

# **2018-2019 COMMUNITY PLANNING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GRANT PROPOSAL**

## **SUBMITTED BY**

### **TOWN OF HOWEY-IN-THE-HILLS, FLORIDA**

#### **REQUEST**

The Town of Howey-in-the-Hills is requesting a technical assistance grant to develop a bicycle and pedestrian master plan as set forth in the Town's Comprehensive Plan Transportation Element Policy 1.1.4 and Policy 1.5.1. The plan will provide the Town's first comprehensive inventory of sidewalks and bicycle facilities; develop specific policies for the implementation of bicycle and pedestrian facilities; identify more specific route opportunities for planned areawide trails; and provide specific project recommendations that the Town can seek to implement using Town, County and Metropolitan Planning Organization resources. The program will include a public involvement effort managed through the Town's Planning and Zoning Board and its Recreation Advisory Board.

#### **STATEMENT OF NEED**

The Town's comprehensive plan calls for a pedestrian and bicycle master plan which has not yet been completed. (Review Attachment One for the relevant policy citations.) The Town's EAR-based amendments will re-set the deadline for undertaking this plan. At the County level, there has been an effort on the part of Lake County staff to review and update their bicycle planning program. The current planning for bicycle facilities affecting Howey-in-the-Hills has advanced to the conceptual level in that connecting routes have been identified, but specific alignments and implementation projects have not been put forward. The Lake-Sumter MPO plans show routes along SR 19, CR 48, Number Two Road and Lakeshore Boulevard, but only Lakeshore Boulevard has received much in the way of attention for specific facilities.

In addition to the area-wide planning efforts that need to be supplemented with more detailed local level planning, the Town is addressing proposals from several major developments that have key positions on the conceptual planning route. Key among these are SR 19 from Lake Harris to CR 48 and a project linking south SR 19 to Number Two Road. These projects offer an opportunity to capitalize on planned development by integrating trails within the proposed projects. With the improving economy and the rapid growth now occurring in south Lake County,

action now is needed to ensure the opportunity for a coordinated pedestrian and bicycle plan incorporating these major development is not lost. FDOT is also active in the area with plans to replace the SR 19 bridge over Little Lake Harris and widen SR 19 from the new bridge to CR 48. The FDOT projects offer an opportunity to address bicycle and pedestrian needs within the project scope.

An informal demand for bicycle facilities has been observed as residents have noted groups of cyclists passing through town. Howey-in-the-Hills offers a connecting route between Central Lake County and the very popular cycling destinations in the Sugar Loaf area and the South Lake Trail, which is part of the Coast-To-Coast Trail. The Town sees this opportunity as not only a recreational opportunity but also an economic development tool. The Town's small central commercial area is undergoing some modest growth which the Town is supporting with infrastructure improvements. Adding cycling is seen as expanding the market possibilities in support of the town center.

While the project need discussion to this point has focused on bicycling, the Town is also interested in developing an overall plan for pedestrian circulation. The Town does not have an accurate or current inventory of sidewalks. While some key sidewalk linkages are in place (SR 19, Central Avenue, Lakeshore Boulevard), sidewalk facilities within the older portions of town are not fully inventoried, and there is no plan in place to identify projects and priorities for linking residential neighborhoods to community facilities such as recreation, shopping and civic activities. New development is required to provide sidewalks, and the Town needs a specific plan and program for advancing pedestrian facilities in the older portions of the town to serve the older neighborhoods and to link the newer development areas with the older sections of town. Residents in the Venezia South neighborhood, one of the newly developing areas of Town, have been particularly vocal about the need to improve pedestrian connections to recreation, civic and commercial destinations in the older portion of the Town.

In summary, the Town has identified a need to complete a pedestrian and bicycle master plan because of the following conditions:

- Implementation of policies in the comprehensive plan
- Provision of an accurate inventory of facilities to serve as a basis for planning and project prioritization
- Advancement of area-wide planning for trails by developing specific links within the Town for conceptual routes
- Maximization of the advantages of incorporating trails and sidewalks in emerging development projects and FDOT planned improvements
- Supporting economic development by augmenting a market for bicycle travel within the Town
- Completion of linkages from residential neighborhoods to commercial, recreational and civic facilities
- Establishment of minimum design standards for sidewalk and bicycle facilities

## PROPOSED WORK PROGRAM

The proposed work program begins with a thorough inventory of existing conditions on all streets with the Town noting pedestrian and bicycle facilities by size, type and condition resulting in a map of facilities. The inventory effort will also include a summary of area-wide planning efforts completed and underway by Lake County and by the Lake-Sumter MPO. The Town will employ this data to develop specific policies and/or maps for inclusion in the comprehensive plan detailing how the bicycle and pedestrian network will be integrated into the overall planning efforts of the Town. Specific project alternatives will be identified and, based on prioritization of these projects, proposed for inclusion in the Town’s capital improvements plan. Public involvement in the process will be managed by the Town’s two key advisory boards on planning and parks and recreation. The Town Council will finally review the plan and make the necessary amendments to include the plan in the comprehensive plan and in the Town’s budget documents as appropriate. The specific deliverables will include:

- Documentation of scheduled workshops and public hearings (Tasks 1, 6, 8, 10 and 11)
- Reports of inventory data and plans of other jurisdictions affecting the Town (Tasks 2, 3, 4 and 5)
- Reports of plan alternatives and the recommended plan (Tasks 7 and 9)
- Comprehensive plan amendments submitted at least to the transmittal stage (Tasks 10 and 11)

The following table lays out the proposed work tasks, timelines and costs in more detail noting the performance measures for each task and deliverable; the proposed project schedule; and the anticipated budget by work task.

<b>Work Tasks and Deliverables</b>	<b>Performance Measures</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Payment Amount</b>
<b>Task 1 Kick-off Meeting</b> Organizational meeting with advisory boards to introduce project, obtain initial input and establish project schedule	Meeting Notice Sign-in List Agenda Minutes	October 26, 2018	\$1,700
<b>Task 2 Facility Inventory</b> Compile and map a street by street inventory of sidewalks and bicycle facilities	Spreadsheet summarizing existing facilities and conditions Map showing sidewalks and bicycle facilities	November 16, 2018	\$5,800

<p><b>Task 3 Planned Facilities</b> Summary of projects and plans from Lake County, TPO and FDOT</p>	Summary report of plans and scheduled projects if any.	November 16, 2018	\$4,000
<p><b>Task 4 Local Plans and Regulations</b> Summary of goals, objectives and policies from comprehensive plan and requirements from land development regulations.</p>	Summary report of comprehensive plan and land development regulation requirements.	November 16, 2018	\$2,000
<p><b>Task 5 Minimum Design Standards</b> Develop recommendation for minimum design standards for pedestrian and bicycle facilities</p>	Report recommending specific standards in written and/or graphic form based on Town, Lake County and FDOT design requirements	December 14, 2018	\$3,500
<p><b>Task 6 Workshop</b> Meet with advisory boards and interested public to present data from Tasks 2, 3, 4 and 5</p>	Meeting Notice Sign-in List Agenda Minutes	January 24, 2019	\$1,700
<p><b>Task 7 Plan Alternatives</b> Based on inventory and design guidelines provide suggested alternatives for sidewalks and bicycle facilities</p>	Report presenting alternatives in written and/or graphic format.	February 15, 2019	\$7,000
<p><b>Task 8 Workshop</b> Meet with advisory boards and interested public to present alternatives and seek recommendations on preferred alternatives</p>	Meeting Notice Sign-in List Agenda Minutes	February 28, 2019	\$1,700
<p><b>Task 9 Recommended Plan</b> Based on the workshop results from Task 8, prepare a recommended plan.</p>	Recommended plan report in written and/or graphic format. Draft comprehensive plan amendments	March 28, 2019	\$7,000
<p><b>Task 10 Workshop</b> Meet with advisory boards and interested public to review recommended plan</p>	Meeting Notice Sign-in List Agenda Minutes	March 28, 2019	\$1,700

and formally recommend plan to Town Council	Draft comprehensive plan amendments		
<b>Task 11 Town Council Presentation</b> Present recommended plan to Town Council for approval and transmittal of comprehensive plan amendments as required.	Meeting Notice Sign-in List Agenda Minutes Transmittal Package	April 8, 2019	\$1,700
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$37,800</b>

**ATTACHMENT ONE  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN EXCERPTS  
TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT**

**OBJECTIVE 1.1: *Safe, Convenient, and Efficient Traffic Circulation System.*** Provide a safe, convenient, and energy efficient transportation system through the establishment of minimum level of service standards and the provision of multi-modal transportation facilities with proposed road improvements.

**POLICY 1.1.4:** *Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Facilities.* By December 2012, the Town shall. adopt a Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan to identify missing facilities in parts of the Town that are already developed as well as facilities that shall be incorporated in the redevelopment of the Town Center and facilities that shall be required as part of new growth. The Town shall work with Lake County, developers, and other possible funding agencies to implement the improvements identified in the plan.

**OBJECTIVE 1.5: *Bicycle and Pedestrian Ways and Scenic Roadways.*** Promote a system of bicycle and pedestrian ways in planning for transportation facilities, and analyze roadways for scenic designations.

**POLICY 1.5.1:** *Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities Plan.* By December 2012, the Town shall prepare a Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities Plan. The Plan shall at minimum, establish guidelines for developing bicycle and pedestrian ways which connect residential areas to recreation areas and major activity centers.

- POLICY 1.5.2:** *Rails-to-Trails Program.* The Town shall coordinate with Lake County to analyze the feasibility of acquiring abandoned railroad right-of-ways within the Town for use as regional bicycle and pedestrian paths.
- POLICY 1.5.3:** *Provision of Bicycle and Pedestrian Ways.* The Town shall enforce the provisions established in the Land Development Regulations regarding the development review process that requires applicants of PUDs, site plans, subdivisions, and replats to provide for the needs of bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
- POLICY 1.5.4:** *Bicycle Storage Facilities.* The Town shall continue to provide bicycle storage facilities at existing and proposed Town parks and shall analyze the need to provide such facilities at other Town public buildings within the proposed bicycle and pedestrian plan. The Town shall enforce the guidelines established in the Land Development Regulations regarding the requirement of all new shopping centers, recreation areas, and other public uses to provide storage facilities for bicycles.
- POLICY 1.5.5:** *Preservation of Scenic Route Designation.* The Town shall coordinate with the Florida Department of Transportation to preserve the State’s designation of S.R. 19 as a “Backwoods Trail” to promote the roadway’s unique scenic character.
- POLICY 1.5.6:** *Bicycle and Pedestrian Walkways Connection.* Bicycle and pedestrian walkways shall connect schools, the downtown area, parks and recreational areas and should include plans for bicycle parking.
- POLICY 1.5.7:** *Encouraging the County.* The County shall be encouraged to provide bikeways in areas adjacent to the Town that will connect with the Town system.
- POLICY 1.5.8:** *Automobile Emission Pollution.* The Town shall enforce the guidelines and standards established in the Land Development Regulations regarding bicycle paths and pedestrian walkways to reduce the potential for automobile emission pollution and promote the use of bicycles and walking in the Town.