Presentation Outline

• Overview of Community Schools and Transportation Program
• Study on School Traffic Congestion and Travel Flow
• School District - Public Transit Coordination Report
• Other Resources for School Districts and Communities
Community Schools and Transportation Program

OBJECTIVES:

- Encourage **coordination** between school districts and local governments
- Advance long-term planning for **school siting**
- Improve **transportation safety** near schools
- Promote **alternative transportation options** to schools

Created with funding from a federal transportation planning grant (TIGER).
Study of School Traffic
Congestion and Travel Flow
Study Overview

Two Parts:

1. Study of how schools affect travel speeds
2. Analysis of traffic congestion, safety, and connectivity around case study schools
1. Study of how schools affect travel speeds

**Methodology:** Compared speeds on roads adjacent to schools during the summer to speeds during the school year.
Findings:

• During the school year, speeds decreased an average of 4.4 mph in the morning and 3.2 mph in the afternoon.

• The greatest change was on roads with a school speed zone 15 mph less than the posted speed limit.
1. Study of how schools affect travel speeds

**Implications:** Avoid locating elementary schools along higher-speed major roads, particularly with speed limits of 35 mph or more.

Source: Ricardo Ramirez Buxeda, Orlando Sentinel
### Case Study Elementary Schools – data collection:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Older, Neighborhood-Oriented Schools (built before 1965)</th>
<th>Newer Schools (built after 2000, limited access, on-site queuing)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Urban Schools</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dallas</td>
<td>Bayles ES</td>
<td>C.A. Tatum Jr. ES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fort Worth</td>
<td>Bruce Shulkey ES</td>
<td>Hazel Harvey Peace ES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Suburban Schools</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plano</td>
<td>Meadows ES</td>
<td>Barron ES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irving</td>
<td>Otis Brown ES</td>
<td>Jackie Mae Townsell ES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rural Schools</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waxahachie</td>
<td>Marvin ES</td>
<td>Margaret L. Felty ES</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Also received in-person observations
2. Analysis of traffic congestion, safety, and connectivity around case study schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Urban Schools</th>
<th>Older, Neighborhood-Oriented Schools</th>
<th>Newer Schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dallas</td>
<td>Bayles ES</td>
<td>C.A. Tatum Jr. ES</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Travel Distance from School:

Density of Traffic Crashes:
2. Analysis of traffic congestion, safety, and connectivity around case study schools

Findings – All Schools:

**Congestion**
Schools with the most congestion had the least restrictions on on-street parking.

**Pick-up/Drop-off**
More cars pick up in the afternoon than drop off in the morning.

**Sidewalks**
Lack of sidewalks = fewer students walking to school.
2. Analysis of traffic congestion, safety, and connectivity around case study schools

Findings – Newer Schools:

**Queuing Space**
Building larger driveways may not improve traffic flow and congestion.

**Traffic Demand**
Newer schools had more cars dropping off/picking up students.

**Traffic Safety**
Newer schools had more crashes on nearby streets.
2. Analysis of traffic congestion, safety, and connectivity around case study schools

Recommendations for Reducing Traffic Congestion and Improving Safety:

1. Staff/volunteers should always be present in loading zones
2. Separate travel modes
3. Drop-off/pick-up single file, against the sidewalk
4. Identify spaces for parents to park
5. Restrict on-street parking
6. Prioritize students that walk and bike
7. Communicate expectations
Why Coordinate?

- Cost savings (school district) and new source of revenue (transit agency)
- Expanded school choice and improved academic performance
- Reduced environmental impact
- Increased transit ridership and promoting transit after high school
- Expanded mobility options
Types of Coordination

- Information sharing and coordinated planning
- Transit pass programs
- Coordination of management and administrative activities
- Sharing infrastructure and physical stock
Existing Coordination in DFW (From Interviews)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percent of Public Transit Riders that are K-12 Students (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DART, Trinity Metro, DCTA</td>
<td>0.2 - 3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Cities</td>
<td>4.0 - 13.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Current Areas of Coordination:

- Transit travel training at some schools.
- Dallas ISD purchases one-day transit passes for homeless students and students difficult to serve with school bus routes.
- Discussions about emergency preparedness.
- School field trips that use transit.
Opportunities for Coordination in DFW (From Interviews)

- Information sharing on where transit can meet school needs
- Coordinating school arrival/dismissal bells and transit schedules
- Locating new Choice schools along transit routes
- Using transit instead of school buses for certain high school students
- Driver training or background checks
- Joint use of maintenance and storage facilities
Other Resources for School Districts and Communities
NCTCOG School Siting Guidebook

• Steps for improving city-school district communication and coordination

• Strategies and criteria for siting “community-oriented schools”

Download at: www.nctcog.org/schools
Technical Assistance

- Speaking at City Council or School Board meetings
- Bringing together school districts, local governments, and transportation agencies
- Providing technical assistance on school siting, Safe Routes to School, and school traffic management projects
- Walk to School Day promotion

(Dependent on staff availability)
What YOU Can Do!

• Share the tips for improving drop-off/pick-up
• Talk to your city about improving walking and biking to school
• Encourage schools to participate in Walk to School Day

Resources at nctcog.org/saferoutes_toschool
Contact Information

Kathryn Rush, AICP
(817) 704-5601
krush@nctcog.org

Comments? Questions?