

Downtown Transportation Review

Engagement Summary

Spring 2026



Project overview

Downtown Kelowna is growing rapidly. More people are living, working and spending time in the area than ever before. Our streets need to work well for everyone, including people walking, biking, taking transit, driving, making deliveries, using mobility aids, and those stopping for short visits.

The Downtown Transportation Review explores how our streets can continue to keep up with this growth. We're exploring how downtown streets can function better with the space we already have. This review looks at how these streets can work together more effectively today as a connected network, and how future upgrades can continue to contribute to safer travel, improved access and more vibrant spaces as downtown evolves.

This work builds on the City's [Transportation Master Plan](#), taking a closer look at how transportation functions within the downtown core.

The Downtown Transportation Review is focused on five key streets, including Ellis Street, Water Street, Lawrence Avenue, Leon Avenue and Pandosy Street

These five streets are some of Downtown Kelowna's most important corridors. They carry people walking, biking, taking transit, making deliveries, accessing businesses, and visiting key destinations.

Because these streets are where redevelopment or upgrades are most likely to occur over time, planning helps the City coordinate future improvements, reduce disruptions, and make the most of limited downtown space.

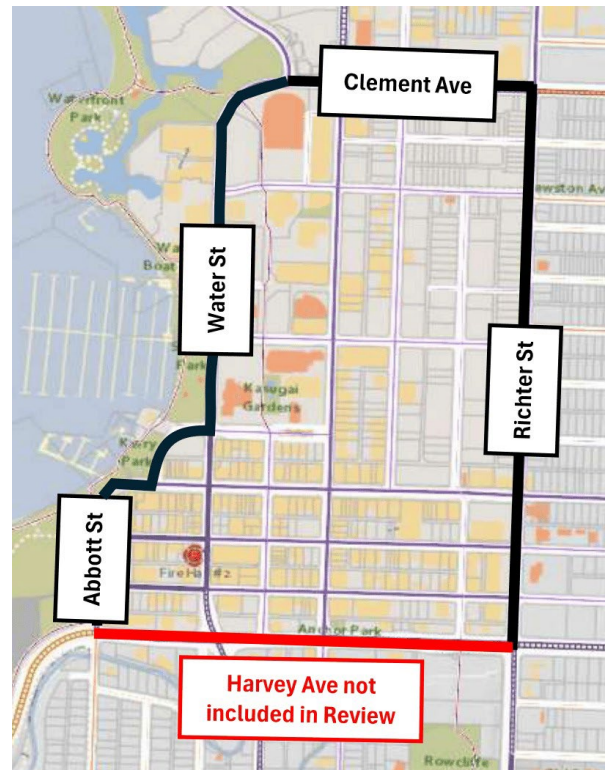
Each street plays a different role in how people move around downtown. For example, some streets carry more vehicle traffic, some have key transit routes, and others cluster businesses that rely on walking, loading, or outdoor patios. Rather than treating every street the same, this review looks at how they work together as a connected network.

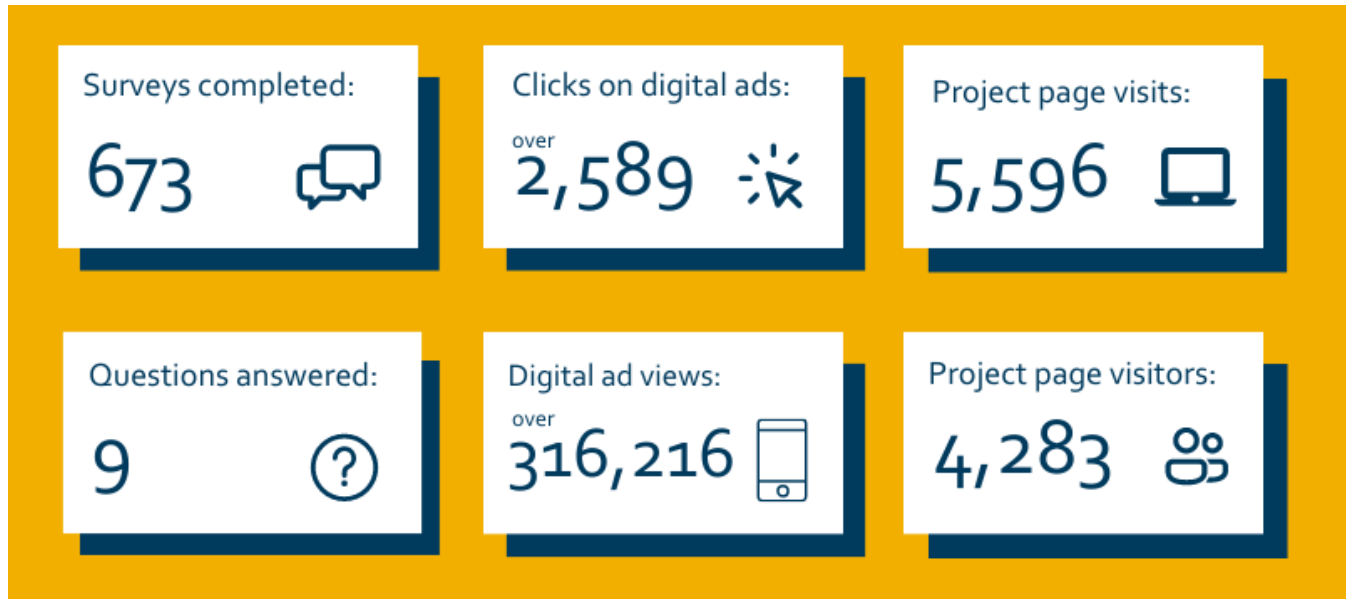
Engagement overview

We wanted to hear from residents to understand their priorities for transportation options and related activities for five key downtown streets including Lawrence Avenue, Leon Avenue, Pandosy Street, Ellis Street and Water Street.

A **survey** was available for residents from February 20 to March 15, 2026, that asked respondents to highlight their values and priorities for transportation options and related activities and features in downtown Kelowna.

Respondents could also **ask questions** about the project throughout the engagement. This allowed residents to learn more as well as ask directly ask staff about specific aspects of downtown transportation in present and future.





Limitations

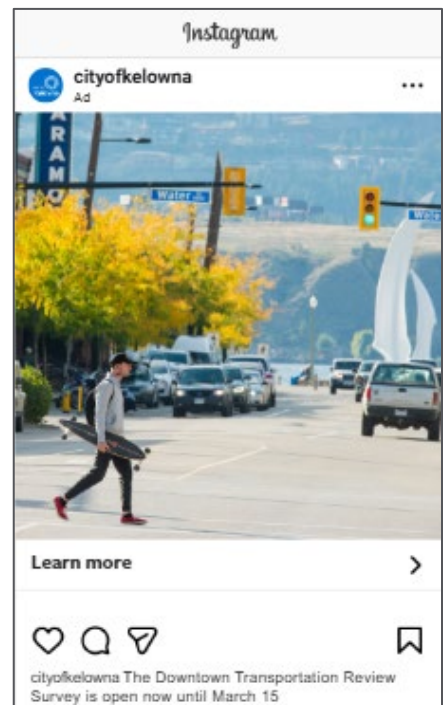
While a variety of advertising tactics were used to reach a diverse range of residents (see below), results do not represent a statistically significant, random sample of all Kelowna residents. Due to the opt-in and open-to-all nature of participation in surveys like this, results do not necessarily reflect the views of all Kelowna citizens.

Promotion

Both print and digital methods of advertising were used to notify residents about the opportunity to provide feedback:

- **Meta (Facebook & Instagram) ads:** targeted to the entirety of Kelowna for the duration the survey was active.
- **Google ads:** targeted to the entirety of Kelowna for the duration the survey was active.
- **Daily Courier ads:** print ads in the City in Action section on February 21 and March 7, 2026.
- **Radio ads:** campaign on 96.3 FM classic rock station campaign from February 23 to March 15, 2026.

Other ways we advertised the survey opportunity included [City Views](#) (approximately 6,500 subscribers), the [City's website homepage](#), and organic social media posts on the @cityofkelowna channels ([Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#)). Two public service announcements were also sent to local media and sent to over 5,500 e-newsletter subscribers on both [February 20, 2026](#) and [March 9, 2026](#).



Meta (social media) advertising reached over 47,000 accounts. Demographics for Meta included a more even split between men (42 per cent) and women (56 per cent) but various age ranges. While most of the reached accounts were in the 55-65+ age range, there were also some younger demographics reached as well in the 25-44 age ranges.



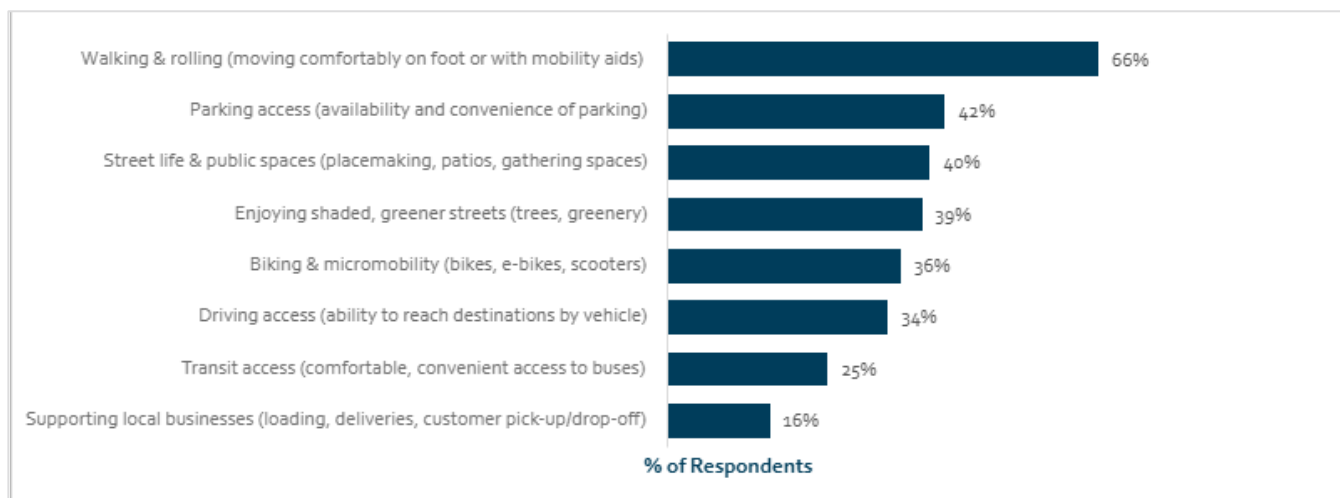
On Google, the ad was clicked over 2,500 times and was shown more than 175,000 times. Google also had a close gender split in terms of audience reached, with impressions for women at 82,220 and impressions for men at 72,312. Gender was unknown (due to user privacy settings) for 24,438 impressions. While a wide variety of ages were reached on Google, the majority came from those ages 65 and up.

While this project is geographically located in the downtown area, the impact to the entirety of the city is minimal so expectations of participation city wide were understood. While we always attempt to provide opportunities for involvement to all residents, tactics used and interest in this project only appeals to certain demographics.

What we learned

Online survey

Downtown streets support many different activities, but space is limited. To get an idea of how important each transportation option is for five key streets in Kelowna’s downtown (Ellis, Leon, Pandosy, Water and Lawrence), respondents were asked to choose their top three priorities for getting around.



431 respondents chose walking and rolling as their top priority (66 per cent), followed by parking access (278 responses, 42 per cent), and street life and public spaces (263 responses, 40 per cent). The least chosen priority was supporting local businesses via loading deliveries, etcetera, with 103 responses (16 per cent).

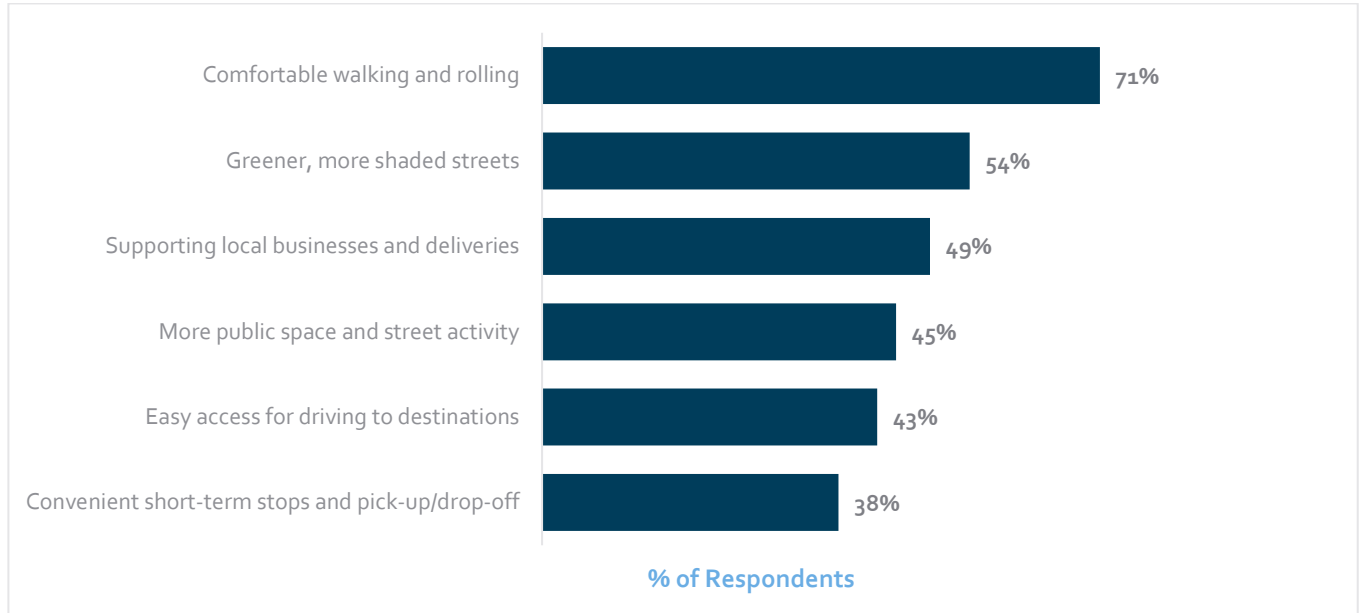
Knowing what activities residents want to support on each key street identified in the project helps staff understand what should be prioritized for any future improvements.

Respondents chose their top three priorities for future improvements on Ellis Street, Water Street, Leon Avenue, Lawrence Avenue and Pandosy Street. Results are captured below.



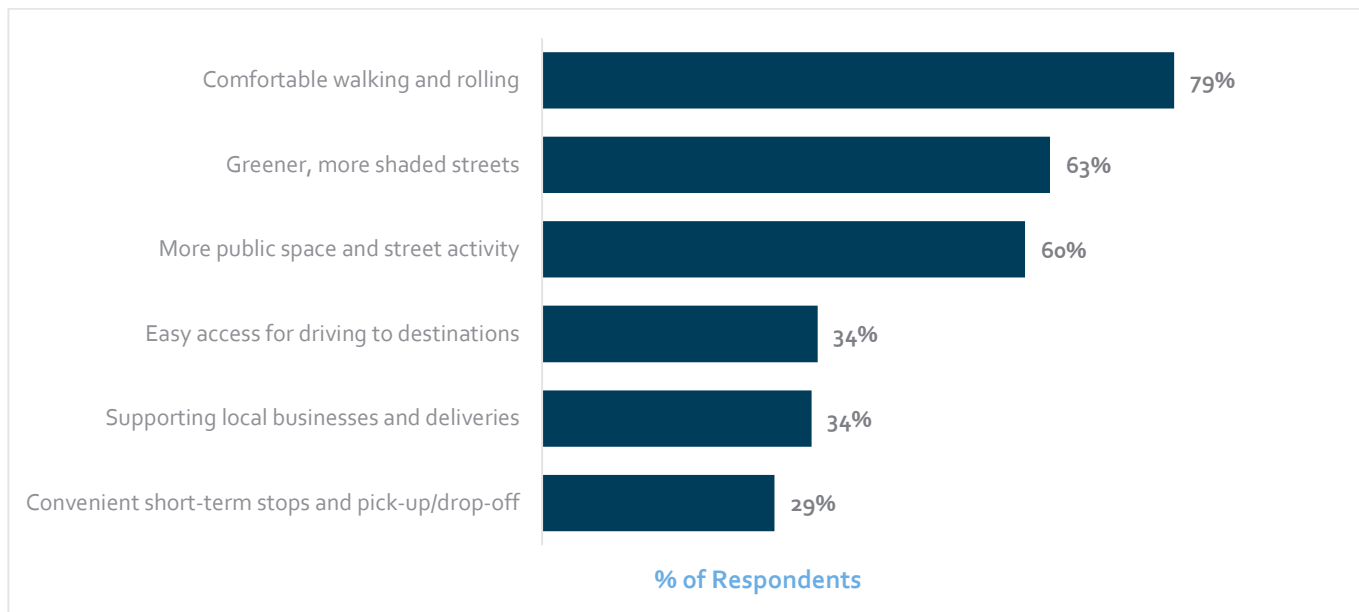
Ellis Street

476 respondents identified comfortable walking and rolling as their top priority for Ellis Street (71 per cent). Followed by greener, more shaded streets (365 responses, 54 per cent) and supporting local businesses and deliveries (331 responses, 49 per cent).



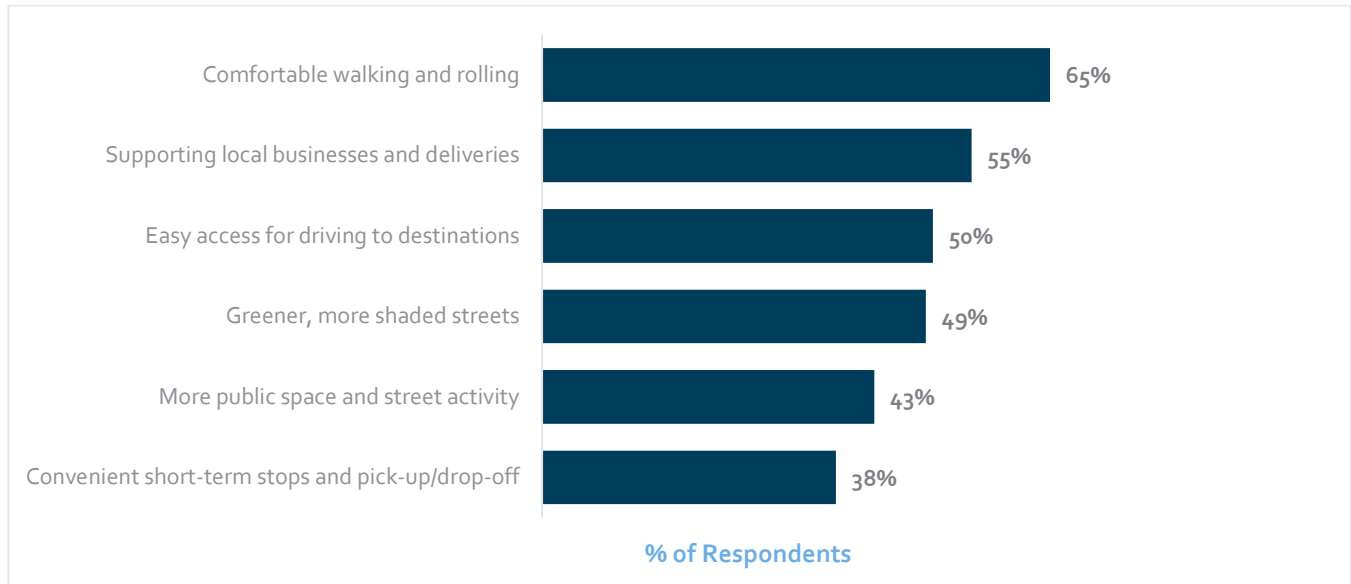
Water Street

530 respondents identified comfortable walking and rolling as their top priority for Water Street (79 per cent). Followed by greener, more shaded streets (426 responses, 63 per cent) and supporting local businesses and deliveries (405 responses, 60 per cent).



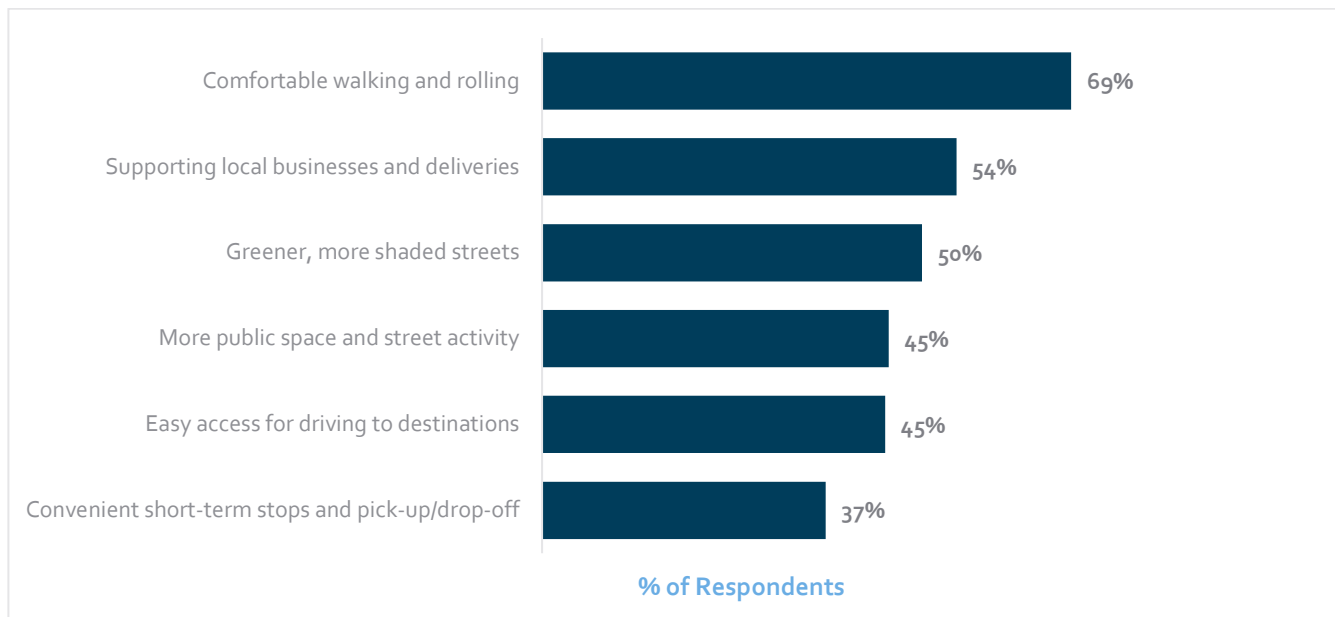
Leon Avenue

For Leon Avenue, comfortable walking and rolling remained the top priority (434 responses, 65 per cent), though responses were more evenly spread across other activities than on other streets. The next priorities were supporting local businesses and deliveries (367 responses, 55 per cent) and easy access for driving to destinations (334 responses, 50 per cent).



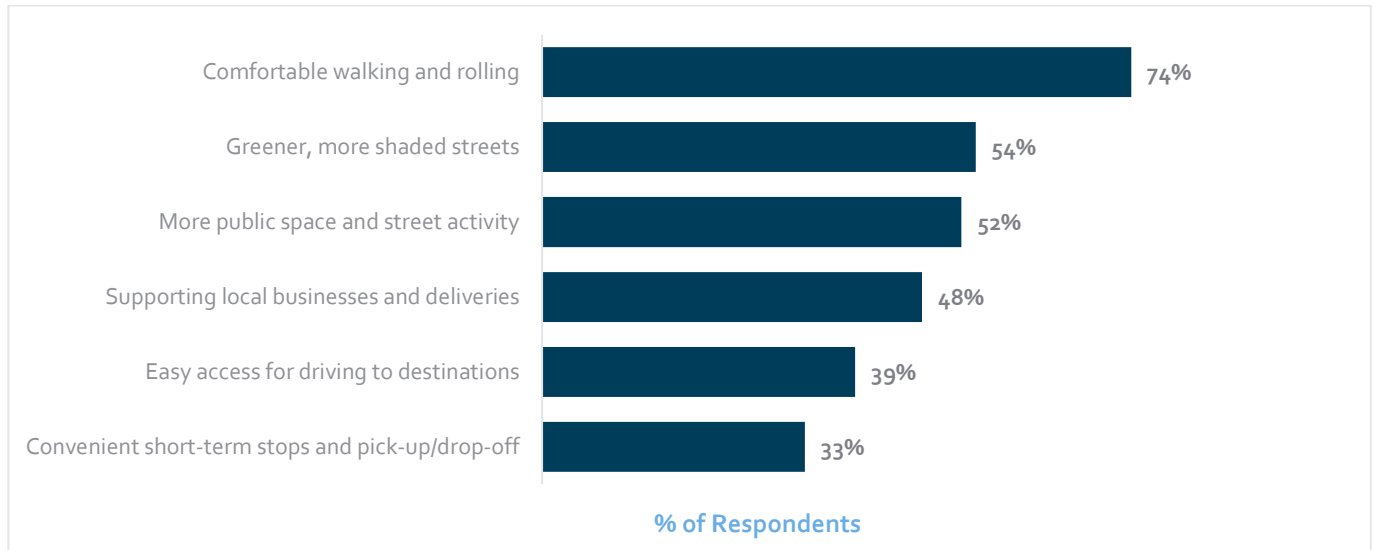
Lawrence Avenue

Again, on Lawrence Avenue, 461 respondents (69 per cent) chose comfortable walking and rolling as their highest priority. This was followed by supporting local businesses and deliveries (361 responses, 54 per cent) and then greener, more shaded streets (331 responses, 50 per cent).



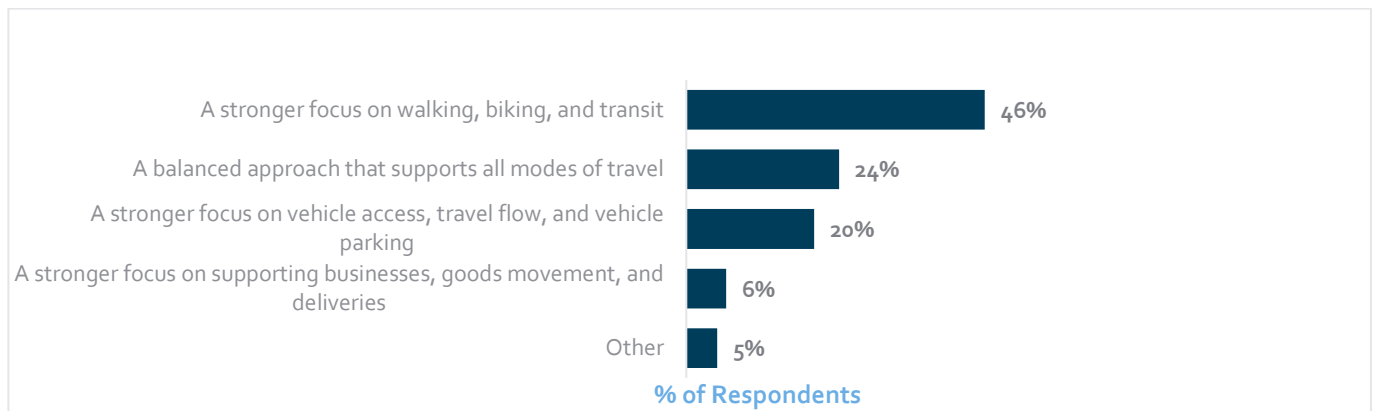
Pandosy Street

On Pandosy Street, comfortable walking and rolling was again the top priority, chosen by 493 respondents (74 per cent). The next priorities were greener, more shaded streets (363 responses, 54 per cent) and more public space and street activity (351 responses, 52 per cent).



Overall direction

To help staff understand how residents feel about how downtown streets should evolve over time to assist with future planning decisions, respondents were asked to choose one direction that should guide us into the future.



Most respondents want a stronger focus on walking, biking and transit (229 responses, 46 per cent), followed by a balanced approach that supports all modes of travel (153 responses, 23.5 per cent) and then a stronger focus on vehicle access, travel flow, and vehicle parking (128 responses, 20 per cent).

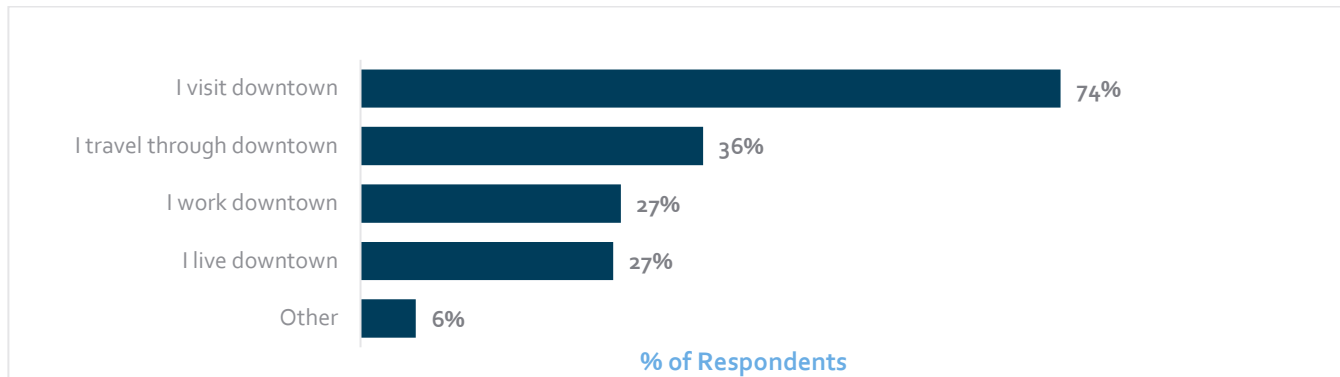
31 respondents (five per cent) indicated that they had a different (“other”) priority for how downtown streets should evolve in the future. The key themes included:

- Homelessness, crime and perceptions of safety
- Vibrant and green public spaces
- Vehicle access, traffic and parking



- Accessibility
- Transit and micromobility

Understanding respondents' relationship to Kelowna's downtown helps staff understand who they are hearing from, and how they relate to the survey questions.



Most respondents are visitors to downtown (468 responses, 74 per cent), followed by those who travel through downtown (229 responses, 36 per cent), with a close split between those that work downtown (174 responses, 27 per cent) and live downtown (169 responses, 27 per cent). It's important to note that respondents were asked to select all options that apply, so many respondents may have overlap between options.

There were also 37 responses that indicated that their relationship to downtown was different than the choices presented. The key themes of the "other" responses included:

1. Attending local events
2. Shopping or eating at restaurants
3. Attending health appointments
4. Own property or a business downtown

Questions

In addition to the survey, participants could ask questions about the project to City staff. A total of nine questions were answered, which included the following themes:

- Pedestrian safety (speed limits, crosswalks, etc.)
- Desire for light rail
- Transit concerns (lack of cleanliness and ease of use)
- Concern for social issues downtown
- Desire for one-way streets to be bidirectional

“Plans to make Lawrence and Leon bidirectional again?”

Participant feedback

The phase of public engagement met the objective to **consult** with interested members of the public. This means that we discussed the project with key experts, consultants, effected community members or groups, and key stakeholders to ensure that multiple views and opinions were considered during the project. More information about the City's public engagement process, including a breakdown of the various means of public engagement can be found online at getinvolved.kelowna.ca/engagement-process.





While most participants said the information was easy to understand (79 per cent, 531 responses), 19 per cent (130 responses) said it was somewhat easy to understand, and 1.64 per cent (11 responses) said no.

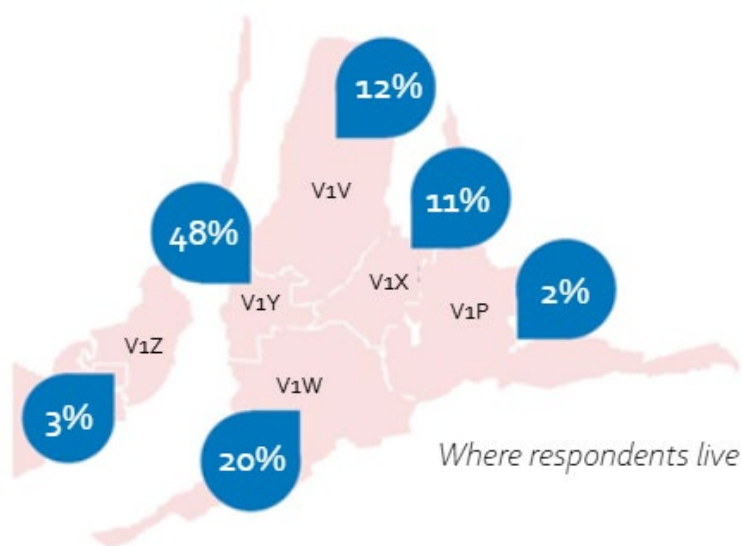
Most participants said they had enough information to participate in a meaningful way (63 per cent, 426 responses), while 31 per cent said somewhat (214 responses), and 4.76 per cent (32 responses) said no.

Just under half of participants said they understood how their input would be used (48 per cent, 325 responses) but 37 per cent (253 responses) said somewhat and 13.99 per cent (94 responses) said no.

Who we heard from

Most participants live in the V1Y postal code area which aligns with the location of the project as well as population density in Kelowna. The second and third most selected postal codes were V1W, which captures the South Kelowna area (including Upper and Lower Mission) and V1V, which captures the Glenmore area (including Magic Estates and McKinley Beach).

Most respondents live in the Kelowna area, but approximately three per cent (approximately 15 responses) indicated that they live outside of the Kelowna boundary, including places like Lake Country, Vernon, Langley, Vancouver, Price Rupert, Salmon Arm and Hope.



? Next steps

Feedback from this project will help finalize the Downtown Plan, including five street cross-sections, which will be presented to City Council and used to guide future development and transportation decisions.





St. Paul St 1400

St. Paul St 1400

Bertram St 1400

Bertram St 1400

Richter St 1400



City of Kelowna

City Hall
1435 Water Street
Kelowna, BC
V1Y 1J4

TEL 250-469-8500
kelowna.ca