
SCHOOL TRAVEL PLAN

Larson Elementary



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National Active & Safe Routes to School

www.saferoutestoschool.ca/school-travel-planning

HASTe BC

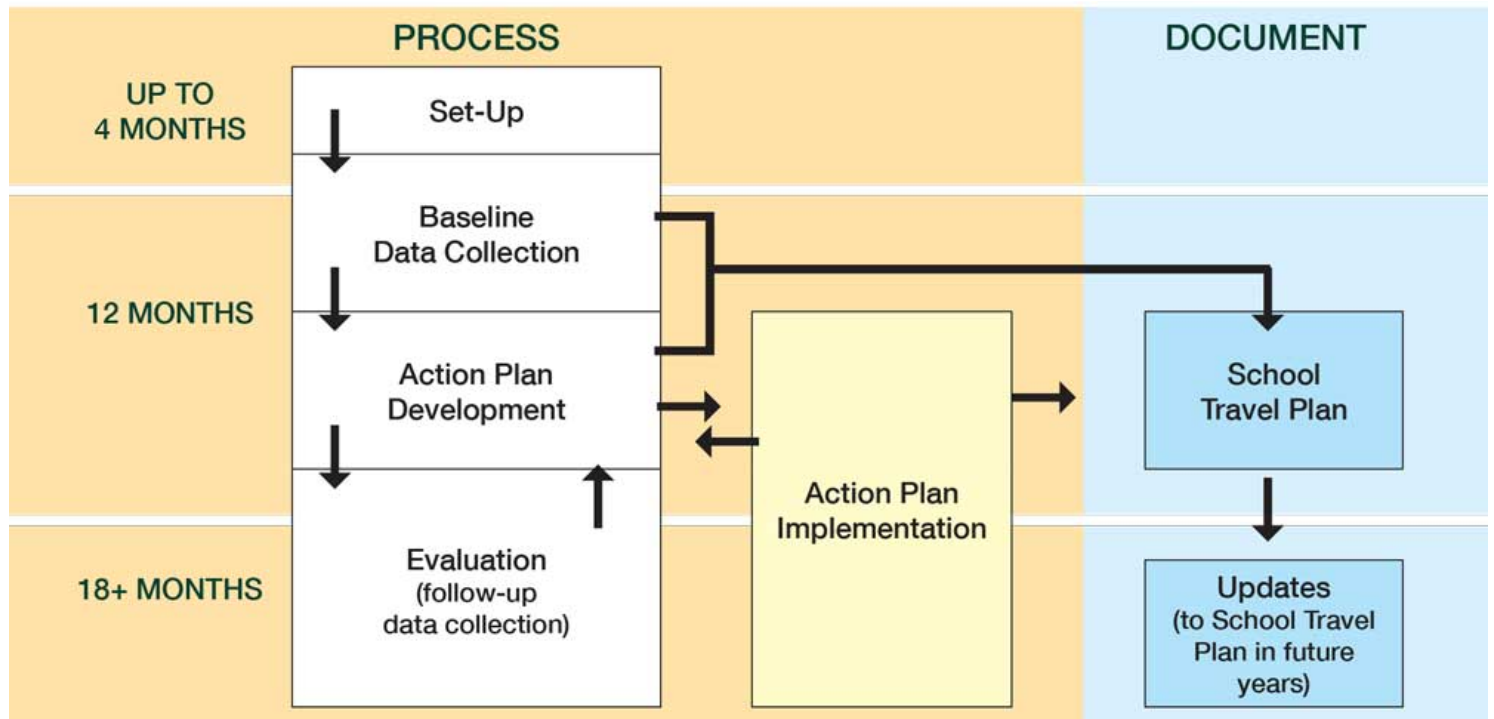
www.hastebc.org

School Travel Planning

School Travel Planning (STP) is a community-based planning process that has been used with success to date in communities across Canada. The goal is to increase the number of families choosing active transportation modes to get to and from school. School Travel Planning uses a collaborative approach, working to involve all relevant stakeholders and enable communities to tackle the root causes of their schools' transportation challenges.

School Travel Planning is overseen and resourced in each community by a Steering Committee comprised of representatives of key school-transportation stakeholder groups. At individual schools, the School Travel Planning process is led by an STP Facilitator, who convenes a School Committee, comprised of staff, parents, administration, and other community stakeholders to outline specific active school travel barriers and solutions, developing the foundation and specifics for each school's School Travel Plan.

School Travel Planning employs a linear process that takes the better part of a year to complete. Individual stages inform subsequent ones but can overlap, so the overall process is kept flexible in order to address issues and respond to opportunities as they emerge. A graphic illustration of the School Travel Planning process can be seen below.



▲ The School Travel Planning process

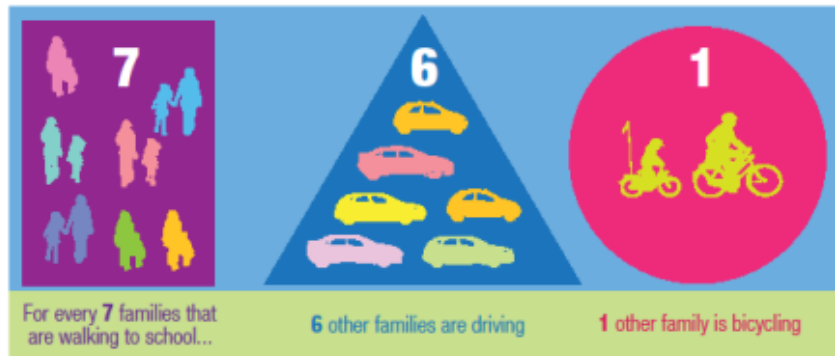
School Travel Planning in the City of North Vancouver

In 2013, a survey was conducted in partnership with the North Vancouver School District (SD44) and the District of North Vancouver in order to better understand issues specific to the areas surrounding schools and determine how students currently get to and from school.

SUMMARY REPORT
School Travel Survey

In the Fall of 2013, families from the North Vancouver School District elementary schools were asked to fill out an online school travel survey. The survey was a joint initiative between the School District, the City of North Vancouver and the District of North Vancouver.

WHAT WE HEARD



WHO WE HEARD FROM

- 1,586 families from 26 elementary schools across the North Shore responded
- Families with children enrolled in Kindergarten through Grade 7 were represented equally
- Of the families that responded:
 - 55% have one child in elementary school
 - 35% have two children in elementary school
 - 10% have three or more children in elementary school
- 25% of respondents are enrolled in French Immersion programs and 5% are enrolled in International Baccalaureate (IB) programs

TOP FIVE REASONS WHY PARENTS DRIVE THEIR CHILDREN TO SCHOOL



▲ **Results from the 2013 survey**

The City's Safe and Active School Travel Program (SASTP) combines education and outreach with improvements to the transportation infrastructure surrounding schools in order to encourage safe and healthy travel habits. The City of North Vancouver, in cooperation with the North Vancouver School District, TravelSmart, and the Heart & Stroke Foundation, launched the SASTP at Queensbury Elementary in 2014.

After launching the SASTP program at Queensbury in 2014, North Vancouver City staff and the RCMP reviewed each public elementary school zone while considering the results of the survey. School administration was consulted to identify which schools would be most appropriate for expanding the SASTP. North Vancouver City staff contracted HASTe (Hub for Active School Travel) to develop and implement actions that minimized safety issues around schools and facilitated programs that encouraged walking and cycling to school.

In spring 2015, the program was extended to Larson and Ridgeway elementary schools. A copy of the invitation letter sent to the school is included as Appendix D to this report. The program addressed safety issues beyond the immediate school property and included the development of Best Routes to School plans, taking walkability and safety issues into account. The program involved bringing together numerous stakeholders and partners, including school staff, parents, students, City of North Vancouver staff, and many others, to identify issues and develop solutions.

During this process, current transportation issues (such as busy crossings and barriers to active transportation) and opportunities (such as existing pedestrian and bicycle paths) were identified around each school.

City of North Vancouver staff have prioritized the SASTP program due to growing concerns over school zone safety issues and low levels of physical activity amongst children in North Vancouver. With a shift in travel norms and lifestyles among families, and increasing concerns about safety, there has been an increase in parents driving their children to school over the last few decades. The SASTP program allows City of North Vancouver staff to identify opportunities to make strategic and impactful improvements to the transportation infrastructure surrounding schools, educate and reach out to students and families about safer travel behaviour, and encourage walking and biking to and from school.

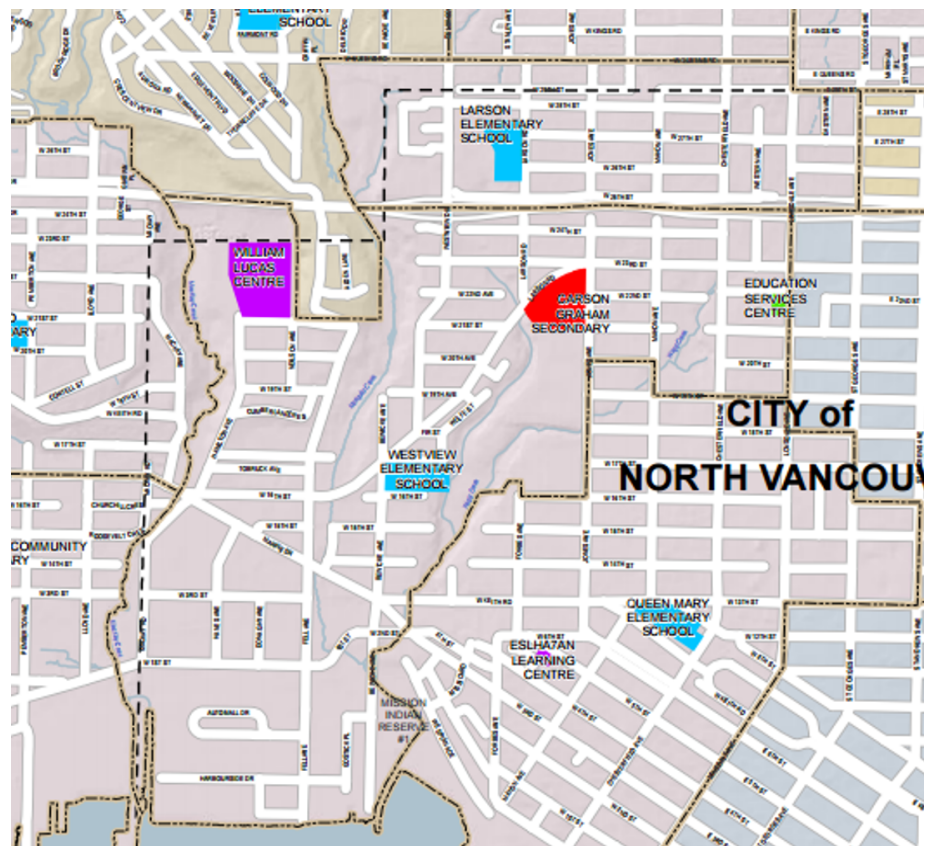
The School Travel Plan

This School Travel Plan is a living document belonging to the school. It should be revisited regularly to update the status of Action Plan items and to incorporate future evaluation findings. This document consists of information compiled since The City of North Vancouver Safe and Active School Travel Program (SASTP) began at Larson Elementary School in the spring of 2015.

About Larson Elementary

Larson Elementary School (hereinafter Larson) is located on the northern border of the City of North Vancouver at 2605 Larson Rd. The school is within walking distance of several popular amenities, including Westview Plaza, Delbrook Recreation Centre, the District of North Vancouver Municipal Hall, Edgemont Village, Delbrook Park and the Capilano Branch Library. It is nestled within a residential neighbourhood just north of Hwy 1.

The neighbourhood has a Walkscore of 70/100 and a Bikescore of 41/100. Each score is a measure of neighbourhood accessibility, and is often an indicator of community health and well-being (www.walkscore.com). The neighbourhood features hilly terrain, few designated bike lanes and several large roads. A map of the school's catchment area can be seen below.



▲ Larson catchment area

Larson is a public elementary school providing instruction to approximately 470 students from Kindergarten through Grade 7. It is a dual-track school that offers both an English program and a French Immersion program. The French Immersion program has a larger catchment area, meaning that some Larson families travel considerable distances to and from school. Additionally, Larson's proximity to Hwy. 1 makes it convenient for parents to drop their children off at school on their way to work out of town.

“We are planning to try to bike/walk to school at least twice a week this spring.”

- Larson Parent

Baseline Data Collection Methodology

School travel data was collected through a variety of methods, including student hands-up surveys, parent online surveys, and school walkabouts. Baseline hands-up surveys and baseline family online surveys were completed in April 2015, and a walkabout involving members of both the Municipal Steering Committee and the SASTP committee was conducted in May 2015. Follow-up surveys were conducted in June 2016, the results of which are detailed in the Evaluation section of this document

In-Class Hands-Up Student Surveys

Baseline hands-up student surveys were coordinated by HASTe and facilitated by Larson teachers and staff in April 2015. These surveys involved students self-reporting which modes of transportation they used to travel to and from school each day for one week.

Usually, this data is used to capture school travel mode share before and after the STP process. However, the follow-up surveys were lost by the school administration, making it impossible to compare baseline and follow-up results. Therefore, mode share data captured in the family online survey is used in this report.

Family Online Survey

Further information regarding the school journey and family travel habits was gathered through a family online survey and a take-home route-mapping exercise in April 2015. The class with the highest rate of participation received a \$50 prize. A copy of the Family Online Survey is included as Appendix E to this report.

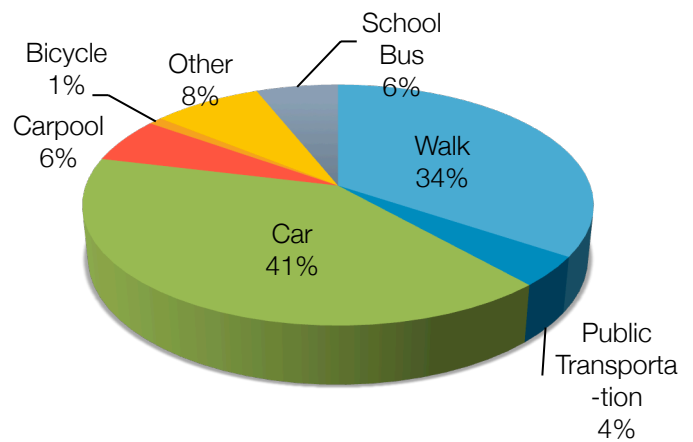
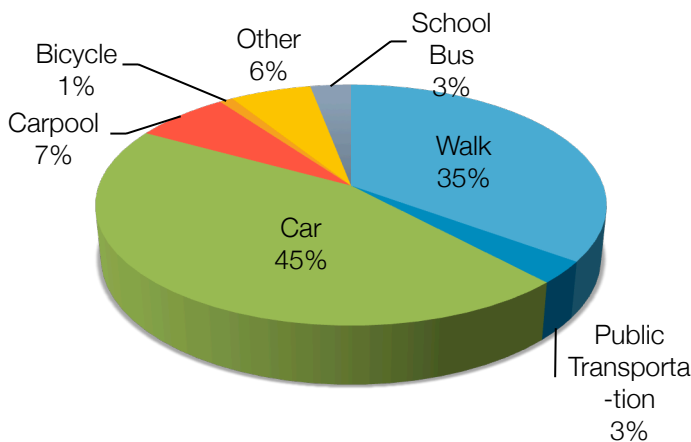
Survey Participation

The administration at Larson suggested that sending the route-mapping exercise home with each family’s youngest child would elicit a higher response-rate from parents. The STP facilitator designed a family online survey and a take-home route-mapping exercise. A letter was sent to all teachers, suggesting that the route-mapping exercise be presented as a take-home family assignment and announcing a \$50 reward for the class with the highest rate of participation. The surveys returned represented just

under 50% of the student population at Larson, and likely more than half of the school’s families.

Mode Share

The family online survey revealed that many students at Larson (45%) were being driven to school, while about a third of students and families (35%) walked.



▲ **Travel mode to school – 2015 family online baseline survey**

▲ **Travel mode from school – 2015 family online baseline survey**

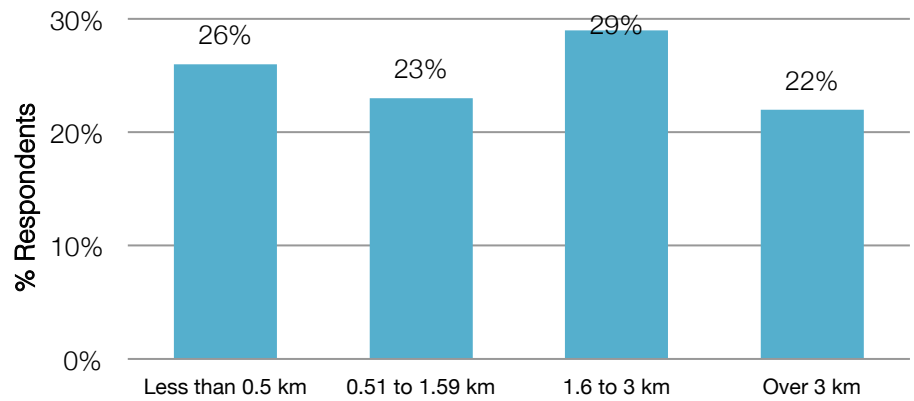
“It is encouraged to drop kids off a couple of blocks away from the school.”

- Larson Parent

Distance Travelled to School

Larson is a dual-track school, with both English and French Language programming. As such, it was not surprising that over 50% of families who completed the family online survey indicated that they lived more than 1.6km from the school. It is not uncommon for French Immersion schools to enrol a high number of students who travel relatively long distances to school. Such populations are less able to directly substitute a walking or cycling trip for a driving trip, but can still incorporate an active or sustainable component into their trips to and from school by carpooling, using transit, or walking partway.

▼ **Travel distance to school**



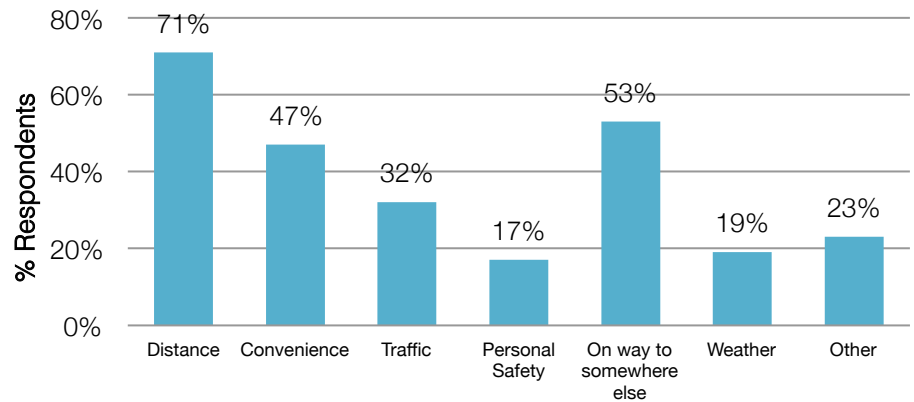
Reasons for Driving

The family online survey results suggest that the main reason Larson families drive to school are “distance,” which aligns with over 50% of surveyed families reporting that they live more than 1.6km from school; and that parents drop off their children “on [their] way to somewhere else,” which aligns with the school’s proximity to the highway. These results help to explain why many families at Larson drive to school. Distance presents a real barrier to active travel, but Larson’s location in a walkable grid-street neighbourhood and its proximity to recreation centres and parks make it possible to easily increase active trips to and from school.

▼ **Reasons for driving child(ren) to/from school**

“Speeding isn’t as much of a factor for Larson, thankfully, but it’s the dangerous parking, stopping, manoeuvres, and poor consideration to pedestrians crossing that make our school zone hazardous.”

- Larson Parent



Inducements to Walk or Cycle

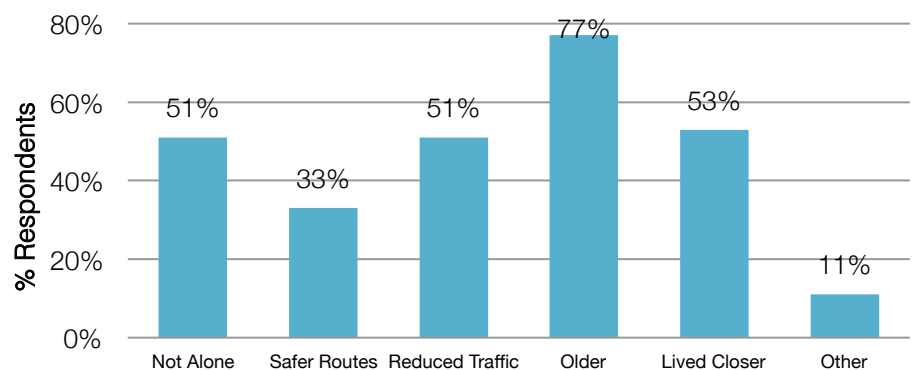
When asked what changes would encourage them to allow their children to walk to school, the most popular option chosen by driving parents at Larson was if “they were older,” at 77%. The second most common answer was if “they lived closer” (53%).

“PALS – We need more bike racks!!”

- Larson Parent

However, survey results indicated that students in the oldest (10-12 years) group at Larson walked to school at a similar rate (43%) to the youngest (4-6-years) students (44%), while only 26% of students aged 7-9 years old walked or scooted to school. This suggests that age is more of a perceived, rather than real, barrier to active travel.

▼ Parents would allow child to walk to/from school if...

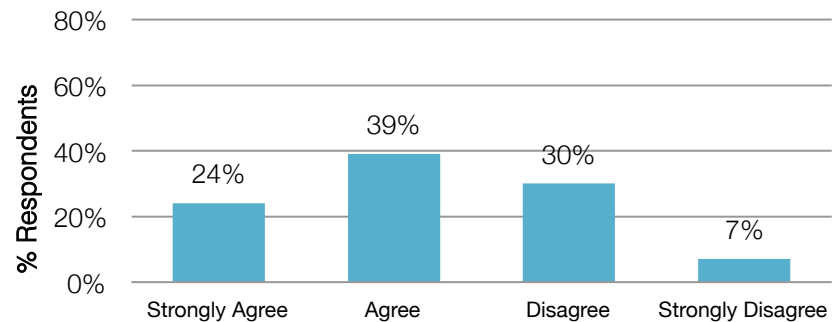


Neighbourhood Safety

The majority of parents surveyed (63%) believed that their neighbourhood was safe for children. However, over a third of

parents disagreed with this statement. This could pose a significant barrier to letting their children walk or cycle to school.

▼ “Our neighbourhood is safe for children”



Walkabout

Members of the City of North Vancouver SASTP committee and the Municipal Steering Committee joined members of the Larson community on Thursday, May 7th, 2015 to conduct a school walkabout. The purpose of the walkabout was to provide key stakeholders with an opportunity to learn about the walking and cycling experiences of families on their routes to school.

Walkabout participants were divided into two groups: one focused on key safety concerns to the north and west of Larson, while the other focused on concerns south and east of the school.

Each participant was given a map that listed top areas of concern to observe on the walkabout. Points of interest observed during the walkabout are documented below. They include

- Sight line distances from crossings to road curves, blind corners, & school and transit stops.
- Adequacy of lighting along walkways.
- Clarity of wayfinding and signage.
- Behaviour of drivers in the school zone and on nearby streets.
- Street-crossing behaviour and crosswalk use by children and families.
- Daycare pick-up.

- Type, volume, speed, noise and pollution of traffic on surrounding streets.
- Presence and conduct of heavy trucks in the school zone and on nearby streets.
- Timing of traffic lights and the pedestrian phase.
- Accessibility for all ages and all abilities (sidewalk letdowns, audible and visual alerts at traffic signals, etc.).
- Potential for park-and-walk, drive-to-5, or walk-a-block-or-two schemes and parking locations.
- Emergency vehicle access.
- Proximity of bike paths or lanes, and their suitability for children and families.
- Presence, location, accessibility and effectiveness of bike and scooter parking and storage facilities
- Suggested walking and cycling routes
- Lighting and wayfinding on forest paths and trails.

A copy of the information package prepared for walkabout participants is included as Appendix I to this report. A map of the route travelled during the walkabout is included as Appendix B to this report.

Travel Challenges Summary

Like many schools, Larson experiences several traffic safety issues and barriers to active transportation. The most pressing of these are documented below, along with potential impacts and solutions. A full list of all actions and recommendations for Larson can be found in Appendix A to this report: the School Travel Action Plan. The Action Plan was provided to the Children and Youth Safe and Active Travel Working Group for review, and to the City of North Vancouver, which will determine the feasibility of the solutions contained therein.



▲ **Jones Ave. north of the pedestrian overpass**



▲ **Jones Ave. alley from W25th St**

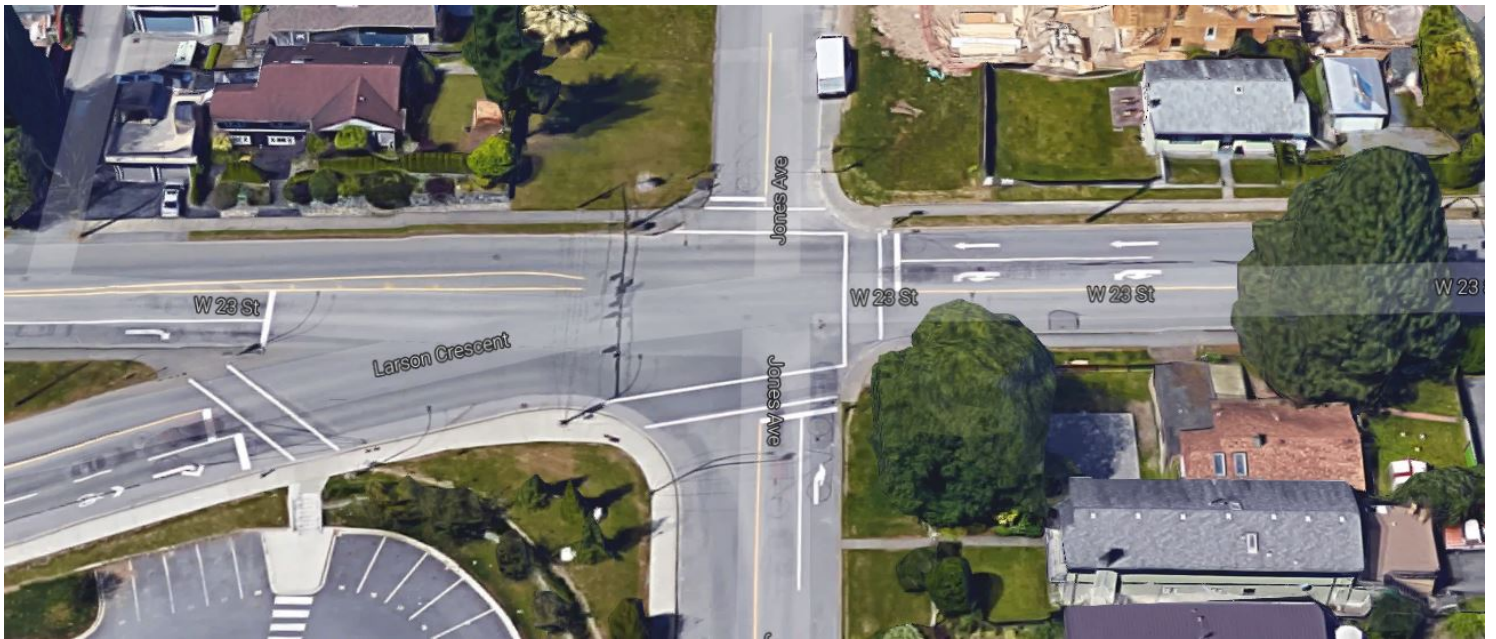
1.

Jones Ave. between W25th St. & W28th St.

Parents expressed concern through the family online survey that the lack of sidewalks on the west side of Jones Ave. placed students walking to school too close to vehicle traffic.

During the meeting after the walkabout, a parent expressed that Jones Ave. was a popular walking route both for students using the pedestrian overpass over Hwy. 1 and for residents of the neighbourhood. When asked, students expressed that they preferred to avoid Jones Ave. and W26th St. and instead walk through the alley between W25th St. & W26th St. to get from the overpass to the school.

During the walkabout, it was observed that many drivers also used the alley to exit or enter the school zone, rather than using W 25th St. During the post-walkabout meeting, stakeholders discussed several options for reducing vehicle use of the alley, including using cones as a barrier, posting “resident-only” signs at the alley entrance, and distributing letters to residents in order to raise awareness of the alley’s use as a school walking route and the efforts that were being made to reduce its use by driving parents.



▲ An aerial view of the Larson Cres. / Jones Ave. / W 23rd St. intersection



▲ West side of Larson Cres. / Jones Ave. / W 23rd St. intersection

2.

Jones Ave., W 23rd St. and Larson Cres. Intersection

Parents expressed a number of concerns about this multi-road intersection through the family online survey.

Currently, there are no north-south crossing provisions for pedestrians on the west side of the intersection; pedestrians wishing to cross are required do so on the east side of the intersection. However, a number of parents reported that pedestrians, including students walking to school, frequently do cross north-south on the west side of the intersection instead of completing the longer



▲ **Looking north on Jones Ave. towards Highway 1**

process of crossing over to the east side of the intersection before proceeding north or south or using the special crosswalk at W 23rd St. and Larson Rd.

North of the intersection, there is no sidewalk on Jones Ave. for pedestrians approaching the Hwy. 1 pedestrian overpass. This is a particular issue for parents at Larson, as this stretch of Jones Ave. was proposed as a potential drive-to-five location for Larson families living south of Hwy. 1.

During the post-walkabout meeting, several strategies were discussed that would address concerns about the intersection, including:

- Repainting crosswalk markings on north, east and south sides of the intersection, to improve their visibility.
- Installing an additional crossing on the west side of Jones Ave., across both W23rd St. and Larson Cres., to facilitate pedestrian crossings.
- Installing a level gravel path on the east side of Jones Ave., south of the intersection, as a temporary measure until a full sidewalk can be installed.
- Adding painted bike boxes on the south side of the intersection to improve the visibility of, and facilitate turns by, northbound cyclists turning left onto Larson Cres. and W 23rd St.

The US National Association of City Transportation Officials' Urban Street Design Guide notes that "[i]rregular intersections... [are] often overbuilt and confusing, [and] present safety hazards to all users." Normalizing the intersection at Jones Ave. and W 23rd St. would likely be the most effective way to address the many concerns voiced by Larson families. Dan Ross, a Larson parent and a consultant with a local engineering firm, provided some

suggestions on how this might be accomplished. These are attached as Appendix A to this plan.

3.

Larson Rd. & W 28th St.

Both through the parent survey and during the stakeholder walkabout, members of the Larson community expressed that they felt parked vehicles and over-grown vegetation were impeding sightlines and visibility at this popular school pedestrian crossing. During the post-walkabout meeting, parents and stakeholders suggested many potential measures to improve sightlines, including:

- Requesting that residents trim over-grown vegetation on the southwest corner.
- Investigating the possibility of converting the intersection into a four-way stop.
- Designating stretches of Larson Rd. close to the intersection as no-parking or no-stopping zones in order to prevent cars from parking near the intersection, thereby improving both sightlines for drivers and the visibility of pedestrians waiting to cross.
- Realigning and editing the curb returns on the west side of the intersection to match the east side.
- Installing curb bulges on the northwest and southwest corners of the intersection (Refer to Appendix A for a more detailed description).



▲ Larson Rd. approaching W 28th St. intersection from the north



▲ W 28th St. approaching Larson Rd intersection from the west

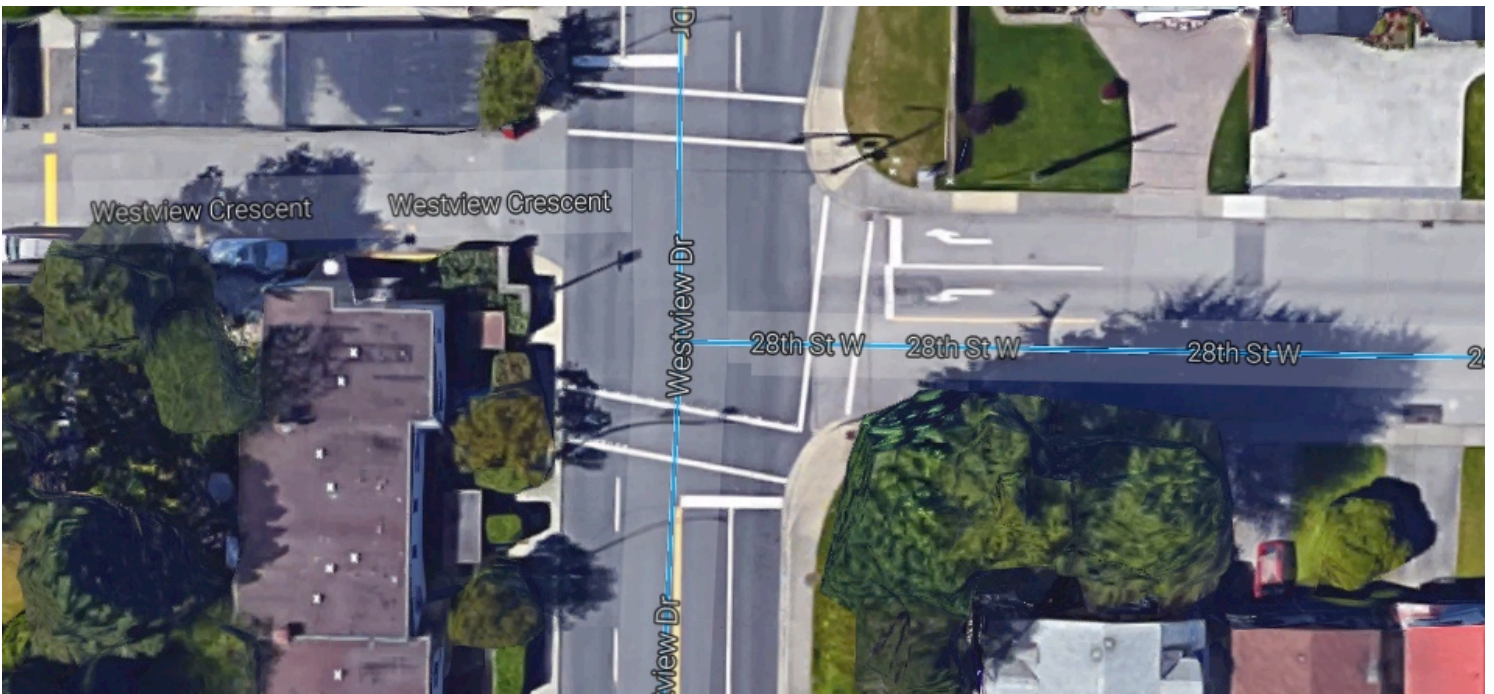


▲ **Westview Dr. and W 28th St. intersection**

4.

Intersection of Westview Dr. and W 28th St.

Westview Dr. is a popular walking route, a bus route, and a primary connector to Hwy. 1. At its three-way intersection with W 28th St. there are pedestrian-activated traffic lights, a no right-turn-on-red restriction, and supervision provided by a paid adult crossing guard during the periods both before and after school.



▲ **Aerial view of the Westview Dr. and W 28th St. intersection**

According to the online survey results, this intersection is part of the walking route to school for many Larson families, and is the subject of a number of traffic safety concerns. Parents expressed that the speed of traffic; poor driver



▲ **Approaching intersection opposite complex exit/entrance**

behaviour, including running yellow lights and not adhering to the no-right-turn-on-red restriction; and the presence of a townhouse-complex entrance exit into the intersection, combine to make this intersection unsafe for pedestrians, even with the crossing guard's assistance.

The participants at the walkabout suggested a few measures to improve traffic safety at the intersection of Westview Dr. and W28th St., including:

- Increasing enforcement.
- Requesting that the townhouse-complex owner reinstall mirrors, or remove the walls at the complex driveway, in order to improve visibility and sightlines.

5.

W Queens Rd. & Stanley Ave. Crosswalk

Larson sits on the border between the District of North Vancouver and the City of North Vancouver. Through the family online survey, some Larson families who live in the District of North Vancouver expressed concerns about the crosswalk at W Queens Rd. and Stanley Ave., which is located in the District of North Vancouver.

There is a painted north-south crosswalk on the west side of the intersection of W Queens Rd. and Stanley Ave. During the walkabout participants looked at sightlines and walking distance across W Queens Rd. and observed drivers failing to stop for pedestrians in the crosswalk.

Members of the school community related that, in addition to being used by Larson families, this crosswalk was used by seniors, young families and youths going to Delbrook Community Recreation



▲ **View of crossing on W Queens Rd. & Stanley Ave.**

Centre. If the crossing were improved, staff at Little Rascals Daycare, who currently drive two vans (approx. 40 students) full of Larson students the three-block journey to school, have expressed that they would be willing to walk their charges to school.

The suggestions raised by the school committee for this intersection and walking route include:

- Installing a pedestrian-activated light or signal.
- Installing a curb bulge-out on the north west corner of the intersection in order to improve visibility and reduce road width and crossing distance.
- Widening the sidewalk on W Queens Rd. to provide a boulevard for pedestrians and reduce crossing distances at the intersection.
- Requesting that residents on the west side of Larson Rd. and W Queens Rd. trim their hedges.

Refer to Appendix A for further information about these suggestions.



▲ **Larson Rd. at W Queens Rd. May 2016, after the hedge on the west side was trimmed**



▲ **An RCMP officer issuing a driver a ticket in the Larson school zone during the 2015 Safety Blitz**

6.

Traffic safety in the school zone

Traffic safety in the school zone was the most commonly raised issue in the family online surveys. A number of parents expressed concerns and complaints about traffic safety on Larson Rd. Many of these focused on driver behaviour, including failure to stop for pedestrians at the crosswalk in front of the school and lack of adherence to posted parking and stopping regulations during the periods before and after school.

The Larson PAC and Principal Cathy Piteux have sent out multiple reminders through their newsletters and social media about the importance of following the rules of the road and driving safely in the school zone. The school zone itself has clear signage outlining parking restrictions and designated drop-off zones as well as two marked, traffic-calmed crosswalks.

During the walkabout, participants observed that the school zone was busy and congested with motor vehicles. Many drivers were observed parking and stopping their vehicles improperly. Several drivers were observed double-parking and performing U-turns in the school zone during the period just before school.

During the post-walkabout meeting, stakeholders suggested a number of changes that could improve traffic safety conditions in the school zone, including making the street one-way during peak times, encouraging families to drive around the block in a uniform direction, and increasing enforcement.

The discussion inspired the creation of a video by HASTe BC called “What Did You Teach Me Today?” The video’s message was based on a poem that the former PAC chair Kevin Barefoot used in his

newsletters to relay the message that parents' actions often speak louder than their words, as well as the importance of following traffic rules and modelling mindful behaviour.

Transportation Goals

The main goal of the School Travel Planning process is to increase active transportation, which reduces the volume of vehicles in the school zones and makes those areas safer.

Achieving this goal requires the school to make active transportation programs, events and promotions a part of their school culture. The schools that see the best results are those that take the events and make them into community building opportunities. Allowing the students to own the events reduces the number of parent volunteers required and ensures that they will be promoted through the student population.

The more fun the event, the more families will participate, and once families get to know each other the neighbourhood in turn is perceived as being safer, friendlier, and more walkable. Parents then start looking out for others if they are driving, making the roads safer. Furthermore, they will know who lives close to them and they will empower their children to walk together or share walking duties. This frees up parents' time and promotes their children's independence and self-confidence.

However, the messaging to parents must always focus on active transportation first so that it becomes the norm. It must be a focus during Kindergarten Orientation, when new families join the school community, and within school communications. Therefore, the goal is always a work in progress.

The next section outlines the interventions undertaken to date to achieve and support these goals.



Goal 1: Improved traffic safety in the school zone

Improving traffic safety in the school zone was the top priority expressed by parents through the family online survey. In addition to forthcoming measures that are identified in the Action Plan (Appendix B to this report), the following actions have been undertaken to date to address this issue.

Engineering

City of North Vancouver staff reviewed the signage around the school zone to ensure that appropriate signage was present. City of North Vancouver staff also assessed the suitability of the alley between W25th St. and W26th St. from Jones Ave. to Larson Rd. as a walking route, and the need for sidewalks in the area.

Education

The PAC, school and school district all play a role in education about the benefits of active school travel and the importance of traffic safety in the school zone.

They worked to promote safety within school zones through the Why Walk or Roll communication on both school district and school websites, as well as in student agendas, Kindergarten registration packages, and the superintendent's welcome email.

The school and PAC distributed copies of the Best Routes to School Map in both hard and soft copy, through social media, and on the school website.

The school's STP group established a preferred direction of flow for motor vehicles in the school zone in order to help ensure that parents who drove their children to school released them on the curb side of the street. This was communicated through PAC and Principal newsletters.

In June 2016, The City of North Vancouver launched a communication campaign called Look Think Go aimed at educating citizens about the importance of sharing the road. The campaign provided information about the rules of the road for all road users and was communicated through the City of North

Vancouver's website, the local newspaper, flyer drops, and a short movie that was played throughout the summer at North Vancouver City events. In October 2016, branded reflectors and stickers were given out at the City of North Vancouver's Bike to Work week celebration station.

The Best Routes to School Map also dedicated a panel to the Look Think Go campaign in order to educate families about the role we all play in sharing the road safely.

Encouragement

The City of North Vancouver partnered with the RCMP, bylaw officers, the fire department, ICBC, and the community police to hold a series of events aimed at educating members of the school community about the importance of traffic safety and recognizing those using active transportation.

These events were held during the first week of school in September and the week after winter break in January. They were promoted to the school community in order to bring awareness to school zone safety and provide a teaching opportunity regarding the rules of the road and the benefits of active school travel.

Key stakeholders distributed information and stickers. An opportunity to check out the fire truck and receive City of North Vancouver swag were used to draw parents and students into conversations about the importance of sharing the road to ensure safety for all road users.



Time to start thinking about this.....be safe, be active, be considerate!

Safe Routes 2 School

WALK, RIDE OR ROLL
Students who use active modes of transportation to school show:
• Better concentration ability.
• Have lowers risk of obesity, heart disease, cancer & diabetes in the long run
• Are more likely to get the required 60 mins of daily physical activity.

DRIVE TO 5
Avoid the crowds, by parking a few blocks away & walking your child to school. After school, meet your child in the school yard & walk to the car together. You may learn interesting things about their day.

WATCH THE SIGNS
• Obey the street signs, they are posted for everyone's safety.
• Drop off / pick up zones are designated spots for your child to safely exit or enter your car from the curb side. Keep things moving.

BE RESPECTFUL
Students, staff and parents volunteer as traffic patrolers to help keep EVERYONE safe. Show your appreciation for their important work by being respectful and following their directions.

“DON'T BE THAT DRIVER”
It's easy to make mistakes when you're in a rush. Don't speed, block lanes of traffic, make U turns, double park, block driveways, pass cars at a crosswalk or use the drop off zone as a parking lot. These actions put students at RISK.

SLOW DOWN
After labour day, you will be required by law to slow down to 30km/h between 8am & 5pm on school days where school zone signs are posted.

WEATHER
Worried about getting wet in the rain or your child getting cold? Dressing your child(ren) with rain-boots and hooded jackets for the walk to school weather also means they are prepared for the weather at OUTDOOR recess.

TICKET

IS A FRIENDLY REMINDER:
We can all make health and safety a priority for students by following a few simple steps.

WALK, RIDE & ROLL
Students who walk, ride or roll to school have something in common: better concentration, lower risk of obesity and heart disease, lower risk of depression and much more fun!

DRIVE TO 5
5 minutes away that is. Try parking a few blocks away and walking your child to and from school. You'll avoid the school zone chaos, get some fresh air and have the chance to learn something interesting about their day.

SLOW DOWN
School zone speed limits are 30km per hour between 8am-5pm on school days. Please don't speed.

SET AN EXAMPLE
Speeding, double parking, blocking driveways and making U-turns is unsafe and puts students at risk. Set an example for other drivers.

WATCH THE SIGNS
Respect posted signs and pay attention to designated drop off / pick-up areas. Never allow a child to cross mid-block.

DID YOU KNOW?

91% OF CANADIAN YOUTH AND **51%** OF CANADIAN ADULTS

Are not getting the recommended levels of daily physical activity. **Make it part of your daily routine.**

ICBC TIPS FOR SAFE WALKING:

LOOK! Always look left-right-left and shoulder check before crossing.

LISTEN! Remove your headphones so you can hear approaching traffic.

BE SEEN! Wear reflective materials or bright clothes and use lights after dark.

CITY OF NORTH VANCOUVER
141 WEST 14TH STREET
NORTH VANCOUVER BC / V7M 1H9
T 604 985 7761

North Vancouver School District
100 HASTIE DRIVE
NORTH VANCOUVER BC
T 604 985 7761

HASTE

city of north vancouver

▲ Safety Blitz information handout

▲ Enforcement Blitz “ticket”

The continued presence of bylaw and police officers, especially after school breaks, showed the commitment of key stakeholders to ensuring safe routes to school, and also provided parents with a sense of security.

Enforcement

City of North Vancouver staff coordinated a traffic-safety enforcement blitz from February until April in partnership with City bylaw officers and the North Vancouver RCMP.

This was a targeted enforcement and outreach campaign held at five public elementary schools (Queen Mary, Ridgeway, Larson, Queensbury, and Westview). Using primarily “Friendly Reminder” Tickets, we focused on positive, solutions-based messaging to engage residents and parents to bring about awareness of the safety concerns, and the health and environmental impacts of a congested and unsafe school zone.

Some warnings and infraction tickets were also handed out. The overall feedback was positive: officers enjoyed the experience and parents appreciated the intense focus on student safety.

Goal 2: Youth engagement and leadership in creating a culture of active school travel

In the fall of 2015, Larson students participated in Cool Route to School, HASTe's student engagement program. Cool Routes to School generates active transportation strategies developed by student leaders to change school transportation attitudes and behaviour. Funding for the Cool Routes to School program at Larson was provided by TransLink's TravelSmart program.

Principal Cathy Piteux assembled the Larson student leadership group on October 16, 2015. The group met every Wednesday for 13 weeks over the lunch period. Principal Piteux assisted with equipment and reminder announcements. She was provided with weekly updates. The group named themselves Smog B Gone and used an environmental angle to promote the increase of active trips to school.



▲ TravelSmart engagement assembly

Education and Encouragement

While learning about the benefits of active transportation, students also learned they can have an impact and influence on their peer group and with their parents.

The Smog B Gone group started a poster campaign at Larson that focused on communicating the benefits of walking and cycling to-and-from school. Images showed students enjoying physical activity, portrayed walking to school as fun and cool, and provided tips on walking safely.

Smog B Gone created their own cartoon concept, with characters they imaged after themselves, and created a two-minute short animated film. The film was posted on social media by HASTe, the City of North Vancouver and the Parent Association of Larson school (PALs), and has received a lot of attention online. It was played as part of the pre-show to the August 19th, 2016 Movie in the Plaza showing of *The Princess Bride*.

In October 2016, the Smog B Gone team travelled by transit to the City of North Vancouver's municipal hall to share their movie with the Mayor and City of North Vancouver Staff. The students enjoyed sharing what they learned in the Cool Routes to School program. Their field trip was shared with the school community through social media and the PAC newsletter. The attention and publicity assisted in keeping the momentum from Walk and Wheel Week going.



▲ **Smog B Gone City Hall movie screening**

Goal 3: Encouraging active and safe trips to school

Prior to its participation in the School Travel Planning process, Larson did not have an active transportation program and had never participated in Walk & Wheel or Bike to School Week events.

Education

TransLink's TravelSmart staff held an interactive school assembly in October 2015, where students learned about the benefits of active transportation to the environment and to their physical and mental health.



▲ TravelSmart assembly

Encouragement

Special Events

The Smog B Gone student group and the Larson PAC embraced the fun of the Walk and Wheel Week in October and the Bike to School Week in May. They arranged fun events and special guests for each day of the week. These week-long events provided an opportunity for parents and students to try a new mode of travel, enjoy the benefits of active transportation, and experience how much calmer the school zone can be with fewer vehicles present.



▲ Bike to School Week at Larson

The Principal's cooperation enabled the STP facilitator to host multiple events during the year to promote active school transportation: Walk & Wheel Week, Bike to School Week, and Kindergarten play dates. These events have become a permanent part of Larson's culture and annual schedule, and are successful in part because they tap into the school and PAC's pre-existing community-building goals.

Larson hosted Bike to School Week in the spring of 2015 and 2016, during which the school held theme days and activities such as bike decorating, bike rodeos, appearances by special guests, and carnival games. A copy of the school's Bike to School Week plan is included as Appendix F to this report, and a copy of the school's Bike to School Week poster is included as Appendix G.

During the Walk and Wheel Week in October 2016, the PAC promoted active transportation through social media and invited special guests to visit the school, including the Mayor, members of the local Fire Department, RCMP officers, North Vancouver Recreation staff, and Elmer the Safety Elephant. It rained frequently during Walk and Wheel Week 2016, but this did not dampen the positive atmosphere.

Community events such as Bike to School Week and Walk and Wheel Week strengthen relationships within the school, building a strong sense of community and helping people feel more secure.

Communication With Parents

The STP School committee and Principal expressed that in the past parents had not heeded calls to modify their driving and parking behaviour in the school zone. During the STP process, the committee updated its approach to focus on the positive, and replaced long written communications with images, short films, social media, and maps. The friendly format and the variety of mediums used to communicate messages seem to have captured a larger audience.



▲ **Active and Safe Routes to School communications through Larson social media**

▲ **Active and Safe Routes to School communications through Larson social media**

During the back-to-school period of 2015, the North Vancouver School District board chair and superintendent’s social media and

newsletters shared the same message about the benefits of safe active school travel. Together, they presented a united front with their Welcome Message:

“Students who walk or bike to and from school, even part of the way, benefit from regular exercise and begin each day more alert and ready to learn. Please help us to reduce traffic around schools by leaving the car at home. If that’s not possible, parking within walking distance helps to reduce school zone traffic congestion, safety risks, and pollution while promoting a healthy, active start to the day.”

In August 2016, the North Vancouver School District launched their “Why Walk & Roll to School” campaign. The District website now features a banner explaining the benefits of active school travel, and provides resources for parents and teachers to encourage active transportation within their schools. The message has spread to every school website’s Parent tab, and resides on the Safe and Caring School section of the school district’s website.



- [Active and Safe Routes to School](#)
- Walk
- Cycle/Roll
- Transit/Carpool/Drive-to-Five
- Freedom Friday
- Partners

Active and Safe Routes to School

The North Vancouver School District encourages students to walk or roll to and from school.



▲ SD44’s 2016 Walk or Roll to School campaign

Each North Vancouver school’s 2016-2017 agenda now includes a graphic promoting a healthy mind, body and environment. The agendas will be provided in hard copy for each school’s parent reference library, and will be a part of the Kindergarten registration package in 2017-2018.

Goal 4: Best Routes to School Maps

A route-mapping exercise was sent home at the same time as the baseline family online survey; it asked families to specify their route to school if they were to use an active mode of travel. These routes were then collected and plotted on to heat maps. A copy of the school’s heat route map is included as Appendix H to this report.

The facilitator evaluated the most-used routes against the list of safety concerns collected through the family online survey, and plotted out possible best routes to school. These routes were

reviewed with the school committee and municipal staff, and were walked by the student committee. The students were asked:

- Are there any barriers or dangers on this route?
- How could they promote the route to their peers?
- Would their parents have any concerns with this route?

Larson's Smog B Gone team identified that they preferred walking through the alley between 25th St W and 26th St W to using the sidewalk on 26th St W because of the number of cars on the street, cars trying to park along the street and the narrow width of the sidewalk. Additionally, they related that the alley was quieter and gave students more room to walk.

The students assisted in crafting a letter to the residents on the two streets that shared the alley, advising them that the school would be promoting the alley as a preferred walking route. The school would be encouraging parents not to drive through the alley, and would be incorporating the alley into schoolyard clean-up efforts. The letter was delivered to neighbours in late August, 2016. The school did not receive any negative feedback from the neighbours about its plan for the alley.

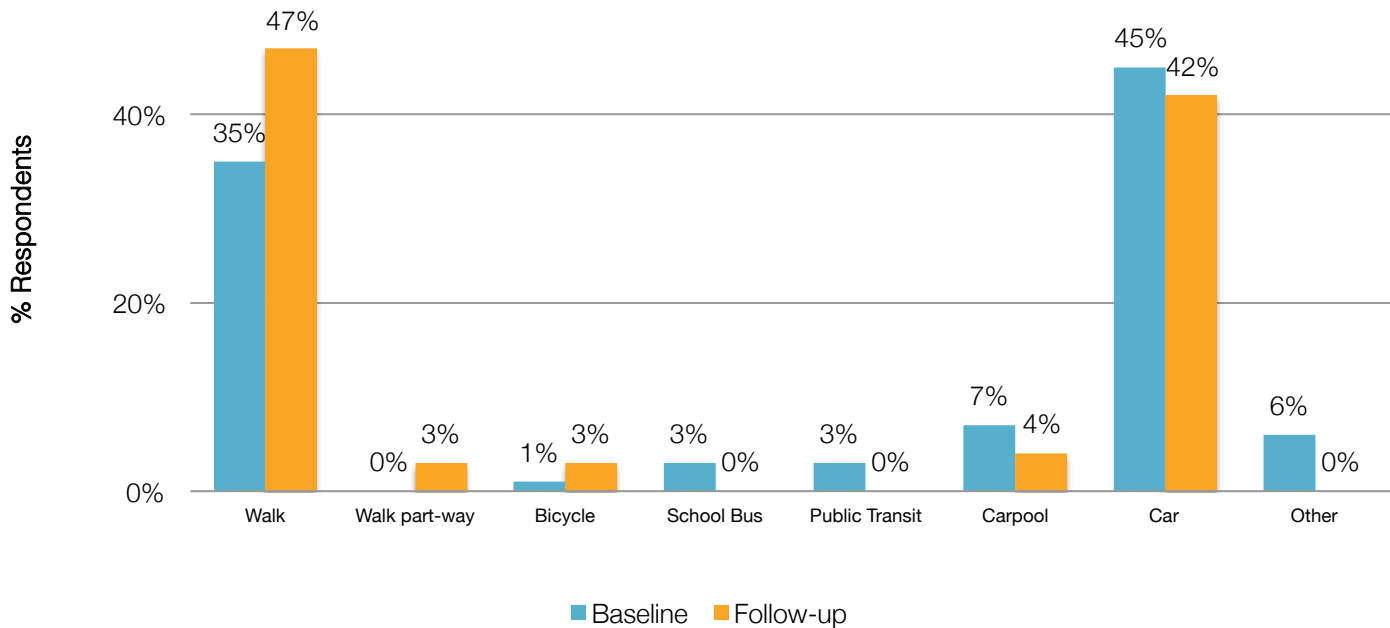
Once the routes and letter were approved by key stakeholders, the best routes map was made into a Best Routes to School flyer, printed, and added to the Welcome Back to School Package sent home to families in September, 2016. A digital copy was also provided to the school and PAC to be hosted on their websites. A copy of the map is included as Appendix C to this report.

Follow-Up Surveys

School travel follow-up data was collected through a family online survey that was conducted in June of 2016, just over a year after baseline data was collected. 53% of families at Larson participated in the follow-up family online survey. Unfortunately, the follow-up hands up survey results were lost by the school’s administration.

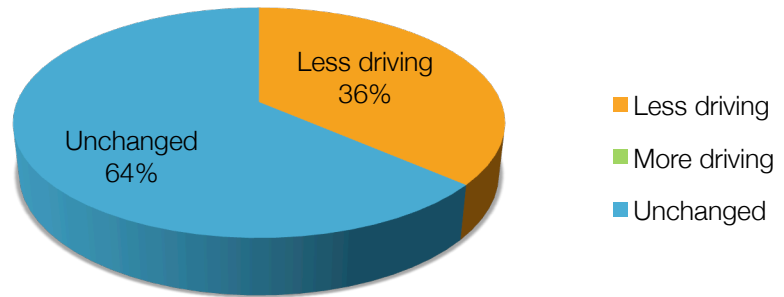
Evaluation Results

In the baseline survey conducted in April of 2015, 35% of families reported walking to school, while 45% reported that they usually drove to school. In the follow-up survey 47% of families at Larson indicated that they usually walked to school, while 42% reported that they drove (single family). Additionally, 3% of driving parents indicated that they dropped their children off away from school so that they could walk part-way.



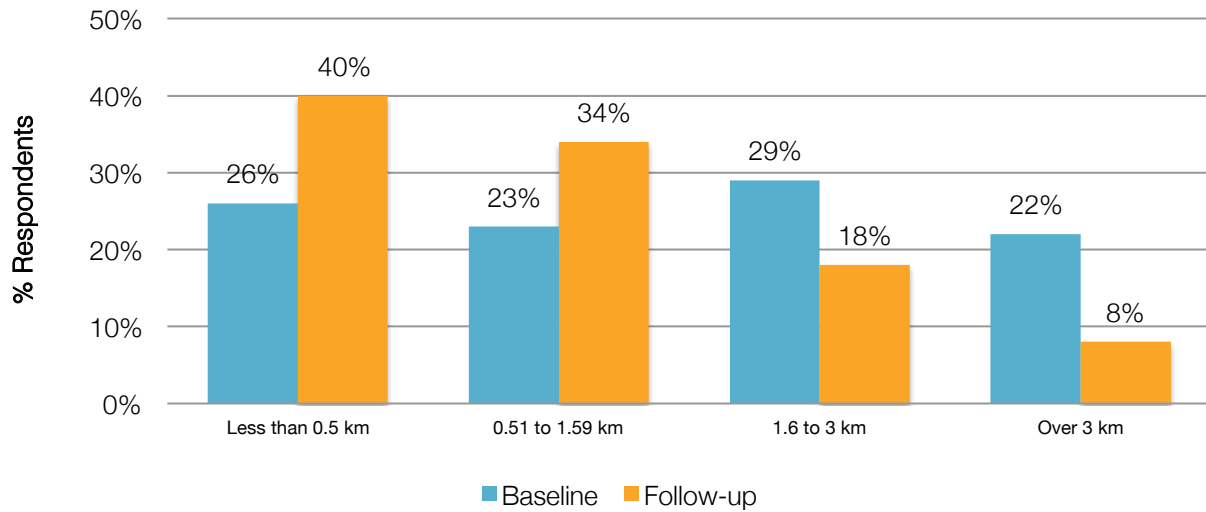
▲ To school mode share, baseline vs. follow-up

These numbers show a 31% increase in the number of families walking to school at Larson over the past year and a 7% decrease in the number of single-family driving trips to school.



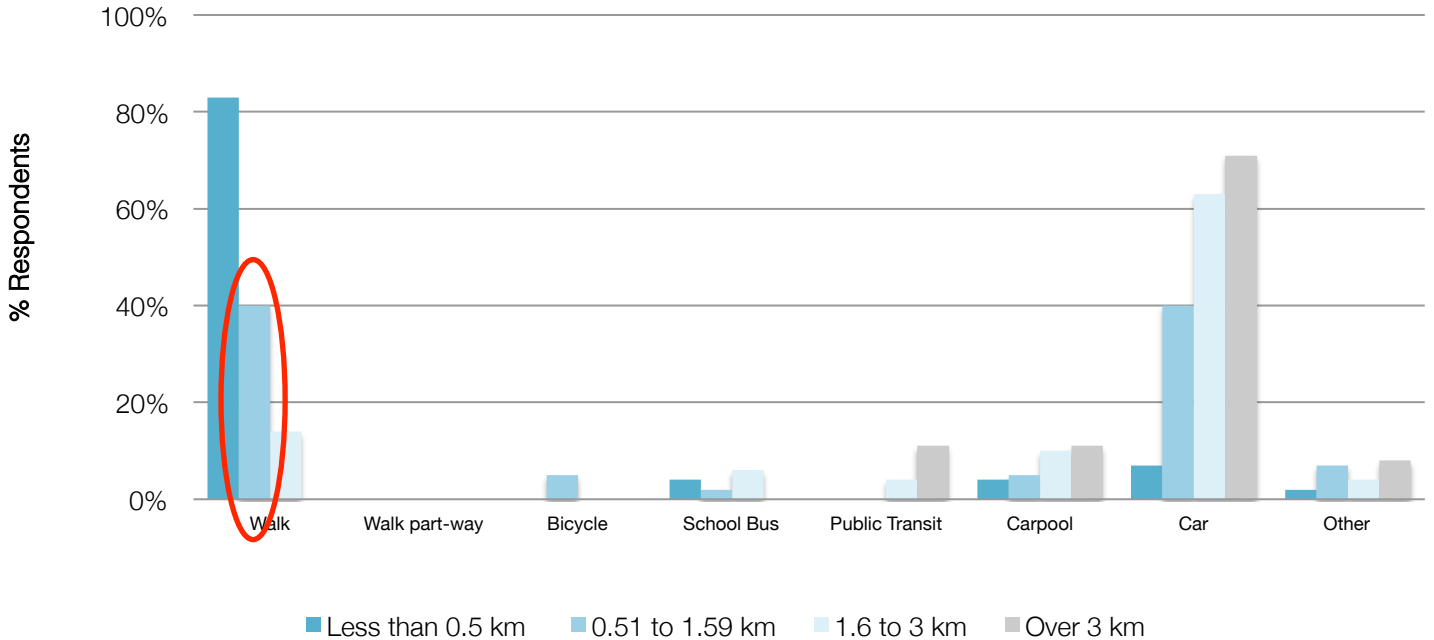
▲ Follow-up reported mode share shift

These numbers show a significant shift towards active transportation modes, and a shift away from driving, within the school's "walk shed" – the area encompassed by the walking distance from the school. For families who live less than 500m (most of whom were already walking) or more than 1.6km from the school, the walking rate was unchanged; but for families who live between 500m and 1.6km from the school, the walking rate went from 40% to 63% – an increase of over 50%.

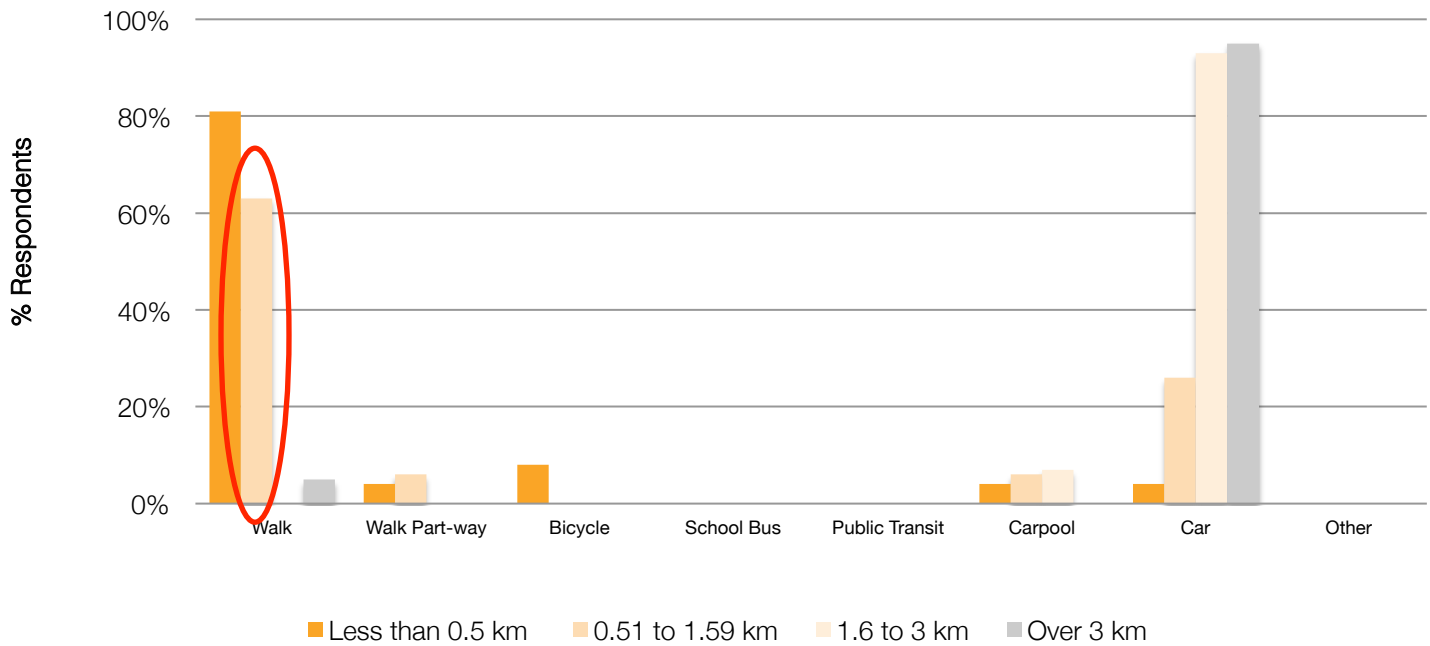


▲ Distance travelled to school, baseline vs. follow-up

▼ Baseline survey to school mode share, by distance



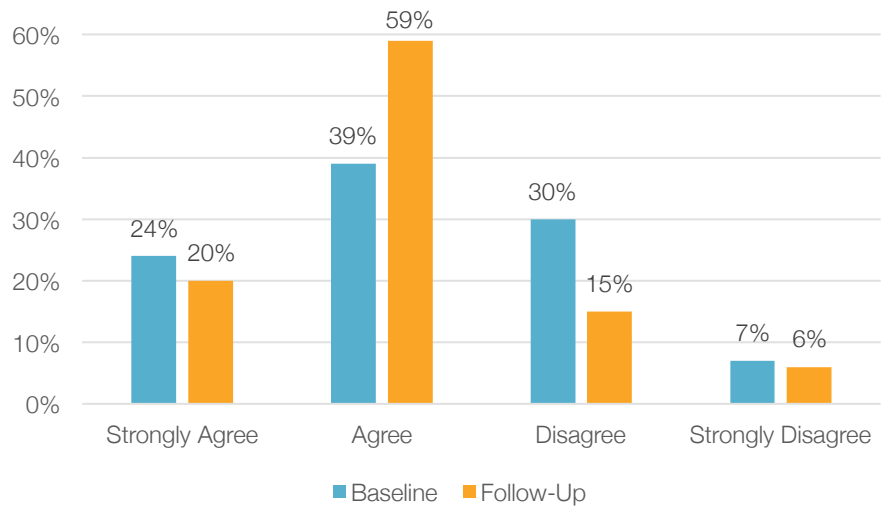
▼ Follow-up to school mode share, by distance



79% of respondents to the follow-up survey reported feeling that the neighbourhood was either safe or very safe for children walking to school, compared to 63% of respondents who reported such feelings in the baseline survey. Reduced motor vehicle traffic and the increased presence of law enforcement in the school zone may account for some of this positive shift in perception.

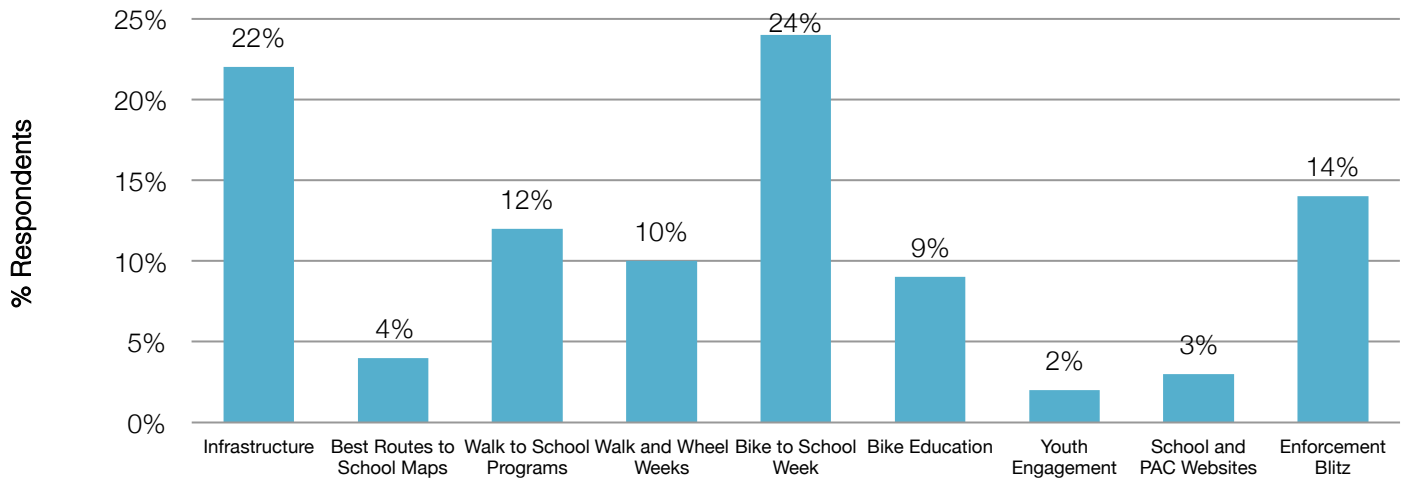
“Only thing I might say is that whoever timed the walks has longer legs than my kids (and me, frankly) and the estimated walk times do not make allowances for whining, shoelace adjustment, dawdling, general reluctance, or (the much more welcomed) stops to look at things of interest en route.”

- Larson Parent



▲ **“Our Neighbourhood is Safe for Children”**

The families who responded to the follow-up survey stated that, among the many interventions that the School Travel Planning process developed for Larson, positive, participatory events like Bike to School Week had the biggest impact on their transportation activities and attitudes. Anecdotally, many parents at Larson reported that they enjoyed the feeling of social connection created by these events; hopefully they will find parent champions and organizers and the events will become a part of school culture.



▲ Parent respond to most effective STP activities

School Travel Planning Members

The School Travel Planning process at Larson 2014-2016 involved a School Travel Planning school committee and the Children and Youth Safe and Active Travel working group. Key members of each committee are listed below.

School Committee

Principal: Cathy Piteux

PAC Chair: Tammy Pollock

Parents: Kevin Barefoot, Cristina Rucci, Trina Sabet and Dan Ross

Children and Youth Safe and Active Travel Working Group

City of North Vancouver Transportation Planner: Iona Bonamis

City of North Vancouver Transportation Demand Manager: Natalie Corbo (Renate Sitch)

City of North Vancouver Bylaw: Guy Gusdal

NVSD Trustee: Christie Sacré

SD44 Communications Manager: Deneka Michaud

RCMP: Officer Carlos Rockhill

TransLink: Karen Halex

ICBC: Harvey Kooner

Vancouver Coastal Health: Jo-Anne Burleigh

North Vancouver Recreation Commission: Janet Wallace

North Van District Parent Committee: Kulvir Mann

NSVD (Carson Graham): Karim Hachlaf

Alcuin College: Darcey Riley

Principal Name:

Stakeholder Name:

Signature:

Signature:

Date:

Date:

Appendix A: Dan Ross' Drawings

Appendix B: Larson Action Plan

Appendix C: Larson Walkabout Map

Appendix D: Larson Best Route to School Map

Appendix E: STP Invitation Letter

Appendix F: Baseline Family Online Survey

Appendix G: Letter to Neighbours Re. Alley

Appendix H: Bike to School Week Plan

Appendix I: Larson Walkabout Information Package

Appendix J: City of North Vancouver Traffic Safety Enforcement Blitz schedule