

Update: Active Transportation Initiative

Initiative Title: Active Transportation

City Council Lead(s): Councillor B. Henderson

Councillor A. Knack

Department Lead(s): Sustainable Development, Peter Ohm

Recommendation - Renew for 2017-2021 Council Term

Objective:

The overall objective of Council's Active Transportation Initiative is to support and enhance current work of the City of Edmonton. Expected outcomes of the Active Transportation Council initiative include:

- Enhanced accessibility, safety, security and convenience, through strategic improvement, expansion, and maintenance of the infrastructure and facilities that support Active Transportation.
- Heightened awareness of the Active Transportation options available to Edmonton's citizens and the benefits of recreation, sustainable communities and active, healthy living.
- Education for users of Edmonton's transportation systems about their rights and responsibilities, including drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians.
- Strategic plans, policies, procedures, bylaws, directives, processes, programs and guidelines to support and encourage Active Transportation.
- Shared responsibility for the provision of infrastructure, facilities, programs, and initiatives to support and encourage Active Transportation, through collaboration, cooperation and partnerships, both internally and externally.

Key Outcomes, Projects or Activities and their Status:

Following is a summary of significant infrastructure building activities:

Downtown Bike Network:

- The Downtown Bike Network is comprised of 7.8 km of separated bike facilities, and provides access to major destinations and bicycle commuter routes outside downtown.
- Construction started on April 5, 2017.
- It is anticipated that the facilities will be open by June or July of 2017.
- A detailed status update is provided on page 8.

83 Avenue:

- An all-ages and abilities bikeway, including slower streets and protected bike lanes.
- 106 Street to 99 Street is expected to be constructed by late October 2017.
- 99 Street to 96 Street was completed in 2016.
- 106 Street to 111 Street is expected to be complete in 2018

102 Avenue

- An all-ages and abilities bikeway, including shared-use path and protected bike lanes.
- 136 Street to Clifton Place Road was completed in 2016.
- Clifton Place to 111 Street is expected to be complete in 2017.

127 Street

- An all-ages and abilities bikeway that is a protected bike lane.
- Stony Plain Road to 111 Avenue will be constructed in conjunction with Westmount Neighbourhood Renewal in 2017.
- 111 Avenue to 118 Avenue will be constructed in conjunction with Inglewood Neighbourhood Renewal.

43 Avenue Shared-Use Path

- An all-ages and abilities bikeway that includes a shared use path and a shared on-street lane connecting Royal Gardens Park, Louis St. Laurent Junior and Senior High School, Confederation Leisure Centre, Harry Ainley High School and Rideau Park.
- It is expected that construction will start in late spring of 2017 and finish in 2017.

Engage 76/106

- The City has been working with the community on designing 76 Avenue and 106 Street since 2014, with the vision of transforming 106 Street and 76 Avenue into walkable, bikeable and livable public spaces that connect people.
- The pedestrian and cycling network will be significantly enhanced as a result of this renewal: protected bike lanes, raised crosswalks, integrated transit stops and new traffic signals are included to enhance active transportation and neighbourhood livability.

- The realization of this plan will commence with neighbourhood renewal in the Queen Alexandra Neighbourhood this year .

Imagine Jasper Avenue

- Jasper Avenue was officially designated a Main Street by the City of Edmonton in 2015.
- Jasper Avenue, from 109 Street to 124 Street, is slated for full reconstruction beginning in 2019. The purpose of the Imagine Jasper Avenue project is to envision an innovative, vibrant and relevant streetscape that will strive to balance the needs of the community, commuters, businesses and visitors.
- To reflect these functions, the Avenue will be designed and reconstructed to a higher standard, better balancing the needs of all users, with pedestrians given priority.
- The preferred concept plan was presented to the public in March of 2017.
- A “Design Demo”, a chance for people to experience the design before it is permanently constructed, is planned for July 15 to October 31, 2017.

Active Transportation Capital Composite Program

- The active modes composite profile is used for design and construction of many active transportation projects.
- 274 curb ramps have been installed since 2015, with another 132 to be installed in 2017. These curb ramps have been installed to fulfill the requests of approximately 100 citizens with accessibility concerns.
- 50 bus stops will have been improved to meet accessibility standards by the end of 2017.
- Wooden stairways at three locations, including a connection to the lower trail in the vicinity of the mechanized river valley access project, have been replaced or significantly repaired.
- 300 m of new shared-use path has been constructed.
- 5.7 km of missing sidewalk across 18 locations will be constructed by the end of 2017.
- 200 bicycle racks have been installed in locations requested by citizens or to support bicycle parking in priority locations.
- A shared-use path on 91 Street, between 23 Avenue and 34 Avenue, is expected to be constructed by the end of 2018.

- A shared-use path connecting the University of Alberta south campus to the existing shared-use paths along Saskatchewan drive and Groat Road is expected to be constructed by the end of 2018.
- 12 additional shared-use path connections are completed or planned to be completed by the end of 2018.

Building Great Neighbourhoods

- During neighbourhood renewal, opportunities are explored to improve the safety and usability for all users. This often includes shortening pedestrian crossing distances, adding missing links of sidewalk or shared-use path, and renewing pedestrian and cycling infrastructure.

Following is a summary of significant initiatives and programming activities required to support active transportation:

Wayfinding and Mapping

- Work continues to replace interim wayfinding signage downtown with permanent high quality signage.
- Several mapping updates are being undertaken, including:
 - A new bike map to support the new bike infrastructure (expected this spring).
 - An update to the Downtown Visitor Map (spring/summer 2017).
 - An update to the LRT Station maps.
 - An update to the Pedway and Pedestal Maps.

Alberta Bicycle Design Guide Development

- The City of Edmonton, Calgary, Alberta Transportation, Red Deer, Canmore, and Rocky View County, are conducting a review of best practices in bicycle facility design, including “elephant's feet”, protected bike lanes, and “Idaho stops”.
- This project will involve a review of the Alberta Traffic Safety Act and recommend changes to legislation and design standards. This will allow for best practices in cycling design to be built and legally operated in Alberta.
- A terms of reference has been developed and the consultant-led review will kick off mid-2017.

Complete Streets Design Standards Update

- The Complete Streets Guidelines are currently being updated. The update will align with national best practice and it will reflect local design experience.
- The updated guideline will include increased guidance on the design of active modes infrastructure.
- Completion of the updated document is anticipated in Q1 2018.
- Regular future updates to the standards will be undertaken to refine content, reflect advancements in best practice and incorporate experience in the Edmonton context.

Updated Bike Strategy

- An updated bike strategy is being planned to start in late 2017. The updated strategy will leverage what has been learned through recent infrastructure planning processes.

Core Area Bike Network

- Expanding on the Downtown Bike Network, feasibility and route selection of an adaptable all-ages and abilities bike network throughout the core is planned to begin this summer.

Bike Education

- Education activities will focus on the new bike facilities, including the Downtown Bike Network. An on-the-street team will be used to help educate audiences on how to use the new bike grid facilities. The street team will also be a resource that will help collect feedback and public questions at key milestones. Key tactics will include door-knocking, public intercepts at key locations, and ongoing visits to businesses and community gathering points.

Walking Tours

- Administration supports and organizes volunteers to lead Jane's Walks. The walks get people to tell stories about their communities, explore their cities, and connect with neighbours. Jane's Walk is a movement of free, citizen-led walking tours, inspired by Jane Jacobs.
- Administration leads and supports Winter Walk Day in Edmonton. Winter Walk Day is a province-wide initiative to get Albertans up and moving

during the winter months, and celebrates our Alberta winter while promoting the year-round health benefits of walking.

Smart Trip

- SmartTrip is a corporate commuter options program that makes it easier for City staff to commute sustainably. The program focuses on advice and assistance, and includes supports such as a trip-logging and ride-matching service and a guaranteed ride home.

Open Streets

- Staff are supporting community groups to outline options for 2018 Open Streets activities.

Accommodation of Active Modes During Construction Activities

- Administration is exploring further accessibility and Universal Design requirements during construction activities along roadways and river valley trails, and is returning to Council with proposed improvements to the regulation, administration and enforcement of processes for traffic disruptions on sidewalks, bike lanes and shared-use paths.

Snow and Ice Control Policy

- In summer 2017, a report outlining potential changes to the Snow and Ice Control policy will be brought to council. The report will outline implications for improved snow clearing on walking paths and cycling routes.

IceWay

- Matt Gibbs' concept for a commuter skating route led to a pilot recreational trail in Victoria Park, initially called Freezeway, and since named IceWay. Last winter, a second IceWay was developed in Rundle Park. Both IceWays have had high levels of use and support from the public.

Ski2LRT

- Ski2LRT is a citizen-led initiative that allows Edmontonians to do part of their commute on skis. Residents in the southwest can cross-country ski to the Century Park LRT Station, and lock their skis and poles in a rack before hopping on the train.

Live Active Strategy

- The Live Active Strategy is about shifting attitudes and behaviours about active living, which includes active transportation and workplace wellness, active recreation and sport in our community, encouraging and supporting people of all ages, abilities and interests to become more physically active. Ultimately, it strives to create an Edmonton where making an active choice is the easy choice.
- The Live Active Strategy was approved by Council in November 2016. A multi-sector advisory committee has been assembled to begin the implementation process, using a collective impact approach on this 10-year plan to make Edmontonians more active.

Edmonton's Winter Design Policy and Winter Design Guidelines

- The guidelines provide a robust winter lens that applies to all development, redevelopment and capital/infrastructure projects in the city. They support active transportation in our winter context, highlighting ways to improve walkability, cycling and other active modes.
- Council approved the policy and accepted the guidelines as information in December 2016.

Evaluation

Active transportation is a significant aspect of the City's goal to "Enhance use of Public Transit and Active Transportation". Active transportation issues continue to garner significant interest from the public. With strategic importance to the corporation and interest from the public, it is recommended that the Council Initiative on Active Transportation be renewed for the 2017-2021 Council term and the goals be reevaluated with the update of Active Transportation strategies.

Downtown Bike Network Update

The Downtown Bike Network is comprised of 7.8 km of separated bike facilities and provides easy access to major destinations within downtown, and to bicycle commuter routes that connect to downtown. The network will be winter-friendly and has self-watering planters, which enhances both the physical separation and the streetscape. The objective is to deliver a high-quality, adaptable bike network downtown, suitable for all ages and abilities in June or July of 2017. This is to include an upgrade of existing traffic signal infrastructure, as well as the evaluation of the project.

The Downtown Bike Network construction began on April 5, 2017. The following provides key points on the progress of the project:

1. The preliminary design of the protected bike lanes has been completed and reviewed by an independent Road Safety Auditor. A report is due back to Administration in May.
2. Construction activities commenced on April 5, 2017, on segments of the bike network where Administration is satisfied the Road Safety Audit will not identify changes.
3. Two specific locations along the recommended bike network have construction and operational conflicts with other planned 2017 capital projects. As a result, the following locations will be re-examined and integrated at a later date:
 - a. 99 Street between Jasper Avenue and 102A Avenue as a result of:
 - Valley Line Stage 1 construction
 - The Stanley Milner Library reconstruction
 - b. 103 Street between 103 and 104 Avenues will be impacted as a result of ongoing construction activities in the Ice District, and will not be available until 2019. As part of the 2017 project, 103 Street will terminate at 103 Avenue to serve existing valuable destinations at this end point. Due to the robustness of the network, this is accommodated by other north/south corridors at 110 Street, 106 Street, 99 Street and 96 Street.
4. The interim, shared-use path on 104 Avenue was suggested in the initial Downtown Bike Network concept as the north boundary of the Downtown Minimum Bike Network. This was initially proposed based on the understanding that the ultimate bike route would be permanently located on 105 Avenue as part of the future reconstruction of that avenue.

5. Current sidewalk operations have been identified at Rogers Place (104 Avenue, between 105 Street and 101 Street) and MacEwan Campus (104 Ave, between 110 Street and 105 Street) as a potential conflict between bike, pedestrian/transit and facility operations.
6. Administration is currently developing connected two-way, protected bike lanes from 116 Street to 101 Street on the north side of 105 Avenue. This would connect the current bike lanes in Queen Mary Park with an adaptable, on-street route until such time that the planned one-way bike lanes are completed as part of the 105 Avenue (Columbia Avenue) streetscape in the future.
7. The implementation period for this change to the network is anticipated for summer 2017. This will not affect opening of the remainder of the bike route south of 104 Avenue, as there are no changes affecting that portion of the bike network.
8. While Administration is not currently conducting public engagement in relation to location and configuration, a communication and education plan is being developed as a component of the project. Communication to businesses and stakeholders began in March. A media launch event was held on May 10. Information signs are currently being used along segments on the bike grid advertising the upcoming construction and directing users to the City website and 311 for more details.
9. The project team has assembled an external group of individuals and businesses to help identify how the network fits and integrates successfully into the community. The group meets monthly to provide feedback on project implementation and issues.
10. The project team is currently meeting one-on-one with directly adjacent stakeholders, as needed, to address local issues and concerns.

Future Steps:

1. The addition of new traffic-signalling infrastructure began in early May and will be completed before the network opens. This includes bike-specific signal fixtures as well as the construction of two new signals at:
 - a. Jasper Avenue and 96 Street
 - b. 104 Avenue and 106 Street
2. An operations and maintenance plan is being developed to determine the equipment and procedures required to provide best service, especially in winter conditions. This will be reflected in an update to the Snow and Ice Policy in June.

3. Bike parking for the Downtown Bike Network to provide optimal end-of-trip bike parking facilities at higher demand locations is being reviewed.
4. Feedback on implementation of the Bike Network is currently being gathered through 311. A more comprehensive monitoring program is being developed to measure:
 - a. Weekday cycle trips downtown
 - b. Proportion of female cyclists riding downtown
 - c. Reported number of cyclist-related injuries
 - d. Perceptions of safety and positive user experiences of feeling safe cycling downtown
 - e. Measurement of the current connectivity of the Downtown Bike Network to other bicycle facilities and key amenities
5. An Engagement and Education plan is currently in process, as indicated in the section *Key outcomes, projects or activities and their status as of April 2017*, under items, 8, 9 and 10.

The next steps in the Engagement and Education plans include:

- a. Broad public surveys to provide opportunities for a broad range of input
 - b. The utilization of a street team, with a primary purpose to help educate audiences on how to use the new bike grid facilities. The street team will also be a resource that will help collect feedback and public questions at key milestones. Key tactics will include door-knocking, public intercepts at key locations, and ongoing visits to businesses and community gathering points.
6. Evaluation of the bike network is planned once the network opens. The evaluation period is expected to be from late June 2017 to October 2018.