

Forum: School Siting and School Site Design for a Healthy Community

August 2012



HEART &
STROKE
FOUNDATION



Acknowledgements

Forum Planning Committee

City Of Hamilton:

Elizabeth Conti, Sharon Mackinnon, Jacqui Candlish, Peter Topalovic, Kelly Scott

Metrolinx:

Jennifer Lay

Heart and Stroke Foundation:

Andrea MacLean

Giffin-Koerth:

Russell Brownlee

Forum Contributors

Presenters:

Dr. Ninh Tran

Mr. Russell Brownlee (and facilitator)

Discussion Panel:

Hamilton Wentworth Catholic District School Board

Hamilton Wentworth District School Board

City of Hamilton Planning & Economic Development Department

City of Hamilton Public Works Department

Discussion Circle:

York Catholic District School Board

Region of Halton

Grguric Architects

Contact for more information:

Kelly Scott, Chronic Disease Prevention
Healthy Living Division
City of Hamilton Public Health Services
kelly.scott@hamilton.ca

Partners & Funders:



“Innovative thinking occurring beyond isolated silos is needed to address this complex issue that has the potential for long term effects on communities.”

Dr. Ninh Tran, Associate Medical Officer of Health
City Of Hamilton

Table of Contents

Executive Summary

	Page
1.0 Introduction	1
1.1 Purpose and Objectives: School Siting and School Site Design	8
1.2 Setting the Context of School Siting and School Site Design	9
1.2.1 The Built Environment and Healthy Communities	9
1.2.2 Focusing on School Travel	11
2.0 Summary of Forum Presentations and Discussions	12
2.1 Forum Overview	12
2.2 Discussion Panel	13
2.3 Discussion Circle	14
2.3.1 SWOT Analysis	14
2.4 SWOT Analysis	16
3.0 Evaluation	19
4.0 Forum Trends and Highlighted Actions and Next Steps	21
4.1 Next Steps	21
4.2 Conclusion	22
5.0 References	23
6.0 Appendices	
Appendix A - Attendee List	26
Appendix B - Biographies: Presenters, Discussion Panel and Discussion Circle	27
Appendix C - Detailed Swot Analysis	31
Appendix D - PowerPoint Presentations	32

Executive Summary

Context of School Siting and School Site Design for a Healthy Community

Schools are recognized as being central to the growth and development of children through their role in delivering education and facilitating social interaction. Perhaps less recognized but equally important is the function of school sites as community hubs, which exert many

influences on the surrounding neighbourhood¹ (see Figure 1).



Figure 1: The School as Community Hub by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives¹

Transportation to and from schools has been raised as an issue of growing importance due to steady declines in walking and increases in automobile use which have health, environmental, economic and social impacts. The school transportation choices made by individuals and groups are influenced by school location (i.e., siting) and the physical features of school grounds (i.e., site

design), among other factors. Hosting forums for dialogue between multiple stakeholders is a key first step to better understanding and addressing this complex issue, and to fostering collaboration with the common goal of ensuring that schools maximize their positive impact as educational facilities and as sustainable community hubs.



KEY FACTS

In Canada, measured data shows that only 7% of children and youth 5-17 years old and 15% of adults accumulate the recommended amount of physical activity.^{16,17}

- Home to school distance has been found to be the strongest predictor of active and sustainable school travel (ASST).²⁴⁻³¹
- Research has established important linkages between the built environment, health, and physical activity.¹
- Nearly a quarter of elementary students living within 1 km are regularly driven to school.³⁴



Forum Overview

On May 17, 2012, a full-day forum about “School Siting and School Site Design for a Healthy Community” was hosted by the forum organizers: the City of Hamilton Public Health Services, Metrolinx, and the Heart and Stroke Foundation. The forum brought together representatives from across the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA), including government, not-for-profit and private sectors. Together these stakeholders took the first step toward answering the overarching question:

To foster a healthier community, how can school siting and school site design better support people to use active and sustainable school travel modes?

The forum built on the history and momentum of active and sustainable school travel initiatives within the GTHA, the recognized links between the built environment and health, and the need for greater collaboration from multiple stakeholders in this issue. Shaped by this context, the forum objectives to answer the overarching question included the following

- Build on previous momentum
- Develop a common understanding
- Explore existing policies and gaps
- Build relationships

Forum Sessions

The forum elements included keynote presentations, a discussion panel with Hamilton school board and municipal professionals, a GTHA discussion circle, and a SWOT analysis activity.

Forum Trends and Recommended Next Steps

Key themes and ideas about school siting and school site design for a healthy community emerged from collaborative forum activities and discussions between municipal, school board, provincial, and non-government stakeholders at the forum. Overall, stakeholders recognized the complexity of the topic at hand and emphasized the following actions (grouped by objective):

☒ **Build on momentum of active and sustainable transportation**

ACTIONS:

- Stakeholders to come together to endorse a vision of healthy living based upon active and sustainable transportation, and land-use policy and planning principles (e.g., see the Waterloo Region District School Board's Active Transportation Charter — www.wrdsb.ca/planning/active-and-safe-routes-school/active-transportation-charter)
- Share the lessons from this report with parent associations and further connect with them to explore potential roles in parent education, awareness, and involvement in advocacy

☒ **Develop a common understanding of school siting and school site design**

ACTIONS:

- Stakeholder groups to gather more often to establish roles, shared goals and targets, and further develop actions (e.g., further engagement of developers)
- Stakeholders to ensure that their internal departments are engaged and understand linkages

☒ **Explore existing policies and guidelines, and identify gaps**

ACTIONS:

- Review policies that influence school siting and school site design with a health impact lens (e.g., by-laws; Acts; revenue generation and allocation models; liability; planning requirements)
- Increase communication and awareness about the existing supports for active transportation provided by the municipality and school boards
- Explore how/if funds from the provincial ministry level can be allocated differently to support non-motorized modes of school transportation

☑ **Build relationships and partnerships towards a shared vision for action**

ACTIONS:

- Continue to involve multiple stakeholders including provincial ministries, architects, researchers, school boards, NGOs, municipality; break down silos; and work to normalize the incorporation of active and sustainable transportation into plans, policy, and legislation (see Figure 2)
- Formalize involvement in stages of school and community planning where stakeholders can have impact
- Enhance discussions between school boards, municipalities and the Ministry of Education on the topic of school consolidation to include broader health, economic, and environmental impacts (e.g., through Accommodation Review Committee process)
- Share the lessons from this report with parent associations and further connect with them to explore potential roles in parent education, awareness, and involvement in advocacy

A healthy community encourages cross-sector collaboration, and public participation in decision making for policies, programs, and services at multiple levels of influence that increase physical activity opportunities where we live, learn, work and play.²



Figure 2: A Social Ecological Model for a Healthy Community²

Conclusion

An in-depth discussion about the action items identified by forum participants was beyond the scope of the forum; however, this will be a focus for subsequent work of the forum organizers in collaboration with stakeholders.



1.0 Introduction

On May 17th, 2012, the City Of Hamilton in partnership with the Heart and Stroke Foundation, Metrolinx, and facilitator Russell Brownlee (the “Forum Planning Team”), hosted a full-day forum entitled “School Siting and School Site Design for a Healthy Community” at the Waterfront Banquet and Conference Centre in Hamilton. The forum resulted from a City of Hamilton Public Health Services program review and situational assessment conducted from 2010 to 2011, specifically the section regarding active and sustainable transportation (AST), as well as the Stepping It Up school travel planning pilot project in Hamilton, which was conducted from 2009 to 2011.

The forum brought together 60 representatives from across the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area with expertise from school board planning and operations; municipal planning, public works, and public health; Metrolinx, the Regional Transportation Authority for the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area; provincial representatives from the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Infrastructure; not-for-profit organizations; and universities (see Figure 3). For a complete list of attendees, refer to Appendix A.

My affiliation is...

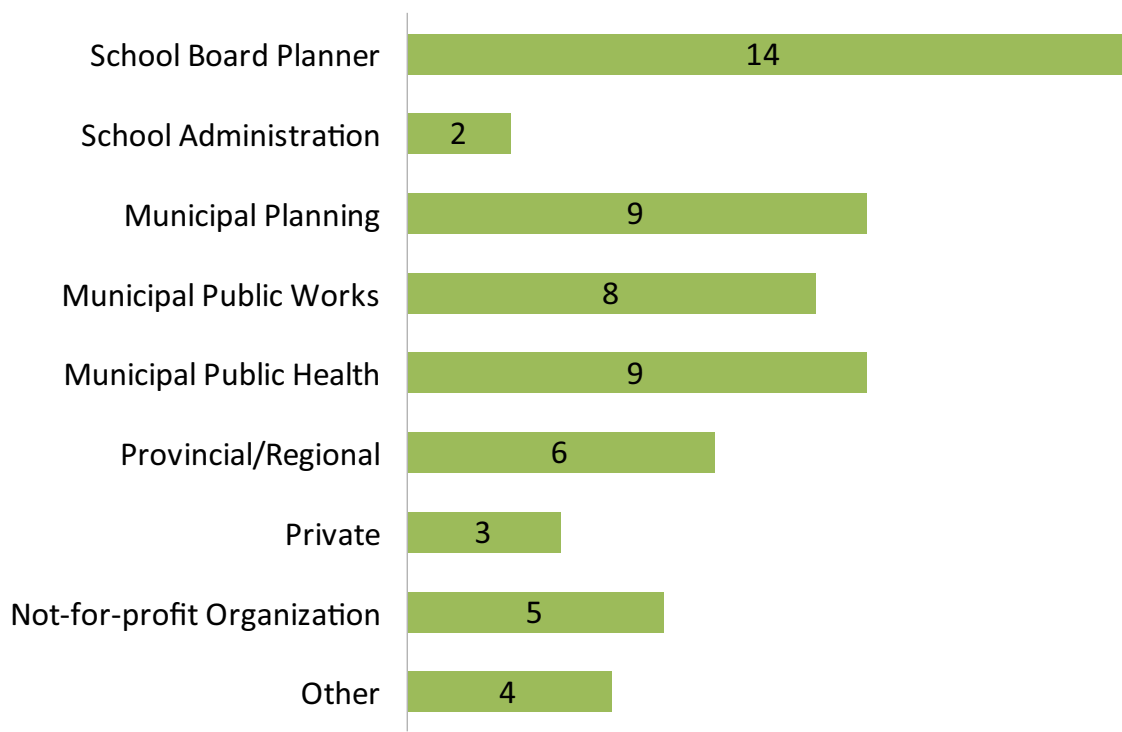


Figure 3: Affiliation of the forum participants

This report provides context for the topic area and summarizes the forum’s interactive discussions including recommendations for future action.

1.1 Forum Purpose and Objectives: School Siting and School Site Design

The forum is the first step in answering the overarching question:

To foster a healthier community, how can school siting and school site design better support people to use active and sustainable modes for school travel?

The core topic of this report is school siting and school site design for a healthy community with an emphasis on how this supports Active and Sustainable School Travel (ASST). See sidebar for Active and Sustainable Transportation definition.

To achieve progress toward the overarching question, the Forum Planning Team identified four objectives.

i. Build on the momentum of active and sustainable transportation in Hamilton:

- An understanding is developing of how the built environment influences health, economics, the natural environment, and our communities. More research is emerging; more discussions with a broad range of stakeholders are taking place.
- Stakeholders are committing to the issue.

ii. Develop a common understanding of school siting and school site design for a healthy community:

- The issue is complex and discussion/solutions require the input of a wide range of stakeholders.
- An understanding of various perspectives helps to establish clear, meaningful dialogue and to determine each group's contribution moving forward.

iii. Explore existing policies and guidelines, and identify gaps

- Policies, procedures, and guidelines from different municipal departments, school boards, and provincial ministries influence ASST.
- Stakeholders need to understand better the scope, impact, and gaps in policies, procedures, and guidelines related to school siting and school site design that supports ASST.

Active and Sustainable Transportation

Active Transportation

includes any mode of human travel, which is self-propelled such as bicycle, walk, in-line skate, skateboard, scooter, and wheelchair.

Sustainable Transportation

includes modes of human travel that combines active transportation and mass transportation, such as city transit, commuter trains, and organized carpooling

iv. Build relationships and partnerships towards a shared vision for action

- Dialogue and progress related to school siting and school site design and ASST is in the early stages with representatives from various sectors interacting professionally often for the first time. Before groups can work together successfully, trusting and respectful relationships must be developed.

Meeting, networking, and discussion about school siting and school site design and ASST will help to build relationships and partnerships to keep stakeholders invested in the issue.

The next section considers the overarching question and objectives within the broader context of health, the built environment and active and sustainable transportation.

1.2 Setting the Context of School Siting and School Site Design

1.2.1 The Built Environment for Healthy Communities

Research has established important linkages between the built environment, health and physical activity.³ Practices and priorities in the last three to four decades have led to the current built environment and policies, in many Canadian municipalities, that predominately discourage physical activity. Changes in community design and advances in technology have largely engineered physical activity out of the daily routine.⁴⁻¹³ **See Figure 4 for key messages about Canadian physical activity levels.**

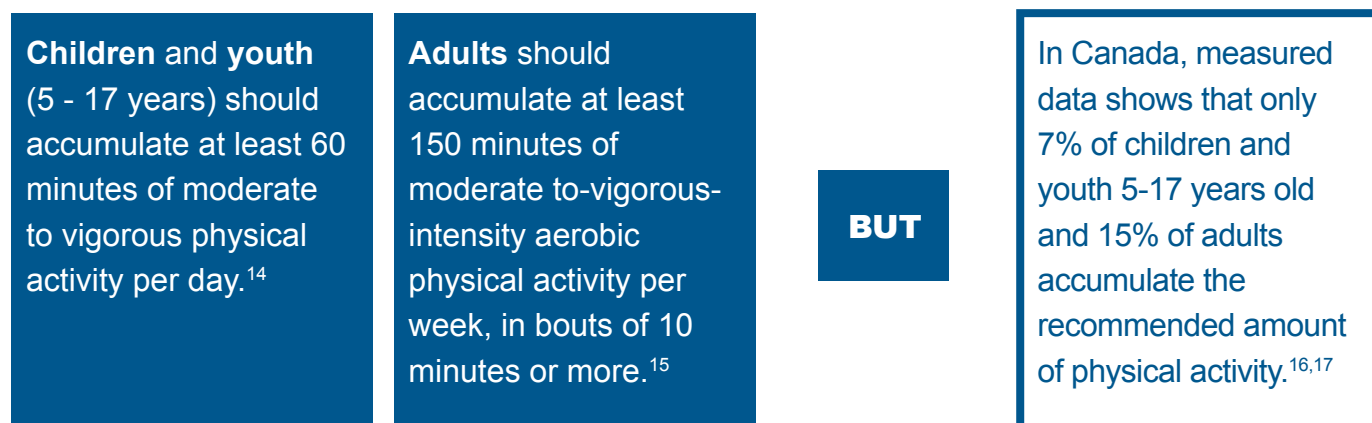


Figure 4: Key Messages about Canadian Physical Activity Levels

Many communities are now focusing efforts toward improving the built environment using a health lens. Multiple sectors are exploring collaborative ways to create healthier communities; for example, the inclusion of schools, workplaces, retail and homes within compact communities to increase opportunities for active transportation.^{18,19} Such planning approaches can make an impact: a study found that when children were able to walk or cycle to a neighbourhood school it added up to 24 additional minutes of physical activity daily, thus meeting almost half of their daily physical activity requirements.²⁰ Similarly, facilitating the use of active transportation or public transit by commuters to work provides an opportunity to contribute to recommended daily physical activity.²¹

Public health professionals, planners, traffic engineers and others can work together to include options for active and sustainable transportation. **See sidebar for a sampling of initiatives in Hamilton that support active and sustainable transportation.**



Hamilton Active and Sustainable Transportation Momentum 2000 to Present

- Active and Safe Routes to School introduced (2000)
- Signing of the International Charter for Walking (2008)
- Shifting Gears Cycling Master Plan (2009)
- School Travel Planning (2009)
- Transit-Oriented Development Guidelines (2010)
- Step Forward Hamilton Pedestrian Mobility Plan (draft 2012)

STP is a comprehensive process that engages multiple stakeholders to assess and take action on barriers to ASST.³² Many cities across Canada and globally are actively pursuing STP in their jurisdiction. In 2009, STP was introduced in Hamilton through the Stepping It Up project. More information about the project is available at www.metrolinx.com/schooltravel

1.2.2 Focusing on school travel

“Schools not only provide a place for education, but they are also an important anchor that helps define and sustain our neighbourhoods.”²²

Lessons from comprehensive School Travel Planning (STP) projects and studies in the GTHA have shown that two of the key determining factors of school travel mode choice are school location and school site design.²³ See the sidebar for more information about STP. Home to school distance has been found to be the strongest predictor of ASST²⁴⁻³¹ emphasizing the importance of school siting and defined catchment areas. Walkable neighbourhoods are defined as those with a centrally located school, surrounded by narrow grid patterned streets, and homes on small lots.³³ **See sidebar for student walking rates associated with distance from school.**

School siting and school site design has become a significant topic of multi-stakeholder discussions as school consolidations have become an increasingly common solution to declining enrolment and increasing budgetary pressures on school boards.

The factors mentioned above, such as built environment, planning and policies, and the overall multi-jurisdictional nature of ASST, serve to illustrate the need for multi-stakeholder collaboration on this important topic.³⁴ Moreover, even when a given school site is planned to be accessible by walking or cycling, parental perceptions of safety,³⁵ school choice policies,^{24,30,36} and broader urban form³⁶ have an influence on school travel mode choice. The subject matter is recognized as complex, with many aspects for consideration.

Community Planning in Support of ASST: Student Walking Rates with Distance to School

Children are 3-5 times more likely to walk or cycle when schools are located within 1.6 kilometres of home.^{28,37}

Conversely, increased distance between home and school is associated with half of the decline in walking over the last three decades.³⁰

Driven by this context the forum on “School Siting and Site Design for a Healthy Community” included numerous collaborative activities and discussions between municipal, school board, provincial, and NGO stakeholders to address the forum objectives. There was a focus on promoting a common understanding of the topic and an interest in further collaboration. The structure and results of the forum’s interactive discussions are summarized below.

2.0 Summary of Forum Presentations and Discussions

2.1 Forum Overview

The forum opened with two presentations: Hamilton's Associate Medical Officer of Health provided the health context for school siting and site design for a healthy community, while the forum facilitator presented further context on school site design and engineering strategies to manage traffic congestion around school sites. **See sidebar for presentation key messages.**

A discussion panel of Hamilton school board and municipal representatives provided insight on local school siting and site design processes and highlighted opportunities for further collaboration (see Section 2.2). Following that, a Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area discussion circle provided regional, school board and private sector perspectives through success stories about school siting and site design for a healthy community (see Section 2.3).

The forum concluded with a SWOT Analysis through which participants identified perceived stakeholder strengths (S), weaknesses (W), opportunities (O) and threats (T) related to the issue of school siting and site design for a healthy community with a focus on ASST. Participants identified key actions to be taken to capitalize on the identified SWOTs. This feedback was used to form the foundation for next steps contained within this report (see Section 2.4).

The following sections provide a summary of the key aims and learning from the discussion panel, discussion circle, and SWOT activities.



School Siting & School Site Design for a Healthy Community

Dr. Ninh Tran, AMOH,
City of Hamilton:

"This is the first time we've had so many people in the same room on this topic. It is the first stepping stone into a larger discussion."

Key Message: The health effects of the built environment are complex requiring multi-faceted solutions involving many stakeholders and decision-makers. See Appendix D for the full presentation.

School Areas - Planning and Designing for Safety

Russell Brownlee of
Giffin-Koerth:

"Push as much as you can in planning stages to solve problems proactively."

Key Message: Long range planning for active and sustainable transportation is critical to minimize interaction and conflict points between vehicles and people using active travel modes. See Appendix D for the full presentation.

2.2 Discussion Panel

The panel was comprised of senior staff in school and community planning and transportation from:

- Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board (HWCDSB)
- Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB)
- City of Hamilton Planning and Economic Development
- City of Hamilton Public Works

The purpose of the discussion panel was to increase dialogue and understanding about school siting and site design, with a focus on ASST. The emphasis was on identifying opportunities for greater collaboration between school boards, municipalities and other key stakeholders and on creating a supportive context in which participants could discuss options for moving forward together on ASST initiatives. The facilitated panel discussion centred on the following topics (see Figure 5):

- Understanding current school siting and site design policies, guidelines, and processes.
- Identifying gaps and barriers in current processes and practices and highlighting potential areas for greater collaboration in support of ASST.

Figure 5: Summary of Key Discussion Panel Points

What we are currently doing well:

- Supportive policy and guidelines (e.g., Hamilton's Official Plan and Transportation Master Plan which includes greater provision for ASST than in the past, and Halton's school site and adjacent lands design guidelines which support ASST)
- Maintenance of community schools (e.g., where possible school boards choose retrofits and reconstruction of community schools before new builds)

What are key gaps/barriers?

- Conflicting planning policies (e.g., Growth Plan promotes complete communities, active transportation, and mixed uses, but there is now provincial direction to encourage the consolidation of underutilized school sites (i.e., those with low enrolment))
- Funding challenges (e.g., education budget constraints being addressed through school closures)
- Legacy issues (e.g., suburban development, low density communities, car culture)
- Fragmented land ownership (e.g., alternative land assembly processes make it challenging to acquire good school sites in existing neighbourhoods)
- Lack of collaboration (e.g., between municipality and school boards at secondary plan stage)

Where are the opportunities?

- More and earlier collaboration of key stakeholders in school siting and site design
- Multi-pronged solutions
 - Policy emphasizing ASST
 - Changing social norms through education and awareness campaigns

2.3 Discussion Circle

The purpose of the discussion circle was to share success stories about school siting and school site design that supports ASST. The intention was to engage participants in an open discussion forum to build on lessons learned and create further momentum for collaborative action. A regional planner, a district school board planner, and a local architectural firm initiated discussions by presenting their local successes and perspectives. See section 2.3.1 for more case studies of school siting and school site design.

Discussion Circle Key Themes

Partnerships and collaboration across sectors and disciplines are recognized as essential.

Changing social norms means education about ASST must accompany supportive policy and environmental change efforts.

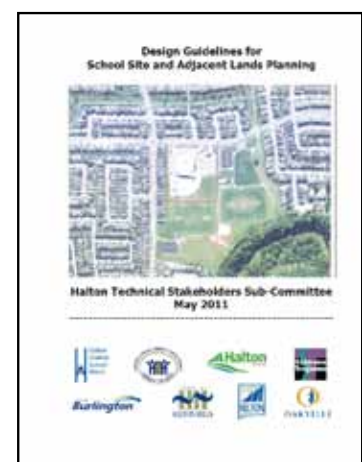
Resources to support ASST should include programs (e.g., walking school bus), champions, and funding or investment along with policies and infrastructure.

2.3.1 Case Studies: School Siting and School site Design

Case Study 1: Halton's Design Guidelines for School Site and Adjacent Lands Planning

Halton District School Board, Halton Catholic District School Board, Halton Region, and local municipalities partnered to create Design Guidelines for Schools and Adjacent Lands which support ASST. Refer to the link to view the entire document:

<http://www.hdsb.ca/Programs/ASSTS%20Documents/DesignGuidelinesSchoolAdjacentLands.pdf>



Case Study 2: Policy Package - Model School Siting Policies for School Districts

ChangeLab Solutions has developed a package of school siting policies for school districts that want to ensure that their school siting decisions support the educational success, physical health, and overall well-being of students and their community. Refer to the link for the policy package and supporting documents:

<http://changelabsolutions.org/publications/smart-school-siting>



Case Study 3: Ecology Action Centre (EAC)—Reducing Childhood Obesity by Increasing Opportunities for Active Transportation

The EAC prepared this discussion brief to ask questions, promote discussion about the link between obesity reduction and school siting, and to seek a more in-depth analysis as to how school siting could be better aligned to support reduced childhood obesity in Nova Scotia. Refer to the link for more information:

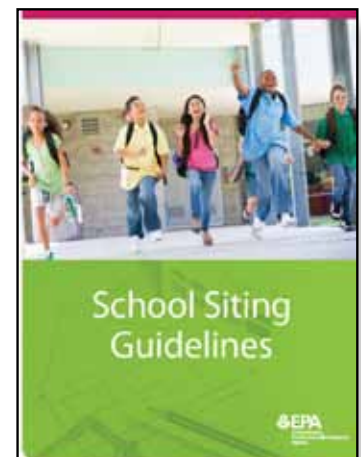
http://saferoutesns.ca/images/uploads/ASRS_full_12pgs_nov14_web.pdf



Case Study 4: United States Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) School Siting Guidelines

EPA's voluntary school siting guidelines can help local school districts and community members evaluate environmental factors to make the best possible school siting decisions. Refer to the link for more information:

<http://www.epa.gov/schools/siting/download.html>



The discussions set the context for the SWOT analysis, which is summarized in the following section.

2.4 SWOT Analysis

The SWOT analysis assessed forum attendee perceptions of internal strengths and weaknesses and external opportunities and threats associated with key stakeholder groups. The purpose of the analysis was to create a more comprehensive understanding of the current school siting/site design context, and to provide the foundation for next steps.

For the SWOT analysis, participants were grouped into eight tables consisting of a mix of stakeholders and assigned a letter (S, W, O, or T). Attendees were asked to focus upon the following stakeholder groups in their analysis: school boards, municipalities, the province, and ‘others’ (e.g., NGOs, architects). For each stakeholder group, attendees were asked to consider political, socio-cultural, economic, environmental and technological aspects regarding their table’s assigned letter. Each table was additionally requested to identify a top action or next step stemming from their analysis and to report this in plenary.

Summary of SWOT findings:

In Figure 6, the recorded notes from the SWOT have been summarized and grouped into driving forces of strengths and opportunities, and restraining forces of weaknesses and threats. The “change issue” identified in the middle of the driving forces comes directly from the overarching question: “To foster a healthier community, how can school siting and school site design better support people to use active and sustainable modes for school travel?”

In Figure 7, the actions identified by the attendees are summarized and grouped by forum objective.

Appendix D includes a more complete transcript of the SWOT analysis and identified and interpreted actions/next steps.

Figure 6: SWOT Analysis Findings Summarized Using A Force Field Analysis

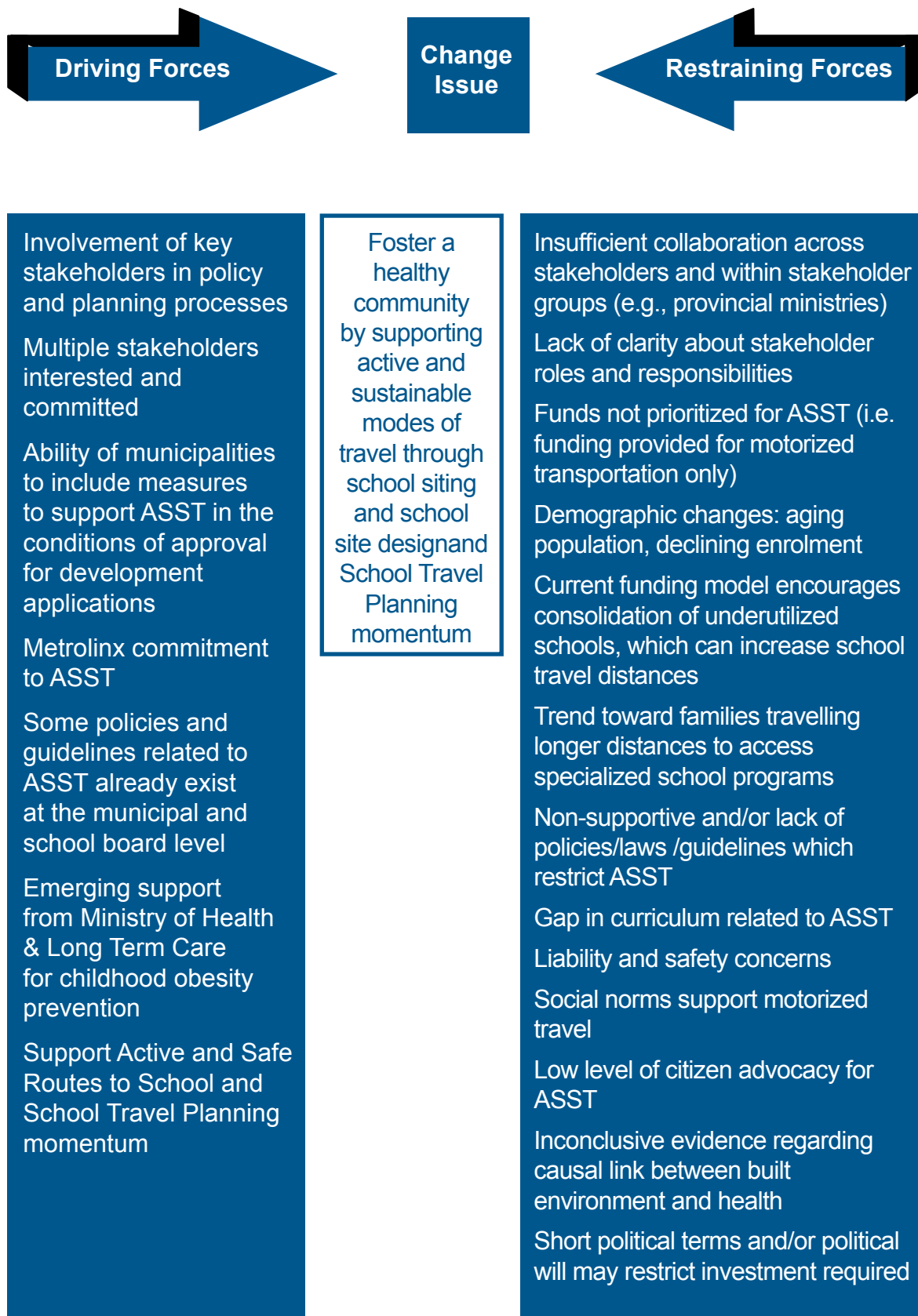
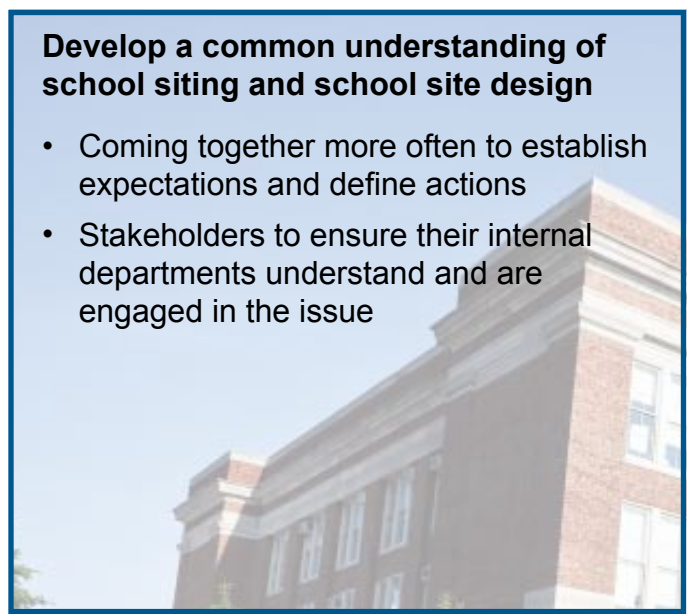
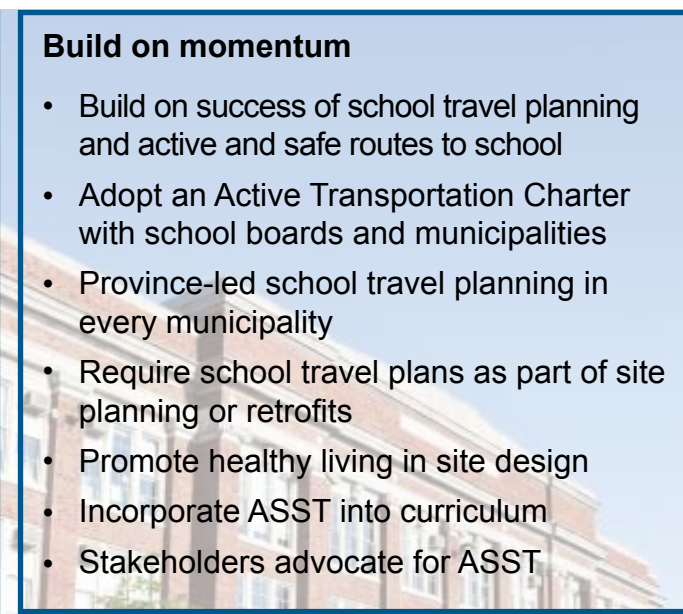
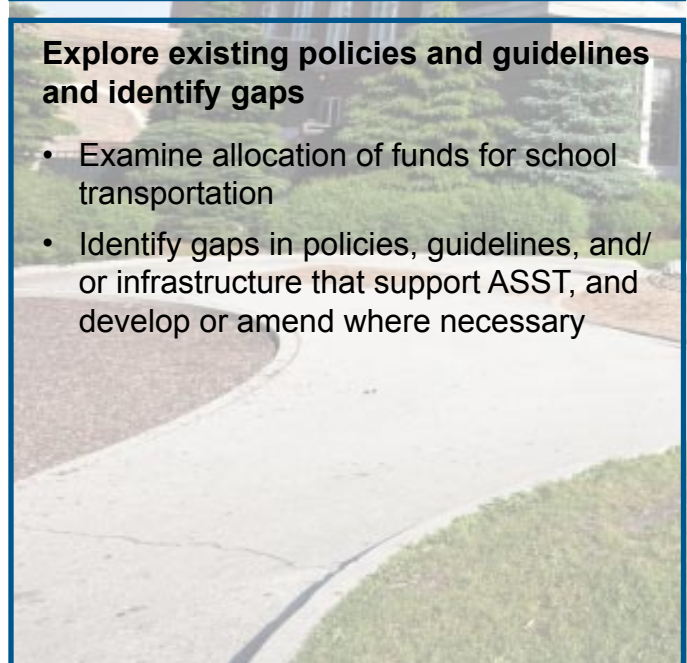



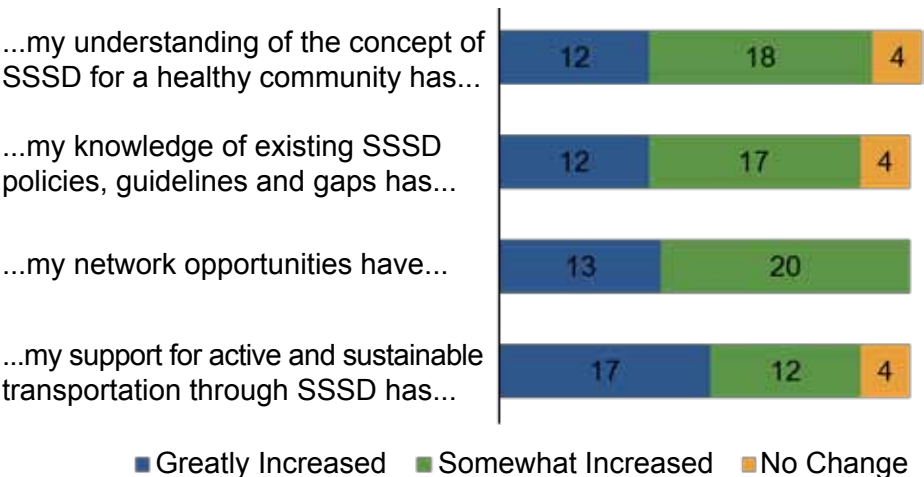
Figure 7: Summary of Top Actions Identified by SWOT Tables

 <p>Develop a common understanding of school siting and school site design</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Coming together more often to establish expectations and define actions• Stakeholders to ensure their internal departments understand and are engaged in the issue	 <p>Build on momentum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Build on success of school travel planning and active and safe routes to school• Adopt an Active Transportation Charter with school boards and municipalities• Province-led school travel planning in every municipality• Require school travel plans as part of site planning or retrofits• Promote healthy living in site design• Incorporate ASST into curriculum• Stakeholders advocate for ASST
 <p>Explore existing policies and guidelines and identify gaps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Examine allocation of funds for school transportation• Identify gaps in policies, guidelines, and/or infrastructure that support ASST, and develop or amend where necessary	 <p>Build relationships and partnerships towards a shared vision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Formalize relationships and explore how to better fill gaps together• Strengthen relationships between school boards, provincial ministries, and municipalities• Establish inter-ministerial committee for school travel (e.g., Ministries of health, education, transportation, infrastructure, municipal affairs and housing, and child and youth services)• Normalize the incorporation of ASST in to the work of all stakeholders

3.0 Evaluation

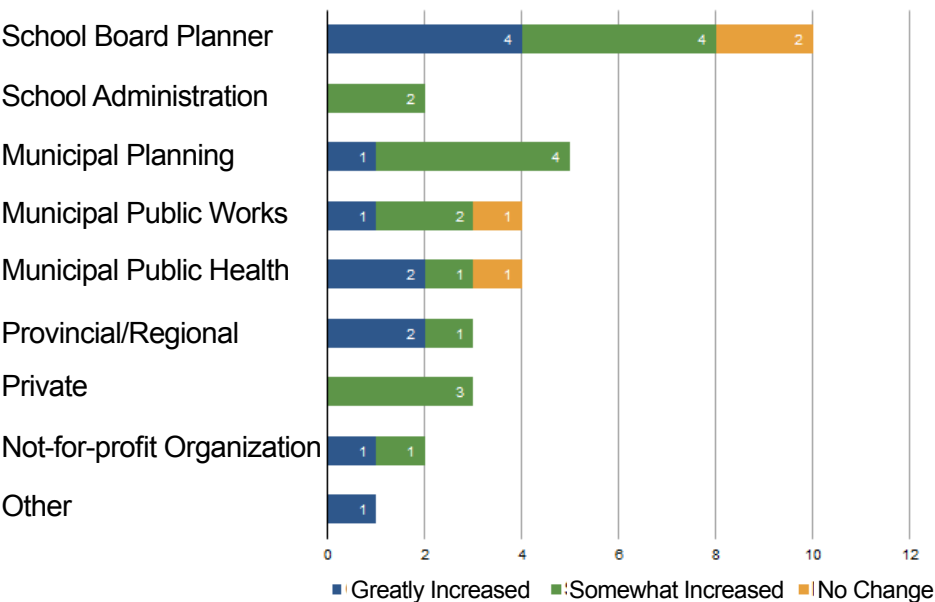
What progress did we make toward achieving our purpose and objectives? Workshop attendees provided the following feedback via evaluation forms at the end of the forum. The following graphs represent a summary of participants’ impressions and experiences:

After attending the Forum about School Siting & School Site Design (SSSD) for a Healthy Community...



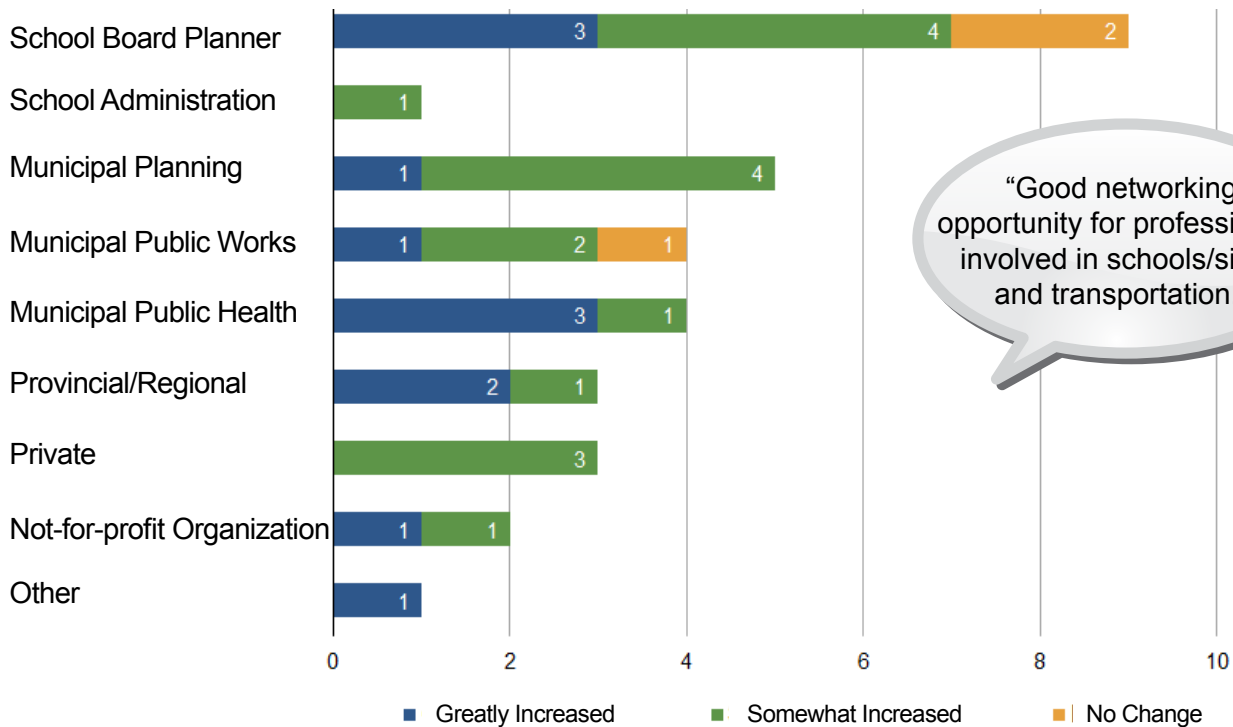
“It would be beneficial for decision-makers (higher level) to attend these sessions.”

My understanding of the concept of SSSD for a healthy community has...



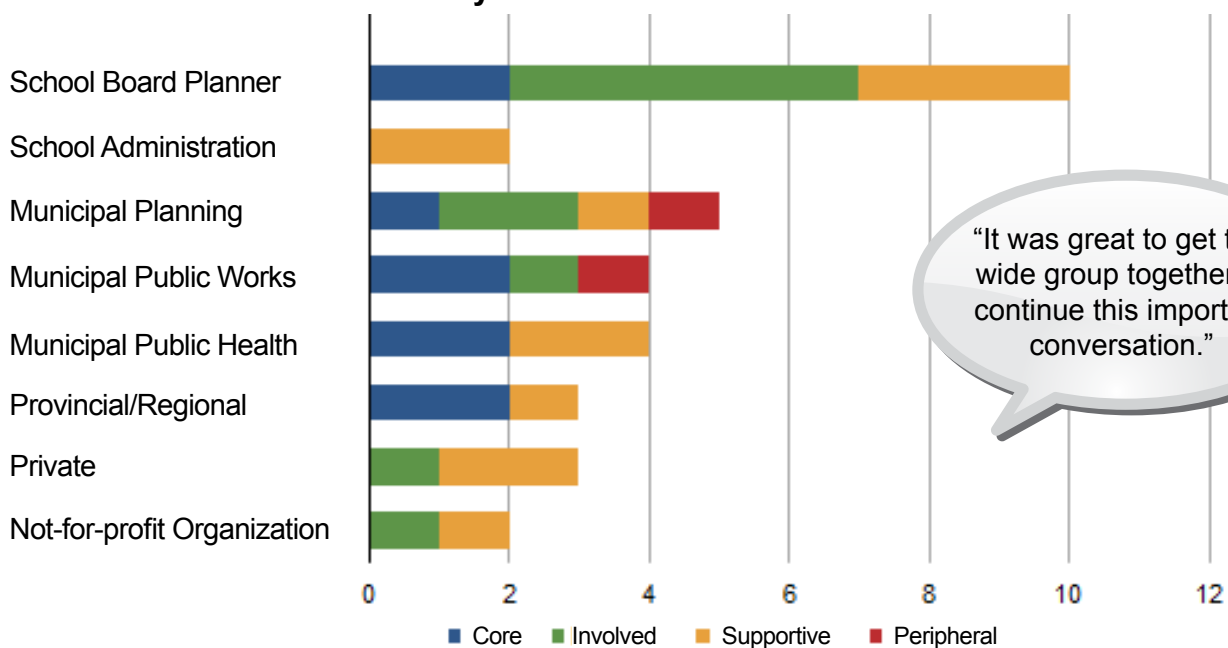
“I think more discussion is necessary to balance the needs of the [stakeholders].”

...my knowledge of existing SSSD policies, guidelines, and gaps has...



“Good networking opportunity for professionals involved in schools/siting and transportation.”

...my level of commitment to moving the agenda of SSSD for a healthy community forward can be described as:



“It was great to get this wide group together to continue this important conversation.”

4.0 Forum Trends and Highlighted Actions/Next Steps

Each of the forum sessions produced similar key themes and ideas about school siting and school site design for a healthy community. See sidebar for key themes. The evaluation demonstrated a high level of commitment and interest in continuing this dialogue. This section summarizes the common themes and presents stakeholders' proposed preliminary next steps to continue this collaborative process.

4.1 Preliminary Next Steps:

☒ Build on momentum of active and sustainable transportation

ACTIONS:

- Stakeholders to come together to endorse a vision of healthy living based upon active and sustainable transportation, and land-use policy and planning principles (e.g., see the Waterloo Region District School Board's Active Transportation Charter - www.wrdsb.ca/planning/active-and-safe-routes-school/active-transportation-charter)

☒ Develop a common understanding of school siting and school site design

ACTIONS:

- Stakeholder groups to gather more often to establish roles, shared goals and targets, and further develop actions (e.g., further engagement of developers)
- Stakeholders to ensure that their internal departments are engaged and understand linkages

☒ Explore existing policies and guidelines, and identify gaps

ACTIONS:

- Review policies that influence school siting and school site design with a health impact lens (e.g., by-laws; Acts; revenue generation and allocation models; liability; planning requirements)
- Increase communication and awareness about the existing supports for active transportation provided by the municipality and school boards
- Explore how/if funds from the provincial ministry level can be allocated differently to support non-motorized modes of school transportation

Key Themes and Ideas

- Need for partnerships and collaboration from multiple stakeholders
- Explore potential supportive policies and practices, address those that create barriers
- Communicate earlier and often
- Need for education, awareness, and enforcement in unison with supportive policy and improvements to the built environment

☑ **Build relationships and partnerships towards a shared vision for action**

ACTIONS:

- Continue to involve multiple stakeholders (including provincial ministries, architects, researchers, school boards, NGOs, municipality); break down silos and work to normalize the incorporation of active and sustainable transportation into plans, policy, and legislation
- Formalize involvement in stages of school and community planning where stakeholders can have impact
- Enhance discussions between school boards, municipalities and the Ministry of Education on the topic of school consolidation to include broader health, economic and environmental impacts (e.g., through Accommodation Review Committee process)
- Share the lessons from this report with parent associations and further connect with them to explore potential roles in parent education, awareness and involvement in advocacy

4.2 Conclusion

An in-depth discussion about the action items identified by participants was beyond the scope of the forum; however, it will be a focus for subsequent work of the forum organizers (Metrolinx, the City of Hamilton, and the Heart and Stroke Foundation) in collaboration with stakeholders.



5.0 References

1. Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. (2010). The School as Community Hub. Retrieved from: www.policyalternatives.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/publications/ourselves/docs/OSOS_Summer10_Preview.pdf
2. Active Canada 20/20. (n.d.). Social ecological model. Retrieved from <http://www.activecanada2020.ca/sections-of-ac-20-20/appendix-a/appendix-b/appendix-c-1/appendix-d>
3. Reynalds, A., Smith, T.H., & Hale, P.J. (2010). A systematic review of built environment and health. *Family Community Health*, 33(1), 68-78.
4. Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care [MOHLTC] (2004). 2004 Chief Medical Officer of Health Report Healthy Weights, Healthy Lives. Toronto, ON: Queen's Printer for Ontario.
5. World Health Organization [WHO]. (2007). Steps to Health: A European framework to promote physical activity for health. WHO Regional Office for Europe, Copenhagen, Denmark.
6. Bassett, D., Cureton, A., & Ainsworth, B. (2000). Measurement of daily walking distance: Questionnaire versus pedometer. *Medicine, Science, Sports and Exercise*, 32(5), 1018-1023.
7. Spence, J. (2001). Compilation of Evidence of Effective Active Living Interventions: A Case Study Approach. A report submitted to Health Canada on behalf of the Canadian Consortium of Health Promotion Research.
8. Lavizzo-Mourney, R., & McGinnis, J. (2003). Making the case for active living communities. *American Journal of Public Health*, 93(9):1386-1388.
9. Frank, L., Engelke, P., & Schmid, T. (2003). *Health and Community Design: The Impact of the Built Environment on Physical Activity*. Washington, DC: Island Press.
10. Frank, L., & Engelke, P. (2000). How land use and transportation systems impact public health: A literature review of the relationship between physical activity and the built form. Atlanta, GA: CDC.
11. Litman, T. (2003). Integrating public health objectives in transportation decision-making. *American Journal of Health Promotion*, 18(1), 103-108.
12. Sallis, J., Frank, L., Saelens, B., & Kraft, K. (2004). Active transportation and physical activity: Opportunities for collaboration on transportation and public health research. *Transportation Research Part A: Policy & Practice*, 38(4), 249-269.
13. Transportation Research Board (2005). Special Report 282: Does the built environment influence physical activity?: Examining the evidence. Transportation Research Board and the Institute of Medicine, Committee on Physical Activity, Health.

14. Colley, R., Garriguet, D., Janssen, I., Craig, C., Clarke, J., & Tremblay, M. (2011a). Physical activity of Canadian children and youth: Accelerometer results from the 2007 to 2009 Canadian Health Measures Survey. Health Reports (Statistics Canada, Catalogue no. 82-003-XPE), 22(1).
15. Colley, R., Garriguet, D., Janssen, I., Craig, C., Clarke, J., & Tremblay, M. (2011b). Physical activity of Canadian adults: Accelerometer results from the 2007 to 2009 Canadian Health Measures Survey. Health Reports (Statistics Canada, Catalogue no. 82-003 XPE), 22(1).
16. Tremblay, M., Shields, M., Laviolette, M., Craig, C., Janssen, I., & Connor-Gorber, S. (2010). Fitness of Canadian children and youth: Results from the 2007-2009 Canadian Health Measures Survey. Health Reports (Statistics Canada, Catalogue no. 82-003-XPE) 21(1). **Retrieved from <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/82-003-x/2010001/article/11065-eng.pdf>**
17. Shields, M., Tremblay, M., Laviolette, M., Craig, C., Janssen, I., & Connor-Gorber, S. (2010). Fitness of Canadians adults: Results from the 2007-2009 Canadian Healthy Measures Survey. Health Reports (Statistics Canada Catalogue 82-003XPE), (21)1. Retrieved from **<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/82-003-x/2010001/article/11064-eng.pdf>**
18. Active Living Research. (2007). Designing for active living among children. Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, San Diego, CA: Kerr, Jacqueline.
19. American Academy of Pediatrics. (2009). The built environment: designing communities to promote physical activity in children. Pediatrics, 123(6), 1591-1598.
20. Sirard, J.R., Riner, W.F., McIver, K.L. & Pate, R.R. (2005). Physical activity and active commuting to elementary school. Medicine and Science in sports and exercise, 37(12), 2062-2069.
21. Need to find
22. National Trust for Historic Preservation. (2010). Helping Johnny walk to school: Policy recommendations for removing barriers to community-centred schools. Washington, DC: Renee Kuhlman. Retrieved from **<http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/about-us/newsroom/our-newsletter/article/new-report-helping-johnny-walk-school-policy-recommendation>**
23. Metrolinx. (2012). Making active and sustainable transportation a priority in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area: Stepping It Up-final report. Toronto, ON: Jennifer Lay
24. Eyler, A.A., Brownson, R.C., Doescher, M.P., Evenson, K.R., Fesperman, C.E., Litt, J.S., Pluto, D., Steinman, L.E., Terpstra, J.L., Troped, P.J., & Schmid, T.L. (2008). Policies related to active transport to and from school: a multisite case study. Health Education Research, 23(6), 963-975.
25. Davison, K., Werder, J., & Lawson, C. (2008). Children's active commuting to school: current knowledge and future directions. Preventing Chronic Disease, 5(3):1-11. (Peer Reviewed)
26. Napier, M.A., Brown, B.B., Werner, C.M., & Gallimore, J. (2011). Walking to school: Community design and child and parent barriers. Journal of Environmental Health, 31(2011), 45-51.

27. Beijleri, I., Steiner, R.L., Fischman, A., & Schmucker, J.M. (2011). Using GIS to analyze the role of barriers and facilitators to walking in children's travel to school. *Urban Design International*, 16(1), 51-62.
28. Giles-Corti, B., Wood, G., Pikora, T., Learnihan, V., Bulsara, M., Van Niel, K., Timperio, A., McCormack, G., Villanueva, K. (2011). School site and the potential to walk to school: The impact of street connectivity and traffic exposure in school neighbourhoods. *Health & Place*, 17, 545-550.
29. Salmon, J., et al. (2007). Associations among individual, social, and environmental barriers and children's walking or cycling to school. *American Journal of Health Promotion*, 22(2), 107-113.
30. McDonald, N.C., (2008). Children's mode choice for the school trip: the role of distance and school location in walking to school. *Transportation*, 35(1), 23-35.
31. McDonald, N.C. (2010). School siting: contested visions of the community school. *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 76(2), 184-198.
32. Green Communities Canada. (n.d.). School travel planning. Active and Safe Routes to School, Peterborough, ON. Retrieved from <http://www.saferoutestoschool.ca/school-travel-planning>
33. Frank, L. & Kavage, S. (2009). A national plan for physical activity: The enabling role of the built environment. *Journal of Physical Activity and Health*, 6(S2), S186-S195.
34. Metrolinx (2012).Metrolinx Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area School Travel Household Attitudinal Study Report. Retrieved from <http://metrolinx.com/en/projectsandprograms/steppingitup/ENG-2011GTHASchoolTravelStudy.pdf>
35. Lees, E., Salvesen, D., & Shay, E. (2008). Collaborative school planning and active schools: a case study of Lee County Florida. *Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law*, 33(3), 595-615.
36. Wilson, E.J., Marshall, J., Wilson, R., & Krizek, K.J. (2010). By foot, bus or car: children's school travel and school choice policy. *Environment and Planning A*, 42, 2168-2185.
37. McMillan, T., Day, K., Boarnet, M., Alfonzo, M., & Anderson, C. (2006). Johnny walks to school- does Jane? Sex differences in children's active travel to school. *Children, Youth and Environments*, 16(1), 75-89.

6.0 Appendices

Appendix A: Attendee List for May 17th, 2012 Forum

First Name	Last Name	Organization
Sam	AbiSaab	Heart and Stroke Foundation
Karen	Accursi	Coordinator of Crossing Guards, Cambridge
Khaldoon	Ahmad	Planner, Urban Design, City of Hamilton
Brad	Anderson	Planner, Planning & Economic Development, Region of Durham
Scott	Bennet	McMaster University, School of Geography & Earth Science
Rob	Berketo	Niagara Student Transportation Services
John	Bigelow	Waterloo Catholic District School Board
Bart	Brosseau	Transportation/Transit Technologist, City of Hamilton
Russell	Brownlee	Giffin Koerth - May 17th Forum Facilitator
Jacqui	Candlish	Public Health Nurse (PHN), Injury Prevention, City of Hamilton
Liz	Conti	PHN, Chronic Disease Prevention, City of Hamilton
Cettina	Cuffaro	Senior Policy Specialist, Capital Policy Branch, Ministry of Education
Gerry	Cullen	Halton District School Board
Leanne	Cunliffe	Project Manager, Traffic Planning, City of Hamilton
Dennis	Cuomo	Manager of Planning, Waterloo Region District School Board
Agnese	Defazio	Project Supervisor, Capital Projects, Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board
Kira	Dolch	Manager of Development Approvals, Fort Erie - Representing OPPI
Ashley	Ecker	Heart and Stroke Foundation
Robert	Fex	Senior Planner, Accommodation & Planning, Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board
Lindsay	Ford	Property/Planning Officer, Corporate Services - Capital Planning Department, Waterloo Catholic District School Board
Anne	Gariscsak	Planner, Community Planning, Halton Region
Gillian	Gemmell	Heart and Stroke Foundation
John	Grguric	Architect, Grguric Architects
Don	Hall	Senior Facilities Officer, HWDSB
Eva	Hatzis	Public Health Inspector, City of Hamilton

First Name	Last Name	Organization
Trevor	Horzelenberg	Senior Project Manager, Public Transportation, City of Hamilton
Christine	Hyde	York Catholic District School Board
Jennifer	Jenkins-Scott	PHN, Health Promoter, Region of Halton
Monica	Keliacies	GSP Group
Kyle	Kellam	Intern, Metrolinx
Brenda	Khes	Architect, GSP Group
Jennifer	Lay	Program Advisor - School Travel, Metrolinx
Christine	Lee-Morrison	Manager, Mobility Programs & Special Projects, City of Hamilton
Chris	Leitch	Senior Planner, Region of Durham
Janet	Loebach	J. Loebach Consulting & PhD Candidate, University of Western Ontario
Georgeanne	MacGregor-Fox	PHN, School Representative, Region of Waterloo
Lauren	Manske	Senior Planner, Planning Department, Business Services, Waterloo Region District School Board
Kirsten	McCauley	Recreation Planner, Recreation, City of Hamilton
Andrea	McDonald	Senior Planner, Community Planning, City of Hamilton
Andrea	McLean	Community Mission Specialist, Heart and Stroke
Steve	Molloy	Project Manager, Transportation Master Plan, City of Hamilton
Dave	Morrissey	Controller of Plant Operations, Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board
Virginia	Oprea	Health Promotion Officer, School Health Team, Peel Public Health
Jessica	Peake	Land Use Planner, York Region District School Board
Tom	Pechkovsky	Manager of Planning, York Region Catholic District School Board
Julianna	Petrovich	Traffic Analyst, Planning & Development Services, Town of Ajax
Vince	Ramelli	Manager of Planning, Transportation, and Statistics, Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board
Domenico	Renzella	Manager of Planning, Halton District School Board
Steve	Robichaud	Manager, Development Planning, City of Hamilton
Joanne	Rogers	Planner, Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School

First Name	Last Name	Organization
		Board
Sue	Russell	Project Manager, Strategic Planning and Rapid Transit, City of Hamilton
Ali	Salam	Heart and Stroke Foundation
Kelly	Scott	Physical Activity Specialist - Health Promoter, City of Hamilton
Ann	Stanziani	Manager, Chronic Disease Prevention, City of Hamilton
Fred	Sztabinski	Ministry of Infrastructure (Ontario Growth Secretariat)
Christine	Thompson	Supervisor of Planning, District School Board of Niagara
Peter	Topalovic	Project Manager - TDM, City of Hamilton
Ninh	Tran	Associate Medical Officer of Health, City of Hamilton
Bill	Zuk	Technologist Planning, City of Hamilton

Appendix B: Biographies of May 17th, 2012 Forum Speakers

Facilitator:

Russell Brownlee, B.Sc., M.A.Sc., FITE, P.Eng. is a Transportation Safety Engineer with over 17 years of public and private sector experience in the areas of road user safety, rail safety, and transportation engineering. At Griffin Koerth he provides expert opinions in the areas of transportation system design, operations and maintenance, primarily related to road and rail facilities.

Mr. Brownlee is a recognized expert in undertaking in-service safety reviews of transportation facilities and has conducted operational and safety reviews at existing and proposed school sites. He will draw on years of experience related to school planning, design and operations as a municipal employee as well as through his safety review consulting work. Most recently, Russell prepared a guideline document related to school site location and access for the Region of Durham.

Mr. Brownlee is an active member of the Institute of Transportation Engineers. He is the Canadian District Director and represents Canada on ITE's International Board of Direction. He is currently a member of an ITE International Committee preparing an Information Report on School Site Planning, Design and Transportation, which is currently going through the balloting process to be released for approval.

Associate Medical Officer of Health

Dr. Ninh Tran

Associate Medical Officer of Health
Healthy Living Division
Hamilton Public Health Services

Dr. Tran works both as a family doctor and as one of Hamilton Public Health Services' Associate Medical Officers of Health. His areas of responsibility include chronic disease prevention, tobacco control, substance misuse and injury prevention, and the school program. He is also the chair of Public Health Services' Social Determinant of Health Committee and is a member of the Council of Medical Officer of Health Built Environment Working Group.

Discussion Panellists:

Donald R. Hall, B.Arch Sci., MBA, MAATO

Senior Facilities Officer, Facilities Management

Hamilton Wentworth District School Board

don.hall@hwdsb.on.ca

Role description at HWDSB:

Mr. Hall is responsible for and oversees the four divisions of Facilities Management, including Accommodation & Planning, Capital Projects, Energy & Maintenance, and Caretaking and Property Services. Focal to this work at present is the development of a Long-Term Term Facilities Master Plan that will direct the Boards revitalization strategy proposed over the next 3 - 5 years.

Dave Morrissey, P. Eng.

Controller of Plant

Hamilton Wentworth Catholic District School Board

Mr. Morrissey has been the Controller of Plant for the Hamilton Wentworth Catholic District School Board since 2003. He is responsible for 50 elementary and 7 high schools. Dave has been involved in over 25 elementary and secondary school projects during his career. His previous experience includes Manager of Plant for Windsor Essex Catholic District School Board, Chrysler Canada, Kilborn Engineering, and Stone and Webster Engineering.

Steve Robichaud,

Manager, Development Planning

Development Division

Planning and Economic Development Department

City Of Hamilton

Mr. Robichaud is responsible for the Development Planning Section (comprised of two development teams: the Committee of Adjustment, and the Business Facilitation Office), for applications submitted to the City of Hamilton under the Planning Act. In addition, he was the Project Manager responsible for the development of the City of Hamilton's integrated growth management strategy (Growth Related Integrated Development Strategy or GRIDS). The process required a multi-disciplinary and integrated planning process to develop a broad land use structure that accommodates projected population, household, and employment growth and requires the integration of land use and infrastructure planning with the City's economic development strategy and social vision through the preparation of land use plans (Official Plan), infrastructure plans (transportation, stormwater and water and wastewater) and financial plans.

Christine Lee-Morrison

Manager, Mobility Programs and Special Projects
Transit (HSR), Transportation, Energy and Facilities
Public Works Department
City Of Hamilton

Ms. Lee-Morrison is a registered professional planner, and has been with the City for 26 years working in both the Planning and Public Works Departments. Currently, she is the Manager of the Mobility Programs and Special Projects Section. This is a newly formed group in the City which includes an 'integrated public transportation' program and was established by combining several individual public transportation related programs into one consolidated single program that fits into the City's policies and principals. The objective was to develop an organizational structure that encompasses provincial, inter-regional, inter-city, rapid transit, public transit (conventional and specialized), active transportation (cycling, walking and ride share) and transportation demand management. This is a new concept, combining all modes of public transportation under one umbrella with transit leading the way.

Discussion Circle Leads:**John Grguric, B.Tech., B. Arch., Architect, OAA**

GRGURIC ARCHITECTS INCORPORATED

28 King Street East, Unit B
Stoney Creek, Ontario L8G 1J8
johng@2gai.com

Mr. Grguric assumed the principalship of Grguric Architects Inc., formerly Torsney Graff Architects Inc. and then Graff Grguric Architects Inc., in 2005. He has over 20 years of experience in educational and other institutional projects. John assumes the lead role, as Project Architect, in project design, coordination and management. Under John's guidance, his firm is developing a fresh approach to architectural design and construction delivery.

Anne Gariscsak

Planner, Community Planning
Legislative and Planning Services
Regional Municipality of Halton
anne.gariscsak@halton.ca

Ms. Gariscsak had worked in school board planning for 13 years with the Halton District School Board and most recently as a Planner with Halton Region-Community Planning for the past 10 years. Anne was invited to participate as a Steering Committee member for the Halton District School's Active and Safe Routes to School program in 2009 and from there, helped to initiate a sub- committee to establish "Design guidelines for school site planning and adjacent lands planning", to which she will be speaking today.

Tom Pechkovsky, BES, MCIP, RPP

Manager of Planning Services

York Catholic District School Board

Mr. Pechkovsky is currently the Manager of Planning Services with the York Catholic District School Board and has worked in the field of school board planning for over 17 years. Throughout his career he has served on a number of committees and advisory boards relating to school traffic and safety. In 2008 the York Boards created a joint position of School Traffic Planner intended to evaluate and address school related traffic issues. Tom will be speaking to this initiative and its evolution to a Safe Routes to School Coordinator.

Appendix C: Detailed SWOT Analysis, May 17th, 2012 Forum

Appendix D: PowerPoint Presentaion, May 17th, 2012 Forum