

Active & Sustainable School Travel



School Travel Plan

Prepared: May 2018

Acknowledgements

This School Travel Plan was prepared as part of the Active & Sustainable School Transportation Certification process, and in partnership with Ancaster Meadow Elementary School, Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board, and the City of Hamilton.

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School Travel Plan—Ancaster Meadow Elementary School

1. Introduction

Active & Sustainable School Transportation (ASST) emphasizes the importance of walking, cycling, and public transit. More students using ASST means less cars on the road, less pollution, improved safety, and increased physical activity. School Travel Planning (STP) is a community-based approach that aims to increase the number of children choosing ASST to get to and from school.

Key community stakeholders work together to identify, and to solve their school transportation problems. These stakeholders include school boards, municipalities, police, public health professionals, parents, educators and students.

1.1. School Travel Planning Six-Step Process

Figure 1: School Travel Planning 6-Step Process



1.2. Rationale for participating in the Active and Sustainable School Transportation Certification process

- Only 8% of Canadian children & youth meet the minimum physical activity requirements of 60 minutes per day of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity¹
- Thirty-two percent of Canadian children & youth are overweight (20%) or obese (12%)²
- Health benefits of physical activity and reduced sedentary behaviour (decreased motorized transport) associated with walking or cycling to school include the following:^{3,4,5}
 - ▶ Promotes healthy growth and development
 - ▶ Improves fitness
 - ▶ Improves academic performance
 - ▶ Provides social opportunities with friends and family
 - ▶ Improves self-confidence
 - ▶ Reduces stress and anxiety
 - ▶ Helps maintain a healthy body weight
 - ▶ Reduces greenhouse gas and air pollution
- Currently, only 28% of Canadian children & youth walk or cycle to and from school⁶
- Walking and cycling to school daily can add 15-20 minutes (about 1.6 kilometres) of physical activity³, which contributes to the 60 minutes of daily physical activity needed for overall health⁴

2. Step 1: School Travel Planning Set-up

Ancaster Meadow Elementary School (E.S.) initiated ASST-STP Certification on April 28, 2014 and re-engaged in the process in January 2018. The school established an STP committee comprised of the principal, teacher(s), parents/guardians, and other champions (e.g., STP Coordinator) to manage the STP process at the school level. The committee plans to meet three times per year to manage their STP.

3. Step 2: School Travel Data Collection

The collection of baseline travel data to and from Ancaster Meadow Elementary School occurred through the use of the following methods:

- School and school neighbourhood transportation profile
- An in class student hands-up survey

- A school site and school neighbourhood walkabout

3.1. School Neighbourhood and School Overview

Ancaster Meadow Elementary School (E.S.) is located within Hamilton's Oakes neighbourhood. The boundaries for the Oakes neighbourhood include Highway 403/Southcote Road (west), Meadowlands Boulevard (east), Stonehenge Drive (south), and Lincoln M. Alexander Parkway/Highway 403 (North). See **Appendix A** for the school boundary. Listed below are findings from the Ward 12 community profile developed by the City of Hamilton:⁷

- The proportion of children and youth age 0 to 19 years is slightly higher in Ward 12 than in Hamilton.
- Lone parent families with children under 18 is lower in Ward 12 (10.3%) than for the City of Hamilton (18.9%)
- The proportion of individuals that identify as a visible minority is similar for Ward 12 (15.4%) and the City of Hamilton (15.7%)
- Home ownership is much higher in Ward 12 (93.8%) than in the City of Hamilton (68.4%)
- The poverty rate in Ward 12 is much lower than for the City of Hamilton (5.8% versus 15.7%)

The Oakes neighbourhood has many assets including Kitty Murray Park (**Figure 1**), Meadowlands Community Park (**Figure 2**), and Moorland Park (**Figure 3**). Other significant features include Holy Name of Mary C.E.S.

Figure 2: Kitty Murray Park

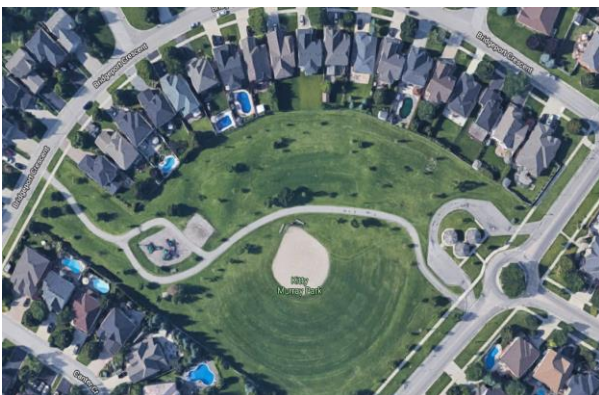
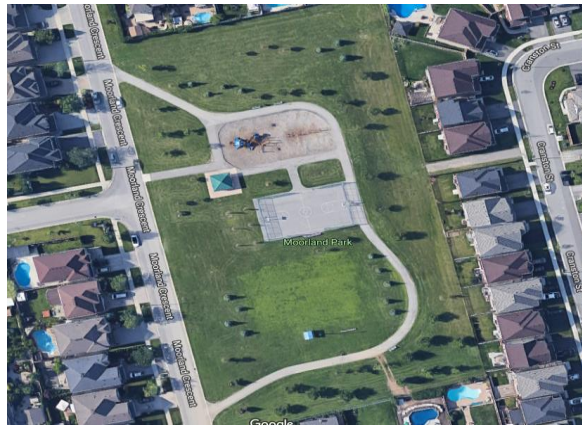


Figure 3: Meadowlands Community Park



Figure 4: Moorland Park



Most of this neighbourhood was built after 1960.⁸ Loops and lollipops are the characteristic street design for this era.⁹ The longer winding street design and cul-de-sacs present a maze-like pattern with limited route choice.^{9,10} The intention of this design was to limit through traffic, thereby increasing privacy and safety within the neighbourhood.^{9,10}

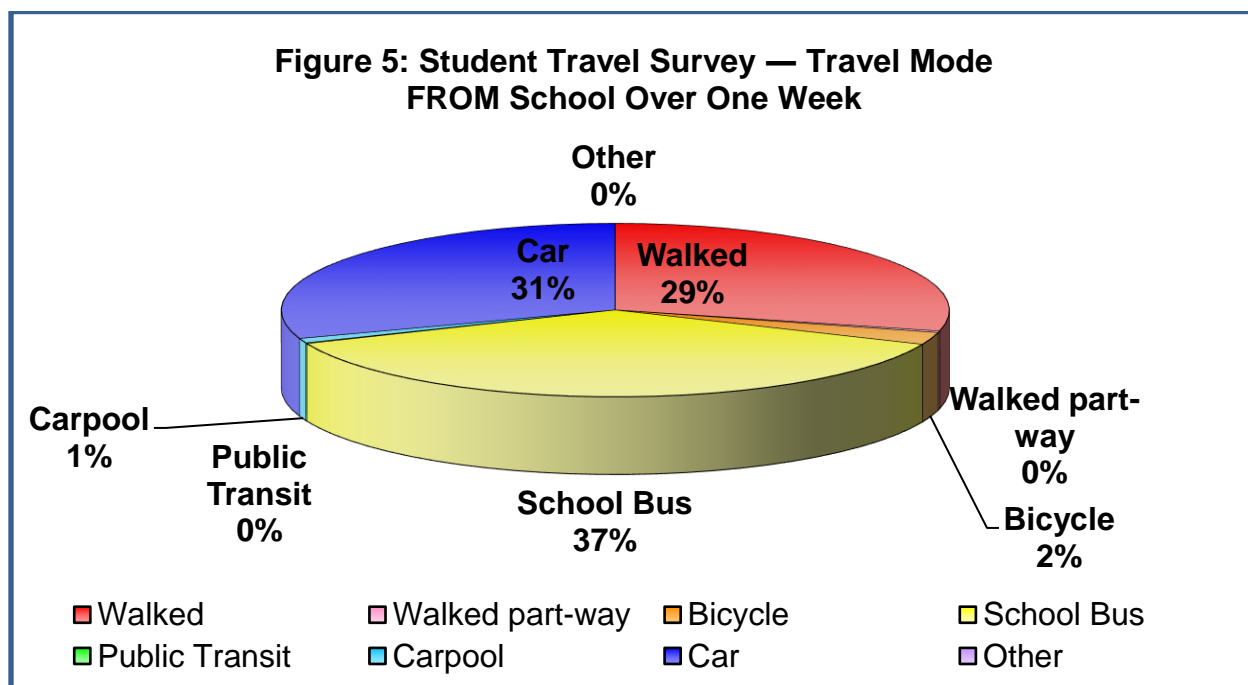
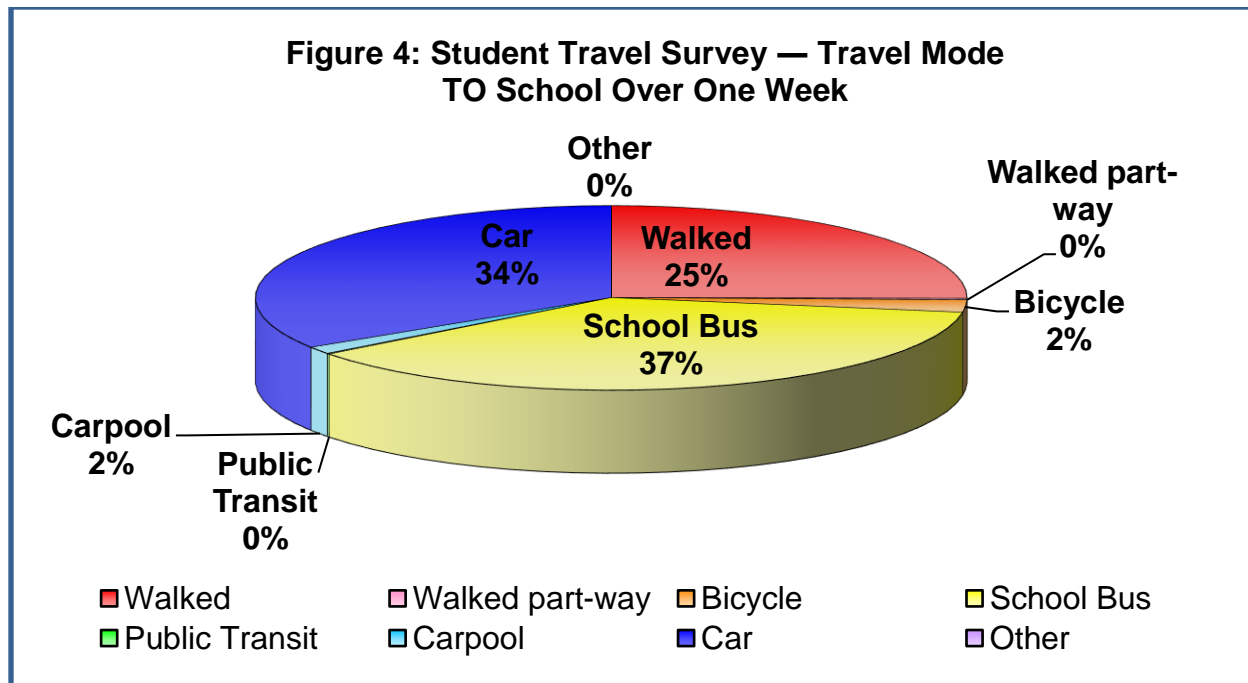
The streets within the Oakes neighbourhood and the school boundary are largely local roads except for Golf Links Road (major arterial), Kitty Murray Lane, Meadowlands Blvd and Stonehenge Drive (collector road).¹¹ See **Table 1** for road classification description. Conversely, the roads surrounding the school catchment include a Provincial Highway (403), and an expressway (Lincoln M. Alexander).¹¹ Additionally, there are informal pathways that provide shorter walking distances to the school that are devoid of vehicular traffic on the land where Ancaster Meadow E.S. is located.

Table 1: City of Hamilton Road Classification Basic Description¹²

Road Type	Traffic Volume	Vehicles/Day	Speed Limit
Major Arterial Road	High	> 10,000	60-80 km/hr
Minor Arterial Road	Moderate	5,000-20,000	50-60 km/hr
Collector Road	Moderate	< 8,000	50-60 km/hr
Local Road	Low	< 1,000	40-50 km/hr

3.2. Student Travel Survey

All classes participated in a student hands-up survey for one full week to collect information about how students travel to and from school. The survey was administered during the week of April 30, 2018. The results of the survey are shown in **Figure 4** and **Figure 5** below.



The proportion of students and their families that should be walking or cycling to and from school is much lower (29%) from the hands-up student travel survey data compared with the data from the HWSTS (51%). The proportion of students that should be riding the school bus is lower (37%) in comparison to the data from the HWSTS (49%). Consequently, on average about 32% of students that should be using active or sustainable travel modes are commuting by car, which translates into about **200 additional cars** at the school site during arrival and dismissal. These students and their parents will be a key target group as the school moves forward with their school travel plan.

3.3. School Site and School Neighbourhood Walkabout

On May 9, 2018, the Ancaster Meadow STP Committee and community stakeholders met at 2:50pm to observe the school's travel challenges. First, the group watched arrival time at the school site noting pedestrian, cyclist, and driver behaviour and interaction. Then the group walked a short distance into the school neighbourhood observing common walking routes to and from school.

Key highlights from the walkabout include

- There are 5 school buses
- There are two bike racks: one near the front entrance and one in the back.
- A paved path was built in the last few years connecting to the park behind the school
- There is on-street parking available
- School Bus loading zone is in the fire access route
- The school had a much larger population with almost 1,000 students. With a new school in the area it went down to 640 students and must stabilize around that number
- Some parents that live 500m from the school ask for courtesy rides on the bus
- The pathways are underutilized and not maintained during winter
- Roundabouts still pose some challenges to navigate through
- Parents are concerned about their kids walking and cycling through the roundabouts
- Part of the school staff needs to park on the streets
- Part of the on-street parking near the school was recently changed to a 2-hour limit instead of all day.
- On page 113 of the [executive summary](#) of [Ancaster Transportation Master Plan page](#), there is a proposed bike lane for Kitty Murray Lane (full length).

4. Step 3: Action Planning & Goal Setting

4.1. Action Plan

Through the baseline data collection, and the school walkabout, the action plan for Ancaster Meadow Elementary School is outlined in **Table 2** below.

Table 2: Ancaster Meadow Elementary School Action Plan 2014

Location	Issue	Action Plan Item	Assigned to
Kitty Murray Lane	Potential conflict between pedestrians and cars	Investigate feasibility of all-way stop on the intersection of Kitty Murray and Bridgeport	PW-TE
Roundabouts	Concerns about driver behaviour and pedestrian safety	Investigate possible measures: vertical sign on the street, ladder crossing, speed hump	PW-TE
Drop off zone in front of the school	Reduce idling near the kindergarten area	Provide school with anti-idling signs and help identify ideal location	PHS-HH
Drop off zone in front of the school	Reduce idling near the kindergarten area	Install anti-idling signs	School
School	Need for education and awareness about air pollution	Provide school with information about the Fresh Air for Kids program through Green Venture	PHS-HH
School/School Neighbourhood	Need for pedestrian, cyclist, and driver safety education	Provide safety tip sheets, newsletters, announcements and links to other verified resources	PHS-IP
School Site	Number of private vehicles picking up or dropping off students	Use educational resources from City of Hamilton to raise awareness about the importance to encourage more walking and cycling, and less dependency on vehicle travel	School
N/A	Engage the community in a healthy behaviour	Promote Walk a block at the school	School & STP
N/A	Building awareness about the importance of walking and cycling	Provide information about Bike to School Month http://www.bikemonth.ca/biketoschool	STP

Location	Issue	Action Plan Item	Assigned to
	to school		
N/A	Raise awareness about school travel	Include short notes on the school meeting agenda	School
School parking lot	Stopping and parking in the fire access route	Contact School Parking and By-Law Service to assess the situation	School & School Parking and By-Law Service

4.2. Goals

According to the vision of the future for the GTHA, by 2031, 60% of students will walk or cycle to school¹³. Ancaster Meadow E.S. currently has 29% of students walking or cycling to school which means that to achieve the goal it needs a 2.5% increase per year on average.

To increase the chances of a successful school travel plan, a secondary goal consists of completing at least 75% of the action items listed by the end of the implementation stage (step 4).

5. Step 4: Implementation – Action Plan Progress

<To be completed during the 2018-2019 school year>

6. Step 5: Monitoring and Evaluation – Next Steps

With the completion of the school travel data collection and action plan development, the school is well positioned to commence implementation over the 2018-2019 school year and beyond. The plan should be re-evaluated annually in May and adjustments will be made as necessary in preparation for the next school year.

Regular STP meetings will help with the sustainability of ASST momentum and with the setting of targets for each successive school year. The STP committee can continue to track progress through monitoring the completion of action plan items. As the school completes their recorded action items, new action items may be added to the plan to further ASST. Periodic use of the student hands-up survey will help track changes in

travel behaviour and record progress toward the school's target. The shift from motorized vehicles helps to address important issues of sustainability, safety, and health associated with the school run.

7. Consensus

This school travel plan has been reviewed and approved by

Simon Goodacre

(print), Principal, Ancaster Meadow Elementary School

Signature

Date signed

Callaway Johnson

(print), Hamilton ASST Hub representative and STP Coordinator

Signature

Date signed

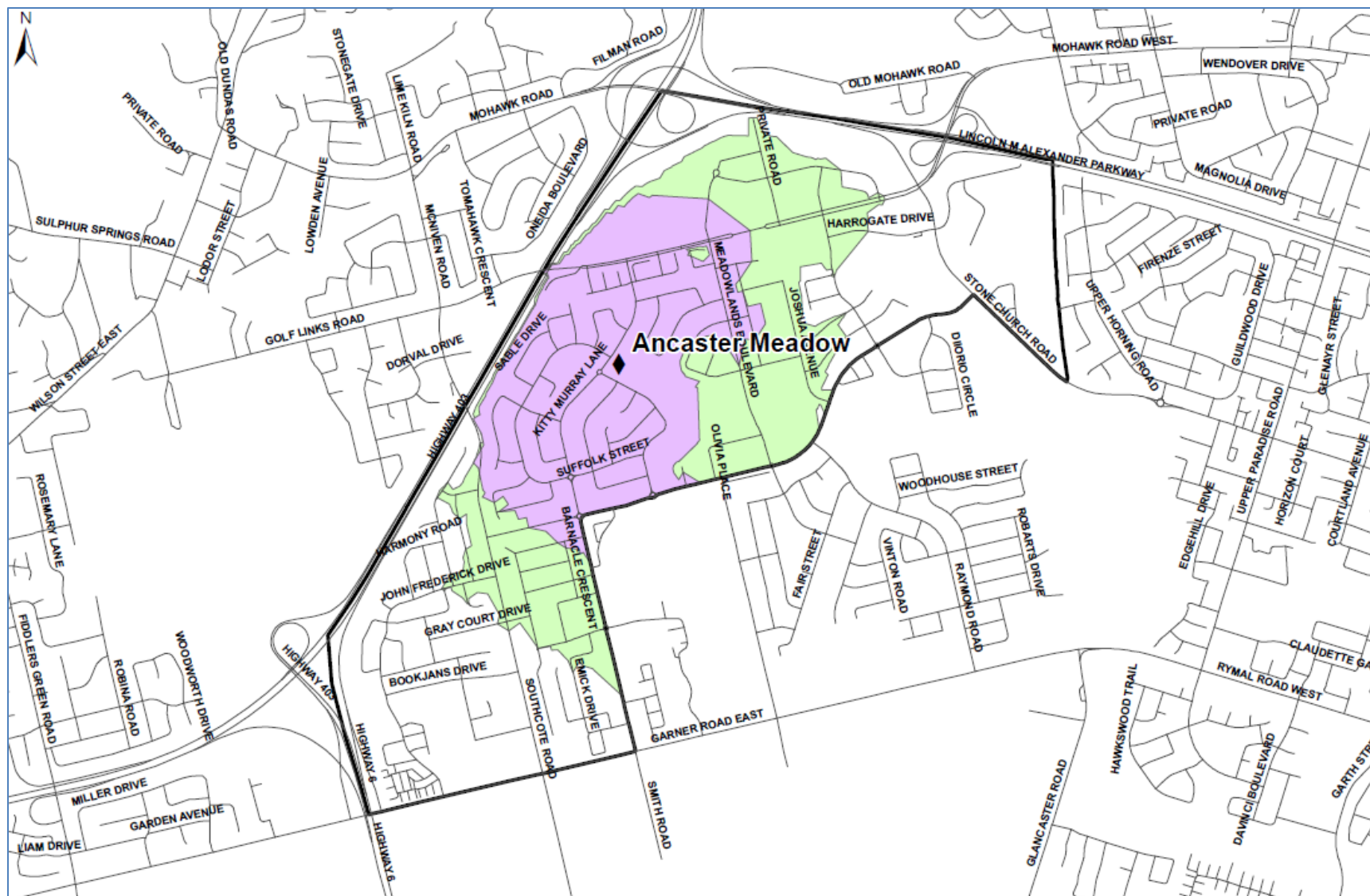
Annual Update

Year	<name>, Principal	<name>, Hamilton ASST Hub representative
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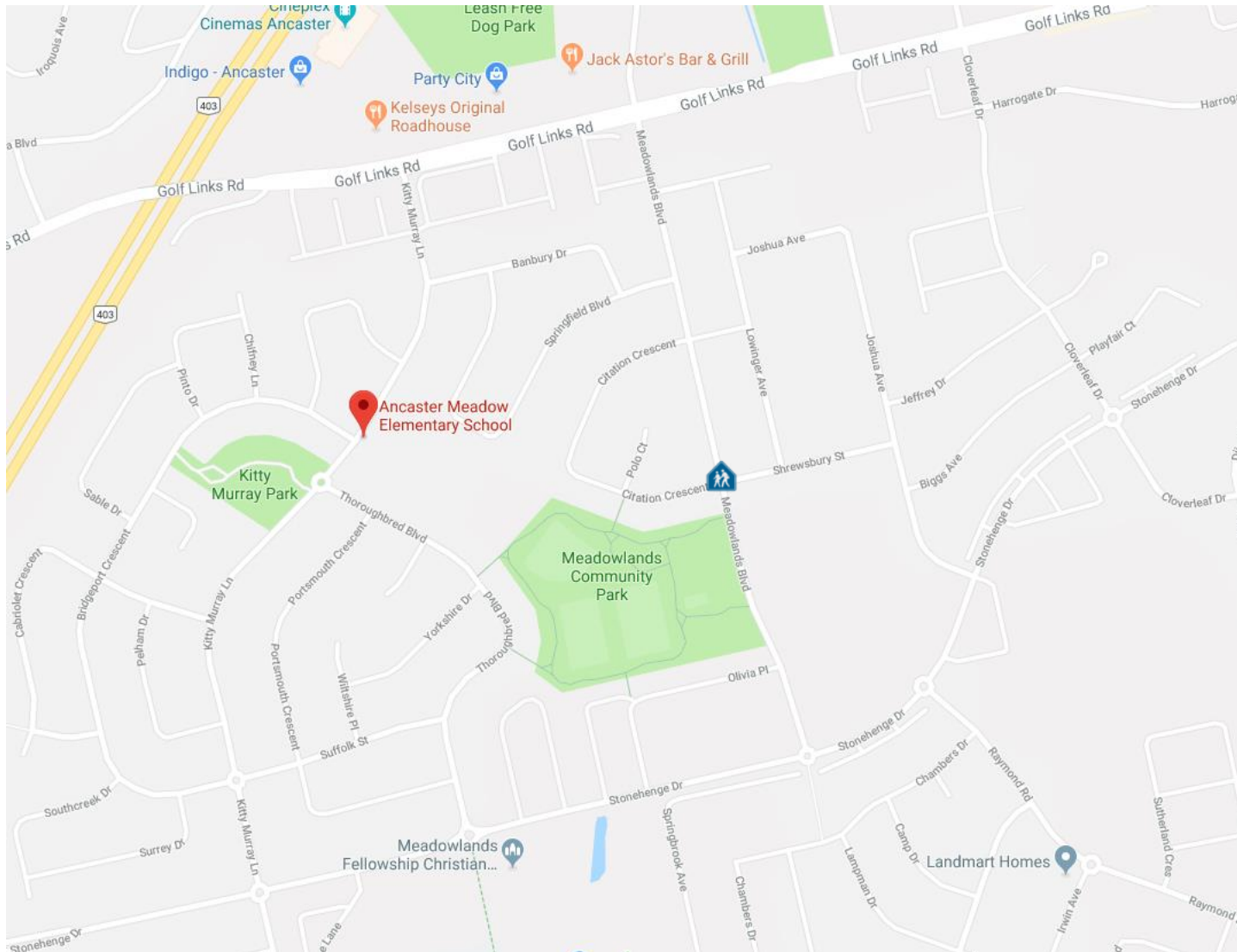
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Appendix A: Ancaster Meadow Elementary School Catchment Area Map and Walking Boundaries 2017-2018¹⁴



Appendix B: Ancaster Meadow Elementary School Crossing Guards



School Travel Plan—Ancaster Meadow Elementary School