

Date: March 16, 2022

To: Chair and Members of General Committee

From: Geoff Wright, P.Eng, MBA, Commissioner of
Transportation and Works

Originator's files:

Meeting date:
March 30, 2022

Subject

Memorandum of Understanding for School Streets Pilot Project

Recommendation

That the Commissioner of Transportation and Works or designate be authorized to negotiate and enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Peel District School Board and the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board related to the School Streets Pilot Project, including any renewals and all necessary documents ancillary thereto, in a form satisfactory to Legal Services.

Background

Mississauga's Transportation Master Plan identified that 10% of all trips in Mississauga are school trips, and that the number of Mississaugans under 19 years of age is expected to increase by 14% from 2016 to 2041. Thus, school travel will be an enduring and increasing part of Mississauga's travel profile. Currently, around 30% of students arrive to school by car. Many school zones face temporary congestion during drop-off and pick-up times, which presents traffic dangers, high concentrations of greenhouse gas emissions, and lost opportunities for students to get physical activity and develop the skills needed to travel independently. In 2021 the City of Mississauga was the recipient of funding from the Ontario Active School Travel fund, to pilot a concept called School Streets. School Streets create temporary car-free environments in front of schools, with the goals of promoting active transportation, improving safety of the street during school drop-off and pick-up, and building community through providing a positive and unique opportunity for members of the school community to interact.

Comments

Planning for this pilot project began in May 2021, with a comprehensive review of all elementary school sites in Mississauga to determine priority schools for inclusion in this pilot, based on street design, proportion of students living within walking distance of the school, equity factors,

and previous engagement of the school in active school travel initiatives, including the City's School Walking Routes program. Once identified, a shortlist of schools was created, and ultimately three schools agreed to participate in the pilot: Hillside Public School (Ward 2), Brian W. Fleming Public School (Ward 3) and St. Alfred Separate School (Ward 3).

To implement the pilot project, the City will arrange for temporary road closures in front of the participating school sites. Activities are being planned in coordination with members of the local communities to activate the streets during the closure times. The activities of the School Street pilot will take place on the City's right-of-way, while the participants will be school staff, students, and families; therefore, a Memorandum of Understanding is required to set out the expectations of the program, define the responsibilities of the parties involved, and ensure sufficient liability protection is considered for both the City and the participating school boards.

The project budget will go toward costs associated with communications (e.g. Curbex signs, resident mail-outs); required signage for the road closure; materials for activities; refreshments; honoraria for volunteers; and to offset the costs of hiring a student position to support project planning and implementation. Implementation is planned for May 2022.

Strategic Plan

The School Streets Pilot Program aligns with the *Move* pillar in the City's Strategic Plan. In addition, it also aligns with other key City strategies:

- Transportation Master Plan (TMP) –The School Streets pilot project aligns with the TMP vision to expand opportunities for active transportation for school trips, as well as the goal to enhance Mississauga's School Walking Routes program (Action 57).
- Vision Zero –The School Streets pilot project is one of the included actions of Mississauga's Vision Zero strategy (Action 90).
- Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP) –The School Streets pilot project addresses the goal to develop targeted outreach and engagement opportunities for youth in Mississauga (Action 20-3).

Engagement and Consultation

Engagement with internal and external stakeholders has been foundational to the design of the Mississauga School Streets pilot project. A Project Advisory Group consisting of representatives from the Peel District School Board, Dufferin Peel District School Board, Student Transportation of Peel Region, Region of Peel, and Traffic Safety Council helped set the parameters of the project based on shared goals.

City staff presented the project to Traffic Safety Council in June 2021 and received strong support. Traffic Safety Council adopted the following recommendation:

1. That the deputation from Laura Zeglen, Active Transportation Coordinator regarding the School Streets Pilot Project be received.
2. That the Traffic Safety Council provide a letter of endorsement regarding the School Streets Pilot Project. (TSC-0018-2021)

City Councillors with shortlisted schools in their ward, including schools that ultimately agreed to participate in the pilot project, were given the opportunity to identify potential points of alignment and/or conflict with other community projects. All Councillors who were approached expressed support for the project. Subsequently, school board staff, school councils and staff from participating schools were consulted on the best approach for the project in their communities, including preferred dates and project scope.

Beginning in January 2022, City staff coordinated local project planning teams for each site of the pilot, including a diverse range of stakeholders (e.g., local residents, parents and guardians of children at the school, school board trustees and superintendents, representatives of local BIAs and community organizations, local high school students). City staff are working with these teams to create detailed plans of how the pilot will be implemented in those school communities. A comprehensive communications strategy is in development to ensure that all impacted community members have the opportunity to learn about and contribute to the project.

Financial Impact

The funding for this project is provided through an Ontario Active School Travel grant (PN A21156, in the amount of \$30,000) and supplemented by the annual budget for the School Walking Routes program (PN 21156, in the amount of \$7,500), which this pilot supports. The in-kind contribution requirement of the Ontario Active School Travel grant is met through the provision of project management services, which is conducted by City staff.

Conclusion

A School Streets Pilot Project is being implemented to promote the use of active transportation modes for trips to and from school, improve safety of the street during school drop-off and pick-up and to build community all by creating temporary car-free environments in front of three schools. This report is seeking authority to negotiate and enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Peel District School Board and the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board related to the School Streets Pilot Project.



for

Geoff Wright, P.Eng, MBA, Commissioner of Transportation and Works

Prepared by: Laura Zeglen, Active Transportation Coordinator