

Legislation Text

File #: 21-544, **Version:** 1

PRESENTER:

Garry Ford, Assistant Public Works Director/City Engineer

SUBJECT:

Discuss and consider a resolution to remove a segment of the Minor Arterial identified in the City of New Braunfels Thoroughfare Plan that is the future extension of County Line Road from FM 1044 to Engel Road associated with the proposed 1845 Subdivision located at 1890 FM 1044.

DEPARTMENT: Public Works and Planning & Development Services

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: 1

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The City of New Braunfels received an Application for Regional Transportation Plan Amendment requesting removal of a segment of the Minor Arterial in the Thoroughfare Plan that is the future extension of County Line Road from FM 1044 to Engel Road. The application included a subdivision site plan for the “1845 Subdivision” that is noncompliant with the City’s subdivision regulations.

The County Line Road Minor Arterial thoroughfare runs south of and parallel to IH 35 from Engel Road north to Barbarosa Road. Existing segments include County Line Road from FM 1044 to south of the Guadalupe River and Alves Lane from State Highway 46 to Barbarosa Road. The current right-of-way dedication requirement for a Minor Arterial is 120 feet and the developer may be required to construct two lanes if supported by a traffic impact analysis (TIA).

The Thoroughfare Plan is the City's adopted plan for guiding transportation system improvements, including existing and planned extensions of city streets. The thoroughfare system is comprised of existing and planned interstates, expressways, parkways, arterials, and collectors which require wider or new rights-of-way. The primary objective of the Thoroughfare Plan is to ensure the dedication of adequate right-of-way on appropriate alignments and of enough width to serve existing and future transportation needs. The Texas Local Government Code allows the City to require development plans and subdivision plats to conform to the general plan for current and future roadways

City staff communicated the Minor Arterial thoroughfare requirements with the property owner through predevelopment meetings, TIA scoping meeting, and a meeting with the property owners, their attorneys, and City staff and Counsel. In March 2020, New Braunfels Utilities (NBU) notified the City that they received a request for electric service design and that subdivision layout was inconsistent with the City’s Thoroughfare Plan. The City and NBU informed the property owner that the subdivision site plan was noncompliant with the city’s subdivision regulations and could not be accepted.

In addition to the request to remove the Minor Arterial thoroughfare, the City received a request to conduct a rough proportionality analysis for the proposed subdivision to be in compliance with the thoroughfare plan and the city's subdivision regulations. The request was processed as an appeal for relief from a dedication and construction of municipal infrastructure, the Minor Arterial, as outlined in Sec. 118-13 of the Code of Ordinances.

The roughly proportionate analysis was completed in accordance with State Law and concluded that the proposed development is roughly proportionate based on the noncompliant subdivision site plan and TIA. The applicant disagrees with the analysis and requested an appeal that will be presented as a separate item.

City staff reviewed the request based on the thoroughfare connection, current and future transportation mobility needs, and compliance of the Minor Arterial thoroughfare with nearby developments. As previously stated, the subject Minor Arterial thoroughfare is parallel to IH 35 and is critical for mobility south of the highway. The thoroughfare has been on the plan since at least 2005 and provides a connection to the future Parkway between IH 35 and FM 1044. FM 1044 currently ends at the IH 35 northbound frontage road which is a limitation of the existing arterial.

The Capital-Alamo Connections Study, a TxDOT initiated a study to develop bi-regional strategies to enhance mobility within the greater Austin-San Antonio region, identified the limited availability of alternatives to IH 35 and designating, prioritizing, and coordinating arterial improvements in regional and local thoroughfare plans as a key strategy to address future mobility needs. Furthermore, the study indicated that a most trips are for local travel and the completion of the County Line Road extension from FM 1044 to Engel Road will improve mobility.

The master planned developments of Highland Grove, Highland Gardens, Morningside Hills, and Morningside Trails have provided the right-of-way dedication for the Minor Arterial between FM 1044 and Engel Road. Morningside Hills is planned to have a segment of the arterial constructed to serve the development and Highland Grove has also provided the right-of-way dedication for the future Parkway that will connect to Rueckle Road and IH 35.

Removal of a segment of the Minor Arterial that is the future extension of County Line Road south of FM 1044 is not recommended and would be detrimental to transportation mobility in the area. The removal will create a gap between FM 1044 and Highland Gardens with no other alternative to make the roadway connection. The removal would force high volume arterial traffic to travel through local streets and neighborhoods which often results in speeding and traffic safety concerns.

Thoroughfares on the Thoroughfare Plan represent a generalized location and can be refined to meet local site conditions. Modifications to the site plan, zoning, and other adjustments to the roadway network, drainage facilities, intersections, and access will allow for various development scenarios. City staff has been willing to work with the property owner to fully develop the site and meet the City's development and thoroughfare requirements.

ISSUE:

The request to remove a segment of the Thoroughfare Plan hinders the following action items in the City's Comprehensive Plan Envision New Braunfels:

Action 7.50 - Ensure the thoroughfare plan includes and ordinances require adequate dedication and

reservation of right-of-way for future roadways.

Action 7.53 - Upgrade existing arterials and major collectors and identify new alignments to create a network of expressway or parkway functional classification roadways. Create a plan by 2020; complete construction by 2040.

Action 7.56 - Identify missing linkages across town that create barriers to efficient mobility (e.g. the Town Creek neighborhood connections to Downtown and Landa Street, Guadalupe River crossings southwest of Cypress Bend Park and another on the east side of IH-35, parallel routes to Hwy 46 South, etc); implement a plan to construct.

Action 7.59 - Address future infrastructure needs when roadways are built by planning for infrastructure not necessarily needed at the present, but what will be needed in the future.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The fiscal impact of the removal of the segment is unquantifiable at this time; however, it is anticipated that the cost of securing right-of-way and the impact to future property owners will be significant.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Planning Commission considered this item on February 2, 2021 and unanimously voted to recommend denial to City Council regarding the removal of a segment of the Minor Arterial identified in the City of New Braunfels Regional Transportation Plan that is the future extension of County Line Road from FM 1044 to Engel Road. (9-0-0)

Staff does not recommend removal of a segment of the Minor Arterial identified in the City of New Braunfels Regional Transportation Plan that is the future extension of County Line Road from FM 1044 to Engel Road.