

School Streets Program Report

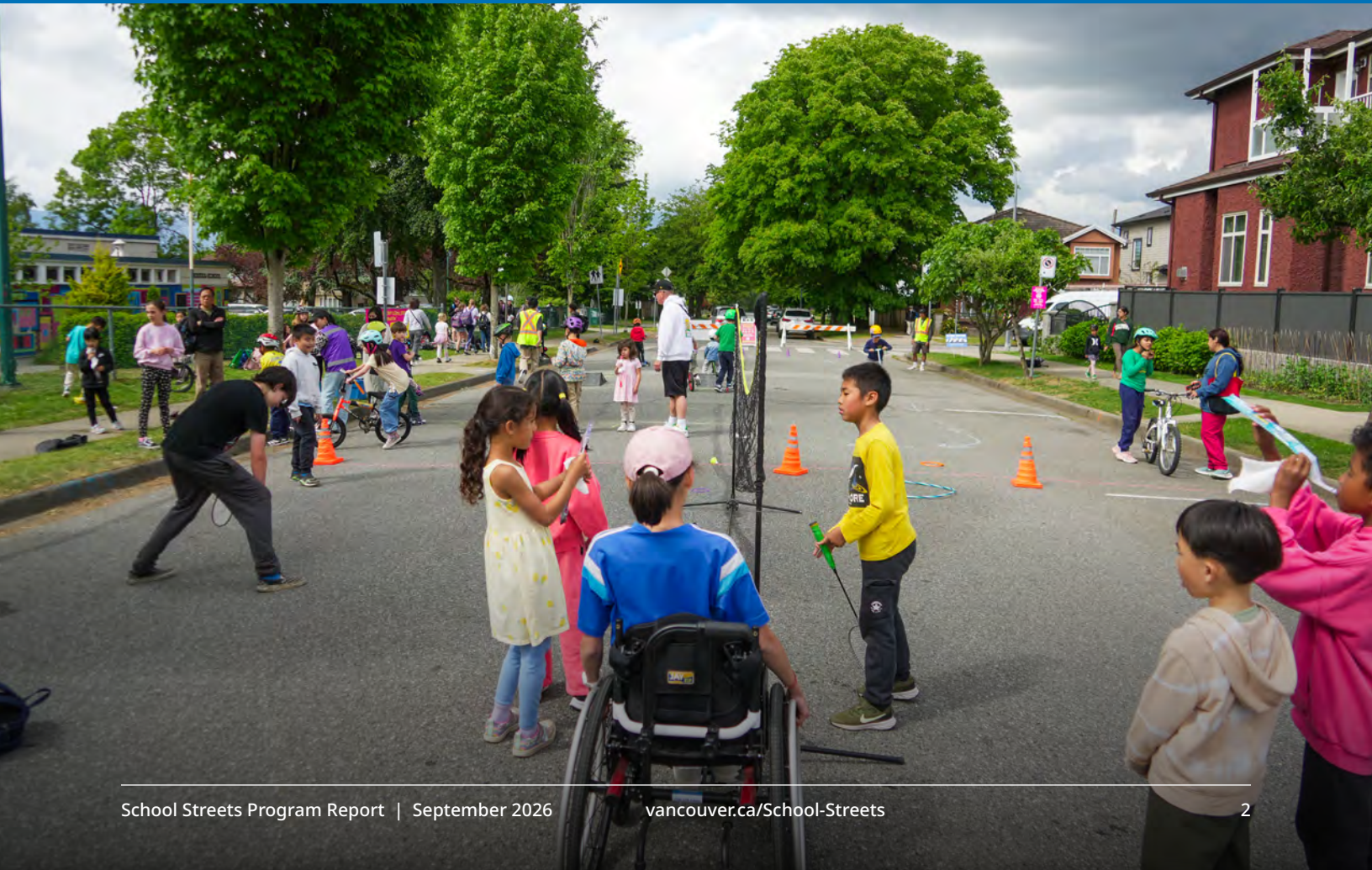
September 2026



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



About School Streets

Introduction

The City of Vancouver's School Streets Program began in 2021. The program aims to:



Improve safety for students arriving and leaving school.



Increase active travel and transit for school trips.



Foster community connections within the neighbourhood and school community.

These objectives align with broader City initiatives, including the Transportation Demand Management Action Plan (2026-2030), [Transportation 2040](#), [Vision Zero Safe Mobility Plan](#), and the [Climate Emergency Action Plan's](#) goal of having two-thirds of daily trips made using active transportation and transit by 2030.

How it Works

During school drop-off and pick-up times, one street adjacent to each participating school becomes a temporary car-free zone for 30 to 75 minutes. This creates a safer environment for students and families to walk, bike, scoot, and roll to and from school. School volunteers or staff install temporary road barriers during these times to restrict motor vehicle access while maintaining access for emergency services. Delivered in partnership with the Vancouver School Board, the School Streets Program is part of the [School Active Travel Program](#), supporting safer, healthier, and more active school journeys.

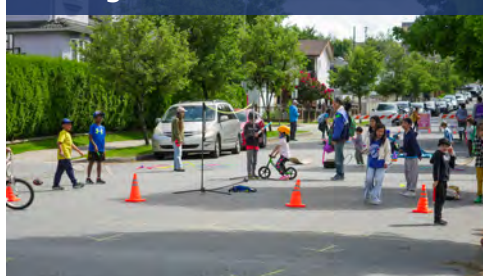
A School Street is a car-free block beside a school, open to walking, biking, and rolling during drop-off and pick-up times. Motor vehicles are not permitted to enter or exit a School Street.



Before



During



Program Models

The City of Vancouver’s School Streets Program includes various program models, including:

- **Volunteer-led:** Parent and community volunteers lead the implementation of the School Street.
- **Paid leader:** Paid staff under the management of the Society for Children and Youth of BC (SCY) lead the implementation of the School Street.
- **Spring School Street:** The school street operates daily for two to six weeks in May and June.
- **Year-Round School Street (YRSS):** The School Street operates from September to June. Frequency varies from one day/week to daily.

2025-26 Participating Schools

**Lord Selkirk Elementary**

..... Paid leader

YRSS: Daily from September 3, 2025 – June 25, 2026

Part of National Active School Streets Initiative (NASSI)

**Gordon Elementary**

..... Volunteer-led

YRSS: Every Tuesday from September 16, 2025 – June 23, 2026

Spring: May 19 – June 12, 2026

**Lord Strathcona Elementary**

..... Paid leader

Spring: May 11 – June 5, 2026

**L'Ecole Bilingue Elementary**

..... Volunteer-led

Spring: May 11 – June 5, 2026

**Nootka Elementary**

..... Volunteer-led

Spring: May 11 – June 5, 2026

**Hastings Elementary**

..... Paid leader

Spring: May 25 – June 5, 2026

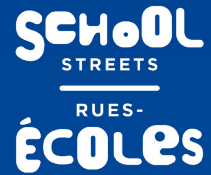
Part of National Active School Streets Initiative (NASSI)

Did you know?

The School Active Travel Program offers a variety of initiatives to improve safety around schools, educate students, and encourage active travel and transit to and from Vancouver schools. Learn more at: [Vancouver.ca/SchoolActiveTravel](https://vancouver.ca/SchoolActiveTravel)



National Active School Streets Initiative



The City of Vancouver is participating as a “Level-Up” community in the National Active School Streets Initiative (NASSI), led by Green Communities Canada and funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada. This Canada-wide program supports schools across the country to deliver School Streets. From 2025 to 2027, two Vancouver schools will pilot Year-Round School Streets.

Lord Selkirk Elementary

Following their successful participation in School Streets over the past three years, Lord Selkirk Elementary was the first school selected to participate in NASSI Vancouver. From September 2025 to June 2026, they ran School Streets daily for the full 2025-26 school year, with the support of paid School Street leaders from Society for Children and Youth of BC.

On the last Friday of every month, the PAC led themed activations for students to keep the momentum rolling throughout the year. From winter hot chocolate days to spring dance parties, the street saw a variety of fun, engaging opportunities for the community to enjoy. The school also continued its Friday Bike Bus, ending the ride to school on a School Street each week.

We look forward to continuing the School Streets momentum in this school community and will be continuing a Year-Round School Street for the 2026-27 school year. Congratulations to everyone involved in this project!



Hastings Elementary

Hastings Elementary became the second school to participate in NASSI Vancouver. As an original School Streets pilot participant, Hastings Elementary rejoined the program this spring after a four-year pause. The school organized a successful two-week spring pilot to prepare for its Year-Round School Street, scheduled from September 2026 to June 2027. This spring initiative also introduced a new School Street location, managed by paid leaders from SCY. The program team looks forward to returning to Hastings Elementary in September.

NASSI Research

A research team co-led by Dr. Mariana Brussoni at the University of British Columbia is evaluating both Year-Round School Streets. The findings will provide valuable insights not only for the City, but also for the NASSI Canada-wide project, helping to inform and strengthen similar initiatives across the country.



Accessibility

We carefully select streets for the School Streets Program that don't have driveways and offer alternative access through alleyways, minimizing the impact on residents. All other nearby streets remain open to vehicles, so everyone can still reach the school easily.

Ensuring accessible drop-off and pick-up areas for all families remains a top priority. This year, we identified the need for two additional accessible parking spaces at participating schools and worked closely with school staff to find the best locations for these new spots.

At Nootka Elementary, we partnered with school staff to reroute school buses during the program, ensuring a smooth and safe experience for both bus riders and other participants.

To further improve safety and ease congestion, we encouraged families to take part in our 'drive-to-five' initiative. By dropping off or picking up students at a safe spot within a five-minute walk of the school, families helped create a calmer, more enjoyable start and end to each school day.

Engagement



Planning the School Streets Program at each school was a collaborative effort between City staff, Parent Advisory Councils, school staff, and SCY. Each school designated a School Streets Committee that attended regular working group meetings to facilitate knowledge sharing and cooperative planning among all participating spring schools.

Community engagement involved informing residents and school families about the upcoming program through mailed letters, emails, on-street signage and banners, and online promotion to ensure widespread awareness.

81%

of residents living within two-blocks of the School Street reported they were aware of the program before it began.



Volunteers

In 2026, more than 65 dedicated parent volunteers from three volunteer-led schools contributed their time and energy to the program. By setting up temporary barriers and monitoring the School Streets, the volunteers helped create a safe, welcoming environment for students and their families.

To further support their efforts, the City refreshed its volunteer training video this year. This updated guide ensured that every volunteer, new or returning, felt prepared, confident, and excited for their role on the School Street.



Volunteer feedback reflected the program's success: every volunteer rated their experience positively, and 96% expressed enthusiasm to return if the program continues.

A highlight of this year's program was the introduction of student volunteers at all five participating spring schools. These students took on key roles, including helping set up and take down School Streets, bringing out play equipment, engaging their peers, and supporting school-led activities along the street. Their leadership and energy made a meaningful difference throughout the program. Thank you to all the students who stepped into these leadership roles!

96%

of volunteers expressed enthusiasm to return if the program continues.



Paid Leaders

At the three paid leader schools, a dedicated team of staff managed by SCY led the daily implementation of the School Street. Consistent, reliable staffing and management of the School Street relieves the school community of the time and energy required to coordinate volunteers, schedule shifts, and ensure program continuity. In many cases, staff are recruited from the school and local community and bring additional insights that benefit the program.

Encouraging Active Travel

Spring School Streets once again coincided with HUB Cycling's annual Bike to School Week, held from June 1 to 5, 2026. All five participating schools enthusiastically took part in both initiatives, and parent organizers noted that the overlap helped spark greater excitement and involvement among students and families.

The City also renewed its partnership with SCY and VeloLifestyle to provide free bike safety checks during Play Streets. Local mechanics provided students with basic tune-ups, including seat adjustments, brake tightening, and chain lubrication. Across the five sites, more than 150 children registered for bike maintenance.

To further promote walking, biking, and rolling during School Streets, eligible schools received City-funded Active Travel Education for grade 6 and 7 students, delivered by HUB Cycling. The program featured four engaging lessons that built walking and cycling safety knowledge and on-bike skills through school-ground training and group rides around the neighbourhood.

Additionally, each school received \$500 to support creative promotional activities of their choice. Schools put these funds to good use—purchasing extra play equipment, inviting local organizations to join the fun, and awarding prizes to students who chose active travel.



150+

children registered for bike maintenance across the five sites.



\$500

received by each school to support creative promotional activities of their choice.

Play Streets



"I like that it encourages people to play outside."

~ Nootka student

Since 2022, we have partnered with SCY to bring Play Streets to participating schools once a week. During a Play Street, the afternoon school street time is extended to provide 75 minutes of safe, active, outdoor play and community connection.

In total, SCY hosted 18 Play Streets at the five participating schools. The program offered a variety of play areas that featured low- to high-energy activities, including balance boards, badminton, and a scooter/ bike course with ramps. New activities this year included an art station, music and rhythm area, water-based play, and large-scale board games to foster interactive and cooperative play. In addition, schools brought out their own play equipment, such as hockey nets and giant Tetris Tumble, to amplify the fun. The activities are designed to be inclusive and accessible for children with diverse abilities and sensory needs, ensuring meaningful participation for all children.

A Play Street

is a co-designed initiative with children that temporarily transforms streets into safe and active public play spaces.



Play Streets (continued)

Thanks to SCY and TransLink, three participating schools have received Play Boxes for their school communities. These weatherproof metal boxes provide safe storage for school equipment in a convenient location next to the School Street. This makes it easier for schools to offer unstructured play opportunities on the street on days without Play Streets.



Play Streets offers a low-barrier way to boost outdoor play, encourage active transportation, and strengthen social connections and community well-being. Schools consistently highlight Play Streets as a program favourite. Even when schools already have play areas, Play Streets inspire families and neighbours to see streets as vibrant public spaces—places not just for cars, but for everyone to enjoy.

“I love school street because they have fun activities and I enjoy interacting with kids from other grades.”

~ L'Ecole Bilingue student



61%

of parents/guardians reported their child was more physically active on Play Street days.



School Streets Program Impacts

Evaluation Methods



To understand the impacts of the Spring 2026 School Streets Program, we used a variety of tools. We gathered feedback from schools and local communities to monitor and evaluate the program at five participating schools.*

We collected information from:

	146 online parent/guardian surveys
	8 online school staff surveys
	28 volunteer surveys
	129 resident surveys
	225 students participated in engagement pop-ups at schools
	19 e-mails received in our inbox

**The Lord Selkirk Elementary community was evaluated separately as part of the National Active School Streets Initiative. The program impacts below do not include data from this school community.*



Who we heard from:
13% of students
15% of parents/ guardians
4% of school staff
3% of residents within two-blocks of the Program

What We Heard

School Streets Program Outcomes



29% of families reported biking more



22% of families reported walking more



8% of families reported rolling more
(wheelchair, skateboard, or scooter)



19% of families reported driving less



93%

of students felt safer during pick-up and drop-off compared to before the School Streets Program.



77 families encouraged their child to walk, bike, or roll to school for the first time alone or with others.



38% of parents/guardians gave their child more freedom to travel to and from school on their own or with their peers.

Took time to socialize on the street



63% of parents/guardians

22% of residents

Stronger connection to community



67% of students

61% of parents/guardians

35% of residents

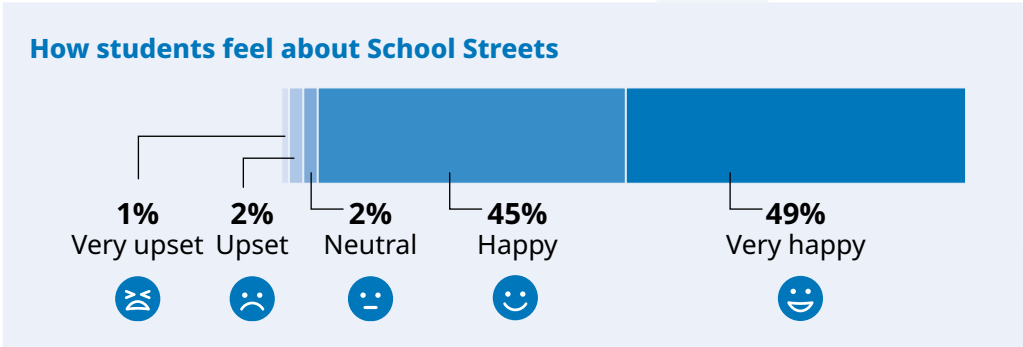


54% of students reported being more physically active on Play Street days than on regular school days.



58% of students experienced new opportunities during Play Streets like playing with new peers or engaging in new activities.

School Streets Program Outcomes (Continued)



Students' top 5 likes and dislikes about School Streets:

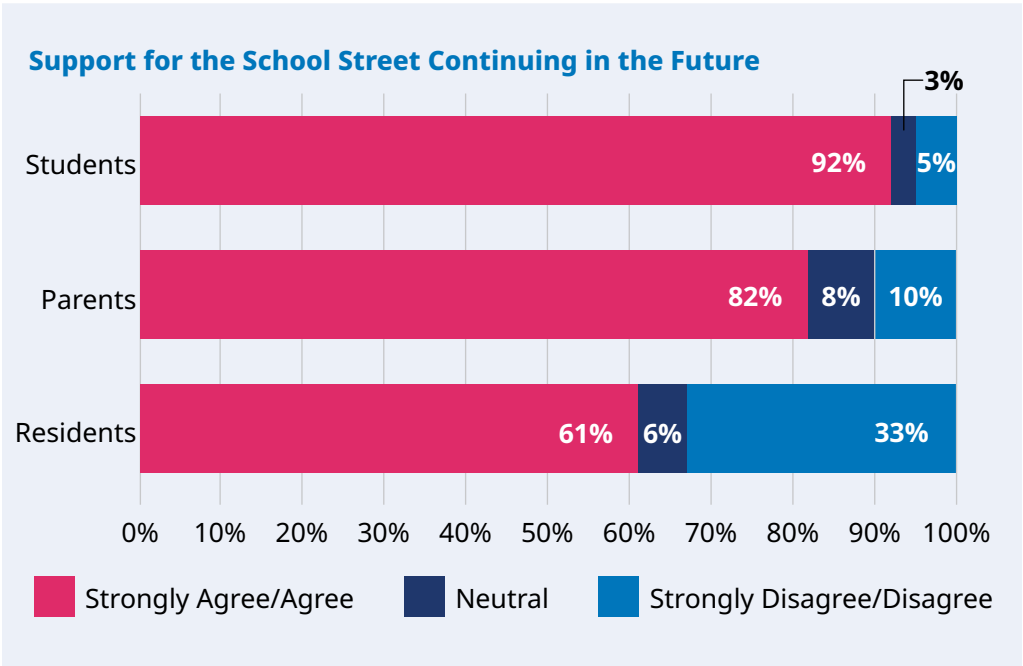
- ✓ Activities, outdoor play and fun
- ✓ Community and friends
- ✓ Walking, biking and rolling
- ✓ General support
- ✗ Request for new or more activities

 **21%**

increase in support for the program among parents and residents after they experience it.

34% of residents **13%** of parents

reported facing challenges travelling to/from school or home due to School Streets.



Key Themes

Community members contributed more than 200 thoughtful comments about the School Streets Program during the evaluation process. Several key themes emerged, reflecting both strong support and areas of concern.

Supporters of School Streets highlighted the following benefits:

-  The program fostered community building and opportunities to gather.
-  Many expressed a desire to see the program expanded or made permanent.
-  School Streets provided opportunities for play and physical activity.
-  Participants noted improved safety for students.

“We love the social (and safe) atmosphere it’s created outside the school.”

~ Nootka parent

Those concerned with School Streets noted:

-  Unnecessary additional public space given nearby school grounds.
-  Challenges with residential and school parking.
-  Increased congestion or traffic in the neighbourhood.
-  Pick-up and drop-off were more challenging and inconvenient for those who need to drive.
-  Increased driver violations during the program.

“Parents who pick-up/ drop-off kids via car will continue to do so even with School Street happening. It just makes traffic much worse as there is reduced street parking with the same amount of car traffic.”

~ Gordon parent



Community Voices

"I love it! Kids being able to play together on the neighbourhood streets is the way it was in my childhood before cars (parked or in motion) took over all the public space where we used to skate, play hockey/marbles/soccer."

~ Strathcona resident

"I love the motive of it and how it encourages people to bike, walk, etc."

~ L'Ecole Bilingue student

"I just felt a better sense of overall safety for not just the children but as an adult."

~ Nootka parent

"The program also supported my daughter's growing independence as I felt comfortable saying goodbye to her at our front gate and letting her cross [the street] by herself."

~ Strathcona resident and parent

"It makes the school feel like even more of a collaborative, connected community."

~ Gordon parent

"I like that you can feel safe while playing on a street."

~ L'Ecole Bilingue student

"This is a great program. We're seeing lots of happy kids. This makes the neighborhood so much more peaceful."

~ L'Ecole Bilingue resident

"It changes the vibe of the street, and great for kids to be active before and after school."

~ Gordon parent

A Heartfelt Thank You!

The success of the School Streets Program relies on the contributions and dedication of many individuals and organizations. The City of Vancouver would like to thank the school communities and families that participated in the program, the dedicated parent volunteers, student volunteers who stepped into leadership roles, our School Streets Working Group members, school staff, the Society for Children and Youth of BC staff including paid leaders at each site and Play Street staff, the Vancouver School Board, and all the local organizations that generously donated their time to bringing the School Streets to life. Together we created safe, active, fun, community spaces outside schools and sparked meaningful change in school communities across the city.





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