

# CENTRE LRT STUDY

## Public Engagement | What We Heard

Phase 2 | November 2017 – March 2018



### PROJECT OVERVIEW

In 2009, City Council adopted a long-term Light Rail Transit (LRT) Network Plan that defines the future size, scale and operation of Edmonton's LRT system. It includes the expansion of the Capital Line to the north and south, expansion of the Metro Line to St. Albert city limits, and completion of the Valley Line Southeast and West.

The plan also identifies the need for an east/west route south of the river that, once in place, would complete the network creating seamless or one transfer connections via LRT and/or bus to all quadrants of the city. The Centre LRT Study is determining the best possible option for this future route that would specifically connect Downtown, the Alberta Legislature, the University of Alberta, Strathcona, Bonnie Doon, and east Edmonton. The study began in June 2017 and is scheduled to conclude with both a route selection and a concept design. Funding is currently not available to proceed with the project past the concept design phase. There is no timeline for construction of the route.

### PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

The planning of this new LRT route requires both *public engagement*, to gather local knowledge, concerns and opportunities, and *technical studies*, to understand route possibilities and constraints.

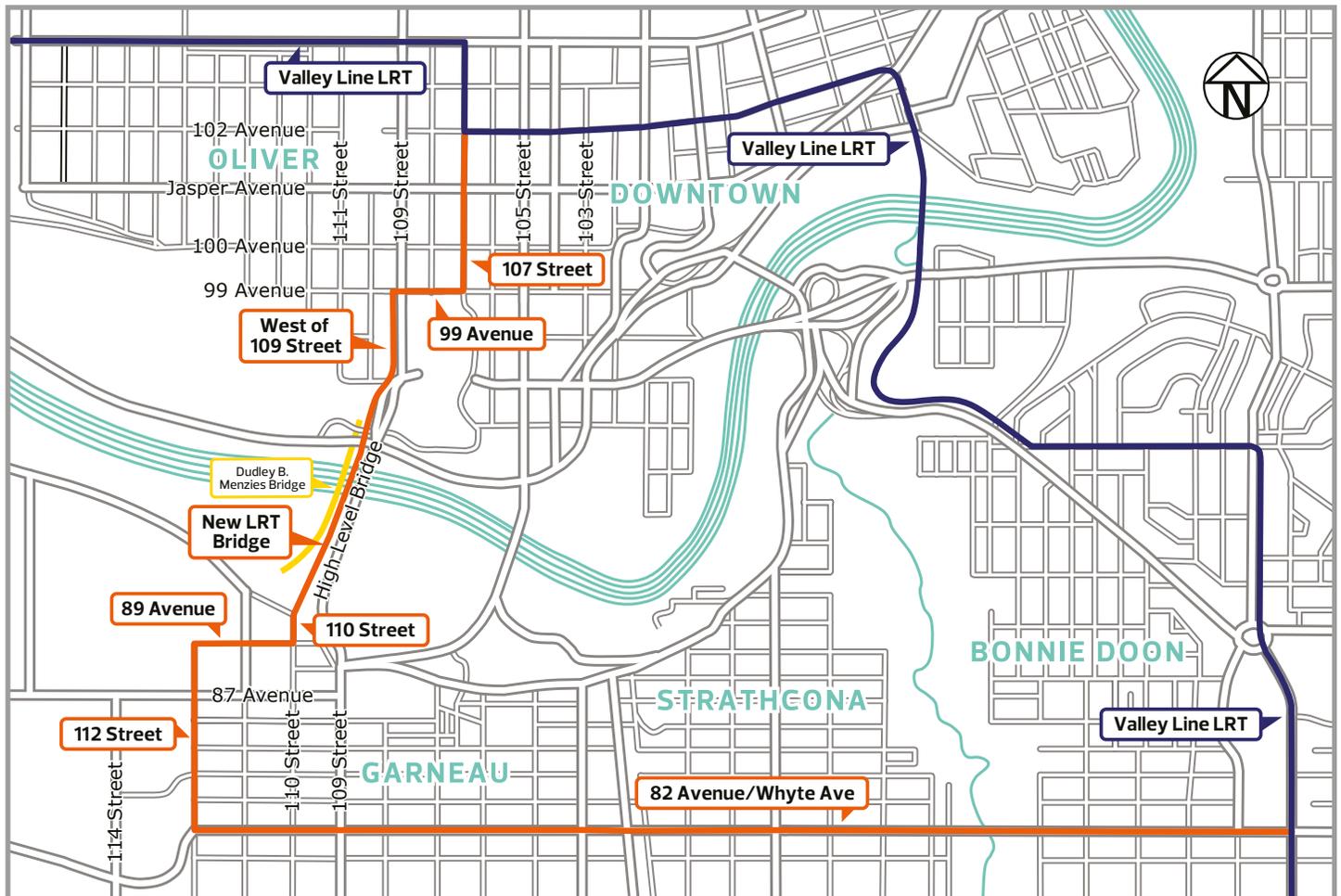
- A public engagement process has been designed for the Centre LRT Study to create opportunities for the public, community and special interest stakeholders, and local businesses to provide input into the route selection, stop locations and track alignment.
  - Phases 1 and 2 – Route Selection
  - Phases 3 and 4 – Concept Design (confirm stop locations, alignment, and how the LRT will fit into neighbourhoods)

This document summarizes input received from Phase 2 engagement activities.

## WHAT WAS PROPOSED: PREFERRED LRT ROUTE

Input received during the Phase 1 public engagement process, together with the technical learnings, helped inform the preferred route which was shared with the public in Phase 2 (February 2018). See map below:

It was later learned that the river crossing and route through the University of Alberta area/Garneau community require further study and stakeholder involvement.



## ENGAGEMENT PHASE 2

Phase 2 objectives: Gather feedback to help refine preferred route, determine preferences on stop locations, and understand community considerations for integrating LRT.

**Public Engagement Events** (3) 375 attendees

**Surveys** 1,605 completed (1,575 public, 17 business, 13 University of Alberta)

**Community League/Special Interest Group/Business Meetings** 15

## WHAT WE HEARD: RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Different audiences shared many similarities of opinions. What follows is a compilation of common themes and issues identified across the different engagement tactics and audience groups. Input was received via surveys, sticky note comments on maps at public events, meeting notes and emails. This compilation of opinions is not ranked or rated.

The following is a general summary of what we learned overall during this phase of engagement.

### The Preferred Route

Overall, the public is generally supportive of the preferred route suggesting it improves links and access to key destinations such as Whyte Avenue, the University of Alberta, Bonnie Doon and Downtown, as well as connectivity with the overall transit network. Other supportive comments note the route provides alternative transportation options to area residents, students, seniors, and it has potential to reduce vehicle traffic and encourage area revitalization and business development.

The primary concern with both those who support the route and those who do not, is the impact of the LRT on traffic flow, most specifically along Whyte Avenue, which is a key east/west vehicle and emergency vehicle connection. Other common concerns identified include the redundancy of three bridges in proximity to one another, the cost and necessity of a new LRT route, and impacts to emergency vehicle access to the University of Alberta Hospital site along 112 Street.

### Stop Locations

Public preference for stop locations along the preferred route:

#### DOWNTOWN AREA

##### 107 Street between 99 Avenue and 102 Avenue

Equal preference for a stop between either:

- 100 Avenue and Jasper Avenue
- Jasper Avenue and 102 Avenue

##### 99 Avenue between 107 Street and 109 Street

Preference for a stop between:

- 108 Street and 109 Street

##### Along 109 Street between 99 Avenue and the river crossing

Preference for a stop:

- Aligned with or near Grandin Station

#### UNIVERSITY AREA

##### 89 Avenue between 110 Street and 112 Street

Preference nearly equal for a stop between (in order of preference):

- 110 Street and 111 Street
- 111 Street and 112 Street

##### 112 Street between 82 Avenue and 89 Avenue

Preference nearly equal for a stop between (in order of preference):

- 82 Avenue and 84 Avenue
- 84 Avenue and 87 Avenue
- 87 Avenue and 89 Avenue

#### WHYTE AVENUE (82 AVENUE)

##### 82 Avenue between 105 Street and 112 Street

Preference nearly equal for a stop between (in order of preference):

- 107 Street and 109 Street
- 105 Street and 107 Street

##### 82 Avenue between 98 Street and 105 Street

Preference for a stop between:

- 105 Street and Gateway Boulevard

##### 82 Avenue between 83 Street and 98 Street

Preference nearly equal for a stop between (in order of preference):

- Between 96 Street and 98 Street
- Between 83 Street and 97 Street
- Between 89 Street and 91 Street

## CHARACTER/AESTHETICS

Feedback indicates a desire to preserve the aesthetic character and ambience of both Whyte Avenue and the Garneau neighbourhood. This includes protecting historical homes and buildings, green spaces and trees. LRT infrastructure should also consider including additional landscaping, artwork and benches along the route.

## PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLIST ACCESS/SAFETY

Pedestrian safety around and across LRT infrastructure should be given high priority. Comments suggest crossing north/south along 82 Avenue particularly at the 109 Street and 112 Street intersections as the areas of greatest concern.

Student safety and for those walking and cycling in the campus areas is a key priority for the University of Alberta.

Ensure bike parking is available at or near stations.

## BUSINESS IMPACTS

Businesses, particularly along Whyte Avenue, are concerned about impact of the LRT on the character of the area, parking, and most importantly, the construction impacts on business operations and profitability.

## RESIDENTIAL IMPACTS

Residents would like LRT to consider impacts such as neighbourhood disruptions (during and after construction), increased traffic (shortcutting), loss of and non-resident parking, impeded access into communities, and decreased property values.

## Community Integration (how the LRT will fit into neighbourhoods)

### TRAFFIC/VEHICLE ACCESS

How this LRT will integrate with and impact traffic flow along the preferred route is of utmost importance and concern to the public, businesses and stakeholders. Residents are concerned about neighbourhood access and diverted traffic shortcutting through their streets. Alberta Health Services raised concern regarding impacts to emergency vehicle access to the University of Alberta Hospital site at 112 Street. Vehicle commuters are concerned with increased congestion and drive time along the preferred route. Others would like consideration given to building the LRT above or below street level.

## ROUTE SEGMENTS APPROVED – AUGUST 2018

The Downtown (102 Avenue to the North Saskatchewan River) and Whyte Avenue (83 Street to 109 Street) segments of the route were approved for further concept level planning by City Council on August 21, 2018.

In keeping with our commitment to continue to explore options and possible approaches to effectively address raised issues by the public and stakeholders, the river crossing and route through the University of Alberta area/Garneau community segments were not taken with the rest of the preferred route for City Council approval.



**PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT**  
SHARE YOUR VOICE SHAPE OUR CITY

For more information:

[edmonton.ca/CentreLRTStudy](https://www.edmonton.ca/CentreLRTStudy)  
[centreLRTstudy@edmonton.ca](mailto:centreLRTstudy@edmonton.ca)  
 780-496-4874

**Edmonton**