

RECOMMENDATION REPORT

D: West Gray Street

APPLICANT: Bowden Land Services

LAMBERT: 5319

JURISDICTION: City of Houston

PRECINCT: Harris County Pct. 1

DISTRICT: C

PROPOSAL:

Bowden Land Services, on behalf of M & D Gray Properties, LLC, is requesting to reclassify right-of-way on thoroughfare West Gray Street, south of Fourth Ward and slightly west of Midtown inside the City of Houston limits. The original request was to reclassify West Gray Street from T-3-70 to T-3-60 between Mathews Street and Cushing Street. As of July 2019, the current request is to reclassify West Gray Street from T-3-70 to T-3-65 between Mathews Street and Cushing Street (0.05 miles).

APPLICANT'S JUSTIFICATION and HISTORY:

Bowden Land Services is requesting to re-evaluate the Thoroughfare West Gray (T-3-70) between Mathews St and Cushing St. This thoroughfare was updated in October 2017 the MTF Plan to increase the ROW width of West Gray from 60' to 70' and requiring 3 lanes of traffic.

In 2018 2 separate applications to plat contiguous properties of Lots 6-9 Block 60 Runnels Addition as recorded in Vol 12 page 691 HCDR was submitted for review under application numbers 2018-1822 and 2018-1929. At this time both plat applications were subject to ROW dedication of 7.5 feet.

The dedication of this 7.5 feet significantly impedes plans to develop the property.

The 2017 MTF Plan change applies the same 70' width requirement for both the one way traffic AND two way traffic further to the west. The paving width is over 44 feet at this location which is sufficient to meet the 3 lanes required by the MTF Plan therefore maintaining the intent of the MTF Plan.

Dedication of the 7.5 feet at this location does not make sense to obtain the required number of lanes.

RECOMMENDATION

DENY the request to reclassify right-of-way from T-3-70 to T-3-65 on West Gray between Mathews Street to Cushing Street on the Major Thoroughfare and Freeway Plan (MTFP).

Justification

To incorporate the Houston Complete Streets and Transportation Plan (HCSTP) and maintain an effective roadway network in the MTFP, it is in the best interest of the City of Houston (the "City") to preserve existing right-of-way along West Gray.

Incorporation of the Houston Complete Streets and Transportation Plan (HCSTP)

The MTFP is a component of the HCSTP, which directs City efforts to achieve complete streets that consider people of all ages and abilities, level of vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle traffic, the function of the road, and land use context.

West Gray Street functions as an east-west connector for people driving, walking, biking, using a wheelchair, and taking public transit in an urban environment. As of 2018, average daily traffic for this

RECOMMENDATION REPORT

block of West Gray is 9,064. For a two-lane, two-way road the maximum throughput to maintain reasonable level of service the average traffic threshold is 14,000-16,000. Thus, this block of West Gray maintains a reasonable level of service.

West Gray's adjacency and connectivity to Midtown, a newly designated Walkable Place district, is reflected in its mix of retail, restaurant, commercial, and multi-family residential uses. The designation of 70' right-of-way allows the City and its partners to accommodate a more walkable neighborhood including the improvement and expansion of sidewalks.

The amendment area is also designated as a future bikeway in the Houston Bike Plan. The proposed on-street bike lane would connect with a bikeway currently programmed for construction, between Bagby Street and Columbia Tap. Maintaining 70' right-of-way allows the City and its partners to accommodate a more bikeable neighborhood, including the addition of on-street bikeways.

Accommodating all modes of operation and factoring in adjacent land use ensures that proposed changes to the MTFP are consistent with the Houston Complete Streets and Transportation Plan.

Maintaining an Effective Roadway Network

Planning-level traffic analysis is completed as part of the MTFP and confirms that network connectivity and accessibility are maintained. According to the MTFP Policy Statement, mostly recently amended in March 2015, network connectivity and accessibility ensure an effective roadway network in the region. Connectivity includes the maintenance of consistent street classifications along a corridor. Reclassifying right-of-way for a one-block segment of a major thoroughfare would not maintain consistent street classifications in the MTFP.

The applicant refers to Streets in Place Ordinance 99-1344, which confirms rights-of-way of certain streets within the Fourth Ward of the City of Houston. Metes and bounds descriptions included in this ordinance do not include West Gray Street and clearly state the exclusion of West Gray right-of-way in defining the area of Fourth Ward.

Conclusion

P&D and Houston Public Works staff analysis of the amendment area find that incorporation of the HCSTP and maintenance of network connectivity are integral to the MTFP and recommend that Planning Commission deny the applicant's request to reclassify right-of-way from 70' to 65' on West Gray between Mathews and Cushing streets.

STAFF ANALYSIS

Population & Employment Projections

A demographic analysis using the Houston-Galveston Area Council (HGAC) projections was conducted for the MTFP amendment proposal area. According to the HGAC data,

Year	Population	Population Density (Persons/Acre)	% Change	Jobs	Job Density (Jobs/Acre)	% Change
2015	3,021	33.5	-	330	3.7	-
2020	2,674	29.6	-11.5%	428	4.7	29.7%
2025	2,401	26.6	-10.2%	433	4.8	1.2%
2030	2,164	24.0	-9.9%	437	4.8	0.9%

RECOMMENDATION REPORT

2035	2,175	24.1	0.5%	443	4.9	1.4%
2040	2,160	23.9	-0.7%	447	5.0	0.9%
2045	2,234	24.8	3.4%	451	5.0	0.9%
Change (2015 to 2045)	-787	-8.7	-26.1%	121	1.3	36.7%
COH change (2015 to 2045)	872,669	1.7	38.7%	507,094	1.0	30.4%
COH ETJ change (2015 to 2045)	1,206,503	1.6	55.3%	512,135	0.7	77.4%

Source: 2015-2040 Demographic Projections by H-GAC released in 2017

Data represents population, jobs, and households in 2 Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZ) encompassing approximately 90 acres around the proposed amendment.

Land Use and Platting Activity

Land use surrounding the amendment request is predominately commercial and multifamily, with townhomes to the north and south. Public and religious uses are also nearby, such as The African American Library at Gregory School and Mt. Horeb Missionary Baptist Church.

Below is platting activity within the last five years directly on the block of the amendment request.

GP or Subdivision Plat Name	PC Action Date	Land Use	Property Size (acres)	Lots
Unique Design Corner	10/11/2018	Unrestricted Reserve	0.23	0
Midtown Plaza	11/08/2018	Unrestricted Reserve	0.34	0
Le Coin De La Rue Gray	6/12/2014	Commercial Reserve	0.11	0

Right of Way (ROW) Status

In the proposed amendment area, West Gray is classified as a thoroughfare with three lanes and 70 feet of right-of-way. Existing right-of-way is documented as 62.5 feet and existing street pavement widths are 44 feet.

Spacing

RECOMMENDATION REPORT

