

StopHeightsWalmart.org

Super Neighborhoods not Supercenters

August 5, 2010

Dear Neighbor:

Walmart has a contract with the intent to purchase a piece of land at Yale & I10. Early reports suggest they intend to build a supercenter that will be open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Heights and West End residents have formed a grassroots non-profit organization to halt this type of development in our urban neighborhoods. The non-profit is called Responsible Urban Development for Houston. It is entirely local, run by your neighbors, with everyone using their professional expertise to employ every legal and technical avenue available to halt this development. We currently have nearly 5,000 opposition members on Facebook alone and the number is growing daily.

We are concerned about a significant increase in crime and traffic, among other issues. Our neighborhood was never built to support a retailer of this size.

We invite you to visit our website and learn more about this issue that will affect us all.

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Please contact us if you have any questions or if you'd like to donate towards printing signs, bumper stickers, hiring experts and other needs.

Sincerely,
Responsible Urban Development for Houston
RUDH.org

Here are some questions to consider:

How do we absorb all of this extra traffic, not to mention the resulting air pollution?

How will a development of this size mitigate flooding issues for area residents and the bayou?

Will greater volumes of commuter traffic be pushed onto smaller, more pedestrian streets like Studewood & Heights Blvd?

How will this impact our roadways and our pedestrian safety?

How will the police monitor increasing traffic infractions?

How will the police—on a City hiring freeze—address the uptick in crime in and around Walmart while also patrolling our streets? The neighborhoods are all currently installing constable patrols to address a shortage of police as it is.

Will our tax dollars be paying for incentives to encourage Walmart to build on this site?

Will our tax dollars be paying for streets to be repaved and repaired due to the increased volumes of traffic?

Will our tax dollars be paying to secure their parking lot?

How will this all affect our quality of life and our property values?

PLEASE TURN OVER TO READ FACT SHEET.

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Crime Statistics

- In 2004, there were a reported 148,331 police calls across 514 Walmart stores analyzed. That equates to an average of 269 calls per store.⁽⁴⁾ In Texas, there were 21,741 police incidents reported at 69 stores studied.⁽⁴⁾ The Houston store located at 2727 Dunvale reported 1,123 police incidents, placing it in the Top 10 stores nationwide.⁽⁴⁾
- Between 2003 – 2006, there were:
 - 16 alleged murders committed at Walmart stores and parking lots, including 2 alleged murders in the Houston area (Katy and Spring).⁽⁴⁾
 - 16 alleged rapes and sexual assaults at Walmart stores and parking lots, including 1 in the Houston area.⁽⁴⁾
 - 11 alleged sex crimes against children at Walmart stores and parking lots, including 1 in the Houston area.⁽⁴⁾
- Nationally, Walmart stores cost taxpayers an estimated \$77 million annually in increased police costs.⁽⁴⁾

Traffic Impact

- An average size Walmart Supercenter will generate nearly 10,000 car trips per day.⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾
- A Walmart Supercenter often has between seven and nine tractor-trailer deliveries daily, as well as one or two smaller trucks delivering products from vendors.⁽³⁾

Tax Information

- There have been at least 29 subsidy deals in Texas benefitting Walmart worth a total of about \$90.8 million.⁽⁵⁾ The Baytown and New Braunfels developments alone were granted \$39 million in tax subsidies.⁽⁶⁾
- Since the mid-1980s, Walmart has obtained at least \$1.2 billion in reported subsidies nationwide.⁽⁵⁾
- By its own admission, Walmart disclosed that they did not pay \$2.85 billion in taxes for fiscal year 2009, which they would likely have to pay if audited.⁽⁶⁾⁽⁷⁾

Job Statistics

- Walmart store openings reduce retail employment in a county by 2.7%.⁽⁸⁾
- Walmart's entry into a metro area eliminates similar jobs that pay about 18% more than Walmart.⁽⁹⁾
- The presence of big box stores, such as Walmart, causes "a substantial reduction in net employment growth at smaller retailers, which is mostly accounted for by an increase in job destruction from store exit."⁽¹⁰⁾

• An average of two local supermarkets are forced out of business by every Walmart Supercenter.⁽¹⁰⁾

Footnotes:

(1) The average Supercenter store size of 186,000 square feet, cited in Walmart Stores, Inc. Form 10-K for the year ended January 31, 2009.

(2) Institute of Transportation Engineers Trip Generation Rates, 8th Edition, for Free Standing Discount Superstores (ITE Code 813).

<http://www.mikeontraffic.com/2009/08/trip-generation-8th-edition-spreadsheet.html>
(3) "Sonora Walmart Expansion Project: Draft Environmental Impact Report," prepared for the City of Sonora Department of Community Development by Michael Brandman Associates, December, 17 2009.

(4) "Crime and Walmart – Is Walmart Safe: An Analysis of Official Police Incidents at Walmart Stores" prepared by [wakeupwalmart.com](http://www.wakeupwalmart.com), Washington, D.C. May 1, 2006.

http://www.losspreventionmagazine.com/customers/104120817472470/filemanager/Crime_Wal_Mart.pdf

(5) "How Wal-Mart Has Used Public Money in Your State"

<http://www.walmartsubsidywatch.org>

(6) Mattera, Philip, Anna Purinton, Jeff McCourt, Doug Hoffer, Stephanie Greenwood, and Alyssa Talanker. "Shopping for Subsidies: How Walmart Uses Public Money to Finance its Never-Ending Growth." Good Jobs First. May 2004.

<http://www.goodjobsfirst.org/pdf/wmtstudy.pdf>

(7) Walmart Stores Inc. Form 10-K for fiscal year ended January 31, 2010. Consolidated Financial Statements, Note 8, pg. 36.

(8) Neumark, David, Junfu Zhang, and Stephen Ciccarella, January 2007. "The Effects of Walmart on Local Labor Markets." Institute for the Study of Labor Discussion Paper #2545, University of Bonn.

http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=958704.