Jersey City School Travel Plan
Improving Jersey City Streets for active travel to school.

July 2019
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Acknowledgements

The New Jersey Safe Routes to School Resource Center

The New Jersey Safe Routes to School Resource Center assists public officials, transportation and health professionals, and the general public in creating a safer and more accessible walking and bicycling environment through primary research, education and dissemination of information about best practices in policy and design. In partnership with the New Jersey Safe Routes to School Resource Center, Regional Coordinators at the state’s eight Transportation Management Associations (TMAs) offer advice and assistance in getting programs off the ground in communities in all 21 counties.

The NJ SRTS Resource Center is supported by the New Jersey Department of Transportation through funds provided by the Federal Highway Administration. The NJ SRTS Resource Center is managed by the Alan M. Voorhees Transportation Center within the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey.

Thank you

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- Jersey City Mayor’s Office
- City Council – City of Jersey City
- Jersey City Public Schools
- Jersey City Board of Education
- Jersey City Division of City Planning
- Jersey City Division of Engineering, Traffic and Transportation
- Jersey City Police Department
- Jersey City Division of Community Development
- Jersey City Department of Health and Human Services
- Jersey City Housing Authority
- The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey
- Hudson TMA
- Hudson County Freeholders
- Safe Streets JC
- Bike JC
- Haven Adolescent

We would also like to thank the PTA members, parents, students and concerned members of the public who attended our meetings and walk audits and provided valuable feedback.

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Background
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What is Safe Routes to School?

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) is an international, federal, state and local effort to encourage children to walk and bicycle to and from school. In 2005, the U.S. Congress passed legislation that established a National Safe Routes to School program dedicating funds administered through the Federal Highway Administration, and requiring each state to have a SRTS Coordinator as a central point of contact for the state. Though federal funding has changed since 2005 and SRTS is no longer a required program with dedicated funding, the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJ DOT) has continued to support the program and maintains a Safe Routes to School Coordinator as the state’s central SRTS contact.

New Jersey Safe Routes to School (NJ SRTS) is New Jersey’s statewide initiative led by NJ DOT to enable and encourage students to safely walk and bicycle to and from school through engineering, education, training and research efforts. The mission of NJ SRTS is to empower and assist communities with identifying issues, creating partnerships and implementing projects and programs to encourage walking and bicycling to and from school as a safe, convenient, and fun daily activity. SRTS projects can involve physical improvements to the environment as well as encouragement and education programs to promote safety and more walking and bicycling to and from school. The vision of NJ SRTS is to develop a culture and environment where walking and bicycling to and from school is safer, more appealing, and a part of daily life for students of all abilities throughout New Jersey.

The New Jersey Safe Routes to School Resource Center (NJSRTSRC) assists public officials, transportation and health professionals, and the general public in creating a safer and more accessible walking and bicycling environment through primary research, education and dissemination of information about best practices in policy and design. In partnership with the NJ SRTSRC, Regional Coordinators at the state’s eight Transportation Management Associations (TMA) offer advice and assistance in getting programs off the ground in communities in all 21 counties. The NJ SRTSRC supports Hudson TMA, the TMA serving Hudson County, as well as the state’s other TMA Regional Coordinators through training and outreach to help maximize the effectiveness of the NJ SRTS program.

The NJSRTSRC is supported by NJ DOT through funds provided by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The NJ SRTSRC is managed by the Alan M. Voorhees Transportation Center within the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey.

What is a School Travel Plan?

A SRTS Travel Plan “maps out” how to improve pedestrian and bicycle travel to and from school to increase the number of students who walk and bike to school and to improve safety.

A School Travel Plan identifies the following:

- Where do students currently walk and bike?
- Where would students walk and bike if they could?
- What changes are needed so that students can and will walk and bike to and from school?

A School Travel Plan identifies short term solutions for immediate action and implementation, as well as long term ones that may require further planning.
Introduction

Mutual Goals of SRTS and Vision Zero

Vision Zero is a strategy to eliminate all traffic fatalities and severe injuries while providing safe, accessible, and equitable options for transportation mobility. In February 2019, Jersey City adopted a Vision Zero Action Plan that, "commits the City to eliminating traffic fatalities and serious injuries on Jersey City roadways by 2026." The Action Plan outlines specific, data-driven steps to reach their goal of a transportation system that prioritizes safety, efficiency, and accessibility for all users.

Vision Zero and Safe Routes to School both have their roots in Europe as systematic ways to address injuries and fatalities. Both take a public health approach to addressing poor road design and dangerous driver behavior. The goals of Safe Routes to School are to create a safe and encouraging walking and bicycling environment for children on our roads through engineering, enforcement, education, encouragement, evaluation, and equity. Each approach has similarities and differences. Often Safe Routes to School is a bottom-up approach that starts with parents, students, and community members concerned with dangerous conditions for children. Vision Zero often starts from the top with a commitment from municipal administration including the mayor or other elected officials. What they both have in common is creating space for a conversation around safety priorities and identifying populations most at risk.

There are several ways to make sure Vision Zero and Safe Routes to School are used to accomplish mutual goals, including:

1. **Youth Engagement:** Adults rarely invite youth to participate in decision-making, yet youth provide a compelling voice about barriers, opportunities, and changes needed in their community. Youth will tell you their experiences about where they walk, or where they avoid walking and why. This is often not the adult perspective, yet important to understand. Youth are the current and future users of the transportation system. Engaging them early and often is key to successful implementation. Jersey City has several youth-oriented groups and organizations who could be better aligned and supported to have a more direct tie to Safe Routes to School and Vision Zero efforts.

2. **Community Engagement:** There is often a disconnect between municipal and school officials and authorities about mutually beneficial policies and programs. The public education structure is set apart from other municipal services, often leading to lack of communication and understanding about policies and programs that directly impact children and families. Safe Routes to School is a way to bring municipal and school officials to the same table in order to further shared safety and equity goals.

3. **Reduced Speeding:** Roads need to be designed for all users of all ages and abilities. When vehicles traveling at 20 mph collide with pedestrians, fewer than 10% of those struck are killed; at 40 mph, more than 80% of the pedestrians are killed and all are severely injured. There are several approaches to reducing speeding, especially in school zones. In New York City, the city used crash data to prioritize school zones for traffic calming and speed cameras. In New Jersey, municipalities have lowered speed limits in school zones below 25 mph to improve safety for children, parents, and crossing guards. Local authorities, with roadways under their jurisdiction, may by ordinance designate a reasonable and safe speed limit that is less than 25 mph after an engineering and traffic investigation [N.J.S.A. 39:4-98(c)].

4. **Data Collection:** Collecting data about the number of students who walk and bike to and from school is important to Safe Routes to School evaluation and can also be used as a driving force behind Vision Zero goals.

5. **Crash Data:** When analyzing data with locations of serious injuries and fatalities, identifying and prioritizing areas around schools, parks, and other family destinations is critical. Breaking down crash data to include victim ages and the time of day youth travel to and from school is important when determining hot spots and clusters.

6. **Funding:** Funding safety improvements around schools can not only mean advancing safety through infrastructure improvements, but also through engagement, education, and enforcement strategies. Both Vision Zero and SRTS strive to build fairness into transportation expenditures including prioritizing schools and communities with the highest need for safe walking and biking conditions paying particular attention to ensuring safe, healthy, and fair outcomes for low-income students, students of color, students of all genders, students with disabilities, and others. Dedicating authority and/or funding to a Safe Routes to School liaison or manager is a way to maximize communication between the municipality, school district, and the regional Safe Routes to School Coordinator in order to coordinate program initiatives and to provide technical assistance, training and outreach to increase walking, bicycling and transit use with a focus on underserved communities.

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1 City of Jersey City Vision Zero Action Plan: https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5b3e2f51a13772c5c93f846a/v/5e6e41a135cf0240a6607155009062334/Jersey-City-Vision-Zero-Action-Plan-021519_printversion.pdf

2 UK Department of Transportation. (London, 1987) Killing Speed and Saving Lives

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**Vision Zero**

Jersey City

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About the Project

The Jersey City School District Travel Plan is the result of a partnership between the New Jersey Department of Transportation, Rutgers University, Hudson TMA, the Jersey City School District, and the municipal government of Jersey City. The purpose of this project is to develop a districtwide travel plan that will ultimately make it safer and easier for students to walk and bicycle to and from school.

While School Travel Plans for a single school are regularly developed throughout the State, large school districts with numerous schools present additional challenges. A School Travel Plan also requires public input, which can be very difficult to coordinate on a district-wide scale. Through similar efforts in Plainfield, Bayonne, and Bound Brook/South Bound Brook, the NJ SRTSRC has developed a district focused School Travel Plan process that streamlines the information gathering and public input process, using this data to help communities complete a detailed prioritization of districtwide barriers and countermeasures. In the case of large school districts, priority information is necessary due to the potential for a large number of countermeasures and the community’s need to determine which countermeasures to prioritize.

While the district focused School Travel Plan process has been effectively implemented in New Jersey in the past, it has never been tested in a district as large as Jersey City. The Jersey City School District is one of the state’s largest. To help understand the issues and concerns of such a large spatial area, a comprehensive methodology was designed to select representative schools.

Information including city history, demographics, transportation data, as well as walking and bicycling related policies from both the City and the Schools, were gathered and analyzed.

With input from the project steering committee and careful analysis of the information collected throughout this city-wide and district-wide effort, seven priority school neighborhoods were selected as the representative neighborhoods where specific concerns and issues could be observed and identified by the project team. The seven school neighborhoods selected included over 30 public, private, and charter schools. Walkability audits were conducted around each of the seven school neighborhoods existing conditions were identified and common areas of concern were noted. A public event was held in coordination with the "I Love Jersey City Public Schools Back-to-School Festival" to raise awareness, gather input and identify community priorities. This comprehensive document including action plans, policy strategies and potential funding opportunities for Jersey City and the Jersey City Public School District is the final result of the project.

Implementation of this plan aims to improve the health of students and reduce traffic congestion within school zones. In addition to providing Jersey City and the Jersey City School District with a list of actions that will help to encourage safe and active options to travel to and from schools, this district plan, undertaken in one of the State’s largest districts and the most culturally diverse city in the United States, will serve as a model for future plans in large districts across New Jersey. In addition, this plan meets the six NJ DOT requirements for submitting for extra points on Federal Safe Routes to School Grant Applications. These six requirements are: a school description, working groups and partnerships, a map of the school neighborhood, barriers to and opportunities for walking and biking, goals and actions, and evaluation. All six elements must be in place for the plan to be considered complete.

## Working Group & Partnerships

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The City of Jersey City is in Hudson County, New Jersey. With a population of 270,753 in 2017, it is the second most populous city in the state, after the City of Newark. Jersey City is located directly across the Hudson River from Lower Manhattan and is part of the New York City metropolitan area. Population is growing in Jersey City, with an estimated population increase of 6.7% from 2010 to 2015. Hudson County has grown at a similar pace (+6.5%). Jersey City has grown at a faster rate than the State of New Jersey during the same time (+2.1%).

The number of residents under the age of 18 is also growing in Jersey City. Between 2010 and 2015, Jersey City is estimated to have added almost 900 people in this age group, an increase of 1.7%. During the same period, Hudson County’s population of people under 18 increased by 3.5%, while New Jersey’s decreased by 2.8%.

Jersey City is racially and ethnically diverse. The largest racial group in Jersey City is “White” at 35% followed by “Black or African American” at 25%, “Asian” at 25%, “Some other race” at 11%, and “Two or more races” at 3%. “American Indian and Alaska Native” and “Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander” each comprise less than 1% of Jersey City’s population. In addition, 16% of Jersey City residents identify as Hispanic or Latino. In total, Jersey City has a higher portion of racial and ethnic minorities than both Hudson County and New Jersey as a whole, and is the most diverse city in the nation.

Figure 1: 2010-2015 Jersey City Residents Under 18

Source: American Community Survey (ACS) 5-yr Estimates (2010-2015)

Figure 2: Jersey City Race and Ethnicity 2015

Source: ACS 5-yr Estimates (2010-2015)
**Income and Rent**

The median household income in Jersey City is $59,537 - slightly lower than Hudson County's, and lower than New Jersey's. The median gross rent in Jersey City has increased 12% from 2008 to 2014, from $1,060 to $1,189.

**Figure 3: Median Gross Rent from 2008-2014**

![Graph showing median gross rent increase](image)

**Figure 4: Median Household Income 2015**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Income</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>$59,537</td>
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<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>$59,741</td>
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<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>$69,537</td>
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**Language Spoken at Home**

Jersey City families speak many different languages at home. 47% of Jersey City households speak only English at home, while 23% speak Spanish, 14% speak another Indo-European Language (Other than English and Spanish), 12% speak an Asian or Pacific Islander language, and 4% speak another language. Overall, Jersey City has a similar linguistic composition as Hudson County. However, Jersey City has a significantly higher number of non-English speaking households (53%) than New Jersey as a whole (31%).

**Transportation to Work**

Jersey City is a densely populated city with a robust network of public transit. As a result, car usage is relatively low. Residents of Jersey City are more likely to walk, bike, and take public transit to work than residents of Hudson County or New Jersey at large. Similarly, they are less likely to drive alone or carpool to work.

**Figure 6: Transportation to Work**

![Graph showing transportation modes](image)
Encouraging healthy and active lifestyles by walking and biking to school is a key focus of a School Travel Plan. It is important to provide a comprehensive approach towards addressing barriers and opportunities to walking and bicycling, which includes analyzing the top public health concerns identified by the community and how improving conditions for youth active travel will affect community health. This health profile includes a broader picture of community health including the areas of crime, access, air pollution, income, and education.

**County Health Rankings & Roadmaps**

The County Health Rankings & Roadmaps program is a collaboration between the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute and measure vital health factors and other ways where people live, work, attend school, and play affect health. These annual health rankings are considered a “population health checkup” for the nation’s counties. Rankings address population health that includes both health outcomes (how long people live and how healthy people feel while alive) and health factors (health behaviors, clinical care, social and economic factors, and the physical environment) and are used to clearly demonstrate differences in health by place. For the 2019 health rankings, Hudson County is placed 11 of 21 New Jersey counties on health outcomes and 16 out of 21 for health factors. Factors including children living in poverty (22%), air pollution (9.9%), and physical inactivity (26%) rank higher in Hudson County than in other counties and the state.

**Community Health Needs Assessment - Jersey City Medical Center/RWJ Barnabas Health**

In 2016, Jersey City Medical Center worked with Barnabas Health Community to create a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) for Hudson County. Data analyzed for this CHNA was collected from “detailed secondary public health data at state, county, and community levels, a community health survey, a survey of Hudson County public health officers, and other community stakeholders.” The CHNA examined a variety of study areas, not just the county, revolving around zip codes in the Jersey City area. The top five health issues that were identified by the study were:

1. Chronic Disease Management: Diabetes
2. Healthcare Access: Convenience and Affordability
3. Health Disparities
4. Behavioral Health: Mental Health & Substance Abuse
5. Public Safety: Unsafe Neighborhoods and Violence

**Hudson Co. Community Health Improvement Plan**

In 2007, Community Public Health Partnership and Governmental Public Health Partnership joined together to produce a Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) for Hudson County. The report was compiled by using the Mobilizing for Action through Planning Partnership (MAPP) approach, involving four MAPP assessments being completed. These assessments, which gathered and analyzed a variety of health indicators from the county, identified five Strategic Issues.

1. Access to Health Care
2. Substance Abuse
3. Heart Disease
4. Diabetes
5. Lead Poisoning
Understand the Social Determinants of Health

Social determinants of health are defined as the conditions in which people live, learn, work, and play, which has far reaching effects on health risks and outcomes. Neighborhoods stricken with poverty are more likely to be perceived as unsafe and have limited access to healthy food, while higher levels of education are associated with increased health. Neighborhoods with poor social determinants of health generally face severe issues such as unstable housing, low income, increase crime, and/or substandard educational opportunity. By understanding and applying knowledge of social determinants of health it is possible to improve the health of individuals, neighborhoods, and communities and improve health equity as a whole.

Figures 1 and 2 display percentages of population living below the federal poverty level. If the guidelines set by the United Way’s Asset Limited, Income Constrained where employment status is used instead of the federal poverty line, then 23% of the population within Jersey City are in a state of poverty.

All three reports listed access to health care as a key issue being faced by Jersey City and Hudson County as a whole. Dealing with chronic health issues such as diabetes and heart disease was also a common concern.
Obesity: Adult and Childhood

Obesity is a condition caused, largely, by poor eating habits and physical inactivity that has serious health impacts. Obesity has been shown to be associated with poorer mental health outcomes, reduce quality of life, diabetes, heart disease, stroke, and some types of cancer. The percentage of residents of Jersey City diagnosed with diabetes, hypertension, and high cholesterol is generally the same as Hudson County, but lower than the state of New Jersey as a whole.

Exercise

Engaging in exercise is important for combating obesity and the negative effects that accompany it. Regular exercise helps reduce excess body fat and protects against chronic disease. Jersey City walks and bikes more than the county and state and is more likely to engage in vigorous recreation activities.

Asthma

Another chronic condition that should be analyzed is asthma. In this area, Hudson County has improved drastically. In 2009, there were 186 asthma hospitalizations per 100,000 residents, this rate dropped to 85.9 in 2016. However, the American Lung Association’s 2017 State of the Air report reported that Hudson County had some of the worst air quality in the state, with 23 unhealthy air quality days.

Access to Healthcare Services

Healthcare access was a major issue identified not only by the CHNA but also by CHIP, and the Partnership for Healthier Jersey City’s Blueprint for Action. Access to healthcare means more than just availability of doctors, though that is a major issue for Hudson County, it also entails timeliness of service and access to health insurance. Figure 7 displays that number of residents to physician ratio for Hudson County and New Jersey. Hudson County is lacking primary care physicians and mental health providers. Nine percent of the population is uninsured, over the state rate of 6.3% according to Enroll American. The rate of uninsured has dropped substantially from 2013-2015, from 17% to 9%.

Figure 10: Obesity: % with reported BMI >30, 2012

Source: CDC, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System

Figure 11: % of People engaging in Physical Activities

Source: city-data.com

Figure 12: Number of Residents per Physician

Source: County Health Rankings & Roadmap
Education
The level of educational attainment is recognized as an important social determinant of health. It not only plays a significant role in employment opportunities which may provide for health care, but it also improves personal health decisions and expenditures for both mental and physical health.⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁵ ⁴ ⁶ ⁤
Related Existing Groups

Jersey City has several community groups and nonprofit organizations that support Safe Routes to School, Complete Streets, Vision Zero and related policies and programs. These groups are important to furthering and enhancing recommendations in the near- and long-term. The following are some of the groups who should be at the table and part of the decision-making process as recommendations are implemented:

**Jersey City Vision Zero Task Force** is a multidisciplinary partnership established by Executive Order in 2018 and brings together representatives from 15 city departments and agencies along with community organizations to lead the efforts in eliminating traffic fatalities and injuries. The Vision Zero Action Plan developed by this task force lays out the specific actions and strategies by which the zero fatalities target will be met.

**Jersey City Youth Planning Task Force & Youth Works** supports positive youth development by offering multiple youth-centered and youth-lead programs that provide recommendations for programs, policy and practices that support positive youth development.

**Jersey City Office of Sustainability** oversees the City’s sustainability efforts and facilitates the collaboration of community members, city government and local nonprofit organizations that prioritize green infrastructure practices.

**Sustainable Jersey Green Team** is the environmental action sub-committee of the Jersey City Environmental Commission and advances Jersey City’s certification as a sustainable community through the Sustainable Jersey program.

**Safe Streets Jersey City** is a volunteer group of residents who advocate for road improvements that will lead to zero traffic fatalities in Jersey City.

**Bike JC** is a citizen-based non-profit advocacy organization that aims to make Jersey City streets safe and welcoming for all bicyclists.

**Jersey City Dept. of Health and Human Services, Healthy Corner Store Initiative** seeks to increase access to healthier food options within Jersey City’s underserved neighborhoods. Children lacking access to healthy food in corner stores is a common issue near schools.

“Buster” the Hudson TMA walking school bus along with the Principal of Whitney M. Young Jr. Primary School.
About Jersey City Crossing Guards

Crossing guards play a vital role in the lives of children who walk or bike to school each day. At the same time, the position of crossing guard is one of the most dangerous of municipal jobs due to slips, trips, falls, and crashes involving motor vehicles.

Without state or national standards, training requirements and programs for adult school crossing guards vary greatly. In an effort to address safety concerns for crossing guards and the children they cross, over the past several years VTC has been conducting research on crossing guard training and developing and implementing a statewide uniform, comprehensive Crossing Guard Training Program.

With funding from NJDOT and New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety, VTC introduced the New Jersey Crossing Guard Training Program in 2013 and continues to train and provide numerous resources to crossing guards and their supervisors.

The training has been designed to help crossing guards perform their duties more effectively and safely, including discussion of traffic laws, gap assessment, proper crossing procedures, uniforms and equipment, expectations and duties, and conditions at post. The training also includes a viewing of the “Crosswalk Heroes” training film which reinforces the main themes covered in the training by demonstrating proper technique and visualizing challenging situations on real streets.

At the request of the Jersey City Crossing Guard Manager, NJ SRTS Resource Center staff conducted a total of three crossing guard trainings in Jersey City on August 23, 2018, and August 27, 2018. Jersey City has 180 crossing guards; 40 of these guards were newly hired as of those dates. The first and third trainings were for new crossing guards. The second training was a large session of over 100 guards with a mix of new and experienced guards.

The Jersey City Crossing Guard Manager attended the trainings, as did crossing guard supervisors. As part of improvements to the crossing guard program, each of the four supervisors is responsible for crossing guards within one of four districts.

Part of the training program covers uniform requirements and how the crossing guard uniform helps to identify guards as official personnel associated with the police department and can help them do their jobs more effectively. NJ Statute requires the use of a STOP paddle and a retroreflective vest worn at all times outside all other clothing, unless a jacket is issued that is retroreflective and identifies the wearer as a crossing guard. Jersey City crossing guards are fortunate in that they are given complete uniforms. Jersey City guards are equipped with whistles to assist with alerting traffic that pedestrians are about to use, or are using the crosswalk. These full uniforms and whistles help enhance the visibility of the Jersey City guards and help the guards in commanding respect from students, parents, and the community.

The training also allows an opportunity for discussion among the crossing guards and some feedback for supervisors and presenters about the issues they face each day. Some crossing guards voiced concerns for conditions at their individual crossings, but the most frequent comment heard from experienced guards during the trainings was that drivers disregard crossing guards on a regular basis.

Drivers frequently pass the crossing guard and students while they are walking in the crosswalk. These comments align with the concerns expressed by crossing guards that were spoken to as part of the walk assessments who reported bad driver behavior, unsafe parent pick-up and drop-off, and a general lack of respect for the crossing guards and students.
Our understanding is that the Crossing Guard Manager will be working out a reporting protocol with the JCPD. Coordination with the police is essential in order to respond to crossing guard concerns and to make their post areas safer. Protocol may include:

- Enforcement is one response to drivers violating pedestrian laws and ignoring signals from crossing guards
- Police officers can implement an educational campaign around pedestrian safety in conjunction with enforcement efforts
- All crossings should be clearly marked, pedestrian signs visible, and pedestrian crossing signals in working order. Other engineering solutions can be considered to improve visibility of crossing guard posts
- A protocol for maintenance at school crossings could be established in conjunction with the Department of Public Works, e.g. to ensure clear crossings after a snow storm

In addition to establishing the reporting protocol, Jersey City should also adopt a municipal crossing guard policy to establish and describe crossing guard procedures. The policy should cover hiring and discipline practices, training and re-training procedures, uniform requirements, performance review, incident reporting procedures, and crossing guard placement procedures. A model policy that can be tailored to fit Jersey City’s needs is available at the New Jersey Crossing Guard Training and Resources Program website: www.njcrossingguards.org

There was some mention that the crossing guard union was seeking to enable all crossing guards to direct traffic. Their principal duty is to cross students. It is not generally recommended that guards direct traffic at the same time that they are trying to cross students. If guards will be directing traffic, it is recommended that they receive training specific to conditions at their posts, and/or they receive Special Law Enforcement Office (SLEO) training which would be similar to the training received by police officers.

Crossing guard supervisors may benefit from attending a NJ Crossing Guard Train-the-Trainer class to have a better understanding of the training material that will allow them to more effectively train and supervise crossing guards into the future.
Jersey City has several ordinances that mandate cleaning and maintenance of sidewalks in front of residences and businesses. It is the duty of owners, occupants or those in charge of residences to clear snow to the extent of one foot outside the curb within eight hours of snow fall, or 4 hours after dawn if the snow fell at night (§ 296-1). It is the responsibility of these groups to also remove ice from the sidewalk if possible, and if not to spread salt, sawdust or sand upon the ice. Snow and ice cannot be placed into the street after it has been cleared by the municipality. In addition to maintaining the sidewalk free of snow and ice it is also their responsibility to keep the sidewalk out of a dirty and littered condition (§ 296-8).

Jersey City ordinance (§ 296-14) also dictates that in the event of any street improvements (widening, rehabilitation, resurfacing, or reconstruction) curbs and sidewalks will also be improved so as to conform with specifications of NJ DOT.

Jersey City has a number of ordinances regarding bicycle riders, including where bicycles can and cannot be used, bike racks, and safety of cyclists (§ 242-9.1). For the purposes of this School Travel Plan sections of the ordinance pertinent have been highlighted here. Bicycle users within the roadway are generally considered similar to motorists and must follow all instructions and laws as motorists do, including traveling with the direction of traffic and stopping for pedestrians within crosswalks. Cyclists are prohibited from using sidewalks within business districts. Outside of business districts sidewalks are still prohibited for bicycle use except by minors under nine years of age. When bicycle lanes are present on a roadway bicycle users who are traveling slower than traffic should use them. In addition to bicycles individuals using roller blades, scooters, and skateboarders may use the bike lane.

In February 2018 Mayor Steven Fulop signed executive order 2018-001, which adopted a “Vision Zero” initiative for Jersey City. The order created the Vision Zero Task force, which is tasked with creating an action plan to follow through with the goal of reducing traffic deaths and serious injuries on City roadways to zero by 2026. The Vision Zero idea, which began in Sweden and has been replicated all over the world, will be to eliminate the average 300 traffic crashes with pedestrians and the nine traffic fatalities that occur in the city each year. The Vision Zero Action Plan was adopted in February 2019.

In May 2011, the Municipal Council of Jersey City established a Complete Street Policy for the city. In effect this made it mandatory for new construction, reconstruction, or maintenance projects performed on the streets had to follow “Complete Streets” principles. The principles outline how to design the streetscape so that it is safe for all types of users to enjoy the streets, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit, and motorized users. Full integration and improved safety are the real goals of the Complete Street policy.
Related Existing Related Plans and Studies

There are several relevant studies and plans in Jersey City that are either currently underway or recently completed. This plan incorporates findings from these studies when appropriate. In addition, priority study areas were chosen to avoid duplicating areas already under study.

Bicycle Master Plan 2019

The Jersey City Bicycle Safety Master Plan will include a detailed map of a citywide bicycle network and design guidelines for bicycle facilities, as well as a comprehensive bicycle master plan with specific policy recommendations and implementation framework. The Bicycle Master Plan will provide the City with a clear guide to creating a more bicycle-friendly environment and position the City favorably for future implementation funding for its streets.

Pedestrian Enhancement Plan 2018

The Pedestrian Enhancement Plan identifies six priority corridors in the City in need of improvement based on data and public engagement. Walkability workshops were held in each of the six corridors. Recommendations for improvement included policy, programs, engineering, replicable methodology, and placemaking efforts that address the pedestrian realm.

Grand Street Concept Development Study 2018

Grand Street is a vital transportation corridor connecting diverse and growing neighborhoods. The study is looking at making Grand Street safer and more accessible for pedestrians, cyclists, and all users. The study will utilize advanced street redesign techniques to enhance safety conditions along Grand Street and improve the balance between all transportation modes.

McGinley Square - Montgomery Corridor Mobility Project 2014 TNJ, NJ TPA

The study examined existing transportation, pedestrian and bike access conditions, to increase mobility and create a transportation access improvements plan to strengthen the current McGinley Square - Montgomery Corridor CHOICE Neighborhood plan to better position it for implementation funding.

Parking Management Plan 2019-20

Working with NJ TPA, Jersey City is completing a citywide parking study to catalog and optimize the existing parking supply, understand parking needs, and identify innovative management strategies.

Christopher Columbus Drive Redesign 2018-19

The Christopher Columbus Drive corridor in Jersey City has been identified by the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority’s FY 16-17 Local Safety Program as a priority pedestrian corridor, due to the increase in pedestrian and bicycle crashes resulting in severe injuries and fatalities. Working closely with NJ DOT and Michael Baker International, Jersey City is studying Christopher Columbus Drive to create a safer street for all users.

Resiliency Master Plan 2017

The Jersey City Urban Environmental Green Infrastructure Design Plan outlines Green Infrastructure priorities to help the city be resilient against flooding, protect city infrastructure, improve emergency preparedness, and to create a socially resilient community. The plan includes citywide recommendations to help achieve these goals, namely encouraging development of LEED buildings, implementing green streets, adding new landscaping and green roofs, and setting their zoning and design standards for stormwater retention.
Race and Ethnicity

Jersey City public and public charter schools are racially and ethnically diverse. Black or African American students make up the largest percentage of the students in both school systems, followed by Hispanic, and Asian. Non-Hispanic White students comprise 12% of public school students and 10% of public charter school students. Please note that the Department of Education does not separate race and ethnicity in these statistics.

Language

Public Schools

Jersey City public schools exhibit a great deal of language diversity. Students who speak languages other than English at home are common. Although Spanish is the second most common language, after English, many other languages have a significant presence, including Arabic, Tagalog, Urdu, Gujarati and Hindi. Overall, English is the first language of most students at 24 schools, and the plurality at 12 schools. Spanish is the first language of most students at Franklin L. Williams School, and the plurality of students at William L. Dickinson High School, James J. Ferris High School, and Christa McAuliffe School. Arabic is the most common language of a plurality of students at Martin Luther King Jr. School. Overall, 11% of students are Limited English Proficient.

Public Charter Schools

English is the home language of most students at every public charter school. Students who speak languages other than English at home are common. The second most common language is Spanish at seven public charter schools; Arabic at Empowerment Academy Charter School, and Tagalog at Soaring Heights Charter School, and “Other” at Jersey City Golden Door Charter School and Learning Community Charter School. At one school, English is the home language of 100% of students. Overall, 7% of students are Limited English Proficient.
In May 2018, schools throughout Jersey City were asked to complete Safe Routes to School Student Arrival and Departure Tally Sheets. Student Arrival and Departure Tally forms track how students arrive to and depart from school. The results of the tally provide valuable information that can help with estimating traffic congestion and environmental issues and understanding traffic patterns.

Student travel tallies were administered to students on three days of a given week to determine how children traveled to and from school. The tallies were usually administered by teachers at the beginning of the day. Teachers asked students to raise their hands to indicate both how they traveled to school and how they intend to travel home at the end of the day. They were given the choices of walk, bike, family car, carpool, school bus, transit, and other.

Tallies were received from 19 Jersey City Schools, recording information for over 44,000 individual trips. When looking at all the City-wide data together, Walking is by far the most common mode of transportation to and from school, with nine of the 19 schools having more than 60% of students arriving and departing on foot. While it is encouraging to see so much walking to and from school throughout the City, bicycling to and from school in Jersey City is uncommon. The city-wide results show a total of 0% of children bicycling. While school bus transportation and transit use are quite common within some individual schools, city-wide only roughly 6% of students report using each of these modes.

The second most common method of travel to and from school is family vehicle. With only 2% of the students reporting that they travel in carpools, it seems that most vehicle traffic traveling to and from schools each day is individual families.

While tally results show that the majority of students attending Jersey City schools are walking to and from school each day, efforts should be made to reduce the number of children utilizing individual family vehicles to travel to and from school. Future efforts should encourage more walking, increased utilization of bicycling, increased use of public transit, and more carpooling to and from school to minimize vehicle traffic during arrival and dismissal.

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### Figure 17: School Travel Mode Results by Individual School

| Travel Mode | Academy One | Claremont Ave. Early Childhood Center | Infinity Institute | Innovation High School | MS-4 | MS-40 | PS 3 | PS 5 | PS 11 | PS 14 | PS 17 | PS 24 | PS 25 | PS 29 | PS 30 | PS 33 | PS 37 | PS 38 | Renaissance High School |
|-------------|-------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------|------------------------|------|------|------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------------------------|
| Walk        | 16% AM 21% PM 6% AM 6% PM 24% AM 26% PM 28% AM 75% PM 79% AM 45% PM 46% AM 35% PM 39% AM 77% PM 78% AM 66% PM 70% AM 74% PM 77% AM 76% PM 77% AM 67% PM 72% AM 43% PM 71% AM 40% PM 30% AM 71% PM 72% AM 44% PM 45% AM 70% PM 73% AM 27% PM 21% AM 21% PM | |
| Bike        | 0% AM 0% PM 0% AM 0% PM 0.2% AM 0.2% PM 0.4% AM 0.4% PM 0.2% AM 0.2% PM 0.1% AM 0.1% PM 0% AM 0% PM 0.2% AM 0.2% PM 0.1% AM 0.1% PM 1% AM 1% PM 0% AM 0% PM 0.1% AM 0.1% PM 0.2% AM 0.2% PM 1% AM 1% PM 0.4% AM 0% PM 4% AM 5% PM | |
| School Bus  | 12% AM 11% PM 88% AM 88% PM 0% AM 0% PM 2% AM 2% PM 3% AM 3% PM 8% AM 7% PM 6% AM 5% PM 9% AM 9% PM 0.8% AM 0.8% PM 12% AM 12% PM 13% AM 13% PM 1% AM 1% PM 2% AM 2% PM 6% AM 5% PM 2% AM 2% PM 23% AM 23% PM 22% AM 22% PM 0.2% AM 0.2% PM 9% AM 9% PM 8% AM 8% PM 2% AM 2% PM 0.6% AM 0.6% PM 14% AM 14% PM | |
| Family Vehicle | 39% AM 24% PM 6% AM 6% PM 35% AM 28% PM 16% AM 10% PM 32% AM 24% PM 15% AM 10% PM 43% AM 42% PM 42% AM 42% PM 16% AM 16% PM 19% AM 15% PM 20% AM 18% PM 19% AM 18% PM 25% AM 22% PM 20% AM 23% PM 34% AM 33% PM 27% AM 25% PM 39% AM 39% PM 26% AM 24% PM 3% AM 3% PM 2% | |
| Carpool     | 11% AM 10% PM 0% AM 0% PM 3% AM 3% PM 5% AM 5% PM 2% AM 2% PM 9% AM 11% PM 0.9% AM 0.9% PM 0.7% AM 0.7% PM 1% AM 1% PM 0% AM 0% PM 0% AM 0% PM 0% AM 0% PM 0% AM 0% PM 0% AM 0% PM 0% AM 0% PM 0% AM 0% PM 0% AM 0% PM 2% AM 2% PM 1% AM 1% PM 1% AM 1% PM 1% AM 1% PM 2% AM 2% PM 1% AM 1% PM 1% AM 1% PM 2% AM 2% PM 1% AM 1% PM 1% AM 1% PM 3% AM 3% PM 2% | |
| Transit     | 22% AM 34% PM 0% AM 0% PM 37% AM 41% PM 40% AM 38% PM 29% AM 33% PM 3% AM 3% PM 2% AM 2% PM 4% AM 4% PM 2% AM 2% PM 3% AM 3% PM 4% AM 4% PM 2% AM 2% PM 2% AM 2% PM 2% AM 2% PM 1% AM 1% PM 0.2% AM 0.2% PM 0.5% AM 0.5% PM 1% AM 1% PM 0.6% AM 0.6% PM 1% AM 1% PM 0.9% AM 0.9% PM 0.7% AM 0.7% PM 2% AM 2% PM 3% AM 3% PM 0.3% AM 0.3% PM 0.7% AM 0.7% PM 57% AM 57% PM 50% AM 50% PM | |
| Other (Skateboard, scooter, etc) | 0.9% AM 0.9% PM 0% AM 0% PM 0.5% AM 0.5% PM 3% AM 3% PM 3% AM 3% PM 1% AM 1% PM 1% AM 1% PM 0% AM 0% PM 0% AM 0% PM 0.5% AM 0.5% PM 1% AM 1% PM 1% AM 1% PM 1% AM 1% PM 0% AM 0% PM 0.4% AM 0.4% PM 0.3% AM 0.3% PM 0% AM 0% PM 0% AM 0% PM 0% AM 0% PM 2% AM 2% PM 0% AM 0% PM 0% AM 0% PM 0.1% AM 0.1% PM 6% AM 6% PM | |

Tallies were received from 19 Jersey City Schools, recording information for over 44,000 individual trips.
Student Transportation

The Jersey City Public Schools Student Transportation Department provides transportation for students from home to school, from school to school, and to-and-from field trips, athletic contests, and other extracurricular activities. For over 25 years, Jersey City Public Schools has maintained an arrangement with NJ TRANSIT to provide transit tickets for students at a discounted rate and distributed them to students eligible for school bus transportation.

Policy 3541.1, Transportation Routes and Services is primarily concerned with procedure for the development of bus routes for students who live remote from the schoolhouse as defined by New Jersey law; educationally disabled students in accordance with their IEP; students participating in board-approved extracurricular activities or field trips; students whose route to the school is deemed hazardous by the board; and other students as required by law.

Policy 3541.33, Transportation Safety, makes no mention of walking or bicycling to school. This policy is primarily concerned with school busing and outlines procedures regarding accidents, emergency drills, vehicle and equipment requirements, and requirements for bus drivers.

While no mention of bicycling was found in school policy, walking was mentioned in Policy 5142, Student Safety. In the section detailing supervision of non-bused students at dismissal, it states that the Board of Education requires signed permission for a student to be dismissed to walk home unescorted. Additionally, while the Jersey City Public Schools 2018-2019 Student Code of Conduct is an excellent resource describing a variety of procedures and policies, it fails to address transportation.

Wellness and Nutrition Policy

The Jersey City Schools Wellness and Nutrition policy focuses on the nutrient standards for meals and other food/snack programs. The policy follows the Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010, which provide the nutrition standards for school lunch and breakfast program as well as provide funds to the child nutrition program. The goals of the wellness policy cover nutrition promotion, nutrition education, and physical activity. While it is encouraging to see that the policy has a physical activity section outlining a minimum daily recess and prohibiting the withholding of recess or other periods of physical activity as a disciplinary action, the policy does not address physical activity before and after school and does not mention active transportation.

Students walking to and from School in Jersey City
Hudson Transportation Management Association

Jersey City has a long history of encouraging and enhancing walking, bicycling, and public transit use. Hudson TMA is a division of the Hudson County Improvement Authority and offers Hudson County businesses, schools, employees, residents, and visitors resources and tools to simplify travel, enhance the daily commute, improve business productivity, improve safety, and assist in lowering carbon emissions for a better environment. Hudson TMA provides multiple programs and opportunities as a free service that create improved environments for walking, bicycling and transit in Jersey City. The following denotes several of the programs and services provided by Hudson TMA.

Safe Routes to School Programs in the Jersey City School District

Hudson TMA provides several educational and encouragement programs in Jersey City schools on an annual basis. Walk- and bike-to-school safety/educational programs bring fun and fitness-promoting activities to students’ daily school routine.

Stride & Ride - Countywide Bicycle Safety Day

The annual Hudson TMA Stride & Ride program has two main goals:
1. Teach children who already can ride, to do so safely with better ability and,
2. Teach children how to ride a bike who were previously on training wheels.

The event has 10 obstacle courses and teaching stations designed to teach the children bike safety while improving their handling skills and balance. As parents or guardians are required to accompany the child through the course, they are also educated so they can continue the process with their children at home as well as use the same information when they ride a bicycle. Many parents attend with their own bikes to learn along with their children. The event also includes a community festival focused on health and safety, drawing additional members of the community. Hudson TMA also provides additional information on walking, biking and safety programs at these events.

June 2017: 10th Annual Stride & Ride Lincoln Park

- 325 children participated in the on-bike skills drills
- 25 children participated in Learn to Ride
- 1000 family members attended the event

June 2018: 11th Annual Stride & Ride Lincoln Park

- 280 children participated in the on-bike skills drills
- 30 children participated in Learn to Ride
- 800 family members attended the event
Hudson BIKE SCHOOL - Grades 4 and 5

Hudson BIKE SCHOOL is an evidence-based on-bike skills class taught to students in grades 4 and 5 through a school’s physical education program. Staff from Hudson TMA train school physical education teachers in the lesson plans, knowledge, and resources needed to implement an on-bicycle safety education program to youth. The curriculum covers bicycle-riding basics including helmet fit, bike fit, bike parts and bike check along with on-bike skills including balancing, braking, scanning and signaling. Upon completion of the training, PE teachers are eligible to receive a fleet of bikes which are loaned to the school for the children to use as part of their gym class. In Jersey City, PS 5 and PS 12 routinely offer this program to over 200 students each year.

Walk to School Safety Poster Contest - Grades K-8

Children creating posters not only provides an opportunity to exercise their creative and artistic abilities, but also think about various pedestrian safety rules and the importance of walking to school. Hudson TMA sponsors annual poster contests to provide teaching and learning opportunities and a chance to win prizes for the top three posters. All students who participate have their posters hung in their school which in turn exposed the other students to the positive messages. In 2018, PS 8, PS 16, PS 17, PS 20 and PS 25 participated in this contest.

Golden Sneaker Program - Grades 2 and 3

The Golden Sneaker program is a walking mileage contest within one school between all classes in the 2nd and 3rd grades. During the Golden Sneaker competition, the children use pedometers for one week to measure the distances they walked. The class with the greatest distance walked is awarded the Golden Sneaker trophy. During the week of competition, the program is incorporated into math and science classes as the children add and convert their numbers of steps and discuss the environmental impact. The award presentation includes an interactive program teaching children safety rules regarding crossing the street at the corner and within the crosswalk, understanding and following all signs and signals, being seen, listening as well as looking, and paying attention to the crossing guard. In 2018, over 1,500 students in eight schools in Jersey City participated in the Golden Sneaker program.

Walk to School Event

Walk to School Event

Hudson BIKE SCHOOL Event

Golden Sneaker Program Winners

Hudson BIKE SCHOOL Event
Walk to School Programs - Grades K-3

Hudson TMA's Walk to School program encourages parents and children to walk to school rather than dropping off students by car. One of the ways Hudson TMA kicks-off their walk to school programs at the beginning of the school year is to have staff accompanied by their mascot, Buster the Bus, lead a walking school bus with children and their parents, family members, and school staff. A walking school bus consists of a group of children walking to school with one or more adults, picking up more children at predetermined stops along the route. After the students arrive to school, the TMA staff run a fun, interactive, and educational presentation promoting both the benefits of walking and best pedestrian safety practices to children in grades K to 3. In September and October of 2018, over 1,400 students from 12 Jersey City schools participated in walk to school events and over 4,400 students participated in the educational program.

Youth Bicycle Safety Program - Grades 3-5

The program provides bicycle safety questions, answers, and explanations through an interactive PowerPoint presentation in a Quiz Show format. Students participate by answering questions and demonstrating safe practices. Students who participate are also given bicycle safety activity books. Over 6,000 students from 24 Jersey City schools participated in this program in 2018.

NOTE: Schools that participated in programs in previous years are not shown, numbers indicate student participation
In addition to providing Safe Routes to School programs, Hudson TMA provides communitywide programs and services including adult learn-to-ride, senior pedestrian safety programs, adult smart cycling classes, Intro to CitiBike informational sessions, assistance with Sustainable Jersey actions, and the programs described below:

**Bicycle Rehab Program**

Hudson TMA’s Adult Bike Rehab program provides bikes, which were donated to the TMA and then rehabbed by the TMA, to qualified individuals who can use them as part of their commute to work. Bikes are available on a first come, first served basis. Bike donations sometimes include child sized bicycles which are then donated to children whose families may not be able to afford one.

**Park(ing) Day**

Each year, in downtown Jersey City on the third Friday in September, the Hudson TMA participates in Park(ing) Day. It is an annual international event where metered parking spaces are temporarily transformed into a mini park. The originators of Park(ing) Day conceived the event as a way for people to re-imagine our urban landscape.

Hudson TMA uses the event as a fun way to get people to think about how they travel and the impact it makes on our environment. The ‘instant’ park attracts passers-by, allowing the TMA staff to engage them in a dialogue about using their cars less often. The converted park is themed “Shakespeare in the Park(ing) Spot.” On hand to provide the classical element is the Actors Shakespeare Company. Between the dialogues and soliloquies, the actors mention the TMA’s objectives and programs. A swordfight is also performed which centers around the difficulties of parking. TMA staff takes advantage of the crowd of onlookers and asks individuals to pledge to go car-free or car-lite. Many of the people drawn to the staged event are Jersey City residents with children in the district school system. A TMA information tent is nearby to provide additional information.