

Plan Amendment 03-12
Citrus Park Village Plan – Trail Corridor Text
An amendment to the Text of the Future Land Use Element
Second Cycle of 2003 Plan Amendments

Description of the Text Amendment

The requested plan amendment is proposed to revise text in the Future Land Use Element related to the newly adopted Citrus Park Village (CPV) Plan. The proposed policy supports the walkable community concept promoted in that Plan. The proposed text amendment is intended to better guide development adjacent to the Upper Tampa Bay Trail.

A key tenet of the CPV Plan is to promote a walkable, urban community closely associated with the Upper Tampa Bay Trail. The Trail is a focal of the Plan, with building orientation and proximity to the Trail viewed as necessary attributes for its success. This text amendment is being proposed to clearly identify the desired trail width standard within a specific location along the County owned trail corridor.

Proposed Text and Amendment Area

The text amendment is intended to state the desired trail width within a 1,200-foot segment of the Upper Tampa Bay Trail corridor. The segment extends approximately 600 feet north and south of the intersection Ehrlich Road and the Upper Tampa Bay Trail.

Proposed text language:

The Upper Tampa Bay Trail is a focal point of the CPV Plan. Within the Village Center, extending approximately 600 feet north and south of the Ehrlich Road, the corridor that accommodates the Trail shall be, to the fullest extent possible, 60 feet in width.

Background Information

The Board of County Commissioners adopted the Citrus Park Village Plan Amendment 02-07 on June 25, 2003. The text amendment under review now, was initiated by the Board of County Commissioners to clarify and address trail width standards that were not included in the original amendment.

The Upper Tampa Bay Trail, traverses through that portion of Citrus Park identified as the “village”. It is a significant asset to the community as it creates a linear park through the area and provides connections to the mix of uses planned to occur adjacent to the trail. This is particularly important within the “village center” sub-area located north and south of Ehrlich Road.

During the initial planning process, the Citrus Park Village (CPV) Plan called for narrowing the trail in order to introduce commercial activities, create a desirable destination for trail users, while supporting the creation of an interactive pedestrian friendly connection through the village center. The subject area is contained within the Village Center Sub-Area A and partially along Sub-Area D and extends approximately 600 feet north and south of the Ehrlich Road intersection.

The Upper Tampa Bay Trail is contained within a corridor owned by Hillsborough County. The corridor width within the CPV Plan varies throughout. It changes from 35 feet, in an area east of Gunn Highway & west of Manhattan Park subdivision, to 60 feet in an area immediately south of Ehrlich Road between the Ballyhoo Grill restaurant and the computer store and expands to 100 feet in areas north and south of Ehrlich Road, (including the historic Citrus Park platted area north of Ehrlich Road, the area between Manhattan Park Drive to the south, and the proposed village center area of Citrus Park, south of Ehrlich Road).

The paved portion of the trail is contained within the County owned Trail corridor. The corridor itself extends well beyond the paved areas in some locations. The unpaved portion of the corridor has been left in its natural state in many areas to provide a bit of green-space to trail users and to provide privacy to the property owners whose properties abut the trail.

It was a desire of some property owners to be able to build very close to the paved portion of the trail to foster interaction between the trail users and the new developments envisioned along the trail. During the plan amendment process, some property owners have alleged that portions of the unpaved trail corridor actually encroach onto their property. This has been a point of contention at some of the meetings held with the public on this matter. However, to date, there has not been verification of the facts regarding ownership, as no surveys have been submitted to the County for review.

Some of the property owners have also expressed a desire to have the trail corridor narrowed to 60 feet for most of the distance through Citrus Park. Trail users who have participated in this process do not support this "narrowing" of the trail the entire distance through Citrus Park. The trail user want to retain the green space along the trail to the extent possible, while still establishing an activity center at the village center at Ehrlich Road.

Neither the Parks, Real Estate nor Public Works Departments support narrowing the trail corridor throughout the community. They have expressed some support to narrowing a portion of the trail, where the trail intersects with Ehrlich Road. However, narrowing the corridor will entail some type of process to dispose of the excess County owned property where the trail corridor exceeds 60 feet in the specified area. There is

also a Tampa Bay Water transmission pipe with an associated easement within the trail corridor. Narrowing the trail corridor to 60 feet will entail a cooperative process that includes, adjacent property owners, Real Estate and Parks Department, the County Attorney's office and other departments and outside agencies as may be needed. The proposed text amendment will be the first step in this process.

Summary of Agency Comments

A complete summary of all of the agency comments and copies of the responses received are included as an attachment to this report. Hillsborough County Agencies/Departments with no objections or no significant comments to the proposed text amendment are as follows:

- Hillsborough County Office of Neighborhood Relations
- Hillsborough County Housing and Community Code Enforcement
- Hillsborough County Water Resource Team
- Tampa Electric Company (TECO)
- Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)

The following are some highlights of some of the more substantive agency comments.

Hillsborough County Public Works

Staff recommends obtaining a current survey or "as-built" cross section that shows existing corridor width, right-of-way limits, public and private utility locations, existing trail position, and loss of buffer and screening space between the trail and private property owners. Adjacent development should provide protection from stormwater runoff and erosion. Review improvements, encroachments and runoff associated with existing and proposed development that encroach upon trail property and mitigate accordingly.

Hillsborough County Greenways Committee

Staff recommends narrowing the Upper Tampa Bay Trail corridor to 60 feet *only* through the "village center" area of the Plan, a distance of approximately 1,200 linear feet, or 600 feet north and south of Ehrlich Road, or two blocks in either direction.

Hillsborough County Parks Department

Staff recommends narrowing the Trail corridor to 60 feet only through the "village center" area of the Plan, a distance of approximately 1,200 linear feet, or 600 feet north and south of Ehrlich Road, or two blocks in either direction, consistent with the Greenways Committee recommendation. In addition, staff recommends build-to lines of 5 feet within the 60' width and 15 feet within the remaining portions of the corridor outside the village center.

Hillsborough County Utilities Department

Staff concurs with comments provided by Public Works Department and recommends keeping the full width currently owned by Hillsborough County.

Tampa Bay Water

Staff has no objection to reducing the width as long as the width reduction maintains an existing 50-foot easement for their water transmission line that runs the length of the Trail corridor through the Plan.

Hillsborough County Real Estate

Staff could support a trail width reduction. However, the outcome of such a proposed reduction will be subject to the results of a survey of that area identifying all existing improvements, utilities, etc. Disposition of “excess” portions of the corridor in this area (or any portion) would have to follow the statutes that guide our sale of surplus property. Staff also concurs with comments provided by the Public Works Department.

Hillsborough County Environmental Protection Commission

No objection to the reduction of the corridor. Staff recommends a pre-application with EPC staff to review the new corridor alignment and how that might impact wetlands.

Due to the specific nature of the request, only a limited review by effected agencies was necessary.

Conformance with the Future of Hillsborough 2015 Comprehensive Plan:

Staff has determined that the following Comprehensive Plan Policies are relevant to the proposed plan amendment.

Future Land Use Element

Objective B-2:

Neighborhood Planning Hillsborough County is comprised of many diverse communities and neighborhoods, each with its own unique identity. While the comprehensive plan is effective in providing an overall growth management strategy for development within the entire County, it does not have detailed planning strategies for individual communities. The County shall develop strategies that ensure the long range viability of

its communities through a community and/or neighborhood planning effort.

Policy B-2.1:

The County shall request that community areas be identified by the Hillsborough County City-County Planning Commission, and community groups shall be established to advise and assist the Hillsborough County City-County Planning Commission and the Board of County Commissioners in planning related issues for their respective areas.

Objective E2-1:

Ensure that new community development is compatible with its surroundings.

Policy E2-1.1:

Establish a mechanism for determining neighborhood design which is compatible with its surroundings, with urban standards for new development in urbanizing areas, rural standards for development in rural areas, and enhanced suburban standards for suburban areas.

Policy E2-1.3:

Include design related issues as part of the neighborhood planning process.

Community and Special Area Studies

Northwest Area Community Plan

Section C

Flexible and innovative mobility options have been identified to offset the deficient street network by:

- *Connecting neighborhoods with employment, retail, and education centers through Greenways of equestrian, pedestrian and bicycle trails integrated with other recreation areas, and ensuring that major streets do not act merely as vehicular thoroughfares but serve pedestrians and bicyclists equally well.*

Section F

A neighborhood plan has been adopted to guide development in and around historic Citrus Park village by:

- *Defining an area to be governed by the Citrus Park Village Neighborhood Plan.*
- *Codifying traditional neighborhood development (TND) regulations for Citrus Park to include a plan, TND code, TND checklist and a zoning overlay defining neighborhood center, neighborhood general and neighborhood edge zones.*
- *Identifying a greenway network, traffic network, public areas and private areas in the Neighborhood Plan.*
- *Permitting development which is consistent with the adopted Citrus Park codified regulations.*

Implications

The text amendment will provide support for the existing concept in the Citrus Park Village (CPV) Plan establishing a village center with the trail as its focal point. By narrowing the trail, the village center would take advantage of pedestrian connectivity by fronting retail shops along the trail closer than normally anticipated by the CPV development standards and enhance a so-called commercial hub envisioned for the village.

Throughout the community planning process, adjacent property owners embraced a concept that allowed commercial development to front along the Upper Tampa Bay Trail. An approximate 1,200-foot segment within the village center sub-area is the focus of the trail width reduction. The trail corridor through Citrus Park varies in width with some areas 100 feet wide and other areas less than 60 feet wide.

In order to reduce the width of the trail along the corridor, research performed by County Real Estate, Surveying, Planning Growth Management Department and Parks Department determined that an official survey is necessary to document the trail corridor centerline, existing utility easements and adjacent properties including any encroachments. The proposed text will provide the County the opportunity to establish a detailed survey that would establish the location of the trail centerline, existing utilities, proximity to adjacent properties, potential surplus land, and where a 60-foot trail width can be achieved.

Analysis/Conclusions

Staff has concluded that the proposed text amendment assists in implementing the CPV Plan's vision by providing for the development of supportive and complementary residential, retail, office and civic uses along the trail.

The proposed amendment is consistent with the adopted Hillsborough County NW Sector Plan. As a focal point, the success of the trail is emphasized by developing commercial activities in a pedestrian friendly environment, by creating a sense of place or desirable destination for trail users. Adopting the text provides support for future non-residential development adjacent to the trail and would not compromise the remainder of the trail utilized as a linear park/natural greenway. The text further supports the Citrus Park Village Plan's comprehensive approach to development along the Tampa Bay Trail. The Plan provides for a well-planned corridor in the future and discourages the piecemeal approach that is often created through individual zoning applications.

Staff Recommendation

Staff finds the proposed amendments CONSISTENT with the Future of Hillsborough Comprehensive Plan and recommends the Planning Commission recommend its approval to the Board of County Commissioners of the proposed text to be inserted in the Introduction Section of Citrus Park Village (CPV) Plan Special Studies Section of the Future Land Use Element.

Staff report by: Daniel Santos, AICP

Date: August 4, 2003