

# Local Support



## 4 Local Support

There is strong local support for the designation of the Ridge Scenic Highway. The Corridor Advocacy Group has worked hard to involve local governments, non-profit organizations, civic groups, and local citizens in preparing the Corridor Management Plan.

### Letters of Support

The Corridor Advocacy Group has obtained letters of support from the following organizations:

- Chalet Suzanne
- Frostproof Historical Museum and Library
- Historic Lake Wales Society
- Lake of the Hills Community Club
- Lake Wales Lions Club
- Lake Wales Police Department
- Northeast Polk County Historical Society
- Ridge Audubon Society
- The Depot - Lake Wales Museum and Cultural Center

The following corridor residents have also submitted letters of support to the Corridor Advocacy Group:

- Bart Aleck, Little Market, Lake Pierce
- Conrad Lantz and Delores Garrett, South Star Hills
- Dennis Coder, Drift In Resort, Lake Pierce
- Kathleen and Virgil Powell, Lake Pierce
- Patricia Waters, Lake Pierce
- Richard Huxtable and Diane Pierce Huxtable, Artist and Resident, Lake Pierce
- Robert Connors, La Bella Torre and Coldwell Banker, Lake Wales
- Robert Kirk, Kirk Country Store, Lake Pierce
- Ted and Shirley Nelson, Frostproof
- Theresa Collins and Marty Keller, Lake Pierce
- Tim Powell, Powells Landscape and Tree Service, Lake Pierce

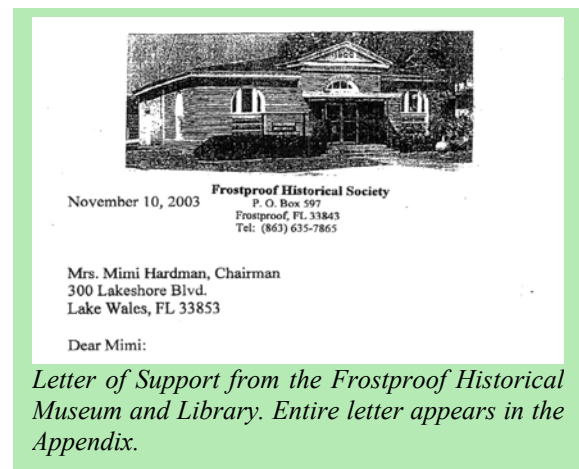
Copies of the letters of support are included in the Appendix.

### Groups and Organizations Involved in Preparing the Corridor Management Plan

The Corridor Advocacy Group consists of representatives from local government, non-profit organizations, civic groups, and local residents. These individuals have worked together closely to build consensus for the ideas and projects presented in the Corridor Management Plan.

Groups and communities represented on the Corridor Advocacy Group include:

- AAUW
- Babson Park Visioning Group
- Central Florida Regional Planning Council
- Chalet Suzanne
- City of Frostproof
- City of Haines City
- City of Lake Wales
- Cypresswood/Winter Haven Coalition
- Florida Department of Transportation
- Frostproof Historic Museum
- Historic Bok Sanctuary
- Lake of the Hills
- Lake Wales Depot Museum and Cultural Center
- Lake Wales Arts Center
- Lake Wales Historical Society
- Mountain Lake Corporation



- Mountain Lake Estates
- Polk County Historical Society
- Polk County Natural Resources
- Polk County Transportation Planning Organization
- Polk County Transportation Planning Organization Citizens Advisory Committee
- Ridge Audubon Society
- South Starr Hills
- The Nature Conservancy, Lake Wales Ridge Program
- Town of Dundee
- Town of Hillcrest Heights
- Town of Lake Hamilton
- Village of Highland Park

**Resolutions**

In support of the Ridge Scenic Highway, resolutions were passed by the City of Haines City, Town of Lake Hamilton, Town of Dundee, City of Lake Wales, Village of Highland Park, Town of Hillcrest Heights, the City of Frostproof, the Polk County Board of County Commissioners, and the Polk County Transportation Planning Organization. Each of these local governments also signed the Letter of Intent, Eligibility Application, and this Designation Application. Resolutions appear in the Appendix.

**Newspaper Articles**

*The News Chief, The Ledger, and The Lake Wales News* have provide coverage of Corridor Advocacy Group meetings and events, such as the three-day design workshop held in July 2003. The news articles have helped maintain communication between the Corridor Advocacy Group and the community as well as provide insight in the views of local residents. The news articles provide evidence of strong local support for the scenic highway designation. Copies of the news articles appear in the Appendix.

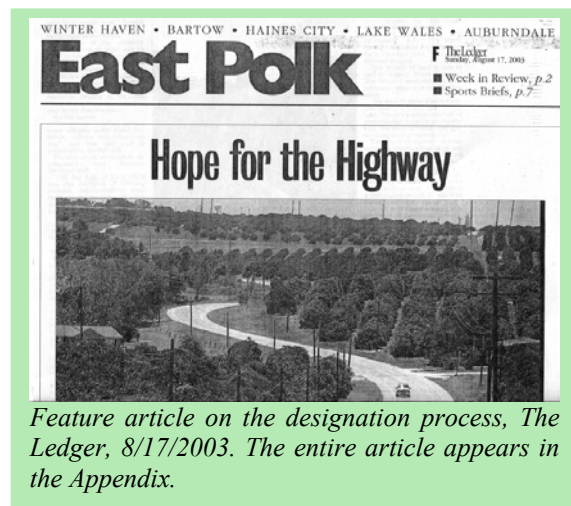
**Surveys**

While preparing the Eligibility Application, the Corridor Advocacy Group prepared a survey to obtain input on how the community perceives the Ridge Scenic Highway and the types of

improvements the community most values. This survey records the impressions of the corridor from frequent users of the corridor.

Nineteen surveys were completed. All survey respondents stated that they enjoy driving along SR 17, emphasizing the scenic quality of the corridor. Survey respondents also reinforced the connection between the corridor and significant historic, cultural, natural, and recreational resources. Survey respondents identified the following as historic, natural, cultural, recreational, or scenic resources that they identify with SR 17:

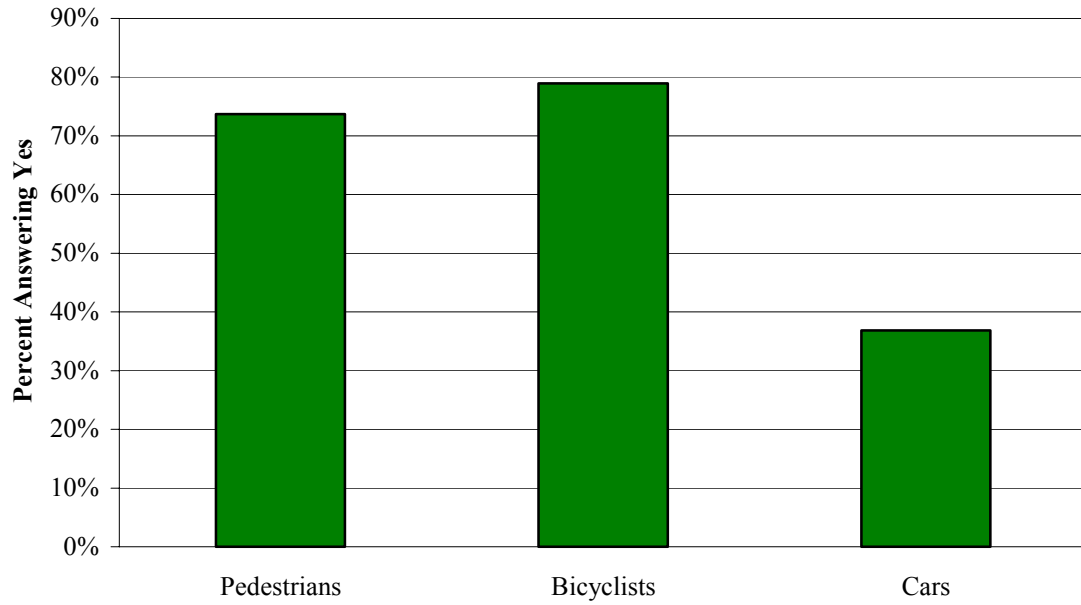
- Casa de Josephina
- Chalet Suzanne’s Historic Village, Restaurant, Inn, Cannery and Airstrip
- Crooked Lake
- Cultural events (art shows/ ice cream socials/ carillon dinner, etc.)
- Depot Museum and Railroad Corridor (Lake Wales)
- Downtown Lake Wales
- Dundee Children’s Park
- Dundee Lake Marie Park
- Florida Natural’s Groves
- Florida scrublands
- Frostproof Historical Museum
- Hills
- Hickory Lake Scrub
- Highland Park
- Historic Bok Sanctuary
- Historic Districts and Sites
- History Museums



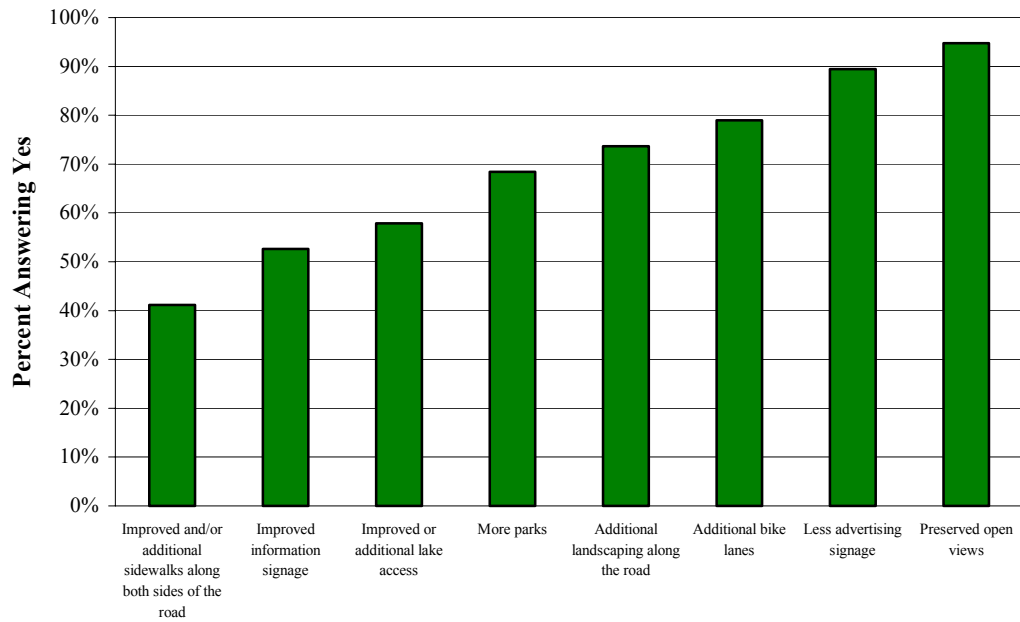
- Indian Creek Preserve
- Iron Mountain
- Kissimmee River State Park
- Lake of The Hills Community Club House
- Lake Starr
- Lake Wales
- Lake Wales Arts Center
- Lakes
- Lake of the Hills
- Lakes Wales Depot Museum
- Orange Groves
- Preserves
- Ridge Audubon Center
- Rolling Hills
- Snodgrass Island
- The Lake Wales Ridge
- Tiger Creek Preserve
- Valleys
- Vistas

When asked about safety enhancements, 74% of survey respondents stated that pedestrian enhancements are needed and 79% stated that bicycle enhancements are needed. Other types of enhancements that rated favorably by a majority of the respondents included preserved open views, less advertising signage, additional bicycle lanes, additional landscaping, more parks, improved informational signage and improved or additional lake access. *Table 1* and *Table 2* summarize the findings of the survey.

**Table 1: Safety Enhancements Needed along SR 17**



**Table 2: Additional Enhancements Needed along SR 17**



Survey respondents stated that enhancements should be focused in the following areas:

Location	Type of Enhancement
Windy Hill	Purchase land
Rural areas	Install native sandhill and scrub landscape Preserve vistas to Windy Hill and Bok Tower Pull-off with benches and tables and information on geology of ridge Historic markers Bridle (equestrian) trail Hiking trails
City/Town	Improve entrances Clean up yards Historic markers
Lake Moody	Remove exotic plants
Mt Lake	Remove exotic plants

The Goals and Strategies, Concept Plan and Action Plan include projects and policies that focus investments on pedestrian and bicycle facilities, the preservation of open views and environmentally sensitive lands, landscaping enhancements, a signage package, lake access, and more recreation parks.

**Design Workshop**

On June 21-24, 2003, the Corridor Advocacy Group hosted three open houses with the consulting planners and designers. Over 50 residents attended at least one open house. Nearly all participants expressed support for the designation.



*The consulting biologist describes potential enhancements during the Design Workshop.*



*Lori Carlton, FDOT Community Liaison, discusses potential projects with members of the Corridor Advocacy Group.*