Waco MPO BU/US 77 Corridor Access and Circulations Guidelines

09.15.2026

Clint Peters, Director of Development Services

Kevin St. Jacques, Freese and Nichols, Inc.

BU/US 77 Corridor Access and Circulation Guidelines

Primary Goal

- To establish clear, actionable guidance and strategies for managing access, mobility, and multimodal safety along US Business 77 and US 77 through Robinson



City Partners

- Waco, Robinson, Bellmead, Lacy Lakeview

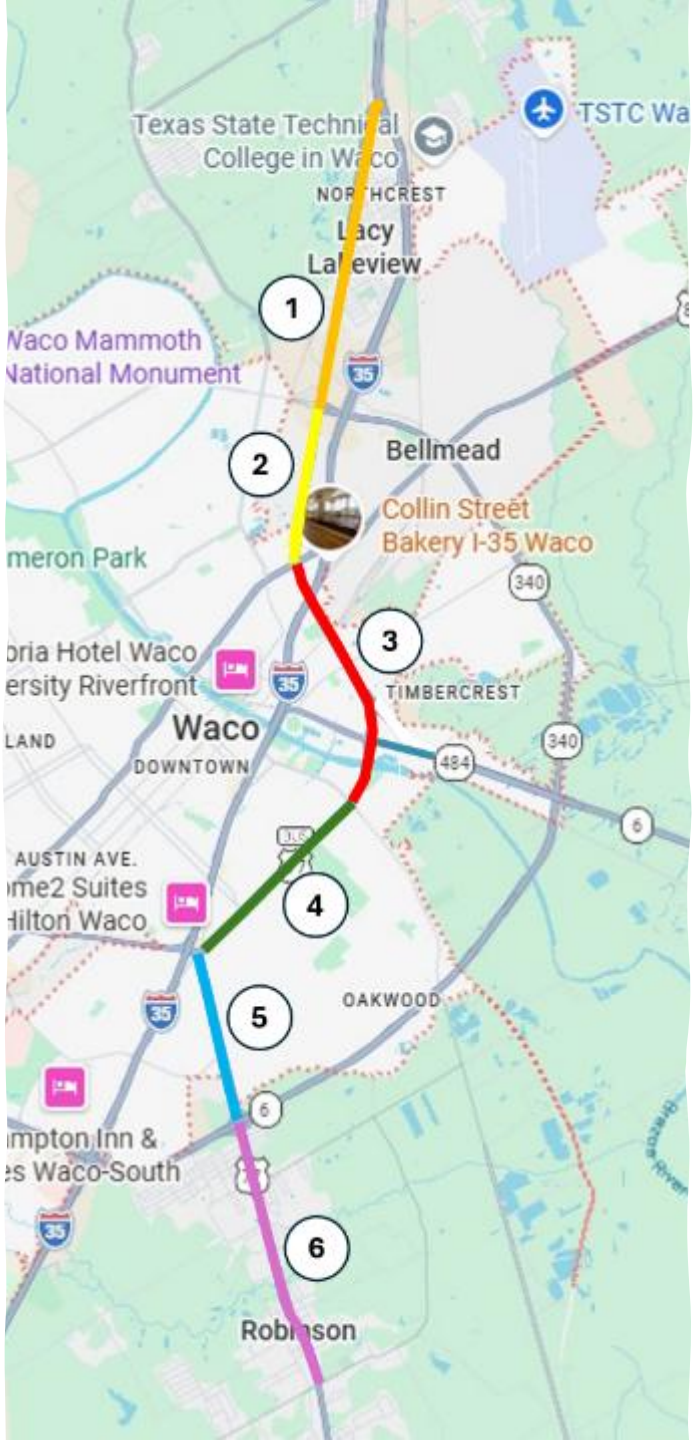
Consultant

- Freese and Nichols
- HDR - Subconsultant

Waco Metropolitan Planning Organization

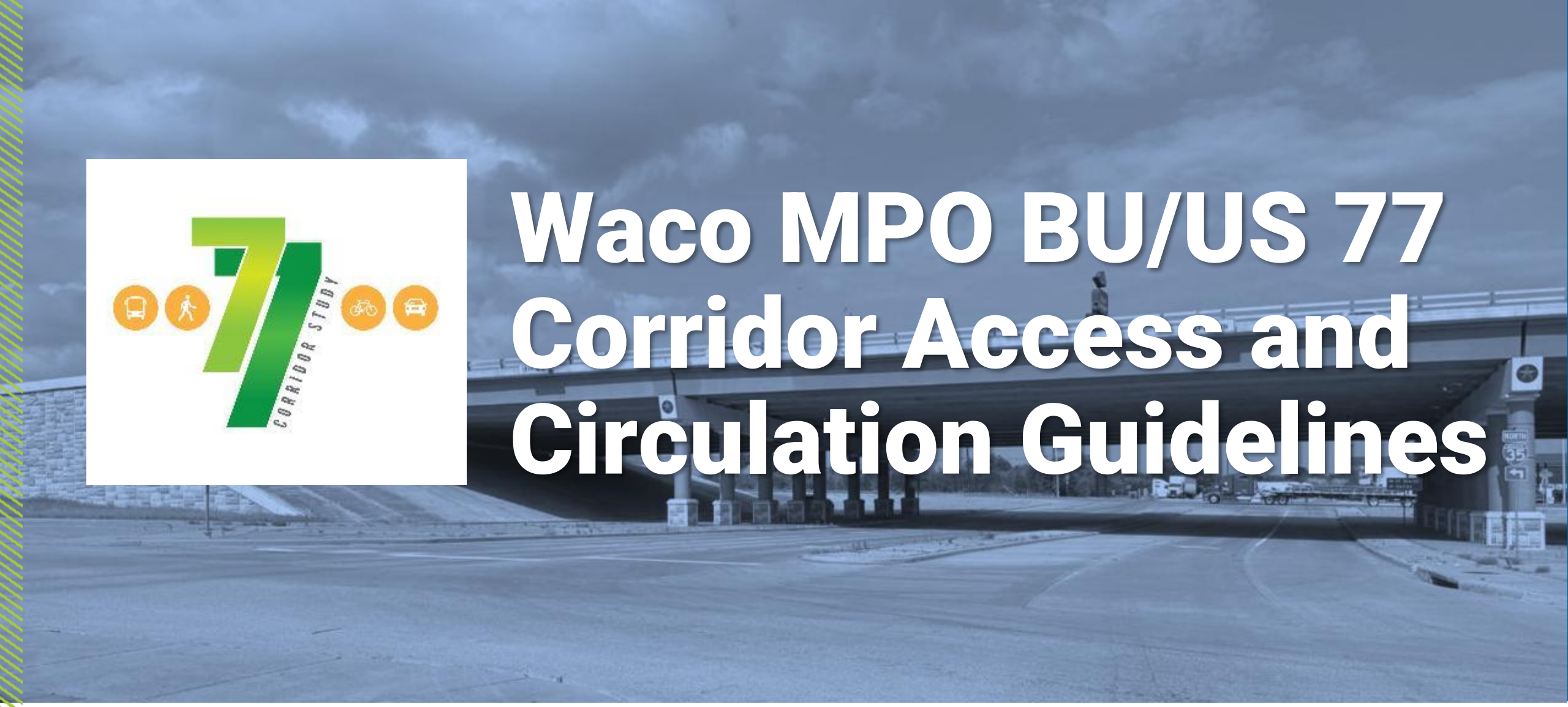
BU 77 /US 77 Corridor Access & Circulation Guidelines

Kevin St. Jacques
Project Manager
Freese & Nichols, Inc.









Waco MPO BU/US 77 Corridor Access and Circulation Guidelines

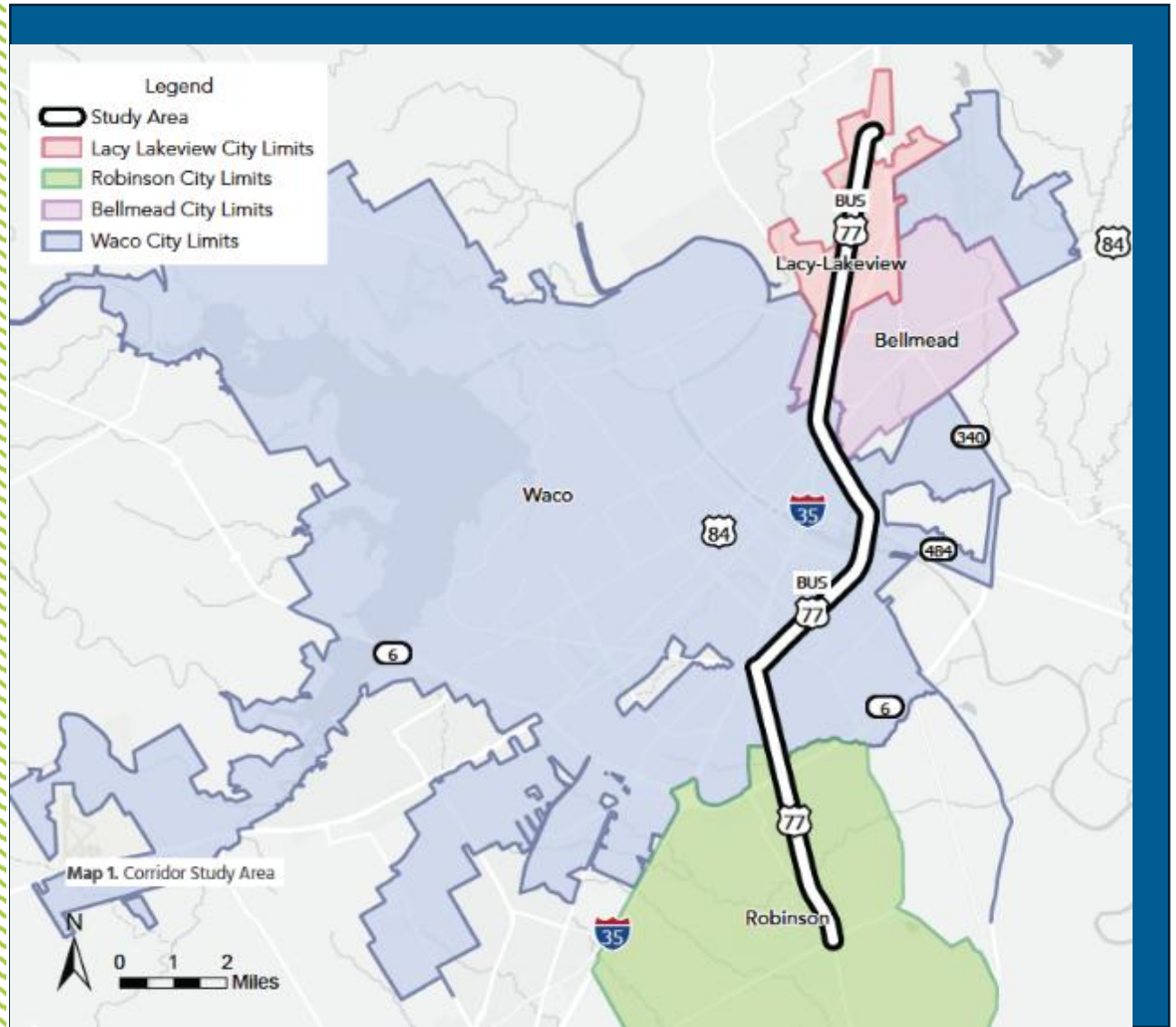
September 2026

Waco Area Metropolitan Planning Organization

HDR

FREESE AND NICHOLS

Why This Corridor and Why Now?



- Constructed in the early 1950s as the principal Waco–DFW connection
- Regional traffic later shifted to IH-35
- Existing traffic uses only a portion of available capacity
- Opportunity to right-size the roadway and redirect space and investment toward safety, access, walking, bicycling, drainage, landscaping, and supporting economic development
- Opportunity to align the guidelines across TxDOT's and City's ROWs to support the broader objectives for the corridor.

Corridor Vision and Guiding Principles

Safe & Efficient

- Improve access and circulation
- Manage speeds and conflict points
- Avoid unnecessary future widening

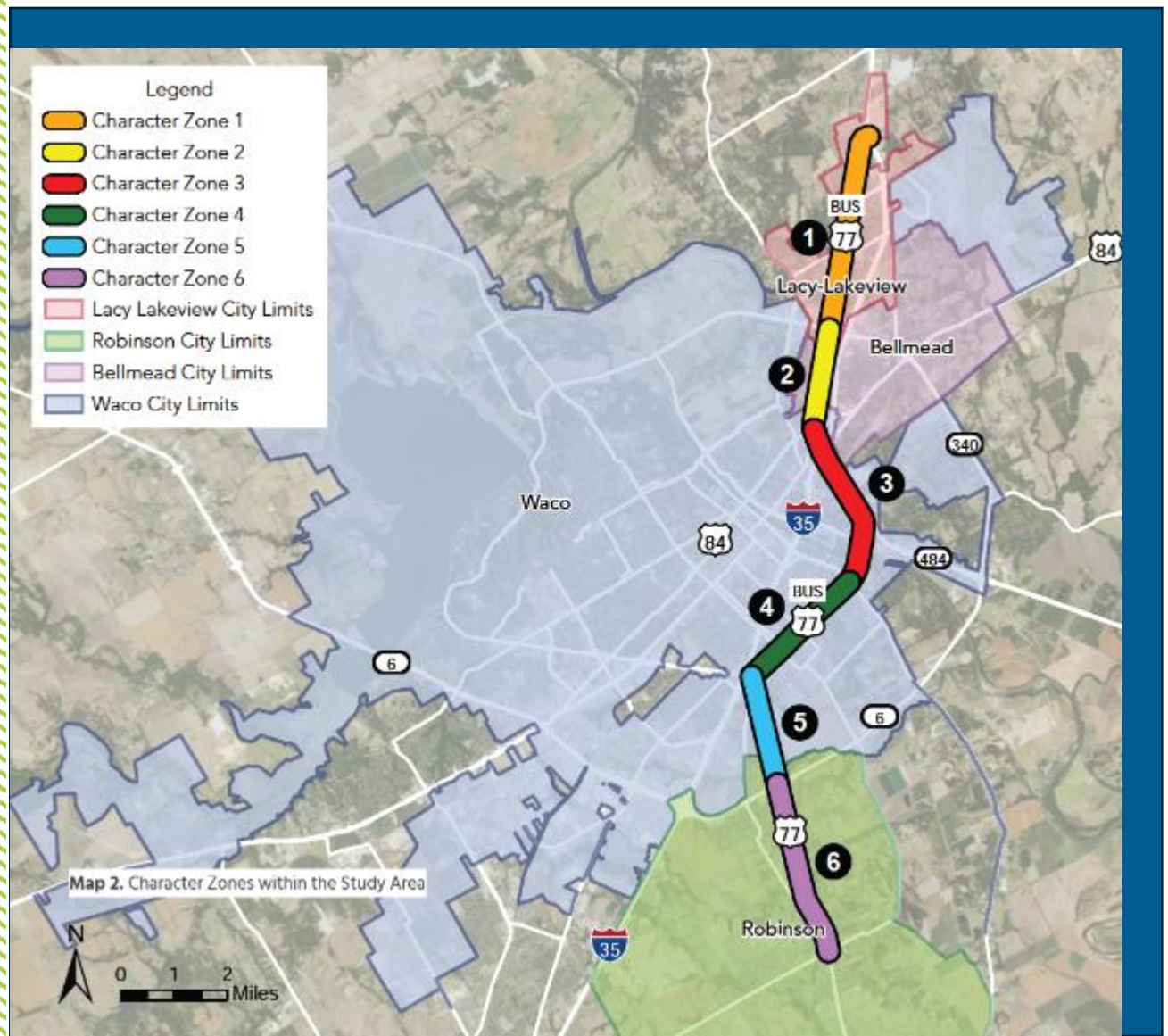
Multimodal and Context Sensitive

- Serve people walking, bicycling, using transit, and driving
- Respond to adjacent neighborhoods and land uses

Catalytic and Sustainable

- Reduce long-term maintenance obligations
- Support redevelopment and economic growth
- Coordinate transportation, drainage, utilities, and public space

Six Character Zones



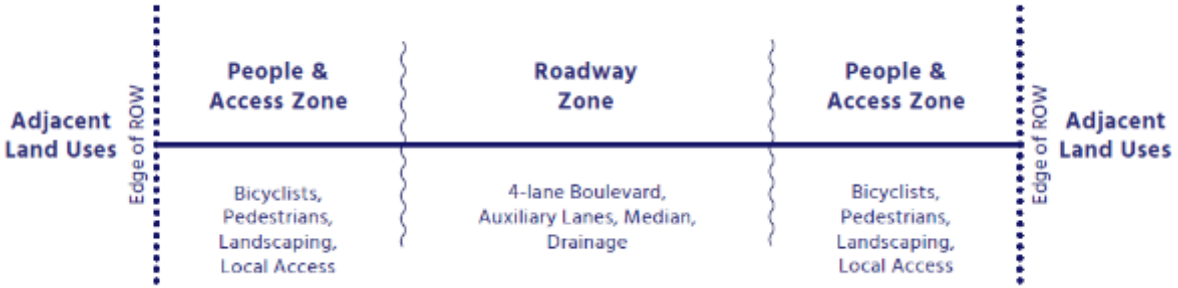
Map 2. Character Zones within the Study Area

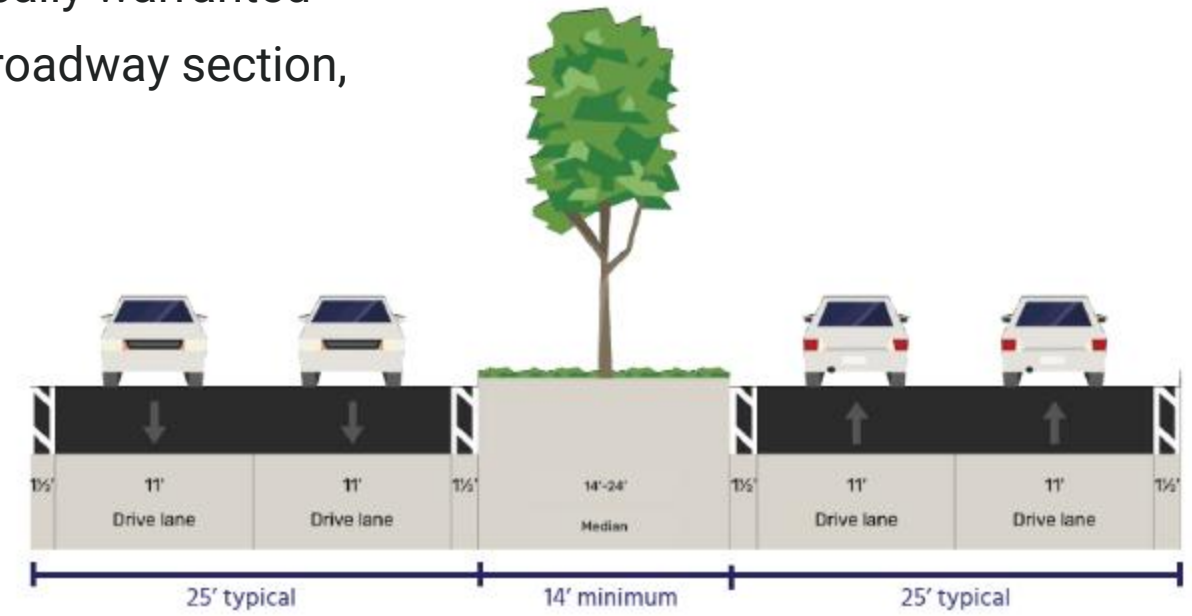
- **Zone 1: Lacy Lakeview**
  industrial, commercial, residential, and school uses
- **Zone 2: Bellmead**
  commercial frontage, underdeveloped land, and floodplain conditions
- **Zone 3: Waco interchanges and bridges**
  US 84, IH-35, railroad, Brazos River, and Baylor facilities
- **Zone 4: Baylor/La Salle**
  urban activity, redevelopment, and higher pedestrian and bicycle demand
- **Zone 5: Southeast Waco**
  commercial frontage, residential areas, and major development potential
- **Zone 6: Robinson**
  community corridor, local commercial center, and rural-to-urban transition

Core Roadway Section

Four-lane boulevard would continue to accommodate forecast demand through 2050

- Two 11-foot travel lanes in each direction
- Curbed boulevard character
- Landscaped or drainage median, generally 14–24 feet
- Left-turn pockets at appropriate median openings
- Right-turn lanes only where operationally or strategically warranted
- A *people and access zone* on both sides of the core roadway section, contextually sensitive (Edge Treatments)





Edge Treatment Toolkit

ELEMENTS	TYPICAL APPLICATION
Shared-Use Path	Residential and lower-density contexts
Separated Walking and Bicycling	Pedestrian-oriented commercial and institutional areas
Parking and bicycle facilities	Active retail or neighborhood commercial areas
Access-lane treatments	Industrial and commercial areas requiring frequent property access
Planting areas & buffers	Where necessary for screening or amenity

Considerations:

- Available right-of-way
- Adjacent land use and development pattern
- Pedestrian and bicycle activity
- Vehicle speed and access needs
- Parking demand
- Drainage and utility conditions

Applying the Framework by Character Zone

CHARACTER ZONES	DESIGN DIRECTION
Zones 1–2: Lacy Lakeview and Bellmead	Organize access roads and parking, maintain continuous shared-use paths, improve drainage, and use roundabouts to address complex intersections
Zone 3: Interchanges and bridges	Coordinate with current TxDOT projects to convert access-controlled infrastructure into an urban boulevard with pedestrian and bicycle accommodations
Zones 4–5: Baylor/La Salle and Southeast Waco	Prioritize separated walking and bicycling facilities, traffic calming, landscaped medians, and development that engages the street
Zone 6: Robinson	Provide continuous shared-use paths, modernize drainage incrementally, and establish a more pedestrian-oriented treatment near the community center

Sample Cross Sections

- Sample cross sections demonstrate how the core roadway section can be paired with edge treatments to create contextually sensitive sections that relate to the land uses and activities going on adjacent to the corridor.
- Each Character Zone has one sample cross section and identified alternatives for certain contextual considerations.



CHARACTER ZONE 1 (LACY LAKEVIEW TO LOOP 340)

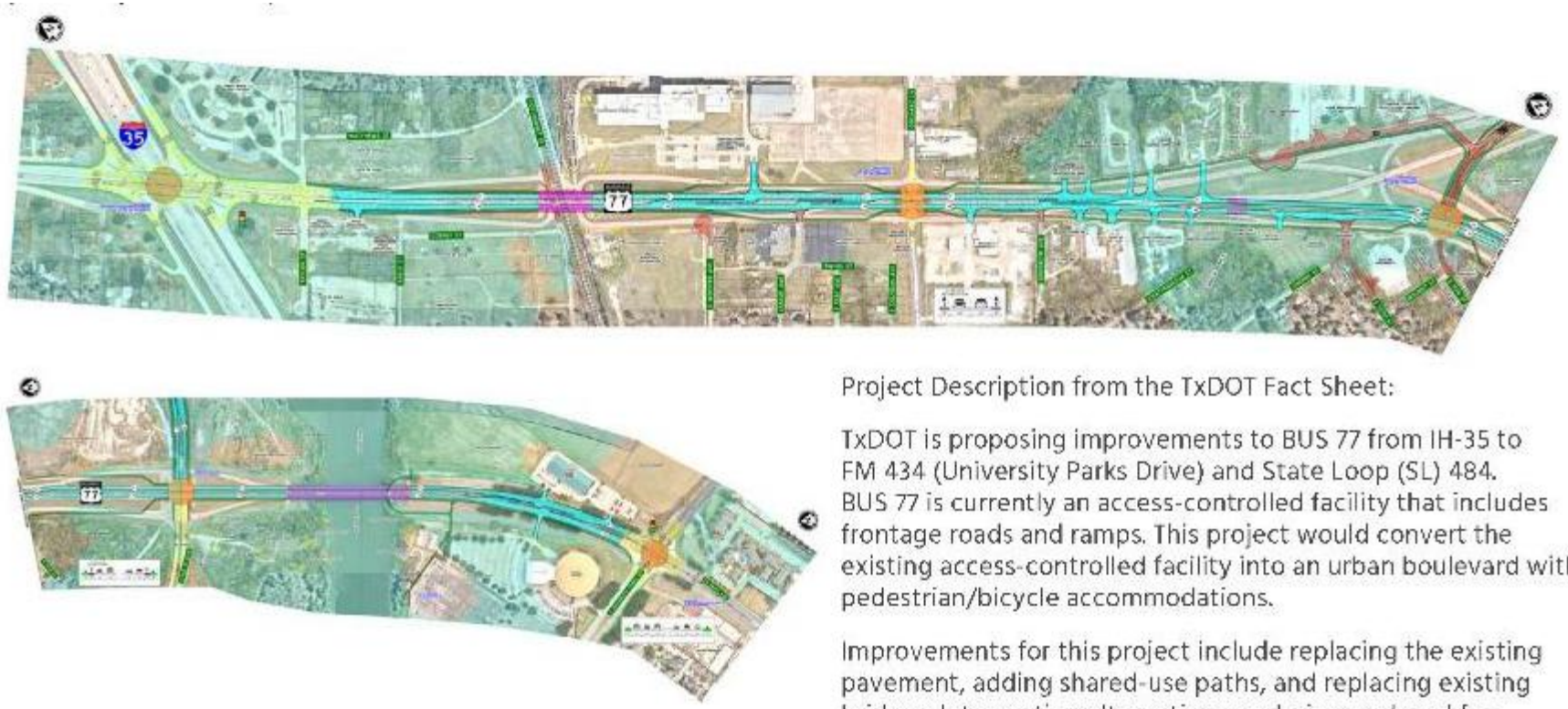


CHARACTER ZONE 2 (LOOP 340 TO US 84)



CHARACTER ZONE 3 (INTERCHANGES & BRIDGES, US 84 TO UNIVERSITY PARKS)

- TxDOT is currently already working on the redesign of the BUS77 and US 84 interchange



Source: TxDOT 2025 BU 77 Public Meeting #1
Schematic for Alternative 1

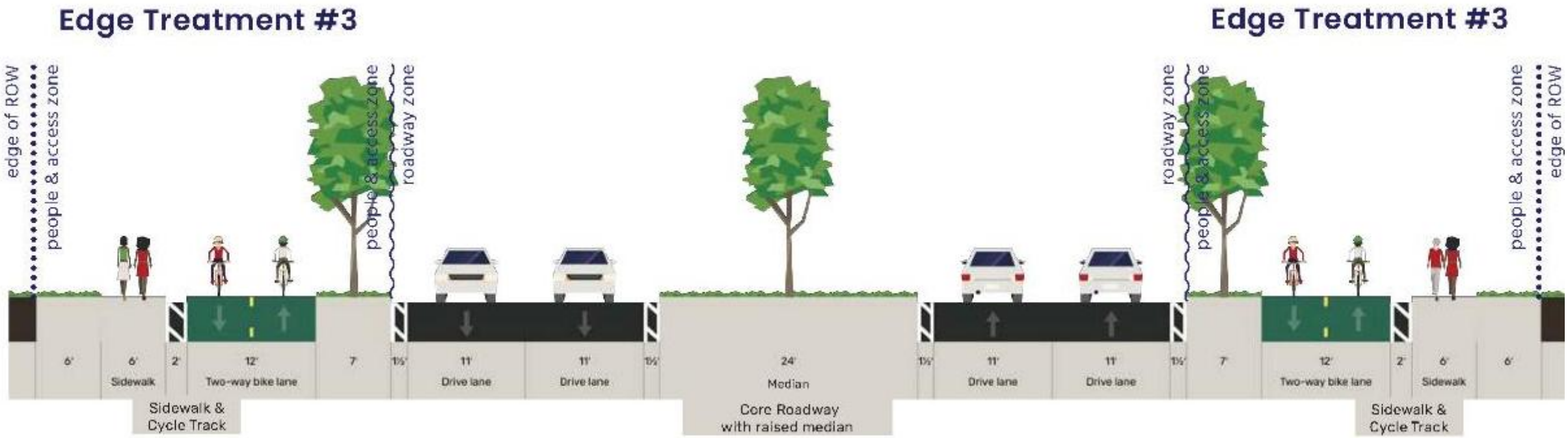
Project Description from the TxDOT Fact Sheet:

TxDOT is proposing improvements to BUS 77 from IH-35 to FM 434 (University Parks Drive) and State Loop (SL) 484. BUS 77 is currently an access-controlled facility that includes frontage roads and ramps. This project would convert the existing access-controlled facility into an urban boulevard with pedestrian/bicycle accommodations.

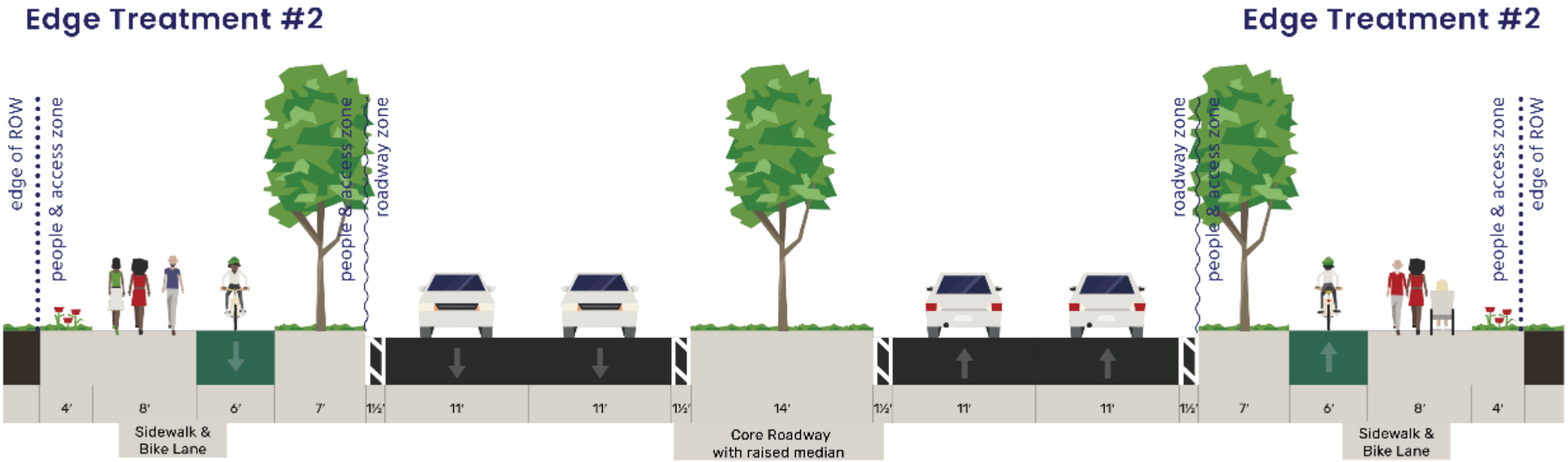
Improvements for this project include replacing the existing pavement, adding shared-use paths, and replacing existing bridges. Intersection alternatives are being analyzed for safety and traffic operation improvements. SL 484 would be realigned into SL 574 (South MLK Jr. Boulevard).

The proposed roadway realignment will be an urban boulevard including a shared-use path.

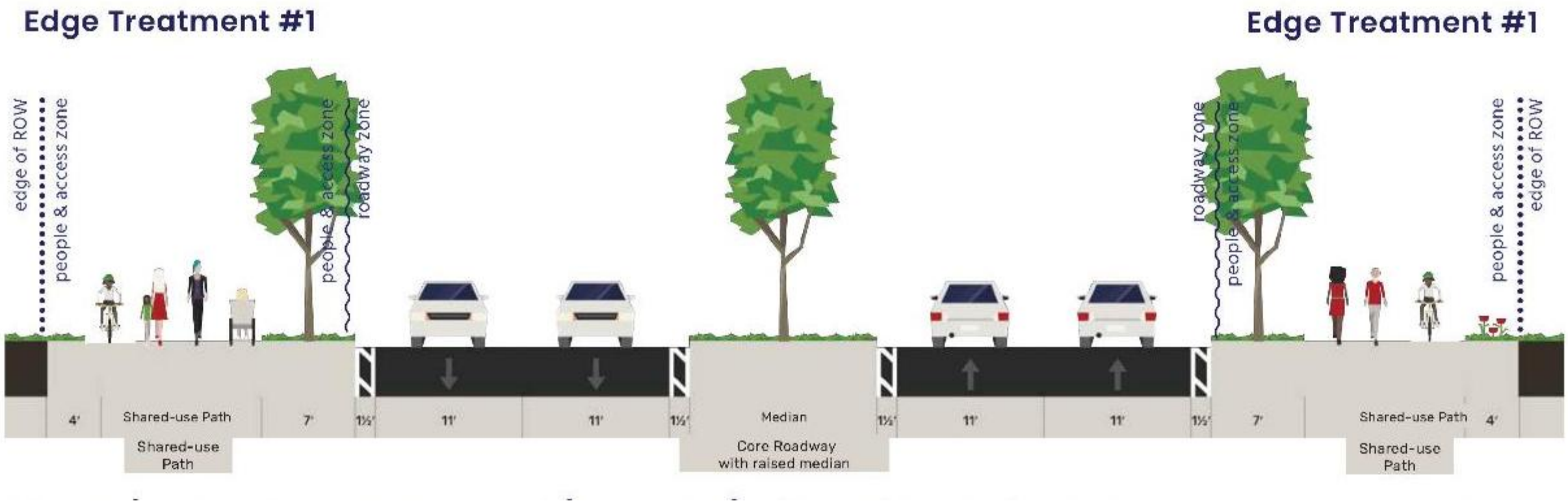
CHARACTER ZONE 4 (UNIVERSITY PARKS TO TRAFFIC CIRCLE)



CHARACTER ZONE 5 (TRAFFIC CIRCLE TO LOOP 340)



CHARACTER ZONE 6 (LOOP 340 TO MOONLIGHT)



Supporting Recommendations: Safety, Access, Place, and Resilience

Intersections and Crossings

- Compact geometry and slower turns
- ADA-compliant crossings
- Controlled crossings no more than approximately ¼ mile apart

Public and Private Realm

- Lighting, trees, furnishings, signage, and gathering spaces
- Buildings and entrances oriented toward the corridor
- Parking and service functions screened or placed to the side/rear

Access Management

- Consolidate and better space driveways
- Use shared and cross-access
- Manage left-turn movements and median openings

Resilience and Infrastructure

- Bioswales, rain gardens, and durable materials
- Shade for pedestrians, cyclists, and transit users
- Bundle roadway, drainage, and utility work

Implementation

Corridor Concept Implementation Pathways

- TxDOT roadway, bridge, signal, and maintenance projects
- City capital and utility programs
- Private development and redevelopment
- Access permits and frontage improvements
- Targeted grants and partnership projects

Primary roles



Community stakeholders: Needs, identity, feedback, and long-term corridor vitality



TxDOT: State-system standards, approvals, construction, and asset management



Waco MPO: Regional coordination, programming, funding, and performance tracking



Cities and local agencies: Land use, development review, local streets, utilities, and economic development



Developers and institutions: Site access, frontage, easements, cross-access, and private investment

Adopted Guidelines provides Cities with a decision-making tool that protects future mobility, improves safety, leverages investment, and supports redevelopment.

Protect the future corridor	Preserve necessary right-of-way, access, and multimodal connections before development or capital projects make them harder or more expensive to deliver.
Improve safety & access	Reduce conflict points, address network gaps, improve access, and create safer transitions for people driving, walking, bicycling, and using transit.
Support economic vitality	Enable redevelopment and investment while improving parcel access and site connectivity.
Get more value from projects	Coordinate roadway, drainage, utility, development, and streetscape investments to reduce rework, share costs, extend asset life, and minimize disruption.
Create consistency & coordination	Gives cities a common basis for reviewing development, capital projects, permits, and maintenance decisions while aligning with TxDOT and MPO roles.
Build a resilient corridor	Incorporate lifecycle, drainage, heat, technology, and mobility considerations into today's decisions to remain adaptable into the future.

Priorities, Next Actions, and Measures of Success

Before Action Advances, Ask…

- Does the action preserve the future corridor concept and right-of-way?
- Does it avoid unresolved safety or access problems?
- Are ownership and maintenance responsibilities documented?

Project-Prioritization Weights

- **20%:** Safety and universal access
- **15%:** Plan and character-zone fit
- **15%:** Multimodal connectivity
- Remaining criteria address operations, economic value, community benefit, deliverability, and resilience

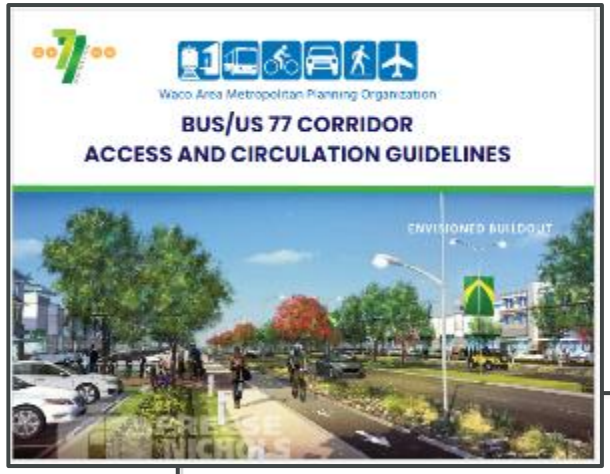
Recommended Initial Actions

- Use guidelines in project and development review
- Create a joint corridor-screening process
- Map crossing, path, access, and drainage gaps
- Bundle implementation with roadway and utility projects
- Set baseline measures and start reporting annually
- Pilot smart-signal and corridor technologies

New Planning and Design Tools

BU/US 77 Corridor Access and Circulation Guidelines

- **Adopted by MPO Policy Board on September 10th**
  - **MPO Access and Circulation Guidelines**
    - Tool for managing traffic flow and improving safety
    - Directs how vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists move along the US Business 77 and US 77 corridor
  - **MPO Complete Streets Design Manual**
    - Tool for standardizing street design and construction
    - Provides local governments with blueprints for multimodal street design





Waco Metropolitan Planning Organization

Waco's Planning Objectives

BU/US 77 Corridor Access and Circulation Guidelines

Department of Development Services will evaluate the options to implement the guidelines for City of Waco's planning objectives:



Implement Safety Standards

- Leverages common standards to maximize local safety impact

Modernize Community Infrastructure

- Facilitates upgrades to existing roadway to better support modern community use

Stimulate Local Business Growth

- Provides a unified blueprint that equips the City of Waco with the tools needed to incentivize property development and commercial expansion

Secure Funding

- Strategic positioning ensures corridor improvements are highly competitive for state and federal funding sources

Waco Metropolitan Planning Organization

THANK YOU.

Please contact ClintpP@wacotx.gov with any questions.