

From: **"Mochrie, Paul"** <Paul.Mochrie@vancouver.ca>

To: **"Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"**

Date: 10/22/2021 4:25:29 PM

Subject: **School Streets Pilot and Expansion Update**

Attachments: **Memo - School Streets Pilot and Expansion Update.pdf**

Dear Mayor and Council,

Please see the attached memo from Margaret Wittgens. A short summary of the memo is as follows:

- ☐ Initial four-week School Streets Pilot was a success at three pilot elementary schools.
- ☐ The City hired a consultant to lead volunteer recruitment for the 2021/2022 school year. Unfortunately, not enough volunteers have been recruited to sustain the current program model.
- ☐ At Lord Roberts Elementary, school and parent support remains strong. Program will continue with a school-led approach for remainder of 2021.
- ☐ Staff will aim to re-launch the School Streets program from April to June 2022.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Margaret Wittgens at 604-673-8227 or margaret.wittgens@vancouver.ca

Best,
Paul

Paul Mochrie (he/him)
City Manager
City of Vancouver
paul.mochrie@vancouver.ca



The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the x^wməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səlilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

MEMORANDUM

October 22, 2021

TO: Mayor and Council

CC: Paul Mochrie, City Manager
Karen Levitt, Deputy City Manager
Katrina Leckovic, City Clerk
Lynda Graves, Administration Services Manager, City Manager's Office
Maria Pontikis, Director, Civic Engagement and Communications
Anita Zaenker, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office
Neil Monckton, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office
Alvin Singh, Communications Director, Mayor's Office

FROM: Margaret Wittgens
Deputy General Manager, Strategy and Integrated Planning, Engineering Services

SUBJECT: School Streets Pilot and Expansion Update

RTS #: N/A

Purpose

The purpose of this memo is to update Council on the 2021-2022 School Streets Expansion, related challenges in securing ongoing volunteers and recommended next steps.

Background

Established in 2012, the School Active Travel Planning Program consults with school communities and stakeholders to identify transportation-related challenges and opportunities, improve safety, and increase the number of children walking, cycling and rolling to school.

In November 2020, City Council approved the Climate Emergency Action Plan including direction to develop a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Action Plan. The TDM Action Plan includes expanded School Active Travel Planning Program offerings proven to be effective in reducing vehicle trips including School Streets and a Walking School Bus program.

School Streets Pilot Program Summary

A School Street is a car-free block beside a school open to walking, cycling and rolling during

drop-off and pick-up times for up to 45 minutes, depending on the location. No motor vehicles are permitted to enter or exit the block when School Streets is in effect, except in an emergency.

School Streets has been implemented in many other jurisdictions, particularly in the UK, and has been shown to create a safer environment for children, increase active travel, improve safety and air quality, reduce congestion and support physical distancing needs. In partnership with the Vancouver School Board (VBS), the City of Vancouver piloted a School Streets program from April 12, 2021, to May 7, 2021 (4 weeks) at three participating schools:

- Lord Roberts Elementary
- Van Horne Elementary
- Hastings Elementary

Parent and community volunteers led the day-to-day implementation of School Streets by setting up and taking down barriers at the end of each block (morning and afternoon), and interacting with interested residents and parents. During the pilot, schools were provided a stipend and parent advisory councils actively recruited and scheduled volunteers. The city program coordinator was the primary contact if any issues or concerns arose.

Pilot Outcomes

During the pilot, feedback was collected from residents, parents, volunteers and school staff. Parents and school staff were also surveyed to help understand program impact. One day traffic counts were conducted before and during the pilot on the streets surrounding each school. Highlights of the pilot included:

- 29% of families reported driving less
- 32% of families reported walking more
- 231 families tried active travel to school for the first time
- 76% of parents support School Street to continue in the future

To read the full program report, please visit vancouver.ca/School-Streets

2021-2022 School Streets Expansion

Building upon the success of the initial pilot, all three pilot elementary schools expressed interest to continue the School Streets Program for the duration of the 2021/2022 school year (from September 2021 to June 2022, school days only). In addition, the City planned to launch School Streets at an additional seven schools for a three month pilot from April – June 2022.

Based on feedback from the pilot, the city hired a consultant to lead all aspects of volunteer recruitment, training, scheduling and management for the 2021/2022 school year. In addition to recruiting parent volunteers, the consultant's role was to advertise volunteer opportunities to the broader community to ensure volunteer support could be sustained for the school year.

The program expansion launched on September 8, 2021. Within the first few weeks of the program, it became evident that recruiting daily morning and afternoon volunteer shifts was a significant challenge despite substantial outreach efforts on the part of the consultant.

Although volunteer enthusiasm was high during the pilot, the same did not translate into a long-term, sustainable volunteer recruitment model. There are currently not enough volunteers to sustain this program model for the remainder of the 2021/2022 school year.

Next Steps / Future of School Streets

While school and parent support for the School Streets program remains strong, there is not enough volunteer commitment to maintain the daily School Street road closures at the three pilot elementary schools. In the interim:

- Lord Roberts Elementary School – Program to continue with a school-led approach as parents have stepped forward to lead the volunteer management for at least the remainder of 2021.
- Van Horne and Hastings Elementary Schools – Program has been on pause since September 20, 2021 due to low recruitment of volunteers. Program to remain on pause for the remainder of 2021 and early 2022.

Staff are currently exploring alternative program models to further continue the School Street program. We are collaborating with our partners and researching examples of School Street models from peer cities that were successful in keeping this initiative operational on a long term basis. Staff will spend the remainder of 2021 evaluating the current model and lessons learned as we aim to re-launch the School Streets program from April to June 2022. Where applicable, staff will also consider looking at more permanent design solutions to the School Street block.

School Streets are being successfully implemented in peer cities around the world. Staff hope that we can continue our partnership with VSB, to find a successful model to implement in our Vancouver context. Staff will provide an update for the future implementation model of School Streets in early 2022 in advance of a spring program re-launch.

Please contact me directly if you have any further questions.



Margaret Wittgens, MCIP, RPP
Deputy General Manager, Strategy and Integrated Planning, Engineering Services
604.673.8227 | margaret.wittgens@vancouver.ca