CENTREPLAN 2050

Phase 1 Public Engagement Summary

Background

The City of Winnipeg (City) is making a long-term plan that will guide investment and development in Downtown Winnipeg for the next 30 years.

CentrePlan 2050 will guide investment in Downtown parks, streets, and buildings. The plan will help transform:

- What Downtown looks like
- How we get around
- How we experience Downtown

We're not starting CentrePlan 2050 from scratch. There are over 80 plans and strategies that look at our Downtown, developed by the City and key Downtown stakeholders, since 2000. The project team is reviewing these previous Downtown studies and strategies. They are also engaging with stakeholders and residents to determine which goals and actions to include in CentrePlan 2050.

To create CentrePlan 2050, we are asking for feedback on five key themes:



Living & visiting Downtown



Greening Downtown



Getting around Downtown



Building Downtown



Re-imagining Graham Avenue

The themes of CentrePlan 2050 are all connected. They all support the goal of CentrePlan 2050 – to get more people living and visiting Downtown.

As part of this project, we are also creating:

- Downtown Urban Design Guidelines
- A Streetscape Design Standards Manual
- A design of key Downtown Bike Routes
- A redesign of Graham Avenue

The project is organized into three phases. The first phase is now complete. This report summarizes what we heard from participants during Phase 1 engagement. Feedback is organized by the five key themes of CentrePlan 2050.

Engagement

In February 2022, the project team met with the Downtown Plan Stakeholder Advisory Committee. In the meeting, the project team provided background information. They also went over the process for developing CentrePlan 2050. The advisory committee is comprised of a variety of perspectives, knowledge, and skills related to Downtown.

In August 2022, key Downtown stakeholders were invited to take part in a workshop. Feedback from the workshop will help to inform the goals, actions, and policies in the plan. Meetings with key Downtown stakeholders took place throughout Phase 1. Meetings will be on-going throughout creation of the plan.

From May 11 to June 15, 2023, the public was invited to provide input on the key themes of CentrePlan 2050. Feedback was collected online and in-person. The project team also held many stakeholder meetings, organized by topic.

Table 1 provides an overview of all public and stakeholder engagement opportunities.

Table 1: Public and stakeholder engagement opportunities

Date	Activity	Details
August 17, 2022	Stakeholder workshop	34 participants Notes in Appendix B.2.
May 11 – June 15, 2023	Project webpage	7,300 visits
May 11 – June 15, 2023	Online surveys	3,879 responses See appendices for full results. Responses by theme: • Living & visiting Downtown (1286 responses) • Greening Downtown (656 responses) • Getting around Downtown (697 responses) • Building Downtown (587 responses) • Re-imagining Graham Avenue (653 responses)
May 11 – June 15, 2023	Online mapping tools	236 pins See appendices for full results. Pins by theme: • Greening Downtown (164 pins) • Building Downtown (22 pins) • Re-imagining Graham Avenue (50 pins)
May 11 – June 15, 2023	Online ideas board	106 ideas Ideas in Appendix B.7.

Date	Activity	Details
May 24, 2023	Stakeholder workshop: Getting around Downtown	18 participants Notes in Appendix D.2.
May 24, 2023	Stakeholder workshop: Building Downtown	24 participants Notes in Appendix E.2.
May 25, 2023	Open house	402 participants Open house boards
May 26, 2023	Stakeholder workshop: Re-imagining Graham Avenue	25 participants Notes in Appendix F.2.
May 30, 2023	Graham avenue pop-up	32 participants Feedback in Appendix F.4.
May 31, 2023	Exchange District residents' workshop	30 participants Notes in Appendix D.6.
June 13, 2023	Youth engagement: Level-up Winnipeg	50 participants Notes in Appendix G.2.

Promotion

Public engagement opportunities were promoted using the following methods:

- News release – May 11, 2023
- Facebook posts with over 37,000 followers - May 11 to June 15, 2023
- X (formerly Twitter) posts with over 119,000 followers – May 11 to June 15, 2023
- Instagram posts with 2,700 followers - May 11 to June 15, 2023
- LinkedIn posts with 39,000 followers - May 11 to June 15, 2023
- Postcards mailed to over 19,000 Downtown residents and businesses
- Posters in 150 Downtown locations
- City of Winnipeg public engagement newsletter with over 5,000 recipients – May 12 and 29, 2023
- Clean Air Day Commuter Challenge – June 7, 2023

See Appendix A for promotional material.

Media coverage

In May and June 2023, there were several stories published about the project as well as being featured on CTV Morning Live Winnipeg and in a Downtown Biz eNews Memo. Headlines included:

- City proposes massive changes in downtown redevelopment
- Reimagining downtown — for people
- Put your money where your mouth is when it comes to Winnipeg's downtown
- How the city plans to improve Winnipeg's downtown and make it a destination
- Winnipeg's plan to improve downtown
- Downtown's new vision – how you can participate

Key findings

Make Downtown a community and a destination, not a place to drive through.



- **53%** of respondents travel through Downtown to get where they are going
- **65%** like the arts, culture, and entertainment options; **28%** like the atmosphere/vibe of Downtown
- **9%** strongly or somewhat agree that Downtown Winnipeg is family friendly
- Comments emphasized that to make Downtown better we must prioritize pedestrians, cyclists, and public transportation users over those of motorized vehicles.

Create a walkable and bike-friendly neighbourhood.



- **75%** indicated that the most important thing this City should do to improve Downtown streets is make it easier, safer, and more comfortable to walk Downtown.
- **20%** of respondents strongly or somewhat agree that Downtown Winnipeg is bike friendly; **23%** agree it is pedestrian friendly

Make Downtown beautiful and accessible for all.



- **68%** indicated there are too few parks Downtown
- Comments highlighted the need for a Downtown that is designed for people of all ages and abilities, clean and maintained, and has more and better existing green spaces, parks, and trees.

Address crime, homelessness, addiction, and mental health issues.



- **73%** indicated that improved community safety and well-being would make Downtown better (rated #1 out of 10 options)
- Community safety and well-being is the most common theme identified and seen as critical to creating a safer and more vibrant Downtown.

Grocery stores are the top desired amenity needed Downtown.



- **91%** of respondents indicated there are too few grocery stores Downtown
- Respondents that would or may consider living Downtown identified grocery stores as the top amenity needed Downtown.

Protect and enhance the character of heritage buildings.



- The top thing participants like about Downtown is the architecture/heritage buildings (**66%**).
- **58%** indicated that buildings should fit with the character of the neighbourhood/street (including heritage buildings).

Downtown needs more people.



- Participants emphasized that Downtown would be safer and more vibrant if more people lived Downtown.
- More affordable housing/rent was rated 4th out of 10 options that would make Downtown Winnipeg better.

Who we heard from

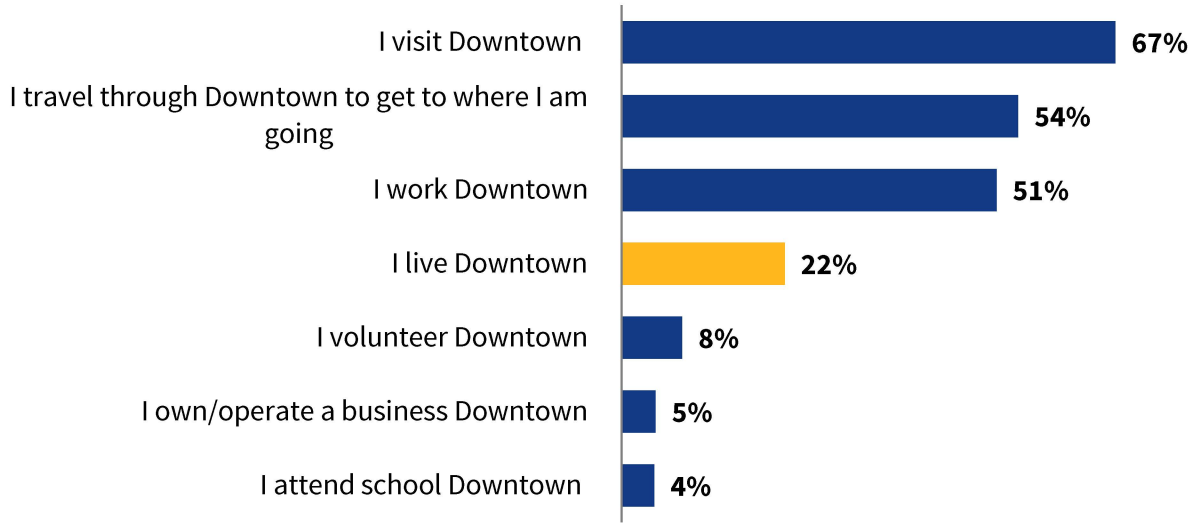
Participants included residents, community stakeholders, community leaders, Indigenous representatives, local business associations, business owners, developers, as well as not-for-profit, health, and post-secondary organizations. We heard from Winnipeggers from across the city and all age demographics, including youth.

During the month that the surveys were open, we received 3,879 responses. A map of respondent location by postal code can be found in Appendix J.

On each of the five surveys, we asked participants their connection to Downtown. An average of those results indicates that almost one quarter (22 percent) of survey respondents live Downtown. Survey respondents also indicated that they that work, visit, volunteer, attend school, own/operate a business or travel through Downtown (**Figure 1**).

Figure 1: Connection to Downtown Winnipeg

What is your connection to Downtown? Select all that apply.





Living & visiting Downtown

During Phase 1 engagement, we gathered feedback to help understand what would make Downtown a better place to live and visit. A summary of engagement opportunities related to this topic and the corresponding notes and feedback received can be found in Appendix B.

Who we heard from

Survey respondents that live Downtown (22 percent):	
	45% of respondents that live Downtown also work Downtown
	55% have lived Downtown 5 years or less **29%** have lived Downtown 10+ years
	59% rent **41%** own

Survey respondents that do not live Downtown (78 percent):	
	70% come Downtown weekly or more in warm weather months **59%** come Downtown weekly or more in cold weather months
	50% use a car to get Downtown in warm weather months **63%** use a car to get Downtown in cold weather months
	28% would consider living Downtown **24%** may consider living Downtown

What we heard – Living and visiting Downtown

What do you like about Downtown?

We asked survey respondents that live Downtown what they like most about living Downtown. We also asked all survey respondents and participants at the open house what they like about Downtown.

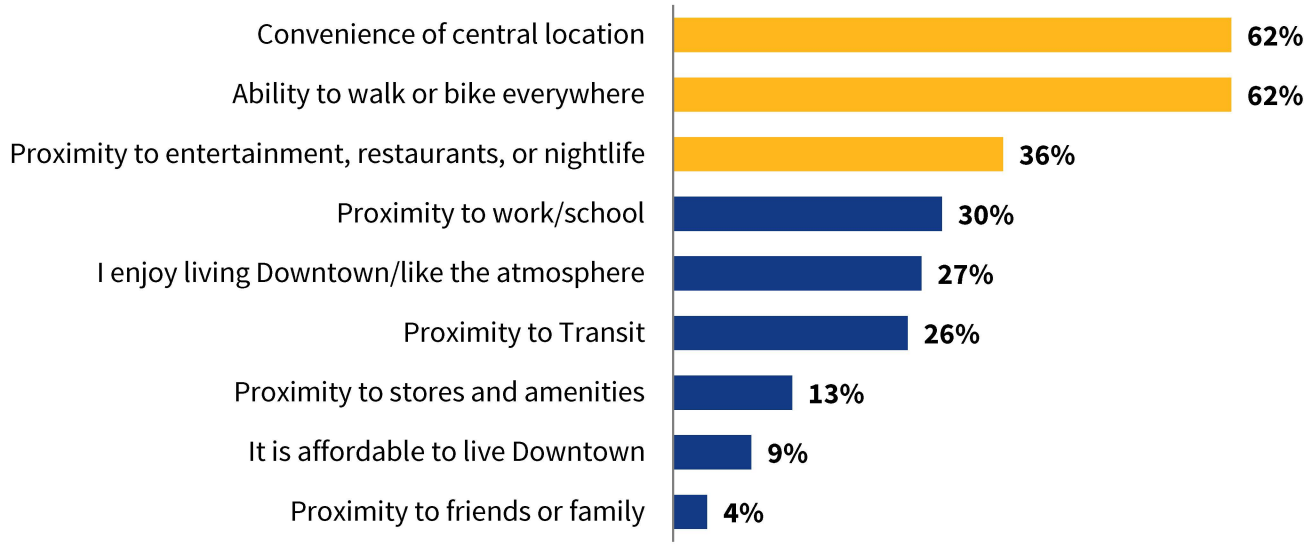
Positive views about living Downtown (residents)

The top three things residents like about living Downtown include:

- Convenience of central location (62 percent)
- Ability to walk or bike everywhere (62 percent)
- Proximity to entertainment, restaurants, or nightlife (36 percent)

Figure 2: Positive views about living Downtown

What do you like most about living Downtown? Select up to three choices.



Total responses: 266 (18 skipped this question)

Similarly, survey participants that indicated they may or would consider living Downtown were attracted to it for its convenience and proximity to amenities. These preferences highlight the advantages of urban living in Downtown Winnipeg.

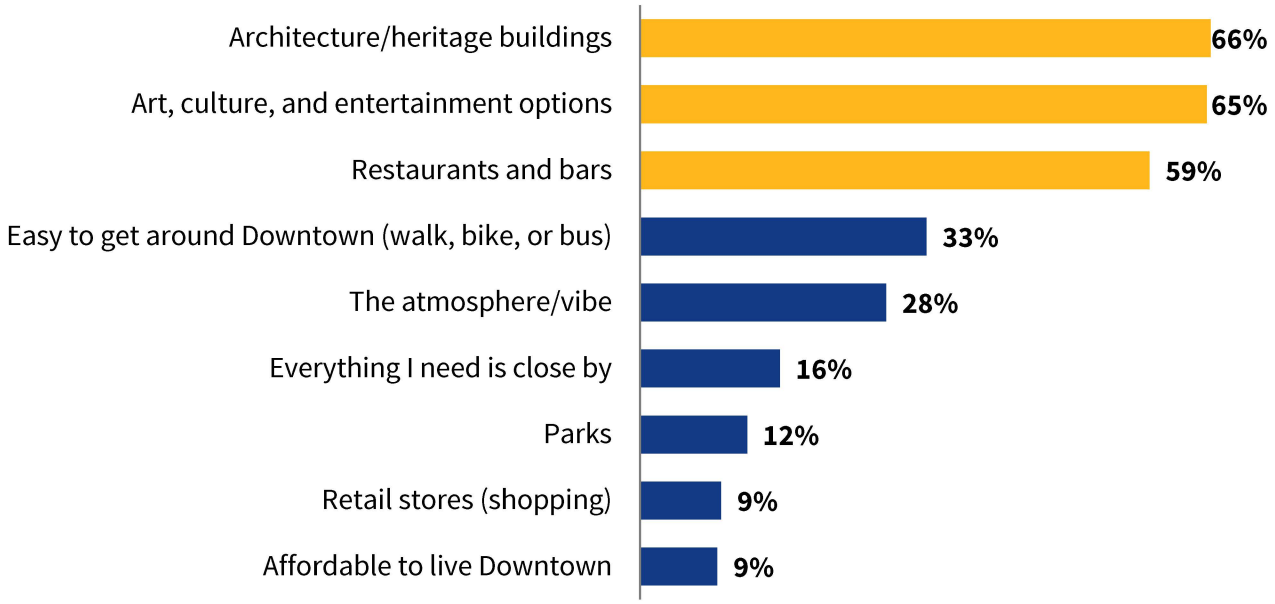
Positive views about Downtown (all survey respondents)

The top three things that survey respondents like about Downtown include:

- Architecture/heritage buildings (66 percent)
- Art, culture, and entertainment options (65 percent)
- Restaurants and bars (59 percent)

Figure 3: Positive views about Downtown

What do you like about Downtown? Select up to three choices.



Total responses: 1,164 (122 skipped this question)

Open house participants had similar results except that they rated "Easy to get around Downtown" third in the list of choices and "Restaurants and bars" fourth. Open house notes can be found in Appendix B.4.

What would make Downtown a better place to live or visit?

We asked participants what would make Downtown a better place to live or visit. The following key themes emerged and are described below:

- Address crime, homelessness, addiction, and mental health issues
- Create a walkable and bike-friendly neighbourhood
- Grocery stores are the top desired amenity needed Downtown
- Downtown needs more housing
- Downtown needs more/better parks, green spaces, and trees
- Clean and maintain public spaces

Address crime, homelessness, addiction, and mental health issues

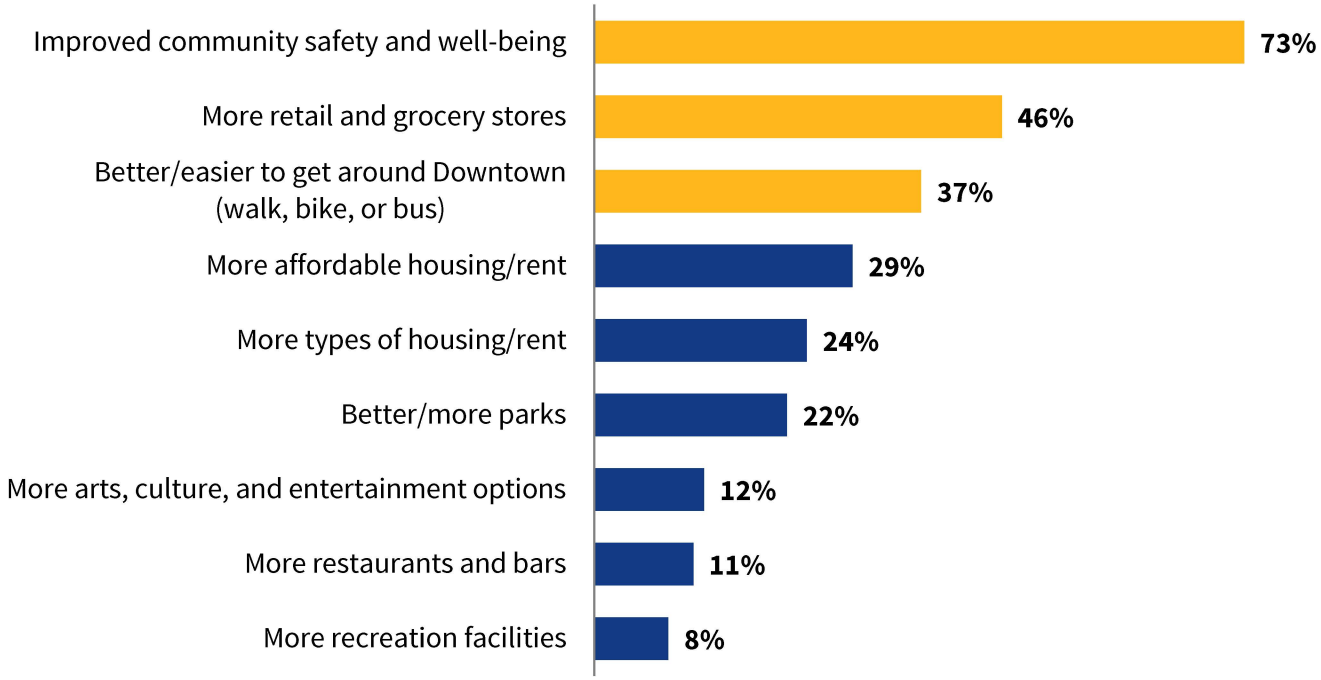
Addressing crime, homelessness, addiction, and mental health issues are seen as critical components of creating a safer and more vibrant Downtown.

When asked what would make Downtown Winnipeg better, improved community safety and well-being was rated highest amongst participants through the survey (see Figure 4), open house, and at the Exchange District residents' workshop. In addition, many ideas related to community safety and well-being were submitted though the online

ideas board to get more people Downtown, for more hours every day. Youth projects submitted through Level up Winnipeg emphasized a committment to addressing homelessness and addiction issues (see Appendix G).

Figure 4: Views on improving Downtown Winnipeg

What would make Downtown Winnipeg better? Select your top three choices.



Total responses: 1,164 (122 skipped this question)

Comments noted by participants include:

- Increase police presence
- Focus on community policing, foot patrols, and collaborating with support services
- Increase support services for vulnerable populations, such as unsheltered individuals and those struggling with addiction
- Increase community amentities, such as public washrooms
- Provide hosuing for unsheleterd individuals

> *"I would love to go for a walk and not feel unsafe. I would love for the streets to be clean when I walk to work. I would love for those in homelessness to receive the help and care that they desperately need and deserve."*
> *-Survey respondent*

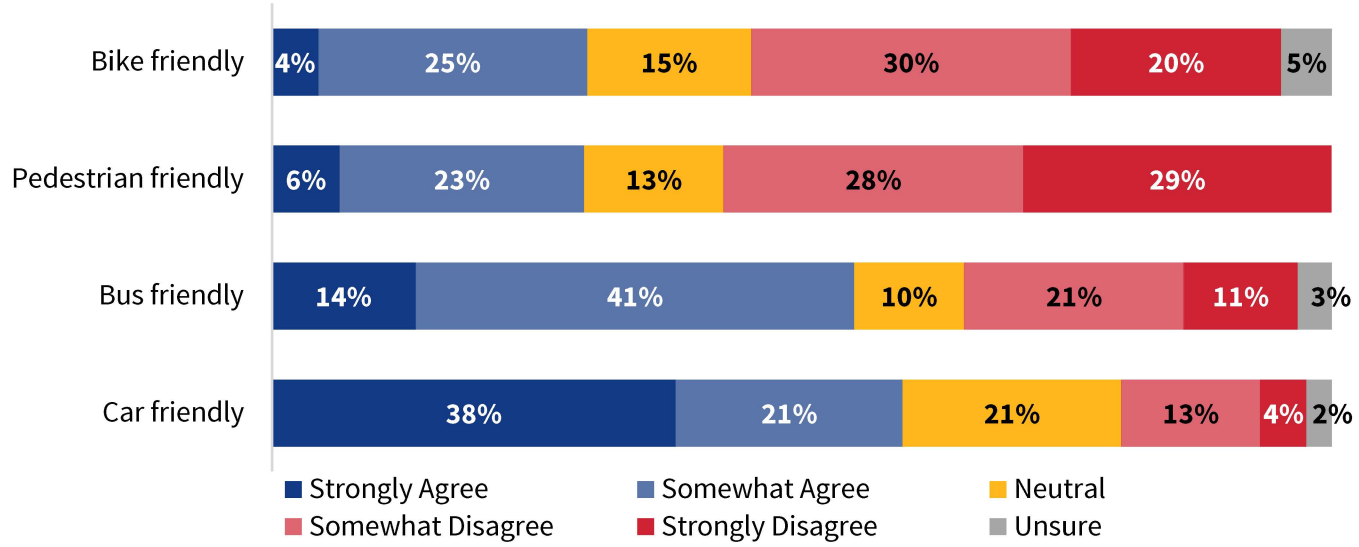
Create a walkable and bike-friendly neighbourhood

The desire for a highly walkable and bike-friendly neighbourhood was evident as a way to make Downtown more liveable, vibrant, and reduce reliance on cars.

One of the top things survey participants like living about Downtown is the ability to walk or bike everywhere. However, less than one-third of participants that live Downtown strongly or somewhat agree that Downtown Winnipeg is bike or pedestrian-friendly (Figure 5). This suggests a potential gap between survey respondents' preferences and their view of the current infrastructure and amenities in the Downtown.

Figure 5: Downtown Residents' views on getting around Downtown

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Downtown Winnipeg is…



Total responses: 255 Downtown residents (29 skipped this question)

Comments highlighted by participants include:

- Prioritize the needs and safety of pedestrians, cyclists, and public transportation users over those of motorized vehicles
- Reduce reliance on cars
- Improve transit and make it more affordable
- Improve accessibility for people of all ages and abilities
- Create better and safer parking solutions for residents, their guests, and visitors

> *"Focus on pedestrian traffic and the living experience. Don't build it for people to drive through, make it a place to live and stay."*
> *-Survey respondent*

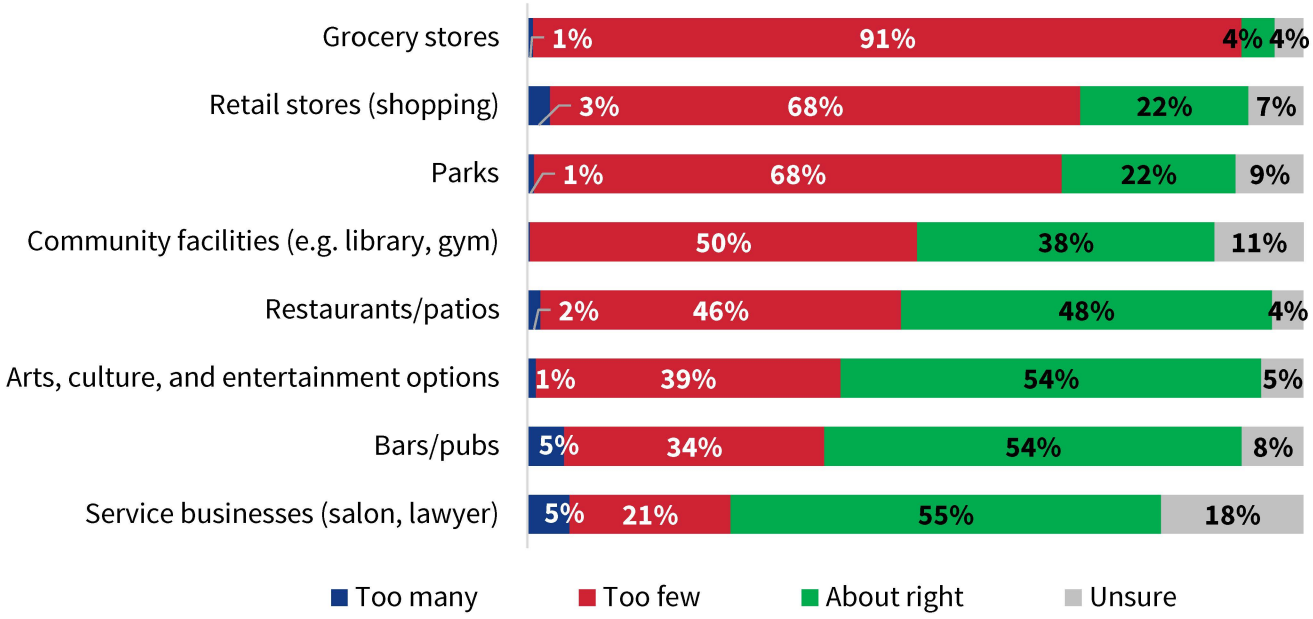
Grocery stores are the top desired amenity needed Downtown

The need for more grocery stores, especially full-service ones, was highlighted. Participants want convenient access to fresh and affordable food options within Downtown.

Most survey respondents indicated that there are too few grocery stores (91 percent; Figure 6). This number goes up to 94 percent when filtered for people that live Downtown. Participants also rated 'more retail and grocery stores' second from of a list of ten options that would make Downtown Winnipeg better. Feedback on this question was consistent through the survey, open house, and at the Exchange District residents' workshop.

Figure 6: Views on Downtown amenities

Does Downtown have too many, too few, or about the right number of the following?



Total responses: 1,164 (122 skipped this question)

Downtown needs more housing

Participants emphasized that Downtown would be safer and more vibrant if more people lived Downtown. To get more people living Downtown, participants indicated that we need more housing, especially affordable housing. Comments noted by participants include:

- Create more affordable housing and improve the quality of affordable housing
- Consider the types of housing needed to meet a range of needs, such as the need for larger apartments
- Encourage mixed-use development that includes residential, commercial, and recreational spaces
- Create more incentives to support the development of housing Downtown
- Convert surface parking lots to residential or multi-use development

At a stakeholder workshop in August 2022, participants identified where residential development should occur, and what is needed to support that development. See notes in Appendix B.2.

Downtown needs more/better parks, green spaces, and trees

Participants highlighted the need for more and better existing green spaces, parks, and trees in the Downtown area, contributing healthier and more beautiful spaces. Comments noted by participants include:

- Prioritize improving and maintaining existing green spaces and parks
- Create new parks of all sizes, both large and small, including dog parks
- Establish community gardens
- Plant more trees
- Convert surface parking lots to parks or green spaces
- Keep parks clean and free of garbage

Over two-thirds (68 percent) of survey participants indicated that Downtown has too few parks and 22 percent indicated that there are about the right number of parks Downtown.

> *"Add more green spaces (does not need to necessarily be parks specifically, but things like street trees and small green spaces)."*
> *-Survey respondent*

Clean and maintain public spaces

Concerns over safety and cleanliness were often cited together. Participant comments noted cleanliness and maintenance issues such as:

- Garbage collection
- Snow removal
- Graffiti removal
- Repairs to streets and sidewalks
- Overall beautification of streets

Youth engagement

In April 2023, Level Up Winnipeg launched in collaboration with Microsoft Canada, Minecraft Education, Winnipeg's six school divisions, the Division scolaire franco-manitobaine, Lord Selkirk, Balmoral Hall, and the City of Winnipeg.

Through Level Up Winnipeg, local students had a chance to use the popular Minecraft videogame to re-imagine our Downtown. Using what they learned through the game, students built something in the Minecraft Winnipeg world and uploaded a short video explaining their projects.

Hundreds of students submitted their projects, and of these, select project summaries from Winnipeg school divisions were submitted for analysis as part of the CentrePlan 2050. Overall, project ideas reflect a holistic approach to re-imagining Downtown that consider and embrace environmental sustainability, culture, social support, and accessibility. Ideas are summarized in Appendix G.

At the Level Up celebration event, students shared their big ideas to get more people Downtown. Overall, students' ideas indicate they want to make the city better for everyone by including everyone, being easy to get around, and not hurting the environment. Key themes included:

- Making homes affordable
- Helping people in need
- Taking care of the environment
- Making the city easy to get around for everyone
- Providing fun things to do



Greening Downtown

During Phase 1 engagement, we gathered feedback to help develop a greening plan for Downtown. A summary of engagement opportunities related to this topic and the corresponding notes and feedback received can be found in Appendix C.

Who we heard from

Survey respondents (all):	
	98% have visited a Downtown park in the last year
	Old Market Square was the most visited city-owned park
	54% visit Downtown parks weekly or more in warm weather months **25%** visit Downtown parks weekly or more in cold weather months
	35% walk to get to parks most often

Survey respondents that live Downtown (24 percent):	
	99% have visited a Downtown park in the last year
	Old Market Square was the most visited city-owned park
	76% visit Downtown parks weekly or more in warm weather months **40%** visit Downtown parks weekly or more in cold weather months
	72% walk to get to parks most often

What we heard – Greening Downtown

Goals for Greening Downtown

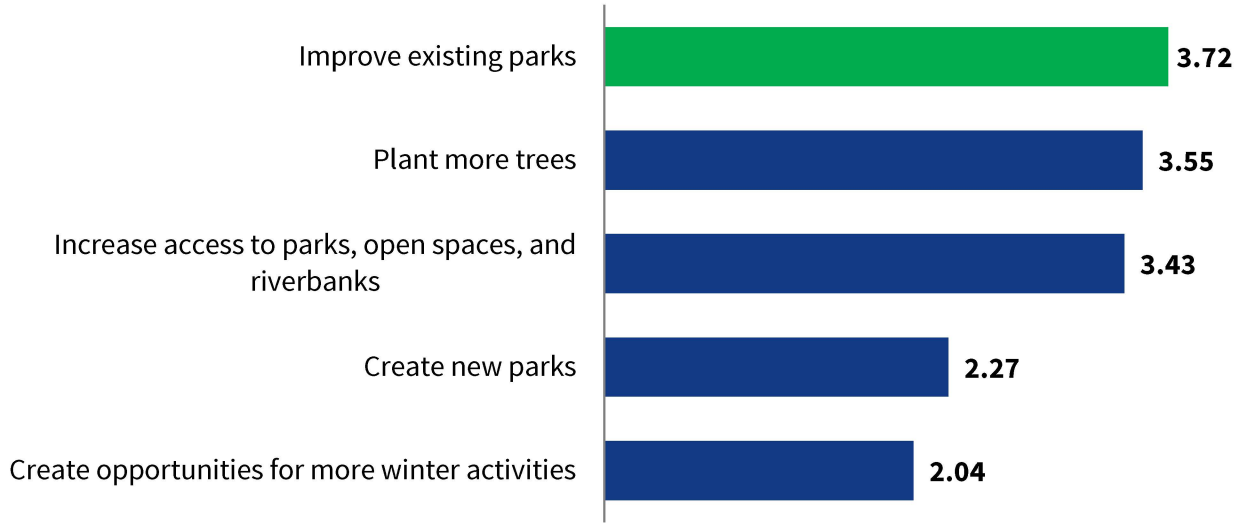
The Winnipeg Parks Strategy provides a long-term vision for Winnipeg's parks. CentrePlan 2050 will include specific goals and actions for Downtown identified in the Parks Strategy:

- Increase access to parks, open spaces, and riverbanks
- Create new parks
- Improve existing parks
- Plant more trees
- Create opportunities for more winter activities

Survey respondents were asked to prioritize the goals for greening Downtown. Improve existing parks ranked highest followed by plant more trees. Figure 7 below indicates the average ranking score of the five goals for greening Downtown. Options are displayed from highest priority to lowest priority.

Figure 7: Goals for greening Downtown

How would you prioritize the goals for greening Downtown?



Total responses: 600 (56 skipped this question)

"Greenspaces are so crucial for adaptation to climate change, supporting mental health, developing connections to the natural world, having space to meet people. I value all these priorities."
-Survey respondent

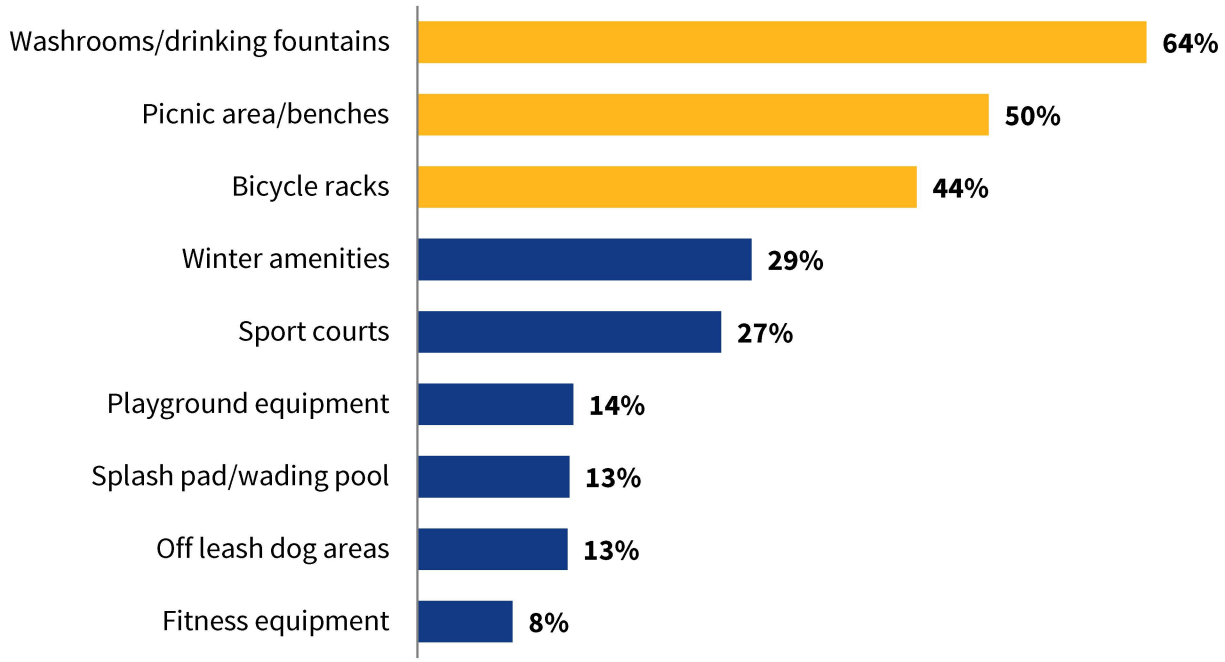
Improve existing parks

We asked participants which Downtown parks need improvement and which amenities Downtown parks need most. Several Downtown parks were noted by participants as needing improvement at the open house, Exchange District residents' workshop, and through the online mapping tool. As shown in Figure 8, the top three amenities indicated by survey respondents include:

- Washrooms/drinking fountains (64 percent)
- Picnic area/benches (50 percent)
- Bicycle racks (44 percent)

Figure 8: Amenities at Downtown parks

Which amenities do you think Downtown parks need most? Select your top three choices.



Total responses: 597 (59 skipped this question)

Survey responses to this question were consistent with open house participants (see Appendix C.3). The online mapping tool allowed participants to provide feedback and indicate amenities they would like added to specific parks. Results of the mapping tool can be found in Appendix C.6.

> *"There are a fair number of green spaces downtown already, but many of them are poorly maintained, do not have great amenities or do not feel safe. Improving the existing parks should be a higher priority than developing new ones."*
> *-Survey respondent*

Plant more trees

Planting more trees and greenery, especially those resilient to Winnipeg's climate, was a common theme noted by participants. Trees and greenery provide shade, can contribute to aesthetics, and have environmental benefits.

Increase access to parks, open spaces, and riverbanks

Comments noted by participants included:

- Riverbanks are currently underutilized
- Focus on pedestrian, bike, and transit access to get to parks
- Incorporate wayfinding to get to parks and provide better signage at parks
- Enhance infrastructure to better connect existing parks with other Downtown areas

Create new parks

We asked participants to identify possible locations for new Downtown parks. Several possible locations for new Downtown parks were noted by participants at the open house, Exchange District residents' workshop, and through the online mapping tool. Comments noted by participants included:

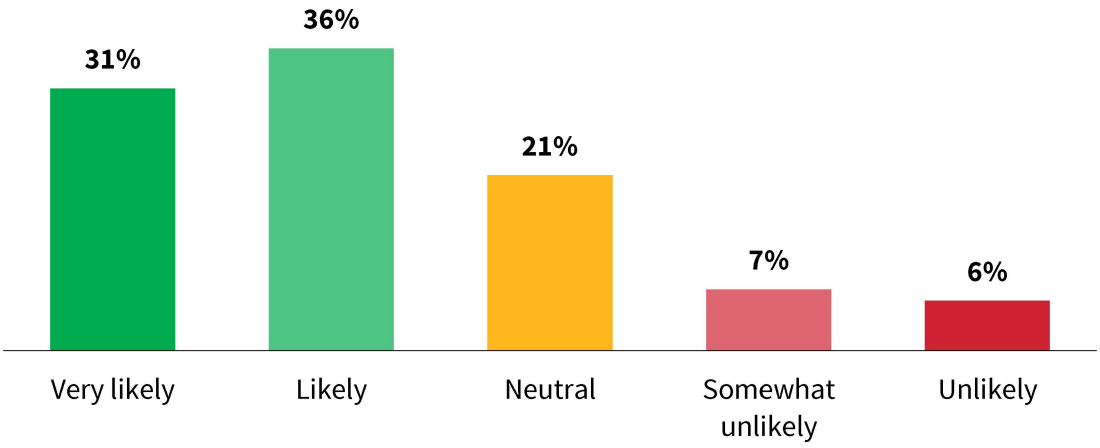
- Create new parks and green spaces, both small and large
- Convert surface parking lots and concrete areas into green areas, community gardens, or other recreational spaces
- Create public spaces that are safe and where everyone feels welcome, including more family-friendly parks

Create opportunities for more winter activities

Currently, only 25 percent of survey respondents visit parks during cold weather months weekly or more. If Downtown parks had more winter amenities, two-thirds of survey respondents (67 percent) indicated they are likely or very likely to visit them more often (See Figure 9).

Figure 9: Likelihood of visiting parks with more winter amenities

If Downtown parks had more winter amenities, how likely would you be to visit them more often?



Total responses: 597 (59 skipped this question)



Getting around Downtown

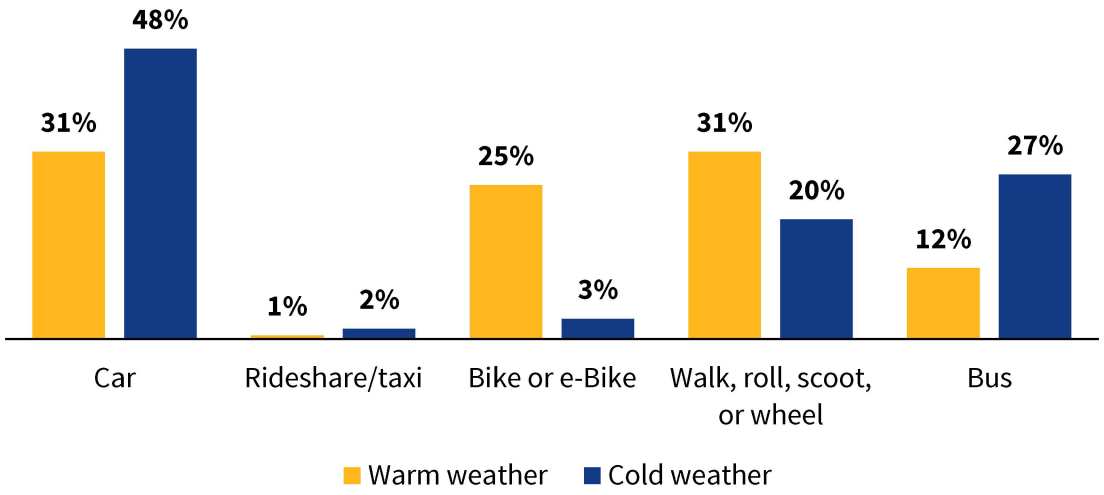
As part of CentrePlan 2050 we are creating a Streetscape Design Standards Manual. The manual will help us plan how our streets will look and function over the long-term. During Phase 1 engagement, we gathered feedback to help inform draft guidelines for how we design Downtown streets, as well the design of three key bike routes. A summary of engagement opportunities related to this topic and the corresponding notes and feedback received can be found in Appendix D.

Who we heard from

Survey respondents who live Downtown (21 percent) most often get around Downtown as a pedestrian, regardless of the time of year. As depicted in Figure 10, overall survey respondents are more divided on how they get around Downtown, depending on the weather.

Figure 10: Getting around Downtown

When Downtown, how do you get around most often?



Total responses: 697 (0 skipped this question)

What we heard – Getting around Downtown

Downtown streets

The Streetscape Design Standards Manual will categorize Downtown streets by types, based on their function in the roadway network and the planned adjacent land uses. It will also provide recommendations for how space is allocated within the sidewalk area for each type of street, including placement of things like benches, trees, and other streetscape elements.

Stakeholder engagement

We asked stakeholders what street features will most benefit future Downtown residents, employees, and visitors. Key themes from the discussion included:

- Streets need to be designed for people
- Streets should work for everyone and shouldn't segregate residents, visitors, and employees
- We need to consider safety, sustainability, and design for all ages and abilities; ethics must be embedded in the design of streets
- Accessibility is crucial; streets need to be designed and maintained for equitable use
- We need to balance the priorities of all users
- Less prioritization of through traffic; treat streets as destinations rather than thoroughfares
- Focus on connectivity and wayfinding; create intuitive connections with less signage

Public engagement

The Streetscape Design Standards Manual will categorize Downtown streets by type. Each type of street serves a different purpose and sets different expectations for how we use them to get around. We asked participants for feedback on each proposed street type.

Neighbourhood streets

Neighbourhood streets provide safe and inviting places to walk to local residences, stores, and businesses. Survey participants and those that attended the open house ranked street trees and additional lighting as the most important feature followed by additional safety features at intersections.



#1: Street trees and additional lighting to enhance safety



#2: Additional safety features at intersections where pedestrians cross the street

Connector streets

Connector Streets accommodate a moderate amount of traffic, including bikes and transit. Connector streets join neighbourhoods and Downtown hotspots and include both commercial and residential buildings. Survey participants

and those that attended the open house ranked wide sidewalks as the most important feature followed by businesses and storefronts at street-level.



#1: Wide sidewalks, when possible, to allow for greater pedestrian activity, outdoor dining, and streetscape furniture



#2: Businesses and storefronts at street-level, with commercial or residential activities on upper floors

Corridor streets

Corridor streets connect Downtown with the rest of Winnipeg. These streets are vibrant roadways that accommodate high traffic volumes while also serving as high capacity, rapid transit corridors. Survey participants and those that attended the open house ranked wide sidewalks as the most important feature followed by bus priority lanes.



#1: Wide sidewalks to allow for greater pedestrian activity, outdoor dining, and streetscape furniture



#2: Bus priority lanes for rapid bus movement

As a follow up question, we asked if is there anything else we should keep in mind when creating the proposed street types (neighbourhood, connector, corridor)? Comments noted by participants include:

- Downtown needs traffic calming measures
- Reduce personal vehicle access and street parking on certain streets
- Increase bike and transit options
- Add landscaping and trees for weather protection and beautification; emphasize proper maintenance
- Prioritize wider sidewalks and smaller mixed-use buildings for pedestrians
- Address the needs of unhoused individuals before street design improvements
- Ensure accessibility of transportation infrastructure, including bike routes
- Design Downtown streets for accessibility and equity
- Parking lots affect comfort and safety; consider their removal or infill

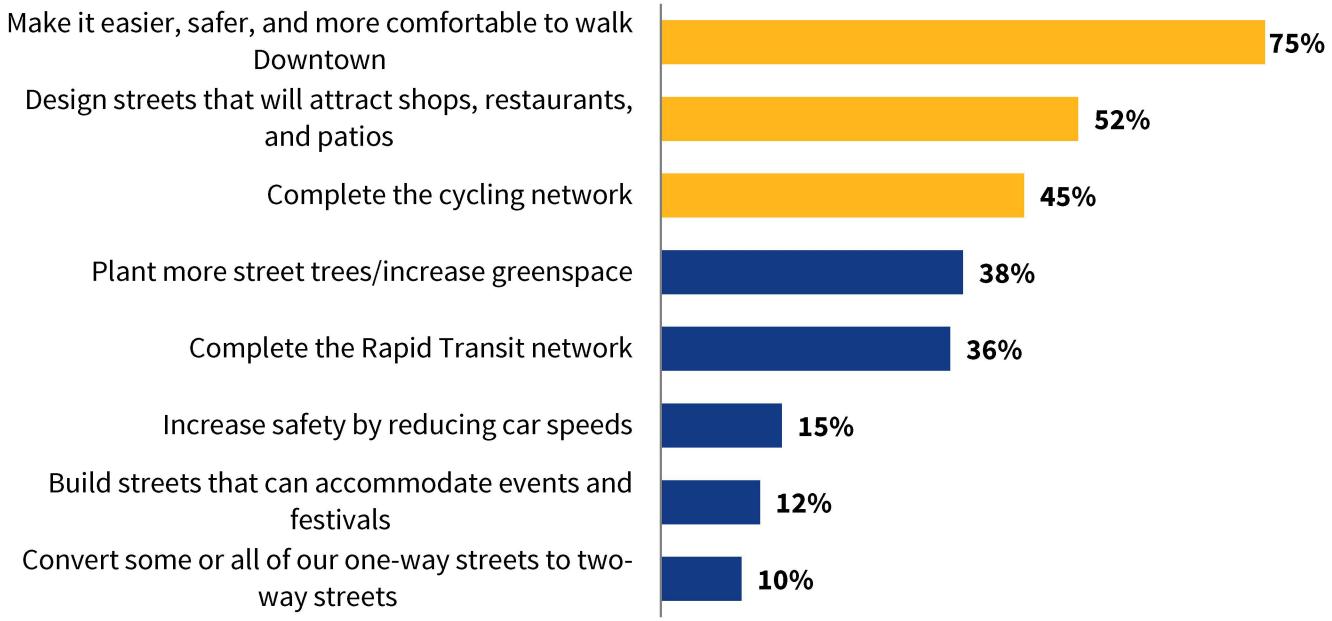
We also asked survey participants the most important things the City should do to improve Downtown streets. As shown in Figure 11, the top three choices were to:

- Make it easier, safer, and more comfortable to walk Downtown (75 percent)

- Designing streets that will attract shops, restaurants, and patios (52 percent)
- Complete the cycling network (45 percent)

Figure 11: Priorities for Downtown Streets

What are the most important things the City should do to improve Downtown streets? Select your top three choices.



Total responses: 697 (0 skipped this question)

"The priority for most streets should be on the pedestrian and cycling street-level experience -- both for safety and aesthetics. Improved transit is also a must."
-Survey respondent

Downtown bike routes

As part of CentrePlan 2050, we are looking at design options for the following routes to improve connectivity to/from and within the Downtown:

- St. Mary Avenue and York Avenue
- Notre Dame Avenue and Cumberland Avenue
- William Stephenson Way

We are also looking cycling infrastructure on Graham Avenue as part of the Re-imagining Graham Avenue theme.

We asked stakeholders that attended a workshop for feedback on specific Downtown bike routes. The public was invited to provide feedback on each route at the open house. Feedback for each route is noted below.

St. Mary and York Avenue

The project team is considering two options for protected bike lanes on St. Mary Avenue and York Avenue. Option 1 is one-way protected bike lanes on St. Mary Avenue and York Avenue. Option 2 is a two-way protected bike lane on York Avenue.

Stakeholder feedback:

- One-way protected bike lanes on each street is preferred
- Try testing both options first
- There will be increased pedestrian use with Canadian Museum of Human Rights and Railside development at The Forks
- We need to consider visibility of cyclists

Public feedback:

- Support for protected bike lanes. Careful intersection design is noted.
- Improve road safety by implementing better signage
- Re-evaluate road design to make streets safer for all users
- Improve connectivity to make it easier to bike within Downtown

Notre Dame Avenue and Cumberland Avenue

The project team is considering two options for protected bike lanes on Notre Dame Avenue and Cumberland Avenue. Option 1 is a two-way protected bike lane on the south side of Cumberland Avenue and a two-way protected bike lane on the north side of Notre Dame Avenue. Option 2 is a two-way protected bike lane on the north side of Cumberland Avenue and a two-way protected bike lane on the north side of Notre Dame Avenue.

Stakeholder feedback:

- Connectivity to the University of Winnipeg is key
- Access to services and amenities is important
- Try testing both options first

Public feedback:

- Support for protected bike lanes
- Eliminate gaps in the cycling network Downtown
- Re-evaluate road design to make streets safer for all users

William Stephenson Way

The project team is proposing multi-use pathways that will provide bike access to The Forks, Exchange District, Esplanade Riel Pedestrian Bridge, Provencher Bridge, and Waterfront Drive.

Stakeholder feedback:

- When flooding occurs, many people cycle through The Forks along Israel Asper Way

Public feedback:

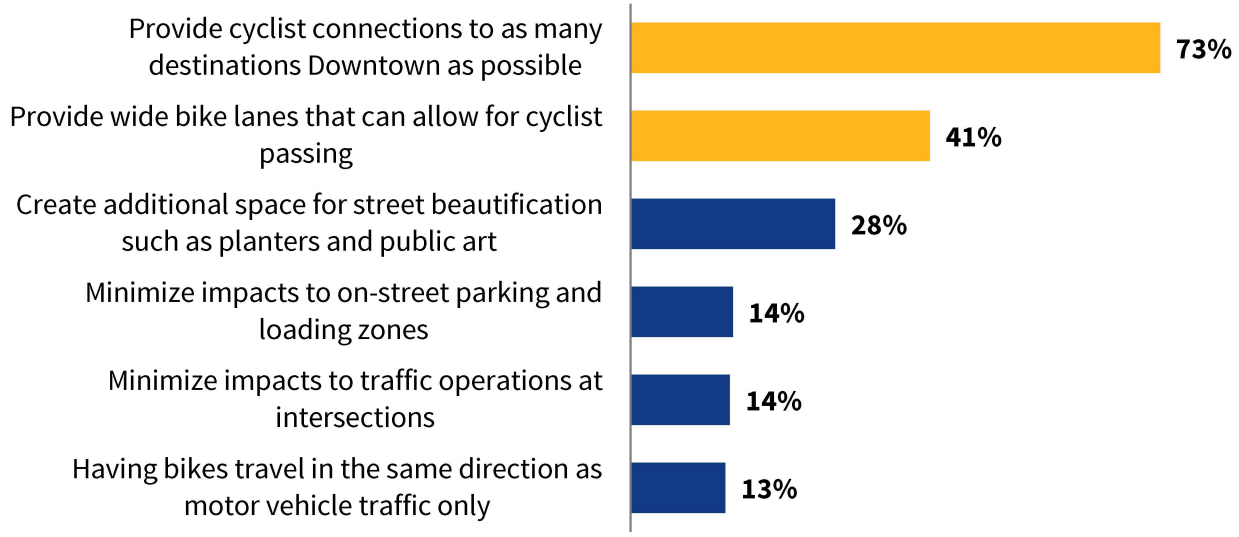
- Ensure pathways are wide enough to accommodate pedestrians and cyclists
- Pedestrians and bike need separate lanes
- Narrow the road to accommodate bike lanes

Public engagement

We asked survey respondents what the most important things are to consider when designing options for bike lanes on Downtown bike routes. As shown in Figure 12, the top two choices were providing cyclist connections to as many destinations Downtown as possible and providing wide bike lanes.

Figure 12: Considerations when designing Downtown Bike Routes

As we consider design options for protected bike lanes on Downtown bike routes, what are the most important things to consider? Select your top two choices.



Total responses: 482 (2 skipped this question)

We also asked survey respondents for their familiarity with protected bike lanes and level of support for them.

Two-way protected bike lanes	
80% of survey respondents are moderately or very familiar with two-way protected bike lanes. Of those:	
80%	Strongly support or support
13%	Oppose or strongly oppose
7%	Neutral

One-way protected bike lanes	
81% of survey respondents are moderately or very familiar with one-way protected bike lanes. Of those:	
83%	Strongly support or support
11%	Oppose or strongly oppose
6%	Neutral

As a follow up question, we asked why they feel this way. Participants noted the following:

- Protected bike lanes are the best way to ensure all modes of transportation are safely separated.
- Preferences for one-way vs. two-way bike routes were split, with respondents suggesting that bike lanes should follow the road's direction.
- Bike routes are not well connected, and the type of infrastructure changes frequently, making it confusing and challenging to bike Downtown.
- Concerns about impacts to parking and vehicle traffic
- Bike lanes should be designed with maintenance and snow clearing in mind.

> *"I think any protected bike infrastructure would make me feel much safer biking around my area. I bike whenever I can. Owning a vehicle is expensive and biking is affordable, good exercise, good for the environment. If I had more access to better bike lanes downtown it would make the city much more livable for me."*
> *-Survey respondent*

We asked open house participants and survey respondents what else we should keep in mind when designing options for bike routes Downtown. Participants shared the following feedback:

- Design bike routes that make cycling feel comfortable and safe, with elements such as protected bike lanes, raised bike lanes, wider bike lanes, and lighting
- Establish continuous, connected bike lanes that minimize lane switches across roads
- Consider accessibility and safety for both pedestrians and cyclists

- Maintain protected features at intersections, consider roundabouts, and improve signaling
- Ensure all road users, including pedestrians and cyclists, adhere to rules of the road to minimize conflicts

> *"Intersections where the "protected" features vanish are the dangerous spots. There needs to be traffic measures, signage, and infrastructure to prevent bikes being sideswiped by turning vehicles when they cross into intersections from the protected lanes."*
> *-Survey respondent*



Building Downtown

As part of CentrePlan 2050, we are creating Urban Design Guidelines. The guidelines will inform how we design our buildings and public spaces in Downtown Winnipeg. During Phase 1 engagement, we gathered feedback about the design of Downtown buildings and public spaces. A summary of engagement opportunities related to this topic and the corresponding notes and feedback received can be found in Appendix E.

What we heard – Building Downtown

Street level design

Pedestrian prioritization was a key theme noted in engagement. Participants said that it was important to prioritize human scale design (spaces that are easy and comfortable for people to use) at street level, universal accessibility, mixed-uses, public amenities and street furniture/art.

Stakeholder engagement

When designing residential units or other residential uses at street level, several considerations were highlighted by participants:

- Consider window heights and lower-level windows
- Instead of using walls to buffer, landscape using materials or design techniques that don't obstruct views or block natural light, allowing for a more open and interconnected feel
- Use attractive fences and other elements that transition from public to private spaces
- Consider incorporating commercial spaces at residential corners
- Convert one-way streets to two-way streets to address traffic speed and attract for more street-level residential development
- Address safety concerns with residential development at street level
- Create a sense of community through design
- Explore opportunities for live-work spaces

When designing commercial uses at street level, several considerations were highlighted by participants:

- Commercial/retail helps with safety and keeps people Downtown

- Emphasize finer-grained design, including a large number of different buildings and closely spaced streets
- Foster street-level activity and culture
- Promote flexible street-level uses that can be adapted over time, avoiding rigid guidelines or by-laws
- Create comfortable plazas, courtyards, and outdoor spaces
- Showcase unique Downtown offerings that you can't get in the suburbs
- Implement higher standards to protect developer investments
- Encourage setbacks for entrances and cut-out corners
- Promote shared facilities, amenities, and rooftop uses
- Limit all-glass buildings to maintain door visibility and deter vandalism
- Prohibit vinyl on windows
- Include plantings in front of buildings and entrances
- Recognize the economic challenges in financing commercial spaces and reflect this in policies

Public engagement

We asked survey participants what features would create a positive experience for pedestrians at street level. Over two-thirds (67 percent) of respondents indicated that space for patios, retail displays, art, etc. would create the most positive experience for pedestrians at street level, where landscaping ranked second at 44 percent.



67% Space for patios, retail displays, art, etc.



44% Landscaping

When designing residential units or other residential uses at street level, design considerations highlighted by open house and survey participants include:

- Medium scale development that matches the neighbouring character
- Green infrastructure and landscaping
- Quality building materials and finishes
- Safe entrances, minimal setbacks
- Residential units that have amenities including balconies and ample storage for non-vehicle needs

"Accessibility should not be an afterthought to meet minimum standards if you really want to encourage more people to get downtown."
-Survey respondent

Tall buildings

Stakeholder engagement

We asked stakeholders which priorities are most important in the design of tall buildings Downtown. Key priorities noted by participants include:

- Mitigate wind and density trade-offs while varying scale, using dense towers with open space
- Ensure interaction with the sidewalk and make the changes between different parts of the sidewalk smoother and more gradual (finer-grain transitions)
- Gradually transition in scale from tall to shorter buildings, stepping towers back from podiums to reduce sidewalk height perception
- Maintain appropriate separation distances between towers for privacy, sky views, and reduced shadows
- Design podiums around a "human-scale" height (typically 3-6 storeys) and ground floors suitable for retail, restaurants, or services
- Choose tower floorplate (floor sizes for tall buildings) that are smaller to minimize shadows on sidewalk and parks
- Establish minimum height and density requirements for efficiency
- Need local tall building precedents, as other cities may not be applicable

Public engagement

When asked about Downtown building design, 69 percent of survey respondents selected that high-quality design was the most important feature, where buildings that fit the character of the neighbourhood ranked second at 58 percent.



69% High quality design (buildings that are nice to look at)



58% Buildings fit with the character of the neighbourhood/street (including heritage buildings)

Heritage Integration

Stakeholder engagement

Adopted Heritage Conservation Standards and Guidelines call for new development to be visually compatible with, subordinate to, and distinguishable from a heritage building or a heritage district. We asked stakeholders and participants at the Exchange District residents' workshop what that means to them within the Exchange District.

Participant comments reflected a balance between preserving the historical and architectural character of the Exchange District while allowing for modernization and development that is context-sensitive and contributes positively to the urban environment. Comments highlight a commitment to maintaining a cohesive and visually

appealing environment that serves the needs of both current and future residents. The following themes emerged from the feedback:

- Historic design elements and guidelines
- Development priorities
- Pedestrian experience
- Film Industry and development
- Need for community engagement

Public engagement

The online mapping tool allowed participants to identify unique characteristics or features about Downtown Districts that we should protect or enhance. The Exchange District National Historic Site received the most pins. Results of the mapping tool can be found in Appendix E.6.

Parking

Public engagement

Parking was noted as a challenge Downtown, and often safety concerns were noted in garages and lots. Respondents prefer parking facilities that are underground, or in mixed-use buildings where the parking is hidden.

When asked about the design of parking structures, 57 percent of survey respondents indicated that integration with other developments (rather than standalone structures) was most important, followed by structures that include street level uses such as retail stores (50 percent).



57% Parking structures integrate with other development rather than being stand-alone structures



50% Parking structures include street-level uses, such as retail stores, so that people walking by don't realize there is parking behind

> *"Many other major cities incorporate parking structures with a mix of retail on ground level and housing or office space above. The building design incorporates all 3 of those to blend in. Ugly parking garages are nothing but an eye sore."*
> *-Survey respondent*



Re-imagining Graham Avenue

As part of CentrePlan 2050 we are developing designs for a re-imagined Graham Avenue. Today, Graham Avenue is primarily a bus, bike, and pedestrian only street. Within five years, bus routes will be moving off of Graham Avenue to provide better bus service to the Downtown, as planned in the Winnipeg Transit Master Plan.

During Phase 1 engagement, we gathered feedback to help develop design options for Graham Avenue. A summary of engagement opportunities related to this topic and the corresponding notes and feedback received can be found in Appendix F.

What we heard – Re-imagining Graham Avenue

Stakeholder engagement

Stakeholders that attended the workshop identified the following opportunities and challenges for re-imagining Graham Avenue:

- Create a unique and distinct experience on Graham Avenue
- Celebrate Métis, First Nations, and Inuit voices
- Address winter challenges such as programming, maintenance, and protection from the elements
- Consider vertical elements to the skywalk system and encourage pedestrians to go down to street level
- Proposed improvements include enhanced lighting, updated street furniture, and public washrooms
- Consider infrastructure needs such as servicing, grading, and area ways
- Promote additional commercial development for pedestrian activity and safety
- Careful management of transit removal, as it will reduce pedestrian traffic
- Prioritize more windows and fine-grain storefronts (retail or commercial spaces with a high level of detail and diversity at a small scale)
- Address potential conflicts between pedestrians and cyclists and implement separated infrastructure as needed
- Consider connections to other destinations in the Downtown including other green spaces and public amenities
- Create inviting corners at intersections and diagonal connections

- Active programming throughout the day and year is essential for the street's success, requiring partnerships and collaboration

Public engagement

Graham Avenue could be made up of three proposed street zone types – shared, green, and celebration zones. We asked participants to look at the zone types and let us know what they would like to see in each zone.

Shared zone

In the Shared Zone cars would be permitted; however, more space would be dedicated to pedestrians, cyclists, and patios.



88% Trees/planting



79% Street furniture (e.g. bike racks, garbage receptacles)



66% Public art



83% Patios



78% Seating areas



25% Curbside parking and loading

Green zone

In the Green Zone, significant space would be dedicated to trees, plantings, recreational amenities, and seating. Pedestrians would have dedicated sidewalks on either side and could also use a multi-use path that would be shared with cyclists and accommodate emergency vehicles.



90% Trees/planting



75% Green infrastructure to capture rainwater and snow runoff



53% Food trucks



82% Seating areas



64% Public art



53% Recreational amenities

Celebration zone

The Celebration Zone would be the new destination for street parties in the Downtown - from Winnipeg Jets' Whiteout parties to food truck festivals and beyond.

84% Patios

78% Food trucks

65% Movable street furniture (e.g. tables, chairs)

39% Pavement markings for sports and games

80% Space for events and supporting infrastructure

77% Trees/planting

63% Public art

Participants that attended in-person events or provided feedback online highlighted the following key themes for re-imagining Graham Avenue:

- Support for green spaces and landscaping, public amenities such as washrooms and water fountains, as well as flexible opportunities for patios, recreation opportunities, food trucks, seating and third spaces/meeting areas
- Prioritize pedestrians and restrict personal vehicle access
- Consider universal accessibility, safety, and security were emphasized in all designs and interventions
- Provide safe access to the skywalk network
- Street-level retail, restaurants, and patios were seen as beneficial
- Reduce unwelcoming areas, such as surface parking lots
- Cycling infrastructure was supported, but requires full separation from pedestrians and vehicles

The online mapping tool allowed participants to provide input on where the three proposed zone types for Graham Avenue should go and what that could look like. Results of the mapping tool can be found in Appendix F.7.

> *"Keep the focus on the street-level pedestrian and cycling experience. If it is safe and attractive for people to use, and not a traffic thoroughfare, more people will come to use, visit, and shop in the area."*
> *-Survey respondent*

Next steps

What we heard in Phase 1 will help to outline the goals and actions that will become part of CentrePlan 2050. Feedback from Phase 1 will also help the project team draft:

- Downtown Urban Design Guidelines
- A Streetscape Design Standards Manual
- Options for key Downtown bike routes
- Options for re-designing Graham Avenue

In Phase 2, the project team will continue to work on CentrePlan 2050 with input from Downtown stakeholders. Feedback from Phase 2 will help to complete the draft of Centre 2050. In winter 2024, we will also get feedback from Winnipeggers on options for two Downtown bike routes.

In Phase 3, a draft of CentrePlan 2050 will be shared with the public along with an explanation of how feedback was used to create the draft plan. Public and stakeholder input will be used to refine the draft and recommend CentrePlan 2050 to Council.

Appendices

Appendix A – Promotional materials
Appendix B – Living & visiting Downtown
Appendix C – Greening Downtown
Appendix D – Getting around Downtown
Appendix E – Building Downtown
Appendix F – Re-imagining Graham Avenue
Appendix G – Youth engagement
Appendix H – Exchange District residents' workshop
Appendix I – Open house feedback
Appendix J – Map of survey respondents

CENTREPLAN 2050

Phase 2 Stakeholder Engagement Summary

Background

The City of Winnipeg is making a long-term plan that will guide investment and development in Downtown Winnipeg for the next 30 years. *CentrePlan 2050* (Plan) will guide investment in Downtown parks, streets, and buildings. The goal of *CentrePlan 2050* is to get more people living and visiting Downtown.

This report summarizes the feedback we received from stakeholders during Phase 2 engagement on *CentrePlan 2050*.

As part of this project, we are also creating:

- Downtown Urban Design Guidelines
- A Streetscape Design Standards Manual
- A design of key Downtown Bike Routes
- A redesign of Graham Avenue

Engagement summaries will be available for each topic above in the coming months.

Engagement

In Phase 1, the public and stakeholders shared insight and ideas on how to attract more people to live and visit Downtown. The project team also reviewed over 80 plans and strategies that for our Downtown.

Feedback from Phase 1 informed the draft of CentrePlan 2050. In Phase 2, we asked stakeholders for feedback on the goals, policies, and actions of CentrePlan 2050.

Throughout Phase 2, the project team met with 37 Downtown stakeholders to discuss CentrePlan 2050. Stakeholders included community stakeholders, Indigenous and community leaders, committees, associations, local business associations, business owners, developers, as well as not-for-profit organizations. The focus of these meetings was to:

- Identify gaps in the draft plan
- Gather feedback on key actions and priorities
- Understand how the plan may impact stakeholders
- Address any concerns

A list of stakeholder organizations we met with can be found in Appendix A.

What we heard

We heard that a commitment to implement the key actions and policies is critical to the success of *CentrePlan 2050*.

There is also a strong desire among stakeholders to work together to make Downtown thrive and attract more people to live and visit.

The draft Plan includes five strategic moves designed to help Downtown grow and thrive:

- Create great urban neighbourhoods
- Re-envision streets to foster urban life
- Grow a greener Downtown
- Create a lively Downtown
- Improve Downtown governance and implementation

Each strategic move has a set of goals, policies, and actions. Stakeholder feedback was used to refine the policies and actions. Table 1 highlights some of the feedback received and how it was considered.

Table 1: What we heard and how it was considered

What we heard	How it was considered
Strategic Move 1: Create great urban neighbourhoods	
Growing the number of people that live Downtown is a top priority. This includes increasing both market and non-market housing (affordable and social housing).	The draft Plan includes several policies and actions related to residential development: • Create development incentives • For a limited time, get rid of City fees associated with residential development • Create an intergovernmental committee on housing development • Invest provincial and federal funding in housing projects (e.g. Housing Accelerator Fund) • Reduce barriers for affordable, social, and Indigenous housing providers
As we improve Downtown neighbourhoods, it is important to maintain their unique character.	The draft Plan recognizes that each Downtown neighbourhood has its own unique character. It includes policies and actions specific to each neighbourhood to improve and enhance them.
The current approach to maintenance, garbage and recycling pickup, and snow clearing should be reviewed and improved.	The draft Plan includes policies and actions to ensure: • Downtown is clean and well-maintained • Sidewalks, benches, lighting, curbs and other public amenities are fixed or replaced in a timely manner • Areas with higher garbage, recycling, and maintenance needs get the service required to keep up with demand • A coordinated and timely response abandoned waste and other waste complaints • Sidewalks, bike routes, and bus stops are accessible in winter

What we heard	How it was considered

Addressing community safety and well-being was noted as critical to attracting more people to live and visit Downtown.	The draft Plan includes several actions related to equitable, inclusive, and accessible city services, such as:
	• Provide inclusive public spaces
	• Ensure access to clean drinking water in public spaces
	• Ensure access to washroom facilities
	• Expand access to existing facilities and programming for:
	  ○ Recreation
	  ○ Library
	  ○ Community gathering
	  ○ 24/7 safe spaces
	• Ensure safe and accessible active transportation networks
	
	The draft Plan also includes community safety and well-being actions from the *Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Strategy* and other strategies related to equity and inclusion.

Strategic Move 2: Re-envision streets to foster urban life	
Ensuring that Downtown streets are designed for people was noted as a top priority.	The draft Plan includes several policies and actions related to street design, such as: • Design streets for people, focusing on making Downtown a destination with great neighbourhoods • Create a *Downtown Streetscape Design Standards Manual.* The Manual will guide how streets are designed based on their type and function. It will also suggest how to use sidewalk space, including adding trees, safe places to store bikes, benches, and more.
Strategic Move 3: Grow a greener Downtown	
Concern about the lack of street trees in the Downtown.	The draft Plan includes policies to increase and protect street trees: • The City should plant trees on streets and parks according to the *Winnipeg Urban Forest Strategy* • The City should ensure long-term success for street trees through measures outlined in the plan • For every one tree removed during City infrastructure projects, two trees get planted. Trees should be in Silva cells near the original trees.

What we heard	How it was considered
Support to transform Graham into a key destination Downtown with a focus on pedestrians.	As part of CentrePlan 2050, we are redesigning Graham Avenue. The draft Plan includes policies and actions to transform Graham Avenue into key Downtown destination focused on people. To read more about stakeholder engagement related to Graham Avenue, read the Phase 2 CentrePlan 2050: Re-imagining Graham Avenue stakeholder engagement summary.
Strategic Move 4: Create a lively Downtown	
Some stakeholders noted that Downtown needs more programming, like events, festivals, pop-ups, patios, and more. To do this well, the City should support and reduce barriers to hosting events and activities.	The draft Plan includes several actions to strengthen Downtown as a cultural and entertainment hub, such as: • Make the temporary patio program permanent with improvements to the current program • Work with Downtown stakeholders to provide a wide range of quality programming • Reduce barriers to holding events and festivals
Strategic Move 5: Improve Downtown governance and implementation	
Concern that CentrePlan 2050 will not receive the long-term funding necessary to implement the plan.	The draft Plan recommends there be long-term funding from the City for implementation. The Plan also includes: • Recommendations to develop targets, create a baseline, and measure progress • Polices and actions to improve coordination with Downtown partners

Next steps

CentrePlan 2050 was refined using stakeholder feedback collected during Phase 2 engagement.

In the final phase of engagement, we will share the draft CentrePlan 2050 with stakeholders and the public. The project team will answer questions get comments on the draft plan. In spring 2024, CentrePlan 2050 will be presented to Council for consideration.

Appendices

Appendix A – Stakeholder organizations

Appendix A – Stakeholder organizations

Appendix A - Phase 2 Stakeholder organizations

Key Downtown stakeholders with expertise and interest in Downtown were invited to provide feedback on the draft goals, actions, and policies of CentrePlan 2050. Throughout Phase 2, we met with the following organizations:

- Alston Properties
- BOMA (Building Owners and Managers Association)
- Central Park Stewardship Committee
- CentreVenture
- City of Winnipeg ad-hoc safety committee (consisting of service providers working primarily in the Main & Higgins area)
- CityPlace
- Delta Hotel
- Downtown Winnipeg BIZ board and staff
- DCSP (Downtown Community Safety Partnership)
- EDW (Economic Development Winnipeg)
- End Homelessness Winnipeg
- Exchange District BIZ board and staff
- Green Corridor Advisory Circle
- Institute of Urban Studies
- KNH Sawatzky & Associates
- Landmark Planning
- Longboat Development Corporation
- Main Street Project
- Main Street Area Action Plan – Neighbourhood Beautification and Neighbourhood cleanliness subcommittees
- Manitoba Hydro
- Manitoba Trucking Association
- Red Road Lodge
- Senior Citizens at Fort Garry Place (Outlook Club)
- Southern Chiefs Organization (SCO)
- Storefront MB
- The Forks Renewal Corporation
- TNSE (True North Sports and Entertainment)
- UWCRC 2.0 (University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation 2.0)
- Wawanesa
- Winnipeg Arts Council
- Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce

- Winnipeg Convention Centre
- Winnipeg Foundation
- WIEC (Winnipeg Indigenous Executive Circle)
- YMCA-YWCA of Winnipeg

CENTREPLAN 2050 – RE-IMAGINING GRAHAM AVENUE

Phase 2 Stakeholder Engagement Summary

Background

The City of Winnipeg is making a long-term plan that will guide investment and development in Downtown Winnipeg for the next 30 years. The goal of CentrePlan 2050 is to get more people living and visiting Downtown.

As part of CentrePlan 2050, we are creating designs for a re-imagined Graham Avenue. Today, Graham Avenue is primarily a bus, bike, and pedestrian only street. In June 2025, bus routes will begin moving off of Graham Avenue as planned in the Winnipeg Transit Master Plan.

This gives us an incredible opportunity to re-imagine how we use Graham Avenue. At this stage in the design, we are creating a plan for how the street could look and function.

This report summarizes the feedback we received from stakeholders during Phase 2 engagement on the redesign of Graham Avenue.

Engagement

In Phase 1, the public and stakeholders shared their thoughts on what they would like to see and do on a re-imagined Graham Avenue.

Feedback from Phase 1 was used to create design options for Graham Avenue. In Phase 2, we asked stakeholders for feedback on the preliminary design of Graham Avenue.

In November 2023, Downtown stakeholders were invited to a come and go event. In February 2024, we held a workshop with Graham Avenue stakeholders. In addition, the project team met one-on-one with 16 Downtown stakeholders throughout Phase 2 to discuss the redesign of the street.

Stakeholders included:

- Community stakeholders
- Local business associations
- Graham Avenue property owners and tenants
- Developers
- Not-for-profit organizations



Figure 1: Participants share input at a Re-imagining Graham Avenue stakeholder event

Table 1 provides an overview of stakeholder engagement opportunities.

Table 1: Stakeholder engagement opportunities

Date	Activity	Details
November 30, 2023	Stakeholder event	17 participants Notes in Appendix A
December 6, 2023 – January 5, 2023	Online commenting tool	4 participants Notes in Appendix A
February 8, 2024	Stakeholder workshop	20 participants Notes in Appendix B

What we heard

We heard that Graham Avenue should focus on pedestrians. Programming, patios, storefronts, as well as self-directed activities are key to making Graham Avenue a vibrant destination in our Downtown.

Public art, secure bike storage, more street trees, better lighting, and places to sit are all important in the design of Graham Avenue. It should be flexible to allow for a variety of activities, events, and celebrations. Pilot projects should be encouraged and supported to see what works and what doesn't.

Table 2 highlights some of the feedback received and how it was considered.

Table 2: What we heard and how it was considered

What we heard	How it was considered
Stakeholders indicated the importance of transforming Graham into a destination with a focus on pedestrians. Public art, secure bike storage, more street trees, better lighting, and places to sit were noted as key amenities. There is a desire among some stakeholder to include public washrooms on Graham Avenue. Graham Avenue should be designed with safety in mind.	The draft design of Graham Avenue includes several design elements that focus on pedestrians such as: • Wide sidewalks and space for patios • Seating areas • Trees and other greenery • Lighting The draft CentrePlan 2050 includes actions related to access to washroom facilities and clean drinking water Downtown.
Several stakeholders indicated that programming is key to making Graham Avenue a vibrant destination in our Downtown. This requires a commitment from the City and a comprehensive program plan with input from key stakeholders.	One of the goals proposed in the draft CentrePlan 2050 is to increase programming options through partnerships. This includes supporting Downtown partners to provide recreational and programming opportunities on City-owned land, existing rights of way, and corporate plazas.

What we heard	How it was considered
There are mixed opinions on adding dedicated bike lanes on Graham Avenue. Stakeholders that support bike lanes noted it is important to keep cyclists and pedestrians separated. They also indicated it would provide important connections in the cycling network. Those opposed to bike lanes noted it would change the character and feel of the street and limit options that focus on pedestrians. Some stakeholders are indifferent on whether to include bike lanes but indicated that the street should be consistent from one end to the other.	Bike lanes are proposed along the length of Graham Avenue. Cyclists may be re-routed to other streets during events such as festivals and white-out parties.
Stakeholders noted that the design should be flexible. There is a need for a mix of permanent and temporary infrastructure and installations so Graham Avenue can be used for different activities and seasonal needs. Some stakeholders indicated that the street should be designed to allow for pop-up spaces for recreation and small businesses.	The draft design keeps flexibility in mind. Several of the options in the draft design are interchangeable to allow for different types of activities throughout the year. For example, in the green zone, significant space is dedicated to recreational amenities and seating. This could be a combination of permanent and temporary infrastructure to support things like outdoor workstations and library programming.
Some stakeholders indicated that there should be a focus of green infrastructure on Graham Avenue (e.g. permeable surfaces, soil cells, raised planters).	The draft CentrePlan 2050 document states that greening the street is a priority for Graham Avenue. In addition, one of the draft plan's goal areas is to promote green infrastructure, so these will be considered at the construction drawings stage of the project.

What we heard	How it was considered
All participants at the stakeholder event noted that building new residential and commercial buildings in and around Graham Avenue was very important. Some noted the importance of inclusive, affordable, and/or subsidized housing.	The *draft CentrePlan 2050* includes several policies and actions related to residential development: • Create commercial and residential development incentives • For a limited time, get rid of City fees associated with residential development • Create an intergovernmental committee on housing development • Invest provincial and federal funding in housing projects (e.g. Housing Accelerator Fund) • Reduce barriers for affordable, social, and Indigenous housing providers
Stakeholders noted that Indigenous art and cultural elements be incorporated in the design of Graham Avenue.	First Nations, Métis, and Inuit art, history, and culture will be included in the detailed design of Graham Avenue.

Next steps

In the final phase of public engagement, we will get feedback on the draft design of Graham Avenue. Feedback will help finalize how the street could look and function.

In spring 2024, the draft design of Graham Avenue will be presented to Council for consideration as part of CentrePlan 2050. The next step in the process will be detailed design. Before detailed design and construction can occur, Council would need to allocate funding.

Appendices

Appendix A – Stakeholder drop-in event notes
Appendix B – Stakeholder workshops notes

Appendix A – Stakeholder drop-in event notes

Appendix A: Stakeholder drop-in event notes

Location:	Holy Trinity Anglican Church 256 Smith Street	**Date:**	November 30, 2023
Attendees:	17 in-person, 4 online commenting tool	**Time:**	9:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Downtown stakeholders and property owners along Graham Avenue were invited to participate in a stakeholder drop-in event. The following organizations were represented:

- Architecture 49
- Bike Winnipeg
- Colliers Project Leaders
- Downtown Winnipeg BIZ
- Green Corridor Advisory Circle
- Holy Trinity Anglican Church
- Little Mountain Park Conservancy Group
- Manitoba Association of Landscape Architects
- Manitoba Hydro
- Monteyne Architecture Works Inc.
- UWCRC 2.0 (University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation 2.0)
- Wawanesa Mutual Insurance Company
- Winnipeg Public Library
- Winnipeg Regional Health Authority

Participants were invited to attend a drop-in event to view presentation boards with preliminary designs for three zones: Celebration Zone, Green Zone and Shared Zone. Each zone included specific questions to better understand the needs and ideas from stakeholders.

Feedback was provided through sticky notes and conversations with the project team.

For those who were unable to attend, or who wanted to provide additional feedback, materials from the event were also available to be viewed online on a stakeholder engagement website. Stakeholders were invited to provide feedback through an online commenting tool. The following summary includes the feedback from both the in-person drop-in event and online commenting tool.



Participants share input at a Re-imagining Graham Avenue stakeholder event

Celebration Zone

Do you think we should have dedicated, two-way cycling infrastructure in the Celebration Zone? Why or why not?

- Dedicated cycling infrastructure would alleviate concerns about conflicts.
- Infrastructure should be designed to slow users down to ensure safety of all users (e.g. chicanes).
- Dedicated cycling infrastructure would dedicate too much space to one user group.
- Connections to other cycling infrastructure in the downtown is important.
- Make use of permanent structures and benches, trees, and art works to help reinforce areas not meant for bicycle travel.
- Procedures would need to be in place to manage bicycle traffic along Carlton and Hargrave when the Celebration Zone is active.
- Ensure that there are proper detours available whenever the celebration zone is activated in a way that would hinder bicycle travel.

What sort of activities and events do you envision in the Celebration Zone?

- Sports activities.
- Space for arts groups to perform and hold public events.

Should we have permanent recreation infrastructure or art installations? If yes, what would you like to see?

- A mix of permanent and temporary infrastructure and installation to allow for flexibility and seasonal needs.
- Work with Manitoba and Winnipeg Arts Councils to program art.
- Incorporate lighting for safety into infrastructure and installations.

Is there anything else you would like to see or do in the Celebration Zone?

- Raised pavement to reinforce pedestrian environment.
- Window art galleries or small satellite gallery spaces.
- Space for theatre performances.
- Adding vitality to the area may help with safety concerns.
- Protected pedestrian crossing between City Place and Millennium Library.
- Need to address vulnerable and unhoused populations.
- Short term bike parking should be sheltered.

Green Zone

Do you think we should have dedicated, two-way cycling infrastructure in the Green Zone? Why or why not?

- Dedicated cycling infrastructure would alleviate concerns about conflicts.
- Infrastructure should be designed to slow users down to ensure safety of all users (e.g. chicanes).
- Dedicated cycling infrastructure would dedicate to much space to one user group.
- Connections to other cycling infrastructure in the downtown is important.

What sort of activities and events do you envision in the Green Zone?

- Library programming such as author readings, children's activities.
- Free programming such as meditation activities.

Should the City-owned drive aisle in front of the former post office building be incorporated into the Green Zone design?

- Support for incorporating the drive aisle, if feasible.
- Permeable green surface could allow limited vehicle access as necessary.

Is there anything else you would like to see or do in the Green Zone?

- Green corridor connections to other green spaces including Air Canada Window Park and Central Park.
- Educational programming on Indigenous gardening and planting, other cultural learning.
- Opportunity to incorporate green space or green infrastructure on surface parking lots.
- No curbs in design – more space for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Outdoor children's play spaces.
- More street-level lighting.
- Pop-up spaces for recreation and small businesses.
- Maintenance of infrastructure is essential.
- Security patrol.

Shared Zone

Is there anything else you would like to see or do in the Shared Zone from Vaughan Street to Carlton Street?

- Flexible commercial spaces for local businesses.
- Permeable surfaces, green infrastructure, soil cells, raised planters.
- Less hard / impermeable surfaces that create additional heat.
- Picnic tables and benches should be shaded by trees and other plantings.
- Eliminate street parking to accommodate more pedestrian and cycling space.

- Active transportation connections to Edmonton Street (Portage Place redevelopment) to Central Park and the Exchange District.
- Design clear gateways onto the shared street, with narrow vehicle path entries to slow vehicular traffic to appropriate speeds. Use grade changes, paving textures and colors, and tactile strips to alert pedestrians when they are crossing out of the shared street into general traffic space.

Residential and commercial infill development

How important is residential and commercial infill development in and around Graham Avenue to achieving this vision?

- All participants who provided feedback noted that infill development was “Very Important”
- Ensure housing is inclusive, affordable and/or subsidized

Appendix B – Stakeholder workshop notes

Appendix B: Stakeholder workshop notes

Location:	True North Sports + Entertainment Conference Centre 242 Hargrave Street	**Date:**	February 8, 2024
Attendees:	20	**Time:**	1:30 p.m. – 3 p.m.

Key stakeholders and property owners along Graham Avenue were invited to participate in a workshop to discuss the future of the street. The following organizations were represented:

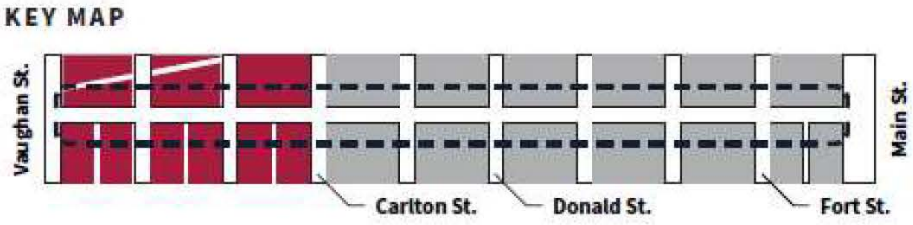
- Artis REIT
- Cargill
- Cityplace
- Colliers Project Leaders
- Downtown Community Safety Partnership
- Downtown Winnipeg BIZ
- Manitoba Hydro
- Southern Chiefs' Organization
- True North Sports + Entertainment
- Wawanesa Mutual Insurance Company
- Winnipeg Public Library
- Winnipeg Police Service

Graham Avenue could be made up of three proposed street zone types – shared, celebration, and green zones. We asked stakeholders to provide input related to:

- Activities and amenities that should be included the vision for Graham Avenue
- How the business/organization might contribute to the success of Graham Avenue
- The business/organization's operational needs (e.g. loading and access)

A summary of the key themes for each zone is below.

Shared Zone – Vaughan Street to Carlton Street



Preserve vibrancy and character:

- Emphasize the uniqueness of the area, particularly the small-scale commercial retail at the west end of Graham Avenue.
- Westbound traffic is preferred direction for one-way. This provides the best functionality for the future SCO development (Wehwehneh Bahgahkinahgohn) and preserves the visual appeal of driving towards west down Graham Avenue.

- Consideration of future developments and policy to maintain the unique character of the area.

Amenities/design considerations:

- Ensure there is ample outdoor seating and recreational areas. Graham Avenue will serve as a shared space for 800+ residents in the new SCO building (Wehwehneh Bahgahkinahgohn).
- Consider permanent public washrooms, especially for hosting future large-scale events on the street (washrooms could be in the celebration zone)
- Great opportunity for Indigenous art to spill out from SCO development (Wehwehneh Bahgahkinahgohn) onto the street. Can tie in connections to MMF on Main Street through art and programming.
- Opportunities for art and cultural elements to reflect the traditional names and identities of the area's stakeholders
- Incorporate native plants from Treaty areas in the landscaping, emphasizing education and reconciliation
- There will be lots of kids coming to the area with new daycare facilities catering to 100+ children.

Programming/activities:

- Continued support for existing programming, such as the Farmer's Market and community events
- Graham Avenue presents opportunities for hosting celebrations, ceremonies, and community events

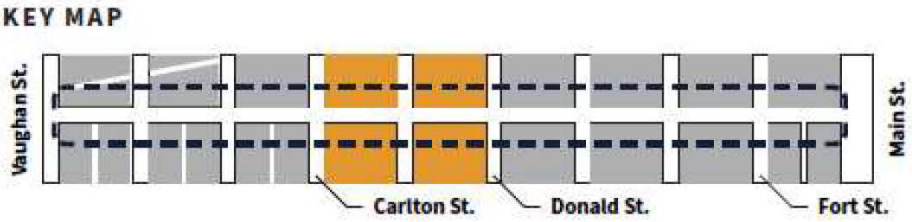
Connectivity:

- Graham Avenue should provide a visual and functional connection between Hydro Plaza and True North Square. It should also include integration of RWB Plaza.

Walking/biking:

- Encourage pedestrian activity while balancing vehicular traffic
- Concerns about maintaining momentum for pedestrian activity without overwhelming car traffic
- Need for ample bike parking, both short-term and secure long-term options
- Consider existing cyclist activity and future demand

Celebration Zone – Carlton Street to Donald Street



Programming / activities:

- Develop a comprehensive program plan with input from major partners.
- Programming is crucial to deter crime and address issues related to homelessness, addiction, and mental health. Winter activities are essential for maintaining vibrancy.
- Need to leverage events taking place at Canada Life Centre.
- Create self-directed activities during lulls in programming to attract people to Graham Avenue such as dog-walking, skating, sitting, taking pictures (Instagram appeal).
- Concern about the impact of food trucks in the area (except for special events)

Cycling infrastructure:

- Lack of consensus on dedicated cycling infrastructure.
- Consideration of safety for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Dedicated bikes lanes may impede deliveries and affect street vibe.
- Secure bike storage is necessary to encourage people to stop and visit and attend arena events by bike.
- One comment that cconsistency in cycling infrastructure along Graham Avenue is important.
- Bike lanes might make it less inviting to spill out into the streets and hang out

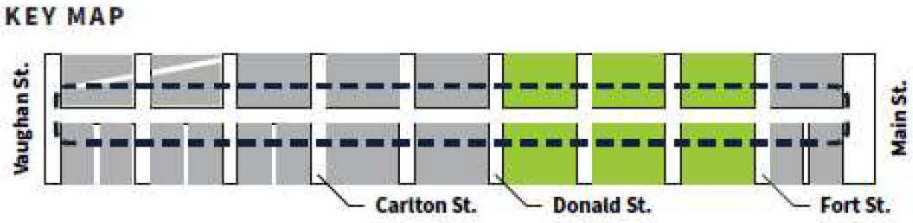
Design elements:

- Space must be designed to be flexible, without fixed infrastructure that could impact flexibility for use of the space.
- Plan for snow storage and winter functionality of the street.
- Consider removing grade separation between the street and the sidewalk for improved functionality.
- Design should encourage street spill-out activities and queuing for events.
- Maintain consistency in the look and feel of the street. It shouldn't feel like you are going from one zone to the other.

Safety:

- Design with safety in mind, including adequate lighting.
- Consider diverse perspectives on safety.
- Vibrant street features like storefronts and patios contribute to perceived safety and vibrancy.

Green Zone – Donald Street to Fort Street



Amenities:

- Outside electrical infrastructure for purposes like outdoor workstations, library programming, etc.
- Implement temporary pilot projects for to see what works before full implementation
- Lighting and revitalization efforts to improve street safety and accessibility, to promote pedestrian movement and access to bus routes
- Include play structures and public washrooms (with sharps containers)
- Emphasis on public art and cultural activations
- Winter activities like skating and curling, explore partnership with the Forks to have warming huts on Graham Avenue

Maintenance:

- Emphasis on the importance of ongoing maintenance for sustainability
- Use of prairie/indigenous plants and mature trees
- Consideration of encampment prevention through design and sightlines

Walking/biking:

- Ensure pedestrian routes are cleared on the same priority schedule as major roads
- Flexible design for pedestrian and cycling spaces; don't necessarily need dedicated cycling infrastructure
- Use different textures on the ground. This might also help make it safer for people walking by reducing slipperiness.
- Strategic placement of secure bike parking with consideration for visibility and accessibility.
- Creative solutions for bike parking, potentially integrating with public art
- Consideration of motorcycle parking for community needs
- Measures to reduce conflicts between cars, bikes, and pedestrians

Programming/activities:

- Need for business contribution to area vibrancy
- Involvement of economic development organizations for programming support

Safety Concerns:

- Addressing safety concerns in back lanes, potentially through gating with controlled access

- Importance of well-lit and populated areas for enhancing pedestrian safety during walks

Connectivity:

- Explore skywalk connections through existing parking lots to improve pedestrian connectivity (long-term)

CENTREPLAN 2050 & RE-IMAGINING GRAHAM AVENUE

Phase 3 Public Engagement Summary

Background

The City of Winnipeg is making a long-term plan that will guide investment and development in Downtown Winnipeg for the next 30 years. The goal of *CentrePlan 2050* is to get more people living and visiting Downtown.

As part of *CentrePlan 2050*, we are creating designs for a re-imagined Graham Avenue. Today, Graham Avenue is primarily a bus, bike, and pedestrian only street. In June 2025, bus routes will begin moving off Graham Avenue as planned in the *Winnipeg Transit Master Plan*.

This report summarizes the feedback we received during Phase 3 engagement on the draft *CentrePlan 2050* and redesign of Graham Avenue.

Engagement

In Phase 2, we asked stakeholders for feedback on the goals, policies, and actions in the draft *CentrePlan 2050*. We also asked for feedback on the preliminary design of Graham Avenue.

Feedback from Phase 2 helped to refine the draft *CentrePlan 2050* and draft design of Graham Avenue.

In Phase 3, the public was invited to provide comments on the draft *CentrePlan 2050*, including feedback on the draft design of Graham Avenue. Feedback was collected online and in-person. In addition, the project team met with and received feedback from key Downtown stakeholders.



Figure 1: Participants share feedback on the draft design of Graham Avenue at the CentrePlan 2050 Open House

Table 1 below provides an overview of public engagement opportunities.

Table 1: Public engagement opportunities

Date	Activity	Details
May 8 – May 23, 2024	Project webpage	6,300 unique visits
May 8 – May 23, 2024	Online survey (Re-imagining Graham Avenue)	1,110 responses Full results in Appendix B & C.
May 8 – May 23, 2024	Online comments (*CentrePlan 2050*)	62 comments Feedback in Appendix D.
May 15, 2024*	Open house #1	86 participants Notes in Appendix E.
May 23, 2024	Open house #2	86 participants Notes in Appendix E.

** Unfortunately, the open house on May 15 ended earlier than scheduled due to a prolonged power outage affecting most of Downtown.*

Promotion

Public engagement opportunities were promoted using the following methods:

- News release – May 8, 2024
- Facebook posts with over 40,000 followers – May 8 to 23, 2024
- X posts with over 127,000 followers - May 8 to 23, 2024
- Instagram posts with over 6,500 followers - May 8 to 23, 2024
- City of Winnipeg public engagement newsletter with over 5,800 recipients – May 9 and 17, 2024
- Email to 140 project subscribers – May 8 to 23, 2024
- Email to 150 stakeholder organizations - May 8 to 23, 2024
- Postcards handed out to 300 people Downtown - May 15 and 23, 2024

See Appendix A for promotional material.

Key findings – Re-imagining Graham Avenue

- Over 80% of survey respondents that live Downtown support the draft design of Graham Avenue.
- Participants indicated the most important design features to include on Graham Avenue are greenery (53%), dedicated space for pedestrians (50%), and dedicated bike lanes and bike parking (35%).
- Participants indicated strong support for prioritizing pedestrians and reducing or eliminating cars and/or parking.
- Participants noted that Graham Avenue could become a place to gather and build community, where all people are welcome.
- Participants expressed concern that safety and increased services for people experiencing homelessness, addictions, and mental health must be addressed before Graham Avenue can be re-developed.

> *"Implementing this design would be a big step forward for Winnipeg as a city to embrace being a place that is enjoyable for living, working, visiting, etc. Downtown is ready for this upgrade. We desperately need a safe bike corridor and more shared accessible spaces for relaxing, eating, shopping, celebrating, etc."*
> *-Survey respondent*

What we heard – *CentrePlan 2050*

The draft Plan includes five strategic moves designed to help Downtown grow and thrive:

- Create great urban neighbourhoods
- Re-envision streets to foster urban life
- Grow a greener Downtown
- Create a lively Downtown
- Improve Downtown governance and implementation

Residents were invited to read the draft *CentrePlan 2050* and provide comments online and at the open house. A summary of feedback by strategic move is below.

Create great urban neighbourhoods

Participant comments emphasize revitalizing Downtown by:

- Attracting people and businesses
- Opening affordable grocery stores or markets
- Replacing surface parking with multi-storied parking or mixed-used development

Re-envision streets to foster urban life

Participant comments noted the importance to:

- Redesign streets to prioritize pedestrians and cyclists
- Improve public transit and reducing car dependency
- Increase affordable and social housing
- Foster community spaces and nightlife
- Create a safer, cleaner, and more vibrant Downtown

Grow a greener Downtown

Participant comments indicated the need for:

- Diverse greenery and landscaping
- Family-friendly amenities
- Electric buses
- Open-air venues
- Ensuring environmental sustainability and proper maintenance of sidewalks, pathways, benches, and streets

Create a lively Downtown

Participant comments included ideas to enhance Downtown:

- Add safety measures and better lighting
- Winter amenities

- Add Indigenous art and cultural programming
- Increase connectivity between key areas
- Add more gardens and supermarkets
- Improve and maintain cleanliness

Improve Downtown governance and implementation

Participant comments highlighted the need to:

- Develop Downtown with a focus on affordable housing and safety
- Collaborate with stakeholders and other levels of government
- Plan for long-term maintenance
- Eliminate or reduce parking lots
- Include accessible public amenities such as washrooms
- Ensure inclusive and transparent processes

> *"Love it! Winnipeg needs more bike lanes, green space and areas with no cars. A dedicated fan zone for hockey is awesome! This plan will encourage people to go outside, visit downtown and for those who don't bike regularly they will be encouraged to grab their bike and go for a ride."*
> *-Online commenting tool respondent*

What we heard – Re-imagining Graham Avenue

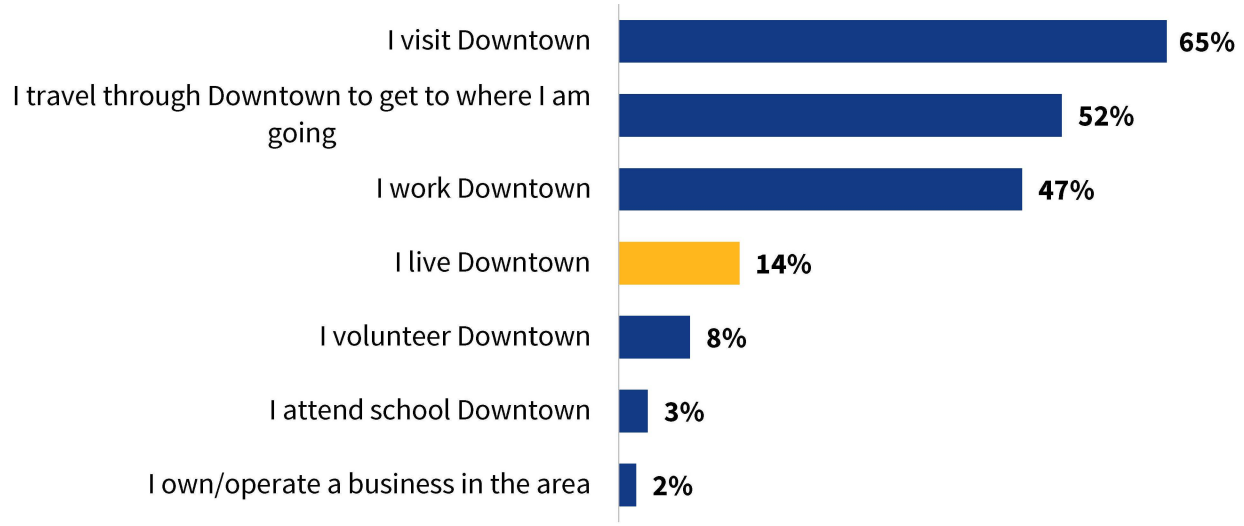
Residents were invited to provide feedback on the draft design of Graham Avenue through an online survey and at the open houses. A summary of feedback is below.

Who we heard from

We asked survey participants their connection to Downtown. Almost half (47 percent) of survey respondents work Downtown and 14 percent live Downtown (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Connection to Downtown Winnipeg

What is your connection to Downtown? Select all that apply.



Total responses: 1,110

Level of support

Three proposed street zone types have been developed for Graham Avenue:

- Shared Zone: Vaughan Street to Carlton Street
- Celebration Zone: Carlton Street to Donald Street
- Green Zone: Donald Street to Fort Street

We asked survey respondents to review each zone and indicate their level of support. Over 70 percent of respondents somewhat or strongly support the draft design for each zone (Figure 3):

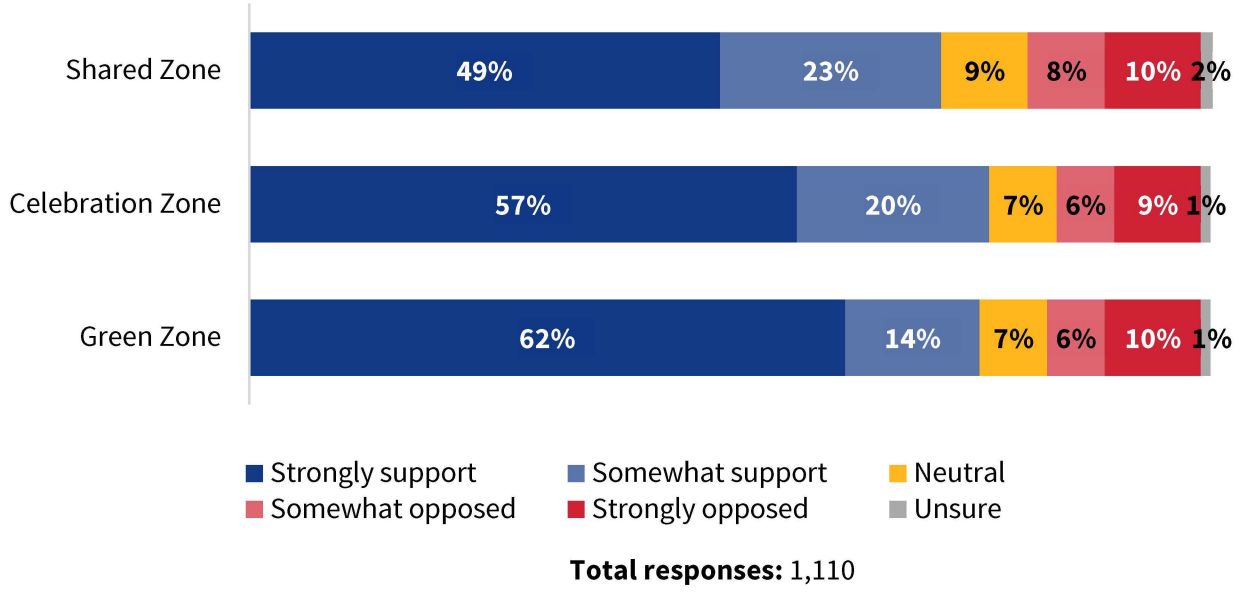
- Shared Zone - 72 percent somewhat or strongly support
- Celebration Zone -77 percent somewhat or strongly support
- Green Zone - 76 percent somewhat or strongly support

Survey respondents that live Downtown indicated slightly higher levels of support for the draft design:

- Shared Zone – 80 percent somewhat or strongly support
- Celebration Zone – 83 percent somewhat or strongly support
- Green Zone – 85 percent somewhat or strongly support

Figure 3: Level of support for draft design of Graham Avenue

How much do you support or oppose the draft design of Graham Avenue?



Total responses: 1,110

Design features

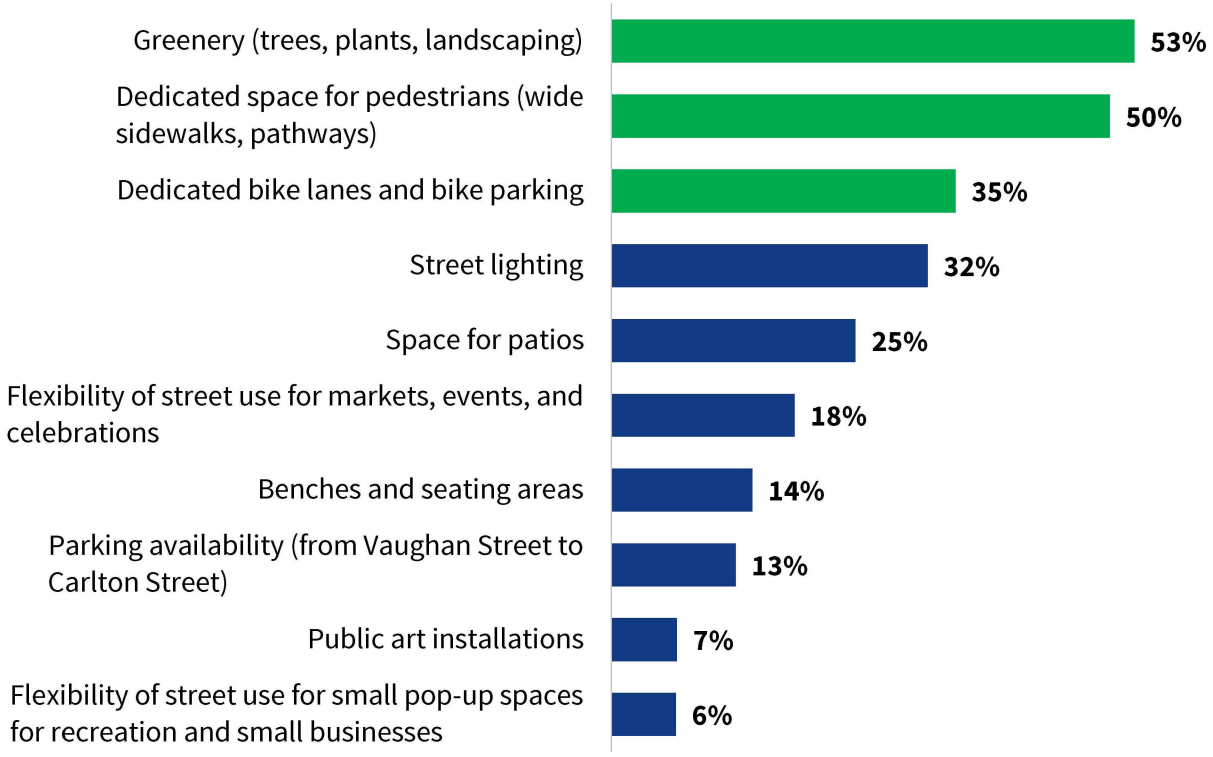
We asked survey respondents how important each design feature is to them. Of the design features they indicated as very important, we then asked respondent to indicate their top three (Figure 4). The top three most important design features included:

- Greenery (trees, plants, landscaping) – 53 percent
- Dedicated space for pedestrians (wide sidewalks, pathways) – 50 percent
- Dedicated bike lanes and bike parking – 35 percent

> *"I like the green zone in particular, with lots of space for pedestrians and cyclists, and lots of greenery, which we desperately need more of downtown."*
> *-Survey respondent*

Figure 4: Importance of design features

Which design features are most important to you? Select up to three design features.



Total responses: 895

Overall draft design

What participants like the most

We also asked survey respondents what they like most about the draft design of Graham Avenue. Responses were consistent with open house feedback (see Appendix E). The most mentioned themes included:

- Pedestrian prioritization and accessibility (179 comments)
  - Creating walkable spaces that prioritize pedestrians over cars
- Vehicle access (132 comments)
  - Support for reducing or eliminating cars and/or parking
- Greenery (130 comments)
  - Appreciation for green spaces, trees, and other greenery
- Biking (124 comments)
  - Desire for dedicated bike lanes and secure (monitored) bike parking
- Place for people (117 comments)
  - Place to gather and build community, where all people are welcome

- Arts, culture, and entertainment (96 comments)
    - Desire for a lively Downtown
    - Focus on arts and culture
- Beautification (65 comments)
    - Beautifying the street through landscaping, lighting, seating areas, and other elements

> *"Love the focus on pedestrians and active transportation. I always thought our city is missing a pedestrian corridor like most major cities have."*
> *-Survey respondent*

What participants like the least

When asked what respondents like least about the draft design of Graham Avenue, the most mentioned themes included:

- Vehicle access (203 comments)
    - Reduce or eliminate all cars/parking (133 comments)
    - Increase cars/parking. Concern how reduced car access will impact Downtown traffic (70 comments)
- Community safety and well-being (84 comments)
    - Concerns about safety, including crime, harassment, and the presence of vulnerable populations
- Biking (61 comments)
    - Opposition to bike lanes on Graham Avenue
- Transit (54 comments)
    - Opposition to buses coming off Graham Avenue
- Lively downtown (29 comments)
    - More space for large events
    - Less space dedicated for large events
- Greenery (28 comments)
    - Lack of greenery and trees and too much concrete
- Business impact (21 comments)
    - Concerns about negative effects on local business

When asked if there are any other comments about the draft design, about one-quarter of comments related to community safety and well-being (141 of 516 comments). Several comments noted that before Graham Avenue can be re-developed, safety and increased services for people experiencing homelessness, addictions, and mental health must be addressed. Open-ended survey analysis can be found in Appendix C.

Activities or programming

We asked survey respondents to share their ideas for activities and programming that would work well on Graham Avenue. Participants suggested free or low-cost activities in each category. The most mentioned themes included:

- Food and markets (176 comments)
    - Farmers'/makers' markets, food trucks, unique dining experiences
- Live entertainment (129 comments)
    - Buskers, live music, theatre, poetry, entertainers
- Arts and culture (84 comments)
    - Art installations and competitions, cultural celebrations
- Festivals and large events (80 comments)
    - Street parties, festivals, collaboration with existing large events
- Sports and recreation (78 comments)
    - Yoga/fitness classes, sport courts, sport camps, lawn games
- Family-friendly events (51 comments)
    - Spray pad, youth activities, family events
- Patios and beer gardens (49 comments)
    - Year-round patios, beer gardens

Next steps

In summer 2024, the draft *CentrePlan 2050* will be presented to Council for consideration. This includes a funding request to:

- Move forward on the redesign of Graham Avenue
- Create a plan on how to animate the street and maintain Graham Avenue after construction is complete

Council approval and funding is needed before we begin these next steps. Feedback from this final phase of engagement will be used in the next step of the design process.

Appendices

Appendix A – Promotional material
Appendix B – Survey results
Appendix C – Open-ended survey analysis
Appendix D – Online comments feedback
Appendix E – Open house feedback