



THROUGH CHARTER OFFICER: Edward Lavalley, City Manager **E-SIGN:**
FROM: James R. Clinch, Assistant City Manager
DEPARTMENT: City Manager

DATE: May 28, 2024

MEETING DATE: June 11, 2024

SUBJECT / TOPIC: Staff Information Request
Toscana Isles – Entrance/Exit to Knights Trail Rd.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

At the May 14th City Council meeting, Councilmember Frank shared concerns from the community members of the Toscana Isles subdivision regarding their main entrance/exit onto Knights Trail Road. These concerns were primarily focused on the vehicular safety of residents while entering and exiting from the main entrance to Toscana Isles (Maraviya Blvd.) onto Knights Trail Road. Council proceeded to direct staff to *research and compile information and bring back recommendations to Council regarding Knights Trail improvements.*

STAFF RESEARCH:

Knights Trail Road is owned and maintained by Sarasota County and designated as an Urban Minor Collector in the City’s Comprehensive Plan and a Minor Arterial on the County’s Thoroughfare Plan, a higher classification. The County does not identify it as an evacuation route, but it does consider it a major roadway and indicates a future of four (4) lanes. The roadway does serve as the primary access route to the Sarasota County Landfill and to many industrial use properties.

Minor collectors collect and distribute moderate amounts of traffic between arterials, major collectors, and local roads at relatively low operating speeds with greater accessibility than major collectors.

Minor Arterials provide somewhat shorter trip lengths than major arterials and generally interconnect with and augment major arterial routes at moderate operating speeds, allowing somewhat greater access to adjacent properties than major arterials.

Based on the County’s most recent, 2022 Generalized Level of Service Analysis, Knights Trail Road from Laurel Rd. to Rustic Rd. is functioning at LOS “C”. Six levels of service have been defined, with LOS “A” representing the best operating conditions and LOS “F” representing the worst. This means that this road segment is functioning at a better level than the minimum adopted required LOS “D” that is shared by both the City and the County. The County began doing traffic counts on Knights Trail in 2018. The Design Hourly Volume (DHV) is 1,031 and the Service Volume is 1,440.

At the request of the Toscana Isles residents, the Venice Police Department (VPD) performed a speed study on Knights Trail Rd. in August of 2023 (see attachment 1). Of the 3,285.3 daily vehicles average in both directions, there was a daily average of 37.9 vehicles traveling 10 MPH over the limit. This equates to only 1.1% of daily vehicles traveling 10mph over the posted speed limit. Based on the data obtained from the speed study, it was VPD's opinion that there is not a speeding concern in that section of Knights Trail Rd.

The original traffic study for Toscana Isles was approved and is dated July 18, 2011. The following improvements were identified:

The analysis concluded that two improvements will be needed during the construction of Phase 1.

The first improvement is the construction of a northbound to eastbound right turn lane at the north project driveway. The applicant has agreed to construct the northbound right turn lane at the north project driveway when the north project driveway is constructed for Toscana Isles project traffic.

The second improvement is that when warranted and approved by Sarasota County, the intersection of Knight's Trail Road & Technology Drive/South Project driveway should be signalized. Accordingly, the applicant has agreed that when 600 Toscana Isles single family dwelling units, or the equivalent of 600 single family dwelling units (one single family dwelling unit is equal to 1.943 multi-family dwelling units in terms of trip generation) receive certificate of occupancy, that a full traffic signal warrant study shall be conducted by the developer, with the County's methodology approval at the Knight's Trail Road & Technology Drive/South Project Driveway intersection. If a traffic signal warrant is met, and the County determines that a traffic signal is needed, based on professional judgment, then the developer will design and construct the traffic signal. The design and construction will be to County standards and must be approved by the County. If a traffic signal warrant is not met, than on an annual basis thereafter, a full traffic signal warrant study shall be conducted by the developer, with the County's methodology approval. When a traffic signal warrant is met, and the County determines that a traffic signal is needed, based on professional judgment, then the developer will design and construct the traffic signal. The design and construction will be to County standards and must be approved by the County.

The initial approval for Toscana Isles was for 1,714 residential units along with two commercial out-parcels. The initial concurrency certificate was issued in September of 2012 and indicated a maximum of 915 vehicle trips for Phase 1. It was indicated that Phases 1 and 2 would generate 1,205 trips.

In July of 2015, a revised certificate was issued for the entire development that set the maximum residential units at 1,107 and identified the signalization of the entrance. It also indicated that 779 trips remained. In May of 2017, a revised certificate was issued that indicated 677 trips remained and it included the signalization. In July of 2019, a revised certificate was issued that

increased the proposed residential units to 1,159. It also indicated that a mobility fee would be applied to each residential unit. The required signalization requirement remained in place.

In December of 2019, a letter from Jeff Boone was received requesting an updated concurrency certificate based on the City Attorney's determination that the developer was no longer responsible for the signal (see attachment 2). This was due to the new application of mobility fees on each structure within the Toscana Isles development. The City had adopted the County's mobility fee process and began collecting the fee with the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy (CO) for each new residential or non-residential structure. These fees are substantial and are collected for the County to be applied to transportation improvements within the City. As a result, a revised concurrency certificate was issued that removed the requirement for signalization of the Toscana Isles entrance from the developer's responsibility.

It is important to note that the total residential build-out of Toscana Isles is only 967 units. Considerably below the originally approved 1,714. It is also important to note that it appears the development did not reach the 600 unit count prior to the application of mobility fees and the removal of the developer's responsibility for the signal. The burden of the signalization had now been shifted to the County through the potential use of mobility fees. It is not allowable for the City to propose a project on a County road and therefore must rely on the County for future project consideration and timing.

The signalization of Knights Trail Road and Technology Drive first appeared in the Capital Improvement Schedule (CIS) approved on May 28, 2019 through Ordinance No. 2019-16 and it was ranked 13th. This roadway improvement has remained on the CIS list since that time and its current CIS ranking is 19. This list of priorities, including the subject signalization, is forwarded to the Sarasota County Commission annually. It is also provided to the Sarasota Manatee County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) every year, who administers both State and Federal funding.

The County is currently designing the connection of Lorraine Road to Knights Trail Road. The southernmost segment of the eventual connection is scheduled for design and permitting completion in the Fall of this year. There is remaining right-of-way that needs to be acquired for the northern portions. A separate interlocal agreement also needs to be executed before construction can begin. The County's Capital Funding program indicates construction for FY 26/27. There is also a project plan to expand the 681 interchange at I-75 and these projects will provide much needed relief from the current commercial and industrial truck traffic that use Knights Trail Rd. to access the County Landfill and the other industrial use properties.

In summary, this is a dynamic and rapidly changing County owned roadway. The intersection was identified and has been listed in the City CIS as needing to be signalized in the future once the traffic volumes warrant such an improvement.

ATTACHMENTS:

- 1) VPD Knight's Trail Speed Study 10/9/2023
- 2) Request for Amended Concurrency 12/3/2019
- 3) Approval of Concurrency Amendment 12/9/2019
- 4) Location Map

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1) CIS Update – the update of the CIS is typically in October and provides opportunity for projects to be re-prioritized. The rankings will be sent to both the MPO and Sarasota County.
- 2) Letter from City Council to Sarasota County indicating resident concerns and asking for their consideration of this future project.

SUPPORTS STRATEGIC PLAN: Goal Six: Preserve the Venice Quality of Life through Proper Planning

COUNCIL ACTION REQUESTED: Direction to staff for next steps

Yes	N/A	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Document(s) Reviewed for ADA compliance <small>(required if for agenda posting)</small>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	City Attorney Reviewed/Approval
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Risk Management Review
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Finance Department Review/Approval
		Funds Availability (account number): Park Impact Fees