

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

TO: *MAYOR AND COUNCILLORS*

SUBJECT: **ACTIVE SCHOOL TRAVEL PLANNING STRATEGY UPDATE**

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the report titled "Active School Travel Planning Strategy Update" dated March 27, 2024, be received for information.

REPORT

The Transportation Committee, at its meeting held on March 27, 2024, received and adopted the attached report providing an update on the Active School Travel Planning Strategy.

On behalf of the Transportation
Committee,

Councillor R. Lee
Chair

Councillor D. Tetrault
Vice Chair

TO: TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE (TC)
FROM: GENERAL MANAGER ENGINEERING
SUBJECT: **ACTIVE SCHOOL TRAVEL PLANNING STRATEGY UPDATE**
PURPOSE: To present an update on the Active School Travel Planning Strategy project.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the report titled “Active School Travel Planning Strategy Update” dated March 27, 2024, be received for information.

1.0 POLICY SECTION

The Active School Travel Planning Strategy project supports the City of Burnaby’s Corporate Strategic Plan and goals for a safe, connected, healthy, and dynamic community. The project is also aligned with Council-adopted goals, policies, and targets within Burnaby’s Transportation Plan and the City’s Climate Action Framework that supports a sustainable, safe, and accessible transportation system.

2.0 BACKGROUND

The City of Burnaby is home to the Burnaby School District No. 41, which is the fourth largest school district in the province and one of the most culturally diverse school districts in Canada. As the City’s proportion of younger demographics continues to grow, developing a School Travel Planning Strategy for safe active school travel is important to not only promote sustainable mode shifts, but to also ensure that children and families have access to a safe and healthy transportation network that can support future growth.

In 2022, the City completed the Burnaby Elementary School Traffic and Safety Study that included all forty-one public elementary schools within School District No. 41. The study reviewed existing traffic conditions and identified improvement measures to address operational and safety concerns within the immediate vicinity of each elementary school. The Active School Travel Planning Strategy focuses on the primary grades between Kindergarten and Grade 7. This project will build upon the recommendations identified in the 2022 study and develop a strategic framework through which the City can identify the necessary resources, programs, and activities to encourage, support, and facilitate active school travel. This project is aligned with TransLink’s TravelSmart4Kids regional strategy and is partially funded through the Infrastructure Canada’s Active Transportation Fund.

3.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

3.1 Existing Conditions Key Takeaways

The project team has completed an initial review of existing conditions, including current demographic trends, school district profiles, school attendance patterns, and travel mode share. A summary of the key takeaways is described below.

School Attendance Patterns

Approximately 75% of students attend school within their catchment area. This means most students at the elementary school level live within a walkable or bikeable distance from their school. The proportion of students attending a school outside their catchment area and the high number of specialty programs with larger catchment areas suggest a need to create programs and initiatives that support longer multimodal trips.

Demographic Trends

Burnaby is a diverse community where 50% of the population are immigrants, almost 70% identify as a visible minority and 35% speak a language other than English at home. Programmatic activities aimed at increasing active travel should reflect this diversity and be culturally sensitive. Activities targeting new immigrants or translation of some key materials will be important to promote active and sustainable travel behaviours.

Travel Mode Share

On average across the City, approximately 60% of students are being driven to school with approximately 32% of students walking. This suggests a solid foundation for active transportation and high potential to encourage more students to walk, cycle, or use other micromobility devices. Early education can target younger students to prepare them for future years when they have more autonomy in their travel mode choices.

3.2 Program Development

Collaborating with various stakeholders including staff at Burnaby School District No. 41 and RCMP, the project team is currently developing the elementary school framework for the Active School Travel Planning Program. Based on information gathered from the existing conditions and ongoing stakeholder engagements, the framework will identify core strategies and specific actions that can be applied through a toolbox of measures to support and grow the Active School Travel Planning Program in the City. The final program will also include success indicators, resourcing and funding streams, and a monitoring/evaluation plan.

4.0 COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The project team conducted interviews with core stakeholders, including School District No. 41, TransLink, and RCMP, and a virtual summit was held on December 11, 2023, where all the stakeholders, including ICBC and Fraser Health, were brought together

and co-created a vision and goals for the Active School Travel Planning Program. The interviews and virtual summit helped the project team to better understand current opportunities and challenges in the development of this city-wide program. Ensuring continued collaboration and participation from these core stakeholders will be key to developing a strategic framework that is actionable and can respond to existing needs and realities in the City.

The stakeholder engagement process is currently ongoing, and a survey will be shared with core stakeholder members to solicit feedback on topics that will help the project team develop the overarching framework for the Active School Travel Planning Program.

5.0 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The Infrastructure Canada's Active Transportation Fund has approved \$50,000 for this project.

Respectfully submitted,

May Phang, P.Eng., General Manager Engineering

REPORT CONTRIBUTORS

This report was prepared by Po Sun, M.Sc., ACIP, Transportation Planner, and reviewed by Kathy Ho, P.Eng., PTOE, Senior Manager, Transportation, and Amy Choh, P.Eng., PMP, Director Engineering, Transportation.