

RECLASSIFY 38½ STREET

Currently in the CAMPO 2025 Plan, a roadway through our neighborhood is inappropriately classified as “Arterial.” East 38½ St (“Anchor Lane” in the Plan) from IH 35 to Manor Road is designated Minor Arterial, MNR 2/4 (Existing) and as Major Arterial Divided, MAD 6 (Needed). These obsolete designations are causing problems.

We request that East 38½ St from IH 35 to Airport Blvd be downgraded to Neighborhood Collector.

- **While the Robert Mueller Airport main entrance on Manor Road was served from 38½ St-Anchor Lane, the redeveloped airport site will draw less cross-town traffic all of which can be dispersed to approach redeveloped Mueller through several gateways, avoiding concentration on 38½. The traffic count a few blocks east of IH 35 already is down to less than half (8,000) what it was in the Robert Mueller era (18,000).¹ We believe 38½ will revert to functioning naturally as a Collector, as the area develops, if it is given a more appropriate designation.**
- **The segment remains heavily residential. At the end near IH35 it has a retail center anchored by Fiesta Mart, and at the other end a florist and convenience store, both oriented to Airport Blvd. Along the way are an apartment complex, our elementary school, two small churches, and a small day-care center, all neighborhood facilities. Almost all the rest is single-family residential (SF-3). The roadway narrows quickly to one lane in each direction.**
- **Pedestrian and cycling destinations abound, including neighbors’ homes, some neighborhood shops, Maplewood Elementary, the Willowbrook greenway, Patterson Park, and in summertime Patterson Pool, all requiring pedestrians and bicyclists to traverse and cross 38½.**
- **38½ St essentially bisects the Cherrywood community. Other nearby arterials to the north and south – 51st St, Airport Blvd, Manor Rd, and M.L.King Jr. Blvd – run along seams between established neighborhoods. Airport Blvd in particular appears to be under-utilized.**

¹Traffic Impact Analysis for Fiesta development (1979). CAMPO 1997 Traffic Volumes Report

(“West of Cherrywood” = 8,010, <Shandrian.Jarvis@ci.austin.tx.us>, Sept. 2000). Is the latter figure indeed a 1997 count? If so, it would reflect a decline even *before* Robert Mueller Airport closed..

- **Other, similar segments** – from IH 35 west to Guadalupe, also one lane in each direction through residential and park areas (Existing, MNR 2) – are not identified in the CAMPO Plan as having any such extreme 2025 Needs.
- **Mixed classifications are neither common nor unique in Austin.** 11% of street segments in the City’s Collector Street Inventory (CSI) have traffic volumes greater than this one. And several of these are roadways with Arterial segments that become Collectors as they travel into residential areas (e.g., Howard Ln, Montopolis Dr, Pleasant Rd Valley North, Windsor Rd, and Woodward St).^{*2}
- **Problem #1: CNA is disadvantaged trying to qualify for the City’s Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program and other safety measures because 38½ is not even counted as a neighborhood street. Thus it is inadmissible as evidence of the problem!**
- **Problem #2: TXDoT is designing IH 35 to accommodate and utilize local designations. Even though interim safety improvements (2001) will remove the northbound exit ramp that feeds 38½, ongoing TXDoT MIS upgrade plans revive the unwanted ramp (within the decade) because it feeds an “arterial.” Without this designation, preferable exit ramp locations could be considered.**

Although every individual consulted at TXDoT and at the City PW&TD and PECSD has expressed agreement with the present and proposed function of this section of 38½, they appear to be constrained by their classification review system, and have not given staff recommendation to our request for reclassification. We hope that established criteria might give way to reason in this case.

² Neil Jodeit’s comparison of the Austin Metropolitan Area Transportation Plan (AMATP) and the CSI (Sept 2000)