



# SCHOOL DISTRICT OF ABBOTSFORD SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL PLAN

AUGUST 2015

*OUR CHILDREN. OUR FUTURE.*



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## Executive Summary

### Introduction

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) is an international movement that promotes walking and biking to school. SRTS began in the 1970's in Denmark, which had an alarming number of child fatalities due to crashes on roadways. SRTS reached the United States in 1997, when The Bronx received local funds to implement a SRTS program to reduce the large number of student injuries and fatalities due to crashes around schools. The success of the program convinced other communities to adopt similar measures. By 2000, SRTS programs were nationwide. In 2005, Congress saw the importance of these programs and

consequently signed into law a federally funded SRTS program. The new law facilitated the allocation of money to all 50 states and the District of Columbia to create, implement, and administer SRTS programs. Federal SRTS funds can be used for projects within two miles of an elementary or middle school (K-8). In 2014, the School District of Abbotsford and City of Abbotsford were awarded a SRTS planning grant to develop this plan.

The SRTS program has its roots in both health and transportation safety. The major program goals are to make the school trip safe for walking and biking and to encourage children to walk and bike to school and home. SRTS strives to reduce congestion around schools, improve the health of school-aged children through increased physical activity, reduce vehicle emissions and fuel consumption, increase community security, enhance community accessibility, increase community involvement, and improve partnerships among schools, local municipalities, parents, and other community groups.

### Abbotsford's SRTS Vision

The School District of Abbotsford and the City of Abbotsford will work together and collaborate with other community stakeholders to create a Safe, Organized, Accountable, and Respectful (SOAR) environment for walking and biking to school with a focus on the motto "Our Children. Our Future". This environment will include existing development and future development in the City.



Abbotsford SRTS Task Force working on existing conditions.

The Abbotsford SRTS Task Force consists of representatives from the School District of Abbotsford, City of Abbotsford, UW-Extension-Clark County, Chamber of Commerce, AbbyBank, Clark County Health Department, and parents. The Task Force worked together to develop a SRTS vision and goals, surveyed parents concerning their students' walking and biking patterns to and from school and opinions on safety issues, worked with teachers to do a week-long commuting tally sheet, completed a walking and biking audit of the areas around the schools, and developed strategies to address the issues noted in the audit and surveys.

**Key survey findings include:**

- Of those surveyed, 33% stated that they live within .5 mile of the school and 10% walk/bike to school and 16% walk/bike home.
- Speed/amount of traffic and safety of intersections contributed to students not walking/biking.
- Of those surveyed, 38% stated that the school encourages or strongly encourages walking/biking to school.
- The teacher tally found that for the specific week, 16% of the trips to/from school were walking/biking.

**Existing Conditions**

As part of collecting existing conditions, two surveys were used. One survey collected data on student travel through a tally aggregate through the classrooms. The second survey was distributed to parents. The second survey had 78 responses. Task Force members participated in the walking and biking audit, which provided valuable information. Key findings from these events are shown in the colored boxes.

**Strategies**

The SRTS framework recommends using five categories when looking at issues and strategies. These are called the *Five E's*. Recommendations in the plan were developed

using all five E's (Engineering, Education, Encouragement, Enforcement, and Evaluation). For a full listing, see pages 13-15.

Safe pedestrian systems for Abbotsford were planned. This includes sidewalks, intersection and crossing improvements, and signage improvements. In addition to the sidewalk system (shown in Figure 5) some of the improvement recommendations include:

- An educational program is needed at all levels.
- Newspaper articles and letters from the schools will help to inform parents of the SRTS plan and progress.
- Training to be a lawful and safe pedestrian, cyclist, and driver
- Bicycling in the physical education curriculum at the elementary and middle school levels.
- As dangerous traffic corridors and intersections are prevalent, infrastructure projects are key items in the SRTS program.

**Key walking/biking audit findings, include:**

- There is a general lack of sidewalks in the City of Abbotsford.
- The Spruce St. and 4<sup>th</sup> Ave. intersection is a major issue/barrier.
- Speed of traffic on a variety of streets is an issue. One of the contributing factors is the street widths.
- Crossings along 4<sup>th</sup> Ave. need to be improved.
- Additional East/West SRTS need to be created east of the school.
- Current crossing guard works well.

**Funding**

Funding sources vary widely in their eligibility and magnitude. Federal Transportation Alternatives Program funding (formerly Safe Routes To School and Transportation Enhancement programs) is a primary source for those projects that specifically address the SRTS focus on biking and walking safety and encouragement, both infrastructure and non-infrastructure. However, other grants may be appropriate for funding smaller projects, such as Bikes Belong or Bicycle Safety-Rodeo. Other funding sources from both health and transportation sources are listed and described on pages 18-21.

## Introduction

### **Safe Routes To School**

An active SRTS program will help Abbotsford create safer, easier, and more enjoyable walking and biking routes to school so more students choose walking and biking as their main mode of transportation. There are a number of benefits to the entire community when walking and biking conditions are improved.

#### *Safer routes*

One of the reasons parents do not allow their children to walk and bike to school is because the routes to school are too dangerous. Problems such as incomplete, poorly maintained, or missing sidewalks and trails, congested streets, and lack of traffic calming devices in the vicinity of schools discourage walking and biking to school. SRTS programs help communities identify and fix these problems making it safer for all residents and visitors to the area.

#### *Healthier children*

In the past few decades, the number of active children in the United States has decreased and the number of overweight children has almost doubled. Recent data shows that  $\frac{2}{3}$  of Wisconsin adults are overweight or obese. In addition, kids are spending more and more time indoors not being active. The American Heart Association recommends that children participate in at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity every day. One of the ways to achieve a large portion of this goal is to walk or bike to school. SRTS programs encourage children to be more active by walking and biking to school.

#### *Cleaner environment*

Emissions from vehicles pollute the air our children breathe and can cause serious health problems such as asthma and bronchitis. Motor vehicle use is now generally recognized as the source of more air pollution than any other single human activity. In order to decrease air pollution, communities should look to reduce the number of vehicles on the roads especially in the vicinity of schools. Fewer cars emitting pollutants will improve the air quality, thus decreasing health problems in children. SRTS programs aim to decrease the number of cars in the vicinity of schools thereby creating a cleaner environment.

#### *Other desired outcomes of Safe Routes to School:*

- Enhanced community accessibility
- Increased community involvement
- Reduced fuel consumption
- Increased community security
- Improved partnerships among schools, local municipalities, parents, and other community groups.

In order to accomplish the goals of SRTS programs, the School District of Abbotsford and City of Abbotsford must focus on the 5 E's: Engineering, Education, Encouragement, Enforcement, and Evaluation. This comprehensive approach allows communities to maximize the number of students walking and biking to school.

#### *Engineering*

Problems with the physical environment around schools such as damaged or missing sidewalks, lack of traffic calming measures, or unsafe crosswalks prevent children from walking and biking safely and easily to and from school. These problems can be dangerous enough to cause pedestrian injuries and fatalities, often to children. Clearly, a safe physical environment is

necessary for enabling children to walk and bike to school. Therefore, SRTS funds can be used to make infrastructure improvements that will fix these problems and make the physical environment safer for children. Improving the physical environment near schools is necessary for a successful SRTS program. In addition, other measures are needed, in tandem with those improvements, to get students walking and biking to school.

### *Encouragement*

Another key component to the SRTS program is encouraging children to walk and bike to school. Convincing children, as well as parents and guardians, that walking and biking to school is safe, fun, and healthy can be a difficult task, especially since SRTS may interfere with a parent's already busy schedule or established routine of driving their child to school. That is why a comprehensive SRTS program offers activities and events that promote walking and biking to school that are fun, safe, and easy. This will help to ease the safety concerns of parents and guardians in their decision to allow their children to walk and bike to school.

### *Education*

Educating children and parents is an important part of SRTS. Children as well as parents need to learn about biking and walking safety and about the benefits of walking and biking to school. Equally important is educating drivers about safe driving around schools. These programs will help ensure that walkers, bikers, and drivers think about safety first.

### *Enforcement*

Driver education and safety campaigns do not ensure the elimination of unsafe driving behaviors. Therefore, SRTS programs should partner with local law enforcement to make sure traffic laws are obeyed (including enforcement of speed limits, yielding to pedestrians in crossings, and proper walking and biking behaviors), and to initiate or strengthen community enforcement such as crossing guard programs. Enforcement programs also keep an eye on any criminal or threatening behavior, which could possibly discourage walking and biking, especially around schools. Each of these approaches is necessary for a successful program. By tackling the project from multiple angles, communities can maximize the safety of the routes to school and increase the number of students that use the routes.

### *Evaluation and Sustaining a Program*

Understanding the barriers and obstacles that prevent children from walking and biking to school are essential in implementing an effective SRTS plan. Evaluation techniques such as surveys will help communities see the current walking and biking behaviors and understand the attitudes that parents and children have towards walking and biking. With this information, communities can make the necessary adjustments (through Engineering, Education, Encouragement, and Enforcement techniques) to change behaviors and attitudes. Also, evaluation of the program will be vital to continuing SRTS, as being able to show improvements by comparing before and after data is very helpful in maintaining local commitment to the program. Even more, evaluation can show what techniques did not work so that adjustments can be made in the future. A successful SRTS program is dependent on the use of all 5 E's.

## **School District of Abbotsford**

The School District of Abbotsford has a total enrollment of 718 students. The City is home to the District's elementary school, middle school, and high school. Abbotsford's 2010 population was 2,310. Regionally speaking, the area that the School District serves is in an area that has not experienced significant growth over the past two decades. However, there has been a significant increase in the number of Hispanic students in the district. Currently, the District's Hispanic student population is 39 percent. From kindergarten to 8<sup>th</sup> grade, many grades have around 50 percent Hispanic student population.

**Figure 1  
Location Map**



In order to specifically consider the economic standing of students attending the elementary and middle schools, a commonly used and carefully tracked index is commonly used. An "economically disadvantaged" student is a member of a household that meets the income eligibility guidelines for free or reduced-price meals (less than or equal to 185% of Federal Poverty Guidelines) under the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). In the School District, the percentage of students that meet this income eligibility is 59 percent. The percentage that is not economically disadvantaged is 33 percent, and eight percent is unknown.

### **Safe Routes To School Task Force**

A SRTS Task Force is a group of people who represent all facets of the SRTS program in the community (transportation, health, fitness, safety, etc.), and work together to develop and implement a plan to increase the number of students walking and biking to school.

Abbotsford's SRTS Task Force developed a vision and goals for their SRTS program, considered relevant issues, and discussed strategies to overcome the barriers to walking and biking. In addition, they worked to develop and conduct surveys and coordinated and staffed a walking and biking audit. The surveys and audit were to collect data and to better understand the challenges of walking and biking to school.

### **Previous Safe Routes to School Work**

In the years previous to starting the SRTS plan, the City and School District designated Cedar St. as a SRTS corridor. Since there are no sidewalks along Cedar St. the City painted walking



lanes along the curb. The walking lanes have arrows that show that pedestrians should be walking against oncoming traffic.

### **Vision and Goals**

A vision and two goals were developed to bring the SRTS program's direction into focus and to make it fit the specific needs and desires of the school district and the three communities. It is important to revisit this vision and the goals throughout the planning and implementation stages of the program to ensure that projects are heading in the intended direction, in a coordinated manner. There may be times when the vision and goals need to be updated to meet changing needs in the local environment, but kept current, they will help to lead toward a unified implementation and an eventual realization of the vision. The SRTS Task Force created the vision based on two themes in the school district SOAR (Safe, Organized, Accountable, and Respectful) and *Our Children. Our Future.*

#### *Vision:*

The School District of Abbotsford and the City of Abbotsford will work together and collaborate with other community stakeholders to create a Safe, Organized, Accountable, and Respectful (SOAR) environment for walking and biking to school with a focus on the motto "Our Children. Our Future". This environment will include existing development and future development in the City.

#### *Goals:*

- Make walking and bicycling safe ways to get to school.
- Encourage more children to walk or bike to school.

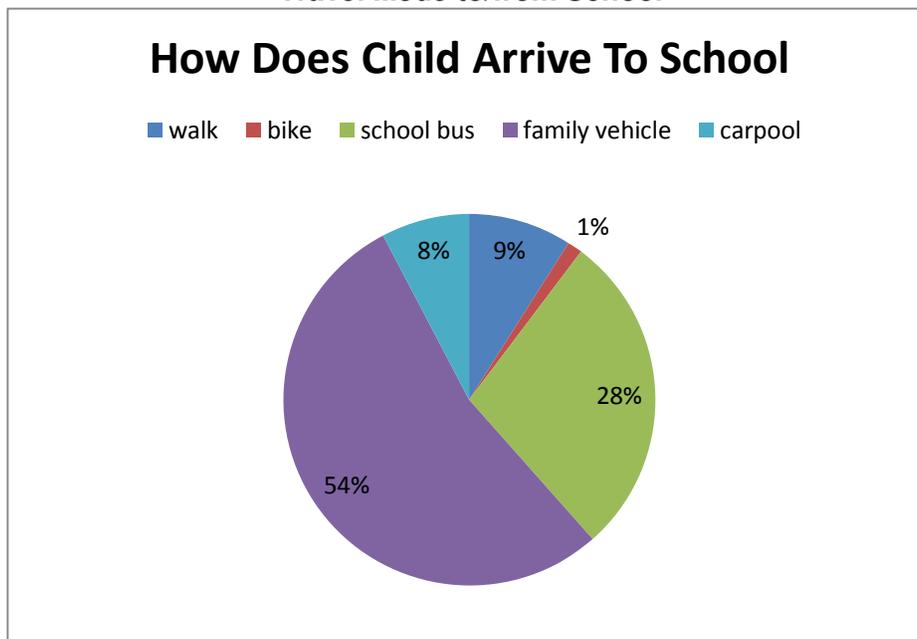
## Existing Conditions

### Surveys

In Spring 2015, surveys were distributed to parents at the elementary school and middle school. Due to the high Hispanic population in the School District, the survey was available in both English and Spanish. The survey results provided the parent perspective on the existing situation. A list of written comments can be found in Appendix B. A different survey was given to classrooms to tally the modes of transportation for each student, for a one week period. The detailed classroom results are in Appendix A.

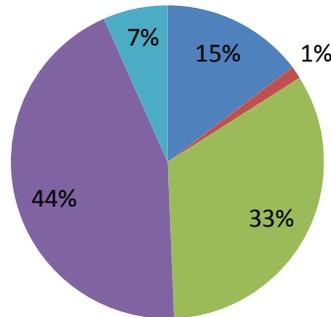
A key piece of information is the mode of travel to and from school. The survey shows that in the morning, 10 percent of children in the survey walk or bike to school. The survey also shows that this number increases to 16 percent in the afternoon (Figure 2). This fluctuation between AM and PM is not unique to the school district as in the vast majority of schools more personal vehicles are used for transporting students in the morning as opposed to the afternoon. The number of walkers, bikers, and students that take the bus typically increase in the afternoon, as many parents are still at work and picking up students is not convenient.

**Figure 2**  
**Travel Mode to/from School**



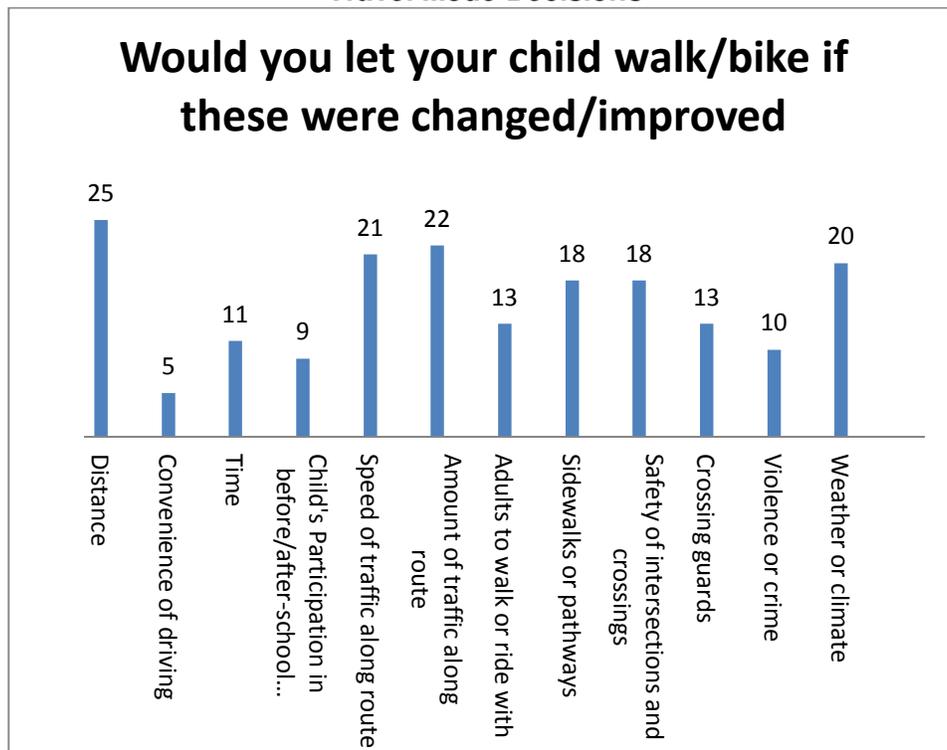
## How Does Child Get Home

■ walk ■ bike ■ school bus ■ family vehicle ■ carpool



In many instances, distance is the most prevalent barrier to get students to walk and bike to/from school, as many students live outside the communities where they attend school. However, looking at what parents list as changes/improvements that would allow their child to walk to/from school can help a community decide what strategies they should implement to get more students to walk and bike. Figure 3 addresses the question, “Would you let your child walk/bike if these were changed/improved?” There is very little a school district can do regarding distance, weather, and even the amount of traffic. However, the responses from the parents in Abbotsford are very telling. The main issues which can be mitigated deal with speed of traffic, dangerous intersections, and the condition or lack of sidewalks/pathways.

**Figure 3**  
**Travel Mode Decisions**



### Walking/Biking Audit

A walking/biking audit was conducted in the area surrounding the school campus, roughly within a 1/2 mile radius to the north, south, and east of the school campus. The audit consisted of an a.m. and p.m. audit. Task Force members met before the audit to learn about SRTS and the types of things they should be looking for in the immediate vicinity of the schools and surrounding neighborhoods and streets. The weather on the day of the audit was cold and windy, with a mixture of rain, snow, and sleet.



The findings and comments from the audit consisted of the following:

- Could put a sidewalk on school property on west side of 4<sup>th</sup> from where existing sidewalk ends.
- Need crossing signs on both sides of the street at crossings in school zone.
- There are two crosswalks on 4<sup>th</sup> Ave. There is limited signage and no crossing guards.
- Spruce St./4<sup>th</sup> Ave. – need adult crossing guard. Street needs to be narrowed. Need painted crosswalk, digital speed sign, and paint for parking line.
- There are no crossing signs at Cedar St. /4<sup>th</sup> Ave. intersection.
- 4<sup>th</sup> Ave. could use painted lines for center line and parking lines and sharrows or bike lanes.
- Sycamore St./4<sup>th</sup> Ave. – if designated as a SRTS route, then need signs and paint.
- 4<sup>th</sup> Ave. travel lanes need to be narrowed.



- No drivers drive 15mph in school zones.
- Entire zone needs 15 mph signs in both directions.
- Cedar St. needs four-way stop at 3rd. Ave.
- Community specific SRTS signs along Cedar St. and other SRTS routes would be good.
- Heavy traffic exists at school entrance at Hemlock St. and 4<sup>th</sup> Ave.
- No crosswalk exists at Hemlock St. to cross 4<sup>th</sup> Ave.
- There are some sidewalks in the neighborhood to the east, but not many.
- Need school zone signs coming from the east towards

4<sup>th</sup> Ave. on all streets.

- Cedar St. jog is dangerous as some cars take sharp turns into the walking lane.
- 3 kids crossed at Kramers grocery store.
- 4<sup>th</sup> Ave. and Pine St. lacks sidewalks
- High speeds and truck traffic along Spruce St.
- School bus going very fast along Spruce St.
- Need school zone sign along Spruce St.
- 25mph turns into 35mph (at 4<sup>th</sup> Ave. and Spruce St.) along Spruce St. going out of town.
- Many drivers are on their phones.
- Cars pass on right along Spruce St.
- Spruce St. could be narrowed and bike lanes added or parking lines and sharrows.
- There is no sidewalk along 4<sup>th</sup> Ave. south of Spruce St.
- There are many high school drivers in the area.
- Bike racks work well in current location.
- Need additional crosswalks at 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave./Cedar St. intersection.
- High school students drive fast along Pine St. going west out of town
- Students were walking on both sides of Cedar St.
- Street narrowing (bumpouts and/or paint) would help traffic speeds.
- Law enforcement is needed along Spruce St. and 4<sup>th</sup> Ave.
- Need crossing guard to get students across 4<sup>th</sup> Ave.
- Flashing lights on 15 mph signs are needed.



### Existing Policies and Practices

Both the School District and the City have various policies and practices that directly or indirectly affect how students get to and from school. The most direct affect is the school district's busing policy, which allows most elementary school students in the City limits to ride the school bus, most often based on the existence of a defined barrier. There is no bus service for middle school students in the City limits. The City does not require that sidewalks be provided in the construction of any development.

### Traffic

Traffic volumes are not particularly high on the streets adjacent to the schools. However, during the time of day that students are walking/biking to and from school, there is significant traffic along 4<sup>th</sup> Ave. and a few of the east/west streets that connect with 4<sup>th</sup> Ave. In addition, Spruce St. has a high traffic volume and most motorists drive over the posted speed limits of 25mph and 35mph (35mph at the 4<sup>th</sup> Ave. intersection).

The most recent average daily traffic (ADT) for 4<sup>th</sup> Ave. is from 08/31/2010 and between Butternut St. and Hemlock St. The ADT for 4<sup>th</sup> Ave. at this location is 860 vehicles. However, it



should be noted that this date was not on a school day. The most recent ADT on Spruce St. is from 10/05/2010. Between 5<sup>th</sup> Ave. and 4<sup>th</sup> Ave., the ADT was 3,100 vehicles and between 4<sup>th</sup> Ave. and 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. the ADT was 4,500 vehicles. For students that have to cross State Highway 13, the ADT between Spruce St. and Birch St. was 8,200 on 06/10/2013.

Two students have been hit in the past five years by vehicles in the School Zone. One instance was in front of the elementary school and the other instance was at the 4<sup>th</sup> Ave. and Butternut St. intersection.

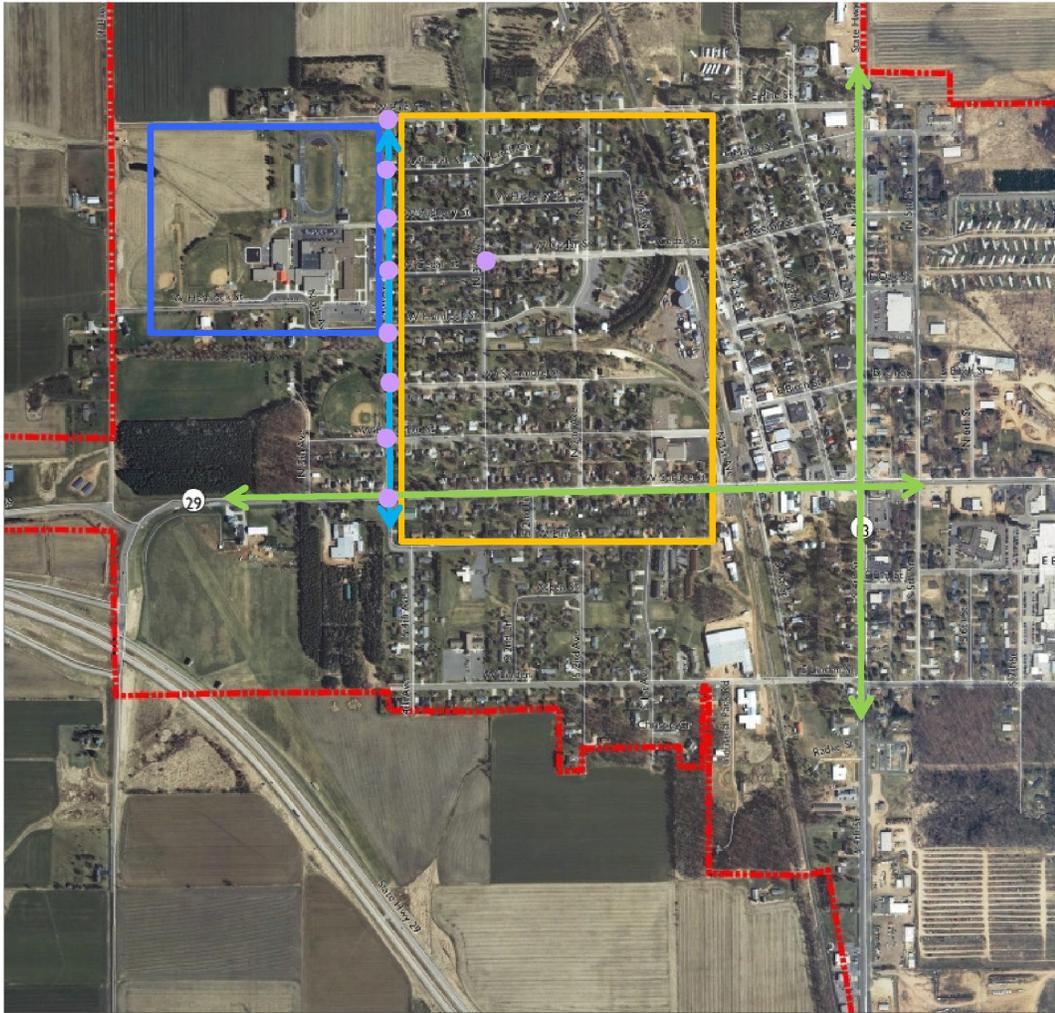
### **School Buses and Parent Drop Off**

At this time, the bus loading zone is working well. Once a student crosses 4<sup>th</sup> Ave. and Hemlock St., they need to cross one driveway that accesses on-site parking. After that crossing, they do not interact with any vehicle traffic.

### **Other Plans**

When a community has a comprehensive plan, transportation sections should promote safe walking and biking. School-related walking and biking should be addressed in the goals, objectives, and policies of a comprehensive plan and should be consistent with the goals of this SRTS plan. There is no specific mention of Safe Routes To School in the Transportation Chapter of the City of Abbotsford Comprehensive Plan. However, there is language that values and promotes pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

**Figure 4**  
**Walking and Biking Barriers**



- School Barriers**
- No sidewalks
  - Intersections with issues
  - 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue
  - Spruce St./ State Highway 13
  - Schools

## Recommended Strategies

Numerous strategies are recommended for the City of Abbotsford and the School District of Abbotsford. It is important to remember that a community that is safe for students to walk and bike to school is also a walkable and livable community for everyone. Abbotsford faces some particularly difficult challenges to safe walking and biking, specifically due to Spruce St., State Highway 13, and all of the student walkers/bikers that need to travel along or cross 4<sup>th</sup> Ave. The community is of a size that virtually all students who live within the City limits should be able to walk and bike to school, and at one time the vast majority did so. However, the lack of sidewalks and high traffic volume before and after school along specific streets has created a community where most children ride in a private automobile and/or school bus. For the strategies, there are three different timeframes recommended for implementation: ongoing, short-term (2015-2016), and medium-term (2017-2019).

Due to the high number of Spanish-speaking parents in the school district, Spanish should be included in as many of the following strategies as possible. *Education* and *Encouragement* strategies offer the greatest opportunity to provide both English and Spanish language.

### Education

#### City

- Locate a sign along Highway 13 (north and south sides of the City) and Spruce St. (east and west sides of the City) that says Abbotsford is a SRTS community. (short-term)

#### School District

- Host fitness speakers that promote walking/biking (athlete/coach from High School, UW system, etc.). (short-term)
- Distribute an annual letter at the beginning with a brief description stating that the community has completed a SRTS plan and where designated SRTS corridors are located. (short-term)
- Start a P.E. bike unit for elementary school students. (medium-term)
- Include vehicle/bike/pedestrian law education in school newsletters. (short-term)

#### City/School District

- Promote SRTS on the website and social media. (short-term)
- Continue to work with local media in promoting SRTS. (ongoing)

### Encouragement

#### City

- Create a map that shows distances by walking, calories burned, and designated safe routes. Distribute annually. (short-term)
- Locate signage around town that shows designated safe routes, distance, and calories burned. Possibly incorporate this with a community based theme. (short-term)

#### School District

- Continue Walk to School Day events/activities. (ongoing)
- Organize a walking school bus from strategic locations along SRTS routes, specifically south of Spruce St. (short-term)

#### City/School District

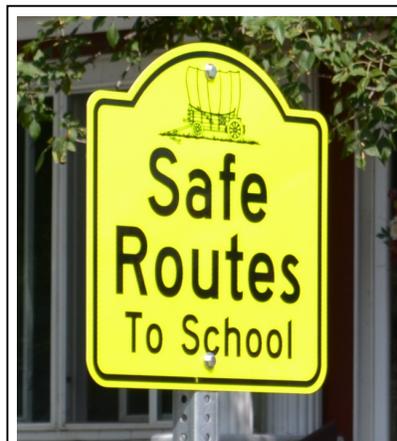
- Continue to distribute reflectors for backpacks. (ongoing)
- Keep adult crossing guard at current location. (ongoing)

- Assess the costs to have an adult crossing guard cross students at 4th Ave. and Spruce St. and 4th Ave. and Cedar St. (short-term)
- Collaborate with community organizations (outdoor groups, health organizations, etc.) to help promote walking and biking to/from school. (short-term)
- Continue walking to the City Safety Day event and use that walk to educate students on proper walking/biking. (ongoing)
- Implement a one-year pilot program with an adult crossing guard at Spruce St. and 4th Ave. This would be concurrent with other mitigation measures for that intersection. After one year, see if more students are using the intersection. (medium-term)

## Enforcement

### City

- Enforce speed limits. (ongoing)
  - Spruce St.
  - Pine St.
  - 4th Ave.
  - State Highway 13
- Investigate activity that is currently deterring walking and biking to/from school. (short-term)
- Acquire safety-green in-street pedestrian signs for 4<sup>th</sup> Ave. intersections: (short-term)
  - Continue in Spruce St. at 4th Ave. intersection
  - 4th Ave. at strategic locations (Hickory St., Cedar St., Hemlock St., and Sycamore St.)
  - Pine St. at 4th Ave. intersection



A SRTS street sign in De Smet, SD. The sign uses De Smet's theme of a covered wagon with the Laura Ingalls Wilder "Little Town On The Prairie" theme.

## Engineering

### City

- Require all future development to meet pedestrian and bicycle and SRTS policies and needs. (short-term)
- Require all future surrounding development to have adequate pedestrian/bicycle trail, sidewalks, and feeder system to the school. (short-term)
- Where they do not currently exist, construct sidewalks along all SRTS routes, as shown on the maps. If sidewalks are not feasible, create a walking lane similar to the walking lane on Cedar St. Also research feasibility for bicycle lanes on these roads. (medium-term/short-term)



Example of a roadway with centerline, parking lines, and sharrows.

- Locate safety-green colored pedestrian crossing signs with arrows on both sides of the street in both directions and painted crosswalks at all Improved Intersections labeled on the map. (short-term)
- Investigate feasibility of bumpouts at all Improved Intersections labeled on the map. If feasible at specific locations, construct bumpouts at those locations. (short-term)
- Install school zone signs on both sides of the street. Where desired, also locate flashing yellow lights on the signs: (short-term)



Example of diagonal hatched lines to eliminate traffic in a lane.

- Along 4<sup>th</sup> Ave. from Spruce St. to Pine St.
- Along Spruce St. for 4<sup>th</sup> Ave. intersection
- Along Pine St. for 4<sup>th</sup> Ave. intersection
- Paint centerlines and parking lanes and/or bike lanes or sharrows along Spruce St., Pine St., and 4<sup>th</sup> Ave. (short-term)
- Locate a HAWK beacon (High-Intensity Activated crossWalk beacon)/Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon (PHB), a digital speed sign facing east and west, and school zone signs for traffic along

Spruce St. at the Spruce St. and 4th Ave. intersection. (medium-term)

- Paint diagonal hatched lines in the parking lane along Spruce St. starting at the Spruce St. and 4<sup>th</sup> Ave. intersection and heading east and west to a satisfactory distance. This would eliminate on-street parking at those locations and increase awareness of no allowed driving in that lane. (short-term)
- Reduce speed limit along Spruce St. to 25mph from west of 5<sup>th</sup> Ave. to east of 11<sup>th</sup> St. (short-term)
- Make 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. and Cedar St. a four-way stop. (short-term)
- Locate stop signs for Hickory St. traffic at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. and Hickory St. intersection. (short-term)

### School District

- Locate new stop signs at egress of school parking lots and Hemlock St. (west of 4<sup>th</sup> Ave.). (short-term)
- Construct a multi-use path on school property along the west side of 4th Ave. This would be similar to the path along 4th Ave. south of the school. (medium-term)
- Improve bicycle parking areas/facilities with covered bike parking and student art. (medium-term)

### City/School District

- Work with Wisconsin DOT to research mitigation options (flashing lights, school zone signs, reduced MPH during school hours, etc.) for State Highway 13. Specifically for Cedar St., Birch St., Spruce St., and Linden St. implement mitigation options that are possible. (short-term)
- Locate SRTS signs that have a specific theme along SRTS corridors. This could include community theme and/or school age interests. An example is something with the District mascot, Soar the Falcon. (short-term)
- Experiment with a crosswalk painting schedule that starts in the Spring. (short-term)
- Improve lighting along SRTS corridors, where needed. (short-term)



Covered bicycle parking in Tomelilla, Sweden.

## Evaluation

- Nominate a chairperson for the SRTS Task Force (ongoing)
- Continue to meet as a SRTS Task Force (at least twice a year) (ongoing)
- Complete a teacher tally sheet in Spring 2017 and Spring 2019 (medium-term)
- Complete a parent survey in Spring 2017 and Spring 2019 (medium-term)

**Figure 5**  
**Proposed Safe Routes To School System**



## Implementation

In order for the recommendations included in this SRTS plan to become reality, it is important that the SRTS Task Force remain active. The group's role will be to coordinate, track, and evaluate projects, programs, and grant applications. They will serve as the champion of SRTS in the City.

In the list of recommendations, the strategies all have a stated timeframe. There are three different timeframes for starting implementation: ongoing, short-term (2015-2016), and medium-term (2017-2019). The ongoing projects are those that can be implemented without the need for specific grant funds or large coordinative efforts. The short-term category includes those projects that may require some planning to include in school curriculum during 2015 or 2016 or would be eligible for upcoming grant cycles, such as applications to Wisconsin Department of Transportation TAP grant program. Projects included in the medium-term are longer term projects that either require more coordinative effort, design time, or may need more complex funding schemes. With the correct planning and coordinated effort, some of these could start sooner.

The following is a list of criteria that could be used by the SRTS Task Force. During the planning process, it was discussed that several strategies were of high priority. It is planned that over the coming months and years, the SRTS Task Force will update the strategies that are to be at highest priority levels. In addition, it should be noted that some strategies can be accomplished easily and that even though they are not the highest priority, these can and should be implemented when the resources are available.

1. Safety
2. Ease of Implementation
3. Usage
4. Cost
5. Healthy Outcomes
6. Time Required

The engineering strategies of highest priority include:

- Spruce St. / 4<sup>th</sup> Ave. intersection
- Crossing and walking/biking along 4<sup>th</sup> Ave.
- Crossing State Highway 13
- Cedar St. and 3<sup>rd</sup>. Ave intersection

Funding programs and abbreviations are described in the following pages. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list, as new programs concerning the health and safety of children are being established every year, but gives a starting point for some of the major programs that are currently available. It is important to partner with local service groups, as well as organizations with children's health and safety as their mission.

The best means of implementation is an organized and diligent task force working to bring the three communities and School District together and guide them toward the goal of becoming Safe Routes to School communities.

## Funding and Resources

### Additional funding

#### Bicycle Safety – Rodeo (BS-R)

This grant is intended to provide one-time funding that will contribute to a community's ability to set-up a bicycle-training rodeo or similar hands-on event. The purpose of this event is to teach safe bicycling operation, skill and judgment to elementary and middle school children and their parents. Many of the skills and attitudes developed in this training are precursors for skills and attitudes necessary for safe driving. For more information, contact: Larry Corsi, Wisconsin Bureau of Transportation Safety, Phone: 608.709.0081, email: [larry.corsi@dot.wi.gov](mailto:larry.corsi@dot.wi.gov)

#### Community Academic Partnership Fund

For information about this funding source: <http://www.med.wisc.edu/wisconsin-partnership-program/community-academic-partnership-fund/634>

#### Driven to Better Health

Physical activity involves the development, implementation, and evaluation of school - based, school - linked efforts to increase exercise among students, staff, and community. There are a number of ways the Department of Public Instruction is addressing this important issue. Driven to Better Health is one such program that addresses this issue. It is a DPI sponsored program to engage families in physical activity and healthy eating by having students and their families count moving miles based on the amount of physical activity they complete, and the food choices a person makes. To find out more about how your school can begin a Driven to Better Health program contact: Eileen Hare at 608.267.9234 [www.sspw.dpi.wi.gov/sspw\\_driventohealth](http://www.sspw.dpi.wi.gov/sspw_driventohealth)

#### General Mills Champions for Healthy Kids

In partnership with the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Foundation, the General Mills Foundation developed the Champions for Healthy Kids grant program in 2002. Each year, the Foundation awards 50 grants of \$20,000 each to nonprofit organizations working to improve nutrition and physical fitness behaviors for youth. Web: [www.eatrightfoundation.org/foundation/championgrants/](http://www.eatrightfoundation.org/foundation/championgrants/) for more information.

#### Green & Healthy Schools Program (GHSP)

Green & Healthy Schools is a Web-based, voluntary program available to all public and private elementary, middle and high schools across Wisconsin. The program encourages teachers, staff, students and parents to work together to use the school, its grounds and the whole community as learning tools to teach, promote and apply healthy, safe and environmentally sound practices. Green & Healthy Schools is an integrated program that addresses many of the same issues as Safe Routes to School such as transportation alternatives, improved air quality, a safe transportation environment and community involvement. Small grants are available for schools that show a commitment towards these goals. For more information, visit:

[www.dnr.wi.gov/education/educatorresources/ghs/](http://www.dnr.wi.gov/education/educatorresources/ghs/) or contact DNR staff at: [DNRGHSchools@Wisconsin.gov](mailto:DNRGHSchools@Wisconsin.gov)

#### Local Transportation Enhancements (TE) (part of the Transportation Alternatives Program-TAP)

The Transportation Enhancements program funds projects that increase multi-modal transportation alternatives and enhance communities and the environment. Federal funds administered through this program provide up to 80% of costs for a wide variety of projects including "provision of facilities for bicycles or pedestrians" and "provision of safety and educational activities for pedestrians and bicyclists." Projects must meet federal and state requirements. Local governments with taxing authority, state agencies and Indian tribes are eligible for funding. A project sponsor must pay for a project and then seek reimbursement for the project from the state. Federal funds will provide up to 80% of project costs, while the sponsor must provide at least the other 20%. For more information, contact: Tanya Iverson, Department of Transportation, Phone: 608.266.2574, email: [tanya2.iverson@dot.wi.gov](mailto:tanya2.iverson@dot.wi.gov)

#### Pedestrian Road Show-Walking Workshop (PRSWW)

*The Pedestrian Road Show-Walking Workshop* provides funding to communities that are working on local expertise and on-going commitment to increase public safety by reducing pedestrian related traffic crashes and injuries while improving the community's Walkability. The grantee will arrange a Pedestrian Road Show/Walking Workshop with a trained facilitator from a Bureau of Transportation Safety list. The Pedestrian Road Show/Walking Workshop is the initial event to a pedestrian improvement commitment by this community. The invitation of community leaders encourages the formation of a local group of pedestrian advocates and experts

to focus on identifying and solving potential problems that affect pedestrian safety and walkability in the local community. They also identify good pedestrian environments and determine how those can be replicated in the less desirable locations for pedestrians. *For more information, contact:* Larry Corsi, Wisconsin Bureau of Transportation Safety, Phone: 608.709.0081, email: [larry.corsi@dot.wi.gov](mailto:larry.corsi@dot.wi.gov)

#### People For Bikes

The People For Bikes Community Grant Program provides funding for important and influential projects that leverage federal funding and build momentum for bicycling in communities across the U.S. These projects include bike paths and rail trails, as well as mountain bike trails, bike parks, BMX facilities, and large-scale bicycle advocacy initiatives. Visit [www.peopleforbikes.org/](http://www.peopleforbikes.org/) for more information.

#### Recreational Trails Program (RTP)

Funding for the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) is provided through federal gas excise taxes paid on fuel used by off - highway vehicles. Towns, villages, cities, counties, tribal governing bodies, school districts, state agencies, federal agencies and incorporated organizations are eligible to receive reimbursement for development and maintenance of recreational trails and trail-related facilities for both motorized and non-motorized recreational trail uses. Eligible sponsors may be reimbursed for up to 50 percent of the total project costs. [www.dnr.wi.gov/aid/rt.html](http://www.dnr.wi.gov/aid/rt.html)

#### Safe Routes to School (SRTS) — (part of the Transportation Alternatives Program-TAP)

The Wisconsin Safe Routes to School Program provides funding for planning, infrastructure and non-infrastructure projects within two miles of an elementary or middle school (kindergarten through eighth grade). For information about the guidelines and funding cycles, contact the program coordinator: Wisconsin Safe Routes to School Coordinator, email: [srts@dot.state.wi.us](mailto:srts@dot.state.wi.us)

#### Teaching Safe Bicycling (TSB)

This training is normally scheduled in April and designed to work with teachers, YMCA staff, summer program instructors, law enforcement officers, programs and organizations putting on bike rodeos and people interested in teaching safe bicycling to children. This is a one - day course at no cost to the participants. The course teaches attendees how and why children are different from adults when it comes to bicycling and what the most common child bicycle crashes are. It also provides useful information that can be used at future training sessions, hands on training for participants and strategies for developing better ideas and methods for teaching children. Sponsors will also receive useful safety materials for children. For more information, contact : Larry Corsi, Wisconsin Bureau of Transportation Safety, Phone: 608.709.0081, email: [larry.corsi@dot.wi.gov](mailto:larry.corsi@dot.wi.gov)

#### U.S. Department of Transportation – Federal Highway Administration

The Bicycle & Pedestrian Program of the Federal Highway Administration's Office of Human Environment promotes bicycle and pedestrian transportation use, safety, and accessibility. There are many funding opportunities under this department. For more information:

[http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle\\_pedestrian/funding/funding\\_opportunities.cfm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/funding/funding_opportunities.cfm)

#### Wisconsin Medical Society Community Grant

The Wisconsin Medical Society Foundation focuses on providing support for physician-led, community-based or statewide programs to improve health through education and outreach. We seek to support primarily high impact, high visibility programs that support the Foundation's mission. More information is online at: [www.wisconsinmedicalsociety.org/about-us/foundation/grants-and-awards/grant-program/](http://www.wisconsinmedicalsociety.org/about-us/foundation/grants-and-awards/grant-program/)

#### Wisconsin Pedestrian and Bicycle Law Enforcement Training Course

This two-day course provides Wisconsin law enforcement officers with the training and information that they need to manage traffic for pedestrian and bicycle safety and enjoyment in their communities. It will explain the causes of crashes and the chief countermeasures for preventing these crashes, teach Wisconsin laws and statutes relating to pedestrians and bicyclists and provide hands on training.

For more information, contact: Larry Corsi, Wisconsin Bureau of Transportation Safety, Phone: 608.709.0081, email: [larry.corsi@dot.wi.gov](mailto:larry.corsi@dot.wi.gov)

## Related Programs

### Comprehensive School Health

Healthy kids make better students and better students make healthy communities! This belief is the cornerstone to coordinated school health and the reason why organizations and agencies representing public health, higher education, school districts, parents, and other groups have joined the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) in supporting CSH initiatives. DPI incorporates a variety of strategies to address these critical health behaviors and they include funding opportunities; technical assistance; free resources through printed publications, internet, and media resources; and professional development events. [http://sspw.dpi.wi.gov/sspw\\_cshp](http://sspw.dpi.wi.gov/sspw_cshp)

### National SAFE KIDS Campaign

The National SAFE KIDS Campaign is a national nonprofit organization dedicated exclusively to the prevention of unintentional childhood injuries (motor vehicle crashes, fires and other injuries), which is the number one cause of death of children under the age of 14. The Campaign's aim is to stimulate changes in attitudes, behavior and the environment. Since its inception in 1998, the Campaign has focused on developing injury prevention strategies-conducting public outreach and awareness campaigns, stimulating hands - on grassroots activity and working to make injury prevention a public policy priority. The National SAFE KIDS Campaign and program sponsor FedEx Express developed SAFE KIDS Walk this Way in 2000 to bring national and local attention to pedestrian safety issues. The SAFE KIDS Walk This Way program involves *Walk to School Day* events, data collection, school pedestrian safety committees and community pedestrian safety task forces. The Campaign relies on the support of more 400 grassroots coalitions in 49 states and the District of Columbia to reach out to local communities. For more information, visit: <http://www.safekids.org/united-states-0>

### Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity Program

The Nutrition and Physical Activity Program provides statewide leadership to decrease overweight and obesity, increase physical activity and improve nutrition. Located in the Wisconsin Department of Health Services, the Program and its partners have developed and are implementing the Wisconsin Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity State Plan to accomplish the overall goal of preventing obesity and chronic disease. For more information, visit <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/physical-activity/index.htm>

### School Wellness Policy

With the passing of the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, school districts participating in federally subsidized child nutrition programs (e.g., National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, Special Milk Program and After School Snack Program) will be required to establish a local school wellness policy by the beginning of the 2006-07 school year. In 2010, Congress passed the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 and added new provisions for local school wellness policies related to implementation, evaluation, and publicly reporting on progress of local school wellness policies. Part of Wisconsin's School Wellness Policy requires schools to set goals for physical activity for their students. Safe Routes to School Programs will help meet these goals. For more information visit: [http://fns.dpi.wi.gov/fns\\_wellnessplcy](http://fns.dpi.wi.gov/fns_wellnessplcy)

### Wisconsin School Health Award

State Superintendent Evers supports the Wisconsin School Health Award as a way to recognize and celebrate schools with policies, programs, and the infrastructure to support and promote healthy eating; physical activity; parental and community involvement; and staff wellness. The goal of this award is to motivate and empower Wisconsin schools as they create and maintain healthy school environments. For more information on how your school can apply for the award, visit [http://sspw.dpi.wi.gov/sspw\\_wischoolhealthaward](http://sspw.dpi.wi.gov/sspw_wischoolhealthaward)

## Other Resources

### Active Living by Design

Since 2002, Active Living By Design (ALBD) has supported community-led change to create healthier environments in rural, suburban and urban communities across the United States. By working in more than 30 states and with more than 160 local partnerships, dozens of national collaborators and many philanthropic organizations, we are helping to build a culture of active living and healthy eating for all. For more information, visit [www.activelivingbydesign.org](http://www.activelivingbydesign.org)

### Bicycle Federation of Wisconsin (BFW)

The Bicycle Federation of Wisconsin (BFW) is a statewide, nonprofit, bicycle advocacy organization working to make Wisconsin a better place to bicycle. The BFW is actively involved with Safe Routes To School Programs. For more information, visit [www.bfw.org/](http://www.bfw.org/)

### Girls on the Run

Girls on the Run is a non-profit prevention program that encourages preteen girls to develop self-respect and healthy lifestyles through running. Girls on the Run International (GOTRI) is the parent organization of more than 225 Girls on the Run councils across the United States and Canada. GOTRI establishes, trains and supports a network of community-level councils with local volunteers. The volunteers serve as role models to the girls through coaching the 12-week, 24-lesson curricula. The curriculum is delivered in these areas through after-school programs, recreation centers and other non-profit settings. For more information, visit [www.girlsontherun.org](http://www.girlsontherun.org)

### Kid Power

Kid Power is a global non-profit leader dedicated to providing empowering and effective child protection, positive communication, and personal safety skills for all ages and abilities. For more information, visit [www.kidpower.org](http://www.kidpower.org)

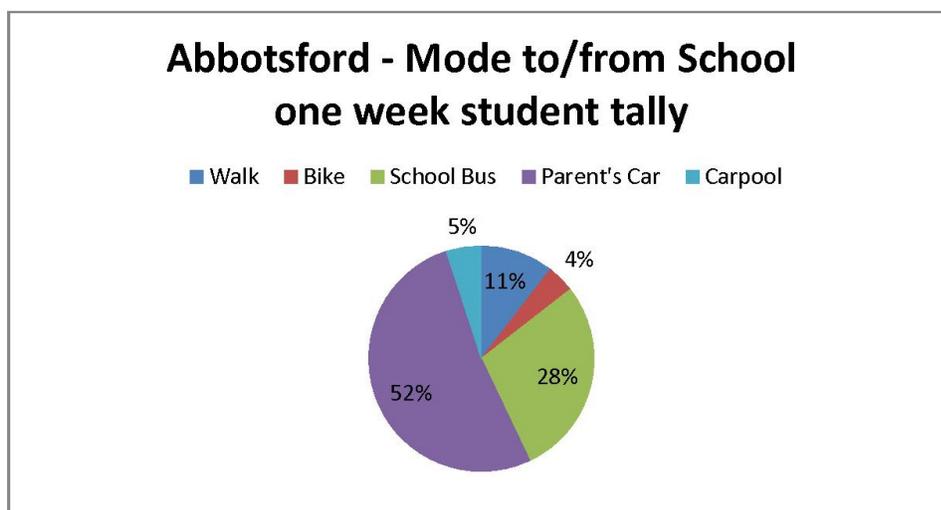
# Appendix A

## Teacher/Classroom Surveys

### Student Arrival and Departure Tally Sheet - Week Total

Grade	Walk	Bike	School Bus	Family Car	Carpool
K	1	18	72	61	8
1	19	0	49	80	0
1	0	0	74	73	0
1	10	2	59	66	9
2	41	4	37	77	15
2	5	0	41	63	11
2	9	14	60	48	14
2	5	6	52	101	1
3	13	0	56	97	0
3	11	0	48	119	0
4	9	8	86	142	0
4	24	10	54	162	6
5	37	6	84	88	3
5	8	12	109	104	0
6	58	46	52	236	42
7	75	22	44	148	28
8	25	0	30	130	15
8	41	0	50	139	35
Total	391	148	1057	1934	187

Walk	Bike	School Bus	Parent's Car	Carpool
391	148	1057	1934	187



# Appendix B

## Parent Surveys – additional comments

### English Language Survey

- If I lived closer to the school I might let him walk.
- When I was in school, we had safety patrol that helped with getting vehicles to stop so children can cross safely. I see teachers and students not stopping for kids at crosswalks. I live on the corner of a very busy intersection across from the school. I will never allow my child, or the children I watch, to ever cross without me and I have some that are in 5<sup>th</sup> grade.
- A bike rack should be installed in front of the elementary school. I know Mr. Welsh doesn't want one but in reality it is the parents and school board's decision if one should be put there, not his! Too many kids and adults walk on the incorrect side of the road (right side), this is a major safety hazard when traffic on Cedar is going both ways. Cedar between 2<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue is very rough, I do not let my kids ride bikes on that block.
- I don't feel that my child would be safe in Abbotsford walking alone. It's hard for me to even let her play outside alone.
- We would walk or bike to school if we didn't live so far away.
- Need safer routes and need bike racks put in a better, safer, supervised spot.
- We live 5 miles from Abbotsford, off of Highway 29. They go to their Grandma's house before and after school, who lives a few blocks from school. They do ride bike or walk to school weather permitting.
- We live on a rural gravel road where traffic generally exceeds the speed limit and the main road to school is paved but posted at 55 MPH with no bike lanes. It would be too dangerous for us.
- No one stops for the crosswalk on Highway 29. Don't like kids crossing due to lots of traffic and speed of traffic in that area.

### Spanish Language Survey

- I wish somebody would help the kids to cross 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Spruce Street or if possible to put a light there because this intersection is dangerous for the kids to cross. A lot of trucks use this street (Spruce) and no one is there to help. This is one of the reasons for me not to let my kids ride the bicycle or walk to school.
- I have to cross very busy streets that are very dangerous.
- We walk and ride bicycles as a family, and it is very fun for my kids.
- I think it's an excellent idea to walk or ride a bicycle when the weather is good. My only worry is that some drivers do not respect street signs.