

# Ridge Scenic Highway Vision and Concept Plan



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## Corridor Vision

The Corridor Advocacy Group's vision for the Ridge Scenic Highway is stated below. The vision statement is phrased from a future perspective, looking back at the Corridor Management Entity's accomplishments.

*The Ridge Scenic Highway contains a wide variety of natural, scenic, historical, cultural, and recreational resources of regional and national significance along the Lake Wales Ridge. The corridor is rich in archaeological sites, cultural enclaves, tourist destinations, historic commercial and residential districts (some listed on the National Register), farming communities, national landmarks, conservation lands, migratory bird preserves, and green spaces. Its rolling hills and valleys, pristine waters, and high sandy ridge have promoted healthy living and scenic vistas for past generations. The Ridge Scenic Highway Corridor Management Entity has worked with local, state, and federal governments, citizen groups, and non-profit organizations. These continuing efforts are intended to protect and maintain the unique geology, environmental lands, and habitats and ensure viable citrus and agricultural industries, therefore preserving a natural, scenic, historic, and recreational way of life. Through preservation of resources, interpretive signage, and sufficient advertising, the Ridge Scenic Highway continues to educate residents and visitors about the unique Florida Story and promote preservation for future generations.*

## Goals, Objectives and Strategies

To guide the Corridor Management Entity's focus toward creating its vision for the Ridge Scenic Highway, the group created a set of Goals and Strategies. These Goals and Strategies directly support and further the Corridor Visions. There are six categories of goals and their supporting strategies.

### *Goal: Increase Community Support and Participation*

Objective: Work closely with local governments, entities, and communities to coordinate and maximize our efforts.

- Strategy 1.1: Be available and receptive to community input to foster a spirit of cooperation.
- Strategy 1.2: Review existing projects and participate in future planning with community leaders to synthesize mutual goals.

Objective: Receive input from residents and decision makers

- Strategy 2.1: Develop and implement a continuous public awareness program among the community (the Community Participation Program).
- Strategy 2.2: Inform public of contact information to allow for open communication.
- Strategy 2.3: Update the Corridor Management Plan every 5 years to allow for revisions of the document.

### *Goal: Increase Resource Protection, Maintenance, Preservation and Enhancement*

Objective: Support and expand methods for resource protection.

- Strategy 3.1: Support and expand existing conservation efforts.
- Strategy 3.2: Support and expand existing recreational efforts.
- Strategy 3.3: Expand resources for equestrian community.
- Strategy 3.4: Provide access to intrinsic resources by biking, hiking, walking, canoeing, and horseback riding.
- Strategy 3.5: Sponsor an adopt-a-highway and other litter control programs along SR 17.

Objective: Continue to encourage and coordinate the acquisition and management environmentally sensitive lands.

- Strategy 4.1: Work with local, county, and state agencies.

- Strategy 4.2: Coordinate and encourage the purchase of land development rights on environmentally sensitive lands.
- Strategy 4.3: Develop innovative ways to protect environmentally sensitive lands.

Objective: Support and promote local culture.

- Strategy 5.1: Support local celebrations/holidays.
- Strategy 5.2: Pursue grants to fund local celebrations, festivals and other cultural events.
- Strategy 5.3: Develop a clearinghouse or coordinating calendar for cultural events.
- Strategy 5.4: Support local cultural organizations.
- Strategy 5.6: Provide information of cultural resources in multiple languages.

Objective: Preserve scenic views from SR 17.

- Strategy 6.1: Coordinate the purchase of land development rights within key viewsheds.
- Strategy 6.2: Encourage new development to include roadside buffers and encourage local governments to require them for new development.
- Strategy 6.3: Encourage local governments to provide incentives for clustering to preserve key viewsheds.
- Strategy 6.4: Assure that lighting, signage, landscaping and hardscape reflect the historic character of the corridor while conforming with standards presented in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, FDOT guidelines, and other engineering standards.

*Goal: Increase Transportation and Safety*

Objective: Promote and reinforce safe vehicular travel speeds.

- Strategy 7.1: Promote the completion of a safety study along SR 17. A safety study should be conducted to evaluate and make recommendations at high accident locations, determine the length and location of passing zones, as well as the appropriate posted speed for the road.

- Strategy 7.2: Implement the recommendations of the traffic study in accordance with the Corridor Vision.
- Strategy 7.3: Within incorporated and unincorporated communities, lower posted speed to promote safety for motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists and other users of the road.
- Strategy 7.4: Urge local law enforcement to implement posted speed limit.

Objective: Promote non-motorized modes of travel.

- Strategy 8.1: Construct safe and convenient multi-use facilities along and parallel to SR 17 where feasible (e.g. bicycling, hiking, and equestrian).
- Strategy 8.2: Develop and coordinate implementation of a plan for sidewalk construction and enhancements in incorporated and unincorporated communities.

*Goal: Increase Education and Publicize Corridor Story*

Objective: Educate residents and decision makers about the Ridge Scenic Highway Vision, Goals and Strategies, and Action Plan.

- Strategy 9.1: Communicate ideas, activities, and events through media outreach.
- Strategy 9.2: Develop standardized presentation on the Ridge Scenic Highway, (e.g. interactive website, video, handouts, brochures, others means as needed).
- Strategy 9.3: Present and promote our information, programs, and materials to non-profit, business, and community groups.
- Strategy 9.4: Include government officials (city and county) on CME mailing list.
- Strategy 9.5: Publicize and invite public to CME meetings and events.
- Strategy 9.6: Sponsor a speakers bureau.

Objective: Tell the Corridor Story to inform and educate travelers about the multiple assets along the corridor..

- Strategy 10.1: Develop a wayfinding program.
- Strategy 10.2: Develop pamphlets and brochures to guide the traveler along the



corridor, including local culture and ecological information.

- Strategy 10.3: Locate, establish, and staff an Interpretive/Multi-language Center for the corridor.
- Strategy 10.4: Provide additional pull-off areas.
- Strategy 10.5: Develop interpretive signs at pull-off and other locations along the corridor.
- Strategy 10.6: Design and construct gateways for the corridor.
- Strategy 10.7: Develop an interactive web site with links to sites, attractions and events along the corridor.
- Strategy 10.8: Sponsor events establish a wide advertisement base.
- Strategy 10.9: Promote tourism through cooperative efforts with groups such as AAA, Visit Florida, Polk County Convention and Visitors Bureau, Keep Florida Beautiful, etc.
- Strategy 10.10: Develop, produce, and sell “The Ridge Scenic Highway” t-shirt and other marketing items.

#### *Goal: Pursue Sustainable Agriculture and Ecotourism*

Objective: Protect the commercial base of cattle and citrus industry.

- Strategy 11.1: Develop strong relationships with the agricultural industry.
- Strategy 11.2: Work with the county and involved cities to maintain land in agricultural use.
- Strategy 11.3: Develop partnerships with representatives of agricultural industries or groups.
- Strategy 11.4: Participate in lobbying efforts.
- Strategy 11.5: Develop innovative ways to protect cattle and citrus industry.
- Strategy 11.6: Promote incentives for alternative family farming businesses.

Objective: Develop nature-based and heritage-based tourism.

- Strategy 12.1: Host special events.
- Strategy 12.2: Support historical and cultural events.

- Strategy 12.3: Work with tourism and tour groups, such as AAA, Visit Florida, Polk County Convention and Visitors Bureau, Keep Florida Beautiful, etc.

Objective: Promote the Ridge Scenic Highway as an international resource for agricultural and ecological research.

- Strategy 13.1: Create interactive website documenting the unique agricultural and ecological assets of the region.

#### *Goal: Provide Adequate Administration*

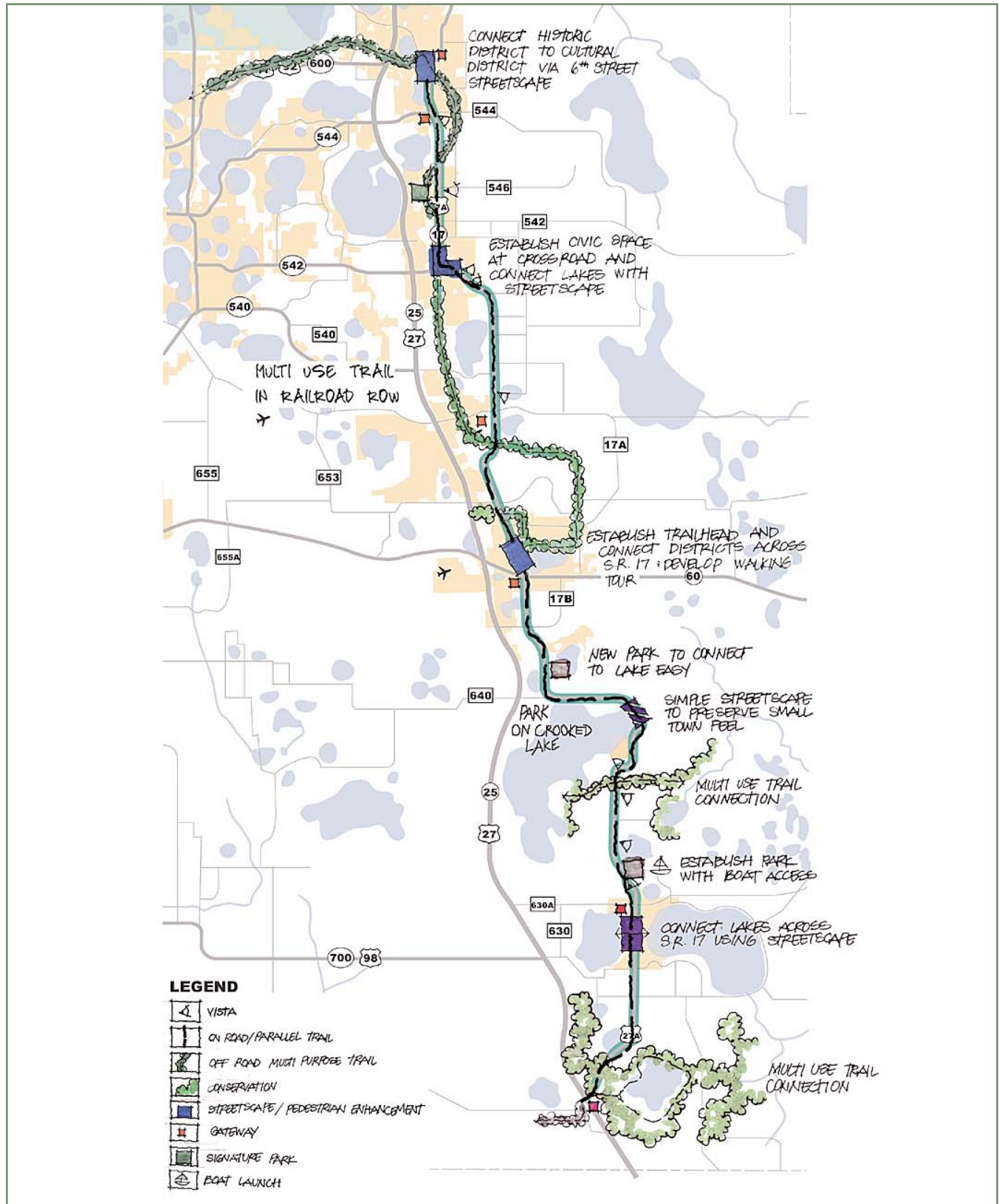
Objective: To establish and maintain a Corridor Management Entity.

- Strategy 14.1: Form non-profit organization with 501(c)3 status.
- Strategy 14.2: Establish P.O. Box for CME correspondence.
- Strategy 14.3: Address and complete necessary operational functions and tasks such as establishing and maintaining mailing lists, CME logo, etc.
- Strategy 14.4: Establish representation for CME from incorporated communities, unincorporated communities, the County, and five At-Large positions (Agriculture, Tourism, Cultural/Historic, Commercial/Developers, Environmental).
- Strategy 14.5: Convene annual meetings, as specified in the CME Bylaws.
- Strategy 14.6: Regularly review and update the Short Term Action Items.

### **Concept Plan**

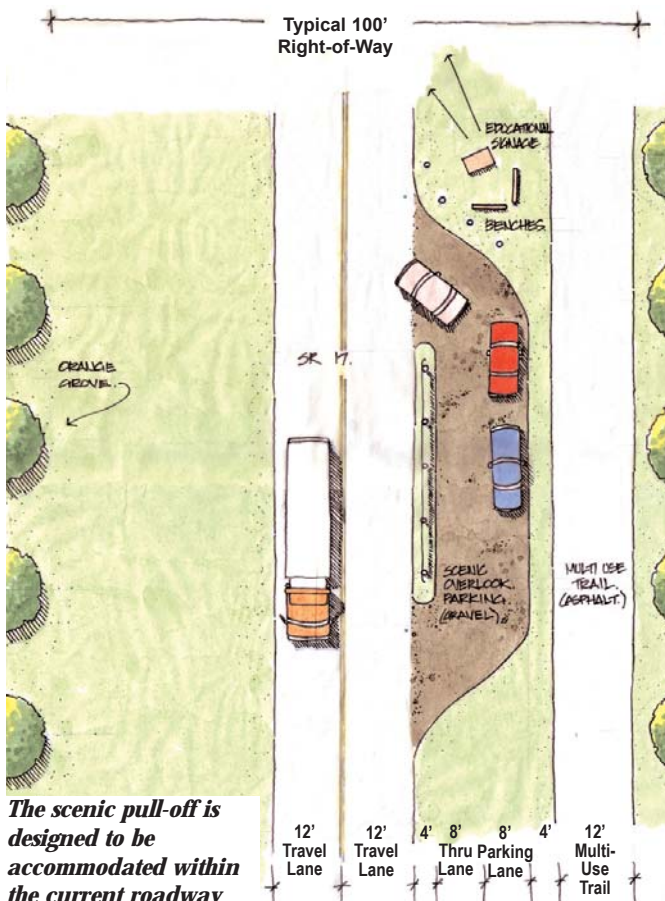
The Concept Plan is visual representation of the Corridor Vision and is a preliminary physical summary of the Action Plan. It provides a palette for design. All sketches are preliminary and in draft only. They provide a structure for future design work and will be refined during the implementation phase. The images of the Concept Plan were created during the Design Workshop, June 21-24, 2003. The images were inspired and refined by the members of the Corridor Advocacy Group and other corridor residents that participate in the open houses.

## Rural Areas



Concept Map

## Rural Areas



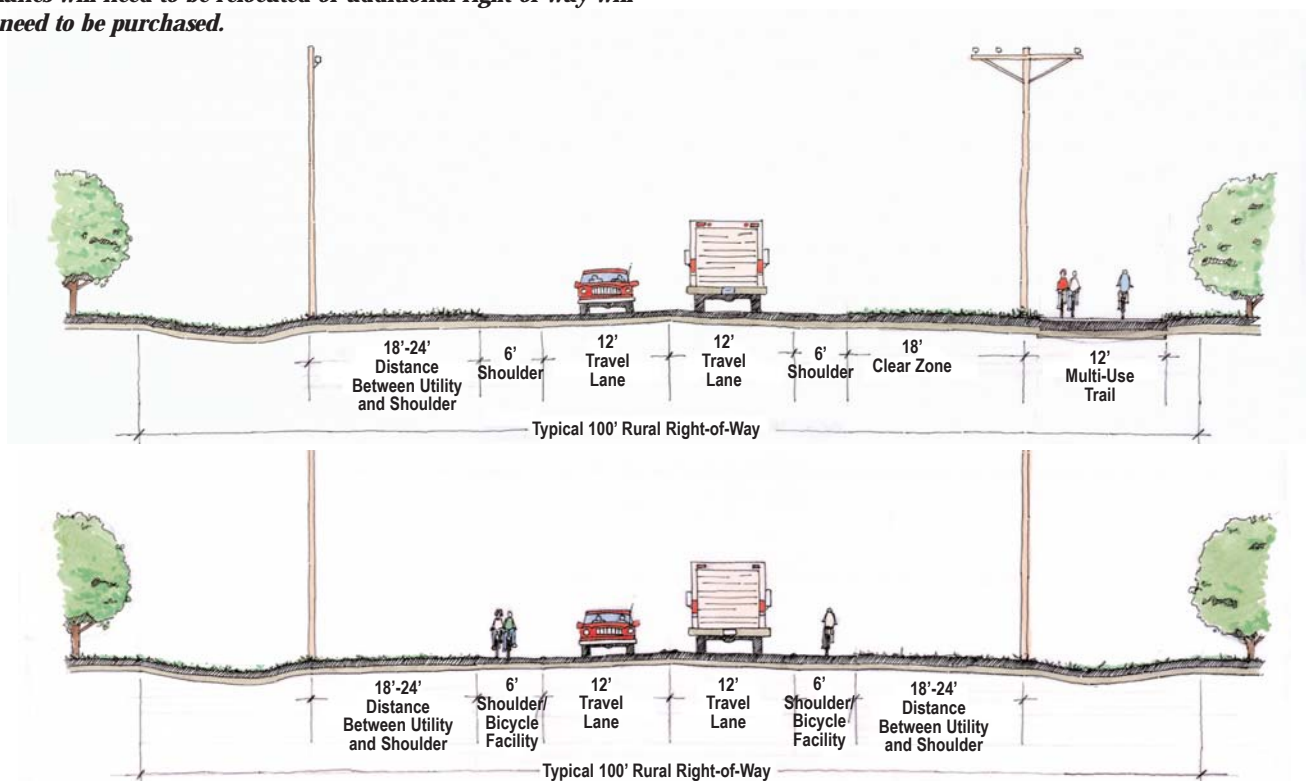
**The scenic pull-off is designed to be accommodated within the current roadway right-of-way. If a shoulder must be maintained, the travel lanes will need to be relocated or additional right-of-way will need to be purchased.**



**Scenic Pull-off, Lake Moody**



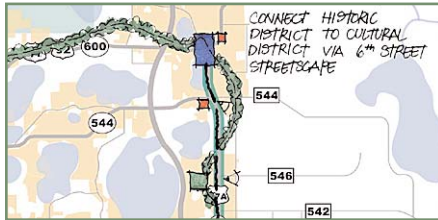
**Park at Lake Easy**



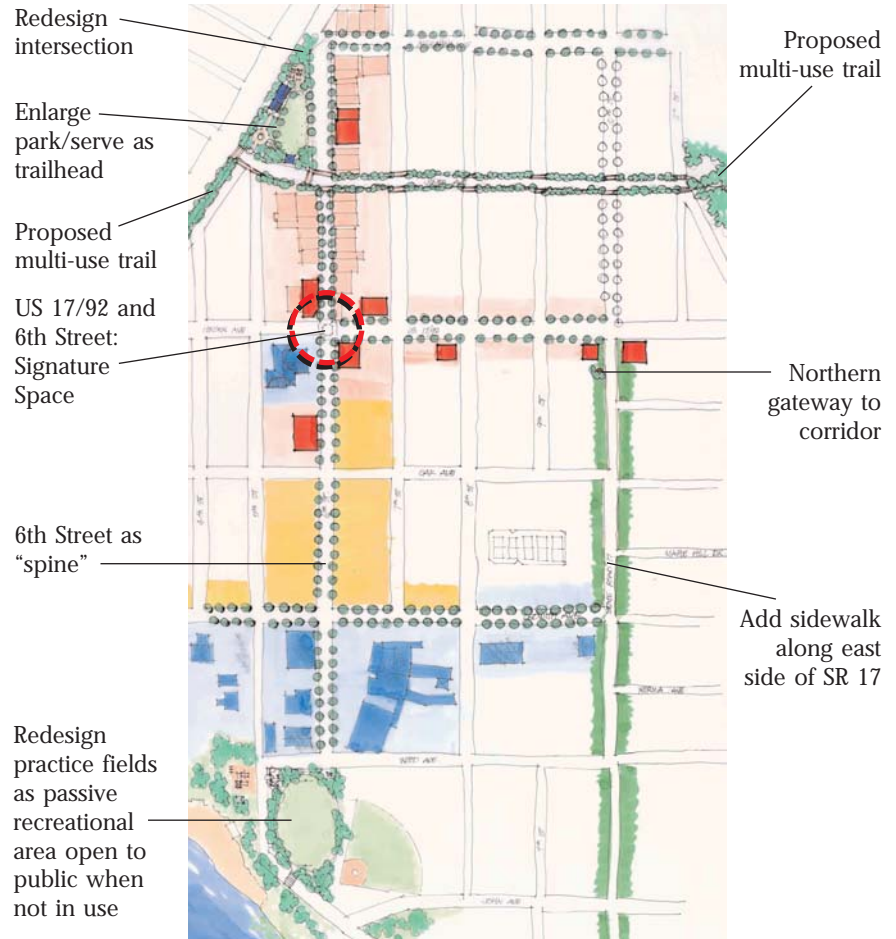
### Alternative bicycle facilities in ROW



## Haines City



**Concept Map**



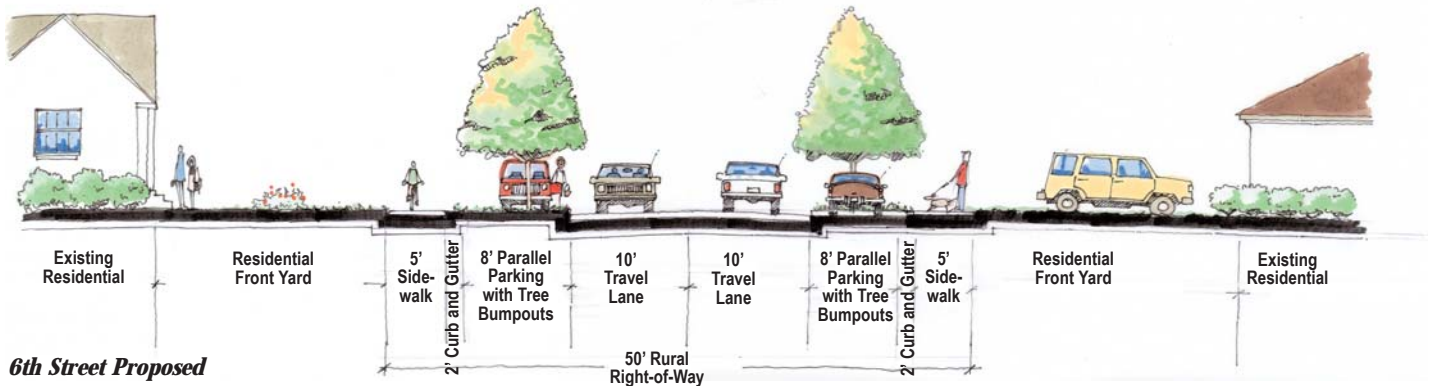
**Haines City Concept Plan**

### Proposed 6th Street

- 10 ft vehicular travel lanes
- Define parking
- Landscaped bulbouts in parking lane
- Continuous sidewalk
- Decorative lighting



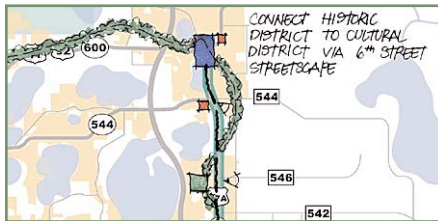
**6th Street Existing**



**6th Street Proposed**

## CONCEPT PLAN

### Haines City and Lake Hamilton

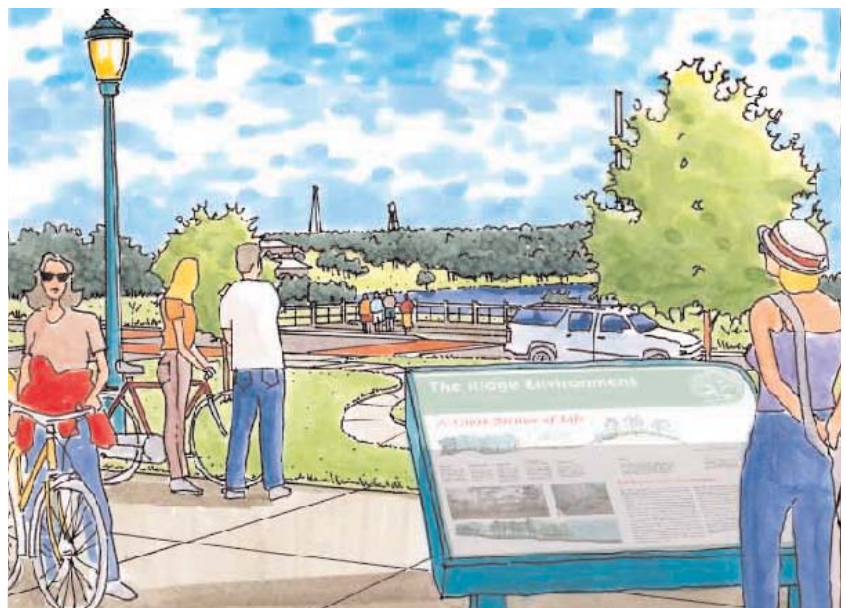


**Concept Map**



#### **US 17/92 and 6th Street Signature Space, Haines City**

- Redevelop buildings on corners to address the street
- Decorative paving for pedestrian crossings
- Bulbouts at intersections
- Continue landscaping/lighting/streetscaping currently provided north of 17/92 south on 6th Street
- Banners/signage



#### **Lake Hamilton**

- Redesign existing park to include trailhead/interpretive signage
- Provide scenic view area between SR 17 and frontage road



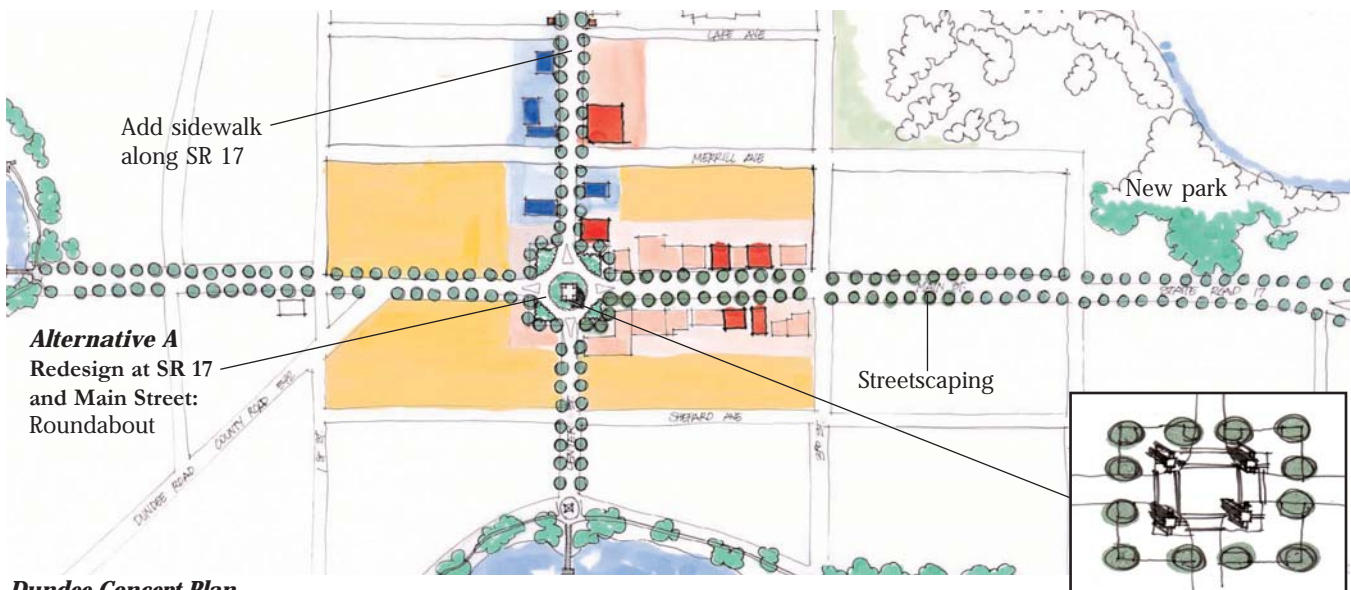
## Dundee and Lake of the Hills



**Concept Map**



**SR 17 (Main Street), existing through Dundee**



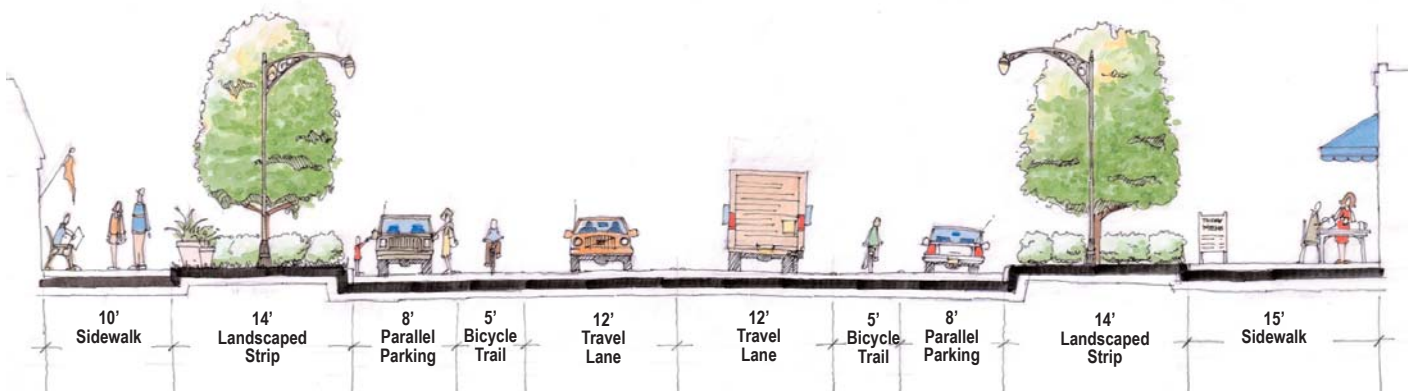
**Dundee Concept Plan**

### Proposed SR 17

- Restriping to narrow vehicular travel lanes and introduce bicycle lane
- Decorative lighting
- Tree canopy/landscaping within existing lawn area

### Alternative B

Redesign at SR 17 and Main Street: Maintain traffic signals, introduce pedestrian scale arches over sidewalk area



**Proposed enhancements to SR 17 (Main Street) through Dundee.**

## Lake Wales



**Concept Map**



### SR 17 and Park Avenue Signature Space

- Redevelop parking on southeast corner
- Special pavement treatment of pedestrian crossing
- Passive urban park on northeast corner
- Landscaping along Park Avenue
- Decorative lighting along Park Avenue



**Rails to Trails crossing of SR 17 north of Seminole Ave.**

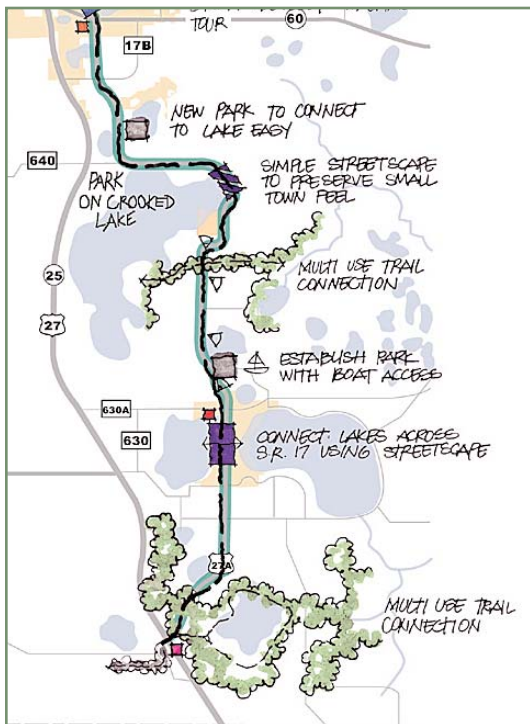


**Lake Wales Concept Plan**



## CONCEPT PLAN...continued

### Village of Highland Park, Babson Park, Hillcrest Heights and Frostproof

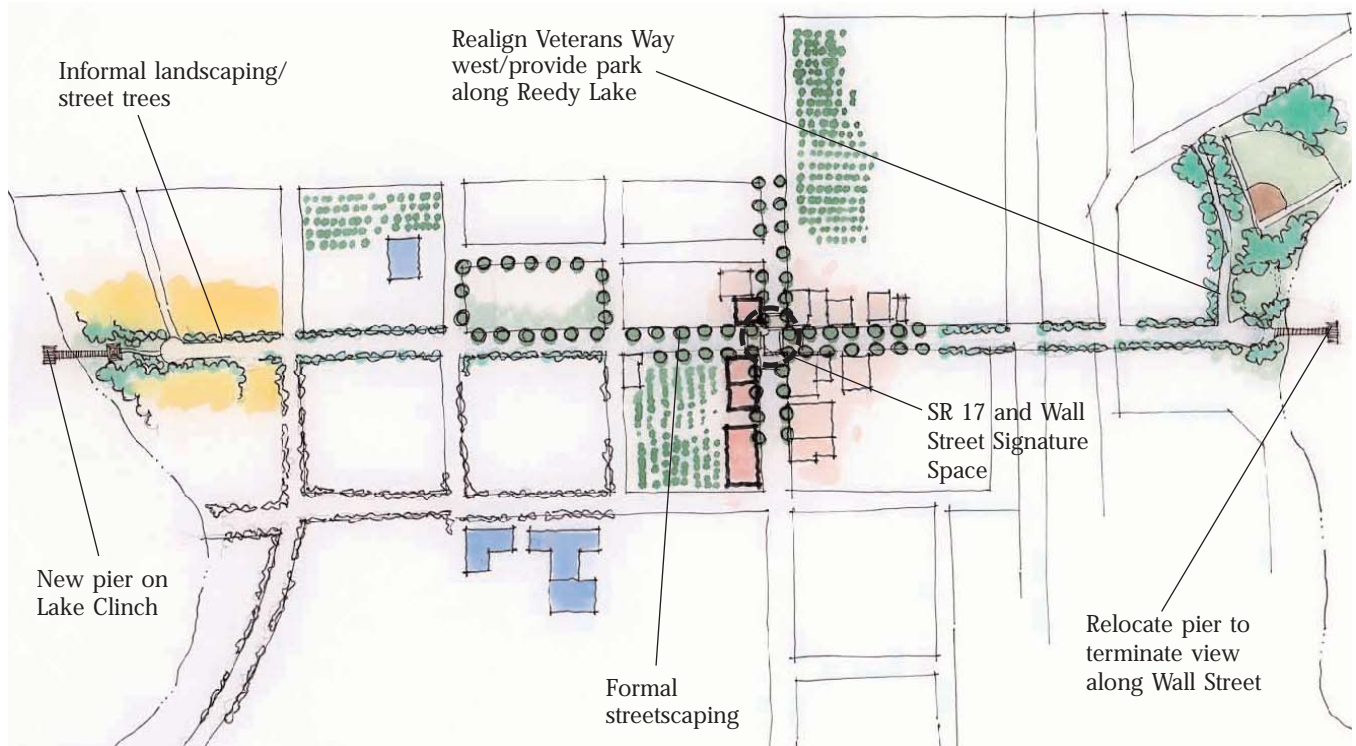


**Concept Map**



#### SR 17 and Wall Street Signature Space

- Redevelop northwest and southwest corner of SR 17 and Wall Street
- Special pavement treatment of pedestrian crossing of SR 17 and Wall Street.
- Landscaped bulbouts



**Frostproof Concept Plan**

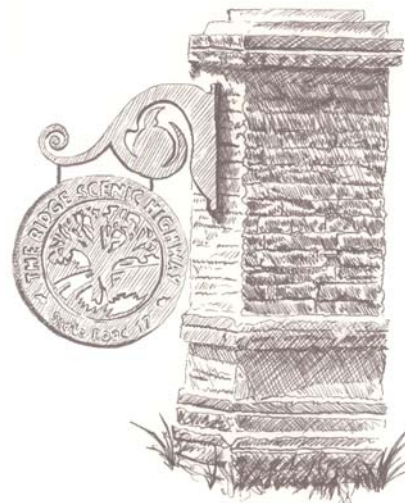


## Comprehensive Signage and Wayfinding Package

### Overview of Elements of Comprehensive Signage and Wayfinding Package



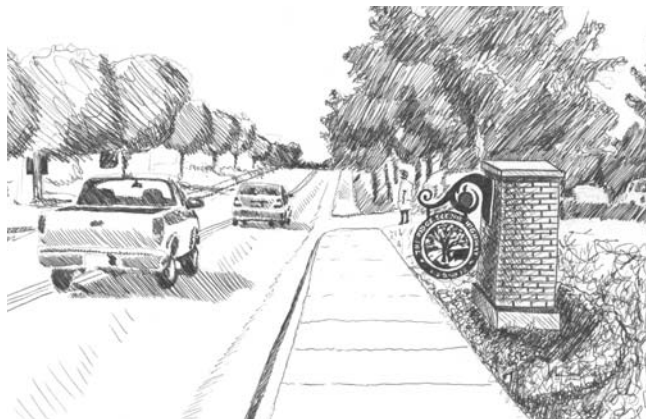
- Gateway
- Wayfinding/directional
- Street signage
- Trailblazer
- Educational
- Other
  - Maps/tours
  - Brochure



### Gateways - Examples



*South Gateway, north of US 17/92*

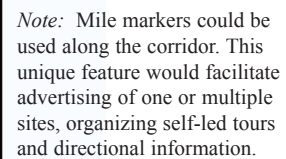


*North Gateway, Haines City, south of US 17/92*



*Gateway at Chalet Suzanne Road*

## Wayfinding/Directional



THE RIDGE

- ↑ Historical Museum
- ← Public Library
- ← Courthouse
- City Hall
- Farmers Market

12TH STREET

