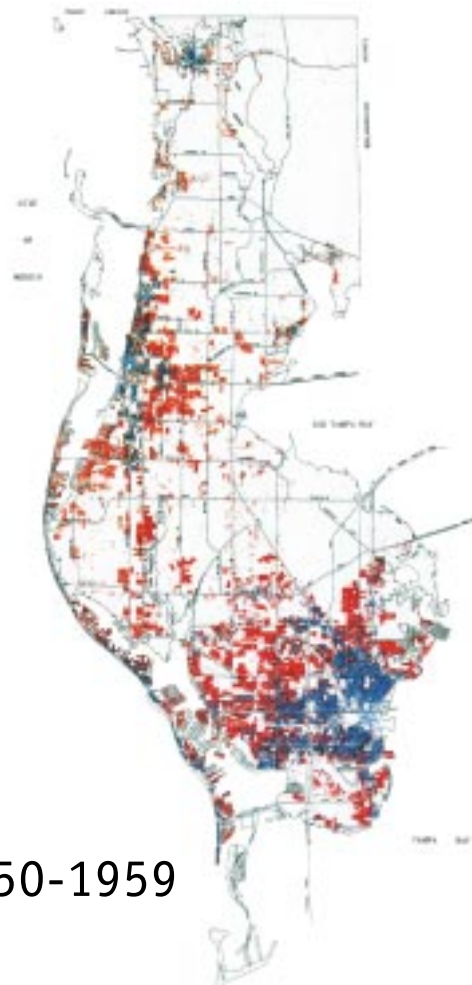


# Pinellas Planning Council

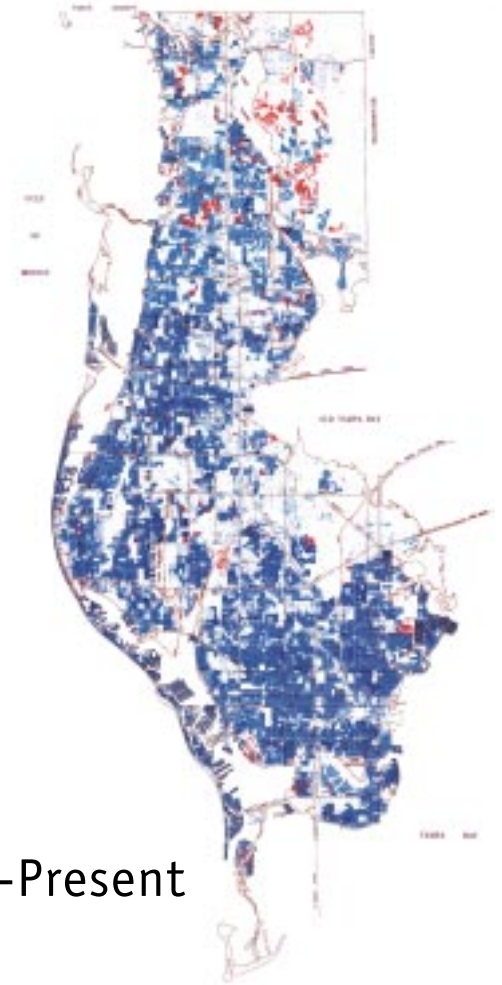
## Annual Report for FY 2001-02



1910-1919



1950-1959



1990-Present

■ Existing residential units  
■ New residential units

# The Pinellas Planning Council

Chairman



Commissioner  
Nadine Spring Nickeson  
City of Safety Harbor

Vice-Chairman



Vice-Mayor  
Janet Henderson  
City of Dunedin

Treasurer



Mayor Robert DiNicola  
City of Indian Rocks Beach  
Representing Group B Communities

Secretary



Mayor  
Robert Jackson  
City of Largo



Mayor Jerry Beverland  
City of Oldsmar



Councilmember Sandra L. Bradbury  
City of Pinellas Park



Mayor Tom De Cesare  
City of Madeira Beach



Mayor Frank DiDonato, DC  
City of Tarpon Springs



Councilmember Bill Foster  
City of St. Petersburg

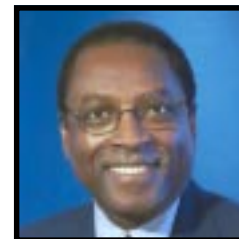
Representing Group A Communities



School Board Member  
Dr. Max R. Gessner  
Pinellas County School District



Commissioner Hoyt Hamilton  
City of Clearwater



Commissioner Calvin D. Harris  
Pinellas County



Mayor William B. Smith  
Town of Kenneth City  
Representing Group C Communities

Group A Communities: Madeira Beach, St. Pete Beach, Treasure Island

Group B Communities: Belleair Shore, Belleair Beach, Indian Rocks Beach, Indian Shores, North Redington Beach, Redington Beach, Redington Shores

Group C Communities: Belleair, Belleair Bluffs, Gulfport, Kenneth City, Seminole, South Pasadena

# Chairman's Message

Since its reconfirmation in 1988, the Pinellas Planning Council has served all county citizens in a variety of worthwhile endeavors. Among these, the PPC continues to play the role of honest broker in land use and intergovernmental issues. It does this by representing the twenty-four municipalities, the county, and the school system on one, unique panel. And while these various entities have, on occasion, disagreed and expressed different points of view regarding important issues, significant consensus exists on most issues. The representative forum that the PPC exemplifies, remains, more than ever before, a relevant and valuable organization for the county as it transitions to an infill and redevelopment phase of development.

The body of this annual report details the most significant accomplishments of the Council during the last fiscal year. I would like to highlight some that I think are most noteworthy together with a few of the challenges that remain for the Council to address.

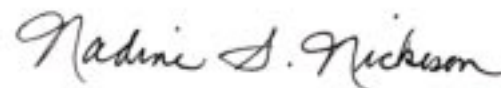
- The PPC has played an important role in assisting Pinellas County prepare for redevelopment. Working with the county government, the first phase of a study was completed with publication of *Redevelopment Issues and Strategies for Pinellas County* and additional phases have begun. However, in order to make it all work, we, the elected officials of Pinellas County, in coordination with the private sector, will need to exhibit the necessary countywide leadership and follow through for completing a plan.
- Our local assistance work has again proven of great value for those communities that use the service. Over the next several years, we can anticipate that local assistance will continue to be needed

especially when new redevelopment-focused regulations and state-mandated comprehensive plan updates must to be produced.

- While not yet completed, the countywide plan is being updated in order to more effectively address land use and intergovernmental coordination issues. Discussion of various parts of the proposed plan have produced spirited debates and thoughtful contributions to the final product.
- While the PPC was instrumental in developing the customized process for voluntary annexations in the county, the annexation issue continues to vex us. A solution that fairly and equitably satisfies the municipal, county, special district, and service provision interests will be reached. We know that this issue is an important one for our county and may set a precedent for our state.

Finally, it has been my pleasure to serve as PPC chair during this last year. I want to thank my fellow Council members for the opportunity to serve. I have found the experience to be interesting, educational, and challenging. We have had lively discussions and reached innovative conclusions. I thank Mr. Healey and his staff for the excellent technical support. I look forward to continue serving on the Council and wish the incoming chair a successful year.

Sincerely,



Nadine S. Nickeson, Chairman

# Countywide Planning Authority

The Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners serves as the Countywide Planning Authority (CPA) for Pinellas County, as provided for in the Special Act (Ch. 88-464, Laws of Florida) and the County Charter.

The seven elected county commissioners, in their capacity as the CPA, serve as the final decision-making body in the adoption and administration of the Countywide Plan. In conjunction with the PPC, the CPA guides the growth and development of Pinellas County in a manner consistent with the best interests of the county as a whole. During this last fiscal year, the CPA acted on 52 amendments to the Countywide Future Land Use Plan Map.

County Commissioner Calvin D. Harris has served as the Pinellas County representative on the PPC for the past two years, and has been an effective liaison between the PPC and the CPA, helping to stimulate thoughtful discussions regarding many countywide planning issues.



Seated, left to right:

Commissioner Susan Latvala

Commissioner Barbara Sheen Todd, Chairman

Commissioner Karen Williams Seel, Vice-Chairman

Standing, left to right:

Commissioner Kenneth T. Welch

Commissioner Robert B. Stewart

Commissioner Calvin D. Harris

Commissioner John Morroni

# Planners Advisory Committee

The Planners Advisory Committee (PAC) provides technical input and makes recommendations on matters that come before the Council. The committee is made up of directors of the various local government planning departments, or their selected representatives, as well as a representative from the Pinellas County School District.

The PAC meets with PPC staff on a regular basis to review items being brought to the Council, and serves as an additional source of professional input to the decision-making process. Major components of the PAC effort this past year included reviewing land use plan amendments to maintain consistency with the Countywide Plan; reviewing voluntary annexations; and providing input into the joint redevelopment study.

Mitch Bobowski, General Services Director for the City of Seminole, and Gordon Beardslee, Planning Administrator for Pinellas County, served respectively as Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the PAC during FY 2001-02.



Standing, left to right: Marie Dauphinais, Oldsmar; Jeff Dow, Dunedin; Susanne Hicks, Gulfport; Tom Shevlin, Pinellas Park; Dave Goodwin, St. Petersburg; Lynn Rosetti, Treasure Island; Mitch Bobowski, Seminole; Mike Nadeau, Redington Shores.

Seated, left to right: Erik Bredfeldt, Largo; Katherine Burbridge, Indian Rocks Beach; Jim Miller, Pinellas County School District; Gordon Beardslee, Pinellas County.

Not present for picture: Cyndi Tarapani, Clearwater; Malcolm Green, Indian Shores; Paula Cohen, Maderia Beach; Ron Rinzivillo, Safety Harbor; Chris Brimo, St. Pete Beach; Renea Vincent, Tarpon Springs.

# The Countywide Planning Process

The Pinellas Planning Council (PPC) is comprised of thirteen elected officials who provide representation for each of the twenty-five local governments within Pinellas County and the Pinellas County School District. The PPC serves in an advisory role to the Countywide Planning Authority for the purpose of formulating and administering a coherent planning process that overcomes the inherent limitations of twenty-five separate local government plans, while respecting the prerogatives and individual character of each local government as set forth in those plans.

The countywide planning process, based upon a Special Act of the State Legislature (Chapter 88-464, Laws of Florida, as amended) and approved by referendum as an amendment to the Pinellas County Charter, was established to guide the growth and improvement of Pinellas County as a whole, with the participation of the county's member local governments and the School District.

Countywide planning, as administered by the PPC, is designed to promote a consistent, coordinated, and efficient approach to planning and development in Pinellas County with local, regional, and state government entities.

The work undertaken by the PPC during the past year reflected continued implementation of the strategic planning process established in 1999. This process involved review of the PPC's mission and role statements and preparation of goals and objectives, in conjunction with the Countywide Planning Authority, resulting in the long-range Strategic Plan for the Pinellas Planning Council. The annual and five-year work programs are derived from this plan.

Throughout the past year, the PPC has assisted local governments and developed numerous programs that furthered the countywide planning program. In addition to day-to-day operations, work completed or begun in Fiscal Year 2001-02 consisted of several major projects, as described on the following pages.

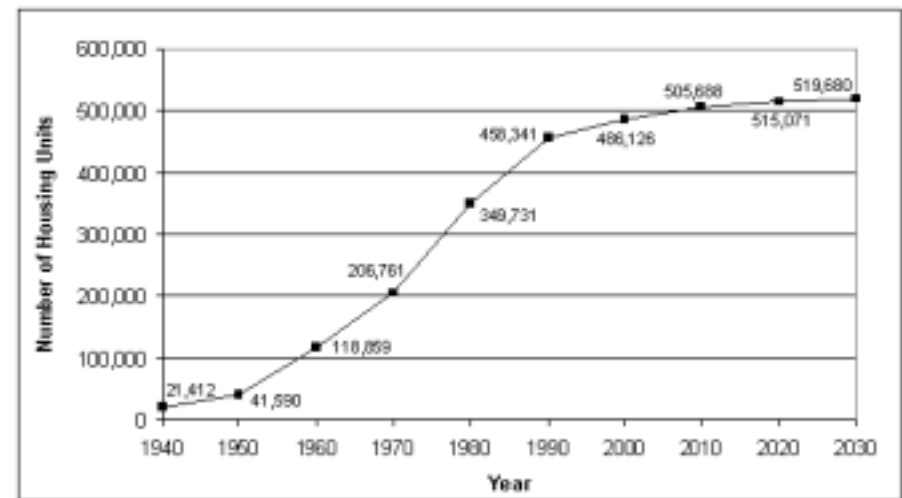
# Countywide Issues and Trends

## *Land Use*

Pinellas County is geographically unique. Located on a peninsula between the Gulf of Mexico and Tampa Bay, the county has a land area of just 280 square miles, with over 400 linear miles of coastline. Today the county contains more than a million permanent and seasonal residents, and is projected to grow by at least another 2,000 persons each year for the next three decades. However, this sustained growth is rapidly exhausting the supply of undeveloped land. The county is approaching full “buildout,” in which 100 percent of usable land has been developed at least once. With the county more than 95 percent built out, development has spread out as much as physically possible. Growth has begun to turn inward, redeveloping older properties and filling in vacant lots once deemed too marginal to develop.

Notwithstanding its dramatic population increases over the last several decades, residential development in Pinellas County has remained remarkably low-density, with an overall density of 6.85 units per acre -- the equivalent of a low- to medium-density suburb. Even when land use designations allow greater densities, development has often been built at densities lower than what is allowed either by zoning or land use designations.

From 1996 to 1999, residential land use designations decreased from 55.5 percent to 54.2 percent of total land area (a decrease of  $\pm 2,000$  acres), and preservation land increased from 12.2 percent to 13.4 percent (an increase of  $\pm 2,000$  acres). Other categories remained relatively constant. Numerous land use amendments were made during the period, indicating the continued evolution of our countywide character. In addition to the movement from lower density residential into the Preservation land use category, modest increases have also been seen in high-intensity public/semi-public and high-intensity industrial; and there has been an increasing amount of land included in “Community Redevelopment Districts” and “Central Business Districts,” together with



a reduction of single-use designations in those areas. These latter changes provide evidence of redevelopment efforts being made throughout the county.

Thus far, the increase in land with higher densities and intensities has been somewhat less than expected, given the constrained land supply. This may be due in part to a regulatory framework that prevents developers from overburdening hurricane evacuation resources, the roadway system, and other public facilities; these regulations may work to keep densities and intensities lower than the market alone would dictate. Another factor is that much of the land in Pinellas County has historically been developed at less intensive levels than permitted, and it is therefore possible to redevelop these parcels at increased densities without changing their future land use designations. It is expected that as competition for land increases, there will be more effort to redesignate parcels to higher densities and intensities.

### *Intergovernmental Coordination*

While Pinellas County is learning how to adjust to a new era of development, there is also the need to work toward improved intergovernmental relations. In fact, without multijurisdictional cooperation and coordination, a focused redevelopment initiative will be difficult to develop and sustain.

The reconstitution of the PPC in 1988 is a notable example of successful intergovernmental action in Pinellas County. The “Special Act” recognizes the intergovernmental relations role of the Council through a “coordinating” function, which the PPC fulfills by implementing future land use plan map consistency, and promoting consistent countywide regulations and balanced, efficient approaches to countywide issues.

However, while numerous intergovernmental successes can be identified, there is evidence of a drift toward more, not less, parochialism within the county. That drift can be seen in county and municipal responses to annexation activities, countywide planning efforts, and service provision.

Pinellas County local governments are by no means alone in exhibiting parochialism. It exists in virtually every jurisdiction in the state, nation, and world. Its existence, however, seldom has positive effects, and puts up barriers to those efforts that must be overcome or minimized before the problems that require cooperation can be solved.

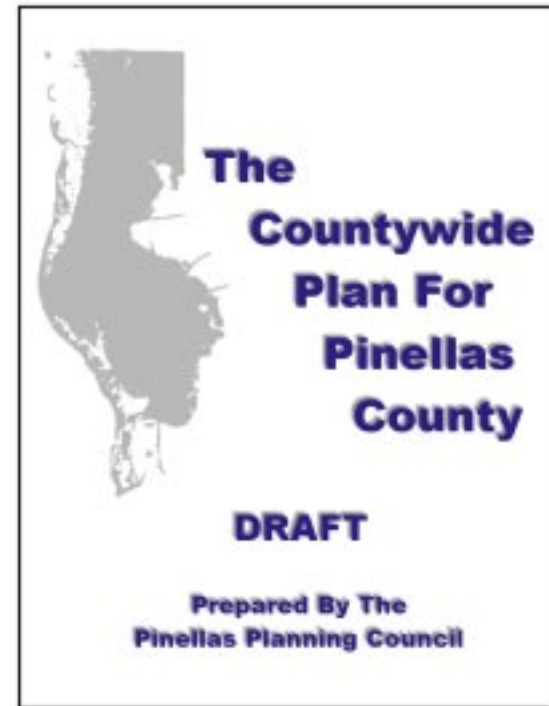
Within the last several years, there has been an increase in efforts to expand municipal corporate limits through annexation in order to increase local tax bases and provide needed and desirable services as well as delimit municipal boundaries in a logical manner. The ongoing and ambitious annexations created an environment of uncertainty and instability, resulting in a breakdown in intergovernmental coordination

between adjacent municipalities and the unincorporated county. Recognizing the negative results of such an environment, a referendum was approved in November, 2000, that established a comprehensive approach to voluntary annexation for Pinellas County. The new process implements a limited regulatory review process to ensure that municipal annexation is accomplished in a more rational, deliberate, and equitable manner.

### *Countywide Plan Update*

The issues areas of land use and intergovernmental coordination are both changing rapidly, creating new challenges for local governments. To help meet these challenges, the Council has directed that one of its most important planning tools, the Countywide Plan, be updated. The existing plan, titled the *Countywide Comprehensive Plan for Pinellas County* was originally adopted in 1979, and readopted with only minor changes in 1989.

The updated Countywide Plan will be organized into two components, one addressing land use and the other one intergovernmental issues. Each component will be divided into a number of major themes (e.g., the natural environment, economic sustainability), containing supportive data and analysis relevant to Pinellas County. A hierarchical structure of issues, policy statements, and strategies will comprise the adopted portion of the plan.



During the past fiscal year, staff conducted research and prepared drafts of the plan, while the Council participated in several progress reports, reviewing research and discussing topics addressed in the plan. The document is anticipated to be completed during early 2003.

# Local Assistance

An ongoing task of the PPC is to provide technical planning services to local governments with whom the Council has an interlocal agreement. Staff assists local governments by reviewing site plans, processing requests for variances, researching and applying for grants, evaluating proposed changes to land development regulations, and providing land use maps and technical assistance for special projects such as floodplain management plans.

PPC local assistance efforts provide an important contribution by allowing smaller communities, many of which are unable to retain their own planners, to obtain professional planning services in an economical manner. In addition, the PPC is able to learn from the experiences and practices of many different jurisdictions, and to share this information with other local governments.

An example of this assistance is the "Truth in Annexation" project. Even with the voluntary annexation reform measures provided for under the amended County Charter and Ordinance No. 00-63, the decision whether or not to annex can be confusing to property owners, given the combination of millage rates and service charges that may apply from one governmental jurisdiction to the next. To assist with this process, the PPC created an interactive spreadsheet that calculates an accurate estimate of property owner costs before and after annexation into a particular municipality, along with a detailed users manual. The Truth in

Annexation materials have been distributed to many Pinellas local governments, and have been used successfully by both government representatives and the public. A new edition of the program, incorporating updated millage rates and fees, was released at the end of the fiscal year.

**Comparison of Costs Related to Jurisdiction (Example)**

	County	City
<b>Section 1: Ad Valorem Taxes</b>		
Enter present fire district here <sup>1</sup>	Fire, Inc.	
Enter city annexing into here		Anytown
Millage rate for fire district	0.5000	
City millage rate		2.8560
Library Co-op	0.5000	
County MSTU	1.8560	
Enter special district (if applicable) <sup>2</sup>	0.0000	0.0000
Ad valorem paid by all residents <sup>3</sup>	175943	175943
Total Ad Valorem (in mills) in 2001	20.4503	20.4503
Enter taxable property value here	\$92,900	
Total Ad Valorem taxes per year in 2001	\$1,89983	\$1,89983
Ad Valorem Difference:	\$0 annually after annexation	

In another example, this year the PPC undertook a detailed, countywide study of wireless communication facilities. The study examined regulation and tracking issues faced by local governments, as well as the potential for enhancing public revenue generation. Likely future trends for the wireless industry, and the ability of current regulatory processes to accommodate them, were also assessed. As a result of this effort, the Council voted to hold an educational workshop in the spring of 2003, to further explore these issues.

# Redevelopment Focus

## *Background*

Geographically and historically, Pinellas County is unique, consisting of more than two dozen distinct communities that have grown together into a single metropolitan area. Bounded by water on three sides, the county is approaching a condition of “buildout,” in which 100 percent of usable land will be developed.

At the same time, many of the county’s buildings are aging. Small “mom and pop” beach motels with few amenities, old strip centers with no landscaping, and small, scattered, industrial structures were once prosperous, but now sit underutilized or empty. Some have been abandoned altogether, and are a blighting influence on their communities.

Meanwhile, new residents and employers continue to arrive each year, attracted by the favorable climate and coastal location. As these newcomers seek new places to live and locate their businesses, the inevitable result is that older, less efficient land uses are steadily being redeveloped into new uses.

The redevelopment process has already begun to create new challenges for our local governments. What will redevelopment look like? Will it change our communities? Can redevelopment alone provide economic

sustainability? And how can the redevelopment process be guided to make our communities better places to live?

Buildout marks an important transition for Pinellas County, and has begun to affect virtually all land use decisions made by local governments and the Council. Development can no longer be considered in a vacuum - each new use added through redevelopment, however beneficial, also takes an old use away, and may have an effect (whether positive or negative) on established neighboring land uses. Local officials must guide this process to ensure that new uses are better than the old, and that changes to the communities are positive ones.

## *Redevelopment Study*

Council members have thoughtfully considered these issues as they have evaluated amendments to the Countywide Plan during the past year. In addition to evaluating individual redevelopments during the Countywide Plan amendment process, the Council has embarked upon a major study examining the role of redevelopment in the county’s future. Phase I of this study, conducted jointly with the Pinellas County Economic Development Department, was concluded in February with publication of the final report, *Redevelopment Issues and Strategies for Pinellas County*. This report evaluated the current development environment in



the county, discussed impediments to high-quality redevelopment, and made a number of recommendations for subsequent actions.

The Council has now launched Phase 2 of the effort, in partnership with the Economic Development Department and the Board of County Commissioners. While Phase I focused almost entirely on land use, the second has adopted a broader approach that places equal emphasis on economic development, recognizing that the two policy areas are becoming increasingly interdependent as the county reaches buildout. In addition, special emphasis is being placed on consensus-building among the county's twenty-five local government jurisdictions.

Information technology will also play a larger role than during Phase I. Land use, real estate, and economic data from both the public and private sectors will be combined in a geographical information system (GIS) database, to be used for planning analysis. Another of the more innovative products of the study will be an analysis of community development patterns. While the study will acknowledge and respect the fact that each community is unique, it will also identify commonalities among areas with similar land use characteristics.

The work completed during the past fiscal year resulted in the creation of an economic development "summit," open to both the public and private sectors, to focus on building a consensus vision for the future. The December 2002 event, entitled "Redevelopment Opportunities for the Pinellas Community," was designed to lay the foundation for long-range redevelopment planning efforts. Desired goals for countywide economic development and redevelopment identified at the summit will be incorporated into future public and private actions.

# PPC Staff



David P. Healey, AICP  
Executive Director



Michael C. Crawford, AICP  
Principal Planner



Dolly Eylward  
Office Manager



Larry S. Pflueger  
Principal Planner



Abby Shannon  
Planner



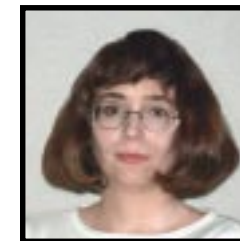
Theresa Goodman, AICP  
Program Planner



April Collins  
Secretary



Lynda Waldron  
Office Assistant



Linda Fisher  
Program Planner

# Year-End Financial Statement

The PPC's operating budget is prepared annually by the Executive Director, reviewed and approved by the Council, and adopted by the Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners. Copies of the proposed and adopted budget are forwarded to each local government. The budget

is funded by an ad valorem tax based on a millage rate applied countywide. The Fiscal Year 2001-02 millage rate was .0225, the same as last year. The year-end general purpose financial statement is shown below:

	<u>2002</u>	<u>2001</u>
REVENUE:		
Pinellas County property taxes	\$928,172	\$854,295
Interest	\$14,306	\$29,385
Contract services	<u>\$21,264</u>	<u>\$22,640</u>
Total revenue	\$963,742	\$906,320
EXPENDITURES:		
Payroll, taxes, and benefits	\$650,338	\$593,200
Contractual support services	\$67,863	\$100,760
Legal services	\$4,389	-
Rent	\$79,580	\$77,005
Equipment and furnishings	\$18,497	\$25,104
Telephone	\$2,887	\$2,876
Mail	\$5,784	\$29,373
Advertising notice	\$3,690	\$3,142
Printing and reproduction	\$12,657	\$16,943
Office supplies and materials	\$6,306	\$6,809
Property appraiser and tax collector commissions	\$29,801	\$25,627
Travel	\$4,378	\$6,646
Reference and education	\$7,101	\$7,504
Accounting and audit	\$5,500	\$5,867
Local government grants	-	\$12,000
Depreciation	\$8,322	-
Miscellaneous	<u>\$2,641</u>	<u>\$1,507</u>
Total expenditures	\$909,734	\$914,363
REVENUES OVER (UNDER) EXPENDITURES	\$54,008	(8,043)
FUND BALANCE, OCTOBER 1	<u>\$415,288</u>	<u>\$423,331</u>
FUND BALANCE, SEPTEMBER 30	\$469,296	\$415,288

# A Look Ahead to 2003

As the previous pages demonstrate, the Pinellas Planning Council has been active and engaged in countywide planning during the past year, and has accomplished a great deal. Looking ahead to next year, the Council will continue to build upon the progress made during the past twelve months.

The annual (FY 2002-03) and five-year (FY 2003-07) work programs identify tasks performed by the Council on a routine basis, as well as a number of special projects. Some of these tasks and projects include:

## Continuing Tasks

- Countywide plan and rules administration
- Review of voluntary annexation proposals
- Assistance to local governments as outlined in approved interlocal agreements
- Implementation of Council administrative functions
- Maintenance of the PPC web site and expansion of public information efforts regarding Council activities

## Special Projects

- Continuing Phase 2 of the redevelopment issues project, involving the identification and approval of courses of action to achieve the objectives identified in Phase I and address the findings of the Opportunities Summit

- Conducting a technical workshop to assist local governments in wireless facilities planning, and pursuing any agreed-upon follow-up actions
- Completion and implementation of the updated Countywide Plan
- Coordination and assistance with amendments to the State Growth Management Act and related state legislation affecting local governments

In the longer term, the Council will continue to address significant issues of countywide importance. These topics include:

- Helping local governments transition to a redevelopment-oriented planning focus
- Addressing issues of countywide importance, such as annexation and shared urban services
- Assisting local governments with comprehensive plan evaluations
- Update of the Countywide Rules
- Examination of zoning and land use regulations consistency issues
- Assisting local governments with implementing the recommendations of the Pinellas Assembly effort

## Pinellas Planning Council

600 Cleveland Street, Suite 850

Clearwater, FL 33755-4160

727.464.8250

<http://www.co.pinellas.fl.us/ppc>