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Active and Sustainable School Transportation in Ontario

Policy Context





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Cover photo: School walking route signage in Brampton, ON

Active and Sustainable School Transportation in Ontario: Policy Context

Introduction

Metrolinx, the regional transportation authority for the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA), is working with stakeholders to support active and sustainable school transportation (ASST) in Ontario. To support this initiative, this document has been prepared to identify and map the existing policy context for ASST in Ontario.

This policy review is structured around nine key issues that influence ASST. As shown in FIGURE 1, these issues are categorized into two groups—those related to the communities in which schools are located, and those related to schools themselves. The following sections address these nine issues in turn. Each section begins with an overview of the issue’s scope and importance, and a status summary of Ontario’s relevant policy framework. Specific policies of note are then identified; these include provincial policy documents that apply across Ontario, as well as examples of municipal and/or school board policies that have a more local application.

An appendix to this review contains a table summarizing the cited documents. The table identifies the name of the responsible agency, the name of the document, the type of document (i.e. law/regulation, policy, strategy, guideline or charter), the topics of interest, the agencies affected by it, and whether the adherence of those agencies is required or voluntary. (Note that the

literature review on which this report is based was not exhaustive, and is considered to be representative rather than definitive.)

About active and sustainable school transportation (ASST)

Transportation to and from schools is a major traffic generator, and has real impacts on the environment, the economy, our health and our communities. Automobiles use fossil fuels, emit greenhouse gases, contribute to smog, and create congestion, delays and safety hazards around schools. Public transit vehicles and school buses, which move people more efficiently, are safer than cars and promote physical activity, are more sustainable. Active transportation is even more desirable—kids who walk or bike to school use their own energy, and they minimize wear and tear on public infrastructure, while getting physical activity that helps them develop and stay healthy. **Active and Safe Routes to School (ASRTS)** and **School Travel Planning (STP)** are increasingly common ASST initiatives in Ontario.



School celebration of ASST culture during an organized Walk or Bike to School Day at St. Martin of Tours Catholic Elementary School in Hamilton, ON

FIGURE 1: Issues addressed in this review	
Community issues	School issues
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Land use ▪ Transportation infrastructure ▪ Transportation services and operations ▪ Health services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School planning and design ▪ School closing and consolidation ▪ Curriculum ▪ Student transportation services ▪ Active and sustainable transportation programs

Community issues

Land use

Land use policies, particularly as manifested in land use plans and land development processes, shape the communities that schools serve. The mix or separation of land uses, their densities and design features all help determine the distance that children travel to school and the environment they travel through.

The Province of Ontario conducts high-level growth management planning, for example in the Greater Golden Horseshoe, but otherwise delegates to municipalities the power to plan and approve land uses within their boundaries. The Province uses legislation and policy to define its interests in community planning, and requires regional and local municipalities to support those interests.

Municipal land use policy, as expressed primarily through official plans, is more descriptive and prescriptive. Subordinate policy documents that must conform to official plans include secondary plans, subdivision plans and zoning by-laws, and these may be even more precise in addressing specific school sites and school site design features.



Students at St. Lawrence Catholic Elementary School in Hamilton, ON take part in a walking group for their school trip

Policy references and examples

- The **Province of Ontario's** *Planning Act* notes the provincial interest in the provision and distribution of community facilities, and in the inclusion of adequate school sites in subdivision plans. The *Provincial Policy Statement* directs communities to plan land use with densities and mixes that minimize the emission of greenhouse gases and air pollutants. The *Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe* aims to reduce automobile dependence and encourage walking and cycling through mixed-use, transit-supportive, pedestrian-friendly urban environments. The Ministry of Transportation's *Transit Supportive Guidelines* suggests a wide range of approaches to link transit and schools, notably by ensuring a quality pedestrian environment. The *Ontario Public Health Standards* mention the role of local health boards in working with municipalities to make the built environment more supportive of health, and in working with school boards and schools to assess the health-related needs of educational settings and create more health-supportive environments.
- **Municipal official plans** typically contain a range of policies directing the creation of walkable communities through compact, mixed land use patterns and pedestrian-friendly urban design. They may set future targets for the proportion of the community's travel demand to be served by walking, cycling and transit. These general policies in support of sustainable transportation may be complemented by more specific directions pertaining to schools, such as the need to collaborate with local school boards in locating new school sites, and to integrate schools into the fabric of adjacent development through efficient siting and compact design (see "School planning and design" section, below).

Transportation infrastructure

Quality infrastructure is key to ensuring safe, comfortable and convenient walking and cycling trips, and this is especially true for school trips made by children. Because of the time required to plan and implement infrastructure, guiding policy at all levels of government is critical for consistent decision-making and investment planning.

Ontario's policy framework for transportation infrastructure focuses on meeting broader community objectives, and is rarely specific to meeting the needs of schools and students. For this reason, infrastructure development processes do not tend to give much consideration to the existence of schools or school travel patterns. This gap has led to the need for remedial "retrofit" measures to create more suitable transportation infrastructure around schools—a process that is itself sometimes guided by policy.

Policy references and examples

- The **Province of Ontario's** *Provincial Policy Statement*, *Building Together: Jobs and Prosperity for Ontarians*, and *Metrolinx Act* place clear priority on the need for effective and integrated active transportation infrastructure in communities, although with little direction specific to schools and children as a population segment. The *Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe* calls for a transportation system that provides multimodal access to schools. *Transit Supportive Guidelines* recommends specific strategies for linking walking and cycling to transit use, and for ensuring the availability and attractiveness of transit at school sites.

- *The Big Move*, the GTHA transportation plan of **Metrolinx**, references the importance of walking and cycling to school in its vision statement, and sets a target of having 60% of children do so by 2031.
- **Municipal official plans** typically set community-wide targets for travel behaviour, establish key road design standards (e.g. requirements for sidewalks on new roads, and maximum walking distances from homes to transit), outline design principles for walkable neighbourhoods, and designate future cycling routes. They may highlight the need for schools to be connected to adjacent communities with quality infrastructure and services for walking, cycling and transit. York Region's *Official Plan* goes even further in calling for compact, urban-style new schools, and committing to working with school boards on school design, location and ASRTS programs.
- **Municipal transportation strategies** that shape infrastructure include transportation master plans, walking and cycling plans, and (to a lesser extent) high-level statements such as the *Toronto Pedestrian Charter*. Transportation plans are critical, as they tend to provide a specific expression of the policy commitments in official plans—i.e. what is to be built, where, and when. For example, Ottawa's *Pedestrian Plan* uses school travel as a key lens for identifying and prioritizing walking infrastructure, such as the need for pedestrian routes through development blocks within 800 metres of schools, and the need for sidewalks on both sides of streets that serve schools.

- **School boards** can identify their own guidelines for planning and designing connections between schools and adjacent communities. For example, the Halton District School Board and several partners jointly developed *Design Guidelines for School Site and Adjacent Lands Planning*, a document meant to be applied by the municipality in developing secondary and tertiary community plans, and in reviewing planning applications by developers, with the goal of enabling and encouraging children use active transportation to and from school.



New cross walk and crossing guard at a school put in place following an STP project at Eagle Plains Public School in Brampton, ON

Transportation services and operations

Municipalities complement their provision of transportation infrastructure with a wide range of transportation services and operations: public transit, transportation demand management (TDM) programs, active transportation education and promotion, road safety programs, and so on. The importance of these “soft” initiatives is reflected in their inclusion in policy documents at different levels.

Policy references and examples

- The **Province of Ontario's** *Highway Traffic Act* governs several aspects of school crossing guard operations, focusing on safety issues. The *Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe* directs municipalities to develop and implement TDM policies in their official plans and other planning documents. *Transit Supportive Guidelines* notes that public transportation services in a community, including those operated by transit systems and school boards, should be coordinated; it also notes that transit systems can attract more children and youth by offering fare incentives, transit information and promotional programs to students and schools, and that schools and school boards should be encouraged to undertake TDM strategies that promote transit, carpooling and active modes of travel.
- *The Big Move*, the GTHA transportation plan of **Metrolinx**, includes a priority action to develop a TDM policy and a strategy for provincial ministries and agencies, such as school boards, that includes actions, timelines and targets.
- **Municipalities** use their policy documents (e.g. York Region's *Official Plan* and the City of Ottawa's various transportation strategies) to commit to actively supporting school boards and schools in programs like ASRTS, CAN-BIKE cycling skills training, and traffic safety education.



Example of school walking route signage piloted in some Ontario municipalities

Health services

Ontario has 36 local public health units, each governed by a board of health, that administer a variety of services including initiatives to encourage healthy lifestyles and provide parenting education and health education for all age groups. Local health units and their boards can play an important role in promoting ASST.

Policy references and examples

- The **Province of Ontario's** *Public Health Standards* mention the role of local health boards in working with municipalities to make the built environment more supportive of health, working with school boards and schools to assess the health-related needs of educational settings and create more health-supportive environments, and building capacity and understanding among stakeholders. Its *Action Plan for Health Care* calls for the development of a strategy against childhood obesity, and the Healthy Kids Panel, an advisory group for that strategy, recognized the importance of walking and cycling to school in its report to the Minister of Health.

- **Public health units** can identify strategic linkages between ASST and key factors that influence it in the broader environment. For example, Peel Region's Public Health Unit assessed the local situation, and developed a set of principles and recommended initiatives. The resulting report, *Creating Supportive Environments for Healthy Living in Peel*, notes that schools are a priority setting for public health strategies including active travel, and recommends expanding STP activities in partnership with school boards.

School issues

School planning and design

School location and design are critical determinants of the attractiveness of schools as walking and cycling destinations. When centrally located school sites are not designated by municipalities at the plan of subdivision phase, and/or when school site designs do not include appropriate active transportation linkages to the surrounding community from the outset, there are ongoing impacts on health, the environment, children's development and capital and operating costs. The importance of school planning and design is evidenced by the range of policy that guides them, from provincial legislation to local guidelines.

Policy references and examples

- The **Province of Ontario's** *Planning Act* specifies that the adequacy of school sites shall be one criterion in the review of draft subdivision plans. Its *Education Act* empowers the Minister of Education to regulate the accommodations and equipment of school buildings and the arrangement of premises. The Ministry of Education's *Foundations for a Healthy School* policy highlights school buildings, grounds and equipment as vital components of a healthy school. The same Ministry's *Green Schools Resource Guide* suggests a number of features of green schools including secure bike parking, car parking and drop-off facilities not exceeding those required by municipal zoning, multi-use parking spaces that can be used for other activities when not needed for parking, and preferential parking for carpools and low-emission vehicles. The Ministry of Transportation's *Transit Supportive Guidelines* suggests that schools be located on or close to public transit routes.

- *The Big Move*, the GTHA transportation plan of **Metrolinx**, includes a policy that school catchment areas should be defined, and school campuses should be designed, to maximize walking and cycling as the primary means of school travel. It also includes a policy that new schools should demonstrate excellence in transit-oriented and pedestrian-friendly design, and should be in locations that maximize access by transit and active transportation.
- **Municipal official plans** can identify important considerations for school sites. For example, the Region of York's *Official Plan* directs that schools should be located away from major highways, and that new school sites should be constructed to an urban standard including the consideration of alternative site size and design standards, multi-story buildings and shared facilities. It also commits to working with local school boards to ensure that schools are located and designed to promote walking, cycling and transit as primary means of transportation.
- **Municipal and school board guidelines** can help school boards integrate best practices into the planning and design of schools. For example, the Region of Durham's *School Site Access and Operations Guideline* are meant to be used in evaluating potential school sites, and in designing a school (new, redeveloped or retrofitted) on a given site. As another example, the Halton District School Board and several partners jointly developed *Design Guidelines for School Site and Adjacent Lands Planning* that are intended to guide the designation of school sites, and the initial or retrofit design of school sites before site plans are submitted for approval. Finally, the York Catholic District School Board's *Healthy Schools—Physical Activity* policy requires that planning for a school's safe arrival area must consider safe walking routes and bike parking.



New bicycle racks at a school in Brampton, ON, located at the front and near the principal's office

School closing and consolidation

Community-centered schools are located near the families they serve. They allow students to walk or bicycle to school and encourage frequent interactions between students, teachers and parents, among other benefits. The closing of such schools can have a substantial impact on a community, for example by creating longer trip distances, reducing opportunities for walking and cycling, and requiring extension of municipal infrastructure.

Policy references and examples

- The **Province of Ontario's** *Education Act* gives the Minister of Education the authority to issue guidelines on school closings and requires school boards to develop related policies and procedures. The Ministry of Education's *Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline* requires school boards to consult with the local community before deciding to close a school, and to consider the broader value of the school to the health and welfare of the community. Relevant factors that can be considered include the ability of the school to support healthy physical activity and extracurricular activities, the safety of the school, its proximity to students and the length of their bus ride to school, and the cost of operations including busing.

- **Municipal official plans** (e.g. the City of Ottawa's) can emphasize the importance of schools to the health of communities, and commit municipalities to working with school boards to ensure that local schools are available, as far as possible. They can also require (through supporting zoning by-laws) that schools provide visible, secure bicycle parking facilities and (through development approval processes) that school sites include direct, safe and secure linkages to adjacent walking and cycling routes.
- **School boards** set their own detailed policies to guide school closings or consolidations, including the composition of school accommodation review panels, and key factors to be considered. For example, the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board's *Pupil Accommodation Review Policy* identifies decision factors in potential school closings including the proportion of students bussed, the length of their trips, the location of students' homes, the availability of public transit service, the requirement for new busing for students currently walking to school, and the safety improvements that would be needed for students making longer trips by foot after a closure.

Curriculum

In-class learning activities can help raise awareness and understanding of ASST among students, transfer skills needed for safe travel, and leverage students' real-world experience to magnify learning in a range of disciplines. In Ontario, curriculum is heavily structured and guided by provincial policy.

Policy references and examples

- The **Province of Ontario's** *Education Act* requires school curriculum to adhere to mandatory requirements and standards set out in Ministry of Education policies. The Ministry has the authority to develop both mandatory and optional guidance for educational curriculum. Its *Daily Physical Activity Guidelines* specify the inclusion of 20 minutes of daily physical activity in instructional time, and also encourage physical activity outside school, but they do not specifically address the value of physical activity during trips to and from school. The Ministry's *Acting Today, Shaping Tomorrow* policy framework for environmental education encourages action-based projects for students to acquire and apply knowledge and skills on environmental issues, and references the Halton District School Board's ASRTS Program as a good example of integrating environmental education into school board operations.



The Tree of Transportation showcases students' mode of travel to Memorial Elementary School in Hamilton, ON

Student transportation services

Student transportation services run by school boards are authorized by provincial legislation and supported by provincial funds, but are designed and contracted by the school boards themselves.

Policy references and examples

- The **Province of Ontario's** *Education Act* authorizes the Ministry of Education to regulate the transportation of students, and permits school boards to partner with municipalities, hospitals, colleges or universities to provide student transportation (a term that generally references school bus operations and other motorized methods). The Ministry regulates provincial funding to school boards for transportation services through criteria and formulas. The *Highway Traffic Act* governs several aspects of school bus and crossing guard operations, focusing on safety issues. The MTO's *Transit Supportive Guidelines* note that school busing and school bus companies should be considered in the coordination of a community's expanded or more efficient public transit service.
- Individual **school boards** in Ontario have their own policies that focus on circumstances in which transportation will be provided to students, but these do not encompass services supporting walking or cycling. For example, the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board's *Transportation Policy* specifies the school bussing eligibility of individual students from junior kindergarten to grade 12, based on their grade level and the distance from their home to school, and considering other factors including the need to walk along major roadways without walking facilities or across major roadways without adequate traffic controls. It also indicates the board's willingness to work with schools on student safety programs for their trip to school.

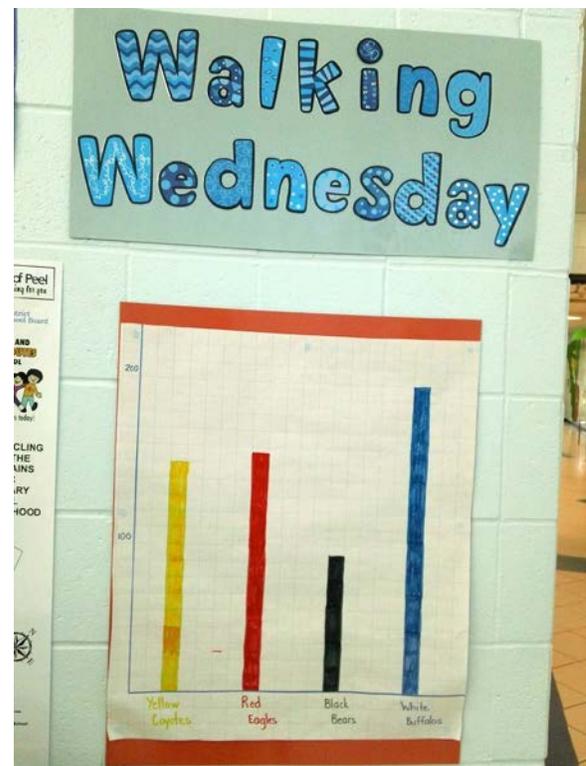
Active and sustainable transportation programs

School-based programs to promote and support ASST (e.g. the Canadian STP model and ASRTS programs) represent an emerging trend. To date in Ontario, they have developed in an organic, grassroots fashion. A robust policy framework that would effectively motivate and support these programs in a more top-down fashion, while continuing to enable communities to develop local solutions, does not yet exist. Such a framework would be beneficial, as schools and their stakeholders face numerous competing priorities and, in many cases, a lack of capacity for work that can require specialized skills. Policies that mandate and allocate such resources to ASST initiatives could accelerate their impact (as observed in other jurisdictions).

Policy references and examples

- The **Province of Ontario's** *Education Act* gives school boards the authority and funding to provide student transportation services (a term that generally references school bus operations). The Ministry of Education's *Daily Physical Activity in Elementary Schools* policy specifies the inclusion of 20 minutes of daily physical activity in instructional time and encourages physical activity outside school, but does not specifically address the value of physical activity during trips to and from school. Further, the Ministry's *Green Schools Resource Guide* suggests measures like walking school bus programs. The Ministry of Transportation's *Transit Supportive Guidelines* highlights the desirability of school-based TDM programs implemented by schools and school boards, and suggests attracting children to public transit services, as an alternative to car travel, through a combination of fare incentives, education and promotional programs.
- **Municipal plans and strategies** cannot set policy for schools and school boards, but they can encourage desirable activities and commit municipal resources to supporting them. For example, the Region of York's *Official Plan* commits the regional government to implementing ASRTS programs in partnership with local school boards. Peel Region's *Creating Supportive Environments for Healthy Living in Peel* further notes that schools are a priority setting for public health strategies including active travel, and recommends expanding STP activities in partnership with school boards. Similarly, the City of Ottawa's *Transportation Master Plan* and *Transportation Demand Management Strategy* both pledge support for school travel plans, promotional events and cycling skills training.

- **School boards** are perhaps best positioned to provide effective policy guidance on school-based programs to support active and sustainable transportation. In the Waterloo region, the public and Catholic school boards have jointly signed an *Active Transportation Charter* that emphasizes the importance of and key principles underlying active transportation to school, and that commits to developing travel plans at every school including facility improvements and promotional events. The Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board's *Transportation Policy* identifies a willingness to work with schools to improve student safety as they travel to and from school.



Poster showing the progress of a friendly walk-to-school competition between classrooms at a school in Brampton, ON

Appendix – Summary of environmental scan

See the following page.

Photo credits

Cover: Metrolinx, 2011

Page 1: St. Martin of Tours Catholic Elementary School, Hamilton, ON, 2012

Page 2: St. Lawrence Catholic Elementary School, Hamilton, ON, 2012

Page 4: Eagle Plains Public School, Brampton, ON, 2010

Page 5: Green Communities Canada, 2013

Page 7: Metrolinx, 2011

Page 8: Memorial Elementary School, Hamilton, ON, 2011

Page 10: Metrolinx, 2011

SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN: POLICY CONTEXT FOR ACTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION IN ONTARIO (page 1 of 4)

Agency	Document Name & Type <i>L = Law/Regulation P = Policy S = Strategy G = Guideline C = Charter</i>	Topics of Interest	Affected Agencies					
			▶ Adherence required ▷ Adherence voluntary					
			Prov. Gov't	Reg. Mun's	Local Mun's	School Boards	Schools	
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT								
Ministry of Education	<i>Good Places to Learn</i>	P	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvements to facility planning process, school conditions, school closing procedures, capital grants, decision-making and public participation 	▶			▶	
	<i>Education Act</i>	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roles and responsibilities in curriculum development Ministry may set guidelines for school closings by boards Ministry may make regulations about school facilities, physical education programs, duties of school staff members, transportation of students Allows school board partnerships with municipalities, hospitals, colleges or universities for student transportation 	▶			▶	
	<i>Grants for Student Needs – Legislative Grants for 2013-14 School Board Fiscal Year (Reg. 120/13)</i>	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Details funding school boards receive for transportation services Supporting Technical Paper details criteria and formulas Specifies six allocations within overall transportation grants, as well as escalation rates 	▶			▶	
	<i>Day Nurseries Act</i>	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requirements for appropriate zoning, submission of floor/site plans to obtain a licence 	▶				
	<i>Daily Physical Activity in Elementary Schools, Grades 1-8 (Policy/Program Memorandum 138)</i>	P	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board must ensure at least 20 minutes of physical activity each day during instructional time 	▶			▶	▶
	<i>Acting Today, Shaping Tomorrow</i>	P	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy framework for integration of environmental education into school board plans, policies and procedures Schools to encourage action-based projects for students to acquire and apply knowledge and skills re: environmental issues School boards to implement strategies to protect/conserv the environment while protecting health and safety 	▷			▷	
	<i>Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline</i>	G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsibility of boards to establish own accommodation review policies, undertake long-term capital planning, key factors in making decisions Guidance for school closures, requirement to consider health of community 	▷			▷	
	<i>Daily Physical Activity Guidelines</i>	G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requirements for daily physical activity, inside/outside phys ed classes Encouragement for children to be active in family settings and out of school 				▷	▷
	<i>Green Schools Resource Guide</i>	G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ideas and best practices for green schools School location, walking routes, bike parking, auto parking, carpool incentives 				▷	▷

SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN: POLICY CONTEXT FOR ACTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION IN ONTARIO (page 2 of 4)

Agency	Document Name & Type <i>L = Law/Regulation P = Policy S = Strategy G = Guideline C = Charter</i>		Topics of Interest	Affected Agencies				
				▶ Adherence required ▷ Adherence voluntary				
				Prov. Gov't	Reg. Mun's	Local Mun's	School Boards	Schools
Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing	<i>Ontario Planning Act</i>	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provincial interest in provision and distribution of community facilities Adequacy of school sites in subdivision plans 	▶	▶	▶		
	<i>Ontario Municipal Act</i>	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Power of municipalities and school boards to expropriate land Establishes possible tax and development charge exemptions for school boards and school capital facilities 	▶	▶	▶		
	<i>Provincial Policy Statement</i>	P	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land use and infrastructure planning to promote environmental and public health, active transportation, optimal use 	▶	▶	▶		
Ministry of Infrastructure	<i>Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe</i>	P	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vision includes walking and cycling Directs transportation system to offer multimodal access to schools Directs safe, comfortable walking and cycling in new and existing areas Directs plans to use existing infrastructure efficiently and effectively 	▶	▶	▶		
	<i>Building Together: Jobs and Prosperity for Ontarians</i>	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategies for provincial infrastructure investment including building more options for active transportation Goal of meeting present and future needs through system of elementary and secondary schools 	▷				
Ministry of Transportation	<i>Metrolinx Act</i>	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requirements to consider consideration of walking and cycling in the regional transportation plan 	▶ Metrolinx				
	<i>Highway Traffic Act</i>	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Power of municipalities to designate school bus loading zones Parameters of school bus and crossing guard operations Laws governing drivers around stopped school buses and crossing guards, and penalties for failure to obey 	▶	▶	▶	▶	
	<i>Transit Supportive Guidelines</i>	G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Location of schools close to transit routes Possible inclusion of school busing in coordination of efficient transit service Use of fare, educational and promotional programs to attract children to transit Desirability of school-based TDM programs by schools and school boards 	▷	▷	▷		
Ministry of Health and Long Term Care	<i>Ontario's Action Plan for Health Care</i>	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Childhood obesity strategy to be developed; panel formed to support that strategy recognized importance of walking and cycling to school 	▷				
	<i>Ontario Public Health Standards</i>	G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Role of health boards in working with school boards and schools to support healthy policies and environments, such as those for physical activity Role of health boards in helping municipalities improve recreational settings and the built environment Role of health boards in building capacity among partners, increasing public awareness, and linking people to community resources Child health and development as a goal 	▷		▷ Boards of Health		
Metrolinx	<i>The Big Move</i>	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transportation plan for the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area Vision statement cites importance of children being able to walk to school Sets target for 60% of children to walk or cycle to school, and sets goal of parents allowing and encouraging children to walk, cycle or take transit to school School design and catchment areas should maximize walking and cycling as primary means of school travel New institutions should have supportive locations and designs 	▷ Metrolinx				

SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN: POLICY CONTEXT FOR ACTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION IN ONTARIO (page 3 of 4)

Agency	Document Name & Type <i>L = Law/Regulation P = Policy S = Strategy G = Guideline C = Charter</i>	Topics of Interest	Affected Agencies						
			▶ Adherence required ▷ Adherence voluntary						
			Prov. Gov't	Reg. Mun's	Local Mun's	School Boards	Schools		
REGIONAL AND LOCAL MUNICIPALITIES (EXAMPLES ONLY)									
Region of York	<i>Official Plan</i>	P	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location of schools away from major highways • Secondary plans to require new schools built to urban standards, with consideration of more compact designs and shared facilities • Mobility plans to ensure schools are reachable by walking, cycling and transit • Commitment to work with boards on Active and Safe Routes to School, and on school design and location that maximize walking, cycling and transit use • Inclusion of school busing in long-term transit modal share targets 		▶	▷	▷		
Region of Peel	<i>Creating Supportive Environments for Healthy Living In Peel</i>	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies schools as priority setting for public health strategies including active travel • Recommends working with school boards to facilitate expansion of pilot school travel planning activities 		▷				
Region of Durham	<i>School Site Access and Operations Guideline</i>	G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desirable multimodal access characteristics of school sites, for application in site evaluation and configuration • Identifies legal requirements for traffic safety, firm policies and standards, and suggested guidelines 		▷	▷	▷		
City of Ottawa	<i>Transportation Master Plan</i>	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for Active and Safe Routes to School programs, events and cycling skills training for students • Commitment to partnering with schools in measures to expand active travel by students • Commitment to traffic and child safety programs that target school travel 				▷		
	<i>Transportation Demand Management Strategy</i>	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short-term action plan to financially support school travel planning and help engage schools and school boards in TDM measures both within and outside the school travel planning framework 				▷		
	<i>Ottawa Pedestrian Plan</i>	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rationale for increasing walking's share of school travel • Value of programs that target school-aged children to encourage walking • Schools as key attractors that should guide future plans and priorities for pedestrian improvements • Objective of using development approvals process to improve walking, such as by allowing pedestrian passage through large development blocks within 800 metres of schools and other key destinations • Reference to neighbourhood design guidelines that recommend sidewalks on both sides of streets that serve schools 				▷		
	<i>Ottawa's Strategic Road Safety Action Plan</i>	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programs to give pedestrian/cyclist safety training, and classroom information and presentations to elementary students in junior kindergarten to Grade 8 • Promotion of City's CAN-BIKE training program for school audiences 				▷		
City of Toronto	<i>Toronto Pedestrian Charter</i>	C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principles behind rationale for support of walking • Commitment to uphold right to safe walking by pedestrians of all ages • Commitment to pedestrian access to basic community amenities and services 				▷		

SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN: POLICY CONTEXT FOR ACTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION IN ONTARIO (page 4 of 4)

Agency	Document Name & Type <i>L = Law/Regulation P = Policy S = Strategy G = Guideline C = Charter</i>	Topics of Interest	Affected Agencies					
			Prov. Gov't	Reg. Mun's	Local Mun's	School Boards	Schools	
SCHOOL BOARD (EXAMPLES ONLY)								
Waterloo Region District School Board & Waterloo Catholic District School Board	<i>Active Transportation Charter</i>	C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emphasizes importance of active transportation to school, and key underlying principles Commits to school travel planning in partnership with other stakeholders, including development of school travel plans for every school, improvements to end of trip facilities, and participation in promotional events 				▷	▷
Halton District School Board (with other school board and municipal partners)	<i>Design Guidelines for School Site and Adjacent Lands Planning</i>	G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integration of best practices for active transportation school into planning and development approvals for both school sites and neighbourhoods Identifies objectives and guidelines for community components (parks, trails, roads, school/park blocks, traffic, access) and school site components (roads, access, traffic, landscaping) 		▷	▷	▷	
Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board	<i>Transportation Policy (No. 10.01)</i>	P	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eligibility of students from junior kindergarten to grade 12 to receive transportation services (busing, generally), accounting for threshold distances between home and school for students, need to walk more than 800 metres along major arterial roadway without walking facilities, or need to cross a major arterial roadway without traffic lights, stop signs or crossing guards Roles of various stakeholders including parents, municipalities, police, transit systems Willingness to work with school principals and councils on programs to advance student safety when travelling to/from school 				▷	▷
	<i>Pupil Accommodation Review Policy (No. 12.0)</i>	P	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviews to determine the future of one or more schools Need to adhere to provincial guidelines Decision-making process and criteria Inclusion of data on proportion of bussed students, school bus trip lengths, location of student residences, availability of public transit Consideration of new busing required for students currently walking to school, and safety improvements for walking trips that would increase in length 				▷	
York Catholic District School Board	<i>Healthy Schools – Physical Activity (Policy #201B)</i>	P	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policies to consider planning for pedestrians and cyclists within school safe arrival areas, and to work with partners in promoting physical activity education and a supportive environment Directs schools to develop supportive strategies, and to comply with Ministry of Education's Daily Physical Activity Policy 				▷	▷