, Friendship Trail and Gateway/Weedon Island Nature Trail, about 1 mile in length

FIGURE 1A

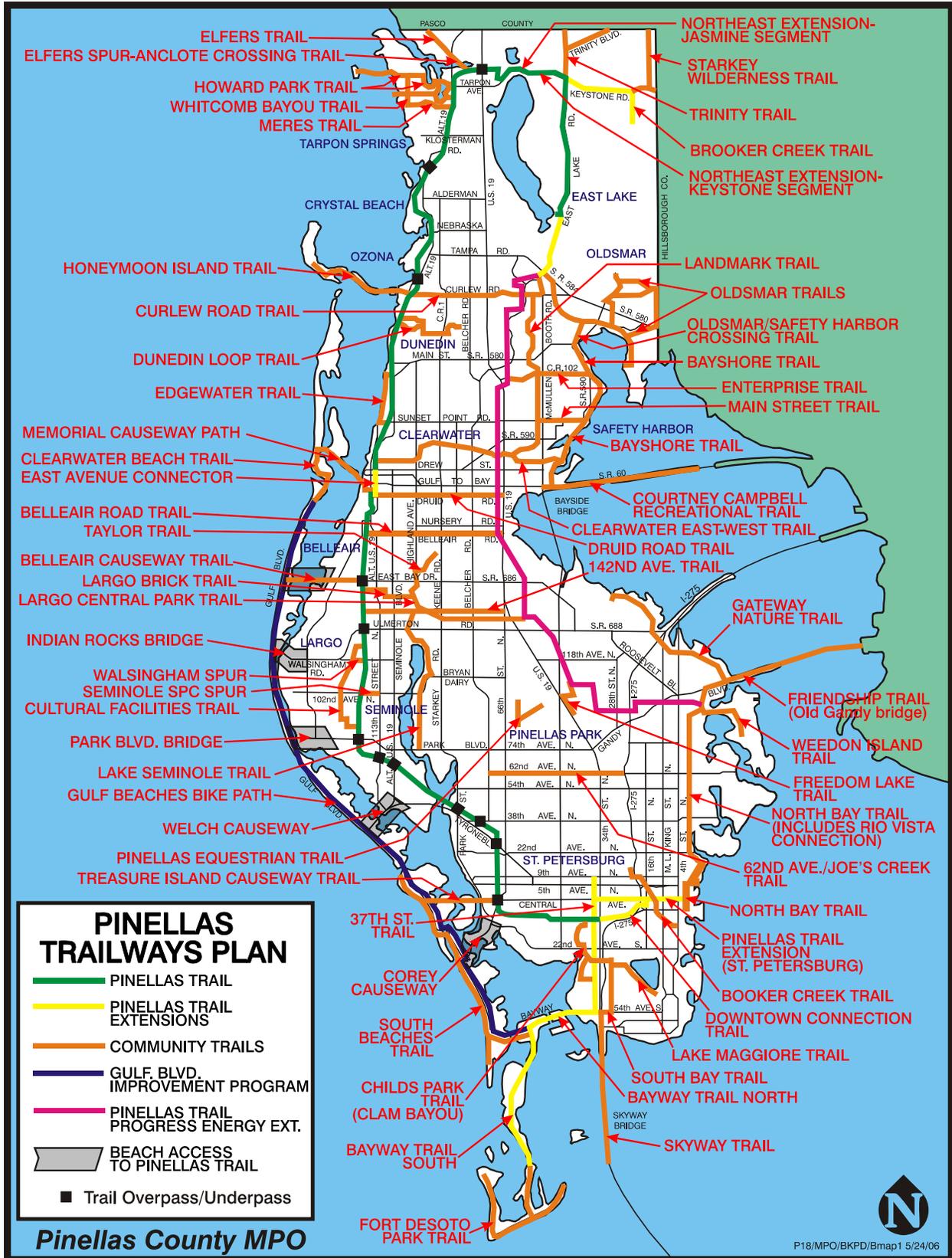
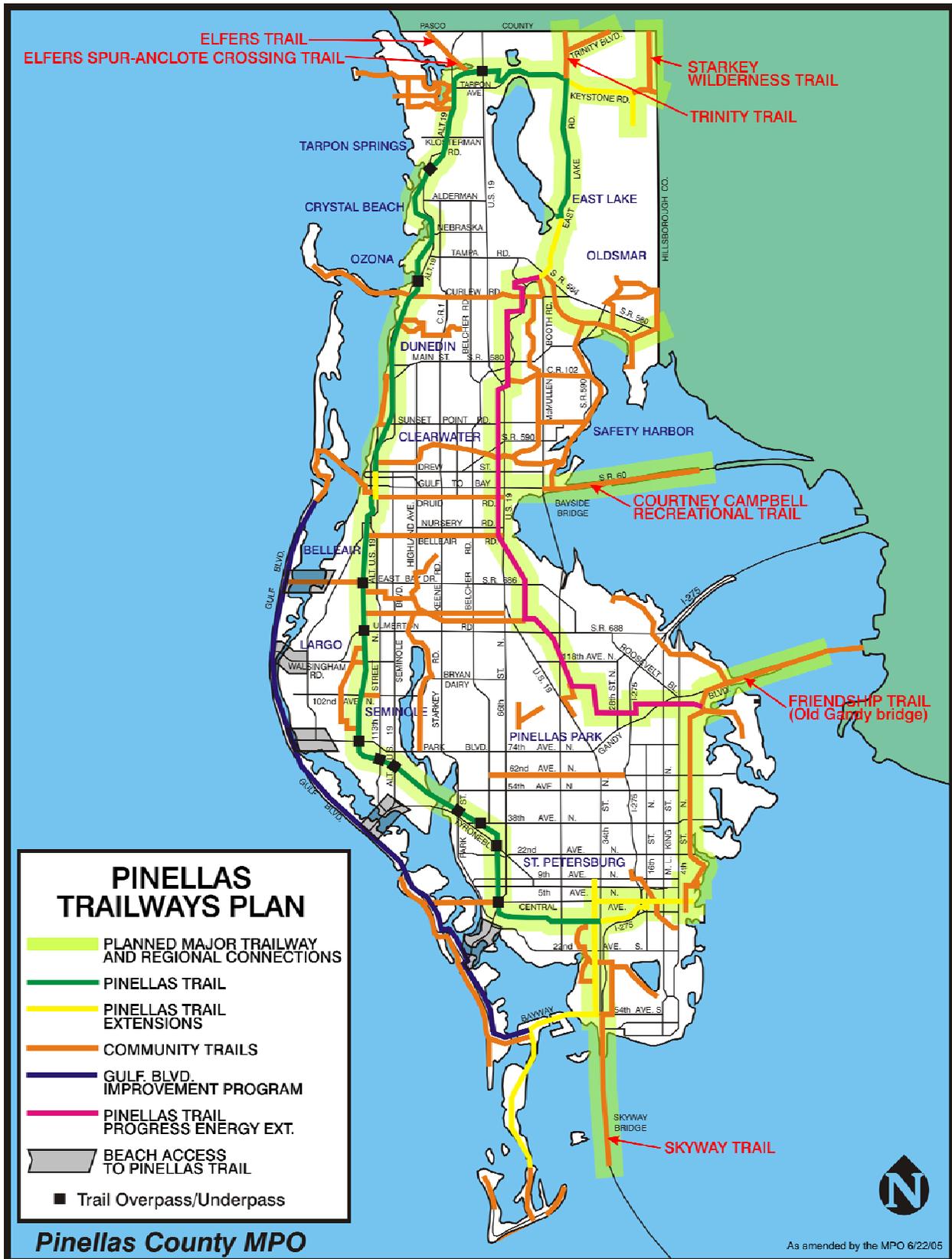


FIGURE 1B



Bicycle Lanes

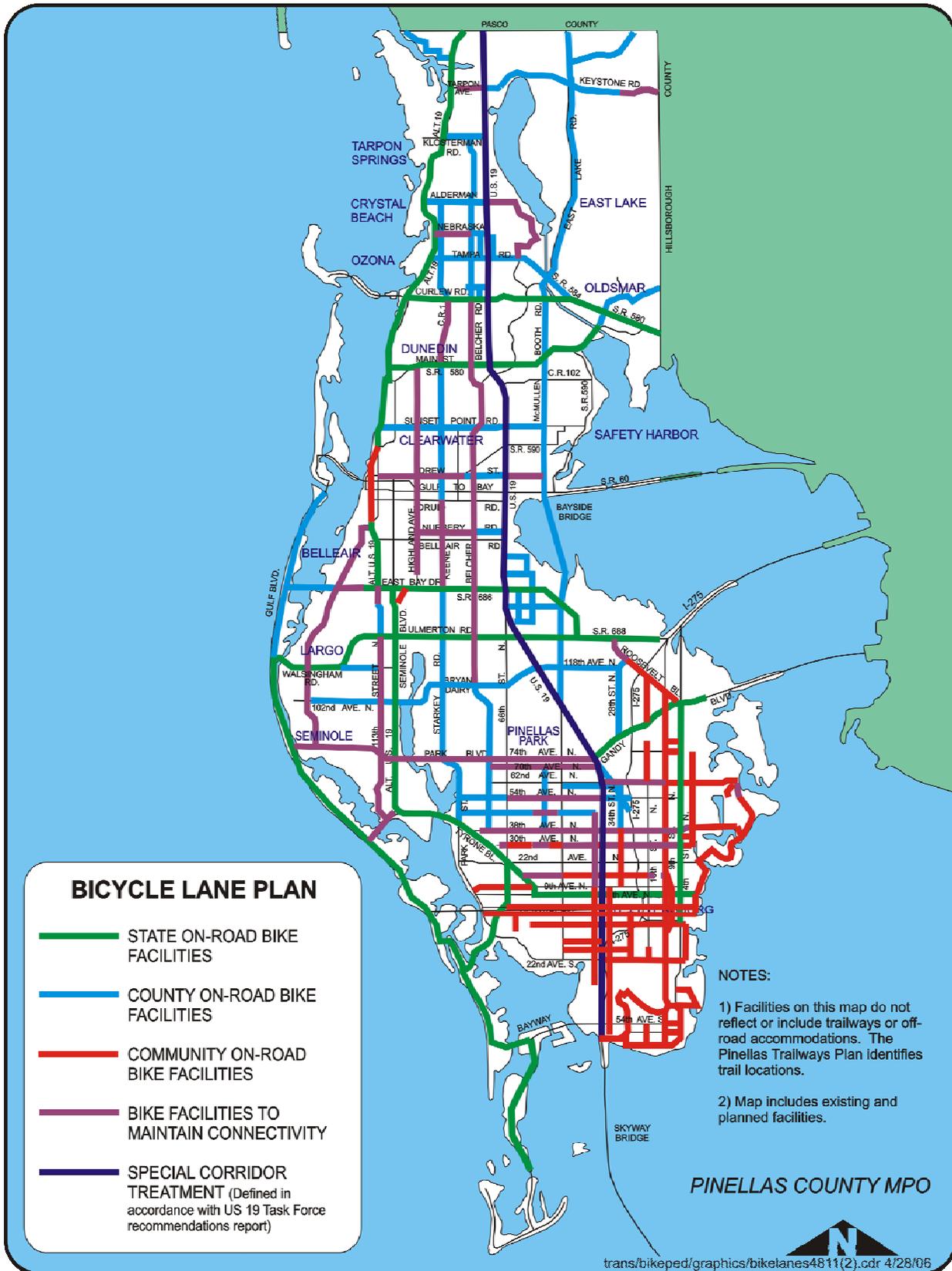
State Law recognizes bicycles as vehicles and as such, they are afforded the same rights to the road as motor vehicles. Bicycle lanes are important when it comes to serving the needs of bicyclists and motorists. With pavement markings and signs, these lanes increase the visibility of bicyclists and the awareness of motorists to their presence and legal right to travel in the stream of traffic. Figure 2, Bicycle Lane Plan, identifies major roads where bicycle lanes currently exist or are planned for installation by FDOT or a local government.

Bicycle Lane Strategies

1. Include dedicated bicycle lanes in the design and construction of roadway improvement or resurfacing projects throughout the County.
2. Install bicycle lanes with appropriate markings and signs along existing roadways throughout Pinellas County to ensure the safety of bicyclists as they travel to and from their destinations.
3. Utilize alternate pavement colors, fluorescent paint on markings and similar techniques to increase the visibility of bicycle lanes to motorists.
4. Utilize the Bicycle Lane Facility Provisions map contained in the Long Range Transportation Plan to identify the location and type of existing and planned bicycle lane facilities in Pinellas County. The special treatment indicated for U.S. Highway 19 will be defined in accordance with the U.S. 19 Task Force recommendations report.
5. Implement urban roadway section design standard for designated bike lanes (minimum four-foot wide); where appropriate, rural roadway section design standard (five-foot wide) shall be required. Signs and pavement markings should be installed under urban or rural roadway standards to identify these lanes, and to increase the awareness of motorists of the presence of bicyclists.
6. Ensure that bicycle lane striping will provide adequate room for bicyclists to operate within the lane.
7. The MPO Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC) shall participate in the review of roadway design plans, as appropriate, to ensure that accommodations are included for bicyclists.
8. Install signs identifying bicycle lanes to increase the awareness of motorists that bicyclists will be using the road.
9. Ensure that bicycle lanes are adequately maintained and swept clean through the implementation of State and local work programs.

10. The BAC shall coordinate with and encourage cities to adopt and institutionalize bicycle lanes as a required component of all road construction and resurfacing projects.
11. Work with local governments and FDOT to identify and prioritize facilities for installation of bicycle lanes emphasizing connectivity between existing bicycle lanes, trails and major trip destinations.

FIGURE 2



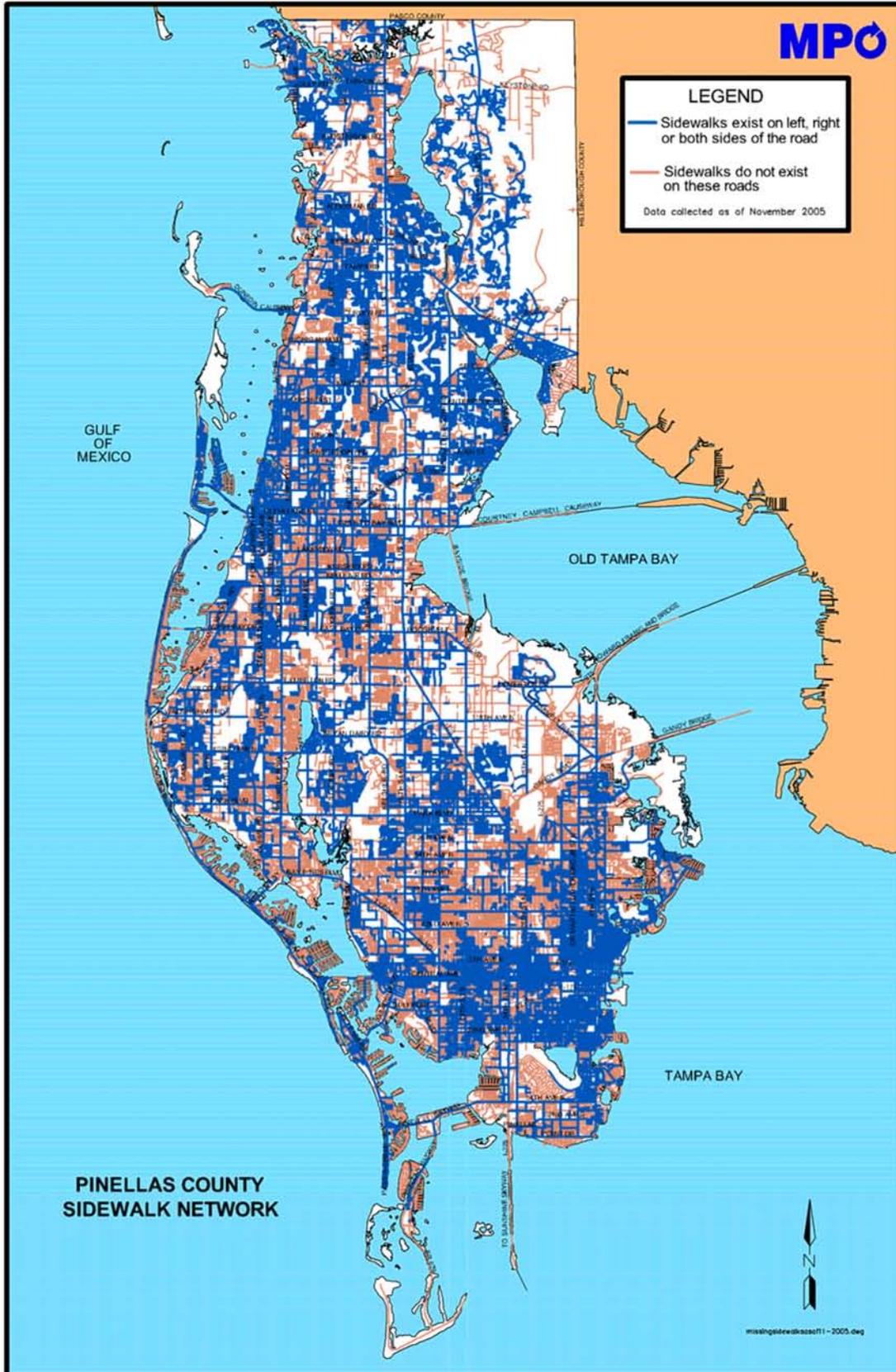
Sidewalks

Sidewalks are an integral part of a pedestrian friendly environment. National studies (Vernez-Moudon, 1996) have confirmed that the presence of a continuous network of sidewalks, walkways, crossings and other pedestrian facilities encourage increased levels of pedestrian activity. Sidewalk construction in Pinellas County occurs through a variety of mechanisms, including the application of local site plan review processes and land development codes, capital improvement programs and federal grant programs. Figure 3, Sidewalk Network, illustrates where sidewalks currently exist on at least one side of the roadway.

Sidewalk Strategies

1. Facilitate the expansion of sidewalks in Pinellas County through the identification of locations where they are most needed. These include areas along major roads (including roads classified in local comprehensive plans as collectors and arterials) where “gaps” remain between existing sidewalk links, between sidewalks and bus stops and between an existing sidewalk and a major destination point.
2. Work with local governments and FDOT to assess existing inventory of sidewalks and provide technical support to ensure the data is maintained and updated on an ongoing basis.
3. Include sidewalk construction as part of roadway improvement and resurfacing projects.
4. Construct sidewalks from school sites to surrounding neighborhoods where the Pinellas County School Board no longer provides courtesy busing service to students within a two-mile radius of their local school.
5. Construct sidewalks on all roads that are classified as arterial or collector facilities.
6. Ensure sidewalk design plans maximize pedestrian safety within road rights-of-way while providing a more calming experience for walkers.
7. Emphasize connectivity of sidewalks to major activity centers such as malls, schools and public buildings and between existing sidewalks and bus stops.
8. Emphasize sidewalk construction to fill gaps or missing sections along major roadways as a priority of capital improvement programs regarding pedestrian facilities.
9. The MPO Pedestrian Transportation Advisory Committee (PTAC) shall participate in the review of roadway design plans, as appropriate, to ensure that accommodations are included for pedestrians.

FIGURE 3



Street Crossings

One of the major challenges facing Pinellas County is the difficulty many pedestrians face attempting to cross wide or busy roadways. This can be challenging for young and older pedestrians even at signalized intersections with crosswalks because of the long crossings and the presence of turning vehicles. Contributing to those challenges, red-light running has become a major issue in many communities, with cameras, media campaigns and heightened enforcement aimed at reducing the chronic nature of this illegal activity.

Unfortunately, many pedestrians do not cross at intersections, where they have a degree of protection and visibility. Pedestrians typically will take the shortest path to their destination. They also prefer to cross where there are less directional vehicular movements to take into account. That presents a conflict because arterial roadways are designed to move cars efficiently; meaning that there is a professional bias against adding traffic signals and creating delays between existing signalized intersections. As a result, on arterial roads like Park Boulevard, McMullen Booth Road and Ulmerton Road, distances between signals can be quite long. With posted speed limits of 40 to 45 miles per hour, undesignated mid-block crossings can be very hazardous. This presents a problem for transit users when stops are located mid-block. People may need to cross the road to reach their stop or their destination, and often will do so by crossing mid-block instead of taking a longer route to cross at the intersection.

Furthermore, there are many roadways in the county that have four or six travel lanes, but lack a raised median to offer protection and refuge for people trying to cross. By adding a center-raised median, it reduces the potential of multiple threat crashes in which pedestrians have to pay attention to vehicles traveling in both directions or operating in a center turn lane. Designated mid-block crossings, when a raised median exists, can provide an additional level of safety. However, many traffic engineers resist installing mid-block crossings without a pedestrian signal because it can offer a false sense of security that on-coming vehicles will yield. Conversely, there is resistance to adding the pedestrian signal because of the delays it creates in the motorized traffic stream.

However, it is the intent of this Master Plan to change the viewpoint that the movement of vehicles takes precedence over the need to provide for safe pedestrian movements. The MPO's position is that pedestrians should receive priority at intersection areas. Recognizing pedestrian movement as a priority at roadway intersections has prompted the type of advanced technology solutions, such as countdown signals, designed to safely manage pedestrian crossing activity. Countdown signals are currently being implemented on many state and local roads. These signals are most effective when installed to direct messages to both drivers and pedestrians of the need to recognize pedestrian right-of-way and priority.

Street Crossing Strategies

1. Where feasible, add intersection treatments such as leading pedestrian intervals at signalized intersections, advance signage to alert motorists of pedestrian crossing zones, and curb extensions, refuge medians and similar roadway modifications to reduce crossing distances and promote visibility.
2. In areas where mid-block crossings are occurring but a mid-block signal is not appropriate, add advance signage and/or pavement markings to alert motorists. Consider adding refuge medians to selected road segments where such crossings are occurring.
3. Lighted pedestrian road crossings shall be provided on all roads that are classified as arterial or collector facilities.
4. Pedestrian crossings in road corridors shall be designed to place a priority on the safe movement of pedestrians. These crossings shall also be designed to utilize advanced technology such as pedestrian countdown signals to facilitate safe passage for pedestrians.

Safety

Safety is a critical element in all of the MPO's bicycle and pedestrian planning initiatives. In order to encourage more people to travel by foot or bicycle, safety has to be a foremost consideration. Absent an environment that provides an adequate level of safety, people will be discouraged from bicycling and walking. The MPO maintains a database of accident information including incidents involving bicyclists and pedestrians, illustrated in Figures 4 and 5. This information is analyzed to determine priority locations for implementing safety improvements.

Safety Strategies

1. Work with the Pinellas County School Board to ensure safe access to schools for students.
2. Engage in an active education program to ensure that trail users understand how to travel safely on the trail.
3. Engage in an education program to ensure that both bicyclists and motorists understand standard safety practices and rules as they apply to the use of bicycle lanes and trail facilities.
4. Carry out public education activities to ensure that pedestrians and motorists understand the laws and safe practices concerning pedestrian travel. This is intended to support and encourage a safer environment for motorists as well as pedestrians.
5. Provide technical assistance to Pinellas County, FDOT and School Board affiliated committees to improve the safety of bicyclists and pedestrians.
6. Identify high accident locations and identify strategies to reduce them by working through the appropriate MPO advisory committees and local governments.
7. Increase pedestrian and bicycle visibility through pavement markings, signage and signals.
8. Add bicycle loop detectors and signage at certain intersections along designated bike routes so bicyclists know where to stop in order to trigger the signal to change its cycle.
9. Continue efforts through the BAC, PTAC and other MPO advisory and School Board committees, such as the STSC and STEPS, to ensure that issues and needs related to education, encouragement and enforcement are addressed in a coordinated manner.

10. Incorporate bicycle and pedestrian safety information into a consistent and systematic program of classroom education curriculum that continues each year at elementary, middle and high school levels.
11. Organize and provide information on safe cycling through local cycling organizations and events.
12. Incorporate safety information into park and trail guides.
13. Support the use of traffic calming measures, where appropriate, in areas of high pedestrian activity to reduce conflicts and improve safety.
14. Install pedestrian level street lighting in areas of high bicycle and pedestrian traffic.

FIGURE 4

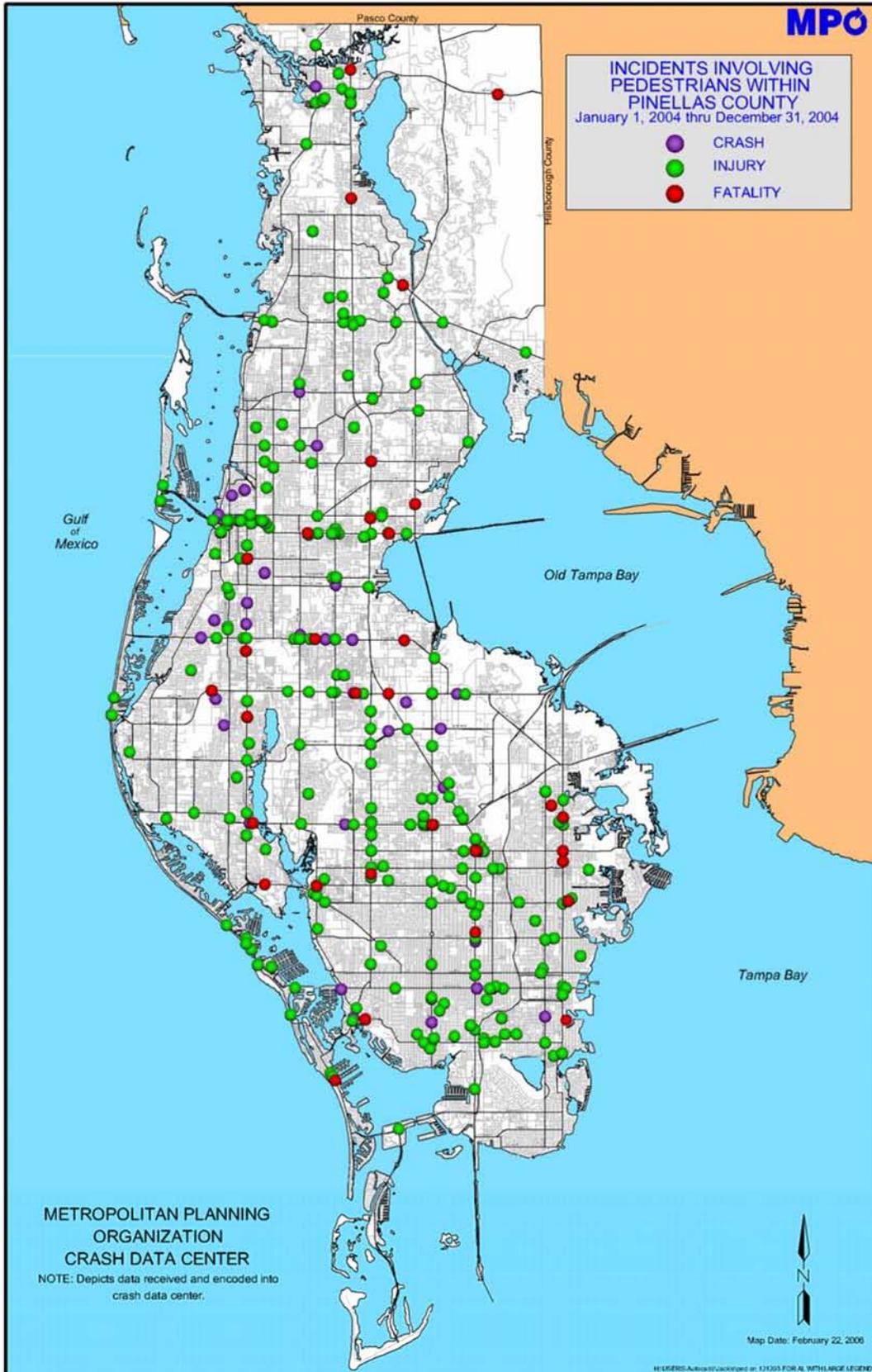
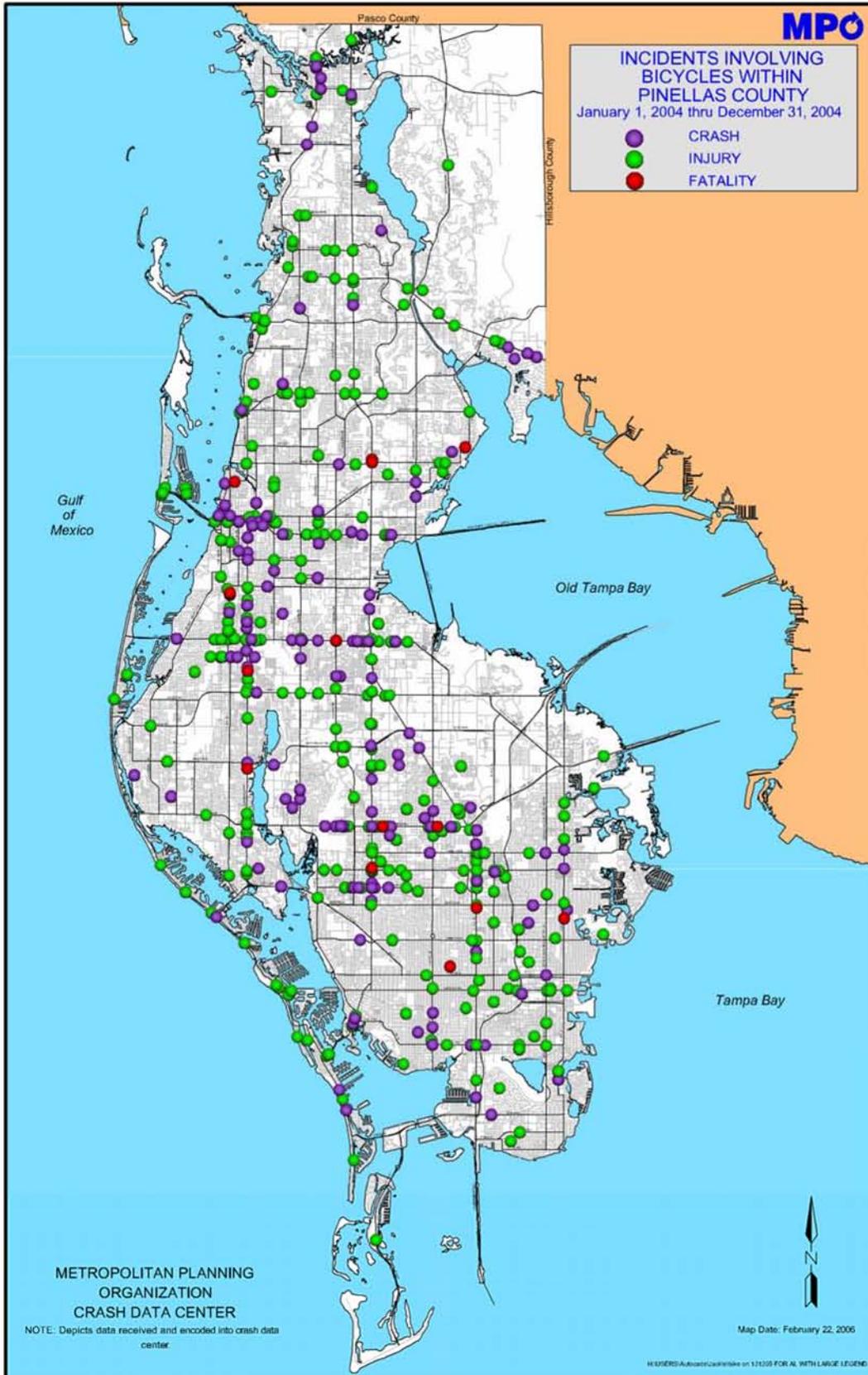


FIGURE 5



Livable Communities

One of the primary goals of the LRTP is to create a transportation network in Pinellas County that is not only safe and efficient, but also supports community livability goals. Creating and sustaining environments that are conducive to bicycle and pedestrian travel is a key ingredient of the “livable communities” concept, which embraces land development and street design strategies that create quality urban environments where people want to live, work and play. Figure 6 shows site-specific improvements, and Figures 6 through 9 illustrates several principles and key features of this concept. Listed below are common characteristics of livable communities.

- 🚲 Street Connectivity - well-connected areas promote pedestrian and bicycle activity by making connections between destinations accessible and convenient.
- 🚲 Parking location - parking design should strive to create an environment conducive to pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, and motorists.
- 🚲 Building orientation and placement - building placement can reduce walking distances for customers and make streets more useful for pedestrians, transit users, and bicyclists. Buildings should be drawn to the street edge to create a defined edge and provide “spatial enclosure,” an important quality for a pedestrian-friendly streetscape.
- 🚲 Transit - transit stops should be accessible to pedestrians, located at the core of compact development and surrounded by a good mix of land uses.
- 🚲 Pedestrian sidewalk and walkways - sidewalks should make connections between complementary uses, allowing citizens to park once and walk between buildings and uses without a car.
- 🚲 Bicycle facilities - accessible bicycle lanes and bicycle parking areas are needed to make bicycling an appealing transportation alternative.
- 🚲 Lighting and landscaping - pedestrian lighting should guide pedestrians safely to and along intended walkways and highlight destination points including building entrances, public spaces, and significant intersections. Street trees and landscaping distinguish major pedestrian paths and building entrances. In addition to providing shade, street trees help to define a comfortable pedestrian realm buffered from vehicular traffic.
- 🚲 Street operation - street design should employ context-sensitive traffic calming techniques that make the roadways safe for pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists alike.
- 🚲 Improve connections between various modes and activity centers.

- 🚲 Link bicycle and pedestrian facility improvements with existing and planned transit services, particularly between activity/employment centers and residential, commercial and institutional land uses.
- 🚲 Working with employers and local government to provide other facilities like bike racks, lockers, showers, etc. for commuters or parking to serve large community events.

Livable Community Strategies

1. Work with local governments to develop land development codes requiring site design features that enhance the quality of the urban environment from the standpoint of mobility choices, site and structural design and creating a sense of place.
2. Work with FDOT and local governments in the development of road construction plans to support a more walkable, transit and bicycle friendly environment.
3. Ensure the implementation of livable community improvements such as landscaped sidewalks, bus shelters and trail connections through the Transportation Impact Fee Ordinance as well as local land development codes.
4. Support and encourage development patterns and land development codes that integrate the physical environment with the County's park system, trails and natural resources.
5. Ensure local governments require developers to provide on-site amenities such as shower facilities and bicycle racks for their employees to accommodate bicycling as a form of commuter travel.
6. Ensure adequate pedestrian access between building entrances and sidewalks located along adjacent roadways.
7. Private and public land development projects shall be designed in a manner that allows for safe pedestrian movements between buildings and parking lots and other common areas.

FIGURE 6

SITE SPECIFIC BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENTS BALANCING PEDESTRIANS, CYCLISTS, TRANSIT & AUTOMOBILES

EXISTING



113th St. at Seminole City Hall and St. Petersburg College, looking south.

ENHANCED



Paved sidewalks create pedestrian connections.

Plantings separate the sidewalk from vehicular traffic.

Landscaped median provides mid-street refuge for pedestrians.

Street trees break down the width of the roadway and highlight significant points along a corridor.

Separate lane for bikes and buses provides a safe route for bicyclists and a dedicated lane for transit.

EXISTING



Gulf-To-Bay Boulevard west of Belcher Road, looking southeast.

ENHANCED



Wide striped crosswalk provides visual queue for drivers to presence of pedestrians crossing.

Signal allows pedestrians to halt traffic and cross safely.

Landscaped median provides mid-street refuge for pedestrians.

EXISTING



Druid Road west of Belcher Road, looking west.

ENHANCED



Multi-use trail for bicyclists and pedestrians provides a safe and interesting route.

Street trees frame the edge of the street and provide a shaded buffer for trail users.

Plantings separate the multi-use trail from vehicular traffic.

FIGURE 7

COMPLETING THE STREET

BALANCING PEDESTRIANS, CYCLISTS, TRANSIT & AUTOMOBILES

BUILDING SETBACK & ENCLOSURE

Orienting buildings to the street creates a feeling of spatial enclosure which dignifies the street as a public space, calms traffic, and fosters pedestrian activity. Placing buildings close to one another and close to the street edge helps to create an active street environment. Rather than separating buildings from the street with large expanses of parking, buildings should work collectively to form a “street wall.”

PRINCIPLES AND KEY FEATURES

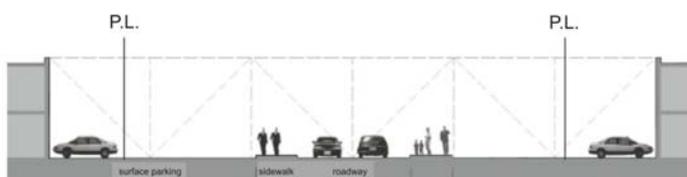
- Drawing buildings to the edge of the street creates a human-scaled pedestrian environment with a clearly defined edge.
- Using buildings to shape the street as a public room is essential in creating an attractive, walkable streetscape.
- Parking lots and large building setbacks discourage the sense of spatial enclosure and result in an unfriendly pedestrian environment.
- Maximum setbacks should be established to control the ratio of building height to street width.



DISCOURAGED

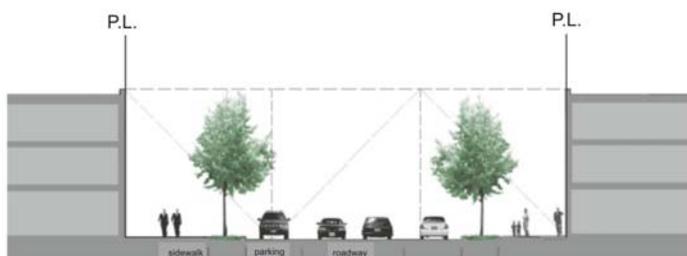


ENCOURAGED



DISCOURAGED

1:6 RATIO (BUILDING HEIGHT: ROAD WIDTH)



ENCOURAGED

1:3 RATIO (BUILDING HEIGHT: ROAD WIDTH)

LANDSCAPE

Street landscaping and furniture break down the scale of the roadway to create an attractive and comfortable sidewalk environment for pedestrians. Street trees, grass planting strips, and ground cover plants all help to distinguish the sidewalk as a place for pedestrians separate from vehicular traffic.

PRINCIPLES AND KEY FEATURES

- Trees and plantings create a separation between vehicular traffic and the sidewalk.
- Trees break down the overall scale of the roadway, making it more welcoming for pedestrians.
- Shade trees and street furniture provide a cool, comfortable environment for pedestrians.
- Special landscape treatments may be used to highlight ‘gateways’ and important public spaces.



DISCOURAGED



ENCOURAGED

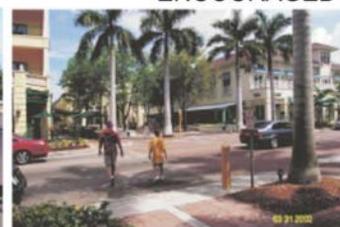


FIGURE 8 COMPLETING THE STREET

BALANCING PEDESTRIANS, CYCLISTS, TRANSIT & AUTOMOBILES

LIGHTING

Lighting should be carefully integrated with the built landscape. Building, pedestrian, and highspeed roadway lighting have unique purposes and requirements. All areas with pedestrian and bicycle traffic should be well lit to ensure visibility and safety and encourage night time activity.

LIGHTING PRINCIPLES AND KEY FEATURES

- Lighting should guide pedestrians along intended walkways and highlight destination points.
- For pedestrian lighting, a large number of low- intensity lights is preferred to fewer high-intensity lights.
- Ornamental light posts may be used to contribute to the architectural character of the streetscape.
- Lighting design may incorporate signage to highlight “gateways” and other significant locations.
- All light sources should be carefully located and shielded so that light is not directed towards adjacent properties or towards the night time sky.



ENCOURAGED



DISCOURAGED



PARKING

Surface parking lots should be placed to the side or rear of buildings rather than directly adjacent to the roadway. This configuration allows buildings to be drawn to the street edge and contribute to the pedestrian atmosphere of the street. This strategy also provides convenient building entry access from the sidewalk and enlivens the streetscape while leaving parking quantity unchanged.

PRINCIPLES AND KEY FEATURES

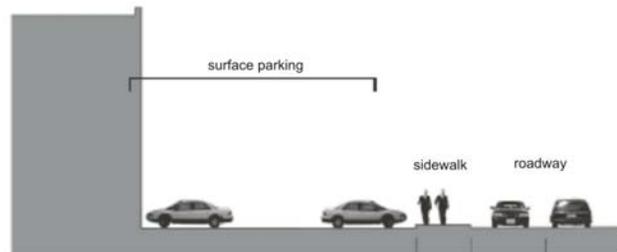
- Parking lots should be placed to side or rear of buildings.
- Buildings should be drawn to the street edge, creating a “public room” for pedestrians.
- Placing parking in the rear and drawing buildings up to the street adds vitality to the sidewalk and welcomes pedestrians.



ENCOURAGED



DISCOURAGED

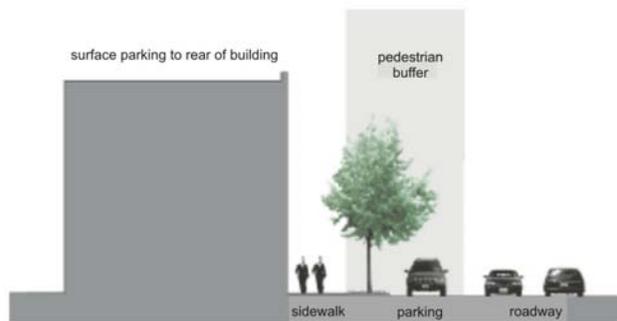


DISCOURAGED

On-street parking provides parking spaces within the paved right-of-way. The presence of on-street parking helps to buffer the sidewalk from vehicular traffic. Parallel parking is preferred over angled parking on urban streets in order to maximize space for sidewalks and bike lanes. Additionally, on-street parking spaces shall be counted towards the required number of parking spaces.

PRINCIPLES AND KEY FEATURES

- On-street parking reduces the need for surface parking.
- On-street parking provides an important buffer between pedestrians and moving vehicles.



ENCOURAGED

FIGURE 9

COMPLETING THE STREET

BALANCING PEDESTRIANS, CYCLISTS, TRANSIT & AUTOMOBILES

TRANSIT

BUS BAYS, STOPS, & SHELTERS

Transit must have an attractive and cohesive image to appeal as an alternative mode of transportation.

PRINCIPLES AND KEY FEATURES

- Bus bays allow passengers to load and unload safely by creating a bus-only zone undisturbed by roadway traffic.
- Well designed shelters should be integrated into the streetscape and provide a safe and comfortable place for people to wait.
- Bus stops and shelters must clearly marked and identifiable.

COMPACT DEVELOPMENT

Transit oriented design improves mobility and leverages public investment in transit systems using pedestrian and transit-friendly development patterns. These development patterns encourage a compatible mix of residential, commercial, and other land uses, facilitate employment opportunities convenient to transit, and enhance connectivity to transit stations and surrounding land uses.

PRINCIPLES AND KEY FEATURES

- Transit stops should be located at the core of downtown, ensuring accessibility for pedestrians.
- Density directly influences potential transit ridership. Transit stops shall be located within a compact, walkable area. An area with a quarter mile radius (or 5 minute walk) is ideal.



DISCOURAGED



ENCOURAGED



COMPACT DEVELOPMENT



WELL DESIGNED SHELTER

Regional Connections

The West Central Florida MPO Chairs Coordinating Committee (CCC) developed the 2025 Regional Long Range Transportation Plan as part of a comprehensive and coordinated transportation planning process within the region. The CCC, in an effort to develop a more balanced multi-modal transportation system, has created a Multi-Use Trails Element of the Regional LRTP. This element brings to light the ongoing need for planning and investment to eliminate discontinuities in the trail network, particularly as it relates to inter-county connections and provision of trail facilities within the right-of-way for new and expanded roads. Trail development is encouraged along roadways, abandoned railroad easements and other undeveloped land to maximize connections within the network. Many of the planned projects focus on expanding and linking existing trails in the region. The goal of the element is to increase connectivity and work towards a network of interconnected trails that provide for bicycle and pedestrian movements throughout the entire seven county region.

The CCC was formed to develop solutions relating to transportation needs and priorities throughout the region. The CCC is comprised of MPO officials from Pasco, Hernando, Hillsborough, Sarasota/Manatee, Polk and Pinellas. Non-voting members include: Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Secretaries for District 1 and 7, the Florida Turnpike Enterprise, Citrus County and the Regional Planning Councils. The CCC is tasked with coordinating projects, developing funding priorities, reviewing impacts of land use decisions, reviewing transportation projects that include multiple MPOs and instituting a conflict resolution process to address any conflicts that arise from planning and programming regionally significant transportation projects. Meetings are held quarterly. Topics of discussion include construction priorities, traffic congestion mitigation, air quality, goods movement, land use, pedestrian and bicycle issues and trails.

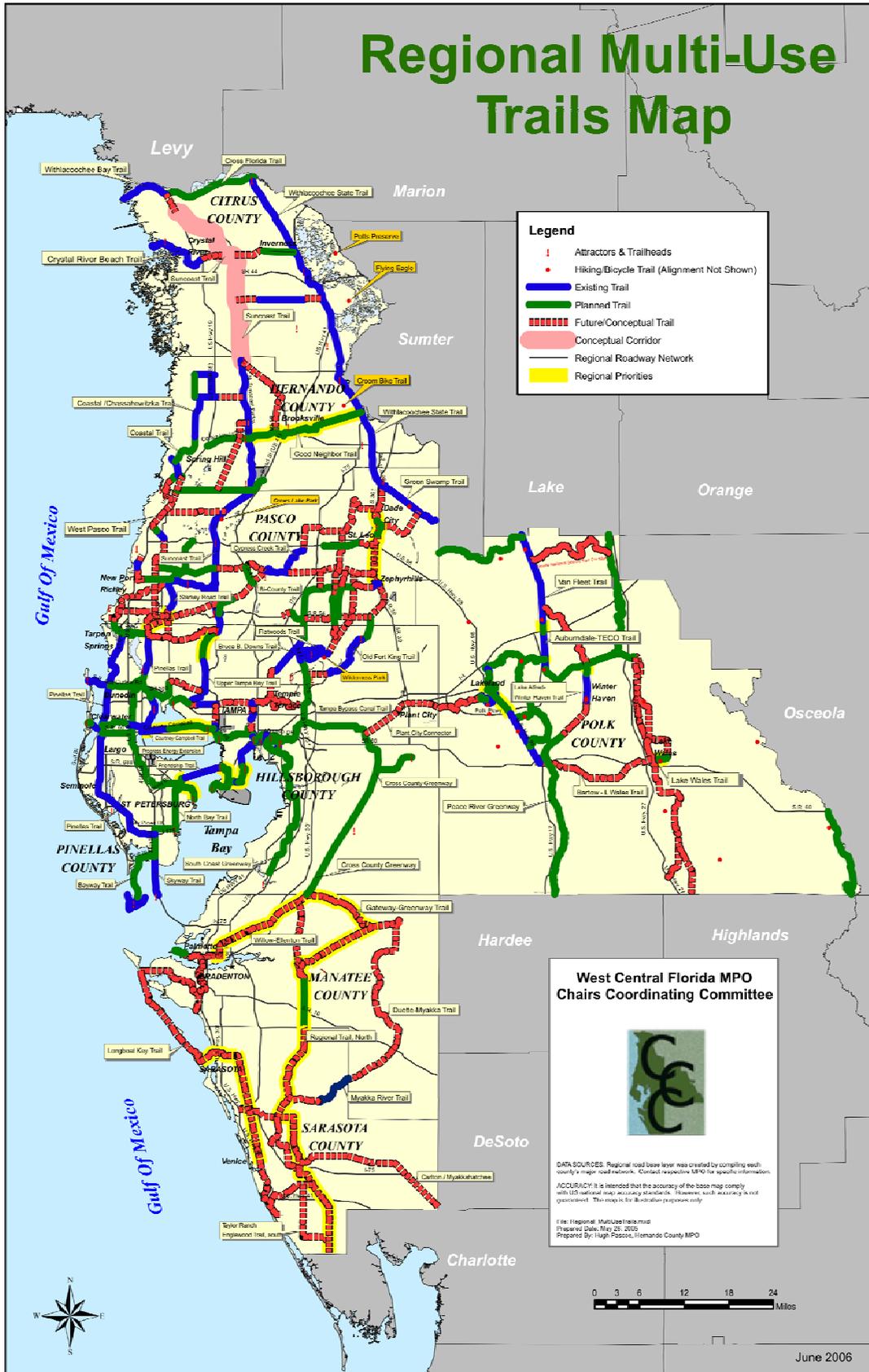
Regional Connections Strategies

1. Assist in the update and maintenance of the Regional Multi-Use Trails Map (Figure 10), which reflects projects and plans developed by each of the MPOs, counties and the FDOT. The map defines key segments that help form an interconnected regional network.
2. Support the efforts of the West Central Florida MPO Chairs Coordinating Committee to improve inter-county connections for trails and bicycle facilities, including non-motorized access to regional transit service.

-

FIGURE 10

Regional Multi-Use Trails Map



Performance Measures

To gauge the effectiveness of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan in achieving its objectives, performance measures shown below are recommended for program monitoring. These performance measures are intended to employ and build upon readily available data already gathered and used as part of the Pinellas State of the System (SOS) Report conducted every two years. New measures should be added with the next update of the SOS Report. The performance measures currently used for the SOS are in italics.

- 🚲 *Number of pedestrian and bicycle crashes overall and by planning sector* (ideally, crashes should be presented in context of trends for trail usage; if crashes and trail usage are both climbing, a logical conclusion may be that the higher number of crashes is attributable to more people riding bicycles and walking).
- 🚲 *Monthly Trail usage (Pinellas Trail and Friendship TrailBridge)* – this should be expanded to include new Pinellas Trail extensions as they come on line.
- 🚲 Ratio of sidewalk and bike lane miles to collector and arterial road miles overall and by planning sector (i.e., the ratio should be getting closer to 1.0) – currently, the SOS only keeps track of the miles of sidewalk and trail facilities.
- 🚲 Miles of gaps in the sidewalk network.
- 🚲 Miles of designated (signed) bike routes in Pinellas County.
- 🚲 Annual usage counts of PSTA’s Bikes on Buses program.
- 🚲 Number of bus shelters and percentage of stops with shelters in Pinellas County.
- 🚲 Number of schools with “Safe Routes to School” improvements (signage, markings, facilities).
- 🚲 Miles of roadways with Bicycle/Pedestrian Level of Service grades (A through F) – this will need to be phased in over time. The MPO will work with the BAC and PTAC to define standards by which these measures will be used to assess progress.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The MPO and its partner agencies have made tremendous strides over the last 10-15 years to develop an expansive bicycling and walking network designed to meet the needs of a wide range of users. The Pinellas Trail and its planned extensions make Pinellas County a recognized leader in the country for urban trails that link residential, commercial and institutional land uses. Regional and community trails will provide critical linkages that connect neighborhoods throughout Pinellas County to its outstanding beaches, parks, natural areas, downtowns and similar destinations in adjacent counties. Furthermore, Pinellas County is a national model for how off-road trails can lead to downtown revitalization, support quality redevelopment, ensure safety and enhance property values for residents and businesses alike.

Despite the successes, challenges remain. Pedestrian-related fatalities have drawn statewide and even national attention, and the St. Petersburg-Clearwater-Tampa urban area has been routinely cited for its “mean streets” because of the high crash rates involving pedestrians and cyclists. While the trail network is growing steadily and demonstrating its value, on-road facilities and sidewalks remain lacking on many county roadways. These are important “connectors” to commercial, industrial and institutional land uses throughout the County. They provide a critical intermodal linkage between transit and the places people need to reach. The County’s transportation network — especially in mid-county, where industrial and office land uses have been predominant for many years — is limited with respect to on-road facilities and sidewalks. These are not inexpensive problems to solve; a mile of sidewalk can cost more than \$1 million when issues such as drainage and utility locations need to be considered.

This Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan recognizes the need for both trail and on-road transportation systems to improve personal mobility and accessibility. A review of existing, funded and planned sidewalks, bicycle facilities and multi-use trails, reveals sections of gaps where facilities will be needed to complete the development of an integrated, continuous system serving all of Pinellas County. Planned trails, sidewalks and bicycle lanes that will be constructed through roadway improvement/resurfacing projects, will fill a portion of the identified gaps. Projects for the remaining gaps will need to be identified and prioritized.

Through redevelopment and impact fee reduction incentives for the private sector, there are opportunities to increase connectivity of places in Pinellas County to encourage walking, bicycling and a reduction in vehicle miles of travel. The MPO’s Livable Communities Initiative, an outgrowth of its efforts to update the Transportation Impact Fee Ordinance in 2002-2005, promises to encourage walkable community design through modification of land development regulations and incentives for vehicle trip reduction strategies. The key is to create destinations in appropriate locations that are accessible at a pedestrian scale, and incorporate the design, diversity and density elements necessary for them to function as multi-modal hubs.

Education, awareness and encouragement are equally important to safe and effective bicycling or walking. Improving the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists requires more

than facility building. It requires a multi-faceted approach to provide instruction on how to operate a bicycle or walk in ways that obey traffic laws, ensure maximum visibility and reduce potential conflicts. This Master Plan promotes the expansion of safety education and training for school-age children and motorists. It encourages involvement from law enforcement, school representatives, transportation and planning staff, and community members to transform problem areas into a safe and more livable environment.

Although many of the strategies set forth in this Plan are already underway, it is important to note that considerable work in the area of assessing, developing and maintaining bicycle and pedestrian facility data is needed in order to effectively plan for the continued expansion of these networks. This effort is also needed to establish and carry out the performance measures identified in the previous section. This will allow for the MPO and its partner agencies to better identify and address the need for projects involving the installation of bicycle lanes, trail and sidewalk construction, crosswalk enhancements and other safety improvements.

Lastly, the successful implementation of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan is dependent upon creating quality urban environments that are conducive to these travel modes. This underscores the need for local land development codes and supporting comprehensive plan policies calling for the incorporation of livable community design standards. Following the adoption of the Master Plan, the MPO will engage in a cooperative effort with its committees and partner agencies to develop model land development code and comprehensive plan policy language for the local governments to implement through their site plan review processes and capital improvement programs.

APPENDIX

**PINELLAS COUNTY TRAIL PROJECTS
CURRENTLY SCHEDULED IN TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM**

| Project | Miles | Juris. | Cost Estimate | Fund Source | Const. Yr. | Trail Classification | | | | |
|--|-------|---------------------------|---------------------|--------------|------------|--------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
| | | | | | | Pinellas Trail Extension | Community Trail | Regional Connector Trail | East-West Connector Trail | Beach Access Trail |
| Bayway Trail South | 1.40 | County | \$3,045,095 | TE | 2006/07 | X | | | | X |
| Belleair Causeway Trail | 1.68 | County | * | | 2006/07 | | X | | | X |
| NE Extension - Keystone Segment | 4.22 | County | * | | 2006/07 | X | | X | X | |
| Pinellas Trail Progress Energy Extension - At Grade | 8.80 | County | \$6,196,620 | PP | 2005/06 | X | | | | |
| Pinellas Trail Progress Energy Extension - US 19 crossing at Enterprise Rd | N/A | County | approx. \$3,000,000 | Fed Grant | 2005/06 | X | | | | |
| Pinellas Trail Progress Energy Extension - Ulmerton Rd crossing at Cross Bayou | N/A | County | approx. \$3,000,000 | CMAQ | 2006/07 | X | | | | |
| Pinellas Trail St. Petersburg Extension CSX Acquisition | 1.70 | County/ St. Petersburg | \$5,000,000 | Fed | 2005/06 | X | | | | |
| US 19 Trail Crossing Bayside Segment | N/A | State | \$1,417,500 | Spec. Alloc. | 2008/09 | X | | | | |

NOTES:

This chart contains information available at time of printing. For more current information, please refer to the TIP.

- 1) TE = Transportation Enhancement funding
 - 2) Pinellas Trail St. Petersburg Extension: Includes \$3m overpass at US Hwy 19. Source of funding for balance of project yet to be determined.
 - 3) PP = Penny for Pinellas Infrastructure Sales Tax
 - 4) Special allocation is legislative earmark
- * Trail portion of cost included with scheduled roadway improvement.

PLANNED TRAILWAYS PROJECTS

| Project | Miles | Jurisdiction | Trail Classification | | | | |
|--|-------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
| | | | Pinellas Trail Extension | Community Trail | Regional Connector Trail | East-West Connector Trail | Beach Access Trail |
| 142nd Avenue Trail | 2.50 | Largo/County | | X | | X | |
| 37th Street Trail | 4.25 | St. Petersburg | X | X | | | |
| 62nd Ave/Joe's Creek Trail | 4.30 | County | | X | | X | |
| Bayshore Trail (Sunset Point Rd. to planned Oldsmar Tr.) | 3.60 | Safety Harbor | | X | | | |
| Belleair Road Trail | 4.20 | County/Clearwater/Largo | | X | | X | |
| Booker Creek Trail | 2.74 | St. Petersburg | | X | | | |
| Brooker Creek Path Extension | 2.00 | County | X | | | | |
| Clearwater Beach Trail | 1.50 | Clearwater | | X | | X | X |
| Clearwater East Avenue Connector | 0.50 | Clearwater | X | X | | | |
| Clearwater East-West Trail (Belcher Rd. to Pinellas Trail) | 3.40 | Clearwater | | X | | X | |
| Courtney Campbell Rec. Trail | 5.00 | County/Clearwater | | X | X | X | X |
| Cultural Facilities Trail | 5.00 | County | | X | | | |
| Curlew Road Trail | 4.30 | County/State | | X | | X | |
| Downtown Connection Trail | 1.85 | County/St. Petersburg | X | | | | |
| Druid Trail | 4.00 | Clearwater | | X | | X | |
| Dunedin Loop Trail | 4.00 | Dunedin | | X | | | |
| Edgewater Trail | 2.00 | Dunedin/Clearwater/State | | X | | | |
| Elfers Trail to Pasco CL | 1.75 | County | | X | X | | |
| Enterprise Trail | 2.80 | Clearwater | | X | | X | |

PLANNED TRAILWAYS PROJECTS

| Project | Miles | Jurisdiction | Trail Classification | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------|------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
| | | | Pinellas Trail Extension | Community Trail | Regional Connector Trail | East-West Connector Trail | Beach Access Trail |
| Freedom Lake Trail | 2.50 | Pinellas Park | | X | | | |
| Friendship Trail | 3.00 | County | X | X | | | |
| Gateway/Weedon Island Trail | 9.00 | County | | X | | | |
| Gulf Beaches Bike Path | 21.00 | County/State/City | | X | | | X |
| Howard Park Trail | 4.00 | County | | X | | | X |
| Lake Maggiore Trail | 2.25 | St. Petersburg | | X | | | |
| Lake Seminole Trail | 4.25 | County | | X | | | |
| Landmark Trail | 6.00 | Clearwater | | X | | | |
| Largo Brick Trail | 1.30 | Largo | | X | | | |
| Largo Central Park Trail System | 6.00 | Largo | | X | | | |
| Main Street Trail | 1.20 | Safety Harbor | | X | | X | |
| Meres Trail | 2.50 | Tarpon Springs | | X | | | |
| North Bayway Trail Extensions | 9.00 | County/St. Petersburg | X | | | | X |
| North Bay Trail | 6.25 | County/St. Petersburg | X | | | | |
| Oldsmar Trail | 11.20 | Oldsmar | | X | X | X | X |
| Oldsmar/ Safety Hbr Crossing Trail | 1.50 | County/Safety Harbor/Oldsmar | | X | | | |
| Pinellas Park Equestrian Trail | 2.60 | Pinellas Park | | X | | | |

PLANNED TRAILWAYS PROJECTS

| Project | Miles | Jurisdiction | Trail Classification | | | | |
|--|-------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
| | | | Pinellas Trail Extension | Community Trail | Regional Connector Trail | East-West Connector Trail | Beach Access Trail |
| Pinellas Trail Extension on East Lake Road | 1.90 | Pinellas County | X | | | | |
| Seminole SPC Trail Spur | 1.00 | County | | X | | | |
| Skyway Trail | 1.00 | St. Petersburg | | | X | | |
| South Bay Trail | 3.00 | St. Petersburg | | X | | | |
| South Beaches Trail | 7.00 | Treasure Isl./St. Pete Bch. | | X | | | X |
| Starkey Wilderness Trail | 1.94 | Pinellas County | | X | X | | |
| Taylor Trail | 1.75 | Largo | | X | | | |
| Treasure Island Cswy Tr. Connection | 0.40 | County | | X | | X | X |
| Trinity Boulevard Trail | 1.70 | Pinellas County | | X | X | | |
| Trinity Trail | 3.40 | Pinellas County | | X | X | | |
| Weedon Island Trail | 1.00 | County | | X | | | |
| Whitcomb Trail | 2.80 | Tarpon Springs | | X | | | |

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