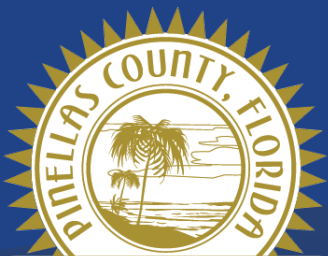


# Pinellas Trail Connection Issues



Parks and Conservation Resources Department  
Paul Cozzie  
Director

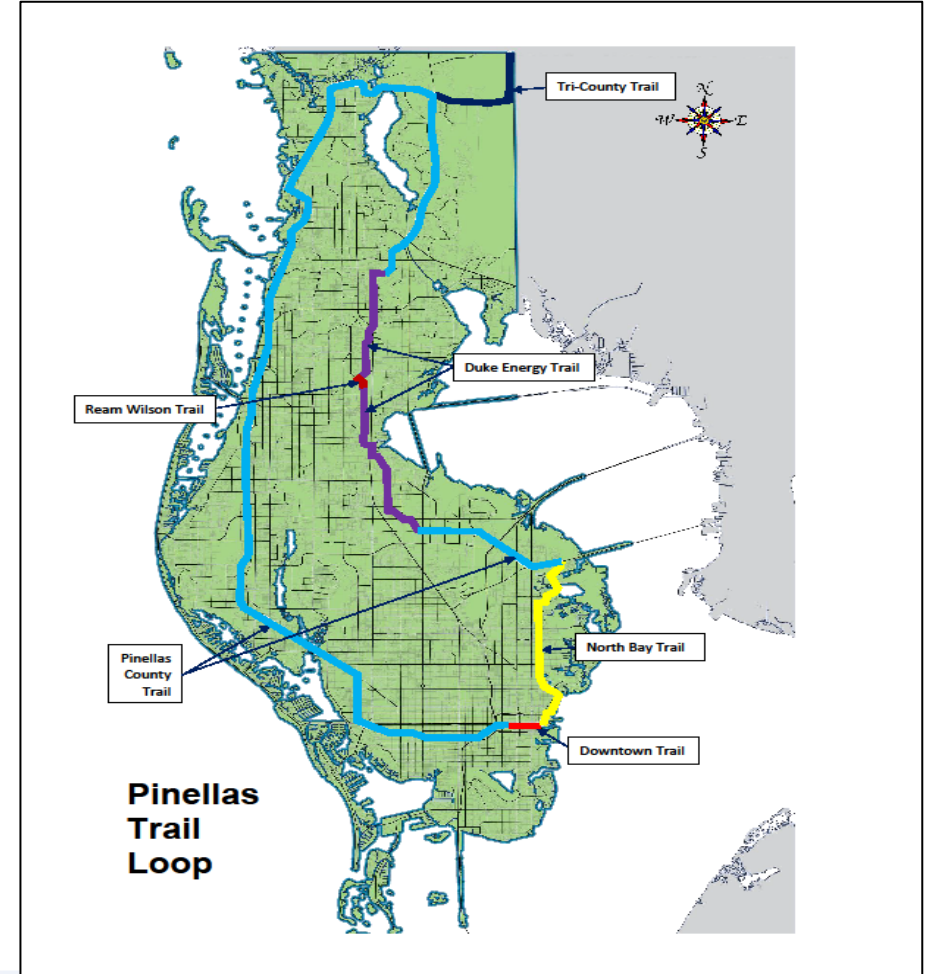
BOARD OF  
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

**Our Vision: To Be the Standard for Public Service in America**



# The Pinellas Trail

- Current length is approximately 55 miles and includes segments of Duke Energy Trail and Tri-County/Coast to Coast Trail.
- Connection issues are primarily related to the 44-mile Fred Marquis Pinellas Trail portion of the Trail Loop. There are approximately 140 access points on this portion of the trail, including governmental, commercial and residential connections, both permitted and unpermitted.





## Background

- 1986: Pinellas County enters into Public Purpose Lease Agreement with FDOT for use of abandoned CSX railway corridor as a public trail
- 1990: First five mile stretch of Pinellas Trail opens from Taylor Park to Seminole City Park
- 1996: CSX railway corridor conveyed to Pinellas County by FDOT
- 2003: Pinellas Trail designated a National Recreation Trail by U.S. Department of Interior
- 2008: Progress Energy (now Duke Energy) Trail opens
- 2017: Tri-County Trail/Coast to Coast Connector opens



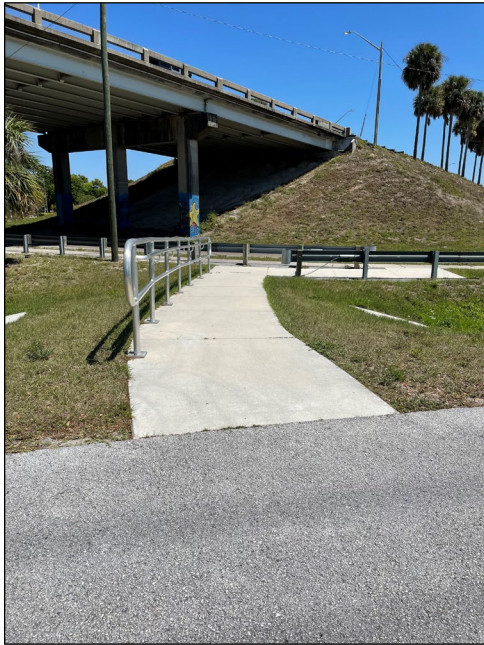
# Types of Trail Connections



- County Permitted Access Connections
- Municipality Initiated (with County Approval) Access Connections
- Unpermitted Connections
  - Commercial
  - Residential



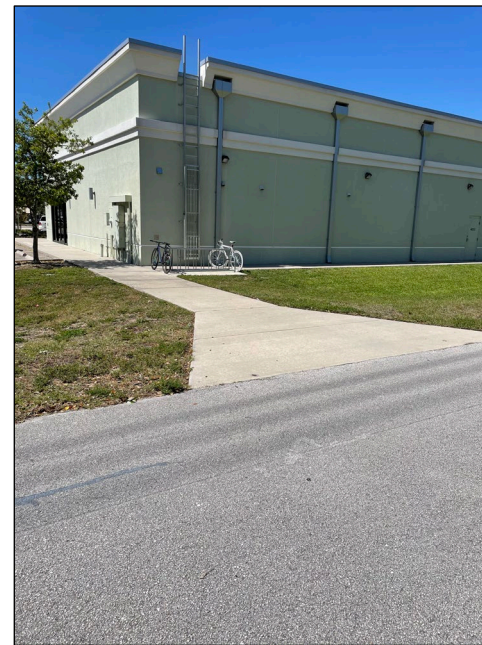
# Examples of County Permitted Access Connections



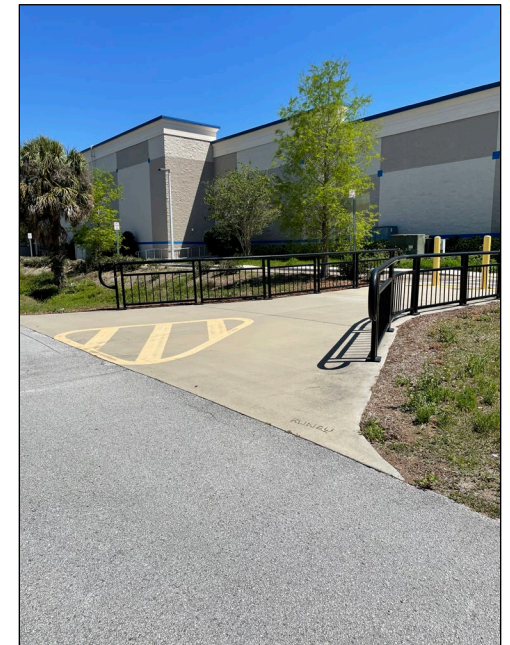
Tyrone Blvd. Overpass



Seminole City Park



Anytime Fitness @ Park Street



Tyrone Mall

County permitted access connections may include sidewalk connections or commercial connections approved as part of a development, when the developer assumes responsibility for design, permitting, construction and maintenance of the connection.



# Examples of Municipality Initiated (with County Approval) Access Connections



City of Largo 4<sup>th</sup> Ave. NW



City of Seminole PW Operations



City of Tarpon Springs Meres Crossing/Alt 19

Municipality initiated access connections are connections requested by a city in order to improve access to the Pinellas Trail from adjacent neighborhoods, or as part of a proposed city development agreement. Either the city or developer assumes responsibility for the design, permitting, construction and maintenance of the access connection, subject to County approval.



# Examples of Unpermitted Commercial Connections



Unpermitted Commercial Connections are access points along the trail that have been placed without notification to, or approval by, the County which allow trail users to access commercial establishments directly from the trail.

There are no uniform minimum standards applied to the design, location, materials or construction methods applied to the installation of the connection.



# Examples of Unpermitted Residential Connections



Unpermitted Residential Connections are access points along the trail that have been placed by the resident without notification to, or approval by, the County for the sole convenience of the property owner and serve no broader public purpose or convenience.

There are no uniform minimum standards applied to the design, location, materials or construction methods applied to the installation of the connection.

# Potential Issues with Unpermitted Connections



- Safety/Liability
- Potential for Drainage Obstruction and Flood Risk
- Impedes Mowing Operations
- Impedes Ditch Maintenance
- Does it enhance the trail user experience?

# Current Practices for Addressing Permitted and Unpermitted Connections



## Permitted Connections

- Municipalities and/or Individuals are directed to apply for a Utilization Permit (UP).
- Staff determines public purpose and will issue an RUP if all conditions are satisfied, including design review and maintenance responsibilities.

## Unpermitted Connections

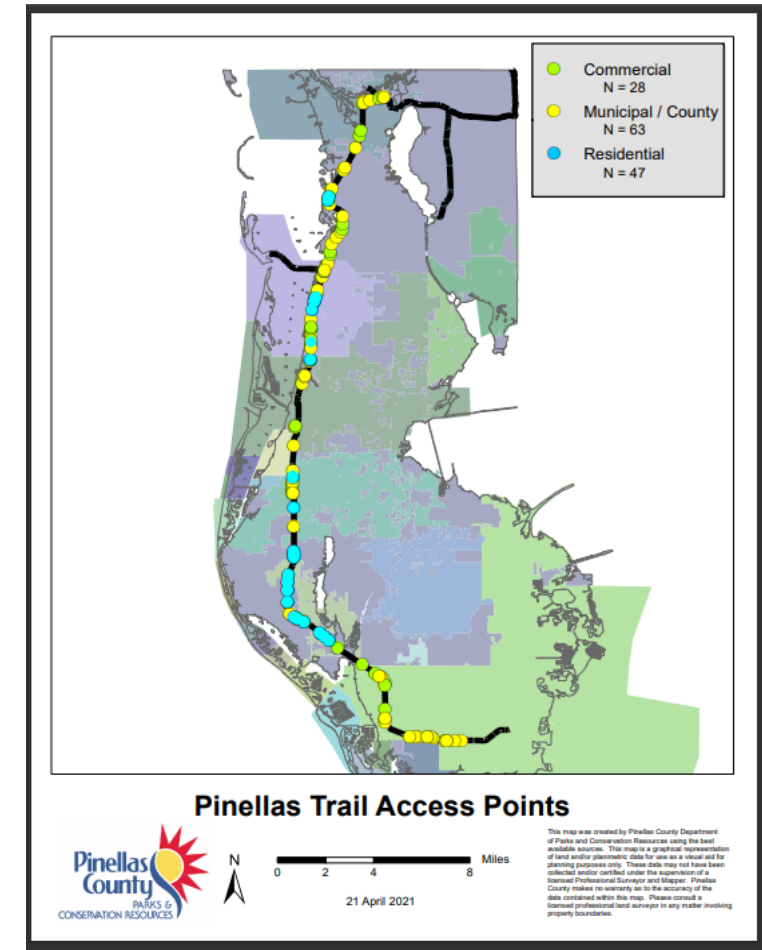
- Past approach was to request removal, but currently taking a “no net change” approach due to lack of resources. No action taken unless complaint received, the connection is in disrepair, or evidence of new reconstruction/renovation.
- Municipality may make a request on behalf of a commercial entity if it meets public purpose and municipality assumes responsibility (permitting, design and construction) for the connection.



# Options for Addressing Unpermitted Access Points

1. Create a process for commercial businesses to provide access to their establishments from the Pinellas Trail through the development of specific County standards to address safety/liability concerns, ADA accessibility, impact on trail maintenance activities, and potential legal issues.
2. Continue to require the removal of “built” private residential connections to the trail.
3. Take no action and continue with current practices.

Note: Any option under consideration would require review of legal issues, risk/liability concerns, impact on staff resources, potential unintended consequences



# Comments or Questions?

