

# 5 | Design Strategies for Transportation Corridors

The purpose of this section is to identify strategies that will help Waxahachie to achieve its vision for future growth and redevelopment of its major corridors, and to promote the community's image. These strategies were created in response to the continuous development activity along the corridors as well as the growth potential for the decades to come.

The City of Waxahachie is located adjacent to four major corridors (see **Figure 37**) that are vital thoroughfares for connectivity within Waxahachie and the DFW Metroplex:

- IH-35E
- US 287
- US 287 Business
- US 77

These roadways not only experience high volumes of traffic daily, but they also play an important role in the perception and identity of the community. Each corridor is unique in both functionality and character; this plan will build upon those elements to recommend strategies for the enhancement of these corridors.

Although each corridor is unique, they each face similar challenges. Vacant land, undesirable land use types, unattractive areas, and the lack of signage result in the lack of continuity and limit the area from reaching its full potential. The following recommendations have been developed to address the corridor's issues.

Figure 37. Corridor Location Map



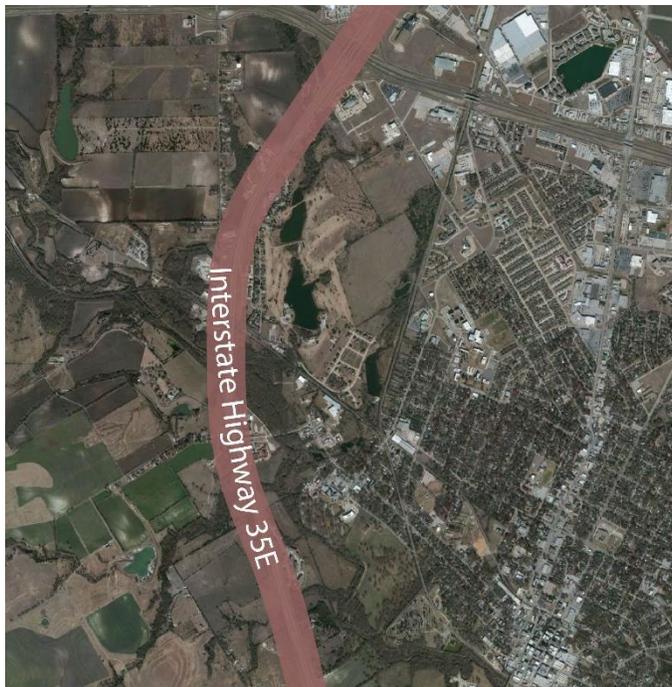
# Transportation Corridors

## Interstate Highway 35E

IH-35E is a federal highway that is located west of the main area of Waxahachie. The highway is a high-capacity four lane divided TxDOT facility with a north- and south-bound service road. The combined north and southbound traffic volume on this highway is 55,242 vehicles per day, making IH-35E the most heavily-traveled roadway in Waxahachie. Although the corridor is traveled by many people daily, many vehicles are passing through to a different destination and not actually visiting Waxahachie.

The character of this corridor is monotonous; there are no distinguishable features along the highway that are unique to Waxahachie. A large amount of the land adjacent to the IH-35E frontage road is vacant. The land located along IH-35E that is north of U.S. 287 includes some existing commercial and industrial land use types, as well as the Civic Center and the new Baylor Scott & White Hospital. South of the U.S. 287 intersection, IH-35E has a mix of multi-family, retail, and public/semi-public areas along the highway.

The Future Land Use Map shows a great contrast along this corridor. As shown, IH-35E is envisioned to have additional areas for commercial use, as well as highway commercial, mixed use nonresidential, and a medical district. It is intended that developments along the corridor will be of high quality and showcase the character of Waxahachie, attracting travelers into the main area of the City.



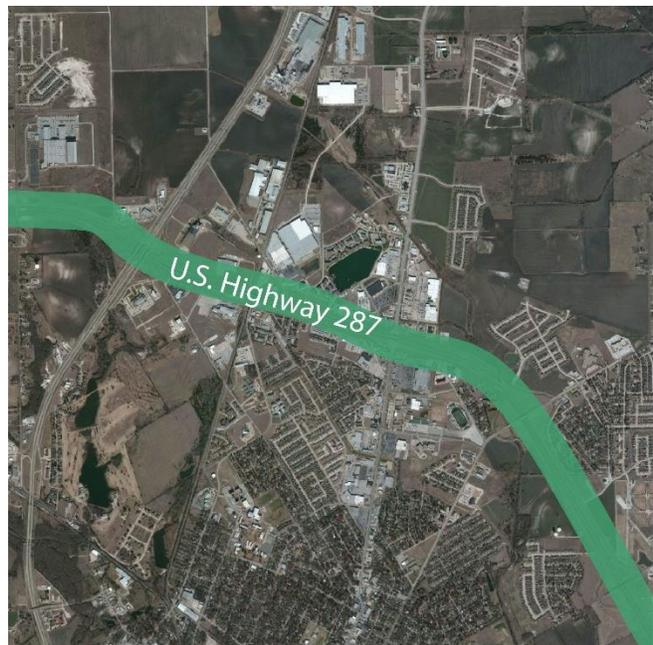


## U.S. Highway 287

U.S. Highway 287 is located in the northern region of Waxahachie, just outside of the main portion of the City. The highway provides west-east access from Interstate 35E. The roadway is a four-lane thoroughfare with frontage roads running on each side. The total east- and west-bound vehicle volume is 31,544 near the intersection with IH-35E, compared to 13,138 near the south-eastern edge of the City. This indicates that much of the traffic using the roadway may be accessing other roads to enter the main part of Waxahachie, or are accessing the retail and residential areas at a close proximity to the highway.

Although the corridor does have a large amount of vacant land adjacent to its frontage roads, it is more developed than IH-35E. Industrial land uses currently are the predominant land use at the intersection with IH-35E. Moving eastward, the land use changes to a large amount of retail with some commercial spread throughout. Within this segment of the corridor, establishments such as Discount Tire, Wendy's, Target, Holiday Inn Express, and other can be found. Further eastward, residential areas are located with close proximity to the highway.

As shown on the Future Land Use Map, this corridor is envisioned to redevelop with different uses in the future to project a positive images of the City and take advantage of the high visibility along US 287. On the western side of the roadway, there is a significant amount of land designated as Highway Commercial, which includes traditional commercial land uses that are developed to a higher standard. The southern edge of the Medical District lies along the corridor, with Mixed Use Nonresidential on the opposite side. Large amounts of Retail, Low Density Commercial and Mixed Use Residential are envisioned to line the remaining portion of U.S. 287.

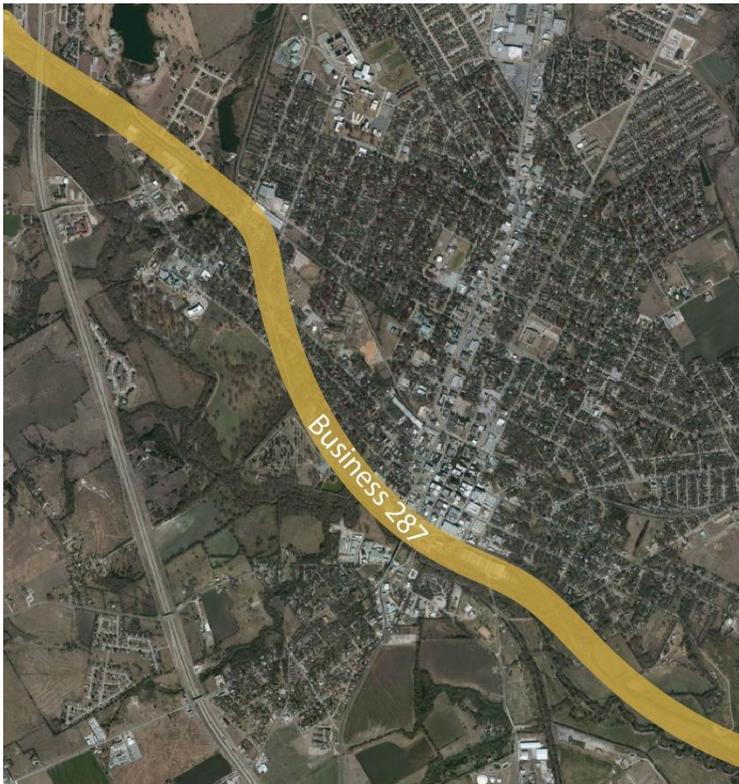


## Business 287

Business 287, or Main Street, runs west to east and directly through the heart of Waxahachie. This is a four lane undivided roadway (two travel lanes running in opposite directions). Total traffic volume on Business 287 is 3,840 vehicles per day.

Development along the corridor is predominately vehicle-oriented with a minimal amount of sidewalk lining the roadway. There is a multitude of land use types found along this corridor, most predominantly residential. There are some commercial establishments located east of the Downtown area, with more retail and public/semi-public found within the Downtown portion of Waxahachie. The remaining land along the corridor is left vacant. Business 287 is mainly used by the local residents of the City to travel through the main part of the City, including the Downtown area.

When looking at the Future Land Use Map, not much is planned to change along the roadway. It will remain predominately residential, with some Mixed Use Nonresidential envisioned at the intersection with Interstate 35E. Mixed Use Residential is also envisioned to be found along the corridor as well as additional retail.

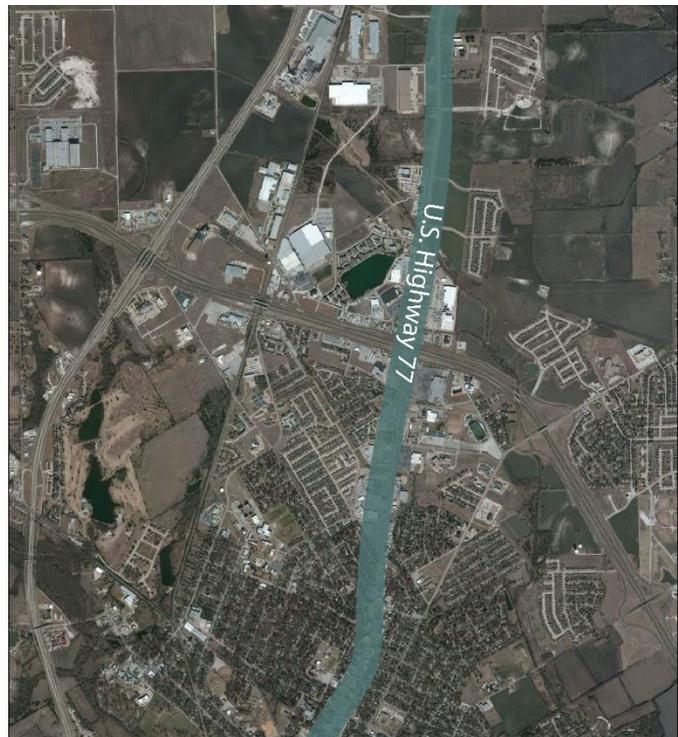




## U.S. Highway 77

U.S. Highway 77, or Dallas Highway, is another major corridor that runs through the heart of Waxahachie. Dallas Highway was once the major thoroughfare that linked Waxahachie to Dallas before the construction of IH-35E. The roadway is now mainly used by local residents to travel north-south within Waxahachie. The average traffic volume along the roadway at the intersection with U.S. 287 is 25,181 vehicles per day, compared to 3,840 vehicles at the intersection with Main Street. This can indicate that a large portion of the vehicles that travel south-bound are accessing the retail that is found adjacent to the roadway. For the most part, the majority of Dallas Highway is lined by retailers such as H.E.B, several restaurants, Home Depot, and Auto Zone. The downtown area along Dallas Highway includes office and commercial uses, as well as residential uses along the southern portion of the roadway within the city limits.

The only major modification along the roadway that can be observed in the Future Land Use Map are more areas designated as Retail and Mixed Use Nonresidential just south of the Downtown.



# Corridor Design Policies

## 1. Incorporate bicycle and pedestrian friendly design into roadways



There are several techniques that Waxahachie can incorporate along its roadways to be more bicycle and pedestrian friendly. One technique is the possible addition of sharrows, particularly along Business 287 and US 77. Instead of designating a lane for bicyclists, sharrows are special markings within the traffic lane that enable bicyclists to use the full traffic lane, if needed. Sharrows enhance bicyclist safety by providing identified corridors for their use. The presence of the markings also informs motorists that bicyclists may be present. In Waxahachie’s case, sharrows would be the most economical way to incorporate a bicycle corridor along its roadways.

Another strategy the City could incorporate is to allow businesses along the corridors to have bike racks as an alternative to parking regulations. Not only will these bike racks provide a place to park bicycles, but by being placed at such a close proximity to a business, it might encourage the bicyclist to venture inside of the building.

To enhance the walkability of Waxahachie, the City should conduct a study that will identify where sidewalks should be added and where there is a need for crosswalk enhancements. The City should also make the corridors that are already lined with sidewalks more pedestrian-oriented. This can be done by first identifying what sidewalks do not have light poles or other obstructions, then widening sidewalks and including other pedestrian amenities such as adequate lighting, seating, waste receptacles, and landscaping where it is appropriate. Pedestrian amenities, roadway paintings and wayfinding signage should be a priority.



## 2. Establish an incentive program for landscaping adjacent to roadways

West Side of IH-35E IH-35E Rebuild Mid-Way Airport Growth Strategies Trail Connections Medical Center District Roadways

Landscaping is a major opportunity to boost the image of a corridor. The City should create an incentive program that allows all new developments and any developments that are being remodeled to retrofit their parking lots in order to provide landscaping adjacent to the roadways. Not only will this make the corridor look much nicer, but it will in turn provide a positive image of the businesses. If there is no way for the retrofitting to occur, establishments should be required to incorporate landscaping in the parking lot design. For example, requiring that a minimum of one landscaped island should be installed for every 15 parking lot stalls, or requiring that that two or more interior parking bays have a continuous parking lot island/end cap.



## 3. Improve community identity with the installation of gateway elements

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The use of branded gateways is a great tool the City can use to attract attention from travelers and draw them into Waxahachie. The City should expand its branding efforts and identify key locations along the major corridors, particularly Interstate 35E. As visitors and residents travel along IH-35E, future gateway features will create a positive and identifiable image of the community. Based on visibility, it is recommended that a gateway monument sign be placed along IH-35E southbound where it intersects with U.S. 287, as well as along U.S. 287 eastward where it intersects IH-35E.



Design of the gateway elements and/or monument sign should build upon Waxahachie's small-town character. Materials for consideration should include brick, stone, wood and potential accents of metal. The sign or elements should be significant in size since they will not be directly adjacent to the corridors and must be seen and read from the roadways.



#### 4. Reduce visual clutter through enhanced signage standards

The rights for local business to advertise their services is crucial in order to draw in customers. Signage on the corridors, however, can create visual clutter making the corridors unattractive. Signage along IH-35E, US 287, US 77, and Business 287 should provide advertisement in ways that do not take away from Waxahachie’s overall appearance. Monument signs should be required or incentivized for multi-tenant developments (see bottom image) along corridors that run internally through Waxahachie (i.e., U.S. 77 and Business 287), while pole signs (if allowed) should be limited to higher speed corridors such as Interstate 35E.



Example of visual clutter along U.S. Highway 77



Example of multi-tenant monument sign

5. Establish guidelines and design standards for major transportation corridors



Table 16. Guidelines and Design Standards for Major Transportation Corridors

|  | IH-35E  | U.S. 287                   | Business 287  | U.S. 77                    |
|--|---|----------------------------|---|----------------------------|
| <p><b>Signage</b><br/>Any device used for visual communication intended to attract the attention of the public and visible to the public ROW or other properties.</p>                                    | <p>Off-premise (billboard) signs should be discouraged or prohibited</p> <p>Pole signs should be discouraged or prohibited</p> <p>Pylon signs, wall signs, and monument signs should be encouraged</p>  |                            | <p>Monument signs only</p> <p>Off-premise shared signage, attached signs, and wall signs should be allowed</p> <p>No signs should be of a height taller than 20'</p>  |                            |
| <p><b>Landscape Screening Buffer</b><br/>Delineates private property from the public right-of-way, or two less compatible uses from one another, with the use of either masonry or natural features.</p> | <p>20' buffer required</p>  | <p>15' buffer required</p> |   | <p>10' buffer required</p> |
| <p><b>Building Articulation and Design</b><br/>Refers to building wall and height offsets</p>  | <p>New developments should be discouraged from using a building design that achieves a "large box" effect</p> <p>Façades facing roadways or residential uses should be constructed of masonry or Hardieplank material, have articulation, and other design elements</p> <p>Accent material (non-masonry) up to 10% of façade can be allowed</p> |                            | <p>Wall design should be cohesive throughout the corridor</p> <p>No metal buildings allowed</p> <p>Maximum coverage of one type of building material should not exceed 70% of a façade</p>  |                            |
| <p><b>Trash Receptacle</b><br/>A barrier that covers all four sides of a refuse and recycling collection bin</p>   | <p>Trash receptacles should be located out of public view. If they are visible, they should be screened with a masonry wall (on three sides with a gate on the fourth) that is at least one foot taller than the container, and that is architecturally compatible with the primary building.</p>   |                            |   |                            |
| <p><b>Outside Storage</b><br/>Areas where goods and materials are displayed or stored outside a building for more than 24 hours</p>  | <p>Require all new businesses to locate outside storage areas such that they are not facing onto or visible from the thoroughfare</p> <p>All areas must be adequately screened</p>  |                            | <p>Require all new businesses to locate outside storage areas such that they are not facing onto or visible from the thoroughfare</p> <p>Discourage where the establishment and its outside storage area directly abuts a residential neighborhood</p> <p>Require screen where outside storage is adjacent to residential areas</p> |                            |

|   | IH-35E   | U.S. 287 | Business 287   | U.S. 77 |
|---|--|----------|--|---------|
| <p><b>Parking Lot Landscaping Design</b><br/>Refers to the amount and placement of landscaping within the parking lot</p> | <p>20 sq. ft. of landscaping required per parking space</p> <p>No landscaped area less than 50 sq. ft. allowed</p> <p>One tree is required to be within 50' of a parking space</p> <p>Landscaped island is required at the end of each parking row</p> |          | <p>20 sq. ft. of landscaping required per parking space</p> <p>No landscaped area less than 50 sq. ft. allowed</p> <p>One tree is required to be within 60' of a parking space</p> |         |
| <p><b>Lot Design</b><br/>The area dimensions for parking lots</p>   | <p>In general, lots should be a minimum of 2-5 acres along highway frontage to preserve sites for large developments</p> <p>Minimum frontage of 300'</p>   |          | <p>Lots should be a minimum of 1-2 acres</p> <p>Minimum frontage of 150-200'</p> <p>In general, parking lots should be placed in the rear of buildings</p>                         |         |

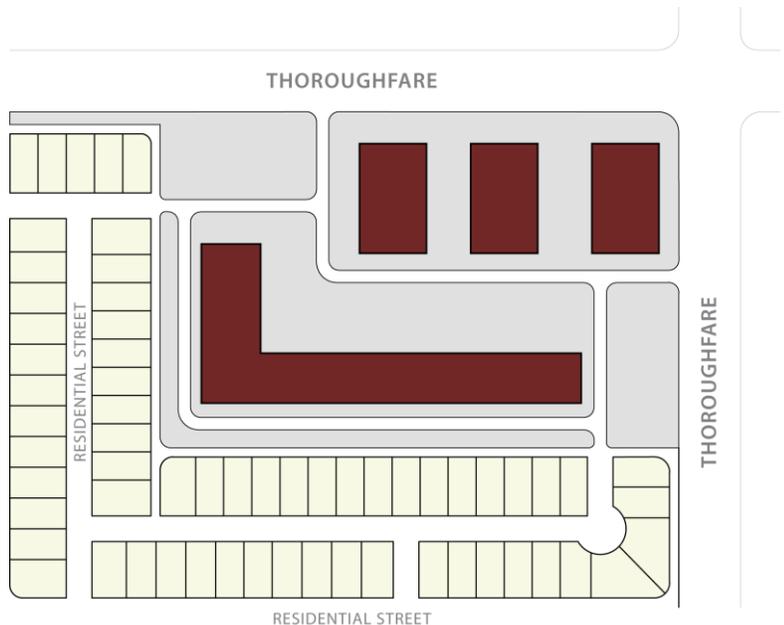
6. Improve connectivity and compatibility between residential and retail/commercial

West Side of IH-35E IH-35E Rebuild Mid-Way Airport Growth Strategies Trail Connections Medical Center District Roadways

Connectivity

In cases where residential and nonresidential development (typically local neighborhood development) are adjacent to each other, one (1) street or drive connection should be required for nonresidential properties less than ten (10) acres, and two (2) street or drive connections should be required for nonresidential properties that are ten (10) or more acres in size. Residential developments should provide street/drive stub-out connections. A reduction in the number of connections where physical or site development constraints exist may be approved. Connections should be located as to avoid conflicts with the service areas of a nonresidential development.

Example of connectivity between residential and retail/commercial



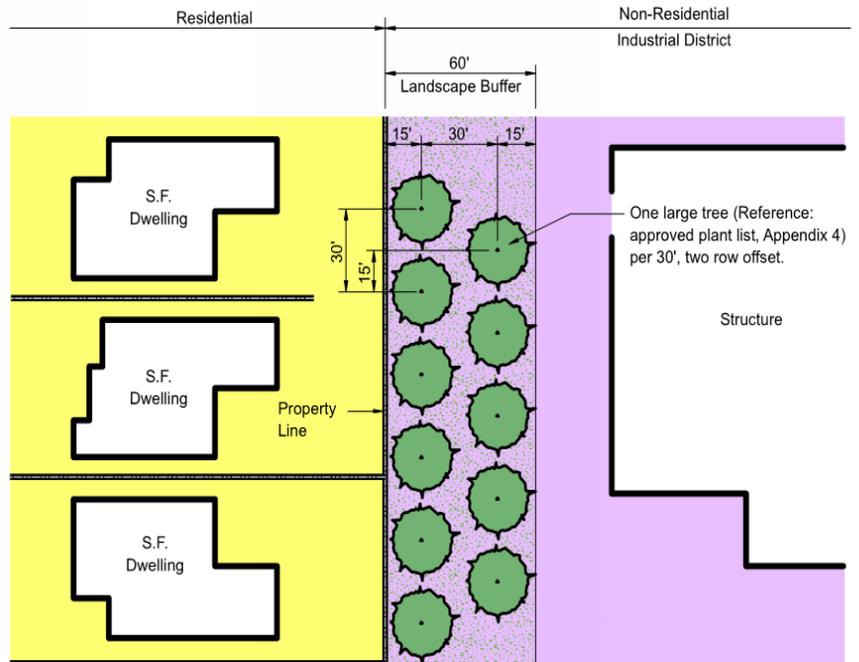
## Compatibility

Whenever an off-street parking area or vehicular use area abuts an adjacent property line used or zoned for residential use, a perimeter landscape area of at least ten feet (10') should be maintained between the edge of the parking area and the adjacent property line.

A solid brick or masonry screening wall of not less than six feet (6') nor more than eight feet (8') in height should be erected on the property line separating nonresidential that backs upon residential uses or zoning districts.

If an industrial use abuts a residential land use and the two uses are not separated by a public street, then a sixty-foot (60') landscaping buffer with two rows of large trees should be required along the shared property line. Tree rows should be separated by a distance of thirty feet (30') from each other and be parallel to the property line. For each row, trees should be planted at thirty-foot (30') intervals and be offset fifteen feet (15') from the other tree row. No outside storage or parking should be allowed within the buffer area.

Example of landscape buffer



## Keep Waxahachie Beautiful

Keep Waxahachie Beautiful is an all-volunteer, non-profit organization that organizes and participates in a wide variety of projects to promote the beautification of the City. Their mission is to:

*“Preserve the natural beauty and protect the environment, making the City of Waxahachie and the state of Texas a better place to live”.*

This is achieved through litter pickup events, beautification projects and lessons with children, as well as participation in the annual Don't Mess with Texas Trash-Off.

