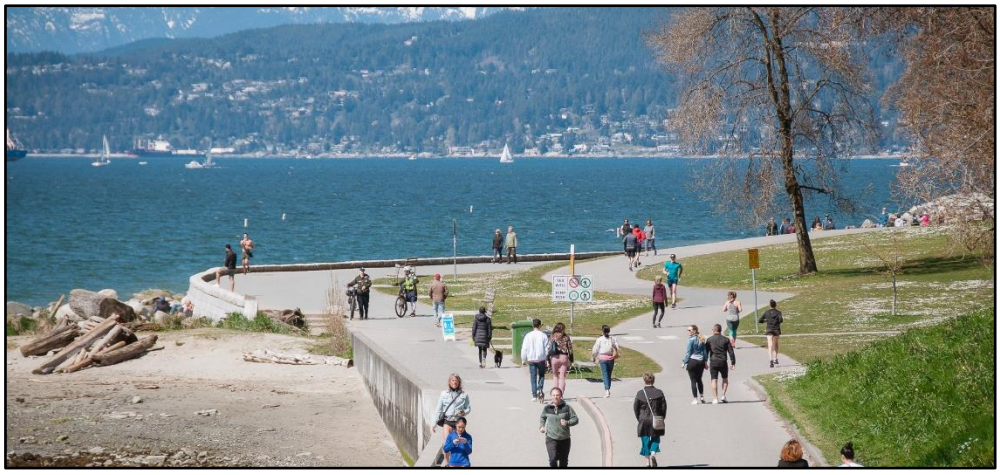
Making Streets for People

Room to Move - Beach Avenue Temporary Path Engagement Summary









Prepared by Engineering Services
City of Vancouver
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Part One: Overview

Background

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we have been re-shaping how we use our streets and public spaces to help residents physically distance and provide opportunities to exercise and travel more comfortably.

In April 2020 we created additional space for exercising and outdoor enjoyment in the West End including:

- Providing more space for walking along the Sunset and English Bay beaches by:
    - Restricting cycling on the Seawall path west of Hornby Street
    - Re-routing people cycling to a wider temporary path along Beach Avenue (Park Lane to Hornby St) by converting the eastbound travel lanes for cycling
- Maintaining resident access and where possible on-street parking that serves local residents



Figure 1: Additional spaces for walking, cycling and rolling in the West End Waterfront Park area

Since it opened this initiative has provided relief along the busy West End Waterfront park paths and this past summer, Beach Avenue became the busiest cycling route in Vancouver, regularly exceeding the 10,000 cycling trips per day milestone that other routes occasionally see.

In Phase Three of BC's Restart Plan and as we see COVID-19 cases rising this fall, the City is continuing initiatives that provide additional space for people to exercise and access services. In late September/October 2020, we gathered input from the public about the current configuration of Beach Avenue and the Seawall path through an online survey.

Staff have used feedback from the public to inform an interim design for Beach Avenue that reduces the maintenance effort and improve access for walking, transit and driving while maintaining a two-way protected bike path.

Engagement approach

This Engagement Summary analyzes over 2,500 survey submissions that were completed between September 24th and October 12th 2020, roughly six months after the Temporary Path was added to Beach Ave.

The survey was available online on at Shape Your City (shapeyourcity.ca) and paper copies were available through the West End Seniors Network at Kay's Place (#118 - 1030 Denman).

The survey was promoted with the following tactics:

- News release on Sept. 25, 2020
- Shared with City Advisory Committees such as the Persons with Disabilities Advisory Committee, Seniors' Advisory Committee, and Transportation Advisory Committee.
- Poster and notification adhered to doors of residential buildings and businesses along Beach Avenue
- Advertisement in the West End Seniors Network newsletter
- Social media posts via Facebook, Twitter and Instagram

This Engagement Summary also includes the feedback of those who called and/or wrote to the City via email or 3-1-1. Additionally, staff met virtually with the Persons with Disabilities Advisory Committee on two occasions, once with the Seniors' Advisory Committee and once with a representative from the West End Seniors Network to listen and learn about how the current design can be improved. Staff also reviewed the current configuration and refined the interim design with operational partners including TransLink, Coast Mountain Bus Company, Vancouver Park Board and Vancouver Fire Rescue Services.

In August 2020, we also more broadly asked about people's experiences with the City's mobility and public life COVID-19 initiatives through an online Talk Vancouver survey. Over 90% of respondents felt their experience using the Room to Move - Beach Avenue was "positive" or "very positive". A full summary of these survey results can be found at shapeyourcity.ca/making-streets-for-people.

Key findings

Thank you to everyone who shared their thoughts with us. We heard a range of feedback about the current configuration and ideas for improving these spaces.

Summary of Feedback

- People walking, with or without a mobility device noted that:
  - There is more room to walk and physically distance on the Seawall
  - Improving crossings will help people cycling know to slow down and yield to people walking.

- People cycling and rolling shared that:
    - The additional space has supported physical distancing and exercise during the pandemic
    - The bike path on Beach Avenue is flatter, provides direct access to destinations and has better lighting than the Seawall
    - It feels safer and more enjoyable to be separated from cars
    - There should be protected bike lanes like this in other parts of the city
    - There is a lack of clarity about the rules, and who has priority along Beach Ave
    - A few respondents noted they preferred cycling on the Seawall

- People using transit mentioned that:
    - Traversing the steep hill to the east of Beach Avenue is challenging for reaching transit (particularly Route # 23). Many residents of the West End use eastbound transit to access services and destinations (i.e. the Aquatic Centre) and this is a popular transit route for seniors in the West End.

- People driving noted that:
    - There is traffic congestion entering and leaving the neighbourhood
    - A few people mentioned that they have been inconvenienced by parking restrictions

Interim design

Staff developed an interim design to address the common feedback we heard during engagement. The following table provides an overview of feedback and interim design upgrade. Please see *Appendix A* for a map of current configuration and the interim upgrades along Beach Ave.

Feedback	Interim Upgrades
Improve street crossings and separate walking and cycling spaces	Key pedestrian crossings will be improved with a mix of the following treatments: • Painting crosswalks (striped 'zebra' markings) to better designate priority for people crossing the street. • Adding median islands to shorten the crossing distance for people walking. • Incorporating accessible design features.
Restore eastbound travel for motor vehicles, and transit	• Eastbound travel restored between Denman St and Jervis St for motor vehicles and transit. • Access to transit will be improved by adding 'Bus Boarding Islands' and modifying traffic signals. **These changes may be delayed as they rely on other project elements to be in place before they can be implemented. Certain design elements, like paint markings, require a window of dry weather for installation.*

Maintain the width of the Beach Ave path	• The width of the path will be maintained except where transit and crosswalk improvements are needed. • Cycling on the Seawall will continue to be restricted during COVID conditions to provide more space for physical distancing between people walking in the West End Waterfront parks.
Having a sturdier barrier between people cycling and traffic lanes	• The traffic cones will be replaced by a concrete barrier, which won't move around and will require less maintenance.
Short/Medium-Term Future Considerations	
Provide accessible parking at the waterfront	• Engineering staff are working with Park Board staff on identifying additional accessible parking in the lot near Bute Street to provide access for those who have mobility issues and need a level access point to the beach, Sewall and other amenities.
Extending cycling path along Pacific St	• Exploring potential work on Pacific Street which could include connecting the bike path to the Burrard Bridge along Pacific Street and two-way service for bus Route #23.

Next steps

Staff are finalizing an interim design for Beach Avenue that will be installed in late 2020/ early 2021. With wetter weather expected over the next few months, staff may need to phase the installation and wait for a window of dry weather to install certain aspects of the design like paint markings.

Construction crews will work as quickly as possible to minimize local impacts, but changes such as restoring eastbound motor vehicle and transit access (between Denman St and Jervis St) may be delayed as they rely on other project elements (which are weather dependent) to be in place before they can be implemented.

Staff will continue to monitor and adjust the next phase of the Beach Avenue Path and there will be opportunities to share additional feedback about the longer-term vision for these spaces through the West End Waterfront Master Plan process that will get underway in 2021.

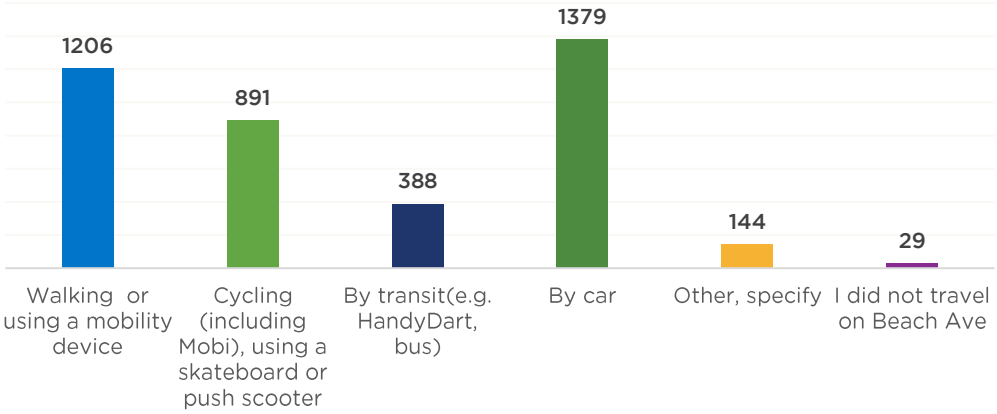
Part Two: Detailed Summary

The findings below reflect what we heard and who we heard from during engagement and a summary of what we learned from online survey respondents.

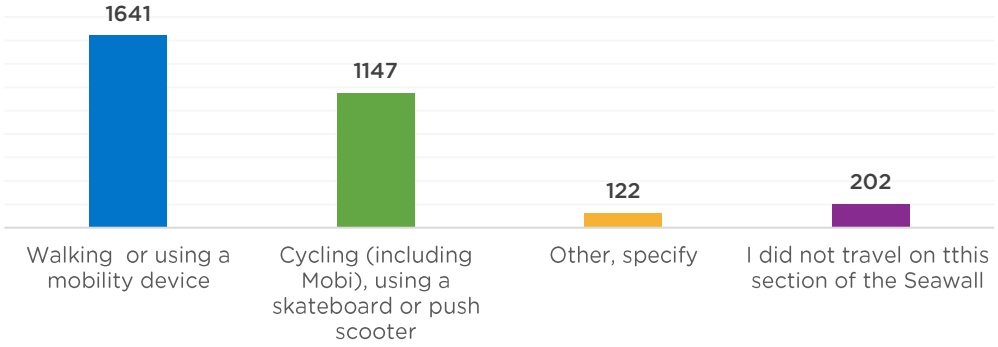
How was Beach Avenue and the Seawall used prior to mid-April 2020?

Prior to mid-April 2020, Beach Avenue was primarily used by people in private motor vehicles, and the Seawall was primarily used by people walking, with or without a mobility device.

Q1: Beach Avenue Use, Park Lane to Hornby St, prior to Mid-April 2020 (select all that apply)



Q2: Seawall Travel Modes, Park Lane to Hornby St, prior to mid-April 2020 (select all that apply)



How have Beach Avenue and the Seawall been used since mid-April 2020?

The following section will summarize how respondents have been using these spaces since the Beach Avenue bike path was installed, a detailed break down of responses for each question is found in *Appendix B*.

Since mid-April 2020, most respondents **(57%)** have been using Beach Avenue at least once a week, primarily for cycling or walking (with or without a mobility device). Half **(50%)** of respondents shared that they are travelling by car on Beach Avenue at least once a week.

Since mid-April, **60%** of respondents noted that they are using the Seawall for walking at least once a week (with or without a mobility device) and almost half of respondents cycling noted that they have not used the Seawall between Park Lane and Hornby St since the Beach Ave path was installed in mid-April 2020).

Respondents shared that they are commonly using the Beach Avenue path with other people, either from the same or a different household. The Beach Avenue path is primarily used for recreational purposes such as exercising or connecting to Stanley Park as well as commuting to daily destinations.

Areas for improvement

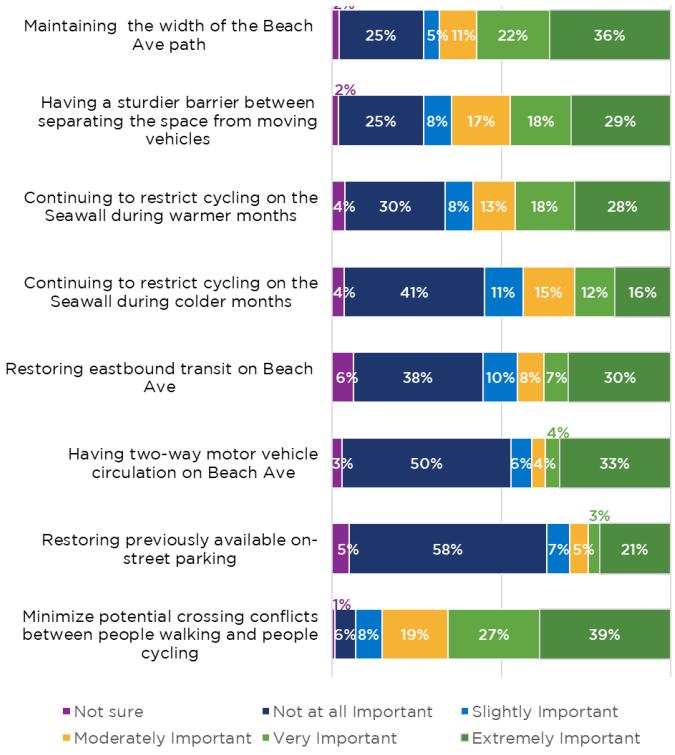
The second part of the survey asked respondents to share feedback about what is important for mobility in the area and ideas for improving walking, cycling and rolling along the Beach Avenue.

We heard that for many people minimizing potential crossing conflicts **(66%)** and maintaining the width of the Beach Ave path **(58%)** was extremely/very important.

As well, having a sturdier barrier between the space and moving vehicles **(47%)** and continuing to restrict cycling on the Seawall in warmer months **(47%)** was also extremely/very important for respondents.

For some participants, restoring two-way vehicle traffic **(38%)** and eastbound transit service **(37%)** were extremely/very important.

Q8: If the Beach Ave temporary path is in place into 2021, how important is the following to you when thinking about your mobility in this area?

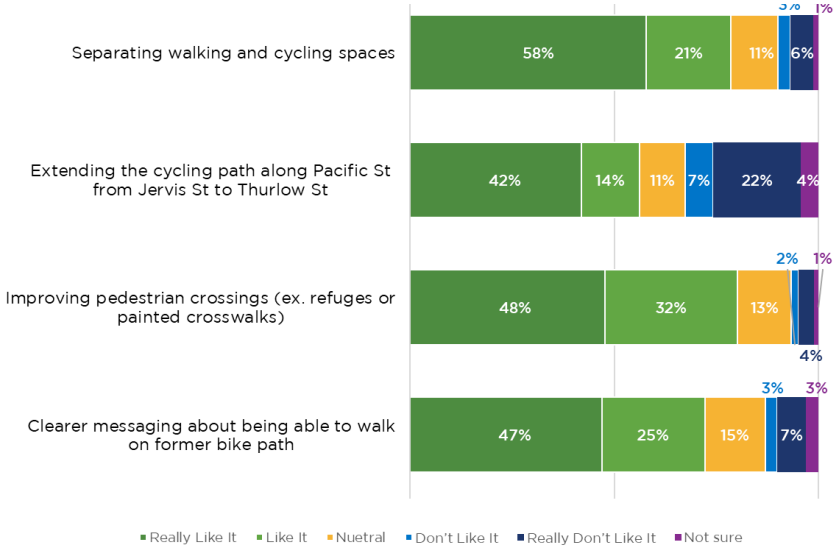


Many survey participants liked (really like or like) the idea of improving pedestrian crossings **(80%)** and separating walking and cycling spaces **(79%).** The interim design will

Additionally, **72%** of respondents liked (really like or like) including clearer messaging that people walking can use the former bike path.

More than half **(56%)** of respondents liked (really like or like) the idea of extending the cycling path along Pacific St to provide a level cycling connection to the Burrard Bridge.

Q9: How do you feel about the following ideas to help improve walking, cycling and rolling on the Beach Ave temporary path?



The following table provides an overview of the feedback we received about potential improvements.

Table 1: Feedback Themes

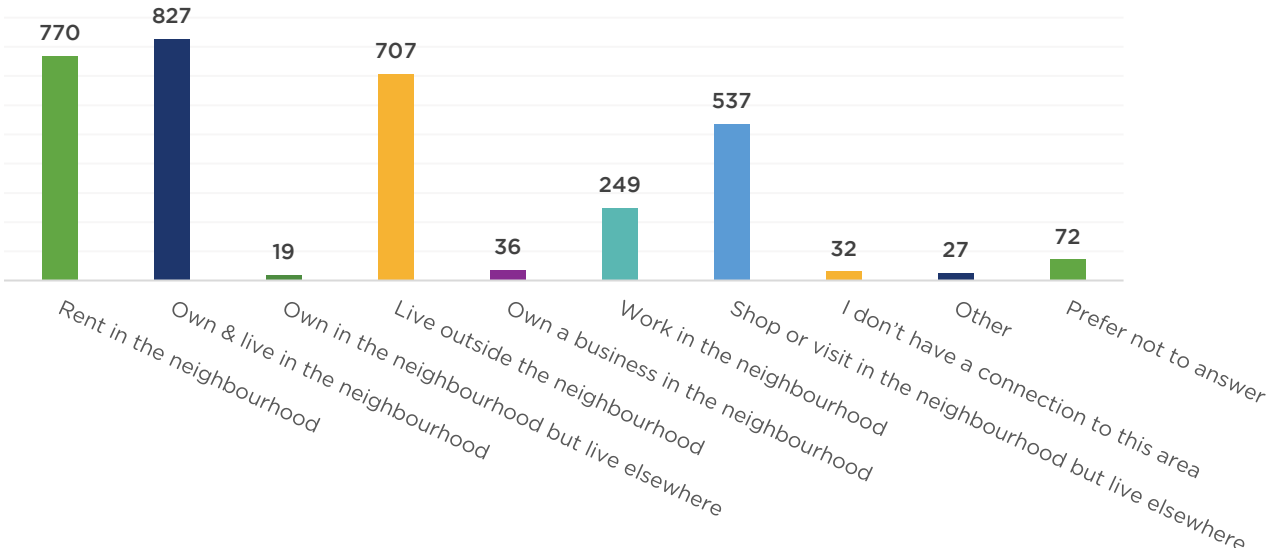
Feedback about improvements	Illustrative comments
Those who shared <u>positive and supportive feedback</u> about the project had the following ideas: - Improving signage and wayfinding to provide more clarity for each travel mode and how and where to get on/off the Beach Avenue Path - More substantial barriers to increase safety and aesthetics. - Maintain the path's width and reduce bumps in certain areas. - Space for on-street parking could be repurposed for eating, washrooms and food/beverage carts. - Additional protected bike lane routes across the city	*"Make sure all signs and directions are clear…"* *"….If you can improve the median between the motor vehicles and temporary path and also the crossing points for pedestrians you have a perfect, safe street for everyone to enjoy."* *"It is very important to me to maintain the width of the bike path because it allows riding side by side"* *"…I would hope the city continues to expand on streets for people to get more people out of their cars and choosing alternative, healthier & more environmentally friendly ways of getting around."* *"I can't stress enough the importance of extending existing path along Pacific street to the Burrard Bridge. It'll make for a much easier grade and safer access to the bridge."*

People who shared <u>less than supportive</u> feedback about the project had typically commented on the following topics to improve the space: - Restore eastbound vehicular travel - Reduce congestion on major roads and at residential driveways - Increase education and enforcement for people on bikes and jay-walkers - Restore eastbound transit service (i.e. #23 Bus) - Restore parking and drop off zones - Resume bikes on the Seawall in this area	*"I like seeing all the bikes and it is quieter without so many cars speeding past. I just want the number 23 bus back to its normal route so it's easier to get to and from the West End."* *"More education/clarity about where and when to stop for pedestrians"* *"Closure of eastbound traffic on Beach Ave creates additional bottlenecks on traffic traveling east from the West End, particularly Davie, Nelson and West Georgia"* *"...it's a big inconvenience to me personally as I drive eastbound every day. It was a nice idea at first, but now that there are more vehicles on the road again, it doesn't make sense."*

Who We Heard From

It's important to us that we hear from a diverse group of people and perspectives. The following section is a summary of the demographics of who we heard from in the online survey.

Q11: What is your connection to Beach Avenue (Park Lane to Hornby St)? (Select all that apply)

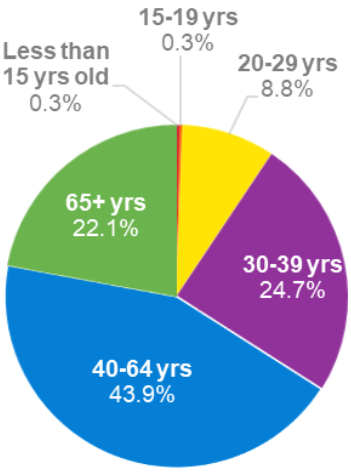


The survey responses were well balanced between people who live in the neighbourhood (owners and renters) and people who live outside the neighbourhood. Of the **49%** of respondents who live in the neighbourhood

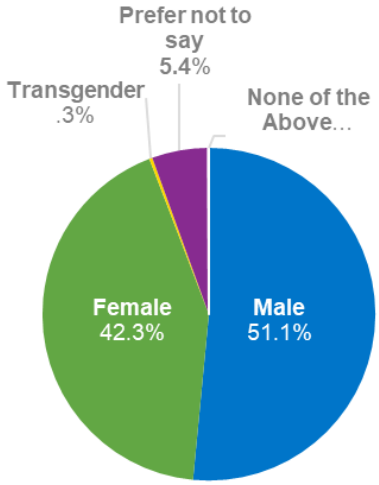
there was a fairly even representation between those who rent **(48%)** and own **(52%)**.

Many of the people who responded **(44%)** were between the ages of 40-64 with a fairly even representation from the other age groups, except for the ages of 19 and under where there was little to no representation. Nearly half of the surveys **(51%)** were completed by people who identify as "male"

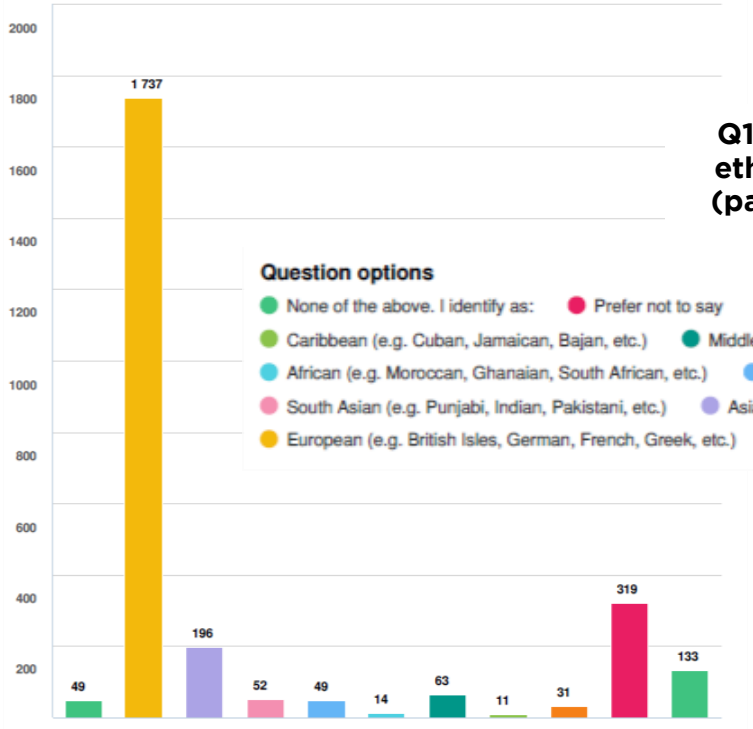
Q13: What is your age?



Q14: Do you identify as?



Most of the respondents considered their ethnic origin to be European **(65%)**. Only **1.8%** of respondents considered themselves to have First Nations, Metis or Inuit ancestors.



Q15: What do you consider your main ethnic origin or that of your ancestors (parents, grandparents)? (Select up to two)

Appendix A: Interim Design

Figure 1: Beach Avenue Current Configuration (since mid-April 2020)

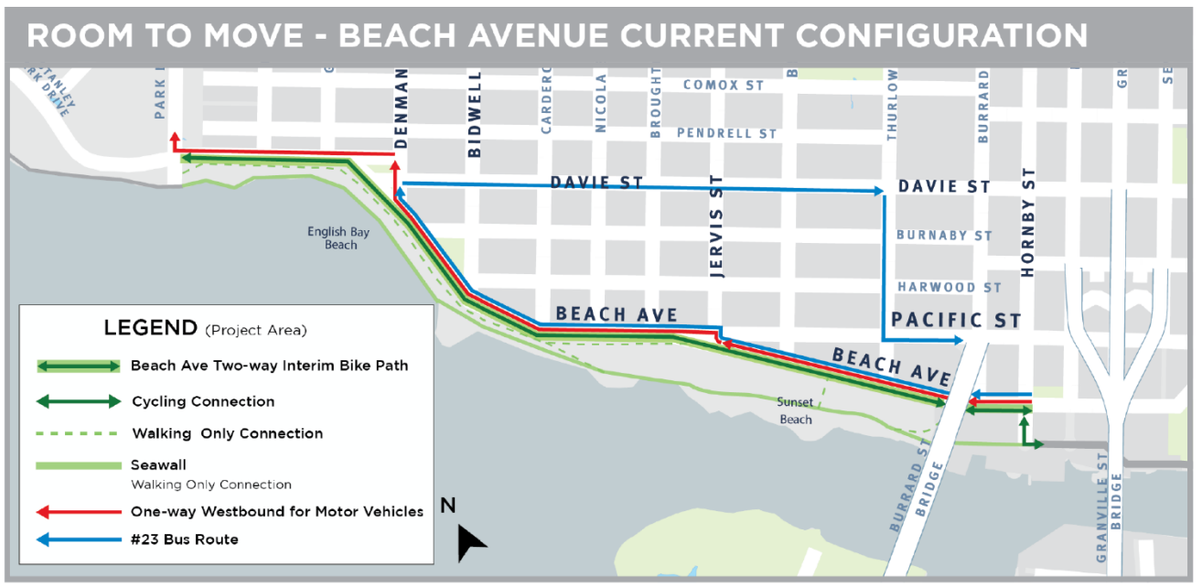


Figure 2: Beach Avenue Interim Design

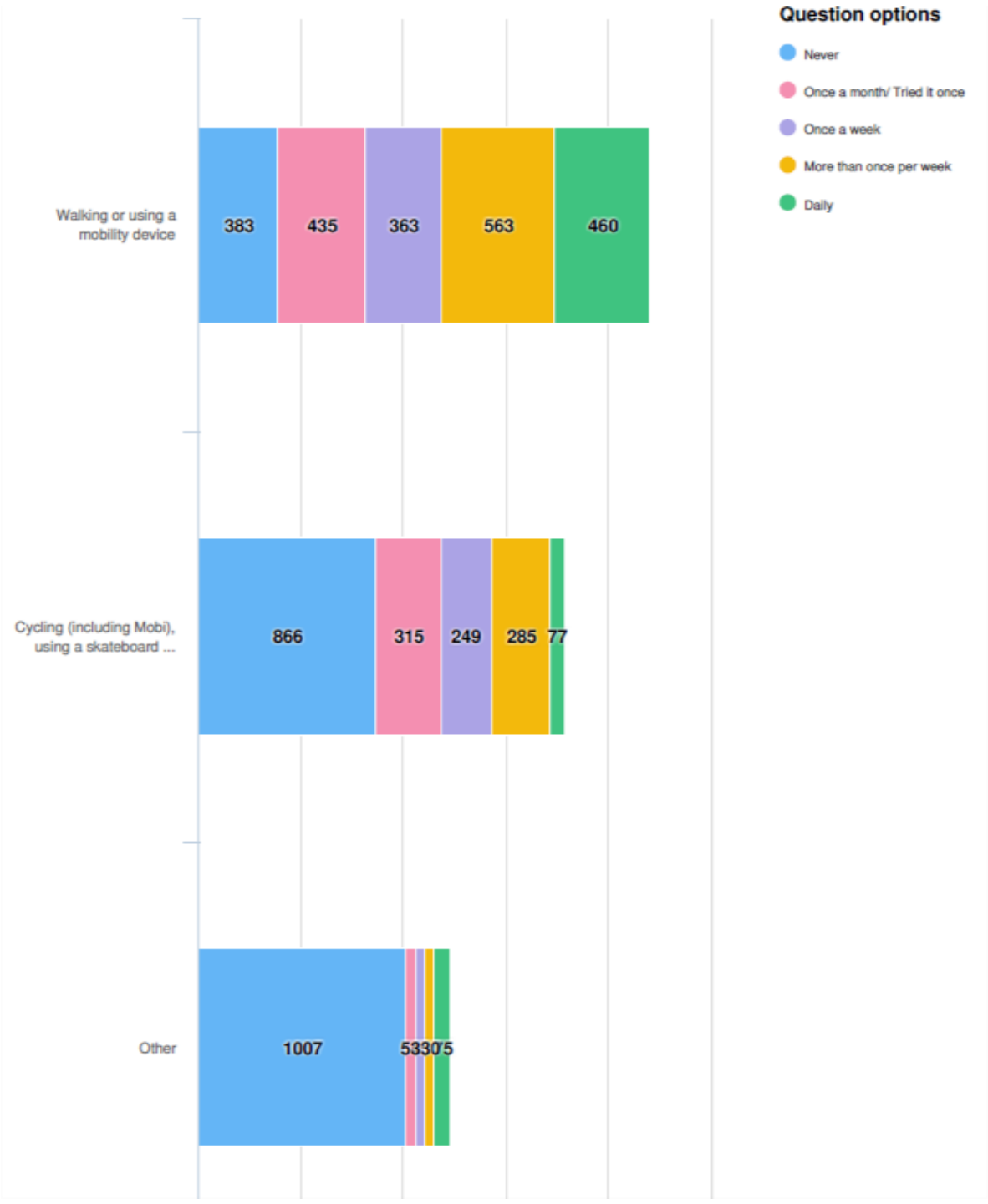


Appendix B: Detailed Graphs for Survey Questions 4- 7

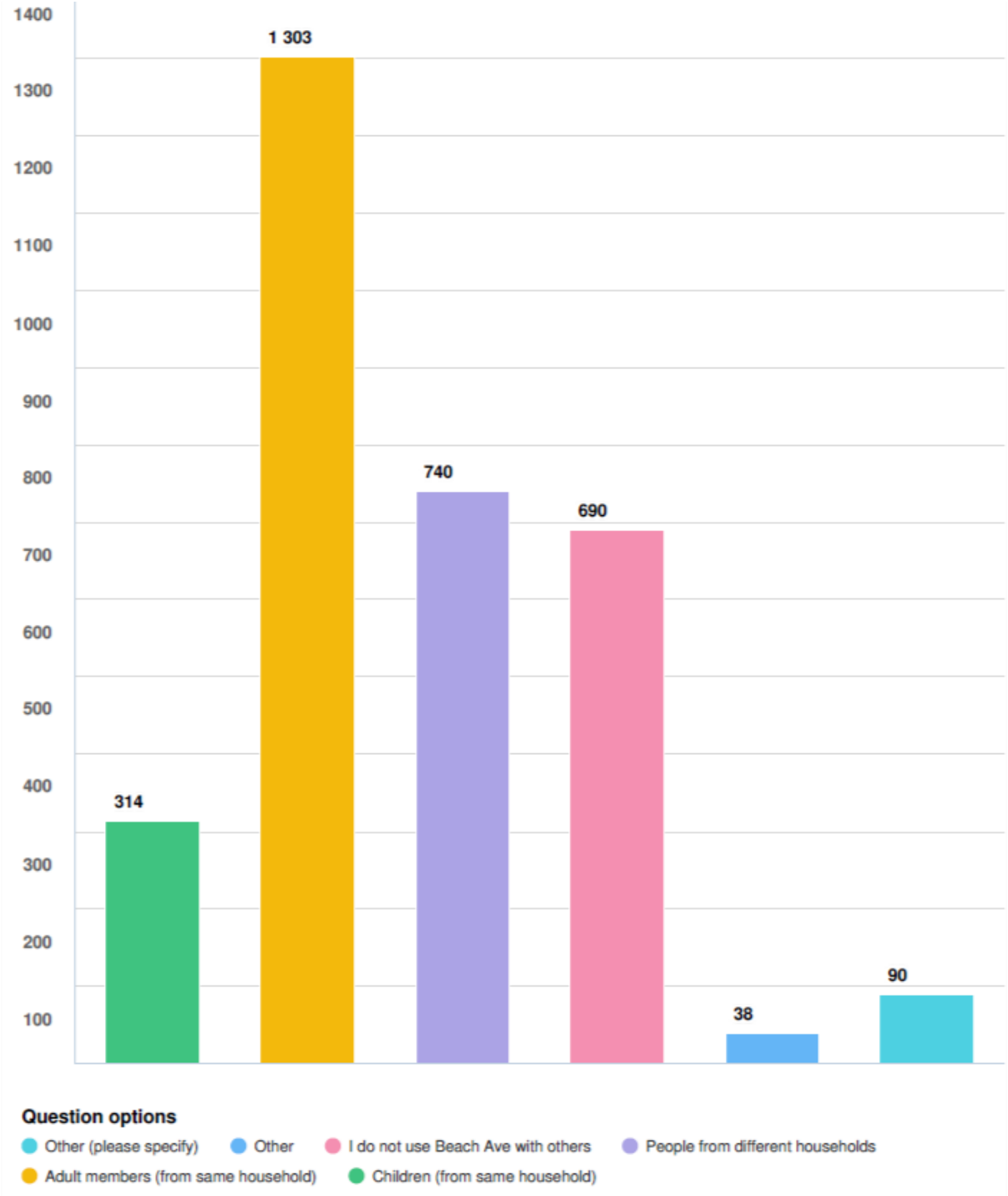
Q4: How often and what form of transportation did you use on Beach Ave since mid-April 2020?



Q5 – How often and what form of transportation did you use on the Seawall (Park Lane to Hornby St) since mid-April 2020?



Q6: If you are using the temporary path on Beach Ave (Park Lane to Hornby St): Who are you using it with? (Select all that apply)



Q7: If you are using the temporary path on Beach Ave (Park Lane to Hornby St): How are you using it? (Select all that apply)

