

ACTIVE SCHOOL TRAVEL PROVINCIAL PRIORITIES

January 2017



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Executive Summary

Across Ontario, many students are not walking or wheeling for the school journey. For two decades, dedicated individuals and organizations have been working to reverse this trend toward increased use of private vehicles to get to and from school. That work has mostly been done under the “banners” of Active and Safe Routes to School (ASRTS) and School Travel Planning (STP). Significant progress has been made despite the irregularity and often low dollar amounts of funding. After many “pilot tests” and pushing work along in disconnected pockets across the province (determined by who has been successful at securing funding), everyone involved in this important work agrees it is time to evolve to a new, sustainable level.

We know that School Travel Planning works. Individual STP schools have experienced shifts toward active travel of over 20%! We know that the process is flexible enough to work in the diverse range of settings that exist across the province. For the full benefits of School Travel Planning to succeed, it’s time for a larger investment in the work, an investment that will give all communities access to this valuable approach for getting students using active transportation for their school journey, thereby improving their health, safety and the environment.

In year 1 of this project, Heart & Stroke, in partnership with Green Communities Canada and University of Toronto, gathered input from active school travel (AST) stakeholders across the province about what is needed to take this work to the next level. In year 2, we hosted three regional summits followed by a provincial summit. Through this process, five top provincial priorities were identified by stakeholders. Four priorities were related to securing funding, i.e. for (1) provincial coordination & support; (2) community capacity; (3) implementing engineering measures; and (4) implementing education and encouragement measures. The fifth priority was to further investigate existing municipal, regional and provincial policies and compile a comprehensive list. To be successful in accomplishing these five things, all AST stakeholders need to align and champion for the identified priorities together.

Terms & Acronyms

AST	active school travel
ASRTS	active and safe routes to school
ASST	active and sustainable school travel: this is a term that includes sustainable choices that are not active such as riding the school bus or taking public transit. Some organizations, such as Metrolinx, promote these sustainable travel modes as part of their School Travel Planning approach because doing so can help improve safety and air quality in the school zone.
AT	active transportation
STP	school travel planning
Wheeling	human-powered transportation with wheels, e.g., bike, skateboard, scooter, rollerblades

“Wheeling” to school refers to human-powered transportation options with wheels such as riding a bike, scooter or skateboard, or rollerblading.

Provincial Context

Fewer Students Walking/Wheeling

Across Ontario (in fact, across the entire country), we are facing a modern-day challenge. Car culture is taking over and fewer kids are walking or wheeling to school. When students are driven to school instead of walking or wheeling, they miss the opportunity for much-needed physical activity, fresh air and quality interaction with parents, caregivers and friends; and their family vehicle’s presence at or near the school contributes to traffic congestion, which in turn makes the conditions less safe for those who do walk or wheel, and adds to air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. Also, school staff frequently waste valuable time dealing with traffic issues and complaints.

ASRTS is Introduced

Recognizing a desperate need for solutions to these problems, Jacky Kennedy took inspiration from the Safe Routes to School initiative in the UK, and introduced “Active and Safe Routes to School (ASRTS)” in Toronto in the mid-1990s. By 2000, the program had been embraced throughout much of the Greater Toronto Area and was spreading across Ontario, and “ownership” of ASRTS moved to Green Communities Canada (GCC), a not-for-profit organization with national reach, a feature important for the growth of the work. For many years, Heart & Stroke (H&S) supported ASRTS in numerous communities through their Spark Grants; they invested more than a quarter million dollars through awarding grants of \$5,000 to \$25,000 each.

Although the full ASRTS approach did recommend doing some data collection and involving diverse stakeholders, in practice, ASRTS was typically focused on education and encouragement activities, and the work was often handled at the local level by public health staff working in isolation. Popular, well-established ASRTS activities include events like International Walk to School Month (IWALK) and Winter Walk Day, Walking School Buses/Bicycle Trains, and weekly programs such as Walk/Wheel Wednesdays. Some great results were experienced as a result of ASRTS education and encouragement efforts, however stakeholders soon realized that a more comprehensive approach was necessary to realize systemic, lasting change.

The reasons why so few children walk and wheel for the school journey are complex. Some of the common reasons include:

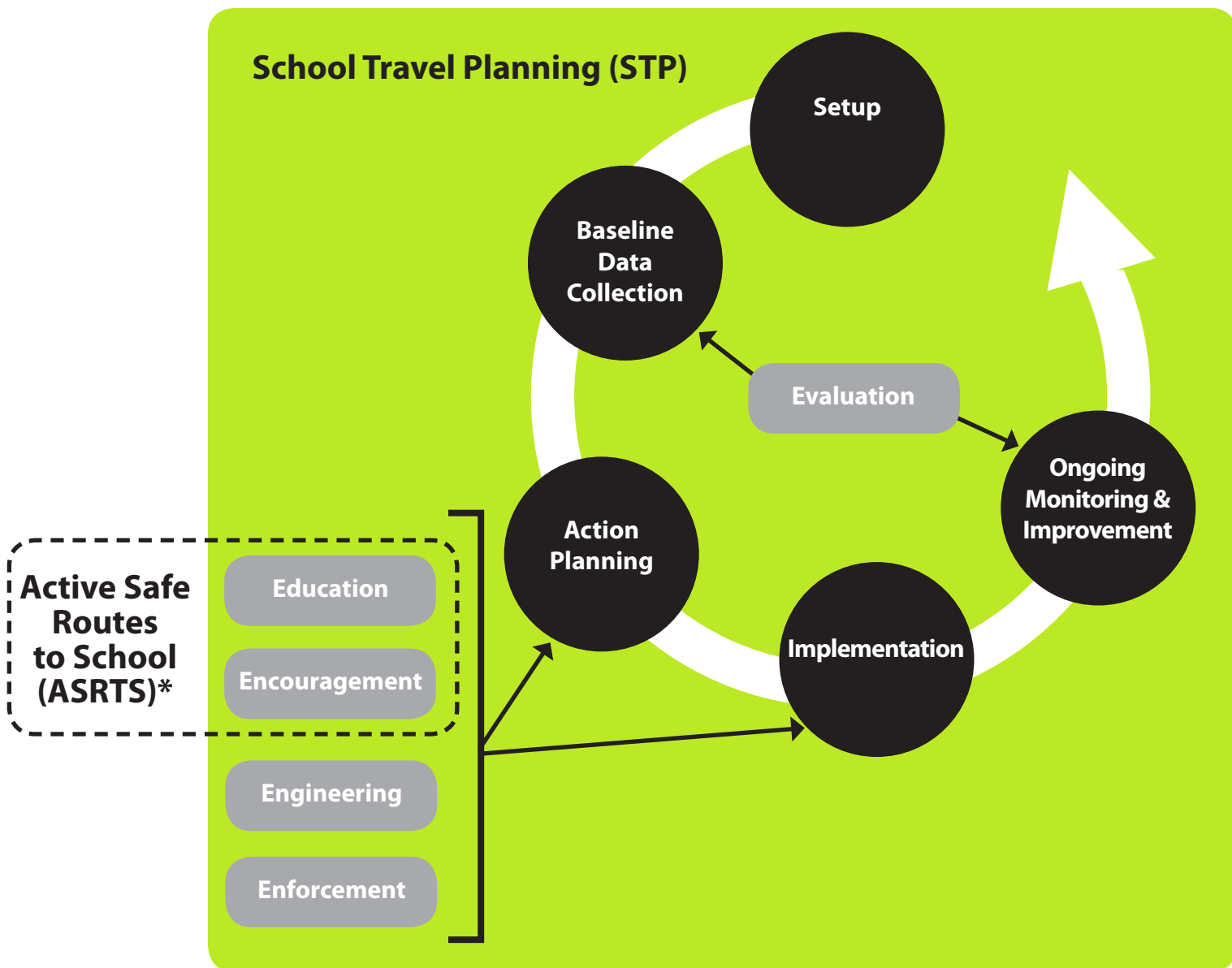
- Many routes to school have not been designed for active travel (e.g., a lack of sidewalks or bike lanes); and drivers often exceed posted speed limits and are unable to stop safely. We must keep in mind that children are extremely vulnerable users of our roads and public space. We need to design or re-engineer our neighbourhoods to make them as safe as possible for children.
- Parental perceptions of safety play a key role in travel mode decisions.
- Parents also have concerns about bullying or abduction, particularly where there are few families walking, and thus few “eyes on the street.”

- When both parents work, a lack of time is often cited as a reason for driving kids to school. Convenience is also a big factor, e.g., “I drop the kids off while I’m en route to another destination.”
- Many communities are closing smaller schools which were located in central, walkable neighbourhoods and opening big schools on the edge of town resulting in fewer students living within a walkable distance to school (school siting).

School Travel Planning is Introduced: The Evolution of ASRTS

Simply educating families about the benefits of active school transportation and encouraging them to walk or wheel for the school journey was not sufficient to address these complex reasons. So, in 2006, Green Communities Canada conducted research into international best practice, seeking to learn how other countries have evolved their ASRTS programs over time. That research revealed that a community-based, comprehensive model—commonly referred to as School Travel Planning (STP)—had been developed and was experiencing success. GCC adopted those best practices to develop a recommended STP model for Canada.

School Travel Planning is a process that involves diverse stakeholders in the development and implementation of a school travel plan (document)—one plan per school. The action plan portion of a school travel plan includes a broad range of activities, commonly organized under the “5 Es”—Evaluation, Education, Encouragement, Engineering and Enforcement. Evaluation (data collection) is a key component that helps ensure the action plan created is customized to address the unique challenges at a given school. The diagram on the next page shows the stages of the STP process, how the 5 Es fit in, and illustrates how ASRTS is typically a subset of STP activities. This is showing what happens at the school/municipal level.



* ASRTS work commonly jumps right to the implementation of a standard set of activities—i.e., the same activities at all schools being worked with—without tying into an STP process.

Individual STP schools have experienced shifts toward active travel of over 20%!

The Canadian School Travel Planning model was pilot tested in four provinces, after which a comprehensive toolkit was created to support STP Facilitators with taking schools and communities through the process. The toolkit and the STP process was then disseminated nation-wide between 2008 and 2012, thanks to grant funding. The STP process has also been actively promoted in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area by Metrolinx working with Green Communities Canada, and has been undertaken in select communities that have been able to secure local funding.

School Travel Planning Results

In communities where School Travel Planning is well established and schools have been fully engaged over a longer period of time, the huge potential of School Travel Planning to impact travel mode choice is evident. For example, Viscount Alexander Public School in Ottawa experienced a 21 percent increase in walking and a 3 percent increase in cycling over two school years (October 2010 to May 2012).

School Travel Planning Lessons Learned

After years of testing and refining the STP process and tools, many lessons have been learned, for example:

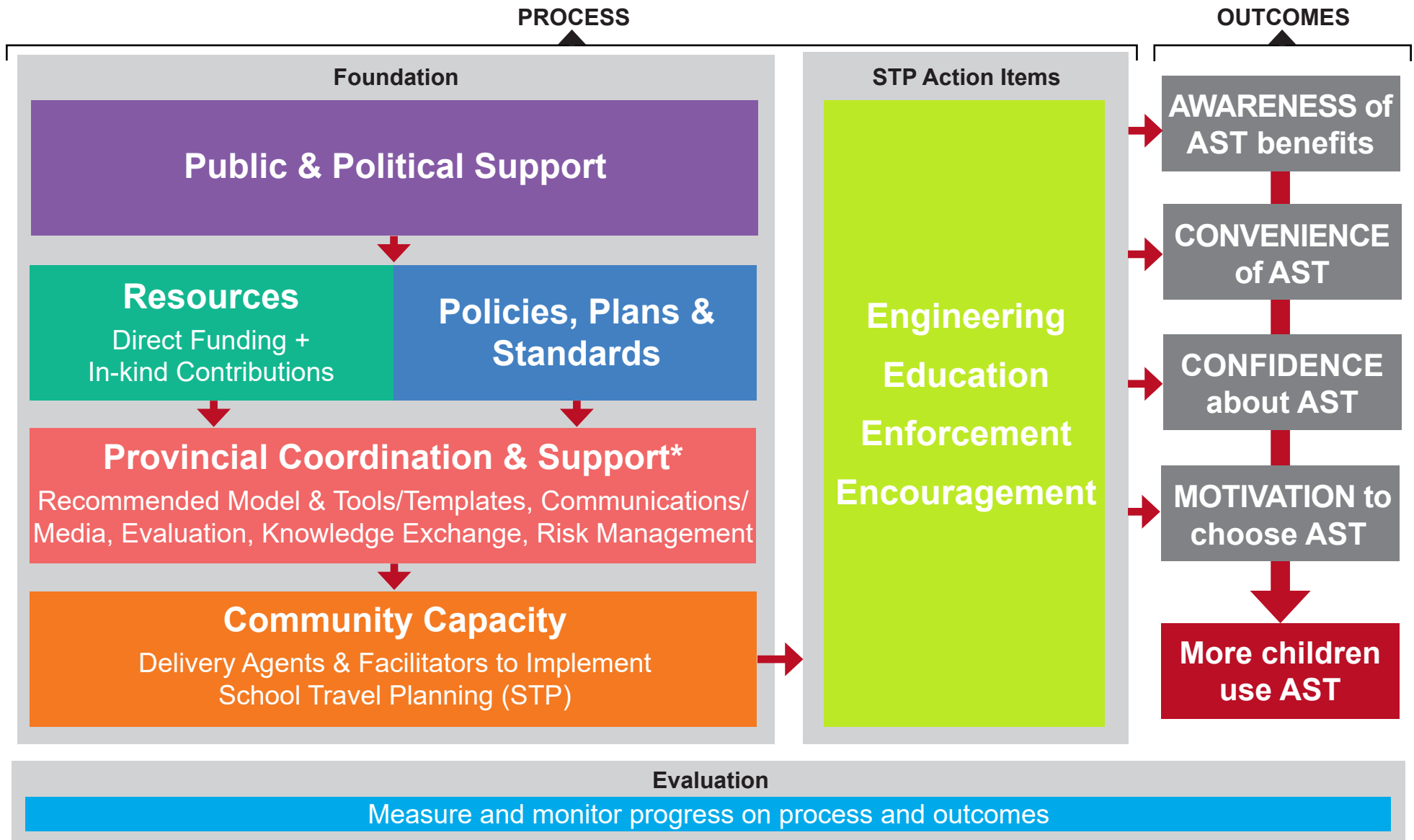
- Having a full-time, paid STP Facilitator to lead the process at a local level is ideal. Relying too heavily on volunteers or school staff typically means the work stops.
- Affecting behavior change is a long-term effort that requires comprehensive and consistent action; we have noted that an STP process implemented over three years can lead to longer-term active travel sustainability at schools. One or two school years is not enough, and yet that is often the extent of what is possible with grant funding.
- It is critical to have funding for facilitation and action plan development, but in order to deliver on action plans, investments in implementation have to be made; this has been a missing component with many of the pilot tests so far.
- Ensuring all relevant municipal and education stakeholders are involved in the process is key: transportation engineering and planning, urban planning, public health, police, school boards, school transportation services. It is possible to proceed without all of the ideal representatives “at the table” however progress and effectiveness are negatively impacted.
- In the absence of funding for provincial coordination & support (as has largely been the case since the end of the national dissemination project in 2012), individual communities move forward the best they can, but there are obvious inefficiencies as a result because they are working in isolation and often do not realize they are “re-inventing the wheel” and duplicating similar work being done in other communities. For effective and efficient work to happen at the community level, it is critical to invest in provincial-level activities that form a foundation for all the work. The diagram on the next page—AST Framework—shows the key pieces that form the foundation, how they support School Travel Planning at the community and school level, and how it contributes to the desired outcomes.

Moving Forward

GCC and Heart & Stroke realized that coordination at the provincial level to identify priorities for this important work was needed, and applied to the Ontario Trillium Foundation and secured funding for this project.

AST Framework

Review of the discussions from the regional summits, and consideration of recommendations from other consultations and projects, revealed that there are consistent overarching pieces that need to come together in order to get more children using active transportation for their school journey. The framework below illustrates those overarching pieces and how they tie in with desired outcomes. Work on these key pieces must be done by various stakeholders working at different levels.



* Includes all activities that are most efficient and effective when executed at a high-level. For this project, we are focused on the provincial level, but in other instances this could be national or regional.

Project Background

This project was undertaken to invigorate and unite the active school travel (AST) work underway in Ontario, thereby identifying the top priority actions that will help make the work more efficient and sustainable. The project took part in three phases over 2.5 years, beginning with research on AST work to date in the province, followed by three regional summits and ending with a provincial summit. All three phases helped gather the input from diverse communities that informed the recommendations in this report.

The Process

1 AST Work to Date Research

University of Toronto conducted a survey that examined the reach of active school travel programming in Ontario. Results were published in a May 2015 report (see <http://tinyurl.com/zprwrx6>) and an infographic.

2 Regional Summits

Three summits were held—in St. Catharines, Parry Sound and Smiths Falls—to share promising and best practices, understand challenges and brainstorm priority actions for moving AST work forward in each region and provincially. Summaries from each summit can be found in appendices 1-3.

3 Provincial Summit

A full-day summit was held in Toronto, with participants from across the province, to consolidate the ideas from the regional summits and determine the top provincial priority actions. Top-level ideas are captured in the main body of this report, and additional details can be found in appendix 4.



Participants in Parry Sound brainstorm at one of the regional summits

Provincial AST Priorities

Priority Action Summary: Building a Strong Foundation for AST Work in Ontario

Public & Political Support

Advocate for support from provincial, regional and municipal levels of government—support that is evident through resources and policy.

Resources

Secure funds for:

- Provincial Coordination & Support
- Community Capacity
- Engineering Implementation
- Education and Encouragement Implementation

Policies, Plans & Standards

Identify priority policies and advocate for their adoption.

Provincial Coordination & Support

Foundation

RECOMMENDED MODEL & TOOLS/TEMPLATES

- **Develop new tools/templates or update existing ones for STP toolkit—see the next page for details.**
- Better promote the STP toolkit—clearly needed because some people asked for tools that already exist.

EVALUATION

- Develop provincial tool for collecting/storing/analyzing evaluation data—have the tool vetted by the Ministry of Education so that ethics reviews by individual school boards won't be necessary.

COMMUNICATIONS/MEDIA

- Create and run provincial communication campaigns and provide strategy/templates to be used for regional/municipal/school campaigns, e.g., (1) to educate parents & encourage AST and (2) to promote winter walking—show it's fun, how to dress for it, how to do it safely.

KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

- Create a navigator role—someone to contact for assistance at any stage in the process
- Establish a “community of practice”
- Offer STP Facilitator training sessions & regular webinars
- Annual provincial summit (face-to-face)
- **saferoutestoschool.ca website update**

RISK MANAGEMENT

- Address concerns about risks of doing STP and promoting AST—provide messaging on liability.

Community Capacity

- Hire **STP Facilitators** and eventually AST Area Specialists.
- Ensure **all stakeholders are engaged**; ensure there is agreement on roles/responsibilities; establish meeting schedule and process for regular communication.

Review of Top 5 Priorities

Five short-term priorities were identified through this project. The first four are related to funding and the fifth is about policies, plans and standards. These are the top priorities because they form the basis upon which all the rest of the foundational activities rely. The table below provides detail about these top five priorities.

Top Priority Actions	Details
1. Secure funding for provincial coordination & support	<p>Provincial coordination & support includes activities that are most efficient when done at a provincial level, e.g., training, coaching/mentoring, research. (See previous page for other provincial coordination & support activities that were identified as top priorities.) Not much work has happened at the provincial level for some time due to lack of funding. Ideally, resources will be secured to allow focus on provincial coordination & support tasks <i>first</i> (or simultaneously with building community capacity) to help reduce duplication of effort at the regional/municipal/school levels.</p> <p>Feedback from meeting attendees made it clear that the existing School Travel Planning toolkit would benefit from updating and the addition of some new tools/templates. The following is a list of new tools that would enhance the toolkit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommended process for school route safety audit & mapping recommended active routes • Orientation package for JK students promoting AST; plus, orientation package for older students to promote independent walking, e.g., grades 3 and 4. • Pedestrian safety training tools, with curriculum links • AST awards program to recognize schools for varying levels of progress—provide incentives for participation • Action Plan Inspiration Guide—update this document and make it into a searchable online database • Rewards program for students including online tracking system • Advocacy training tools, e.g., manual • Suggestions about how to engage across cultures <p>Provincial coordination & support ideally would happen through a sustainably funded small group of staff—see the suggested organizational chart in Appendix 5. However, until sustainable funding is secured for all staff positions, it may be possible to move certain activities forward as standalone projects.</p>

2. Secure funding for community capacity	Funding to hire the staff required at the local level to facilitate School Travel Planning, using Ontario's proven effective model.
3. Secure funding to implement engineering measures	For School Travel Planning efforts to be successful, there has to be funding available to implement the action plans developed. Funding for engineering measures won't always be new funding; in some cases, we just need to influence how existing infrastructure funding is spent.
4. Secure funding to implement education and encouragement measures	There also has to be funding for implementing the education and encouragement action items; these have been separated out from engineering because it makes sense that these would be funded from different sources. Input during the provincial meeting suggested that some of these funds need to be given directly to schools as an incentive to participate in AST work, i.e., an honorarium.
5. Identify priority policies and advocate for their adoption	Investigate existing policies and compile a comprehensive list. The provincial-level scan will use any past scans as a starting point, and should include good policy examples from outside of Ontario for inspiration. Policy scans will also need to be conducted at the regional and/or municipal level—ideally that would be a priority task for the first STP Facilitator in a given area. Then, create templates of recommended best practice AST policy wording and advocate for the adoption of recommended policies.

Active school travel work provides a broad range of societal benefits—for example, health, education, transportation—so it is recommended this work be supported by joint funding from numerous sources. This work is not the responsibility of a single department or organization; it requires shared support from provincial, regional and municipal levels, and may also benefit from corporate sponsorship or grant funding.

Next Steps

Going forward, Heart & Stroke and Green Communities Canada will work together in an expanded and formalized partnership to develop more detailed action plans, further engage decision-makers and seek out new (or expand existing) partnerships with AST champions from multiple sectors.

The preceding pages are intentionally focused on top-level priorities. Establishing such priorities was the critical first stage in reaching consensus about the direction of AST work in this province. We recognize that to successfully tackle these priorities will require “drilling-down” into more details about who will take what steps to move the actions forward. That level of detail was beyond the scope of this project. Some preliminary brainstorming of such details did take place during table discussions at the provincial summit, and highlights from those discussions can be found in Appendix 4.

What we do know already—and this is illustrated by its placement at the top of the “foundation” section of the AST Framework diagram on page 6—is that political and public support will be essential to secure the resources we need and to positively influence policy. Building political and public support will require coordinated, persistent effort by all stakeholders.

It’s clear that there is a need for advocacy expertise and training among the stakeholders currently involved in active school travel work. As a starting point, we know we need to map out exactly who we are trying to influence (audience mapping) and what exactly we are asking them to do (the specific “ask” for each audience). Then we need to create relevant communications tools/strategies for each audience, tailored to what they care about. We need to identify champions and understand the way decisions are made and by whom.

Appendix 1:

Niagara Regional Summit Summary

Date:	February 11, 2016
Location:	St. Catharines, ON

Agenda

Time	Item
9:00 – 9:30	Registration and Breakfast
9:30 – 10:00	Opening Remarks and Guest Speakers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colleen Hill – Heart & Stroke • Lora Courtois – Superintendent of Education, District School Board of Niagara • Lisa Gallant – Health Promoter, Niagara Region Public Health • Lori Powell – Executive Director, Niagara Student Transportation Services
10:00 – 10:10	Housekeeping and Overview of Agenda <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nancy Dubois – DuBFit Consulting, Facilitator and Health Promotion Consultant
10:10 – 10:30	Panel Discussion – Part 1 The BIG Picture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jacky Kennedy – Director, Canada Walks, Green Communities Canada
10:30 – 10:45	Break
10:45 – 11:45	Panel Discussion – Part 2 The Local Picture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rob Berketo – Project and IT Manager, Niagara Student Transportation Services • Lisa Gallant – Health Promoter, Niagara Region Public Health • Todd Halliday – Principal at College Street School in West Lincoln, District School Board of Niagara • Rachelle Larocque – Planner, Town of West Lincoln • Bryan Purins – Traffic and Parking Technician, City of Welland
11:45 – 12:10	Comments
12:10 – 12:15	Morning Wrap Up
12:15 – 1:00	Lunch
1:00 – 1:10	Golden Shoe Awards Ceremony
1:10 – 2:15	Table Discussions
2:15 – 2:30	Stretch Break
2:30 – 3:30	Table Discussions – continuation of earlier discussions
3:30 – 4:00	Wrap-up and Closing

PROVINCIAL Priorities Identified at Niagara Regional Summit

The diagram below focuses on the **provincial-level** priority actions recommended by the attendees at the Niagara Regional Summit. The contents of this diagram informed the development of the provincial priority action summary contained in the main body of this report.

Foundation

Public & Political Support

[No provincial-level actions were discussed at Niagara Regional Summit for this foundational piece.]

Resources

- Obtain funding from Ministry to address infrastructure challenges.
- Secure funds for infrastructure as well as ongoing maintenance.
- Think outside the box, approach non-traditional partners, e.g., Nike.

Policies, Plans & Standards

- Mandate School Travel Planning.
- Include AT as part of the conversation at school accommodation reviews.
- Make pedestrian training part of curriculum.

Provincial Coordination & Support

RECOMMENDED MODEL & TOOLS/TEMPLATES

- Establish a standardized model with a manual that lays out flow of steps, reporting, etc.
- Link AST work with existing programs.
- Develop pedestrian safety training tools.

COMMUNICATIONS/MEDIA

- Create advocacy pieces/templates to advocate for investment in AST.
- Create and run provincial media campaigns and provide strategy/templates to be used for regional/municipal/school campaigns: (1) to educate parents & encourage AST and (2) to promote winter walking—show it’s fun, how to dress for it, how to do it safely.

KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

- Collect and share information about what works well and what doesn’t, to inform STP Action Plans.

Community Capacity

[Not applicable at provincial level; by definition, this foundation piece refers to regional/municipal level activity.]

Regional/Municipal/School-Level Priorities Identified at Niagara Regional Summit

The diagram below focuses on the priority actions relevant at the **regional, municipal and/or school level** that were recommended by the attendees at the Niagara Regional Summit.



School Travel Plan Action Items

Evaluation

- Evaluate current infrastructure, i.e., systematic process for school route safety audit.

Engineering

- Use collective/neighbourhood approach, i.e., look for improvements that benefit multiple schools in same walking areas.
- School boards consult with municipality when modifying their property to ensure impact on routes to school are considered.
- Build compact communities—more walkable/bikeable naturally.
- Design infrastructure to make walking & cycling more convenient, i.e., remove barriers, make it easy and safe to use.

Education

- Identify safest routes to schools and create/distribute maps.
- Teach pedestrian & cycling safety.
- Schedule police to speak at schools about safety (including stranger danger).
- Work with parents to change perceptions around danger and safety.
- Show walking time instead of distance (on wayfinding signs & maps).
- Share evidence/data outlining success with parents to convince them of importance of AST.

Encouragement

- Organize a walking buddies program.
- Offer some kind of reward for choosing AST.
- Provide helmets at reduced cost.

Enforcement

- Use enforcement to ensure compliance with laws.
- Have school staff help “police” area in front of school.

Outcomes

**AWARENESS of
AST benefits**

**CONVENIENCE
of AST**

**CONFIDENCE
about AST**

**MOTIVATION
to choose AST**

**More children
use AT for
school journey**

Appendix 2:

Eastern Regional Summit Summary

Date:	April 21, 2016
Location:	Smiths Falls, ON

Agenda

Time	Item
9:00 – 9:30	Registration and Breakfast
9:30 – 9:50	Opening Remarks and Guest Speakers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colleen Hill – Heart & Stroke • Dr. Paula Stewart – Medical Officer of Health at the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit
9:50 – 10:00	Housekeeping and Overview of Agenda <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nancy Dubois – DuBFit Consulting, Facilitator and Health Promotion Consultant
10:00 – 10:30	Panel Discussion – Part 1 The BIG Picture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wallace Beaton – Active & Safe Routes to School Program Manager, Green Communities Canada, Ottawa • Vicky Kyriaco – General Manager and Chief Administrative Officer, Ottawa Student Transportation Authority
10:30 – 10:45	Break
10:45 – 11:45	Panel Discussion – Part 2 The Local Picture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Betty Betts – Public Health Nurse • Christopher Hannah – Vice Principal, Westminster Public School, Brockville • Robert Grimwood – Senior Project Manager, Planning and Growth Management, City of Ottawa • Lorraine Allen – Smith Falls Town Councillor • Vicky Kyriaco – General Manager and Chief Administrative Officer, Ottawa Student Transportation Authority
11:45 – 12:10	Comments
12:10 – 12:15	Morning Wrap Up
12:15 – 1:00	Lunch
1:00 – 1:10	Golden Shoe Awards Ceremony
1:10 – 2:15	Table Discussions
2:15 – 2:30	Stretch Break
2:30 – 3:30	Table Discussions – continuation of earlier discussions
3:30 – 4:00	Wrap-up and Closing

PROVINCIAL Priorities Identified at Eastern Regional Summit

The diagram below focuses on the **provincial-level** priority actions recommended by the attendees at the Eastern Regional Summit. The contents of this diagram informed the development of the provincial priority action summary contained in the main body of this report.

Foundation

Public & Political Support

[No provincial-level actions were discussed at Eastern Regional Summit for this foundational piece.]

Resources

- Allocate funds to support AST [Ministry of Transportation].

Policies, Plans & Standards

- Re-write definition of school transportation to include active transportation [Ministry of Education].
- Work together to develop an AT policy in all Ontario schools.
- Ensure that crossing guard rules are part of new driver’s education manual.
- Mandate that municipalities include sidewalks on all new or redeveloped streets.

Provincial Coordination & Support

RECOMMENDED MODEL & TOOLS/TEMPLATES

- Establish a standardized model and manual that makes it clear how to get started and outlines sequential steps (flow chart).
- Develop pedestrian safety training tools.
- Develop AT information templates that can be included in Kinder packages.

COMMUNICATIONS/MEDIA

- Develop large-scale parental/community campaign with messaging that emphasizes the benefits of AST and addresses parental concerns. Materials/resources ideally developed provincially and shared/adapted locally. Campaign could include shaming of parents for not letting kids walk; appeal through guilt. To address parents’ common overestimation of risks related to safety (traffic/crime), integrate into the campaign information/research from Mariana Brussoni’s (professor at UBC) risk reframing workshops for parents.

KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

- Get the word out about how some bussing authorities have made AST a priority. Use this to influence Ministry of Education to change policy but also to influence additional individual bussing authorities to change on their own.
- Collect and share best practices across regions/municipalities/schools.

RISK MANAGEMENT

- Sort out insurance for liability—OSC has insurance.
- Establish recommended policies for WSB, e.g., references, police check.

Community Capacity

[Not applicable at provincial level; by definition, this foundation piece refers to regional/ municipal level activity.]

Regional/Municipal/School-Level Priorities Identified at Eastern Regional Summit

The diagram below focuses on the priority actions relevant at the **regional, municipal and/or school level** that were recommended by the attendees at the Eastern Regional Summit.

Foundation

Public & Political Support

- Find champions/mentors.

Resources

- Allocate funds to support School Travel Planning [School Boards and Transportation Authorities], i.e., an all “under one roof approach”—STP Facilitator, crossing guards, communications, walking school buses.
- Advocate for sustainable funding, i.e., longer term, multi-year contracts; promote the need for AST initiatives to be a priority.

Policies, Plans & Standards

- Conduct a policy review and ensure all policies line up.
- Revise courtesy seats in “walk-zones” policy at the same time as an active transportation option/plan is put in place; everyone gets access to a planned mode of transportation with supervision.
- Make stronger requirements in Transportation Master Plans to make AST a higher priority.
- Improve education/communication regarding policy.

Provincial Coordination & Support

[Not applicable at regional/municipal/school-level; by definition, this foundation piece refers to provincial-level activity.]

Community Capacity

- Determine who will lead AST work in the region; there has to be an “owner.”
- Need involvement from all the right parties to be successful; establish a meeting schedule and working groups/committees; have clear lines of communication; know who has authority to say yes/no to what.
- Hire a facilitator—School board should have someone dedicated to School Travel Planning.
- Establish qualification/selection criteria to maximize impact & efficiency, e.g., target new schools to start students off walking.

School Travel Plan Action Items

Evaluation

- [No regional/municipal/school-level actions were discussed at the Eastern Regional Summit related to Evaluation.]

Engineering

- Signage change is important.
- Design infrastructure that makes AST convenient, not driving.

Education

- Teach pedestrian safety.
- Add AT information to Kinder packages. Provide AT info on Kinder nights. Capitalize on large group gatherings (e.g. open houses, concerts).
- Establish a culture among school staff/parents of parking further away by creating/distributing maps showing alternate parking locations.
- Work with the city and Ottawa Public Health to tweet images/info on bad weather days to show how to dress for the weather and illustrate how walking is fun in the winter.
- Emphasize benefits (what's in it for me?) when communicating with parents.

Encouragement

- Target kids and have them sell it to parents.
- Offer walking school buses with paid leaders; this could mean parents don't need morning daycare and parents could leave earlier for work since child walks without them.

Enforcement

- [No regional/municipal/school-level actions were discussed at the Eastern Regional Summit related to Enforcement.]

Outcomes

**AWARENESS of
AST benefits**

**CONVENIENCE
of AST**

**CONFIDENCE
about AST**

**MOTIVATION
to choose AST**

**More children
use AT for
school journey**

Appendix 3:

Northern Regional Summit Summary

Date:	April 26, 2016
Location:	Parry Sound, ON

Agenda

Time	Item
9:00 – 9:30	Registration and Breakfast
9:30 – 9:50	Opening Remarks and Guest Speakers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colleen Hill – Heart & Stroke • Dr. Brenda Bruner – Nipissing University, North Bay • Tammy Purdy – By-law Enforcement Officer, Town of Parry Sound
9:50 – 10:00	Housekeeping and Overview of Agenda <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nancy Dubois – DuBFit Consulting, Facilitator and Health Promotion Consultant
10:00 – 10:30	Panel Discussion – Part 1 The BIG Picture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jacky Kennedy – Director Canada Walks, Green Communities Canada • Alex Mayer – Community Health Promoter, Healthy Schools , North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit
10:30 – 10:45	Break
10:45 – 11:45	Panel Discussion – Part 2 The Local Picture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Brenda Bruner – Nipissing University, North Bay • Taylor Elgie – Principal Planner, Town of Parry Sound • Brigitte Fiorino – Vice Principal, Alliance French Immersion School, North Bay • Alex Mayer – Community Health Promoter, Healthy Schools , North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit • Rob Mens – Chief Administrative Officer, Town of Parry Sound
11:45 – 12:10	Comments
12:10 – 12:15	Morning Wrap Up
12:15 – 1:00	Lunch
1:00 – 2:15	Table Discussions
2:15 – 2:30	Stretch Break
2:30 – 3:30	Table Discussions – continuation of earlier discussions
3:30 – 4:00	Wrap-up and Closing

PROVINCIAL Priorities Identified at Northern Regional Summit

The diagram below focuses on the **provincial-level** priority actions recommended by the attendees at the Northern Regional Summit. The contents of this diagram informed the development of the provincial priority action summary contained in the main body of this report.

Foundation

Public & Political Support

[No provincial-level actions were discussed at the Northern Regional Summit for this foundational piece.]

Resources

- Allocate funding (provincial and/or federal) for infrastructure implementation.
- Fund walking school bus staff with technology-supported safe arrivals and routing (i.e., provincially publicly funded).

Policies, Plans & Standards

[No provincial-level actions were discussed at the Northern Regional Summit for this foundational piece.]

Provincial Coordination & Support

RECOMMENDED MODEL & TOOLS/TEMPLATES

- Develop pedestrian safety training tools.
- Develop bear safety training tools.
- Develop tools to maximize use of buses by eligible students.
- Develop rewards program to encourage AST.

RISK MANAGEMENT

- Create communication strategy/template that illustrates municipal liability of not doing due diligence in providing safe and active routes to school.

Community Capacity

[Not applicable at provincial level; by definition, this foundation piece refers to regional/ municipal level activity.]

Regional/Municipal/School-Level Priorities Identified at Northern Regional Summit

The diagram below focuses on the priority actions relevant at the **regional, municipal and/or school level** that were recommended by the attendees at the Northern Regional Summit.

Foundation

Public & Political Support

[No regional/municipal/school-level actions were discussed at the Northern Regional Summit for this foundational piece.]

Resources

- Advocate for funds from provincial and federal governments for infrastructure updates.

Policies, Plans & Standards

- Implement urban design guidelines that support AT and growth.
- Have 30 km/hr zones around schools.
- Support new schools being built in well-connected areas (appropriate school siting).
- Municipalities prioritize snow removal on designated active routes to school.
- Lobby to increase km needed for bus eligibility (force more walkers, fewer buses).

Provincial Coordination & Support

[Not applicable at regional/municipal/school-level; by definition, this foundation piece refers to provincial-level activity.]

Community Capacity

[No regional/municipal/school-level actions were discussed at the Northern Regional Summit for this foundational piece.]

School Travel Plan Action Items

Evaluation

- [No regional/municipal/school-level actions were discussed at the Northern Regional Summit related to Evaluation.]

Engineering

- Municipalities adopt a paradigm shift that makes AT a priority in decision making (Complete Streets approach).
- Identify infrastructure needs—e.g., sidewalks, speed cushions, flexible bollards to divide traffic, divided lanes with boulevards/flower boxes, road diet, radar boards—and prioritize those needs. Determine a long-term plan (20-40 years).

Education

- Run public awareness campaign with partner agencies (OPP, health unit). Encourage getting to know your neighbours, and educate about how safe the community is. Share tangible data with parents.
- Police educate motorists on pedestrian and cycling use of roadways, e.g., run education/media campaign.
- Use school event (such as school orientation for new students) as an opportunity to engage parents in walkability audit. Debunk parental “unsafe” perceptions.
- Teach pedestrian safety.
- Teach cycling safety, e.g., in-school cycling lessons, summer cycling clubs for families to build confidence.
- Teach bear safety.

Encouragement

- “Game-ify” walking to school, i.e., offer rewards for number of steps walked.
- Optimize bus utilization with rewards and penalties for ridership.
- Re-engage safety patrols and peer-assisted leadership.
- Facilitate parental networking for AST through technology/social media.
- Have a drop-off hub away from school, i.e., bus partway then walk rest of way.
- Address inequity that may be preventing children from walking during winter or rainy weather, i.e., provide winter clothing or rain gear to those in need.

Enforcement

- By-law needs to enforce that homeowners remove snow within legal time limit.
- Police ticket speeders near school zones.

Outcomes

**AWARENESS of
AST benefits**

**CONVENIENCE
of AST**

**CONFIDENCE
about AST**

**MOTIVATION
to choose AST**

**More children
use AT for
school journey**

Appendix 4:

Provincial Summit Summary

Date:	December 1, 2016
Location:	Toronto, ON
Attendees:	40+ stakeholders from a broad range of organizations

Agenda

Time	Item
8:30 – 9:00	Registration and Breakfast
9:00 – 9:05	Opening Remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joe Belfontaine – Executive Director (Ontario Mission), Heart & Stroke
9:05 – 9:20	Housekeeping and Overview of Agenda <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nancy Dubois – DuBFit Consulting, Facilitator and Health Promotion Consultant
9:20 – 10:00	Getting Up to Speed – Part 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kate Berry – Senior Program Manager, Active & Safe Routes to School, Green Communities Canada Colleen Hill – Manager, Children and Youth, Heart & Stroke
10:00 – 10:45	Getting Up to Speed – Part 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wallace Beaton – Active & Safe Routes to School Program Manager Ottawa, Green Communities Canada Lisa Gallant – Health Promoter, Niagara Region Public Health Kelly Scott – Physical Activity Specialist, City of Hamilton Public Health Services
10:45 – 11:00	Break
11:00 – 11:20	Getting Up to Speed – Part 2 (Continued)
11:20 – 11:45	Q&A for panelists and overall comments on Priority Recommendations Vicky Kyriaco, General Manager, Ottawa Student Transportation Authority
11:45 – 12:45	Lunch with Special Guest <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Honorable Minister Eleanor McMahon, Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport
12:45 – 1:00	Re-group for Afternoon Table Discussions
1:00 – 2:30	Priority Recommendations Table Discussions
2:30 – 2:45	Stretch Break
2:45 – 3:35	Hot Topics Discussions
3:35 – 3:50	Next Steps
3:50 – 4:00	Wrap-up and Closing

Table Discussions

Attendees received a printout of the Priority Action Summary as it appears below, created using input gathered about provincial priorities at the three regional summits, and its contents were discussed at each table:

Priority Action Summary: Building a Strong Foundation for AST Work in Ontario

Public & Political Support

Seek support from provincial, regional and municipal levels of government—support that is evident through resources and policy.

Resources

Secure funds for:

- **Centralized Support**, exact near-term activities to be discussed & prioritized
- **Community Capacity**, in particular to fund the role of STP Facilitators and eventually AST Area Specialists
- **Engineering Implementation**
- **Education and Encouragement Implementation**

Policies, Plans & Standards

Conduct a comprehensive **policy scan**, documenting specifics about existing policies at all levels in Ontario (using any past scans as a starting point). Then, create templates of recommended best practice AST policy wording and advocate for the adoption of recommended policies (part of Centralized Support role).

Centralized Support

Potential priority actions (to be explored/prioritized at meeting):

RECOMMENDED MODEL & TOOLS/TEMPLATES

- Develop new tools/templates or update existing ones for STP toolkit
 - Recommended process for school route safety audit
 - Orientation package for JK students promoting AST
 - Pedestrian safety training tools
 - AST awards program to recognize schools for varying levels of progress
 - Action Plan Inspiration Guide - update this document and make it into a searchable online database
 - Rewards program including online tracking system

EVALUATION

- Develop provincial tool for collecting/storing/analyzing evaluation data

COMMUNICATIONS/MEDIA

- Create and run provincial communication campaigns and provide strategy/templates to be used for regional/municipal/school campaigns, e.g., (1) to educate parents & encourage AST and (2) to promote winter walking—show it's fun, how to dress for it, how to do it safely

KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

- Establish a "community of practice"—What is best way for this group to interact?
- Offer webinars—What topics would be of interest?
- Run STP Facilitator training sessions—What is the preferred length, format, etc.?
- Annual provincial summit (face-to-face)
- saferoutestoschool.ca website update

RISK MANAGEMENT

- Address concerns about risk—What is needed, e.g., research, education tools, insurance?

Community Capacity

- Hire **STP Facilitators** and eventually AST Area Specialists.
- Ensure **all stakeholders are engaged**; ensure there is agreement on roles/responsibilities; establish meeting schedule and process for regular communication.

Foundation

The goal of the December 1 meeting was to reach consensus on the top provincial-level priorities for AST work. However, given that many of the attendees work on AST at a municipal and/or school level, it's not surprising that discussions expanded to include recommendations for municipal- and school-level activities. Also, in some cases, discussions got fairly detailed about how to execute some of the provincial priorities identified. This level of detail was beyond the scope of what we wanted to capture in the main document, but we have included highlights from the detailed discussions in this appendix so that they can inform the execution of the various provincial tasks, once funding is secured.

Overall Feedback

- For advocacy we need to keep in mind that AST work is embedded in a huge broader system; consciously make links to AT in general.

Feedback About Public & Political Support Section

- A provincial Ministry needs to take the lead on ASRTS.
- Understand how decisions are made at municipal and provincial level. Learn how to navigate the political systems.
- Look for opportunities for shared advocacy—what other groups have overlapping goals?

Feedback About Resources Section

- Resources need to be available for cities/regions at different phases of ASRTS.
- Schools need money as incentive.

Feedback About Policies, Plans & Standards Section

- Some regions may not yet be at the policy scan phase.
- There needs to be regular policy scan updates.
- Need to identify the priority policy.
- Would rather AST fall into existing policy, i.e., complete streets.

Feedback About Centralized Support Section

RECOMMENDED MODEL & TOOLS/TEMPLATES

- Recommended process for school route safety audit & mapping recommended active routes
- Orientation package for JK students promoting AST; plus, orientation package for older students to promote independent walking, e.g., grades 3 and 4.
- Pedestrian safety training tools, with curriculum links
- AST awards program to recognize schools for varying levels of progress—provide incentives for participation
- Action Plan Inspiration Guide—update this document and make it into a searchable online database
- Rewards program for students including online tracking system
- Advocacy training tools, e.g., manual
- Suggestions about how to engage across cultures

EVALUATION

- Include indicators for well-being.
- Bikewalkroll (<http://bikewalkroll.org/>) can collect, store and analyze classroom surveys instantly and vividly. It can show mode share data by classroom and by school. Schools

are given a score based on the percentage using AST and based on the number of surveys entered. This tool and other survey methods can be tied to the math curriculum, which is currently a strong priority in Ontario education.

- Ethics review is a barrier, onerous, needs to be understood, varies between school boards. Having a province-vetted data collection tool could overcome that barrier.
- There are issues in some school boards around collecting “hands-up” student data. Alternative to hands-up survey: count number of cars that travel to the school (municipality could do this evaluation) and count #s that walk/cycle.
- Mandate school travel survey.
- Evaluation is difficult without dedicated people.
- Make evaluation very simple.

COMMUNICATIONS/MEDIA

- Targeting younger students is also effective for influencing parents. Using the student voice in communications materials can be very powerful.
- Achieve cultural shift through social marketing + in-person delivery of message + translation services.
- Have common tag line and coordinated effort. Consistent messaging provincially.
- Ensure diverse communities are considered when developing communication strategies.
- Design a one-pager with consistent messaging that can be used across the province when meeting with government and key stakeholders; make it a template that can be easily modified to represent local issues.

KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

- *Community of Practice:*
 - In addition to webinars, workshops, quarterly online meetings/conference calls, a listserv and highlights of the month email would be effective.
 - Group email for questions.
 - Line of communications with centralized support: an accessible database with new tools and a forum to ask/answer each other’s questions. This needs to be actively nurtured and maintained by assigned administrator.
 - OASBO (Ontario Association of School Business Officials) Forum as information hub: Questions and then responses collated by originator and posted on forum wall.
 - Connect with Healthy Communities Resource Centre—Andrea Bodkin.
 - Create a place for non-professionals to engage too.
- *Webinars:*
 - Webinars have been declining. YouTube and TedTalks are becoming more effective, reliable and easy to use/access.
 - There needs to be webinars/workshops for different stages of the process.
 - Webinar topics of interest:
 - ♦ Best practice sessions—info, with a theme, shared online bi-annually by operational staff.
 - ♦ Use of toolkit
 - ♦ Infrastructure, guideline revisions, engineering
 - ♦ Site planning
 - ♦ Risk mitigation and liability—OSBIE
 - ♦ Results of this project—focus on the outcomes and next steps
 - ♦ Advocacy strategy

- ♦ Evaluation strategies
- ♦ Communication/engagement ideas/techniques for diverse communities
- *STP Facilitator Training:*
 - Introductory session with follow up “tune up” sessions over the course of a year
 - General education videos/webinars
 - Ongoing forums
 - Monthly Skype updates
 - Breakout sessions for specific topics
 - Include some presentations and discussions for knowledge exchange.
 - Annual 1.5 day workshop: have an umbrella then break out to develop different focuses
 - Networking opportunities to learn from other STP Facilitators—not just one per year and have them in different locations.
 - Content—Need to emphasize relationship building. STP Facilitators need to have the right connections. In particular, STP Facilitators should be taught how to communicate with the principal; that they are there for support rather than someone who is assigning the principal additional work.
- *Annual Summit:*
 - Annual in-person summits at the provincial and regional level.
 - Partner with an existing summit/conference or be a session at a conference to optimize peoples’ time and travel; enables more attendance.
- *Website:*
 - Current website is outdated and difficult to navigate. (This is a critical, top priority for Provincial Coordination & Support.)

RISK MANAGEMENT

- Liability is one of the biggest issues.
- What is needed to address concerns about risk?
 - Put risk in perspective. Educate others about benefits vs risks.
 - Central resource outlining how to deal with liability concerns, including messaging on liability, i.e., from OSBIE (Ontario School Boards’ Insurance Exchange).
 - Is the existing GCC webinar on liability still relevant? If not, need new webinar with OSBIE.
 - Provincial advocacy for “Good Samaritan” law that would protect those leading walking school buses, promoting popular routes to schools etc.
 - Information that is specific and accessible for everyone to understand.

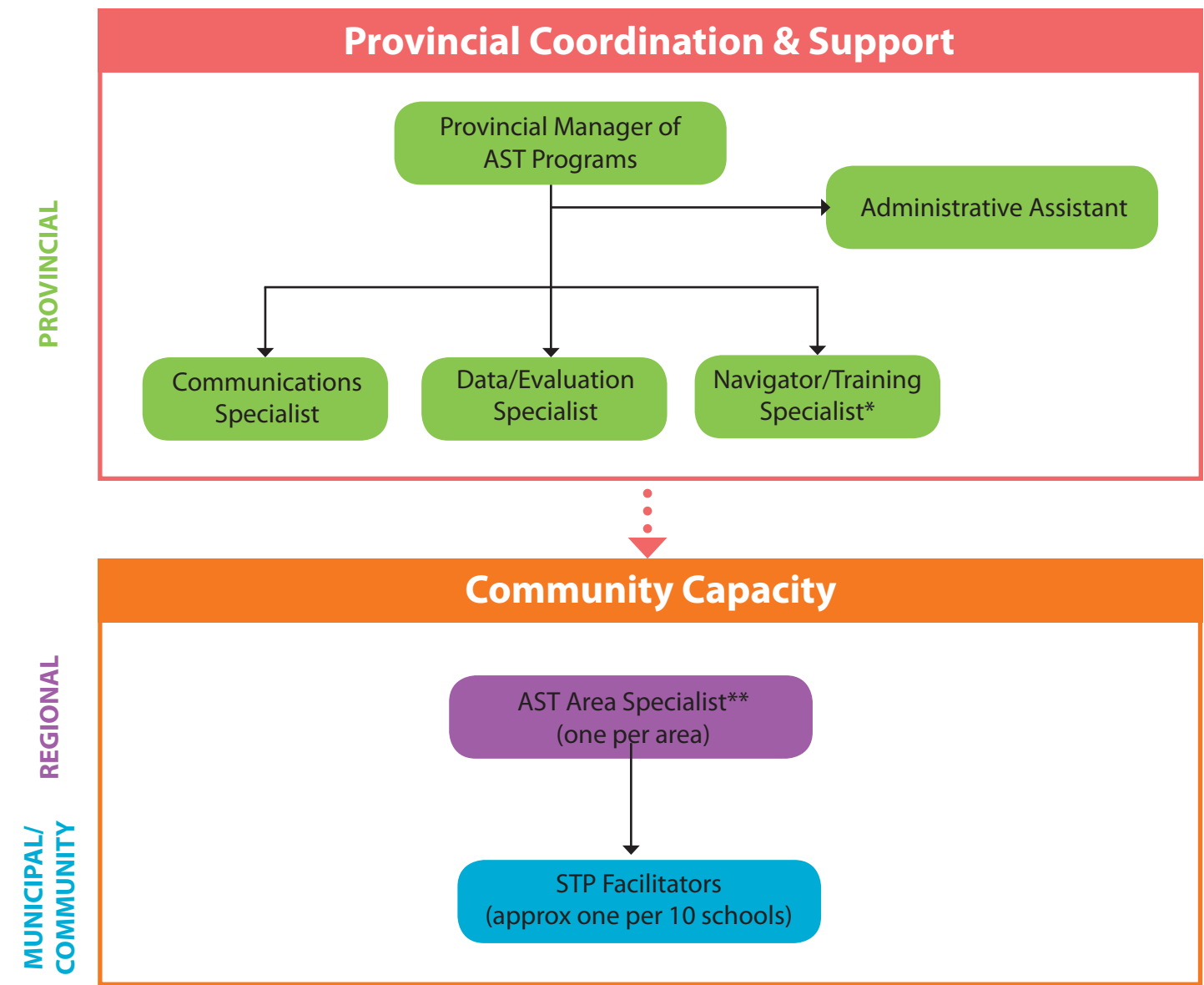
Feedback About Community Capacity Section

- Public Health nurses and champion teachers can be STP facilitators or co-STP facilitators.
- Need to have someone dedicated to STP role in each region.

Appendix 5:

Suggested Organizational Chart for Provincial Roll-Out of School Travel Planning

The diagram below summarizes a vision of only paid “internal” AST staff. These individuals will be accountable to their respective funders and will work closely with numerous “external” stakeholder groups that will be essential to developing and implementing strong School Travel Planning efforts (but are not shown in the diagram).



* A Navigator/Training Specialist helps Facilitators and AST Area Specialists get familiar with the STP process and tools, supporting the “on-boarding” of new communities as well expansion to new schools. Depending on how quickly STP rolls out across the province, there may be the need for more than one person in this role.

** For the purposes of supervision/management of STP Facilitators and handling any activities that are most efficient at a regional level, it will be necessary to have regional staff in place. The province will have to be divided into “areas” that one staff person can reasonably oversee. In municipalities where there is only one Facilitator, that person will likely act as the Area Specialist and Facilitator.

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