



KITCHEN

# Old Strathcona Public Realm Strategy

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**SHAPE** OUR CITY



August 2024 | [edmonton.ca/OldStrathPublicRealm](https://edmonton.ca/OldStrathPublicRealm)

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## I. LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Acknowledging the ancestral roots embedded in Treaty Six Territory, the City of Edmonton extends gratitude to the diverse Indigenous Peoples whose heritage has woven through the fabric of this land. Among them are the nêhiyaw (Nay-hee-yow) / Cree, Dené (Deh-neyh), Anishinaabe (Ah-nish-in-ah-bay) / Saulteaux (So-toe), Nakota Isga (Na-koh-tah ee-ska) / Nakota Sioux (Na-koh-tah sue), and Niitsitapi (Nit-si-tahp-ee) / Blackfoot peoples. We also acknowledge this as the Métis' (May-tee) homeland and the home of one of the largest communities of Inuit south of the 60th parallel.

Old Strathcona is situated in the Edmonton ward named papastew (PAH-PAH-STAY-OH) or ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ in Cree, which means "large woodpecker." Papastew, also known as Papaschase, led a Cree band that had settled on the south bank of the North Saskatchewan River. As the result of a Treaty 6 adhesion that Papastew signed in 1877, the Papaschase Band #136 was promised a reserve of 48 square miles. In 1884, a 39 square mile reserve was surveyed for them south of what is now 51 Avenue NW. Settlers, however, had been campaigning against the reserve even before it was surveyed. At the urging of the federal government, the last band members left the reserve in 1887 and in 1888 three men officially surrendered it. Part of the reserve land was used for the Calgary and Edmonton Railway that gave rise to Strathcona and the rest was subdivided and sold.

The implementation of the *Old Strathcona Public Realm Strategy* will seek to honour the importance of this area to First Nations and Métis peoples as well as the historical significance to Edmonton and our collective aspirations. Together we call upon all of our collective, honoured traditions and spirits to work in building a great city for today and future generations.



## II. TEAM

This project would not have been possible without the energy, contributions, and support of many people. Thank you to everyone who contributed their time and ideas to this project.

### The City of Edmonton

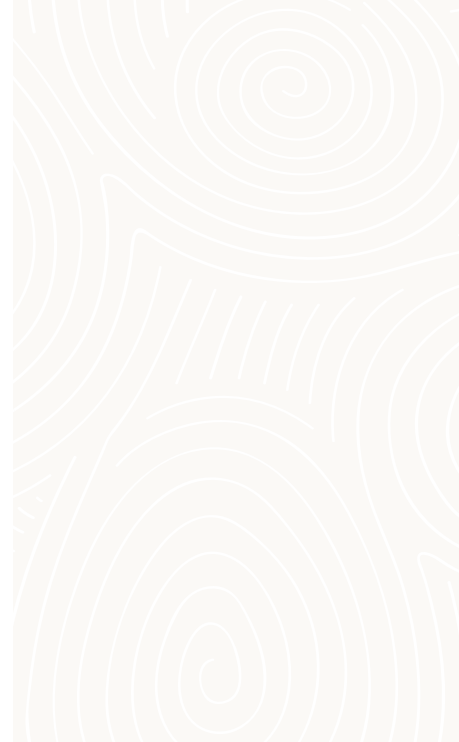
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Old Strathcona Farmers' Market  
Old Strathcona Youth Society  
Paths for People  
Pride Corner  
Queen Alexandra Community League  
Ritchie Community League  
Senior Citizen Opportunity  
Neighbourhood Association  
Strathcona Community League  
Wheaton Group  
Yardbird Suite  
Youth Empowerment & Support  
Services



### III. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Old Strathcona is a unique and vibrant cultural hub, tourist destination, main street, historical area and home to thousands of Edmontonians. Identified by *The City Plan* as a priority growth area with two primary corridors, Old Strathcona will see its population grow in the coming years. This increased density will add pressure to the area's public realm. The public realm – *those communally accessible, publicly owned spaces* – includes the streets, sidewalks and alleys people travel through, and the parks or plazas people stop to rest, meet friends or visit for events. As Old Strathcona welcomes more residents and visitors, the public realm will become increasingly important and need to adapt and improve to be inclusive and equitable for everyone.

The *Old Strathcona Public Realm Strategy (OSPRS)* has collected input from Edmontonians to reimagine a new future for publicly owned spaces within Old Strathcona. The strategy outlines the guiding themes, the process taken in the assessment of the current conditions and experiences with public realm, different design ideas considered, public and stakeholder input, and the analysis towards recommendations.

The recommendations propose improvements to create and improve parks and plazas, repurpose parking lots, widen sidewalks, prioritize pedestrians on key streets, and activate alleyways – all while increasing housing opportunities to strengthen the area as a place to live, work and play.

An overall public realm concept illustrates how the proposed improvements will integrate and connect within Old Strathcona.

The strategy's recommendations include seven Key Actions:

- 1 Create a District Park
- 2 Create a Gateway Greenway
- 3 Create an Urban Plaza
- 4 Improve End of Steel Park and Support Mixed Market Development of the Parking Lot
- 5 Support Development next to Connaught Armoury
- 6 Pedestrianize 83 Avenue
- 7 Prioritize Pedestrians on Whyte Avenue

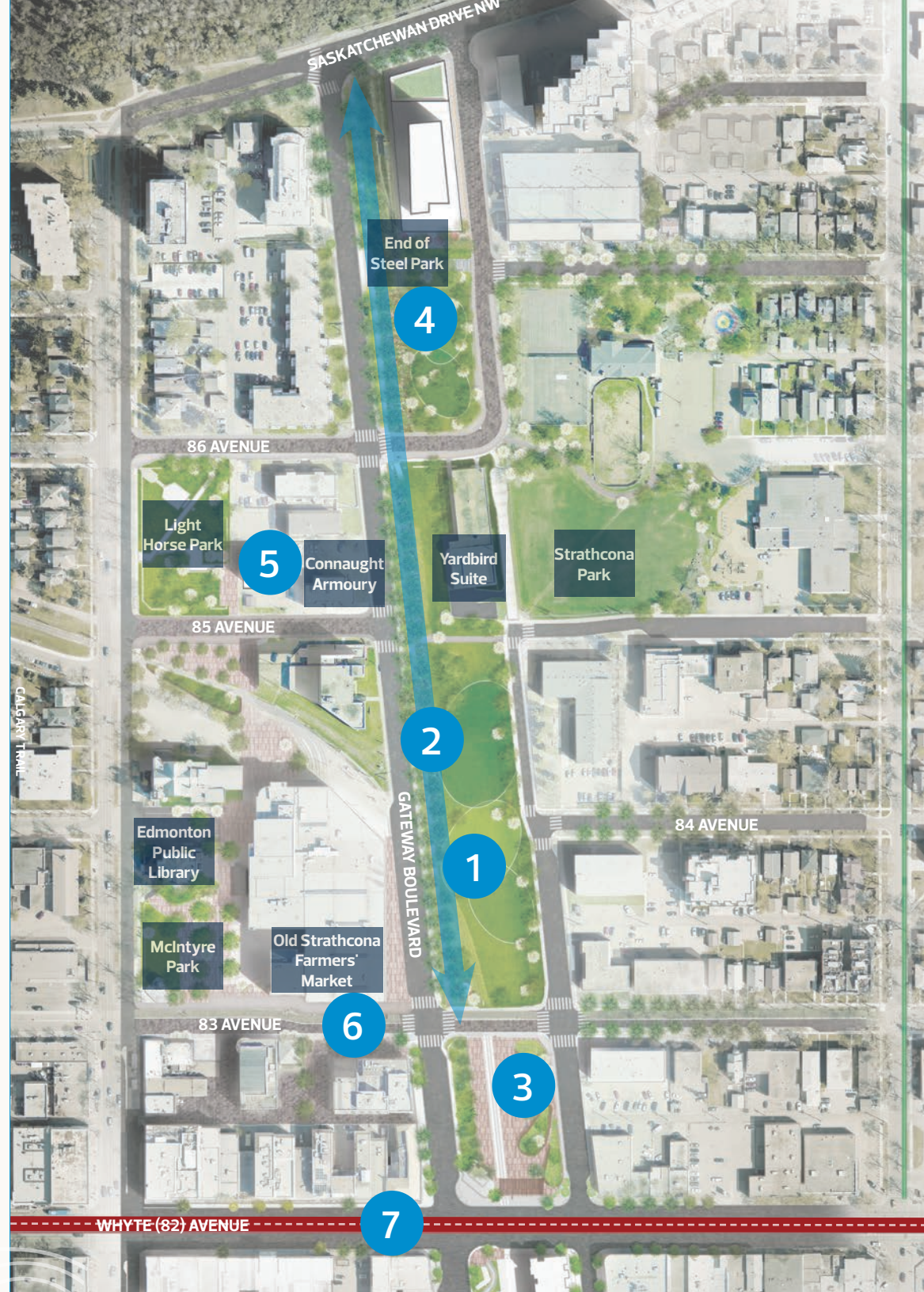
The strategy, however, is a long-term initiative that will take decades to be fully realized. Before any changes, there will be additional, more focused engagement with interested citizens and groups as individual public realm improvements are designed. These improvements will then be implemented incrementally based on funding and other opportunities. The goal in this strategy's implementation will be to ensure that Old Strathcona continues to be a desirable place to live, visit and work even as we address critical issues like climate action and housing affordability.

## IV. OVERVIEW OF THE OLD STRATHCONA PUBLIC REALM STRATEGY KEY ACTIONS

An overall public realm concept illustrates how the proposed improvements will integrate and connect within Old Strathcona.

- 1 Create a District Park
- 2 Create a Gateway Greenway
- 3 Create an Urban Plaza
- 4 Improve End of Steel Park and Support Mixed Market Development of Parking Lot
- 5 Support Development next to Connaught Armoury
- 6 Pedestrianize 83 Avenue
- 7 Prioritize Pedestrians on Whyte Avenue

-  Key Actions
-  Landmarks
-  Dedicated Mass Transit Lanes



# 1. INTRODUCTION





## 1.1 NEED FOR A PUBLIC REALM STRATEGY

Public realm is a critical component of our collective experience. By creating spaces for gathering and mobility, public realm brings urban residents together and gets us where we need to go. By giving us places for play and interpretation, the public realm revitalizes and enriches our connection with spaces we affectionately refer to as home.

The need for a public realm strategy in Old Strathcona arises due to Edmonton's population growth, generating increased demands on public spaces. The *planWhyte study* (2018) first recommended a public realm strategy along with amendments to the *Strathcona Area Redevelopment Plan*. Then in February 2020, a council motion directed Administration to conduct the study. Old Strathcona is a key part of *The City Plan's Whyte Avenue/99 Street Priority Growth Area* with two primary corridors. Over time, the area will also increase in importance as a cultural centre, mobility hub and critical connection in the city's transit network. Finally, a forward-looking vision will help inform Whyte Avenue's rehabilitation work, expected to begin later this decade.

In addition to policy guidance, the impetus for a public realm strategy was shaped by external prospects and initiatives such as the Prairie Sky Gondola, High Level Line, and regional passenger rail. Consequently, the Strategy evaluates how publicly owned land—parks, plazas, sidewalks, streets, alleys, and parking lots—should be assessed in the context of current and future proposals. The COVID-19 pandemic underscored the significance of the public realm, publicly accessible open space, and the potential adaptation of road right-of-way as shared spaces to foster physical and mental well-being.

## 1.2 STRATEGY OBJECTIVES

To contribute to Old Strathcona as a unique place and destination for residents and visitors, the *Old Strathcona Public Realm Strategy* included three main objectives:

- + Imagine a new future for parks, plazas, sidewalks, streets, alleys and parking lots
- + Prioritize pedestrians on Whyte Avenue and the addition of mass transit
- + Add to the vibrant and diverse opportunities for people to live, work and play within Old Strathcona and surrounding neighbourhoods

## 1.3 STRATEGY PROCESS

The *Old Strathcona Public Realm Strategy* launched as a project in August 2022 and was developed in three phases. Engagement with relevant groups and the public was an essential part of each phase. O2 Planning and Design as well as Toole Design Group were retained to help assist with the strategy's development.



### 1.3.1 Engagement and Relevant Groups

The City of Edmonton is committed to involving people affected by decisions and seeking diverse opinions, experiences and information to represent a broad spectrum of perspectives. The City's GBA+ (Gender-Based Analysis +) framework guided the project to consider identity factors, reduce barriers to inclusion, and ensure equitable outcomes.

The project team engaged with the general public, including residents from Strathcona and the surrounding neighbourhoods, Edmontonians (living outside the project boundary) and visitors from the region and beyond.

A Community Advisory Committee (CAC) was established from relevant groups in the area to support the work. It included representatives from the:

- + Strathcona Community League and neighbouring leagues
- + Old Strathcona Business Association
- + Old Strathcona Farmers Market
- + Edmonton Fringe Theatre
- + Yarbird Suite
- + Organizations that reflect, support or advocate for different communities
  - + Youth Empowerment & Support Services
  - + Accessibility Advisory Committee
  - + Senior Citizen Opportunity Neighbourhood Association
  - + Old Strathcona Youth Society
  - + Paths for People
  - + Pride Corner

A big thank you to everyone who contributed to the strategy's development!

### 1.3.2 Historical Context

Strathcona's history has been recognized and celebrated through local action and municipal policy for over 50 years. A community-led project that began in 1971 branded the area as "Old Strathcona" and established the Old Strathcona Foundation as a force for conservation. The first heritage designations in the area took place in 1979 when Ritchie Mill and Connaught Armoury were designated as Provincial Historic Resources. Today over 20 properties are legally protected from demolition.

In the 1980s the Old Strathcona Area Redevelopment Plan applied preservationist land use policy to the area while initiatives such as the Edmonton Fringe Festival, Old Strathcona Farmers' Market, and Whyte Avenue streetscape improvements added vitality. The railroad's contribution to Strathcona's history was commemorated through the establishment of End of Steel Park in 1995. In 2007, Old Strathcona was designated as one of only two Provincial Historic Areas in Alberta (see boundary in Figure 1).

Since then, however, new historical sensibilities have emerged. Actions to honour the area's history need to broaden their scope beyond a settler-colonial perspective to celebrate Indigenous heritage and other underrepresented voices. As Old Strathcona densifies, its historical resonance needs to diversify.



FIGURE 1 PROJECT STRATEGY AREAS

### 1.3.3 Project Boundary and Strategy Areas

The boundary for the project included most of the Strathcona neighbourhood, along with parts of the Garneau, Queen Alexandra and Ritchie neighbourhoods.

Two strategy areas were identified as a way to consider and focus on different open space needs while still working together to create a cohesive direction for Old Strathcona (Figure 1).

#### STRATEGY AREA 1: FOCUSED IN AND AROUND GATEWAY BOULEVARD



- + Includes a number of small parks and parking lots including the City-owned parking lot leased to the Old Strathcona Farmers' Market.

#### STRATEGY AREA 2 FOCUSED ON WHYTE AVENUE (FROM 109 STREET TO 99 STREET)



- + Focuses on prioritizing pedestrians, in collaboration with the City's Mass Transit Implementation work that will introduce Bus Rapid Transit.



#### EXISTING OPEN SPACE

- |  |                          |                             |
|--|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Garneau Park 1                            | 6. Old Scona School Park | 11. Strathcona Park         |
| 2. E.L Hill Park                             | 7. Tipton Park           | 12. King Edward School Park |
| 3. Strathcona Park 2 (Community Rail Garden) | 8. Walter Polley Park    | 13. Big Miller Park         |
| 4. Strathcona Park 3                         | 9. Fred A. Moire Park    | 14. McIntyre Park           |
| 5. Light Horse Park                          | 10. End of Steel Park    | 15. Strathcona Park 4       |

### 1.3.4 Policy Framework

The *Old Strathcona Public Realm Strategy* was informed by and will help to achieve many of the Council approved policies and strategies. Phase 1 of the project included a review of existing policies that directly or indirectly impact Old Strathcona's public realm. The following summarizes the policies that will give foundational direction.

#### THE CITY PLAN AND DISTRICT PLANS

Edmonton's municipal development and transportation master plan guides how Edmonton will grow and redevelop. *The City Plan* identifies Old Strathcona as being in a Priority Growth Area and includes two primary corridors (Whyte Avenue and Calgary Trail/ Gateway Boulevard). The draft *District Policy* and *Scona District Plan* offers area-specific guidance for Strathcona and neighbouring areas, serving as a localized extension of *The City Plan's* overarching vision. In anticipation of an increase of approximately 33,000 new residents, the plan aligns this demographic shift in the Scona District with Edmonton's population reaching 1.25 million.

*The City Plan* also identifies a mass transit network to provide more travel options for Edmontonians, support more compact and lively districts and reduce our environmental footprint. Whyte Avenue is identified as a mass transit corridor to connect Bonnie Doon to the University of Alberta (and on to West Edmonton Mall). To make transit faster and more reliable, the City will add dedicated Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) lanes.

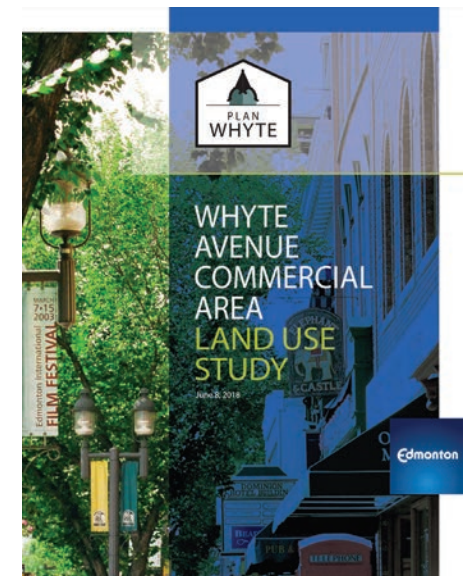
To support the existing and future residents (and visitors) and make traveling as a pedestrian or transit rider better, *the Old Strathcona Public Realm Strategy* guides how parks, plazas, sidewalks, streets and alleyways will adapt and improve to be inclusive, equitable and more accessible to everyone. By doing so, it will help to contribute to *The City Plan's* "Greener as we Grow", "Rebuildable City" and "Community of Communities" big moves.

IMAGES LEFT TO RIGHT *THE CITY PLAN* - OFFERING STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS TO GUIDE EDMONTON'S GROWTH; *PLANWHYTE* - TO STRENGTHEN THE HERITAGE, CHARACTER AND CONNECTIVITY OF THE WHYTE AVENUE COMMERCIAL AREA

#### PLANWHYTE

Completed in 2018, the *planWhyte Land Use Study* looked at enhancing the area's heritage and character while managing future growth. One of its recommendations was to initiate a public places plan that included studying the opportunities for the City-owned parking lot leased to the Old Strathcona Farmers Market. This recommendation is a policy direction in the draft *Scona District Plan*.

*The Old Strathcona Public Realm Strategy* will achieve this policy direction by recommending improvements to publicly-owned land to improve how people (especially pedestrians) travel to and through the area.



### BREATHE: EDMONTON'S GREEN NETWORK STRATEGY

*Breathe* recommends that neighbourhoods are supported by an accessible and multifunctional network of parks and open spaces as the city grows. It uses the three themes of "Ecology" (protecting the environment), "Wellness" (supporting health and well-being) and "Celebration" (connecting people to others and place) to inform the type and function of spaces needed.

*The Old Strathcona Public Realm Strategy* draws on *Breathe* to inform the improvements to existing open spaces, the provision for new spaces and how they will serve residents from Strathcona, the surrounding neighbourhoods and visitors.

### CLIMATE RESILIENT EDMONTON: ADAPTATION STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

*The Climate Resilient Edmonton: Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan* focuses on understanding the climate impacts we are already experiencing and how they may shift in the future due to ongoing climate change. It looks at what this means for our community and provides insight into how we can build resilience for those impacts through five pathways.

*The Old Strathcona Public Realm Strategy* draws on *Climate Resilient Edmonton* Goal 2: "Edmonton is planned, designed, developed and built to be climate resilient today and for future Edmontonians" to ensure public realm improvements are climate resilient for present and future Edmontonians.

### EDMONTON'S COMMUNITY ENERGY TRANSITION STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

*Edmonton's Community Energy Transition Strategy* is the path forward for a low carbon city and is the City of Edmonton's climate change mitigation plan. *The Community Energy Transition Strategy* is centred around four pathways including: Renewable and Resilient Energy Transition, Emission Neutral Buildings, Low Carbon City and Transportation, and Nature Based Solutions and Carbon Capture.

Implementation of Key Actions within *the Old Strathcona Public Realm Strategy* will use the *Energy Transition Strategy* to inform the design of public realm and improvements to align with low carbon and emissions goals.

The project team also consulted other City policies or strategic documents with examples referenced below.



IMAGES LEFT TO RIGHT CLIMATE RESILIENT EDMONTON: ADAPTATION STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN; EDMONTON'S COMMUNITY ENERGY TRANSITION STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN; BREATHE: EDMONTON'S GREEN NETWORK STRATEGY

### 1.3.5 Passenger Rail Master Planning

The Government of Alberta will develop a Passenger Rail Master Plan to comprehensively assess the establishment of a passenger rail network in the province. This plan will look decades forward and identify concrete actions that can be taken now, as well as in the future, to build the optimal passenger rail system for Alberta. It will assess the feasibility of various passenger rail services and models to determine what elements should proceed and in what order. The master plan will consider commuter rail systems for Edmonton and Calgary that connect surrounding communities, the international airports and downtowns, as well as regional rail lines between Calgary and Edmonton and to the Rocky Mountain parks. The project will begin in the fall of 2024 and is expected to be complete by the summer of 2025.

Because of the aspiration to bring passenger rail service to downtown Edmonton, the Old Strathcona area will be considered in the master planning. Since the recommended outcome has not yet been determined, it will be important to allow for flexibility in the Old Strathcona Public Realm Strategy to accommodate the province's master planning process. Although the strategy aims to mitigate constraints for passenger rail, no permanent actions on the ground will be taken concerning the District Park, Gateway Greenway, or Urban Plaza (Actions 1-3) until the master plan is completed and its implications for the area are understood.

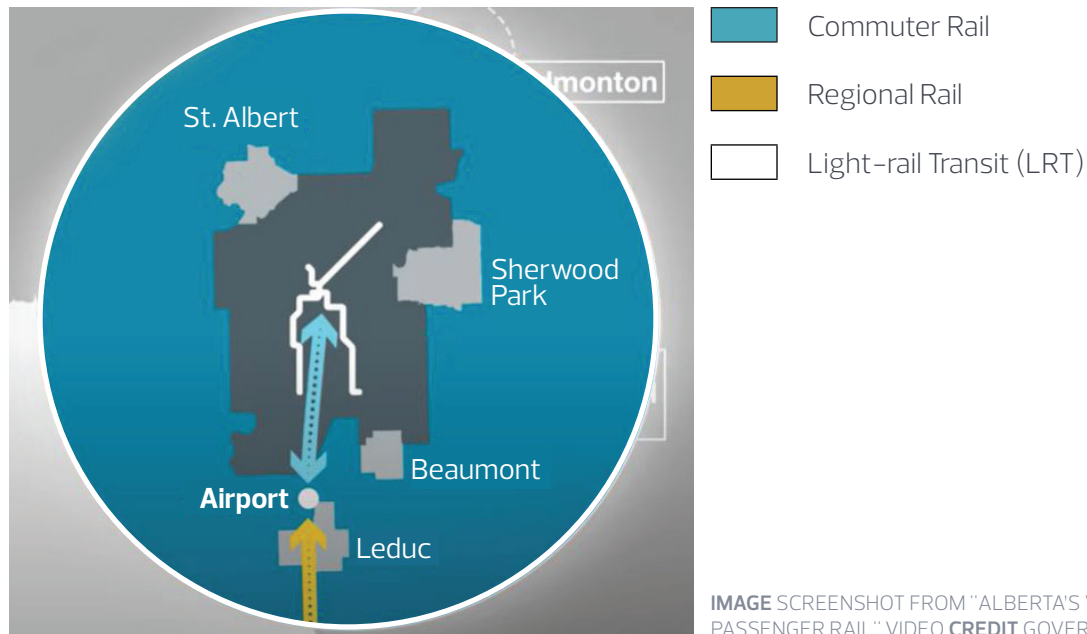


IMAGE SCREENSHOT FROM "ALBERTA'S VISION FOR PASSENGER RAIL" VIDEO CREDIT GOVERNMENT OF ALBERTA

### 1.3.6 Guiding Themes

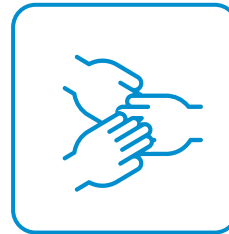
Navigating the diverse ways we use our public realm in an evolving city are not always easy to understand. We continue to change the way we use and see those spaces so they can provide a view into our shared common values and civic responsibilities.

Four **Guiding Themes** were developed to keep this in mind and to help guide the project, frame the feedback and analysis and inform the recommendations.



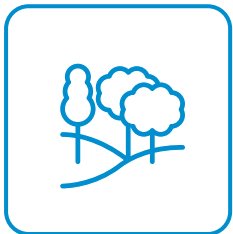
**MOBILITY & MOVEMENT:  
HOW WE MOVE AROUND**

Mobility plays a vital role in how we arrive, explore and experience public spaces. Public spaces should be easily reached by pedestrians, cyclists or transit users to ensure access for everyone.



**INCLUSION & EQUITY:  
HOW WE BELONG**

Economic status, age, disability, gender identity, ethnicity, social or cultural background create barriers to access and affect people's ability to feel comfortable and enjoy public spaces. The aim is to ensure spaces are welcoming and offer a sense of belonging to everyone.



**OPEN SPACE & ACTIVITIES:  
HOW WE CONNECT OUTDOORS**

Open spaces are publicly owned or publicly accessible outdoor areas, including parks, natural areas or other civic spaces. They provide ecological, wellness, and celebration functions supporting health and well-being, provide ecosystem services and connect people and places.



**COMFORT & SAFETY:  
HOW WE FEEL**

Spaces need to be safe and comfortable to encourage people to use them. Comfort includes seating, shade or wind protection, washroom access, and drinkable water. At the same time, lighting and other design elements can contribute to safety.

## 2. MAKING THE STRATEGY

**Join the  
Conversation**  
Old Strathcona  
Public Realm Strategy

**Help Reimagine Public  
Spaces In Old Strathcona**





## 2.1 MAKING THE STRATEGY

Planning for the *Old Strathcona Public Realm Strategy* was built on the foundation of Council-approved policies and priorities, public engagement and technical analysis. The following sections summarize the development of the strategy's recommendations over three phases based on what was heard through engagement, what was learned through area analysis and other key considerations.

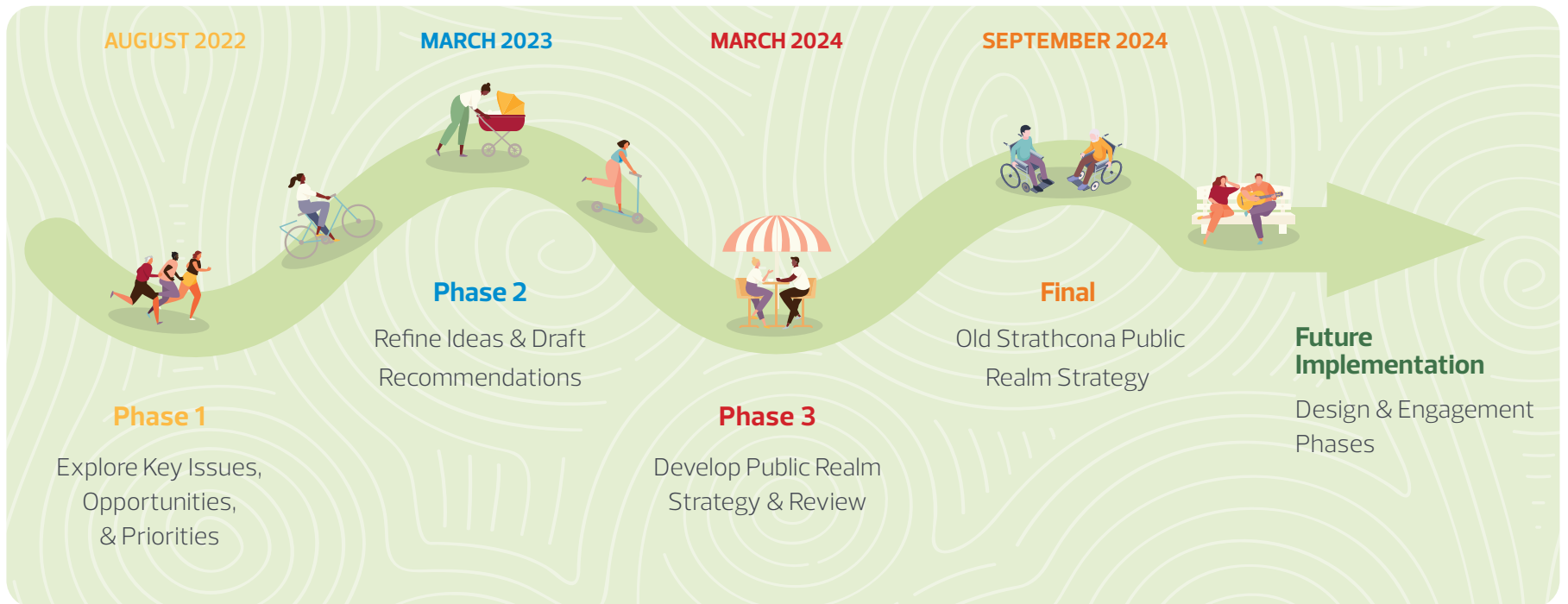


FIGURE 2: TIMELINE OF PHASES – STARTING IN 2022 AND LASTING FOR APPROXIMATELY 24 MONTHS

## 2.2 PHASE 1: OPPORTUNITIES & PRIORITIES

To understand what mattered to people and what opportunities could be explored, Phase 1 focused on understanding the area's existing conditions such as roadways, parks, sidewalks, parking, and connectivity. To start, we asked Edmontonians to share their experiences with and ideas for public realm through surveys, an interactive map and pop-up events.

### 2.2.1 Phase 1 Engagement Recap and Highlights

Below summarizes key feedback collected under each Guiding Theme. For a full summary, refer to the [Phase 1 What We Heard Report](#).

#### OPEN SPACE & ACTIVITIES:

*HOW WE CONNECT OUTDOORS*



- + Suggestions to improve existing green spaces, add more spaces to gather and attend events and increase connectivity and safety for people.
- + Participants would like to see open spaces activated year-round with winter-friendly amenities.

#### MOBILITY & MOVEMENT:

*HOW WE MOVE AROUND*



- + A mix of openness and worry about reducing the overall space allocated to street parking and parking lots (e.g. excitement about other uses of that space; concern about the amount and location of remaining parking, and; reduced vehicle capacity along Whyte Avenue).
- + Most participants expressed interest in prioritizing pedestrians throughout the area with improved infrastructure, connectivity, and separation from vehicles.

#### COMFORT & SAFETY:

*HOW WE FEEL*



- + Addressing conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers while increasing pedestrian safety at intersection crossings is a recurring need.
- + More outreach services to support vulnerable populations.
- + Increasing the amount of affordable housing in the area to address households in core housing need.

#### INCLUSION & EQUITY:

*HOW WE BELONG*



- + Participants contributed a range of ideas to enhance the gender inclusivity and age-friendliness of public spaces. Suggestions encompassed improvements in lighting, the advocacy for gender-neutral, barrier-free, and family-friendly public washrooms, enhanced access to drinking water, and barrier-free sidewalks.

**EXISTING OPEN SPACE**




- |   |                          |                             |
|---|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Garneau Park 1                               | 6. Old Scona School Park | 11. Strathcona Park         |
| 2. E.L Hill Park                                | 7. Tipton Park           | 12. King Edward School Park |
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| 5. Light Horse Park                             | 10. End of Steel Park    | 15. Strathcona Park 4       |



**FIGURE 3** OPEN SPACES FOUND WITHIN THE PROJECT AREA

**2.2.2 Phase 1 Area Analysis**

The technical analysis assessed current conditions, encompassing aspects like open spaces, mobility, and housing in the area. Insights from demographic data, a review of land use, City policies, and on-site observations informed this comprehensive analysis. This analysis contributed to future phases of engagement and the eventual recommendations.

 **PROJECT BOUNDARY**  
 **PARKS**  


## A. Population Growth and Open Space Assessment

Old Strathcona, comprising the vibrant neighbourhoods of Strathcona, Garneau, Queen Alexandra, and Ritchie is part of the Scona District, which had an estimated population of 56,000 in 2021, as indicated by the federal census. The draft *Scona District Plan* anticipates that when Edmonton reaches 2 million people, the Scona District population will have tripled to approximately 193,000 people. Given that Old Strathcona is recognized as one of the most densely populated areas in the Scona District, it is expected to experience a more significant ratio of growth associated with this population milestone. This can be attributed to the designation of this area as a priority growth area with two primary corridors in *The City Plan*.

The projected population increase means additional demand on the existing open spaces in the area. Within the project boundary, there is approximately 11.1 hectares of open space (a total area approximately the size of 20 football fields), which includes a mix of parks, school sites and greenways. Figure 3 shows the distribution of open spaces with the majority in the northern half of the overall project area and a deficiency in the southern half. The City of Edmonton uses a population-to-area ratio to get a sense of how much open space is available.

Based on the current population, the amount of open space is 1.0 hectares/1,000 residents within the project area. This is significantly below the average for mature neighbourhoods. This helps to highlight the need for additional open space as the area's population is projected to increase.

The area also attracts large volumes of visitors, with almost one million people visiting events or festivals annually.<sup>1</sup> Many of these events and festivals use open spaces for programming (or staging). For example, McIntyre Park is regularly booked for large events or gatherings. While this contributes to the vibrancy that

makes Old Strathcona unique, it can limit the availability of open spaces for residents to use for their wellness or recreation.

Edmonton and Old Strathcona, not unlike other Canadian cities, have seen a dramatic increase in vulnerable populations, including people experiencing homelessness.<sup>2</sup> Public realm and open spaces, while only a small piece within more long-term solutions to these challenges, serve as important places for all people to gather, rest, and access drinking water or washrooms (e.g., public washrooms at Whyte Avenue and Gateway Boulevard).

## B. Sidewalk and Alley Assessment

*The City Plan* strives for half of all trips to be made using transit and active transportation. This involves integrating transit and active modes within key nodes and corridors, such as Whyte Avenue, a crucial east-west route. Whyte Avenue is also a destination and main street in Old Strathcona. Recognizing the importance of the public realm is a vital step in establishing effective transit, given that every transit rider starts and finishes their journey on a sidewalk.

Sidewalks are the travel infrastructure for pedestrians (including people with mobility aids like wheelchairs, scooters, and walkers). They also support commercial activity. Active storefronts, restaurants and patios give the street its vibrancy. Sidewalks should be comfortable to travel, stop, and maneuver on foot or while using a mobility aid to ensure a good barrier-free pedestrian environment.

- 
1. P. 31 "SEE YOURSELF IN OLD STRATHCONA", OLD STRATHCONA BUSINESS ASSOCIATION
  2. HOMEWARD TRUST EDMONTON

Sidewalk widths on Whyte Avenue, however, are relatively narrow. They range from 3.5 to 4 metres, which is half the width targeted by Edmonton's *Main Street Guidelines*. The space needed for a main street sidewalk should be allocated into three 'zones': the 'frontage zone' space adjacent to buildings for displays, signage or seating; the 'pedestrian through zone' space for people of all ages and abilities to travel; and the 'furnishing zone' space for lights, trees, transit stops, bike racks, patio seating, and benches. The modest sidewalk widths on Whyte Avenue means the space for people to travel can be obstructed or different elements compete for the limited space. Figure 4 depicts the current situation and challenges.

Along with Whyte Avenue, the strategy has examined the inventory of alleyways north and south of Whyte Avenue. Alleys are often viewed as a building's back of house: there for exits, servicing, loading and vehicles. As a result, they can be perceived as less inviting spaces within the public realm. Through an alley assessment, it was observed that the surfaces in alleys are uneven or inconsistent, lighting is limited, and there is little vegetation.

Yet, alleys serve as integral parts of the pedestrian and cyclist network, contributing to the creation of a more intimate block structure, reducing distances to destinations, and expanding connectivity. Enhancing the conditions in alleys would transform them into versatile multi-modal connections.

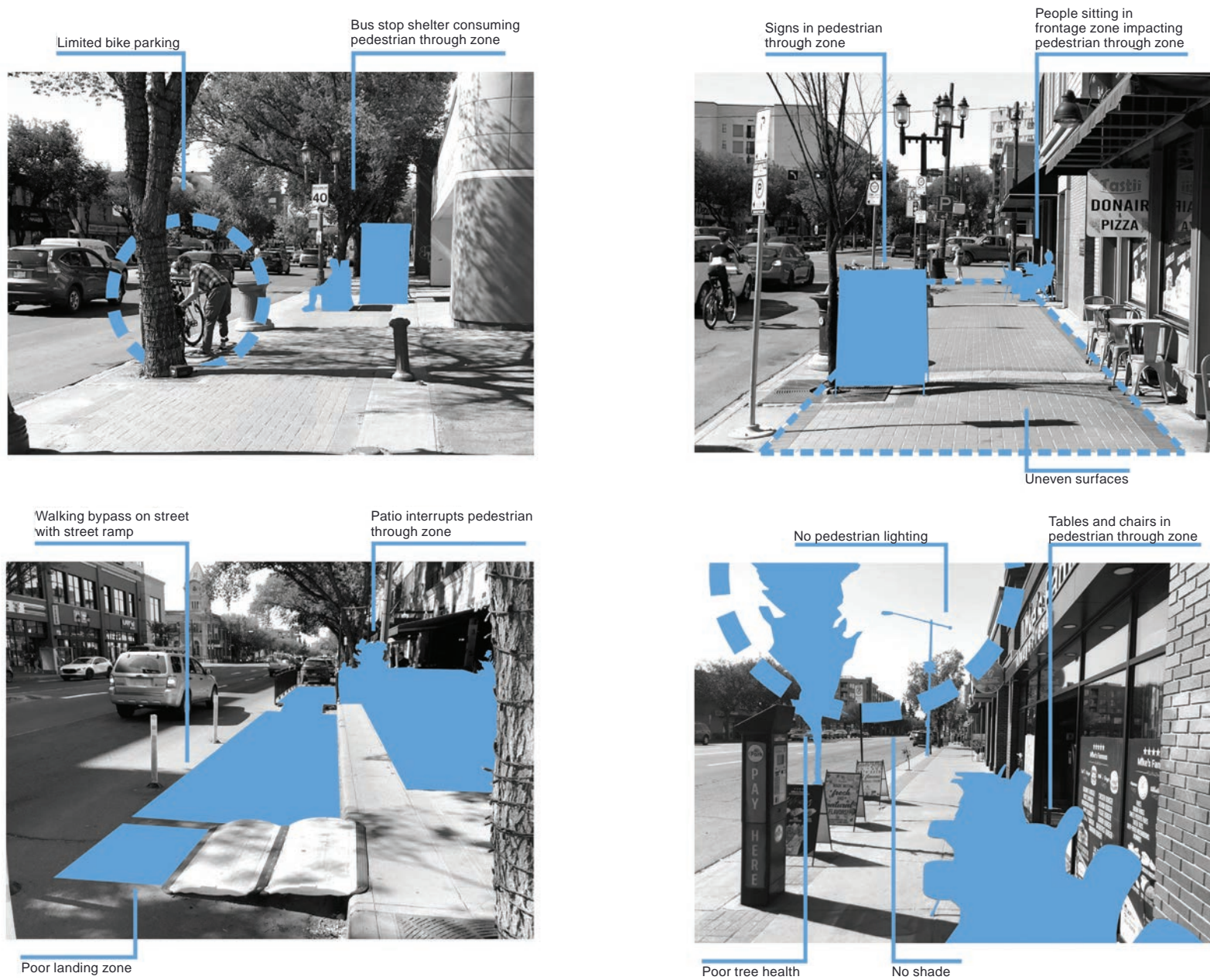
Building on the success of the Strathcona Back Street (an alley and parking lot recently transformed into a plaza), there is a growing inclination to view alleys not just as links but as destinations in

themselves. Many instances of public art and murals, achieved through collaboration among the community, artists, and businesses, have significantly enriched the ambiance of alleys. During community engagement events, Edmontonians expressed a shared desire to witness improvements in alleys, including enhanced lighting, upgraded surfaces, increased business presence, more art installations, and the addition of greenery to cultivate distinctive and safe experiences.



IMAGE STRATHCONA BACK STREET ENTRANCE

FIGURE 4 EXAMPLES OF PEDESTRIAN CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED THROUGH AN ASSESSMENT OF WHYTE AVE



### C. Housing and Development Assessment

The project assessed the function of publicly owned surface parking lots along Gateway Boulevard and considered alternatives. Using some of this land for new open space was one possibility, given the need highlighted above. Allocating some of the land for development integrated with the open space was another strong consideration. Mid to high-rise development would contribute to the density in the area as directed by *The City Plan* and would connect future residents to a variety of amenities.

Mixed market development that includes affordable housing would address housing needs in the Old Strathcona area and help alleviate

housing issues in the city. The City of Edmonton, like other governments and agencies across the country, is working to address the housing affordability challenge that has increased in recent years. In 2019, City Council approved a long-term goal of 16 percent affordable housing (i.e., non-market housing) in every neighbourhood across Edmonton. In Strathcona, the non-market housing ratio is approximately 1 percent.

Land sale revenue resulting from a mixed market development (after discounting the value of City-owned land for the affordable housing component) should be used to help pay for new and improved open spaces within the project area.



FIGURE 5 MIXED MARKET DEVELOPMENT SITE (EXACT CONFIGURATION TO BE DETERMINED)

## 2.3 PHASE 2: DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

This phase built on what was learned and heard in Phase 1 to present possible options and recommendations. Together with a technical analysis and policy review, the project team proposed a series of design ideas to explore possible improvements and opportunities. The engagement process invited people -- through surveys, online learn and share sessions, and an in-person drop-in event -- to provide feedback to help refine the design ideas.

### 2.3.1 Phase 2 Engagement Recap and Highlights

For Phase 2 Engagement, the design ideas were grouped by Strategy Area (see Figure 1 on pg. 4).

#### STRATEGY AREA 1: GATEWAY BOULEVARD & PUBLICLY OWNED LANDS

Using the feedback collected in Phase 1 about improving connectivity for residents, adding to the existing parks, enhancing spaces for festivals and everyday use, and accommodating development like affordable housing, three design ideas were presented.

Each design idea proposed to repurpose the parking lots and increase the total amount of open space in the area. Open space features could include trees and other vegetation, places for shade (in summer) or warmth (in winter), supporting facilities (such as washrooms and drinking water stations), as well as space for festivals and events. Pedestrians and cyclists using pathways and have places to rest, play and congregate. Design ideas 2 and 3

(Figure 6) proposed incorporating residential buildings that would include affordable housing. All three design ideas proposed a residential building between Connaught Armoury and Light Horse Park. All three design ideas also proposed to improve segments of some avenues, streets, and alleys into "shared streets."



IMAGE PHASE 2 ENGAGEMENT DROP-IN SESSION COMMENT BOARD



**STRATEGY AREA 1 WHAT WE HEARD HIGHLIGHTS**

For Strategy Area 1, people expressed interest in a large open space that could support events and other activities. Participants also liked balancing open spaces with plazas and residential development including affordable housing. There was support for the “shared streets” on certain avenues and alleys that prioritize pedestrians and cyclists while allowing cars at slower speeds. Several participants raised the idea of closing off some streets to cars completely.

Participants were divided on re-purposing parking lots to create more open spaces, with 44 percent strongly or somewhat agreeing that they should be and 48 percent strongly or somewhat disagreeing. A gradual transition, support for new uses like parks, plazas and housing, and consideration for underground parking could help to alleviate the concern for the loss.

For a full summary, refer to the [Phase 2: What We Heard Report](#).

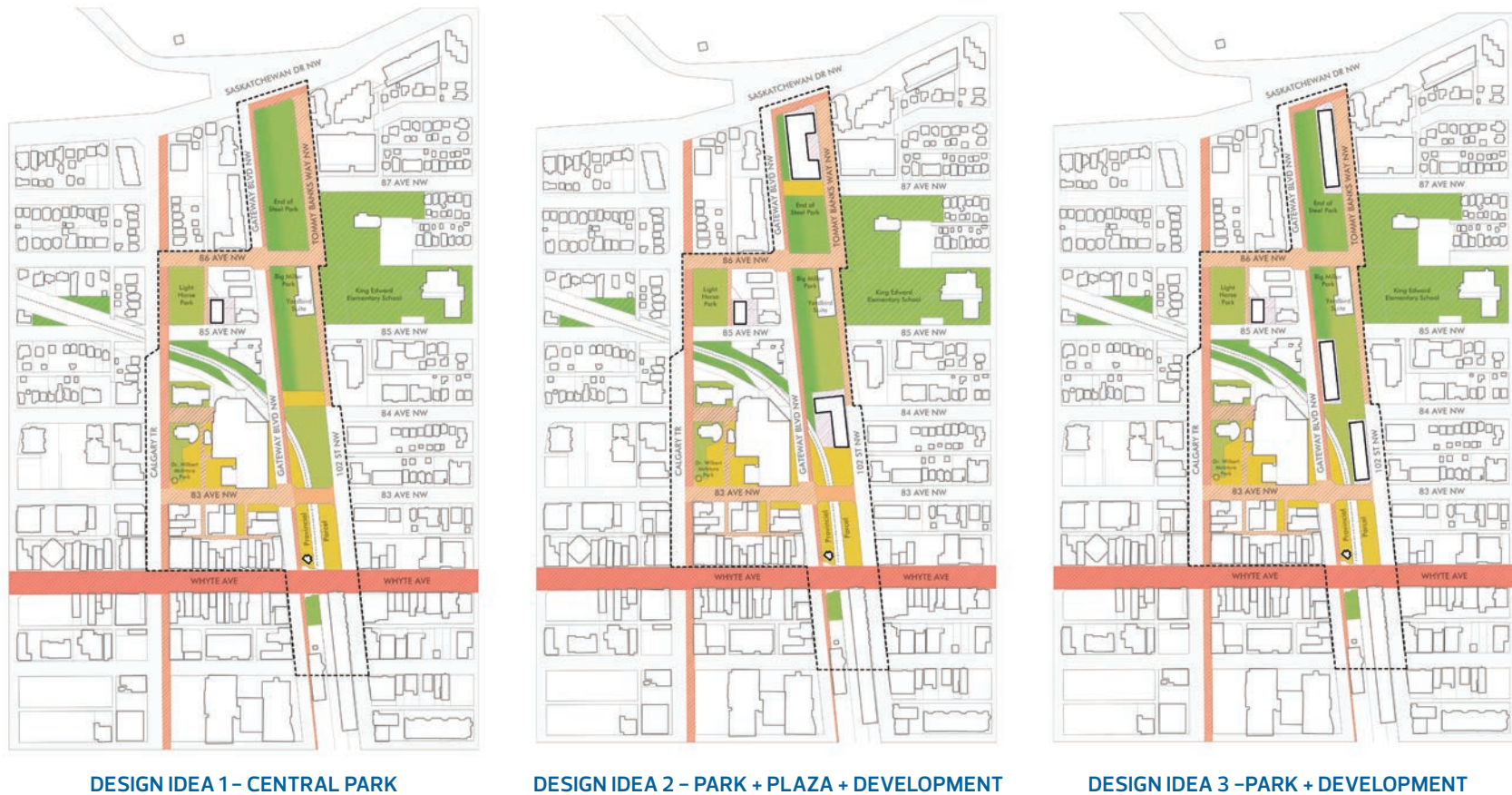


FIGURE 6 THE THREE PROPOSED CONCEPTS PRESENTED DURING PHASE 2 ENGAGEMENT

**STRATEGY AREA 2: WHYTE AVENUE AND ALLEYWAYS**

Using the feedback collected in Phase 1 about improving connectivity for residents, adding to the existing parks, enhancing spaces for festivals and everyday use, and accommodating development like affordable housing, three design ideas were presented.

The design idea for Whyte Avenue also showed dedicated centre-running transit lanes.\* Two vehicle lanes (one in each direction) would be provided.

*\* Note: the exact location of the dedicated transit lanes, whether in the centre or next to the curb, will be determined as part of future Mass Transit work.*

Feedback was sought on four different examples that showed how the wider sidewalks could adjust to provide more space for pedestrians and different public realm elements.

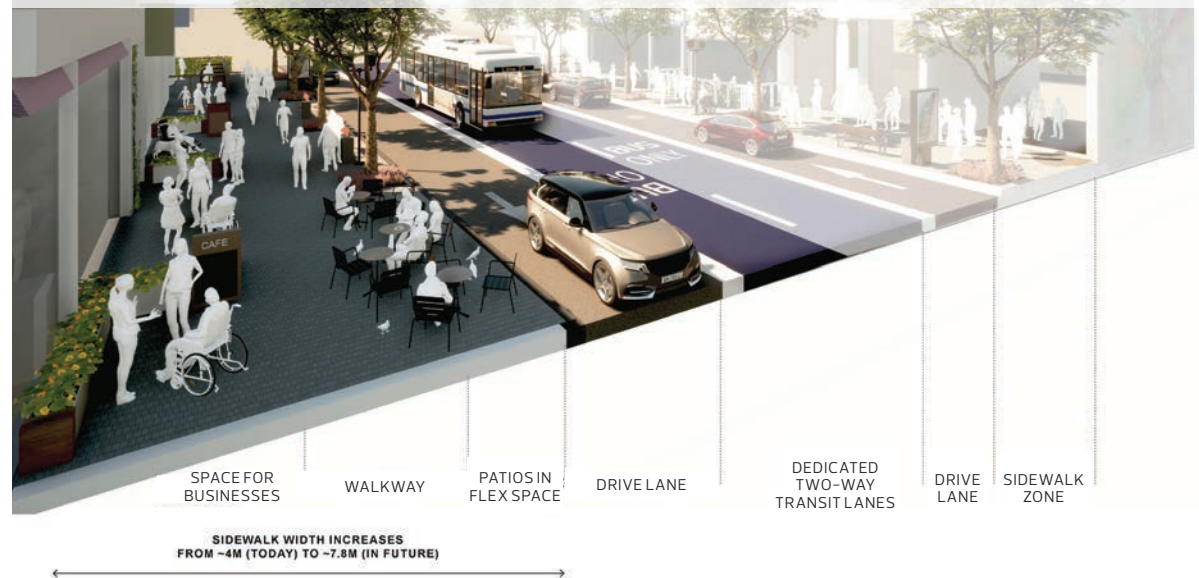
Based on the Phase 1 input and analysis, people wanted alleyways to become safer and more inclusive by improving the conditions and bringing businesses to them. People shared what they thought was needed to renew and activate alleys to be inclusive, safe and inviting.

**FIGURE 7** STRATEGY AREA 2 PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS WITH THE PROPOSED INCREASE OF WHYTE AVENUE SIDEWALK WIDTHS

**Whyte Avenue: Bioswale & Rain Garden Example**



**Whyte Avenue: Business Activation/Patio Example**



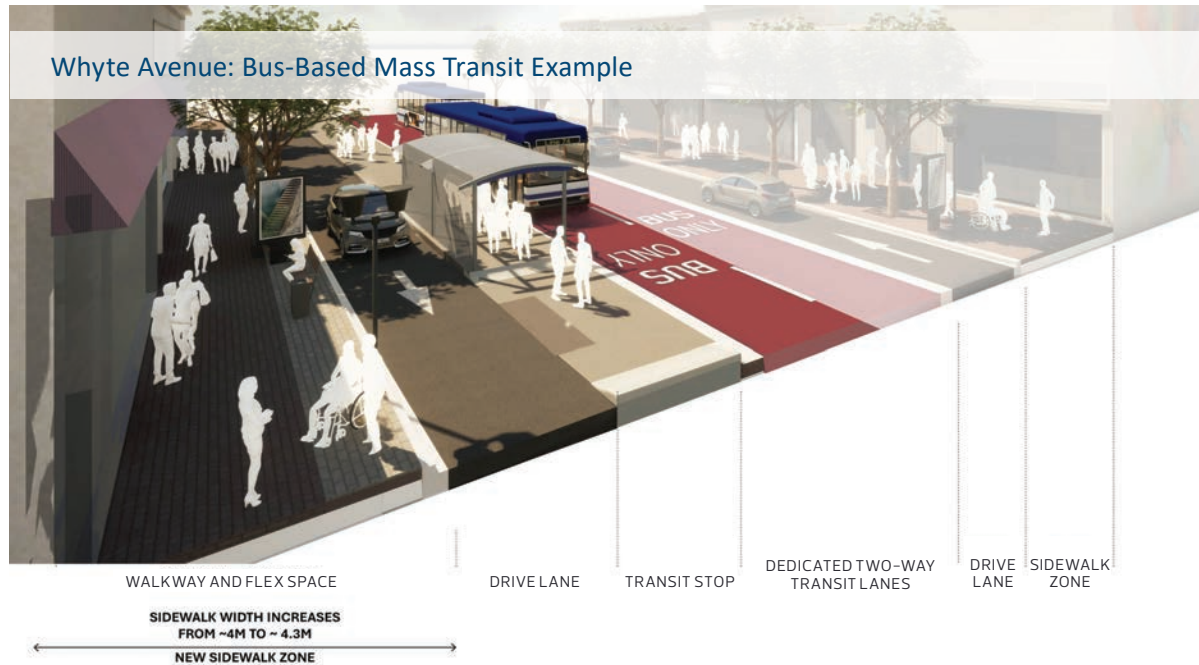
**STRATEGY AREA 2: WHAT WE HEARD HIGHLIGHTS**

For Whyte Avenue, nearly two-thirds of participants supported repurposing on-street parking to expand sidewalks for pedestrian movement and other amenities such as seating, patios, street lights, signs, seasonal retail, and vegetation. Participants also welcomed transit improvements. While some were concerned about losing on-street parking, support increased when drop-off/pick-up and accessible parking were included, along with developing parking wayfinding to direct drivers. Concerns about maintenance, snow clearing, traffic congestion, limited parallel routes, and shortcutting through neighbourhoods were noted. However, many felt the changes would slow traffic, make crossing safer, and reduce noise.

For alleyways, people wanted improved pedestrian experience and safety, with better lighting being the most popular request. Enhancing paving conditions, encouraging more businesses to face alleys, adjusting waste bin placement, and adding landscaping would also help renew and activate these spaces.

For a full summary, refer to the [Phase 2 What We Heard Report](#).

**FIGURE 8** STRATEGY AREA 2 PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS WITH THE PROPOSED INCREASE OF WHYTE AVENUE SIDEWALK WIDTHS



### 2.3.2 Phase 2 Analysis

The feedback received from Phase 2 engagement, together with further technical analysis and ongoing alignment with policy objectives, was used to inform how to refine the design ideas. Additional analysis was also done on open space, parking and how traffic will shift in response to what was heard.

For Strategy Area 1, the analysis focused on drafting one design idea or overall concept that would:

- + Add open spaces that are safe and inclusive with natural and active spaces for all ages and year-round use
- + Identify the most suitable locations for building(s)
- + Enhance connections for pedestrians and cyclists
- + Identify alleys/streets/avenues as candidates to be a shared street

For Strategy Area 2, engagement focused on refining the illustrations that communicate public realm improvement possibilities, illustrating the possible distribution on the avenue and highlighting the characteristics to renew and activate alleyways.

#### OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Building on the Phase 1 open space assessment, further analysis evaluated the open space network at the district level. Within the Scona District, spaces for the functions of "Wellness" and "Ecology" were identified as under-provided compared to "Celebration." Specifically, the neighbourhoods adjacent to Whyte Avenue lack Wellness

amenities and supporting infrastructure that provide informal leisure and recreation opportunities for visitors and residents from multiple neighbourhoods. Additionally, opportunities for additional tree plantings and naturalization are limited due to space and utility constraints.

These findings were used to evaluate the Phase 2 design ideas and their potential impacts. Gateway Boulevard and the Rail Trail corridor were identified as future greenways for increased plantings and ecological connection to the North Saskatchewan River Valley. All three design ideas aligned with this opportunity. However, design ideas 2 and 3 left insufficient open space to provide district-level Wellness amenities within the area. Ideally, district-level programming should be centrally located near Whyte Avenue to reach a broader range of users and leverage its proximity to public amenities like washrooms.

Open space programming, classification, priority functions, and intent were identified for all open spaces in the project area to provide strategic direction for future implementation. They have been incorporated into the strategy's recommendations.

#### PARKING STUDY

Repurposing parking for other public realm uses was an idea common to both strategy areas. As a result, the project team completed a parking study to understand how on-street parking is provided and used in the area. The study offered insights into the opportunities and challenges associated with changing how parking spaces are managed to enhance the public realm and better accommodate transit.

The study counted publicly available parking spaces and their use from 109 Street to 99 Street and 85 Avenue to 79 Avenue (a five to seven minute walk on foot to/from Whyte Avenue) over three days (Thursday to Saturday). Key findings included:

- + There were 3,500 public parking spaces made up of on-street and publicly available off-street parking (i.e., parking lots) : 1,965 were on-street curbside parking spaces
- + Utilization (for on-street curbside) was generally below 65 percent with a peak of 72 percent: On average, there were between 250 to 500 parking spaces at any given time available within one block from Whyte Avenue

The number of spaces and the level of utilization indicate that the area, broadly, is overparked – that more spaces are provided than needed. However, using the curbside space efficiently is far more complicated than simply matching the number of spaces supplied to the demand. Given the wide range of land uses in the area – from main street shops and restaurants to single-family residential – it is anticipated that the area would benefit from the development of a more comprehensive approach to parking management as a way to manage on-street parking supply. This will better support nearby land uses. For example, on-street parking spaces near businesses and restaurants can be managed to encourage higher turnover while on-street parking spaces near lower-density residential can be managed to allow for longer periods and overnight parking. Tactics to manage on-street parking in the area will be guided by the Curbside Management Strategy which will inform expanding paid/restricted parking areas, consideration of a residential parking permit program on residential streets, and introducing parking wayfinding tools and technology.

For the complete report, refer to the [Old Strathcona Parking Study](#).

## SHIFTS TO TRAFFIC

Providing more public realm space and introducing dedicated transit lanes on Whyte Avenue will reduce the number of travel lanes and inevitably, change traffic patterns and volumes along the corridor. The changes will shift Whyte Avenue's role to more of a main street and entertainment district and less of a car commuter corridor. Current traffic volumes along Whyte Avenue are in the range of 24,000–28,000 vehicles per day. Reducing vehicle capacity on Whyte Avenue to accommodate widened sidewalks and dedicated transit lanes will reduce vehicle traffic accommodation by about one half. Over time, more people will travel along Whyte Avenue using a different mode (e.g. transit or walking) with drivers seeking alternative routes to their destinations. The shift considers the capacity of the avenue to move more people to and through the area. For example, a dedicated transit lane could see 4000 to 8000 people travel per hour compared with only 500 to 1000 vehicles.

To support *The City Plan's* goal to provide more choices in how people get around, investment in mass transit will provide a new, faster and more frequent transit option in the future for commuters. It was also encouraging to learn through the Phase 1 engagement how people said they travel to the Old Strathcona area: 65 percent said that they were pedestrians, 50 percent cycle, 48 percent take transit, 22 percent said they use a car (as the driver) and 21 percent said they use a car (as the passenger). (Note: people were able to pick more than one travel mode).



## 2.4 PHASE 3: DRAFT PUBLIC REALM STRATEGY

The feedback received from Phase 2 engagement informed the refinement of the design ideas into an overall concept, reflecting a combination of what was heard. The overall concept provides a focal point for the strategy document which contains the key actions and additional recommendations.

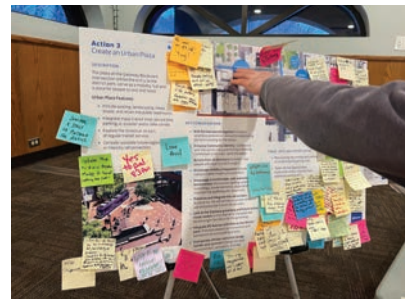
Phase 3 engagement invited people -- through a survey, the Engaged Edmonton webpage, in-person drop-in event, online sessions and other opportunities -- to provide input on the strategy's key considerations, trade-offs and opportunities to help with possible adjustments needed for successful implementation.

### 2.4.1 Phase 3 Engagement Recap and Highlights

The Phase 3 feedback included a lot of excitement for the strategy and what it sets up for decades of future growth in Old Strathcona. People liked the enhancements to parks, the addition of dedicated transit lanes, and the creation of more housing, especially affordable housing. Many shared their enthusiasm to see the proposed changes happen soon.

The reduction of parking and its impacts was one of the frequent concerns heard. People shared that the loss of parking could be perceived as a barrier to travel to Old Strathcona, especially for people from other parts of the city or region, for seniors, and people with mobility considerations. It could also impact the viability of the theatres, the Old Strathcona Farmers' Market, and businesses. Other concerns included traffic impacts, costs (to taxpayers) to build or maintain the new spaces, safety, and the need to support vulnerable or houseless Edmontonians first.

For a full summary, refer to the [Phase 3: What We Heard Report](#).



**TOP LEFT** PARTICIPANTS AT THE DROP-IN SESSION HELD ON APRIL 4, 2024 **BELOW LEFT** DISPLAY BOARD DURING THE DROP IN SESSION **RIGHT** AN EXAMPLE OF OPPOSING VIEWS ON THE STRATEGY HEARD THROUGH ENGAGEMENT

## 2.4.2 Phase 3 Analysis

### POPULATION GROWTH AND OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Population projections were updated to ensure alignment with ongoing work related to district plans and *The City Plan's* implementation. Based on questions that came through the Phase 3 feedback, the rationale for the need, location and benefit of a district park was also updated.

### PARKING

Based on the engagement feedback, people were concerned with the loss of parking. However, some shared that those concerns could be alleviated if the strategy better described when parking would be reduced (e.g. in the long term), how it would be phased (e.g. gradually), ensuring accessible parking and having alternatives in place first (e.g. mass transit, parking wayfinding). The strategy was updated to provide greater clarity in response to that. Drawing from the parking study, the strategy was also updated to include more information on the potential for parking wayfinding.

### STRATEGY REFINEMENTS

Examples of other refinements to the strategy informed by the feedback received from Phase 3 engagement included:

- + Adjusting considerations for different actions
- + Providing greater clarity on how parking reductions will be phased and aligned with the roll out of dedicated transit lanes for mass transit
- + Adding references to conduct additional parking analysis in the future

- + Providing detail on projected timelines and phasing regarding the design and construction of actions and recommended improvements
- + Providing references to other City guidelines or strategies that will be consulted as part of implementation e.g. Access Design Guidelines
- + Adding of a glossary with definitions to frequently used terms
- + Updating language to be more inclusive and less able-bodied centric

Some feedback, such as retaining surface parking lots or keeping Whyte Avenue as is, did not factor into revisions to the strategy. Reducing and repurposing car parking is one example of a trade-off required to realize the proposed improvements to foster vibrant urban places, address climate goals, support housing affordability, encourage modal shifts and enhance livability in Old Strathcona. Overall, the revised strategy addresses or responds to the input people provided through the engagement phase and is strengthened as a result.

For a full summary, refer to the [Phase 3: What We Changed Report](#).



In addition to the revisions made based on the feedback, a few Old Strathcona related announcements during the Phase 3 period also prompted changes. These included:

- + The departure of the tenant within the Connaught Armoury (a City-owned building at the time of drafting) requires the City to reconsider its goals for the property. Guidance under Action 5 still applied but modifications to the considerations were made to ensure any new development supports the rehabilitation of the armoury.
- + The departure of the tenant within the 1909 Strathcona Public Market Building (a City-owned building at the time of drafting) located on 83 Avenue (between 104 Street and Gateway Boulevard) has also prompted the City to reconsider the future of this property. Modifications to the considerations under Action 6 were made to encourage the activation of the building to complement the changes to 83 Avenue.
- + The Government of Alberta has announced a Passenger Rail Master Plan to establish a passenger rail network in the province. One of the stated goals of the initiative is to connect downtown Edmonton to the rail network so publicly owned properties in Old Strathcona will need to be considered in the master planning.





# 3. RECOMMENDATIONS



### 3.1 RECOMMENDATIONS

Drawing upon the public engagement and area analysis, the recommendations provide actions to reimagine the public realm and contribute to the vibrancy that makes Old Strathcona a great place to live, work, visit and shop. The recommendations are divided into two groups:

The first group focuses on site-specific improvements proposing new or improved public realm projects within the project area. These are characterized as **Key Actions**. For each Key Action, a brief description of the current state is provided followed by a summary of the proposed improvements, considerations to guide implementation, as well as a summary of the trade-offs and opportunities on how to address them.

The second group includes general guidance or improvements to the open space and mobility network, referred to as *Additional Open Space Recommendations* and *Additional Mobility Recommendations* within the strategy.

- 1 Create a District Park
- 2 Create a Gateway Greenway
- 3 Create an Urban Plaza
- 4 Improve End of Steel Park and Support Mixed Market Development of Parking Lot
- 5 Support Development next to Connaught Armoury
- 6 Pedestrianize 83 Avenue
- 7 Prioritize Pedestrians on Whyte Avenue

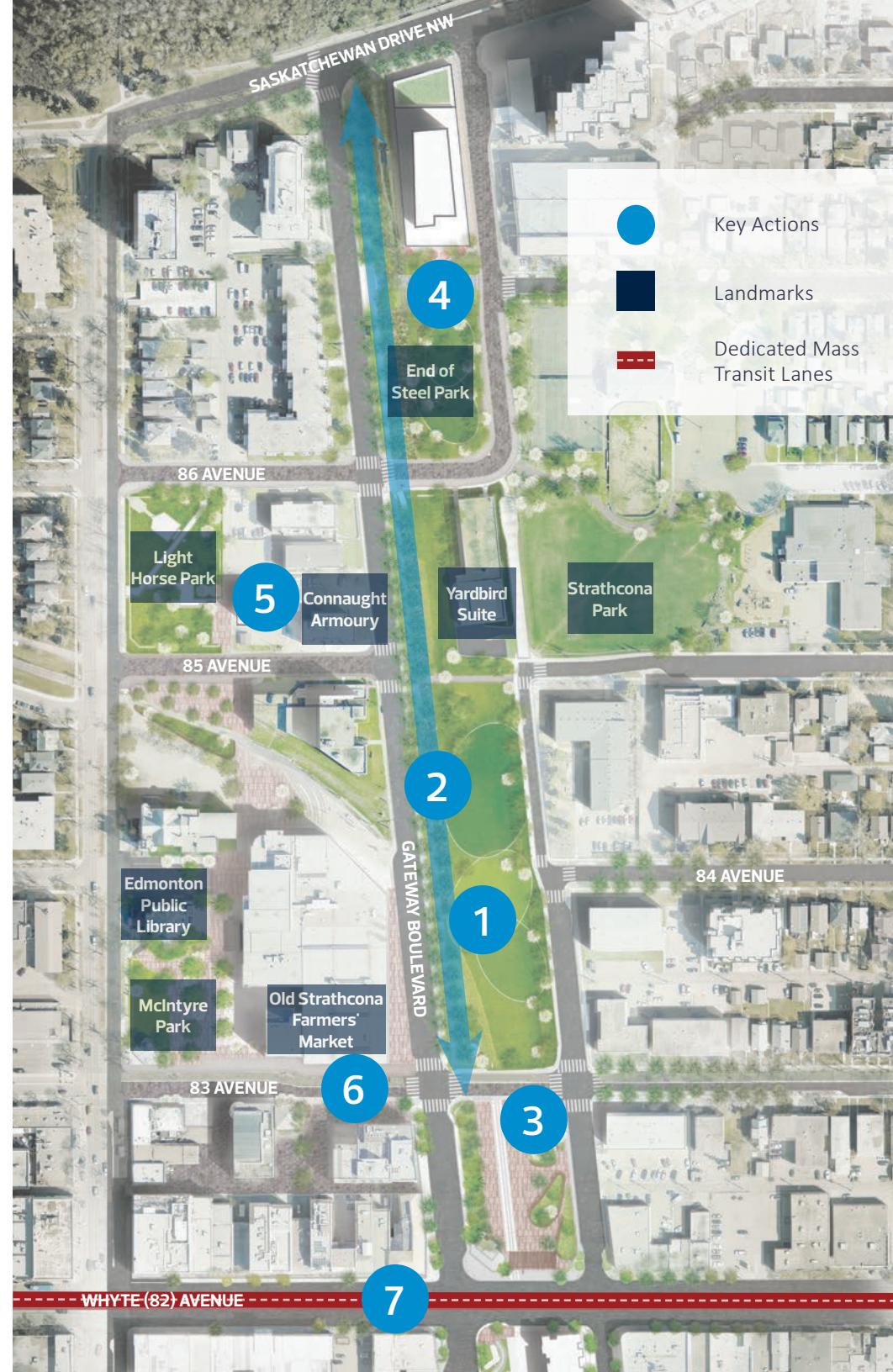


FIGURE 9 LOCATION OF THE KEY ACTIONS

## 3.2 KEY ACTIONS

### 1 Create a District Park

#### DESCRIPTION

The general boundaries of the new district park will be Gateway Boulevard, 83 Avenue, 102 Street and 85 Avenue. The site is currently used as a surface parking lot with a portion of the southwest corner dedicated to the rail corridor.

#### PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

The recommendation for a new district park arises from several key factors. Firstly, the current population-to-area ratio within the project area falls below the city's average, highlighting the need for additional open space, especially with projected population growth. Moreover, Edmonton's *Breathe: Green Network Strategy* underscores the significance of open space diversity, distribution, and quality. With significant population growth anticipated in Old Strathcona and surrounding neighbourhoods, there is a growing need for a variety of open spaces, such as parks, greenways, and plazas.

The area's commercial and entertainment activities, along with the anticipated access to mass transit, will bring visitors from both the district and city-wide levels, putting more pressure on the existing open space network than in other parts of the city. The park's central location near Whyte Avenue, known for its theatres and venues, will draw visitors and foster social gatherings. Additionally, the park's accessibility via an expanding pedestrian and bike network and transit will benefit residents of adjacent neighbourhoods, making it an important addition to the city's open space infrastructure.

The new district park, created by repurposing the existing parking lot, will become a signature destination, addressing Edmontonians' desire for a large new open space. It will primarily serve current and

future residents of Strathcona and the surrounding neighbourhoods. To complement the nearby Rollie Miles District Park, which provides amenities like sports fields and recreational facilities, the new district park will offer wellness functions that are lacking in the urban area. These specialized amenities will provide a level of service that attracts users from beyond a single neighbourhood.

Recommended district level functions include:

- + All-age play elements, interactive public art or landmarks
- + Naturalized landscapes and low impact development (LID) infrastructure
- + Adaptive spaces for social gathering and picnicking
- + Enhanced pedestrian circuit with seating and shade
- + Informal, unorganized, or unstructured sport, leisure and recreation
- + Provision of shade, hydration, and cooling stations
- + Supporting amenities expected to support district level use e.g. sheltered area for all season use and shade; lighting

The new district park could also serve some Celebration functions while not disrupting the Wellness activities which are the park's priority. A portion of the park closest to 83 Avenue would be ideal to host farmers' market vendors, food trucks, buskers or an extension of programming from venues west of Gateway Boulevard.

#### KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- + **Develop a Concept Plan**– The City will create a concept plan for the district park, Gateway greenway, End of Steel Park, Big Miller Park, and urban plaza, taking into account the above considerations and others, with further public input. A concept plan will provide a cohesive design, identify specific elements and guide construction.

- + **Integrate the Gateway greenway** – The new district park and the Gateway greenway will be integrated to ensure pedestrian and cycling connections to the park.
- + **Create east-west connections** – Entrances for the park will be created at 85 and 84 Avenues to welcome people from the neighbourhood directly east and west. The entrances will also allow pedestrian and cycling connections when travelling east or west through the park or connect to the Gateway greenway. Improvements to pedestrian crossings of Gateway Boulevard should also be explored.
- + **Consider Big Miller Park and the Yardbird Suite** – The north part of the park will connect to Big Miller Park and the Yardbird Suite. The Yardbird could function as an anchor drawing people to it. This part of the district park could include seating, queuing areas or other elements supporting outdoor performances or programming.
- + **Link to the urban plaza and 83 Avenue** – The district park will have a clear physical and visual connection to the urban plaza immediately south of the district park. Special treatment of 83 Avenue should be considered, in order to emphasize pedestrian priority in this area.
- + **Create a welcoming edge along 102 St** – With park entrances, ensure a seamless interface with 102 St. This may involve renewing 102 St into a shared street concurrently with the district park’s development. Connecting the shared street with the park would establish a welcoming link for the eastern half of the neighbourhood and potential future redevelopment across from the park.
- + **Consider sightlines** – Views of Old Strathcona’s rich heritage (e.g., the Walterdale Theatre bell tower), the river valley, downtown and the skyline will be considered in the design.
- + **Preserve and integrate the rail corridor** – The design for the park should account for the rail corridor, in the south west corner of the park, and the current streetcar use and future rail services that may be connected.



FIGURE 10 DISTRICT PARK FOCUS

- + **Provide servicing** – Appropriate municipal servicing (e.g., water fill stations, power) will be designed into the district park to ensure daily use, events and festivals.
- + **Incorporate climate**–sensitive design (winter and summer)– The City’s Winter Design Guidelines will inform the design for year–round comfort, activation, and use.
- + **Incorporate resilience** – Park design and amenities consider resilience best practices to buffer the impacts of extreme weather, boost biodiversity by increasing natural habitat, and provide places for people to gather and recreate. Spaces are multi–functional and adaptive to support district needs

#### TRADE-OFFS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Removing parking is one of the trade-offs needed to make the proposed improvements to the public realm. The proposal for a new district park means repurposing the existing City-owned parking lot. The parking lot, which is currently leased to the Old Strathcona Farmers' Market, is used by market patrons on Saturdays and by people attending performing arts events at other times of the week. While the parking study highlighted the overall availability of parking in the area and strategies to address the removal and reduction of parking, some organizations have expressed concern about short-term impacts to their operations resulting from parking reductions.

The City has a staged plan that considers impacts on the market and performing arts groups in the area:

1. Retain surface parking on an interim basis. Dedicate parking revenue to public realm improvements in the area.
2. Add secure bike parking.



IMAGE DISTRICT PARK CONCEPTUAL VISUALIZATION

3. Initiate an Old Strathcona parking wayfinding project. Better manage on–street parking.
4. Start open space concept plan design. Engage interested parties in the design.
5. Conduct additional parking analysis, including identifying locations for accessible parking.
6. Implement bus rapid transit on Whyte Avenue.
7. Reduce surface parking stalls in phases as the district park is built.

As mass transit is introduced and the population living within walking and cycling distance increases, travel mode preferences are expected to continue evolving. A properly programmed and designed district park that meets the needs of residents may also encourage nearby properties to densify. If, despite other efforts, there continues to be significant unmet demand for private vehicle parking, the City can explore the business case for building structured parking (underground or in a parkade).

## 2 Create a Gateway Greenway

### DESCRIPTION

The Gateway greenway will be located east of Gateway Boulevard from Saskatchewan Drive to Whyte Avenue. It will travel through portions of what is currently End of Steel Park, Big Miller Park and the City-owned parking lot.

### PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

The greenway will provide a north-south shared pathway connecting the river valley, Queen Elizabeth Park, Saskatchewan Drive and Whyte Avenue that is currently lacking. Building off *The City Plan's* "Greener as We Grow" big move and target for two million trees, the greenway will function as a habitat greenway enhancing the area's ecology and biodiversity. It will include more trees, drought resistant native plants in naturalized plantings, low impact development and enhanced landscaping. The greenway will provide a corridor for pedestrian and cycling movement to complement other north-south active transportation routes (e.g., 104 Street is identified as more of a commuter route for cycling). It may include separate pathways to ensure safety and avoid conflicts between pedestrians and cyclists. Features will include (but not be limited to): trees and vegetation such as native species, lighting, sun and wind protection, wayfinding and signage, seating, heritage interpretation and all-year use.

### KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- + **Integrate with existing and new parks** – The greenway will integrate with surrounding parks, Saskatchewan Drive, and the river valley, connecting with the new district park and urban plaza to ensure pedestrian and cycling connections from both the north and south.
- + **Foster east-west connections** – 84, 85 and 86 Avenues will enable people from the east and west parts of the neighbourhood to access the Gateway greenway.



IMAGE GATEWAY GREENWAY CONCEPTUAL VISUALIZATION

- + **Target a minimum 20 metre wide greenway** – To ensure sufficient space for the shared pathway (approximately 5 metres), landscaping and vegetation, and supporting elements like lighting and seating, 20 metres should be the goal. Some space may be integrated into the redesigned parks, but with clearly delineated areas for pedestrian and cycling movement to enhance safety and minimize conflicts. The recommended width and combination of these elements are necessary for the greenway's success.
- + **Buffer from Gateway Boulevard** – When close to Gateway, buffering elements should protect greenway users from the impacts of vehicular movement. Portions of the greenway may be further from the roadway. Improvements to Gateway Boulevard will also help. See section 3.4.4 under Additional Mobility Recommendations for more.
- + **Preserve and integrate the rail corridor** – The design and direction for the greenway should account for the rail corridor and possible future commuter and/or regional rail service.
- + **Link to the urban plaza and future active mode routes** – The greenway provides an important connection to the



IMAGE GATEWAY GREENWAY CONCEPTUAL VISUALIZATION

proposed urban plaza and future active transportation and mobility connections planned or needed south of Whyte Avenue. For example, the greenway could link (via the urban plaza, 102 Street or Strathcona Park 4) to the future redevelopment of the CPR lands south of Whyte Avenue.

- + **Incorporate climate-sensitive design (winter and summer)** – The City's *Winter Design Guidelines* will guide design for year-round comfort, activation, and use.
- + **Incorporate resilience** – Integration of resilience best practices should be incorporated into the greenway such as hardy tree species, native species and drought tolerant plants to help enhance the areas ecology and biodiversity and buffer impacts of extreme weather.

#### TRADE-OFFS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The creation of the greenway will mean a change to existing parks like End of Steel Park and Big Miller Park. Through analysis and engagement, End of Steel was seen as less utilized and less connected to Old Strathcona's core areas. Big Miller is a small and poorly defined pocket park and deserves attention to elevate its commemorative role. The Gateway greenway provides the opportunity to consider targeted improvements to both parks through a comprehensive concept plan.

The greenway may also impact the existing trees in End of Steel Park. The greenway (together with the other proposed improvements) will include a net increase of trees and other plantings to support *Breathe* and other climate resiliency goals. New trees and other plantings should include native species that provide shade, space for pollinators and local wildlife, and are resilient to drought and other weather extremes.

The Gateway greenway will also impact the parking and access in front (west) of the Yardbird Suite. Access could be redirected to 102 Street where there is space south of the Yardbird's building to provide an enhanced drop-off and pick-up location. Parking can be accommodated on nearby streets and avenues. The Gateway greenway will provide an attractive connection from the neighbourhood or to future mass transit on Whyte Avenue. An open space concept plan (for the Gateway greenway, district park, Big Miller, and urban plaza) will consider how to positively integrate the Yardbird Suite to include seating, queuing areas or elements that could support outdoor performances or programming. The design of the district park and greenway should be flexible in the event the site or building's function changes or other opportunities or collaborations arise.

### 3 Create an Urban Plaza

#### DESCRIPTION

The plaza will be located on the two parcels bounded by Whyte Avenue, Gateway Boulevard, 83 Avenue and 102 Street. The parcels are owned by the province and bisected by the rail corridor currently used by the Edmonton Radial Railway Society's historic streetcar and preserved for possible future commuter or provincial rail service. The parcel to the west of the rail corridor is leased to the City and used as a parking lot, and provides public washrooms. The parcel to the east currently operates as a used car lot.

#### PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

The plaza site is located in the heart of urban life on Whyte Avenue and at a key intersection with Gateway Boulevard. The plaza is envisioned to become the entryway or even a landmark between the new district park or Gateway greenway and Whyte Avenue. With seating, landscaping, trees and shade, and retention of the public washroom, the plaza would also be a place for people looking to meet or rest.

Its centrality makes it an ideal site for a mobility hub: "a place for trip origins, destinations and transfer points to allow people to seamlessly move from one travel option to another."<sup>3</sup> The plaza may be the location of a mass transit stop and could also be a place for secure bike parking, e-scooter and e-bike corrals, a stop for a future everyday streetcar integrated into regular transit service and/or a future regional or intercity rail connection.

#### KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- + **Preserve and integrate the rail corridor** – The plaza's design should account for the rail corridor's current streetcar use and potential future passenger rail services. Streetcar traffic should be successfully integrated into the plaza, similar to the urban plaza at Portland State University in Oregon. If passenger rail extended north of Whyte Avenue the plaza's design would need to consider heavy rail safety requirements.
- + **Integrate the rail corridor into the plaza's design** – the design, treatment and programming of the plaza should include the rail corridor along with how people will use or travel through the proposed plaza, in the interim (i.e. prior to passenger rail

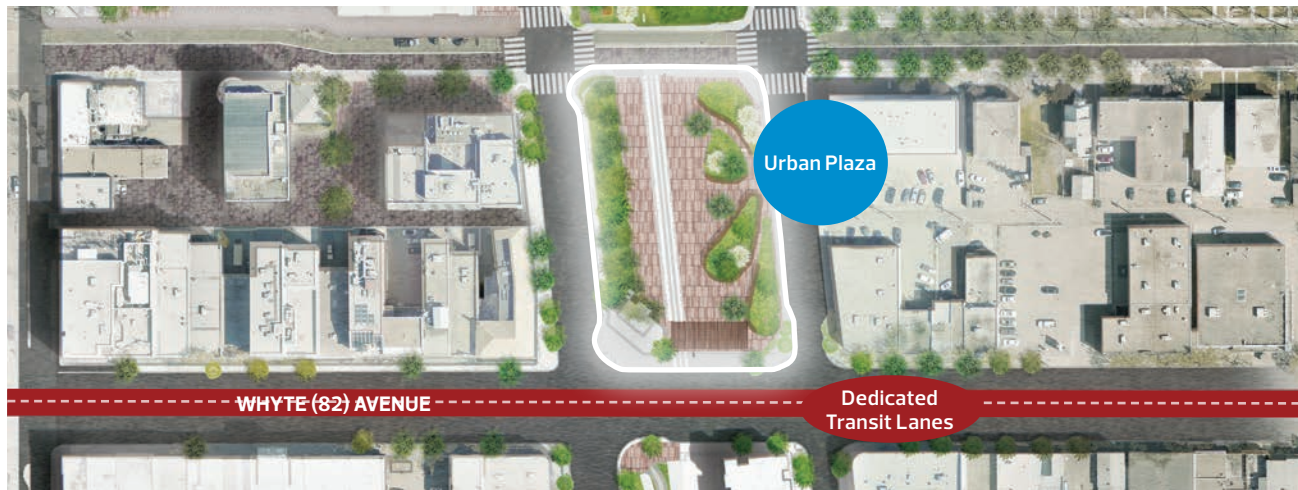


FIGURE 11 URBAN PLAZA FOCUS

3. CITY OF EDMONTON DISTRICT POLICY, P. 42



service). Should it be determined that passenger rail service would terminate south of Whyte Avenue or would not travel through the plaza, the plaza design should consider the two parcels (that make up the site) together as one site.

- + **Access from all directions** – The plaza’s design will consider how people will travel to and through it.
- + **Encourage mobility integration** – The plaza will include various transportation modes and amenities such as secure bike parking, e-scooter and e-bike corrals, streetcar and transit stops.
- + **Improve Whyte Avenue pedestrian crossings** – Connection between the proposed plaza and Strathcona Park 4 will be important. New or expanded pedestrian crossings at Whyte Avenue and Gateway Boulevard and Whyte Avenue and 102 Street will be considered.
- + **Encourage a comfortable, safe and inclusive environment** – Lighting, seating, furnishings, shade elements, landscaping and vegetation will be included. The public washroom, with staff, should continue to operate and be factored into the design.
- + **Link to the Gateway greenway and future active mode routes** – In the near term the plaza will be the origin/terminus for the greenway. However, over time, it will be an important active modes connector when the CPR lands south of Whyte Avenue are redeveloped.
- + **Integrate 83 Avenue with links to the district park** – The design of 83 Avenue will prioritize pedestrian movement between the plaza, district park, greenway and street closures on 83 Avenue between Calgary Trail and Gateway Boulevard or 102 Street.
- + **Incorporate climate-sensitive design (winter and summer)** – The City’s Winter Design Guidelines will inform

the design for year-round comfort, activation, and use.

#### TRADE-OFFS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The proposal for a plaza means repurposing the existing parking lot on the west half of the site and the reduction of approximately 33 stalls. The parking study, referenced above, highlighted the overall availability of parking in the area and strategies to address the removal and reduction of parking. Refer to *Trade-off and Opportunities under Action 1: District Park* for additional information on how this shift will be addressed.

IMAGE PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY’S URBAN PLAZA STREETCAR INTEGRATED INTO DESIGN SOURCE PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY



## 4 Improve End of Steel Park and Support Mixed Market Development of Parking Lot

### DESCRIPTION

End of Steel Park is between Saskatchewan Drive, Gateway Boulevard and Tommy Banks Way. The park opened in 1995 after a fundraising campaign led by the Old Strathcona Foundation. Commemorating the terminus of the railroad that reached the Edmonton region in 1891, the park includes historic railroad stop blocks, a caboose on rebuilt train track, and interpretive sound boxes that have not worked for many years. Original plans for the park called for an oval lawn in the southern portion of the park that was never built.

In the northeast corner of the site, there is an 84 stall parking lot, which the City currently leases 60 stalls to the owner of the Ritchie Mill for use of the building’s tenants and visitors. There are about 24 free and publicly available but time-restricted parking spaces.

### PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

The redevelopment of the parking lot is a strategic opportunity that aligns with *The City Plan*. Its location along Saskatchewan Drive makes it an attractive place to live. The greenway will directly connect to mass transit on Whyte Avenue, approximately 600 meters to the south. High-rise development on the site will activate End of Steel Park, fit Saskatchewan Drive’s urban context and retain views into the river valley from Gateway Boulevard and the greenway. Shadowing from the development will primarily be over Saskatchewan Drive.

Consistent with calls during public engagement for affordable housing, the mixed-market development could include one or two residential towers. Some retail or commercial or community/cultural space will also be encouraged on the ground floor. Proximity to Strathcona Park and King Edward School will make it an attractive place for families.

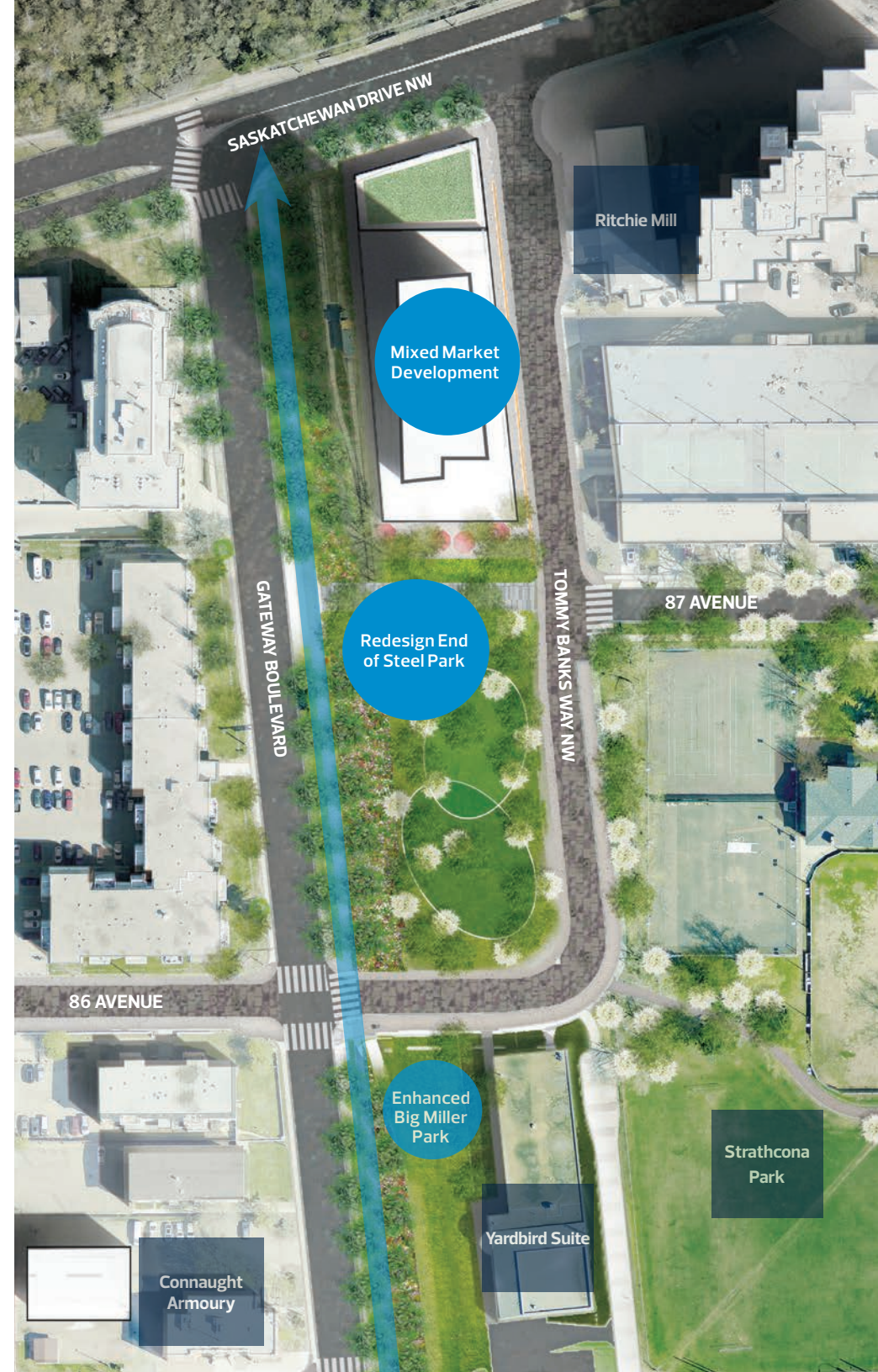


FIGURE 12 END OF STEEL PARK + DEVELOPMENT FOCUS



IMAGE CONCEPTUALIZATION OF MIXED MARKET DEVELOPMENT SITE

time in and feel less isolated. End of Steel Park will continue to play a commemorative historic function. The park will provide outdoor room for residents in the mixed-market development without excluding other people from coming to it for informal gatherings or passive activities.

## KEY CONSIDERATIONS

### A. Mixed Market Development of Parking Lot

- + **Ensure height and densities align with *The City Plan* and the *Scona District Plan*** – The site falls within a primary corridor. Following *District Policy* and *Scona District Plan* policies on height, scale and massing will ensure the new development integrates well with the adjacent park.
- + **Include affordable housing and barrier-free housing** – To help households in core housing need, the development should include a significant number of affordable, barrier-free housing units.
- + **Add family housing** – Include units with three bedrooms and other features in the development would make this a desirable option for families.
- + **Integrate space for a child care facility** – Allocate space on the ground level for a child care facility to accommodate park access and provide essential support to local families with young children.
- + **Ensure building design considers the context** – The development should be designed with consideration for the area's history (including its pre-settlement history), the adjacent Richie Mill (a Provincial Historic Resource and Municipal Historic Resource) and End of Steel Park, viewscales, and sun/shade and wind impacts.
- + **Prioritize active buildings edges** – Development must interface well with the Gateway greenway, the improved End of Steel Park, Tommy Banks Way and Saskatchewan Drive. At-grade commercial uses could help to activate the open spaces.

The reason for favouring this scenario that proposes development on the parking lot next to End of Steel compared with those Phase 2 design ideas (that considered development between 85 Avenue and 83 Avenue) is it allows for a district park to be central and closer to Whyte Avenue. Analysis indicated that End of Steel Park's location better suits the role of a community park, making the area between 85 Avenue and 83 Avenue a more suitable option for a central district park.

End of Steel Park will be improved with the creation of the Gateway greenway. It will continue to be a local destination, serving the needs of its immediate residents and the surrounding neighbourhood, playing a different role than Strathcona Park's active recreation function. Responding to what was heard through engagement, redesigning the south portion of the park will make it more attractive to spend

- + **Consider underground parking for public use**– Underground public parking could help serve surrounding commercial tenants, employment and/or park visitors.
- + **Ensure new development integrates resiliency**– Building design will achieve Edmonton's climate resilience goals and energy transition targets to ensure new construction helps meet emissions reduction targets and is resilient to climate risks.

## B. Redesign End of Steel Park

- + **Incorporate heritage interpretation** – End of Steel Park will continue to serve a commemorative function and could re-use existing elements in the new design (e.g. the caboose). However, broadening the historical framework and heritage interpretative elements about the area must reflect pre- and post-contact Indigenous considerations.
- + **Integration with development** – The design for the park should interface successfully with the adjoining development.
- + **Redesign the diagonal pathway** – The current pathway limits flexible programming of the space. The new design should take a different approach to pedestrian circulation to increase programming opportunities and incorporate plantings that reduce turf erosion

### TRADE-OFFS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The proposed development means repurposing the existing parking lot and the reduction of approximately 84 stalls (approximately 24 free and publicly available; 60 currently leased to the Ritchie Mill). Potential underground parking built into the new development could address some of the parking needs in the area. Additional on-street parking may also be possible.

The parking study, referenced above, highlighted the overall availability of parking in the area and strategies to address the removal and reduction of parking. Refer to **Trade-off and Opportunities under Action 1: District Park** for additional information on how this shift will be addressed.

The proposed development will also impact existing trees around the parking lot. Preserving trees will be a priority but some trees may need to be removed. Overall, there will be a net increase in trees with the addition of more trees as part of the greenway, the improvements to End of Steel Park, and the district park.



**IMAGE** CONSIDER DESIGN ELEMENTS THAT ACCOMMODATE VARIOUS FUNCTIONS AND PROGRAMMING **SOURCE** THE CITY OF CALGARY

## 5 Support Development next to Connaught Armoury

### DESCRIPTION

Built in 1911, Connaught Armoury is the oldest surviving armoury building in Alberta. It was designated as a Provincial Historic Resource in 1979 and a Municipal Historic Resource in 2007. The building was used for military purposes until 1965 when it was sold to the City of Edmonton. It has since housed commercial and institutional tenants. Youth Empowerment and Support Services (YESS) operated in the building between 2009 and 2024.

On the same property as the armoury and next to Light Horse Park is a 23-stall parking lot owned by the City and operated by Impark.

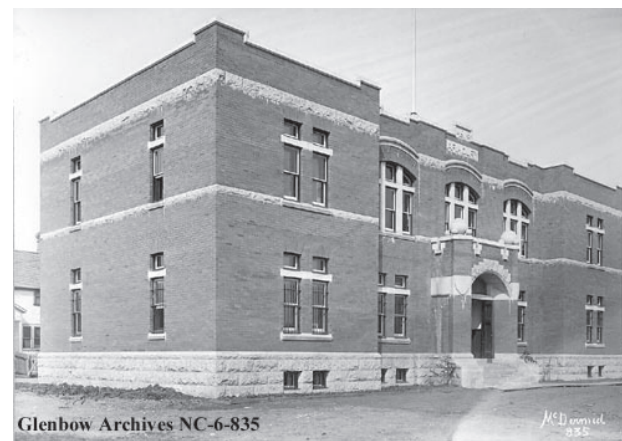
### PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

The parking lot is an ideal location for redevelopment if it can be serviced in a cost-effective manner. Its size and context lends itself to a low-rise or mid-rise development. Given the area's need for housing (either market or affordable), a new development would contribute to the "missing middle" housing form. Future residents will have Light Horse Park, the new district park and the Strathcona Library and Farmers' Market as nearby amenities. Housing (and the possibility of retail or commercial space on the ground floor) would be well served by active transportation routes and close proximity (350 m) to Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) on Whyte Avenue. The Gateway greenway and the district park will provide improved north-south and east-west connections for residents wanting to access the river valley, Strathcona Park and King Edward School.

The new development could be stand-alone or sympathetically attached to Connaught Armoury. The armoury itself could be adapted as part of the new development if, at the time of development, it is not required for institutional, commercial or community/cultural purposes.



FIGURE 13 CONNAUGHT ARMOURY AND DEVELOPMENT FOCUS AREA



**IMAGE** CONNAUGHT ARMOURY, SOUTH EDMONTON, EDMONTON, ALBERTA, 1914, (CU154042)  
**SOURCE** MCDERMID STUDIO. COURTESY OF COLLECTION, LIBRARIES AND CULTURAL RESOURCES DIGITAL COLLECTIONS, UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY.

## KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- + **Ensure height and densities align with *The City Plan* and the *Scona District Plan*** – The site falls within a primary corridor. Following *District Policy* and *Scona District Plan* policies on height, scale and massing will ensure the new development integrates well with the adjacent park and nearby development.
- + **Ensure new development supports rehabilitation of armoury** – Given required building upgrades, the City should look for a development partner able to invest in heritage rehabilitation.
- + **Encourage family housing** – Including some units with three bedrooms and other features in the development would make this a desirable option for families.
- + **Ensure building design considers the context** – The new building must consider the adjacent Connaught Armoury, Light Horse Park and the historic link between the two. Specific design and architectural details will be determined in consultation with heritage planners from the Province of Alberta and the City of Edmonton.
- + **Prioritize active building edges** – The building should interface well with 85 Avenue and Light Horse Park.
- + **Put parking underground** – If parking is required for the development, it should be provided underground.
- + **Optimize vehicular access for pedestrian safety and comfort** – In designing the new building, vehicular access to the site should be planned to minimize the impact to pedestrians passing by. Currently, there is vehicular access from Gateway Boulevard, 85 Avenue and the alley. With the new development, access could be limited to one of these.

## TRADE-OFFS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The proposal for development means repurposing the existing parking lot. The parking study, referenced above, highlighted the overall availability of parking in the area and strategies to address the removal and reduction of parking. Refer to ***Trade-off and Opportunities under Action 1: District Park*** for additional information on how this shift will be addressed.

Underground parking as part of the new development could provide some spaces to serve activities in the armoury and the general public.



RESPECT IN CONTRAST: AN ARCHITECTURAL ADDITION STANDS NEAR A HISTORIC BUILDING, SET BACK FROM THE STREET, PRESERVING THE CHARM AND COEXISTING HARMONIOUSLY  
**IMAGE** MORGAN LIBRARY, NYC, NY. **SOURCE** RENZO PIANO BUILDING WORKSHOP

## 6 Pedestrianize 83 Avenue

### DESCRIPTION

83 Avenue between 104 Street and Gateway Boulevard is home to restaurants, theatres, the Strathcona Back Street, the Old Strathcona Farmers' Market and McIntyre Park. There are separated bi-directional bicycle lanes on the north side of the road right-of-way, two lanes of traffic, and parking (including accessible parking and loading zones). Two north-south alleys intersect 83 Avenue.

### PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

The recommendation to pedestrianize a section of 83 Avenue was prompted by engagement input. The avenue is frequently utilized by pedestrians and cyclists, particularly during weekends and the spring to fall seasons. Additionally, 83 Avenue experiences periodic closures to vehicular traffic for events and festivals, averaging approximately 30 days annually.

Pedestrianization will make the area more walkable, provide safer crossings to and from the avenue's diverse destinations, and knit together McIntyre Park and Strathcona Back Street. It will continue to serve as an important bike connection. It will reduce conflicts between travel modes identified during engagement. Restaurants may be able to use more of the road right-of-way for seating or extensions to their patios; the Farmers' Market may choose to take advantage of additional space for vendors and outdoor retail. The closure will enable socializing and enhanced programming of the avenue. Vehicular access for loading and unloading will still need to be accommodated. Consideration will also be needed for accessible parking spaces, possibly using the parking lot east of McIntyre Park. In the short term, limited upgrades would be needed for seasonal closure. In the long term, the permanent design

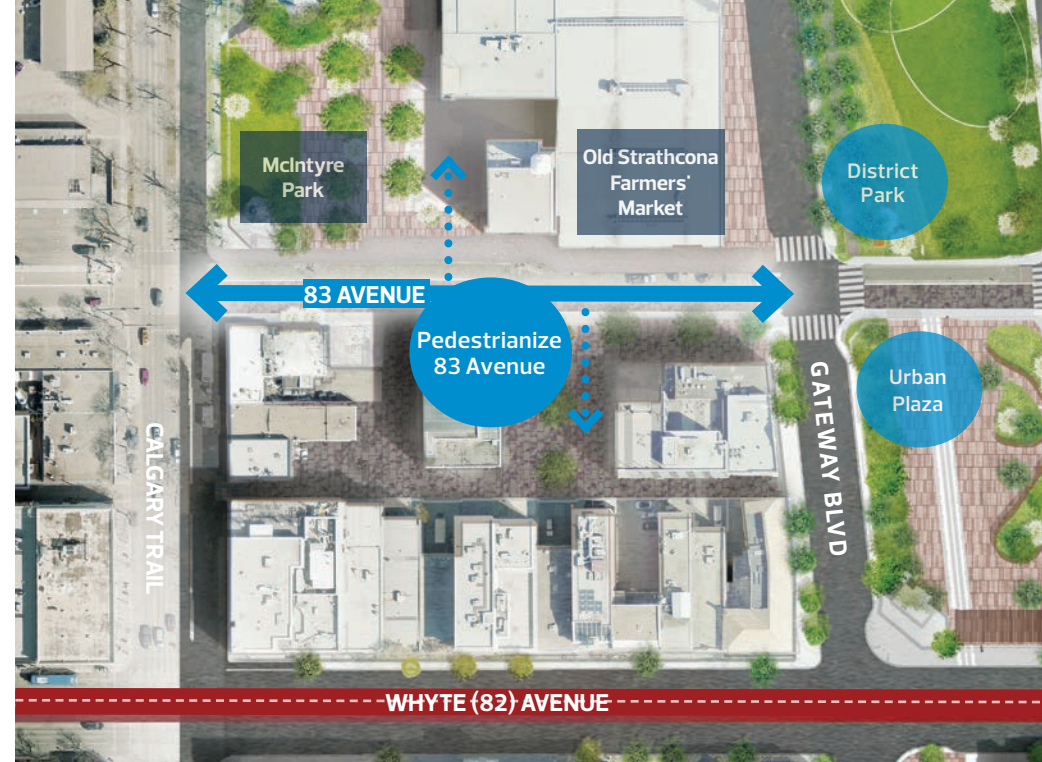


FIGURE 14 SECTION OF 83 AVENUE PROPOSED FOR VEHICULAR CLOSURE

will include paving, lighting, landscaping, and should create a unified look to communicate the avenue is a space dedicated to people and active modes.

The stretch of 83 Avenue does not facilitate much through traffic for vehicles (i.e. westbound travel is only possible between 102 Street to Calgary Trail/104 Street).

### KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- + **Explore different closure scenarios** – For 83 Avenue, including options from Gateway Boulevard to 104 Street or to one of the north-south alleys. Starting with seasonal closures, evaluate how interim closures can support vehicle circulation, accessible parking, loading requirements, and flexible infrastructure for delivery vehicles. Additionally, consider closing the portion between 102 Street and Gateway Boulevard

to better integrate it with the district park and urban plaza. Further analysis will determine the optimal scenario, guiding the final design and reconstruction to ensure its success.

- + **Ensure active mobility links** – While pedestrianizing 83 Avenue means making the avenue more of a 'place' than a 'link,' it will still allow barrier-free pedestrian and cycling connections. It could function like a "shared street" integrated with the protected bike lanes. During periods with high levels of pedestrian activity (such as festivals or events), the interaction between bikes and people will have to be carefully considered. A bike detour -- by way of the rail trail corridor to the north -- or implementing a bike slow zone could be considered.
- + **Maintain circulation for service vehicles and pick-up / drop-off** – Service vehicles will still need to access the Walterdale Theatre, Old Strathcona Farmers' Market, and other buildings. Some restaurant, theatre and market patrons will still need to be dropped off and picked up close by for accessibility reasons. As a result, the north-south alley east of 104 Street will likely need to remain open to vehicles as part of a circulation route.
- + **Work with relevant groups on the avenue** – Communication and engagement with relevant groups connected with the avenue will be needed to ensure the closure supports their patrons, staff and operations. Regular programming will also help activate and draw people to the avenue.
- + **Encourage activation from adjacent buildings** – Buildings and businesses can contribute to and benefit from the people moving and spending time on 83 Avenue orienting operations to the avenue, adding seating etc. For example, the historic 1909 Strathcona Public Market building could be rehabilitated.
- + **Explore an interim closure** – Similar to what was done on 102A Avenue in front of City Hall, an inexpensive closure of the

avenue could be followed by a more fulsome reconstruction as part of future infrastructure renewal work.

- + **Consider utility connections** – Take into account potential utility connections that support events, festivals and food service.
- + **Account for different maintenance needs** – As the avenue transitions to more of a 'place,' keeping it clean and clear of hazards, snow, and ice for pedestrians and cyclists will be necessary.

#### TRADE-OFFS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Pedestrianizing 83 Avenue will enhance its function as a place and shift its role in Old Strathcona's mobility network to emphasize pedestrian and cycling movement. Although 83 Avenue currently only accommodates limited vehicular traffic, its permanent closure will require some drivers to change how they get around the area. Engaging with relevant groups will be key to learn how to implement the closure, ensure access for deliveries, loading and servicing, address the shift from what people are used to, and highlight the new opportunities the space can offer.

While the few parking spaces on the avenue would need to be removed, identifying a strategic location for accessible parking or drop-off and pick-up that can serve multiple destinations will need to be explored.





## 7 Prioritize Pedestrians on Whyte Avenue

### DESCRIPTION

Improvements to Whyte Avenue are proposed for 99 Street to 109 Street -- the commercial and cultural heart of Old Strathcona. The focus is on widening the sidewalk by repurposing the on-street parking spaces on both sides of Whyte Avenue.

### PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

Prioritizing pedestrians requires enhancing their infrastructure. Repurposing curbside parking will widen sidewalks on Whyte Avenue, providing more space for pedestrian activities and reducing crossing distances. This will be important with the expected growth in Old Strathcona, as projected by *The City Plan*. Designated as a primary corridor, the *District Policy* and *Scona District Plan* also prioritizes pedestrian safety and comfort along Whyte Avenue. With the introduction of mass transit, wider sidewalks will also benefit transit riders who begin and end their trips by using active modes to reach the bus stop.

The increased sidewalk width will also improve the experience with additional space for businesses, vegetation and landscaping, street furniture and other amenities (e.g. lighting, seating, wayfinding, secure bike parking etc). The City's *Winter Design Guidelines* and *Climate Resilient Edmonton: Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan* will inform year-round comfort and functionality.

To help direct the eventual streetscape design, the following conceptual renderings show how the sidewalks will be increased and transformed. Each rendering shows an unobstructed pedestrian space with more space next to buildings or next to the avenue for different sidewalk elements. The elements will be incorporated on different blocks to respond to the immediate context.

The renderings are illustrated with centre-running dedicated bus lanes. While the direction from *The City Plan* and subsequent mass transit studies outlined that Whyte Avenue will include dedicated transit lanes, the configuration of the transit lanes is still to be determined through the *Mass Transit: Implementing for 1.25 Million People* project.

The mass transit project will evaluate transit lane configurations, including centre-running, curb-running, and side-running transit lanes. *The Mass Transit: Implementing for 1.25 Million People* project will identify the best configuration for Whyte Avenue based on transit operations, integration with adjacent land uses, streetscape, and mobility benefits. These insights will guide further concept planning and detailed design. Project outcomes will inform the potential redesign of Whyte Avenue, incorporating this strategy's findings and recommendations in all options.



IMAGE EXISTING CONDITIONS ON WHYTE AVE

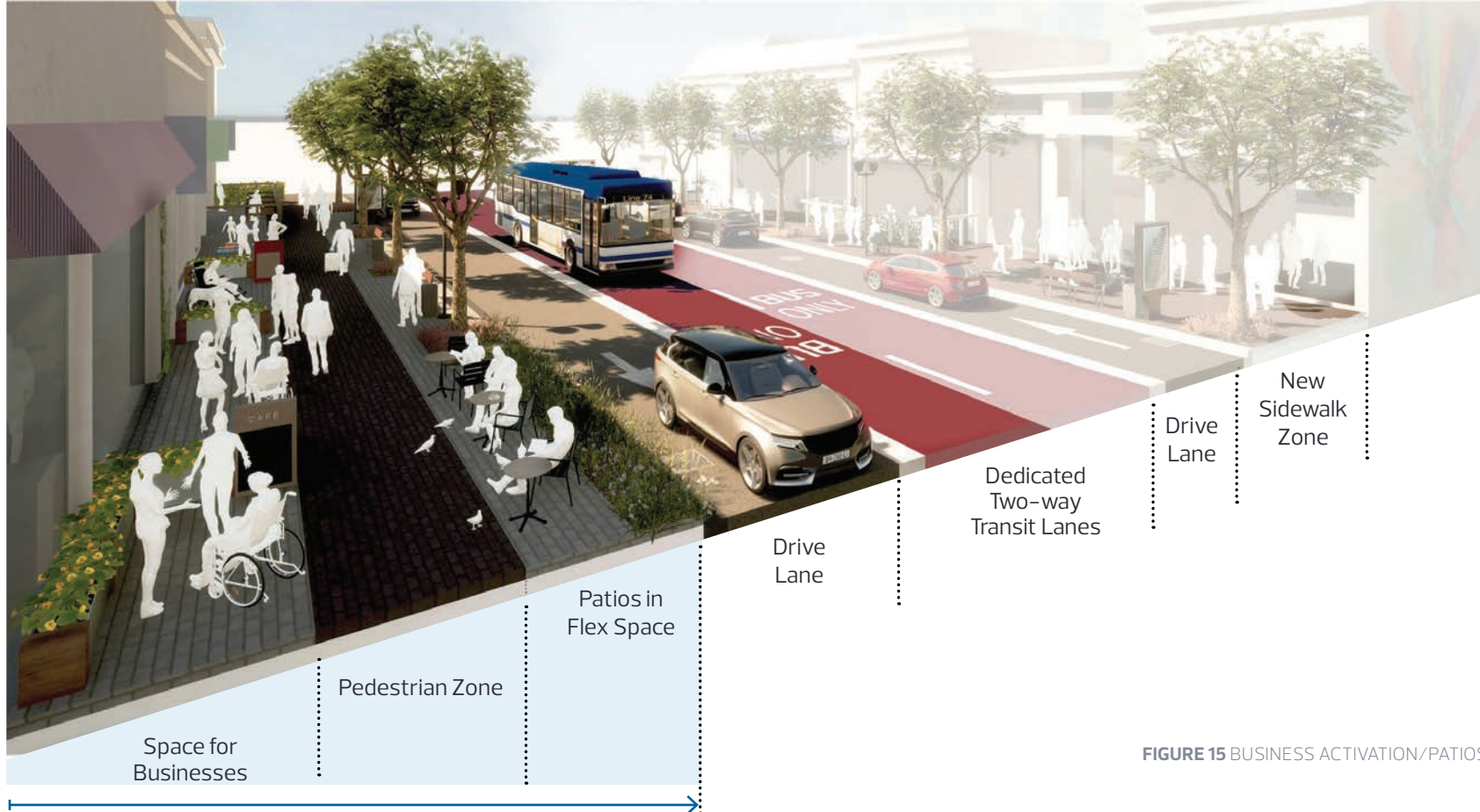


FIGURE 15 BUSINESS ACTIVATION/PATIOS

### 7.a. Additional Spaces for Business Activation

Figure 15: Business Activation/Patio illustrates how businesses or restaurants will have more space for signage, seating or patios next to the building or in the flex space, keeping the pedestrian space barrier-free for everyone, including using a wheelchair or pushing a stroller.

#### KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- + **Provide a wider barrier-free pedestrian space** – While providing increased space for seating or patios, a widened clear space for through movement must be protected.
- + **Encourage year-round activation** – Whether adjacent to buildings or in the flex space, seating should be encouraged throughout the year to support the City's winter city objectives.
- + **Update policy and guidelines** – Determine City guidelines or standards that may require updating to support desired design outcomes to reduce challenges in using the spaces as proposed by the strategy (e.g. updating guidelines to ensure wider sidewalks and material selections do not create barriers to accommodating patios).

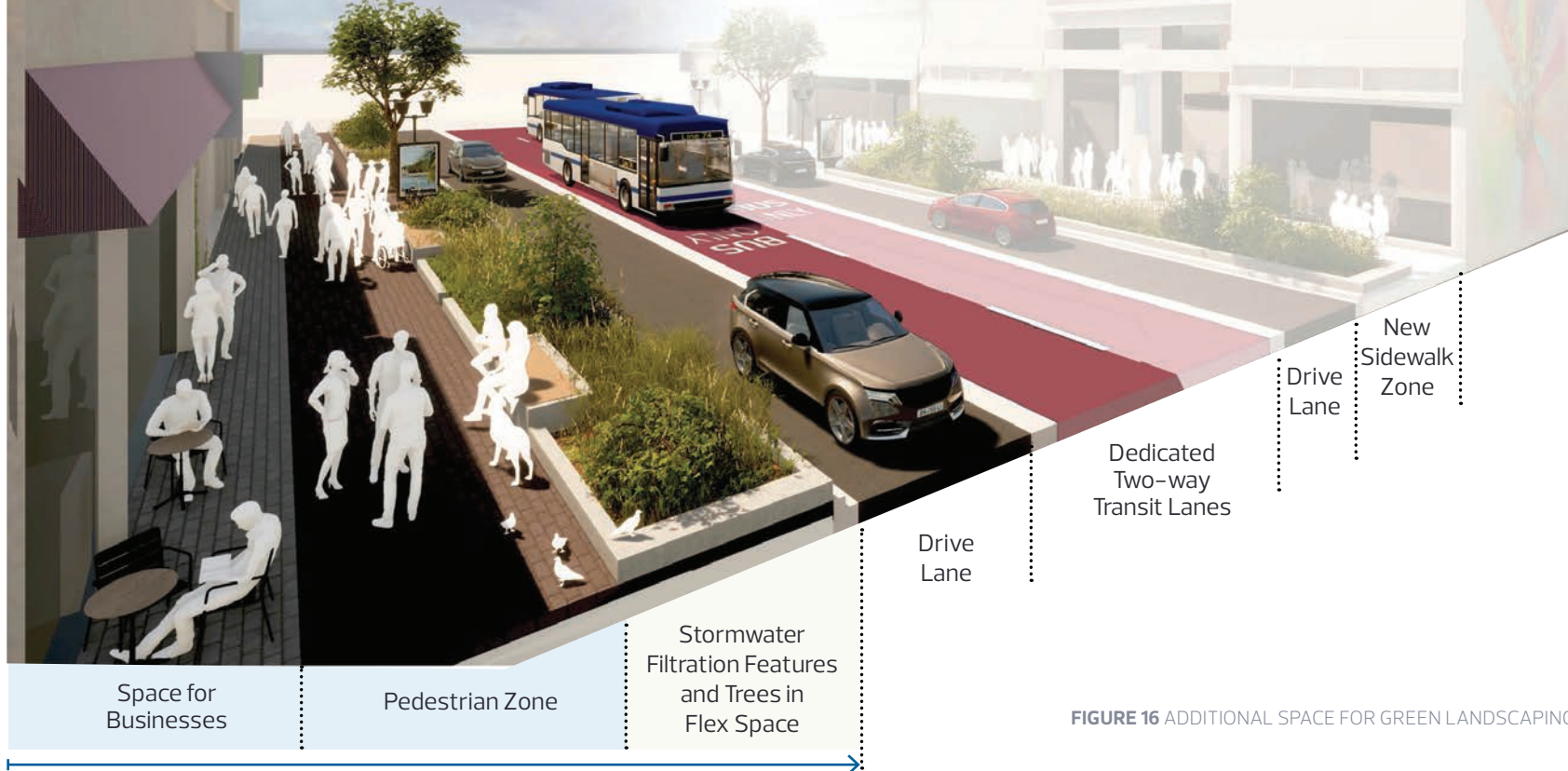


FIGURE 16 ADDITIONAL SPACE FOR GREEN LANDSCAPING

**NEW SIDEWALK ZONE**

Sidewalk Width Increases  
From ~4.0 m to 7.8 m

**7.b. Additional Space for Green Landscaping**

Figure 16: Additional Space for Green Landscaping illustrates how sidewalk space can be used to increase the built area for green landscaping elements including street trees, drought-tolerant native species, and low impact development (LID). This recommendation will contribute to managing stormwater and reducing runoff into sewers, supporting local ecology, contributing to the reduction of the urban heat island effect, and fostering an inviting and pleasant avenue experience year-round for pedestrians. The installation of soil cells will enhance the lifespan of street trees and plantings. Additionally, incorporating seating into the structures that house vegetation will add functionality and create inviting spaces for all.

**KEY CONSIDERATIONS**

- + **Provide a wider barrier-free pedestrian space**– While providing increased space for plantings, a widened clear space for through movement must be protected.
- + **Create successful planting conditions** – To ensure street trees and other vegetation will be healthy and mature, structural soil cells will be required to ensure adequate soil volume and minimize soil compaction. Drainage will also be needed and could be addressed through LID to help manage runoff and be used to water plantings. Drought-resistant plant species should be selected to reduce the need for irrigation.
- + **Incorporate resilience** – Design choices including plantings and pavement should consider objectives from the *Climate Resilient Edmonton* and *Edmonton’s Community Energy Transition* strategies to support low carbon emissions and be adaptive and responsive to climate risks such as extreme heat and extreme weather events.

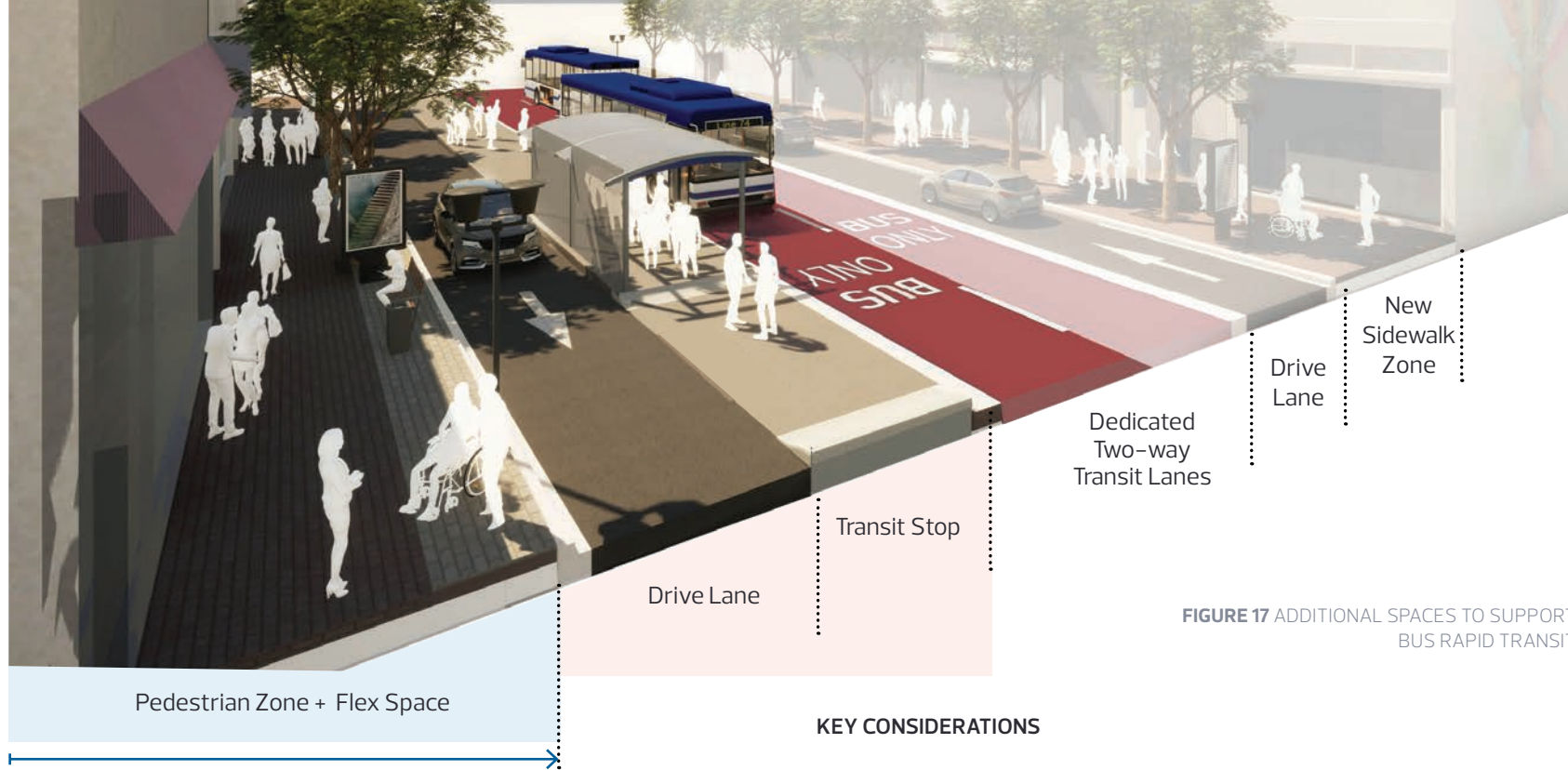


FIGURE 17 ADDITIONAL SPACES TO SUPPORT BUS RAPID TRANSIT

#### KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- + **Maximize barrier-free pedestrian space** – When designing transit stops, the public realm must not be compromised because of the transit stop. Passenger queue management and stop integration with the public realm are critical for the success of Whyte Avenue as a main street and transit corridor. The use of barriers between the sidewalks and stops should be avoided. Platforms should be level with sidewalks.
- + **Improve pedestrian crossings** – Reducing general vehicle lanes along Whyte Avenue may provide opportunities to improve pedestrian crossings. For example, mid-block crossings could make it easier to access transit stops from both ends of the platform. Restricted turning movements at intersections and/or shorter crossings could provide opportunities to create safer crossings with less delay for pedestrians.
- + **Integrate transit stops with the sidewalk** – Where possible, a transit stop will be designed and integrated with the sidewalk to be safe, comfortable, attractive and share public realm amenities like seating.

### 7.c. Additional Spaces to Support Bus Rapid Transit

Repurposing space from on-street curbside parking will increase space to support pedestrians and transit riders. Note that the transit lane configuration shown in Figure 17 is for illustrative purposes only. Recommended bus lane configuration (e.g., curb-running, centre-running, or side-running) for Whyte Avenue will be advanced as part of the *Mass Transit: Implementing for 1.25 Million People* project and later confirmed through further functional planning, concept planning and detailed design.

If the dedicated transit lanes are located next to the curb, the transit stop could be integrated with the wider sidewalks. The transit stop, in either configuration, could include furnishings like a shelter, seating, lighting, space for queuing and buffering from vehicle lanes.

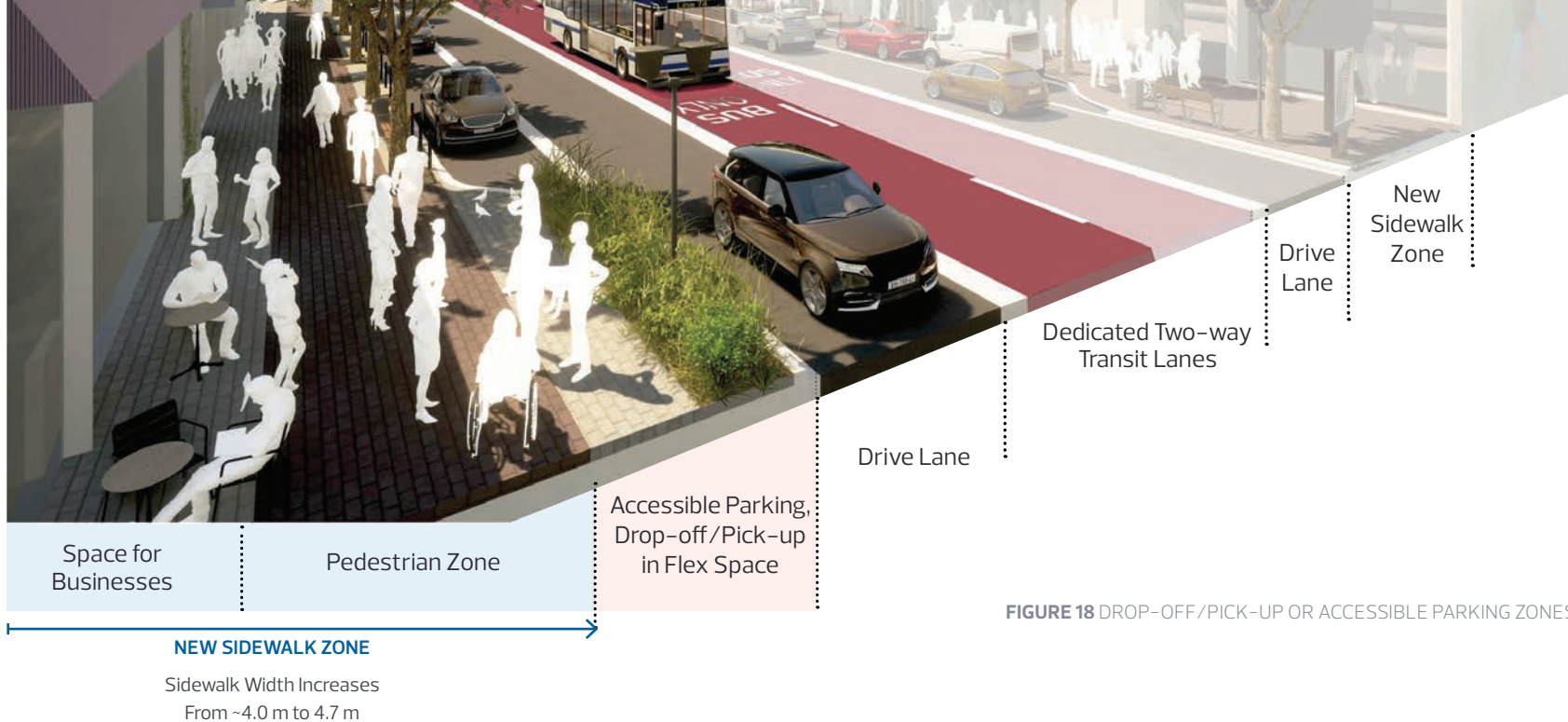


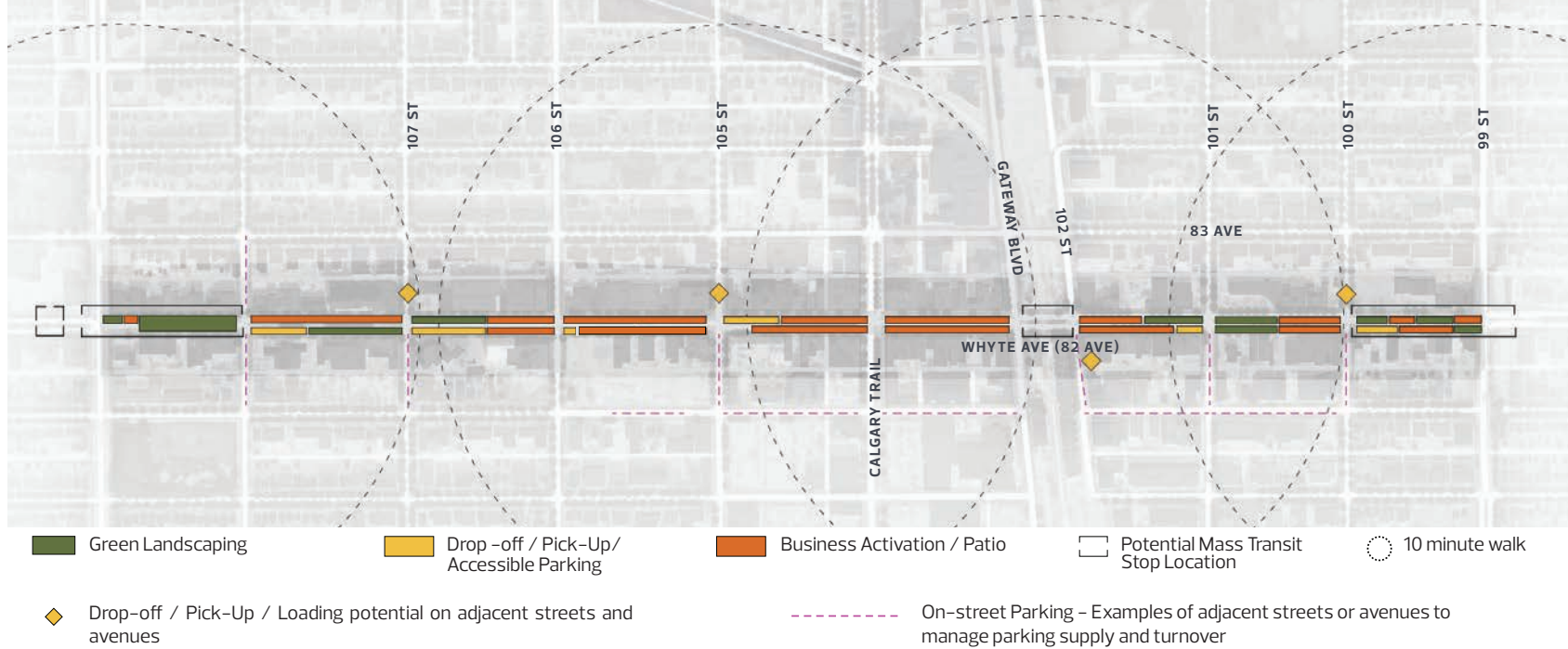
FIGURE 18 DROP-OFF/PICK-UP OR ACCESSIBLE PARKING ZONES

**7.d. Incorporate Spaces for Drop-Off, Pick Up and Accessible Parking**

Space repurposed from conventional curbside parking can be used to accommodate drop-off/pick-up and/or accessible parking. This would respond to what was heard through the engagement about supporting the loading or delivery needs of businesses as well as the accessibility, taxi and ride-sharing needs of area visitors. Figure 18: Drop-off/Pick-up or Accessible Parking shows how the sidewalk would be adjusted to include a lay-by without compromising the overall objective of a more pedestrian environment.

**KEY CONSIDERATIONS**

- + **Target strategic locations** – Further analysis, together with the *Curbside Management Strategy*, will help refine which blocks or portions of blocks to designate for drop-off, pick-up and accessible parking spaces, as not every block along the avenue will be able to accommodate one. Lay-bys could be added on cross streets to serve multiple establishments within a certain radius. The length and number of spaces will also be confirmed as part of detailed design work.
- + **Maximize barrier-free pedestrian space** – On blocks that include such spaces, some of the public realm elements highlighted above may need to be scaled to ensure the maximum space possible for people moving through and passing.



**FIGURE 19** MAP SHOWING POSSIBLE LOCATIONS OF DIFFERENT ELEMENTS ALONG WHYTE AVENUE (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

### 7.e. Example Distribution of the Public Realm Elements on Whyte Avenue

Figure 19 identifies possible locations of different elements along Whyte Avenue to illustrate how the various elements could be located along Whyte Avenue to support the pedestrian experience. It considers the concentration of pedestrians, the sunnier sidewalk (north), possible mass transit stops and existing and future businesses, amenities and services.

The map is for illustrative purposes only and is intended to help people visualize where the proposed improvements could go and inform future detailed design. The exact locations of the elements, including transit stops, are not set and will be determined in future design phases. The City's Curbside Management Strategy will also help to inform future design.

#### KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- + **Consider different factors as part of distribution** – Distribution should consider pedestrian activity, existing and future land uses, sun and shade on the avenue, and confirmed mass transit stops.
- + **Use input from relevant groups in the decision-making process** – Communication and engagement with relevant groups connected with Whyte Avenue will be needed to inform specific locations.
- + **Develop a streetscape design that prioritizes pedestrians and mass transit**

The table below highlights the **four public realm treatments**, including identifying the rationale and guidelines on when to apply each.

PUBLIC REALM FOCUS	WHY IT'S IMPORTANT	HOW TO USE IT
Business Activation / Patio	Spaces for Business Activation / Patio are important to urban life as they provide businesses and restaurants with additional space for signage, seating, or patios, whether adjacent to buildings or within flexible outdoor areas. This approach not only enhances the visibility and appeal of establishments but also fosters a vibrant street life. By strategically designing these spaces, pedestrian spaces remain barrier-free, accommodating everyone, including individuals using wheelchairs or pushing strollers.	Apply a Business Activation / Patio within existing or future Whyte Avenue segments where restaurants and interested businesses regularly activate exterior spaces for patios and seating.
Green Landscaping	Green landscaping is vital for urban environments. It helps manage stormwater, supports biodiversity, and reduces the urban heat island effect by providing shade and cooling. These green elements also enhance aesthetics, promote mental well-being, and encourage outdoor activities, fostering a healthier and more vibrant community. Economically, they can increase property values and attract businesses and visitors, contributing to the overall livability and sustainability of Old Strathcona.	Apply Green Landscaping to segments of Whyte Avenue, with variations to account for the 'hub' of activity or centre of Whyte Avenue. These areas provide opportunities to improve the walking and lingering experience through the provision of landscaping, greenery and shade.
Drop-off/Pick-up/ Accessible Parking	Incorporating drop-off, pick-up, and accessible parking areas is essential for supporting local businesses and restaurants. These designated zones facilitate efficient pick-ups and deliveries, ensure accessibility for individuals with mobility considerations, reduce traffic congestion, and enhance overall safety, thereby contributing to a robust local economy and a vibrant urban environment.	To identify optimal locations for drop-off, pick-up, and accessible parking zones, a thorough assessment of high-traffic areas, proximity to business entrances, and accessibility needs should be conducted as part of the concept design, considering input from local business owners and community members.
Potential Mass Transit Stop Locations	Well-designed and integrated rapid bus transit stops along busy sidewalks are important for ensuring safe, efficient, and accessible public transportation. This approach optimizes accessibility for people and seamlessly integrates transit facilities into the urban environment, promoting barrier-free access. Focusing on these strategic locations aims to enhance commuter convenience, improve public transit efficiency, and support sustainable urban mobility goals.	Ideally, stations and stops should be strategically positioned near the centre of Whyte Avenue activity ( e.g. near 106 Street or Gateway Boulevard) or close to high-density housing.

## TRADE-OFFS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The Old Strathcona Public Realm Strategy and mass transit implementation are being considered together to prioritize pedestrians and transit. Both projects envision Whyte Avenue operating differently to better support the corridor as the main street and entertainment district that it is. The most significant changes will be reducing on-street parking and repurposing two general traffic lanes to provide a wider public realm on both sides of the avenue and dedicated transit lanes to serve the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT).

### A. Reducing On-street Parking

Reducing on-street parking is needed to better support Whyte Avenue as a main street. This will accommodate a wider public realm that can allow people to move more freely on the sidewalks and provide fronting businesses with opportunities to program the public realm (e.g., with patios, tables or merchandise displays).

Up to 225 parking spaces may be removed to widen the public realm. While some people and businesses value on-street parking on Whyte Avenue, the public realm space is currently inadequate, particularly in areas with higher levels of pedestrian activity. This was frequently mentioned through public engagement, for example, many people said that wider sidewalks would be a welcome improvement. With the introduction of mass transit, additional public realm space is anticipated to be needed to manage transit passenger queues without compromising the function of the public realm as a way for pedestrian movement or to support business activation.

The *Old Strathcona Parking Study* highlighted the availability of parking in the Old Strathcona area and potential strategies.

Adjusting to changes can take time. To help facilitate changes, the City should consider the following:

- + Communicate and engage with residents and relevant groups in the area
- + Manage the on-street parking supply to encourage turnover that supports businesses and entertainment venues.
- + Establish a parking wayfinding system to allow people to find available parking spaces quicker.
- + Ensure accessible parking spaces are located near key destinations.
- + Phase parking reductions, where and when possible, to align with the introduction of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) or other parking management tactics.
- + Continue to promote the benefits of using transit and active modes to access the area.

### B. Repurposing General Traffic Lanes

Repurposing two general traffic lanes to transit lanes is anticipated to result in a reduction of traffic volumes along Whyte Avenue from 24,000 – 28,000 vehicles per day to about 10,000 – 15,000 vehicles per day. This is a significant change, but a necessary change to support Whyte Avenue as a main street and entertainment area.

It is common for corridors – whether in Edmonton or in other cities – to experience traffic volume reductions with the implementation of a mass transit project. Transformational changes like these are often viewed – at least prior to implementation – by some as leading



to gridlock. Once implemented, however, many of these streets tend to operate appropriately as people adjust to the changes. When the capacity of the street is reduced, vehicle traffic volumes tend to be less. The reduction in traffic is the result of a combination of conditions:

- + **Drivers Find Alternative Routes** – Traffic volumes redistribute in a way that most efficiently uses the capacity of the roadway network. Traffic congestion pushes drivers to find the quickest route. For some people, they may stay on the impacted corridor. For others, they will find an alternative route.
- + **Drivers Travel at Different Periods** – As mentioned above, congestion influences people’s route choices. Congestion also influences when people travel. Corridors that experience significant congestion during the morning and afternoon peak periods tend to also discourage people from traveling on them. For some people, like commuters, they may continue using the same corridor. For other people, they may choose to reschedule a trip to avoid congestion.
- + **Drivers Choose Other Ways to Move** – Congestion also influences the way people choose to move. When travel time amongst modes – whether biking, using transit or driving – is comparable, people’s choices are influenced by other factors such as cost or convenience. It is at this time when people will start to choose other ways of moving, including transit.

**C. Vehicle Turning Lanes**

Repurposing two general traffic lanes to dedicated bus lanes and widening the public realm will also likely impact the provision of turning lanes (e.g., left- and right-turn bays). While dedicated turning lanes may allow vehicle traffic to move more freely, they also consume space and are often implemented at the trade-off of higher quality

public realm, or walking, rolling and / or biking facilities. Given the grid network of the area and the (likely) lower travel speeds, and the competition for space along the corridor, turning lanes should not be prioritized along Whyte Avenue. In cases where turning lanes are required from a traffic accommodation perspective, the impacts on walkability and pedestrian safety should be carefully weighed to clearly highlight the trade-offs. The image below illustrates the impacts of a vehicle turning lane to the public realm along Whyte Avenue.

Additional network analysis may be required as the mass transit work moves through the next phases of design. This will include further engagement to understand Edmontonians’ concerns and consider multi-modal mitigation to support the implementation of a mass transit corridor on Whyte Avenue connecting Bonnie Doon and the University of Alberta.

**D. Emergency Vehicles**

Emergency vehicles will continue to have priority on Whyte Avenue and if needed could use the dedicated bus lanes.



**IMAGE** EXAMPLE OF SPATIAL CONFIGURATION WHEN A TURN LANE IS PRESENT

### 3.2.1. Key Actions and Guiding Themes

As described above, the recommendations all draw upon the public engagement and area analysis. They also connect back to the Guiding Themes that highlighted the diverse ways we use our public realm which helped frame the engagement feedback. The table below summarizes how each of the seven **Key Actions** achieves each of the **Guiding Themes**.





	 <b>MOBILITY &amp; MOVEMENT</b> <i>HOW WE MOVE AROUND</i>	 <b>OPEN SPACE &amp; ACTIVITIES</b> <i>HOW WE CONNECT OUTDOORS</i>	 <b>INCLUSION &amp; EQUITY</b> <i>HOW WE BELONG</i>	 <b>COMFORT &amp; SAFETY</b> <i>HOW WE FEEL</i>
1 Create a District Park		●	●	●
2 Create a Gateway Greenway	●	●	●	●
3 Create an Urban Plaza	●	●	●	●
4 Improve End of Steel Park and Support Mix Market Development on the Parking Lot		●	●	●
5 Support Development next to Connaught Armoury			●	●
6 Pedestrianize 83 Avenue	●	●	●	●
7 Prioritize Pedestrians on Whyte Avenue	●		●	●

FIGURE 20: KEY ACTIONS AND GUIDING THEMES

### 3.3 ADDITIONAL OPEN SPACE RECOMMENDATIONS

This section lists the additional open space recommendations that, together with the Key Actions, will support the overall concept for Old Strathcona.

#### 3.3.1 Improvements to McIntyre Park

##### RECLASSIFY FROM A POCKET PARK TO A METROPOLITAN PARK

- + Given the number and type of festivals that McIntyre Park hosts, updating its **Breathe** open space classification would recognize its role as a premier civic space for Old Strathcona.

##### EXPAND MCINTYRE PARK TO INCLUDE THE PARKING LOT EAST OF THE ALLEY

- + To support the year-round public use and festival demands on McIntyre Park, the City-owned parking lot just east of the alley could be adapted to link with the park.
- + Retain some parking, prioritizing or designating the spaces for accessible parking
- + Considerations: integration with the alley, adding/updated the utilities, integration of the firefighters' memorial, space for festivals, and views of adjacent buildings.



SEASONAL ACTIVATION OF MCINTYRE PARK  
**ABOVE IMAGE** EDMONTON INTERNATIONAL FRINGE THEATRE FESTIVAL  
**SOURCE** EXPLORE EDMONTON  
**BELOW IMAGE** WINTER WHYTE LIGHT UP  
**SOURCE** OLD STRATHCONA BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

### 3.3.2 Enhanced connectivity between Light Horse Park and McIntyre Park

#### EXPLORE A UNIFIED DESIGN TO IMPROVE THE CONNECTIVITY FOR PEDESTRIANS AND CYCLISTS

- + Currently, there is no formal connection linking Light Horse Park, 85 Avenue and the Rail Corridor junction to McIntyre Park. However, the spaces are often used together for festivals and desire lines indicate the benefits of a formal link. Repurposing the parcel used for recycling could serve festivals as a satellite site and contribute to the linking of the different spaces.
- + Considerations- address barriers, improve sightlines and wayfinding; improve lighting; construct a path using consistent surface materials; consider repurposing the parcel allocated to recycling into a small plaza; and consider festivals and event programming that optimizes the area as a satellite festival site. See Figure 21.
- + Work with Knox Evangelical Free Church to provide a connection that supports ongoing use of the church.

### 3.3.3 Improvements to Rail Trail Greenway

#### FORMALIZE THE RAIL TRAIL GREENWAY

- + Designate the streetcar rail corridor and abutting parks as a “habitat” greenway and explore opportunities to naturalize and enhance ecological features within the greenway. See Figure 22.
- + Consider community garden and dog park requests within pocket parks along the Rail Trail greenway.

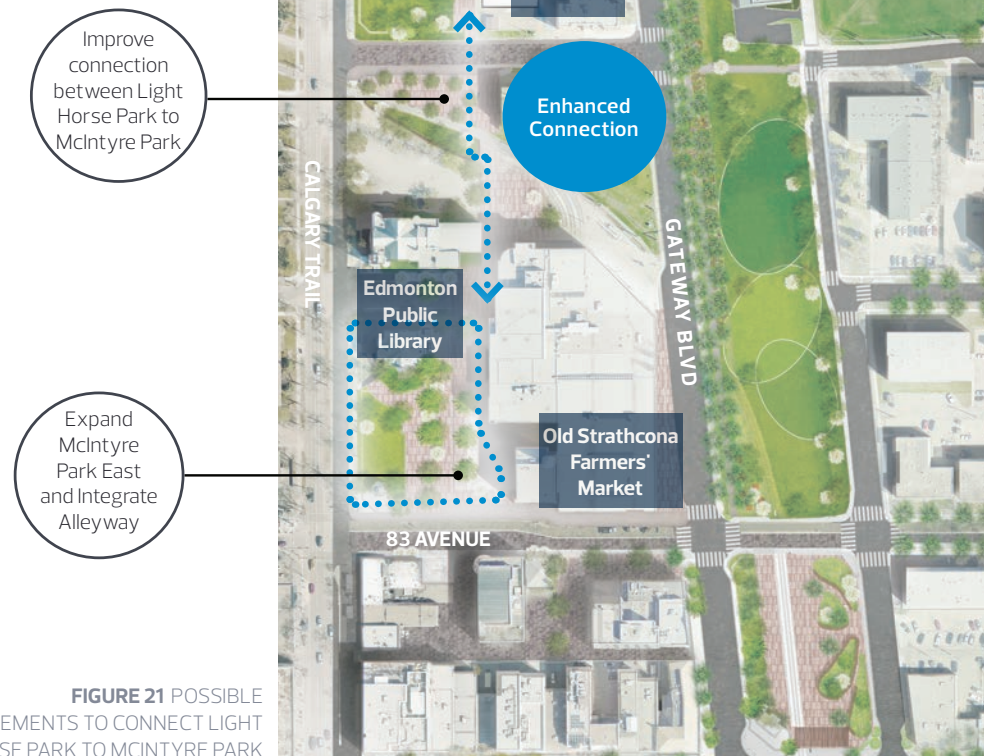


FIGURE 21 POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS TO CONNECT LIGHT HORSE PARK TO MCINTYRE PARK



FIGURE 22 MAP SHOWING THE RAIL TRAIL GREENWAY AND THE GATEWAY GREENWAY

**ENCOURAGE NEW DEVELOPMENTS ADJACENT TO THE GREENWAY TO HAVE ACTIVE FRONTAGES FACING PUBLIC SPACES**

- + Discourage blank walls and surface parking and encourage active spaces through landscaping, murals, and other treatments.
- + Encourage the use of screening elements, landscaping or decorative walls to conceal unavoidable features like parking garage entrances, loading zones, and waste and recycling containers to create more aesthetically pleasing views along the greenway.

**3.3.4 Retention of Strathcona Park 4**

**RETAIN STRATHCONA PARK 4 WITHIN THE CITY'S PARK INVENTORY**

- + The pocket park is a highly visible open space at the southeast corner of Whyte Avenue and Gateway Boulevard. It will link with the Gateway greenway and urban plaza with future active transportation routes south of Whyte Avenue as the rail yard is redeveloped. See Figure 23.

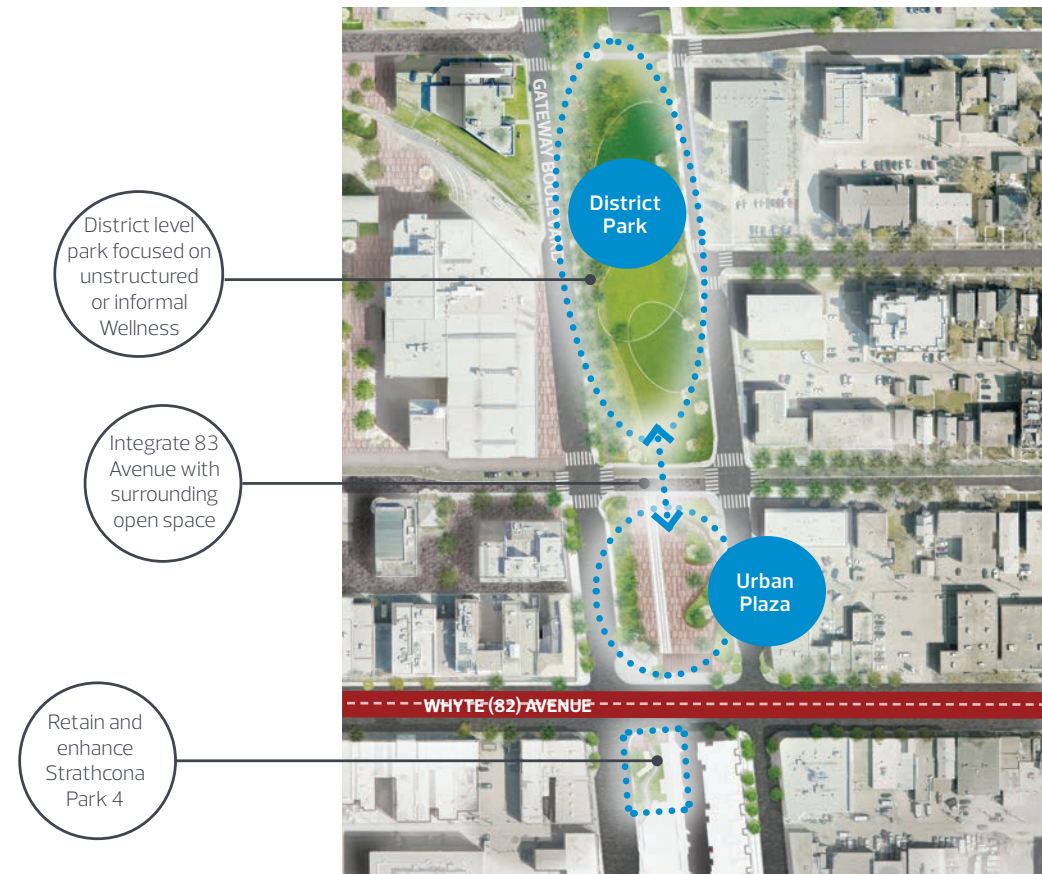
**ENCOURAGE ACTIVATION OF THE SITE**

- + A current lease of the park is programming the site together with the private parcel immediately to the south. Features such as public art, landmarks, lighting, seating, and landscaping are expected to draw patrons from Whyte Avenue. If the current lease is not renewed and/or when it ends, other programming or activation should be encouraged for the site.
- + Pocket park activation will serve a broad range of communities, including but not limited to business and arts groups. Programming shall not be limited to exclusive partnerships and/or agreements to ensure activities can serve various communities.
- + If there is a significant change surrounding the site,

for example, the establishment of regional or intercity rail, the use of the park should be reevaluated.

**REDESIGNATE AS A MUNICIPAL RESERVE AND NAME PARK**

- + If the current lease is not renewed and/or when it ends, this site should be redesignated as a municipal reserve (MR). Redesignating MR status of the site provides certainty in allocated open space assets and funds that can respond to evolving open space needs, particularly as more people move into and visit Old Strathcona.



**FIGURE 23** STRATHCONA PARK 4 IS AN IMPORTANT PART WITHIN THE OPEN SPACE NETWORK

- + Any proposed commercial activity within the pocket park shall be secondary to the primary function of the pocket park to adhere to Municipal Reserve use restrictions. Such commercial use shall be considered an accessory, complementing the park's intended functions.
- + Working with the City's Naming Committee, a name would help to give the park identity, formalize the park within the open space network and encourage community stewardship.

### 3.3.5 Acquisition of West Ritchie Community Park

***CONTINUE TO PURSUE THE ACQUISITION OF LAND AT THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF 81 AVENUE AND 100 STREET FOR A PUBLIC PARK.***

- + Because West Ritchie is isolated and surrounded by major roads, a new community park should be established and designed with amenities to serve the needs of residents and visitors of all ages. It could also celebrate one or more cultural communities important to the area.
- + Festivals and events should largely be contained to 81 Avenue and should not negatively impact the everyday use of the community park. Incorporation of utilities should be considered on the north edge of the park to support programming of 81 Avenue for festival use.

### 3.3.6 Creation of a West Ritchie Greenway

***RETAIN THE CPR IRVINE AND WEST RITCHIE RIGHT OF WAYS TO CREATE A WEST RITCHIE GREENWAY.***

- + The City-owned right-of-ways west of 101 Street / 79 Avenue and south of 102 Street / 80 Avenue should be designed to create a greenway that would connect to the Gateway greenway.

- + Consider features like a shared-use pathway, seating, and continued community garden use, and an overall design that prioritizes ecology and wellness functions.

### 3.3.7 Animation of Spur Line Alley

***CONTINUE TO ENCOURAGE THE FORMAL OR INFORMAL USE AND PROGRAMMING OF SPUR LINE ALLEY***

- + Spur Line Alley could be enhanced with seating, lighting and vegetation that offers a place for people to rest or shelter from the sun, wind or street noise.

## 3.4 ADDITIONAL MOBILITY RECOMMENDATIONS

This section lists the additional mobility recommendations that, together with the Key Actions, will support the overall public realm concept for Old Strathcona.

### 3.4.1 Shared Streets

**DESCRIPTION**

A shared street is primarily used for active transportation (e.g. walking, wheeling or cycling). The design of a shared street also accommodates automobiles moving at slow speeds demonstrating consideration for the safety and priority of other road users.

**PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS**

Implementing shared streets along certain segments of avenues, streets, and alleys would complement the new and enhanced open spaces and residential developments. This approach aligns with community feedback emphasizing the importance of improving connectivity and safety for pedestrians and cyclists in the area.

Shared streets use signage, different paving or surface materials and traffic calming elements to prioritize active transportation modes and safety. Shared streets can adapt for events or programming to include outdoor dining spaces, public seating, captivating art installations, and thoughtful landscaping. Where housing is located along a shared street, the street can become the extended interface with the public realm fostering opportunities for neighbours to meet and interact. To ensure year-round pedestrian and cyclist use, shared streets need to be high in the winter maintenance/snow clearance hierarchy.

The following segments are recommended for consideration as shared streets:

- + The alley east of McIntyre Park (between 84 Avenue and 83 Avenue)
- + 85 Avenue (between Calgary Trail and Gateway Boulevard)
- + Tommy Banks Way NW (between Saskatchewan Drive and 86 Avenue)
- + 84 Avenue (between 104 Street east to the alley)
- + 102 Street (between 85 Avenue to 84 Avenue)
- + 81 Avenue (between 102 St to 100 Street)

### 3.4.2 Alleyway Renewal and Activation

#### DESCRIPTION

Alleys – with their eclectic rear building exteriors, their quiet or calm relative to parallel streets, and the many points for travel and connection -- have the potential to be compelling places contributing to the area's public realm.

Through engagement, Edmontonians shared they want to see the alleys renewed and activated with better lighting, improved surfaces, more businesses and more greenery to foster unique and safe experiences.

The assessment highlights how the purpose of alleys is evolving, meaning improvements are needed to serve their double role as destinations (as alternative routes for pedestrians and unique locations for businesses) as well as their functional role (for servicing and deliveries).

#### PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

Building on recent examples like the Strathcona Back Street and Spur Line Alley/Rainbow Road, support from the BIA, interest from the wider community, and available grants, there is an existing foundation for alley renewal and activation in Old Strathcona.

While the alley network in Old Strathcona is extensive and some alley segments will continue to serve functional needs, the initial focus should be on alleys in proximity to the Strathcona Back Street. Figure 24 shows the recommended alleys to transform. This is based on establishing a network radiating from Back Street, the existing activity (commercial, residential and festival) between 105 Street to Gateway Boulevard, the existing alley facing or connected businesses (e.g. Made by Marcus or Spur Line Alley) and opportunities for complementary routes for pedestrians.

Establishing a small network of alley segments is intended to create a manageable starting point that can serve for piloting, temporary activation and gradual implementation as opportunities arise or funding is available. However, other alleys within the business improvement area (BIA) boundary may be considered for upgrades as growth or renewal opportunities become available.



**FIGURE 24** PRIORITY ALLEYS (LIGHT BLUE) IDENTIFIED FOR RENEWAL AND/OR ACTIVATION

Based on an alley assessment and the engagement input, the following actions are recommended:

- + Repair or resurface alleys to improve the travel conditions for pedestrians, including people with mobility aids, and cyclists. Consider a mix of pavement types and materials that consider different uses and users, e.g. stronger materials to withstand the load of necessary service trucks; permeable pavers to allow water to drain.
- + Introduce pedestrian-focused lighting to improve visibility and safety that encourages pedestrian activity.
- + Consider naming alleys to help with wayfinding, support addressing and contribute to alley identity.
- + Encourage property owners/businesses to explore consolidated waste and recycling disposal and storage, including underground technologies or infrastructure and coordinated waste pickup to more efficiently use alley space (in advance of renewal).
- + Introduce vegetation to support the aesthetic, comfort and microclimate qualities in alleys.
- + Encourage new and existing developments to include alley-oriented spaces, entrances, or facades to contribute to the activity in alleys. Rear exteriors and facades need to be reconsidered so uses in new or existing buildings can provide their main or secondary frontage upon alleys.



- + Encourage businesses to locate in the alleys to support them as destinations.
- + Continue to encourage a variety of public art and murals to add to the beauty and identity of alleys.
- + Identify alleys that can be closed to vehicle traffic.
- + Explore fundraising or grant opportunities for elements that may not be covered by (but could be coordinated with) renewal (e.g. street furniture, decorative or extra lighting).

**KEY CONSIDERATIONS**

**Achieve Improvements through collaboration-** The City will need to work with partners like EPCOR and agencies for infrastructure improvements (i.e., surface, lighting, utilities, waste management, vegetation and new LID infrastructure design and maintenance etc). Existing property owners will be encouraged to rethink the rear of their buildings (e.g. creating a secondary entrance) or how to reuse parking spaces (e.g. for patios or seating). Developers should design new buildings with commercial units or spaces adjacent to the alley and limit blank rear exteriors. New businesses could consider locating in alley-oriented spaces. Community partners could program alleys as part of festivals or events. Public art will continue to be encouraged.

**3.4.3 Active Modes on 104 Street / Calgary Trail (Saskatchewan Drive to University Avenue)**

**DESCRIPTION**

From Saskatchewan Drive to University Avenue, 104 Street / Calgary Trail includes a northbound contraflow lane. For part of the year, the lane is limited to buses with cars only allowed to travel between 83 Avenue and Saskatchewan Drive. It is also an important active transportation link. In recent years, during the spring and summer, the lane has been closed to vehicles as part of the city's Summer Streets program to encourage biking and pedestrian traffic and to connect people to the wider network of shared pathways and bike routes. Portions of the lane (between Whyte Avenue and 84 Avenue) are also used for festivals and events.

*planWhyte* and the *Scona District Plan* recommend examining complete street options for a north-south active modes 'spine' along the east side of 104 Street / Calgary Trail, including converting contra flow lanes for pedestrian and cyclist use.

**PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS**

In the short term, the contraflow lane should continue to focus on biking and pedestrian traffic along with event or festival use and seasonal closures to vehicles. In the long term, the lane should be retrofitted to formalize it as a year-round active transportation route with programmable spaces. While the active transportation route would need to extend the full length from Saskatchewan Drive to University Avenue to ensure connections to other routes, the programmable spaces (e.g. for festivals or patios) would be concentrated a few blocks north and south of Whyte Avenue. Improvements could include, but are not limited to, changes to the surface material, possibly delineating the space between pedestrians and cyclists, and adding or improving on seating, lighting, and vegetation.

### 3.4.4 Gateway Boulevard (from Whyte Avenue to Saskatchewan Drive)

#### DESCRIPTION

North of Whyte Avenue, Gateway Boulevard includes three vehicle lanes and is an important link to Saskatchewan Drive, the river valley and further north to downtown. It includes some curbside parking or loading spaces on both the east (between Whyte Avenue and 83 Avenue) and west (north of 83 Avenue) sides of the boulevard.

#### PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

With the proposed greenway, parks and plaza to the east of Gateway Boulevard, consideration should be given for how the roadway could evolve to foster a safer environment next to these spaces and the people using them. Potential actions include designating more curbside parking, increasing the time when curbside parking is allowed, improving pedestrian crossings and enhancing the buffer between the road and adjacent land uses, and reducing the speed limit.

A raised or continuous crossing that is barrier-free is recommended at Gateway Boulevard and 86 Avenue to reinforce pedestrian priority and improve drivers yielding behaviour (as drivers have to slow down when approaching the sidewalk). A continuous crossing is intended to visually and geometrically show priority for pedestrians. While these smaller improvements will support accessibility for pedestrians in the interim, a more comprehensive approach should be explored through conceptual design in conjunction with the Gateway greenway.

These actions could replace some parking lots east of Gateway Boulevard, reduce vehicle noise, and make the parks and greenway more attractive. If mass transit is located on Gateway Boulevard, any improvements could be coordinated with transit measures.

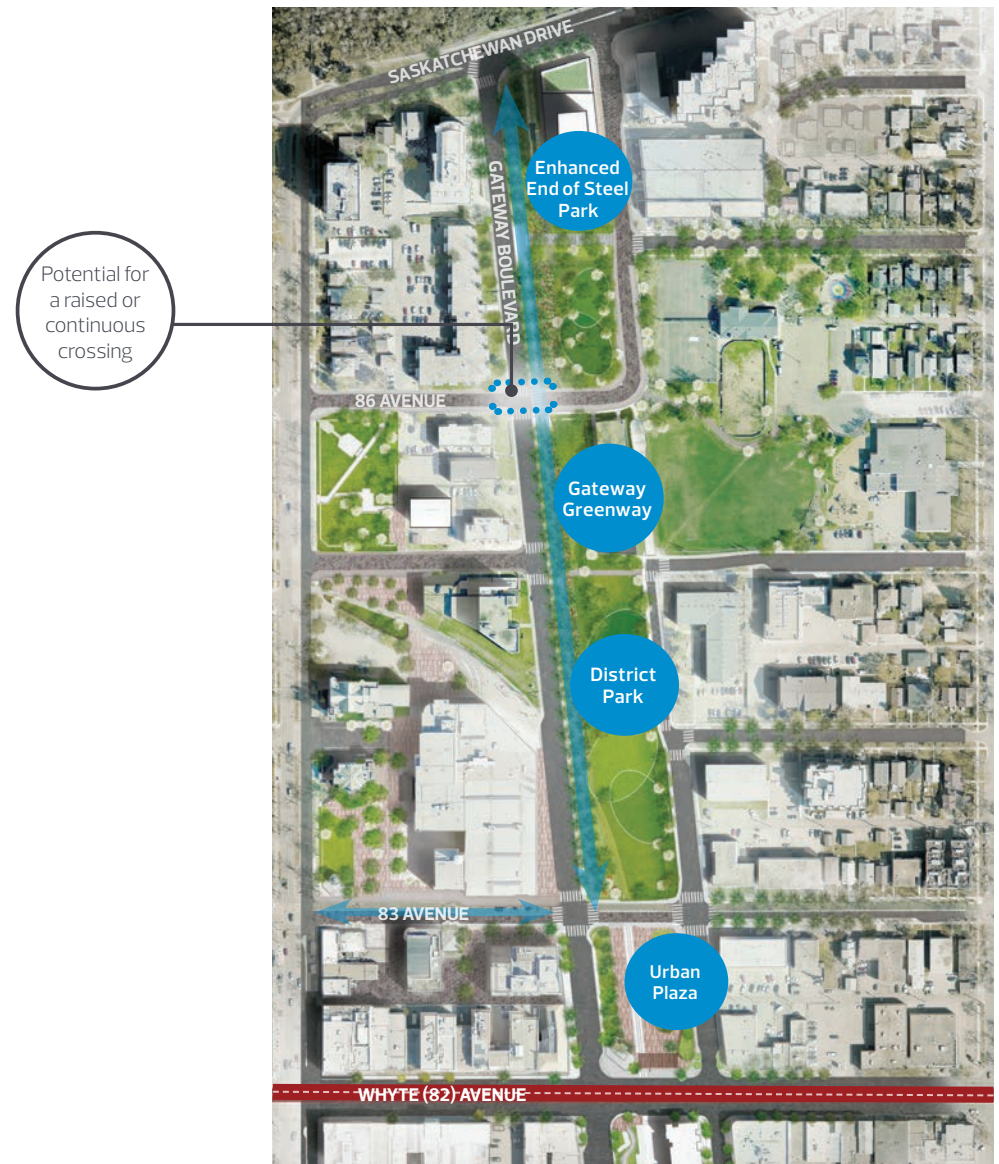


FIGURE 25 SITE FOR CONTINUOUS CROSSING TO REINFORCE PEDESTRIAN PRIORITY AND IMPROVE SAFETY

### 3.4.5 Parking Wayfinding

#### DESCRIPTION

The application of new tools to manage parking must consider the needs of all parking users in the area including businesses, customers, employees, commuters, residents, service providers, and visitors. Each may have different parking needs, including accessible parking and pick up or drop off zones.

Parking wayfinding strategies or systems use a combination of signage and technology to help guide drivers to available parking spaces more efficiently. Through engagement, Edmontonians shared that knowing the location and availability of the remaining parking spaces will help drivers traveling to the area. *The Old Strathcona Parking Study* recommended a parking guidance or wayfinding system as one of the tools that can support better parking management. The City’s Curbside Management Strategy also has an action related to wayfinding recommending the use of “technology as a lever to manage the flow and utilization of on and off street public paid parking spaces and make it easier to find available parking in high-demand areas.”

Parking wayfinding typically includes a combination of static or dynamic signs, sensors, displays, and apps that communicate the number and location of available parking spaces, help drivers reserve parking spaces (potentially in advance), and guide drivers to a desired parking spot. Easy-to-read information, available online or in highly visible physical locations (e.g. digital signage or displays) close to destinations, reduces uncertainty and informs drivers of their options.

The benefits of parking wayfinding include reduced time for drivers to search for an available parking space, including accessible spaces, reduced traffic congestion, improved air quality, and increased safety.

#### PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

Before a concept plan for the district park, the greenway, urban plaza and End of Steel Park is initiated, a parking wayfinding strategy for the Old Strathcona area will be undertaken. The parking wayfinding strategy will explore how to use real-time data to identify the number, location and availability of parking stalls including accessible parking on street and/or off street. The strategy should also consider how and where to communicate parking wayfinding information e.g. online/app-based as well as through physical digital signage. Developing the parking wayfinding should include engagement with stakeholders and interested parties like area residents, businesses as well as visitors to Old Strathcona.



**IMAGE** DIGITAL WAYFINDING SIGNS INSTALLED IN BEND OREGON HELP PREVENT PEOPLE CIRCLING TO FIND AVAILABLE PARKING.



## 4. IMPLEMENTATION

## 4.1 OVERVIEW

Old Strathcona presents significant potential as an economic driver. As a focal point for enhanced livability, a prominent historic district, and an increasingly thriving centre for vibrant cultural activities, the area has seen minimal transformation since the 1990s. This can be attributed to various factors, including the complexities associated with leased lands and low demands on City holdings.

Implementation of the strategy will require choices and trade-offs to achieve urban development goals, climate objectives, and housing affordability and ultimately enhance livability for residents. This effort will involve interested parties in the area and ensure ample opportunities for engagement as implementation unfolds.

Reducing and repurposing parking spaces, both on-street and in publicly owned lots, is necessary to achieve some of the proposed improvements. Changes to parking, however, will not be immediate and will be thoroughly assessed and discussed with interested groups during future project phases (see Figure 26).

This strategy establishes clear expectations for the work and decisions needed to advance Old Strathcona’s overarching vision while also outlining a logical phasing sequence for actions and investments.

## 4.2 PHASING CONSIDERATIONS

Careful consideration for the phasing of implementation is necessary to ensure the success of the strategy and should keep in mind several related factors, including:

### **Real Estate Development and Funding Opportunities in Old Strathcona:**

If the City’s financial circumstances at the time of development permit it, the End of Steel Park parking lot that is the subject of

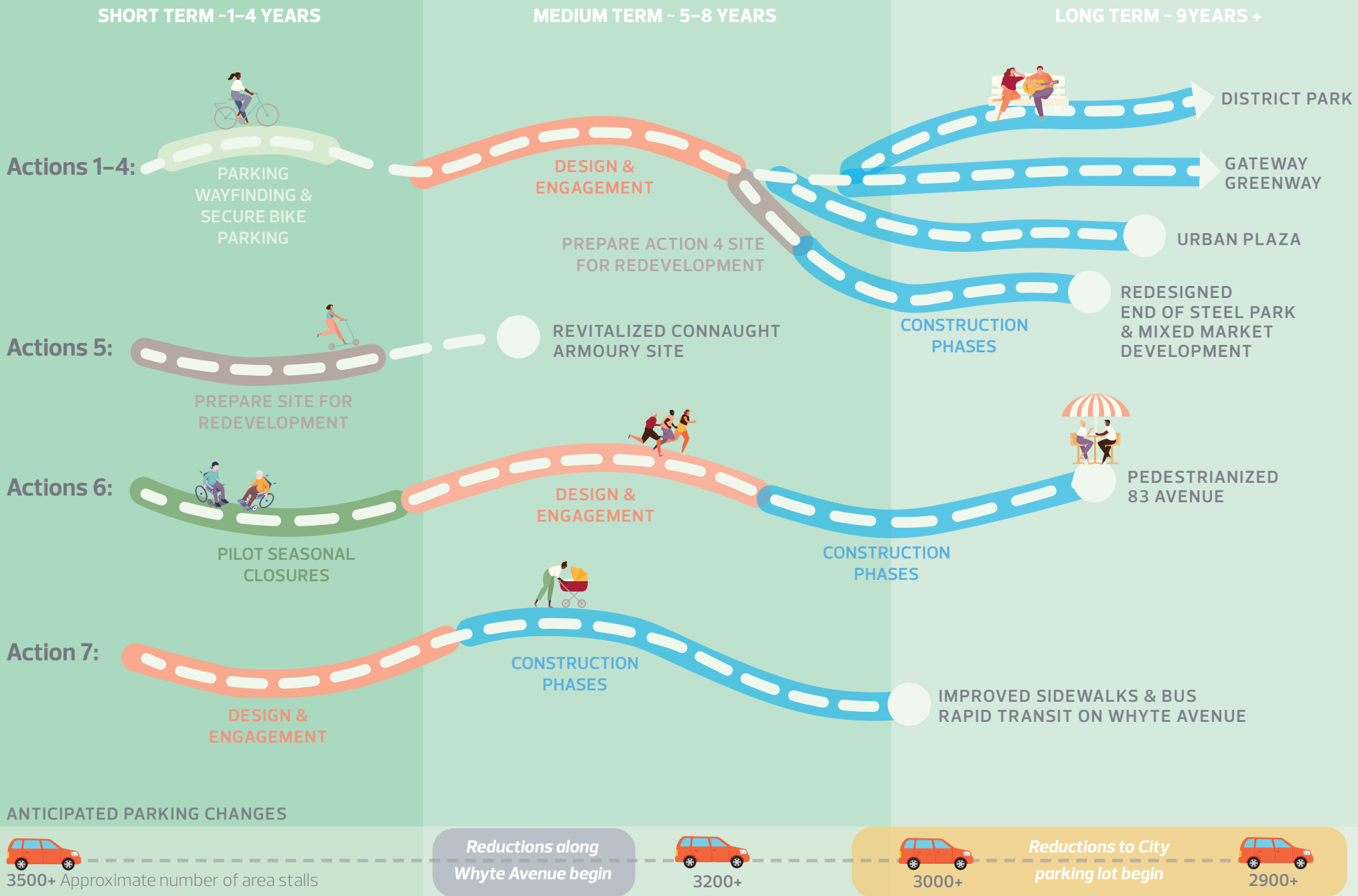
Action 4 could be an opportunity for the City to leverage City Policy C511A. This policy provides an opportunity for the City, through its Land Enterprise retained earnings, to allocate land sale revenue for investments in adjacent sites that achieve *The City Plan’s* objectives. In this case, retained earnings from the sale of the End of Steel parking lot site could be used to support adjacent open space improvements.

**Passenger Rail Master Planning:** Given the aspiration to bring passenger rail service to downtown Edmonton, the Old Strathcona area will be considered in this master planning, anticipated for completion by Fall 2025. Since the recommended outcome has not yet been determined, it is important to allow for flexibility in the strategy to accommodate the province’s master planning process. Consequently, no permanent actions on the ground will be taken concerning the District Park, Gateway Greenway, or Urban Plaza (Actions 1–3) until the master plan is completed and its implications for the area are understood. Land agreements, suitable to the province, will be required to facilitate any future development. If commuter or regional rail will not utilize the alignment north of Whyte Avenue, the City of Edmonton should consider purchasing the lands for this plaza, as well as the lands utilized by the Edmonton Radial Railway.

**Ties to Mass Transit:** The rollout of Bus Rapid Transit is necessary for supporting area modal shifts, accommodating new residents, and reducing parking demands. To ease parking concerns, the completion of mass transit work will be important before making significant parking reductions. Through concept planning of the mass transit line along Whyte Avenue, the design and construction of Whyte Avenue streetscape improvements will be considered.

**Availability of other funding sources:** The City’s lease of the parking lot east of Gateway Boulevard and north of 83 Avenue to the Old Strathcona Farmers’ Market expires in April 2025. It is recommended that the site revert to a City-operated lot upon

FIGURE 26  
OSPRS Implementation Approach



n.b. The timelines presented in this implementation section are tentative and have yet to be confirmed.

the expiration of the lease. Revenues from this lot could help address City financial needs. In the future when finances permit, a dedicated reserve fund could be established to support concept planning and design of the district park, Gateway greenway or other projects that align with the strategy’s long-term vision.

**Sequencing of parking reductions:** During Phase 3 engagement, concerns regarding reductions in area parking were frequently raised. Given that businesses and organizations in the area are apprehensive about the potential impacts of parking removal on the viability of their operations, it will be necessary for future projects involving parking reductions to engage with affected groups to mitigate negative impacts to the extent possible. Additionally, it will be important to integrate and ensure adequate accessible parking options throughout the area.

The City has a staged plan that considers impacts on the businesses and organizations in the area:

1. Retain surface parking on an interim basis. Dedicate parking revenue to public realm improvements in the area.
2. Add secure bike parking.
3. Initiate an Old Strathcona parking wayfinding project. Better manage on-street parking.
4. Start open space concept plan design. Engage interested parties in the design.
5. Conduct additional parking analysis, including identifying locations for accessible parking.
6. Implement Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) on Whyte Avenue.
7. Reduce surface parking stalls in phases as the district park is built.

**Establishing a parking wayfinding system:** While further parking analysis is recommended, current analysis indicates that ample parking will remain in the area. Introducing a digital wayfinding system to direct drivers to available parking will be necessary to support parking reductions. A real-time wayfinding system could direct drivers to parking inventory, helping to ease the transition related to parking reductions.

**Piloting seasonal closures and exploring activations:** It is recommended that the piloting of temporary or seasonal closures and temporary activations be implemented to support Action 6: Pedestrianize 83 Avenue. Strategic upfront investments in placemaking and programming can help generate excitement about the future of Old Strathcona, thereby increasing interest from visitors and developers, and supporting densification efforts.

**Rezoning and Plan of Subdivision Processes:** The City will initiate rezoning where necessary to further Key Actions. Rezoning for the urban plaza may also be necessary since it is currently zoned AJ (Alternative Jurisdiction) Zone. New parks will also be rezoned for park purposes. If projects arise in the future related to other City-owned lands in the project area (e.g., the Old Strathcona Performing Arts Centre or the Yardbird Suite building), the City may also initiate zoning changes there.



### 4.2.1 Implementation Coordination

The City will be responsible for stewarding the different recommendations and projects outlined in this strategy. This will include facilitation between City departments, development partners and other relevant groups.

Implementation coordination can be broken into three processes:

#### **CAPITAL PLANNING (FOR CITY-LED PROJECTS)**

- + Preparation of infrastructure requests and capital profiles for specific projects that require Council approval for funding and initiation. Coordinate with the renewal of an asset
- + Following the City's Project Development and Delivery Model (PDDM) to guide a project's progress through the stages of concept, design, build and operate

#### **LAND PREPARATION (FOR CITY-LED OR DEVELOPMENT PARTNER LED PROJECTS)**

- + Stewardship and management of lands, assets, or agreements prior to improvements or construction
- + Site preparation, initial site assessments
- + Assess servicing and utilities and need for infrastructure upgrades
- + Exploration of opportunities for shifting utilities to provide adequate soil depth and more tree planting room

#### **DEVELOPMENT PREPARATION (FOR DEVELOPMENT PARTNER LED PROJECTS)**

- + Selection of development partners, through an invitation for offers to purchase (IFOP) process and establishment of a conditional sale agreement
- + Facilitation and review of development concepts for alignment with this strategy
- + Finalization of land sale with development partners

- + Land use and development approvals process
- + Ongoing monitoring of development progress and alignment with this strategy

Steps within each process may happen in parallel or be sequenced if dependencies exist in accordance with the implementation phasing. Wherever feasible, implementation will be comprehensive, as this allows the City to plan, develop, and manage the open space network holistically, ensuring efficient use of resources, coordination, and limited disturbances to residents. Different city policies and guidelines, such as the Access Design Guide, will inform implementation.

Given Strathcona's former industrial and historic uses (e.g. railway use of sites associated with actions 1 to 4 or artillery training on the Connaught Armoury site) environmental overviews or environmental site assessments may be needed as part of future work to identify and mitigate any related contamination or concerns.

Implementation is broken into short, medium and long-term phases. The table in section 4.2.2 provides a high-level overview of the different steps for the seven Key Actions. Communication and public engagement will be a component of many of the steps outlined below.

Maintenance and operations will also be important considerations as part of implementation. The actions outlined in the strategy will have operating impacts of capital (e.g. turf/horticulture, snow and ice control, benches or other amenities etc.). As actions shift into projects, future designs and budgets will account for operations and maintenance needs.

Note: Implementation and proposed timelines are dependent on the availability or approval of funding by Council through the city budget process. Some actions could be implemented sooner or fast-tracked pending funding opportunities or to align with the Mass Transit project schedule.



### 4.2.2 Implementation Phasing and Funding Table

The Key Actions identified in this strategy will be implemented over many years as funding becomes available. The following table indicates how implementation can be funded:

KEY ACTIONS	SHORT TERM (1-4 YEARS)	MEDIUM TERM (5-8 YEARS)	LONG TERM (9+ YEARS)
New District Park, Gateway Greenway and End of Steel Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Accommodate interim parking</li> <li>+ Monitor existing leases of city-owned land</li> <li>+ Rezone and transfer City-owned assets to parks holdings</li> <li>+ Initiate open space concept plan</li> <li>+ Consider piloting &amp; temporary activations</li> <li>+ Strategize new parking management tool</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Finalize concept plan</li> <li>+ Request capital funding</li> <li>+ Implement new parking management tools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Construct district park, Gateway greenway and make improvements to End of Steel Park and Big Miller Park</li> </ul>
Potential Funding Approach:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Future reserve fund</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Land sale revenue and future capital profile</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Future capital profile</li> </ul>
Pedestrian Prioritization on Whyte Avenue and Urban Plaza	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Review existing leases and explore new leases (provincial land)</li> <li>+ Include relevant Public Realm Strategy actions in the Whyte Avenue streetscape/ corridor design as part of the Mass Transit: Implementing for 1.25 Million People project</li> <li>+ Develop streetscape concept design for Whyte Avenue</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Develop preliminary and detailed engineering in alignment with Mass Transit Whyte Avenue timeline</li> <li>+ Begin the first phase of Whyte Avenue reconstruction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Complete Whyte Avenue reconstruction</li> <li>+ Construct Urban Plaza</li> </ul>
Potential Funding Approach:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Pursue funding for public realm concept design in alignment with already funded Capital Profile CM-20-2020 for concept plan for B2 bus rapid transit route</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Continue to align public realm design with construction of B2 bus rapid transit route</li> </ul>	
83 Avenue Pedestrianization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Test different closure scenarios</li> <li>+ Initiate closure to vehicles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Initiate streetscape concept design</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Re-construct 83 Avenue</li> </ul>
Potential Funding Approach:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ City Operations existing budget</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Future capital profile</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*see medium term</li> </ul>
Development next to End of Steel Park (Mixed Market) and Connaught Armoury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Monitor existing leases of city-owned land</li> <li>+ Establish invitation for offers to purchase</li> <li>+ Manage lands prior to their redevelopment</li> <li>+ Work with affordable housing partners</li> <li>+ Prepare sites (e.g. site assessments, subdivision, possibly rezoning) prior to sales</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Select development partners and establish conditional sale agreement</li> <li>+ Finalize land sales</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Developments constructed</li> </ul>
Potential Funding Approach:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Land Enterprise / Housing funding (for affordable housing units)</li> <li>+ Private funding, housing agency funding and/or government grant</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Land Enterprise / Housing funding (for affordable housing units)</li> <li>+ Private funding, housing agency funding and/or government grants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*see medium term</li> </ul>

n.b. Action 7: Prioritize Pedestrians on Whyte Avenue (section 3.2) implementation will reflect the 1.25 million population threshold which may require project timing to be expedited to align with Mass Transit project scheduling.

Implementation of the Additional Open Space Recommendations (section 3.3) and Additional Mobility Recommendations (section 3.4) will be opportunitybased and prioritized and evaluated on a case-by-case basis (e.g. acquisition or development to fulfill functionality, programming or connectivity gaps). Some recommendations may require separate funding or be combined with other work.

Other recommendations provide direction or guidance that will be considered on an ongoing basis.

## 4.3 ONGOING COMMUNICATIONS + FUTURE ENGAGEMENT

The strategy benefited from the feedback of residents, businesses, and visitors. Additional communication and engagement will be required as part of the implementation. The City is committed to involving people affected by the decisions it makes and seeks diverse opinions, experiences and perspectives. The City's Public Engagement Spectrum will continue to guide the level and type of input needed for different projects or stages. The City's GBA+ (Gender-Based Analysis +) framework will also guide implementation to consider identity factors, reduce barriers to inclusion, and ensure equitable outcomes.

## 4.4 PILOTING AND TEMPORARY ACTIVATIONS

Piloting seasonal and temporary activations is an opportunity for people to experience the changing spaces in advance of construction and permanent implementation of the recommendations. Piloting and temporary activations can include a variety of installations or events, using materials that are easy to move and remove. Collaboration with and participation of the community will be essential. The culture for placemaking is strong and existing City processes and departments are available to support pilots or activations.

- + **Piloting** can serve as a way to test and learn through observation and engagement. For example, in the design for new open spaces, the City could explore pilot projects as a way to gather input that informs the final design. This could include temporary seating or play elements or hosting pop-ups. Piloting could also include organizations or community groups using spaces to test if and how events work. Visitation and usage should be monitored, along with other metrics to assess if a particular pilot project could successfully lead to a permanent project.

- + **Activation** can provide a way to use spaces between the transition from their current state (e.g., parking lot) to their future state (e.g., park). These spaces could be made available to existing organizations and festivals that regularly host events in Old Strathcona to animate.

### SPACES TO PRIORITIZE FOR PILOTING AND TEMPORARY ACTIVATIONS:

#### *Future Gateway greenway and district park (currently, the parking lot between 83 and 85 Avenues)*

When the current lease expires and until construction funding is in place for the park, this space will be made available for other uses in addition to parking. Examples include (but are not limited to):

- + Working with the Old Strathcona Farmers' Market to program the site with vendors or other market-related activities.
- + Making the site available for existing festivals or events that occur in Old Strathcona (The Fringe, Art Walk, etc.).
- + Identifying new temporary activities that could animate the space.
- + Piloting measures as part of engagement to inform future park design (as outlined in Key Action 1 and 2).

### KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- + Rezone and transfer lands to parks holding – This will facilitate temporary activations (and support the eventual creation of the park).
- + Interim site improvements – The current surface is not conducive to programming. A new surface treatment could be considered to support interim uses and programming.

### **FUTURE URBAN PLAZA (LOTS BETWEEN 83 AND 82 AVENUES)**

When the current uses can be transitioned, and until construction funding is in place for the plaza, this space could be made available for other uses. Examples include (but are not limited to):

- + Making the site available for existing festivals or events that occur in Old Strathcona (e.g., The Fringe, Art Walk, etc.).
- + Identifying new temporary activities that could animate the space.
- + Piloting different elements for modes e.g., bike parking, e-bike and e-scooter parking, etc.
- + Piloting measures as part engagement to inform future urban plaza design (as outlined in Key Action 3).

### **83 AVENUE (BETWEEN 104 AND 102 STREETS)**

Prior to the conversion of 83 Avenue into a more permanent pedestrian area (with limited vehicle access) the City will:

- + Continue to accommodate closures in support of festival and event use.
- + Pilot seasonal closures.
- + Encourage temporary activations and programming that draw people to the avenue and generate excitement.
- + Explore additional closures outside festivals or events to provide pedestrian and active mode space and increase awareness of its future.
- + Test and engage on different possible closure scenarios, monitor traffic movements and impacts to inform the future pedestrianization (as outlined in Key Action 6).

### **ALLEYWAYS**

Prior to renewal and improvements, explore opportunities to:

- + Encourage property owners and businesses to animate their space adjacent to the alley to draw people to and through alleys.
- + Encourage the BIA, community groups or residents to host activities that draw people to alleys and experience them as unique spaces.
- + Encourage existing festivals or events to consider alleys as a site for their programming as a way to animate alleys.
- + Test and engage on improvements in select alleys to inform future changes (as outlined in section 3.4.2 Alleyway Renewal and Activation).
- + Consider testing temporary landscaping before renewal.

IMAGE ACTIVATION AND ANIMATION OF SPURLINE ALLEY (2024)



## 4.5 INCORPORATING RESILIENCE

Climate Resilience is one of the four strategic goals identified in *The City Plan*, guiding Edmonton's efforts to build resilience to a changing climate and transition to a low-carbon future. Implementation of the *Old Strathcona Public Realm Strategy* should work towards *The City Plan's* targets outlined under the "Big City Moves" as well as the actions outlined in *Edmonton's Community Energy Transition Strategy* and the *Climate Resilient Edmonton: Adaptation Strategy*.

Incorporating low-impact design, increased naturalization, adaptive public spaces, and other public realm improvements can buffer extreme weather impacts, boost biodiversity, and provide safe gathering spaces. Enhancing active transportation, pedestrian prioritization, and expanding the urban tree canopy can help the city meet emissions reduction targets. This strategy also complements other climate resilience efforts, such as carbon budgeting, emissions profiling, and promoting electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure.

## 4.6 HERITAGE INTERPRETATION

Heritage and historical commemoration have been a key part of Old Strathcona's identity. Much of that history, however, has focused on a settler-colonial perspective. Identifying and celebrating Indigenous heritage (pre- and post-contact) will be part of the future implementation such as the design of new open spaces or improvements to existing open spaces. This could include commemorating more than the area's tangible history (the buildings and activities that are visible today) to consider the intangible history which consists of the more subtle and harder-to-define historic activities and roles that the area served but are no longer present. This includes, but is not limited to, the area's ancient use by Indigenous peoples as a place to live, trade and travel. This can also foster use of these spaces for Indigenous or ceremonial practices.

## 4.7 REGULAR MONITORING AND REPORTING SCHEDULE

It will be important to monitor and report on the progress of the recommendations to ensure implementation can be achieved. The implementation phasing projected time horizons provide milestones to track how implementation is proceeding and potential checkpoints to report to Council.

One of the drivers of the strategy is to serve the existing and future residents of the Old Strathcona area. Therefore another milestone to monitor will be how implementation is happening relative to the population growth of the Scona District and Edmonton towards *The City Plan's* 1.25 million population horizon.

In addition to those milestones, monitoring and reporting will also occur around the following:

- + Ongoing land and property stewardship (including updates on leases); land preparation
- + Capital planning, funding requests and initiation
- + City-led capital improvements (e.g., open space, transit)
- + Status of parking reductions
- + Growth of businesses and cultural organizations
- + Climate resilience monitoring and air quality measurements
- + Development partner-led projects

Given the long term nature of the strategy, the influence of market factors, opportunities or shifting civic priorities may require flexibility or adjustments to monitoring.

When the recommendations in this strategy have been achieved, the City will review (similar to the lifecycle of other strategies or tools in the City's planning toolkit) when to retire the *Old Strategy Public Realm Strategy*.



## 5. GLOSSARY

## 5.1 FREQUENTLY USED TERMS

**Accessibility** – Refers to the absence of barriers that prevent individuals and/or groups from fully participating, contributing to and benefiting from all social, economic, cultural, spiritual and political aspects of society. The term also refers to rights to access, and to universal design characteristics of products, devices, information, programs, services, infrastructure that enables independent use, or support when required, and access by people with a variety of disabilities.

**Active Transportation** – Any mode of transportation by which people use their own energy to power their motion, including walking, rolling, running, cycling, cross-country skiing, skateboarding, snowshoeing, roller blading and use of a wheelchair.

**Affordable Housing** – Housing that is priced below the average market cost as a result of receiving government subsidies, so as to be affordable for people with below-median household income.

**Barrier-free** – Means an absence of obstacles, allowing people with physical, cognitive or sensory impairments safer or easier access to pathways, open spaces, amenities, facilities, services, activities, or areas within a building.

**District Park** – District Park is an open space that serves multiple neighbourhoods, is more specialized than a community park and may provide multifunctional amenities. The size and programming depends on the community where they are located.

**Greenways** – Greenways are linear, publicly accessible open spaces that are large enough to operate as parkland, providing opportunities for active transportation, recreation or social encounters in addition to their role as connectors.

**Habitat Greenways** – Naturalized or restored corridors that support ecological connectivity from the River Valley and Ravine system or district area to other major ecological habitats and connections. This may include transportation or utility corridors that have been naturalized or intentionally designed to provide a mix of habitat for plants and animals that strengthen biodiversity, wildlife connectivity and overall ecological function.

**Mass Transit** – A large scale fixed route system of public transportation serving an urban area, which is able to transport large numbers of people using buses, trains and other technologies. This includes dedicated transit lanes for bus based mass transit or Bus Rapid Transit (BRT).

**Open Space** – An area of outdoor land that is publicly owned or publicly accessible, including municipal parks, civic spaces, provincial or federal parkland, institutional campuses and other public spaces.

**Parking Wayfinding** – Strategies or systems use a combination of signage and technology to help guide drivers to available parking spaces more efficiently.

**Pedestrian** – Refers to any person walking, rolling or wheeling whether able bodied or using manual/motorized wheelchairs or scooters, canes or walkers.

**Public Realm** – The public realm includes those communally accessible, publicly owned spaces such as the streets, sidewalks and alleys people travel through, and the parks, plazas or open spaces people stop to rest or play in, meet friends or visit for events.

## Thank You

The City of Edmonton thanks all the Old Strathcona residents, the Community Advisory Committee, area businesses and organizations, Edmontonians and visitors for contributing to the *Old Strathcona Public Realm Strategy*. We look forward to collaborating with you again in the future!

**SHARE** YOUR VOICE  
**SHAPE** OUR CITY

**Edmonton**