

## VII. CONCLUSIONS

In a region with continual population growth and complex jurisdictional boundaries, future preparation for accommodating population growth will require early, deliberate, and continuous collaboration and formalized partnerships between ISDs and local governments. NCTCOG's



position at the regional level allows for the facilitation of partnerships and coordination among member organizations for mutual benefit in school siting and SRTS activities. Highlights of the Safe Routes to School Regional Action Plan include:

- A large majority of school students in the region are driven to school (2017 National Household Travel Survey), which provides an opportunity to shift the mode of travel for students living within walking distance to schools through safety improvements, education on safe walking and biking practices, and encouragement activities.
- An NCTCOG survey of schools and local governments in the region revealed a potential for greater collaboration among local government and ISDs/schools.
- Recommendations for SRTS planning for retrofits to improve children's ability to walk to school in built neighborhoods by understanding the built environment, including existing infrastructure, routes to school, driveway configurations, and making context-sensitive recommendations with collaboration from the community.
- Recommendations for new school siting situations, given continued regional growth and consequential school siting planning challenges and opportunities.
- The Transportation Safety GIS analysis to quantitatively combine and weigh transportation safety and other data to act as a tool to identify areas of high concern and potential need for SRTS improvements. This analysis can be used to help prioritize resources for SRTS improvements in the region. NCTCOG staff can develop localized versions of the



analysis to assist cities and ISDs with prioritizing SRTS activities.

- The Regional Strategy for SRTS identifies a multifaceted approach to advancing SRTS in the region. This approach includes joint coordination among local agencies, smart development in rural and rapidly developing areas, and NCTCOG technical assistance in a variety of areas.

### ***Summary of Next Steps***

## **Section II: State of the Schools in the Dallas-Fort Worth Region**

NCTCOG will:

1. Continue to engage local ISDs, cities, counties, and other relevant school stakeholder groups to understand current conditions of school travel and safety needs and share funding opportunities.
2. Increase efforts to create introductions between ISDs and local municipalities by hosting meetings between different stakeholder groups with shared areas of jurisdiction and interest.
3. Increase efforts to share relevant safety information and data with its member organizations as it relates to bicycle and pedestrian safety near schools.

## **Section III: Safe Routes to School Plans for Existing Schools**

1. Parties interested in completing a SRTS plan should:
  - a. Read and use the SRTS Toolkit for Planning and Conducting a Walk Audit and other resources related to walk audits in Appendix 2 when planning your own existing conditions analysis.
  - b. Review existing SRTS plans on the NCTCOG website at [www.nctcog.org/srts](http://www.nctcog.org/srts) and elsewhere for ideas that are transferable locally.

## **Section IV: New School Siting**

1. Developers and planners: review the *Planning for Community-Oriented Schools: A Guide to School Siting in North Texas*<sup>12</sup> guidebook for additional information on best school siting practices and use the EPA *Smart School Siting Tool*<sup>23</sup> when comparing candidate school sites.
2. NCTCOG will continue to offer technical assistance and foster collaboration among member cities, counties, ISDs, and other applicable stakeholders for school siting and transportation safety.

## **Section V: Identifying Areas of Potential Need for SRTS Improvements**

NCTCOG will:

1. Revise this analysis in the future with updated and additional roadway safety and demographic data to ensure the tool is relevant and useful for planners as they make professional judgments regarding schools planning and funding.
2. Offer technical assistance to local governments to complete more localized analyses to assist in funding and planning prioritizations tailored to their communities.