

Agenda Item: 1.d

Meeting Date: September 17, 2026

MEMORANDUM

To: City Commission

Through:

From: Kathy Gademer

Date: 2026-08-18

Subject: World Car Free Day, September 19, 2026

Presenter(s): Kathy Gademer, Project Manager, Community Development Department

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends reading of the World Car Free Day Proclamation.

Strategic Themes: Multi-modal Transit, Good Governance

Boards & Committees: None

Budget Impact: None

Past Action: None

Next Action: Share proclamation and announce City of Dunedin Celebrates World Car Free Day Event

Attachments: [2026 World Car Free Day Proclamation.pdf](#)

Background: World Car Free Day 2026 is a global event that encourages people to give up their cars for a day and discover alternative ways of getting around. The goal is to show how cities and communities can be healthier, safer, and more enjoyable when there are fewer cars on the road. From walking and biking to public transportation, this day reminds us how our daily choices impact air quality, traffic, and the environment. World Car Free Day invites everyone to rethink how they travel and to imagine cities with cleaner air, less noise, and more space for people, not just automobiles.

The idea for World Car Free Day initially began in the 1970s as an energy crisis movement that sought to raise awareness about air pollution and climate change, and educate people on sustainability in the transportation industry. Over time, these

initiatives gained momentum, leading to the formal establishment of World Car Free Day in the 1990s - 2000s as part of a growing movement to reduce car dependence. Many cities in Europe were among the first to close streets to cars for a day and open them up to pedestrians and cyclists instead.

Over the years, World Car Free Day has spread worldwide, with hundreds of cities taking part each year. Some cities hold festivals, community bike rides, or car-free street parties, while others close major roads to cars altogether.

World Car Free Day is observed every year on September 22nd. In 2026, it will fall on a Tuesday.

In celebration of World Car Free Day, City staff will participate in a community gathering at Weaver Park on September 19, 2026 starting at 2:15pm.

2:15pm: Commissioner Gow will start the day with a short speech.

2:30pm: A short bike ride or walk into Dunedin along the Pinellas Trail.

2:30pm – 5:45pm: Passport Style Crawl event. Participants will be given a map of local businesses along the trail participating. Each local shop will have a Car Free Day theme special.