

Neighborhood Circulation

An Introduction to City Streets

Streets can be beautiful places. Buildings and street trees give the space a sense of enclosure. Proper proportions and details create a comfortable space to be in that operates harmoniously together.

Streets are also for mobility, providing a *right-of-way* to get from where we are coming from to where we are going. How a street functions should be based on a continuum, from pure mobility, such as an interstate highway, to a destination itself with strong economic and social functions, such as a pedestrian only shopping street, like Lincoln Road in Miami Beach, for example.

In Downtown neighborhoods, streets must always provide a mix of mobility and placemaking. They need to be great addresses and provide access to businesses and residences. They must also be spaces for socializing, commerce, dining, gathering, vending, and celebrating. In a Downtown, the long-distance travel function of a street should take a backseat to its placemaking function with less focus on moving people through the city and more on being in the city.

Designing and building great streets can be a challenging task, balancing the priorities of many stakeholders and agencies. A great deal of this plan is devoted to designing streets as public spaces worthy of the landscape design heritage of Lake Wales. This section provides guidance on turning streets into spaces where people want to be.

Connecting Pedestrians on Neighborhood Streets

In addition to the bikeways and trails described in the previous pages, future improvements to Lake Wales' neighborhood streets can be undertaken to better support the needs of pedestrians. This will benefit the existing community, and support new development and future residents as well.

All neighborhood streets should have a sidewalk on at least one side of the street; key connectors should have sidewalks on both sides. The map on the next page illustrates existing and potential future sidewalks in the neighborhood, to make a more complete pedestrian network.

Implementation of the Olmsted vision will bring shade trees to Lake Wales' Downtown and neighborhood streets. As described earlier, there are many benefits to shade trees beyond simply aesthetics; this is particularly true in the warm central Florida climate. The map at right illustrates key north/south and east/west connections that can be prioritized first. The siting of street trees will need to be coordinated within available right-of-way space and utilities.

It is not surprising that, given their multiple roles in urban life, streets require and use vast amounts of land. In the United States, from 25 to 35 percent of a city's developed land is likely to be in public right-of-way, mostly streets. If we can develop and design streets so that they are wonderful, fulfilling places to be, community building places, attractive public places for all people of cities and neighborhoods, then we will have successfully designed about 1/3 of the city directly and will have an immense impact on the rest.

- Allan Jacobs,
Great Streets



Proposed Sidewalk Improvements

