



OLMOS PARK ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
120 West El Prado Drive
San Antonio, Texas 78212

June 29, 2016

Dear Olmos Park Residents, and Business and Property Owners:

The City Council of Olmos Park has approved a “Striping Plan” on McCullough as proposed by the Olmos Park Economic Development Corporation (“EDC”).

WHY DO A “STRIPING PLAN”?

Since 2008, our community has deliberated many options for improving the aesthetics and functionality of McCullough and transforming the Corridor to a safe and pedestrian friendly area. Wider or narrower lanes, faster or slower traffic, landscaping, sidewalks, bike lanes, reconfigure McCullough to two or three lanes - these options have all been studied. The EDC was sanctioned by the voters in November of 2008. The EDC receives approximately \$100,000 in sales tax revenue annually. The current balance in the EDC account is approximately \$330,000. Over the years, most of the funds in the EDC account have gone to engineering studies, engineering consultants, landscape design consultants, traffic studies, engineering plans, grant applications, research, surveys, and attorney fees, with very little “visual effect” to the aesthetics of the McCullough Corridor. One clear purpose for the EDC is to improve McCullough and to act on the approved options agreed upon by the City Council.

The City Council approved plans that include six foot sidewalks on the west side of the street, a landscape buffer, bike lanes and narrower vehicular lanes. Funding this “plan” would cost millions of dollars and neither the EDC nor the City are able to fund this project at this time. In September of 2014, the EDC submitted an application for an MPO Grant for this project. The City was denied in January 2015. Around that time, it was discovered that this grant was a “Reimbursable Grant Program.” A City our size obviously cannot “bank” a project of this size so the City Council has opted to not pursue this avenue of funding.

The majority agrees that the existing conditions of the McCullough Corridor is an embarrassment and must be improved. On November 19, 2015, the City Council *unanimously* approved a “Striping Plan” that incorporates “paint lines” to indicate future curb locations for sidewalks and landscaping, ease vehicular maneuverability, improve bike safety and enhance the pedestrian environment. The City Council stated that the stripe plan was a good way to “test drive” the approved plan. This way, concerns that may arise can be addressed without a multimillion dollar expense or major technical impacts.

This is particularly important as commercial properties change hands. The “plan” includes updates to our code so that property upgrades can incorporate frontage improvements such as the already approved requirement to build six foot sidewalks and future code updates currently being drafted for landscape requirements and parking lot maintenance requirements for all property owners on McCullough. Coordinating the “plans”, the “test” and the code changes, will deliver visible improvements to McCullough over time. As other funding mechanisms are developed to complete the expected scope of work, we can proceed with the confidence that the plan details will function for our community as intended.

WHY SHOULD WE HAVE TWO LANES INSTEAD OF A CENTER TURN LANE ON MCCULLOUGH?

One of the design options for the McCullough corridor developed by the EDC included a three lane geometry that accommodates turns into the residential or commercial block, south and northbound respectively.

Careful consideration of the asymmetric grid alignment of the residential blocks to the east, and commercial blocks to the west of McCullough, reveal the fact that a third lane designed for left hand turns places incoming traffic into a path of collision. This situation would impact the safety of our residents and visitors, and has been deemed unacceptable, and has been officially rejected by the City Council.

This fact was discussed with the consultants and the EDC Board, and the City Council voted to approve the two lane design over the option with a center turning lane.

WHY SHOULD WE HAVE “BIKE LANES” ON MCCULLOUGH?

San Antonio and Bexar County have adopted the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) “Bike Master Plan,” which includes a full network of bike infrastructure to be implemented over the next years, totaling hundreds of miles of connectivity. An example of the “bike lane” dedication in our area can be seen on McCullough south of Hildebrand to downtown. As the network continues to be built and the number of cyclists increases as projected, Olmos Park is responsible to incorporate safe passage to residents and other bikers who will, without a doubt, be using this Corridor. Bike Lane dedication increases safety for riders and decreases liability for drivers.

Since the “2011 Survey,” which provided a “snapshot” of approximately 50% of the stakeholders in the City of Olmos Park, many properties on McCullough have changed hands and younger families have moved into our community. This generation is more likely to ride bicycles for recreation or transportation and their demand for a safe infrastructure is becoming increasingly evident.

WHAT IS THE COST OF THE “STRIPING PLAN”?

\$110,220.00 in EDC sales tax dollars for engineering (Bain Medina Bain), planning and landscape design (Bender Wells Clark) to develop a design, and to bid and hire a contractor to execute the work for the “Striping Plan”.

WHEN WILL THE STRIPING PLAN BE COMPLETE?

Late August to mid-September 2016 (weather permitting).

HOW DO RESIDENTS, BUSINESSES AND PROPERTY OWNERS GIVE “FEED-BACK” TO THE CITY REGARDING THE “STRIPING PLAN”?

There is a newly added “G-Mail” link (McCullough.Feedback@gmail.com) on the City Website for you to provide feedback regarding this project over the next year. In addition, all EDC Board Members and City Council Members email addresses are posted on the City Website or you may attend the EDC Board Meetings (second Tuesday of each month at 6:00pm) and/or the City Council Meetings (third Thursday of each month at 6:00pm) and sign-up to speak during the “Citizens To Be Heard” portion of the Board or Council. All agendas, meeting dates and times are posted on the City website. You may also drop-off or mail your comments to City Hall (at the address shown above) or you may email your comments to the City Manager, Celia DeLeon (citymanager@olmospark.org) and she will forward them to the appropriate party on the EDC Board.

WHAT TYPE OF DATA WILL THE EDC BE COLLECTING DURING THIS PERIOD?

The City Council voted to “test” the Striping Plan for one year and gather community input during this period. A copy of the “Striping Plan” is posted on the City Website.

At the June 2016, EDC Board Meeting, the Board approved the purchase of two (2) Radar Recorders to monitor vehicular traffic and bike traffic for the Police Department to be used during this “test period” which will monitor and track vehicle types, speed and number, including bicyclists. The Police Department will be alternating the device on two separate areas on McCullough and the second device will be placed along the residential streets starting with those closest to the “Circle.” Residential input is **critical** during this “testing period.” **Example:** *If you are witnessing an increase in bicyclists on your street, PLEASE inform the Police Chief or an EDC Board Member. We can then move the recorder to your street to obtain and retrieve this data.*

(ON A SIDE NOTE: For all you “Nextdoor Neighbor” subscribers, the Police Department will now be able to place these devices in areas of our City when complaints are received regarding traffic violators within our City. This will provide the necessary data to justify/warrant additional patrolling in certain areas of our City during certain times of the day/night.)

Your comments will be reviewed, and vehicle and bicycle data will be collected and reported monthly to the EDC and the City Council. This information will be contained in the minutes of the EDC and City Council Meetings and are posted on the City website. If you are unable to attend either of these meetings, the City Manager can also provide a copy of the monthly report upon request.

The EDC and the City Council will conduct a “Town Hall Meeting” in January 17, 2017 for the sole purpose of receiving your input on the “Plan.” The EDC Board Members and the City Council felt this would allow enough time for residents, business/property owners to “test drive” McCullough and provide valuable input regarding this project.

If you have not already provided your email information to the City so that you can receive the OP “Weekly E-Mail” Blast, we would encourage you to do so *now*, because we may be providing updates for future meetings via this outlet regarding this project. You will not receive “random emails” from the City, nor will your information be shared. All it takes is a phone call to City Hall (210-824-3281) or an email to citymanager@olmospark.org.

Respectfully Yours,
Sharon Plant, EDC President
Andres Andujar, EDC Secretary