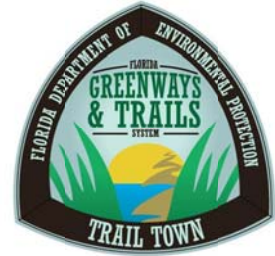


EVERGLADES CITY TRAIL TOWN – One Year Update - February 12, 2020



Everglades City was designated a Trail Town in January 2019 and since our last report in June 2019, the City has continued to make progress in completing the goals for our Trail Town initiatives. The following is a list of what we have accomplished which is the result of the efforts by many in our community, including non-profit organizations, the Mayor and the Everglades City Council and Staff.

New Visitor Center / Trail Town Headquarters:

On February 1, 2020, the City celebrated the Grand Opening of the new Visitor Center and Trail Town Headquarters located across from the historic district at 207 West Broadway in the heart of Everglades City. There were over 100 guests who attended the ribbon cutting ceremony by Mayor Howie Grimm, including U.S. Congressman Mario-Diaz Balart, U.S. Senator Marco Rubio's representative, Collier County Tourist Development Council Executive Director Jack Wert, Everglades City Councilperson Elaine Middelstaedt, Everglades National Park Superintendent Pedro Ramos, OGT Regional Coordinator Katie Bernier and Florida Greenways & Trails Council member Chuck Barrowclough among many others. The Center is open 7 days a week from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.



Signage:

- 1) Maps of Everglades City / Chokoloskee have been installed at the following locations:
 - a) Kiosk on CR29 coming into town
 - b) McLeod Community Park in the center of town

- 2) Trail Town Signs have been installed at the following locations:
 - a) On the “Welcome to Everglades City” sign on CR29 coming into town
 - b) At the boat ramp at the Everglades National Park Gulf Coast Visitor Center in Everglades City
 - c) On the maps at the Kiosk on CR29 and at the Community Park
 - d) Lobby entrance at City Hall
 - e) On the “Welcome to the Everglades” sign at the new Visitor Center / Trail Town Headquarters

- 3) Everglades City will install two new directive blue signs with arrows pointing to the new Visitor Center / Trail Town Headquarters



Bicycle Amenities:

- 1) Two new bicycle rental companies have opened – *Tour the Glades* and *Island Ryders*
- 2) A “Dolphin” Bike Rack & a Dero Bike Repair Station have been installed at McLeod Community Park
- 3) Eight new bicycle racks were distributed to area restaurants, hotels, and businesses



Other Improvements:

- 1) New street signs and speed limit signs were installed throughout town with 15 mph approaching the school, 25 mph in all residential areas and downtown Everglades City, and 40 mph on the main road coming into town CR29/Collier Blvd.
- 2) The local Lion’s Club raised funds to landscape McLeod Community Park with native plants and purchase new playground equipment for the children of residents and visitors.



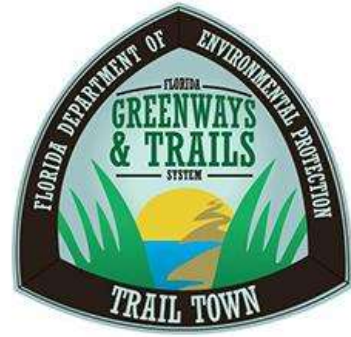
- 3) A Naples Boy Scout troop cleaned out the historic goldfish pond which was built by Barron Collier on West Broadway; it is being refurbished as an outside art project.
- 4) Many businesses have made landscaping improvements, and a new garden club has been established which will assist residents and businesses in setting up raised gardens which will benefit the residents and the community. Residents are being encouraged to prepare whole foods and establish healthier life styles.
- 5) The 1st Annual Sprint Triathlon/Duathlon was held on February 1, 2020, to encourage more physical exercise. Many residents participated in this event which was sponsored by several Collier County bicycle and running clubs in coordination with local representatives. Proceeds from the event will be used to benefit the local community.
- 6) A Bicycle/Pedestrian Committee was organized to make recommendations to the City and to the Collier MPO for road improvements to benefit cyclists and pedestrians.
- 7) Economic Development progress in Everglades City - Within the past six months, several private enterprises have invested in major renovations and improvements:
 - a) The Everglades Fishing Company purchased the Marathon Gas Station and expanded its services to include a bait and tackle shop and a popular new restaurant Nely's Corner.
 - b) The Oyster House Restaurant & Glades Haven Store (across from the Everglades National Park), damaged by Hurricane Irma in 2017 and left abandoned for two years, were recently purchased and now undergoing major renovations.
 - c) A new pizza and sandwich restaurant (Hole in the Wall Pizza) opened in the Right Choice Supermarket offering a wide variety of Italian dishes.

To be completed:

- 1) New street lights for the entire town -Solar street lights (92) have been approved by the City Council – installation for the first 30 lights should be completed within the next few months; the remaining lights will be installed in stages.
- 2) Bicycle Repair Shop - Bike Repair Station at the Park seems to be sufficient at this time; it is being utilized by residents and visitors and very much appreciated.

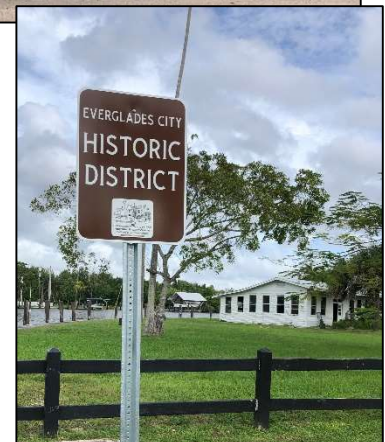
EVERGLADES CITY TRAIL TOWN – Two Year Update – January 12, 2021

Everglades City was designated a Trail Town in January 2019 and a one-year update was submitted on February 12, 2020, with the announcement of the Grand Opening of our new Visitor Information Center / Trail Town Headquarters. After welcoming over 1,600 visitors, the Center had to close in mid-March due to the Covid-19 pandemic and has yet to re-open as positive cases have not declined in Florida. However, Everglades City continues to make great progress in improving the community and at the same time welcoming tourists who come to enjoy the outdoors and the Everglades.



During the past year the following improvements, many listed as goals in our original application, have been completed:

- Businesses are adding landscaping; many restaurants were initially closed during the pandemic but all have since re-opened for the season, primarily with outdoor seating and/or takeout lunches/dinners. Kathy Brock organized several “free plant” sales with the Naples Botanical Gardens; residents and business donated funds which were then given to the Everglades City School. People have been encouraged to plant native trees.
- The City has continued to install new LED solar lighting to replace the historic lampposts that were damaged during Hurricane Irma in 2017. Almost all the lights have been installed which has improved night-time walking and biking conditions.
- The Everglades City Bike/Ped Committee completed an Everglades City Master Plan in August 2020 which was approved by the Everglades City Council and subsequently added to the Collier MPO Bike / Ped Master Plan. The Committee identified immediate bike/ped needs in the City and presented its findings to the City Council which submitted an application to the MPO for the work.
- The Everglades Society for Historic Preservation installed four “Historic District” signs in town to help visitors identify designated historic areas.



- Two new “Visitor Information” signs were installed, one above the map at McLeod Community Park and the other at the kiosk on CR29 approaching town. An “i” for Information was attached to the entrance sign on CR29 directing visitors to the kiosk.



- The County installed new *Share the Road* signs along CR29.
- The Trail Town Committee continues to provide bicycle racks to businesses that request them. More residents and visitors have been biking through town and using the bicycle facilities, including the Bike Repair Station at the Park.



- The local Lions Club has made significant improvements at the Community Park including new playground equipment for the children and new benches. They also refurbished four of the original historic streetlamps and situated them throughout the Park.



EVERGLADES CITY TRAIL TOWN – Three Year Update – August 2022



Everglades City was designated a Florida Trail Town in January 2019, and in January 2020 a new Visitor Information Center and **Trail Town Headquarters** opened for just two months before closing due to the Covid-19 pandemic. In February 2021 it re-opened, again greeting visitors from around the world. Since the last Trail Town update in January 2021, Everglades City has continued to make progress.

In March 2021, the Everglades Society for Historic Preservation, Inc., (ESHP) received as a donation the 1927 historic Bank of Everglades building that was in disrepair from the 2017 Hurricane Irma. ESHP has begun the ambitious task of renovating the building to become the **new Area Visitor Center and Trail Town Headquarters** (www.save-boe.org) which will be an outstanding site for tourists coming to the Everglades to paddle, bike, and hike!

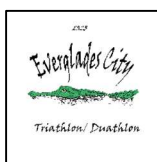


Everglades City Council accepted an award from the Florida Bicycle Association (FBA) for the 2021 Bicycle Friendly Community of the Year.



Bicycle tours in the Everglades are once again being offered during the fall/winter/spring season with both on- and off-road options. This photo was taken while cycling along Loop Road in the Big Cypress National Preserve. These free tours are sponsored by the Friends of the River of Grass Greenway (FROGG) (www.evergladesrogg.org).

Everglades City representative Patty Huff was invited to speak in April at the 2022 Florida Trails Summit, hosted by the Florida Department of Transportation and the Florida Greenways & Trails Foundation in DeBary, Florida.



On January 28, 2023, Everglades City will host the 2nd Annual Sprint Triathlon/Duathlon to encourage more physical exercise. The event will include paddling, biking, and running with proceeds benefiting the local community.