

Pinellas CTST – February 6, 2025

Meeting started at 10:07am

I. General Meeting

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

II. Committee Reports

Enforcement

Christopher Keeler (Largo PD): There have been seven fatalities in Largo, and one was a pedestrian fatality. Last year there were 17 fatalities, four were pedestrian fatalities. Many of the fatal crashes recently have been related to the homeless population. Largo PD will be participating in the Pinellas Trail details in February with multiple agencies. Largo PD is also participating in the Enhanced Law Enforcement Engagement (ELEE) details as well as their High Visibility Enforcement (HVE) grant. Discussion followed on axon evidence and flock safety integration which provides advanced security for law enforcement agencies.

Wellington Bond (St. Pete PD): January 19th was a Move Over operation on Gandy Boulevard. Wellington Bond provided the statistics of the operation, including one felony DUI. February 1st was the street racing operation on Gandy Boulevard. On February 19th there will be another operation on Gandy Boulevard and Roosevelt Boulevard.

Mark Eastty (PCSO): Pinellas County Sheriff's Office is conducting ELEE details. Last month was Drug Recognition Expert (DRE) school. Mark Eastty shared a news article on "Is legalizing recreational marijuana making roads more dangerous?" He was in the news with reporter Angie Moreschi and DRE Coordinator Tim Cornelius. Field sobriety tests for alcohol impairment often show suspects having difficulty walking a straight line. When it comes to marijuana impairment, detection can be more subtle, but law enforcement says, not to be ignored. An analysis by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety of 26 studies found on average a 5.8% increase in injury crashes and a 4.1% increase in fatal crashes in states, after the legalization of recreational marijuana and subsequent onset of retail sales. For the article, Lt. Eastty took Spotlight correspondent Angie Moreschi on a ride along to show what DREs look for as signs of marijuana impairment. Discussion followed on Amendment 3 not having verbiage on traffic safety.

Jim Reiser (LEL): Jim Reiser discussed law enforcement training for officers on how to treat cases of open-use marijuana. He stated that there is going to be a refile for the midterm election in 2026 with provisions of no recreational use and can only be used in the private residence.

Engineering and Bike/Pedestrian

John Rieman (Pinellas County): Pinellas County is handing out bike lights and other safety materials to vulnerable roadway users. John discussed the trikeathon in Seminole that is geared towards preschoolers and kindergarteners in which they did helmet fittings. There is also a photo contest currently happening on the Pinellas Trail and there is a QR code to send the photos. Pinellas County is handing out helmets at

Lealman's Farmers Market. Recently there were three fatal crashes on Ulmerton Road, west of US 19, include males, homeless population, and pedestrians and bicyclists.

David Hegarty (City of St. Petersburg): The city received funding for MLK Avenue and 8th Street. The funding with USDOT has been put on pause. They started updating their sidewalk master plan and complete streets guide. He discussed 2026 funds for reduced speeds in neighborhoods.

Brentin Mosher (CUTR): As part of the ELEE program, they are conducting education at high schools. On March 1st, there will be a Bike Your City event in Pinellas Park. Walk like MADD will be at USF on March 28th. For the next ELEE program, they are hoping to incorporate more bicycle and pedestrian outreach for points for law enforcement equipment.

John Rieman (Pinellas County): HVE Day with FDOT is February 22nd. John Reiman also discussed the push for signal cabinet wrapping.

Education

None.

III. Old Business

Problem Locations

1. **Passing School Busses:** Mark Eastty will follow up on information on speed cameras in school zones.
2. **Signal @ Starkey Road north at Willow Road:** No update.
3. **5th Avenue North (Alt. 19) and 8th Street North:** David Hegarty, from City of St. Petersburg, stated that the signal timing is complete. Warning signs will be installed within the next month or so.

HSIP and SRTS Projects

Mahshid Arasteh (American Quality Consultants): Mahshid is working with Bill Riha on reviewing applications. They are in the process of getting more codes. If anyone needs help on applications, reach out to Mahshid. In the application, make sure to put in an address of where the equipment will be sent as well as a prioritized list of locations.

Jim Reiser (LEL): Jim Reiser discussed the federal funding freeze. The state is working off fiscal funds from the last grant cycle. He encouraged the CTST group to still fill out applications for funding, regardless of the funding freeze.

High Crash Intersections and Fatal Map

Mark Eastty (PCSO): From January 1st to January 28th, 2025, there have been eight fatal crashes with eight fatalities. Same time last year there were seven fatal crashes and eight fatalities.

IV. New Business

Jim Reiser (LEL): Jim Reiser discussed the Law Enforcement Traffic Safety Challenge. Jim Reiser can help with the statistics, training metrics, etc. The statistics show that law enforcement agencies under report initiative.

Kathy Gademer (City of Dunedin): The City of Dunedin is installing roundabouts on Skinner Boulevard with FDOT. The road will change in 30 days.

Deneta Jones (Pinellas County): Deneta Jones gave a brief description of the TMC's new technologies before the optional guided tour. She discussed AI technologies for crash and weather predictions as well as intersection analytics.

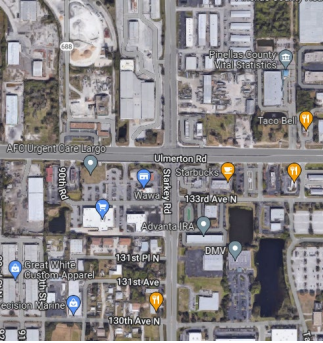
Upcoming Meeting: March 6, 2025, 10:00am – Virtual Meeting

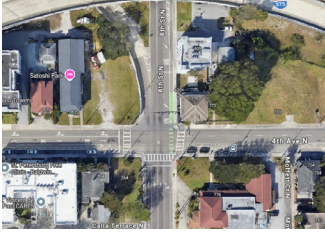
Meeting adjourned at 11:02am

Attendees: Mahshid Arasteh (American Quality Consultants), Susan Boda (Benesch), Wellington Bond (St. Pete PD), Darby Bryant (Pinellas County), Mark Eastty (PCSO), Kathy Gademer (City of Dunedin), Jim Hartwell (Element Engineering Group), David Hegarty (City of St. Petersburg), Deneta Jones (Pinellas County), Christopher Keeler (Largo PD), David Kwoph (PC Transportation), Blaine Loring (PCSO), Brentin Mosher (CUTR), Lori Palaio (JMT), Jim Reiser (LEL), John Rieman (Pinellas County), Andrea Sauvageot (Benesch), Autumn Westermann (Pinellas County Schools)

PROBLEM LOCATIONS - FEBRUARY 2025

Item	Date Reported	Description	Staff	Last Update	Date Resolved/ Withdrawn	Comments
1	11/4/21	Passing School Buses	Deputy Miller, Joe Camera	10/3/24		<p>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. Everyone forgets and more education and enforcement is needed. They must identify their high problem areas, such as Gandy, 4th Street, 114th Avenue, etc. The City of St. Pete suggested a billboard campaign. The new school buses have lights that are a lot brighter, than previous buses. Deputy Loring and other agencies are working on passing school bus enforcement. Joe 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 Rd and Lancaster Dr, the students jump in the middle of the median. Mark Easty will make sure there is directed patrol in the areas Joe mentioned. Tampa Road was discussed. Deputy Loring will be taking care of the issues at US 19 and Highland Acres. This area backs up traffic for six to eight miles. Joe spoke to the driver, and she is going to try to open the yellow a little bit further back to give them more warning. Deputy Loring created a directive patrol for that as well and he is trying to include some of the patrol deputies and make them aware of it and enforce it when Deputy Loring is unavailable. School buses will take a break soon once school ends. Vehicles are not paying attention to bus stop arms. Daniel Negersmith stated that on Belcher Road by Oak Grove Drive, vehicles are constantly running past the bus stop arms. It is a 40mph zone. There is a transfer where buses pick up other students from other schools at that school, so many buses are coming and going. Daniel Negersmith if there is any way they can make that a school zone to slow down people during those times. John Rieman will investigate this location. Discussion followed. Autumn will reach out to her drivers to ensure they are doing what they need to do.</p> <p>Mark will follow up on information on speed cameras in school zones.</p>

Item	Date Reported	Description	Staff	Last Update	Date Resolved/ Withdrawn	Comments
2	7/8/22	Signal @ Starkey Road north at Willow Avenue  https://goo.gl/maps/mP4aTReBBao4HLwn6	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. The State is working with the County to offset the cost of lights and fixtures. This project is still in design. Joan Rice will find out more information. A traffic light will be put in at Starkey Road and Willow Road. It is currently in design now.</p> <p>No update.</p>

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3	11/7/2024	5th Avenue North (Alt. 19) and 8th Street North  https://maps.app.goo.gl/jsXXckzZ4Xu2DTEj9	David Hegarty (COSP)	2/6/25		<p>He stated that the City has one specific intersection with a high volume of red-light running crashes/collisions - 5th Avenue North (Alt. 19) and 8th Street North (two one-way streets). They had had 26 confirmed red-light running crashes in the westbound direction over the past five years. The City is looking at this to see if there is something that can be done to improve the intersection and bring the number of crashes down. This could be a line-of-sight issue. David Hegarty, from City of St. Petersburg, stated that they took some action to try and correct the high volume of red-light running collisions they were seeing. They have increased the length of the all red time as the signals change in both directions, but predominately on 5th Avenue North where they are seeing most of the collisions. They also coordinated with FDOT to make some signage improvements on 5th Avenue North approaching the light to warn drivers that the signal is there. The signage improvements should be completed in February in conjunction with another project that has been going on in that area. So once that is done, they will monitor the location over the next year to see if there are a reduction in crashes. David Hegarty, from City of St. Petersburg, stated that the signal timing to increase the all-red time to try and reduce those red-light running collisions is complete. FDOT will be implementing some signage improvements in February. This will be monitored. David Hegarty, from City of St. Petersburg, stated that the signal timing is complete. Warning signs will be installed within the next month or so.</p>