




MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Gregory I. Guernsey, AICP, Director
Planning and Zoning Department 

DATE: February 15, 2017

SUBJECT: Villas at Vinson Oak (C14-2016-0063.SH)
February 16, 2017 City Council Agenda Item #60

The Villas at Vinson Oak Rezone (C14-2016-0063.SH) was item #46 on the agenda for Council's February 9, 2017 meeting. Council had questions of staff while discussing this item. The questions and responses are provided in this memorandum.

1. Vinson Drive Traffic Study: What is the cost to perform a traffic study along Vinson Drive to identify roadway improvements for pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicular traffic?

A preliminary review of conditions along Vinson Drive established the need to complete a preliminary engineering report (PER) to identify opportunities and constraints along Vinson Drive. Survey information will be critical to establish the limits of the City's ROW and that of the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR). The following tasks would be completed as part of the PER. A rough estimate of cost to complete the PER is \$100,000. An estimated time for completion is approximately 6-9 months.

- *Prepare preliminary engineering report*
 - *Coordinate with UPRR*
 - *Conduct field survey to establish right-of-way lines*
 - *Public engagement*
 - *Recommended improvements*
 - *Cost estimates*
 - *Discuss feasibility of purchase w/UP, if necessary*
 - *Determine available funding options for roadway improvements*
2. Converting Railroad Segment to an Urban Trail: Can Urban Trails funding in the 2016 Mobility Bond be used to convert the rail segment adjacent to the property to an urban trail?

This segment is identified in the Urban Trails Master plan as a Tier I trail. At this time the rail segment is owned by Union Pacific. The Urban Trails Program is in discussion with CapMetro about sharing the possible purchase of the land or an easement for a

future Urban Trail. No funding has been allocated to this project as Union Pacific still owns the property.

3. Funds to Purchase Property: Is funding available to buy the property?

Staff contacted the Office of Real Estate Services and the Parks and Recreation Department (PARD) in order to respond to this question. Real Estate Services reports that they are unaware of funding to make this purchase. PARD looked at the possibility of acquiring 4507 and 4511 Vinson Drive and concluded that they do not have dollars at this time to acquire the properties. PARD has about \$12,000 in the immediate area available in parkland dedication funds. In looking further into the reasons behind such an acquisition, PARD would not consider this a priority based on the following criteria:

- 1) It is not a park-deficient area, which is our primary focus acquiring new parkland.*
- 2) It is located with 700 feet of St. Elmo Park, which is located along the same railroad spur.*

Given that it is not a park-deficient area, it would not rank high on PARD's priority list given our limited resources.

4. Programmed Improvements: What improvements are programmed for construction along Vinson Drive?

There are currently no improvements planned for Vinson Drive. Sidewalks are absent along Vinson Drive but are designated as a 'medium' priority per the City of Austin's Sidewalk Master Plan. ATD staff, led by Active Transportation, have committed to further study of the available right of way is necessary to fully understand the opportunities for any improvements to Vinson. ATD will be evaluating this as resources become available. Staff will also evaluate an alternate bicycle route via 3rd from St. Elmo to Aberdeen.

ATD manages the Local Area Traffic Management (LATM) program which is a request-based program to address speeding on residential streets. To date, an application has not been received for Vinson Drive.