

Pinellas CTST – January 4, 2024

Meeting started at 10:01 am

I. General Meeting

Welcome and introductions were given. The December meeting minutes were approved.

II. Committee Reports

Enforcement

Wes Caseber (Largo PD): The Enhanced Law Enforcement Engagement (ELEE) grant is coming to an end. Largo PD did some DUI enforcement holiday details. They also did some roadway audits with FDOT.

Cheryl Stacks (City of St. Pete): St. Pete PD did some enforcement education related to scooter users in downtown St. Pete. Enforcement did a few stops recently and issued citations for sidewalk riding, double riding on the scooters, etc. There was a crash recently in St. Pete where a scooter user hit a pedestrian and the pedestrian suffered a fatal injury. Eric Henry, of FDOT D7, stated that FDOT recently developed a new tip card through the bicycle and pedestrian coalition related to micromobility devices. It is not finalized, so there is room for comments. There will be more scooter enforcement downtown.

Jim Hartwell (Element Engineering Group): Jim was with Clearwater PD on December 20th in support of their enforcement efforts on SR 60. The sheriff's office also did some enforcement on the Bayside Bridge. Clearwater PD issued 67 citations, 62 warnings, 125 traffic stops, four arrests, one felony traffic arrest, one warrant, a couple suspended drivers licenses, and two DUI's. It was a multi-agency effort on both sides of the bridge as well as FHP and they had a total of 399 traffic stops, 187 citations, and 212 warnings.

Brentin Mosher (CUTR): ELEE enforcement is coming to an end. Details should be finished by Saturday night and then they will have two weeks to submit their details. Brentin will have final stats from the program by the next meeting and then March 21st will be the enforcement award ceremony where equipment will be distributed that was earned throughout the ELEE program.

Engineering and Bike/Pedestrian

Brentin Mosher (CUTR): FDOT and CUTR and gearing up for another round of drivers ed high school education. There are a couple more FDOT sponsored drivers' education tuition reimbursement for the teachers. The goal is to make sure that every high school in Pinellas County has an active driver's education teacher by the end of the year. They are also finishing up the 49th Street geofencing campaign and results will be presented at the next meeting.

Cheryl Stacks (City of St. Pete): The City of St. Pete heard back from the USDOT on the Safe Streets and Roads for All grant program. They didn't get all the funding that they requested to do capital improvements on 18th Avenue South and 22nd Street, but they did get awarded some planning dollars. The City of St. Pete will be updating their complete streets implementation plan and it'll specifically include a vision zero safe streets approach element to the complete streets' implementation plan.

John Rieman (Pinellas County): Pinellas County received 2.5 million dollars for the Pinellas impaired pedestrian bicycle evaluation and demonstration.

Eric Henry (FDOT D7): FDOT decided to limit CDMS to internal FDOT only. From now on, FDOT is encouraging users to use Signal Four or request a Signal Four account if they do not have one. Signal Four will be the official source of FDOT crash data going forward. Discussion followed.

Education and EMS

Eric Henry (FDOT): FDOT will be participating in some events at HCC.

Robyn Morton (MADD): MADD is going to participate in a 5k event in St. Pete with Community Health as a vendor for a tabling event on February 3rd. There are a lot of presentations coming up, drivers' education, and tabling events.

III. Old Business

Problem Locations

1. **Passing School Busses:** No update.
2. **Light at Tarpon Mall:** No update.
3. **Signal @ Starkey Road north at Willow Road:** No update.

HSIP and SRTS Projects

Mahshid Arasteh (American Quality Consultants): The HSIP portal is up and running and cities and counties have been submitting applications recently. The City of St. Pete has been applying for zipper style bike lane delineators and it's under review. Cheryl Stacks has a short presentation on that.

Cheryl Stacks (City of St. Pete): Cheryl Stacks gave a presentation on the HSIP candidate application overview. The project is located along 1st Avenue North, from 20th Street to 28th Street in St. Pete along an existing bicycle lane. The project addresses safety for vulnerable road users and it enhances a recently modified bicycle lane where a narrow buffer was provided following resurfacing. Changes in roadway cross-section now place additional traffic adjacent to bike lane and has removed parking on the north side of the avenue. The City of St. Pete is looking to do a zipper which is now on the FDOT approved products list. They are modular, prefabricated devices that you can install and narrow buffers to provide a vertical element to protect the bicyclists and the bike lanes a little bit more. It establishes a new curb line for motorists. Cheryl discussed their project funding strategy for this.

High Crash Intersections and Fatal Map

Melissa Shepherd (JMT): Forward Pinellas sent a map over recently. It isn't up to date, but it is the most recent map from Forward Pinellas. This map is as of December 8th. In 2023, there were eight percent bicycle fatal crashes, 15 percent motorcycle fatal crashes, 44 percent pedestrian fatal crashes, and 33 percent vehicular fatal crashes. In 2022 there were 11 percent bicycle fatal crashes, 25 percent motorcycle fatal crashes, 32 percent pedestrian fatal crashes, and 42 percent vehicular fatal crashes. Motorcycle fatal crashes went down in 2023 compared to 2022, but pedestrian fatal crashes went up. Discussion followed.

Eric Henry (FDOT D7): In terms of overall fatalities, first of the year to last of the year 2022 vs. 2023, Pinellas was down over 18 percent. Districtwide, there has been over an eight percent reduction in fatalities.

IV. New Business

Melissa Shepherd (JMT): It is concept paper season for the 402 sub grants for FDOT. It takes a while for it to be reviewed and approved and the cycle of funding comes out later in August or September. This funding is for local agencies, law enforcement agencies, certain qualified nonprofit organizations, etc. The FDOT website talks about different concept papers and sample concept papers that have been successful.

Eric Henry (FDOT): The last day of February is the final day to submit concept papers.

Melissa Shepherd (JMT): Melissa discussed the Safe Streets for All Road Users grant program. The next timeframe to submit your application is expected to open in February. It is a discretionary program established through the bipartisan infrastructure bill. It is five billion dollars appropriated over five years. These funds are regional, local, and for tribal initiatives to improve safety and help prevent roadway deaths and serious injuries. These funds help tackle preventable deaths on the nation's roads through safer people, roads, vehicles and appropriate speeds and improved post care crash. So, who is eligible for these funds? Cities, counties, towns, transit agencies, other special districts, MPO's, federally recognized tribal organizations, etc. State level agencies are not eligible. You can submit grants for the planning and demonstration or the implementation grant. E-blasts will be sent out for assistance. Cheryl Stacks, of City of St. Pete, for the smaller local jurisdictions, Forward Pinellas has been assisting. They received some safe streets money to do some safety corridor safety studies. But, for the smaller local jurisdictions who may not have the staff capacity to apply for it on their own, Cheryl recommends reaching out to Forward Pinellas because they could be helpful in helping to craft an application.

Jim Hartwell (Element Engineering Group): The roundabout at Alt 19 and Florida Avenue in Palm Harbor, the RRFB on the northeast corner has been knocked down a few times. It has been down for a few weeks. George Edmiston from Benesch got some 3M tape or bright sticks that were going to be place don the poles, but Jim has not seen them left. Jim will try and find out the most recent crash and the reason why. That sign continues to get hit, and he doesn't know what the solution will be. This puts the pedestrians trying to cross at risk. Construction is completed. The last thing that was done was lighting and it is well it. People may be trailering boats around there and haven't really learned how to navigate the roundabout yet. Discussion followed. Eric Henry, of FDOT D7, said the plan is to bag the other RRFB at the roundabout on Alt 19 and Florida Avenue while they are looking at what the cause is and whether relocation is a good idea. Eric will follow up with Pinellas Ops to see if they have any update on that and at the next meeting it could be brought back up on a status on this.

The next meeting is February 1st, 2024, at 10:00 am and will be virtual.

Meeting adjourned at 10:40 am




MEETING MINUTES – JANUARY 2024

Attendees: Mahshid Arasteh (American Quality Consultants), Wes Caseber (Largo PD), Jim Hartwell (Element Engineering Group), Eric Henry (FDOT), Brandy Howard (Suncoast Safety Council), Rich Interante (PCSO), Jason Levey (SPPD), Brentin Mosher (CUTR), Robyn Morton (MADD), Lori Palaio (JMT), John Rieman (Pinellas County), Melissa Shepherd (JMT), Cheryl Stacks (City of St. Pete)

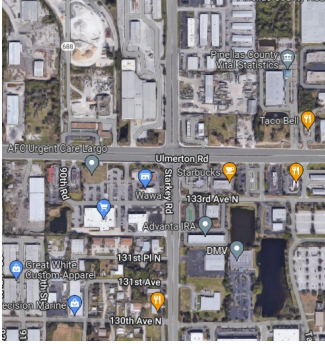
PROBLEM LOCATIONS – JANUARY 2024

Item	Date Reported	Description	Staff	Last Update	Date Resolved/ Withdrawn	Comments
1	11/4/21	Passing School Buses	Deputy Miller, Joseph Camera	7/6/23		<p>He and other deputies have been targeting people passing stopped school buses. The buses are not activating the red lights which activates the stop bars, only the yellow lights are on. People are passing with the yellow lights on. The deputies can't stop people unless the red lights are on, and the stop bars are out. He asked that the bus drivers be re-educated about this to help the situation. Discussion followed. Joseph Camera will be speaking to his bus drivers about this. Joe said that he sent information to the supervisors with instructions for all the drivers. Joe still averages about 12 per week. This will stay on the list and will address it next month when school kicks back up. This is a districtwide problem. Everyone forgets and more education and enforcement is needed. This was discussed in item three and will stay on the problem location sheet throughout the school year and will be taken down once the school year passes. It has been a historic problem. They must identify their high problem areas, such as Gandy, 4th Street, 114th Avenue, etc. Brian Pessaro, City of St. Pete, suggested a billboard campaign. The new school busses have lights that are a lot brighter, than previous busses. No update. Deputy Loring and other agencies are working on passing school bus enforcement. Joe Camera reached out to Sgt. Caseber, of Largo PD for assistance. Joe stated when parents have their kids getting on the bus in the morning near Belcher Road and Lancaster Drive, the students jump in the middle of the median. The citizens want a law enforcement presence back out at this location. School starts August 10th. Passing school buses will always be an issue.</p> <p>No update.</p>

PROBLEM LOCATIONS – JANUARY 2024

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2	12/2/21	<p>Light at Tarpon Mall</p>  <p>https://goo.gl/maps/RNwqUTnPLqxd4rwp6</p>	Steven Gassen (Tarpon Springs PD)	7/6/23		<p>Officer Hollingsworth brought up to the group the light at the Tarpon Mall. There have been many bad crashes and fatalities at this location. There are no designated turn arrows. Ofc. Boone stated they've had multiple incidents at this location due to the no left turn arrows. From his understanding, FDOT has a contractor coming in to work from Huey Avenue to US 19. He heard this was supposed to happen in the spring. They have been out doing traffic counts and studies. They are still waiting on FDOT to start that program. They need the left turn arrow bad. They have had multiple fatalities and several crashes. With no arrow, it is a big problem. They heard it would start in March, but it keeps getting put off. It is on Tarpon Avenue, west of US 19. There's a traffic light in between Walmart and the Publix entrance. Mike stated to put a traffic warrant request in. They are waiting for approval. Mike will follow up. Mark believes Officer Boone retired. He will ask Officer Gaskin who will replace him. Mike said this is already under construction and the contractor is currently working on it. It is for the City of Tarpon Springs. They are getting new extended turn lanes and turn signals. They are getting a lot of different things at that intersection. This area is under construction. The traffic lights will change. Mark spoke with Officer Gaskin with Tarpon Springs. It is still under construction. This will stay on the problem locations sheet until the construction is completed. Officer Steve Gassen said the whole project is complete and there has been a significant reduction in crashes since the lights have been put up. They are still looking for a no U-turn sign to be added at the western end of the new median, along with a fence to reduce pedestrian traffic. This will stay on the problem locations sheet until the improvements are made.</p> <p>No update – still under construction.</p>

PROBLEM LOCATIONS – JANUARY 2024

Item	Date Reported	Description	Staff	Last Update	Date Resolved/ Withdrawn	Comments
3	7/8/22	<p>Signal @ Starkey Road north at Willow Avenue</p>  <p>https://goo.gl/maps/mP4aTReBBao4HLwn6</p>	Joe Camera, PCSB	9/7/23		<p>At the intersection of Ulmerton Road and Starkey Road, a lot of people congregate. There are two left turn lanes, a right turn lane, and a forward lane. The townhomes are further north on Starkey Road on the east side. A lot of Southern Oaks Elementary School students are in the townhomes. People are not paying attention and the kids want to go to Wawa or Walmart and cut across Starkey Road. He is worried that in the morning and afternoon, the kids are not being protected and aimlessly going across the roads. Drivers are speeding and not paying attention. Kids cannot evaluate the speed of a vehicle to cross the road. This will be added to the problem location sheet. Joan brought up that she needed to know the specifics of the location in question and Joe stated he get the number of students and where the exactly cross street is at. Putting lights further north may possibly fix issue. A lot of people are congregating there. The school nearby is Southern Oaks Elementary School. Kids come out from the apartment complexes. They will continue checking up on it throughout the school year. They will be putting a traffic light up at Willow. They will be putting a traffic light up at Willow Avenue and is currently going through design. This will stay on problem location sheet until traffic light is put up. There will be a signal at Willow. It is currently in the design phase. Joan Rice asked if Melissa could get rid of the RRFB comment on the problem locations sheet. It will not be an RRFB, it will be a full signal at Willow Avenue. The signal is in the design phase right now. There is a study for the traffic signal. This is for a signal at Starkey Road, north of Willow Avenue. Waiting on the new signal to be installed. Joan Rice, of Pinellas County, mentioned this is almost finished. The sidewalk is almost complete and then the signal will be installed after.</p> <p>No update. This is under construction north of Willow Avenue.</p>