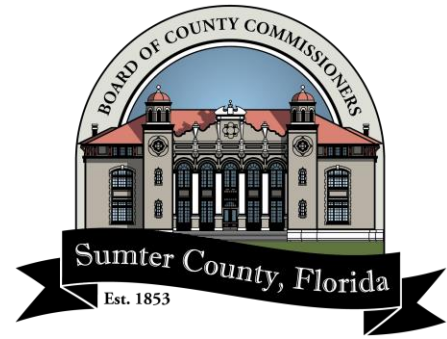


Board of County Commissioners Sumter County, Florida

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Memo

To: Bradley S. Arnold, County Administrator
From: Deborah L. Snyder, P.E., PTOE
Public Works Director/County Engineer
Date: December 5, 2023
RE: Morse Boulevard Traffic Safety Website Review

As requested, Sumter County Public Works staff reviewed multiple web proposals for roadway changes on Morse Boulevard and provide the following responses below.

Web Proposal One:

Following is Public Works input for the proposed multimodal path between San Marino Drive and the postal station located approximately 620 feet southwest of San Marion Drive. The proposal can be found at the following link <https://sites.google.com/view/mnmb/propoals/mail-sta-to-san-marino-path>.

- a. **Web Author:** A single lane (northbound only) golf car path from the postal station to San Marino Drive. It can be installed without the need to remove any live oak trees. It would generally follow along beside the existing fence, with a little "S" bend at the north end. This would make the return trip for De La Vista North residents a lot safer when going by golf cart to pick up their mail. It would also allow residents of De La Vista West and Tierra del Sol South to avoid having to make an unprotected left turn onto Morse when heading to Spanish Springs in their golf carts.
 - i. **Staff Response:** The proposed off-street path from the postal station to San Marino Drive is not within Sumter County's jurisdiction. However, if the off-street path is approved by the maintaining agency, County staff recommends a meandering path as identified in the Preliminary Design Memorandum prepared by Kimley-Horn and Associates in October 2008 (attached). There would be some impacts to County right-of-way, primarily associated with to slope tie-in's. Further, staff recommends any proposed path be wide enough to accommodate two-way golf cart traffic.

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Proposal One - Staff Summary:

Sumter County does not own or maintain the area where the web author is proposing a path. Based on a review of the tree critical root zone, it is likely that some impacts to the trees along the corridor would indeed occur. A Preliminary Design Memorandum prepared by Kimley-Horn and Associates in October 2008 identified a similar path that meandered just outside of the County's right-of-way. The path identified in the October 2008 study, and associated right-of-way impacts (slope tie-in), is considered acceptable by County staff should the maintaining agency approve a new multimodal path. The following language came from the October 2008 study, and should be considered by the future path maintaining agency, if approved.

- b. *"Having a separate golf cart path will allow golf cart drivers to travel in a more leisurely fashion because of the increased distance from automobiles; however, their travel time will be increased, which may cause frustration."*
- c. *"Right-of-Way: Option 1 would require the endorsement of Villages CDD 1. The cart path would have to be constructed mostly on private property. Property owners were not expecting a cart path in the easement, so there may be resistance to allowing the path in the easement."*
- d. *"Summary: While Option 1 provides a significant improvement to automobile congestion and travel speed, it increases travel time for golf carts and requires private property acceptance..."*

Web Proposal Two:

Following is Public Works input for the proposed re-striping of the turn lane at the south Morse Boulevard gate and the web authors perceived issues. The proposal can be found at the following link <https://sites.google.com/view/mnmbs/proposals/barraza-ct-intersection>.

- a) **Web Author:** A northbound golf cart intending to cross the intersection must stop to wait for a break in northbound vehicular traffic. All golf cart traffic behind the stopped one must also stop.
 - i. **Staff Response:** This scenario is called a queue. Queuing of traffic, or in this case golf carts, is a common occurrence and not something that is unusual. The through traffic has the right-of-way, thus, crossing traffic must yield. Other connections further north on the corridor at Aldama Avenue, Orteiz Lane, and Carrera Drive provide an opportunity for cart users to access homes off of or near Barraza Court without having to navigate the yielding scenario detailed by the web author.
- b) **Web Author:** Northbound motor vehicles intending to turn left onto Barraza Court must stop and wait for a break in southbound traffic (both vehicular and carts). The painted road striping doesn't provide any obvious way to accommodate this. Traffic behind the turning vehicle often drives around the stopped car(s), veering into the cart lane. If the turning car tries to maneuver into the median area, it blocks the path of southbound golf carts that have illegally crossed into the median, using the median area as a "safe" travel lane.
 - ii. **Staff Response:** This staging of traffic is identified as a queue. The roadway striping that exists today allows a limited number of vehicles and carts to queue in the median between northbound and southbound traffic. Vehicles and carts that are traversing through the median to circumvent queued vehicles, in a way that is unsafe or illegal, should be addressed by the appropriate enforcement agency. The existing roadway striping was identified as the optimal configuration to accommodate both carts and automobiles within the existing footprint of the roadway.

- c) **Web Author:** Vehicles turning left out of Barraza Court must wait until there is simultaneously a break in several traffic flows (southbound golf carts, southbound vehicular traffic, northbound vehicular traffic).
- iii. **Staff Response:** Southbound carts and vehicles merge before the Barraza Court connection. Thus, left-turning vehicles from Barraza Court must yield to southbound traffic and northbound traffic. The median does not meet the width definition for two-stage maneuvers, so left turn vehicles must ensure northbound and southbound traffic is clear before crossing. The adopted level of service of the roadway is F so sometimes traffic from the minor streets must wait longer to make this movement than they may on other roadways in the County.
- d) **Web Author:** Proposed re-striping the intersection to achieve improved safety and efficiency (exit spur for northbound carts turning left onto Barraza Court, left turn lane for all northbound traffic (vehicles and carts) turning left on Barraza Court, merge lane for traffic turning left from Barraza Court onto Morse Boulevard).
- iv. **Staff Response:** Improvements other than re-striping are being proposed on the website. The author of the plan is also proposing the addition of impervious area further to the south of the existing cart access (identified as an “exit spur”). This type of addition would trigger discussions with the water management district and associated permitting by entities other than Sumter County. Further, the proposed improvements do not appear to be achievable within the existing footprint of the roadway while still meeting the minimum design standards for lane/taper widths and lengths. As it relates to the proposed spur, this proposed shift south introduces additional conflict points as path users would now be required to cross two lanes of traffic (one of which is a vehicular merging lane) instead of one.



Proposal Two - Staff Summary:

This section of Morse Boulevard has an adopted level of service F. This means that the roadway is constrained by the limited amount of right-of-way available and congestion on the corridor is going to occur during peak traffic hours. Major street, minor street, and golf cart road users are going to be delayed during

these peak hour periods. Staff review of the crash reports near this intersection indicate the predominate crash patterns involved merging movements between golf cart and vehicular traffic in the southbound direction (two incidents in the last five years). The web author identified situations that likely occur from time to time; however, there is no sign these are frequent occurrences and overall the statistics demonstrate the flow of carts and traffic at this location occur efficiently and safely. All congested roadways require every driver to be patient and courteous. Golf carts drivers should be aware that they have to observe all of the traffic laws just as all cars and trucks do, and they do not have priority over any other vehicle on the roadway.

Staff Recommendations:

As it relates to proposal one, Sumter County staff has no objections to minor impacts to Sumter County right of way should a path extension, similar to that proposed in the 2008 study, be approved by the maintaining agency.

As it relates to proposal two, County staff has identified improvements to the roadway markings and road signage for the the southbound merging movements at the intersection of Barraza Court and Morse Boulevard. Future improvements are provided in the illustration to follow, and these improvements should be in place before January 1, 2024, weather permitting.

Proposed Striping Improvement

