

# 2021-22

## School Travel Planning in Waterloo Region



**Prepared by the School Travel Planning Team  
at Student Transportation Services of Waterloo Region**

**Landon Chan**

**Bryden Eby**

**Leslie Maxwell**

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## Executive Summary

We are very pleased to report that throughout the 2021-22 school year Student Transportation Services of Waterloo Region (STSWR) was able to provide School Travel Planning (STP) assessments and recommendations for traffic and active transportation interventions at **15 new-to-STP schools** where school administrators, city leaders, and our funding partners alerted us to problems. That was no small feat as we **continued working with 49 schools** who joined us before September 2021 and we continued delivering a fulsome list of programs, too.

The year kicked off with **Finding Common Ground – a forum** that brought together municipal and school board decision makers to learn more about active school travel (AST) and STP and where we shared a **video of support** for STP by various community members and parents who have witnessed the benefits of this work.

**Four (4) new schools reached Champion status** by working with School Travel Planning for at least two (2) years and implementing a comprehensive slate of interventions, and many of our schools are on track to reach that goal with **balanced action plans**, too. We **published traffic videos** and other materials to help parents make the connection between their choices and dangers in school zones. We also **launched Enhanced School Zones** in the City of Cambridge with a fantastic coterminous event that saw elected officials comingling with students for the first time since the pandemic arrived. The **Community Road Model project at four (4) schools** helped urge families to choose active travel first and drive carefully and courteously near children, too.

In addition, we put **one (1) Walking School Bus** on the sidewalks (with the support of Wilfrid Laurier students) for four (4) months to help a large group of new Canadian students become acclimated to their new surroundings. This format of Walking School Bus proved to be a good ‘vehicle’ for knowledge transfer and a model that we will be happy to support as needed in the future. We also delivered **Sidewalk Smarts pedestrian skills education to four (4) schools** and we worked with students at Courtland Public School to examine the needs and uses and to rethink the school parking lot to accommodate all those needs in **one (1) design thinking project**. Engineers will be incorporating some of the elements of the students designs when they rebuild the parking lot in summer, 2023.

We created **11 additional Drive-to-5 maps** for a total of 100 maps that now help people find safe and legal parking a distance away from schools. Some schools took the project the full distance, with **one (1) school installing paw prints on sidewalks** to connect the “park and walk” locations with the school.

Finally, we are pleased to share that the 2021-22 school year ended with **a celebration event sharing the certification status of 64 schools** in June. It was the perfect way to end the school year and to launch **two (2) permanent STP Facilitator positions**, leaving us well positioned to focus on enhancing our data collection and refining our interventions in the 2022-23 school year.

Sincerely,

Leslie Maxwell  
School Travel Planning Supervisor, STSWR



## Mission

“School Travel Planning in Waterloo region strives to create a community where the preferred means of transportation to and from school is by active and sustainable modes.”

STP expands the traditional concept of student transportation services so that STSWR now provides support for walking families too. We’re making active school transportation an easier choice for families.

## Mandates

School Travel Planning strives to reach its mission through two (2) mandates:

1. Encourage more families to use AST
2. Decrease traffic near schools

These mandates are interrelated and complex. STP depends on many partners coming together to help shift attitudes and to create safer and more welcoming travel environments.

## Objectives

These objectives apply to the collection of schools serviced by STSWR:

1. Deliver hands-on STP services region-wide on a school-by-school basis.
2. Provide consultation to elementary schools regularly and secondary schools as necessary.
3. Work with school communities to address municipality concerns on streets near schools.
4. Identify gaps in policy and inform change where policy can encourage AST.
5. Work with municipalities and school board planning staff to implement and maintain programs and infrastructure for active transportation.
6. Seek funding opportunities to support school-based interventions.
7. Represent STP partners on committees and work groups.

To learn about the STP method employed at STSWR, see Appendix A

STP Method.

## Funding Partners

### **Municipalities**

City of Cambridge  
City of Kitchener  
City of Waterloo  
Region of Waterloo

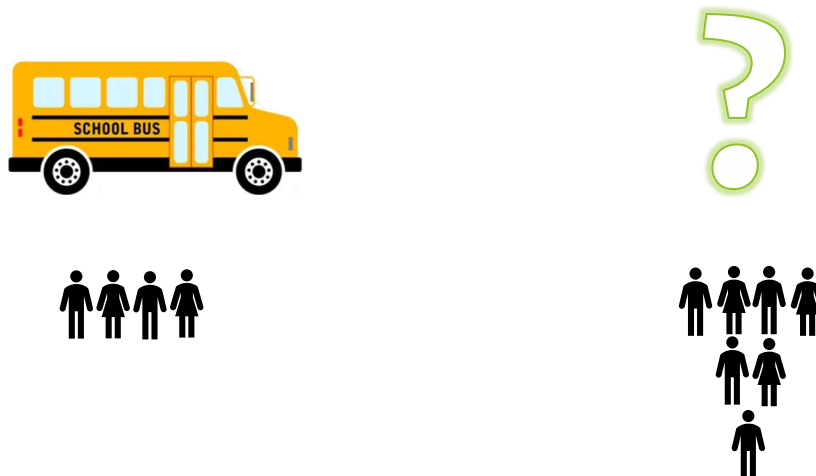
### **School Boards**

Waterloo Catholic District School Board  
Waterloo Region District School Board

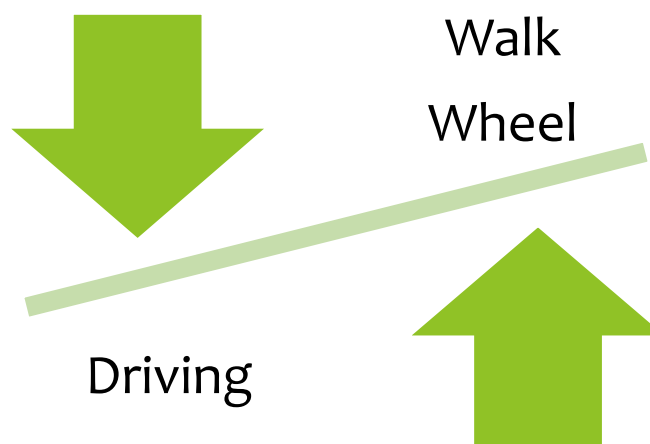


## Rationale

For every four (4) children who are eligible for a bus at WCDSB and WRDSB schools, there are seven (7) whose families must plan a different way for them to travel. School Travel Planning offers support for children who travel by active means in an effort to reduce the number of personal vehicles at school sites.



Coaching children to be active travellers takes time, knowledge, and resources over the course of several years before parents may allow them walk or wheel alone. Yet, the short trip to school offers a rich opportunity to convert thousands of daily car trips into active transportation trips that could dramatically improve children's health, air quality, and safety in school zones and on routes to school across the region<sup>1</sup>.



<sup>1</sup> Ontario Active School Travel. Making the Case for Active School Travel; Fact Sheet & Reference List. Accessed October 1, 2022. <https://ontarioactiveschooltravel.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Making-the-Case-Dec-2018-En.pdf>

## Framework

STP support to schools takes shape in two (2) forms;

- Programs – common supports to all schools
- Services – customized support for schools to create unique action plans

## Programs

STP programs may be thought of as the education and encouragement interventions that solve barriers that are common to most schools. These programs allow STP to prompt a greater shift towards AST by addressing barriers to AST near more schools, and by raising the profile of AST through system-wide exposure.

STP programs provide an opportunity to build and nurture partnerships among community partners and bring greater media and/or community awareness to AST, helping to normalize the simple act of using active modes of travel for the school journey.

In 2021-22, STSWR offered Sidewalk Smarts, Trailblazers, Canadian Automobile Association (CAA) Standing Foot Patrol, Winter Walk Day, Bike to School Day, and Kindergarten milestone magnets to improve walking culture at schools across the region. In addition, STSWR has created Drive-to-5 maps for 100 schools to encourage driving parents to park a few blocks away to alleviate traffic at school sites. The Community Road Model program was run at four (4) schools to encourage families to use active transportation, to obey road rules, and to be courteous to all road users.

Descriptions of STP programs can be found in Appendix B.

### 2021-2022 Programs Available Broadly

Table 1: Programs		Intervention		Target	
“E”	Program	Students	Parents	School	Community
Education	<b>Sidewalk Smarts*</b>	✓			
	<b>Trailblazers*</b>	✓			✓
	<b>Cycling Into The Future*</b>	✓			
Encouragement	<b>Drive-to-5 Maps*</b>		✓		
	<b>Kindergarten Magnets</b>	✓	✓		
	<b>Walking School Bus Support</b>	✓	✓		
	<b>Active Transportation Celebration Events*</b>	✓		✓	✓
	<b>Bike to School Week Celebration</b>	✓		✓	✓
	<b>Community Road Model Project</b>	✓	✓		✓
Enforcement	<b>CAA Standing Foot Patrol*</b>	✓		✓	✓
Engineering					
Evaluation	<b>BikeWalkRoll*†</b>	✓		✓	

\*Standard Operating Procedures (SOP’s) outlining details, risks, and expected outcomes are available at: <https://www.stswr.ca/walkzone/school-travel-planning/solutions/>

† Delayed due to moratorium on in-class research.



New in 2021-22!

*Bike to School Week*

For the first time, STSWR and municipal partners came together to support Bike to School Week celebrations in June of 2022. The Cities of Cambridge, Kitchener, and Waterloo; and the Regional Municipality of Waterloo provided prizes while STSWR organized contests, created posters, and gathered data. Overall, 13,642 students were impacted, receiving positive cycling messaging, safety tips, and encouragement to ride!



At St. Nicholas CES in Waterloo, 45 students pledged to ride 836.7 kms; maybe they were inspired by Vice Principal Michael Leonard, who rode his bike 25 kms to school for Bike to School Week!

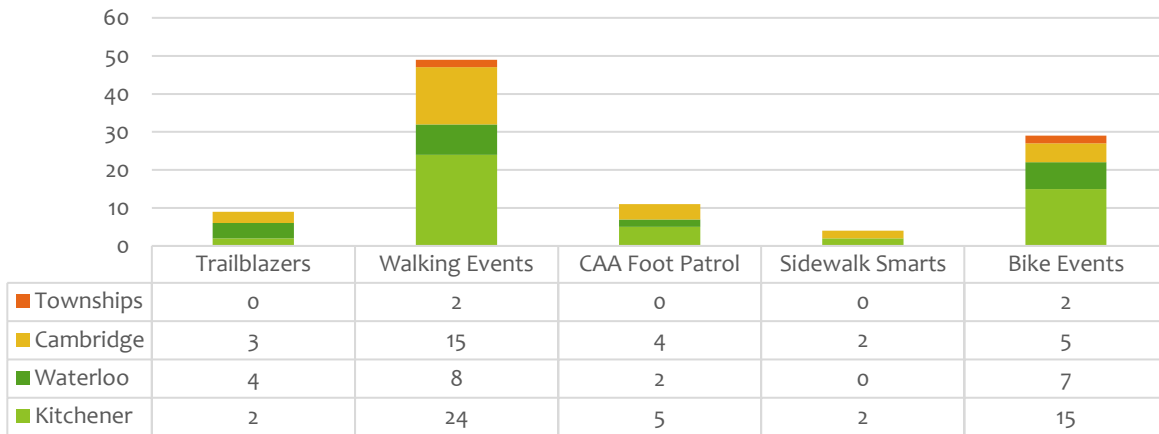


### Program Participation

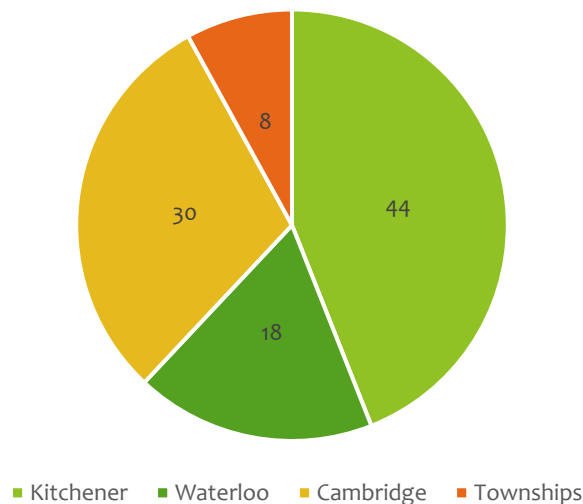
As schools emerged from years of pandemic lockdowns, participation in programs grew. There were more requests for Drive-to-5 maps from schools that had previously not participated in STP, and all four (4) schools that were offered Sidewalk Smarts participated in the program. Sidewalk Smarts instruction was adapted to meet Covid requirements, relying on school staff and virtual instructors for in-class sessions and qualified instructors for curbside sessions only. Celebration Events had good participation and the addition of Bike-to-School Week (separated from Walking Events below) attracted some schools that don't normally participate in walking events. School participation in safety patrol programs (Trailblazers and CAA Foot Patrol) tripled over the previous school year as schools became more comfortable running them.

The following data are collected through school program tracking by Facilitators, registration in various programs, and maps published at [www.stswr.ca/walkzone/maps](http://www.stswr.ca/walkzone/maps) by the end of June 2022.

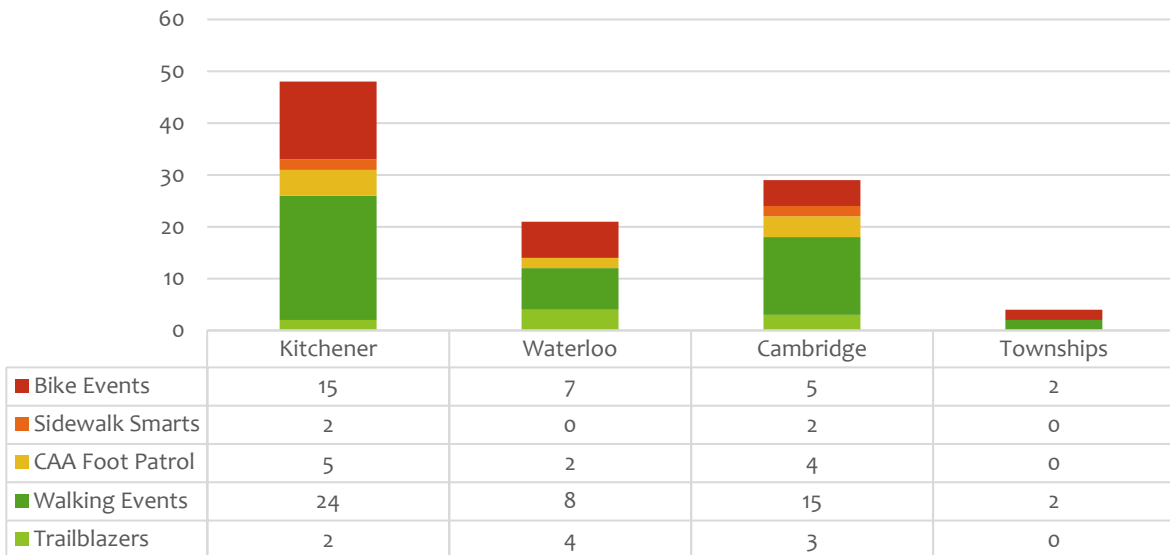
Number of Schools in Select Programs  
2021-22



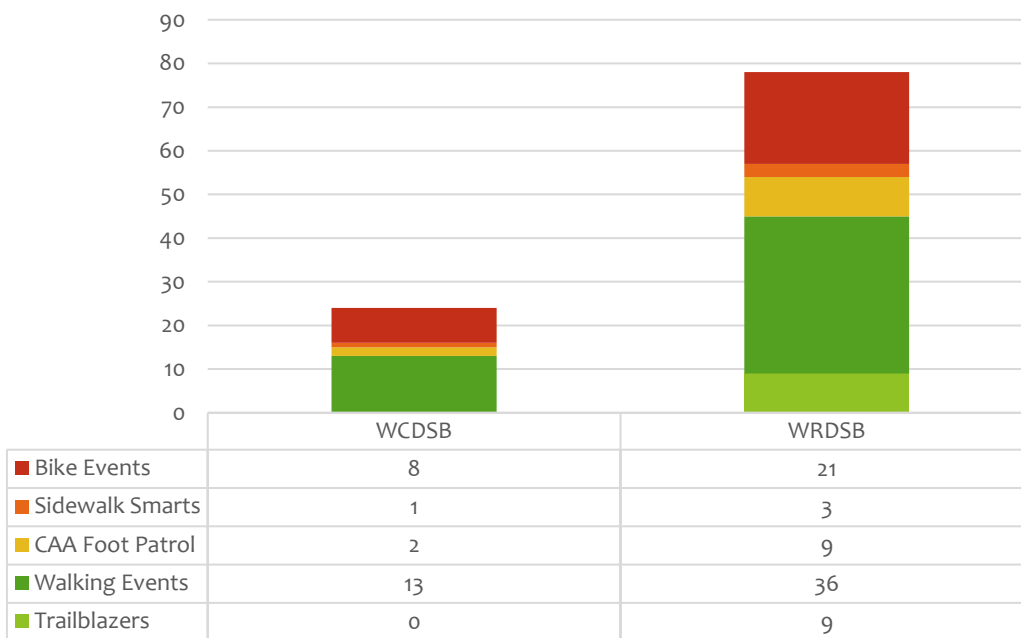
Drive to 5 Maps 2021-22



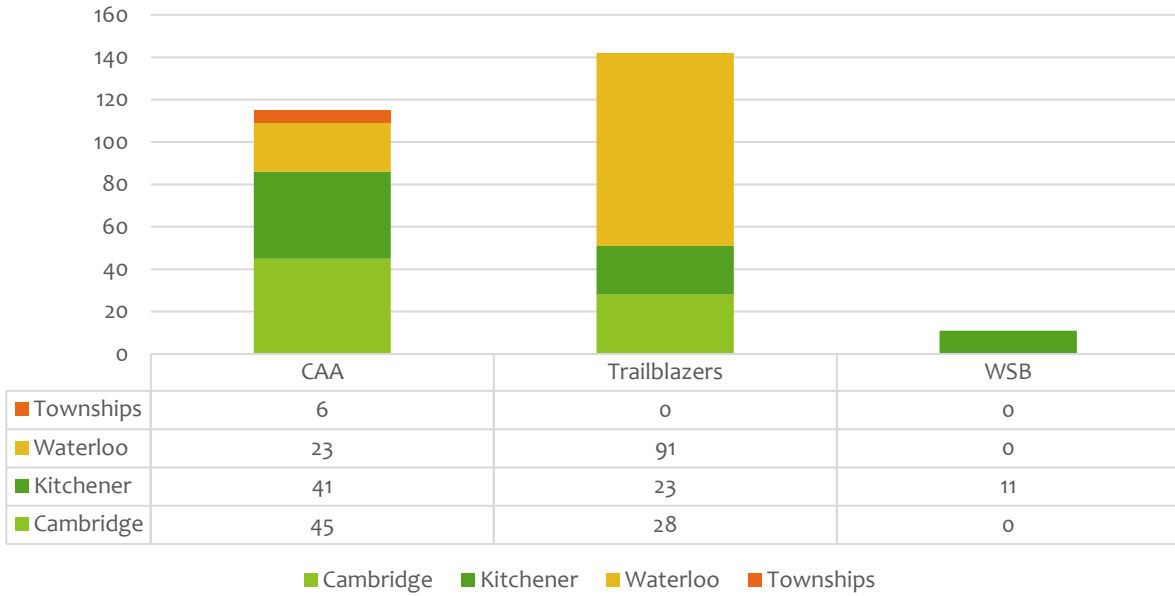
### Dispersion of Schools in Select Programs by Municipality 2021-22



### Dispersion of Schools in Select Programs by School Board 2021-22



### Student Participation in Programs 2021-22

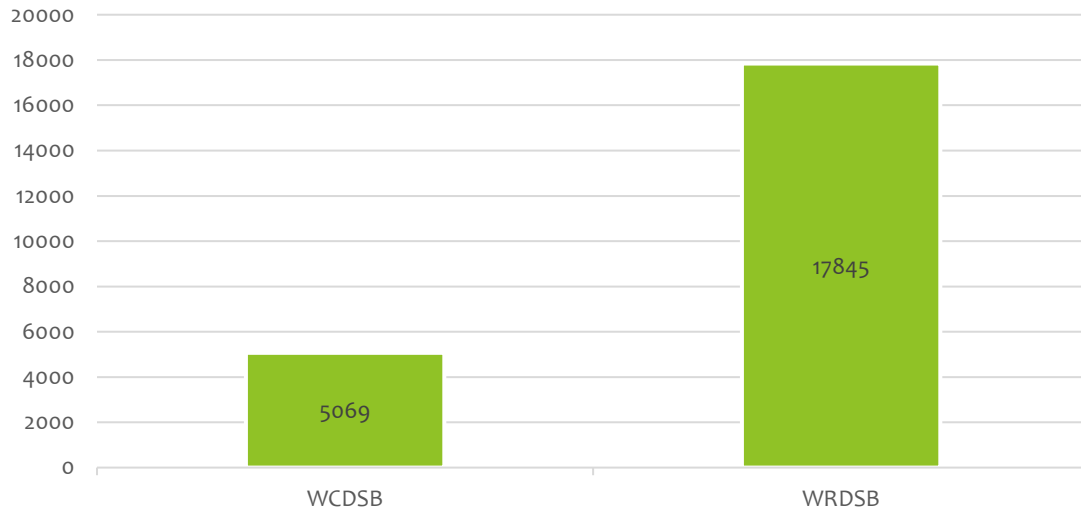


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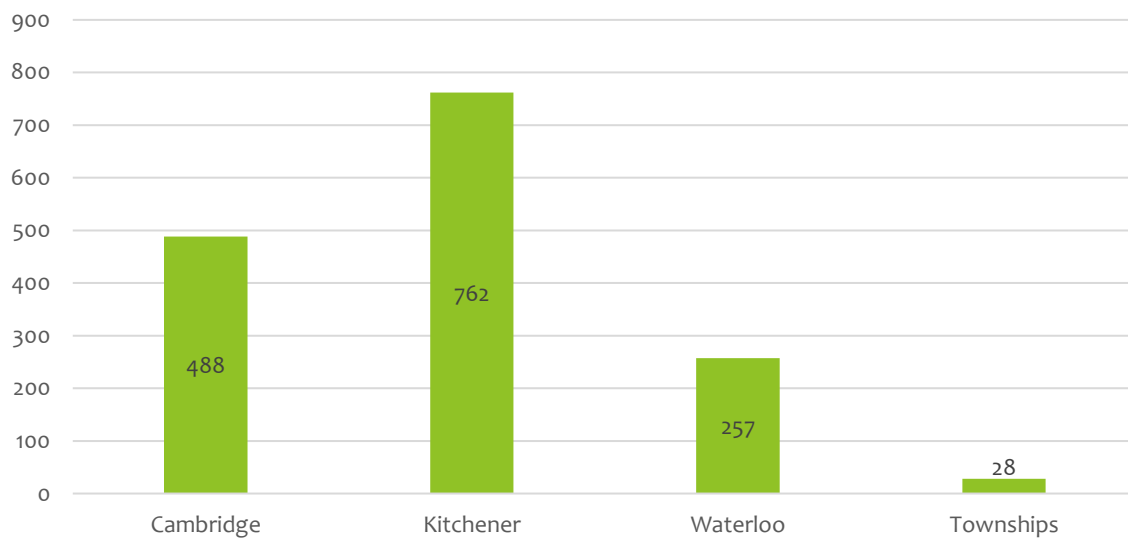
Students participated in Sidewalk Smarts pedestrian skills training in 2022.

For the third straight year, Winter Walk Day was promoted by both WCDSB and WRDSB on a board-wide basis. This resulted in positive winter active school travel messaging reaching 22,914 students. Encouragement from school board leaders prompts yields impressive results!

### Number of Students Receiving WWD Messaging by School Board



### Number Students Registered in WWD Contest by Municipality 2022



The first Bike to School Week showed great promise. It was promoted with all 64 STP schools. Twenty-seven (27) of those schools registered and received promotional materials from STSWR, in turn promoting Bike to School Week with 13,642 students. In the end, 333 students registered for the individual contest, pledging to ride 4,462.3 kilometers. Schools counted a total of 965 bikes in bike racks on their bike rack count day (Wednesday) with the highest turnout at John Mahood P.S., with 112 bikes/ scooters in the storage rack!

Table 2: Bike to School Week Results					
Schools	Bike/ Scooter Count	School Enrollment	% Biked	Municipality	Board
Avenue Road	12	457	2.63%	Cambridge	WRDSB
Clemens Mill	25	620	4.03%	Cambridge	WRDSB
Hillcrest	20	388	5.15%	Cambridge	WRDSB
St. Augustine	25	447	5.59%	Cambridge	WCDSB
St. Margaret of Scotland	14	319	4.39%	Cambridge	WCDSB
Blessed Sacrament	20	367	5.45%	Kitchener	WCDSB
Chicopee Hills	26	771	3.37%	Kitchener	WRDSB
Franklin	12	581	2.07%	Kitchener	WRDSB
Groh	44	917	4.80%	Kitchener	WRDSB
Janet Metcalfe	25	906	2.76%	Kitchener	WRDSB
Lackner Woods	15	609	2.46%	Kitchener	WRDSB
Saint John Paul II	95	768	12.37%	Kitchener	WCDSB
Sheppard	38	333	11.41%	Kitchener	WRDSB
Smithson	55	248	<b>22.18%</b>	Kitchener	WRDSB
Southridge	15	523	2.87%	Kitchener	WRDSB
St. Teresa	10	259	3.86%	Kitchener	WCDSB
St. Timothy	16	284	5.63%	Kitchener	WCDSB
Wilson Avenue	22	492	4.47%	Kitchener	WRDSB
St. Brigid	35	256	13.67%	North Dumfries	WCDSB
Edna Staebler	57	590	9.66%	Waterloo	WRDSB
Elizabeth Ziegler	57	470	12.13%	Waterloo	WRDSB
Lester B. Pearson	25	644	3.88%	Waterloo	WRDSB
Mary Johnston	75	415	<b>18.07%</b>	Waterloo	WRDSB
Millen Woods	34	323	10.53%	Waterloo	WRDSB
St. Nicholas	50	448	11.16%	Waterloo	WCDSB
Vista Hills	31	787	3.94%	Waterloo	WRDSB
John Mahood	112	420	<b>26.67%</b>	Woolwich	WRDSB

*“Spencer was very excited he won; you certainly made his day. It also helped motivate him to complete his pledge to riding this week :)”*

*~ Amelia (parent)*



## Services

Schools may choose to participate in the STP process at any time during the school year. The process requires Facilitators to work with parents, school staff, community groups, community leaders, and students to determine a unique action plan to address active travel and traffic goals at the school.

To succeed, STP requires:

- active support for at least two (2) years at each school
- a trained Facilitator who works directly with the school, liaises with community stakeholders, leads data collection and analysis, and guides action-planning and implementation

School-based committees are encouraged to be creative in their approach to action-planning, while the Facilitator distills requests, connects schools to resources, and manages expectations or guides new solutions when some plans cannot be fulfilled. Some action plan items supported by STSWR are outlined in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Services		Intervention		Target Audience		
"E"	Sample Action Plan Items*	Students	Parents	School	Community	
Consultation	Initial Assessment*			✓		
	Parking Lot Assessment*			✓		
	STP Committee Meetings*	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Walkabout*		✓	✓	✓	
Education	Bike Rodeo*	✓				
	Traffic Video*	✓	✓			
	Traffic Flow Maps*		✓			
	Letters/ Council Delegation		✓		✓	
	School Presentation	✓	✓			
	STP Booth*	✓	✓			
	Poster Challenge	✓				
	Student Inquiry or Design Project	✓	✓			
	Radar Gun Project	✓	✓	✓		
	Walking Clinic*	✓				
	Road Safety Assembly*	✓				
Encouragement	Drive-to-5*		✓			
	Staff or Student Carpool		✓	✓		
	Greening Tree	✓				
	Kindergarten Coaching	✓	✓			
	Monthly Parent Communications*		✓			
	Weekly Announcements*	✓				
	Letters to Parents		✓			
	Sidewalk Paint/ Wayfinding*	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Walking Buddy system	✓	✓			
	Walking Wednesdays	✓				
Winter Clearance Thank You*				✓		
Enforcement	Anti-idling Campaign		✓			
	Administrator Parking Lot Supervision*		✓			
	Parking Attendants		✓			

Table 3: Services	Intervention	Target Audience			
		Students	Parents	School	Community
	<b>Sample Action Plan Items*</b>				
	Parking Lot Blitz*		✓		
	Police or Bylaw Collaboration		✓		
Engineering	Add Storage Rack	✓		✓	
	Access Point Improvement (on school site)			✓	
	Neighbourhood Matching Grant				✓
	Request Infrastructure Review				✓
	Parking Signage		✓	✓	✓
	Temporary Tactical Urbanism Project		✓		✓
	Evaluation	Family Survey*		✓	
Traffic Observations			✓	✓	
Request for Speed Monitor / Traffic Counter			✓		✓

For actions marked with “\*” within this table, Standard Operating Procedures are available here: <https://www.stswr.ca/walkzone/school-travel-planning/solutions/>



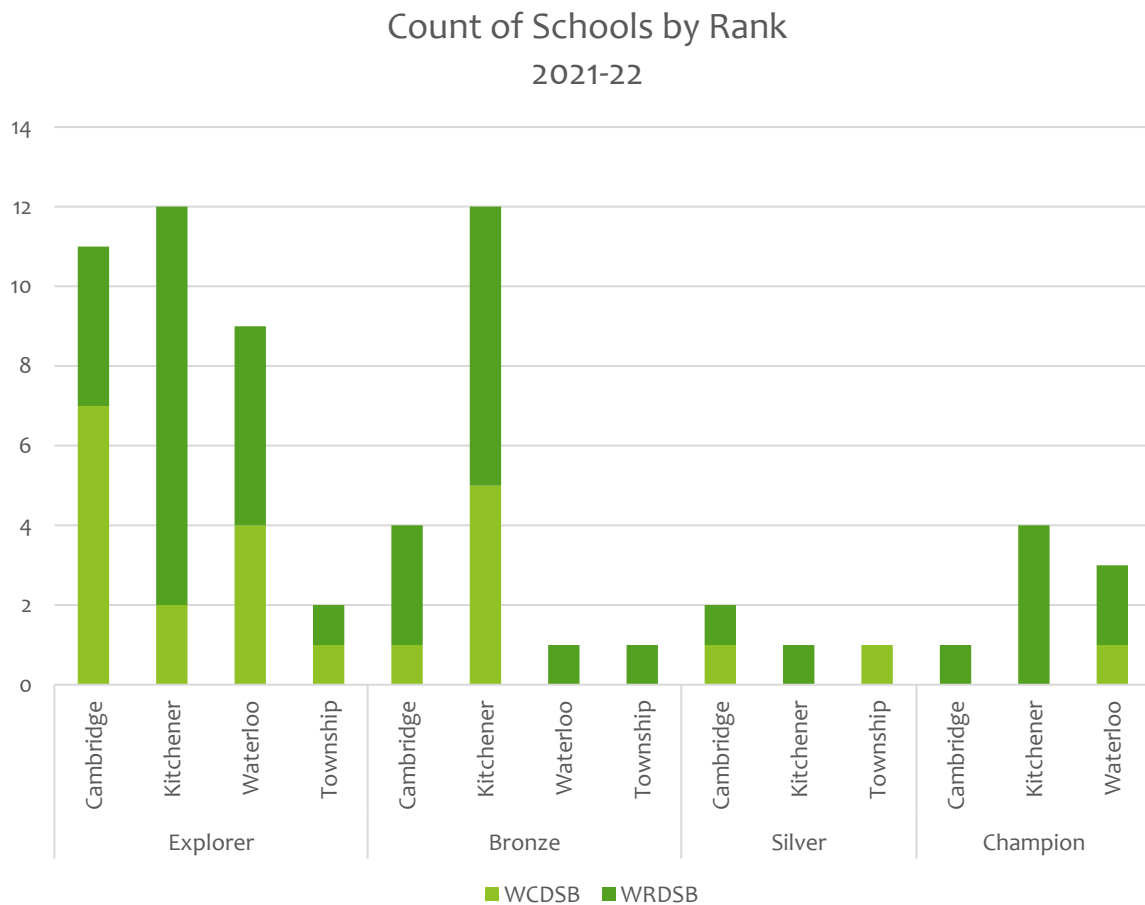
Parents from Mary Johnston P.S. worked with their STP Facilitator to plan layouts, apply for municipal permits, and paint paw prints on area sidewalks and trails leading from Drive-to-5 locations to the school, encouraging students to use school crossings properly and to have some fun along the way!

### Schools Receiving Custom Services

During the 2021-22 school year, 15 additional schools received at least an initial assessment, bringing them into the STP community of 64 school peers. Thirteen (13) schools worked through engaged committees, while many others completed action items without meeting regularly. Most of the 64 schools continue to encourage active travel through communications to parents and students, and by participating in Celebration Events.

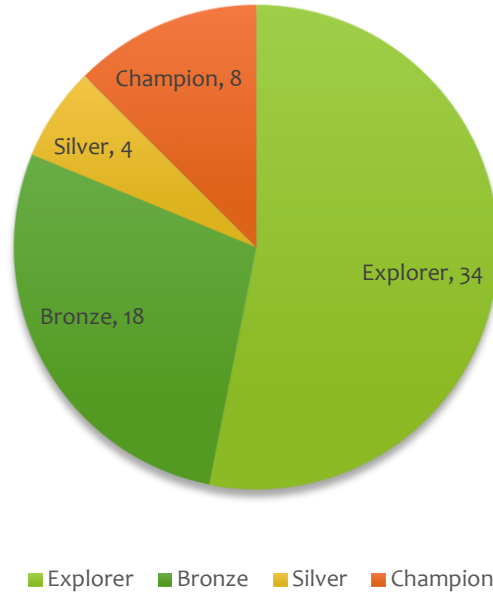
The high number of schools in the Explorer stage is an indication that schools are interested in School Travel Planning but have not yet developed or implemented a balance of interventions from an action plan yet. Eight (8) schools have now reached Champion status as they have been in the program for two (2) or more years; have worked through bronze, silver, and gold levels by completing the actions in their action plan; and are motivated to continue ongoing programs and celebrations to encourage more active travel.

All 64 schools received a certificate of participation recognizing their STP rank in June.

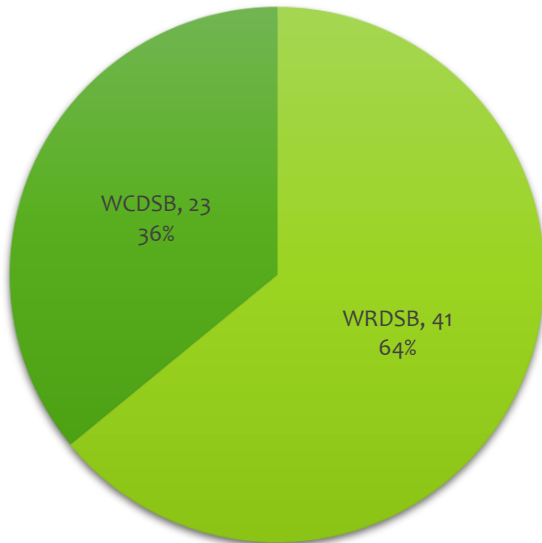


Number of Schools with Custom Services

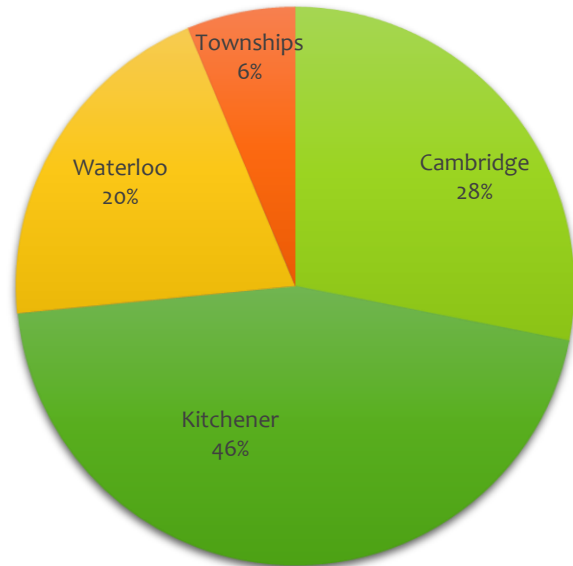
By Status



By Board



By Municipality



School Rank and Status 2021-22

Ranking	School	Municipality	Board
<b>Champion</b>	St. Matthew	Waterloo	WCDSB
	Saginaw	Cambridge	WRDSB
	Chicopee Hills	Kitchener	WRDSB
	Janet Metcalfe	Kitchener	WRDSB
	Sandhills	Kitchener	WRDSB
	Wilson Avenue	Kitchener	WRDSB
	Edna Staebler	Waterloo	WRDSB
	Mary Johnston	Waterloo	WRDSB
<b>Silver</b>	St. Peter	Cambridge	WCDSB
	St. Boniface	Woolwich	WCDSB
	Moffat Creek	Cambridge	WRDSB
	King Edward	Kitchener	WRDSB
<b>Bronze</b>	Holy Spirit	Cambridge	WCDSB
	St. Anne (K)	Kitchener	WCDSB
	St. Daniel	Kitchener	WCDSB
	St. John	Kitchener	WCDSB
	St. John Paul II	Kitchener	WCDSB
	St. Teresa Kitchener	Kitchener	WCDSB
	Avenue Road	Cambridge	WRDSB
	Central	Cambridge	WRDSB
	Hillcrest	Cambridge	WRDSB
	Courtland	Kitchener	WRDSB
	Groh	Kitchener	WRDSB
	Howard Robertson	Kitchener	WRDSB
	J.W. Gerth	Kitchener	WRDSB
	Smithson	Kitchener	WRDSB
	Southridge	Kitchener	WRDSB
	Suddaby	Kitchener	WRDSB
	Elizabeth Ziegler	Waterloo	WRDSB
	Riverside	Woolwich	WRDSB
<b>Explorer</b>	Our Lady of Fatima	Cambridge	WCDSB
	St. Augustine	Cambridge	WCDSB
	St. Benedict	Cambridge	WCDSB
	St. Elizabeth	Cambridge	WCDSB
	St. Margaret of Scotland	Cambridge	WCDSB
	St. Michael	Cambridge	WCDSB
	St. Vincent de Paul	Cambridge	WCDSB
	Blessed Sacrament	Kitchener	WCDSB
	St. Timothy	Kitchener	WCDSB
	St. Brigid	North Dumfries	WCDSB
	Our Lady of Lourdes	Waterloo	WCDSB
	St. Agnes	Waterloo	WCDSB
	St. Luke	Waterloo	WCDSB
	St. Nicholas	Waterloo	WCDSB
	Clemens Mill	Cambridge	WRDSB
	Coronation	Cambridge	WRDSB
	Elgin St.	Cambridge	WRDSB



	School	Municipality	Board
Explorer, cont.	Hespeler	Cambridge	WRDSB
	A.R Kaufman	Kitchener	WRDSB
	Bridgeport	Kitchener	WRDSB
	Brigadoon	Kitchener	WRDSB
	Forest Hill	Kitchener	WRDSB
	Franklin	Kitchener	WRDSB
	J.F. Carmichael	Kitchener	WRDSB
	Jean Steckle	Kitchener	WRDSB
	Lackner Woods	Kitchener	WRDSB
	Pioneer Park	Kitchener	WRDSB
	Sheppard	Kitchener	WRDSB
	Laurelwood	Waterloo	WRDSB
	MacGregor	Waterloo	WRDSB
	Millen Woods	Waterloo	WRDSB
	Vista Hills	Waterloo	WRDSB
	WCI	Waterloo	WRDSB
John Mahood	Woolwich	WRDSB	



Municipal and school board leaders gathered at Janet Metcalfe P.S. to honour all 64 schools in June 2022. Ceremony attendees heard from teacher and parent Christina Carl and her twin sons about the joys, teachable moments, and connection they feel as they use active school travel every day. Many delegates offered praise for the hard work by volunteers and school staff to make the school commute safer at all schools.



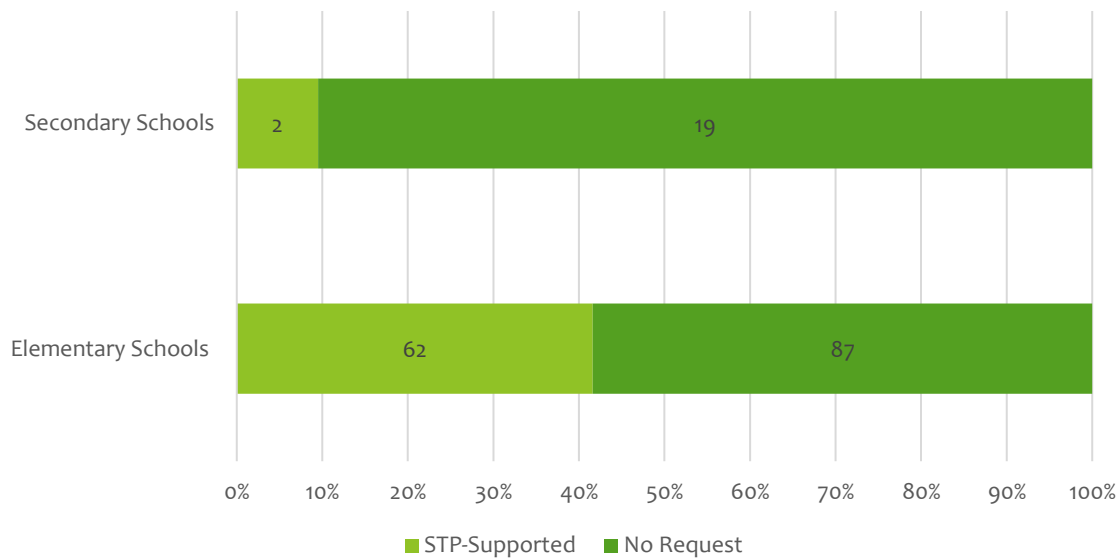
## Goals and Achievements

The following lists achievements in relation to goals set in the 2020-21 STP Annual Report

### Goal #1 - Responding to demand for help.

To date, 64 out of 170 schools have engaged the STP team for assistance managing traffic and/or encouraging active travel, and the team has been able to respond with services for every school that has requested them.

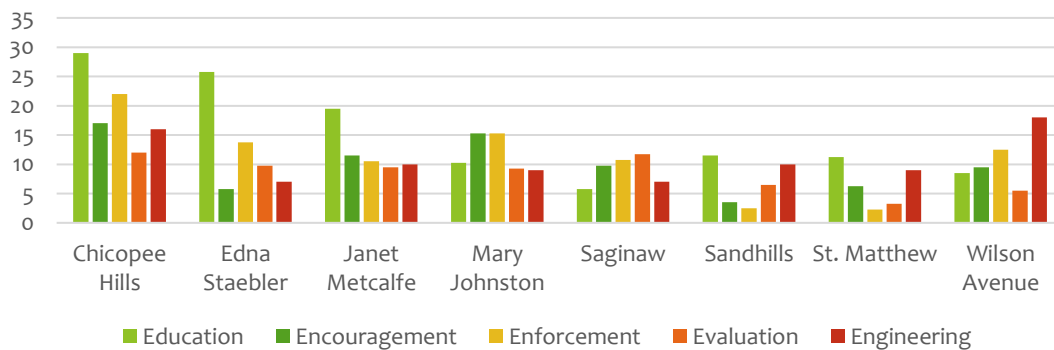
Percentage Schools Supported with Services to Date



### Goal #2 Growing Champions

Eight (8) schools have reached Champion status through a balance of action items using all 5 E's. To learn more about the E's, see Appendix A.

Numbers of Interventions at Champion Schools



Interventions that recur annually (e.g., Celebration Events) are only counted for the current year; interventions that are only required once (e.g., new bike rack) are counted interminably.

*Goal #3 – Additional Online Resources*

Parents, students, and administration at Janet Metcalfe and Edna Staebler Public Schools came together to produce a video aimed at helping parents make the connection between driving behaviours and overall safety in the school zone.



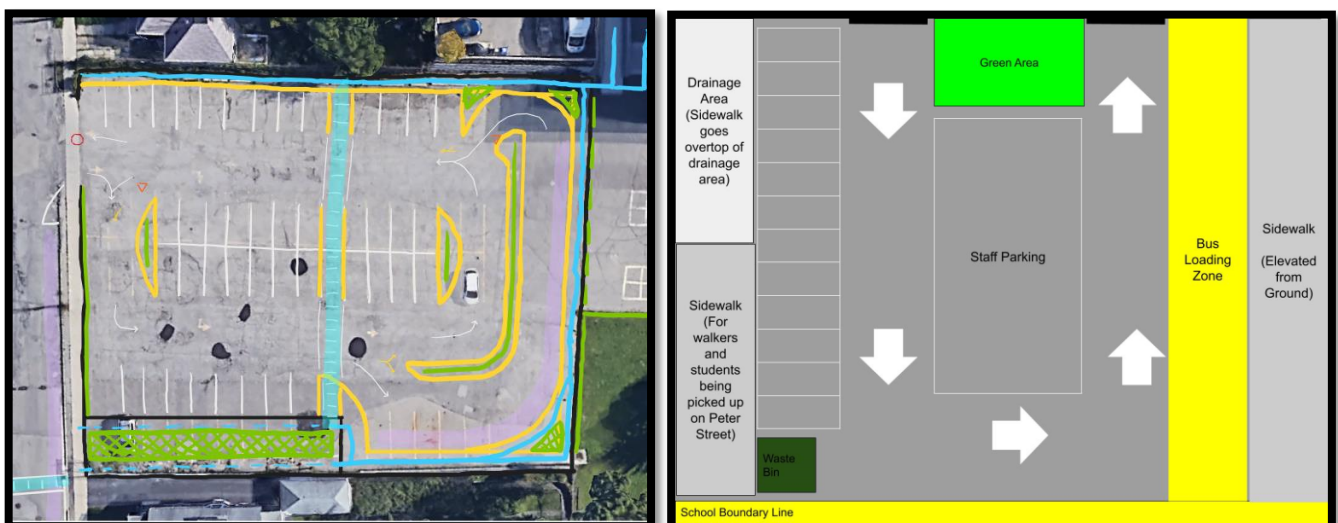
Traffic video

*Goal #4 – Drive-to-5 Maps*

The STSWR website now hosts 100 Drive-to-5 maps, including four (4) high schools.

*Goal #5 – Involve Students in More Projects*

Courtland P.S. principal Mike Coates and teacher Mark Brubacher rallied Grade 7 students to participate in a design thinking project to reimagine the school parking lot, which was failing to protect students on foot. WRDSB Project Manager Mel Lavoie made sure all designs were genuinely considered by the engineering team contracted earlier to redesign the lot. Samples below.



### Goal # 6 Equity Map

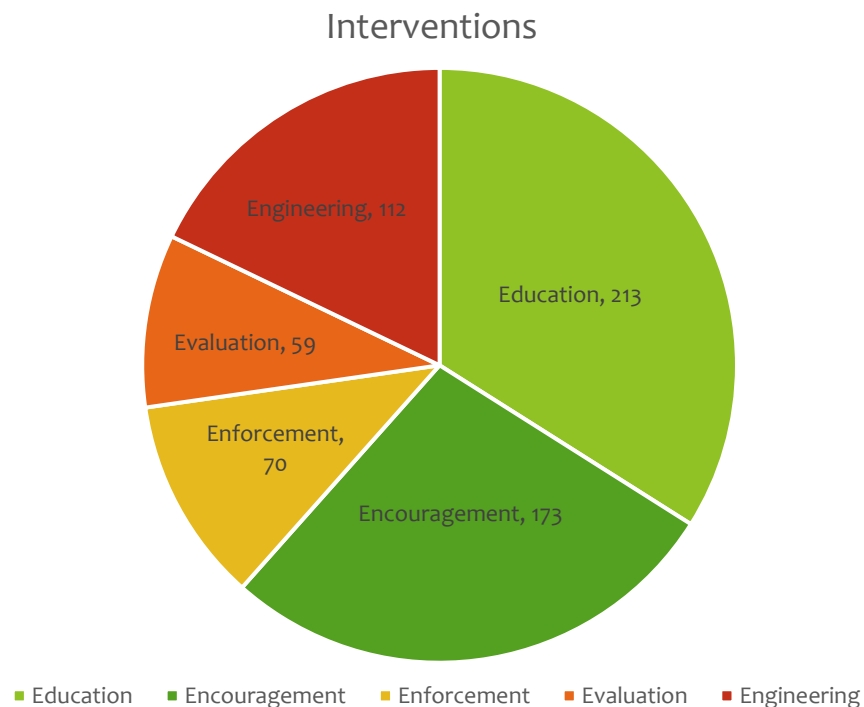
STSWR's STP team continues to advocate for a regional map that can show active travel infrastructure in relation to equity-deserving neighbourhoods to understand where our efforts will better serve to support our most vulnerable students; however, the data and tools required to create this map are not available to the team.

### Goal # 7 Public Interface for the STP Certification Program

Struggles with Information Technology permissions have made it difficult to explore the software needed to attain this goal.

### Goal # 8 Supporting a Balanced Approach

STP Facilitators continue to inspire a mix of interventions from the 5 E's with the understanding that a balanced approach procures a more sustained shift to active school travel. The graph below shows that by number, there are more education and encouragement interventions than others, and that engineering interventions figure more prominently than evaluation and enforcement interventions.



### Goal # 9 - Ensure Program Sustainability and Reduce Dependency on Grant Funding

In November 2021, the STP team held a forum called [Finding Common Ground](#) to share the [2020-21 Annual Report](#) with decision makers, to establish greater knowledge of the program and to develop a connection for further information or help when leaders are asked to respond to constituents regarding school traffic. Additionally, the team produced a business case to support more permanent funding from partners.

In June 2022, two (2) temporary STP Facilitators were offered (and accepted) permanent roles, based on temporarily expanded funding from the school boards and prospective future municipal budget commitments.

## Support Activities

In 2021-22, the STP team provided the following support to funding partners and active school transportation interest groups.

### Consultations

Organization	Topic
<b>WRDSB, WCDSB</b>	CMC Bus Decision Appeals
<b>WCDSB and WRDSB</b>	New school development (Oak Creek, Kitchener)
<b>WCDSB and WRDSB</b>	Drop-off Improvement Projects
<b>WRDSB</b>	Exterior Design Standards Development
<b>City of Waterloo</b>	Speed reduction in residential zones
<b>City of Kitchener</b>	Vision Zero Plan
<b>Wilfrid Laurier University</b>	Air Quality Near Schools Research
<b>University of Waterloo</b>	CIHR Youth Mental Health and Built Environment
<b>University of Western Ontario HEAL Lab</b>	AST Policy Research and Recommendations
<b>GCC and Stuckless Consulting</b>	Walking & Wheeling Skills Training in Schools
<b>Urban Systems</b>	Supporting Kids on the Journey to School Report
<b>Climate Action Waterloo Region</b>	Active Transportation
<b>BC Healthy Communities</b>	STP Best Practices
<b>City of Stratford</b>	Wayfinding projects
<b>Canadian Cancer Society</b>	Walking School Bus Transition
<b>Region of Waterloo</b>	Franklin Boulevard / Saginaw Intersection
<b>City of Kitchener Love My Hood</b>	Every Child Matters Crosswalk

### Plan Examination (a sample)

Partner Organization	Project
<b>Township of Wellesley</b>	1016-1018 Doering Street
<b>City of Cambridge, WCDSB, Region of Waterloo</b>	Avenue Road Watermain
<b>City of Kitchener</b>	1940 Fischer Hallman Proposed Condo Dev.
<b>City of Kitchener</b>	Sportsworld Applications
<b>City of Kitchener</b>	Walkway Block Between 37-45 Lichty Cres
<b>Region of Waterloo, City of Cambridge, WCDSB</b>	Avenue Road Reconstruction

### Committees

Organizations Represented	Committee Title
<b>All funding agencies</b>	STP Steering Committee
<b>Ontario Active School Travel</b>	OAST Council - Chair
<b>Area Municipalities, Universities, and Road Safety Authorities</b>	Inter Municipal Partnership for Active Transportation (IMPACT)
<b>City of Kitchener</b>	Vision Zero Planning Committee
<b>Ontario Association of School Board Officials</b>	Active Transportation Leading Practices
<b>Active School Travel Canada</b>	Stakeholder Committee
<b>Western University HEAL Lab, OAST</b>	Supportive Policy for Active School Travel Working Group

*Presentations*

Organizing Agency	Topic
<b>STP Steering Committee</b>	Finding Common Ground – STP Stakeholder Forum
<b>Ontario Association of School Board Officials</b>	School Travel Planning Best Practices
<b>Share the Road - Ontario Bike Summit</b>	School Travel Planning and Temporary Bike Lanes in Waterloo Region
<b>WRDSB, WCDSB</b>	Annual Report

*Finding Common Ground Stakeholder Video*



[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UTCyV\\_hhqmo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UTCyV_hhqmo)



# Results

## Mode Split

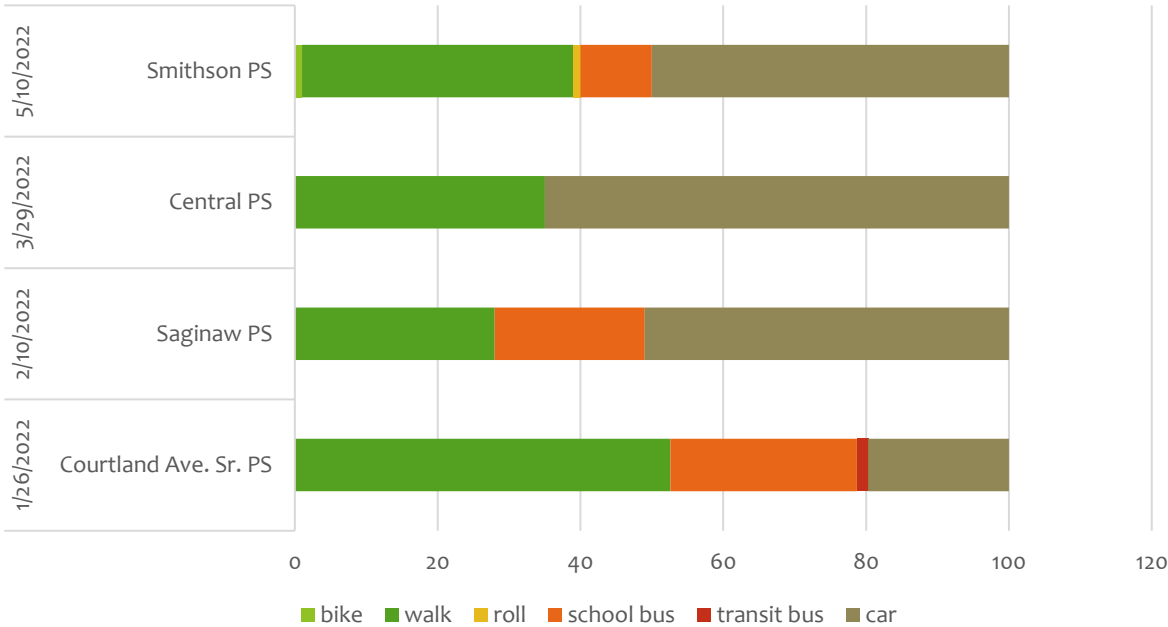
The STP team strives to collect data early in the STP process using a software application called [BikeWalkRoll](#) to see a snapshot of the mode split. In addition to providing information for action plan items, this exercise can be a wakeup call to school communities as parents are often surprised to find out just how many students are driven to school.

To execute the survey, students are asked in class how they got to school and how they will get home; and the data collector records aggregate numbers in the application. Schools and parents can see the survey data in real time on the app; and the School Travel Planning committee can use the data to inform action plan choices. This data is especially useful when planning traffic calming measures near schools.

This data could not be collected for the first half of the 2021-22 school year due to a moratorium on research in schools throughout the pandemic. Special approval processes at both boards were offered mid-year, and permissions were granted to allow collection in the second half of the school year.

Four (4) schools elected to collect data on single days and mostly during winter weather; so, the following results are not reliable enough to form assumptions. Instead, these data should be regarded as additional information that helped schools confirm which interventions they would implement.

Mode Split Percentage at Four (4) Schools





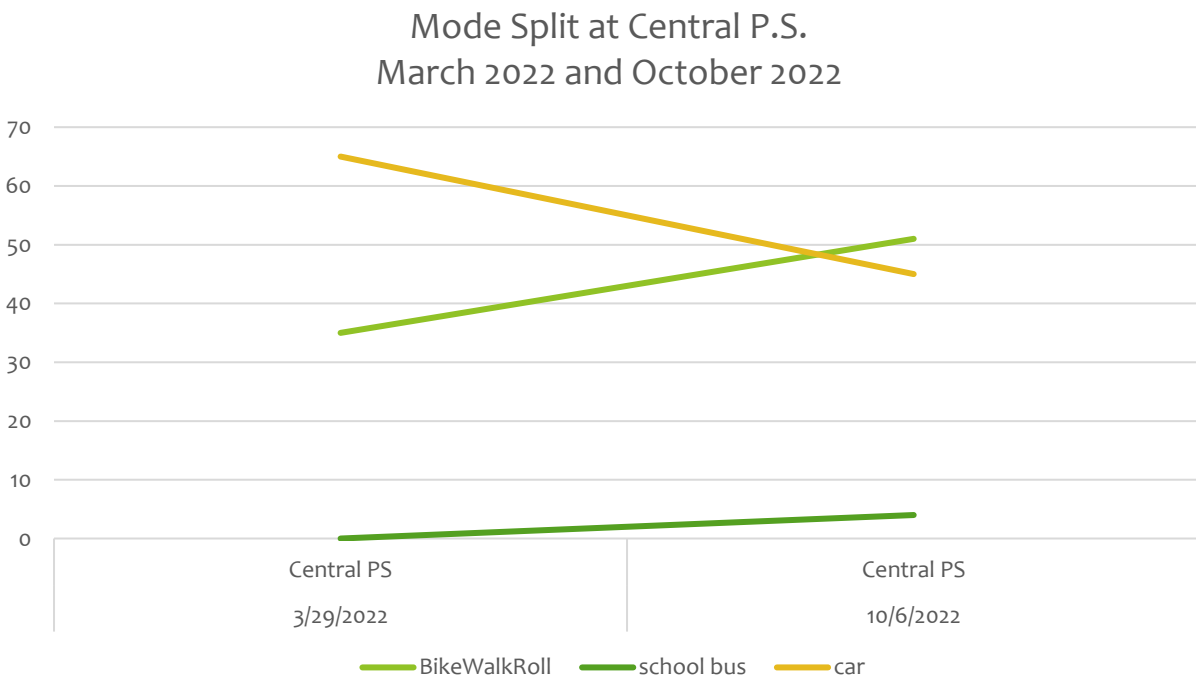
## Mode Shift

Mode shift cannot be determined at most schools yet, due to a gap in data collection during the pandemic.

The single exception is at Central Public School, where data were collected in March of 2022 and again in October of 2022 after a number of interventions. In this case, the weather on the days collected were too dissimilar to make that assumption. Further data collected in March or October of 2023 might indicate with greater confidence that the interventions implemented at the school are the only reason for this great shift towards active travel.

Central P.S. Interventions March-October 2022 included:

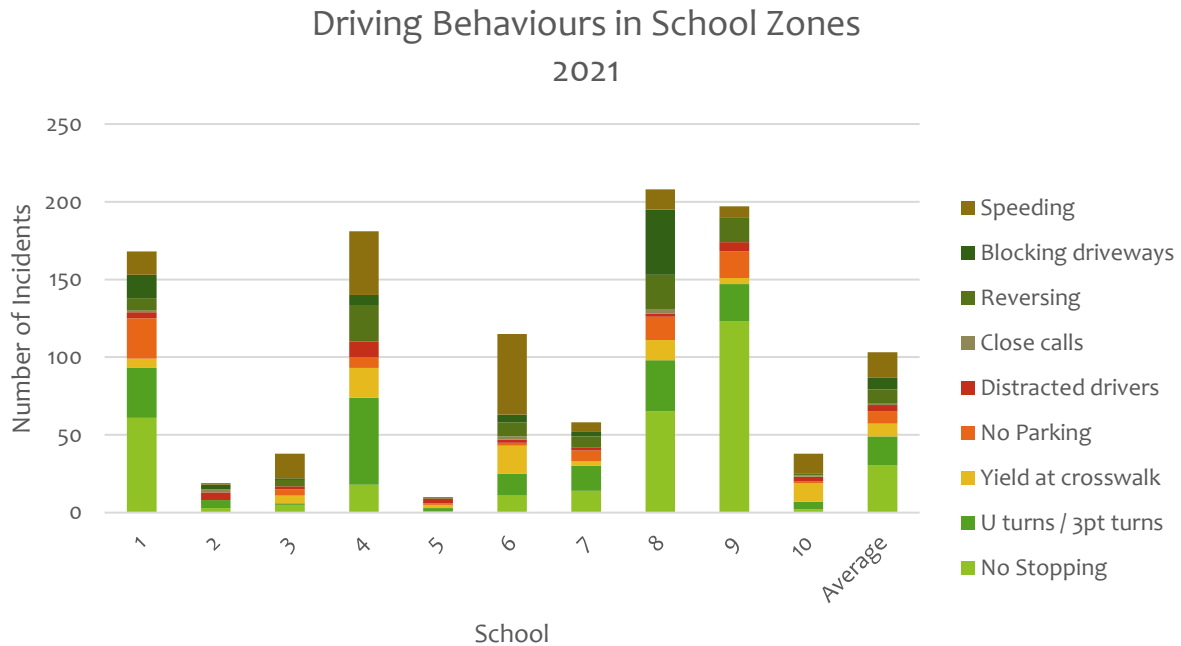
- Sidewalk Smarts
- Trailblazers
- Parking restriction/ sign changes
- Drive-to-5 maps and messages sent home regularly
- Regular STP updates at School Council meetings
- Sharps cleanup on routes to school
- BikeWalkRoll data collection



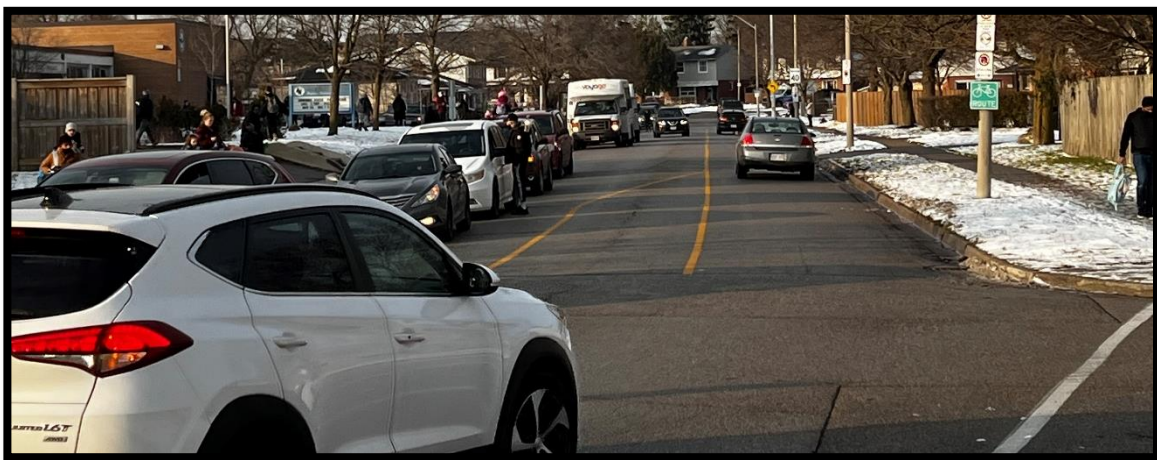
*STSWR will collect BikeWalkRoll data again in March 2023 to confirm that the drop in car use and rise in active transportation is a result of STP interventions.*

## Driver Behaviour

Since 2018, the STP team has collected data on driving behaviours in select school zones. Each year, ten (10) schools are observed to count specific behaviours that, while not always illegal, have been consistently identified by stakeholders as dangerous near large groups of children. These behaviours create an unwelcoming and risky space for child pedestrians.



To collect this data, three (3) STP Facilitators each record the behaviours that occur in one third (1/3) of the school zone. The data collected in 2021 confirms that a significant number of these behaviours occur in almost every school, covering a variety of school contexts that include different road design characteristics, varying sizes of enrolments, and morning bell times both before and after typical work hours commence.



Drivers stop on both sides of the road in front of Avenue Road P.S. despite stopping restrictions.

## Parent Involvement

Parents are at the heart of STP work because they understand their community and the school culture better than practitioners who have rarely visited. The following data show some of the breadth of this impact across the region.

- **99** parents engaged in regular School Travel Planning Committee meetings or projects
- **2** Bike Bus leaders
- **5,304** milestone magnets sent to parents of JK students

Online engagement during the 2021-21 school year:

- **2,130** users accessing Walk Zone webpage (increase of 839 over previous year)
- **575** users accessing Drive-to-5 Maps
- **377** users accessing Trailblazer page



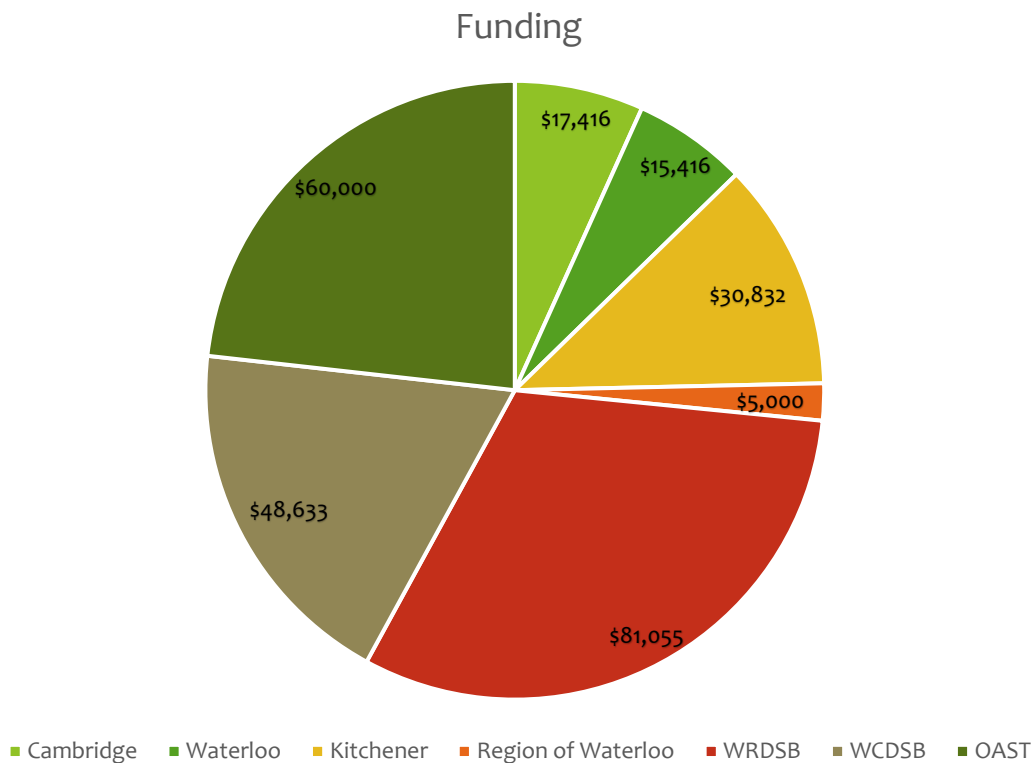
*Parent Nicole Walker worked with an STP Facilitator to coordinate a Walking School Bus pedestrian skills clinic at St. Teresa CES in Kitchener. Facilitators recruited Wilfrid Laurier students to lead, while Nicole laid out the route and recruited student participants. The clinic ran from November to April and Nicole happily reports that students who joined the Walking School Bus are now walking safely without supervision.*

## Financials

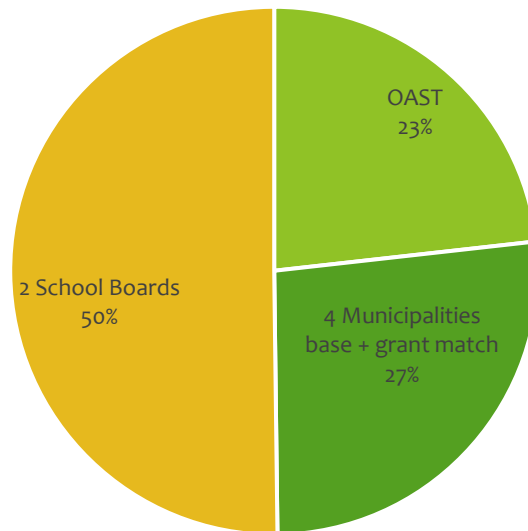
Six (6) funding partners work together with STSWR to bring greater attention to school traffic and active school travel than they can do on their own. This partnership powers a diverse toolkit filled with interventions. This model allows for a collective and coordinated approach to AST barriers that focuses on solution building to make active school travel easier for families and that produce healthier, safer, and more active communities.

### Funding

Funding for the 2021-22 school year includes 50% from school boards, 27% from 4 municipalities, and 23% from Green Communities Canada's Ontario Active School Travel (OAST) Fund. The funding continues to support the employment of two (2) STP Facilitators in 10-month positions and one (1) STP Supervisor in a 12-month position to provide custom school services and to support program development and delivery. Total program budget was \$258,352.



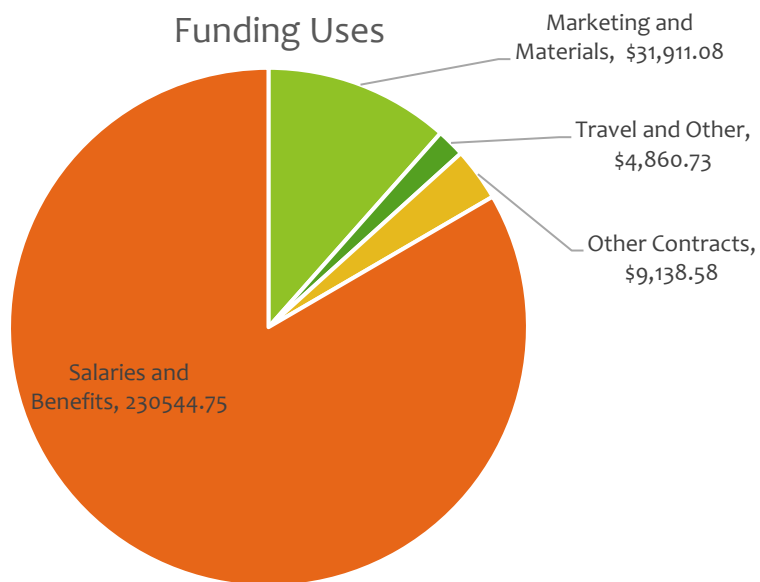
## STP Funding by Partner Group



### Uses

The bulk of funding is used on personnel to provide the custom school service required to engage communities and motivate behavioural shifts, and to create and implement data studies, educational programs, and encouraging board-wide events.

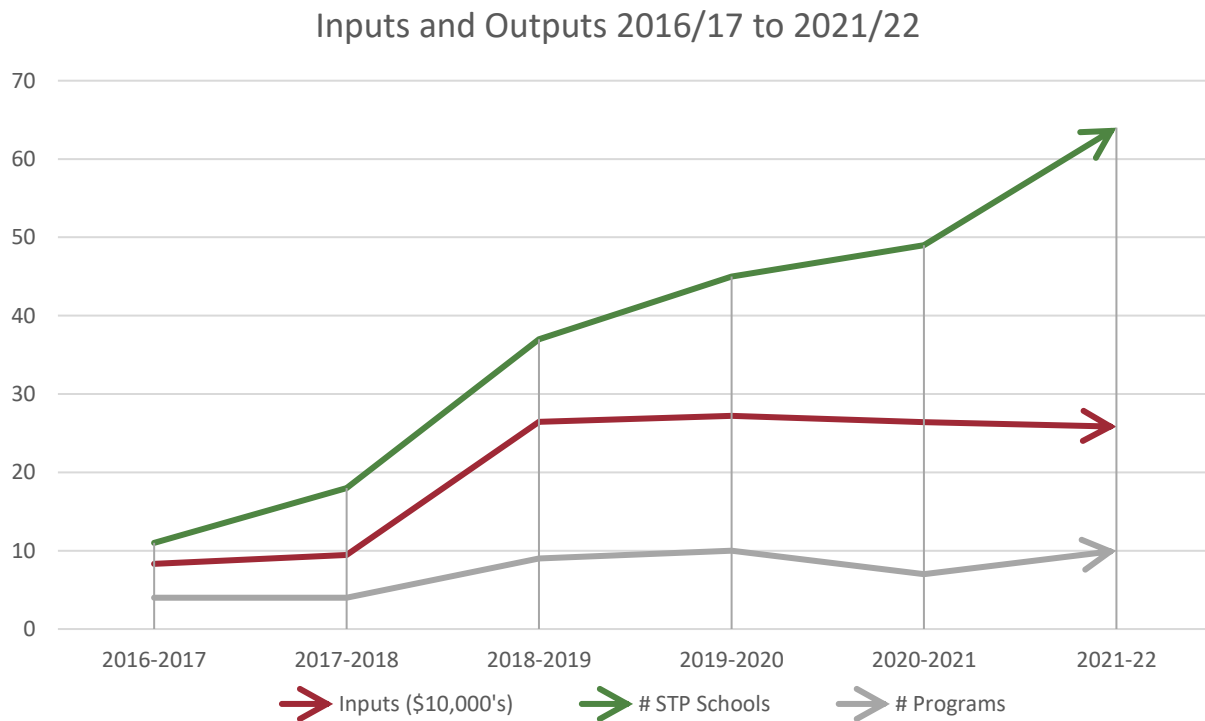
Three (3) per cent of the budget was used to complete the Enhanced School Zone pilot project. Much of the remaining budget was used for marketing products, holding events, Trailblazer training and materials, and Sidewalk Smarts instruction.



### Trajectory

School Travel Planning strives to assess and implement action plans with all 150 Waterloo region elementary schools by 2027. By August 2022, STP assessments and some level of action planning had been started at 64 schools. STP continues to support all schools after their early STP work is complete, offering consultations, programs, and special attention as needed.

Thanks to additional funding from the school boards and goodwill from municipal partners, two (2) Facilitator positions originally hired with grant money have been made permanent, which has allowed consistent support to schools despite the enormous strains on their resources.





### Risk Factors

Table 5 shows risks that impacted STP work in Waterloo Region in 2021-22, ongoing controls for those risks, and actions STSWR took to respond to the actualization of those risks and/or to mitigate them in the future.

Table 5: Risks	Controls	2021-22 actions
<b>In-school capacity still low</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gain school council buy-in for depth of support</li> <li>Offer alternatives to traditional programming</li> <li>Endorse or build in-school programs that support teachers' core work</li> <li>Engage teachers who are passionate about active travel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Train Trailblazers online</li> <li>Adapt Sidewalk Smarts' delivery to be outdoors only, supported by virtual instructor for in-class portion</li> <li>Resume hands' up data collection for select schools at school year end</li> </ul>
<b>Partner funding capacity low</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Robust reports to build case for support</li> <li>Maximize grant and sponsorship options</li> <li>Expand funding partnership</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create business case document for municipal use</li> <li>OAST Grants adapted; Cambridge supported one (1), RoW supported a second, and BOEs supported the third</li> <li>Boards of Education expand contributions temporarily to cover what the cities cannot</li> <li>Region of Waterloo has joined the partnership</li> </ul>
<b>Facilitator turnover</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Permanent role</li> <li>44-week job structure</li> <li>Fulfill Planner accreditation requirements with role</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New hire November 2021 after double posting</li> <li>Conduct exit interviews to identify reason for departure and controls for future</li> <li>Facilitator positions made permanent through backing by BOEs with the understanding that municipalities are working toward sustained support for permanent positions</li> </ul>



Sidewalk Smarts class kits containing tabletop maps, manipulable figures, flashcards, and a card game were delivered to each participating school. Manuals were shared with teachers who could cover the in-class portion of the instruction with a qualified instructor available virtually during the session to answer questions.

## Future Development

### 2022-23 Goals

1. Respond to demand for engagement with schools when it is requested.
2. Support more schools to move forward in the certification process
3. Improve amount and quality of data to support interventions
4. Further mature programs for more refined implementation
5. Provide additional schools with Drive-to-5 maps, including more high schools.
6. Involve students in more projects.
7. Develop a public interface for the certification program.
8. Secure municipal funding to support permanent STP Facilitator positions.

### Beyond 2023

Long-term delivery of effective School Travel Planning is dependent on:

1. Supporting schools that are highest in need of safety interventions.
2. Enhancing current programs to keep them relevant and accessible:
  - e.g. develop better tools for Trailblazer school coordinators.
  - e.g. create effective tools for teachers or parents to deliver in-class portions of Sidewalk Smarts.
3. Scaling delivery of region-wide programs (e.g. Sidewalk Smarts) to ensure equitable access and to give all students a chance to learn and participate.
4. Developing and celebrating AST champions in every school.
5. Developing more parent resources.
  - e.g. active travel preferred routes maps showing pedestrian/cycling facilities and identifying top routes
  - e.g. digital Sidewalk Smarts home course
  - e.g. online route planning tools
6. Tracking progress with better data collection practices and tools.
7. Expanding support activities like plan reviews, consultations, presentations, delegations, and committee membership.



STOP FOR  
PEDESTRIANS



## Conclusion

The 2021-22 school year presented many opportunities for STP Facilitators to create change at the community level, largely powered by requests for safer school zones and safer routes to school. The team supported 15 new schools and implemented scores of interventions from the 5 E's. These interventions invigorated school communities and changed the way some families get to school. The data shows the impact of this work in numbers, but the real impact is demonstrated curbside, by children who can now join thousands of peers travelling actively and independently to school in the Waterloo region.



## Appendix A

### STP Method

Ontario Active School Travel (formerly Active & Safe Routes to School) is a program of Green Communities Canada that promotes STP as the most effective approach to creating a culture of AST. They provide a toolkit and procedure that STSWR uses to guide STP processes. According to their website:

“School Travel Planning is a community-based model for implementing active school travel that systematically addresses barriers to and incentives for walking to school. School Travel Planning strengthens local commitment to active school travel.

“School Travel Planning (STP) is a proven cost-effective way to get more kids walking and wheeling to school. When effectively coordinated and implemented, it results in positive travel behaviour changes with health, safety, environmental, and economic benefits.

“Through STP, school and community stakeholders collaborate to create and implement school-level action plans that use all of the 5 E’s to:

- address ongoing transportation and traffic safety problems
- increase the number of students using active and sustainable modes for all or part of the journey to school.<sup>2</sup>”

#### **The 5 E’s include:**

1. **Education** - teaching students and community members about active transportation options and ensuring they have the skills to be safe near traffic
2. **Encouragement** - using events, activities, support systems, and incentives to promote AST
3. **Engineering** – working with partners to make improvements to the built environment on and off school property to increase safety; “the majority of the studies finding null effects on AST only focused on non-infrastructure strategies through either educational (Ducheyne et al, 2014; McMinn et al., 2012) or encouragement tactics (Bungum et al., 2014; Sayers et al., 2012; Hunter et al., 2015) without addressing environmental barriers.<sup>3</sup>”
4. **Enforcement/Reinforcement** – partnering with police and bylaw officers on traffic and crime concerns in the neighborhoods around schools and along school routes, encouraging administrators to supervise traffic on school property, and encouraging parents/guardians to abide by traffic laws while reinforcing better drop-off behaviours
5. **Evaluation** – bringing attention to the mode split and assessing the effectiveness of the interventions

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<sup>2</sup> <https://ontarioactiveschooltravel.ca/school-travel-planning/> extracted October 28, 2020.

<sup>3</sup> Mammen, George. School Travel Planning in Canada: A Holistic Examination of Program Impact on Active School Travel. University of Toronto, Graduate Department of Exercise Sciences. 2016; pp. 31.

## Appendix B

### Program Descriptions

The following programs work in various ways to address barriers to active travel:

**Active Transportation Celebration Events** – Celebrates students who use active travel and encourages their peers to find ways to experience the active commute, sometimes for the first time. Events occur throughout the year (October, February, April, and June) focusing on different aspects of the active school commute.

**BikeWalkRoll** – Allows schools to discover their modal split so they know how many children are walking, cycling, rolling (includes scootering and mobility devices), riding city transit, riding school buses, or being driven to school. This information is particularly useful in the action planning stage of school travel planning.

**CAA Standing Foot Patrol** – Trains student leaders to monitor school crossings by ensuring students cross roads near their school in a safe and responsible manner. Unlike Adult Crossing Guards, Patrollers do not stop or direct traffic. This program is provided by CAA through STSWR in partnership with Waterloo Region Police Services, and the cities of Cambridge, Kitchener, and Waterloo.

**Community Road Model** - Asks all road users to pledge to obey traffic laws, use active transportation more often, and to be courteous road users. Students take the pledge in class and a take-home discussion primer helps students encourage their parents or guardians to take the pledge, drive more safely, and place decals in vehicle windows.

**Cycling Into The Future** – Trains grade 5 and 6 students to be safe, confident cyclists. STSWR promotes this program with all schools and connects them with the organization as appropriate. Cycling Into The Future's trained instructors deliver the program over a number of sessions, both in the classroom and on the street. (Cycling Into The Future ended services as of July, 2022.)

**Drive-to-5** – Identifies safe and legal street parking a short distance away from the school to disperse congestion and leave school access points safer for children on foot. This program is a steppingstone towards active travel for hesitant parents.

**Kindergarten Outreach** – Introduces parents to the expectation that our smallest children can walk to the bus stop or to school, and helps parents teach their children about walking and road safety.

**Sidewalk Smarts** – Introduces grades 3 and 4 students to complex pedestrian skills. Students learn in-class and then practice skills curbside to get real life experience on familiar streets. Students take home a checklist that parents can use to gauge their child(ren)'s readiness to actively travel independently.

**Trailblazers** – Trains student walking experts who walk preferred routes to school wearing class II safety vests. This program provides greater visibility of active school commuters, provides a greater level of pedestrian skill knowledge on school routes, and helps to highlight preferred routes to other students.

**Walking School Bus** - An organized system of getting children to school on foot under the supervision of trained and screened adult volunteers.