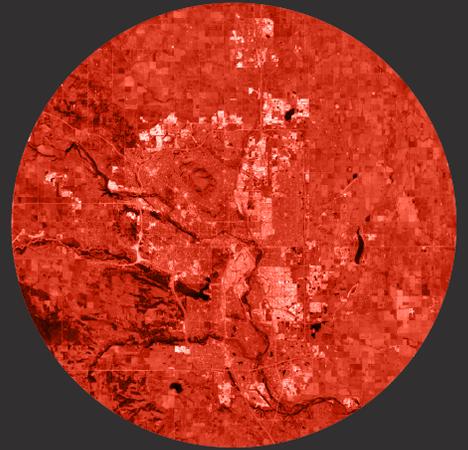


17TH AVENUE
OPEN
STREET

PUBLIC &
BUSINESS
ENGAGEMENT
WHAT WE HEARD



The Calgary area, where the Bow and Elbow rivers meet, is a place of confluence where the sharing of ideas and opportunities naturally come together.

Indigenous peoples have their own names for this area that have been in use long before Scottish settlers named this place Calgary.

The Métis call the Calgary area Otoskwunee. In the Blackfoot language, they call this place, Moh'kinstsis. The Îlethka Nakoda Wîcastabi refer to the Calgary area as Wicispa Oyade and the people of the Tsuut'ina nation call this area Guts'ists'i.

We appreciate and acknowledge that we live, work, and play on the ancestral and traditional territories of the Blackfoot confederacy, made up of the Siksika, Piikani, Amskaapipiikani and Kainai First Nations; the Îlethka Nakoda Wîcastabi First Nations, comprised of the Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Goodstoney First Nations; and the Tsuut'ina First Nation.

The City of Calgary is also homeland to the historic Northwest Métis and to the Otipemisiwak Métis Government, Métis Nation Battle River Territory (Nose Hill Métis District 5 and Elbow Métis District 6). We acknowledge all Indigenous people who have made Calgary their home.

City of Calgary Land Acknowledgement

Prepared for



Beltline Neighbourhoods Association

About the Beltline Neighbourhoods Association (BNA)

The Beltline Neighbourhoods Association (BNA) is a vibrant community association for the Beltline district in urban Calgary encompassing the neighbourhoods of Connaught and Victoria Park. The BNA has led numerous transformational initiatives in the Beltline including *High Park*, *Humpy Hollow Park* redevelopment, McHugh House Community & Arts Hub, launched the *BUMP Festival* and more.

The Beltline Neighbourhoods Association is a grassroots organization founded by engaged residents with a history of service in their communities who wanted to build an accessible and diverse association open to all residents to get involved in making the Beltline an even better place.

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- 02** About 17th Avenue
- 03** Public Engagement Findings
- 05** Business Engagement Findings
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Public & Business Engagement Overview

Reimagining 17th Avenue

The Beltline Neighbourhoods Association undertook an engagement process using online surveys to collect feedback from both the local business community and the general public on a potential pilot program for an “Open Streets” initiative on 17th Avenue SW, a lively and well-loved main street in Calgary, home to numerous local businesses and active public spaces. The avenue’s popularity has provided positive benefits to both the businesses and the residents, however issues like crowded sidewalks, heavy traffic, and vehicle-related noise and air pollution suggest that the street may not be meeting the needs of all users.

Open Street Pilot Proposal

Initial business and public engagement surveys conducted in Summer 2024 solicited interest in further exploring an open street pilot project on 17th Avenue.

Surveys were advertised throughout the summer on posterboards on 17th Avenue, hand delivery of postcards to local businesses, and through news media.

Project Goals

1. Boosting the Local Economy and Supporting Businesses

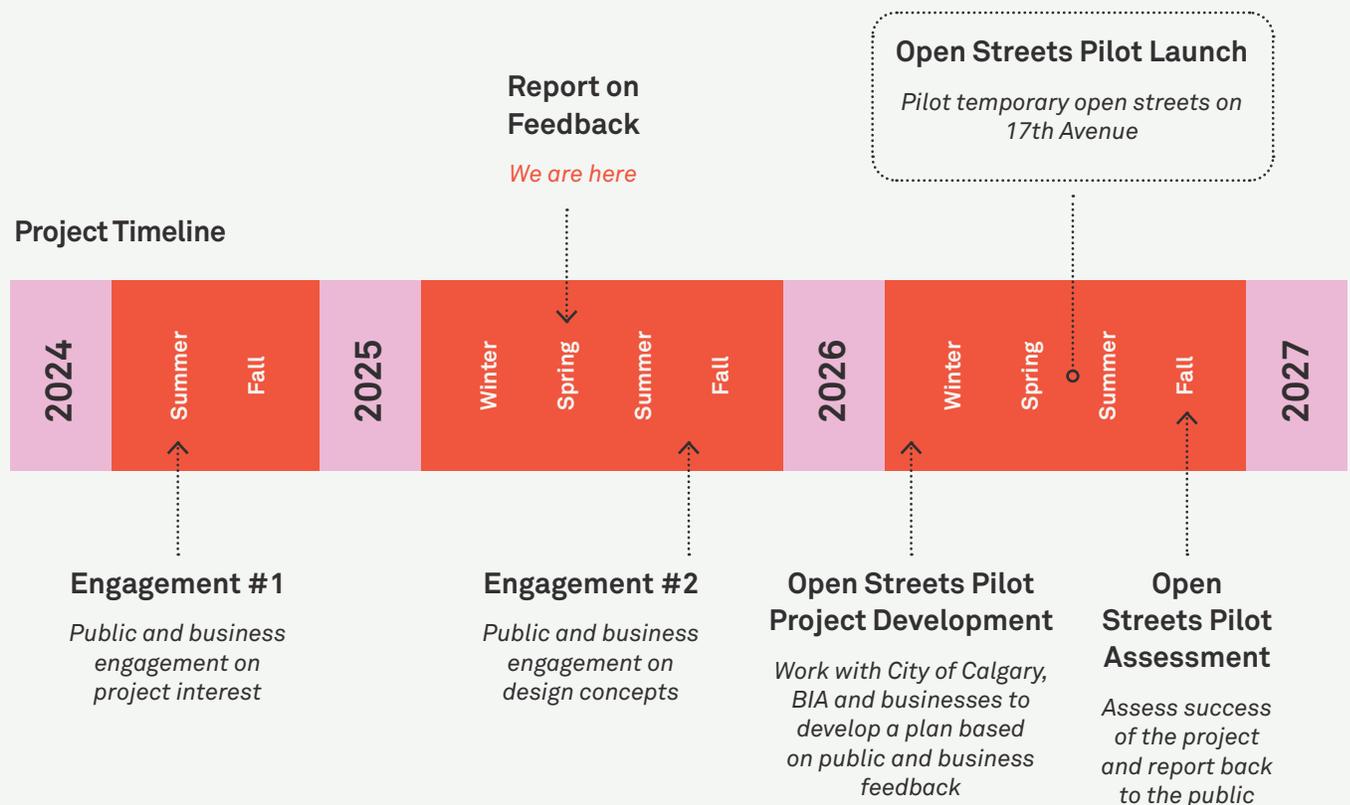
Pedestrian zones typically increase revenue for local retailers. Studies have shown that pedestrianization leads to a surge in foot traffic, enhancing sales and reducing commercial vacancy rates. Additionally, people walking, cycling or wheeling tend to spend more at local businesses than people driving, highlighting the economic benefits of providing more space for people.

2. Enhancing Community Well-being and Safety

Pedestrian zones create safer, more accessible spaces for everyone. By reducing vehicular traffic, noise and air pollution, we lower the risk of collisions and create a more inviting, accessible, and livable space for residents and visitors.

3. Improving Accessibility and Mobility

Transforming 17th Avenue SW into pedestrian zones improves accessibility and mobility for all, including seniors, children, and those with mobility challenges. By reducing vehicle traffic and enhancing pedestrian infrastructure, the area becomes safer and more navigable, encouraging more people to walk, cycle, and engage in active transportation along the street.



About 17th Avenue



17th Avenue in Calgary is a vibrant, diverse and evolving urban corridor known for its rich mix of businesses, cultural landmarks, and urban amenities. The project focus area for 17th Avenue SW stretches from Macleod Trail to 14th St SW, encompassing approximately 40 blocks and home to over 720 businesses as well as a thriving residential area.

This area is a central hub for shopping, dining, entertainment, and professional services within the Beltline in downtown Calgary.

Businesses & Amenities

The avenue boasts a diverse array of destination and neighbourhood establishments:

- **Dining:** From international cuisines to plant-based options, 17th Avenue is a destination for food and beverage.
- **Shopping:** Boutiques along the avenue offer clothing, home decor, vintage finds and specialty goods.
- **Wellness & Professional Services:** Spas, salons, fitness centre, tattoo parlors, and other services like law firms and medical clinics.
- **Entertainment:** Live music venues, escape rooms, and art galleries contribute to 17th Avenue's vibrant atmosphere and active public realm.



Public Spaces & Art

The avenue has developed a reputation for artistic interventions and leveraging of existing public space. Current opportunities to build on the public realm could relate to:

- **Public Parks:** Tomkins Park, established in 1915, offers passive green space with benches, a gazebo and mature tree covering. It is a communal gathering spot for neighbourhood residents.
- **Public Art:** The avenue features 29 BUMP (Beltline Urban Murals Project) murals, enhancing the area's cultural and artistic appeal.

Urban Density & Development

Located within Calgary's Beltline community, 17th Avenue SW is part of one of the city's most densely populated areas, with a population density of approximately 8,580 people per square kilometer. The region is characterized by a mix of residential and commercial developments.

Accessibility & Transportation

The avenue is well-connected and accessible for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists alike:

- **Public Transit:** Serviced by Calgary's bus and nearby CTrain network.
- **Active Transportation:** The area features bike lanes and pedestrian-friendly pathways.
- **Parking:** Multiple public parking lots are available within the area, with free street parking on Sundays, holidays and weekdays after 6pm.

Public Engagement Findings

75%

of visitor spending comes from people living within 2km of 17th Avenue.

WALKING

was the most common mode of transport for those visiting 17th Avenue.

FRIDAY - SUNDAY

the preferred timing for the Open Streets Pilot is Friday evening through Sunday day, during the months of July and August.

PRIMARY DRIVERS FOR PUBLIC SUPPORT

- Less vehicle noise and air pollution
- More space to walk
- Extended patios

1500+

responses were collected during the Public Engagement.

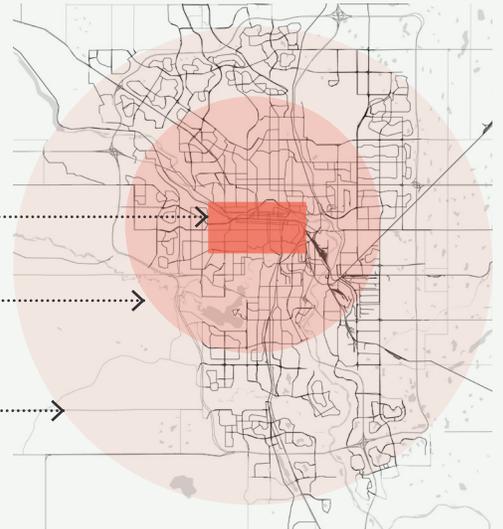
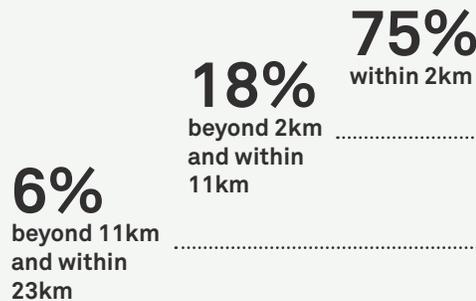
82%

of the public surveyed were in support of the 17th Avenue Open Street Pilot.

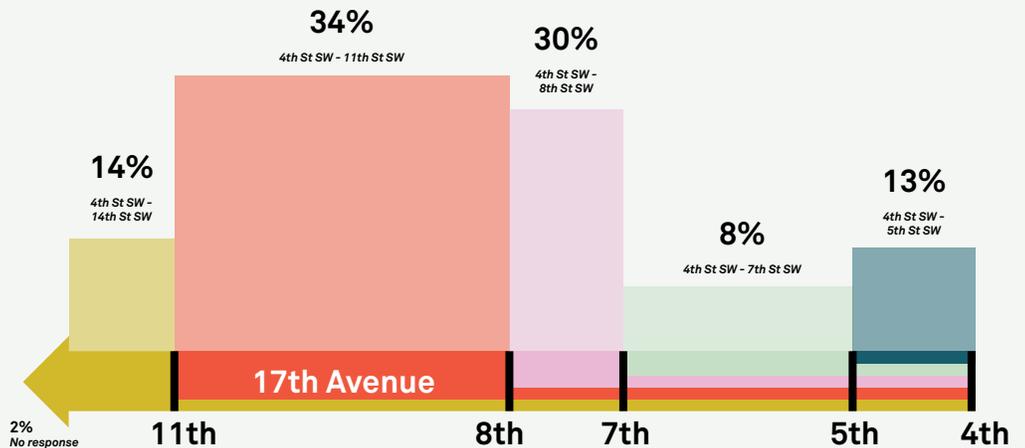
77%

of the public said they would visit more often if there were open streets.

Where visitors to 17th Avenue live based on proportion of annual spending



Where would you most like to see the open street piloted on 17th Ave SW?



Quotes from Respondants

“This would be so incredible. We’d walk and shop and dine up and down the Open Street stretch way more..”

“This would also help to crack down on the loud cars that can make dining outside on 17th Ave. patios somewhat unpleasant.”

“As someone who lives near 17th Ave and is there often, I’m concerned about access for people with mobility issues.”

“As a longtime resident of the Beltline, I think it’s a wonderful idea.”

“I would love to be able to sit on a patio and not have to deal with loud noise and exhaust from vehicles.”

Public Engagement Summary

The public survey also concluded with an open-ended section for written feedback on the 17th Street pedestrianization trial. The majority of respondents expressed support, often referencing positive experiences with

similar initiatives in other cities and a desire to see Calgary offer a comparable street experience. Those with concerns used the space to outline potential challenges or objections.

01 Strong Support for the Idea

A vast majority of respondents expressed enthusiasm for the concept, calling it a “great idea” and encouraging the city to “make it happen.” “Open the streets, and people will come” was a sentiment shared across many of the responses.

02 Desire for More Pedestrian and Public Space

A significant number of comments highlighted the need to prioritize people over cars. Themes included a push for open streets, limiting vehicle access, and creating more space for walking and community use.

03 Concerns About Traffic and Parking

Respondents frequently mentioned traffic issues and the potential loss of parking. While some supported street closures, others were worried about how this would impact vehicle flow and access to the surrounding area.

04 Support for Cycling Infrastructure and Safer Streets

Words like bike, city, and space suggest a desire for improved cycling options and safer environments for non-drivers. These comments often overlapped with support for a more livable and walkable downtown.

05 Mixed Opinions on Noise and Car Activity

Several respondents voiced concern about noise, cars, and general loud activities on 17th Avenue. Some supported changes as a way to reduce disturbance, while others expressed worry about increased foot traffic replacing vehicle noise with other types of disruption.

“This is an amazing idea and would add some much value to growing the sense of community in the Beltline.”

Business Engagement Findings

FRIDAY - SUNDAY

As with the Public Engagement, most businesses reported preference for timing Open Streets Pilots running from Friday evenings to Sunday days during the months of July and August.

PRIMARY DRIVERS FOR BUSINESS SUPPORT

- Extended patios/retail
- More space to walk
- Less vehicle noise and air pollution

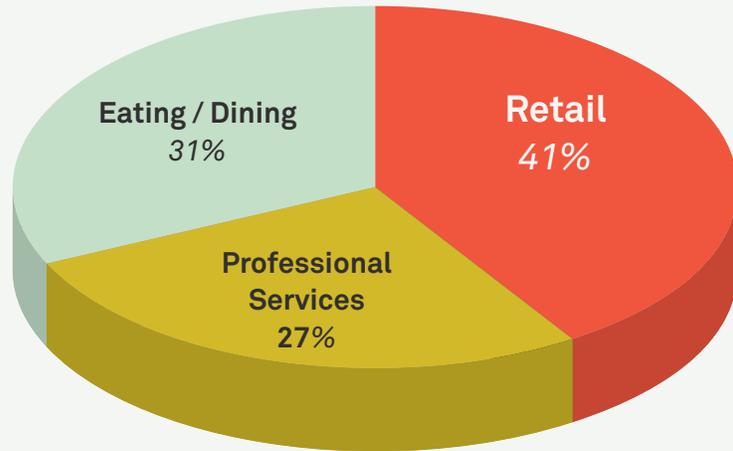
40+

responses were collected during the local Business Engagement.

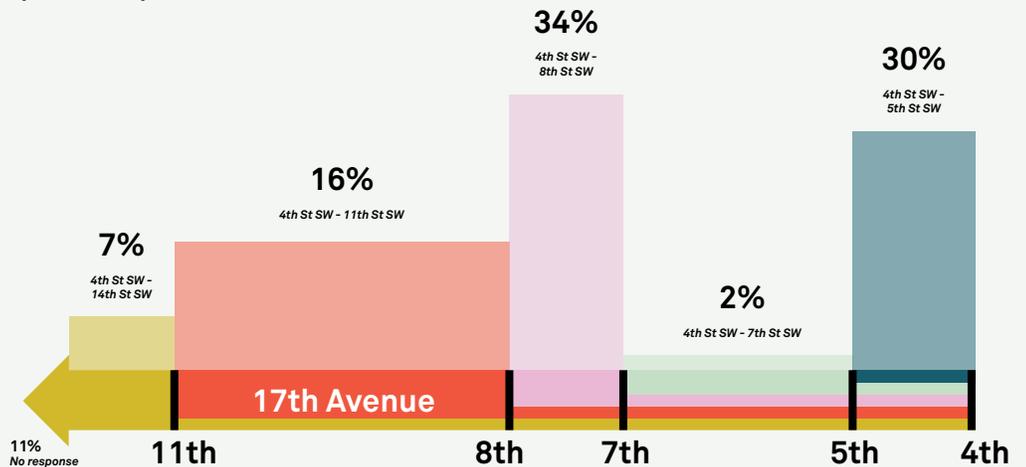
54%

of local businesses were in support of the 17th Ave Open Street Pilot. 10% were unsure and 36% were opposed.

What category best describes your business?



Where would you most like to see the open street piloted on 17th Ave SW?



Quotes from Respondants

“Remove cars from 17th ave, period.”

“Consider partial closure of 1 side of Avenue to allow motor traffic to traverse east/west.”

“Having an open street for more gatherings is better for businesses during the summer. Folks will WALK and stop to shop, eat and drink... Driving past a business does not increase sales.”

“I would like to see a trial done to block off a few blocks to traffic. More parking would need to be provided at cheap rates, if not free. Use the abandoned lots as parking.”

“If my customers can’t drive to me and park close by, they will not bother coming.”

Business Engagement Summary

The participants from the business community along 17th Avenue SW offered additional comments outside of the provided question prompts. This feedback was wide-ranging in terms of support for the overall project, with many respondents acknowledging the positive effects of

increased foot traffic on their businesses. Other respondents voiced more specific concerns related to business impacts, parking access for their customers and the harmful effects of previous street closures related to construction.

01 Business Access and Impacts

Many responses focus on concerns about how pedestrianizing or modifying 17th Avenue could affect access to local businesses. Respondents mention reduced sales, difficulty for deliveries, and the importance of maintaining traffic and parking for customer access.

02 Traffic and Parking

A recurring concern is the removal of vehicle access, with particular emphasis on the need for parking and ease of driving to and from the area. Several comments argue that customers prefer to drive and park nearby, and fear that closing the street could displace traffic or inconvenience users.

03 Mixed Views on Pedestrianization

While some respondents strongly oppose making 17th Avenue pedestrian-only, others suggest piloting the idea in different areas (like 4th Street) or expanding it in targeted ways, such as having additional outdoor spaces to increase business visibility. A few also express that pedestrian-focused designs have benefits for public space and events.

04 Event-Related Disruptions

Feedback includes references to events like the Lilac Festival, noting that while these events attract people, they also generate noise and disruption. Some view these as temporary but impactful, especially for nearby residents.

05 Area-Specific Suggestions and Expansions

Suggestions include expanding the pedestrian zone east to 2nd Street SW or considering other zones for pilot projects. These comments imply a desire for more localized, nuanced planning rather than a one-size-fits-all approach.

06 Strong Opinions – Both For and Against

A few responses are short but emphatic, either strongly opposing the idea (“terrible idea,” “remove cars from 17th ave, period”) or supporting increased public space. This reflects polarized views and suggests any changes will need careful stakeholder engagement.

“...this would bring more pedestrian traffic which will affect positively most businesses in many ways...our summer is very short lets make the best of it”

Next Steps

The Beltline Neighbourhoods Association will work with Public City Architecture to develop preliminary design concepts for 17th Avenue Open Streets for further public and business engagement in Summer/Fall 2025.

Stay tuned for updates.

How You Can Help Businesses

Show your support by ordering your 17th Ave Open Street window sticker.



Get Updates

Join the email list for updates

https://www.beltlineyc.ca/signup_page



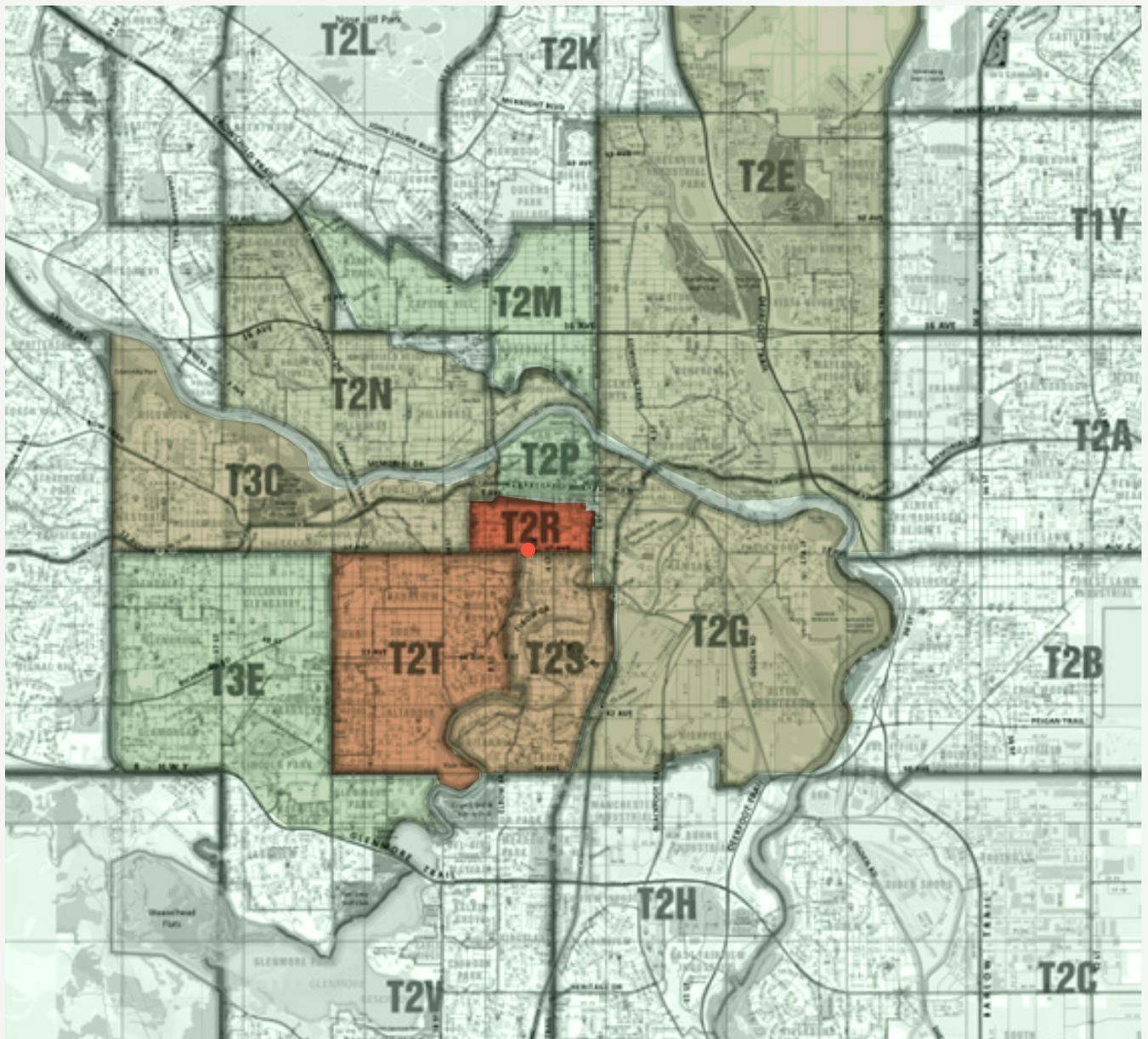
APPENDIX A
PUBLIC
ENGAGEMENT
DATA

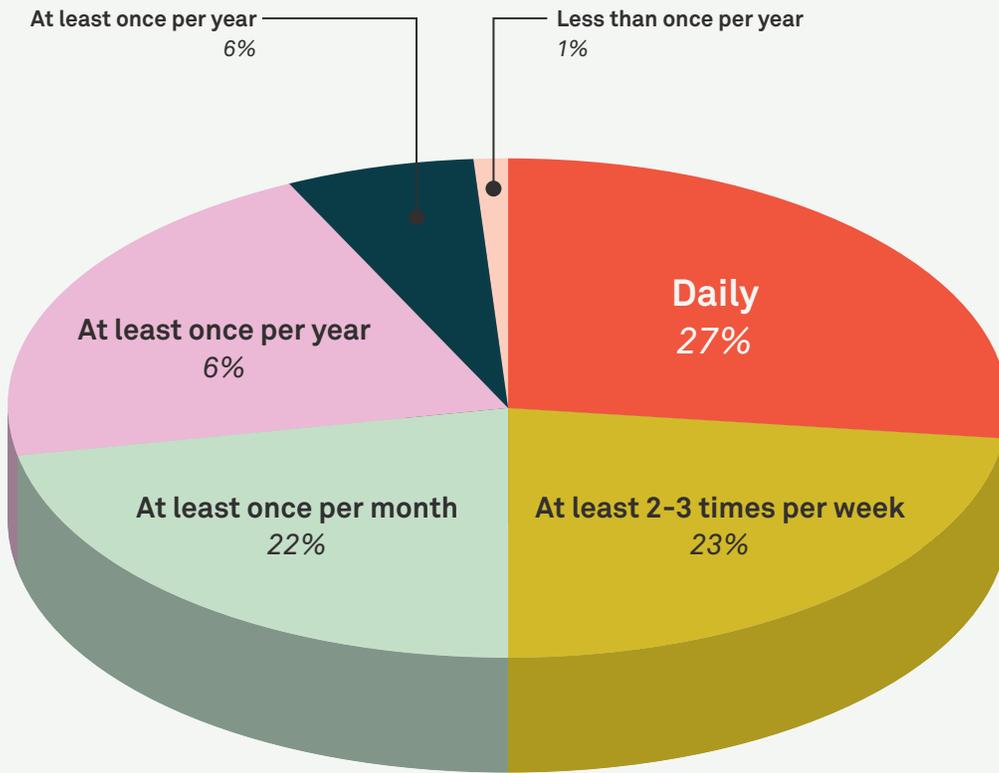
Public Engagement Results

The online survey prepared for the general public was designed to collect data relating when, how, how often and why the general public currently visits the public realm and businesses along 17th Ave SW.

The results to the individual questions are included on the following pages, illustrated according to the number or percentage of responses given for each option provided.

- **T2R** 22.7%
- **T2T** 13.7%
- **T2S** 9.4%
- **T3C** 6.2%
- **T2G** 5.1%
- **T2N** 4.8%
- **T2E** 4.8%
- **T3E** 4.0%
- **T3H** 3.2%
- **T2M** 2.5%
- **T2P** 2.3%
- **Less than 2% representation**
 T2J, T3B, T3G, T2V, T2K, T2Y, T3A, T3L, T2X,
 T3K, T2C, T2Z, T2W, T2L, T2A, T2H, T3M,
 T3J, T3R, T2B, T3P, T1Y, T4B, T1S, N2N, T4C,
 T1W, T3N, T5E, T6G, T1K, T3Z, T1X, T0J,
 T3Y, T6T, V7M, T1J & S0N



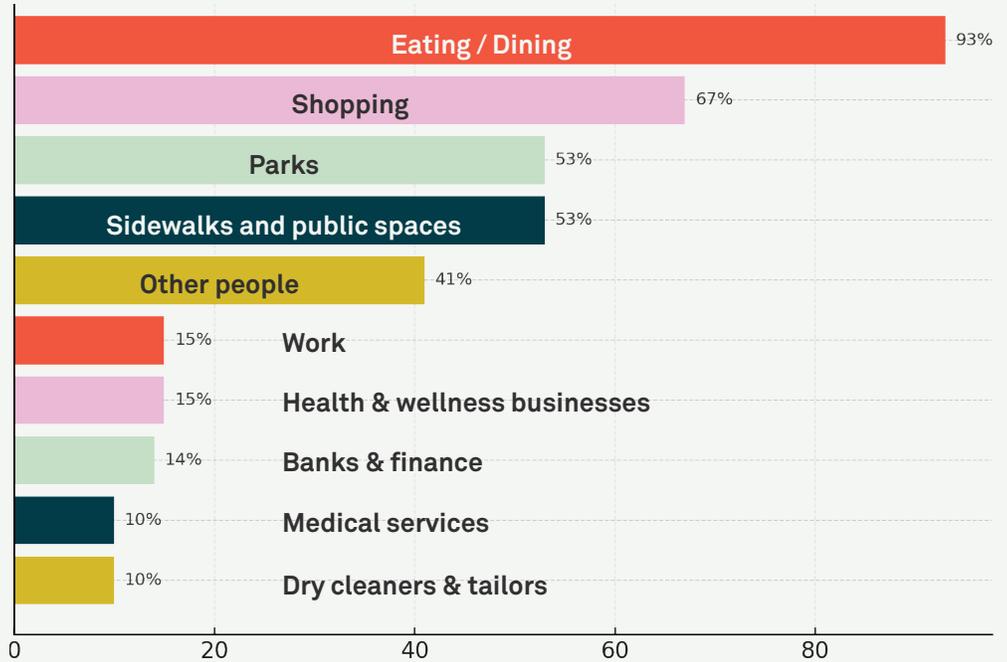


How often do you currently visit 17th Ave SW?

- *Daily*
- *At least 2-3 times per week*
- *At least once per week*
- *At least once per month*
- *At least once per year*
- *Less than once per year*

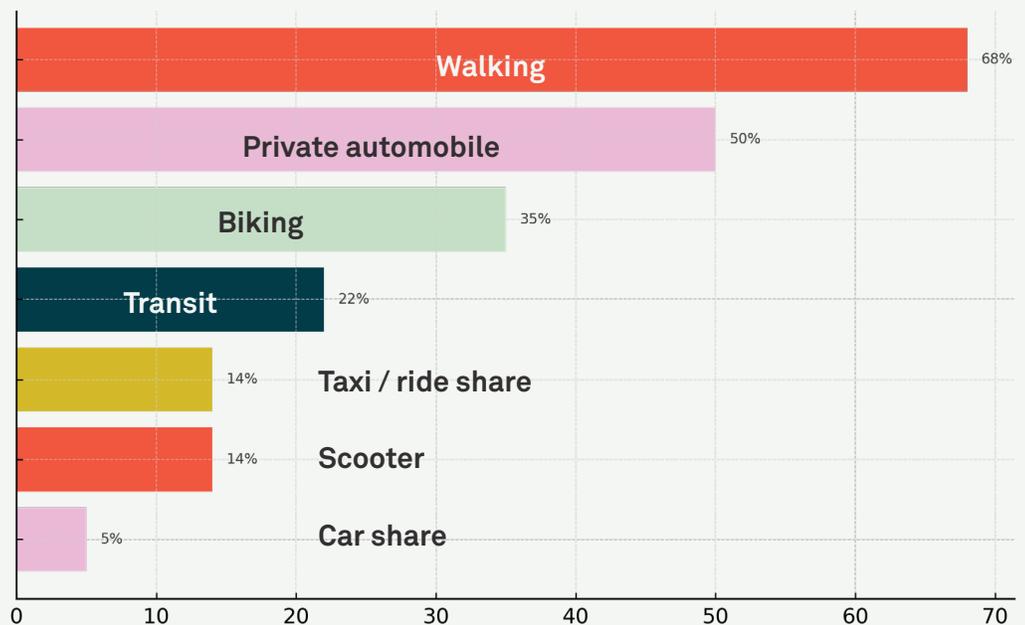
What typically brings you to 17th Ave?
Check all that apply

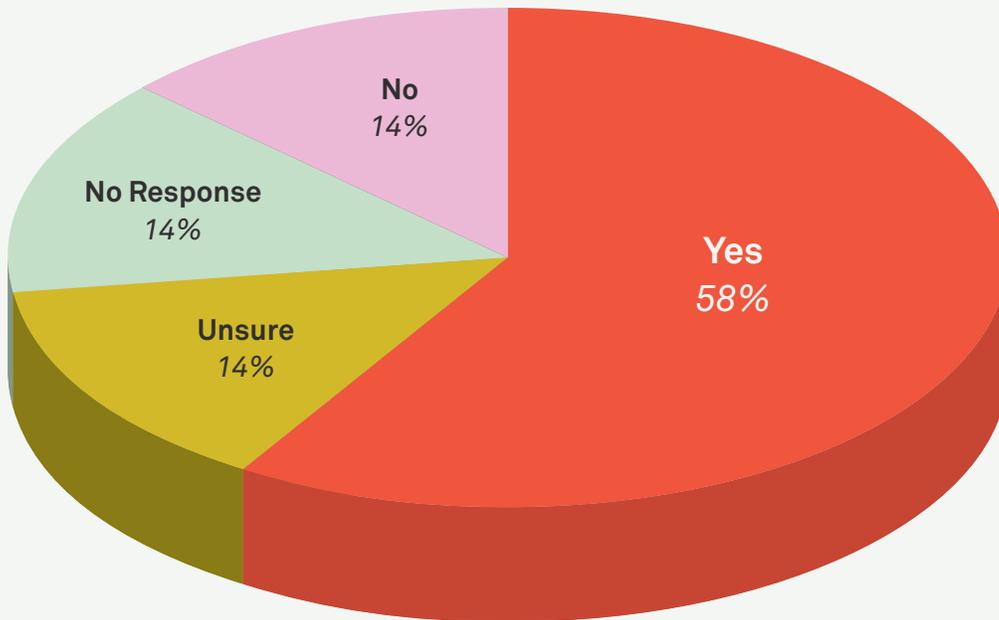
Less than 10% Representation
Gas Stations, Professional Services, Chiropractor, Acupuncture & Massage Businesses, Design, Architecture & Development Businesses, Mental Health Services, Photography & Video Businesses, Insurance Businesses, Law Firms, Travel Services, & Marketing/Consulting Businesses



How do you typically travel to/from 17th Ave?
Check all that apply

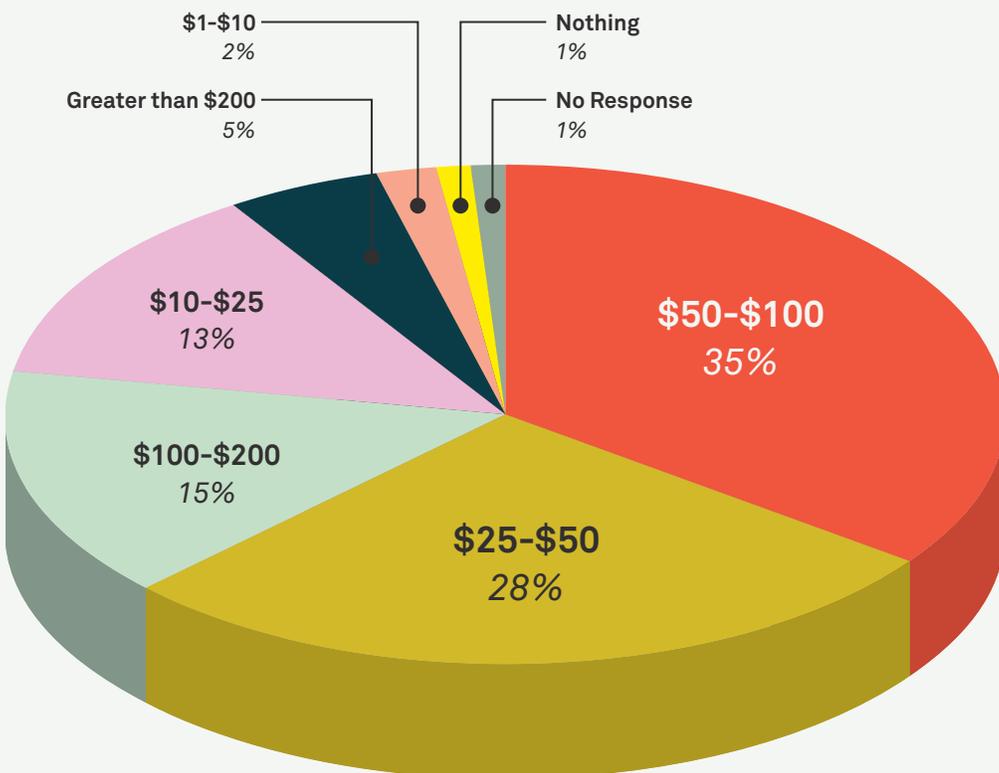
- Walking
- Biking
- Private automobile
- Scooter
- Transit
- Taxi / Ride share
- Car share





If you take a private automobile, would you use off street parking (parking lot or parkade) if there were less on-street parking available on 17th Ave SW?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

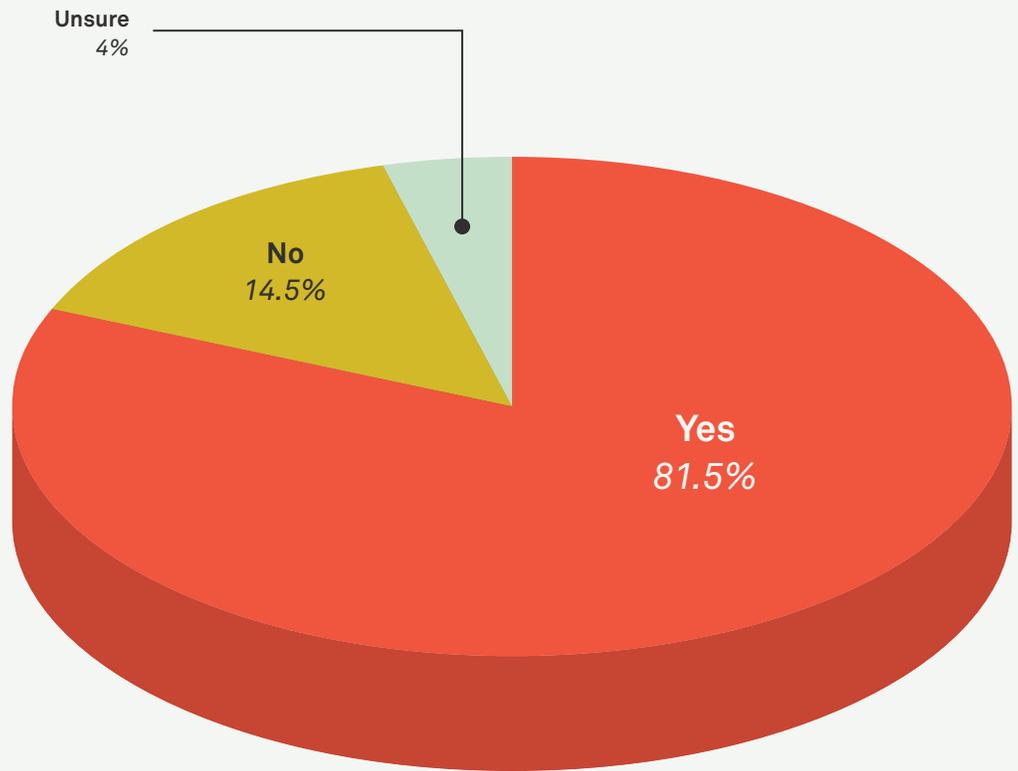


On average, how much do you typically spend when you go to 17th Ave SW?

- Greater than \$200
- \$100-\$200
- \$50-\$100
- \$25-\$50
- \$10-\$25
- \$1-\$10
- Nothing

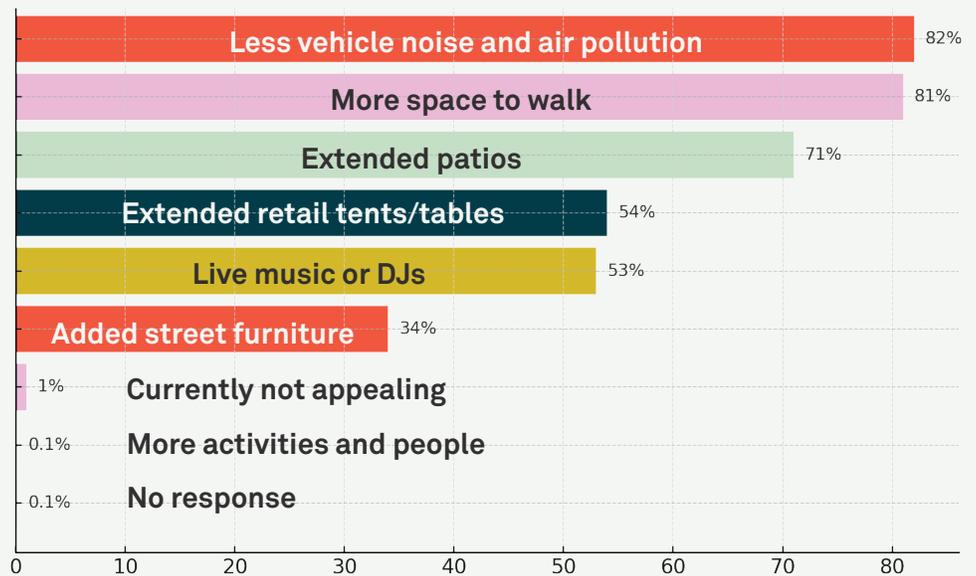
Would you like to see an open street piloted on 17th Ave SW at various times during the summer?

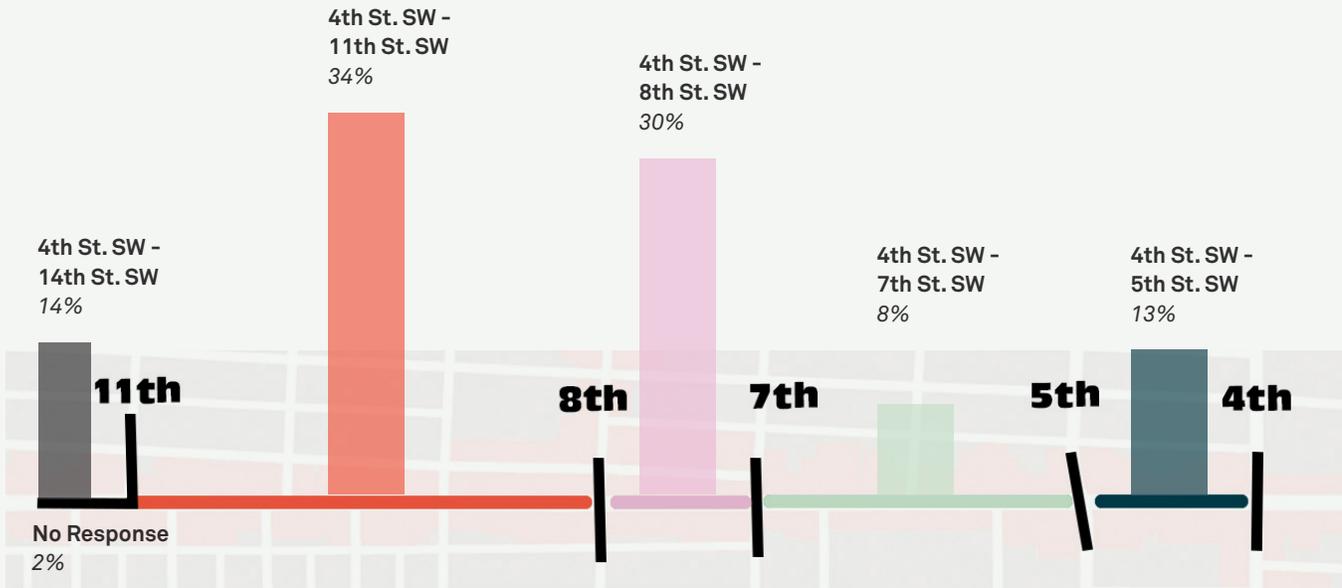
- Yes
- No
- Unsure



What appeals to you about having a 17th Avenue Open Street?
Select all that apply

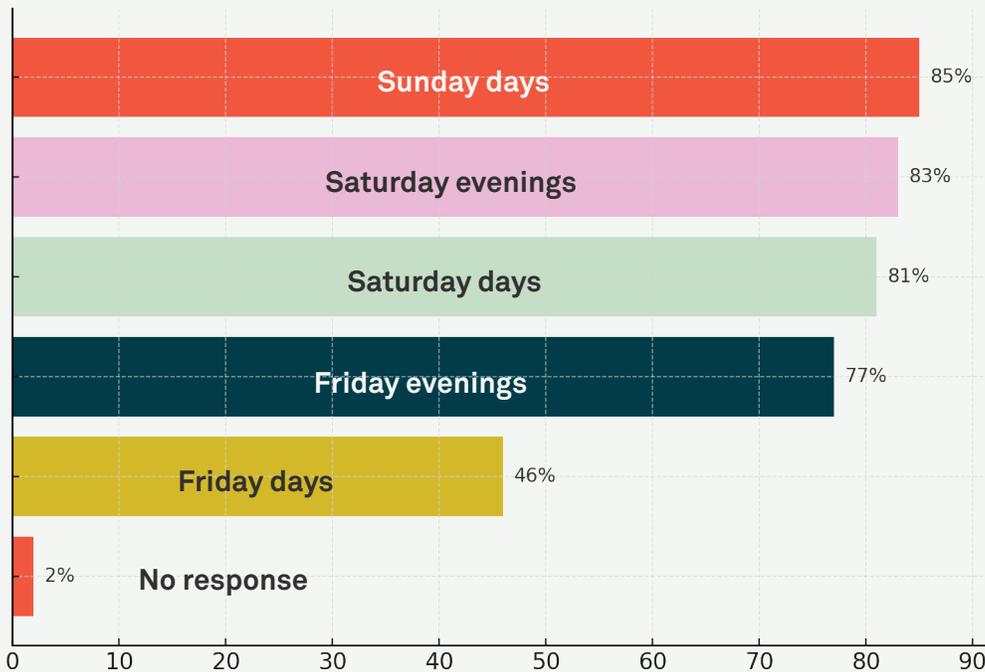
- Less vehicle noise and air pollution
- More space to walk
- Extended patios
- Extended retail tents/DJs
- Added street furniture
- More pedestrian activity
- More activities and foot traffic
- Busier and livelier
- Currently not appealing





Where would you most like to see the open street piloted on 17th Ave SW?

- 4 St SW to 5 St SW
- 4 St SW to 7 St SW
- 4 St SW to 8 St SW
- 4 St SW to 11 St SW
- 4 St SW to 14 St SW

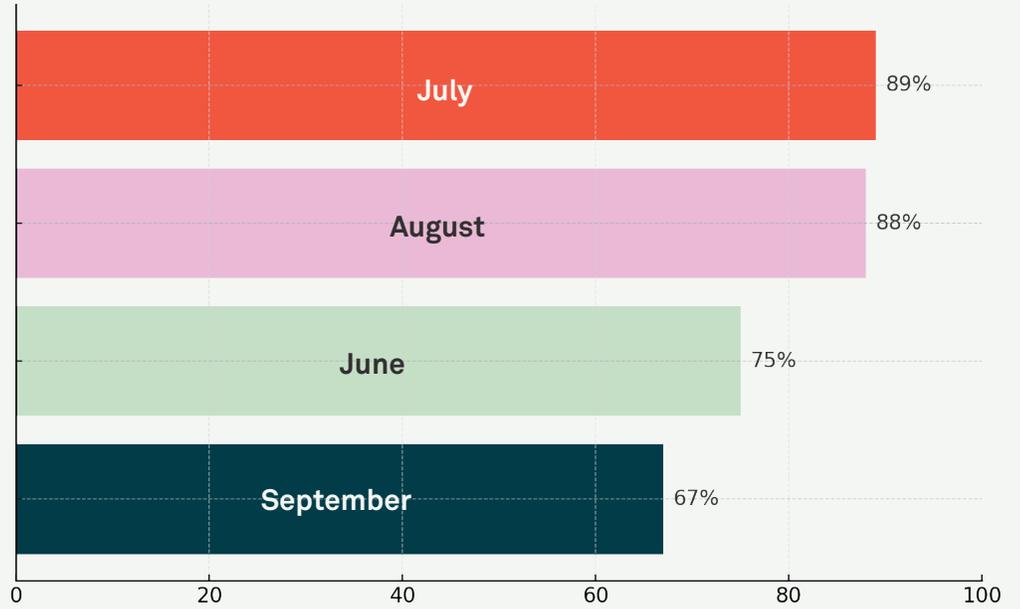


What time of week would you most like to see the open street on 17th Ave? Select all that apply

- Friday days
- Friday evenings
- Saturday days
- Saturday evenings
- Sunday days

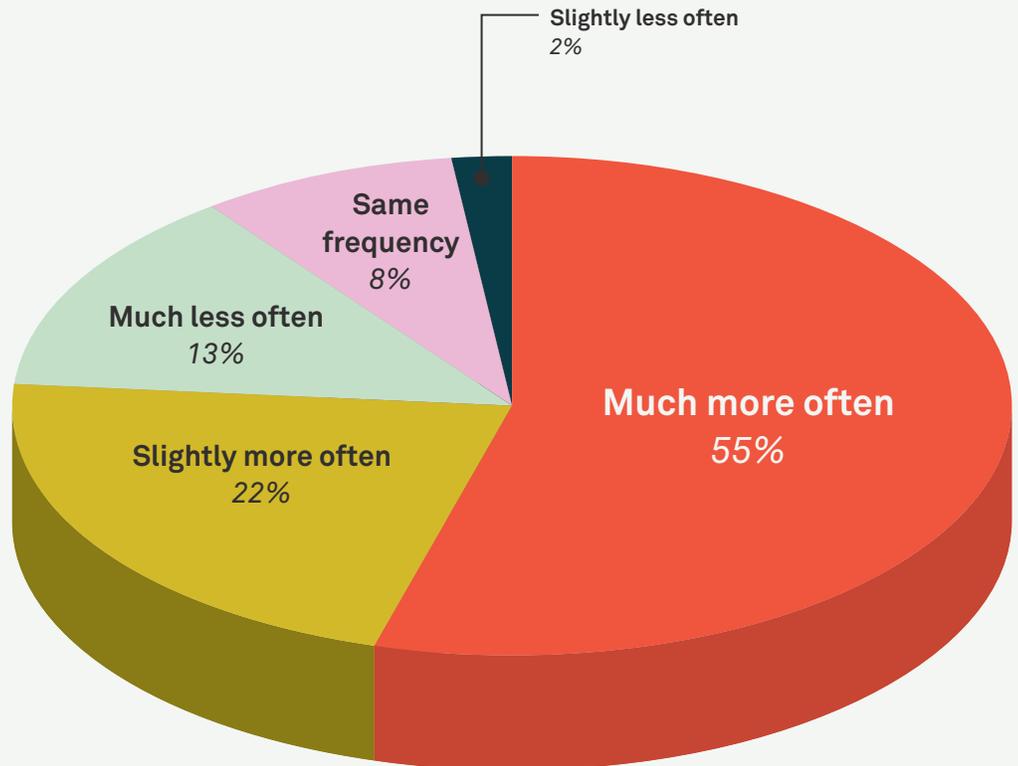
What months would you like to see open streets on 17th Avenue?
 Select all that apply

- June
- July
- August
- September



Would you visit more or less frequently if 17th Ave hosted open streets in the summer?

- Much more often
- Slightly more often
- Same frequency
- Slightly less often
- Much less often



APPENDIX B
BUSINESS
ENGAGEMENT
DATA

Business Engagement Results

The online survey prepared for the 17th Avenue business community was designed to collect data relating to business owners, employers and employees who work on or near 17th Ave SW.

The results to the individual questions are included on the following pages, illustrated according to the percentage or number of responses given for each option provided.

What category best describes your business?

Retail

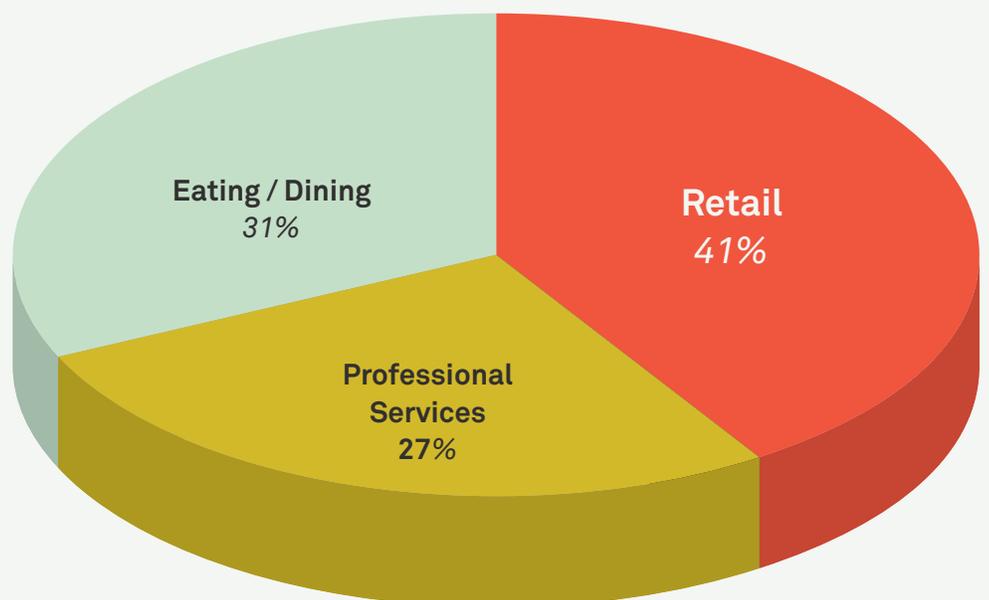
- *Retail*
- *Gas stations*

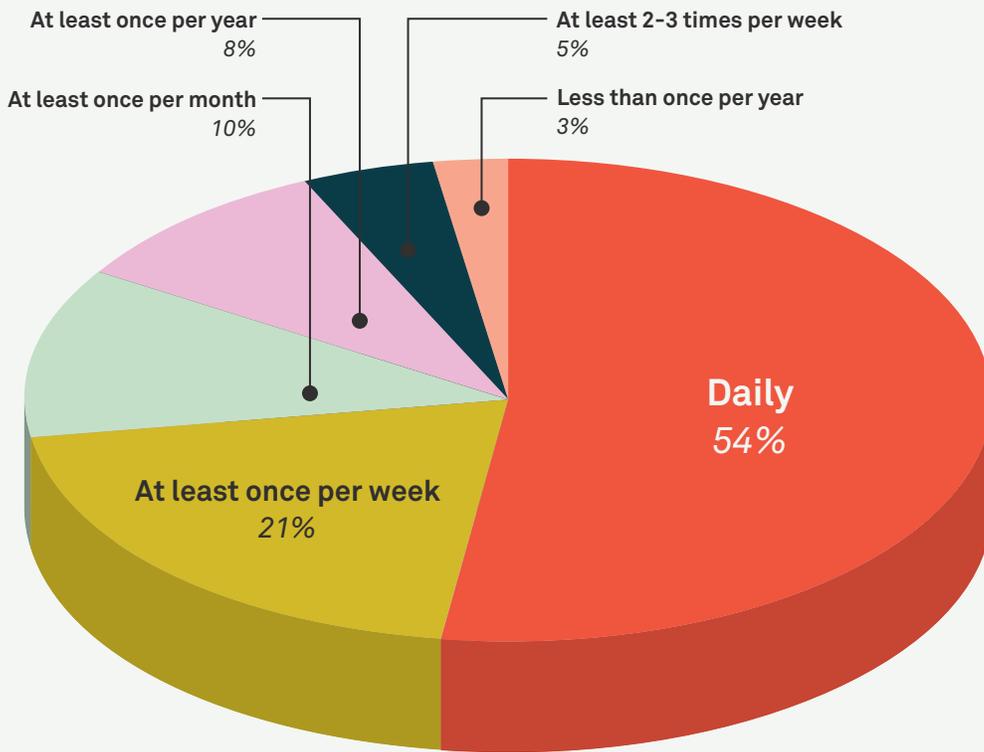
Eating/Dining

- *Eating/Dining*

Professional Services

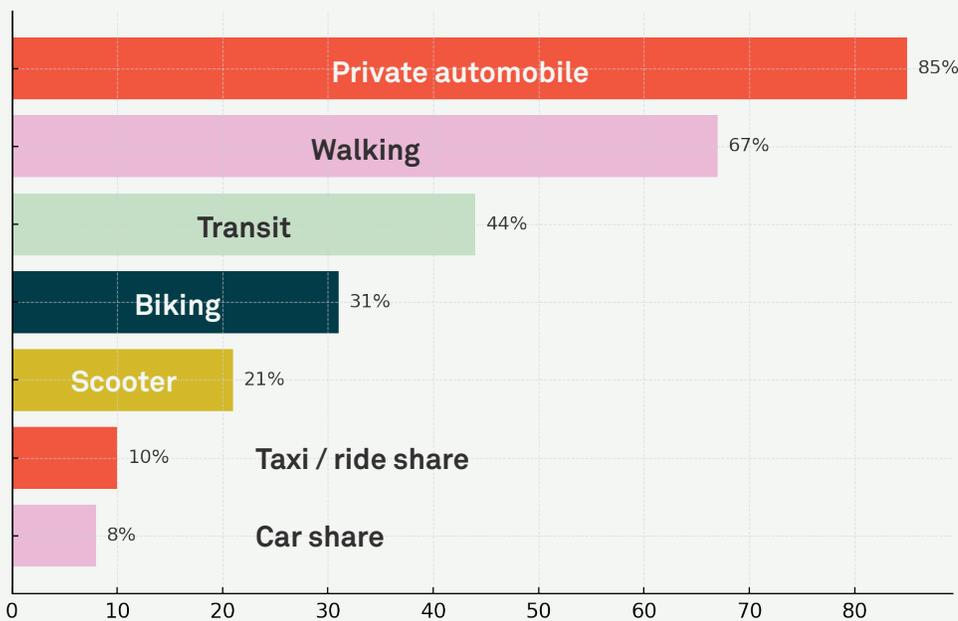
- *Bank & Finance*
- *Chiropractor, acupuncture & massage*
- *Design, architecture & development*
- *Drycleaners & tailors*
- *Health & Wellness*
- *Insurance*
- *Law firms*
- *Marketing & consulting*
- *Medical services*
- *Mental health services*
- *Photography & video*
- *Professional services*
- *Travel services*





How often do you currently visit 17th Ave SW outside of your work hours?

- Daily
- At least 2-3 times per week
- At least once per week
- At least once per month
- At least once per year
- Less than once per year

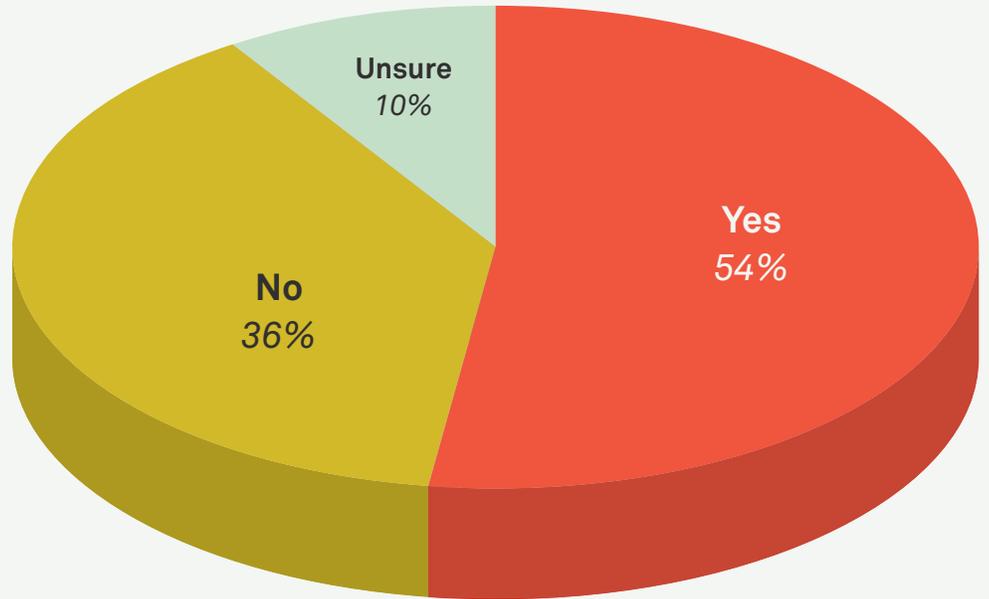


How do your staff typically travel to/ from your business?
Check all that apply

- Walking
- Biking
- Scooter
- Transit
- Taxi / ride share
- Car share
- Private automobile

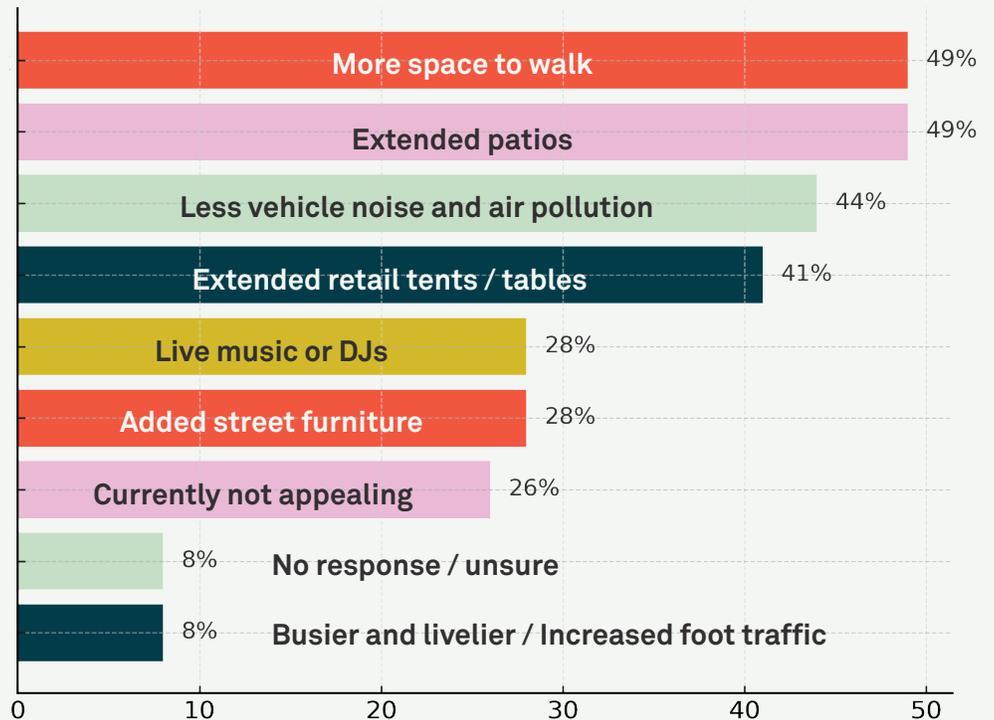
Would you like to see an open street piloted on 17th Ave SW at various times during the summer?

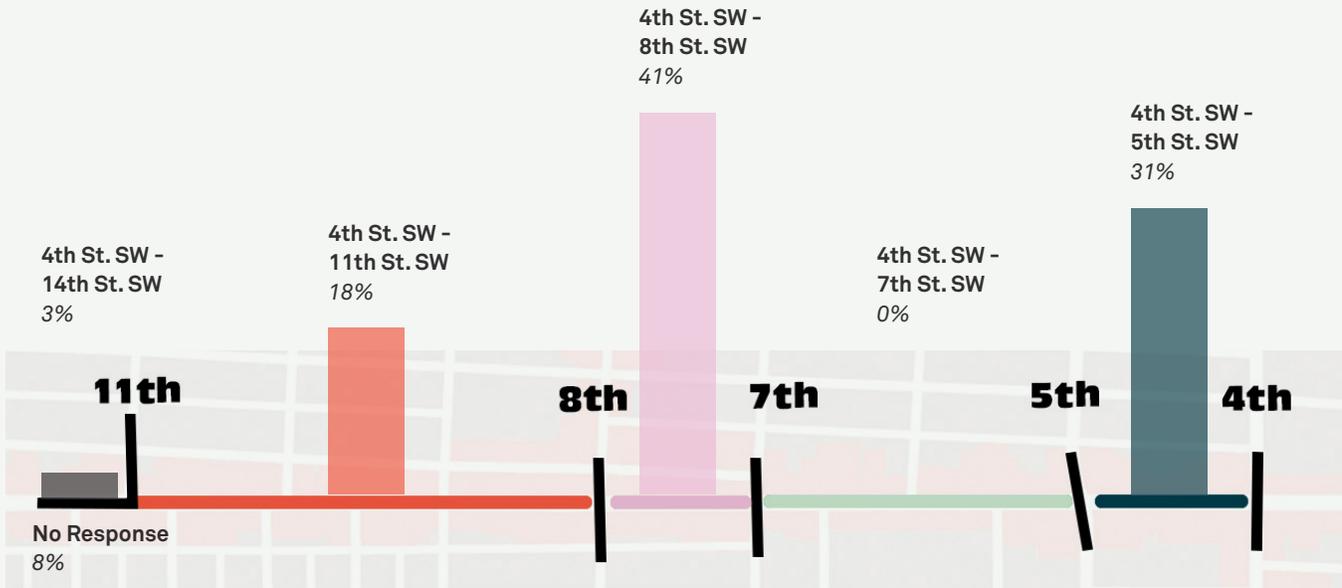
- Yes
- No
- Unsure



What appeals to you about having an 17th Ave Open Street?
Select all that apply

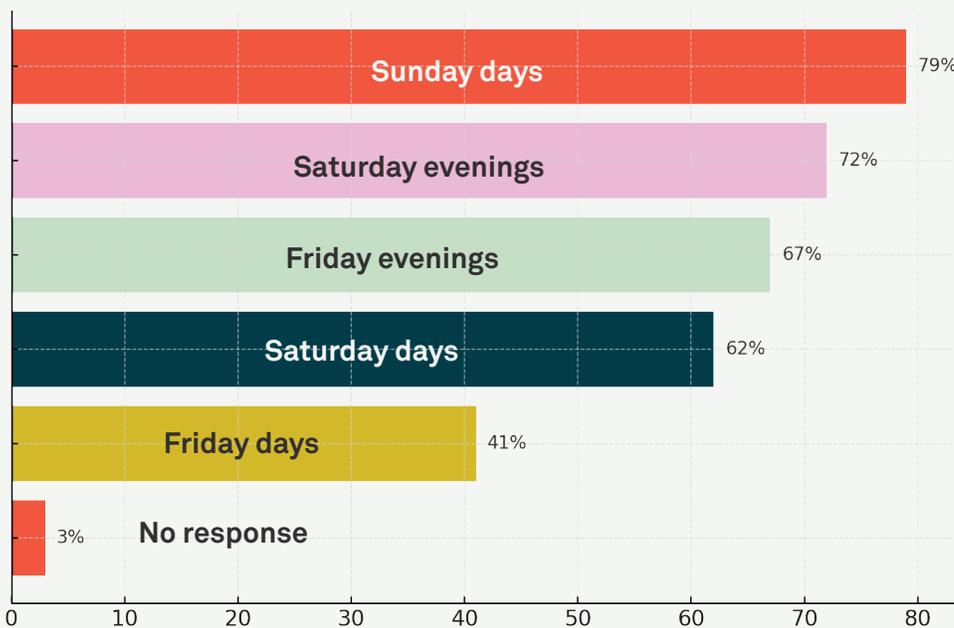
- More space to walk
- Less vehicle noise and air pollution
- Extended patios
- Extended retail tents / tables
- Added street furniture
- Live music or DJs
- Currently not appealing
- No response / unsure
- Busier and livelier / Increased foot traffic





Where would you most like to see the open street piloted on 17th Ave SW?

- 4 St SW to 5 St SW
- 4 St SW to 7 St SW
- 4 St SW to 8 St SW
- 4 St SW to 11 St SW
- 4 St SW to 14 St SW



What time of week would you most like to see the open street on 17th Avenue?

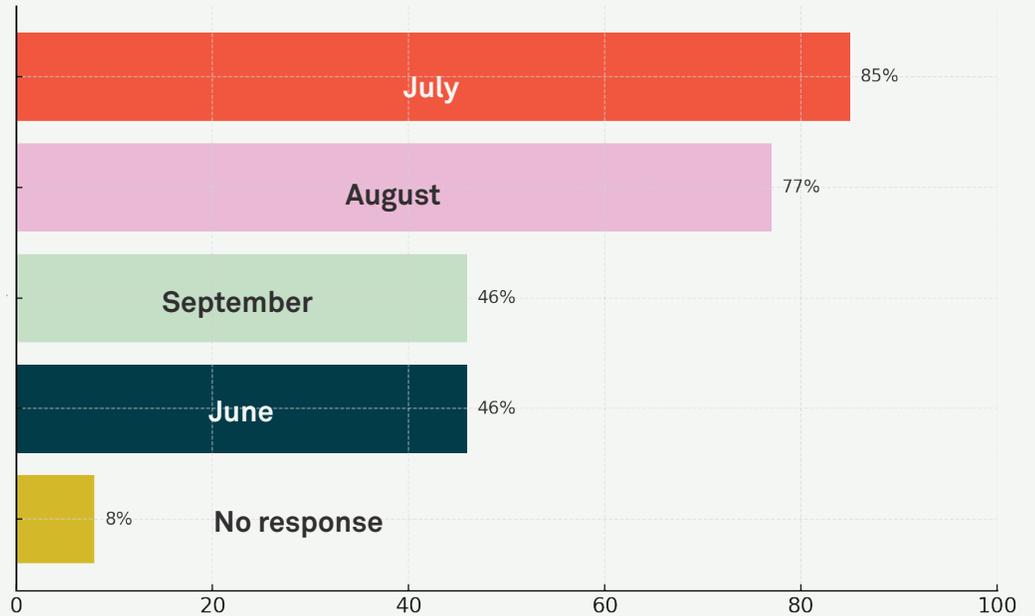
Check all that apply

- Friday days
- Friday evenings
- Saturday days
- Saturday evenings
- Sunday days

What months would you like to see open streets on 17th Avenue?

Select all that apply

- June
- July
- August
- September



Do you think a 17th Avenue Open Street could be beneficial to your business?

- Detrimental to business
- Slightly detrimental to business
- No impact on business
- Slight benefit to business
- Very beneficial to business

