KELLY'S BROOK

SHARED-USE PATHWAY

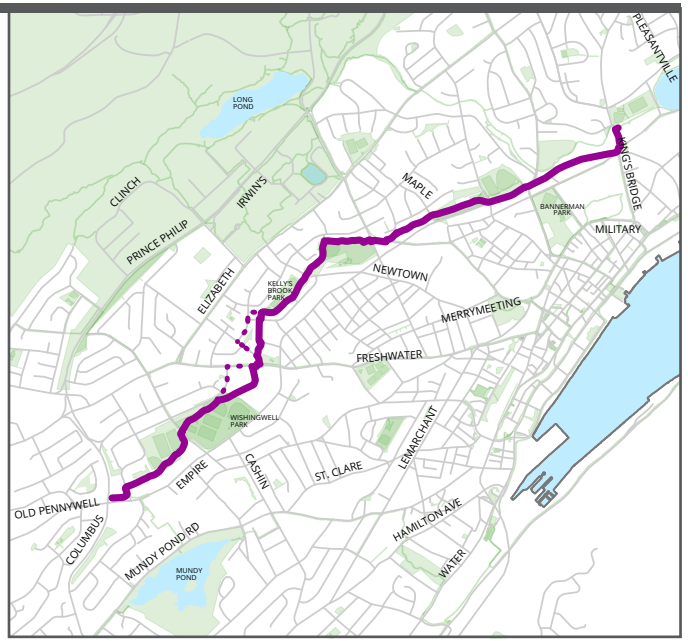
WHAT WE HEARD

March 2021

ABOUT THIS PROJECT

Kelly's Brook Shared-Use-Pathway will extend from King's Bridge Road to Columbus Drive. It is mostly in place as a granular walking trail today, linking several neighbourhoods through an important east-west greenway that largely parallels Empire Avenue. Its goal is to provide an attractive and continuous 4.8 km recreation corridor and active transportation route in St. John's, connecting popular destinations and amenities along the way. Although the idea came from the bike master plan, this is not a project just for cyclists. **The shared-use path is proposed to serve people of all ages and abilities, using all forms of active transportation, including walking, running, biking, and rolling.**

Beginning in December 2020 and continuing through February 2021, residents and stakeholder groups were invited to share their perspectives, ideas and concerns about Kelly's Brook Shared-Use Path through a number of engagement activities. They were also asked to provide input to inform design decisions around elements such as lighting, surface materials, path alignment, trailhead and rest areas, wayfinding, and other features. The purpose of this document is to provide a summary of what we heard during the engagement process.



Kelly's Brook shared-use-path proposed route

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PROJECT STAKEHOLDERS

Residents and other identified stakeholders were invited to participate in the engagement process through the City's on-line engagement platform, www.engagestjohns.ca, stakeholder meetings and virtual public workshops.



ENGAGESTJOHNS.CA

The City's online engagement website provides opportunities for residents to provide feedback on city projects. This platform was used to share information about this project and offer opportunities for residents to share their perspectives, ideas and concerns about Kelly's Brook Shared-Use Path.



CITY'S ADVISORY COMMITTEES

The City relies on its Advisory Committees, Working Groups and Experts Panels to provide guidance on projects affecting the City and its residents. All committees were asked to provide feedback and individual meetings were held with five of these groups.



STAKEHOLDERS GROUPS

Identified stakeholder groups were invited to provide feedback and express their ideas and concerns at four online sessions. Stakeholders were also invited to participate in the virtual public workshops.



VIRTUAL PUBLIC WORKSHOPS

Residents and other stakeholders were invited to participate in one of the virtual public workshops to share their ideas and concerns and provide input to inform design decisions around elements such as lighting, surface materials, path alignment, trailhead and rest areas, wayfinding, and other features.

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ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITES

Engagement for Kelly's Brook Shared-use path included the following opportunities and activities between December 2020 and February 2021.

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY	PEOPLE ENGAGED
engagestjohns.ca Project Page	3440 visits in total
Pathway Map	346 visitors, 63 map pins
Project Primer Video	541 views
Pathway Features Idea Board	100 visitors, 62 submissions
Pathway Concerns Board	45 visitors, 27 submissions
Pathway Use Board	35 visitors, 14 submissions
Q&A	121 visitors, 17 questions
Frequently Asked Questions	190 visitors
News	3 visitors
Surface Material Technical Memo	408 visitors, 26 comments
Environment and Sustainability Experts Panel	14 participants
Youth Engagement Strategy Implementation Team	10 partcipants

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY	PEOPLE ENGAGED
Online Survey	822 participants
Grand Concourse Authority	2 participants
Inclusion Advisory Committee's Universal Design Working Group	13 participants
Bike St. John's Advisory Committee	14+ participants
Seniors' Advisory Committee	9 participants
Memorial University Stakeholder Group	16 participants
Current & Potential Trail Users Focus Group	12 participants
Virtual Public Workshop - Session A	40 participants
Virtual Public Workshop - Session B	49 participants
Empire Ave. Pathway Section Residents	18 participants
Letters received	2
Emails received	26
Calls to Access St. John's (311)	3

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ENGAGEMENT PROMOTION

A communications plan to inform and invite residents to participate in the engagement process included the City's social media channels and engagement platform, a technical briefing for the media, flyers to nearby residents, signs along the trail and on Empire Avenue, newsletters, and inclusion in the Winter edition of the City Guide.

PROMOTION ACTIVITY	PEOPLE REACHED
Twitter Posts	7 posts, 2103 engagements
Facebook Posts	7 posts, 29,133 people reached
Instagram Posts	7 posts, 18,681 accounts reached
Media Launch and News Coverage	7 news articles
Public Service Announcement	unknown
Website Feature Story	unknown
3 Engage Newsletters	2,800 per newsletter
Project Signs along trail	50 signs
Direct mail to Empire Ave. residents	30 households
Project Flyers/postcards to nearby residents	8,000 households
Rabbittown Community Centre promotional letter	80 households
Inclusion in the City Guide	48,000 households

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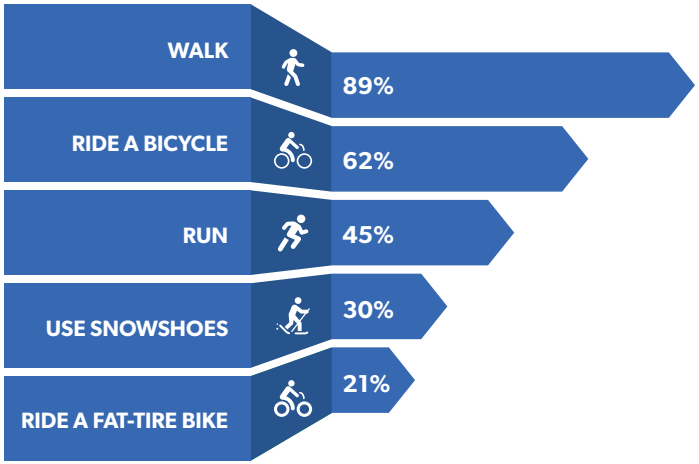
WHAT WE HEARD

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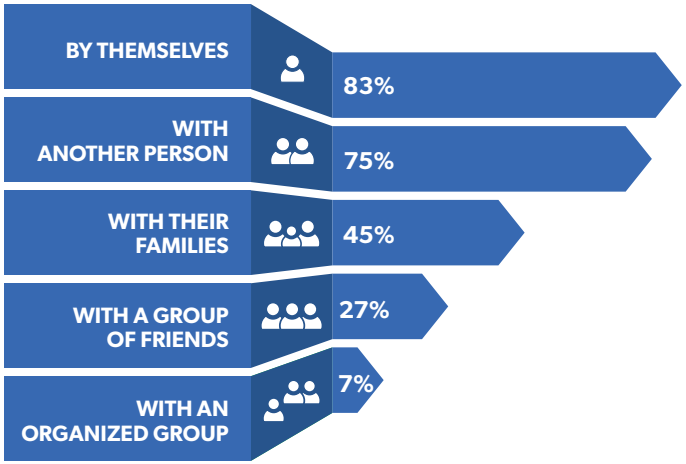
USING THE PATHWAY

During the first phase of engagement, survey participants were asked about how they want to use the pathway, what would make the pathway user-friendly for all, about shared-use path options, trail type and locations.

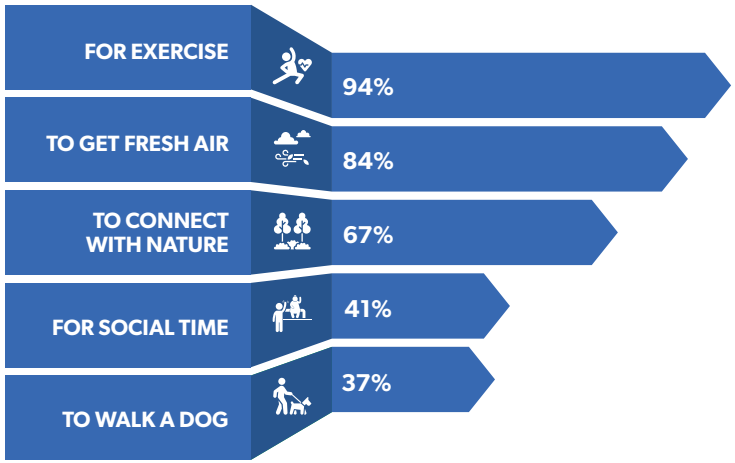
Top 5 ways survey respondents want to use the pathway:



How survey respondents plan to use the path:



Top 5 activities survey respondents want to do on the pathway:



Pathway Alignment:

- Kelly's Brook Park to St. John's Farmers' Market: Survey respondents, stakeholders, and public workshop participants favoured a route travelling along Graves Street rather then Guy Street.
- St. John's Farmers' Market to Wishingwell Park: Survey respondents, stakeholders and public workshop participants favoured a route travelling behind the market rather than along Freshwater Road and Terra Nova Road.

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SHARED-USE PATHWAY

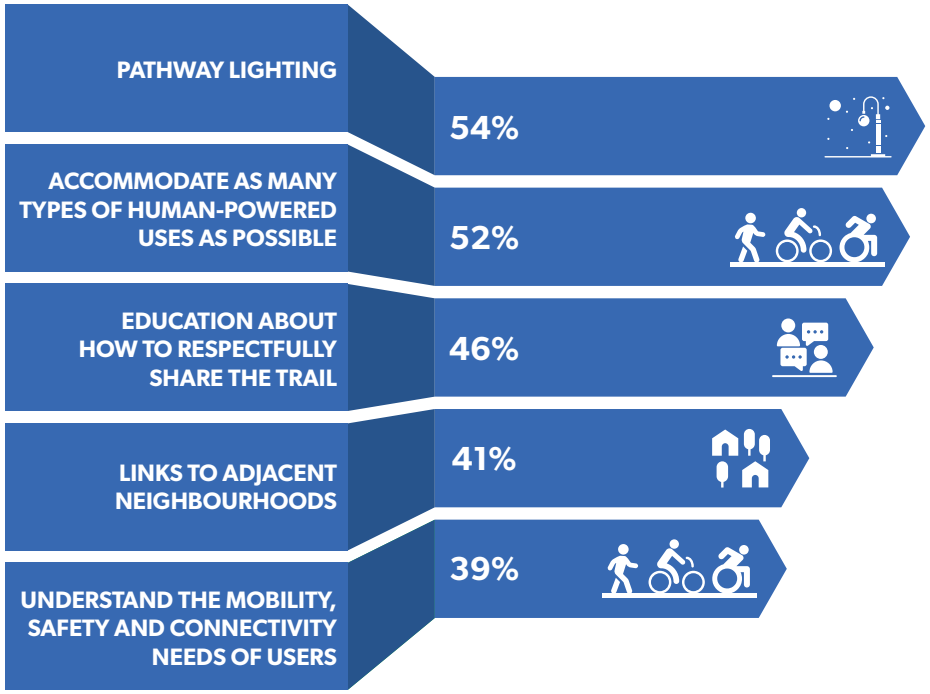
WHAT WE HEARD

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Building on the findings from the survey, the second phase of engagement asked workshop participants for more specific feedback on pathway features such as surface materials, lighting, pathway alignment and amenities.

MAKING THE PATHWAY USER-FRIENDLY 6

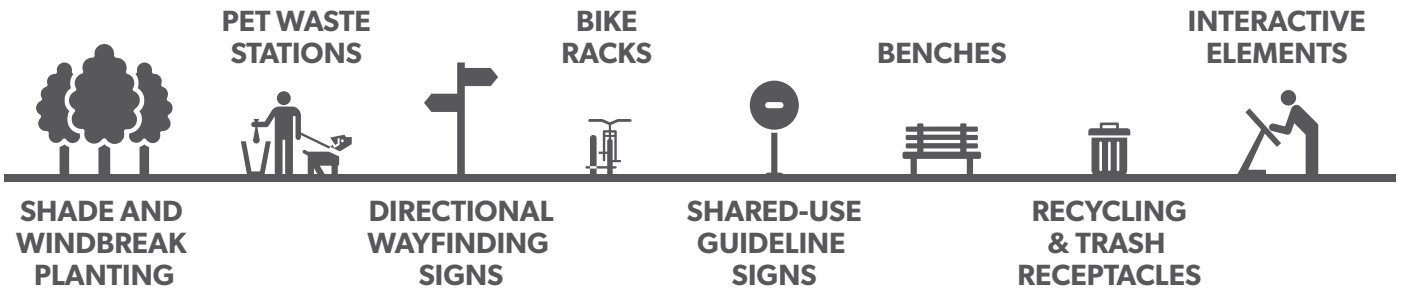
Survey respondents' top 5 ways to make the pathway user-friendly for all:



Pathway Lighting:

- A majority of survey respondents said **lighting was important** to them and that lighting should illuminate just the pathway rather than the pathway and surrounding area.
- Public workshop participants refined the preferred type of lighting as **area lighting**, with some flood lighting where necessary for safety.

Public workshop participants prioritized these amenities:



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TOOLE DESIGN

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SHARED-USE PATHWAY

WHAT WE HEARD

March 2021

MAKING THE PATHWAY USER-FRIENDLY 7

Survey respondents were asked about their **top three items of importance** when considering the usability, environmental aspects, performance and durability, and the cost and maintenance of **pathway surface materials**. Here's what we heard:

Pathway Surface Materials Top Three Considerations By Theme:



USABILITY

- Accommodate as many types of human-powered uses as possible (52%)
- Year Round Use
- Keeping the path free of water

ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECTS

- Minimize impact to vegetation and trees (44%)
- Surface erosion and washout
- Drainage and runoff

PERFORMANCE AND DURABILITY

- Usability - comfort under foot or wheels (48%)
- Durability
- Lifespan

COST AND MAINTENANCE

- Ease of maintenance in all season (41%)
- Cost of routine maintenance
- Amount of routine maintenance required

Key Themes to consider:

- Accessibility
- Traction in all weather
- Year-round use
- Safety when freezing
- Ongoing maintenance
- Comfort under foot or wheels
- Safety at intersections
- Minority of people prefer a granular surface

KELLY'S BROOK

SHARED-USE PATHWAY

WHAT WE HEARD

March 2021

KEY THEMES AND BIG IDEAS

After careful review of all the feedback provided by the City's Advisory Committess, stakeholder groups, participants from engagestjohns.ca and the virtual public workshops, the following themes and ideas emerged:

ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSIVITY

- Design the pathway to be accessible to people of all ages and abilities at all times of the year; provide the most accessible and inclusive surface possible.
- Keep intersections accessible with low slopes and smooth transitions.
- Use tactile materials where surfaces change to improve readability.
- City needs accessible paths and shared paths, but not fast moving vehicles/bicycles on those paths.
- If a user needs assistance with moving across the selected surface, the surface is not accessible.
- Make the pathway wide enough for a companion to walk or roll beside a person using a wheelchair.
- Increased pathway width and education reduce anxiety for those who use or assist someone who uses a mobility aid.
- Ensure pathways have some form of physical separation from the street.
- Granular is a good surface for existing users.
- Provide parking at trail access points, where possible.
- The pathway surface should be consistent.
- A granular surface is not optimal for crutches, wheelchairs, walkers and canes.
- Make this a space where every resident in the city can be active in whatever means they see fit for themselves.
- The pathway can provide a way for people to have space to discover the city in a different way.
- Not everyone has access to a car.
- Pathway provides social opportunities to interact with people.
- Trails are very important to people with disabilities and our oldest citizens.
- Year-round access is important for active transportation to be a reliable option for people.

KELLY'S BROOK

SHARED-USE PATHWAY

KEY THEMES AND BIG IDEAS

WHAT WE HEARD

March 2021

SHARING THE PATHWAY

While we heard many supportive comments about the change of the existing trail to a shared-use path, we also heard many concerns, specifically around the loss of a walking-only trail and safety concerns about sharing the path with people on bicycles.

THE SHARED-USE EXPERIENCE

- This pathway is a precedent-setting model for St. John's that is worth our investment.
- It is important to address safety for all pathway users.
- Concerns around the pathway being used as a means of efficient and fast active transportation instead of a recreational trail.
- Develop and deliver an education campaign about etiquette and guidelines for respectfully sharing the trail.
- Shared-use is not new and works well in many Canadian cities.
- Concerns about losing a walking-only trail experience.
- The pathway should feel like a trail, not a mini-street.
- The pathway is not a place for motorized bikes.
- Don't give up on making streets more user-friendly to multi-modal transportation.
- Need to ensure that trails bordering play and social areas do not impact the use of these areas.
- Speed limits and bells should be mandatory.
- Safety concerns about pedestrains sharing the pathway with people on bicycles.
- Consider a side-by-side asphalt-granular trail as an option.
- Allowing bikers and pedestrians to share the same corridor reminds us that we all belong together.
- Bikers, wheelchairs and strollers simultaneously use the Waterford Valley/ CVS trail without incident.
- Good sightlines support safe multi-modal use.
- Concerns about the speed of bikes, skateboarders, etc. around pedestrians
- The safety of all users is imperative.
- Concerns about losing the feeling of being in nature with more traffic, wider trail and more noise (bells, bikes, skateboards etc.).

KELLY'S BROOK

SHARED-USE PATHWAY

WHAT WE HEARD

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KEY THEMES AND BIG IDEAS

THE LANDSCAPE EXPERIENCE

- Preserve the natural aspects of the existing trail.
- Plant more trees when possible to enhance the pathway experience.
- This a great environment to learn to ride a bike.
- Minimize tree removal.
- Birds, bees, insects and a diverse planting environment are part of the pathway experience.
- Avoid impacts on aquatic and bird environments.
- Planting does more than beautify; it also creates windbreaks and provides shelter from inclement weather and the sun.
- A granular surface provides a more natural feel for the pathway.

THE NEIGHBOURHOOD EXPERIENCE

- Consider traffic calming in adjacent neighbourhoods to support comfort for increased pedestrian traffic.
- This is a great pathway that should extend across the city.
- The pathway should consider adjacent neighbour impacts.

HEALTH BENEFITS

- Natural spaces are good for mental health.
- Pathway encourages exercise and reduces car use.
- Aging society; need to promote healthy aging and more exercise.

KEY THEMES AND BIG IDEAS

LIGHTING

- Lighting is important for the feeling of safety, particularly for women.
- Place strategic lighting at locations where good sightlines are required (trail access, intersections, etc.).
- Avoid impacts on aquatic and bird environments.
- Focus on area lighting to ensure the pathway is visible without impacting surrounding natural or neighbourhood settings.
- Maintenance and lighting support extended daily use in all seasons.
- Explore solar lighting as an option to above or in-ground wiring.
- Ensure lighting is placed without creating obstacles at the sliding hill by the Elks Club.

ROUTING CHALLENGES

- The pathway should support mobility around the market when busy.
- Prioritize pedestrians at the Anderson Avenue/Freshwater Road Intersection.
- Safety is paramount at all intersections; the design must place pathway users in dominant positions when crossing streets.
- Consider limiting right-turn car traffic at red lights for pathway/street intersections.

KEY THEMES AND BIG IDEAS

SUPPORTING AMENITIES

- Access to existing public washrooms will improve family and extended stay experiences.
- Make sure that seating is strategically placed for social and rest purposes.
- Need clear signage for all users with shared-use guidelines and directional information, especially at pathway entries and intersections.
- Create great rest areas along the pathway to sit and enjoy nature.
- Consider access to natural areas for picnic use.
- Try to use the 'less is more' approach when placing signage.
- Signage describes pathway distances in both time and length formats.
- Busy places, such as the market, require more bike parking.
- Consider strategically planted shelter from the weather.
- Need good and accessible bike parking.
- Provide linkages to bus stops.
- Provide lots of garbage cans in easily maintainable locations.
- Explore commemorative benches, lighting, etc.
- Make the pathway family-friendly (play areas, open space, Interpretive elements, learning opportunities).
- The future should include shower facilities for commuters and link to a transit hub.
- Explore bike maintenance stations.

KEY THEMES AND BIG IDEAS

EMPIRE AVENUE PATHWAY SECTION

- Need to manage vehicle speeds driving downhill on Rennies Mill Road when approaching the crosswalk.
- Need to slow vehicle speeds and support pedestrian visibility at crosswalks.
- Driveway 'dips' causes a 'roller coaster effect' along walking surface.
- Pathway snow clearing is a priority.
- This street supports increased pedestrian use that is often buried by snow; pedestrians should not have to walk on the street.
- Snow storage for reduced street width needs to be considered.
- To accommodate the pathway, residents prefer a one-way eastbound vehicle lane with on-street parking (over a two-way lane with parking removal).
- Residents like and prefer the idea of a shared pathway in front of their homes; however, designers should explore both sides of the street for the pathway.
- Current vehicle speeds are perceived to be high; streetscape design should support speed reduction and/or act as traffic calming.
- Kings Bridge intersection is not great for pedestrians and requires careful design thinking.
- Explore speed bumps and raised crosswalks to create a safe street for pedestrian use.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Following public engagement and the analysis of the feedback received, a report with recommendations will be presented to Council and the project team will undertake the detailed design of the pathway.

NEXT STEPS

- Report with Recommendations to Council: Spring 2021
- Detailed Design: Winter - Spring 2021
- Ongoing consultation with the Inclusion Advisory Committee and other stakeholders as needed during detailed design
- Tendering and Contract Award: Spring 2021
- Shared-Use Path Construction: 2021-2022

STAY IN TOUCH

Thank you to everyone who shared their perspectives, ideas, and concerns by participating in the engagement process for Kelly's Brook Shared-Use Path. To learn more and stay up to date on this project's progress, please visit www.engagestjohns.ca.

A NOTE ABOUT PROJECT SCOPE

During this engagement process, we heard concerns about the pathway's previous riverside alignment, other trails in the City, and the Bike St. John's Master Plan. Because these comments are not actionable feedback for the Kelly's Brook Shared-Use Path project, they were not included within the scope of this What We Heard report.