

Keystone Road and East Lake Road Emergency Access Improvements

Project Narrative



KEY INFORMATION TABLE (IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS)

Title	Instructions
Lead Applicant Name	Pinellas County, Florida
Lead Applicant Unique Entity Identifier (UEI)	R37RMC63XKG1
Eligible Entity Type	Political subdivision of a State or territory
Project Title	Keystone Road and East Lake Road Emergency Access Improvements
Project Goal/Description	Pinellas County proposed to advance the Keystone Road and East Lake Road project, currently at 30% design, to implement targeted safety improvements with measurable benefits identified in the Safe Streets Pinellas Action Plan. Proposed activities include roadway reconfiguration through added left-turn lanes, extended left-turn lanes, enhanced pedestrian crossings, improved lighting, and updated signal timing to reduce crashes for all road users. This project will use USDOT-proven countermeasures to address documented safety and operational deficiencies on a high-injury network location and position the project for construction.
Primary Project Purpose (select one)	Infrastructure Strategies: Build physical transportation improvements; goal is to create safer facilities (e.g., constructing roundabouts, sidewalks, and traffic calming measures)
Total Applicant Jurisdiction Population	959,107 residents
Total Count Motor Vehicle-Involved Roadway Fatalities in the Applicant Jurisdiction that includes the last 5 years of data made available in the Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) during the NOFO period	609 fatalities
Total Average Annual Fatality Rate (per 100,000 population) for the Applicant Jurisdiction	12.7 fatalities per 100,000 population
Inclusion of Underserved Communities in Jurisdiction(s)	Yes

Inclusion of Underserved Communities in Project Area(s)	No
Project Area Fatalities	2 fatalities (Source: FDOT Signal Four)
Project Area Serious Injuries OR Project Area Injuries Severity Unknown	15 serious injuries (Source: FDOT Signal Four)
Applicant roadway safety responsibility (may select multiple)	• Ownership and/or maintenance responsibilities over a roadway network; and • Safety responsibilities that affect roadways.
Does your project include Supplemental Planning and/or Demonstration activities?	No
Would you consider accepting funding for only Supplemental Planning and/or Demonstration activities?	No; there are no supplemental planning or demonstration activities in this proposed project.
Total SS4A Federal Funds Requested	\$7,960,000
Total SS4A Non-Federal Share	\$1,990,000
Total SS4A Project Cost	\$9,950,000
Total Other Federal Funds Used (if applicable)	N/A
SS4A Funding Request for Supplemental Planning and/or Demonstration Activities (A)	N/A
SS4A Funding Request for Planning, Design, and Development Activities for Projects/Strategies (B)	N/A
SS4A Funding Request for Carrying Out Projects and Strategies (C)	\$7,960,000
Existing Comprehensive Safety Action Plan (or equivalent)	<u>THE ACTION PLAN – Safe Streets Pinellas</u>

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I. OVERVIEW

Located along Florida's Gulf Coast within the Tampa Bay Metropolitan Area, Pinellas County is home to 959,107 residents within just 280 square miles, making it the most densely populated county in Florida. Pinellas County also welcomes approximately 20 million visitors annually. These visitors rely on the County's transportation system to access world-class destinations and beaches, with tourism generating an estimated \$10 billion in economic impact in 2025. Northern Pinellas County communities served by Keystone Road and East Lake Road include average household sizes of 2.2 persons, and approximately 67% of households include married couples. This reflects a stable, family-oriented population that relies on daily travel to access schools, employment, parks, and community activities. As travel demand increases on major arterial roadways, targeted safety improvements are needed to reduce conflict points and minimize fatal and serious injury crash risk for all roadway users.

Transportation safety is a focal point for Pinellas County. Due to high density and traffic volumes, the County ranks among Florida jurisdictions with elevated totals of vehicle crashes and serious injuries, particularly on major arterial roadways serving mixed residential and commuter traffic. Keystone Road and East Lake Road function as critical intersecting arterials in northern Pinellas County for residents, commuters, and first responders to access key destinations in the community. These roads have also been identified through state safety analyses and the countywide High Injury Network (HIN) by having documented crash patterns and operational deficiencies affecting drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists. In response, Pinellas County and its regional partners have prioritized safety improvements consistent with the SS4A-funded Comprehensive Safety Action Plan (CSAP) titled the Safe Streets Pinellas Action Plan, adopted in 2021 and updated in 2023, which commits the County to reducing serious injuries and fatalities through data-driven, multimodal roadway improvements designed for all road users.

Request

Pinellas County is requesting \$7,960,000 in federal funding through the SS4A Grant Program for the Keystone Road and East Lake Road Emergency Access Improvements project to construct the following infrastructure safety improvements:

- Additional eastbound left-turn lane and extended left-turn storage length on Keystone Road at East Lake Road
- Additional westbound lane on Keystone Road from Buffalo Avenue to East Lake Road; and
- Extended storage length for southbound left-turn lanes on East Lake Road at Keystone Road
- Added eastbound left-turn lane on Keystone Road at Old Keystone Road
- Improved traffic signal timing, streetlighting, and crosswalks

These improvements have been identified to target a specific crash trend related to severe rear-end crashes. Over 60% of the fatal and injury crashes at the intersection involve rear-ends, which will be mitigated by these turn-lane and through-lane improvements. These improvements will also address post-crash care concerns by improving emergency vehicle access to the East Lake Fire and Rescue station, directly east of the intersection in the study area.

Implementing the Comprehensive Safety Action Plan (CSAP)

Since the adoption of the [CSAP](#), the community has been committed to addressing its current and future transportation safety issues. Through data analysis, public outreach, and stakeholder involvement, County staff identified several key systemic focus areas:

- **HIN Corridors**– About 40% of fatal and serious-injury (KSI) crashes occur on roughly 3% of the roadway network, designated as the HIN; 73% of these corridors run through communities of concern, which make up only 32% of the county’s land area, highlighting the need for targeted safety investments.
- **Speed, Roadway Design, and Crash Severity** – Most KSI crashes occur on roadways posted at 40 mph or higher. High-speed corridors and intersections contribute disproportionately to severe outcomes, particularly through turning, angle, roadway departure, and fixed-object crashes.
- **Vulnerable Roadway Users** – People walking, biking, or motorcycling account for roughly 36% of serious injuries and 67% of fatalities, despite representing a small share of total crashes, with risks amplified on higher-speed roads and during roadway departures.
- **Risk Driving and Nighttime Conditions** – Alcohol-impaired, aggressive, and risky driving is two or more times likely to be involved in fatal or serious-injury crashes, often occurring at night (6 p.m. to 6 a.m.), when reduced visibility, lighting conditions, and speeding increase crash severity.

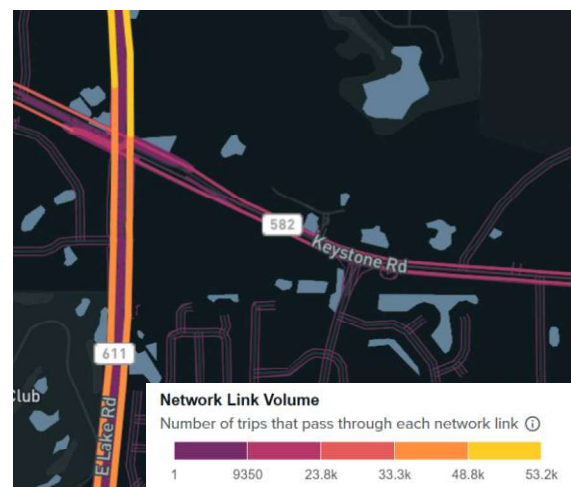
With these focus areas in mind, County staff have developed a list of projects that are included on the [CSAP’s](#) HIN. This list includes all recommended projects that relate to the roadway segments, corridors, and intersections with the highest crash risk. **Additional funding is required to start the implementation of countermeasures identified in the [CSAP](#).**

II. LOCATION

Pinellas County is located along the Florida Gulf Coast within the Tampa Bay Metropolitan Area and is home to approximately [959,107 residents within just 280 square miles](#), making it the [most densely populated county in the state](#). High density, combined with [high projected population and employment growth](#), places increased demand on the County’s transportation system, particularly along key arterial roadways that support daily travel for residents, commuters, and visitors.

The proposed project along **Keystone Road and East Lake Road** serves as a primary daily access route for residents accessing schools, childcare facilities, local businesses, employment centers, faith-based institutions, recreation, and emergency services. **The project will specifically address the high number of rear-end crashes that result in fatalities and injuries at the intersection.** Additionally, this project will provide better access for emergency responders from the East Lake Fire and Rescue station at the east end of

Figure 1: Corridor Network Link Volume (Source: Replica)



the project area. Post-Crash Care is a key focus of the Safe System Approach highlighted in the [CSAP](#), and this project will help lower response times and save lives across the county.

Figure 2 illustrates the project location, which is situated along Keystone Road and East Lake Road, both roadways that carry mixed residential, commercial, and commuter traffic. General characteristics of each roadway are provided below:

- **Keystone Road** – A principal arterial serving residential neighborhoods and adjacent commercial and institutional uses, including schools, parks, and local businesses. Long queue lengths and constrained turning movements contribute to safety concerns.
- **East Lake Road** – A major arterial supporting commuter travel and local access to employment centers, medical services, retail uses, and residential areas. The corridor experiences high traffic volumes and complex turning movements that increase crash risk.

The project area additionally includes two regionally significant shared-use trail crossings: the Pinellas Trail crosses Keystone Road, and the Florida Coast-to-Coast Trail crosses East Lake Road at the project intersection. These crossings concentrate pedestrian and bicyclist activity within the corridor and reinforce the importance of safe intersection operations.

Pinellas County maintains jurisdiction over these roadways and has coordinated closely with regional and state partners during project development. During the [CSAP](#) stakeholder meetings and development of project concepts, representatives from stakeholders and partners provided input and support.

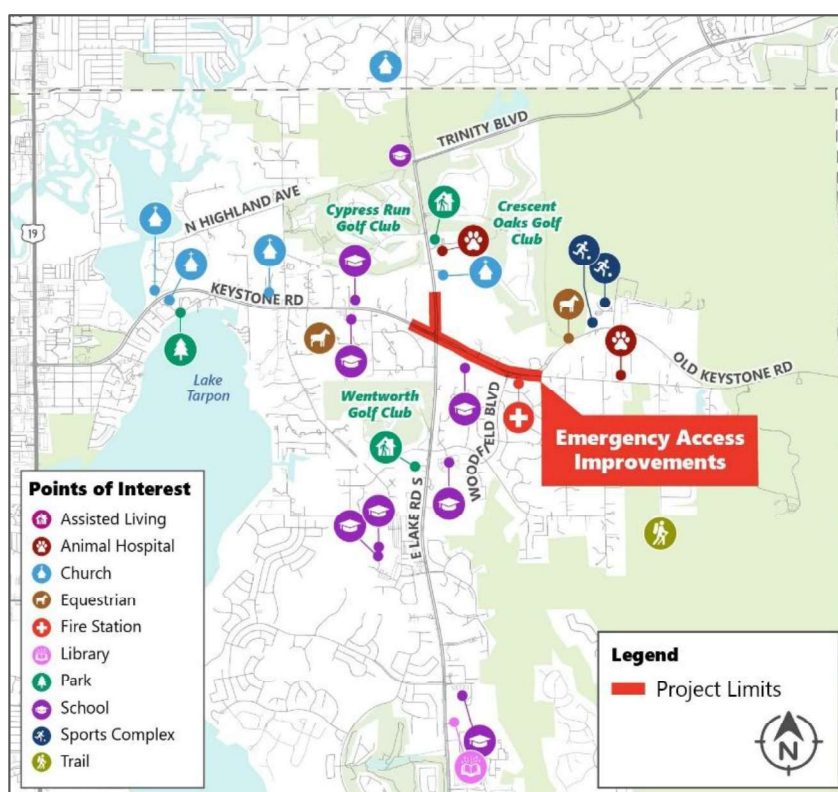


Figure 2. Project Location Map

By reducing queue spillback and minimizing conflict points at key intersections, this project will reduce severe crash exposure and improve operational safety for all roadway users.

III. RESPONSE TO MERIT CRITERIA

Pinellas County has made significant investments in the community through transportation infrastructure projects aimed at enhancing both vehicular and non-vehicular mobility and safety. While notable progress has been achieved in traffic flow and safety, continued efforts are needed to make streets safer for all. This will remain essential as the County continues to grow and new areas are developed, especially in unincorporated East Lake where the project is located.

Selection Criterion #1: Safety Need

High Merit Rating Component	Document Location Where Addressed
✓ <i>Crash Data and Analysis</i>	✓ <i>Pg. 4-6 and Table 2</i>
✓ <i>High Injury Network Map</i>	✓ <i>Pg. 5 – Figure 4</i>
✓ <i>Summary of Safety Risk</i>	✓ <i>Pg. 5 – Addressing Safety Risks on the HIN</i>

159 people lost their lives in unincorporated Pinellas County from 2019-2023.

Pinellas County is committed to improving roadway safety for everyone who lives, works, or visits the community in alignment with the SS4A program. Spanning just 280 square miles along Florida's Gulf Coast, the County supports nearly 960,000 residents, and even more residents from adjacent counties, who rely on its road network daily to access schools, jobs, housing, and local businesses. More than 100,000 of these user trips cross through this project area every day. Increasing travel demand among residents, commuters, and visitors underscores the need for continued data-driven investments that create safer conditions and reduce fatal and serious injury crash risk for all roadway users.

The project will specifically address the high number of rear-end crashes that result in fatalities and injuries in the study area.

Safety Problems - Countywide & Project Location

From 2019 to 2023, there were 24,745 total transportation crashes in unincorporated Pinellas County areas. Of which, 29% resulted in death or injury (serious and minor injury crashes). **There were 159 people who lost their lives in unincorporated Pinellas County in this five-year span alone.**¹ During this time, Pinellas County experienced an average annual fatal crash rate of 12.7 fatalities per 100,000 population, slightly below the 2023 national average of 13.4 crash fatalities per 100,000 population. However, preliminary data for 2025 shows that the crash fatality rate in Pinellas County has risen to 13.9 people per 100,00 population. The level of loss in the community remains significant and continued efforts are needed to achieve Pinellas County's goal of zero KSI crashes by 2045, adopted in the CSAP.

The CSAP's HIN encompasses roughly 40% of all KSI crashes from 2015 to 2019 but represents just 2.7% of the roadway network in Pinellas County. Specifically, **the East Lake Road**

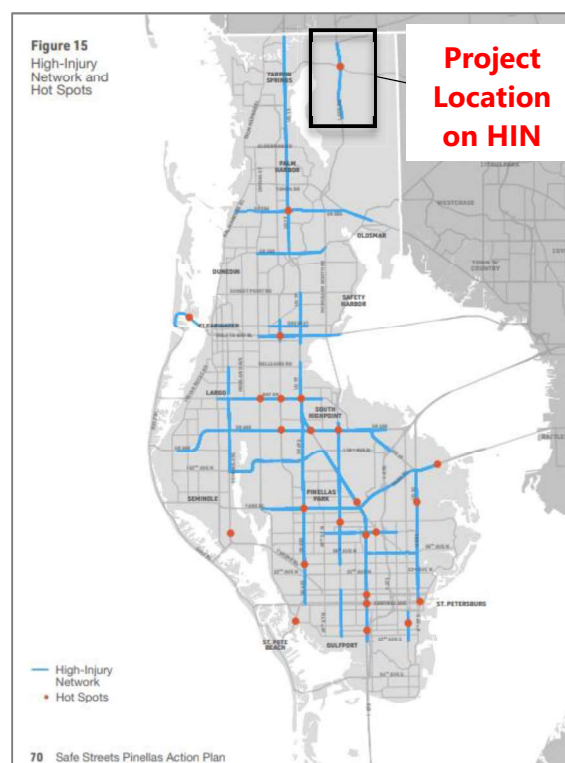


Figure 3. Safe Streets Pinellas Action Plan High Injury Network

¹ FDOT Signal Four

corridor and the intersection of East Lake Road and Keystone Road are locations identified on the HIN as areas with elevated fatal and serious injury crash rates, indicating heightened safety concerns and crash risks for those traveling on these roads and an urgent need for safety improvements.

Safe, reliable roadways are essential in Florida, especially during hurricane evacuations and for emergency responders traveling to emergencies during a crash. In [67% of fatal crashes](#) from 2019 to 2023, victims were still alive when first responders arrived at the scene. This emphasizes the need for roadway improvements that enable emergency responders to reach crashes quicker to provide life-saving care and efficient transport to hospitals.

From 2019 to 2023, 28 children and teenagers lost their lives in crashes in Pinellas County.

From 2019 to 2023, [28 children and teenagers](#) lost their lives in crashes in Pinellas County. There are **six schools located within 1/2 mile of the Lake Road HIN segment**, further emphasizing the need to prioritize proven safety countermeasures that will reduce the risk of KSI crashes among the community's children.

A 2022 [intersection analysis and alternatives development study](#) evaluated ways to improve emergency response and access out of nearby East Lake Fire Station and Tarpon Springs Fire Rescue along Keystone Road and reduce queuing at the intersection with East Lake Road. This project used the results of that study to identify improvements to emergency access through the intersection and reduce response times

Addressing Safety Risks on the High Injury Network

Crash trends on Pinellas County's HIN locations reflect systemic roadway design and operational challenges rather than isolated incidents. As reflected in the [CSAP](#), high traffic volumes combined with extended queues and constrained intersection geometry contribute to increased crash frequency and severity for all road users. Without intervention, continued population and employment growth will further strain these corridors, increasing crash risk for motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users alike.

From 2019 to 2023, there were 99 fatal or injury crashes within the project area, which involved:

- 1 pedestrian
- 6 bicyclists
- 5 motorcyclists
- 13 teen drivers
- 19 aging drivers

The [Keystone Road and East Lake Road Emergency Access Improvements Project](#) will address existing safety concerns and elevated crash risks primarily related to intersection queuing and lack of left-turn lanes and sufficient turn lane storage. Rear-end crashes account for approximately 30% of the fatal and injury crashes across the county. In this project study area, that number is 60%. Rear-end crashes are a key concern due to the left-turn queues that regularly

Table 1. Projected area crashes by severity rating

Crash by Severity Rating	Number of Crashes	Percent of Total Crashes
Minor	84	21.2%
Serious	13	3.3%
Fatal	2	0.5%

extend into the high-speed through lanes, and uncontrolled intersections without left-turn lanes. This queuing is particularly consequential when mixed with distracted or intoxicated drivers, which are the top two contributing behaviors to crashes at the study

location. These drivers may collide with the end of a queue without even braking. The queuing and congestion also complicate things for younger and older drivers and VRUs. Among the KSI crash victims from 2019-2023, 32% involved teen or aging drivers and 12% involved vulnerable road users (VRUs).

Additionally, the project area also provides critical access for emergency response. East Lake Fire & Rescue Station and Tarpon Springs Fire Rescue are located at the east end of the project limits. Existing congestion and constrained turning movements can delay emergency vehicles during peak travel periods, increasing response times when seconds matter. Improving intersection operations and turn-lane queue storage will support more reliable emergency access and enhance public safety outcomes beyond crash reduction alone.

Table 2. Project area crash types

Top Project Area Crash Types	Number of Fatal or Injury Crashes	Percent of Total Crash
Rear End	61	62%
Left Turn	9	9%
Other	8	8%
Angle	7	7%
Off Road	5	5%
Bicycle	4	4%
Right Turn	3	3%
Sideswipe	1	1%
Rollover	1	1%
Total Crashes	99	100%

Selection Criterion #2: Safety Impact

Project Benefits using Proven Safety Countermeasures

This project will implement proven safety countermeasures at a key HIN intersection and segment identified in the [CSAP](#). The proposed improvements on Keystone Road and East Lake Road were specifically selected to address the historical crash trends and high-risk roadway elements. The proposed improvements are anticipated to reduce vehicle queuing/flow interruptions and collision conflict points through added turn lanes, extended turn lanes, added lighting, improved traffic signal timing, and improved pedestrian and bicyclist crossings.

Project Location 2019-2023 Fatal and Injury Crash Trends

- **Top Crash types:**
 - Rear-end (61%),
 - Left-Turn (9%),
 - Angle (7%),
 - Off-road (5%)
- **Top Contributing Factors:**
 - Intoxication (14%),
 - Distraction (15%),
 - Speed/Aggressive Driving (5%)

High Merit Rating Component	Document Location
Primarily on HIN & Addresses High-Risk Road Features	Page 5 – Figure 4
Significantly Reduces Serious Crashes	Page 7
Low-Cost, High-Impact Strategies	Page 7
Evidence-Based Countermeasures	Page 7
Measurement of Safety	Page 7
Long-Term Safety Benefits	Page 8 – Safety Benefits that Persist Over Time
Technology Incorporation	Page 9 – Incorporating Modernized Safety Technology

The major proposed capital improvements include the following and are estimated to reduce crash risk in the project area by more than 50%:

- Additional eastbound left-turn lane and extended left-turn storage length on Keystone Road at East Lake Road
- Extended storage length for southbound left-turn lanes on East Lake Road at Keystone Road
- Additional westbound lane on Keystone Road from Buffalo Avenue to East Lake Road; and
- Added eastbound left-turn lane on Keystone Road at Old Keystone Road
- Improved traffic signal timing, streetlighting, and crosswalks

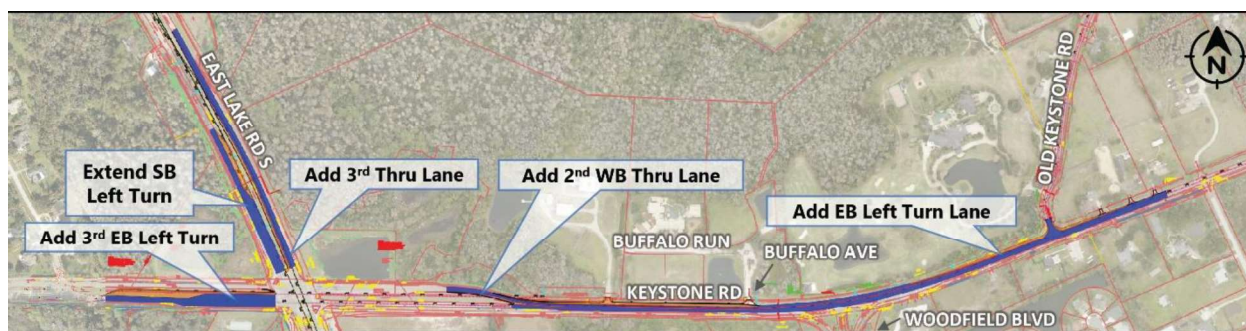


Figure 4. 30% Design Plans for Proposed Project

The project will also incorporate new or upgrade existing low-cost, high-impact systemic safety strategies to extend safety benefits across the geographical project area for all road users and reduce fatal and injury crashes. These Safe System Approach countermeasures will result in evidence-based safety benefits supported by NHTSA's [Countermeasures that Work](#), FHWA's [Proven Safety Countermeasures](#), and published [Crash Modification Factors](#).

Low-Cost, High-Impact Countermeasure	Target Crash Types	Estimated Crash Reduction
Auxiliary Left Turn Lanes	• Rear-end, left-turn	• 28-48% reduction in total crashes
Lighting Improvements	• All crash types	• 33-38% reduction in nighttime crashes
Signal Timing and Operations Improvements – Yellow Change Intervals	• All crash types	• 8% - 14% reduction in crashes at intersections
Crosswalk Visibility Enhancements at signalized and unsignalized locations	• VRU	• 40-42% reduction in VRU crashes
Signal Timing and Operations Improvements – Leading Pedestrian Interval	• VRU	• 13% reduction in VRU crashes at intersections

Proven safety countermeasures were selected for the project area based on their effectiveness in reducing crash risk associated with the most common KSI crash types, particularly rear-end crashes, at this location on the HIN. These treatments directly address the predominant crash patterns identified within the project area by incorporating evidence-based, cost-effective safety countermeasures that have consistently demonstrated reductions in fatal and injury crashes nationwide. Dedicated left-turn lanes reduce turning conflicts and rear-end crashes by separating through and turning movements, while enhanced pedestrian infrastructure and signal timing improvements increase visibility and reduce exposure to VRUs.

In addition to the proposed capital improvements, Pinellas County Operations is advancing near-term, low-cost safety enhancements at the project intersection to further protect vulnerable road users. Planned upgrades include converting the eastbound right-turn signal to a four-section flashing yellow arrow to allow for a protected red arrow when pedestrian crossings are activated, installing stop bars in right-turn lanes to improve yielding compliance, and adding advance trail warning signs with continuous flashing beacons 400-500 feet in advance of the intersection. These proactive operational improvements demonstrate the County's commitment to implementing layered, evidence-based safety strategies while longer-term capital improvements are advanced.

The project advances the Safe System Approach by reducing high-speed rear-end crash exposure, minimizing conflict points, improving roadway predictability, enhancing post-crash emergency access, and implementing proven countermeasures designed to reduce fatal and serious injury crashes.

Safety Benefits that Persist Over Time

These capital investments will produce long-lasting safety benefits that persist over time because they are designed to address long-term operational and geometric safety deficiencies identified through the [CSAP](#). Ensuring that future families in developing East Lake (unincorporated Palm Harbor), Pinellas County can travel safely through the corridor.

The safety benefits of the proposed capital infrastructure investments will persist over time by correcting geometric and operational deficiencies rather than relying on short-term or interim enforcement-based solutions. Pinellas County, including unincorporated Palm Harbor, is a rapidly growing area of central Florida. As more community members come to rely on Keystone Road and East Lake Road to access everyday destinations, existing safety challenges within the project location are expected to worsen over time. Especially related to congestion and operational predictability. These conditions increase all road users' risk of severe injury or death associated with high-speed collisions along arterial roadways on HIN locations.

Incorporating Modernized Safety Technology

This intersection improvement fits into a broader safety initiative to improve approximately 10 miles of East Lake Road throughout the unincorporated county area. Lessons learned from this project will be applied to other future projects along the corridor. To evaluate the long-term benefits of the proposed improvements, Pinellas County will prioritize future post-implementation evaluation studies to assess the project's effectiveness in improving safety and efficiency on Keystone Road and East Lake Road.

Evaluation criteria will track before and after conditions related to KSI crash rates, VRU crash rates, and emergency response times from East Lake Fire & Rescue Station and Tarpon Spring Fire Rescue. Technology enhancements such as near-miss cameras will continue to be utilized at the project intersection to further assess changes in crash risk at the project location. Doing so, will provide the community with data-driven insights to guide future safety projects across the county.

Selection Criterion #3: Implementation Costs

This project will total \$9,950,000, discussed in more detail in the Supplemental Budget document. This project cost is reasonable, necessary, and proportionate to the documented safety need. In the five years from 2019 – 2023, there were two fatal crashes and 13 serious injury crashes. Based on [USDOT crash cost guidance](#), this equates to **\$13,170,000 in annual crash cost** to society. These improvements are expected to perform over a twenty-year period, which equates to \$263,440,000 in undiscounted crash costs. Considering the improvements identified are expected to reduce fatal and serious injury crashes by more than 50%, this safety project will have a substantial safety benefit compared to the project costs.

Crashes 2019-2023			Value	Design & Implementation Costs
Fatal	Serious Injury	Minor Injury		
2	13	84	\$65,859,100	\$9,950,000

This high benefit compared to the cost comes as a direct result of the County targeting corridors and intersections with high concentrations of fatal and serious injury crashes. By focusing funding on locations identified through the [CSAP](#), the County ensures federal resources are directed where they can deliver the greatest safety benefit per dollar invested. Leveraging existing right-of-way and coordinating improvements with established transportation plans further enhances cost efficiency.

Selection Criterion #4: Engagement and Collaboration

Building on the extensive engagement done throughout the [CSAP](#) development, Pinellas County has actively engaged with the public and local stakeholders on safety-related projects since the adoption of the [CSAP](#). The proposed project will build off completed engagement and prioritize continued efforts to ensure the project meets the needs of all road users and underserved residents in the community.

The next project public meeting is scheduled for June 2026, to present proposed safety improvements, share preliminary concepts, and receive feedback on design details, construction phasing, and access needs.

Ensuring Investment in Underserved Communities

The proposed project is not located within an Area of Persistent Poverty (APP); however, the intersection serves over 100,000 trips per day, many of which originate in APP communities. While the project is not located within an Area of Persistent Poverty, the corridor serves a regionally significant travel market and supports access to schools, emergency services, recreation, and employment destinations across northern Pinellas County and adjacent communities. Many of the trips through the project area originate in APP communities in Pasco County, just north of Pinellas County.

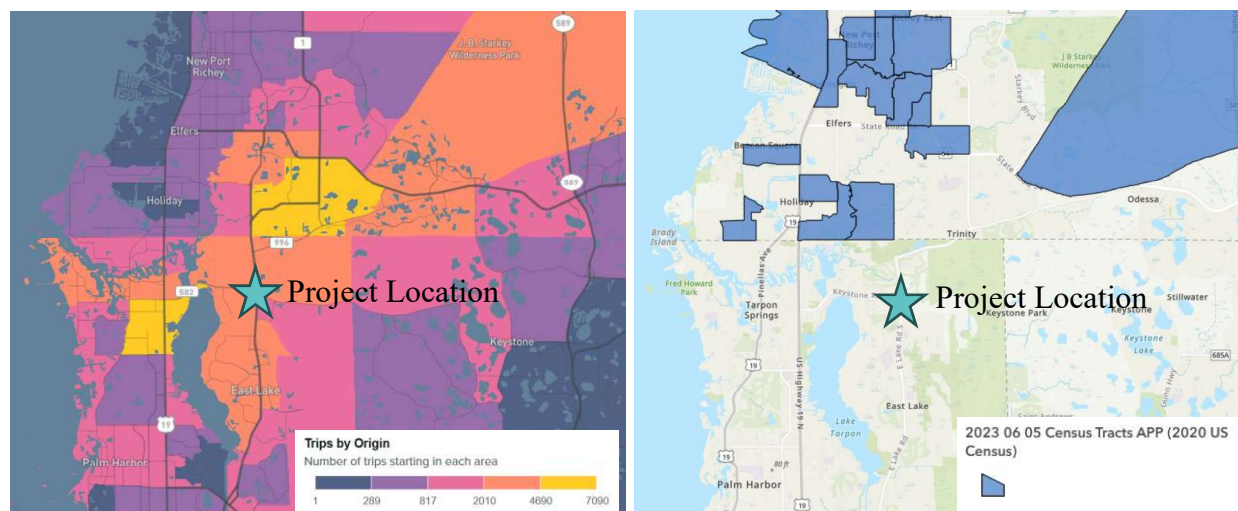


Figure 5. 30% Trip Origins for Trips Passing Through Study Area compared to Areas of Persistent Poverty (Source: Replica, USDOT)

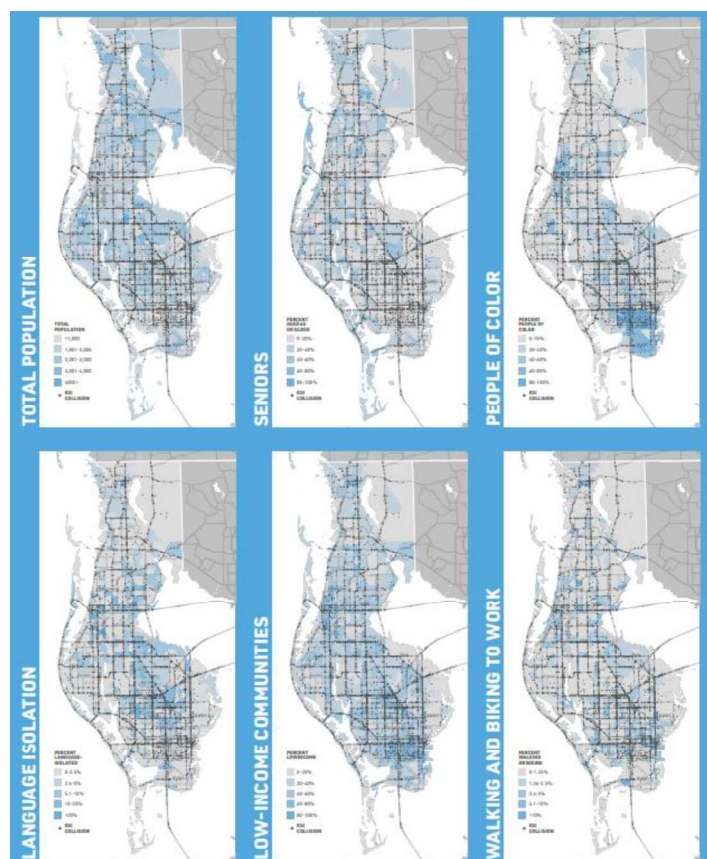
The project ensures targeted investment in preventing roadway fatalities and serious injuries in underserved communities by advancing safety improvements along corridors identified in the [CSAP](#). The plan analysis shows that approximately 73% of the County's HIN lies within or directly impacts Communities of Concern, despite these areas representing only 32% of the County's geography. These communities experience disproportionate rates of KSI crashes affecting all road user types. The Keystone Road and East Lake Road corridors were identified through this data-informed process as a priority location for near-term safety investment due to their traffic volumes, crash history, and role as a key arterial serving surrounding residential areas, including nearby underserved communities, institutional, and commercial land uses.

Demographic Analysis

Demographic analysis conducted as part of the [CSAP](#) incorporated both quantitative and qualitative data to inform project prioritization and design. Quantitative analysis included crash data, roadway characteristics, and overlays of demographic indicators such as income, race and ethnicity, age, and language isolation to identify Communities of Concern most impacted by severe crashes.

Qualitative input was gathered through extensive public engagement, including an online crowdsourced safety mapping tool, public surveys, and stakeholder workshops. More than 1,700 individuals participated in online engagement, with over 250 location-specific public comments submitted, many highlighting concerns related to speeding, turning conflicts, and unsafe conditions for people walking and biking on major arterial roadways. This feedback reinforced the need for roadway design and operational improvements that directly address safety risks along corridors such as Keystone Road and East Lake Road.

Figure 6: CSAP – HIN Demographic Analysis



Meaningful Engagement with the Public

The County has engaged with the public and will continue to do so throughout all phases of the project, including final design, construction, and implementation. Engagement during the [CSAP](#) development included a multidisciplinary Task Force representing transportation planning and engineering, public health, emergency services, law enforcement, transit providers, school officials, business interests, and disability advocates. Public outreach was supplemented by online safety quizzes, educational campaigns, and community ambassadors who helped expand participation among historically underrepresented groups. This resulted in data-driven and community-informed recommendations that respond to local safety needs, particularly through the HIN and within Communities of Concern.

Building on this foundation, Pinellas County is conducting project-specific public involvement during implementation, including a public meeting scheduled for June 2026, to present proposed safety improvements, share preliminary concepts, and receive

feedback on design details, construction phasing, and access needs.

Public engagement will continue throughout design and implementation, including coordination with nearby schools, residents, businesses, and emergency service providers. Continued communication will be maintained throughout construction through the project website and direct coordination with affected stakeholders to ensure transparency and responsiveness. The County will provide accessible project updates, construction coordination, and opportunities for community input to ensure that safety improvements are delivered in a manner responsive to local needs.

Through continued inclusive engagement, Pinellas County will ensure that SS4A implementation reflects community priorities, advances equitable safety outcomes, and supports the Action Plan’s goal of eliminating fatal and serious injury crashes for all roadway users.

MOVING FORWARD, Pinellas County will continue CSAP-aligned engagement by:

- Sustaining public outreach – Ongoing events and targeted engagement in Communities of Concern and along the HIN.
- Enhancing digital engagement: Updates via the project website, social media, and interactive feedback tools.
- Coordinating with partners: Close collaboration with FDOT, PSTA, municipalities, and emergency responders throughout implementation.

Leveraging Partnerships and Collaboration

The project builds on strong, established partnerships across public and private sectors to maximize safety and minimize community impacts. Coordination includes Pinellas County, local municipalities, FDOT District 7, and Pinellas Suncoast Transportation Authority (PSTA), along with the [CSAP](#) Task Force and partners in law enforcement, emergency services, public health, schools, and advocacy groups. The East Lake Fire & Rescue staff will be a critical part of this coordination and engagement, as this project will directly benefit their operations. These collaborations ensure safety improvements support crash reduction, emergency response, and equitable access while maintaining community connectivity during implementation.

Through these coordinated efforts, Pinellas County will ensure that SS4A investments reinforce [CSAP](#) priorities, advance equitable safety outcomes, and sustain meaningful stakeholder involvement as the project moves from planning to implementation.

Selection Criterion #5: Supplemental Planning and Demonstration Activities

No supplemental planning or demonstration activities are included in this grant application.

VI. PROJECT READINESS

Pinellas County staff are familiar with the USDOT grant agreement and administration process. The County was awarded an SS4A grant in 2024 to help update the [CSAP](#), in addition to [27 grants received](#) since 2015. The project is currently at approximately 30% design and has already undergone intersection alternatives analysis and operational evaluation. The project is included in the Forward Pinellas TIP and Pinellas County CIP, demonstrating local commitment and funding prioritization. Because the project primarily utilizes existing public right-of-way and builds upon previously completed corridor studies, Pinellas County is positioned to advance implementation quickly following award.

Alignment with Regional & Statewide Safety Priorities

The proposed project is in the [Forward Pinellas Transportation Improvement Program](#) (TIP) for 2026 – 2030 on page 306. The project is also in the [Pinellas County Capital Improvement Plan](#) on page 281. The project also aligns with the following regional and statewide plans:

- **Forward Pinellas Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP):** Prioritizes reducing KSI crashes through data-driven safety improvements on high-risk corridors and aligning investments with state and federal goals.
- **Florida Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) 2021-2025:** Advances a Safe System Approach to eliminate fatalities and serious injuries; guides MPO and local project implementation. The 2026 SHSP is still being updated per the [FDOT website](#).
- **Florida Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP):** Supports data-driven projects that reduce severe crashes by addressing documented risks and roadway characteristics.

Regulatory Compliance & Permitting

The proposed project aligns and complies with local, state, and federal requirements. Pinellas County works closely with FDOT and all required entities on ROW and proposed project matters. The NEPA process will proceed in an expedited manner in conjunction with the design of the proposed projects. The County has performed preliminary investigation into the NEPA process and expects this project to be a Type 2 Categorical Exclusion permit.

ROW Acquisition Plans and Multi-Part Agreements

The project is located within Pinellas County ROW; if not, agreements would be in place with the appropriate ROW owner. No utility relocations are anticipated. Limited land acquisition from the Pinellas County School District may be needed for a stormwater pond to meet regulatory requirements, though alternative designs are being evaluated to avoid this. This land acquisition would not become public road ROW, but instead would be owned by the County as an independent parcel.

Risk and Mitigation Strategies

Pinellas County has analyzed crash data and identified problem areas to understand contributing factors. The strategies for the proposed projects include infrastructure improvements to make roadways safer, enhance intersections, and improve multimodal experiences. Operational improvements are also planned, including enhancements to traffic flow and management.

Because this project will be fully constructed within the existing ROW and no major utility corridors exist in the study area, no major schedule or cost risks are anticipated for this project. The County manages dozens of similar infrastructure improvement projects each year, and is well equipped to manage any risks that may be realized on this project. The County will coordinate with East Lake Fire & Rescue throughout design and construction to maintain emergency access and response reliability. Construction phasing and traffic control plans will prioritize uninterrupted emergency routes.

Detailed Project Schedule

Pinellas County will complete the scope of work within 3 years of executing the agreement, including design, construction, environmental, permitting, and approval processes. Construction of the projects and strategies would consist of three tasks: design, installation, and monitoring of

the improvements. The projects and strategies are intended to be completed within 3 years of signing the agreement outlined in the project schedule below.

Table 3. Design and Implementation Schedule

Task	2026				2027				2028				2029			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Grant Application Submitted																
Estimated Award Announcement																
Grant Agreement Execution																
NEPA/Environmental Documentation																
Final Design																
Public Meetings/Stakeholder Coordination																
Stormwater Parcel Acquisition (if needed)																
Construction Award																
Pre-Construction Meeting & NTP																
Construction																
Final Walk-Through																
As-Built Documentation																
Post-Construction Safety Evaluation																
Project Closeout																
Obligation Deadline																
Expenditure Deadline																