



# Downtown LRT

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November 2011

## Public Involvement (Summer/Fall 2011)

At the May 25, 2011 Transportation and Infrastructure Committee meeting, a motion was passed directing Administration to consult with the Chinese Benevolent Association, Boyle Street Community League, and other affected stakeholders regarding the potential for LRT on 102 Avenue, and 102A Avenue, between 97 Street and 95 Street.

A detailed Public Involvement Plan was developed with input from the Chinese Benevolent Association and the Boyle Street Community League. The plan included three meetings to gather input from stakeholder groups, residents, property owners and business operators within the study area. The first two meetings were to gather input regarding the community and the LRT, and the third meeting was to share results of the analysis completed by the project team.

### *Listen and Learn – July 24, 2011*

The first workshop was designed to gather input on the issues, opportunities, and strengths of the study area along both 102 Avenue and 102A Avenue. A total of 28 participants attended this session, which included a walking tour of the area, and a workshop to discuss what is working, and what could be in the area regardless of LRT. Key themes included:

- **Chinatown Gate** - Chinatown Gate is an important historic site with symbolism and cultural meaning and is tied to a cultural contract with the City of Harbin, China.
- **Community/Cultural Identification** - 102 Avenue is the core of the Chinese community with many important cultural, recreational, and residential organizations/facilities that serve residents from all parts of Edmonton.
- **102 Avenue** is an important street carrying many pedestrians, buses, and traffic out of downtown.
- **102A Avenue** has more vacant lots (specifically on the north side) and is not as highly used by vehicles, pedestrians, or buses as 102 Avenue.
- **Underground Option** - potential negative impacts would be mitigated with underground LRT.
- **Development/Housing** - Even with the multiple residential, cultural, and business uses, the area would benefit from more development and activity to draw new people.
- **Parking/Vehicular Access** - Many of the attendees at cultural activities, frequenting businesses, and families of senior's facility residents come from across Edmonton. Emergency access is critically important to the senior's facilities on both the 102 and 102A Avenues. Therefore, most visitors arrive to the area in vehicles so vehicular access and parking remain important.
- **Pedestrian Realm & Crosswalks** - This area attracts many pedestrians moving through the area, as well as those pedestrians who live in the area. Seniors walk along 102 Avenue and the staff of local businesses cross 102 Avenue on foot throughout the day. Pedestrian safety, with provision for midblock crosswalks is important.

### ***Designing Options – August 21, 2011***

In the second workshop, 19 participants developed LRT options on both 102 and 102A Avenues for both surface and underground options. The participants worked with scaled LRT puzzle pieces and worked within design constraints to complete the task. Overarching key themes from the work included:

- The cultural character of the street should be reinforced with all the LRT options.
- The area should have a stop.
- Impacts to buildings should be avoided.
- Access and parking to the existing Chinese seniors residential buildings should be provided.
- Recognize cultural importance of the area.
- The Chinatown gate should not be impacted.
- A number of groups noted they developed 102 Avenue options reluctantly, due to a preference for 102A Avenue
- Provision of pedestrian crossing points at midblock

Following the meeting, options from each group were combined into four composite options to reflect each proposal, and analysis was completed using the LRT Corridor Evaluation Criteria to identify which option best met the criteria.

### ***Sharing the Results – October 5, 2011***

On October 5, 2011, 45 participants attended the third and final meeting at the Winspear Centre. The purpose of the meeting was to share the results of the analysis, answer questions about the conclusions, and ensure residents were aware of the information going forward to Council. Feedback on the recommendation was also collected so it could be shared with City Council as part of the decision-making process. Key themes included:

#### *102A Avenue surface:*

- A strong segment of stakeholders, particularly from the Boyle Street Community League and representatives from the Chinese community, have strongly advocated for a 102A Avenue corridor. Many note a desire to see LRT brought into the area, and feel this option provides greater separation between the LRT and the existing pedestrian and vehicle traffic that is already in place on 102 Avenue, while still providing access to LRT. Others have noted concerns about this option, as it does not provide as direct a connection to activity centres.

#### *102A Avenue underground*

- This option is also supported by stakeholders who feel the 102A Avenue corridor is more appropriate for LRT, though many stakeholders and participants noted concerns about the estimated costs for underground LRT for both corridors.

#### *102 Avenue surface*

- There is a strong segment of the population that has significant issue with surface LRT on 102 Avenue relating to the portal location and the impact this will have on north-south pedestrian crossings, and an overall concern about adding LRT to an area with high pedestrian activity and vehicle/traffic. The need for the LRT to cross under the Chinatown Gate is also a significant concern. Another segment feels the LRT should be on this corridor because of its connection to future development and activity centres.

#### *102 Avenue underground*

- Those who support this option noted a preference for the station location on this option and its proximity to planned Quarters development. Others noted concerns about the cost to construct and did not feel this option was realistic.

# Questionnaire Results

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October 2011

## Downtown LRT

97 Street to 95 Street  
Corridor selection and Concept Plan  
Information Session

A total of 45 participants came to the open house held at the Winspear Centre on Wednesday, October 5, 2011. Of these, 21 completed questionnaires.

- Please help us prepare for future meetings by taking the time to answer a few questions about your experience. Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements, on a scale where 1 means Strongly Disagree and 5 means Strongly Agree.

	1	2	3	4	5
	Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree	
The information presented was useful and informative. N=20	1	1	9	6	3
	10%		45%	45%	
The information was easy to understand. N=21	1		9	6	5
	5%		43%	52%	
The project representatives were helpful, friendly and accessible. N=19			8	5	6
			42%	58%	
I was able to find satisfactory answers to my questions. N=21	5	4	4	3	5
	43%		19%	38%	
I have a better understanding of the project because of my attendance tonight. N=21	3	4	5	3	6
	33%		24%	43%	

### Comments:

Project representatives have wrong idea. We only want 102A Avenue (2)

- How did you hear about this session? (Please check all that apply) (N=27)

8 (30%)	Notice in mail	3 (11%)	Word of mouth
11 (41%)	Email notice	1 (4%)	Phone call
1 (4%)	From my community league	3 (11%)	Other: City website (2); LRT Working Group

3. Did you participate in any of the July or August 2011 workshops?

Yes	14 (67%)
No	7 (33%)
Don't know/recall	0

### 102A Avenue – Surface Option

4. On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means “Not at all” and 5 means “Completely”, how well does this option address your concerns? (n=21)

1 “Not at all”	2	3	4	5 “Completely”
1	2	4	1	14
14%		19%	71%	

5. What do you like about it?

- The fact that it will be a surface station for the Quarters area.
- Cheaper (2)
- Stay away from the busy activities on 102 Avenue (2)
- Your people said that 102 Ave is preferred over 102A Avenue because there is higher density of pedestrian traffic and other activities. I think you need to look at a longer horizon, say 10 to 15 years from now. The reason is that (a) the line won't even be built within the next 5 years. (b) when the lines is in, it will attract development on 102A Avenue, there will be increased pedestrian traffic. You NEED to NOT just consider the whole project from just a static point of view!!
- Nothing
- Station adjacent to Quarters future part at 102A Avenue/96 Street → plaza opportunity
- Would bring vibrancy and improvement to the more desolate of the two avenues → greatly enhance streetscape, spur development of empty/parking lots.
- Allows for retention of more space on 102 Avenue for pedestrian activity (including cycling) → good for the activity centres and festivals/special events.
- Less interruption to the day-to-day activities of the seniors. (2)
- Easy to access
- Room for handicapped parking and passenger loading zones.
- Less noise
- Safety
- Less impact to the Chinese community
- Provide LRT Benefit to the public
- Better serves the community
- Does not impact the China Gate
- It serves Boyle Street and Riverdale communities better. Avoid disruption to Harbin Avenue and Chinese community.
- Make central for LRT users with access needs to the future Museum and having develops at the location.
- Safety for seniors in the area
- More opportunities for housing developments on the vacant lands along 102A Avenue
- n/c
- Route chosen by community after extensive discussion
- Least disruption to community (2)
- Does not destroy community centre
- More chance for TOD development
- Does not destroy important cultural area
- Does not obstruct Chinatown Gate
- Respectful of current and future community needs
- Supported by Chinese community, Boyle Street Comm. League, Artists Urban Village, etc.

## 6. What could be improved?

- Less stops
- Can't be
- I think this option is best. Satisfies the local community AND supportive of city-changing goals of LRT.
- Should have received higher evaluation score → see last page of questionnaire on various criteria categories.
- The community is satisfied and supports the 102A Avenue surface option.
- Do not need improvement
- Better developmental opportunities
- Closer to Downtown core
- Go underground (2)
- Given constraints of overall plan, this is best route.
- If a route through East downtown Edmonton requires a portal (and associated grade-change trench), and cannot provide at least one station at a location that significantly improves transit service for residents of all portions of the area, then an improvement would be moving the route out of East downtown altogether. The current route asks too much of East downtown and returns too little.

**102A Avenue –Underground Option**

7. On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means "Not at all" and 5 means "Completely", how well does this option address your concerns? (N=16)

1 "Not at all"	2	3	4	5 "Completely"
4	1	1		10
31%		6%	63%	

## Comments:

- No need to consider this option. Surface is fine.
- No comment due to cost fact
- Our opinions on underground options are not going to make it happen. So there is no use commenting.

## 8. What do you like about it?

- Nothing
- Don't
- Less disturbance (3)
- Safer for seniors activities (2)
- Prefer 102A option since this will impact building on 102 Avenue
- No physical barrier
- (2) Same as answer to question 5 [reference: 102A Avenue Surface Option].
- No impact to the resident
- Provide LRT benefit to the public
- No impact on surface property at all
- Better for long winter
- Going underground would eliminate concerns on safety for seniors.
- Safety and environmental
- I do not feel sufficiently versed in the pros and cons to make an assessment of this option.

## 9. What could be improved?

- By having surface services
- Underground components are bunk
- N/A
- Generally not supportive of underground station for this neighbourhood
- We support the underground option. No improvement is necessary.
- Easy downtown traffic
- More people take LRT to downtown
- Underground always make sense
- We should not look for the cheapest option, but the best one
- I do not feel sufficiently versed in the pros and cons to make an assessment of this option.

**102 Avenue – Surface Option**

10. On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means “Not at all” and 5 means “Completely”, how well does this option address your concerns? (n=19)

1 “Not at all”	2	3	4	5 “Completely”
14			1	4
74%			26%	

## 11. What do you like about it?

- The option takes into consideration the community needs, but maintains logic in the recommendation made by Administration. I have renewed confidence in City Administration.
- Everything
- See us legit. Cheaper
- Don't like. The Track goes through the China Gate
- Nothing. (4)
- Garbage in (evaluation criteria) garbage out. Surface option better integrated with bicycles and pedestrians? Only if you think pedestrians and cyclists getting run over by trains is the way to go
- Shortened portal – retaining mid-block crossing 15m east of existing.
- No need to demolish valued community buildings
- Increased on-street parking/drop off adjacent to Elders Mansion
- New mid-block crossing on west end of station platform.
- We don't support the surface option.
- More interruption to the seniors activities.
- More interruption to the cultural activities
- Not easy to access
- Less parking available.
- I do not support 102 Avenue Surface Option
- I do not like this at all
- Nothing. It is destructive and arbitrary and against all community opinion.

## 12. What could be improved?

- Nothing
- If cost is a concern. There's nothing that can change this to address this concern, of course, if the track goes underground then it will not be an eye sore under the gate.
- Irredeemable (2)
- Already much improved from previous 102 Surface route presented in April 2011
- No comment
- Do not put it there at all
- Go underground (3)
- Listen to the community
- Move route to 102A Avenue
- Respect community needs.

**102 Avenue –Underground Option**

13. On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means "Not at all" and 5 means "Completely", how well does this option address your concerns? (n=19)

1 "Not at all"	2	3	4	5 "Completely"
6	3	1	2	7
47%		5%	47%	

## Comments:

- Because of the higher cost, would Council consider this option, realistically???
- Not comment due to cost
- Since it is obvious that the underground option is not really being considered, there is no use commenting in detail.

## 14. What do you like about it?

- Nothing (2)
- Slightly better because underground for one more block. Better located station to meet needs of Quarters.
- No physical barrier
- Same as answer #5 [102A Avenue Surface]
- No impact to the Chinese community
- Attract more people to take LRT to downtown
- Same as Question 7 [102A Avenue Underground option]
- Minimize disruption to the community
- Less disturbance
- n/c
- It would preserve 102 Avenue and gate eventually, but only after HUGE disruption.
- Not an option.

## 15. What could be improved?

- By having surface services
- Expensive
- Keep it underground for one more block and locate the portal west of 97 Street.
- Generally not supportive of underground station for this neighbourhood.
- We support the underground option. No improvement is necessary.
- Underground option will actually serve the seniors better in the area
- This option is irredeemable.

## Final Recommendation – 102 Avenue Surface

Is there anything more that should be considered on this option?

- It would be nice if there was a stop on the south side of the Winspear. That would make for easy access to the courthouse and Canada Place, which are two heavy LRT user groups.
- No
- Great visual representation of things
- Taking too long
- Rear access to parking on building 9524 Jasper Avenue building on the corner
- Genuine consultation rather than weighting the criteria to generate a pre-ordained result
- Evaluation of the 4 options using the criteria should have been done in concert with the community.
- Why I think 102A Avenue surface should have scored higher:
  - o “Land use/Promoting compact Urban Form” – It seems a big reason for many of the red scores in this category is due to the planned zoning for the Quarters area. But zoning can always be changed to encourage/support higher density on 102A Avenue if LRT built on 102A.
  - o “Parks, River Valley & Ravine System” – 102A Avenue surface option should logically have just as much opportunity for streetscaping as 102 Avenue surface.
  - o “Social Environment” – Both surface options had overall category score of 0.5, but 102 Avenue surface has one red score while 102A surface has no red score?
- Choose the 102A Avenue Surface Option (2)
- The community supports LRT expansion
- Parking (loading zones and handicapped parking) (2)
- Environmental issues
- Revitalization factors
- Senior safety
- Noise from LRT
- Do not put it there
- Improve aesthetic through landscape improvement and cultural themed street furniture.
- No support for 102 Avenue surface
- Underground LRT only please.
- The Chinese community living in the vicinity of 102 Avenue does not support this recommendation due to:
  - o Risk to seniors living in the seniors towers
  - o Divisive to the Chinese community when the portal cuts right through Chinatown between 96 Street to 95 Street.
  - o Cultural heritage is dismantled
  - o Chinatown Gate symbolizes the entry into Chinatown and to have trains/LRT running into Chinatown shows disrespect to the community and Harbin City, or sister-city.
- Underground LRT is far better for future development of the area.
- This option is completely against all community input.
- It is destructive, unworkable for community, and disrespectful
- The public process did not allow the community to discuss the decision-making matrix.
- The evaluations in the matrix are biased and in some cases demonstrably wrong. It is NOT an objective evaluation and does not take the community’s opinions, work, input and preservation into account.
- I don’t believe the Chinatown Gate will be safe and even if it isn’t immediately damaged, what will the long-term effects be?
- China Gate is to welcome everyone to the community, not to be cluttered up with trains.
- 102A Avenue Route is supported by Chinese community groups, Boyle Street Community League, Artists Urban Village, etc.
- This is a bad choice. If community input had been respected, LRT would have the community’s support.
- Yes. In my opinion the evaluation criteria and the weighting of those criteria should be re-considered entirely. I cannot discern a comprehensible foundation for the current evaluation in either of any value system known to me or in the practical realities of East-downtown Edmonton as know it to be now and as I expect it to become.
- Perhaps if the consultation process had not been so arbitrarily truncated, City staff could have achieved a truer understanding of the issues and factors involved in this matter.



**Public Involvement:**

16. On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means "not at all satisfied" and 5 means "Very satisfied"; overall, how satisfied are you with the City's efforts to keeping the public involved in the planning of this project? (n=21)

1: Not at all Satisfied	2	3	4	5: Very satisfied
7	2	6	3	3
43%		29%	29%	

**Comments:**

- At least there was a public process at last.
- Public process was incomplete. Needed to discuss the evaluation criteria.
- There should have been a third consultation meeting, as promised, not an open house in place of the meeting

**Demographic Information:**

17. What interests are you representing when completing this comment form? *(Please check all that apply)* (n=40)

3 (8%)	Resident of the Community	10 (25%)	Volunteer in the community
3 (8%)	Business owner in the community	2 (5%)	Post-secondary student
5 (13%)	Service provider in the community (not for profit)	3 (8%)	Shopper at a business in the community
0	Employee of an organization located in the community	4 (10%)	Transit user
7 (18%)	Property owner in the community	3 (8%)	Other: Frequent visitor of area (2); Lifetime citizen of Edmonton with a memory of history, a respect for community opinion, and the interests of the whole City in mind.