

# Bike-Ped NEWS

The Newspaper of the Hillsborough County  
Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee



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## MAKING CONNECTIONS IN NORTH HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

Do you remember playing “connect the dots” to make a picture? Well, a series of bicycle/pedestrian projects are underway to complete another kind of picture. These projects will link existing trails and connect cyclists with neighborhoods, parks, schools, stores and other destinations.

Phase II of the Upper Tampa Bay Trail, scheduled to open in May 2004, will add four miles of paved trail along Rocky Creek and Drainage Channel “A.” Extending south from the existing trail, which runs from Peterson Road Park to Linebaugh Ave, Phase II will bring the trail as far as Memorial Highway. Three small bridges over Drainage Channel “A,” scheduled to open in 2005, will give neighborhoods across the water access to the trail.



*The Gunn Highway Overpass, scheduled to open in November, will provide safe crossing over Gunn Highway.*

The first bike/pedestrian overpass on the Upper Tampa Bay Trail is scheduled to open this November. Located just west of the Veteran’s Expressway, the overpass will provide safe crossing of Gunn Highway.

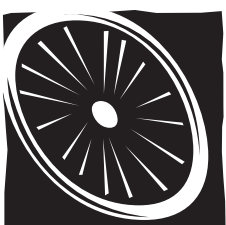
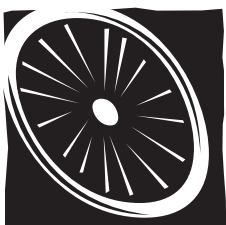
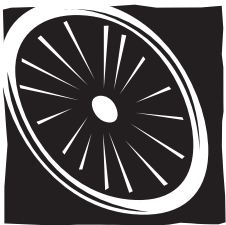
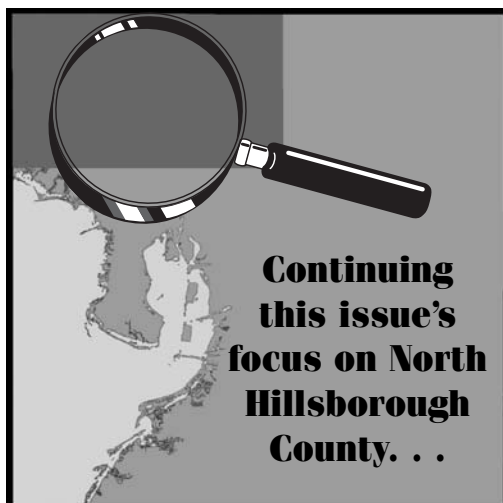
Not yet scheduled for construction is Phase IV of the Upper Tampa Bay Trail, connecting Peterson Road Park to the Sun-coast Parkway Trail. When this link is complete, 58 miles of continuous paved trail will traverse three counties. For more information on the Upper Tampa Bay Trail, contact **Charner Reese** at (813) 272-5920.

The recently completed four-mile,

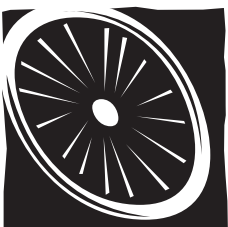
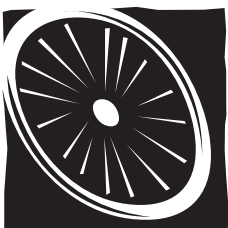
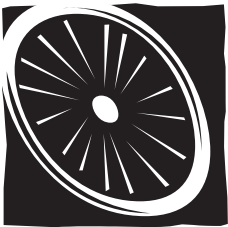
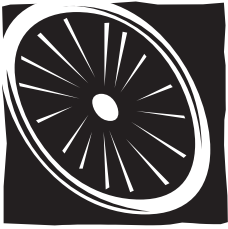
15-foot wide Bruce B. Downs Trail connects shopping and housing developments along Bruce B. Downs Boulevard with an entrance to Flatwoods Trail in Flatwoods Park. Crossing Bruce B. Downs Boulevard will be more challenging when it is widened from four lanes to eight, and the FDOT is considering pedestrian overpasses at three locations. But overpasses are expensive, and people frequently walk across roads even when an overpass is available. The BPAC and the MPO’s Citizens Advisory Committee are exploring other options, such as underpasses or enhanced crosswalks.

Though they are not marked as bike lanes, the wider, paved shoulders included in a repaving of Lutz Lake Fern Road make an important east-west connection. Wide

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**Continuing this issue’s focus on North Hillsborough County. . .**



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paved shoulders, which give cyclists room on rural roads, are also present on Gunn Highway. Nearby in Pinellas County, Tarpon Springs Road has designated bike lanes. Together, Gunn, Tarpon Springs, and Lutz Lake Fern make a bike connection between the Upper Tampa Bay Trail, the Suncoast Parkway Trail, and the bike routes of Pinellas County.

The first phase of the Lutz Lake Fern repaving, from Dale Mabry west to the Boulevard of the Roses, was completed in August 2003. The next phase, from the Boulevard of the Roses to Gunn Highway, will be completed as funds become available. For further information on this project and the Bruce B. Downs Trail, contact **Gena Torres** at (813) 273-3774, ext. 357.

### **A KINDER, GENTLER 22ND STREET**

22nd Street due west of the University of South Florida is a well-traveled two-lane road passing by houses, apartments, a community center, new schools, and a shopping mall, among other destinations. The subject of a recent revitalization study and master plan, the road is now slated for significant enhancements between the University Mall and Bearss Avenue.

Construction of the enhancements, including left turn lanes, center median, improved stormwater drainage and curbs, is scheduled to begin in 2006. Wider sidewalks, on-street parking, crosswalks, streetlights, and street furniture (such as benches) will contribute to a more pedestrian-friendly environment. The 22nd Street Master Plan also proposes mixed use or "Traditional Neighborhood Development" rezoning to encourage new development with a walkable, "Main Street" feel.

There are bicycle lanes on the road today and the road is heavily used by cyclists, according to USF's Center for Urban Transportation Research. Concerns about cyclists colliding with buses and with the opening doors of cars parked in the new on-street parking led planners to reconsider the bike lanes. Instead, the reconstructed road will make room for cyclists in wider lanes shared with motor vehicles, and the traffic speed will be lowered to 25 miles per hour. Making the road more walkable should also help to calm traffic, improving conditions for cycling.

The preliminary engineering study for the road enhancements will be completed in spring 2004, with zoning changes to follow. For more information, contact **Michael Callahan** at (813) 276-8387.

### **COMMUTER CORNER**

Chris Fuller is no rookie to the often-hectic city streets. The fact that he doesn't own a car doesn't deter him from the 11-mile each-way daily trip between his home in South Tampa and his job in the Sabal Park area. A cycling commuter on and off for ten years, Chris sometimes augments his mobility with HARTline's Bikes on Buses program. He also feels fortunate to work for a company that provides showers for employee use.

Being sideswiped by a cement mixer might make some people nervous and a little street-shy, but this cyclist is still on the road. Fortunately, he was not injured, but the incident strengthened Chris' support for off-road trails. Chris values exercise and stress reduction, and feels friendlier roads would help promote cycling and walking as daily activities. Dedicated bike lanes and programs to educate drivers would make his ride safer and more enjoyable.

