

Ontario Active School Travel Fund

Final Progress Report for INNOVATE Stream

Reporting Period: March 1, 2021 – March 15, 2022

Contents of this progress report:

- A. Project delivery
- B. Communications
- C. Evaluation
- D. Project Sustainability

Questions within each section that require a response are highlighted in **blue text**. Please provide full answers in paragraph form. There are a total of 15 questions to be addressed.

Submission Requirements for this Progress Report

Please submit the items listed below by email to Kate Berry kberry@greencommunitiescanada.org by **Tuesday, March 15, 2022** at the latest. Your input is valuable and will inform GCC's reporting to the Government of Ontario. It will also help to shape future active school travel programming and funding initiatives.

Items for submission to GCC:

1. Copy of this **Final Progress Report** (Word file) with all tables and questions completed

There will be an opportunity to ask questions about the Progress Report requirements at the OAST Fund Group Meeting in February 2022. In addition, you may contact Kate Berry for assistance at kberry@greencommunitiescanada.org.

1) Please provide the following project and contact information:

Project Name	Enhanced School Zones Pilot
Project Location(s)	Cambridge, Ontario
Progress Report completed by:	
Name(s)	Leslie Maxwell
Position(s)	School Travel Planning Supervisor
Organization(s)	Student Transportation Services of Waterloo Region

A. Project Delivery

Over the past school year, we have faced some extraordinary circumstances across the province that have required OAST Fund projects to review and adjust project plans and budgets (e.g., Covid-19-related school closures and restrictions). Projects also regularly face ordinary changes in circumstances, such as planned resources being unavailable, or recruitment of staff/volunteers taking extra time. As you respond to the questions below, consider how you have adapted your project delivery in response to both ordinary and extraordinary circumstances.

Project Plan

2) Please indicate the overall completion rates for your project delivery up to March 15, 2022:

Total Number of tasks/deliverables in your Project Plan:	10
Number of tasks/deliverables completed to date:	9
Number of tasks/deliverables not completed to date:	1
Number of tasks/deliverables that had to be cancelled or significantly altered:	1

3) Please describe any tasks/deliverables on your original Project Plan that could not be completed or had to be altered – what challenges were faced, how have you adapted your plan and how would you mitigate similar circumstances in the future? E.g., timing of activities, duration of tasks, availability of resources.

Hands' up data and family data was not possible due to ongoing moratoriums on data collection during the pandemic. We were finally approved to conduct this data collection in February, 2022, well after this project was completed.

Project Budget

4) Overall, was the actual spending for your project in line with your original budget? If there were adjustments or deviations, please explain why.

Overall, spending was in line with our original budget except on municipal contract for services and materials that was budgeted at \$26,000, with \$23,000 coming from the OAST fund. In an effort to create interventions that can be widely installed, the municipality used a lower-cost solar-powered flashing light in each school zone sign instead of the larger, wired, type that would have cost more per light and far more for installation. The total for all materials was actually just \$9,138, leaving close to \$14,000 unspent. We hope that OAST will be open to allowing the city to use these extra funds to install enhanced school zones in more schools, which will also allow us to implement at a time when all data collection will be feasible.

Project Highlights

As your project is coming to a close, this is an ideal time to reflect on your project's processes and achievements.

5) Please describe **three highlights from your project** – e.g., *achievements that your project team is most proud of, greatest impacts in your community/communities, new opportunities/partnerships developed, unexpected successes.*

1. Forging stronger relationships with Councillor Ermeta and Mayor McGarry. Cambridge has been a difficult area to develop cross-sectoral relations at the administrative level and this project truly opened a door of communication not only with STSWR, but also directly with the school boards. These relationships have already produced a wonderful side-outcome; Mayor McGarry worked with WRDSB to gain information before proposing a motion to Regional Council to lower speed in a school zone on one arterial roadway, and to review all others across the region in the coming year. Additionally, Councillor Ermeta has cc'd STSWR on responses to citizens with concerns about safety in school zones, even offering the data we collected in this project.
2. Bringing senior board staff and municipal leaders to the children they serve at our launch event. The pandemic closures and restrictions have meant that staff has not been able to visit schools for many purposes. Because our event was outside and socially distanced, they were allowed to attend this one. I heard from a couple of them that they were grateful for a chance to interface with students directly for the first time since March 2020; and the Mayor was particularly engaged and then called to task by one student with a list of suggested improvements!
3. Creating a reason for greater inspection of school zone treatments by stakeholders. The results of interventions at 4 schools show that none of the interventions is effective enough to mitigate dangers to children accessing school sites. Because we still lack compliance, this project begs the question "what more is needed;" and with strengthened relationships with municipal council, I think we're poised to explore that question further and to back up new recommendations with the results of this project.

B. Communications

Media Events

6) Please describe the media event completed for your project. If the media event has not yet happened, please indicate what you have planned.

Date of media event	September 17, 2021
Location	Gail St near Avenue Road PS and Saginaw Parkway between Clemens Mill and St. Margarete of Scotland
Short description of the media event held/planned	"Looking Out For Each Other;" Students shared sidewalk chalk messages between coterminous schools before select student Safety Ambassadors met with municipal and board officials for a tour of the new infrastructure. Students shared their reactions to the new infrastructure and stories about their own commutes to school.

List any key decision-makers, elected officials or other VIPs who attended/will be invited	St. Peter Principal EJ Hunt St. Margaret of Scotland Principal Jodie Schnarr Clemens Mill Vice Principal Vinay Tiwari Avenue Road PS Principal Marc Lehman WCDSB Superintendent of Business Shesh Maharaj WCDSB Superintendent Annalisa Varano WRDSB Superintendent of Business Matthew Gerard WRDSB Superintendent Jodi Albrecht WCDSB Trustee Wendy Price WCDSB Trustee Melanie Van Alphen WRDSB Trustee Joanne Weston Ward Councillor Nicholas Ermeta Mayor Kathryn McGarry MPP Belinda Karahalios
List any hyperlinks to articles or media coverage related to the event	<i>City of Cambridge blog post</i> https://www.cambridge.ca/Modules/News/index.aspx?newsId=a0a5b393-3295-44c9-a566-63178cf5eea5# <i>Cambridge Times</i> https://www.cambridgetimes.ca/community-story/10480011-enhanced-school-safety-zones-in-cambridge-to-combat-chronic-problem-of-bad-driver-behaviour/

Story Telling

- 7) **Please provide a summary of your story telling activities – how have you shared the content, impacts and results of your project with your community/communities?** E.g., *website pages, blogs, videos, social media posts, news media articles.*

Story Telling Activity <i>e.g., website pages, blogs, videos, social media posts, news media articles.</i>	Audience(s) Targeted <i>e.g., Students, Teachers & Staff, Parents & Guardians, Decision-makers</i>	HyperLink to the story-telling materials if available online. If not, please attach a digital copy to your progress report.
Presentation – Finding Common Ground	<i>Elected officials School Board Staff</i>	See Appendix A “Enhanced School Zone” slide, and view the whole presentation here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=75K_M-rORDs&t=1875s
Invitation	<i>Elected officials, school board staff</i>	See Appendix B “Invitation”
Social Media	<i>Parents, schools, media, elected officials</i>	https://twitter.com/STSWR/status/1438983813795917835

		https://twitter.com/MelVanAlphen/status/1438981520958578691 (RT) https://twitter.com/cityofcambridge/status/1438969416373395456 (RT) https://twitter.com/weston_jd/status/1439025601134927876 (RT) https://twitter.com/STSWR/status/1440452562893688837 https://twitter.com/STSWR/status/1441022588738809857 (RT) Total STSWR impressions 15,079 Total STSWR engagements 155
Electronic message home	Parents	See Appendix C “Electronic Message Home”
Future Board Presentations		Planned for spring 2022

8) Please provide any methods of engagement for each audience below that you would recommend to other communities based on your experience in the project.

Students	Principals love to engage students in these civic projects that link learning to real action.
Teachers, staff and administration	Really pitch the fact that these activities will help them address traffic issues, boost student wellness by encouraging more AST, and create a more equitable environment for students accessing the school.
Parents and guardians	This was difficult during the pandemic as parents weren’t allowed on site. We created a message for principals to send home electronically. In the future, we may use placards at each school at commute time to draw attention to the changes and use the parent communication as a handout to share with drivers.
Decision-makers (e.g., regional and local elected officials and senior staff, including school boards, public health and municipalities)	Schedule the event on a day that they are not engaged in committee or council meetings. Give as much notice as possible. Develop relationships with administrative staff so you will receive a reply with details.

C. Evaluation

Participation

- 9) Please provide the total number of schools and students that received support from your project:

	Received Direct Support*	Participated Overall**
Number of schools	4	4
Number of students (estimated)	40	1700

* **Direct Support** means focussed support from a Facilitator and/or participating in a specific program such as School Travel Planning or Walking School Bus.

** **Participated Overall** means any form of support from the project, such as access to online information and tools, attendance at events/workshops. Includes Direct Support.

Key Performance Indicators

As your project is coming to a close, this is an ideal time to review and update the Key Performance Indicator Table for your project, to compare progress against your targets and reflect on how data you collected has been/will be used. (Note that GCC does not require an updated copy of your KPI Table)

- 10) What were the main challenges you experienced when collecting data and evaluating the success of your project?

A moratorium on data collection in schools and with school communities stopped us from gaining information about mode split. Even creative workarounds like the modal split audit were not allowable.

Evaluation of the project was difficult as different technology was used to collect pre data as opposed to post data. The post studies did show positive results, however, the City will be conducting new studies in the spring using the same technology as the pre studies to compare the results.

In addition, pre-data at one location was not possible due to a short time frame between installation and the event; so post collection is all we had to go on at that location. Gratefully, the post data does show that vehicles are complying to the posted speed over the course of the day.

11) What tools and techniques do you recommend for successful evaluation, based on your experience from the project?

We were extremely pleased that the City of Cambridge overcame some staffing shortages to provide wonderful support through the project. Municipal volume and speed tools are generally more accurate than the physical counts that STSWR is able to perform, and they are able to count traffic for longer periods of time so the impact to traffic at all times of day can be reviewed.

However, our physical counts did allow us to look at specific behaviours at precise school commute times - so the combination of the two is ideal.

We also look forward to testing whether these interventions result in more families choosing to use active school travel, but we are very satisfied knowing they at least make it safer for those who are already walking.

12) Of the KPIs that have been tracked for your project, which do you consider to be the most useful for getting buy-in from community partners and/or 'making the case' for further investment in AST projects in your community?

We aimed to reduce volume by 5% and to restore speeds to the posted speed limit. For this purpose, speed compliance and volume numbers collected by the city are likely the largest considerations for our municipal partners. That said, the mode split data could potentially push a city to consider changes that may not be warranted by their traditional data. In no uncertain terms, the more data the better.

D. Project Sustainability

Achieving sustained change in travel behaviours takes time. The OAST Fund supports initiatives that achieve a significant and lasting impact in their communities by establishing a **foundation for continuing growth in active school travel**.

As your OAST-funded project comes to a close, it is time to reflect on the lessons learned and the capacity built that can be taken forward to support long-term shifts from passive to active school travel in your community.

Please review the sustainability measures that you identified in your original proposal as you answer the questions below.

13) **What are the key lessons learned from your project to take forward to future AST initiatives; e.g., what advice would you give to other organizations implementing a similar project working towards the same outcomes?**

- Early data is promising, but to prove a project like this we need more time after installation
- Having a number of different tools available helps to adapt for different school situations
- Multiple school locations with various contexts and types of neighbourhoods provided a good opportunity to test different treatments in different environments.
- Permanent driver feedback signs within the school zone may have a more positive impact on driver behaviours than in other areas of the city
- Installation of changes over the summer gave time for all installations to be complete for school opening but not much time for pre- data collection
- The event gave us an opportunity to draw community-wide attention to the changes

14) **What aspects of your project could be readily adapted/implemented in other schools or communities?**

- Solar powered flashing beacons over school zone signs are affordable, easy to install, and it seems, helpful in drawing greater attention to the school zone
- Painting the word “SCHOOL” on the roadway in the zone is also affordable and easy to install
- The addition of a “drive slowly” tab to existing school zone sign posts requires no locates or posts so is also very easy to install

15) Please identify any key knowledge resources that were developed locally for your project that you can share with other Ontario communities.

A 'knowledge resource' is a resource or tool that could be adapted and used by other communities'. E.g., activity sheets, information brochures, video series, lesson plans, evaluation tools.

Name of Knowledge Resource	Description (Format, Purpose, Reference)
Driver Behaviour Data tools	Paper tally sheet/ google sheet with pivot tables; collect and organize data; Appendix D Driver Behaviour Data Tally Sheet and Appendix E Driver Behaviour Data Table sample
Take home information sheet	PDF; share information about the interventions with families; Appendix C "Electronic Message Home"

Final Thoughts

Please use this space to add any other information that you would like to share with the Ontario Active School Travel Fund. E.g., comments, reflections, feedback, recommendations.

Please Appendix F: for photos. The event was very well received, but if equipment is installed on a large-scale basis, individual events will not be possible. We will need to engage media and communications at a higher level.

The installation of this equipment was exciting for politicians, who really want to create safer spaces for children.



Appendix B: Invitation


LOOKING OUT FOR EACH OTHER
TWO BOARDS COMING TOGETHER WITH THE
CITY TO CELEBRATE STUDENT SAFETY

Join us for a tour of
New!
Enhanced School Zones

17 SEPTEMBER 2021 AT 12:45 PM
40 GAIL ST, CAMBRIDGE

17 SEPTEMBER 2021 AT 2:05 PM
SAGINAW PARKWAY AT LIONS CAN-AMERICA PARK

Tour will run rain or shine...dress accordingly!



Looking Out For Each Other

ST. MARGARET CES & CLEMENS MILL PS CELEBRATE STUDENT SAFETY


New enhanced school zones at
St. Margaret CES and Clemens Mill PS!
Our students toured the zone and shared
messages of safety with each other.
These zones aim to encourage
better driving behaviours near our children.

CHANGES INCLUDE

- Flashing lights on all school zone signs
- Signs now include "Maximum 40 kph" & "Drive Slowly" notices
- "School" road markings painted on Saginaw Parkway and Cowan Boulevard

DO YOUR PART AND DRIVE SAFELY NEAR SCHOOL!
OUR STUDENTS DEPEND ON YOU!

Further walking and biking resources:
www.stswr.ca/walkzone/home-support





Looking Out For Each Other

ST. PETER CES & AVENUE ROAD PS CELEBRATE STUDENT SAFETY

New enhanced school zones at
St. Peter CES and Avenue Road PS!
Our students toured the zone and shared
messages of safety with each other.

These zones aim to encourage
better driving behaviours near our children.

CHANGES INCLUDE










- Flashing lights on all school zone signs
- Signs now include "Maximum 40 kph" & "Drive Slowly" notices
- Mid-street flexible bollards on Gail Street

**DO YOUR PART AND DRIVE SAFELY NEAR SCHOOL;
OUR STUDENTS DEPEND ON YOU!**

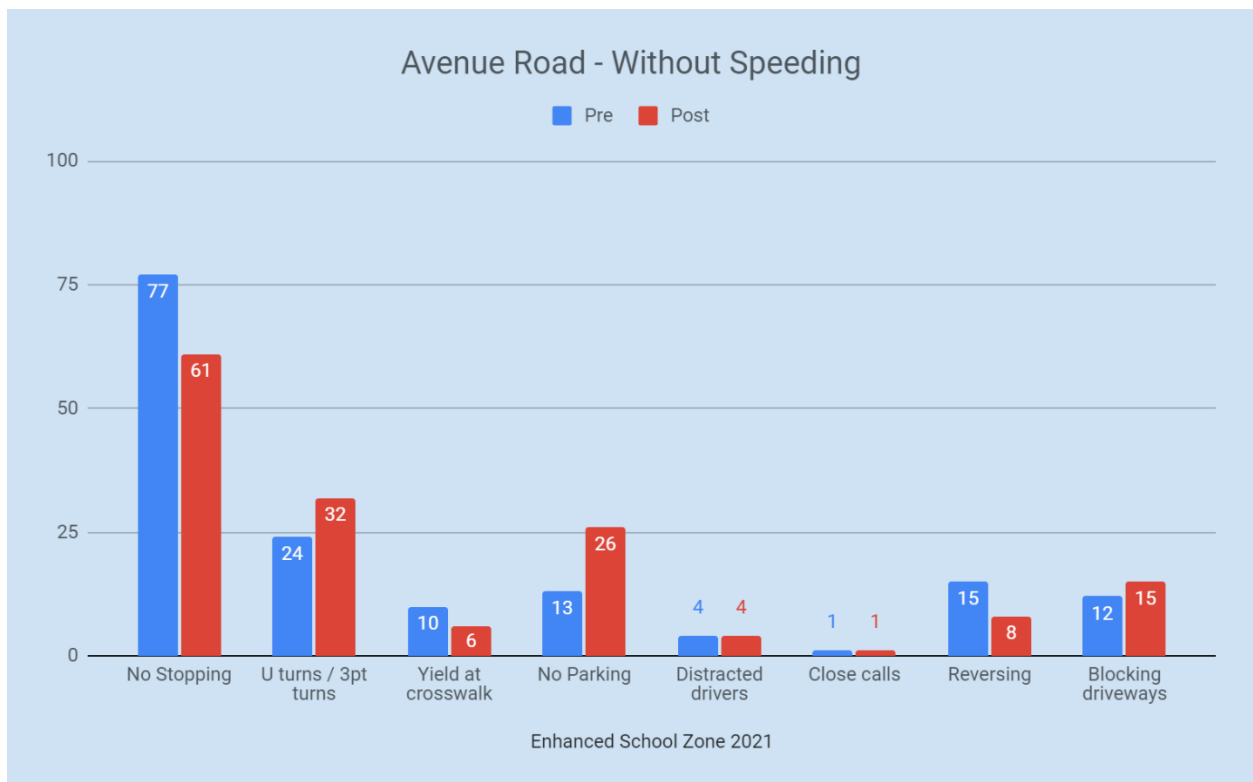
Further walking and biking resources:
www.stswr.ca/walkzone/home-support/



Appendix D: Driver Behaviour Data Tally Sheet

Priority	BEHAVIOUR	DESCRIPTION	AM COUNT	PM COUNT
Primary		Count any driver who stops or parks in no stopping space, including in school driveway entrance		
		Count all u-turns and 3 pt turns		
		Count drivers who do not yield to pedestrians all the way across the street at Red X or crossing guard locations.		
Secondary		Count any driver who parks in no parking space - vehicles may stop but drivers may not abandon the vehicle		
		Count drivers on cell phones, eating, or other distractions. Record other specific distractions.		
Tertiary		Count blatant "close calls" between cars and pedestrians		
		Count drivers who reverse in the school zone.		
		Count drivers who block private driveways		
		Count drivers who are obviously speeding above the posted speed		

Appendix E: Driver Behaviour Data Table



Appendix F: Pictures



