

Summer Streets Report 2018

Summers Streets began as a pilot project in 2015 as an off-shoot of the Open Streets events. In the first year, it was suggested that E. Weaver be closed from 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. on the 3rd Sunday of the months of June, July, and August. This closing coincided with the Sunday morning brunch jazz event that Weaver Street Market has on the lawn. There was no programming planned for the street with the concept that people would naturally use the road if it were open.

In 2016, the pilot project continued and staff provided some limited activities mostly for children including chalk, water balloons and sprinklers. We also provided a few tents to add some shade opportunities to the street. Also in 2016, El Centro Hispano took over the August Summer Street event and relocated the annual Latino Festival from Town Commons to W. Weaver Street. The Latino Festival provides a full day of programming and activities all coordinated by El Centro and has been well attended by the community.

In 2017, staff worked with other non-profit agencies to provide some additional programming in the street. However, due to summer heat and lack of shade in the street the event continues to only attract a small number of people, estimated to be less than 100 people. In general, the people that are using the street are “spill-over” from the jazz brunch activities on Weaver Street Lawn.

In terms of staffing, the closure requires four (4) Public Works staff for a period of 7 to 8 hours to close the street, plus 1 additional staff person to manage any programming or activities that are occurring in the street. Equipment includes two trucks that sit idling for approximately 5 hours during the closure. The estimated cost for each closure is approximately \$1500.00 in staff and equipment time.

Feedback from the business community has generally not been positive for this closure and has asked the Town to discontinue the practice. In addition, at a recent meeting, the TAB suggested eliminating the Summer Streets program or making it an evening event. In its place, they suggested holding a second Open Streets event in the fall.

Staff recommends that the Board discontinue the Summer Streets program for June and July, but allow El Centro to continue to coordinate the August event for the Latino Festival.