Active Transportation Network Expansion Program

79 Street Route Fact Sheet

Fall 2026

Project Overview

Active transportation (walking, rolling, and bicycling) improves access, reduces vehicle trips and traffic congestion, and supports healthy minds and bodies.

The City of Edmonton is expanding the active transportation network with routes that are safe, accessible, and predictable for everyone, based on principles of connectivity, ridership potential, equity, safety, and feasibility.

As part of the Active Transportation Network Expansion Program, the City is advancing a north-south active transportation connection along **79 Street, from 76 Avenue to 101 Avenue**, in east-central Edmonton.

This connection provides direct active modes access to 101 Avenue, 95 Avenue, and 94 Avenue as well as 84 Avenue.

A report providing an update and recommended next steps for the Active Transportation Network Expansion Program was presented and discussed at Infrastructure Committee on August 26, 2026. Following Committee's discussion, it was confirmed that implementation for the planned program routes will proceed according to the original plan.

Network Connectivity

79 Street serves as a vital north-south connector in the city's east central area. The northern segment, spanning from 94 Avenue to 101 Avenue, will integrate with the existing 95 Avenue shared roadway going east. Between 90 Avenue and 94 Avenue, the route will tie directly into the new east-west route on 94 Avenue. To the south, the route will link seamlessly with the existing 90 Avenue shared pathway, while providing critical future connections to the new 84 Avenue route going west.

Design & Infrastructure: Protected Lanes & Shared Pathways

Across the communities of Forest Heights, Holyrood, Idylwylde, and King Edward Park, a combination of two-way protected bike lanes and a dedicated shared pathway was selected for the 79 Street district connector route (from 76 Avenue to 101 Avenue). These routes will be implemented as part of the Active Transportation Network Expansion Program, and this design adapts to existing roadway widths, traffic volumes, roadway designation, mature trees, and utilities to maximize year-round safety and comfort for all commuters.

The facility types along this corridor include:

- **Two-Way Protected Bike Lane**: On-street bike lanes separated from moving and parked vehicles by a physical barrier, running from 76 Avenue to 94 Avenue and from 95 Avenue to 101 Avenue.
- **Shared Pathway**: A wide, paved off-street path built on the west side of 79 Street from 94 Avenue to 95 Avenue, replacing the existing sidewalk directly in front of Holyrood School. This provides a safe, comfortable zone shared by students, pedestrians, and cyclists alike.

Operational Changes & Transit Integration

To safely integrate this new infrastructure, several permanent traffic and transit modifications will be implemented along the corridor:

- **One-Way Vehicle Conversion:** From 76 Avenue to 90 Avenue, 79 Street will convert to a **one-way southbound roadway** for motor vehicle traffic. Active mode users will maintain the ability to travel in both directions along the new destination cycling facility. Two-way motor vehicle traffic will remain unchanged from 90 Avenue to 101 Avenue.
- **Service Road Realignment:** On the east side of 79 Street, the existing 79 Street access to the south service road along Whyte Avenue will be permanently removed. New access to this service road will instead be provided directly from Whyte Avenue.
- **Turn Restrictions:** Northbound left turns will no longer be permitted from 79 Street at 91 Avenue, 92 Avenue, 93A Avenue, and 97 Avenue to ensure safety for users.
- **Transit Accommodations:** 79 Street remains an active ETS bus route. The project team worked alongside ETS planners to adjust and relocate certain bus stops using design elements like island platform bus stops to ensure smooth bus operations without canceling any routes.
- **ETS Route 522 Update:** Due to low ridership independent of this program, Route 522 was cancelled as of June 21. Note that existing bus stops are being fully protected within the new bike lane design so that service can easily be reintroduced in the future.

Parking Modifications

To accommodate the dedicated bike infrastructure and maintain safe sightlines, street parking will be optimized and restricted in key zones:

- **Spirit of Hope United Church Changes:** On the west side of 79 Street (south of Whyte Avenue), existing angle parking will change to parallel parking. To offset the reduced number of parking spots, additional angle parking will be added to the south side of the south service road along Whyte Avenue directly in front of the church.
- **Accessible Parking:** Existing actively used accessible parking zones along the route will be maintained.
- **24/7 No Parking Zones:** New 24-hour parking restrictions will be implemented, and street parking will be completely removed at the following locations along 79 Street:
    - Both sides of the roadway from 76 Avenue to the alley south of 82 Avenue.
    - East side of the roadway from the alley south of 82 Avenue to 89 Avenue.
    - Both sides of the roadway from 91 Avenue to 94 Avenue.
    - Both sides of the roadway from 95 Avenue to 101 Avenue.

Neighbourhood Infrastructure Context

The 79 Street route spans three mature neighbourhoods whose full neighbourhood renewal programs were completed in previous cycles: Holyrood (2005), King Edward Park (2012–2014), and Avonmore (2015–2016). All three neighbourhoods have since received microsurfacing treatments to preserve pavement life.

While no additional neighbourhood renewals are slated for these communities during the 2027–2030 city budget cycle, a major collector renewal is planned for 76 Avenue, which will link directly to the southern terminus of this new active transportation corridor.

Environmental Stewardship (Urban Forestry)

Designs were developed to minimize tree impacts. Trees will only be removed when there are no preservation options due to site constraints. Some tree removal is expected around the Holyrood school within the school site to accommodate the new shared pathway adjacent to the school. When removals occur, new trees will be planted to replace those removed, as part of Greener as We Grow, to diversify the tree canopy. Anticipated boulevard tree removal for the 79 Street route implementation will be restricted to areas with insurmountable site constraints, specifically those requiring the accommodation of accessible parking stalls or intersection modifications to ensure safety along the route.

Communications & Timelines

City Council approved the accelerated implementation of Active Transportation Network Expansion Program. Designs were developed based on technical and safety requirements, City policies, The City Plan,

targeted public engagement where needed, and previous engagement data collected during development of the Bike Plan. Because the approach to design decisions along the routes was guided by technical considerations, there were limited opportunities for residents to influence the outcomes.

The project team focused discussions on directly impacted parties who may experience potential changes to site access, land use and landscaping, and where their input can be integrated into the design. Following City Council's direction for focused engagement, the project team did not conduct broader public engagement. We understand that this approach may be frustrating for community members and might not align with everyone's hopes. Letters detailing operational and parking changes will be distributed to nearby residents and businesses in early spring 2027 following confirmation of project timelines.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why was the 79 Street location chosen and how were routes prioritized for this project?

Over 200 routes were originally reviewed based on the Bike Plan and the Bike Plan Implementation Guide. A prioritization framework was developed to evaluate routes based on core pillars: connectivity, ridership potential, equity, safety, and feasibility.

79 Street was selected because it fills in critical missing links in the network. The new route spanning across the Forest Heights, Holyrood, Idylwylde, and King Edward Park neighbourhoods, will provide seamless connectivity through east-central Edmonton.

The corridor acts as a vital regional anchor by tying into the existing 95 Avenue shared roadway going east, and the new east-west route on 94 Avenue. Additionally, it links directly to the existing 90 Avenue shared pathway, while paving the way for immediate access to the new 84 Avenue route going west, extending to 76 Avenue, creating a fully integrated grid for the east end network.

Is parking removal really necessary for route implementation? How will accessible stalls be accommodated?

In mature and developed neighbourhoods with narrower roads, some parking removal is necessary along portions of the new on-street protected routes to ensure there is enough physical space for the new physical barriers and lanes. All options were explored, and along these specific blocks of 79 Street, there is insufficient boulevard space to build an off-street shared pathway without losing mature trees or impacting utilities.

Decisions that impact parking are never taken lightly. Where on-street parking is being removed, alternative options—such as lane/rear-access parking and parking on nearby adjacent roadways—remain available.

Additionally, the City is deeply committed to maintaining accessibility. Designated curbside accessible parking zones that are actively used along 79 Street will be maintained.

How does the City justify the cost of bike lanes and why should tax dollars be spent on this? Why is the City funding bike lanes when there are other priorities?

The funding is part of approximately $5 billion from the 2023-2026 Capital Budget for transportation projects, including roads and bridges. The active transportation network expansion makes up just 2 per cent of the overall transportation infrastructure budget for this budget cycle.

I park my car on-street in front of my house, can I plug in my car with a block heater extension cord across the sidewalks or paths in the winter so my vehicle will start in the cold?

Extension cords across sidewalks are not permitted because they pose an obstruction for pedestrians and other sidewalk users, and they can impede wheelchairs and strollers. Peace officers may receive public complaints and attend to confirm if there is an obstruction present in the case of extension cords across the sidewalk, and can provide a warning or a fine for the obstruction.

Given the number of multi-family infill developments in the Holyrood, King Edward Park, Avonmore and Idylwylde neighbourhoods and the anticipated increased need for parking, how can parking removal for the new route be justified?

The City recognizes public curbside parking is an important and valued component of our streets as many Edmontonians rely on it every day. When the new Zoning Bylaw came into effect in 2024, it largely carried over the same parking provisions established in the previous Zoning Bylaw, including Open Option Parking. A goal of the new Bylaw was to provide greater development opportunities across the city including enabling higher densities on residential sites to provide a greater diversity of housing options in both redeveloping and developing areas.

To support the redesign of the Residential Parking Program, targeted public engagement will occur through the Curbside and Parking Program in late 2026. This engagement aims to better understand how parking demand is changing in areas experiencing significant growth and densification. This work will gather resident and visitor input alongside data to assess cumulative impacts and identify where pressures are most acute. Findings will inform future program updates, ensuring decisions reflect current conditions and emerging needs as development continues. To learn more about the Residential Parking Program, and for updates on any current engagement opportunities, please visit: https://www.edmonton.ca/transportation/driving_carpooling/residential-parking

Will traffic flow and emergency services be impacted along 79 Street? Won't the change to one-way adversely impact access for emergency services vehicles?

To safely accommodate the new active transportation infrastructure, traffic patterns will change along the corridor. The most significant update is between 76 Avenue and 90 Avenue, where 79 Street will convert to a **one-way southbound roadway** for motor vehicle traffic (while active mode users can travel in both directions along the new route). Two-way motor vehicle traffic will be maintained from 90 Avenue to 101 Avenue, though northbound left turns will be restricted at 91, 92, 93, and 97 Avenues to prevent turning conflicts across the bike lanes. Additionally, the 79 Street access point to the south service road along Whyte Avenue will be removed, with new access rerouted directly from Whyte Avenue.

All design decisions, including these operational updates and the integration of ETS bus stops, have been thoroughly reviewed to ensure functional routes for emergency vehicles and to maintain local emergency access standards across all four surrounding neighbourhoods.

Emergency services, such as Edmonton Fire Rescue Services, have been key players in the design review process. This has ensured accommodation of emergency vehicles in all designs. Accommodating emergency services is a key factor in how the City of Edmonton designs its roads, including those with active transportation infrastructure. In all cases, designs ensure functional routes for emergency vehicles that meet local emergency access design standards. The design integrates features such as flexible posts and mountable barriers to bypass gridlock and navigate the corridor. In addition, the two-way bike lanes are wide enough to allow emergency vehicles to use these to bypass obstacles, if required.

Who will be responsible for snow clearing along the new 79 Street route?

The City of Edmonton is responsible for snow clearing along the new infrastructure, with maintenance schedules structured to encourage safe, all-season use:

- **Two-Way Protected Bike Lanes (76 to 94 Ave & 95 to 101 Ave):** These segments are designated for addition to the Priority 1 snow clearing network. This means they will be cleared to bare pavement within 24 hours following the end of a snowfall event.
- **3-Metre Shared Pathway (94 to 95 Ave in front of Holyrood School):** This off-street path will be added to the Priority 2 snow clearing network, ensuring it is fully cleared within 72 hours after

a snowfall event concludes to maintain a safe, accessible route for students and pedestrians.

I rarely see people biking, why implement active transportation infrastructure in my neighbourhood? Where can I see the data to help this make sense?

Active transportation improves access for Edmontonians, reduces vehicle trips and traffic congestion for people that still need to drive, and supports healthy minds and bodies. The active transportation network gives people of all ages and abilities more choice in how they move around the city, whether cycling, walking, running or rolling. Providing a safe, comfortable and connected active transportation network is one of the ways we're working to support safe and efficient travel for all Edmontonians, no matter how they travel. The expansion of the active transportation network will not only support Edmontonians today, but will continue to support generations to come as we grow to a vibrant and climate resilient city of two million people.

This type of infrastructure provides a safe environment for people who ride bikes and other active modes to be separated from other modes of transportation, which encourages more cycling. For example, the increase for annual downtown bicycle counts has increased by more than 15 per cent from 2022 to 2024.

For more information on the cycling usage data, please visit: YEG Cycle Counters

The Government of Alberta has recently discussed potential legislation surrounding bike lanes within cities. Will the City be removing the bike lanes based on these recent comments?

The City is aware of the provincial government's intent to introduce legislation regarding municipal bike lanes, which is anticipated to be tabled Fall 2026. City Administration is working closely with the provincial government to understand the specifics of the anticipated legislation.

At this time, there is no requirement for the removal of existing infrastructure or changes to current plans.

Related Links

Active Transportation Network Wayfinding

Edmonton Bike Plan

Mobility System

Cycling in Edmonton

The City Plan

For more information please visit
edmonton.ca/**ActiveTransportation**