

Planning Staff Analysis

MPA25-0001/Underwood Drive, Corbin Road, and Springside Road City Council District #3

REQUEST:

Removing and realigning a proposed extension of Underwood Road between FM 1515 (Airport Road) and Springside Road, removing an east-west extension of future Corbin Road from Springside Road to existing north-south Corbin Road, and reclassifying portions of Corbin Road and Springside Road.

SITE DATA:

The focus area for the proposed Mobility Plan amendments is located generally west of I-35W and east of City of Denton Airport and includes three target roadways that are proposed to be amended – Underwood Road, Corbin Road, and Springside Road. The focus area includes a mixture of existing industrial and rural residential development, agricultural land, and undeveloped land. The Denton 2040 Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map identifies this area as an Industrial Commerce. The existing design and future configuration of these roads (according to the Mobility Plan 2022) are detailed below:

Underwood Road

The current Underwood Road runs north-south, beginning at Springside Road in the north and ending at the intersection of John Paine Road and FM 2449 in the south. As it is shown the illustration, according to the Mobility Plan 2022, the final configuration of Underwood Road as of now would extend further north with a northern terminus at FM 1515/Airport Road instead of Springside Road. The portion of the road circled in orange does not exist today. Underwood Road is designated on the Mobility Plan as a Secondary Arterial roadway.

This proposal advocates for the elimination of the future extension between Airport Road and Springside Road because constructing a bridge over Hickory Creek would unnecessarily negatively impact the environmental integrity of the riparian buffer surrounding the stream and the bottomland hardwood forest. The extension of Underwood Road north of Springside Road is not necessary because Westcourt Road and the north-south Corbin Road run parallel to Underwood Road, are less than 0.50-mile apart, and have the capacity of managing traffic flow without this extension.



Future Corbin Road (east-west)

The existing east-west Corbin Road begins at Bonnie Brae Street (east of I-35 W), continues westward and crosses under I-35W, with its terminus being at north-south Corbin Road (west of I-35 W). The portion crossing under I-35W is closed to through traffic due to flooding. The 2022 Mobility Plan specifies the ultimate configuration of future east-west Corbin Road, which is designated as a Secondary Arterial roadway, is intended to connect to Springside Drive as shown circled in orange in the adjacent image.



According to the Mobility Plan, the targeted section of Corbin Road will cross multiple existing rural residential properties to connect to Springside Road. This amendment proposes to remove this portion of the road to avoid cutting through these properties and instead making this needed connection in another way, as described below.

North-South Corbin Road

The north-south segment of Corbin Road currently starts at Airport Road and extends southward. However, beyond Shelby, this road is constructed only as an intermittent gravel road and is closed to traffic, creating an incomplete link for travelers and commuters. As properties in the area develop or redevelop, the incomplete gravel segment of the road will be required to be dedicated and built to City standards based on the road's Collector designation, which will ultimately connect to the western terminus of Springside Road. These amendments to the Mobility Plan propose to further extend the Collector functional classification to the north-south segment of Corbin Road to its intersection with the east-west segment of Corbin Road. This enhancement not only aims to improve access and traffic flow between these areas but also intends to facilitate better connectivity for residents and businesses along this corridor, promoting overall transportation efficiency in the region.



Springside Road

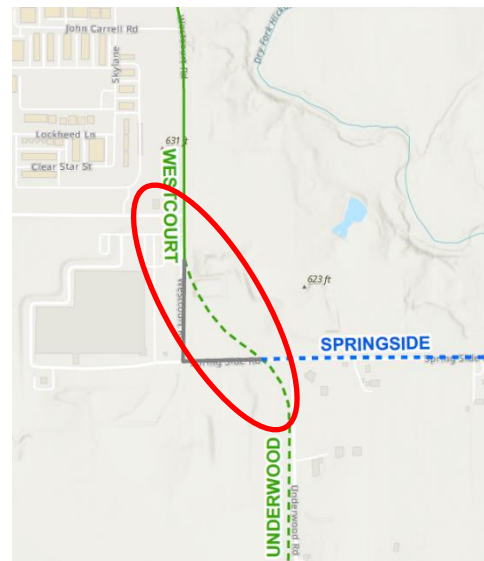
The existing Springside Road is situated between the north-south segment of Corbin Road and Westcourt Road. The 2022 Mobility Plan designated the eastern half of Springside Road as a Collector, while the west half of the road was designated as a Secondary Arterial, as shown in the adjacent image.



After a detailed study and consideration of the upcoming developments and changes in the area, the staff recommends changing the functional classification of Springside Road to a collector for the entire length of the road. This change would provide better accessibility for all existing and future developments, improve safety by reducing the speed limit, and ensure that the existing parallel roads, such as Airport Road (Primary Arterial) to the north and the future extension of east-west Corbin Road (Secondary Arterial) to the south, have sufficient capacity to handle east-west traffic.

Westcourt Road

Westcourt Road, which is designated as a Secondary Arterial, extends south from FM 1515/Airport Road to its southern terminus, which currently connects with Springside Road at a 90-degree intersection. However, to improve road safety and eliminate the potential hazards associated with sharp corners, especially in areas with industrial truck traffic, staff is proposing a reconfiguration of this area. The new design will allow the road to form a smooth, curved connection with Underwood Road. This change aims to facilitate easier navigation for vehicles and pedestrians while reducing the risk of accidents. Implementing these changes, combined with the modifications to Underwood Road described above, would eliminate duplication by having two parallel arterial roadways less than 0.25-mile apart, creating a safer and more efficient roadway network for all users in the area.



CONSIDERATIONS:

- A. Section 2.7.1.D of the DDC provides the criteria for approval of Comprehensive Plan Amendments:
 1. An application for a Comprehensive Plan amendment may be approved by the City Council only following a determination that the proposed amendment is consistent with the overall purpose and intent of the Comprehensive Plan and that any one of the following criteria has been met:

- a. *There was an error in the original Comprehensive Plan adoption;*
There was not an error in the original 2022 Mobility Plan adoption.
- b. *The City Council failed to take into account then-existing facts, projections, or trends that were reasonably foreseeable to exist in the future;*
The City Council did not fail to consider the existing facts, projections, or trends. Analysis of the area was conducted following recent development inquiries in the area, and this brought to light the significant implications that crossing Underwood Road over Hickory Creek will have in terms of adverse environmental impacts, which was determined to be unnecessary given the close proximity of other parallel roadways. Additionally, the current east-west configuration of Corbin Road does not adequately support the new developments and existing properties. With the introduction of new developments in the area, downgrading Springside Road will also enhance safety for all road users.
- c. *Events, trends, or facts after adoption of the Comprehensive Plan have changed the City Council's original findings made upon plan adoption; or*
Since the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, there has been significant interest in development within the area, leading to a more detailed staff analysis of the 2022 Mobility Plan. The proposed road realignments and classifications in this amendment, considering the Future Land Use Map, will improve accessibility and safety.

By recognizing the unique characteristics of Rural Residential and Industrial land uses, the proposed amendment aims to improve connectivity for residents while facilitating efficient access to industrial activities. It will also help reduce potential conflicts between residential and industrial traffic, ultimately fostering a safer environment for pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists.

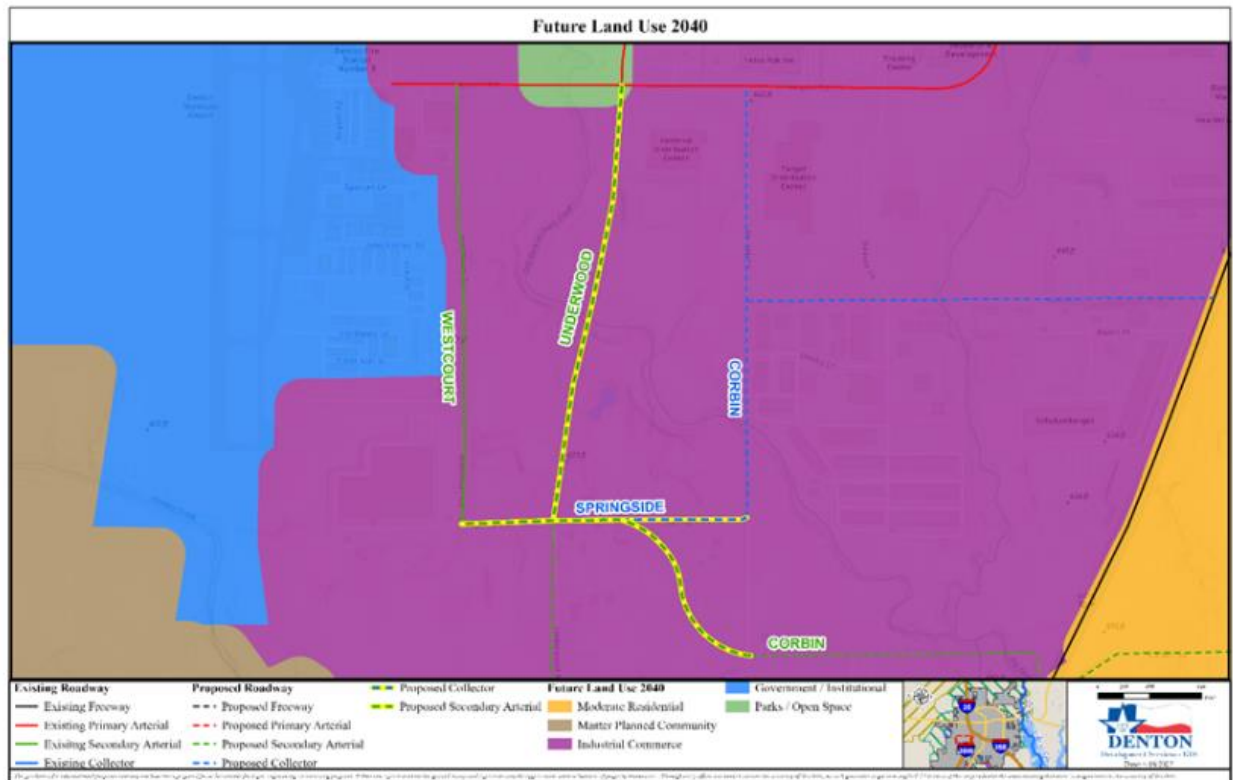
- d. *Events, trends, or facts after adoption of the Comprehensive Plan have changed the character or condition of an area so as to make the proposed amendment necessary.*
See response to c. above as it is applicable to this criterion.

2. In addition to the above-listed criteria, any proposed amendment is subject to the following additional review standards:

- a. *That the amendment is not in conflict with any portion of the goals and policies of the plan.*
The proposed Mobility Plan amendment to the Thoroughfare Plan Map is not in conflict with the Comprehensive Plan and is specifically consistent with the following goals in the Denton 2040 Comprehensive Plan:

M-1: Provide for the safe, efficient movements of motor vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians in a sustainable way that complements Denton's planned growth strategy.

The map below shows the Future Land Use plan from the 2040 Comprehensive Plan. In this area, industrial land use is predominant, indicated by the color purple. The map reflects the proposed changes in this Mobility Plan amendment and the effects on Denton's growth strategy.



Underwood Road - The targeted section of Underwood Road is located a short distance from Hickory Creek. Removing this section will help prevent any environmental interference with the area. Rerouting future traffic from this portion of Underwood Road to nearby roadways, such as Westcourt and north-south Corbin Road, will be able to handle overall capacity and ensure safer movement of vehicles by avoiding the floodplain and potential complications associated with flood events.

North-South Corbin Road - Extending the functional classification for future north-south Corbin Road to connect to the future east-west Corbin Road will complete the roadway network and improve connectivity in the area. By linking these two roads, there will be better connectivity to key thoroughfares such as I-35W and FM 1515.

Springside Road - Given the short length of this road and having Industrial Land use as it is identified in the Future Land Use Map, downgrading its classification from Secondary Arterial to Collector status will enhance accessibility and promote safer traffic flow for all road users.

The proposed amendment is also consistent with the following goals outlined in the 2022 Mobility Plan:

Goal 7: Implement “Complete Streets” Strategies on Roadways in Denton

- Objective 7A: Create a transportation network that meets the mobility needs of all Denton residents, businesses, and visitors.
- Strategy 7.2: Allow for flexible use of public rights-of-way to accommodate all uses of the street system while maintaining safety standards.

Underwood Road - Eliminating the designated section of Underwood Road will reduce potential risks associated with being in the floodplain and its impact on the bottomland hardwood forest.

North-South Corbin Road - Extending the functional classification of future north-south Corbin Road to connect to the future east-west Corbin Road, will complete the road network capacities and improve connectivity in the area.

Springside Road - Classifying Springside Road as a collector roadway will ensure there is adequate right-of-way width, a flexible design, and a safe speed limit, benefiting all users.

- b. *That the amendment constitutes a substantial benefit to the city and is not solely for the good or benefit of a particular landowner or owners at a particular point in time.*

The proposal will ensure adequate connectivity, accessibility, and safety for the current residents and future growth within the broader area.

- c. *The extent to which the proposed amendment and other amendments in the general area are compatible with the land use goals of the plan and that they avoid creation of isolated uses that will cause incompatible community form and a burden on public services and facilities.*

The Proposed changes are compatible with the land use goals. As noted above, these changes would improve the efficiency of the area’s roadway network and improve safety in an area that is designated for future industrial development.

- d. *That the development pattern contained in the existing plan does not provide adequate and appropriate optional sites for the use or change being proposed in the amendment.*

Underwood Road - The targeted section of Underwood Road currently crosses Hickory Creek and a riparian buffer. Removing this section will help prevent adverse environmental impacts. Additionally, existing parallel roads, such as Westcourt and Corbin Road, offer sufficient capacity for north-south traffic movements, making it unnecessary to cross the creek and negatively impact the environment in this area.

East-West Corbin Road - According to the 2022 Mobility Plan, the targeted section of Corbin Road crosses several residential properties. Removing this portion of the road will address residents' concerns and prevent unnecessary road construction in the area, as Springside Road to the north can effectively manage east-west traffic.

North-South Corbin Road – Extending the functional classification to and connecting the north-south Corbin Road to east-west Corbin Road will create a complete road network and improve overall connectivity in the area.

Springside Road - Given the area's growth and upcoming developments, downgrading the existing Secondary Arterial to a Collector Road will enhance accessibility and create safer traffic movement.

- e. *That the impact of the amendment, when considered cumulatively with other applications and development in the general area, will not adversely impact the city or a portion of the city by:*

- i. *Significantly altering acceptable existing land use patterns;*

The proposed modification to the Mobility Plan would not negatively alter the existing land use pattern.

- ii. *Having significant adverse impacts on public services and facilities that are needed to support the current land use and that cannot be mitigated to the maximum extent feasible;*

The proposal would not significantly adversely impact public services and facilities to support the current and future land use.

- iii. *Adversely impacting environmentally sensitive areas or resources; or*

The proposed Mobility Plan Amendment is not anticipated to result in any adverse environmental impacts. Furthermore, by removing a portion of future Underwood Road between Airport Road and Springside Road, the proposed Mobility Plan Amendment will minimize adverse environmental impacts by avoiding road construction on Hickory Creek.

- iv. *Adversely impacting existing uses because of increased traffic on existing systems.*

The proposed amendment is not anticipated to generate additional traffic on existing systems. If approved, the resulting roadway alignments and

functional classifications will provide for adequate roadway capacity in area to accommodate the traffic. Additionally, the reclassification of Springside Road won't change the traffic flow because of having parallel roads to create road capacity for east-west traffic movement.

- f. *That site conditions, including but not limited to topography, utility corridors/easements, drainage patterns, noise, odors, or environmental contamination, would make development under the current plan designation inappropriate.*

The studied portion of future Underwood Road is at a very close distance from Hickory Creek and its associated riparian buffer; therefore, to prevent any environmental interferences to the bottomland hardwood forest, along with other reasons mentioned, staff recommends minimizing adverse environmental impacts by avoiding unnecessary road construction in this area. The entire study area is approximately 0.5-mile across, and the development of redundant roadways is not needed to support the anticipated traffic demand as the area further develops.