Memo

To: Bacon County Schools, Interested Parties, General Public

From: Transportation and Environmental Staff, Southern Georgia Regional Commission

Cc: Chelsea Weldon, Georgia SRTS School Outreach Coordinator – South Georgia

Date: 08/10/2021

Re: Vehicle Crashes near Schools in Bacon County

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Introduction

The Southern Georgia Regional Commission and the state of Georgia's Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program partner with local governments and agencies to determine how to make roads and public rights-of-way safer for all users. Traffic safety around schools is a key concern due to a combination of vulnerable road users (in particular, children who walk or bike to school), periods of high traffic volume (e.g., school pick-up and drop-off times), high-risk drivers (e.g., high school students), and school bus traffic. The purpose of this memo is to provide information regarding traffic safety around schools in Bacon County. This information may be used to help determine future investments in transportation infrastructure; to identify priorities for road user education and law enforcement; and to inform future transportation plans and policies.

This memo examines crash trends for locations within 1/2 mile of public and private schools in Bacon County. Over the five-year period from January 1, 2016 through December 31, 2020, according to data provided by the Georgia Department of Transportation, Bacon County experienced 1,555 crashes in the public right-of-way. Out of this total, 369 occurred within 1/2 mile of a school. Due to COVID-19, many schools shut down in March of 2020 until the end of the school year leading to much fewer crashes during this time period due to a significant decrease in road traffic.
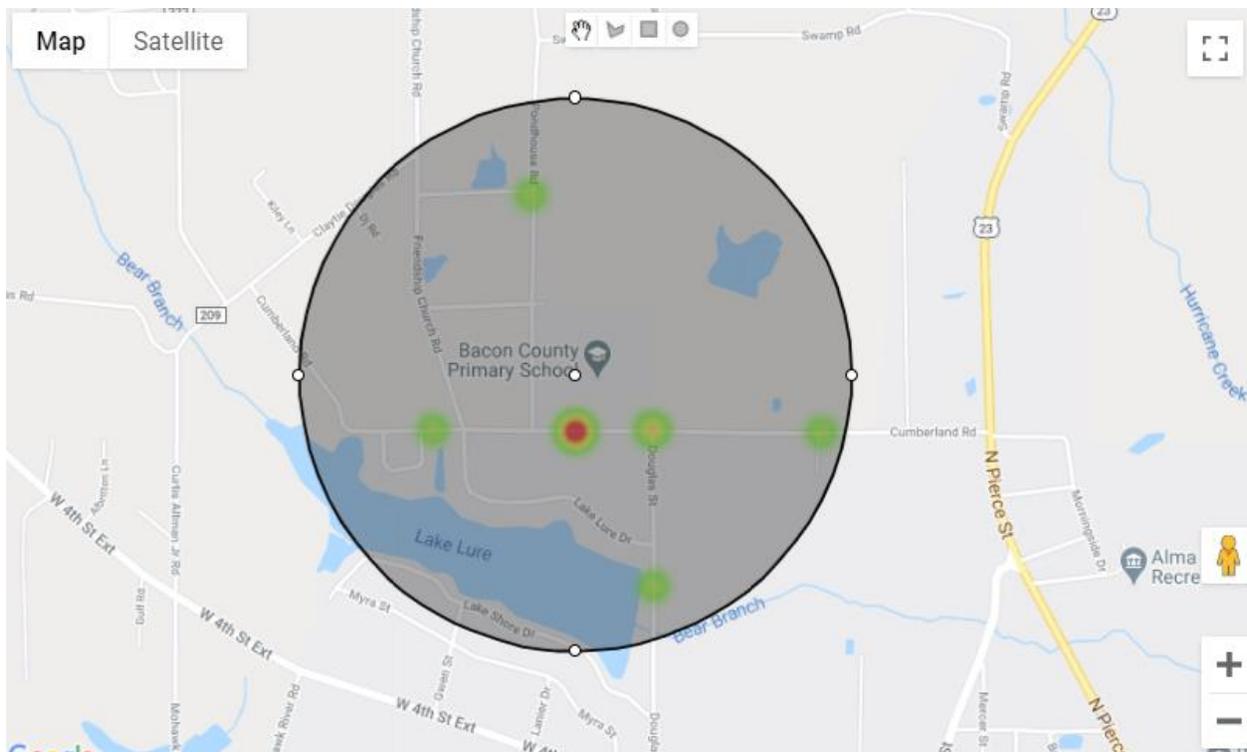
Bacon County Schools
Bacon County has a total of four schools, there is a primary, elementary, middle, and high school. The Bacon county school system is made up of about 1,900 students. School starts at 7:30 AM and it ends at 2:20 PM so we will assume for this survey that the pick-up and drop-off times are from 7:00-8:00 AM and from 2:00-3:00 PM.

Most of the crashes that occurred within a ½ mile radius of a school resulted in property damage only, a fraction of them resulted in injuries.
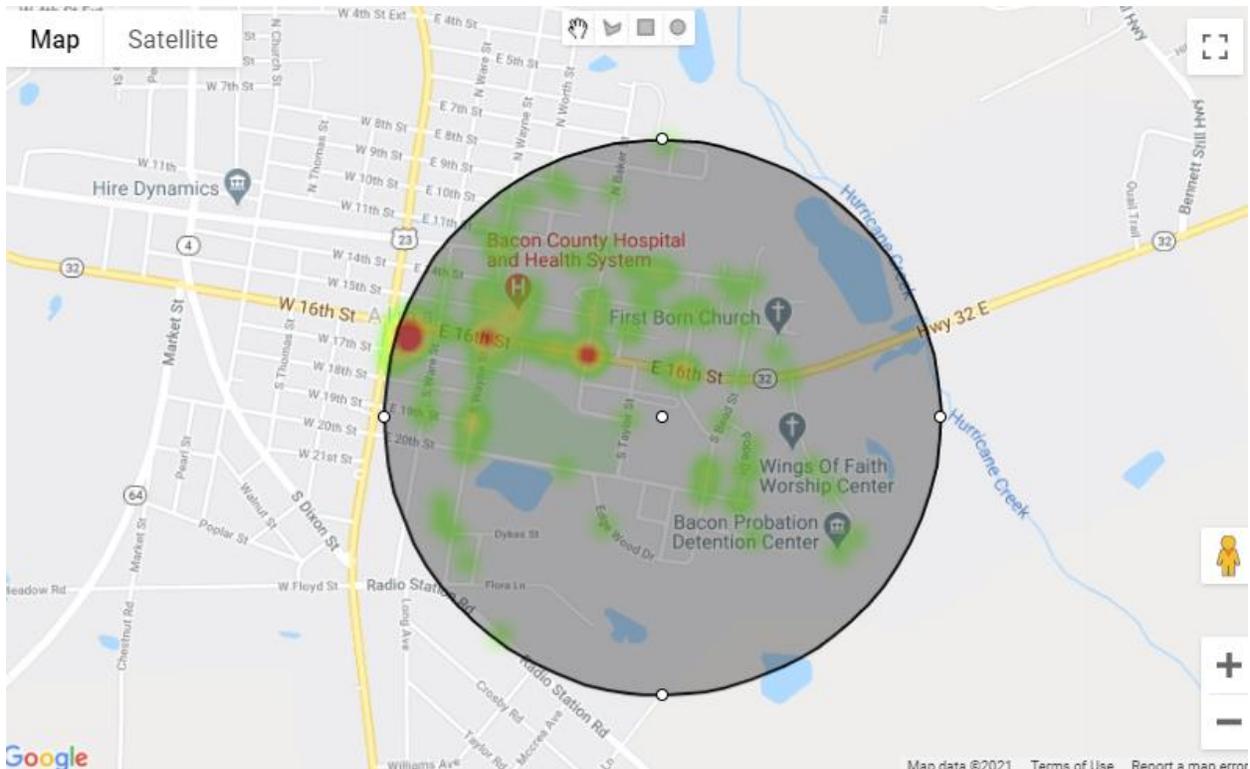
Bacon Primary School
Bacon Primary school had a very few crashes in its ½ mile radius over the 5 year span. There were only 12 crashes during the 5 year period. Of these 12 crashes, there was only 1 injury but it occurred outside of the school times. Only 1 crash happened during the morning hours, it was due to misjudged depth perception. While 3 crashes occurred in pickup times, these were because of drivers not paying attention to the cars in front of them.

Bacon Elementary School

Bacon Elementary experienced 189 crashes, of which there were 23 injuries. There was also 1 reported death in the area. Most of these crashes were due to the high amounts of traffic on Highway 32 E, not necessarily related to the school. Only 3 injuries occurred during the school times. Of these injuries, the 2 that occurred during the pickup times were because of failure to yield and tailgating. The other crash, which occurred at 7:00 AM, was a single-vehicle crash with injuries.

Bacon Middle and High School Campus

Bacon Middle and High School Campus had 75 reported crashes within a ½ mile radius. Of these crashes, 14 of them ended up with reported injuries. One of the 14 injuries occurred during the school hours. It happened at 7:30 AM and the case was a driver failing to yield while turning left at a stop sign. There were 2 crashes that involved teens that may have been driving to or from the school, these were a result of misjudged clearance by rear-ending other vehicles, resulting in injuries. Another single-vehicle crash involving a teen also resulted in injuries.