About NCTCOG

• North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG)
  Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Dallas-Fort Worth region

• Regional Transportation Council (RTC)
  • Transportation Actions
  • Funding of “Projects and Programs”
  • Effectiveness and Equity

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Project Background

May 2020: City submitted funding proposal to NCTCOG

June 2020: RTC approved corridor planning study by NCTCOG staff to develop context-sensitive corridor plan facilitating economic growth

Elam Road to Bruton Road

April 2021: RTC approved COVID Round 4 funding award for Phase 1 Hickory Tree Road construction: **Elam Road to Lake June Road**

- $13.5M Total: $8.2M Federal / $5.3M Local (County) / 260K Regional Transportation Development Credits
- Anticipated FY 22-25: Engineering, Right of Way, Utilities, & Construction

Funding partners include NCTCOG, County, TxDOT, and City of Balch Springs
Improvements to Hickory Tree Road were recommended in the 2019 Balch Springs Mobility Plan and 2036 Comprehensive Plan.
Planning Project Goals

• Develop Context-Sensitive Design recommendations for the corridor
  • Design that is meant to fit the environments of the area surrounding it and meet the needs of the community

• Enhance bicycle/pedestrian experience along the study corridor
  • Increase safety for bicyclists and pedestrians
  • Increase comfort

• Connect key amenities and services along the study corridor
  • Schools, Parks, Municipal Buildings, Commercial Areas

• Facilitate economic opportunity along the study corridor
Planning Project Limits

Project Limits: Hickory Tree Road, from Bruton Rd to Elam Road

Corridor length: 2.03 miles
Public Engagement

Online Public Survey: February 2021-September 2021
  Travel modes, safety concerns, future visions for corridor
  Respondents reported low rates of walking or biking, but high desire with safer conditions. Congestion, driveway exits were points of concern.

Virtual Stakeholder Meetings: June 2021
  Residents, Business Owners, Technical Stakeholders

Virtual Open House: September 2021-November 2021
  Pre-recorded presentation, questionnaire about preliminary recommendations and planning project work to date
Site Visits

Walk Audit: 12/3/2020
- NCTCOG & City of Balch Springs
- Evidence of walking was strong even with limited infrastructure, driver safety was a concern

McWhorter Elementary and Floyd Elementary Dismissal Observations: 5/2021
- NCTCOG, City of Balch Springs, City of Mesquite (McWhorter Only)
- Dismissals cause heavy congestion on Hickory Tree Road at the schools
- Opportunities exist to strengthen pedestrian connections for students to surrounding neighborhoods
Major Considerations

Utilities
  • Many located in the right-of-way that would need to be relocated

Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety
  • Strong desire to walk and bike but limited infrastructure

Pass-Through Traffic
  • Hickory Tree Road is a parallel route to I-635 and used to avoid difficult nearby intersections

Access Management
  • Maintain access to driveways for homes and businesses, reduce queueing behind drivers waiting for left turns
# NCTCOG’s Cross-Section Recommendation

Three-lane roadway with center turn lane and pedestrian refuge islands at key crossing locations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major Considerations:</th>
<th>Why:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Access to homes/businesses</td>
<td>• Improve access to businesses / residences</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Congestion management</td>
<td>• Improve congestion</td>
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<td>• Queuing for pick up/drop-off at schools</td>
<td>• Room for bicyclists and pedestrians to travel</td>
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<td>• Bicycle/pedestrian safety and improvements</td>
<td>safely</td>
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<td>• Pedestrian crossing treatments</td>
<td>• Improve safety for bicycle/pedestrian</td>
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<td>• Future traffic volumes</td>
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NCTCOG Recommendation vs Current Cross-Section:

Current Cross-Section:
- 2-Lanes with limited Bike/Ped Amenities:
  - 60' ROW

Recommended Cross-Section:
- 3-Lane Cross-Section with Added Ped Refuges:
  - 70' ROW

12' Multi-Use Path for bikes and pedestrians + buffer space from roadway
Maintain travel lane widths and add pedestrian refuge island/center turn lane
6' Sidewalk for pedestrians and buffer space from roadway
Recommendations

Note: exact placement of spot-based recommendations will be explored during the design phase of the project.

Center Turn Lane:
• Allows for left and right driveway exits
• Vehicles waiting to turn left no longer cause back-ups
• Maximizes access to businesses

• Pedestrian Refuge Islands
• Increases safety for crossing multi-lane road
• Allows pedestrians to focus on one direction of traffic at a time
• Priority Placement Locations at schools, parks, etc.
Recommendations (cont.)

• Sidewalks and Shared-use Paths
  • Sidewalks: 5-6’, meant for pedestrians
  • Shared-use Path: >10’, shared by bikes and pedestrians

• Crossing Safety Enhancements
  • Improve visibility of crosswalks in all weather and lighting conditions
  • Concepts for all mid-block crosswalks:
    • High Visibility Crosswalk Paint
    • Crosswalk Warning Signs
    • Vehicle Stop Lines
    • Additional Lighting
Recommendations (cont.)

- Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon
  - Beacon activates to temporarily halt traffic to allow pedestrians to safely cross
  - Once pedestrian crosses, road returns to normal conditions
  - Possible locations include:
    - Schools
    - Parks
    - Any other areas with safety concerns
Next Steps:

- **Complete Planning Study**
  - March-April 2022

- **ROW Acquisition**
  - Meetings with property owners after final roadway design complete

- **Project Design**: FY 22
- **ROW Acquisition**: FY 23
- **Utilities**: FY 24
- **Construction**: FY 25

- **Construction & Utilities**
  - Construction schedule and traffic access discussion to come
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Hickory Tree Road Planning Study