



# Safe Routes to School

Blue Zones Project, City of  
Fort Worth and FWISD  
Partnership

# Introduction to Blue Zones Project

Blue Zones **Project** is a community-wide

**WELL-BEING IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVE**

designed to

***make healthy choices easier***

by encouraging

**sustainable changes**



in our

 and social networks



# State of Our Health



- Over half of children in FWISD are either considered overweight or obese.
  - Chronic conditions are generally worse in Fort Worth, mirroring the obesity statistics. The 13.2 percent of adults who have been diagnosed with diabetes exceeds both national (11.7 percent) and state (12.4 percent) levels, as does the 30.5 percent with lifetime diagnoses of high blood pressure.
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- Nearly 50% of kids walked/biked to school in 1969. Today the figure is 13%.
- It is predicted that kids today will have a shorter life span than their parents
- Type 2 diabetes was an adult ailment now we are seeing it in toddlers
- Community is economically viable based on the health of its people









## Economic Benefits

- In the [Walking the Walk report](#), CEOs for Cities examined home values and walkability scores in major metropolitan markets, and found that a one-point increase in the WalkScore correlated with a \$700 to \$3,000 increase in home values—which can then result in higher property tax revenues for local governments.
  - Specific to Safe Routes to School, researchers Muenning, Epstein and DiMaggio [examined the safety benefits](#) of Safe Routes to School projects and found that the cost-savings associated with the reduction of child pedestrian injuries resulted in an overall net societal benefit of \$230 million over a projected 50-year period.
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# Growth

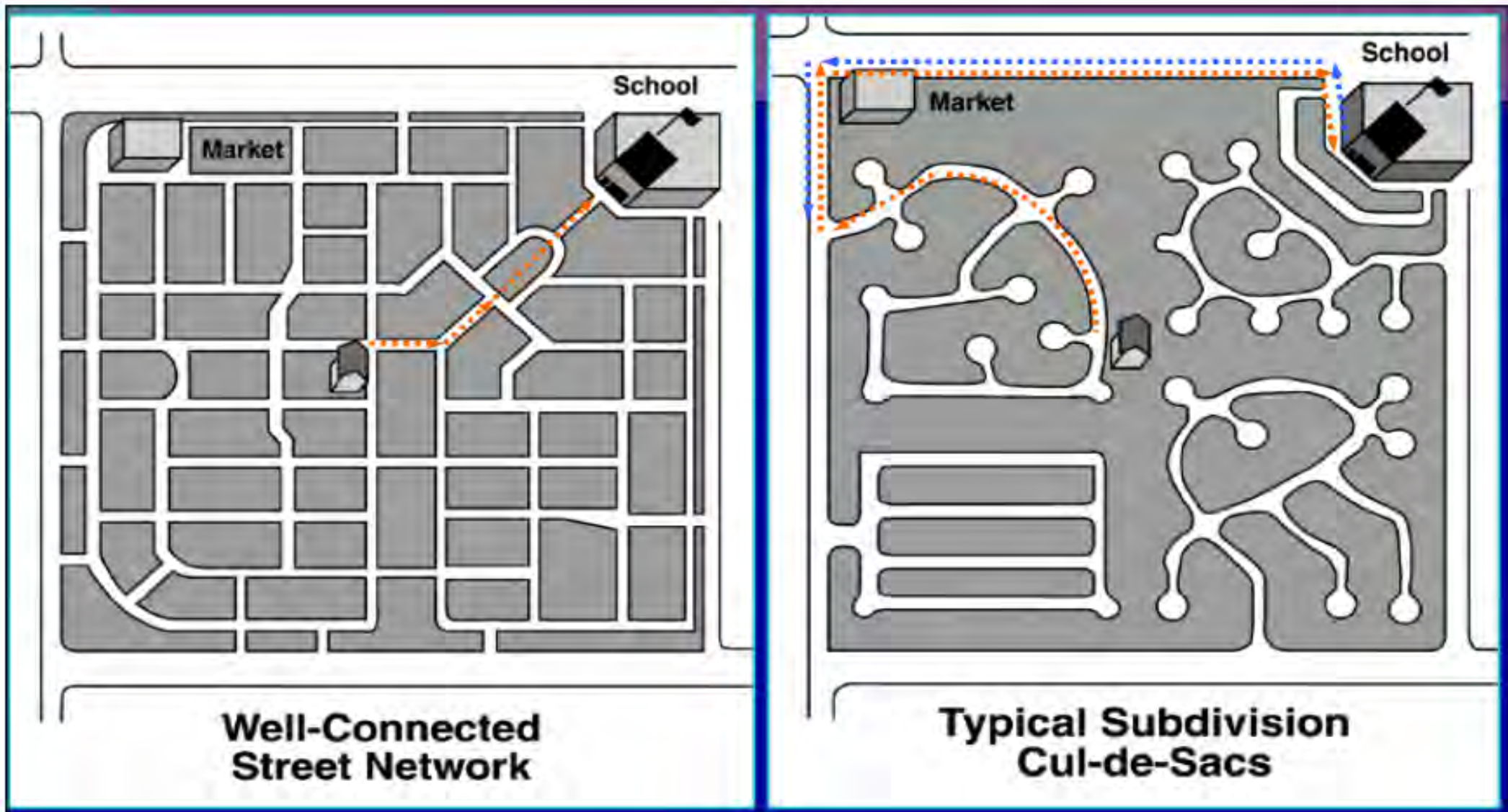
- 60% of Fort Worth ISD schools were built before 1960 –
    - Since then the population growth has skyrocketed in most areas surrounding these schools
    - Districts add to current facility or add portables to accommodate growth
    - With growth comes congestion and unsafe environment for kids to walk and bike to school
    - By state law, school districts are only allowed to do infrastructure improvements on their property
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# Complete Streets

- HIGHER VEHICLE SPEEDS THAN POSTED SPEEDS:
- Design for Target Speed
- Wide travel lanes, lack of street trees, and long sight distances encourage motorists to travel faster than the posted speed **limit**.



# A Well Connected System vs. a Poorly Connected System













# Political Leadership Support



- **Fort Worth ISD passed a resolution –May 2015**
    - Participate in SRTS initiative to strengthen the quality of life for Fort Worth students, families, and neighborhoods
    - Identify an employee to focus on SRTS
    - Conduct walking audits for all elementary schools by 2018
    - Work together with City and other partners to apply for funding
    - Participate in Walk to School Day
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## **City of Fort Worth passed a resolution on June 2015**

- Affirms support for pedestrian safety programs in all 16 school districts
- Will assign high priority to school pedestrian routes in the allocation of 2014 bond funds for sidewalks and school safety zones
- Support FWISD in the efforts to prepare for SRTS master plans and to secure grant funds to implement



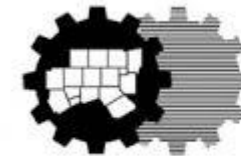
City staff pushed to allocate \$250,000 to hire consultants to conduct an assessment around 20-30 schools



# Safe Routes to School Workgroup







**Tarrant County  
Public Health**



**North Central Texas  
Council of Governments**





# Prioritizing Schools

- Data
    - Bus Service
    - Free and Reduced Lunch percentage
    - Principal Support
    - From NCTCOG Data
      - Ped/Bike Crash Count
      - Childhood density
      - Sidewalk density
    - Crossing guards also did a pedestrian/bike count at their intersections
  - 4 pilot schools
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# Getting the Schools involved

- Principal Support
  - Conduct walking audits: parents, school officials, Bike Friendly FW, Police Department, crossing guards, neighbors
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# Walking School Bus

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Su2aclNk2I>





## LESSONS LEARNED

- Principals tend to have autonomy
- Traffic engineers
- More communication and future planning between ISDs and City



School Planning

Community Planning





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Project



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