



FROGG

Friends of the River of Grass Greenway



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website: www.evergladesROGG.org

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Spring 2019

TRAIL TOWN PRESENTATION

April 27
Official Trail Town Presentation in Everglades City

- 10 am Guided Walking tour of historic buildings & Art-in-the-Glades
- 10:30 Antique Cars arrive
- 11 am Opening Ceremony Welcome & Introductions TRAIL TOWN Presentation to Mayor Grimm by Eric Draper, Director of Florida State Parks
- 11:30 Laundry Cart Races
- 12 pm Lunch by Lions Club
- 1:30 Birthday Cake
- 2:00 Old Timers Story Telling

Everyone Invited to Come and Celebrate the first Trail Town in South Florida

www.evergladesmuseum.org
click on "Events"
or call (239) 252-5026

TRAIL TOWN DESIGNATION

by Patty Huff



In August 2018 I attended an Office & Greenways Trails meeting at which three Trail Town applications were being discussed (Vilano Beach, Malabar, Clermont); this meeting was followed by an official presentation to Titusville as the 2nd Florida State Trail Town designation (Dunedin was the first earlier last year).

Listening to the many amenities each of these communities had to offer to the bicyclists, pedestrians, hikers and equestrians, I was encouraged to believe that our own little town of Everglades City may qualify. When I returned and discussed this with our city officials, several members of the community formed a Trail Town Committee and applied in December for a state designation. In January three of our committee members gave a power point presentation to the Office of Greenways & Trails Council and were approved along with three other towns: Palatka, Inverness, and Deltona. Now there are nine communities that have been recognized as a "place where trail users can venture off a hiking, biking, equestrian or paddling trail to enjoy the services and unique heritage of the community, benefiting the town economically and socially."

Everglades City is a gateway to the Ten Thousand Islands and an important hub for several paddling trails, including the Florida Circumnavigational Saltwater Paddling Trail. Mayor Howie Grimm stated that "Our small island town situated in the middle of the great Everglades area has many amenities for both our residents and visitors, including a city park, a museum, restaurants, lodging, a hardware store, grocery store and historic buildings. We are a bicycle/walkable community with kayak and canoe rentals and guided tours. Having the Florida Trail Town designation will only enhance our efforts to provide the best possible experience for our visitors."

There are seven national and state parks located nearby, and Everglades City is the closest to most of these trail designations and provides the necessary amenities (food, lodging, information, maps) for the eco-tourists. See <https://swflgo.com/trail-town/> for more info.

If you are interested in learning more about Florida Trail Towns and having your town designated, visit the OGT website: <https://floridadep.gov/parks/ogt/content/florida-trail-town-program>

FROGG is committed to establishing the safe use by the general public of US41 across the Everglades between Naples and Miami, focusing on safety and environmental education and stewardship for those hiking, walking, and cycling through south Florida and the Everglades.

COLLIER MPO BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN MASTER PLAN

The Collier County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Board has adopted its Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan

According to the Collier County MPO website: “The Plan provides a comprehensive inventory of existing bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure in Collier County. The Plan provides maximum flexibility in bringing projects forward for funding; and offers design guidelines based on best practices that implementing agencies may use as guidance. Based on the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Complete Streets work and the Collier County Board of County Commissioners approving a Complete Streets Resolution the Plan also takes a more proactive approach to Complete Streets.”

The Plan, Map Series and Appendices may be viewed or downloaded below.

Please call the MPO office at 239-252-5814 if you are having trouble downloading files.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan

(<http://www.colliermopo.org/modules/showdocument.aspx?documentid=11354>)

Map Series (<http://www.colliermopo.org/modules/showdocument.aspx?documentid=11356>)

Appendices (<http://www.colliermopo.org/modules/showdocument.aspx?documentid=11353>)

Excerpt from the Collier County Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan:

“The City of Everglades City is a small community on the edge of the Florida Everglades. The City recently received designation as a Florida Trail Town from the Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Recreation and Parks, Office of Greenways and Trails. Its City Council has identified four priority sidewalk projects that can be considered for future funding. The City is developing its own Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan which, when adopted, will be included in this Plan by reference.”

Also, the Naples Pathways Coalition (NPC) is working on developing a multiuse pathways system for Collier County in the next six years and is looking for partnerships to support this effort. To learn more about NPC visit website www.naplespathways.org.

Updates Along the Tamiami Trail

The Office of Greenways & Trails SUNTRAIL mapping section on their website has been updated to reflect the existing multi-use path along US41 from CR951 in East Naples to SR92 (east entrance to Marco Island). See <http://floridasuntrail.com/> for a copy of the map. There is still a “gap” 3.5 miles between CR951 and 6L Farm Road which is eligible for SUNTRAIL funding since it is listed on the map.

FDOT is reviewing the possibility of removing the raised pavement markings (RPM) on US41 East from SR92 to Port of the Islands to increase safety for cyclists. This would be a tremendous improvement for cyclists who frequently ride this route and for the long distance bicyclists who travel US41 when crossing the United States on their way to Key West. Krome Avenue was widened south of US41 and now has a 8.5 mile separated pathway which several cycling groups this winter enjoyed as they biked from Ft. Myers to the Keys. Eventually, this path will be extended to Homestead.

Continue to communicate with your local and state officials about safety along the Tamiami Trail. We have seen more cyclists traveling this part of south Florida than any other year. Let’s make it safer for them to enjoy!

FROGG Board Members

Dayna Fendrick (Naples) Patty Huff (Everglades City) Scott Shook (Marco Island) Oscar Rattenborg (Ft. Myers)

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NEW BROCHURES

“Everglades City Florida State Trail Town”

After Everglades City was designated a Florida State Trail Town in January, a new brochure was created and is now available in the card rack in the lobby of Everglades City Hall. It highlights the opportunities for eco-tourists in our community.

“Welcome to Historic Everglades City, FL”

A Visitor Information Brochure has been developed listing all the businesses and services available in Everglades City. This will be a guide for anyone visiting the area seeking lodging, restaurants, and services, etc.

“Hiking, Cycling and Paddling the Everglades”

This updated brochure includes information about the various opportunities and amenities along the Tamiami Trail, including information about safety on the Trail and links to the various state and national parks in the area.

For more information, email info@evergladesrogg.org.

Bike Ride through Bear Island in the Everglades

On March 10 Board Member Dayna Fendrick led a small group on a Bear Island spring bike tour. The following is Dayna’s summary of their exciting ride in the Big Cypress National Preserve:

“With my husband Andrew and my sister Tara, we had a nice ride. We ran into a couple from Bonita, they said they’ve been coming there & biking for 20 years. It was a nice cool morning (at first) and we saw lots of wildlife - a couple of deer around mile 4, a black racer and gators, lots of birds - hawks, swallow-tail kites, herons, ibis, buzzards, and a turkey. The road was in pretty smooth condition, with not too many pot-holes or washboard areas. There were a few repair areas where they had used baseball sized rock to fill in, they were not fun!

Then things got interesting around mile 9 - we were heading out to the "big hill" on the Harold Strand Trail, Andrew was ahead of us a little bit & he spots the turkey and speeds up to get a better look - then he sees a black thing behind the turkey and realizes it's a bear! So we stop about 100 yards away and watch the bear - he sees us and starts ambling towards us! Keeps coming towards us, so we all raise our arms



and start yelling - he finally turns off & heads into the woods. We decide that's a good place to turn around, as we don't want to ride by where he might still be hanging out, so we didn't make it to the big hill. Tara got a nice shot of the bear (above). An enjoyable ride: about 20 miles and only passed 2 vehicles on the way!”

If you would like to share your experiences, photos, and bike rides through the Everglades, please send articles to FROGG, P.O. Box 5031, Everglades City, Florida 34139, or you may email to info@evergladesrogg.org.

**Come join us next season for great rides and camaraderie,
experiencing wild rural southwest Florida.**

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Bicycling in Florida

by Patty Huff

A hundred years ago the population in Florida was less than 1 million (about the population of Jacksonville today). Now our state ranks 3rd in the country with over 21.5 million residents! We all love living here with our fantastic weather and variety of outdoor activities, the same amenities that attract the millions of tourists who come to enjoy our Sunshine State. Somehow we all have to find a way to live and travel together. The more people on the road, the higher the danger for cyclists; a never ending compromise to “share the road.”

Bicycling plays such an important role in the lives of millions of Floridians and May is National Bike Month which provides each of us an opportunity to become more involved in spreading the word about safety.

Florida Bicycle Association works diligently to improve our current safety record, working with other organizations, communicating our position with legislators, and educating the public (both motorists and cyclists) about the rules of the road and how we can all work together to improve safety for everyone.

What you can do to help:

- 1) If you are not a member of the Florida Bicycle Association, join now!
- 2) If you are a member, invite your friends and family to join. Explain the benefits that you enjoy and the importance of speaking with one united voice through FBA.
- 3) Stay in contact with your representatives at the local, county and state level and explain the importance of Complete Streets. In September 2014, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) adopted the Statewide Complete Streets Policy (Topic No. 000-625-017-a).

Complete Streets serve transportation needs of transportation system users of all ages and abilities, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, motorists, and freight handlers. A transportation system based on Complete Streets principles can help to promote safety, quality of life, and economic development.

4) Stay informed about future road plans in your area. Get involved with your local Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) by applying for a position on one of the committees, especially a Bicycle / Pedestrian Advisory Committee.

5) Always be courteous and respectful when communicating the concerns and safety needs of bicyclists.

6) Ride your bike and have fun! We all have had wonderful memories while riding; the feeling of freedom, good exercise, the scent of orange blossoms and the sounds of the birds in addition to the amazing people we've met along the way. We have had the privilege of getting on a bicycle with the phenomenal Florida weather, the exhilaration of the wind in your face and the road beneath your wheels; and to be able to do it safely is truly important. The bicycle is famous for being the most efficient man-powered means of transportation the human race has yet invented, not only for the thrill of getting there but the wellbeing it provides. Enjoy the ride and act now to help us make Florida a safer place to ride!



For information about joining FBA, visit <http://floridabicycle.org/membership-and-sponsorship/>. Support safe cycling and learn more about the Florida Bicycle Association and its advocacy programs: www.floridabicycle.org

"I think bicycling has done more to emancipate women than anything else in the world." – Susan B. Anthony

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