Safe Access to Parks

Sulphur Springs

Local Park Pilot
Final Fix-It Ideas

December 2021

SAFE STREETS NOW
VISIONZERO
ONE TRAFFIC DEATH IS TOO MANY

Hillsborough TPO
Transportation
Planning Organization

Contents

I. Introduction

The Hillsborough Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) is conducting a Safe Access to Parks pilot project to develop a process that can be replicated throughout the County to implement safety countermeasures that improve access to parks with a focus on speed management. A toolbox of safety countermeasures, building on the 2019 *Speed Management Action Plan*, was developed as part of this process. This pilot project includes three different types of park facilities in Hillsborough County (local, regional, and linear) whose contexts and transportation safety issues broadly represent other facilities in the region, such that the findings from this pilot project can be applied elsewhere in the County. The project scope includes the following tasks:

1. Identify parks to include in the pilot project
2. Conduct a detailed existing conditions assessment of each park location
3. Solicit public feedback
4. Develop a toolbox of safety countermeasures
5. Apply countermeasures to each park location

This report documents the results of Task 3 and Task 5, including a summary of the public feedback process and results, as well as the safety countermeasures identified for each park location. Project materials are available on the TPO's website: https://planhillsborough.org/park-study/.

The process to conduct this study is summarized at the end of this document to aid other agencies in Hillsborough County in identifying safety improvements to other parks in the county.

A. Park Selection Process

A quantitative process was developed that primarily considers equity and transportation safety metrics to identify candidate parks within Hillsborough County. Of the approximately 200 local parks within the County, defined as a park less than 5 acres that may have a varying level of active and passive amenities that typically serves the local area, **Sulphur Springs Park** was ranked one of the highest based on a combination of equity and safety factors. It is also located adjacent to the **River Tower Park**, a passive regional park, which is defined as a park greater than 5 acres that has no planned programming. River Tower Park placed third on the ranking process for passive regional parks and its location adjacent to Sulphur Springs Park provides an opportunity to improve transportation safety and access around and to both parks. Therefore, the combined park complex was selected for inclusion in the pilot.

Sulphur Springs Park Entry Monument

Additional details are provided in a technical memorandum dated May 3, 2021, that can be found on the TPO's website. Other parks selected for inclusion in the pilot are the Upper Tampa Bay Trail (linear), and Copeland Park (active regional), with separate existing conditions assessments prepared for those parks.

B. Existing Conditions Assessment

An existing conditions assessment was prepared for each park to document the key characteristics of the park and the surrounding transportation context, including the following information for the roadway network that provides primary access to the park facility:

- Description of transportation network for all travel modes, with a focus on the pedestrian, bicycle, and transit networks
- Assessment of the speed of people driving on roadways around the park
- Collision assessment for all travel modes with a focus on vulnerable roadway users (people walking and bicycling)

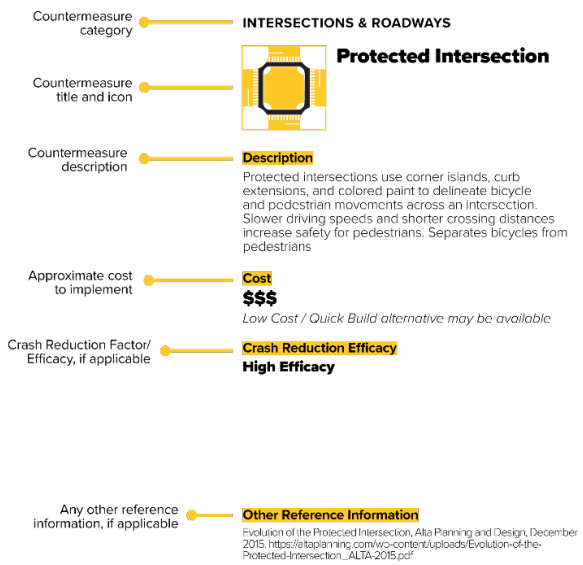
Based on the existing conditions assessment, areas where specific community feedback was desired were identified to include in the public outreach campaign and preliminary opportunities to improve transportation connections to the park were developed. More details can be found in the existing conditions report available on the project website, available at https://planhillsborough.org/park-study/.

C. Countermeasure Toolbox

A toolbox of engineering countermeasures was developed to aid in the selection of potential transportation system enhancements that could be considered around each park area with the following categories:

1. Bikeway Facilities
2. Intersection and Roadway Design
3. Walking Facilities
4. Signals
5. Signing and Striping
6. Other

Over 90 countermeasures were identified with an example shown below.



Example Countermeasure

Where data is available, **Crash Reduction Efficacy** is also provided. For the crash reduction efficacy, some measures include a qualitative range of low, medium, or high when limited information is available. For others, a crash reduction factor (CRF) from the Federal Highway Administration's Crash Modification Clearinghouse is provided for

illustrative purposes only to illustrate a potential range. More details are provided in the Toolbox available on the project website.

The remainder of this report provides an overview of the public engagement process, with a summary of the specific feedback related to Sulphur Springs Park as well as the initial potential improvements, or fix ideas, developed for the roadways surrounding and connecting to the park.

II. Public Outreach Process and Results

Public outreach for the Safe Access to Parks pilot project was conducted in several ways, including collaboration with an agency stakeholder group, online public outreach, and in-person public outreach. Additionally, regular presentations were made to the Hillsborough TPO committees to provide updates on the project and to receive feedback. Each of these outreach elements is described in more detail below.

A. Public Outreach Process

1. Stakeholder Group

A project stakeholder group was established during the scoping process for the project to provide input on the overall scope of work and to help inform the overall project goals. This stakeholder group consists of staff from Hillsborough County, the City of Tampa, and the Hillsborough TPO, and includes staff from multiple departments, including planning, engineering and parks and recreation. The goal was to establish a group with a diverse background to provide unique insights into the project.

In addition to the scoping meeting, the group met three times, including a project kick-off meeting, a meeting to review and discuss the existing conditions assessment, and a meeting to review and discuss the countermeasure toolbox and application of the toolbox to each park.

Feedback from the stakeholder group was overwhelming positive and their ideas have been incorporated into this final document, including a change of name for the project and five additional fix ideas around Sulphur Springs Park (no fix ideas were removed based on feedback). The project was initially called the Park Speed Zone Pilot Study. However, the project evolved and some of the strategies identified go beyond only speed management. The project was renamed Safe Access to Parks to better reflect that the overall purpose of the project is to improve transportation safety on roadways surrounding and connecting to parks, which includes speed management strategies, but other improvements as well.

In addition to project stakeholder group outreach, the project was presented to the following committees and their feedback was incorporated into the overall process. Members of these committees also assisted with sharing information about the project and public outreach with their networks.

- Citizens Advisory Committee
- Technical Advisory Committee
- Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee
- Livable Roadways Committee
- Policy Committee

2. Online Public Outreach

Due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic conditions at the time this study was prepared, including the Delta surge in late summer/early fall, much of the early public engagement was conducted through online tools. Numerous neighborhood groups in the vicinity of all park locations were contacted and information about the project provided. Social media was extensively used to promote the project.

A website to share project information was developed, with links to an online web map and an online survey. The web map and survey were developed in both English and Spanish and were open to the public from mid-August through early November 2021. Between the three parks, there were over 95 unique responses to the online survey and over 115 comments on the web map. The results for Sulphur Springs Park are discussed in Section 3. To help inform people who use the park on a regular basis about the outreach, yard signs and flyers were placed around the park and distributed to people who have connections to the park.

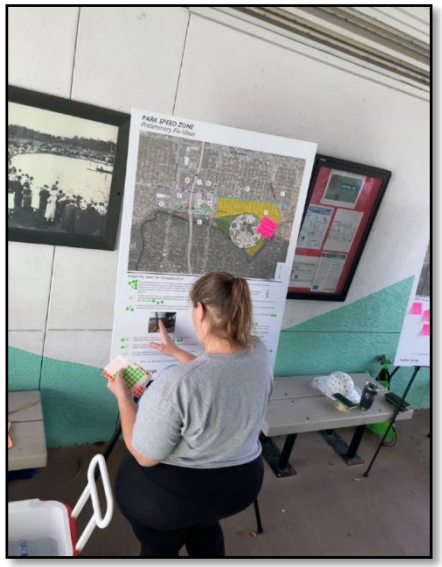
Yard Signs and Flyers that were Placed Around Each Park

3. In-Person Public Outreach

In-person outreach events were conducted at all three pilot locations on Friday, October 29, 2021. The Upper Tampa Bay Trail event was held at the Channel Park Trailhead from 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM, while concurrent events took place at Sulphur Springs Park and Copeland Park from 3:00 PM to 5:00 PM. At all events, team staff discussed the background and purpose of the project with participants and explored ideas to make access to the parks safer by all modes of travel. This feedback focused on reactions to initial concepts previously identified by the team and new ideas generated by participants.

While participation at the Sulphur Springs Park event was limited to some extent by the current lack of programmed park events and the temporary closure of portions of the park, more than 15 community members including swimmers, local law enforcement, pool lifeguards, and passers-by collectively provided many valuable insights. At least one participant indicated support for each of the 19 presented initial ideas for consideration, with more than 60 such positive "votes" provided in total. Ideas receiving the most support all involved new sidewalks, walkways, and walking paths within the study area. More than a dozen additional ideas and concepts were also identified, many focusing on personal security, land use, landscaping, and aesthetic considerations. Other key issues that consistently emerged involved on-site traffic circulation and parking lot drainage, which are all discussed more in Section 3.

In-Person Public Outreach Invitation



In-Person Public Outreach

October 29, 2021

B. Online Public Outreach Results

The online public outreach yielded 25 unique comments from the online map and seven responses from the online survey questions. An additional six people provided feedback for all parks.

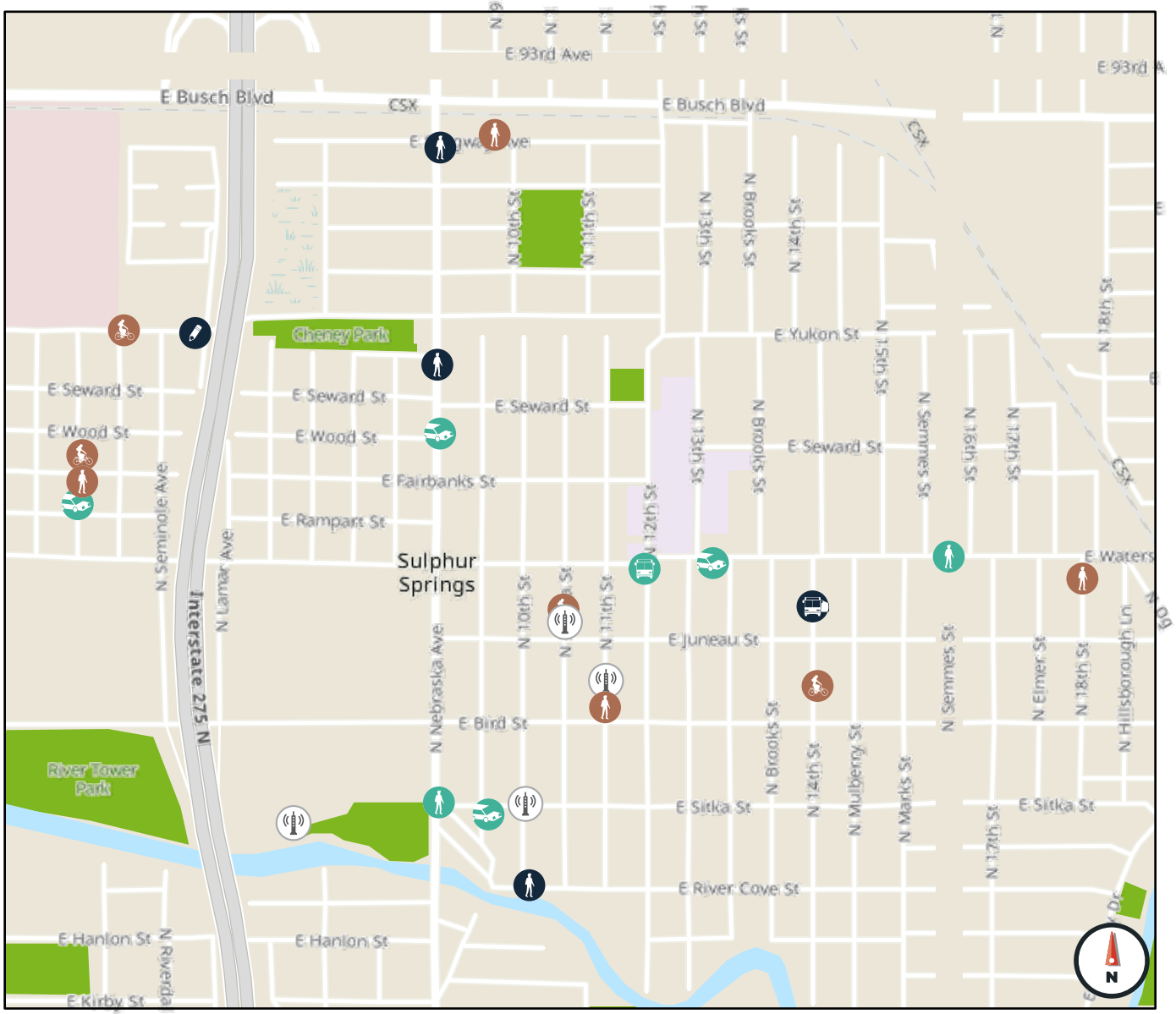
Links to the online map were provided on the TPO's project website as well as through social media. People were able to identify comments related to different aspects of the transportation system, as well as other specific issues. The location of each comment is shown on **Figure 1** with a summary of the comments provided in **Table 1**. All the comments by issue type are provided at the end of this report in **Table 2**, with some highlights below:

- We need better streetlights in all of Sulphur Springs for safety and to illuminate the bike lanes for drivers.
- Lack of bike lanes; particularly sad because it's right next to a transit center and shopping center and a neighborhood where a lot of kids bike
- We need buffered bike lanes in this area- it is dangerous to ride on the street with cars; especially because there are so many speeders.
- We need to increase bus routes- especially to rural areas or far away areas like Ruskin and Wimauma. There are better opportunities for work for me there, but it is hard for me to be able to get out there without a car. Also, buses aren't good for getting to appointments, and they're a bit pricey for many.
- Crosswalk light could be longer when button is pressed. Intersections in the area are notorious for cars running the light, especially in the mornings.
- This entire area, from Waters to Florida to Yukon to N. Seminole, is missing sidewalks, bike lanes and stop signs. These blocks are home to a LOT of children who walk and bike daily in the road because of a lack of facilities.

Table 1: Online Map Comment Type Summary

Comment Type	Number of Comments	Percent of Comments
Roadway Operations – People drive too fast	4	16%
Walk – Inadequate, missing, or unsafe crosswalks	10	40%
Lighting – Insufficient Street lighting that make it uncomfortable to walk or bike at night	4	16%
Transit – The bus does not come frequently enough/There is not a place to wait for the bus	2	8%
Another issue – please explain	1	4%
Bike – Inadequate or missing bikeways (trails, bike lanes, etc)	4	16%
Drainage - Drainage issues create a barrier to walking, biking or taking transit during and after rain	0	0%
Total	**25**	**100%**

Source: Fehr & Peers, 2021



Comment Type

- Another issue – please explain
- Bike – Inadequate or missing bikeways (trails, bike lanes, etc)
- Bike – Vehicles not sharing the road with bikes
- Drainage - Drainage issues create a barrier to walking, biking or taking transit during and after rain
- Lighting - Insufficient street lighting that make it uncomfortable to walk or bike at night
- Roadway Operations – People drive too fast
- Roadway Operations – Traffic signal cycle is too long
- Transit – The bus does not come frequently enough
- Transit – There is not a direct route from the bus stop to my destination
- Transit – There is not a place to wait for the bus
- Vehicles – Hard to turn from this location
- Walk – Inadequate or missing sidewalks
- Walk – Inadequate, missing, or unsafe crosswalks
- Walk – People driving not yielding to people walking

Figure 1

Sulphur Springs Public Outreach Comments

Hillsborough TPO Transportation Planning Organization

The survey was developed to ask more direct and open-ended questions of park users, including asking about typical travel modes to the park, ease of access, specific locations where people feel unsafe walking or bicycling to the park, and specific ideas for improvements. Some key highlights of this feedback are summarized below. Due to the small sample size for Sulphur Springs Park, some of the results are combined with all the parks, while some results are for Sulphur Springs Park specifically.

- *How do you typically get to the park or trail?*
    - Of the 88 people total across all parks who answered this question, 17 percent walk, 42 percent bicycle and 38 percent drive a car. The remaining do not actually go to the trail or park. Of the 7people who answered this question for Sulphur Springs Park, 3 (43 percent) walk, 3 drive (43 percent) and 1 bikes (14 percent).
- *How easy or difficult is it for you to get to/from parks and trails, with 0 being the hardest and 10 being the easiest?*
    - Of the 81 people who answered this question overall, the average score was 6.7. For Sulphur Springs Park, of the 5 people who answered this question, the average score was 6.6, meaning that people think it is slightly harder to access Sulphur Springs Park than other parks.
- *When thinking about going to the park or trail, where do you feel unsafe walking or bicycling and why?* Here are the specific responses related to Sulphur Springs Park:
    - Most roads feel unsafe. Lack of sidewalks, drug dealing and speeding
    - Not enough dedicated bike lanes
    - For the Sulphur Springs Park trail next to the public pool, there is insufficient lighting at dawn and dusk, making dog walks unsafe at these times.
- *Does the behavior of people driving, like speeding or not paying attention, make you not walk or bike to the park or trail?*
    - Of the 72 people total across all parks who answered this question, 40 percent responded “Yes,” 33 percent responded “No,” and 27 percent responded “Sometimes.” Of the 4 people who answered this question for Sulphur Springs Park, 2 (50 percent) said “Yes,” and 2 (50 percent) said “Sometimes.”
- *Are there specific locations where you would like to see marked crosswalks connecting to the park or trail?* Here are the specific responses related to Sulphur Springs Park:
    - Yes, at the Garden center on Central Ave
    - I think safer access (sidewalks) and lighting is what this area needs most. You can't stop the speeders. Maybe longer crosswalk signals when button is pressed.
- *Would you walk, bike or take transit more to the park or trail if it was safer?*
    - People would be more likely to walk or bike to parks and trails if access is easier. Improved transit would not result in a lot of additional trips to the park or trail.
- *Are there specific locations where more street lighting is needed? Please tell us where.*
    - The Sulphur Springs bike trail, near the public pool along the river, definitely needs lighting. They exist in the parking lot but I never see them turned on. I can't walk my dog in the mornings, that park is pitch black.
    - Pretty much all throughout Sulphur Springs there's that terrible purple lighting from faulty bulbs, making the neighborhood too dark to enjoy at dusk and dawn.
- *Are there drainage issues that affect your travel during and after periods of rain? Where?*

    - Specific locations around Sulphur Springs Park were not identified beyond the locations identified using the crowdsource map.
- *Please share other suggestions for improvements that would help you access parks and trails in your neighborhood.*
    - No additional feedback was provided.

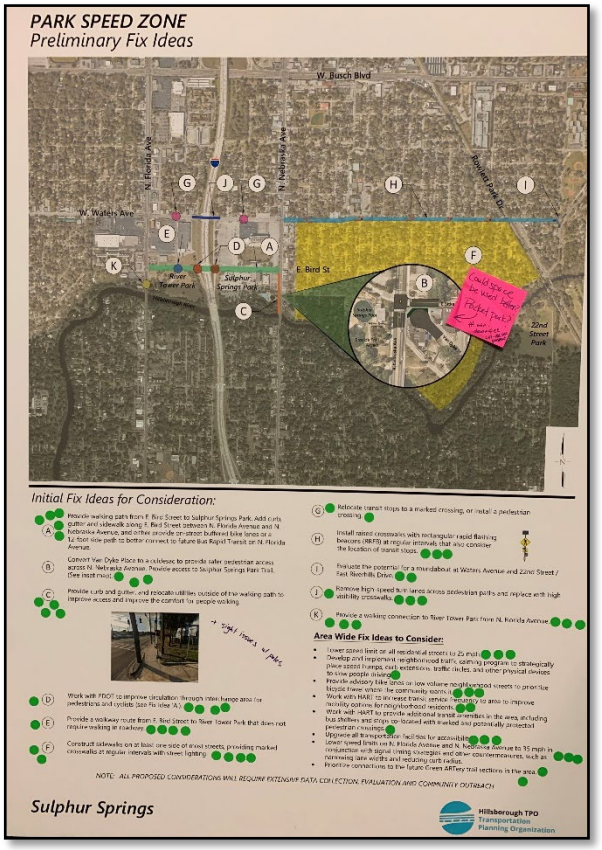
III. Countermeasure Toolbox Application

This chapter details the application of the countermeasure toolbox to Sulphur Springs and River Tower Park based on the existing conditions assessment and feedback provided from the community during the online and in-person public outreach. The image below shows the initial reaction to the application of the countermeasures. Participants were provided with red and green dots to denote ideas that they were supportive of (green) and ideas that they did not support (red). In the discussion of specific countermeasure ideas, the initial level of public support is indicated. No ideas received a no vote, and an absence of a vote does not mean community support was lacking, rather participants preferred other ideas. These will be denoted by "●" in the same quantity as the public noted.

Overall, people who provided feedback at the in-person public outreach event were supportive of improving infrastructure for people walking and bicycling. Concerns were also noted related to overall maintenance of the area and illegal activities that are a deterrent to people walking and bicycling to the park and within the surrounding areas.

A. Overview

The countermeasure toolbox described previously was applied to the roadway network surrounding and connecting to Sulphur Springs Park and the adjacent River Tower Park, as presented on **Figure 2.** Potential transportation system improvements are shown for specific locations, as well as areawide considerations. It is the intent that the appropriate agency will consider the various ideas in their planning and capital improvement processes, and that this document will serve as a starting point to identify potential projects for further evaluation. In the Sulphur Springs Park area, projects could be undertaken by the City of Tampa, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), Hillsborough Transportation Planning Organization (TPO), Hillsborough Area Regional Transit (HART), and the Hillsborough County Public School District. For the ideas shown on Figure 2, they are organized below by the most applicable countermeasure category, as some fix ideas could fall into several categories. The agency that would be responsible for further planning and implementation is also shown. Most strategies fall under the Intersection and Roadway Design, and Walking Facilities categories.



Public Preference on Initial Fix-Ideas

B. Bikeway Facilities

There are not dedicated bicycle facilities in the area. Two Safe Access Strategies were identified specifically related to bicycle facilities, as included in the Area Wide Ideas on Figure 2.

1. Provide advisory bike lanes (Area Wide) on low volume neighborhood streets to prioritize bicycle travel where the community wants it. (Picture bike lanes on both sides of the road with vehicles sharing the middle at low speeds.) ●●●

The concept of an advisory bike lane is relatively new in Florida. It is a striping configuration which provides for two-way motor vehicle and non-motorized traffic using a center lane and edge lanes on either side. The center lane is dedicated to, and shared by, motorists traveling in both directions. Vulnerable road users including cyclists or pedestrians have right-of-way in the edge lanes, but motorists can use the edge lanes, after yielding to people there, to pass other vehicles. This type of configuration can be appropriate on low volume, low speed streets, especially ones without sidewalks or other dedicated right-of-way for people bicycling, similar to some of the neighborhoods surrounding Sulphur Springs Park. As this type of treatment has not been implemented in the Tampa Bay area, extensive outreach and education would be needed for a successful implementation. There may be some opportunities for a temporary pilot of this treatment with low-cost materials to demonstrate proof of concept for the residents and decision makers. (City of Tampa)

2. Prioritize connections to the future Green ARTery trail (Area Wide and shown as N and O on Figure 2) sections in the area. Although the final alignment of the Green ARTery trail has not been identified, it is expected to traverse this area. Providing a connection and wayfinding from the trail to Sulphur Springs Park will expand the number of people who have access to the park via non-motorized travel options. (TPO in coordination with the City of Tampa) ●●

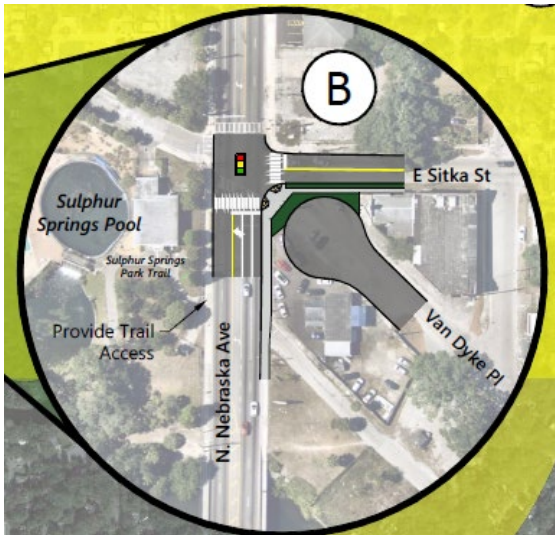
Example of Advisory Bike Lane on Residential Street

C. Intersection and Roadway Design

Much of the roadway infrastructure in the area was designed and constructed at a time when design standards prioritized the expedient movement of vehicles over the movement of people. Since this area was built, design standards have evolved and there are opportunities to reconstruct intersections to balance the travel of all roadway users, slow the speed of people driving, and implement more effective traffic calming measures than those already in place.

3. Convert Van Dyke Place to a cul-de-sac to provide safer pedestrian access across N. Nebraska Avenue. Provide access to Sulphur Springs Park Trail (***Idea B*** on Figure 2, and inset on next page). This improvement would eliminate some vehicle movements and provide a shorter distance for people to cross N. Nebraska Avenue to access the Park. Should this idea move forward, members of the public suggested that the radius of the cul-de-sac be reduced or potentially be replaced

with green space, which are ideas that can be considered if the project is considered further. (City of Tampa) ●●●



Concept of Safe Street Strategy 3

4. Provide curb and gutter (for better vehicle-pedestrian separation) and relocate utilities outside of the walking path to improve access and improve the comfort for people walking (Idea C). There are many areas where utility poles impede the path of travel, as well as sight distance. Some portions of N. Nebraska Avenue do not have curb and gutter, which helps to provide some extra protection to people walking from vehicles traveling on the roadway. (City of Tampa and FDOT) ●●●●

5. Evaluate the potential for a roundabout at Waters Avenue and 22nd Street /East Riverhills Drive (Idea I). This intersection connects the Sulphur Springs area to Rowlett Park and does not have any pedestrian accommodations to cross 22nd Street to access the park. Slowing vehicle travel and providing crosswalks could help connect the Sulphur Springs Park area to Rowlett Park. Roundabouts improve safety by reducing the number of conflict points and slowing the speeds of people driving. (City of Tampa) ●●

6. Redesign on-site circulation and parking areas to prioritize walking and biking to the pool and park, as well as address existing drainage issues that result in standing water in the parking area (Idea L). The existing layout of the park circulation and parking prioritizes people driving to the park instead of walking or bicycling. It is also in disrepair. Improvements should be constructed in combination with improvements to adjacent parcels to also provide access from E. Bird Street (see also Safe Street Strategies 8 and 15. This strategy was added in response to community feedback during the in-person event. (City of Tampa) ●●

7. Develop and implement neighborhood traffic calming plan (Area Wide) to strategically place speed humps, curb extensions, traffic circles, and other physical devices to slow people driving. (City of Tampa) ●

D. Walking Facilities

Most of the Safe Access Strategies fall under the Walking Facilities category, as the focus of providing safe access to parks is improving facilities for people to walk or bicycle to area parks. As many walking facilities can also double as bicycling facilities, especially for children and families, some of the strategies also accommodate bicycle travel.

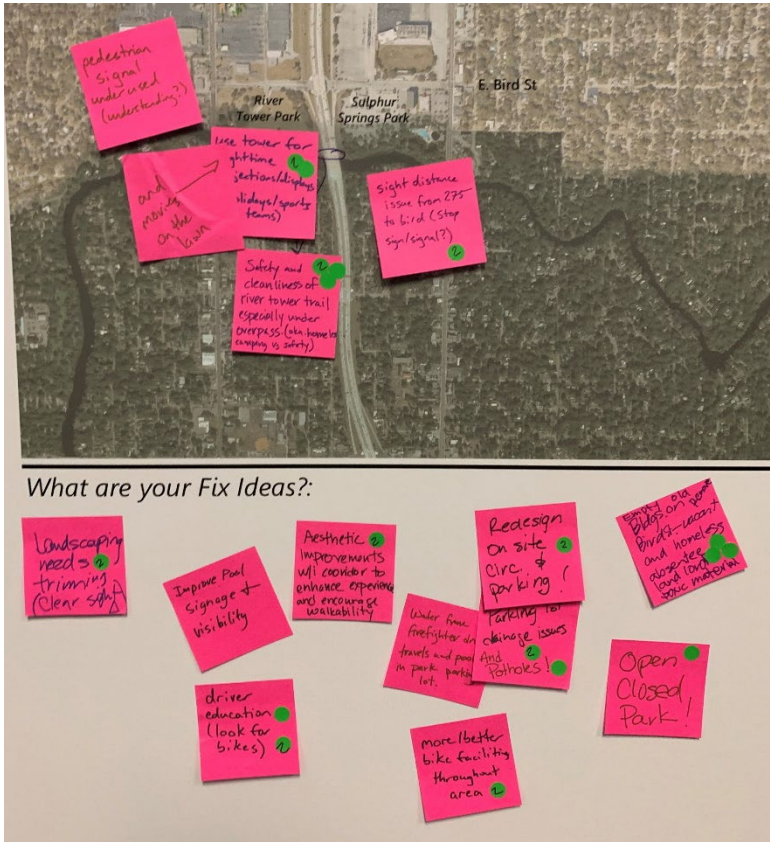
8. Provide walking path from E. Bird Street to Sulphur Springs Park (Idea A). Add curb, gutter and sidewalk along E. Bird Street between N. Florida Avenue and N. Nebraska Avenue, and either provide on-street buffered bike lanes or a 12-foot side path to better connect to future Bus Rapid Transit (optimized bus routes) on N. Florida Avenue. This improvement should be coordinated with Safe Access Strategies 6 and 15. (City of Tampa and FDOT) ●●●●●

9. Work with the Florida Dept. of Transportation to improve circulation through interchange area for pedestrians and cyclists along E. Bird Street (***Idea D***; also see Safe Street Strategy 8). There is currently excess capacity for vehicle travel, and the roadway is designed to promote high-speed vehicle travel. Eliminating some excess turn capacity and realigning pedestrian crossings would encourage slower vehicle travel and improve pedestrian safety outcomes. (City of Tampa and FDOT) ●●●●●

10. Provide a walkway route from E. Bird Street to River Tower Park that does not require walking in roadway (Idea E). There is not a designated pedestrian path of travel from E. Bird Street to River Tower Park, which may discourage people from accessing the park. (City of Tampa) ●●●●●

11. Construct sidewalks on at least one side of most streets, providing marked crosswalks at regular intervals with street lighting (Idea F). Within the area south of Waters Avenue, east of Nebraska Avenue and north of the river, there are not consistent sidewalks, street lighting or marked crosswalks. Given the urban context and proximity to the park and other destinations, sidewalks are appropriate for at least one side if not both sides of streets in this area. While unmarked crosswalks are at most intersections, most people do not understand that there is a legal crossing at all intersections, unless specifically prohibited. (City of Tampa) ●●●●●●

12. Relocate bus stops so they are positioned conveniently near marked crosswalks or install a pedestrian crossing (Idea G). Some transit stops on high-volume and high-speed roadways are not located near marked and controlled crossings, resulting in mid-block crossings where they might not be desirable as people access transit. Co-locating transit stops with marked crossings can make transit a more viable choice of transportation for some people. (HART and City of Tampa) ●●



Additional Fix Ideas that were Incorporated

13. Install raised crosswalks (like a speed hump across the roadway) with rectangular rapid flashing beacons (RRFB) at regular intervals that also consider the location of bus stops (Idea H). Along Waters Avenue, east of N. Nebraska Avenue, there is a lack of consistent marked crossings, and people drive in excess of the posted speed limit. With a school and single-family residences along the corridor, there are opportunities to improve access to the school as well as area parks. (City of Tampa) ●●●

14. Install high visibility crosswalks across the "high-speed" turn lanes that run parallel to I-275 at Waters Avenue and evaluate potential to slow traffic (Idea J). Similar to the freeway ramps on E. Bird Street, the roadway in this area was designed to prioritize high speed vehicle travel to I-275. (FDOT and City of Tampa) ●●●●

15. Provide a walking connection to River Tower Park from N. Florida Avenue (Idea K). There are few ways that someone can access the park on foot, in a wheelchair, or on a bicycle from the surrounding street system. This improvement should be coordinated with Safe Access Strategies 6 and 12. (City of Tampa) ●●●●●●

16. Increase lighting levels in the area to provide a consistent level of lighting along streets, with a focus on intersections and roadway crossing locations ***(Area Wide)***. Insufficient lighting for overall safety and transportation safety was identified as a concern by many residents. (City of Tampa)

17. Upgrade all transportation facilities for accessibility (Area Wide). Many of the transportation facilities in the area do not meet current Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards. Required upgrades to the facilities provide opportunities to provide additional enhancements that not only benefit those with disabilities, but everyone who lives in the neighborhood. Curb ramp improvements benefit those in a wheelchair, but also help people who might have small children in strollers or use other micro-mobility devices, like scooters. (City of Tampa) ●●●

18. Provide a walking connection to River Cove Park* along Grant Avenue and East River Cove Avenue *(Idea M). This Safe Access Strategy was added in response to feedback from the Stakeholder Group. People often walk in the street to connect from Sulphur Springs Park and other locations to access River Cove Park. There is a plan to expand activities at River Cove Park and sidewalk connections would encourage more people to walk there. Closure of Grant Avenue at Nebraska Avenue should be considered to reduce conflicts along Nebraska Avenue. (City of Tampa)

E. Signals

While only one specific stand-alone strategy was identified in this category, it is expected that as Safe Access Strategies are refined, signal strategies would be incorporated, including considerations for reduced cycle lengths along N. Florida Avenue and N. Nebraska Avenue to decrease the delay for people waiting to cross the street.

19. Evaluate signal timing strategies to reduce red light running and conflicts between roadway users (Area Wide). This Safe Access Strategy was added in response to feedback from the Stakeholder Group. A high frequency of red-light running and people driving making unsafe turning movements on redlights were noted from Stakeholders. Evaluating and implementing signal timing and phasing strategies could reduce the frequency of red-light running and right-turn on red movements that conflict with other roadway users could improve transportation safety outcomes. (City of Tampa and FDOT)

F. Signing and Striping

While only one specific stand-alone strategy was identified in this category, it is expected that as Safe Access Strategies are refined, signing and striping strategies would be incorporated, such as advance

stop bars at controlled locations to increase visibility of people crossing the street, upgraded roadway striping to enhance visibility, and improved wayfinding to help people navigate the area.

20. Paint Conflict Zones (Area Wide). (Hillsborough County, TPO and FDOT). This Safe Access Strategy was added in response to community feedback. Evaluate the use of green paint in bicycle lanes and conflict zones with a special emphasis on roadways with bike lanes connecting to the trail and other area parks and schools.

G. Other

Several strategies were identified that fall into the other category.

21. Lower speed limit on all residential streets to 25 mph (Area Wide). The City of Tampa plans to lower the speed limits on all residential streets within the City. Lowering speed limits should also be done in concert with other design changes to reinforce lower design speeds. Many of the Safe Access Strategies identified aim to reduce the speeds of people driving to a more reasonable level given the residential context of the neighborhood surrounding the park. (City of Tampa) ●●●

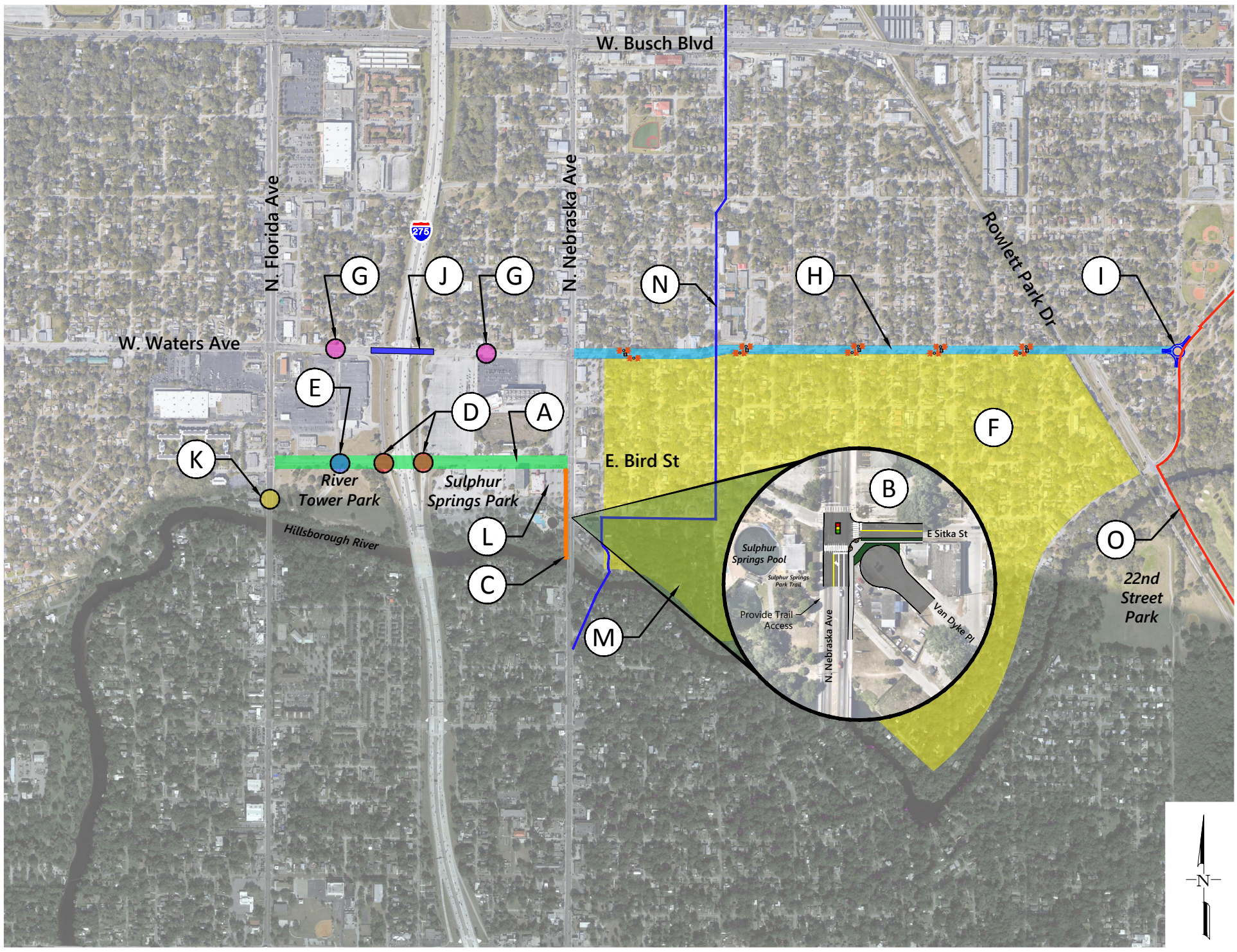
22. Work with HART to increase bus service frequency to area to improve mobility options (Area Wide) for neighborhood residents. While transit is provided to the area, it is not frequent and does not serve residents' needs well. Improving the frequency of transit service coupled with other projects that improve walking connections could improve mobility options for many residents of the area. (HART) ●●●

23. Work with HART to provide additional transit amenities in the area, including bus shelters and stops co-located with marked and potentially protected pedestrian crossings (Area Wide). Some bus stops in the area are lacking amenities that could improve the ridership experience for area residents. (HART, FDOT, and City of Tampa) ●

24. Lower speed limits on N. Florida Avenue and N. Nebraska Avenue to 35 mph in conjunction with signal timing strategies and other countermeasures, such as narrowing lane widths and reducing curb radii to reduce pedestrian crossing distance (Area Wide). Prevailing travel speeds along the corridor are less than 35 miles per hour during peak periods, indicating that there is an opportunity to reduce the speed limits along with the application of engineering countermeasures to improve safety outcomes at all times of day. (FDOT and City of Tampa) ●●●

25. Prioritize Park Connections in Future Transit Oriented Development Plans (Area Wide). This Safe Access Strategy was added in response to feedback from the Stakeholder Group. There are opportunities to develop parcels in the vicinity of Sulphur Springs and River Tower Park, especially as transit capacity and frequency is increased along N. Florida Avenue. As the parcels redevelop, bicycling and walking connections to the parks should be prioritized.

SAFE ACCESS TO PARKS



Preliminary Fix Ideas for Consideration:

(A) Provide walking path from E. Bird Street to Sulphur Springs Park. Add curb, gutter and sidewalk along E. Bird Street between N. Florida Avenue and N. Nebraska Avenue, and either provide on-street buffered bike lanes or a 12-foot side path to better connect to future Bus Rapid Transit (optimized bus routes) on N. Florida Avenue.

(B) Convert Van Dyke Place to a cul-de-sac to provide safer pedestrian access across N. Nebraska Avenue. Provide access to Sulphur Springs Park Trail. (See inset map).

(C) Provide curb and gutter (for better vehicle-pedestrian separation), and relocate utilities outside of the walking path to improve access and improve the comfort for people walking.

(D) Work with the Florida Dept. of Transportation to improve circulation through interchange area for pedestrians and cyclists (see Fix Idea 'A').

(E) Provide a walkway route from E. Bird Street to River Tower Park that does not require walking in roadway.

(F) Construct sidewalks on at least one side of most streets, providing marked crosswalks at regular intervals with street lighting.

(G) Relocate bus stops to so they are positioned conveniently near marked crosswalks, or install a pedestrian crossing.

(H) Install raised crosswalks (like a speed hump across the roadway) with rectangular rapid flashing beacons (RRFB) at regular intervals that also consider the location of bus stops.

(I) Evaluate the potential for a roundabout at Waters Avenue and 22nd Street / East Riverhills Drive.

(J) Install high visibility crosswalks across the "high-speed" turn lanes that run parallel to I-275, and evaluate potential to slow traffic.

(K) Provide a walking connection to River Tower Park from N. Florida Avenue.

(L) Redesign on-site circulation and parking areas to prioritize walking and biking to the pool and park, as well as address existing drainage issues that result in standing water in the parking area.

(M) Construct sidewalk connecting River Cove Park to Nebraska Avenue; evaluate potential to close grant street to provide enhanced connection.

(N) Proposed USF Green ARTery Trail Alignment - Alternative 1

(O) Proposed USF Green ARTery Trail Alignment - Alternative 3

Area Wide Fix Ideas to Consider:

- Lower speed limit on all residential streets to 25 mph.
- Develop and implement neighborhood traffic calming program to strategically place speed humps, curb extensions, traffic circles, and other physical devices to slow down drivers.
- Provide advisory bike lanes on low volume neighborhood streets to prioritize bicycle travel where the community wants it. (Picture bike lanes on both sides of the road with vehicles sharing the middle at low speeds.)
- Work with HART to increase bus service frequency to area to improve mobility options for neighborhood residents.
- Work with HART to provide additional transit amenities in the area, including bus shelters and stops co-located with marked and potentially protected pedestrian crossings.
- Upgrade all transportation facilities for accessibility.
- Lower speed limits on N. Florida Avenue and N. Nebraska Avenue to 35 mph in conjunction with signal timing strategies and other countermeasures, such as narrowing lane widths and reducing curb radii, to reduce pedestrian crossing distance.
- Prioritize connections to the future Green ARTery trail sections in the area.
- Increase lighting levels in the area to provide a consistent level of lighting along streets, with a focus on intersections and roadway crossing locations.
- Prioritize park connections in future transit oriented development plans.
- Evaluate the use of green paint in bicycle lanes and conflict zones with a special emphasis on roadways with bike lanes connecting to the trail and other area parks and schools.
- Review and adjust signal timing and phasing at all intersections on major corridors with a focus on reducing red-light running. Consider no right-turn on red prohibitions at major intersections around the park.

NOTE: ALL PROPOSED CONSIDERATIONS WILL REQUIRE EXTENSIVE DATA COLLECTION, EVALUATION AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Figure 2

Sulphur Springs

Hillsborough TPO
Transportation
Planning Organization

Jan 12, 2022

IV. How to Guide

The Hillsborough TPO conducted this Safe Access to Parks pilot project to identify a process that can be replicated by other agencies in Hillsborough County. The following provides information related to the process with an estimate of the expected level of effort per park location. Some of the materials prepared as a part of the pilot process can support additional park locations, such as the ranked list of park locations and the countermeasure toolbox.

A. Select Park Location

As a part of the pilot process, evaluation criteria that focused on transportation safety and equity were developed and a numerical score was assigned to each park location in the County. Understanding who would benefit from park access improvements and determining if there have there been area improvements recently can help in the finalization of a study park. Other factors to consider include community feedback and ability to combine with other projects to maximize potential benefit.

B. Existing Conditions Assessment

Understanding the transportation context around and connecting to the park location is important to understand barriers to park access. The existing conditions assessment should include the following elements:

- Description of the park and any passive or active uses
- Description of the surrounding transportation system, including connecting roadways, transit, presence/absence of facilities for people walking and bicycling, barriers to park access
- Transportation system assessment including collision review and if available, traffic volumes and vehicle travel speed data
- A field review should be conducted, preferable with multiple members of the evaluation team to gain additional insights

C. Public Outreach

Public outreach can include a variety of approaches, including establishing a Stakeholder Group to provide feedback at various project stages, soliciting feedback from members of the public in-person and online, and sharing project information with elected officials. Engaging with the community can help identify challenges that are not readily apparent in the data and help to refine potential countermeasures such that there is confidence that they could be supported for implementation.

D. Identify Potential Countermeasures

Based on the existing conditions assessment and feedback from the public, the countermeasure toolbox developed as a part of this project should be used as a starting point to identify potential Safe Access to Parks strategies. A range of potential improvements is likely to be identified, with some that could be implemented in the near-term, such strategies that include enhanced paint and signs. Many strategies that will be the most effective, such as constructing new sidewalks, and adding separated bicycle facilities, will likely take time to design, secure funding, and construct.

E. Next Steps

This pilot project ends with the identification of countermeasures for each of the park locations selected for inclusion in the study. As the Hillsborough TPO does not have the jurisdiction to implement identified improvements, the next steps include working with the appropriate jurisdiction or agency partner to advance some of the fix-it ideas into more detailed planning studies and ultimately a capital improvement plan/work program. This pilot process and supporting documents can also be used to help secure additional funding, such as grants, that could be used to advance specific fix-it projects.

F. Level of Effort

It is expected that future Safe Access to Parks evaluations would be advanced by the Hillsborough TPO, Hillsborough County, City of Tampa, City of Temple Terrace and City of Plant City. Some agencies may opt to lead the studies in-house while others may opt to use outside support. Depending on the type of park, extent of the study area, and availability of data, the level of effort for outside support is estimated in the range of 100 to 200 hours per park, with some potential for economies of scale should multiple parks be included in a single study.

Table 2: Online Map Comments

Comment Type	Votes[1]	Comment
Walk – People driving not yielding to people walking		We need more sidewalks and crosswalks in this neighborhood because we have a lot of people who walk/bicycle as their primary mode of transportation combined with a lot of speeders. It's an accident waiting to happen.
Walk – People driving not yielding to people walking	1	Crosswalk light could be longer when button is pressed. This intersection is notorious for cars running the light, especially in the mornings.
Walk – Inadequate, missing, or unsafe crosswalks	1	Children on bikes hang out on this corner and up and down this busy road.
Walk – Inadequate, missing, or unsafe crosswalks		Lack of crosswalks across large driveways, cars pulling in and out off Nebraska way too fast and taking up entire sidewalk.
Walk – Inadequate, missing, or unsafe crosswalks	1	The sidewalk is super short right here and only exists in front of 2 houses. It starts on the corner lot house and ends at 10th and doesn't pick back up until the park on the other side of the street. There's a couple blocks before the sidewalk and a couple blocks after it with no sidewalk at all and it feels unsafe when walking the dog to the park, especially with the speeders in the neighborhood driving right next to you.
Walk – Inadequate or missing sidewalks	1	No sidewalks at all here in this neighborhood, it is very dangerous for our kids who want to play outside
Walk – Inadequate or missing sidewalks	2	We need speed bumps because people go very fast down this road and do not respect that we have children that want to play outside (which we can't let them since there is not even a sidewalk for them to be able to walk on or ride their bikes safely).
Walk – Inadequate or missing sidewalks		This entire area, from Waters to Florida to Yukon to N. Seminole, is missing sidewalks, bike lanes and stop signs. These blocks are home to a LOT of children who walk and bike daily in the road because of a lack of facilities.
Walk – Inadequate or missing sidewalks	1	Lack of sidewalks, large paved driveways
Transit – There is not a place to wait for the bus		There is no protection at this bus stop from the sun or rain. During the summer, it is very uncomfortable to wait for the bus here.

Table 2: Online Map Comments

Comment Type	Votes[1]	Comment
Roadway Operations – People drive too fast		A lot of speeders down these roads: especially Waters
Roadway Operations – People drive too fast		I witnessed a large vehicle blast through this area and making a turn in the neighborhood without even slowing down.
Roadway Operations – People drive too fast		Very fast cars driving right next to sidewalks.
Roadway Operations – People drive too fast	1	People run the light on Sitka and Nebraska often. The light maybe should have a slight pause before changing to green. And the crosswalk signal could be slightly longer when button is pressed.
Lighting - Insufficient street lighting that make it uncomfortable to walk or bike at night	1	We need better street lights in all of Sulphur Springs for safety and to illuminate the bike lanes for drivers.
Lighting - Insufficient street lighting that make it uncomfortable to walk or bike at night	1	The lights here are very weak. We need more lighting to feel safer in this neighborhood.
Lighting - Insufficient street lighting that make it uncomfortable to walk or bike at night	1	This park by the public pool is so incredibly dark for no reason. I can't walk my dog in the morning before work for safety reasons, it's that dark. There's lights on premises but I never see them on. It's a shame because I like the park during the day. Please install lights for safe morning walks. Thank you.
Lighting - Insufficient street lighting that make it uncomfortable to walk or bike at night	1	I'm sure the city is aware of the terrible purple lighting plaguing many neighborhoods in Tampa. Sulphur springs also has many of these lights, making it too dark at night. Hopefully they can be replaced in the near future.

Table 2: Online Map Comments

Comment Type	Votes[1]	Comment
Bike – Inadequate or missing bikeways (trails, bike lanes, etc)	1	We need buffered bike lanes in this area- it is dangerous to ride on the street with cars; especially because there are so many speeders.
Bike – Inadequate or missing bikeways (trails, bike lanes, etc)		We need more bike lanes! I ride my bike everywhere and it would make me feel more comfortable and safe
Bike – Inadequate or missing bikeways (trails, bike lanes, etc)	1	Lack of safe bike lanes for bikers throughout this neighborhood
Roadway Operations – People drive too fast		lack of bike lanes; particularly sad because it's right next to a transit center and shopping center and a neighborhood where a lot of kids bike
Roadway Operations – People drive too fast		roadway sign down

Notes:
1. Users were given the option to vote for, or agree with, other users' comments.
Source: Fehr & Peers, 2021