

TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

DATE: December 28, 2022

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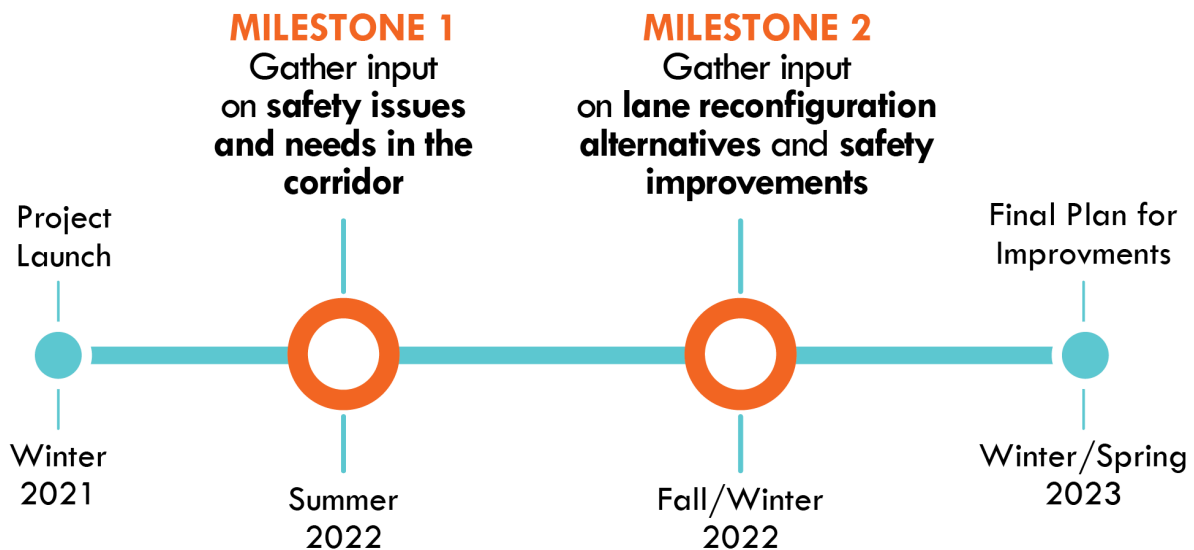
SUBJECT: Milestone 2 Community Engagement Summary – Final Report

PROJECT NAME: Fourth Plain and Fort Vancouver Way Safety and Mobility Project

1 Overview

This memorandum summarizes the public and stakeholder outreach conducted between August and November of 2022 to support the *Fourth Plain and Fort Vancouver Way Safety and Mobility Project*. These outreach activities were part of the second major community engagement milestone, as summarized in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1. Community Engagement Timeline



Milestone 2 activities focused on gathering community feedback on a range of preliminary design options for Fourth Plain and Fort Vancouver Way. Importantly, outreach during this period asked community members to provide input on potential street reconfigurations to repurpose a travel lane for safer multimodal travel through the corridor.¹

While both designs include improvements for people bicycling and those riding transit, Milestone 2 outreach asked community members about their preference between design options that had a greater emphasis on bicycle- or transit-focused improvements.

1.1 Objectives

The objectives of the Milestone 2 outreach were to:

- **Share information** with community and stakeholders about the lane reconfiguration project and options under consideration by City of Vancouver, explain how design options link back to underlying policy direction and community priorities, and educate community and stakeholders on benefits and impacts of each design option under consideration.
- Ask for community feedback and preferences on potential **lane reconfiguration options**.
- Gather broader feedback on **future investment opportunities** in the corridor, potentially through future APRA funding.

1.2 Outreach Tactics

The Project Team utilized a mix of in-person and online outreach tactics to engage community members during this milestone, summarized below:

- **Business Canvassing:** The team conducted targeted, in-person visits to engage directly with business owners, property owners and employees within the corridor.
- **Mailer:** The team designed, printed, and distributed an informational postcard to residential and business addresses in the project area. The postcard included project information, how to contact the project team and a QR code directing the public to the online open house and survey.
- **Tabling:** The team hosted an informational table at four (4) public events to share details about the project, ask for community feedback, and build relationships for future and ongoing engagement opportunities. Tabling at public events was coordinated in partnership with the following host organizations: Fourth Plain Forward and Columbia Play Project, League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), Clark College, and Vancouver Farmers Market. Photos 1 through 4 below were taken during Milestone 2022 tabling events.

¹ Milestone 1 activities occurred between May and July 2022 and were focused on focused on sharing baseline information about the project and gathering input on community needs and priorities. Public feedback collected during Milestone 1 also helped inform the development of design options and alternatives that were aligned with community desires and known safety needs in the corridor.



Photo 1. Project team member Eddie Montejo sharing project information with a community member at the LULAC Mercado on September 17, 2022.



Photo 2. Project team member Elvia Santos Dominguez reviewing the design options with a Spanish-speaking family at the LULAC Mercado on September 17, 2022.



Photo 3. Project team members Kayla Dunn, Elvia Santos Dominguez and Eddie Montejo tabling at the LULAC Mercado on September 17, 2022.



Photo 4. Project team member Elvia Santos Dominguez and City Community Engagement Manager William Cooley tabling at the Downtown Vancouver Farmer’s Market on October 1, 2022.

Outreach tactics included (continued):

- **Focus Groups:** Three small focus group sessions were offered (two in English and one in Spanish) at Clark Community College to share more detailed information on the design options and to gather a deeper level of input from a range of key project area stakeholders, including equity-priority community members, business and property owners, neighborhood association leaders, and business service providers. Events were publicized on the project website, social media, and on-site at the college.
- **Project Flyer:** A project flyer summarizing general information about the project was developed in English, Spanish, and Russian. The flyer also invited community members to visit and stay engaged via the project BeHeard site, Online Open House, and survey.
- **Online Open House and Survey:** An online open house and survey collected community feedback from September 2, 2022 to November 7, 2022. The online open house summarized the project planning process, potential treatments, and draft design options in an interactive online format. Results from the interactive survey are summarized in Section 2.2 below.
- **Community Meetings:** The Project Team presented information and gathered feedback to community-based organizations and neighborhood associations within the study area including Fourth Plain Forward, Neighborhood Traffic Safety Alliance (NTSA), Action for Climate Emergency (ACE), and Meadow Homes Neighborhood Association.
- **Community Roundtable:** The Project Team hosted an online roundtable with representatives from Bike Clark County, the School for the Blind, and other community stakeholders to share information and gather feedback on this project as well as the concurrent *Vancouver Transportation System Plan* and *Heights District Project*.
- **Social Media and Advertisements:** Social media advertisements on Facebook, NextDoor, Instagram, and Reddit were used to help drive community members to the BeHeard site and the focus groups. Social media accounted for approximately 14% of all traffic sources to the BeHeard site.

Milestone 2 engagement activities are summarized in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Milestone 2 Engagement Activities

Activity	Date	Event / Location / Group	TOTAL REACHED
Tabling	August 2	Fourth Plain Forward & Columbia Play Project Arte en El Parque	170+ Total engaged
	September 17	LULAC Grows Mercado	
	September 17	Multicultural Resource Fair at Clark College	
	October 1	Downtown Vancouver Farmers Market	
Business Canvassing	October 11, 12, & 19	Project corridor (F Street to Ft. Vancouver Way) – Ft Vancouver Way (Fourth Plain to Mill Plain)	34 Businesses
Mailer	October 7	Residents and businesses in zip codes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 98660 • 98661 • 98663 	18,714 Addresses
Focus Groups	September 26 & 29	Transportation Talks at Clark College	7 Total participants
Online Survey	September 2 – November 7	Online – BeHeardVancouver.org	189 Total visits 36 Completed surveys
Community Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSTA – November 16, 2022 • ACE – November 16, 2022 • Meadow Homes – November 16, 2022 • Fourth Plain Village – TBD Feb/Mar 2023² • Arnada – TBD Nov/Dec 2022³ 	Virtual attendance	20+ Participants

² All neighborhood associations within the study area were contacted during Milestone 2, but not all replied. Fourth Plain Village agreed to let the Project Team come present the project in 2023 but did not have time to engage with the project during the Milestone 2 outreach.

³ As of the time of this writing, the project team was still working on identifying a workable date and agenda slot to present to the Arnada Neighborhood Association.

2 Themes and Findings

The following sections detail the themes and findings of both in-person and online outreach done as part of Milestone 2.

2.1 In-Person Outreach

2.1.1 Questions

The outreach team prioritized asking the following three questions during each engagement effort with members of the community:

1. Are you in favor of **repurposing a lane of traffic** on Fourth Plain Blvd or Fort Vancouver Way?
2. How supportive are you of repurposing a travel lane to make **bicycling safer** or to make **transit more reliable** and efficient on Fourth Plain Blvd and Fort Vancouver Way?
3. What are your **top priorities** as someone who travels (walks, bikes, rolls, or drives) through the corridor?

2.1.2 Key Themes and Feedback

2.1.2.1 General Feedback

Overall, community members were supportive of safety and mobility improvements along Fourth Plain Blvd and Fort Vancouver Way. Respondents were generally in favor of investments in both public transit and bike infrastructure. Many people shared their desire for a solution that both increases bus service and adds necessary, safe bike infrastructure. Select examples of these themes included:

- “The roadways are getting a lot more crowded and we need a better transportation system.”
- “I ride the bus all the time, every day, we should prioritize buses.”
- “In general, the City needs to invest more in better transit/transportation. I favor buses but mostly we all just need more ways to get around.”
- “Safety first. I’m okay with any changes as long as they improve safety.”
- “I favor both bike and buses, but people need to get to work and they use the bus.”
- “If Fourth Plain had biking access like Columbia I would use it.”

Desire to create a more inviting destination. Many people expressed a lack of investment in the corridor and a desire for improvements that contribute to an overall sense of place and a more cohesive identity. Residents and business owners alike shared a desire to create an inviting, safe environment where people want to spend time. Key themes included:

- The City should promote consistent signage to make the street more attractive, improve wayfinding, and make it easier to find businesses
- Reduce the visual noise on Fourth Plain Blvd

- Support for general beautification and anything to make Fourth Plain more of a destination rather than a pass-through corridor
- Desire to amplify local businesses, services, and amenities in this neighborhood as part of what Vancouver has to offer
- “The murals here are incredible, but the buildings and streets are ugly. The City should invest in more maintenance, so this area looks cared for just like other areas. Fourth Plain feels forgotten about.”

2.1.2.2 Safety Improvements

Safety is a primary concern for travelers in the corridor. Overwhelmingly, the community expressed a strong desire for pedestrian safety improvements and reduced vehicle speeds. Many community members expressed a concern for personal safety at crosswalks and expressed a desire for more and better crosswalks. Key examples of the themes included:

- The Commons will bring many more pedestrians to the area, so pedestrian safety improvements are necessary
- “I’ve been hit by cars three times in my wheelchair.”
- Support for pedestrian improvements such as wider sidewalks, more crosswalks
- Current crosswalks are not sufficient (too few and not user-friendly)
- “Kids almost get hit all of the time.”
- “What we really need most on this road is more traffic enforcement and police presence. My property is always getting broken into and too much speeding.”
- “More attention to our safety is necessary, I don’t feel safe in this area. Need more police presence.”

2.1.2.3 Lane Reconfigurations

Community members expressed strong support for repurposing a traffic lane. Community members also expressed a stronger preference for focusing on bus improvements as opposed to bike improvements. People who support lane reconfiguration believe it will increase safety in the area by decreasing speeding traffic. Key themes included:

- General support for any change that makes the street safer and slows traffic
- “No strong preference, but something has to change.”
- “I would recommend limiting cars to 1 lane each way.”
- Making the road narrower for car travel is important to changing the way people drive
- “If you want effective change to buses or bikes, you have to make it harder for cars. Cars will have to suffer.”
- More people ride the bus so there is a greater need to serve transit riders than bicyclists

83% of respondents expressed support or strong support for a lane reconfiguration along Fourth Plain Blvd and Fort Vancouver Way.

Some people did not favor the idea of repurposing a travel lane. About 17% of those who responded to the feedback prompts expressed that repurposing a lane would not be a good

idea, saying that the change would create more traffic issues and negatively impact the corridor. Some of the reasons cited include:

- The increased level of bus/bike users would not be worth the impact created to drivers
- Concern that fewer lanes would slow traffic and cause congestion during peak travel times
- “You need to add a lane, not take one away. Keep it as-is or add a lane. There is already too much traffic on the road.”
- “Taking a lane would definitely have a negative impact on small businesses here.”
- Concern that there are already too many cars on the road

2.2 Online Open House and Survey

2.2.1 Questions

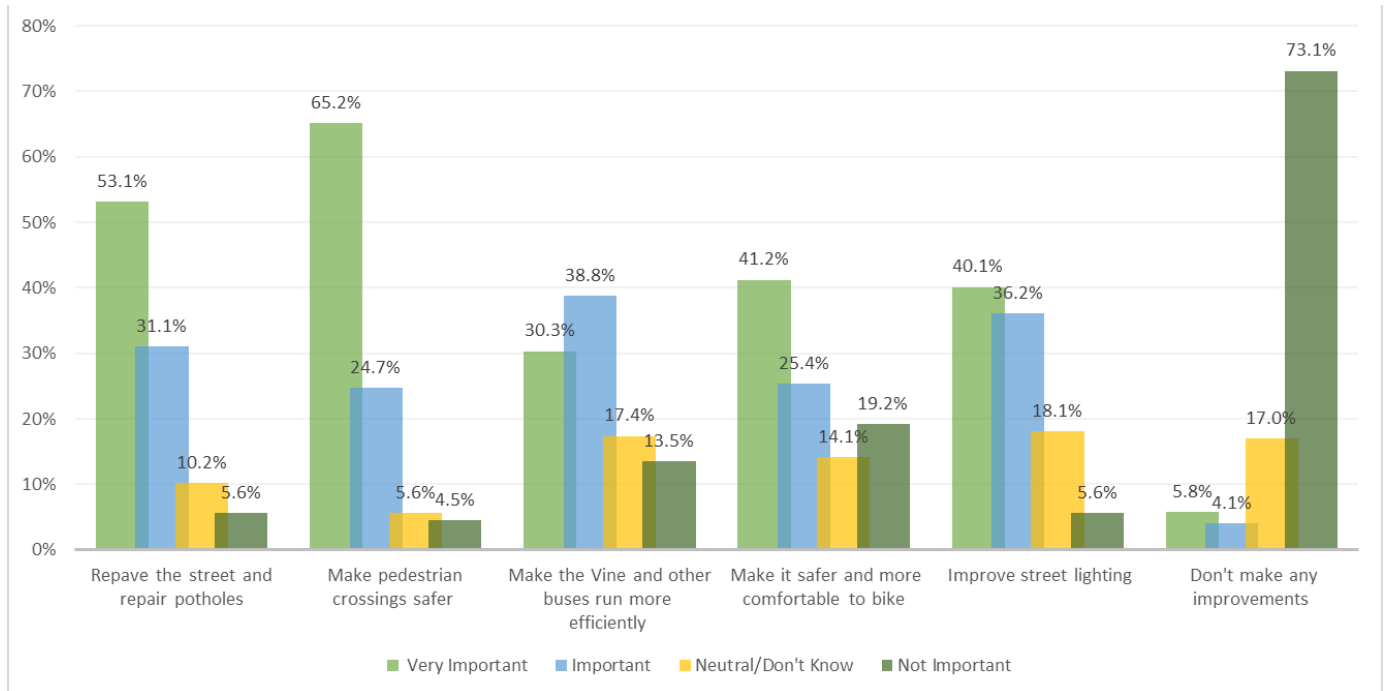
Between September 2, 2022 to November 7, 2022, the online open house collected (36) completed surveys. The survey included nine (9) total questions:

1. How would you prioritize these potential improvements to Fort Vancouver Way and Fourth Plain Blvd? (*Very Important to Not Important*)
 - a. Repave the street and repair potholes
 - b. Make pedestrian crossings safer
 - c. Make the Vine and other buses run more efficiently
 - d. Make it safer and more comfortable to bike
 - e. Improve street lighting
 - f. Don't make any improvements
2. What are your top three (3) priorities as someone who **walks, bikes, or rolls** on Fourth Plain and Fort Vancouver Way?
 - a. Increasing physical space between cars and people walking biking or rolling
 - b. Improving street lighting
 - c. Improving the condition of the pavement/repairing potholes
 - d. Improving the condition of the sidewalks
 - e. Slowing down fast traffic
 - f. Making existing crossings safer
 - g. Adding new crossings
3. What are your top three (3) priorities as someone who **drives** on Fourth Plain and Fort Vancouver Way?
 - a. Increasing physical separation between cars and bicyclists
 - b. Slowing down speeding cars
 - c. Maintaining right-turns and access to businesses
 - d. Getting out from behind the bus and/or getting the bus out of mixed traffic
 - e. I don't drive on Fourth Plain Blvd and Fort Vancouver Way
 - f. Maintaining current traffic conditions
4. How Supportive are you of the potential design options for Fourth Plain Blvd and Fort Vancouver Way? (*Very Supportive – Not Supportive*)
 - a. Design Option: No Change
 - b. Design Option 1: Focus on Bicycle Improvements

- c. Design Option 2: Focus on Bus Improvements
5. How supportive are you of repurposing a travel lane to make **bicycling safer** on Fourth Plain Blvd and Fort Vancouver Way? (*Very Supportive – Not Supportive*)
 6. How supportive are you of repurposing a travel lane to make the **Vine bus** more reliable and efficient on Fourth Plain Blvd and Fort Vancouver Way? (*Very Supportive – Not Supportive*)
 7. How would you prioritize creating **buffered bike lanes** on Fourth Plain Blvd and Fort Vancouver Way? (*Very Important – Not Important*)
 8. How would you prioritize adding new **on-street parking** on Fort Vancouver Way?
 9. Do you have any other suggestions or recommendations for making Fourth Plain Blvd and Fort Vancouver Way safer? (*Open ended*)

2.2.2 Key Themes and Feedback

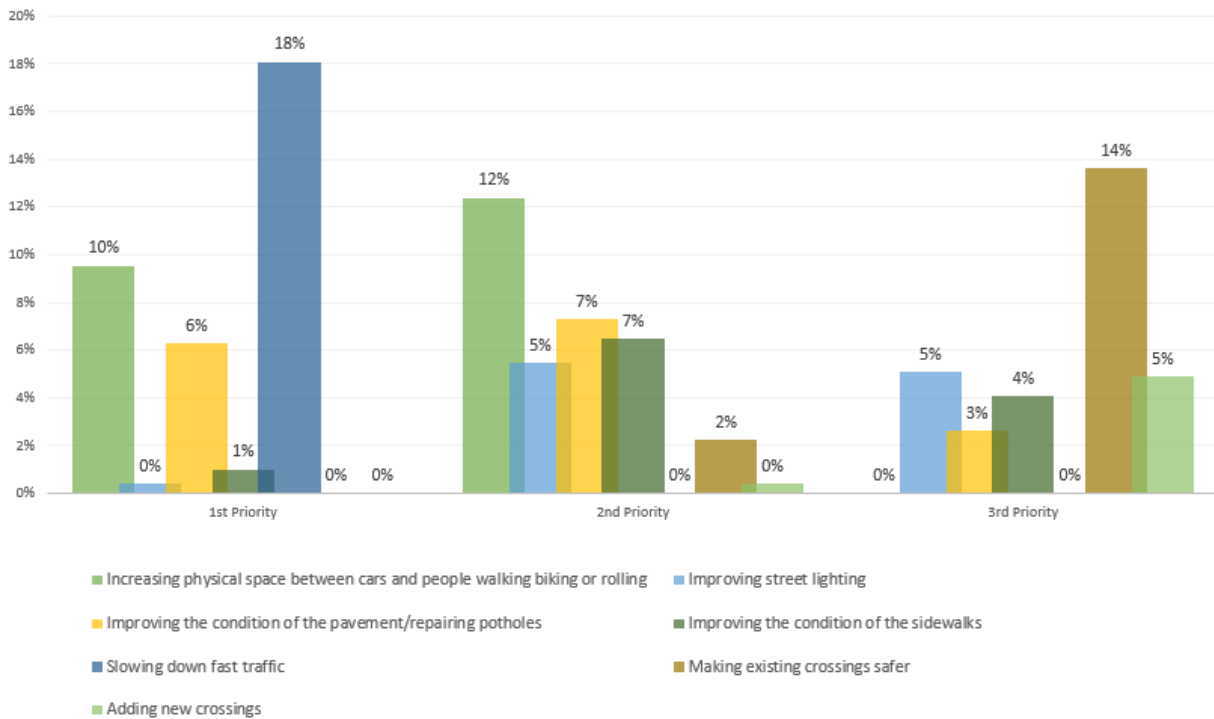
2.2.2.1 Question 1: How would you prioritize these potential improvements to Fort Vancouver Way and Fourth Plain Blvd? (Very Important to Not Important)



Note: Responses were counted for *each individual improvement option*, so each response “cluster” adds up to 100%.

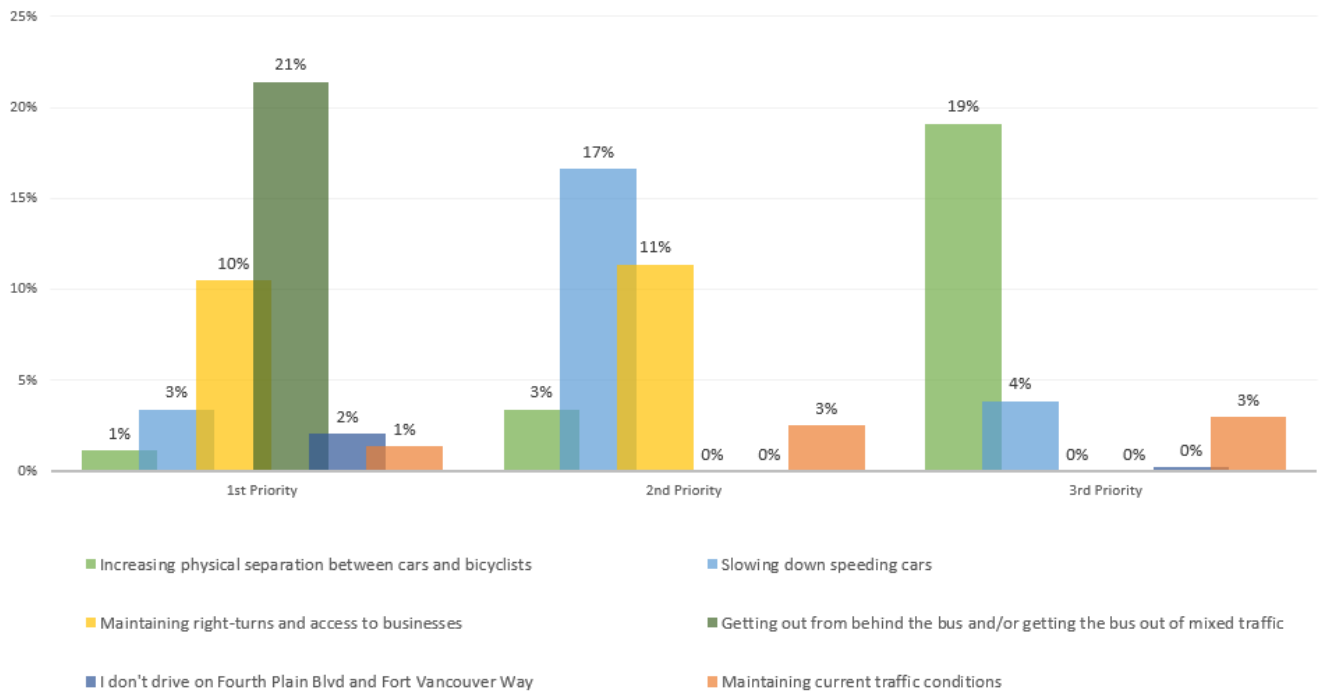
- Most respondents (73.1%) were in favor of making improvements in the corridor.
- Survey respondents prioritized making pedestrian crossings safer (65.2%) and repaving the street and repairing potholes (53.1%) as the top potential improvements on the corridor.
- More respondents said it was either important or very important focus improvements on making the Vine and other buses run more efficiently (69.1%) as opposed to safer and more comfortable biking (66.6%).

2.2.2.2 Question 2: What are your top three (3) priorities as someone who *walks, bikes, or rolls* on Fourth Plain and Fort Vancouver Way?



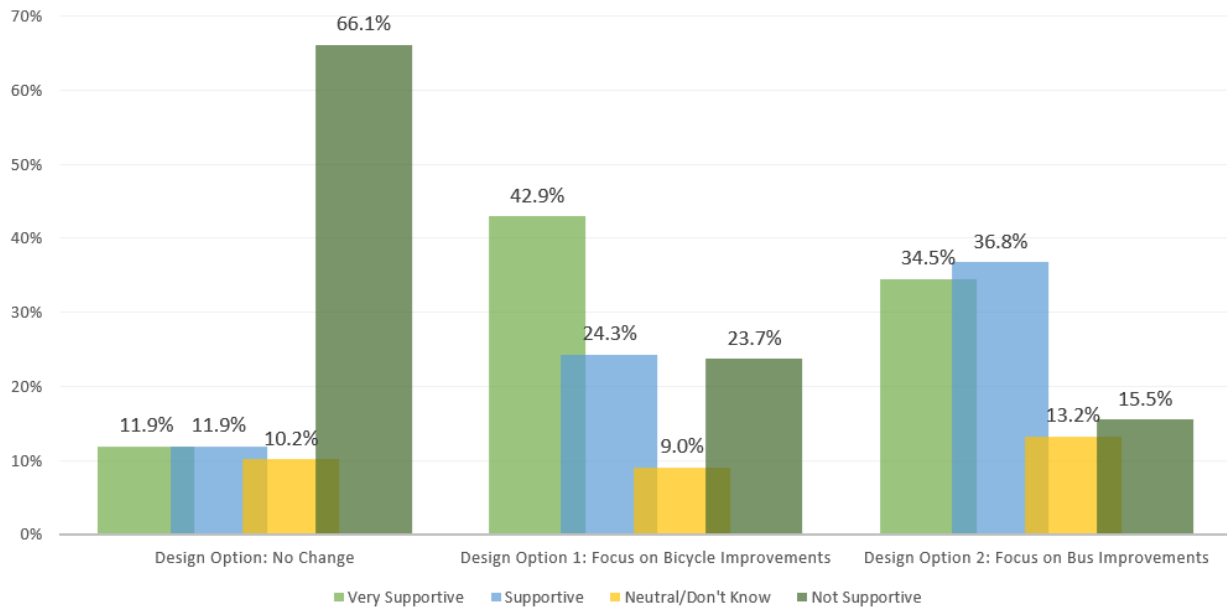
- Respondents who **walk, bike, or roll** on Fourth Plain and Fort Vancouver Way said that their top three (3) priorities for improving the corridor were slowing down fast traffic (18%), increasing physical space between cars and people walking, biking, or rolling (12%), and making existing crossings safer (14%).
- Respondents also said that improving the condition of the pavement and repairing potholes was an important priority.

2.2.2.3 Question 3: What are your top three (3) priorities as someone who *drives* on Fourth Plain and Fort Vancouver Way?



- Respondents who **drive** on Fourth Plain and Fort Vancouver Way said that getting out from behind the bus and/or getting the bus out of mixed traffic (54%), slowing down speeding cars (17%), and increasing physical separation between cars and cyclists were the top three (3) priorities for improving the corridor.
- Maintaining right-turns and access to businesses was also a high priority, ranking second amongst respondents' top and secondary priorities.

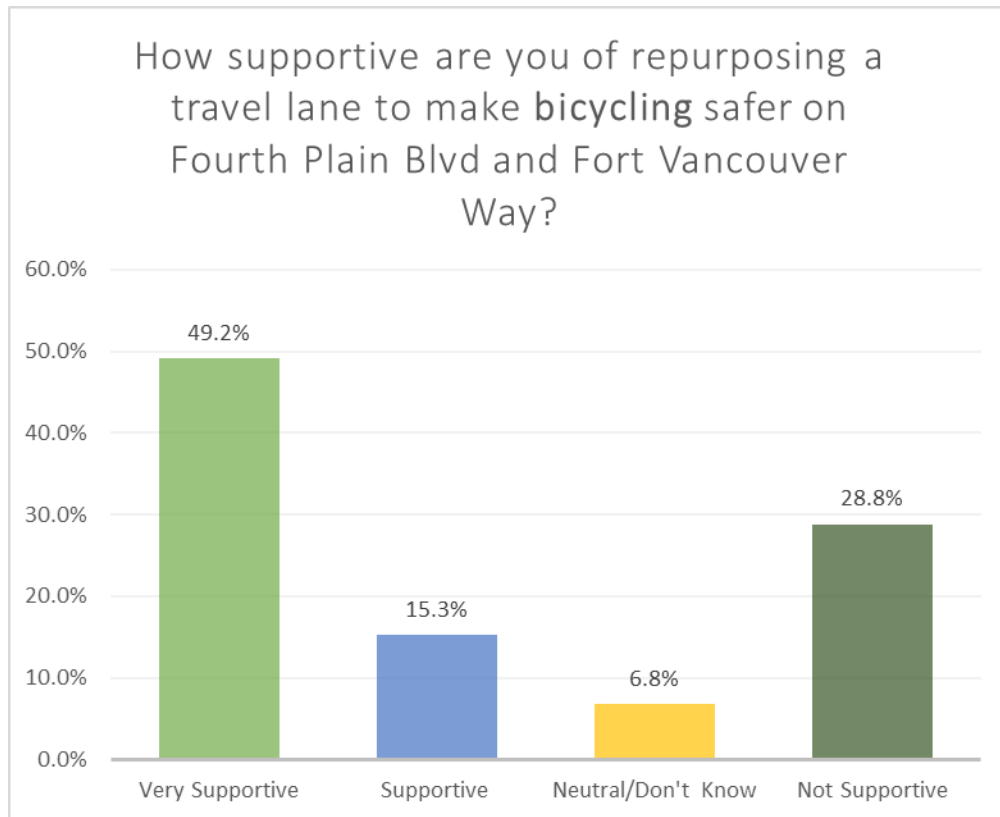
2.2.2.4 Question 4: How Supportive are you of the potential design options for Fourth Plain Blvd and Fort Vancouver Way?



Note: Responses were counted for *each individual design option*, so each response “cluster” adds up to 100%.

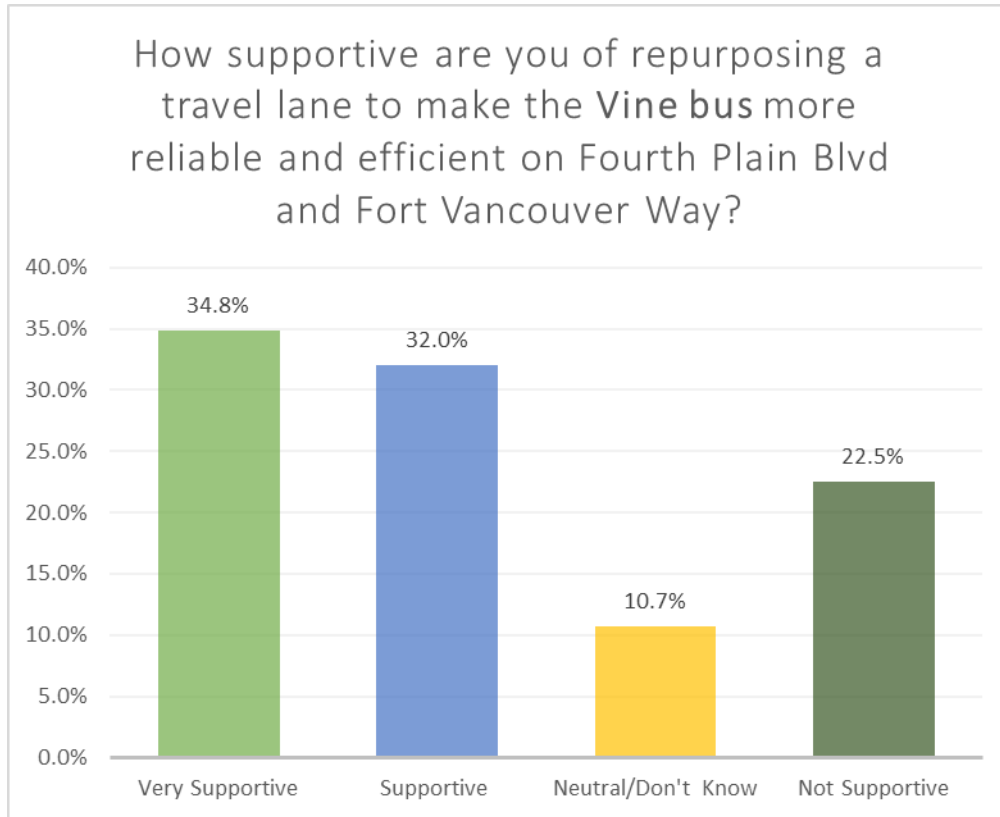
- Most respondents (66.1%) said they were not supportive of the “no change” design option.
- Overall, more respondents said they were either supportive or very supportive of Design Option 2: Focus on Bus Improvements.
- Most respondents (71.3%) said they were either supportive or very supportive of Design Option 2: Focus on Bus Improvements.
- Slightly fewer respondents (67.2%) said they were either supportive or very supportive of Design Option 1: Focus on Bicycle Improvements

2.2.2.5 Question 5: How supportive are you of repurposing a travel lane to make *bicycling safer* on Fourth Plain Blvd and Fort Vancouver Way?



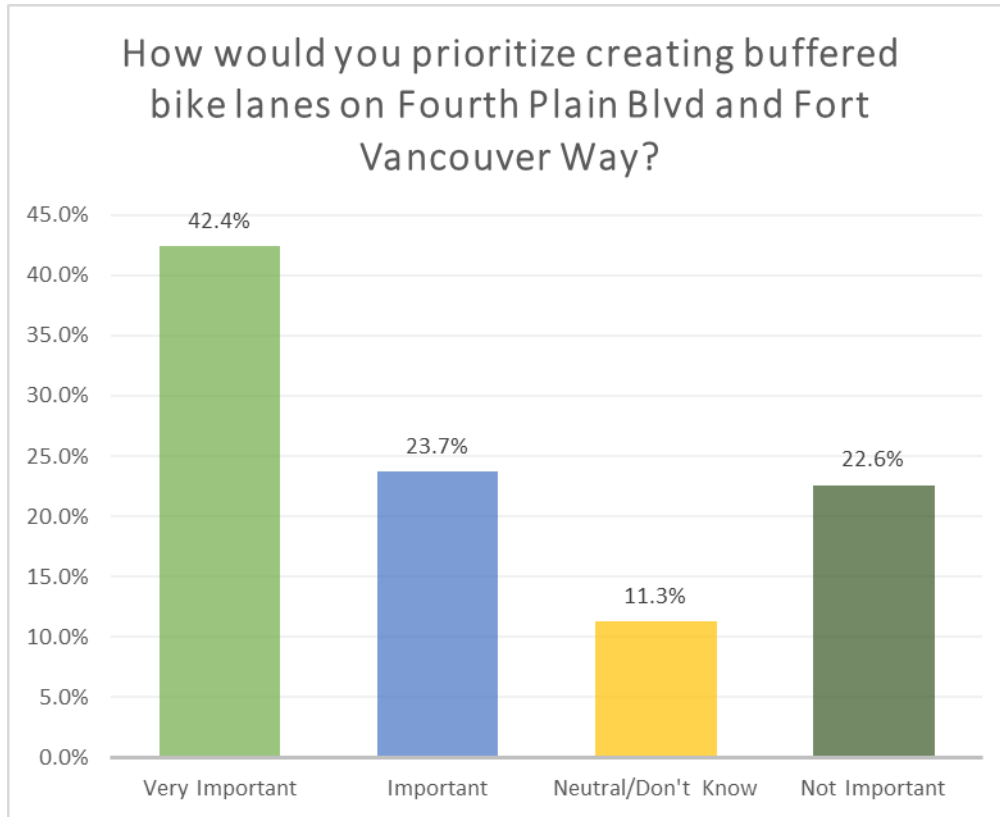
- Most respondents (64.3%) said they were either supportive (15.3%) or very supportive (49.2%) of repurposing a travel lane to make **bicycling** safer on Fourth Plain Blvd and Fort Vancouver Way.
- Nearly 1 out of 3 respondents (28.8%) said they were not supportive of repurposing a travel lane to make bicycle safer.

2.2.2.6 Question 6: How supportive are you of repurposing a travel lane to make the *Vine bus* more reliable and efficient on Fourth Plain Blvd and Fort Vancouver Way?



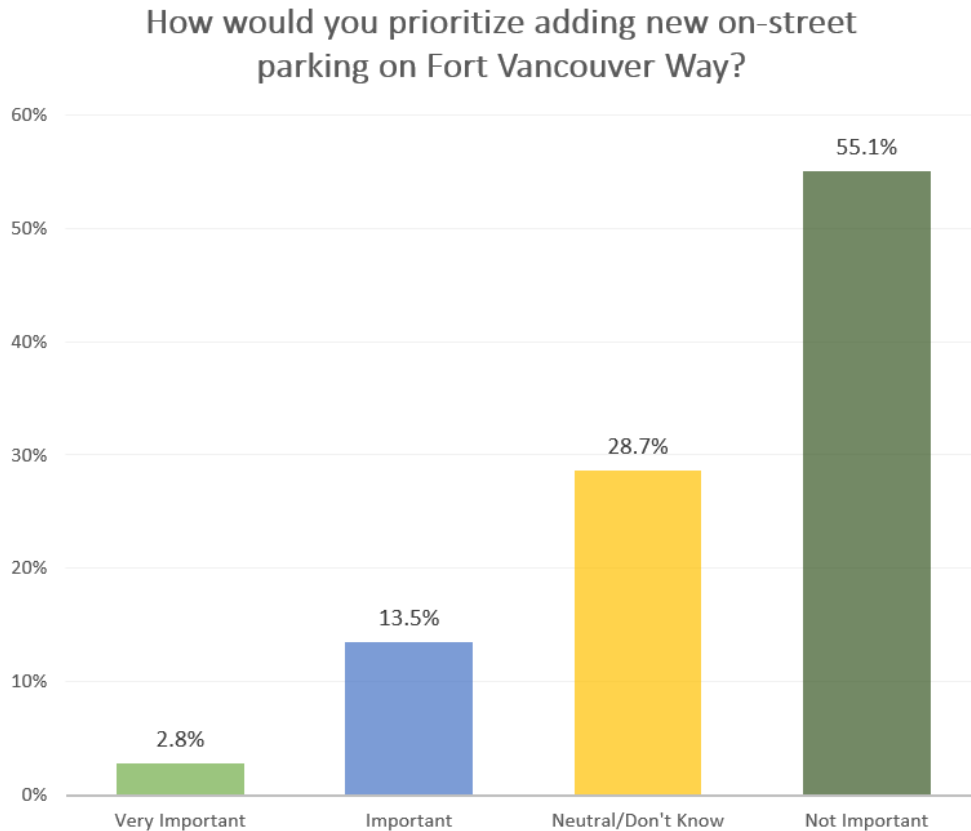
- Most respondents (66.8%) said they were either supportive or very supportive of repurposing a travel lane to make the Vine bus more reliable and efficient on Fourth Plain Blvd and Fort Vancouver Way.
- About 1 out of 5 respondents (22.5%) said repurposing a travel lane to support the Vine bus service was not important.

2.2.2.7 Question 7: How would you prioritize creating *buffered bike lanes* on Fourth Plain Blvd and Fort Vancouver Way?



- Most respondents (66.1%) said creating buffered bike lanes on Fourth Plain Blvd and Fort Vancouver Way was important or very important.
- About 1 out of 5 respondents (22.6%) said creating buffered bike lanes was not important.

2.2.2.8 Question 8: How would you prioritize adding new *on-street parking* on Fort Vancouver Way?



- Most respondents (55.1%) said that adding new on-street parking on Fort Vancouver Way was not important.
- Less than 1 out of every 5 respondents (16.3%) said that adding new on-street parking on Fort Vancouver Way was important or very important.
- About 1 out of 3 respondents (28.7%) said they were neutral or didn't know how they would prioritize parking on Fort Vancouver Way.

2.2.2.9 Question 9: Do you have any other suggestions or recommendations for making Fourth Plain Blvd and Fort Vancouver Way safer?

The last question was open ended and allowed respondents to share any other ideas or comments around improving safety and mobility along the corridor. The open-ended responses were analyzed in a few different ways. First, a “word cloud” was created as a visual representation of the responses. The larger words and phrases represent those that were used most frequently in the responses, as shown in Figure 2 below. Identifying the most frequently used words and phrases serves as one way of understanding community priorities and recommendations around the draft design options.



Figure 2. Question 9 Word Cloud

The project team also selected some individual responses that were representative of the overall survey feedback:

- *“I think the better choice is to improve the bike infrastructure as that will truly ‘connect’ the good cycling infrastructure downtown to the East Side of Vancouver.”*
- *“Give everyone a safe space to be, buffered lanes for all mobility!”*
- *“Develop a consistent bicycle facility along Fourth Plain Blvd. As someone who regularly rides from the Northeast corner of the city to downtown, it is a horrible and inconsistent route to take.”*

- *“I am so excited to see these ideas. Repurposing lanes for busses and bikes and adding buffers would make this currently dangerous street better for everyone.”*
- *“I just want to reiterate how important it is to me that the Vine gets its own lane. That would speed up traffic, AND speed up the Vine. Just look at other cities that do that. It's best for all road users.”*

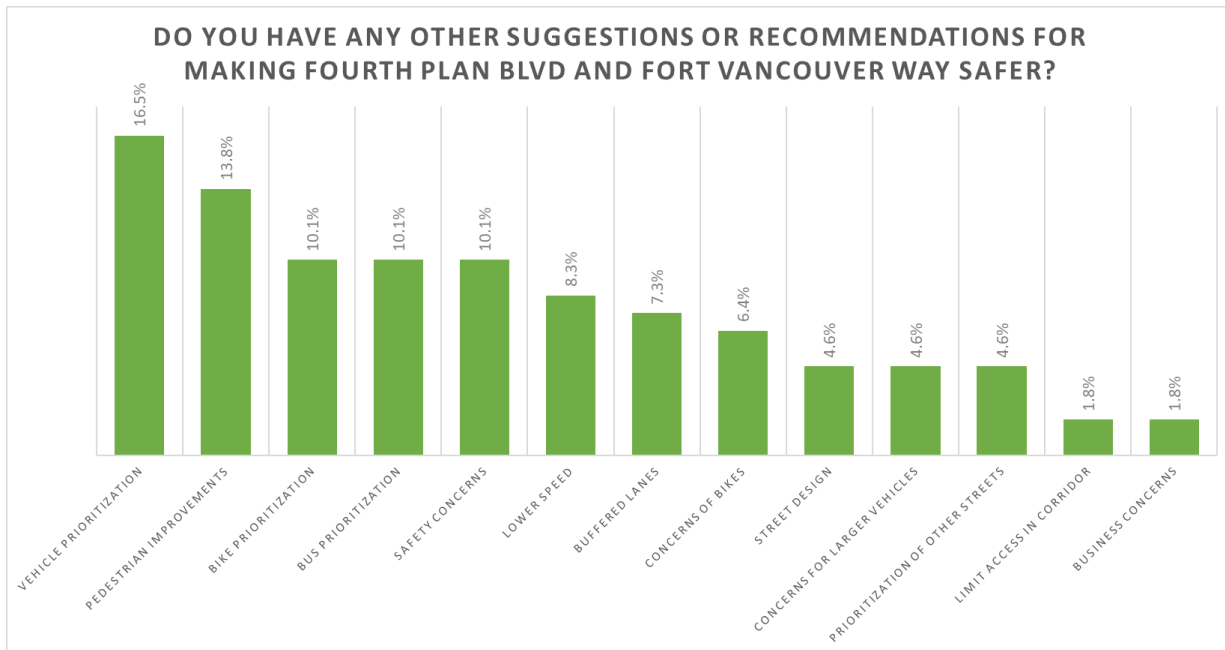
Lastly, the project team also assigned key words/phrases to each of the individual open-ended responses. The key words used are summarized in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Open Ended Key Words Summary

Key Word	Assign to Comments that:
Bike Prioritization	Prioritized bicycle improvements as opposed to other kinds of improvements
Buffered Lanes	Specifically advocated for this kind of on-street treatment
Bus Prioritization	Prioritize fully and/or partially dedicated bus-only lanes
Safety Concerns	Recommend specific improvements to address safety, such as increasing enforcement, adding medians, limiting certain turns, etc.
Pedestrian Improvements	Recommend pedestrian improvements such as crosswalks, flashing lights, improved lighting, better sidewalks, etc.
Lower Speed	Recommend traffic calming countermeasures such as adding signage, adding more stop lights, etc.
Concerns of Bikes	Advocate for the overall needs of bicyclists in the corridors, such as consistent routes and upgraded on-street facilities
Vehicle Prioritization	Advocate for the needs of drivers and/or generally not in support of removing a travel lane
Street Design	Address streetscaping elements such as trees, swales, and changes to parking
Limit Access in Corridor	Advocate for access management options in the corridor
Business Concerns	Prioritize the needs of small businesses along the corridor
Concerns for Larger Vehicles	Address ways to reduce truck, freight, and RV traffic in the corridor
Prioritization of Other Streets	Prioritize multimodal improvements on other and/or parallel streets such as 18 th

The development of these key words allowed the team to quantify response themes using Figure 3 below.

Figure 3. Open Ended Key Words - Chart Summary



- The top three key word themes were vehicle prioritization (16.5%), pedestrian improvements (13.8%), and a three-way tie for bus prioritization, safety concerns, and lowering speeds (10.1%, respectively).

3 Next Steps

This community feedback will inform the selection of the preferred design for the east segment of the corridor, from St. Johns Boulevard to Andresen Road in the Spring of 2023. Once a preferred design option is selected, community feedback will be taken into consideration as the City further refines design drawings and moves to incorporate changes into planned pavement maintenance in Summer of 2024.