Building Schools, Building Communities

A School Siting and Collaboration Workshop

February 22, 2019

North Central Texas Council of Governments
A Regional Perspective on School Siting and Coordination
About NCTCOG

**NCTCOG Region**
(16 counties)

**Metropolitan Planning Area**
(12 counties)
Assist in regional planning, cooperation for mutual benefit, and recognizing regional opportunities.
About NCTCOG – Transportation Department

» 12 counties
» 209 cities
» 127 Independent School Districts
» 7.4 million people

Source: NCTCOG 2018 Population Estimates
About NCTCOG - Transportation Department

Mobility/Congestion
Air Quality
Economy
First, Some Background: Recent School Siting Trends
Over the past 50 years, schools/neighborhoods have gone from looking like this...
To looking more like this.
To this.
Impacts of larger school sites, disconnected from neighborhoods

• Fewer kids walk or bicycle to school
• Schools have become major traffic generators
• Students face greater traffic safety risks on their way to/from school
• Academic impacts: The lack of transportation choices can make it difficult for students without a ride to school or that want to participate in after-school activities.
Fewer and fewer students are walking or biking to school.
Fewer and fewer students are walking or biking to school.

Source: 2009 and 2017 National Household Travel Survey, Dallas-Fort Worth MSA (N=1,041); National Center for Safe Routes to School, 2011.
How Kids Get to School in DFW

United States

Dallas-Fort Worth Region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>United States</th>
<th>Dallas-Fort Worth Region</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal Vehicle</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Bus</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walk/Bicycle</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: National Household Travel Survey, 2009, Dallas-Fort Worth MSA (N=1,041); National Center for Safe Routes to School, 2011.
Less Walking and Biking to School

↑ Traffic Congestion

↓ Safety

↓ Air Quality

↓ Health

1/3 of children are overweight or obese

*Source: Texas Comptroller, 2014.*
Estimated 20% of morning traffic is school-related.
More than 30% of schools are in “air pollution danger zones.”
Students face greater traffic safety risks.
What’s the connection between schools and community?

• Schools both affect and respond to community growth.
• Schools are a major financial investment that the entire community bears.
• Schools can either work with or against a wide variety of community goals.
When school siting is not coordinated with community planning...

Side impacts = demand for new:

• Roads
• Traffic signals
• Sewer lines
• Utilities
• Other infrastructure and services
When development approvals are not coordinated with school districts...

School districts may be pushed to make rushed and ill-informed decisions about new school facilities to address overcrowding.

• Schools are not located internal to neighborhoods.
• Schools are located along major thoroughfares.
Intergovernmental Framework

**School District**
- Enrollment projections, school facility planning, school construction

**Municipality**
- Population projections, comp. plan, infrastructure and public facilities, subdivision and rezoning approval

**County**
- Infrastructure and public facilities, subdivision approval
Intergovernmental Framework

- School District
- Municipality
- County
Benefits of Collaboration

• School planning = neighborhood planning
• Closer link between development and school capacity
• Better connectivity between schools and adjacent neighborhoods
• Better alignment between local comprehensive plan and school facility plan
• Improved student access and safety by coordinating school construction with road and sidewalk improvements
• Co-location and joint use with other facilities (e.g., ball fields, libraries)
Obstacles to Collaboration

• Different objectives
• Lack of knowledge about the other agency’s processes, funding streams, etc.
• Time
• Trust
• No history of working together
• Lack of leadership
• Lack of mechanism to collaborate
Opportunities

Since 2010, an average of 21 new schools have opened every year in the DFW region.

Regional Population Increase: 2017-2045

7.4 million

2017

11.2 million

2045

741,000 additional school-age children

» How will we accommodate roughly 500+ new schools by 2045?

Sources: 2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate; 2045 – NCTCOG Demographic Forecast; TEA 2016 School Accountability Reports.