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Press Release

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City Unveils Major Beautification and Pedestrian Safety Project as Part of Tyler 21 Implementation

At a news conference held Tuesday, Jan. 22, City of Tyler Mayor Joey Seeber and Council Members Ralph Caraway (District 3), Donald Sanders (District 2) and Chris Simons (District 4) unveiled an extensive beautification and pedestrian improvement project that will be presented at the Tyler City Council Jan. 23rd meeting. The project will extend four miles along Gentry Parkway and will include landscaping and safety measures at nine intersections between the NW Loop 323 and East Martin Luther King Blvd.

Under a contract proposed by the Texas Department of Transportation, the State will provide more than \$450,000 toward the project and the City of Tyler will fund the remainder of the \$1.1 million project cost with general capital projects funding.

Improvements to the nine intersections along Gentry Parkway will include:

- Installation of Raised Median Pedestrian Refuge Areas
- Landscaping
- Signage
- Concrete Curbs and Gutters
- Traffic Signal Modifications (Pedestrian Signals and Push Buttons)

These improvements are intended to make Gentry Parkway safer for pedestrian travel by creating a landscaped refuge area in the middle of the roadway to ensure pedestrians have adequate time to cross. An added bonus is that the landscaping will be an attractive addition to the community.

“Among the goals that emerged from the Tyler 21 North End Revitalization planning process were the need to create parkways, beautify entry corridors and improve pedestrian friendliness in the area,” said Mayor Seeber. “This project is a giant leap toward achieving that goal.”

(more)

“By creating pedestrian refuge areas, the distance across this very wide roadway is cut in half,” said Council Member Caraway. “This is a much safer design in addition to being more attractive for the neighborhood.”

A tenth intersection also would be improved as part of an additional \$173,400 Safe Routes to School Grant proposed by the Texas Department of Transportation. The intersection of Hillsboro and Gentry Parkway will be enhanced with the same changes as the other nine intersections; however, a sidewalk will be constructed from the intersection to Douglas Elementary School. The total direct cost to the City of Tyler for this project will be \$31,010 to pay for landscaping and signage, which are excluded from the grant.

“There is nothing more important than the welfare of our children,” said Caraway. “This project will make pedestrian travel at the intersection much safer as well as improve the safety for Tyler’s children walking to school.”

Upon approval from the City Council, these projects are proposed to begin with selection of project engineers by April 2008. The planning, specifications and engineering are expected to be established by October 2008 and construction could begin as early as January 2009. The projects are anticipated to be complete in November 2009.

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