

# Staff Report



Development Services Department

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**REPORT TO:** Finance and Corporate Services Committee

**DATE OF MEETING:** September 16, 2024

**SUBMITTED BY:** Darren Kropf, Manager, Active Transportation & Development, 519-741-2200 ext. 7314

**PREPARED BY:** Dean McMillan, Supervisor, Crossing Guards 519-741-2200 ext. 7232

**WARD(S) INVOLVED:** 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 7

**DATE OF REPORT:** August 29, 2024

**REPORT NO.:** DSD-2024-397

**SUBJECT:** School Bus Loading Zone and Crossing Guard Adjustments

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## RECOMMENDATION:

That the School Bus Loading Zone be extended on the east side (odd-numbered) of Indian Road from a point 77 m north of McGee Avenue to a point approximately 147 m North thereof; and,

That a School Bus Loading Zone be installed on the north side (even-numbered) of Block Line Road from a point 93m east of Hanover Street to a point approximately 87m east thereof; and,

That the School Bus Loading Zone be extended on the west side (even-numbered) of Autumn Hill Crescent from a point 104m north of Westheights Drive to a point approximately 38m north thereof; and,

That a School Bus Loading Zone be installed on the east side (even-numbered) of Vanier Drive from a point 49m south of Boniface Avenue to a point approximately 31m south thereof; and,

That the School Bus Loading Zone previously established on Emerald Avenue be removed; and,

That the School Bus Loading Zone be extended on the east side (odd-numbered) of Hickson Drive from a point 10m south of Secord Avenue to a point approximately 49m south thereof; and,

That two Adult Crossing Guards be installed along Huron Road at Beckview Drive; and,

**That an Adult Crossing Guard be installed along Thomas Slee Dr at South Creek Dr; and,**

**That an Adult Crossing Guard be removed along Holborn Drive at Old Chicopee Drive; and,**

**That an Adult Crossing Guard be removed along Franklin Street at Connaught Street; and,**

**That the Adult Crossing Guard be removed along Pioneer Drive at Pioneer Park Public School stairway location; and further,**

**That the Uniform Traffic By-law be amended accordingly.**

#### **REPORT HIGHLIGHTS:**

- The purpose of this report is to improve street safety at multiple elementary schools within the City of Kitchener
- The key finding of this report is that safety and operations can be improved with several school bus loading zone adjustments and crossing guard location changes.
- The financial implications are approximately \$5,000 for the school bus loading zones taken from the existing sign maintenance budget. The removal of crossing guards at underutilized locations allows resources to be redeployed at the proposed new locations, at no net cost to the city.
- This report supports the delivery of core services.

#### **BACKGROUND:**

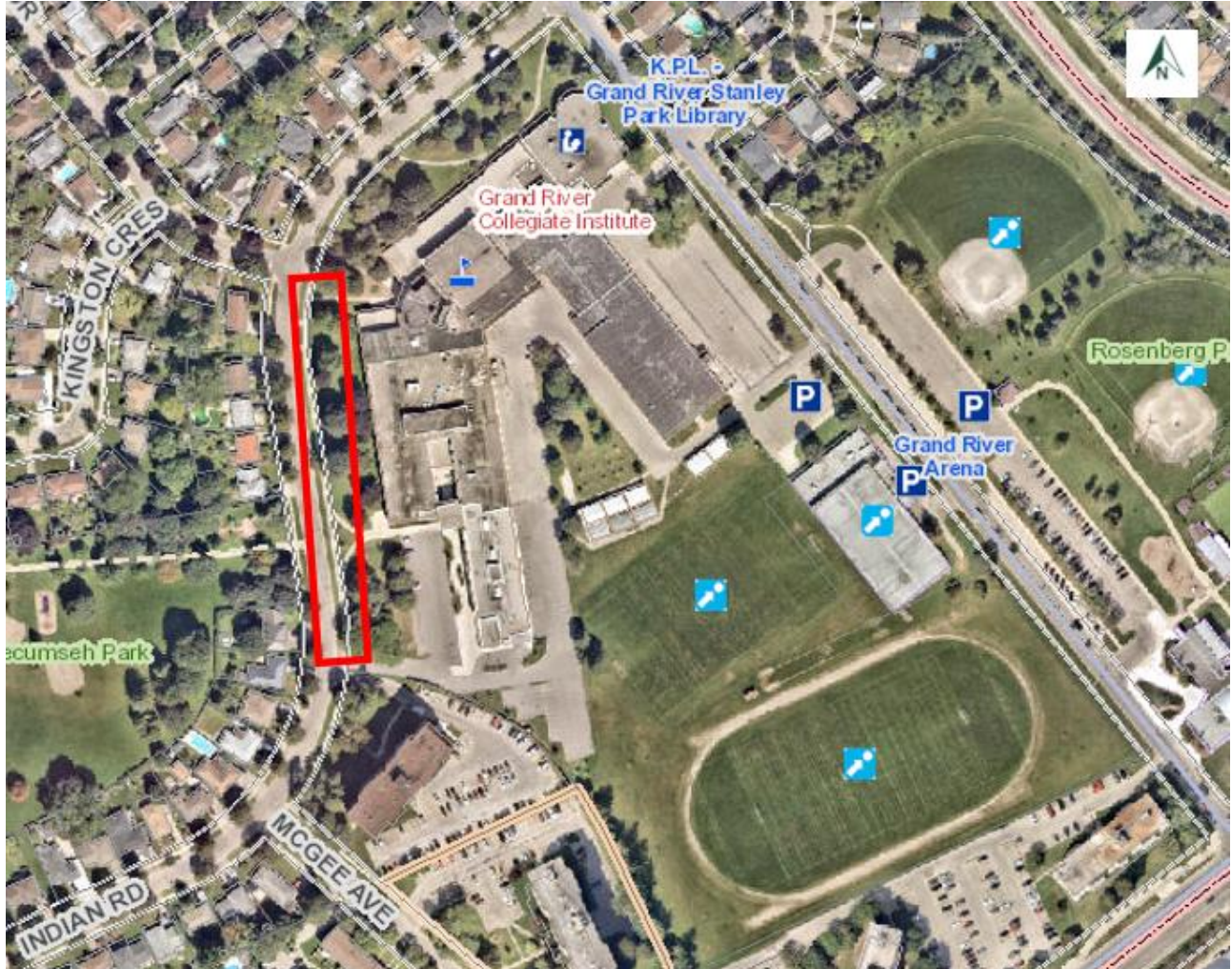
Transportation Services is providing an update to Council regarding recommendations to support school safety and active travel at the following schools:

- Grand River Collegiate Institute: A school Bus Loading Zone extension on Indian Road;
- St. Mary's High School: A School Bus Loading Zone along Block Line Road;
- St. Mark Catholic Elementary School: A School Bus Loading Zone extension on Autumn Hill Crescent;
- Rockway Public School: A School Bus Loading Zone installation on Vanier Drive;
- Sunnyside Public School: A School Bus Loading Zone removal on Emerald Avenue
- Stanley Park Senior Public School: A School Bus Loading Zone extension on Hickson Drive;
- St. Josephine Bakhita Catholic Elementary School: The justification of crossing guards for Huron Road at Beckview Drive;
- Groh Public School: The addition of a crossing guard for Thomas Slee Drive at South Creek Drive;
- Crestview Public School and St. Daniel Catholic Elementary School: the removal of a crossing guard for Holborn Drive at Old Chicopee Drive;
- Wilson Avenue Public School and St. Aloysius Catholic Elementary School: the removal of a crossing guard for Franklin Street at Connaught Street; and,
- Pioneer Park Public School: the removal of a crossing guard for Pioneer Drive at stairway location.

**REPORT:**

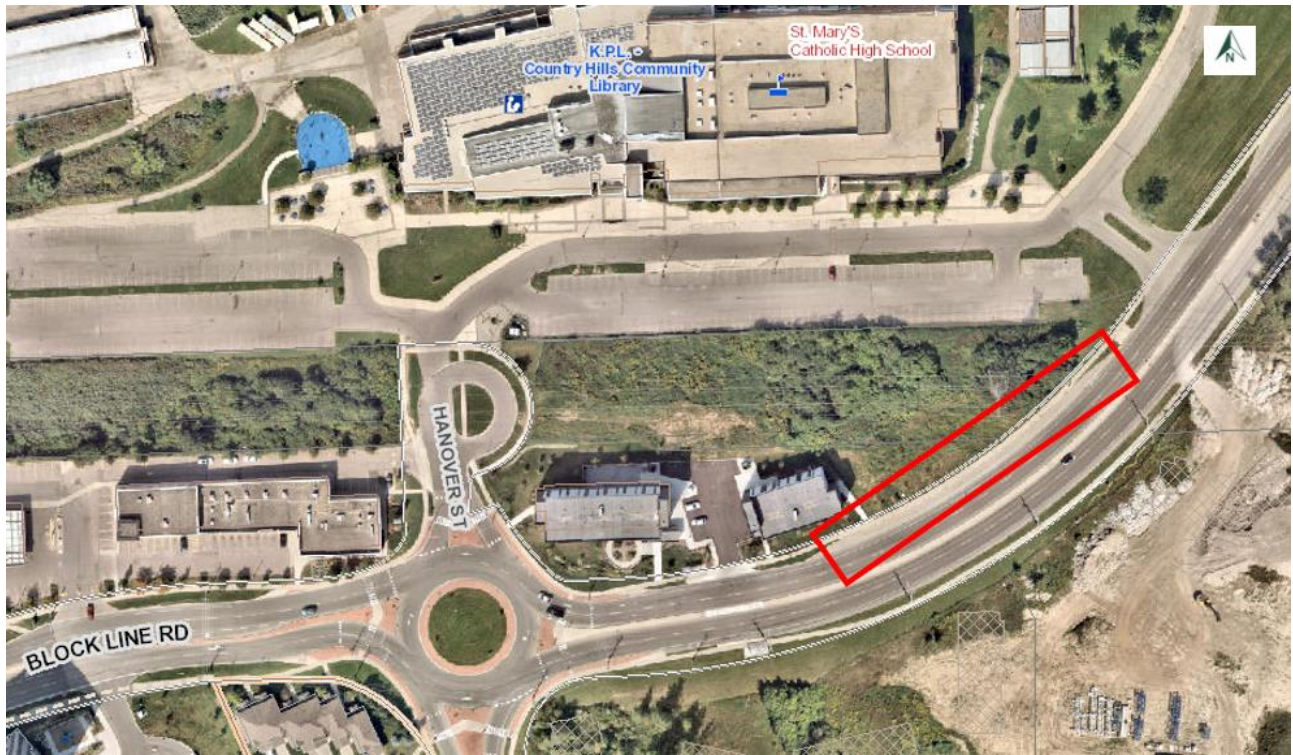
**Grand River Collegiate Institute**

Student Transportation Services of Waterloo Region (STSWR) requested the extension of a School Bus Loading Zone located on Indian Road between Queenston Drive and McGee Avenue to accommodate school buses dropping-off and picking-up students. Staff have reviewed and determined that this request can be accommodated with minimal impact to the neighbourhood given the existing No Parking restrictions on-street for school and general traffic operations.



**St. Mary's High School – School Bus Loading Zone**

STSWR requested the addition of a School Bus Loading Zone on the north side of Block Line Road (between Hanover Street and school access driveway location) to accommodate school buses dropping-off and picking-up students. Staff have reviewed and determined this request can be accommodated with minimal impact to the neighbourhood given the existing No Parking restrictions on-street for school and general traffic operations.



**St. Mark Catholic Elementary School – School Bus Loading Zone**

STSWR requested the extension of a School Bus Loading Zone located on Autumn Hill Crescent between Westheights Drive and Blue Spruce Court to accommodate school buses dropping-off and picking-up students. Staff have reviewed and determined that this request can be accommodated with minimal impact to the neighbourhood given the existing No Parking restrictions on-street for school and general traffic operations.



**Rockway Public School – School Bus Loading Zone**

STSWR requested the addition of a School Bus Loading Zone on Vanier Drive between Boniface Avenue and Walton Avenue fronting Rockway Public School to accommodate school buses dropping-off and picking-up students. Staff have reviewed and determined that this request can be accommodated with minimal impact to the neighbourhood given the existing No Parking restrictions on-street for school and general traffic operations.



### **Sunnyside Public School – School Bus Loading Zone**

STSWR requested the removal of the School Bus Loading Zone along Emerald Avenue between Weber Street East and Prospect Avenue since it will no longer be in use.



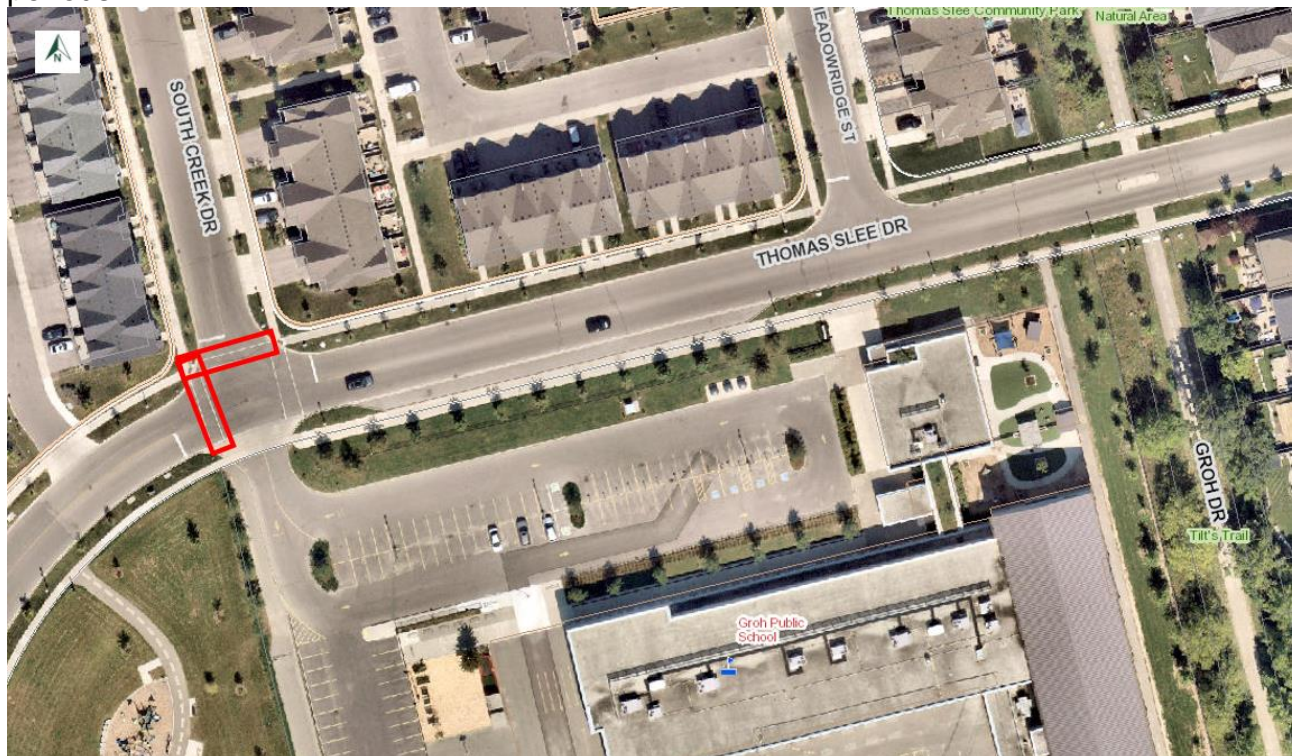
### **Stanley Park Senior Public School – School Bus Loading Zone**

STSWR requested the extension of a School Bus Loading Zone located on Hickson Drive between Crosby Drive and Secord Avenue to accommodate school buses dropping-off and picking-up students. Staff have reviewed and determined that this request can be accommodated with minimal impact to the neighbourhood given the existing No Parking restrictions on-street for school and general traffic operations.



### **Groh Public School**

Residents have requested the establishment of an adult crossing guard to accommodate student safety to and from Groh Public School at the all-way stop intersection of Thomas Slee Drive at South Creek Drive. Data was collected to determine the number of students crossing during the arrival and dismissal periods in both the morning and afternoon. The average number of school-aged pedestrians crossing exceeds the recommendation of 40 pedestrians in the Ontario Traffic Council School Crossing Guard manual. In addition, staff observed it is difficult for school aged children to determine safe crossing opportunities due to the high volume of traffic at the all-way stop intersection during school periods. A crossing guard will provide clearer direction for both pedestrians and drivers during the busy school periods.



### **St. Josephine Bakhita Catholic Elementary School**

Waterloo Catholic District School Board requested the establishment of an adult crossing guard to accommodate student safety to and from St. Josephine Bakhita Catholic Elementary School, which opened in September, 2023. The new school is located on Beckview Drive roadway adjacent to arterial Huron Road, requiring students to cross Huron Road at the roundabout. Huron Road is an arterial street with high vehicle volumes and speeds and limited pedestrian crossing opportunities. The average number of school-aged pedestrians crossing exceeds the recommendation of 40 pedestrians in the Ontario Traffic Council School Crossing Guard manual. Due to operational concerns controlling both the entry and exit of the roundabout location, two crossing guards are needed to ensure a safe crossing experience.



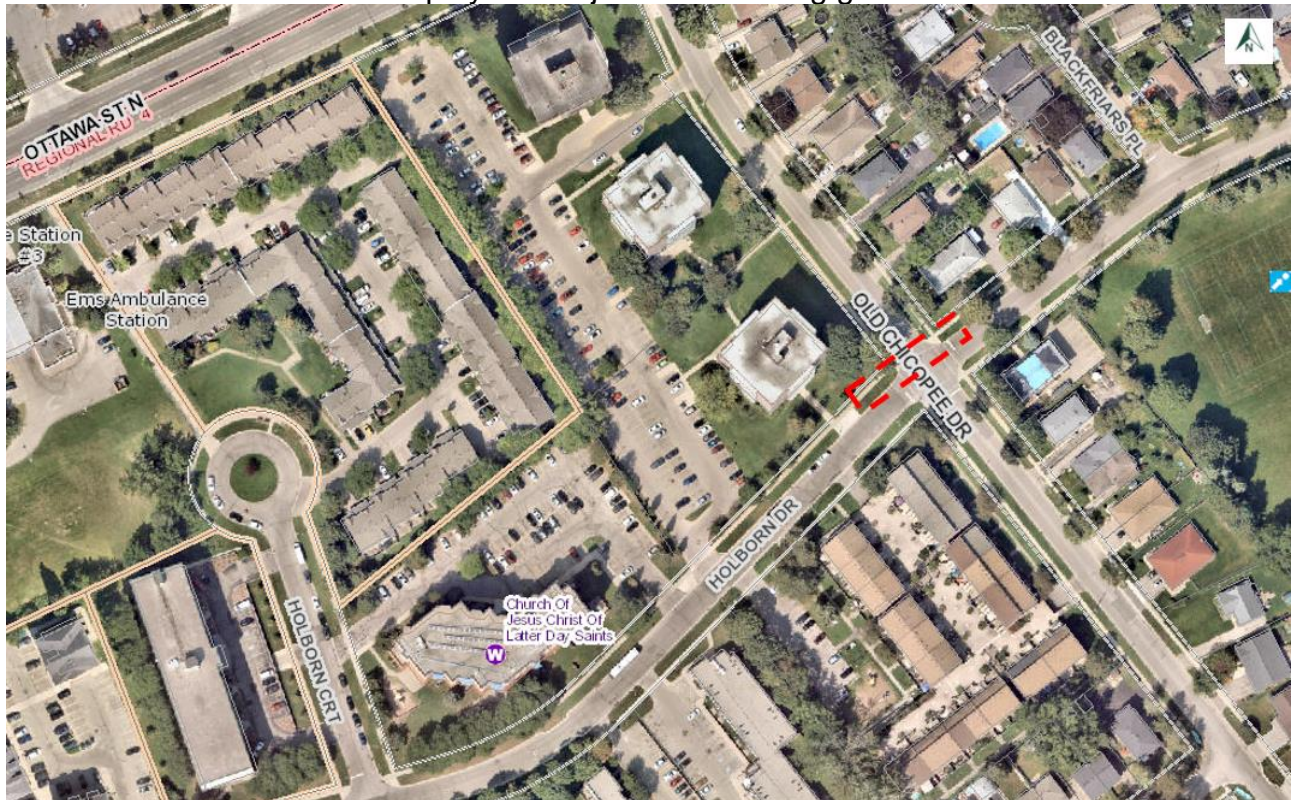
### **Adult Crossing Guard Holborn Drive at Old Chicopee Drive**

Staff are recommending the removal of the crossing guard location for Holborn Drive at Old Chicopee Drive (all-way stop control). It should be noted that this location is close to Stanley Park Mall which is likely a destination for pedestrians within the area throughout the day.

Data was collected during the morning and afternoon time periods (in 5 minute increments) to determine pedestrian movements before and after school times. During the morning data collection, there were mostly adolescent students crossing; these pedestrians are able to determine when it is safe to cross the roadway and do not need the assistance of an adult crossing guard. Also, during some of the time periods observed for the morning study there were only adults crossing, and for three of the time periods there weren't any pedestrians observed. It is likely that throughout time the neighbourhood has changed as well as student ages and pedestrian patterns.



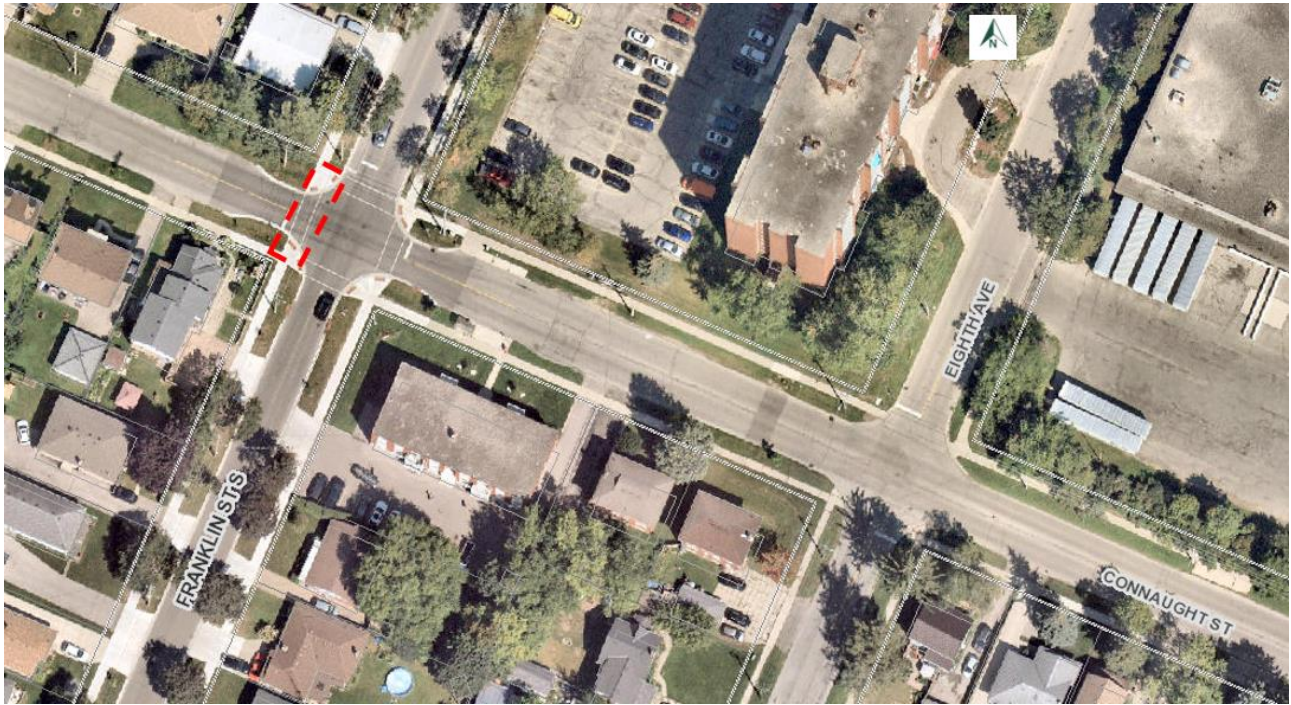
Since the school crossing guard program is reserved for elementary aged students (kindergarten to grade 6) and due to the low number of elementary aged students accessing the intersection, staff are recommending the removal of the crossing guard for this location. Affected schools were notified and no concerns have been received. The crossing guard from this location can be redeployed to a justified crossing guard location.



### **Adult Crossing Guard Franklin Street at Connaught Street**

Staff are recommending the removal of the crossing guard location for Franklin Street at Connaught Street, an all-way stop location. In 2022, through the complete streets reconstruction program, Transportation Services added curb extensions to the intersection location, effectively narrowing the crossing distance for pedestrians accessing the location during all times of day. Once this work was completed, pedestrians began crossing themselves in all directions, choosing not to wait for the crossing guard who was crossing at another leg, as they observed the short crossing distance to be safe enough to cross without the assistance of a guard.

Additionally, there are Grand River Transit (GRT) bus stops in the immediate vicinity of the crossing location; therefore, a number of pedestrians at the crossing location are adults crossing to access the bus stop locations. Given the improved safety following installation of curb extensions, and due to the low number of school related pedestrians accessing the intersection, staff are recommending the removal of the crossing guard for this location. Affected schools were notified and no concerns have been received. The crossing guard from this location can be redeployed to a justified crossing guard location.

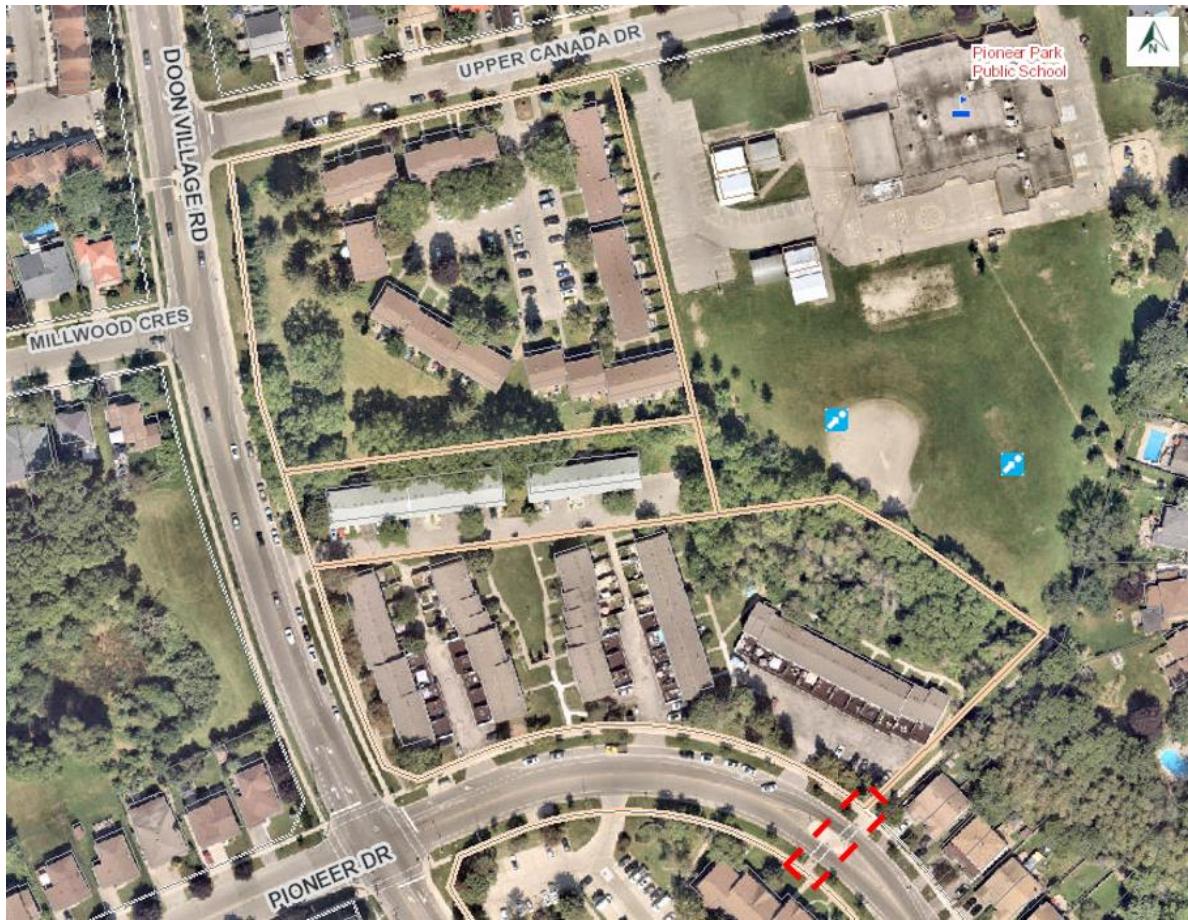


### **Adult Crossing Guard Pioneer Drive at Stairway Location**

Staff are recommending the removal of the crossing guard location for Pioneer Drive at Pioneer Park Public School stairway location. A pedestrian refuge island was installed at this location prior to 2017, thereby creating a two-stage crossing process. Pedestrians only have to determine when there is a safe gap within one direction of traffic flow and can wait on the island (or on the street sidewalk) until there is a safe gap in traffic to proceed.

Staff committed to monitoring the crossing location for the first two weeks of the 2023-2024 school year. This included a crossing guard working and advising the community that the crossing guard would be removed from this location. Further, data was collected during the morning and afternoon time periods to determine whether a crossing guard would still be justifiable for this location. During the studies conducted there were always less than 40 pedestrians (typical threshold to justify a crossing guard in the School Crossing Guard Guide from the Ontario Traffic Council) and, in most cases, the student was accompanied by an adult. For example, during the morning period time studies, 34 pedestrians were observed, however, all students were accompanied by an adult except for one student that was crossing on their own (17 students and 17 adults observed). During another study conducted during morning and rainy conditions, there were only 12 pedestrians observed altogether. During the afternoon time period, again, there were 25 pedestrians crossing with 16 students crossing and 9 adults. The number of adults crossing with students and due to the addition of the island within the roadway, a crossing guard is not suitable for this location at this time.

Pioneer Park Public school was notified prior to the 2023-2024 school year. After the crossing guard had been removed, the crossing guard Supervisor continued to monitor the location periodically. During this monitoring process a concern was received from a local resident regarding crossing guard removal, however, the Supervisor was able to address the concerns to the resident's satisfaction.



**STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:**

This report supports the delivery of core services.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

Capital Budget – The recommendations will cost approximately \$5,000 to make the necessary signing changes for school bus loading zones, taken from the existing sign maintenance budget.

Operating Budget – The recommendations in this report has no impact on the Operating Budget given the recommendation that three crossing guards be removed which will offset the three new recommended crossing guards working at the new crossing guard locations.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:**

INFORM – This report has been posted to the City’s website with the agenda in advance of the council / committee meeting.

**PREVIOUS REPORTS/AUTHORITIES:**

There are no previous reports/authorities related to this matter.

**APPROVED BY:** Justin Readman, General Manager  
Development Services Department

**ATTACHMENTS:**

n/a