

scenic Views

The Tamiami Trail Scenic Highway—Windows to Gulf Coast Waters
Corridor Management Entity

City of Bradenton, Manatee County, North Port, Palmetto, City of Sarasota, Sarasota County, City of Venice

Welcome!

When the Scenic Highway Program was first introduced, I recall seeing a letter "to the editor" of a local newspaper, in which the writer complained the program was a way of having another sign litter our roads. How wrong that individual was!

The Tamiami Trail Scenic Highway Corridor Management Entity has been working diligently with representatives from several municipal entities, to identify projects that will enhance and improve our communities. Given the economic times in which we find ourselves, these projects and the funding available to complete them, provide major opportunities we can't afford to pass by.

It is our intent to make sure you are aware of what this group is planning and accomplishing so as to encourage your participation and earn your support. We welcome your questions, feedback and participation as they are essential to our mutual success.

Toward that end, this *newsletter* will be issued quarterly and will include news from each of the member entities and updates on projects. The newsletter will be circulated among County and City Officials, neighborhood groups, the Chambers of Commerce, Florida Department Of Transportation, Visitor's Bureaus and others.

We hope you will be on the look-out for the next edition of our newsletter. Your support of our efforts will be a tremendous help in achieving great things for our communities.

Thank you.

Hugo Mazzoli, Chairman

*"Preserving, protecting and enhancing
valuable historical and
cultural resources."*



August 2009

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The Tamiami Trail Scenic Highway Program began as a sponsored program of the Florida Department of Transportation. In December 2003, the length of Tamiami Trail (U.S. 41) through Sarasota and Manatee Counties was officially designated a Florida Scenic Highway.

Where did it all start?

Shortly after the designation was granted, a Corridor Management Entity (CME) was assembled to oversee various initiatives.

The CME is tasked generally with protecting, preserving and enhancing the Tamiami Trail and its intrinsic resources. This is to be accomplished through the identification of educational and collaborative activities with many of the cultural and educational institutions in the area, seeking grant funding for projects, and working with other Scenic Highway groups.

The program is coordinated through the Sarasota/Manatee Metropolitan Planning Organization.

The Tamiami Trail begins in the City of North Port and extends nearly 70 miles north to the Hillsborough/Manatee border.

The City of Sarasota

In 2006-2007, the City of Sarasota held several public and stakeholder meetings to talk about signage design and a **Wayfinding Master Plan** for the City of Sarasota.

At present, the City lacks a cohesive sign design to direct visitors to its downtown area, its many tourist destinations, districts and public areas of interest.

The purpose of the Wayfinding Project is to recommend both a sign design and a Wayfinding Master Plan program for signage locations / messages for the entire City of Sarasota.



On June 22, 2009, the City's Wayfinding consultant presented the signage design recommendation to the City Commission. The public was invited to attend the meeting. Programming locations for these signs will follow next fall. For additional information, please contact Dr. Clifford Smith, Senior Planner, City of Sarasota, at (941) 365-2200 x 4361.

Programming locations for these signs will follow in Fall 2009.

Bayfront Connectivity Study

In November 2008, the City of Sarasota sponsored a charrette to design improvements to Tamiami Trail in the City's downtown area.

Over 400 people participated in that effort to make Tamiami Trail more pedestrian-friendly and efficient for all users. One of the major recommendations of the charrette final report was the creation of five (possibly six) modern roundabouts on the Tamiami Trail for the purpose of slowing traffic and making the roadway easier and safer for pedestrians to cross.

A City Commission Workshop was held on Tuesday, June 16, 2009 to review the final study recommendations along with transportation modeling results for the proposed roundabouts.

For additional information, please contact Susan Montgomery, Transportation Planner, City of Sarasota, at (941) 365-2200 x 4368.

NATIONAL ARBOR DAY TREE PLANTINGS—TAMIAMI TRAIL SCENIC HIGHWAY



In Manatee County a tree canopy was added to enhance the Tamiami Trail Scenic Highway for 2009 National Arbor Day events coordinated by **Keep Manatee Beautiful**. The Florida Division of Forestry and local governments celebrate this on the last Friday in April annually, because they understand the crucial role of trees in the long-term health, beauty and vitality of any thriving community by improving quality of life, increasing property values and increasing economic stability by attracting businesses and tourists.

The City of Palmetto planted a live oak along with a commemorative plaque from **Keep Manatee Beautiful** at Palmetto Estuary Preserve on the northwest side of the U.S. 41 De Soto Bridge.



City of Bradenton officials and staff, Tree and Land Preservation Board members and residents held a ceremony with the Manatee Chamber of Commerce for 14 memorial trees (black olives, winged elms, live oaks) placed at the city's Waterfront Park parking lot beside the new Manatee Players on 3rd Ave. W. between U.S. 41 and 9th St. W.

The 14th St. W. Community Redevelopment Agency and Manatee Co. Neighborhood Services Dept. planted 37 trees (black olives, yellow elders, live oaks, Simpson's stoppers) and various shrubs in medians on Bus. 41 between 30th Ave. W. and Cortez.



The Manatee County Port Authority held a ribbon-cutting of the new landscaping at its entrances on U.S. 41 N. at South Dock Street.

North Port

North Port community pride will get a big, very visible boost this fall, when a handsome new gateway entrance sign will grace the northbound U.S. 41 entrance to North Port at the City's southern boundary. Work has begun and project completion is anticipated by early fall.

The gateway will be anchored by a 12-foot-tall, eight-foot-square Mediterranean style tower with a clay tile roof. A 12-foot-long sign will greet travelers with the words, "The City of North Port Welcomes You." The stucco walls of the sign and tower will be painted pastel gold and white, and a looped extension of the existing sidewalk will pass through the tower's arched sides.

U.S. 41 redevelopment funds provided by Sarasota County will cover the entire \$55,000 cost of the project.

Palmetto

The City of Palmetto has applied for grant funding through the MPO for the installation of imprinted crosswalks at four high volume pedestrian intersections, on public right-of-ways within the City.

This project will not only provide a safer means of travel for the City's residents but will also add aesthetic beautification to the Tamiami Trail which makes its way right through the heart of Palmetto.

By linking existing non-continuous sidewalks and bike paths, the City will be providing a continuous, modern and multi-modal travel system. This project will also improve the beauty, safety, and efficiency of the City and the current sidewalk system. The projects projected cost is \$105,300.00.



City of Bradenton

- ✳ Way finding update – There are five sign types being installed: Kiosks, Pedestrian Directionals, Destinations, City Vehicular and FDOT Vehicular. Pedestrian Directional's and the Destination signs are already installed with another 108 signs in the pipeline. These will be followed by the Kiosks and then both vehicular type signs. We anticipate the completion of this project by the end of July.
- ✳ The Tamiami Trail Taskforce continues to meet every other month allowing the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) and City department personnel to come together with the business owners, stake holders and citizens in an effort to keep all parties current on revitalization projects presented by the Tamiami Trail Revitalization Strategy. More information on the plan is available at www.ddabradenton.com
- ✳ The Realize Bradenton (RB) Cultural Plan has been enthusiastically received and endorsed by: City of Bradenton, Bradenton DDA, Manatee County, Manatee Players, Art Center Manatee, South Florida Museum and the Manatee County Historical Commission.

Presentations are forthcoming to the Manatee Tourist Development Council (August), School District of Manatee County (TBD), Village of the Arts (July), and Manatee Cultural Alliance (July).

As part of DDA responsibilities under the plan, a public art advisory board (PAAB) has been established, made up of RB task force members. The DDA will announce this month the hiring of Ann Wykell, most recently the manager of cultural affairs and international relations for the City of St. Petersburg, as its Public Art Coordinator. Ann and the PAAB will implement the public art section of RB in cooperation with the RB Board.

The Realize Bradenton movement has organized into a board of directors, which is pursuing 501c3 status. This Board includes

- a. 7 -person executive committee, 23-slot board of directors with multiple sectors and entities on board.
 - b. An advisory council (made up of RB steering committee members not on the board).
 - c. Nine committees working on various matter
- ✳ The private sector's Artisan Avenue concept, with leadership from Mayor Poston, has been warmly received by both the Bradenton City Council and the Manatee County Commission. The DDA is working with Rick Fawley to do some necessary planning work to establish full project timeline and budget.

Sarasota & Manatee Counties

- ✳ Proposed installation of enhanced pedestrian crossing "material" at major intersections along the bay front, and major hospital facilities (Manatee & Sarasota).
- ✳ Explore the use of solar street lights for specific applications (parks, pedestrian rest areas, etc.)
- ✳ Ensuring routine inspections are conducted of adult entertainment establishments as mandated by existing Sarasota and Manatee County ordinances.
- ✳ Enhancement to the current Crosley Museum sign. An easement has been granted by the current owner of the University Row site as a location for the new sign.
- ✳ Reviewing and supporting median plans for U.S.41 by the Sarasota-Manatee USF campus. This can serve as a major visual enhancement to what the campus has already brought to the area, provide positive impacts on traffic, and perhaps be the start of a striking gateway for both Counties.
- ✳ Sarasota County and Manatee County Area Transit organizations agreed to including a Scenic Trail Map on bus shelters. Work continues on design and graphics.
- ✳ A review of environmentally contaminated sites has begun aimed at identifying potential uses and next steps to converting them for useful purposes.

**Interested in the
Scenic Highway Program?**

**Contact: Robert M. Herrington,
Sarasota/Manatee MPO,
Office: 941-359-5772 or
bob@mympo.org**

**Tamiami Trail (U.S. Highway 41)
Petroleum Brownfields
Revitalization Initiative**

Recently the Sarasota/Manatee Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), a regional transportation planning agency, authorized the application for a \$1M EPA Brownfields Coalition grant in support of The Tamiami Trail (U.S. Highway 41) Petroleum Brownfields Revitalization Initiative..



The Sarasota/Manatee MPO staff has been working with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and the Tamiami Trail Scenic Highway Corridor Management Entity to identify Petroleum Brownfields along the U.S. 41 corridor for redevelopment. A brownfield is an abandoned or under-used property with an active redevelopment potential that is complicated by either real or perceived environmental contamination. Often, **Petroleum Brownfields** are old abandoned Underground Storage Tanks (USTs), such as gas stations.

In many communities, these vacant Petroleum Brownfields properties represent untapped resources for *economic and community revitalization*. Real estate activities that redevelop, renovate, or remove these eyesores involve investment lending risks.

The goal of the initiative is to identify, assess, and cleanup abandoned petroleum sites which will result into viable redevelopment projects to benefit the surrounding communities. The outcome will be to reuse properties, making for a more vibrant and attractive community.

The targeted communities are those along the Tamiami Trail Scenic Highway route, which extends almost 70 miles within Manatee and Sarasota Counties (Southwest Florida). This corridor includes the cities of Palmetto, Bradenton, Sarasota, Venice and North Port.

For more information, please contact:

Robert M. Herrington, Sarasota/Manatee MPO

ROTHENBACH PARK AT HIGH POINT

Do you know where it is? If you're an "old timer" in Sarasota you probably remember where the old landfill was/IS located. I emphasize IS because the landfill IS still there but has been transformed into one of the most unique, multi-use, beautiful and accessible parks in the county. Something for everyone. In case you aren't familiar with this area, it's very easy to find. Go east to the end of Bee Ridge Road, and continue straight ahead into the 450 acre park.

The recent Grand Opening attracted more than 1,300 people of all ages. Many, many families including bikers, walkers, roller-blades and those who just wanted to see the park. There is a pavilion with kitchen facilities for parties, grills, picnic areas – two playgrounds for little ones with a soft surface reducing the risk of injury. There are about 5 miles of trails, 2 paved – one is 2.8 miles, another 1 mile, as well as several unpaved, through the heavily wooded acres of huge oak hammocks. One of the shorter trails goes around the FP&L solar panel area, which is now part of the power grid. The flora and fauna is well marked so walkers can learn the names of the many varieties. Carrying a bird book might be a good idea as people talk about the many different birds they have seen – some they recognized, others that were not familiar. All buildings and the playgrounds were built with the latest in green, energy saving materials.

At the top of the hill, there is a short, paved landing strip, and a covered open sided building used by the RC Squadron, a local group of remote controlled model airplane enthusiasts. This group donated funds for the construction and the area is not open to the public unless members are present.

The park was named to honor Walt Rothenbach who worked for Sarasota County for 40 years, many as Supervisor of Parks and Recreation, and High Point because it is the highest point of land in the County—98 feet above sea level.

If you visit the park during business hours, you may want to take along some items for the recycle facility located near the entrance of the park. They accept old leftover cans of paint, insecticides, electronic products. etc., and also have a small "store" of useable household items. Everything is free!

Millie Small

CME Members:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Representing</u>	<u>E-mail address</u>
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