



What We Heard Report: Highlands Neighbourhood Renewal

**Draft Concepts Public Event
September 27, 2018**

**SHARE YOUR VOICE
SHAPE OUR CITY**

Edmonton

What We Heard Report: Highlands Neighbourhood Renewal Public Engagement Session

Purpose

On September 27, the City of Edmonton engaged with more than 250 people to **REFINE** draft concepts as they relate to Highlands' roads and intersections, walkways and connectivity, bike routes and infrastructure, and public parks and green spaces. In this report, we have analyzed and summarized the input collected at this event.

The City sought input on the positive effects and challenges on each of the proposed concepts with two goals:

- 1 IDENTIFY** what is working well in each concept, and where enhancements are desired and why
- 2 EVALUATE** and recommend the best option when more than one concept was presented (i.e., bike route infrastructure; Ada Boulevard)

The City also invited people to:

- + Rank five public outdoor space concepts according to the order that funding opportunities should be explored
- + Evaluate how well the concepts align with the important elements for Highlands' Neighbourhood Renewal and will help to support the project vision



How the Concepts were Created

The City presented a total of 15 concepts, including two options for bike route infrastructure and two options for Ada Boulevard.

Each concept was developed to:

- + Align with current City of Edmonton policy
- + Reflect technical requirements in the neighbourhood
- + Incorporate current construction standards and best practices
- + Integrate, wherever possible, public input gathered through several in-person public engagement sessions, email submissions, and phone calls over nine months

What a great turnout! More than 250 people shared their ideas on our Highlands' neighbourhood renewal concepts, and also had the opportunity to learn about and provide input on:

- + The City of Edmonton's Yellowhead Trail Freeway Conversation, Exhibition Lands, and Highlands Granular Trail Realignment projects
- + The Highlands Community League's hall renewal project
- + The Edmonton Public School Board's Highlands School project

@cherk

I'm so excited by all the revitalization happening in @yeghighlands. When we bought our home here 15 yrs ago, I saw the potential in the community. Tonight echoed that.
#buildinggreatneighbourhoods
#matureneighbourhoods

Thank you for the great job in trying to address all of our concerns - knowing that you cannot please everyone! I look forward to seeing preliminary plans in November.

– Received through hard copy satisfaction survey.

Public engagement opportunities

JANUARY

Renewing Ada Boulevard Community Conversation

*Highlands Golf Club and
Online Survey*

- + 162 respondents in person and online

ADVISE



MARCH

Stakeholder Outreach Workshop

Edmonton Expo Centre

- + 25 participants

ADVISE

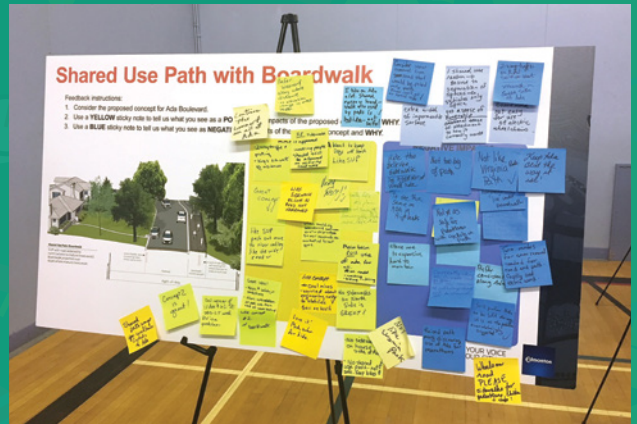
APRIL

Two Public Engagement Events on Neighbourhood Vision, including Community Walks

*Highlands School and Mount
Royal School*

- + 78 participants

ADVISE
+
REFINE



JUNE

Two Drop-in Outdoor Events on Exploring the Possibilities for Highlands and Ada Boulevard

Henry Martell Park

- + 277 participants

ADVISE

SEPTEMBER

Neighbourhood Concept Design Public Engagement Session

Highlands School

- + 253 participants

REFINE

All public engagement also considers input that the City of Edmonton project manager received via email, letters, and phone calls.

The 15 concepts fall into four categories:

Category	Concepts
Pedestrian and Traffic Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none">+ Locations to install raised crosswalks+ Locations to install curb extensions+ Concept along 65 Street and south of 112 Avenue – Gibbard Block+ Concept, including mini roundabout, at 57 – 60 Street along 111 Avenue
Active Connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none">+ New bike routes+ Options for bike route infrastructure, including:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– a shared-use path– an on-street bike route+ Addition of missing sidewalk links
Ada Boulevard	<p>Options for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">+ A shared road (Woonerf) with one-way traffic+ Installation of a shared-use path on the south side of the Ada Boulevard
City-owned Outdoor Spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none">+ Concept for Boulder Lookout Park between 51 and 52 Street on the south side of Ada Boulevard+ Concept to update Henry Martell Park+ Concept to update Buttercup Farm Park+ Concept for the triangle-shaped open space between 57 and 60 Street north of 111 Avenue+ Concept for the former trolley turnaround location on 112 Avenue

Concepts and previous What We Heard Reports, including for Ada Boulevard, are available at edmonton.ca/BuildingHighlands

What we heard about each concept: Pedestrian and Traffic Safety

Concept	Positive Effects	Challenges or Recommendations
Locations to install raised crosswalks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Raised crosswalks will help to improve accessibility and walkability in the neighbourhood. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Ensure that the raised crosswalks align with sidewalk links to support connectivity and walkability. + Consider alternative traffic calming measures that will help to address mid-block speeding. + Consider additional locations for traffic calming measures to address instances of speeding and shortcutting identified as being prevalent on most streets north of 112 Avenue.
Locations to install curb extension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + The curb extensions for 65 Street, 62 Street, and 55 Street will be effective to help slow speeding traffic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Ensure that winter road clearing, parking, and access for emergency vehicles and people with residences on these streets will be maintained. + Consider additional curb extensions on other streets experiencing instances of speeding and shortcutting
Concept along 65 Street and south of 112 Avenue – Gibbard Block	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + The curb extensions will help slow traffic and enhance pedestrian safety and comfort walking this street. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + The parallel parking may encroach into road width. + The City may be underestimating the parking requirements being introduced by the renewal of the Gibbard Block. + Protect the mature trees.
Concept, including mini roundabout, at 57 – 60 Street along 111 Avenue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + The roundabout will help to eliminate driver confusion at what is often interpreted as a five-way intersection. + The roundabout is an effective way to calm traffic, and will help mitigate instances of speeding along 111 Avenue. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Closure of 57 Street may result in people using the alleyway as a main point of access and thoroughfare. + With people parking on 57 Street, they use 111 Avenue to turnaround. People may compensate by using private driveways to turnaround if access to 111 Avenue is closed. + Protect the mature trees. + The intersection is safe and sees a limited amount of traffic; this makes the mini roundabout unnecessary.

What we heard about each concept: Active Connections

Concept	Positive Effects	Challenges or Recommendations
Bike routes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Overall appreciation for enhanced north-south connectivity, as well as an east-west route north of 112 Avenue. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Designated bike routes are not needed because people use all of Highlands' streets as bike routes. + There are potential safety issues for people who bike along 55 Street due to congestion, drivers ignoring traffic controls, and challenges crossing 112 Avenue.
Bike route infrastructure option: On-street bike route	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Maintenance will be completed as part of road maintenance. + Prioritizes pedestrian and pet safety by keeping bikes in a separate space. + Less costly and disruptive to the neighbourhood. + Helps to slow down drivers and mitigate instances of speeding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Roads are too narrow for both bikes and vehicles, and drivers speed on the roads. + Take a consistent approach to designating bike paths. + Prefer not to impact or slow down drivers.
Bike route infrastructure option: Shared-use path	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + City will take care of winter snow clearing along the shared use path. + Ability to ensure compliance with respectful behaviours and interactions between modes on a shared-use path. + Safer for everyone and supports year-round use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Disruption to mature trees, private and public landscaping, and neighbourhood aesthetic. + Additional maintenance costs to City. + Negative interactions between bike and pedestrians and pets and, cars that back out of driveways.
Addition of missing sidewalk links	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Overall appreciation for efforts to enhance Highlands' walkability, connectivity, and accessibility. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Remove the sidewalk in Henry Martell Park; place the 66 Street sidewalk on the west side of Henry Martell Park (i.e., on the park land). + Supportive if eliminate or mitigate reduction of driveways, private landscaping, parking, and trees. + Ensure a continuous connection along 111 Avenue.

What we heard about each concept: Ada Boulevard

Concept	Positive Effects	Challenges or Recommendations
Option: Shared road [Woonerf] with one-way traffic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Accessible for pedestrians, joggers, and children on bikes. + Keeps it a multi-use corridor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Prefer existing design, with no changes to Ada Boulevard. + Roadway designed for front entrance homes must maintain access. + Concern about the access for emergency vehicles. + Difficult to make a left turn to access Highlands Golf Course from 111 Avenue. + It's overkill, and will come with high costs and maintenance challenges. + LED lighting has a negative impact on people and wildlife. + Desire to see a Woonerf the full length of Ada Boulevard. + Loss of parking. + Prefer two-way traffic; one-way may detour traffic to 111 Avenue or frustrate drivers and encourage speeding along Ada Boulevard.
Option: Shared-use path with boardwalk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Keeps it a multi-use corridor, and aligns well with the current uses and design of Ada Boulevard. + Increases pedestrian safety. + Improves walkability in the neighbourhood by connecting to other pathways. + A south side pathway will not encroach on the residences on the north side of Ada Boulevard. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Boardwalk materials do not work well for people using electric wheelchairs. + Prefer consistent style all along Ada Boulevard. + Do not like the style of shared-use path selected for Virginia Park and Bellevue. + Protect the parkland area by managing the size and location of the shared-use path. + Additional maintenance required, and potential for snow to be stored on the north side of Ada Boulevard on people's properties. + Potential conflicts between people who bike and pedestrians and pets.

What we heard about each concept: City-owned Outdoor Spaces

Concept	Positive Effects	Challenges or Recommendations
Concept for Boulder Lookout Park between 51 and 52 Street on the south side of Ada Boulevard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Use of natural materials for integrated aesthetic. + Great idea to make this a more useable space and child-friendly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Use of rock and sand doesn't suit the area. + Replace sand with a safer, more child-friendly base material. + Enhance the lighting. + Add more trees and permaculture. + The climbing structure could be dangerous for playing on and, with new hiding spaces, a threat to personal security. + The park is close to the road, and may encourage children to go into the road.
Concept to update Henry Martell Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Pathways will improve accessibility. + Amenities will make the park more useable and aesthetically attractive. + Support for a wide road that integrates with the Woonerf concept for Ada Boulevard. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Add additional amenities – water feature, drinking fountain, waste bins, and additional power outlets for a variety of stage locations. + Keep the space natural and minimize the use of concrete. + This will require additional maintenance and upkeep of amenities, including water feature. + Higher costs of coloured concrete. + Place the 66 Street sidewalk on the west side of Henry Martell Park (i.e., on the park land); place the 111 Avenue sidewalk on the north side of Henry Martell Park.



What we heard about each concept: City-owned Outdoor Spaces

Concept	Positive Effects	Challenges or Recommendations
Concept to update Buttercup Farm Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Closing 113 Avenue will help to calm traffic. + Landscaping, with an emphasis on the integration of buttercup flowers and sculpture. + Public art, with connection to the history of the area and land use (i.e., farm). + Appreciate the sitting areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + 113 Avenue is heavily used and the park is not; the park could be smaller to keep 113 Avenue open. + 113 Avenue is a key east-west connection through Highlands. + Concern that the concept will require road narrowing and, accordingly, less parking on 58 Street and divert traffic to 60 Street. + Concern about the choice to use metal cows rather than natural vegetation. + Concern over the metal art rusting.
Concept for the triangle-shaped open space between 57 and 60 Street north of 111 Avenue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + The mini roundabout will help to eliminate driver confusion at what is often interpreted as a five-way intersection. + The mini roundabout is an effective way to calm traffic, and will help mitigate instances of speeding along 111 Avenue. + Like the trees, and variety of trees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Closure of 57 Street will trap cars in the cul de sac. + Add a fountain or statue to the roundabout for 111 Avenue. + Protect the mature trees.
Concept for the former trolley turnaround location east of 61 Street on 112 Avenue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Pedestrian access. + Addition of seating areas. + Integration of public art. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Better as an opportunity for a development or to keep a washroom for Edmonton Transit Service. + High cost to develop and maintain without a high return to community. + The public art examples lack appeal.



What we heard about funding priorities

The costs to upgrade the five City-owned outdoor spaces are not yet funded. In order to move forward, the costs must be covered within Highlands' neighbourhood renewal budget or the City will explore potential partnerships with other City programs, community partners, and initiatives to leverage additional funding opportunities.

In order to help the City gain a better understanding of which updates to City-owned outdoor spaces to prioritize, we asked people to rank them from one to five, with one being the most important space to update. The rankings came back as follows:

- 1 Henry Martell Park
- 2 Boulder Lookout Park
- 3 Buttercup Farm Park
- 4 Triangle-shaped open space between 57 and 60 Street north of 111 Avenue
- 5 Former trolley turnaround location east of 61 Street on 112 Avenue



How the Concepts Relate to Highlands' Vision and Important Elements

After people had the opportunity to review all of the concepts on September 27, we asked them to tell us if the concepts will help to advance the Vision and deliver on the Important Elements. This is what they told us:

Vision	Yes, the concepts support the Vision	No, the concepts do not support the Vision
Highlands is a safe, friendly, and highly connected neighbourhood. It is an active and accessible destination, where people enjoy modern infrastructure and beautiful gathering spaces surrounded by local history.	45 participants	3 participants

When asked to provide input on how the concepts can be enhanced to achieve the Vision, the key themes included:

- + Reducing crime
- + Focusing on maintenance
- + Emphasizing functionality over aesthetic

What we heard about aligning to the Neighbourhood Renewal Vision and Important Elements

At the time that we introduced neighbourhood renewal to Highlands, we asked people what they want it to achieve. This became Highlands Neighbourhood Renewal Vision. We also asked them what we need to focus on to help achieve the Vision, and these more detailed areas of focus became Highlands Neighbourhood Renewal Important Elements. You can view the final **Vision and Important Elements** for Highlands on page 15.



We also asked people to tell us if the concepts reflect each Important Element. This is what they told us:

Important Elements	Yes, the concepts reflect the Important Element	No, the concepts do not reflect the Important Element
Highlands features its natural beauty, including mature trees and connections to the river valley	45 participants	0 participants
Highlands is an active and accessible neighbourhood, where streets and sidewalks are designed to favour pedestrians and other active modes of transportation	39 participants	2 participants
Highlands is a safe neighbourhood, where traffic management and lighting help people feel secure moving throughout the neighbourhood	36 participants	4 participants
Highlands is a friendly neighbourhood, where there are beautiful, functional and accessible outdoor areas for people to gather	33 participants	0 participants
Highlands honours and reflects its history, recognizing local points of interest and telling stories about the diverse groups of people who lived on these lands	32 participants	0 participants
Highlands is a connected neighbourhood, where the streets and sidewalks support a natural flow	27 participants	2 participants

When asked to provide input on how the concepts can be enhanced to reflect the Important Elements, the key themes included:

- + Make additional improvements to manage traffic speeding, shortcutting, and congestion
- + Protect the mature trees
- + Focus on better ongoing maintenance and cleanliness in the neighbourhood
- + Add naming and historical signage
- + Reduce crime
- + Maintain access, including along 57 Street and by ensuring connections in and out of Highlands from other neighbourhoods

Next steps

The City is reviewing all of the comments from the September 27 event relative to City policy and programs, including available funding, technical requirements, and current construction standards and best practices, along with available funding. We will make updates to the concepts, where possible, and present a

set of preliminary designs for input at a public engagement session on November 19, 2018. The preliminary designs will detail the renewal planned for Highlands, invite input on aesthetic choices (e.g., choosing a style of bench), and present a tentative construction schedule for each section of the neighbourhood.

Project timeline



Make sure you are informed

Visit edmonton.ca/BuildingHighlands for more information, and to add your name to our email list so we can keep you informed of project updates. There's still much work to be done and one more formal opportunity on January 31, 2019 to provide feedback on plans for Highlands' neighbourhood renewal before construction begins in 2019.

Final Vision and Important Elements for Highlands' Neighbourhood Renewal

Vision

Highlands is a safe, friendly, and highly connected neighbourhood. It is an active and accessible destination, where people enjoy modern infrastructure and beautiful gathering spaces surrounded by local history.

Important Elements

- + Highlands features its natural beauty, including mature trees and connections to the river valley.
- + Highlands is an active and accessible neighbourhood, where streets and sidewalks are designed to favour pedestrians and other active modes of transportation.
- + Highlands is a safe neighbourhood, where traffic management and lighting help people feel secure moving throughout the neighbourhood.
- + Highlands is a friendly neighbourhood, where there are beautiful, functional and accessible outdoor areas for people to gather.
- + Highlands honours and reflects its history, recognizing local points of interest and telling stories about the diverse groups of people who lived on these lands.
- + Highlands is a connected neighbourhood, where the streets and sidewalks support a natural flow of people who move both north and south of 112 avenue.

For more information:

Web: edmonton.ca/BuildingHighlands
Email: buildinggreatneighbourhoods@edmonton.ca
Call: 311



Working together to make the most out of your neighbourhood.

This is your city and your neighbourhood. We want to understand how you experience your neighbourhood and ask for your input on what we might do to make it better.

We will engage and work with you on the renewal of roads, sidewalks, street lights, and park spaces, and promote other community opportunities to enhance how people live and interact in your neighbourhood. We commit to being open and transparent about how your input is used. Let's make the most out of your neighbourhood.

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