

PLANNERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Meeting Summary
June 29, 2026

The Planners Advisory Committee held its June 29, 2026 meeting in person in the Palm Room at the Pinellas County Communications Building located at 333 Chestnut Street, Clearwater.

The Chair, Andrew Morris, called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. and the members introduced themselves for the record.

Committee Members in Attendance Included:

Andrew Morris, Britton Wilson, Maryellen Edwards, Todd Biron, Whitney Clark, Mark Griffin, Tatiana Childress, Kathy Gademer, Cecilia Chen, Tom Scofield, Christina Porter, Marshall Touchton, Adrian Young, Caroline Lanford, Jacob Labutka (late arrival), Wesley Wright (late arrival).

Forward Pinellas Staff in Attendance Included:

Rodney Chatman, Emma Wennick, Linda Fisher, Nousheen Rahman, and Tina Jablon.

Others in Attendance Included: Lauren Matzke, City of Clearwater; Matt Lackritz, Spectrum Bay News 9; Craig Southern, City of South Pasadena; Pamela LeClair, PCREC; Alison Kielty; Angela Terrio; Megan Montesino, City of Pinellas Park; Krista Kosier.

2. Approval of Minutes from the June 1, 2026 PAC Meeting [Vote: 14-0]

Motion: Mark Griffin

Second: Britton Wilson

3. REVIEW OF FORWARD PINELLAS AGENDA FOR JULY 8, 2026
PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS

3A1. Case CW 26-11 – City of Clearwater [Vote: 14-0]

An overview of the case was provided by Adrian Young, Clearwater City staff, and questions were asked and answered. A motion to recommend approval of Case CW 26-11 was made by Mark Griffin, seconded by Tom Scofield, and approved unanimously.

4. PLANNING TOPICS OF INTEREST

4A. FY27 PPC Work Plan and Budget Request

Rodney Chatman presented the FY 27 Pinellas Planning Council (PPC) work plan and budget requests. He explained that the PPC is a dependent special district of the Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners, and its budget is reviewed and approved by the BCC. He highlighted recent work done by Forward Pinellas, and its partners that advanced Pinellas County as a viable location for target industries,

including implementation of the Target Employment and Industrial Land Study in Largo and Pinellas Park. He summarized progress on the Pinellas County Multimodal Impact Fee Ordinance update, including delays and adjustments required by HB 479, SB 180, and HB 1329. He reported on the Knowledge Exchange Series focused on hurricane recovery and disaster response, and described expanded use of Arc Urban for scenario planning.

4B. Special Act Review Committee Recap

Rodney Chatman provided a recap of the Special Act Review Committee's third meeting. The committee discussed potential changes to the Planning Council's board membership and ways to streamline the Countywide Plan Map amendment process.

Staff presented three options for board composition (13, 9, or 8 members with varying use of rotating seats). The committee supported the 13-member option with three rotating seats. The committee also discussed options for streamlining the amendment process, including a sub-threshold administrative track and focusing PPC review on activity centers, multimodal corridors, and other countywide-significant amendments.

4C. Countywide Plan Amendments Overview

Linda Fisher presented an overview of a proposed package of Countywide Plan amendments. She advised the amendments were intended to:

- Incorporate amendments previously recommended by PAC but not yet adopted, addressing the Housing Regulatory Toolkit, MAX Index and Target Employment Center category, and
- Streamline the countywide plan map amendment process.

The proposed amendments would establish subthreshold criteria under which certain small or low-impact cases would be processed as Tier I (staff-level) even if the category on the countywide map changed. She explained that these criteria included parcel size limits, no increases in density or intensity in sensitive areas, and required coordination with adjacent jurisdictions and the school district where applicable.

She also outlined additional streamlining concepts for activity centers and multimodal corridors, including refined mapping and allowing minor boundary adjustments as Tier I. She stated that staff planned to take a preliminary package to the Special Act Review Subcommittee next week, return to PAC for a recommendation by late August, and then proceed to the Forward Pinellas Board and Countywide Planning Authority for public hearings in September and October, respectively.

4D. Knowledge Exchange Series – Data Centers

Emma Wennick introduced data centers as a rapidly emerging topic of interest.

She noted that commissioners and others had raised concerns about power consumption, water usage, and other impacts, and that there had been the first local proposal in Pinellas Park to redevelop an existing office site as a data center. She explained that data centers did not clearly fit within existing Countywide Plan Map categories, indicating a need for clearer interpretation and guidance.

Todd Biron reported that Pinellas Park was considering a pause on data center approvals to allow time to evaluate code amendments and consistency with the Countywide Rules.

The committee discussed the low job generation associated with data centers, their high energy and utility demands, and the potential need for regional consistency and moratoria or restrictions.

At the suggestion of Rodney Chatman, the committee agreed to create a subcommittee to explore amendments to the Countywide Plan related to data centers, and the motion to create the subcommittee was approved unanimously. Motion by Caroline Lanford, with a second by Marshall Touchton, carried by a vote of 16-0.

Emma reported that staff were preparing a white paper on data centers and planned to brief the Forward Pinellas Board at its July 8 meeting.

5. OTHER PAC BUSINESS/PAC DISCUSSION AND UPCOMING AGENDA

5A. Upcoming Land Use Cases & Pre-App Meetings

Rodney Chatman, citing the last topic (data centers) as an example of the value of pre-app meetings, he encouraged PAC members to continue to schedule these meetings in advance of submitting land use cases.

5B. Interesting Topics from Your Planner's Notebook

Rodney Chatman, referring to the backup materials in the agenda, noted there was valuable information from Alachua County (and Pinellas County) on potential impacts of property tax reform and encouraged members to review it to assess local implications.

6. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

6A. CPA Actions and Forward Pinellas Administrative Review Items

Rodney Chatman advised the PAC members that there were no Countywide Planning Authority public hearings or administrative review items to report on this month.

6B. SPOTlight Emphasis Areas Update

Rodney Chatman advised the committee members that the Forward Pinellas Board recently received a presentation on Phase 1 of Advantage US 19 (the transit-oriented development plan for the US 19 corridor from SR52 in Pasco to the Gateway area in St. Petersburg) and authorized staff to begin work on Phase 2 of the project which will include the development of a transit operating plan for future enhanced transit service along the key corridor.

7. UPCOMING EVENTS

The Chair highlighted the upcoming events of interest as noted in the agenda.

8. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:47 p.m.

Chair

Date