



On 83 Avenue Since '83 Recap

Implementing the Old Strathcona Public Realm Strategy

Introduction

As part of the [Old Strathcona Public Realm Strategy](#)'s implementation, *On 83 Avenue Since '83* temporarily transformed 83 Avenue (between 104 St and Gateway Blvd) into a pedestrian-only space across four weekends in summer 2025. This recap summarizes the event, the connection to the public realm strategy, what was learned, and next steps. Thank you to the Old Strathcona Farmers' Market (which led the programming), event collaborators, and everyone who visited!



What We Did & Why

- The [Old Strathcona Public Realm Strategy](#) (OSPRS), finalized in 2024 after two years of public engagement, includes seven key actions to improve parks, repurpose parking lots, encourage redevelopment, activate alleys, prioritize pedestrians, widen sidewalks and support bus rapid transit.
- Action 6 recommends piloting occasional activations of 83 Avenue between 104 St and Gateway Blvd (i.e., closed to vehicles but open to pedestrians).
- *On 83 Avenue Since '83* was a pilot to demonstrate how Action 6 could be realized. The avenue is already a destination with restaurants, theatres, the farmers' market and festivals. The pilot intended to complement that existing vibrancy, support local businesses, and showcase how 83 Avenue works as a people-centred place.



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- The Old Strathcona Farmers' Market (OSFM) organized the programming over the four weekends (Saturdays and Sundays) in July and August of 2025. The events complemented the Whyte Avenue Art Walk and Fringe Festival which are also hosted on the avenue during the summer.
- Each weekend featured market vendors, programming, and family-friendly activities. Various City departments collaborated to support the market with the road closure and related materials.
- People were informed about the events and the road closure through the OSPRS project email list, the OSFM's newsletter, the City of Edmonton's webpage and social media channels, and roadside signage.
- The event was funded in part by the Old Strathcona Public Realm Strategy Reserve Fund established by City Council earlier this year. The fund receives net revenues from the EPark lot east of Gateway Boulevard and north of 83 Avenue to help improve public spaces in the area. The event was also supported by the City's business improvement area (BIA) infrastructure fund.



What We Learned

- People of all ages were drawn to 83 Avenue to enjoy the vendors, food trucks, music, and activities. The OSFM estimated a 10 per cent increase in market attendance during the *On 83 Avenue Since '83* weekends.
- Early communication with 83 Avenue partners (the market, theatres, business association, community league, festivals and others) helped to create awareness about the event, identify opportunities for collaboration (e.g., keeping road closure materials on site), and avoid impacts on their operations. This would be recommended for future activations.
- The City's project team appreciated the supportive emails as well as the constructive feedback received from residents. A few examples included:



- Bike detour added: Bike detour signage (advising east and west bound cyclists to head north around the market) was added after the first weekend following questions from cyclists. The detour signage complemented the cyclist dismount signage that was also in place.
- Accessible parking: One resident was concerned about the unavailability of the accessible parking stall on 83 Avenue during the events. While accessible stalls are available in nearby EPark lots north, south and east (along Gateway Blvd) of 83 Avenue, the inquiry highlights the need for future activations to consider improved awareness of accessible parking locations near the area.
- While not within the scope of this pilot, future activations could include a public engagement component to formally gather people’s insights and experiences. Observing vehicle and cyclist patterns and counts would also be beneficial.
- The *On 83 Avenue Since ‘83* was featured by [Taproot Edmonton](#) and [CTV news](#).



What Happens Next

On 83 Avenue Since ‘83 demonstrated how the intention of Action 6 -- to pilot occasional closures and activations -- contributes to the avenue as a destination and a people-centred place. Future activations will add to the insights gathered from this pilot. The City’s project team will explore and encourage additional opportunities to activate 83 Avenue in collaboration with area partners as part of the Old Strathcona Public Realm Strategy’s implementation. To learn more and stay up to date visit edmonton.ca/OldStrathPublicRealm.