



Terwillegar Drive Expressway Concept Plan

Phase 3 Public Engagement Summary Report

August - September 2019

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Edmonton

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Project Overview

The City is currently developing a plan to upgrade Terwillegar Drive, between Anthony Henday Drive and Whitemud Drive, to an expressway. An expressway is a high-capacity roadway which includes widely spaced signalized intersections. The Terwillegar Drive expressway will include four travel lanes in each direction (three for motor vehicles, one for transit), increased capacity at all intersections and the Whitemud Drive / Terwillegar Drive interchange, dedicated transit lanes and bus stops, and a shared-use path on the east side of the roadway.

This was the third and final phase of the public engagement process for the concept planning study.

Phase 1 was completed in early 2018 and presented freeway options for Terwillegar Drive. After analyzing the public and technical needs, and considering direction from Edmonton City Council, an alternative solution to the freeway, an expressway, was developed. In October 2018, the Urban Planning Committee of City Council unanimously accepted a motion to advance the expressway option.

During Phase 2, the draft expressway concept plan was shared publicly, and feedback was collected on elements of the plan including: locations and connections for the shared-use path, bridge styles for the 142 Street pedestrian/cyclist bridge, dedicated transit lanes and bus stops, and locations for naturalized landscaping along the corridor. Input from Phase 2 was used to fine tune the concept plan that was shared during Phase 3.

For detailed information about the study and to view the concept plan, visit:
edmonton.ca/terwillegardrivestudy

Phase 3

Phase 3 of the public engagement process was designed to share the Terwillegar Drive expressway concept plan for information and review. Only minor modifications to the concept plan would be considered following Phase 3 activities.

During August and September 2019 information was shared with commercial property owners, community league executives, and members of the public (area residents and commuters) through the following activities:

- + Meetings with Community League Executives, Terwillegar Riverbend Advisory Council (TRAC), and Commercial Property Owners – 7 meetings in August and September 2019
- + Public Information Session, St. Thomas More Parish (September 18, 2019) – 700 attendees
- + Feedback Form available at the event asking attendees if they had anything else to share about the project – over 130 comments received

This document summarizes Phase 3 activities, as well as comments received.

What We Presented in Phase 3: Recommended Concept Plan

The recommended expressway concept plan includes three lanes of travel plus one separated bus lane in each direction, intersection upgrades including new left and right turn lanes to improve traffic movements at all crossing roadways, and traffic signals that separate the buses from general traffic.

Additional highlights include:

- + Enhanced bus stops with longer bus pull outs, weather-protected shelters, connections to shared-use paths, lighting, and potentially additional amenities and features (e.g., real-time displays).
- + Northbound and southbound lanes separated to improve intersection operations at Haddow Drive
- + Shared-use path connections on both sides of arterials crossing Terwillegar Drive
- + Shared-use path connections into neighbourhoods
- + Shared-use path connection to new 142 Street pedestrian/cyclist bridge

How Phase 2 Input Was Used

The table below summarizes the feedback received during Phase 2 engagement (November–December 2018) and how it was considered as part of the Phase 3 planning and design process.

What We Heard	What Is Included in the Concept Plan
Vehicle Traffic	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Improve traffic flow + Construct improvements quickly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Improvements will increase roadway capacity and reduce congestion + Stage 1 funding approved and construction is anticipated for 2021/2022
Landscape Naturalization	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Desire for additional trees in open area and between road and shared-use path (SUP) + Feedback about safety (impact to sightlines), maintenance and species of tree planting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Added boulevard trees on crossing roadways + Assessing where and what types of trees to plant (will be confirmed during design)
142 Street Pedestrian/Cyclist Bridge	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Prioritize cost, safety and consistency with existing bridge over Terwillegar Drive + Desire for additional bridges over Terwillegar Drive at major intersections for safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + What We Heard will be considered as planning and design begins + Further engagement opportunities are planned over the next year + Additional bridge locations are not included in the scope of the project
Transit	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Mix of perspectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Bus lane will improve transit use and experience – Bus lane will be underused and increase traffic congestion and delays + Consider safety, access and amenities at bus stops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Included separated transit lanes with bus-specific traffic signals + Added additional upgrades to bus stops + Accessing the traffic and transit impacts using traffic modelling software + Anticipating two rapid bus services using Terwillegar Drive, following Stage 1 construction, made up of mostly electric buses
Shared-use Path (SUP)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + North of 40 Avenue, preference for shared-use path to go around Bulyea Heights neighbourhood (Brookview) + Provide access to commercial and residential areas and to existing SUPs + Consider safety of users in design (separate SUP from vehicles with space or barrier) + Minimize impacts to traffic flow + Some feel no SUP or bike route is necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Selected SUP location that goes around the Bulyea Heights neighbourhood (Brookview) + Added additional connections to commercial and residential areas, and existing paths + Included SUP crossings on both sides of all crossing roadways + SUP meets design standards and is separated by a 4 m or greater boulevard where possible, and may include railings in some areas

Phase 3 Results and Findings

During this project phase, the expressway concept was shared with the public and stakeholders, highlighting changes in the design from the draft plan. Comments were gathered at the stakeholder meetings and public event participants were invited to share their thoughts on the final configuration in one open-ended question.

The following are the common themes and issues across the different activities and audience groups. The compilation of opinions is not ranked or rated in order of importance.

General Support for Expressway

There is significant support for the expressway plan and appreciation for the work by the project team in developing a cost effective and timely solution for Terwillegar Drive.

General Support for Freeway

Some commenters remain in favour of a freeway solution for Terwillegar Drive, rejecting the expressway as a cheaper, short-term solution that will not be able to handle traffic resulting from future growth.

Building another Yellowhead

Increasing capacity along the corridor combined with traffic signals at every intersection is seen by some as "building another Yellowhead Trail", which will be prone to accidents and increase travel times.

Bottlenecks at the Interchanges of Terwillegar Drive with Anthony Henday Drive and Whitemud Drive

Changes planned to improve the interchanges of Terwillegar Drive at both Anthony Henday Drive and Whitemud Drive in Stages 2 and 3 of construction are perceived as being too late. Increasing capacity along the corridor, without changes to improve these two bottleneck interchange locations, is seen as irrelevant to improving traffic flow. There is a desire to construct the improvements to the interchanges first.

Preference for High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Lanes over Dedicated Transit Lanes

There is concern that the dedicated transit lanes will be underutilized and would be more effective in minimizing congestion as HOV lanes.

Support for Shared-use Path and 142 Street Pedestrian / Cyclist Bridge

There is general support for the shared-use path along the east side of the corridor and the connection across Whitemud Drive as a welcome addition to southwest Edmonton that will increase safety for all who travel along the corridor.

Other Feedback

Comments were also received on additional items that did not aggregate to overall themes like the numbers of responses above. This includes concerns about noise impacts along the corridor, support for Adaptive Traffic Signal Controls, belief that the bus lane medians are costly and unnecessary, and suggestions to minimize construction impacts.

Next Steps

The concept planning study is now complete. Only minor modifications to the concept plan are possible at this point in the design process.

Depending upon the final commitment of funds, the concept plan will move into the preliminary and detailed design phases.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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