

Planning Staff Analysis

MPA25-0002b/Future Collector between I-35 and Western City Council District #3

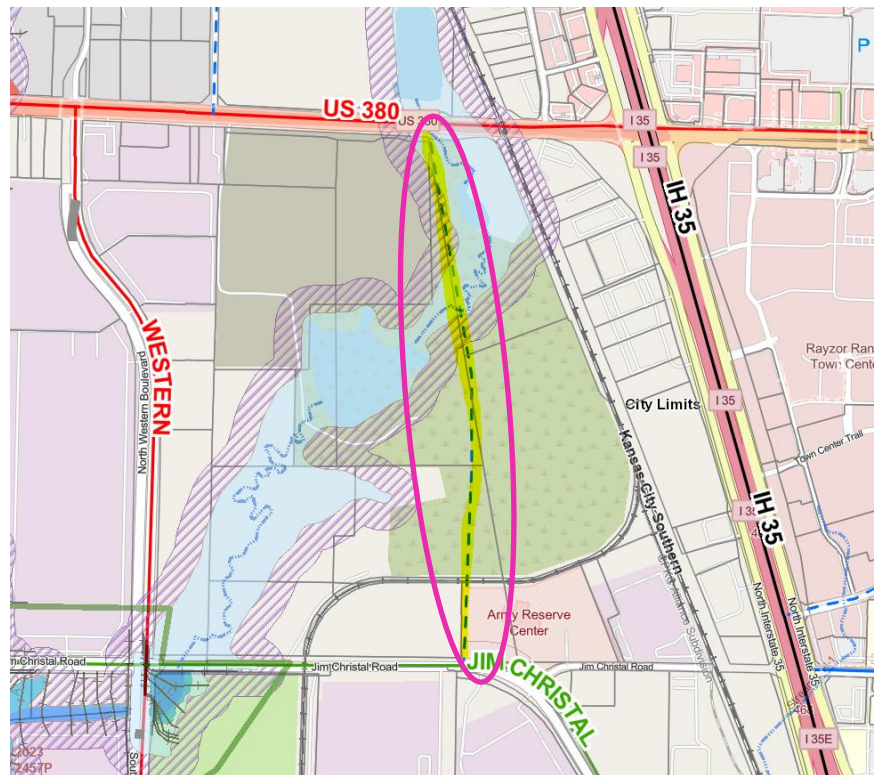
REQUEST:

Remove a Future Collector between Interstate 35 (I-35) and Western Boulevard, south of West University Drive (US 380) and north of Jim Christal Road.

SITE DATA:

The 2022 Mobility Plan proposes a Future Collector located west of I-35 and east of Western Boulevard and extending from US 380 southward to Jim Christal Road. According to the Denton 2040 Comprehensive Plan, the surrounding region is identified as Heavy Industrial and Light Industrial uses, along with areas designated for General Offices.

The Future Collector stretches approximately 0.75 miles in a north-south direction, linking US 380 to Jim Christal Road. It would be situated about 0.3 miles from I-35 and 0.4 miles from Western Boulevard. At the southern end of the proposed road, there is a crossing for the Kansas City Southern railroad. Recent regulations mandate the closure of at least two existing crossings in order to facilitate a new Rail crossing at the Future Collector Road. Additionally, as shown on the adjacent map, a pond is located in the northeast section of the Future Collector area, and its proximity will need to be considered during the planning and construction phases if this road were to be constructed.



Furthermore, the northern segment of the proposed road lies within a floodplain, which poses risks and potential adverse environmental impacts when building a road across it.

The surrounding roadway network includes:

- **I-35:** The I-35 corridor is designated as a freeway in the City's Mobility Plan and is a roadway managed by the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT).
- **US-380:** US 380 also known as University Drive, is a TxDOT road designated as a Primary Arterial that facilitates east-west traffic flow in the City of Denton

- **Western Boulevard:** Western Boulevard is a north-south Primary Arterial that runs parallel to the Future Collector. It connects to US-380 on the northern end and to Airport Road (FM 1515) to the south.
- **Jim Christal Road:** Jim Christal Road is an east-west corridor classified as a Secondary Arterial. Its western terminus is at FM 156, and its eastern terminus is at the railroad tracks located to the west of I-35.

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:

- There was an error in the original Comprehensive Plan adoption;*
There was not an error in the original 2022 Mobility Plan adoption.
- 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. Building the proposed Future Collector between I-35 and Western Boulevard will potentially negatively impact the surrounding environment due to its location within the floodplain. Additionally, creating a new crossing at the railroad will pose financial burdens and raise safety concerns. However, removing the Future Collector will not affect traffic flow and circulation within the area, as the existing parallel roads (I-35 and Western) have sufficient capacity to handle the traffic.
- 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, the area has experienced significant growth, leading to deeper analysis of the 2022 Mobility Plan, resulting the following conclusions:
 - 1) Regulations of Kansas City Southern require that any new rail crossing requires in the closure of at least two existing crossings. This could cause further safety issues and disrupt daily traffic in Denton.
 - 2) Environmental factors are also critical, as the proposed road crosses over a floodplain and is adjacent to a pond and stream. Construction could negatively impact local ecosystems and water quality.
- 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.

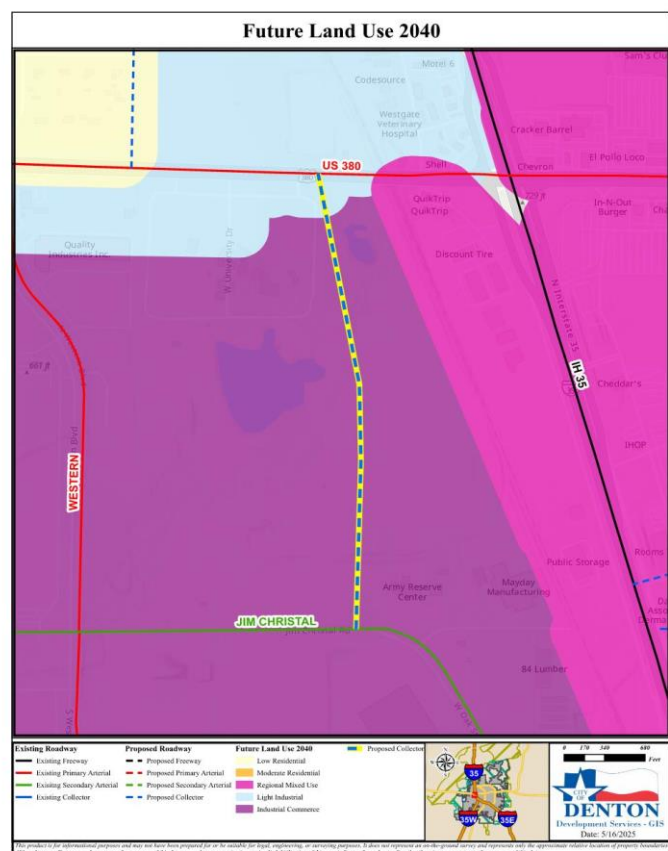
2. In addition to the above-listed criteria, any proposed amendment is subject to the following additional review standards:

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 removal of the Future Collector aligns with Denton's planned growth strategy while prioritizing the safe and efficient movement of motor vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians. By eliminating the proposed crossing, the city can reduce potential safety risks associated with increased traffic and the complexities introduced by Kansas City Southern regulations. Moreover, by minimizing disruption to natural features such as the adjacent pond and floodplain, this decision supports sustainable practices that protect local ecosystems.



(continued on next page)

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

Goal 5: Ensure Coordination between the Land Use and Circulation Systems

- Objective 5B: Establish strategies and processes that allow large developments to analyze and mitigate traffic impacts and infrastructure needs.
Strategy 5.11: Consider the needs of the transportation and infrastructure system early for large developments and coordinate with developers to design projects that minimize traffic impacts and infrastructure demands and implement complete street wherever feasible. Alternatively, address transportation and infrastructure system impacts through the implementation of development agreements.

The removal of the Future Collector will not impede the existing land uses and circulation systems. Since the target road is located in a single industrial lot, removing the Future Collector has no impact on the surrounding area. Also, the existing adjacent roadway network provides enough capacity to handle traffic circulation.

- 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.

- 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.*

The Future Collector is located only 0.3 miles from Highway I-35 and 0.4 miles from Western Boulevard, which serves as a primary arterial route. By removing the Future Collector, the city can ensure that development patterns are more in line with existing traffic capabilities, improving safety while minimizing unnecessary crossings without compromising access to vital transportation routes. This amendment ultimately supports a more effective land use strategy that reflects the current and future needs of the community.

- 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, the proposed Mobility Plan Amendment will minimize adverse environmental impacts by removing the Future Collector and avoiding road construction within the floodplain.

- 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. Given the proximity of the Future Collector to I-35 and Western Boulevard, there will adequate be roadway capacity in area to accommodate north-south traffic.

- 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 Future Collector is located at a close distance from an existing pond, and it will also cross the existing floodplain; therefore, to prevent any environmental interferences, along with other reasons mentioned, staff recommends minimizing potential adverse environmental impacts by avoiding road construction in this area.