

PRELIMINARY REPORT

H: Via Dora Drive

APPLICANT: LJA Engineering, Inc.

JURISDICTION: ETJ

PRECINCT: Harris County Pct. 3
COUNCIL DISTRICT: N/A

PROPOSAL:

LJA Engineering, Inc. – on behalf of Castlerock Communities, L.P. – is requesting the deletion of proposed Major Thoroughfare Via Dora Drive from Golf Club Drive to Red Summit Drive in the Major Thoroughfare and Freeway Plan (MTFP).

APPLICANT’S JUSTIFICATION and HISTORY:

LJA Engineering, Inc., is requesting this amendment on behalf of the property owner, Castlerock Communities, L.P. The subject property is Pecan Estates: a subdivision located within the City of Houston’s Extra Territorial Jurisdiction (ETJ) in Harris County.

Pecan Estates is a residential subdivision, consisting of approximately 193-acres of mixed-use development situated north of Beaumont Highway, east of San Jacinto River, south of Diamondhead Boulevard, and west of FM 2100. The segment of Via Dora Drive is a proposed Major Thoroughfare that traverses the northwestern portion of the applicant’s property.

The applicant states that the current alignment of the proposed Major Thoroughfare presents significant engineering obstacles that would make the construction of this portion of the corridor extremely challenging, if not impossible. According to the applicant, the location of the floodplain and floodway would require that the proposed Major Thoroughfare be constructed and elevated above the floodplain. The applicant states further that the elevation would be costly and could possibly create adverse flooding effects within the surrounding areas. Additionally, the applicant states that several portions of the alignment would cross Jackson Bayou, a segment of the Union Pacific Railroad, and the existing transmission line infrastructure. The applicant asserts that it would be necessary to construct a bridge to cross Jackson Bayou, as well as an above-grade crossing to cross the railroad to allow for the safe flow of vehicular traffic.

Additionally, the applicant states that to comply with typical above-grade crossing requirements, the railroad crossing should be at a 90-degree angle with a slope requirement of approximately 400’ in length from the beginning to the end of the transition. This, according to the applicant, would require the existing transmission towers to be relocated. Moreover, the applicant states that an additional engineering challenge of the proposed corridor includes the necessity to meet the required tangent of 2,000’ and radius standard of 100’ that is required for a Major Thoroughfare. According to the applicant, this distance requirement could result in unanticipated construction costs and potentially require environmental impact mitigation efforts. Additionally, the applicant states that the proposed alignment bisects an historical nineteenth century gravesite that cannot be removed, relocated, or disturbed.

The proposed alignment of Via Dora Drive first appeared on the MTFP in 1992. The applicant indicated that the existing alignment proposed in the MTFP would require right-of-way (ROW) dedication within a portion of the Pecan Estates subdivision and additional ROW to the north, connecting to the Newport subdivision. The proposed ROW extension would connect two residential subdivisions that currently have access to existing Major Thoroughfares: Red Summit Drive, Diamondhead Boulevard, and FM

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2100. According to the applicant, deletion of this proposed Major Thoroughfare would not frustrate the general pattern of Thoroughfares and Collectors previously established. Finally, the applicant states that the deletion of the corridor would serve to preserve the natural conditions of the land and would not worsen drainage or flooding in the area.

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