

# **TOWN OF LOXAHATCHEE GROVES**

155 F Road Loxahatchee Groves, FL 33470



## **AGENDA MEMO**

**TO: Town Council of Town of Loxahatchee Groves**

**FROM: Francine Ramaglia, Town Manager**

**DATE: May 21, 2024**

**SUBJECT: Discussion on Roadway Standards**

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### **Background:**

As with all things in the Town, the root of the roadway system goes back to the 1925 plat. The Town was subdivided primarily into 20 acre parcels (up to 25 acres between F Road and what is now Folsom Road) located adjacent to lettered canals/roads A-F which ran South to North. The plat was bordered to the South by the C-51 canal and what now has become Southern Boulevard. Collecting Canal became, in part, an east/west roadway and what is now known Okeechobee Boulevard was designed to bifurcate the northern and southern portions of the plat running east to west through the entirety of the platted area. North Road gives east west access across the top of the plat. The distance between the lettered roadways is approximately a ½ mile and F Road to Folsom is approximately ¾ of a mile.

Over time subdivisions of the original 20 acre parcels occurred with access to the smaller lots provided by subdivision roads. Some of the subdivision roads connected one lettered road to another and other subdivision roads acted as access points only to the subdivision neighborhood. Lands to the north and west of the original 1925 plat are included within the Town's boundaries and are accessed by A Road and North Road with adjacent subdivision neighborhood roads accessing individual lots. The longest of those neighborhood subdivision roads is 161<sup>st</sup>. There are also a number of smaller subdivisions which are accessed off of the lettered roads by private easements. These private easements typically connect 4 or fewer lots.

The Town's current minimum size lot is 5 acres in size. Prior subdivisions have left the Town with 650 non-conforming lots of record.

The Town Council has made decisions to pave the lettered north/south roadways, Collecting Canal Road, and Folsom Road. The last of those roadways are scheduled to be paved in FY2025.

The Town Council has also included some of the longer neighborhood and subdivision connector roads in the FY23 and FY24 paving projects.

In order to better evaluate future maintenance plans, staff is in the process of establishing standards for all roadways as follows:

1. Grid Roads – These roads include the South to North lettered roadways, Folsom and East/West roadways Collecting Canal Road and North Road. Okeechobee Boulevard is not included in this classification as it is a County Road and maintained by Palm Beach County. The Major/Main roads are generally at least two miles in continuous length. They should have a maintained drive width of at least 18 feet with 20 feet being preferred. They should have a paved surface and be striped. An adjacent drainage area should be provided to collect and dispose stormwater.
2. Subdivision neighborhood connector roads - These roads connect the Grid roads to each other and provide access to at least 12 lots. The connector roads are usually at least a half mile in length and should have a maintained drive width of at least 16 feet. It is recommended that they have a paved surface. These roads should also include a drainage swale on either side to allow stormwater to discharge to the main canals.
3. Subdivision neighborhood roads with a straight away length of at least one half a mile, servicing at least 12 lots. These roads should have a maintained drive width of at least 16 feet. It is recommended they have a paved surface. These roads should also include a drainage swale on either side to allow stormwater to discharge to the main canals.
4. Subdivision roads with a straight away length of less than one half a mile servicing at least 12 lots. These roads should have a maintained drive width of at least 16 feet. Staff should make recommendations on the surfacing of the roads based on what is the most efficient means of maintenance. In making the recommendation, staff will take into consideration consistency of the maintenance for the main subdivision access road and its spurs, turns and arms. These roads should also include a drainage swale on either side to allow stormwater to discharge to the main canals.
5. Publicly maintained subdivision neighborhood roads servicing less than 12 lots. Staff will make a recommendation on the appropriate width of the road attempting to maintain a drive width of at least 16 feet and will make the recommendation on the most efficient surface and manner to maintain the road. These roads should also include a drainage swale on either side to allow stormwater to discharge to the main canals.
6. Private roads and easements.
  - a. There are a number of smaller subdivisions accessed by way of a private easement system created years ago which do not have maintenance agreements in place and are not necessarily maintained in accordance with current standards. To the extent these systems service otherwise conforming developed or undeveloped lots, it is staff's recommendation that such lots, when coming in for development and redevelopment be permitted to rely on the previously established easement access system, even if the access may be subject to a private challenge, due to a lack of clarity in the written recorded record.
  - b. Under current regulations the typical subdivision of a 10 or 20 acre parcel into two or more lots may require the establishment of easement in order to create frontage, when the newly created lot does directly abut a public or private street. While an easement for access

purposes to the newly created lot is a necessity, the staff believes the easement for the purpose of creating frontage does not serve a legitimate purpose and suggests the ordinance defining frontage be amended to have the portion of the newly created lot which is parallel to the street, onto which the access easement connects, be considered the back lot's frontage.

- c. Staff will be making recommendations to increase the accessibility of shared private culvert bridges.
- d. Staff will be making recommendations for access easements and private roads associated with culvert bridges.

Staff will be moving forward with measures to adopt the classification system and recommended changes in access based on the Council's discussion and direction.

**Recommendation:** Discuss and provide direction to staff.