

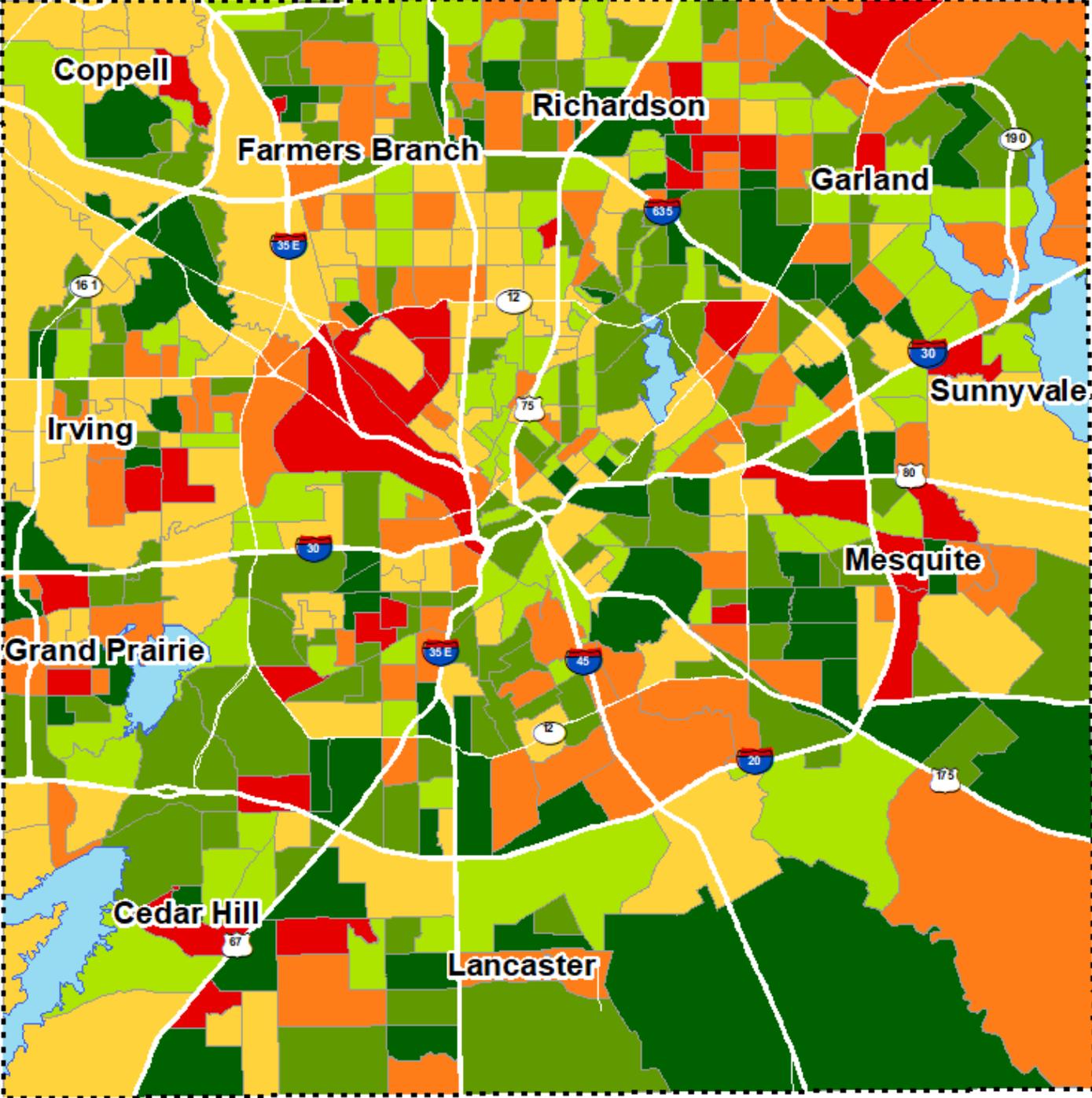
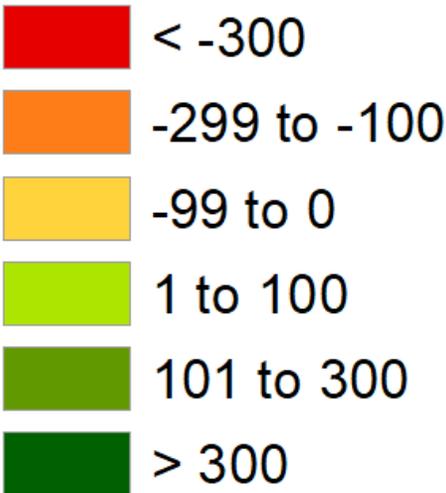
# Planning for Enrollment Growth in Urban Infill Areas

Kathryn Rush, AICP

NCTCOG

It's not just the outer suburbs that are growing or changing.

**Dallas County:  
Change in K-12 Enrollment from  
2013-2017, by Census Tract**



Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Total K-12 Enrollment

# Challenges Accommodating Enrollment Growth in Infill Areas

1. Deciding how to accommodate growth.
2. Finding vacant sites.
3. Finding willing sellers / avoiding eminent domain.
4. Finding sites that are connected to neighborhoods, and safe for students walking to school.
5. High costs.
6. Smaller sites.
7. Greater potential for neighborhood opposition.
8. Need for greater community engagement.

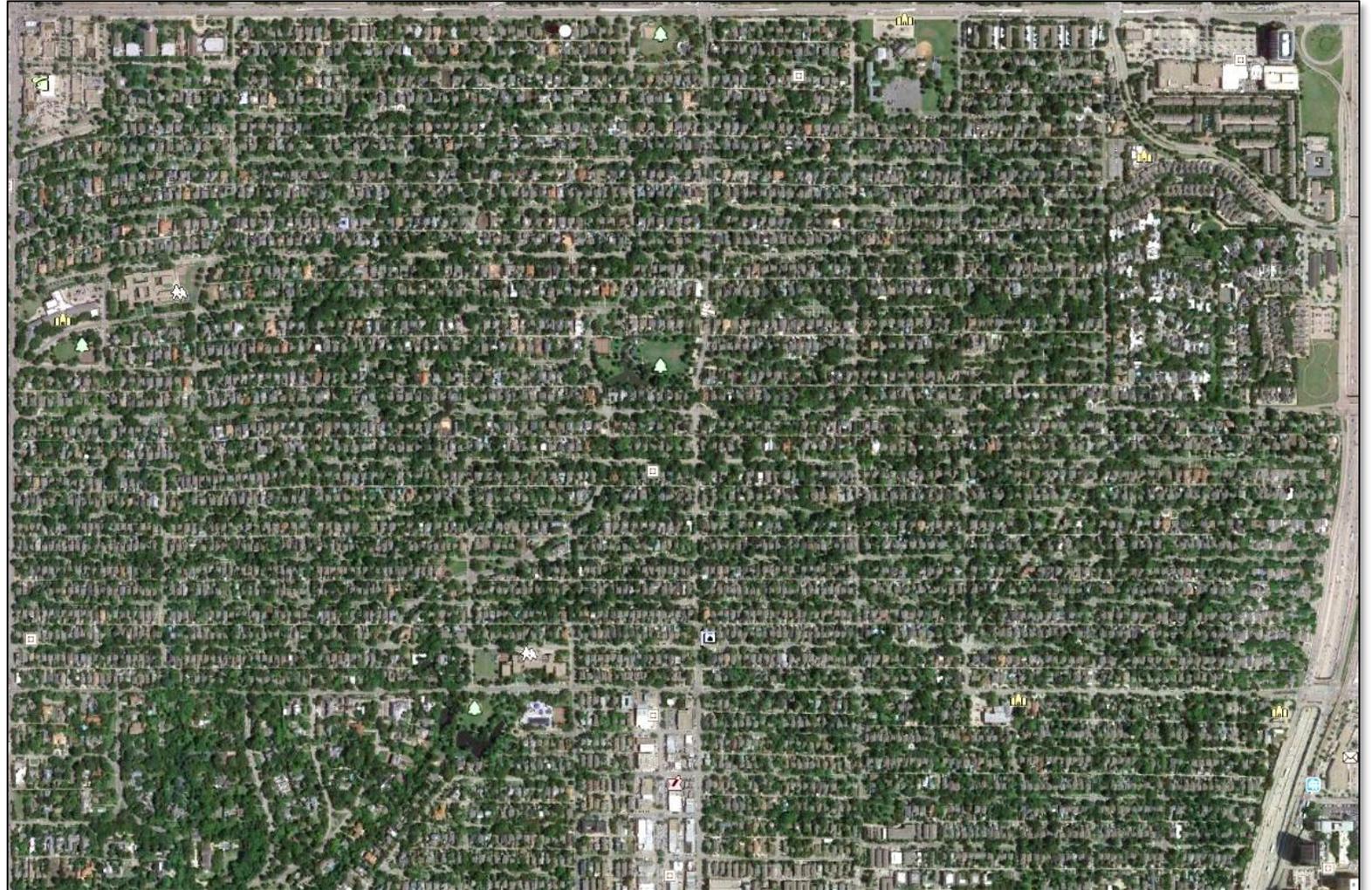
# Challenges Accommodating Enrollment Growth in Infill Areas

- **Deciding how to accommodate growth:**
  - Adjusting attendance zones
  - Adding on to/rebuilding existing schools
  - Building a new school



# Challenges Accommodating Enrollment Growth in Infill Areas

- **Finding vacant sites.**  
Typical options:  
parks, excess church  
land, undeveloped  
land along arterials



Highland Park ISD

# Challenges Accommodating Enrollment Growth in Infill Areas

- **Finding willing sellers / avoiding eminent domain.**

[Dallas ISD Eminent Domain Fight With Business Owner Over Before it ...](#)

<https://www.nbcdfw.com/.../Dallas-ISD-and-Business-Owner-Eminent-Domain-Fight-...> ▼

Jan 11, 2017 - Business owners who worried the Dallas Independent **School District** would take their properties by **eminent domain** are breathing a sigh of ...

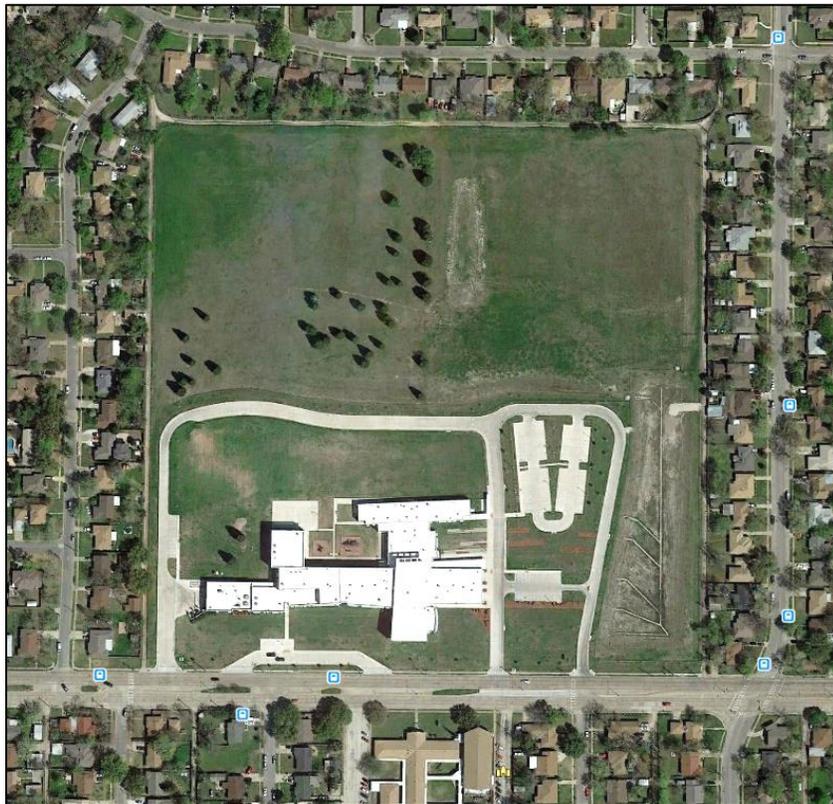
[FWISD, Jewish congregation closer to agreement | Fort Worth Star ...](#)

<https://www.star-telegram.com/news/local/community/fort-worth/article198531954.html>

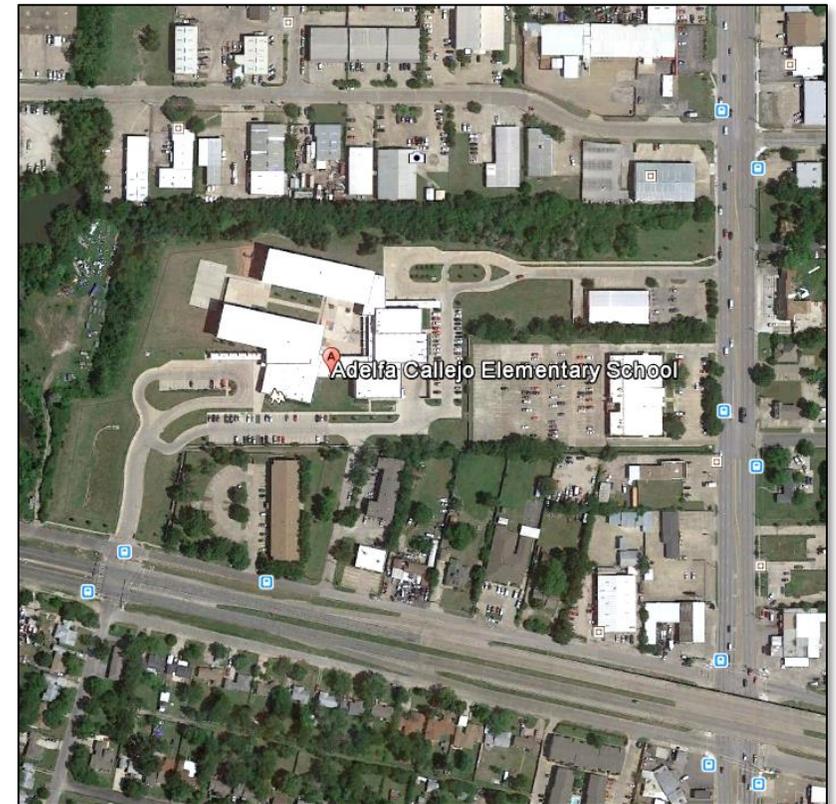
Feb 5, 2018 - On Monday, the district said it reached an agreement in principle with the congregation — a move that would take **eminent domain** off the table ...

# Challenges Accommodating Enrollment Growth in Infill Areas

- **Finding sites that are connected to neighborhoods, and safe for students walking to school.**



Thelma Richardson Elementary in Dallas, opened in 2013 on former greenfield



Adelfa Callejo Elementary in Dallas, opened in 2012 on former greenfield

# Challenges Accommodating Enrollment Growth in Infill Areas

- **High costs:** higher cost of land, costs to clear sites, higher mobilization costs, etc.

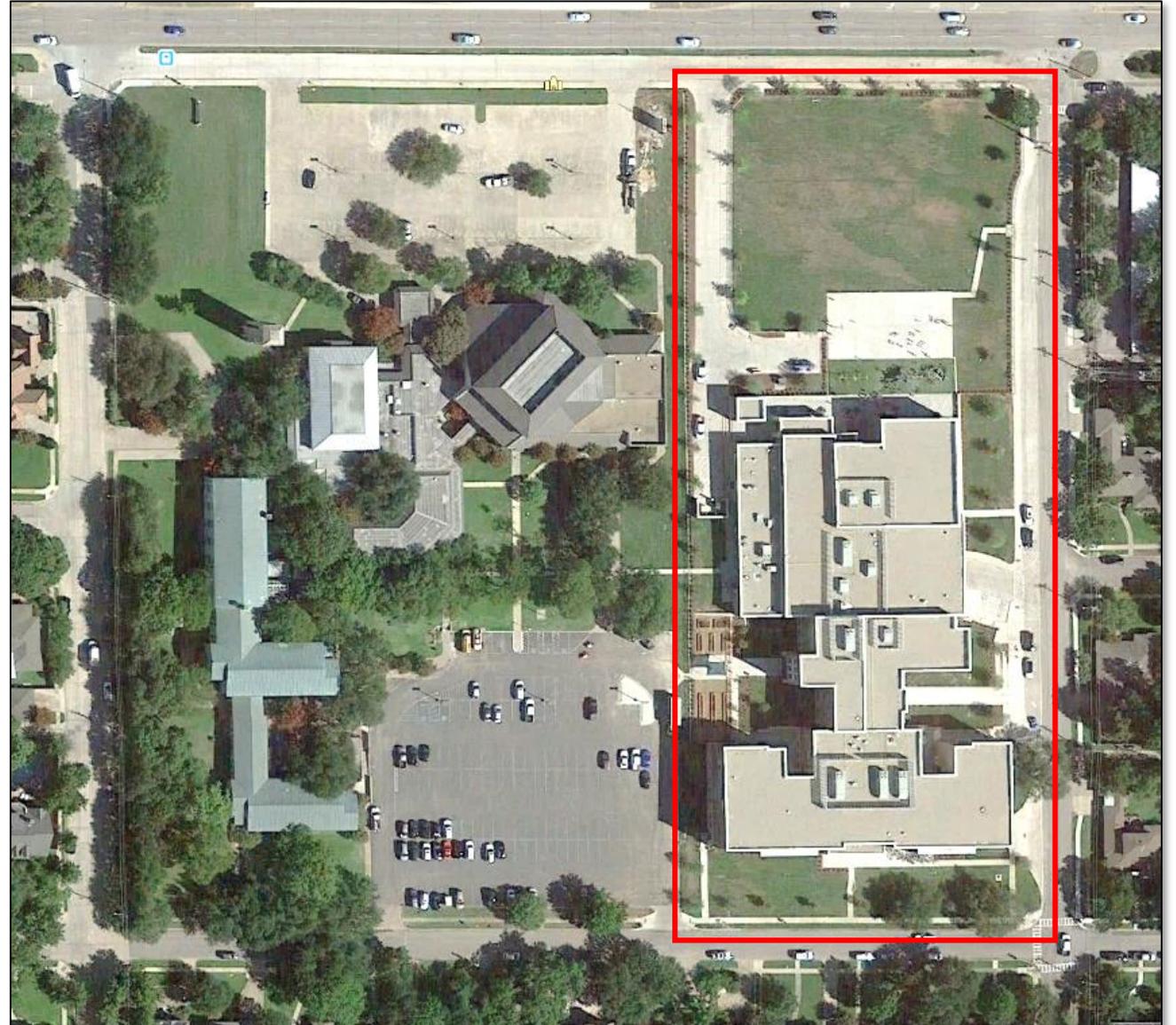
Highland Park ISD's 4.3 acre Elementary #5 Site: \$20 million

Fort Worth ISD's new 6 acre Elementary 229 site: \$6.8 million

# Challenges Accommodating Enrollment Growth in Infill Areas

- **Smaller sites.**

Highland Park ISD: Elementary School #5, opened 2017, 4.3 acres, land previously owned by Northway Christian Church, underground parking, 2-3 stories.



# Challenges Accommodating Enrollment Growth in Infill Areas

- **Greater potential for neighborhood opposition** (rezoning students out of current neighborhood schools, use of eminent domain, etc.).
- **Need for greater community engagement.**



Photo Source: *Dallas Morning News*, Jan. 11, 2017, Smiley N. Pool/Staff Photographer

# Case Studies

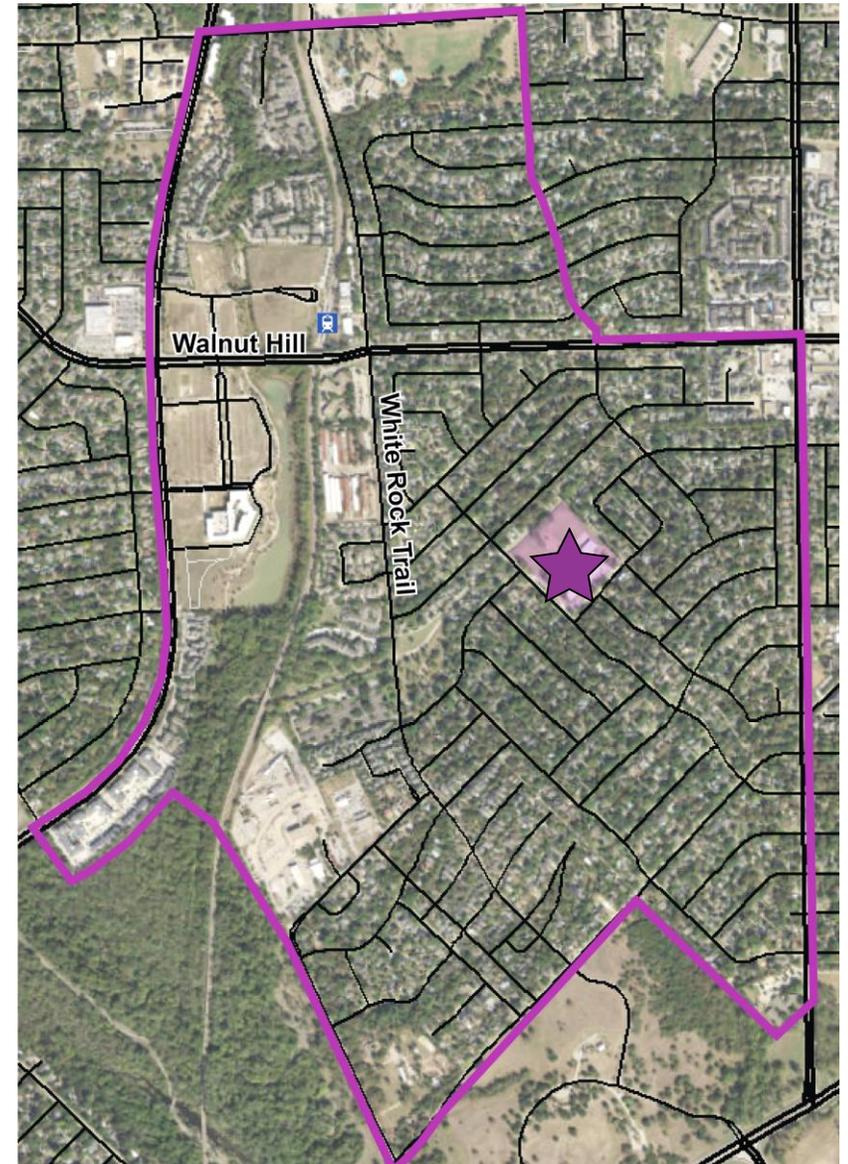
1. Richardson ISD: White Rock Elementary overcrowding
2. Dallas ISD: Vickery Meadows area overcrowding / Jill Stone Elementary Replacement

# Richardson ISD: White Rock Elementary Overcrowding

## Background:

- White Rock 2016-2017 enrollment: 926 students. School capacity: 912 students.
- White Rock was projected to be at 111% capacity within five years.
- 2016 Bond: roughly \$40 million to accommodate enrollment growth in the Lake Highlands area / White Rock Elementary attendance area.

★ = White Rock Elementary

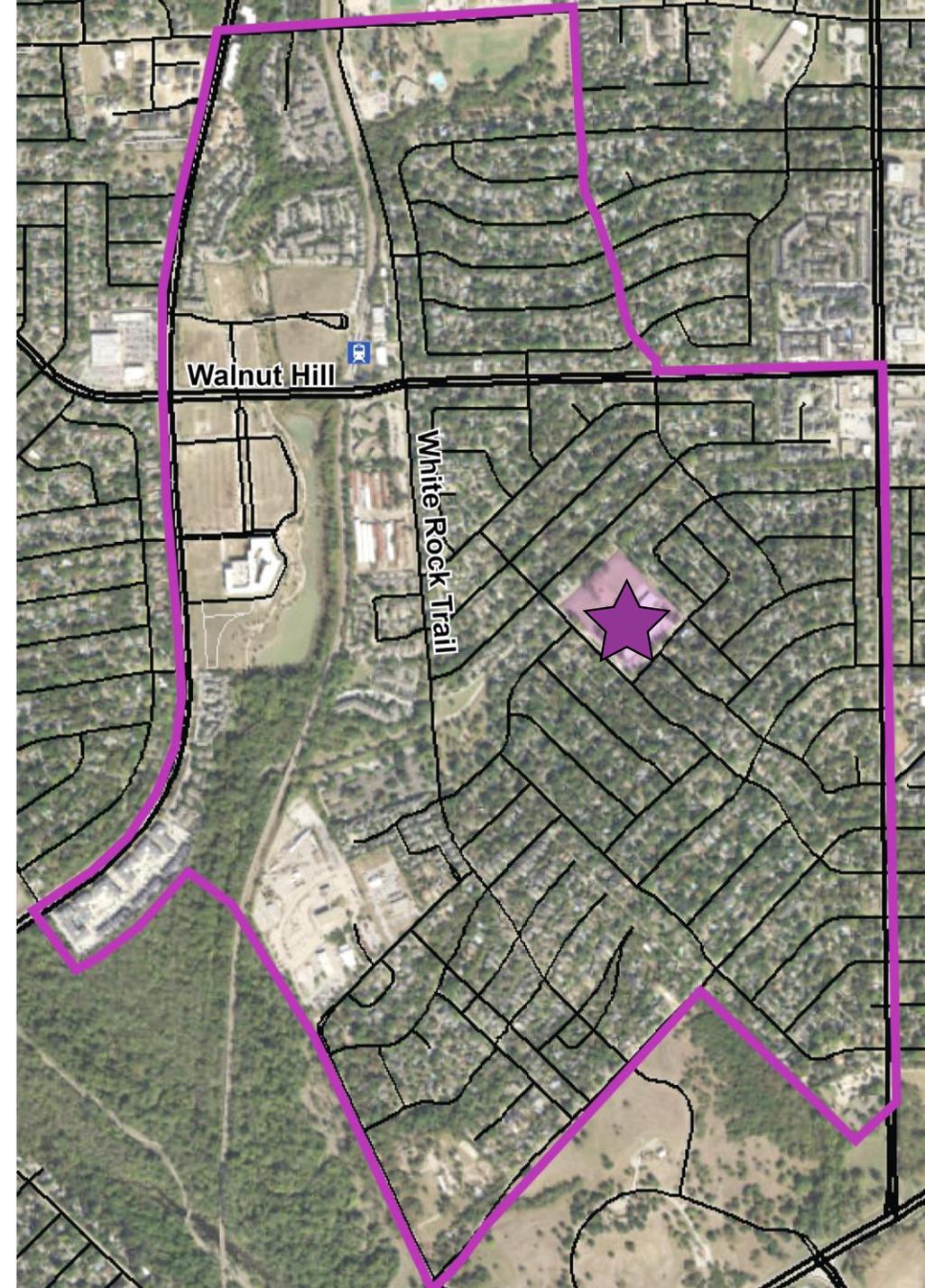


# Timeline

**February 2016:** 48-member stakeholder committee convened to determine how to accommodate the enrollment growth.

**March 2016:** Committee Meeting – Options considered (and voting results):

- a. New K-6 campus in the Lake Highlands area (38%)
- b. Add on to existing campuses (31%)
- c. New 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> intermediate campus on junior high sites (29%)



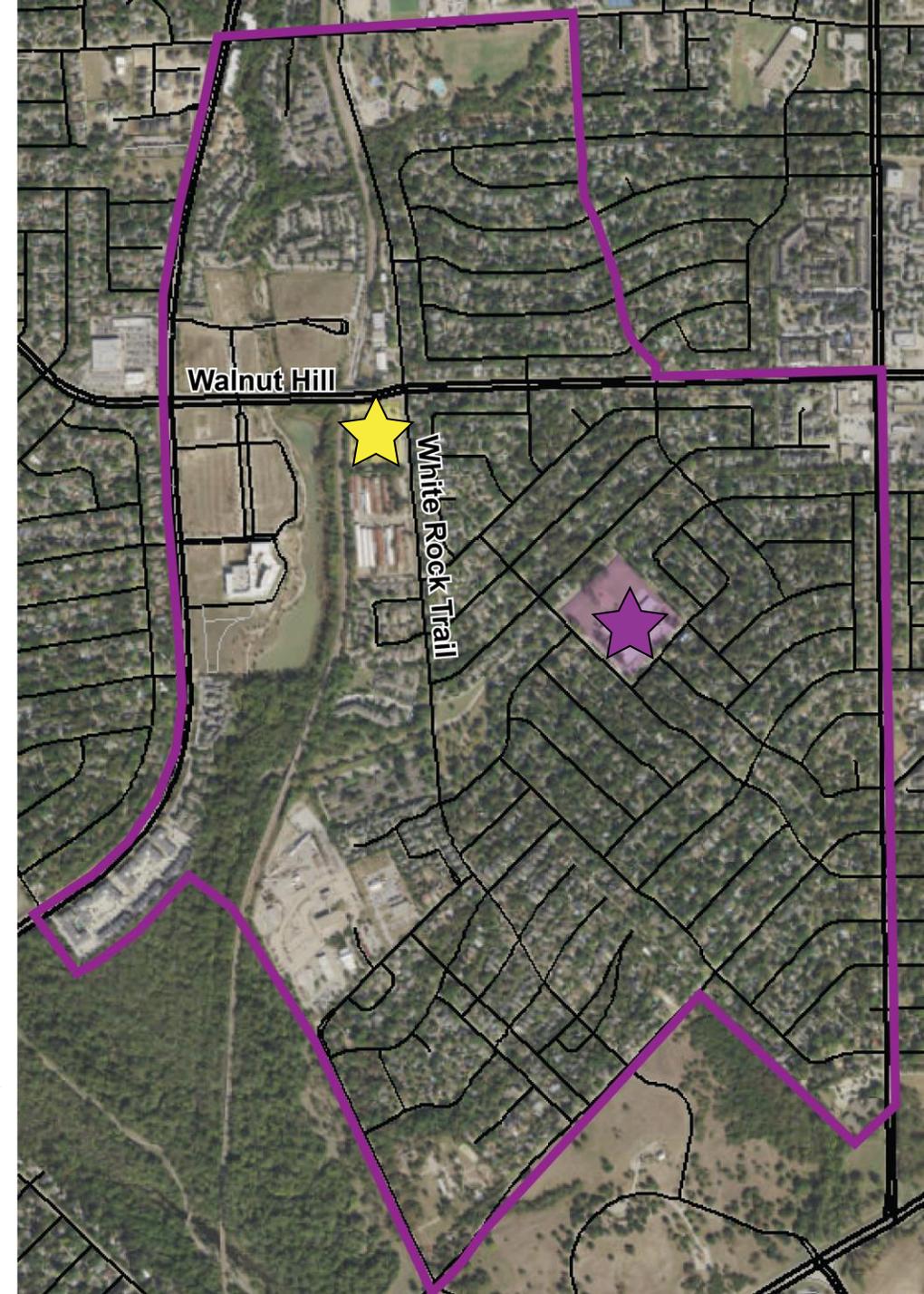
**April 2016:** Final Committee Meeting – Two options brought back for discussion and voting:

- a. New K-6 campus in the Lake Highlands area (45%)
- c. New 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> intermediate campus on junior high sites (55%)

**April 2016:** RISD purchased 4.6 acre site at corner of Walnut Hill Lane and White Rock Trail for \$4.5 million.

★ = White Rock Elementary

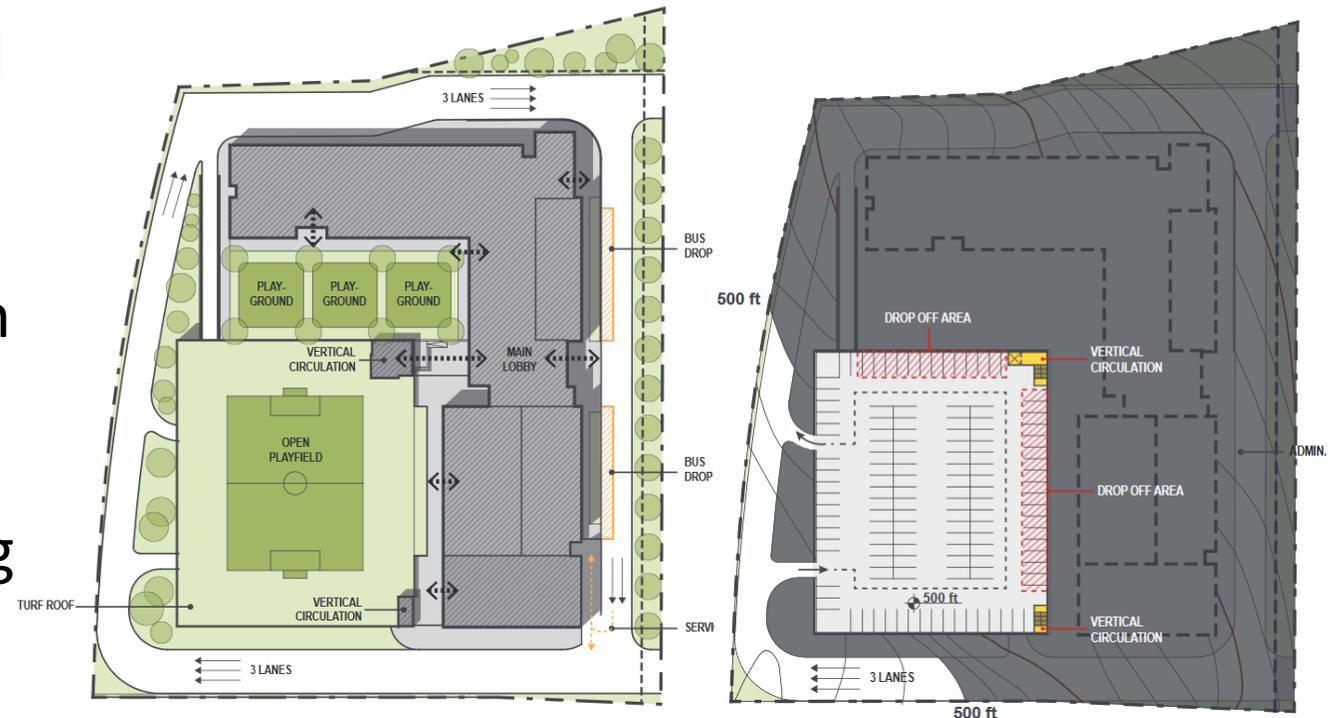
★ = New School Site



**May 2016:** RISD staff recommended building a new K-6 school. Trustees receive community feedback expressing concern about purchased school site.

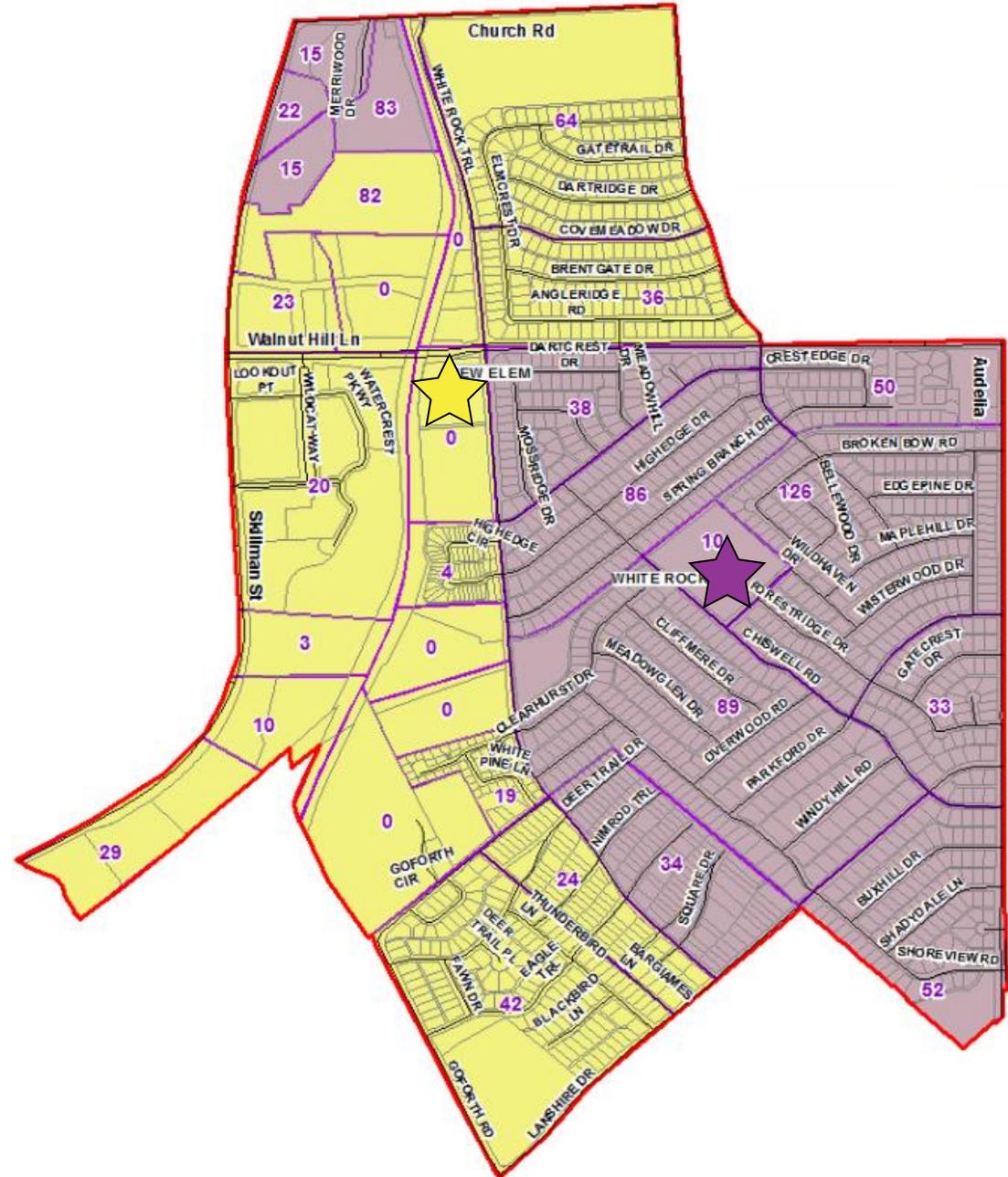
**June 2016:**

- Trustees approved staff’s recommendation for a new K-6 school.
- Architect presented conceptual design options for the new school.
- Superintendent publishes Open Letter to the White Rock Community seeking to address the feelings of “tension” among White Rock families.



## September 2016:

- Recommended attendance boundary for the new school was published for public comment.
- Traffic Impact Assessment completed



**October 2016:** Stakeholder Meeting with White Rock Community Leaders (including HOAs, PTA, Dallas City Council Member).

- Request by community leaders to reconsider other options:
  - Adding classrooms to White Rock Elementary
  - Incorporating neighboring Northlake Elementary into a potential solution
- Community's concerns: walkability to the new school site, safety of students, and increased traffic.
- Next Steps: RISD to retain a consulting firm to assist with re-evaluating options



**Nov. 2016:** RISD announced it was no longer pursuing White Rock Trail site.

**Jan. 2017:** Survey sent to all households in the White Rock attendance area with several possible solutions. Expansion of the current campus received the most support.

**Feb. 2017:** Trustees approved option to expand White Rock to accommodate growth.

**March 2017:** Trustees granted approval to sell White Rock Trail property.



# Dallas ISD: Vickery Meadows Area Overcrowding / Jill Stone Elementary Replacement

## Background: Vickery Meadow

- One of the most densely populated areas of Dallas.
- Most apartments were developed in the 1970s, largely for childless, middle-upper income young people moving to Dallas. (No schools.)
- Since the 1980s it has been a hub for immigrant and refugee families. Average household income is \$26k (2015).



# Dallas ISD: Vickery Meadows Area Overcrowding / Jill Stone Elementary Replacement

## Background:

- 2016-2017: Jill Stone was at 106% capacity; Hotchkiss was at 151% capacity.
- Many students that live closer to Jill Stone are bused to Hotchkiss because of lack of space at Jill Stone.
- 2015 Bond: \$29.5 million to replace Jill Stone Elementary and relieve overcrowding at Jill Stone and Hotchkiss.





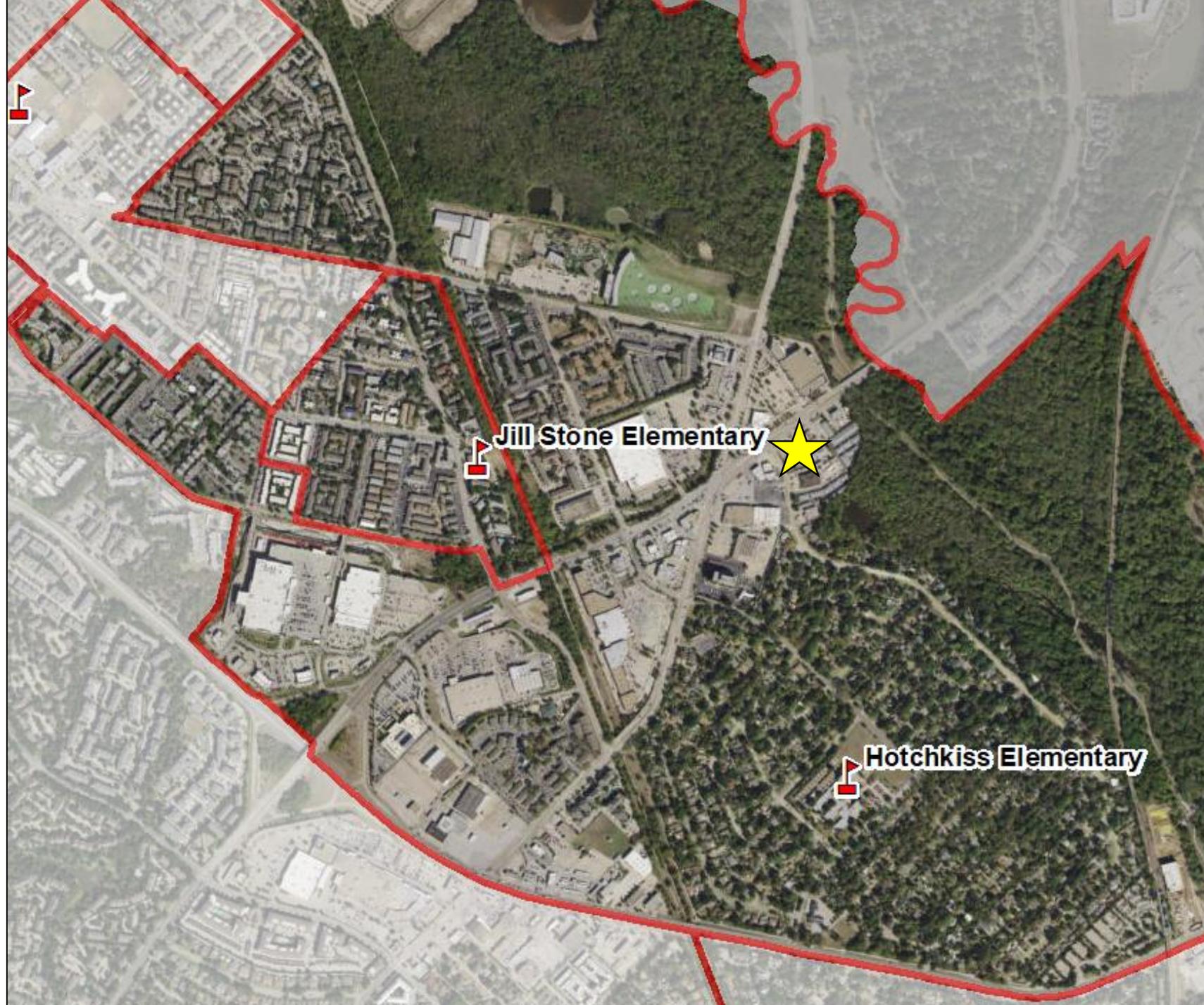
## Considerations for New Site:

- Located in Hotchkiss or Jill Stone attendance zones.
- Try not to acquire residential properties, which could displace students.

## Initial Site Selected for Jill Stone Replacement/ Hotchkiss Relief

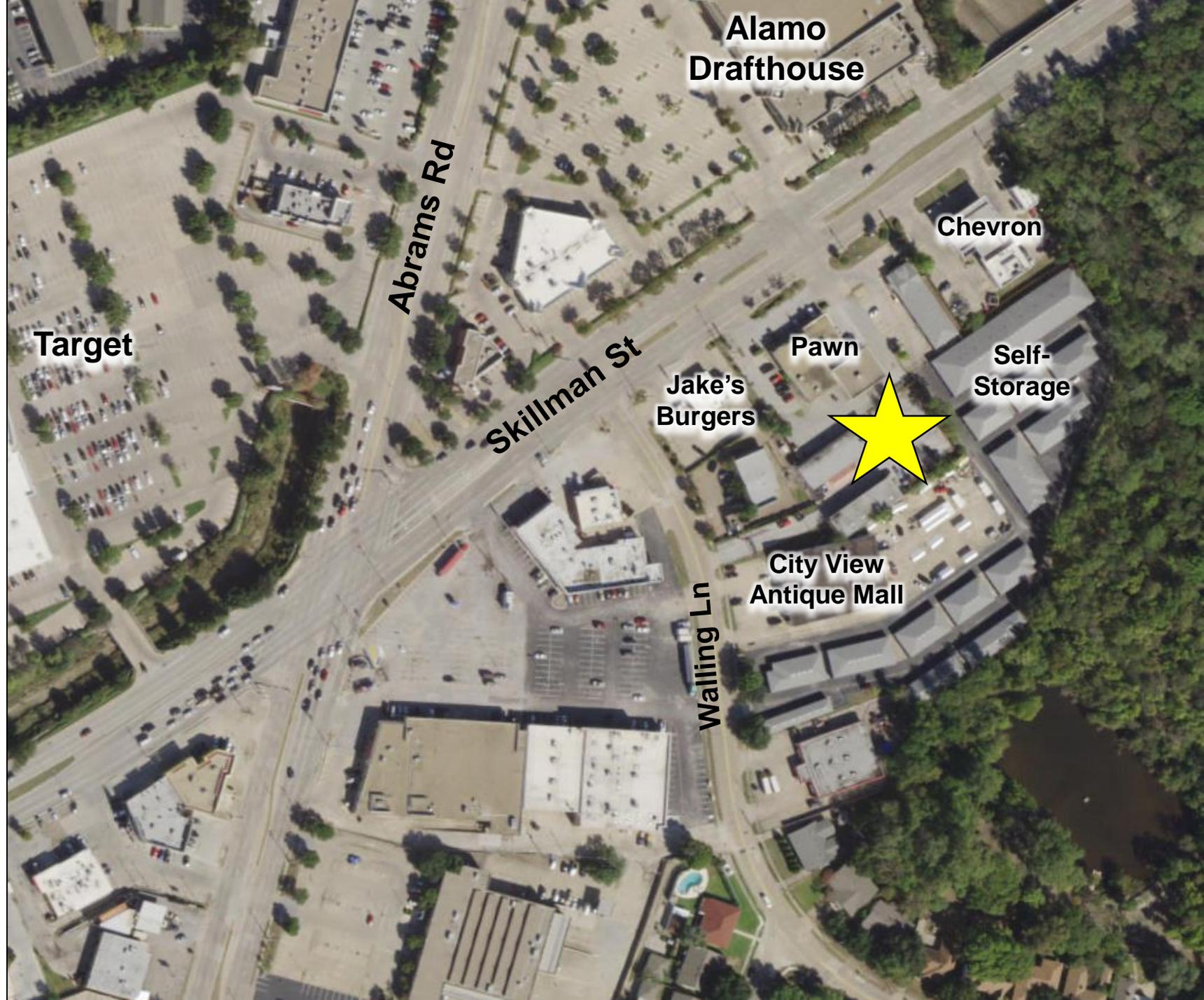


- District issues eminent domain notices to businesses.
- A business publishes DISD's letter.
- Community calls for a meeting with DISD staff.



## Community's Concerns:

- Use of eminent domain
- Most students live north of Skillman, closer to the existing Jill Stone Elementary.
- Safety concerns about students having to cross Skillman or Abrams.

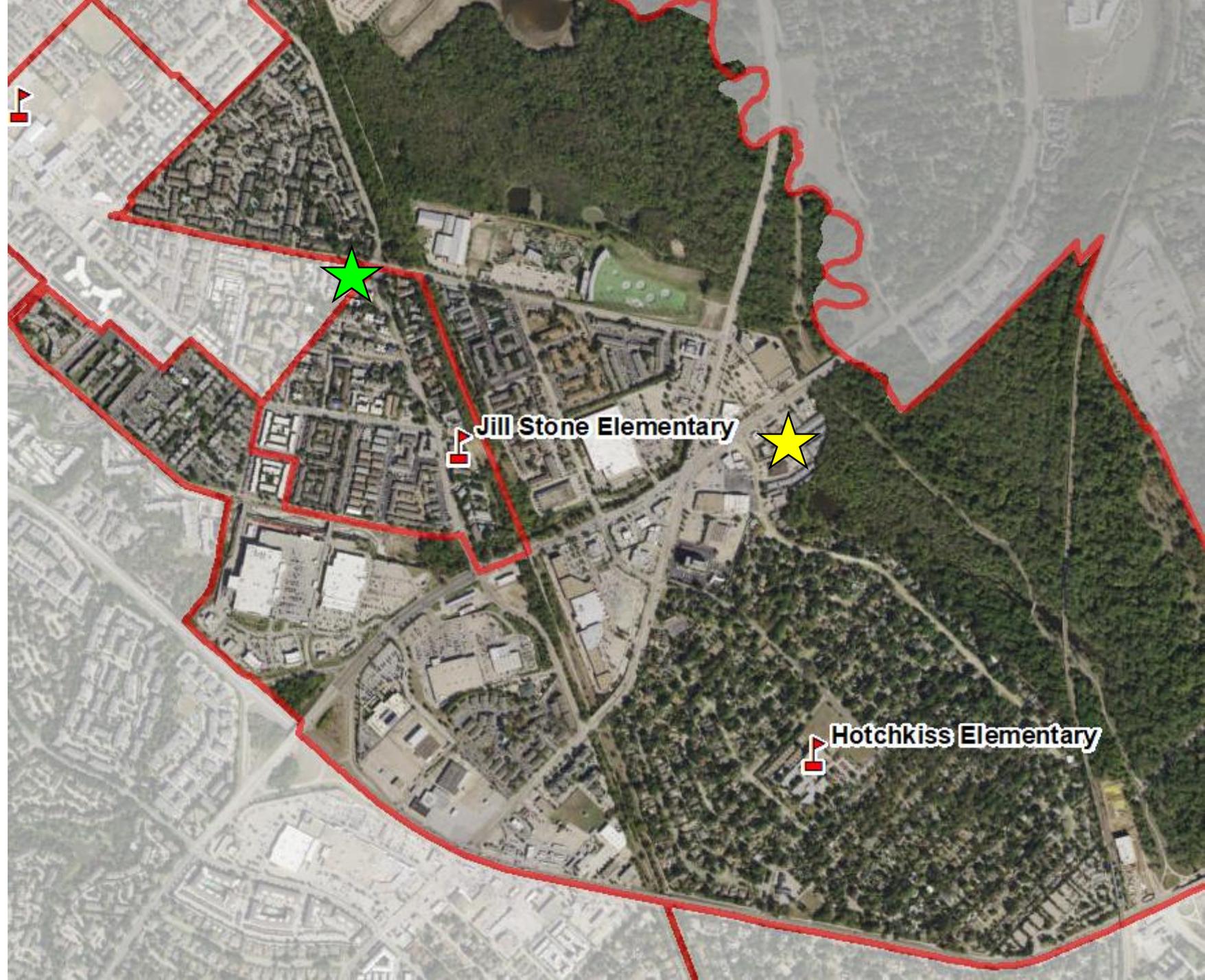


## Final Site Selected ★

- 300-unit apartment complex.
- Willing seller - did not have to use eminent domain.

### Issues:

- Displacing some students.
- Residents had difficulty finding affordable housing to relocate to.



Reflections

# Reflections

- It's an emotional issue, and it's impossible to please everyone.
- Involving the community early in analyzing trade-offs can help prevent problems at the outset:
  - Expand existing schools vs. build new school
  - Displacing residents or businesses vs. siting schools further from all residents along major thoroughfares
  - Importance of ability of students to walk to school
  - Impacts on attendance zones
- This can be done without divulging information on specific sites under consideration.



Photo Source: *Dallas Morning News*, Jan. 11, 2017, Smiley N. Pool/Staff Photographer

# Reflections

- Parents and communities want “community schools.” These schools are located central to the students they will serve, AND they are also easily and safely accessible by walking and bicycling.
  - Consider student demographics and how students currently get to school.
  - Traffic Management Plans should include non-motorized (walking and biking) travel flows.
  - Is a six-lane road considered a “hazard”, requiring students to be bused across?

Discussion / Q&A