



District Planning

Edmonton

# What We Heard Report

November 2022

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## Acknowledgements

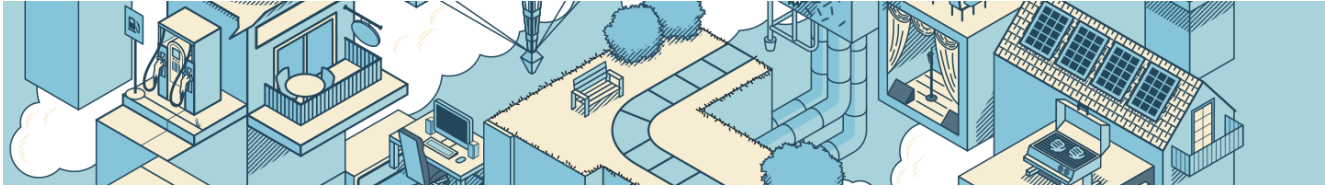
We acknowledge the traditional land on which Edmonton sits, the Territory of the Treaty 6 First Nations and the Métis Nation of Alberta Region 4. We would like to thank the diverse Indigenous Peoples whose ancestors' footsteps have marked this territory for centuries, such as nêhiyaw (Nay-hee-yow), Dene (Deh-neyh), Anishinaabe (Ah-nish-in-ah-bay), Nakota Isga (Na-koh-tah ee-ska), and Niitsitapi (Nit-si-tahp-ee) peoples.

We also acknowledge this as the Métis' homeland and the home of one of the largest communities of Inuit south of the 60th parallel. It is a welcoming place for all peoples who come from around the world to share Edmonton as a home. Together we call upon all of our collective, honoured traditions and spirits to work in building a great city for today and future generations.

Edmonton is a welcoming place for all people who come from around the world to share Edmonton as a home. Together we call upon all of our collective honoured traditions and spirits to work in building a great city for today and future generations.

This acknowledgement is significant to us as planning is about our accountability to the land and the people that call it home. Land is used for many things, and it is tied to the practice of culture. We owe our presence here — the city's vitality and very existence — to the land itself and the cultures that help build this city.

The project team and report authors thank everyone who participated in public engagement activities throughout the summer and fall of 2022. Your contributions are greatly appreciated and we are enthusiastic to share your values and ideas as reflected in these pages.



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### PROJECT OVERVIEW

The district planning project is about providing planning direction for each of The City Plan's 15 districts as the city grows to 1.25 million residents. The District General Policy and district plans will help simplify Edmonton's planning system, integrate the physical systems necessary to support 15-minute communities and lay the foundation for a more equitable approach to planning and design, mobility and growth management.

### ENGAGEMENT APPROACH

Public engagement is an important aspect of this project and essential to refine the district policy and plans. After initial engagement in 2021 and early 2022, the project team conducted comprehensive engagement from June to November 2022. Edmontonians were offered a mix of in-person and digital engagement opportunities to ensure as many voices as possible were heard:

- + Indigenous engagement
- + Engaged Edmonton pages (17)
- + Direct emails to the project team
- + Online surveys (2)
- + Online workshops (13)
- + In-person open houses (14)
- + Pop-up events (12)
- + Usability tests - students (37) and public (12)

A Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA+) process was also followed for this engagement to help better understand the experiences and needs of diverse people and communities who are not often heard from.

The engagement process was supported by extensive communications tactics to enhance public awareness, education, inclusion and participation by people city-wide.

## WHAT WE ARE HEARING

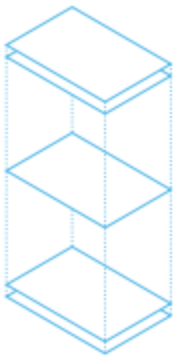
The engagement feedback revealed a series of themes that are summarized in four main categories below.

### General Project

Overall, engagement participants supported the goal of achieving:

- + 15-minute communities,
- + More diverse neighbourhoods and a mix of housing options,
- + Access to parks, open spaces and nature as districts grow and
- + More local businesses.

*A Community Of Communities is about making big city life feel less anonymous and more personal. It's about welcoming new residents and developing housing, recreation, schools and employment in all of our districts that can be better accessed through all forms of transportation.*



Participants noted a desire to understand where future development and change can be expected and potential impacts on communities.

They also indicated out-of-date and completed plans should be retired and, where necessary, local plan policies should be kept. In many instances, participants were seeking detailed guidance and direction to respond to growth within district plans to address:

- + Specific local planning issues
- + Change in land use

### Directing Growth

A number of themes emerged related to directing growth within district plans and revealed a strong desire from Edmontonians to identify where Intensification Areas are located and how they are defined. There was limited support for a streamlined land development application process in Intensification Areas. Seeking public input as part of application decisions was also important to participants.

Participants also expressed the desire for higher density development to have good urban design and respond to local context. Greater policy clarity was suggested in terms of where:

- + Growth will be supported
- + Larger (higher) buildings may be located
- + Greater density can be accommodated

### Document Usability

Functionality and readability emerged as major themes related to the usability of district planning documents. How the District General Policy and district plans are used together was not always clear to participants and became a barrier for those unfamiliar with the plans.

The glossary helped explain technical terms and interpret policies and maps, however, participants noted difficulty reading map features and details due to either size, colour, similarity or amount of detail. Recommended improvements to document usability included:

- + More visuals and footnotes
- + Hyperlinked terms or references within the documents
- + An interactive, customizable online mapping interface
- + Instructional videos

### Heritage and Culture

Participants expressed a strong desire for an expanded view of district heritage and culture. This included:

- + Incorporating missing information related to historical development, achievements and Indigenous uses within district context sections and maps
- + Supporting relationships and processes where Indigenous historical and cultural information is welcomed and can be communicated with Edmontonians
- + Refining policy with consideration to preserve important heritage buildings and sightlines to these features

### HOW FEEDBACK IS BEING USED

Engagement feedback will be used to fix errors and/or omissions, clarify language and terms, improve alignment with The City Plan, make revisions to policy and/or plan content and consider ways to improve the overall usability of both District General Policy and district plans. Input will also inform changes to district maps, such as line work, colour, level of information and clarity of concepts or applications.



## NEXT STEPS

Administration will present these engagement findings, along with a project update, to Urban Planning Committee on January 17, 2023. Outreach and meetings with different stakeholder groups are ongoing and will continue in the new year. Planning is underway to conduct further engagement on the refined District General Policy, district plans and associated plan repeals and amendments in spring 2023, prior to advancing them to City Council Public Hearing for consideration and adoption in Q3 2023.

*Watch this [short video](#) to learn more about District Plans. Other City Building videos are available at [edmonton.ca/citybuilding](https://edmonton.ca/citybuilding).*



## INTRODUCTION

The district planning project is about guiding growth and redevelopment for the 15 districts identified in [The City Plan](#) in order to welcome the next 250,000 people to Edmonton. The project is preparing two main components to help Edmonton reach 1.25 million people:

- + District General Policy - general policies that apply in all districts
- + Fifteen (15) District Plans - show where general policies apply and include specific policies for each of the 15 districts

These new planning documents will help City Administration make decisions about how the city's land is used, how people will be able to move around more efficiently and ensure growth happens in the best places.

### **Background on the District General Policy and District Plans**

The District General Policy and district plans will be used to guide development and growth to achieve The City Plan's Big City Move, Community of Communities. Together, these documents determine what outcomes the City expects from planning and design, mobility and growth management projects and what decisions need to be made on:

- + What can be built and where
- + How we move and grow
- + Where and what type of future planning work is required
- + Where strategic investments should be made

### Engagement Timeline

After the draft District General Policy was released online in early June 2022, public engagement specific to this policy document began on June 21 and continued until July 29, 2022. The release of the fifteen (15) district plans followed in early August. Public engagement continued on both the District General Policy and district plans from August 23 to November 26, 2022. The figure below provides an overview of the engagement and communication tactics used in Phase 1 and 2 of the project. Additional details are provided in subsequent sections of this report.

## District Planning Engagement and Communications Snapshot

Edmontonians and stakeholders have had the opportunity to engage throughout the district planning project in varying influence and commitment levels.

A range of traditional and non-traditional communications materials were created to help educate Edmontonians prior to public engagement, as well as build project and public engagement awareness.

### PHASE 1 (2021):

#### Engagement Activities

- 8 Online information sessions
- 33 Monthly stakeholder meetings

#### Communication Activities

- 1 Video presentation

### PHASE 2 (2022):

#### Refine-Level Engagement Activities

- 17 Engaged Edmonton webpages
- 12 Pop-up events
- 13 Online workshops
- 2 Online surveys
- 14 Open houses
- 35+ Monthly stakeholder meetings

#### Communication Activities

- 1 Making Space podcast series
- 3 City Building videos
- 6 Conversation Starters
- 12 Monthly newsletters
- 2 Paid social media campaigns
- 3 Print advertisements
- 1 Taxation notice insert
- 3 Types of outdoor signage

### PHASE 3 (2023):

#### Advise-Level Engagement Activities

- Spring 2023: Public engagement

#### Communication Activities

- Q1 2023: Promotion of public engagement



## ENGAGEMENT APPROACH

The City of Edmonton's 'Public Engagement Spectrum' defines the role of the public in the public engagement process. For this project, the public was engaged at the 'Refine' level. This means that the City involved the public to provide recommendations to adapt and adjust the draft District General Policy and 15 district plans.

*The City of Edmonton's Public Engagement Promise*

*This is your city.*

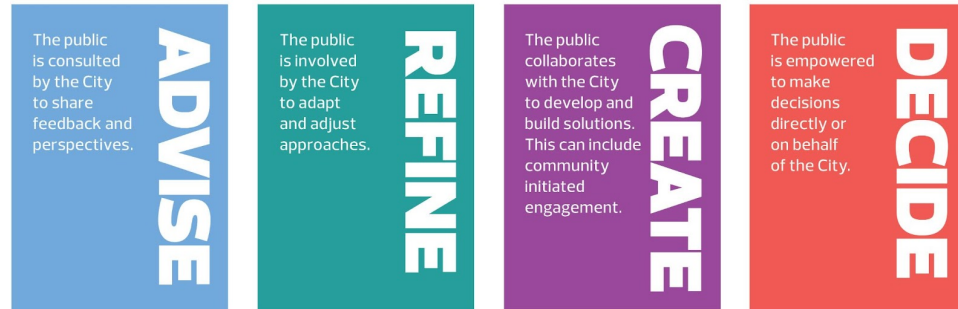
*We value your input on how we maintain, grow and build Edmonton.*

*We believe engagement leads to better decision-making.*

*We are committed to reaching out to our diverse communities in thoughtful and meaningful ways.*

*We want to understand your perspectives and build trusting relationships with you.*

*We will show you how you help influence City decisions.*



The project includes a three-part communication and engagement approach, each offering various opportunities for Edmontonians to learn and share their input. District planning is a complex project. Recognizing this, the engagement approach aims to simplify concepts and activities in an inclusive way to support people who may not have the technical knowledge and understanding of the subject matter. Opportunities to share feedback were participant-focused and efforts were made to meet people where they are at. The figure on the following page illustrates the various opportunities to learn about district planning and engage with the project.

### Part 1: Communication and Awareness (April 2021 - ongoing)

The project team focused on creating awareness about what district planning is, why it's important and how it's integrated with The City Plan.

### Part 2: REFINE Engagement (June – November 2022)

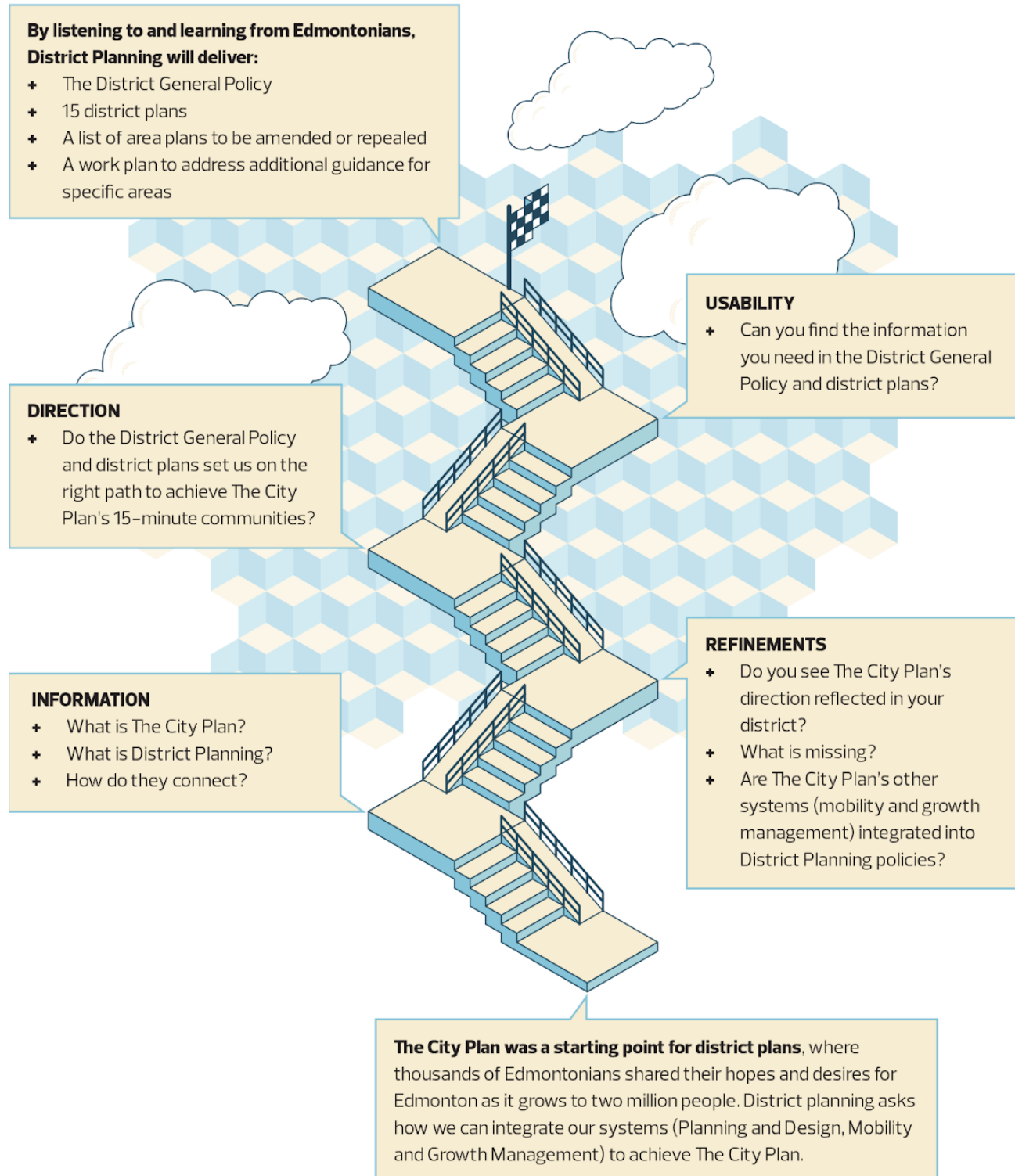
Through various engagement opportunities, Refine-level feedback was sought, starting with the District General Policy and district plans to follow.

### Part 3: ADVISE Engagement (Spring 2023)

The revised drafts of the District General Policy and the district plans will be shared in early 2023 and Edmontonians will be informed on how their input was used from Part 2.

## How We Are Listening

Edmontonians play a vital role in the District Planning journey and continue to contribute every step of the way. Their level of involvement has been closely tied to their time availability. Those with less time learned about how districts connect to The City Plan's long-term vision through low-commitment educational and engagement opportunities (mall pop-ups, watching videos). Those with more time provided deeper feedback to improve draft plans and identify gaps through a localized lens by participating in higher-commitment engagement opportunities (workshops, usability testing).



### Project Integration

District planning is an implementation action of The City Plan and will provide planning policy direction for each of The City Plan's 15 districts as the city grows to 1.25 million residents. The City is undertaking several other projects related to The City Plan's implementation, including the [Zoning Bylaw Renewal Initiative](#), [Mass Transit](#) and the [River Valley Planning Modernization Project](#). The [National Urban Park Initiative](#) was also included to support engagement communications for the initiative. These projects have their own project charters, timelines and deliverables. Where possible, integration efforts and cross-promotion of communications and engagement activities were pursued to:

- + Assist Edmontonians in understanding how the different pieces fit together in implementing The City Plan
- + Support meaningful engagement and learning opportunities
- + Embrace engagement planning efficiencies
- + Reduce engagement fatigue

### Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA+)

A gender-based analysis process was completed to support a communications and engagement design that mitigated barriers for Edmontonians who may have varying interests and abilities, experience inequalities or may be underrepresented in engagement opportunities.

As a result of applying a GBA+ process to the engagement and communications approach, the following groups and identity factors were considered in designing and selecting methods for reaching out:

- |                          |                           |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| + Indigenous Peoples     | + Women                   |
| + BIPOC community        | + Newcomers to            |
| + BIPOC community        | Edmonton                  |
| + LGBTQ2S+ community     | + Lone parents            |
| + Unhoused individuals   | + Low-income individuals  |
| + Renters                | or households             |
| + Religious Groups       | + Small businesses        |
| + Youth, adolescents and | + Persons with limited or |
| seniors                  | no knowledge of or        |
| + Persons with a         | experience in             |
| disability               | Edmonton's planning       |
|                          | system and context        |

The following steps were taken to reduce barriers for the groups identified above:

- + Conducting in-person pop-up events and district open houses in community halls, recreation centres and local events in an attempt to connect with every district and reach people facing technology or income barriers.
- + A direct link to engagement information at the top of the project webpage to easily navigate to the Engaged Edmonton platform and surveys.
- + Offering short, take-home document formats for participants with time constraints so they can conveniently provide and submit feedback on their own time.
- + A children's table at each open house with a colouring station and toys to support families or lone parents who may attend these events.
- + Efforts to maximize outreach to diverse Edmontonians by leveraging relationships and sharing information with community organizations that represent marginalized voices (e.g. information sharing with the Edmonton Local Immigration Partnership Community Collaboration Table).
- + Hosting events in locations accessible by multiple modes of transportation, where possible.
- + Ensuring engagement activities and facilitation employed tactics to ensure all participant voices were heard.



Additional outreach to individuals, groups and organizations who may not have had the opportunity to provide feedback during the Part 2 engagement period is ongoing and will continue through Advise-level engagement in spring 2023.

## WHAT WE DID

Engagement design considered the need to balance in-person and online engagement activities, host sessions at various times and offer low-technology activities and safe spaces to foster open discussions with all participants. The project team used a variety of ways to hear from as many Edmontonians as possible, which included:

- + Indigenous engagement
- + Engaged Edmonton - the City's digital engagement platform
- + Direct emails to the project team
- + Online surveys
- + Online workshops
- + In-person open houses
- + Pop-up events
- + Usability tests



Participation rates across engagement activities varied widely. Some activities solicited more visitors and feedback than others. The project team is continuously learning and improving engagement practices. These lessons informed changes during this phase and will also be applied to the next phase of engagement.

### Indigenous Engagement

To help refine the district plans, the project team engaged with Indigenous Peoples and provided space to share stories, experiences and perspectives. Engagement with Indigenous Peoples included:

#### Indigenous Nations and Communities

Indigenous Nations and communities individually and collectively hold traditional and sacred knowledge about their People's history and connection to the land. Understanding this, the district planning team, alongside the River Valley Planning Modernization and Zoning Bylaw Renewal Initiatives projects, met with Indigenous Nations and communities on October 27 and 28, 2022 for two full-day engagement sessions.

#### Indigenous Community Organizations

Edmonton has the second largest urban Indigenous population of all major cities in Canada. Administration invited 14 Indigenous community organizations (who primarily support urban Indigenous Peoples) to the various engagement opportunities available between September and November 2022.

#### Circulation to Enoch Cree Nation (Stony Plain No. 135)

The project team circulated the draft documents and met with planning staff from Enoch Cree Nation about the district planning project, and in particular, the West Henday District Plan. This fulfilled the Administrative Procedure A1475 *Planning Referrals and Notifications with Regional Partners*. At the time of writing this What We Heard Report, no concerns were raised about the West Henday District Plan. Conversations will continue with Enoch Cree Nation in advance of the next phase of engagement to welcome feedback and foster a positive working relationship.





## Engaged Edmonton

The district planning Engaged Edmonton page served as a hub to collect information via a poll, allow participants to share their ideas regarding the policy direction set out in the draft District General Policy, receive and respond to questions, highlight workshop opportunities and share project documents and resources. This page was open to input from June 21 to July 29, 2022, during which **506** people visited the page. Twenty-seven people interacted with the poll related to demographics. No questions or ideas were received about the project or policies.

*You have insights, make them count by signing up for the **Edmonton Insight Community!***

One main district planning webpage and fifteen (15) district-specific webpages were also available for input from August 22 to October 15, 2022. The main district planning page was primarily used as an information hub and a means to redirect and link readers to the district-specific pages. Over **6,300** people visited these pages.

The 15 district pages leveraged a variety of Engaged Edmonton's tools including:

**Ideas:** Virtual 'Post-it' notes where individuals add ideas to a collective board. Participants may 'like' the ideas that inspire them most.

**Share Your Thoughts:** Upload comments regarding a topic or issue.

**Polls:** Encourage people to give a quick answer on one question, selecting from multiple choice answers.

**Questions:** A managed space for participants to ask questions that can be responded to either publicly or privately.

The 'Ideas' tool was used to seek feedback on community asset features, as well as heritage and culture features. The 'Share Your Thoughts' tool was used to seek input on plan repeals.

## Email Feedback

The district planning email (districtplanning@edmonton.ca) was shared on the project website, social media posts, Engaged Edmonton pages, newsletters, Conversation Starters, presentations, workshops and via 311. A total of 21 emails were received from residents, community league representatives and industry providing feedback on district planning.

### Online Surveys

Two online surveys were shared for public input; the first was specific to the District General Policy and the second included questions about the District General Policy and district plans. Online surveys provided people the opportunity to contribute ideas, share concerns and identify policy issues at a time and location most convenient for them.



The first online survey was open from June 21 to July 29, 2022, and was focused on gathering input on the District General Policy's content clarity, policy concerns and issues, as well as learning about people's awareness of the project and use of educational tools and resources. The survey was advertised on the Engaged Edmonton page via social media, newsletters and the project webpage. However, the response rate was limited (63 responses) and, therefore, responses did not reflect the perspectives of all Edmontonians.

A second online survey was developed to collect input on content, priorities and trade-offs in the District General Policy and 15 district plans. Feedback was gathered from August 22 to October 15, 2022, on Edmontonians' suggestions for policy refinement and comments of concern/support regarding district policies, map features and boundaries. The survey was promoted through the City of Edmonton's Edmonton Insight Community (EIC) and an open link was shared via the district planning website, Engaged Edmonton webpage, emails, digital newsletters, posts on social media (Facebook and Twitter) and open house material. The survey was sent to 2,980 EIC members who expressed their interest in providing feedback via an opt-in question as part of a mixed-topic survey fielded in early September 2022. In total, 1,625

respondents completed the survey and 1,176 respondents began the survey but did not complete it. Of the 1,625 completions, 1,205 were from EIC members and the remaining 420 completions came from respondents accessing the survey via the open link.

### Online Workshops

After the District General Policy was shared with the public, seven (7) online workshops were conducted between June and July 2022 for all Edmontonians. After completing the first six (6) Learn and Share Events, a final Deep Dive on the District General Policy was hosted, primarily for industry and other stakeholders with subject matter expertise or special interest. Overall, **108** people attended these six online workshops.

In fall 2022, district planning and the Zoning Bylaw Renewal Initiative teams co-hosted six (6) integrated online workshops that were open to the public, industry, businesses, community league representatives, non-profit groups, agencies and other groups. There were three unique themes for the workshops where a series of questions were explored with participants. Each theme was delivered twice between October 12 and November 26, 2022, to allow participants an alternate time to participate. Registration capacity was limited to 60 participants for the first three (3) sessions and then increased to 80 participants to account for an average attendance rate of approximately 40%. Overall, **143** people attended these six online workshops.

Online Workshop Schedule (2022)		
Workshop	Date	Time
<b>Learn and Share</b>	Thursday, June 16	7 - 8:30 p.m.
	Wednesday, June 22	7 - 8:30 p.m.
	Thursday, June 23	12:30 - 2 p.m.
	Tuesday, June 28	12:30 - 2 p.m.
	Wednesday, July 6	7 - 8:30 p.m.
	Tuesday, July 12	12:30 - 2 p.m.
<b>Deep Dive on the District General Policy</b>	Wednesday, July 20	12:30 - 2 p.m.

<b>Guiding Neighbourhood Redevelopment</b>	Wednesday, October 12	6 - 8:30 p.m.
	Saturday, November 5	9 - 11:30 a.m.
<b>Enabling Growth in Nodes and Corridors</b>	Saturday, October 15	9 - 11:30 a.m.
	Thursday, November 17	6 - 8:30 p.m.
<b>Fostering 15-Minute Communities</b>	Thursday, October 20	6 - 8:30 p.m.
	Saturday, November 26	9 - 11:30 a.m.



### In-person Open Houses

An open house was scheduled in each of the fifteen (15) districts from September 7 to October 13, 2022. Fourteen (14) of the district open houses were executed, however the Horse Hill district open house (September 8, 2022) was cancelled in accordance with Demise of the Crown protocols (to observe the mourning period following the death of Queen Elizabeth II).

These drop-in events were hosted in community halls and neighbourhood venues that were accessible by multiple modes of transportation, whenever possible. Project staff were onsite to support participants in navigating a series of informational and engagement display boards, maps available to be marked up and to answer any project-related questions. These events did not require technological resources as print materials and take-away engagement packages were available. Overall, over **250** people attended the 14 open houses.

In-Person Open House Schedule (2022)			
District Open House	Date	Time	Location
<b>West Edmonton</b>	Wednesday, September 7	5 - 8 p.m.	Belmead Community League
<b>Southwest</b>	Monday, September 12	5 - 8 p.m.	Ellerslie Rugby Club
<b>Mill Woods &amp; Meadows</b>	Tuesday, September 13	5 - 8 p.m.	Woodvale Community League
<b>Central</b>	Thursday, September 15	5 - 8 p.m.	Queen Mary Park Community League
<b>Jasper Place</b>	Monday, September 19	5 - 8 p.m.	Canora Community League
<b>Whitemud</b>	Wednesday, September 21	6 - 9 p.m.	Yellowbird East Community League
<b>West Henday District</b>	Thursday, September 22	5 - 8 p.m.	Westview Village
<b>Northwest</b>	Tuesday, September 27	5 - 8 p.m.	Caernarvon Community League
<b>Southeast</b>	Wednesday, September 28	5 - 8 p.m.	Bonnie Doon Community League
<b>Rabbit Hill</b>	Monday, October 3	5 - 8 p.m.	St. Mary's Russian Orthodox Church
<b>Northeast</b>	Wednesday, October 5	5 - 8 p.m.	South Clareview Community League
<b>Scona</b>	Thursday, October 6	5 - 8 p.m.	Queen Alexandra Community League
<b>118 Avenue</b>	Tuesday, October 11	5 - 8 p.m.	Eastwood Community League
<b>Ellerslie</b>	Thursday, October 13	5 - 8 p.m.	Orchards Residents Association

### Pop-Up Events

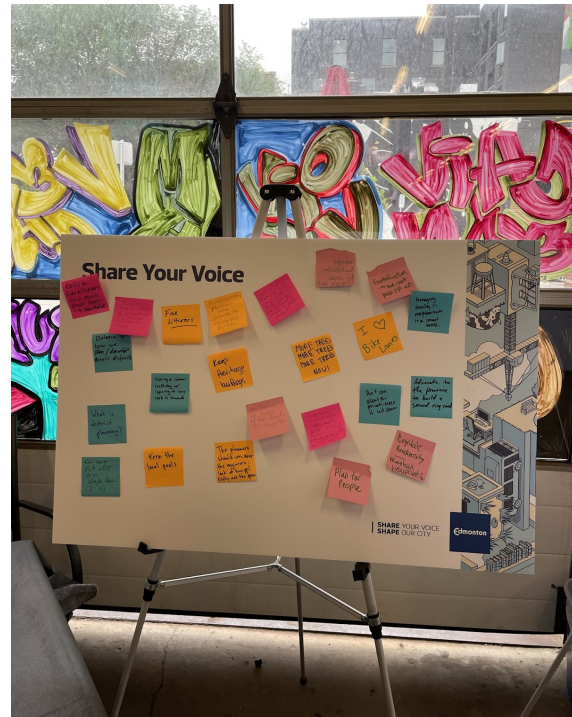
The district planning and Zoning Bylaw Renewal Initiative project teams co-attended local Edmonton events and venues to build awareness for the two projects and promote engagement participation. The purpose was to make project information available to Edmontonians in high-traffic areas who may not otherwise hear about it.

From July to August 2022, the two project teams completed eight (8) pop-up events at recreation centres, markets and the Edmonton Heritage Festival.

Two (2) additional pop-up events were hosted in collaboration with the Zoning Bylaw Renewal Initiative, River Valley Planning Modernization Project, Mass Transit and the National Urban Park Initiative.

These events were designed to reach diverse audiences and align with the GBA+ equity measures to meet people where they are at and to provide quick, low-technology engagement opportunities.

The district planning and Zoning Bylaw Renewal project team attended the Canadian Home Builders' Association (CHBA) Builders' Breakfast and the Urban Development Institute (UDI) Luncheon in September 2022. Industry leaders extended the invitations to the project teams as they saw value in





encouraging participation from their members to attend future engagement opportunities.

Pop-Up Event Schedule (2022)			
Location	Date	Time	Interactions
<b>Old Strathcona Farmers' Market</b>	Saturday, June 18	7:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.	83
<b>Beverly Farmers' Market</b>	Tuesday, June 21	3:30 - 7:30 p.m.	46
<b>South Common Farmers' Market</b>	Saturday, June 25	10 a.m. - 4 p.m.	47
<b>Terwillegar Recreation Centre</b>	Wednesday, June 29	5 - 8 p.m.	12
<b>Kinsmen Sports Centre</b>	Tuesday, July 5	4 - 7 p.m.	67
<b>Jamie Platz YMCA</b>	Wednesday, July 13	8 a.m. - 12 p.m.	24
<b>Edmonton Downtown Farmers' Market</b>	Saturday, July 23	9 a.m. - 3 p.m.	27
<b>Edmonton Heritage Festival</b>	Saturday, July 30	10 a.m. - 5 p.m.	47
<b>Castle Downs YMCA</b>	Wednesday, August 10	4 - 7:30 p.m.	14
<b>West Edmonton Mall</b>	Saturday, September 10	10 a.m. - 9 p.m.	31
<b>Londonderry Mall</b>	Saturday, September 17	11 a.m. - 5 p.m.	15
<b>CHBA Builders' Breakfast</b>	Wednesday, September 28	7 - 9 a.m.	Greeted members as they entered the event with project information.
<b>UDI Luncheon</b>	Thursday, September 29	11.30 a.m. - 1 p.m.	

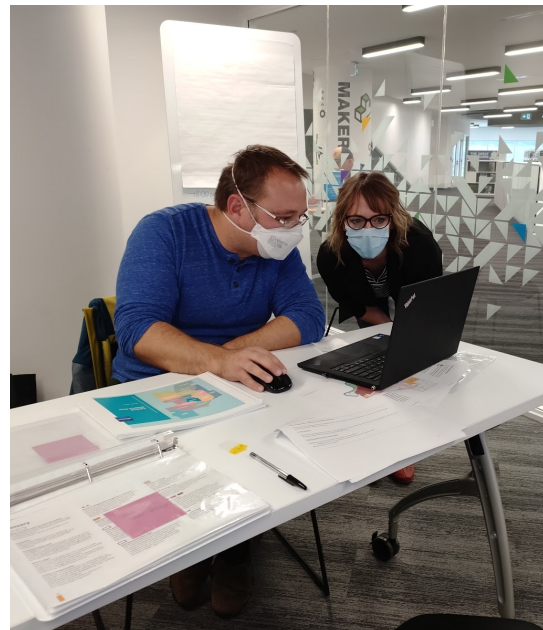
### Usability Testing - University of Alberta Student Assignment

The City engaged with the University of Alberta's undergraduate and graduate students (PLAN 310 - Land Use Planning and Policy / PLAN 510 - Physical Planning and Design Fundamentals) on the draft Zoning Bylaw and district planning projects as part of a course assignment. The students completed pre-reading/listening activities and participated in a presentation and discussion. During the session, the project teams provided an overview of the history and current status of the two projects, shared concerns and interests from recent engagement efforts, identified example topics or questions that the City is looking to gain feedback on and explained how to use the Zoning Bylaw and district plans. Following this, students were asked to complete a course assignment testing the application of the Zoning Bylaw, District General Policy and district plans. Students selected from a set list of mock-up development projects, completed a series of tasks, reflected and then provided feedback on their experience using the draft policies and bylaw. In total, thirty-seven (37) individual student assignments were completed and submitted for consideration (21 by undergraduate students and 16 by graduate students).

### Usability Testing - Research Interviews

Twelve (12) in-person interviews were conducted with members of the public from October 18 to 21, 2022. Participants had identified an interest in participating in an interview via the online survey that was shared with the public on August 23. Diverse candidates were selected for interviews, all of whom had varying levels of understanding about city planning or familiarity with the District General Policy or district

plans. The testing objective was to observe and evaluate user behaviour regarding document navigation through the administration of a parcel-specific activity. Facilitators used prompts and alternatives



to identify functionality and readability recommendations for improvement of both document and map formats.

## HOW WE COMMUNICATED

Method/Tool	Results
<b>Making Space Podcast</b>	5,200 total downloads District planning episode: 711
<b>City Building Video Series</b>	Entire Series: 3,339 views District planning video: 715 views
<b>Project website (edmonton.ca)</b>	7,900 page views (May-Nov 22)
<b>Social media (organic and paid)</b>	Paid: 807,578 impressions Paid: 286,865 unique people reached
<b>Monthly Newsletters</b>	2,787 combined subscribers
<b>Print Advertising (Newspaper)</b>	153,000 estimated combined impressions
<b>Out-of-home Advertising</b>	3,000 postcards delivered across 15 districts 7 road signs in high-traffic areas 100 neighbourhood signs across 15 districts Digital displays in 18 LRT stations
<b>Taxation Notice Insert</b>	Sent to ~400,000 properties
<b>Phone calls to GBA+ organizations</b>	13
<b>Direct emails to stakeholders</b>	196 recipients received emails about draft district plans being available 320 recipients received a marketing package 585 recipients of announcement for last week of the second survey
<b>Presentations</b>	13 presentations shared with various organizations

District planning policies and maps are complex. Prior to public engagement, educational materials (e.g. videos and podcasts) were created and shared to help Edmontonians understand high-level district planning concepts and their connection to The City Plan. These communications materials also began to build both project and public engagement awareness to ensure potential participants were aware of upcoming opportunities to share feedback.

The goal of this approach was to provide Edmontonians with the necessary background information and context to meaningfully engage. It also identified that district planning will not introduce any new policies but rather translate The City Plan's policies to the 1.25 million population threshold and show them at a finer level of detail in relevant geographic areas.

In alignment with the City's [Public Engagement Framework](#), public engagement opportunities were communicated in a timely and transparent manner using plain and accessible language. Traditional and non-traditional tactics were used to reach a wide range of Edmontonians and notify them of both in-person and online engagement opportunities.

Enhancements to the communications approach were made as needed throughout the public engagement period so that participants knew what was happening, how to get involved and how their input would be used to refine the District General Policy and district plans.

Communications will remain active in between the Refine and Advise-level engagement opportunities, inclusive of this report and other web-based messaging and resources.

The project team used a variety of platforms and tactics (see below) to:

- + Create awareness about district planning
- + Educate key stakeholders and Edmontonians on the connection between district planning and city building and
- + Inform Edmontonians on how and when to participate in engagement opportunities.



**Making Space Podcast**– A five-episode podcast series was created by the City to help educate Edmontonians about the impacts of zoning, planning and land use so they could meaningfully engage in conversations about the Zoning Bylaw Renewal Initiative and district planning.



**City Building Video Series** – In an effort to increase awareness about The City Plan and its key projects, three YouTube videos were launched, each telling a different part of The City Plan’s story, including a specific video on districts and 15-minute communities.



**Project Webpage (edmonton.ca)** – The draft District General Policy was released publicly on the project website in early June 2022, followed by the draft district plans and proposed area plans to be repealed in August 2022.



**Conversation Starters** – Mini information booklets and videos introducing key district planning topics were published on the district planning website prior to engagement in May.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ What is district planning?   <a href="#">Video</a></li> <li>+ What are the District General Policy and the district plans?   <a href="#">Video</a></li> <li>+ How are the District General Policy and the district plans being drafted?   <a href="#">Video</a></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ How can Edmontonians provide input?   <a href="#">Video</a></li> <li>+ How are the District General Policy and district plans intended to be used?   <a href="#">Video</a></li> <li>+ How will the District General Policy and district plans be monitored and updated?   <a href="#">Video</a></li> </ul> |
|---|---|



**Organic Social Media** - Information about the project, upcoming engagement events and educational materials were shared organically through the City of Edmonton’s Twitter and Facebook account and [@PlanEdmonton](#) Twitter account using the hashtag #yegplan.



**Paid Social Media** - The District Open Houses Campaign was in-market from September 26 to October 15, 2022, followed by the Online Workshop Campaign from November 3 to November 17, 2022. The campaign objectives were to increase project and engagement awareness and drive Engaged Edmonton website traffic to increase attendance at the district open houses and Zoning Bylaw Renewal and district planning combined online workshops.



**Monthly Newsletters** - Educational material, engagement opportunities and project updates were included in relevant City of Edmonton monthly newsletters:

- + City Building Newsletter, which delivers integrated information on key City Plan Implementation projects, including district planning, Zoning Bylaw Renewal, Mobility and Growth Management
- + Building Edmonton Newsletter (BEN), which provides subscribers with regular updates about development and building policies and processes



**Print Advertising** - Advertisements promoting district planning and Zoning Bylaw Renewal open houses ran in the Edmonton Journal and Edmonton Sun on September 28, 2022.



**Out-of-Home Advertising** - A variety of out-of-home advertising tactics were implemented to reach Edmontonians offline, including road signs, neighbourhood signs, postcards and digital displays across the City's 18 LRT Stations.



**Taxation Letter Insert** - General information on both the district planning and Zoning Bylaw Renewal projects, as well as general engagement timelines were included as part of the May 2022 taxation notice that was sent to every property owner in Edmonton.



**Direct Emails** - The project team shared information and updates about the project and upcoming engagement sessions through direct emails to various stakeholders, including organizations representing marginalized and underrepresented groups and every community league in Edmonton.



**Marketing packages for stakeholders** - Packages including sample social media content and graphics, drafted articles for publications and newsletters, a calendar of events and PDF posters for bulletin boards were distributed to



various stakeholders to promote engagement opportunities with their audiences.



**Phone Calls** - The project team made a number of phone calls to organizations representing marginalized and underrepresented groups to invite them to participate in engagement sessions. They were also encouraged to voice how they would like to give feedback on the project.



**Presentations** - Presentations outlining project information and engagement opportunities were given to a number of civil society groups, including the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues, community leagues, industry organizations, Business Improvement Associations and others.

Presentation and Meeting Schedule (2022)		
Type	Stakeholder	Date
Check-ins	Infill Development in Edmonton Association (IDEA)	Over 35 informal check-ins from January - November 2022, upon request
	Canadian Home Builders' Association (CHBA)	
	Urban Development Institute (UDI)	
	Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues (EFCL)	
Presentations	EFCL	Thursday, February 24
		Wednesday, March 23
	School of Urban and Regional Planning at the University of Alberta	Friday, September 23
		Friday, November 18
	Edmonton Local Immigration Partnership	Thursday, September 1
	Business Improvement Areas	Wednesday, October 5
	Edmonton River Valley Conservation Coalition	Wednesday, November 2
	Energy Transition Climate Resilience Committee	Thursday, November 3
Shovel Ready Working	Wednesday,	

	Group	November 30
Panel Discussion	City of Edmonton Making Space Podcast	Tuesday, June 28

## WHO WE ARE HEARING FROM

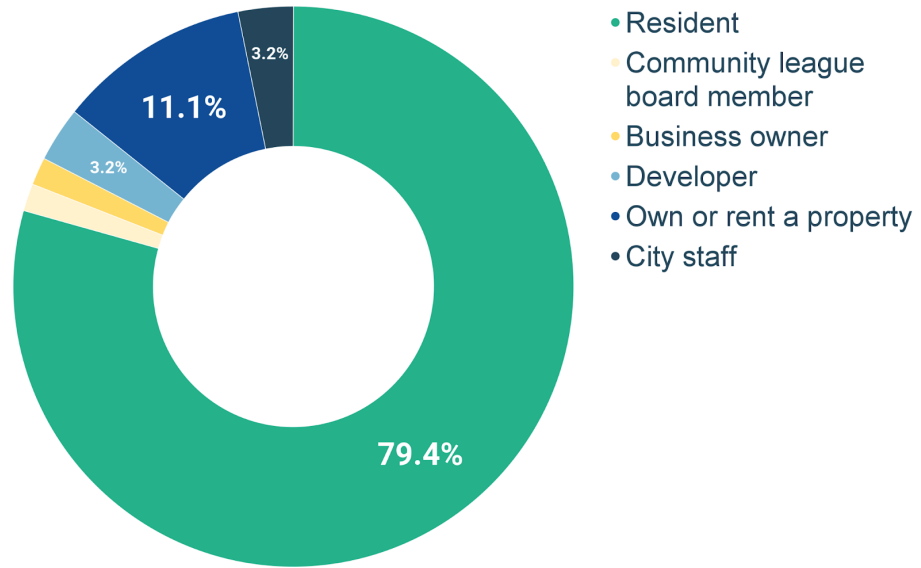
During this engagement, many Edmontonians representing different ages, cultural and socio-economic backgrounds, levels of education and knowledge about city planning processes were heard from. Information about identity factors was collected on an optional basis through demographic-based survey questions and as part of Engaged Edmonton's account registration process. Additionally, online workshop participants were asked to identify the group or sector that best represented their participation.

On the Engaged Edmonton and survey platforms, categories included Edmonton Resident, Own or Rent a Property, Developer, Business owner, Community League Board Member, Business Owner, Non-Profit Organization, academic institution and City staff.

For the online workshops, category options included Homeowner/Renter, Industry (e.g. Infill Development in Edmonton Association and Canadian Home Builders Association), Business Owner/Operator (e.g. Stantec and Rohit Group of Companies), Community League Representative, Non-Profit Organization or Agency (e.g. Edmonton Public School Board and Old Strathcona Business Association) and Other. Representation from each category was observed.

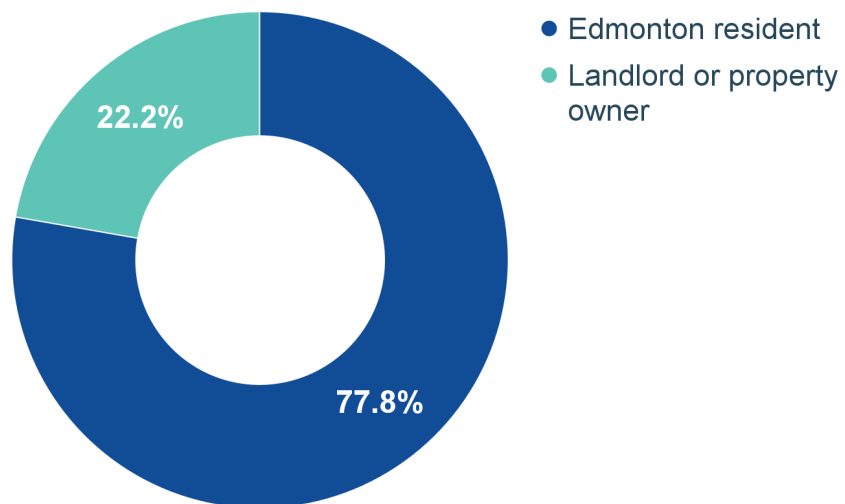
### District General Policy Survey - Respondent Self-Identification

63 respondents



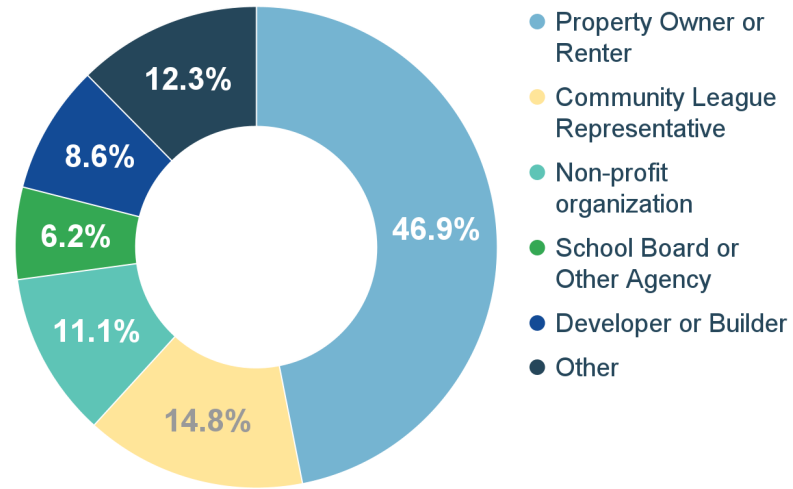
### Engaged Edmonton (June-July) - User Poll Self Identification

27 respondents



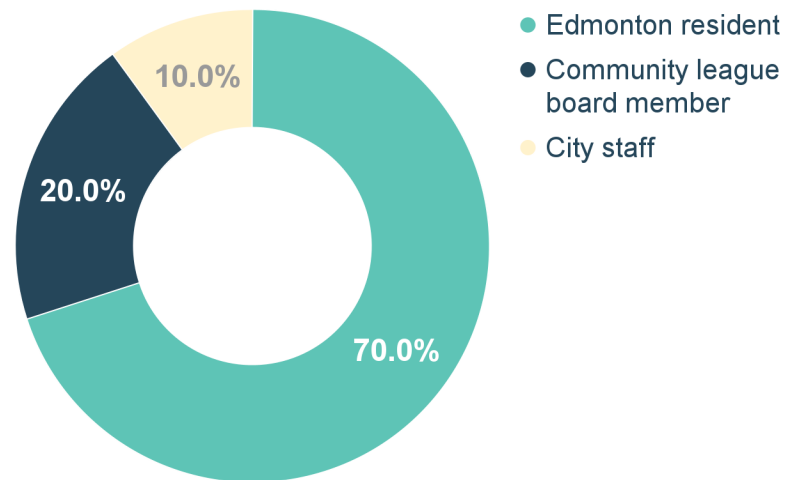
### Integrated Workshops - Respondent Self-Identification

81 respondents



### Engaged Edmonton (August-October) - User Poll Self Identification

10 respondents



At the time of writing this report, groups that received communications about the project from the City but have not yet participated in any engagement opportunities are being contacted (and will continue to be contacted) to gauge interest in meeting with the City to learn more about the project and provide input at a time suitable for them. As a result of the direct outreach to some groups, project update meetings are being planned in the coming months with the following groups: advisory committees (such as the City of Edmonton Youth Council and Women's Advocacy Voice of Edmonton Committee), organizations addressing food security issues (e.g. Edmonton Food Bank and WECAN), organizations that are meeting on development and affordable housing direction (e.g. Shovel Ready Working Group) and with other groups that indicate an interest in learning about the project or sharing input.

The project team is also continuing to plan for integrated engagement opportunities with other City Plan Implementation projects in order to reach and hear from diverse groups in future engagement opportunities.

## WHAT WE ARE HEARING

Through all the engagement activities, four main themes emerged:

1. General project
2. Directing growth
3. Document usability
4. Heritage and culture

The key findings supporting these four themes are detailed and listed below in the following order:

[Online Survey \(June - July 2022\)](#)

[In-person Indigenous Engagement](#)

[Online Engaged Edmonton Platform](#)

[Email Feedback](#)

[Online Survey \(August - October 2022\)](#)

[Integrated Online Workshops](#)

[In-person Open Houses](#)

[In-person Pop-up Events](#)

[In-person Usability Interviews & University Assignments](#)

An interim **What We Are Hearing Report** was published on the project webpage in August 2022 to share the preliminary results of engagement conducted on the District General Policy from **June - July 2022**. That report included a summary of the feedback from the six Learn & Share and one Deep Dive workshop; results from the online District General Policy survey are summarized below.

### Online Survey (June - July 2022)

The online survey consisted of 42 questions (30 open-ended questions and 12 closed questions) and optional demographic questions (7 closed questions). The survey questions were meant to gather input on the District General Policy, including content clarity, policy concerns, level of support for policy direction, as well as learning about people's awareness of the project and use of educational tools and resources. This survey generated 63 responses.

Main Themes	Key Findings
Project Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>71% of the respondents were aware of district planning prior to taking the survey.</li> </ul>
Project Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>78% of the respondents believe living in a community where groceries, schools and work opportunities are close to them is important.</li> <li>63% of the respondents think that it is important to ensure that all neighbourhoods continue to be desirable places to live.</li> <li>70% of the respondents think it is important to have fun and recharge in the river valley and local parks which support biodiversity and provide physical and mental benefits.</li> <li>73% of the respondents believe having a choice in getting around with opportunities to walk, roll, cycle or take transit is important.</li> </ul>
Policy Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Generally the District General Policy direction is seen as a good starting point.</li> <li>Policies related to walkability and 15-minute communities are strongly supported.</li> <li>25% of the open-ended comments showed strong support for direction in the District General Policy.</li> <li>The majority of supportive open-ended comments were made for policy direction related to the sections on Urban Design, Nodes &amp; Corridors and Active Transportation.</li> </ul>
Policy Refinement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The District General Policy language is generally seen as too vague to be effectively interpreted</li> </ul>

	<p>and/or implemented and suggestions are made for more detail, enforceability and prescription.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 38% of the open-ended comments suggested refinements to directions in the District General Policy.</li> <li>• The majority of open-ended refinement suggestions were made for policy direction related to the sections on Urban Design, Land Use and Active Transportation.</li> </ul>
Policy Opposition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A few comments were unsupportive of existing residents having to pay for the infrastructure upgrades to accommodate increases in density.</li> <li>• The policy was criticized as focusing too much on quick wins as opposed to a long-term vision.</li> <li>• 13% of the open-ended comments expressed opposition to the District General Policy's direction.</li> </ul>
General Comment/ Concern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 79% of the 63 survey respondents found the District General Policy's glossary helpful.</li> <li>• A suggestion was made to simplify the messaging around project goals.</li> <li>• Concern was raised regarding engagement methods and outreach.</li> </ul>
Out of Project Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The majority of out-of-project scope comments were made by respondents when answering open-ended questions related to sections on Urban Design and Active Transportation.</li> <li>• Out-of-project scope comments were mainly concerned with previous infrastructure project flaws, the removal of automobile infrastructure (roads/parking) for bike lanes and the subjectivity of "attractive" design.</li> </ul>

The section below summarizes the results from engagement conducted between **August and November 2022**, post release of the 15 district plans and the list of plans proposed to be amended or repealed. The results have been categorized based on the different engagement tactics used.

### **In-person Indigenous Engagement**

The district planning team invited 31 Indigenous Nations and communities, as well as 14 Indigenous community organizations, to participate in engagement opportunities for the district planning project. Specific feedback received from the in-person



engagement sessions with Indigenous Nations and communities is included below.

Main Themes	Key Findings
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider different opportunities, approaches and platforms that may extend beyond district plans to share Indigenous history and culture in amiskwaciwâskahikan (Edmonton). Communication methods could include oral and/or verbal storytelling, augmented reality, QR codes, site signage, etc.</li> </ul>
Relationships & Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support for co-developing a shared process to welcome and share Indigenous history and culture with Edmontonians.</li> <li>Desire for the City to work closely with Indigenous Nations and communities to support strong relationships.</li> </ul>

### Online Engaged Edmonton Platform

The Engaged Edmonton platform resulted in over 6,300 total visits. Over 5,000 people viewed at least one page and gained project awareness. Participants primarily leveraged Engaged Edmonton to access documents and view videos that describe the scope of the project, identify district geography and discover where and when they could participate in engagement activities.

Participants were also able to engage directly on the site by responding to a poll, sharing ideas and thoughts or submitting questions. A total of 23 participants contributed feedback.

One comment regarding plan retainments, amendments and repeals was received on the Scona district page.

- Support for revising, not repealing, the Garneau Area Redevelopment Plan (ARP), as it aligns with The City Plan.
- Concerns regarding upzoning (rezoning property to a higher density than it is currently zoned for) and building transitions.

Other comments received in this tool unrelated to plan repeals include:

- Concerns about the location of new bike lanes and removal of on-street parking as it relates to goods movement and emergency vehicle access.

Seven ideas regarding Community Assets were received via the Whitemud (2), Central (1), Scona (3), Southwest (1) district pages.

- Support for having open and green spaces within 15 minutes.
- Map revisions:
  - Deprioritize vehicles as a primary mode of transportation by replacing roads map base with a non-motorized routes map base (e.g. sidewalks, multi-use trails, bike lanes,

- pedestrian corridors). Address gaps in accessibility and missing connections for active modes of transportation.
- Environmental footprint map features (e.g. stormwater runoff, low impact development, pervious/impervious surfaces, ecological habitat, heat island effects)
  - Inclusion of shopping areas and grocery stores.

- Preservation of and pedestrian access to natural areas (e.g. Whitemud Ravine near the MacTaggart Sanctuary).
- More detail is required regarding physical context (e.g. percentage of open and green spaces) and location of parks and amenities (e.g. parks, playgrounds and hockey rinks).
- Historical context is missing content regarding settlement sites and Indigenous use areas.

Two ideas were received pertaining to Heritage and Cultural Features on the Scona (1) and Central (1) district pages.

- Preference to have interactive maps (Heritage and Culture Assets Figure 6.7) that enable the reader to hover over an asset and see a description (label).
- Would like to see a community vibrancy metric included. Concern that Indigenous use areas are not accurately documented.

Fourteen poll responses were received: Central (3), Scona (3), Mill Woods & Meadows (2), Southeast (2), 118 Avenue (2), West Henday (1), Southwest (1) district pages received poll responses.

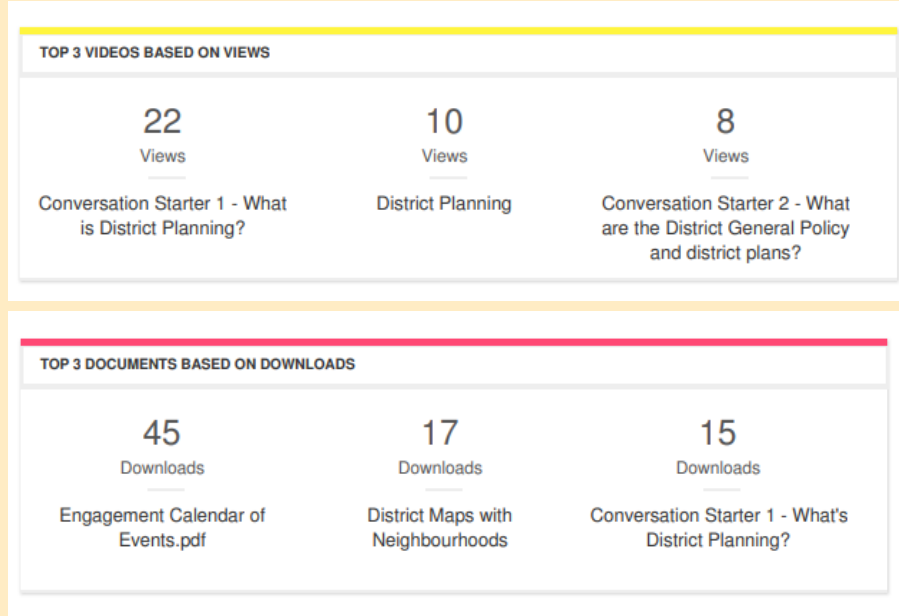
Of those who contributed to the poll, results indicate that Edmonton residents were the primary participants (77.8%) followed by community league representatives (20%) and City staff (10%). Based on these findings, these sectors/groups did not participate on this platform: non-profit organization, business owner, academic institution, developer, landlord or property owner.

Five questions were received via the district planning main page (1), Southeast (2), Central (1) and Southwest (1) district pages.

Participant questions related to:

- Missing neighbourhood assets or cultural amenities that do not meet the district threshold (e.g. La Cité Francophone).
- Bike routes and choices for active modes of transportation along roadways (e.g. Anthony Henday and Jasper Avenue).
- The relationship between nodes and corridors and densification.
- Concern regarding misinformation that upzoning may occur without public consultation.

Participants who visited the district planning main page and/or one or more of the district pages, were frequently accessing information about the project scope, engagement event opportunities and the district geography.



**Email Feedback**  
 The project team received 21 emails from various community and industry members providing feedback on different aspects of district planning.

Main Themes	Key Findings
Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy language is too subjective/prohibitive and assumes all new buildings have a negative impact.</li> <li>• Growth numbers for various districts do not seem to be accurate - particularly for the 1.25 million projection.</li> <li>• Housing affordability is an objective of The City Plan and is not prioritized appropriately.</li> </ul>
Readability/ Usability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Having to refer to multiple documents is difficult and is not design oriented for average citizens.</li> <li>• More variation in colours is needed on the maps to better distinguish map features.</li> </ul>
Missing Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historical development/planning achievements and Indigenous uses are missing from the various historical context sections and heritage &amp; culture maps in the district plans.</li> <li>• Requirements should be added (such as embodied carbon accounting) to encourage sustainable development.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is not enough information to understand the implications of the Innovation Corridor.</li> </ul>
Plans in Effect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support was expressed to retire plans that are outdated or that have been incorporated into a District Plan.</li> <li>Communication improvement is needed to better explain how plans that are proposed to be repealed have served their purpose and are determined to be complete.</li> </ul>
Upzoning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communication improvement is needed to better explain that properties will not be automatically rezoned to a higher density if district plans come into effect.</li> </ul>
Out-of-Project Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Neighbourhood-level assets (medical offices, park names etc.) are missing on maps and in text.</li> <li>The distribution of density should be detailed throughout a district.</li> </ul>

### Online Survey (August-October 2022)

The online survey consisted of 10 questions (8 open-ended questions and 2 partial open-ended questions) and optional demographic questions (7 closed questions). The survey questions were meant to gather input on content and priorities/trade-offs in the District General Policy and 15 district plans, concerns and issues regarding localized (district-level) policies, map features and boundaries and identify interest in participating in an interview with project staff (i.e. usability testing).

Main Themes	Key Findings
Land Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Respondents would like to see food establishments, health services and community services considered in the Land Use policies.</li> <li>63% of respondents think it is important that main street(s) are lined with window-front commercial shops.</li> <li>Respondents who feel that it is not important that main streets are lined with window-front commercial shops feel that commercial shops should have a parking lot (13%) and that commercial shops on the main streets can cause congestion (12%).</li> <li>The top three items to prioritize for Edmonton overall are trees and additional landscaping (#1), quiet streets and areas (#2) and the types of amenities and businesses allowed in new buildings</li> </ul>

	<p>(#3).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respondents would most like to see tree-lined roads (62%) followed by street lighting (56%); buffers between pedestrians and vehicles (55%); and pedestrian, bikeway connections through and into the site included in the District General Policy regarding Large Site redevelopment.</li> <li>• 70% of respondents believe that new or mature areas with not enough parks to serve the existing population should be prioritized when making decisions about land for parks and open spaces.</li> </ul>
Nodes & Corridors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regarding where office towers should be located within nodes and corridors, the largest proportion of respondents (82%) agree that office towers should be located next to other office towers.</li> <li>• 87% of respondents would expect to see existing commercial properties, like offices or coffee shops to be included within the boundary of a node and corridor.</li> <li>• 64% of respondents would prefer to see natural boundaries like the edge of a park used to refine the pathways that node and corridor boundaries follow.</li> <li>• Respondents would like the City to consider more active transportation and better zone planning when revising node and corridor boundaries in support of 15-minute communities.</li> </ul>
Intensification Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 92% want their district plan to show where intensification is expected within a node and corridor.</li> <li>• 59% agree with the streamlined approach of the application process for development proposals within Intensification Areas. Those who do not, feel that there is a lack of input from citizens on decisions.</li> <li>• 80% of respondents would expect to see focus areas near planned or existing mass transit stations in an Intensification Area boundary.</li> <li>• Over half (51%-61%) of respondents want the City to use all criteria (this includes properties with similar land use, properties with similar height or density allowances, the road network like roads or alleys, areas previously planned to have buildings that may be taller and which support a variety of activities like commercial and/or mixed use functions, natural boundaries like the edge of a park) except for property lines when drawing Intensification Area boundaries.</li> </ul>

Local Nodes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 54% of respondents feel that it is better for one local node to serve a small set of neighbourhoods when making decisions about the location of local nodes.</li> <li>• The largest proportion of respondents (82%) agree that local nodes should be located where there are existing support activities (e.g. apartments, schools, community centres, etc.).</li> </ul>
Mobility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The largest proportion of respondents (68%) think the District General Policy should include more pedestrian amenities in regard to Pedestrian Priority Areas.</li> <li>• Respondents would expect to see Pedestrian Priority Areas in areas with commercial shops facing the streets (76%), surrounding bus or LRT stations (70%) and/or in local nodes (69%).</li> </ul>
Heritage & Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 62% of respondents think the City should be required to preserve the views to and from the historic and cultural resources to respect their role and significance.</li> </ul>
Growth Activation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respondents would like to see all infrastructure projects on the district plan growth activation maps.</li> </ul>
Simplifying the Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The largest proportion of respondents (82%) agree that it makes sense to retire plans that have become outdated.</li> </ul>

### Integrated Online Workshops (with Zoning Bylaw Renewal)

A total of six online workshops were conducted that focused on one of three topics - *Guiding Neighbourhood Redevelopment*, *Enabling Growth in Nodes and Corridors* and *Fostering 15-Minute Communities*. The workshops were conducted in collaboration with the Zoning Bylaw Renewal Initiative project. The three topics were identified as points of common interest. Participants were first introduced to the two projects through a presentation, followed by a facilitated discussion as smaller groups in break-out rooms.

### Guiding Neighbourhood Redevelopment

Main Themes	Key Findings
Building Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concerns about height transitions and how they will be regulated. Desire to see gradual transitions as opposed to buildings of dramatically different heights right next to each other.</li> <li>• Desire for inclusion of various design elements to provide separation and support neighbourhood character.</li> </ul>



Housing Diversity & Affordability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support for diverse housing types to accommodate a diversity of users.</li> <li>• Concern that more infill will not result in more affordability.</li> </ul>
Impacts of Infill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concerns about height and massing (e.g. the three-dimensional form) of a building and sun access/shadowing effects.</li> </ul>
<b>Enabling Growth in Nodes &amp; Corridors</b>	
<b>Main Themes</b>	<b>Key Findings</b>
Building Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support for setbacks and stepbacks to limit height at street level and provide height transition.</li> <li>• Desire to see building articulation and lots of windows on corridors to avoid large blank walls.</li> <li>• Cautious of design regulations being overly prescriptive, resulting in a “cookie cutter approach”.</li> </ul>
Where to Locate Density	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support for higher density near mass transit.</li> <li>• Concern about sun access/shadowing effects.</li> <li>• Some concern that the definition of “high rise” being “9+ stories” is too vague.</li> </ul>
Land Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support for a variety of land uses/businesses in corridors.</li> </ul>
<b>Fostering 15-Minute Communities</b>	
<b>Main Themes</b>	<b>Key Findings</b>
Community Amenities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support for service and retail businesses that provide daily needs and social gathering space such as cafes, restaurants, grocery stores, corner stores, child care and pharmacies.</li> <li>• Concern there will be negative impacts on the neighbourhood if restrictions are loosened for the location of certain kinds of businesses, such as liquor and cannabis stores, light industrial businesses and body rub centres.</li> <li>• Some desire for big-box stores to be discouraged in order to promote smaller, local businesses.</li> </ul>
Community Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support for community police stations in order to reduce crime.</li> <li>• Some concern around allowing community amenities that are perceived to cause or attract crime, such as supervised consumption services.</li> </ul>

Equity & Diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desire to see demographically diverse communities throughout Edmonton and the necessary amenities to support that.</li> <li>• Some support for community amenities that can improve social equity, such as supervised consumption services.</li> </ul>
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### In-person Open Houses (September-October 2022)

Fourteen open houses were hosted by City staff across different districts. Participants were welcomed to navigate through a series of informational and engagement display boards, discuss the project with staff onsite and submit any afterthoughts through the project email. Large printouts of district plan maps were displayed on tables for review/markup and printed district plans were handed out.

Main Themes	Key Findings
Project Related	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General excitement and support for the project direction to enable density, walkable neighbourhoods and different housing forms.</li> <li>• Recommendations for retiring additional plans previously not proposed for repeal by the project.</li> <li>• Concern that parts of existing plans important to current residents will be discarded and not incorporated into the district plans if proposed for repeal.</li> </ul>
Policy Refinement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need for heritage/culture representation that is not legally recognized and has historically faced policy bias.</li> <li>• Need for the protection of watershed health with an increase in development.</li> <li>• Desire for wider sidewalks as well as sidewalk and bike lane additions were identified in specific district locations.</li> <li>• Suggestions for additional commercial frontage designations.</li> <li>• Desire to see Node &amp; Corridor Intensification Areas expanded.</li> </ul>
Missing Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pedestrian Priority Areas should be included around recreation centres.</li> <li>• Map feature errors were identified such as missing existing bike lanes and locations of assets (schools, pools etc.).</li> <li>• The Heritage &amp; Culture map in the Mill Woods and Meadows district plan does not recognize the</li> </ul>

	<p>current and historical diversity of cultures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The approved Rollie Miles Recreation Centre should be identified on the Development Context Asset map in the Scona district plan.</li> </ul>
General Comment/Concern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support for diverse housing forms through urban mix policy.</li> <li>• Concern that there is currently not enough open space to accommodate future growth and density.</li> <li>• Desire to streamline processes to enable more green roofs and community gardens.</li> </ul>
Out-of-Project Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issues with current City infrastructure project timelines.</li> <li>• Possibility that property values will decline with an increase in rental development.</li> <li>• Implementation of processes for protecting boulevards and historical trees.</li> <li>• Addition of temporal items to the Heritage &amp; Culture map (e.g. events and festivals).</li> </ul>

### In-person Pop-up Events (June-September 2022)

These events were primarily hosted to build project awareness, help Edmontonians understand the project's importance and share feedback opportunities. Most questions from the public were focused on finding out more about the project, including the project's purpose and timelines. The following points highlight some of the feedback received.

#### Key Findings

- Support for direction on creating fewer planning areas (e.g. districts), 15-minute districts and a Community of Communities.
- Balance how the City plans and develops across the city; concerns about loss of sunlight, green spaces and privacy; consideration for infrastructure like drainage services; keep housing and property taxes affordable; support for infill, density, and more housing options including apartments and housing for those experiencing homelessness.
- Address park and amenity gaps, like off-leash areas; protect and grow more trees; maintain and create viewpoints throughout the city; preserve sunlight; protect biodiversity, floodplains and agricultural land; prioritize outdoor winter recreation facilities.
- Expand the city's bike network; increase bike parking amenities; ensure cyclist safety in winter months.

- Improvements to transit safety, affordability and accessibility.
- Support for free and better parking options near schools, parks, small businesses, downtown and primary corridors.
- Keep and secure more heritage buildings.

### In-person Usability Interviews & University Assignments

The themes below are compiled from individual usability interviews led by the project team and the usability assignments completed by students in the University of Alberta's undergraduate and graduate Urban Planning programs. The testing objective was to evaluate user impressions regarding document navigation through the administration of a parcel-specific activity.

Main Themes	Key Findings
Functionality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Glossary definitions that show the corresponding map symbology are helpful.</li> <li>• Text that explains how the District General Policy and the district plans function is rarely read.</li> <li>• Text that explains plan precedence is rarely read and is difficult to understand if the reader is unfamiliar with the planning system.</li> <li>• The amount of cross-referencing required between the district plan and the District General Policy is seen as a barrier.</li> </ul>
Readability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The map size and detail provided makes locating specific parcels of land difficult and results in errors.</li> <li>• The colouring and hatching (parallel lines/dots) of map features are too similar, and in some instances, results in errors.</li> <li>• Boundaries that are not filled in with colour (neighbourhoods, plans in effect etc.) on some maps are not immediately apparent and should be more distinguished from the road network.</li> <li>• Point-form alternatives are preferred over current paragraph-form explanations.</li> <li>• The glossary made it easier to interpret the technical terms used in the policies and maps.</li> </ul>
Recommended Improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Margin or footnotes that provide extra or simplified direction would be helpful.</li> <li>• Hyperlinks in district plans (to relevant sections in the District General Policy and the district plan)</li> </ul>

	<p>and/or text direction that states when to refer to other relevant sections would allow for ease of use and efficiency.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A digital and customizable policy/map interface is widely supported and seen as an opportunity to resolve many of the readability issues.</li> <li>• The suggestion of creating online video tutorials/training modules and FAQs on how to use the District General Policy and district plans was generally supported and seen as valuable.</li> </ul>
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## WHAT CHANGES ARE BEING MADE?

As the project team evaluates all public and internal feedback received, adjustments are underway to refine policies, increase usability and improve the outcomes of engagement communication for diverse stakeholders. Below is a summary of some actions taken following the initial feedback review. Additional actions will follow as the team progresses in their feedback evaluation.

### Mapping Updates:

#### Readability Improvements

- Colour contrast has been increased or hatching (parallel lines/dots) has been added on top of colours in cases where feature colours were too similar.
- Various boundaries have been adjusted with darker colouring or have been offset from other linework where there was overlap.
- The road and block structure has been darkened to help with navigating specific parcels of land.
- Figure 4.1 has been substantially changed to improve the clarity of plans in effect and district-specific policy locations.

### Plans in Effect Review & Proposed Plan Repeal Notification:

In the August 2022 survey, 82% of respondents agreed with retiring plans that have become outdated and/or have served their purpose.

This result provided the project team with confidence in moving forward with the plans proposed for repeal.

The survey also indicated that the public wants the project team to ensure the public is consulted prior to any plan repeal changes.

Feedback from engagement suggested that more plans, specifically Area Redevelopment Plans, should be added to the list of plans to be amended or

- Colour blindness testing is being conducted in order to help with map accessibility.

#### Error Corrections

- Various feature locations, labelling, missing data and data updates have been corrected based on feedback.

#### Additions

- Road labels, landmarks and regional roadways have been added to help with navigation.
- Public art symbology has been included depicting the locations and density of permanent art as recognized by the Edmonton Arts Council.

#### Communication Strategy:

Iterative improvements have been made to the project's communication strategy to reach diverse stakeholders. The team remains committed to hearing from stakeholders identified through the project's GBA+ process.

repealed to support The City Plan.

Remaining Area Redevelopment Plans are being reviewed a second time for additional opportunities for City Plan alignment.

Any plans proposed for amendment or repeal will be notified to the public through the Land Development Application process and supported through the district planning project's communication strategy and phase three engagement in spring 2023.

#### District General Policy & Plans:

A number of revisions and improvements are underway to improve user understanding of:

- How the District General Policy and district plans function together
- Policy terms and descriptions and
- Policy direction including:
  - the subdivision of land
  - transition between lower and higher density development
  - Intensification Areas within nodes and corridors, as well as
  - connectivity and accessibility

District plans are being further reviewed for policy and map clarifications/revisions and improvements to their overall form and functional use.



## NEXT STEPS

Engagement feedback received will be considered in refining the draft District General Policy and district plans over the coming months. On January 17, 2023, City Administration will present a project update to the Urban Planning Committee and provide information on how engagement outcomes will inform revisions to the draft documents. This What We Heard Report will form part of that report and also be made available on the project website. The refined District General Policy and district plans will be shared on the project website in the spring of 2023. Edmontonians will be invited to review these refined documents in preparation for future Advise-level engagement opportunities in the spring of 2023.

Following that, and in preparation for Public Hearing in August, Administration will make final changes to all documents and prepare the associated bylaws.

For regular project updates, please visit [edmonton.ca/districtplanning](https://edmonton.ca/districtplanning), call 311 or contact the project team by email at [districtplanning@edmonton.ca](mailto:districtplanning@edmonton.ca).

Edmontonians can receive monthly updates about the district planning project and related city-building projects by signing up for **The City Building newsletter**.