

**To the Mayor and Members of the City Council****January 9, 2024**

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**SUBJECT: LOCALLY-PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE RECOMMENDATIONS
FOR THE EASTSIDE TRANSPORTATION PLAN**

The purpose of this Informal Report is to provide information about the Eastside Transportation Plan progress to date and the four recommended Locally Preferred Alternatives (LPA) developed as part of the Eastside Transportation Plan which will be presented to the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) to inform their design and environmental process for their upcoming SH-180/East Lancaster Avenue and I-30 design and environmental work.

Previously, the City, Trinity Metro, the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG), TxDOT and other regional partners conducted various plans and studies including the 2016 NCTCOG Corridor Plan, The Handley and Oakland Corners Urban Village Plans, Advancing East Lancaster, A Better Connection, the City 2022 Comprehensive Plan, the 2020 Master Thoroughfare Plan and the NCTCOG 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan. These plans and studies provided the framework for the Eastside Plan to build on.

On September 9, 2022 the City Council appropriated funds in the amount of \$1,100,000.00 to fund the re-titled Eastside Transportation Plan (formerly the East Lancaster Avenue Corridor and Sub-Regional Planning Study) under M&C 22-0783.

On November 29, 2022 the City Council approved execution of a professional services agreement with WSP USA Inc. to develop the Eastside Transportation Plan under M&C 22-1014.

The Eastside Transportation Plan is being developed in partnership with TxDOT, NCTCOG and Trinity Metro. This is a City-wide effort involving numerous departments including Development Services, Environmental Services, the Fort Worth Lab, Neighborhood Services and others. This plan includes the following deliverables.

- Develop a locally preferred alternative for roadway layouts on East Lancaster Avenue, along with Brentwood Stair Road and Bridge Street (from Oakland to Bridgewood) and for premium transit route and vehicle type(s) for Route 89 between Downtown, Handley and the Eastchase/I-30 shopping area.
- Serve as a coordinating document for federal processes on identified roadway and transit components to inform the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process, design, and construction along East Lancaster Avenue.
- Create a capital plan for transportation improvements on other local roadways and transportation routes.
- Develop form-based zoning and regulating plans for development areas.

Locally preferred alternative means options evaluated through the local planning process, adopted as the desired alternative by the appropriate State and/or local agencies and official boards through a public process and identified as the preferred alternative in the federal environmental process. The adopted LPA represents the City's desired project elements but is subject to changes after



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adoption by project implementers, in this case TxDOT, due to physical constraints and funding during the design process.

Public Involvement and Alternatives Analysis Processes

The Eastside Plan began in January of 2023 and a Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) was created at the beginning to help guide and inform the Plan. This SAC was a thirteen (13) member group comprised of key public and private organizations with interest in and/or relevant experience related to the Plan. They convened regularly throughout the Plan development and provided input on plan deliverables.

Two rounds of public open houses have been held, these were in May and October of 2023 and were held in three separate locations within the study area each round. 63 people attended the May open houses and 82 people attended the October open houses. Both of these rounds included month-long virtual open houses where the public could view the in-person meeting boards and provide comments. Additionally, the first round of public outreach included a survey which had over 750 respondents. The full public engagement report is attached.

An analysis of current conditions and needs assessment were developed reviewing existing transportation data and policy, past plans, economic factors, safety trends, land use, and other information. The City team also conducted an extensive review of relevant examples from peer communities. The City and NCTCOG considered TxDOT performance standards as a part of the road layout design process to maintain consistency with other state projects. They also balanced the need for transit along the corridor with Trinity Metro. Alternatives were developed and evaluated for the transit mode and route, and roadways using the following processes:

1. Transit Route: Two potential transit routes were evaluated to extend Route 89-Spur from its current end-point at Handley to the Eastchase/I-30 shopping area (Dottie Lynn option and Handley option). The evaluation was based on right-of-way impacts, travel time, and potential connections to destinations and other transit routes.
2. Transit Mode: The team reviewed various options for vehicle types along the route to evaluate capacity, frequency, costs, and service types. For this study, local bus, high-capacity bus, light-rail, and street car were evaluated.
3. Roadways: The team reviewed a combination of roadway layouts that can accommodate cars, freight, transit, pedestrians, and bicycles that can fit in the right-of way, are constructible, have reasonable cost/benefits, and can handle future needs.

The following locally preferred alternatives are being recommended for adoption at the January 23, 2024 City Council meeting.



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Transit Route LPA

The recommended LPA for transit route uses East Lancaster to Eastchase due to the availability of open land, less disruption to existing communities, constructability, and provides quicker service. This route connects to Eastchase shopping, and planned high-intensity transit on IH 30 between Fort Worth and Dallas, opens up opportunities to use transit to get to the eastern suburbs, and connects with Arlington's on demand "VIA" transit service. This route can also be extended to Trinity Lakes Station in the future. The other route (green) evaluated (not recommended) used Handley Drive and Ederville Road.

Transit Mode LPA

Technology Rapid Transit using busses is being recommended as it can handle current and future ridership needs. Advanced technology will be used to create a reliable, safe and premium experience for all modes along the corridor. The route's infrastructure will be developed to meet future demand and capitalize on new technologies.

Roadway LPA - East Lancaster

World-class roadway design is envisioned and will include access management (driveway consolidations and shared access), fiber-optics, enhanced traffic signals, improved pedestrian and bicycle accommodations, flexible curb space for loading, freight, and parking, street trees and green infrastructure, lighting, and other features. The LPA includes a four-lane section for IH 35W to Riverside and six lanes from Riverside to Dottie Lynn/City Limit. The segment from *Pine Street to IH 820* is now fully funded.

Roadway LPA – I-30 (Bridge Street and Brentwood Stair Road)

These two roadways currently have the same configuration, four-lanes undivided. The two LPA options being shown to TxDOT include provision for the state to add frontage roads or off/on ramps as part of the I-30 rebuild. One option keeps the two roads at four lanes (2 lanes each way) and the other reduces the roads to two lanes (1 lane each way).

A resolution supporting the four Locally Preferred Alternatives with environmental commitments for further development by TxDOT will be on the January 23, 2024 City Council agenda. The Eastside Transportation Plan Executive Summary is attached illustrating the progress to date, the full Eastside Plan will be presented to Council for adoption in the Summer of 2024, this will include the economic and land-use components as well as recommendations for the City streets within the study area. If you have any questions, please contact Kelly Porter, Assistant Director, Transportation and Public Works, Regional Transportation and Innovation Division, at 817-392-7259.

David Cooke
City Manager