PLANNERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Meeting Summary
August 31, 2026

The Planners Advisory Committee held its August 31, 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 1:37 p.m., and the members introduced themselves for the record.

Committee Members in Attendance Included:
Andrew Morris, Derek Kilborn, Todd Biron, Braydon Evans, Gil Martinez, Whitney Clark, Mark Griffin, Tatiana Childress, Kevin Nurnberger, Cecilia Chen, Tom Scofield, Christina Porter, Marshall Touchton, Marcie Stenmark, Caroline Lanford, Devan Deal, and Wesley Wright.

Forward Pinellas Staff in Attendance Included:
Rodney Chatman, Emma Wennick, Linda Fisher, Nousheen Rahman, Nicole Galasso, Whit Blanton and Tina Jablon.

Others in Attendance Included: Luis Garcia, Pinellas County; Scott Swearengen, Pinellas County; Lizzy St. Pierre, Pinellas Park; and Craig Southern, South Pasadena.

2. Approval of Minutes from the June 29, 2026 PAC Meeting [Vote: 17-0]
Motion: Mark Griffin
Second: Tatianna Childress

3. REVIEW OF FORWARD PINELLAS AGENDA FOR SEPTEMBER 9, 2026 PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS

3A1. Case CW 26-12 – Pinellas County [Vote: 17-0]
An overview of the case was provided by Scott Swearengen.
Motion: Mark Griffin
Second: Marshall Touchton

3A2. Case CW 26-13 – City of Dunedin [Vote: 17-0]
An overview of the case was provided by Kevin Nurnberger.
Motion: Mark Griffin
Second: Marcie Stenmark

The PAC asked about access, parcel configuration, buffering, and neighborhood feedback, prior to voting to recommend approval.

DRAFT

3B1. Countywide Plan Amendments [Vote: 17-0]
Linda Fisher presented a comprehensive package of proposed amendments to the Countywide Plan, focused on:

Streamlining the Countywide Plan Map amendment process, expanding Tier I (staff-level reviewed) "subthreshold" amendments to include any parcels ≤5 acres meeting clear criteria for Coastal High Hazard Area (CHHA), Scenic/Non-Commercial Corridors (SNCC), Target Employment Centers (TEC), and low Multimodal Accessibility Index (MAX) areas. Allowing for staff-level boundary amendments for Activity Centers (AC), Multimodal Corridors (MMC), and Planned Redevelopment Districts under defined thresholds (10% base; up to 25% where planning/urban design principles were addressed), with an "escape clause" to escalate cases to Tier II when warranted.

Clarifying and updating the Rules for CHHA balancing criteria and the MAX index so that local governments could either use formal balancing criteria or limit density/intensity through other binding mechanisms (Land Development Regulations caps, development agreements, clustering, etc.).

Refining TEC rules, increasing allowable densities for certain TEC subcategories to better compete with the Live Local Act, and clarifying that adopting Special Area Plans in existing TEC-Local areas would be Tier I staff reviews.

Incorporating the Housing Regulatory Toolkit to include additional definitions; standardized bonus language; extending mixed-use bonus to horizontal mixed use; and expanding senior housing bonuses to include universal design.

Housekeeping updates to procedures, notice, submittal timing, and definitions.

Ms. Fisher noted that legal counsel has raised concerns about the authority to relocate the Land Use Strategy Map from the Countywide Plan Strategies to Submap No. 3 of the Countywide Plan Map series, though staff noted a similar submap had been added under previous counsel. Ms. Fisher explained the map's role as locational criteria (not direct regulation), and indicated that, if necessary, that specific change could be severed without harming the rest of the package.

PAC members discussed:

- The Office category and its relationship to mixed-use and retail,
- How CHHA requirements and Activity Center boundary expansions would interact,
- Legal authority and possible ramifications if the disputed submap change proceeded,
- Incremental Activity Center expansions, "contiguous" definitions (including across ROW), and CHHA balancing expectations at the local level.

The PAC ultimately voted to recommend approval of the full amendment package as written, with language acknowledging that legal counsel's interpretations could still affect the submap component.

Mark Griffin made the motion, which was later amended to as noted above. Marcie Stenmark seconded the motion. **[Vote: 17-0]**

3B2. Countywide Plan Appendix Update [Vote: 17-0]
Linda Fisher presented proposed updates to the Countywide Plan Appendices citing that the appendices are non-regulatory, informational components that are not part of the officially adopted Plan.

Appendix D: Updated to clarify that listing an industry code (e.g., data processing/hosting) does not automatically make it a target industry; performance criteria still applied (intended to avoid unintentionally treating all data centers as target industries).

Appendix E: Updated the MAX index countywide average and committed to timely annual updates going forward.

The PAC recommended board acceptance of these appendix updates. Cecilia Chen made the motion which was seconded by Todd Biron. **[Vote: 17-0]**

4. PLANNING TOPICS OF INTEREST

4A. Special Act Review Committee Recommendations
Rodney Chatman reported on the Special Act Review Committee recommendations, focused on:

A contingent new Pinellas Planning Council membership structure that would take effect only if the Tampa Bay Area metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) merge, ensuring balanced city/county representation with a mix of permanent and rotating seats (including distinct rotations for the larger beach communities, inland communities, and smaller beach communities), plus one member from a smaller city to represent on the regional MPO. The proposed changes include permanent members for Pinellas County, St. Pete, Clearwater, Largo, Pinellas Park, Dunedin, Tarpon Springs, Seminole, Safety Harbor, and Oldsmar with rotating seats for beach communities and inland communities.

Shifting Planning Council meeting frequency language to "at least quarterly" to introduce flexibility while protecting the ability to schedule meetings when major amendments are pending.

Streamlining the Countywide Plan Map amendment process toward truly countywide/regional categories (Activity Centers, Multimodal Corridors, Planned Redevelopment Districts), with a stronger consistency review function and more staff capacity for technical assistance.

Rodney Chatman outlined the legislative process for amending the Special Act and the steps involved, including drafting the concept and working with the legislative delegation. He added that a draft concept for the amendments would be prepared and brought back to the committee for review in preparation for the November/December Legislative Delegation meeting.

The committee also reviewed the status and performance of Activity Centers, Multimodal Corridors, and TEC-Local areas across the county, with examples from Largo, Pinellas Park, Madeira Beach/John's Pass, Treasure Island, St. Pete Beach, and Lealman.

4B. <u>Legislative Support and Follow-Up</u>

Nousheen Rahman facilitated a discussion on legislative support and recent state bills, based on a PAC survey and one-on-one meetings:

- The survey results indicated a need for legislative updates in agenda packets and discussions on bill implementation.
- Members reaffirmed the value of PPC legislative memos and requested they be shared earlier and in a format usable in local agenda packets.
- There was consensus to use the PAC as a standing forum to discuss implementation (not just tracking) of passed bills.
- The committee discussed four key bills that require further discussion and implementation guidance:
    - **HB 399** (compatibility standards for residential uses; written findings requirement when denying on compatibility grounds)
    - **HB 927** (private provider registry and related processes)
    - **HB 803** (building processes, glazing limits, permit fees and reductions)
    - **SB 1730 (Live Local Act bill from the 2025 legislative session),** requiring reporting of Live Local Projects, with a reminder about Forward Pinellas' countywide Live Local dashboard.

- Members shared local approaches and questions, including:
    - Oldsmar/Safety Harbor working with Pinellas County Building Department and county attorneys to treat the County's existing pre-application and private provider contracts as compliant with HB 927, and exploring piggybacking on county contracts rather than issuing a Request for Proposals (RFPs) for private providors.
    - St. Petersburg reviewing zoning design standards (e.g., glazing requirements) for compliance with HB 803, and explained that the city already uses traditional vs. suburban categories and design standards to address residential compatibility under HB 399.
    - Interest in pre-application fees or deposits towards development applications to recover staff time, balanced against public service

expectations and administrative feasibility; Safety Harbor shared past challenges with tracking minimum fee deposits.
    - Questions about how to structure written findings for compatibility determinations in hearings, with St. Petersburg considering short recesses to prepare collective findings slides before votes.
    - Implementation questions about reduced permit fees, how to calculate them, and whether small projects (e.g., fences, sub-$7,500 work) were exempt from permits or fees under new law. Derek Kilborn, City of St. Peterburg offered to share with the collective group a presentation the City recently used regarding updating of the permit fee schedule.
    - A note about "chickies" (tiki huts) and the need to update LDRs to reflect new state provisions on allowable materials and electrical connections.

- PAC members and Forward Pinellas staff agreed to keep a standing legislative implementation item on future PAC agendas to facilitate discussions, share solutions, templates, and legal guidance.

5. OTHER PAC BUSINESS/PAC DISCUSSION AND UPCOMING AGENDA

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

Rodney Chatman asks if there are any controversial or community-involved land use cases or pre-app meetings being considered by any of the local governments that Forward Pinellas staff isn't already aware of. After which:

- Derek Kilborn, City of St. Petersburg, shared that following the adoption of MMC categories and maximum densities into the comprehensive plan in 2024, there will be a text amendment related to this that will be presented to the DRC this Wednesday, with City Council activity delayed until November or December.
- Marcie Stenmark described a new amendment for 2448 Nursery Road, next to a recently processed amendment at 2446 Nursery Road.

5B. Interesting Topics from Your Planner's Notebook

Citing all the prior robust discussions, Rodney Chatman noted there were no additional topics to take up at this time.

6. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

6A. CPA Actions and Forward Pinellas Administrative Review Items

Rodney Chatman briefly mentioned the approval of two cases in Clearwater and a map amendment in Reddington Shores at the July and August CPA meetings.

6B. SPOTlight Emphasis Areas Update

Rodney Chatman advised there are no updates to report.

7. UPCOMING EVENTS

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

Before adjournment, Derek Kilborn publicly thanked Forward Pinellas staff (including Whit Blanton) for their work on the Special Act Review Subcommittee, praising the clarity of the presentations and their usefulness in explaining complex topics to city staff and elected officials.

8. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:13 p.m.

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Chair Date