



# Downtown LRT Connector

## Public Involvement Report 2010

[www.edmonton.ca/LRTProjects](http://www.edmonton.ca/LRTProjects)

November 2010

Following City Council's approval of the Downtown LRT Connector Corridor study on June 21, 2010, a Concept Planning study was initiated to define where they LRT would fit within the approved corridor, where LRT stops would be located, and what type of access changes would be required for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists.

A public involvement process was initiated to support the planning study, and to identify local issues and impacts that needed to be addressed through the planning process. The process had two key stages:

### ***September to October 2010 – Review options***

A number of options for the LRT alignment, LRT stop locations, pedestrian and cyclist connections, and vehicle access changes were reviewed with a broad range of community, commercial/business, active transportation, transit user and institutional stakeholders. The options were also posted online at [www.edmonton.ca/LRT](http://www.edmonton.ca/LRT) projects. Over 120 people participated by attending presentations, interviews, and by completing questionnaires.

### ***November 2010 – Collect feedback on draft Concept Plan***

With consideration of technical study and stakeholder input, a draft Concept Plan was developed and presented to the public at an open house on November 2, 2010. A total of 148 people attended that open house. Feedback from that open house will be presented to City Council as part of the decision-making process.

## **Key Themes**

There is overarching support for additional LRT service in the Downtown, which is a benefit to the businesses, institutions and community in the area, and as a focal point for continued growth and expansion of the City. LRT is seen by many as a way to improve access to and from downtown Edmonton and to therefore increase business and facility use. There is a desire for enhanced pedestrian and cyclist facilities and connections to major destination points.

However, the removal of vehicle capacity and decreased access to adjacent parkades along the corridor is of concern to a segment of the population. The balance between maintaining vehicle access and enhancing pedestrian and cyclist facilities with LRT is a competing theme.

There were also competing interests relative to station location with some key stakeholders suggesting that recommended station locations need to be closer to individual locations to be of optimal benefit. Others noted concerns about safety, security and access impacts with stations located too close to their buildings.

Another segment of the population has raised concerns about pedestrian and cycling circulation along the corridor. While many indicated support for a balanced approach that saw enhancements for cyclists and the addition of bike lanes in places along the corridor, another segment of the population has noted concerns that the cycling lanes are not continuous along the corridor, and many have indicated a preference that 102 Avenue be closed to vehicle traffic to allow for continuous bike lanes.

### ***Campus Stop***

- The desire to serve both MacEwan and NorQuest has been identified in this area, with some noting a desire for closer connections to either of the institutions with potentially adding another stop to serve NorQuest, and others noting a desire for the recommended location because it serves both destinations. A desire for a pedestrian overpass to MacEwan was raised. Some have noted concerns about the loss of the AADAC building and its architecture for the area, while others have noted benefits to the site because it provides potential for new development and amenity space to replace the parking lots that occupy the majority of the site as it exists today. Concern about losing a traffic lane on 104 Avenue was also identified.

### ***105/106 Street Stop***

- The desire to serve NorQuest with a stop directly adjacent to the campus was raised, as well as concerns for the 104 Street Market. In discussion with the 104 Street Market, there is concerns about the impact to the operation today but also interest and excitement about the addition of LRT. Future work would be needed to identify impacts that may arise from construction and operation on the market.

### ***Centre West Stop***

- Options considered to remove or reduce vehicle access to 102 Avenue were positively viewed and promoted by some who wanted to see a more pedestrian-oriented environment, while others noted a concern about vehicle access to parkades and businesses along the corridor. It is noted that 102 Avenue is already a key bus transit corridor, and there is a desire to ensure that people served by transit along this corridor continue to be served in the future. Concerns have been raised about security in and around transit locations in this area. A need to ensure security concerns are addressed for the LRT stops and the adjacent areas in the future has also been raised.

### ***Churchill Stop***

- The closure of 102 Avenue in the area to allow for more bike lanes and the station at Churchill was desired by a broad range of the participants. The ability for this to also enhance Churchill Square and benefit the destinations in the area was also identified. The need to ensure the LRT does not impact the operations at the Winspear and the Citadel was raised. Security measures at the station and in the area will need to be considered on an ongoing basis.

### ***Quarters***

- The need for this station to serve and contribute to planned development in the Quarters was raised. Some desired the stop be moved closer to the planned higher density for the area. Future construction staging activities have been identified as concerns that will need to be discussed with residents in the area.

## **Open House Feedback – November 2, 2010**

- A total of 148 people attended the open house for the Downtown LRT Connector on November 2, 2010. Of those, approximately 50 completed questionnaires.
- Almost half of the respondents (47%) who completed the open house survey indicated they were satisfied with the draft LRT Concept Plan, with 27% indicating they were neutral, and 26% indicating they were dissatisfied.

- Participants who were satisfied with the draft Concept Plan most frequently stated it was a good plan that was well balanced to consider the needs of many stakeholders, that the plan needs to move forward, and that they see benefits from reducing road capacity and enhancing pedestrian focus. Those who indicated dissatisfaction were most likely to be concerned about the impact of reduced roadway capacity and on cars and traffic congestion, and they noted concerns regarding station locations and bus transit integration.
- Participants primarily indicated support for the recommended alignment, as many noted the alignment improved opportunities for pedestrians and cyclist in the downtown, and they noted a balance has been struck between private vehicle traffic and public transit. However, another group has indicated concerns that the plan has too much of an impact on vehicle traffic in the downtown.
- Participants indicated support for the station locations, as means to connect to major destinations, and integrate with other transit modes such as the existing LRT lines. It has been noted by some that the plan is balanced and serves the major corridors. However, a segment has expressed concerns that the Campus Station needs to be more closely spaced to Grant MacEwan University, and that NorQuest should have a more directly connected station. Some participants also noted a desire for the Quarters station to be more optimally located towards planned higher density in the planned development.

### **Review Options: September/October 2010**

- Participants were very positive about the potential for expanding LRT and saw benefits to the community, businesses and institutions. There is a great deal of interest in seeing downtown as a connection point for all LRT lines within the city.
- There was interest and support for options that increased pedestrian and cyclist connectivity to the LRT and within the downtown as a whole.
- The importance of ensuring safe and secure LRT stops was also raised. As the LRT planning process moves forward, there is a need to provide safety and security features at stops and in the adjacent areas.
- There is a desire to preserve vehicle access to Jasper Avenue and to parkades along the corridor. Participants noted concerns about specific pedestrian and shipping access impacts when reviewing the alignment options.
- A mixture of views was heard on the potential to decrease capacity or close sections of 102 Avenue to vehicle traffic. Some participants noted a great potential to transform the area as a transit and pedestrian-focused area. Others noted concerns about the impacts this would have on vehicle access to key commercial properties in the area.
- Stakeholders noted the identified stop locations were connected with the right destinations and activity centres. However, throughout the process, a need to balance the different interests to determine the best stop locations was reinforced.
- With the potential development of a new arena district in the downtown, it was reinforced that planning for LRT needs to consider the possible impacts.

## Detailed list of public involvement activities

Date	Activity
Aug 16, 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting with Downtown Business Association (Jim Taylor)</li> </ul>
Sept 1, 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interview with Citadel Theatre (3 attendees)</li> </ul>
Sept 2, 2010	Downtown LRT Breakfast meeting (35 attendees) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Co-sponsored by Downtown Business Association and City of Edmonton</li> <li>54 stakeholder groups invited, representing community, commercial/business, active transportation, transit, and institutions.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interview with Edmonton Public Library (2 attendees)</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interview with NorQuest College (3 attendees)</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interview with Katz Group (1 attendee)</li> </ul>
Sept 3, 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interview with the Winspear Centre (1 attendee)</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interview with Manulife Centre (2 attendees)</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interview with YMCA (1 attendee)</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interview with City Centre Mall (1 attendee)</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interview with Canada Place</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interview with MacEwan University (2 attendees)</li> </ul>
Sept 23, 2010	Building Owners and Managers Association – BOMA (80 participants) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presentation and questionnaire presented at BOMA lunch</li> </ul>
	Meeting with NorQuest College
Sept 27, 2010	Alberta Health Services (1 attendee)
Sept 28, 2010	Meeting with Fire Rescue
Oct 4, 2010	Meeting with the Quarters Project
October 7, 2010	Meeting with NorQuest College (2 attendees)
	Downtown Edmonton Community League <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Special General Meeting on LRT</li> <li>Presented LRT options</li> </ul>
Oct 14, 2010	Meeting with NorQuest College
Oct 25, 2010	104 Street Market – Board of Directors
Nov 2, 2010	Open House- Stanley Milner Library (148 participants)

Total: 23 events (August to November 2, 2010) Approximately 290 participants