



The Sustainable Thurston project is an opportunity to shape this region's future as well as the actions and responsibilities to achieve it.

North County Schools and Transportation Panel (including school siting and design)



September 23, 2011

ABOUT THE SUSTAINABLE THURSTON PROJECT

This community conversation comes at a time when the issues of economic resilience and efficiency are foremost in our minds. Our region – its households, governments, nonprofits and business are making the most of resources in order to maintain quality of life and build toward a more resilient economy, society and environment.

This region and its 29 public and private sector partners successfully competed for a Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant from Federal Housing and Urban Development, Department of Transportation, and the Environmental Protection Agency. Their interest in making these grants possible is to encourage regions to incorporate livability principles into sustainability plan discussions since these are proving to be essential to the creation of resilient communities.

The Sustainable Thurston Plan will build upon:

- 1) **Thurston Region 2040 Population Projections estimated to add 120,000 additional residents between 2010 and 2035**
- 2) **Existing state, regional and local plans** as the base scenario for plan discussion and analysis
- 3) **Livability Principles**
 - Provide more transportation choices
 - Promote equitable affordable housing
 - Enhance economic competitiveness
 - Support existing communities
 - Coordinate policies and leverage investment
 - Value communities and neighborhoods

About Sustainable Thurston Panels

The Sustainable Thurston Plan process begins with information development through a series of “white papers” produced by panels and work groups and reviewed by the Sustainable Thurston Task Force. This work will inform the three phase public process about a variety of elements that support our community and work together to enhance quality of life.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PROCESS – 2011 - 2013

Initial Visioning and Engagement of Stakeholders - Winter 2012

Description: Develop a regional vision by engaging residents and stakeholders in an interactive Sustainable Community game at a series of public meetings - informed by panel, work group and Task Force information.

Goal: Achieve an understanding of the major vision of the residents and stakeholders regarding the future of the Thurston County region.

Develop Growth Scenarios - 2012

Description: Involve residents and stakeholders in order to gain a data-based understanding of the implications of current growth patterns, and develop a range of growth alternatives.

Goal: Describe the most likely future for the region given “business as usual,” and community-based alternatives reflecting the Phase 1 vision.

Develop a Preferred Growth Vision and Regional Plan for Sustainable Development - 2013

Description: Involve residents and stakeholders in review of a preferred growth alternative, the Regional Vision and Plan for Sustainable Development, a Regional Housing Plan, a Regional Economic Strategy, Implementation Steps, and a List of Projects of Regional Priority.

Goal: To develop a community based series of Regional Plans, Strategies, Implementations Steps, and Projects of Regional Priority that articulate a community defined sustainable future, and the actions and responsibilities to achieve it.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary1

Schools and Transportation Panel Identified Problems4

Schools and Transportation Panel Identified Challenges/Barriers5

Implications of addressing – or not addressing – the challenges and
barriers identified9

Appendices

Appendix A. Healthy Kids – Safe Streets Action plan..... A-1

**Appendix B. Draft Policies for Jurisdiction and School District Comprehensive
Plans as recommended by Healthy Kids – Safe Streets Action Plan B-1**

Appendix C. Population Forecast by Age 2010 – 2040 C-1
Population Forecast by School District 2010 – 2030 C-1

Appendix D. School Siting and Size WAC 392-342-020 D-1

**Appendix E. Excerpt from “Summary Report – First Summit on School
Planning and Siting” E-1**

Appendix F. Excerpt - Bremerton Collaborative School Siting ProjectF-1

**Appendix G. Child Safety Is More Than A Slogan - National Center for
Missing & Exploited Children..... G-1**



Executive Summary

An estimated 21,000 additional K-12 students will need to be accommodated between now and 2035 in Thurston County.

Where will the schools these students attend be located? How can schools be accommodated in urban areas with the combined constraints of fewer large acreage areas and challenged school budgets? How will students get to school? How can the region accommodate school and transportation needs as efficiently as possible as funding becomes more constrained? How can school planning, siting and design decisions encourage safe walking and biking, healthier youth, and fewer auto trips to and around schools at peak hours? How can school districts and jurisdictions collaborate to maximize opportunities that result in safe and walkable communities as the region grows? How do we build a new generation of safe and healthy walkers, bicycle and bus riders?



Challenges, Opportunities and Implications

This white paper identifies major categories of challenges and identifies some opportunities to overcome these as well as implications for the economy, society, environment, and energy use and conservation.

School Siting, Configuration and Design

Schools close to lots of households with sidewalks, bike lanes, street crossings, as well as inviting and safe school entryways, will result in a higher proportion of walk and bike trips throughout the day. The addition of safe walk/bike/bus education and encouragement programs in schools can reduce the number of parent drop-offs - reducing auto trips in and around school neighborhoods as well as on the region's street networks. Careful school location and design offers safe and efficient access for the school community as well as adding safety and serving the surrounding neighborhood.

Did you know... that at least 25% of peak hour traffic is parents driving students to school. (Source: *National Safe Routes to School and TRPC Walk & Roll Surveys*)

School and jurisdiction collaboration and shared use maximizes the investment in school buildings and grounds for community-wide use. Issues of traditional large acreage school design, a move toward larger schools, difficulty finding large acreage sites within urban growth areas, and dependence on school fields to satisfy community outdoor recreation needs will continue to be a challenge for school districts and the community. School siting analysis should include long term transportation costs to both school districts and households - as well as the costs of poor health due to lack of opportunities for active travel that helps to prevent obesity and early onset of many chronic diseases.

Want kids to walk & bike to school?

The basics include:

- schools sited close to as many households as possible
- sidewalks & safe crossings
- as many street and path connections as possible (see map, page 17)

Infrastructure + Encouragement & Education = More Walk & Bike Trips

Sidewalks, bike lanes, street crossings and transit offer a full range of options that can decrease traffic around schools. Safe and complete infrastructure within at least one half-mile of school should be a priority for school districts and jurisdiction collaboration.

Safety education and encouragement programs – and infrastructure improvements – combined with dense housing around schools are the most successful combined strategies that reduce parent drop off rates, resulting in:

- reduced vehicle trips to and around schools,
- increased safety,
- increased exercise, and
- enhanced student short and long term health and readiness to learn

Did you know... students were three times more likely to start walking or bicycling on routes that included improvements than they were before these improvements were made. (Source: *UC Berkeley Traffic Center*)

Good infrastructure encourages more walking and biking as well as access and use of school facilities by those living in the surrounding neighborhood area.

Did you know... the Healthy Kids - Safe Streets Action Plan is the result of community discussions that asked the question "Why can't kids walk and bike to school"? The Plan goal is to: Build a generation of healthy and safe walkers, bicycle and bus riders.

Coordination and Cooperation

Ongoing coordination and cooperation among school districts, jurisdictions, transit and regional planning can leverage resources, establish common policies and goals, identify priority projects and programs, and help achieve Healthy Kids – Safe Streets Action Plan goals and the recommendations in this report.

Parent Attitudes and Fears

Addressing parent concerns about safety for their children and developing positive attitudes towards walking, biking or taking the bus to school require on-going encouragement and education. Efforts to increase parent support for walking, biking and busing could include:

- 1) Programs that educate and focus on safety and skill building, including how to address stranger danger fears;
- 2) Programs that encourage walking, biking and bus travel through school-based events that get parents and students to participate in program activities;
- 3) Priority infrastructure improvements that address safety issues (safe sidewalks, bike lanes, and street crossings); and,
- 4) Emphasis police patrols around schools focused on ticketing drivers exceeding speed limits.

The Bottom Line

Considerations of safe access for walk, bike or bus riders – especially to community activity centers like schools, can decrease long term transportation costs for all and offer choices for households and the community at large. While most travel may continue to be by family car, supportive safe travel infrastructure that encourages walking, biking and bus riding:

- Connects communities;
- Improves health and physical fitness, saving money for households and resources for community health providers;
- Helps the environment by reducing our carbon footprint;
- Improves mobility and provides transportation options;
- Increases community safety by providing eyes on the street; and
- Enhances neighborhood and business district vitality.



Evolution of the North County Schools and Transportation Panel Discussion, Process and Panel Members

Why Can't Kids Walk and Bike to School? This was the question posed in a series of forums coordinated by TRPC in 2009 and 2010. Forum participants developed 138 ideas that were organized and analyzed by an Action Plan subcommittee with the most viable ideas included in the Healthy Kids – Safe Streets Action Plan (Appendix A) with the goal to “Build a generation of safe and healthy walkers, bike riders, and bus riders.” The plan is the result of two grants that also supported a demonstration project at three elementary schools. The Walk & Roll program objective was to identify best practices that would influence school travel choices by families and educate about the benefits of safe, active travel and decreasing trips to and around school.

By the 2011-12 school year the Walk & Roll program will have expanded to ten schools in four Thurston County school districts. In addition, a coordination team met as recommended in the Action Plan. Their goal is to:

- Continue the collaboration established during the Healthy Kids – Safe Streets Action Plan process,
- Increase communication and coordination, and look for opportunities to achieve Action Plan goals
- Advocate for the action initiatives identified in the Action Plan, including policies related to: 1) ongoing communication about infrastructure improvements around schools, 2) consideration of the long range costs and benefits of school siting decisions, and 3) collaboration on school design and infrastructure improvements that provide safe access for walkers, bike riders and bus riders. (See Appendix B)

The Action Plan coordination team includes planning and public works staff from Lacey, Olympia, and Tumwater, as well as the Olympia, North Thurston, and Tumwater school districts, Intercity Transit, Thurston County Department of Public Health & Social Services, Educational Service Districts (ESD) and Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI).

The North County Schools and Transportation Panel is an expanded group of policy makers that builds upon the work of the Healthy Kids – Safe Streets Action Plan and its coordination team. Those serving on the panel include:

| | |
|------------------|---|
| Ryan Andrews | City of Lacey Planning Department |
| Dave Burns | City of Lacey Planning Department |
| Joan Cathey | City of Tumwater City Council |
| John Clark | Tumwater School District |
| Virgil Clarkson | City of Lacey City Council |
| Chris Hawkins | Thurston County Public Health & Social Services |
| Doug Johnston | City of Tumwater Public Works Department |
| Tom Kuehn | OSPI |
| Mike Laverty | North Thurston Public Schools |
| Randy Millhollen | PSESD |
| Mel Murray | Tumwater School District |
| Chuck Namit | North Thurston Public Schools Board |
| Dan Payne | ESD 112 |
| Cynthia Pratt | City of Lacey City Council |
| Peter Rex | Olympia School District |
| Erin Scheel | Intercity Transit Youth Services |
| Kerry Tarullo | City of Olympia Public Works Department |
| Eric Weight | North Thurston Public Schools |



Did you know... 50% of students living within ½ mile of school are being driven to school! (Source: *National Safe Routes to School and TRPC Walk & Roll Surveys*)

Did you know... Washington State obesity rates have more than doubled since 1990. And 11% of 10th graders were obese and 14% were overweight in Thurston County. (Source: *Thurston County Public Health & Social Services*)

Did you know... walking to school is associated with higher overall physical activity throughout the day and better academic performance. (Source: *American Journal of Preventative Medicine and CA Department of Education*)

Schools and Transportation Panel Identified Problems

- 1) Too few students walk, bike or take the bus to school.**
- 2) Too few students get enough daily physical activity – increasing health risks (diabetes, hypertension, heart disease at younger ages).**
- 3) Budget cuts have resulted in less physical education and recess time and are forcing difficult school district budget decisions. Students who don't get exercise exhibit less readiness to learn.**
- 4) Students who are not allowed to walk, bike or take the bus to school don't get an opportunity to learn and practice safety and independence skills (from their parents or at school).**
- 5) Too many parents drive students to school, adding peak hour traffic to and around schools, decreasing safety and contributing to air pollution.**
- 6) Some new schools have limited populations around them, few sidewalks, and few safe home-to-school connections or routes.**

So What Do The Students Have To Say About Challenges To Walking, Biking and Bus Riding?

The following are quotes taken from the Reeves Students Letter to the City of Olympia about barriers to walking and biking to school (6-8th graders, Spring 2010), the Olympia Comprehensive Plan Update school outreach to Jefferson Middle School Boys and Girls Club participants (8th grade, Spring 2010), Olympia High School Environmental Club participants in the Oly Comp Plan Update outreach (9-12th grade, Spring 2010). These comments are backed up by a study done in August 2005: "Teenage Attitudes and perceptions regarding transit use," State of Florida DOT, with the National Center for Transit Research Center for Urban Transportation Research University of South Florida.

The most frequently cited challenges and barriers to youth access to their community:

- In order for it to be safe for students to participate in grant programs like Walk & Roll, sidewalk improvements must be made at the school entrance and near school.
- When you have to walk in a ditch near speeding traffic, it makes you feel like an outcast for walking to school.
- Sidewalks are too often narrow, uneven, and can cause falls
- Drivers drive too quickly through school zones and on our routes to school
- We are often dependent on our parents for transportation, on their schedule and their route. Sometimes they don't want to drive us. We would like to get around independently.
- Driving is too expensive, with the cost of driver's education, a car, insurance, and gas.
- The new Graduated Driver Licenses make carpooling impossible, it is now hard for us to legally drive around with our friends who can't drive or don't own a car.
- The streets are too often unsafe for bike riding; there are few bike lanes or clear instructions on how to ride as a part of traffic.
- Transit passes are too expensive. Even if we are on a bus line, those who need it most can't use the service.
- It is not safe to wait for a bus alone in the dark, or to walk or bike home.
- Sexual harassment from men makes us not want to ride the bus, bike, or walk in public places.

- The bus doesn't run as late on weekends or evenings when we want to use it the most.
- It is too far to bike, walk or take the bus from home to school or anywhere else after school. It is faster to drive or catch a ride.

Schools and Transportation Panel Identified Goals

- 1) Build a new generation of safe and healthy walkers, bicycle riders and bus riders
- 2) Promote regular physical activity so students stay strong, healthy and ready to learn
- 3) Reinforce good traffic safety skills
- 4) Maintain and improve infrastructure around schools that supports and encourages safe walking and biking (sidewalks, pedestrian paths, safe crossings, and lighting, especially within ½ mile of school)
- 5) Develop walking route maps for schools
- 6) Maintain viability of existing schools
- 7) Encourage bus transport for students living too far from school to walk/ bike
- 8) Site new schools in close proximity to as large a percentage of students as possible
- 9) Site schools as close to transit corridors as possible to encourage use of transit by students as well as employees
- 10) Design school entries with safety of walkers, bicyclists and bus riders in mind, while also designing any parking and drop-off areas with clean air around schools in mind

Schools and Transportation Panel Identified Challenges/Barriers

School Siting, Configuration, and Design Challenges/Barriers

The following challenges/barriers were identified by the North County Schools and Transportation Panel.

- 1) Some schools are not well connected to surrounding neighborhoods, making walking routes longer and circuitous – See map at end of this white paper.
- 2) Large acreage school designs separate schools from residences, increase travel distance, and discourage active travelers (walkers and bicycle riders)
- 3) Schools are not within walking/bicycling distance of large numbers of students
- 4) School sites for conventionally designed (large acreage) sites are difficult to find within the urban growth area
- 5) There is a lack of holistic and long- term assessment of costs including transportation costs for school buses; costs to households for driving students to school; community health (chronic disease susceptibility due to overweight and respiratory issues); community safety impacts (including increased traffic to and around schools); and congestion on the transportation network due to the large volume of parents or guardians driving students to school.

Did you know... Decisions about school site size and configuration are left up to local school districts. State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) guidelines are not requirements but have been identified for the purpose of documenting for the record that the school district has considered the education and physical education of the students as well as the impact on the surrounding neighborhood. OSPI school size guidelines are found in WAC 392-342-020 – See Appendix D.

Did you know... In 2007 Washington OSPI and State Department of Commerce analyzed school planning and siting issues. See Appendix E for recommendations from that process for school planning and siting and school funding relevant to the work of the Schools and Transportation Panel.

Did you know... in the 2008/2009 school year the State provided \$262 million for school transportation and school districts expended another \$370 million to cover the total cost of student transportation. (Source: Allan Jones, OSPI)

Did you know... In 2009 the Bremerton School District and City of Bremerton studied the potential for different site and size configurations for a middle school – including the possible co-location of additional community facility use. See Appendix F.



Some Opportunities to Overcome School Siting, Configuration and Design Challenges/Barriers

School districts and jurisdictions should collaborate on:

- Plans, policies and regulations affecting school siting, design of access and entryways, and infrastructure
- Cost/benefit analysis of different options for siting of schools and other public facilities – including costs to schools, households, and community, as well as community health and safety impacts – both short and long term.
- Design of access and entrances to school for the safety and health of students arriving at school. Make arrival by walking and bicycling as safe, convenient and inviting as possible. Design arrival areas to maintain as much clean air around school entrances as possible.

Did You Know...

... The Olympia School District transportation subsidy is about \$1 million/year. Eliminating a bus route can save about \$40,000/route/year but drivers serve multiple routes making consolidation complicated. (Source: Peter Rex, Olympia School District)

... Tumwater School District has observed that school bus ridership goes up and student drop-off by family car goes down when gas prices hit \$4/gallon. (Source: Mel Murray, Tumwater School District)

... When siting schools, the following factors are considered.

- Where is growth occurring?
- Are nearby schools at or near capacity?
- Can an existing facility be expanded?(Sewer/septic issues become important here)
- Could school boundary changes address growth? (Typically very disruptive, complicated and politically difficult)
- Where is land available?
- How much does land cost? (Including trade-off costs for transportation and other issues)
- Is the site accessible to students by walking and biking?
- What is the right size for the program? (Larger schools may be more efficient but research shows smaller elementary schools relate better with families and improve student performance)
- Will voters approve a bond request?

(Source: Peter Rex, presentation to Urban Corridors Task Force, 2010)

Infrastructure Challenges/Barriers

- Incomplete infrastructure (sidewalks, paths, bike lanes) and difficult or unsafe street crossings – discourage walking and biking to school even within ½ mile of school. Encouragement and safety education program success will be determined – in part – by the type and amount of infrastructure improvements within walking or biking distance to schools.
- Funds for Infrastructure improvements are scarce and focus on improvements around schools have not always been a priority.
- Responsibility for making infrastructure improvements around schools is unclear. Note: Cases related to clarifying State responsibility and definition of “basic education” are working their way through the Washington State court system. Decisions are likely to provide more clarity about what will and won’t be funded by the State.

Some Opportunities to Overcome Infrastructure Challenges/Barriers

- 1) Establish policy in all city and school district plans to build or retrofit sidewalk, paths, bike lanes that contribute to safe student travel.
- 2) Prioritize safety improvements through a walk route map development process. Walk route identification is required by Washington State for all elementary schools. TRPC is working with school districts and jurisdictions from the region to efficiently develop maps that can identify the best walk routes and priority safety improvements to make, as well as educate parents and students about safe walking, bicycling and driving.
- 3) Communicate and collaborate to make infrastructure improvements priority especially at schools with safe routes to school (SRTS) education and encouragement programs. Priority improvements should be identified by jurisdictions and school districts with priority given generally:
 - Within ¼ mile of schools
 - Within ½ mile of schools
 - Within 1 mile of schools
- 4) Work to identify and focus funding sources to make improvements around school areas – especially those with Walk & Roll type safe routes to school education and encouragement programs.
- 5) Identify opportunities to increase shorter distance route connections (such as pedestrian paths) between schools and surrounding areas to encourage active travel by students.

Note: *The City of Olympia completed a Neighborhood Connections Study in 2001 that identified possible bike and pedestrian “pathways” that connect adjoining neighborhoods and streets. Priority pathways included those for school children walking to and from school. Several of these are now being improved through the City’s Public Parks and Pathways Program (funded through private utility tax).*

Did you know... Safe Routes to School pedestrian and bicycle education programs decreased accident rates around schools by up to 49%. (Source: UC Berkeley Traffic Center)

Coordination and Cooperation Challenges/Barriers

School districts and jurisdictions are challenged to increase coordination, partnerships and advocacy opportunities. The following challenges/barriers have been identified:

- Lack of school area focused infrastructure improvements that encourage safe, active travel
- Lack of partnership on grants or other funding sources result in missed opportunity or duplication of effort
- Lack of very early facility planning coordination and cooperation discussion, especially to coordinate school district and jurisdiction planning for future schools and parks, facility co-location and shared costs opportunities is not occurring. Note: Some school districts and jurisdictions do share maintenance and use of some school ball fields .
- Lack of very early collaboration on school site design is needed - including orientation of buildings, entries, and arrival/departure areas that separate car, bus, and walk or bike arrival areas with safety and clean air in mind
- Lack of education and encouragement programs that result in too few students walking, bicycling or riding the bus
- Lack of voter education regarding joint use opportunities and community benefits of infrastructure improvements (i.e. ability to decrease traffic around schools and in neighborhoods – increase safety - and encouraging more walk, bike trips). Promoting walking and bicycling: connects communities; improves health and physical fitness; helps the environment by reducing our carbon footprint; improves mobility and provides transportation options; increases community safety by providing eyes on the street; and enhances neighborhood and business district vitality.



Some Opportunities to Overcome Coordination and Cooperation Challenges/Barriers

- 1) Incorporate school capital facility planning and coordination in jurisdiction and school district comprehensive plans
- 2) Identify school district and jurisdiction representatives responsible for sharing information regularly on school and jurisdiction capital improvement plans
- 3) Establish communication opportunities between school boards, jurisdiction policy makers, and their staff
- 4) Form a coordination team made up of multiple school district and jurisdiction representatives to maintain communication and coordination, share ideas and search for opportunities to collaborate, and attract resources

Parent Attitudes and Fear Challenges/Barriers

- 1) Perception or reality of unsafe speed and traffic along routes to school
- 2) Lack of sidewalks or bike lanes/shoulders, insufficient safety or lack of crossing guards at busy crossings
- 3) School too far away from homes
- 4) Inclement weather (parents and/or students reluctant to walk on rainy days)
- 5) Convenience - parents dropping students on their way to work (or students going to schools close to parents work instead of close to home)
- 6) Fears about criminal behavior

Some Opportunities to Overcome Parent Attitude and Fear Challenges/Barriers

- 1) Assess and address pedestrian/bicycle safety and safe school arrival areas
- 2) Support Safe Routes to School type programs (e.g., Walk & Roll) that include safety education for students and parents as well as the neighborhood and community at large. Identify ways to maintain and expand successful programs.
- 3) Raise awareness of the advantages of the school bus system and the transit network – and the fact that households are already paying for these systems and should take the opportunity to use them.
- 4) Investigate ways to support bus passes for school students where schools are within walking distance of Intercity Transit stops.
- 5) Raise awareness about the true cost of driving, travel to school alternatives, and the benefits that accrue to individuals, households and the community
- 6) Raise awareness about the links between walking, bicycling, and student health and readiness to learn
- 7) Raise awareness about the positive effects of decreased vehicle trips and car drop-off (increased safety around schools and cleaner air)
- 8) Raise awareness about the degradation of air where cars are allowed to idle especially near entrances to schools. Install anti-idling signs (from Washington State Dept of Health) at schools and educate parents about the issue.
- 9) Offer “Safety Without Fear” workshops for parents (professional child development specialists offer tips and tools for dealing with both founded and unfounded fears about children’s safety)

Did you know... The average of cost of car ownership and use is about \$8500/car/year (Source: AAA 2010 estimates of car ownership and use for a medium sized sedan driven 15,000 miles/year – with \$2.88/gal cost for gas and excluding car loan payments)

Did you know... many area schools have taken advantage of the Washington State Department of Health’s anti-Idling signs. The Walk & Roll school programs educate parents via flyers, emails and pledge programs such as “Pace Car” that gets community members to pledge to drive within the speed limit and turn off their engine even when stopping briefly.

Note: The following is an excerpt from a Candyce Lund Bollinger Safety Without Fear Presentation and Discussion as part of a Walk & Roll education and encouragement program.

Overprotection has a cost

It is costing our kids their health. The lack of exercise that they get from staying inside four walls at home results in poor health, obesity, diabetes, and lifelong health risks. There is a cost to the community. The ties of our community are severed as we all turn inward and fear each other too much to interact. Part of kids' safety is having a large circle of caring. The climate of fear results in a shrinking circle of caring. Kids are less safe because they don't know their neighbors.

Adults and children live with a constant low level of fear that makes it impossible for them to distinguish actual signs of danger and respond appropriately. We should teach our children that the world is a good place, and then when they see something that is truly unsafe, they will be able to recognize it as strange and take action to become safer.

If your kids are told that strangers are not safe, then they have no one to go to for help. Kids need to be taught to be aware of "signs of strangeness" not strangers.

Implications of addressing – or not addressing – the **challenges and barriers identified.**

Economic Implications for:

- 1) **School Districts** – School districts will continue to have responsibility for a large portion of the cost for purchasing, maintaining and operating school buses (all of which will continue to increase over time). Only schools located in close proximity to high density neighborhoods with well-connected sidewalks or paths, safe street crossings, bike lanes or ready access to transit between home and school will be able to decrease transportation costs.
- 2) **Households** – Only households living within walking, bicycling or transit service to school will be able to choose to walk, bicycle or take the transit to school. Costs to households will grow as the price of car ownership and use increases. Households driving students to school pay twice – once for a portion of the cost of school bus service and again for the cost of driving their student(s) to school.

Increase costs for health care due to chronic disease adds stress to household budgets, especially those already financially stressed.

Proximity to schools has a high value for prospective home owners.

- 3) **Community** – Traffic throughout the network increases during the school year. Large numbers of parents dropping students at school each morning increases congestion especially around schools creating traffic hazards and increasing pollution from brakes, tires and exhaust around schools. Injuries from car accidents add to cost, particularly for law enforcement and health care.

Sedentary lifestyles, poor nutrition, and degraded air quality are associated with chronic disease and long term health care costs.

Did you know...Dropping one car out of the typical household budget can allow a family to afford a \$100,000 larger mortgage. or an additional \$700/month rent. (Source: Doherty and Leinberger; Washington Monthly – Aug. 2011)

Did you know... 20% of the total Thurston County's population goes to a school or district facility each day either as an employee or a student. (Source: TRPC – 2010)

Did you know... Chronic health conditions account for 75% of health related costs. (Source: *Behavior Risk Factors Surveillance Systems, WA State Dept .of Health*)

Did you know... The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) does not support the “stranger danger” message. The majority of cases have shown most children are not taken by a stranger, but rather are abducted by someone they know. (See Appendix G)

Did you know... The Olympia School District (OSD) Conservation Management Program helped the district save resources, generated over \$1 M in grant funds and over \$.5 M in incentives and rebates. As a result the OSD saved over \$214,000 for utility cost in one year. Actions taken will continue to save 1.68 million kilowatts of electricity, 9 K therms of natural gas and 776 K cubic feet of water annually.

Social Implications (including mental and physical health)

- 1) Exercise decreases the rate of early onset chronic disease (i.e. diabetes) in youth and affects student readiness to learn.
- 2) Students who learn safe travel habits and are able to practice these skills will build important safety, independence and confidence skills as well as developing good instincts about the difference between “signs of strangeness” and strangers.
- 3) Possible social and quality of life costs result from restricted active mobility. Intercity Transit service will follow density. Schools and other community activity centers located in close proximity to transit can offer a mobility option, giving people greater opportunity to interact, socialize and participate in the life of the community. Use of school sites or co-location of facilities at schools that provide before and after school programs can decrease cost of transporting students to these programs (for household and providers) as well as decrease vehicle trips.

Environmental Implications

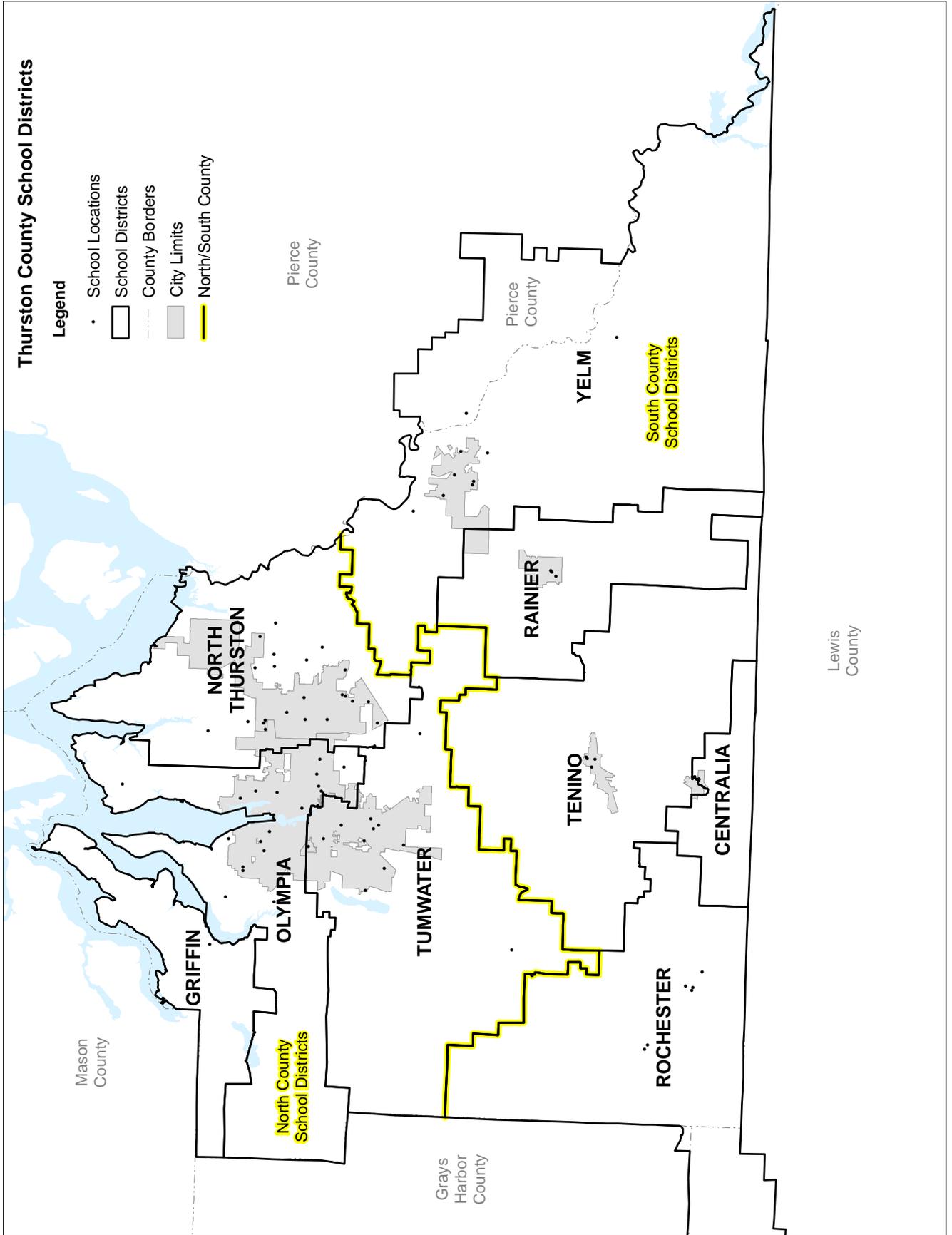
Schools are major employers and - depending on how they are sited - can be community centers of activity as well. If facilities are sited in areas that only support travel by vehicle the result will add to increasing greenhouse gas emissions, degraded air quality and auto related pollution in stream corridors from brakes, tires, exhaust and pavement.

Energy Use/Conservation Implications for School Districts

- 1) Resource Conservation Management programs have resulted in cost savings to school districts. These management positions within school districts are guaranteed by utility companies to pay for themselves through energy conservation at school buildings.
- 2) The fewer miles driven by school buses the more energy saved.

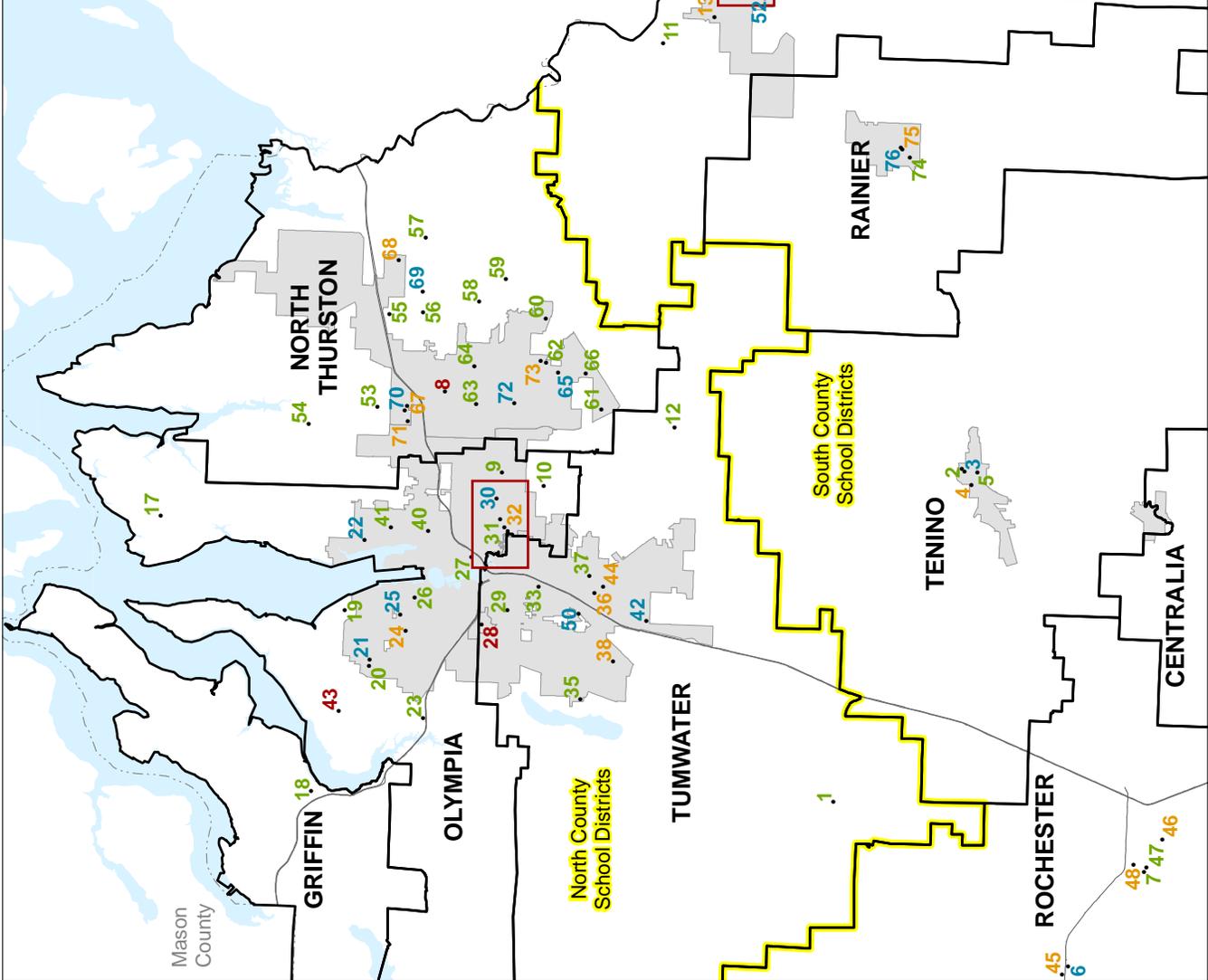
“Schools influence the reputation, quality of life, and vitality of neighborhoods. As physical infrastructure, schools have significant impacts on land development, transportation patterns, housing prices, residential choices, and water and utility demands. The location of schools has a tremendous impact on students, teachers, families, neighborhoods, and the learning environment. Thus, smart school siting outcomes are an important element in a sustainable school infrastructure program... We should look at infrastructure with regard to the benefits to our communities and our state. Our investment in public school construction plays a key role in closing the achievement gap and creating sustainable community – if we leverage the investment.” (Source: Jeffrey M. Vincent, PhD, Deputy Director Center for Cities & Schools, University of California-Berkeley)





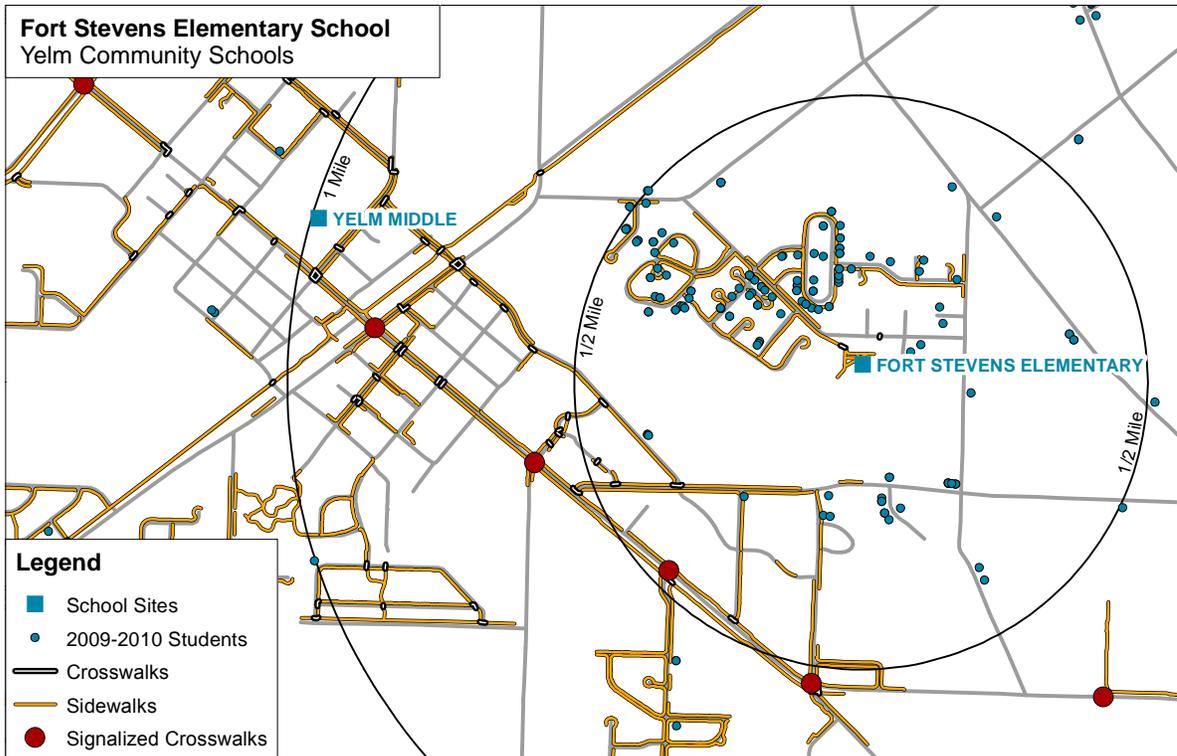
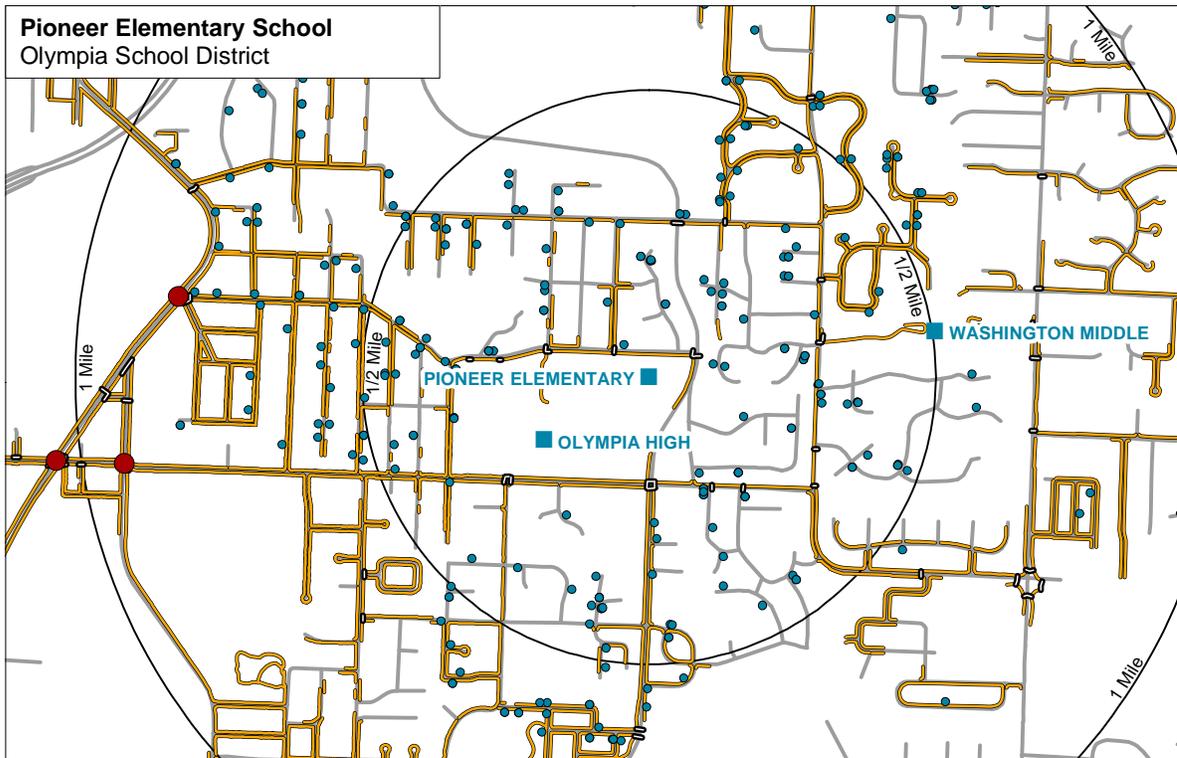
Thurston County Schools

| ID | Name | ID | Name |
|----|--------------------------|----|--------------------------------|
| 1 | LITTLE ROCK ELEMENTARY | 24 | CAPITAL HIGH |
| 2 | TENINO ELEMENTARY | 25 | JEFFERSON MIDDLE |
| 3 | TENINO MIDDLE | 26 | GARFIELD ELEMENTARY |
| 4 | TENINO HIGH | 27 | LINCOLN ELEMENTARY |
| 5 | PARKSIDE ELEMENTARY | 28 | SOUTH PUGET SOUND COMMUNITY CO |
| 6 | ROCHESTER MIDDLE | 29 | TUMWATER HILL ELEMENTARY |
| 7 | GRAND MOUND ELEMENTARY | 30 | WASHINGTON MIDDLE |
| 8 | ST MARTINS UNIVERSITY | 31 | PIONEER ELEMENTARY |
| 9 | MCKENNY ELEMENTARY | 32 | OLYMPIA HIGH |
| 10 | CENTENNIAL ELEMENTARY | 33 | MT SIMMONS ELEMENTARY |
| 11 | SOUTHWORTH ELEMENTARY | 35 | BLACK LAKE ELEMENTARY |
| 12 | EAST OLYMPIA ELEMENTARY | 36 | TUMWATER HIGH |
| 13 | YELM HIGH | 37 | PETER G SCHMIDT ELEMENTARY |
| 14 | YELM MIDDLE | 38 | BLACK HILLS HIGH |
| 15 | FORT STEVENS ELEMENTARY | 40 | MADISON ELEMENTARY |
| 16 | MILL POND ELEMENTARY | 41 | ROOSEVELT ELEMENTARY |
| 17 | BOSTON HARBOR ELEMENTARY | 42 | G W BUSH MIDDLE |
| 18 | GRIFFIN ELEMENTARY | 43 | EVERGREEN STATE COLLEGE |
| 19 | LP BROWN ELEMENTARY | 44 | NEW MARKET SKILLS CENTER |
| 20 | HANSEN ELEMENTARY | 45 | H.E.A.R.T HIGH |
| 21 | MARSHALL MIDDLE | 46 | MAPLE LANE |
| 22 | REEVES MIDDLE | 47 | ROCHESTER PRIMARY |
| 23 | MCLANE ELEMENTARY | 48 | ROCHESTER HIGH |
| | | 50 | TUMWATER MIDDLE |
| | | 52 | RIDGELINE MIDDLE |
| | | 53 | PLEASANT GLADE ELEMENTARY |
| | | 54 | SOUTH BAY ELEMENTARY |
| | | 55 | OLYMPIC VIEW ELEMENTARY |
| | | 56 | LYDIA HAWK ELEMENTARY |
| | | 57 | MEADOWS ELEMENTARY |
| | | 58 | SEVEN OAKS ELEMENTARY |
| | | 59 | EVERGREEN FOREST ELEMENTARY |
| | | 60 | WOODLAND ELEMENTARY |
| | | 61 | HORIZONS ELEMENTARY |
| | | 62 | LAKES ELEMENTARY |
| | | 63 | MT VIEW ELEMENTARY |
| | | 64 | LACEY ELEMENTARY |
| | | 65 | ASPIRE MIDDLE |
| | | 66 | CHAMBERS PRAIRIE ELEMENTARY |
| | | 67 | SOUTH SOUND HIGH |
| | | 68 | RIVER RIDGE HIGH |
| | | 69 | NISQUALLY MIDDLE |
| | | 70 | CHINOOK MIDDLE |
| | | 71 | NORTH THURSTON HIGH |
| | | 72 | KOMACHIN MIDDLE |
| | | 73 | TIMBERLINE HIGH |
| | | 74 | RAINIER PRIMARY |
| | | 75 | RAINIER HIGH |
| | | 76 | RAINIER ELEM/MIDDLE |
| | | 77 | YELM PRAIRIE ELEMENTARY |
| | | 78 | LAKAWAS ELEMENTARY |
| | | 79 | MCKENNA ELEMENTARY |



Text Indicates School Type:

- College
- High School / Alternative
- Middle School
- Elementary School



Legend

- School Sites
- 2009-2010 Students
- Crosswalks
- Sidewalks
- Signalized Crosswalks

Percent Distribution of Distances That Students Live Away From School (Fall 2010 Enrollment Data)

| Elementary School | Total Students | Students that live within: | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|----------------|----------------------------|-----|----------|-----|--------|-----|--------|---|
| | | 1/4 mile | % | 1/2 mile | % | 1 mile | % | > mile | % |
| Peter G., Tumwater | 577 | 127 | 22% | 278 | 48% | 299 | 52% | | |
| Pioneer, Olympia* | 360 | 160 | 44% | 319 | 89% | 41 | 11% | | |
| Fort Stevens, Yelm | 506 | 142 | 28% | 228 | 45% | 278 | 55% | | |
| Mill Pond, Yelm | 528 | 186 | 35% | 312 | 59% | 216 | 41% | | |

*Fall 2009 Enrolment Data

Appendices

Appendix A. Healthy Kids – Safe Streets Action plan

Appendix B. Draft Policies for Jurisdiction and School District Comprehensive Plans as recommended by Healthy Kids – Safe Streets Action Plan

Appendix C. Population Forecast by Age 2010 – 2040
Population Forecast by School District 2010 – 2030

Appendix D. School Siting and Size WAC 392-342-020

Appendix E. Excerpt from “Summary Report – First Summit on School Planning and Siting”

In December 2006, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction published “Summary Report – First Summit on School Planning and Siting.” The summit and report was the first step in addressing complexities faced by local and regional governments and school districts in successfully planning and siting new schools and providing them with infrastructure. Subsequent grants through State growth management and OSPI financed a pilot program that supported an innovative local government and school district coordination project as well as a Bremerton area school siting and school size options analysis.

Appendix F. Excerpt - Bremerton Collaborative School Siting Project

This community and consultant analysis was supported with a State grant. The 2009 report concluded that co-locating a middle school with a teen center, community center, or senior center is a good idea. An urban location was seen as best for such a facility (versus the analyzed suburban and rural site) due to its ability to serve the greatest number of citizens. The study also concluded that making the vision for the project a reality would require committed partners and active communication with the greater Bremerton Community.

Appendix G. Child Safety Is More Than A Slogan - National Center for Missing & Exploited Children

APPENDIX A.
Healthy Kids - Safe Streets Action Plan

Healthy Kids – Safe Streets Action Plan



Initiatives to encourage kids to walk, bike & bus to school

Goals

- Build a generation of safe and healthy walkers, bike riders, and bus riders
- Promote regular physical activity so students stay strong, healthy, and ready to learn
- Reinforce good traffic safety skills

The Problem

Too few students walk, bike, or take the bus. Too many parents drive students to school. Too few students get enough daily physical activity. *Did you know that 50 % of students living within a 1/2 mile of school are driven to school?*

The Result

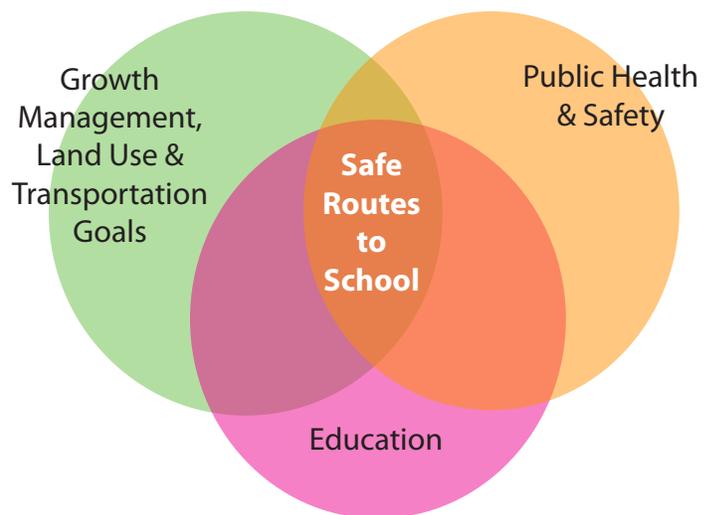
Parents driving students to school account for:

- 25% of morning peak hour traffic
- a decrease in safety, air quality, student health and readiness to learn (due to lack of exercise)
- a lack of knowledge and experience needed to be safe pedestrians and cyclists

Partners in the Plan:

Parents
Local School Districts & School Staff
Intercity Transit
Local Governments
Thurston Regional Planning Council
Thurston County Health & Social Services
Olympic Region Clean Air Agency
State Department of Transportation
State Department of Health
State Department of Commerce

Healthy Kids - Safe Streets Action Plan Achieves Shared Goals



This Action Plan results from school and community stakeholder ideas and Walk & Roll demonstration project findings. The plan identifies strategies, programs and policies that address school, transportation, and community health issues.

Healthy Kids - Safe Streets Action Plan

Next Steps

- 1. Review of Action Plan.** Stakeholder groups commit to take action and identify advocates.
- 2. Create a Safe Routes to School Coordination Team** to advocate for the Action Plan initiatives; apply for funding to support programs and infrastructure improvements; and serve as a resource for school site analysis. Identify a facilitator for the team. Members should include at least school districts, and jurisdiction planning/public works. Adjunct representation should include Thurston County Health & Social Services, Intercity Transit and Thurston Regional Planning Council.
- 3. Identify a Safe Routes liaison within each school district** to act as a contact with school principals to develop the required Safe Routes Walking and Biking map and possible expansion of the Walk & Roll program.
- 4. Complete Safe Routes Walking and Biking Map for each school in the county.** State law requires Safe Routes maps for all schools by September 2013. Determine responsibility and most effective and efficient way to complete maps. Identify safety improvements as part of the process.

Programs to Develop or Expand

- 1. Develop Walk & Roll program template and "How To" manual** for program expansion to additional schools.
- 2. Identify ways to sustain and build Walk & Roll type school-based incentive programs at additional schools.**
- 3. Identify funds needed to support staff and program** such as stipends for school coordinators or incentive programs.

Policies to Incorporate in Plans

School District and Local Government:

- 1. Establish early communication about infrastructure improvements** to identify opportunities to collaborate, co-locate or connect facilities to encourage walking, biking, and transit use.
- 2. Consider the long range costs and benefits of school siting decisions** including long term transportation costs to the community as a whole (school districts, households), and the costs and benefits to student health.

- 3. Collaborate on school design and infrastructure improvements** at the beginning of the design process to maximize opportunities for walking, biking and transit use.

State:

- 1. Advocate state policy change for school siting guidelines.**
- 2. Encourage state policy change related to school retrofit and maintenance.**
- 3. Add state policy or incentive to locate schools on transit routes or within walking distance of large student populations.**
- 4. Advocate for state policy directive to contribute to infrastructure improvements and programs** targeted to students living within a mile of school – instead of yellow school bus funding in these areas.

For more information, including draft policy language, go to <http://www.trpc.org/regionalplanning/transportation/projects/Pages/HealthyKidsSafeStreets.aspx>

The "Five E's" - Strategies for Healthy Kids - Safe Streets

Education

Teach children about the broad range of transportation choices; instruct them in lifelong bicycle and walking safety skills; and launch driver safety campaigns near schools.

- Integrate bicycle, pedestrian, and transit education into school curriculum. ***SD**
- Assist school districts in creating Safe Routes Walking and Biking Map for each school per state law. **SD, TRPC, CO, PTO**
- Create a community outreach plan to raise awareness and promote walking and biking to school. **SD, IT, LG, CO**
- Address parental concerns through outreach campaign. **PTO**

Encouragement

Use events and activities to promote walking and bicycling.

- Maintain and expand existing school-based encouragement programs like Walk & Roll. **SD, IT, LG, TRPC, PTO**
- Identify a leader within the school to coordinate bike and walk programs. **SD**
- Hold annual study sessions with school boards to review new walking, biking, and transit related initiatives. **SD, SRTS**
- Identify a funding source to provide subsidized transit passes for the school community. **IT, SD**
- Establish a school district policy to give physical education credits to students for walking and biking. **SD**
- Support state and local policies encouraging flexible work hours so parents can walk or bike with children. **S**

Enforcement

Partner with local law enforcement and community programs to increase awareness, slow speeds, and increase traffic safety.

- Slow speeds and reduce idling through "Pace Car" campaign. Drivers pledge to drive within the speed limit and not idle. **IT, TRPC, SD, NA, PTO**
- Initiate a Walking School Bus (either school or parent-run) to give more students an opportunity to walk with an adult leader. **SD, PTO, CO**
- Analyze the effect of shifting school start time by 15 minutes to alter traffic volume and increase safety for biking and walking. **SD, LG, CO**
- Work with high schools to develop alternatives to drive alone vehicle use and encourage closed campuses at lunch to enhance student safety. **S**

Engineering

Improve opportunities to walk & bike through school siting & design of walkways, bikeways, & street connections.

- Adopt a policy for school districts and jurisdictions on school and community facility siting and infrastructure planning and design. **SD, LG**
- Advocate changes to state policies relating to school size, school siting guidelines, and transportation funding to encourage easily accessible neighborhood schools. **SRTS**
- Make sidewalks, bike lanes, lighting and crossing improvements a high priority within 1/2 mile of schools. **S**
- Separate modes of travel at arrival points at schools to avoid bike and pedestrian conflicts with cars. **SD, LG**

Evaluation

Monitor and document trends and outcomes to identify the most effective strategies.

- Survey families annually to track successes and identify challenges. Administer the Safe Routes to School Survey through schools. **SD, PTO, SRTS**
- Engage Parent Leaders. Create a Walk & Roll Parent Steering Committee to plan and share ideas between and among schools. **PTO, SRTS**
- Seek input and leadership from school staff, parents and students to fit strategies and messages to each school's needs. **PTO, SRTS**
- Track vehicle use reductions around schools to monitor success of walking and biking initiatives. **CO, LG, SRTS**



Walk & Roll is a grant supported project demonstrating how to build and sustain partnerships that will result in a new generation of healthy

and safe walkers, cyclists and bus riders and reduce trips to and around school. "Walking & Wheeling Wednesdays" are part of the project.



* STAKEHOLDERS

CO - Community Organizations
IT - Intercity Transit
LG - Local Government
NA - Neighborhood Associations
PTO - Parent-Teacher Organizations

S - Stakeholders
SD - School District
SRTS - Safe Routes to School Coordination Team
TRPC - Thurston Regional Planning Council

Testimonials

"This is really good because we need to get our kids healthy and doing active things at home and at school."

-Elementary school parent on International Walk to School Day

"It was a wonderful morning for the two of us to have the time to walk and notice the little things in the neighborhood."

-Elementary school parent

"We rode our bikes this morning. It was freezing, but it was great fun!"

-Madison Elementary parent on a Walking & Wheeling Wednesday

Did You Know...

40 years ago, 50% of students walked or rode bikes to school. Today fewer than 15% travel on their own steam.

Over the last 40 years, childhood obesity has gone from 4% to 17% (2008 figure). In the last decade, obesity in youth has doubled.

By the end of the Walk & Roll program's first year, 57% of students walked or cycled to school and only 17% arrived by car. At the beginning of the year 47% arrived by car and only 24% walked or cycled.

Partnerships and Success Stories

Problem: How to build a generation of safe and healthy walkers, bike riders and bus riders

Action Taken:

Walk & Roll school-based encouragement demonstration programs at three elementary schools included: monthly flyers with walk/bike safety tips; "Walking & Wheeling Wednesday" encouragement, prizes for participation, contests, safety assemblies.

Walk & Roll Program Partnership included Thurston Regional Planning Council, Intercity Transit, Olympia School District and Madison, Roosevelt, and Pioneer elementary schools, Safe Kids, City of Olympia, State Department of Transportation - Highways and Local Programs – Safe Routes to School, U.S. Centers for Disease Control and State Department of Health.



Problem: Overcoming barriers regarding student travel to school

Safety Issue

Action Taken:

- "Stranger danger" fears addressed at two Walk & Roll sponsored "Safety Without Fear" interactive forums with a child development specialist.
- Pedestrian and bike safety education through monthly Walk & Roll event flyers, special walk/bike safety classes for students and parents, school safety assemblies with visits by police and Intercity Transit Youth Program coordinator.
- New "Pace Car" and Anti-Idling pledge program to slow driving speeds and promote clean air.
- Initiation of Walking School Bus with several parents walking with a group of students to and from school.
- Identification of infrastructure safety issues.

Distance Issue (i.e. too far to walk/bike)

Action Taken:

- Walk & Roll program focuses on urban schools and students living within a mile of school.
- Walk & Roll program addresses issues and supports a culture of changed attitudes toward student travel to school throughout the school community.
- Walk & Roll program encourages:
 - students traveling by bus to take the long way around the block to get to and from the bus stop;
 - students who must be driven encouraged to park several blocks from school and walk in.
- Action Plan recognizes the importance of school siting. The Plan recommends that school site cost/benefit analysis consider long term student transportation costs and the benefits of making walking and biking to school possible for more students.



Weather Issue

Action Taken:

- Walk & Roll encouragement programs, prizes and contests resulted in participation no matter what kind of weather. Ongoing survey data continues to inform the process.

For more information:

On Youth Programs, contact: **Erin Scheel**
Intercity Transit Youth Education Specialist
360-705-5839 or escheel@intercitytransit.com

On Action Plan, contact: **Kathy McCormick**
Thurston Regional Planning Council Senior Planner, AICP
360-956-7575 or mccormk@trpc.org

Healthy Kids – Safe Streets Action Plan**Draft School District and Local Plan Policy Recommendations****School District and Local Jurisdiction Plans**

- 1. Add policy to school district and local plans** establishing a communication process among stakeholders at the earliest stages of planning for new or retrofit infrastructure (school sites, park sites, bike, pedestrian and bus network)

“Representatives of school districts, local planning, public works, park departments and Intercity Transit should be identified and agree to meet at the very earliest stages of planning for new facilities (i.e. schools, additions to - or maintenance of - the transportation network, or siting of parks) in order to consider benefits of collaboration, connections or co-location of facilities that encourage walking, biking or transit use.”

- 2. Add policy commitment to school district and local plans** to examine long range cost/benefit analysis of school siting decisions. Include long term transportation costs to the community as a whole (school district, households), and the cost/benefit to students able to walk and bike to school.

“School district and local planning representatives will work to identify long term/holistic costs/benefits of various school siting options in order to maximize both short and long term goals for student health, as well as efficient use of land and local resources. Use tools such as Health Impact Assessment (HIA) for evaluating the health effects of a policy, project or program and invite local health officials into the process.”

- 3. Add policy language to school district and local plans** for early coordination between school district and local planning representative for design discussions of school layout, bike, pedestrian and transit linkages and focused infrastructure improvements (that result in safe walking, biking and fewer vehicle miles traveled to school). This should include drop-off and pickup areas that separate vehicles from walk and bike arrival areas; and front entrance overhangs for bike parking protection, with adjacent windows and occupied spaces that can preclude bicycle theft.

- “School districts, local planning, public works departments, and transit agencies will work collaboratively early in the design stages of new or retrofit school sites to maximize safety and increase health and wellbeing of students and neighborhoods by establishing safe walking and biking networks, connections and safe arrival areas.”*
- “School districts and jurisdiction planners will make improvements around schools a high priority within 1 mile of school – focusing effort within ½ mile whenever possible.”*
- “School districts should enter into agreements to use parking lots with light use - during school drop-off and pick-up times (i.e. church parking lots) - that are within walking*

distance of schools, to assure cleaner air around schools and encourage all students to get some exercise.” Church parking lots located within walking distance of schools are already serving some school districts. Oak Harbor has a walking school bus program from a church parking lot site in action now.

- d. *“Identify where added bike/pedestrian connections – such as linked cul-de-sacs – can encourage walking and biking from the neighborhood to schools and other destinations.”*

Action for policy discussion and agreement of 1-3 above: Convene a discussion group of the school district, jurisdiction and other stakeholders to:

- e. Review draft policy language and get agreement to include policies in plan update processes;
- f. Consider collaboration to identify ways to better fund infrastructure improvements to and around schools;
- g. Consider pulling resources to jointly apply for grants for infrastructure improvements;
- h. Consider smaller school site templates where collaboration can supply some shared facilities instead of requiring large tracts of land (i.e. shared sport facilities rather than large acreage school sites that drive schools to fringe areas where walking and biking by many students is difficult or impossible.)

APPENDIX C.

Population Forecast by Age 2010-2040
Population Forecast by School District 2010-2030

**Population Forecast by Age Cohorts
Thurston County, 2010-2035**

| | 2010 | 2015 | 2020 | 2025 | 2030 | 2035 |
|--------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Age | Total | Total | Total | Total | Total | Total |
| 5 to 9 | 15,629 | 16,845 | 18,452 | 19,551 | 20,768 | 21,817 |
| 10 to 14 | 16,559 | 17,234 | 19,504 | 21,065 | 22,362 | 23,617 |
| 15 to 19 | 17,216 | 17,785 | 19,704 | 21,817 | 23,558 | 24,933 |
| Total | 49,404 | 51,864 | 57,660 | 62,433 | 66,688 | 70,367 |

Source: TRPC Profile, 2012

**Population Estimate and Forecast by School District, Thurston County
2000-2035**

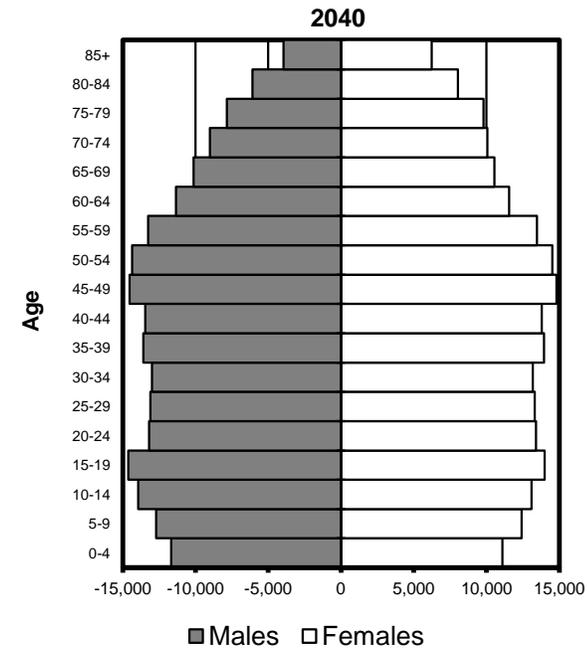
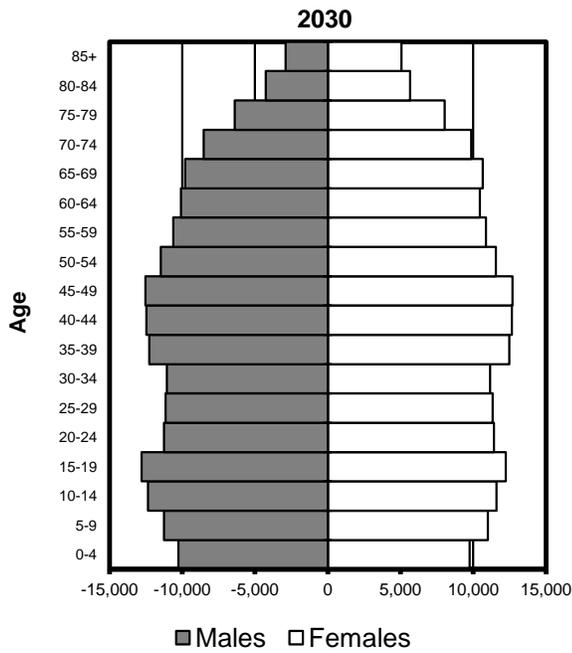
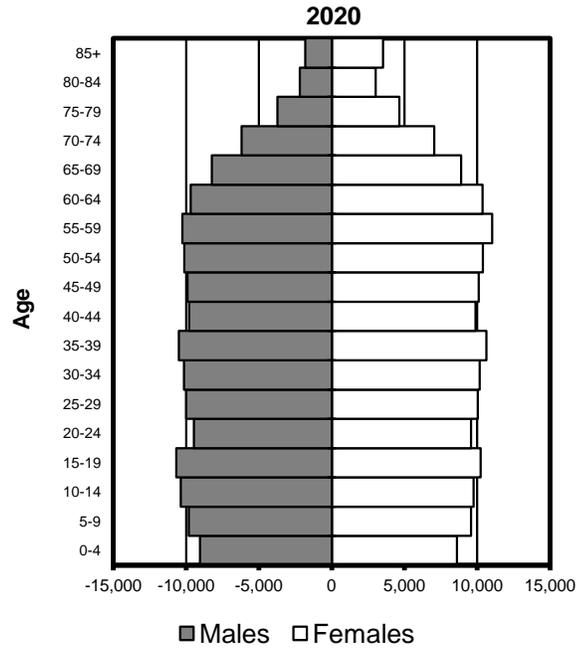
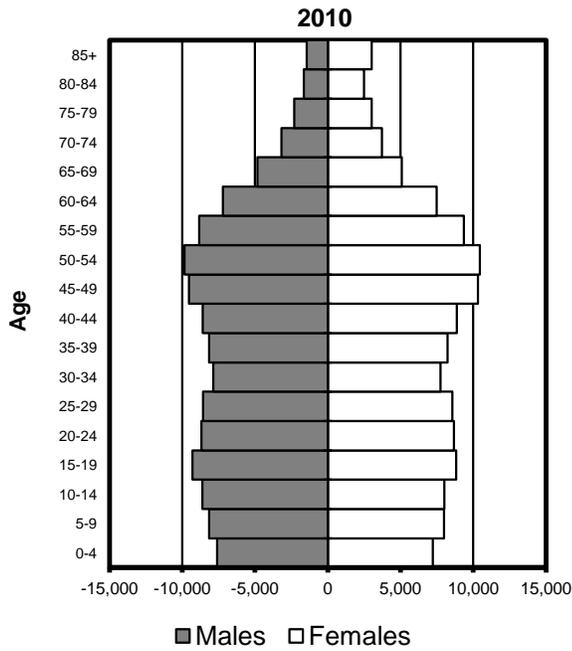
| School District | Estimate | | | Preliminary Estimate | Forecast | | | | |
|-----------------|----------|--------|--------|----------------------|----------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | 2000 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2015 | 2020 | 2025 | 2030 | 2035 |
| Centralia | 390 | 490 | 490 | 490 | 500 | 530 | 640 | 840 | 1,030 |
| Griffin | 5,360 | 5,810 | 5,820 | 5,850 | 5,970 | 6,110 | 6,240 | 6,370 | 6,550 |
| North Thurston | 76,210 | 94,140 | 94,800 | 95,980 | 98,690 | 109,600 | 117,450 | 124,840 | 131,200 |
| Olympia | 54,540 | 61,580 | 61,970 | 62,780 | 65,150 | 70,430 | 75,560 | 80,470 | 84,040 |
| Rainier | 4,050 | 5,060 | 5,100 | 5,120 | 5,260 | 6,500 | 8,600 | 10,660 | 12,130 |
| Rochester | 10,750 | 13,900 | 13,930 | 13,810 | 14,140 | 14,690 | 15,500 | 16,350 | 17,270 |
| Tenino | 8,140 | 9,580 | 9,590 | 9,650 | 9,910 | 10,350 | 11,440 | 13,060 | 14,280 |
| Tumwater | 30,820 | 36,680 | 37,100 | 37,600 | 39,680 | 45,650 | 51,050 | 56,340 | 59,840 |
| Yelm | 17,090 | 25,030 | 25,300 | 25,520 | 27,150 | 32,010 | 35,680 | 39,620 | 44,240 |

Source: Thurston Regional Planning Council - Small Area Population Estimates and Population and Employment Forecast 2012.

Explanations: These data represent total residents in district, not just school age children. Data is for Thurston County portion of school districts only. Griffin adjusted for year 2015.

See Map 5 for School District boundaries.

Population Pyramids, Thurston County, 1980-2040



Sources: 1980, 1990 and 2000 Census, 1985, 2005, 2005 OFM Estimates, and TRPC - Population and Employment Forecast Work Program, 2009.
Explanation: See Table II-10 for supporting data.

APPENDIX D.
School Siting and Size WAC 392-342-020

WAC 392-342-020

Site review and evaluation.

The superintendent of public instruction together with the school district shall conduct a review and evaluation of sites for new and existing state funding assisted projects. In selecting sites for schools, a district shall consider the following:

(1) The property upon which the school facility is or will be located is free of all encumbrances that would detrimentally interfere with the construction, operation, and useful life of the facility;

(2) The site is of sufficient size to meet the needs of the facility. The minimum acreage of the site should be five usable acres and one additional usable acre for each one hundred students or portion thereof of projected maximum enrollment plus an additional five usable acres if the school contains any grade above grade six. A district considering the use of a site that is less than the recommended minimum usable acreage should assure that:

(a) The health and safety of the students will not be in jeopardy;

(b) The internal spaces within the proposed facility will be adequate for the proposed educational program;

(c) The neighborhood in which the school facility is or will be situated will not be detrimentally impacted by lack of parking for students, employees, and the public; and

(d) The physical education and recreational program requirements will be met.

(3) A site review or predesign conference has been conducted with all appropriate local code agencies in order to determine design constraints;

(4) A geotechnical engineer has conducted a limited subsurface investigation to gather basic information regarding potential foundation and subgrade performance.

APPENDIX E.
Excerpt from “Summary Report - first Summit on School Planning and Siting”



Summary Report

First Summit on School Planning and Siting in Washington ■ Highline Community College ■ February 2007

Summary Report

First Summit on School Planning and Siting

Prepared for:
Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
P.O. Box 47200
Olympia, WA 98504

Prepared by:



Jones & Stokes
711 South Capitol Way, Suite 504
Olympia, WA 98501
Contact: Meg O'Leary
(360) 357-6817

February 2007

This document should be cited as:
Jones & Stokes. 2007. Summary Report. First Summit on School Planning and Siting. December 2006. (J&S 61022.06.)
Olympia, WA. Prepared for Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. February.

A message regarding some content in this First Summit Summary report from the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI):

Conclusions in this report reflect participants' impression of present laws and procedures. Sometimes, these impressions conflicted with actual rules and procedures. One issue this raises is the need for improved communication of the reality of the present responsibilities, rules and procedures. This maybe a necessary first step before developing solutions to the issues raised in this report. Some examples are cited below:

- 1) **Changes to Rules are made by the Legislature:** Whereas the legislature does make laws which are embodied in the Revised Code of Washington (RCW), the Washington Administrative Code (WAC) can be altered by the state agency authorized by the legislature. Some elements of the report seek to have the legislature amend WAC's, but actually OSPI (until recently, the State Board of Education) and CTED would perform this task.
- 2) **Current Methodology used to Determine "Unhoused Students" is not Based on Projected Needs:** Actually the determination of the area needed is based on housing the student enrollment projected typically 5 years into the future, so the issue is more complex:
 - a) OSPI uses the "Cohort Survival" method to project student enrollments, a nationally accepted but conservative methodology that it uses trends of the previous 5 years' actual enrollments to project the next 5 years. This is in contrast to the OFM econometric based projections used by cities and counties. The cohort survival method minimizes the impact of sudden changes in population, such as military base reconfigurations or master planned communities.
 - b) The calculation of "Unhoused Students" also includes a space-per-student allocation (SSA). The SSA was recently restored by the legislature to levels of the early 1980's, but is still below current national numbers and many local districts' needs.
- 3) **Perception that Current Minimum Site Size "Standards" favors Larger School Sites outside Urban Areas:** WAC 392-342-020 establishes a threshold of site acreages for the purpose of the school district, documenting for the record that it has considered the education and physical education of the students as well as the impact on the surrounding neighborhood, etc. Therefore these are guidelines, not standards that must be adhered to. Further, the implementation of High Performance Buildings Program legislation mandates use of either the Washington Sustainable Schools Protocol (WSSP) or the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver protocol, both of which have criteria that encourage in-fill sites.

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| Introduction | 1 |
| Summit Purpose..... | 1 |
| Summit Organization and Participation..... | 2 |
| School Siting Issues and Challenges..... | 4 |
| School Siting Recommendations | 6 |
| Summit Recommendation Letters..... | 8 |
| Annotated Bibliography..... | 19 |

Appendices

- Appendix A. Summit Information
- Appendix B. Clark County Quality Schools Task Force Materials
- Appendix C. Safe Neighborhood Planning Pilot Project, Spokane
- Appendix D. Executive Order 06-02: Regulatory Improvement

Acronyms

| | |
|------|---|
| CTED | Washington State Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development |
| DAHP | Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation |
| DOH | Washington State Department of Health |
| GMA | Growth Management Act |
| OFM | Washington State Office of Financial Management |
| OSPI | Washington State Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction |
| SEPA | Washington State Environmental Policy Act |

Introduction

Planning and siting schools in Washington State involves local school districts, local county and city governments and state agencies. The current process for planning new or expanded schools, obtaining sites and permits for constructing schools, and providing supporting infrastructure to the schools faces many challenges as well as opportunities for improvement.

In response to these challenges, the Washington State Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development (CTED) and the Washington State Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) sponsored the first statewide summit on school siting on Monday, December 4, 2006, at Highline Community College in Des Moines, Washington.

This report provides a discussion about the conditions prompting the summit, a summary of proceedings, and recommendations from summit participants. It is organized into three sections:

1. The purpose and format of the summit, and a list of the key issues and challenges faced by school districts and local government planners, transportation engineers, and public health officials in planning for and siting schools.
2. Recommendation “letters” to the state legislature, state agencies, local governments, and school districts with suggestions about how to improve the school siting process.
3. An annotated bibliography and several appendices. The bibliography includes reference materials from other communities about school siting issues. The appendices include summit materials, a list of panelists, a case study and other resource materials.

Summit Purpose

The increasing complexity of school planning and siting prompted the need for statewide assessment and problem solving. Common trends such as permit delays, lack of adequate funding for school construction, and the challenges of securing suitable land were emerging and creating challenges for the many organizations and individuals involved in school siting and planning activities. The rise of these local issues to the state level led to the introduction of bills in the 2005 and 2006 legislative sessions, one of which proposed the creation of a public school facilities element under the growth management act. Though the bills failed to pass, the issues relating to school planning and siting are regarded as one of the key policy priorities among legislators, CTED and OSPI.

In 2005, CTED earmarked funds within their Regional Collaboration Competitive Grants program to finance a pilot project for innovative local government and school district coordination. The Clark County Quality Schools Task Force was awarded the grant in 2006.

For the last few years CTED and OSPI have been jointly seeking opportunities to improve coordination between school districts and local governments (including city and county planners, transportation engineers, public health officials and other relevant departments) in providing for schools. After consultation with stakeholders to gauge interest in a statewide forum, CTED and OSPI convened a summit with representatives from state agencies, local governments, and school districts. The purpose of the summit was to identify and assess key issues and challenges, discuss potential solutions, and determine next steps. Particular topics of interest included the impacts of school facilities on existing community infrastructure and public services and strategies to better align the planning of school facilities with community and regional comprehensive planning efforts.

The summit is a first step to addressing the complexities faced by local and regional governments and school districts in successfully planning and siting new schools and providing them with support infrastructure. In addition to identifying the key issues and challenges and initiating a discussion about potential solutions, the summit provided an opportunity to share information, build relationships and develop common understanding about issues faced by agencies involved in school siting.

Summit Organization and Participation

The summit drew together over 80 participants from a variety of backgrounds including state agencies (CTED, OSPI, DOH, DAHP), school districts, local and regional governments, elected officials, school board members, consultants, building industry and construction associations, and school task force members. The daylong summit included four panel presentations, two working group sessions, and facilitator reports on the group session highlights. The summit agenda and complete lists of panelists and participants are included in Appendix A.

Panel Presentations

The twenty-minute panel presentations offered the local government and school district perspectives, and set the stage for more in-depth discussion and problem solving in the afternoon working group sessions.

School Planning & Siting Panel

Three panel speakers discussed the lack of coordination between state agencies, local governments and school districts; the challenge of acquiring land for new schools; site assessments; land-banking; enrollment projections; transportation and

accessibility; and the assertion that neighborhood-centered schools are best. Recommendations and insights included viewing schools as public facilities; improving interagency communication and collaboration; adopting school district capital facility plans by reference in comprehensive plans; and streamlining the permit process.

Panelists included Forrest Miller, Director of Support Services at Lake Washington School District; Mike McCormick, planning consultant; and Barbara Wright, Deputy Director of the Environmental Division of Seattle/King County Public Health.

Permitting Processes Panel

Two panel speakers discussed the need for local control of permitting; involving key decision-makers early on; establishing and maintaining interagency communication; simplifying and streamlining permit process.

One case study was presented in order to underscore the complexity of the permitting process. Construction of one new 62,500 sq. ft. elementary school inside the UGA involved 15 agencies, 17 permits and approvals, and \$150,000 in permitting fees (the contract award was \$22.5 million). The consequences of delay were estimated at \$130,000 per month (assuming \$20 million project at 8% per year). In addition, delays often prompt installation of portable classrooms, which adversely impacts the learning environment.

Panelists included Michael Gunn, Director of Facilities and Planning for the Everett School District, and John Doan, City of Sumner Administrator.

Fiscal Impacts and Finance Panel

Panelists discussed how capital projects are funded, and explained the relative benefits and challenges of each funding source. For example, state matches are not available until the school is overcrowded, and they only pay a small portion of construction costs. Voter-approved bonds and capital levies require a fixed schedule and offer minimal flexibility for project scope expansion. Panelists also discussed the cascading challenges of timing land purchase with bond approval, overcrowding with state match eligibility, state matches with commitment of funds, and commitment of funds with the actual receipt of funds. It was recommended that the state legislature and state agencies improve the current system in order to provide adequate funds for school planning, siting and construction.

Speakers included Debra Aungst, Puyallup School District Assistant Superintendent and Mike Bailey, City of Renton Finance and Information Services Administrator.

Clark County Quality Schools Task Force Panel

The lunch break included a panel of representatives from Clark County, who shared their experiences with the Clark County Quality Schools Task Force, a pilot project

funded by the CTED Regional Collaboration Competitive Grants program. The task force, which has been meeting since early August 2006, was established to address the impacts of growth on K–12 capital facilities. The primary focus of the task force has been to identify how quality education might be made available for all children in appropriate facilities at the time they enroll. Clark County Quality Schools Task Force purpose and protocol materials are included in Appendix B.

Presenters included Marty Snell, Clark County Community Planning Director; John Deeder, Evergreen School District Superintendent; and Steve Madsen, Government Affairs Director for Building Industry Association of Clark County.

Working Group Sessions

Following the morning panel presentations, summit participants were organized into two working groups. Each group was led by a facilitator and asked to identify issues and challenges for each of the three topic areas—planning and siting, permitting processes, and fiscal impacts. After lunch, summit participants were organized into two new groups and asked to identify potential short- and long-term actions that could be taken to address the issues and challenges identified earlier in the day. They were also asked to identify specific responsibilities for the state legislature, state agencies, local governments, and school districts.

At the end of the summit, Senator Jim Kastama, Washington State Senate, shared brief remarks about school siting issues.

School Siting Issues and Challenges

Participants agreed that school facilities are an essential element of a healthy community. In addition to their primary role in providing an environment conducive for education, school facilities contribute to neighborhood identity, provide a location for informal and formal recreation activities, and can be a focal point for communities. Because of these public benefits, planning and siting of school facilities is an important function of both general-purpose governments and school districts throughout Washington. However, the current process for planning new or expanded schools faces many challenges.

Summit panelists described some of these challenges and their experiences in planning and siting new schools, providing the backdrop for meeting participants to identify and further elaborate on key issues and challenges. Several themes emerged from the issues identification exercises that help provide context for the recommendations that follow.

Need for Collaboration and Shared Understanding

Summit participants shared a variety of issues related to the challenges of effective collaboration. One prevalent issue is the lack of understanding among most school

districts of the roles, responsibilities and challenges faced by local governments. Conversely, local governments have limited knowledge about the same issues for school districts. Certain practical considerations make it difficult and expensive to coordinate efficiently. Some school districts are served by multiple jurisdictions and some jurisdictions are served by several school districts. This increases the complexities involved in population and enrollment forecasting, land use decision-making, efficient co-use of facilities, and coordinated permitting. Another barrier to effective collaboration is the lack of time and resources.

Local government plans and decisions about development frequently do not include thorough consideration of schools; likewise school district plans and acquisition of school sites typically do not include full consideration of local government land use plans and development approvals. It was noted that school districts often wait too long to coordinate with local governments about the development process and that local governments are not always clear on the full requirements and conditions of certain permits. The “time” factor was also mentioned—both groups of organizations face heavy workloads, diminishing resources, and an expectant public that demands results. There is not enough time to complete their respective assignments, let alone spend time understanding or assisting one another.

New Approaches to School Siting

Changing demographics and needs over time force school districts to abandon unused facilities in one area and stock up on temporary portables in another. Participants noted that the state system for school planning and funding is traditional and prescribed—it is inflexible, does not encourage creativity, and has not responded to changes over time. School districts and local governments identified the need to plan more effectively for the long-term, not just for the immediate “un-housed” student population.

The state’s current minimum acreage standards for new schools favors larger school sites (WAC Chapter 392-342, Section 392-342-020). Due to the high cost of land in urban areas, schools often find land on the fringes of urban growth areas where it is more plentiful and less expensive. This leads to inefficient and costly provision of services and is in direct conflict with the state’s Growth Management Act (GMA). In addition, there is little incentive to consider smaller school sites, to locate schools within mixed-used developments, to jointly construct and/or use facilities, and to consider creative strategies to integrate and recognize schools as an important community asset.

Funding

Funding issues included a review of the state match program, creative ways to purchase land, elimination of the supermajority for bond issues, and joint use and construction of facilities.

Impact fees were also discussed. Some participants noted that impact fees do not cover the real costs of school construction, that they face significant opposition from developers, and that they are not a panacea for overall school funding shortfalls. Participants pointed out that impact fees are not being used to finance new school construction—which is the intent—but rather, they are paying for temporary, portable classrooms. Some recommended a review of impact fee use throughout the state to understand how effectively and broadly they are used and whether their use could be expanded.

Other broad funding concerns included state funding for education, limited resources for ongoing maintenance, and legislative budget priorities for funding for schools.

Community Impacts

Many issues were shared from a community health and safety perspective. Participants discussed the various reasons why many students do not walk to school and how to encourage more walking and biking. Many of these comments revolved around the Safe Routes to Schools grant program and ideas about how this could be used more effectively to reduce vehicle trips.

Participants mentioned the need to identify and protect cultural and archaeological resources, as well as recognize the value of historical resources through the school planning and siting process. Other concerns included the social, environmental, and potential health costs of siting schools in less than desirable locations.

Permitting

Issues with permitting include multiple agencies, multiple permits, conflicting permit approval timeframes, unclear requirements, changes in permit conditions, staff changes throughout the permit process, and regulatory standards that are too expensive to implement. In addition, others mentioned that the permit process is too long, is costly, and is difficult to synchronize with school construction dates. It was noted that local governments typically do not provide incentives for infill development and often require costly improvements not directly related to school impacts, and that flexibility is limited in zoning and development standards.

School Siting Recommendations

In the working group breakout sessions, summit participants were asked to identify specific short- and long-term solutions and the responsibilities of various agencies in carrying out these actions. A summary of key short-term recommendations is listed below; followed by more detailed recommendations to the Washington State Legislature, state agencies, cities and counties and school districts.

Key Short-Term Recommendations

Washington State Legislature

- Revise the Growth Management Act to include a school element in all local government comprehensive plans.
- Revise the population projection and enrollment forecast allocation process (WAC Chapter 392-343, Section 392-343-045).
- Develop more accurate ways of predicting under- and over-enrollment.
- Revise acreage standards for new schools (WAC Chapter 392-342, Section 392-342-020).
- Develop policies that favor remodeling existing schools and encourage selection of infill sites for new schools.
- Create and fund a task force to address school siting issues.
- Change Washington State law to require a simple majority to pass bonds for school construction.
- Eliminate the sales tax on public school construction materials.
- Eliminate unfunded mandates.
- Increase “Safe Routes to Schools” grant funding.
- Provide financial incentives for schools sited inside urban growth boundaries.
- Provide financial incentives for preservation, rehabilitation, and/or reuse of historic schools

Washington State Agencies

- Encourage and financially support collaboration among agencies involved in school siting issues.
- Change “basis of future needs” to include projected enrollment, not just currently “un-housed students.
- Provide financial incentives for collaboration.
- Consider a statewide review of impact fees and whether the use of impact fees should be expanded.
- Review streamlined permitting efforts of other agencies and identify potential solutions for permit streamlining.
- Provide statewide leadership in addressing school siting issues.
- Develop technical assistance tools to support collaborative school siting.
- Develop a “health impact assessment” to better incorporate data.

Washington Counties and Cities

- Propose interagency agreements with local school districts to identify roles, responsibilities, and communication protocols for school planning.
- Consider policy and development guidelines revisions that support schools development, value schools as an important community asset and integrate schools into the community.
- In cooperation with school districts, seek opportunities for private sector engagement in the process of planning, siting, and funding schools.
- Build internal knowledge about school siting issues. Sharing information is essential to understanding the opportunities and challenges of other organizations.
- Create an expedited permit review process for schools.

Washington School Districts

- Develop, in coordination with local governments, interagency agreements to identify roles, responsibilities, and communication protocols for school planning.
- Include bicycle and pedestrian safety in educational curriculum to encourage non-vehicular transportation to schools.
- Build internal knowledge about school siting issues.
- Work with local governments to develop a streamlined permitting process.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

By 2013 Bremerton will need a new middle school. The District will be 150 students over its middle school capacity by 2013 and 375 over by 2020. An analysis of this projected growth shows that it is likely to occur in West Bremerton.

IF A SCHOOL IS NECESSARY, WHY NOT CO-LOCATE OTHER COMMUNITY FUNCTIONS WITH IT?

\$ THE GRANT \$

THE CITY OF BREMERTON AND BREMERTON SCHOOL DISTRICT RECEIVED A STATE GRANT TO STUDY THE IDEA.

THE PROCESS

THE COMMITTEE

CITIZENS FROM ALL OVER BREMERTON COME TOGETHER TO TALK ABOUT CO-LOCATION.

THE COMMITTEE ESTABLISHED THE GOALS A CO-LOCATED FACILITY SHOULD MEET.

THE GOALS

- Community pride, support revitalization of Bremerton
- Part of a neighborhood center, support comprehensive plan
- Create a great school and improve academic environment
- Bring community together and expand opportunities
- Create a project that receives broad community support
- Maximize capital, financially responsible
- Efficient use of resources
- Synergy of services working together
- 360 degree service for students
- Visible, public, central
- Environmentally sensitive

IDENTIFY USES

community center, teen center, middle school, senior center, OTHER?

WHAT USES WOULD BE GOOD TO CO-LOCATE WITH A MIDDLE SCHOOL?

WHAT THE COMMITTEE THOUGHT:

- Better location
- More efficient
- Closer to people it will serve
- Better environmentally

COST ESTIMATES SHOWED THAT:

The cost of developing the urban site is estimated to cost less than the suburban site (excluding cost of land).

WHAT THE COMMITTEE SAID ABOUT THE URBAN SITE:

PROS:

- Part of a neighborhood, community pride
- Community Center easily accessible
- Likely to attract more potential partners
- More efficient use of land
- Cut down on transportation needs; users can walk or take city bus
- Small/ compact; less environmental impact
- Easier to share
- Meets project goals

CON:

- Limited field space
- Limited parking/ increased traffic
- Less room for future growth
- Too radical an idea for community?

WHAT THE COMMITTEE SAID ABOUT THE SUBURBAN SITE:

PROS:

- More fields
- Room for growth
- More parking
- More flexible

CON:

- Does not build community
- Not as revitalizing
- Location makes facility invisible
- More difficult transportation
- Does not meet project goals

THE COMMITTEE SAID ABOUT THE URBAN SITE:

PROS:

- Part of a neighborhood, community pride
- Community Center easily accessible
- Likely to attract more potential partners
- More efficient use of land
- Cut down on transportation needs; users can walk or take city bus
- Small/ compact; less environmental impact
- Easier to share
- Meets project goals

CON:

- Limited field space
- Limited parking/ increased traffic
- Less room for future growth
- Too radical an idea for community?

THE GOAL OF THE STUDY IS NOT TO CHOOSE A SITE FOR THE PROJECT. INSTEAD, THE COMMITTEE CONSIDERED WHETHER AN URBAN OR SUBURBAN SITE IN WEST BREMERTON WOULD BEST MEET THE GOALS ESTABLISHED FOR THE PROJECT.

WHERE SHOULD THE FACILITY BE LOCATED?

middle school, teen, community or senior center

BREMERTON COLLABORATIVE SCHOOL SITING PROJECT
 DECEMBER 2008

NCS NORTH COUNTY SCHOOLS & TRANSPORTATION

Executive Summary

While an additional middle school is not needed in Bremerton today, if demographic trends continue, an additional middle school may be needed in the future. In July of 2008 NAC|Architecture was engaged by the City of Bremerton to study the potential for co-locating a middle school with a closely related public recreation facility in west Bremerton. This was in response to a grant from the State of Washington received by the city to study this concept. In addition, Bremerton School District realized that although the overall enrollment in the district is currently declining, population growth is occurring in west Bremerton and a middle school will eventually be needed in that area to accommodate this trend.

experience of learners in the school while meeting the needs of more community members. These facts make the results of the Bremerton Community School of the Future Study applicable well beyond this project. It is a model for how schools and community organizations can work together to efficiently provide facilities for their communities that both enhance learning and meet broader community needs.

Working with representatives from the City of Bremerton and Bremerton School District, the NAC|Architecture team developed a plan and schedule for the study. The study process was designed to bring community stakeholders together to consider the idea of a co-located facility and share with the city and school district their thoughts on the pros and cons of this idea. Furthermore, the stakeholders were to recommend where, in general, such a facility should be located and judge how this idea might be accepted by the broader community. Finally, the stakeholders would be “key communicators” of the idea of a co-located facility and be instrumental in getting feedback on the idea from the broader community.

In concept, schools of the future will be more than just learning places for a single age group; they will be multi-age learning spaces that serve broader community needs. Students are increasingly learning outside of traditional school settings in order to make their learning more relevant while engaging them to become life-long learners. Co-locating other facilities with a school is a natural outgrowth of this trend in that it enriches the

The study was conducted using a workshop process spanning several months in 2008 and 2009. The workshops were organized to allow the committee of key communicator-stakeholders to understand the issues involved in co-location and come to conclusion about the best co-location options. Workshop 1 established the reasons for co-location and the goals for a co-located facility. These revolved around the idea that a shared use facility would be more economical and make essential community recreation services available to a broad spectrum of the community.

Workshop 2 identified the best uses for co-location



Bremerton Community School of the Future | The Co-Location Project Study

with a middle school and explored the challenges and opportunities of co-location. The study was not intended to find specific partners for co-location, but rather to identify the most appropriate uses to be located with a middle school. Uses considered ranged from orchestra practice space and a swimming pool to a teen or senior center. Opportunities and challenges included the ability to provide constructive activities for teens after school to concerns that management of shared spaces in a co-located facility would be difficult. The committee concluded that a teen center, community center, or senior center would be the best co-location partner with a middle school.

Workshop 3 focused on identifying the configuration of a co-located facility and the desirable characteristics for its location. An evaluation of potential co-location partners' facility needs showed that these were very similar for the most highly ranked candidates. They required approximately 5,000 SF of dedicated space outside the middle school program for activity, storage and similar functions. In turn the middle school would need approximately 91,000 SF for its functions. The resulting 96,000 SF complex would need to be accommodated on any site considered for the facility.

Selecting a specific site for the facility was out of the scope of the study so the focus was to determine the characteristics of a location that would best support a co-located use. The committee concluded that an ideal location would be close to potential users of the facility, would enhance the vitality of its neighborhood by its presence, would make efficient use of existing city infrastructure, would be environmentally sensitive, and would be likely to attract potential partners due to its location. A review of parcels large enough to accommodate

the facility naturally organized potential locations as urban and suburban with Highway 3 being the demarcation between suburban locations to the west and urban locations to the east. The committee determined by comparing locations to their ideal criteria that an urban location would best meet the goals for a co-located facility and support the city's comprehensive plan.

Workshop 4 examined costs for urban and suburban options and studied how the areas of a facility might be shared. Cost estimates showed that the urban location would likely be slightly less expensive than a suburban location due to lower site development costs. The committee also determined that a co-located facility should be distinct from the middle school so that both facilities could have their own identity.

The committee reached out to the community to verify their conclusions through forums, informal conversations, and by providing information on the city and district web sites which allowed people to comment. Comments were limited, but supported the concept of co-location and the urban location for the facility. The largest concern uncovered through comments was a questioning of the need for an additional middle school, which highlights the need for additional communication with citizens on this issue.

In summary, the committee determined that co-locating a middle school with a teen center, community center, or senior center is a good idea. An urban location is seen as best for such a facility due to its ability to serve the greatest number of citizens. Making the vision for this project a reality will require committed partners and active communication with the greater Bremerton community.

Conclusions

The Typical Pattern of Development for New School Facilities, and a Change Toward an Alternate Pattern of Development

The typical pattern for new school construction is that the school districts purchases land that has been previously undeveloped or only marginally developed (a green-field site). This land is typically outside of the previously developed areas within the school district. They generally make this land acquisition because they predict significant residential growth in the areas and/or it is an area where they can purchase a land parcel they consider to be an adequate size. The parcel needs to accommodate the school building, parking, all of the related play fields, and area for onsite storm detention and wetlands mitigation. The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instructions (OSPI) has recommendations for school site size based on the class levels served but this is only a recommendation and it is very common for urban schools to have a smaller site. The new school facility generally operates exclusively for school use except for afterhours use of the gym and fields by the Parks Department or community groups.

In the course of this study, it was determined that the above noted "typical" pattern of development is likely not the best for the Bremerton School District, or for other school districts with similar characteristics. This study concluded that Bremerton and other communities would benefit by an alternative pattern of development in which non-school / community services are co-located on site with the school. This study also determined that locating the school closer to the developed area / urban core of the city makes the facility more visible, more accessible and more of a center of activity. It is expected that the property

size will be smaller than OSPI recommendations in a more urban area due to less available land; the appropriate size of the land would be based on high efficiency use of fields, parking and a small building footprint (likely multiple stories). If possible, school development adjacent to Parks Department land makes additional playfields more available for school needs, thus reducing the amount of land needed by the school. This study determined that for Bremerton (and similar communities) the educational experience is not expected to diminish because of the smaller land size, rather there are more educational opportunities available if the school connects to community partners.

The Bremerton School of the Future Co-location Study concludes that there would be significant benefits to developing a middle school with a community activity center. These benefits include:

- + Efficient use of resources
- + Synergy of different services working together
- + Neighborhood enhancement - creates a hub,
- + 360 Service for students – meets multiple student needs
- + Positive public perception
- + Invigorates west side of Bremerton

The study concludes that the best uses to co-locate with a middle school are uses that reach out both to children and the neighborhood in which the facility is located. A teen center, community center, or senior center were seen as the uses most compatible with a middle school.

CHILD SAFETY IS MORE THAN A SLOGAN

"Stranger-Danger" Warnings Not Effective at Keeping Kids Safer

**By Nancy A. McBride, National Safety Director
National Center for Missing & Exploited Children®
www.missingkids.com**

"Stranger danger" — the phrase is so pervasive in our culture it has become part of the lexicon. The media and other professionals often use this phrase as a slogan to try to educate children about how to avoid dangerous situations and individuals. When well-intentioned professionals and parents/guardians use the phrase "stranger danger" it may mistakenly convey only strangers harm children. The message of "never talk to strangers" does not fully educate children about how to stay safer.

What does "stranger danger" really mean, and do children benefit from an outdated and misleading message? Here's what we have learned about the "stranger-danger" concept.

- Children don't get it
- Adults don't practice it
- Children need to know how to recognize and avoid potentially dangerous situations
- Adults need to know risks to children are greater from someone they know

This is why the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children® (NCMEC) does not support the "stranger-danger" message. The majority of cases have shown most children are not taken by a stranger, but rather are abducted by someone they know.

When questioned, children will often describe a "stranger" as someone who is "ugly or mean." They do not perceive attractive or friendly people as "strangers." If someone talks to a child or is even around a child more than once, that person may lose his or her "stranger" status to the child. The child may then think he or she "knows" that person. Children also want to be helpful, thrive on adult approval, and respond to adult authority. So if someone with ill intent asks a child to perform a task or tells a child something has happened to a loved one, there is a good chance the child may be tricked into going with that person.

The "stranger-danger" message becomes even more confusing for children because they may not be able to tell by looking at someone whether that individual is "good" or "bad." Wouldn't it be great if we could simply recognize and point out the "bad" people to our children? Adults often break the rule of "don't talk to strangers" in a number of different situations. Adults, however, have the benefit of experience, judgment, and decision-making skills. Children do not. And even adults, at times, may misperceive potential dangers. So if we are not always able to identify "bad" people, we certainly cannot expect our children to be able to do so.

Children need to be empowered with positive messages and safety skills that will not only build their self-esteem and self-confidence but also help keep them safer. Children need to learn how to recognize and avoid potentially dangerous situations. If they become involved in a dangerous situation, children need to learn effective steps they can take to remove themselves from the situation. Children do not need to be told the world is a scary place. They see it through a variety of media, hear it from adults, or may even personally experience violence. Children need to know their parents, guardians, or other trusted adults — people whom the parents/guardians have come to rely on and with whom they and their children feel comfortable — are there for them if they are in trouble. Children also need to know the majority of adults in their lives are good people.

When we tell children to "never talk to strangers," we have effectively eliminated a key source of help for them. If they are lost they may be surrounded by many rescuers who could help them. If children perceive these people as "strangers," they may not speak or reach out to them. There have been cases in which a child's rescue was delayed because the lost child was afraid to call out to the "strangers" when rescuers were nearby. Parents and

guardians cannot be with their children every second of the day. We need to give our children “safety nets,” the plans and people you’ve put in place to contact so your children know there is always someone available to help them. These individuals may include uniformed law-enforcement or security officers and store/business personnel wearing nametags.

The safety messages need to be tailored to specific circumstances, such as being lost outside. Parents and guardians should teach children to

- Stay put and not wander away from where they first became lost. Staying where they are increases children’s chances of being found unless that place becomes too dangerous because of severe weather or another potentially threatening situation. In that case children need to go to the nearest safe spot and wait for rescuers.
- Make noise either by yelling, blowing a whistle, or attracting attention in some other way. This may help bring someone to their rescue.

Parents and guardians should make child safety part of a child’s everyday life in a reassuring way by practicing these skills. Whether it is checking first with a trusted adult, taking a friend, or avoiding and getting out of potentially dangerous situations, there are easy “what-if” scenarios you may practice with your children to make sure they understand and “get it.” Make outings to a mall or the park a “teachable moment” to make sure your children understand the safety messages and are able to use them in real-life situations. Children will begin to learn what to do if they become lost or are in danger by practicing these “what-if” scenarios with you on a regular basis. You can also use these opportunities to reassure your children you are there for them, and remind them there are other people who also are able to help them.

NCMEC believes it is time for everyone to retire use of the “stranger-danger” message. By realizing child safety is much more than a slogan, we can then arm our children with relevant, age-appropriate messages to help empower and protect them from potentially dangerous situations. Having strong parental, guardian, and caregiver supervision and attention is vital to keeping our children safer.

For more information about child-safety topics, visit our website at www.missingkids.com or contact us at 1-800-THE-LOST® (1-800-843-5678).

Copyright © 2005, 2010, and 2011 National Center for Missing & Exploited Children. All rights reserved.

This project was supported by Grant No. 2011-MC-CX-K001 awarded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. Points of view or opinions in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice. National Center for Missing & Exploited Children® and 1-800-THE-LOST® are registered trademarks of the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children. NCMEC Order PDF-10A.

