

**TOWN OF HOWEY-IN-THE-HILLS, FLORIDA  
PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE FACILITIES PLAN  
TECHNICAL REPORT #3  
SIDEWALK AND BICYCLE TRAIL PLAN ALTERNATIVES**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

During the initial project meeting the Town was presented with an inventory of existing conditions for both sidewalks and bicycle facilities. Plans for additional sidewalks and bicycle facilities were identified as presented in plans from the Town, Lake County and the Lake Sumter Metropolitan Planning Organization. The initial report also reviewed the Town's development regulations for sidewalks and bicycle facilities. At the next workshop general options were presented for both sidewalks and bicycle facilities and questions and issues affecting both facilities were identified. Workshop attendees were then asked to work in smaller groups to develop options and alternatives for discussion and eventual action. This report will summarize the alternatives considered to date and present the plans developed in the breakout session at the February 5, 2019 meeting. This discussion will provide the framework for the recommendation of a most favored plan and other actions that should be considered to support the recommended policies and programs.

## **SIDEWALK ISSUES, OPPORTUNITIES AND ALTERNATIVES**

The development of sidewalk alternatives looked at shortcomings of the current network as identified through the inventory; key factors that were to be considered in developing and assessing alternatives; identifying appropriate alternatives; and dealing with development on infill lots where no sidewalk infrastructure exists. These issues will be discussed below.

### **Sidewalk Network Parameters**

The parameters for identifying and assessing sidewalk plan alternatives include the shortcomings of the current network; factors that a good qualify sidewalk network should address; and key destinations that a sidewalk network should serve. The current sidewalk network consists to two north-south spines with some sidewalks extending from these spines. One north-south spine is along SR 19 and the other is along Lakeshore Boulevard. These spines serve a number of high-profile destinations and provide access to most residential areas, but the two primary spines are not connected. The existing network also includes an extensive sidewalk network within the Venezia subdivision, but this subdivision is not linked to either network. The inventory identified four issues within the existing network that should be addressed in any sidewalk plan. These include:

1. Connection of the sidewalk network to key destinations, and interconnection of the sidewalk network itself so the two main spines are linked.
2. Retrofit of the existing network to fill in system gaps at intersections and other locations where small improvements are needed.
3. Integration of emerging subdivisions into the overall sidewalk network in the Town.
4. Maintenance issues including overgrown vegetation and repair of damaged sidewalks.

In addition to addressing these issues, the ideal plan should also consider some general factors for sidewalks as they serve the community. These factors include:

Improve Safety: Traffic accident data shows that the Town has a safe walking environment currently even with a lack of sidewalks in many residential neighborhoods and a somewhat disjointed existing sidewalk network. This condition results from generally low traffic volumes on streets aside from SR 19 and generally low operating speeds for traffic in the Town generally. However, as the sidewalk network expands, safety still needs to be a high priority.

Encourage Walking: The emerging sidewalk network should encourage walking as an alternative to driving for short local trips. This can be done by ensuring the sidewalk network serves key destinations, and at a minimum, can be easily accessed from residential areas.

Maximize Connectivity: The preferred alternative should look to provide a network that resolves gaps in the existing network and provides for connections to the emerging subdivisions including Whispering Hills, Mission Rise, Venezia South, Venezia North, the Reserve and Lake Hills.

Cost Effectiveness: The sidewalk plan needs to be sensitive to the cost to provide the desired network and the Town's limited resources available to build new sidewalks.

Neighborhood Disruption: The plan alternatives should consider the level of disruption that proposed sidewalks could create in existing, established neighborhoods without extensive sidewalks networks.

Support Future Transit: The Town is not currently served by any transit network and there are no short-term plans to provide transit links. Any future transit is likely to be based on buses and use SR 19 where a well-developed network is in place. If transit is extended, the Town can consider supporting transit with bus stop improvements.

For a network to be the most effective the network alternatives should link residential areas with the higher priority destinations and provide for linkages between priority destinations. The sidebar shows the key destinations and whether these are currently served by sidewalk. As the listing shows, many key destinations are already served, but there are gaps and additions that should be considered.

These factors were combined to generate two basic alternatives for a sidewalk network that were then used to build a physical plan that was mapped by the attendees at the February 5, 2019 workshop. The alternatives discussion also led to a discussion about options to deal with residential infill lots in areas where there is no established sidewalk network.

#### SIDEWALK DESTIANCTIONS

Site	Served
Town Hall	Yes
Police Station	Yes
Library	Yes
Central Park	Yes
Post Office	No
Griffin Park	Yes
Business Core	Partial
Churches	Partial
Sarah Maude	Yes
School	Partial
New PD/Fire	No

#### Sidewalk Alternatives

As the inventory and system design factors were applied to the Howey landscape, two basic alternative sidewalk designs emerged. One alternative would call for the eventual provisions of sidewalks on both sides of every street in town to create a fully integrated sidewalk network reaching into every corner of the town and to put older neighborhoods on the same footing as new subdivision development. This option is clearly a high cost alternative which has the prospect of causing significant disruption to existing neighborhoods as construction occurs. However, this alternative would maximize the system's connectivity, safety and service to key pedestrian destinations.

The second alternative is to rely on the existing sidewalk spines and current service areas while planning for strategic additions that would improve connectivity, maintain pedestrian safety and provided for connections to unserved destinations. These two alternatives can be compared as follows:

EVALUATION FACTOR	FULL COVERAGE OPTION	STRATEGIC ADDITION OPTION
SAFETY	MAXIMUM	HIGH
ENCOURAGE WALKING	MAXIMUM	HIGH
CONNECTIVITY	MAXIMUM	HIGH
COST	MAXIMUM	MODERATE
NEIGHBORHOOD IMPACT	HIGH	LOW
TRANSIT SUPPORT	YES	YES
REDUCES DEFICIENCIES	YES	YES

At the February 5, 2019 workshop a decision was made to proceed with the strategic addition option as the best balance of system performance, cost and mitigation of neighborhood impacts. New subdivisions will still be required to comply with current policies and land development regulations through the provision of sidewalks on both sides of the street. The overall network will be designed to provide connections to current subdivisions, planned subdivisions and other known development areas. The attached map shows the location of Venezia South which is under development and other projects that have received some level of development approval.

The map displays the Venice area in Los Angeles, California, with various neighborhoods and major projects highlighted. The projects are shaded in grey and include:

- Lake Hills
- Venesia North
- Venesia South
- The Reserve
- Mission Rise
- Whispering Hills

Major roads and landmarks shown include the 10 Freeway (San Diego Freeway), the 11 Freeway (San Mateo Freeway), the Venice Canals, and the Venice Pier. A legend in the bottom right corner indicates that the grey shaded areas represent 'Howey\_Major\_Projects'.

## Infill Lot Policy

With the selection of the strategic addition option there is a need to develop a clear policy treatment for residential construction on infill lots in neighborhoods where no sidewalk network exists, and no sidewalk network is planned. The current Town policy, although de facto, does not require sidewalk construction for infill lots. There was little support for changing this policy to one which would require sidewalk on scattered lots as this policy would result in disconnected sidewalk segments and increased cost for the homeowner that would yield little if any benefit to the Town.

However, the infill lot policy should require sidewalks where infill development will result in new construction on a complete block face or a substantial portion of a block. Infill sidewalks should also be required where an existing network could be expanded. To clarify the infill development policy, the Land Development Code should be amended to clearly state the policy intent, and if necessary, policy amendments should be proposed for the comprehensive plan.

## **Composite Sidewalk Plan**

At the February 5, 2019 workshop meeting the working groups produced two sidewalk plan proposals. The two proposals were very similar in most aspects, so the two proposals have been combined into a composite plan. (See attached plan map.) The proposal covers several key points:

- ❖ SR 19 sidewalks are extended to link to new development areas on the south side of town including linking to Venezia South neighborhood.
- ❖ The general alignment along Florida Avenue and North Dixie provides a north-south pedestrian corridor west of SR 19 to serve a similar role as the Lakeshore Boulevard sidewalk.
- ❖ The Central Avenue and East Laurel Street extensions provide a direct linkage between the SR 19 and Lakeshore Boulevard pedestrian corridors at the most cost-effective linking points.

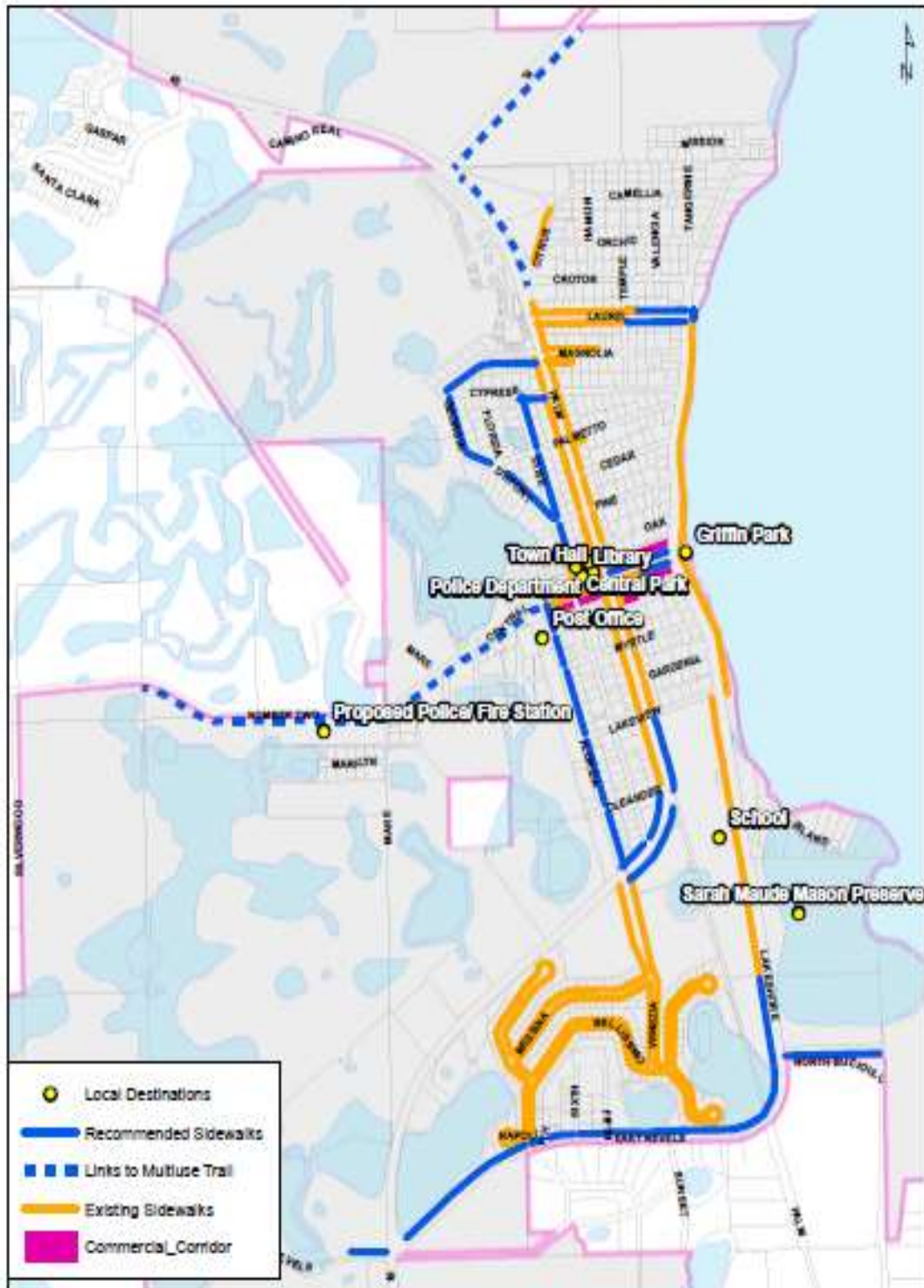
- ❖ The Buckhill Road sidewalk connects the proposed Whispering Hills Subdivision to the main sidewalk network. This sidewalk is expected to be provided by the developer.
- ❖ The Revels Road extension from Buckhill Road to SR 19 provides another connection for the Venezia South neighborhood and ties into the proposed Mission Rise development. This linkage may take the form of a local multi-use trail rather than solely a sidewalk.
- ❖ The Number Two Road extension from Florida Avenue to the Mission Rise entrance provides a second link to the Mission Rise development and will serve the proposed public safety site. This link may also be done as a multi-use trail either as a local trail or as part of the Central Like Trail.
- ❖ As an alternate to the North Dixie link, a route using West Magnolia, North Georgia and North Dupont could be considered. This is a more scenic alternative that could also serve a slightly larger residential area.

If fully completed, this network will connect all the currently developing and emerging development areas to the overall Town pedestrian network. It will provide for linkages between the Town's older residential areas and key destinations thereby improving connectivity at a more reasonable cost point.

The following table provides a generalized cost estimate for the various links in the plan. These costs are based on recent costs for sidewalk construction in Town (\$6.50 per square foot or \$32.50 per linear foot for a 5-foot wide sidewalk). As noted in the descriptive section above, some of these links may be supplanted by a multi-use trail, and some of the links are likely to be constructed by development projects. The cost estimates are provided to give a magnitude of cost to the various projects which might assist in assigning priorities to the various sections. The basic program estimate comes to a little over \$770,000. As noted, some of these projects will be done by other entities and several of the largest links will be needed only if planned new developments emerge. The Town may wish to concentrate its priorities on the western sidewalk corridor and key links connecting the three north-south corridors.



## Sidewalk Recommended Alternatives Feb2019



**Town of Howey-in-the-Hills  
Composite Sidewalk Plan  
Generalized Cost Estimates**

<b>Section</b>	<b>Limit</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Comments</b>
SR-19	Lakeview to Venezia Blvd.	58,000	FDOT to do.
SR-19	Oleander to Florida	32,500	FDOT to do.
Florida	SR-19 to Oak St.	104,400	One side
N. Dixie	Oak to W. Cypress	55,700	One side
W. Cypress	N. Dixie to SR 19	11,600	One side
E. Central	SR-19 to Lakeshore	23,200	North side
E. Central	End of sidewalk to Lakeshore	5,800	South Side
E. Laurel	End of sidewalk to Lakeshore	39,400	Both sides
Lakeshore	End of sidewalk to Buckhill Rd.	27,800	West side
Buckhill Rd.	Lakeshore to bend	60,300	Developer sidewalk
Revels Road	Buckhill Rd to Bellissimo Rd	111,400	
Revels Rd.	Bellissimo to SR 19	58,000	
Number Two Rd.	Florida to Mission Rise	183,300	
<b>Western Alternate</b>			
W. Magnolia	SR 19 to N. Georgia	39,400	
N. Georgia	W. Magnolia to W. Dupont	23,200	One side
W. Dupont	N. Georgia to N. Dixie	37,100	One side

## **BICYCLE TRAIL ISSUES, OPPORTUNITIES AND ALTERNATIVES**

Howey-in-the-Hills is served by the Central Lake Trail in the countywide trails plan. This trail is conceptual with specific routing yet to be determined. As part of the Town's current project, the Town has elected to seek an advance in the timing for a portion of the Central Lake Trail by seeking a feasibility study for the segment serving Howey. The Town has proposed a phase extending from Hickory Point Park to CR 455. The alternatives discussion focused on two options for traversing the Town. One option is to use an alignment that follows the SR 19 corridor along the full length of the segment. The second alignment uses a combination of SR 19, Lakeshore Boulevard and Buckhill Road as the route.

As with the sidewalk phase of the project the breakout groups quickly concluded that the alignment following Lakeshore Boulevard and Buckhill Road was the preferred alignment for safety, service to the Town and scenic value. As with the sidewalks, a composite plan has been prepared showing the preferred route with SR 19 identified as an alternative that should at least be considered in an feasibility study, but a route that is less desired. The groups also looked at options for connections from the Howey-in-the-Hills segment of the Central Lake Trail to destinations to the west. The eastern options are defined by SR 19 bridge over Little Lake Harris while links to the west from Howey could follow either CR 48 or Number Two Road. Both are shown on the composite plan as options for investigation.

Within the Town, the workshop groups recommended using a proposed trail that would be built with a pending development project to construct a local loop trail. The proposed Mission Rise development includes a proposed 10-foot wide trail extending from SR 19 near Revels Road to Number Two Road near the western edge of Town. By adding a trail link on Revel Road from Buckhill Road to SR 19 and on Number Two Road from the Mission Rise project entrance to SR 19 a local loop system will be created. If the local connections to the Mission Rise trail are constructed, these would replace proposed sidewalks. The composite trail map highlights the routes including the preferred and alternate routes.

The map displays the Town of San Juan with various trails and destinations. The legend indicates the following:

- Local Destinations: Represented by a black dot.
- CentralLakeTri Howey Preferred: Represented by a thick red line.
- Howey\_Loop\_Trail\_Proposed: Represented by a thick blue line.
- CentralLakeTri Future Alternatives: Represented by a thick orange line.
- CentralLakeTri Howey Alternate: Represented by a dashed orange line.
- Commercial\_Corridor: Represented by a pink shaded area.
- Town\_Boundary: Represented by a pink outline.

The map shows the town's layout, including neighborhoods like San Miguel, San Fernando, San Jose, San Rafael, and San Juan. Key locations include Griffith Park, Griffith Park Library, Police Department, Post Office, and Griffith Park School. The map also shows the town's boundary and various trails like Camino Real, Camino Dos, and Camino Uno.