



# Safe Routes to School Regional Action Plan

KYLE HOENER | NCTCOG PUBLIC MEETING | 8.11.2025

# What is Safe Routes to School?

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) is a national movement focused on enabling more children to safely walk and bicycle to school.

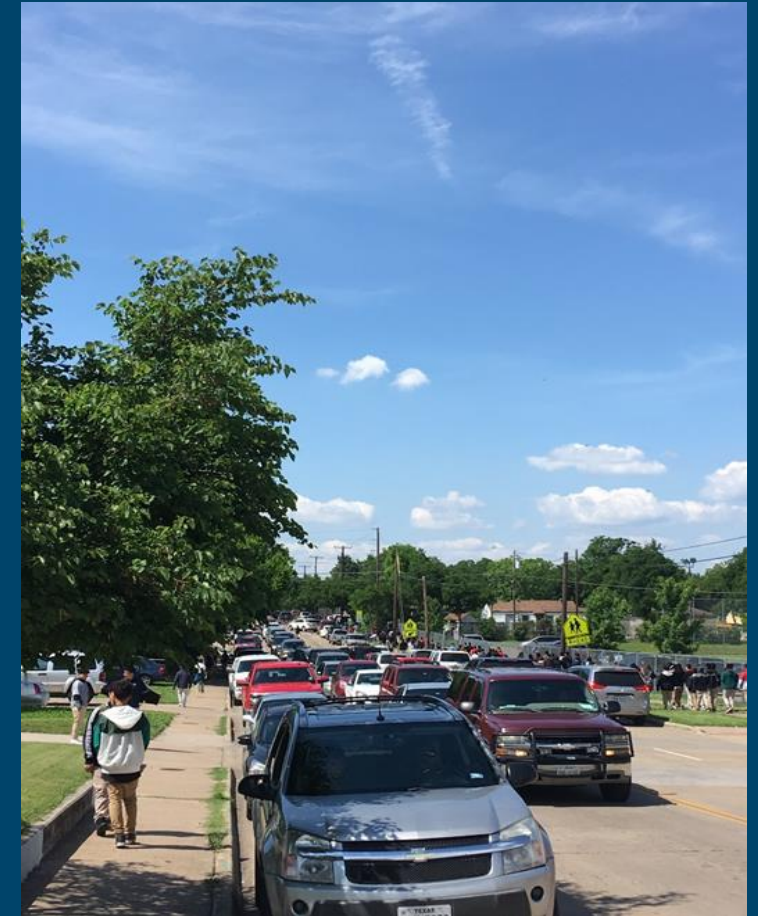
- Improving student health and academic performance
- Relieving traffic congestion
- Increasing student pedestrian safety
- Reducing air pollution





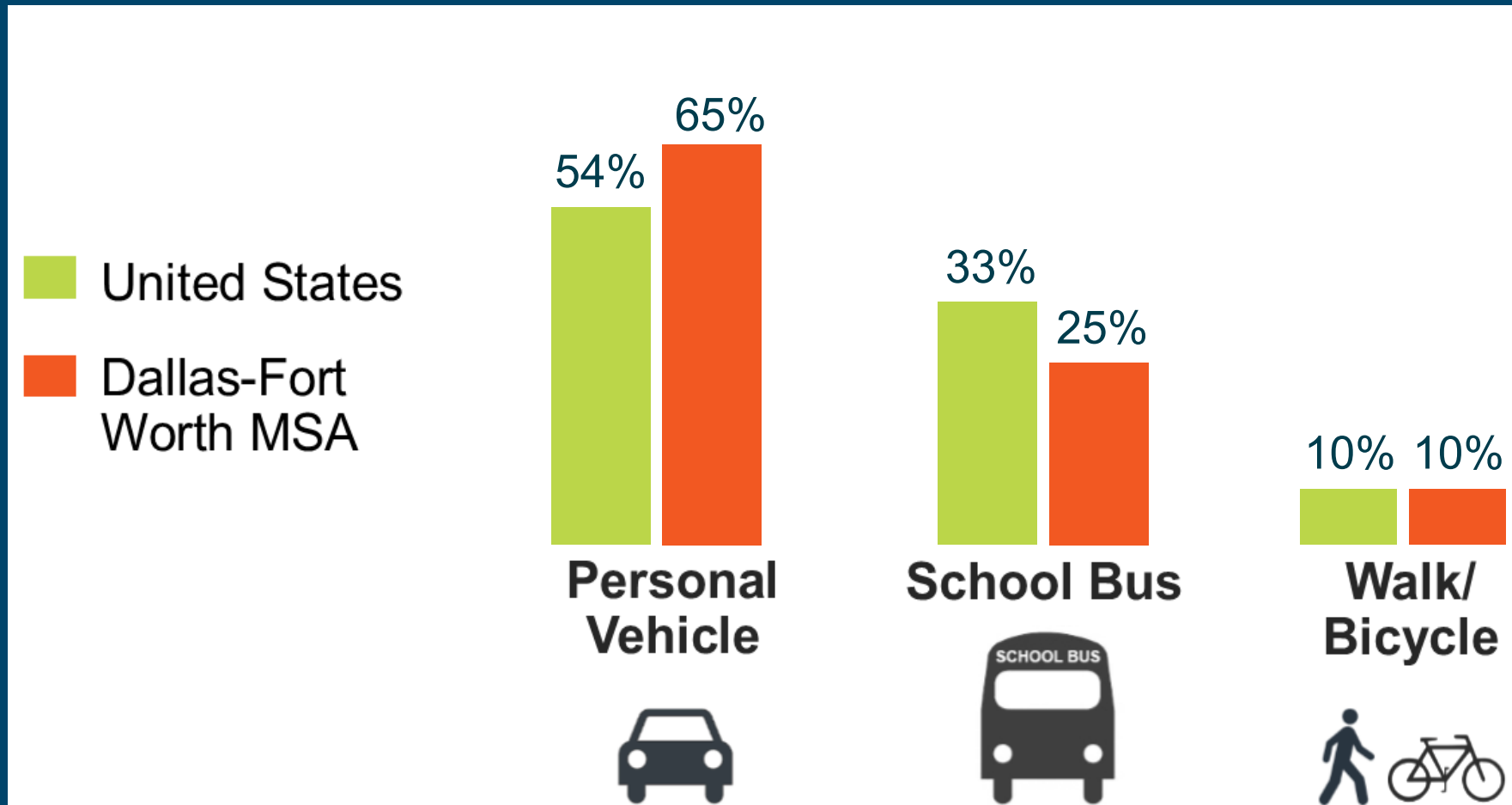
# Why is SRTS important?

- Reduction of students walking and biking to school in favor of commuting via private vehicle in past 50 years
- Vehicle trips to K-12 schools now account for 10-14% of traffic during the morning commute
- Easier, safer routes for students to walk and bike to school
- Healthier students, better academic performance from increased exercise
- Reduce school transportation costs, reduce need for hazard busing
- Household cost savings from reduced fuel and car use



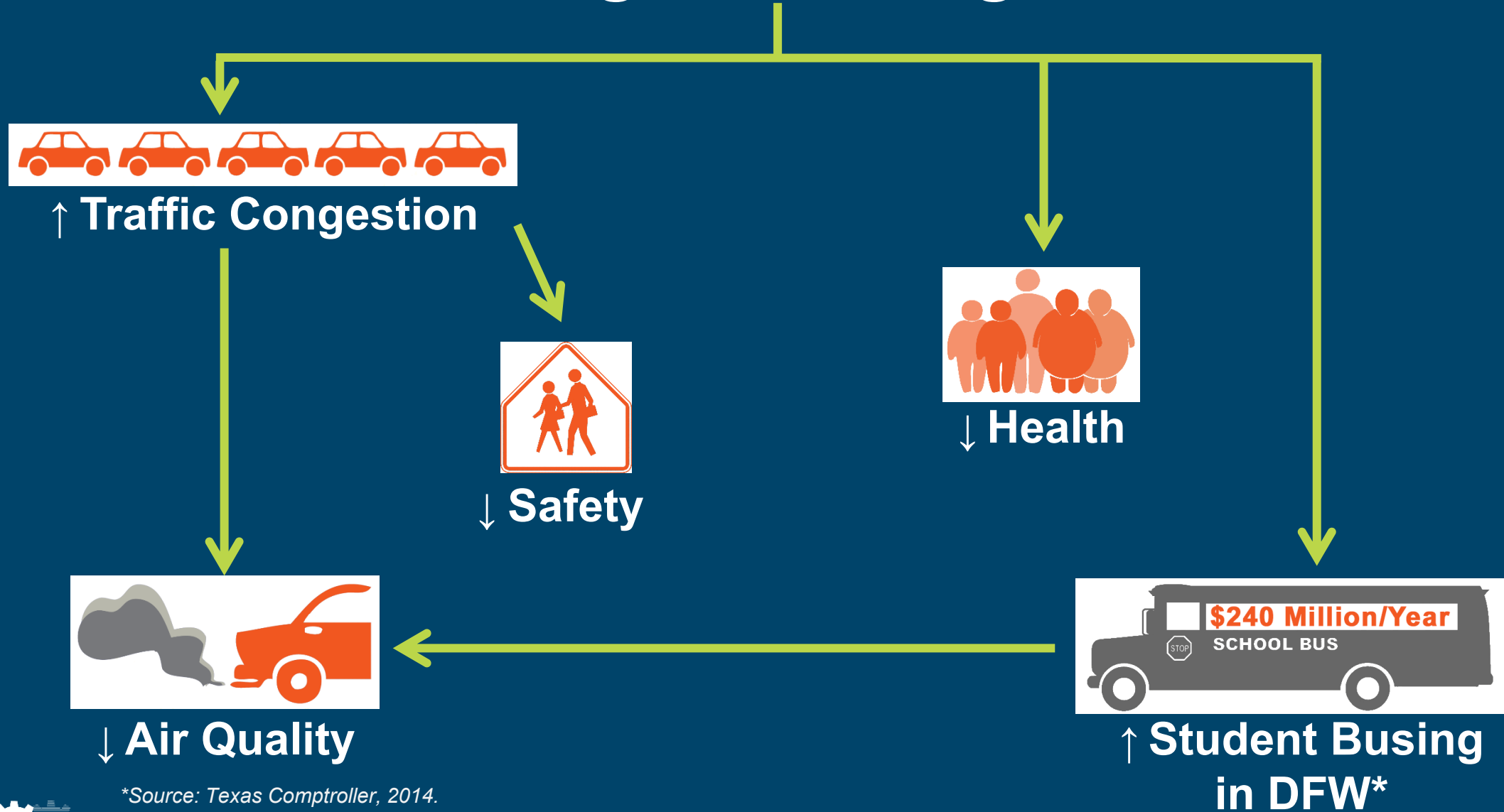
# Decline in Walking and Biking to School

## 2017 Mode Share



Source: National Household Travel Survey, 2017, Dallas-Fort Worth MSA (N=2,582). FHWA NHTS Brief: Children's Travel to School, 2019.  
[www.nctcog.org/srts](http://www.nctcog.org/srts) | [www.nctcog.org/schoolsiting](http://www.nctcog.org/schoolsiting)

# Less Walking and Biking to School



*\*Source: Texas Comptroller, 2014.*

[www.nctcog.org/srts](http://www.nctcog.org/srts) | [www.nctcog.org/schoolsiting](http://www.nctcog.org/schoolsiting)



# NCTCOG Community Schools and Transportation Program

## Safe Routes to School:

Encourage and enable children to safely walk and bicycle to school.

[www.nctcog.org/srts](http://www.nctcog.org/srts)

## School Siting:

Encourage location of schools that enable safe routes, avoid unsafe traffic conditions, and promote efficient development.

[www.nctcog.org/schoolsiting](http://www.nctcog.org/schoolsiting)

## Activities:

Planning, technical assistance, facilitation/coordination, education, encouragement, special topics studies, tools and resources



# Synopsis of the SRTS Regional Action Plan

## Introduction

Background, NCTCOG SRTS activities

## State of Schools in DFW Region

Regional data and challenges, survey of SRTS activities

## SRTS Plans for Existing Schools

Recommendations for planning for existing schools to enable students to safely walk and bike to school

## New School Siting

Recommendations for siting new schools in the face of rapid growth that enable SRTS

## Identifying Areas of Potential Need for SRTS Improvements

Analysis identifying schools with high need for SRTS interventions

## Regional Strategy for SRTS

Action steps for NCTCOG, cities, ISDs, schools, and others focused on coordination, support, education, and new initiatives



# Goals of the SRTS Regional Action Plan

## Support Local Planning

- Serve as a resource for cities, ISDs, and the public
- Guide safe routes and school siting efforts

## Address Jurisdictional Complexity

- Encourage early coordination between local governments and ISDs
- Navigate planning responsibilities

## Encourage Safe & Accessible Schools

- Enable safe multimodal travel options for students
- Improve school placement strategies

## Promote SRTS Funding

- Increase awareness of SRTS and transportation funding

## Plan for Regional Growth\*

- Prepare for 11.4M residents by 2050
- Support ISDs in accommodating 500K+ new students by 2045

*\*Source: NCTCOG 2050 Demographic Forecast*



[www.nctcog.org/srts](http://www.nctcog.org/srts) | [www.nctcog.org/schoolsiting](http://www.nctcog.org/schoolsiting)



# NCTCOG's SRTS Activities

- Since 2011: wide variety of education, encouragement, technical assistance, guidance, and funding activities
- Programmed a total of \$42.8 million for 47 SRTS projects in DFW cities and 23 ISDs since 2014 through four NCTCOG Transportation Alternatives Calls for Projects ([www.nctcog.org/TAP](http://www.nctcog.org/TAP))



# State of Schools in DFW

In the 12 counties:  
- 233 cities

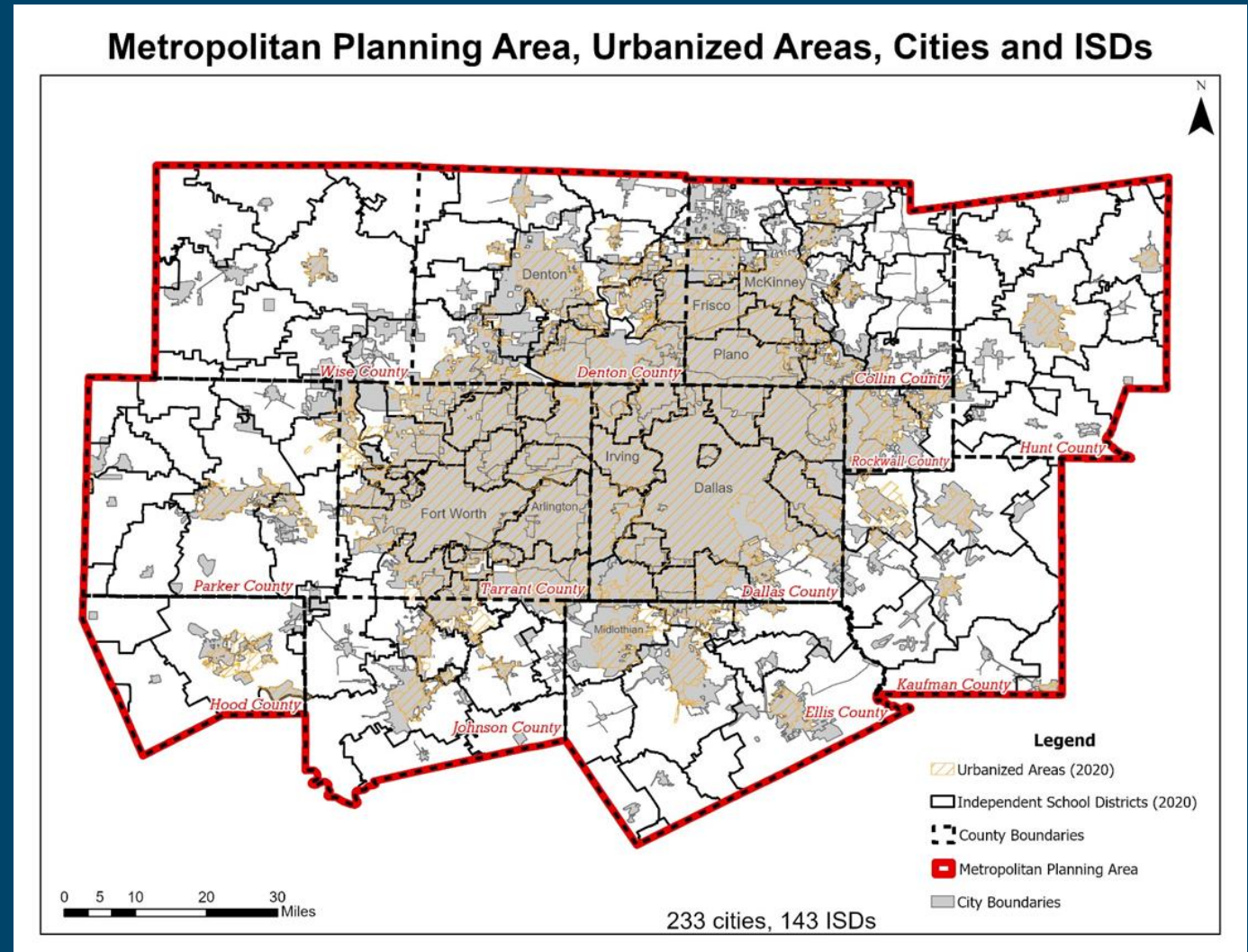
Total Schools: 2,187

Total Charter Only: 236

Independent School  
Districts: 143

Complicated jurisdictional  
boundaries

Rapid growth



# State of Schools in DFW



65% of students driven to school (2017 travel survey)



Modern school siting practices locate schools in outskirts or on wide/fast roads, dangerous for student pedestrians



Need for greater collaboration among schools, ISDs, local governments, other partners regarding student pedestrian safety and school siting



Surveyed entities for school activities (engaging in education/encouragement activities)



# Regional Transportation Safety GIS Analysis

## Purpose

To prioritize allocation of resources through the region to improve students' ability to safely walk/bike to school

## Criteria

Used speed and crash data within 2 miles of all schools in region to rank schools by their potential need for SRTS interventions

## Local Application

Cities can use a similar method for city-wide analysis

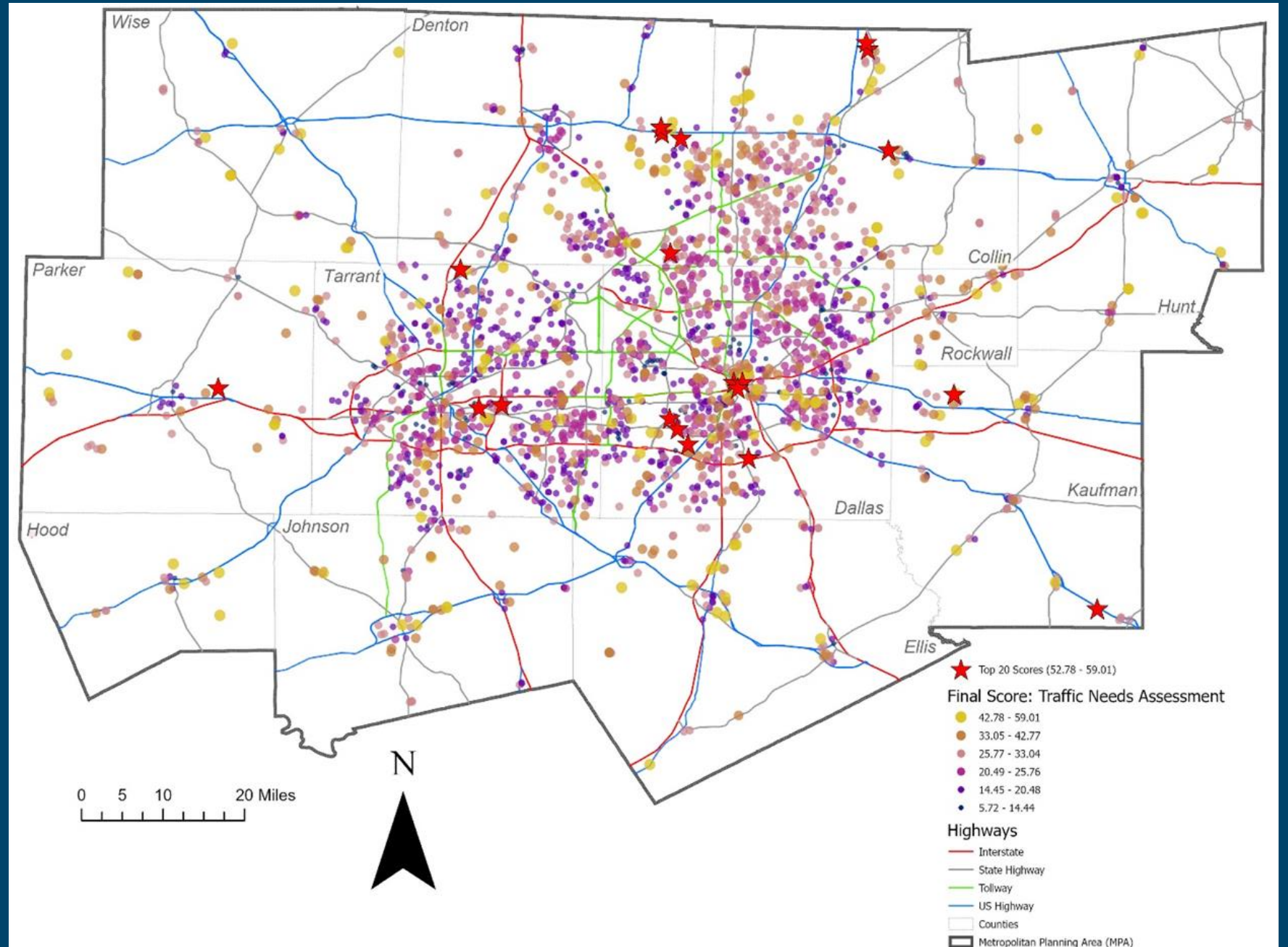
## Verification

High-level prioritization in the region; application will require ground truthing / localized analysis





# Transportation Safety Analysis Results





# Transportation Safety Analysis Results: Top 10 Schools

School Name	Type	City	County	Final Scores
Pegasus Charter High School	Charter	Dallas	Dallas	59.0
Uplift Luna Preparatory High School/ Middle School	Charter	Dallas	Dallas	57.2
Uplift Ascend	Charter	Fort Worth	Tarrant	56.5
Life School Mountain Creek	Charter	Dallas	Dallas	56.5
Kemp Intermediate School	Traditional	Kemp	Kaufman	56.1
La Academia De Estrellas	Charter	Dallas	Dallas	55.7
Newman International Academy	Charter	Fort Worth	Tarrant	55.3
Ray Braswell High School	Traditional	Aubrey	Denton	55.0
Paloma Creek Elementary School	Traditional	Aubrey	Denton	54.9
Quest Campus (K – 8)	Charter	Dallas	Dallas	54.7



# Transportation Safety Analysis Results

- More than half of schools in the top 20 for full region and urban counties only are in Dallas or Fort Worth
- More than half of schools in the top 20 for the full region are also charter schools
- Only four schools in the top 20 for rural counties are charter schools
- Most charter schools in the top 20 had similar built environment context as non-charter schools and could benefit from SRTS interventions



# Transportation Safety Analysis Next Steps

- Refine analysis with new data and approaches
- Aid cities with localized analyses as technical assistance to identify city-wide SRTS priorities or support SRTS planning
- Continue investigations into role of charter schools in the region and implications for SRTS



# Next Steps: Regional Strategy for SRTS

School Siting /  
SRTS  
Coordination

Charter Schools  
Investigation

Technical  
Assistance (Data,  
Facilitate SRTS)

Crossing Guard  
Implementation

SRTS Planning  
Assistance

Funding  
Opportunities

Education and  
Training

Encouragement  
Activities  
(Outreach and  
Promotion)



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