



## MEMORANDUM

**FROM:** Jim Yelverton, City Arborist/ Tree Program Administrator

**DEPT:** Planning and Zoning

**TO:** Mayor and Council

**DATE:** October 8, 2024

**SUBJECT:** Canopy road designation

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**Background:** The Environmental Chapter of the Land Development Regulations provides a process to designate Canopy Roads. These are roads that contain a minimum of 50% canopy coverage and are made up of at least 75% Florida Friendly Species. The 500 to 700 blocks of West Venice Avenue qualify for this designation.

The Live Oaks that line West Venice Avenue have matured, and in some instances, are beginning to show early signs of decline. As they age, their vigor and ability to respond to pruning and root disturbances are diminishing. Improper pruning and root damage can impose significant stress on an older tree. A Canopy Road designation could offer additional protection for these trees as well as heighten public awareness about their value to the City. The goal of this designation would be to acknowledge and preserve the scenic beauty and natural canopy of this historic roadway.

**Canopy Road Standards:** If approved, the Canopy Road designation will provide standards for the protection of trees within the Canopy Road Protection Zone (CRPZ). The CRPZ is defined as:

*A designated section of City and county right-of-way and the adjacent private property extending up to 15 feet laterally from the right-of-way onto adjacent private property, but in no event extending greater than 15 feet laterally from the edge of the roadway.*

Tree protection standards affecting adjacent property owners:

- Pruning branches larger than two inches in diameter from any tree with a trunk located within the CRPZ will require a permit and must be supervised by a Certified Arborist. A request to waive the pruning permit fees will be included with the designation request.
- Root pruning, if necessary, must conform to industry standards and be conducted under the direct supervision of a Certified Arborist.
- It will be a violation of the tree code to cause irreparable injury to or prune a tree within the CRPZ in a manner inconsistent with the City's tree code and *ANSI A300 Standard for Tree Care*.

Complete descriptions of standards and requirements for Canopy Roads are detailed in the *Land Development Code, Chapter 89 – Sec. 3.4.9 Canopy Road Designation*.

**Request:** We are seeking Council approval for the Canopy Road Designation for the 500 to 700 blocks of West Venice Avenue, including Heritage Park. Additionally, we request approval to reduce the burden on property owners by waiving pruning permit fees within the Canopy Road Protection Zone.