



Walk Bike Roll

# SCHOOL STREETS PILOT

## OVERVIEW



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# About the Pilot

**32%**

of families reported  
**WALKING MORE**



**25%**

of families reported  
**BIKING MORE**



**29%**

of parents reported  
**DRIVING LESS**



**76%**

of parents want the  
**SCHOOL STREET  
TO CONTINUE**  
at their school in the future



In partnership with the Vancouver School Board, the City of Vancouver piloted School Streets at three local elementary schools for four weeks from April 12 to May 7, 2021.

During drop-off and pick-up times one street adjacent to each school was closed to motor vehicle traffic and open to walking, biking and rolling for up to 45 minutes depending on the location. Daily implementation of the School Street was led by school volunteers.

## What is a School Street?

A School Street is a car-free block beside a school open to walking, biking, and rolling during drop-off and pick up.

School Streets is a popular program in many jurisdictions around the world and has been shown to:

- Create a safer environment
- Encourage active travel
- Promote independent mobility of children
- Reduce congestion
- Improve air quality
- Foster community connection
- Support physical distancing needs during the COVID-19 pandemic



### Why pilot School Streets?

Safety around schools is a top concern. Reducing emissions in Vancouver is also pivotal to meeting the City's climate emergency goals. We are aiming for two-thirds of trips to be made by active transportation and transit by 2030.

By providing a car-free street in front of the school, children, caregivers and teachers reported feeling safer as well as walking, biking or rolling to school more often.

### Accessibility

All other blocks around the school apart from the School Street remained accessible by motor vehicle if needed. To minimize impacts on residents, the City chose streets without driveways and where residents had alternative access to their homes through alleys. Where necessary, designated drop-off areas for parents or students with disabilities were put in place in advance of the pilot.



**“During the pilot we started cycling for the first time, and we began walking more. We previously drove more as I was also nervous walking in the crosswalks around the school due to the extremely chaotic and aggressive car traffic.**

**During the pilot Comox Street felt exponentially safer for children and adults on foot and on bikes, wheelchairs etc.**

**I finally feel comfortable cycling to school with my child. Thank you for creating a safe space for all of us to commute!”**

*- Lord Roberts School Parent*

### Encouragement

Each school was provided with \$500 to use towards active travel encouragement. Activities included a Bike Day, chalk drawing contests and more. Prizes and giveaways from TransLink, the City of Vancouver and ICBC were distributed to participating schools.

### Engagement, Feedback and Monitoring

City staff engaged each school through presentations to principals, teachers and parent advisory councils in advance of the pilot. All residents within a two-block radius of the schools were also mailed letters with information on how to provide feedback. Additional notifications included on-street pedestrian signage, banners, a media release and online promotion. Feedback was collected from residents, parents, volunteers and school staff throughout the pilot.

Surveys were sent to parents and school staff in order to help understand impacts. Traffic counts were also conducted before and during the pilot on the streets surrounding each school.

**“I loved the way the school made use of the space, my son’s class drew a scale map of the solar system on the road just before the end of school one day.”**

*- Hastings School Parent*









# School Streets Pilot Impacts



*All figures note the average of the three participating schools.*

## Has the School Street **ENCOURAGED YOUR FAMILY**

to do more or less of the following types of travel to and from school?\*

**32%**

of families reported  
**WALKING MORE**



**15%**

of families reported  
**ROLLING MORE<sup>†</sup>**



**25%**

of families reported  
**BIKING MORE**



**21%**

of families reported  
**“DRIVING-TO-FIVE”<sup>‡</sup>  
MORE**



**29%**

of families reported  
**DRIVING  
LESS**



\* An online survey was sent by school administration to parents and was open for two weeks. 406 families completed the survey out of an estimated total of 1083 families at the three schools.

<sup>†</sup> Wheelchair, skateboard or scooter

<sup>‡</sup> Drive-to-Five is an initiative that encourages parents to drop their children a couple blocks away from the school instead of directly beside the school. Children can then complete the rest of the journey on foot either accompanied by their guardian or unaccompanied.



The School Street encouraged

**231**

**FAMILIES TO  
TRY WALKING,  
BIKING OR ROLLING**

to school for the first time

Parent support of the  
School Street pilot

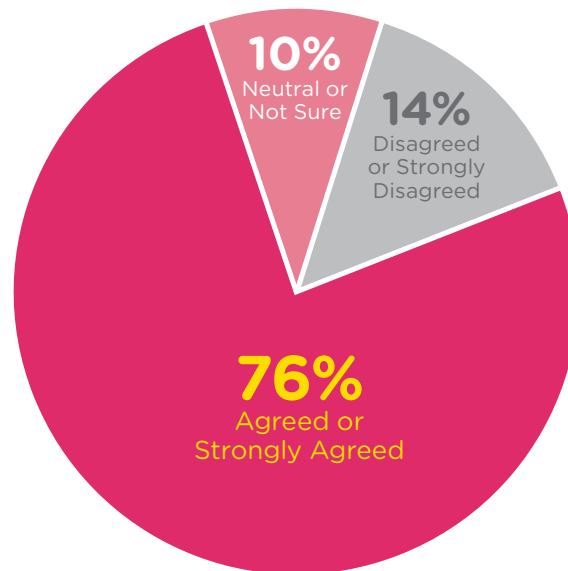
**INCREASED  
AFTER THEY  
EXPERIENCED IT**

**A REDUCTION  
IN MOTOR  
VEHICLE TRAFFIC**

was observed on all  
streets adjacent to the  
schools during the pilot §

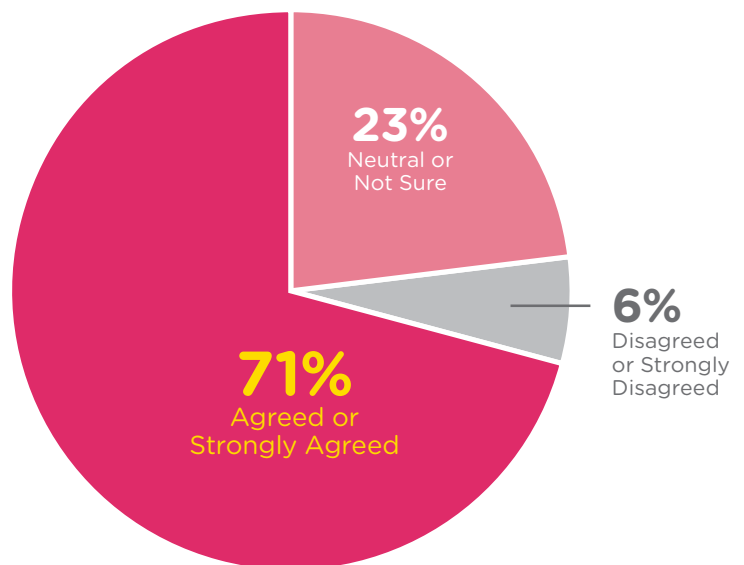
## PARENTS SUPPORT

the School Street continuing in the future



Teachers and school staff felt that the School Street had a

**POSITIVE EFFECT ON  
CHILDREN'S WELL-BEING¶**



§ One-day traffic counts were conducted on all streets surrounding the participating schools before the pilot (in March 2021) as well as during the pilot (in April 2021) during pick-up and drop-off times. Overall, total motor vehicle volumes on the streets directly adjacent to the participating schools decreased by 42% on average during the pilot compared to before the pilot. In order to better understand impacts of other variables on these counts control schools would need to be added into future monitoring plans.

¶ An online survey was sent by school administration to school staff and was open for two weeks. 52 staff completed the survey out of 204 staff at the three schools.







# Moving Forward

In partnership with the Vancouver School Board, the City of Vancouver is currently looking into how best to expand the School Streets program moving forward. Based on feedback we are currently exploring the following as we plan the program's next steps:

- Continue to ensure parents or children with disabilities who need to use a motor vehicle have convenient access to school
- Provide schools with additional volunteer recruitment and coordination support
- Review and revise parking signage around the school in advance of a School Street implementation to reflect the needs of the school
- Consider allowing exemptions for residents of a School Street in future if no alternative home access is available (e.g. no parallel alley)
- Consider more than one street for the School Streets Program at select schools
- Increase resources for the Drive-to-Five initiative and ensure parents are aware of Drive-to-Five location options nearby
- Support additional encouragement programming at schools in conjunction with the School Street (e.g. Walking School Bus, Walking/Cycling education programs, etc.)

Select School Street locations may inform more permanent road space reallocation.

If you have any questions about the School Streets pilot please email [SchoolActiveTravel@vancouver.ca](mailto:SchoolActiveTravel@vancouver.ca)

**“My child and I enjoyed walking instead of driving during this time!”**

*- Hastings School Parent*

**“I have only heard positive things about this pilot project; parents and children alike hope it will become a permanent way of life. It's better for safety, for community, and for the environment.”**

*- Van Horne School Parent*





**IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

Please have this translated

**RENSEIGNEMENTS IMPORTANTS**

Prière de les faire traduire

重要資訊 請找人為你翻譯

重要资讯 请找人为你翻译

**MAHALAGANG IMPORMASYON**

Mangyaring isalin ito

**ਜ਼ਰੂਰੀ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ**

ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਇਸਦਾ ਅਨੁਵਾਦ ਕਰਵਾਓ

**TIN TỨC QUAN TRỌNG**

Xin hãy dịch sang tiếng Việt

**INFORMACIÓN IMPORTANTE**

Busque a alguien que le traduzca

**중요정보** 번역해주세요

اطلاعات مهم  
لطفا درخواست کنید که این  
اطلاعات را برای شما ترجمه کنند

معلومات مهمة  
البحث على الترجمة



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