## **REPORTS**

## Item No. 6 Extending the Sunday / Holiday Bicycle Route

## WINNIPEG PUBLIC SERVICE RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. That this update be received as information and that the Public Service be granted an extension to the February 2021 to complete the recommendations on future open streets programs.
- 2. That the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

#### **DECISION MAKING HISTORY:**

## **COUNCIL DECISION:**

On September 30, 2020, Council adopted the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Infrastructure Renewal and Public Works, which included the following:

3. That the Winnipeg Public Service be directed to include options for additions to the Sunday/Holiday Bicycle Route in wards that have not previously been included in the listing, in their report back to the Standing Committee.

On June 26, 2020, Council concurred in the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Infrastructure Renewal and Public Works as amended, and adopted the following:

- 1. That the Winnipeg Public Service be directed to amend By-law No. 1573/77 and take all other necessary steps to extend the Sunday / Holiday Bicycle Route from the current expiry date of July 6, 2020 to September 7, 2020 for the following streets:
  - A. Lyndale Drive Cromwell Street to Gauvin Street
  - B. Scotia Street Anderson Avenue (at St. Cross Street) to Armstrong Avenue
  - C. Wellington Crescent Academy Road (at Wellington Crescent) to Guelph Street
  - D. Wolseley Avenue Raglan Road to Maryland Street
  - E. Churchill Drive Hay Street to Jubilee Avenue
  - F. Egerton Road Bank Avenue to Morier Avenue
  - G. Kildonan Drive Helmsdale Avenue to Rossmere Crescent & Larchdale Crescent to Irving Place
  - H. Kilkenny Drive Burgess Avenue to Patricia Avenue and Kings Drive
  - I. Rover Avenue Hallet Street to Stephens Street
- 2. That the Winnipeg Public Service be requested to work with the Councillor of the Charleswood -Tuxedo Westwood Ward to find an alternate temporary active transportation route within the area.

## DECISION MAKING HISTORY (continued):

## COUNCIL DECISION (continued):

- 3. That the Winnipeg Public Service be directed to consult with local Councillors to determine if any changes are required to the above noted active transportation routes that are located within a local Councillor's ward.
- 4. That the Winnipeg Public Service be directed to report back to the Standing Policy Committee on Infrastructure Renewal and Public Works within 120 days, with the results of the extended Sunday / Holiday Bicycle Route, and recommendations for establishing permanent year-round active transportation routes.
- 5. That the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the intent of the forgoing.

On May 29, 2020, Council ruled automatic referral of the following motion to the Standing Policy Committee on Infrastructure Renewal and Public Works:

Moved by Councillor Rollins, Seconded by Councillor Mayes,

WHEREAS on May 5, 2020, in an effort to assist with physical distancing requirements during the COVID-19 pandemic, the City extended its annual active transportation route schedule and expanded the temporary routes to include additional streets;

AND WHEREAS these active transportation routes limit vehicular traffic from 8 am to 8 pm, 7 days a week until July 6, 2020;

AND WHEREAS these routes have been well received by the public, encouraging greater physical activity and creating a safer environment for cyclists and pedestrians;

AND WHEREAS it is appropriate as part of the COVID-19 recovery efforts to consider continuing these routes throughout the summer on a pilot basis and explore possibilities to continue them beyond 2020;

AND WHEREAS it is important that the local Councillor have input on any changes to the active transportation routes that are located within their respective wards;

## DECISION MAKING HISTORY (continued):

## COUNCIL DECISION (continued):

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Public Service be directed to amend by-law 91/2014 and take all other necessary steps to extend the annual active transportation route schedule from the current expiry date of July 6, 2020 to September 7, 2020 for the following streets:

- 1. Lyndale Drive Cromwell Street to Gauvin Street
- 2. Scotia Street Anderson Avenue (at St. Cross Street) to Armstrong Avenue
- 3. Wellington Crescent Academy Road (at Wellington Crescent) to Guelph Street
- 4. Wolseley Avenue Raglan Road to Maryland Street
- 5. Assiniboine Avenue Bedson Street to Westwood Drive
- 6. Churchill Drive Hay Street to Jubilee Avenue
- 7. Egerton Road Bank Avenue to Morier Avenue
- 8. Kildonan Drive Helmsdale Avenue to Rossmere Crescent & Larchdale Crescent to Irving Place
- 9. Kilkenny Drive Burgess Avenue to Patricia Avenue and Kings Drive

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the public service be directed to consult with local Councillors to determine if any changes are required to the above noted active transportation routes that are located within a local Councillor's ward:

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Public Service be directed to report back to the appropriate standing policy committee in 120 days with the results of the extended active transportation route initiative, and the feasibility of establishing permanent year-round active transportation routes;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Proper Officers of the City do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT**

Title: Extending the Sunday / Holiday Bicycle Routes

Critical Path: Standing Policy Committee on Infrastructure Renewal and Public Works

## **AUTHORIZATION**

Author	Department Head	CFO	CAO
C. Desjardine, P.Eng	J. Berezowsky	N/A	M. Ruta,
			Interim CAO

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

As a response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the City of Winnipeg opened its annual Sunday/Holiday Bicycle Routes in April 2020 for daily use between 8:00 am and 8:00 pm to accommodate increased outdoor activity while also accommodating social distancing. These routes, known as open streets, provide a traffic-calmed environment by restricting vehicle traffic to one block at a time and promoting use by pedestrians and cyclists.

In June 2020, the Public Service expanded the pilot program to include five additional routes, and also removed one route at the request of area residents.

In September 2020, Winnipeggers, including those who use the open streets as well as those who live adjacent to them, were asked to provide feedback on the pilot program to help the Public Service understand their usage, challenges, and future opportunities.

This report presents initial findings from the public feedback program, as well as some key lessons learned by the Public Service.

Generally, the response to the Open Streets Pilot was positive and suggests further pilot programs be implemented along with further technical analysis prior to recommending a permanent program.

If the recommendations of this report are approved, a subsequent report will be presented in February 2021 with recommendations for the future of the Open Streets concept.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1. That this update be received as information and that the Public Service be granted an extension to the February 2021 to complete the recommendations on future open streets programs.
- 2. That the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

## **REASON FOR THE REPORT**

At its meeting on June 26, 2020, Council concurred with the recommendation from the Standing Policy Committee on Infrastructure Renewal and Public Works that the Public Service be directed to report back in 120 days with the results of the extended Sunday / Holiday Bicycle Route, and recommendations for establishing permanent year-round active transportation routes.

Further, on September 30, 2020, Council directed that the Public Service include seven additional streets, or portions of streets, in its report back to Council, as well as options for additions to the Sunday/Holiday Bicycle Route in wards that have not previously been included.

### IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

There are no implications to the recommendations of this report.

## HISTORY/DISCUSSION

## **Background**

As a response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the City of Winnipeg opened its annual Sunday/Holiday Bicycle Routes in April 2020 for daily use between 8:00 am and 8:00 pm to accommodate increased outdoor activity while also accommodating social distancing. These routes, known as *Open Streets*, provide a traffic-calmed environment by restricting vehicle traffic to one block at a time and promoting use by pedestrians and cyclists.

The initial phase of the daily open streets pilot included:

- Lyndale Drive Cromwell Street to Gauvin Street
- Scotia Street Anderson Avenue (at St. Cross Street) to Armstrong Avenue
- Wellington Crescent Academy Road (at Wellington Crescent) to Guelph Street
- Wolseley Avenue Raglan Road to Maryland Street

Initially, this Open Streets pilot was to last until July 1, 2020. In June 2020, the Public Service expanded the pilot program to include five additional routes:

- Assiniboine Avenue Bedson Street to Westwood Drive
- Churchill Drive Hay Street to Jubilee Avenue
- Egerton Road Bank Avenue to Morier Avenue
- Kildonan Drive Helmsdale Avenue to Rossmere Crescent & Larchdale Crescent to Irving Place
- Kilkenny Drive Burgess Avenue to Patricia Avenue and Kings Drive

On June 26, 2020 the pilot's end-date was extended by Council to September 6, 2020; Council also removed Assiniboine Avenue from the pilot at the request of area residents and added Rover Avenue – Hallett Street to Stephens Street; subsequent to this, Vialoux Drive was also added to fill the ward gap left by removing Assiniboine Avenue. As part of this decision, Council

directed the Public Service to report back within 120 days on Winnipeggers' experiences with the open streets and to provide recommendations on future open streets programs.

This report – the first of two related to this matter – presents four key categories of information:

- 1. Public feedback summary. (The entire Public Engagement report summary is included as Attachment B; relevant summaries of the Public Engagement are included throughout the report).
- 2. Lessons learned from the 2020 open streets pilot program.
- 3. Next steps.

Recommendations for each individual route will be provided in a subsequent report to be submitted at the SPCIRPW at the February 2021 meeting. It is necessary for the evaluation and recommendations of individual routes to occur in a subsequent report as it is first necessary to define the parameters of future open streets (accomplished in this report).

## **Public Feedback**

In acknowledging that open streets are not experienced the same way by all users, the Public Service sought to hear about the unique experiences of three main categories of respondent: residents who live along the piloted open streets; residents who live on adjacent streets; and users of open streets.

These audiences were engaged via an online survey, which was promoted both broadly and directly to residents along the 10 open streets as an opportunity to provide feedback that would help inform recommendations on the future of open streets in Winnipeg.

In total, the survey received 5,436 responses (5,381 English and 55 French).

The following sections highlight the survey's key findings.

The online survey asked respondents to identify their connection to the open street and data was analyzed using these categories:

- Someone who lives on the open street
- Someone who lives adjacent to an open street
- Someone who uses an open street

Overall, the feedback on the Open Streets Pilot was generally positive, as outlined in Figure 1.

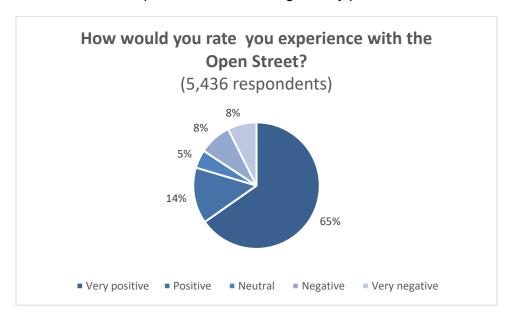


Figure 1: Overall Response to 'Open Street' Concept from Survey Participants

Appendix A presents a summary table of feedback from each individual street. It includes feedback in the form of pie charts, broken down into the following categories and includes the response rate for residents of each open street and total number of responses for each category:

- 1. Overall experience
- 2. On -street residents experience
- 3. Adjacent residents experience
- 4. City -wide user experience
- 5. Pedestrian experience
- 6. Cyclist experience
- 7. Motorist experience

Similar to the overall feedback, the majority of the open streets' user experiences were very positive or positive. This was most common in the users who identified as most often using the open street as pedestrians and cyclists. However, those who indicated they drive had a much more mixed response.

## Residents of Open Streets

721 open street residents responded to the survey.

The responses, presented in Appendix A, from those who live on an open street was generally positive but mixed results were observed.

- Egerton Avenue residents had the highest ranking of positive and very positive experience of 97%, followed by Wolseley Avenue at 87%.
- Vialoux Drive residents had the highest ranking of negative and very negative experience at 52%, followed by Lyndale Drive at 38%.

Table 1 summarizes the overall user experience feedback of those who live on or near open streets compared to users of the open streets.

Question: Overall, how would you	Connection to Open Street		
rate your experience with the open street?	Live on Open Street	Live Near Open Street	Use Open Street*
Very Positive	58%	65%	65%
Positive	16%	14%	14%
Neutral	8%	5%	5%
Negative	8%	9%	8%
Very Negative	10%	7%	8%

Table 1: Survey Responses: Rated Experience by Connection to "Open Street"

The experience of open street residents across all streets indicated that 65% had very positive experience (412 respondents), 16% had a positive experience (117 respondents), 8% had a neutral experience (56 respondents), 8% had a negative experience (59 respondents), and 10% had a very negative experience (73 respondents).

## Reasons for or Against Open Streets

The open street residents who reported a positive experience indicated their top three reasons for indicating they **liked** the open streets were:

- 1. Increased pedestrian and cycling activity on the street (410 respondents)
- 2. Less traffic on the street (396 respondents)
- 3. It felt safer to use the street (392 respondents)

The open street residents reporting a negative experience indicated their top three reasons for **disliking** the open streets were:

- 1. Pedestrians/cyclists did not observe the rules (79 respondents)
- 2. Difficulty accessing my property by vehicle (78 respondents)
- 3. I couldn't drive more than one block (64 respondents)

The group with the highest overall level of positive experience were those who often used open streets as a cyclist (2742 respondents); 95% (82% very positive and 13% positive) said they had a positive experience. The cyclists with a positive experience noted their top three reasons for liking the open streets were:

- 1. It felt safer to use the street (2,040 respondents),
- 2. Increased pedestrian and cycling activity on the street (1,895 respondents)
- 3. Less traffic on the street (1347 respondents)

The group with the most negative experience were those who often used open streets as a motorist (1438 respondents); 49% (25% very negative and 24% negative) said they had a negative experience. The motorists with a negative experience noted the top three reasons for disliking the open streets were:

- 1. I couldn't drive more than one block (458 respondents)
- 2. Increases in vehicle traffic on surrounding streets (342 respondents)
- 3. Pedestrians/cyclists did not observe the rules (335 respondents)

<sup>\*</sup> Use open street but do not live on or near an open street

## Suggestions for Timeframe for Open Streets

The online survey asked all respondents three questions about the timing for implementation of open streets. This information will be useful to the Public Service in the future with respect to making recommendations regarding future iterations of the program, such as in 2021.

- When asked how long a period the open streets should be in operation, the most preferred season was April 1 to October 31, followed by March 1 to December 1 (to coincide with the annual snow route parking ban.)
- The most preferred range of time of day for operation was to continue 8 a.m. 8 p.m., followed by an expanded timeframe, but not overnight.
- The most preferred days of the week for operating the open streets was seven days a week, followed by weekend and holidays only.

Please refer to Appendix B for the full public engagement report.

### **Lessons Learned**

The following sections detail are some key categories in which lessons were learned during the Open Streets Pilot. These lessons will be used to inform and enhance the forthcoming technical analysis.

## **Temporary Barricades**

The open streets made use of temporary construction-style barricades at key intersections to notify/remind/communicate to drivers of the conditions in effect.

This type of barricade is also used during the normal Sunday/Holiday closures because they are easily deployable and removable. They also are easily recognizable and clearly communicate to drivers that some sort of road closure is coming up.

While the Public Service was able to rapidly implement the barricades, they proved problematic in the following ways:

- Maintenance –Staff had to check each open street daily as the barricades would often be moved or would collapse on the ground. This is an unsustainable level of service in the long-term, especially if the number of routes increases or the corridors were to get longer.
- 2. Unsightliness the Public Service received anecdotal but direct feedback from community members, advocacy organizations, and City Councillors that the barricades were unsightly, and that other measures would both be preferred and beautify the area. The most notable suggestion involved planter boxes, which were deployed externally to the City on Rover Avenue as part of a simultaneous community-led traffic calming initiative. (The planter boxes were not used to enforce the open street condition, but contributed to a positive look/feel along the open street on this corridor).

## Locations of Open Streets Within Communities

The open street routes implemented in 2020 were primarily local roads along the edge of a community (often adjacent to a river) with lower traffic volumes and no cross traffic (except Wolseley Ave), most often adjacent to parallel streets that could accommodate detour traffic.

Routes were chosen based on their similarity with the existing Sunday/Holiday Bicycle Routes as they could be rapidly and easily implemented in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, these routes do not reflect all neigbourhoods in Winnipeg, nor do they accommodate all Winnipeggers. A more equitable approach to selecting potential future, additional routes should be considered, as should the strong preference for motorists to be able to exit the open street onto a nearby major street via a signalized intersection or other formal crossing point.

## Long Blocks and Vehicle Speed

Some streets in the pilot contained block segments in excess of 600 metres. While vehicles were subject to the one block restriction, the length of these segments made it possible for motorists to accelerate to inappropriate speeds for the context.

The Public Service conducted speed studies on Churchill Drive between Brandon Avenue/Hay Street and Eccles Street, and on Kilkenny Drive between Rice Road and Radcliffe Road. The results are presented in Table 2. (A range of speeds is provided for Churchill Drive, as data was collected at two locations within this block).

Block	Block length	85 <sup>th</sup> Percentile Speed	95 <sup>th</sup> Percentile Speed
Churchill Drive from Brandon Avenue/Hay Street to Eccles	735 metres	56 km/h - 60 km/h	63 km/h - 64 km/h
Kilkenny Drive between Rice Road and Radcliffe Road	615 metres	49 km/h	56 km/h

Table 2: 85th and 95th Percentile Speeds on two "Open Streets" with Long Block Lengths

The 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed reflects the speed at or below which 85 percent of motorists operate their vehicle. Similarly, the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile speed reflects the speed at or below which 95 percent of motorists operate their vehicle.

The 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed on Churchill Drive between Brandon Avenue/Hay Street and Eccles Street ranged from 56 km/h to 60 km/h, and the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile speed exceeded 60 km/h. The 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed on Kilkenny Drive between Rice Road and Radcliffe Road was 49 km/h, and the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile speed was 56 km/h.

Significantly lower operating speeds are preferred in a shared street environment that accommodates pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists.

## Additional Vehicular Monitoring

As motor vehicle traffic volumes during Summer 2020 were reduced due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it was not possible to adequately measure the traffic effects of the Open Streets on the adjacent road network (the increase on parallel routes due to traffic being detoured off of the open streets). Monitoring traffic during normal conditions will be an important tool in assessing and recommending any further implementation.

### Active Transportation User Count Data

The Public Service conducted counts of pedestrian and cyclists along the open streets. Two rounds of counts were conducted: one in late April and early May and one in late August. Round

one was conducted prior to Rover Avenue and Vialoux Drive becoming Open Streets and before Assiniboine Avenue was restored to normal operation. All of the counts were conducted on weekdays, but equipment limitations prevented them from being conducted all on the same day.

Figure 2 presents the total number of pedestrians and cyclists observed between 8:00 am and 8:00 pm in both rounds of counts. The Wellington Crescent and Wolseley Avenue sites had more users than the other sites; however, all of the Open Streets were well utilized.

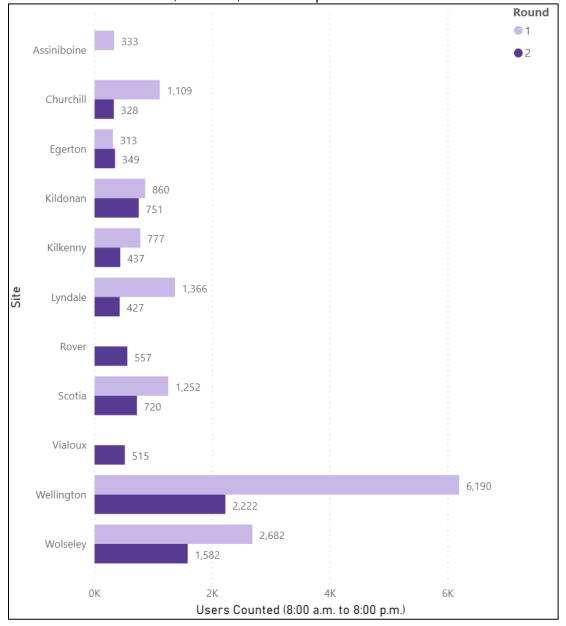


Figure 2: Counted Users on Open Streets during Two Rounds of Counting (April/May and Late August 2020)

Figure 3, below, presents the number of users observed by hour of day. In both rounds, the most popular time for use of the open streets was in the evening, generally peaking around 7:00

pm. This is consistent with trends observed in the user counts from the eight permanent count stations along multi-use paths around the city.

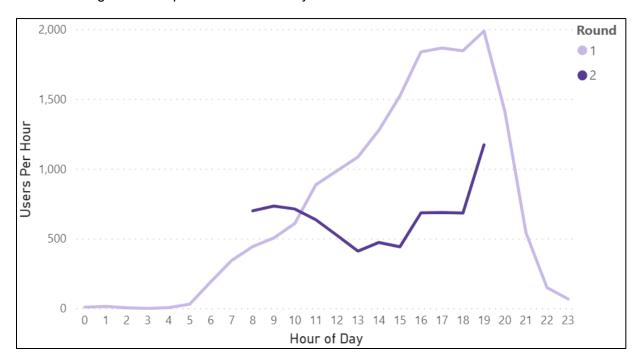


Figure 3: Total Observed Users by Hour of Day on Open Streets (April/May and Late August 2020)

Figure 4 shows a comparison of the usage of the open streets for each round of counts. Pedestrians were the predominant users in Round 1, but cyclists were the predominant users in Round 2.

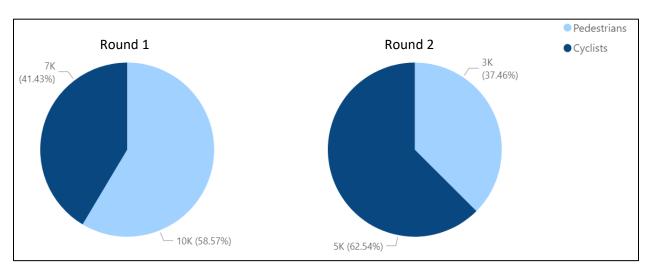


Figure 4: Modes Observed on Open Streets (April/May and Late August 2020)

### Interactions Between Modes

The Public Service was notified through various channels, including from the public, media, and Councillors, that verbal altercations were occurring between vehicles and pedestrians/cyclists on the open streets. The Public Service is aware of one collision between a car and cyclist, which was reported to be minor with both parties involved acknowledging that they had been aware of one another's presence on the road at the time. The verbal conflicts were generally related to people observing vehicles travelling longer that one block and people not moving or slowly moving out of the way of a passing vehicle.

Though signs that communicated expectations related to social distancing and a reminder to all road users to share the road were erected along the open street routes, more communication needs to occur about the purpose and rules of the road.

An important element of Open Streets was to limit motor vehicle traffic to one block of travel, essentially acting as a form of traffic calming by reducing vehicle speeds and vehicle volumes, thereby forcing traffic onto other routes. Other roadway users (pedestrians and cyclists) are still expected to follow the rules of the road and respect that motor vehicles may still be present on the roadway.

The one exception to the single block of travel is Lyndale Drive. The bays between Birchdale Avenue and Highfield Street are considered as one block by the By-law that governs the Sunday/Holiday Bicycle Routes (By-law 91/2014). This may have been the source of some conflicts and misunderstandings specifically on Lyndale Drive.

An unexpected occurrence during the pilot was that there were instances of tactical urbanism appearing on the open streets, wherein community members erected amenities on the street including miniature golf and planter boxes. While these appear to have intended to make the open street more attractive and fun, in practice they promoted congregation on the streets and discouraged both movement and physical distancing – the two primary functions of open streets. That said, the Public Service understands that the tactical urbanism was generally well received/liked by the public and sees value in it if implemented properly.

## 2021 Open Streets Pilot

Based on the experience of the 2020 open streets, the Public Service recommends any Open Streets proposed for 2021 occur as part of a follow-up (or second phase) pilot project rather than a permanent measure.

This is due to the following considerations:

- 1. Vehicular traffic impacts and patterns that result from Open Streets should be monitored under non-COVID 19 conditions (where traffic patterns are normal.)
- 2. Open Streets that are located on roads with cross traffic will need to incorporate additional features/elements compared to the edge streets used in 2020.
- 3. Making use of installations other than temporary barricades can be tested and evaluated.
- 4. Traffic calming and speed mitigations can be tested and evaluated.
- 5. This will allow time to develop a long-term governing tool, likely a new By-law or an amendment to By-law 91/2014.

## **Next Steps for the Public Service**

- Assess survey results by individual open street segment and user type.
- Develop a subsequent administrative report for the February 2021 meeting of SPCIRPW to make recommendations for the future of the open streets, including but not limited to:
  - Assess transportation network impacts for individual open street segment.
  - Consider open streets in other areas of the city and on streets with cross traffic (this will include considering input from stakeholders including City Councillors).
  - Identify improved approach for implementing open streets using infrastructure (currently barricades are used) that include traffic calming measures on long blocks with high vehicle speeds.
  - Consider how to potentially incorporate tactical urbanism concepts in the 2021 open streets pilot.
  - Recommend a list of open street segments and the method(s) for implementing.
  - Address the amendment to the open streets motion from the September 16, 2020 meeting of SPCIRPW.
  - Consider a tool to govern the open streets, potentially a new By-Law or an amendment to City of Winnipeg Traffic By-Law No. 1573/77.
- Implement a second Open Streets Pilot in 2021. Use lessons learned and analysis from the 2021 trial to provide long-term recommendations.

#### FINANCIAL IMPACT

Financial Impact Statement Date: October 27, 2020

**Project Name:** 

**Extending the Sunday / Holiday Bicycle Routes** 

## **COMMENTS:**

There are no financial impacts associated with the recommendation of this report.

"Original signed by J. Peters, CPA, CGA"

J. Peters CPA, CGA

Acting Manager of Finance & Administration

## **CONSULTATION**

This Report has been prepared in consultation with: Office of Public Engagement

## **OURWINNIPEG POLICY ALIGNMENT**

- 01-1 City Building Connect and Expand our Sustainable Transportation and Infrastructure Networks. Ensuring mobility for people of all ages and abilities with active transportation options.
- 01-2 The recommendation of this report is also aligned with the <u>Transportation Master Plan</u>'s key strategic goal #3: To provide a safe, efficient and equitable transportation system for people, goods and services.

### WINNIPEG CLIMATE ACTION PLAN ALIGNMENT

Strategic Opportunity #3 Advancing Sustainable Transportation 3.4 Increase Active Transportation Rates

Strategic Opportunity #3 Advancing Sustainable Transportation 3.5 Reduce Traffic Congestion

## **SUBMITTED BY**

Department: Public Works
Division: Transportation

Prepared by: C. Baker, Senior Active Transportation Planner,

D. Patman P.Eng, Manager PWD Transportation Division

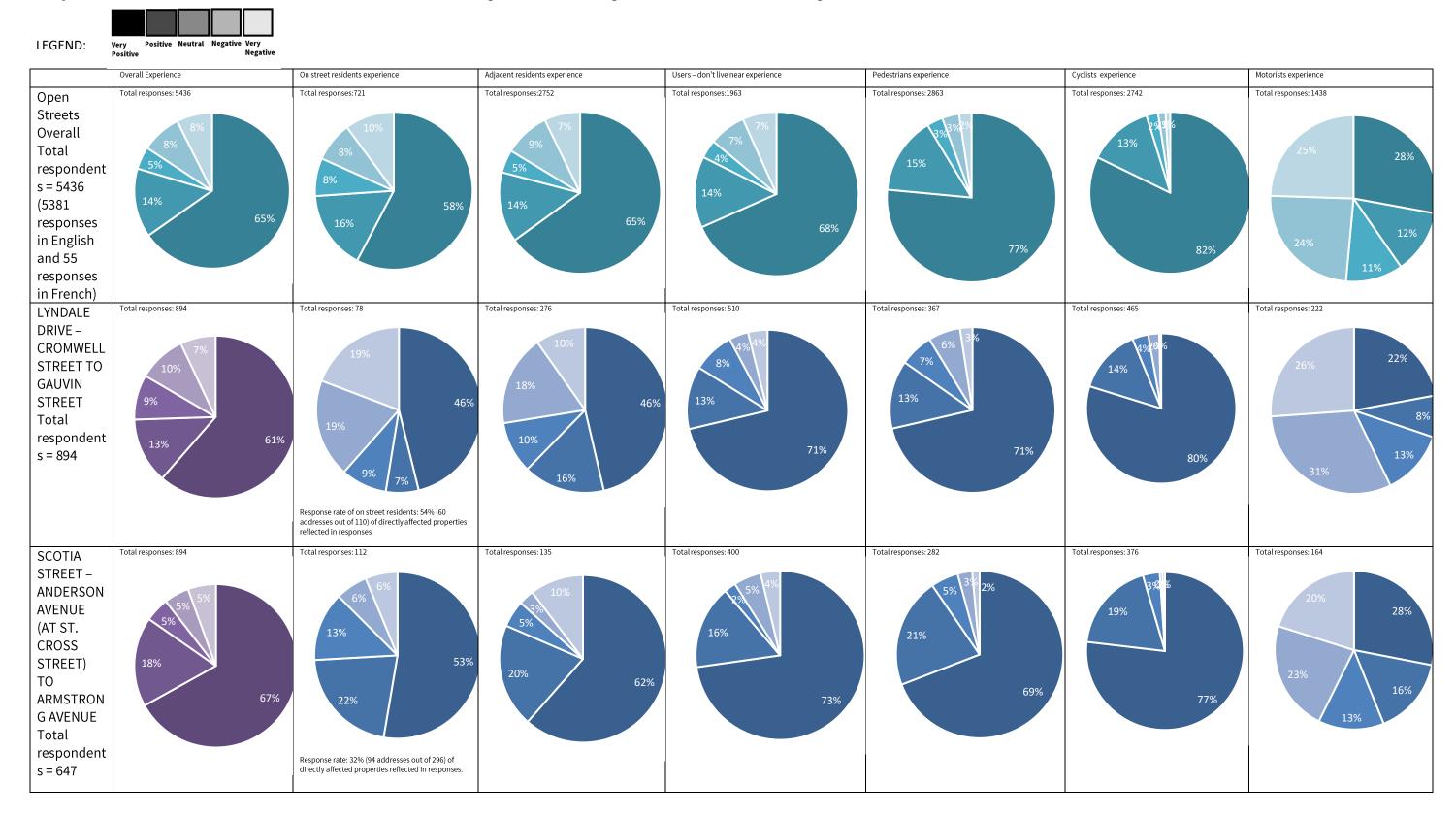
Date: October 27, 2020

Attachments:

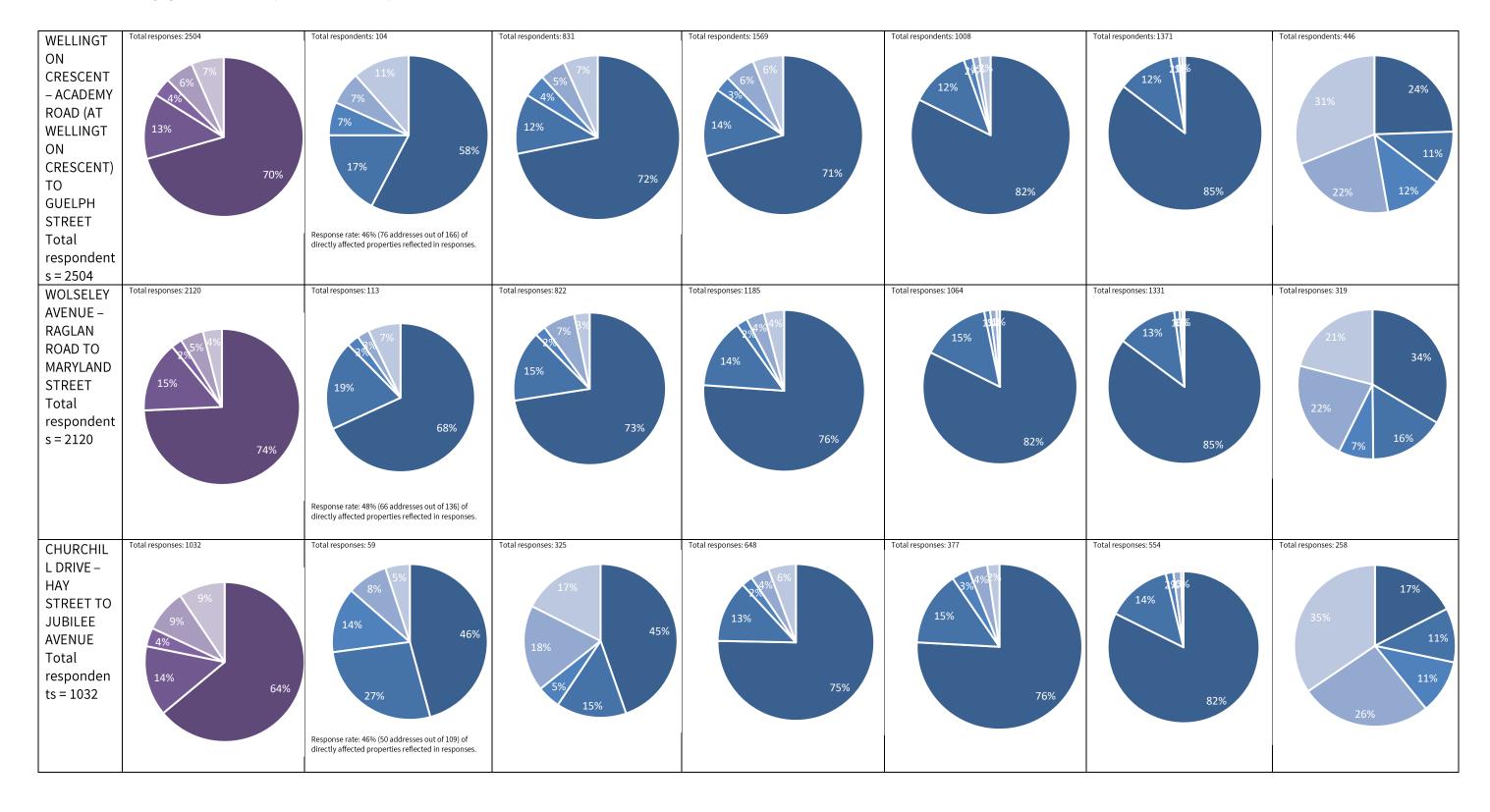
Appendix A – Engagement Summary Table – Street by Street (See below)

Appendix B – Full Public Engagement Report

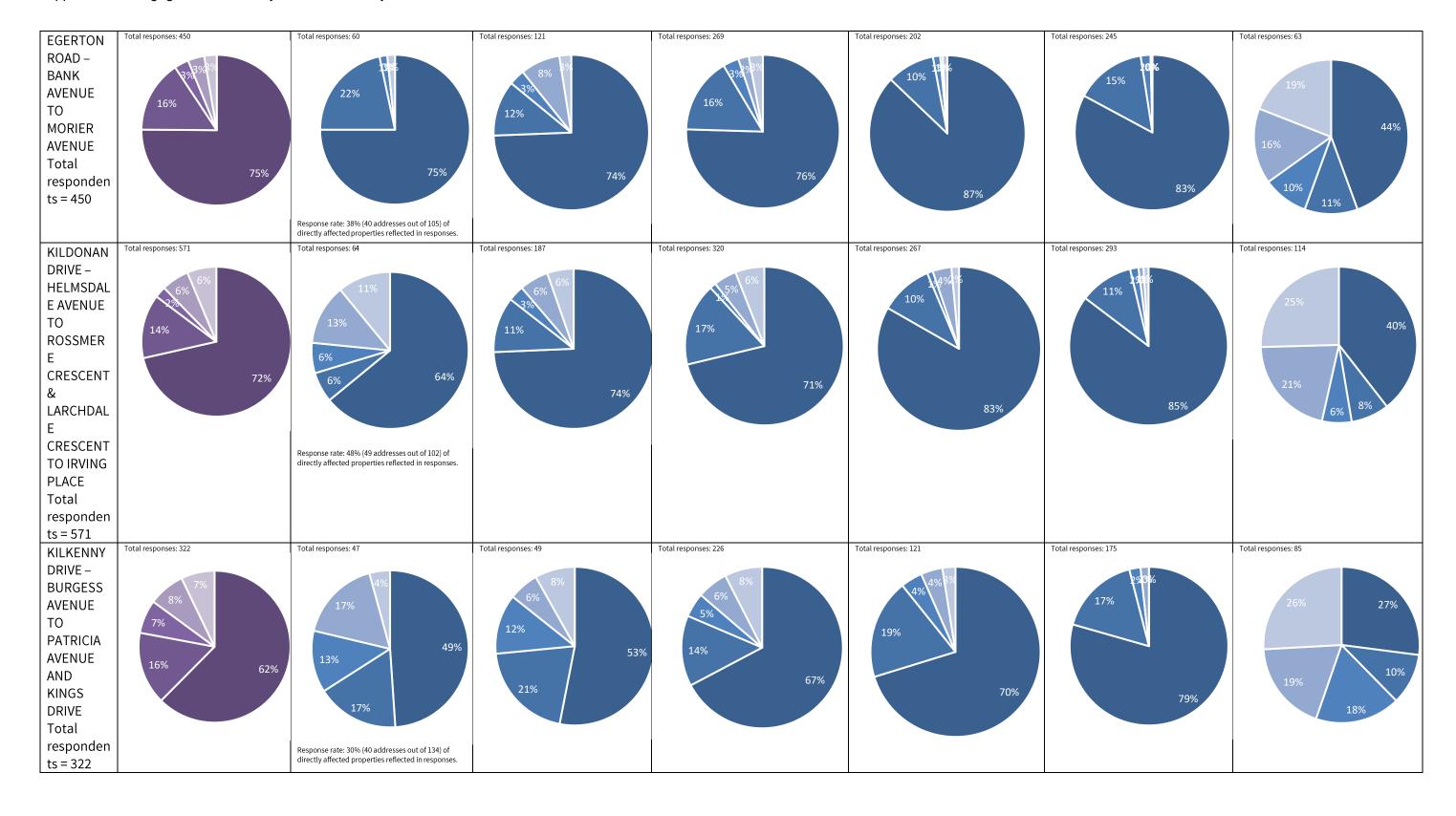
# Open Streets (Enhanced Sunday/Holiday Routes) Analysis



Appendix A – Engagement Summary Table – Street by Street



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