

School Travel Plan for **École Viscount Alexander**

June 2018



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This School Travel Plan (STP) was developed in collaboration with a Stakeholder Committee of volunteer members. The participation of the committee members noted below was a critical component of the development of the plan.

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INTRODUCTION

Increased use of active modes of transportation produces a wide array of benefits for communities. Improved levels of physical activity and health, reduced congestion and green house gas emissions, and infrastructure demands as well as independence from automobiles are all direct results of active transportation that promote more livable, sustainable, and vibrant neighborhoods. When these values are encouraged in our younger populations the benefits they produce are long lasting and potentially life changing. To help increase the number of people choosing to commute to and from school using active modes of transportation and to improve the community vibrancy in East Fort Garry, the City of Winnipeg commissioned MORR Transportation Consulting in 2017 to develop a School Travel Plan (STP) for Ecole Viscount Alexander. School Travel Plans are an excellent tool to help deal with travel-related issues at schools and encourage safe, healthy, active travel to and from school. By engaging stakeholders (e.g., school boards, parents, students, and educators) and applying safety engineering expertise, STPs assess the barriers to active school travel and implement action plans to improve the safety of active travel for children and members of the school community.

Specific outcomes of STPs are to: (1) determine school travel patterns through three hands-up classroom surveys and a take-home family survey; (2) identify current walking and cycling issues through the take-home family survey, a walkabout of the school transportation network, an STP workshop for parents, and an engineering safety review; and (3) develop an action plan of initiatives that will increase the number of people choosing to commute to and from school using active modes of transportation. Results from the STP have also been leveraged to assist in the development of neighbourhood-level strategies as part of the East Fort Garry Walk Bike Project.

When effectively coordinated and implemented, STPs can result in positive school travel behaviour change, and ultimately provide substantial benefits. This STP is a living document which should be revisited regularly to update the status of Action Plan items and to incorporate future findings resulting from evaluations.



ÉCOLE VISCOUNT ALEXANDER PROFILE

Ecole Viscount Alexander is in the East Fort Garry neighbourhood on the south side of Waterford Ave between Wicklow St and Lyon St. The school is a public, French immersion middle years school in the Pembina Trails School Division. The school opened in 1949 and has 229 enrolled students (2017-2018 school year) and 34 staff.

Figure 1 illustrates the catchment area for the school, which extends to various neighbourhoods in South Winnipeg as this is the only French immersion middle school in the area. Figure 2 illustrates the study area used in this STP, which is defined by a 1 km radius around the school. Figure 3 illustrates the existing transportation network in the immediate vicinity of the school.

Approximately 60 percent of the school population lives more than three kilometres away from the school. Ten percent lives within half kilometer, about 25 percent lives within 1.5 kilometres, and about 40 percent lives within three kilometers from the school.

QUICK FACTS

Grades: 5 - 8

No. of students: 229

No. of staff: 34

No. of school buses: 7 - 8

School class times: 08:30 – 15:20

Division: Pembina Trails

No. of parking spaces for staff/visitors: Approx. 40

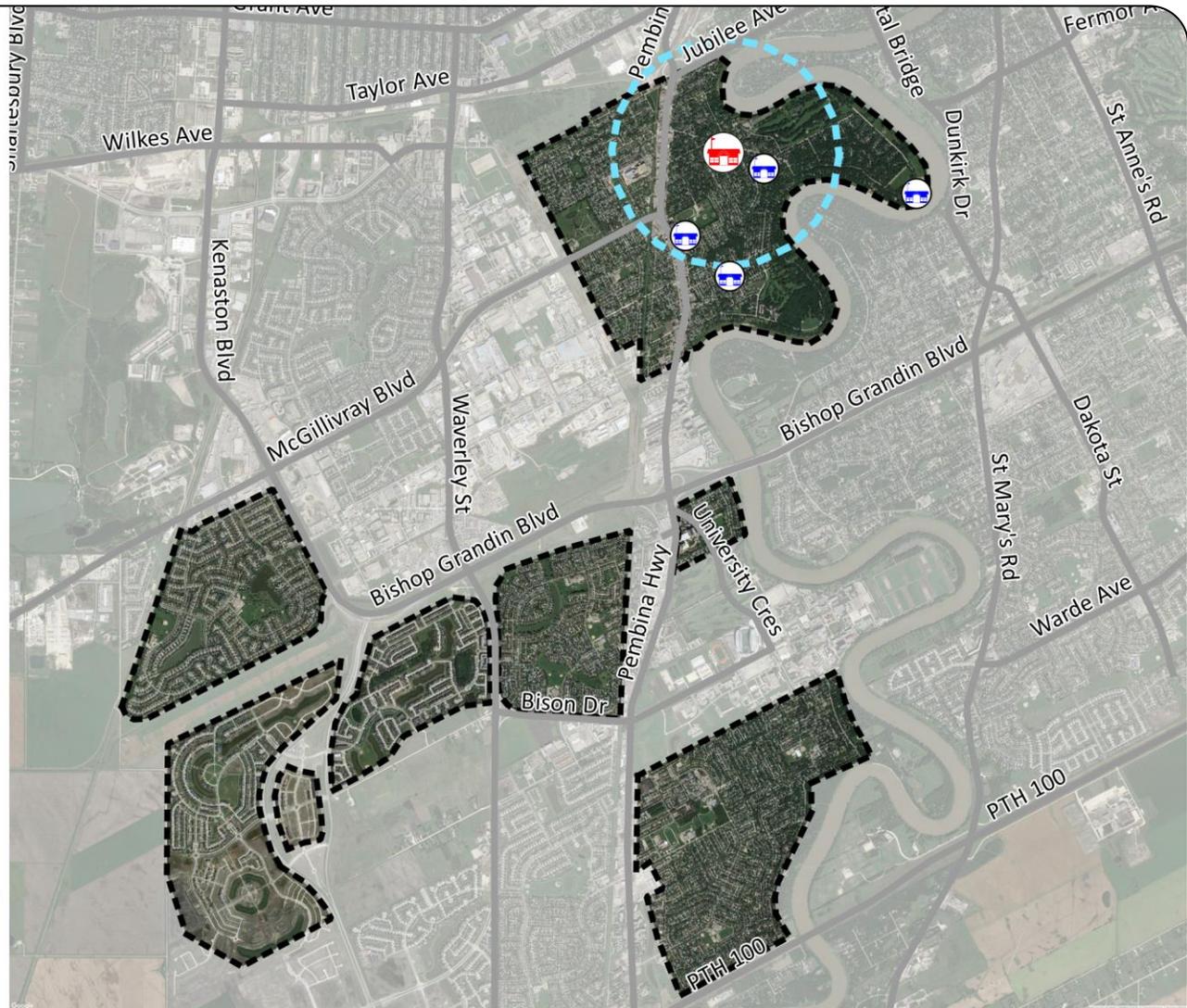


LEGEND

-  ÉCOLE VISCOUNT ALEXANDER
-  OTHER COMMUNITY SCHOOL
-  1 KM RADIUS
-  STUDENT CATCHMENT AREA
-  STREETS



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School Travel Plan for École Viscount Alexander

Figure 1
STUDENT CATCHMENT AREA



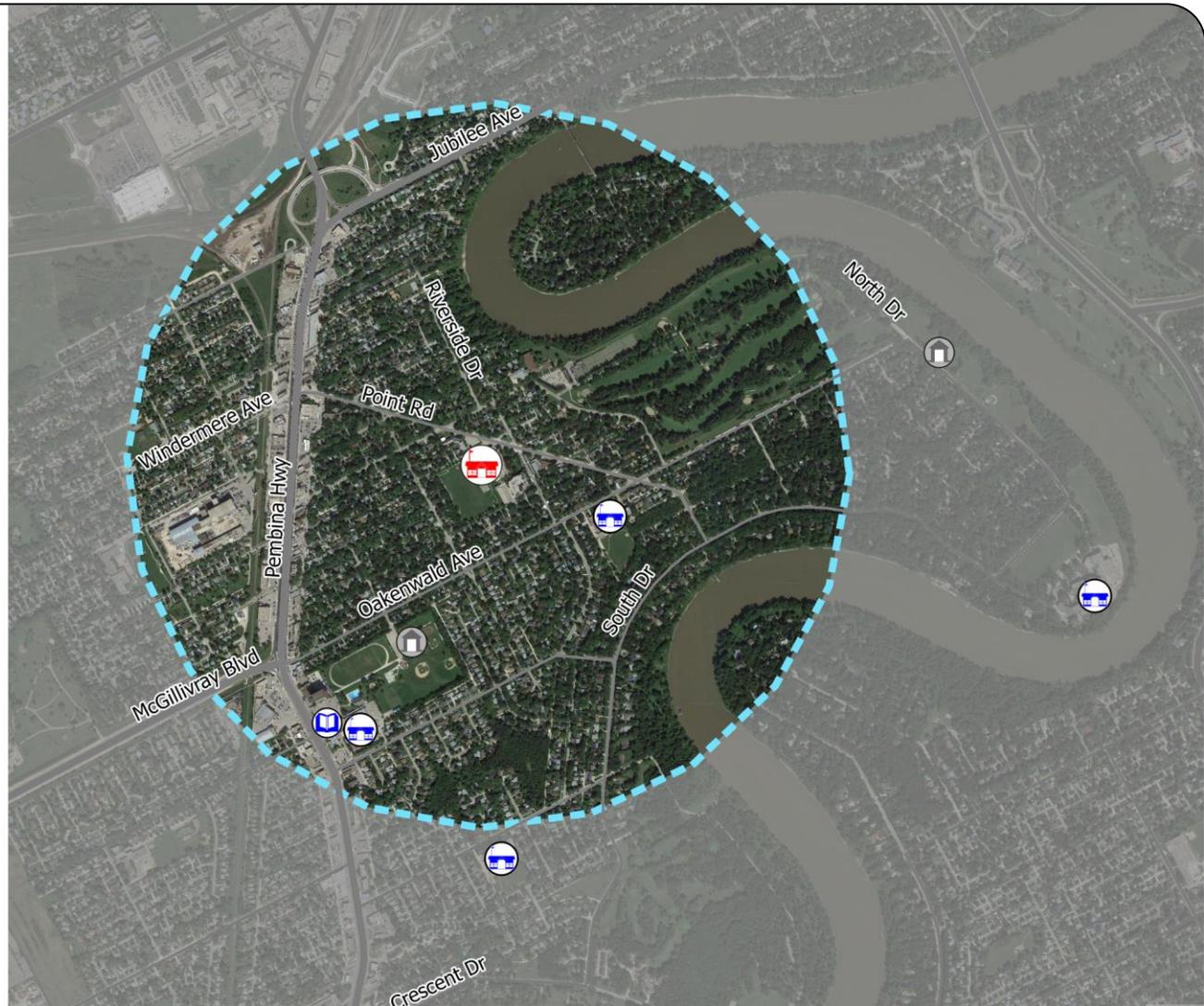
LEGEND

-  ÉCOLE VISCOUNT ALEXANDER
-  OTHER COMMUNITY SCHOOL
-  LIBRARY
-  COMMUNITY CENTRE
-  1 KM RADIUS
-  ARTERIAL STREETS
-  COLLECTOR STREETS

0 200 400 600 800 m



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School Travel Plan for École Viscount Alexander

Figure 2
STUDY AREA



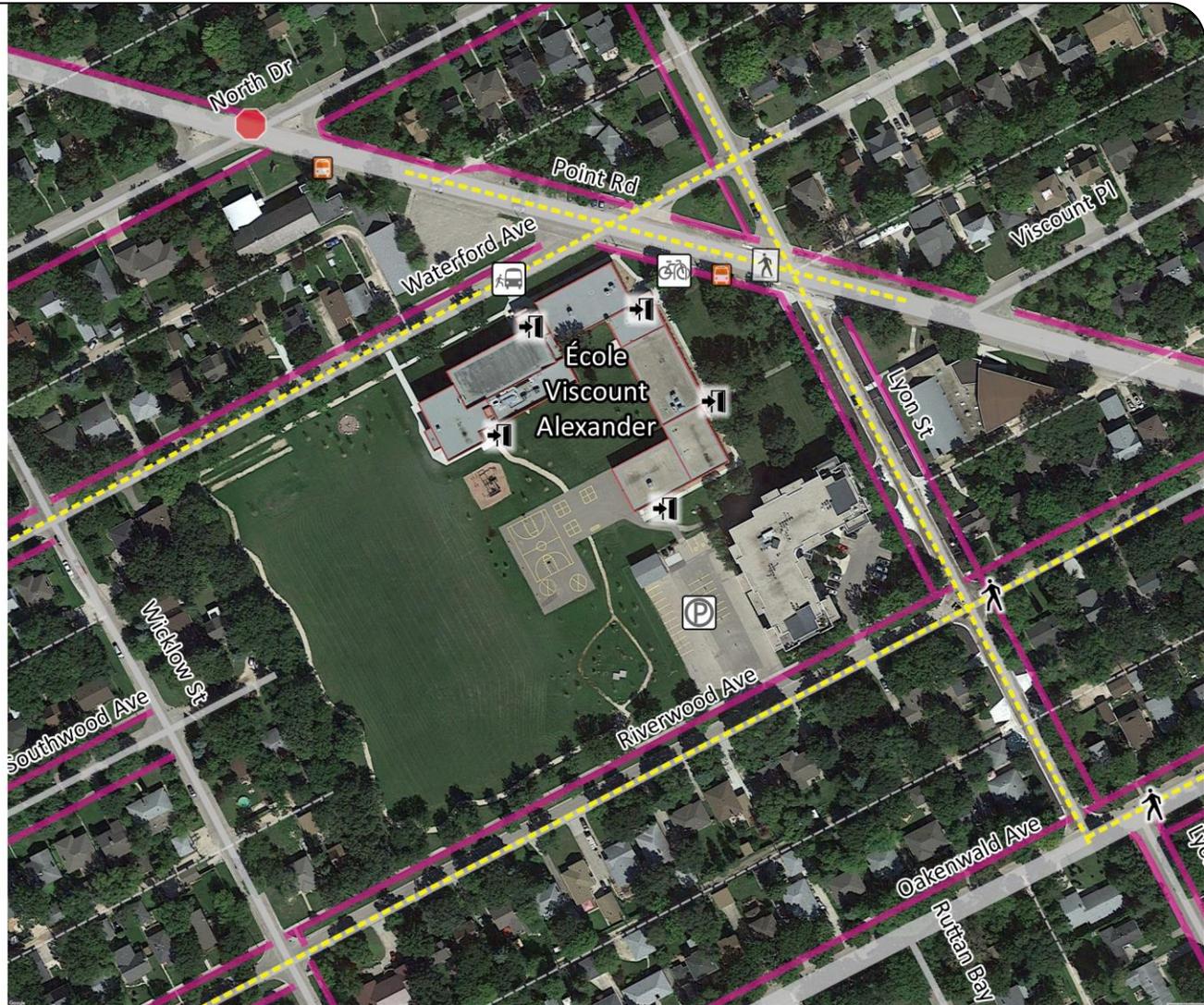
LEGEND

-  ALL WAY STOP
-  PEDESTRIAN CORRIDOR
-  PEDESTRIAN CROSSWALK
-  SCHOOL ENTRANCE
-  BICYCLE STORAGE
-  VEHICLE PARKING
-  SCHOOL BUS LOADING ZONE
-  TRANSIT STOP
-  SIDEWALK
-  ALLEY
-  REDUCED SPEED SCHOOL ZONE

0 40 80 120 m



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School Travel Plan for École Viscount Alexander

Figure 3

EXISTING TRANSPORT NETWORK AROUND THE SCHOOL



SCHOOL TRAVEL PATTERNS

Travel data was collected through classroom and take-home surveys. Findings regarding travel to and from school are summarized here.

HANDS UP CLASSROOM SURVEY

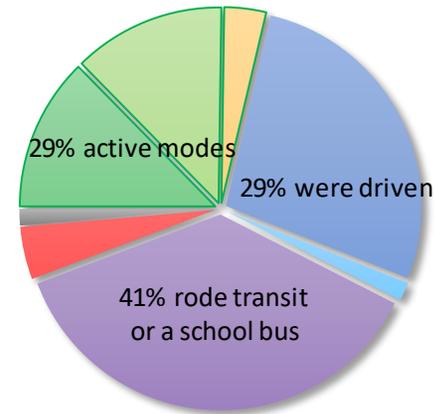
Student travel mode information was collected through a “hands-up” survey with the assistance of academic staff. The survey was administered for three, week-long periods starting September 25th, December 13th, and May 7th to represent the three school seasons Fall, Winter, and Spring respectively. Each day during the survey, the teacher would ask students how they travelled to and from school that day. School staff also participated in the survey. Over the fifteen days of data collection approximately 4700 responses were collected.

Figure 4 shows the travel mode of the school population for the weeks when the survey was taken.

Approximately 25% of students are driven to school and another 40% take the bus (either school bus or public transit). Walking trips are more likely to occur in the afternoon (traveling from school) than in the morning (12% walk to school while 15% walk from school). Cycling trips account for a maximum of 3% (morning) and 4% (afternoon) of all trips.

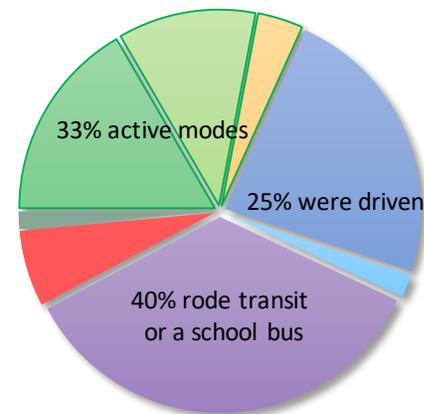
Travel TO School

Travel	Percent of Survey Responses			
	Fall	Winter	Spring	Average
Walked	13%	13%	12%	12%
Walked part way	13%	14%	13%	14%
Biked	3%	0%	7%	3%
Were Driven	27%	27%	26%	27%
Carpooled	1%	2%	2%	2%
Rode school bus	37%	35%	34%	35%
Rode public transit	4%	6%	5%	5%
Other	1%	2%	1%	2%



Travel FROM School

Travel	Percent of Survey Responses			
	Fall	Winter	Spring	Average
Walked	17%	16%	13%	15%
Walked part way	11%	16%	16%	15%
Biked	4%	0%	7%	4%
Were Driven	23%	24%	22%	23%
Carpooled	2%	2%	2%	2%
Rode school bus	35%	33%	31%	33%
Rode public transit	6%	7%	6%	7%
Other	1%	2%	2%	2%



TAKE-HOME FAMILY SURVEY

A take-home survey notice was delivered to families on October 5th and made available on-line from October 5th to October 9th. A total of 80 parents answered travel-related and safety-related questions about their oldest child attending the school so as not to double count. Figure 5 shows the travel mode for winter and non-winter months, of children attending the school. The results are similar to those from the hands-up survey, with no real change in mode of travel between winter and non-winter months.

The most common reasons parents drive their children to and/or from school are:

- 50% I'm on my way somewhere else (e.g. to work);
- 33% Distance from home too far; and
- 25% Convenience/time pressures.

Subsequently, the most common reasons parents would allow their children to walk and bike to school are:



I would allow my child to walk to school if

- 63% - They did not live so far from school.
- 38% - They did not walk alone.
- 25% - They were older.

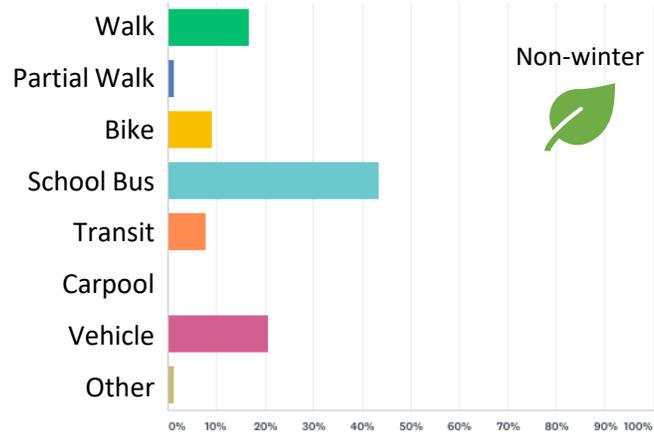


I would allow my child to cycle to school if:

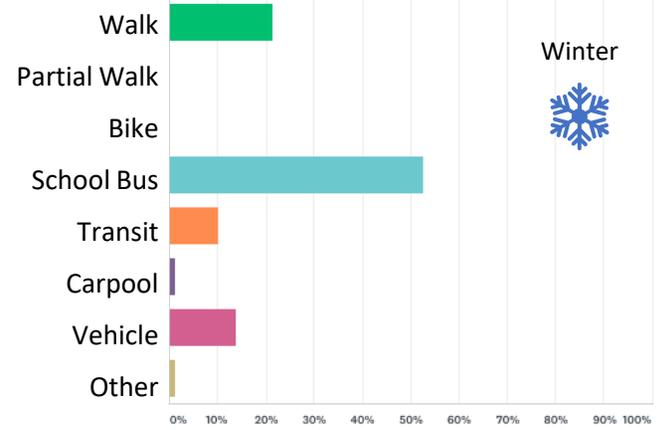
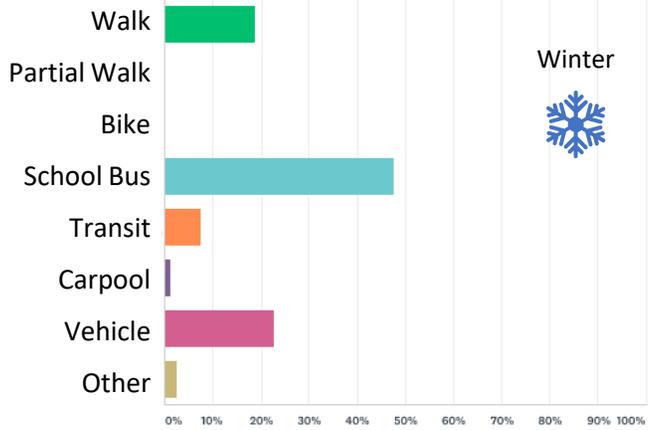
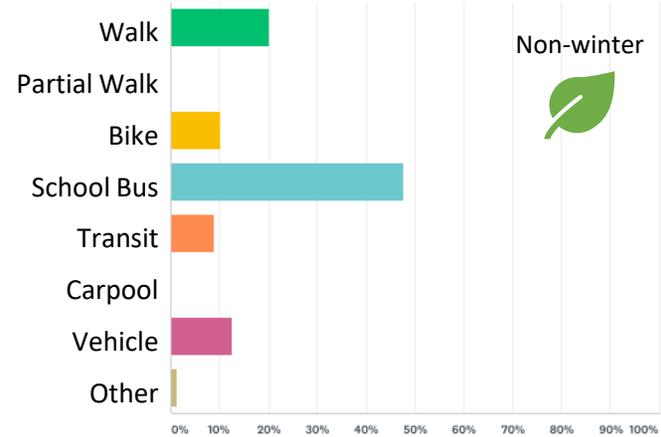
- 39% - There were reduced traffic dangers.
- 36% - They did not live so far from school.
- 32% - There was an improved cycling route.
- 25% - They did not cycle alone.

Walking and cycling safety training can play a major role in reducing barriers such as the perception of traffic danger and the perception that a child is too young to understand how to safely navigate the route to school as a pedestrian or cyclist.

Travel TO School



Travel FROM School



CURRENT ISSUES FOR WALKING AND CYCLING

An essential aspect of school travel planning is to identify issues that could be: (1) negatively impacting the ability of students and staff to walk or bike to school; or (2) negatively affecting safety. These issues may be related to access, congestion, car parking, cycle storage, and traffic operations, infrastructure maintenance, and others. For this STP, four approaches were taken to collect this information:

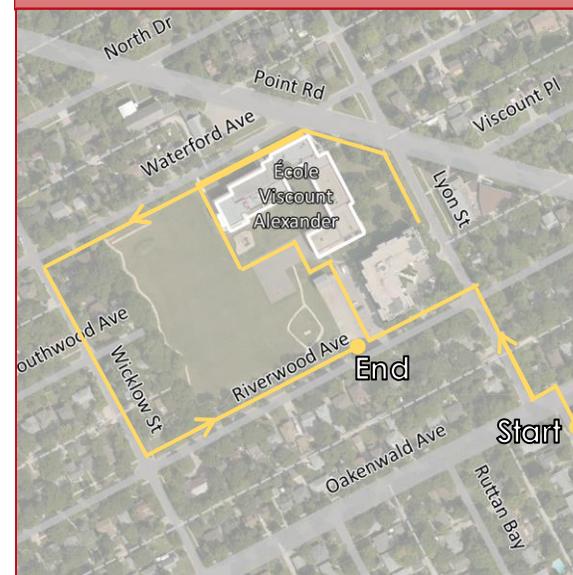
1. A walkabout (detailed to the right) was conducted with members of the STP committee on October 27th, 2017.
2. An STP Workshop was held on November 14th, 2017.
3. A take-home survey was sent with students for parents to provide input.
4. An active transportation road safety review was completed by the engineering team developing this STP.

The following key concerns were identified from the first three data collection approaches.

- **Drop-off and pick-up of students** – Students transported by vehicles are often seen running across the roadway to and from vehicles. This is a safety concern as there is the potential for conflict with on-coming vehicles. In addition, eight school buses currently transport students to and from school; however, there are often vehicles parked in the designated bus loading zone.
- **Missing links in the sidewalk network** – Many students walk to school on Point Rd from Pembina Highway; however, parts of sidewalk network are missing, or there is network discontinuity by having the sidewalk continue on the opposite side of the roadway. This is a safety issue for students walking or cycling as they put themselves at increased risk when sharing the roadway with vehicular traffic. Other examples of missing sidewalks are Wicklow St and Waterford Ave, South Dr, Woodgrove St, and others.

STP Committee Walkabout

On October 27th, 2017, a school walkabout was conducted with members of the STP Committee to identify potential barriers to safety and mobility as well as opportunities for enhanced walking and cycling. Photo documentation and record of the physical environment was collected along the walking route shown below.



- **Traffic safety issues** – Common safety issues identified include:
 - Skewed intersections on Point Rd (e.g., at Waterford Ave)
 - Lack of pedestrian crossing opportunities (e.g., Pembina Highway and Waterford Ave, Byng Place and Riverside Dr, Riverwood St and Point Road)
 - Lack of safe routes for children to walk or cycle
 - Lack of bicycle facilities on Point Rd
 - High traffic volumes perceived around the school
 - High vehicle speeds perceived on Point Rd, Wicklow St, Riverwood St, and Waterford Ave
 - Poor traffic operations perceived at the intersection of Pembina Highway and Point Rd cause safety issues for vulnerable road users
 - Stopping violations at Dowker Ave and Lyon St
 - SJR school bus traffic on South Dr
- **Snow accumulation in winter months** – Snow accumulation in the school bus loading zone was identified as a safety hazard for students as it increases the likelihood of students slipping and sliding onto the roadway.

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION ROAD SAFETY REVIEW FINDINGS

The active transportation road safety review found the issues shown in Figure 6 and illustrated in the pages that follow the figure. The safety review was conducted along various corridors connecting to the school and was guided by walking and cycling issues identified as part of the STP walkabout, STP workshop, and the take-home family survey. These reviews are intended to evaluate the safety performance of a facility from the road design, traffic operations, and road maintenance perspectives. The goal of an active transportation road safety review is to identify issues that may need to be addressed to improve the accommodation of all road users with an emphasis on pedestrians and cyclists.

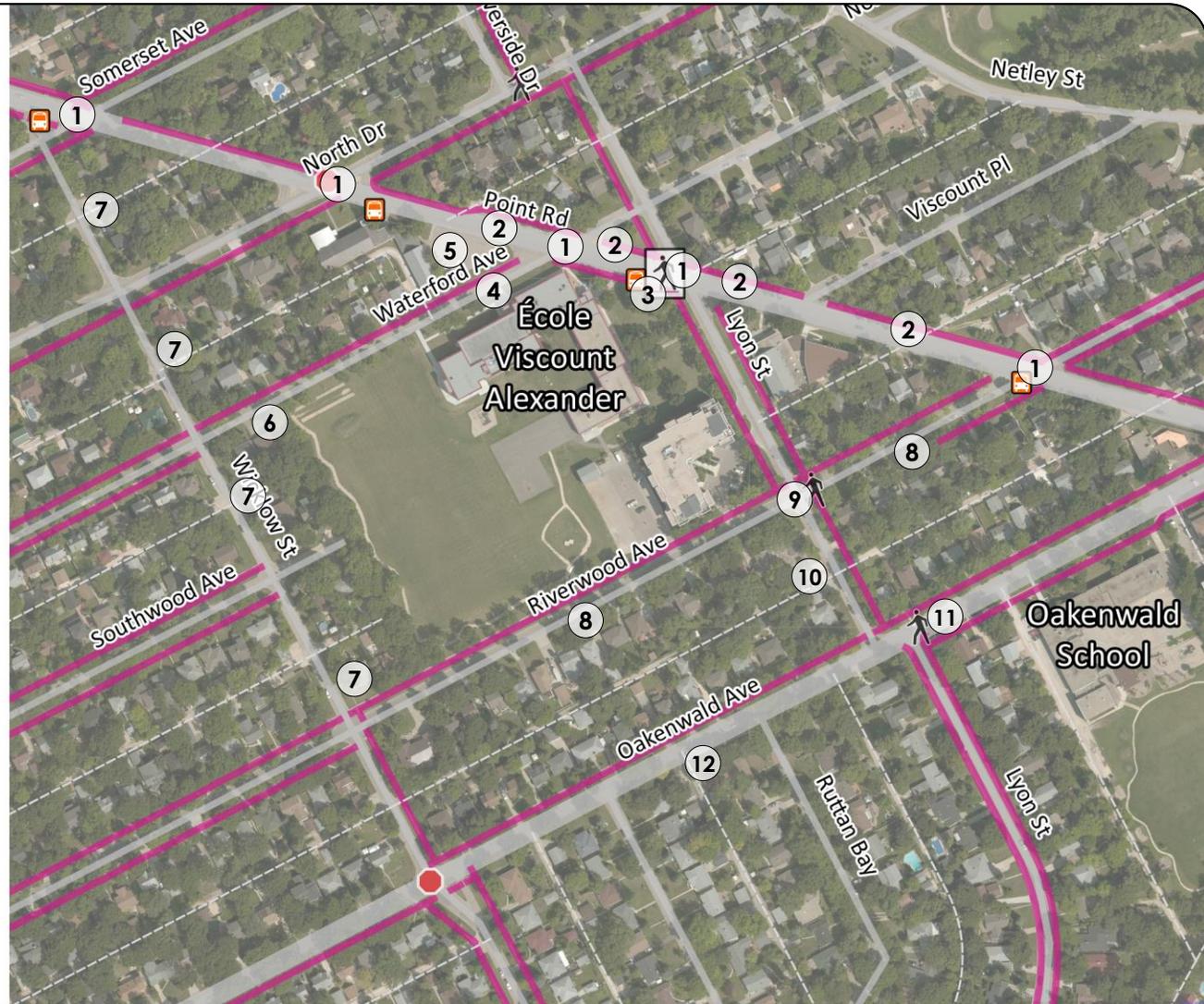


LEGEND

-  SAFETY ISSUES
-  ALL WAY STOP
-  PEDESTRIAN CORRIDOR
-  PEDESTRIAN CROSSWALK
-  TRANSIT STOPS
-  ROADWAYS
-  ALLEYWAYS
-  SIDEWALKS

0 50 100 150 m

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School Travel Plan for École Viscount Alexander

Figure 6
ISSUES FROM ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION SAFETY REVIEW

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FROM THE ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION ROAD SAFETY

	ID	Safety Issue	Photo	Potential Countermeasure
POINT RD	1	<p>Skewed intersections along Point Rd at Somerset Ave, North Dr, Waterford Ave, Lyon St, Viscount Place, Riverwood Ave, and Oakenwald Ave.</p> <p>Obtuse angles promote high turning speed and require high degree of driver head rotation to check for oncoming traffic.</p>		<p>These intersections could benefit from a variety of treatments, depending on the location. Examples are: right-angle turning channels and extension of intersection gore to reduce crossing distance for pedestrians and limit turning radius.</p>
	2	<p>Diagonal parking on Point Rd between North Dr and Riverwood Ave on the north side limits line of sight for vehicles turning onto Point Road. In addition, when diagonal parking lot is not occupied there is ambiguity regarding road space as parking spaces are poorly maintained and have worn pavement markings. Further, backing into oncoming traffic poses an increased risk for collisions, particularly with cyclists.</p>		<p>Removing or re-orienting diagonal parking to back-in angled parking and explicitly accommodating bicyclists on this road could reduce the existing risk associated with the existing parking situation.</p>
	3	<p>Diagonally oriented crosswalk at intersection of Point Rd and Lyon St increases exposure time for pedestrians crossing the roadway.</p>		<p>Re-orienting this pedestrian corridor so that it is perpendicular to Point Rd would reduce crossing distance and crossing time. Also, pavement markings need to be repainted to improve visibility throughout the year.</p>

	ID	Safety Issue	Photo	Potential Countermeasure
WATERFORD AVE	4	<p>A. Two concrete paths from Waterford Ave to the school have no access ramps, which limits access to wheelchair users.</p> <p>B. The no parking sign is currently knocked over and does not have a concrete base.</p>		<p>A. Provide curb ramps.</p> <p>B. Reinstall No Parking sign with a concrete base</p>
	5	<p>Student Drop-off/Pick-up in St. Paul's Anglican Church Parking Lot, École Viscount Alexander Staff Parking Lot, and adjacent roadways increase collision risk for students who must interact with traffic during peak hours. Also, this all creates congestion and driver frustration.</p>		<p>A student drop-off loop could be implemented adjacent to the school on Riverwood Ave. Feasible design options should be investigated.</p>
	6	<p>Gravel path adjacent to Waterford Ave ends abruptly at the edge of school property, forcing pedestrians to walk on private yards or on the road. There is evidence of pedestrian traffic who would benefit from the continuation of this path along Waterford Ave.</p>		<p>Continue the sidewalk along Waterford Ave to Wicklow St.</p>

	ID	Safety Issue	Photo	Potential Countermeasure
WICKLOW ST	7	The absence of sidewalks on Wicklow St between Somerset Ave and Riverwood Ave may force pedestrians to walk on private property or on the roadway. For safety reasons, it is always important to have at least one sidewalk along a street. This provides a safe space for pedestrians and prevents hazardous interactions with vehicular traffic.		Construct sidewalk along the east side of Wicklow St between Somerset Ave and Riverwood Ave.
RIVERWOOD AVE	8	The sidewalk ends abruptly on the south side of Riverwood Ave between Lyon St and Point Rd. This brings pedestrians to a “dead end” and forces them to walk on private property or on the road.		Complete the sidewalk along Riverwood Ave between Lyon St and Point Road.
	9	The crosswalk at Riverwood Ave and Lyon St is installed on the far side of Riverwood Ave. There are no stop signs along Riverwood for a long distance, which may encourage speeding. The location of the crosswalk, combined with limited conspicuity due to worn pavement markings and lack of advance warning, may pose a safety hazard for people wanting to use it.		Evaluate need for 4-way stop sign at Lyon Ave. If no additional stop signs are warranted move the crosswalk to the near side of the intersection. Repaint pavement markings.

	ID	Safety Issue	Photo	Potential Countermeasure
LYON ST	10	No sidewalk on west side of Lyon St between Riverwood Ave and Oakenwald Ave. This may force pedestrians to walk on private property or on the roadway. Sidewalks are necessary for safe pedestrian mobility and accessibility.		Construct a sidewalk on the west side of Lyon St between Riverwood Ave and Oakenwald Ave.
	11	Undesirable alignment of sidewalk ramps at intersection of Lyon St and Oakenwald Ave provide poor pedestrian guidance for navigation. This would pose a challenge for visually-impaired pedestrians, coupled with the lack of curb ramp where the sidewalk meets the road.		A properly paved facility is needed where the foot path is currently present. Also, a curb ramp is required at the end of the sidewalk.
OAKENWALD AVE	12	No sidewalk on south side of Oakenwald Ave between Wicklow St and Lyon St. This may force pedestrians to walk on private property or on the roadway. Sidewalks are necessary for safe pedestrian mobility and accessibility.		Construct a sidewalk on the south side of Oakenwald Ave between Wicklow St and Lyon St.

ACTION PLAN

The main goal of this STP is to increase the number of people choosing to commute to and from school using active modes of transportation. This action plan combines input received from stakeholders (i.e., STP committee and family survey respondents) as well as expert knowledge regarding road safety. The plan incorporates initiatives under the 5Es: education, encouragement, enforcement, engineering, and evaluation. Each is described below followed by the Action Plan.

•Actions primarily aimed at helping children build their pedestrian, bicycling, traffic, and social skills, but also include actions that educate parents and other motorists.

Education



•Actions that provide incentives for students to walk and ride to school, as well as actions that encourage communities to maintain safe routes for students

Encouragement



•Initiatives that increase awareness and reduce the frequency of crime and traffic safety problems

Enforcement



•Actions that improve the safety of pedestrians and cyclists within the built environment

Engineering



•Refers primarily to data collection from students and parents to assess their behavior, beliefs, and attitudes towards non-motorized travel, and to track the impact of various initiatives

Evaluation



ACTION PLAN FOR ÉCOLE VICOUNT ALEXANDER SCHOOL

ACTION ITEM	FREQUENCY	OWNERSHIP		ACTION TYPE				
		School Community	City	Education	Encouragement	Enforcement	Engineering	Evaluation
Update School Travel Plan	Annual	✓						✓
Conduct hands-up survey	Seasonal	✓						✓
Conduct parent survey	Annual	✓						✓
Walking/cycling safety training	Annual	✓		✓				
Implement walking school bus*	Weekly/Daily	✓		✓	✓			
Implement walk-a-block*	Weekly/Daily	✓		✓	✓			
Implement walking/wheeling Wednesdays*	Weekly	✓			✓			
Snow removal around school, particularly at the bus loading area	As needed	✓	✓				✓	
Implement recommendations from AT road safety review	As possible		✓				✓	
Enforcement in school zones (speed, stop sign violations, etc)	Quarterly					✓		

* Active Safe Routes to School strategies are described in the next section.

ACTIVE SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL STRATEGIES

The Active and Safe Routes to School (ASRTS, www.ontarioactiveschooltravel.ca) program has existed in Canada since 1996 and is in-place to promote the use of active transportation (AT) modes for children commuting to/from school and to educate students about the benefits of AT through special events and activities. Children are significantly less active than they used to be, and this trend aligns with a bias of school commuting patterns involving non-active modes. This leads to serious concerns for youth and communities in general, including:

- Reduced safety in surrounding areas during drop-off and pickup times due to the increased number of vehicles making irregular movements.
- Air pollution which erodes health and poses environmental risk.
- Development of a sense of auto-dependency among children.

With encouragement and education from the ASRTS program, the goal is to increase the number of children choosing AT modes to commute to/from school. An increase in the number of children walking and cycling improves their cognitive/physical development, concentration, and motor skills. It also reduces future health care costs and provides a sense of community and neighborhood awareness.

In addition, the ASRTS program yields significant educational benefits to the children involved. Children do not have the same instincts as adults when assessing dangers such as moving vehicles. Proper education can significantly improve a child's ability to comprehend the safety of a traffic situation. The physical act of walking children to school and negotiating streets also helps children to develop proper traffic safety awareness. The proper implementation of the ASRTS program can help children to realize the many benefits of a healthy commute.

Walking School Bus

The walking school bus is 2 or more families travelling to school together and socializing. Volunteer parents living on the same block or the same apartment can start out walking together, and then once trust is built, parents share responsibilities. Implementation includes:

- Garnering interest
- Mapping out candidate routes
- Arrange “meet and greet”
- Distribute toolkit



Resources & Tools

<http://www.saferoutestoschool.ca/>

Walk-a-Block

Walk-a-block arrangements work well for families that live too far from schools for children to walk all the way, or for working parents who drop their kids off on the way to work. Safe and legal parking spaces are identified one or two blocks (or further) away from the school. From these spots, parents can walk their kids the rest of the way, or children can join other students walking to school.

This arrangement provides an enjoyable walk, and reduces traffic congestion around schools, allowing for better safety, and better access for school buses and students walking or biking. After school, students can walk to the assigned spot to meet with the driver. When designating parking spots, be sure to consult with neighbors, and consider existing facilities such as Churches or Community Centres willing to participate



Resources & Tools

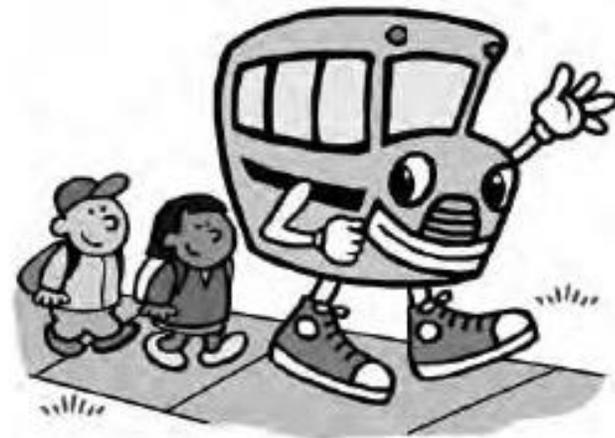
[Green Communities Canada – Active and Safe Routes to School Program](#)

[Alberta's Active and Safe Routes to School Resource Manual](#)

Walking Wheeling Wednesdays

Walking and wheeling Wednesdays is an initiative where on Wednesday of each week or one Wednesday of the month all students are encouraged to walk or bike the full way, or even part way to school. The regular occurrence helps students to keep momentum going and help form positive habits for a lifetime. When organizing the event, it is important to inform everybody, including parents, teachers, and students, while emphasizing the health and environmental benefits.

WALKING WEDNESDAYS CLUB!



Resources & Tools

[Green Communities Canada – Active and Safe Routes to School Program](#)
[Alberta's Active and Safe Routes to School Resource Manual](#)