

THE CORPORATION OF THE  
**CITY OF WHITE ROCK**  
CORPORATE REPORT



**DATE:** January 27, 2025

**TO:** Mayor and Council

**FROM:** Corrine Haer, P.Eng., Manager, Engineering

**SUBJECT:** Five Corners Improvement Project Update

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**RECOMMENDATIONS**

THAT Council receive the corporate report dated January 27, 2025, from the Manager of Engineering, titled “Five Corners Improvement Project Update” for information; and

1. Endorse the alternative design concept without a washroom as outlined in the report; and
  2. Direct staff to proceed to the preliminary design stage for the alternative concept.
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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The purpose of this corporate report is to update Council on the status of the Five Corners Improvement project and to seek direction on how to move forward. This project is a Council Strategic Priority and is identified and prioritized in the City's Integrated Transportation and Infrastructure Master Plan (ITIMP) to improve safety for pedestrians and vehicles, and to promote active transportation.

**INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND**

Five Corners is a symbolic location in the City of White Rock, referencing the convergence of Johnston Road, Buena Vista Avenue and Pacific Avenue. Located within the City's Town Centre, Five Corners is a vital destination node for shopping, dining and sightseeing. This node also provides important transportation links to the City's various key destinations: Uptown, East Beach, West Beach, the Pier, and the Promenade.

The Five Corners Improvement project has the potential to provide an opportunity to revitalize the vibrancy and functionality of Five Corners by creating public space along with upgrading active transportation facilities and enhancing connectivity. Additionally, the intersection of Five Corners is part of TransLink's Major Bikeway Network and has been identified as a greenway corridor to promote network connectivity along Buena Vista Avenue.

Conceptual design options in alignment with the City's ITIMP were created to support discussion and public engagement to gather feedback on the scope before recommending a design approach for Council's approval. The City's ITIMP identified the Five Corners Intersection as one requiring geometric improvements. Geometric improvement projects often include curb extensions to improve pedestrian safety and to reduce crossing distances, lane

closures to reduce conflict between different types of road users as well as the construction of active transportation infrastructure to provide a safer environment for pedestrians and cyclists.

Feedback from the public has now been received on the initial conceptual design and staff are seeking directions on how to move forward.

## **DISCUSSION**

As endorsed by Council at the December 11, 2023 regular council meeting, staff proceeded with public engagement for the Five Corners Improvement project in summer 2024. Between May and July 2024, staff conducted community engagement initiatives to share and to gather feedback. The public engagement campaign included:

- Dedicated project website at [TalkWhiteRock.ca/Five Corners](http://TalkWhiteRock.ca/FiveCorners)
- Two open houses
- WRBIA meeting
- White Rock Elementary PAC meeting presentation
- Public Art and Culture Advisory Committee presentation
- Online and hard copy surveys
- Targeted letters
- Postcards and brochures
- Social media campaign
- Emails
- Utility bill insert
- Newspaper advertisement

Public engagement was designed to reach a wide range of residents, businesses and interested parties. The most successful piece of engagement was the dedicated project website that was visited by approximately 1,400 unique individuals and the survey which received over 600 responses (online and printed). The feedback has been summarized in Appendix A and a more detailed synopsis has been included in a What We Heard Report (Appendix B).

The concept design presented to the public and in alignment with the ITIMP aimed to enhance public space along with upgrading active transportation facilities, improving traffic and pedestrian safety and enhancing connectivity. Features included:

- Closure of the southbound travel lane to create space for events and patios improving traffic and pedestrian safety in the area.
- A new crosswalk on the north leg of the Five Corners intersection.
- Potential for new intersection controls (signals or new stop controls).
- Gently raised intersection crossing to further promote pedestrian and traffic safety.
- An enhanced public gathering space and opportunities for wayfinding, placemaking and public art.
- Retention of the existing plaza tree with seating around it with further landscaping and beautification opportunities.
- Dedicated bike lanes connecting Buena Vista greenway to the Plaza.
- A public washroom on the north side plaza.

- Future proofs for further improvements to the corridor including connections to improved sidewalks and new multi-use paths.
- Creation of a formal entrance to Stager Park.

The survey collected throughout public engagement asked questions regarding these prominent features to get a sense of the features that were supported or not supported by the engaged public. While many individuals completed the survey online through TalkWhiteRock, a significant amount of survey results were submitted via hard copy distributed by a local business fronting the project area. For all questions except the washroom question, the online survey results were slightly unsupportive of the initial concept design, while the hard copy results were strongly opposed, please refer to Appendix A for this summary.

### **Alternative Concept**

Following aggregation and analysis of the feedback, an alternative concept was developed to reflect the input received while still meeting the intent of the City's ITIMP to improve pedestrian and vehicle safety through geometric improvements.

The alternative concept proposes the following:

- A more flexible approach that will keep the south leg of Johnston Road open for vehicles and parking on a regular basis (Image 1).
- Opportunity to temporarily convert the area to 'pedestrians only' on an as needed basis during events by using temporary planter boxes or bollards (Image 2).
- A focus on safety improvements at the intersection of Buena Vista/Pacific/Johnston Road including:
  - Raised intersection promotes pedestrian safety by slowing down traffic and making pedestrians more visible to drivers.
  - Curb extensions where possible to reduce crossing distances.
  - Improved traffic control such as full signal or pedestrian activated to further improve safety at the intersection for both vehicles and pedestrians.
  - Visually striking pavement (public art opportunity) to differentiate the intersection will enhance visibility and safety for both pedestrians and drivers.
  - Mountable curbs to encourage inclusivity and remove the physical barrier of a standard curb in that location for when the temporary barrier planters may be in place ensuring continuity of the space.

Image 1 – Alternative Concept (Day to Day)

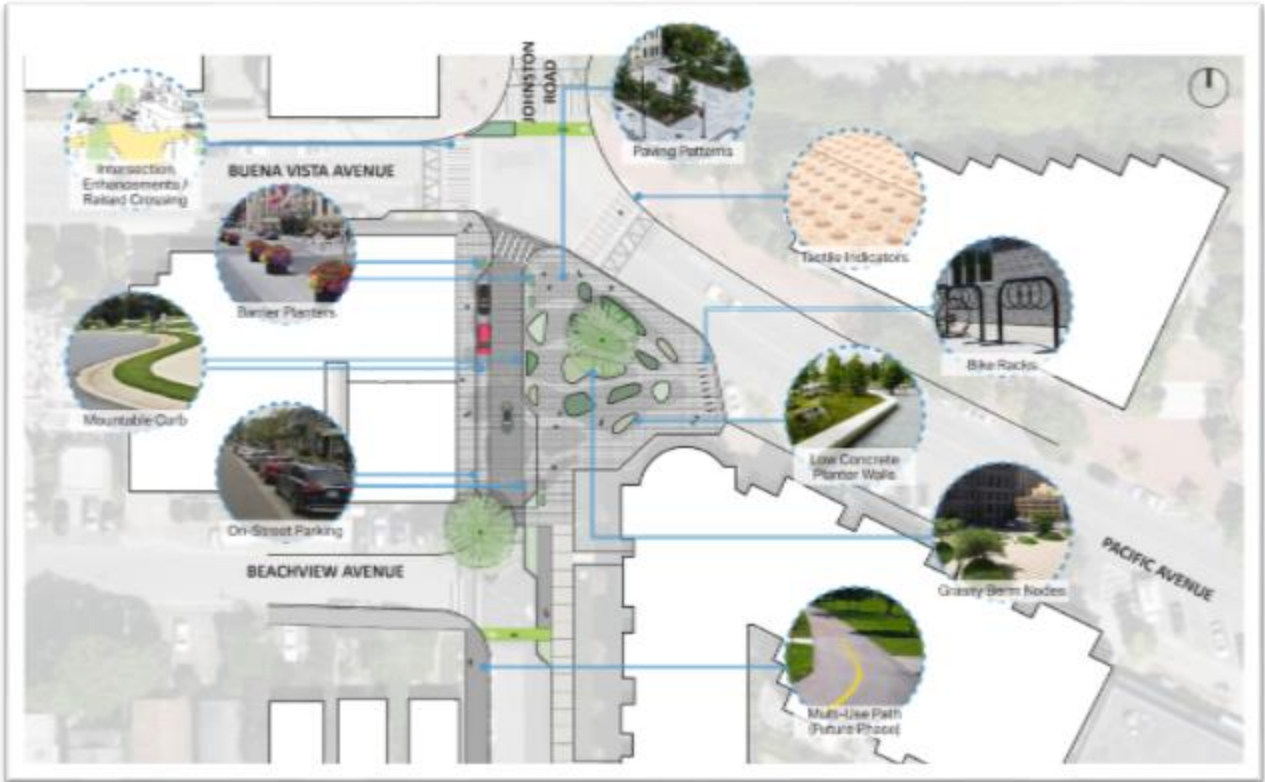
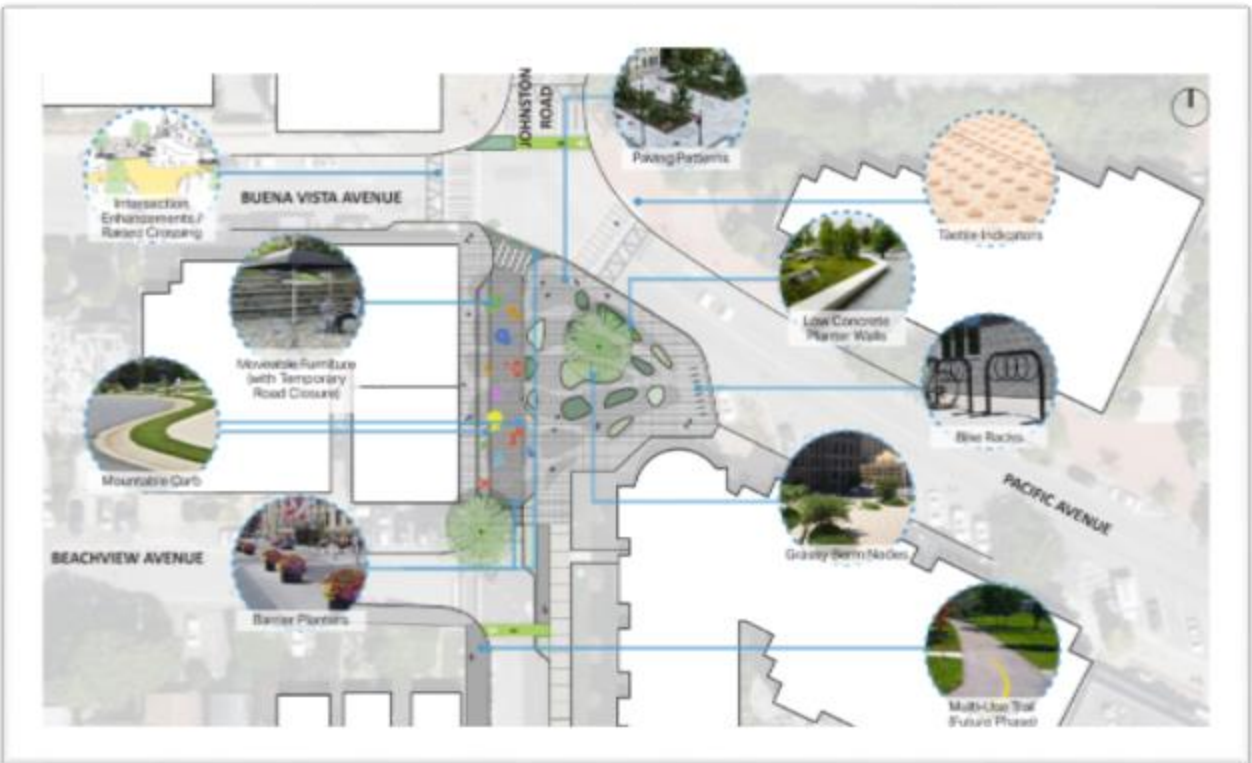


Image 2 – Alternative Concept with temporary Barrier Planters in place (can be implemented on an as needed basis)



## Public Washroom

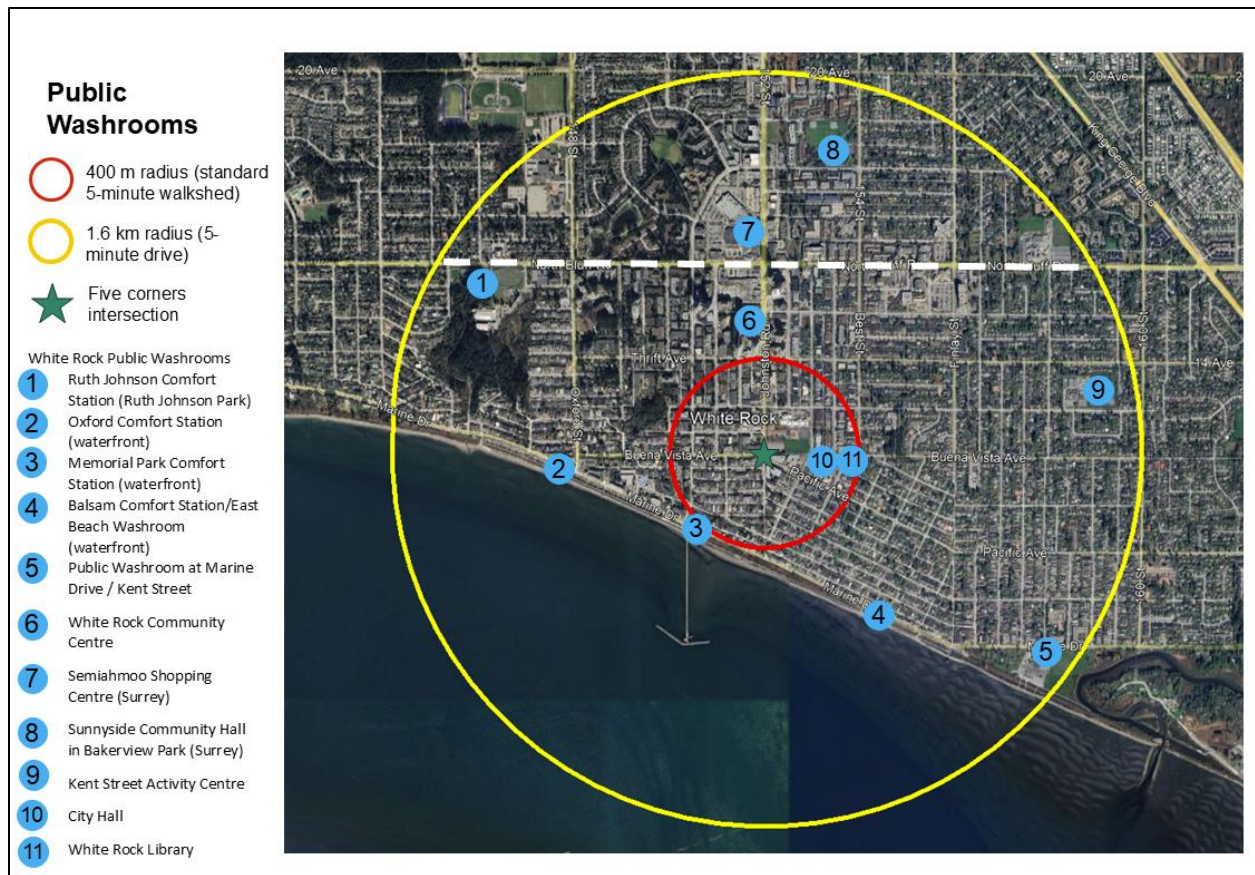
Feedback received on the public washroom was split 50/50 for and against. Further research was conducted regarding the availability of alternatives to determine the need for a washroom at this location.

There are nine (9) existing public washroom facilities in White Rock and two public washroom facilities in Surrey identified within a 1.6 km radius of Five Corners, representing an approximate 5-minute drive, or a 25-minute walk (Image 3).

Of the public washroom locations, City Hall and the Library are the closest washrooms to Five Corners and provide a walking time of approximately 3 minutes (230 m). Nearby, White Rock Community Centre also has a public washroom within a short travel time for drivers (700 m or a 2-minute drive) and a similar distance for pedestrians (650 m / 10-minute walk). To enhance the promotion of existing facilities, wayfinding could be applied as part of the conceptual design to direct residents and visitors to the closest public washroom locations.

It is acknowledged that a 5 or 10-minute walk may not be possible for all ages and abilities, and thus alternative washroom options could be explored such as portable washrooms for rent on an as needed basis during festivals and events at Five Corners.

Image 3 – Public Washroom Map



## **Next Steps**

Having reviewed the public engagement feedback, staff are seeking Council's approval to proceed to preliminary design for the alternative concept identified above. The alternative concept provides the following advantages:

- Maintains vehicle access by keeping the south leg of Johnston Road open for vehicles and parking on a regular basis. This flexibility ensures that the area remains accessible to all, including those who rely on vehicles for transportation.
- By using temporary planter boxes or bollards, the area can be converted to a pedestrian-only zone during when needed during events. This approach allows for dynamic use of the space without permanently restricting vehicle access.
- Raised intersection promotes pedestrian safety by slowing down traffic and making pedestrians more visible to drivers.
- Curb extensions where possible to reduce crossing distances.
- Improved traffic control such as full signal or pedestrian activated to further improve safety at the intersection for both vehicles and pedestrians.
- Visually striking pavement (public art opportunity) to differentiate the intersection will enhance visibility and safety for both pedestrians and drivers.
- Mountable curbs to encourage inclusivity and remove the physical barrier of a standard curb in that location for when the temporary barrier planters may be in place ensuring continuity of the space.
- Includes an enhanced public gathering space, opportunities for wayfinding, placemaking, and public art. The plaza space overdue for a refresh and is currently vulnerable to tripping hazards, this project will provide that refresh while making it safer from a pedestrian perspective.

The alternative concept offers a more flexible, safe, and community-friendly approach to the Five Corners Improvement project. By maintaining vehicle access while allowing for temporary pedestrian zones, enhancing safety features at the intersection and plaza, the alternative concept addresses the needs and feedback of the community more effectively while still meeting the intent of the ITIMP.

Following Council's approval, staff recommend proceeding to preliminary design later this year with construction expected to begin in late 2026, early 2027 provided funding is approved for this project through the City's Financial Plan.

## **Community Engagement**

Staff are committed to continuing to proactively engage with the community and gathering feedback to inform the design process. Integrating the community's input is essential for achieving a desirable outcome and delivering a successful project.

As previously mentioned, the engagement plan is divided into stages: the conceptual design phase (completed), the preliminary design phase (scheduled for Fall 2025), and the final design phase.

In Fall 2025, staff plan to meet individually with the directly impacted businesses and residents to discuss the alternative concept in more detail. Additionally, the City's dedicated project website will be updated to reflect the latest project developments.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The design for this project is included in the 2024/2025 Financial Plan. Following the preliminary design phase, high level estimates will be provided and brought back to Council for consideration before moving forward to detailed design.

### **COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

Public engagement began in summer 2024 with impacted businesses to effect collaboration. Proactive, clear, and consistent communication throughout the project is essential. Communication efforts will continue and will include emails, social media updates, website updates and focus group events.

### **INTERDEPARTMENTAL INVOLVEMENT/IMPLICATIONS**

Staff continue to work closely with Communications & Government Relations to leverage the City's existing social media/channels and available resources, such as Talk White Rock, Facebook, and Instagram to maximize public/stakeholder engagement effectiveness in a cost-effective way.

### **IMPLICATIONS FOR TREE PRESERVATION AND TREE CANOPY ENHANCEMENT**

Staff will ensure existing trees within the corridor are protected, thereby enhancing and ensuring the sustainability of the City's urban forest and recognizing the environmental and esthetic benefits trees provide. Typical city tree management will follow the City's Tree Protection Bylaw No. 2407.

### **ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

This project is a Council Strategic Priority project and is in alignment with the Infrastructure Strategic Priority that identifies that the City plan, build and maintain infrastructure to enhance quality of life and civic service delivery while mitigating and adapting to environmental impacts.

### **OPTIONS / RISKS / ALTERNATIVES**

The following options are available for Council's consideration:

1. Not approve the project to proceed to preliminary design for the alternative concept. This may extend the project timeline and delay the implementation of proposed safety improvements at the intersection and within the plaza area. This decision could lead to some public disappointment.
2. Direct staff to proceed to preliminary design for the original concept identified in the public engagement material. This approach may extend the project timeline as staff will need to engage in further discussions with impacted residents and businesses to address their concerns while maintaining the original concept's intent. This could lead to some community dissatisfaction and potentially lower usage and engagement of the space. Additionally, there may be a need for supplementary projects in the nearby vicinity to address parking concerns.

## CONCLUSION

As part of the implementation of the City's Integrated Transportation and Infrastructure Master Plan, this project aims to provide an opportunity to revitalize the vibrancy and functionality of Five Corners along with transportation improvements addressing safety concerns, upgrading active transportation facilities and enhancing connectivity.

Public engagement continues to be an essential component of this project to create a desirable urban space while still improving the area from a pedestrian and vehicle safety perspective for the community. Staff seek Council approval to proceed to preliminary design for the alternative concept as outlined in this report.

Respectfully submitted,

Approved by,



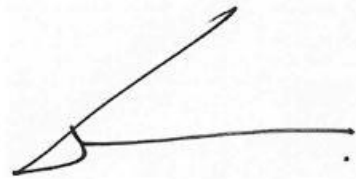
Corrine Haer, P.Eng.  
Manager, Engineering



Jim Gordon, P.Eng.  
Director, Engineering & Municipal Operations

## **Comments from the Chief Administrative Officer**

I concur with the recommendations of this corporate report.



Guillermo Ferrero  
Chief Administrative Officer

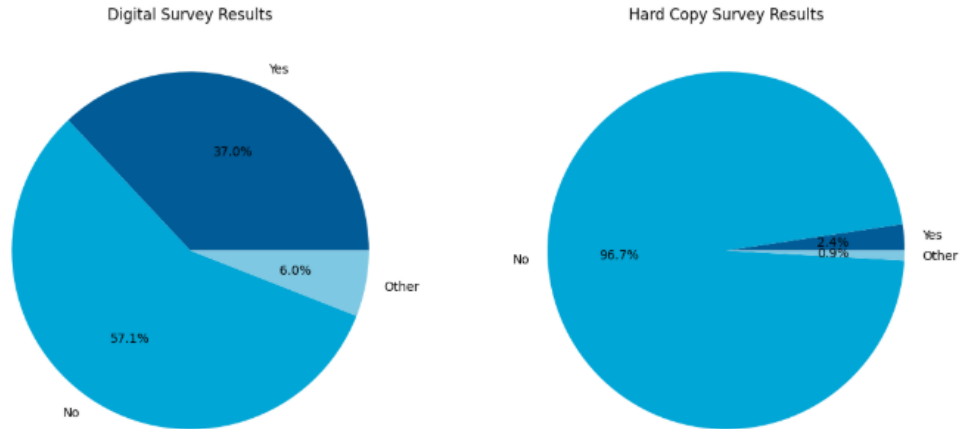
Appendix A: Summarized survey results  
Appendix B: What We Heard Report



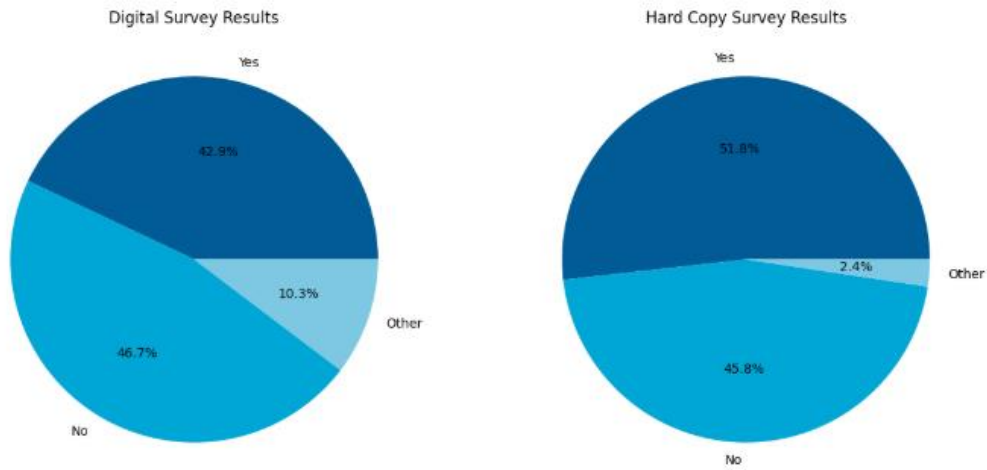
### Appendix A

Responses to the survey questions are summarized below:

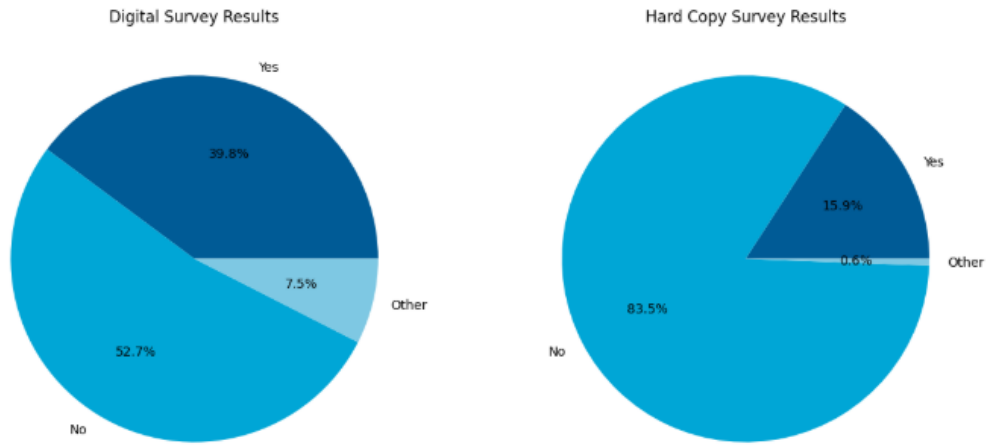
1. Do you support the road closure in order to create a large public gathering space?



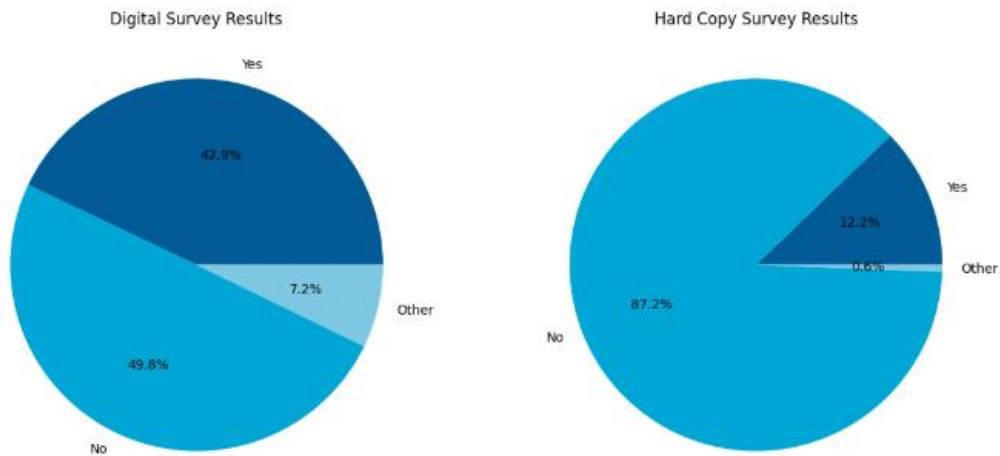
2. Do you like the idea of adding a public washroom?



3. Is the multi-use path connectivity from Five Corners to Columbia Avenue important to you?



4. Do you agree with limiting traffic to one-way southbound on Johnston Road between Beachview Avenue and Columbia Avenue?



5. Would you utilize Stager Park more if there was a formal entrance from Johnston Road?

