

# PC ACTION REPORT

## 2015: H1-H8 – Inner West Loop

**APPLICANT:** City of Houston Planning & Development

**KEY MAP:** 491, 492, 493

**JURISDICTION:** City of Houston

**LAMBERT:** 5256-5258, 5356-5358

**DISTRICT/PRECINCT:** City Council: G, C, H  
Harris County Pct.: 1, 4

# PC ACTION REPORT

Planning Commission has taken action on the following amendments (H-1 through H-5) to the Major Thoroughfare and Freeway Plan as recommended by the City of Houston Planning & Development Department (P&D) on August 13, 2015. Refer to the Inner West Loop Mobility Study for additional details and background on the amendments.

	ID	STREET NAME	STREET SEGMENT	AMENDMENT REQUEST	STAFF RECOMMENDATION	PC ACTION
H	1.	Dunlavy Street	Richmond Avenue to Allen Parkway	Reclassify Dunlavy Street between Richmond Avenue and Allen Parkway from a 4 lane Major Collector (MJ-4-60) to 2 lane Major Collector (MJ-2-60)	Recommend	Approve
	2.	Sawyer Street	Crockett Street to Washington Avenue	Reclassify Sawyer Street between Crockett Street and Washington Avenue from a 3 lane Major Collector (MJ-3-70) to a 2 lane Major Collector (MJ-2-70)	Recommend	Approve
	3.	Shepherd Drive	Dickson Street to IH 10	Reclassify Shepherd Drive between Dickson Street and IH 10 from a 60' right-of-way Principal Thoroughfare (P-4-60) to a 70' right-of-way Principal Thoroughfare (P-4-70)	Recommend	Approve
	4.	Durham Drive	Dickson Street to Washington Avenue	Reclassify Durham Drive between Dickson Street and Washington Avenue from a 60' right-of-way Principal Thoroughfare (P-4-60) to a 70' right-of-way Principal Thoroughfare (P-4-70)	Recommend	Approve
	5.	W. Alabama Street	Weslayan Street to Spur 527	Reclassify W. Alabama Street between Weslayan Street and Spur 527 from a 4 lane Major Collector (MJ-4-60) to a 2 lane Major Collector (MJ-2-60)	Recommend	Approve: Reclassify W. Alabama Street between Weslayan Street and Spur 527 from a 4 lane Major Collector (MJ-4-60) to a 2 lane Major Collector (MJ-2-70)

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Furthermore, Planning Commission has taken action on the additions of new Minor Collectors (H-6 through H-8), listed below, in order to effectively distribute local traffic and support the thoroughfare grid network in the Inner West Loop area. Minor Collectors are public streets that accumulate traffic from local streets for distribution into a Major Thoroughfare or a Major Collector. Minor Collectors typically serve residential uses, but it's not uncommon for them to serve commercial or mixed uses, particularly in urban settings. They typically collect traffic from residential uses or commercial uses and distribute to the Thoroughfare streets. These streets are typically shorter in length, however, may be longer in large single family residential developments. These streets typically accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists. Goods movement is limited to local deliveries only.

	ID	STREET NAME	STREET SEGMENT	AMENDMENT REQUEST	STAFF RECOMMENDATION	PC ACTION
H	6.	Lovett Boulevard	Montrose Boulevard to Commonwealth Street	Add Lovett Boulevard between Montrose Boulevard and Commonwealth Street as a Minor Collector (MN-2-110)	Recommend	Approve
	7.	Commonwealth Street	Lovett Boulevard to Westheimer Road	Add Commonwealth Street between Lovett Boulevard and Westheimer Road as a Minor Collector (MN-2-60)	Recommend	Approve
	8.	Yoakum Boulevard	Westheimer Road to Richmond Avenue	Add Yoakum Boulevard between Westheimer Road and Richmond Avenue as a Minor Collector (MN-2-90)	Recommend	Approve

# STAFF RECOMMENDATION REPORT

## **JUSTIFICATION:**

The amendment recommendations herein are designed to reclassify streets in the Inner West Loop based on the area's multi-modal mobility needs and the overall character, including the existing land use context. The recommendations also take into account the projected growth and likelihood of the context of an area to evolve over time with redevelopment or changes in land uses. This report includes detailed justifications for those amendments (H-1 Dunlavy, H-2 Sawyer, and H-5 W. Alabama) in which alternatives were identified and studied in greater detail. These alternatives were identified early in the MTFP amendment process in coordination with the Planning Commission and the Public Works and Engineering Department (PWE). Further justifications of the recommendations are warranted due to the amount of public input received particularly for Dunlavy Street and W. Alabama Street. Refer to the Inner West Loop Mobility Study for additional background information and details on all the recommended amendments.

### **H-1 Dunlavy Street:**

Dunlavy Street, as a whole, is an approximately 2.3 mile long north-south street that extends from Allen Parkway to Bissonnet Street, south of US 59. It is one of the six north-south streets that extend across the depressed section of US 59 between Shepherd-Greenbriar Drive and Main Street. With the Buffalo Bayou Park at the north end of the roadway and the future extension of a trail connection between Memorial Park to the west and Heights Trail through to Downtown, it provides the critical connections between the residential community to regional parks, bayou trails and the downtown area. Dunlavy Street was first designated on the MTFP in 1942 as a to-be-widened Major Thoroughfare and was reclassified in 1997 as a Major Collector (C-4-60).

Dunlavy Street functions as a collector street that connects east-west thoroughfares, other collector streets and the existing residential neighborhoods. Historically, Dunlavy Street connected residential subdivisions like Edgemont, Castle Court, Lancaster Place, Mandell Place, Winlow Place, Hyde Park, Windsor Place and others. Since Dunlavy connects a number of critical east-west streets, turning movements at all these intersections is critical. A four-lane roadway without turn lanes effectively functions as two-lane roadway since the inner lane is used for turning movements. The absence of dedicated turn lanes at key intersections results in drivers changing lanes to avoid the blocking of through traffic for turning. In such situations, the provision of two lanes with turn lanes at intersections, or a center turn lane in areas with driveways serving large commercial development, does not compromise the vehicular mobility provided by a four-lane roadway without turn lanes.

The City is making improvements to the intersection of Allen Parkway and Dunlavy Street to include a signalized intersection with a pedestrian-bicycle crossing to provide safer access to the Buffalo Bayou Park. The two lane recommendation provides an opportunity for an enhanced pedestrian and a bicycle facility along Dunlavy Street. Also a four-lane configuration is inconsistent with the existing context of the corridor and could result in the corridor functioning similarly to Major Thoroughfares like Shepherd Drive or Yale Street, rather than a collector street.

The existing street pavement width, lane striping and usage vary in sections. The right-of-way (ROW) along Dunlavy Street is approximately 60' and is limited by a significant amount of

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CenterPoint Energy electric utility poles that are approximately 100' tall and 2.3' wide along the corridor. The high mast poles are located along the east side of Dunlavy Street between Allen Parkway and Hawthorne Street. South of Hawthorne Street, to Richmond Avenue, the high mast posts are located on the west side of the street. The 60' ROW is adequate for a two-lane roadway with turn lanes at key intersections and pedestrian-bicycle facilities. On-street parking could be provided along portions of the roadway where turn lanes are not warranted. However, the 60' ROW would not be adequate to provide parking on both sides of the street with pedestrian-bicycle improvements, while maintaining sufficient space for street trees and other utilities.

Given the varying land use character along Dunlavy Street, the corridor has been divided into four segments for further analysis.

## Allen Parkway to West Gray Street

This northern-most section of Dunlavy Street is predominantly commercial and multi-family residential with some single-family residential near West Clay Street. Regent Square, a 24 acre mixed-use development is proposed to extend between Allen Parkway and West Clay Street. This project extends on both sides of Dunlavy Street south of West Dallas Street ([www.gid.com/development/regent-square.aspx](http://www.gid.com/development/regent-square.aspx)). Significant redevelopment is likely to occur north of West Gray Street due to the availability of large parcels along the corridor.

This section of Dunlavy Street between Allen Parkway and W. Gray Street varies between two to four lanes and carries up to 14,000 vehicles per day. Dunlavy Street from Allen Parkway to West Dallas Street has approximately 40' of pavement and is striped as a four-lane roadway, except at the intersection where it becomes two travel lanes with a turn lane. This segment is used as a two-lane street with parking on either side. The segment from West Dallas Street to West Clay Street has a designated bike lane and is striped as two lanes, with a center turn lane and a bike lane on either side. Although no buses operate directly on Dunlavy Street, both West Dallas Street and West Gray Street offer access to east-west bus service.

Allen Parkway provides the southern boundary for the Buffalo Bayou Park. Significant enhancements to the pedestrian and bicycle environment are currently underway along Allen Parkway. These enhancements include many traffic calming measures such as wider sidewalks, new signals, additional parking, planted medians and more. A new signal and crosswalk will be constructed at the Dunlavy Street intersection to provide safer travel movements for both pedestrians and drivers.

Other improvements are currently under construction along Buffalo Bayou, including a multi-purpose private event space called The Dunlavy and Lost Lakes, which features a visitor center, restrooms, picnic pavilion, boating concession, paddle craft launch and visitor parking. <http://buffalobayoupark.org/about-the-project/#lostlake>  
<http://buffalobayoupark.org/the-dunlavy-to-open-in-buffalo-bayou-park/>

## West Gray Street to Westheimer Road

The land uses on Dunlavy Street between West Gray Street and Westheimer Road could be characterized as a mix of residential and neighborhood commercial/institutional uses. Recent

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platting activity includes townhome developments and neighborhood commercial redevelopments near Westheimer Road, which were previously platted as single-family residential lots. In light of the redevelopment changes along the corridor, a number of existing residential neighborhoods south of Fairview along the corridor have adopted the Special Minimum Lot Size and Building Line Ordinances to preserve the character of the neighborhood.

This section of Dunlavy Street carries up to 12,000 vehicles daily and includes a 44' wide pavement section striped as four-lanes. The street along this section functions as two travel lanes, with the outer two lanes being used for parking. Access to high-frequent bus service is available at the intersection of Westheimer Street. The existing pavement width does not allow for an adequate pedestrian realm along this section of the corridor.

### Westheimer Road to W. Alabama Road

The land uses between Alabama and Westheimer is predominantly single-family residential with neighborhood commercial at Westheimer Road. Recent redevelopment along the corridor includes neighborhood retail and the reconstruction of single-family residential homes. Immediately south of Westheimer Road, Dunlavy Street is striped as four lanes with on-street parking in the outer lanes between Westheimer Road and Hawthorne Street. South of Hawthorne Street to Alabama Street, Dunlavy Street has a 34' pavement section that was recently resurfaced and striped as a two-lane street with parking, except at its intersection with Alabama Street, which is striped as two-lanes with a turn lane. The vehicular traffic along this segment of Dunlavy is estimated to be 10,000 per day.

### West Alabama Street to Richmond Avenue

The southern-most section of Dunlavy Street includes a mix of single-family and multi-family residential units, and an HEB grocery store along the west side at Alabama Street. In the last ten years, there has been a significant amount of redevelopment along the entire corridor. Large redevelopment projects within this segment include a recently constructed 444-unit Fairmont Museum District apartment building on a 4.6 acre tract on the southwest corner of the Richmond Avenue intersection. A new 399-unit apartment building, The Susanne, opened earlier in 2015 on the 3.7 acres tract on the southeast corner of the West Alabama Street intersection. This section of Dunlavy Street carries up to 9,000 vehicles per day and is striped as two lanes with a center turn lane within approximately 34' of pavement. Access to high-frequent bus service is available at the intersection of Richmond Avenue.

### Houston Complete Streets and Transportation Plan Considerations

The recommended multi-modal elements from the Inner West Loop Mobility Study include pedestrian, bike and parking as key factors. Although METRO buses do not directly serve Dunlavy Street, east-west bus service is accessible at all the major intersections along the corridor. Providing safe pedestrian and bicycle access to transit is an integral part of the Houston Complete Streets and Transportation Plan.

Given the existing 60' ROW, context of the surrounding neighborhood, and the on-going redevelopment activities along the corridor, Dunlavy Street was designated an Urban Street in the Inner West Loop Mobility Study. The recommended cross-sections include two-travel lanes

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with a center turn lane and a shared bike facility between West Gray Street and Allen Parkway within a 40' pavement section, The recommended cross-section south of West Gray Street, where the existing pavement is approximately 44' wide, includes two-lanes with a shared bike facility and parking. These recommendations served as the basis for developing the MTFP request to reclassify Dunlavy Street between Richmond Avenue and Allen Parkway from a four-lane Major Collector (MJ-4-60) to a two-lane Major Collector (MJ-2-60).

Pedestrian and bicycle accessibility is a critical component along the corridor given the urban mixed-use context of the corridor and the connection to the Buffalo Bayou Park. It is important to recognize that given the ROW restrictions, accommodating all multi-modal needs throughout the corridor may prove to be challenging in some cases. Although parking is an important component to the residential uses along the corridor, where necessary, parking may be restricted to certain sections and only on one side of the street. Additionally, parking should also be restricted at intersections to allow for efficient turning movements.

The two-lane Major Collector designation is consistent with the design options currently being considered for Dunlavy Street. Both options take into account the pedestrian and bicycle needs, land use context, intensity of use, limitation of meeting minimum standards, and compromising on-street parking as needed. Both options generally proposed a two-lane configuration with turn lanes that fall within the existing ROW. Additional ROW would only be required to address any additional parking needs or intersection improvements.

## Houston Complete Streets and Transportation Plan Considerations

MTFP classification	Major Collector
Number of travel lanes	2
Proposed right-of-way	60'
(Multi-modal classification) MMC	Urban Mixed Use Street
Context	Mixed Use
Bicycle	Yes, recommend shared-use path or bike lane
Pedestrian	Yes
Parking	Yes (No parking will be provided in certain sections and may be restricted to only one side in other)
Transit	No (Access to east-west bus routes at major intersections)

### **H-2 Sawyer Street:**

Sawyer Street (transitions to Taylor Street at Shearn Street) is approximately 1.25 miles long between Memorial Drive and White Oak Drive (via Usener) north of IH 10. Sawyer and Taylor Streets were first designated on the City's 1997 MTFP (Adopted April 29, 1998) as a Major Collector (C-4-60) with the addition of the Major Collector designation to the MTFP.

The existing land uses along Sawyer Street and Taylor Street vary along sections of the roadway. Taylor Street between IH 10 and Shearn Street is primarily commercial and was

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recently redeveloped with Target as the primary anchor. There are some existing industrial uses along the corridor. The area east of Taylor Street is mixed-use with a number of new townhome developments in the First Ward area. Sawyer Street from Shearn Street to Washington Avenue is primarily industrial use that developed prior to 1970. This section is likely to redevelop in the near future. Sawyer Street between Washington Avenue and Memorial Drive is mixed-use including multi-family and single-family residential, commercial, office and parks. The Historic Sixth Ward extends across Sawyer Street and is designated on the City of Houston and National Register as a Historic District. Some properties and blocks along the eastside of Sawyer Street are also designated as Historic Sites and Special Minimum Block Size respectively. Glenwood Cemetery and an access point to Buffalo Bayou are located along the west side of Sawyer Street.

Sawyer Street and Taylor Street function as north-south collector streets, given the short segment length and their connections to a number of east-west thoroughfares and collector streets, including White Oak Drive, IH 10, Crockett Street, Washington Avenue and Memorial Drive. The existing street pavement width, lane striping and usage vary in sections. Taylor Street between White Oak (Usener Street) and Crockett Street is classified as MJ-4-60 with four travel lanes including turn lanes at Usener Street, IH 10, and Spring Street within varying ROW widths. Given the commercial nature of the adjacent land uses and proximity to the IH 10 interchange, there is no on-street parking along this section.

Sawyer Street from Crockett Street to Washington Avenue is a 50' ROW street with two UPRR crossings - Freight Main at Winter Street and Passenger Main north of Center Street. Existing industrial buildings are built to the property line. This section currently functions as a two-lane roadway. Sawyer Street south of Washington Avenue has two lanes in each direction that merge with the single-lane frontage road along to Memorial Drive. The existing pavement along this section is 40' wide. With the proposed improvement along Buffalo Bayou, a trail head was constructed across the one-lane Memorial Drive frontage road that extends to Sawyer Street. The City of Houston Bikeway Map shows a proposed bike facility along Sawyer Street that would allow a future connection to this trail head connecting the Buffalo Bayou trail to the bicycle facility along Washington Avenue, the Heights Bike Trail along Spring Street, and the new shared use trail along White Oak Bayou.

In 2014, the Planning Commission recommended the reclassification of Sawyer Street between Crockett Street and Washington Avenue from a four-lane Major Collector (MJ-4-60) to a three-lane Major Collector with a continuous center turn lane (MJ-3-70). Since then, the MTFP Policy Statement has been updated to clarify the definition of lanes in the hierarchy table to only include vehicular through lanes. As such, a center turn lane is not included in the number of lane designation in the MTFP. Consistent with the updated definition, P&D recommends the reclassification of Sawyer Street between Crockett Street and Washington Avenue two lanes with a continuous center turn lane Major Collector (MJ-3-70) to a two-lane Major Collector (MJ-2-70).

Given the existing context, and taking into account the redevelopment potential along the section north of Washington Avenue, the Inner West Loop mobility study recommended that Sawyer Street be classified as an Urban Street. The recommended multi-modal elements along the corridor included pedestrian and bicycle accessibility as key factors. Given the varying character of the land uses and the on-going redevelopment along the corridor, two different



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cross sections were recommended for Sawyer Street north and south of Washington Avenue. Given the redevelopment potential from industrial use to mixed-use north of Washington Avenue, the study recommended two-travel lanes with a turn lane/center turn lane along with bike lanes. This cross-section would result in approximately 44' of pavement with a 13' pedestrian realm on either side. This cross-section would also allow for effective turning movements on east-west local streets. A four-lane roadway without turn lanes effectively functions as two-lane roadway since the inner lanes are used for turning movement. The absence of dedicated turn lanes at key intersection also results in drivers changing lanes to avoid cars blocking through traffic for turning. In such situations, two-lanes with turn lanes at intersection, or a center turn lane in areas with lot of driveways serving large commercial development does not compromise the vehicular mobility provided by a four-lane roadway without turn lanes.

The Old Sixth Ward TIRZ (TIRZ No. 13) has a similar corridor vision for Sawyer Street, with two travel lanes with a turn lane/center turn lane along with a cycle track. This cross-section would result in approximately 45' of pavement with a 12.5' pedestrian realm on either side within the proposed 70' ROW. If on-street parking is desired along one or both sides of the corridor, additional ROW may be required. On-street parking may be integrated on the street as adjacent properties redevelop.

Sawyer Street between Washington Avenue and Memorial Drive has a mix of uses, however, it does not generate a significant volume of traffic since it has one-lane access from Memorial Drive from and towards Downtown. Most of the larger properties along the corridor are developed and Glenwood Cemetery abuts the west side of Sawyer Street, limiting any east-west circulation across Sawyer. The study recommended two lanes with bike lanes along this section of the roadway; however, a dedicated left turn lane on Washington Avenue is warranted at the intersection. This cross-section would result in approximately 34' of pavement with a 13' pedestrian realm on either side. Given the developed nature of the roadway the 60' ROW is adequate along this section of the corridor.

## Houston Complete Streets and Transportation Plan Considerations

MTFP classification	Major Collector
Number of travel lanes	2
Proposed right-of-way	60'
(Multi-modal classification) MMC	Urban Mixed Use Street
Context	Mixed Use
Bicycle	Yes, recommend Bike Lane or Cycle Track
Pedestrian	Yes
Parking	No (May be provided some areas where additional ROW is dedicated by the adjacent property owner)
Transit	No

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## **H-5 West Alabama Street:**

West Alabama Street currently extends east-west from Wesleyan Street to Spur 527 and is 3.5 miles long. Beyond the east side of Spur 527, it transitions into Midtown and extends to Scott Street in the Greater Third Ward. On the west side of Wesleyan Street, West Alabama Street becomes a local street without a crossing over the Union Pacific Railroad. West Alabama Street was first added to the MTFP in 1957 as to-be-widened Major Thoroughfare and was reclassified in 1997 as a Major Collector (C-4-60).

West Alabama Street between Wesleyan Street to Spur 527 is constructed with three lanes of travel generally within 60' to 80' of ROW. The segment between Wesleyan Street and Shepherd Drive has three lanes (two westbound lanes and one east bound lane) with a center turn lane, which transitions into a reversible turn lane between Shepherd Drive and Spur 527. The travel speeds and volumes tend to be less than either of the parallel routes, Westheimer Road and Richmond Avenue, which are Major Thoroughfares designed to move large volumes of traffic. Furthermore, West Alabama Street is proposed as an important east-west bicycle connection for commuters. Unfortunately, the varying pavement markings/stripping, imbalanced lanes, and operation restrictions create confusion for drivers, pedestrians and bicyclists alike. METRO has decided to remove its bus service along West Alabama Street as part of the System Reimagining Plan given the proximity of high frequency routes on Westheimer and Richmond. North-south transit service is still accessible at the major intersections, such as Wesleyan Street, Buffalo Speedway, Kirby Drive, Shepherd Drive and Montrose Boulevard. As such, providing bicycle and pedestrian connections to the bus stops are essential components of the Houston Complete Streets and Transportation Plan.

The land use context along the corridor includes a mix of single and multi-family housing with significant concentration of commercial retail uses. West Alabama Street is also home to a major cultural institution, the Menil, and numerous churches and schools, like Saint Thomas University, Annunciation Orthodox School, Lamar High School, Saint John School, that would benefit from an enhanced pedestrian environment. Even though the overall context is generally consistent throughout the corridor, adjacent built form shifts from providing wider pedestrian realm with shorter building setbacks to larger surface parking lots abutting the street based on the age and type of development.

The land uses in this area have evolved considerably over the last 10 years in light of the growing demand for new upscale apartments inside the Loop. Throughout W. Alabama Street, there is evidence of redevelopment and new construction of higher density mixed-use developments. Examples include a 254 unit 40-story high-rise apartment building (99 units/acre) currently under construction at the corner of West Alabama Street and Wesleyan Street; 399 unit apartment (108 units/acre), The Susanne, and old apartments recently demolished to pave the way for new 258 unit apartments (114 units/acre), Dolce Living - West Alabama, west of McDuffie Street. As additional redevelopment of smaller parcels occurs, the consolidation of some driveways would help traffic flow along the corridor. In addition, the creation of dedicated turn lanes will be very beneficial to the operation of the intersections.

It is important to note that W. Alabama Street is currently programmed in the City's 5-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for full reconstruction. It has been divided into four separate segments sponsored by varying entities that will be reconstructed in multiple phases. The first

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segment between Wesleyan Street and Buffalo Speedway is proposed to be reconstructed as a two-lane street with a continuous turn lane, and a bike facility within the existing 60' to 70' ROW. The existing ROW along portions of this section is less than 60' and necessary ROW will have to be acquired. Options for dedicated bike lanes and shared-use path are still under review pending public input. The design and construction of this segment is led by the City and will break ground in 2016.

Segment 2 from Buffalo Speedway to Shepherd Drive is sponsored by the Upper Kirby District. A 2-lanewith continuous center turn lane configuration with sidewalks and bicycle facility are proposed within the 60' to 70' ROW. Similar improvements are considered for Segment 3 between Shepherd Drive to Spur 527, scheduled for construction in 2018. Most of the existing ROW along this segment is 60' with some varying between 60' and 70'. A short segment between Garrott Street and Spur flares out to 80'. The last segment is between West Main Street to Almeda Street in Midtown sponsored by the Midtown District.

Public involvement played a critical part of the Inner West Mobility Study process. The community expressed a strong desire for an enhanced pedestrian environment, dedicated bicycle facilities and a uniform lane configuration. Similar input was received during the MTFP amendment process in which the residents requested a continuous center turn lane, pedestrian improvements and were generally opposed to any vehicular lane additions.

The proposed multi-modal classification (MMC) for West Alabama Street is an Urban Mixed-Use Avenue. The corridor is envisioned to serve a local transportation need with less emphasis on through traffic.

## Houston Complete Streets and Transportation Plan Considerations

MTFP classification	Major Collector
Number of travel lanes	2
Proposed right-of-way	60'
(Multi-modal classification) MMC	Urban Mixed Use Avenue
Context	Mixed Use
Bicycle	Yes, recommend either Bike Lanes or Shared-Use Path
Pedestrian	Yes
Parking	No
Transit	Access to north-south bus routes at major intersections

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Inner West Loop Mobility Study, completed in 2013, represents the first sub-regional mobility study conducted by the City of Houston. This study was one of the recommendations from the City Mobility Planning (CMP) Phase I (See the appendix for more information). The study area is bounded on the east by Spur 527 and Bagby Street, on the west by IH 610 (West Loop), on the north by IH 10 (Katy Freeway), and on the south by US 59 (Southwest

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Freeway). The purpose was to determine appropriate mobility solutions that are needed in the near and long-term.

Most of the thoroughfares evaluated within the study have existed on the MTFP since its inception in 1942. With the introduction of the Inner Loop around Downtown, connectivity to the study area is limited by adjoining freeways; however, the urban street grid characteristic of the area has remained relatively intact. The Inner West Loop has grown tremendously over the past decades and this growth trend is expected to continue to 2035, according to the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). Although, population density is projected to grow by more than 70%, the employment within the study area will more than double by 2035.

## **Inner West Loop Population and Employment Projections**

Year	Population	Population Density (Persons/Acre)	% Change	Jobs	Job Density (Jobs/Acre)	% Change
2010	85,035	9.8	-	130,755	15.1	-
2018	110,560	12.7	30.0%	179,355	20.7	37.2%
2035	147,002	16.9	33.0%	292,269	33.7	63.0%
<b>Change 2010 to 2035</b>	<b>61,967</b>	<b>7.1</b>	<b>72.9%</b>	<b>161,514</b>	<b>18.61</b>	<b>123.5%</b>

Source: Demographic Projections by H-GAC

One of the largest challenges within the study area is the fact that ROW is significantly limited in many of the corridors due to existing development. Additionally, adding new street connections are not feasible due to the location of existing neighborhoods and given their residential street patterns and Buffalo and White Oak bayous crossing limitations. With the expected growth as demonstrated above, several of the corridors will continue to see increased congestion within the next 25 years. Despite the presence of a strong street grid, the limited ROW and smaller block sizes and lot depths preclude several corridors from increasing their through-put capacity by simply widening the street to add travel lanes. The study recommended using a multi-modal and context sensitive approach and improving the efficiency of the overall public street network to address the demand on the transportation system. See the appendix for corridor specific recommendations from the Inner West Loop Mobility Study.

The Inner West Loop Mobility Study report can be found on the City's webpage:

<http://houstontx.gov/planning/mobility/CMP/Inner-West-Loop-Mobility-Study>

Information about City Mobility Planning (CMP) can be found on the City's webpage:

<http://houstontx.gov/planning/mobility/cmp>

## **AMENDMENT REQUEST:**

Consistent with the recommendation from the Inner West Loop Mobility Study, 39 amendments were adopted by City Council in 2014. P&D has identified the following 8 amendments for consideration this year:

H-1. Dunlavy Street: Last year City Council/Administration requested Planning Commission to reconsider Dunlavy Street to ensure that the public is engaged on all alternatives being

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considered. Consistent with P&D's 2014 request and the updated MTFP Policy Statement clarifying the definition of number of lanes, P&D is requesting to reclassify Dunlavy Street between Richmond Avenue and Allen Parkway from a 4 lane Major Collector (MJ-4-60) to a 2 lane Major Collector (MJ-2-60).

H-2. Sawyer Street: In 2014 Planning Commission recommended the reclassification of Sawyer Street between Crockett Street and Washington Avenue from a 4 lane Major Collector (MJ-4-60) to a 2 lane Major Collector with a continuous center turn lane (MJ-3-70). The MTFP Policy Statement was updated in March 2015 to clarify that - *Vehicular through lanes, for purposes of the MTFP Street Hierarchy Classification Table, are lanes used for continuous travel throughout the entire length of the classified street segment. Lanes used for other purposes, such as turn lanes, parking lanes, bike lanes, etc., do not constitute vehicular through lanes.* Consistent with the updated MTFP Policy Statement, P&D is requesting to reclassify Sawyer Street between Crockett Street and Washington Avenue from a 2 lane with a continuous center turn lane Major Collector (MJ-3-70) to a 2 lane Major Collector (MJ-2-70).

H-3. Shepherd Drive: Shepherd Drive is classified as a 4 lane Principal Thoroughfare with a 60' ROW between Dickson Street and IH 10. The remainder of the segment to the north and south is classified as 70' ROW consistent with the multi-modal needs along the corridor. The Inner West Loop Mobility Study recommended the consideration of high frequency transit and improved pedestrian environment given the commercial – mixed-use nature of the corridor. Consistent with the remaining context of the corridor, P&D is requesting to reclassify Shepherd Drive between Dickson Street and IH 10 from a 60' ROW Principal Thoroughfare (P-4-60) to a 70' ROW Principal Thoroughfare (P-4-70).

H-4. Durham Drive: Durham Drive is classified as a 4 lane Principal Thoroughfare with a 60' ROW between Dickson Street and IH 10. The remainder of the segment to the north is classified as 70' ROW consistent with the multi-modal needs along the corridor. As with Shepherd Drive, the Inner West Loop Mobility Study recommended the consideration of high frequency transit and improved pedestrian environment given the commercial – mixed-use nature of the corridor. Consistent with the remaining context of the corridor, P&D is requesting to reclassify Durham Drive between Dickson Street and IH 10 from a 60' ROW Principal Thoroughfare (P-4-60) to a 70' ROW Principal Thoroughfare (P-4-70).

H-5. W. Alabama Street: W. Alabama Street is classified as a 4 lane Major Collector (MJ-4-60). The existing condition east of Shepherd Drive is 2 lanes with a continuous center turn lane. The section west of Shepherd Drive has 2 lanes west bound, 1 lane east bound and a continuous center turn lane. The Inner West Loop Mobility Study recommended the consideration of bicycle and pedestrian facilities along the corridor given the mixed-use land use context along the corridor. Given the limited ROW along the corridor and development in proximity of the street, P&D is requesting to reclassify W. Alabama Street between Wesleyan Street and Spur 527 from a 4 lane Major Collector (MJ-4-60) to a 2 lane Major Collector (MJ-2-60).

H-6. Lovett Boulevard: P&D is requesting to add Lovett Boulevard between Montrose Boulevard and Commonwealth Street as a Minor Collector (MN-2-110). Commonwealth Street extends across Westheimer Road to align with Lovett Boulevard. The reclassification is consistent with the function of the roadway.

# STAFF RECOMMENDATION REPORT

H-7. Commonwealth Street: P&D is requesting to add Commonwealth Street between Lovett Boulevard and Westheimer Road as a Minor Collector (MN-2-60). Commonwealth Street extends across Westheimer Road to align with Lovett Boulevard. The reclassification is consistent with the function of the roadway.

H-8. Yoakum Boulevard: P&D is requesting to add Yoakum Boulevard between Westheimer Road and Richmond Avenue as a Minor Collector (MN-2-90). Yoakum Boulevard extends into Waugh Drive north of Westheimer Road. The existing uses along this section of the roadway are predominantly institutional.

## **POTENTIAL ALTERNATIVES:**

The following alternatives to the proposed amendments have been identified:

### H-1 Dunlavy Street:

- Reclassify Dunlavy Street between Richmond Avenue and W. Alabama Street from a 60' right-of-way Major Collector to a 70' right-of-way Major Collector (MJ-4-70)
- Reclassify Dunlavy Street between W. Alabama Street and Westheimer Road from a 60' right-of-way Major Collector to a 70' right-of-way Major Collector (MJ-4-70)
- Reclassify Dunlavy Street between Westheimer Road and W. Gray Street from a 60' right-of-way Major Collector to a 70' right-of-way Major Collector (MJ-4-70)
- Reclassify Dunlavy Street between W. Gray Street and Allen Parkway from a 60' right-of-way Major Collector to a 70' right-of-way Major Collector (MJ-4-70)

### H-2 Sawyer Street:

Reclassify Sawyer Street between Crockett Street and Washington Avenue from a 3 lane Major Collector to a 4 lane Major Collector (MJ-4-70)

### H-5 W. Alabama Street:

Reclassify W. Alabama Street between Wesleyan Street and Spur 527 from a 60' right-of-way Major Collector to a 70' right-of-way Major Collector (MJ-4-70)