COMMUNITY SCHOOLS AND TRANSPORTATION

Regional Transportation Council Workshop

October 8, 2015
Agenda

» Existing Conditions and Previous Initiatives (RTC School Policy)

» TIGER Grant and the Community Schools and Transportation Program

» Look Out Texans! Safety Education Campaign

» Air Quality Initiatives
North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG)

NCTCOG Region
16 Counties = 12,800 sq mi

Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA)
12 Counties = nearly 9,300 sq mi

Jan 1, 2015 Population Estimate: 6,812,020 persons within MPA.
NCTCOG School-Related Initiatives

Transportation (MPO)
- Safe access to school
- School siting
- Bike/pedestrian safety education
- Idling reduction
- Clean fleet
- Aviation education

Environment & Development
- Energy efficiency
- Solid waste management/
- Recycling
- Stormwater management

Workforce Development
- Job readiness education
- Tutoring and support services
Existing Conditions

» 12 counties
» 230 cities
» 127 Independent School Districts (ISDs)
» 1,994 public K-12 schools

Source: TEA, 2014
Population (12-County MPA)

2013:
» Total Population: 6.6 Million
» 5-17 Age Group: 1.3 Million

2040:
» Total Population: 10.7 Million
» 5-17 Age Group: ?

Sources: 2009-2013 American Community Survey; 2040 – NCTCOG Demographic Forecast.
Decline in Walking and Bicycling to School

United States

Decline in Walking and Bicycling to School

Dallas-Fort Worth Metro Area
(2009)

- 72% Driving
- 18% School Bus
- 8% Walking
- 2% Biking

Source: National Household Travel Survey, 2009, Dallas-Fort Worth MSA (N=1,041).
What Caused the Shift?
School Siting: A Generation Ago

- Small school size
- Located in community centers
- Civic landmark
- Community anchor

Image courtesy of Highland Park ISD
School Siting: Today

» Larger student enrollment (mega-schools up to 4,500 students)

» Schools located on 10-100+ acres fringe land

» Limited physical connections to the communities they serve

Greater Distance:

47 percent of students in the region live more than two miles from school.

Source: National Household Travel Survey, 2009, Dallas-Fort Worth MSA (N=1,041).
But It’s Not Just Distance

Students living less than one mile who walk or bike to school:

1969: 89 percent

2009: 35 percent

(29 percent, DFW region)

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

#1 Amount of Traffic
- Not an issue
- A serious issue

46%

#2 Speed of Traffic
- Not an issue
- A serious issue

44%

#3 Distance
- Not an issue
- A serious issue

39%

#4 Crime
- Not an issue
- A serious issue

#5 Weather
- Not an issue
- A serious issue

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

↑ Traffic Congestion

↓ Safety

↓ Air Quality

↓ Health

↑ Student Busing in DFW*

Traffic Congestion

During morning rush hour, nine months a year, traffic increases an estimated 10-20 percent.

Sources: National Safe Routes to School Task Force, 2008; National Center for Safe Routes to School, 2011.
Motor vehicle traffic crashes are the second leading cause of death for children ages 5-14 years.

Texas leads the nation in child traffic fatalities.

Sources: CDC, 2013; NHTSA, 2015.
“Mega-schools”…
→ Increased distance to school
→ Increased student busing

What Are the Opportunities?

» Greater interagency coordination (local governments, ISDs, transit agencies, etc.)
  » School siting ↔ residential development
  » Student transportation ↔ public transit

» Constructing multimodal transportation facilities

» Educating students on bicycle and pedestrian safety

» Innovative funding

…To name a few.
What Are the Potential Benefits?

- Reduced traffic congestion around schools
- Improved air quality
- Improved health
- Cost savings for schools (reduce need for “hazard” busing)
- Improved classroom behavior
- More efficient use of tax dollars
- Sense of community
- Economic development

…To name a few.
RTC School Policy (2013)

**Active Transportation:**
Advocate for:
- Safe Routes to School program
- Precious Cargo program
- Transportation Alternatives Program

**Outreach & Engagement:**
- Engage students to design the cover of Progress North Texas
- Advocate for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields

**School Siting:**
- Pilot school siting programs
- School bus stop coordination
- Technical assistance for school districts

**Air Quality:**
- RTC Clean Fleet Vehicle Policy
- Clean school bus programs
- Energy audit programs
- Vehicle idling-reduction programs
- Air quality-friendly contracting initiatives
Previous Initiatives

2010
- Regional Kickoff Meeting

2011
- City of McKinney/ISD Workshop

2012
- McKinney School Siting White Paper
- City of Denton/ISD Joint Meeting

2013
- RTC School Policy Adoption and Meeting

2014
- TIGER Grant Awarded

2015
- Project Kickoff
COMMUNITY SCHOOLS AND TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM (TIGER Grant)
Program Goals

Encourage **coordination** between ISDs, local governments, and transportation agencies.

Advance long-term planning for **school siting**.

Improve **transportation safety** near schools.

Promote **multi-modal transportation** options to schools.
Interagency Coordination

» Create a Regional **Working Group** of city, ISD and transit agency staff, and other stakeholders.

» **Coordinate land use planning efforts**: ISD facility planning, city comprehensive plans and Capital Improvement Plans.

» **Coordinate transportation planning efforts**: school transportation, city thoroughfare planning, and regional transportation planning.

» Coordinate to **remove policy barriers** to the development of sustainable schools.
School Siting

» Review *state and local policies* related to school siting and land banking.

» Research *land banking programs* and best practices.

» Coordinate ISD, city and regional demographic projections.
Transportation Safety

» Conduct **safety audits** at pilot schools sites.

» Develop **recommendations** for pedestrian and bicycle safety around various schools.

» Create a bilingual pedestrian and bicycle safety **education program**, and transportation safety information guide.
Multimodal Transportation

» Coordinate discussions between transit agencies and schools related to bus schedules and routes.

» Analyze alternative transportation connections, and ways to alleviate traffic congestion around pilot schools.
Next Steps

**Next Two Months:** Survey of existing conditions/needs, and creation of a technical Regional Working Group.

**Next Six Months:** School siting research and technical reports.

**Longer Term:**
- Identify and implement pilot planning projects (i.e., safety audits, transportation connections, etc.).
- Develop a process for ongoing coordination/collaboration between municipal and ISD elected officials and their staff.
www.nctcog.org/schools
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REGIONAL
BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN SAFETY
EDUCATION CAMPAIGN

Regional Transportation Council Workshop
October 8, 2015
Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety

- Dallas and Fort Worth are designated by FHWA as Pedestrian-Bicycle Safety Focus Cities.
- High rates of pedestrian and bicycle fatalities in our region.
- In the past five years:
  - More than **8,000 crashes**\(^*\) involving motor vehicles.
  - Resulting in over **500 fatalities**\(^*\)

\(^*\)2010-2014
Source: TxDOT Crash Records Information System
Background

Transportation Enhancement Grant from TxDOT

**Overall Goal:** Inform, encourage, educate people of various ages, races, and backgrounds of the benefits of multi-modal transportation and to promote a culture of safety around active transportation in the region.

- Fall 2014: Notice to Proceed
- Fall 2014 – Summer 2015: Research and Development
- Fall 2015 – Fall 2016: Campaign Outreach and Distribution
Audience

Primary Messaging:

Bicyclists  Pedestrians  Motorists

Targeted Messaging:

• School-aged Children  University Students  Hispanic Population
Twenty-one Safety Tips

- Seven for motorists
- Seven for pedestrians
- Seven for bicyclists
- Adapted from safety outreach materials
Advertisements

- Safety messages for kids and parents
- Bicycle and pedestrian tips for any age group
- Portraits of real North Texans in ads
School Kits and Outreach

- School kits for teachers
  - TEAKS based
  - Modular

- Community events

Teacher Focus Group
Representatives:
- Richardson ISD (2)
- Fort Worth ISD (2)
- Arlington ISD (2)
- Irving ISD (1)
- Denton ISD (3)
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www.LookOutTexans.org