



**Public Engagement Executive Summary
City of Edmonton Integrated Infrastructure Services
April 2017**

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A. Public Engagement Process Overview

A four-phase public engagement process was designed to create opportunities for the public and stakeholders, including businesses and commuters, to provide critical input during the concept planning phase for the Jasper Avenue streetscape.

The process involved four touch points with the community through four public meetings coupled with online engagement, as well as specific activities for other key stakeholder groups as noted in Figure 1 below:

Figure 1



A.1 Activities by Phase

Phase 1

The purpose of Phase 1 engagement was to:

- Introduce the project, purpose, intended outcomes and areas for public involvement
- Gather input on Jasper Avenue's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWAT)

Stakeholder Group	Activity	Date
Public and Business	Visioning Workshops (2)	November 25, 2015
Public	Comment Form/ Online Survey	November 25 – December 9, 2015

Phase 2

The purpose of Phase 2 engagement was to:

- Share input received during Phase 1 engagement
- Build understanding about project parameters and constraints, specifically the area that can be influenced as part of the streetscape (property line to property line)
- Confirm the draft vision and guiding principles
- Gather input on specific areas of concern/issues and opportunities along the avenue

The following meetings/activities took place during Phase 2

Stakeholder Group	Activity	Date
Community Business Residents Committee (CBRC)	Meeting 1	March 8, 2016
Public	Public Event 2	March 21, 2016
All	Comment Form/ Online Survey	March 21 – April 4
Stakeholder/Businesses	Individual Meetings	June 2016 and ongoing
Seniors	Group Meetings	September – October 2016
Businesses	Meet and Greet	October 18 and 19, 2016
Businesses	Door to Door Campaign	July 2016
Businesses	Survey	July – September 2016

Phase 3

The purpose of Phase 3 engagement was to:

- Share input received during Phase 2 engagement
- Present draft concept design and options
- Gather input on draft concept design and options

The following meetings/activities took place during Phase 3:

Stakeholder Group	Activity	Date
Community Business Residents Committee (CBRC)	Meeting 2	November 16 2016
Public	Public Event 3	November 30, 2016
All	Comment Form/Online Survey	November 30 – Dec. 14, 2016
Businesses	Door to Door Campaign	January 2017
Businesses	Business Drop In	February 1, 2017
Businesses	Survey	February 2017

Phase 4

The purpose of Phase 4 engagement was to:

- Share input received during Phase 3 engagement
- Present the preferred design plan
- Gather input on the preferred design plan

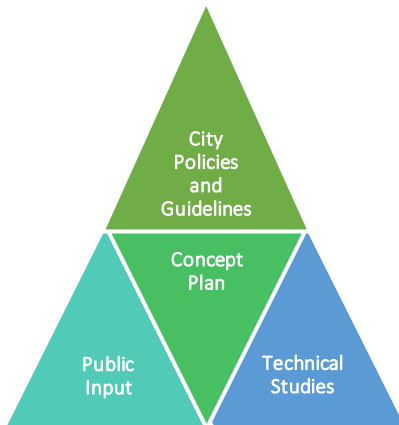
The following meetings/activities took place during Phase 4:

Stakeholder Group	Activity	Date
Community Business Resident Committee (CBRC)	Meeting 3	March 2, 2017
Public	Public Event 4	March 11, 2017
Public	Comment Form/ Online Survey	March 11 – March 25, 2017

A.2 Project Inputs

In the concept planning process, input received from the public and stakeholders is considered together with technical studies, and City policies and guidelines, to inform the design team in the development of the Recommended Concept Plan (see Figure 2). The recommended concept plan is anticipated to be presented to Council in the spring of 2017.

Figure 2



B. What We Heard and How Input Was Used

B.1 Phase 1

What We Heard

During the first phase of consultation, Imagine Jasper Avenue received over 2,100 comments from the workshops, online surveys, social media posts, phone calls and emails. The comments were analyzed for common themes about the current Jasper Avenue from 109 Street to 124 Street.

To establish a vision to guide this project, participants were asked to identify the strengths and weaknesses they currently see on the avenue, and to imagine potential threats and opportunities that may arise in the future.

Some of the overarching themes include:

- There is great pride in and connection with the community. Participants spoke of the history and character of the area; its proximity to the North Saskatchewan River Valley; the number of great destinations, services and shops; and a strong feeling of belonging to a very diverse community.
- There is a desire improve connectivity to these key destinations. Making the corridor more pedestrian-friendly is key, which includes repairing and widening sidewalks, creating resting spots and gathering areas, and making it easier to cross the roadway.

- There was praise for the new pedestrian crossing lights. Respondents felt that more lights, with more crossing time, would make people feel safer crossing Jasper Avenue.
- Many said the area was visually unappealing and lacking in landscaping like trees and other greenery. Making the area more pedestrian-friendly also means making it a more comfortable and inviting place to be.
- In the bigger picture, many described the type of businesses and development in the area as very car-focused.
- The need for infrastructure and cyclist connectivity to major bike routes on the Victoria Promenade and the future 102 Avenue bike route was identified.
- While there is a desire to shift the focus more to pedestrians than vehicles, there is also a recognition that the avenue needs to work for all types of users. Finding the right balance between these interests will be key.
- To make this project a success, it's important to build trust and demonstrate how input has been reflected in the design.
- While Jasper Avenue is part of a great local community, it is also a key route for a large commuter-based population. There is a concern that the needs and desires of the local community may be lost if there is a large commuter-based population with conflicting interests.

Comments received were divided into what people like, what people don't like and ideas for future improvement:

What People Like

- Great pride in and connection with the community
- History and character of area
- Proximity to North Saskatchewan River Valley
- Number of great destinations, services and shops
- Strong and diverse community
- New pedestrian crossing lights

What People Don't Like

- Visually unappealing and lack of trees and greenery
- Noisy and vehicle-focused
- Sidewalks narrow and in poor condition, making it difficult to get around
- Connections to amenities and bike lanes broken or non-existent

Ideas for Future Improvement

- Improve connectivity between key destinations
- Create an inviting and pedestrian-friendly space
- Increase landscaping and greenery
- Align future development with vision
- Improve accessibility and safety for families, seniors and persons with disabilities

- Create resting and gathering spaces
- Include the needs of all travelers, including residents and commuters
- integrate greenery, place-making features, public art and artistic streetscape elements
- enhance transit service and connections to LRT

How Input Was Used

From the themes identified above, a draft vision and guiding principles were developed that were shared with the public in Phase 2.

Draft Vision

Jasper Avenue is Edmonton's premier Main Street—a people place.

Draft Principles

- Create a vibrant, all seasons destination: Transform Jasper Avenue into a lively downtown destination and a place of social gathering. Ensure Jasper Avenue is accessible, inclusive, and offers a safe and secure environment in all seasons.
- Shape a community street: Shift the focus of Jasper Avenue to an inviting neighbourhood amenity. Commemorate Jasper Avenue's vibrant history and the dynamic diversity of its people.
- Put pedestrians first, ensure travel options for all users: Increase the priority on pedestrians while recognizing the needs of all method of transportation along Jasper Avenue.
- Increase the green: Enhance and beautify Jasper Avenue with tree planting and landscaping.
- Consider the big picture: Reinforce Jasper Avenue's local connections to the community, river valley, downtown and other destinations. Use the streetscape as a catalyst for higher quality development and urban form.

B.2 Phase 2

What We Heard

There was significant support for the draft vision and guiding principles for Imagine Jasper Avenue developed from input received during Phase 1 engagement. The vision and principles also reflect the City's Main Streets Guideline meaning a solid foundation for the project was established that was supported by both Edmontonians and the City.

Key themes overall from Phase 2 engagement include:

- Improve intersection and pedestrian crossing safety
- Narrow and reduce travel lanes
- Add sidewalk cafes and patios
- Encourage future development; promote high-density mixed-use buildings
- Maintain parking
- Improve cycle connections
- Maintain peak hour commuter capacity

- Slow traffic/reduce speed
- Include street trees and landscaping
- Add pedestrian-oriented lighting
- Provide wide, unobstructed sidewalks

How Input Was Used

Input influenced the following design response:

What We Heard (from public and stakeholders)	City Design Response
Improve intersection/ pedestrian crossing safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curb bulbs added for shorter crossing distances • Full Signals at every intersection with pedestrian priority signal timing and automatic walk signals • Zebra stripes for added visibility • Dual curb ramps to line up with crossing directions
Narrow and reduced travel lanes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removal of bus/parking lane • Lanes could not be narrowed as they currently are at lowest standard width
Add sidewalk cafes and patios desired	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wide public use space offering room for future businesses to incorporate patios/café. • Flex space that could be transformed into patios
Encourage future development; promote high-density, mixed-use buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design allows for wide public use space, street parking, landscaping elements, amenity zone, flex space that will encourage future development opportunities. • Zoning decisions by City Council for Jasper Avenue will be informed by the Main Streets guidelines and criteria
Encourage future development; promote high-density, mixed-use buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design allows for wide public use space, street parking, landscaping elements, amenity zone, flex space that will encourage future development opportunities. • Zoning decisions by City Council for Jasper Avenue will be informed by the Main Streets guidelines and criteria
Maintain Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of on-street parking stalls have been maintained; available 24/7. • Proposed side street parking.
Improve cycling connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 121 Street improved pavement markings and separated bike lane • 110 Street improved pavement markings, two-way cycle track west side south of Avenue and new stop controls into alley south of Jasper • Cycle parking at every other intersection
Maintain peak hour commuter capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic analysis shows current and future traffic volume can be maintained during peak hours. Slight delays may be experienced (3-4 minutes longer than present travel times) • Full signals at every intersection synced to ensure optimum traffic flow • Removal of on-demand pedestrian signals reduces pedestrian crossing interruptions

Slow traffic/reduce speed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic signals at each intersection, reduction in travel lanes, curb bulbs and boulevard trees encourage slower driving speeds
Include street trees and landscaping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trees and/or landscaping incorporated on both sides • Possibility of treed median from 117 Street to 121 Street. • Possibility of landscaped median at 124 Street intersection.
Add pedestrian-oriented lighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fixtures that light both the sidewalk and the street will be incorporated
Provide wide, unobstructed sidewalks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum clear sidewalk width of 3 m will be maintained where possible. Street furnishings, trees and other amenities will be provided their own space and not obstruct pedestrian walking area.

B.3 Phase 3

What We Heard

Regardless of their relationship with and how they use Jasper Avenue, the majority of respondents and commenters supported the Imagine Jasper Avenue draft plan; however, those who did not support the plan, as well as many supporters, indicated a high level of concern about the potential impacts of the design on vehicular traffic flow.

There was majority support for the proposed changes as they are seen as improvements to the pedestrian space with respondents who see value in the creation of a main street destination and accept a rebalance of travel modes leading to a design that includes a pedestrian friendly environment. While respondents value the changes to the public space and see them as enhancements including unobstructed sidewalks, intersection safety improvements, the addition of greenery and furniture zones and the introduction of flex space, there are many who felt the plan simply does not go far enough to create a pedestrian-focused environment.

Although there was strong support for the proposed changes, there is concern that the design will have a significant impact on traffic congestion along this link into downtown. The main proposed changes that caused concern are the reallocation of space from the peak hour bus/off-peak parking lanes along the avenue and the reallocation of space from the left turn lanes between 119 to 124 Streets. It is felt that these modifications will severely impact an already congested transportation link, frustrating commuters and discouraging others from venturing to the city's core and the future Main Street Jasper Avenue.

There was majority support for the proposed improvements to the cycle connections at both 110 and 121 Streets to minimize confusion and improve safety. Some felt that these changes don't go far enough while others suggested that the improvements are not necessary, and would be a poor use of tax dollars.

There was division about parking along the avenue, with some respondents who suggest that all on-street parking be removed and others who fear that patrons will not visit the new main street destination without adequate available parking. While some respondents felt that side-street parking is a necessary addition to the plan, there was concern about the introduction of angle parking, especially as it relates to safety, some suggest back-in angle parking as an option, specifically as a safety measure for cyclists.

Respondents were divided on their views about the potential for a median between 121 and 117 Streets, with a slight majority who favoured the median option. A significant proportion of those who opposed the median felt that the space would be better used for the pedestrian realm. Some supporters, as well as many who oppose the median, suggested the left turn bay should be constructed as part of this project, that it would be a waste of money to deconstruct a median in the future when it could be used to aid in traffic congestion now.

The proposed options for a pedestrian crossing at 124 Street received mixed responses; however, it was noted that safety should be the primary deciding factor and perhaps a crossing would not be necessary at this difficult and dangerous location.

How Input Was Used

Phase 3 input resulted in the following modifications to the draft concept plan:

Design Feature	Response	Result
124 Street pedestrian crossing	53% preferred median. Some safety concerns.	Median added to design. Crossing location moved to north end of the median to improve safety and pedestrian connectivity.
121 Street to 117 Street	52% preferred median. Some concerns about health of trees.	Median incorporated into design with eastbound left turn bay at 118 Street. Raised planter bed to protect landscaping.
Cycle Connections at 110 Street and 121 Street	Majority agreed with proposed designs. Some operational concerns. Suggestions for additional connections received.	110 Street cycle track separated from sidewalk on north side. Additional cycle connections to be reviewed with Bike Grid study.
Bike Parking	Comments regarding a preference for frequent parking at destinations	Large racks provided only at 110 Street and 121 Street cycle frequent parking at destinations connections. Individual rings to be placed at destinations.
111 & 112 Cross Streets	Concerns regarding traffic from 111 & 112 Streets with proposed shared lanes	Further analysis confirmed turning lane requirement. Existing configuration with southbound turn lanes maintained
Transit Operations	Suggestions for buses to pull out instead of stop in the vehicle travel lane	Bus loading areas increased to accommodate two buses to avoid blocking intersections.
Gathering Space	Comments received about the limited amount of community gathering space along the avenue	Opportunities for enhanced treatments along some cross streets identified. As development occurs, these areas could be improved and closed for community event use.

Flex Space	Concerns flex space looks and acts like parking only	A material other than asphalt will be used for this space to mark parking only in the draft design it as separate from vehicle travel space
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B.4 Phase 4

What We Heard

The majority of respondents supported the Imagine Jasper Avenue preferred design, specifically noting support for the shift to a pedestrian priority with wider sidewalks, shorter crossing distances (curb extensions), pedestrian synced lights and the addition of greenery and trees. These elements are seen as contributing to a more pedestrian friendly main street design.

While there was majority support for the proposed changes to vehicle travel, both supporters and those who do not support the plan share concern about the potential impacts of the design to traffic flow that may result from the reallocation of the bus lanes to pedestrian space (the introduction of buses into traffic lanes), and additional traffic lights. Suggestions to help alleviate these impacts include increasing the number of left turn bays, adding turning signals, and syncing traffic lights to benefit vehicle travel.

A new pedestrian crossing at 124 Street was generally supported with suggestions that traffic signals be placed on either side of the crosswalk for increased safety.

The majority supported the changes to the transit space, however both supporters and those not supporting the transit changes are concerned about how buses in the traffic lanes will impact commuter times, as well as bus efficiency.

There are some conflicting views on parking with some respondents who suggested less parking is needed and others who felt more parking is essential.

There was also majority support the proposed cycle improvements including additional bike parking and cycle connection improvements at 110 Street and 121 Street, but some were concerned about the safety of crossing over one side of the road to the other at the 110 Street connection and it was also noted there is a desire for the addition of a 'no right turn on red' signal at this intersection. Comments also suggest a desire for additional cycling connections along Jasper Avenue.

While there are those who still desire a cycle lane on Jasper Avenue, others indicated they support the recommended design as it does not include a cycle lane. Some respondents would like to see a separated bike lane at 121 Street and others suggested a scramble crossing at this intersection.

How Input Was Used

Input gathered during Phase 4 was shared with the project team and will be reviewed and considered as a part of the next project stage (preliminary design), which is scheduled to begin in mid 2017.

C. How the Vision is Reflected in the Recommended Design

The following summarizes how the vision and guiding principles are reflected in the recommended design:

Vision: Jasper Avenue is Edmonton's Premier Main Street - A People Place

Guiding Principles:

Create a vibrant, all seasons destination: Flexibility in design to adapt uses for each season or for special occasions or changes from future development. Flex space for different uses and activities. Pedestrian-oriented street lights will ensure the avenue is well lit at all times.

Shape a community street: Measures to increase accessibility for all ages and abilities. Creation of resting and gathering spaces along the avenue through increased sidewalk widths. Flex space can potentially be used for community activities. Potential gathering spaces along cross streets identified.

Put pedestrians first, ensuring travel options for all users: Enhanced pedestrian space and operations, while also maintaining transit and traffic capacity. End-of-trip cycling facilities, such as bike parking, and connections to 102 Avenue and 100 Avenue bike routes provided.

Increase the green: Street trees and/or landscaping along the length of and on both sides of the avenue. Treed median from 117 Street to 121 Street. Landscaped median at 124 Street intersection.

Consider the big picture: Enhanced transportation and active modes network connections. Market analysis to identify areas most likely for future development. Zoning decisions to be informed by Main Streets Guideline. Zoning regulations to ensure minimum of 1 metre setback of buildings, which will allow additional space for sidewalk cafes and patios as required.

D. Public Engagement Process Feedback

In the final comment form/online survey, respondents were asked about their views of the public engagement process.

The majority of respondents (78%) indicate they understood the goals and objectives of the public engagement and 69 per cent understood how public input helped to shape the preferred concept plan.

Seventy-three per cent (73%) agree adequate information was available to them throughout the project and 72 per cent agree that participating in the Imagine Jasper Avenue process was a good use of their time.

E. Conclusion

The public engagement process for Imagine Jasper Avenue (109 Street to 124 Street) provided multiple opportunities to learn about and provide input on the project by members of the local community, key stakeholders, area businesses, land owners, associations and other organizations, as well Edmontonians who reside outside the project area, including those who commute through the avenue.

While the Oliver community was the most well represented neighbourhood, input was received from all areas of the city, both north, south, east and west of the project area. Although no engagement activities were specifically targeted to commuters, their views were represented (by self-identification) in the comment

forms/online surveys, with those who both support and do not support the recommended design. Participation was low, despite a strong outreach campaign, by business owners and operators, however those who did engage provided valuable insight and feedback.

Over the nearly one and half year process, those who engaged shared both concerns and desires to inform the design. Understanding grew about the significant project constraints and trade-offs necessary to balance the needs of all users, ultimately increasing knowledge of and underscoring the complexity of the exercise.

The majority of engaged participants, including commuters, support the recommended design and applaud the shift to pedestrian priority and the vision of creating Jasper Avenue into a main street destination. There is general support for the new pedestrian crossing at 124 Street, the introduction of the flex space, as well as the cycle crossing improvements and increased bicycle parking.

Concern remains about the impact of the design on traffic flow into and out of the downtown core due to the removal of specific left and right turn bays, and the introduction of buses into vehicle travel lanes. The project installation (summer 2017) will allow supporters and skeptics to both get a feel for the recommended design and test the roadway changes with a goal to make any necessary modifications prior to construction.

Clear and consistent messaging on technical and other project information was communicated through multiple methods to develop informed participants and thereby increase the value of input provided. Interestingly, those new to the project at the final stage, were generally satisfied with the outcome, perhaps suggesting the recommended design and rationale succeeded in balancing the different interests.