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**MESSAGE  
FROM  
SECRETARY  
DAVID  
GWYNN**



It is hard to believe that we are already heading towards the end of 2021 and preparing for 2022! Although the last year has presented many challenges I am proud to say that District Seven has been making great strides in implementing safety measures that will help us move towards our Vision Zero goals. These have included implementing new safety engineering measures, working with our great law enforcement partners, and using new technology and educational tools to better educate the public on how to be a safe road user. Our maintenance and construction teams have been stepping up and helping us identify new opportunities.

We still have a lot of work to do, but as you read this newsletter, you will see some of the great work that is being done. The Vital Few Safety Initiative is changing the way we approach safety in the department, ensuring that our manuals and procedures are aligned with our vision and goals.

Thank you all for everything you do to make District Seven safer for everyone!

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## Leading Pedestrian Intervals improve pedestrian crossings

The Tampa Bay region is experiencing an alarming trend as pedestrian fatalities have continued to climb. In 2019, the number of pedestrians killed in crashes jumped nearly 10%; Hillsborough County was in the lead with 59 pedestrian fatalities, followed by 36 in Pinellas County, 23 in Pasco County, seven in Hernando, and one fatality in Citrus County. These numbers are nearly double what they were just six years ago. Since the Tampa Bay Region is experiencing a higher-than-average pedestrian and bicycle crashes, there is a need to provide targeted safety improvements at signalized intersections.

A common intervention strategy being prioritized by the District is a Leading Pedestrian Interval, or LPI. An LPI is a protocol used to adjust the timing of traffic signals to allow pedestrians to start crossing prior to motor vehicular traffic movement, helping people in crosswalks be more visible to drivers. District Seven expects to install up to 500 LPIs at various signalized intersections throughout Pinellas and Hillsborough counties by the end of 2021.



*Watch this video FDOT produced to educate the public about the installation of the LPIs which provides a demonstration of how they work.*

For additional information about LPIs, please see the in-depth article all about LPIs featured in the Summer 2021 issue of the **FDOT D7 Safety** newsletter.



existing conditions, developing and evaluating a range of improvements, known as alternatives, and preparing project documents. A public hearing is tentatively scheduled for spring 2022 and the study is expected to be completed by fall 2022.

## TO LEARN MORE PLEASE VISIT THE PROJECT WEBSITE:

[fdotd7studies.com/projects/gandy-4th-to-westshore](https://fdotd7studies.com/projects/gandy-4th-to-westshore)

## Study assesses future improvements for Gandy Boulevard

FDOT District Seven is currently conducting a Project Development and Environment (PD&E) study along Gandy Boulevard (US 92/SR 600) from 4th Street North to Westshore Boulevard. The purpose of a PD&E study is to address the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act and used to determine the location and conceptual designs of feasible build alternatives for roadway improvements and their social, economic, and environmental effects.

The Gandy Boulevard PD&E study is evaluating capacity improvements, such as roadway widening and the addition of bicycle and pedestrian facilities, as well as issues related to traffic operation, safety, access management, freight movements, and transit. The study will also evaluate stormwater management facility and floodplain compensation sites. The acquisition of additional right of way and bridge widening or replacement is anticipated as part of the final recommendation, and a grade-separated overpass at Brighton Bay Boulevard is also being considered. The “no-build” or “no action” alternative, which leaves Gandy Boulevard in its present state and provides for only routine maintenance, is also a viable option within the PD&E study.

The Gandy Boulevard PD&E study began in February 2020. The main project activities include public involvement, data collection, analysis of



Photo provided by Pasco County MPO.

## Pasco County's first active transportation plan is underway

With the opening of the Starkey Gap and Coastal Anclote Trails in 2020, Pasco County now has over 165 miles of paved multiuse paths. The county is also constructing pedestrian overpasses at SR 54 and SR 52 to provide safer connections for riders on the Suncoast Trail and is in the process of completing Pasco County's section of the Florida Coast-to-Coast Trail. In recognition of these amazing opportunities to improve safety and mobility for all users, the Pasco County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) initiated its first Active Transportation Plan (ATP) in 2021. The MPO's ATP action items for this year have included identifying existing public facilities, identifying of areas of concern based on crash data, and developing of an outline for safety and engagement strategies that will support both the ATP and the MPO's Vision Zero priorities for 2022.

## TO LEARN MORE ABOUT PASCO COUNTY MPO ACTIVITIES, VISIT:

[pascocountyfl.net/2098/About-Us](https://pascocountyfl.net/2098/About-Us)

## New signage and pavement markings alert motorists driving the wrong way



FDOT headquarters conducted a statewide study of crash data from 2012 to 2016 and noted that there were over 1,800 Wrong Way Driver (WWD) crashes on state highway arterials and more than 250 WWD crashes on interstates. Tragically, 7% of these crashes resulted in fatality and 52.5% resulted in serious injury. Of the 1,890 WWD arterial crashes, 702 crashes, or 37%, occurred on only 3.6% of the state's arterial highway centerline miles, helping FDOT identify specific target areas to implement interventions. The study also found that over 95% of WWD crashes occurred within 450 feet of where the drivers potentially entered the roadway traveling the wrong way. More than half of the crashes occurred at or near intersections, and 38% of drivers turned the wrong way at a signalized intersection.

For these reasons, FDOT is enhancing the signing and pavement markings at select stop-controlled intersections, signalized intersections, and connections along arterials and collectors to mitigate these WWD occurrences. The Brooksville Operations office in District Seven is currently implementing this WWD strategy on US 19 in Hernando County, north of SR 50.

### Video 1. 21<sup>st</sup> St at SR 60 – WB Direction



For more information on WWD interventions, please watch FDOT's PSA on WWD arterial roadways.



*Steve Diez adjusts a bike helmet on a young child.*

## Remembering Steve Diez, Hernando-Citrus MPO executive director



It takes a village to improve roadway safety; that village lost one of its champions when Steve Diez, executive director of the Hernando-Citrus Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), passed away unexpectedly this past August. Steve had been a transportation planner in Hernando County since 1999 and was set to retire from the MPO at the end of October. He served as the president of the Friends of the Withlacoochee State Trail organization and was known by many as an avid bicyclist and passionate advocate for improving the region's trail network. Steve was also a vocal proponent of active transportation and making streets safer for everyone who uses them. He will be dearly missed.



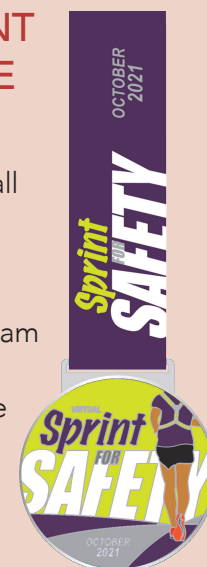
FDOT and University of South Florida pilot participants who completed the 5K challenge pose at medal ceremony.

## Sprint for Safety – Spring pilot project inspires regional 5K challenge this fall

A virtual Sprint for Safety 5K Challenge was piloted to select departments within the University of South Florida and FDOT District Seven during the month of April 2021. More than 200 participants signed up and completed the challenge, providing the experiential data necessary to plan a large-scale Sprint for Safety event for all FDOT departments and the public this fall. Pilot participants had the option of completing a 5K (3.1 miles) or one mile distance. A medals ceremony was held on July 15, 2021 for FDOT staff who participated in the pilot project and completed the 5K challenge.

### FINISH THE OCTOBER SPRINT FOR SAFETY 5K CHALLENGE AND RECEIVE A MEDAL!

Please help FDOT shine by joining the fall Sprint for Safety 5K Challenge, running the entire month of October, in honor of Pedestrian Safety Month. This event is a great opportunity to show your FDOT team spirit, get moving, and experience local pedestrian infrastructure. Participants are encouraged to post photos of pedestrian facilities they encounter on their route. Those who complete the 5K challenge will receive a commemorative medal.



Join the **VIRTUAL CHALLENGE** at:  
[bit.ly/sprintforsafety2021](https://bit.ly/sprintforsafety2021)



## Reminding the public to plan for a sober ride home this Halloween

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has launched a Halloween-themed safety campaign to remind drivers of the dangers of driving while intoxicated. Arranging for a sober ride home in advance means getting to have a fun holiday and arriving home safely.

## Road Safety Audits can improve safety

On September 9, 2021, Ginger Regalado with FDOT District Seven and George Edmiston with Tindale Oliver provided a Road Safety Audit (RSA) training to City of Temple Terrace staff. An RSA is a formal examination of safety performance for an existing or future road or intersection by an independent, multidisciplinary team. This assessment approach augments already established traditional review procedures and will help city staff gain a more holistic picture of safety for any project being examined. The RSA review process considers all road users, accounts for human factors and road user capabilities, is documented in a formal report, and requires a formal response from the authority that owns the assessed road. RSAs can be performed in any phase of project development, from planning through construction, however, agencies are encouraged to conduct an RSA at the earliest stage possible, as the process can identify design improvements and safer alternatives. RSAs can also be conducted on any size project, from minor updates to existing infrastructure to those requiring large-scale construction.



*George Edmiston, Tindale Oliver, presents to Temple Terrace staff.*

### RSAs provide the following benefits:

- Reduce the number and severity of crashes by providing safer designs.
- Reduce costs resulting from safety concerns by identifying and addressing issues before projects are built.
- Improve awareness of safe design practices.
- Increase opportunities to integrate multimodal safety strategies and proven safety countermeasures.
- Expand the consideration of human factors in all facets of design.

By participating in the training, City of Temple Terrace staff have reaffirmed the city's commitment to road user safety. Ultimately, this process is intended to result in the implementation of low- to medium-cost spot safety improvements at the location, as well as document the need for more complex projects or studies.



## Sunshine Skyway Bridge fencing helps prevent people from jumping

At 200 feet high, the Sunshine Skyway Bridge offers stunning views in all directions. There has also been a dark side to these views. Since 1987, more than 250 people have jumped from the bridge, averaging around one death per month, and making the bridge one of the top suicide bridges in the U.S. To help prevent people from jumping off the Sunshine Skyway Bridge, an eight-foot-tall marine-grade steel fence was added on top of the existing concrete barrier on both sides of the bridge, making the fence a total of 11-feet high. The design is lightweight and doesn't add wind resistance or obstruct the sweeping views. In 2021, there has been one death from jumping off of the bridge, and it happened in January, the day before installation began on the 11-foot-high steel netting. The \$3.4 million project was funded through the toll system.

## Move Safe, Pinellas: a multimodal safety and education program

Thousands of individuals in Florida rely on biking or walking as their primary transportation option. Florida is also ranked as one of the top states in the nation for the highest number of bicyclist- and pedestrian-related crashes and fatalities. Move Safe, Pinellas looks beyond engineering solutions and supports the education component of the 4 E's of highway safety by influencing behavior changes and encouraging good habits in multimodal road users, specifically bicyclists and pedestrians.



Example of education materials.

The Move Safe, Pinellas multimodal safety and education program aims to enhance bicyclist and pedestrian safety and reduce the occurrence of related crashes and fatalities in Pinellas County, Florida. Since 2018, the award-winning safety program has educated thousands of individuals through its extensive community outreach and distribution of safety devices. The program partners with human services agencies, the sheriff's office, and the school district, among other community groups, to directly reach what has been identified as the county's most vulnerable road users. This includes at-risk individuals who experience substance abuse or homelessness, low-income residents who are limited in their transportation options, and grade school students who walk or bike to school.



Safety items distributed to the public.

With funding support from the Pinellas County Board of Commissioners, the program provides bicyclists and pedestrians with bright and reflective safety devices, such as bike lights, backpack lights, and reflective wrist-wraps; promotes social media awareness and offers demonstrative videos; and

makes bicyclist and pedestrian educational materials available in a variety of forms to meet the needs of its diverse demographic. Educational materials, videos, and safety resources are available at [PinellasCounty.org/MoveSafe](https://PinellasCounty.org/MoveSafe).



Mayor Jane Castor, Tampa, participates in bike event.

## Tampa's Vision Zero Plan aims to eliminate roadway fatalities

The City of Tampa has committed to striving for zero fatalities and severe injuries on its roadways. To achieve this goal, the city has established Vision Zero Tampa, a collaborative approach that integrates data, demographics, roadway design, and human behavior to guide necessary infrastructure and policy changes. Alana Brasier, AICP, the city's Vision Zero Coordinator, has been working with Vision Zero Task Force members, which is comprised of city leadership and staff, agency partners including FDOT D7, Bike/Walk Tampa Bay, and other organizations, to develop a Vision Zero Action Plan to serve as a roadmap. A draft of the plan is being reviewed and is anticipated to be presented to the public later this fall.

FDOT employees are working hard to make Florida's roadways safer for all who use them; partnerships, like Vision Zero Tampa, help address safety concerns outside of FDOT's jurisdiction and help provide safer connections to the state roadways and interstate facilities the department oversees.

## Impaired Driving Education Awareness committee gets a teen perspective

The Impaired Driving Education Awareness (IDEA) Committee was founded in May 2021 to brainstorm creative ways to change the behavior of impaired drivers. The committee is made up of members representing several local agencies and organizations such as FDOT, City of Tampa Police Department, Bike/Walk Tampa Bay, MADD and many others that are passionate about safe driving.



D7 Secretary David Gwynn and IDEA members gain insight into teen behavior.



IDEA meeting participants pose with Shaina Finkel, SADD national president (center).

An important step in addressing unsafe driver behavior is to understand the specific audiences that are prone to impaired driving. The committee meets every three weeks to discuss ways to implement change, including creating literature and identifying communications channels to get safety messaging to the right audiences. At the September 21, 2021 meeting, the IDEA committee invited Shaina Finkel, the national president of Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) and a student at Wiregrass Ranch High School in Pasco County to speak to the group. Ms. Finkel's presentation titled "Cold. Hard. Facts." provided insight into underage methods for obtaining and consuming alcohol. She spoke about different communications strategies required to reach teens versus adults. She also shared results from a recent teen survey she conducted informing the audience about how teens are using fake IDs to purchase alcohol.

## BWTB 2021 VIRTUAL Summit

**November 5, 2021**

VIRTUAL BIKE TOUR – 4:00 to 4:30 P.M.  
VIRTUAL SUMMIT – 4:30 P.M. to 6:00 P.M.



SIGN UP FOR THE BWTB SUMMIT: [bikewalktampabay.org/summit](https://bikewalktampabay.org/summit)

BE SURE TO CHECK OUT THE GULF COAST SAFE STREETS HYBRID SUMMIT, HAPPENING IN CONJUNCTION WITH BWTB'S EVENT:



**GULF COAST**  
Safe Streets Hybrid Summit

**SAVE THE DATE**

**NOVEMBER 2-4, 2021**

[www.GulfcoastSafeStreetsSummit.org](https://www.GulfcoastSafeStreetsSummit.org)





Crossing guard assists students in crosswalk near the new Starkey Ranch School (K-8) in Pasco County.

## Pasco MPO focuses on safety at new Starkey Ranch School

The Pasco County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) assisted the Pasco County Sheriff's Crossing Guard Division during the opening week of the new Starkey Ranch School (K-8). With a current enrollment of 1,200 students and 1,600 anticipated by next year, this new school offers a great opportunity for a large number of students to walk and bike using the network of multiuse paths that connect the school to hundreds of homes and a multifamily complex.

The MPO provided volunteers to educate parents and students on suggested safe routes and tips for the crossing roads and roundabouts located close to the school. Using input from the county sheriff's office, the MPO designed and placed over 50 directional arrow signs to reinforce safe routes and remind drivers to slow down. The arrow signs developed by the MPO have been approved by the sheriff's office for use with other schools across the county.

As the week progressed, more families left their vehicles at home and enjoyed the time savings of avoiding having to wait in the congested car line to drop off students. The MPO is planning walking school bus and other training activities later in the year to reinforce safety, especially as more students choose to walk and bike throughout the year. The MPO thanks the many agencies that supported several weeks of coordination, including site visits to walk the community and develop

engagement strategies. Partners included the District School Board of Pasco County, the Pasco Community Traffic Safety Team, the Pasco County Traffic Operations Division, AECOM, and Tindale Oliver.

(Below) MPO staff show off directional signs developed to help students identify safe routes and remind drivers to slow down.



## Mobility Week

OCT. 29 – NOV. 5, 2021

### Do You Love To Ride?

Join us for a fun, free statewide challenge and help inspire more people to ride bikes. The **Love to Ride Florida** challenge kicks off on Friday, October 29 and continues to Tuesday, November 30, 2021.

Individuals, social groups and workplaces can all participate in a competition for the top spots on statewide leaderboards. Earn points every time you ride and for each person you encourage to join the challenge.

**Register before October 29 to be eligible to win an early bird prize!**



[www.MobilityWeekFL.com](http://www.MobilityWeekFL.com)

## New crosswalk in South St. Petersburg improves access to transit and shopping

FDOT District Seven recently partnered with the City of St. Petersburg and PSTA to complete a safety improvement project for a new crosswalk and bus stop near the Walmart on 34th St. S. in St. Petersburg, FL. The addition of a crosswalk and bus stop is a direct result of a local resident and city council member requesting FDOT install a new crossing for easier access to the northbound bus stop in this area.

The original request suggested installing a mid-block crosswalk between the Wawa and Walmart at this location but, upon review, it was determined the roadway did not meet the necessary requirements for a mid-block crosswalk. FDOT conducted a review of northbound PSTA transit stops along the nearby 34th Street corridor and determined there was an existing crosswalk at the 38th Ave S. signalized crossing as well

of the existing 38th Ave S. stop to reduce the travel distance for pedestrians leaving the Walmart area. All parties agreed the new crosswalk should be located at the south leg of the 34th Ave S. signal so that pedestrians will not have to cross the Walmart driveway to get to the new northbound bus stop.

Coordination of this work was initially between District Seven Traffic Operations and the City of St. Petersburg; PSTA and FDOT Pinellas Operations were also brought in to assist in a joint project to get the work accomplished. Following coordination efforts between all parties, Traffic Operations developed the design plans and purchased the new pedestrian signal materials, Pinellas Operations' Asset Maintenance Contractor performed all concrete and sod-related work, PSTA installed the new bus stop, and the City of St. Petersburg constructed the new pedestrian signals and pavement markings to round out construction. The initial crosswalk inquiry to FDOT occurred in September 2020. Due to swift coordination between the necessary parties, the plan was finalized April 2021 and the work was completed in July 2021.



*New crosswalk and bus stop make shopping access easier.*

as one at the 34th Ave S. signalized crossing (Walmart driveway), but the latter lacked user functionality. The city requested PSTA staff consider a revised northbound bus stop at the 34th St. S signal, which would provide safer and more appropriate options for pedestrians compared to an unprotected mid-block crosswalk across seven travel lanes. It was agreed that a new northbound bus stop be installed 1,200 feet north



# Make October all about safety & mobility!

As holidays approach and Florida's weather gets cooler, awareness about walking, bicycling, and driving safely gets hotter. Take time this October to participate in great transportation safety happenings and see FDOT's work in action!



**October 1-31**

FDOT Employees & the Public are invited to join the

## **Sprint for Safety 5K or 1 Mile Fun Run or Walk**

In honor of National Pedestrian Safety Month

- Free entry • Prize drawings • Commemorative 5K medal • Share your photo moments

**Join the VIRTUAL CHALLENGE at:**  
[bit.ly/sprintforsafety2021](http://bit.ly/sprintforsafety2021)



**October 1-31**

**is National  
Pedestrian  
Safety Month**

**October 6**

**is Walk to  
School Day**

**October 7**

Hillsborough Community College hosts

## **Road Safety Day**

Students & the public are invited

**For more info, email:**  
[DMStudentActivities@hccfl.edu](mailto:DMStudentActivities@hccfl.edu)

**October 17-23**

**is National  
Teen Driver  
Safety Week**

**October 18-22**

**is National  
School Bus  
Safety Week**



**Mobility  
Week**

**October 29 - November 5**

FDOT is gearing up to celebrate the sixth annual Mobility Week – a statewide campaign that promotes **smart, efficient, and safe** multimodal transportation choices through events held in partnership with local and regional agencies.

During Mobility Week, cities, counties, and transportation partner agencies host events to promote transportation choices, highlight transportation achievements, and roll out new initiatives or policies.

**Check out all the fun activities planned at:**  
[fdot.gov/projects/mobilityweek/mobilityweek2021.shtm](https://fdot.gov/projects/mobilityweek/mobilityweek2021.shtm)



**October 29 - November 30**

FDOT Employees & the Public are invited to join the

**Love to Ride  
Florida Challenge**

As part of Mobility Week

Statewide • Free to participate • Win great prizes • family-friendly • Any bike ride 10 minutes or more counts!

**Join the LOVE TO RIDE CHALLENGE at:**  
[lovetoride.net/florida](https://lovetoride.net/florida)



## Wrap up 2021 by participating in these great Safety Happenings

### OCTOBER

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

- 1-31** Pedestrian Safety Month
- 1-31** Sprint for Safety 5K Virtual Challenge
- 6** Walk to School Day
- 7** Road Safety Day (Hillsborough Community College)
- 17-23** National Teen Driver Safety Week
- 18-22** National School Bus Safety Week
- 29** Mobility Week Begins
- 29** Love to Ride Florida Challenge Begins
- 31** Halloween – Impaired Driving Awareness

### NOVEMBER

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21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

- 2-4** Gulf Coast Safe Streets Hybrid Summit
- 5** Bike/Walk Tampa Bay Virtual Summit
- 5** Mobility Week Ends
- 6-9** International Association of Chiefs of Police Annual Conference & Expo (Atlanta, GA)
- 24-28** Thanksgiving Holiday Travel Safety Awareness
- 25** Thanksgiving Day – Impaired Driving Awareness
- 30** Love to Ride Florida Challenge Ends

### DECEMBER

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12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

- 1-31** National Drunk & Drug-Impaired Driving Prevention Month
- 17** National Impaired Driving HVE Campaign (NHTSA) (Runs through Jan. 1, 2022)
- 31** New Years Eve – Impaired Driving Awareness



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