

What We Heard Report

Meyokumin Neighbourhood and Alley Renewal

Exploring Options and Tradeoffs
September – October 2022

REFINE

SHARE YOUR VOICE
SHAPE OUR CITY

Edmonton

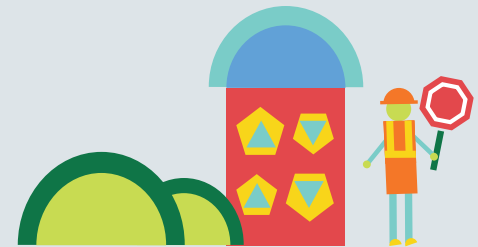
Project overview

Neighbourhood and Alley Renewal in Meyokumin will begin in 2024. Through the City of Edmonton's Neighbourhood Renewal program, we will rehabilitate roads, replace street lights, repair sidewalks and connect missing sidewalk and pathways where possible. Alley Renewal will also be included as part of this project and involves rebuilding alleys, improvements to surface drainage where possible and upgrading of existing lighting.

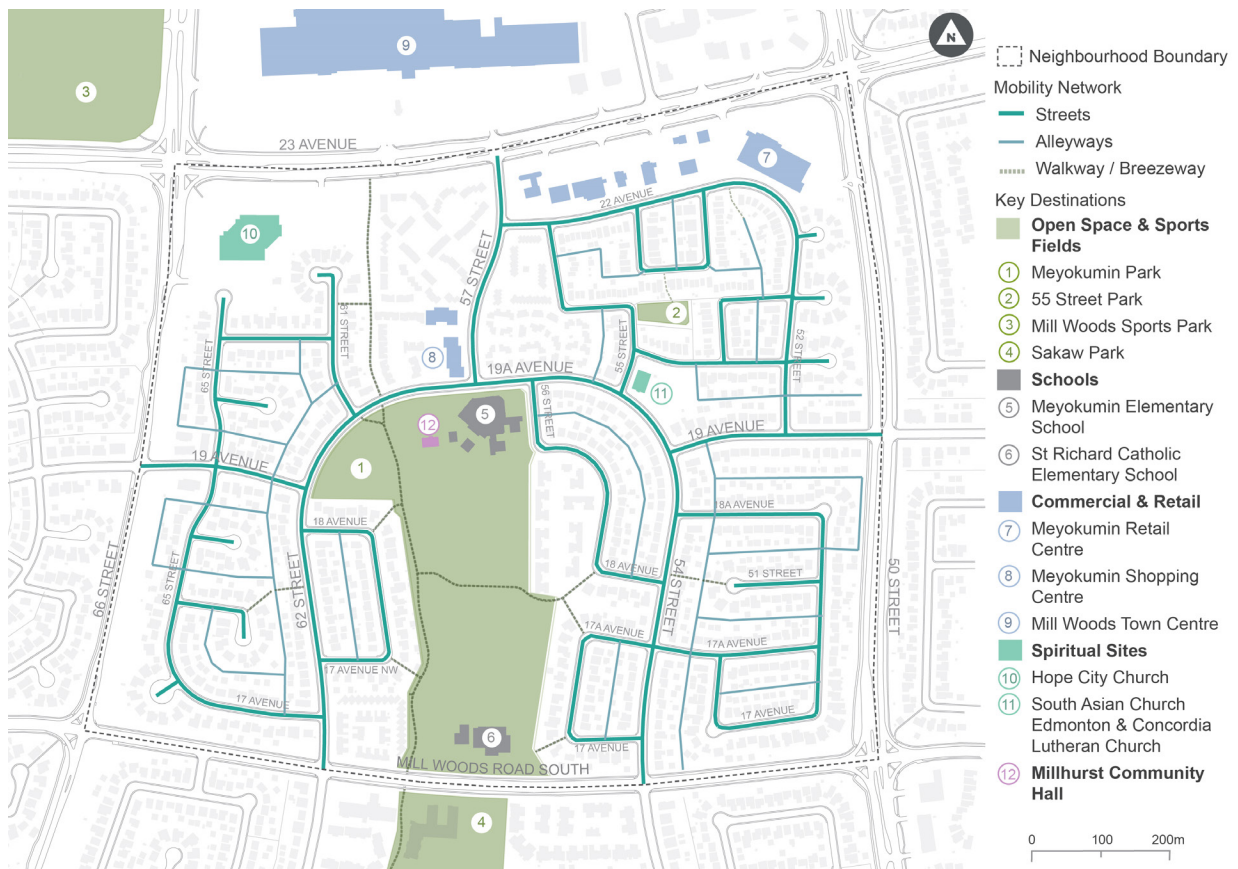
Cost-sharing opportunities will be made available through the Local Improvement process for sidewalk reconstruction and decorative street light upgrades in the neighbourhood. Other opportunities to improve City-owned parks and public spaces will also be explored.

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Meyokumin Neighbourhood and Alley Renewal Scope Map



Where we are in the decision making process

The Neighbourhood Renewal program follows the roadmap below and this report focuses on public input heard during the **Exploring Options and Tradeoffs** stage. At each step, the Project Team shares information with you about how your input has and will inform decisions.

Road Map to Building Great Neighbourhoods



LEGEND

- Public Engagement and Communications Opportunities
- Concept Phase
- Design Phase
- Build Phase
- Operate Phase

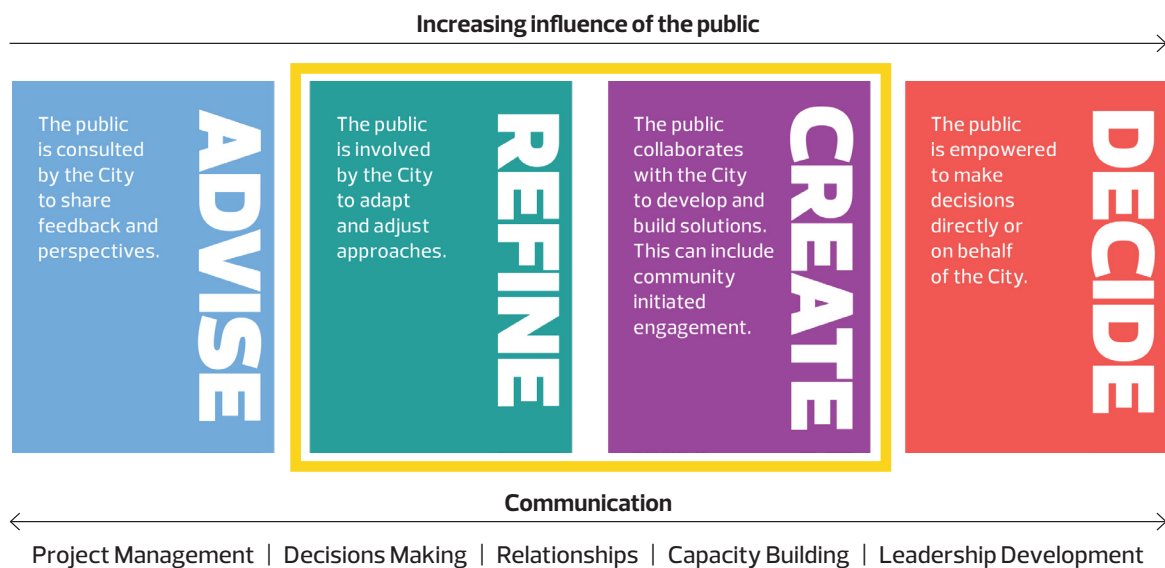
Public engagement spectrum

The City of Edmonton seeks input from residents to help guide the project. The City's public engagement spectrum, below, shows the four levels of influence that the public can have on decisions made by the City throughout the project.

The public was invited to provide input that would help:

- + **CREATE** a Vision and Guiding Principles
- + **REFINE** the Project Team's knowledge of neighbourhood assets, opportunities and priorities

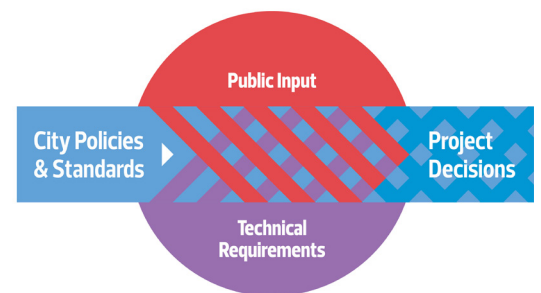
We commit to telling you how the public's comments influence decisions according to the public engagement spectrum.



Decision making process

The City makes decisions using a combination of policy and program information, public engagement comments, technical requirements and available funding. This process helps to ensure that the decisions we make are fiscally responsible, align with best design practices, consider the existing public and private infrastructure, land uses and activities in the neighbourhood and result in the best outcomes for our city.

City policies and programs such as the Complete Streets Design and Construction Standards, Safe Mobility Strategy and Winter City Strategy provide the overall direction for Neighbourhood Renewal designs. As each neighbourhood is unique, the Project Team asks for input from residents who live, work and play in the neighbourhood and considers technical aspects such as roadway widths and conflicts with utilities and trees to determine what will fit in the neighbourhood.



What we did and what we asked

The Meyokumin Neighbourhood and Alley Renewal Project Team organized the following opportunities for the public to share their thoughts on the most important considerations when looking at tradeoffs for design options. This input will help the Project Team **REFINE** the options into a draft design for Neighbourhood and Alley Renewal.



Online Survey

An online survey was available to the public from September 17 to October 11, 2022, asking participants to confirm the draft Vision and Guiding Principles. We also asked for input on proposed options and tradeoffs for Meyokumin.

Paper copies of the survey were available to community members upon request.

86 Respondents



Project Web Page

We asked residents to visit the project web page to learn more about Meyokumin Neighbourhood and Alley Renewal and invited them to provide feedback on the Options and Tradeoffs. There were 880 visitors to the project web page, with 110 people also viewing the presentation. A comprehensive design booklet was posted on the web page, making it easier for people to see and understand the full design package.

880 Unique visits to edmonton.ca/BuildingMeyokumin

110 Video views



Community League Day

The project team attended Community League Day, September 17, 2022 at Millhurst Community League hall and grounds. The team engaged with 75 individuals through a variety of techniques. These included:

- + Playing cards showing various options
- + A walking map where participants identified their existing and desired walking routes
- + A display board showing the draft Vision and Guiding Principles for the project, for people to provide feedback
- + Display boards with general information about the project, such as cost-sharing opportunities
- + A 'Plinko' type game to engage children and teens about what they want to see in their neighbourhood

75 Participants



How we communicated

- + Two road signs
- + Facebook advertising: 69,371 views, 639 clicks
- + 2,500 door hangers
- + 12 posters
- + Two notices in Millhurst Community League newsletter (260 subscribers)
- + Four A-frame signs
- + Two notices on the Millhurst Community League Facebook page (764 followers)

What we heard

Confirmation of Vision and Guiding Principles

In the previous phase of engagement, we worked with the community to **CREATE** a neighbourhood Vision statement and a set of Guiding Principles. This Vision will be used to guide decision making for neighbourhood renewal. The Guiding Principles are ideas that inform how the Vision should be applied to the neighbourhood design.

During the **Exploring Options and Tradeoffs** stage of engagement, we presented the Vision and Guiding Principles to the community through an online survey and at Community League Day. After feedback, the Vision and Guiding Principles were updated.

Vision

"Meyokumin – where community meets to live, work, play and grow together."

Guiding Principles

We value building a thriving community where we celebrate:



Gathering. We gather in safe, inclusive spaces to create memories and experiences with friends, families, neighbours and those we haven't met yet



Beauty. We enjoy nature's gifts in all four seasons: the abundance of trees, plants and greenery throughout our community that all ages and abilities can experience



Diversity. We are a community of all ages, abilities and generations, diverse cultures and experiences. Inclusion makes us stronger as we meet in community gathering spaces, programs and events



Connections. We are connected by wide pathways and safe roadways that link us within Meyokumin and the city beyond



Active living. We enjoy walking and biking with friends and family on smooth, clean sidewalks and pathways that can be used by people of all ages and abilities as they travel to their desired destinations



Community. We care for one another, have a strong sense of community and feel safe in our neighbourhood

Exploring Options and Tradeoffs

The following is a summary of what we heard during the **Exploring Options and Tradeoffs** phase. All feedback collected will be considered in the development of the draft design. The draft design will be shared for community feedback early 2023. **All designs are subject to final approvals and funding.**

People were excited about the opportunities offered by Neighbourhood Renewal. They especially welcomed ideas to:

- + Improve road and sidewalk conditions
- + Slow traffic down and improve safety
- + Create gathering spaces
- + Improve connectivity for people walking and biking throughout the neighbourhood

Walking and Rolling

Meyokumin residents love to walk! They walk to schools, shopping, transit stops and as a leisure time activity with friends and family. There was strong support for making it easier for people to walk and roll throughout the neighbourhood.

“It would be nice to be able to walk or ride all the way through the community. Right now, everything just ends.”

People would like to see improved connections to other areas in the community. Better connections to parks, and the commercial area in the northeast corner, were strongly favoured.

“We can’t get over to the shopping centre. We have to go all the way around. Can this program fix that?”

People used highlighters to show where they currently walk and where they would like to walk. These results are largely consistent with other comments received.



Walking and Rolling *(continued)*

People welcomed the idea of creating better connections and making wider sidewalks, particularly for people using wheelchairs, walkers and strollers.

People acknowledged the poor condition of existing sidewalks and thought new, wider sidewalks would be a good improvement to the neighbourhood. They felt that using City right-of-way to create wider sidewalks was a good idea, even if it meant moving or removing landscaping that homeowners may have put on City right-of-way.

“There are a lot of dead ends that need to be connected. Sometimes I get trapped because nothing is connected, and I can’t get to where I’m going.”

“Wider sidewalks. I could walk side-by-side with my family.”

Traffic Calming

“Do whatever you have to do to make it safe.”

Safety was a major concern with Meyokumin residents. They worried about the safety of people crossing streets and other road users. Their concerns will help the Project Team to plan traffic calming options.

“I thought speed bumps were the only things used to slow traffic. This is really neat.”

Most people supported traffic calming measures. They said ‘increasing safety’ and ‘reducing speed’ were the reasons they would like to see traffic calming measures in place. A few were not in favour and said they were concerned traffic calming might affect snow removal.

Many people were surprised that there were so many different ways to calm traffic and were interested to learn more.

Curb Extensions



Many people did not realize that curb extensions were a traffic calming measure. There was strong support for curb extensions, especially in areas where the road was particularly wide or where it would be less of an impact to parking. Curb extensions near schools and along main roads would help make it safer for people walking and easier for people driving to see them crossing streets.

“These streets are so dangerous, especially for people trying to cross the road. I like the idea of this.”

Traffic Calming *(continued)*

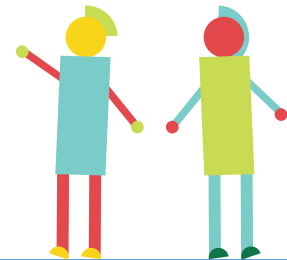
Centre Median



There was strong agreement with the idea of a centre median on 57 Street, as well as 19 Avenue. People said traffic safety improvements were needed at both locations.

A few people were opposed to centre medians because they thought it would create congestion and snow clearing concerns.

“I never knew its purpose was to calm traffic. I think this would be good.”



“Where is the snow going to go? If there’s a centre median it will make the streets too narrow when winter comes, and the snow is piled up.”

Raised Crossing



There was support for raised crossings near both schools, and between Meyokumin and the seniors' residence in Sakaw. Raised crossings were seen as ways to make it safer for people walking in Meyokumin.

“This would be a good idea at the school and crossing to the seniors’ home.”

“I like these better than speed bumps. Speed bumps are so random. These make better sense because they have a purpose—slow traffic AND help people cross the street.”

Traffic Calming (continued)

Raised Intersection



Residents also supported the idea of raised intersections. They felt that people driving would not be able to 'roll' through the intersections if they were raised.

"I see cars not stopping, just driving through intersections ignoring the signs. This would remind them that they are supposed to stop or slow down and look."

Speed Humps



Although people like the other measures more than speed humps, there was still strong support for this feature to calm and slow down traffic. People felt that they are 'harder to ignore than traffic signs.'

A few people didn't like speed humps and thought they might be hard to drive over or there might be damage to vehicles.

"There's too many speeders; I love speed humps."



"I didn't know about the other ways to slow traffic. I still like speed bumps too."

Biking

While some people disagreed with bike lanes, most people supported other options for biking. People who opposed bike lanes were satisfied if people biked on shared-use paths instead of on the road.

People supporting biking options wanted to be able to safely ride with their families, especially young children. They felt that it would help them to bike safely and with confidence.

Teens wanted to bike with their friends and thought current conditions didn't support biking for fun, or going safely to the commercial areas on 23 Avenue.

"I would like to be able to bike side-by-side with family or friends."

"I would like wide pathways and not have to go in a single file."

People would consider biking to work or using it as a means of transportation if there were safe and reliable routes to use.

People were asked to think about tradeoffs that would need to be considered if new ways for biking were implemented. People agreed that moving or removing private landscaping on City right-of-way would be a reasonable option, while they strongly disagreed with removing parking or creating a one-way street.

People were invited to comment on various ways to bike throughout the community.

There was strong support for more family friendly ways to bike and would feel more at ease riding in the neighbourhood. Families with children cannot bike side-by-side and this causes worry for parents.

People said they had concerns sharing the road with cars. Parents were especially fearful about children and teens riding alongside cars.

Some people thought that bikes should be on the street with cars and separated from traffic.

People understand that the main roads are too wide, which can lead to speeding. There was some support for separated bike lanes especially if they were also a traffic calming measure. They felt that using the City right-of-way next to private properties was a reasonable trade off if it meant safer streets for people who walk and bike.



"I would be very nervous biking on the road unless it was separated. I would not let my children ride on the road unless there was a barrier."

"Would bike lanes on the road be a way to slow down traffic? We don't need roads this wide."

Biking (continued)

“Me and my friends would like to ride more but can’t because pavement {parks} is too rough and sidewalk is too narrow, and roads are full of cars.”

There were some concerns about sharing sidewalks with people biking.

Most people offered support for different biking options, but were not sure about the type they preferred.

People were not aware of shared pathways in places other than in parks. Several thought that shared pathways could solve problems for people walking with strollers, small children on trikes and families biking.

People supported ways to encourage biking for all ages and abilities.

The increase in the numbers of e-bikes and scooters led people to support ways to make biking safer.

People offered strong endorsement for direct connections and logical routes to commercial areas and workplaces.

Direct, safe routes would enable them to bike for efficiency, speed and health.

People were doubtful that the pavement could be kept clear of snow and ice, although they thought the idea of biking in winter could be ‘a fun thing to do.’

Some people think that biking is seasonal and said routes ‘won’t be used in the winter.’

“I have three active boys; I’d like more outdoor spaces to rollerblade and bike.”

“I would love to be able to ride to work. Right now, I can’t because there are too many dangerous spots.”



“Riding to the new LRT could open things up for me. I could go all kinds of places if I could bike to the LRT.”

Parks and Open Spaces

The park areas are very important for people who live in the neighbourhood. The number of multi-unit residential buildings mean the parks have added value for people want to enjoy outdoor spaces.

Places to gather and socialize remain main reasons that people go to parks. Although exercise equipment in the park was seen as novel and fun, most people wanted gathering spaces to meet and enjoy the company of friends and family.

People also expressed that, in recent years, the parks have felt less safe and thought that improving the parks would contribute to community safety and wellbeing.

There were tradeoffs that the people asked the Project Team to consider:

- + Some people wanted the parks to be more welcoming and useful with places to sit, enjoy a picnic, read and have quiet time. Others did not want the sports fields to be impacted in favour of gathering spaces.

“There’s not enough green space in south Edmonton and permanent structures such as more benches, more seating covered areas etc. really would take away from the openness of the current park.”

“I’ve never considered a walkway along the east side of the park to be a priority. That said, might be a nice enhancement so long as soccer and baseball fields are not reduced in size or numbers.”

- + Trees were very important to a majority of people, however some thought adding trees would reduce the amount of open space available.

“We don’t need a ton of trees and bushes. We need open space to run and play and fly a kite, have a picnic and play sports.”

- + A dog park was seen by some as a nice feature because of the number of people who had dogs. It would also provide a place to gather. For others, it seemed to be an exclusive feature that would not be accessible to people who did not have dogs.

“What about people who do not have dogs? There are a lot of dog parks in the area. I think this space could be used for more creative things for children and families.”

Parks and Open Spaces *(continued)*

Participants also offered their thoughts on the following:

Pathways



Pathways were very important to people. They wanted to see new pathways that connected them to places they wanted to go.

People also said that it was important to not sacrifice trees for a new or wider pathway.

People liked the idea of wider sidewalks and pathways to allow people to walk side-by-side, or with strollers and walkers. People agreed that park

paths need to be widened to accommodate people walking and people biking.

“The trees in the park are old and beautiful. I would hate to see them removed. Could the pathways not split to encircle the tree(s) thus adding a neat feature to the park?”

“The additional pathways would be appreciated, especially by people with mobility issues and seniors.”

Add outdoor exercise equipment



Most people had never heard of exercise equipment in a park setting and thought it would be an interesting addition. They wondered if anyone would use it. There was curiosity and support for outdoor exercise equipment, especially for children.

Although this was seen as a novel idea, most people supported other choices that could be enjoyed by the entire community.

“So how does this work? You go to the park like you go to a gym?”

“I like the other ideas {Exercise equipment and dog park} but I think picnic areas and places people could sit and talk would be used by more people. IF we can only have one, I would choose picnic spaces. How many people will use exercise equipment compared to picnic spots? “

Parks and Open Spaces *(continued)*

All season parks: covered areas, picnic tables and park furniture



The parks were seen as having great potential as meeting and gathering places. People were excited by the opportunity for more areas for gatherings and celebrations.

People offered strong support for more seating and adding rest stops in parks. People also felt that park furniture would help people to stop and enjoy the park, instead of walking through it as a short cut.

“I’d love a place to have neighbourhood block parties.”

“I’d like to be able to actually use the park instead of just walking through it to get somewhere else.”

People would also like the park to be designed with winter in mind. They said they would like a park design that could be used for all seasons.



“This looks really nice; we could use the park year-round.”

“Let’s have maintenance on paths so that they can be used all season. Not icy watery traps that scare people off.”

Parks and Open Spaces *(continued)*

Improve lighting



People were concerned about safety in the parks and thought that better lighting could discourage criminal activities. They also felt the lighting should be improved to LED lights, be placed closer together, and have lights at lower levels to help people walking.

“The lights are so high up and light nothing. They just light up the sky. We need the lights to shine on where people walk.”

Next steps

Thank you to all who shared their input during the **Exploring Options and Tradeoffs** stage of engagement.

The Project Team will use this input to **CREATE** a draft design for the Meyokumin Neighbourhood and Alley Renewal project. You will have an opportunity to comment on and refine the draft design in the early part of 2023.

Information will also be provided about decorative street lights and sidewalk reconstruction through the Local Improvement Cost-Sharing Opportunities process.

For more information regarding the Meyokumin Neighbourhood and Alley Renewal, upcoming public engagement activities and to subscribe for project updates, please visit edmonton.ca/BuildingMeyokumin.

Working together to make the most out of your neighbourhood

This is your city and your neighbourhood. We want to understand how you experience your neighbourhood and ask for your input on what we might do to make it better. We will engage and work with you on the renewal of roads, sidewalks, street lights and park spaces. We will also promote other community opportunities to enhance how people live and interact in your neighbourhood. We commit to being open and transparent about how your input is used. Let's make the most out of your neighbourhood.



For more information, visit:
edmonton.ca/BuildingMeyokumin

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