

Memorandum

Date: March 29, 2016
To: Mayor Keil and the Seguin City Council
From: John Foreman AICP, CNU-A
Assistant Director of Planning/Codes
RE: Proposed Major Update to the City's Thoroughfare Plan and Roadway Impact Fee

Background

The current City of Seguin Thoroughfare Plan was created and adopted with the Comprehensive Plan in 2008. The Plan shows existing and proposed new roads and the amount of right of way required for them. The plan serves several purposes:

1. Identifies city-wide transportation policies and priorities
2. Contains all potential roadway projects to be developed as capital improvement projects for City or MPO funding.
3. When a property owner within the City Limits or ETJ subdivides property with a plat, right of way is required to be dedicated as shown on the plan. This is true for any proposed new roads and for existing roads where the plan identifies wider right of way than currently exists.

The plan has been difficult to implement because the roadway network is conceptual. A number of alignments are problematic because of existing development, conflicts with physical features, property constraints or other issues. Staff has identified these with various proposed plats and brought plan amendments to Council over the past few years, typically to remove roads or reduce right of way widths. For example at the previous meeting Council removed the two lane undivided collector between FM 725 and S. State Hwy 123 Bypass, which was aligned through existing structures. Staff noted that realigning this collector onto an existing road or through undeveloped land would be more feasible.

There are a number of similar situations where property owners must either dedicate unnecessary right of way or wait for the plan to be amended before moving forward with a plat. Moreover, addressing these one at a time as plats are submitted does not allow for full citywide review and analysis, and the likely result of continuing this approach will be a disconnected thoroughfare network that does not meet the needs of the City.

Thoroughfare Plan Project Overview

The Thoroughfare Plan is a key tool in implementing the Comprehensive Plan. Beyond addressing the issues with the current plan noted above, the development of a Master

Thoroughfare Plan is an opportunity for the City to identify and prioritize current and future transportation goals and to implement strategies to achieve these goals.

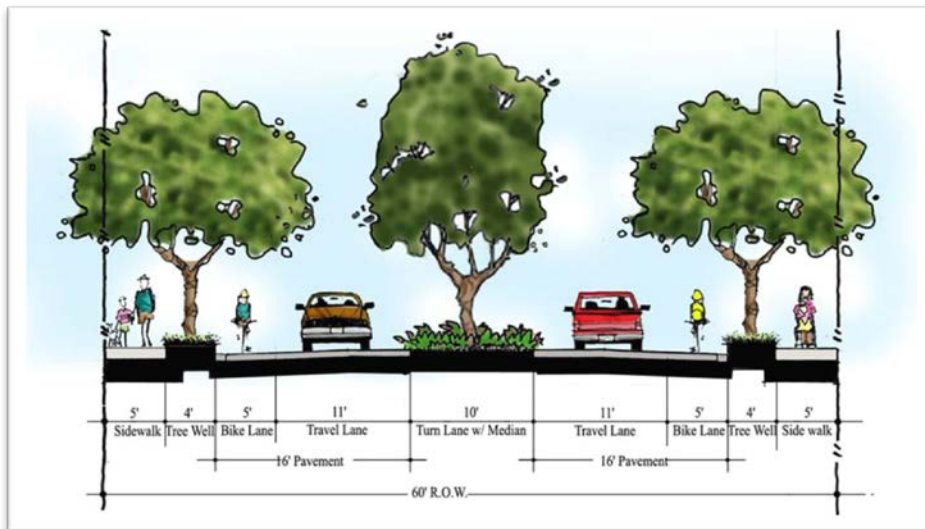
Along with Kimley-Horn a renowned engineering and planning firm, staff has developed the attached scope of work, which includes five tasks:

1. Data Collection

This will include gathering existing plans and studies including from other agencies such as Guadalupe County and TxDOT. Kimley-Horn will also work with the City to prepare an inventory of existing roadways.

2. Master Thoroughfare Plan Development and Documentation

Staff and Kimley-Horn will improve the alignments in the current thoroughfare plan and recommend changes or additions as necessary. Also, the plan will define cross-sections similar to the example below that define the width of the right of way, as well as the number and width of travel lanes and bicycle and pedestrian facilities.



Each major roadway will be assigned a cross section on the Thoroughfare Plan map. Cross sections will be “Context Sensitive.” They will take into account current and future land uses in an area.

Based on the alignments and cross-sections, a list of projects will be developed and prioritized, and cost estimates will be included for priority projects.

Because the Comprehensive Plan contains a number of specific recommendations for downtown, the plan will contain more detailed cross-sections and design concepts focusing on pedestrian safety and comfort and other items recommended in the Comprehensive Plan.

3. Roadway Impact Fee Development and Documentation

See discussion below.

4. Meetings and Public Engagement

Staff anticipates several public meetings, technical work sessions, and Impact Fee

Advisory Committee Meetings. Kimley-Horn will make eight trips to Seguin to assist with these.

Staff proposes the creation of a Task Force consisting of elected and appointed officials to assist with steering the project. This item will be placed on a future Council agenda for discussion, direction, and appointments.

5. Adoption and Implementation Support

Kimley-Horn will assist with plan adoption and implementation, particularly with impact fees.

Roadway Impact Fees

As part of the project, Kimley-Horn will work with the city to establish the framework and required items for a roadway impact fee. Similar to a water or wastewater impact fee, cities may adopt these to cover roadway costs associated with new developments. Fees may be used for construction of new or expanded facilities but not maintenance of existing facilities. New Braunfels, Lockhart and Cibolo currently charge a roadway impact fee.

Currently, the Unified Development Code requires developments to construct their proportionate share of any “boundary streets” located on the Thoroughfare Plan. A roadway impact fee is an alternative method that has several advantages:

1. Predictability – an impact fee is a set amount based on the size and type of development. Calculating boundary street improvement costs is more challenging both for the developer and the City.
2. Fairness – developments not located along streets on the Thoroughfare Plan are not required to do any boundary street improvements. This establishes unequal development costs based on the streets bounding a property.
3. Flexibility – funds collected through impact fees can be used where most needed within the area.

Outcomes

The City will receive the following from Kimley-Horn:

- Thoroughfare Plan Map with improved alignments
- Thoroughfare Plan Document
- Existing conditions data
- Context sensitive cross sections
- Detailed downtown analysis
- Project list and prioritization method
- Roadway Impact Fee Report including necessary items for establishing the fee
- Administration and implementation support

Staff looks forward to working with Council, the Task Force, the public, and Kimley-Horn on this vital project that will help to shape the future of Seguin.