



Top 10 Things You Need to Know About the Old Strathcona Public Realm Strategy

#1 People places need great public spaces. Public space includes plazas, parks, paths, open spaces, streets and alleyways. Figuring out the right public spaces for Old Strathcona and how they should be designed is the overall goal of this project.

#2 Different people have different public space needs. Edmontonians differ by age, ability, gender, race, family status, economic condition, and many other things. We want to hear from a wide variety of people to best understand how to meet these differing needs.

#3 Whyte Avenue will be up for renewal. The City is planning to renew Whyte Avenue in the 2027-2030 period. We want to learn from temporary roadway changes done in 2020 and 2021 to help figure out what the permanent long-term design of the avenue should be.

#4 Transit planning is underway. The City is already working to determine the transit system that Edmonton will need at a population of 1.25 million. Whyte Avenue has been identified for non-LRT mass transit, so this will need to be considered in any future design of the avenue.

#5 Businesses depend on public space. There are over 600 businesses in the area. People rely on them for jobs, goods, and services, and they rely on people. In planning for public space in the area, we want to create places that support businesses and their customers.

#6 Public spaces are critical for events.

Old Strathcona is home to some of Edmonton's favourite festivals and has the city's largest concentration of performing arts venues. The area is an important tourist destination. Public realm improvements can help arts and culture thrive.

#7 People live here! Over 25,000 people live in the neighbourhoods around Old Strathcona. This number will increase over time through new development. As the area densifies, the importance of public space – “outdoor living rooms” – will only grow for residents.

#8 We need more affordable housing. About 50,000 renter households in Edmonton live in unaffordable housing. There may be opportunities for new affordable housing to be developed on City-owned land in Old Strathcona in conjunction with open space improvements.

#9 Old Strathcona is a Provincial Historic Area. It's one of only two in Alberta, containing a rich collection of heritage buildings. Public spaces provide opportunities to appreciate nearby historic resources and can be venues for storytelling and meaning in their own right.

#10 Climate action is a priority. Public spaces can reduce extreme summer heat, absorb runoff from intense storms, store carbon, and encourage walking and cycling. In this project we are looking for ways that public spaces can lower emissions and foster climate resilience.