



CITY COUNCIL CONSIDERATION ITEM

CITY OF FAIR OAKS RANCH, TEXAS

AGENDA TOPIC: Consideration and possible action on the first reading of an ordinance closing the intersection of Noble Lark Drive and Dietz Elkhorn Road to vehicular traffic.

DATE: July 18, 2024

DEPARTMENT: Public Works

PRESENTED BY: Grant Watanabe, Director of Public Works and Engineering Services

INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND:

Last year, residents residing on Noble Lark Drive and Kalkallo Drive noted an increase of traffic in using Noble Lark Road as a cut-through to and from Dietz Elkhorn Road. The heaviest traffic was causing safety concerns during school drop off and pick up times. In December 2023, after meetings with the Mayor and staff to discuss the concerns, the intersection was temporarily closed to assess the impacts to traffic flow in the area.

After the closure, additional discussions were held to hear feedback on driver experiences due to the temporary closure. Most comments centered around:

1. Concerns that the shutdown impacts emergency response time to the school.
2. Longer commute time due to increased traffic at the Dietz Elkhorn Road and Square Gate four-way stop.
3. Children arriving home later by bus, reportedly by up to 30 minutes.
4. Concerns of funding the closure.
5. Noting the decision needs to come down to safety of residents versus convenience.
6. Children, walkers, and bikers are no longer being impacted by heavy traffic.
7. No vehicle queuing and blocking driveways or impeding solid waste pick up service on Noble Lark.
8. Reiteration that Noble Lark Drive is not intended to be used as a through street.

Additionally, the Leon Springs Volunteer Fire Department noted no reported issues regarding response times or ingress/egress issues. The Boerne Independent School District declared they did not have an official position on the closure.

On June 20, 2024, staff and the city's General Engineering Consultant presented City Council a summary of the Noble Lark Drive Closure analysis. The presentation and report provided:

1. Various traffic count results along with pre- and post-travel times.
2. Key study considerations.
3. Drone footage.

4. Pros and cons of available alternatives with cost estimates for closing access at or re-opening Noble Lark Drive.
5. Reasons for recommending closure.

After City Council consideration and discussion, City Council directed staff to present an ordinance closing the access to and from Noble Lark Drive and Dietz Elkhorn Road. If approved, staff will return to Council with closure options and cost estimates for a gated emergency access or permanent barricades such as the continuation of fencing or placement of boulders. Depending on the closure, a hammerhead turnaround may be needed. Additionally, each option will include applicable road signage.

POLICY ANALYSIS/BENEFIT(S) TO CITIZENS:

The closure enhances safety for residents by redirecting traffic to designated collector and connector routes that are designed to handle the higher volumes of traffic.

LONGTERM FINANCIAL & BUDGETARY IMPACT:

A closure will require some form of permanent barrier to enforce the restriction. The cost will depend on the chosen design. Additional budget impact includes cost of applicable signage.

LEGAL ANALYSIS:

Approved as to form.

RECOMMENDATION/PROPOSED MOTION:

I move to approve the first reading of an ordinance closing the intersection of Noble Lark Drive and Dietz Elkhorn Road to vehicular traffic.