

N. Mulberry Street Design & Layout – Community Engagement Summary

Public Engagement Process

The overall engagement approach for the N. Mulberry Street Design & Layout project was designed to reach all community members as well as visitors through a wide variety of engagement tools. The Public Engagement Strategy included various tools for communication and input collection that allowed the project team to reach out to key stakeholders, the local community and also a wider audience that frequently visits Fruita. The engagement tools included both in-person and virtual strategies allowing the community to provide feedback through various channels. This summary outlines the overall approach to engagement and key feedback received.

Goals for Engagement and Outreach

The overall goals for the Public Engagement Process included:

1. Ensure the engagement process is equitable and inclusive and focuses on strategies to obtain input from everyone in the community as well as visitors.
2. Engagement techniques generate quantifiable information that directly informs the Plan's recommendations.
3. Engagement methods are varied to reach a wide and diverse audience and utilize existing communication channels and networks to “meet people where they are.”
4. Engage at least 50-100 people at the in-person event and over 1,000 through the on-line survey.
5. Allow for a one-on-one conversation with business owners.
6. Provide project information through various channels.



Figure 1. Public Participation by the Numbers

Public Outreach Strategies and Timeline

The engagement for the project included focus group meetings with members from Fruita's Boards and Commissions, local business owners, the Planning Commission and City Council, a survey, and an in person pop-up event. Based on feedback from the focus group meetings, the survey was left open longer than typical to ensure the community had ample time to complete it. Additional questions were added to address key comments from the meetings, including a desire to gather broader input on if the N Mulberry St area should be closed permanently, or re-

opened to vehicular traffic, as well as how the community viewed the potential impacts to parking spaces in the area. The pop-up event was held during the Fat Tire Festival to capitalize on significant activity in the area and saw participants from Fruita and across the Grand Valley.

Date	Location
March 17, 2022	Planning Commission & City Council Meeting
March 17, 2022	Local Business Owners Meeting
March 17, 2022	City of Fruita Boards Meeting
April 15, 2022 - May 15, 2022	On-line Survey
May 6, 2022 – May 7, 2022	Fat Tire Festival

Table 1. Dates and locations of outreach events

Strategies for Communication

The project team used multiple communication strategies to spread the word about the project, and particularly to promote the on-line survey. By using multiple strategies for communication our goal was to reach different groups throughout the community, surrounding areas, and visitors.

The strategies that were implemented included:

- Website - [Page dedicated to the project](#) -
- Website - Displayed on website homepage under "In the Spotlight" for easy navigation
- [Press Release](#)
- News articles
 - [Grand Junction Sentinel](#)
 - [KJCT8](#)
- Weekly Updates - Shared in every weekly update since April 14, 2022
- Social Media (Facebook & Instagram)
- [Bit.ly](#) - Specific link to survey
- Flyers
 - Displayed on every table in N. Mulberry Street
 - Shared with businesses downtown
 - Posted in the Civic Center
 - Posted at the Fruita Community Center
 - Used at Fat Tire Festival
- Chalkboard at N Mulberry Street
- City Manager Engagement Event on April 19
- Parks & Rec Bi-Monthly Newsletter



Figure 2. Project Flyer

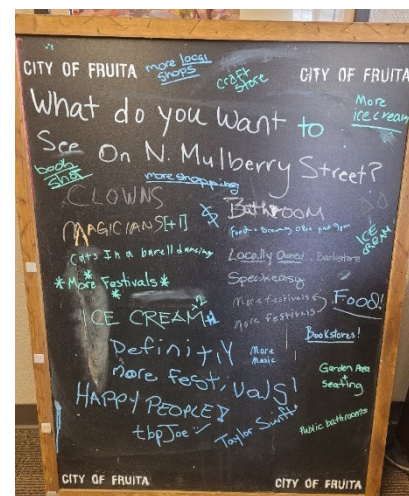


Figure 3. On-site Chalkboard

Stakeholder & Leadership Focus Group Meetings

Three meetings were held in person in early March with various groups and board members. The attendees were presented with the project goals and were able to provide detailed feedback that helped inform the project. The following stakeholders participated:

- City Council and Planning Commission members
- Local Business Owners
- Members of the various Boards from the City of Fruita: Downtown Advisory Board, Arts and Culture Board, Parks and Rec Board, Historic Preservation Board, Livability Committee



Figure 4. March 17 Stakeholder & Leadership Meetings

Some of the key takeaways from the meetings included:

- Updated landscaping in the area was supported by nearly all participants.
- If a permanent closure is put in place, participants expressed interest in updated lighting and shade elements.
- Kids play or interactive elements were commonly raised as an element that should be included if the area is permanently closed.
- Some participants were concerned about the removal of parking spaces with a permanent closure of the street. Other participants were less concerned with the removal of parking spaces.
- Nearly all participants encouraged additional strategies to address parking in the downtown. The ideas raised in the groups were brought forward to the survey to gather broader community feedback about the topic.
- Participants who did not support the permanent closure expressed concerns about the lack of use of the space and the loss of parking spaces.

An exercise asking participants to design the street resulted in a number of different ideas. Examples of the ideas are included in images below.

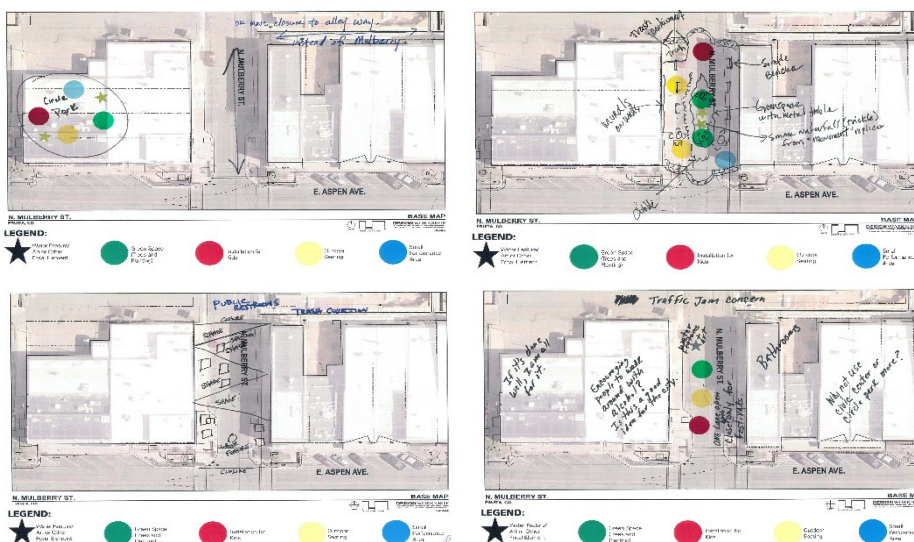


Figure 5. March 17 Stakeholder & Leadership Interactive Exercise

On-Line Survey

An on-line survey was created and posted through the City's website that included 11 questions plus 4 demographic questions. The survey was available in both English and Spanish. The purpose of this survey was to understand the community's preferences as they relate to the temporary closure, potential permanent closure, design elements, and overall opportunities and concerns related to the N. Mulberry Street space. The survey was available for four (4) weeks, from April 15, 2022, to May 15, 2022. Over 1,200 people responded to the survey, with 85% of participants indicating they live in Fruita. Just 15 participants indicated they live outside the Grand Valley.

Key findings from the survey include:

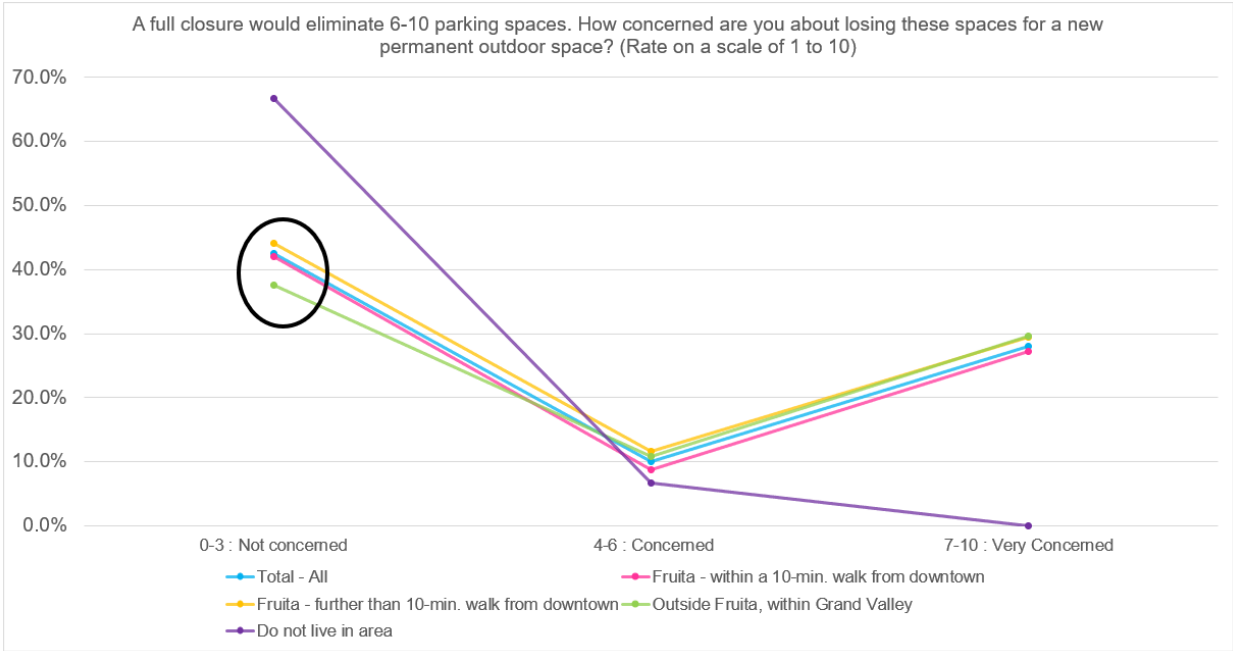
- Majority of participants support a permanent closure
- Majority of participants are concerned about the loss of parking
- Most commonly selected amenities were shade, outdoor dining areas, seating, and lighting
- Most preferred landscaping types were planters and trees
- Most preferred shade elements were trees and sails

Responses to questions about the preference for the space and key amenities are shown below. Complete results, including write-in comments, are available in a separate summary report.

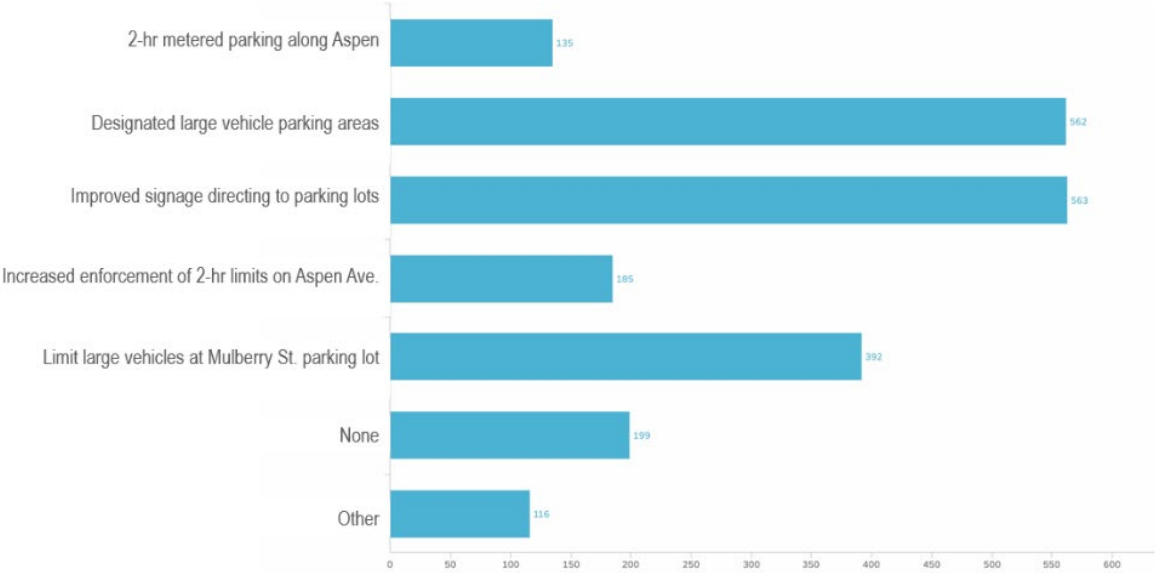
Q1. Did you like the temporary closure of N. Mulberry Street? Rate in a scale of 1 to 10. (1 did not like, 10 liked a lot)



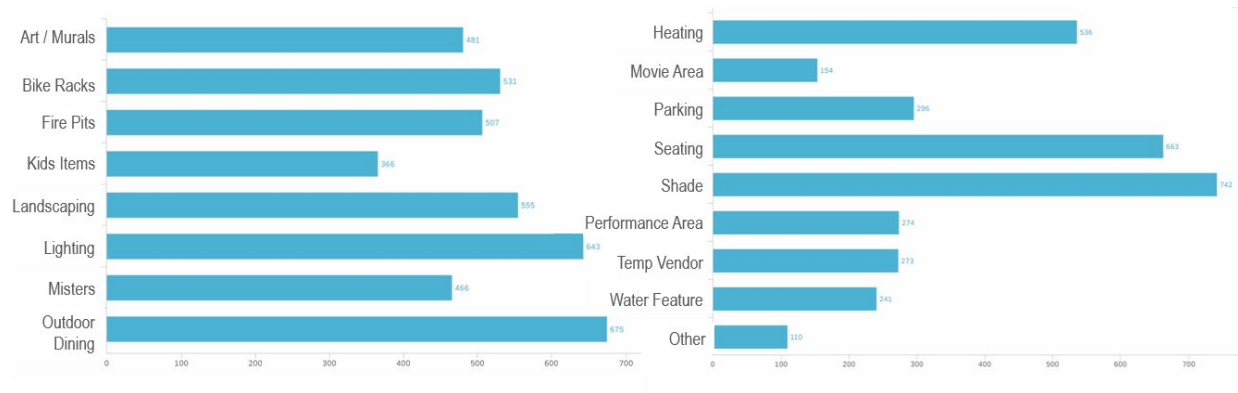
Q5. A full closure would eliminate 6-10 parking spaces. How concerned are you about losing these spaces for a new permanent outdoor space? Rate in a scale of 1 to 10.



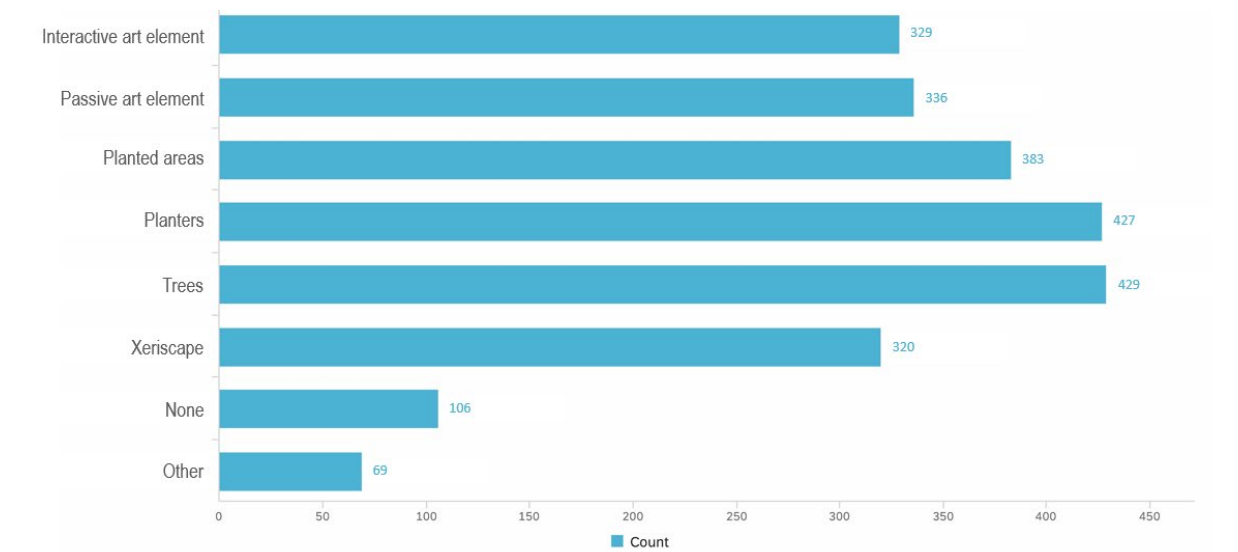
Q6. To address the current parking concerns in the area, which of these parking strategies would you support?



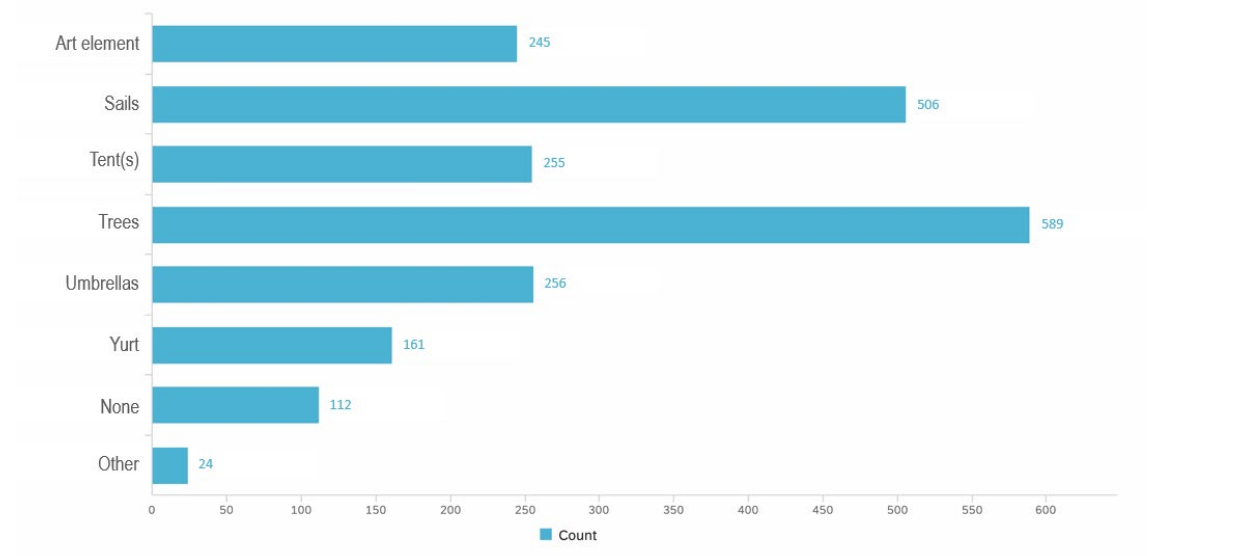
Q7. If N. Mulberry would become a permanent closure, what elements are important to include in the new design?



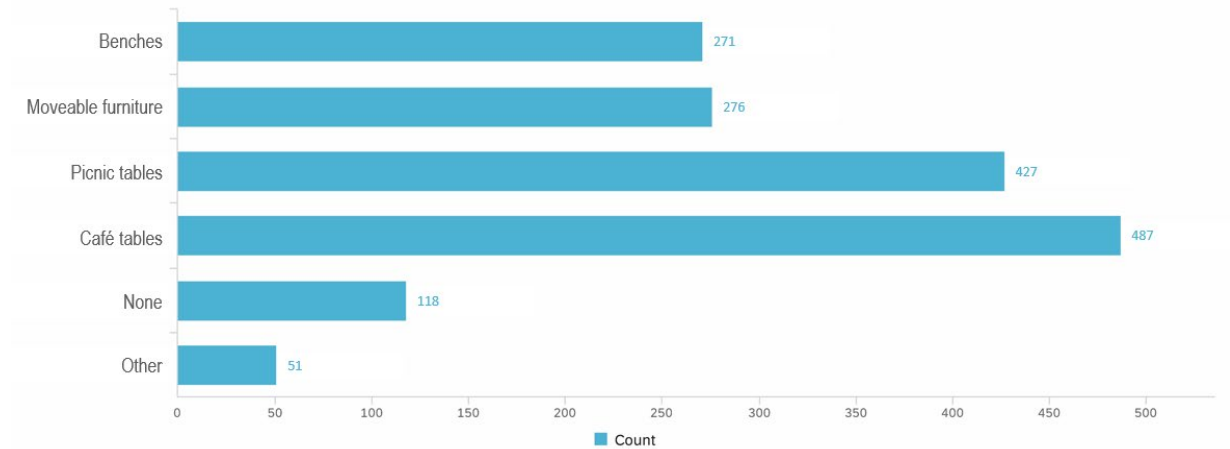
Q8. What type of landscaping elements do you prefer? (visual preference)



Q9. What type of shade elements do you prefer? (visual preference)



Q10. What type of seating/outdoor dining elements do you prefer? (visual preference)



In-Person Outreach at Fat Tire Festival

As a strategy to create awareness about the project, engage residents and gather feedback from the community, a booth was set up during two days of the Fat Tire Festival, from May 6 to May 7, 2022.

Project boards outlined project information and explained key goals. Two interactive exercises allowed participants to provide information about the temporary closure and potential permanent one, as well as desired elements to incorporate into the space if it would be redesigned.

A “design the street” exercise allowed participants to create their ideal space using to-scale elements and placing them over a map of N. Mulberry Street. The elements that were offered to the participants included: drive lanes, parking spaces, green areas, trees, tents, sails, café/ restaurant tables, picnic tables, benches, kids activity area, water feature, art element, and small area for performances.



Figure 6. Youth and families participate at Fat Tire Festival on May 7, 2022

Two activities were also offered to kids and youth: one visual preference board with a variety of programming options for kids in the space, and coloring pages where they could draw what they would like to see in the space.

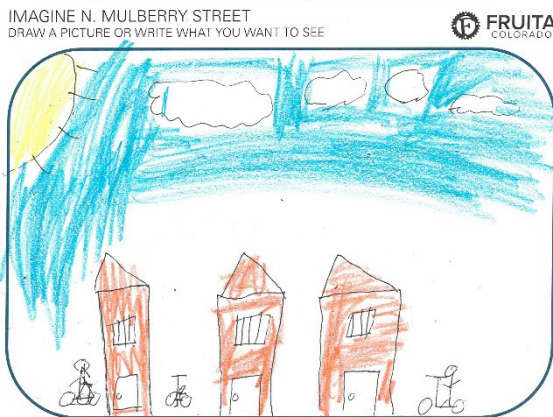
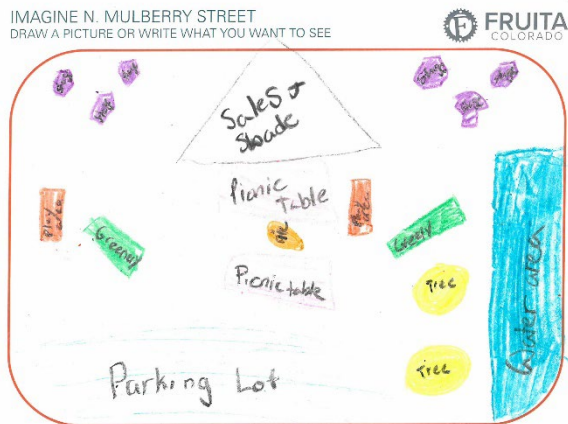


Figure 7. Youth drawings from the Fat Tire Festival on May 7, 2022

Key takeaways from the in-person engagement include:

- In general, the participants had a very positive impression of the N. Mulberry Street temporary closure and were supportive of transforming this into a permanent closure.
- When asked about elements they would like to see in the space, trees, tables, art, a water feature and sails or tents were the highest ranked.
- The visual preference exercise for kids showed that having a water feature, climbing structure and movie nights would be the preferred elements for the space.
- Only a few participants engaged in the “design the street” activity.

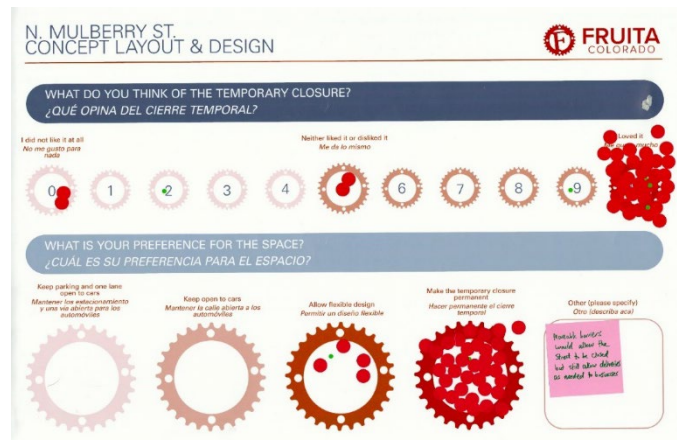


Figure 8. Activity Board at Fat Tire Festival on May 7, 2022

Key Takeaways

Generally, community feedback indicated support for a permanent closure of the N Mulberry St space. A majority of feedback received was from Fruita residents, followed by residents of the Grand Valley generally. Addressing parking in the downtown will be important for the city to explore, regardless of decisions regarding the closure. If a full closure is pursued, feedback indicates it is important the plantings and trees be added, shade elements are included, making the space kid friendly, and encouraging broad use will be important.