

Pinellas CTST – January 8, 2026

Meeting started at 10:02am

I. General Meeting

Welcome and introductions. The December meeting minutes were approved.

II. Committee Reports

Enforcement

Daniel Negersmith (Clearwater PD): Daniel reported that enforcement efforts began last month with the FDOT speed grant, starting with two details in mid to late December. The team continues working on HVE and ELEE details and recently conducted an aggressive driving detail on U.S. 19 before the holidays, noting extremely high speeds. They also joined the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office DUI Wolfpack and launched an e-bike detail downtown in collaboration with multiple agencies, including Christian Zarra from JMT. Additionally, Daniel mentioned teaching an advanced traffic homicide school in Tarpon Springs this month.

Jill Cox (St. Pete PD): Jill shared that in 2025, there were 24 fatal crashes, and her team participated in a countywide e-bike operation on January 3rd, which was shortened due to weather. They will soon begin an FDOT grant initiative called Safe Streets Ahead while continuing traffic and e-bike operations.

Mark Eastty (PCSO): Mark shared that Pinellas County attended the Florida Impaired Driving Coalition meeting on December 17th in Orlando, where updates on the Intoxilyzer 9000 were provided. Law enforcement agencies will soon receive their units, and Mark offered to share delivery dates via email. He reported hosting the DUI Wolfpack operation on December 20–21, resulting in 36 criminal charges (16 DUIs) and 233 citations, dedicated to a DUI manslaughter victim in Dunedin. Additional efforts included ELEE enforcement, speed and DUI grants, and a saturation patrol on New Year's Eve. Mark also noted ongoing directed patrols along East Lake Road and Trinity Boulevard for red-light violations, which have yielded 13 warnings and four citations so far. Upcoming plans include continued HVE, speed, and DUI enforcement, plus new FARO scanner training for forensics and THI teams.

Brentin Mosher (USF CUTR): Brentin added details on the January 3rd multi-agency e-bike operation addressing rising crash and fatality concerns, involving Clearwater, St. Pete, Largo, Indian Shores, Treasure Island, and FHP. The operation resulted in 56 citations (including eight e-bike and nine pedestrian/bike), three child helmet citations, and 10 criminal charges, highlighting a need for further education.

Jim Hartwell (LEL): Jim thanked agencies for participating in the Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over holiday wave and reminded everyone that reporting numbers are due by the end of the month. He noted that concept papers for new grants are due by the end of February, with a new matrix available on the website for checking jurisdiction eligibility—St. Pete, Clearwater, and the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office all qualify in all categories. Jim also announced a grant training session led by Chris Craig on January 28th at FDOT District 7, coinciding with the Ped Bike Coalition meeting, and encouraged attendance for those unfamiliar with the grant process.

Engineering and Bike/Pedestrian

Eric Henry (FDOT): Eric added that FDOT will be present at the Gasparilla Children's Day Parade on January 24th, offering helmet fittings and a bike rodeo, and highlighted that January is Move Over Month, emphasizing education and outreach.

Mark Eastty (PCSO): Mark mentioned a recent PSA about a deputy being rear-ended during a traffic stop to reinforce the Move Over message.

Jim Hartwell (LEL): Jim reiterated the expanded Move Over law, which now applies to any vehicle stopped on the roadside, including disabled vehicles, tire changes, and those with hazard lights, along with law enforcement, fire, EMS, and tow trucks. He noted this change should make compliance clearer for drivers.

Brentin Mosher (USF CUTR): Brentin added that the Walk Like MADD event is scheduled for March 27th in Tampa.

Stephanie Carrier (Pinellas County Schools): Stephanie reported chronic stop-arm violations at Starkey Road and 86th Avenue, as well as 54th Avenue, and confirmed that Gulf to Bay Boulevard remains under evaluation following November's review.

Sheila Rainey (John's Hopkins All Children's Hospital): Valerie, Forward Pinellas, asked about the next e-bike task force meeting, and Sheila Rainey confirmed it is scheduled for Wednesday, January 14th, from 2:00 to 3:00pm. Sheila explained the plan to hold quarterly group meetings, with the next session focused on education and consistent messaging, followed by one on legislation and enforcement. She will send out invites and include future dates. Sheila also mentioned attending the Gasparilla bike rodeo and continuing school visits, while working with helmet manufacturers and risk management to clarify guidance on appropriate helmets for e-bikes, given confusion around laws. Flyers and educational materials will be shared at the upcoming meeting, and agencies are encouraged to participate.

Education

None.

III. Old Business

Problem Locations

1. **Passing School Busses:** No update.
2. **Texas Avenue at Dunedin High School:** Blaine Loring reported that message boards previously placed on Texas Avenue helped deter parking issues for a while, but complaints have resurfaced since their removal. Cooperation from the school remains limited, making the problem difficult to fully resolve. Mark stated that we will keep this on the problem location sheet until we figure something out.
3. **Trinity Boulevard and East Lake Road:** Mark Eastty confirmed that directed patrols will continue, noting 13 warnings and several citations issued so far to help curb the issue.

HSIP and SRTS Projects

Mahshid Arasteh (American Quality Consultants): Mahshid noted that previous meetings included requests for roadway safety enhancements such as safety edges, yield-to-pedestrian signs, bright sticks, RRFBs, and LED stop signs. A meeting with FDOT and consultants is scheduled for tomorrow to review codes and move forward on these requests. Mahshid also mentioned a specific request from Pinellas County to improve the trail crossing at Keystone Road, with Joan expected to provide an update on next steps.

Joan Rice (Pinellas County): Joan provided an update on the Keystone Road crossing near the Hillsborough County line, where the Coast-to-Coast Trail intersects Keystone Road. Initially designed with minimal control, the crossing later added RRFBs and advanced warning signals, but a fatality still occurred. In response, FDOT and Pinellas County are collaborating to install a pedestrian signal as the first phase of improvements. Pinellas County will handle design through Stantec, FDOT will supply materials, and county staff will complete installation. Joan noted concerns about trail users approaching too quickly without activating the signal and drivers failing to anticipate crossings. A potential future solution may involve realigning the trail for better visibility, though that would require additional right-of-way. Mahshid emphasized this project as an example of strong coordination between FDOT and local government, with further discussions planned later in January to finalize signal options. Mahshid also offered support for HSIP requests and assistance with Safety Harbor's application process.

High Crash Intersections and Fatal Map

Mark Eastty (Pinellas County Sheriff's Office): Mark concluded the meeting by sharing positive news on crash statistics: Pinellas County achieved its long-standing goal of reducing fatalities to under 100 for the year. As of December 28th, there were 85 crashes resulting in 88 fatalities, marking significant progress compared to previous years. He noted that even with potential late reports, totals should remain below 90 fatalities.

IV. New Business

Mark Eastty (Pinellas County Sheriff's Office): Mark also highlighted the success of December's in-person meeting at the Pinellas County forensics facility, which included a popular tour showcasing the department's equipment and support role. The group photo from that event was featured in the District 7 magazine.

Upcoming Meeting: February 5th, 2026 – Virtual Meeting, 10:00am

Meeting adjourned at 10:28am

Attendees: Basit Ali (Kimley Horn), Mahshid Arasteh (American Quality Consultants), Colin Batholomew (City of Safety Harbor), Valerie Brookens (Forward Pinellas), Stephanie Carrier (Pinellas County Schools), Jill Cox (St. Pete PD), Mark Eastty (PCSO), Chelsea Favero (Forward Pinellas), Jim Hartwell (LEL), Eric Henry (FDOT), Blaine Loring (PCSO), Brentin Mosher (CUTR), Daniel Negersmith (Clearwater PD), Lori Palaio (JMT), Sheila Rainey (John's Hopkins All Children's Hospital), Joan Rice (Pinellas County), John Rieman (Pinellas County), Andrea Sauvageot (Benesch)


PROBLEM LOCATIONS – JANUARY 2026

Item	Date Reported	Description	Staff	Last Update	Date Resolved/ Withdrawn	Comments
1	11/4/21	Passing School Buses	Deputy Miller, Joe Camera	11/6/25		<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. Mark will follow up on information on speed cameras in school zones. Autumn Westermann from Pinellas County Schools has a</p>


PROBLEM LOCATIONS – JANUARY 2026

Item	Date Reported	Description	Staff	Last Update	Date Resolved/ Withdrawn	Comments
						<p>complaint at Oak Grove Middle School. Mark Eastty will get extra enforcement out there. Mark Eastty will look into Oak Grove Middle School. School starts on August 11th. Mark stated that all agencies will be increasing enforcement around school zones and buses during the back-to-school period. Mark addressed school bus safety concerns. He noted that Tarpon Springs Police Department has been actively monitoring a problematic bus stop area along US 19 and issuing citations for stop-arm violations. Per the discussion from earlier in the meeting, last month, ongoing issues continued from September regarding the bus stop at 2909 Gulf to Bay Boulevard, where drivers consistently fail to stop for buses. Despite seeking assistance from the school board, progress has been minimal, and the situation may escalate to media attention due to the uproar it has caused. Another concern is the Oak Grove area, a 40 mph school zone with multiple buses, where drivers are not stopping. Efforts are underway to designate it as a school zone to slow traffic, and enforcement has been active. No update.</p>

PROBLEM LOCATIONS – JANUARY 2026

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2	9/4/25	Texas Avenue at Dunedin High School  https://maps.app.goo.gl/yYBSsKJxj1dXWEKZ9	Blaine Loring, PCSO	11/6/25		<p>Blaine Loring (PCSO) raised concerns about traffic flow and pedestrian safety on Texas Avenue, specifically at the half-circle near Dunedin High School. During morning and afternoon hours, the road functions as a one-way, but chevron signs in the area appear to misdirect drivers, encouraging travel in the wrong direction. Additionally, it seems the school is encouraging students to cross at this location, despite the absence of a sidewalk, posing a safety risk. To mitigate these issues, Blaine Loring proposed installing an enforceable “No Parking or Standing” sign to prevent congestion and improve safety. A broader discussion followed on how best to address these concerns. Mark mentioned ongoing efforts to resolve issues near Texas Avenue, where coordination with schools and community policing officers is still underway. Blaine Loring reported progress on traffic issues near school drop-off zones. A message board previously placed on Texas Avenue helped reduce congestion, and two additional boards are now positioned on Pinehurst to encourage parents to use the north and south drop-off points instead of Texas Avenue. The team is exploring further options, such as enforcing no-stopping rules within 20–30 feet of driveways, to improve traffic flow. Blaine Loring is looking into this problem location. Blaine Loring reported that message boards previously placed on Texas Avenue helped deter parking issues for a while, but complaints have resurfaced since their removal. Cooperation from the school remains limited, making the problem difficult to fully resolve. Mark stated that we will keep this on the problem location sheet until we figure something out.</p>

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Item	Date Reported	Description	Staff	Last Update	Date Resolved/ Withdrawn	Comments
3	11/6/25	Trinity Boulevard and East Lake Road  https://maps.app.goo.gl/S7kzk oLDHbwPnFVG7	Daniel Negersmith, Clearwater PD	1/8/26		Daniel Negersmith raised a concern about the intersection at Trinity Boulevard and East Lake Road, where drivers frequently run red lights during morning rush hours, particularly westbound vehicles making left turns southbound. This behavior causes gridlock and poses a high crash risk. Colin Bartholomew from City of Clearwater confirmed the issue occurs around 7:15 AM. Mark Eastty agreed to escalate the matter to traffic enforcement and suggested positioning a patrol car in the median for effective monitoring. The intersection will be added to the problem area list for follow-up next month. Mark sent an email to Deputy Howard Miller. There have been two violations, with one warning for passing a red light. There will be more numbers at the next meeting. Mark Eastty confirmed that directed patrols will continue, noting 13 warnings and several citations issued so far to help curb the issue.