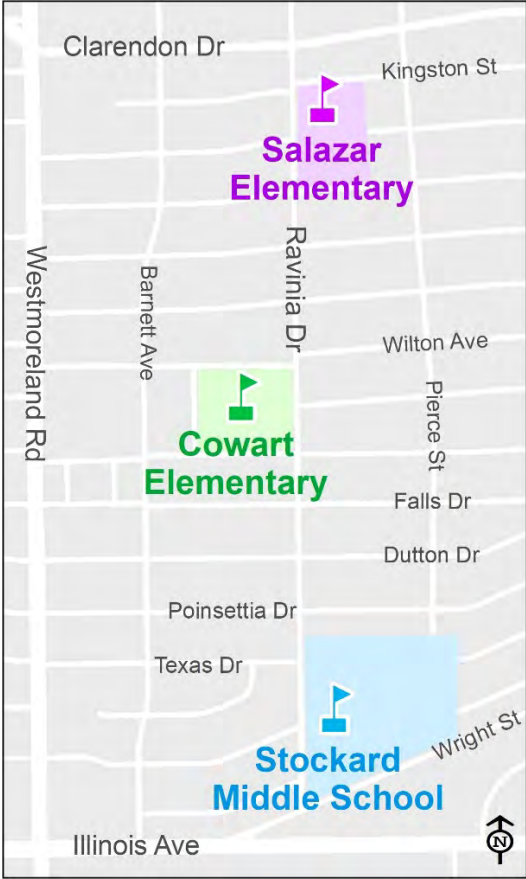


# Safe Routes to School Action Plan for Arturo Salazar Elementary Leila P. Cowart Elementary L.V. Stockard Middle School



2020

Prepared for the City of Dallas and Dallas ISD  
Prepared by the North Central Texas Council of Governments  
Funding from the State Farm Good Neighbor Citizenship Company Grant

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# INTRODUCTION

## Why Safe Routes to School?

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) is a nationwide initiative with the goal of enabling and encouraging more students to walk and bicycle to school through **Engineering** infrastructure investments, and **Education, Encouragement, Enforcement, and Evaluation** programs—also known as the Five Es of SRTS.

SRTS initiatives are proven to improve safety and air quality, increase the number of students that walk and bike, contribute to children’s social and academic success, and provide a foundation for life-long healthful habits.

## What’s Included in This Action Plan?

The plan includes an inventory and evaluation of **Existing Conditions** for walking and biking around Arturo Salazar Elementary (Salazar Elementary), Leila P. Cowart Elementary (Cowart Elementary), and L.V. Stockard Middle School (Stockard Middle School), as well as **Recommendations** for both infrastructure improvements and programming.

**Engineering Recommendations** include a range of improvements to the physical environment at and around a school to improve the safety, comfort, and convenience of walking and biking. This may include upgrading sidewalks or crossings, filling pedestrian and bicycle network gaps, or adding signage and signals.

**Programming Recommendations** include changes to school traffic management, and fun and engaging programs for students and families to increase walking and biking to school. Programs can be relatively easy and inexpensive to implement and can produce significant results even in the near-term.

## Development of the Plan and Input Process

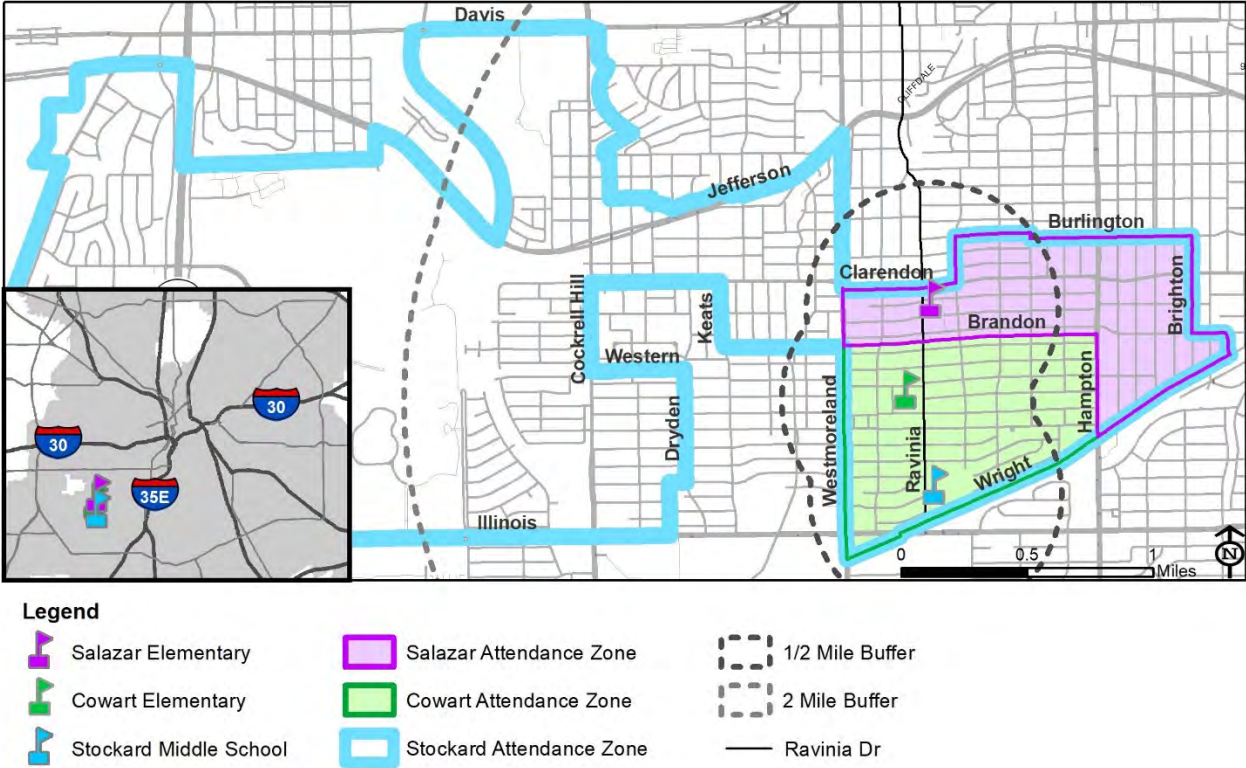
This plan was developed by staff with the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG), with funding from State Farm’s Good Neighbor Citizenship Company Grant. The company grants focus on three areas: safety, education, and community development. A grant was awarded in 2018 to develop SRTS plans for up to three elementary or middle schools.

NCTCOG staff worked with State Farm to develop criteria for selecting the schools that would receive SRTS planning assistance: 1) the number of crashes involving students walking to school (see the Crash History section of the plan), 2) the percentage of students that are considered economically disadvantaged, 3) whether a school had previously received SRTS funding, and 4) the relative proximity of the school to the State Farm campus in Richardson, TX or to State Farm employee residences (many State Farm employees ride the DART train from south Dallas to Richardson. Using this criteria, Salazar Elementary, Cowart Elementary, and Stockard Middle School—all located along a one mile stretch of Ravinia Drive, rose to the top of the list.

To gain input and involvement from local stakeholders, NCTCOG staff led a walk audit in May 2019 during school dismissal with two staff from the City of Dallas’ DOT Mobility Planning Division and two staff from Dallas ISD’s Police Department.

# EXISTING CONDITIONS

Figure 1 - School Locations and Walk Zone



## Overview of the Schools

Salazar Elementary, Cowart Elementary, and Stockard Middle School are located along a one-mile stretch of Ravinia Drive, between Clarendon Drive and Wright Street, in the Oak Cliff neighborhood of southwest Dallas. The schools are located immediately north of the Westmoreland DART Station at Illinois and Westmoreland—along the path of the DART Red Line to Richardson Cityline/Bush Station, where State Farm’s regional corporate office is located. Salazar Elementary and Cowart Elementary are two of the feeder schools for Stockard Middle School. **Table 1, Figure 2, and Figure 3** summarize the characteristics of the three schools and their students.

Table 1 - School and Student Characteristics (Source: Dallas ISD. 2018-19 School Profile)

	Salazar Elementary	Cowart Elementary	Stockard Middle School
<b>Location:</b>	1120 S Ravinia Dr.	1515 S Ravinia Dr.	2300 S Ravinia Dr.
<b>Opened:</b>	2006	1927	1954
<b>Number of Students:</b>	615 (2018-19)	575 (2018-19)	1,153 (2018-19)
<b>Grades Served:</b>	Grades PK-5	Grades PK-5	Grades 6-8
<b>School Hours:</b>	7:45 am - 3:00 pm	7:45 am - 3:00 pm	8:25 am - 3:35 pm

Figure 2 - Student Demographics

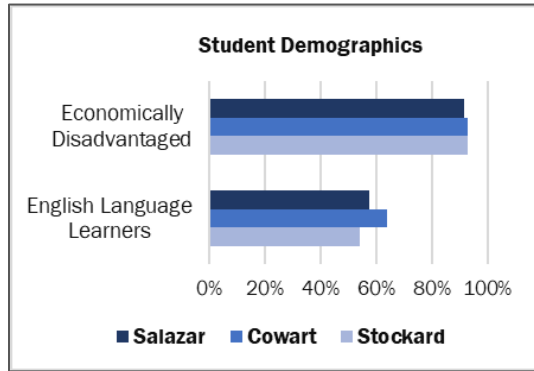
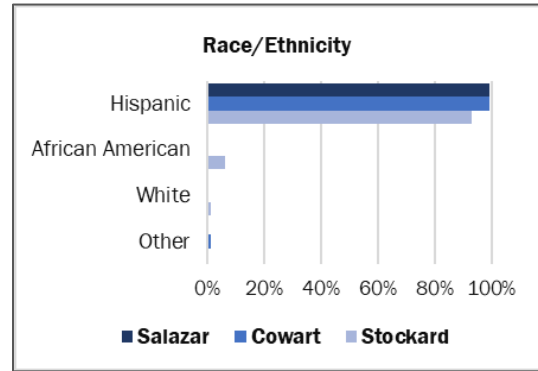


Figure 3 - Student Race/Ethnicity



## Walking and Bicycling Potential

Most students attending Cowart Elementary, and approximately half of the students attending Salazar Elementary, live within a walkable or bikeable distance (that is, one-half mile), as shown in **Figure 1**. Yet few students walk or bike to school, as observed during the walk audits. *How might we grow this number?*

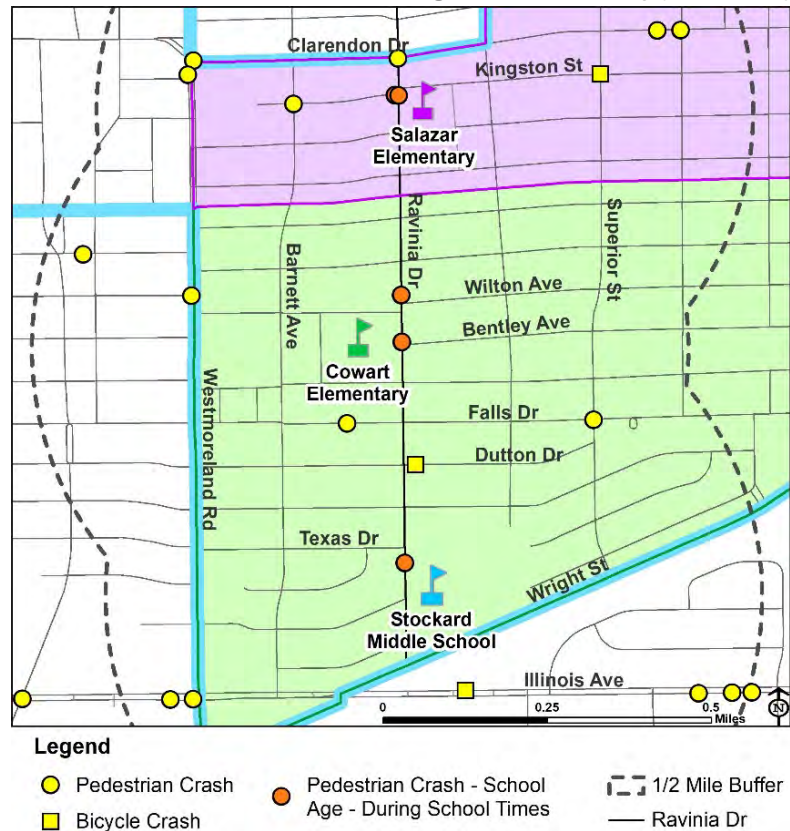
## Crash History

The location of motor vehicle crashes involving a pedestrian or bicyclist was obtained from the Texas Department of Transportation. Between 2013 and 2017, there were six reported collisions between vehicles and pedestrians along the one-mile stretch of Ravinia Drive. There were also three other pedestrian crashes and two bicycle crashes within a half-mile radius of the schools and in the schools' attendance zones.

Five of the crashes on Ravinia Drive involved at least one school-age pedestrian and occurred during school arrival and dismissal times.

The location of these crashes is shown in **Figure 4**.

Figure 4 - Crash History (2013-2017)



# Existing Infrastructure

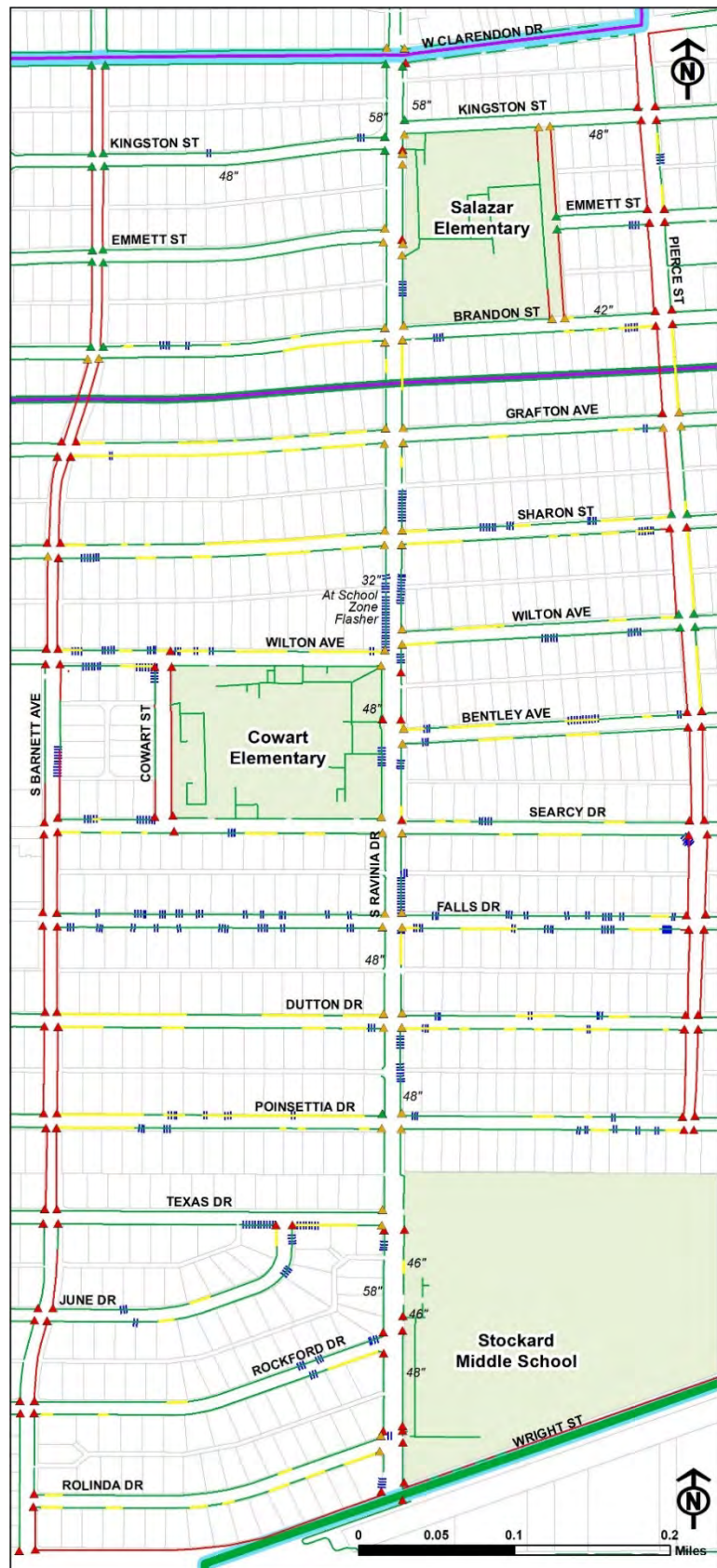
## Sidewalks and Curb Ramps

NCTCOG staff conducted a visual assessment of sidewalks and curb ramps in June 2019. For the sidewalk assessment, sidewalks that were targeted were those considered to be in "Very Poor Quality." NCTCOG staff defined Very Poor Quality sidewalks as those with significant deterioration or with conditions that would restrict ADA access: major cracking that could cause a wheelchair to tip, greater than 1 inch change in level, or greater than 2 percent change in cross slope.

Obstacles or barriers that reduced the width of the sidewalk to less than 36 inches wide (e.g., parked cars, vegetation, utilities, etc.), and the presence of curb ramps meeting ADA standards were also recorded. The findings from the sidewalk assessment are shown in **Figure 5**.

Figure 5 - Sidewalks and Curb Ramps

- ▲ Curb Ramp - ADA
- ▲ Curb Ramp - Non-ADA
- ▲ Curb Ramp - Missing
- Sidewalks - Very Poor Quality
- Sidewalks - Good-Moderate Quality
- Sidewalks - Missing
- ||||| Sidewalk Obstruction
- ▭ Salazar Attendance Zone
- ▭ Cowart Attendance Zone
- ▭ Stockard Attendance Zone
- ▭ Parcels
- ▭ School Campus



## School Zones

The three schools each have a 25 mph school speed zone on Ravinia Drive controlled by a “When Flashing” sign and flasher. Cowart Elementary has a second school zone on Searcy Drive. The location of each of these school zones is shown in **Figure 6**, **Figure 7**, and **Figure 8**.

## Traffic Control

Along Ravinia Drive, there are all-way stop signs at Clarendon Drive, Wilton Avenue, Falls Drive, and Wright Street. In the surrounding area, there are traffic signals at Clarendon and Westmoreland and Illinois and Westmoreland.

## Lighting

Street lights are present at regular intervals along Ravinia Drive, and one street light is present at each intersection of Ravinia Drive with a minor side street. On side streets, street lights are more sparsely located, with an average of two street lights per block.

## Walking Safety Assessment

On May 14, 2019 a walking assessment and arrival/dismissal observations were completed by NCTCOG and the Audit Team. Additionally, NCTCOG conducted a sidewalk assessment of roads one block on either side of Ravinia Drive between Clarendon Drive and Wright Street, to document the condition of the sidewalks and curb ramps, as shown in **Figure 5**. The school traffic circulation patterns, walking routes, and existing infrastructure conditions observed during these assessments are described and displayed in maps in the following sections.

### Walking Volumes

Students were observed walking to Stockard Middle School along Ravinia Drive from as far north as Salazar Elementary. In the afternoon, significant numbers of middle school students walked home along Ravinia—more than could be counted (upward of 200). Thirty-five students were observed walking to Cowart Elementary in the morning—primarily from the north, east, and south. At Salazar Elementary, very few students were seen walking home from school.

**Date:** 5/14/2019

**Day of Week:** Tuesday

**Time:** 7:15-8:15 am / 2:30-4:00 pm

**Weather:** Clear, Warm, Sunny

**Audit Team:** Kathryn Rush, Shawn Conrad, Gabriel Ortiz, and Cintia Ortiz from NCTCOG; Kierra Williams and Dan Rydberg from the City of Dallas Transportation Department; and Noemy Leyva and Victoria Tsalikis from Dallas ISD Police Department.

## School Circulation

### Salazar Elementary Circulation

Salazar Elementary’s traffic circulation patterns are shown in **Figure 6**. The formal entrance of the school is located at the northwest corner of the building, at Ravinia and Kingston. However, the primary entrance used by students is on the east side of the building facing the school driveway. Parent vehicles pick-up and drop-off in the school driveway on the east side of the school, traveling in both directions. Many parents also park along both sides of Ravinia Drive and walk up to the school to pick up and drop off. No bicycle parking was observed on the school campus.



*Student walking volumes along Ravinia Dr. at Stockard Middle School.*



*Parent parking on Ravinia Dr in front of Salazar Elementary during school dismissal.*

### **Cowart Elementary Circulation**

Cowart Elementary’s traffic circulation patterns are shown in **Figure 7**. The historic entrance to the school is located on the east side of the building facing Ravinia Drive; however, this entrance now remains locked during most of arrival and dismissal. Today, the primary entrance used is on the west side of the school, facing the school driveway.

One yellow school bus was observed using the staff parking lot on the south side of the school for pick-up and drop-off. The gated entrance to this parking lot on Ravinia stays locked to deter parent use of the lot.

Parents primarily pick up and drop off in the school driveway on the west side of the school. Cars enter the driveway from Searcy Drive and continue north. A staff assistant is positioned in the loading zone to assist with loading. Some parent pick-up and drop-off also occurred on Ravinia Drive in front of the historic school entrance.

No bicycle parking was observed on the school campus.



*At Cowart Elementary, a parent picks up students at a side entrance on Searcy Dr. and a volunteer directs traffic at the school driveway entrance.*



*At Stockard Middle School, parents park on Ravinia Dr. to pick up and drop off.*



## **Stockard Middle School Circulation**

Stockard Middle School's traffic circulation patterns are shown in **Figure 8**. The primary entrances to Stockard Middle School face Ravinia Drive. Seven buses serve the school and pick-up/drop-off students in the loop in front of the school on Ravinia Drive.

The parking lots on the school campus are for staff only. Parent vehicles pick up and drop off by parking on either side of Ravinia Drive, as well as by loading in the center two lanes of Ravinia Drive. Additional parent parking and queuing occurs on Wright Street.

Significant numbers of students were observed walking to and from school along Ravinia Drive—more than could be counted (upward of 200). Students were seen walking to Stockard along Ravinia Drive from as far north as Salazar Elementary. No bicycle parking was observed on the school campus.

There were several significant differences between the observed circulation pattern and the prescribed traffic flow identified in the school's 2010 Traffic Management Plan (TMP):

- The TMP recommends using the parking lot/driveway on the north side of the school as the bus loading area, and the driveway in front of the school to accommodate a large portion of the queuing length needed for cars. Currently, the parking/lot driveway on the north side of the school is only used for staff parking, and the driveway in front of the school is used for bus loading.
- There are roughly 300 more students that attend Stockard Middle School today than were used to calculate the queuing lengths in the TMP, therefore there are two additional school buses and more parent vehicles dropping off/picking up using the outside lanes on Ravinia than were accommodated in the TMP. Seven buses cannot fit in the north parking lot/driveway as proposed, and therefore use the driveway in front of the school, which results in all parent drop-off and pick-up occurring on-street.

Figure 6 - Existing Conditions - Salazar Elementary

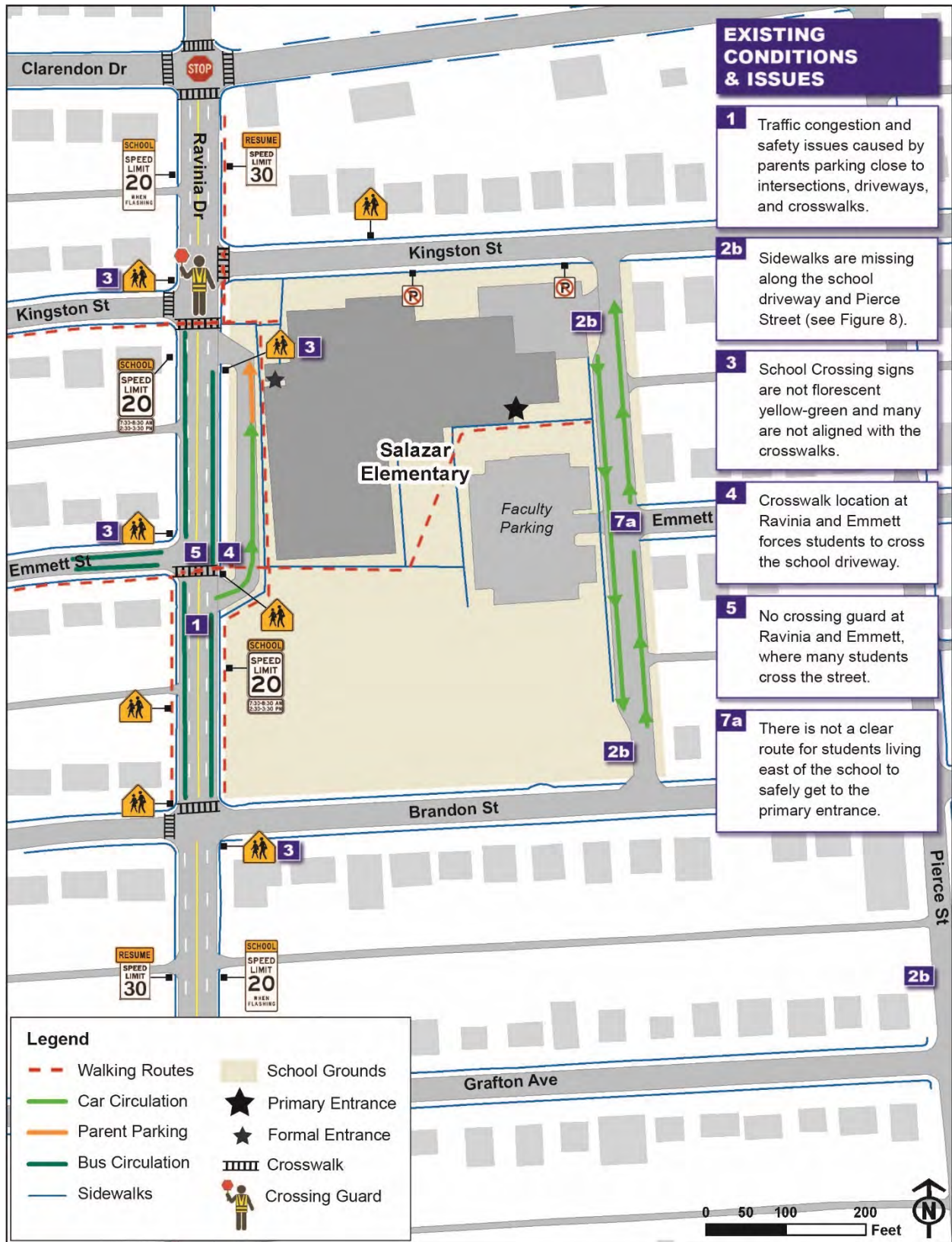


Figure 7 - Existing Conditions - Cowart Elementary

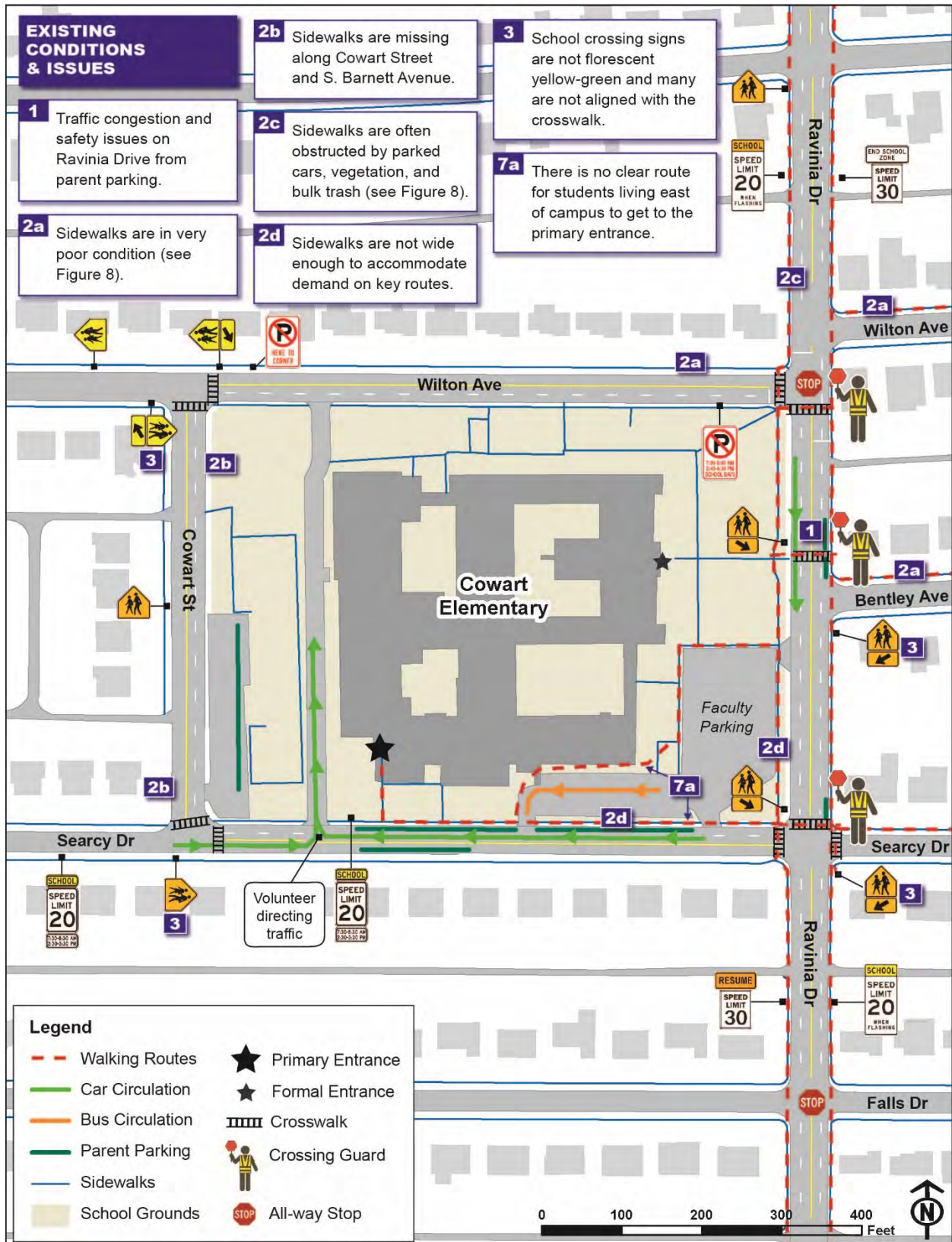
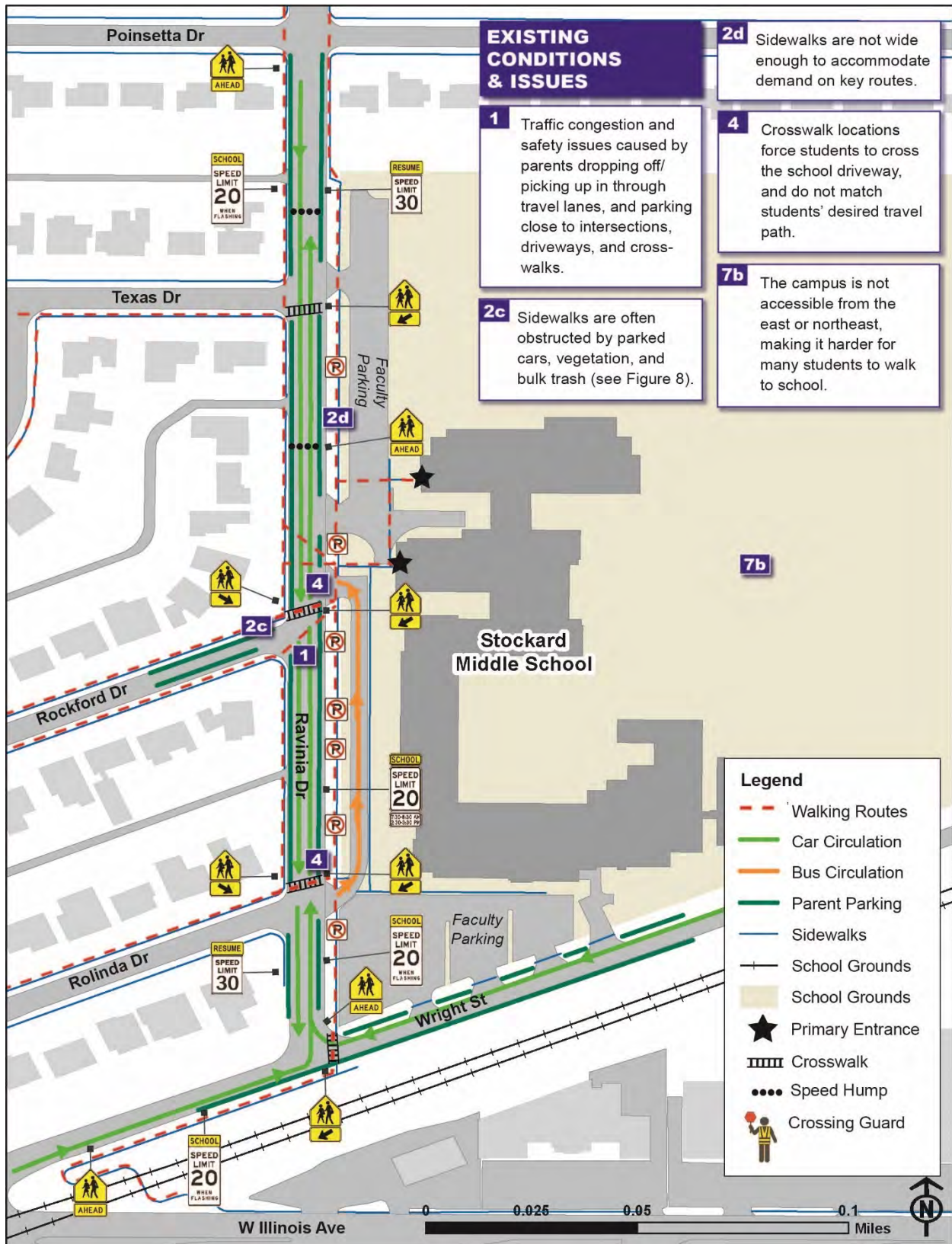


Figure 8 - Existing Conditions - Stockard Middle School



## Key Issues

- 1. Traffic congestion and safety issues on Ravinia Drive** and adjacent streets caused by parents dropping off/picking up students in the main travel lanes, and parking on-street up against or in crosswalks, intersections, and driveways.



- 2. Sidewalks and Curb Ramps:**

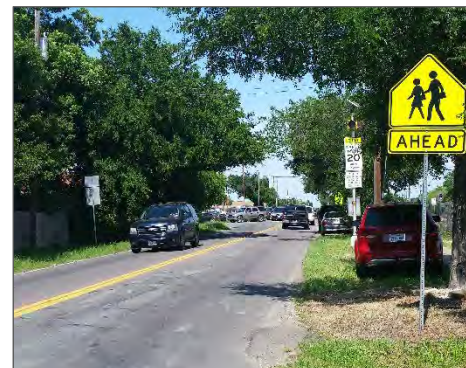
- Sidewalks are in very poor condition along many streets (e.g., Grafton, Sharon, Wilton, Bentley, Dutton, and Poinsetta) (see **Figure 5**).
- Sidewalks are missing on key school routes, including Ravinia and Searcy (see **Figure 5**).
- In many locations, particularly in front of Stockard Middle School, the sidewalks are not wide enough to accommodate demand, with some less than 4 ft wide.
- Along Ravinia, the sidewalks lack a grass buffer separating them from the roadway and are not level at driveway and alley crossings.
- Only a few curb ramps meet ADA standards and many are missing, making it difficult for students with disabilities and parents with strollers to walk to school (see **Figure 5**).
- Sidewalks are often obstructed by cars, overgrown vegetation, bulk trash, and other debris, particularly along Ravinia, Wilton, Searcy, and Falls (see **Figure 5**).



*Heavily cracked sidewalk on Bentley Ave. in front of Cowart Elementary.*



*A sidewalk obstructed by yard waste on Rockford Dr. in front of Stockard Middle School.*



*Missing sidewalks on Wright St.*

- 3. Drivers do not stop for pedestrians crossing the street and parents park in the crosswalks.** The School Crossing signs at Salazar Elementary and Cowart Elementary are not fluorescent yellow-green and many are not aligned with the crosswalk, reducing the amount of attention they

draw to the crosswalks. There is no crossing guard to assist students with crossing at Ravinia and Emmett.



*There is no crossing guard at Ravinia and Emmett in front of Salazar Elementary, making it difficult for students and parents to cross the street.*



*Parent vehicles blocking a crosswalk at Stockard Middle School.*

4. The **crosswalk locations force students to cross school driveways** at Salazar Elementary and Stockard Middle School, and at Stockard do not always align with desired travel paths.
5. **There is a need to provide and clarify walking routes from the east of the schools.**
  - a. At Salazar Elementary, there is no clear and safe way for students living east of the school to cross the eastern school driveway to access the primary entrance.
  - b. At Cowart Elementary, there is no clear route that students living east of the school should take to get to the school entrance, and at least one of the crosswalk locations on Ravinia often leads to students walking through the staff parking lot, where there are gaps in the sidewalk network.
  - c. Stockard Middle School is only accessible from the west, along Ravinia. Therefore, students living north and east of the school must walk long distances to school.
6. **Fear of Crime:**
  - a. Recent Robberies Involving Students: A Dallas ISD Police Department officer participating in the walk assessment reported that fewer students were walking at Stockard Middle School than normal because of recent robberies in the area. In two separate incidences in the spring of 2019, students were robbed at gunpoint near the school. One occurred at Poinsetta at Ravinia, around 4:30 pm when students were waiting for the ice cream man (or paletero).
    - i. Note: The paletero used to locate his cart at the intersection of Ravinia and Rockard, but due to the additional traffic congestion created by students waiting to buy ice cream after school, the school police officer asked the paletero to relocate farther north on Ravinia, near Texas and Poinsetta. This may have had an unintended consequence of moving the student gathering farther from the protection of the school and watchful eyes of adults.
  - b. Some of the houses along Bentley appear to be abandoned.

The location of issues 1, 2a, 2b, 2c, 3, 4, and 5 are shown in the Existing Conditions maps for Salazar Elementary (**Figure 6**), Cowart Elementary (**Figure 7**), and Stockard Middle School (**Figure 8**) on the following pages. Additional locations of the sidewalk and curb ramp issues can also be found in **Figure 5**.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

Effective Safe Routes to School initiatives include both engineering and non-engineering (enforcement, encouragement, education, and evaluation) components.

The recommendations listed here offer a selection of ideas that can be implemented in and near the vicinity of the school as resources are made available, to enable and encourage more students to safely walk and bicycle to school. Please refer to the tables below and **Figure 9**, **Figure 10**, and **Figure 11** on the following pages for more details.

## Engineering Recommendations

Table 2 - Engineering Recommendations

	Recommendation	Reason	Timeframe	Responsibility
<b>ISSUE 1: Traffic Congestion on Ravinia from Student Drop-off/Pick-up</b>				
<b>1a</b>	Install No Parking signs 20 ft on either side of all crosswalks, school driveways, and the intersections (all legs) along Ravinia. These signs should specifically designate where parking is not allowed to avoid confusion (e.g., This Side of Sign, Here to Corner, etc.). (12 new signs, and 5 relocated signs at Stockard MS)	Parents park up against, or in, crosswalks, intersections, and driveways, blocking sight distances for cars and pedestrians.	Short	City of Dallas
<b>1b</b>	Install advance Stop or Yield markings and Yield Here for Pedestrians signs in advance of all mid-block crosswalks. (4 signs)	Parents park up against, or in, crosswalks, blocking crosswalks and limiting sight distances.	Short	City of Dallas
<b>1c</b>	Install No Parking signs on the far side of Ravinia from Stockard Middle School. (4 signs)	This would reduce the likelihood that students will be dropped off on the far side of Ravinia and must cross mid-block between cars.	Short	City of Dallas
<b>1d</b>	At Stockard MS, create space on-site for student drop-off/pick-up.	At Stockard MS, there is no space on-site for parent drop-off/pick-up, forcing parents to pick-up/drop-off on Ravinia.	Long	Dallas ISD
<b>1e</b>	Conduct a study to evaluate whether a road diet or lane reconfiguration of Ravinia between Clarendon and Wright, from four to three lanes, is warranted. It is recommended that any road diet/lane reconfiguration still include on-street parking on the east side of Ravinia in front of Salazar Elementary and Cowart Middle School, and on-street parking on the west side of Ravinia in front of Cowart Elementary.	Traffic congestion on Ravinia creates safety issues for pedestrians crossing the street and negatively impacts the comfort of students walking to school. A road diet would slow traffic, reduce crossing distances, clarify through lanes vs. parking lanes, and could create additional space for grass sidewalk buffers if the curb line were moved.	Long	City of Dallas

	Recommendation	Reason	Timeframe	Responsibility
<b>ISSUE 2: Sidewalks and Curb Ramps</b>				
2a	As part of the City's Sidewalk Replacement Program, conduct outreach to property owners along streets adjacent to the schools and those near sidewalks that are in very poor condition. Notify residents of City funds for sidewalk repairs.	Sidewalks are in very poor condition along many streets, with significant cracks and heaving, particularly along Grafton, Sharon, Wilton, Bentley, Dutton, and Poinsetta. This makes it difficult for students with disabilities and parents with strollers to walk to school.	Short	City of Dallas
2b	Install sidewalks along at least one side of Barnett and Pierce, along Wright Street, and fill in the gaps in the sidewalks on both sides of Salazar ES eastern school driveway (unnamed street) and along Cowart Street. (Est. 6,400 square yards of new 5-ft wide sidewalks)	Sidewalks are missing along Barnett and Pierce, Salazar ES's eastern school driveway and Cowart Street.	Long	City of Dallas
2c	Widen sidewalks along school property in front of Stockard MS to at least 5 ft wide (6 ft preferable).	On key school routes, including Ravinia and Searcy, sidewalks are not wide enough to accommodate demand, with some less than 4-ft wide.	Long	City of Dallas
2d	On Ravinia, install level sidewalks at driveway and alley crossings.	The sidewalks along Ravinia are not level at driveway and alley crossings, creating ADA issues.	Long	City of Dallas
2e	Prioritize the installation of ADA curb ramps at mid-block crosswalks and at intersections directly fronting school campuses. (Est. 102 priority ADA curb ramps needed; 288 total ADA curb ramps needed)	Only a few curb ramps meet ADA standards, and many crossing locations do not have curb ramps at all, particularly at mid-block crosswalks.	Short-Long	City of Dallas
<b>ISSUE 3: Drivers do not stop for pedestrians in the crosswalks and parents park in the crosswalks.</b>				
3a	Upgrade the School Crossing and School Zone signs around Salazar ES and Cowart ES to be fluorescent yellow-green. (3 School Zone When Flashing signs, 5 Resume Speed signs, 9 School Crossing with Diagonal Arrow signs, and 3 School Crossing Ahead signs)	The School Crossing and School Zone signs around Salazar ES and Cowart ES are not fluorescent yellow-green, reducing their visibility.	Short	City of Dallas
3b	Adjust the location of several School Crossing signs around Salazar ES and Cowart ES so that they align with the crosswalk.	The School Crossing signs around Salazar ES and Cowart ES do not always align with the crosswalks and are not always present for both directions.	Short	City of Dallas
3c	Between the two Stockard MS driveways on Ravinia, install a wide raised crosswalk and street lights on either side of the crosswalk to create an attractive	Parents park up against, or in, crosswalks, intersections, and driveways, blocking sight distances for cars and pedestrians. Most	Medium	City of Dallas



	and safer environment for students to cross Ravinia and deter parents from parking or stopping in the crosswalk. This may require that the speed hump between Texas and Rockford be removed. Investigate the use and placement of pedestrian channelizing devices to encourage students to use the raised crosswalk and deter students from crossing mid-block.	students already cross at this location.		
	Recommendation	Reason	Timeframe	Responsibility
ISSUE 4: Crosswalk Locations				
4a	Move the locations of the following crosswalks on Ravinia so that students do not have to cross the school driveway: 1. Emmett St/south end of Salazar driveway 2. Rockford Dr/north end of Stockard driveway 3. Rolinda Dr/south end of Stockard driveway	The location of the mid-block crosswalks in front of Salazar ES and Stockard MS force students to cross school driveways unnecessarily.	Short	City of Dallas
ISSUE 5: Provide and Clarify Walking Routes from the East				
5a	At Salazar Elementary, provide a safe way for students to cross the eastern school driveway by striping a crosswalk and assigning a school staff person to assist students with crossing.	There is no safe way for students living east of Salazar Elementary to cross the school driveway and access the primary school entrance.	Medium	Dallas ISD Salazar ES
5b	At Cowart ES, remove the crosswalk and crossing guard at Ravinia and Bentley. Students that normally cross here can instead cross Ravinia with the crossing guard at Ravinia and Searcy.	At Cowart Elementary, there is no clear route students living east of the school should take to get to the school entrance. The crosswalk at Ravinia and Bentley often leads to students cutting through the staff parking lot, which lacks continuous sidewalks.	Short	City of Dallas
5c	At Stockard MS, investigate ways of providing access to the campus from the east—from Pierce, Texas, and Rolinda—to shorten the walking distances for the students that live east of the school. Install a sidewalk or path on the school campus to connect to the school building. This path could also serve as a recreational loop for students and the community.	At Stockard MS, students living east of the school must walk long distances to school because it is only accessible from Ravinia from the west.	Long	Dallas ISD City of Dallas

Figure 9 - Recommendations for Salazar Elementary

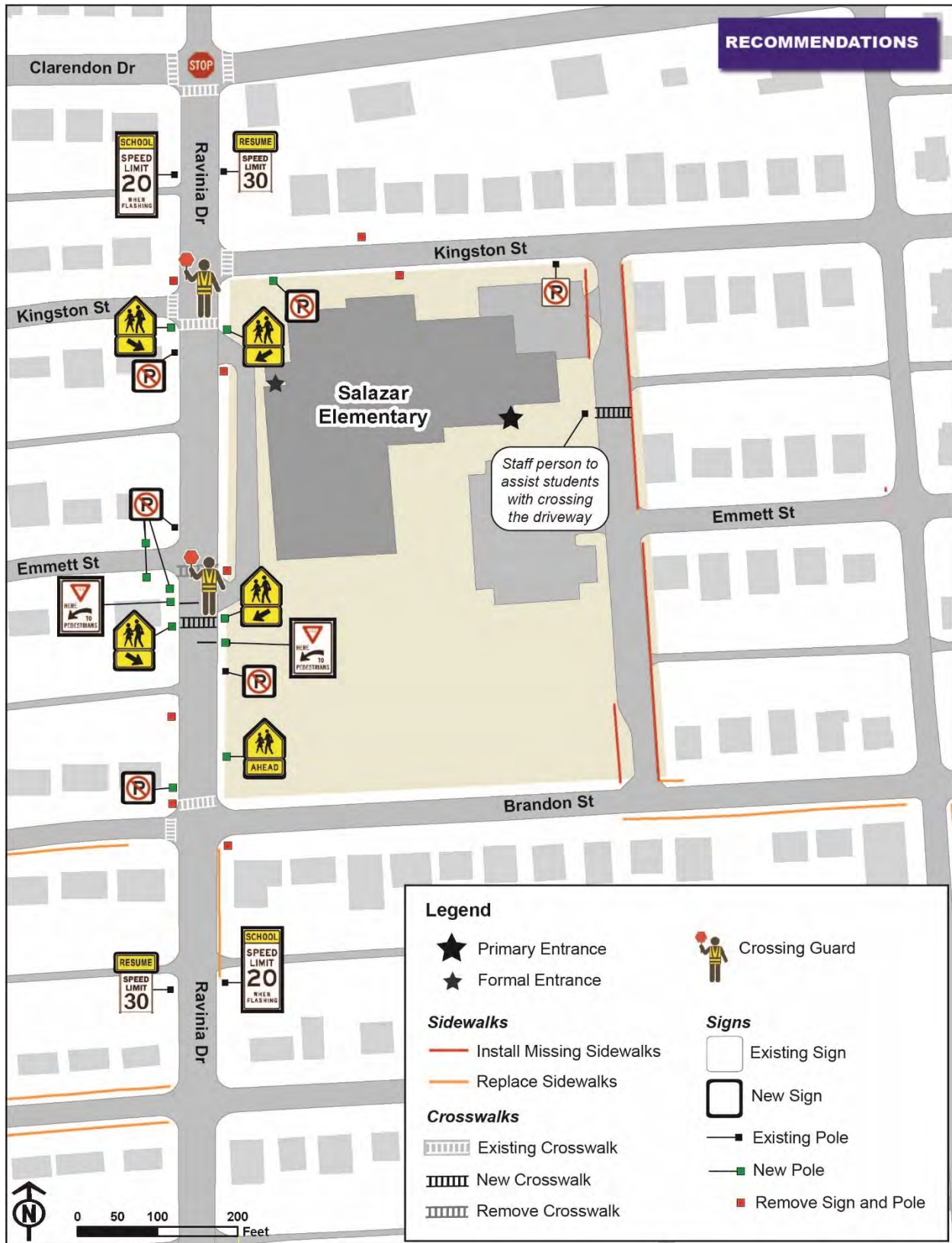


Figure 10 - Recommendations for Cowart Elementary

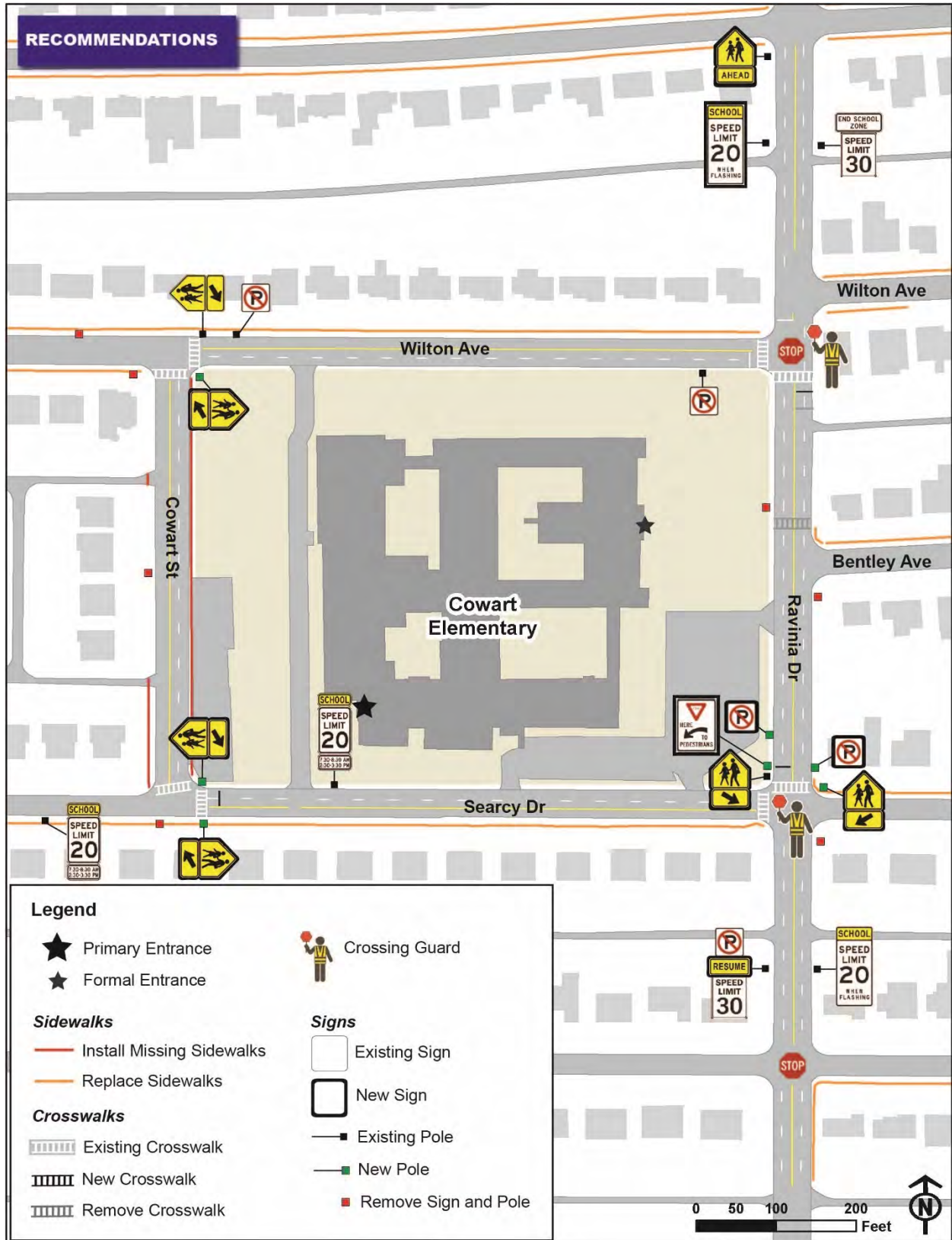
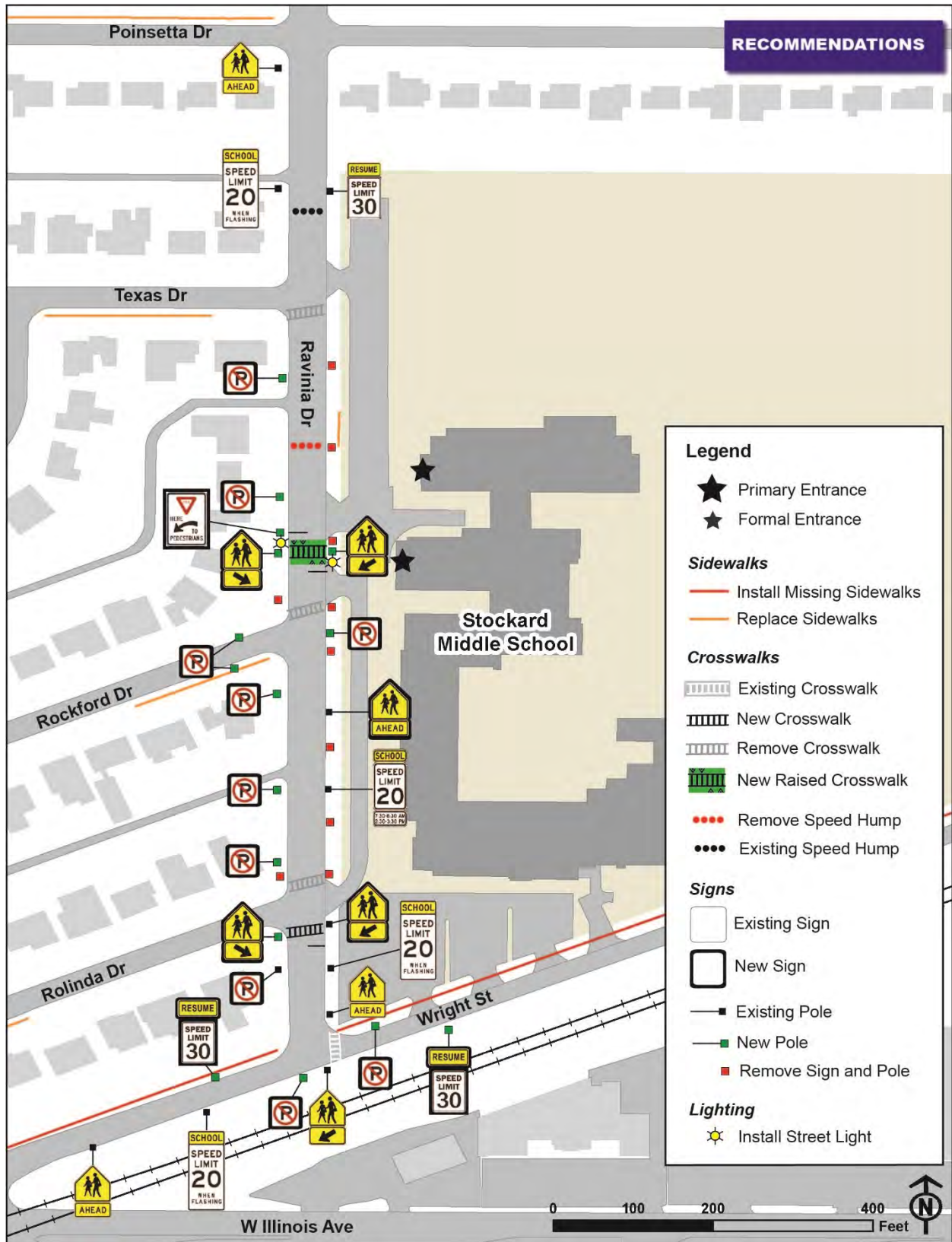


Figure 11 - Recommendations for Stockard Junior High



# Non-Engineering Recommendations

Table 3 - Non-Engineering Recommendations

Issue	Recommendation	Reason	Timeframe	Responsibility
1a	At Salazar ES, institute and enforce a traffic circulation plan whereby parent drop-off and pick-up primarily occurs in the driveway on the east side of the school. At least two school staff should assist with drop-off/pick-up.	Traffic congestion on Ravinia around Salazar ES and Stockard MS from parents parking on-street and dropping off in the main travel lanes.	Short	Salazar ES
1b	Encourage students to walk and bike to school, or if they live too far, to carpool.	Traffic congestion on Ravinia.	Short - Long	Salazar ES Cowart ES Stockard MS
2c	Conduct code enforcement to ensure that sidewalks are kept free of overgrown vegetation, parked cars, yard waste, and other bulk trash pick-up items.  <i>Policy Recommendation: Consider shortening the amount of time that brush and bulk trash items can be left in front of homes for collection (e.g., set-out starts on Sunday of the week before). Shortening the duration would reduce the impact that items set out improperly (e.g., blocking sidewalks) would have on students walking to school and other residents.</i>	Sidewalks are often obstructed by cars, overgrown vegetation, and other debris, particularly along Ravinia, Wilton, Searcy, and Falls.	Short	City of Dallas:  Code Enforcement & Sanitation Services
3	Add a crossing guard at Ravinia and Emmett (i.e., the one that is no longer needed at Ravinia and Bentley).	At Salazar Elementary, there is not a crossing guard at the intersection of Ravinia and Emmett, where large number of students and parents cross the street.	Short	City of Dallas
5a	At Salazar ES, a school staff person should be present along the school driveway, either at Kingston or Emmett, to assist students that live east of the school with crossing the driveway to get to the school entrance.	At Salazar Elementary, for students that live east of the school there is no clear or safe location to cross the school driveway.	Short	Salazar ES
5b	Remove the crossing guard at Ravinia and Bentley, as students that cross here often end up walking through the staff parking lot to get to Cowart ES. Students should instead cross Ravinia at Searcy - where there is still a crossing guard - and use the sidewalks along Searcy to get to school.	At Cowart Elementary, there is not a clear route that students living east of the school should take to get to the school entrance, partially because there are three crossing guards along Ravinia, potentially discouraging students from walking.	Short	City of Dallas
6a	Work with parents to institute programs that improve the feeling of safety, such as walking school buses, corner captains, and parent patrols.	Recent robberies and crime in the area have made parents fearful of allowing their child to walk to school.	Short - Long	Dallas ISD Salazar ES Cowart ES Stockard MS
6b	Invite the paletero back closer to the school or on school grounds so that students can be more closely monitored as they wait for ice cream (e.g., at the north end of the faculty parking lot on Ravinia).	The paletero (ice cream vendor) locates two blocks from Stockard MS, reducing the safety that the presence of a school can provide for students waiting for ice cream.	Short	Dallas ISD Stockard MS

This plan includes a variety of programming recommendations to grow walking and biking to school and promote the safety of all students arriving at and departing from these schools.

Suggested Lead Agency: Salazar, Cowart, and Stockard PTAs (if available); School Administrators or PE Teachers.

## Programs to Encourage Students to Walk or Bike to School

### Walk and Bike to School Day(s)

National Walk and Bike to School Day events are held every year on the first or second Wednesday in October and May. These simple one-day events can lead to great changes such as long-term walking and bicycling programs, new sidewalks and pathways, enforcement of unsafe driving behaviors and needed policy changes at schools and in communities.

#### Getting Started:

1. Identify your school's point person(s) for planning the event. Seek other volunteers.
2. Advertise the event. You can download customizable fliers, signs and banners, and logos from [www.walkbiketoschool.org](http://www.walkbiketoschool.org).
3. Reward students for participating. Certificates and punchcards, stickers, and puzzles are available at [www.walkbiketoschool.org](http://www.walkbiketoschool.org).



Picture Source: Blue Zones Project Fort Worth

### Mileage Clubs and Competitions

Generally, children track the amount of miles they walk or bicycle, or the number of times they walk or bicycle to school, and get a small gift or a chance to win a prize after a certain number of mileage or days walked is reached. This can also be done as a competition between classrooms.

Download punchcards at [www.walkbiketoschool.org](http://www.walkbiketoschool.org).

Proud students show off the Golden Sneaker Award at Hall Middle School in Larkspur, CA. (A donated sneaker was spray-painted gold.) Picture Source: Sonoma County Safe Routes to School



## Programs to Address Fears of Crime

### Walking School Bus

Walking School Buses let students walk or bicycle to school as a group, often with an adult volunteer. It is like carpool, but without the car. They may be daily, weekly or monthly events; and involve two or more families. The presence of an adult prevents bullying and provides protection from potential threats such as harassment from bullies and strangers.



#### Getting Started:

1. Pick a route and take a test walk
2. Invite families who live nearby to walk
3. Identify meeting points along the route
4. Decide how often the group will walk together
5. Have fun!

#### Resources and How-To's:

<http://www.walkingschoolbus.org/>

### Corner Captains or Neighborhood Watch



Corner Captains can be parents, grandparents, retirees, or other volunteers who are stationed at designated locations along school routes during the morning and afternoon school commute. Corner Captains add eyes on the street and provide known safe spots for children walking to and from school.

#### Examples:

- Southwest Detroit Environmental Vision: <http://www.sdevweb.org/programs-and-services/safe-routes-to-school/>
- Philadelphia Block Captains: <https://www.philadelphiastreet.com/pmbc/become-a-block-captain>

A neighborhood watch program is a group of people living in the same area who want to make their neighborhood safer by working together and in conjunction with local law enforcement to reduce crime. Activities conducted by neighborhood watch groups are diverse, but may include mobilizing groups to patrol the neighborhood, conducting neighborhood clean-ups, distributing crime prevention information, etc. For more information, visit the National Neighborhood Watch website at [nnw.org](http://nnw.org).

# NEXT STEPS

While starting a new project can seem like a daunting task, implementing the Safe Routes to School Action Plan doesn't have to be hard. Here are some short-term action items to help you get started:

Task	Lead Agency	Timeframe
Relocate the crossing guard at Ravinia and Bentley to Ravinia and Emmett.	City of Dallas – Transportation Department	2020
Begin making the recommended signage changes.	City of Dallas – Public Works	2020-2021
Identify potential funding sources for new signs, curb ramps, and sidewalks.	City of Dallas – Transportation Department	2020
Add identified sidewalks and curb ramps to City needs lists to be prioritized as funding is available.	City of Dallas – Transportation Department	2020
Conduct code enforcement, particularly at locations identified in the sidewalk assessment, to ensure sidewalks are free of obstructions like vegetation, bulky trash, parked cars, etc.	City of Dallas – Code Compliance Department	2019-2020
Conduct enforcement at Stockard Middle School to discourage parents from stopping to drop off students in through travel lanes, stopping in crosswalks, etc.	City of Dallas – Police Department	2020 -
At Salazar Elementary, assign at least two staff persons to be present in the student loading area during arrival and dismissal periods to promote the safe and orderly flow of traffic and assist students that are walking home with crossing the school driveway.	Salazar Elementary	2019
Begin planning Walk & Bike to School Day events at each school by identifying a point person to spearhead the event (e.g., PE teacher, principal, PTA, etc.). Bike to School Day is the first Wednesday in May. Walk to School Day is the first Wednesday in October.	Salazar Elementary Cowart Elementary Stockard Junior High	2020
The School Resource Officer and Principal at Stockard Elementary should meet with officers from the Dallas Police Department to discuss ways to reduce the risk of crime for students walking to and from school. (The schools are located in the 447 beat). This report outlines potential ideas for consideration (e.g., relocating the paletero, walking school buses, corner captains, neighborhood watch, etc.).	Stockard Junior High – School Resource Officer and Principal  City of Dallas – Police Department	2020