

# City of Mississauga

## Memorandum



To: Chair and Members of Mississauga School Traffic Safety Action Committee

From: Alex Beard, Active Transportation Coordinator

Date: January 31, 2024

Subject: Summary of 2023 Mississauga School Walking Routes Program

This report was prepared in order to provide the Mississauga School Traffic Safety Action Committee (MSTSAC) with a summary of the School Walking Routes Program (SWR) in 2023.

### Participating Schools

Seven schools participated in the 2023 School Walking Routes Program. These were spread across two cohorts: Spring and Fall.

#### Spring cohort 2023 (February- June)

School	Ward	Size	Last participated	How chosen
Artesian Drive PS	8	488	2014	MSTSAC recommendation
Corliss PS	5	192	2010	MSTSAC recommendation
Kindree PS	10	402	2009	MSTSAC recommendation
St Albert of Jerusalem CES	10	456	2010	MSTSAC recommendation

We worked with four schools in the spring, all of which were schools that had participated in the program previously. These schools were recommended by committee members as being suitable for 're-launch'. Kindree PS and St Albert of Jerusalem are neighbouring schools in Ward 10, which gave the chance to run joint events. This approach worked well and is something the team plan on repeating at neighbouring schools in the future.

#### Fall cohort 2023 (September-February)

School	Ward	Size	Last participated	How chosen
Castlebridge PS	9	526	2021	MSTSAC recommendation
Champlain Trail PS	5	537	2021	MSTSAC recommendation
St Gerard CES	6	230	First participation	City recommendation

In the fall we worked with three schools. Unfortunately, Springfield PS, which was due to be our fourth school, decided to withdraw from the program too late to be replaced. Castlebridge and Champlain Trail were re-launches recommended by Committee members. St Gerard and Springfield are neighbouring schools that were recommended for participation by the City's Tactical Urbanism Team in order to utilise the new pedestrian focused road layout on Credit Woodlands at Bert Fleming Park.

## Family Travel Surveys

Staff distributed Family Travel Survey to all seven schools to determine the number of students already using active modes. The survey also lets us know the most popular walking routes, which are used to determine placement of new signed School Walking Routes (first time program participants) or reaffirm the placement of existing signed School Walking Routes (repeat participants).

Survey results for each school are at **Appendix 1**

## Launch Mornings

Date	School	Attended
17 April	Kindree PS & St Albert of Jerusalem CES	City Staff, Teachers, Student Helpers, MSTSAC, Cllr representative
24 April	Corliss PS	City Staff, MSTSAC
27 April	Artesian Drive PS	City Staff, Teachers, Trustee, MSTSAC
11 Oct	Champlain Trail PS	City Staff, MSTSAC
26 Oct	Castlebridge PS	City Staff, Teachers, MSTSAC, Student Helpers, Peel Public Health Nurse, Cllr
1 Nov	St Gerard CES	City Staff, Teachers, MSTSAC, Student Helpers, Cllr representative

The first event held with each school was their launch morning. Staff and volunteers cheered on students walking and rolling to school. The team wore our SWR t-shirts, held signs and distributed pencils to students walking or rolling. The idea was to get the school community excited and help them to realize walking to school is something to celebrate. In addition to City Staff, School Staff and MSTSAC volunteers, we invited Trustees, Councillors and (from the fall) Peel Public Health Nurses.

## Safety Audit Walks

Date	School
27 April	Artesian Drive PS
1 May	Kindree PS / St Albert of Jerusalem CES
10 May	Corliss PS
28 November	Champlain Trail PS
11 December	Castlebridge PS

Safety Audit Walks (previously known as walkabouts) were held with all schools to identify any possible infrastructure improvements the City could make to crossings, lighting, snow clearance etc. These are a short walk in the vicinity of the school using part of the identified School Walking Route. We invite teachers, parents and representatives of relevant City teams. The St Gerard CES Safety Audit Walk is scheduled for February 2024.

## Programmed Events

### Community Walks

Date	School	Attendance
10 May	Artesian Drive PS	100 (approx) students, parents, teachers
15 May	Kindree PS / St Albert of Jerusalem CES	12 students, parents, teachers

Two schools opted to hold Community Walks in the spring. The idea of this event is to encourage families to see the fun and social side of walking to/from school. We choose a short loop from the school utilising local parks and pedestrian infrastructure. We held both Community Walks in the afternoon after school. The Artesian Drive walk was a particular success with excellent attendance. The lead teacher had kindly arranged free coffee for the parents, which proved very popular.

### School Walking Challenge

Dates	School
12 June – 23 June	Kindree
12 June – 23 June	St Albert of Jerusalem
12 June – 23 June	Artesian Drive PS

Three of our Spring schools decided to run a School Walking Challenge to finish their participation in the program. Students were given a 'walking challenge stamp card' and their class teacher would give a stamp for everyday they walked or rolled to school over ten days. The schools reported that this proved very popular and resulted in some healthy competition between the students. Students that collected all the stamps were entered in to a prize draw to win prizes (Frisbees).

## Infrastructure improvements

Following the observations made in the Safety Audit Walks in the spring, the City has actioned the following improvements. Fall cohort improvements will be made in 2024.

School	Location	Request	Status
Artesian Drive PS	Winston Churchill at Artesian Drive	Repainting faded cross walk	Complete
Artesian Drive PS	Winston Churchill at Eglinton	Repainting faded cross walk	Complete
Artesian Drive PS	Eglinton at Southampton	Repainting faded cross walk	Complete
Artesian Drive PS	Eglinton at Middlesex Gate	Repainting faded cross walk	Complete
Artesian Drive PS	Eglinton at Ridgeway	Repainting faded cross walk	Complete
Artesian Drive PS	Dundoon Dr at Artesian Drive	New cross walk markings	Complete
Artesian Drive PS	Fullwell Road at Artesian Drive	New cross walk markings	Complete
Artesian Drive PS	Derrydow Dr at Artesian Drive	New cross walk markings	Complete
Artesian Drive PS	St Martin Mews at Artesian Drive	New cross walk markings	Complete

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Artesian Drive PS	Auckland Ave at Artesian Drive	New cross walk markings	Complete
Artesian Drive PS	Bloomburg Dr at Artesian Drive	New cross walk markings	Complete
Kindree / St. A. of J.	Terragar Blvd at Blackwood Mews	Repainting faded cross walk	Complete
Kindree / St. A. of J.	Terragar Blvd at Black Walnut Trail.	Repainting faded cross walk	Complete
Kindree / St. A. of J.	Black Walnut Trail (west side) from Terragar Blvd to Cactus Gate	Sidewalk snow clearing	Complete
Corliss PS	Corliss school site	Install New Bike rack	Scheduled

## Peel Public Health

In fall 2023, Peel Public Health restarted its School Travel Planning (STP) program, which had been on hold due to the pandemic. STP and SWR both have the goal to promote active school travel, but with slightly different approaches. City staff held several meetings with Peel to ensure the two programs compliment one another. Through co-ordination of the schools we are working with and the sharing of resources, the two programs working together will mean more schools being supported to increase active travel.

Every public school in Peel Region is assigned a Peel Public Health Nurse. The nurses assigned to our SWR schools supported us at a number of our fall cohort SWR events. This worked really well and they will be a valuable link in to the school community for the SWR program going forward.

This academic year (2023/24), Peel's program is with St. Therese of the Child Jesus in Ward 10. City staff have supported Peel's work with this school by attending events and sharing knowledge. We are also exploring the possibility of installing SWR signs for this school based on the survey work done by our colleagues in Peel.

## Support to previous program participants

In 2023, we provided ongoing support to four additional schools that were recent participants of the SWR program. City staff responded to requests from school staff for additional support to help cement the habits instilled during their SWR participation.

School	Last in SWR	Support given
Hillside PS	2018	Led "Bike Skills and Drills" session (1 June) and coordinated Installation of a bike rack.
Oscar Peterson PS	2021	Provided giveaway materials and attended their 'Walking Wednesday' event (27 Sep) to see ongoing work

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Plum Tree Park PS	2021	Provided giveaway materials and coordinated installation of a bike rack.
Thornwood PS	2022	Coordinated installation of a bike rack.

The Bike Skills and Drills Session at Hillside was run in conjunction with Peel Police and Peel Multicultural Council. We delivered seven sessions with five activity stations each: balance, shoulder check, slalom, figure 8 and helmet check. Over the course of the day we worked with all 611 students; those that did not have bicycles or scooters did the activities on foot.

The team was pleased to be invited back to Oscar Peterson to see the excellent ongoing work at the school. Every Wednesday is “Walking Wednesday”, which is similar to the SWR launch morning. Student volunteers in green t-shirts cheer on students walking and rolling to school. Being part of the ‘Walk to School Team’ is a leadership opportunity for the Grade 5 students. Prizes are given to the class with the highest number of walkers. After the bell rings, the whole school also goes for a walk around the school building before heading to class, so all students get an opportunity to start the day with a walk. As well as joining for the morning the team supported this ongoing work by providing more of our giveaway items.

The team provided extra giveaway items to Plum Tree Park. Finally, City Staff assisted Plum Tree Park, Hillside and Thornwood in securing bike racks for their school sites through the Peel Region School Bike Rack Program.

## Ongoing promotion of Active School Travel

The SWR team continued efforts to promote active school travel to both previous SWR participants and to all schools in the City through the City’s social media.

The Traffic Safety Times was published three times in 2023 and sent to all previous participants. The team ensured wider campaigns were shared with SWR schools directly by email and shared to the wider community on the City’s social media. This included: Winter Walk Month (February), Bike to School Week (May/June) and Walk to School Month (October).

## New sign design

In 2023, the City installed the first set of our newly designed SWR signs, based on community feedback gathered in 2022. Our new signs retain the original design but now include wayfinding bars. These have been installed for the School Walking Routes for Tomken Road Middle School and installation is underway for Thornwood PS.

## New t-shirt design

In the fall, the team held a competition for a new SWR t-shirt design, inviting submissions from students at previous SWR schools. MSTSAC volunteers helped judge the competition and an excellent winning design was chosen. Staff are working with a supplier to get the new design printed for distribution to schools in 2024.

## New methodology for selecting schools

To date, the program has worked with schools recommended to us by members of the Committee. To ensure equitable access to the program across the City, Staff have drawn up a methodology for identifying schools to work with. Staff aim to balance choosing schools where we can have the biggest potential impact, best chance of success, inclusion of schools in equity-deserving communities, and representation across all City wards.

Criteria	How assessed
Population	Should be more than 300
Walkers (%)	Should be more than 50%
Ward	Ensure we work with at least one school in every Ward over a two year period
Previous SWR	Per cohort (Fall/Spring): Two new schools and two re-launches
Socioeconomic Vulnerability Index (SVI) Cluster	Higher priority if higher SVI score
Eco School Status	School incentivised to run eco programs, higher chance of success
Champion on Site	Teacher champion means higher chance of success

These should be seen as selection principles and we will retain a degree of flexibility. For instance, where two schools are co-located we should try to work with both schools if possible even if the second one falls slightly below the above thresholds.

We continue to see the value of 're-launches' to cement the hard work done with schools previously. As a rule, we will look to work with two new schools and two 're-launch' schools per term going forward.

## Attachments

Appendix 1: Family Travel Survey Results

Prepared by: Alex Beard, Active Transportation Coordinator