



Gulf Cove Community Streetscape Plan

APRIL 2022



Introduction

The goal of the Gulf Gove Community Streetscape Plan is to improve the functional accommodations for all modes of local travel: motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists, while using street treatments designed to enhance the appearance of the neighborhood and positively influence motor vehicle traffic. The infrastructure of a neighborhood transportation system is a significant attribute which defines the look, feel, and perception of the community. The investment in road and sidewalk improvements not only offer an immediate impact on the neighborhood but establishes the long-term character of the area. With this understanding, the various streetscape amenities addressed within the Community Streetscape Plan are projected to augment the functionality, safety, and aesthetic of mobility in the neighborhood. It should also be noted that the improvements identified within the Plan are not mandates, but rather options for the residents, the Municipal Service Benefit Unit (MSBU), and the County to evaluate and prioritize as funding becomes available. Essentially, these improvements form a menu of options for the Stakeholders to evaluate, prioritize and implement over time as the neighborhood transitions from a limited developed status to a more mature developed status.

The term “streetscape” refers to the natural and built environment within the right-of-way of the street and is defined as the design quality and visual arrangement of the streets within a community. Streetscapes enhance community mobility, define aesthetic quality and influences property valuation. Roads serve many functions and accommodate multiple modes of transportation. Design approaches and materials should be consistent with a cohesive community branding. Signs, landscaping, and lighting can create safe and inclusive environments for various activities and users. Aesthetically appealing elements encourage community members to interact with the environment and explore alternative mobility options, while enhancing the social fabric of the neighborhood.

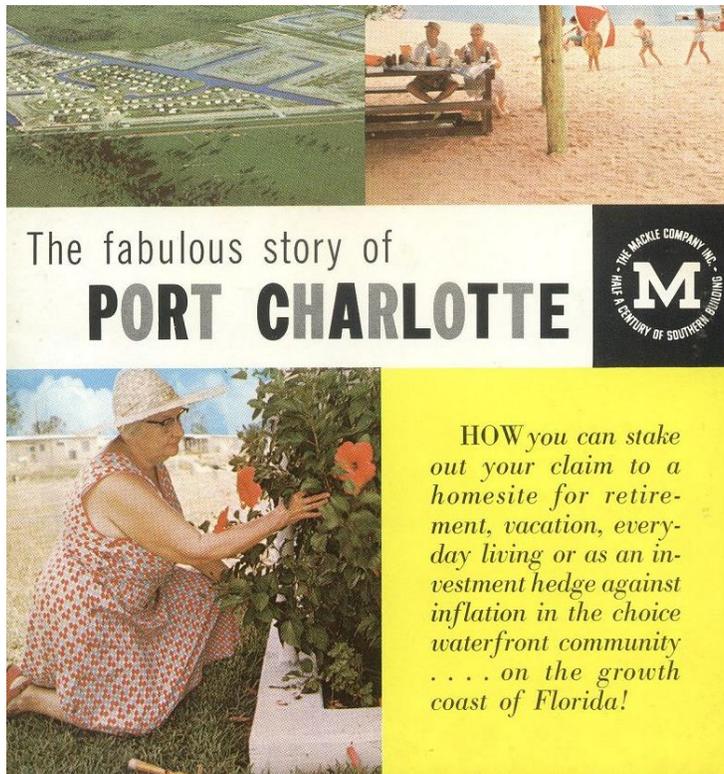
With these understandings, the Community Streetscape Plan was requested by the Gulf Cove Street and Drainage Unit MSBU. The MSBU is seeking, through the completion of this plan, not only to better understand the Gulf Cove Community’s perspective on the preferred location of sidewalks within the neighborhood, but also their preference of the following streetscape options: Sidewalks, Wayfinding & Signage, Connectivity, Street Trees, Street Furnishings, and Lighting. Using the various streetscape amenities, properly placed in the rights-of-way, the neighborhood could experience the positive influence of slowing traffic by better framing the street. Mobility, overall, was repeatedly cited as a general concern by members of the community during a community workshop, discussed later in this document.

History

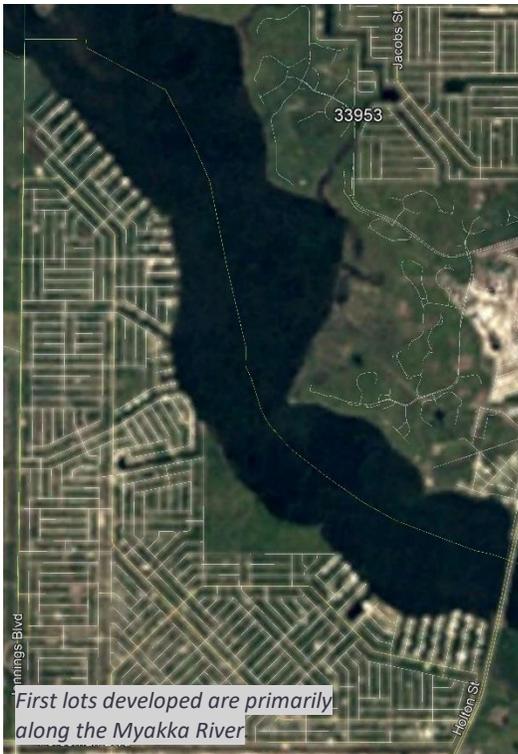
The Gulf Cove neighborhood like many other neighborhoods throughout the State was designed and platted in the late 1950's and early 1960's, by the now defunct General Development Corporation. The company, led by the Mackle brothers, took advantage of the Florida land boom and developed land primarily on both of Florida's coastlines, with worldwide advertising, "own a piece of sunny Florida" (see picture below). The Gulf Cove neighborhood was one of those communities with the lots platted and the streets designated, but little else in terms of planned infrastructure.

On August 27, 1976, the Property Owners of Gulf Cove (POGC), Inc was established as a Florida Domestic Non-Profit Corporation. In 1980 the General Development Corporation deeded 3.487 acres at the corner of Norlander Drive and David Boulevard to the POGC, where the private boat ramp is situated. In 1986, another 1.7-acre parcel was deeded to the POGC, which was developed into the current park for the POGC members.

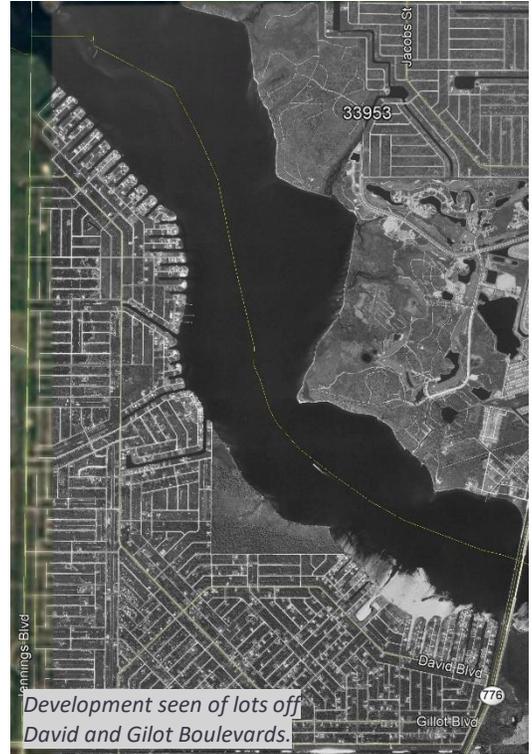
From review of the historic aerials the development pattern of the neighborhood over the past 35 years, shows the lots with frontage along the Myakka River were the first to develop and over time the development pattern has migrated to the interior lots, primarily centered upon the David Boulevard, Gillot Boulevard and Foresman Boulevard corridors. Roughly 27 percent of the 7,309 lots have been developed at the time of this report, which leaves 73 percent of the parcels, or just over 5,200 lots, yet to be developed. With this future development additional pressure will be exerted upon the internal transportation system of the neighborhood to accommodate all additional modes of transportation adequately and safely.



1985 Aerial Gulf Cove



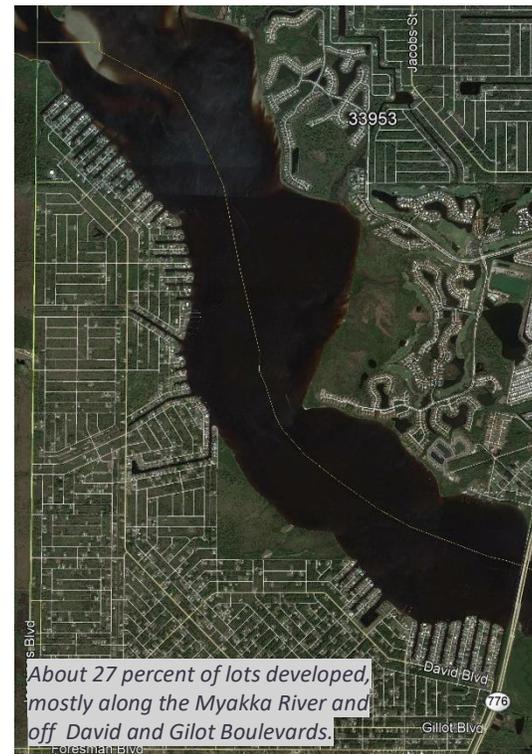
1994 Aerial Gulf Cove



2004 Aerial Gulf Cove



2016 Aerial Gulf Cove



Existing Conditions

The Gulf Cove neighborhood is bound by South McCall Road to the East, by the Myakka River to the North, by the Lafitte Waterway Canal to the South and by the Myakka State Park to the West. The neighborhood benefits from unique, wooded, natural boundaries and residents embrace the ecology of this riverfront community. The Community Streetscape Plan has been crafted to accentuate these recognizable attributes.

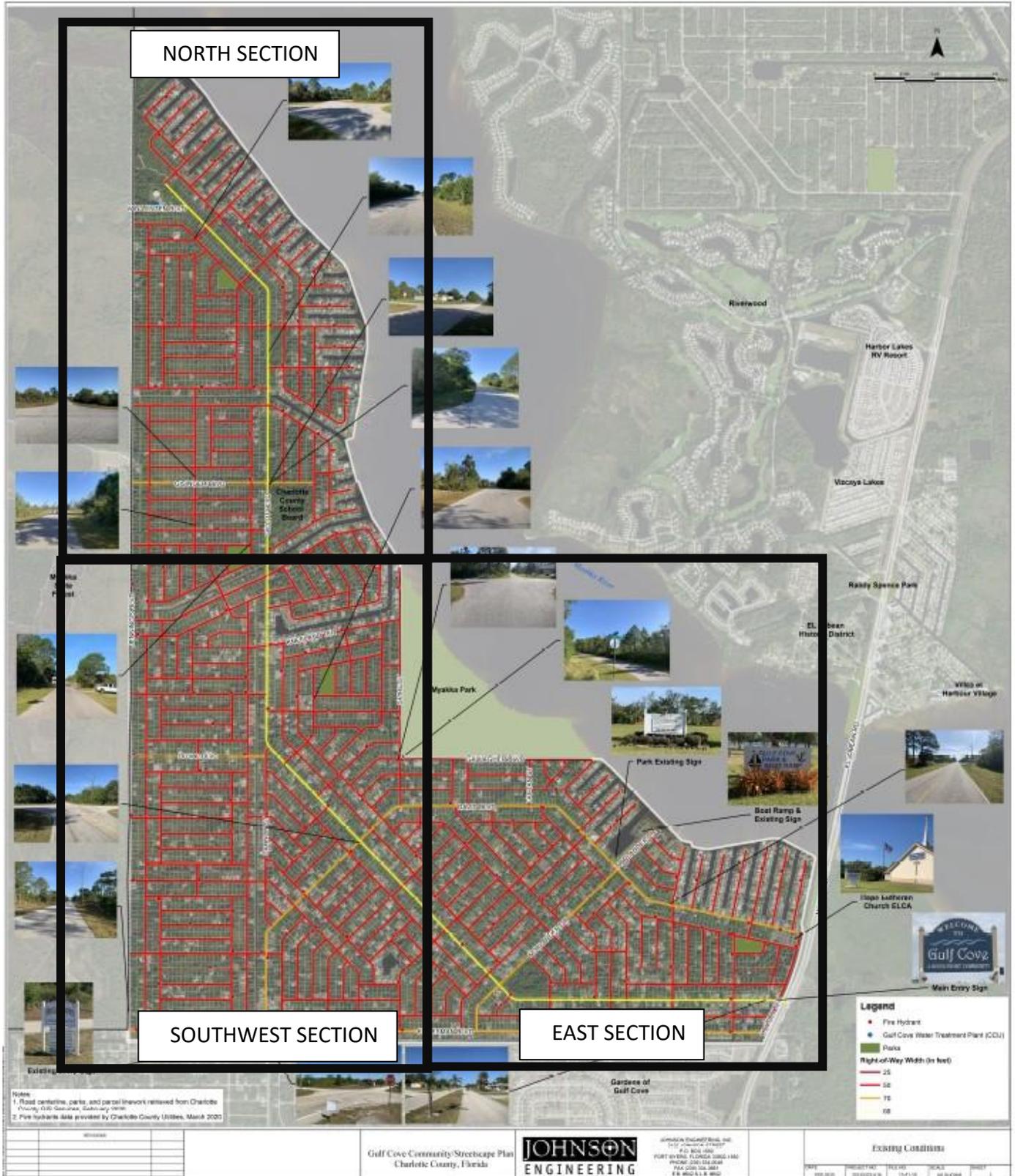
The maps on the following pages provide a graphic documentation of the existing conditions within the neighborhood related to the existing rights-of-way, which currently provides for some limited streetscape improvements. The existing improvements include an entry sign and landscaped median along Gillot Boulevard as the primary entrance to the neighborhood, as well as limited informational signage at the Foresman Boulevard and David Boulevard intersection, and a transportation system of roads with no designated accommodation for either cyclists or pedestrians.

Based on this lack of facilities for pedestrians and cyclists, the Gulf Cove Street and Drainage Municipal Services Beautification Unit has commissioned this Community Streetscape Plan to determine the neighborhood’s desire for sidewalks and streetscape amenities such as street trees, street furniture, signage, and lighting. The plan will also help to determine the neighborhood’s preference of sidewalk locations within the street system.

The MSBU has already developed plans for an initial corridor of sidewalks (Phase One) on David, Foresman, and Gillot Boulevards and on Holton Street. The Sidewalk Plan proposes the sidewalk on one side of each of the streets, located on the northside of David Boulevard, the southside of Foresman Boulevard, the eastside of Holton Street, and the southside of Gillot Boulevard (as shown below).



Gulf Cove Community Streetscape Plan



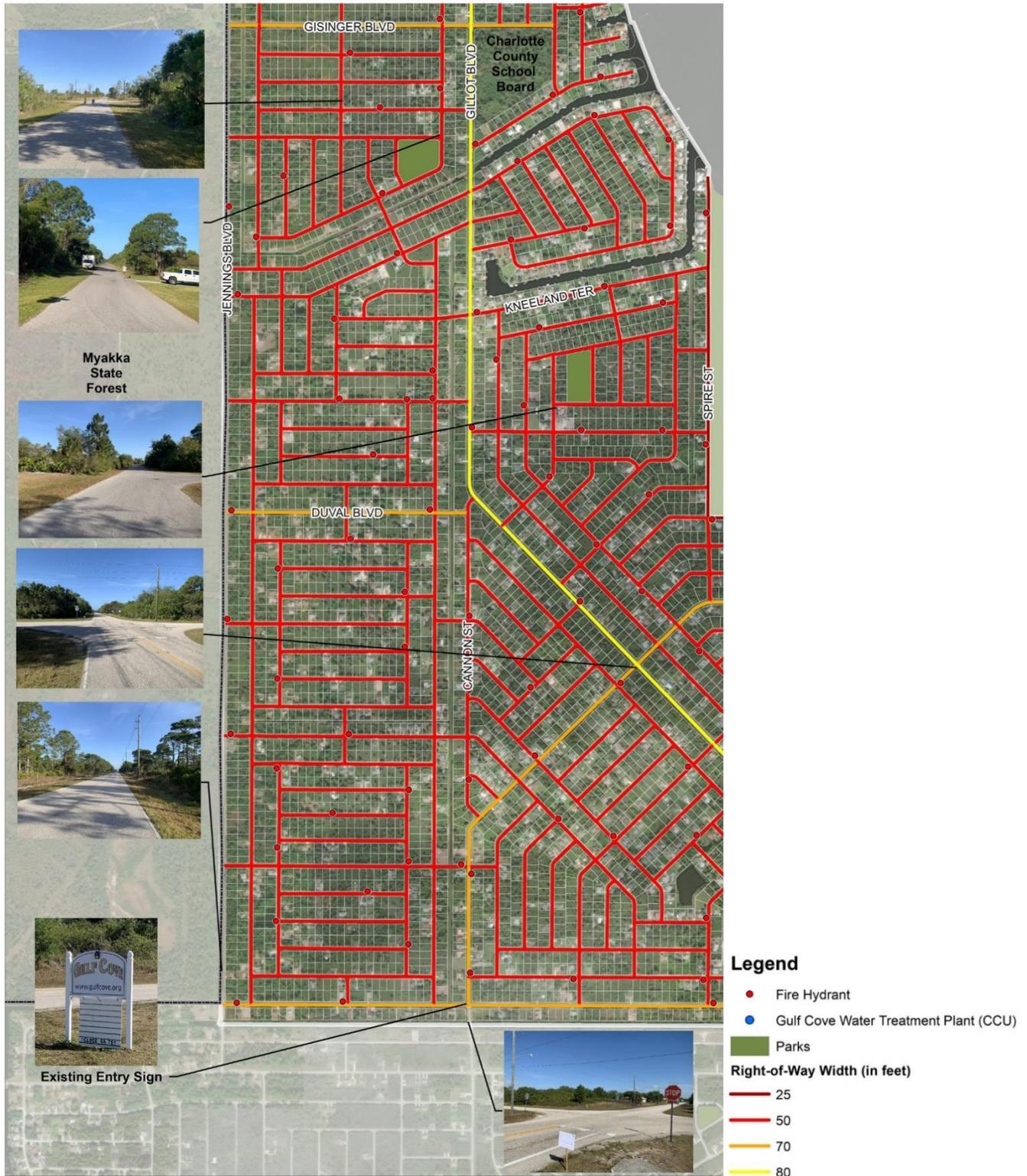
North Section



Legend

- Fire Hydrant
 - Gulf Cove Water Treatment Plant (CCU)
 - Parks
- Right-of-Way Width (in feet)
- 25
 - 50
 - 70
 - 80

Southwest Section



Legend

- Fire Hydrant
 - Gulf Cove Water Treatment Plant (CCU)
 - Parks
- Right-of-Way Width (in feet)**
- 25
 - 50
 - 70
 - 80

East Section



Legend

- Fire Hydrant
- Gulf Cove Water Treatment Plant (CCU)

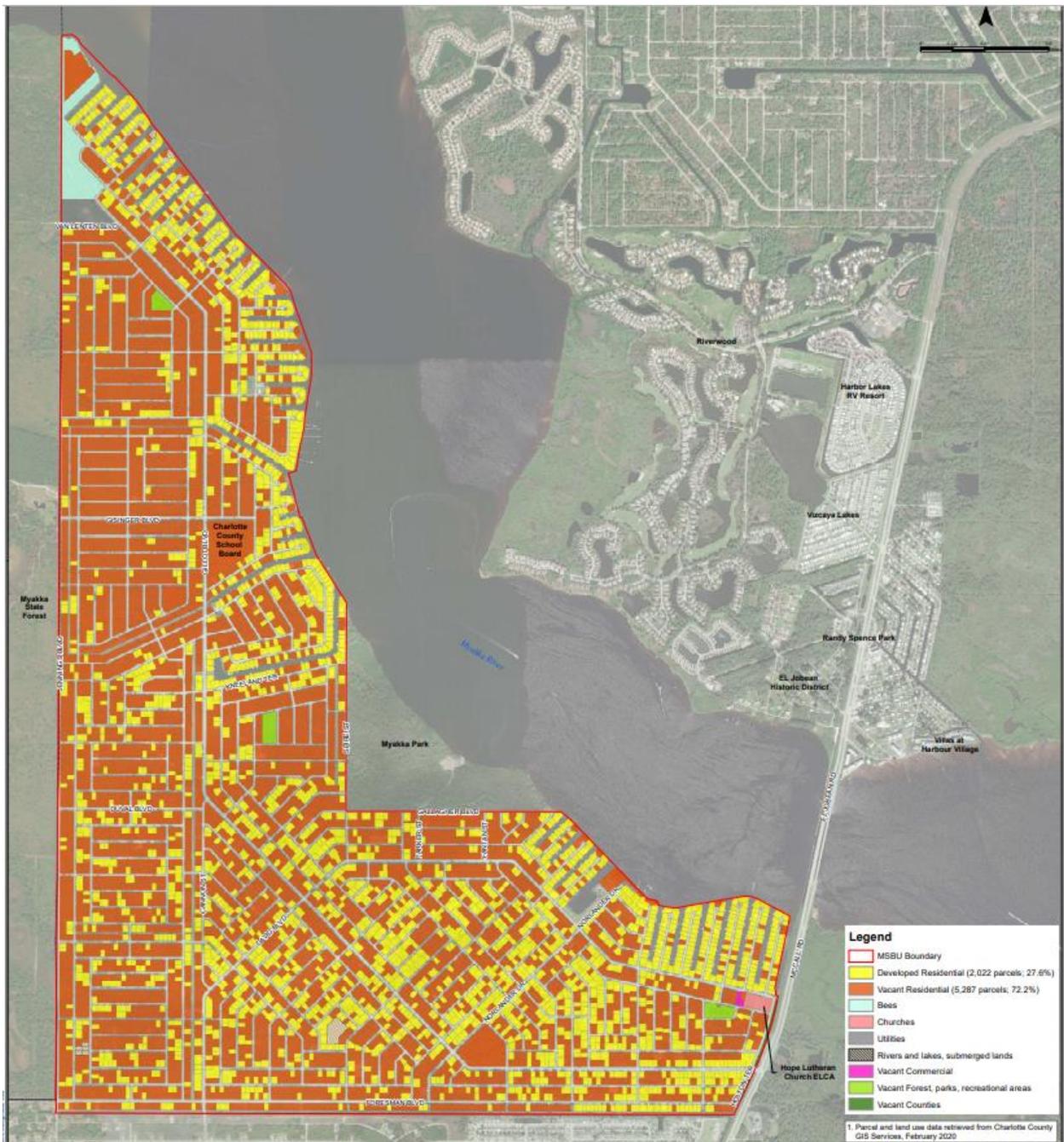
■ Parks

Right-of-Way Width (in feet)

- 25
- 50
- 70
- 80

Gulf Cove Community Streetscape Plan

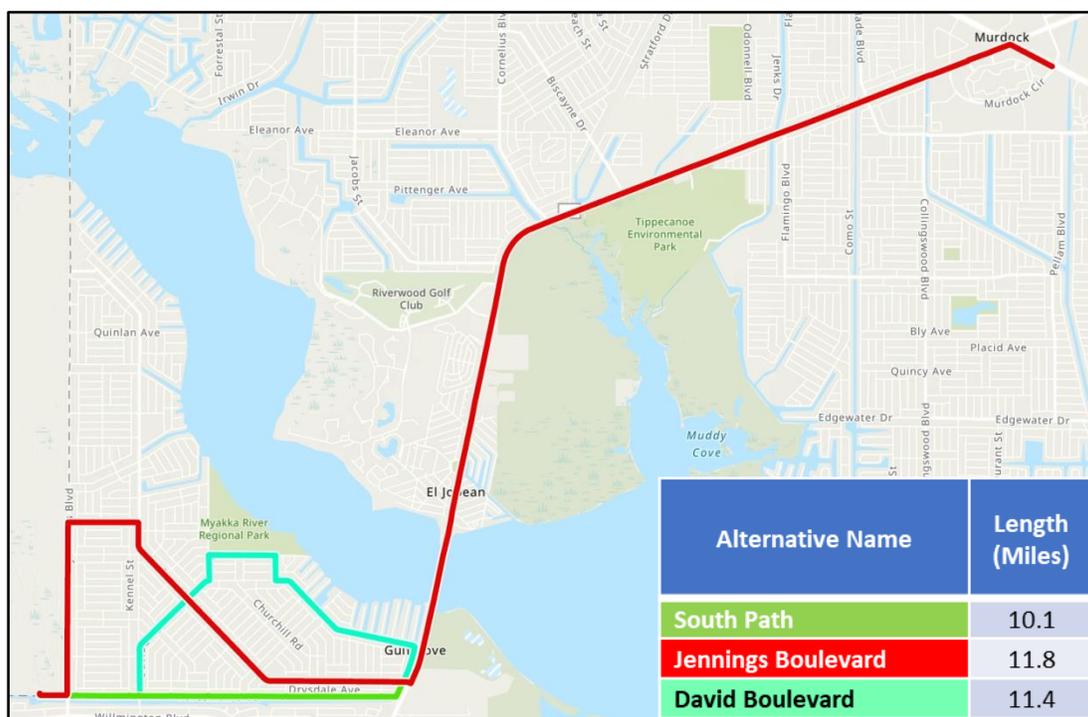
Prior to commencing the sidewalk construction project, the MSBU has sought out the neighborhood’s input not only on the sidewalk locations, but also which streetscape amenities were most desired as part of the rights-of-way to improve overall mobility. While this Community Streetscape Plan is not designed to be a land use plan, a review of the map below illustrates the designated land uses within the neighborhood and provides a general indication of a primarily low-density residential neighborhood, with a limited number of non-residential land uses such as park designations and a potential school site.



Gulf Cove Community Streetscape Plan

The Community Streetscape Plan recognizes this characteristic and seeks to identify mobility enhancements and streetscape amenities which compliment this low-density residential character. Both the Charlotte County Future Land Use Element designation, as well as the current zoning designation, promote the continuation of the low-density residential nature of the Gulf Cove Community. The future development plans for Myakka Park, a regional, County-owned Park designed to draw visitors from a regional proximity, will introduce the presence of non-local traffic within the neighborhood and increase the need for improvement of the existing system and addition of right-of-way signage to provide clear guidance for the Park’s visitors accessing and exiting the facilities.

The Sun Trail, a statewide trail system for multi-modal transit, which is proposed to connect SR776 to Myakka State Park through the Gulf Cove Community, may also assist with the projected traffic increase. This non-local traffic, which will be introduced into the neighborhood in combination with the 73 percent of vacant lots to be developed can be expected to add a significant number of future vehicles to the neighborhood and is anticipated to change the current pedestrian experience along the primary street system to warrant the installation of sidewalks. On November 8th, 2021, Charlotte County and Caltran Engineering Group conducted an updated presentation on the SUN Trail Extension Feasibility Study. By evaluating the existing and future roadway conditions and analyzing the economic impact as well as compiling acquired data, the feasibility study aims to evaluate the potential of Gulf Cove becoming a community centered around safe and accessible bicycle, pedestrian, and public transit facilities. Three proposed alignment alternatives (depicted below from the presentation) were analyzed and scored.



The three alternatives all had the same scoring for safety, traffic impact, construction cost, and accessibility to multimodal features for users. The David Boulevard path connects users to Myakka Park and as closer in vicinity to more active parcels, therefore this scored the highest.

Criteria (Weight)	Traffic Impact	Safety	Community Impact	Accessibility to Other Green Area	Construction Cost	Multimodal Accessibility	Total Score
No Build	N	N	N	N	N	N	0
South Path	-M	+M	+M	+M	-M	+H	3
Jennings Boulevard	-M	+M	+M	+M	-M	+H	3
David Boulevard	-M	+M	+H	+H	-M	+H	6

Continued collaboration with the Charlotte County Department of Transportation, Parks and Recreation, The Metropolitan Planning Organization, and related agencies during the conceptual plan development of the Sun Trail presents the opportunity for community input as well as for funding of the Gulf Cove Community Streetscape Plan where it overlaps the Sun Trail.

Charlotte County Ordinance 86-63 created the Gulf Cove Street and Drainage Unit and within Section 4, provided for the purpose of the unit and established limitations. Based upon those limitations, the Streetscape Plan recognizes that streetscape amenities, specifically benches, bike racks, and waste receptacles cannot be funded by the MSBU. The Plan still seeks out the neighborhood’s receptivity to these amenities since these are elements which provide a “complete street”. In recognition of the funding limitation, if the neighborhood were interested in adding such amenities to the right-of-way, non-traditional funding sources could be explored.

One source that should be evaluated is the Charlotte Community Foundation. Although originally established to support Adventist Hospital in Punta Gorda, the Foundation became the Charlotte County Foundation but when the hospital was sold in 1995. In 2004, post Hurricane Charley, the foundation adopted a stronger focus and attention to the philanthropic needs of the County and renamed itself the Charlotte Community Foundation. As part of the foundation’s expanded focus areas such as Health & Wellness and Community Development, the Gulf Cove Streetscape Plan, through the promotion of multi-modal travel, may qualify as a potential candidate for available funding.

Additionally, a more organic approach could be utilized, as members of the community could organize fund-raising events, such as a neighborhood garage sale, car wash, bake sale or similar event, framed

around a specific purpose to install a new bench, bike rack, or waste receptacle at a specific location along the sidewalk within the right-of-way. Like the concept of a community sale, a campaign could be developed that allows for the dedication of a bench, bike rack, or waste receptacle to memorialize a person or family long associated with the neighborhood.

Although alternative sources of funding for components of the Streetscape Plan are important to consider, the most crucial factor would be the neighborhood's motivation to organize for the specific purpose of bringing certain improvements to the right-of-way for the benefit all residents.

On February 16, 2021, at the Charlotte Harbor Event Center a community meeting was conducted by staff members of the Charlotte County Community Development & Public Works Department, and Johnson Engineering to solicit input from Gulf Cove community members on a variety of proposed streetscape amenities such as sidewalks, street trees, signage, benches, bike racks, lighting and specifics regarding improvements related to mobility and public realm improvements. Thirty-three (33) members of the community attended the meeting and an additional fifteen (15) community members turned in surveys after the event (48 participants total).



Gulf Cove Community Streetscape Plan

The following two charts provides for an accounting of the responses related to the Gulf Cove Questionnaire, as well as the Gulf Cove Visual Preference Survey.

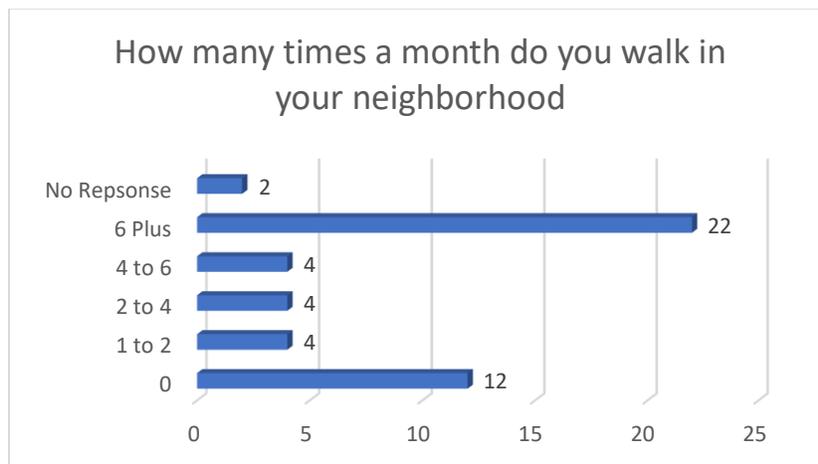
Gulf Cove Questionnaire Results						
(33 from Public Meeting and 15 returned to Public Works Staff post meeting)						
How many times a month do you walk in your neighborhood?	0	1 to 2	2 to 4	4 to 6	6 Plus	No Response
Response	12	4	4	4	22	2
Purpose for Walk	Leisure	Pet Walk	Physical Fitness	Visit Neighbors	Visit Park	No Response
Response	20	11	24	8	4	12
Walkability 1- not walkable 5- Very Walkable	1	2	3	4	5	No Response
Response	7	5	6	6	14	10
Do you support the construction of sidewalks	Yes	No	Undecided/No Response	Only Gillot & Foresman	Bus Stops	
Response	20	23	3	1	1	
How many times a month do you bike in your neighborhood	0	1 to 2	2 to 4	4 to 6	6 Plus	No Response
Response	15	7	3	8	12	3
Purpose for biking in the neighborhood	Leisure	Physical Fitness	Visit Neighbors	Visit Park	No Response	
Response	22	24	6	8	13	
Which arrangement for bikes would you like to see for Gulf Cove	Share road no bike Lanes	Share road with bike Lanes	Share sidewalk with walkers	No Response		
Response	17	13	16	2		
Would you like benches along the streets	Yes	No	No Response/Unsure			
Response	9	36	3			
Are more signs needed within the Gulf Cove Neighborhood	Yes	No	No Response/Unsure			
Response	10	33	5			
Are you in favor of lighting where the	Yes	No	No Response/Unsure			
Response	15	20	5			
Are Street Trees desirable in the Gulf Cove Neighborhood	Yes	No	No Response/Unsure			
Response	20	26	2			
Would you like to see enhanced median landscaping planted on Gillot Boulevard	Yes	No	No Response/Unsure			
Response	21	26	1			

Note: Blue highlight indicates the majority response from participants.

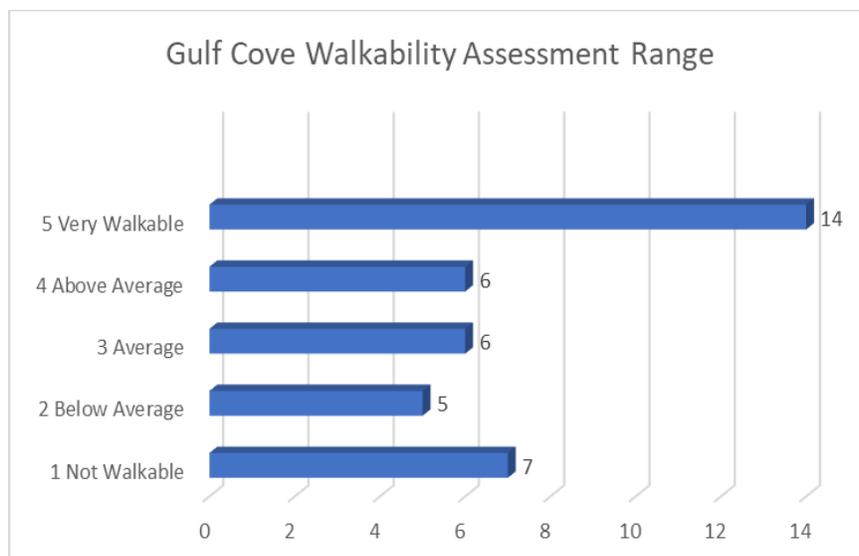
Gulf Cove Visual Preference Survey Results (33 from Public Meeting and 15 returned to Public Works Staff post meeting)					
Streetscape Theme	Ecological	Riverfront	Contemporary	No Response	None
Response	20	16	0	11	1
Entry Signage	Ecological	Riverfront	Contemporary	No Response	None
Response	8	19	5	11	4
Preference on Site Furnishing Material	Composite	Concrete	Powdercoated Metal	Rubber Coated Metal	No Response /None
Response	19	4	5	5	15
Preference of Bike Rack	Curved	Fish	Angled	Waves	No Response /None
Response	17	18	5	1	7
Preference of Waste Receptacle	Modern with Recycle	Grey Spiral	Grey Square	Blue Circular	No Response /None
Response	9	3	4	21	11
Preference on Signage	Existing Gulf Cove	Modern	Rustic	Colorful	No Response /None
Response	5	8	4	16	15
Preference Sidewalk Material	Standard Concrete	Colored Concrete	Standard Asphalt	Colored asphalt	No Response /None
Response	23	5	1	4	15
Preference Lighting Style	Post Acorn Top	Candy Cane Arm Pendant	Flat Panel LED	No Response	None
Response	1	17	13	13	4
Preference Street Trees	Coconut Palm	Live Oak	Bald Cypress	No Response	None
Response	16	8	8	13	3
Preference Crosswalk	Horizontal Dashed	Single Vertical Lines	Framed Diagonal	No Response/None	Other
Response	13	3	20	11	1

Note: Blue highlight indicates the majority response from participants.

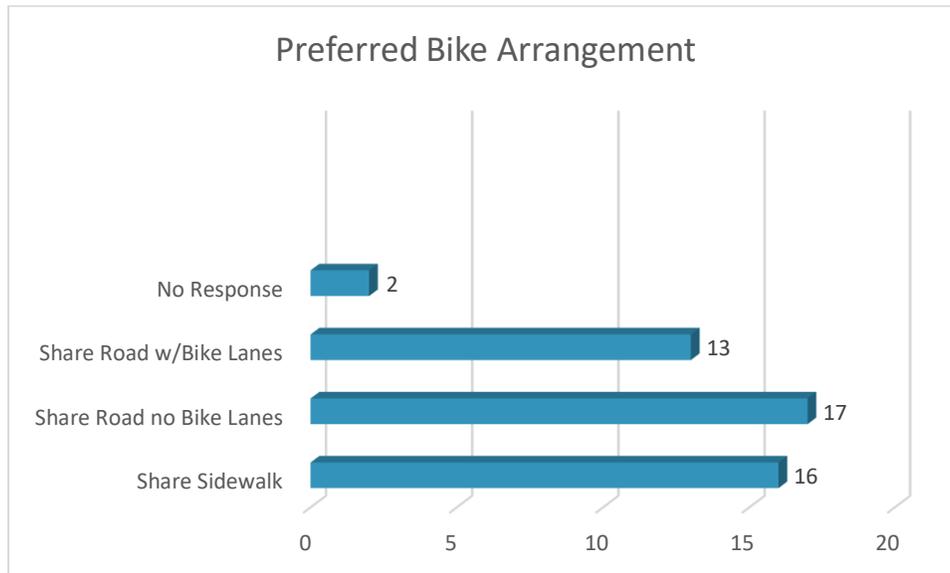
While none of the proposed streetscape amenities received a majority of support from the respondents, of note was the number of respondents that indicated they walked within the neighborhood at least four times a month, 26 or 54% of the responses, with 34 or 71% indicating they walk at least once a month within the neighborhood. This high level of active walkers suggests that any improvement to the pedestrian environment within the neighborhood would benefit many of the respondents, which can be assumed to be a representation of the Gulf Cove Neighborhood as a whole.



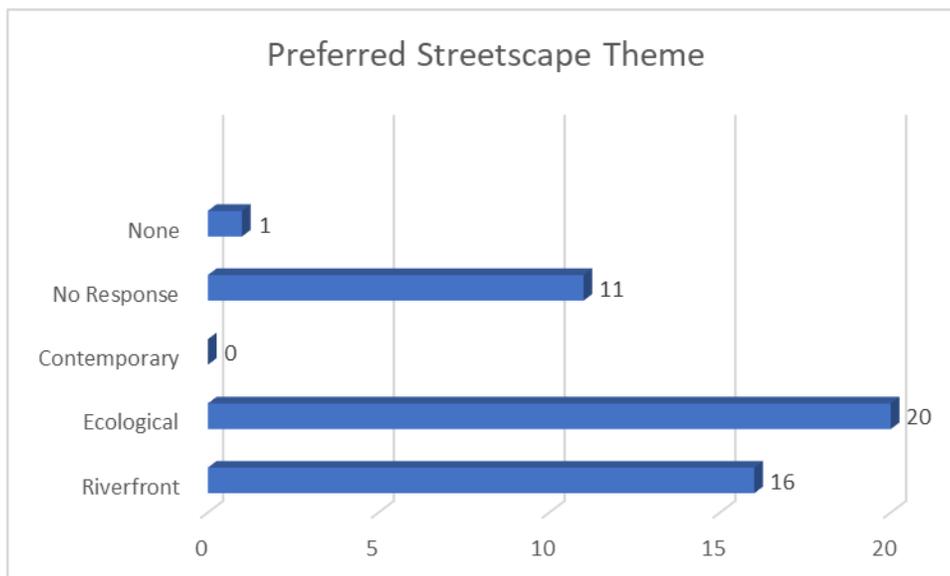
Of other responses of interest, when asked to rate the walkability of the neighborhood, very walkable, the highest assessment of the neighborhoods friendliness to walking was the most selected response, with only 12 or 25% of the responses rating the neighborhood as below average in terms of walkable.



Regarding the accommodation of bicyclist for the neighborhood, there was no clear preference, but bikes sharing the road with no bike lanes received the most responses.



From the Visual Survey certain conclusion can be drawn as to what the community’s vision is for the Gulf Cove neighborhood. There was a near split on the streetscape theme for the neighborhood between the Ecological and Riverfront options, which is not surprising with the Myakka River (representing the Riverfront option) bordering the eastern and northern edges of the neighborhood and the Myakka State Forest (representing an ecological option) bordering the western edge of the neighborhood.



The responses to the survey also suggest that the neighborhood prefers function over form with a conventional design for curved bike racks, standard concrete for sidewalks and circular waste receptacles receiving the highest rating.

Gulf Cove Community Streetscape Plan



The visual preference for Street Trees were for palms, which allows for better coexistence and fewer conflicts over time within the rights-of-way with sidewalks and underground utilities. The Candy Cane Arm Pendant was the streetlighting style of choice, with colorful signage and diagonal cross walks selected per the neighborhood's preferences.



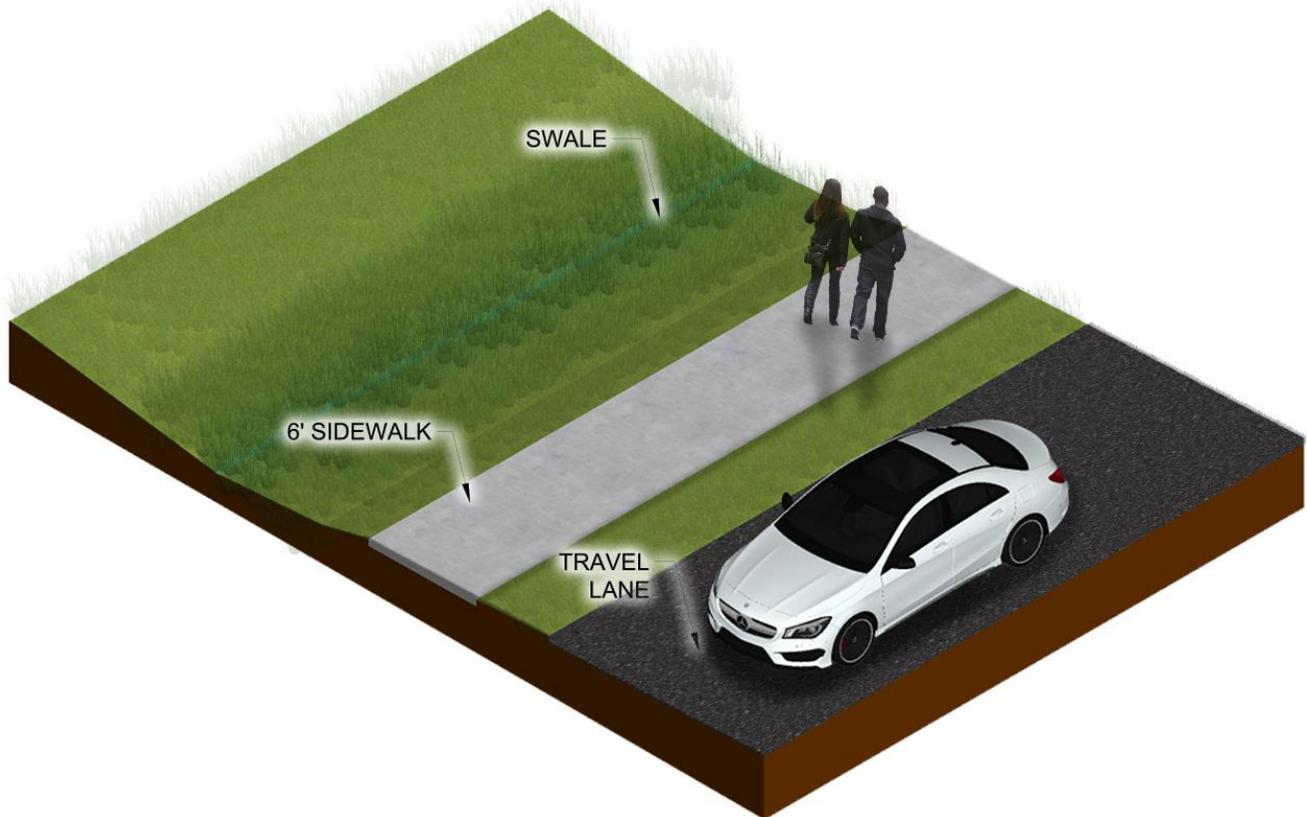
From the discussion with the community meeting attendees regarding the streetscape improvements, two areas outside of the focus of the meeting were dominant themes: Drainage and Traffic Calming. While this Community Streetscape Plan is not designed to address these areas, it is apparent, based upon the frequency of the comments, that the neighborhood places these two improvement considerations as areas of significant concern and future efforts should be coordinated with the MSBU, Public Works and Transportation Planning to address the Gulf Cove neighborhoods concerns.

The improvements such as street trees, sidewalks, signage, street furniture, and streetlights proposed within this Community Streetscape Plan are identified as potential improvement measures which can be utilized to frame the Right-of-Way (ROW), create community branding, improve accessibility and aesthetics of the roadway corridor, and reduce speeds along roadways, or alternatively stated, means of traffic calming.

From the survey results, not one of the suggested streetscape improvements received a majority of support, with sidewalks and street trees both close to an even split. Based upon this result, as well as the fact that 71% of the respondents indicate they walk within the neighborhood at least once a month, the Community Streetscape Plan suggests Four Options for the County, MSBU and Neighborhood to consider and evaluate for future funding and implementation moving forward.

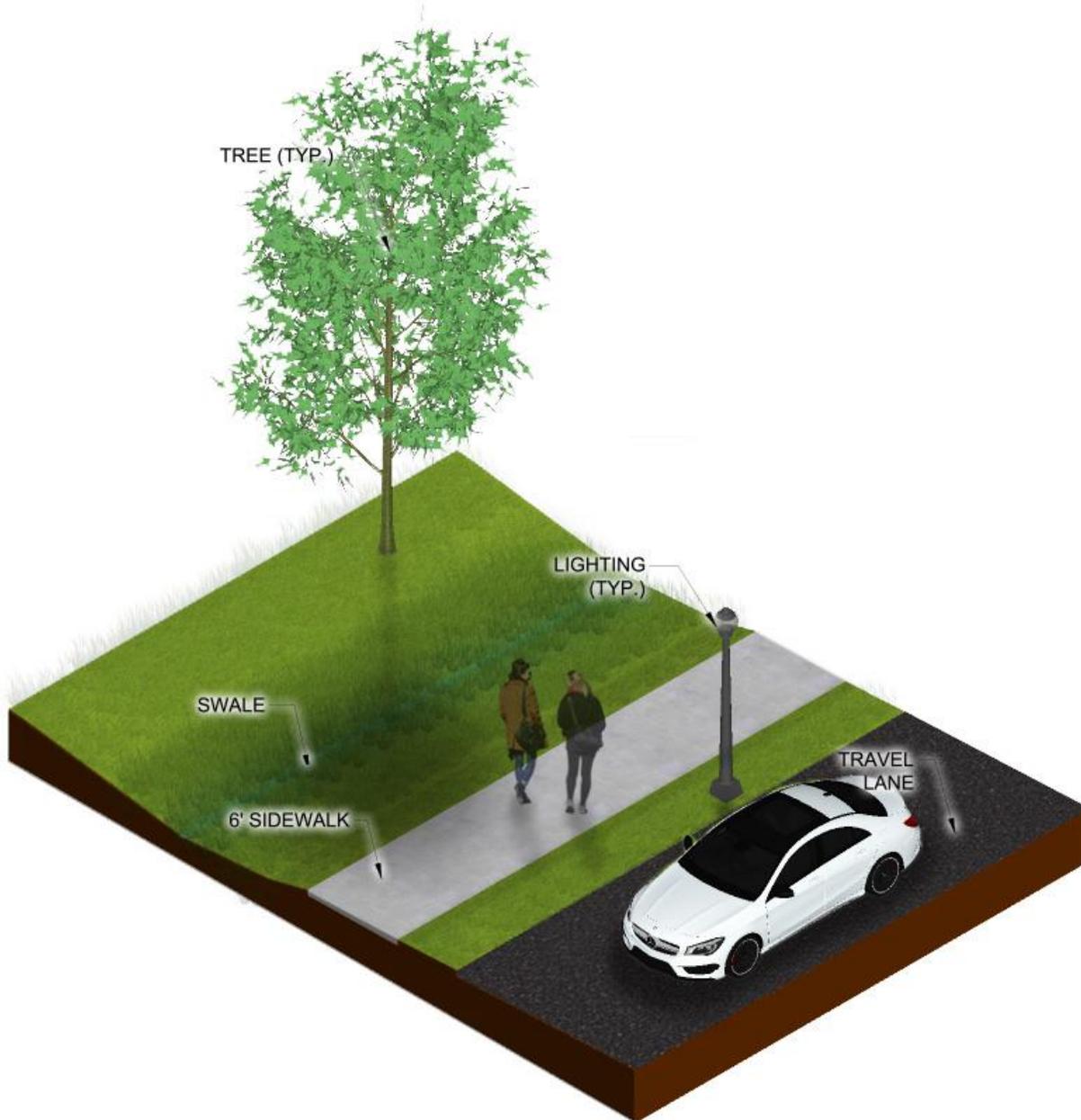
Within each option, the Community Streetscape Plan will identify the width of rights-of-way (80-feet, 70-feet, and 50-feet) of each of the street segments within the option to describe which streetscape amenity that could be accommodated and arranged within the corresponding ROW.

The following graphics provide a visual depiction of the streetscape amenities that are associated with each of the four Streetscape Enhancement options.



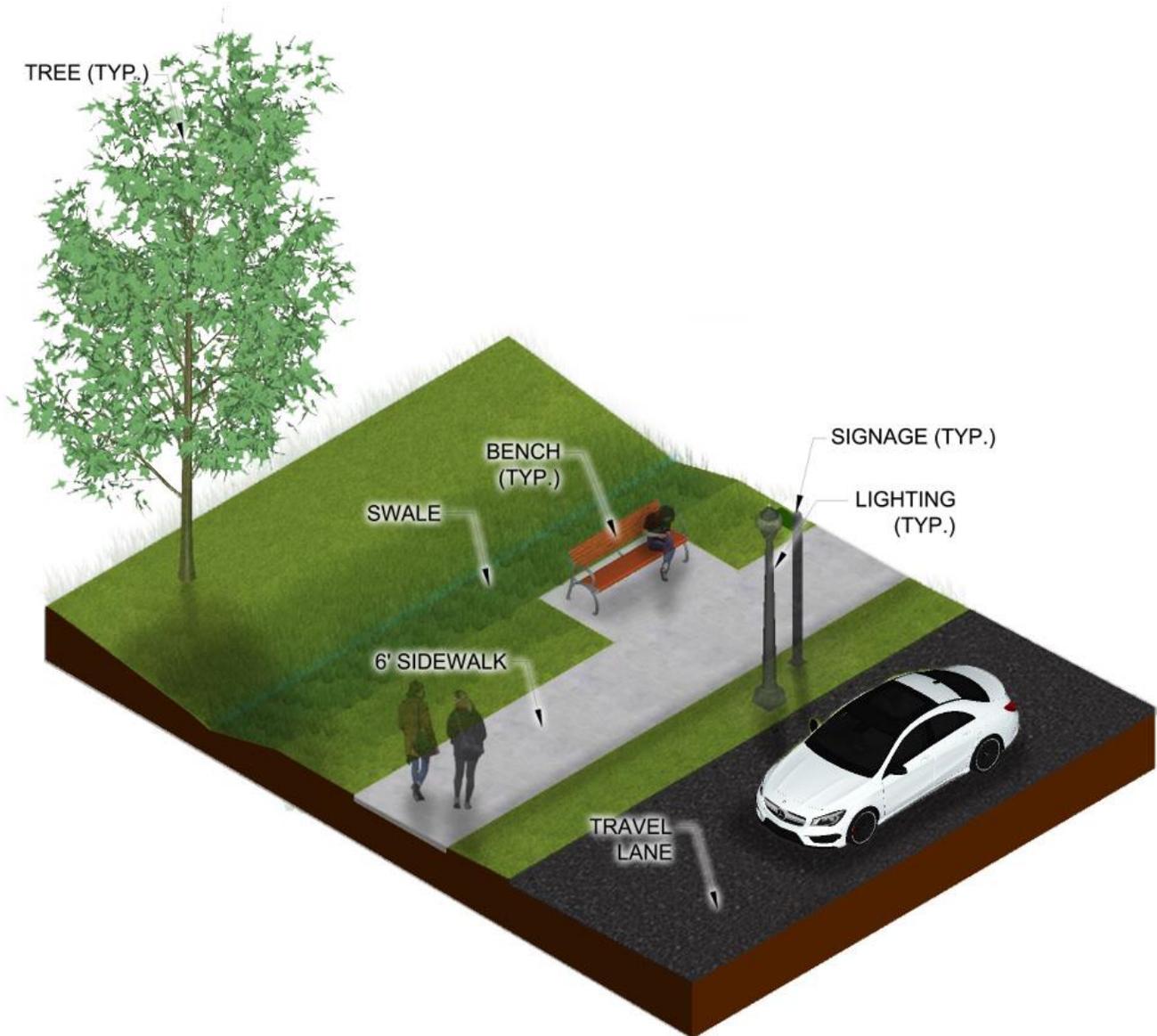
Option One – Basic Streetscape Improvement

This level would provide for only sidewalks along the primary collector roads within the neighborhood.



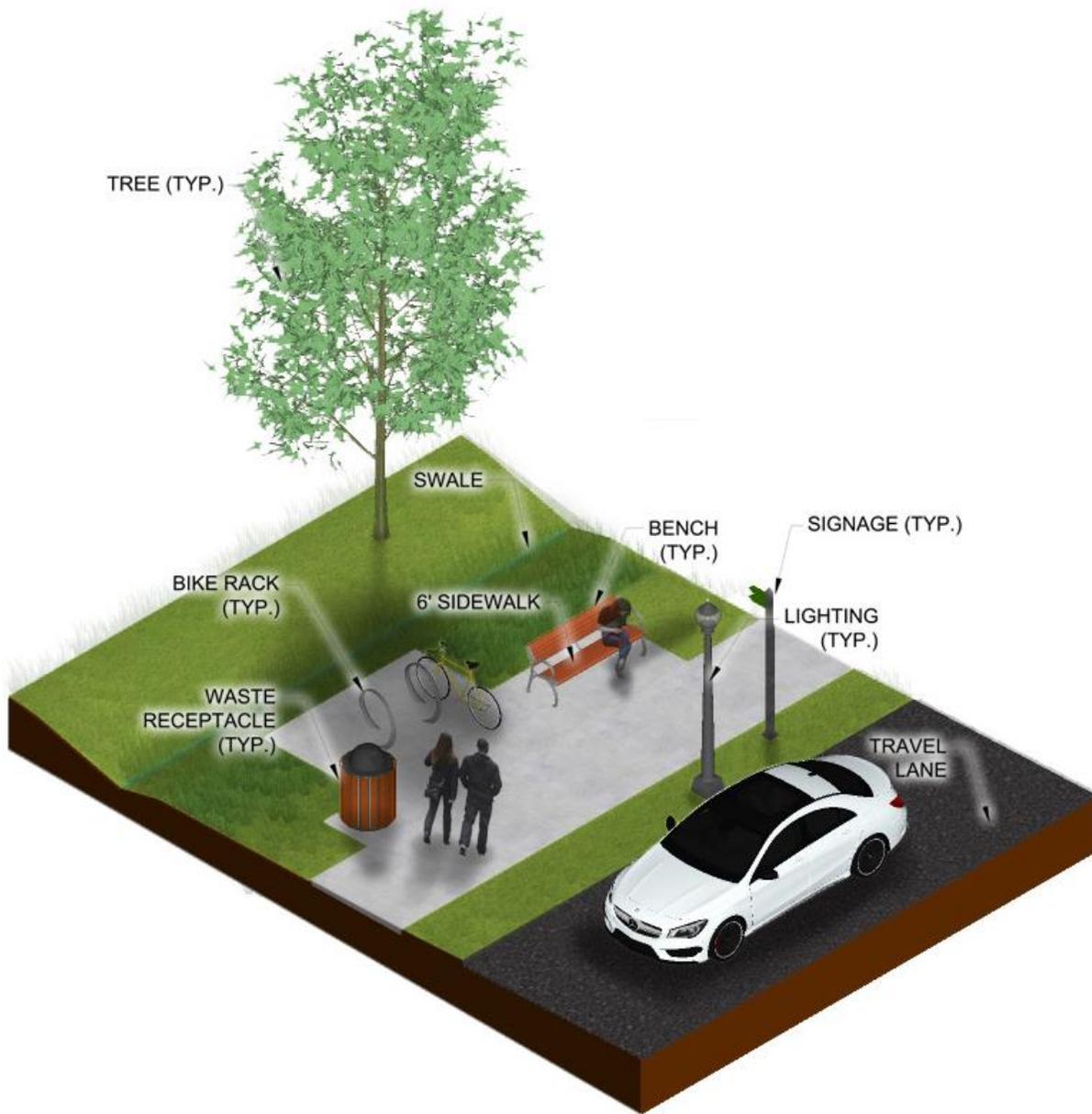
Option Two – Moderate Streetscape Improvement

This level would provide for sidewalks along the primary collector roads with opportunities identified to include street trees and lighting at various locations.



Option Three – Enhanced Streetscape Improvement

This level would provide for sidewalks along the primary collector roads with opportunities identified to include street trees, lightning, benches, and signage at various locations, as well as identifying secondary streets for sidewalks.



Option Four – Premium Streetscape Improvement

This level would provide for sidewalks along primary to include street trees, lighting, benches, waste receptacles, bike racks and signage at various locations and secondary streets to include sidewalks, street trees, and lighting.

Cost Estimates*

Sidewalk per linear mile = \$174,140

Street Tree per unit = \$450

Light Pole per unit = \$12,000

Bench per unit = \$3,264

Waste Receptacles per unit = \$2,788

Signage per unit = \$2,650

Bike Racks per unit = \$2,126

From the individual unit cost, an estimate will be provided for the cost of each level of enhancement (basic, moderate, enhanced, and premium) per mile, with the assumption that the spacing for the arrangement of streetscapes would be separated by ½ of a mile, or alternatively stated twice per, linear mile.

Basic Option per linear mile = \$174,140

Moderate Option per linear mile = \$857,940

Enhanced Option per linear mile = \$869,768

Premium Option per linear mile = \$879,596

The total linear miles of sidewalk in each option will multiplied by the per linear mile price to estimate the cost to implement each sidewalk map option.

*Cost Estimates as of June 2021, estimates subject to change based on time and material costs at time of installation.

Option One – Basic Streetscape Sidewalk Map (Primary Streets Only)

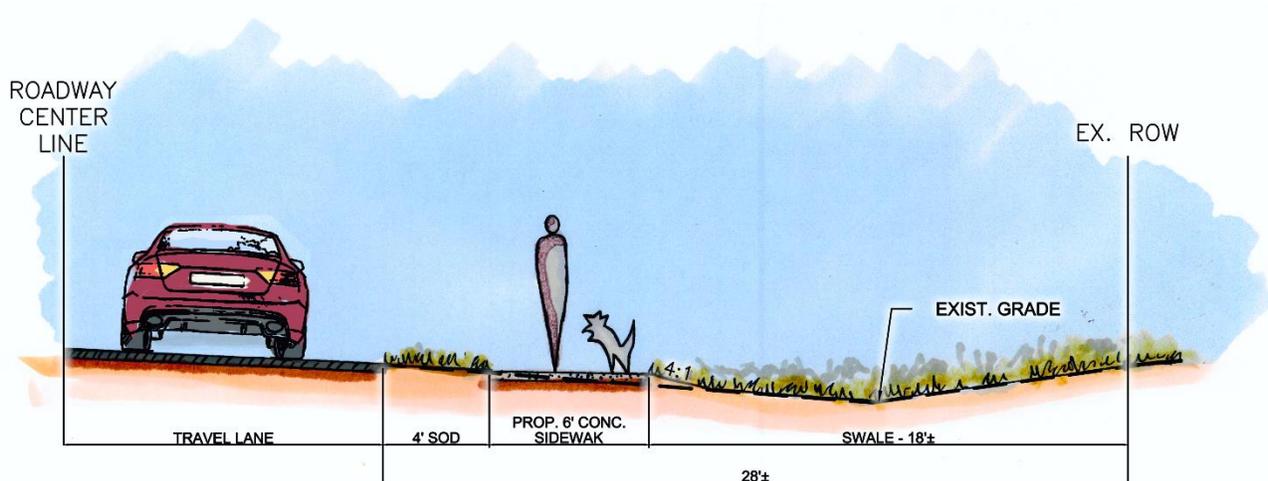
The below map depicts streets where the sidewalk would be constructed on one side of the road, and the width of the right-of-way associated with the various streets.



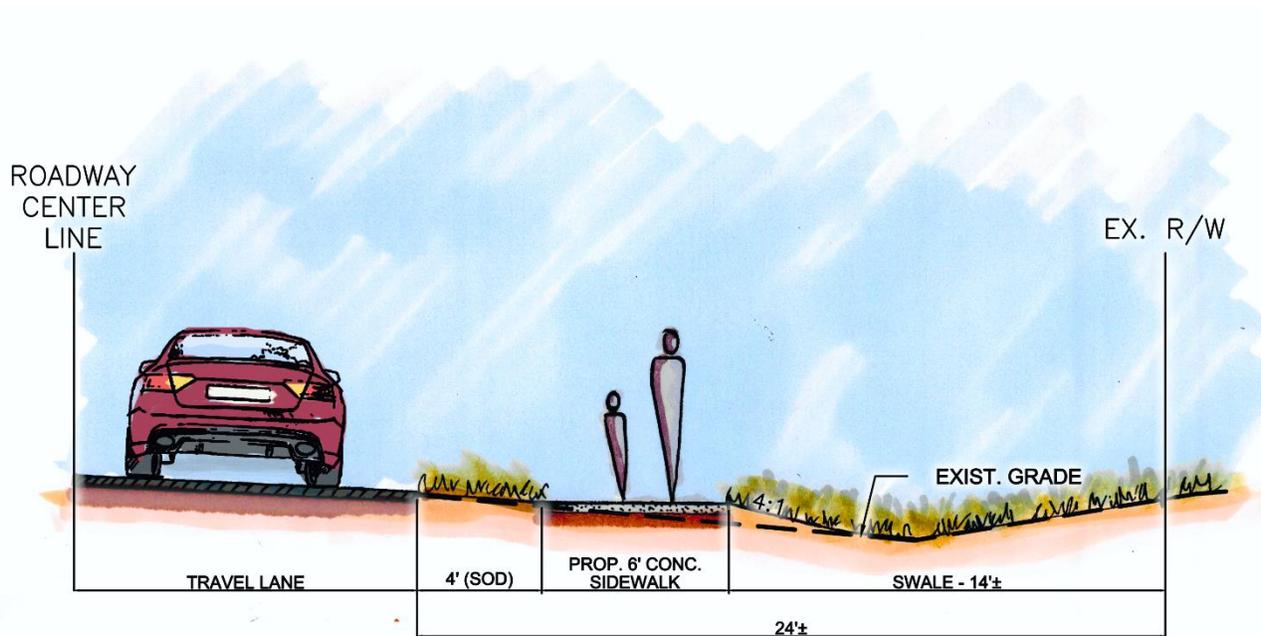
Note: Per Charlotte County data, Jennings Blvd. appears to be designated with a R.O.W. of 50 ft. With Myakka State Forest in Sarasota County as the western boundary of this road. Due to this unique condition, Jennings Blvd is identified separately (purple) from the standard 50 ft R.O.W. (red). Due to this road's unique potential for improvements beyond those recommended for a 50 ft. R.O.W. described in this report.

Option One – Basic Streetscape Improvement

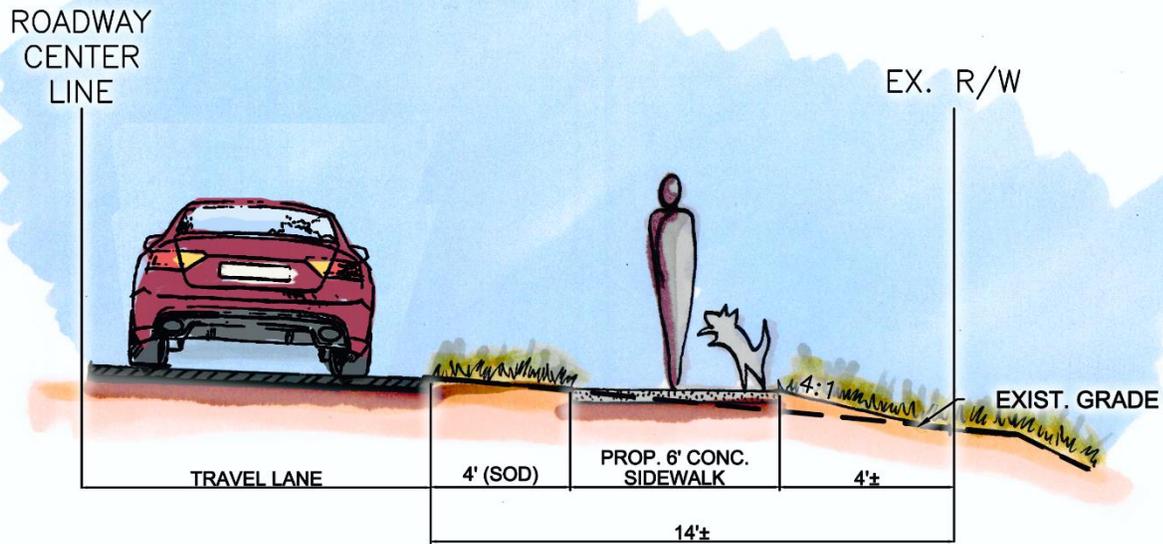
This level would provide for only sidewalks along the primary collector roads within the neighborhood. Below are visual representations for how the three right-of-way widths would accommodate the sidewalk.



80-Foot Right-of-Way (Primary Streets)



70-Foot Right-of-Way (Primary Streets)



50-Foot Right-of-Way (Primary Streets)

Basic Streetscape Sidewalk Map Cost Estimate - \$1,741,400.00

50' ROW (0.4 miles) - \$69,656.00

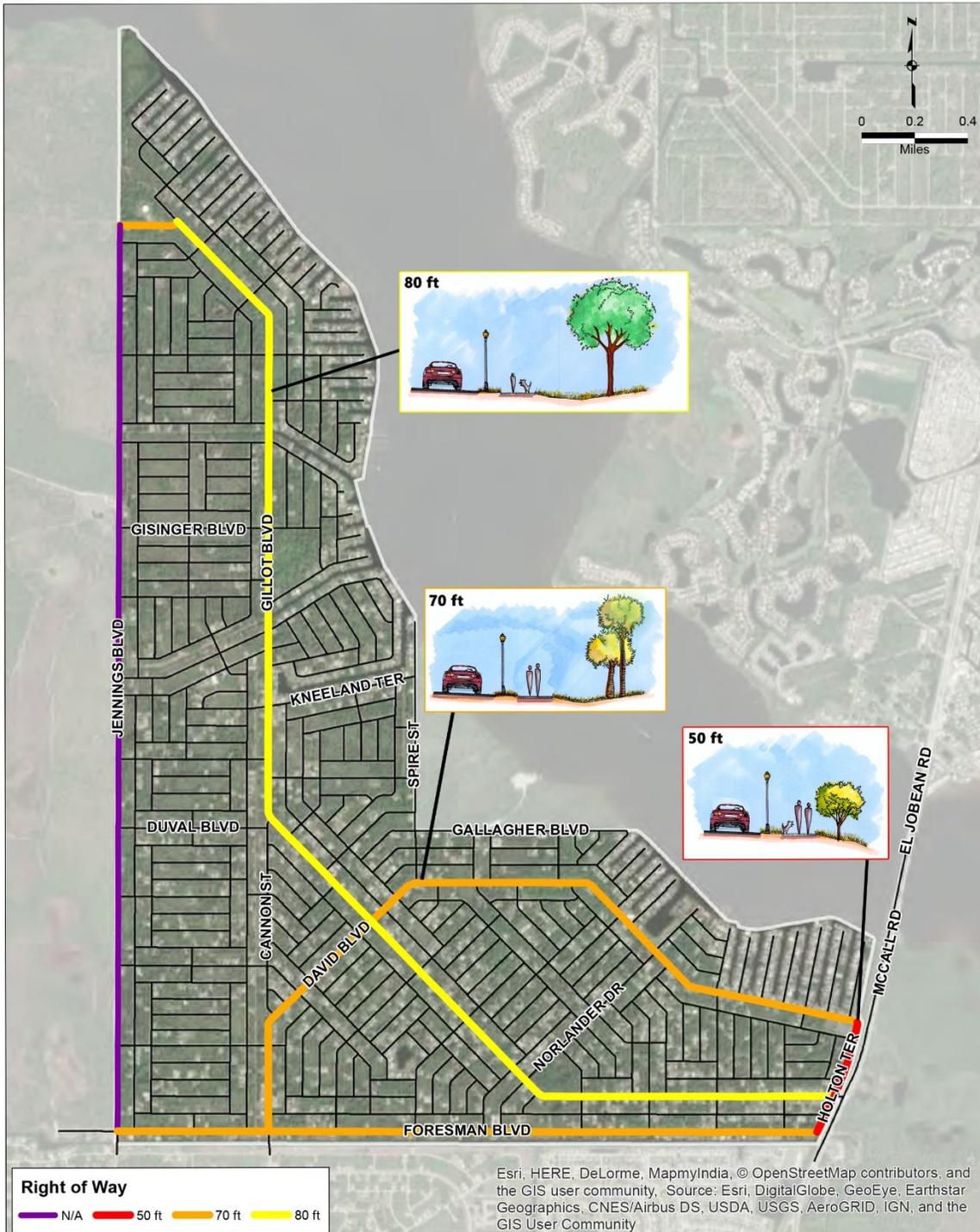
70' ROW (5.2 miles) - \$905,528.00

80' ROW (4.4 miles) - \$766,216.00

*Cost Estimates as of June 2021, estimates subject to change based on time value of money.

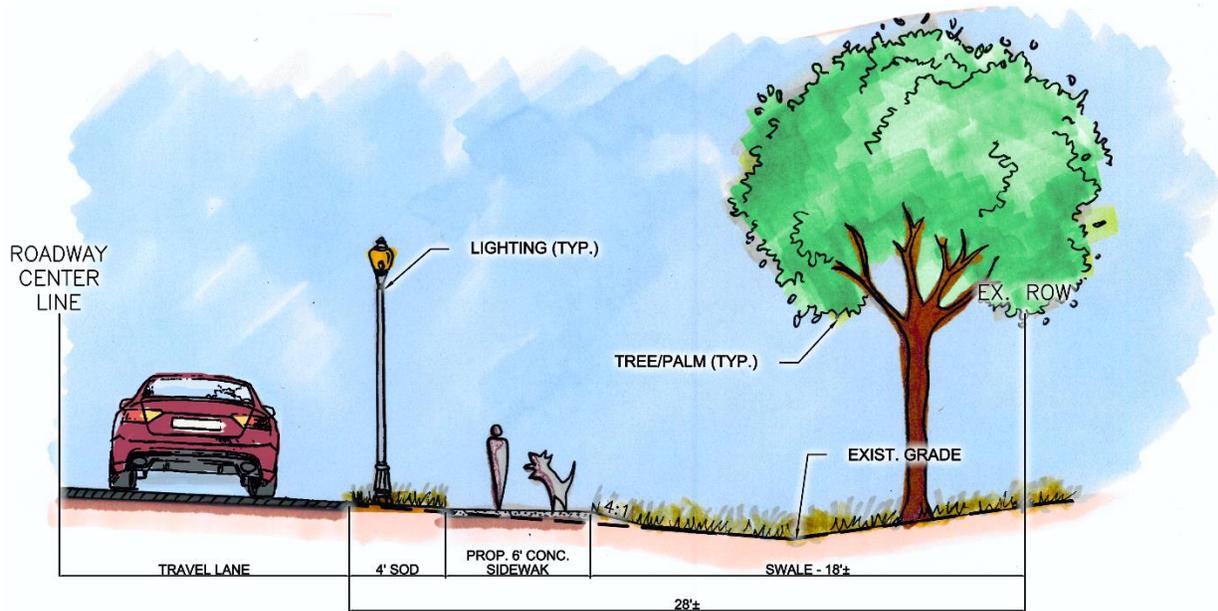
Option Two – Moderate Streetscape Sidewalk Map (Primary Streets Only)

The below map depicts streets where the sidewalk, street trees and lighting would be constructed on one side of the road, and the width of the right-of-way associated with the various streets.

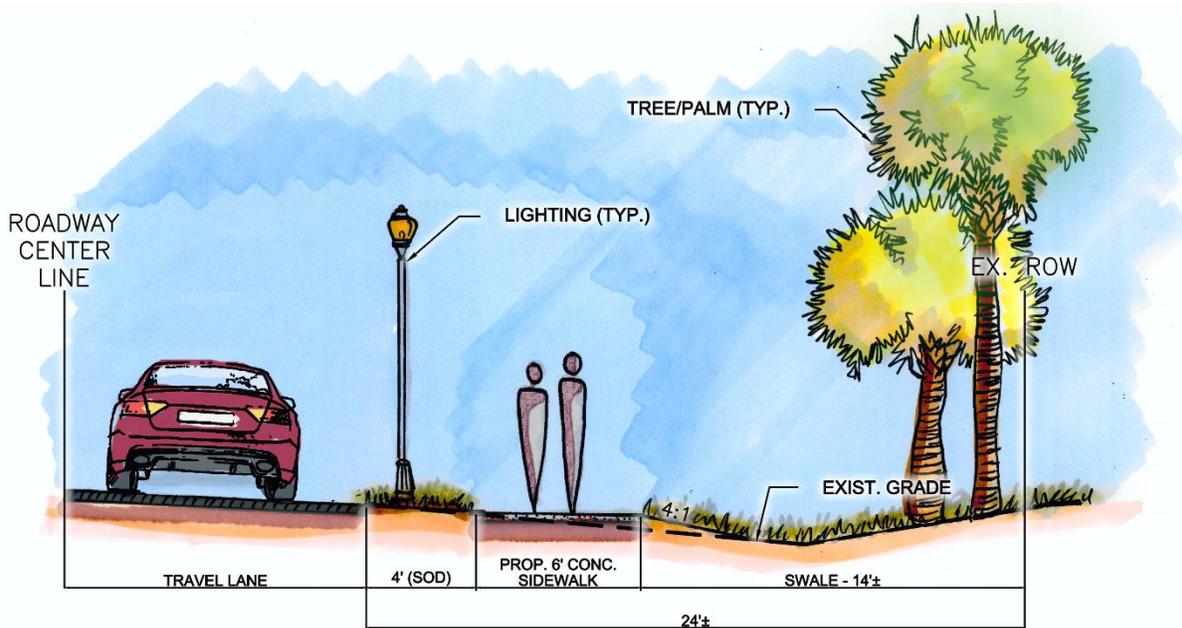


Option Two – Moderate Streetscape Enhancement.

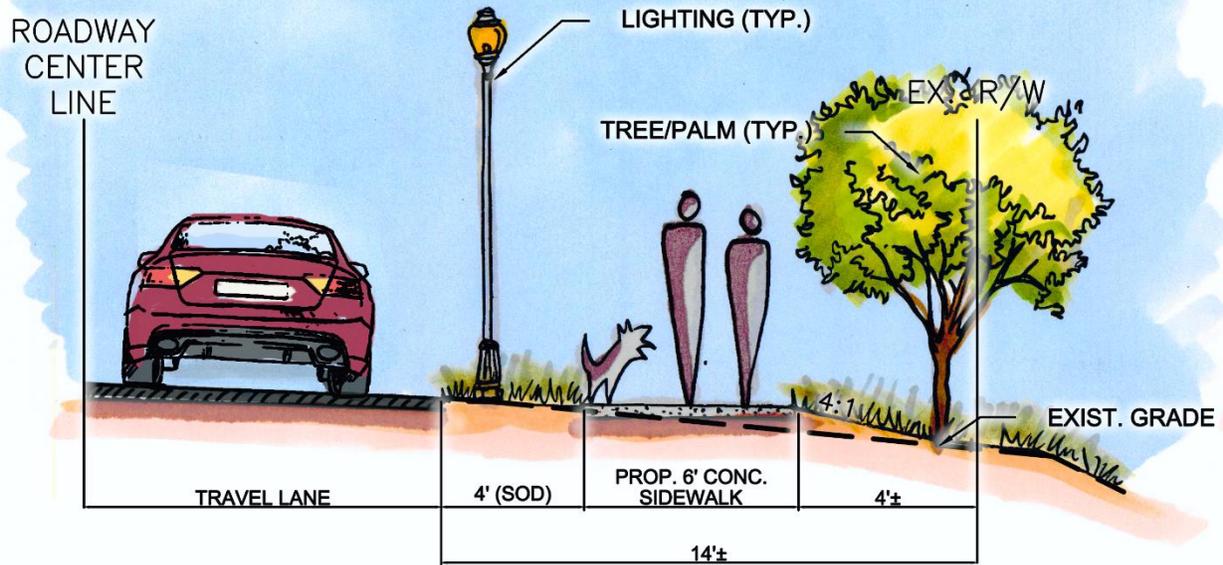
This level would provide for sidewalks along the primary collector roads with opportunities identified to include street trees and lighting at various locations. Below are visual representations for how the three right-of-way widths would accommodate the sidewalk, street trees and lighting.



80-Foot Right-of-Way (Primary Streets)



70-Foot Right-of-Way (Primary Streets)



50-Foot Right-of-Way (Primary Streets)

Moderate Streetscape Sidewalk Map Cost Estimate - \$8,579,400.00

50' ROW (0.4 miles) - \$343,176.00

70' ROW (5.2 miles) - \$4,461,288.00

80' ROW (4.4 miles) - \$3,774,936.00

*Cost Estimates as of June 2021, estimates subject to change based on time and material costs at time of installation.

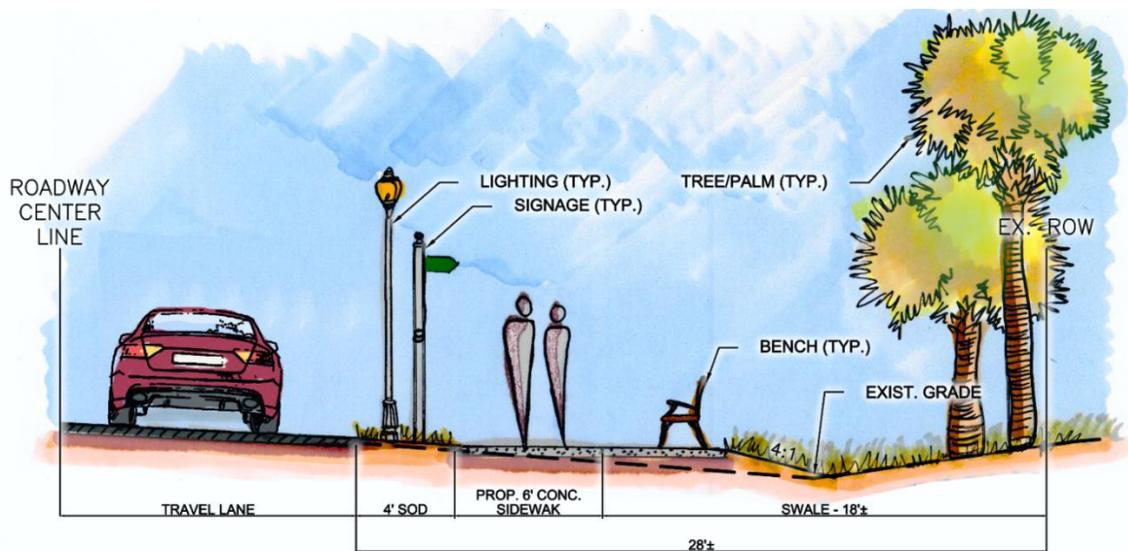
Option Three – Enhanced Streetscape Sidewalk Map (Primary and Secondary Streets)

The below map depicts the primary streets where the sidewalk, street trees, lighting, signage, and benches would be constructed on one side of the road, the secondary streets where sidewalks would be constructed on one side of the road and the width of the right-of-way associated with the various streets.

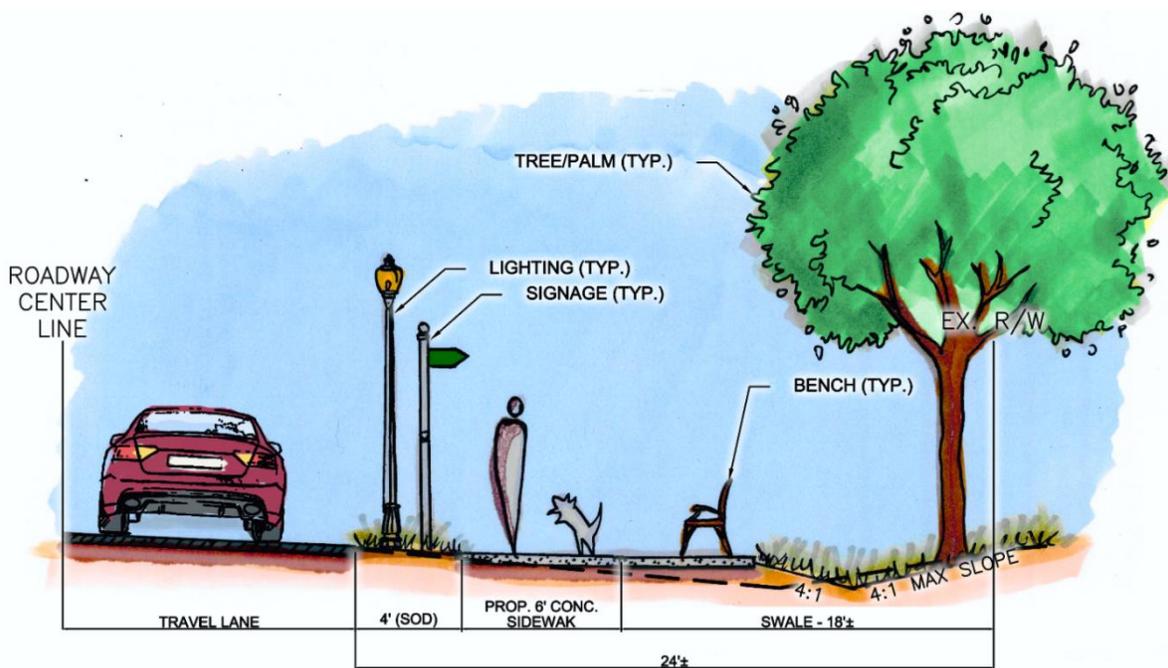


Option Three – Enhanced Streetscape Improvement

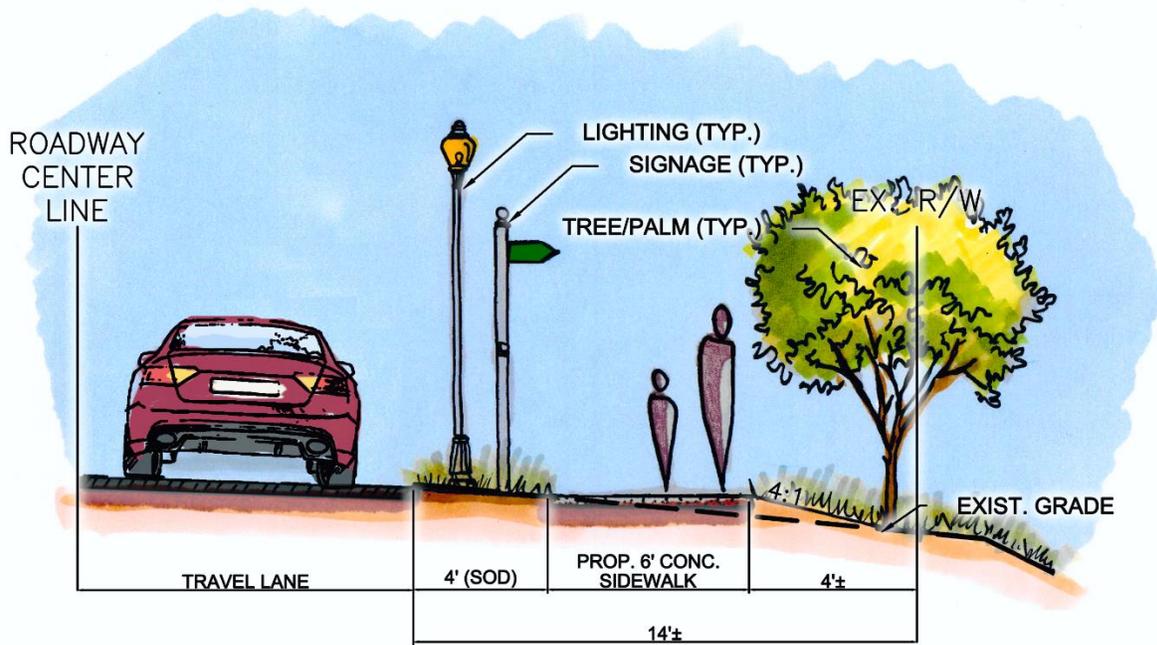
This level would provide for sidewalks along the primary streets with opportunities identified to include street trees, lighting, benches, and signage at various locations, as well as identifying secondary streets (Gisinger Boulevard, Duval Boulevard, Norlander Drive & Spire Street) for sidewalks. Below are visual representations for how the three right-of-way widths would accommodate the sidewalk, street trees, lighting, benches, and signage.



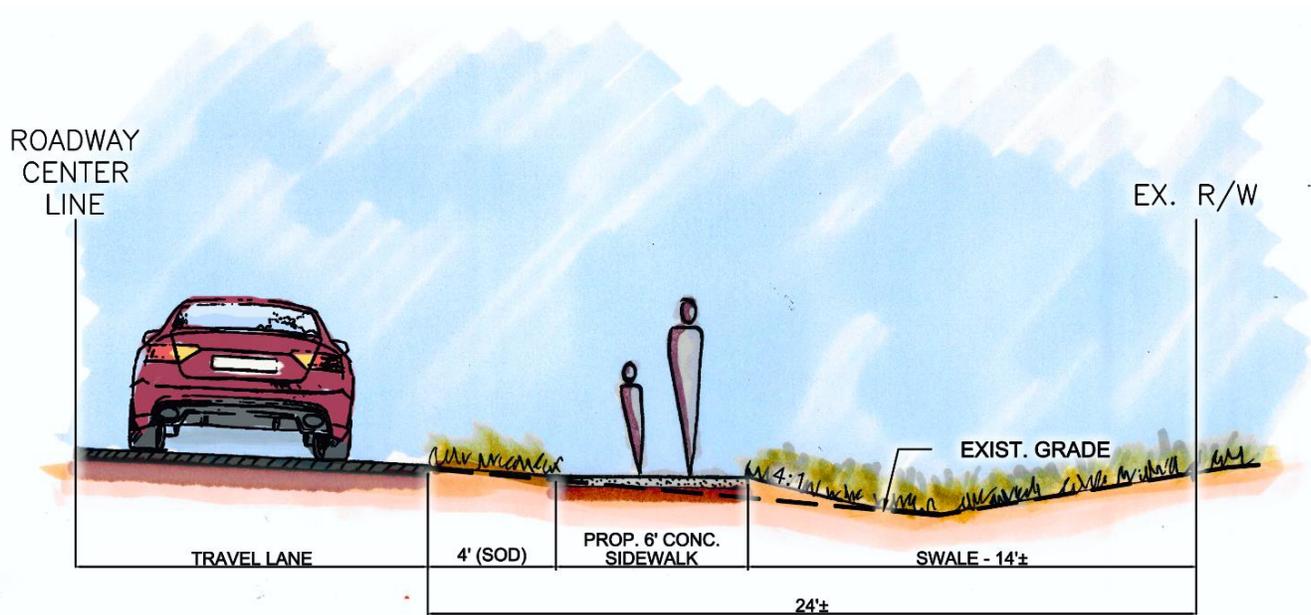
80-Foot Right-of-Way (Primary Streets)



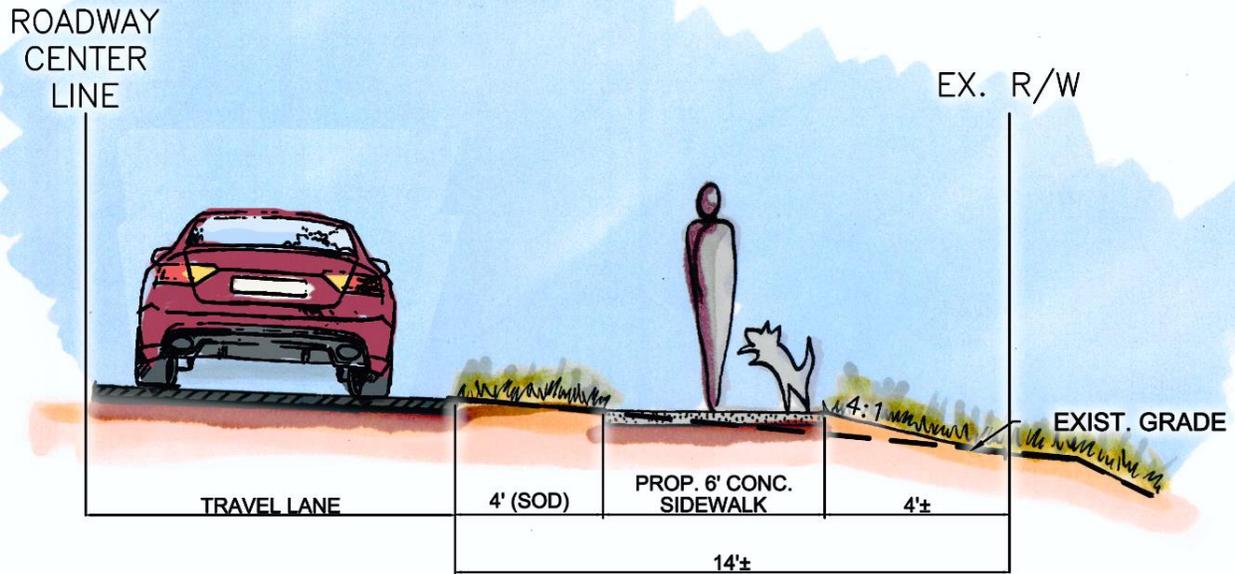
70-Foot Right-of-Way (Primary Streets)



50-Foot Right-of-Way (Primary Streets)



70-Foot Right-of-Way (Secondary Streets)



50-Foot Right-of-Way (Secondary Streets)

Enhanced Streetscape Sidewalk Map Cost Estimate - \$8,697,680.00

50' ROW (0.6 miles) - \$382,735.20

70' ROW (5.2 miles) - \$4,522,793.60

80' ROW (4.4 miles) - \$3,826,979.20

*Cost Estimates as of June 2021, estimates subject to change based on time and material costs at time of installation.

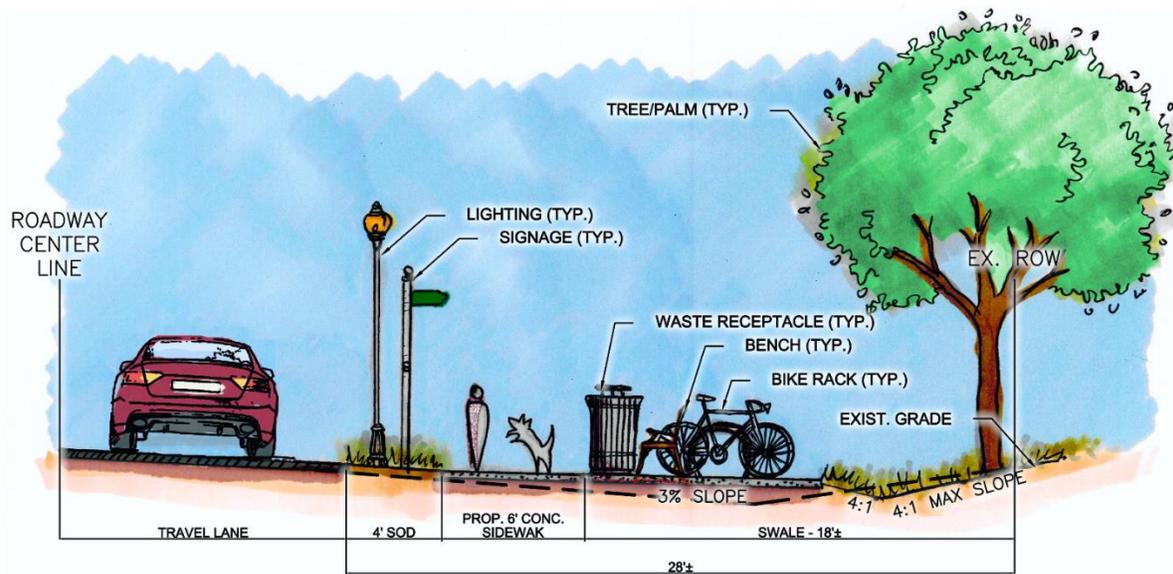
Option Four – Premium Streetscape Sidewalk Map (Primary and Secondary Streets)

The below map depicts the primary streets where the sidewalk, street trees, lighting, signage, and benches would be constructed on one side of the road, the secondary streets where sidewalks, street trees and lighting would be constructed on one side of the road and the width of the right-of-way associated with the various streets.

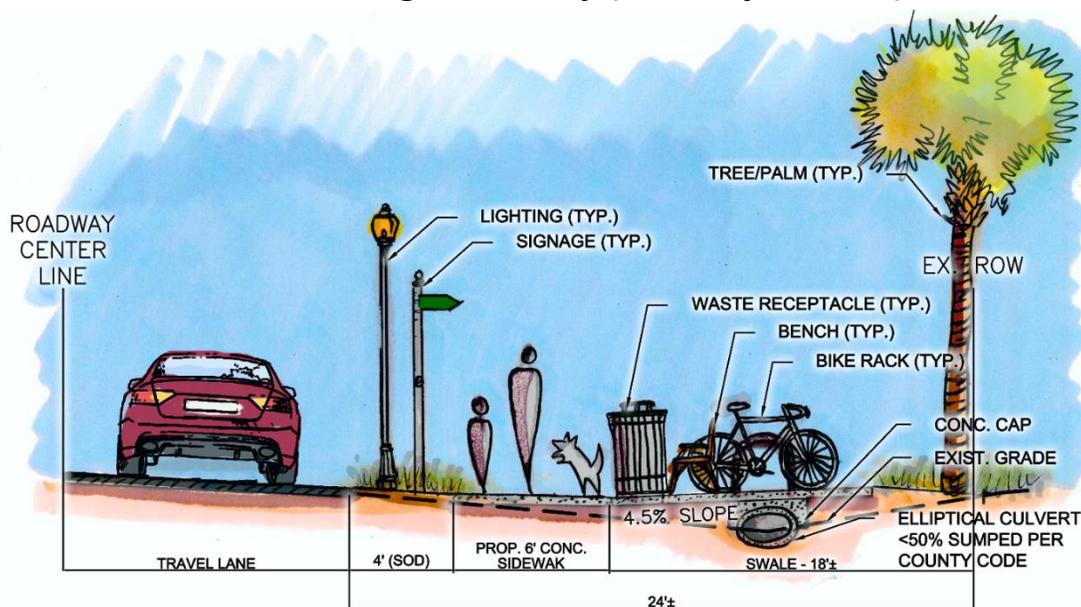


Option Four – Enhanced Streetscape Improvement

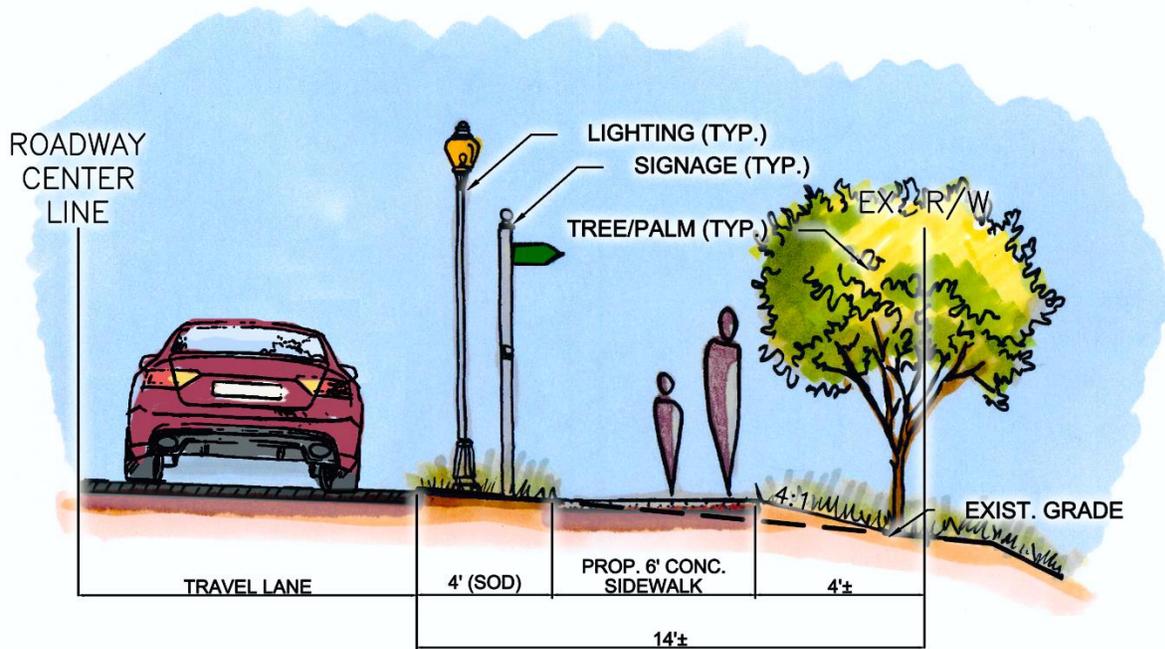
This level would provide for sidewalks along the primary streets with opportunities identified to include street trees, lighting, benches, and signage at various locations, as well as identifying secondary streets (Gisinger Boulevard, Duval Boulevard, Norlander Drive & Spire Street) for sidewalks, street trees, and lighting. Below are visual representations for how the three right-of-way widths would accommodate the sidewalk, street trees, lighting, benches, and signage.



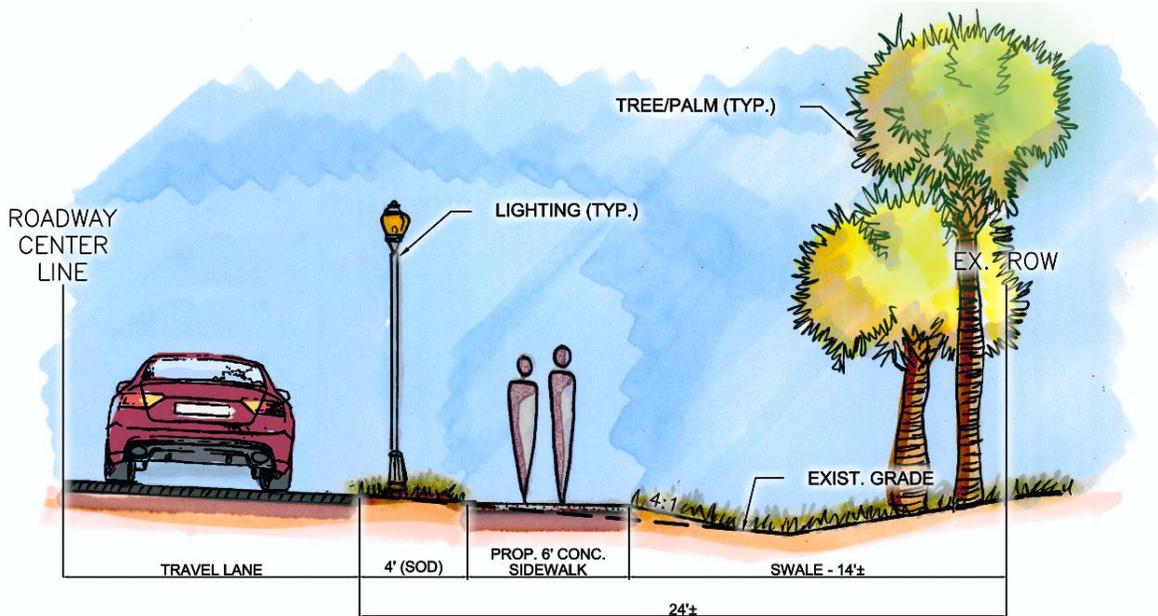
80-Foot Right-of-Way (Primary Streets)



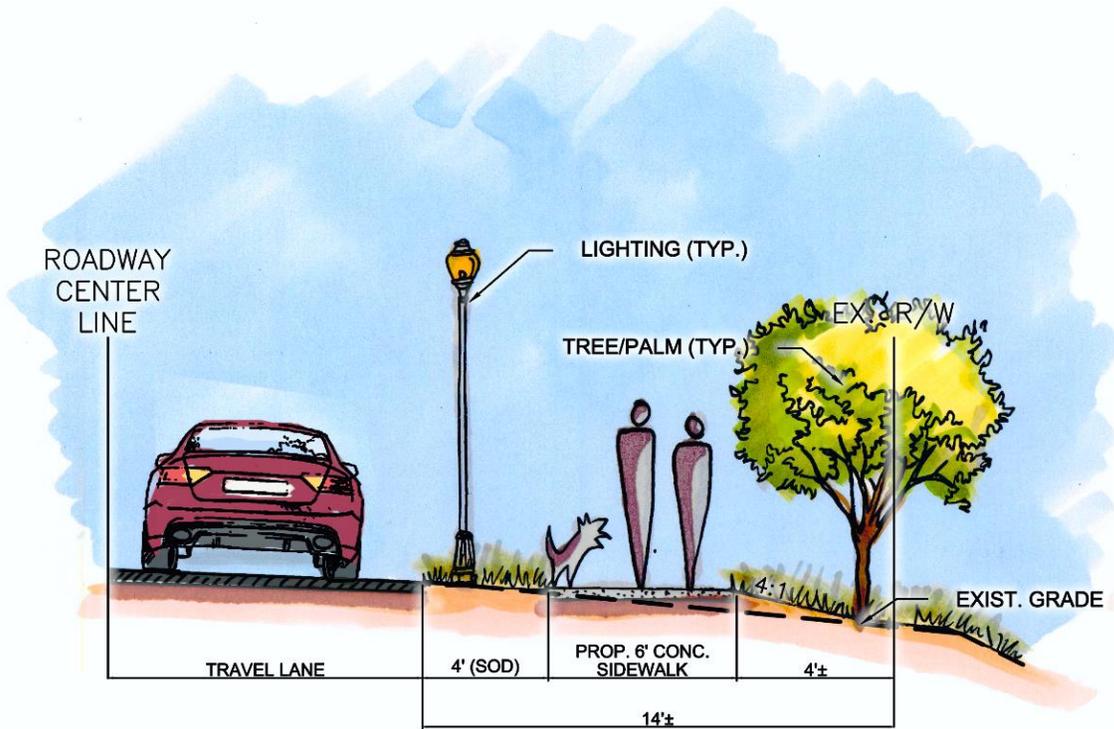
70-Foot Right-of-Way (Primary Streets)



50-Foot-Right-of-Way ([Primary Streets] Cannot accommodate seating area with bench, bike rack and waste receptacle due to spatial constraints.)



70-Foot Right-of-Way (Secondary Streets)



50-Foot Right-of-Way (Secondary Streets)

Premium Streetscape Sidewalk Map - \$8,795,960.00

50' ROW (0.6 miles) - \$519,495.20

70' ROW (5.2 miles) - \$4,573,899.20

80' ROW (4.4 miles) - \$3,870,222.40

*Cost Estimates as of June 2021, estimates subject to change based on time and material costs at time of installation.

Recommendations

The Community Streetscape Plan recognizes the funding limitations of the MSBU, as well as the cost associated with the range of improvements identified within the Plan. Based upon these two constraints, the following recommendations are provided.

1. When funding is sufficiently available construct the Phase One sidewalk project along initial corridor of David, Foresman, Gillot Boulevards and Holton Street.
2. Continued coordination with the Gulf Cove Street and Drainage MSBU on regular (annual) feedback related to neighborhood mobility and streetscape preferences. It is recommended that a standard questionnaire be used to solicit and monitor changing preferences from the community as development continues to expand.
3. Continued coordination with Charlotte County Transportation Planning to engage the neighborhood in the interest of developing a traffic calming strategy and evaluate the appropriateness of the speed limits posted within the residential neighborhood.
4. Continued coordination with the Charlotte County School Board to identify where bench locations can be maximized to serve as bus pick up/drop off location and potential funding opportunities.
5. Continued coordination with Charlotte County Parks and Recreation Department on the timing of the opening of the Myakka River Park and construction of the Sun Trail to ensure proper signage is installed as to minimize park visitor traffic throughout the neighborhoods. Continue coordination with local Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and Sun Trail to explore possible streetscape plan funding opportunities where the Sun Trail may be proposed within the community.
6. Consider improvements of cross-walks and pedestrian signage to promote pedestrian safety at the following intersections:
 - a. Gillot Boulevard & Norlander Drive
 - b. Gillot Boulevard & David Boulevard
 - c. Gillot Boulevard & Gisinger Boulevard
7. Continued coordination with the School Board to identify development plans for the 16.39 acre parcel owned by the Charlotte County School Board. If a school is to be developed, evaluate extending the sidewalk on Gillot Boulevard to Van Lenten Boulevard to allow a primary pedestrian connection to the school facility. If a school site is not needed work with the School District and the neighborhood to develop and alternative public use to benefit the Gulf Cove Community.

8. Continued coordination with Charlotte County for potential grant funding opportunities such as the Charlotte County Community Foundation and community fundraising opportunities.
9. When funding is sufficient after the completion of Phase One sidewalk project, the remaining basic level of sidewalk enhancement as shown on the map should be completed.

Conclusion

At the direction of the Gulf Cove MSBU Advisory Committee, Charlotte County Public Works and Community Development Departments and Johnson Engineering have developed a community plan to address the needs of the Gulf Cove MSBU service area.

Typically, community plans focus on all aspects of an area, including land use, zoning, and infrastructure. The Gulf Cove neighborhood is an entirely residential community, with no commercial areas. With the exception of a few areas designated as parks or potential future parks, the entire Gulf Cove community is zoned Residential Single-family-3.5 (RSF-3.5) and has a Future Land Use Map (FLUM) designation of Low Density Residential. There are no plans to change the zoning or Future Land Use designations for this community, and the vision for the community is to remain residential in nature. As no changes to the land use are proposed, the primary focus of this plan is infrastructure and streetscaping.

The intent of this plan is to provide an analysis of current conditions and to provide options for the implementation of sidewalks and streetscaping throughout Gulf Cove. Streetscaping treatments, including benches, trash receptacles, signage, lighting, and street trees, help to create a sense of place and give a community an identity. Specific branding of the community, such as the creation of a logo design, could be developed based on the aesthetic preferences of the community that were gleaned from the Visual Preference Survey conducted at the community meeting or as part of another specific community branding plan.

This Community Streetscape Plan represents the street segment improvement options to be considered based upon available funding and community member preferences. The options provided range from basic sidewalk installation to a premium arrangement of streetscape amenities within the right-of-way. The benefits associated with each level of corridor enhancement ranges from accommodating the pedestrian only to one that accommodates the pedestrian, calms traffic through the placement of streetscape amenities within the right-of-way and provides for rest areas along the pedestrian travel area to promote exercise and community interaction.

A neighborhood discussion surrounding the Community Streetscape Plan was initiated at the Charlotte Harbor Event Center on February 16, 2021. Responses from residents were solicited through surveys the following month which yielded a response that, in general, did not support any of the options identified within the Streetscape Plan. While most respondents did indicate that they walk the neighborhood on a regular basis, a majority determination was not reached to support any of the suggested improvements. Recognizing the safety needs of pedestrians in a neighborhood of over 7,000 individual parcels, only 27 percent of which have been developed, we recommend that, at a minimum, the Basic Sidewalk Map be implemented over time.

As the Gulf Cove community continues to grow and flourish, this Community Streetscape Plan and options for improvements will provide a guide to promote a cohesive, aesthetically pleasing and inviting environment that will benefit the mobility needs of all community residents. The Plan should be reviewed and evaluated with the Gulf Cove Neighborhood on a periodic basis (6 to 8 years) to determine if the perspective of the neighborhood has changed regarding streetscape amenities and their role in traffic calming and highlighting the unique identity and atmosphere of Gulf Cove.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all of those involved with the preparation of the Gulf Cove Streetscape Plan.

- Community Residents and stakeholders who participated in community outreach meetings
- Property Owners of Gulf Cove (POGC)
- Gulf Cove Street and Drainage Municipal Service Benefit Units (MSBU)
- Charlotte County Public Works and Development Staff
- Johnson Engineering, Inc.