



Mayor Javier Villalobos
Mayor Pro Tem/Commissioner J. Omar Quintanilla
Commissioner Tony Aguirre, Jr.
Commissioner Joaquin Zamora

Commissioner Rodolfo "Rudy" Castillo
Commissioner Victor "Seby" Haddad
Commissioner Pepe Cabeza de Vaca
City Manager Roel "Roy" Rodriguez, P.E.

**NOTICE OF WORKSHOP TO BE HELD BY THE
MCALLEN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MONDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2023 – 4:00 PM
MCALLEN CITY HALL
CITY COMMISSION CHAMBERS; 3RD FLOOR
1300 HOUSTON AVENUE
MCALLEN TEXAS, 78501**

AGENDA

"At any time during the course of this meeting, the City Commission may retire to Executive Session under Texas Government Code 551.071(2) to confer with its legal counsel on any subject matter on this agenda in which the duty of the attorney to the City Commission under the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct of the State Bar of Texas clearly conflicts with Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code. Further, at any time during the course of this meeting, the City Commission may retire to Executive Session to deliberate on any subject slated for discussion at this meeting, as may be permitted under one or more of the exceptions to the Open Meetings Act set forth in Title 5, Subtitle A, Chapter 551, Subchapter D of the Texas Government Code."

CALL TO ORDER

1. Present questions to staff relating to the October 23, 2023 Regular Meeting Agenda, to be discussed at such meeting.
2. Taylor Road Preliminary Schematic.
3. McAllen Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan Update.
4. **EXECUTIVE SESSION, CHAPTER 551, TEXAS GOVERNMENT CODE, SECTION 551.071 (CONSULTATION WITH ATTORNEY), SECTION 551.072 (DELIBERATION REGARDING REAL PROPERTY), SECTION 551.074 (PERSONNEL MATTERS) AND SECTION 551.087 (ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT)**
 - A) Consideration of Economic Development Matters. (Section 551.087, T.G.C.)
 - B) Evaluation of the City Manager. (Section 551.074, T.G.C.)
 - C) Consultation with City Attorney for litigation update regarding Cause No. C-0074-19-D pending in Hidalgo County, Texas. (Section 551.072, T.G.C)

ADJOURNMENT

IF ANY ACCOMMODATION FOR A DISABILITY IS REQUIRED (OR INTERPRETERS FOR THE DEAF), NOTIFY THE CITY SECRETARY'S DEPARTMENT AT 681-1020 FORTY-EIGHT (48) HOURS PRIOR TO THE MEETING DATE. WITH REGARD TO ANY ITEM, THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MAY TAKE VARIOUS ACTIONS INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO RESCHEDULING AN ITEM IN ITS ENTIRETY FOR A FUTURE DATE OR TIME.

C E R T I F I C A T I O N

I, the Undersigned Authority, do hereby certify that the attached agenda of the meeting of the McAllen Board of Commissioners is a true and correct copy and that I posted a true and correct copy of said notice on the bulletin board in the Municipal Building, a place convenient and readily accessible to the general public at all times, and said Notice was posted on October 20, 2023 at 3:30 PM and will remain so posted continuously for at least 72 hours preceding the scheduled time of said meeting in accordance with Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code.

/s/

Perla Lara, TRMC/CMC, CPM
City Secretary



ITEM SUMMARY

BOARD: City Commission

AGENDA ITEM

1.

DATE SUBMITTED

MEETING DATE

10/23/2023

1. Agenda Item: Present questions to staff relating to the October 23, 2023 Regular Meeting Agenda, to be discussed at such meeting.
2. Party Making Request:
3. Nature of Request:
4. Routing:
Emmanuel Garcia
5. Staff Recommendation:
6. Advisory Board:
7. City Attorney:
8. Manager's Recommendation:

Created -



ITEM SUMMARY

BOARD: City Commission

AGENDA ITEM
DATE SUBMITTED
MEETING DATE

2.
10/17/2023
10/23/2023

1. Agenda Item: Taylor Road Preliminary Schematic.

2. Party Making Request: Eduardo Mendoza

3. Applicant:

4. Nature of Request:

5. Fiscal Impact Summary:

6. Budgeted:

Bid Amount: _____
Under Budget: _____

Budgeted Amount: _____
Over Budget: _____
Amount Remaining: _____

7. Routing:

Jose Perez
Eduardo Mendoza
Michelle Rivera
Isaac Tawil

Created/Initiated - 10/17/2023
Approved - 10/17/2023
Approved - 10/17/2023
Final Approval - 10/17/2023

8. Staff Recommendation:

9. Advisory Board:

10. City Attorney:

11. Manager's Recommendation:



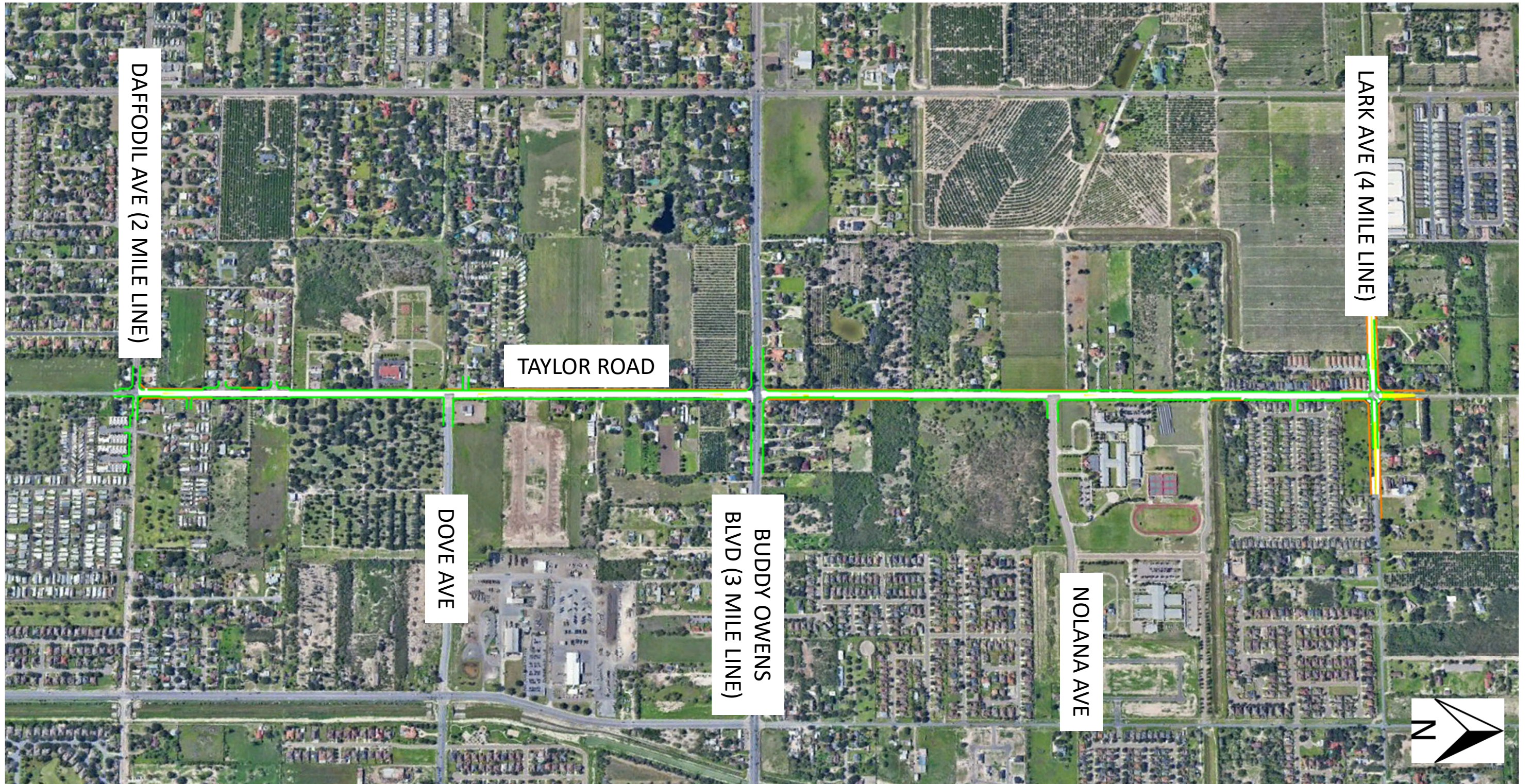
ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT
MEMORANDUM

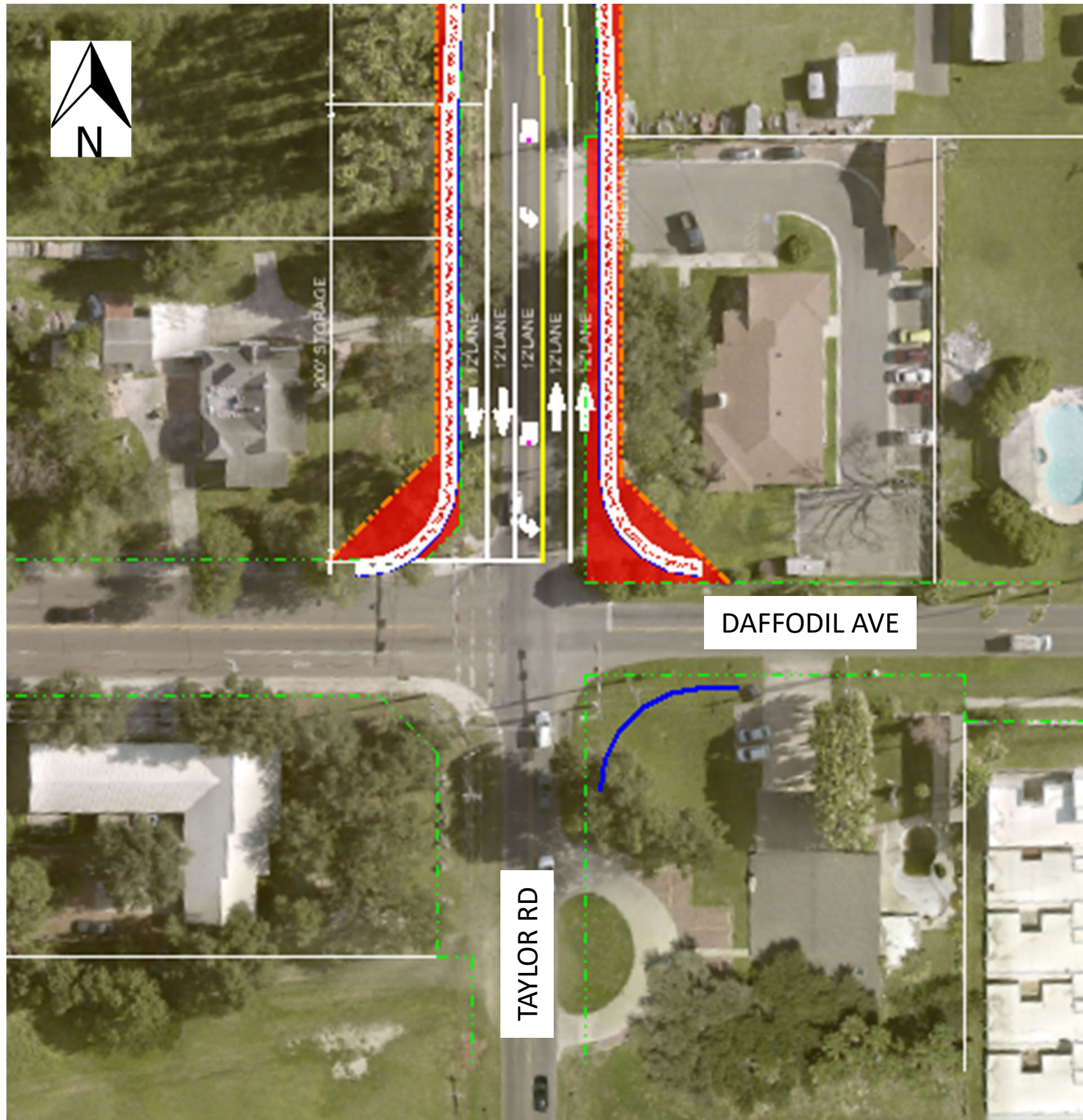
To: Roel Rodriguez, P.E., City Manager
From: Eduardo Mendoza, PE, P.T.O.E., City Engineer
Date: May 3, 2022
Subject: Taylor Road Widening 30% Schematic.

Explanation

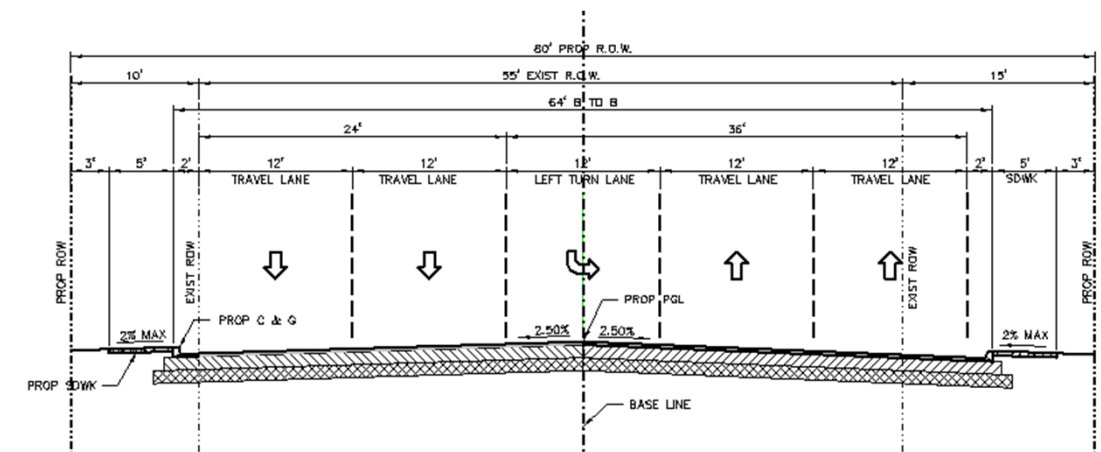
The Engineering Department will be presenting the 30% Schematic for the proposed Taylor Road widening from Lark Avenue (4 Mile Line) to Daffodil Avenue (2 Mile Line), seeking approval direction from the City of McAllen Board of Commission.

TAYLOR ROAD PROJECT LOCATION MAP



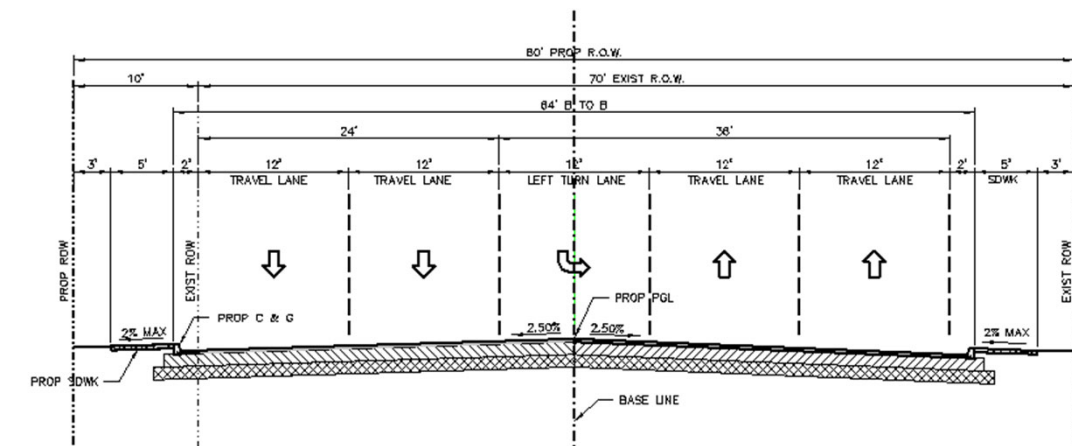


Taylor Rd at Daffodil Ave Intersection

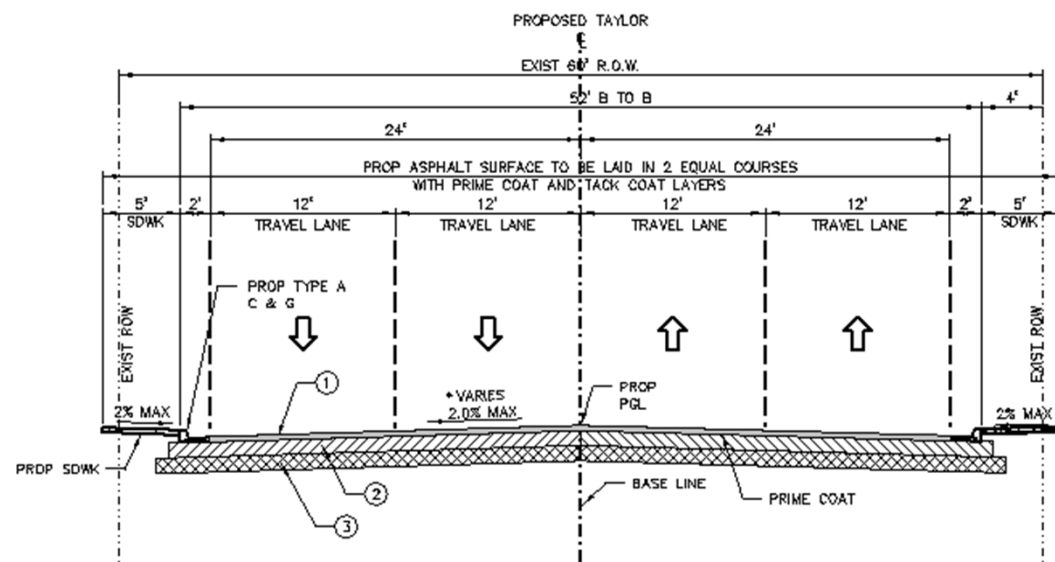


PROPOSED TYPICAL SECTION
STA TO STA
N TAYLOR RD & DAFFODIL

Taylor Rd at W. Nolana Ave. Intersection

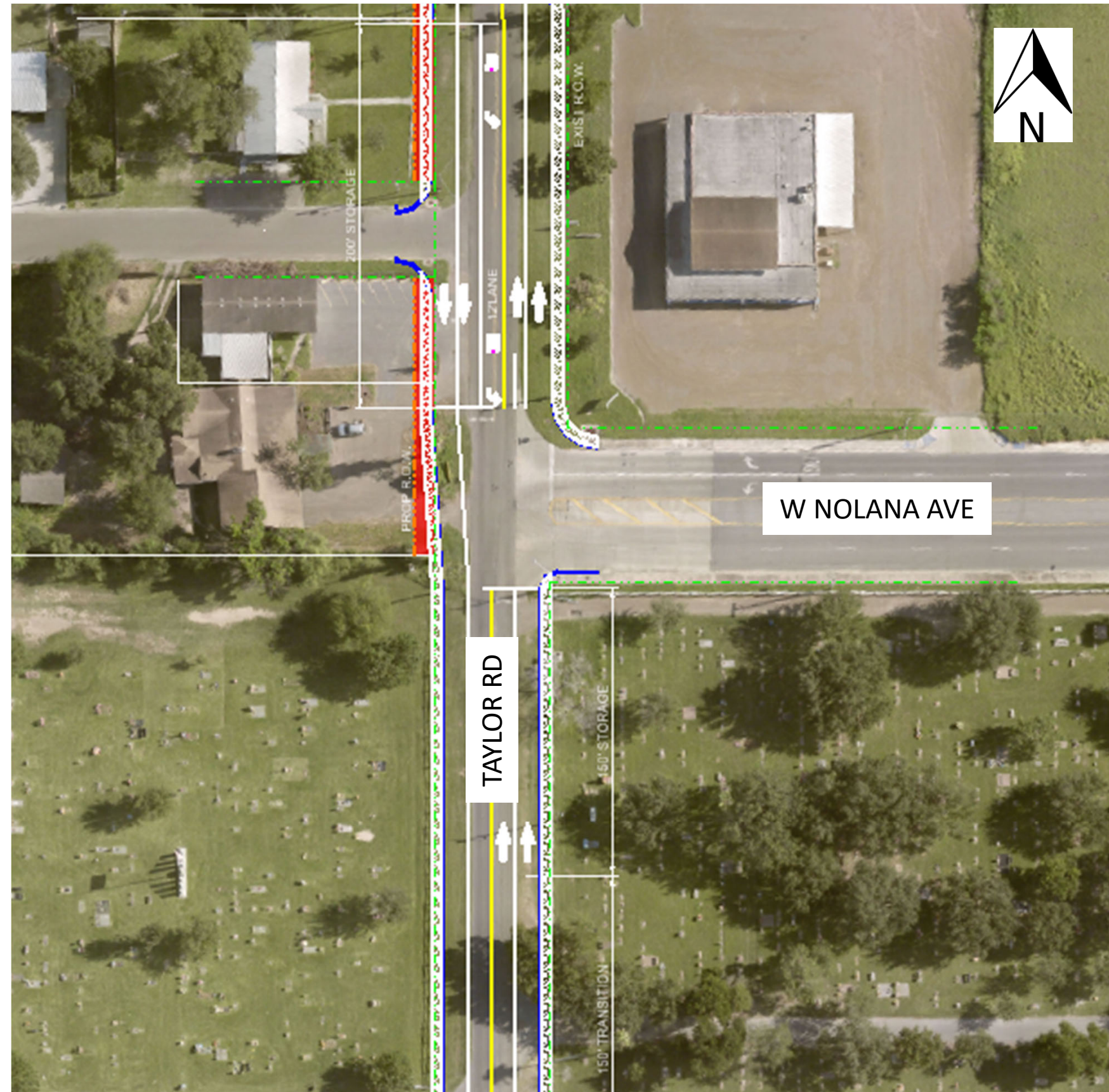


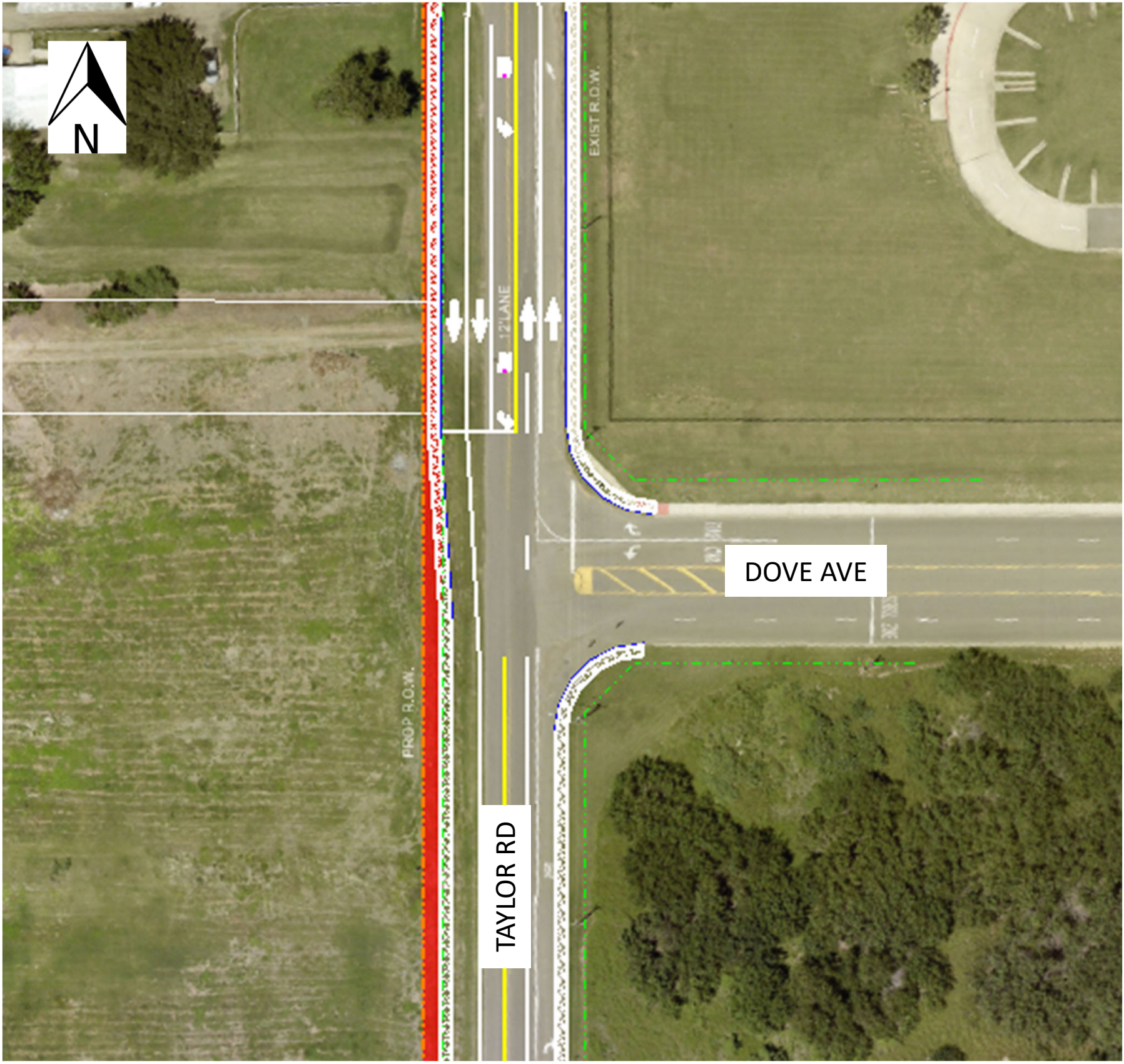
N TAYLOR RD
PROPOSED TYPICAL SECTION
AT NOLANA AVE (NORTH)



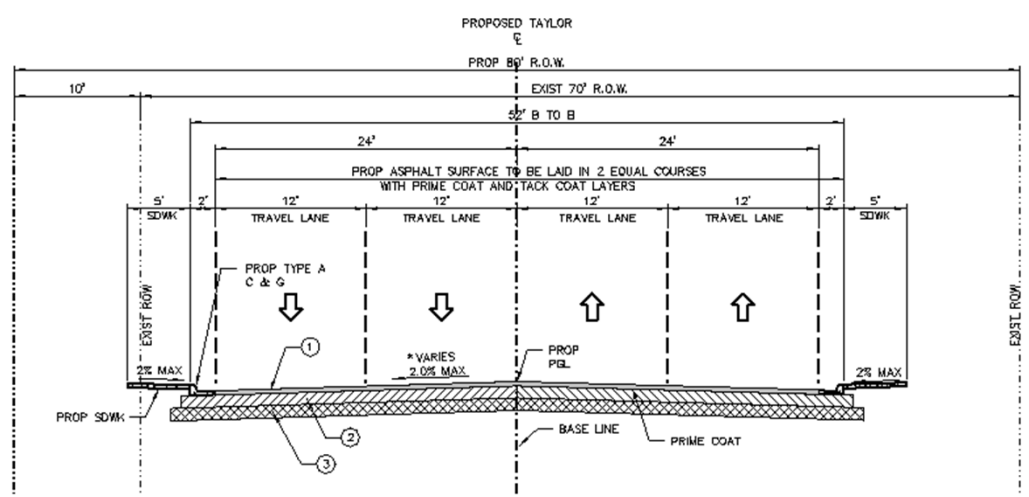
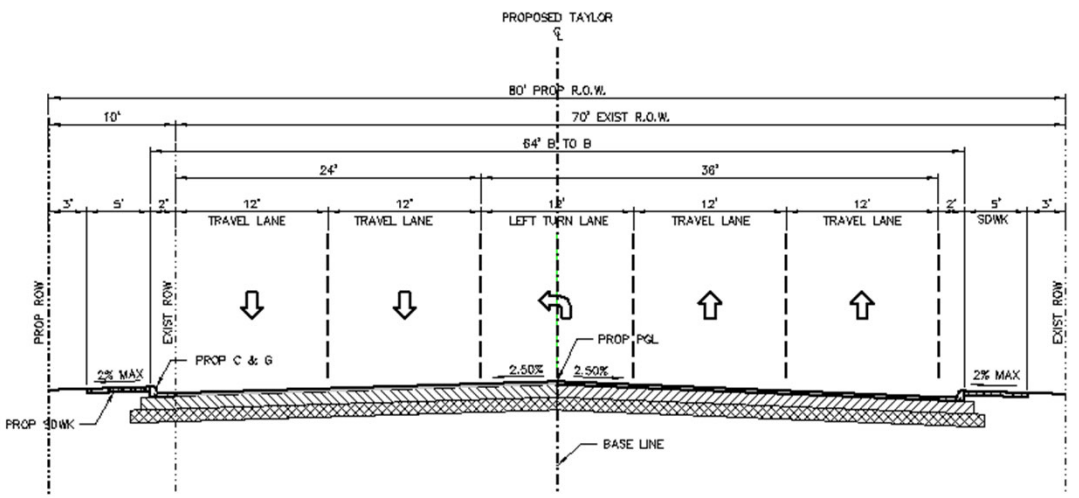
* SEE P & P'S AND INTERSECTION LAYOUT
FOR CROSS SLOPE RANGE

N TAYLOR RD
PROPOSED TYPICAL SECTION
AT NOLANA AVE (SOUTH)

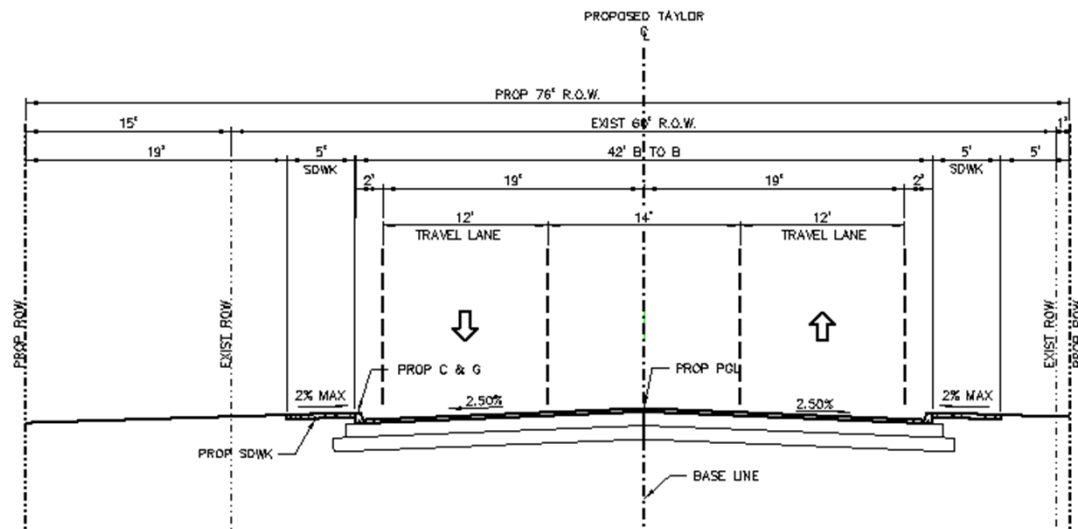




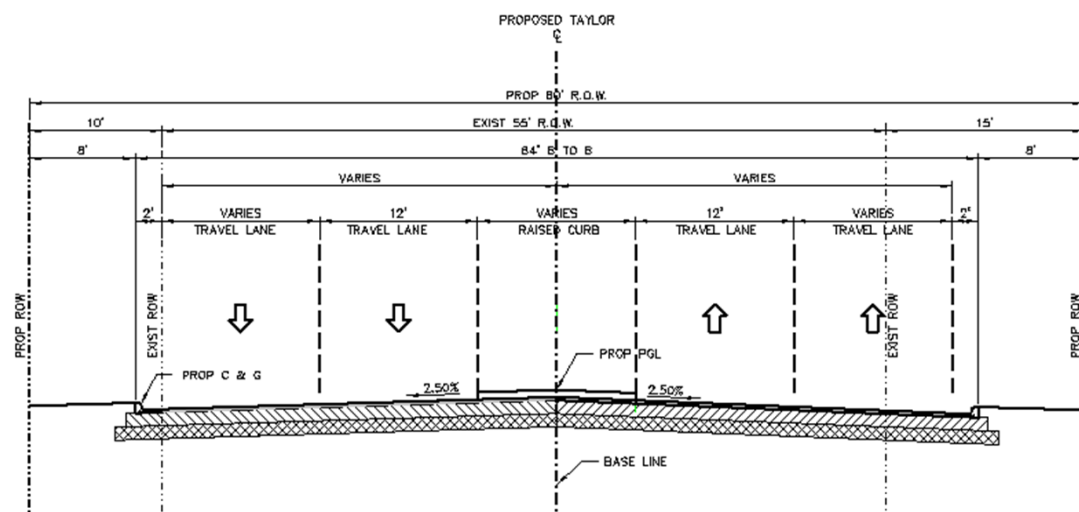
Taylor Rd at Dove Ave Intersection



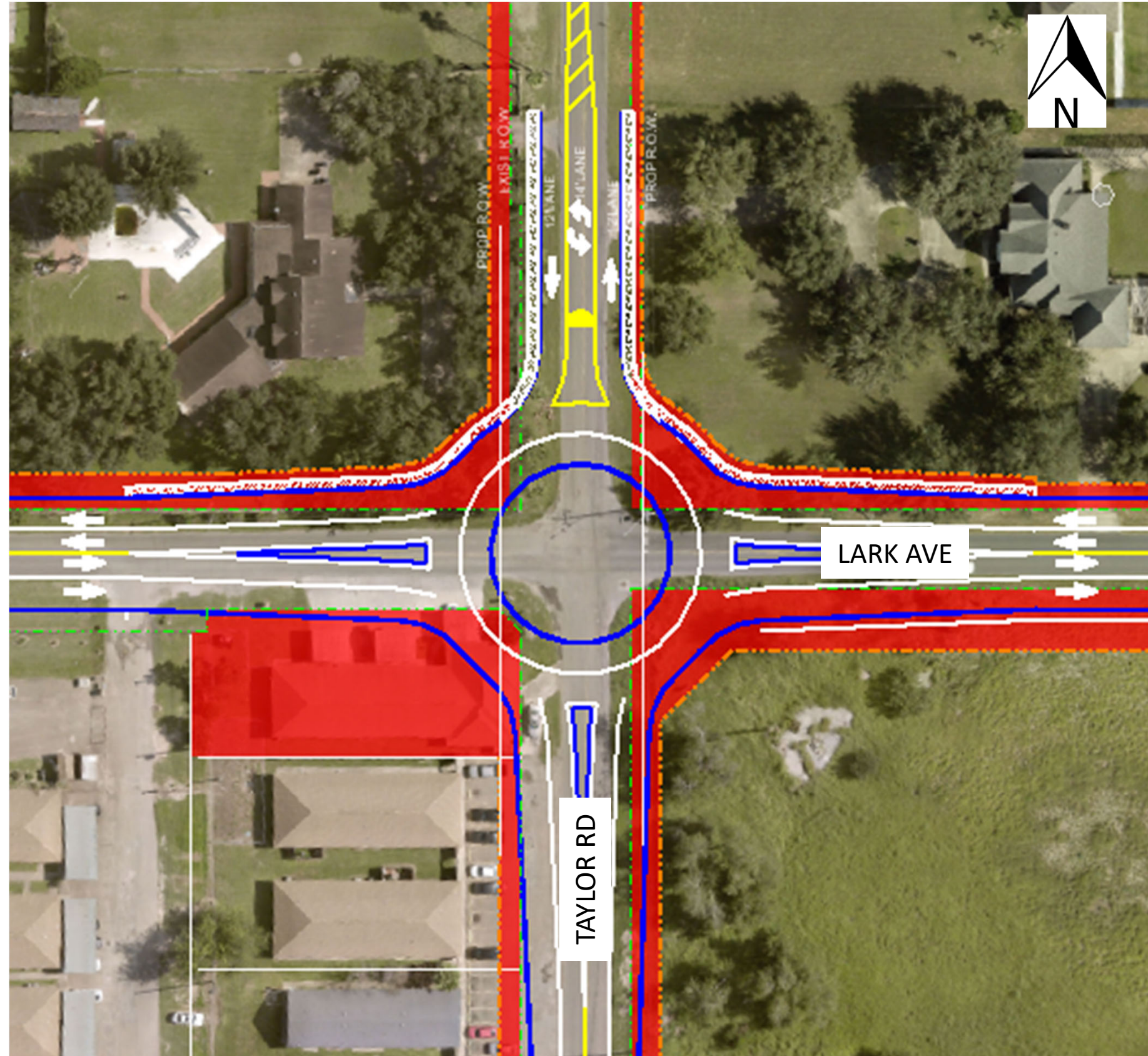
Taylor Rd at Lark Ave Intersection



N TAYLOR RD
PROPOSED TYPICAL SECTION
AT DOVE AVE (NORTH)



N TAYLOR RD
PROPOSED TYPICAL SECTION
AT LARK AVE (SOUTH)





ITEM SUMMARY

BOARD: City Commission

AGENDA ITEM

3.

DATE SUBMITTED

10/17/2023

MEETING DATE

10/23/2023

1. Agenda Item: McAllen Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan Update.
2. Party Making Request: Denny Meline
3. Nature of Request: Discussion on McAllen Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan Update and Top Ten Priority List for 2023 to 2028.
4. Routing:

Cristina Monroy	Created/Initiated - 10/17/2023
Denny Meline	Approved - 10/17/2023
Isaac Tawil	Final Approval - 10/17/2023
5. Staff Recommendation: Upon City Commission approval, the Parks & Recreation Department intends to submit the Updated McAllen Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan and Top Ten Priority List to Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.
6. Advisory Board:
7. City Attorney:
8. Manager's Recommendation:



PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

MEMORANDUM

To: Roel "Roy" Rodriguez, P.E., City Manager

From: Denny A. Meline, Parks & Recreation Director 

Subject: McAllen Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan Update
For 2023 to 2028

Date: October 16, 2023

COMMENT

GOAL:

Discussion on McAllen Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan Update and 2023 Top Ten Priority Listing.

DISCUSSION:

The Parks & Recreation Department surveyed McAllen residents to provide a 5-year update to the existing Master Plan. Residents were surveyed online and by in-person focus groups at Palmview Community Center and Lark Community Center. Documentation from the surveys were used to develop the 2023 Top Ten Priority List, which was presented to the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board on August 23, 2023.

2023 Top Ten Priority List:

1. Nature Park
2. Athletic Fields and Facilities
3. Linear Parks/Trails
4. Swimming Pool
5. New Parks
6. Indoor Recreation Center
7. Tennis Courts
8. Lights
9. Playgrounds
10. Amphitheater

RECOMMENDATION:

Upon City Commission approval, the Parks & Recreation Department intends to submit the Updated McAllen Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan and Top Ten Priority List to Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

McALLEN

*Parks, Recreation and Open Space
2023-2028*



***Prepared By:
P,R & S, LLC***

MASTER PLAN UPDATE

TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE MASTER PLANS



Master Plans set the direction of the Parks and Recreation Department for capital improvement projects over a 5-to-10-year period.



Master Plans are included in the TPWD grant application process.



Master Plans are given points in the grant evaluation and for selection of projects to be funded.



Additional points are given to applicants for their Top Ten Priorities if they are included in the grant application.



A Master Plan is not a requirement for a grant application. However, it adds points to an application.

TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE REQUIREMENTS FOR MASTER PLANS

Original Master Plan Requirements

- ▶ Master Plans must be for a ten-year period.
- ▶ Master Plans must have citizen input through focus groups or community meetings.
- ▶ Master Plans must include a Top Ten Priority List for park amenities and park improvements.
- ▶ Master Plans must include Goals that align with their City Goals.
- ▶ Master Plans must include detailed park inventory and information.
- ▶ Master Plans must have approval of the Parks Board and City Council or Commission prior to submission to TPWD.

5-year Update Requirements

- ▶ Master Plans must be reviewed every 5 years.
- ▶ Master Plan 5-year updates must include citizen input.
- ▶ Master Plan 5-year updates must have a Top Ten Priority List for park amenities for improvements.
- ▶ Master Plan 5-year updates do not have to have new Goals.
- ▶ Master Plan 5-year updates should be presented to the Parks Board.
- ▶ Master Plan 5-year updates, Top Ten Priority Listing, must be approved by City Council/Commission prior to submission to TPWD.

Community Input/Meetings

- ▶ TPWD requirement in developing a Master Plan.
- ▶ McAllen established a three-step process.
 - ▶ Online Survey
 - ▶ Focus Groups
 - 2 meetings - Palmview Community Center and Lark Community Center
 - ▶ Parks and Recreation teenage summer staff completed the survey.
- ▶ Documentation from the surveys were used to develop the Top Ten Priority List.
- ▶ Top Ten Priority List is used for grant applications and provides extra points in the TPWD evaluation process.

Survey Document

- ▶ Surveys were available online for a month.
- ▶ Surveys were available at the focus groups.
- ▶ Surveys were available at the Parks and Recreation Office.
- ▶ Survey questions were based on previous and current surveys addressing park and recreation amenities generally included in park development.
- ▶ Additional questions concerning park promotion of events were included to assist the department in their promotional endeavors.
- ▶ All surveys and questions were included in the summary to determine the highest-ranking amenities.

TOP TEN PRIORITY LIST

- ▶ 1. Nature Park
- ▶ 2. Athletic Fields and Facilities
- ▶ 3. Linear Parks/Trails
- ▶ 4. Swimming Pool
- ▶ 5. New Parks
- ▶ 6. Indoor Recreation Center
- ▶ 7. Tennis Courts
- ▶ 8. Lights
- ▶ 9. Playgrounds
- ▶ 10. Amphitheater

Request of City Commission

- ▶ 1. Approve the Top Ten Priority List as recommended by the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board and included in Updated Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan.
- ▶ 2. Approval to submit the McAllen Parks, Recreation and Open Space 5-Year Updated Master Plan to Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

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*Parks, Recreation and Open Space
2023-2028*



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***Prepared By:
P,R & S, LLC***

MASTER PLAN UPDATE

McAllen Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan Update

Acknowledgements

The following individuals are being recognized for their significant contributions to the preparation of the 2023 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan Update.

City Commission

Javier Villalobos	Mayor
Omar Quintanilla	Mayor Pro-Tem/Commissioner District 3
Tony Aguirre	Commissioner District 1
Joaquin "J.J." Zamora	Commissioner District 2
Rodolfo "Rudy" Castillo	Commissioner District 4
Victor "Seby" Haddad	Commissioner District 5
Pepe Cabeza de Vaca	Commissioner District 6

City Staff

Roel "Roy" Rodriguez	City Manager
Joe Vera	Assistant City Manager
Denny A. Meline	Parks and Recreation Director
Sarai Garcia	Deputy Director of Parks and Operations
Carina Jimenez	Deputy Director of Programs
Cristina Monroy	Management Assistant
Sergio Garcia	Marketing and Special Events Administrator

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board

Brian Lewis	Chairman	Jesus (Jesse) Barba	Member
Juli Rankin	Member	Carlos Garza	Member
Aleck Rios	Member	Ruben A. Fabela	Member
Francisco Meza	Member	Annete Villalobos	Member
Veronica Whitacre	Member	Richard Sanchez	Member
Victoria Guerra	Member	Alfredo Montanaro	Member
Eric A. Sanchez	Member		

McAllen Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan Update

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5. Master Plan Recommendations	13
6. Implementation Plan	14

Prepared By:

P,R & S, LLC

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Corpus Christi, Texas 78418

956-310-8386

McAllen Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan Update

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The McAllen Parks and Recreation Department developed a 10 Year Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan in 2018. Master Plans are used by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department in the scoring of grant funding request. Plans remain for a ten (10) year period with a review at five (5) years. The review is to determine if the priority listing is still relevant, if the goals still meet the city goals, and if projects recommended have the ability to be funded either through grants, foundations or city funds. Attached is the Updated Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan.

Survey and Focus Groups Timeline

The process for the review of the park plan began in June with two focus groups held at Palmview and Lark Community Centers and a survey on the city website. The focus groups also completed the survey document, and their opinions were included in the formulation of the top ten priority listing for future park development. The Parks and Recreation Department notified all the boards and committees who work with the department to complete the survey for inclusion in the overall ratings. The city website and other social media campaigns notified McAllen residents of the availability of the survey.

Goals of the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan

GOALS

In the original Master Plan the Parks and Recreation Department create 7 goals for future development. These goals were the same ones that identified in the 2007-2017 Master Plan.

1. To bring all existing parks to an equivalent standard of quality and excellence.
2. Development of new amenities in all areas of the community.
3. Provide recreational programming and tourism development in McAllen and the Rio Grande Valley.
4. Development of a complete network of trails and linear trail system connecting all parts of the community.
5. Protect and sustain valued nature area, environmental features, and historic and cultural resources.
6. Efficient use of resources to develop and maintain a first-class park system.
7. Broadened the use of technology and social infrastructure into the park sites and recreational programming.

McAllen Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan Update

The goals are still relevant for the 2018 – 2028 period. However, in 2028 a workshop on goals in conjunction with other tourist attractions should be held to include all available resources.

Population Growth

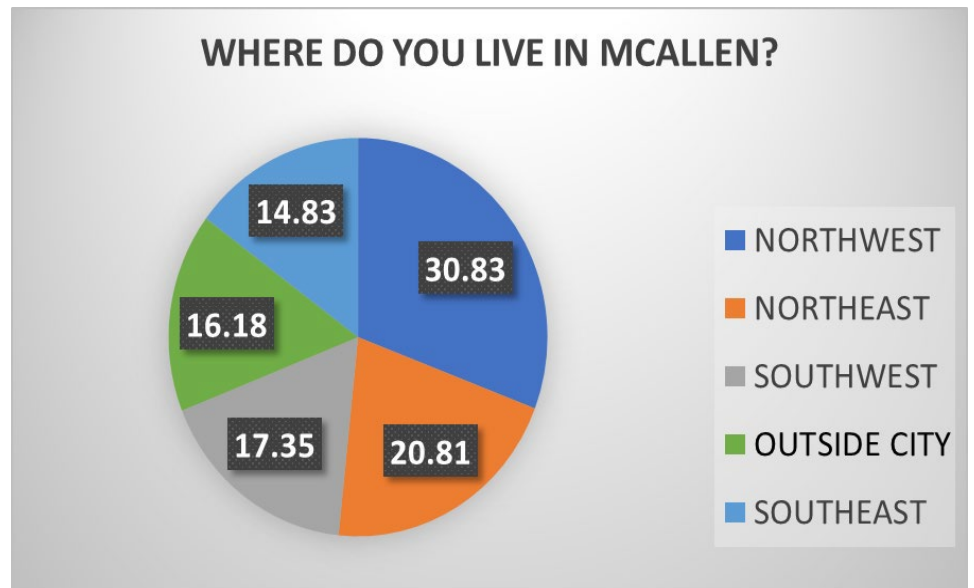
McAllen is considered a Metro area within the population framework of the state. Hidalgo County is ranked number 9, ahead of El Paso County. The population data shows Hidalgo County has 888,367 residents with McAllen being the largest city in the county with a population of 144,579. The population in 2010 was 129,877. The growth has been between 8 and 9 percent with McAllen having the largest share of under 15-year-olds at 28 percent in the state. The population is predominately Hispanic at 91.8 percent, and 88.7 percent of the population self-identifies as being of Mexican descent. McAllen has the highest foreign-born population of any metro area at nearly 27 percent.

The large youth population creates the need for facilities for programming not only for children but for families. Program offerings in after-school, summer and holidays will assist with families, ability to have a safe environment for their children. The large youth population creates the ability for the Parks and Recreation Department to partner with the school systems, Libraries and area Universities to offer diversified programming.

Secondly, having a large Hispanic population means there are immigrants from Mexico, South and Central America. Many of the families may not speak English. Hiring staff who have the ability to communicate and give directions in Spanish will assist in programming functions.

Survey Results

There was a total of 1,340 respondents in 2018 for the original Master Plan, while the 2023 had 1,011 respondents. In 2023, 77 percent were satisfied or very satisfied with the park system. This compares to 86 percent in 2018.



Master Plan Recommendations

The community survey identified the top ten (10) park amenities the citizens would like to see developed for the community. The list did not deviate from the 2018 in amenities, there were changes in the priority of those amenities.

In 2018, a natatorium was identified as the number 1 project and in 2023 a swimming pool was number 4. Labeling the amenity as a swimming pool and not specifically gives the city additional options when applying for grants. A large percentage of responses came from the northwest, northeast and within the ETJ. These are the areas with limited recreational facilities and drove the priority listing for specific amenities. A greater discussion of the survey is included in Section 6, Implementation.

TOP TEN PARK AMENITIES 2023

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. NATURE PARK | 6. INDOOR RECREATION CENTER |
| 2. ATHLETIC FIELDS AND
FACILITIES | 7. TENNIS COURTS |
| 3. LINEAR PARK/TRAILS | 8. LIGHTS |
| 4. SWIMMING POOL | 9. PLAYGROUNDS |
| 5. NEW PARKS | 10. AMPITHEATER |

The McAllen Parks and Recreation Advisory Board met on August 23, 2023 to review and approve the top ten priority list. The Board amended the Top Ten List as follows:

1. Expand item 2 to include Facilities and Fields.
2. Combine Large Community Park and Small Community Park to New Parks.
3. Eliminate Upgrade Park Maintenance. The Board determined this was more of a budget issue rather than a capital or construction issue.
4. Add Tennis Courts and Amphitheater – both of which were included in the park amenity list for review; however, ranked lower.

SECTION 1

McAllen Today

Introduction

Texas is one of the fastest growing states behind Florida. Hidalgo County is one of the fastest growing counties in the state. Their population in 2010 was 774,769. In 2022 the population was 888,367, ranking Hidalgo County as number 9 in the state just ahead of El Paso County. There are 22 cities in Hidalgo County. McAllen is the largest city with a population of 143,751. McAllen's population in 2010 was 129,877 and rose to 143,751 in 2022.

McAllen is dissected by Interstate 2 on the south and Highway 281 on the east. These highways create a wealth of business opportunities. McAllen is virtually landlocked by the surrounding cities of Edinburg, Pharr, Mission, City of Hidalgo and Granjeno.

McAllen Economy

Prior to the ratification of the North American Free Trade Agreement, economic activity in McAllen was centered on agriculture and petroleum. But after being designated as a foreign trade zone and in combination with its close location to the U.S.-Mexico border, the city has established itself as a major hub for international trade and distribution.

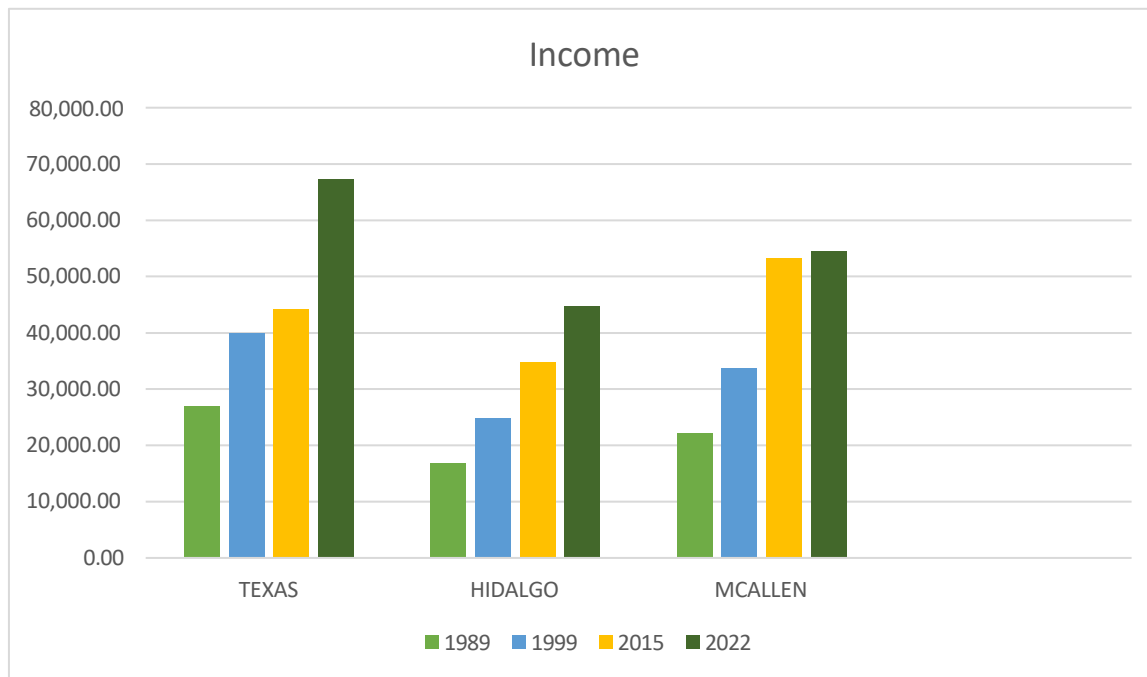
McAllen has seen the job market increase by 2.1% over the last 5 years. Future job growth over the next ten years is expected to be 36.1%, which is higher than the US average of 33.5%. The Sales Tax Rate for McAllen is 8.3%, while the US average is 7.3%. The average income of a McAllen resident is \$21,410 a year. The US average is \$28,555.

McAllen currently has interest in 2 International Bridges with Mexico, Anzaldua and McAllen-Hidalgo, which have increased tourism and trade, helping to establish McAllen as an important port of entry. Those international border crossings make McAllen the third-busiest border crossing in Texas, behind Laredo and El Paso in terms of commercial truck traffic and pedestrians. This sector has grown 19% since 2010, adding workers and increasing its share of the total McAllen employment.

Those bridges provide revenues to the city to offset budgets of operating departments.

Health Care is a key element in McAllen's economy. McAllen has approximately 20% of workers in the health care industry. The opening of the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley School of

McAllen Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan Update



Thirty-three year Income Comparison – State, County, McAllen

Medicine, which welcomed its first class in 2016, points to further growth in that sector.

Retail trade is generally higher in border communities and that is true in McAllen. Retail workers account for 14.3% of workers in the area. McAllen serves as the retail trade center of South Texas and Northern Mexico. Retail tourism draws customers from as far away as Monterrey, Mexico's third-largest metro area. Mexican shoppers account for an estimated 30 to 40% of McAllen's retail sales.

Underserved Areas

Education levels and prevalence of low-paying industries has created an environment where McAllen and the surrounding Rio Grande Valley has a high poverty rate. In 2010 the poverty rate in McAllen was 31%. The current 2023 rate is 21%. Efforts made in education and technical training have increased salaries in the Rio Grande Valley to reduce the number living in poverty.

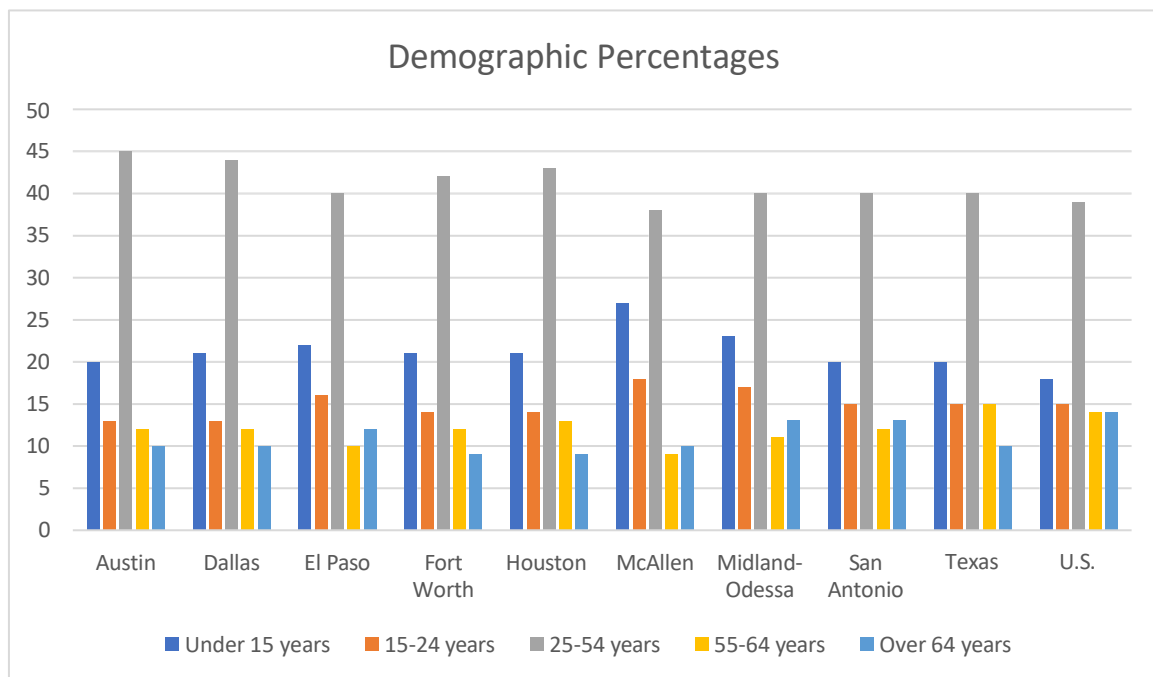
There are many colonias in the Rio Grande Valley where immigrants from Mexico and other South and Central American countries come to live. Their children do not have a formal education and are often behind in education because they do not speak English. This creates a

McAllen Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan Update

hardship on the school system, and a big adjustment for the children. The children are having to catch-up within the education system to graduate and pursue higher education. The families that migrate to the Rio Grande Valley may not have formal training and are living on low-income salaries. This adds to the poverty level within these communities.

Demographics

McAllen has a population that is younger than other metro areas with the average age being 29.2 years. This is 5 years younger than the state average. At 28%, McAllen also has the largest number of 15-year-old and younger group than all other metro areas. Also, McAllen families average 2 children compared to the state average of 1.4 children.



Comparison of ages of the largest cities in Texas and the United States

The area is predominantly Hispanic (91.8%) with 88.7% self-identifying as having Mexican descents. McAllen has the largest foreign-born population of any metro area in the state with nearly 27%. This illustrates their deep ties with Mexico.

McAllen Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan Update

McAllen has a large population of seasonal residents “Winter Texans” with an average age of 72.3 years. Winter Texans come during the winter months from the Northeast United States and Canada to escape the harsh winters. This timeframe is generally November through March. Winter Texans find a more temperate climate and lower cost of living.

Schools

McAllen is behind the state average in education outcomes with those under 25 years of age who do not have a high school diploma as being 35% or, twice the state average. Only 18% have a bachelor’s degree or higher, compared to the state’s 29%. There are Universities in the area that offer programs for youth to attend, but students do not have the pre-college education to qualify to attend.

SECTION 2

Updated Park Inventory

Since 2018, McAllen Parks and Recreation has divided the improvements to their parks into 3 categories: New projects, Upgrades and In-progress. The department has been actively working to improve the park system with creative, environmentally friendly, and customer supportive amenities.

New Projects

The largest project funded through Texas Parks and Wildlife grant funds is the Municipal Youth Baseball Complex. The complex had been in discussion for several years. Through a grant from TPWD and city funding, the project became a reality in 2018. The Baseball Complex was expanded with a Splash Pad and Inclusive Playground. The City also upgraded the Municipal Softball Complex and provided the city with the first turf field at Las Palmas Park.

Crockett Park saw a new dog run developed, an improved playground with exercise equipment, a skatepark, and soccer fields. Lighting was identified as needed in the Master Plan. The department added lights to Springfest Park, Uvalde Park, Morris Trail (solar bollards), Morris Park (to be completed December 2023), and Crockett Park.



McAllen Youth Baseball Complex (MYBC)

Crockett Park Trail Development



McAllen Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan Update



Crockett Lighted Soccer Field

Upgrades

Palmview, Lark, and Las Palmas Community Centers all received upgrades to their HVAC systems, kitchens, and security systems. A new splashpad is being added at Curtis Park.

Trail improvements were provided for Las Palmas and Crockett. Also, restroom improvements were constructed at Cascade, Suarez, La Vista, and Airport Parks.



Airport Park

McAllen Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan Update



Las Palmas Turf Field



Suarez Park Playground

McAllen Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan Update

In-Progress

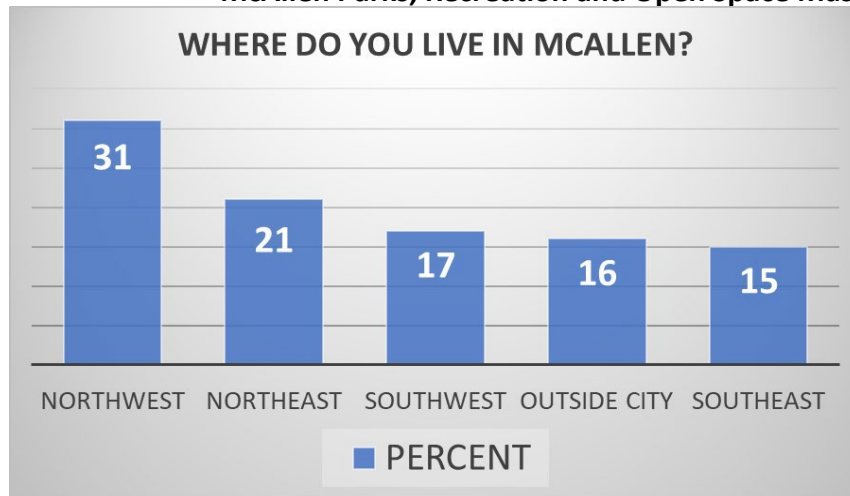
Projects that are in-progress are either in design or waiting for equipment to be purchased and/or delivered. These include Morris Phase 2 Trail and Lights, Westside Park Playground, Bill Schupp Park Playground, El Rancho Park, Campground at Kappler Property, and Bentsen trail North Expansion Concept/ Design.



H2O Hut at Firemen's Park



McAllen Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan Update



SECTION 3

Survey Data and Citizen Input

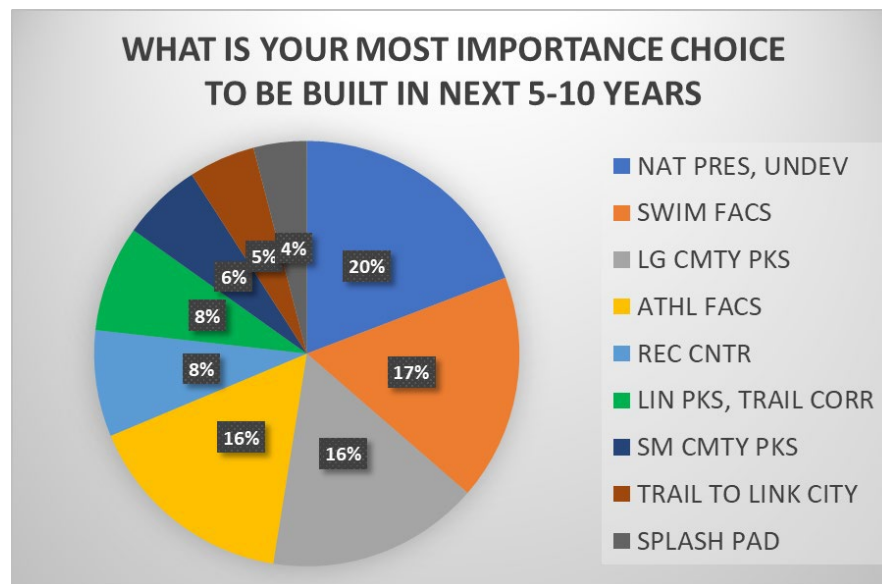
The City of McAllen embarked on a three (3) part strategy to gather as much information and support from the community as possible for the Update of the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan. An online survey for citizens was provided on the city website for a month in both English and Spanish. The city received over 1,000 responses. The second strategy was two (2) focus groups or public meetings where citizens could suggest new programs and/or facilities, comment on existing programs and facilities and provide additional information concerning the Master Plan project. The third strategy included summer staff to complete the survey. Many of the staff were high school students who in the next 5 (five) years would be using the existing facilities or new facilities, possibly as young parents.

The survey results showed citizens were satisfied with existing programs and services offered by the department. However, in the fast-growing areas and the ETJ where there is a lack of facilities, the need for future development was identified. The fast-growing areas of the Northeast and Northwest highlighted not only new park amenities but those currently available in other areas of towns such as athletic fields, nature park and swimming pool. McAllen is known for the trail system through the older developments, but trails and linear parks still ranked high. This would be similar to 2nd Street Trail and Bicentennial Trail. The trails not only serve a recreational purpose but can be for transportation by bicycle. The survey and citizen input noted the lack of east/west trails and connection to other cities. The development of corridor trails is something the Dallas Metroplex has been pursuing. With the connectivity of cities in Hidalgo County, the same type of connective trails could be developed.

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Survey Question Development of Parks in the next 5 to 10 years

The highest-ranking project was Large Community Park with 52.61 percent followed by Nature Preserve, undeveloped with 52.01 percent and Linear Parks and Trails at 51.38 percent. The lowest ranking amenity in this section was Splash Pad at 35.94 percent. McAllen has built several splash pads in the past few years, and this has addressed the issue with the community at this time. The responses matched the overall scoring for the top ten amenities. Each of the evaluated amenities has a relatively small number of responses stating they do not want the amenity at all. Swimming pool did not rank high in this section, but it did in the other sections of the survey.



Families want larger parks for events such as family reunions, birthday parties, Easter and other holiday events. Smaller community parks were identified for neighborhood parks where families could gather, watch their children on the playground and not have to travel a long distance for a park.

The National Park Service has a program 10 Minute Walk to a Park. The belief is that every person in a community should have access to a park within a 10-minute time frame to get to a park. This campaign has been picked up by the Trust for Public Lands, Urban Land Institute and more than 200 mayors from around the country to honor the One-Year Anniversary this October 2023.

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Respondents (63.35%) noted that they had children under the age of 18. This corresponds to McAllen having the highest rate of children under the age of 15 in the state. The survey also noted that respondents gained information about the park system through social media (29.63%). This also corresponds to a young population that uses social media as their primary method of communication. The Parks and Recreation website (18.91%) also provided information to respondents.

The Top Ten Priorities for parks in McAllen based on the survey data were:

TOP TEN PARK AMENITIES 2023

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. NATURE PARK | 6. INDOOR RECREATION CENTER |
| 2. ATHLETIC FIELDS AND FACILITIES | 7. TENNIS COURTS |
| 3. LINEAR PARK/TRAILS | 8. LIGHTS |
| 4. SWIMMING POOL | 9. PLAYGROUNDS |
| 5. NEW PARKS | 10. AMPITHEATER |

Focus Groups

There were many comments and suggestions brought up at the Focus Groups, these include:

1. Develop more play structures with water features.
2. Shade – provide more shade, it is too hot for children on the playgrounds – playgrounds need shade.
3. Natural playgrounds with native material.
4. School hours limit access to playgrounds. This needs to change.
5. Develop a science play area.

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6. Use tubes, logs, rolling hills, musical features.
7. Develop climbing elements, rock walls.
8. Indoor soccer fields
9. Indoor recreation center
10. More pickle ball courts

The group wanted to know when they would find out what the top ten listing was before it went to Commission. This can be accomplished by displaying the list for the Park Board Meeting and as part of the City Commission meeting.

SECTION 4

GOALS

Future Review

The goals were not reviewed in this update. This is an area that should be addressed with a Park Board workshop at the end of 2028, prior to another Master Plan being developed. The goals have been the same since 2007 and while some may still be appropriate others should be adjusted, changed or deleted to meet the direction as in the “Envision McAllen” 2040 Comprehensive Plan Update and other planning documents the City uses. The goals of Parks and Recreation should blend and support those of the city government in promoting and expanding the benefits of open green space for health and wellness.

McAllen has long been a leader in parks and recreation in the Rio Grande Valley in the development of new parks and the use of land through linear parks. However, as the Valley continues to grow and other cities are expanding, developing new and improved facilities, it is

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important for those in McAllen to be upgraded. The newest recreation center is over 20 years old. The swimming facilities are over 30 years old, with some over 50 years old. New recreation centers are over 50,000 sq. ft. with more than one gym, walking trails, exercise rooms and classrooms. They are developed for both youth and seniors. There is pressure to provide services for the new developments on the Northside of town, which could outshine those in the older areas. Thus, the need for collaboration, coordination, and partnerships will become even more important in the future.

SECTION 5

Master Plan Recommendations

The recommendations for the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan have been developed through the series of focus group meetings with the community. These are recommendations and may not be the same as the implementation plan in Section 7. The improvements suggested in Section 6 are for actual amenities the community would like to see developed in future parks. The recommendations are concerns residents have with existing parks and future parks.

These include the following:

- Security in Parks. Many residents feel there is not enough security in the parks and/or trails for individuals to be able to walk or jog late in the evening or early in the morning. With the weather being so hot during the summer months, this is the only time individuals feel they can get their exercise.
- Maintenance levels seem to have dropped in many of the older parks. Is there some way to get the community involved?
- City needs to set up a revitalization program for inner city parks. The parks are old and have not had any improvements.
- City needs to acquire land in the newer sections to be able to build in the future before it is all gone.

One of the survey questions receiving high responses was providing trail corridors. Trail corridor plans have been developed in the Dallas/Ft. Worth Metroplex area. Cameron County has one connecting all their cities. These corridors can connect many areas of the Rio Grande Valley for traveling to work, shopping, school and for alternative transportation. Trail corridors can reduce greenhouse emissions and assist in the carbon footprint in the Valley.

SECTION 6

Implementation Plan

This is the most important part of the Master Plan and the planning process. It determines the direction the City and the Parks and Recreation Department will follow initiating the plan citizens have helped formulate. Implementation is not merely for Texas Parks and Wildlife grant applications, but can be considered in the annual budget process, capital improvement program, TxDot funding, Community Block Grant Funding (CDBG), and other potential grant sources.

This is a long-range, comprehensive plan which is designed to accomplish the following:

- **Identify needs and priorities for parks and recreation areas.**
- **Update and expand the current park facility inventory.**
- **Re-assess the needs for parks, recreational areas, facilities, and improvements.**
- **Recommend strategies for acquiring, developing, operating, and maintaining public parks and recreation areas and facilities.**
- **Assess the adequacy of the existing park system and identify improvements necessary to bring it to an acceptable level of standard.**
- **Establish a priority park amenity listing for grant applications.**
- **Realize opportunities for joint use arrangements.**

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The survey noted the largest percentage of respondents were from the northern sections of McAllen and the ETJ. These are the areas of substantial growth with new housing developments and building permits being applied for regularly. There will be a deficit in parks on the north side of town and ETJ. A plan is needed to secure parkland before it becomes too expensive. Right of Way (ROW) and easements for trails and connectivity can be secured at this time. The City of Edinburg and the Edinburg School District should be a part of this plan as many of the areas are in close proximity or within their boundaries.

FUTURE PARK NEEDS				
Classification	Existing Acreage 2023	Recommended Standard (Acres per 1,000 persons)	Recommended Acreage NRPA standards	Additional Acreage Needed 2023
Playlot	26.42	0.25	50	23.58
Neighborhood/ Linear Park	59.33	2.5	500	440.67
Community Park	810.48	3.5	700	-(110.48)
Total	896.23	6.25	1250	353.77

McAllen had a parkland deficit of 881 acres as of 2007. The deficit has been reduced to 353.77 acres in 2023. If the population continues to grow as expected to 200,000 in 2 years, the parkland deficit will only increase. One way to reduce the deficit is to look at the parkland dedication ordinance, compare it to other cities and change it to reflect today's standards and increase the amount to 7 to 8 acres per 1,000 from the current 5 acres. This is the current National Park and Recreation Association (NRPA) guideline for parkland dedication ordinances.

A Nature Park ranked number 1 in the priority listing for 2023 with 55 points. This would allow the city to apply for a grant for Kappler Property, which is undeveloped parkland. Other improvements could be athletic facilities ranking number 2. The generic category of athletic facilities and fields allows the city to develop a variety of existing and new types of programmatic areas. The same thing is true with a swimming pool. The city has the option of a natatorium, leisure pool, competitive pool, or neighborhood pool and all would qualify for grant points.

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Process

Prior to implementing the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan the City should undertake the following:

1. Develop partnerships with the County, and neighboring cities for trail connections and trail corridors.
2. Develop partnerships with area school districts within the city limits and ETJ.
3. Develop interagency agreements with those who have facilities in areas of the city that do not have recreational facilities i.e., libraries.
4. Review the Parkland Dedication Ordinance to determine if changes are required to meet today's environment.
5. Investigate all funding options for park development.
6. Investigate new and improved maintenance techniques for grounds, tree and plant maintenance in parks.
7. Improve training for all staff.
8. Improve lighting at facilities and trails for safety and lower electrical use. Develop sustainable lighting programs for all areas.

Action Plan

1. Establish a 5 Year Construction Plan for Parks – Secure Funding for the Plan.
2. Establish a 5 Year Upgrade Plan – include in annual budget for in-house and contractor improvements.
3. Develop an Annual Facility Review Plan prior to budget cycle – rotate facilities – at least 10 per year.
4. Develop an ADA plan for each park.
5. Develop a GIS plan for each park.
6. Implement City/School Parks with other school districts



ITEM SUMMARY

BOARD:	AGENDA ITEM	4.A.
	DATE SUBMITTED	
	MEETING DATE	10/23/2023

1. Agenda Item: Consideration of Economic Development Matters. (Section 551.087, T.G.C.)
2. Party Making Request: Isaac Tawil
3. Applicant:
4. Nature of Request: Consideration of Economic Development Matters. (Section 551.087, T.G.C)
5. Fiscal Impact Summary:
6. Budgeted:

Bid Amount:	_____	Budgeted Amount:	_____
Under Budget:	_____	Over Budget:	_____
		Amount Remaining:	_____
7. Routing:
Amy Gonzalez
Created -
8. Staff Recommendation:
9. Advisory Board:
10. City Attorney:
11. Manager's Recommendation:



ITEM SUMMARY

BOARD: City Commission

AGENDA ITEM

4.B.

DATE SUBMITTED

MEETING DATE

10/23/2023

1. Agenda Item: Evaluation of the City Manager. (Section 551.074, T.G.C.)

2. Party Making Request: Isaac Tawil

3. Applicant:

4. Nature of Request: Evaluation of the City Manager. (Section 551.074, T.G.C.)

5. Fiscal Impact Summary:

6. Budgeted:

Bid Amount: _____

Under Budget: _____

Budgeted Amount: _____

Over Budget: _____

Amount Remaining: _____

7. Routing:

Amy Gonzalez

Isaac Tawil

Created -

8. Staff Recommendation:

9. Advisory Board:

10. City Attorney: None. IJT

11. Manager's Recommendation: None. RR



ITEM SUMMARY

BOARD:	AGENDA ITEM	4.C.
	DATE SUBMITTED	
	MEETING DATE	10/23/2023

1. Agenda Item: Consultation with City Attorney for litigation update regarding Cause No. C-0074-19-D pending in Hidalgo County, Texas. (Section 551.072, T.G.C)
2. Party Making Request: Isaac Tawil
3. Applicant:
4. Nature of Request: Consultation with City Attorney for litigation update regarding Cause No. C-0074-19-D pending in Hidalgo County, Texas. (Section 551.072, T.G.C)
5. Fiscal Impact Summary:
6. Budgeted:

Bid Amount:	_____	Budgeted Amount:	_____
Under Budget:	_____	Over Budget:	_____
		Amount Remaining:	_____
7. Routing:
Amy Gonzalez

Created -
8. Staff Recommendation:
9. Advisory Board:
10. City Attorney:
11. Manager's Recommendation: