

**PINELLAS PLANNING COUNCIL
AGENDA MEMORANDUM**

AGENDA ITEM: V E.

MEETING DATE: September 8, 2009

SUBJECT:

Revised PAC Format

RECOMMENDATION:

Council Receive and Discuss As Is Appropriate
(Information Only – No Action Required)

BACKGROUND

As the PPC continues to examine its work program in light of recent budget and staff reductions, a number of programs will need to be streamlined or eliminated in the coming fiscal year. Regrettably, one such program that we will no longer be able to support in its current form is the monthly PAC meeting. These meetings, which require a large investment of PPC staff time for agenda preparation and distribution, attendance, presentations, and recording and distribution of minutes, will simply be beyond the capabilities of our reduced staff.

However, the PPC recognizes that PAC provides a valuable function, and an important voice, in the countywide planning process. We also recognize that local governments are undergoing similar reductions in budgets and staff, and that the time PAC members have available to spend outside of their own jurisdictions is also increasingly limited. To this end, we are introducing a revised PAC meeting format that will allow PAC the same opportunity to review, discuss, and recommend action on countywide planning agenda items, but without requiring travel to the PPC offices or the extensive involvement of PPC staff.

Beginning in October 2009, future PAC agendas will be posted using Microsoft SharePoint, an Internet technology that allows information sharing and written discussion among groups of people regardless of location. The Pinellas County Business Technology Services (BTS) Department has been successfully using this technology for more than two years, and is making it available to all the departments and agencies it serves, including the PPC. The SharePoint service will replace the current in-person meeting format.

PINELLAS PLANNING COUNCIL ACTION:

COUNTYWIDE PLANNING AUTHORITY ACTION:

SUBJECT: Revised PAC Format

Using SharePoint, members will still be able to read, download, and print agenda documents from the PPC web site, but now in addition, will be able to post comments and engage one another in online discussions and debates. It will provide added flexibility and convenience to PAC members, while allowing agenda items to be discussed and commented on in a more efficient and direct manner than the traditional meeting format permits.

This resource is being provided for PAC members to use independently, without PPC staff involvement in the discussions. A PPC staff member will be designated to post agenda items and coordinate with BTS regarding any technical issues, but all other content will be administered by the PAC chair. While only PAC members will be permitted to post comments, the discussions will be visible to the public, and will be archived and made part of the PPC agenda packet each month.

PPC staff will give a short demonstration of the SharePoint service during the PAC meeting, and assign each local government with the username and password that their PAC representative will need to access it.