



HEALTHY WEST ORANGE

TRAILS INITIATIVE

Connecting Healthy Communities



This Report was prepared for the West Orange Healthcare District.

Special Thanks

The Healthy West Orange Trails Initiative and this Report would not have been realized without the endless hours of research, mapping, and coordinated cooperation of the Working Committee. On behalf of the West Orange Healthcare District, the following agencies and organizations are recognized.

Town of Oakland

City of Winter Garden

City of Ocoee

Town of Windermere

Gotha Rural Settlement

Orange County Parks & Recreation Department

Foundation for a Healthier West Orange

MetroPlan Orlando

Bike/Walk Central Florida

Florida Department of Transportation

City of Apopka



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OVERVIEW





1.0. OVERVIEW

1.1 Introduction

The Healthy West Orange Trails Initiative was funded by the West Orange Healthcare District (WOHD). The organization works tirelessly to improve the overall health and wellbeing of people residing in West Orange County. WOHD is a proud founding champion of Healthy West Orange, a grassroots movement providing tools, resources and social connections to help West Orange County residents “eat well, stay active and enjoy life”.

The WOHD’s Board of Directors identified focus areas for 2020, which included activating the trail system in West Orange to improve resident’s health. Motivating the community to get outdoors, walk, bike, and come together was key to building the healthiest community in the Nation. To realize this goal, a year-long process to create a dynamic regional trail system that engages the West Orange community through the activation of wellness hubs along well-designed trail facilities was launched.

WOHD solicited the assistance of the City of Ocoee Development Services Department’s internal design studio to assist WOHD with the work effort required to develop the Healthy West Orange Trails Initiative, which includes a Regional Trails Map.



1.2 Planning Process

A work plan was prepared and the initiative got underway in June of 2020. One of the first tasks undertaken was to establish a working committee comprised of representatives from local municipalities, Oakland, Winter Garden, Ocoee, Windermere, Gotha Rural Settlement, Orange County and the City of Apopka. The CEO of the WOHD, Tracy Swanson personally requested these agencies to designate representatives to participate in the development of a trails' activation plan. Each of these agencies were requested to submit comprehensive and detailed plans with robust data. In addition to the agencies, representatives from MetroPlan Orlando, Bike/Walk Central Florida and The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) were included in the planning efforts.

Data Collection: The following information, if available, was requested from each agency:

- Level of Service (LOS) for trails
- Trails master plan
- Existing trails inventory (on-road and off-road) maps, along with GIS data
- Information regarding amenities located on each trail (i.e., trailheads, rest areas, water, restrooms)
- List of planned trail improvements
- Provide the location of any planned trail and trail amenities, including implementation time frame and estimated costs
- Existing park inventory
- Information regarding any fitness equipment or internal trails or walking paths currently used for exercise at their facilities
- Existing inventory of sidewalk or paths, along with GIS data
- Information on programs or special events held adjacent to or along trails managed by their agency
- Identify existing programs or events held in other locations that could be easily modified to be offered as part of the Trails Activation Plan
- Annual budget for maintaining trails
- Marketing/Informational materials related to trails or fitness/wellness trails (i.e., maps, brochures, apps).

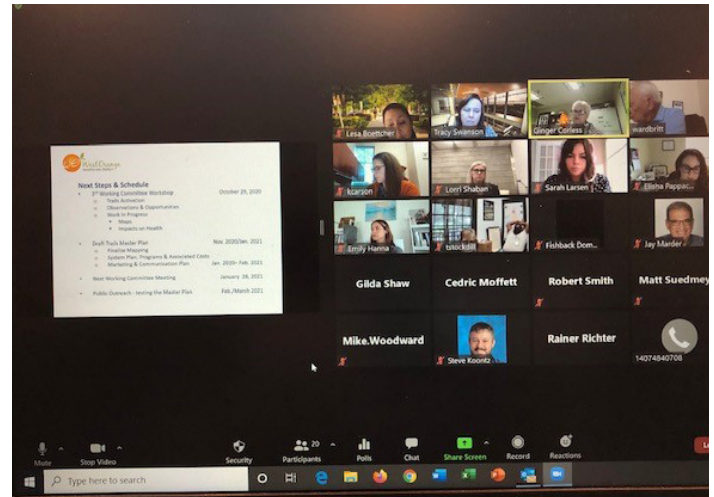


From this information a data assessment report was completed and a “Base Map” created that identified all the trails, trail facilities, parks and places of interest throughout the WOHD service area.



Working Committee Meetings: Seven (7) working committee meetings were held throughout the planning and development of the Healthy West Orange Trails Initiative. The first meeting was held in July of 2020 and the last in August 2021. When the process was first initiated it was the intention to host in person “roll-up the sleeves” type of workshops; however, the 2020 COVID Pandemic required these workshops to be held virtually, limiting the ability to truly interact. That being said, under the facilitation of Ginger Corless, CPRP and Lesa Boettcher, COO of the Foundation for a Healthier West Orange, the working committee met and completed an enormous amount of work in order to develop this report. The following was accomplished by the working committee:

- Defined “Activation”
- Identified the geographical areas to focus planning activation and enhancement efforts
- Documented gaps in the trail system, as well as, identified mechanisms to close those gaps
- Identified new trail facilities and amenities
- Located existing and future “Wellness Hubs”
- Identified new programs and events that can activate Wellness Hubs along the trails
- Drafted capital and program plans
- Outlined an active and dynamic branding, marketing and communication campaign to promote the implementation of the Healthy West Orange Trails Initiative.



Mission & Branding: In order to focus the working committee, the project was branded as the Healthy West Orange Trails Initiative – Connecting Healthy Communities and the following mission statement was agreed upon.



1.3 What's Next

The information, guidance, and recommendations contained within this Report are meant to be advisory and have been written as though the Report is a final document; this draft Report will be presented to the West Orange Healthcare District Board. Based on the direction received, this document will be revised to express the wishes of the Board.

This Report is only the first step in activating trails throughout West Orange County. It is important that the collaboration between the agencies and organizations that have taken part in this planning process continue to work together on an on-going basis. To ensure this happens, there needs to be a champion to guide the implementation of the Healthy West Orange Trails Initiative. Turn the pages to discover the work accomplished and more importantly, the work that must continue to achieve the Initiative's mission.

TRAILS ACTIVATION





2.0 Trails Activation

Trails activation is not just about increasing usage on a specific trail, it's about increasing the diversity of users and the ability to use activation facilities, programs, and events to address and enhance community health. Activation can be achieved by the addition of facilities such as fitness equipment, playgrounds, wellness stations, nature observation stations, and interactive elements; in addition, conducting programming and special events that encourage people to use local trails to improve their overall fitness is very effective for not only addressing health issues but increasing the awareness and comfort level of people to return on their own. Part Two of this Report addresses how trail activation can assist in improving the health and wellbeing of residents of West Orange County.

2.1 Health Characteristics in West Orange County

To activate the trail system, we must first understand the underlining health issues that need to be addressed. Generalized health information was collected through several sources, including the Florida Department of Health and government-maintained data. The most valuable source of information was acquired through MetroPlan Orlando. MetroPlan's consultant, VHB, developed the Healthy Mobility Model and ran it for the West Orange Healthcare District's service area. The Model correlates socioeconomic, demographic, commuting, land use, urban design, and the transportation network to community health. The Model runs two tiers designed to identify areas at risk and built environmental and mobility factors such as: demographic and socioeconomic data, mobility network data, location of sidewalks, bike lanes, trails, unmarked parking and destinations including proximity to transit, jobs, grocery stores, shopping areas, dining, parks and healthcare facilities. The assessment is based on addressing six primary health outcomes: asthma, coronary heart disease, high cholesterol, diabetes, high blood pressure, and obesity.



Findings include:

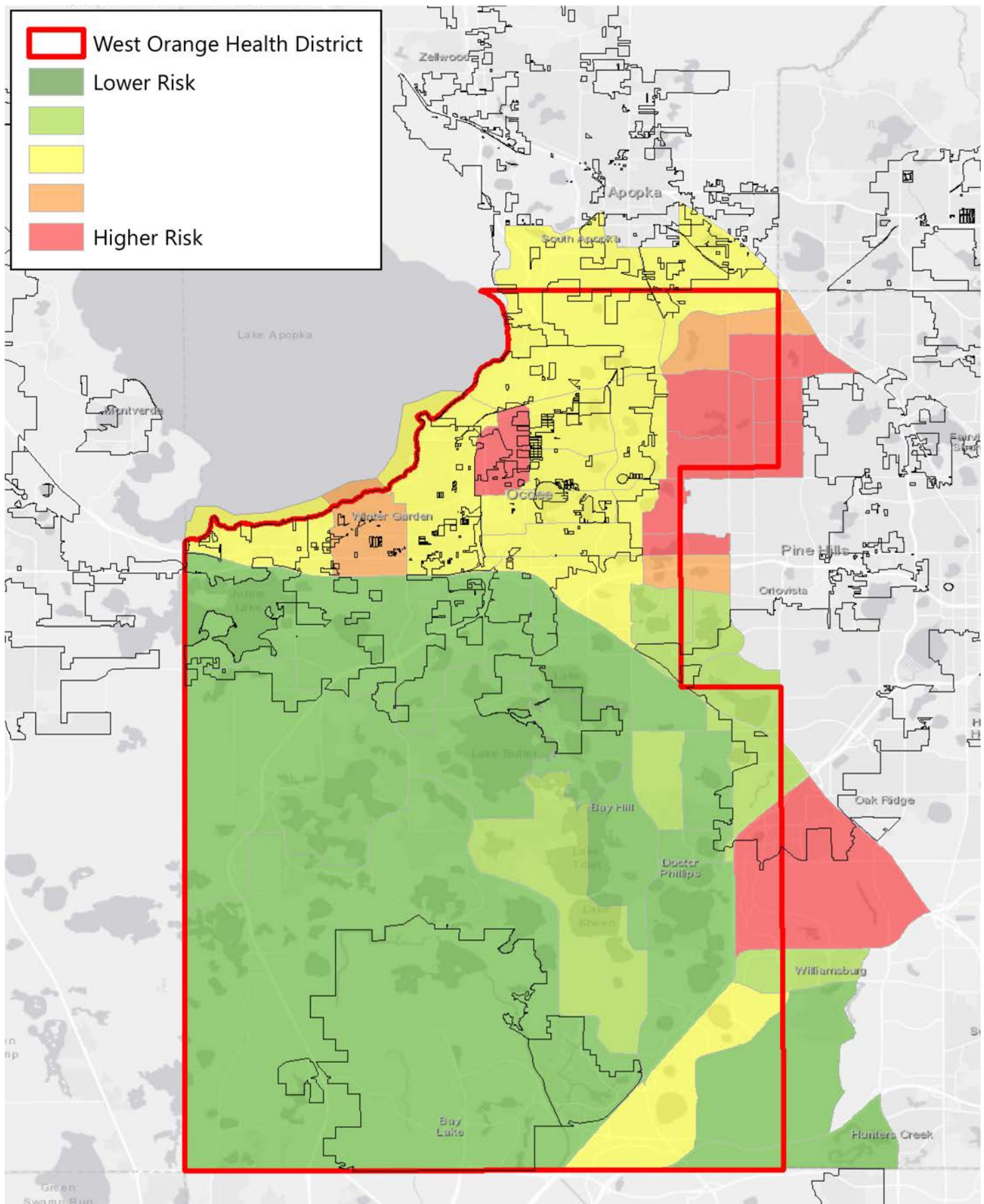
- Roadway width and number of vehicle lanes strongly correlates to high blood pressure, asthma and obesity. The greater number of vehicle lanes the greater the projected rates for these health conditions.
- Commuting time less than 30 minutes correlates to a healthier area.
- Higher access to public parks lowers projected rates of chronic diseases.
- Accessibility to cultural, food, and shopping destinations can correlate to better health outcomes.
- The safer the area, the healthier the area.
- Demographics also can correlate to health concerns such as areas that have an aging population tend to have higher rates of chronic disease, as well as, an area that has a high number of its population that has no higher than a high school education, the higher the incidence of chronic disease.
- Higher poverty rates correlate to higher rates of chronic disease.



Based on the interpretation of data, the Model generated maps for each health outcome within the WOHD.

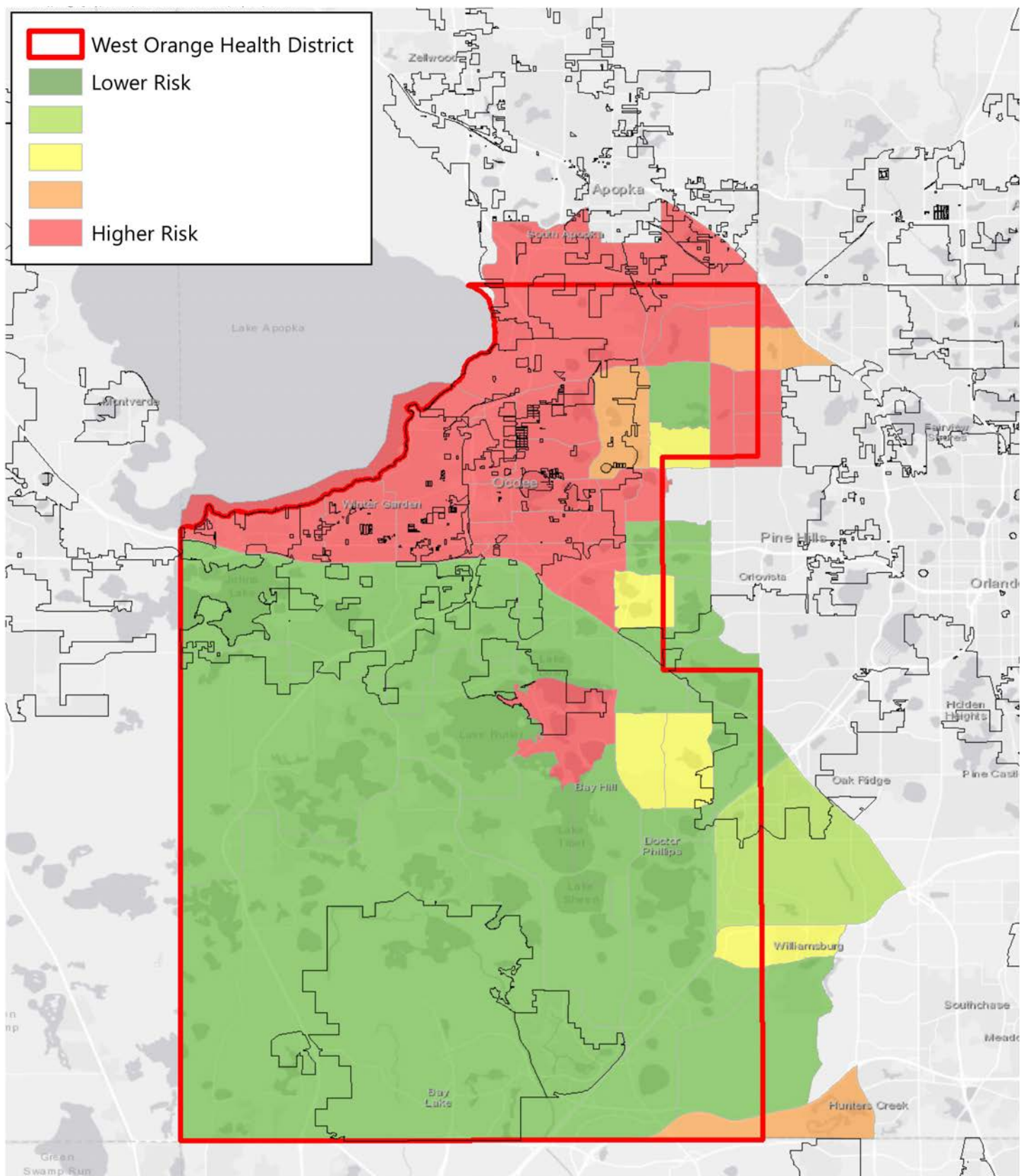


1. Asthma Risk Assessment Map

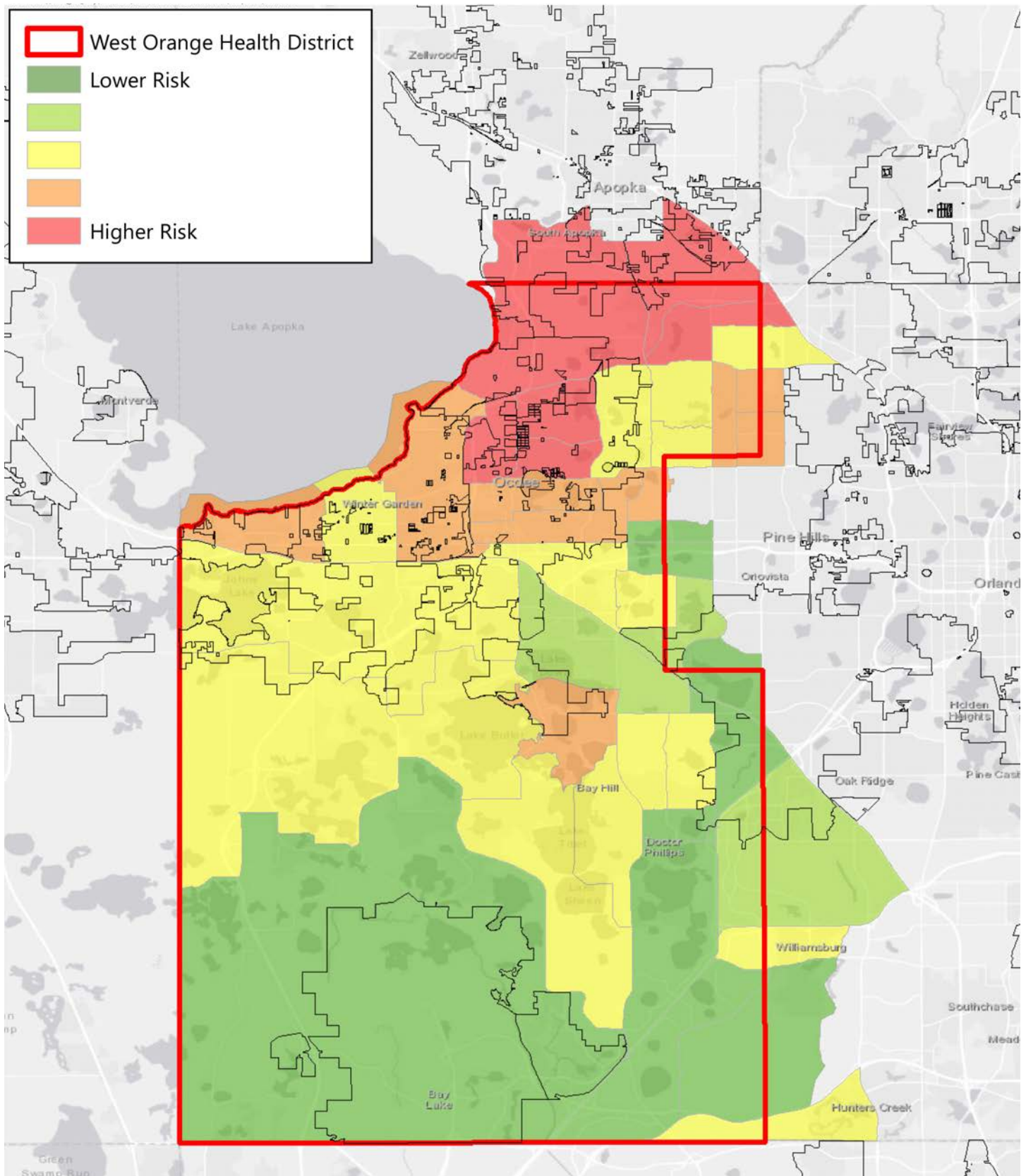




2. Coronary Heart Disease Risk Assessment Map

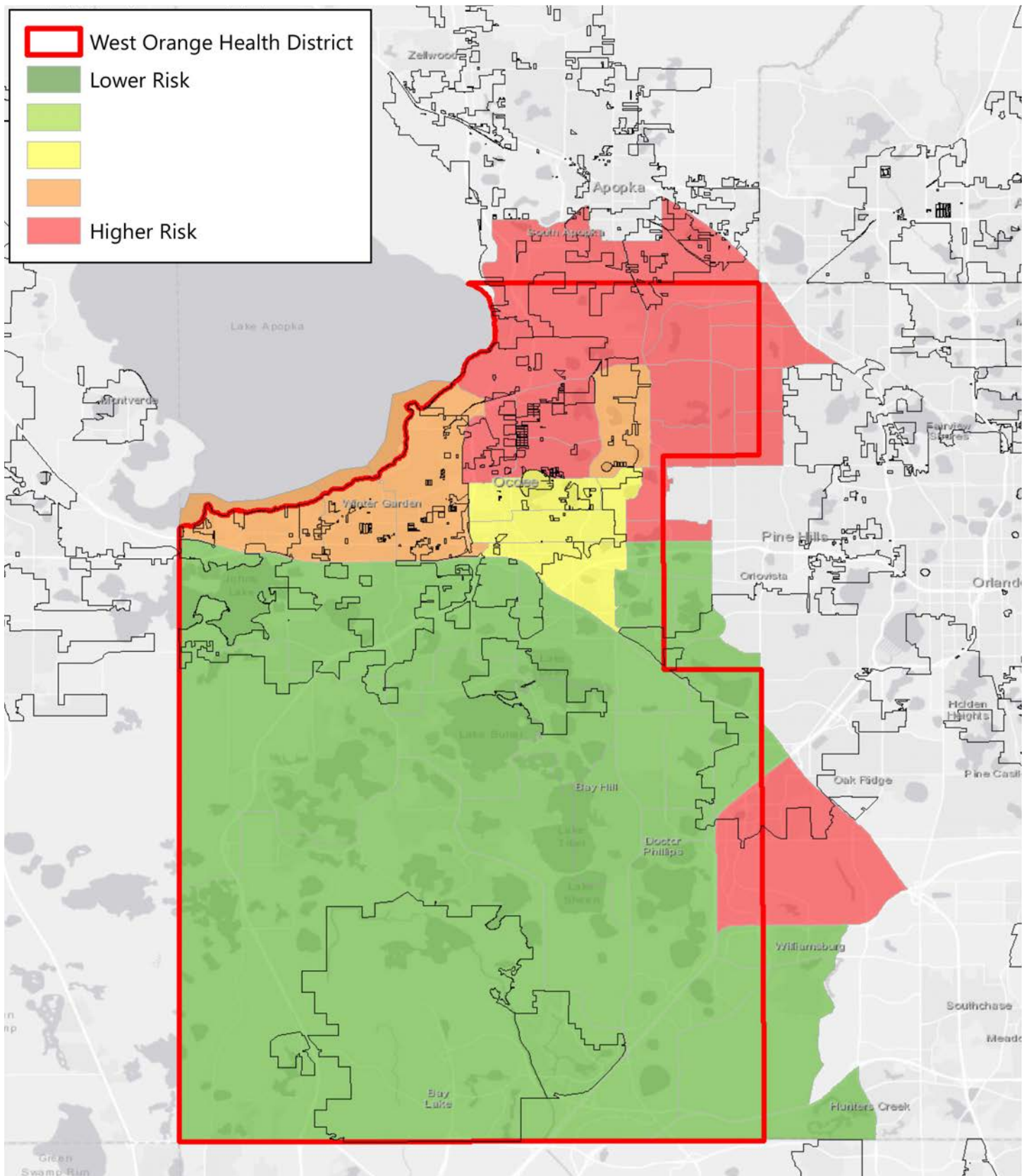


3. High Cholesterol Risk Assessment Map



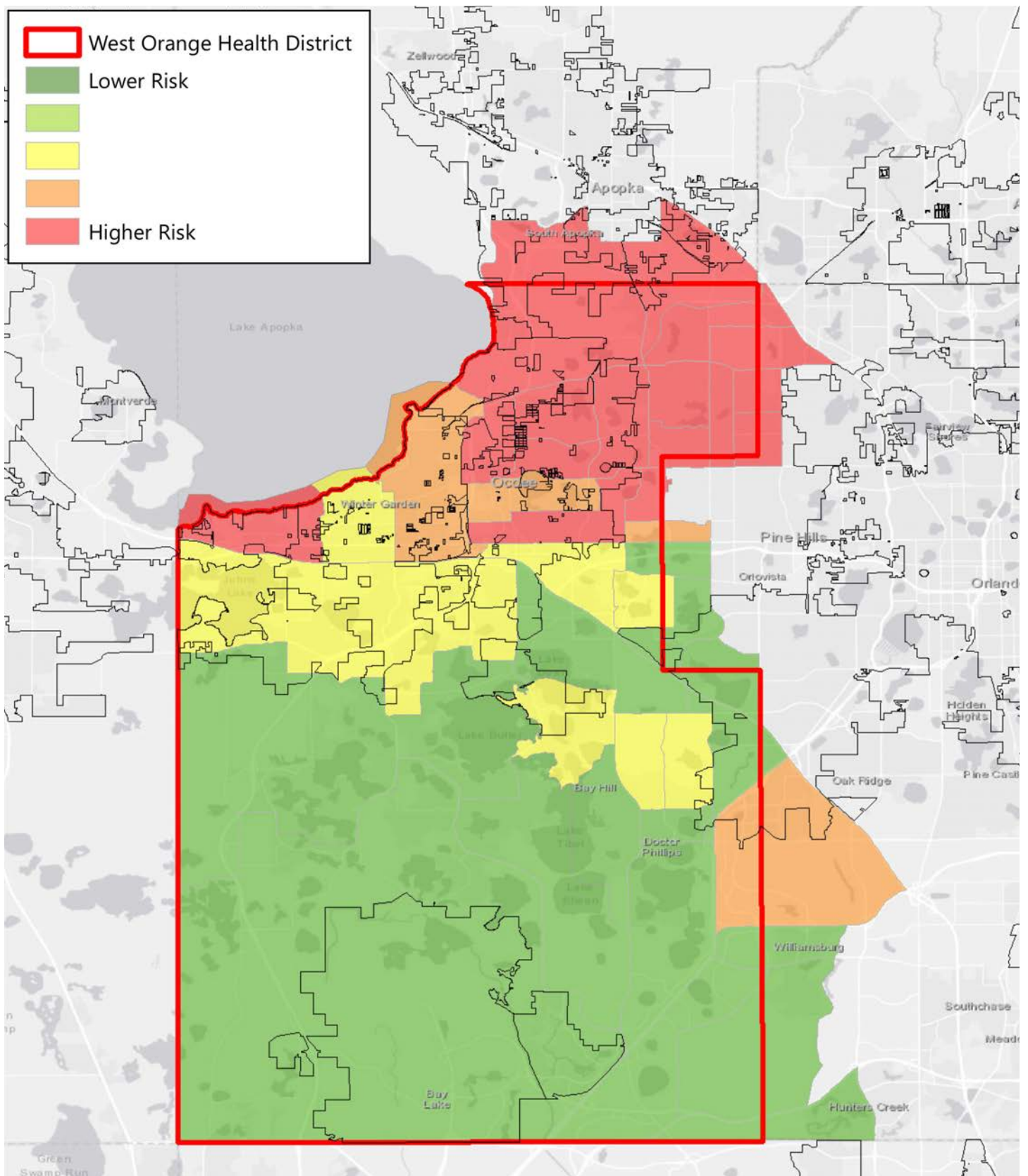


4. Diabetes Risk Assessment Map

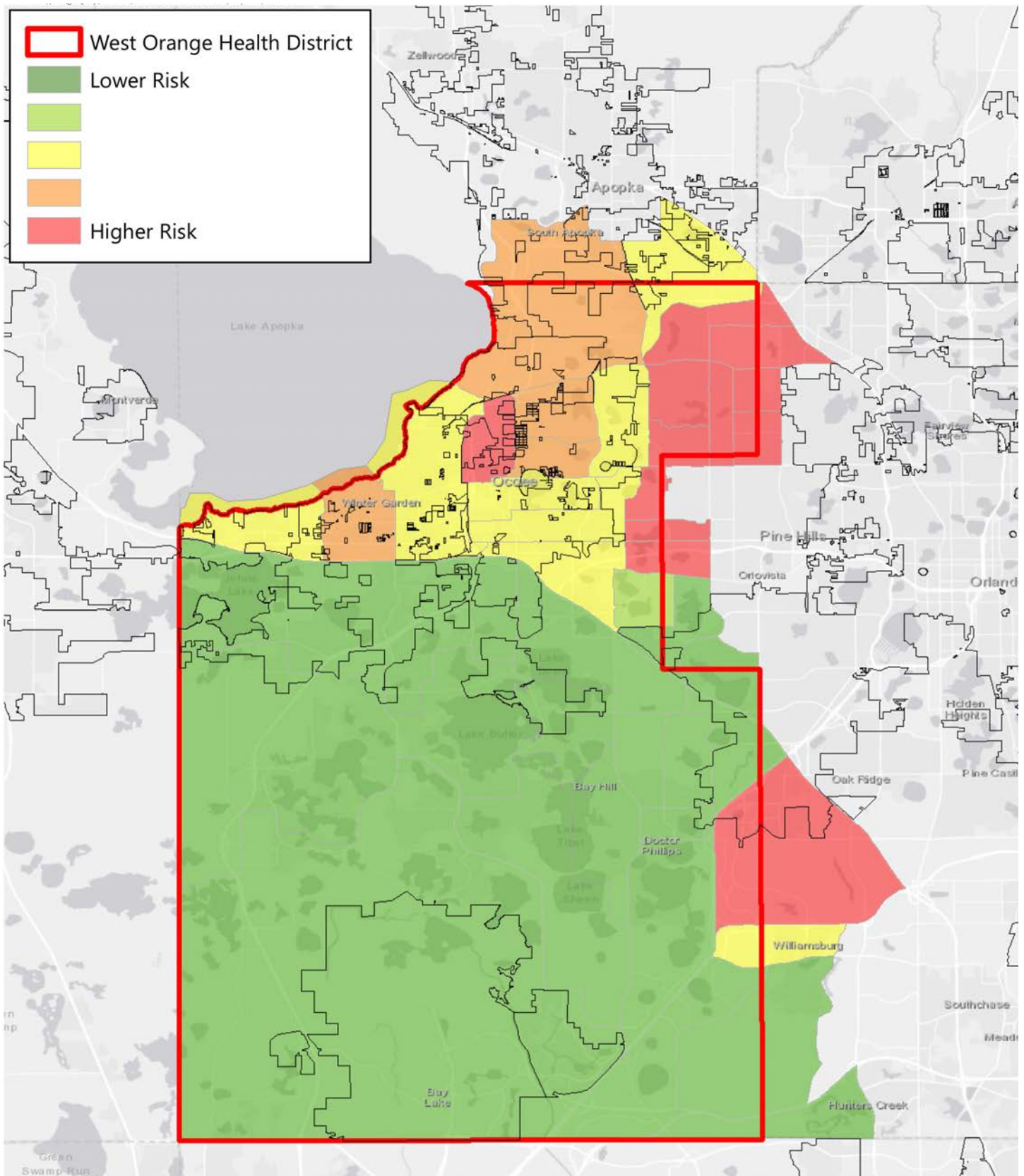




5. High Blood Pressure Risk Assessment Map

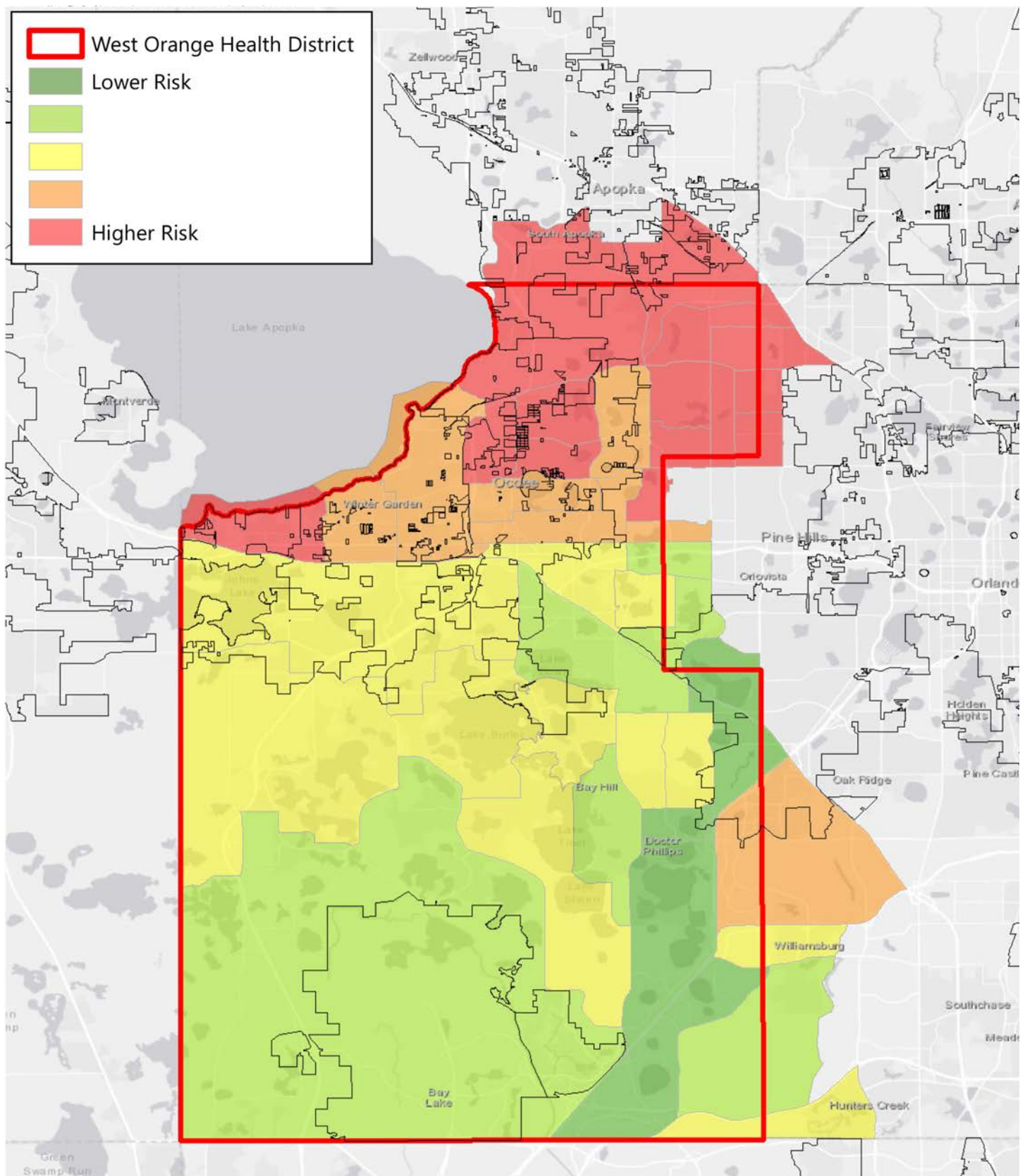


6. Obesity Risk Assessment Map





7. Overall Health Risk Assessment Map





The following chart includes the findings or T-Scores for the WOHD. The information and mapping provide valuable insight to locations where directed activation and trail access will assist in lowering the incidence of chronic disease. Areas of concern within the District are the northern portions of the District including the municipalities that border Lake Apopka, including Oakland, Winter Garden, and Ocoee.

Attachment 2: Healthy Mobility Tier Analysis - T-Scores

Census or LOTIS Factor	Disease					
	HBP	Diabetes	Asthma	CHD	Obesity	Cholesterol
Median Age	2.09	1.48	-1.54	3.00	-0.97	3.18
Commute Time (30 min or Less)	-2.25	-2.88	-0.82	-1.74	-1.18	-1.90
Commute Time (60 min or More)	0.29	0.00	-0.03	-0.64	0.13	-0.21
Poverty Rate	0.36	1.53	1.35	1.38	1.72	0.97
Educational Attainment (HS Diploma or Less)	1.25	1.96	1.85	0.36	1.97	0.32
Speed Limit	0.14	-0.25	0.93	-0.65	1.10	-0.32
Vehicle Lanes	1.58	0.85	2.33	-0.76	2.05	-1.12
Total Width	-1.73	-1.45	-2.36	0.73	-2.28	0.60
Sidewalk Flush	-0.60	-1.08	-1.52	-0.49	-0.96	-0.10
Bike Lanes	1.01	0.34	0.11	0.89	0.17	0.79
Unmarked Parking	0.51	1.10	0.03	0.50	0.32	0.85
Safety Score	2.11	1.52	0.74	1.88	0.98	1.83
Transit (PX Score)	0.88	-0.09	-0.79	0.81	-0.36	0.61
Food Market (PX Score)	-0.46	0.00	-0.43	-0.41	-0.30	-0.11
Public Park (PX Score)	-0.69	-1.25	-1.49	-0.36	-1.06	-3.00
All Parks (PX Score)	-0.28	-0.21	-0.17	-0.04	-0.58	-0.13
Health Care Facility (PX Score)	1.28	1.60	0.98	1.20	1.27	1.18
Jobs (PX Score)	1.00	1.30	2.31	0.54	1.69	0.14
Restaurant (Distance)	1.36	2.05	-1.09	2.52	-0.52	2.59
Fast Food (Distance)	-0.11	0.14	-0.27	-0.32	-0.08	-0.02
Libraries (Distance)	1.27	2.11	1.07	1.94	0.44	1.55
City Hall (Distance)	-0.18	-0.73	-0.96	-0.32	-0.91	-0.24
Post Office (Distance)	-2.97	-3.43	-1.29	-1.61	-1.93	-1.75
Courthouse (Distance)	0.55	0.80	1.23	-0.20	1.53	-0.12

Legend

	Statistically Significant Correlation (Lower Projected Incidence of Disease)
	Strong Correlation (Lower Projected Incidence of Disease)
	No Strong Correlation to Projected Incidence of Disease
	Strong Correlation (Higher Projected Incidence of Disease)
	Statistically Significant Correlation (Higher Projected Incidence of Disease)

Averages

1) "PX" variables are based on the proximity scores from LOTIS. As the score, increases, the access increase; therefore, a negative T-score would indicate the more accessible a use, the higher the proximity score, the lower the projected prevalence of the disease. Additionally, a positive T-score indicates that the more accessible a use is, the lower the projected prevalence of a disease.

2) Destination variables that do not have a "PX" are based on distance; therefore, a negative T-score indicates the further the destination, the higher the projected prevalence of the disease. Additionally, a positive T-score indicates the closer the destination, the lower the projected prevalence of the disease.

1.21
-1.80
-0.08
1.22
1.29
0.16
0.82
-1.08
-0.79
0.55
0.55
1.51
0.18
-0.29
-1.31
-0.24
1.25
1.16
1.15
-0.11
1.40
-0.56
-2.16
0.63

2.2 Trails Activation & Health

In recent years, there have been several research studies conducted by such groups as the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the National Parks and Recreation Association (NRPA), National Park Service, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Rails to Trails Conservancy, American Trails Group, National Learning Initiative, City Parks Alliance, and PLAYCORE that speak to the importance of trail access and activation in promoting healthy lifestyles for people of all ages and abilities, but especially for our youth, families, and senior populations.

Trails are Essential: The COVID-19 pandemic heightened public awareness regarding the importance of parks, trails, and play in enhancing overall community health. In March of 2020, NRPA initiated weekly surveys to uncover how parks and recreation departments were addressing COVID-19. NRPA also conducted several surveys to gain an understanding of how people were using parks, trails, and open space to improve their overall physical and mental health.

NRPA's key research findings over the past few months include the following points:

- 83% of adults believe visiting local parks, trails, and open spaces has been essential to maintaining mental and physical health during the pandemic.
- 59% of adults found walking, jogging, hiking, and biking to be extremely essential to maintain mental and physical health.
- Over 69% of parents feel this way.



NRPA is an excellent source of information when it comes to trail activation. For example, one of their videos (<https://youtu.be/35tWw-DxeAo>) speaks of parks and trails being ideal locations to serve as healthy and equitable wellness hubs. NRPA also created a video (<https://youtu.be/d6sphKT-9U8>) in 2016 that discusses how parks and recreation facilities, including trails, should be planned to provide equitable access. Even though the “What Parks can do about Recreation Equity” video was produced in 2016, there are very important messages on how we can address this issue today.

Providing Trails throughout the Healthcare District: Located within the WOHD is one of the region's most popular trails, the West Orange Trail. As a County asset, the West Orange Trail connects communities from the Lake County line to Apopka and beyond. This trail is also an important link in the Florida Coast-to-Coast Trail. The success of the West Orange Trail has spurred communities within Central Florida to actively plan and implement trails to provide their residents not only an alternative transportation facility; but also, a facility that, when used, increases one's physical, mental, and social wellbeing. Part Three of this Report presents the WOHD Regional Trails Map, identifying existing trails that can be activated now and future trails to link and serve West Orange County. One of the ideas related to regional activation through programming generated by the working committee is to partner with Bike/Walk Central Florida to host a “Bike 5 Cities” (Oakland, Winter Garden, Ocoee, Windermere, and Gotha) event to highlight West Orange County.



Benefits of Trails Activation: By integrating activation and play opportunities into our trail planning and implementation, we can generate multiple benefits, including:

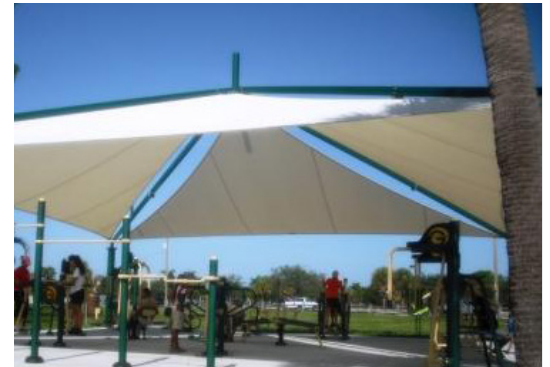
- Promoting Health by providing accessible trails and activation hubs. These facilities, when properly planned, located, designed, and programmed can increase physical activity, motor fitness, and enhance cognitive abilities of people of all ages.
- Nature Engagement through interactive activities provides educational information and a sense of discovery and environmental awareness. This will not only increase environmental literacy within our community, but also serves to soothe the spirit and reduce overall stress.
- **Increased Sense of Inclusion and Trails User Diversification** can be achieved by locating trails and activation hubs near communities where access to a trail or activation facility is not dependent on a vehicle. Furthermore, activation hubs not only allow people from different walks of life, abilities, ages, and even cultural backgrounds to interact in a safe and comfortable space, they can increase user diversification, community cohesion, and communication.
- Extending Play Value can be achieved by providing play experiences that stimulates a child while also keying into an adult's idea of health, physical activity, and environmental education. This type of activation increases overall family participation.
- Building Healthy Behavior and Community Capital by activating trails in a manner that attracts users of all ages, especially by incorporating intergenerational hubs designed to encourage movement and active living.
- Increasing Community Connectivity through Trails by connecting to community destinations including local parks, municipal facilities, shopping and entertainment centers, healthcare facilities, and schools to name just a few.



2.3 Activation Facilities

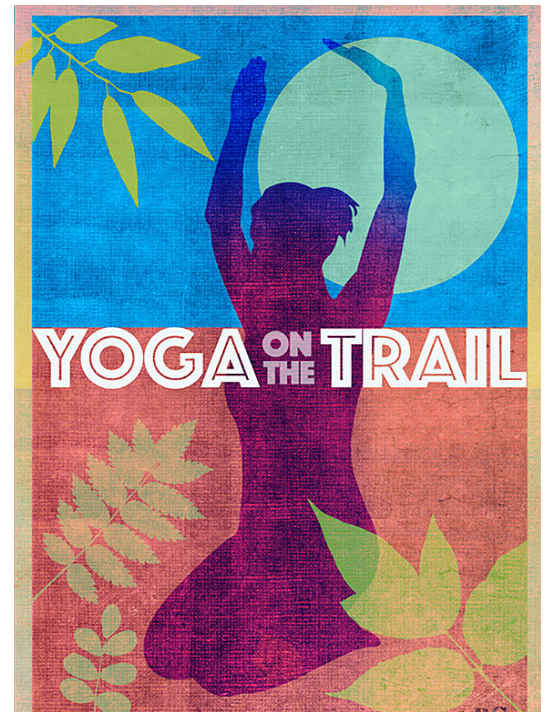
The following provides planning guidance for developing new activation facilities, which can be incorporated into an agency's existing trail or when planning a new trail or pathway experience.

- **Fitness Hubs, Clusters, Zones & Trails:** *Assigned category icon is Fitness & Active Play.* Outdoor fitness areas are aimed at providing adults the opportunity to easily gain access to equipment and facilities for the purposes of improving overall physical health. Fitness hubs should be designed to provide a well-rounded workout by trail users. Fitness hubs can be interspersed along a trail into 3-5 fitness pockets. Each fitness pocket would then include 3-5 stations. Fitness hubs can also be located within a park that is adjacent to or a short distance from the primary trail corridor. These tend to be larger areas with more equipment.



Fitness Zones are larger than fitness hubs and usually located adjacent to or within a nearby park; they can also be located on school grounds. Fitness zones are considered joint use and designed to provide parents, guardians, or supervisors the ability to work-out while watching their child play. Equipment should be selected that work muscles, strengthen core, promote balance, and enhance flexibility. The fitness hubs can incorporate a combination of equipment types. Types include composite fitness stations, each composite station is one piece of equipment that features multiple exercises; these take up a very small area. The hubs can also include standalone exercise equipment, usually located as a circuit.

When locating fitness hubs create a use-zone to discourage walk-through traffic. This can be achieved along a trail by locating pockets. When placing a fitness hub in a park consider installing special surfacing and shade structures to not only increase safety but to clearly designate the area.



Support facilities for either type of fitness hub include water, bike racks, signage, shade, trash receptacle, and possibly seating. Parking should be provided if the fitness hub is located within an adjacent park. Fitness clusters or parks can also be used for programming. An agency can contract with certified personal trainers to hold classes or training sessions at these hubs.

Fitness Trails can be located along an existing trail, as an associated fitness path that connects to the primary trail, or located within a park. Most fitness trails are designed in a loop or with a return pattern where fitness pockets are placed on opposite sides of the trails so there is a return sequence. A typical fitness trail length is 1 mile with stations placed every ¼ mile. Stations can be designed to either offer a single piece of equipment or multiple pieces.

A great resource when developing standards for fitness zones, hubs, trails, etc. is “Outdoor Adult Fitness Parks” prepared by Playcore and their partnership advisory network.



Wellness Hubs: *Assigned category is Fitness/Wellbeing.* This is a facility that can be assigned under several activation categories. For example, there may be an opportunity along a trail or within an adjacent park or public space, where an open area can be programmed for a variety of activities. For example, in Ocoee, Lakefront Park has a large performance green that can be used for such activities as yoga, tai chi, or performance art. The wedding garden lawn at the historic Withers-Maguire House can be used for meditation. In downtown Winter Garden the plaza in front of City Hall can be used for sidewalk art or a meet up for a historic walkabout. In addition to the Farmers Market, the Winter Garden Pavilion can be a venue for all kinds of healthy activities. The important design consideration for wellness hubs is to plan them to be a flexible space that provides a venue for multi-programming.

- **Skate Spots:** *Assigned category icon is Fitness & Active Play.* Skate spots are small areas, about 1,500 square feet, located along trails or in parks where a single aboveground concrete or metal structure is placed to allow in-line skaters and skaterboarders to get off the trail and participate in tricks. Skate spots are normally designed for a capacity of one skater at a time. Larger skate parks can be located at a park in close proximity to a trail.
- **Play Pockets & Pathways:** *Assigned category icons are Fitness & Active Play and Nature.* Play pockets are used to integrate play value along trails. Each play pocket should be located between a 5- and a 10-minute walk from one another and spaced on alternate sides of a trail or pathway. It is important that the pocket has an entrance that draws the visitor away from the trail so conflicts with bicyclists and pedestrians are not an issue. Play pockets can be located as a trail spur off-set, a loop off-set, or as an intersection node.

Play pockets are usually *nature themed* and designed to promote exploration and discovery for the entire family. The layout and equipment selected should encourage physical, social, emotional, and cognitive interaction. Each play pocket should be landscaped to demonstrate local flora. It helps if the plants are different colors, textures, and have different smells to further simulate a child's experience.

Interpretive panels and exhibits can display information on local fauna. Signage should promote play and learning, as well as, encourage family participation. Play pockets are small, and it is intended for a trail user to move on to the next play pocket. The area should be shady, include seating, bike racks, and water if available.

Play pockets can be attached to a trail or be a stand-alone, self-contained area created in a park or as an off-shoot of a trail. Play pockets are typically located ¼ mile to 2 miles in length. Include compact interactive equipment/exhibits for toddlers. Trail configurations include playful cul-de-sac pathways where the design has the pathway reaching its terminus at the end of a cul-de-sac in the trail (not in a subdivision).





Playful pockets can be located in a single closed loop cul-de-sac formation. Playful pockets can be compact where space is limited or it can be configured along a ½ mile-mile open loop. Curving and looping pathways create more interest from children as they discover new things around every curve; however, in designing these areas it is important not to create areas that are unsafe. Keep sight lines open. Play pockets should be placed at regular intervals as with playful pockets. Getting the pockets too close reduces a child's motivation to move on. Locate play pathways near residential areas or areas of high children traffic. To stimulate cognitive skills, integrate interpretative themes based on local culture and nature. Public art, music, and performing arts can be incorporated into play pockets or along playful pathways; it is important that if these elements are used that they provide opportunities for interaction.

Safety surfacing such as engineered wood fibers and pour-in-place surfacing can be used to increase safety as well as serves to better define the play pocket zone from the pathway or trail. Bike racks should be located at the beginning of each playful pathway unless the pathway is designed for bike traffic. If that is the case, locate bike racks by each play pocket. Provide seating, shade, and water if available. Trash receptacles along the way may be handy. Many times, a playful pathway will include a picnic shelter to be used for picnicking or for nature and cultural interpretation classes.

Both play pockets and playful pathways increase active mobility in children of all ages, challenging them to move from one pocket to the next. As with playful pathways, the integration of play pockets along existing or future trails will serve to increase family use; thereby, enhancing overall community health and wellbeing. A great resource in designing play pockets and playful pathways is the **Best Practice Guidelines: Pathways for Play**, prepared by the Natural Learning Initiative (NHI).

- **Musical Pockets:** *Assigned category icon is Public Art & Performance.* Play pockets were introduced earlier. Adding a Musical Pocket along with the other play pockets increases utilization and increases cognitive and social engagement. Music is known to reduce stress, soothe, or even energize a tired trail user. When designing a musical pocket include at least three different instrumental pieces such as a cadence, marimba, and tuned drums. Try to select equipment that are intended to complement one another. They should be placed so that if different people are playing instruments at the same time, they are able to see one another. There can also be musical pockets designed to encourage people to bring their own instrument(s) to play. These should include a small performance area and associated seating. Pockets increases interactive play and social skills. A good source of information on musical hubs for parks and trails can be found at www.freenotesharmoniypark.com.



- **Playgrounds:** *Assigned category icon is Fitness & Active Play.* Kids love playgrounds. Playgrounds can be included at trailheads or stations, as they are now at Killarney Station, Winter Garden Station, and Chapin Station of the West Orange Trail. These playgrounds are not usually destination playgrounds. They should be relatively small. Seating, shade, water, bike racks, restroom, and trash receptacles should also be provided in close proximity.



- **Small Water Features:** *Assigned category is Nature/Wellbeing.* If possible, locate trails near bodies of water; provide viewsheds. Just looking at water is great for our overall wellbeing. Another feature to activate trails is the water interaction hub. These can be small, such as a simple mister or cooling spray. Create a meditation nook where water is the primary feature. The sound of water is relaxing and calms the spirit. For an interactive experience, small pop-up jets activated by touch button bollards can be included. The intent is not to place a large interactive water feature, like the one in Downtown Winter Garden, but design and locate it as a small interactive hub. Water feature hubs need to be placed far enough off the trail that their use does not impede trail use.



Wayfinding signage should be provided to guide trail users to off-trail water experiences such as the Downtown Winter Garden Water Feature.

- **Nature Observation & Birding:** Incorporate nature observation areas adjacent to a trail. This can be as simple as creating short pathways to natural areas along major trail segments. To heighten the experience add photography/nature observation blinds, interpretative exhibits, and educational signage.
- **Community & Specialty Gardens:** *Assigned category is Nutrition/Wellbeing.* One doesn't often see an actual community garden as a part of a trail; however, community gardens can be located in an adjacent parcel, and the trail can provide a healthy alternative form of transportation from nearby neighborhoods. Community gardens can be comprised of raised beds, hydroponics areas, and/or aquaponics.



Horticultural therapy and sensory gardens are used by health professionals for mental, stress, and other medical conditions. When planning trails, identify a small area at a trail station or along a trail that can be used for herbs or aromatics. Integrate butterfly gardens in hubs along a trail. Butterfly gardens are one of the easiest types of specialty gardens to create.

- **Culture and Heritage Points of Interest:** *Assigned category is Cultural/Wellbeing.* Activation interests are different for everyone. West Orange County has numerous historical and heritage sites; many of these are linked by the West Orange Trail, as well as, future trails identified on the WOHD Regional Trails Map. The West Orange Trail is a rail-trail which in itself tells a story. Link the trail(s) to not only historic sites, but also cultural and heritage museums like the Oakland Arts & Heritage Center, Winter Garden Heritage Museum, the Central Florida Railroad Museum, Ocoee's Withers-Maguire House and Nehrling Gardens in Gotha. By promoting, expanding interpretive stations, and linking sites with trails, we are encouraging people to get out and get active while they investigate local heritage. Another point to think about is how the promotion of our heritage trail(s) can increase cultural tourism, providing outside revenues to our communities.



- **Nature & Environmental Awareness Hubs:** *Assigned category Nature/Wellbeing.* Make trails interesting. Add interpretive information about fauna and flora throughout the trails system to inform the trail user of different types of ecosystems. The Oakland Nature Preserve and Boardwalk, Tucker Ranch, and the Lake Apopka Loop Trail are just a few of the nature immersion opportunities in West Orange County.



- **Water Activities & Facilities:** *Can be assigned to Fitness/Nature/Wellbeing categories.* Small water features integrated within the trail corridor are discussed earlier in this section; however, the intent here is to identify opportunities where trails can provide access to water related activation sites. One of the easiest types of trails to create is a paddling trail or blueway. Facilities needed for paddling trails include a launch to gain access to the water body, a small area for parking, signage showing the paddling route with information regarding blueway safety. Currently there is not a Florida Designated Paddling Trail in West Orange County. Opportunities exist to locate paddling trails on the Butler Chain of Lakes in Windermere, Starke Lake in Ocoee, Johns Lake in Winter Garden, and on Lake Apopka where Oakland, Winter Garden, Ocoee, and the County all have access to an existing ramp or have property on which to locate a launch. Tucker Ranch is planned to include a kayak launch.

- **Public Art & Performance:** *Assigned category Public Art & Performance/Wellbeing.* Integrate public art at trail stations and as activation hubs within trail corridors. Consider rotating community art programs including working with local schools. Consider using a portion of a trail or trails to create an art stroll. Art spots could also include music or performance arts.



- **Off Road/Mountain Bike Parks:** Identify locations a short distance from a trail where one can ride created natural tracks.

- **Support Facilities**

- ° **Trail Station (Trailhead) & Rest Areas:** Rest areas should be located along trails and include seating, bike parking, bike repair stations, hydration stations, weather station, emergency contact information, trash cans, and signage. In addition, restroom facilities should be located at trail stations or trailheads. Look for opportunities to provide picnic pavilions/facilities and small playgrounds at trail stations.
 - ° **Concessions, Retail/Food Spots:** Integrate areas at trail stations or along or adjacent to the trail that provides an opportunity to dine or even purchase souvenirs.



- **Dog Stations & Facilities:** The number of trail users with dogs has increased over the years. In fact, people that own dogs are usually healthier due to the need to walk and exercise their dogs. Make sure that rest areas and trail stations have dog water stations and pet waste stations. A dog park can also be located in close proximity to a trail.
- **Parking:** Parking is usually only provided at trail stations/trailheads. Develop parking areas based on trail capacity numbers.



These activation facilities were identified by the Healthy West Orange Trails Initiative's Working Committee and others during the planning process. It is important to note that if a type of facility is not identified in this list, it doesn't mean it can't be done. Local agencies should work together to update and refine this list on an annual basis. When planning, designing, and implementing activation facilities and trails, the following should be considered.

- To help people navigate the trails and our surrounding communities, wayfinding signage should be located throughout the trail network, as well as, in each municipality. Wayfinding signs allow people to explore without their phones, for them to meander along the trail and discover new and interesting things (mental health).
- Enhance the landscape along trails to create safe corridors and improve overall community aesthetics. Do not plant ornamentals/exotics in natural areas. Go native whenever and wherever possible. Make sure there is plenty of tree canopy for shade.
- Use Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles and strategies when designing new facilities, including trails, parks, connections, etc.
- Increase visibility, maintenance, and management to decrease the perception of unsafe conditions. Ideas include:
 - Video monitoring
 - Emergency boxes or GPS marking to assist in locating someone that is in distress
 - Increasing trail patrol
 - Appropriate lighting at trailheads
 - Implement methods to reduce speeding and overcrowded conditions (signage, staffing, enforcement, etc.)



2.4 Activation Categories & Icons

Identification icons have been created for each activation category. Each category is assigned a color. Activities listed for a category will have the same color as the associated category. Each of the categories and associated activity/destination promotes community health and wellness. The list of existing destinations, organized by category, follows this section.

Trails & Support Facilities

- Trailhead/Station
- Parking
- Comfort Station
- Rest Area
- Shelter/Pavilion
- Bike Repair
- Emergency Boxes
- Shelter/Pavilion



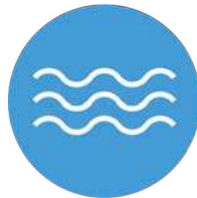
Nature/Wellbeing

- Boardwalk
- Nature Observation
- Environmental Education
- Nature Paths
- Butterfly Garden
- Bird Watching
- Plant ID



Water Activities

- Fishing
- Paddling
- Boating
- Splash Pads or Water Feature
- Swimming



Fitness & Active Play

- Fitness Parks or Trails
- Playgrounds
- Sports Fields
- Sports Courts
- Dog Park
- Community/Recreation Center
- Mountain Bike Trails
- Bike Safety Program



Culture/Heritage

- Historic Site/Museum
- Library
- Cemetery
- Archaeological Sites



Public Art & Performance/Wellbeing

- Art
- Music
- Performing Arts (theater)



Healthcare & Government Facilities

- First Aid/Healthcare
- Law Enforcement
- Government Buildings



Eating & Shopping

- Community Garden
- Farmers' Market
- Restaurants/Shopping
- Picnic Facilities





Existing West Orange County Destinations & Related Activation Category: The following chart identifies the major categories and related destinations or points of activity related to each category. This list was drafted based on comments received through Working Committee meetings, conversations with WOHD, and through research. The following destinations will be shown on the final Healthy West Orange Regional Trails Map using the category icon. The list of existing destinations should be updated annually.

Trails & Support Facilities

- Existing & Planned Trails
 - West Orange Trail
 - Apopka Loop Trail
 - Bluford Shared Pathway
 - Clarke Road to Apopka Loop Connector
 - Clarcona Ocoee Shared Pathway
 - Daniels Road Trail
 - Dillard Street Shared Pathway (in-design)
 - Horizon West Trails
 - Lake Apopka Connector Trail, Orange County (in-design)
 - Franklin Street Shared Pathway, Ocoee (construction in 2021)
 - Ward Trail, Windermere (in-design)
- Existing Trailheads/Stations
 - Killarney Station
 - Winter Garden Station
 - Chapin Station
 - Lake Apopka Loop @ Magnolia Park
 - Apopka Vineland Outpost
 - Ocoee Outpost (Clarcona-Ocoee Road, future)



Culture/Heritage

- Healthy West Orange Arts and Heritage Center, Oakland
- Historic Cemetery Trail, Oakland
- Garden Theatre, Winter Garden
- Edgewater Hotel, Winter Garden
- Central Florida Railroad Museum, Winter Garden
- Winter Garden Heritage Museum
- Winter Garden History Education & Visitor Center
- Winter Garden Cemetery
- Historic Country Club at Tucker Ranch, Winter Garden
- Historic Baptist Church, Winter Garden
- Public Library, Winter Garden
- Historic Britt Mansion, Winter Garden
- Withers-Maguire House, Ocoee
- Historic Christian Church, Ocoee
- July Perry Historic Marker, Ocoee
- Historic Maine Street Park, Ocoee (2022)
- 1887 School House, Windermere
- Cal Palmer Building, Windermere
- Nehriling Gardens, Gotha
- Bob Ross Grave, Gotha
- Historic Church of Christ Church, Gotha
- Yellow Dog Eats, Gotha
- Woodlawn Cemetery, Orange County
- Lovell's Landing State Historic Marker at Magnolia Park, Orange County
- Other Sites



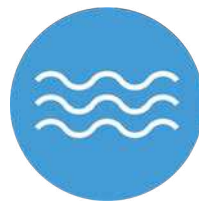


Nature/Wellbeing



- Nature Preserve & Boardwalk, Oakland
- Lakefront Park at Starke Lake, Ocoee
- Apopka Loop Trailhead, Orange County
- Vandergrift Central Park Boardwalk, Ocoee
- Tucker Ranch, Winter Garden
- Magnolia Park, Orange County
- Opportunities along the West Orange Trail
- Nature Park on Lake Apopka, Ocoee (Future)
- Open Space available for Wellbeing Activities
 - Tucker Ranch, Winter Garden
 - Lakefront Park, Ocoee
 - Camp Ithiel, Gotha
 - Woodlawn Cemetery, Gotha
- Warrior Park, Winter Garden
- Braddock Park, Winter Garden
- Maple Street Park, Winter Garden
- Walker Football Field, Winter Garden
- Sam Williams Little League Complex, Winter Garden
- Crown Point Park (future), Winter Garden

Water Activities



- Fishing
 - Tubb Street Pier, Oakland
 - Starke Lake Fishing Piers, Ocoee
- Paddling Trails
 - Lake Apopka, Oakland/Winter Garden
 - Starke Lake, Ocoee
 - Butler Chain of Lakes, Windermere
 - Johns Lake, Winter Garden
- Boat Ramps/Launches
 - Tucker Ranch Canoe/Kayak Launch to Johns Lake, Winter Garden
 - Newton Park, Lake Apopka, Winter Garden

- Magnolia Park Boat Ramp, Lake Apopka, Orange County
- Lakefront Park, Starke Lake, Ocoee
- R.D. Keene Park, Butler Chain, Orange County

- Pools
 - Farnsworth Pool, Winter Garden
 - Zander Park & Boulder Pool, Winter Garden
- Interactive Water Features/Splash Pads
 - Downtown Splash Pad, Winter Garden

Fitness & Active Play



- Speer Park, Oakland
- Pollard Park, Oakland
- Tucker Ranch, Winter Garden (playgrounds & fitness equipment)
- Veterans Memorial Park, Winter Garden
- Central Park, Ocoee
- Jim Beech Recreation Center, Ocoee
- Palm Park, Ocoee
- Sorenson Fields & Senior Center, Ocoee
- Vignetti Park, Ocoee
- Tiger Minor Park, Ocoee
- Keene Park, Orange County
- Wellness Park, Ocoee (future)
- Healthy West Orange Pocket Park (Plant St), Winter Garden
- Jessie Brock Center Fitness Trail, Winter Garden
- Braddock Park, Winter Garden
- Maple Street Park, Winter Garden
- Walker Football Field, Winter Garden
- Sam Williams Little League Complex, Winter Garden
- Crown Point Park (future), Winter Garden



Eating & Shopping

- Community Garden
 - Tucker Ranch
 - 9th Street Community Garden
- Downtown Winter Garden
- Downtown Windermere
- Downtown Ocoee
- Farmers Markets (Winter Garden & Windermere)



Public Art/Performance/Well Being

- Healthy West Orange Arts and Heritage Center, Oakland
- Garden Theatre, Winter Garden
- SOBO Art Gallery, Winter Garden
- Healthy West Orange Pavilion, Windermere (funded, development underway)
- Future Fitness Hubs along or adjacent to the trails (will need to be identified)



Healthcare & Government Facilities

- First Aid/Healthcare
- Law Enforcement
- City/Town Halls for Oakland, Winter Garden, Ocoee & Windermere
- HUBB Resource Center, HWO Building, Plant Street





2.5 Programming is Key to Activation

Research has found the best way to make a positive impact on community health is to expand access to trails, parks, and recreation facilities. People need to feel comfortable about visiting, participating, and using health-directed activation equipment and areas. If an agency builds a specific facility or installs equipment such as fitness equipment they should conduct a public awareness campaign to promote its availability. One of the best ways to introduce a facility to the community is to offer programming or through a special event.

Programming can include such activities as educational classes, community workouts, creation of exercise groups, and the offering of fitness and wellness classes. Let certified trainers in West Orange know where the fitness hubs, parks, and trails are located and encourage them to use these facilities. Initiate, advertise, and hold fitness and wellbeing exercises such as yoga and/or tai chi classes in public open spaces in multiple locations throughout the District. Host community walks and bike safety programs; this is also a great way to let residents know where the trails and related activation areas are. One of the things we learned from on-site discussions and the County's Trails Survey is that some people don't use trails because they are uncomfortable doing so. These people may be more inclined to use trails and wellness facilities if they participate with others that are also new to the experience. Another idea generated by the working committee was to create a program similar to the Florida Trail Association's "Passport" Program. This type of program will increase awareness and support of local businesses.

Healthy West Orange did a great job with their virtual 5K program held in the fall of 2020 instead of their normal 5K to address social distancing concerns due to COVID. In January 2021 they held Westly's 4th Annual 5k virtually as well. This community challenge requires the participant to complete 3.1 miles over a month period, at their own pace. People were encouraged to use the West Orange Trail and Oakland Nature Preserve; however, it didn't matter as long as people met the 3.1-mile rule. For completing the community challenge participants earn a T-shirt and medal.

In implementing the Healthy West Orange Trails Initiative, it is imperative the Trails Committee work closely with local parks and recreation departments, as well as, schools, senior centers, and healthcare organizations to build an active wellness-based program approach to activating West Orange's trail system.



Past Programs and Events: The Healthy West Orange Trails Initiative Working Committee included the various agencies and organizations that operate and manage the trail system in West Orange County. During the workshops held in 2020, participants provided a list of the programs they have conducted along or adjacent to a trail(s), as well as, ideas for new programs. The following list includes events that have been held or were planned to be held in 2020, however, due to the COVID Pandemic, the majority of the events were canceled in 2020 and 2021. Therefore, the actual date was removed but the month remains.

Ocoee

- Martin Luther King Jr. Parade - January 20, 2020 held but canceled in 2021
- Spring Fling – March
- Best Fest – March or April
- Annual Easter Extravaganza – Around Easter
- Big Orange Games -April
- Memorial Day at Bill Breeze Park – May
- Chick-fil-A 5k – Concurrent with the Ocoee Music Festival
- Ocoee Music Festival – October-November
- Veterans Day Ceremony – November 11th
- Christmas Parade – December
- Tree Light Up – December
- TBD Healthy West Orange Signature Event

Oakland

- Celebration Among the Oaks – April
- Jazz in the Town Center – April
- Wine and Dine – April
- Oakland Nature Preserve Pumpkin Glow – October
- Wildlife and Heritage Festival – November
- Light Up Oakland – December
- Santa Day – December
- Heritage Day Celebration – November
- Health and Wellness Initiatives - TBD
- History and Cultural Initiative - TBD

Orange County

Bike Events

- Friends of Lake Apopka Ride - November
- Segway Riders Villages
- Teen Challenge
- Ataxia
- PAL WGPD
- Think Pink Breast Cancer Ride - October

Run Events

- Ragnar Cross Florida Relay
- Thanksgiving 5K - November
- Holly 5K - December
- Sea to Sea Relay
- Seventh Day Adventist Church 5K
- Orange County Parks had a 5K series up to 2019

Walk Events

- Resurrection Catholic Church Good Friday Prayer Walk
- Military Marches
- Mosaic Church Outreach Water Distribution

Winter Garden

- Martin Luther King Jr. Community Celebration – January 20, 2020
- Blues & BBQ – February 2018
- Little Cupid Carnival _ February 14, 2020
- Serenade Under the Stars on the Plaza – February 14, 2020
- Evening at the Pops – March 28, 2020
- Spring Fever in the Garden – April 4-5, 2020
- Party in the Park – July 4, 2019
- Halloweenfest – October 31, 2019
- Light up Winter Garden – December 6, 2019
- Christmas Parade – December 7, 2019
- Cruz-N-Car Show – 3rd Saturday of January, April, June, and September
- Fridays on the Plaza – Every Friday
- Farmers Market – Every Saturday

Windermere

- Windermere Wine & Dine – January 25, 2020
- 5K/10K Run Among the Lakes – April
- Easter Egg-Stravaganza – April
- Craft Beer Fest – October
- Halloween Hayride & Costume Parade – October
- Light Up Windermere – November
- Holiday Hoopla – December
- Farmers Market – Every Friday
- Family Food Truck Night – Every 4th Friday
- TBD Healthy West Orange Signature Event

Healthy West Orange:

- Westly's Annual Virtual 5K
- Westly's Dance Challenge
- Westly's Splash Challenge
- Healthy Selfie 5K Your Way
- Health & Harvest Festival, Winter Garden (Family Fun Bike Rides and 5K)
- Fresh Start Festival at the Healthy West Orange Arts & Heritage Center, Oakland (Family Fun Bike Rides and 5K)
- Healthy West Orange Signature Festival, Ocoee (Future)
- Healthy West Orange Signature Festival, Windermere (Future)
- 3 WOWs Annually (West Orange Walks routes/distances by target audience/partner)
 - ° Senior focused with Living Facilities or new Boardwalk at ONP
 - ° Training Challenge - practice for timed event on specified 5 or 10K route
 - ° Hikes – Held at Oakland Nature Preserve and Tucker Ranch

Other trail activation ideas generated by the Working Committee include:

- Yoga/tai chi along the trail
- Gardening (herbs/edibles, teaching, mental health, and community)
- Meditation Havens
- Fitness/Parkour games
- Chess table and other seated game stations
- Discovery Stations can be placed along a trail that incorporate interactive elements and exhibits regarding the environment including plant and animals that are found in West Orange, local food production healthy insight, information, and activity areas.
- Fitness hubs or stations
- Hold scavenger hunts
- Paddle board race on one of our new paddling trails
- Work with Bike/Walk Central Florida to hold Bike 5 Cities event
- Pop-up events, including health stations
- Art Walk
- Historic Cemetery walks
- Park RX and/or Walk with a Doc
- Host Health Fairs 2-4 times per year. The event should be held adjacent to trail corridors, specifically the West Orange Trail. Each location should have parking for bike and vehicles. Rotate the locations throughout West Orange County.

The ideas are endless; however, as stated at the beginning of this Section, agencies must work together to offer seamless health programs and activities throughout West Orange County. Program priorities should be discussed among the Trails Committee on an annual basis

BUILDING THE ACTIVATION NETWORK





3.0. Building the Activation Network

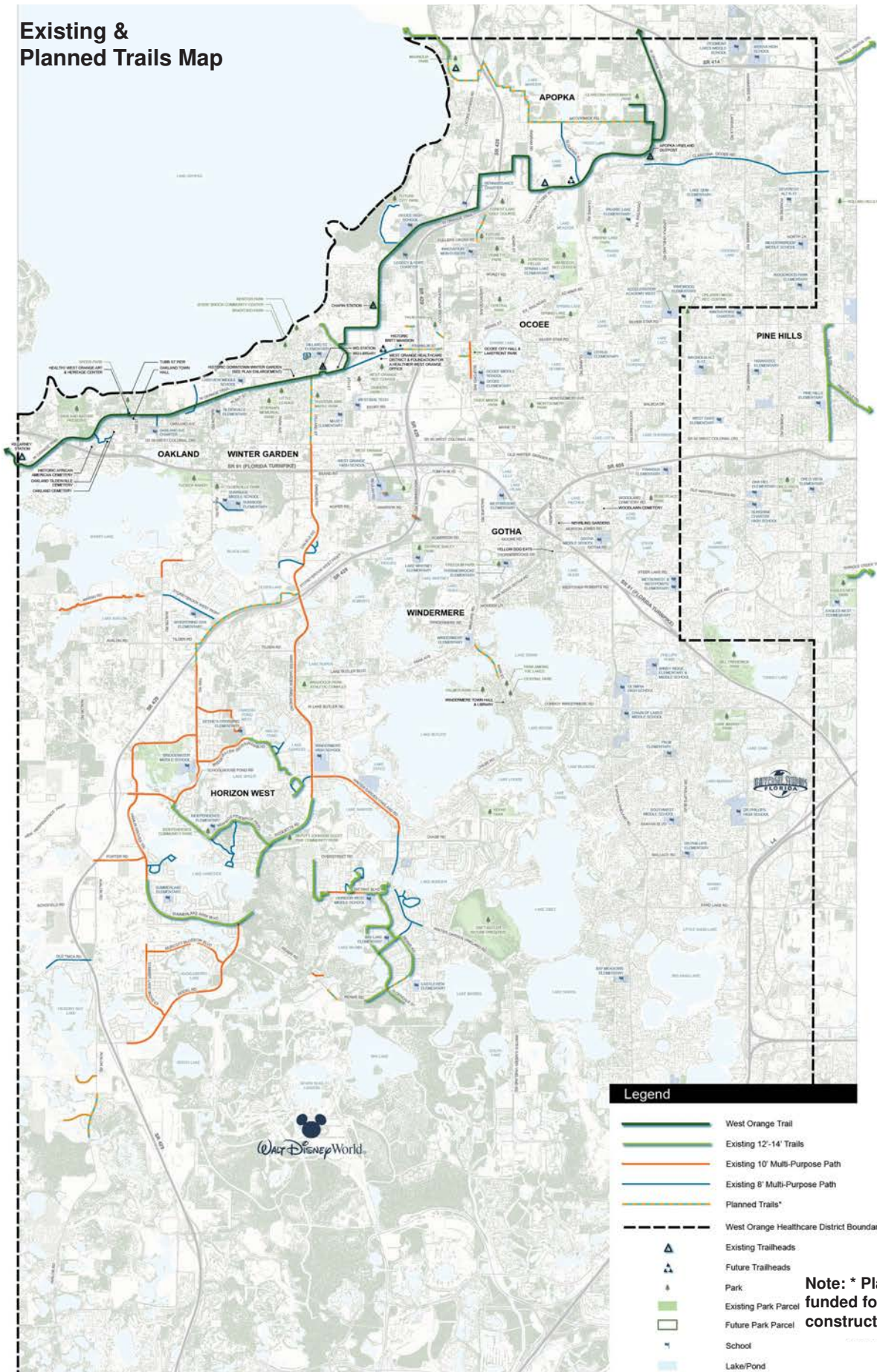
3.1 Existing Trails Inventory & Mapping

To build a Healthy West Orange Regional Trails Map, we started with the existing infrastructure and assets. With that in mind, the existing trails inventory of the Town of Oakland, City of Winter Garden, City of Ocoee, Town of Windermere, and Orange County was collected, reviewed, and documented. Neither Gotha nor the County have any existing trails or multipurpose paths within the Rural Settlement. From this assessment, a master base map was created. The existing trails were depicted and color coded on the Existing Trails Inventory Map based on their width as follows: existing 12'-14' trail, existing 10' multipurpose path, existing 8' multipurpose path. Planned trails were also depicted by a different color. Existing trailheads and unimproved trailheads at dedicated locations were also identified. Trail projects that are funded but not yet constructed are shown as a dashed, orange/teal line on the following map.

The mapping exercise provided valuable information needed to understand needed transitions for trail extensions and in closing trail gaps between municipalities.



Existing & Planned Trails Map



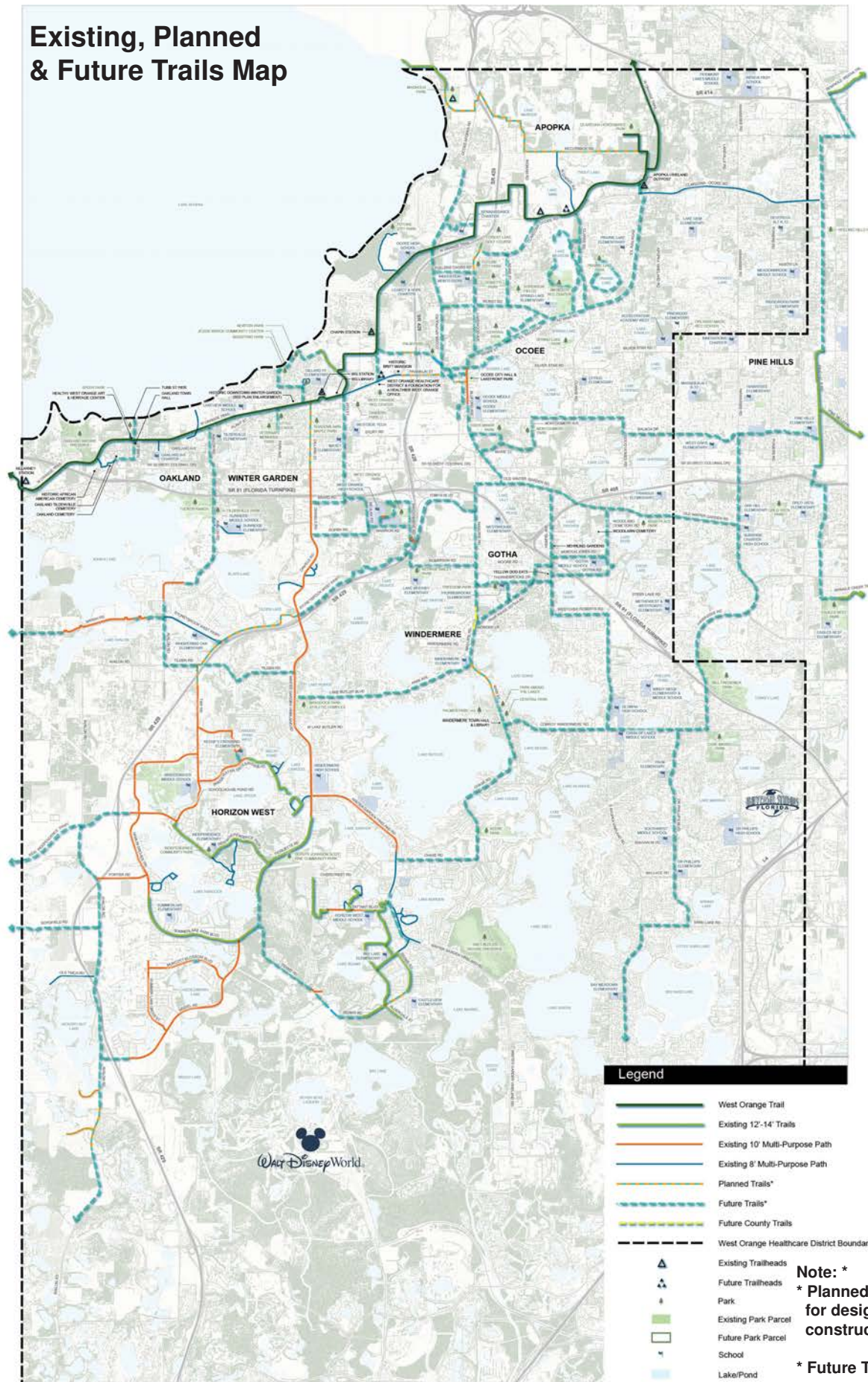


3.2 Future Trails Identification & Mapping

Using the “Existing Trails Inventory Map” and information gained through the assessment of the Trails Master Plans from each of the participating municipalities and the County, future trails were added to the Existing Trails Inventory Map to produce the “Preliminary Healthy West Orange Regional Trails Map”. The next step was to identify potential gaps in the regional trail system, including making sure there were one or more linkages between municipalities. This process is called “Closing the Gaps”.



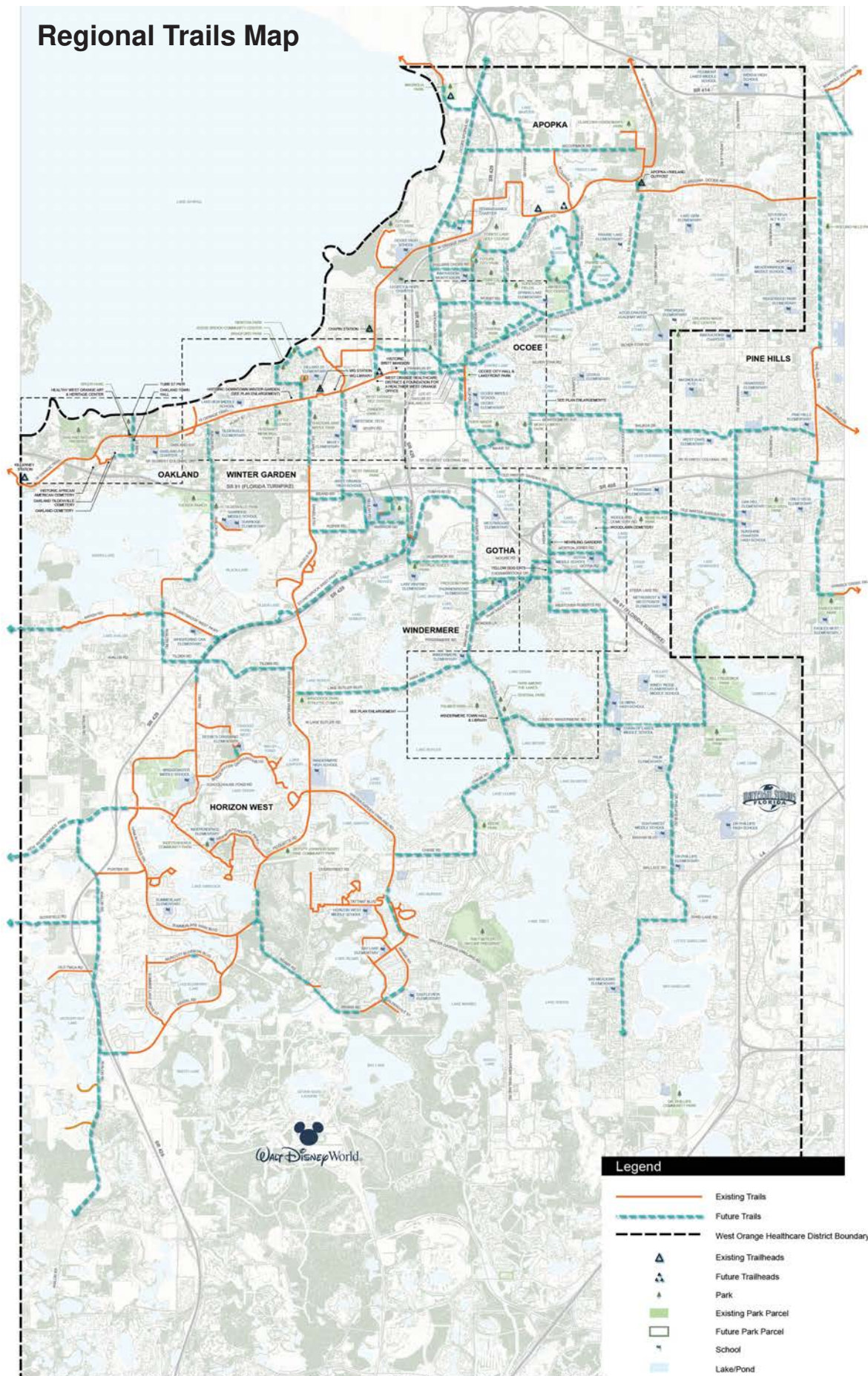
Existing, Planned & Future Trails Map





3.3 Healthy West Orange Regional Trails Map

Following a review with the Working Committee, the Healthy West Orange Regional Trails Map was created and destinations and activation facilities were denoted on the overall map. Due to the large size of the West Orange Healthcare District, maps for each of the municipalities and Gotha were created to better identify trails and activation facilities. Activity activation symbols or icons (refer to Part Two) were added to the Healthy West Orange Preliminary Trails Map to denote destinations and activities.



Oakland Trails Map

This map illustrates the trail network in Oakland, Florida, highlighting existing trails in orange and future trails in blue. The map includes a legend for various activation icons and general trail types. The legend is organized into two main sections: 'Activation Icons' and 'General'.

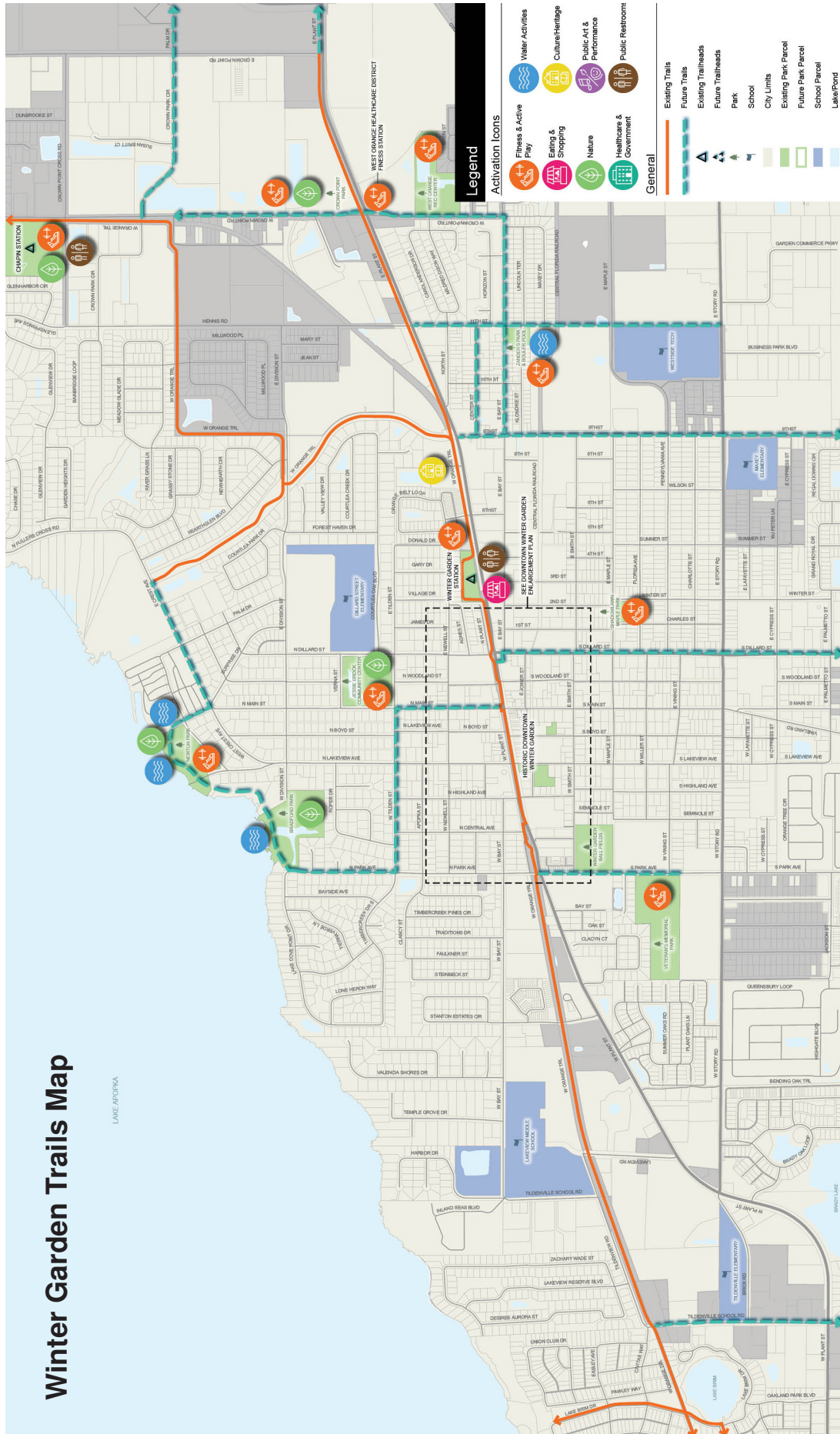
Activation Icons:

- Fitness & Active Play:** Includes icons for a person running, a person on a bike, and a person playing a sport.
- Eating & Shopping:** Includes icons for a shopping cart and a person eating.
- Nature:** Includes an icon for a tree.
- Healthcare & Government:** Includes an icon for a person in a uniform.
- Water Activities:** Includes an icon for a person in a boat.
- Culture/Heritage:** Includes an icon for a person in a hat.
- Public Art & Performance:** Includes an icon for a person in a hat.
- Public Restrooms:** Includes an icon for a person in a hat.

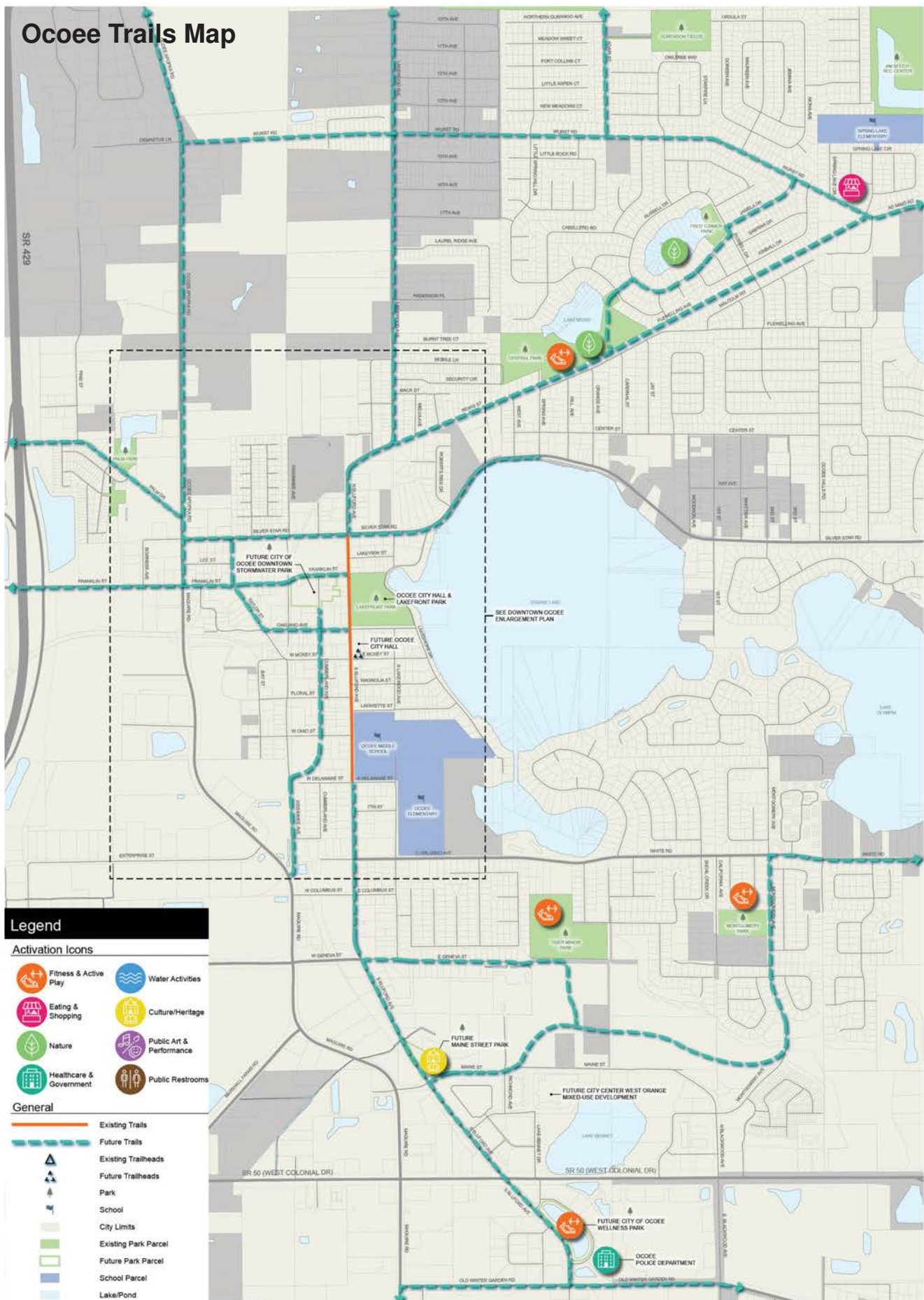
General:

- Existing Trails:** Represented by an orange line.
- Future Trails:** Represented by a blue line.
- Existing Trailheads:** Represented by a blue triangle.
- Future Trailheads:** Represented by a blue triangle.
- Park:** Represented by a green tree icon.
- School:** Represented by a yellow school icon.
- City Limits:** Represented by a yellow outline.
- Existing Park Parcel:** Represented by a green outline.
- Future Park Parcel:** Represented by a green outline.
- School Parcel:** Represented by a yellow outline.
- Lake/Pond:** Represented by a blue outline.

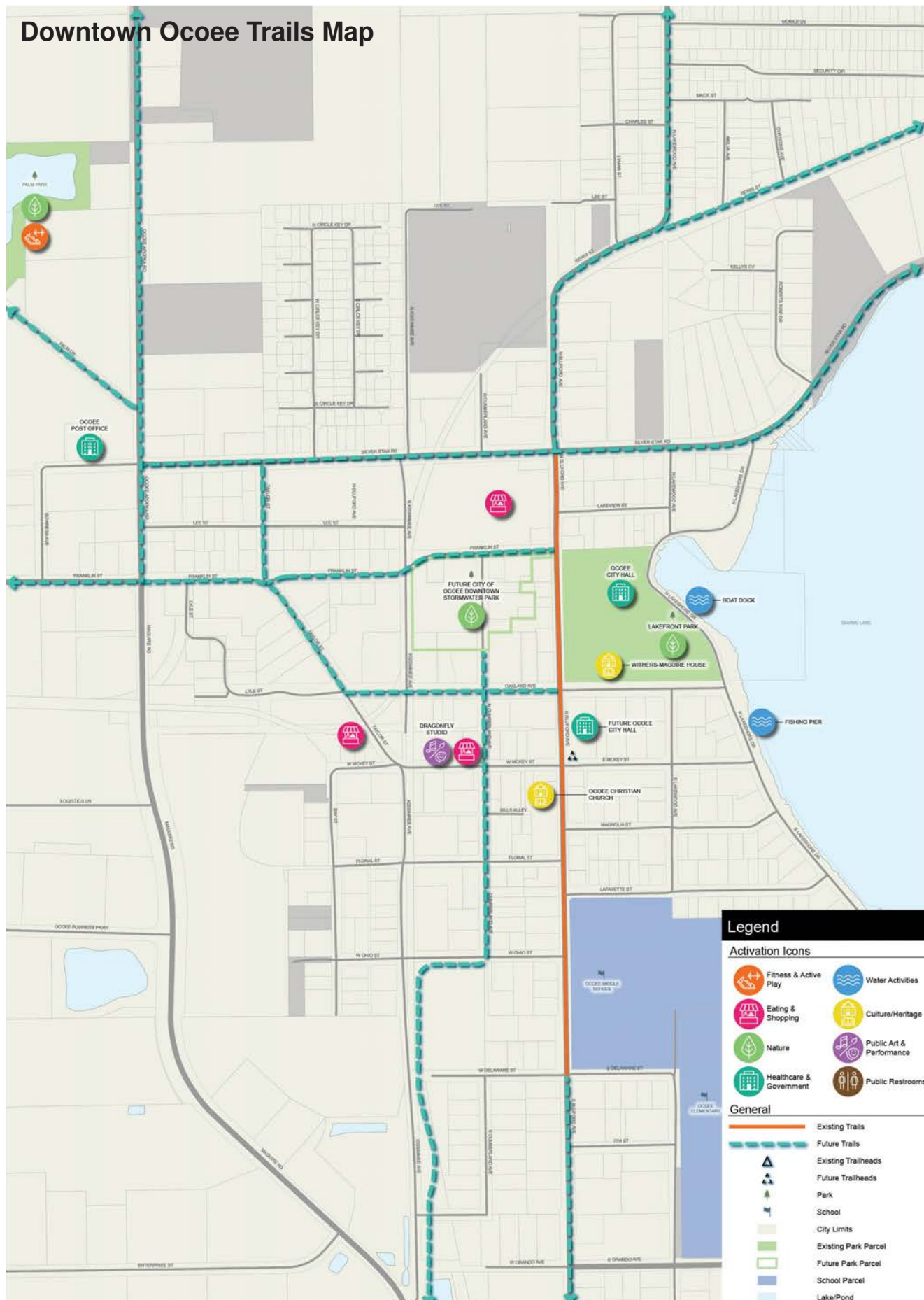
The map shows a network of trails connecting various areas, including the Oakland Town Hall, Oakland Cemetery, and the Oakland Town Hall. The map also shows the location of the Oakland Town Hall, Oakland Cemetery, and the Oakland Town Hall. The map includes a legend for various activation icons and general trail types. The legend is organized into two main sections: 'Activation Icons' and 'General'.

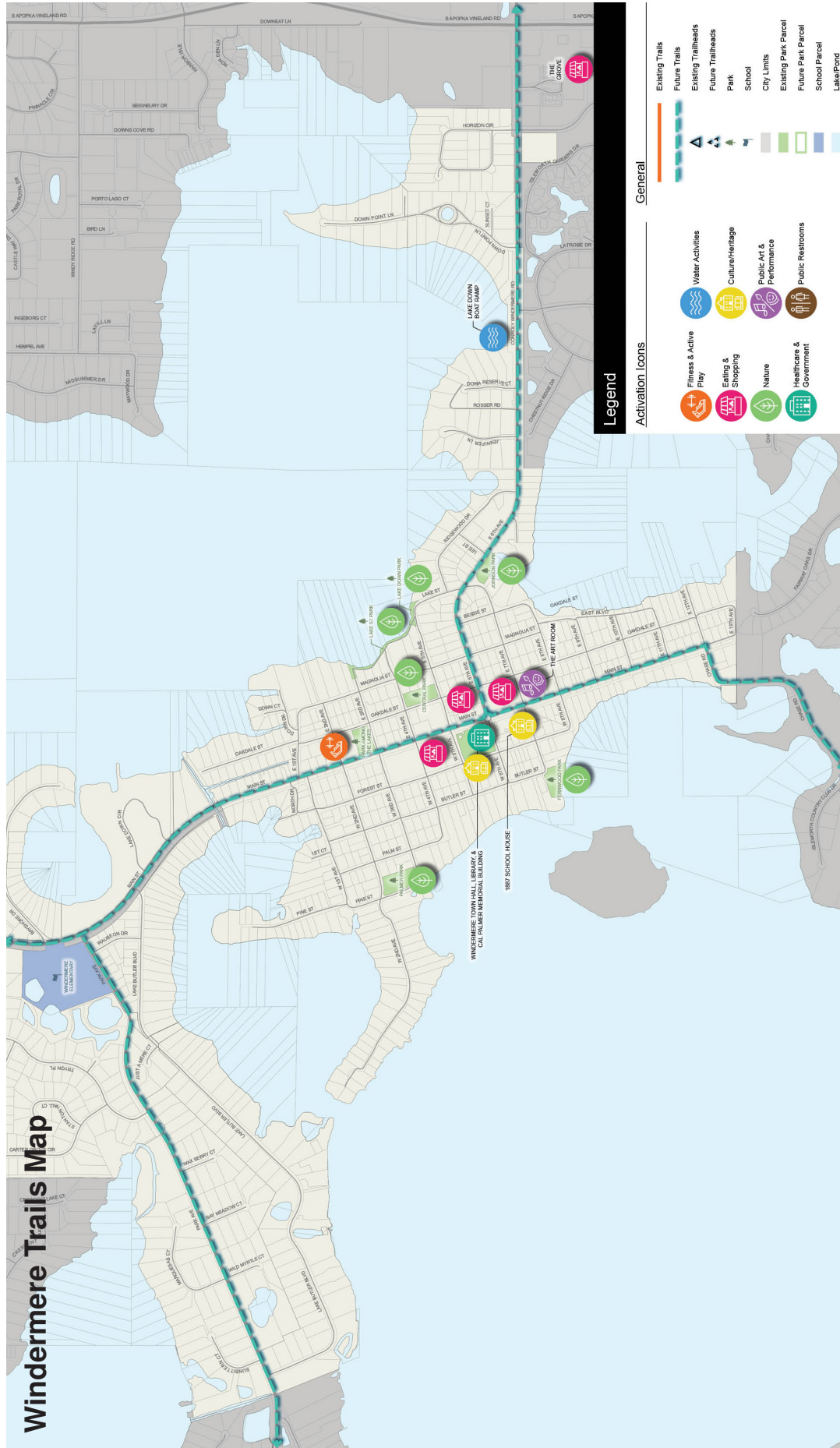


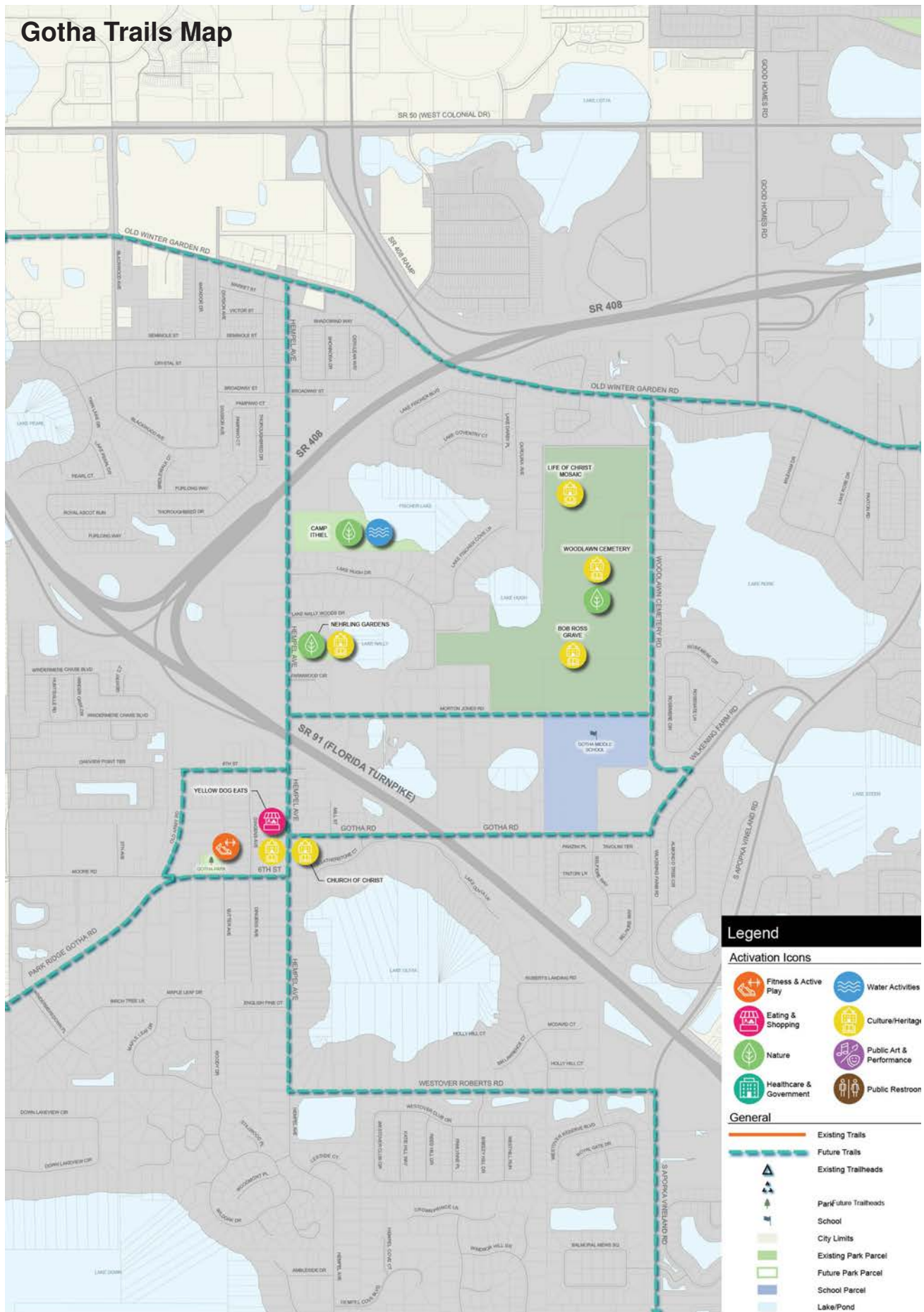
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Downtown Ocoee Trails Map









3.4 Trails & Activation Facility Projects

The municipalities and County were asked to develop a potential capital plan for trails and activation facilities, based on the Healthy West Orange Regional Trails Map. All responded, except for Gotha, with a capital plan that identified key projects identified for implementation. The majority of these were programed to commence construction within the next five (5) years. The following information was obtained and categorized in the worksheets below:

Healthy West Orange Trails Initiative Capital Project Costs: Town of Oakland				
Oakland - Sadler Fitness Trail				The Sadler Fitness Trail and associated parkland is planned to be the newest addition to Oakland's park inventory. Encompassing more than two acres, we envision it to serve many different leisure needs. Aside from being the next link in a sidewalk/trail network that connects to the West Orange Trail and our western neighborhoods, it will have a playground, fitness stations, parking, and are even planning space for a dog park.
a) Trail construction	\$75,000	Yes	2021	
b) Preliminary landscaping	\$25,000	No	2022	
Subtotal Trail Costs	\$100,000			
Oakland - Sadler Fitness Trail				At this point, these features are not funded. As development occurs and Recreation Impact Fees are collected, these features will be funded.
a) Playgrounds	\$100,000	No	Unknown	
b) Fitness stations	\$60,000	No	Unknown	
c) Parking area	\$70,000	No	Unknown	
d) Dog park	\$25,000	No	Unknown	
Subtotal Activation Facilities Costs	\$255,000			



Healthy West Orange Trails Initiative Capital Project Costs: City of Winter Garden

Dillard Street	\$17,000,000	Yes	2021-2024	There will be phasing, but haven't worked out the exact details yet.
Plant St. Realignment	\$400,000	Yes	2022	
W.O. Trail X Realignment	\$73,000	Yes	2021	
Marsh Rd Multi-Use Path	\$4,000,000	Yes	2022	
Subtotal Trail Costs	\$21,473,000			
Butterfly Garden	\$200,000	Yes	2021	Located Downtown
Tucker Wellness Hub	\$ 13,000,000	Yes	2022	Wellness portion of Tucker Ranch Park
Downtown Wayfinding Signage	\$200,000	Yes	TBD	
Subtotal Activation Facilities Costs	\$13,400,000			



Healthy West Orange Trails Initiative Capital Project Costs: City of Ocoee

Bluford Multipurpose Path Phase 1 - Old Winter Garden Rd north to Geneva St	\$4,000,000	Design Only	2022-2023	Under design, this portion of the trail is within the Ocoee *CRA District. A grant from WOHD will provide \$750,000 towards construction. This project is a high priority for the *CRA and the City to provide a safe route to schools from the Oasis Apartments; construction of this segment is identified in the CRA's CIP for 2022-2023.
* CRA -Community Redevelopment Agency				
Bluford Multipurpose Path Phase 2 - Geneva St north to Delaware St.	\$1,500,000	No	2023-2024	Will connect to the City's existing trail that runs north to Silver Star Rd. Connecting at the Middle School it provides an important route to schools for area children.
Silver Star/Franklin Complete Street Project - Trails	\$5,500,000	No	2025+	Includes a cycle track on Silver Star, connection to the WOT west of SR 429. Costs are for the trail element only. Cost for full complete street project is +/- \$14,000,000.
Downtown Connector Trails - Taylor, Oakland, Franklin	\$1,750,000	Partially	2022-2025	Oakland and Taylor is out to bid. Trail segments will tie into the Silver Star Complete Street project.
Ocoee Apopka Rd Trails - Palm Parkway north to McCormick Road	\$3,500,000	No	2025+	10-12' trails along the west side of Ocoee Apopka. Project is planned as a part of widening project needed for capacity. Will connect to the WOT.
Clarke Road Multipurpose Paths between A.D. Mims and Clacona Ocoee Rd	\$950,000	Partially	2022-2023	Multipurpose Path to be installed as part of 4-laning Clarke Rd.
Tomyn Blvd/Windermere Rd	\$2,200,000	No	2025+	Important regional connection. Ocoee has identified a 12'-multipurpose path, as part of the 4-lanning. Total cost of project is +/- \$10,000,000.
Subtotal Trail Costs	\$19,400,000			

Healthy West Orange Trails Initiative Capital Project Costs: City of Ocoee



Wellness Park	\$2,300,000	Yes	Not in 5-year CIP	Funded by grant & CRA
Prairie Lake Hiking Trails w/ wildlife observation and interpretative stations, possible boardwalks	\$550,000	No	Not in 5-year CIP	Not programmed in 5-year CIP. This project needs further study.
Lakefront Park Restroom Concession	\$750,000	No	Not in 5-year CIP	Restroom/concession facility will provide needed facilities for Lakefront Park and downtown trails. People recreating in the park or Starke Lake have requested this facility for some time.
Clarke Road Trailhead - located on the north side of the West Orange Trail, west side of McCormick Rd and north of Clarcona Ocoee Rd.	\$550,000	No	Not in 5-year CIP	Trailhead will have parking, playground, and other amenities. Park has not been designed.
Beach Center Connection	\$1,275,000	No	Not in 5-year CIP	This will include a trail connection east along A.D. Mims Rd to the new Multipurpose Trail on Clarke Rd. Outdoor fitness equipment will be added as well as additional sport fields at the park.
Subtotal Activation Facilities Costs	\$5,425,000			



Healthy West Orange Trails Initiative Capital Project Costs: Town of Windermere

Ward Trail Phase 1	\$1,000,000	Partially	2022	(North Dr to Park Ave) Concept is complete, Design is underway, Construction to be funded through the Town's Miscellaneous fund.
Ward Trail Phase 2	\$600,000	Partially	2024	(6th Ave to North Dr) Design Funded for 2023. Miscellaneous fund.
Ward Trail Phase 3	\$800,000	Partially	2024	(Along 6th Ave - Main St to Apopka Vineland Rd) Design Funded for 2023. Miscellaneous fund.
Ward Trail Phase 4	\$500,000	Partially	2025	(12th Ave to 6th Ave) Design Funded for 2024. Miscellaneous fund.
Ocoee/Ward Trail Connection	\$1,620,000	No	Unknown	New segment from Park Avenue north to Tomin Rd. This will be a multi-agency project, including the Town of Windermere, Orange County and the City of Ocoee. This is an important regional link in the Healthy West Orange Trails Initiative.
Subtotal Trail Costs	\$4,520,000			
Healthy West Orange Pavilion	\$1,000,000	Yes	2024	The West Orange Healthcare District granted Windermere the funds for this project.
Subtotal Activation Facilities Costs	\$0			



Healthy West Orange Trails Initiative Capital Project Costs: Gotha Rural Settlement

Hempel Ave Connection - Old Winter Garden Rd to Westover Roberts Rd	<p>As of June 2021, the costs and funding information for trail segments identified on the Healthy West Orange Trails Initiative Map & the Enlarged Gotha Map have not been provided by any agency.</p> <p>It is recommended that the costs be calculated by the Healthy West Orange Trails Committee at a future date.</p> <p>Furthermore, the area should be further studied to identify potential Activation Facilities. Ideas include a historic ride through Gotha to include wayfinding and cultural identification signs. Also, Gotha Park can serve as a small trailhead.</p>			
Morton Johns Road - Hempel Ave to Woodlawn Cemetery Rd				
Gotha Road - Hempel Ave to Wilkening Farm Rd				
Gotha Road - Hempel Ave to Wilkening Farm Rd				
The 8th St to 6th Street Loop - this will connection along 8th St at Hempel Ave and run West towards Old Army Rd the south to 6th St and east to Hempel Ave				
Gotha to Windermere Connection - this will go along 6th St to Park Ridge Gotha Rd, connecting at Maguire Rd				
Westover Roberts Rd to S. Apopka Vineland Rd				
Apopka Vineland connecting to Westover Roberts Rd				
Subtotal Trail Costs	\$0			
Subtotal Activation Facilities Costs	\$0			



Healthy West Orange Trails Initiative Capital Project Costs: Orange County

Lake Apopka Connector Construction - FDOT Funding	\$4,050,000	Yes	2022-2023	The project will connect Magnolia Park to McCormick Rd. The project was designed in 2020-2021. Design costs were paid by FDOT at \$1,390,802. Trail on McCormick Rd. will connect to the West Orange Trail near Apopka Vineland Rd.
Lake Apopka Connector Construction - County Funding	\$4,396,922	Yes	2022-2023	The project will connect Magnolia Park to McCormick Rd. The project was designed in 2020-2021. Design costs were paid by FDOT at \$1,390,802. Trail on McCormick Rd. will connect to the West Orange Trail near Apopka Vineland Rd.
Horizon West Ph 1	\$3,850,000	Yes	2022	Connects Tiny Rd. to Winter Garden Vineland Rd. County to verify status of this project
Horizon West Ph 2	\$5,642,627	No	No time period given	This will connect West Orange Park to Winter Garden Vineland Rd.
Subtotal Trail Costs	\$17,939,549			
Subtotal Activation Facilities Costs	\$0			

Based on the information provided, there are over \$34,969,922 funded trail projects (most of these are Winter Garden & Orange County projects) and \$16,700,000 funded activation projects (most of these are Winter Garden's) for a total currently funded of \$51,669,922. There are \$28,462,627 of unfunded trail projects and \$3,350,000 unfunded activation projects for a total **currently** unfunded of \$31,812,627 identified projects.

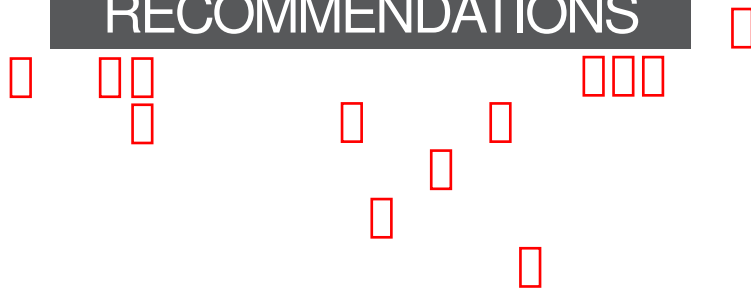


3.5 Trails & Activation Facilities - What Comes Next

Based on the information received, it is clear that additional time is needed to capture every trail and potential activation site currently depicted on the Healthy West Orange Regional Trails Map. Therefore, it is recommended that one of the on-going tasks to be undertaken is to build a short-, mid- and long-term capital plan for all projects. Alternative funding sources should be identified and applied for in order to leverage available funding from local agencies and the WOHD/Foundation for a Healthier West Orange.

The Healthy West Orange Regional Trails Map should be updated on an annual basis to change the future trails and activation sites/facilities, once constructed or activated, to existing trails and if new trails or facilities are identified they should be added as well.

RECOMMENDATIONS





4.0. RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Moving the Initiative Forward

Two of the most important outcomes from the process of drafting this report are the relationships forged and collaboration between the Partnering and Supporting agencies that comprised the Working Committee. It is through this collaboration, a regional approach to trails planning that focuses on improving overall community health in West Orange County was drafted. For the Trails Initiative to be realized, it is imperative that the Partnering Agencies continue to collaborate with one another on an ongoing and regular basis. Furthermore, it is as important that the Supporting Agencies, especially Orange County, continue to be involved in order to properly implement trail activation ideas, projects, programs, and events. The following recommendations are meant to be advisory in nature.



4.2 Definitions

The following definitions are provided in order to better define specific entities and deliverables referred to within the Guiding Principles & Implementation Strategies.

Healthy West Orange Trails Initiative is an ongoing collaborative effort between the partnering and supporting agencies to define and implement an activated regional trails network for West Orange County that centers on building and connecting healthy communities.

Healthy West Orange Trails Initiative's Partnering Agencies include the West Orange Healthcare District (WOHD), Foundation for a Healthier West Orange, Town of Oakland, City of Winter Garden, City of Ocoee, Town of Windermere, and Gotha Rural Settlement.

Healthy West Orange Trails Initiative's Supporting Agencies include, but are not limited to, Orange County Parks and Recreation Department, FDOT, MetroPlan Orlando, Bike/Walk Central Florida, Florida Health-Orange County, West Orange Chamber, and other agencies as may be invited to participate in furthering the Healthy West Orange Trails Initiative by the Partnering Agencies. Supporting Agencies are advisory in nature.

Regional Trails Map is comprised of graphic plans, maps, and text that describe the alignments of existing and future trails and activation destinations throughout west Orange County. The Regional Trails Map was created through the cooperative effort of the Working Committee and presented in Section III of this Report. The Regional Trails Map will be reviewed annually and updated as deemed necessary by the Trails Committee.

Healthy West Orange Trails Committee is comprised of representatives from Partnering and Supporting agencies. Their mission is to further the Trails Initiative.

Healthy West Orange Trails Connection is the proposed name for the program that serves to implement the ideas and recommendations contained within this Report. The administration of this program is discussed further in these recommendations.





4.3 Mission, Guiding Principles & Implementation Strategies

4.3.1 *Collaborate, Connect, Engage, Enhance, Navigate, Identity, Empower*

In order to move the Trails Initiative forward, Partnering and Supporting agencies must embrace and act upon the following guiding principles and their related implementation strategies.

COLLABORATE: *Ensure ongoing, inclusive, collaborative guidance for the Healthy West Orange Trails Initiative's implementation and evolution.*

- Healthy West Orange Trails Connection & Bike/Walk Central Florida:

It is recommended, that the West Orange Healthcare District/Foundation for a Healthier West Orange contract with Bike/Walk Central Florida to be the program manager for the Healthy West Orange Trails Connection. As the program manager for The Healthy West Orange Trails Connection, Bike/Walk Central Florida will facilitate and administer the on-going planning, programming, and implementation of the Healthy West Orange Trails Initiative, as described within this Report. Bike/Walk Central Florida is a 501(c)(3) formed in 2010 to promote walkable and bikeable communities through raising public awareness and advocating for safe, active transportation and recreation. Bike/Walk Central Florida's purpose aligns with the Healthy West Orange Trails Initiative, especially their proven record in raising awareness by framing issues through health and safety. The contract with Bike/Walk Central Florida is estimated to range between \$100,000 and \$125,000 annually.



If and when the Trails Committee determines there is a need to change the management of the Healthy West Orange Trails Connection program, there may be the need to establish a new non-profit organization, including the hiring of an individual that specializes in trail implementation and has strong administrative and organizational capabilities.

- Trails Committee: Under the leadership of the Healthy West Orange Trails Connection, as administered by Bike/Walk Central Florida or another entity, create an interjurisdictional Healthy West Orange Trails Committee (***Trails Committee***) that works collaboratively to implement the Trails Initiative, monitors performance, and evolves the Initiative's mission, guiding principles, and implementation strategies. The Trails Committee will be comprised of representatives from Partnering and Supporting Agencies. The Healthy West Orange Trails Connection will provide administrative and organizational services for the Trails Committee. This will include setting, conducting, and documenting meetings.



- **Roles & Responsibility of the Trails Committee:** The primary role of the Trails Committee is to share information and opportunities in order to implement the Healthy West Orange Trails Initiative's mission, guiding principles and implementation strategies, including furthering the Regional Trails Map.
- **Partnering Agencies:** Each Partnering Agency will be requested to execute a memorandum of understanding (the agreement) with the Healthy West Orange Trails Connection. The draft agreement will be submitted to each Partnering Agency for review, input, and execution. Partnering agencies will be requested to name one (1) staff member and one (1) alternate from their agency to serve on the Trails Committee. Whereas, most decisions should be made through consensus, some decisions may be based on a one-vote per agency system.
- **Supporting Agencies:** In addition, representatives from Orange County, Bike/Walk Central Florida, FDOT, MetroPlan Orlando, West Orange Chamber, and Florida Health-Orange County will be invited to participate on the Trails Committee. The supporting agencies will function as a resource and participate on consensus formed opinions or direction. Supporting agencies will not have a vote, if and when a vote may be necessary, to implement the intent of the mission, guiding principles and implementation strategies. Each Supporting Agency will be requested to execute a "Letter of Participation".
- **Meetings:** The Trails Committee will meet at least four (4) times per year. During the first meeting of each fiscal year, the Trails Committee will confirm the dates for the four (4) meetings of the year and set any additional meetings. Topics for the meetings may include, but are not limited to the following:
 - » Overview of each Partnering and Supporting agencies' funding and budgeting for trail projects, including physical improvements to create activation facilities
 - » Potential activities, programs, or special events to be offered in the upcoming year that serves to address community health needs
 - » Discuss and identify the activities and programs to be implemented
 - » Provide direction related to conducting public awareness and marketing activities
 - » Other issues as agreed to by the Trails Committee.
- **Friends Groups:** Under the leadership of the Healthy West Orange Trails Connection, create Friends of the Healthy West Orange Trails group(s), and/or develop relationships with existing friends' groups that share common goals. The functions of these groups can vary based on their areas of interest or expertise. Examples of the activities such groups may participate in include, the assembly of land for trail development, assist with maintenance activities and costs, encourage trail stewardship among residents, and address other pertinent needs in order to activate to improve community health and increase trail usage, creating a high-quality experience for trail users.





CONNECT: *Create and activate a regional network of trails connecting municipalities, landmarks, and destinations in West Orange County reaching all populations including those that may have underlying health concerns.*

- Coordination: On-going coordination with federal, state, and local entities to develop cross-jurisdictional partnerships and regional alliances to increase viability of investment in the development, activation, and management of the trails and related facilities within West Orange County is essential to implementing the Trails Initiative.
- Regulatory Documents: Partnering Agencies will be encouraged to acknowledge and/or reference the Healthy West Orange Trails Initiative's Guiding Principles and Strategies, which includes the Healthy West Orange County Regional Trails Map in their local comprehensive plans, individual trails master plans, and in other regulating documents to protect/preserve potential trail corridors and further the development of healthy communities through trail activation.
- Community Health & Planning: Encourage our Partnering Agencies to consider the enhancement of community health when planning, prioritizing, and implementing their trails, activation facilities, programs, and special events.
- Connect with Local Public Health Professionals: In order to identify, down to the neighborhood level if needed, underlying health concerns within the West Orange Healthcare District, Healthy West Orange Trails Connection, and the Trails Committee must actively coordinate with local health professionals to:
 - ° Acquire data to assist in planning, designing, and locating trails and activation facilities to better address local health concerns.
 - ° Health issues should be considered when developing programs, events, and activities related to trail activation, including preparing Health Impact Assessments whenever possible.
 - ° To build awareness about the Healthy West Orange Trails Connection Program.
- **Refinement of the Regional Trails Map & Activation Program:** Further discussion and refinement of the location and prioritization of future trail corridors and activation facilities, especially if an opportunity exists to locate a trail or activation facility outside a road right-of-way in order to increase the users' experience and increase activation opportunities.
- Finding the Funds: Collaborate with partnering and supporting agencies to identify funding sources through local, state, and national sources (public and private) that can be used to better implement the projects, programs, events, and activities identified in this Initiative or as a result of information gained through Health Impact Assessments (HIAs), public outreach or other means. This also includes research for obtaining sustainable, dedicated funding for trail implementation, activation, and management.





ENGAGE: Increase trail engagement to meet physical, social, and mental well-being needs of West Orange County through programs, events, and activation facilities guided by data and trends.

- Following Health Trends: When planning and implementing trail activation facilities, events, and programs, Partnering and Supporting agencies should do so based on readily available health data and trends. This data can be obtained through a collaboration with Florida Health Department-Orange County, through local hospitals, and through groups including, but not limited to, the Central Florida Regional Planning Council, MetroPlan Orlando, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and Polis Institute.
- Targeting Health Through Activation: Integration of trail activation facilities into trails, pathways, and parks aimed at increasing overall activity, will create a positive impact on the health of children, families, and residents within West Orange. Partnering Agencies will be encouraged to locate, build, maintain, and manage activation facilities and programs that are geared to different age groups and abilities. The Trails Committee should review and update, if necessary, the list of activation facilities and programs and ideas contained within the Initiative's report on an annual basis.
- Recreational Programs & Events Geared to Improving Community Health: Collaboration is needed with and between local parks and recreation departments to develop and implement special events and programs geared to improving community health through the use of local trails, related activation facilities, and adjacent parks or public venues.
- Harnessing Public Comment: Policies, procedures, and data collection mechanisms, such as workshops and surveys, will be used to collect public opinion in order to improve local activation facilities, programs, and special events.

ENHANCE: Ensure trails are attractive, comfortable, safe, and accessible.

- Guiding Facility Activation: Formation of a subcommittee to work with local trails and recreation facility providers to develop resource(s) for the planning, design, and maintenance of trails and activation facilities within the West Orange Healthcare District.
 - º Partnering agencies will be encouraged to use design/development guidelines/standards when implementing trails and activation facilities.
 - º Those agencies that have adopted such guidelines/standards will be encouraged to share them with the "Guidelines Subcommittee". The intent of this step is to increase awareness of trail and activation facility guidelines/standards.
 - º If a Partnering Agency doesn't have such guidelines/standards, they will be encouraged to establish them.
 - º This subcommittee will evaluate system transition guidelines for trails and activation facilities that may be located between two or more jurisdictions.
- **Evaluating Design & Safety**: A design and safety audit form/process should be developed that documents a trail or facility's aesthetics, user comfort, programs or activities, facility safety, and accessibility. Partnering agencies will be encouraged to use the form when performing their audits and to use the information gained through those audits to improve the Healthy West Orange's Trail system. Agencies that perform audits will be encouraged to share generalized findings in order to increase overall awareness of how conditions (real and perceived) can impact the quality and safety of trail and activation facilities.



NAVIGATE: Increase navigation to and from trails by such methods as standardized wayfinding signage, evaluating trail access and connections, and through communication and education.

- **Design, Branding & Wayfinding:** Create a coordinated wayfinding system that integrates the branding of each individual agency. When implemented, the wayfinding signage program will not only guide trail users to destinations it should also create a regional brand for the trail system in West Orange County, while respecting and integrating each partnering agency's brand.
- **Raising Community Awareness:** Create and implement a communication and education campaign aimed at increasing residents' awareness of trails and location of activation points and programs geared to improving overall community health. This may include, but not limited to, a centralized website and the use of social media such as Facebook and Instagram to get the word out about West Orange trails and trail activation including facilities, activities, special events, and programs. The Healthy West Orange Trails Connection will take the lead in developing and implementing the social media and marketing program.

IDENTITY: Increase sense of place and shared identity through an integrated and consistent "Cultural Trail" with related programming for West Orange County.

- **Connecting Heritage Sites in West Orange County:** In recognition of West Orange County's heritage and to promote the preservation of our historical resources, a "Cultural Trail" that connects our region from the western county line at Killarney Station to Oakland, to Winter Garden, to Ocoee, over to Gotha, and to Windermere should be established.
- **Building on Existing Resources:** The "Cultural Trail" development should build upon available resources, such as "Explore Orlando's West Side", an informational brochure that includes a map depicting West Orange County's Historical Places of Interest, produced by the West Orange Chamber, the West Orange Observer, and the Winter Garden Heritage Foundation.
- **Creating a Uniform Wayfinding and Interpretative System:** Collaborate with local historical and heritage groups to develop uniform cultural identification and interpretive branding and signage guidelines.

EMPOWER: Encourage active public involvement and investment in the Healthy West Orange Trails' Initiative, as well as, in future communication, marketing, and educational campaigns.

- **Keeping up with Future Demand:** Healthy West Orange Trails Connection will take the lead in developing and implementing an active public outreach program. This program will identify methods to collect public comment on existing and future facilities, programs and events that aim to enhance community health. Such outreach may include survey campaigns, virtual workshops, and special events designed to gain public comment. An on-going social media campaign will be created and implemented based on simple and effective messaging on how trails, adjoining parks, activation facilities, programs and events can improve and promote lifelong healthy lifestyles for people of all age groups and abilities.
- **Moving Forward:** This report should be reviewed at least annually and updated as needed to address community issues and comments.

4.4 Next Steps

This report documents the process, organizes collective research, maps existing and future trails and activation facilities, and most importantly defines the mission, guiding principles, and implementation strategies to move

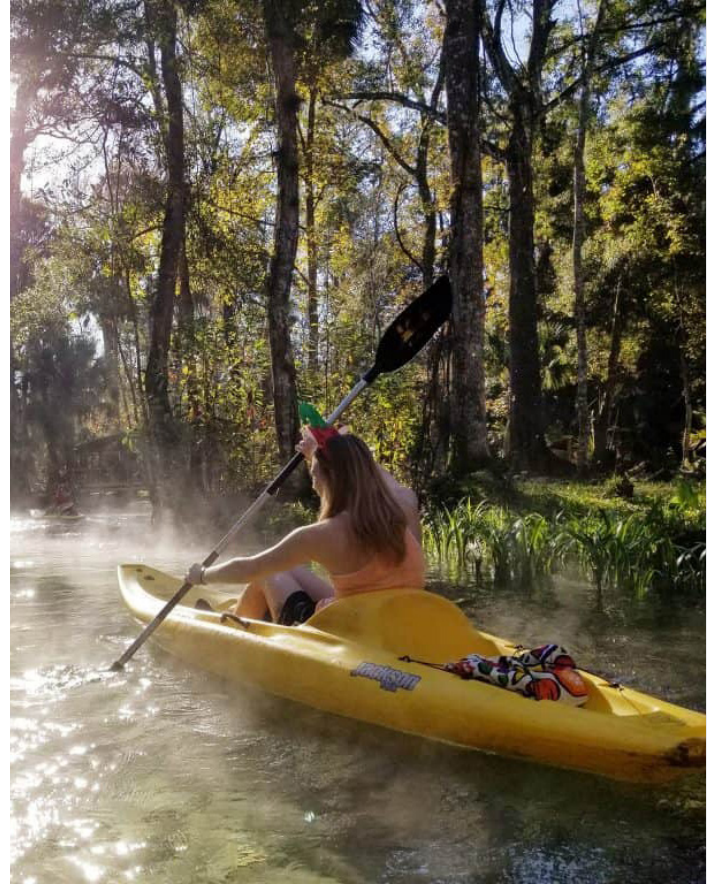


the Trails Initiative forward. The following are recommended immediate next steps to keep the momentum on the right path.

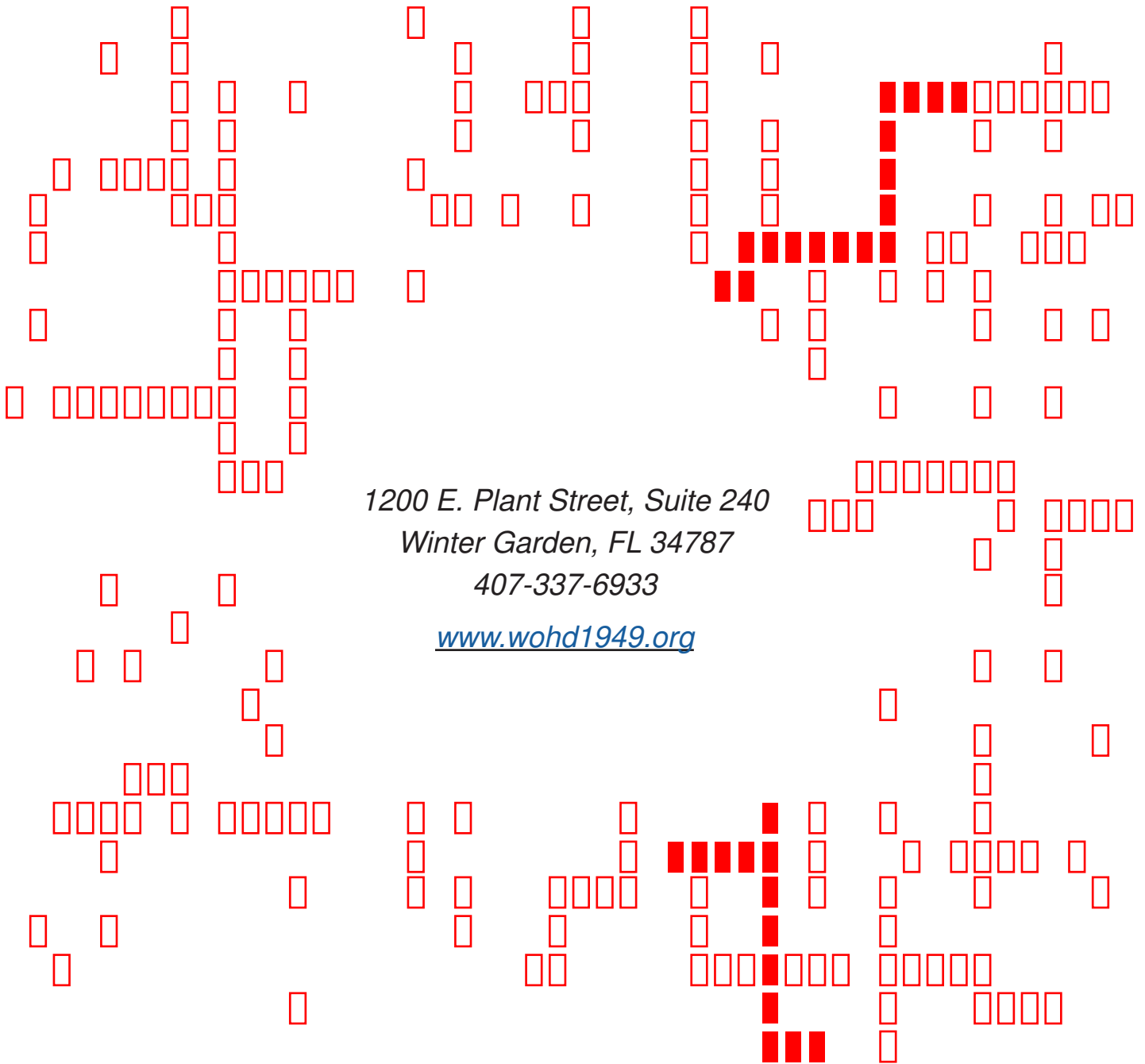
- **Present Findings and Recommendations:** Present an overview of the Trails Initiative to the West Orange Healthcare District Board/Foundation for a Healthier West Orange and request the Board adopt this plan and move forward with its implementation.
- **Request to Contract with Bike/Walk Central Florida:** Request direction to move forward by contracting with Bike/Walk Central Florida to administer and implement the Healthy West Orange Trails Connection. Once the contract is in place, Bike/Walk Central Florida will serve as the administrator and facilitator and initiate the following:
 - **Establish the Trails Committee:** Reach out to the primary and supporting agencies to request their on-going participation on the Trails Committee. Prepare and submit memorandums of understanding to each of the Partnering Agencies and a letter of participation to Supporting Agencies
 - **Identify Priority Projects:** Based on information provided in Part III of this Report and through other means, identify potential projects to recommend to the Foundation for a Healthier West Orange for funding in the next fiscal year. This can be one of the first tasks the Trails Committee considers.



- Develop and Implement a Public Awareness Campaign: The West Orange Healthcare District and the Foundation for a Healthier West Orange have done a fabulous job in the past several years to activate the West Orange community. As the administrator of the Healthy West Orange Trails Connection, Bike/Walk Central Florida will work closely with the West Orange Healthcare District and the Foundation in developing a targeted awareness campaign for the local trails and parks.
- **Establish the Healthy West Orange Trails Connection Non-Profit (Future):** If the trails committee determines the need to establish a non-profit to continue the Healthy West Orange Trails Connection, next steps would include:
 - Form a Florida corporation and File Articles of Incorporation
 - Identify and Name the Board of Directors: The Directors can be representatives from the Partnering Agencies. Only 3 are required by the state of Florida; however, we suggest a 7-member Board.
 - Call an Initial meeting of the Board of Directors to draft and adopt Bylaws.
 - Apply for tax-exempt status from the IRS and the State of Florida.
 - Cost for filing the required documents is approximately \$1,000.
 - Solicit for and secure an Executive Director to run the Trails Connection. Salaries for Executive Directors of trail or park nonprofit organizations in Florida range between \$80,000 and \$160,000, plus benefits, depending on qualifications and size of organization.



In 2020, the Foundation for a Healthier West Orange and the West Orange Healthcare District set out to further its understanding on how trails can be used to activate the community to get outdoors, walk, bike, and come together to become a healthier West Orange. Whereas, COVID changed the way the Trails Working Committee and staff could physically explore topics and then mold the recommendations contained within this Report, we believe, we have ignited a spark with those participating with us over the past year.



*1200 E. Plant Street, Suite 240
Winter Garden, FL 34787
407-337-6933*

www.wohd1949.org