



SCHOOL COORDINATION PROGRAM

Effective Date: Sept 1, 2023



CONTACT

msdsupport@houstontx.gov

P.O. Box 1562, Houston
Texas 77251-1562

DEFINITIONS

ADA – Americans with Disabilities Act

TMUTCD – Texas Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices

HPW – Houston Public Works which includes the Director or designated representatives.

School Zone – A roadway segment identified by school zone signs indicate a reduced speed limit to facilitate safe student crossings

Traffic Control Device – All signs, signals, pavement markings and other devices placed on, over, or adjacent to a street by Houston Public Works in order to regulate, warn or guide vehicular and pedestrian traffic.

Uncontrolled Crossing – An established school crossing location, either at an intersection or mid-block, where the continuous movement of vehicular traffic is not interrupted by a stop sign or traffic signal.

Controlled Crossing – An established school crossing location, either at an intersection or a mid-block, where the continuous movement of vehicular traffic is interrupted by a stop sign or traffic signal.

85th Percentile Speed – The measured speed at which 85 percent of the drivers are traveling at or below.

Posted Speed Limit – The legal speed limit which vehicular traffic may travel and is displayed by the posting of the regulatory speed limit sign. On streets where no speed limit sign is posted, the posted speed limit is defined as prima facie speed limit of 30 mph.

Pedestrian Indications – Special traffic signal indications intended for the exclusive purpose of controlling pedestrian traffic and consisting of the illuminated words WALK and Don't WALK or the illuminated symbols of a walking person (symbolizing WALK) and an upraised palm (symbolizing DON'T WALK).

Sight Distance – The length of roadway ahead visible to the driver.

Major Thoroughfare – A street designated respectively as a Major Thoroughfare on the City's Major Thoroughfare and Freeway Plan's Street Hierarchy Classification.

Take-Up – The start time at which 85% of students begin classes.

Dismissal – The dismissal time at which 85% of students end classes.

INTRODUCTION

The City of Houston's School Coordination Program works with school principals or their designated representatives to develop a master plan for creating safe and efficient traffic circulation which balances pedestrian safety and roadway mobility needs. The master plan may include school zones (SZ), parking restrictions, school crosswalks, and turn restrictions.

As the school's principal is in overall responsible charge for all activities associated with a school, we do not respond specifically to requests from the community at large but do present any suggestions we may receive to the principal for consideration.

1. SCHOOL ZONE

The following is a summary of the process for school zone application and installation:

SCHOOL ZONE REQUEST PROCESS



1

Submit Application (Application Deadline April 15)

An application must be submitted by the school principal for consideration of adding or removing a school zone.



2

Evaluations

Houston Public Works (HPW) will conduct an evaluation. Evaluations for school zone addition typically occur during the school's calendar year.



3

Approval & Installation

School zone ordinance is updated once a year and submitted to City Council in July for review and approval. Once a school zone addition is approved, HPW will schedule school zone installation. School zones will immediately be enforceable. New schools and school expansion projects must schedule their own installations.



4

Removal

If HPW determines that a SZ is qualified for removal, HPW will seek authorization from City Council to remove the SZ.



Eligibility

In order for a request to qualify for consideration, the street must meet criteria set by Houston Public Works. It is the responsibility of Houston Public Works to conduct traffic studies to determine if the street segment meets the following criteria:

- The requested street¹ borders the school²,
- Observation or evidence of students walking or riding bicycles across the street, and
- There are (or will be) designated crossing locations.

OR

- The requested street does not border the school but is a thoroughfare or collector,
- Observation or evidence of students walking or riding bicycles across the street, and
- An established school zone may enhance safety.

¹The street must be owned by the City of Houston

²Schools that are not wholly within the City of Houston will require additional coordination.

The traffic study may include a survey to determine the number of pedestrians crossing at a certain location as well as measurements of volume, direction, and speed of vehicular traffic. Other factors such as roadway geometry, driver sight lines, and availability of sidewalks will also be considered.

Installation of School Zone Speed Limit

Speed limit for school zones throughout the City is uniformly set at 20 mph. School zones are established by signage or flashing beacons. Once signs or beacons are installed and activated, school zone speed limit is immediately enforceable. All traffic signs shall conform to the standards and specifications provided in the Texas Manual on Uniform Control Devices (TMUTCD) and the City of Houston Infrastructure Design Manual (IDM) with regard to their design, dimensions, lettering and placement.

Flashing beacons may be considered for installation on designated major thoroughfares and on streets with an average daily traffic count of 5000 vehicles or greater.

School zone times displayed on signs and beacons shall be established as follows:



Morning Times – 45 minutes before take-up and 15 minutes after take-up

Evening Times – 15 minutes before dismissal and 30 minutes after dismissal

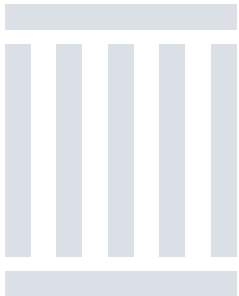
To enhance student safety, schools are encouraged to provide crossing guards for special programs, staggered take-up and early dismissals.

2. INSTALLATION OF PARKING RESTRICTIONS AND BUS ZONES



To promote safe and efficient traffic circulation around a school, it may be necessary to regulate, restrict or prohibit parking, stopping, or standing adjacent to the school grounds or an established school crossing. The restrictions shall be established by signs, all of which conform to the standards for shape, color, position as specified in the latest TMUTCD and HPW standards.

3. INSTALLATION OF SCHOOL CROSSWALKS



Crosswalks are defined by white longitudinal lines parallel to traffic flow to provide guidance for pedestrians who are crossing roadways and alert motorists that pedestrians may be present. Crosswalk locations are strategically selected to enhance the utilization of sidewalks, to serve school routes and to define the appropriate crossing location at high pedestrian volume intersections and mid-block locations.

Crosswalks should only be installed where there are American with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant ramps in accordance with the IDM. To alert drivers of student crossing activity, Advance School Crossing and School Crossing signs may be installed without the presence of crosswalk markings.

When reviewing a location for installation of a crosswalk, many factors are considered. Some of the important factors include:

- a. Volume of vehicular and pedestrian traffic
- b. Vehicular speed
- c. Type of traffic (domestic, commercial, highway, etc.)
- d. Visibility available to motorists and pedestrians
- e. Presence of traffic control devices
- f. Width of street to be crossed
- g. Proximity to school and school walking route
- h. Location of adjacent crosswalks



SCHOOL ZONE

Coordination Program

msdsupport@houstontx.gov

P.O. Box 1562, Houston, Texas 77251-1562

Contact Information

Name of School _____

School District _____

Contact Phone # _____

Requestor Name _____

Designated Appointee _____

Email Address _____

Address _____

Zip Code _____

Student Hours: (provide all times if school has multiple intake or dismissal time)

Intake time(s) _____

Dismissal time(s) _____

Late intake _____ Day(s) _____

Early dismissal _____ Day (s) _____

Requestor Signature _____ Date _____

The application is a request for a school zone addition or removal, crosswalk, or parking restrictions. Send the completed application to the address above. Please indicate what type of installation you are requesting:

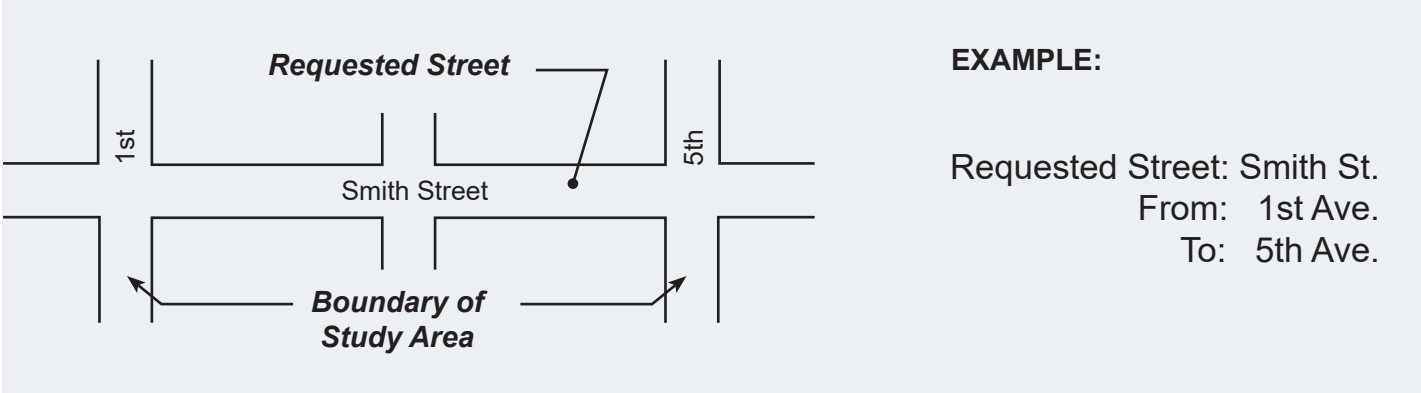
___ Installation of a new School Zone

___ Removal of existing School Zone

___ Parking Restrictions/Bus Zone

___ Installation of Crosswalk

Requested Street – School Zone



EXAMPLE:

Requested Street: Smith St.
From: 1st Ave.
To: 5th Ave.

Provide the names of streets on which installation or removal is requested.

Requested Street: **From:** **To:**

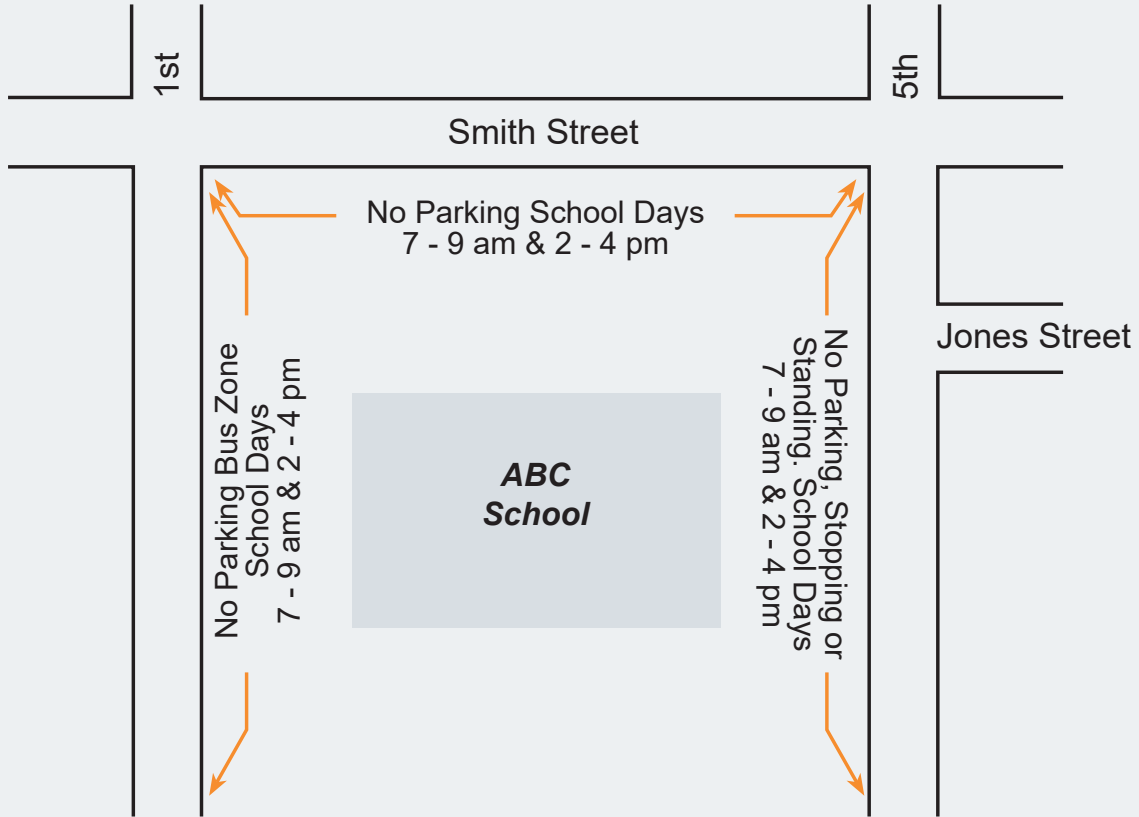
Requested Street: **From:** **To:**

Requested Street: **From:** **To:**

Requested Street: **From:** **To:**

Parking Restrictions / School Zone

EXAMPLE:



Provide the names of streets on which parking restrictions are requested.

Requested Street:

From/To (if applicable):

- No Parking - School Days
- No Parking, Stopping or Standing - School Days
- No Parking Bus Zone - School Days

Requested Street:

From/To (if applicable):

- No Parking - School Days
- No Parking, Stopping or Standing - School Days
- No Parking Bus Zone - School Days

Requested Street:

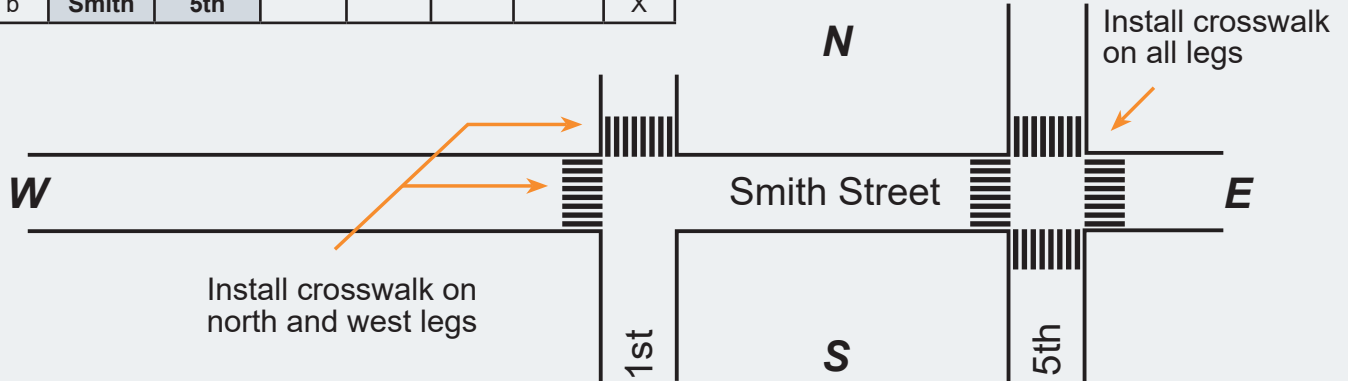
From/To (if applicable):

- No Parking - School Days
- No Parking, Stopping or Standing - School Days
- No Parking Bus Zone - School Days

Crosswalk Installation

EXAMPLE:

	Intersection		Crosswalk				
	Street 1	Street 2	North	South	East	West	All
a	Smith	1st	X			X	
b	Smith	5th					X



Provide intersections where crosswalk installation is requested. Add an extra page if needed.

	INTERSECTION		CROSSWALK				
	Street 1	Street 2	North	South	East	West	All
a							
b							
c							
d							

EXAMPLE:

Mid-block Crosswalk Installation



Provide locations where mid-block crosswalk installation is requested. **Note that a crossing-guard must be assigned at mid-block crossings serving elementary students.** Add an extra page if needed.

Street 1: **Describe Crossing Location:**

Street 2: **Describe Crossing Location:**