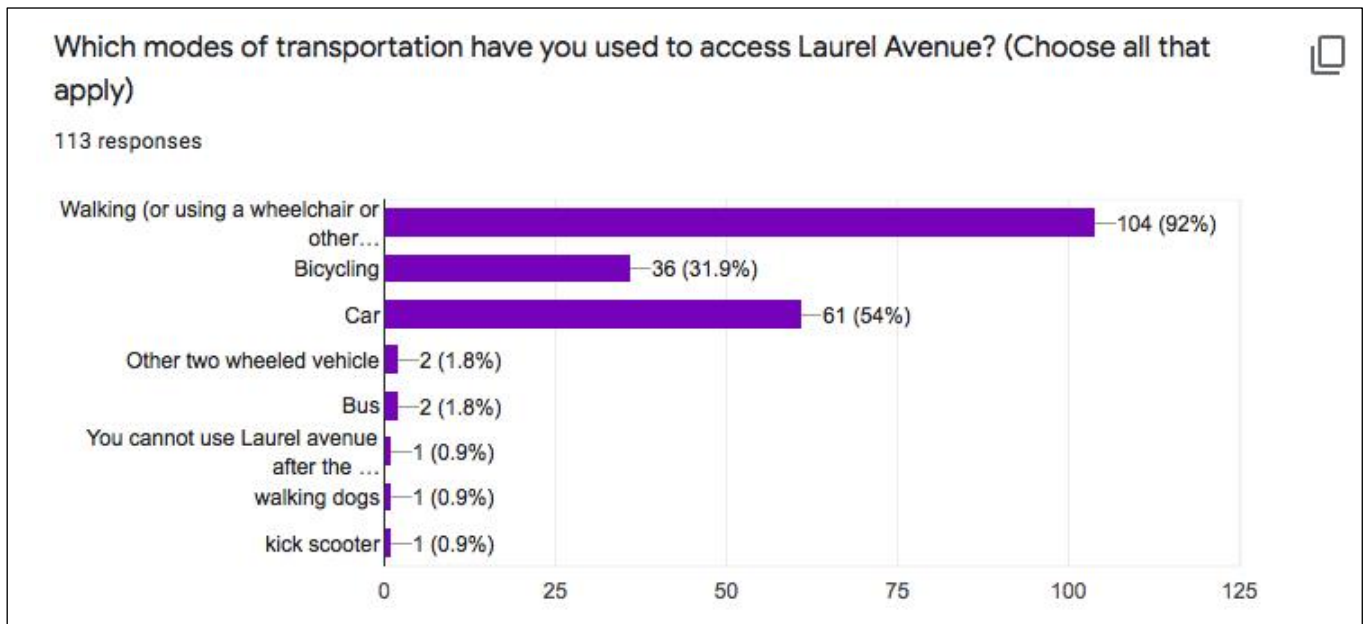


Community Survey Results for Closure of Laurel Avenue During the COVID-19 Pandemic

The following is a summary of results from a survey regarding the closure of Laurel Avenue. The survey was made available to the public in June and as of November 12, 2020 the survey has been completed by 113 respondents.

Seventy-six respondents (67.3%) indicated they are residents and 37 (32.7%) said they were not residents. When asked “Have you used Laurel Avenue during its closure?” 102 (90.3%) of respondents stated that they have used Laurel Avenue during the closure.

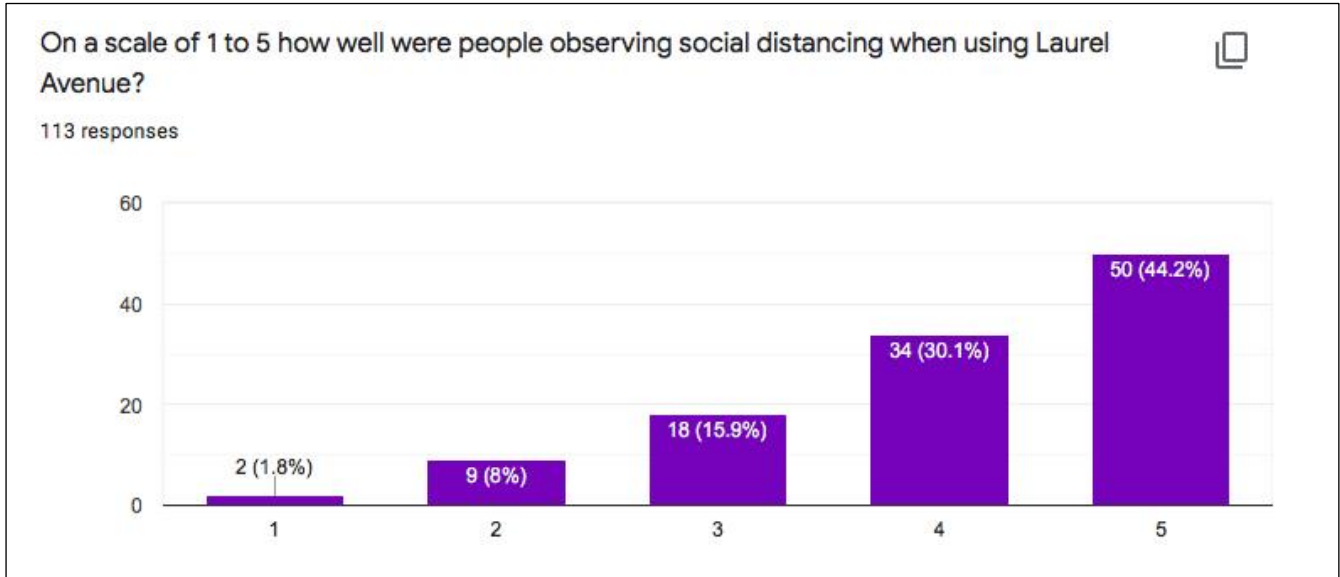
Respondents have accessed Laurel Avenue in different ways: 92% of respondents stated that they have accessed the space while walking or by wheelchair; 54% have accessed the space via car; and 32% have accessed the space via bicycle.



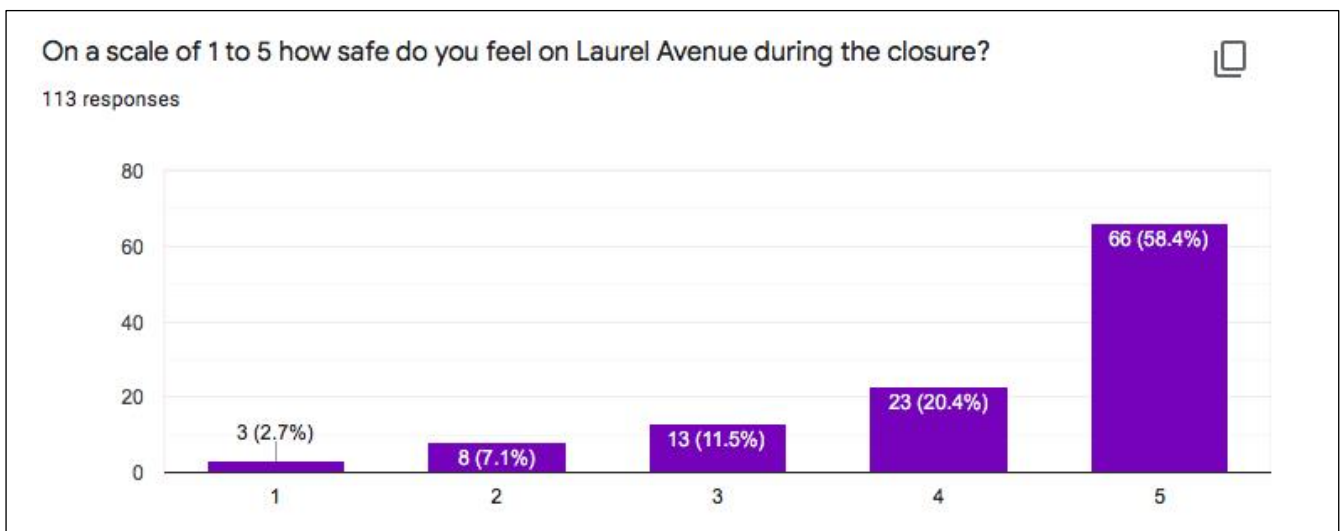
When asked “Have you observed any issues as a result of Laurel Ave’s closure?” 65.5% of respondents stated that “no issues were observed”, 20.4% stated that people were not observing physical distance guidelines, 17.7% stated “driver confusion”, and 10.6% stated there was increased traffic on adjacent streets. From June – September, 31 out of 69 respondents (45%) stated they observed/experienced issues with the Laurel Ave closure. Since September, 9 out of 44 respondents (20%) reported observing/experiencing issues with the Laurel Ave closure.

When asked, “Have you observed any impacts of the Laurel Avenue closure on adjacent streets?” 77.9% of respondents stated that they observed no issues, 11.5% stated “driver confusion”, 7.1% stated “speeding cars”, and 4.4% stated “parking violations”.

When asked “On a scale of 1 to 5 how well were people observing social distancing when using Laurel Avenue?” 44% of respondents stated 5, 30% stated 4, and 16% stated 3. From June – September, the average answer received from respondents was 3.8. From September – Present, the average answer received from respondents was 4.5.

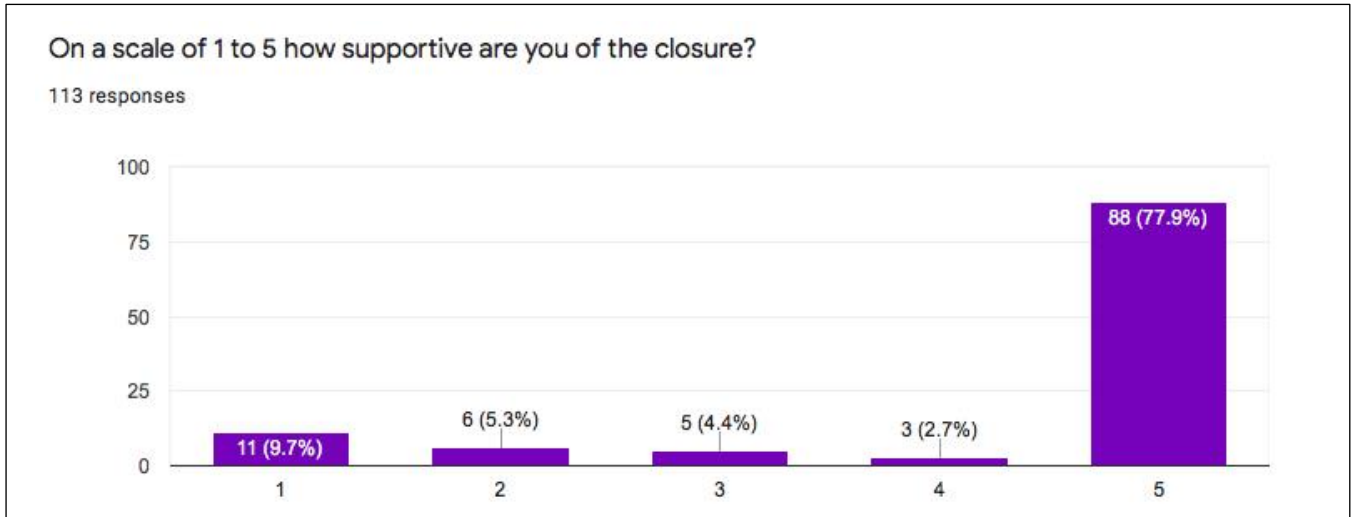


When asked “On a scale of 1 to 5 how safe do you feel on Laurel Avenue during the closure?” 58.4% of respondents stated 5, 20.4% stated 4, 11.5% stated 3, 7.1% stated 2, and 2.7% stated 1. From June – September, the average answer received from respondents was 3.9. From September – Present, the average answer received from respondents was 4.7.



When asked “On a scale of 1 to 5 how supportive are you of the closure?” 77.9% of respondents stated 5, 2.7% stated 4, 4.4% stated 3, 5.3% stated 2, and 9.7% stated 1. From June

– September, the average answer received from respondents was 4. From September –Present, the average answer received from respondents was 4.8.



When asked to optionally answer “Do you have any other comments not addressed in the above questions?” a few residents stated that they were displeased with the closure, stating it encouraged social gathering or that it over prioritizes the businesses. However, many residents openly seemed to support the closure and would even like to see both sides of Laurel Ave closed indefinitely for pedestrian access. Since September, when drivers were accustomed to the new traffic pattern, 21 out of 24 respondents who chose to answer this question stated that they were in support of the closure and many continued to advocate for closing the entire street.

Comments not addressed in survey questions (submitted after August 31st)	
“Keep it going perpetually - this is a much better use of space.”	“Close more streets to pedestrians and bikers - make changes permanent”
“Great idea”	“People over cars! Keep it closed.”
“I think this should be permanent and also include the other side of the street.”	“make it permanent”
“Our city should be finding more innovative ways to encourage safe spaces for people to gather. With 3 parking lots within simple walking distance to Laurel Ave, there should be no need to worry about the loss of a few parking spaces, and traffic is never so bad that this is making life more difficult. Our lives are better when we can walk and safely feel part of a community. This street closure is a step towards that,	“Laurel avenue closure has been an amazing idea bringing the community closer while still maintaining social distance. It creates an incredibly festive downtown atmosphere that simply didn't exist prior. Plus, it promotes walking and pedestrian/bike safety and disincentives driving which from a climate change perspective is ideal. KEEP IT GOING! WOO!”

<p>and I encourage our city and business leaders to find additional opportunities for this.”</p>	
<p>“I live in Takoma DC, so am very nearby although not a resident of Takoma Park. I think it’s a great idea, and it makes me and my family feel much more comfortable patronizing the businesses in that stretch, knowing that we’ll have an outdoor area to eat or wait for each other. Please keep it as is!”</p>	<p>“The only reason I gave a "4" to how safe do you feel is that I think the other lane of traffic should be closed as well. I'll also add the Streeterly is *wonderful* for those of us with small children.”</p>
<p>“Love the Streeterly and honestly hope it becomes a permanent fixture. It’s a huge draw for the community. I frequent the businesses on Laurel almost daily because of the Streeterly.”</p>	<p>“We love the Streeterly and use it frequently. We hope you consider closing the other lane of traffic too, and making it permanent!!”</p>
<p>“My driving life is impacted dramatically, but it is totally worth given what is gained by the closure.”</p>	<p>“I love the Streeterly. Please keep it open. “</p>
<p>“Closing the street to allow for a community gathering space and extended commercial zone for restaurants was smart. It’s the best way to support our neighborhood businesses and community health. Do not change this for cars. Otherwise we will be crammed into the sidewalks only or face going inside - - neither of which makes sense during an ongoing pandemic and will almost certainly lead to negative health outcomes and business closures. I wish this street would stay permanently closed to encourage a safe walking, biking, and seating area in our community. While I technically live on the DC side and not Takoma Park MD, I have lived for 13 years just two blocks from the Street/downtown area. The street closure has made Takoma Park safer, more of a community, and more diverse. I have observed safe social distancing and mask wearing in the social area. If accessibility is an issue, we can figure out a way to better support a wider range of mobilities without falling back on cars ruling our streets and lives - there's got to be a compromise without eliminating the Laurel Ave closure and its value to our community. Some things should not go back to "normal" after the pandemic. The Laurel Ave closure is one of those revisions to our everyday lives and community that should stay now and into the future. “</p>	<p>“I don't believe the shops have suffered because we've lost one lane of traffic, I would argue we have gained tremendously, as was always the case pre-pandemic, by whom our neighbors are and, specifically with Takoma Beverage, what they are doing to their benefit that benefits us all.”</p>
<p>“Love the Streeterly and honestly hope it becomes a permanent fixture. It’s a huge draw for the community. I frequent the businesses on Laurel almost daily because of the Streeterly.”</p>	<p>“I support this being a permanent fixture in the city.”</p>

<p>"I think the closure is GREAT, at least for these times when traffic is lighter than usual. Speeding / disobeying traffic signs at Eastern and Laurel intersection have been common for years, especially with the frustration built up due to recent road work."</p>	<p>"I hope if and when the pandemic is over that the street will open again. The Farmer's market never closed even at the initial COVID onslaught, minimal if any social distancing and use of mask. We now avoid the area if we can, especially on Sundays"</p>
<p>As a local business owner, I am extremely grateful for the use of the space. As a resident, I've enjoyed a tiny bit of "normalcy" by having coffee outside, which feels like a life saver.</p>	<p>"I think the closure is an excellent move, and support making it permanent."</p>
<p>"The Streeterly supports the businesses, their employees and customers to the businesses on Laurel, their e"</p>	

The following is a list of results from optional self-identity questions at the end of the survey:

1. "What is your gender?"
 - a. 49% - Man
 - b. 46.1% - Woman
 - c. 2% - Nonbinary
 - d. 1% - Prefer not to answer
 - e. 1% - Family (answered jointly)
2. "How old are you?"
 - a. 43.3% - 25-44
 - b. 41.3% - 45-64
 - c. 15.4% - 65 or older
3. "Do you identify as someone with a physical disability?"
 - a. 95.1% - No
 - b. 4.9% - Yes
4. "Which of following best describes your race/ethnicity? Choose all that apply."
 - a. 93.6% - White
 - b. 7.4% - Hispanic/Latinx
 - c. 4.3% - Asian
 - d. 3.2% - Black or African American
 - e. 1.1% - Native American or Alaska Native