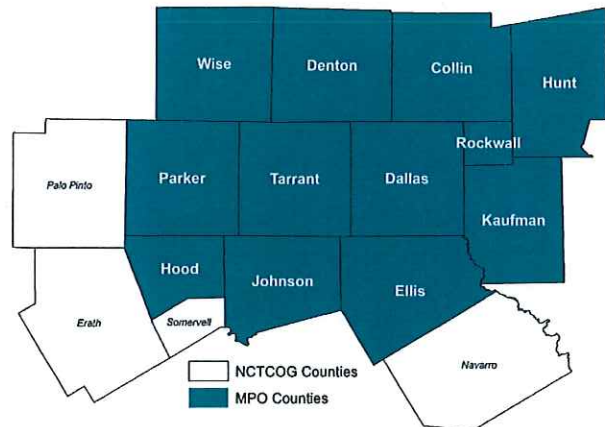


## About NCTCOG

- 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



[www.nctcog.org](http://www.nctcog.org)

# 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



# Project Background (cont.)

Improvements to Hickory Tree Road were recommended in the 2019 Balch Springs Mobility Plan and 2036 Comprehensive Plan.

**BALCH SPRINGS**  
CITY OF

**#5--HICKORY TREE ROAD: PHASE 1 (LAKE JUNE ROAD TO ELAM ROAD) PHASE 2 (BRUTON ROAD TO LAKE JUNE ROAD)**

LOCATION MAP

PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS & RECOMMENDATIONS SUMMARY

	Existing	Planned
Lanes	2 lane undivided	3 lane undivided (two-way left turn lane)
Sidewalk	-	✓
Bicycle/Trial	-	✓
Transit Route	✓	✓
Freight Route	-	-

TRANSFORMATION PRIORITIES ADDRESSED

Traffic & Congestion	Recreation/Multimodal	Safety	Economic Development	Freight	Comprehensive Plan Priority
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

Project Type	Roadway Widening
Thoroughfare Classification	Collector
Length	2.03 mi
From	Bruton Road
To	Elam Road

**EXISTING ISSUES & OBSERVATIONS**

- Current traffic volumes are at or near capacity for segments of Hickory Tree Rd between Bruton Rd and Elam Rd; the Phase 1 segment (Lake June Road to Elam Road) is the highest priority for improvements
- Current roadway does not have continuous sidewalks
- The lack of separation for left-turning vehicles can increase overall roadway delay
- Moderate crash rate between Lake June Rd and Elam Rd

**RECOMMENDED CROSS SECTION**  
Collector - 3-Lane Undivided (70')

**TRAFFIC & CONGESTION**

2018 Traffic Count	9,200
2018 V/C	1.05
2018 LOS	F
2045 V/C	1.41
2045 LOS	F

**RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS**

- Comprehensive Plan recommendation: Improve Hickory Tree Road in coordination with planned development
- Widen roadway to 3 lanes to improve traffic flow and support access to development
- Add sidewalk and a shared-use path to accommodate pedestrian and bicycle travel
- Additional right-of-way may be necessary at major intersections for turn lane storage
- Implementation could occur in phases, with the segment from Lake June Road to Elam Road recommended for improvement in Phase 1



# 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



Hickory Tree Road Planning Study

## 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



Hickory Tree Road Planning Study

# 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



Hickory Tree Road Planning Study



## NCTCOG's Cross-Section Recommendation

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

#### Major Considerations:

- Access to homes/businesses
- Congestion management
- Queuing for pick up/drop-off at schools
- Bicycle/pedestrian safety and improvements
- Pedestrian crossing treatments

#### Why:

- Improve access to businesses / residences
- Improve congestion
- Room for bicyclists and pedestrians to travel safely
- Improve safety for bicycle/pedestrian
- Future traffic volumes

## NCTCOG Recommendation vs Current Cross-Section:

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

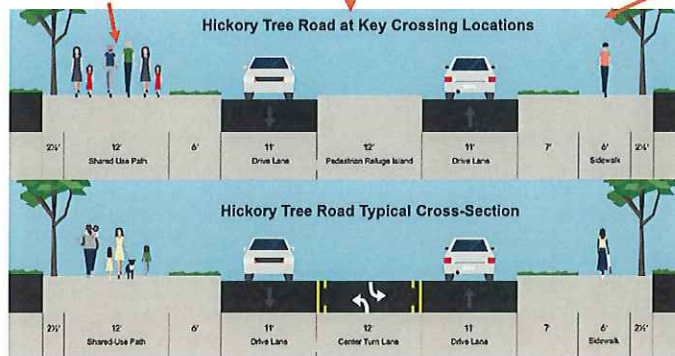
**Recommended Cross-Section:**  
3-Lane Cross-Section with Added Ped Refuges:  
70' ROW



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.



Center Turn Lane: Imagery Courtesy of Google



Pedestrian Refuge Island: Image Courtesy of Dan Burden



## 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



Shared-use Path: Photo Courtesy of Fort Worth



Crossing Safety Enhancements: Photo Courtesy of Dan Sundstrom

## 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  
Completed Summer 2022

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

ROW Acquisition  
Meetings with property owners after final roadway design complete

Construction & Utilities  
Construction schedule and traffic access discussion to come



## CONTACT US



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