



**CITY OF BROOKSVILLE
ANNUAL STEWARDSHIP REPORT
GOOD NEIGHBOR TRAIL AND TRAILHEAD COMPLEX
FCT Project 95-029-P56
July 31, 2016**

Cover Picture: City of Brooksville Tree City Arbor Day! This year the City of Brooksville celebrated its' Tree City Arbor Day festivities on April 29, 2016, kicking the event off with an educational session on the importance of trees to our environment. The "educational session" was held inside the Museum Association's One-Room Schoolhouse at the Good Neighbor Trailhead. Following presentations by various dignitaries, everyone was dismissed to the great outdoors for refreshments and the planting of two beautiful Winged Elm trees. All those present participated in making the event a great success, as evidenced in some of the pictures at the end of this report.

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Good Neighbor Trail and Trailhead Complex

2015-2016 Project Summary

The following paragraphs summarize the accomplishments over the last few years in the implementation of the *Good Neighbor Trail and Trailhead Complex Management Plan* [Management Plan]. The City and the Good Neighbor Trail Advisory Committee [GNTAC] are very proud of the accomplishments with what has been built to date, and anxiously anticipate the day when the Good Neighbor Trail's connection to the Withlacoochee State Trail and the Suncoast Trail are completed.

Within the past few years, the City and County continued to work together in a solid relationship that's led to a high energy focus on seeing the vision of the Good Neighbor Trailhead and Trail come to fruition. Construction of the trailhead, including over 3,000 linear feet of a 12-foot wide multi-use trail, a restroom facility, a 6-sided gazebo with access to potable water for the recreational enthusiast and security lighting, was completed in October of 2009. The first leg of the 12-foot wide Good Neighbor (multi-use) Trail was also completed in 2009 from the trailhead (at Russell Street) to Jasmine Drive (5,800+ linear feet). In 2011, additional segments of the trail from Jasmine Drive to Mondon Hill Road (2,145± linear feet) and from the eastern edge of the Majestic Oaks property to Weatherly Road (2,727± linear feet) have been constructed. The missing link (7,072± linear feet), the portion of the trail going through the Majestic Oaks property, was the most recent segment built with construction being completed in June 2013. The Hernando County Metropolitan Planning Organization [MPO] allocated Enhancement Project Priority Funding (currently known as Transportation Alternative funding) for the construction of the now existing trail sections, which when combined with the trail at the trailhead, totals approximately 4 miles of improved trail network.

Funding in the amount of \$2,745,000 for the design and construction of the balance of the trail (approximately 6.6 miles) to connect the Good Neighbor Trailhead with the Withlacoochee State Trail has been secured through the FDOT 5-Year Transportation Improvement Program, and it is planned to be completed by the end of calendar year 2017. The connection of the Good Neighbor Trail to the Suncoast Trail is a planned link in the Coast-to-Coast (C2C) Trail, which will provide a safe and continuous multi-use trail from the Gulf of Mexico to the Atlantic Ocean. During the 2016 session, the State Legislature and Governor committed 25 million in funding to the C2C and related projects that will help design/construct these missing links of State's regional trail network. Brooksville has strongly urged the MPO and FDOT to bring the connecting route for the Coast-to-Coast trail through the City connecting it with the now existing GNT Trailhead Complex. The Hernando/Citrus MPO commissioned a \$180,000 study to evaluate alternatives for connecting between the Suncoast Trail and the GNT. This study was completed in May, 2016, with the Consultant's and City's recommendation of a preferred route going through a portion of the downtown area and connecting to the existing GNT Trailhead Complex at Main Street. The Hernando/Citrus MPO will review this at their meeting in September, 2016 and their recommendations will be forwarded to FDOT thereafter.

The City and the Hernando Historical Museum Association, Inc. continue to have a collaborative

partnership as a portion of the trailhead includes the 1885 historic train depot. A historic railcar has been restored and is located on tracks adjacent to the Depot. The Train Depot itself continues to be owned and maintained by the Museum Association and is used as a site for meetings and genealogy recordkeeping and research. In May 2012, the Museum Association presented their plan to construct a replica one-room school house at the trailhead on its property adjacent to the 1885 train depot. The Association broke ground for building the structure on January 4, 2014 and completed it in May 2014. A dedication ceremony was held for the grand opening of the building in December 2014. Since then, the Association has been providing educational programs out of this featured structure. Pictures of this years' Arbor Day celebration at the replica one-room school house may be found on the Cover Page and pages 10-11 of this report.

Community outreach and educational opportunities continue with activities and events such as the Brooksville Cycling Classic, Market on Main Street (which began in July, 2016), Leadership Hernando, annual Christkindl Christmas event, annual Christmas parade, annual Heritage Day Festival, Founder's Week celebrations, Downtown Cruise in Car Show, Junior Service League Masquerade 5-10K and one-mile fun run and Brooksville's Arbor Day Tree City celebration. The Florida Blueberry Festival held its fifth annual event on April 16-17, 2016, featuring a fun-filled weekend with a venue that included the entire uptown area. This Festival was another huge success in its fifth year bringing over 60,000 people into our community. Planning for next year's Festival is already underway. The GNTAC continues to promote, communicate and provide dialogue with the public.

Great accomplishments have taken place during recent reporting periods. Projects outlined in the Management Plan have been constructed. People from all levels of the public and private sectors have celebrated the major achievements and construction activity that came to fruition in recent years. Best of all is the reward of seeing people enjoy and use this new recreational amenity daily.

These past few years have seen a strong focus on project implementation. A combination of cooperative agency partnerships including Florida Communities Trust [FCT], City of Brooksville, Hernando County, Florida Department of Transportation [FDOT], Florida Department of Environmental Protection [FDEP], the National Parks Service (Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance [RTCA] Program), the Hernando County Native Plant Society and the Hernando Historical Museum Association have made it possible to get to this point in executing the Management Plan.

Specific activities that have occurred since the last stewardship report include:

- The Good Neighbor Trail Advisory Committee (GNTAC) met five times since the last reporting cycle (9/17/15, 12/17/15, 3/16/16, 5/9/16 and 6/30/16) with the next regular meeting scheduled for September 15, 2016.
- The Junior Service League sponsored the second annual Masquerade 5K, 10K and One Mile Run on the trail on 10/17/2015.
- The Museum Association is currently (May, 2016 – September, 2016) holding a contest to name the model town train layout which has been set up at the train depot site at the GNT Trailhead Complex.
- The Museum Association and Hernando Preservation Society hosted its second annual

“Heritage Day” event at the trailhead on 2/27/2016.

- City sponsored the annual Tree City Arbor day event on 4/29/2016, planting two trees at the GNT Trailhead between the one-room Schoolhouse and the 1885 Historic Train Station.
- Continue to monitor the People for Bikes grant program with the intent to submit permit applications to build/maintain infrastructure at the Trailhead and on the Trail itself.
- Participated with the Brooksville Cycling Classic State Championship event (4/9–10/16).
- Participating with the Division of Forestry in the use of a biological control beetle to help eradicate the air potato plants at the trailhead (The control beetles were released in the park around June 2013. Ongoing efforts continue to ensure their survival and success in eradicating the potato vine plant).
- Stormwater Master Plan was completed around January 2014 by the Brooksville Community Redevelopment Agency, and will be used in part to address design for creek restoration and pond detention/retention at the trailhead site (regional stormwater pond improvement at the Trailhead site programmed for 2016-17).
- Recreation Master Plan was completed around January 2014 by the Brooksville Community Redevelopment Agency, and provides for planning connectivity between the Trailhead and the City’s downtown district (will have a bearing on future projects yet to be programmed).
- Community Redevelopment Agency continues to work on the project to install wayfinding signage at Trailhead and various locations in Downtown area. (Contracted in May, 2015)
- Community Redevelopment Agency enters into contract (6/20/16) to design improvements to water tower site, which is located directly north of GNT Trailhead site. Wayfinding signage will direct trail users at the Trailhead to amenities at the water tower site and downtown.
- Coordination with the County and the SWFWMD continues as it relates to improving the stormwater system that travels in and through the Trailhead.
- Continue to research various grants that might assist with improving improving features of the trail and trailhead property (i.e., People for Bikes, SWFWMD Cooperative funding, etc.).

Site Development

Physical Improvements - Construction of the Trailhead was completed in October 2009, including over 3,000 linear feet of a twelve-foot wide, multi-use trail and 130 linear feet of wooden foot bridging, a restroom facility, parking, a six-sided gazebo with access to potable water for the recreational enthusiast, signage and security lighting. The first leg of the twelve-foot wide Good Neighbor (multi-use) Trail was completed at the same time from the trailhead to Jasmine Drive (5,800+ linear feet). Phase 2 of the trail from Jasmine Drive to Weatherly Road totaling over 11,944 linear feet was initiated in 2011 and completed in June 2013. An information kiosk, bike racks, picnic table and trash receptacle was installed at the Trailhead between April & June 2012. With the completion of Phase 2 of the trail, the total improved (paved) trail network to date is nearly 4 miles in length. A replica one-room schoolhouse was constructed as an additional amenity at the Trailhead, with the dedication ceremony for said facility being held December 6, 2014. A regional stormwater system is slated to be built on the South side of the Trailhead area in 2016-17.

Easements, Concessions or Leases – There is no activity to report for this period.

Key Management Activities

Natural Resource Protection – The City designed the trailhead project in a manner which minimized impact to trees and vegetation on the property. Appropriate safeguards were taken to protect natural resources on the property during the construction phase of the project (i.e., silt fencing for erosion control, no major cut or fill required, etc.). Past tree, plant and animal surveys have been incorporated into design of improvements in order to protect natural resources to the greatest extent possible.

Resource Restoration and Enhancement - The City is partnering with the County and the Water Management District to restore the creek that traverses the Good Neighbor Trailhead site. The Trailhead project proceeded independent of the creek restoration. Creek restoration is anticipated to occur in FY 2015-16 in partnership with and utilizing revenue sources that may be available from agencies that include Hernando County, the Southwest Florida Water Management District [SWFWMD] and the FDEP. A primary effort of the GNTAC in 2015-16 has been to provide input to the MPO and FDOT on the best route to close the C2C Trail between the GNT trailhead and the Suncoast Parkway. Also of importance for the GNTAC in 2015-16 was to offer recommendations for amenities for a water tower site improvement project. Signage at the GNT Trailhead Complex will direct trail users to this facility. The GNTAC also stays actively involved in the efforts to complete the Good Neighbor Trail to the Withlacoochee State Trail, which should happen by the end of 2017.

Educational Programs - Education programs related to resource protection, the environment, recreation and other related topics will be provided on an ongoing basis. Examples of educational programs provided include the annual event sponsored by the City and the Division of Forestry commemorating Arbor Day. This year's celebration was on April 29, 2016, and included the planting of two Winged Elm trees at the Trailhead. Additionally, information related to the Trailhead and property is being posted in the information kiosk that was installed in April 2012. The goal in producing the Good Neighbor Trail brochure has been and continues to be to educate the public about the project and anticipated benefits (a copy of the brochure is posted at the kiosk). Five thousand brochures were published with the financial assistance from the Hernando County Tourist Development Council and technical assistance from the National Park Service's Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program. Many of the brochures have been distributed by GNTAC members as they have spoken to public groups, committees and individuals interested in the project as well as being provided at community events such as the Hernando County Fair and the Hernando Leadership Program. The Adopt-A-Trail program is also being used as an educational youth-at-risk program providing buy-in and respect for the environment and community amenities. And most recently, educational programs are being provided at the one-room school house, where the Museum Association teachers take students back in time to an era past, to a day before computers, cell phones and other electronic devices, teaching an appreciation for the ways of life in the early pioneering days of our Community and the Country.

Maintenance and Security – Maintenance and security responsibility for the constructed improvements lie with the City's Parks and Recreation Department, with support from the City's Public Works and Police Departments.

Revenues

No revenues were collected or produced by the City in conjunction with the Good Neighbor Trail project for this reporting period.

Implementation Timeline

The following table represents the current status of the implementation activities and provides for an updated estimate on task completions where applicable:

ACTIVITY	Original Estimated Date	Current Status as of 07/31/2016
Draft Management Plan to FCT	June 1998-06/01/98	Completed.
Management Plan	November 1998	Completed; Adopted 11/18/03. Updated and submitted to FCT with the 2005 Stewardship Report, further updated and resubmitted to FCT for approval on 2/16/10 with a final revision and submittal on 12/20/10.
Meet with SWFWMD for comments and strategies to begin to develop Creek Restoration Plan	May 1999	Initiated in May 1999. Communication with County and WMD on flood plain improvements in this general area is ongoing. Implementation of improvements to occur by FY 2015-16
Monitoring	May 1999 and annually thereafter 90 days prior to Annual Report due date.	Monitoring is an ongoing activity on an annual basis. The City monitors its' Parks daily. FCT performed a monitoring site visit on 4/20/12.
Stewardship Annual Report (Project Plan approved 8/27/98)	July 27, 1999, and annually thereafter (submit to FCT approximately 30 days prior to anniversary date of project plan approval)	Ongoing on annual basis.
Annual Vegetative/Exotic Pest, Animal, Natural Resources/Ecosystem Survey, including a Specimen Tree Survey	September/October 1999, and annually thereafter	Master site survey completed 1/14/2002; Vegetative/Exotic Pest Plant Survey (Surveys completed 2/2/02, 8/10/02, 10/26/02); Bird Survey (Surveys completed 2/2/02 and 4/18/02); Specimen Tree Survey (completed 6/6/02,); GIS Tree survey mapping completed 3/27/09. Property is

ACTIVITY	Original Estimated Date	Current Status as of 07/31/2016
		monitored annually for any significant changes (none to report at this time).
Project Approval Agreement	November 1999	Project plan approved by FCT Governing Board on 8/27/98 and FCT staff on 12/18/98.
Historic Survey	November 1999	Site was reviewed in conjunction with design to ensure that potential historic features are not disturbed. Survey work is ongoing as-needed as of this date.
Restoration Plan Development (For Parson's Creek)	December 1999	Plans for a regional stormwater improvement have been completed and construction is slated to occur in the near future.
Future Land Use Amendment to Comprehensive Plan	January 2000	Completed April 22, 2004, when the State approved the City's Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR)-based Comprehensive Plan Amendment.
Exotic vegetation removal	March-July 2000	Hernando County Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society sponsored an invasive exotic plant removal day at the site on 1/22/00. Major clean-up occurred in 2006-07 prior to an event held at the property. Two additional major clean-up dates occurred during the 2009/2010 fiscal year. The most recent major clean-up occurred during the months of March-April 2011. In 2013, the GNT Advisory Committee coordinated with the DOF to use a biological control beetle to eradicate the "air potato," an exotic pest plant existing on the property. Exotic vegetation removal is an on-going maintenance activity.
Pave Trail within City limits and Construct Trailhead	2001/2002 Budget Cycle, beginning in October 2001	Construction of trailhead and Ph. 1 to Jasmine Dr. completed October 2009. Ph. 2 to Weatherly Rd. completed June 2013. All of the paved trail within the City limits has been constructed at this time.
Place appropriate signage at trail head	Upon completion of trailhead renovations	Installed as planned. Preliminary signs announcing the project were posted in 2001. New signs were erected upon construction completion in

ACTIVITY	Original Estimated Date	Current Status as of 07/31/2016
Begin maintenance of Trail and Trailhead	Upon completion of trail	September/October 2009. Signage is maintained by the City's Parks & Recreation Department. City Parks & Recreation Department is providing maintenance oversight.
Restore Streambed (SWFWMD assistance)	2002/2003 Budget Cycle, beginning in October 2002	Plans for a regional stormwater improvement have been completed and construction is slated to occur in the near future.
Develop Educational, Recreational and Youth-at Risk Programs	By completion of paved trail	Continual, ongoing outreach is provided to keep the community engaged and informed about the benefits of this project. The City will reach out for participating partners to provide applicable programs consistent with what is discussed in the management plan. Educational programs have been initiated with the Museum Association using the replica one-room school house as a venue. Also instituted the Adopt-A-Trail program in 2012 that provides for youth-at-risk educational opportunities.

Funding

In 1999-2000, FCT provided the funds to purchase large portions of the trail and trailhead property. Additional funding for trail and trailhead construction and related amenities was provided through the City of Brooksville, the FDEP through the Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program, Hernando County and FDOT through the MPO Enhancement Projects Priority (aka Transportation Alternatives) Program and local organizations such as the Brooksville Rotary and Kiwanis Clubs.

Management Plan Changes

The GNTAC updated several components of the “Good Neighbor Trail to Russell Street Management Plan” in 2004. This plan, which is now known as the “Good Neighbor Trail and Trailhead Complex Management Plan” was updated and submitted to the FCT for approval with the 2005 Stewardship Report to more accurately reflect anticipated improvements. An additional update was coordinated with and submitted to FCT staff for review and approval in February 2010. After consultation in coordination with FCT staff, a final version of the 2010 update of the “Good Neighbor Trail and Trailhead Complex Management Plan” was transmitted for approval to Florida Communities Trust on December 20, 2010.

Attachment(s): 1) 2015-16 Good Neighbor Trail and Trailhead Photos
2) Priority Timeline

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ATTACHMENTS



City Council, Division of Forestry Personnel and SMOKY THE BEAR stand in front of the PARTNERSHIP SUPPORT SIGNAGE at the Trailhead (Picture taken during the City Arbor Day Event on April 29 2016)



CHILDREN, PARENTS AND STAFF PLANTING "WINGED ELMS" AT THE TRAILHEAD (APRIL 29, 2016)



TREE PLANTING DECLARED A SUCCESS (04/29/2016)



ANNUAL BROOKSVILLE CYCLING CLASSIC FUN RIDE (4/9/2016)



BIKE TO WORK WITH THE MAYOR DAY (3/18/2016)



HOWELL AVENUE SIDEWALK SECTION DEDICATION CEREMONY AT THE TRAILHEAD'S 1885 TRAIN DEPOT (1/9/2016)

EXHIBIT VIII-B.6.

Priority Timeline										
Project Number: 95-029-P56										
Project Name: Good Neighbor Trail and Trailhead Complex										
Grant recipient: City of Brooksville										
Instructions: Check the Done column for completed items. Write in the month that each task will be completed. Add and delete items as needed.										
	Done	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Design –Trailhead Trail, Gazebo, Trail to Jasmine Dr.	X									
Permitting	X									
Public meetings/comment	X									
Interagency coordination/comment	X									
Demolition of existing structures	N/A									
Amend Future Land Use Designation	X									
Amend Zoning Designation	X									
Structures and Improvements: (add or delete structures as needed)										
Entrance sign with FCT recognition (required)	X									
Parking	X									
Fencing	N/A									
Restrooms	X									
Trash cans		X	X							
Bike racks		X	X							
Benches	X									
Interpretive kiosk	X									
Interpretive signs							JAN			
Museum	N/A									
Nature center	N/A									
Neighborhood Recreation Center	N/A									
Stormwater facilities							JAN			
Picnic Tables		X								
Resource-based facilities:										
Fishing pier	N/A									
Observation pier	N/A									
Observation deck	N/A									
Observation tower	N/A									
Boat launch - ramp and pier	N/A									
Canoe launch - pier	N/A									
Camp ground	N/A									
Picnicking pavilion	X									
Nature trail	X									
Horse trail	N/A									
Off-road bike trail	N/A									
Paved bike trail	X									
Wildlife observation platform	N/A									

	Done	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Dog park (fenced)	N/A									
User-oriented facilities:										
Playground							DEC			
Boundless Playground	N/A									
Tether Ball	N/A									
Tennis courts	N/A									
Baseball field	N/A									
Softball field	N/A									
Handball courts	N/A									
Racquetball courts	N/A									
Basketball court	N/A									
Swimming pool	N/A									
Shuffleboard courts	N/A									
Exercise/par-course trail - exercise stations	N/A									
Volleyball courts	N/A									
Skateboard / roller-blade park	N/A									
Roller hockey rink	N/A									
Bocci ball courts	N/A									
Horseshoe pits	N/A									
BMX bike track	N/A									
Equestrian rink	N/A									
Archery range	N/A									
Frisbee golf course	N/A									
Remote control car track	N/A									
Key Management Activities:										
Archeological survey	N/A									
Archeological protection measures	X									
Landscaping	As Needed									
Upland restoration	N/A									
Wetland restoration	N/A									
Prescribed burn plan	N/A									
Plant survey/ <i>monitoring</i>	X	JAN								
Wildlife survey/ <i>monitoring</i>	X	JAN								
Photo-monitoring	X									
Exotic plant removal - <i>Ongoing</i>	X	FEB								
Feral animal removal program	N/A									
Educational programs – Ongoing Quarterly		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Water quality or hydrological improvements							JAN			
Annual Stewardship Report (Required)	X	AUG								

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