

From: "Levitt, Karen" <karen.levitt@vancouver.ca>

To: "Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"

Date: 8/1/2024 10:21:32 AM

Subject: Water Street Pedestrian Zone Pilot

Dear Mayor and Council,

The GM, Engineering Services will be sending a memo to Council next week summarising early data and findings concerning the Water Street Pedestrian Zone Pilot. As we understand that some members of Council are meeting with the Gastown Business Improvement Society (GBIS) on the near horizon, the GM, Engineering Services is providing the information below as to what the City has learned to date, which may be of use in this meeting.

- **Public feedback from early survey and intercept survey results is extremely positive** 94% positive or somewhat positive about Water St Pedestrian Zone and 88% would like to see something like this return in future summers.
- **Business feedback is mixed:** Almost all appreciate the vibrancy and positive image it has given the neighbourhood, some businesses have told us they've seen an increase in sales and patrons, and some businesses have told us they've seen a decrease in sales and that their patrons are avoiding the neighbourhood because they are worried it will be challenging to access.
- **What the City is doing/how the City is responding:**
 - In response to a request from GBIS, we have canceled two of the full car-free days in August. We will have one car-free day on August 31st, and otherwise will support the Meet me in Gastown event on August 15th which is primarily focused in Maple Tree Square.
 - We are exploring how to increase promotions of the Water Street Pedestrian Zone on our channels and through paid advertisement. Messaging will target a local and Metro Vancouver audience, and also provide information on how to get to Gastown. (This specifically responds to feedback from businesses about the Pedestrian Zone being primarily for tourists.)
 - We have also been working with businesses on specific areas for circulation and curbside changes to support better access.
 - Homeless services staff have added Water Street to their regular route.

Thanks,

Karen

Karen Levitt, Deputy City Manager (she/her)
karen.levitt@vancouver.ca

The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm/Musqueam, Skwxwú7mesh/Squamish and səliłwətał/Tsleil-Waututh nations