



Connecting Courtenay

Engagement Summary: Round 2

October 2018

URBAN
systems

REPORT FOR:

City of Courtenay
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1. INTRODUCTION

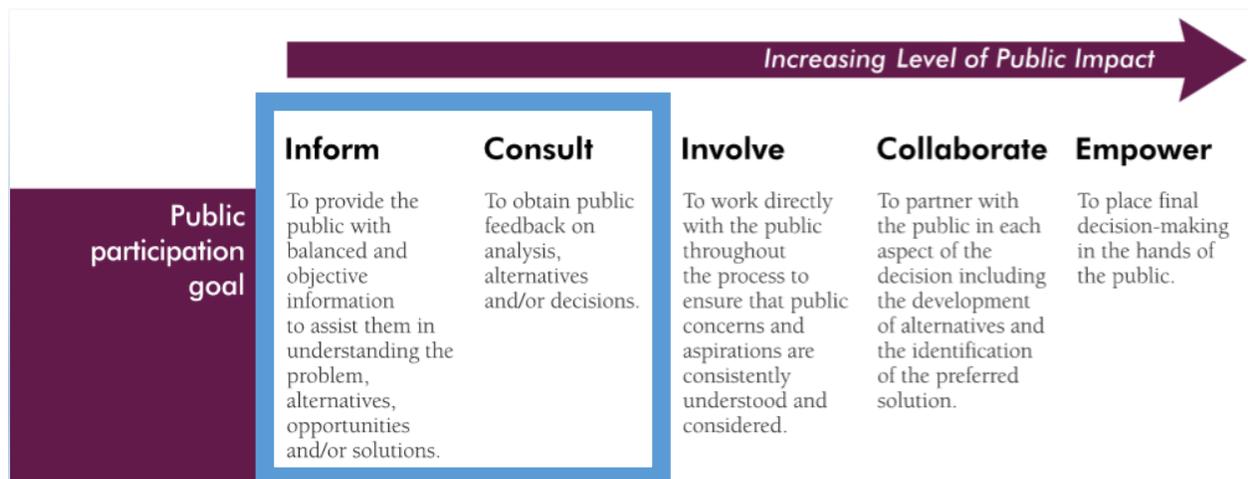
Courtenay has more than doubled in size over the past 25 years, and as cities grow and change, so do their transportation needs. The City is developing Connecting Courtenay, a Transportation Master Plan that will provide direction on transportation infrastructure for the next 20 years. To inform the Transportation Master Plan, the City of Courtenay has undertaken two rounds of public consultation, the first seeking public input about issues and challenges and “big ideas” to be considered as part of the long-term transportation network, and the second stage was seeking feedback on proposed network improvements across all modes.

Based on public input, best practices, and technical assessment, Connecting Courtenay will identify existing issues, model future impacts, identify long-term improvements and set priorities for 2025 investments. The draft plan will be presented to City Council

2. ABOUT THE PROCESS

The daily lives of all citizens are affected by the transportation network, regardless of their mode of choice. Developing an integrated transportation network of the future requires input and involvement from a range of community interests and perspectives. Meaningful engagement in the master planning process will ensure the plan reflects the community’s needs and wants and establishes a greater foundation for public awareness and understanding for implementation of the plan over coming years.

Public engagement efforts focused the on “inform – involve” phases of the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) values and spectrum:



Stage 2 public engagement occurred from early June, starting with several stakeholder meetings and then followed by an open house, engagement booths at a variety of locations and an online survey.

For more information: www.courtenay.ca/connectingcourtenay

3. WHAT WE DID

3.1 ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

A series of public engagement activities were utilized to reach a range of stakeholders and the broad community. Opportunities to participate were widely promoted through advertising, social media, and news media.

- An open house was held at the Florence Filberg Centre - Conference Hall, Tuesday, June 19, 2018, from 5 p.m. – 7 p.m. 77 people attended. Many had attended the first open house in Stage 1 as well.
- A series of stakeholder meetings were held in early June with key groups including the Accessibility Committee, School District #71, several regional government partners, K'ómoks First Nation and the Comox Valley Cycling Coalition.
- To raise awareness and make it easier for the broad public to participate, several “engagement booths” were held at a variety of high-traffic public locations including Comox Valley Night Market, Driftwood Mall and the Lewis Recreation Centre. These outreach booths were an opportunity to reach a diverse range of residents “where they are” and those who may not have been inclined to attend the advertised open house.
- An online survey was available from June 19 to July 3, 2018. Print surveys were also offered as an alternative to the online version. The survey was the central repository for public input and garnered a high response rate with 517 surveys completed including over 433 comments.



3.2 PROMOTION AND OUTREACH

In an effort to establish broad awareness of the “Connecting Courtenay” initiative and the opportunities to provide input, a number of activities occurred:

- Two media releases were distributed to local media resulting in event promotion and attendance at event. One promoted the open house and the second shared the draft recommendations prior to the open house.
- The open house and online survey were advertised in the local newspaper (Comox Valley Record).
- Awareness of the process and survey was established through three engagement booths at Lewis Centre, Driftwood Mall and the Comox Valley Night Market.
- An established project tag line of “Connecting Courtenay” continued to be used and posed a call to participate asking “What Moves You?”
- A project logo and consistent visual identity were applied to encourage recognition of the initiative.
- Business cards promoting the online survey were distributed to residents to encourage participation in the online survey.
- Digital signage in City facilities.
- Promoted on City of Courtenay website and within City of Courtenay social media (Facebook and Twitter)

- Emails to key transportation stakeholders and large employers within the Comox Valley.

3.3 KEY TOPICS

- Level of support for draft guiding principles.
- Level of support for proposed recommendations by mode.
- Level of support for proposed recommendations over long-term.
- Allocation of investment in transportation improvements.

4. OVERALL OBSERVATIONS

- There were 51+ respondents overall to the survey.
- Respondents were predominantly homeowners of single family homes with two or more people living there.
- There was broad representation across all adult age groups with 52% of respondents between 50 - 69. Gender information was not asked.
- 51% of respondents had two cars registered to their household. 84% of respondents indicated owning a bike and over 60% indicated not using Transit.
- The following draft guiding principles are used to shape the Transportation Master Plan:
 - Support planned growth and increasing travel demands.
 - Design streets to be complete and support all modes.
 - Make walking, cycling and transit more attractive.
 - Increase accessibility for people of all ages and abilities.
 - Recognize safety, mobility, accessibility and affordability in identifying transportation improvements and evaluating alternatives.
 - Ensure that the transportation system is planned and designed to support other community aspirations.
- Overall, there was support for the guiding principles and exploring long-term planning within each mode. Nearly 75% of the respondents supported the guiding principles proposed to shape the Transportation Master Plan.

- While a majority of respondents agreed with the guiding principles, many wanted to see sustainable modes such as walking, cycling and transit in particular carry a higher degree of importance in shaping the long-term plan.
- 60% of respondents supported exploring improved or new major corridors identified as preliminary directions, and over 80% of respondents supported directions for transit, walking and accessibility, and the proposed cycling network.
- A proposed new bridge crossing generated opinions of support and opposition, and many commented on the proposed location in relation to the estuary and airpark.
- When asked about the allocation of City resources in transportation improvements (or how would you allocate \$100 toward the possible investments), almost 70% of respondents indicated that at least some funds should be dedicated to a new river crossing. Respondents suggested almost 60% be invested in infrastructure for sustainable modes and education, and more than 40% toward roadway network improvements ranging from operational and safety improvements through to new or improved major streets and new river crossings.

5. SURVEY COMMENTS BY QUESTION

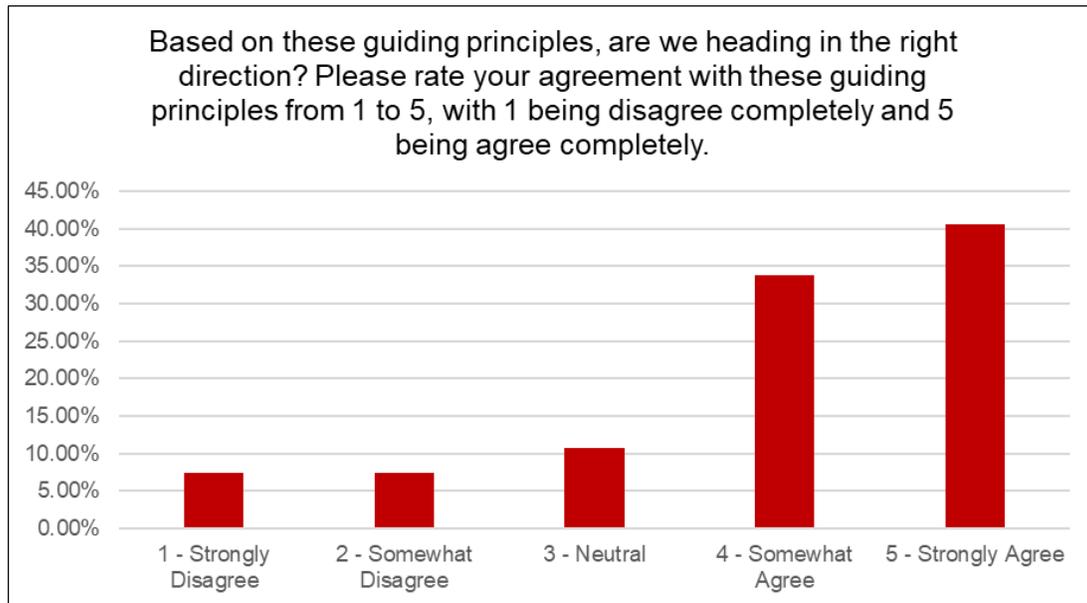
Total number of survey respondents (print and online): 517

of comments: ~ 433

1. *Connecting Courtenay's directions and priorities are guided by community goals and supporting technical assessments of issues and opportunities associated with planned growth of Courtenay. After hearing from the community and before confirming long-term directions, the following draft guiding principles are used to shape the Master Transportation Plan:*

- Support planned growth and increasing travel demands for moving people and goods within and around the community.
- Make walking, cycling and transit more attractive in an effort to increase sustainable modes of travel in the community.
- Design streets to be complete and support for all modes.
- Ensure all modes provide attractive connections to key destinations in and around the City.
- Increase accessibility for people of all ages and abilities.
- Recognize safety, mobility, accessibility and affordability in identifying transportation improvements and evaluating alternatives.
- Ensure that the transportation system is planned and designed to support other community goals including but not limited to land use, recreation, social, environment and economy.

Based on these guiding principles, are we heading in the right direction? Please rate your agreement with these guiding principles from 1 to 5, with 1 being disagree completely and 5 being agree completely.



2. Is there anything else you would like to add?

197 Comments:

- Greater emphasis on cycling and active transportation infrastructure (41)
- Improvements to Transit (25)
- Potential environmental impacts on estuary and natural habitat, and airport (18)
- Regional connections (14)
- Planning with sustainability principles/ address sea level rise/greenhouse gas emissions (9)

- 3. The roadway network and mobility in the City of Courtenay for all modes is constrained by natural barriers such as a river, environmental areas and topography. As such, there are a select number of major roadways and river crossings serving provincial, regional and local travel in addition to providing connections to surrounding land uses. The technical analysis indicates that parts of the existing network operate at capacity during peak periods today and that further increases in traffic will substantially increase congestion and delays. Residents have also expressed a desire to explore improvements and new roadways to improve mobility for all modes.**

Several major roadway widenings and new roadways have been considered to get around the core areas of the city and serve local, regional and provincial travel within and around Courtenay. The City will continue to work with regional and provincial partners to deliver transportation improvements. The proposed Bold Moves add key connections and provide greater resilience to the network in an effort to manage mobility and congestion. All new roadways and roadway expansions would serve all modes of transportation. Beyond these Bold Moves, Connecting Courtenay will also recommend improvements to intersections and provide guidance for connections to and through growth areas.

The major possibilities being considered in the draft plan for the next 20 years include:

A) 17th Street Extension from Highway 19A Bypass to Back Road: Add a new connection to divert traffic from congested roadways, provide a more direct connection between regional connections and East Courtenay, and improve the resiliency of the network.

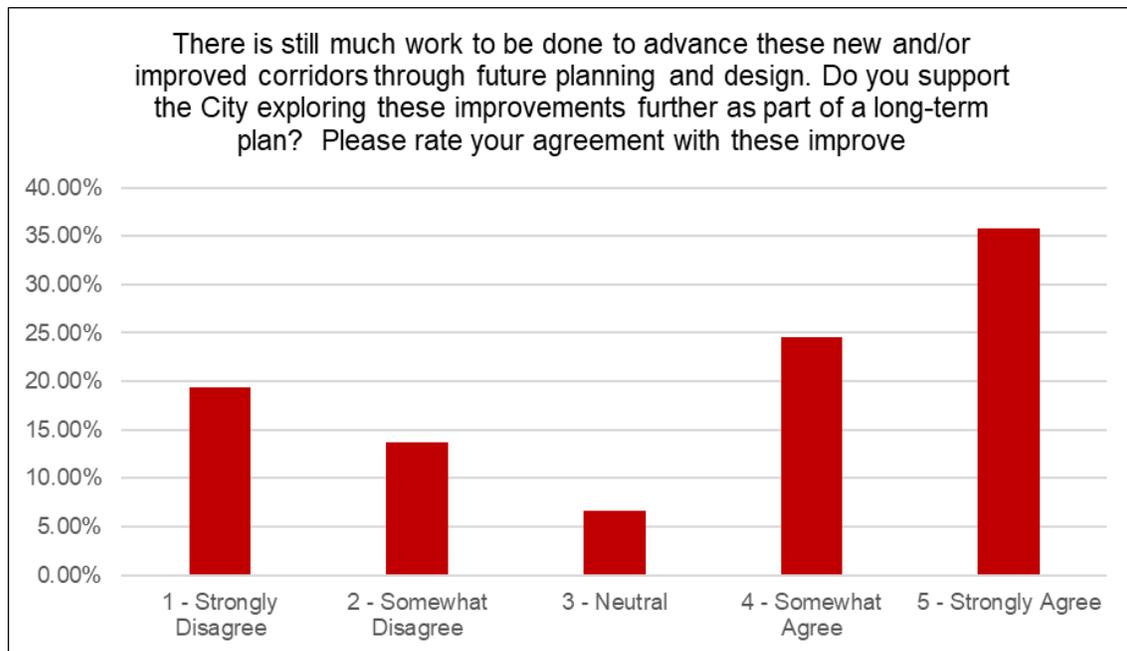
B) Courtenay River Crossing: Add a new bridge crossing south of the existing crossings. A crossing south of the 17th Street Bridge has the greatest potential to divert traffic from congested areas and accommodate increased growth in years to come.

Widening of Existing Roadways: Even with new connections in place, growth over the next 20 years will place increasing pressure on existing roadways.

C) Highway 19A Bypass: Widen the Highway 19A Bypass between 17th Street and Ryan Road.

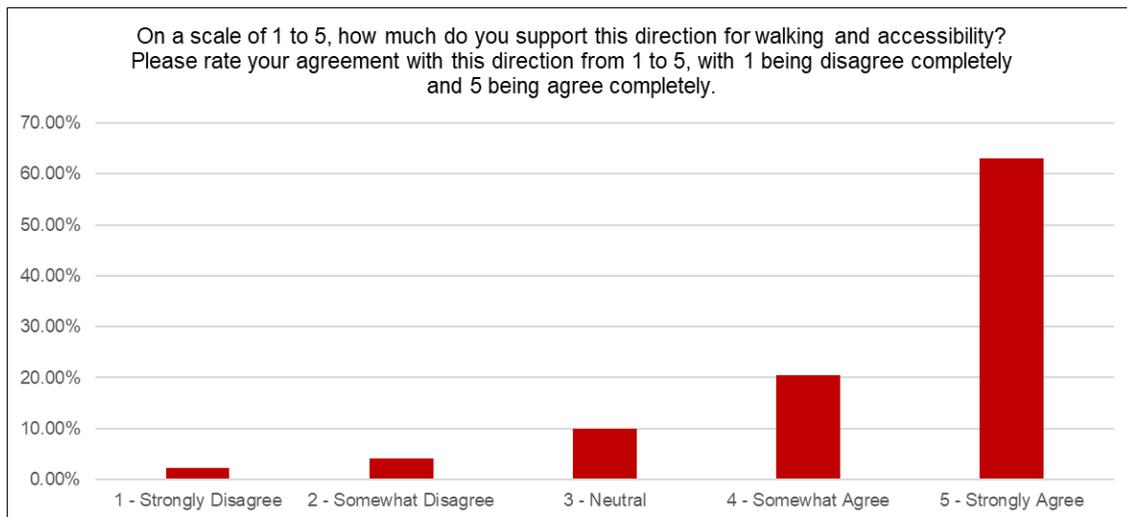
D) Ryan Road: Widen Ryan Road between Back Road and Lerwick Road.

There is still much work to be done to advance these new and/or improved corridors through future planning and design. Do you support the City exploring these improvements further as part of a long-term plan? Please rate your agreement with these improvements from 1 to 5, with 1 being disagree completely and 5 being agree completely.

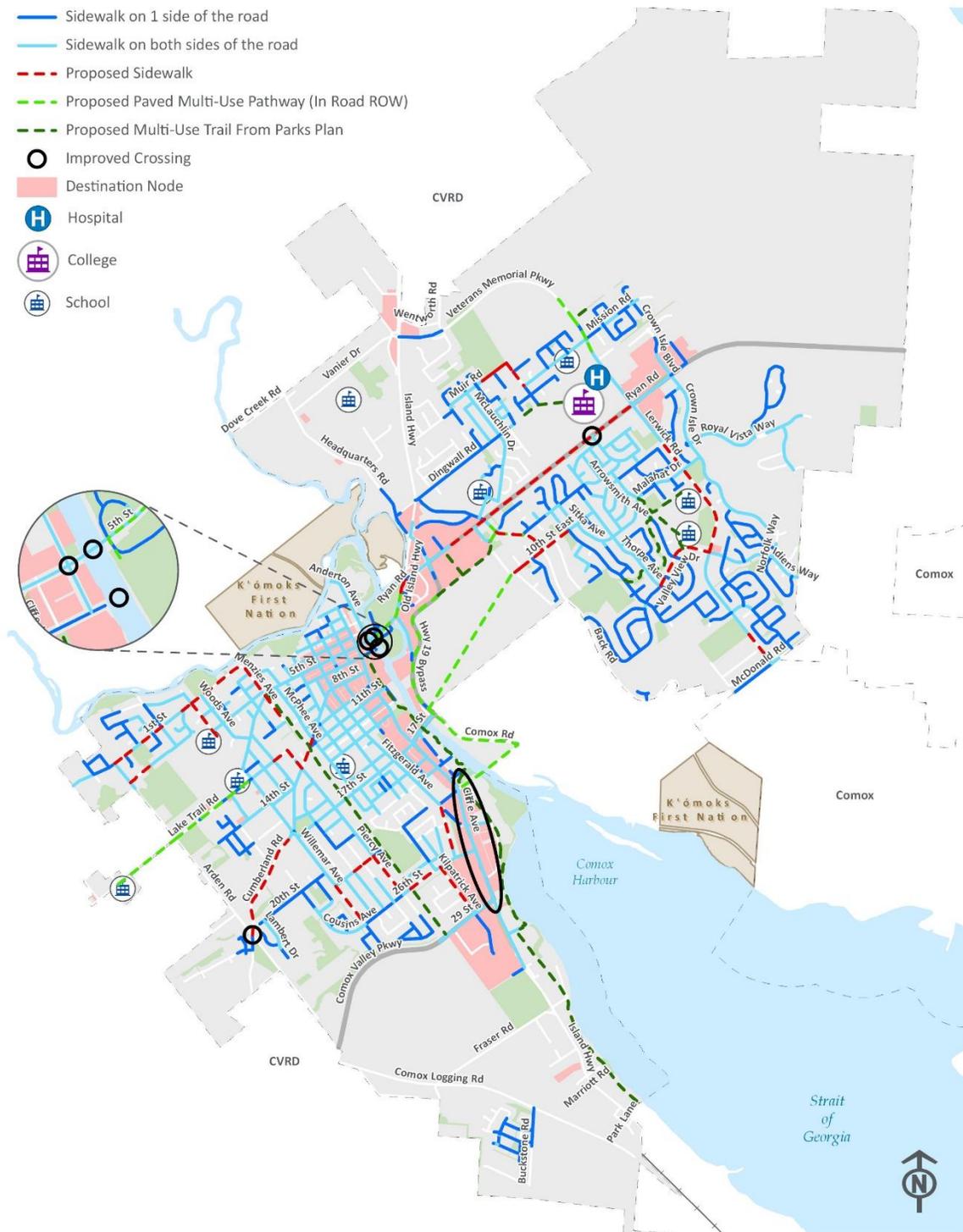


4. *Courtenay has a strong walking network with sidewalks on both sides of most major roads and many well used recreational trails. Our definition of “walking” includes using a mobility aid such as a wheelchair or scooter. There are some missing links in the existing sidewalk network, as well as some corridors where crossing can be difficult. Potential walking network improvements have been identified and focus on arterial roads, areas around schools, and connections to transit. Beyond key connections, Connecting Courtenay will recommend enhanced street treatments for major destinations – including boulevards, street trees, and lighting – safer, more accessible crossings, and support programs, including safe routes to school.*

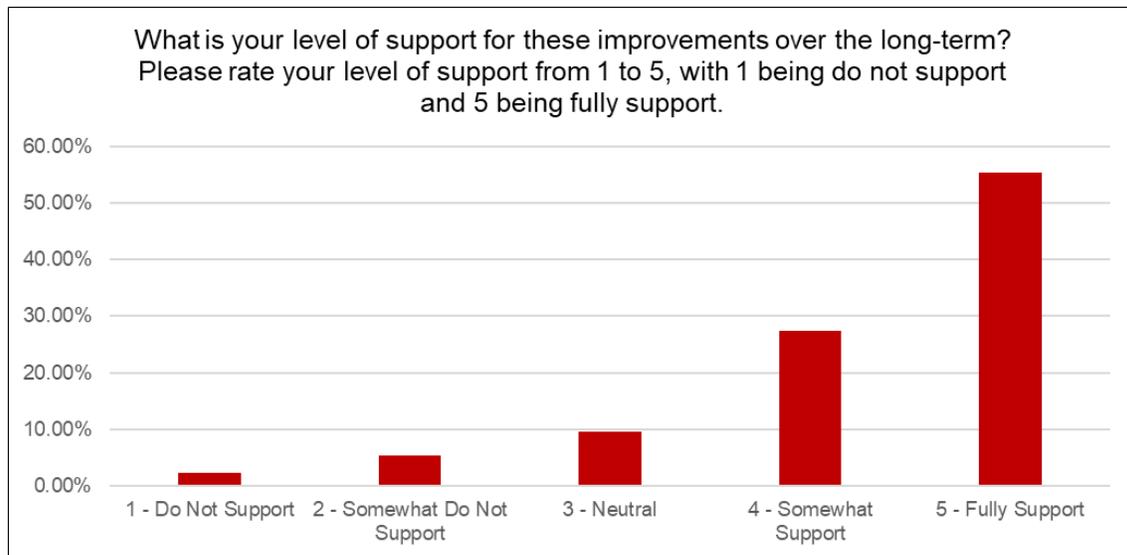
On a scale of 1 to 5, how much do you support this direction for walking and accessibility? Please rate your agreement with this direction from 1 to 5, with 1 being disagree completely and 5 being agree completely.



The map shown below relates to Question 5.



5. What is your level of support for these improvements over the longterm? Please rate your level of support from 1 to 5, with 1 being do not support and 5 being fully support.

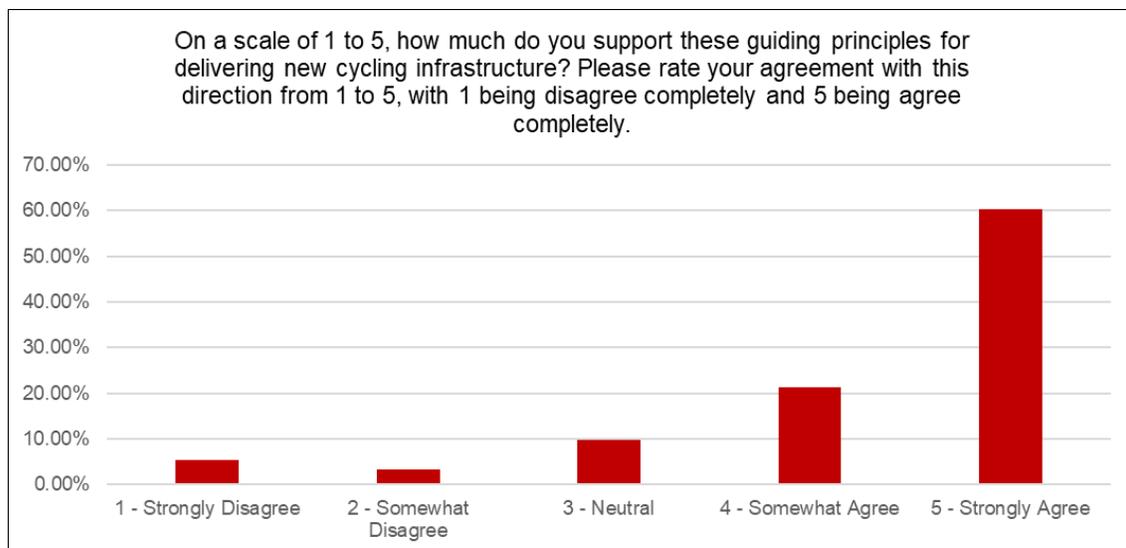


6. *Courtenay has a limited network of designated cycling routes and no protected cycling routes that would be considered comfortable for people of all ages and abilities. There are many popular off-street pathways that act as a spine to the existing cycling network. The first all ages and abilities on-street route is currently under construction on 5th Street between Fitzgerald Avenue and Menzies Avenue. Many neighbourhood routes on local streets that are comfortable to ride are unsigned. Beyond these existing routes, the existing river crossings are not comfortable for cyclists.*

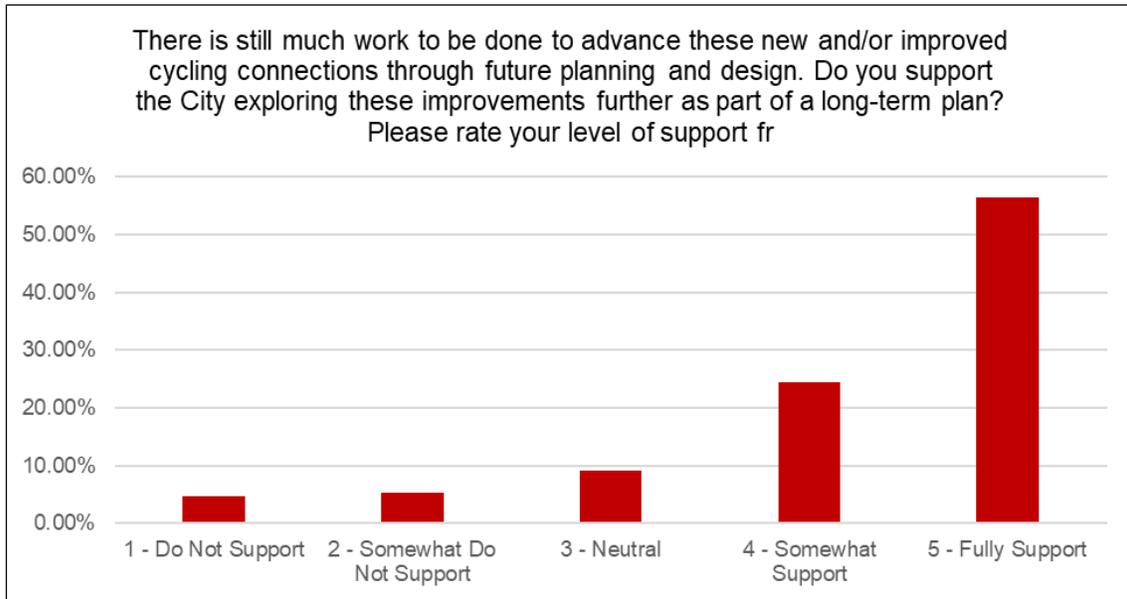
Following are the draft guiding principles for delivering new cycling infrastructure in Courtenay:

- Build on existing momentum.
- Create “spine” network of cycling routes that connects key destinations and focuses on safety and comfort for all.
- Supplement the spine cycling routes with a network that uses neighbourhood bikeways on local roads and existing and planned trails to access a broader area.
- Ensure new roads provide for all modes

On a scale of 1 to 5, how much do you support these guiding principles for delivering new cycling infrastructure? Please rate your agreement with this direction from 1 to 5, with 1 being disagree completely and 5 being agree completely.



7. There is still much work to be done to advance these new and/or improved cycling connections through future planning and design. Do you support the City exploring these improvements further as part of a long-term plan? Please rate your level of support from 1 to 5, with 1 being do not support and 5 being fully support.

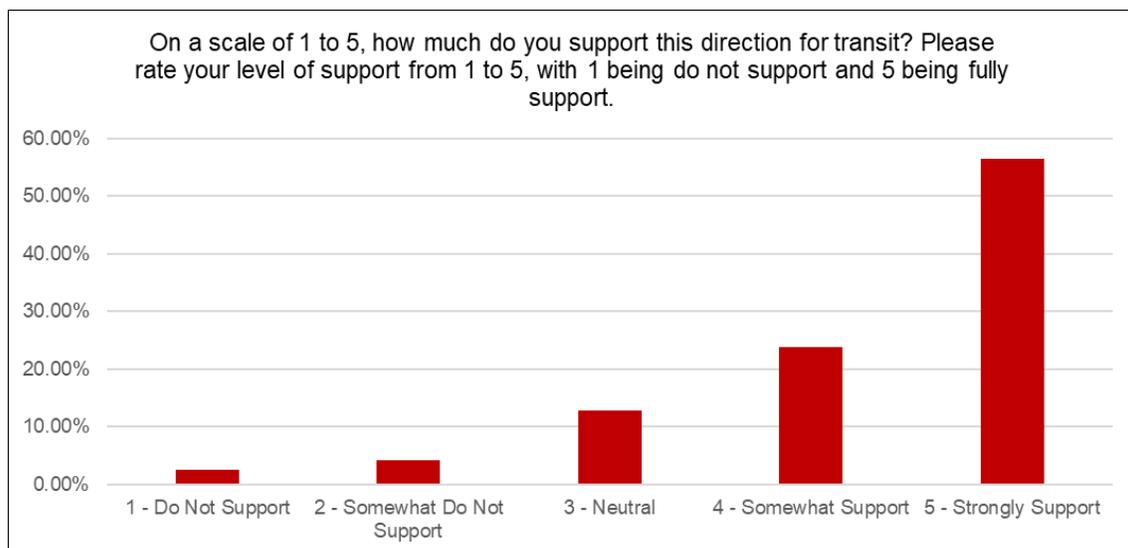


8. BC Transit and the Comox Valley Regional District have developed a Transit Future Plan for the Comox Valley. The City of Courtenay can take a role in advocating for more frequent and direct service for residents.

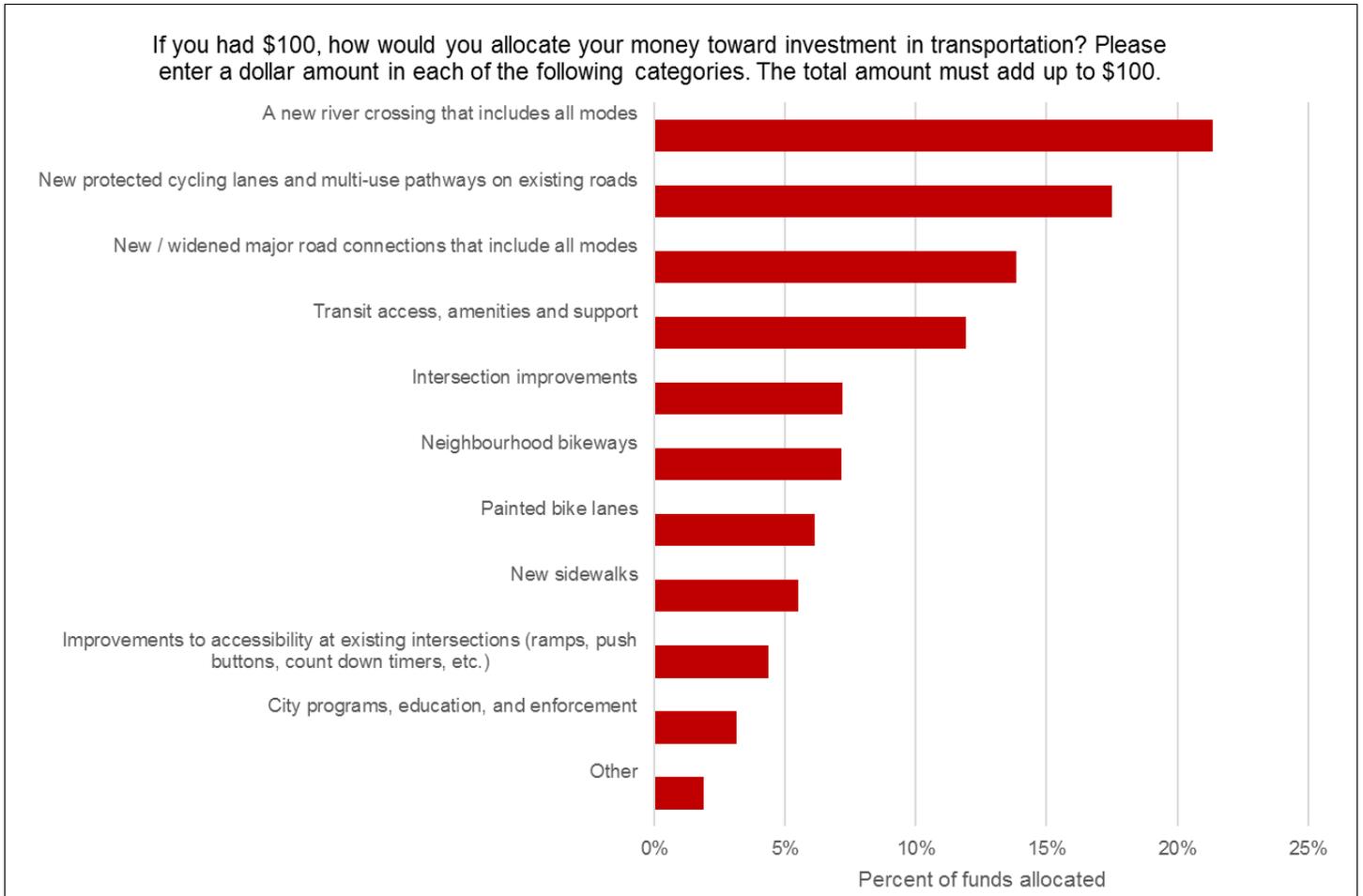
The City can also support transit by:

- Providing improved connections to transit.
- Supporting transit reliability and efficiency by improving intersections and considering transit priority.
- Providing amenities around stops (such as seating, shelters, lighting and other information) and
- supporting the development of future exchanges.

On a scale of 1 to 5, how much do you support this direction for transit? Please rate your level of support from 1 to 5, with 1 being do not support and 5 being fully support.



9. If you had \$100, how would you allocate your money toward investment in transportation? Please enter a dollar amount in each of the following categories. The total amount must add up to \$100.



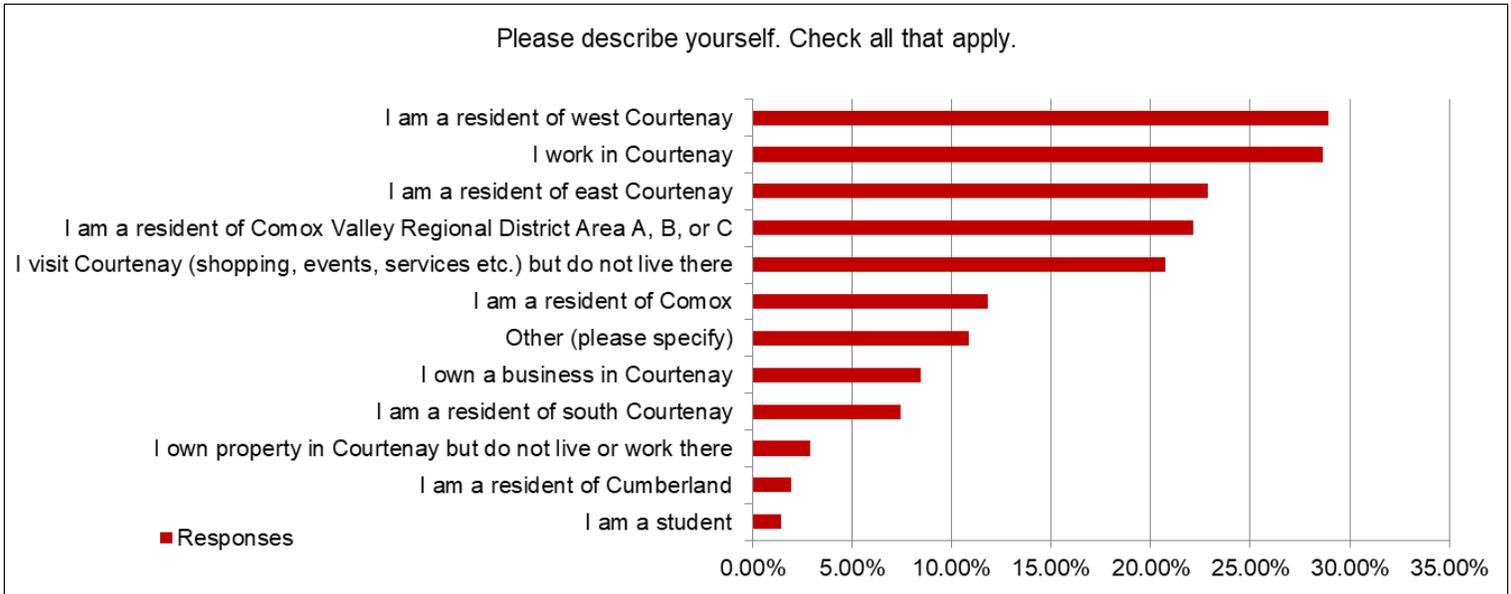
10. Share your thoughts: Is there anything else we should consider as we advance Connecting Courtenay towards completion in late summer/early fall?

236 Comments:

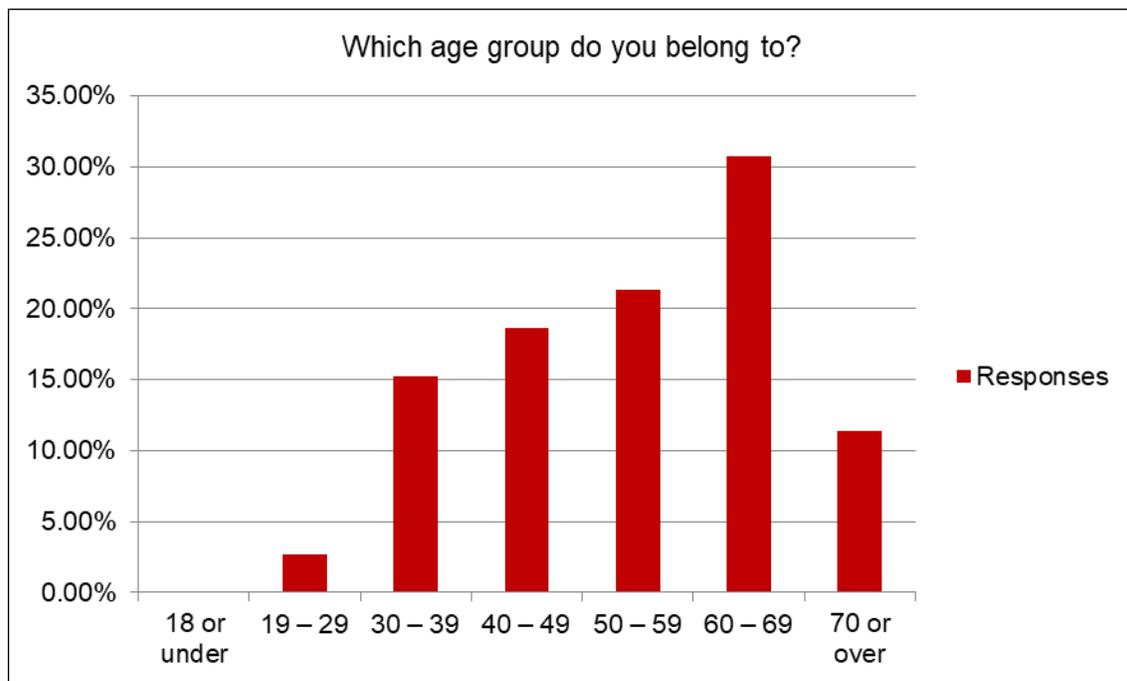
- Greater emphasis on cycling and active transportation infrastructure (41)
- Concern about a new crossing impacting estuary/airpark (37)
- Improvements to Transit (24)
- Specific mentions of safety, markings, signal or signage improvements needed (23)

6. WHO WE HEARD FROM

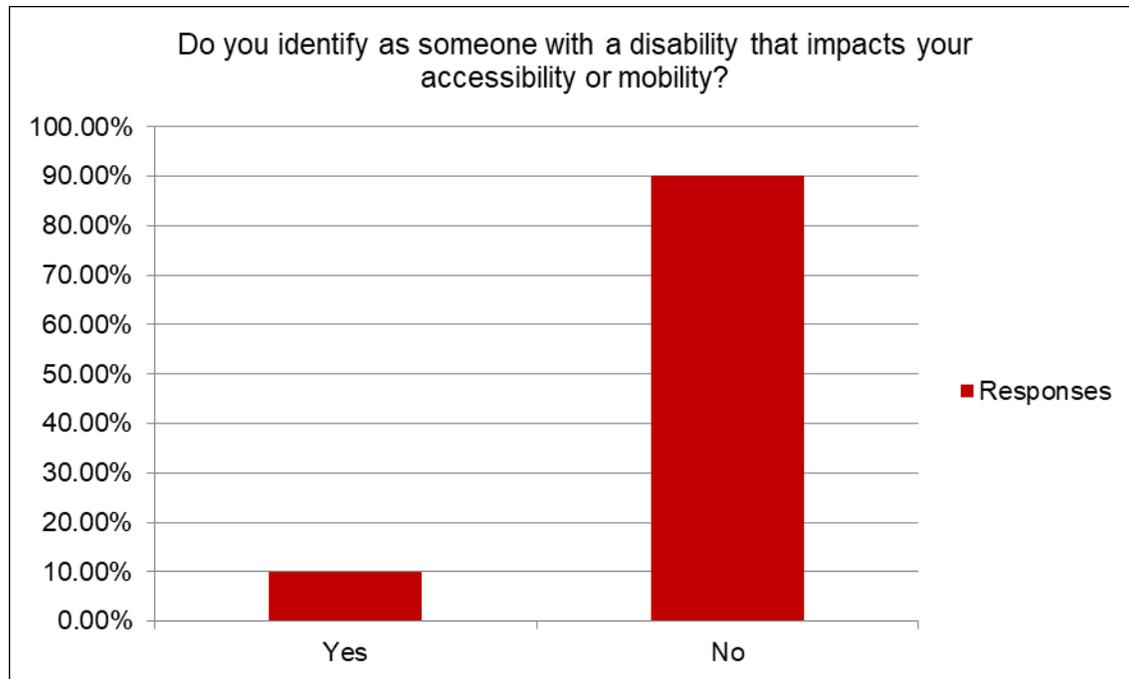
11. Please describe yourself. Check all that apply.



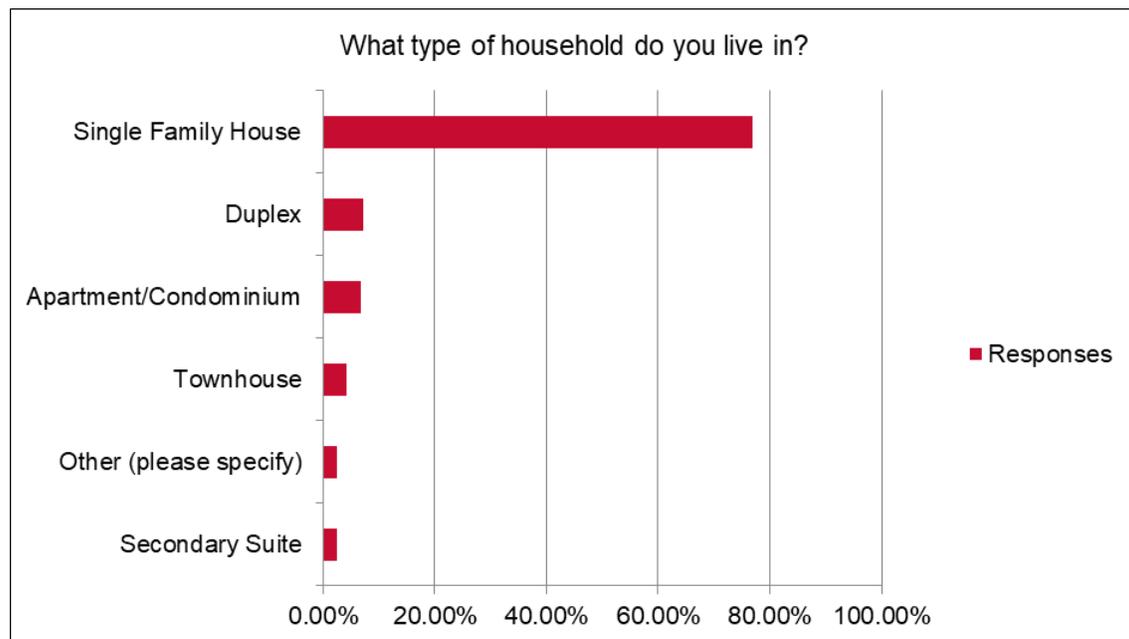
12. Which age group do you belong to?

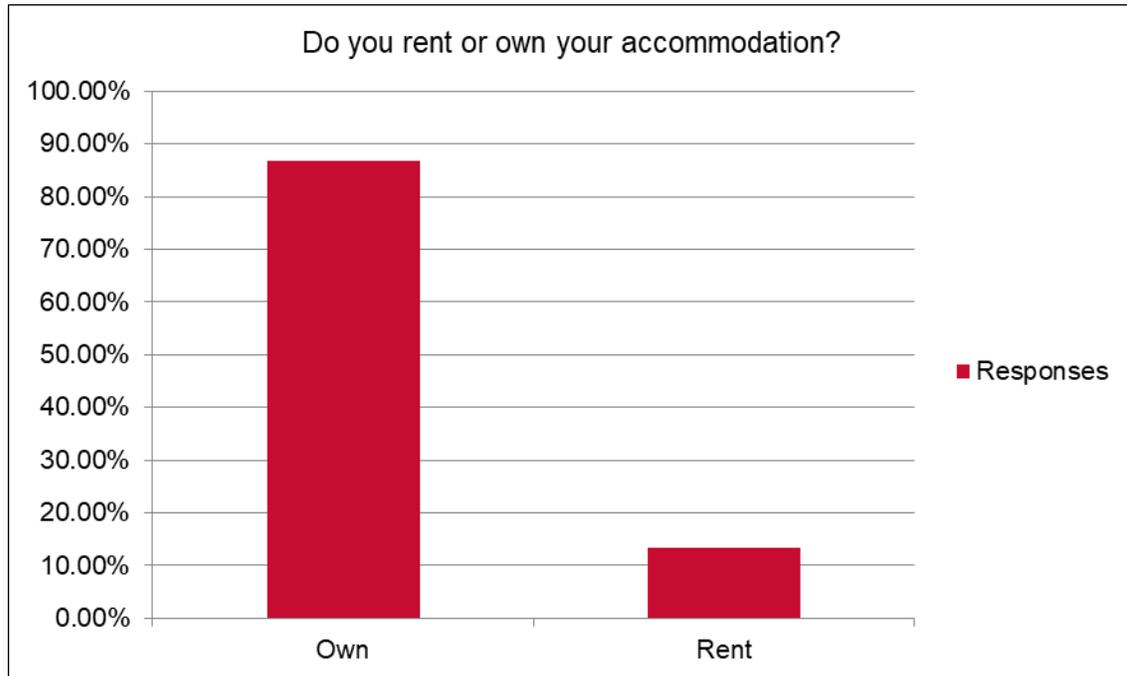
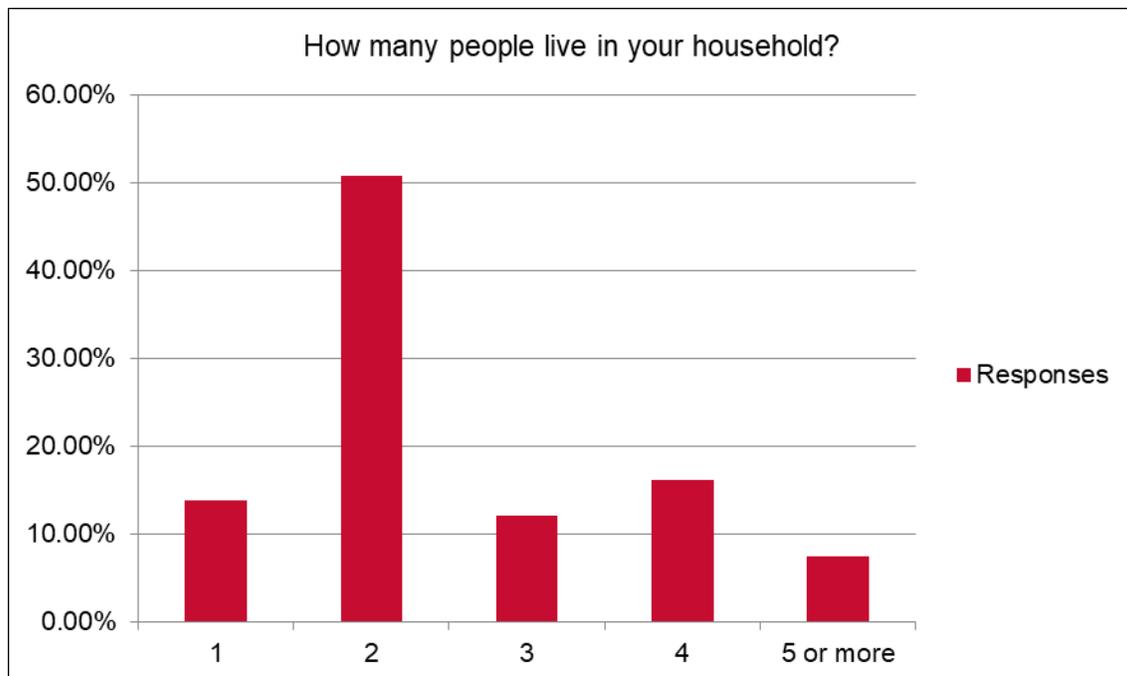


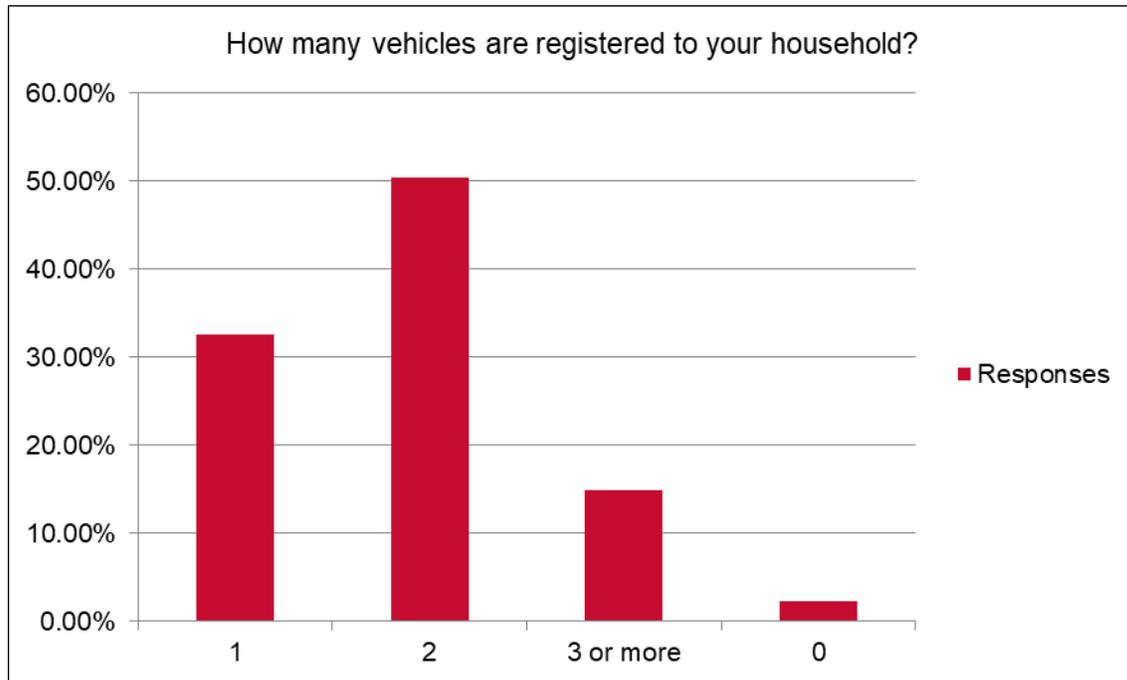
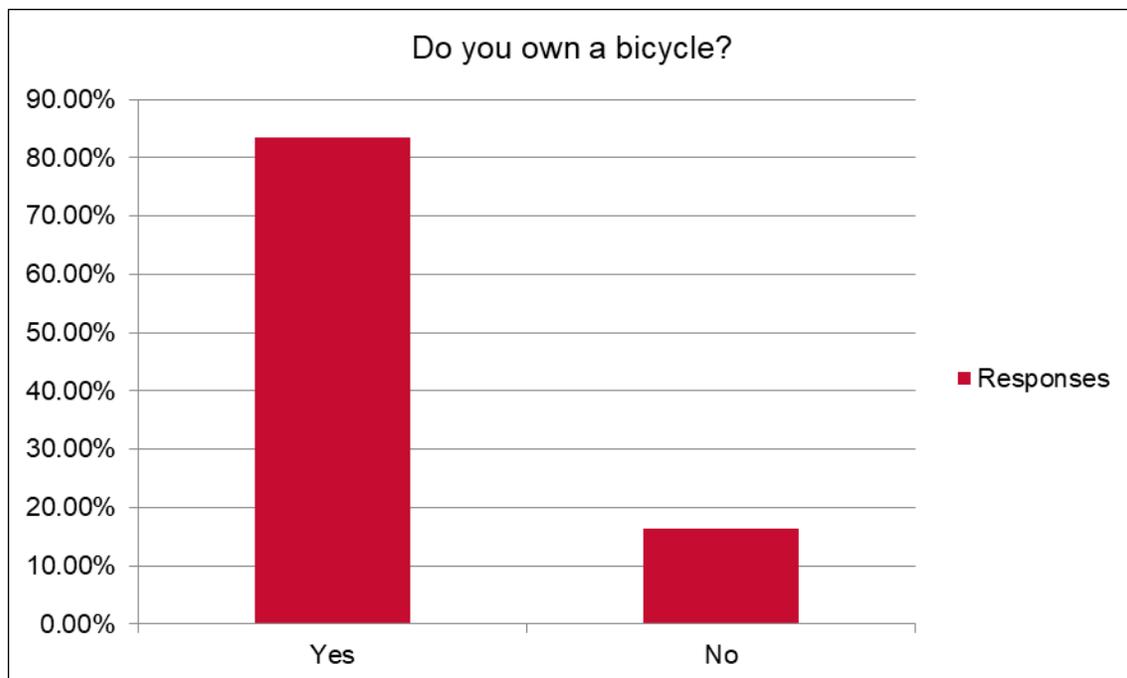
13. Do you identify as someone with a disability that impacts your accessibility or mobility?



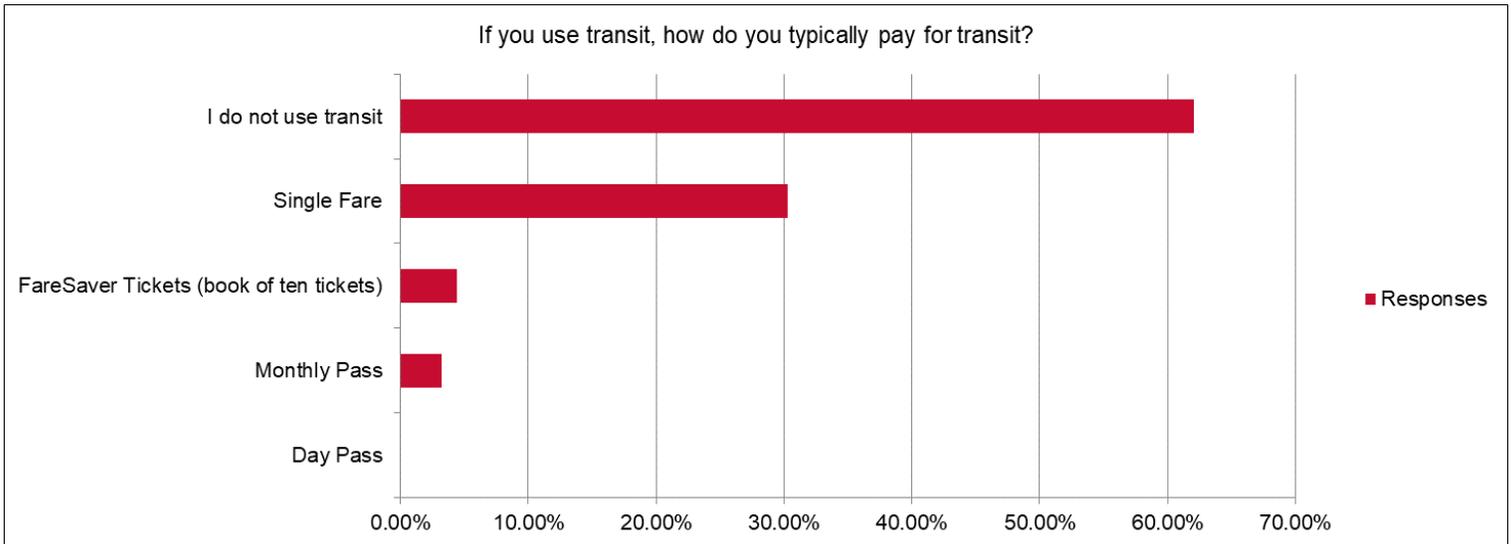
14. What type of household do you live in?



15. Do you rent or own your accommodation?**16. How many people live in your household?**

17. How many vehicles are registered to your household?**18. Do you own a bicycle?**

19. If you use transit, how do you typically pay for transit?



20. How far away is your nearest grocery store?



21. What is the distance of your daily commute to work or school?

