

# DRAFT RECOMMENDATION REPORT

## A: Cypresswood Drive

**APPLICANT:** Windrose Surveying and Platting Services

**LAMBERT:** 4766

**JURISDICTION:** Harris County

**PRECINCT:** Harris County Pct. 3

**DISTRICT:** N/A

### PROPOSAL:

Windrose Surveying and Platting Services – on behalf of Stockton Foundation, Inc. – is requesting the deletion of proposed major thoroughfare Cypresswood Drive from Grant Road to North Eldridge Parkway from the Major Thoroughfare and Freeway Plan (MTFP).

### APPLICANT'S JUSTIFICATION and HISTORY:

Cypresswood Drive was added to the MTFP in 1966. The amendment applicant and property owner of the land along proposed Cypresswood Drive from Grant Road to North Eldridge Parkway is Fred Stockton of Stockton Foundation, Inc. Mr. Stockton believes that he has been denied reasonable use of his property due to the major thoroughfare alignment of Cypresswood Drive that extends through his property, and therefore is requesting that this section of Cypresswood Drive be removed from the MTFP. Mr. Stockton states that, at this time, Harris County is in the final stages of designing improvements to North Eldridge Parkway and Grant Road and that the extension of Cypresswood Drive is not included in the planned improvements. The applicant believes that Harris County should have included this section of Cypresswood Drive from Grant Road to North Eldridge Parkway in its reconstruction plans if the County believes it to be an important connection.

Mr. Stockton, who owns adjacent properties on the west side of North Eldridge, has had the opportunity to sell or develop this property, but states that he has been unable to do so due to the proposed Cypresswood Drive major thoroughfare alignment that bisects the property. The applicant believes that the major thoroughfare alignment, coupled with the County's decision not to construct this section of Cypresswood Drive, has created an undue burden and imposition on personal property which has denied him reasonable use or compensation for the property without cause for the last 30 years. Mr. Stockton also believes that the County's planned improvements to both North Eldridge Parkway and Grant Road will relieve any current or future congestion in the amendment area, and that the deletion of the proposed Cypresswood Drive extension will not adversely impact mobility within the amendment area.

The existing convenience center that is located directly north of the proposed Cypresswood Drive extension was platted by Lakewood Forest Estates, Inc. as Lakewood Forest Convenience Center in 1995. A preliminary plat was approved by Planning Commission on 7/14/1995, subject to including dedication of ROW for Grant Road and Cypresswood Drive. The final plat was disapproved by Planning Commission on 8/24/1995 for failure to show the ROW dedication for adjacent Grant Road and the proposed Cypresswood Drive extension. A re-submitted final plat was approved by Planning Commission on 9/21/1995, which included ROW dedication for both Grant Road and proposed Cypresswood Drive. The plat was extended an additional year via Planning Commission approval on 9/5/1996, but was never recorded. The Harris County Appraisal District property record for the convenience store property shows that the existing retail building on the site was built in 1996 and that the property was sold to Miles Facilities Partnership, LP on 1/2/1996. Following the expiration of the previous plat, a new plat was submitted by owner Miles Facilities Partnership, LP and approved by Planning Commission on 10/2/1997, with ROW dedication once again shown for both Grant Road and the proposed Cypresswood Drive extension. This plat was also never recorded.

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The properties to the south of proposed Cypresswood Drive were platted and approved by Planning Commission on 4/5/01, and were recorded. Through all of the previous plats of the area surrounding the proposed Cypresswood Drive extension, the required ROW was dedicated and preserved, but has never been recorded, and it has remained as private property since that time.

## **STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

**DENY** the applicant's amendment request to delete proposed major thoroughfare Cypresswood Drive between Grant Road and North Eldridge Parkway from the MTFP.

## **Justification:**

The proposed connection of Cypresswood Drive from Grant Road to North Eldridge Parkway is seen by Harris County Engineering Department as an important connection to ensure adequate mobility within the amendment area in the future. Windrose Services, on behalf of Stockton Foundation, Inc., is requesting to delete the proposed 600 ft. long Cypresswood Drive major thoroughfare extension, which bisects a narrow property owned by Stockton Foundation, Inc. (Stockton Foundation, Inc. also owns the large undeveloped properties west of North Eldridge Parkway, directly across from where a proposed Cypresswood Drive extension would intersect with North Eldridge Parkway). Harris County believes that this proposed connection will be important in the future to avoid traffic patterns that require the use of Grant Road in order to get from Cypresswood Drive to North Eldridge Parkway and vice versa. Grant Road is an important corridor of approximately 9 miles that extends from SH 249 to Boudreaux Road. The County is concerned that development in the surrounding amendment area and in the areas north of the amendment area will cause increased traffic along the Grant Road corridor. Without the Cypresswood Drive connection to North Eldridge Parkway, additional trips will be required to use the short stretch of Grant Road from North Eldridge Parkway to Cypresswood Drive, which in the County's opinion would create a bottleneck issue with traffic delays at the Grant Road and North Eldridge Parkway intersection in the future.

As part of the amendment analysis, P&D staff required that the applicant collect updated traffic counts and turning movement counts in the amendment area. Using these counts, P&D staff requested travel demand modeling (TDM) projections from the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC). The updated traffic counts provided by the applicant were used to calibrate the travel demand model before running three scenarios: 1) A baseline 2017 scenario with no Cypresswood Drive connection; 2) A 2040 scenario with no Cypresswood Drive connection; and 3) A 2040 scenario with the Cypresswood Drive connection. The 2040 projections use Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZ) to project development growth, population growth, and employment growth. The travel demand model then distributes the increased trips associated with that growth to the transportation network.

The results of the travel demand model project a substantial increase in average daily traffic (ADT) for Cypresswood Drive, Grant Road, and North Eldridge Parkway in the amendment area. The portion of Cypresswood Drive near the intersection of Grant Road is projected to increase from 4,664 ADT in 2017 to 14,431 ADT in 2040; Grant Road from Cypresswood Drive to North Eldridge Parkway is projected to increase from 16,034 ADT in 2017 to 37,773 ADT in 2040; North Eldridge Parkway south of Grant Road is projected to increase from 13,438 ADT in 2017 to 29,490 ADT in 2040; and North Eldridge Parkway north of Grant Road is projected to increase from 17,547 ADT in 2017 to 33,248 ADT in 2040. That these projections show a large amount of traffic growth supports Harris County's stance that while the current traffic levels may not require the Cypresswood Drive connection at this time, the Cypresswood Drive connection may be required to address mobility needs in the future.

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Additionally, the 2040 scenario which includes a Cypresswood Drive extension showed that a significant amount of traffic is projected to use the Cypresswood Drive extension to access North Eldridge Parkway. The total traffic projected to utilize the extension was 13,542 ADT. P&D staff believes that this amount of projected ADT supports the need for the major thoroughfare connection which is currently shown on the MTFP.

P&D staff also required that the applicant provide their own traffic study utilizing more intricate traffic simulations, which was conducted for the applicant by traffic engineering firm Voigt Associates, Inc. The scope of the traffic growth study used the same assumptions as the travel demand model, which included the analysis of traffic for the year 2040, the full build-out of major thoroughfares in the amendment area, and two simulation scenarios which analyzed the network both with the Cypresswood Drive connection and without the Cypresswood Drive connection. Additionally, the traffic study simulations included signalization of all major thoroughfare intersections; optimal vehicular operational speeds for each major thoroughfare that were consistent with each roadway's adjacent development context and roadway designs; and the assumption that the undeveloped property west of North Eldridge Parkway would be developed as a 100,000 square foot shopping center that included a direct entrance from the proposed Cypresswood Drive extension. The study provided two sets of traffic projections. One projection assumed a 1% annual traffic growth rate from 2017 to 2040, and the other projection was based on the H-GAC travel demand model output traffic growth.

The results of the traffic study were "mixed and marginal, at best," according to the consultant's executive summary of the study, and "do not present an overwhelming case for or against the Cypresswood Drive extension." The final results show that the Cypresswood Drive extension would reduce the number of vehicles using the intersection of Grant Road at North Eldridge Parkway, which would reduce delays at the intersection. Overall the level of service (LOS) for all the roadways in the amendment area would remain largely unchanged under either Cypresswood Drive scenario, with Grant Road and North Eldridge Parkway having a LOS D (>35 to 55 second delay per vehicle) in either scenario and Grant Road at Cypresswood having a LOS C (>20 to 35 second delay per vehicle) in either scenario. The LOS for a future North Eldridge Parkway at Cypresswood Drive intersection would "largely depend on the presence of development on the west side of Eldridge," according to the consultant's report.

Overall, the applicant's final traffic study did not make a strong case in support of the deletion of the proposed Cypresswood Drive extension. The traffic study did support Harris County's argument that the proposed Cypresswood Drive extension as currently shown on the MTFP would help to reduce the number of trips that would need to utilize the Grant Road corridor when traveling to and from Cypresswood Drive, which would reduce delays at the Grant Road and North Eldridge Parkway intersection. Additionally, the H-GAC travel demand modeling scenarios showed that a significant amount of traffic can be expected to utilize the Cypresswood Drive extension. For these reasons, P&D staff cannot support the applicant's request to delete the proposed Cypresswood Drive major thoroughfare, and therefore recommends that the Planning Commission deny the applicant's request to delete proposed Cypresswood Drive from Grant Road to North Eldridge Parkway.

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## STAFF ANALYSIS:

### Population & Employment Projections:

A demographic analysis using Houston-Galveston Area Council (HGAC) projections was conducted for the area surrounding the Cypresswood Drive MTFP amendment proposal. The population in this area is forecast to grow from approximately 15,673 in 2016 to approximately 17,337 by 2040, with most of the growth projected to occur by 2020. This projected growth rate of 10.6% would be significantly less than the projected City of Houston ETJ growth rate of 34.9%. Employment in the area is projected to remain low, with an insignificant growth from approximately 1,978 in 2016 to approximately 2,001 by 2040. With the relatively stable projected population and the low rate of employment, it can be assumed that this area will likely remain a single-family residential community.

Year	Population	Population Density (Persons/Acre)	% Change	Jobs	Job Density (Jobs/Acre)	% Change
2016	15,673	4.67	-	1,978	0.59	-
2020	17,089	5.09	9.03%	1,983	0.59	0.25%
2030	17,337	5.17	1.45%	1,993	0.59	0.50%
2040	17,337	5.17	0.00%	2,001	0.60	0.40%
Change (2016 to 2040)	1,664	0.50	10.62%	23	0.01	1.16%
COH change (2016 to 2040)	806,405	1.88	35.01%	582,120	1.36	30.83%
COH ETJ change (2016 to 2040)	773,457	1.03	34.96%	336,028	0.45	51.12%

Source: 2016-2040 Demographic Projections by H-GAC

Data represents population, jobs, and households in 6 Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZ) encompassing approximately 3,354 acres around the proposed amendment.

### Land-Use and Platting Activity:

The area surrounding Cypresswood Drive is primarily made up of single-family residential subdivisions that were developed in the late 1970's and 1980's, with some development also in the early 2000's. Low-density commercial development and multi-family residential land uses are located along the North Eldridge Parkway and Grant Road major thoroughfares. There is approximately 280 acres of undeveloped land immediately west of North Eldridge Parkway, which is owned by the applicant, Stockton Foundation, Inc.

There has been limited platting activity in recent years immediately adjacent to the proposed Cypresswood Drive extension, but areas to the west along Kluge Road have seen a number of plats for single-family residential development. These plats include Bridlecreek, Alden Woods, Old Kluge Estates, and Perserve at Kluge. In total, these single-family residential plats include 273 lots that have been platted for development since 2013.

GP or Subdivision Plat Name	PC Action Date	Land Use	Property Size (acres)	Lots
Bridlecreek	8/20/2015	Single-family residential	52	92
Alden Woods GP	5/23/2013	Single-family residential	73	0
Alden Woods Sec. 2	3/2/2017	Single-family residential	36	69

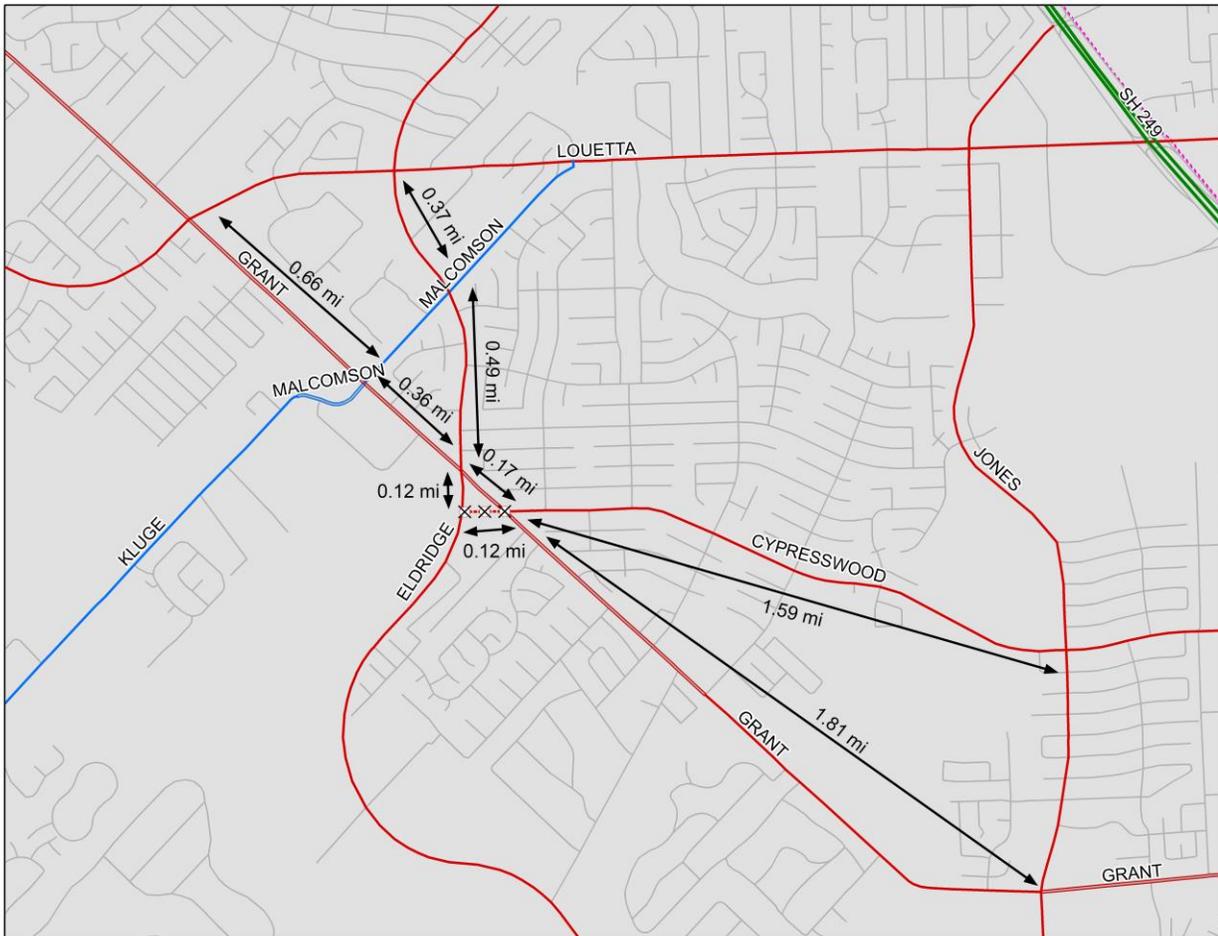
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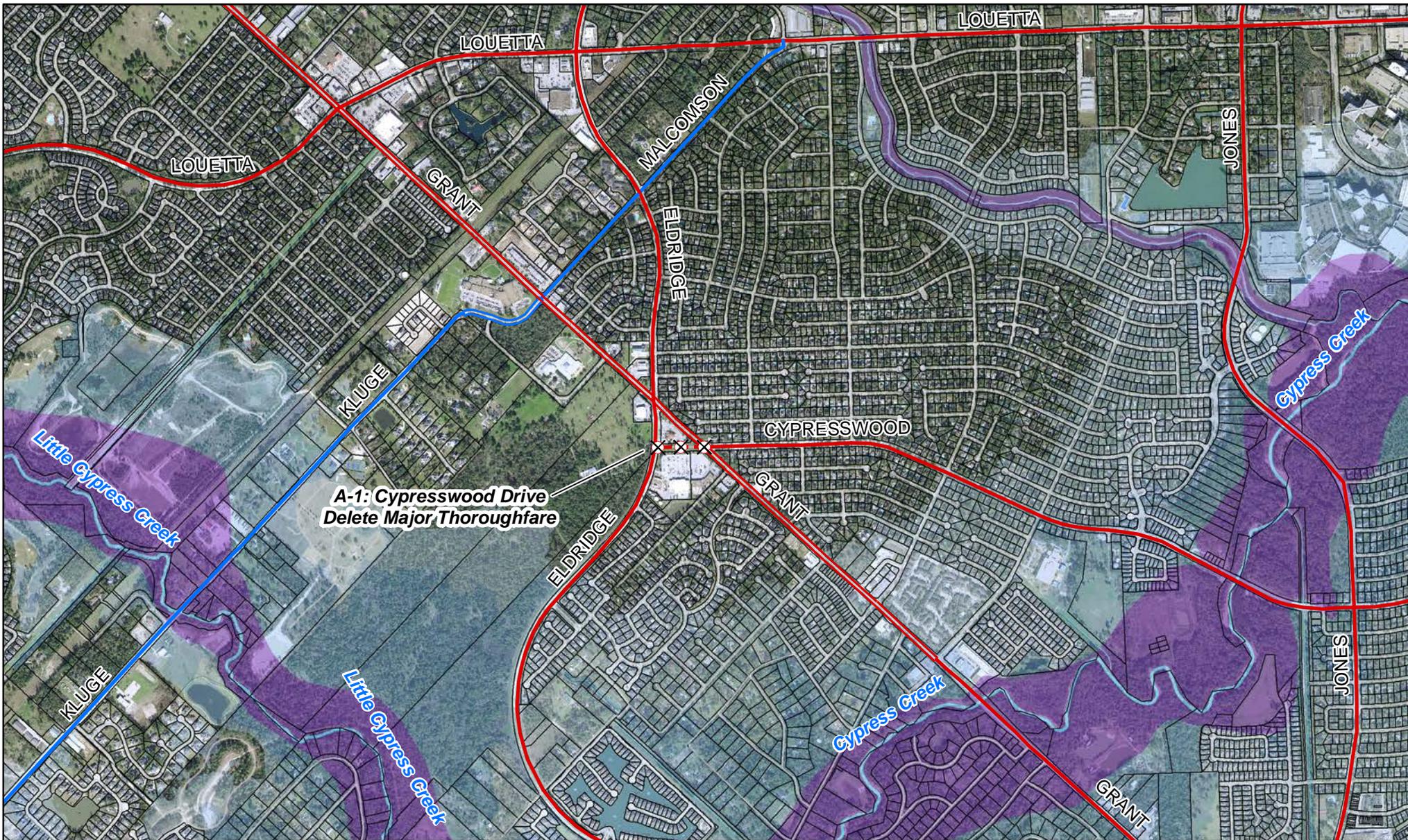
Alden Woods Sec. 1	10/16/2014	Single-family residential	36	86
Old Kluge Estates	7/23/2015	Single-family residential	3	3
Preserve at Kluge	2/19/2015	Single-family residential	8	23
Tall Pines Plaza	8/21/2014	Commercial	2	0
Faith International Fellowship	10/15/2015	Commercial	4	0

**Right of Way (ROW) Status:**

There is currently no existing publicly-owned right-of-way for proposed Cypresswood Drive between Grant Road and North Eldridge Parkway.

**Spacing:**





### A-1: Cypresswood Drive | 2017 Major Thoroughfare and Freeway Plan Amendment Request

#### 2017 MTFP Amendment

- |         |     |            |              |     |
|---------|-----|------------|--------------|-----|
| Add     | —●— | Reclassify | Street Class | —■— |
| Realign | —○— |            | ROW Width    | —▲— |
| Remove  | —X— |            | No. Lanes    | —◆— |

#### 2016 MTFP

- |                         |     |              |     |
|-------------------------|-----|--------------|-----|
| Freeway                 | —■— | Local Street | —   |
| Major Thoroughfare      | —■— | Railroad     | —+— |
| Major Collector         | —■— | Waterway     | —   |
| Minor Collector         | —■— | Park         | ■   |
| Transit Corridor Street | —■— |              |     |

