

1 HISTORY AND OVERVIEW OF COORDINATION MECHANISMS

Pinellas County has demonstrated a long standing commitment and history of participating in the coordination and planning of public educational facilities. Beginning with the Florida Legislature's adoption of the Educational Facilities Siting Act of 1995, the County and effected municipalities adopted Comprehensive Plan amendments and also entered into an Interlocal Agreement for Public Educational Facilities Siting with the Pinellas County School Board in September 1996. These Comprehensive Plan amendments and executed Interlocal Agreement, laid the foundation for the coordination and planning of public educational facilities by establishing a specific process by which the County, local governments, and the School Board, review and approve proposed educational facility sites.

Later in 2002, recognizing the mutual benefits of intergovernmental collaboration of public school planning, the Florida Legislature adopted additional legislation, requiring Counties and non-exempt municipalities to enter into a Public School Interlocal Agreement with the School Board. This Agreement solidified the framework for sharing of information relating to school site selection, student population enrollment, the School District's Five Year Facilities Work Program and Plant Survey, collocation and shared use of facilities, conflict resolution and School Board participation on the Local Planning Agency. In 2003, Pinellas County and participating local governments along with the School Board signed the Agreement.

Shortly thereafter in 2005, the Florida Legislature approved Senate Bill 360, which mandated that school concurrency be implemented to ensure the availability of public school seats as a prerequisite prior to the approval of residential plats/site plans and that local governments considered the impact of land use decisions on school capacity. In response to this directive, Pinellas County, together with the School Board and participating municipalities, began the process of creating a Public School Facilities Element (PSFE) and amended the original 2003 Public Schools Interlocal Agreement. Both of these documents formed the basis for implementing school concurrency and addressed additional school coordinating mechanisms in order to track residential site plans. In 2007, Pinellas County, adopted the PSFE as part of the Comprehensive Plan and entered into a revised Public Schools Interlocal Agreement with the School Board, and participating local governments.

However, the 2011 Florida Legislative session revised the 2005 statutory requirements for the implementation of school concurrency, making it no longer mandatory. Subsequently, County planning staff organized a meeting with the School Planning Workgroup, which is a multi-jurisdictional group consisting of local government planners and School District staff, to review the legislative changes and options relating to school concurrency. The Workgroup recommended to the Pinellas Schools Collaborative that the school concurrency be discontinued. The Pinellas Schools Collaborative, which is established by the Public Schools Interlocal Agreement and consists of elected representatives from the School Board and from each workgroup member's respective jurisdiction, agreed with the Workgroup's recommendation to eliminate school concurrency for various reasons.

On July 24, 2012, the Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners approved Comprehensive Plan amendments (to the goals, objectives, and policies) to eliminate the implementation of school concurrency. On October 16, 2012, the Board signed a revised Interlocal Agreement which removed school concurrency requirements and essentially restores the coordination efforts originally set forth in the original 2003 Agreement.