

# What We Heard

## Strathcona Back Street

November - December 2019

**ADVISE**

BUILDING GREAT  
NEIGHBOURHOODS

Edmonton

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## OVERVIEW

Construction for Strathcona’s Neighbourhood Renewal began in spring 2019, and is expected to be completed in 2021. As part of the project, the City is renewing the alley north of Whyte Avenue, from Gateway Boulevard to 104 Street.

### WHEN IS AN ALLEY MORE THAN AN ALLEY?

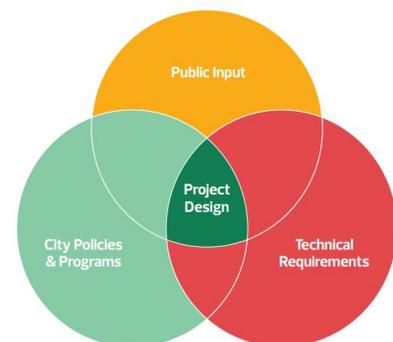
The Neighbourhood Renewal Program includes reconstruction of local and collector streets and sidewalks. Alleys are not usually included in this process, but sometimes an alley is more than an alley. Since there are several commercial units and a residential apartment building with active edges and main entrances facing the alley, it is considered a “back street,” and as such, is included within Strathcona’s Neighbourhood Renewal.

The renewal of this alley includes reconstruction of the pavement and upgrades to LED bulbs for any existing lighting. In addition, the City is exploring funding opportunities through other City initiatives and external partnerships, for the inclusion of:

- Lighting;
- Trees and greenery;
- Furnishings, such as benches;
- Creative, artistic elements;
- Upgraded road surfaces; and
- Improved aesthetics for utilities.

### DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

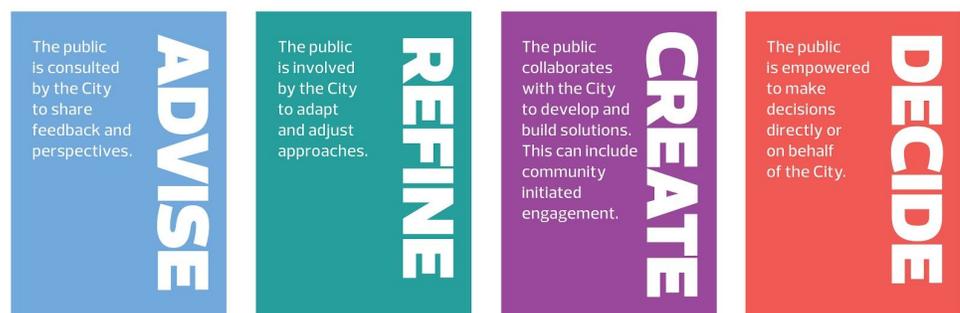
There are many critical aspects in the decision-making process for a renewal project. Along with public input, the project team needs to consider technical requirements, funds available and City policies and programs to determine what is ultimately built.



## PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT SPECTRUM

The City of Edmonton is committed to involving the people affected by the decisions it makes by seeking diverse opinions, experiences, and information so that a wide range of input is available to decision makers. The City's Public Engagement Spectrum defines the public's level of influence during engagement processes.

Engagement on the Strathcona Back Street Draft Design was at the ADVISE level on the City's Public Engagement Spectrum.



## HOW WE ENGAGED

*In total 90 people provided feedback in person and 40 people provided feedback online.*

People were invited to share their feedback at a pop-up event at the Old Strathcona Farmers' Market on December 14, 2019 and online between December 13-31, 2019. The City also met with businesses and other major stakeholders in the area. People looked at the Draft Design, asked and answered questions, and made comments showing the project team which areas they may need to focus on. The project team will use the community feedback gathered to help advise on the design.



*Alley entrance draft design, looking west from Gateway Boulevard*

## WHAT WE ASKED

The City shared the Draft Design and asked the following questions about the project:

*Feedback gathered will help to advise design.*

- How do you use this Strathcona back street?
- Do you have ideas to share?
- Are there concerns or considerations we should know about?

## WHAT WE HEARD

The following summarizes what we heard during engagement from the public, businesses, property owners and other major stakeholders. All input will be considered as we refine the design and move into construction.

Overall the majority of the feedback heard for this project was very positive. People were supportive of the proposed improvements to the area, and appreciated elements of the design like the lighting, greenery, and seating.

We also heard some feedback around:

- Considering winter design features such as bright colours, lighting, and warm seating;
- Ensuring people feel safe in the space;

- Designing the benches to better suit all ages and abilities, and ensuring they are warm in all seasons;
- Adding more bike parking into the area;
- Ensuring the space is accessible for wheelchairs, strollers, and people with mobility challenges;
- Keeping the spaces flexible for future programming, patios and festivals;
- Retaining the historical character of Old Strathcona in the space;
- Improving drainage in the alley;
- Considering wayfinding to major destinations in the area;
- Creating a space for centralized garbage;
- Considering the closure (temporary or permanent) of the eastern north-south alley;

We also heard concerns and questions about:

- Reducing parking and access for deliveries and loading for surrounding businesses and the Farmers' Market;
- Enforcing one way roads within the alley;
- Improving safety for people crossing between the alley and the Farmers' Market;
- Ensuring the alley has appropriate winter maintenance and snow clearing.



*Plaza draft design, looking south from 83 Avenue*

## NEXT STEPS

The feedback we heard will help to develop the preliminary design, which will be shared online when available. Renewal of the back street has shifted from 2020 to 2021. The extra year will help to build momentum around additional funding opportunities which will improve the final design and what's possible for the alley.

Businesses and properties affected by the renewal will receive bulletins at the start of the construction season. A second construction bulletin will be provided by the contractor identifying more detailed dates, closer to the start of construction.

The following is a summary of possible activities leading up to the renewal:

- Utility assessments and repairs/relocations/replacements
- Topographical survey and layout to support design and construction (including flags and paint markings)
- Coring small holes in the alley to verify design assumptions for pavement structures

For further information about the project, please visit the website:  
[edmonton.ca/StrathconaBackStreet](https://edmonton.ca/StrathconaBackStreet)

Find out more about Strathcona Neighbourhood Renewal at:  
[edmonton.ca/BuildingStrathcona](https://edmonton.ca/BuildingStrathcona)