

**TOSCANA ISLES MASTER ASSOCIATION, INC.**  
**2970 University Parkway, Suite 101**  
**Sarasota, FL 34243**

October 12, 2020

Mayor Feinsod and Venice City Council Members  
401 West Venice Ave  
Venice, Florida 34285

**Re: Widening East Laurel Road from Two to Four Lanes**

**SENT VIA EMAIL TO:** [citycouncil@venicegov.com](mailto:citycouncil@venicegov.com); [lstelzer@venicegov.com](mailto:lstelzer@venicegov.com)

Mayor and City Council Members:

I am sending this letter on behalf of the Toscana Isles Homeowners Association, which represent approximately 1,000 future homes (currently ~450 homes) located on Knights Trail Road, just north of East Laurel Road.

After having reviewed the Laurel Road Expansion 22-Page PowerPoint Presentation, we support:

1. Proceeding with a Public Private Partnership
2. Approving Option C in coordination with Sarasota County
3. Authorizing to apply for funding to the Florida Legislature

This project is important to the residents of north Venice and should be approved for the following reasons:

1. The majority of the mobility fees generated in Venice come from Northeast Venice proximate to East Laurel Road. Over the next decade or so, thousands of new homes and apartments will be constructed in this area.
2. The proposed public-private partnership with Neal Communities is a proven and cost-effective way to construct the roadway in the shortest possible time. Neal Communities has a long record of success in doing similar projects under partnerships elsewhere. In addition, Neal owns additional right of way needed on the south side of Laurel Road to make this widening possible.
3. The Level of Service From Knights Trail Road to Jacaranda Blvd. is F
4. Traffic will dramatically increase in this part of the City/County with the growth of the:
  - a. Rapidly expanding 184-acre commercial park and 523-acre industrial park
  - b. 120,000 sq. ft. Amazon distribution center
  - c. New 305,000 sq. ft. Sarasota Memorial Hospital facility

5. In addition, a four lane Laurel Road will benefit the planned new north south corridor roadway that is planned to run from East Laurel Road north through Clark Road and Manatee County.
6. Now is the time to proceed with this study or it will be too late and expensive to acquire right of way in the future after additional development has progressed.
7. A four lane East Laurel Road will provide improved access to the existing City of Venice fire station and life-saving emergency service vehicles for thousands of residents in the area.

I trust you will review each of the highlighted points and will vote in favor of this investment in our future.

Sincerely,

TOSCANA ISLES MASTER ASSOCIATION, INC.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'AH', is written over the printed name.

Alexander Hays, as its President

**From:** [Alexander Hays](#)  
**To:** [City Council](#)  
**Cc:** [Kathleen Weeden](#); [Edward Lavallee](#)  
**Subject:** Laurel Road Expansion  
**Date:** Monday, October 12, 2020 1:13:28 PM  
**Attachments:** [2020.10.12 East Laurel Road 4 Lane Preliminary Design Approval .pdf](#)

---

**Caution:** This email originated from an external source. **Be Suspicious of Attachments, Links and Requests for Login Information**

City Council,

I am writing on behalf of the Toscana Isles Master Association. Thank you for your consideration of the proposed Laurel Road Expansion. Please consider the attached letter expressing Toscana Isles' support of this critical improvement.

---

Alexander H. Hays  
Vanguard Land, LLC

6561 Palmer Park Circle, Suite B  
Sarasota, FL 34238

941.724.0605 (mobile)  
941.552.6705 (office)  
941.346.6115(facsimile)  
[ahays@vanguardland.com](mailto:ahays@vanguardland.com)  
[www.vanguardland.com](http://www.vanguardland.com)

**From:** [DM Sweet](#)  
**To:** [City Council](#)  
**Cc:** [Edward Lavallee](#); [Jerry Jasper](#); [Willow Chase Board](#); [Kathleen Weeden](#)  
**Subject:** Laurel Road Widening Proposal  
**Date:** Monday, October 12, 2020 12:05:18 PM

---

**Caution:** This email originated from an external source. **Be Suspicious of Attachments, Links and Requests for Login Information**

City Council Members,

I am writing regarding the upcoming presentation to City Council by Pat Neal of Neal Communities, and to piggy back on the comments of fellow Willow Chase board member, Rick Palmer, in the email below.

I understand Mr. Neal's presentation offers three options for the widening of Laurel Road, and he will be proposing a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) for the Preliminary Engineering phase, which was recently funded.

Our Community Association joins our neighboring Community Association at Venetian Golf and River Club, in supporting Option C. While the Undivided Option A is the least expensive, we would not only like to see the landscaped median for beautification purposes, but also, and more importantly, for safety considerations. Without a median, left-hand turns out of the residential communities would truly be unsafe without a place to stop within the median area to observe and then merge into the traffic coming from the right. Option C also provides for lower cost and much shorter completion time than Option B, the full divided alternative. Option C would lower costs by reducing the amount of median required overall, but more importantly, eliminate the time and expense involved in obtaining the non-developer owned property on the south side necessary for the expanded right-of-way required to accommodate a center median.

In short, Option C provides, in our opinion, the best cost and schedule combination.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter, and for your public service to our great city.

Regards,  
Dawn Sweet

Willow Chase Community Assoc.  
Board of Directors, president

On Mon, Oct 12, 2020 at 09:46 Richard Palmer <[railsrnp@gmail.com](mailto:railsrnp@gmail.com)> wrote:  
| Venice City Council

| I first would like to thank the Council for their Public Service.

| In reference to the planned Laurel Road widening proposal presented.

| With the amount of completed and planned housing construction on Laurel Road east of I

75, and surrounding area (Knights Trail, Jacaranda Blvd), It has, and will more so become a Neighborhood of it's own .

Having a NEIGHBORHOOD ROAD, and NOT a THOROUGHFARE is essential to the CHARACTER of this area.

I would like to see Plans B or C Proposed for the Widening Project.

Respectfully  
Richard Palmer , Director on Willow Chase HOA BOD

**From:** [Jerry Jasper](#)  
**To:** [City Council](#)  
**Cc:** [Edward Lavallee](#); [Kathleen Weeden](#); [Lori Stelzer](#)  
**Subject:** Laurel Road \_ Funding of Preliminary Design  
**Date:** Friday, October 9, 2020 10:00:43 AM

---

**Caution:** This email originated from an external source. **Be Suspicious of Attachments, Links and Requests for Login Information**

Mayor and City Council Members,

As you may or may not know, the Sarasota County BOCC unanimously approved the funding arrangements for the Laurel Road Preliminary Design at their September 22, 2020 meeting. Three separate actions were taken at that meeting, as follows:

- Amended their FY 2020-2024 Capital Improvement Program to add the Laurel Road preliminary design project
- Amended their FY 2020 Budget to appropriate the funding for the preliminary design of Laurel Road in the amount of \$400,000
- Approved a locally funded agreement with the City of Venice authorizing the release of \$400,000 in road impact fees toward the preliminary design of a two-lane to four-lane arterial widening for a section of Laurel Road from Knights Trail Road to Jacaranda Boulevard.

The VG&RC Community Association along with homeowners associations from other communities in Northeast Venice has supported such an effort for many years. We consider this approval a major milestone on the way to widening this section of Laurel Road. What was equally satisfying, however, was the strong support received by all the Commissioners for this project. I encourage you to view the short video clip showing the approval and equally important, the comments of the County Commissioners. Here is the clip: <https://www.dropbox.com/s/5swmy10hx9rhdz8/Laurel%20Road%20Sarasota%20BOCC%209.22.21.mp4?dl=0>

On behalf of our Community Association, I would like to thank the Mayor, Council, and City staff for their support as this project went from conception through the funding of the preliminary design. This is an excellent example of three separate community levels, a neighborhood, a city, and a county working together to assure proper roadway infrastructure is in place when needed, rather than being a reaction to a bad traffic situation.

Thanks again,

Jerry Jasper  
VG&RC Community Association

**From:** [John G. Singer](#)  
**To:** [City Council](#)  
**Cc:** [Kathleen Weeden](#); [Edward Lavallee](#)  
**Subject:** Laurel Road Expansion - Preliminary Engineering - Option C  
**Date:** Sunday, October 11, 2020 3:04:17 PM

---

**Caution:** This email originated from an external source. **Be Suspicious of Attachments, Links and Requests for Login Information**

Honorable Council Members:

I am a board member of the Willow Chase Homeowners Association. Willow Chase is a community located on Laurel Road between The Venetian and Knights Trail.

**I am writing to request that you approve a Public - Private Partnership to cover the preliminary engineering phases of the Laurel Road Widening project with the selection of Option C.**

I, and many others in my community, feel that this expansion is absolutely necessary to allow for the coming growth in our area. It is also felt that Option C will provide that best and safest solution for our aging community.

Thank you for your time,

John G. Singer  
Vice President, Willow Chase Homeowners Association  
1182 Cielo Court  
North Venice, FL 34275  
(732) 236-0559 - Cell  
[jgs@PoBox.com](mailto:jgs@PoBox.com)

**From:** [Lori Stelzer](#)  
**To:** [City Council](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Laurel Road Widening Proposal  
**Date:** Monday, October 12, 2020 10:27:39 AM

---

FYI.

Lori Stelzer, MMC  
City Clerk  
City of Venice  
401 W. Venice Avenue  
Venice, FL 34285  
941-882-7390  
941-303-3486 (cell)

---

**From:** Richard Palmer <[railsrnp@gmail.com](mailto:railsrnp@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Monday, October 12, 2020 9:47 AM  
**To:** Kathleen Weeden <[KWeeden@Venicegov.com](mailto:KWeeden@Venicegov.com)>  
**Cc:** Directors, HOA Board Of <[willowchaseboard@gmail.com](mailto:willowchaseboard@gmail.com)>  
**Subject:** Laurel Road Widening Proposal

**Caution:** This email originated from an external source. **Be Suspicious of Attachments, Links and Requests for Login Information**

Venice City Council

I first would like to thank the Council for their Public Service.

In reference to the planned Laurel Road widening proposal presented.

With the amount of completed and planned housing construction on Laurel Road east of I 75, and surrounding area (Knights Trail, Jacaranda Blvd), It has, and will more so become a Neighborhood of it's own .

Having a NEIGHBORHOOD ROAD, and NOT a THOROUGHFARE is essential to the CHARACTER of this area.

I would like to see Plans B or C Proposed for the Widening Project.

Respectfully  
Richard Palmer , Director on Willow Chase HOA BOD