

# North Williams Transportation Safety Project Community Forum Questionnaire and Response

Data Collection and Evaluation from Community Forum November 28, 2011

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## Sub-Committee Work Summary

A sub-committee was formed from the Stakeholders Advisory Committee to design a survey to gather, analyze and present information gathered from the Community Forum that took place on November 28, 2011. The sub-committee had hoped to learn from the community specific information that would be helpful in making decisions about the outcome of the project to identify and articulate the community's vision, guide future development in the N. Williams corridor, and to learn more about the interested parties.

The sub-committee met virtually to create the survey. The questionnaire asked eighteen questions with an additional nine optional demographic questions. Among the questions asked were those asking the location of those showing interest in the project, identification of streets that were perceived to be more dangerous by mode of travel, whether or not the perception of safety differed by mode of travel, and whether one was crossing or traveling *along* N. Williams using a particular mode. Additionally, we asked which streets were perceived to be most dangerous, whether or not an alternate route was favored by large numbers of people, the ways in which people were connected to the neighborhood, ideas for potential solutions to the safety issues, and what types of future development would make people feel more connected to the community.

The questionnaire included two questions not directly related to the project which may be helpful to future development along the corridor. We asked how people would like to be engaged, and asked respondents to identify what types of businesses, products, and services would increase respondents' sense of community connection. The responses to these questions were open-ended and appear in clustered themes at the end of this report.

The committee met in person three times over the course of this project to first enter and tabulate and look at the data, determine how we would normalize the data, and assign people to tasks to complete the project.

The attendance at the Community Forum was estimated at approximately 170 attendants including City representatives. We have used this estimated attendance to in turn estimate the rate of response which is just under 55%.

## Methods

Surveys were available at the check-in table and an announcement was made about their availability twice during the course of the event. A total of 93 surveys were returned, representing a larger than normal share of responses by about 25%.

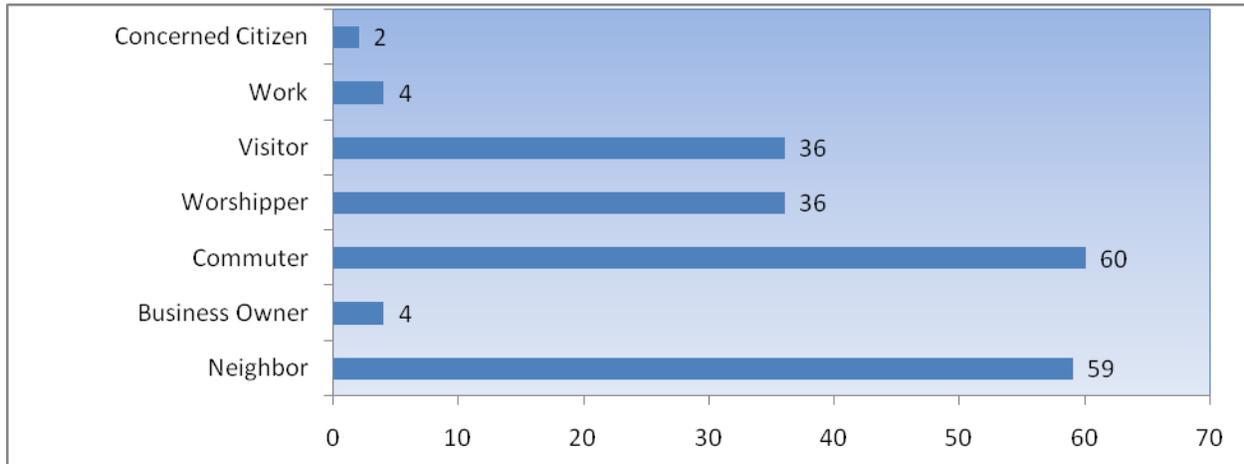
In several of the questions, more than one response option was available, or the question was open-ended. For instance in question 1, a respondent could indicate that they were connected to the project, as in "I'm a neighbor, a pedestrian *and* I worship in the neighborhood". In these cases, each response was recorded and analyzed, so the total percentages will add up to more than 100%; this will be noted in the narrative where appropriate.

The data were entered into a spreadsheet so that each question could be looked at in isolation. We discussed cross tabulating responses, for instance we could look how people were connected to the project and determine if their connection to the project was correlated with the length of time in the neighborhood, or if their perception of safety by mode of travel was correlated with age or other demographic information. We decided not to complete cross-tabulating due to time constraints.

## Findings

Most of the respondents identified themselves as either commuters, (60%) or neighbors, (59%). We did not set geographic bounds on what constituted a neighbor, so people in neighborhoods not directly affected by this project may have responded. Fewer respondents identified themselves as visitors and/or worshippers, at 36%. Business owners, workers, and concerned citizens made up 2-4% of respondents.

**Figure 1. Forum Respondents by relationship to project**



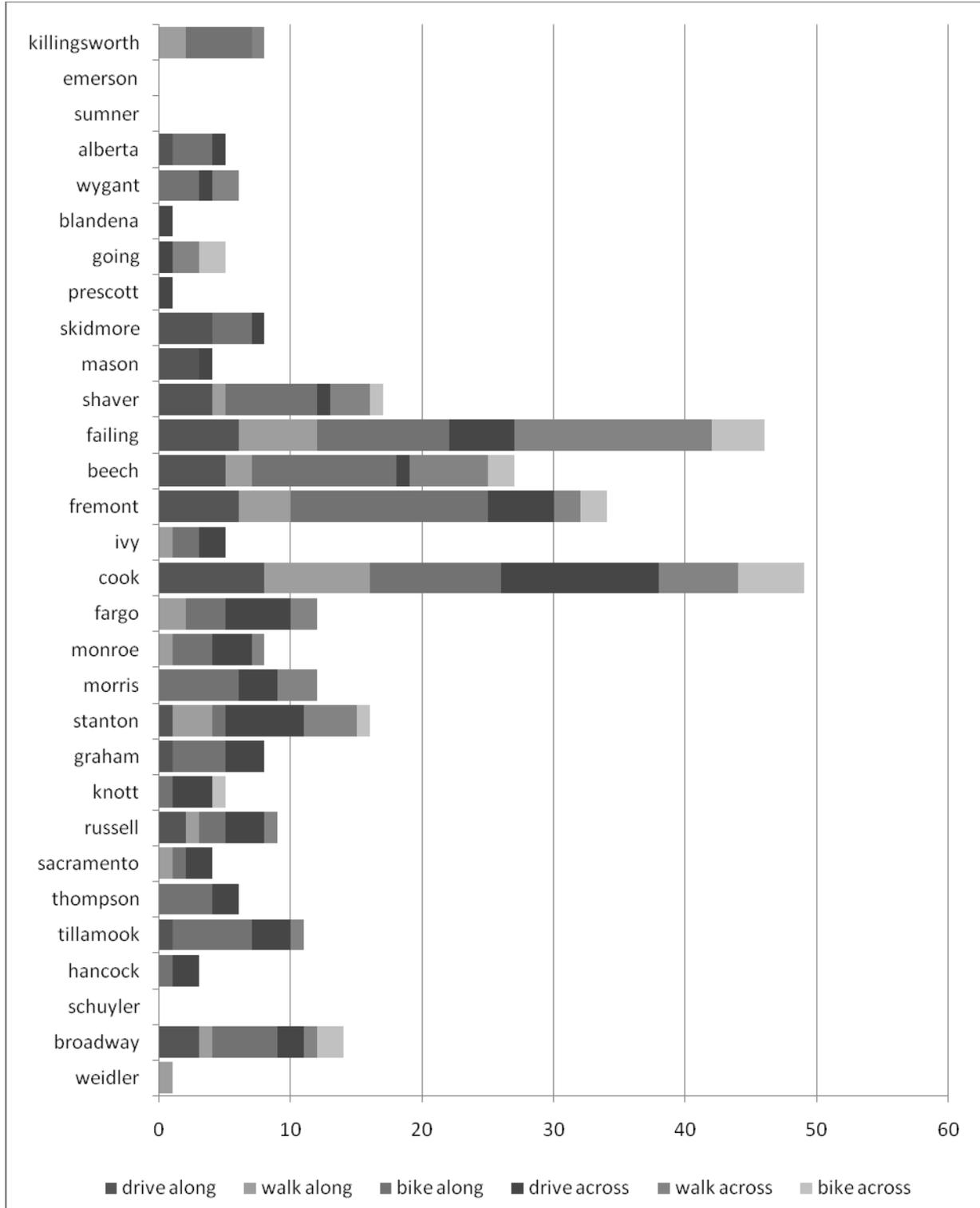
Attendees were asked to rate their satisfaction level driving, bicycling and walking along and across N. Williams Avenue, and to identify the most dangerous spots. All of the satisfaction rating questions were posed on a 1-7 scale. Respondents noted that travelling across the street is much more difficult than travelling along it.

Overall average = 3.2 with 87 responses	Driving	Bicycling	Walking
Along N Williams	Average=4.5 (n=73)	Avg = 4.5 (n=77)	Avg =3.8 (n=75)
Across N. Williams	Average=3.3 (n=69)	Avg = 3.4 (n=78)	Avg = 3.5 (n=68)

The data also suggests that the average person is quite concerned with the street, only driving along and bicycling along Williams scored above the middling 4 mark in terms of comfort. This data suggests that pedestrians are currently the most poorly-served users of the street. These questions could serve as a benchmark to measure the success of the project, provided that the population of respondents is similar in a follow-up survey.

On the next, page, there is a compilation of the number of complaints about each area of the street.

The most dangerous intersections were listed by a number of respondents. These are listed in the chart on the next page based on the number of responses of a given type



The survey included a question about the use of alternate routes, “*Do you use an alternate route to avoid Williams*”? In general, people made decisions about which route to take based on the time of day, and whether they were driving, biking or walking.

Of ten responses, 7 people chose Rodney as an alternate route, we assumed for bicycling, with a single vote each for Commercial, Kerby, Haight, Cleveland, Interstate/Greeley, Gantenbein, and Mississippi Avenues for north-south routes.

The survey offered respondents an opportunity to think “big” about how to increase safety along N. Williams. The ideas fell into several categories, 1) slow traffic, 2) separate bicycle lanes, 3) increase lighting, and 4) increased signaling. The clustered responses and their frequencies are listed below:

- Slow traffic down (5)
- Hold drivers & cyclists accountable for their behaviors (1)
- Separated bike lanes (6)
- Increase lighting (2)
- Add controlled (signaled) intersections (3)
- No Bike Lanes on Williams (1)
- Encourage motorized traffic to use busier corridors such as MLK I-5, Interstate Avenue (1)
- Bike lanes that help cyclist merge left for left turns (1)
- More signage (1)
- Less parking on street or increase off-street parking (2)
- Turn Rodney into a green way (1)
- More crosswalks and curb extensions (4)
- Increase connections between people on street (2)

The final question that was posed was Q7., *What businesses, services, or products could develop on Williams that would increase your sense of well-being and community connection?*

The responses appear in a word cloud. Because the question was open-ended, the goal of the sub-committee is to fully represent the ideas and range of responses that arose from the question. Those responses appear below. In general, the responses indicated that the community would like to see affordable housing, public spaces, (places to meet on the street), a reduction of empty lots, increased lighting and support for minority-owned businesses.



## Recommendations

While the entire Stakeholders Advisory Committee needs to weigh in on recommendations, the data points to several preferences of the community in no particular order:

- 1) Traffic calming through signage, crosswalks, signaling and increased enforcement are the top recommendations to increase safety.
- 2) Lighting, both street lighting and signaling are recommended and wanted by respondents.
- 3) Separated bike lanes are highly desired by the community.
- 4) The community would like to see well-marked crosswalks, and City enforcement of bicycle and auto offenders.
- 5) The designation of an alternate route for bicycling, either east or west of Williams should be explored.
- 6) The community would like to see the types and kinds of development in the future that will increase "eyes on the street", reduce the number of empty lots, bring African American businesses back to the street, and encourage businesses that are of use to neighbors. Quality, affordable housing and public gathering spaces are high on the community's "wish list".