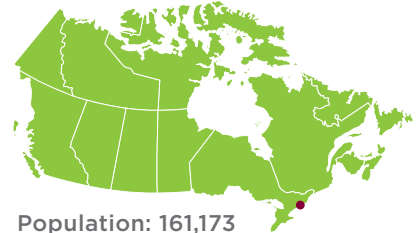




City of Kingston, ON



Population: 161,173
Project duration:
Sept. 2016–Aug. 2017

TRANSPORTATION: CITY OF KINGSTON HIGH SCHOOL TRANSIT PASS PROGRAM

This guide is designed to help municipal staff and decision makers understand how excellent sustainability projects are developed, and help them adopt best practices in their community. Read the guide to learn more about award-winning strategies, then use the guiding questions to kick-start your sustainability initiative.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

- The City of Kingston and local school boards worked together to implement the Kingston High School Transit Pass Program, combining a free bus pass for all high school students with an on-bus orientation, to encourage students to take public transit.
- The program teaches grade 9 students the practical skills for riding the bus, basic bus etiquette, and the environmental, economic, and social benefits of riding the bus.

How does this initiative benefit the environment?

- Student trips on public transit **increased to 600,000 trips in 2016–17 up from 30,000 in 2012–13**, and reduced how often parents drove their children to activities (and associated greenhouse gas emissions).
- Following graduation, students continued to use the bus to travel within Kingston, likely adding to the environmental benefits.

How does this initiative benefit the community?

- Combining a free pass with **education and awareness** increased ridership, confidence and independence of young riders, especially those in grade 9. As a result of the orientation they received in grade 9, students took the bus on average three times more often by the time they were in grade 12.

- Having a free pass allowed students to participate in more extracurricular activities such as **volunteering, work and sports**.
- Student ridership contributes to overall transit use, which increases the level of transit service provided to all residents.
- Public transit is **less expensive** than a personal vehicle, and parents spent less money and time driving their children to activities.

How does this initiative benefit the local economy?

- Students were able to pursue **employment opportunities** that might have otherwise been unavailable.

What are some of the successes of this project?

- Students and parents often did not collect the pass on their own. Passes are now issued at each school, which has **improved access**.
- The transit pass and orientation program has been an effective **behavioural change tool**, and could be applied in other **mid-sized Canadian municipalities**.
- The City **partnered with local school boards** and the University of Waterloo to quantify the benefits of the program, which will help to inform future initiatives.

Want to implement a transportation initiative in your community?

To get started, answer these questions:

Which modes of transit are most popular for non-car users in your community (walking, biking, bus, train, etc.)?

What existing biking/walking paths exist in your community? Where are they located (downtown core, residential/commercial areas)? How are they used (e.g., recreational, commuting, both)?

The City found that some students felt anxious about using public transit, while others did not take the initiative to collect the free pass on their own. What are the most important barriers that affect public transit ridership in your community?

One of the goals of Kingston's high school transit pass program was to increase the attractiveness of transit services through education and awareness. How could your community make transit more appealing? Who could you target?

Has your community made any recent changes or improvements to transit infrastructure and systems? If so, what were the benefits?

What performance indicators does (or could) your community use to measure the success of a transportation initiative?

For Kingston, one of the keys to success was partnership building. Name two or three potential partners or stakeholders (within and/or outside municipal departments) who could be engaged in a transportation initiative in your community. Consider transit operators, urban planning professionals, policy-makers, community groups, landowners, and educational institutions, among others. What would their role be in the planning, development and implementation?
