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News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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August 1, 2014

Start of school traffic issues prompt panel discussion *City officials want to avoid the 'perfect storm'*

MURPHY (August 1, 2014) Citing the combination of the start of the new school year, the ongoing construction of North Murphy Road and the lack of adequate turn lanes in front of Murphy Middle School, McMillan High School and Tom Kimbrough Stadium, City Manager James Fisher convened a panel of affected parties to discuss options.

"This is the proverbial perfect storm," he said. "Parents, students and school busses all have to share the same lanes with people who use North Murphy Road to commute to work or get around town. And, with the lack of dedicated turn lanes, the congestion has the potential to be not only massive, but could also prove dangerous."

During the school year, dozens of large school busses enter and exit the two school's driveways to drop off and pick up students in the morning and the early afternoon. In addition, hundreds of cars also seek access to the campuses for the same reason. On many evenings during the school year, the stadium plays host to sporting events and other extracurricular activities. Many students walk to both campuses from adjoining neighborhoods, requiring even more caution.

That prompted the City Manager to bring together officials from the City, the Plano ISD and the Texas Department of Transportation to have an open discussion and propose possible solutions. The meeting was held at the Murphy Fire Department and included representatives of the school district administration, administrators of the two affected schools, the district's athletic and transportation departments along with the Murphy Fire Chief, Police Chief, engineering consultant and Public Works personnel. A representative from TxDOT, the state agency overseeing the construction was also included.

"The discussion was extremely fruitful with conversations ranging from bus routes into and out of the campuses, the possibility of building additional lanes to ease the traffic and the addition of extra personnel during peak traffic times," he said. "It was really the first time people at these significant levels got together for a hard look at the issue."

The meeting concluded with commitments from the TxDOT representative to construct temporary relief lanes that allow for safer turns into the schools; the schools' administrators review entrance and egress points for school busses; the City's engineering consultant is to assist with traffic flow planning; police and fire will assist with traffic control; and the City's administration will continue monitoring the situation for safety and security.

"It was a good first step, and one which we all agree will result in a solid plan of action," said Fisher. Follow-up meetings will finalize the proposed solutions and a joint marketing and publicity campaign between the City and the school district will be implemented to share information with the public. Changes in school traffic patterns will likely result from the discussions, requiring drivers to pay close heed to the new routes.

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ABOUT MURPHY -- Murphy is a fast-growing community located in Collin County. The population is approximately 18,020, generally characterized as highly educated with a median household income above the state average. With more than 70 percent of the land developed, the community is dominated by single-family residences. City planners strive to preserve a country feel while exhibiting an aggressive economic development stance. The centrally-located municipal complex includes four buildings that house Fire, Police, City Administration and Public Works. Money Magazine has dubbed Murphy as the 27th Best Place to Live in America for small cities, and D Magazine placed Murphy as the fifth best suburb in the 2014 list, where it has consistently ranked in the top 10.