

Pinellas CTST – July 9, 2026

Meeting started at 10:03 AM

I. General Meeting

Welcome and introductions. The June meeting minutes were approved.

II. Committee Reports

Enforcement

Jill Cox (St. Petersburg PD): Jill reported that there were no notable activities to highlight from the previous month. For the current month, however, the agency has several enforcement and operational initiatives underway. These include ELEE operations, High Visibility Enforcement (HVE) operations, and Pinellas County Trail operations. Additionally, SPPD will be participating in Operation Southern Slowdown during the following week.

Daniel Negeresmith (Clearwater PD): Daniel reported that his team has been primarily assigned to beach patrol duties, which has limited their usual enforcement activity. Looking ahead, the agency plans to participate in Operation Southern Slowdown during the upcoming week, with enforcement details scheduled along U.S. 19. In addition to these efforts, the team continues to actively support and work under its ongoing speed enforcement grant program. Aside from these initiatives, there were no additional updates to report.

Mark Eastty (Pinellas County Sheriff's Office): Mark reported that his team has been heavily engaged in activities related to the July 4th holiday, which has kept them particularly busy in recent weeks. In addition to holiday-related responsibilities, the agency has been conducting e-bike enforcement details and plans to participate in Operation Southern Slowdown. Mark also shared that he is currently attending the Breath Test Operator and Agency Inspector Course for the Intoxilyzer 9000, a new breath-testing instrument that is anticipated to be implemented within the next year.

Blaine Loring (Pinellas County Sheriff's Office): Blaine reported on a July 4th weekend Dunedin Causeway enforcement detail. During the operation, officers made 110 traffic stops, resulting in 14 citations and 97 warnings issued to motorists. In addition, the detail generated 20 ordinance violations.

Jim Hartwell (LEL): Jim announced that the Operation Southern Slowdown media kickoff will take place on Monday, July 13th at 10:00 AM, with officers requested to arrive by 9:30 AM. Speakers will include Major Benton, Sheriff Brannen of Sumter County, Chief Starling of the Dade City Police Department, and Brian Hunter from FDOT. Hartwell also thanked everyone for submitting their Click It or Ticket enforcement numbers. In addition to Southern Slowdown, he noted that the Challenge Awards will be held at the end of the month.

Engineering and Bike/Pedestrian

Brentin Mosher (USF CUTR): Brentin reported that his team is beginning an educational campaign along Skinner Boulevard to help the public navigate the new roundabout. The team is also reviewing the Pinellas Trail crossing and monitoring improvements along Alt U.S. 19 near Palm Harbor, where new Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs) and pedestrian hybrid beacons are being installed.

Jim Hartwell (LEL): Jim noted that the Alt U.S. 19 project from approximately Tampa Road north toward the hospital area is likely complete or nearing completion, although some crossing beacons may not yet be fully operational, so field verification is recommended.

Education

Sheila Rainey (John's Hopkins All Children's Hospital): Sheila stated that FDOT, with assistance from EXP, filmed an e-bike safety education video. The video uses everyday people in plain clothes and is intentionally unbranded so that all agencies can use and distribute it without restrictions. Sheila expressed enthusiasm about the project and expects the video to be released within the next month, with the goal of having it available before the start of the school year.

III. Old Business

Problem Locations

1. **Passing School Busses:** Eric provided an update regarding ongoing school bus safety concerns at Gulf-to-Bay Boulevard and Thornton Road, where there have been issues with motorists failing to stop on the opposite side of the roadway for a stopped school bus. He reported that he was able to work with Traffic Operations to have S3-1 School Bus Ahead signs installed at the location through a TSR process. The signs have either been installed already or will be completed soon and are intended to help improve driver awareness and address the compliance issues that have been observed.
2. **Trinity Boulevard and East Lake Road:** Mark noted that deputies monitored the area at least five times during June and did not observe any violations during those enforcement efforts. He added that two days prior, deputies issued four warnings at the location. Daniel responded that the law enforcement presence is clearly noticeable when deputies are on site.
3. **38th Avenue and 66th Street:** No update.

HSIP and SRTS Projects

Mahshid Arasteh (American Quality Consultants): Mahshid stated that the group continues to meet monthly to review applications and evaluate projects. The next meeting is scheduled for July 30th. The team is currently awaiting an application from the City of Clearwater, which is in development. In addition, they are preparing a presentation on HSIP funding and conducting a review of before-and-after results from past projects. The presentation and related information are expected to be shared next month.

High Crash Intersections and Fatal Map

Mark Eastty (Pinellas County Sheriff's Office): Mark reported that as of June 29th, there had been 35 fatal crashes resulting in 35 fatalities. At the same point in the previous year, there were 46 fatal crashes and 50 fatalities, indicating lower totals this year. Mark noted that only about two additional fatalities had occurred between June 29th and today, suggesting that the numbers have not increased significantly since then. He expressed hope that the downward trend would continue.

IV. New Business

Jill Cox (St. Petersburg PD): Jill asked whether there had been any progress on improving the tracking of e-bikes in crash data.

Mark Eastty (Pinellas County Sheriff's Office): Mark responded to Jill, stating that the issue has been discussed and that the upcoming state crash report form, which is nearing completion, is expected to include the ability to specifically classify e-bikes.

Jill Cox (St. Petersburg PD): Jill mentioned that her agency has received numerous inquiries about e-bike crash tracking and expressed appreciation for the update.

Mark Eastty (Pinellas County Sheriff's Office): Mark added that the revised crash form will include several updates and new definitions, with e-bikes being more clearly defined and tracked in the system.

Mark Eastty (Pinellas County Sheriff's Office): Mark mentioned that Andrea had contacted him just before the meeting regarding a potential future presentation. He explained that the Hillsborough IDEA Committee recently reviewed crash data compiled by one of Benesh's summer interns. Andrea asked whether the intern could also pull and analyze crash data for Pinellas County and provide a presentation to the group. Mark indicated that the intern is expected to prepare a similar presentation based on Pinellas County data, potentially for next month's meeting, although the timeline will depend on how long it takes to gather the data and complete the presentation.

Sheila Rainey (John's Hopkins All Children's Hospital): Sheila announced that the next e-bike task force meeting will be held virtually on August 12th at 2:00 PM and is the second Wednesday of every month. The meeting will cover updates to crash reports, discussion of new e-bike safety initiatives, and other developments following the decision not to establish a state-level task force. Rainey noted that attendees will likely be shown the new e-bike safety video, which is also being adapted into shorter 20-second public service announcements for social media use. In addition, the group expects to have more information available regarding improved access to e-bike helmets. Sheila encouraged interested individuals to join the email distribution list and noted that the one-hour virtual format is intended to make participation convenient.

Upcoming Meeting: August 6th, 2026 – Virtual Meeting, 10:00 AM

Meeting adjourned at 10:20 AM



MEETING MINUTES – JULY 2026

Attendees: Mahshid Arasteh (American Quality Consultants), Matthew Belmonte (Gresham Smith), Jill Cox (St. Petersburg PD), Mark Eastty (PCSO), Richard Hartman (City of Clearwater), David Hegarty (City of St. Petersburg), Jim Hartwell (LEL), Eric Henry (FDOT), David Hegarty (City of St. Petersburg), Blaine Loring (Pinellas County Sheriff's Office), Brentin Mosher (USF CUTR), Daniel Negeresmith (Clearwater PD), Lori Palaio (JMT), Mercedes Nelson-Palmer (Treasure Island Fire Rescue), Sheila Rainey (John's Hopkins All Children's Hospital), Andrea Sauvageot (Benesch), Ethan Sbani (Parsons Transportation Group), Chris Wence (Comprehensive Engineering Services)

Pinellas CTST Meeting, July 2026

Problem Locations

Item 1: Passing School Buses

Date Reported: 11/4/21

Staff: Deput Miller, Joe Camera

Last Update: 7/9/26

Date Resolved/Withdrawn: N/A

Google Maps Link: N/A

Comments: 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 Eastty 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 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. School bus stop-arm violations continue to be a significant safety concern, with drivers frequently passing stopped school buses. Reports of these violations are shared with law enforcement units for follow-up and enforcement.

School zone camera programs were also discussed, including implementation challenges experienced in other counties. Manatee County's program has been suspended due to enforcement errors, specifically citations being issued outside of active school zone times. Hillsborough County is currently operating a similar program, with violations reviewed by law enforcement prior to citation issuance. Ongoing concerns with illegal passing of school bus stop arms were discussed. A list of problem locations is shared with law enforcement, and targeted enforcement and updated signage have already resulted in improvements at some locations. School bus safety enforcement remains an ongoing challenge across Pinellas County, with multiple high-risk locations continuing to experience illegal passing violations despite prior attention and enforcement efforts.

Recent input from school bus drivers has helped identify updated problem locations, and adjustments have been made where feasible, such as relocating a stop from Gulf-to-Bay Boulevard to a nearby side street. However, certain locations, particularly near Oak Grove Drive, continue to be persistent problem areas. Discussion also highlighted the need to evaluate signage condition and visibility, including faded FDOT signs that may require replacement, as well as coordination between agencies to confirm jurisdiction and next steps. Because relocation is not always feasible, agencies are exploring additional countermeasures, including potential engineering solutions such as installing a raised median along sections of Gulf-to-Bay Boulevard to reduce illegal passing movements. Enforcement efforts are ongoing, but with limited resources, a combination of enforcement, education, and infrastructure improvements is being considered to address these recurring safety concerns. There are a high number of school bus passing violations occurring throughout the county. Specific concerns were noted at the intersection of Oak Street and Gandy Boulevard.

Eric provided an update regarding ongoing school bus safety concerns at Gulf-to-Bay Boulevard and Thornton Road, where there have been issues with motorists failing to stop on the opposite side of the roadway for a stopped school bus. He reported that he was able to work with Traffic Operations to have S3-1 School Bus Ahead signs installed at the location through a TSR process. The signs have either been installed already or will be completed soon and are intended to help improve driver awareness and address the compliance issues that have been observed.

Item 2: Trinity Boulevard and East Lake Road

Date Reported: 11/6/25

Staff: Daniel Negersmith, Clearwater PD

Last Update: 7/9/26

Date Resolved/Withdrawn: N/A

Aerial map view of the Trinity Boulevard and East Lake Road intersection



Google Maps Link: [Access the map location](#)

Comments: 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 Easty 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 Easty confirmed that directed patrols will continue, noting 13 warnings and several citations issued so far to help curb the issue. Mark stated since issuing a directed patrol there, officers have written 11 citations and more than 25 warnings. He said they will keep this location on the list a little longer, noting that it was originally raised by Sgt. Daniel Negersmith from Clearwater PD. Mark plans to reach out in the coming weeks to see whether conditions have improved. In the meantime, patrol units will continue monitoring the area during morning hours when drivers tend to roll past the stop bar and block the intersection.

Ongoing congestion during peak periods was noted, with vehicles frequently blocking the intersection. Drivers are entering the intersection without sufficient space to clear it, contributing to operational and safety concerns. Drivers should remain behind the stop bar until adequate space is available and traffic conditions allow the intersection to be cleared. Enforcement efforts continued at the Trinity Boulevard and East Lake Road intersection during March, primarily during morning hours. Deputies issued three citations and 13 warnings for traffic violations. Follow-up feedback indicated that the enforcement presence is

improving driver awareness and making a noticeable difference at the intersection. The group noted that enforcement at this location remains important, as speeding and aggressive driving continue to be ongoing issues along the corridor. It was observed that when officers are actively present, traffic flow improves, however, conditions tend to worsen once enforcement is no longer visible, with congestion and unsafe behavior returning. Drivers were described as frequently traveling at high speeds, and the corridor is often perceived as having raceway-like conditions. As a result, participants agreed the location should remain a priority for continued monitoring and enforcement. Enforcement is monitoring the area in the morning. Mark will send an email to Deneta about possible IVA technology opportunities.

Mark noted that deputies monitored the area at least five times during June and did not observe any violations during those enforcement efforts. He added that two days prior, deputies issued four warnings at the location. Daniel responded that the law enforcement presence is clearly noticeable when deputies are on site.

Item 3: 38th Avenue and 66th Street

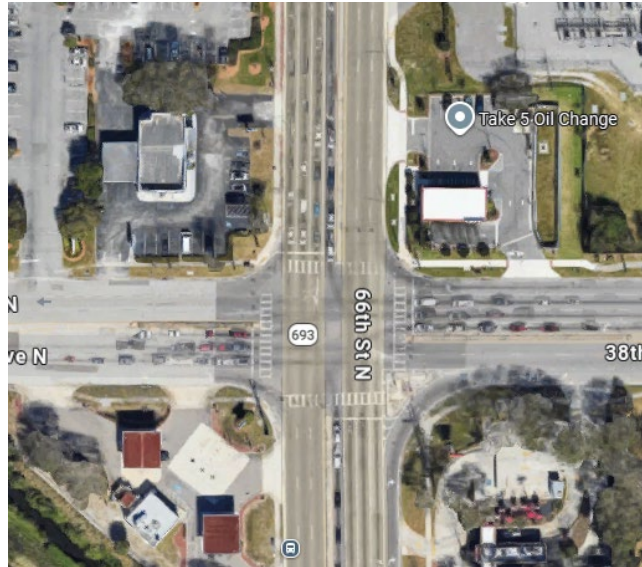
Date Reported: 3/16/26

Staff: Mercedes Nelson-Palmer, Treasure Island Fire Rescue

Last Update: 6/11/26

Date Resolved/Withdrawn: N/A

Aerial map view of the Trinity Boulevard and East Lake Road intersection



Google Maps Link: [Access map location](#)

Comments: Concerns were raised regarding a proposed new Publix development and a nearby charter school, with increased congestion anticipated in the area. Identified issues include school pick-up and drop-off traffic, the lack of a formal school zone designation for charter and private schools, and limited driver awareness of increased pedestrian activity associated with the school. Ongoing congestion concerns were discussed at the intersection near 38th Avenue following the addition of a Publix, particularly due to increased pedestrian activity from students walking in the area. The location spans both unincorporated Pinellas County and the City of St. Petersburg. St. Petersburg Police reported that congestion is present but typically limited to a brief period of approximately 10 minutes during student pickup, after which traffic clears. The area will continue to be monitored to determine whether continued enforcement or presence is needed. The group discussed that this location is near a hospital and upcoming development could lead to increased pedestrian activity, particularly with a new Publix expected to open nearby. While no recent safety issues or incidents have been identified by enforcement, the area was previously raised as a concern by Treasure Island Fire Rescue and may still warrant monitoring. It was noted that the issue may also be under review by the STEPS committee for school-related considerations. Given the potential for higher pedestrian volumes, participants agreed to keep the location on the list for continued observation and coordination. There are issues during drop-off times. Schools are not following the staggering pick-up/drop-off plan, which is leading to crashes.

No update.