



The Lake Mary Jane Alliance (LMJA) Recommends:
Vote NO on Orange County Charter Amendment Question #2 (Split Oak)

The LMJA has been successfully preserving land and fighting off inappropriate development since 2005. We only support smart growth and look at the bigger picture and long-term impacts of managed development. We believe with certainty that this road will be built eventually, and that the planned approach we support is the best way to build it. We should not wait and end up with fewer options and worse impacts to the forest.

What voters need to know about Split Oak:

- When asked if a road should go through the middle of a conservation area, the obvious answer is “no,” but the majority of Orange County voters do not know anything about Split Oak or the negotiated route to minimize the impact and add significant conservation lands.
- The LMJA strongly opposed the 2013 plan to put a road through the center of Split Oak, and has been involved over the past few years in a group with multiple environmental and county agencies, as well as the developer and land owner in the negotiations of a minimization route to lessen the impacts of the road.
- The minimization route hugs the borders of Split Oak, only taking up about 68 acres for the road and impacting another 100 acres next to the road.
- Split Oak is 1689 acres. The approved plan will add over 1550 acres of additional conservation land that will surround all 3 adjacent parks buffering Split Oak, Moss Park, and Isle of Pines Preserve.
- The Osceola portion of donated lands was previously approved for 37,000 SF of industrial, 27,000 SF of commercial, 573,000 SF of office, and 40,000 SF of civic use that would be right on the border of the parks.
- These 1550 acres will be donated & fully funded for both restoration and maintenance, and have wildlife corridors to connect to other conservation areas so Split Oak will not be left isolated by development.
- Negotiations were successful in moving the planned well and water treatment facility away from Split Oak.
- This minimization route was approved by CFX, Osceola, and Orange County with a 5-2 vote in 2019.

Even if Amendment 2 passes – the road will still be built:

- Florida law allows for utilities to go through conservation land, including highways.
- This amendment almost did not make it on the ballot because there are legal concerns about its validity.
- The head of the charter review commission opposed this amendment, and their attorney admitted that the amendment may not be enough to stop the highway.
- Intense development in Osceola is moving forward regardless, and traffic will increase on both Narcoossee Road and Cyrils Drive until there is a road built to connect 417 to Osceola Parkway.
- Osceola needs this road and has already started a lawsuit against Orange County if the amendment passes.
- This road is part of a focus by the governor to increase connecting roadways in Florida – specifically connecting Brevard County to Central Florida.
- The negotiated plan has already moved forward to the Florida Community Trust (FCT), which must review it for approval. Currently they are missing 2 of the 5 FTC board members required to take a vote, so the governor will be appointing 2 more and we expect the new members to support the road
- After all of this – the vote can still go to the Governor’s cabinet to decide on, and they will support it.

The LMJA respects the intentions of the amendment put forth by the Friends of Split Oak as an attempt to stop the road from going through any portion of Split Oak Forest, but this amendment will only stop it temporarily.

Additional information and maps are available on our website: www.LakeMaryJaneAlliance.com