



DIVISION OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

KEN BURKE, CPA

Clerk of the Circuit Court & Comptroller
Pinellas County, FL



AUDIT OF COUNTY CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM AND INFRASTRUCTURE – PUBLIC WORKS TRANSPORTATION

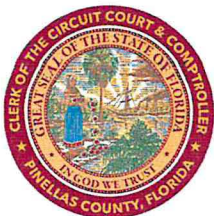


Melissa Dondero, CPA, CIA, CIG, CIGA, CIGI, CITP, CRMA, CFS, CECFE
Inspector General/Chief Audit Executive

Audit Team

Robert Poynter, CISA, CIG, CIGA, CIGI, CCA, CECFE, CFS - Assistant Inspector General
Justin Verron, CIGA - Inspector General II

REPORT NO. 2026-20
JULY 14, 2026



KEN BURKE, CPA

Clerk of the Circuit Court & Comptroller
Pinellas County, FL

Clerk of the County Court • Recorder of Deeds
Clerk and Accountant of the Board of County Commissioners
Custodian of County Funds • County Auditor

Division of Inspector General

510 Bay Avenue, Clearwater, FL 33756
Telephone: (727) 464-8371 | Fax: (727) 464-8386
Fraud hotline: (727) 45FRAUD (453-7283)
www.mypinellasclerk.gov



July 14, 2026

Kelli Hammer Levy, Director, Public Works Department

We have conducted an audit of the Pinellas County (County) Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and Infrastructure - Public Works Transportation based on our annual risk assessment. Opportunities for Improvement (OFIs) and Recommendations (Recs.) are presented in this report; see Table 1 for a summary classified by priority level.

During our audit, we found the Public Works Department (Public Works) had sufficient risk management activities to ensure CIP projects stayed on schedule, the grant process had clear governance of roles and responsibilities, and transportation maintenance and construction activities generally had sufficient oversight. However, we identified an opportunity to strengthen the documentation processes for maintenance work within the Cityworks application. We also noted the County had made significant investments in maintenance and operation activities, as well as in pursuing grant funding for a new Dunedin Causeway Bridge. Despite these efforts, funding for the project had not yet been secured. The County should consider its next steps for moving the project forward. We developed OFIs and Recs. to address these items.

Priority	OFIs	Recs.
 HIGH	0	0
 MEDIUM	1	1
 LOW	1	1
Total	2	2

Table 1 - Number of OFIs and Recs.

We appreciate the cooperation shown by the staff of Public Works during the course of this review.

Respectfully Submitted,

Melissa Dondero

Melissa Dondero
Inspector General/Chief Audit Executive

Approved:

Ken Burke

Ken Burke, CPA*
Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller
Ex Officio County Auditor
*Regulated by the State of Florida

cc: The Honorable Chair and Members of the Board of County Commissioners
Barry Burton, County Administrator
Jill Silverboard, Deputy County Administrator and Chief of Staff

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS.....	4
REPORT SUMMARY	5
Overall Conclusion	5
Audit Objectives and Outcomes.....	5
Scope and Methodology	7
BACKGROUND	9
OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT	15
1. The County Should Evaluate Future Options For The Dunedin Causeway Bridge To Achieve The Most Strategic And Efficient Replacement Outcome.	15
2. Cityworks Contained Inconsistent Photographic Documentation Of Before-And-After Maintenance Work.....	19

ABBREVIATIONS

ATMS	Advanced Transportation Management System
BIP	Bridge Improvement Program
CCA	County Construction Contract Administration and Construction Observation Reference Manual
CIP	Capital Improvement Program
CMMS	Computerized Maintenance Management System
County	Pinellas County
FY	Fiscal Year
GAO	Government Accountability Office
GIS	Geographic Information System
ITS	Intelligent Transportation System
OFI	Opportunity for Improvement
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
PD&E	Project Development and Environment Study
Public Works	Public Works Department
Recs.	Recommendations
Shop	Public Works Shop

REPORT SUMMARY

Overall Conclusion

Our audit was conducted in accordance with the *Global Internal Audit Standards* of The Institute of Internal Auditors and the *Principles and Standards for Offices of Inspector General* of the Association of Inspectors General. Accordingly, it included such tests of records and other auditing procedures as we considered necessary in the circumstances.

Based on our independent and objective assessment, the department's governance and internal control environment were effective for the scope of this audit. Governance and internal controls were operating effectively and consistently applied to support the achievement of objectives in the area audited. However, some weaknesses existed in risk management, which may impact the achievement of objectives in the area audited. We identified areas of strength where controls were strong and aligned with the department's goals. However, we also identified areas of improvement to enhance efficiency and mitigate risks.

Opportunities for Improvement (OFIs) are prioritized based on the likelihood of the risk occurring and the impact the risk may have on the department's governance, risk management, and/or control processes as follows:

- Priority 1 (High) = Significant risk or impact on operating effectiveness and efficiency; audit findings indicate ineffective or lack of controls
- Priority 2 (Medium) = Moderate risk or impact on operating effectiveness and efficiency; audit findings indicate control weaknesses that may negatively impact the achievement of business objectives, reputation, and/or compliance
- Priority 3 (Low) = Minor risk or impact on operating effectiveness and efficiency; audit findings indicate opportunities to enhance the control environment



Figure 1 - Priorities

Our audit was neither designed nor intended to be a detailed study of every relevant system, procedure, or transaction. Accordingly, the OFIs presented in this report may not be all-inclusive of areas where improvement may be needed.

Audit Objectives and Outcomes

The purpose of our audit was to:

1. Evaluate the schedule status of Transportation Division Capital Improvement Program (CIP) projects through a high-level review
2. Evaluate the current status of the Dunedin Causeway Bridge project
3. Determine if there were opportunities for improvement within the current grant process for transportation projects

4. Assess the effectiveness of transportation maintenance and construction activities
5. Evaluate the accuracy and completeness of the relevant data and performance metrics within Cityworks

As a result of the audit, we determined:

1. The CIP project completion percentages the Public Works Department (Public Works) reported were generally consistent with the audit team's calculations based on budget usage. Public Works explained their estimates relied primarily on the contractor's schedule and the proportion of contract dollars paid to date. When comparing project timeline usage to budget usage, we noted instances where the timelines appeared further along than spending, which could have indicated the potential for completion delays. Public Works clarified that project costs were not incurred evenly over time, which we independently confirmed through research. Overall, we determined Public Works management was effective in monitoring CIP projects and anticipating changes to keep projects on schedule.
2. Pinellas County (County) had invested heavily in the Dunedin Causeway Bridge project. To date, approximately \$3.9 million had been spent on maintenance, operations, the Project Development and Environment (PD&E) study, and assistance with the Bridge Improvement Program (BIP) grant application. The BIP grant application also reported approximately \$11 million in planning and design costs already incurred as of October 2024. Additional County time and resources spent pursuing other grants could not be quantified, and consultants noted these grants were highly competitive with a low likelihood of award. Public Works staff echoed this assessment.

Delays in project initiation may also require reevaluation of design assumptions, as environmental regulations or standards may have changed since the original PD&E study. Inflation and potential redesign needs create further cost risks. We identified no weather-related issues affecting the bridge design currently but confirmed environmental and design assumptions must remain valid before construction, meaning some elements may now need reassessment.

We also found that despite significant effort, the County has not secured external funding because the bridge does not meet the high-need thresholds required for competitive grants. Without grant awards, the project may face further delays or require new funding sources. See OFI No. 1 for our detailed review and recommendation.

3. During our preliminary work, we identified potential concerns about insufficient guidance on roles and responsibilities in the grant process. As we conducted our fieldwork, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and Public Works provided new documentation that illustrated improvements in the clarity of team member

responsibilities in the grant process. Additionally, newly developed training materials provided team members clear guidance and stronger support. This enhanced the efficiency of the grant process by enabling team members to clearly understand the process and their respective roles within it. The noted improvements alleviated our preliminary concerns.

4. Maintenance operations had strong inventory controls, supporting an accurate and efficient inventory system. Our review also found no evidence of inspector overextension across construction projects. Each project had adequate inspection coverage, with inspectors typically assigned to only one project at a time to ensure focused oversight and accountability. The only exception was a single inspector who was assigned to more than one project, which was an outlier rather than standard practice.
5. The Cityworks system was generally operating effectively and efficiently; however, we identified inconsistent documentation of before-and-after photographs for maintenance work. According to Public Works management, photo documentation was typically not prioritized unless a trip-and-fall incident was involved. On the other hand, we observed photographs attached to work orders unrelated to such incidents, indicating inconsistent application of this practice. The absence of consistent before-and-after photo documentation limits the department's ability to confirm the completion and quality of repair work. This gap reduces transparency, weakens oversight, and creates avoidable operational and compliance risks. See OFI No. 2 for our detailed review and recommendation.

Scope and Methodology

We performed an opportunity assessment of the CIP and Infrastructure for Public Works Transportation. As a result of our opportunity assessment, the audit covered a high-level assessment of the CIP project schedules, including a focused evaluation of the Dunedin Causeway Bridge project. We also examined the current grant process, assessed the effectiveness of transportation maintenance and construction activities, and evaluated the accuracy, completeness, and performance metrics of Cityworks data.

The audit period was January 1, 2022, through March 31, 2026. However, we did not limit the review of transactions and processes by the audit period and scope.

To meet the objectives, we performed the following:

1. Met with management in the applicable departments to understand their roles and responsibilities as they related to the CIP, daily operations, and the grant process
2. Reviewed CIP projects at a high level to ensure projects were on track and performed a more in-depth review of the Dunedin Causeway Bridge project, including historical costs and current progress

3. Reviewed available policies, procedures, and training materials for both Public Works and OMB related to the grant process to determine their sufficiency
4. Reviewed the requirements for a sample of grants to determine if there was any risk of lost funding or reimbursements due to inefficiencies in the current processes
5. Reviewed inspectors' workloads within Public Works to ensure adequate coverage for projects
6. Reviewed the operations of the Public Works Shop (Shop) warehouse to determine whether the inventory was sufficient for crews
7. Reviewed Shop usage compared to procurement card usage to ensure staff used in-house materials before purchasing new materials
8. Reviewed work orders in Cityworks for data completeness and accuracy
9. Reviewed Cityworks data and current metrics to determine the efficiency level of operations

BACKGROUND

Audit Evolution

As we initiated this audit, our team met with a range of managers and field crews across Public Works to gain a clear understanding of their day-to-day responsibilities, operational challenges, and overall perspectives on departmental performance. These conversations allowed us to hear directly from the individuals who managed critical functions and those who performed the work in the field, giving us a well-rounded view of how current processes operated in practice.

Throughout these discussions, we asked participants to identify areas where they saw opportunities for improvement—whether related to workflow efficiency, communication, resource allocation, or operational consistency. Their insights were instrumental in shaping the direction of our review. As we assessed feedback from these varied personnel groups, several recurring themes and potential focus areas emerged. These themes guided us in determining which processes, practices, and organizational structures warranted deeper examination during the audit.

Departmental Information

Public Works is responsible for managing the County's essential infrastructure and environmental resources to support a safe, sustainable, and thriving community. The department oversees the maintenance and enhancement of critical assets, such as roadways, sidewalks, bridges, stormwater systems, and traffic signals, while also managing natural and urban environmental resources, including mosquito control, urban forestry, and environmental protection initiatives. Figure 2 illustrates a Public Works sidewalk improvement project.

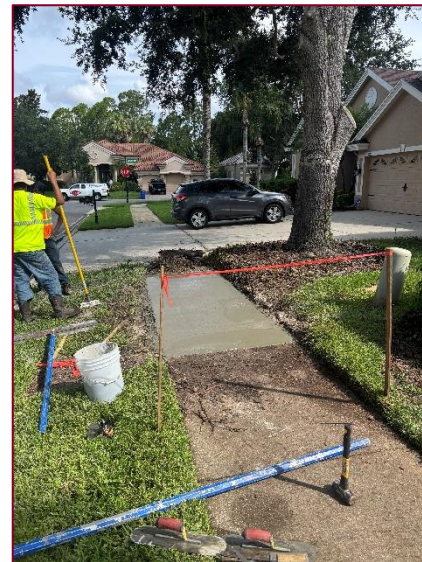


Figure 2 - Public Works Sidewalk Project



Figure 3 - Public Works Emergency Water Main Repair

Beyond routine maintenance, Public Works plays a central role in planning, designing, and delivering capital improvement projects that strengthen the County's infrastructure and safeguard natural habitats. These projects range from major roadway and bridge improvements to shoreline stabilization, stormwater upgrades, and habitat restoration. The department also provides a wide array of customer-focused services—such as mowing, sidewalk repairs, drainage maintenance, and timely responses to citizen inquiries—that directly support community safety and quality of life. Figures 3 and 4 illustrate examples of Public Works field operations, including emergency infrastructure repairs and stormwater improvements.

The department's organizational structure includes several specialized divisions that work collaboratively to meet the County's operational and environmental needs:

- **Capital Improvements and Survey and Mapping** oversees the planning, prioritization, and delivery of major infrastructure projects across the County to support long-term community needs. In addition, it provides precise land measurements, mapping, and spatial data to support infrastructure planning, construction, and property boundary accuracy across the County.
- **Construction** manages, inspects, and ensures the quality of contracted work for capital projects, helping deliver infrastructure improvements efficiently and in compliance with engineering standards.
- **Customer and Technical Services** supports residents through service request management, inventory oversight, and community outreach, ensuring transparency and responsiveness.
- **Environmental Management** monitors water quality, manages beaches and coastal systems, oversees habitat restoration, and enforces environmental ordinances to protect natural resources.
- **Special Programs** manages targeted initiatives and support services that address unique community needs and enhance the effectiveness of countywide public works operations.
- **Stormwater Management** protects the community by controlling runoff, reducing flooding, and improving water quality across the County's drainage systems.
- **Transportation** maintains and improves the County's transportation network, including traffic operations, roadway maintenance, and multimodal mobility initiatives.

In addition to these core functions, Public Works collaborates with state and federal agencies, regional partners, and private consultants to secure funding, comply with regulatory requirements, and implement long-term infrastructure strategies. The department also plays a key role in resilience planning—addressing challenges such as sea-level rise, aging infrastructure, and increased storm intensity—to ensure the County’s systems remain reliable and adaptable.

Through these coordinated efforts, Public Works serves as a cornerstone of the County’s public service framework. Its work preserves the quality of life for residents and visitors by ensuring the efficient operation, environmental stewardship, and long-term resilience of the County’s infrastructure and natural systems.



Figure 4 - Public Works Storm Drain Installation

Accomplishments

Public Works delivered a high-impact year (2025) of infrastructure improvements, strengthening transportation safety, mobility, and long-term resilience across the County. The department manages more than 2,500 roadway lane miles, 200 bridges, nearly 1,100 miles of sidewalk, and 450+ traffic signals. The 2025 budget highlighted major progress in maintaining and upgrading these assets.

Major Maintenance and Repair Achievements

Public Works significantly accelerated core maintenance work thanks to dedicated millage funding. According to the adopted fiscal year 2025 budget, the department:

- Repaired 4 miles of sidewalk
- Upgraded 199 Pinellas Trail roadway/trail intersections with new pavement markings, Americans with Disabilities Act pads, bollards, and signage
- Repaired or replaced nearly 3 miles of curb
- Repaired or replaced nearly 1 mile of underdrain
- Resurfaced 144 lane miles of local roads

These improvements directly supported safer walking, biking, and driving conditions Countywide.

Delivery of Major Capital Projects

Using Penny for Pinellas and American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 funding, Public Works completed or advanced several large-scale projects, including:

- Mehlenbacher Road sidewalk & drainage improvements
- Starkey Road sidewalk improvements
- 42nd Ave N & 46th Ave N roadway, drainage, and sidewalk upgrades
- Crosswinds Bridge replacement
- Mast arm upgrades at 9 intersections
- Resurfacing of 100 arterial and collector lane miles
- Safe Routes to School sidewalk projects for 2 schools

These projects improved safety, reduced flooding, and modernized aging infrastructure.

Advanced Traffic Management System/Intelligent Transportation System Modernization

Public Works is in year two of a three-year, \$18 million investment to modernize the County's Advanced Transportation Management System (ATMS)/Intelligent Transportation System (ITS). In fiscal year (FY) 2024:

- Signal timing was upgraded on 8 major corridors, covering 75 signals.
- The department completed an updated ATMS/ITS Master Plan.
- The State Road 60 Smart Corridor Project was completed with Florida Department of Transportation support.

These upgrades improved travel times, reduced congestion, and enhanced safety.

Budget Information

Public Works is funded through a combination of the County's General Fund, Transportation Trust Fund, Penny for Pinellas sales tax, gas taxes, and state and federal grants. Unlike enterprise funds, Public Works operates as a general government function, meaning its services—such as roadway maintenance, traffic operations, stormwater support, and capital project delivery—are not recovered through user fees but instead rely on Countywide revenue sources.

Public Works FY 2025 Adopted Budget Information

Depicted in Table 2 is the Public Works operating budget taken from the FY 2025 adopted budget document.

Public Works Operating Budget from FY 2025 Adopted Budget FY 2023 - FY 2025					
FY 2023		FY 2024		FY 2025	
Budget	Full-Time Team Members	Budget	Full-Time Team Members	Budget	Full-Time Team Members
\$137,867,420	508.7	\$150,580,810	514.7	\$150,597,790	516.7

Table 2 - Public Works FY 2023 - FY 2025 Operating Budget

The FY 2025 Public Works adopted operating budget totaled approximately \$150.6 million, with only a slight (less than 1%) increase from FY 2024 and workforce support of over 516 full-time team members. The County continues to prioritize transportation and infrastructure investment, transferring \$42.2 million from the General Fund to the Transportation Trust Fund to support road resurfacing, bridge maintenance, traffic technology upgrades, and other transportation improvements.

Table 3 presents the capital budget by function from the FY 2025 adopted budget document. This is only inclusive of functions in our audit scope and is not necessarily fully attributable to Public Works, especially as relates to the Physical Environment function that includes surface water, water, sewer, and other types of projects.

Capital Budget by Function from FY 2025 Adopted Budget FY 2023 - FY 2025			
Function	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025
Transportation	\$104,858,090	\$154,419,000	\$162,796,500
Physical Environment	59,241,000	97,032,000	97,007,860

Table 3 - Public Works FY 2023 - FY 2025 Adopted Capital Budget

The County's transportation capital budget for 2025 totaled approximately \$162.8 million, or 5.4% more than FY 2024, supporting major investments in roads, bridges, trails, traffic systems, and other infrastructure improvements. An additional \$97 million was allocated to Physical Environment capital projects, which included stormwater management, environmental protection, water quality initiatives, and flood mitigation.

The FY 2025 adopted budget highlighted significant progress in roadway and bridge upkeep, including funding to resurface 270 additional lane miles beyond Penny for Pinellas allocations and enhanced maintenance for the County's 200 bridges and related transportation assets. Public Works was also in the second year of a three-year, \$18 million modernization of the ITS, aimed at improving traffic flow, safety, and congestion management across major corridors.

Long-term Penny for Pinellas surtax allocations further reinforced these priorities, dedicating \$633.1 million (58.2% of the total proposed FY 2025 Penny for Pinellas distributions) to roads, bridges, and trails, as well as \$195.7 million (18% of the total proposed FY 2025 Penny for Pinellas distributions) to water quality, flood prevention, and sewer spill prevention. Collectively, these investments aligned with the County's strategic goal of promoting resilient infrastructure and environment, as well as emphasizing transportation improvements, infrastructure condition, environmental sustainability, and storm resilience.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

1. The County Should Evaluate Future Options For The Dunedin Causeway Bridge To Achieve The Most Strategic And Efficient Replacement Outcome.

MEDIUM



Figure 5 - Sky view of Dunedin Causeway Bridge

Our review revealed the County had an opportunity to evaluate replacement and funding options for the Dunedin Causeway Bridge. During our project planning and opportunity assessment process, we reviewed the Public Works Roadway and Bridge Asset Management System Plan and focused on bridges that were in poor condition. After discussion with Public Works management, we selected the Dunedin Causeway Bridge Replacement Project for further review.

During our site visit to the Dunedin Causeway Bridge, we documented its overall condition. Figure 5 provides an aerial view of the bridge, while Figures 6 through 8 show heavy rust buildup and corrosion observed on structural steel during our inspection.

We reviewed the PD&E study, dated May 2020, conducted by URS Corporation during 2015 through 2020 to determine which type of bridge should replace the current movable bridge. The preferred alternative was the mid-level movable bridge, with an approximate cost of \$77 million at the time of the study. We then met with management to discuss and understand the findings and determine whether they remained valid, including any thresholds that affected their validity.

We found the study remained valid as of our audit; however, there were concerns regarding the extended timeline for the Dunedin Causeway Bridge Replacement Project commencement. This was primarily due to the County's inability to secure funding despite applying for multiple federal and state grants. Specifically, we determined the County had made multiple attempts to apply for



Figure 6 - Close-up View of Heavy Rust Buildup on the Underside of the Dunedin Causeway Bridge

grants to fund the project but had been unsuccessful to date, as indicated by management and the consultant HDR that assisted with the BIP grant application. According to Public Works grant management staff, the competition for these project grants was extremely fierce. Potential changes to environmental regulations could impact the project requirements. Additionally, as time progresses, project costs are likely to increase due to inflation, as confirmed by our independent research.



Figure 7 - Structural Steel Framing Beneath the Dunedin Causeway Bridge Showing Heavy Rust Buildup

Another key aspect of our review was calculating the total costs incurred to date, encompassing both the study itself and all related expenses. We found a significant amount of funds had already been expended on efforts to initiate the Dunedin Causeway Bridge Replacement Project and secure its funding.

We first reviewed the BIP grant application, which stated the County had spent approximately \$11 million on staff time, consultants, design negotiations, and the PD&E study, among other expenses. We also conducted our own review of the cost of the study, work orders related to the operation and maintenance of the Dunedin Causeway Bridge, as well as any costs related to consultants' work on grant applications for the study for the period of 2020, when the study was completed, to 2025.

Analyzing Cityworks work orders, we calculated the County had spent approximately \$1,463,690 on maintenance and operations related to the causeway through contracted agreements, as well as an additional \$727,175 for in-house work order costs related to bridge maintenance. Furthermore, \$1,461,296 was expended on the PD&E study, and \$253,690 was spent on assistance with the BIP grant application by HDR, totaling \$3,905,851. However, there were additional factors we were unable to quantify, including the time and resources the County had invested in applying for other grants to fund the majority of the project.

There were several factors contributing to the current situation of the Dunedin Causeway Bridge Replacement Project. The County historically sought grant funding for the project. The primary factor in unsuccessfully securing grant funding was the highly competitive nature of the grant application process, as acknowledged by the consultant, HDR, and Public Works staff. Securing federal funding for transportation projects, including bridge replacements, is highly competitive. However, Public Works staff indicated that completion of the design phase may improve the County's likelihood of receiving grant funding, as it demonstrates project progress and readiness.



Figure 8 - Additional Underside View of the Dunedin Causeway Bridge Showing Heavy Rust Buildup

The U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) is an independent, non-partisan agency that evaluates government programs and investigates how federal agencies spend tax dollars. As the congressional watchdog, GAO provides objective, fact-based analysis to help Congress oversee federal operations and ensure accountability in the use of public funds.

GAO-20-195G: Best Practices for Developing and Managing Program Costs made the following statement regarding increased costs:

"Delays in obtaining funding can also create cost growth."

An additional GAO-13-302, also highlighted this potential risk. In the report, the GAO highlighted the challenge as follows:

"Project designs, initial cost estimates, and completion dates are developed years prospectively, several years before Congress appropriates funds and the construction contract is awarded."

Although the County is not relying on Congress directly for funding, we face a similar challenge—significant time may pass before funds for a project become available. GAO-13-302 examined 26 major medical facility projects and highlighted how delays contributed to substantial cost growth. Among the projects reviewed, half experienced cost increases. The most striking finding was that 9 projects saw cost escalations of 31% or more, resulting in a combined increase of approximately \$1.03 billion. By contrast, projects with more modest increases of 1% to 30% added about \$54 million in total. This reinforces the potential risk of cost increases due to delays in a project initiation.

In addition, an article from the Oklahoma Department of Transportation cited in October 2025 that construction costs surged 63% since 2020, compressing 18 years of inflation into just 3 years and forcing the agency to reduce and delay projects. This article supports that

action needs to be taken sooner rather than later, as construction costs continue to rise. In addition to that article, we also found an article related to bridge construction for the Howard Frankland Bridge expansion project, having increased by \$108.1 million—12.5% above its original \$865.3 million construction budget—due to hurricane impacts, rising material costs, and additional scope, despite construction remaining on schedule.

These examples demonstrate that when project decisions are delayed or scopes remain unresolved, agencies face significant financial uncertainty and increased exposure to cost escalation.

We acknowledge that Public Works does not have the responsibility for releasing funds to support this project. Therefore, our recommendation is geared toward collaboration with County policymakers on a solution. Delayed action on this project may lead to increased costs. Contributing factors include regulatory changes, site modifications, inflation, and the progressive deterioration of the existing bridge. This deterioration not only raises maintenance expenses but also increases the risk of structural failure over time.

We determined the OFI's priority was medium, as the finding occurred, and there were potential risks of cost increases and reputational damage.

We Recommend Management:

Collaborate with policymakers to determine and document the next steps for the Dunedin Causeway Bridge Replacement Project. Given increasing maintenance and construction costs and the potential the bridge does not meet federal funding eligibility thresholds, a defined course of action should be established. For example, consideration could be given to funding and initiating design activities to make the project more attractive to grantors, potentially leveraging more local funding options initially.

Management Response and Action Plan:

Management Partially Concurs. As noted, this funding decision falls outside the Department's authority. The Department is coordinating with County Administration and partner agencies to evaluate available options.

- ✓ **Individual(s) Responsible for Implementation:** Kelli Hammer Levy, Public Works Director, Pinellas County Public Works
- ✓ **Planned Implementation Completion Date:** June 1, 2029

2. Cityworks Contained Inconsistent Photographic Documentation Of Before-And-After Maintenance Work.

LOW

During our review of a sample of Cityworks work orders, we identified inconsistencies in the retained photo documentation. Cityworks is a Geographic Information System (GIS)-based asset-management and work-management system that helps local governments track infrastructure, manage maintenance activities, and streamline service requests. It integrates directly with ArcGIS to map assets, organize work orders, and support field operations. Management informed us that Cityworks photo documentation was typically only required for slip-and-fall cases, as those involved the most liability to the County. Management further indicated there was no established emphasis on documenting photos for other types of work orders.

The American Public Works Association standards in Practices 6.1, 6.3, and 6.4 were developed to ensure that public works agencies manage infrastructure with accuracy, accountability, and long-term reliability. These practices emphasize maintaining complete asset inventories, documenting current and historical conditions, and keeping thorough records of all maintenance activities. A critical part of meeting these expectations is consistent photo documentation, which provides objective, time-stamped visual evidence of asset conditions and completed work. Photos strengthen the credibility of written records, support quality control, reduce disputes about work performed, and give management a clear, unfiltered view of field realities. When combined, these documentation requirements give leadership the reliable data needed to justify budgets, prioritize maintenance, mitigate risk, and plan future investments with confidence, ultimately demonstrating responsible stewardship of public assets and improving service delivery.

In addition, we used as a resource the Pinellas County Construction Contract Administration and Construction Observation Reference (CCA) Manual, as it:

"Provides guidance in the performance of construction engineering services associated with construction contract administration and construction observation. It has been prepared primarily for the Transportation, Water/Wastewater, Stormwater, Environmental and Resource Management disciplines, and is applicable to all projects in which Pinellas County provides traditional design-bid-build and work order construction phase administration services."

The CCA Manual in Task Number 5002 emphasizes the use of photographs and videos to document project progress and identify deficiencies as part of construction observation and inspection responsibilities, stating that the *"utilization of photos and videotapes of construction are critical for proper progress documentation."*

Specifically, Task Number 5024 in the CCA Manual - Project Photo and Video Documentation includes the following points under Administrative and Construction Notes 4 and 5:

- "4. Photographic documentation, beyond that specified by the Contractor, can be very valuable in resolving disputes and/or claims. There probably isn't a project that took too many pictures. Be diligent in numbering and logging photos or writing descriptions on the photographs.*
- 5. Video recording of unique construction activities, certain testing procedures, and other aspects of construction that one may not expect to regularly occur on every job can provide training tools for others in the County who have not witnessed such things before. This form of documentation may also be useful to designers for the refinement of their details and specifications. Be mindful of the unusual and share it with the County by video recording."*

The effect of not having documentation before and after repairs results in a loss of accountability. Without images, it becomes more difficult to verify the true condition of an asset, justify the work performed, or defend the department against complaints or disputes. It also weakens institutional memory, as future staff cannot easily understand what was done or why. Over time, the absence of visual records can lead to inefficiencies, miscommunication, and even mistrust from the community, all of which slow progress rather than supporting it.

We determined the OFI's priority was low, as the finding occurred; however, its occurrence was infrequent, and the finding was related to operational efficiency and effectiveness.

We Recommend Management:

Provide additional training to field staff on documenting photographic evidence of maintenance work before and after completion. This will ensure accurate and comprehensive historical records of repairs.

Management Response and Action Plan:

Management Concurs. Public Works agrees that consistent visual documentation in maintenance work orders is a best practice. To support this improvement, Public Works will implement a Computerized Maintenance Management System (CMMS) Policy that aligns with our draft grey-sky documentation policy and will require the following:

- Use of timestamps rather than labor-hour entries
- Timely submission of work orders, measured from the In Progress date to the Completion date
- Photo documentation of completed work

To support these updated practices, Public Works will revise its work order monitoring procedures to identify and follow up on work orders lacking photo attachments. In addition, a training plan will be developed to ensure staff understand and follow the new CMMS policy requirements.

- ✓ **Individual(s) Responsible for Implementation:** Scott Stillwell, Enterprise Asset & Work Management Section Manager, Pinellas County Public Works
- ✓ **Planned Implementation Completion Date:** January 31, 2027



DIVISION OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

KEN BURKE, CPA

Clerk of the Circuit Court & Comptroller
Pinellas County, FL



SERVING YOU:
AUDIT SERVICES
INVESTIGATIONS
GUARDIANSHIP SERVICES
CONSULTING
TRAINING
COUNTY FRAUD HOTLINE
GUARDIANSHIP FRAUD HOTLINE
PCSO PREA HOTLINE

 mypinellasclerk.gov/Home/Inspector-General

 [x.com/PinellasIG](https://twitter.com/PinellasIG)

 facebook.com/igpinellas

Call: (727) 464-8371

Fax: (727) 464-8386

Fraud: (727) 45FRAUD
(727) 453-7283

Write:

Division of Inspector General
510 Bay Avenue
Clearwater, FL 33756