

Dear Sarasota County Commissioners

Friends of The Legacy Trail requests your vote to approve the recommendations from County Staff regarding the Legacy Trail Extension Feasibility Study which is on the agenda for your April 1 meeting. Staff has recommended:

- 1. To accept the final Legacy Trail Extension Feasibility Study**
- 2. Direct the County Administrator to obtain real estate appraisals for the Legacy Trail Extension area.**

We wholeheartedly support these recommendations as next steps to continue the momentum for the extension.

Our all-volunteer organization has over 300 members who are committed to support, promote, enhance and protect The Legacy Trail now and for future generations. It is a 11 mile continuous, paved, non-motorized, multi-use trail that is the regional backbone of a recreation and nature based trail system connecting communities across Sarasota County. It is a wonderful rails-to-trails County Park that officially opened in 2008 and is enjoyed by many Sarasota County residents and visitors.

Since 2013 we have focused our attention on getting it extended another 8 miles north to downtown Sarasota. Our activities have included providing input to the feasibility study, raising money to help pay for the feasibility study and building County-wide support for the extension through various events and programs. The Legacy Trail connects to the Venetian Waterway Park Trail at the south end so the extension will create a continuous off-road trail from downtown Sarasota to Caspersen Beach and Shamrock Park in Venice.

The many benefits to extending the Trail include enhancing property values, providing alternative transportation options, promoting healthy lifestyles and supporting the Safe Routes to School Program - 27 schools are within 1 mile of the Trail

extension and 45 schools are within 2 miles. And one of the most important is building connectivity and a sense of community within the County.

We would appreciate your vote of support April 1.

Chuck Butterfield
President, Friends of The Legacy Trail