



LAKE WALES
ENVISIONED
OLMSTED'S CITY IN 10, 25, AND 50 YEARS

Memorandum

Date: September 7, 2023

From: Wade Walker and Alex Reasbeck
Kittelson and Associates

To: City of Lakes Wales

Re: **Lake Wales Envisioned Technical Memorandum:**
Mobility Recommendations

INTRODUCTION

As part of Lake Wales Envisioned, a comprehensive rethink of how people move in Lake Wales was undertaken. Growth in communities to the north of Lake Wales has not only been dominated by single use and auto-oriented development, it has yielded a transportation system with streets geared toward moving as much automobile traffic as quickly as possible, often at the expense of those who walk, ride bicycles, or use transit. It has also created a system where roads are repeatedly widened to accommodate growth rather than one where networks of many streets can facilitate movement of people regardless of their choice of conveyance.

Lake Wales Envisioned looks to flip that script of wider, faster, and more dangerous to one that moves people rather than simply moves cars, balancing the needs of the motorist, pedestrian, and cyclist in a better-connected network of smaller, tamer, and more attractive streets and trails. Lake Wales Envisioned defines what those Complete Streets articulated in Lake Wales' Mobility Plan should look and feel like. This memorandum summarizes the streets (new streets as well as enhancements to existing streets), trails, transit, and connectivity to support the land use patterns proposed in Lake Wales Envisioned as well as policy changes needed to support that integrated land use and transportation vision.

Street Network

The Lake Wales Envisioned plan street network reflects the network recommended as part of the recently adopted Lake Wales Mobility Plan. Additional street connections were developed as part of this process. Lake Wales Envisioned took on the concept of providing Complete Streets on both existing and proposed streets within the City, developing typical cross sections with elements such as travel lanes, sidewalks, shared use paths, streetscape, and dedicated bike facilities, to give the basis for what these recommended streets would look and feel like in context. Recommendations for the enhancement of existing streets and the construction of new streets are described as follows.

US 27, STATE ROAD 60 AND STATE ROAD 17/SCENIC HIGHWAY

US 27, State Road (SR) 60, and State Road 17/Scenic Highway are the regional state-maintained roadways within Lake Wales. All three of these facilities are scheduled for resurfacing in FDOT's five-year work program; in recent years, FDOT has incorporated safety enhancements in the scope of work for these resurfacings, with the ability to address deficiencies in pedestrian and bicycle facilities and speed management for motor vehicles as part of these projects. For US 27 and SR 60, plan recommended enhancements include protected midblock pedestrian crossings due to the long distance between current traffic signals, lane narrowing, provision of shared use paths, and landscape to provide enclosure to reconcile traffic speeds with the desired speed for the facility. These recommendations will create better connectivity across these multilane facilities within the City, and will signal to drivers that they have entered Lake Wales and should be aware of pedestrian activity within the corridor. All of the recommendations fall within the context of items being included in these resurfacing projects in FDOT District One and statewide; the City should reach out to FDOT to express the desire that these initiatives be included in the upcoming resurfacing projects.

While it is not a multilane roadway like US 27 and SR 60, Scenic Highway also serves an important role in the regional travel network, connecting Lake Wales to other cities to the north and south in Polk County and beyond. Furthermore, it is designated as a State Scenic Highway, attributable to the exceptional landscapes through which it passes as well as the viewsheds available from its alignment. Since it is also slated for resurfacing within the next five-year window, recommendations for speed management through enclosure with landscape are included in Lake Wales Envisioned. Since Scenic Highway passes in and out of cities and towns along its length, it will be important to signal that change to motorists that they are leaving a high-speed rural area and entering a town or settlement. Additionally, the Ridge Scenic Trail is proposed to run alongside Scenic Highway, so in built-up areas there will likely be more users and potential crossings of the street, making slower vehicle speeds in these areas critical. Coordination between FDOT and the City should begin now to make sure that City interests are represented in the scope of work for the upcoming FDOT projects along the state facilities.

Figure 1: 2045 Plan Street Network

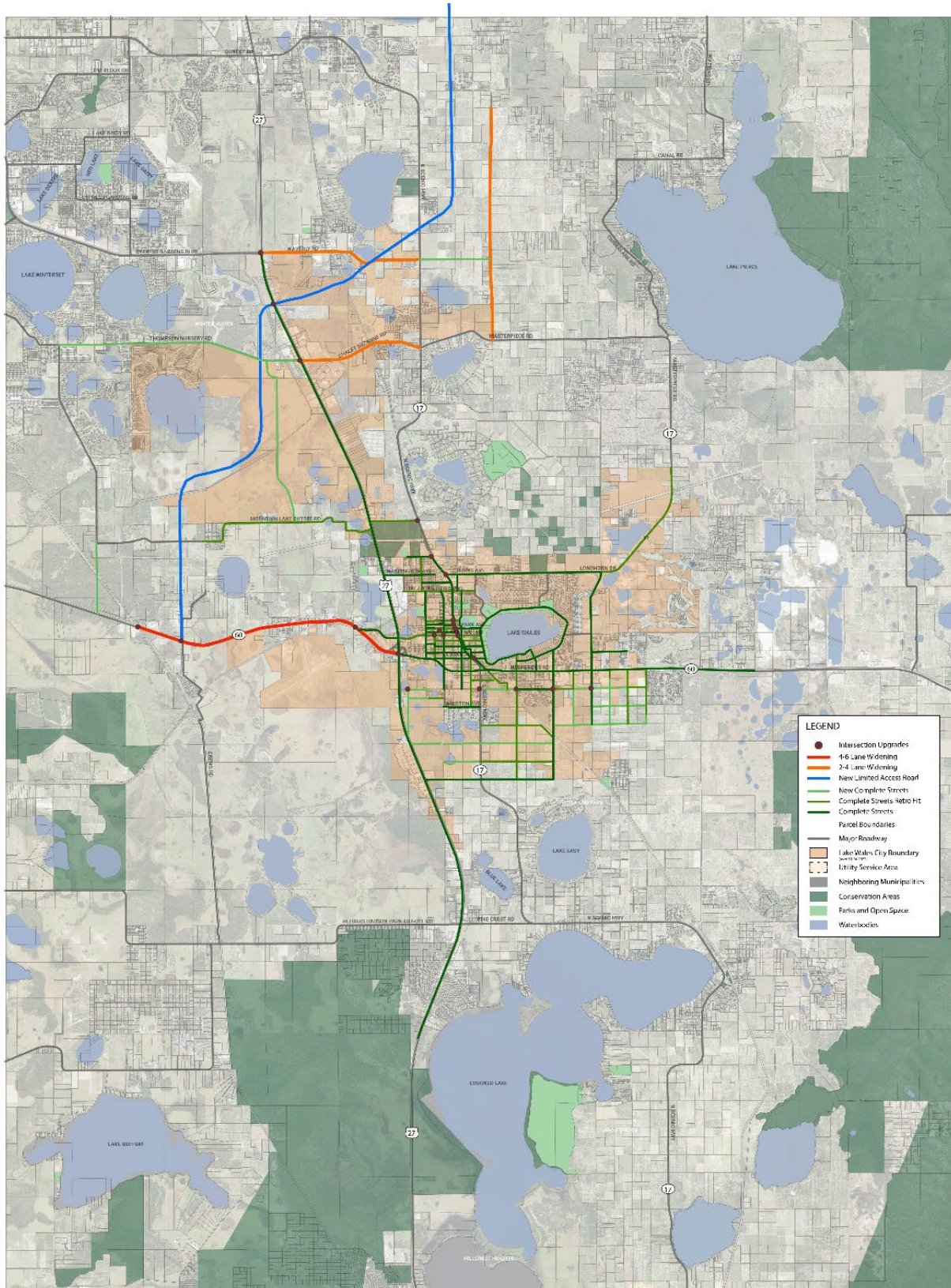


Figure 2: US 27, Existing Street and “What If?” Street Enhancements



Figure 3: SR 60, Existing Street and “What If?” Street Enhancements



BURNS AVENUE

Burns Avenue is a 5-lane street that runs east-west and provides access between Scenic Highway and Buck Moore Road, it serves as the front door access to Bok Tower Gardens and provides access to two schools and neighborhoods that are adjacent. Burns carries a volume of approximately 8,000 vehicles per day, well short of its carrying capacity. It does not have dedicated bicycle facilities, and the sidewalks that are present are located near the curb and directly adjacent to the outside travel lane.

During the Hands-on Session of the charrette, participants were asked to envision what they wanted 5-lane road like Burns to look like. Most tables agreed that Burns should only carry two vehicle lanes and that the surplus space be repurposed for pedestrian and bicycle facilities as well as for streetscape. During the charrette, the following concept was developed that articulated that vision, narrowing Burns and providing protected space for bicycles and pedestrians, while enhancing the level of landscape along the edges to provide shade. A roundabout is also proposed for the intersection of Tower Boulevard, which will be bracketed by previously-planned roundabouts at Buck Moore Road and Scenic Highway. These measures will not only improve the look and pedestrian and bicycle realm, the enclosure provided by the narrowing and landscape treatments will result in slower vehicle speeds, increasing safety for all users.

Figure 4: Burns Avenue Existing Typical Section

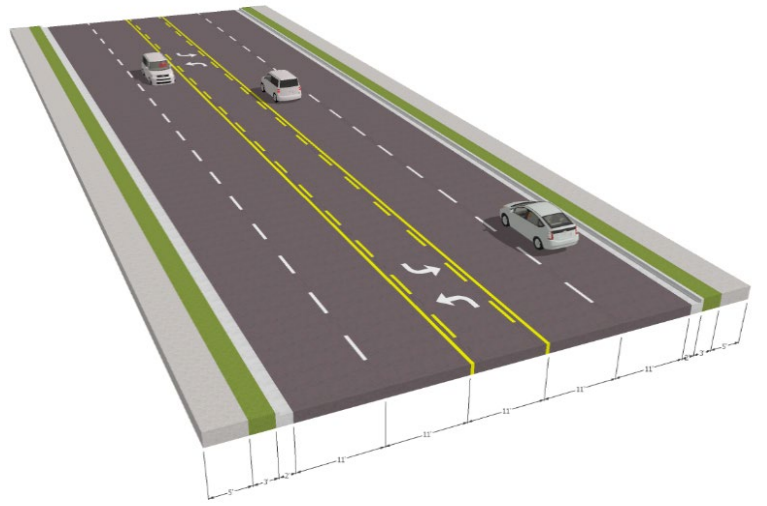


Figure 5: Burns Avenue Proposed Typical Section



CONNECTOR STREETS

Existing connector streets in the network such as Masterpiece Road, Hunt Brothers Road, Mountain Lake Cutoff Road and Thompson Nursery/Chalet Suzanne Road should be retrofit to accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists through the use of multi-use pathways separated from the road, as well as landscape treatments in built-up (or future village) areas to signal to motorists that they are entering a place where they should expect pedestrian activity. In addition, new streets built to connect village development should be designed in a similar manner. Three distinct cross sections were developed for these connector facilities: a “connector” section that passes through rural or undeveloped lands; a “gateway” or “transition” section that signals to a motorist that they are entering a place; and a “Main Street” section that forms the primary street within the village or developed area. Each of these segments have distinct cross section characteristics as shown below, but all convey pedestrians and cyclists in a safe manner and provide speed management measures to keep vehicle speeds consistent with the context through which the street passes.

Figure 6: Village Connector Street

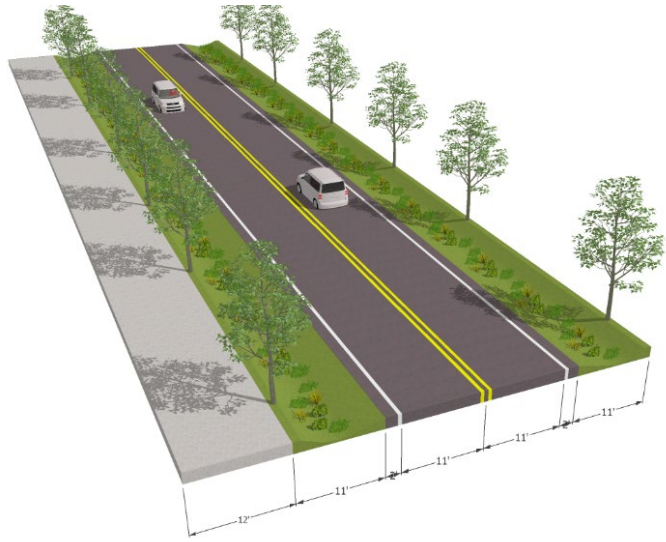


Figure 7: Village Gateway/Transition



Figure 8: Village Main Street



NEIGHBORHOOD STREETS

As new walkable neighborhoods are planned and developed, streets will be designed along the principles of slow, beautiful, and walkable streets. Sidewalks, streetscape and trees, and pedestrian-scale lighting will be included. Vehicle speeds will be “baked in” to the design to result in intentionally slow vehicle traffic, where bicycles can be accommodated in a shared street environment. On-street parking will be provided in the following ways: for commercial and multi-family frontages, on street parking bays will be provided, separated by landscape islands as shown to enclose the street and provide shade. Where streets have single family frontages with rear garages, the streets will be narrow and provide informal on-street parking on both sides. Called a “yield street,” this configuration enforces low speeds by requiring one vehicle to yield to another where a car is parked on one side, creating a slow, walkable environment on these low volume streets and keeping the pavement area narrow.

Figure 9: Village Commercial and Attached/Townhouse

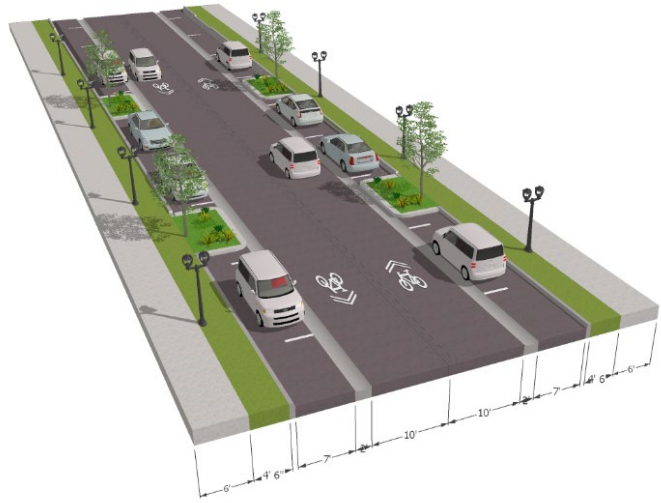
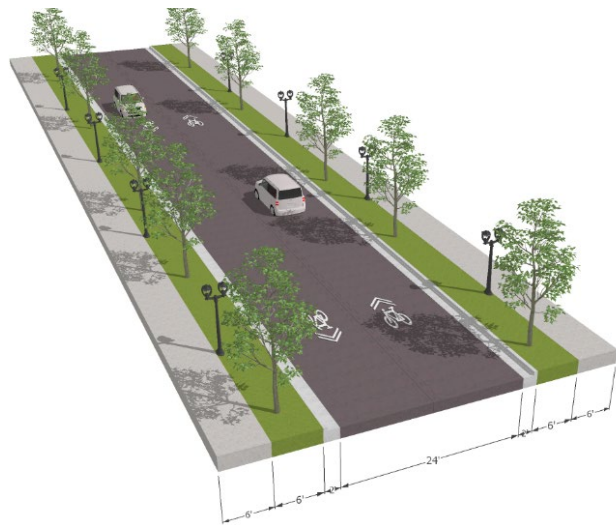


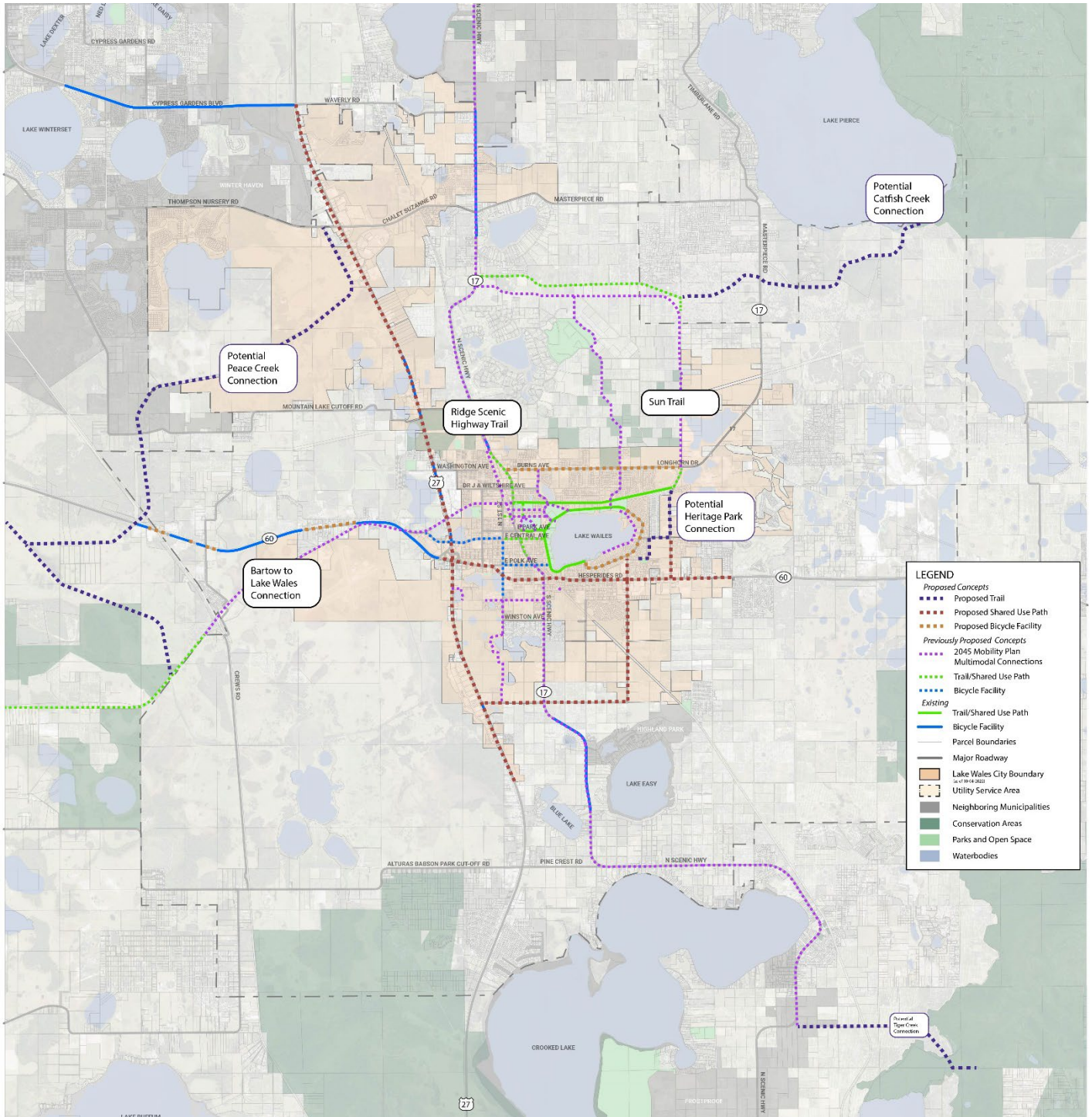
Figure 10: Village Detached/Single Family



Trails and Active Transportation Network

One of the guiding principles for the mobility network in Lake Wales Envisioned is to provide a network in which people have true choices about how they move; the ability to provide this kind of network is a direct result of the development pattern and type proposed in the Plan. As part of the Mobility Plan, these were several trail facilities recommended; these are all included in the trails network for Lake Wales Envisioned. In addition, as the Big Green Network was created for the Plan, additional trail opportunities presented themselves as a means to connect these conservation and preservation areas, and to connect regional trail facilities to Lake Wales. The map on the next page shows the agglomeration of all the trail facilities proposed, those in the Mobility Plan as well as those new connections identified as part of Lake Wales Envisioned. New connections are proposed to the Catfish Creek and Tiger Creek Preserves, as well as a new trail connection along Peace Creek to better connect the northern parts of Lake Wales to the planned Bartow to Lake Wales trail system. Trails should be designed as 12-foot wide and can run in utility easements and stream corridors in addition to along roadways, rail lines, and through open lands. Funding can be accomplished through the state SUNTrail grant program and federal grants as well as through Lake Wales's Multimodal Transportation Impact Fee revenue.

Figure 11: Proposed Multimodal Network



Transit

The Mobility Plan envisioned a transit circulator to connect various locations within Lake Wales. Lake Wales Envisioned adopts the recommendations of the circulator, but also recommends identification of a priority pilot project such as a limited time service (weekends initially) to connect Downtown to Bok Tower Gardens. This route could likely be served by a small shuttle bus and could even be a contracted service to be provided by a private entity through a City contract. Any transit routes or facilities should be connected to the rest of the multimodal network proposed as part of the Mobility Plan and Lake Wales Envisioned.

Policies

To effectively implement the mobility vision set forth in the Mobility Plan and Lake Wales Envisioned, several policy changes or new policies need to be developed and implemented. Currently, the City has no design guidelines to guide the development of the type streets and trails proposed as part of Lake Wales Envisioned; the City should develop and adopt a Complete Streets Policy and follow that up with a set of City street design guidelines that will result in the construction of the high quality walkable and complete streets that are integral to the success of the Plan.

Project Priorities and Funding Avenues

A table identifying specific projects for streets, trails, transit, and policies has been developed and is included in the body of the Lake Wales Envisioned report. The table below includes some additional details, including magnitude of costs and potential funding mechanisms.

Action #	Description	Timeframe			Responsible Party / Partners	Cost Range (Order of Magnitude Estimate)	Potential Funding Sources
		Immediate (year 1-3)	Mid-Term (year 4-6)	Long-Term (year 7+)			
						\$ = under \$200,000 \$\$ = under \$500,000 \$\$\$ = under \$1,000,000 \$\$\$\$ = under \$5,000,000 \$\$\$\$\$ = under \$10,000,000	
M1	Adopt Complete Street design standards for new or improved streets	X			City of Lake Wales / Polk County / FDOT	\$	City budget
M2	Pursue Complete Street improvements for identified non-state streets Includes Thompson Nursery/Chalet Suzanne and Masterpiece Road; Mountain Lake Cutoff Road; Buck Moore/Hunt Brothers Road; 11th Street South		X	X	City of Lake Wales / Polk County / Private Sector (frontage)	\$\$\$ - \$\$\$\$\$	SUNTrail; City (MMTIF and CIP); County CIP; Federal grants (Reconnecting Communities, Safe Streets 4 All)
M3	Design and construct Burns Avenue redesign Includes road diet, separated bike lanes, spot medians, lighting, canopy landscape, roundabout at Tower Road		X		City of Lake Wales / Polk County	\$\$\$\$	Federal Grants (Reconnecting Communities grant, Safe Streets 4 All grant, RAISE); City CIP
M4	Implement speed management/landscape and pedestrian enhancements on SR 60 and US 27	X	X		FDOT / City of Lake Wales	varies	FDOT RRR projects (work with FDOT to accomplish within RRR budgets)
M5	Implement SR 17 / Scenic Highway Enhancement and Trail		X		FDOT / City of Lake Wales / Polk County / Nearby Municipalities	TBD	FDOT RRR projects (work with FDOT to accomplish within RRR budgets)
M6	Pursue Lake Wales Transit Circulator Initial Route: Immediate Timeframe Expansions: Mid- to Long-Term Timeframe	X	X	X	City of Lake Wales / FTA	\$\$ (startup)	City MMTIF or CIP