

Questions for Mayor Lisa Helps from EMJS Parents

1. Do you have any updates/thoughts on traffic calming measures that might be undertaken around EMJS (e.g., along Fairfield between Richmond and Foul Bay, Chandler and Richmond intersection)? We met with one of the City's Transportation Technologists (Nick Armstrong) and did our own traffic counts, but it seems like this area might be a low priority unless there is an accident! (see attached correspondence and results)
 - a. We contacted Kimberley Stratford about the Neighbourhood Grant program - she was the one who directed us to Nick.
 - b. We also met with the Ray Straatsma from the Placemaking Network - he suggested new signage in high traffic areas - perhaps made by students.

Eng: A Safe and Active Routes to School Plan was originally completed for Margaret Jenkins School in 2007 which identified a number of improvements and since that time, several projects have been implemented around the school including:

- intersection reconfiguration (large curb bulge on the north-east corner) at Chandler and Richmond to improve crossings
- sidewalk on the east side of Foul Bay Road between Shotbolt and Chandler
- sidewalk bulges at the intersection of Irving and Fairfield Road at the site of the pedestrian crosswalk
- centre median crosswalk on Fairfield on the east side of the intersection of Richmond
- 40 mph speed limit on Richmond at the end of 2014
- opening of the pedestrian pathway connection between Gonzales and Chandler with crosswalk and sidewalk bulges construction at Chandler

Staff are continuing to make improvements and are currently working on the design of a new sidewalk along Gonzales Avenue between Richmond Road and Maddison Street which is also identified in the 2007 report.

There is a city-wide interest in neighbourhood traffic calming and the City receives many request for measures each year. Indeed, this issue has formed part of the recent discussions of Council during consideration of the 2019 Financial and Strategic Plans. In order to make sure that the resources available to us are being prioritized at those locations where most benefits will be achieved, through 2019, the City will be undertaking a comprehensive review of our approach to traffic calming and will be establishing guidelines and criteria on where traffic calming can be considered. This work will be underpinned with extensive speed and traffic volume surveys at all the locations requested so that we have objective information upon which to prioritize projects. The specific request for traffic calming around EMJS will be looked at within this broader city-wide context and also mindful of the improvements introduced in recent years.

Staff will also take the opportunity to make other improvements whenever possible in coordination with other capital projects taking place in the area with, for example, the Richardson AAA bicycle facility planned for 2020

2. Related to the previous question, do you have thoughts on how the City can work with Saanich and the District of Oak Bay (and possibly the CRD who run the Active and Safe Routes to School program) to improve safe transportation routes (cycling and transit) between EMJS and Lansdowne Middle School (proposed new catchment middle school)?

Eng: The City would be happy to be involved in discussions with Saanich and Oak Bay to support safe cycling and transit routes between the two school sites and it is assumed that any concerns specifically at Lansdown Middle School will be discussed directly with the District of Saanich. A good way to help ensure coordination would be for Lansdown Middle School to apply to be considered in the 2019/2020 CRD sponsored Active School Travel Planning program. Applications to be considered in this year's program would need to be submitted by March 15, 2019.

In the meantime, staff will be assessing bus stop improvements around Margaret Jenkins. For improvements directly around Lansdowne, it is recommended that parents reach out to the District of Saanich staff.

SD61: As Background, the District is proposing that EMJ students in French Immersion proceed to Lansdowne rather than Central in Middle School. This is due to capacity issues at Central. The English track is unchanged (to Monterey). This decision is not yet finalized (the aim is for May 2019 to take effect in September 2020).

3. What do you think is the best way to pursue partnerships with BC Transit to improve routes and subsidize or provide free transit passes for students (for field trips as well as traveling to/from school, especially middle school and high school)?

SD61: The District is committed to reaching out to BC Transit to ensure that in the event that the French Immersion catchment middle shifts that we discuss appropriate transportation. We hope that it is part of a larger discussion of aligning routes with catchment pathways.

4. Do you have an update on the status of the continuation of the Chandler pathway across the school field?

SD61: We do not have this in our capital plans. The school is, however, open to this in the event that the City would like to expand the network.

5. When you met with us last year, we talked a bit about the impact of the proposed densification in Fairfield on our school - do you have any updates for us on that? How will enrollment at EMJS be affected with the proposed densification?

City: City staff have consulted with the Greater Victoria School District staff and do not foresee an impact of gradual housing growth on school capacity in Fairfield. Sir James Douglas elementary accommodates many out-of-catchment students as there are not sufficient school-aged children in catchment to fill the school, and a decline in school age population has been expected. The GVSD undertakes long-range planning for school capacity based on demographic and enrolment trends, and can use a number of tools from boundary adjustment to adding school capacity where needed over time.

SD61: The school currently is approximately 455 with many students not from the catchment. We are projecting the school to decline by about 40 in 5 years. Our kindergarten intake this year, however, indicates that the decline may be steeper than anticipated. The District feels that given the projections that increased density is supportable, and depending on trends, desirable, at EMJ.

6. Do you have thoughts on how recent property tax assessments will affect SD61's ability to attract and retain staff? In recent years, we have lost a number of EMJS teachers to other districts with more affordable housing. Similarly, availability of affordable housing may also limit the District's ability to attract new teachers (particularly French immersion teachers).

City: City Council through its Strategic and Financial Plans has prioritized work related to the provision of affordable housing.

SD61: Currently the District has been able to keep a full complement of teachers on staff but we have continued to have issues attracting enough FI teachers to ensure a robust TTOC (Teacher Teaching on Call List). We do have ongoing issues attracting EAs, however, which is more likely related to housing affordability.

7. To follow-up on another item we discussed at our last meeting, do you have any further thoughts on specific ways to engage our students in community development and municipal government in 2019?

City: There are a number of ways to engage students in community development and municipal government:

- participate in community planning processes
- request that a planner attend a class to participate in a joint activity or make a presentation on a particular topic. We have found this is particularly useful if the planner can present the class with a real situation such as a parks planning exercise, a transportation challenge or an aspect of a neighbourhood planning process and then the students work on the challenge for a period of time and then present their work to the planner at a later date.
- visit City Hall.

8. Do you think there are opportunities for the City to partner with school district to improve recycling and waste management in Victoria schools?

Eng: Indeed, there are opportunities for the City and school district to build a stronger relationship when it comes to waste management issues. The City has just embarked on the development of its Zero Waste Strategy. This strategy will inform how to move towards a future where nothing is wasted. We know that SD 61 is a significant stakeholder when it comes to waste and through the development of the City's Zero Waste Strategy we will work with SD61 to understand exactly how much waste is generated and diverted from schools across our community. Once we have this baseline understanding, then we will look to options that can move us towards zero waste. While we are still early in the planning stages, we'd envision a range of options for exploration with schools in our community, from the introduction of curriculum that can help students learn about the intricacies of our waste management system through to tried and tested policies and programs that can be adopted by organizations such as SD61 to ensure organic materials and recyclables don't end up in

the landfill. Over the next several months, City staff will be working with stakeholders such as SD61 to better understand the current landscape, and will move to broader public engagement on proposed options and actions in late 2019

SD61: The District is very open to this discussion. Further, we are currently creating an environmental plan for the District and if any parents would like to know more about this planning they can contact Associate Superintendent Greg Kitchen at gkitchen@sd61.bc.ca

9. Can you comment on the police liaison program and whether it might return to Victoria schools, in future?

Additional follow-up received from mayor's office after the meeting:

From: Danielle St. Jacques
Sent: March 1, 2019 11:41 AM
To: Anne Tomyn
Cc: Colleen Mycroft
Subject: Mayor Helps - follow up items...

Good day Anne,

Mayor Helps requested I email you with a number of follow-up items.

1 CRD 'Active School Travel Planning Program' (applications due by Mar 15th) <https://www.crd.bc.ca/project/regional-transportation/active-school-travel-planning>

2 City of Victoria 'Bicycle Master Plan – Implementation Strategy Update' <https://pub-victoria.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=32223>

3 Petition on [Change.org](https://www.change.org) 'Free Bus Passes for Kids 18- in the BC CRD' <https://www.change.org/p/bc-capital-regional-district-free-bus-passes-for-kids-18-in-the-bc-crd-12193090-c3d8-4417-b90c-48ee9924902e>

Please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions. Happy Friday to you!

Kindly,
Danielle

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