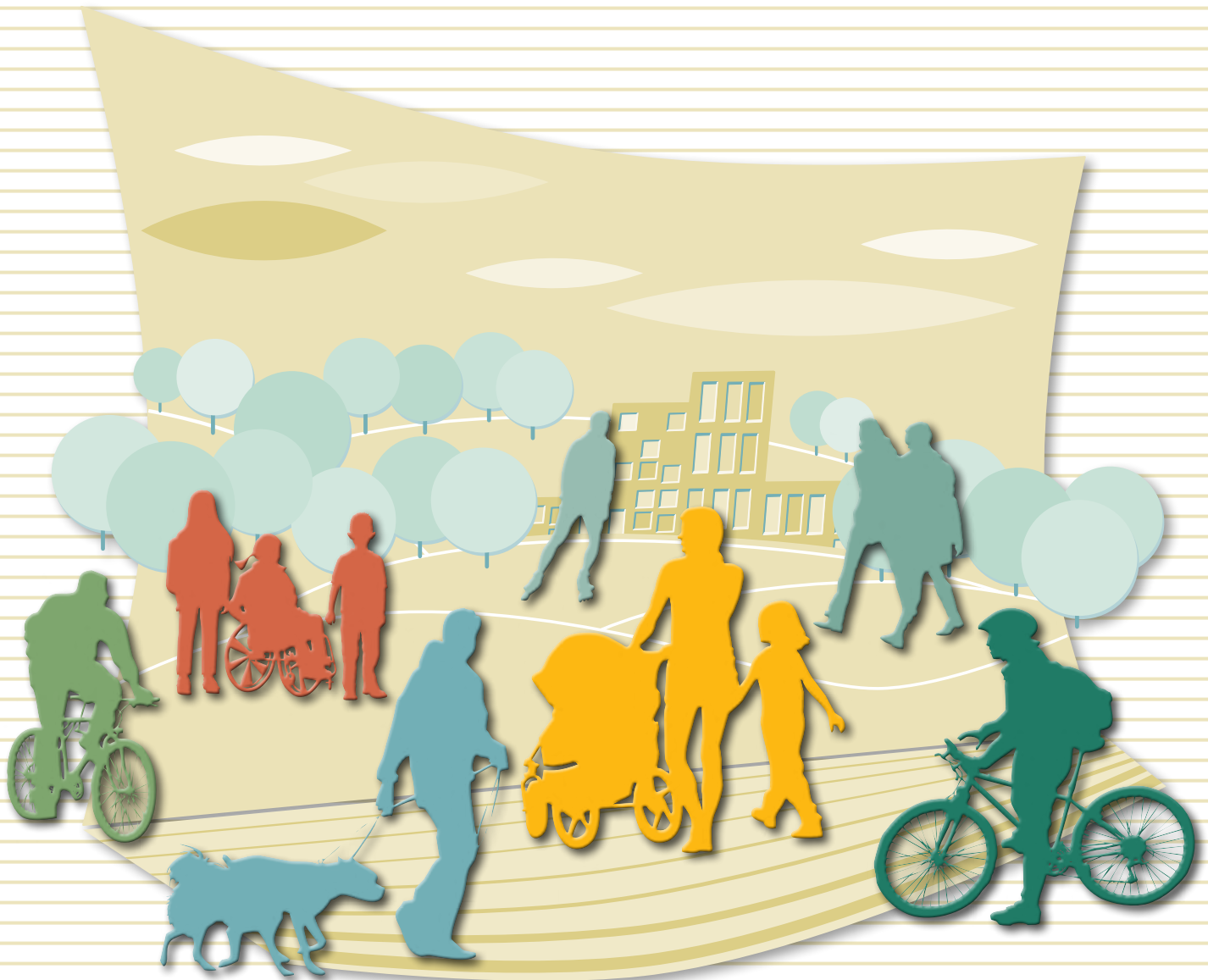


Canadian School Travel Planning Facilitator Guide



Edition 4 - March 2016



www.saferoutestoschool.ca





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Production of this guide has been made possible through a financial contribution from Health Canada, through the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer; and from the Public Health Agency of Canada. The views expressed herein represent the views of Green Communities' Canada Walks and do not necessarily represent the views of the project funders.

The Guide has been updated in March 2016.

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Preamble

The recommended approach to School Travel Planning (STP) and the design of the STP Toolkit are the result of the successes and lessons learned during STP projects that have taken place in Canada since November 2007.

From 2010 to 2012 the project Children’s Health, Mobility and Happiness: A Canadian School Travel Planning Model used Active and Safe Routes to School programming combined with Transportation Demand Management principles to encourage active and sustainable modes of school travel for students, families and staff. The project addressed barriers to active travel caused by attitudes and car-dominant design in school neighbourhoods in an effort to reduce the potential health risk to children at over 120 schools spread across every province and territory in Canada.

Surveys took place before and after the project, to gauge family attitudes and practices concerning the school commute and to see how the students traveled to and from school. Baseline surveys showed that 41% of participating students arrived at school in personal vehicles. Even before many Action Plan items had been fully implemented, by March 2012, Follow-up Surveys showed some provinces saw a shift towards active travel of up to six per cent and some individual schools saw a shift of over 20 per cent.

The final results are found on line at saferoutestoschool.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/CLASP-2012-National-Results.pdf

Results from STP work between 2014-16 demonstrate that the STP program is a cost-effective intervention.

When effectively coordinated and implemented STP can result in positive school travel behaviour change, and ultimately provide substantial economic, environmental and physical activity benefits.

Green Communities work in Ontario shows that the STP model performs well in a variety of community settings – inner city, inner and outer suburbs, and rural. When travel mode data was combined with the actual costs of delivering STP the results were very encouraging: a benefit cost ratio of 2.4 after one year of implementation.



1. Introduction to this Guide and the School Travel Planning Process

This guide and the School Travel Planning (STP) Toolkit resources have been prepared to assist STP Facilitators with taking elementary and middle schools through a comprehensive STP process, in collaboration with community stakeholders. The STP process is designed to help deal with travel-related issues at schools and encourage safe, healthy, active travel to and from school.

The STP process has five phases that are detailed in Section 2 of this guide. They are:

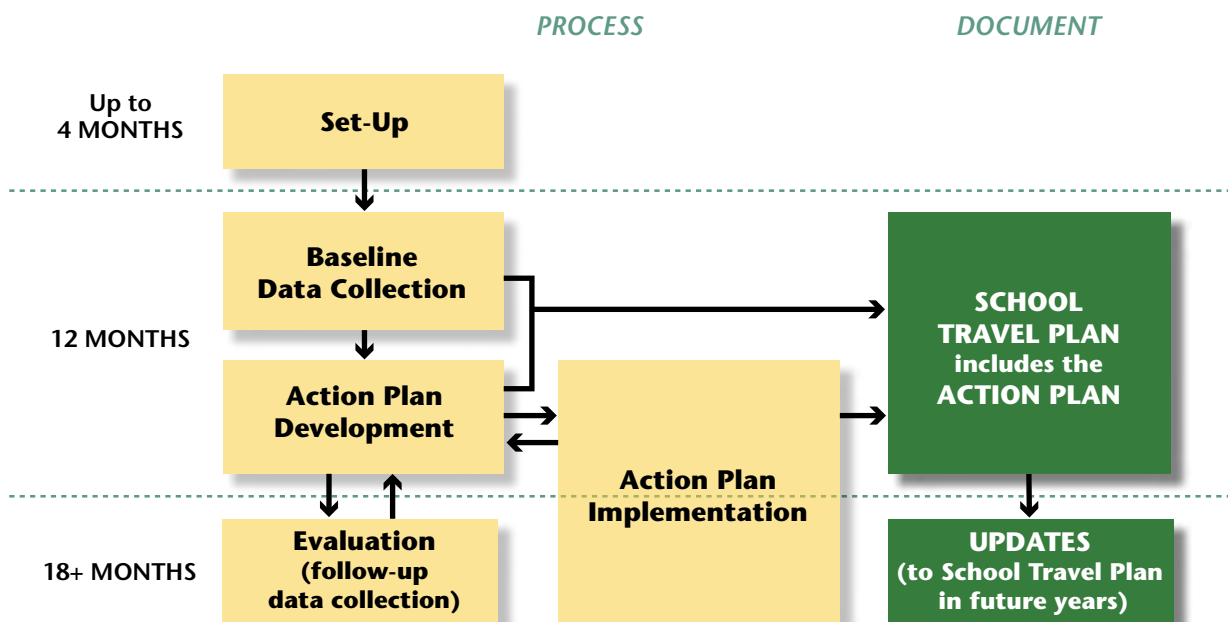
- Set Up
- Baseline Data Collection
- Action Plan Development
- Action Plan Implementation
- Evaluation

Phases do overlap. During Baseline Data Collection, after surveys have taken place, an enthusiastic school will often initiate simple ideas identified on a Walkabout; such as small signage changes that can be made early on. Essentially, Action Plan development and implementation have started. Acting fast on ideas at the outset of the STP process is a great way to capitalize on the new project energy of school champions and community stakeholders.

*A key component of the STP Toolkit is a **School Travel Plan** template that has the essential building blocks, including the Action Plan, all in one place.*

The School Travel Plan is compiled from the start, as the STP process unfolds. It is customized for each school and is a living document to be revisited and updated, every year.

All five phases of the STP process have STP Toolkit resources and flexible templates to assist with every task. They are referenced throughout this guide and are accessible at saferoutestoschool.ca/school-travel-planning-toolkit.





1.1 Benefits

Different stakeholders and champions will focus on those benefits that inspire them or support their daily work. Some include:

Improved physical health

- The annual Canadian ParticipACTION Report Card for children and youth is found at participaction.com. It supports the need to reduce sedentary time and incorporate 60 minutes of physical activity into each day. Daily exercise is linked to numerous benefits including decreased risk of chronic diseases such as cancer, diabetes and cardiovascular disease. The 2015 report card states “The biggest risk is keeping kids indoors.”

Student focus

- Students who have an active morning journey arrive more alert and ready to learn - and studies show they score higher on tests. Physical activity is linked to improved academic performance.

Development of life-long healthy habits

- Using active travel to and from school is an easy and effective way for parents to role-model good practices and help children integrate physical activity into their daily lives. Studies show that fitness habits formed prior to age fourteen lead to greater physical activity and health in adulthood.

Sustainable happiness and well-being

- Active travel allows a child to develop independence, appreciation for natural surroundings and community connectedness and can contribute to sustainable happiness — that is, happiness that contributes to individual, community and/or global well-being and does not exploit other people, the environment, or future generations. For information visit sustainablehappiness.ca.

Environmental benefits

- Reducing vehicles trips lowers emissions, helps improve air quality in local

neighbourhoods and contributes to a decrease in greenhouse gases that are a key ingredient of global climate change. The [Air Quality and Active Travel](#) fact sheet, designed with the input of Environment Canada and Health Canada, makes the links and explains the use of the national Air Quality Health Index found at airhealth.ca.

Improved safety for children and neighbourhoods

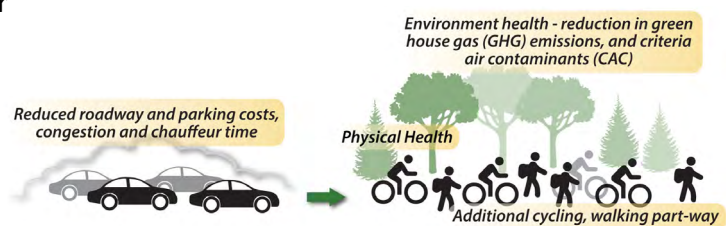
- More walkers mean more ‘eyes on the street.’ Walking or biking groups ensure children are not alone, and in a group they are easier to see in traffic.

Communities easily navigable by all people

- Supportive built environment features (e.g., traffic calming, safe crossings) around schools may encourage more students to use active travel and benefit residents of all ages. Enrique Peñalosa, former Mayor of Bogota, says; “If we can build a successful city for children, we will have a successful city for all people.” Guideline #1 of the *Child and Youth Friendly Land Use and Transportation Planning Guidelines*, states: “In transport and land-use planning, the needs of children and youth should receive as much priority as the needs of people of other ages and the requirements of business.” Communities may be interested in signing the [Active Travel Charter for Children and Youth](#).

Increased benefits, reduced costs

- The coordination of effort between agencies are shown to result in synergies that save time and cost. Supportive results of ground-breaking Canadian studies can be found at saferoutestoschool.ca/solutions-that-work. The STP Toolkit allows evaluation of data to determine the benefit cost ratio of the STP process.



1.2 Keys to Success

The STP Facilitator

- The facilitation role is critical to the success of the STP process: the Facilitators work directly with the schools acting as the liaison with the community STP steering committees. The Facilitators lead the collection of all data (baseline and follow-up), create the school profiles, analyze results and prepare reports, lead the action planning discussions, and create the school travel plans.

Multiple champions

- Are needed at each school to provide the initiative required to get through the process.
- Carry the momentum into subsequent years.

Stakeholders involvement

- Represent a diverse group of community interests to make the process comprehensive and successful.
- Agree to implement relevant action items up front to save time and effort.

School community ownership

- Must own the School Travel Plan; it must be seen as the school's plan, developed by the school community for the benefit of its students.

Incentives for key steps

- Honoraria can emphasize the value of STP work and make it a priority program amongst all those competing for a school's attention and time. Providing honoraria may help to facilitate the collection of follow-up surveys, off-set the cost of teacher release time and make small infrastructure improvements.

The School Travel Plan document

- A reference for each school, in a presentation layout suitable to all stakeholders.
- Helps achieve program sustainability.

A flexible framework

- Allows for links with existing local and regional health and environmental programs.
- Customizes an approach to include provincial and community resources.
- Allows phases to overlap as best suits the community.

AT A GLANCE

There are a choice of customizable components in each phase of STP

Set-up

- **Municipal Stakeholder Committee**
- **Schools chosen and approved**
- **School STP Committees**

Baseline Data Collection

- **School Travel Plans started**
- **Classroom travel surveys**
- **Family surveys**
- **Current active travel routes to school**
- **Walkabout and bikeabout**
- **Traffic observation and traffic count**
- **Summary of findings**
- **STP program costs**

Action Plan Development

- **Education, active travel strategies and infrastructure planning**

Action Plan Implementation

- **Education**
- **Minor infrastructure**
- **Active travel strategies**
- **Walking/biking best routes**
- **Major infrastructure**

Evaluation

- **Annual Classroom Travel Survey**
- **Follow-up Family Survey after significant progress made on Action Plan implementation**
- **Benefit Cost Ratio Analysis**
- **Policy development**
- **School Travel Plan updates**



1.3 Responsibilities of Stakeholders

If you are responsible for recruiting, you may find it helpful to refer to the **Facilitator Job Description** template. School and municipal committee participants in Canada universally agree on the importance of having a person dedicated to leading the School Travel Planning process.

There are typically two committee levels involved in School Travel Planning in Canada—a Municipal Stakeholder Committee (one per municipality or one regional committee, depending on the make-up of the local government) and a School STP Committee (one per school). In some jurisdictions a provincial or territorial level committee has also been set up.

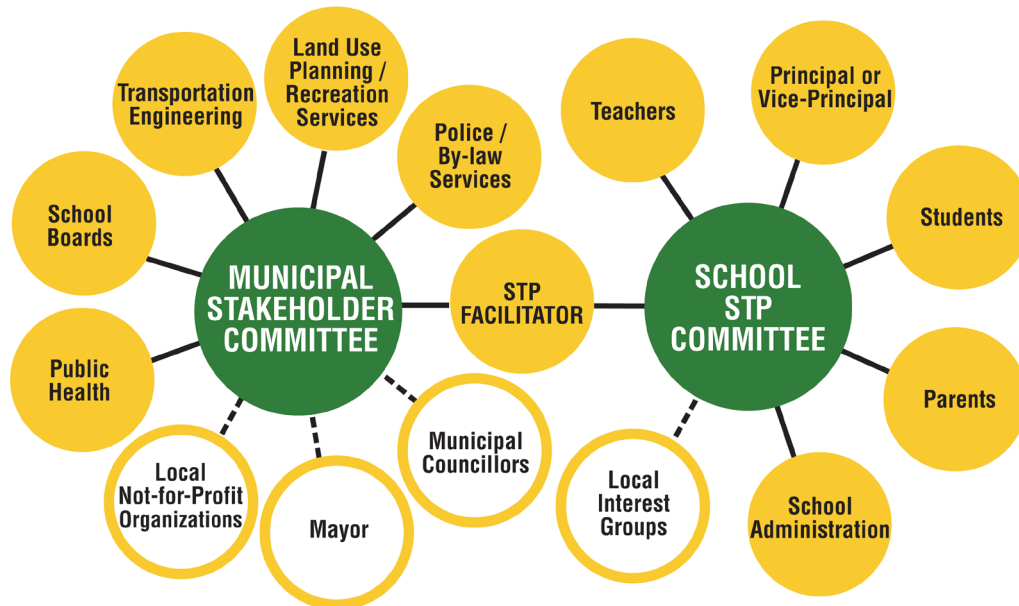
The Municipal Stakeholder Committee (that may be part of an existing committee with active transportation within its mandate) is a high-level group of stakeholders that contribute to the process for multiple schools that fall within their geographic region.

The School STP Committees are local-level groups, each working specifically on a plan for their particular school. This could also be part of an existing health or environmental committee within a school. Sometimes a group of neighbouring schools work together in concert with municipal stakeholders to coordinate strategies and save time.

Both committees should agree to a Terms of Reference found in the **STP Toolkit**. This ensures significant stakeholders are aware of their necessary commitment to the STP project.

Municipal Stakeholder Committee member responsibilities

Municipal staff, e.g. transportation engineer, planner, local councillors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in all Municipal Stakeholder Committee meetings as well as select School STP meetings to provide traffic engineering expertise. • Recommend candidate schools (where possible). • Participate in relevant aspects of data collection. In particular, they must attend the Walkabout and Traffic Observation. They are the logical stakeholder to spearhead the Traffic Count if this takes place. • Provide any relevant historical data, e.g. crash and injury statistics, major arterial road statistics. • Help to develop Action Plans, especially regarding engineering requirements. • Report and make recommendations to Council as needed about STP requirements and policy changes that could become part of the official neighbourhood and community plans. • Ensure engineering improvements recommended in the School Travel Plan document are included in master municipal plans and budgets (e.g. signage and road crossing upgrades; walking, biking and traffic-calming built infrastructure). • Liaise with schools on ongoing basis to address new issues.
School district/board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve school participation in the program (sometimes this involves a formal review by their ethics committee). • Provide information about current travel-related policies, e.g. bussing plans, parking and bike rack requirements for new school sites. • Provide school site plans and dot maps of where students live when possible. • Participate in monitoring and reviewing the School Travel Plan.
Geographic Information System (GIS) expert or mapping person if available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute required maps, e.g. for the baseline Family Survey, School Walkabout, and Traffic Count. • Help develop Best Route to School map education materials.



<p>Police/Bylaw Officers (Enforcement) & Safety Education Police Officers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide crime and/or traffic statistics and highlight areas of concern in the neighbourhood. • Participate in Walkabout. • Assist in the development of the Action Plan. • Participate in traffic safety education and/or personal safety education. • Train and monitor school traffic safety teams, e.g. school crossing patrollers.
<p>Public Health</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take part in the Walkabout. • Contribute ideas for the Action Plan. • Participate in education of parents and students regarding health, wellness, and safety benefits. • Help develop policies in school districts and regions.
<p>Other local educators and community organizations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizations that have similar mandates to STP regarding children’s health and well-being, physical activity or safety, may be useful to have on the Municipal Stakeholder Committee. For example, Block Parents, Community Policing volunteers, CAA, local university researchers, or local NGOs and ENGOS. These groups might carry out Action Plan items. • In some instances, these groups may want to be involved in the STP process but not as part of the committee. In these cases, the Facilitator may meet with them one-on-one to “pick their brains”, while also routinely sending them email information updates and including them on any relevant e-newsletter list.



School STP Committee member responsibilities

School principal or designated project lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate on the School STP Committee. • Supply information to the STP Facilitator for the School Profile. • Help with relevant aspects of data collection (e.g. distribution of surveys, reminders about deadlines, submission of finished surveys to STP Facilitator, participating in the Walkabout, communicating to parents). • Contribute ideas for the Action Plan. • Champion Action Plan initiatives. • Review the Action Plan. • Sign off on the School Travel Plan. • Communicate STP updates in school newsletters and websites.
Parent Council Executive or Parent representative(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in School STP Committee meetings. • Participate in the Walkabout and Traffic Observation. • Help conduct the Traffic Count if one takes place. • Contribute ideas for the Action Plan. • Champion Action Plan initiatives. • Provide STP updates for school newsletters and websites.
Other school staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data collection, e.g. administer the Classroom Travel Survey. • Link the program to curriculum, i.e. through math, geography, art, drama, writing, etc. • Distribute STP resources and communications. • Educate on safety, health and wellness and active travel benefits.
Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graphically portray classroom travel survey data. • Partake in a Walkabout and Traffic Observation. • Represent those with different mobility needs, such as wheelchair use. • Develop and implement action items, e.g. lead Walking School Buses, organize active travel promotion and events. • Participate on the School STP Committee.



2. The Five Phases; Objectives and Recommended Steps

2.1 Set-up Phase

Objectives

1. **Identify interested municipalities and establish a Municipal Stakeholder Committee in each.**
2. **Select schools and establish a School STP Committee for each.**
3. **Establish timeline.**
4. **Notify school community about project.**

Recommended steps

1. **Identify interested municipalities and establish a Municipal Stakeholder Committee in each.**
 - Choose potential municipalities and approach key decision makers to gauge the level of interest, commitment and resources available for the project. The key decision makers are likely to be transportation planning and engineering managers or municipal councillors. Resources available to assist with this step are a:
 - **Briefing for Decision Makers**
 - **Slide Deck for Stakeholders**
 - Select the municipalities that will participate in STP.
 - Develop a list of relevant stakeholders for each chosen municipality. Make contact with stakeholders; provide information about the project including clarification of roles and responsibilities, and invite them to join the Municipal Stakeholder Committee.

AT A GLANCE

TEMPLATES to use when establishing committees

To share with both committees

- **School Travel Plan**

For the Municipal Stakeholder Committee

- **Municipal Committee Statement of Support**
- **School Board Ethics Committee Review Submission**
- **Municipal Committee Terms of Reference**
- **Introduction for Professionals**

For the School STP Committee

- **School Agreement**
- **School Committee Terms of Reference**
- **Introduction for Teachers**
- **Introduction for Parents**

The **Introduction for Professionals** and the **Child and Youth Friendly Land Use and Transport Planning Guidelines (Guidelines)** are useful documents

- If school boards/districts express concerns about the liability issues of being involved, you can refer them to the **Risk Management and Active School Travel** document found in the STP Toolkit.
- Secure stakeholders' commitment to the project with the signing of the **Municipal Committee Statement of Support**.
- Be sure to secure any approvals required from School Boards—this may require you to submit information for review by an ethics committee, which can be a time-consuming process. A useful template is the **School Board Ethics Committee Review Submission**.
- Identify the roles each committee member will play and develop the **Municipal Committee Terms of Reference**.



Establish a School

STP Committee for each.

- Have the Municipal Stakeholder Committee members recommend schools that would benefit from School Travel Planning. Gather any pertinent information about the nominated schools to prepare for contacting the schools e.g. location (rural/urban), school type (French Immersion/Special Programs), existing travel issues.
- Contact the principal at potential schools and discuss the benefits of participating in School Travel Planning.
- Share with the principal the *School Travel Plan* template to help explain the framework within which steps will be achieved. You may also provide the *Introduction for Teachers* and the *School Committee Terms of Reference*.
- Follow up with the principal to answer any questions and determine next steps in gaining commitment to the project. Parents are critical stakeholders and the *Introduction for Parents* is prepared with that idea in mind.
- Once the principal has agreed to proceed, have her/him sign the *School Agreement*.
- Recruit members for the School STP Committee.
- Some of the approaches used by Canadian STP Facilitators to recruit School STP Committee members include:
 - *Present to established school groups, e.g. parent council.*
 - *Host an exclusive STP information session and promote it via the school newsletter.*
 - *Speak directly to school staff.*
- Finalize the *School Committee Terms of Reference*.

SCHOOL SELECTION CRITERIA

The STP process and tools described in this guide particularly suit:

- **Elementary or middle (K – grade 8)**
In a community where STP is a new concept, ideal schools to start with are:
 - **Enthusiastic about participating**
 - **Prepared to contribute in-kind staff and parent time**
 - **Connected by routes to school that have the potential to be made safe for active travel from**
 - home
 - partway, or
 - via transit.
 - **Located in municipalities that are prepared to commit to making STP a priority** and to provide funding for engineering measures that might be required.

Regarding language:

Schools that serve families who do not speak English or French will need to secure funds to translate surveys and parent communication materials for the process to be most effective. Alternatively, some schools that serve a population with many diverse languages address the situation by asking students to verbally translate materials for parents.

This guidebook and the STP Toolkit are available in English and French.



TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE MEETINGS

Organization: Have a set agenda and circulate it and any necessary information before the meeting. Take detailed minutes (or have a designated minute-taker do so) and distribute the minutes promptly after each meeting, inviting meeting participants to advise you of corrections or omissions needed. Because it can be challenging to schedule group meetings, it is advised that at the first meeting you set up a schedule for the rest of the year and send out a reminder closer to each meeting date.

Handling Interpersonal Conflict: In some cases, the School Travel Planning process is undertaken at a school where problems have been known for a long time but not addressed. Sometimes there are strong opinions about what needs to happen, and strong feelings about who is responsible for past inaction. STP Facilitators must, in such cases, act as a bridge between disparate stakeholder groups—helping overcome resistance and maintaining a positive group dynamic.

Preliminary Discussions: It can be helpful to have preliminary discussions with individual committee members so that they are well informed prior to group meetings. For example, if a report highlights the need for major infrastructure change, it is important to give the municipal traffic engineer time to prepare.

Refreshments: To keep everyone comfortable and happy, it can be a good idea to provide refreshments. If you do not have the budget to cover refreshments on a regular basis, you might find that stakeholders are happy to cover this expense, perhaps taking turns so that no single group incurs a large expense.

Follow up: Be sure to touch base with committee members before the next meeting to remind them of any outstanding action items.



3. Establish a timeline.

Experience has shown that the ideal timeline (Timeline 1 in table on next page) may be delayed; set up could take longer and in the meantime a school's circumstance could change, possibly resulting in a change to the STP timeline.

Use the Timeline of Main Tasks section in your School Travel Plan to set goals for when the main STP tasks will be completed. Planning the timing of the STP work up front ensures stakeholders are aware of when they will be needed to participate in tasks, and allows school events to be integrated into the process. For example, presenting at a planned parent-teacher evening ensures a maximum number of parents (and students) are involved.

There are certain times of year that are better for working with schools. The next table looks at two possible timelines.

		RECOMMENDED TIMELINE 1	EXAMPLE ALTERNATE TIMELINE 2
SET-UP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Municipal Stakeholder Committee established Schools chosen School STP Committees established School Travel Plan started 		April	August
BASELINE DATA COLLECTION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Classroom Survey Family Survey School Walkabout Data analyzed, presented Goals set School Travel Plan finalized 	ACTION PLAN DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION	June - September	October - November
		October	January
		November	February
EVALUATION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow-up Classroom Survey School Travel Plan update Further Action Items Follow-up Family Survey Data analysis and presentation School Travel Plan Update 	ACTION PLAN DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION	June	(Next school year) Fall term
		(Next school year)	
		October	January
		November	February
		April	May

4. Notify school community about project.

This step is about informing the wider community of the School Travel Plan and the part they will play in its development (such as completing Family Surveys, providing their current active travel route to school). Communication options include the following:

- School newsletter and website.* Some schools will use their existing newsletter and/or website as the vehicle for informing parents about the School Travel Plan project. The **Introduction for Parents** can usefully be advertised this way and the **School Newsletter Articles** tool is a helpful reference. Some schools have active parent councils that maintain their own websites, newsletters and regular electronic bulletins that families subscribe to with password access.
- Special meeting/presentation:* This can be useful to announce the project, introducing the goals and main components along with an outline of what to expect.
- Regular school event (e.g. parent-teacher night, parent council meeting):* Piggybacking on an existing school event that involves parents can be a useful way to interact with parents and raise awareness of the project.
- Media coverage:* Take advantage of any opportunities that arise throughout the project to raise awareness of School Travel Planning. STP Facilitators have taken part in school social events or bike rodeos. One key strategy for raising awareness of the STP project with the entire community is through press coverage. Be sure to submit press releases to your local or provincial/territorial media on a regular basis throughout the project, notifying key media contacts about what's going on, e.g. announcing the project launch, sharing baseline data highlights, and celebrating implementation successes. See **Media Tips**.

2.2 Baseline Data Collection Phase

Objectives

1. Complete the School Profile and establish a Timeline of Main Tasks.
2. Use surveys and maps to gather information about the school and its transportation and safety issues.
3. Collate and analyze the survey information collected.
4. Gather information on a Walkabout and have optional Traffic Counts.
5. Incorporate key findings in the School Travel Plan, and share results.
6. Collect costs for benefit cost analysis (optional).

Recommended steps

1. Complete the School Profile and establish a Timeline of Main Tasks
 - In the *School Travel Plan* template:
 - a. complete the School Profile with input from the school principal.
 - b. include final baseline data collection dates on the Timeline of Main Tasks page.

AT A GLANCE

TEMPLATES to use for: Data Collection

- School Profile (in School Travel Plan)
- Classroom Travel Survey
- Baseline Family Survey
- Walkabout Instruction and Checklist
- Traffic Observation and Count

Data Entry

- Classroom Travel Survey Data Entry Tool
- Classroom Survey Summary Graphs and Instructions
- Online Data Collection and Entry Instruction
- Family Survey Data Entry Tool
- Family Survey Data Entry Manual
- Benefit Cost Analysis Individual School Tool

TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL SURVEYING

Make the process easy for schools: If you have the budget, offer to make the copies needed, although schools may find it simple to do this themselves. A committee member might be able to provide a large map that can be displayed at the school upon which parents and students can draw their routes.

Advertise widely: Ensure parents are aware of where to find the online survey link, and remind them of this a few days before the due date. This will help ensure greater participation numbers and you'll have fewer paper responses to enter online.

Suggest schools offer incentives: To increase response rates for the Family Survey, suggest that schools offer an extra recess or a swim pass to a local pool if a return rate higher than 50% or 75% is achieved. Your municipal committee stakeholders can help suggest an appropriate incentive.

2. Use surveys and maps to gather information about the school and its transportation and safety issues.

- Customize the *Classroom Travel Survey* for each school.
- Have teachers conduct the survey with a show of hands from their students over five consecutive days, tracking transportation mode to and from school.



Classroom Travel Survey

Please complete the two questions in this survey, with _____ school name _____ students standing up or raising hands.
Grade: _____ Room/Class #: _____ Number of Students: _____ Teacher: _____ Dates: From _____ Day / Month / Year _____ To _____ Day / Month / Year _____

1. Ask: "How did you travel TO school this morning?" Ask each mode separately and fill in the number of students (one mode per student).

	Weather: Dry, OK Precipitation	Temp. in degrees C	WALK	WALK PARTWAY See Note ¹	BICYCLE	SCHOOL BUS	PUBLIC TRANSIT bus, train, ferry	CARPOL 2 or more families sharing	CAR just my family all the way to school or TAXI	OTHER e.g. scooter, skateboard, rollerblades	Mobility for disabilities e.g. wheelchair	Total
Mon												
Tues												
Wed												
Thurs												
Fri												

2. Ask: "How will you travel FROM school today?" Ask each mode separately and fill in the number of students (one mode per student).

Mon												
Tues												
Wed												
Thurs												
Fri												

Note: ¹ PARTWAY is from marked car or last one entire block. Circles with "X" in the school counts. <http://www.schulplanning.ca/resources/2016/02/01/2016-02-01-01>



- Decide if your families will have the option to answer a survey ONLINE or PAPER ONLY. Using an online method will reduce the amount of paper required and make data entry and analysis far less time-consuming. If you choose to offer online and paper you will still save time because it is easy to enter the paper responses into the online survey.
- Customize the **Baseline Family Survey** letter for your school. This survey provides important information about the distance students live from school, how they usually get to/from school, barriers to active transportation, parental attitudes on modal choice and safety concerns on common routes. Questions also explore the relationship between school travel choice and happiness and well-being. NOTE: For the data to match online collection, it is essential that you do NOT alter the wording of any questions and do NOT delete any questions. ONLINE
 - a. Request your unique school online links for the Baseline Family Survey from Green Communities Canada (asrts@greencommunitiescanada.org). You will be sent two links.
 - *Parent Link, the ONLY link for public sharing.*
 - *Data Entry Link.*
 - b. TEST the Parent Link before you send it out on letters or distribute on school websites. Please ensure all online distribution occurs only on secured websites.
- Prepare a map that can be sent home and can be made available for downloading and printing from the school website. The map must have the school's location clearly marked. It is important that the maps used are clear, detailed, and well-labelled. NOTE: The map must also have a scale bar for families to estimate the distance along their route to school. If your municipality or regional district is providing the map they might be able to add concentric distance rings that provide an easy distance-from-school visual. Otherwise, you might be able to get a map from your school board or find your own map online. Remember to add the scale bar!

- Have Baseline Family Survey letters and maps sent home to each family, asking they be returned to the school one week later. If you are providing the paper option of the survey, send that home too.
- If no family surveying is taking place, provide a large map at the school upon which parents and students can draw their routes to school.

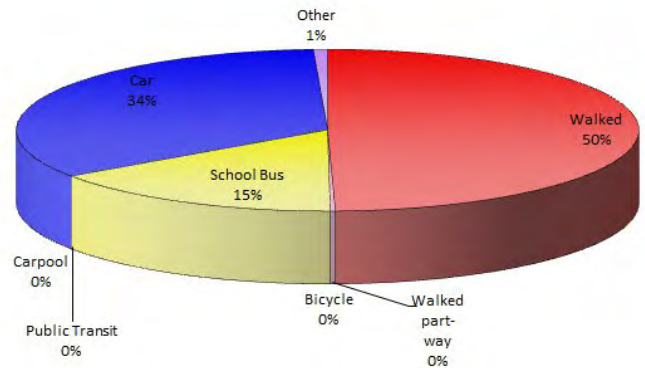


3. Collate and analyze the survey information collected.

- Complete data entry and analysis of Classroom Travel Surveys.
 - a. Since it is a fairly quick task to enter the results of the surveys and generate summary graphs, the STP Facilitators usually handle it. If volunteers are recruited, be sure they have great attention to detail, so that you can be confident your data is accurate. Enter the data into the Excel, **Classroom Travel Survey Data Entry Tool**.
 - b. Use graphs for easy sharing of mode share numbers with each school and municipal stakeholders. They are simple to generate using the Excel tool **Classroom Travel Survey Summary Graphs and Instructions**.
 - c. Place the summary graphs into the School Travel Plan.
- Complete data entry and analysis of Family Surveys.

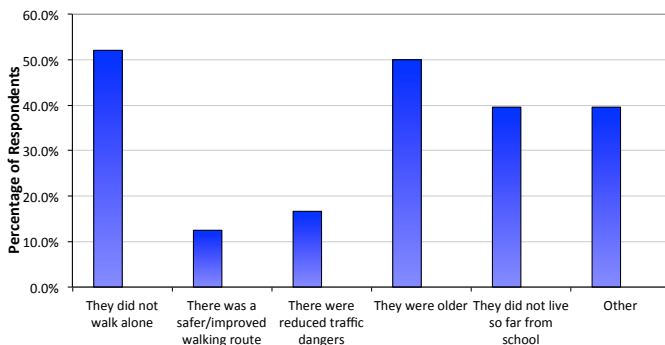
ONLINE

- a. Easy to follow steps are laid out in the **Online Data Collection and Entry Instruction**. This explains how and when to use the Data Entry Link provided to you by Green Communities Canada.
- b. Online data is pasted into the **Family Survey Data Entry Tool**.



PAPER ONLY

- a. Keep in mind that whoever enters the data needs to be skilled in Excel. Allocate approximately one week to complete data entry if using the paper-only method of data survey collection; a task that may be done by municipal staff, senior high school or college students, school staff, parents or the facilitator.
 - b. Provide the **Family Survey Data Entry Tool** and **Family Survey Data Entry Manual** to the assigned data entry person.
- The facilitator should monitor the process to ensure accurate data entry takes place.
 - Extract graphs from the completed data, an easy process using the Family Survey Data Entry Tool that also allows comparison between baseline and follow-up data on the same graph. Particularly useful baseline graphs will be the ones your committees need to consider when creating an Action Plan. For example, you might want to use graphs that show:
 - *Comparison of transportation mode chosen in am vs pm.*
 - *Main reasons for driving.*
 - *Distance to school.*
 - *I would allow my child to walk to school if...*



- Place graphs into the “Baseline Data Collection - summary of findings” section of your School Travel Plan.
- Review your filed Family Survey Data Entry Tool for the map-related answers. The recorded information can provide an individual profile of use and problems on the roads and streets near the school. You can identify the:
 - *Problem intersections.*
 - *Other hazards or safety concerns.*
- It is helpful to develop a Top Ten list of concerns.
- Use a map to locate concerns and share with your committees. It is helpful input for determining your walkabout route.
- Be sure to contact any parents who indicated a desire to be involved, and determine how to meaningfully include them in the project.
- Safely file the Family Survey Data Entry Tool to use again to enter and process the Follow-up Family Survey data at a later date.

4. Gather information on a Walkabout, and have optional Traffic Counts.

- Conduct a Walkabout. This data collection tool is critical because it gets stakeholders to take the time to actually walk through the neighbourhood surrounding the school, viewing the journey through a child’s eyes. By doing so, stakeholders develop a better understanding of the issues being faced by students and their families. The **Walkabout Instruction and Checklist** may be used for this event. Items for action are often



identified on the day of the Walkabout and then they can be recorded along with a task person in the Action Plan section of the School Travel Plan.

- Conduct a Traffic Observation and a Traffic Count, which involve stationing people at each entrance to the school to track items such as: number of pedestrians/cyclists/vehicles arriving via that entrance, unsafe behaviour such as illegal parking or U-turns, unsafe crossing of roads by pedestrians, etc. Depending on the support personnel you have this may be a traffic observation exercise only or it may include a traffic count, on one or more days. Available to assist is the **Traffic Observation and Count** template.
- A full week-long traffic count yields extremely valuable information; however, even a 3-day traffic count (which would be the minimum recommended) is quite labour-intensive, requiring many people to observe and count for 30+ minutes at both the beginning and end of each school day. If you have the budget for it, you may want to offer honoraria to volunteers if available. Some STP Facilitators have had success recruiting eager college or university students studying geography, planning or environmental studies to help with this task. Municipal transportation departments will have established systems and forms for collecting traffic count information and may prefer to use their own approach.
- Both a Bikeabout in an appropriate neighbourhood and a Busabout in a rural setting could be useful at your school.

CURRICULUM LINKS

Schools often choose to use the STP survey process as a learning opportunity for their students.

Senior students may gain much from a practical application of their knowledge when calculating averages, percentages and graphing responses by class and/or school-wide.

Students may also enjoy conducting their own Walkabout, or mapping out common routes and barriers.

Students may also create artwork that addresses issues raised in the survey process such as traffic speed, idling vehicles, pedestrian safety, or that encourages driving families to walk all or partway to school.



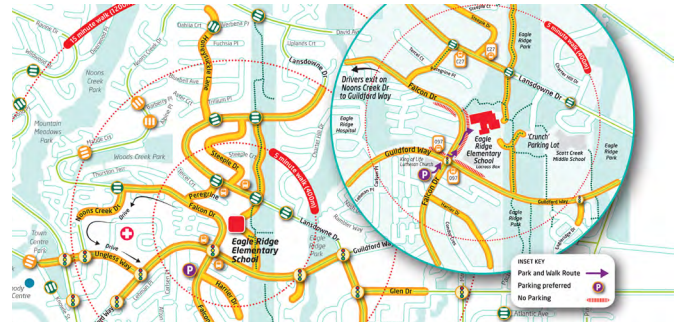
Green Communities' Canada Walks strives to provide a strong base of carefully researched curriculum links that coordinate School Travel Planning activities and principles with curriculum outcomes for each province and territory. An example is:

Sustainable Happiness and Health Education Teacher's Guide available with companion resources at sustainablehappiness.ca.

5. Incorporate key findings in the School Travel Plan, and share the results.

- Once you have reviewed the collected data, record summary findings. Elements you could include in your School Travel Plan are:
 - a. Method. Outline the purpose, how the data was collected and the response rates.
 - b. Modes of travel. Summarize these, and the percentage of children using each mode. Graphs work well for this.
 - c. Danger spots / key sites. Summarize the key locations of concern and describe the issues. Maps and photos are useful here.
 - d. Action points to be addressed. List suggested issues for the Committee to discuss and include in the Action Plan.
- A Sample Walkabout Report and School Travel Plans with Walkabout summaries are in the **STP Toolkit** under Phase 5.
- Circulate the summary findings section of the School Travel Plan to both STP Committees.
- It is highly recommended that highlights, including key graphs documented in the baseline findings section be shared with parents.
- If there are any stakeholders in the wider community who might have an interest in the school's transportation issues, they should also receive a copy of the summary findings along with an invitation to submit any feedback or Action Plan ideas for consideration. For example, nearby businesses that have parking issues with parents, or community centres that use the same walking paths may have an interest.
- The key findings can be referred to when developing Walking School Bus routes and a Best Routes to School map.
- To develop comprehensive Best Routes to School maps it is necessary to collect other information that helps determine the routes including: neighbourhood clusters of family homes; suitable walking and biking facilities for families; speed, volume and type of vehicle traffic on roads; personal safety considerations; air quality and a natural and interesting environment for children. For further

information please see the section on Best Route to School Mapping in the **Action Plan Inspiration Guide**.



6. Collect costs for benefit cost analysis.

The Toolkit provides Excel tools for this optional activity. If the Municipal Stakeholder Committee agrees to do this work, make sure to start right at the program outset so no cost details are forgotten and follow the instructions on the Information tab.

- There is a **Benefit Cost Analysis Individual School** tool into which three sets of data are entered and generated:
 1. travel mode share at baseline and follow-up.
 2. benefits from increased walking, increased cycling and less driving — these are automatically generated for you.
 3. cost of people and materials. A Configuration tab gives monetary values you may use to enter costs for each school.
- The Facilitator is responsible for:
 - a. entering the travel mode share that has been collected with Classroom Travel Surveys, and
 - b. entering the costs

At the end of your STP project a benefit cost ratio is automatically generated in the summary tab. The data of up to 20 schools can be entered into the **Benefit Cost Analyses Multiple Schools** tool to automatically generate a benefit cost ratio for all your schools.

An infographic on a **Benefit Cost Ratio Information Sheet** illustrates a successful Ontario study.



2.3 Action Plan Development Phase

Objectives

1. **Write an Action Plan.**
2. **Consult with stakeholders about the Action Plan.**
3. **Complete the School Travel Plan and have stakeholders approve it.**

Recommended steps

1. Write an Action Plan.

- A customizable Action Plan for each school is found in the School Travel Plan you have started to compile. You are likely to have initiated an Action Plan at the stakeholder meeting held after the Walkabout. It may take a few meetings over a period of a couple of months to discuss the issues and fully develop the Action Plan. Be sure to arrive at any meeting prepared with detailed notes about Action Plan items that came up during previous meetings/discussions.
- As a group, prioritize problem areas and potential solutions and choose the items that will be included in the Action Plan. To assist in solutions brainstorming we created an **Action Plan Inspiration Guide** that details real life examples from communities and schools across Canada.
- As issues and solutions are determined by the committees, the STP Facilitator is expected to update the Action Plan.
- If your budget (and timeline) permits, you might want to organize a regional symposium that brings together representatives from the Municipal Stakeholder Committee and representatives from multiple schools to network and brainstorm solutions together. Alternately, a local stakeholder might be able to arrange interactive webinars.
- Explore all possible solutions including engineering, education, encouragement, enforcement and policy strategies. It is important to consider the broader community and road environment, and not to focus solely on the area immediately around the school.

- Make sure that Action Plan items are clear, measurable (if possible), realistic, address who is responsible, and have a deadline.
- It is absolutely necessary to be in touch and provide resources so that momentum can build within the school. How much you are able to do will depend on how many schools you are expected to work with at any given time and on the travel time for getting to the schools.
- Some facilitators have the capacity to take a very hands-on role in the schools, e.g. leading kick-off assemblies, coordinating student activities, conducting safety training, and/or overseeing student active transportation clubs. Other facilitators provide suggestions about these types of actions but leave the responsibility for implementing these ideas to others on the team.
- It is necessary to identify school champions to continue momentum beyond the first year when the facilitator takes a less active role in STP at that school.

2. Consult with stakeholders about the Action Plan.

- This step can be as simple as notifying the school community that the draft Action Plan is available and inviting interested people to request a copy and provide feedback. Alternately, a more structured approach can be taken — a feedback period of three to four weeks is recommended. **Seeking buy-in at this stage is crucial to successful implementation.**
- Continue to update the Action Plan section of the School Travel Plan as necessary, based on feedback from the school community.



IDEAS FOR SEEKING COMMUNITY INPUT

Create an Action Plan summary and distribute it to all parents, interested businesses and school neighbours, encouraging them to provide feedback. For example, list key action items and place “YES” and “NO” check-boxes beside each to indicate support (or not) for the initiative.

Create a display using photos of key issues along with the recommended Action Plan items for dealing with the issues. Publicize the display and ideally showcase it during a school event such as a parent-teacher evening. Provide a simple feedback mechanism such as green sticky dots for agreement and red sticky dots for disagreement so that the parents can easily record their feedback directly on the display.

Remember to seek the input of all parents and the wider school community as well as any stakeholders that were not active in the development of the plan (but ideally should have been). It will be difficult to implement an Action Plan that contains tasks assigned to a stakeholder who has not agreed beforehand to carry out the tasks.

3. Complete the School Travel Plan and have stakeholders approve it.

- Once the Action Plan is finalized, your School Travel Plan is almost ready for sign-off by lead stakeholders. One more meeting might be required to discuss ongoing monitoring and updates in future years. For a sample of a completed School Travel Plan, look under Phase 5 in the *STP Toolkit*.
- Circulate the School Travel Plan to committee members for review. Incorporate any feedback and obtain the committee lead signatures.



2.4 Action Plan Implementation Phase

Objectives

- Facilitate the implementation of Action Plan items.
- Inform the school community of the impact of implemented strategies.

Recommended steps

- Facilitate the implementation of Action Plan items.
 - Implementation of short-term items such as signage changes, curriculum resource sharing and the set up of walk to school days may start very soon after baseline data has been collected. Ensure to communicate all actions to stakeholders, record implementation dates in the Action Plan section of the School Travel Plan, and create celebration opportunities where they are warranted and welcomed.
 - Announce the completion of the School Travel Plan, e.g. through school newsletters, bulletin boards, school website, presentations at parent council meetings, and/or media releases. Some schools choose to launch their plan to the community by holding an event (often during a regular assembly) with key stakeholders present to mingle with parents, residents and other community or business members impacted by the plan.
 - Oversee the implementation process.
 - Undertake any of the Action Plan items you are responsible to implement.
 - Coordinate ongoing committee meetings. The School STP Committee will need to meet regularly to monitor progress and discuss/solve any problems that have arisen with particular Action Plan items.
 - Identify and remove obstacles to Action Plan implementation—troubleshoot.



TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION

Don't be discouraged if things do not proceed exactly as planned during implementation. It often takes longer than expected to implement some Action Plan items, particularly those tasks that require input from other groups such as municipal councils or school boards; for example, some municipalities have very long wait lists for new sidewalk construction. Be patient, but persistent.

Consider safety when prioritizing implementation. For example, do not begin encouraging walkers to use routes in need of safety-related infrastructure upgrades until that infrastructure work is complete. Safety is always the key consideration and some interim measures, such as adult-led walking groups and park and walk a block, may help make a route safer than it was until built upgrades can take place.

As the end of year one approaches, it is integral to the School Travel Planning process that the STP Facilitator prepare the school to address future travel issues with less reliance on the facilitator's involvement.

2. **Inform the school community of the impact of implemented strategies.**

- Celebrating milestones in the implementation process can maintain visibility of and enthusiasm for the School Travel Plan and to retain interest by recognizing people's input. These celebrations can be large or small, e.g. an article in the school newsletter announcing the completion of a task, an article in the community newspaper, a special school event, or a large event involving a cluster of schools. In addition to describing any completed action items, be sure to emphasize the impact those changes will have on students, parents, school staff and the wider community.



2.5 Evaluation Phase

Objectives

1. **Conduct follow-up data collection.**
2. **Compile and analyze the data.**
3. **Communicate successes locally.**
4. **Update the School Travel Plan and monitor changes.**
5. **Communicate results and lessons learned.**

Recommended steps

1. **Conduct follow-up data collection.**
 - Have teachers conduct the Classroom Travel Survey with their students over five consecutive days, tracking transportation mode to and from school (Use the same **Classroom Travel Survey** template as in baseline). It is recommended this first follow-up classroom survey take place one year after baseline was conducted, in order to compare before and after numbers under similar weather conditions and school calendar events. This simple survey can be carried out again in subsequent years.
 - Decide if your families will have the option to answer a survey ONLINE or PAPER ONLY.
 - Complete the Follow-up Family Survey process.
 - a. Customize the parent letter in the **Follow-Up Family Survey** template for your school and ONLY edit the yellow areas. Unlike at baseline, this survey will not include a map.
 - b. After a few Action Plan items have been implemented, send home the Follow-Up Family Surveys, due one week later. It is advised this take place after the Classroom Travel Survey in order to allow a little more time for Action Plan items to have an effect and so engage busy parents at a time that it is most worthwhile of their attention. Schools may want to consider offering an incentive or prize to improve response rates.

ONLINE preparation

- a. As in the baseline data collection phase, refer to the **Online Data Collection and Entry Instruction**.

2. Compile and analyze the data.

- Complete data entry and analysis of Classroom Travel Surveys.
 - a. As at baseline it is a fairly quick task to enter the results and generate summary graphs. STP Facilitators usually handle this task. Data from this survey may be entered into the Excel **Classroom Travel Survey Data Entry Tool**.
 - b. Create graphs showing key data for each school similar to those you created for the baseline data; but this time include comparisons between the baseline and follow-up results.
 - c. Update your School Travel Plan Evaluation section with these graphs.
- Complete data entry and analysis of Family Surveys.
- Data is entered into the filed **Family Survey Data Entry Tool** Excel sheet that already contains the school’s baseline data.
- Generate graphs that compare baseline to follow-up, from the Family Survey Data Entry Tool.
- Enter the most relevant graphs for your school’s needs into the Evaluation section of the School Travel Plan.
- Use the graphs in presentations to Mayor and council, school boards, committees, school parent councils, and any other interested organizations.
- Enter follow-up travel mode data into the **Benefit Cost Analysis Individual School Tool** — if data for this exercise was collected. Generate the Benefit Cost Ratio for one school or up to 20 schools using the **Benefit Cost Analyses Multiple Schools Tool**.

3. Communicate successes locally.

Keep the school community informed about any key information that comes out of the follow-up data collection, i.e. through school newsletters, school websites or local media.

4. Update the School Travel Plan and monitor changes.

- Once the initial School Travel Plan is written, it will need to be revisited and updated on a regular basis. Regular, but less frequent, meetings will need to be held by the committees. Implementation will continue. Completed Action Plan items will be checked off with a completion date and new ideas will be added to the Action Plan.
- Follow-up data collection should ideally be conducted every year using the Classroom Travel Survey. The Walkabout and Traffic Observation and Counts are also very useful to conduct periodically, perhaps once every other year. Ideally, by this stage, the Facilitator will have greatly diminished his or her role with this school and any ongoing data collection will be coordinated by the School STP Committee. In some cases the Facilitator will continue overseeing this task.

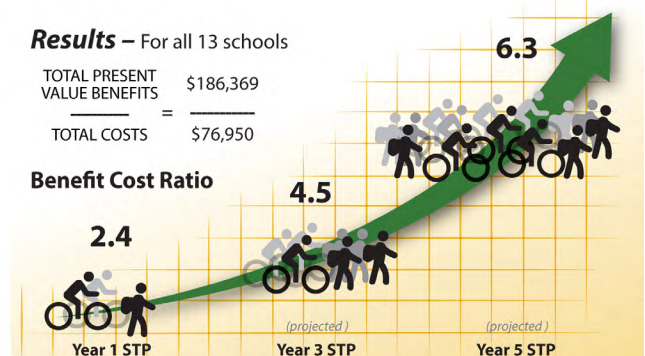
5. Communicate results and lessons learned.

- Share your successes with Green Communities’ Canada Walks. STP Facilitators are encouraged to submit news of policy changes, and event photos and articles for a national newsletter (asrts@greencommunitiescanada.org).

Results – For all 13 schools

TOTAL PRESENT VALUE BENEFITS	\$186,369	
TOTAL COSTS	\$76,950	=

Benefit Cost Ratio



3. Resources

3.1 Online Toolkit

On-line access for Toolkit documents is at:

saferoutestoschool.ca/school-travel-planning/school-travel-planning-toolkit

Program Set-up

- Slide Deck for Stakeholders
- Facilitator Job Description
- Briefing for Decision Makers

Municipal Stakeholder STP Process

- Municipal Statement of Support
- Municipal Terms of Reference
- School Board Ethics Committee Review Submission
- Introduction for Professionals

School Stakeholder Committee

- School Agreement
- School Committee Terms of Reference
- School Travel Plan (Includes the Action Plan)
- Introduction for Parents
- Introduction for Teachers

Data Collection and Evaluation

Student

- Classroom Travel Survey
- Classroom Travel Survey Data Entry Tool
- Classroom Travel Survey Graphs and Instructions

Family

- Baseline Family Survey
- Follow-up Family Survey
- Online Data Collection and Entry Instructions
- Family Survey Data Entry Tool
- Family Survey Data Entry Manual

Walkabout and Traffic Observation

- Walkabout Instruction and Checklist
- Traffic Observation and Count

Benefit Cost Analysis

- Benefit Cost Analysis Individual School Tool
- Benefit Cost Analyses Multiple Schools Tool
- Benefit Cost Analysis Information Sheet
- School Travel Planning Benefit-Cost Report

Communication and Education

- School Newsletter Articles
- Media Tips
- Action Plan Inspiration Guide
- Air Quality and Healthy Active Travel
- Active Travel Charter for Children and Youth
- Sustainable Happiness and Health Education Teacher's Guide
- Photo Archive
- Parent Testimonials
- Risk Management and Active School Travel
- School Travel Plan Logo Style Sheet

Community Examples

- Sample School Travel Plans
- Sample Walkabout Materials
- Sample Road Safety Initiatives and Studies
- Policy

3.2 Lead Organizations

The Canadian School Travel Planning model was developed over several years working with many organizations across Canada. This toolkit exists because of the dedication and participation of the following organizations - from east, to north, to west:

City of St. John's Department of Recreation, Newfoundland and Labrador
stjohns.ca/living-st-johns/recreation-and-parks

Ecology Action Centre, Nova Scotia
ecologyaction.ca

Recreation PEI
recreationpei.ca

Healthy Eating and Physical Activity Coalition of New Brunswick (HEPAC)
hepac.ca

The New Brunswick Lung Association
nb.lung.ca

Vélo Québec
velo.qc.ca

Canadian Partnership Against Cancer (CPAC)
partnershipagainstcancer.ca

Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC)
phac-aspc.gc.ca

Transport Canada
tc.gc.ca

Green Communities Canada, Active & Safe Routes to School program
saferoutestoschool.ca

Heart and Stroke Foundation
heartandstroke.ca/

Government of Nunuvut, Population Health
livehealthy.gov.nu.ca

Yellowknife Education District #1, Northwest Territories
yk1.nt.ca

Green Action Centre, Active & Safe Routes to School program, Manitoba
greenactioncentre.ca

Saskatchewan *In Motion*
saskatchewaninmotion.ca

Safe Healthy Active People Everywhere (SHAPE) Alberta
shapeab.com

The Hub for Active School Travel (HASTe), British Columbia
hastebc.org

The Recreation and Parks Association of the Yukon (RPAY)
rpay.ca

3.3 Supporting Programs

Encouraging ideas to create a culture of walking and other active school travel options.

saferoutestoschool.ca/steps-to-success-the-5-es





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