

School Travel Planning in Waterloo Region

Annual Report 2022-2023



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

Landon Chan

Ashley Cullen

Leslie Maxwell

October 31, 2023

This report was prepared in an industrial office located 470 meters from the Grand River and the work it describes is performed across Waterloo region; lands traditionally used by the Haudenosaunee, Anishinaabe, and Chonnonton People. As treaty people and uninvited guests, we acknowledge the enduring presence of the Indigenous people with whom we share this land. We appreciate their deep traditional knowledge, laws, and philosophies, which among other things teach us that when we walk upon the land, we come into a relationship with it and that the way we step upon this earth matters.

“Even if the grassland has been ploughed under, even if you’re passing canola fields...you can still feel the sun on your face, see the sky, hear the birds, sense the gentle contours of the land in the muscles in the legs...You’re not alone when you’re walking by yourself. You’re with the land and it is with you.”¹



This work was made possible through financial support from the City of Cambridge, the City of Kitchener, the City of Waterloo, the Region of Waterloo, the Waterloo Catholic District School Board, and the Waterloo Region District School Board. In-kind support was provided by a variety of community partners, school administrators, and troupes of incredible community volunteers.

Data within this report reflects activities from September 1, 2022 to August 31, 2023 unless otherwise stated.

Cover photo taken at St. Peter CES on September 5, 2022 while preparing a new active transportation waiting area. Permissions granted.

¹ Wilson, K. (2021). Walking as Embodied Territorial Acknowledgment: Thinking about Place-Based Relationships from the Side of the Road. *Performance Matters*, 7(1-2), 97–115. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1085315ar>

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Executive Summary

We are proud to bring you the 2022-23 School Travel Planning (STP) annual report.

This work is a true collaboration between school boards, municipalities, citizens, schools, and children that results in real impact on the ground, and so we hope you are proud of this work too. It is yours.

The 2022-23 year was marked by the fortification of a permanent team and the extension of STP work. The STP team dedicated themselves to goals set in the 2021-22 annual report to great effect, resulting in the refinement and growth of 5 out of 6 of our major programs, more comprehensive mode split data, more Drive to 5 maps, and more student involvement.

The team also expanded custom services to include 74 elementary schools and 2 high schools across Waterloo Catholic District School Board (WCDSB) and Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB). The action plans at these schools continue to grow in complexity and breadth, including bringing municipal partners in the City of Cambridge, City of Kitchener, City of Waterloo, and Region of Waterloo in to help tackle extreme traffic situations. In total, over 400 School Travel Planning actions were taken by schools in 2022-23.

Going above and beyond those goals, our team also underwent several hours of strategic planning exercises to set our course for the coming years. Our new strategic plan map will guide our internal decisions while giving funding and community partners a clear picture of the STP direction for the longer-term.

We hope our new strategic plan will lend more opportunity for the identification of synergies and inter-agency integrations that can work to move the collective “us” closer to our aspirational vision that every child in Waterloo region will walk or wheel for part or all of their school journey.

We know Waterloo region children deserve this, and we know we can get there, together.

Sincerely,
Leslie Maxwell
School Travel Planning Supervisor, STSWR

Vision

VISION

That every child will walk or wheel for part or all of their daily school journey

Mandates

1. To reduce vehicular traffic at schools, and
2. To encourage more active transportation modes like walking, cycling, and scootering for the journey to / from school.

The STP process is guided and supported by an STP Facilitator who brings school, school board, municipal and community stakeholders together to identify and resolve issues. The method used to achieve these mandates is based on the Ontario Active School Travel STP Method, as outlined in Appendix A.

Values

The following values guide STP decisions.



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.

(See Appendix B for a rationale for STP work.)

Programs

STP programs have been developed to address barriers that are found to be common to many schools. The bulk of these programs focus on education, encouragement, and evaluation. These programs allow STSWR to prompt greater shift towards active school travel (AST) by allowing schools to take actions outside of formal School Travel Planning, and by raising the profile of AST through system-wide actions.

This greater exposure to AST ensures that more students feel comfortable trying it, more students use it on a regular basis, and more students consider it a normal choice.

In 2022-23, STSWR issued milestone magnets to all Junior Kindergarten students to encourage ongoing home coaching and to set the expectation that students will walk to school or to the bus stop during their school career. In addition, Trailblazers, Sidewalk Smarts, Canadian Automobile Association (CAA) Standing Foot Patrol, Winter Walk Day, and Bike to School Day programs all aimed to improve active travel culture at schools across the region. To date, STSWR has created and maintained 128 Drive-to-5 maps to encourage families who choose to drive to alleviate traffic at school sites by parking a few blocks away. Unfortunately, Cycling Into The Future disbanded and no comparable cycling education alternative was available. Table 1 below shows who our programs aim to support and motivate.

Descriptions of STP programs can be found in Appendix C.

| Table 1: Programs | | Intervention | | Target | | |
|-------------------|--|--------------|---------|--------|-----------|--|
| "E" | Program | Students | Parents | School | Community | |
| Education | Sidewalk Smarts* | ✓ | | | | |
| | Trailblazers* | ✓ | | | ✓ | |
| Encouragement | Drive-to-5 Maps* | | ✓ | | | |
| | Kindergarten Package (Magnets + Slides) | ✓ | ✓ | | | |
| | Walking School Bus Support | ✓ | ✓ | | | |
| | Bike Bus Guide | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| | Winter Walk Day / AT Celebration Events | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| | Bike to School Week | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| | Community Road Model Project | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | |
| Reinforcement | CAA Standing Foot Patrol* | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Engineering | Parking Restriction Request Support | | ✓ | | ✓ | |
| Evaluation | BikeWalkRoll* | ✓ | | ✓ | | |

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

Bike Bus

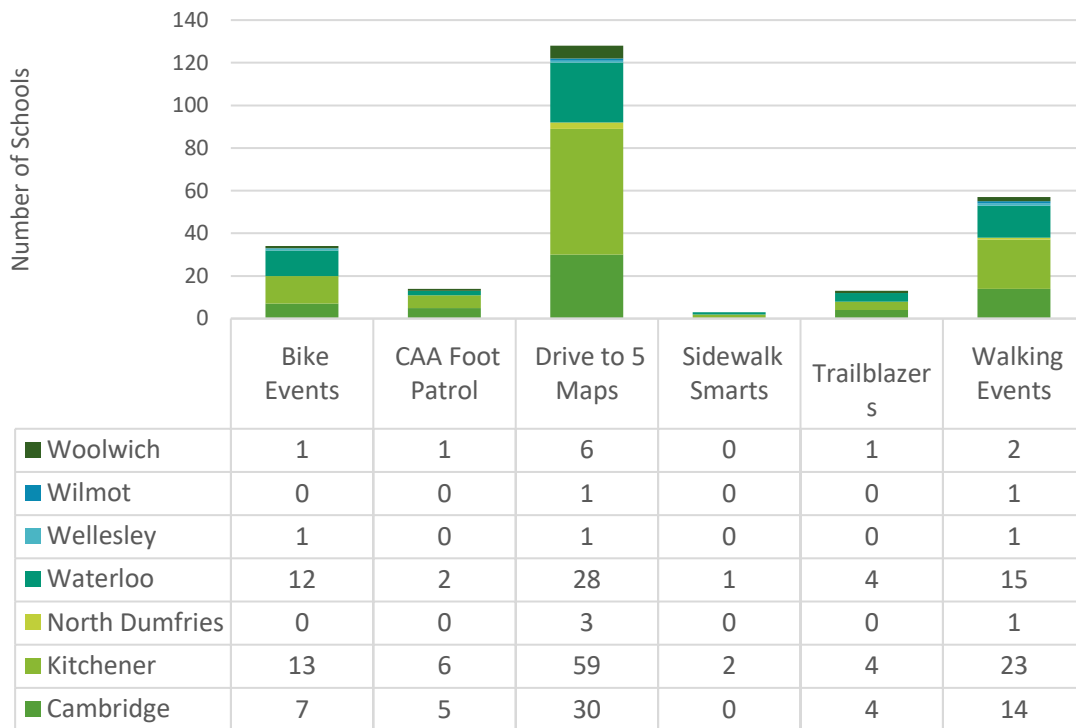
The bike bus launched by parents and the Bike Mayor of Waterloo (Arcy Canumay) at Empire P.S. gave the STP team an opportunity to develop a Bike Bus Guide with these partners that is available to any school seeking to create their own. Photos below show the bike bus in action and a special visiting cyclist, Mayor McCabe of the City of Waterloo!



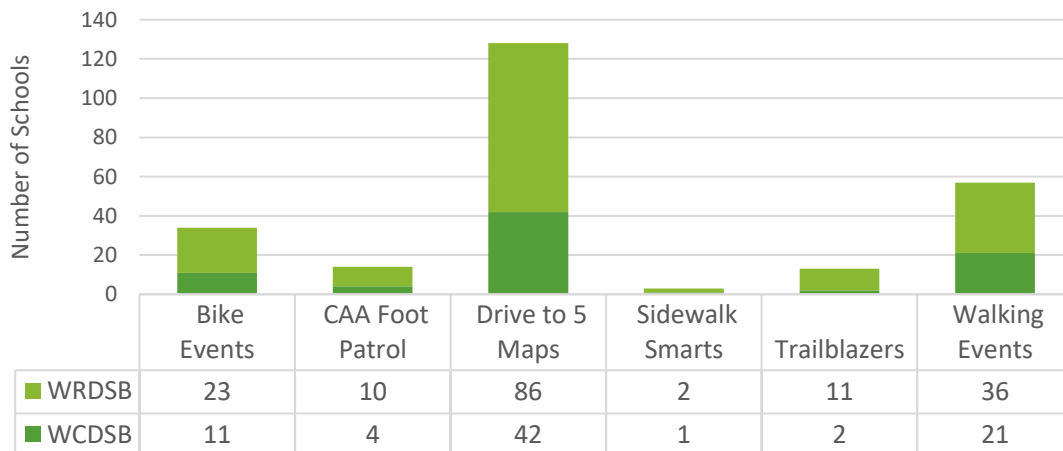
Program Participation

2022-23 saw a return to more normal activities. Trailblazers grew from 9 schools to 13, CAA Standing Foot Patrol went from 11 schools to 14, Drive to 5 Maps increased from 100 to 128, Winter Walk Day grew from 49 to 57 schools, and Bike to School Week increased from 29 schools to 34. Unfortunately, one school backed out of Sidewalk Smarts without time to offer it to another school, so it was delivered to 3 schools only.

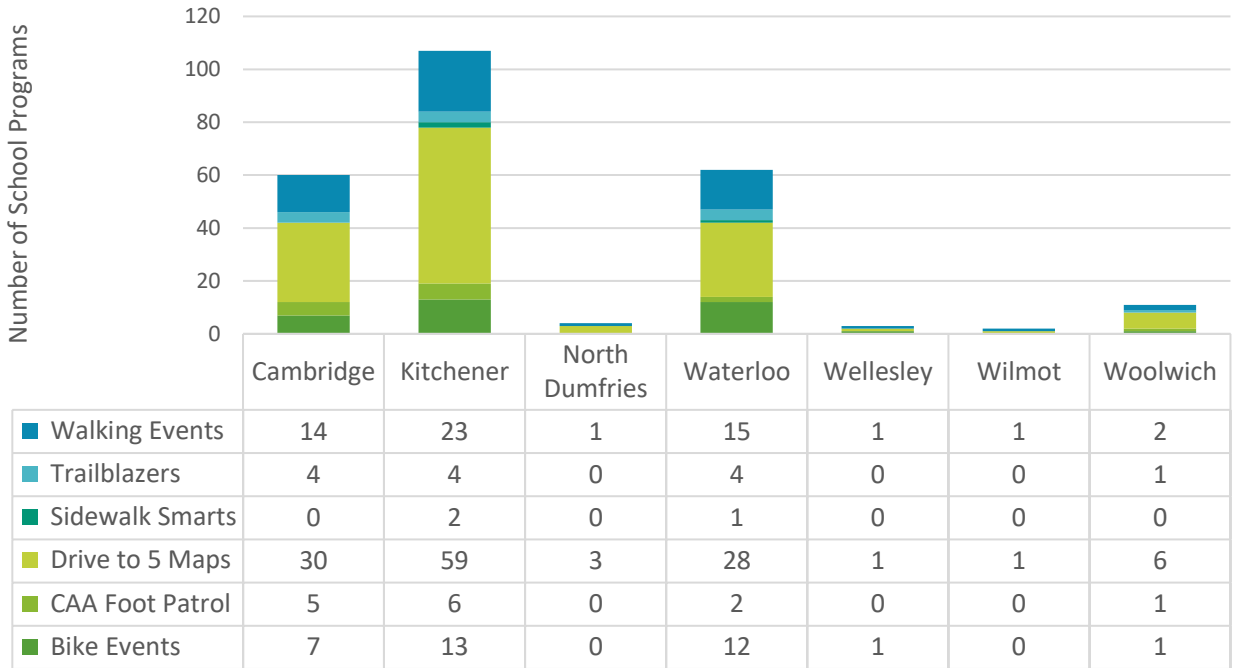
Participation in Major Programs by Municipality



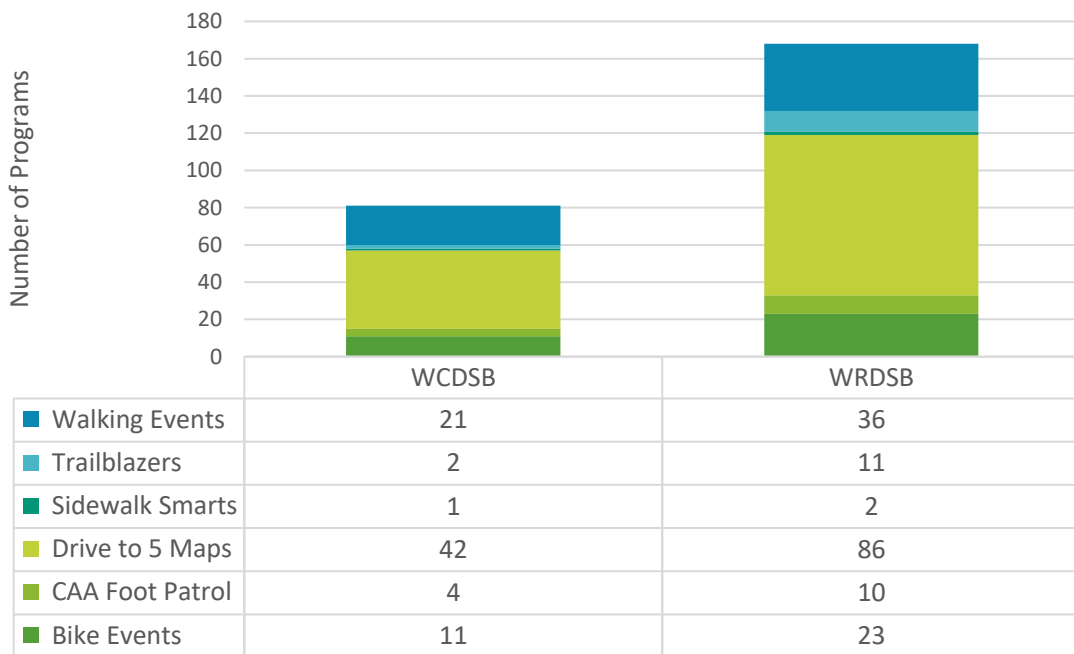
Participation in Major Programs by Board



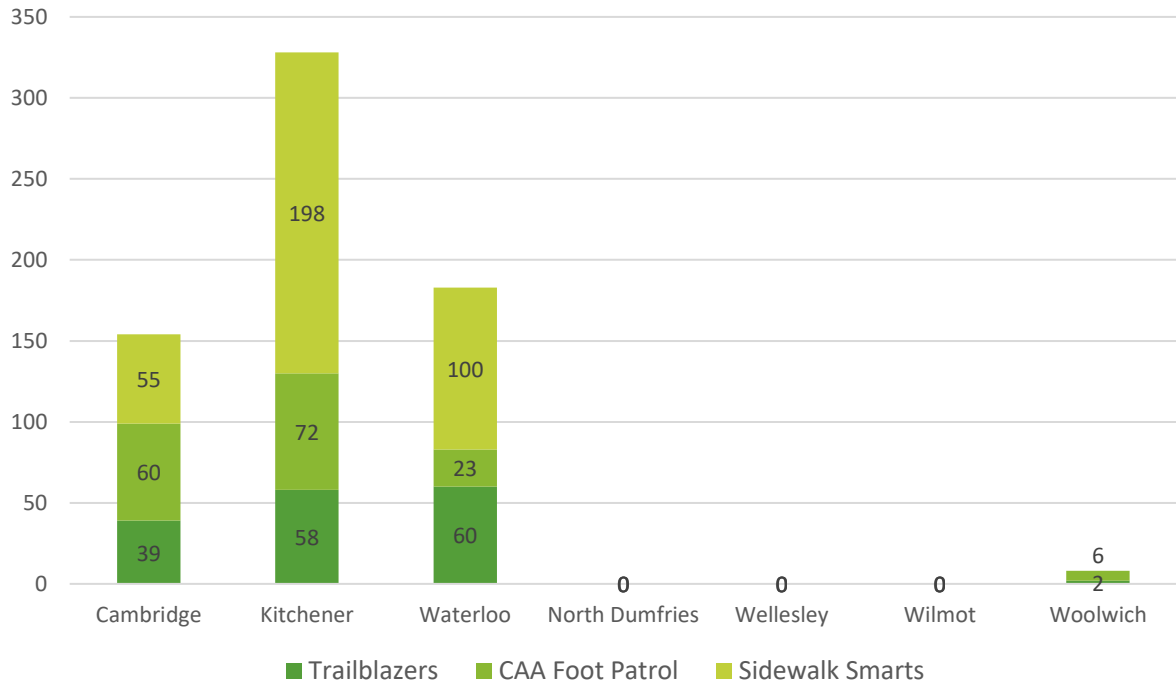
Dispersion of Schools in Select Programs by Municipality



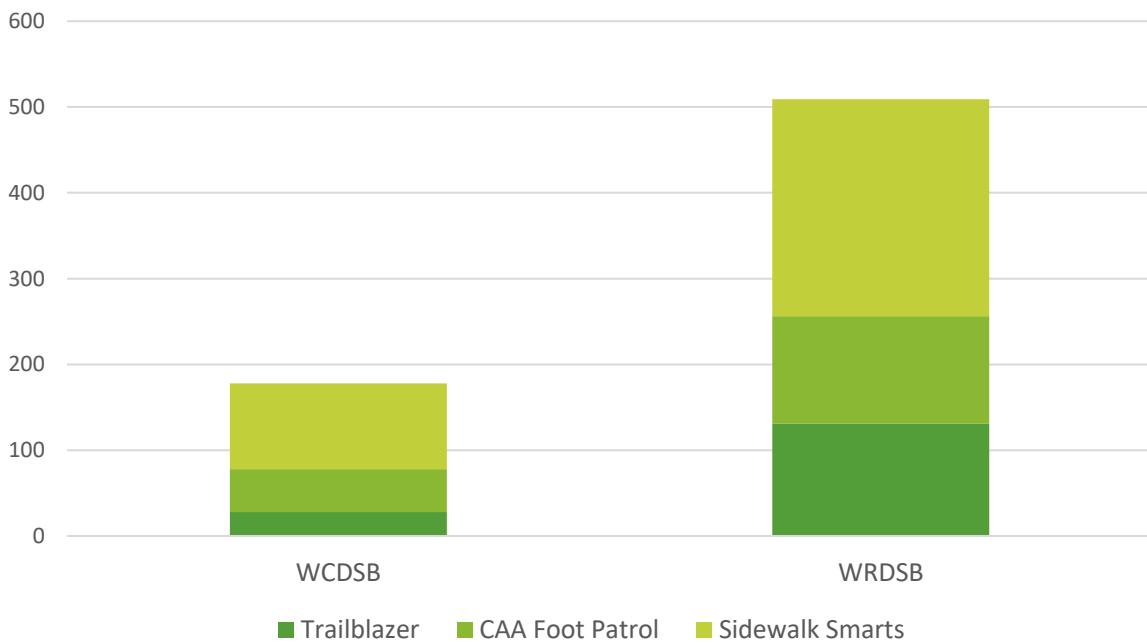
Dispersion of Schools in Select Programs by Board



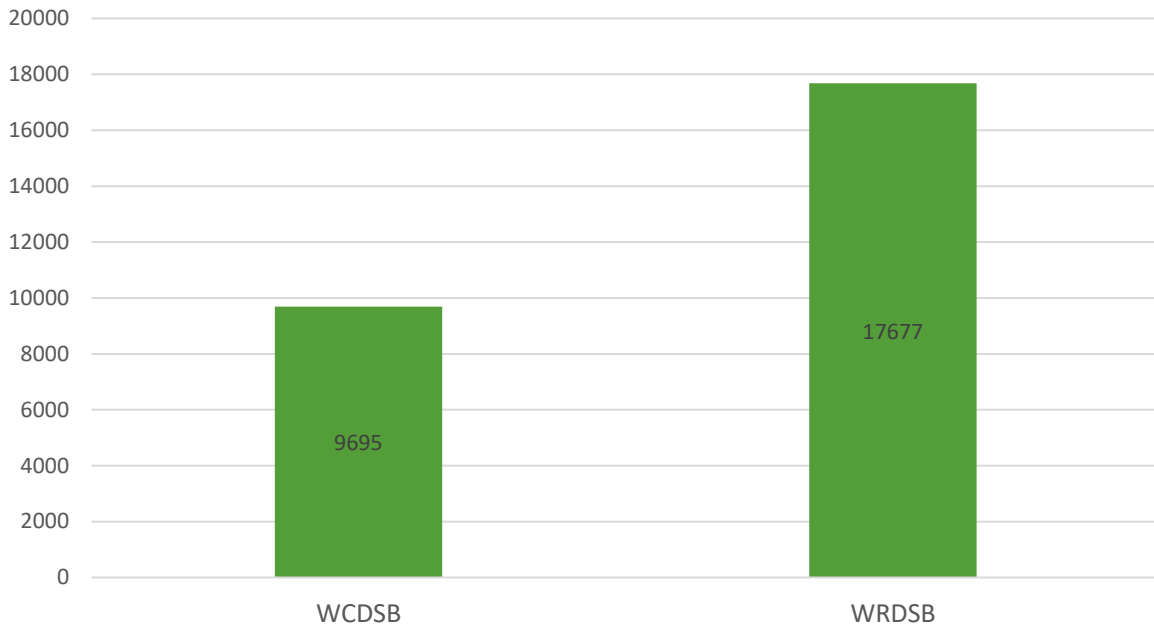
Student Participation in Select Programs by Municipality



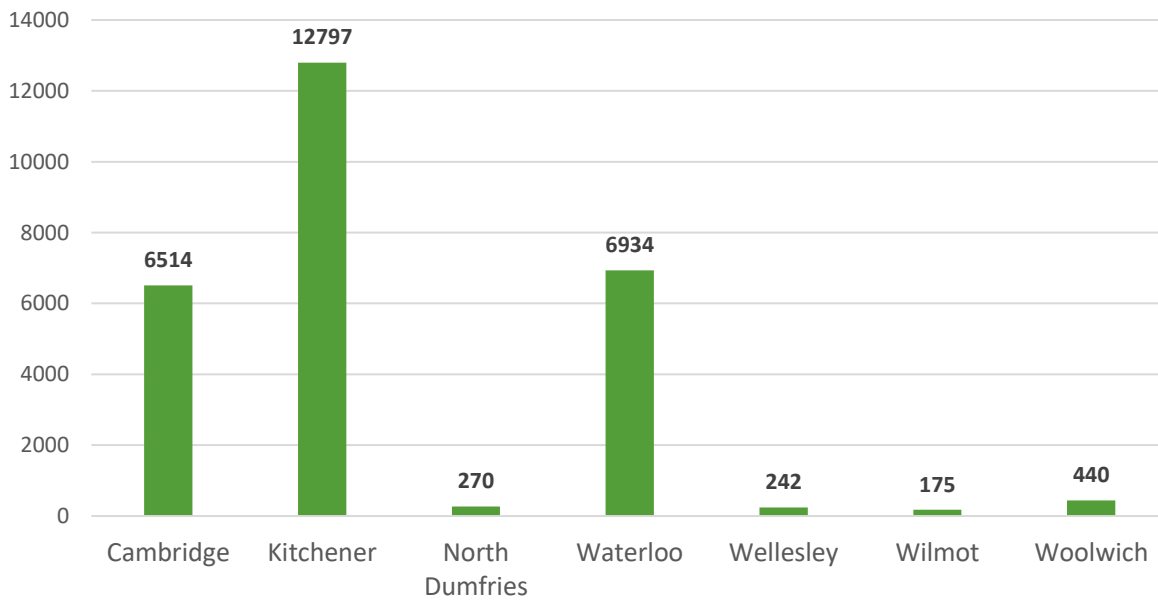
Student Participation in Programs by Board



Number of Students Receiving Winter Walk Day Messaging by Board



Number of Students Receiving Winter Walk Day Messaging by Municipality



Bike to School Week 2023

Bike to school week grew to include 34 registered schools and collectively promoted cycling to school to 18,013 students. Five hundred and forty-five (545) students registered for a contest and through it pledged to ride a total of 7,260.4 kilometres over the course of the week. Schools counted a total of 1,178 bikes in their racks on bike count day (Wednesday) with the highest turnout at Groh P.S. and the highest percentage turnout at John Mahood P.S. The lucky winner of the bike rack is Trillium P.S.!

Municipal partners provided prizes for this event, and 60 students won either an active transportation prize or a Dairy Queen gift certificate; Trillium P.S. won a new bike rack (all winners chosen by electronic random draw from eligible registrants). Table 2 shows Bike to School Week results.

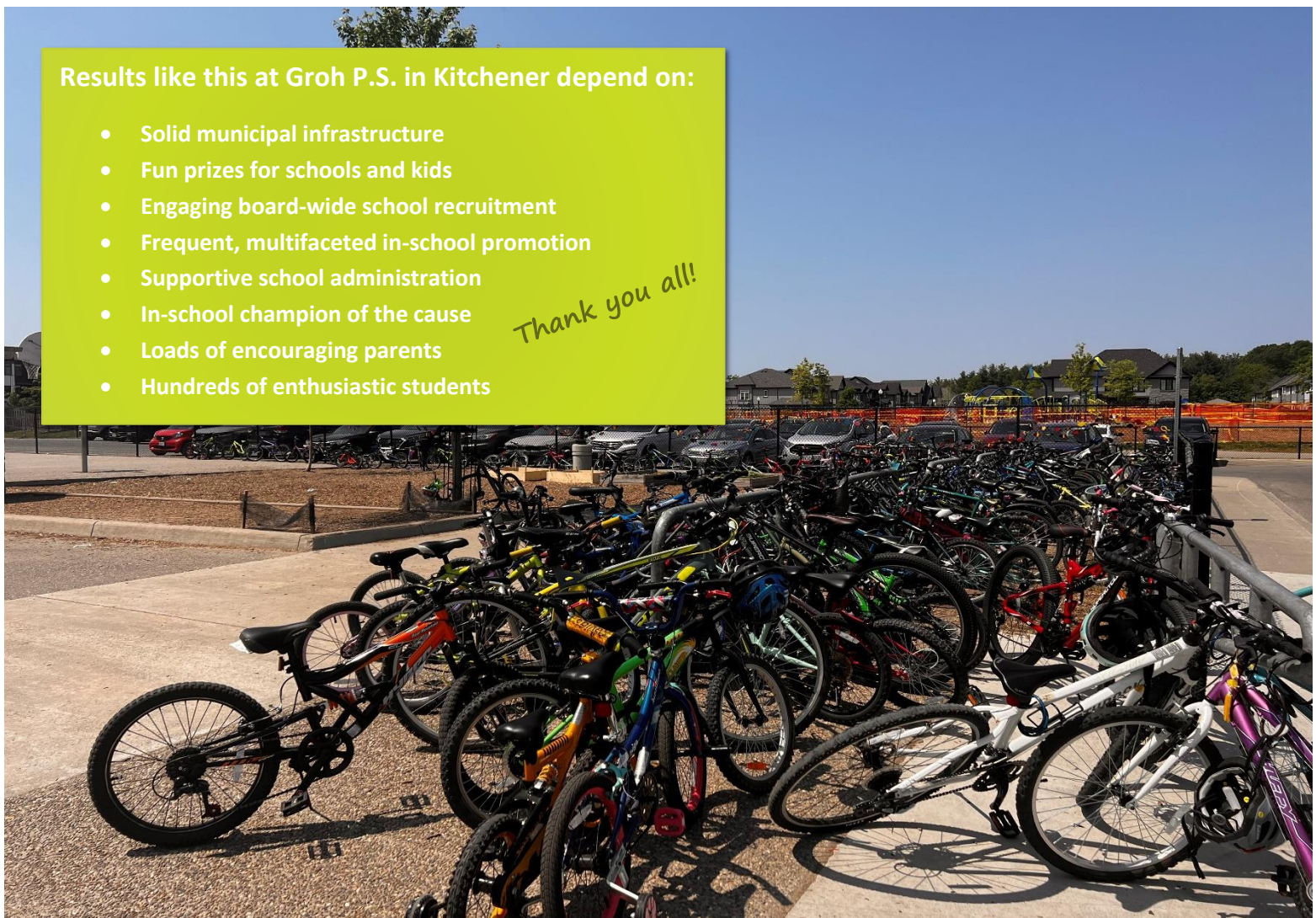


Table 2: Bike to School Week Results

| Registered School | Bike/ Scooter Count | School Enrollment | % Biked | Municipality | Board |
|---------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|---------|--------------|-------|
| Avenue Road PS | 35 | 481 | 7.28% | Cambridge | WRDSB |
| Galt Collegiate Institute | 17 | 997 | 1.71% | Cambridge | WRDSB |
| Grand View PS (C) | 16 | 244 | 6.56% | Cambridge | WRDSB |
| Hillcrest | | 401 | | Cambridge | WRDSB |
| St Andrews PS | | 316 | | Cambridge | WCDSB |
| St Margaret of Scotland | 18 | 315 | 5.71% | Cambridge | WCDSB |
| Chicopee Hills P.S. | 81 | 803 | 10.09% | Kitchener | WRDSB |
| Christ the King | | 243 | | Kitchener | WCDSB |
| Groh PS | 177 | 935 | 18.93% | Kitchener | WRDSB |
| Janet Metcalfe PS | | 788 | | Kitchener | WRDSB |
| Lackner Woods | 115 | 621 | 18.52% | Kitchener | WRDSB |
| Oak Creek PS | | 518 | | Kitchener | WRDSB |
| Saint Anne (K) | | 651 | | Kitchener | WCDSB |
| Saint John Paul II | 61 | 767 | 7.95% | Kitchener | WCDSB |
| Southridge PS | 39 | 388 | 10.05% | Kitchener | WRDSB |
| St Daniel | 19 | 564 | 3.37% | Kitchener | WCDSB |
| St. Timothy | 26 | 317 | 8.20% | Kitchener | WCDSB |
| Trillium PS | 36 | 194 | 18.56% | Kitchener | WRDSB |
| Wilson Ave P.S. | 35 | 486 | 7.20% | Kitchener | WRDSB |
| Abraham Erb | 53 | 426 | 12.44% | Waterloo | WRDSB |
| Edna Staebler | 41 | 558 | 7.35% | Waterloo | WRDSB |
| Elizabeth Ziegler PS | 50 | 469 | 10.66% | Waterloo | WRDSB |
| Laurel Heights SS | 48 | 1760 | 2.73% | Waterloo | WRDSB |
| Laurelwood | 78 | 651 | 11.98% | Waterloo | WRDSB |
| Lincoln Heights PS | | 433 | | Waterloo | WRDSB |
| Mary Johnston | 32 | 410 | 7.80% | Waterloo | WRDSB |
| Northlake Woods PS | | 357 | | Waterloo | WRDSB |
| ST Nicholas | 13 | 505 | 2.57% | Waterloo | WCDSB |
| St. Agnes | 45 | 499 | 9.02% | Waterloo | WCDSB |
| Vista Hills | | 813 | | Waterloo | WRDSB |
| Westvale | 29 | 413 | 7.02% | Waterloo | WRDSB |
| John Mahood | 114 | 443 | 25.73% | Woolwich | WRDSB |
| St Clement | | 247 | | Woolwich | WCDSB |

Services

School Travel Planning services focus on individual schools and may be initiated at any time throughout the school year. This fluidity allows for real-time response to traffic events, champion interest, construction projects, and resident issues as they develop. The process includes engagement between and among Facilitators, parents, school staff, students, municipal staff, community groups, and community leaders to create and act together on a unique action plan that addresses shared active travel and traffic goals.

For best success, 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

STP schools participate in region-wide programming outlined above in the Programs section, and they go further to target the specific issues arising at their schools. STP 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 of the unique action plan items selected, designed, and completed by various school STP Committees during the 2022-23 school year are outlined in Table 3 below.



A Tactical Urbanism Project at Abraham Erb P.S. to mitigate u-turns and live-lane drop offs. The trial used pylons on the street to determine the most effective placement for permanent infrastructure.

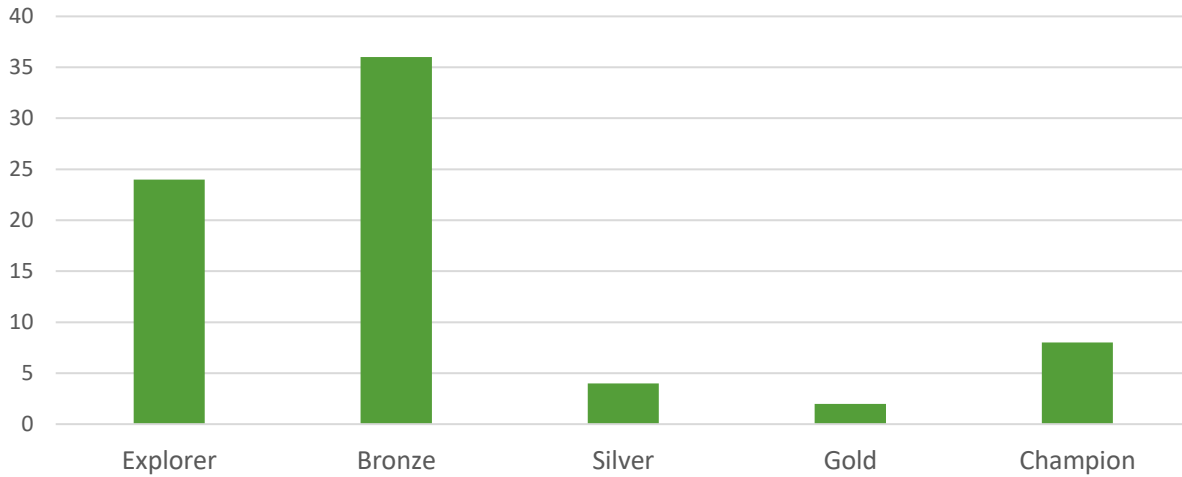
| Table 3: Services | | Intervention | | Target Audience | | |
|-------------------|---|--------------|---------|-----------------|-----------|---|
| Focus Area | Sample Action Plan Items* | Students | Parents | School | Community | |
| Consultation | Initial Assessment* | | | ✓ | | |
| | Parking Lot Assessment* | | | ✓ | | |
| | STP Committee Meetings* | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| | Walkabout* | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Education | Bike Rodeo* | ✓ | | | | |
| | Letters/ Council Delegation | | ✓ | | ✓ | |
| | School Council Presentation | ✓ | ✓ | | | |
| | STP Booth at School Event | ✓ | ✓ | | | |
| | Student Inquiry or Design Project | ✓ | ✓ | | | |
| | Class-based STP Project | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | |
| | Traffic Flow Map | | ✓ | | | |
| | Walking Clinic* | ✓ | | | | |
| Encouragement | Drive-to-5* | | ✓ | | | |
| | Kindergarten Package | ✓ | ✓ | | | |
| | Monthly Parent Communications* | | ✓ | | | |
| | Weekly Announcements* | ✓ | | | | |
| | Letters to Parents | | ✓ | | | |
| | Walking Buddy system | ✓ | ✓ | | | |
| | Walking School Bus | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | |
| | Winter Clearance Thank You* | | | | | ✓ |
| Reinforcement | Anti-idling Campaign | | ✓ | | | |
| | Administrator Parking Lot Supervision* | | ✓ | | | |
| | Distribute Traffic Pamphlet | | ✓ | | | |
| | Parking Attendants | | ✓ | ✓ | | |
| | 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 at: <https://www.stswr.ca/walkzone/school-travel-planning/solutions/>.

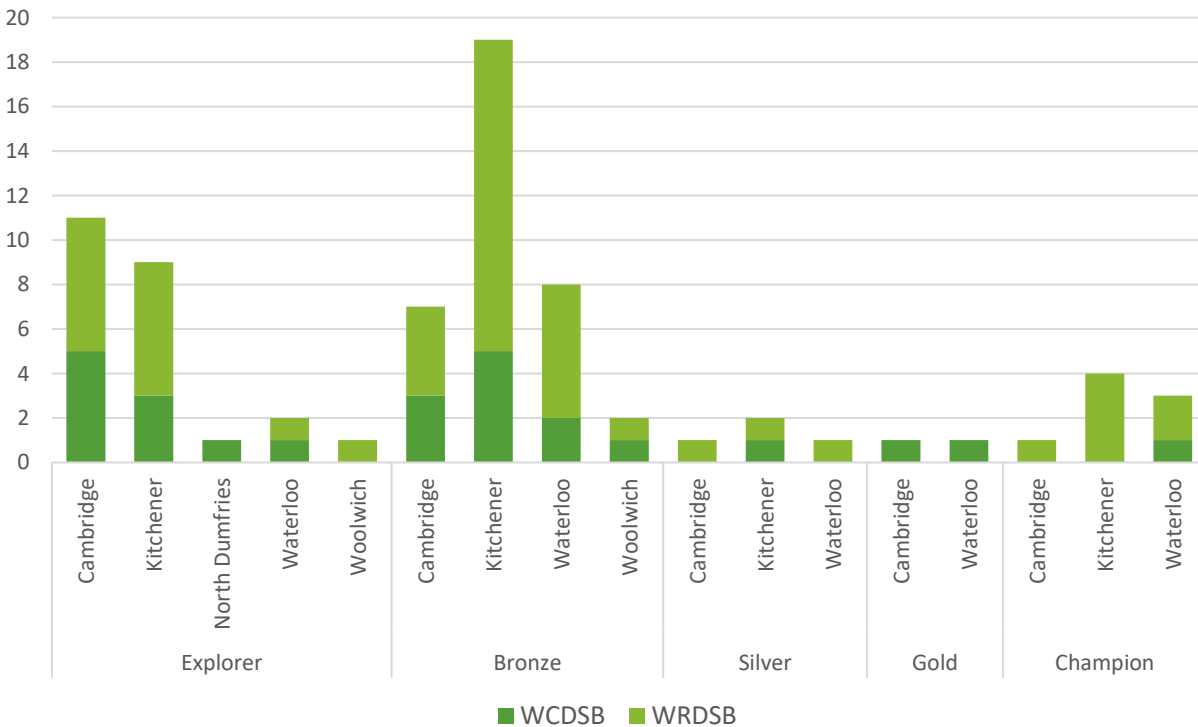
Schools Receiving Custom Services

The charts below show the count of STP schools by rank and then further break down the rank by municipality and by board, so that each stakeholder can see the output associated with their organization.

Count of Schools by Rank



Schools by Rank, Municipality, and Board



STSWR conducted initial assessments at ten (10) schools during the 2022-23 school year, raising the number of schools that have reached out for support since 2016 to a total of 74. Ten (10) schools held regular committee meetings, while many others completed action items with school staff support only. Most of the 74 schools continue to participate in active school travel events and/or programs and send active travel messages to parents and students. They all know they can reach out any time for additional support when there are heightened traffic problems, too.

There was a large shift of schools from Explorer to Bronze stage in the 2022-23 school year, thanks in part to great efforts from Facilitators and in part to a minor shift in point weighting aimed to more fairly reward the schools that are working so hard at the beginning of their involvement with STP. Two schools achieved Gold status this year, and four achieved Silver status, through various combinations of interventions.

For example, St. Agnes achieved gold status after completing the following interventions this year:

| Education | Encouragement | Reinforcement | Engineering | Evaluation |
|---|---|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School council presentation • Bike Rodeo • Sidewalk Smarts • Trailblazers • Walking School Bus • Kindergarten outreach | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drive to 5 campaign • Winter Walk Day • Bike to School Week | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic pamphlet • Occasional admin parking supervision • Messaging coordinated with Bylaw blitz | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved snow management • Parking/road signage changes • Access points improved | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BikeWalkRoll in-class data • Family Survey • Traffic behaviour data • Speed monitor placed |



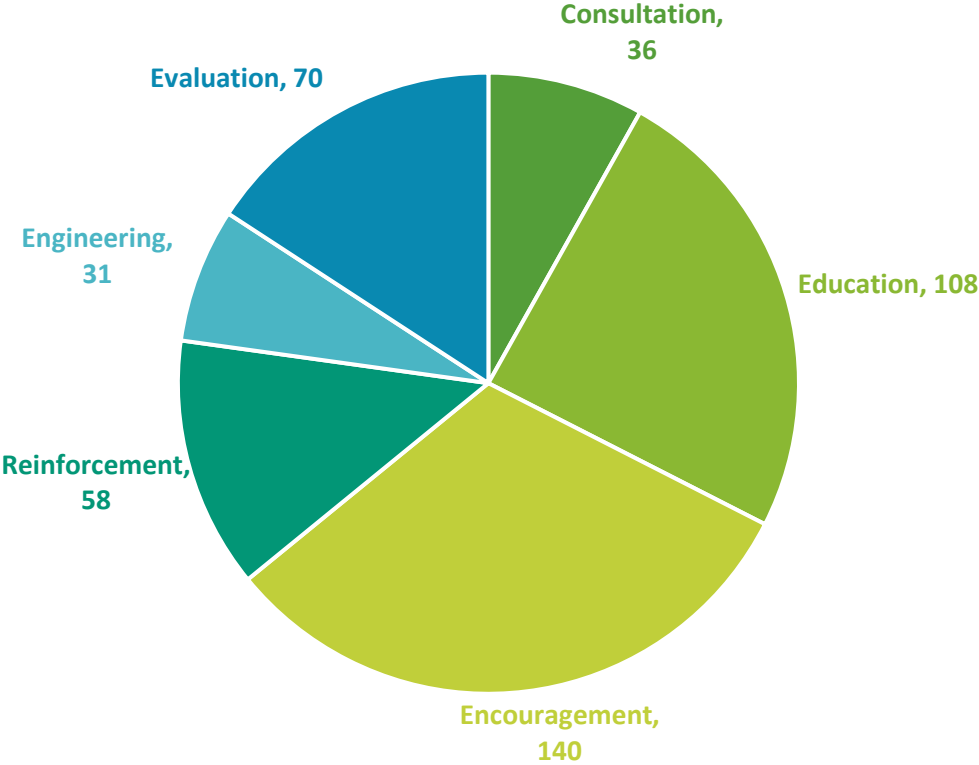
School Rank and Status

A full list of school rankings follows in Table 4.

| Table 4: School Rank and Status | | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------|-------|
| Ranking | School | Municipality | Board |
| Champion | Chicopee Hills | Kitchener | WRDSB |
| | Edna Staebler | Waterloo | WRDSB |
| | Janet Metcalfe | Kitchener | WRDSB |
| | Mary Johnston | Waterloo | WRDSB |
| | Saginaw | Cambridge | WRDSB |
| | Sandhills | Kitchener | WRDSB |
| | St. Matthew | Waterloo | WCDSB |
| | Wilson Avenue | Kitchener | WRDSB |
| Gold | St. Agnes | Waterloo | WCDSB |
| | St. Peter | Cambridge | WCDSB |
| Silver | Hillcrest | Cambridge | WRDSB |
| | Oak Creek | Kitchener | WRDSB |
| | St. Anne (K) | Kitchener | WCDSB |
| | Vista Hills | Waterloo | WRDSB |
| Bronze | St. Benedict | Cambridge | WCDSB |
| | St. Boniface | Woolwich | WCDSB |
| | St. Daniel | Kitchener | WCDSB |
| | St. John | Kitchener | WCDSB |
| | St. John Paul II | Kitchener | WCDSB |
| | St. Mark | Kitchener | WCDSB |
| | St. Michael | Cambridge | WCDSB |
| | St. Nicholas | Waterloo | WCDSB |
| | St. Timothy | Kitchener | WCDSB |
| | Suddaby | Kitchener | WRDSB |
| | Trillium | Kitchener | WRDSB |
| | Waterloo Collegiate Institute | Waterloo | WRDSB |
| Explorer | A.R Kaufman | Kitchener | WRDSB |
| | Blair Road | Cambridge | WRDSB |
| | Blessed Sacrament | Kitchener | WCDSB |
| | Bridgeport | Kitchener | WRDSB |
| | Coronation | Cambridge | WRDSB |
| | Elgin St. | Cambridge | WRDSB |
| | Hespeler | Cambridge | WRDSB |
| | J.F. Carmichael | Kitchener | WRDSB |
| | John Mahood | Woolwich | WRDSB |
| | Manchester | Cambridge | WRDSB |
| | Millen Woods | Waterloo | WRDSB |
| | Our Lady of Fatima | Cambridge | WCDSB |
| | Preston | Cambridge | WRDSB |
| | Shepphard | Kitchener | WRDSB |
| | Smithson | Kitchener | WRDSB |

| | | |
|--------------------------|----------------|-------|
| St. Augustine | Cambridge | WCDSB |
| St. Brigid | North Dumfries | WCDSB |
| St. Elizabeth | Cambridge | WCDSB |
| St. Josephine | Kitchener | WCDSB |
| St. Luke | Waterloo | WCDSB |
| St. Margaret of Scotland | Cambridge | WCDSB |
| St. Teresa Kitchener | Kitchener | WCDSB |
| St. Vincent de Paul | Cambridge | WCDSB |
| Williamsburg | Kitchener | WRDSB |

Number of Interventions



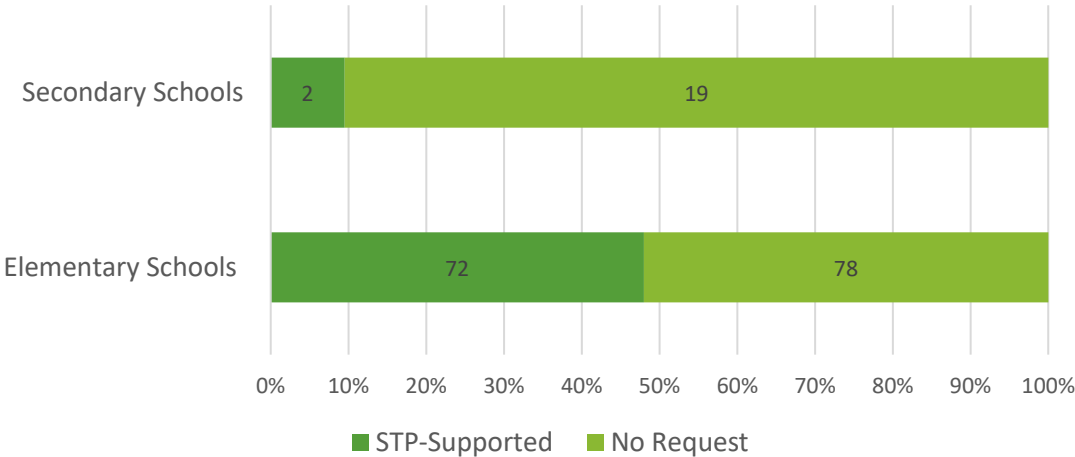
Goals and Achievements

Goals set in the 2021-22 annual report resulted in the following achievements:

Goal #1 - Responding to demand for help.

Ten additional schools requested assistance managing traffic and/or encouraging active travel.

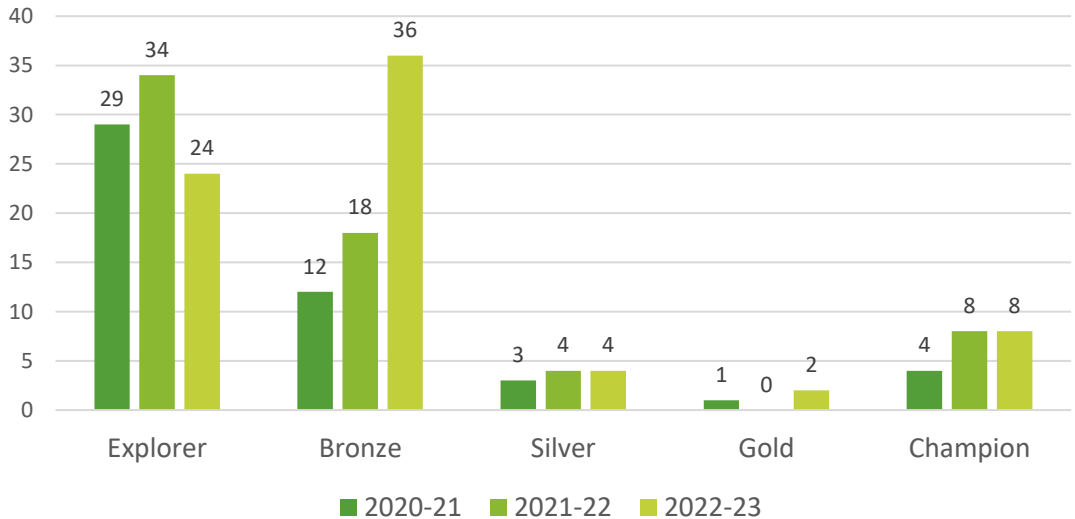
Percentage Schools Supported with Services to Date



Goal #2 – Advance school rankings.

Many schools advanced from Explorer to Bronze status this year. This shift was caused by schools holding more events and activities in their schools after pandemic restrictions were lifted, as well as by a slight adjustment to the formula allowing new schools making good strides to be recognized for their work. No new schools advanced to Champion status.

STP School Certifications



Goal #3 - Improve data to support interventions.

The STP team collects data with willing schools to help committees determine the barriers to active travel and to highlight opportunities for change. Many schools are hesitant to collect data due to privacy concerns by various members of the school community, so the STP team continues to seek ways to make data collection easier and more targeted to return useful and meaningful information that can inform and support the choice of interventions at schools.

Data collection agreements were struck between STSWR and both boards late in the school year. These agreements allow STP data collection without annual application. Annual reporting on these activities to board research teams will continue.

Over the course of 2022-23, the STP team was able to conduct 9 family surveys, 32 BikeWalkRoll audits, and 12 traffic behaviour observations that contributed to understanding various pressures on the school commute and the potential interventions that could help schools overcome them.

Goal #4 – Refine programs.

The STP team advanced the following programs:

Bike Bus Program – A bike bus was piloted in Waterloo at Empire P.S. Due to insurance concerns, it was parent-led and backed by Bike Mayor of Waterloo. STP developed a guide to assist parents to develop bike buses at other schools.

Bike to School Week – Bike to School Week is supported by a partnership between STP and municipal Transportation Demand Management teams. This year, it was expanded from being promoted to only STP schools, to being promoted to all schools through WRDSB and WCDSB communications teams.

Sidewalk Smarts – Due to the disbanding of Cycling Into the Future and the lack of partnership to roll out Sidewalk Smarts, the STP team conducted this training themselves at three schools. This offered an opportunity to review the efficacy of the content and to develop in-class materials to better retain student attention.

Community Road Model Program – In anticipation of working with clusters of schools, the team expanded and improved outreach materials.

Standing Foot Patrol – The STP Steering Committee requested that Standing Foot Patrol be folded into STP work so that issues regarding the program could be discussed at monthly meetings as needed. In response to municipal needs, the STP team worked with the STSWR patrol safety team to develop intake forms that identify specific Foot Patrol locations so that on-street infrastructure will be easier to monitor in the future.

Cycling Into the Future – The disbanding of this treasured program leaves the Region of Waterloo without an accessible elementary-school level cycling education program. The STP team worked with partners from across the region to lead a review of the program and the development of a business case for a replacement program.

Goal #5 – Increase Drive-to-5 Map Inventory.

The team built 28 new maps for a total of 128. Six (6) high schools now have maps.

Goal #6 – Involve students in more projects.

The STP team was able to deliver a small handful of interventions that involved students including:

Bike rodeo at St. Agnes CES

St. Agnes held a school-hours bike rodeo with help from student leads in each class.



Classroom yard sign project at Janet Metcalfe P.S.

Kindergarten students designed yard signs that will be printed and used along school frontage.



Safe street design project at St. Peter CES

St. Peter CES created a temporary installment in their parking lot to create space for families waiting for students who walk and roll to school. Later, they won a KEEP CALM grant to improve a shared street adjoining the school parking lot. All students and residents were given the opportunity to give input via survey and Standing Foot Patrollers have been involved in co-designing the shared street with the school community and nearby residents. In December, Standing Foot Patrollers delivered holiday cards to neighbours.



Sidewalk Smarts videos/posters project at Oak Creek P.S.

After participating in the Sidewalk Smarts program, Oak Creek's grade 3 and 4 students created videos and posters to share with the rest of the school at the school's end-of-year grand opening.



Goal #7 – Develop a school interface for the certification program.

The STP team is working with Mobius One to develop project management platform called STEPS (School Travel Evaluation and Planning System). This is the first project management system of its kind, specifically developed for the complexities of school travel behaviour change, and Waterloo Region is fortunate to have the interest and investment of time in the development of this tool for free. The STP team is currently working with the boards and Mobius One to ensure the platform can be used within all board protocols.

This platform is designed to deliver easy yet detailed reports that can be shared with schools at their convenience through the STP website.

Goal #8 - Secure municipal funding.

Municipal partners have added STP into budgets to ensure ongoing funding, allowing two temporary STP Facilitator roles to become permanent. The team developed a strategic plan to ensure cities of mid-term direction and to support further budgetary inclusion.



Photo: STP works with Crossing Guard programs across the region. Crossing Guards form an integral part of the human and structural infrastructure responsible for making AST an easier choice for families.

Support Activities

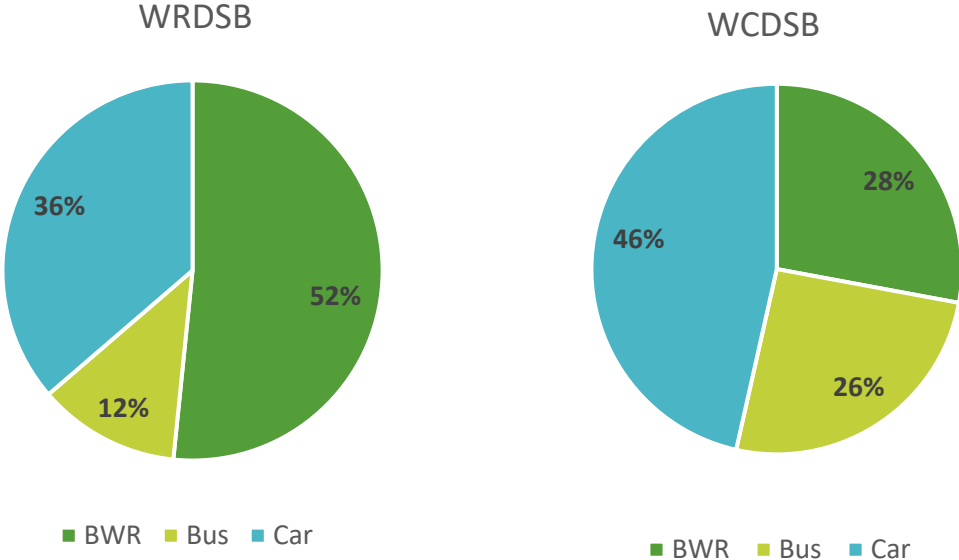
The STP Team participates in a number of activities outside of programs and services that support active school travel, including providing consultations, examining development and construction plans, serving on and leading committees, and delivering presentations. Table 5 outlines some such activities undertaken in 2022-23.

| Table 5: Support Activities | |
|---|--|
| Consultations | |
| Organization | Topic |
| WRDSB, WCDSB | CMC Bus Decision Appeals |
| WCDSB | New school development (St. Josephine, Kitchener) |
| WCDSB and WRDSB | Kiss n Ride Considerations |
| City of Kitchener | Vision Zero Plan |
| Region of Waterloo | Franklin Boulevard / Saginaw Intersection |
| Urban Minds 1Up | 1Up Leaders Lab – Students and Built Environment |
| Committees | |
| Organization | Topic |
| All funding agencies | STP Steering Committee |
| WCDSB, WRDSB | Joint Board Sustainability Working Group |
| Area Municipalities, Universities, and Road Safety Authorities | Inter Municipal Partnership for Active Transportation (IMPACT) |
| Ontario Association of School Board Officials | Active Transportation Leading Practices |
| Active School Travel Canada | Stakeholder Committee |
| All funding agencies | Cycling Into The Future Review |
| Plan Examinations | |
| Organization | Topic |
| Township of Woolwich | 225 Starlight and 95 Loxleigh |
| Region of Waterloo | Franklin Boulevard Reconstruction at Saginaw |
| WRDSB | New Breslau Hopewell Crossing |
| WRDSB, WCDSB | 435 King St. North |
| WRDSB | 800 Fairway Rd at Lackner |
| WCDSB | 20 Northfield |
| WCDSB | 751 Victoria Street South |
| WRDSB | 506 Hespeler Road |
| Presentations | |
| Organization | Topic |
| City of Waterloo | Waterloo Winter Sidewalk Maintenance Proposal |
| WRPS | Bike Rodeo |
| Nova Scotia Collaborative | “STP, A Collaborative Approach” |

Results

Mode Split

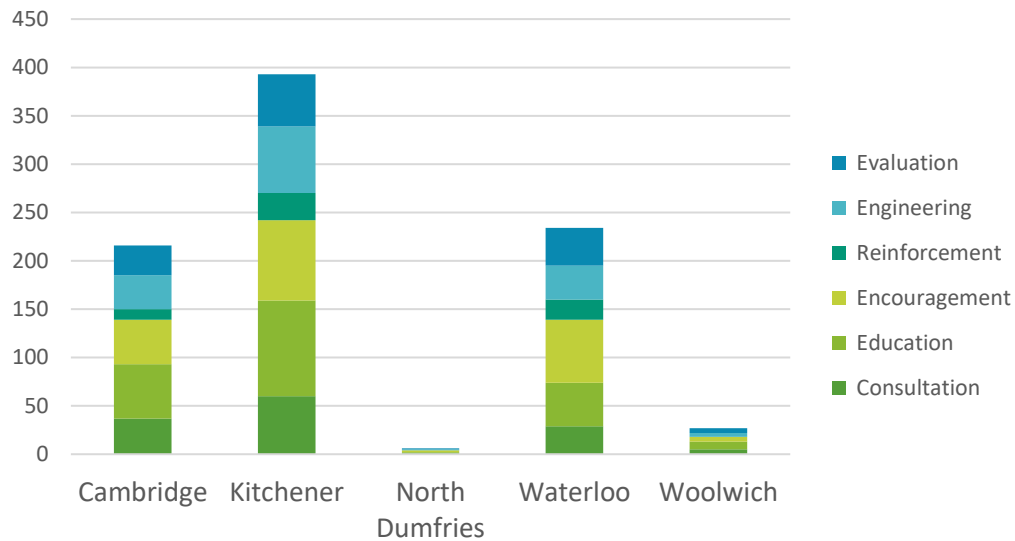
The STP team encourages collection of mode split data through the BikeWalkRoll.org app. Though BikeWalkRoll (BWR) data was always an option for schools to participate in, this year (2022-23) the STP team offered to enter schools to conduct counts, resulting in a larger body of data for comparison than ever before. In addition to using this data within schools, it has also been used by municipal partners to justify specific engineering changes near some, and in delegating to support the City of Waterloo’s winter maintenance proposal. It must be noted that Kindergarten classes were not surveyed, many schools were not included in the count, and most counts were single-day only; while this is not a complete picture of the mode splits in the Region of Waterloo, it offers only a general picture of active school travel within these two boards.



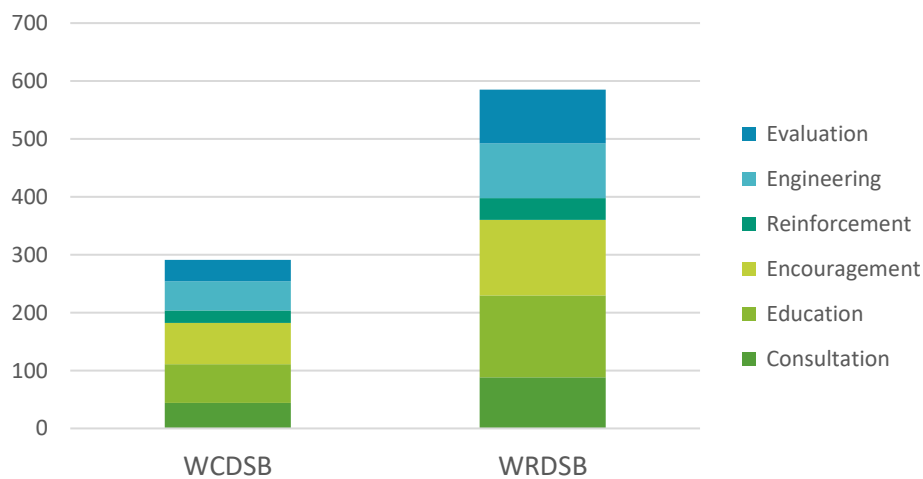
Intervention Dispersion

The STP model has proven that a multipronged approach using five areas of interventions will change behaviours. To that end, the Waterloo STP team aims to inspire school committees to choose a variety of interventions across all 5 areas including education, encouragement, reinforcement, engineering, and evaluation. STP further acknowledges schools’ request for consultation as an indicator of awareness of a problem, which is often the first step in shifting behaviours. The following graphs indicate that there is a healthy balance of interventions by schools in the region.

Dispersion of Intervention Types across Municipalities



Dispersion of Intervention Types across Boards



Parent Involvement

STP engages deeply with parents who are committed to helping change travel behaviours. The following data is intended to highlight the amount of work they put in and how STP makes the parent connection.

- **96** parents engaged in regular School Travel Planning Committee meetings or projects
- **5** Bike Bus leaders
- **15** Sidewalk Smarts Volunteers

Website analytics are no longer available to STSWR.

Financials

Funding Partners

The STP partnership collectively provided \$266,985 to fund this work in 2022-23.

Municipalities

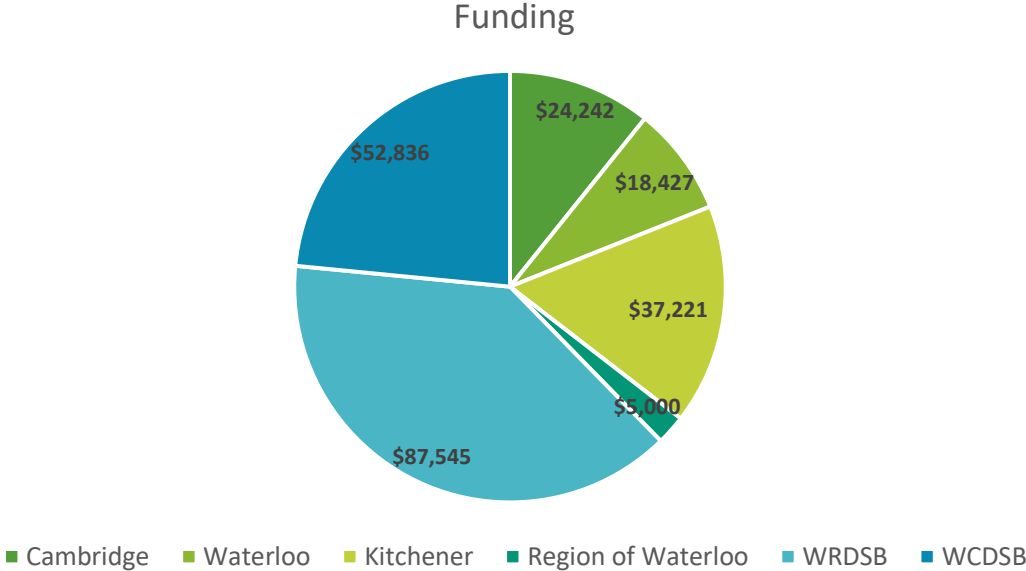
- City of Cambridge
- City of Kitchener
- City of Waterloo
- Region of Waterloo

School Boards

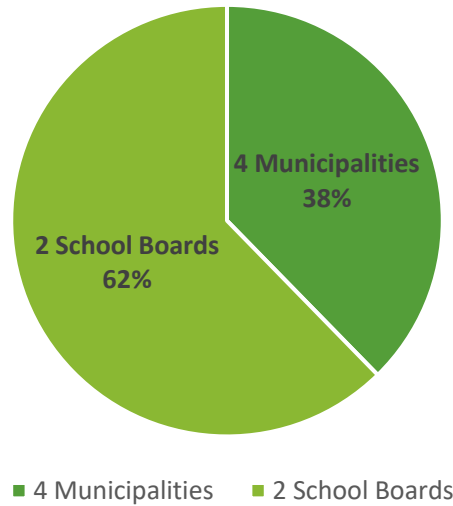
- Waterloo Catholic District School Board
- Waterloo Region District School Board

Funding

Funding for the 2022-23 school year includes 62% from school boards and 38% from municipalities. The funding supports two (2) Facilitators and one (1) Supervisor, plus a small expense budget for travel, marketing, and materials.



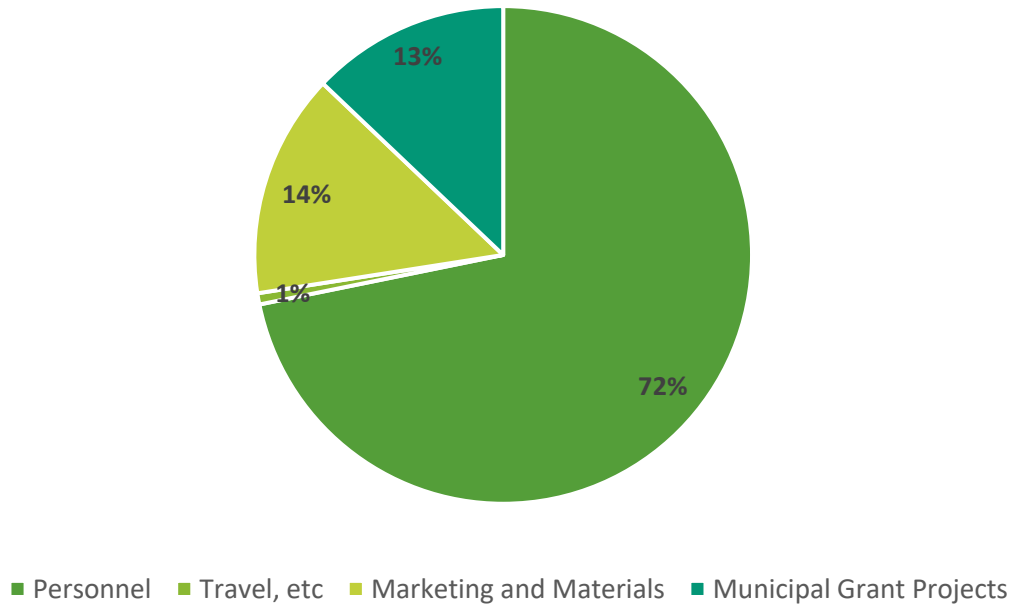
Percentage of Funding by Partner Group



Uses

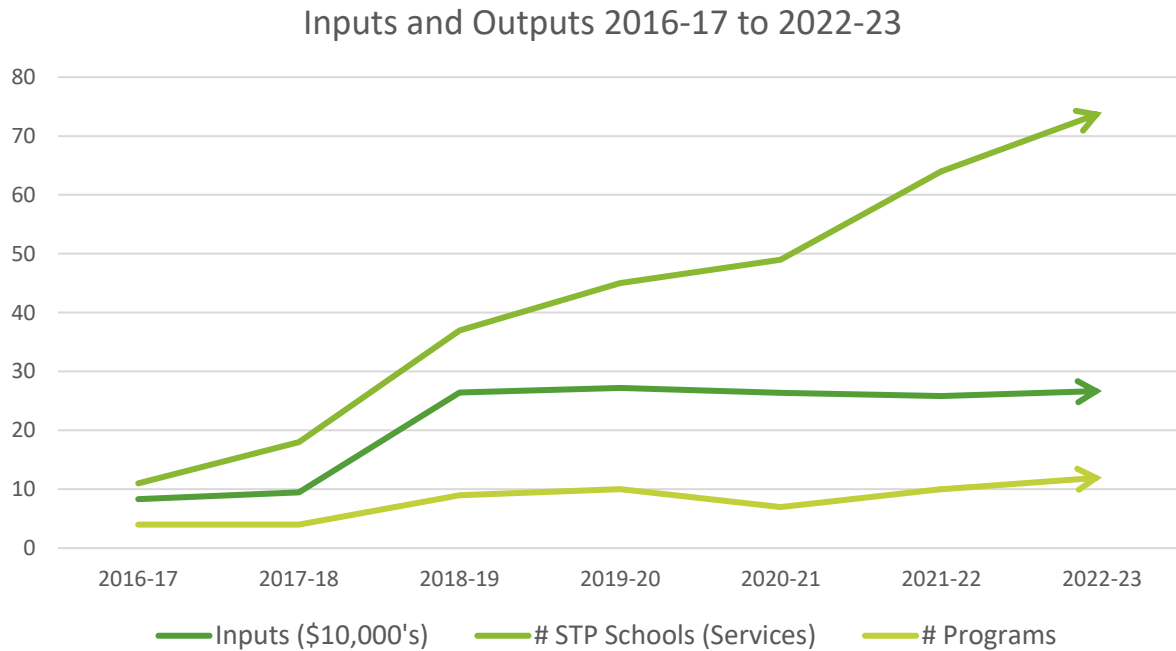
Three main uses of funding include salaries, travel (to schools), marketing, and materials that allow the team to deliver programs, custom school services, and projects to engage school communities and motivate a modal shift. In 2022-23, thirteen (13) per cent of the budget was collected and spent on the Cycling Into The Future review.

Funding Uses



Trajectory

School Travel Planning has provided consistent support to schools without impacting school budgets. Over time, the breadth of impact has grown despite unchanging inputs.



Risk Factors

The following table shows risks that impacted STP work in Waterloo Region in 2022-23, 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: Risks | Controls | 2022-23 actions |
|--|--|---|
| Schools hesitant to form committees | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gain school council buy-in for depth of support Offer alternatives to traditional programming Mitigate principal work load | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Map out plans for individual schools to move towards committees while also addressing urgent needs Work with parents online, outside of school time |
| Ongoing partner funding capacity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Robust reports to build case for support Maximize grant and sponsorship options Expand funding partnership | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct strategic planning to show medium-term direction and goals Engage townships in partnership work Apply for grant funding as it becomes available |

Future Development

Strategic Priorities

Through strategic planning exercises conducted in spring, 2023, three priority areas emerged including safety, strong communities, and process improvements. These emerge in several ways through STP.

- 1. Safety** – That STP provides quality programs that reduce traffic and encourage AST. That solutions are targeted and proven to result in healthier and safer students. That the focus is on safer school traffic and more AST. That the public recognizes inconvenient changes are placed to support AST and to reduce dangers. That programs are both fun and important for safety. That programs equip students properly for safe AST. That programs ensure more consistent use of AST infrastructure. That programs train the next generation of adults who use active travel.
- 2. Strong Communities** – That school communities recognize that STP school committees result in safer spaces and easier AST for everyone. That participants see they are valued and their voices are heard. That it is responsive to citizen concerns. That creative methods allow deeper engagement with parents. That actions are focused on creating a healthier and safer region. That the committee brings fun, engaging, encouraging and informative programs to the school community. That people feel the fact that they are part of a movement that is bigger than themselves. That community leaders are given a chance to celebrate successes with schools.
- 3. Process Improvements** – That quality programs become easier to deploy and scale to motivate more families towards AST. That clear and focused communications are used to share data and outcomes. That clear and regular updates are shared with each stakeholder. That the team responsibly collects and manages data. That quality data is packaged well for parents and partners and to motivate greater uptake of AST. That STP brings mass visibility to the AST movement.

Beyond 2024

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.
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.

Conclusion

The 2022-23 year was marked by the creation of permanent Facilitator roles and the extension of STP work to include 48% of the elementary schools and 10% of the high schools in the STSWR family.

The STP team worked to diversify interventions, refine programs, improve data, and involve more students for a greater impact on the region and so that one day every child will walk or wheel for part or all of their school journey.

We are on our way!



Photo: Students from a Walking School Bus at Elizabeth Ziegler lead a “Jane’s Walk” to share their experience and recommendations with interested members of the public

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 areas 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.²”

The 5 areas include:

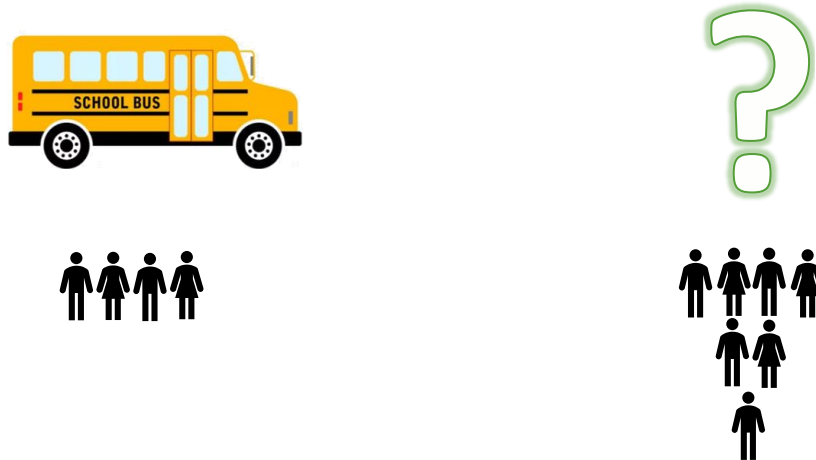
1. **Education** - teaching students and community members about active transportation options and ensuring they have the skills to be safe near traffic
2. **Encouragement** - using events, activities, support systems, and incentives to promote AST
3. **Engineering** – working with partners to make improvements 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.³”
4. **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

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

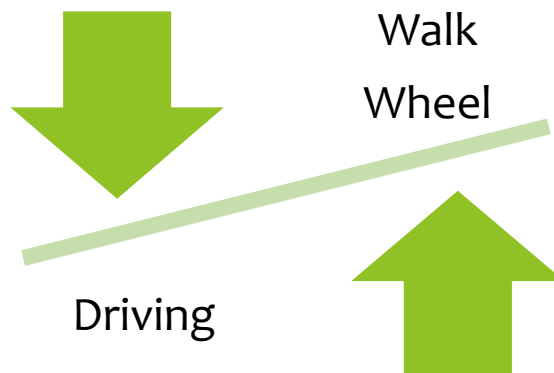
³ Mammen, George. School Travel Planning in Canada: A Holistic Examination of Program Impact on Active School Travel. University of Toronto, Graduate Department of Exercise Sciences. 2016; pp. 31.

Appendix B: Rationale for STP

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 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 region⁴.



⁴ 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>

Appendix C: 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. Individual school events can occur throughout the year.

Bike Bus – An organized system of getting children to school on bikes under the supervision of qualified adult volunteers.

Bike to School Week – Celebrates active modes of transportation like cycling and wheeling across Ontario. In Waterloo region, municipal partners provide incentives to join a region-wide celebration.

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.

Drive-to-5 Maps – 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 Package – 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. Can include milestone magnets outlining coaching how-to's and Kindergarten orientation flyers and presentation slides.

Parking Restriction Request Support – Helps schools build a case to advocate for changes to parking restrictions when and where necessary.

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 qualified adult volunteers.

Winter Walk Day – a Region-wide event held on the first Wednesday of February to celebrate those who walk in all weather and to encourage those who don't to try it.