



2012

Safe Routes to School Travel Plan



Washington Avenue School

102 Washington Avenue

Chatham, NJ 07928

Grades: K - 3

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Intro:

Chatham Borough is located in southwest Morris County and has an area of 2.4 square miles. Washington Avenue School is located on Washington Avenue that has a 25 MPH posted speed limit. During morning and afternoon school hours, the speed limit is reduced to 25 MPH on neighboring streets with higher posted speed limits. Most of the Borough has sidewalks present in the community, however traffic volume is high in many areas and the Borough has a vibrant economic center and transit station that are popular destinations for motorists. On the streets with no sidewalks, traffic volume and speed are perceived to be low, but motorist awareness is a concern, especially during morning and afternoon rush hours.

Community Profile: Chatham Borough
Population: 8,962 (2010 Census)
Area: 2.425 SQ. Mi. (2.373 Land, 0.052 Water)
Police: Chatham Borough Police Department

Working Members:

Ms. Kathy Abbott – Chatham Township Committeewoman

Ms. Shannon Bley – WAS PTO Parent

Ms. April Kabbash – WAS PTO Parent

Ms. Mary Quigley - Principal

Objectives of the Travel Plan:

1. To make travel to and from Washington Avenue School safer and more efficient.
2. To reduce traffic congestion around the school zone.
3. To encourage travel to school by means other than the car, thus encouraging students to walk as a health option.
4. Increase motorist awareness within the community, making it a safer place to walk and cycle.
5. Educate younger students on the safety elements of walking and bicycling, especially to and from school.

Current School Policy:

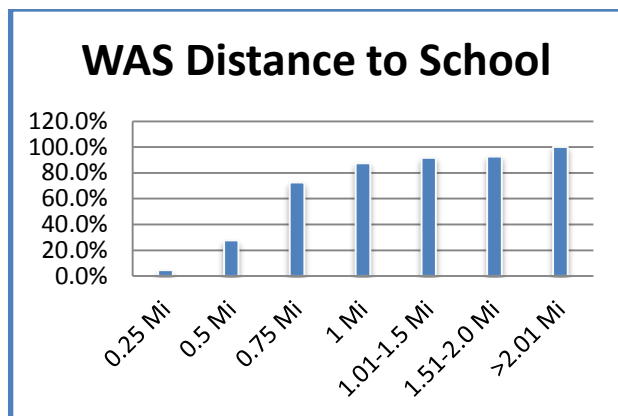
Walking and bicycling are greatly encouraged, not only within Washington Avenue School, but throughout the entire school district. There are bicycle racks present at each of the schools for the students and faculty to use, and there are six (6) crossing guards present within a .25 mile radius of WAS. The crossing guards are located at the intersections of Watchung Ave and Lafayette Ave, Orchard Rd and Lafayette Ave, Chatham St. and Lafayette Ave, Washington Ave and Chatham St, Orchard Rd and Washington Ave, and Watchung Ave and Washington Ave. Currently, students whom reside more than 2 miles from their school are eligible for bus transportation. Students are required to complete a bicycle safety course offered by the PE department in order to be eligible to ride their bicycle to/from school.

Efforts to Date: Education and Encouragement

Proximity Analysis:

The School District of the Chathams provided TransOptions with redacted students addresses for the 2011-2012 academic year. TransOptions used the student locations to assess the feasibility of students

walking or biking to and from school, solely regarding distance that they live from their respective school.



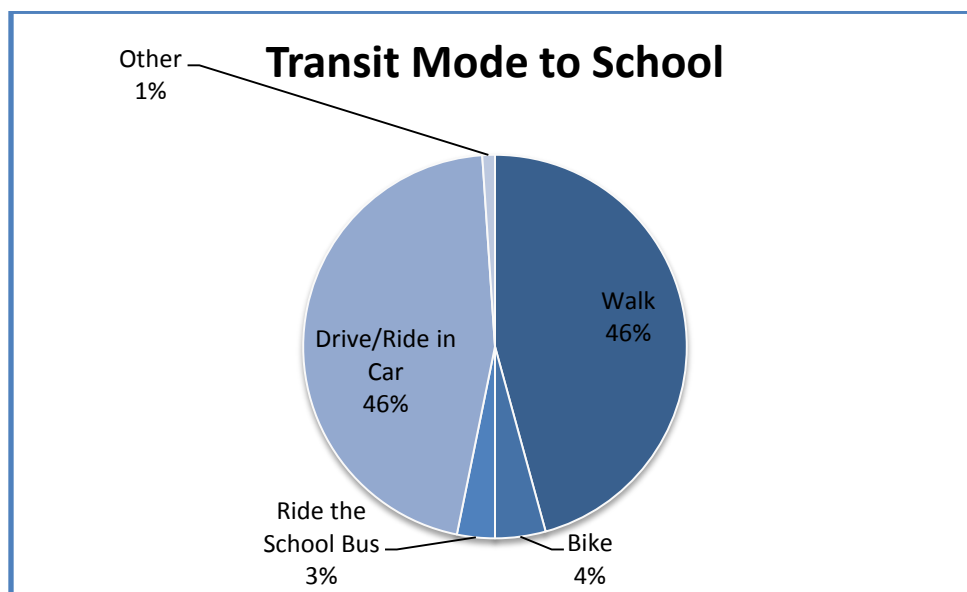
Washington Avenue School		
Distance to School	Percentage	Count
0.25 Mi.	4.5%	20
0.5 Mi.	27.5%	103
0.75 Mi.	72.5%	201
1 Mi.	87.5%	67
1.01-1.5 Mi.	91.5%	18
1.51-2.0 Mi.	92.6%	5
>2.0 Mi.	100.0%	33
Total		447

This data enabled the Chatham Safe Routes to School Team to estimate the number of students that would be able to walk or bike to school. This also assisted in creating walking routes, as well as identifying the target enforcement areas and locations where infrastructure improvements would be necessary. 87.5% or 391 of the students at Washington Avenue School reside within a 1 mile radius.

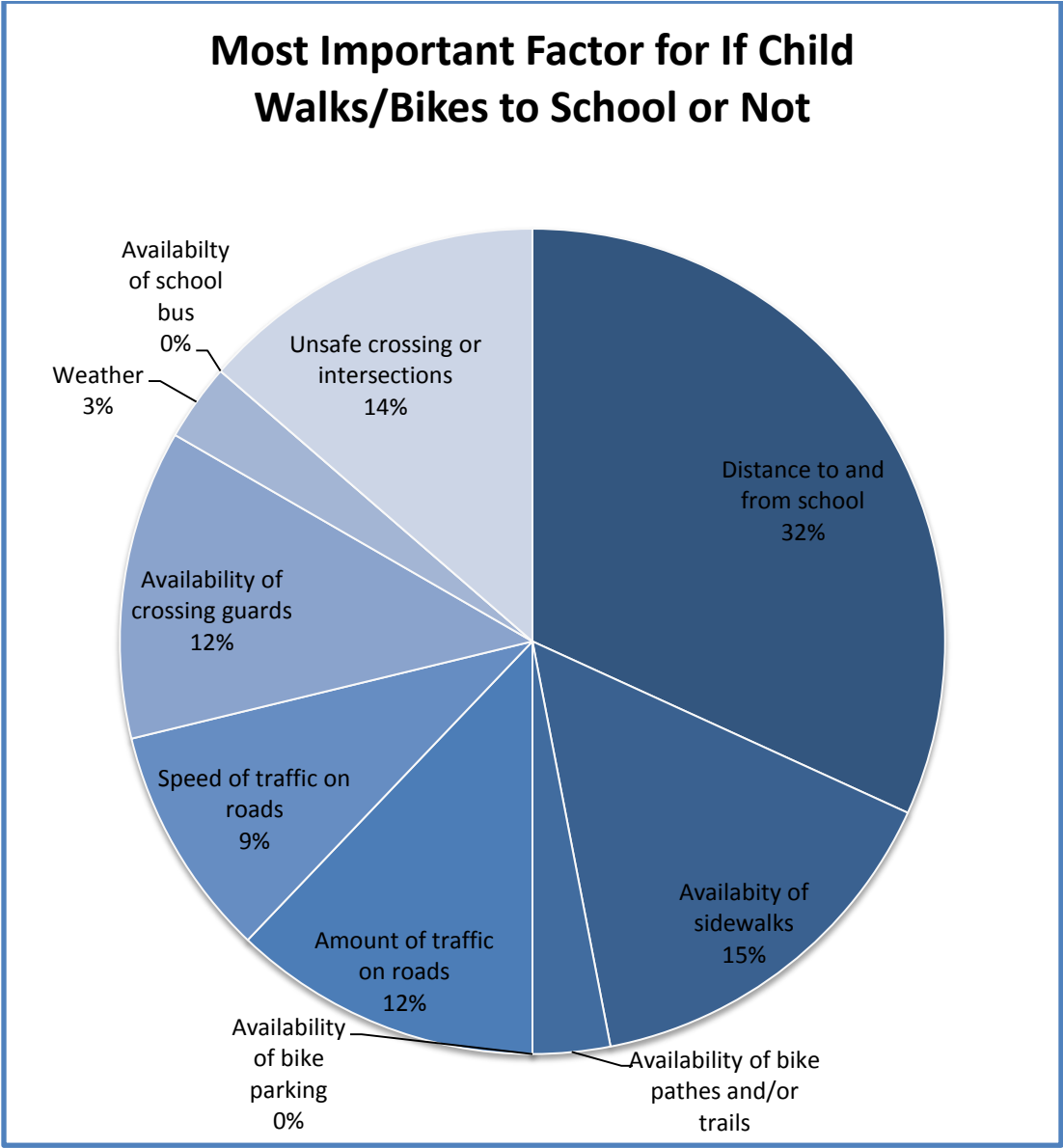
Parent Survey:

A Parent/Caregiver Survey was developed by the NJ SRTS Resource Center at the Alan M. Voorhees Transportation Center as a tool to gather information regarding a student's travel behavior as seen by the parent/caregiver. The goal of this survey is to learn how students travel to and from school and to better understand any issues or concerns that parents have with allowing their child to walk or bike to school. Below is a highlight from the parent survey responses that were collected during the winter of 2011:

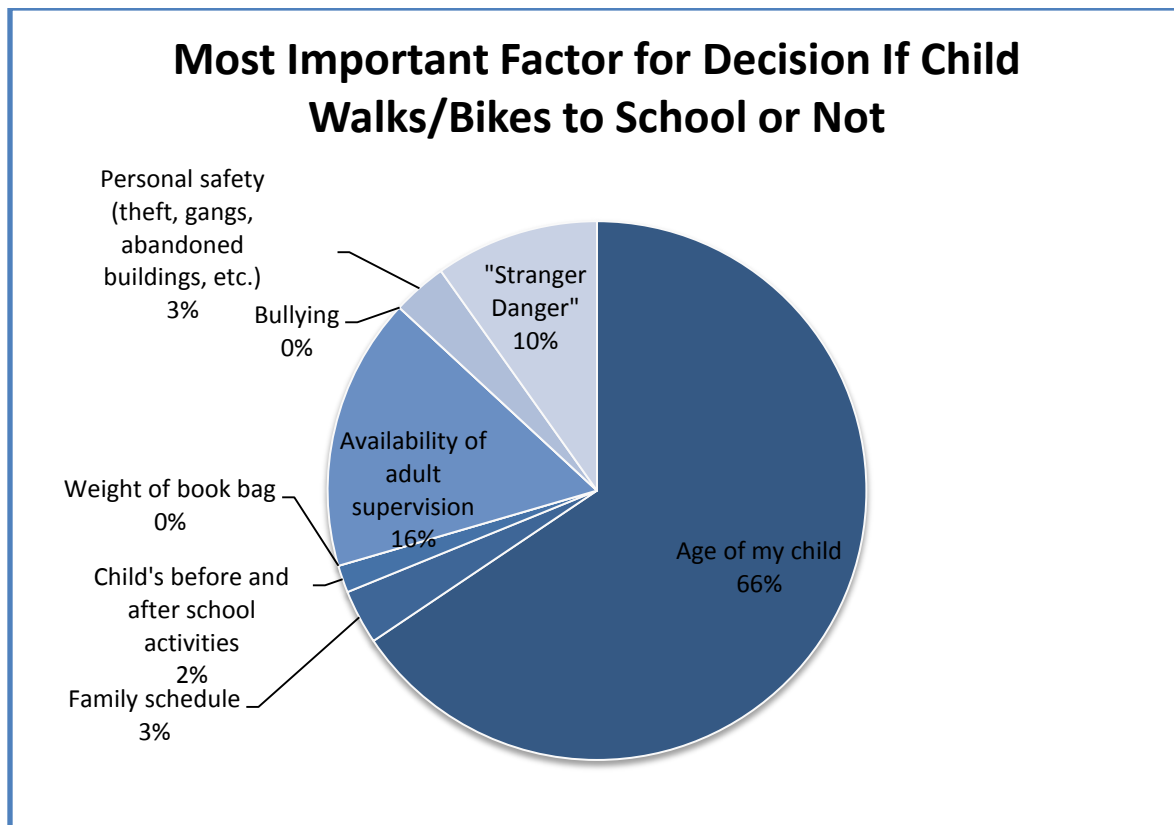
Question 10: (A) How does your child usually get to and from school?



Question 15 (B) Indicate the one factor that is most important in your decision.



Question 16: (B) Indicate the one factor that is most important in your decision. Are there any other important factors in your decision to let your child bike or walk to school?



Travel Tallies:

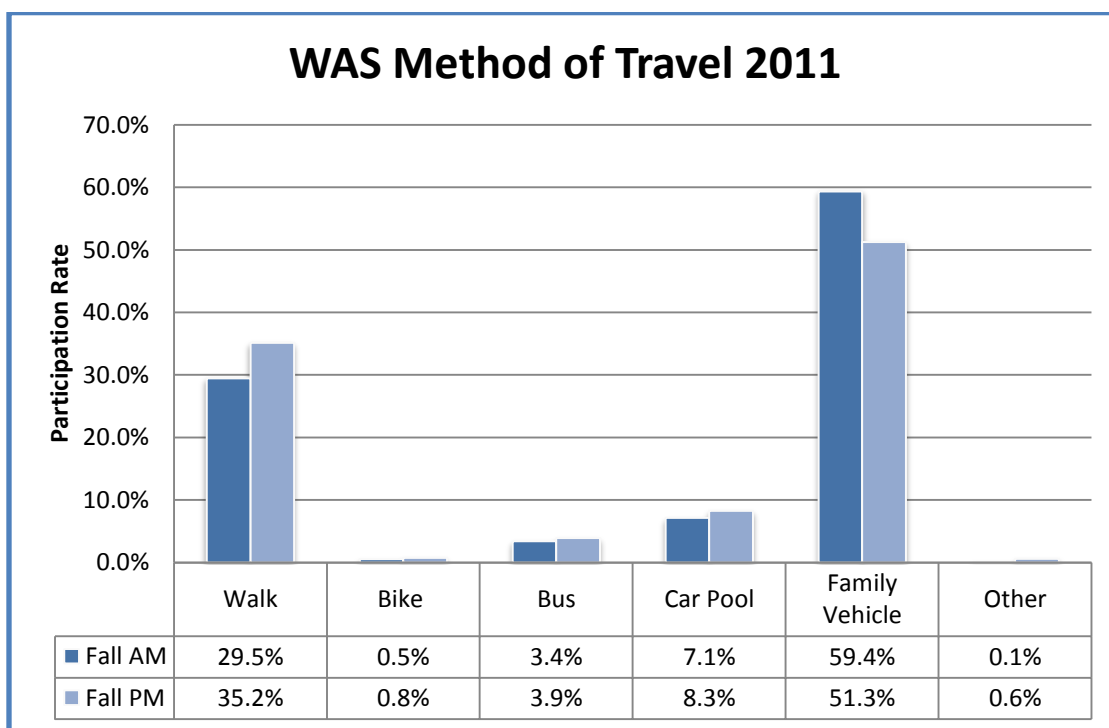
A Student Travel Tally was conducted in the fall of 2011 to form as a baseline snapshot of the student's travel mode to and from school. The tally was created by TransOptions based off of the SRTS National Partnership Tally. The tally is a simple "show-of-hands" collection method where the teacher during the first period of school asked the students how they arrived at school that morning, giving the student the choices of Walk, Bike, Bus, and Carpool with other students, driven alone in a family vehicle, or other (scooter, skateboard, etc.).

The data collected in the tally was completed without the promotion of a walk or bike to school event. We hoped to gather information that would capture the true travel behavior of the school before any encouragement and education efforts were put forth. In the AM from December 13th, 2011 to December 15th, 2011, 277 students had walked to school (29.5%), 5 had biked (0.5%), 32 had taken the bus (3.4%), 67 carpooled with other students (7.1%), 558 were driven alone by a parent or guardian (59.4%), and 1 arrived to school via other means (0.1%). In the PM, 225 students had walked home from school (35.2%), 5 had biked (0.8%), 25 had taken the bus (3.9%), 53 carpooled with other students

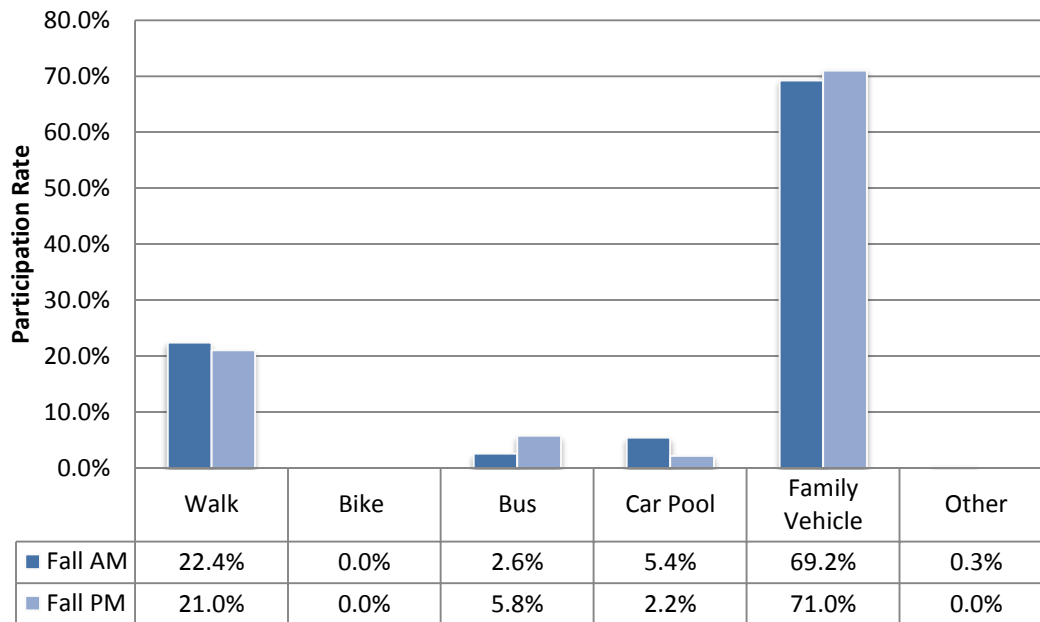
(8.3%), 328 were driven alone by a parent or guardian (51.3%), and 4 arrived home via other means (0.6%).

As the school year progressed, the students and their parents were encouraged to walk or bike to school, and where the service was available to them, to take the bus. Also, parents were educated on the New Jersey Pedestrian laws, and a Chatham SRTS Facebook page was created, gathering information from the residents of the community regarding opportunities or constraints their child may face on his or her trip to school. There were also a series of videos that were created in anticipation of Walk and Bike to School Week, which were posted on YouTube, and publicized throughout the school district.

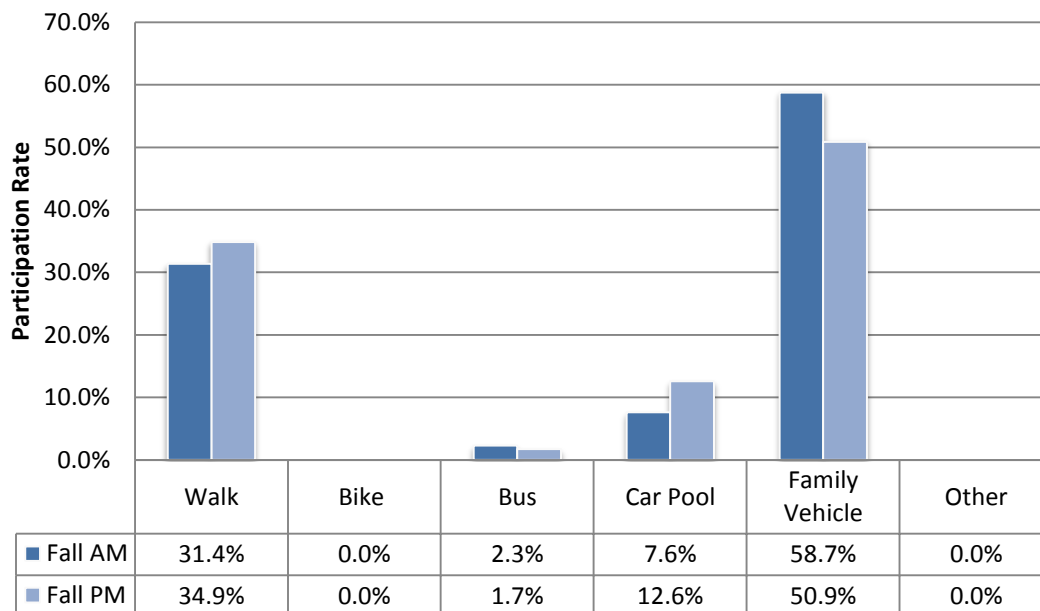
The findings of the travel tally are represented below:

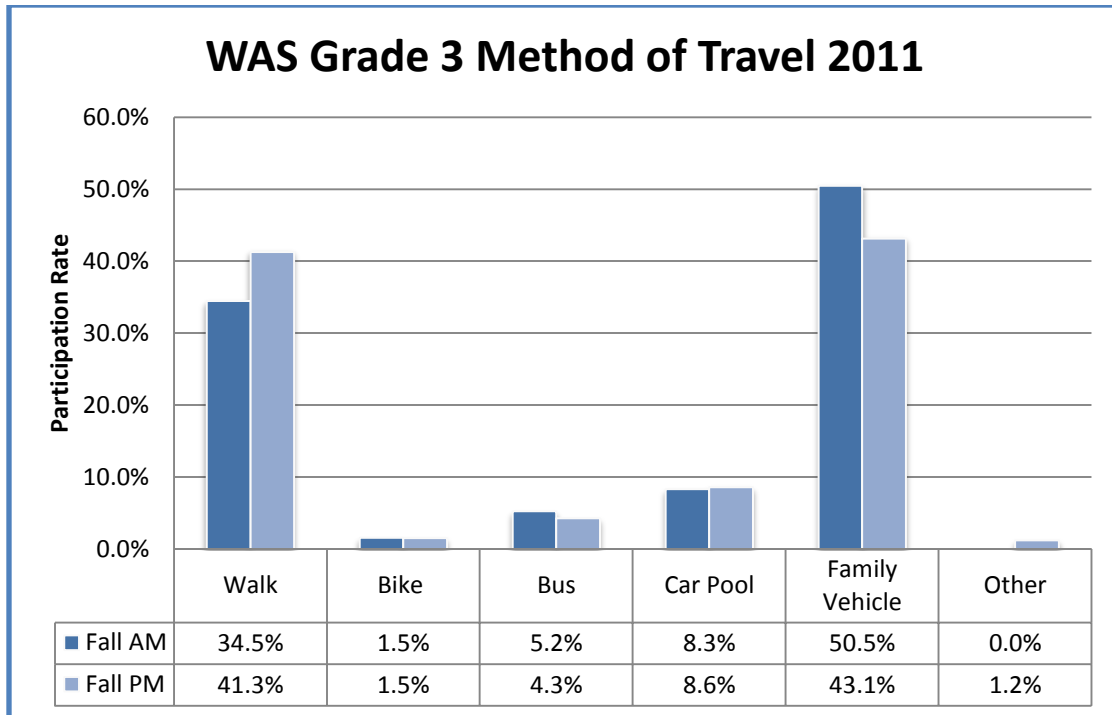


WAS Grade 1 Method of Travel 2011



WAS Grade 2 Method of Travel 2011





Bicycle Education Curriculum:

The Bike Safety Specialist of TransOptions developed an in-class off-bike bicycle education program to be taught throughout the School District of the Chathams. The curriculum has been developed to address the different age groups and their ability to comprehend the lesson plan. The program is designed to provide the following educational lessons for the various grade levels:

- Grades K-1 – One Classroom Lesson
 - Importance of the helmet and take home material for parents to learn how to properly fit a helmet.
 - Encourage bicycling as a fun and energizing activity.
 - Learn the basic traffic signals (Stop Signs and Traffic Lights) and to teach them the role of the crossing guard.
 - The lesson also includes a take home coloring book that can be used as a take-home homework assignment.
- Grades 2-3 – One Classroom Lesson
 - Importance of the helmet and take home material for parents to learn how to properly fit a helmet.
 - Encourage bicycling as a fun and energizing activity.
 - Learn the rules of traffic signals (Stop Signs, Traffic Lights, One Way signs, Yield Signs) and to teach them the role of the crossing guard.
 - Educate the students on the environmental and health benefits of bicycling.
 - Educate the students about sharing the road and how to look out for cars and other hazards.

TransOptions worked with the Physical Education (PE) teachers at each of the six public schools in Chatham to train them in the bicycle curriculum. Training sessions were coordinated with each of the schools, and instructions were provided to the PE teachers on how to conduct the lesson. This was an educational experience for TransOptions, and provided insight on how to best deliver the message of bicycle safety to students in varying age groups.

Barriers and Constraints:

The Chatham SRTS Committee created a Safe Routes to School email account, as well as a Facebook profile, to solicit information from residents of the community. Both accounts generated a number of responses regarding crosswalks, sidewalks, crossing guards, signage, and maintenance issues that could pose as threats to pedestrians travelling to and from school. Below is a list of the areas of concern that were cited by residents in the community as suggestions to be considered moving forward:

Crosswalk Installation:

- Fairmount Ave (Multiple Locations)

Sidewalk Installation Requests:

- Lafayette Ave (East of CHS/LAS)
- Shunpike Road (West of Falmouth Drive)
- Washington Avenue (South of Watchung Ave)

Traffic Calming Measures:

- Pedestrian Warning Flashers on Watchung
- Reduce speeding on NJ 124
- Reduce speeding on Watchung Ave
- Reduce speeding on Lafayette Ave

This was the first year of having a successful Safe Routes to School program in Chatham Borough. Washington Avenue School, as well as Chatham Borough, will continue to promote and encourage students travelling to and from school to do so by means of active transportation. Those students that reside greater than 2 miles from the school are eligible for bus service, and are encouraged to utilize those services.

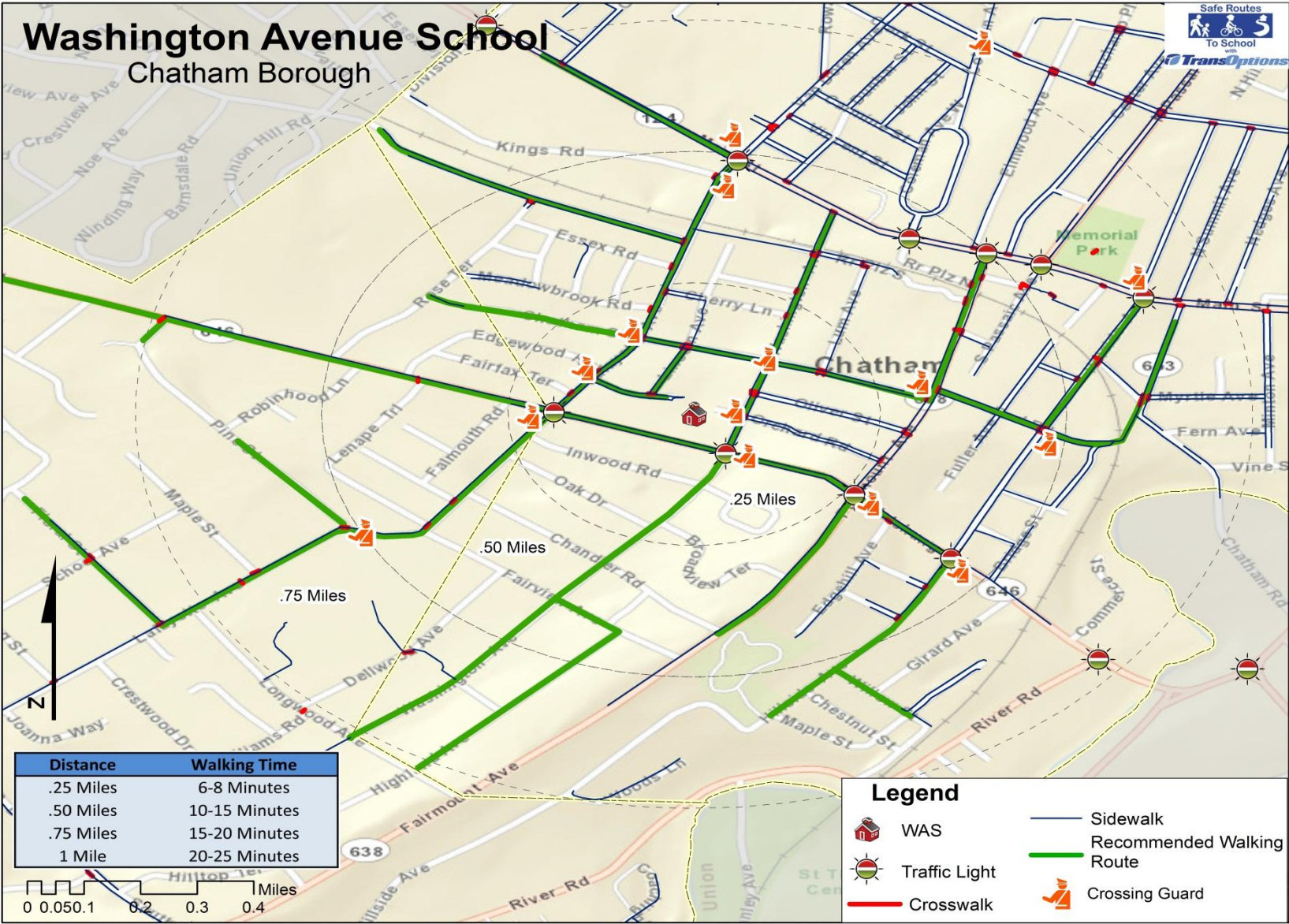
TransOptions hopes to host bicycle and pedestrian education classes at Washington Avenue School in the upcoming 2012-2013 school year. TransOptions also hopes to work with the Chatham SRTS Committee, Washington Avenue School and the Chatham Borough Police to establish Walk and Bike to school days for the upcoming school year. Establishing dates for these events before the school year begins will facilitate in the encouragement and communication to parents and enable those to participate.

Washington Avenue School would like to acquire sources of funding for continued promotional items and other encouragement and educational materials to build on the success of the program to date.

Proposed Actions:

Education Actions	Responsibility	Timeframe	Cost
Pedestrian Safety Classes	TMA	Ongoing	Low
Bicycle Safety Classes	TMA	Ongoing	Low
Printing of Pedestrian Safety Documents for Parents	School/TMA	Ongoing	Low
Encouragement Actions			
Establish relationship with local sponsors	Chatham SRTS Committee	Ongoing	Low
Establish Walk and Bike to School dates for 2012-2013 School Year	School/Board of Education/Borough Police/TMA	Fall 2012	Low
Register for International Walk to School Day	School/TMA	By October 3 rd	Low
Enforcement Actions			
Speed Enforcement	Chatham Borough Police	Ongoing	Low
Yield to Pedestrians at crosswalks	Chatham Borough Police	Ongoing	Low
Engineering Actions			
Installation of sidewalks, crosswalks, pedestrian signage	Municipality	?	High
Walkability/Bikeability Audit	School/TMA	2012-2013 School Year	Low
Evaluation Actions			
Student Travel Tally	School/TMA	Fall 2012	Low
Parent Survey	School/TMA	Fall 2012	Low

Map of School



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