

Citizen Working Group - Zone "F" (Downtown/Groat)

MINUTES

Meeting # 1	Location: Queen Mary Park Community League 10844 - 117 St
Date: October 19, 2017	Time: 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Members		Attendance
Andrew MacIsaac	Downtown Edmonton Community League	✓
PM Edmond	Oliver Community League	✓
Derrick Forsythe	Queen Mary Park Community League	✓
Robert Summers	Westmount Community League	✓
Jeff McLaren	124 Street Business Association	✓
Sarah Proudlock	124 Street Business Association	✓
Dan Young	City Market Downtown	
Brent Francis	Edmonton Chamber of Commerce	
Melaniee Smith	Oxford Developments - Edmonton City Centre	
Ian O'Donnell	Edmonton Downtown Business Association	
Kajsa Duke	Public at Large	✓
Thomas Oster	Public at Large	✓
Jack Stuempel	Community Relations Advisor (Facilitator)	✓

Guests		
Katrina Lawrence	Member of the public	✓

1.	Welcome & introductions	Action by:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting participants introduced themselves, and Jack briefly explained the history and purpose of the Valley Line LRT Citizen Working Groups. 	
2.	Confirmation of agenda	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The agenda was adopted as circulated. 	
3.	Terms of reference	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The group reviewed the terms of reference, which outline the general purpose of the groups, their composition and coverage area, and guidelines for the conduct of meetings. To help keep the focus on the community, there will not generally be an expanded City delegation at these meetings, except where special expertise (sometimes from other departments) is warranted to hear and respond to specific questions and/or concerns. 	
4.	Zone boundaries	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The group discussed the zone boundaries, which have been established as a starting-off point, with the working groups being invited to suggest adjustments to better reflect the interests of the community and relationships between neighbourhoods. It was suggested that while the eastern boundary for Zone F is indicated as approximately 101 Street, all of downtown might be considered part of the zone, with the zone boundary set at 97 Street for a greater overlap with the Downtown Citizen Working Group established for Valley Line Southeast (Zone A). This is substantially reflected in the membership of Zone F, which includes some members who also participate in Zone A. There was also a suggestion that the western boundary might be extended to overlap the zone to the west by including Glenora. Ultimately, it was agreed that for the time being, the boundaries appear reasonable. 	
5.	Group composition / membership	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The group reviewed the composition of the group, with it being noted that recruitment still needs to be completed for the school sector and the seniors' sector. The seat allocated for MacEwan University also remains to be filled. The group suggested that it would be appropriate for First Capital Realty of Long Street and the Brewery District to participate, and it was noted that contact has been made with them. It was suggested that adding a student representative from MacEwan University would provide a valuable perspective. 	Jack
6.	Project update	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jack presented an overview of the Valley Line West project, including the status of the current technical review being undertaken to identify any changes that might be necessary to enable the project to be ready for possible procurement in 2018. The technical review includes an assessment of the LRT crossings at several major intersections. While the LRT will cross most intersections at ground level, controlled by the same signals that control car traffic, 	

	<p>some major intersections are being evaluated to determine if a grade-separated crossing would improve intersection performance enough to warrant the cost and other potential impacts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public engagement sessions are planned for November 15 and 16 to obtain further input on LRT crossing assessments before recommendations go to City Council. 	
7.	Round Table	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There was some discussion regarding the nature of matters that members might bring forward at future meetings of the Citizen Working Group, with it being explained that the members should advance LRT-related topics that might be of interest to their communities. Examples from similar groups established for Valley Line Southeast included concerns over non-resident parking, and possible opportunities for landscaping in the river valley to include an “edible forest” component. There was a question regarding the Valley Line West’s potential impact on some key accesses in the downtown area. These impacts, which would go beyond inconvenience, have been noted and the City is working to address them. Discussion turned to the role of the Citizen Working Group and the question of how meaningful the group’s contribution is capable of being, considering that the major fundamental decisions, including the style of LRT as well as LRT corridor and alignment choices, are firm. It was acknowledged that it might have been more ideal to establish these working groups earlier in project development process, but despite limitations, there are still opportunities for the working groups and the public at large to influence outcomes in how the approved plans are implemented. For example, public input will be one of the factors considered by Council in the LRT crossing assessments. Also, part of the facilitator’s role in this engagement model is to help advocate on behalf of the group within the City organization. It was recommended that the City provide adequate signage and publicity for the “jughandle” manoeuvres that will be required as a result of turning restrictions at some intersections, including 124 Street. Similarly, there is a desire to see appropriate publicity in support of traffic pattern changes that will affect businesses in the 124 Street Business Improvement Area. Impacts to business accesses also remain a concern, and there is a feeling that there has been insufficient response to matters that have been raised previously. There is also community concern over the potential additional traffic that may be concentrated on 127 Street north of Stony Plain Road due to the removal left-turning opportunities along much of the section. There is significant interest in traffic studies used to support decision-making in such matters as the crossing assessments. It is expected that recommendations to Council will include reference to traffic analysis, as well as cost, local impacts, public input and other considerations. The group suggested that the “reach” of the City’s public engagement process could improve, and members acknowledged that they will have a role to play in extending that reach. The Edmonton Insight Community is an additional City initiative that gives a voice to the community. Members were reminded that if they wish to receive updates on the Valley Line (apart from information they might receive as part of the 	

	Working Group process), they can subscribe to automatic emails from the LRT Projects Information Centre: http://bit.ly/1HSobbS .	
8.	Next meeting	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The group agreed the next meeting should be targeted for mid-January, again at the Queen Mary Park Community Hall. (Jack to poll for a date.)	All

Notes by Jack Stuempel