

Vedder Elementary School Safer School Travel Road Safety Plan

Produced by Vedder Elementary - Safer School
Travel Team

In cooperation with Safer City



Safer City

Plan completed in March, 2007



Acknowledgements

It takes commitment and community to make this plan a reality.

Without the participation of following people,
The School Road Safety Plan for Vedder Elementary School
Would not be possible.

Many thanks to.....

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Active members of the Vedder Elementary PAC
Doug MacKay, School Board President, School District #33
Doug Templeton, Maintenance Manager, School District #33
Ed Ashley, Transportation Supervisor, School District #33
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Mike Weightman, ICBC Loss Prevention Coordinator
Cpl. Bruce Abbott, NCO i/c of Municipal Traffic Chilliwack RCMP
Ineke Schuurman, Safer City Coordinator, City of Chilliwack

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Executive Summary

The parents and staff at Vedder Elementary School have participated in the Safer School Travel program developed by Safer City to identify school road safety related issues. The program strives to define priorities and create realistic solutions for addressing these issues. Vedder Elementary worked together with key community partners to achieve this goal. Vedder Elementary contacted the Chilliwack Safer City Coordinator, Ineke Schuurman to participate in the Safer School Travel (SST) Program in September 2003.

The solutions generated identify strategies from three key perspectives: Education, Enforcement and Engineering. The final plan identifies both short and long term goals within each focus. As part of their education strategy, Vedder Elementary strongly advocates healthy lifestyles and fitness, encouraging students to walk and or bike to school.

Vedder Elementary is located on 45850 Promontory Rd. This school has been open for approximately 58 years. The student population consists of 397 students in grades kindergarten to six. The majority of students are driven or take the school bus to school.

Purpose of the School Road Safety Plan is to:

- Identify safety concerns for the student population, parents and school staff traveling to and from the school.
- Collaborate with the municipality, school community, school district, police, ICBC, and other stakeholders to identify and implement changes to enhance safety of student travel.
- Develop and include strategies for all modes of transportation and from the three key disciplines of Education, Enforcement and Engineering.
- Increase support for safe pedestrian and bicycle travel and/or other vehicle reduction initiatives.

Consultation and Research

Identifying the top road safety issues involves research and investigation; Key steps in the process include:

- a survey distributed to all families to determine modes of travel, routes to school and road safety issues;
- traffic counts and behaviour patterns at key access points to the school;
- mapping existing car and green modes (pedestrian, bike, bus) infrastructure and student travel routes.



Cst. Bowden from the Chilliwack RCMP pulls over a speeding driver.



Speed Watch monitors Promontory Rd. during a Back to School awareness campaign



Cpl. Abbott from the Chilliwack RCMP pulls over a speeding driver during a Back to School Awareness Campaign

Data Collection

Travel Surveys

Surveys developed by Safer City were distributed to all school families (Appendix 1). The survey was designed to gather the following information:

- How students travel to school during good and poor weather conditions.
- Safety and travel issues identified by students and parents in the project area.
- The routes used to drive, walk and bicycle to school.

Infrastructure Mapping

The Safer School Travel Team walked and collected observational data on safety issues within the project area. The information collected was from two perspectives. These were a green mode of travel (walk, bicycle or bus) and a car mode of travel. The information was transferred to and displayed on maps.



Artwork courtesy of Ryker, Grade 2

Data Analysis

Student Distribution and Existing Travel Mode Used to get to School

397 children were registered at Vedder Elementary at the time of the study. 252 questionnaires were sent out (one per family). 61 students returned surveys (24 per cent of school population). Please note that the table totals exceed 100% because some students use multiple modes to travel to and from school. All the students in each classroom were polled on which mode of travel they use to get to and from school, please see the modes below.

Mode	Good Weather		Adverse Weather	
	AM	PM	AM	PM
Car	33	26	46	44
Walk	49	49	28	30
Cycle	2	2	0	0
School Bus	26	26	26	26
Transit	0	0	0	0
Car Pool	0	0	2	2
Total	110	103	102	102

Table 1 – Student Mode of Travel

Routes to School and Infrastructure Mapping

Mapping of the existing infrastructure in the community involves becoming more intimate with the neighbourhood surrounding the school. The mapping process highlights key areas of concern by including the routes being taken to school and the extent of the existing infrastructure.

The maps are fairly large and detailed and are available for review. The information gathered in this phase of the SST process was incorporated into the final list of issues.

Safer School Travel Issues

A wide variety of safety concerns were identified on the survey forms. Often people will use the SST process to express concern about issues that may not

relate to safe school travel for students. Within the SST process, there is a consolidating and summarizing phase where issues are reviewed and assessed for relevancy.

The core SST team reviews the overall list of issues and determines which issues will be presented to the stakeholder committee. The stakeholder committee had representation from municipal engineering, the RCMP, school principal, and the SST team leader.

Final List of Issues

This final list of issues was endorsed by the stakeholder group at a meeting on December 6th, 2006. These issues reflect the key concerns of the school community.

Issue #1a: Behaviour Issues in the Bus Loop:

- Drivers are double parking in the bus loop.
- Traffic impedes busses.
- Children passing through traffic.
- Double parking on Promontory Rd. is blocking drivers' view.



Issue #1b: Behavior Issues in the Parking Lot:

- Congestion
- Double parking
- Children are passing through traffic to get to vehicles.



Issue #2a: Behaviour Issues on Promontory Rd:

- Drivers are speeding in the school zone
- Dump trucks are speeding past the school
- Congestion right after school
- School is not noticeable with plaza activity



Issue #2b: Behaviour Issues on Thomas Rd:

- Drivers are speeding while children are traveling to and from school, and also while they are attempting to cross the street.



Issue #3a: Infrastructure Issues in the Parking Lot:

- Poor visibility when pulling out of Vedder Elementary and turning onto Promontory Rd.
- No signage indicating entrance/exit points in the parking lot
- Parking lot is not large enough



**Issue #4a: Infrastructure
Issues on Promontory Rd:**

- It is unsafe to cross the street in front of the school.
- Walking on Promontory Rd. east of the school is unsafe.



**Issue #4b: Infrastructure
Issues on Thomas Rd:**

- School sign is on the wrong side of the crosswalk.
- Crosswalk is unsafe at Thomas & Clover.



**Issue #4c: Infrastructure
Issues on Vedder Rd:**

- It is unsafe to walk on the east side of Vedder Rd. between Promontory Rd. and Thomas Rd.
- The Developer of the Vedder River Inn has completed the widening of the paved shoulder.



Identified Measures

Issue #1a	Behaviour Issues in the Bus Loop:				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Drivers are double parking in the bus loop. ➤ Traffic impedes busses. ➤ Children passing through traffic. ➤ Double parking on Promontory Rd. is blocking drivers' view. 				
Strategy Details	Priority	Action By	Funding Source	Projected Timing	Progress
SCHOOL DISTRICT					
-Restrict bus loop for bus use only	High	School District #33	School District	Long Term	
-Change school entrance and exit from Promontory Rd. to Thomas Rd. except for busses	High	School District #33	School District	Long Term	
Create a walking path in the back field to assist children walking to school from Clover	High	School District #33	School District	Immediate	Completed February 2007

Issue #1b	Behavior Issues in the Parking Lot:				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Congestion ➤ Double parking ➤ Children are passing through traffic to get to vehicles. 				
Strategy Details	Priority	Action By	Funding Source	Projected Timing	Progress
SCHOOL DISTRICT					
Create an additional 50 staff parking stalls on the east side of the school.	High	School District #33	School District #33	Summer 2007	
-Change school entrance and exit from Promontory Rd. to Thomas Rd. except for busses	High	School District #33	School District #33	Long Term	

Issue #2a	Behaviour Issues on Promontory Rd:				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Drivers are speeding in the school zone ➤ Dump trucks are speeding past the school ➤ Congestion right after school ➤ School is not noticeable with plaza activity 				
Strategy Details	Priority	Action By	Funding Source	Projected Timing	Progress
ENFORCEMENT					
Monitor driver behavior in this area	High	Speed Watch/RCMP	N/A	Short Term	Ongoing
ENGINEERING					
Paint the word School on Promontory Rd.	High	City of Chilliwack	City of Chilliwack	Summer 2007	

Issue #2b	Behaviour Issues on Thomas Rd: ➤ Speeding				
Strategy Details	Priority	Action By	Funding Source	Projected Timing	Progress
EDUCATION					
Monitor driver behaviour in this area	High	Speed Watch/RCMP	N/A	Short Term	Ongoing

Issue #3a	Infrastructure Issues in the Parking Lot : ➤ Poor visibility when pulling out of Vedder Elementary and turning onto Promontory Rd. ➤ No signage indicating entrance/exit points in the parking lot ➤ Parking lot is not large enough				
Strategy Details	Priority	Action By	Funding Source	Projected Timing	Progress
ENGINEERING					
Ask Canada Lands Company to move Halcyon Meadows sign	High	Safer City	N/A	Immediate	Completed February 2007
SCHOOL DISTRICT					
Install signage indicating entrance and exit points in parking lot	High	School District #33	School District #33	Summer 2007	
Create an additional 50 staff parking stalls on the east side of the school.	High	School District #33	School District #33	Summer 2007	

Issue #4a	Infrastructure Issues on Promontory Rd:				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ It is unsafe to cross the street in front of the school. ➤ Walking on Promontory Rd. east of the school is unsafe. 				
Strategy Details	Priority	Action By	Funding Source	Projected Timing	Progress
ENGINEERING					
Pedestrian facilities will be improved at Thomas Rd. and Promontory Rd.	High	City of Chilliwack	City of Chilliwack	Short Term	
Sidewalk will be built along Promontory Rd.	High	City of Chilliwack	City of Chilliwack	10 year Capital Plan-Schedule to be determined by land purchase	
3 Way Stop at Chilliwack River Rd. and Promontory Rd.	High	City of Chilliwack	City of Chilliwack	Summer 2007	

Issue #4b	Infrastructure Issues on Thomas Rd:				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ School sign is on the wrong side of the crosswalk. ➤ Crosswalk is unsafe at Thomas & Clover. 				
Strategy Details	Priority	Action By	Funding Source	Projected Timing	Progress
ENGINEERING					
Work order issued to move school sign to other side of crosswalk	High	City of Chilliwack	City of Chilliwack	March 2007	Completed March 12 th , 2007
Finish painting the crosswalk	High	City of Chilliwack	City of Chilliwack	Immediate	Completed February 2007

Summary

Significant effort has been made by the Vedder Elementary community to identify key concerns that affect the safety of children traveling to school. It is the role of the SST Team and the relevant stakeholders to review the issues and information brought forward and to seek realistic strategies to mitigate these concerns.

By incorporating education, enforcement and engineering strategies together the School Road Safety Plan strives to achieve participation by parents, stakeholders and the neighbourhood community to make positive change.

Behaviour concerns are the most difficult to effect as it takes a conscious shift by the school community and the general public to be a part of the solution. At the same time behaviour changes cost very little and can have an immediate and long lasting impact.

This report details a few engineering solutions that will require significant capital funding. Like many municipalities and school districts, Chilliwack and School District #33 have budgets that are tight and are stretched in many directions. The School Road Safety Plan for Vedder Elementary seeks to prioritize and identify the strategies that will have the greatest impact on road safety concerns in this community.

Let us look forward to Safer School Travel around Vedder Elementary

Appendix 1

Safer School Travel Survey

Vedder Elementary Road Safety Plan Survey

Dear Parent / Guardian

Vedder Elementary is currently developing a School Road Safety Plan. This plan is to provide for the safety of our students traveling to and from school. Your input is important in developing the plan. Please take a few minutes to complete the following survey (one per household). **Please return by Wednesday April 26th, 2006 to your child's homeroom teacher.**

Parent / Guardian name: _____ Postal Code: _____

Telephone number: _____

Number of children in your household, attending Vedder Elementary: _____

A. Modes of Travel

Indicate the most frequent mode of travel to and from school for the following conditions:

MODE	Good Weather Conditions		Adverse Weather Conditions	
	A.M.	P.M.	A.M.	P.M.
Car				
Walk				
Cycle				
School Bus				
Transit				
Car Pool				

B. Alternative Modes

Is your most frequent mode of travel to school by car? If yes, what will encourage you to switch to other modes?

C. Safety Issues/Concerns

Please describe or give details of any safety concerns you may have in and around the school. Indicate any specific problem locations by circling and numbering them on the accompanying map.

D. Safety Suggestions

Please describe or give details of any suggestions you have to improve safety in and around the school.

E. Routes

On the attached map, please mark your child’s usual route to school.

If your route begins off the map start marking where you join the map. If the route home (p.m.) differs from the morning (a.m.) route, please mark a second route and label it.

Please use a coloured marker that coincides with the following legend or label the route with the given letter.

Walk	-	green (W)
School Bus or Transit	-	orange (T)
Car	-	red (C)
Bicycle	-	blue (B)
Car pool	-	yellow (P)

F. Community Involvement

If we determine the need for community programs such as crossing guards and speed watch, would you be interested in assisting?

Yes / No (Please circle one)

Please contact any of the following persons, should you have any queries:

Ineke Schuurman 604-793-2766

Glynnis Koczur 604-858-4759