



ZONING AND PLATTING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION 20220920-10

Date: September 20, 2022

Subject: Resubdivisions - Connectivity

Motioned By: Commissioner Greenberg

Seconded By: Vice-Chair Kiolbassa

Recommendation

Whereas; Priority Program 1 in the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan calls for “investment in a compact and connected city through the coordination of capital investments, incentives, and regulations;” and

Whereas; according to the 2020 Imagine Austin Compact and Connected Indicators, developed land area, annual unlinked transit passenger trips, vehicle miles traveled per capita, percentage of trips by biking and walking, and transportation system total annual delay are all “headed in the wrong direction;” and

Whereas; fatalities, serious injuries, and total crashes in Austin have increased year over year in the Austin area since 2018; and

Whereas; designing communities with options for bicycling and walking increases opportunities for physical activity, especially for children and families; and

Whereas; car ownership in Texas costs almost \$10,000 a year; and

Whereas; dead-end streets and disconnected networks increase vehicle miles traveled and time spent in the car, which have been associated with obesity, decreased opportunities for active travel, stress, impacts on mental health, less time to spend with family and friends, and less time to engage in community activities.

Whereas, connected street networks help reduce traffic on major thoroughfares, are cheaper to build and maintain; and

Whereas a connected street grid makes walking, biking, and transit use more desirable options; and

Whereas, the way streets are laid out now determines the pattern for future growth; and

Whereas subdivisions with too few access streets results in dangerous situations in the event of flooding or wildfires; and

Therefore, the Zoning and Platting Commission recommend that the Austin City Council seek to revise and amend Land Development Code sections § 25-4-151 through § 25-4-157 to meet the intent of Imagine Austin Priority Program and seek to enhance connectivity and affordability in new subdivision design; and proposed changes recommended by the Zoning and Platting Commission are:

1. § 25-4-151 – Require connections and alignment of all stub out streets of a new subdivision to existing or proposed streets. If street connection infeasible, provide connection through a multi-use trail; and
2. § 25-4-152 – Prohibit dead-end streets and/or cul-de-sacs unless the director determines that topography, natural features, or unusual conditions make connection to an existing or proposed street infeasible; and
3. § 25-4-152 – If allowed by the director, a dead-end street and/or cul-de-sac must be no longer than 300 feet and provide a multi-use trail connection; and
4. § 25-4-152 – Define cul-de-sac and dead-end; and
5. § 25-4-153 – Limit block length to 600 feet; and
6. § 25-4-157 – Require more connections to external streets for larger subdivisions.

Vote : 9-0

For., Vice-Chair Kiolbassa and Commissioners Boone, Denkler, Greenberg, King, Stern and Woody

Against: Commissioners Smith and Thompson

Abstained: Commissioner Acosta

Absent: Chair Barrera-Ramirez

Attest:



Andrew D. Rivera
Liaison to Zoning and Platting Commission