

JUNE 2024

F O L K L

Maru Streets for People

Te Awa Kairangi

Hutt City Council

Evaluation Report Summary



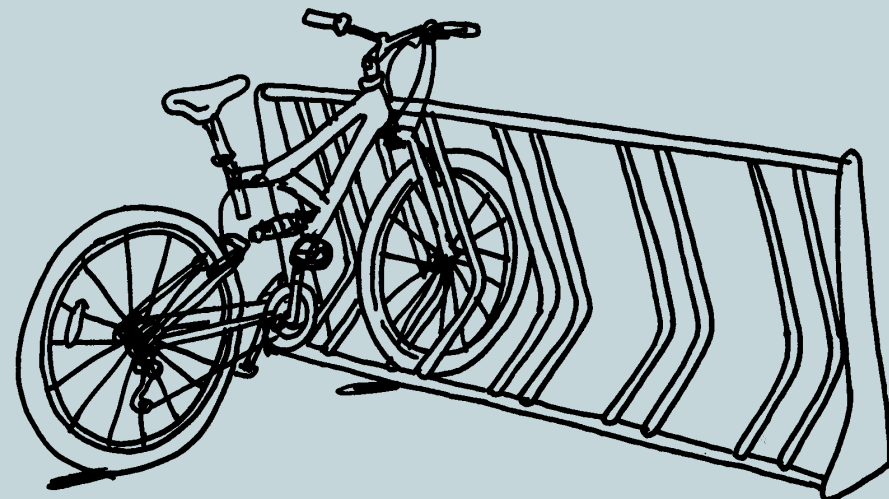
Streets for People

Executive Summary

Students felt safer after the recent changes and speed data showed the majority of speeds in the project area had decreased. Though the community survey showed that feelings of safety had decreased and over half of the respondents found it difficult to travel in the project area after the recent changes.



This report is the post-change report which follows changes to streets in Wainuiomata to make it feel safer, more inviting and accessible for people to walk, skate, scooter and bike through the area. This report follows a pre-change report which was conducted in March 2023. Due to the number of schools in the project area student safety was and improved connection was a key focus area. Analysis of the community survey and student feedback revealed significant differences in experience and feelings of safety for these two groups.



Students feeling safer

Overall students were more positive about the street changes than those who responded in the wider community survey and felt that they were safer travelling to school with the changes in place (68% average across all areas). Students appreciated the new road art, plants and colours but had some concerns about the bollards.



Frustrated drivers

A large majority of participants felt that the changes had made driving in the area more difficult and less safe. This resulted in many wanting amendments to the designs or interventions removed entirely. 51% of survey respondents found it difficult to travel through the area after the changes.



Vehicle tube counts

There has been a decrease in speed and volume of motor vehicles using Totara Street from the pre-change data. Motor vehicle speed and volume at Konini Street are slightly higher than the pre-change data. This could be due to the removal of car parking on one side of the road. Motor vehicle speed and volume at Rata Street mostly decreased, however North/Eastbound mean and 85th percentile speed remained the same.

Project context and objectives

Maru Streets for People

This project aims to make the network between the Wainuiomata town centre, local schools and Te Hīkoi Ararewa (Wainuiomata hill shared path) safer and more accessible for people to use active forms of transport such as walking, cycling or scootering on their daily journeys. This project also links to the recent changes in speed limits outside schools as well as concerns from residents about congestion in the area.

The Maru Streets for People project is within the Hutt City Council's Integrated Transport Strategy.

The following three objectives include a specific school focus:

- 1 Creating a connected and safe travel network that makes it more attractive for people to cycle, walk or use the bus.
- 2 Create people-focussed, livable streets around key hubs and local centres.
- 3 Encouraging people to rethink how and when they travel.

This is the evaluation summary report for the Maru School Connections project. The full version of this report is available on the Maru project page (<https://hutt.city/wainuistreets>). This report follows an initial benchmark report which informed the physical changes to the street's design.

Project Methodology



Survey



School worksheet surveys



Vehicle counts



Research Limitations

Survey data is not representative of the Wainuiomata population and any interpretation of the results should consider this. The comparative analysis utilises a different sample within the same community.

Due to the survey data collection method and restricted tracing ability, FOLKL were unable to assure all fraudulent survey responses were removed from the final data set.

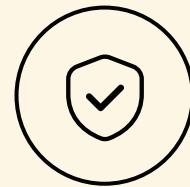


Overall themes

Community safety perceptions

The wider community generally disliked the changes, whereas students felt that the area had become safer.

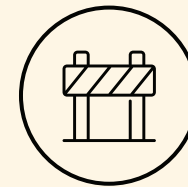
Analysis of the community survey and student feedback revealed significant differences in experience and feelings of safety for these two groups. Students identified issues within the design along with suggestions for improvements, however they were mostly positive about the changes made and overall felt safer because of them. The respondents of the community survey felt the changes had made it more difficult to travel in the area and many called for designs to be changed or interventions to be removed.



Students feeling safer

Overall students were more positive about the street changes than those who responded in the wider community survey and felt that they were safer travelling to school with the changes in place (68% average across all areas).

Similar to community sentiment, bollards were a concern to some students who felt that bollards increased the possibility of car accidents as well as reduced space for motor vehicles. Some students felt that the bollards contributed to improved safety in the area by encouraging drivers to be more cautious on the roads.

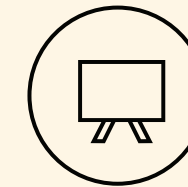


Frustrated drivers

A large majority of participants felt that the changes had made driving in the area more difficult and less safe. This resulted in many wanting amendments to the designs or interventions removed entirely. Many respondents felt that the changes have negatively impacted the experience of drivers.

Survey respondents had concerns about bollards, chicanes and road tightening design features. Many felt that the changes had contributed to increased traffic congestion causing difficulty moving through the area, and poor visibility.

Motor vehicle speeds decreased in Totara Street and Rata Street which may reflect the negative experiences described by respondents of slower moving traffic. However, speed and volume on Konini Street slightly increased.



Road safety education

Perceptions of safety were greatly influenced by the idea that safety is an individual's responsibility. Many respondents felt that the lack of safety in the area was due to student's lack of road safety education.

Many respondents suggested that safety would improve if road safety education was prioritised rather than design features on the road.

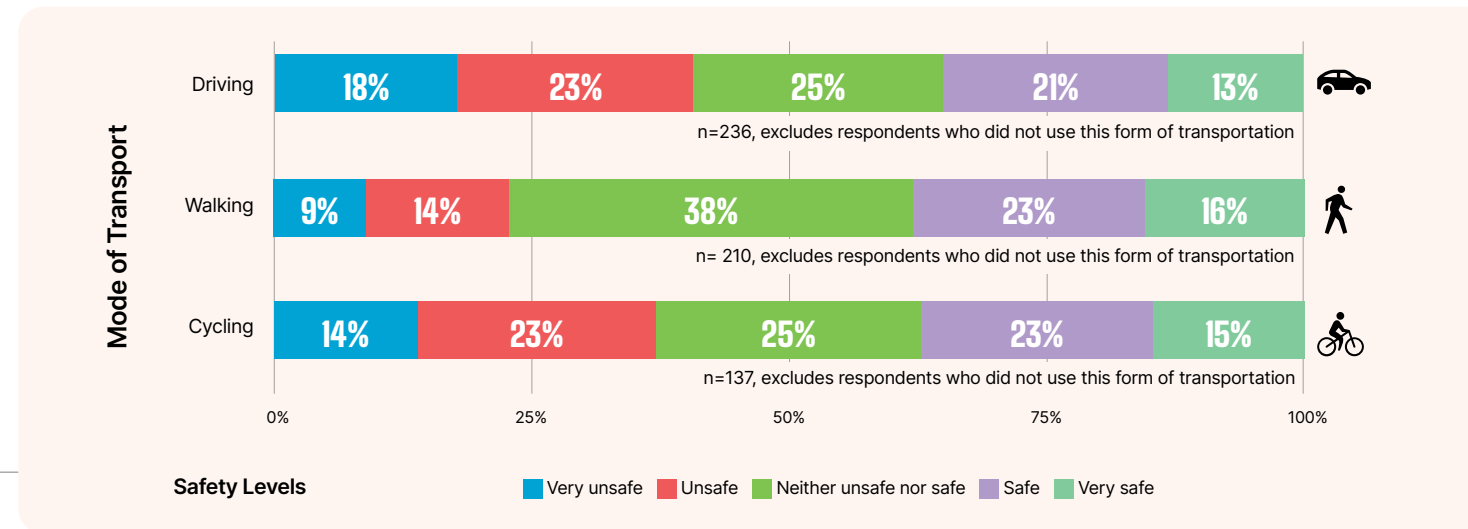
Drivers felt that students crossed the road in unsafe ways and the changes had exacerbated this issue.

If there is a road safety education programme, there seems to be a lack of awareness within the community.

Community Survey Evaluation scores

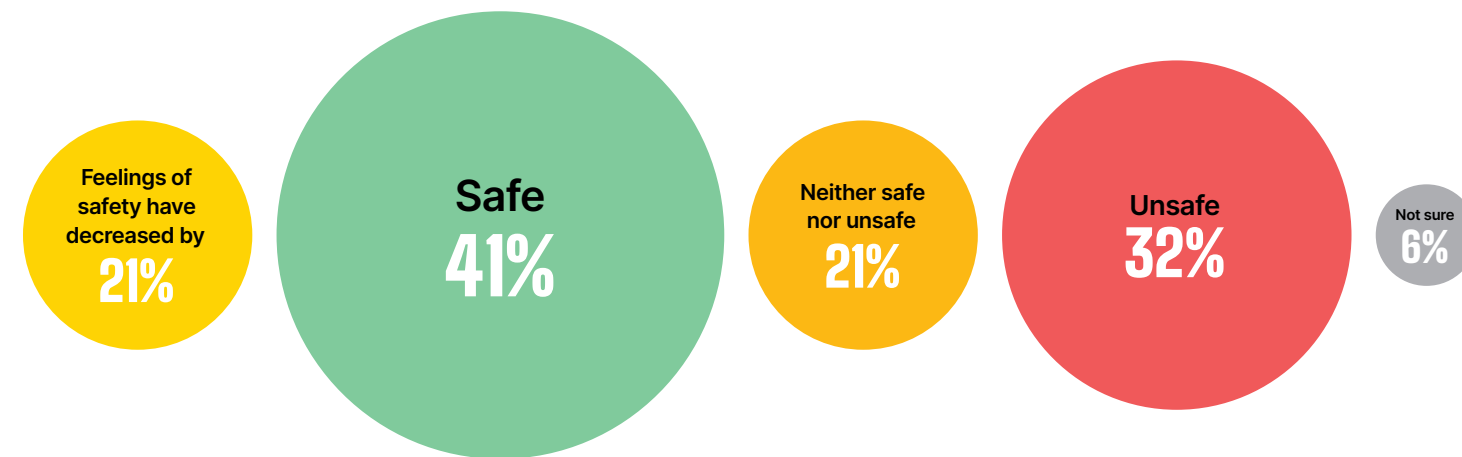
Safety by classification

- Respondents were relatively split on safety by classification which indicated the wider community is unsure about the impact of the interventions.
- In the previous survey, 66% of people felt safe when traveling through the project area. This is lower than the current survey average of 37% across all types of transportation.



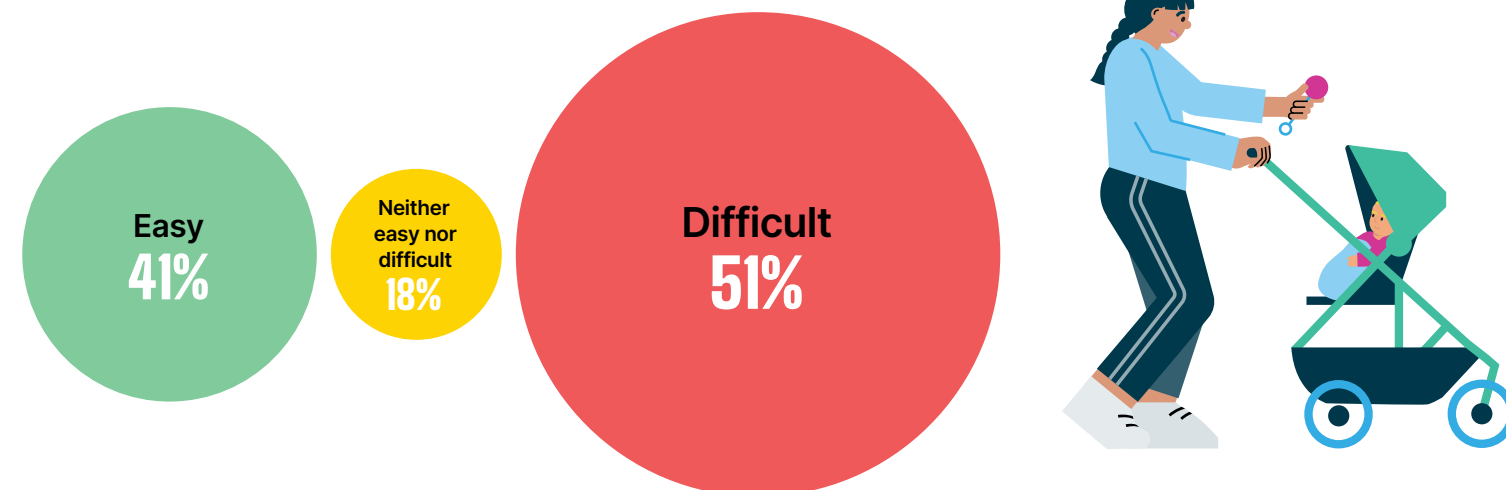
Student safety

- 41% of people felt that students were safe when going to and from school. This is a 21% decrease from the previous survey.
- The new design features were frequently described as causing driver frustration due to increased congestion and visual distractions.
- High vehicle speeds were identified as a key safety concern and many felt the current design features did not support the reduction of vehicle speeds. Tube counts indicated that vehicle speed decreased at Totara and Rata Street, however vehicle speed at Konini street slightly increased.
- Students themselves reported feeling safer travelling to school after the recent changes.



Travelling through the area

- 51% of survey respondents found it difficult to travel through the project area after the changes and 31% find it easy.
- Respondents expressed a general feeling that there was a lack of space for all users as a result of new changes. Changes specifically referenced were bollards, chicanes and intersection tightening.
- The lack of visibility caused by the increase in congestion was safety concern for respondents.
- Difficulty turning and navigating intersections was a concern, in particular for heavy vehicles.



There was no comparative data for this question from the pre-change report.

Community survey

Sound bites

“All this has done has made people’s life harder. What ever happened to teaching your child to cross a road properly?”

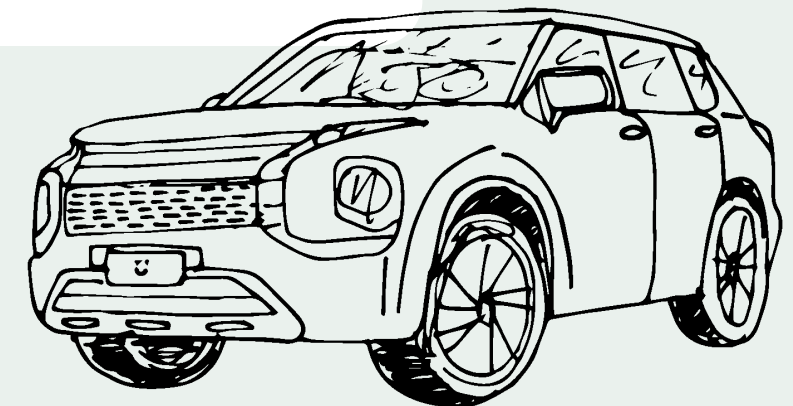
“It has made it safer for walking or cycling but more dangerous for cars using the area.”

“I appreciate some of the changes, especially the reduced parking. But I feel the black bollards are much more of a hazard than a safety improvement.”

“The time of day I travel in the area makes it difficult, but slightly less difficult than before the change.”

“This area is so busy and full of children - they are on bikes, throwing balls, in large groups. The kids tend to play chicken with the cars. Now that the street moves faster, the risk for their safety has increased.”

“Drivers attention taken away from pedestrian because of the obstacles.”



Door-knocking surveys

This data represents the 24 door-knocking survey responses only

Summary

Door-knocking was conducted by Hutt City Council team members at residences in the project area.

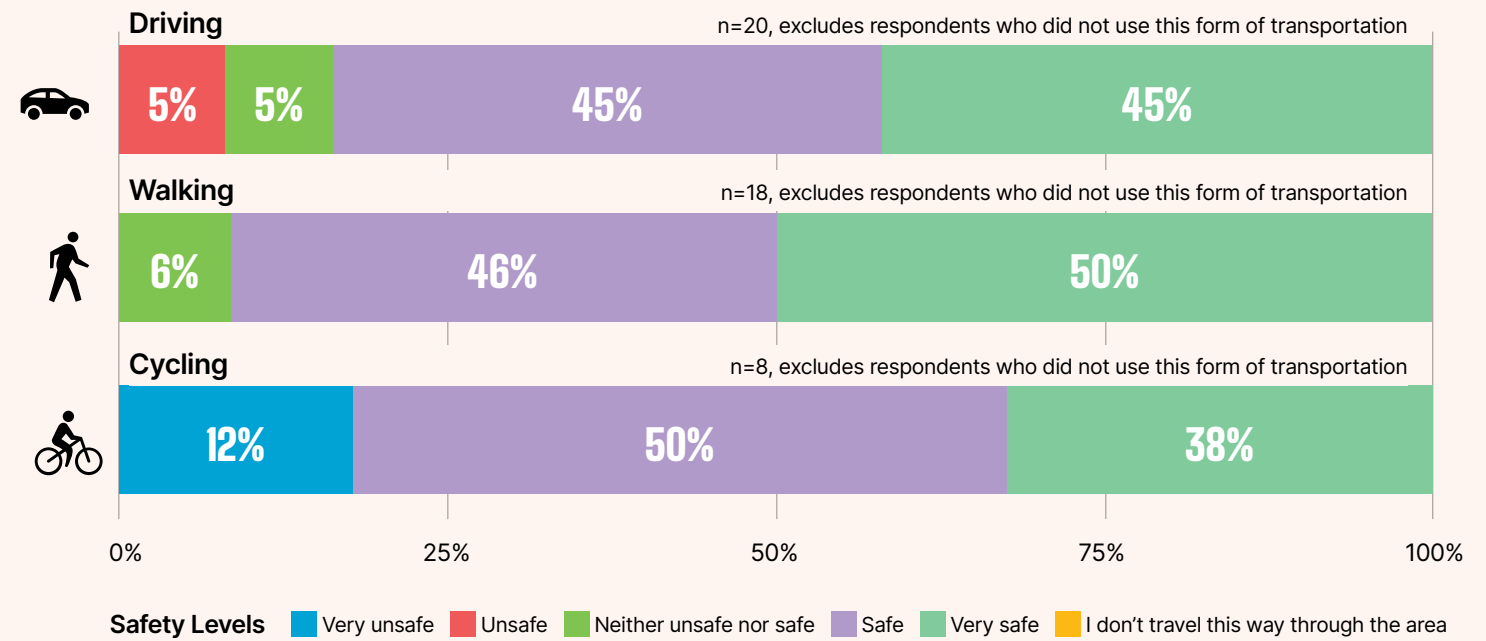
Door-knocking respondents were mostly positive about the changes in the area. In regards to student safety many felt that safety had improved.

Some felt that there was a lack of space in the area which made it difficult to travel through the area. Others felt traffic flow had improved. Some respondents suggested that improved signage would improve the area's usability.

Some suggestions for improvements and further comments were to make changes with more permanent material, this was in regards to the speed bumps and bollards. Some suggested that bollards should be removed.

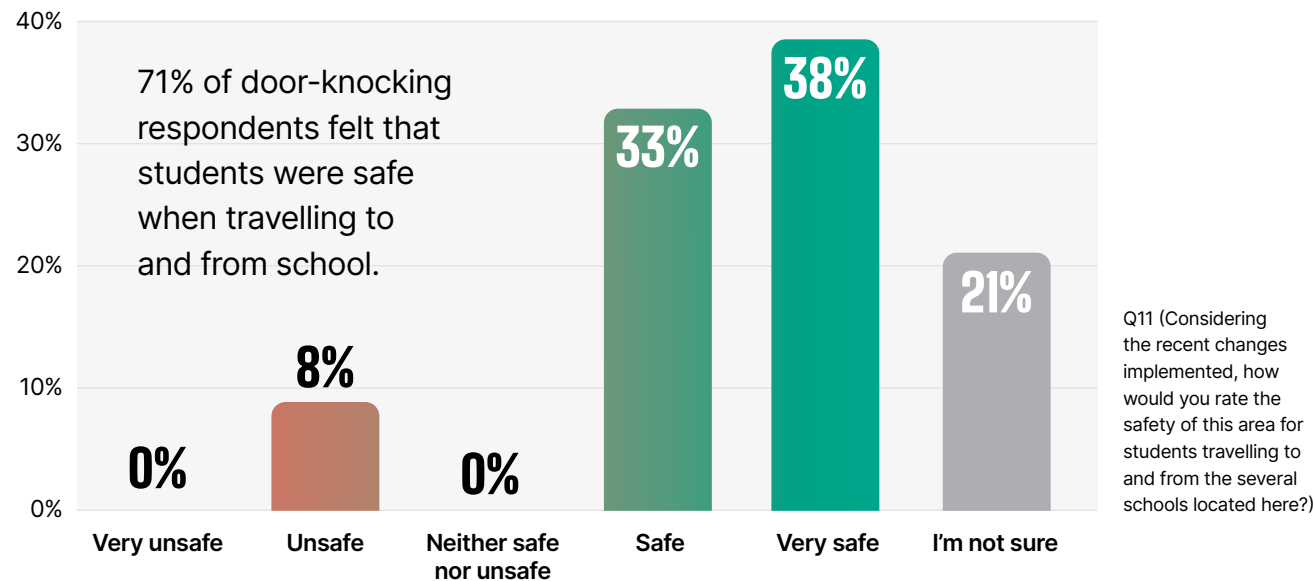
Safety by classification

- 90% of door-knocking respondents who said they drove in the area felt it was safe.
- 94% of door-knocking respondents who said they walked in the area felt it was safe.
- 88% of door-knocking respondents who said they cycled in the area felt it was safe.

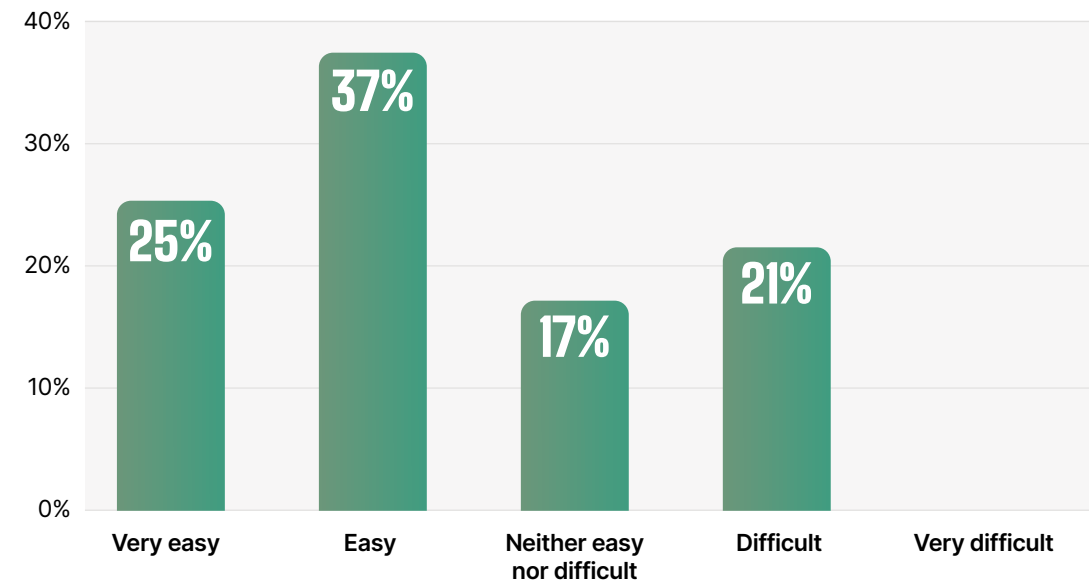


Student safety

I think it's _____ for students travelling to and from school



Travelling through the area



62% of door-knocking respondents felt it was easy to travel in the area.

School Worksheet Analysis

Overview of Findings

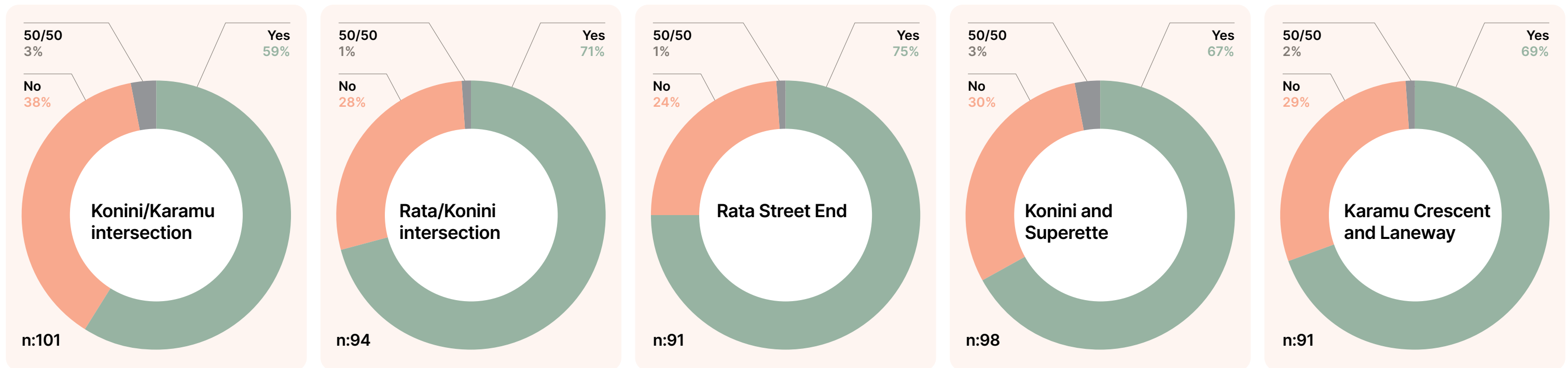
→ Majority of students surveyed felt safer travelling to school with the new changes.

→ Students concerns were formed by the interactions and experiences in the project area. Often when students had safety concerns they referenced the potential for car accidents. Many students suggested removing bollards and this was often because they felt it made bollards harder for motor vehicles to use the road.

→ Students appreciated the visual aspects of the project. Many of the students liked the road art, plants and colours. They also liked the areas of the project which had focussed on making areas for people to spend time in such as the Rata Street end, the seating in this area was well liked by many students.

→ Much of the specific design feedback were suggestions related to improving safety in the area. This indicates that students pay attention to their surroundings and it impacts their experiences.

Do you feel safer travelling to school with the new changes? (Y/N)



Not all of the students that completed the worksheet answered this question.

School worksheet

Sound bites

“Likes the cones because it makes it safer but would put less of them.”

“Likes how it’s safer for cars and young people, blue areas much safer for us.”

“Likes that there are no cars bumping into each other.”

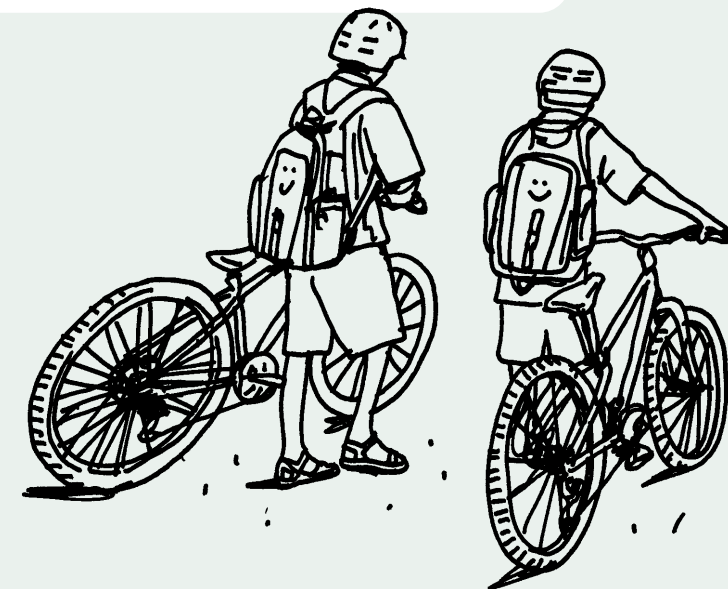
“Like seeing less cars and it’s a safe area, would make the protection stronger and add a lane to it.”

“Don’t like how the poles get in the way and there might be more crashes.”

“Likes poles because it makes cars double check if kids are crossing but change them to a different material.”

“Plants in the way when biking through here.”

“Thinks it’s beautiful, loves the colours and pattern, whoever designed it is an amazing designer, it’s a relaxing place to sit, talk, sing and easily go to school.”



Quantitative

Motor vehicle volumes and speeds

Totara Street



Motor vehicle speed and volume at Totara Street is lower in comparison to the pre-change data.

Konini Street

Motor vehicle speed and volume at Konini Street is slightly higher than the pre-change data.

Rata Street

Motor vehicle speed and volume at Rata Street mostly decreased, however North/Eastbound mean and 85th percentile speed remained the same.

	2023 Volume (Daily average)	2024 Volume (Daily average)	 2023 Mean speed	 2024 Mean speed
Totara Street	529	463	43 km/h	24 km/h
Konini Street	952	942	31 km/h	33 km/h
Rata Street	1,232	1,156	32 km/h	32 km/h



Volume by direction has been combined together and mean speed has been averaged over the two directions. Numbers have also been rounded to the nearest whole number. See full report for more detail.