



**Unsworth Elementary  
Safer School Travel  
Road Safety Plan**

**Produced by Unsworth Elementary - Safer School  
Travel Team  
In cooperation with Safer City**



**Plan completed in October, 2008**

## Acknowledgements

**It takes commitment and community to make this plan a reality.**

Without the participation of following people,  
The School Road Safety Plan for Unsworth Elementary School  
Would not be possible.

***Many thanks to.....***

Chuck Charles, Principal, Unsworth Elementary  
Elizabeth Grimaldi, SST Team Leader  
Charlie Hawks, Unsworth Elementary PAC  
Diane Kaldestad, Unsworth Elementary PAC  
Kim Pogue, Unsworth Elementary PAC  
Susan Vanluyn, Unsworth Elementary PAC  
Dale Churchill, Director of Operations, School District #33  
Rod Sanderson, Manager of Transportation and Drainage, City of Chilliwack  
Cpl. Bruce Abbott, NCO i/c of Municipal Traffic, Chilliwack RCMP  
Ineke Schuurman, Safer City Coordinator, City of Chilliwack

**October, 2008**

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## **Executive Summary**

The parents and staff at Unsworth Elementary School have participated in the Safer School Travel program developed by Safer City to identify school road safety related issues. The program strives to define priorities and create realistic solutions for addressing these issues. Unsworth Elementary worked together with key community partners to achieve this goal. Unsworth Elementary contacted the Chilliwack Safer City Coordinator, Ineke Schuurman to participate in the Safer School Travel (SST) Program in October 2007.

The solutions generated identify strategies from three key perspectives: Education, Enforcement and Engineering. The final plan identifies both short and long term goals within each focus. As part of their education strategy, Unsworth Elementary strongly advocates healthy lifestyles and fitness, encouraging students to walk and or bike to school.

Unsworth Elementary is located on 5685 Unsworth Rd. This school has been open for 45 years. The student population consists of 466 students in grades kindergarten to six. The majority of students are driven or walk to school.

### **Purpose of the School Road Safety Plan is to:**

- Identify safety concerns for the student population, parents and school staff traveling to and from the school.
- Collaborate with the municipality, school community, school district, police, ICBC, and other stakeholders to identify and implement changes to enhance safety of student travel.
- Develop and include strategies for all modes of transportation and from the three key disciplines of Education, Enforcement and Engineering.
- Increase support for safe pedestrian and bicycle travel and/or other vehicle reduction initiatives.

### **Consultation and Research**

Identifying the top road safety issues involves research and investigation; Key steps in the process include:

- a survey distributed to all families to determine modes of travel, routes to school and road safety issues;
- traffic counts and behaviour patterns at key access points to the school;
- mapping existing car and green modes (pedestrian, bike, bus) infrastructure and student travel routes.



Speed Watch volunteers monitor driver behaviour on Keith Wilson Rd.



Cst. Conroy and Cst. Dorey monitor driver behaviour on Keith Wilson Rd.

## Data Collection

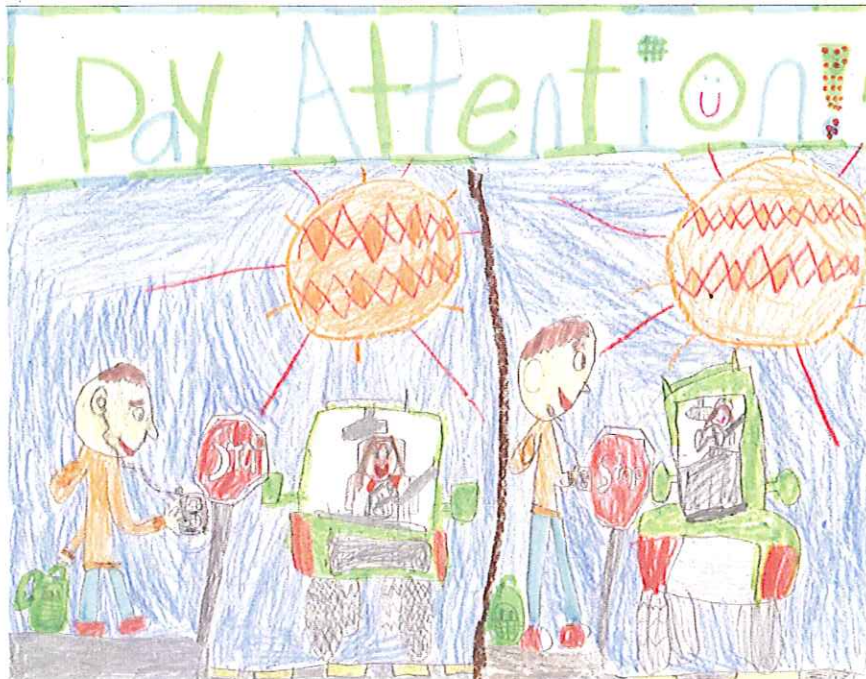
### Travel Surveys

Surveys developed by Safer City were distributed to all school families (Appendix 1). The survey was designed to gather the following information:

- How students travel to school during good and poor weather conditions.
- Safety and travel issues identified by students and parents in the project area.
- The routes used to drive, walk and bicycle to school.

### Infrastructure Mapping

The Safer School Travel Team walked and collected observational data on safety issues within the project area. The information collected was from two perspectives. These were a green mode of travel (walk or bicycle) and a car mode of travel. The information was transferred to and displayed on maps.



Artwork courtesy of: Emma, Grade 2

## **Data Analysis**

### **Student Distribution and Existing Travel Mode Used to get to School**

466 children were registered at Unsworth Elementary at the time of the study. 362 questionnaires were sent out (one per family). 141 students returned surveys (39 per cent of school population). Please note that the table totals exceed 100% because some students use multiple modes to travel to and from school. All the students in each classroom were polled on which mode of travel they use to get to and from school, please see the modes below.

Mode	Good Weather		Adverse Weather	
	AM	PM	AM	PM
Car	61	53	72	69
Walk	43	48	20	18
Cycle	6	7	0	0
School Bus	18	20	16	18
Transit	0	1	0	1
Car Pool	4	8	6	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>116</b>

Table 1 – Student Mode of Travel

### **Routes to School and Infrastructure Mapping**

Mapping of the existing infrastructure in the community involves becoming more intimate with the neighbourhood surrounding the school. The mapping process highlights key areas of concern by including the routes being taken to school and the extent of the existing infrastructure.

The maps are fairly large and detailed and are available for review. The information gathered in this phase of the SST process was incorporated into the final list of issues.

### **Safer School Travel Issues**

A wide variety of safety concerns were identified on the survey forms. Often people will use the SST process to express concern about issues that may not

relate to safer school travel for students. Within the SST process, there is a consolidating and summarizing phase where issues are reviewed and assessed for relevancy.

The core SST team reviews the overall list of issues and determines which issues will be presented to the stakeholder committee. The stakeholder committee had representation from municipal engineering, the RCMP, School District, school principal, the PAC and the SST team leader.

### **Final List of Issues**

This final list of issues was endorsed by the stakeholder group at a meeting on May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2008. These issues reflect the key concerns of the school community.

#### **Issue #1a: Behaviour Issues on Keith Wilson Rd:**

- Speeding



#### **Issue #1b: Behaviour Issues on Keith Wilson Rd:**

- Too many vehicles are parking alongside the school
- Speeding in the school zone
- Making a left turn out of the school is difficult
- Parents are parking on the bike lanes





**Issue #1c: Behaviour Issues at Unsworth & Keith Wilson:**

- Students need assistance at the crosswalk



**Issue #2a: Infrastructure Issues at Unsworth & Keith Wilson:**

- Additional pedestrian opportunities need to be pursued
- Poor visibility when turning left from Unsworth onto Keith Wilson Rd.



**Issue #2b: Infrastructure Issues on Keith Wilson Rd.**

- Additional pedestrian opportunities need to be pursued.



**Issue #2c: Infrastructure Issues on Webster Rd:**

- Additional pedestrian opportunities need to be pursued



**Issue #2d: Infrastructure Issues at Unsworth & Elsie:**

- Additional pedestrian opportunities need to be pursued.



**Issue #3a: Behaviour Issues in the parking lot:**

- Parents are parking in No Parking area
- Congestion
- Cars are parking in the bus lane



## Identified Measures

<b>Issue #1a</b>	<b>Behaviour Issues on Keith Wilson Rd:</b>				
	➤ Speeding				
<b>Strategy Details</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Action By</b>	<b>Funding Source</b>	<b>Projected Timing</b>	<b>Progress</b>
<b>ENFORCEMENT</b>					
The RCMP will work with Speed Watch volunteers to undertake 3 Strikes campaigns throughout the school year.	High	RCMP/ Speed Watch	N/A	Ongoing	

<b>Issue #1b</b>	<b>Behaviour on Unsworth Rd:</b>				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Too many vehicles are parking alongside the school</li> <li>➤ Speeding in the school zone</li> <li>➤ Making a left turn out of the school is difficult</li> <li>➤ Parents are parking on the bike lanes</li> </ul>				
<b>Strategy Details</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Action By</b>	<b>Funding Source</b>	<b>Projected Timing</b>	<b>Progress</b>
<b>SCHOOL DISTRICT</b>					
Expand parking lot and create separate area for teacher parking	High	School District	School District	Summer 2008	Complete
<b>ENFORCEMENT</b>					
Speed Watch and the RCMP will monitor driver behaviour periodically throughout the school year	High	RCMP/ Speed Watch	N/A	Ongoing	
<b>ENGINEERING</b>					
Create a No Stopping zone on both sides of the entrance and exit driveways	High	City of Chilliwack	City of Chilliwack	Fall 2008	Complete
Stencil bike lanes and create No Stopping zone	High	City of Chilliwack	City of Chilliwack	Fall 2008	Complete

<b>Issue #1c</b>	<b>Behaviour Issues at Unsworth &amp; Keith Wilson:</b> ➤ Students need assistance at the crosswalk				
Strategy Details	Priority	Action By	Funding Source	Projected Timing	Progress
<b>SCHOOL DISTRICT</b>					
A crossing guard is needed	High	School District	School District	Request has been made of School District	

<b>Issue #2a</b>	<b>Infrastructure Issues at Keith Wilson &amp; Unsworth:</b> ➤ Additional pedestrian opportunities need to be pursued ➤ Poor visibility when turning left from Unsworth onto Keith Wilson				
Strategy Details	Priority	Action By	Funding Source	Projected Timing	Progress
<b>ENGINEERNIG</b>					
A sidewalk is needed on Unsworth on the same side as the school	High	City of Chilliwack	City of Chilliwack	Capital planning is underway; efforts will be made to include this project in the 3 year budget	
A visibility test is required	High	City of Chilliwack	City of Chilliwack	This location passes the visibility test	No action is required

<b>Issue #2b</b>	<b>Infrastructure Issues on Keith Wilson:</b> ➤ Additional pedestrian opportunities need to be pursued				
<b>Strategy Details</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Action By</b>	<b>Funding Source</b>	<b>Projected Timing</b>	<b>Progress</b>
<b>ENGINEERING</b>					
A sidewalk is needed on the south side of Keith Wilson from Webster to Unsworth	High	City of Chilliwack	City of Chilliwack	Capital planning is underway; efforts will be made to include this project in the 3 year budget	
A sidewalk is needed on the North side of Keith Wilson from the PRTC to Unsworth	High	City of Chilliwack	City of Chilliwack	Not within 10 year capital plan, staff will consider this project when preparing future 10 year capital plans	

<b>Issue #2c</b>	<b>Infrastructure Issues on Webster Rd.</b> ➤ Additional pedestrian opportunities need to be pursued				
<b>Strategy Details</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Action By</b>	<b>Funding Source</b>	<b>Projected Timing</b>	<b>Progress</b>
<b>ENGINEERING</b>					
A sidewalk is needed	High	City of Chilliwack	City of Chilliwack	Capital planning is underway; efforts will be made to include this project in the 3 year budget	

<b>Issue #2d</b>	<b>Infrastructure Issues at Unsworth &amp; Elsie:</b> ➤ Additional pedestrian opportunities need to be pursued				
Strategy Details	Priority	Action By	Funding Source	Projected Timing	Progress
<b>ENGINEERING</b>					
A zebra crosswalk on Elsie at Unsworth is needed	High	City of Chilliwack	City of Chilliwack	Fall 2008	

<b>Issue #3a</b>	<b>Behaviour Issues in the parking lot:</b> ➤ Parents are parking in no parking area ➤ Congestion ➤ Cars are parking in the bus lane				
Strategy Details	Priority	Action By	Funding Source	Projected Timing	Progress
<b>SCHOOL DISTRICT</b>					
Expand parking lot and create a separate area for teacher parking	High	School District	School District	Summer 2008	Complete

## Summary

Significant effort has been made by the Unsworth Elementary community to identify key concerns that affect the safety of children traveling to school. It is the role of the SST Team and the relevant stakeholders to review the issues and information brought forward and to seek realistic strategies to mitigate these concerns.

By incorporating education, enforcement and engineering strategies together the School Road Safety Plan strives to achieve participation by parents, stakeholders and the neighbourhood community to make positive change.

Behaviour concerns are the most difficult to effect as it takes a conscious shift by the school community and the general public to be a part of the solution. At the same time behaviour changes cost very little and can have an immediate and long lasting impact.

This report details a few engineering solutions that will require significant capital funding. Like many municipalities and school districts, Chilliwack and School District #33 have budgets that are tight and are stretched in many directions. The School Road Safety Plan for Unsworth Elementary seeks to prioritize and identify the strategies that will have the greatest impact on road safety concerns in this community.

**Appendix 1**  
**Safer School Travel Survey**



# Unsworth Elementary Road Safety Plan Survey

**Dear Parent / Guardian**

Unsworth Elementary is currently developing a School Road Safety Plan. This plan is to provide for the safety of our students traveling to and from school. Your input is important in developing the plan. Please take a few minutes to complete the following survey (one per household). **Please return by February 13th, 2008 to your child's homeroom teacher.**

Parent / Guardian name: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of children in your household, attending Unsworth Elementary:

\_\_\_\_\_

**A. Modes of Travel**

Indicate the most frequent mode of travel to and from school for the following conditions:

MODE	Good Weather Conditions		Adverse Weather Conditions	
	A.M.	P.M.	A.M.	P.M.
Car				
Walk				
Cycle				
School Bus				
Transit				
Car Pool				

**B. Alternative Modes**

Is your most frequent mode of travel to school by car? If yes, what will encourage you to switch to other modes?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**C. Safety Issues/Concerns**

Please describe or give details of any safety concerns you may have in and around the school. Indicate any specific problem locations by circling and numbering them on the accompanying map.

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**D. Safety Suggestions**

Please describe or give details of any suggestions you have to improve safety in and around the school.

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**E. Routes**

On the attached map, please mark your child's usual route to school.

If your route begins off the map start marking where you join the map. If the route home (p.m.) differs from the morning (a.m.) route, please mark a second route and label it.

Please use a coloured marker that coincides with the following legend or label the route with the given letter.

Walk	-	green (W)
School Bus or Transit	-	orange (T)
Car	-	red (C)
Bicycle	-	blue (B)
Car pool	-	yellow (P)

**F. Community Involvement**

If we determine the need for community programs such as crossing guards and speed watch, would you be interested in assisting?

Yes / No (Please circle one)

Please contact any of the following persons, should you have any queries:

Ineke Schuurman 604-793-2766

Elizabeth Grimaldi 604-858-4510