

**From:** ["Levitt, Karen" <karen.levitt@vancouver.ca>](mailto:karen.levitt@vancouver.ca)  
**To:** ["Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"](#)  
**Date:** 8/2/2024 2:40:59 PM  
**Subject:** Updates on the Water Street Pedestrian Zone Pilot

---

Dear Mayor and Council,

Additional to the memo shared earlier today concerning the Water Street Pedestrian Zone Pilot, we wanted to follow up on the specific question about options for traffic pattern changes for this summer.

- Staff have also been hearing from some businesses about challenges their patrons are having accessing the neighbourhood.
- Larger changes to vehicular traffic patterns aren't possible this summer, such as a two-way Cordova Street or other significant directional changes that would require signal and signage work.
- Similarly, Water Street and Maple Tree Square cannot be immediately opened to allow motor-vehicles; this would be a significant challenge as most extended patios would need to be removed, as well as seating, planters and the art features to ensure space for pedestrians.
- Determining a new street layout and traffic management measures that would accommodate additional features would take some time to develop a plan that operates safely, but is something that could be explored for future pilots.
- As such, staff's recommended approach is to keep the current traffic patterns for the duration of the pilot and install additional signage highlighting access to the area.

There are a number of specific actions staff are taking to help people more easily access the neighbourhood by vehicle:

- We are installing more wayfinding signage on Hastings Street, Cordova Street, and Main Street to guide drivers into Gastown. These will be installed this weekend.
- We will be installing some additional signage at pick/up and drop off locations in the neighbourhood to make these stand out for drivers and customers. These will be installed this weekend.
- We are launching some promotional advertising encouraging locals in Vancouver and the lower mainland to check out the Water Street Pedestrian Zone and visit Gastown to shop and dine. This will include information about how to access the neighbourhood. This campaign will launch next week.

All the best,

Karen

---

**From:** Levitt, Karen <karen.levitt@vancouver.ca>  
**Sent:** Friday, August 2, 2024 12:21 PM  
**To:** Direct to Mayor and Council - DL  
**Cc:** City Manager's Correspondence Group - DL  
<Jimmy.Zammar@vancouver.ca>

Zammar, Jimmy

10/22/2024

**Subject:** Memo - Updates on the Water St Pedestrian Zone Pilot

Dear Mayor and Council,

Please see the attached memo from Jimmy Zammar, Deputy General Manager, Engineering Services.

- This memo provides early learnings from the Water Street Pedestrian Zone Pilot, with preliminary data from July 2024.
- More information will be distributed to Council on the near horizon, responding to Council recent questions about opening Water Street to vehicles at slow speeds, and with further information on timing of wayfinding and promotional rollout.
- 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 in 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 due to challenges in accessing the neighbourhood.
- Staff are responding to this feedback by increasing promotions of the Water Street Pedestrian Zone, working with businesses to support better access in specific areas, and adding signage denoting access to Gastown; two of the full car-free days in August have also been canceled in response to requests from the Gastown Business Improvement Society (GBIS).
- Staff will be continuing to collect survey data, pedestrian counts and economic data, and will report back with this to Council in the fall.

All the best,

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 səlilwətaʔ/Tsleil-Waututh nations