

Infill Roadmap: Action 2 Infrastructure Capacity Review

Stakeholder Open House

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In 2018, the City of Edmonton established the *Infill Roadmap* to support the expansion and enhancement of infill development within Edmonton. The plan sought to determine how the City of Edmonton could welcome more people and new homes into established areas. As part of the work, 25 Actions were identified to answer this question and support future infill development. In December 2020, City Council approved Edmonton's new *City Plan*, which charted the course to a future population horizon of two million people. The *City Plan* further outlines the development goals and outcomes and it also established how to achieve the infill targets envisioned.

Since approval of the *Infill Roadmap* and the *City Plan*, additional work has been completed to better understand the investment requirements to support Edmonton's forthcoming growth. One of the initiatives is the *Infill Roadmap: Action 2 Review Infrastructure Capacity* (aka, Infrastructure Capacity Review). This project aligns the *City Plan* policies and outcomes with the potential for redevelopment as outlined in the *Infill Roadmap*. The goal of the project is to assess the ability of selected nodes and corridors within older neighbourhoods to accommodate the City's future growth for additional people and new homes. Where existing infrastructure capacity is insufficient, the review will also identify the type and scale of infrastructure and high-level cost estimates needed to support the infill development anticipated by *The City Plan*. The review of infrastructure investments is broken down into transportation infrastructure and utility infrastructure.

The following notes reflect the feedback from stakeholders at the [virtual open house information session](#) held on **December 15, 2021** from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm.

ATTENDEES / FACILITATORS

City of Edmonton

Ania Schoof
Brian McCosh
Charles Gordon
Howaida Hassan
Hafsah Navarro-Henry
Hussein Alibhai
James Robinson
Neal Osaduik
Sean Bohle

Shauna Kuiper

Tom Lumsden

Infrastructure Capacity Consultants

Marcel LeBlanc, Aecom
Tyler Golly, Toole Design
Miranda Hingston, Toole Design

ATTENDEES / PARTICIPANTS

External Representatives / Industry

Alberta Association of Landscape Architects
Alberta Avenue BIA
Alberta Infrastructure
Ask For A Better World
Averton Homes
Avillia Developments
Beverly Business Improvement Area
Bike Edmonton
BOMA Edmonton
Brookfield Properties Development
Canadian Home Builders' Association (CHBA
Edmonton)
Chinatown and Area Business Association
EDGAR Development
Edmonton Business Association
Edmonton Catholic School District (ECSD)
Edmonton Chamber of Commerce
Edmonton Construction Association (EDMCA)
Edmonton Downtown Business Association
Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues
(EFCL)
Edmonton Public School Board (EPSB)
EDS Group
French Quarter Business Revitalization Zone
Hibco Construction
IBI Group
Infill Development in Edmonton Association
(IDEA)

ISL Engineering and Land Services
Kingsway BIA
Le Conseil scolaire Centre-Nord
Melcor
Multicultural Health Brokers Co-operative
NAIOP, the Commercial Real Estate
Development Association
North Edge Business Association Edmonton
Old Strathcona Business Association
Pals Geomatics
Pangman Development
Qualico Communities
Realtors Association of Edmonton
Rohit Group
Select Engineering
Sherrick Management
Sierra Club
Single Tree Builders
SituatE
Stantec
Stony Plain Road Business Association
Strata Developments
Urban Development Institute Edmonton (UDI)
Urban Land Institute
West Edmonton Business Association

REGRETS

Environmental Design Solutions (EDS)
Avillia Developments

FEEDBACK / Q&A

(Comments/Feedback / Responses from City staff in italics)

1. General Comments/Questions/Feedback

- Will a recording of this conversation be made and distributed?
 - *The session is not recorded but the presentation and notes from the session will be sent out to all participants.*
 - *The feedback in this session will be a part of this action for initiatives that are starting and are underway.*
- Comment about old studies being used.
 - *The studies endeavored to reference the most up to date information available.*
- How will this be socialized with the new council and likely the province?
 - *A Council report on all Infill Roadmap Actions is scheduled for April 2022*
 - *This study will be a basis for Growth Management work. The infrastructure upgrades are looking at the needs of a 2 million population threshold, so we will need to consider how to back stop and advance projects.*
- Concern that the new council may not be aware of the challenges facing infill development.
 - *New Council orientation includes these projects and we are going back in April 2022 to report to Council on City Plan Implementation.*
 - *This study is a starting point and a basis to understand change in redeveloping areas and staff will include this information in a communications plan associated with the work.*
 - *We will be reporting back to Council on all Infill Roadmap actions at an Urban Planning Committee meeting February 2022 (since delayed until April 2022)*
- It's encouraging to see the work going forward.
- Is this work being updated every few years? *Is it a one and done document?*
 - *This document serves as a kickoff and a useful reference point as other business areas set out on other projects and help inform what we are trying to achieve in the long run.*
 - *However, the study is a one-time project and will not have its findings updated.*
- This conversation needs to show Council how important this is. Council needs to understand that more money for future-proofing areas for redevelopment is important. The city can do it on their own; but need more partnership with franchise partners.
 - *Work is underway through the Growth Management Framework to identify specific challenges and opportunities for strengthening and building new partnerships with industry and other partners to overcome challenges to infill development.*
- This information should be going to the Urban Planning Committee meeting.
 - *These reports will play a significant role in the growth management work that is being done. They are one more piece of information that we have, but are not going to be presented to Council independent of the broader infill and City Plan implementation reports.*
 - *A report providing an overview of the Growth Management Framework will be going to Urban Planning Committee in June which will speak to the challenges facing redevelopment and how the components of work in the framework could help overcome them.*

- How will our feedback be used for these studies? There are a lot of really important sessions happening right now. Concerned that there won't be time to comment on the summary report. The summary needs more attention than over the holidays
 - *The City is not expecting those on the call to review the study line by line. The question is what messaging is important in relation to the issue? The technical reports have already had two review sessions on previous drafts with infrastructure and utility service providers to ensure accurate information. The summary will refer to the information in the technical reports.*
 - *Much of the feedback from this session will frame the summary report to highlight what is pertinent. Additional feedback sessions will not be scheduled for the summary report as it discusses the information in a tangible way to improve accessibility of the technical studies for a broader audience.*
- Trying to get feedback before holidays isn't realistic. There isn't much time to review everything, and getting access to all the reports has been an issue. When are comments due back on the report or has that already passed?
 - *A working deadline for comments was reset for January 7th 2022 and further extended to allow time for review of the reports.*

2. Redevelopment / Land Use Comment

- Are the studies looking at future demands?
 - *The studies are based on one hypothetical land use scenario that was used in the creation of The City Plan to evaluate outcomes. This report carries that hypothetical forward. This report helps people see what the City Plan is proposing. This report is not where the "rubber meets the road" about who pays for this infrastructure work.*
- Do utility service providers project future demand?
 - *Our understanding is that utility service providers work from existing demand and they will upgrade services as needed.*
 - *They look at current demand and are reactive. The nature of utilities means that they do not see an issue in adding additional capacity as warranted.*
- Stony Plain Road as a business area is a test case and there isn't an apparent equity lens on the developments. Epcor has been a big obstacle for smaller to medium developers. What is the hierarchy of all the different plans and studies? There are some significant infrastructure deficits around some of that capacity. As we look at significantly growing our residential communities, where do the different studies and plans conflict with or enhance some of the policies going forward?
 - *The City Plan is quite new so the city is simultaneously working to connect redevelopment ambitions to some concrete policy steps. A zoning renewal project is underway and the district planning project is also underway which looks at the near term. The Growth Management Framework is looking at how and where we can support growth in a more meaningful way that is strategic and works within our financial constraints. This study compliments the city plan. It helps us to understand the scale of changes that we are anticipating.*

- Concerns about developers' capacity with where equity lenses are being placed for new development. In terms of Stony Plain Road what would be the timeline within these proposals because there are about 17,000 housing units [unverified] in plans immediately post LRT construction. Does the Main Street Overlay have a significant impact on current developments? What is the hierarchy of the plans and projects? Seems that LRT design projects have final say. Concerned that the Mainstreet overlay called for buildings to be situated as close to property lines, now we're seeing the analysis saying that there may be a need for more public realm space. Will this lead to other plans or revisiting current policy reviews. The recommendations do not align with the City's main street guidelines. Are those guidelines being updated?
 - *The City Plan is still quite new but the issues we're dealing with are older. The City Plan puts forward lofty ambitions which are being implemented through initiatives such as the Zoning Bylaw Renewal, including the mainstreet overlay and aims to simplify zones to better work for developers and to allow the City to provide good quality public spaces. District Planning is also underway to see what our intentions should be in the nearer term. Growth Management work looks at how and where we support growth in a more meaningful way beyond just supporting rezoning. This study takes the assumption that the City will develop as envisioned by the City plan, and what that means for infrastructure.*
- In the future Imagine Jasper project may be up for review and may result in a much different cross section
 - *Guidelines and other City planning documents are planned for review through the City Planning Framework to update and bring planning documents in alignment.*
- What is happening with 118th ave through exhibition grounds?
 - *There are various applicable guidelines based on the needs in that area. In this study, we found there is high transit demand. However, 118th Avenue area was not a node that was part of the study.*
- Are there patterns in districts emerging?
 - *District plans give geographic insight for other projects that are working in parallel with district planning. District level planning also focuses on the nodes that include priority growth areas.*
- There are power infrastructure challenges being faced under current regulations and upgrades that cannot happen for infill projects.
 - *This study looked at broad infrastructure needs and cannot answer specific upgrade questions but aims to provide a consolidated general infrastructure information for select nodes and corridors.*

3. Water Infrastructure

- For the cast iron water main upgrade, is EPCOR planning to replace like for like or upgrading the pipes?
 - *We can't speak to specifics of EPCOR's programs but we assume that if a need has been already identified then it would be like for like. However, if there are hydrants required then these would be installed.*

- Was there a sensitivity analysis done for 300 l/s fireflow?
 - *Fireflow analysis did not consider other target flows, the current standard of 300 l/sec was used.*
- Concern about upgrade costs of infrastructure. Is EPCOR planning any rebate programs due to developer funding of upgrading cast iron to PVC ?
 - *There is the fire flow cost share program that has been expanded beyond the Pilot.*
- There is a need to conserve water but the City and EPCOR do not recognize water conservation in the design standards. May be creating unrealistic water servicing issues.
 - *Long term monitoring will determine whether water demand decreases due to conservation.*
- Through this study, has information been found about EPCOR giving rebates for developers replacing cast iron with PVC?
 - *No*
- Infill will increase storm water flows, the study should say may increase
 - *This study creates the framework to start those discussions.*
- Pilot program page for the cost share program
 - *Information about the cost share program can be found at <https://www.epcor.com/products-services/water/water-service-new-developments/Pages/infill-cost-share-progam.aspx>*

4. Drainage Infrastructure

- Concern about the statement that infill will increase storm runoff
 - *Runoff will depend on the amount of impervious surfaces associated with increase due to land use intensification.*
- For storm flows, was LID taken into consideration in the public road right of way? Is it located within the road or on private property?
 - *LID is just one of the number of means to reduce outflow, when developers come in to handle the site specific drainage impacts, LID is one of the ways they can manage it.*
 - *LID depends on what the development looks like. We assumed a percentage of LID. [Climate change](#) will create greater fluctuation in storm runoff due to an increase in storm surges which will need to be accommodated through methods such as LID.*
- What was the ratio of how much was LID versus storm water facilities?
 - *The ratio may be 70%:30%. There is a series of storm water ponds proposed across the city.*
- The LID split was 75% storage, 25% LID but it should be more like 50:50. These are only assumptions and the real challenge of LID is long term maintenance. LID long term maintenance is an issue and when the City takes over maintenance. It is prohibitive to give that infrastructure to the city.
 - *The future split between LID and other storage methods is not as likely to come close to a 50/50 cost split as LID is a more expensive option than traditional drainage methods.*
- Was there a ratio or data analysis done on how much runoff would be taken on by LID and other means because infill sites are constrained and there would be trade offs that we would need to

make such as increased building heights and/or density to allow for LID or other stormwater management.

- *Many of the recommended cross sections include potential accommodations for LID*
- *There remains uncertainty, one of the issues is climate change which has been addressed as best we can with the information we have.*
- *It is understood that LID needs to be cost effective and may be suitable with certain types of redevelopment.*

5. Power Infrastructure

- Was the energy transition strategy factored into this review?
 - *[Edmonton's Community Energy Transition and Action Plan](#) was not a major consideration for this study. While charging stations for electric car charging stations were included in the analysis, the franchised utilities did not bring up the strategy which would factor in with future power capacity assessments.*
 - *The long range time frame of this study naturally includes technological changes such as autonomous vehicles that were included in the study.*
 - *The Mobility study included potential accommodation for future charging stations within the Road ROW.*
- Power capacity issues are already beginning. Some secondary suite redevelopment projects are finding they are not able to upgrade power. Maybe there needs to be changes in other levels of government.
- EPCOR power should share more information and strengthen the partnership and further advocacy to meet changing power demand.

6. Shallow / Franchise Utilities

- Franchise utilities prioritize future expansion less than their focus on patterns and technologies that are well understood.
- Franchise utility demand is based on density.
- Shallow utilities approach future capacity with confidence that they will be able to meet demand.
 - *Franchise utility providers follow a just-in-time service delivery model They are reactive and will meet demand as needed. The nature of utilities approach doesn't foresee any issues with meeting demand due to increased population or changing demand.*
- Changing technologies are an important factor.
 - *Franchise utilities such as Telus and Shaw did not provide much information or any input on changing technologies.*
- Is there a way to get the franchised utilities more engaged on the power side? Franchise utilities could be much more engaged. Just being confident that they will be able to meet demand may not be enough. It would be great to have them more involved.

7. Mobility Comments

- For the exhibition land redevelopment; a big part of that is mobility. The City will be looking to maintain and enhance mobility in that node and make sure there are mobility connections between east and west.
- Mainstreet guidelines do not include bike facilities; Complete Streets also provide more updated guidelines. Bike parking should also be considered with the Exhibition redevelopment plan, on 118 Avenue.
 - *[The Bike Plan](#) includes information on managing and streamlining bike parking which includes updating design standards for on and off-street bike parking and establishing capital funding to support the ongoing procurement and installation of bike parking infrastructure.*
 - *There are a few corridors that have a very high transit demand, including 118 Ave. The study did not include the Exhibition node*

8. Infrastructure Funding

- The messaging to Council should be that every policy decision that they make, should include a good understanding of the cost and implication of plans. Where the money will come from and who will be paying, will have a direct impact on the decisions.
- When asked what participants thought was the most important aspect of this work, a strong response was to focus on partnerships to find a way to finance redevelopment infrastructure upgrades.
 - *How we finance the city is not a deliverable of this project, so the status quo is used as the basis for analysis here. This report focuses more on the scale of change to help understand and highlight next steps.*
- City Council is talking a lot about the Climate strategy which will need a lot of investment.
- There is a lot of work needed to future-proof projects and that will take a strong commitment to do things now that may not result in cost savings and advantages for some time.
- There are partnership issues and an opportunity to improve the how the City and utility partners collaborate to build infrastructure