



WHYTE AVENUE COMMERCIAL AREA LAND USE STUDY

June 8, 2018

Edmonton





EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Whyte Avenue commercial area has been celebrated for its unique heritage, character and image and represents a key corridor where growth needs to be managed and positive change leveraged to sustain its long-term success. In 2016, Administration initiated the planWhyte land use study in consideration of ongoing development pressure, sensitivity of the area's existing heritage and character, and assessment of the Strathcona Area Redevelopment Plan. The goal of the study was to understand how the area's heritage, character and livability could be further strengthened while exploring opportunities for additional development over the next 20-25 years.

The planWhyte land use study focuses on the Whyte Avenue commercial area (sub-area 5) of the Strathcona Area Redevelopment Plan. Technical analysis examined the commercial area in terms of its heritage, land use, urban design, transportation, and future development opportunities. Public engagement provided input from the surrounding community using a variety of methods and events. This was used to test, adapt and further refine ideas that would culminate into the final vision, set of guiding principles, concept, and key recommendations proposed by this study.

The planWhyte land use study proposes a series of recommendations to strengthen the heritage and character of the corridor, manage future growth to benefit community and local business, and revitalize the heart of Old Strathcona as one of Edmonton's premiere arts, culture and tourism destinations. The recommendations are based on three phases of public engagement, a technical assessment and support for a new development concept. The recommendations are organized into three strategic areas:

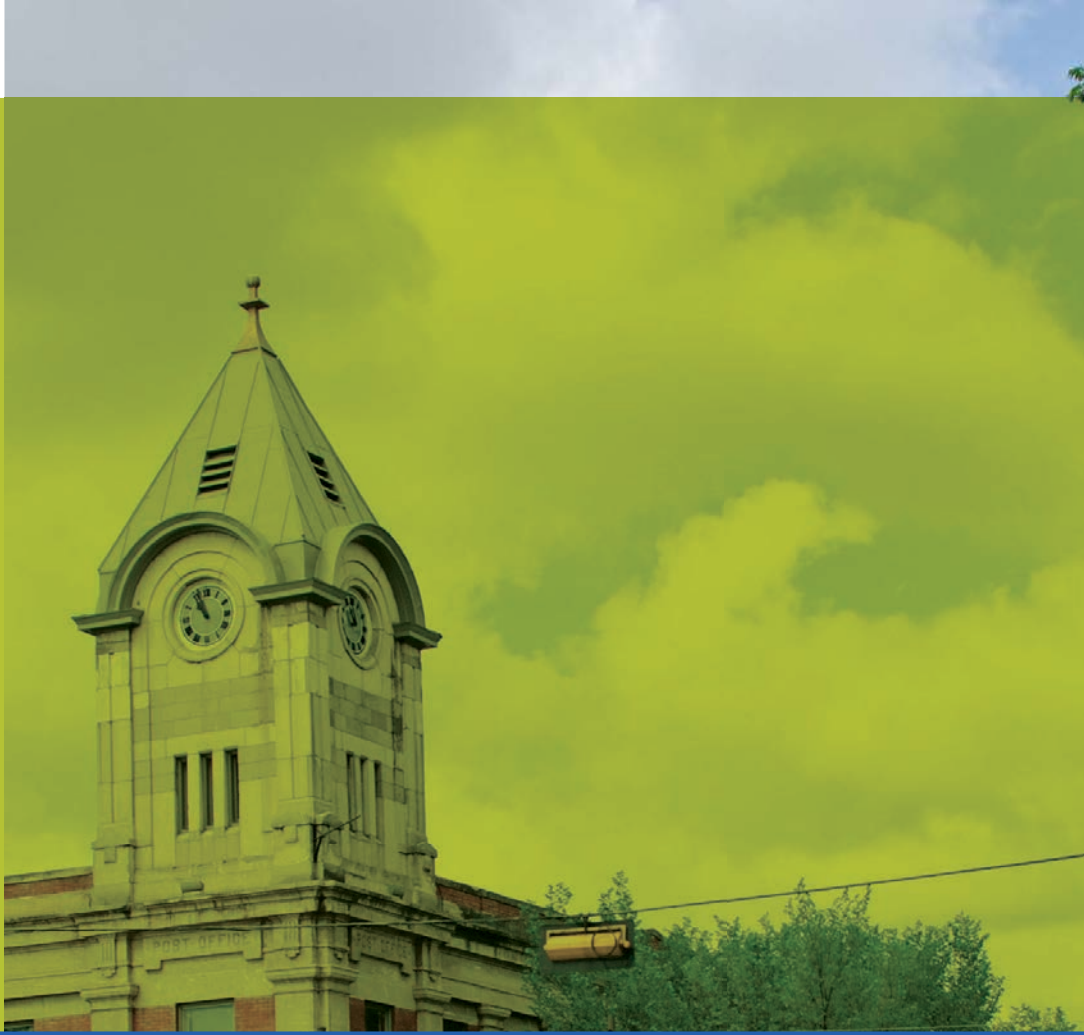
- Amendments to the Strathcona Area Redevelopment Plan
- Public Places Plan for Old Strathcona, and
- Transportation Safety and Operational Considerations

Over time, the implementation of the ideas and recommendations are expected to preserve the physical and heritage character of Whyte Avenue, provide more housing choice, support local business, strengthen community events and festivals, and enhance the long-term livability and success of the Whyte Avenue commercial area.



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INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

The Whyte Avenue commercial area has been celebrated for its unique heritage, character and image and represents a key corridor where growth needs to be managed and positive change leveraged to sustain its long-term success.

At a current population of 932,546, the City of Edmonton is the fastest growing major city in Canada. This growth presents both opportunities and risks relative to the future prosperity, attractiveness and livability of Edmonton's older communities such as the Old Strathcona area and Whyte Avenue.

Located primarily within the Strathcona neighbourhood, the Whyte Avenue commercial area has been celebrated for its unique heritage, character and image for decades. Since the late 1970s, many residents, community and business leaders have worked together to help shape and steward this important corridor into the premiere business and tourism area it is known for today. In 2007, the Province of Alberta designated a portion of Old Strathcona from 85 Avenue south to 80 Avenue and from 102 Street west to 106 Street as one of only two Provincial Historic Areas in the province. This designation recognizes Old Strathcona's architectural richness, integrity of historic buildings, and pre-World War One commercial and social development of one of Alberta's most significant early communities. As such, the Whyte Avenue commercial area corridor represents a key area where growth needs to be managed and positive change leveraged to sustain its long-term success.

The Whyte Avenue commercial corridor has seen increased interest in the area over time that has led to changes in local businesses, housing, community events, increased congestion (i.e. both traffic and pedestrian), concerns over safety and further development and intensification pressure. This has raised concerns among nearby residents, surrounding communities, planning and policy questions regarding the future of the corridor and the Strathcona Area Redevelopment Plan (ARP) including:

- Is the current direction of the Strathcona ARP approved by City Council in 1998 still valid in protecting the commercial area?
- Does the ARP need to be updated to accommodate long-term growth, additional development potential and encourage private investment in the area?

- Are planning applications that seek additional development potential over that reflected in the ARP appropriate?

Administration began by undertaking a series of scoping activities in late 2015. On February 2, 2016, Administration presented its Council report CR_3171 entitled 'Old Strathcona Heritage - Commercial Area' to Executive Committee for information. As part of this work, Administration provided:

- An update to preliminary scoping work undertaken by Administration regarding planning responses to growing development pressure in the the Whyte Avenue area, as initially outlined in the October 6, 2015, Sustainable Development report CR_2822; and
- A description of focus (i.e. Whyte Avenue commercial area) and limited planning work that Administration would conduct to address development pressure within the study area.

Activities used to inform Council report CR_3171 involved:

- Seven (7) focus group meetings held with key community and industry stakeholders including the Old Strathcona Business Association, Old Strathcona Area Community Council, Old Strathcona Foundation, Edmonton Historical Board, Alberta Culture and Tourism, and Industry representatives with holdings in the area;
- Online Edmonton Insight Survey which gathered feedback from 766 Edmontonians; and
- Research on six (6) best practice case studies from across Canada.

Focus group discussions provided valuable insights that included:

- Concern over higher development intensity within the commercial area due to shadowing, visual barrier and loss of characteristic views within the corridor.
- Receptiveness of some stakeholders to greater heights and larger stores outside the core heritage commercial area.
- Importance of clear design guidelines to maintain the area's character.
- Concern over ongoing increasing property taxes, rents, tenant relocations and vacancy rates along Whyte Avenue.

- Opportunity to strengthen the historic area, character and vibrancy through high quality development.
- Demand for greater development opportunity within Whyte Avenue area.

The online Edmonton Insight Survey received responses from 766 citizens. This survey helped highlight the top reasons why people visit Whyte Avenue (i.e. eating/drinking, Farmers Market, shopping) and what its most important features are (i.e. mix of activities, walkability, and independent businesses). People were also asked about the level of change they thought was appropriate for properties within the Old Strathcona Provincial Historic Area and those located on and off Whyte Avenue.

A majority supported 'no change' from the existing zoning (or up to 4 storeys allowed) within the Old Strathcona Provincial Historic Area. On Whyte Avenue itself, responses were almost equal in support of 'no change' (at 4 storeys) and 'some change' (up to 6 storeys allowed). Lastly, for the area off Whyte Avenue, respondents generally supported 'some change' up to 6 storeys with a smaller proportion supporting 'significant change' up to 20 storeys.

To better understand how to balance heritage conservation and development, best practices from six other cities were reviewed included Winnipeg (Exchange District), Vancouver (GasTown), Calgary (Stephen Avenue), Halifax (Barrington Street), St. John's (Water Street), Victoria (Downtown). Keys to successful management of heritage resources included:

- Clear guidance when there are development pressures
- Clear design guidelines
- Context sensitive regulations
- Funding and conservation programs
- Strong political will and direction

The findings from stakeholder discussions, online survey, and Canadian case studies suggested that while the Strathcona Area Redevelopment Plan provides robust direction for the preservation of heritage, it also constrains new development from contributing to the area.

PLAN WHYTE STUDY

Administration proposed that it revisit specific aspects of the plan without amending the the entire Strathcona Area Redevelopment Plan. On February 2, 2016, City Council's Executive Committee received Administration's report CR_3171 for information and endorsed its proposal to prepare a land use study (i.e. planWhyte) for the Whyte Avenue corridor.

In anticipation of two large scale redevelopment projects proposed by industry at this time, City Council's Executive Committee members also asked Administration to process land development applications concurrently with the preparation of the planWhyte study. The expectation was that Administration would evaluate proposals with respect to existing policies and guidelines and in consideration of planWhyte's evolving draft recommendations. City Council decisions regarding development proposals would subsequently inform planWhyte.

GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

The goal of the planWhyte study was to better understand how the area's heritage, character and livability can be further strengthened while exploring opportunities for additional development over the next 20-25 years. To achieve this, heritage, land use, urban design, transportation, and development opportunities (outside the core heritage commercial area) were examined in order to develop a design vision, concept and set of recommendations for the long-term evolution of Whyte Avenue that will:

- Strengthen preservation of heritage in the commercial area;
- Identify potential opportunities for additional development outside the core heritage commercial area;
- Enhance the quality of urban design within the Whyte Avenue area; and
- Lead to amendments to the Strathcona ARP.

Specific objectives of the study were to:

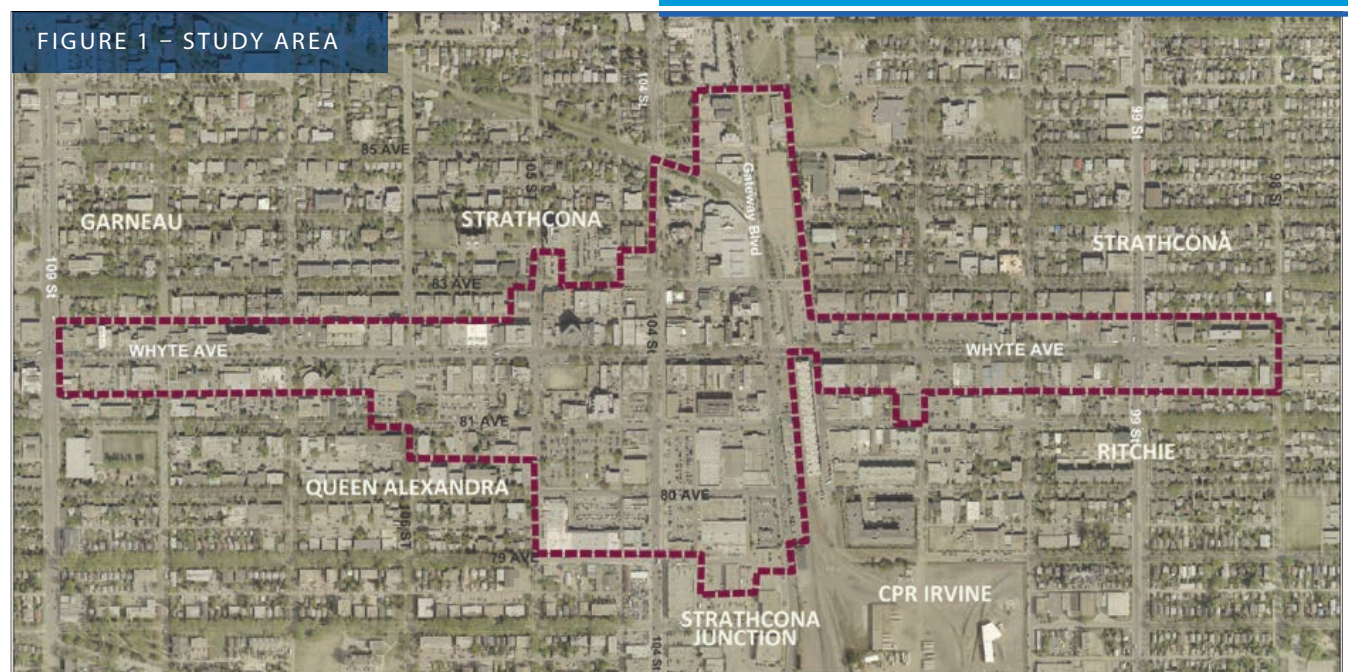
- Assess the context of the planning area (e.g. existing land use policies, zoning regulations, development patterns, design, infrastructure adequacy, market economics);
- Explore opportunities for additional development outside the core heritage commercial area supported by technical study and relevant strategic city policy;
- Investigate potential impacts of additional development on heritage buildings and local area businesses;
- Understand the implications of various alternatives outside the core heritage commercial area in order to better understand the potential trade-offs of decisions affecting the overall corridor (sub-area 5 of the Strathcona Area Redevelopment Plan);
- Strengthen preservation of heritage in the commercial area;
- Develop a design framework to ensure high quality design within the study area;
- Develop recommendations that will help guide and strengthen the Whyte Avenue corridor area

STUDY AREA

The planWhyte study applies to sub-area 5 of the Strathcona ARP, referred to as the 'Whyte Avenue Commercial Area'. The area is approximately 48 hectares or 21 city blocks in size and is generally bounded by 109 Street, 86 Avenue, 99 Street, and 79 Avenue (see Figure 1 - Study Area). Properties deemed to significantly affect the future planning and development of this corridor were further added, including:

- City owned lands located at 8235 Gateway Boulevard and 11 Tommy Banks Way (currently leased to the Farmers Market for parking); and
- Private properties located at 8108-101 Street and 10110-81 Avenue which include the A. Minchau Blacksmith Shop, which is listed on the Inventory of Historic Resources in Edmonton.

The area is mostly comprised of land within the Strathcona and Queen Alexandra neighbourhoods with small portions of Garneau, and Ritchie also included. The area connects to the North Saskatchewan River Valley system to the north and two industrial areas to the south (CPR Irvine, Strathcona Junction) with Mill Creek Ravine further east. Whyte Avenue is designated as an arterial roadway, serves as a major 'connector' between these neighbourhoods and provides a major east-west through-route function south of the North Saskatchewan River and downtown. This roadway is well travelled by vehicles and buses.



PREPARATION

This work was led by City Administration, supported by technical experts and consultation with community stakeholders. It was in response to City Council Public Hearing decisions (2016-2017), and integrated with the Centre LRT Study (2017-2020). The study was organized into four (4) phases:


- Phase 1: Gathering Information, Exploring Opportunities and Constraints (February - June 2016).
- Phase 2: Development and Evaluation of Alternatives (July - September 2016).
- Phase 3: Draft Study Concept and Recommendations (October 2016 - December 2017).
- Phase 4: Final Study Report (December 2017 - July 2018).

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

An effective public engagement program involving citizens and other key internal and community stakeholders has been essential to the planWhyte study process, findings and recommendations. Public engagement provided opportunity to invite Edmontonians to contribute ideas and feedback to help shape the future of Whyte Avenue. Engagement activities were open and varied to collect a diversity of information, knowledge and perspectives. This was critical as it sparked discussion, brought forward concerns (existing and future), expectations and ideas necessary to inform the study. Public events and online opportunities allowed residents, communities, businesses and industry representatives to participate and provide their input on the future of the corridor. Engagement included:

- Stakeholder meetings, discourse, information sharing (November 2015 to present)
- City Council Public Hearing Decision on Bylaws 17620 and 17621 and (April 2016)
- Heritage walking tour (June 2016)
- Public Open House Workshop #1 (June 2016)
- Whyte Avenue pop-up events (August 2016)
- Public Open House Workshop #2 (September 2016)
- Edmonton Insight Surveys (June, July, October 2016; December 2017)
- City Council Public Hearing Decision on Bylaws 17846, 17847 and 17848 (March 2017)
- Public Open House Review #1 (June 2017)
- Integration with Centre LRT Study (June 2017 to present)
- Edmonton Design Committee - Informal Meeting (November 2017)
- Public Open House Final Review (November 2017)
- Edmonton Design Committee - Formal Meeting (June 2018)
- Urban Planning Committee (August 2018)





STUDY CONTEXT



The Old Strathcona area has been celebrated and valued for decades for its unique commercial historic character. A range of actions have been taken to revitalize the area over time, including the purchase, restoration and sale of key properties in Old Strathcona's commercial core. Some of these properties include the Princess Theatre, the Dominion Hotel and the Hulbert Block which reflect the area's low scale 1890-1920 building styles.

In 1993 Edmonton's Inventory of Historic Resources further recognized the heritage nature of Old Strathcona and in 1998, City Council adopted the Strathcona Area Redevelopment Plan (ARP). Key policy directions of the plan are to retain the historic character of the core commercial area, and to manage the compatibility of redevelopment surrounding this core area in part by limiting building heights to four storeys.

In 2007 the Province of Alberta designated Old Strathcona as one of only two Provincial Historic Areas. The area is recognized for its architectural richness and integrity of historic buildings that represent pre-World War One commercial and social development of one of Alberta's most significant early communities. The area encompasses approximately 5 city blocks ranging from 85 Avenue south to 80 Avenue and from 102 Street west to 106 Street.

Emphasis on preserving Old Strathcona's heritage resources and character have helped shaped the area into a premiere business and tourism area serving as a major destination for Edmonton residents and visitors and contributing significantly to the area's success. Pressure to redevelop existing properties and lands within and surrounding the core heritage commercial area followed with an increasing number of proposals challenging the Strathcona Area Redevelopment Plan (ARP) originally adopted in 1998.

In response to this Administration undertook a series of activities in late 2015 to determine the effectiveness of the existing Strathcona ARP, its impact on heritage preservation and prospect for future development opportunities. These activities included meetings with key stakeholders and focus groups, an online survey, and review of case studies. Findings indicated that while the Strathcona ARP encourages robust heritage preservation, it also constrains new opportunities for development and intensification.

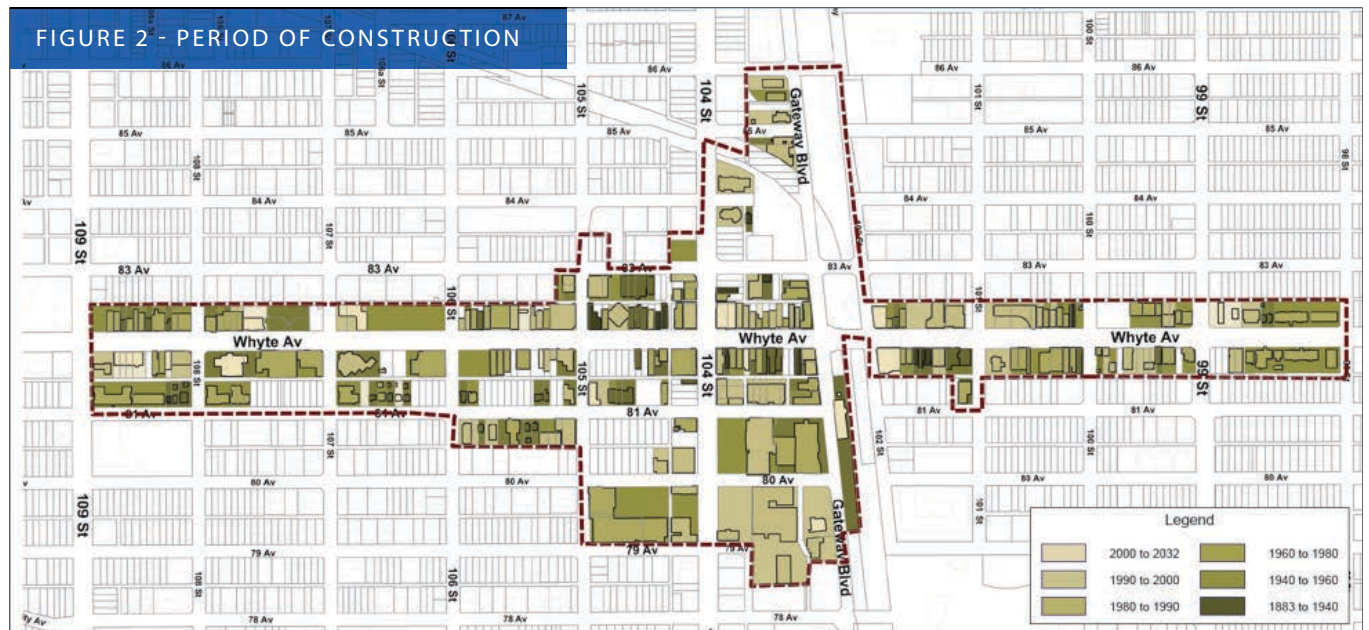
On February 2, 2016, Executive Committee received report CR_3171 (Old Strathcona Heritage - Commercial Area) for information. The report summarized scoping work that Administration had done and intended to further undertake as a focused planning study for a portion of the Strathcona ARP area. In response Executive Committee directed Administration to process land development applications concurrently with the preparation of the land use study in consideration of recent development proposals and sensitivity of the area's heritage and character. The expectation was that Administration would evaluate proposals with respect to existing policies and guidelines and in consideration of study findings and draft recommendations. In like manner, City Council decisions regarding development proposals would necessarily inform planWhyte policies.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

The planWhyte study area has a rich main street history, unique character and sense of place. Located primarily in the Strathcona and Queen Alexandra neighbourhoods, development first began with the arrival of the Calgary and Edmonton Railway line in 1891. Early development centred on Whyte (82) Avenue and comprised commercial, cultural and public buildings that helped settle the South Edmonton area and its eventual incorporation in 1907 as the Town of Strathcona. Influential buildings included the Canadian Pacific Railway Station, Strathcona Hotel, Gainers Block, Orange Hall, Douglas Block, South Side Post Office, and Princess Theatre.

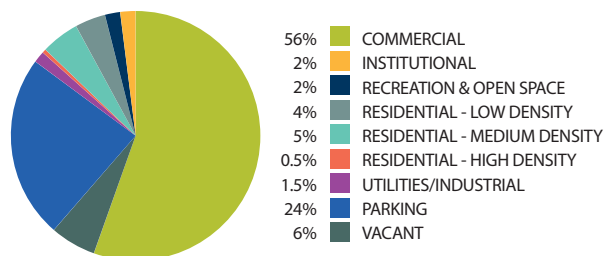
During the early 1900s Strathcona thrived as an independent government, cultural, commercial and transportation centre. However, despite its early growth and success, Strathcona could not outpace the commercial development of Edmonton and in 1912 was amalgamated. This triggered both an economic slowdown and shift of business and investment north across the river.



LAND USE PATTERN

The planWhyte study area consists of a traditional main street set within a gridded street layout. Smaller blocks provide pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles a high level of access, connectivity and business opportunity within the corridor. Uses include commercial, retail, institutional, residential, park and open space, vehicle parking and vacant lands (see Figure 3 - Land Use Distribution).

FIGURE 3 - LAND USE DISTRIBUTION



Commercial uses dominate the study area. The corridor provides a range of services to the surrounding neighbourhoods of Strathcona, Garneau, Queen Alexandra, Ritchie, Strathcona Junction, and CPR Irvine. Due to the early commercial retail development, it is more compact, pedestrian oriented and located between 102 and 106 Streets. Buildings are generally 2 to 3 storeys in height, front directly onto Whyte Avenue and designed to a human scale.

Outside this core heritage commercial area, retail is more mixed and less fine-grained. In cases where auto-oriented development sites exist, these provide vehicle access/ egress and parking directly off Whyte Avenue interrupting the pedestrian main street shopping experience. A mix of surface parking lots located North and South of Whyte Avenue provide off-street parking opportunities serving local retail, restaurant, office, residential, entertainment and festival activities.

Low and medium density residential housing are located within the study area. Larger concentrations of 3 and 4 storey walk-up apartments built in the 1960s and 1970s can be found within a block or two off of Whyte Avenue transitioning down to single-family housing interspersed outside the corridor.

Given the historical development pattern of Whyte Avenue as a commercial main street, there is very little park or open space within this area with the exception of Dr. Wilbert McIntyre Park located on the northeast corner of Calgary Trail (104 Street) and 83 Avenue. Surrounding the park are a number of institutional and cultural uses. These are concentrated north of Whyte Avenue between Gateway Boulevard (103 Street) and Calgary Trail (104 Street). Key civic uses include the Old Strathcona Farmers Market, the Strathcona Branch of the Edmonton Public Libraries, a number of local theatre companies such as the Westbury, Backstage, Varscona, Fringe Theatre Adventure, Old Strathcona Performing Arts Centre and the Edmonton Radial Railway Society, Strathcona Streetcar Barn and Museum. St. Anthony's Church and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints are located on Whyte Avenue at 107 and 108 Streets respectively.

A number of surface parking lots, vacant lands or retail spaces can be found within the study area. These offer a number of potential opportunities for redevelopment and or intensification over time whether short or long term as seen with recent rezonings (e.g. Raymond Block, The Mezzo, South Park on Whyte).



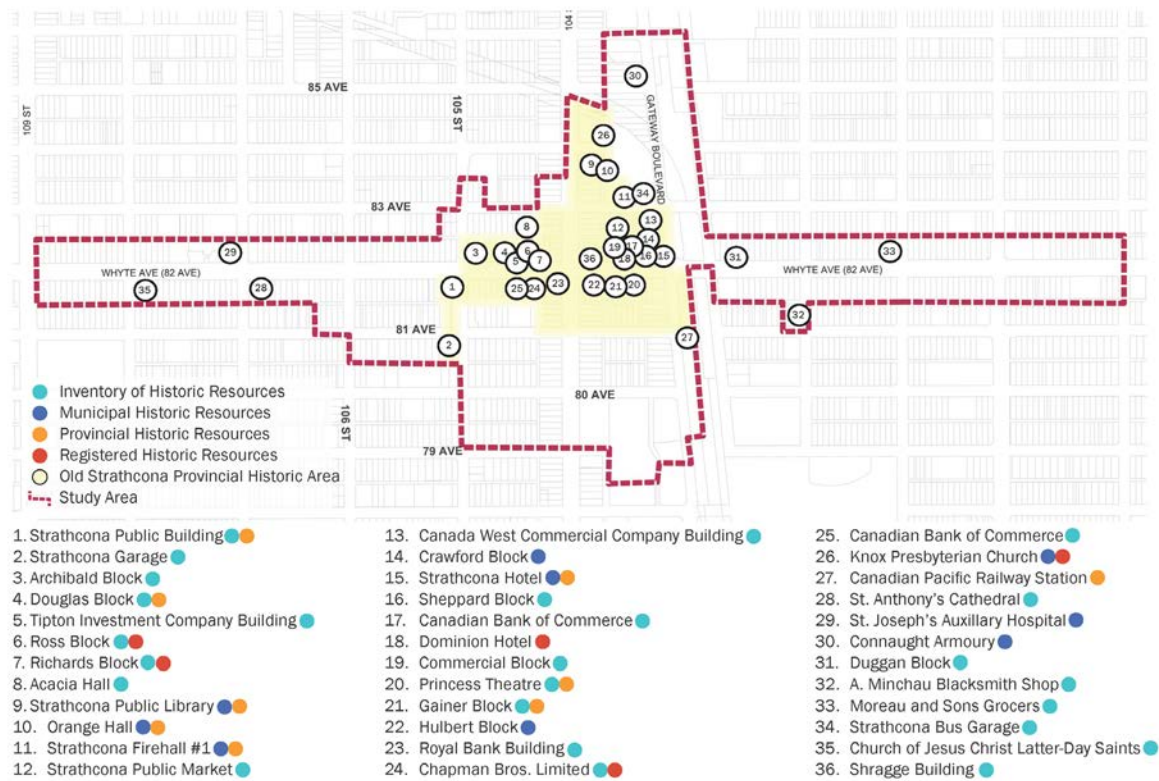
URBAN DESIGN AND THE BUILT FORM

HERITAGE CHARACTER

As one of Edmonton’s oldest communities, the built heritage of Old Strathcona is one of its greatest assets. As the community developed from the early 1890s with a concentration of government and commercial buildings in the core area, a typical character of height and scale of buildings was established. Prior to 1903, this character was largely in the form of one or two-storey wood frame buildings. After 1903, changes in building codes required non-combustible construction, which resulted in larger scale brick buildings. This character, represented today by a combination of wood and brick buildings that are one to three storeys in height, built to the front property line, and with narrow frontages, remains largely intact today within the commercial area. In 2007, the Province formally designated a portion of Old Strathcona as a Provincial Historic Area (see Figure 4 - Provincial and Civic Historically Significant Buildings) for its enduring heritage value and architecture from the early railway and pre-World War One period.



FIGURE 4 - PROVINCIAL AND CIVIC HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT BUILDINGS



This variety of architecture and building form continues to shape the Whyte Avenue corridor today in terms of its image, identity and urban design. A number of character defining elements are identified within the Old Strathcona area and include:

- Dominant street-grid network
- Prominent axis and roadway widths of Whyte Avenue and 104 Street
- Examples of early wood-frame architecture (e.g. Strathcona Hotel)
- Examples of early brick building structures (e.g. Gainer Block)
- Concentration of commercial businesses along the Whyte Avenue corridor between 103 and 105 Streets
- Building scale typically three storeys or less fronting onto Whyte Avenue
- Buildings built to zero-lot (i.e. property) line fronting onto Whyte Avenue
- Use of traditional materials (e.g. painted wood, red/orange brick, stone)
- Building facades articulated with recessed entries, storefront windows, sign band area, balanced arrangement of upper windows, and human scaled signage
- Expression of classical, Queen Anne and Edwardian architectural styles

STREET-WIDTH TO BUILDING HEIGHT RATIO

Buildings are the primary feature of urban areas that create a sense of definition and enclosure to a street. When determining building height, a common approach is to consider the width of the street a building will frame. The existing Whyte Avenue corridor by comparison represents a low street-width to building height ratio with its wide right of way (approximately 30 metres) and lower scale buildings (7 to 15 metres).

BUILDING FORM AND MASS

Form and mass help define the context and character of a street as well as the pedestrian experience. A building's form contributes to the architectural character at the neighbourhood level, creates landmarks, and contributes to the image and identity of a street and community. Building mass affects how people near the building experience both the building and the environment. Whyte Avenue's existing built form is typically small, with detailed buildings reflective of Strathcona's early railroad community heritage. Low scale, 1890s - 1920s boom-town architecture followed by subsequent construction has produced a 2 - 3 storey streetwall comprised of small storefronts. These qualities help to establish a comfortable human scale based upon interesting streets with multiple entrances, smaller storefronts, a consistent street wall, sense of enclosure, and contribution to neighbourhood identity.

BUILDING TRANSITION

Building transitions add visual coherence to buildings of different heights within a neighbourhood and address micro-level shadowing and overlook issues. Early examples of building transition can be found within the plan Whyte study area where 1, 2, and 3 storey brick buildings establish a consistent street-wall and more modern buildings use stepbacks to create a more human-scale.

SUN-SHADOW ANALYSIS

Sun-Shadow analysis considers the amount of sun and daylight access buildings allow (or limit) on nearby buildings, the public realm (sidewalks and streets) and public and private open space. Typically, shadows are measured at the spring (March 21) and autumnal equinox (September 21), when shadows are midway through a period of contraction or lengthening respectively.

Sun-Shadow studies are particularly important along main streets that are oriented east - west, as in the case of Whyte Avenue. This is because uses on the north side of the street could become shadowed by taller development on the south.

Current shadowing along Whyte Avenue's north sidewalk is minimal. The existing maximum height (with certain exceptions) for new development under existing CB2 zoning along Whyte Avenue is 14.5 metres and the Historical Commercial DC1 Provision is 15 metres. Figure 5 - Shadow of 14.5 metre Building on Whyte Avenue during Equinox at Solar Noon, illustrates existing maximum height allowance of approximately 4 storeys. Sunlight is prolonged along the north side of Whyte Avenue encouraging outdoor activity (e.g. shopping, strolling, visiting) and supports Edmonton's Winter City Strategy.

WIND

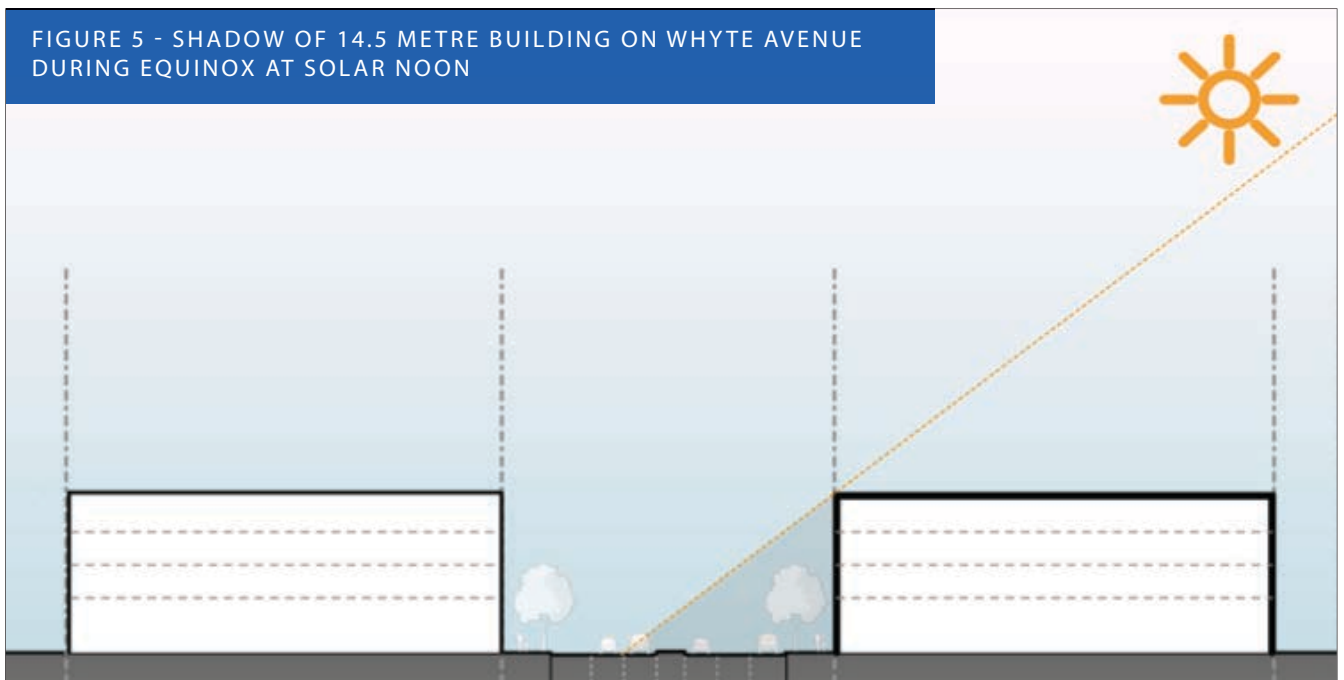
Buildings should not negatively affect the environmental conditions of the public realm. This is particularly important for tall buildings, which tend to create their own microclimates, both by overshadowing large areas and by channelling strong winds to ground level. Significant wind impacts include winter winds (prevailing north-westerly winds), downdrafts, wind channeling and corner acceleration.

The existing built form of in the planWhyte study area is varied, with height typically between 1 - 4 storeys. A variety of heights along a block length reduces ground-level wind speeds. The current conditions on Whyte Avenue are typically suitable for standing or sitting in both the summer and winter seasons, which benefits year-round patios and gathering spaces.

VIEWS

The amount of sky visible from the public realm contributes to the character of a street. The effect of significantly reduced sky views is a 'street canyon' condition. Sky view is influenced by both building mass and height. The Whyte Avenue corridor has a large percentage of sky view which is caused by both narrow and low built form.

FIGURE 5 - SHADOW OF 14.5 METRE BUILDING ON WHYTE AVENUE DURING EQUINOX AT SOLAR NOON



ECONOMIC AND MARKET

A market study was undertaken for the planWhyte study area to help provide a foundation on which strategic decisions around land use planning could be taken. It explored opportunities that exist today and what opportunities may exist over the next 25 years pertaining to residential, commercial, retail and office development within the study area. The study also examined prospects for additional new development primarily (but not exclusively) outside of the Whyte Avenue commercial area, that would at once support and strengthen the area's character, livability and heritage. The Market study also examined factors that contribute to great commercial shopping streets and districts in relation to the Whyte Avenue corridor. These findings are summarized below and based on discussions with key stakeholders, City staff, interviews, literature review and site visits to the area.

MARKET SPATIAL QUALITIES

- 105th to 109th Street along Whyte is well-anchored (e.g. Safeway, Chapters), and well proportioned.
- 102nd to 105th Street is a very strong pedestrian environment with excellent heritage building stock and is well anchored by Chapters and the new organic food mart.
- Known redevelopment projects (e.g. Raymond Block, South Park) will add vitality and increased modern retail/business spaces at grade.
- Larger properties in the planWhyte South Core area offer greater ease of development for higher density uses.
- The planWhyte study area is weakest in terms of spatial quality between 102nd and 98th Streets (roughly 730 metres in length), given its inconsistent streetscape and generally lower building quality (dated structures in need of upgrading).

PARKING, MOBILITY AND WAYFINDING

- Whyte Avenue's stated future as a higher frequency transit network has very positive implications for future movement between the University to the west and Bonnie Doon to the east – opportunities to build nodes in support of this network/frequency expansion, regardless of the technology (e.g. BRT, LRT).
- Study area represents an excellent location for exploration of car share programs and related parking capacity.

- Overall, access to parking within the study area is strong, particularly for access to businesses within the planWhyte core area.
- Poor lighting on parallel streets and alleys to Whyte Avenue creates safety issues after hours, which have grown more pronounced in recent years.
- Lack of cohesion in tenant mix by sub-area, coupled with a lack of wayfinding signage makes understanding the Whyte Avenue mix of businesses and attractions difficult for visitors.
- From a pedestrian/cyclist standpoint, Whyte Avenue, while one of the city's premiere walkable districts, the area has a lot of space devoted to automobile flows (70% of physical space).

SAFETY & SECURITY

- Whyte Avenue is itself relatively well lit and comfortable to navigate during the day and evening.
- Increased personal and property crime within the last year, a function of the economic downturn and displacement of individuals surrounding the Ice District, among other factors.
- Lack of visible police presence along Whyte Avenue viewed as an issue, particularly for managing after-hours activities.
- High automobile traffic volumes coupled with on-street parking and extent of pedestrians and cyclists creates conflicts.

CLEANLINESS, NOISE, PEDESTRIAN COMFORT

- Large number of trash bins helps keep streets relatively clean.
- Parking-replacement patio program a success to date – effectively reclaiming auto-oriented space for pedestrian enjoyment and enhancing existing business performance.
- Very loud automotive (including truck and motorcycle) traffic is negatively impacting patrons' enjoyment of outdoor patios along Whyte Avenue, and has been a stated issue for patrons and visitors to both of the existing boutique hotels.
- Insufficient extent of street furniture, particularly seating.

TOURISM & FESTIVAL ATTRACTION

- Strong visitor volumes, locally, regionally and from out of province.
- Significant proportion of restaurant food & beverage uses catering to this festival going crowd supports night-time economy in the planWhyte study area.
- Alleyways and sidewalks are not currently able to accommodate the large crowds generated by highly successful and positive events like the Fringe Festival. This forces movement along poorly lit alleys or high traffic auto corridor.

BUSINESS PERFORMANCE, RENTAL RATES & REDEVELOPMENT SITES

- Decent balance between convenience, comparison, service, and arts/entertainment uses throughout the study area.
- Particularly strong overall proportion in the restaurant food & beverage category, though could be improved.
- Good mix of independent to chain businesses (at 80:20 ratio).
- Despite strong overall balance of category representation, slight overrepresentation in certain personal service categories (e.g. nail and hair salons).
- Relative lack of higher quality full-service restaurants and overrepresentation of bars/pubs catering to a younger, less affluent demographic – insufficient mix to attract broader range of clientele, particularly new residents.
- Relative to other observed commercial street districts, a relative paucity of higher quality independents and street-smart chains, both of which tend to require more modern, higher ceilinged space.
- In terms of mix, low proportion of indie fashion tenants, which would build on existing successful businesses.
- Inconsistent business hours decreasing potential sales for the area as a whole – particularly notable during major arts and cultural events, when only a portion of area businesses remain open during after work/business hours.

REDEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES & INTEREST

- Whyte Avenue/Old Strathcona area a known entity, with a rich history and quality streetscape, has generated interest in creating better building spaces for ground and upper floor businesses.
- Historic building stock offers opportunities for adaptive re-use at a scale that well serves retailers and professional service firms looking for a strong lifestyle district.
- Lack of defined policy regarding desired densities within the study area (and for sub-areas within the study area) causing developer frustration relating to required rezoning applications.
- Concerns over area safety and auto-oriented noise creating issues over potential residential ownership and rental.

Based on assessment of the current conditions, the planWhyte study area was divided into 5 precincts or character areas providing an additional means of analyses based on the corridor's distinctive sub-areas. This provided a number of insights and benefits that could allow for:

1. Targeted management of business attraction/retention strategies
2. Stronger matching of tenants seeking types of space to space availability
3. Strategic tenant mix targets and active recruitment initiatives
4. Strong placemaking and branding
5. Efficient clustering of businesses based on complementarity



CURRENT RETAIL AND SERVICE COMMERCIAL TENANT MIX

The planWhyte study area contains over 371 storefronts with 333 active businesses, spread across 1.2 million square feet. The study area serves both day-to-day convenience functions of surrounding neighbourhoods, and as a destination for large parts of the city.

As a destination, the area's main focus is food services and entertainment. There is also a notable amount of destination retail in the apparel category (mostly independents supplemented by notable fashion chains), as well as destinations for home furnishings, home accessories, multimedia, books and music.

Convenience goods and services comprise over 38% of the total floor space and over 42% of the total occupied floor area. The most notable retail category is Grocery at nearly 160,000 square feet. The combined categories of Services (general), Financial Services and Healthcare Services comprise nearly 237,000 square feet or 20% of the total floor space in the area.

FUTURE RESIDENTIAL MARKET PROJECTIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

CITY WIDE RESIDENTIAL DEMAND

The City of Edmonton is expected to see household occupancy demand grow by between 221,000 and 270,000 dwelling units over the next 25 years. This demand is expected to be comprised of 46% single detached dwellings, 18% ground-oriented multi-family dwellings (e.g. townhouses, rowhouses, semi-detached), and 36% apartment units including secondary suites.

PLAN WHYTE STUDY AREA RESIDENTIAL DEMAND

Demand for new housing units was allocated to the planWhyte study area based on a review of historic development patterns, discussions with the development community, and a review of demand allocation calculations previously conducted as part of Edmonton's Infill Action Initiative. Based on this, and taking into account low and high population forecasts, the unit demand likely to be directed to the study area is likely to range from 2,650 to 3,260 dwelling units over a 25-year period. This demand will be primarily comprised of apartments (90%), with the remainder being ground-oriented multi-family.

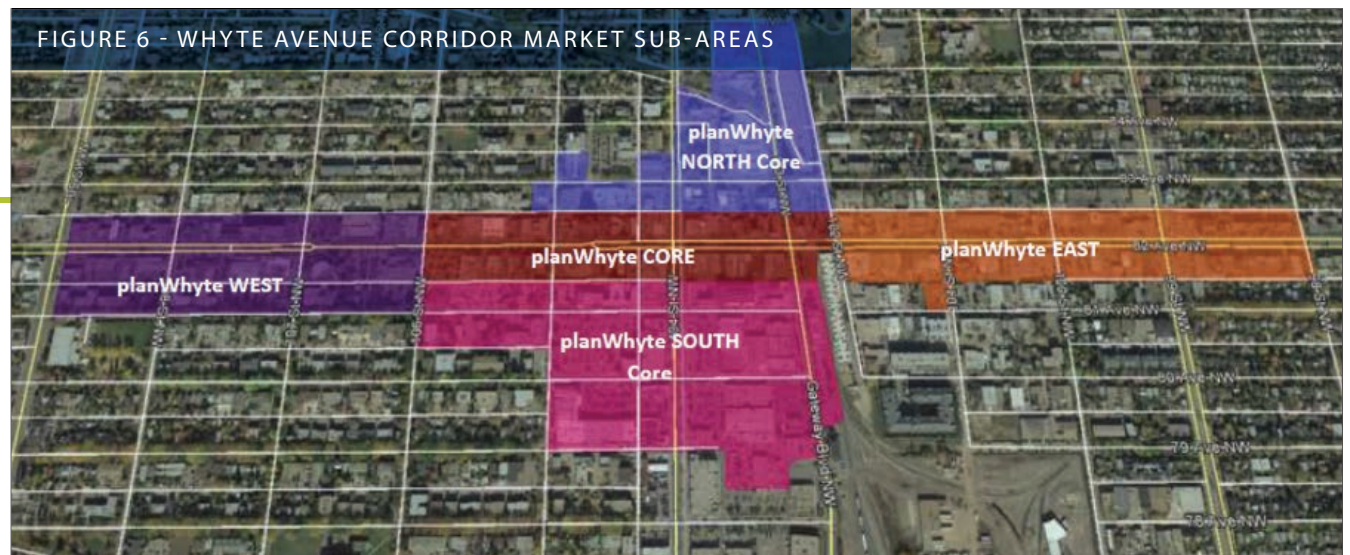


FIGURE 6 - WHYTE AVENUE CORRIDOR MARKET SUB-AREAS

LAND DEVELOPMENT FACTORS AFFECTING RESIDENTIAL DEMAND

Residential demand will not be evenly distributed across the study area. Rather, it will gravitate to certain pockets that have the strongest mix of enabling characteristics such as:

- Arterial roads;
- Transit proximity;
- Existing land uses;
- Age of building stock;
- Size of lots;
- Levels of servicing;
- Land use policy context; and
- Projects already in development.

PROJECTED DISTRIBUTION OF RESIDENTIAL DEMAND

Based on these factors, residential occupancy demand is projected to be directed in the following proportions to each market sub area as shown in Figure 6 - Whyte Avenue Corridor Market Sub-areas:

Core	15%
West	15%
East	15%
North Core	15%
South Core	40%

FUTURE RETAIL AND SERVICE COMMERCIAL PROJECTIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

DEFINING TRADE AREAS

Whyte Avenue serves both a local and a regional clientele. The retail demand analysis were structured to account for both the local 'convenience' trade areas and the regional 'destination' trade areas, and the spending dynamics and market captures associated with each. This yielded information on how future spending, support for existing businesses, and net new commercial retail floor space within the corridor will increase with population growth.

SPENDING GROWTH AND LOCAL CAPTURE

Future retail expenditure potential was forecast by retail category on the basis of both population growth and anticipated real changes in per-capita expenditure by category, the latter based on historic patterns in real expenditures. It is important to note that the extent to which future retail expenditures are likely to be captured by businesses (existing and future) within the planWhyte study area is based on a variety of factors, including:

- Current retail floor area in the study area, by category;
- Likely sales volumes generated by current floor area, based on typical quality-adjusted retail performance (\$/sf/annum);
- Location of current and emerging retail and service commercial competition
- Findings of other studies

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR EXISTING BUSINESSES

Based on population growth forecasts, particularly the expected 8,000 new residents over 25 years to the area immediately around Whyte Avenue (within the Primary Community Trade Area), existing businesses can expect an estimated \$29 million in additional retail dollar support within 10 years and nearly \$74 million in the next 25 years.

NET NEW FLOOR SPACE SUPPORTABLE

By 2026, there is a forecasted support for the net addition of 131,000 square feet of retail and service commercial floor area. By 2041, this figure is projected to increase to 293,000 square feet. These figures equate to support for approximately 50 and 115 new businesses, respectively, and take into account new spending growth likely captured by existing businesses.

FUTURE OFFICE MARKET DEMAND & OPPORTUNITIES

Whyte Avenue is considered a niche, suburban secondary office market within the Edmonton context, home to 15 notable office properties totaling 604,000 square feet or 1.9% of the City's inventory. The office direct vacancy rate stood at just over 11% near the end of 2016, which was comparable to many other districts. However, the average asking lease rates were below the suburban average at under \$17 per square foot.

Whyte Avenue is not a likely candidate for dedicated office buildings and large-scale office users. However, its status as one of the City's most recognized mixed-use commercial districts makes it a prime location for a range of more specialized employment uses that are able to make the most of smaller spaces in older buildings, or second or third floor locations in newer mixed-use buildings. Businesses include:

- Boutique architecture and design firms;
- Smaller engineering firms
- Tech firms seeking larger spaces in character areas
- Professional offices in legal, accounting, finance
- Medical and health related specialists
- Arts and cultural enterprises and organizations
- Shared office enterprises that can serve as catalysts for local businesses

The following factors can also help drive the evolution of a higher quality space along Whyte Avenue:

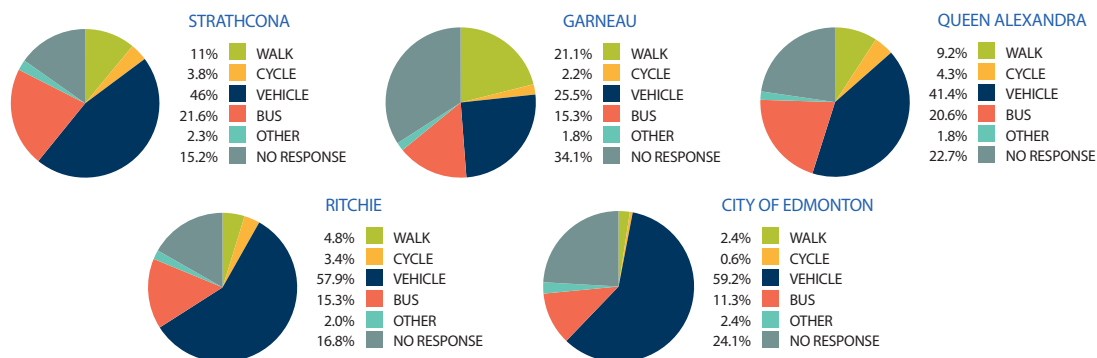
- Ongoing residential infill, creating a base of customers and employees
- New and renovated buildings with modern features (e.g. elevator, outdoor areas)
- Continued evolution of area amenities
- Improvements to the quality of the public realm, including lighting, furniture, sidewalks, patios, and other space reclaimed from car
- Traffic (e.g. vehicle, pedestrian)
- Addition of future frequent rapid transit

The type of office space that is most likely to be in demand is boutique second and third floor space within mixed-use buildings. Based on review of market conditions and discussions with development community, there is demand forecast for approximately 100,000 to 200,000 square feet of net new office within the corridor over the next 20 years.

MOBILITY NETWORK

The study area is defined by a rectilinear grid of streets extending from 99th Street at the east end to 109th Street at the west end. Whyte Avenue serves as both main street and primary mobility 'spine' for the corridor. Smaller blocks 100 metres x 150 metres in size provide pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles a high level of access and connectivity to move in, through and around the area. A comparative overview of travel modes for Strathcona, Garneau, Queen Alexandra, Ritchie and City of Edmonton is provided in Figure 7 - 2014 Residential Travel Mode.

FIGURE 7 - 2014 RESIDENTIAL TRAVEL MODE



WALKING

The grid pattern provides for high connectivity. A connected network has a high number of intersections, shorter blocks, and fewer dead ends (cul-de-sacs). The planWhyte study area is ideal for walking and cycling as there are many direct route options available. Sidewalks exist on both sides of most streets in the study area with the exception of the east side of 103rd Street (Gateway Boulevard) south of Whyte Avenue.

Sidewalks are well used, averaging 2,300-2,900 pedestrian counts daily. On weekends this number can significantly increase with the area's entertainment and night-time economy. On the busy arterial roads of 99th Street, 103rd Street, and 109th Street, the sidewalks are often monolithic (i.e. not separated with a boulevard) and may not provide adequate separation from traffic for pedestrians to feel comfortable and safe. High levels of vehicle traffic and lack of separation along arterial roadways create a crossing barrier. Efforts have been made to mitigate these barriers (particularly along Whyte Avenue) with some form of pedestrian control device at every intersection (either full signals, ½ signals, pedestrian actuated amber flashers, and one high visibility rectangular flashing beacon (RRFB)).

CYCLING

The City of Edmonton is currently constructing a protected bike lane (physically separated two-way bike lane) along 83rd Avenue through the entire study area. This will ultimately connect the corridor to Mill Creek Ravine in the east (via 96 Street), and Garneau / University area in the west past 109 Street. Current bicycle volumes of 300-400/day suggest this is already a desired route adjacent Whyte Avenue.

106 Street is the only designated north-south bicycle routes in the study area. Ideally, a robust bicycle network would have route spacing around 500 meters. 99th Street and 109th Street pose substantial challenges for future bicycle infrastructure due to the traffic volume and limited right of way of these arterial roads. Currently, the opportunities for cyclists to cross arterials is best facilitated at intersection locations where there are either full signals, or another form of pedestrian crossing control (e.g. half signals). There is also an east-west on-street signed bike route along 85th Avenue and offers a high comfort level given the low volume nature of this roadway.

In terms of end of trip facilities, the study area has a total of five bike corrals (a parking stall repurposed for the use of bike racks) on Whyte Avenue, 103rd Street, 104th Street, and 105th Street. The 30 racks in these locations provide parking for potentially

60 bikes. In addition, over 100 bike parking locations (post and ring style) are located throughout the study area, and focused primarily along Whyte Avenue and 109th Street commercial corridors.

TRANSIT

There are five transit routes (4, 7, 57, 94, 327) running regularly along Whyte Avenue with bus stops located every 1-2 blocks on both sides of Whyte Avenue. Transit ridership is high (up to 9,000 passengers/day west of 106th Street).

CARSHARE

Pogo, the first (and at present only) carshare company in Edmonton, launched in the fall of 2014 has become a common sight within the planWhyte study area. Pogo provides a network of vehicles that can be accessed for a rate based on usage. The planWhyte Study area falls within the Pogo car share zone which allows users to park the cars at on-street parking or City of Edmonton metered locations. Car sharing is seen as a complement to walking or transit. It allows people to access destinations like Whyte Avenue without a personal vehicle with minimal impact on parking (i.e. a Pogo car will not stay parked long as it will be accessed by another user and parked in another location).

MOTOR VEHICLES

Each weekday approximately 27,000 vehicles travel this roadway serving communities in west and east Edmonton. The six main intersections along Whyte Avenue at 99th Street, 103rd Street, 104th Street, 105 Street, 106th Street, and 109th Street are all operating within capacity during both the morning and afternoon peak hours. All of these intersection approaches have residual capacity in the morning and afternoon peak hours, though there are some specific movements (e.g. westbound left approaching 104th Street in the afternoon) that experience higher delays.

Intersections of 99th Street, 109th Street, 104th Street, and 103rd Street also had the highest collisions with 20-30 annually. About 1 pedestrian annually was involved in a collision at the intersections of 105th Street, 104th Street, and 100th Street. As for midblock collisions, these are evenly distributed along the corridor with 5-8 total collisions annually for each block. Pedestrian related midblock collisions are relatively infrequent with only 5 recorded over a 6-year period between 105th and 106th Streets, and between 100th and 101st Streets.

Vehicle parking is available on and off-street within the planWhyte study area. There is a total of 259 available stalls along Whyte Avenue, 43 of which are free (east of 99th Street) and 216 which are \$3/hour E-park stalls. Within 2-3 blocks of Whyte Avenue there are over 1,200 surface lot stalls. The average cost is \$2/hour and \$7 for the entire day. In terms of utilization, these are not observed to be at or near capacity. Drivers seeking free on-street parking within residential areas north and south of Whyte Avenue is a contributing factor for those unable or unwilling to use parking facilities within the commercial area.

MUNICIPAL SERVICES AND UTILITIES

This study area is serviced by a combined sewer system. South and east parts of the study area are serviced by a main combined trunk sewer draining east along 80th Avenue, while the remaining northwest part of the study area is serviced by another main combined trunk sewer also draining east along 88th Avenue. These sewer systems can contribute flows to each other and both receive flows from much larger upstream contributing service areas. While the area does have some storm sewers, they all discharge back into the combined sewer system. The study area is not designed with a defined overland or major stormwater drainage system. This means several sag areas exist within the study area where ponding can occur during major rainfall events.

Available fire flow for existing conditions is present but varies significantly in some areas. For example, in some locations fire flows may not meet current City requirements, yet nearby it can exceed them. EPCOR Water will continue to review all new development and recommend appropriate system improvements.

Existing franchise/shallow utilities (electrical power, telephone, and natural gas) within the planWhyte study area are sufficient for existing development and expected to be adequate to support future intensification/redevelopment through extension from mainlines.

GUIDING LEGISLATION, PLANS, POLICIES, STUDIES AND REGULATIONS

The planWhyte study has been informed and is in alignment with the following legislation, statutory documents and strategic policy initiatives.

ALBERTA MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT ACT

The Alberta MGA provides City Council and Administration with the legislative framework to encourage and facilitate the development and redevelopment of land in an orderly, economically and environmentally responsible manner. Implementation of the planWhyte land use study and future amendment of the Strathcona Area Redevelopment Plan will comply with Sections 634 and 635 of the MGA and provide opportunity for members of the public, school boards and other affected parties to provide input to that process.

THE ALBERTA HISTORICAL RESOURCES ACT (HRA)

The Alberta HRA provides the legislative framework for how the Province and City designate both Provincial Historic Resources (PHRs) and Municipal Historic Resources (MHRs). There are several buildings with one or both types of designation in the study area, and the preservation and management of change to these structures are controlled by the HRA.

OLD STRATHCONA PROVINCIAL HISTORIC AREA ESTABLISHMENT REGULATION

The central portion of the study area contains the Old Strathcona Provincial Historic Area, which was adopted in 2007 by the Provincial government. The Regulation does not contain any specific direction to development in the area, but does provide recognition of the historic significance of Old Strathcona.

EDMONTON METROPOLITAN REGION GROWTH PLAN

The planWhyte study supports a number of the land use principles and policies, articulated in the regional growth plan, including concentrating urban growth within the central city, emphasizing higher density development served by public transit and improving civic spaces.

THE WAY WE GROW, MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN, BYLAW #15100

The planWhyte study is in alignment with the MDP strategic goals of sustainable urban form, integrated land use and transportation, complete healthy and livable communities and urban design. It seeks to manage future growth, balance neighbourhood infill and potential development opportunities with local heritage, character and using urban planning and design best practice.

THE WAY WE MOVE, TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN, BYLAW #15101

The planWhyte study aligns with the Way We Move by encouraging active modes through the integration of land use and transportation planning uses. planWhyte seeks to address the transportation needs of future development in ways that enhance safety, access, connectivity, active modes and transit.

THE WAY WE LIVE: EDMONTON'S PEOPLE PLAN

The Way We Live envisions Edmonton as a vibrant, connected, engaged, welcoming, caring, inclusive, affordable, safe, attractive and sustainable city that celebrates life, and provides direction for people services that will help achieve these goals. While planWhyte does not directly address people services, it indirectly contributes to these goals through land use, built form, mobility and open space policy recommendations.

THE WAY WE GREEN

The Way We Green is an environmental strategy that addresses water, air, fossil fuel, minerals and soil, climate, renewable resources, ecosystem services and waste absorption. The planWhyte land use study addresses these issues through policy recommendations related to environmentally sustainable design including provisions for: a compact urban form, low impact development, improvement of the active transportation network, integration of future LRT, and sustainable building design.

THE WAY WE PROSPER

The Way We Prosper is a high-level plan focused on growing and diversifying the local economy. This strategic plan is meant to be advanced within the context of City budgeting processes. It also recognizes that there may be immediate costs for direct investments in economic development in the short term, but they are foundational to the long-term sustainability and resilience of the local economy. The planWhyte land use study

addresses Edmonton's desire to grow and diversify its economy through policy supportive of increased housing and commercial retail, diversity and choice.

TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

The planWhyte study was developed in consideration of the Centre LRT Study and therefore Transit Oriented Design (TOD) Guidelines. These guidelines direct appropriate development around LRT stations and transit centres. Both the TOD Guidelines and planWhyte study encourage and support planning in advance of LRT to optimally integrate transit and land use.

TRANSIT STRATEGY

The Transit Strategy identifies the long-term vision for transit in Edmonton and provides guidance for future system development and investment. The "Bus Network Redesign" is the first major action resulting from the Transit Strategy and it proposes to implement frequent bus routes within the study area when the new network is implemented in 2020.

FRESH

Edmonton's Food and Urban Agriculture Strategy recommends new approaches to food and urban agriculture that can make Edmonton an even better place to live, work, plan and invest. planWhyte aligns with FRESH's strategic direction to enliven the public realm through a diversity of food activities through its support of Strathcona's Farmers Market and emphasis on improved public realm and enhanced place-making within the study area.

WINTER CITY STRATEGY

The Winter City Strategy provides a holistic approach to transform Edmonton into a more inviting, vibrant and prosperous place throughout the winter months. The planWhyte land use study considers winter design outcomes through policy recommendations for the mobility network, built form, and the public realm.

STRATHCONA AREA REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

The existing Strathcona ARP expands the planning area to cover all the Whyte Avenue commercial area, including portions of the Garneau Plan. The planWhyte study area focuses on Area 5 of the ARP (Whyte Avenue Commercial) including 11 Tommy Banks Way (Block K, Plan I) and 8235 Gateway Boulevard (Lots 15, 16, 17 and 18, Block 60, Plan I). The study is also cognizant of the need to

protect existing residential areas from the impacts of excessive traffic, parking on residential streets, need for safe and attractive pedestrian and bicycle access to community activity nodes and beyond (e.g. Downtown, University of Alberta).

COMPLETE STREETS DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION STANDARDS

The goal of the recently updated and integrated Complete Streets Design and Construction Standards is to create a network of streets that are safe, welcoming, attractive, comfortable, and functional for all users in all seasons, and that support and enhance the unique characteristics of the neighborhoods and districts they serve.

MAIN STREETS GUIDELINE

Main Streets, such as Whyte Avenue, are recognized as different than other streets since they serve as both important destinations and transportation links. The Main Streets Guidelines, build of the City's Complete Street principles, to design and reconstruct main streets to a higher standard, balancing the needs of all users, with pedestrians given priority.

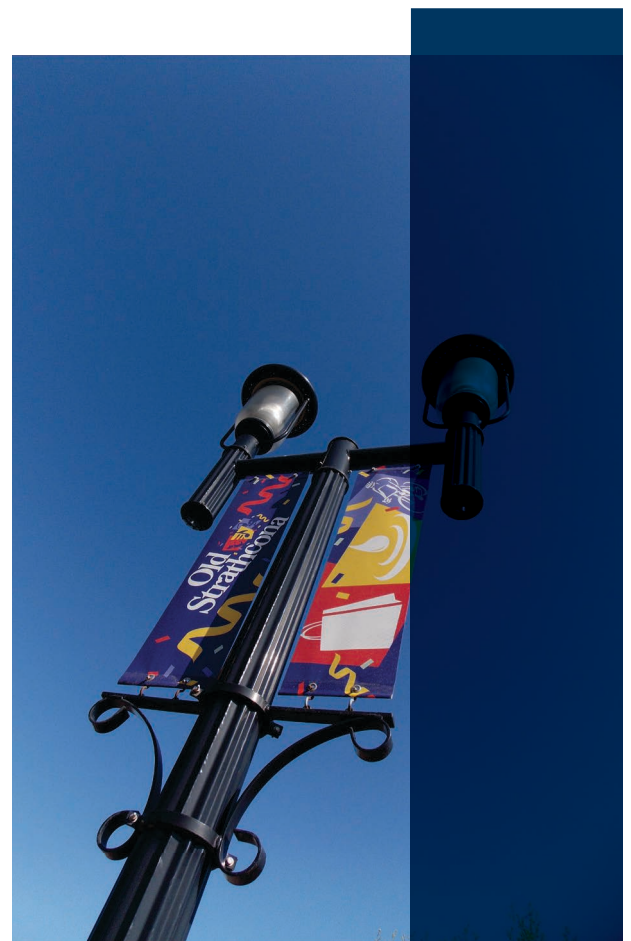
EXISTING ZONING

The zoning for properties within the planWhyte study area primarily includes CB2 (General Businesses) Zone, DC1 (Direct Development Control) and DC2 (Site Specific Development Control) Provisions. These are used extensively along Whyte Avenue for businesses that require larger sites, high visibility and accessibility, require greater heritage preservation, or control over use, development, siting, building design or architecture. Two Urban Service (US) zoned parcels are located on the south side of Whyte Avenue on 108 Street (The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints) and 107 Street (St. Anthony's Church). East of 99 Street 3 and 4 storey apartment complexes front Whyte Avenue and zoned RA8 (Medium Rise Apartment Zone). Outside of the study area significant portions of the surrounding area is zoned RA7 (Low Rise Apartment Zone) and some RA8. The entire Whyte Avenue commercial area is also covered by the Main Street Overlay which provides another set of zoning regulations designed to strengthen the pedestrian-oriented character of Edmonton's commercial main streets.

CENTRE LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT STUDY

The Centre LRT Study (2017-2018) is examining the best LRT route to connect Edmontonians and visitors to Strathcona,

Downtown, Bonnie Doon and east Edmonton. This new central LRT route will provide circulation between the Downtown and University areas connecting operations as part of the Valley Line within the LRT Network Plan adopted by City Council in 2009. The Centre Light Rail Transit Study will research possible street and avenue options to determine the best location for a central LRT route, stop locations along the way and the optimum track alignment (where the tracks fit in the roadway). Future service will be provided via low-floor, urban-style LRT that operates in dedicated lanes and uses traffic signals to flow with traffic through intersections. City policy, technical evaluations and public engagement will be used to determine the preferred route.





PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Given Whyte Avenue's importance to residents, businesses and the city overall, it was important to provide many opportunities to engage with Edmontonians. A number of public engagement methods were used at each phase of the project to inform the planWhyte study. This strategy was used to obtain broad input and understanding as it related to preserving local heritage, future growth, evaluate options, manage change and potential impacts within the planWhyte study area. What follows is a summary of key findings from the public engagement phases used to better understand the area in terms of its unique qualities, opportunities, constraints, expected growth, possible responses and future direction for managing long-term change.

PHASE I: GATHERING INFORMATION, EXPLORING OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

During the first phase of planWhyte the project focused on developing a broader understanding of the study area's physical traits, how people perceived the area and interacted with it. This information was collected using one-on-one and group conversations, pop-up events, online surveys and an open house public workshop.

On June 16, 2016, the City of Edmonton held its first public workshop to introduce the project, team, study process and expectations. It provided background information about the area, features of the Whyte Avenue Commercial Area, and technical information being collected. Most importantly, the open house workshop gathered public input on what people would like to see happen within the planWhyte study area over the long-term.

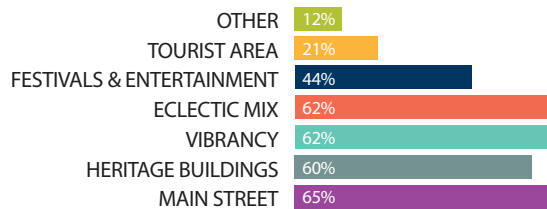
PHASE I: WHAT WE HEARD SUMMARY

The following information is a summary of what was heard during Phase 1. The information is grouped by the following categories: 'Existing Conditions', 'Areas for Change and Stability' and 'Community Livability'. The graphs total of what people said in the survey. The Design and analysis for each question includes insight from the open house and online open ended survey questions.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

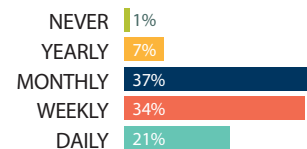
IN YOUR OPINION, WHAT DEFINES WHYTE AVENUE'S CHARACTER?

Whyte Avenue's main street character with its pedestrian-friendly design and human scaled buildings was identified as one of the most important character defining elements. Vibrancy, eclectic mix of people and things to do, and heritage buildings were also highly rated. Whyte Avenue's character is complicated but its main street nature is key.



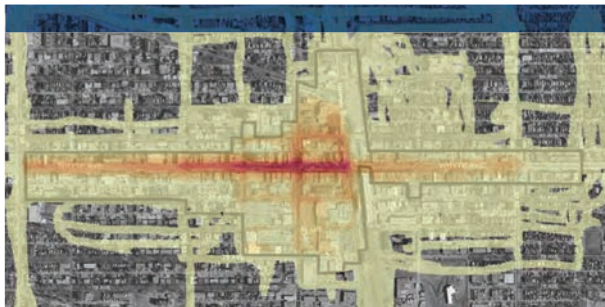
HOW OFTEN DO YOU VISIT WHYTE AVENUE?

Most people visit the area at least once on a monthly basis. However, just over half of those asked visit Whyte Avenue either daily or weekly. People frequently visit the Whyte Avenue area throughout the entire year.



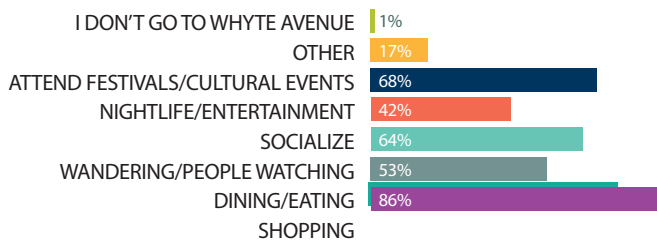
WHEN YOU VISIT WHYTE AVENUE, WHERE DO YOU TYPICALLY GO OR VISIT WITHIN THE STUDY AREA?

As shown on the highlighted map below, approximately 60% of people typically visit those blocks directly on Whyte Avenue between 103 Street and 105 Street, and 40-50% one block immediately west to 106 Street. While most visits seem to occur on Whyte Avenue between 109 Street and 99 Street within the study area, there is also an emergence of activity south along 81 Avenue between 103 Street and 105 Street and the area north along 83 Avenue between 103 and 104 Street.



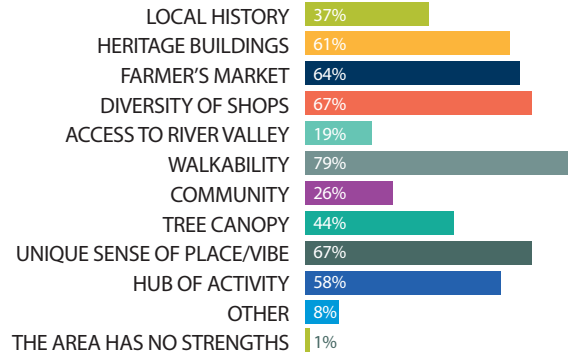
WHAT DO YOU DO ON WHYTE AVENUE?

Dining and eating at establishments along Whyte Avenue was the most popular activity for people followed by shopping, attending festivals and cultural events, and socializing with friends and family.



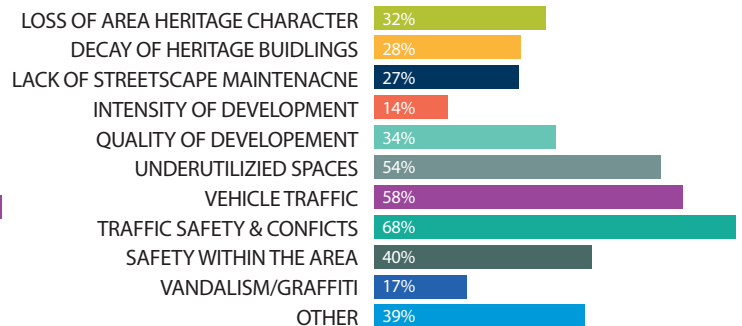
FROM YOUR PERSPECTIVE, WHAT ARE THE KEY STRENGTHS OF WHYTE AVENUE?

Walkability was identified as one of Whyte Avenue's key strengths followed by its diversity of shops and unique sense of place. People also identified the Farmer's Market and the complement of heritage buildings as significant to the area.



WHAT ARE THE KEY ISSUES THAT NEED TO BE ADDRESSED REGARDING WHYTE AVENUE?

People reported traffic safety as it relates to pedestrians and cyclists, and vehicle traffic as key issues. Underutilized spaces such as surface parking or vacant lots and general safety within the area were also deemed important issues to be dealt with.



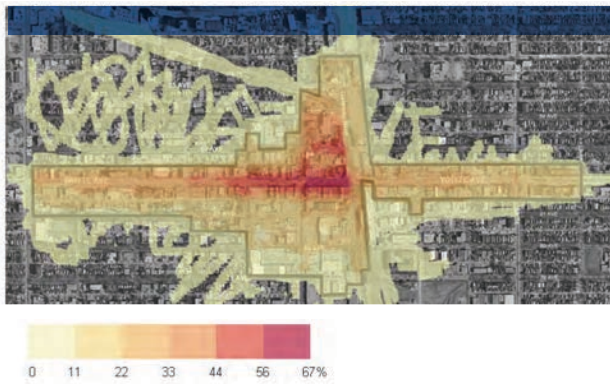
AREAS OF CHANGE AND STABILITY

In considering future growth and potential for change within the planWhyte study area, it was important to understand what areas might remain stable, which ones might evolve over time and how this could occur from an urban design perspective. Expectations of urban change, the role of heritage, building form, massing and transition within the study area were all explored.

URBAN CHANGE

WHAT AREAS SHOULD BE PRESERVED AND ENHANCED WITHIN AND AROUND THE STUDY AREA?

More than half of all respondents indicated the area along Whyte Avenue between 103 and 105 Street should be preserved or enhanced in some way including a portion of 83 Avenue between 103 and 104 Street. This suggests the commercial area is not only frequently visited, but seen as a valuable area that should be cared for.

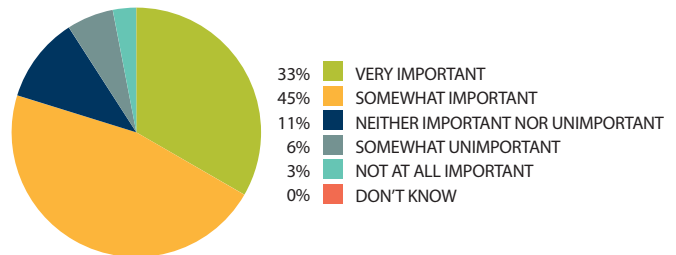


HERITAGE CHARACTER

Understanding the value of heritage as a resource to Whyte Avenue's image and identity is crucial to preserving its character and importance within the community. Results from the online survey revealed heritage buildings play a key role in preserving and understanding local history.

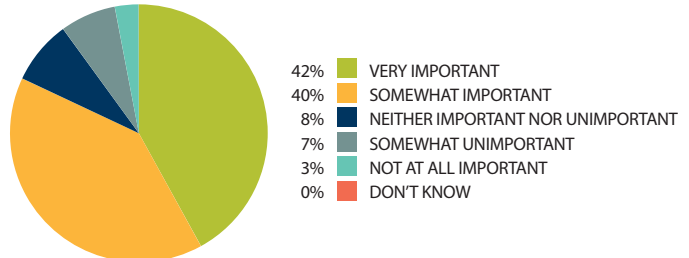
HOW IMPORTANT IS IT TO UNDERSTAND AND COMMEMORATE THE HISTORY OF THE AREA?

79% of people surveyed reported it important that the area's history be recognized, understood and commemorated.



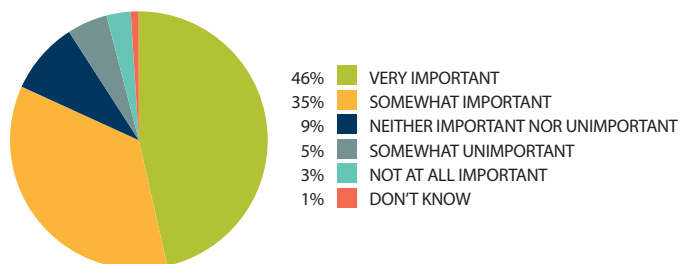
HOW IMPORTANT IS IT TO CONSERVE AND RETAIN EXISTING HERITAGE OF THE AREA?

82% of people surveyed reported that the preservation of the area's heritage is important, should be further conserved and retained.



TO ENSURE THAT NEW DEVELOPMENT REFLECTS HERITAGE CHARACTER OF AREA?

81% of people surveyed reported it important that new development integrate and reflect the heritage character of the area.

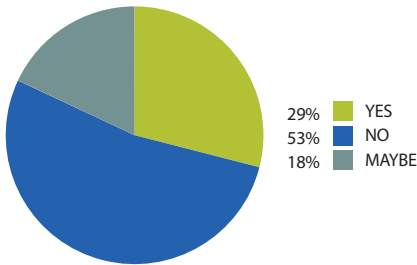


BUILT FORM, MASSING, TRANSITION

How people react and respond to Whyte Avenue's built form, massing, and transitions in scale is another important element to understand and how the present day character or best qualities can be further preserved and strengthened over time.

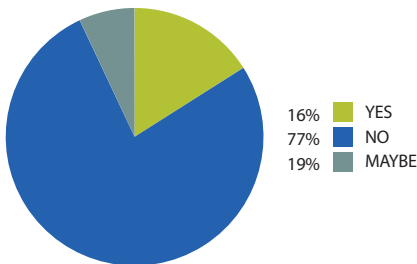
DO YOU THINK THE EXISTING DESIGN (BUILDING) FORM SHOULD CHANGE ON WHYTE AVENUE?

53% of people surveyed indicated that the predominant building form should not change along Whyte Avenue. While many would like to retain the existing character of buildings, 18% indicated they would be open to new building forms if they were integrated with existing architecture and character of older buildings.



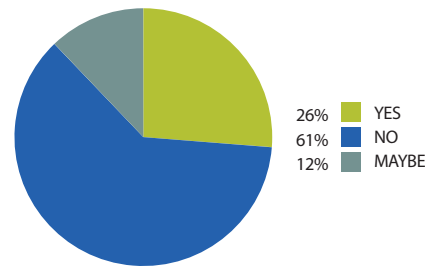
DO YOU THINK THE EXISTING WIDTH OF BUILDINGS AND SMALLER STOREFRONTS SHOULD CHANGE?

77% of survey respondents reported they do not want wider buildings with larger storefronts. Buildings that offer multiple storefronts and entrances built to a human scale are identified as extremely important to Whyte Avenue's mainstreet character.



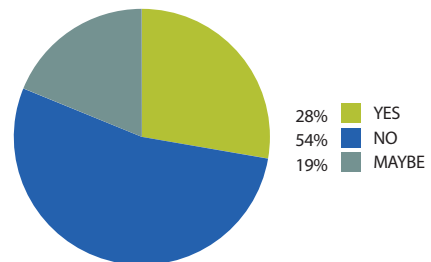
DO YOU THINK THE EXISTING TRANSITION BETWEEN BUILDINGS SHOULD CHANGE ON WHYTE AVENUE?

61% of survey respondents indicated keeping the existing 'fit' of buildings with each other and the street. For some, this could change if the overall design of future development could improve how buildings transition between each other and surrounding communities.



DO YOU THINK THE EXISTING HEIGHT OF BUILDINGS AND ABILITY TO BUILD UP TO 4 STOREYS SHOULD CHANGE?

54% of people indicated that new development up to 4 storeys as currently allowed should not change. However, some respondents thought this could change if buildings were stepped back from Whyte Avenue and created a human scale at the ground floor level.

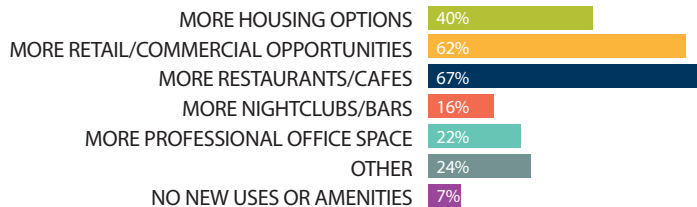


COMMUNITY LIVABILITY

People were also asked to consider what kind of improvements could help enhance the area as a place to live, work and visit in the future. These were framed from an urban design, public realm and mobility perspective and used to shape an overall design vision for the area, guiding principles, concept and recommendations.

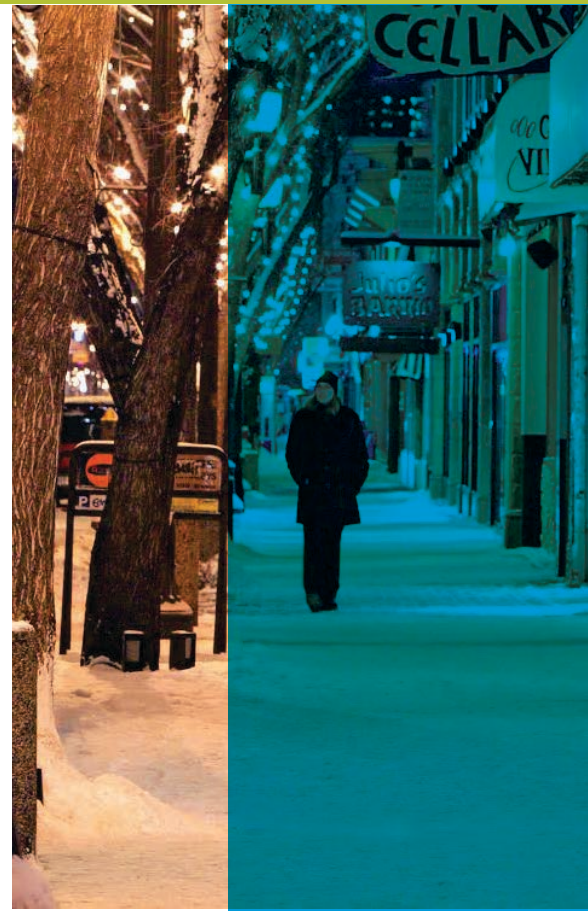
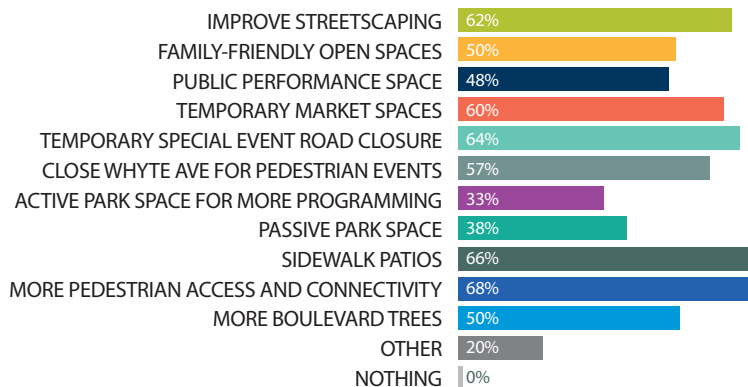
WHAT NEW USES AND AMENITIES COULD MAKE THE WHYTE AVENUE CORRIDOR A MORE INTERESTING AND ATTRACTIVE PLACE TO LIVE, WORK AND VISIT?

Many people called for additional restaurants and cafes within the corridor followed by independent small retailers. More housing options and affordability was also identified as important.



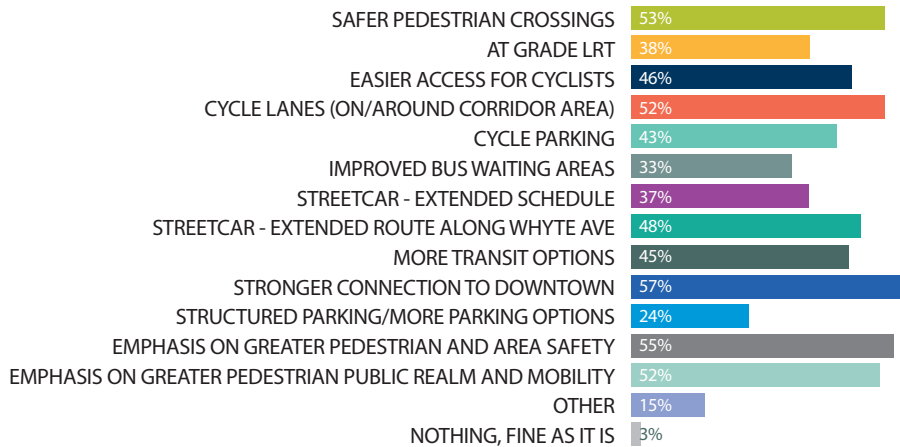
WHAT KINDS OF PUBLIC SPACE, GATHERING PLACES AND PARKS COULD ENHANCE THE LIVEABILITY AND ATTRACTIVENESS OF THE WHYTE AVENUE AREA?

Pedestrian access and connectivity along with sidewalk patios were identified as important key enhancements for the area. A number of people also requested the ability or opportunity to close Whyte Avenue temporarily for special events, and improved streetscaping to improve public space. People want more public spaces that activate the avenue as well as help them access and connect to their favorite places without the use of a car.



WHAT IMPROVEMENTS COULD BE MADE FOR PEDESTRIAN, CYCLISTS AND TRANSIT USERS IN AND AROUND THE WHYTE AVENUE CORRIDOR?

A majority of people supported greater connection to the downtown along with pedestrian and area safety. People also reported their desire for safer pedestrian crossings at key intersections, an increase to the pedestrian public realm, and cycling lane connectivity. People want a better transit connection to downtown.



SUMMARY

Phase one of the study used a number of different public engagement methods to develop a better understanding of the area, its qualities, constraints and opportunities. Key strengths identified were the area's walkability, diversity of shops, unique sense of place, Farmer's Market activities and building heritage. A number of challenges were also identified affecting the planWhyte Study area including traffic safety conflicts with pedestrians and cyclists, the level of vehicle traffic, and negative impact of underutilized spaces on the area (e.g. surface parking/empty lots, vacant retail/office space).

There was a strong desire to preserve the qualities of the Whyte Avenue commercial area. This included protection of existing heritage buildings, ensuring new development integrate and reflect the heritage character of the area (e.g. provide similar building widths with multiple storefronts and entrances, ensure a sensitive transition between buildings), and maintaining the existing 4 storey height limit along Whyte Avenue. Redevelopment was reported best located outside the core area, and ideally, to address vacant or underutilized lands, contribute to Whyte Avenue's main street character. Taller buildings should be located outside the core heritage commercial area ideally south of Whyte Avenue, incorporate stepbacks, and human-scaled design. This feedback was used to help inform and structure Phase II development and evaluation of alternatives for the Whyte Avenue corridor.

PHASE II: DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION OF ALTERNATIVES

During Phase Two of the study, people were invited to further refine a draft vision and set of guiding principles for the planWhyte study area, explore building types and potential future development scenarios. This in turn set a direction and foundation for preserving local heritage, accommodating future growth, setting expectations for new development, and helping identify potential amenities and services that could support and strengthen Whyte Avenue over the long-term.

On September 28, 2016 a second public open house workshop was held at the Roots on Whyte building and attended by 48 members of the public. The purpose of the workshop was to invite feedback on four items: a draft vision statement, a set of guiding principles, building typologies and two conceptual scenarios for the corridor. Materials were designed and developed based on public feedback collected from Phase 1, 'pop-up' engagement events and stakeholder conversations. Using the same materials and questionnaire, additional feedback from another 67 respondents was collected online. Results of phase two public engagement are summarized here.

Overall results indicated strong support for strengthening the core heritage commercial area, controlling for development on Whyte Avenue, and locating more intensive change and density to specific areas South of Whyte Avenue. Guiding principles were largely supported with additional emphasis on ways to reduce the impact of vehicles within the corridor, respecting the existing principles and development limits contained within the Strathcona ARP, and community involvement in development approvals.

Design Vision

Preserve and strengthen the existing heritage core commercial area, control for development along Whyte Avenue, and direct moderate to higher intensification to key nodes along the corridor.

Are there aspects of the Vision Statement you would like to see revised / additional ideas / directions?

Frequently

- **Change nothing** - they look good; Greater emphasis on pedestrian and cyclist safety

More than once

- **Reduce the impact of cars** - More emphasis on multi-modal transportation; Reduce car traffic to and through neighbourhood
- **Respect Community** - Address the needs and role of surrounding communities; Remove 'small town' reference; focus more on families
- **Reduce crime** through design and neighbourhood inclusion

Guiding Principles

1. Acknowledge the Whyte Avenue corridor area will continue to evolve over the long term
2. Preserve and strengthen the heritage and character of the corridor.
3. Ensure new infill and redevelopment is appropriately located and scaled to both main street and surrounding community
4. Improve mobility and connectivity within the corridor and to surrounding communities
5. Enhance the pedestrian public realm and place-making opportunities within the corridor
6. Pursue sustainable, urban design excellence

Are there any Guiding Principles you would like to see revised / changed / additional ideas / directions?

Frequently

- **Change nothing** - they look good; Greater emphasis on pedestrian and cyclist safety

More than once

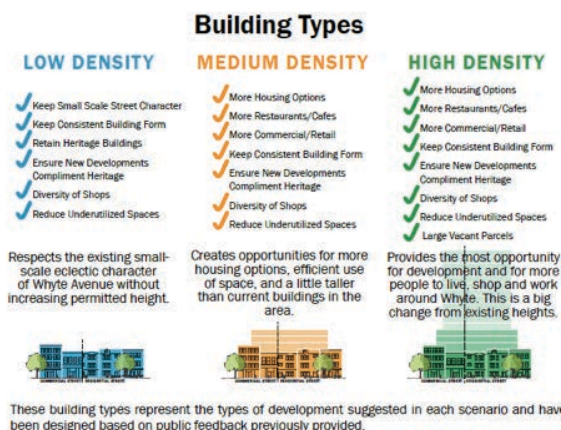
- **Reduce the impact of cars** - Car-free streets and alleys; Lower vehicle speed limit; Mitigate traffic shortcutting; Emphasis on pedestrian design
- **Respect existing Strathcona ARP** guiding principles and development limits
- **Community involvement** in new development approvals

In terms of preferred built forms, there was general agreement that low (up to 4 storeys), medium (up to 6 storeys) and high intensity (up to 14 storeys) buildings as presented should be designed to have a historic feel or character at the lower levels of buildings.

This is consistent with workshop 1 that identified the importance of preserving and integrating Whyte Avenue's history with new development. Where significantly taller, more intensive buildings are proposed, these should be located off of Whyte Avenue. In all cases, future development should ensure high quality materials and podium.

SCENARIOS

Participants were also shown two potential design scenarios for the corridor. These were presented as potential scenarios rather than options with the goal to stimulate discussion around future land use, built form, public realm and mobility issues, opportunities, constraints and preferences.



Are there aspects of the building types that you would change?

Frequently

- Change nothing - these building types make sense.

More than once

- Buildings should have a historic feel or character to them
- Buildings should provide high quality design, podium and materials

Scenario 1



Scenario 1 represented limited change and development opportunities over time for the corridor area.

This scenario allows the area to evolve slowly to include slightly higher densities. The heritage core area is preserved at the existing maximum of 4 storeys (or 15 metres). Elsewhere along the corridor, slightly taller buildings may be permitted to provide limited development opportunities. Recommendations would include repairs and upgrades to existing infrastructure to maintain the current level of use and demand.

What do you LIKE / DISLIKE about these Scenarios?

Frequently

- **Like:** Lower building heights and intensity; Preserves area's small scale character
- **Dislike:** Potential for vehicle short-cutting from 99 Street to Gateway Trail or 103 Street via S4, S5, and S6 Avenues; Not dense enough; Not enough people living in area.

More than once

- **Like:** Slow, incremental change over time; Lower mix of density that is primarily 4 to 6 storeys in height; Protects core heritage area
- **Dislike:** Density (i.e. too much); Lack of pedestrian and cycling connectivity; Alleys not activated; Streetcar is underutilized; Gateway corridor is not activated.

Scenario 2



Scenario 2 included more development opportunity and existing heritage core area height and character.

In this scenario, development opportunities are provided away from the heritage core. This includes development nodes, which are identified as areas which are currently underdeveloped and could transform over time. Due to the additional density this option provides, there are many other improvements that could be required to accommodate additional activity along the corridor.

Frequently

- **Like:** Protects core heritage area; East-west connections across Gateway Boulevard for pedestrians; More density; Streetcar extension to Whyte Avenue
- **Dislike:** Potential for vehicle short-cutting from 99 Street to Gateway Trail (103 Street) via S4, S5, and S6 Avenues; Density is too high; Tall buildings do not fit Whyte Avenue's streetfront character or feel; Entire concept.

More than once

- **Like:** More retail and businesses, access over long-term; More intensive development spread throughout the corridor; Alley network; Transforming vacant and underutilized spaces along the corridor
- **Dislike:** Increase in vehicle traffic, congestion, and does not deal with commuter traffic; Too many large development nodes; High density is too close to Whyte Avenue; High density will cast shadows on-site and on Whyte Avenue

A significant majority of people who attended the second workshop and responded online preferred Scenario 1. This scenario was preferred for its limited change, lower heights, and perceived lower impact on Whyte Avenue's main street character. However, a number of people also commented that Scenario 1 was too conservative and not dense enough to support the needs of the area over time. It was also noted that more should be done to support pedestrians and cyclists, enhance the public realm, and better utilize existing alleys and heritage streetcar to move people.

Regarding Scenario 2, most respondents felt the development was too intensive overall, did not fit the low scale character of Whyte Avenue, and would likely contribute to increased traffic and congestion for local residents. Despite this, many people liked that this scenario would preserve the 4 storey heights within the study area, feature stronger east - west pedestrian connections across Gateway Boulevard, add more development and housing opportunities, support for local businesses, institutions, and public realm improvements. For example, the Farmers Market parking lot owned by the City could be redeveloped to potentially incorporate a mix of parking and green space for community, special event and or performance use.

PHASE III: WHAT WE HEARD - TESTING IDEAS, CONFIRMING A CONCEPT

Using city policy, urban design analysis, technical information from market, mobility and infrastructure studies, and public feedback collected during phases 1 and 2 of the study, a hybrid or draft concept for the corridor was prepared. On June 20, 2017, seventy (70) people attended a drop-in open house at the Old Timers' Cabin to confirm a design vision and set of guiding principles for the corridor. Attendees were also asked to provide their input on a series of urban design ideas, land use, built form, public realm, and mobility strategies that could structure an overall corridor concept. Feedback collected along with additional technical study information were used to refine concepts for the corridor.

A final open house was held on December 13, 2017 to present these findings along with suggested policy recommendations. Fifty-nine (59) people attended this event and another 244 participated in a six week online survey (closing January 22, 2018) to share their input and comments.

Participants were asked to share their main reasons for visiting Whyte Avenue and their response to the design concepts presented. Of the responses, 80% said they come to Whyte Avenue to eat, shop or for entertainment purposes followed by living (41%) and working (14%) in the neighbourhood. Questions related to design concepts were organized into four themes: 'Land Use', 'Built Form', 'Public Realm' and 'Mobility' strategies. For each theme, people were asked to refer to specific planWhyte boards and respond to various statements using a four-point scale of agreement. The scale ranged from 'Strongly Agree' to 'Strongly Disagree'. A final question provided people the opportunity to share any final comments they had. Over 50 people provided further comments. The results of these two public engagement events are summarized below.



VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The vision and guiding principles acknowledge community growth, the need to manage future development pressure, desire to strengthen the area's heritage and main street character, support local business and help surrounding community access and continue to enjoy the corridor.

The proposed vision and guiding principles for the corridor were strongly supported and confirmed by stakeholders at the June 2017 open house. People frequently cited the importance of pedestrian and cycling connectivity and safety, in addition to more public space and preservation of the area's heritage character. More than once people commented on the need to support higher density mixed use in the area, retain parking and explore additional uses for the Farmer's Market parking lot.

Vision

Preserve and strengthen the corridor's existing heritage core commercial area and character while ensuring new development is built to a human-scale and supports a great pedestrian environment. Manage future growth in support of surrounding communities and local businesses through improved connections, active modes, and locating higher, more intensive development south off of Whyte Avenue.

Principles

1. Acknowledge the Whyte Avenue corridor area will continue to evolve over the long term
2. Preserve and strengthen the heritage and character of the corridor
3. Ensure new infill and redevelopment is appropriately located and scaled to both main street and surrounding community
4. Improve mobility and connectivity within the corridor and to surrounding communities
5. Enhance the pedestrian public realm and place-making opportunities within the corridor
6. Pursue sustainable, urban design excellence



URBAN DESIGN STRATEGIES

A series of 'Big Ideas' related to urban design were introduced at the June 2017 open house for public feedback. These helped translate the broader vision and guiding principles for the corridor into actual design strategies for further consideration and concept refinement. The ideas presented were based on planning and design best practice, city policy, technical information, and previous public input.

The urban design ideas received a high degree of support and confirmation at the June open house. More than once people expressed a desire for more housing types (e.g. family oriented housing), mobility and public realm improvements (e.g. pedestrian 'spine', more green spaces). However, a few people did express their opposition to all cycle paths, central pedestrian 'spine', and any increase in building heights above 4 storeys. This feedback influenced the five Design Strategies:



1 - Establish Character Districts

Identify key districts within the corridor to help structure and manage future change that will:

- Unify - optimize the heritage core area.
- Consolidate - strengthen and compliment existing and future heritage development along Whyte Avenue.
- Sustain - corridor businesses, heritage character and surrounding communities.



2 - Create a Pedestrian 'Spine' through the Whyte Avenue Corridor

Improve corridor north-south mobility and connectivity

- Connect - strengthen corridor connection to North Saskatchewan River Valley system, Queen Alexandra and Strathcona Junction.
- Activate - reallocate existing contra-flow lane along 104 Street to enhance pedestrian public realm, business and event experience.



3 - Improve Active Mode Connectivity

Strengthen Strathcona and Ritchie community connections into the core heritage commercial area, civic spaces and services

- Connect - east-west pedestrian and cycling connections along Gateway Boulevard / 103 Street north and south of Whyte Avenue



4 - Strengthen Public Space

Contemplate future redevelopment of City parking lot adjacent to Farmer's Market and integration of civic spaces

- Explore - consider future options for City lands to support additional open space within the heart of Strathcona and continue to support Farmer's Market (e.g. parking)
- Integrate - stitch existing civic spaces together to provide a more cohesive program and experience for area.



5 - Improve Pedestrian Safety and Access

Enhance pedestrian safety and mobility within the core heritage area utilizing existing alleyways

- Safety - improve alleys within core area to provide greater safety, security, comfort and access during various times of day and events
- Place-making - create opportunities to enhance pedestrians' experience and wayfinding within the core heritage area

LAND USE STRATEGY

Three (3) special character districts (heritage, main street and urbanization) and a shift toward more commercial mixed use were proposed to help guide the transition of Whyte Avenue into a more vibrant, dense, and diverse area. Character districts proposed greater heritage preservation, new development complementary to local heritage, strengthening Whyte Avenue's main street pedestrian environment, and directing more intensive development and density south and off Whyte Avenue.

Stakeholder feedback at the June 2017 open house generally supported these districts. While there was good support for the character districts and more commercial mixed use throughout the study area, there was frequent mention of the need for more family housing, unit types, green and open spaces. More than once people commented on limiting certain types of uses along Whyte Avenue or within the heritage core (e.g. bars, pawn shops, chain stores) and converting (or not) the Farmers' Market parking lot into some form of green or open space.

Districts



- Heritage District**
This area is focused on preservation of existing heritage resources, development complementary to the area, and urban design aimed at strengthening the image, identity and function of civic, park and open spaces.
- Main Street District**
This area allows slightly higher development outside the core heritage commercial area fronting directly on to Whyte Avenue. Buildings provide a human-scale, complement local heritage, and contribute directly to Whyte Avenue's pedestrian-friendly streetscape.
- Urbanization District**
Larger, more intensive development is directed to this area where underutilized parcels, greater servicing, access and opportunity to support surrounding community and business needs can be accommodated over the long-term.

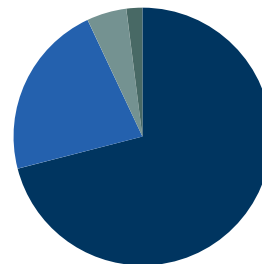
Land Use



- Commercial Mixed Use** - The corridor will remain primarily commercial in use with more opportunity to introduce residential within the corridor.
- Active At-Grade Frontage** - Buildings are designed to promote a high degree of visual and physical interaction at ground-level through use (e.g. retail, restaurants).
- Institutional** - No changes are proposed to the existing complement of institutional or civic use spaces within the corridor.
- Residential** - Existing residential within the corridor that can redevelop complementarily to area district while providing for a greater range of housing option/choice.
- Special Study Area** - City and Provincial owned lands identified for further study into their future role and use within the corridor.
- Open Space** - Public space that may be passive in use and/or actively programmed to accommodate commercial, civic or cultural uses.
- Park Space** - Formal gathering spaces used for civic events, celebration, arts and cultural activities.

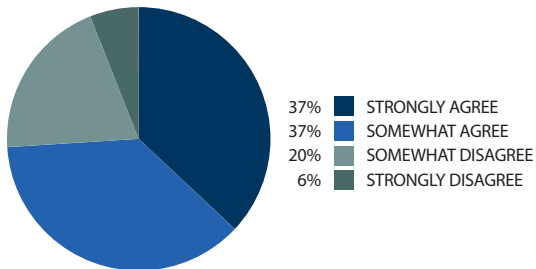
The same concepts were presented at a final open house in December 2017 along with previous public input received and suggested policy recommendations. Results from the open house and online engagement confirmed that stakeholders strongly support the land use strategy and proposed policy recommendations. In particular, there was strong support for complimenting the existing heritage character, strengthening the pedestrian and human scale, directing development south of Whyte Avenue and encouraging more commercial residential mixed-uses along the corridor. The following charts show how people agreed or disagreed with the proposed concepts.

PRESERVE THE EXISTING HERITAGE CORE AREA ON WHYTE AVENUE BY FOCUSING ON DEVELOPMENT THAT COMPLIMENTS AND STRENGTHENS HERITAGE DESIGN AND CHARACTER

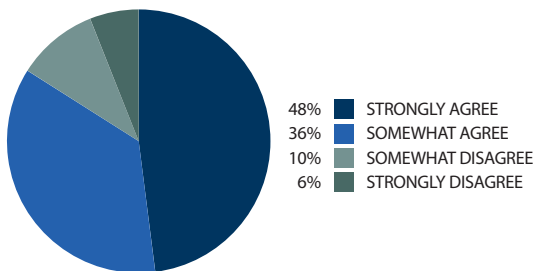


- 71% STRONGLY AGREE
- 22% SOMEWHAT AGREE
- 5% SOMEWHAT DISAGREE
- 2% STRONGLY DISAGREE

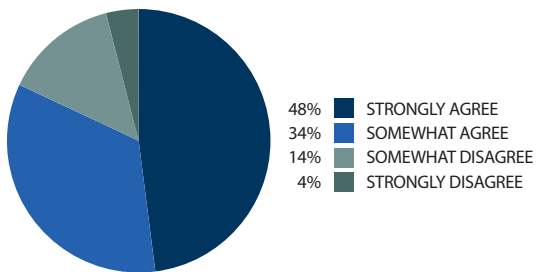
STRENGTHEN WHYTE AVENUE'S PEDESTRIAN MAIN STREET BY ENCOURAGING SLIGHTLY TALLER DEVELOPMENT THAN EXISTS, IS BUILT TO HUMAN-SCALE AND COMPLEMENTS LOCAL HERITAGE



DIRECT INTENSIVE DEVELOPMENT OFF AND SOUTH OF WHYTE AVENUE WHERE UNDERUSED PARCELS SERVICING ACCESS AND OPPORTUNITY EXIST TO BETTER SUPPORT COMMUNITY AND BUSINESS



ENCOURAGING MORE COMMERCIAL-RESIDENTIAL MIXED USED THROUGHOUT THE WHYTE AVENUE CORRIDOR



A SAMPLE OF ADDITIONAL COMMENTS INCLUDE:

“CONSERVING THE CHARACTER WHILE ENHANCING THE PEDESTRIAN EXPERIENCE SHOULD BE TOP PRIORITY.”

“THERE ARE MANY UNUSED LOTS ON BUSY ROADS THAT CAN ACCOMODATE APARTMENTS AND CONDOMINIUMS.”

“WHYTE LACK HOUSING OPTIONS - IT HAS BEEN PRIMARILY SFH AND OLDER RENTAL APARTMENTS”

“COMPARED TO OTHER URBAN AREAS IN EDMONTON LIKE OLIVER AND DOWNTOWN IT OFFERS VERY LITTLE CHOICE IN NEWER MULTI-FAMILY BUILDINGS. SOUTHPARK, THE MEZZO AND THE RAYMOND BLOCK ARE EXCELLENT AND LONG-OVERDUE STEPS TO IMPROVING THIS. AND I HOPE THAT PLAN WHYTE WILL ENCOURAGE MORE PROJECTS OF THAT TYPE.”

“THIS PROJECT IS RESPECTFULLY TRYING TO COMBINE OLD STRATHCONA’S HERITAGE AND CORE VALUES WITH THE REALITIES OF A GROWING AND DYNAMIC CITY.”



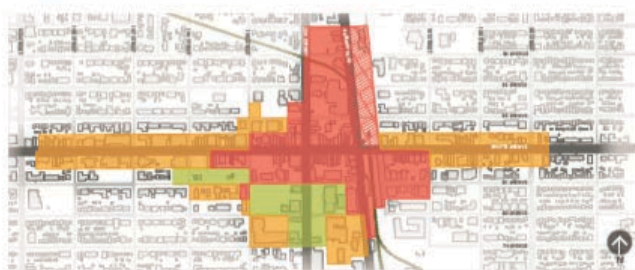
BUILT FORM

Building height has been a critical element of this study. Three height zones were presented as part of an overall strategy to manage the impact of building heights. The first zone would maintain existing heights within the core heritage commercial area at 15 metres or approximately 4 storeys. This would preserve a sense of enclosure, scale and character within the heritage core. A second zone would propose a slight increase outside from approximately 102 Street east and 105 Street west along Whyte Avenue at 21 metres (approximately 6 storeys) allowing for modest redevelopment and pedestrian oriented scale to remain.

A third zone would designate to accommodate potential demand for more intensive development south of Whyte Avenue where there is vacant and underutilized lands. This strategy reflected earlier public input and general support received from the third open house despite some controversy over tall building design, impact and contribution to the community.

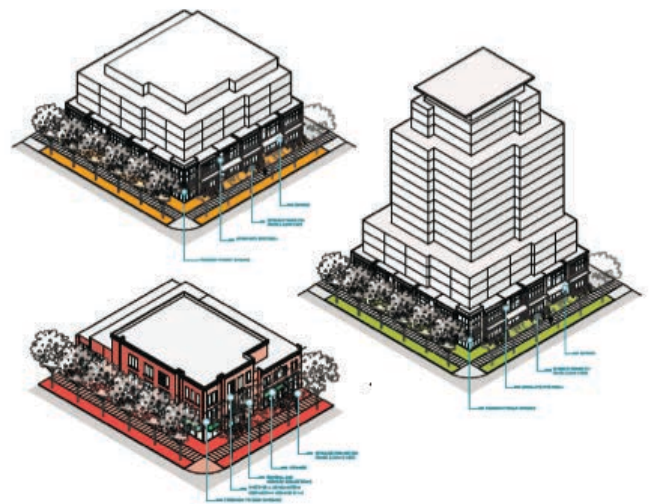
Respondents were asked about height limits within and outside the commercial area along with shadowing on Whyte Avenue. The majority of respondents either strongly or somewhat agreed with all the proposed height limits.

Height Strategy

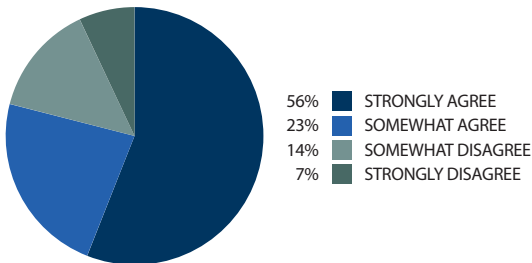


Building Height Strategy
 To maintain the traditional scale of Whyte Avenue, existing building height permissions have been generally retained within the core heritage commercial area. Further east and west along Whyte Avenue, a slight increase in height is proposed to accommodate future redevelopment of underused space that will strengthen and expand the pedestrian-oriented nature of this main street. The greatest intensity of development is proposed south off of Whyte Avenue to limit the impacts of taller buildings (e.g. shadowing, wind) through appropriate design and transition to the surrounding area.

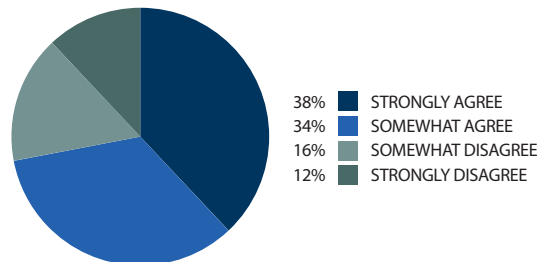
Building Design



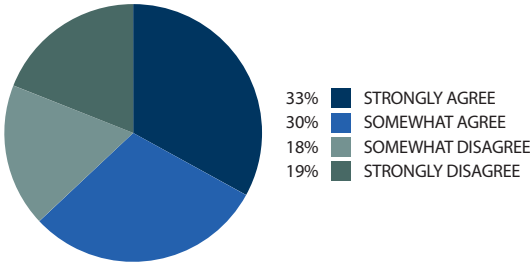
LIMIT HEIGHTS TO 15 METRES (APPROXIMATELY 4 STOREYS) ALONG WITHIN WHYTE AVENUE'S CORE HERITAGE AREA



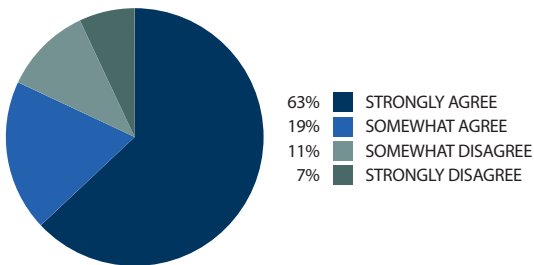
LIMIT HEIGHTS TO 21 METRES (APPROXIMATELY 6 STOREYS) OUTSIDE THE WHYTE AVENUE CORE HERITAGE AREA AND TRANSITION TO SURROUNDING RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBOURHOODS



LIMIT HEIGHTS TO 50 METRES
(APPROXIMATELY 16 STOREYS) OFF AND
SOUTH OF WHYTE AVENUE WITH THE
EXCEPTION OF PROPERTIES ALREADY
SPECIFICALLY ZONED



LIMIT THE AMOUNT OF SHADOWING ON
WHYTE AVENUE TO THE SAME LEVEL AS
EXISTING 4 STOREY BUILDINGS



A number of people elaborated on concerns with taller buildings or significantly increased heights. For example, those that wanted to limit tall buildings felt that increased “heights will block winter sunlight on the avenue and further create a canyon effect visually and in terms of wind ...” or that “...shadows will change feel of this area”. Others in favor of tall buildings said “Allow for density. People want to live here...” or felt the “proposed height limits in general are too low. Whyte [Avenue] can and should accommodate taller buildings and higher density. Impacts of taller buildings can be mitigated through design and setbacks”. One respondent summarized both the challenge and the opportunity, stating:

“I DO WORRY THE 50M MAY BE TOO TALL SOUTH OF WHYTE IN TERMS OF SUN IMPACT (DEC 21 NOT JUST SEPT 21) AND STREET FEEL, BUT DENSITY IS IMPORTANT FOR THE AREA TO CONTINUE TO THRIVE AS PARKING LOTS ARE TRANSFORMED INTO REAL PLACES. MAKE SURE THE TALLER BUILDINGS FEEL INTERESTING AND HUMAN-SCALE AT THE STREET AND THAT THESE DO NOT CUT OFF THE NEIGHBORHOODS TO THE SOUTH IN TERMS OF WALKABILITY.”



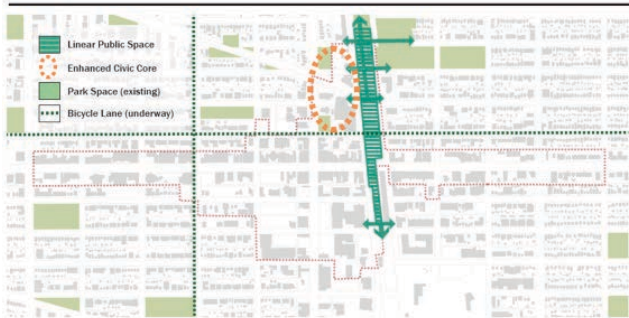
PUBLIC REALM

A strong public realm underpins the human experience of place. Well designed civic and community spaces, parks and open spaces were identified as important aspects that contribute to Whyte Avenue's heritage character and sense of place. In response to this, two main public realm strategies were presented - a Linear Public Space and Enhanced Civic Core shown below.

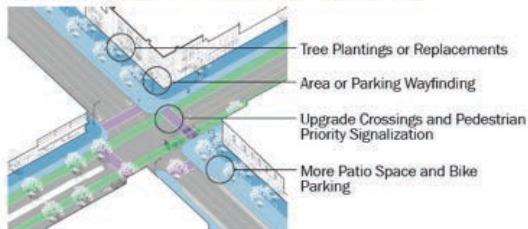
The Linear Public Space would encompass lands along the east side of 103 Street (Gateway Trail) from 80 Avenue to 86 Avenue. This strategy would provide additional open spaces for local community and festival use, improved pedestrian and cycling connectivity and mobility, and vehicle parking for local area businesses north and south of Whyte Avenue. A special study to confirm these future opportunities would be further required.

A second public realm strategy proposed would be an Enhanced Civic Core area to reinforce and strengthen Old Strathcona's image, identity and sense of place within the heart of the commercial area. Public realm improvements would be used to improve underutilized, vacant and or disconnected spaces north of Whyte Avenue generally between 104 Street (Calgary Trail) and 103 Street (Gateway Trail) from 83 Avenue to 86 Avenue. An urban design master plan and program would expand this public realm in this area in relation to existing heritage buildings, arts and cultural spaces.

Civic, Park and Open Space

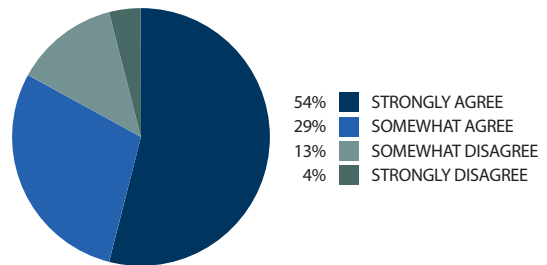


Example Public Realm Improvements

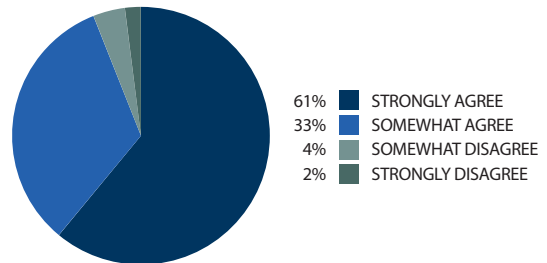


These strategies respond to the public's feedback to better utilize the City of Edmonton owned Farmer's Market parking lot, consider additional open space to support families and general connectivity for active modes (i.e. walking, cycling) that will become increasingly important as the population increases. They also recognize the need to improve pedestrian safety (especially crossings) providing additional options to connect, move within, and experience the corridor.

UNDERTAKE A SPECIAL STUDY TO EXPLORE FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES SUCH AS A LINEAR PUBLIC SPACE FOR THE FARMERS MARKET PARKING LOT OWNED BY THE CITY



ENHANCE THE DESIGN AND CONNECTIVITY OF CIVIC AND CULTURAL SPACES NORTH OF WHYTE AVENUE



One respondent questioned the need for the parking, while another cautioned against losing Market parking spaces. Interest in exploring the repurposing of the area was captured by one respondent in particular who suggested the area "could be transformed into a multi-use and much needed public green space...[with] cleverly designed functional spaces for festivals, theatre, a sculpture park, fountains, skating and pop-up markets".

MOBILITY

The ability and ease of which many people are able to move through and within the Whyte Avenue commercial area will be crucial to its long-term success. A Pedestrian ‘Spine’ was presented north-south along the east side of 104 Street (Calgary Trail). This would replace the existing underutilized contra-flow lane, free up sidewalk space for patios immediately adjacent within the core heritage commercial area, and connect pedestrians more easily to/from Edmonton’s river valley, Old Strathcona, and Queen Alexandra neighbourhood. In addition, an enhanced ‘Alley Network’ is proposed centrally within the plan Whyte study area to improve pedestrian safety, comfort and connectivity.

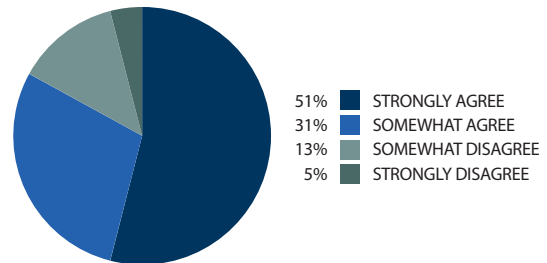
Lastly, a series of east-west connections for pedestrians and cyclists at 86, 85, 84 and 80 Avenues between 103 Street and 102 Street were presented. The aim is to provide improved access and connection within the neighbourhood to area businesses, local events and festivals, parks and open spaces while discouraging traffic-shortcutting. A west-only vehicle access was also proposed for 80 Avenue onto Gateway Trail in order to provide residents of Ritchie an alternative neighbourhood exit an ability to access local businesses and services.

Responses from the third open house were supportive of a pedestrian ‘Spine’, an Alley Network, wider sidewalks, increased pedestrian traffic safety measures, and more pedestrian crossings. Providing for seniors parking in the core area and consideration of keeping the contra-flow lane for buses was also noted.

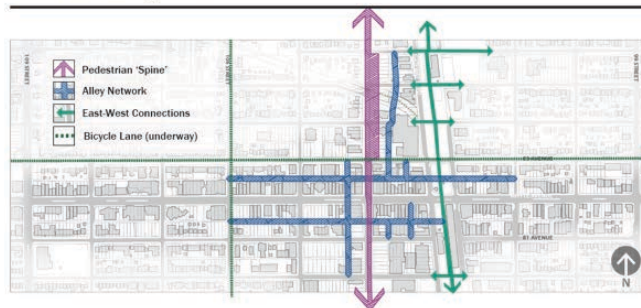
Example of Mobility Improvements



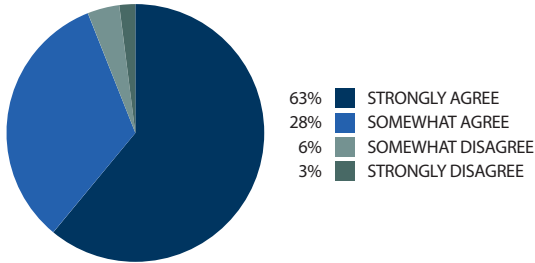
IMPROVE NORTH-SOUTH PEDESTRIAN TRAVEL THROUGH WHYTE AVENUE USING THE EXISTING CONTRA-FLOW LANE ALONG 104 STREET / CALGARY TRAIL TO CREATE A PEDESTRIAN ‘SPINE’.



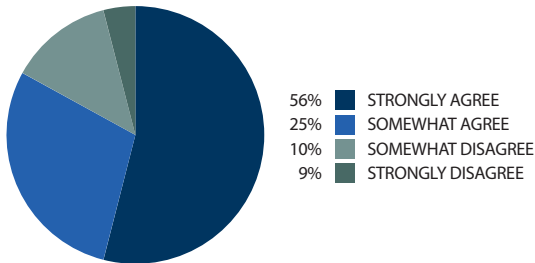
Active Transportation



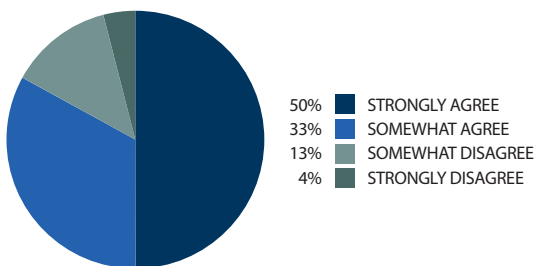
IMPROVE PEDESTRIAN SAFETY AND CONNECTIVITY WITHIN THE CORE HERITAGE AREA THROUGH A SERIES OF ALLEY WAY ENHANCEMENTS AND/OR IMPROVEMENTS.



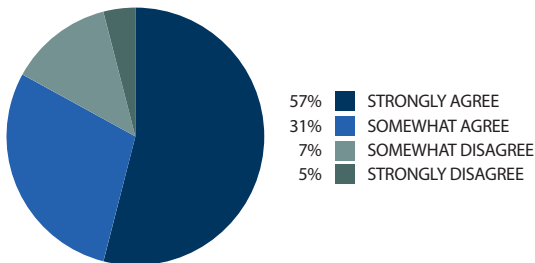
IMPROVE BOTH PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLING SAFETY AND CONNECTIVITY THROUGH A SERIES OF EAST-WEST CONNECTIONS AT 86, 85, 84 AND 80 AVENUES.



INCREASE TRANSIT FREQUENCY AND SHELTER IMPROVEMENTS.



IMPROVE TRAFFIC SIGNAL OPERATIONS AND CAR-PARKING WAYFINDING TO LIMIT IMPACT OF VEHICLES WITHIN CORE AREA AND SURROUNDING NEIGHBOURHOODS.



The 104 Street contra-flow lane generated a lot of additional comments in support of improvements for pedestrians as well as improvements for cycling although one respondent stated “the benefit an alternative use for this street would provide to the community would have to be significant for the inconvenience of limiting vehicles”.

Parking also generated some additional comments. Those who felt parking should be maintained at current levels or increased described how it is needed for people visiting the area; that other transportation options aren’t available, efficient or desirable so people need to drive and therefore park; or off-street parking mitigates the impact on-street parking has on those who live in the area. Others expressed less concern about vehicle parking need, as one respondent saw the reduction of “parking minimums in the study area [as a way] to encourage more pedestrian design and affordable housing”. Another saw the potential for higher value uses of repurposed parking lots. The location of parking was also mentioned with “parking near whyte [as] more important than on whyte”.

Respondents that mentioned alleys or the alley way enhancements all saw this as a positive for the Whyte Avenue area. For example:

“ALLEYS ARE AN AMAZING WAY TO ACTIVATE MORE SPACE AT A HUMAN SCALE, AWAY FROM CAR NOISE AND DANGER. I ABSOLUTELY LOVE THE HUMAN-SCALE LIGHTING IN THE ALLEY OF THE NEW CRAWFORD BLOCK AND THE REAR-FACING STORES JUST STARTING TO EMERGE. FOCUS HARD ON THE ALLEYS AND LOOK AT AMAZING IDEAS LIKE “RUELLE VERTE”. WHAT CAN WE DO HERE? ALL OF THESE CHANGES WILL FACE LESS RESISTANCE THAN CHANGES TO WHYTE ITSELF, BUT CAN HOPEFULLY CATALYZE FURTHER CHANGES TO WHYTE ITSELF.”

“...DEVELOPMENT OF DESTINATION RETAIL/RESTAURANT OFFERINGS IN THE ALLEYS IS PROBABLY SOMETHING THAT ONLY OLD STRATHCONA CAN PULL OFF”

“INVEST IN THE ALLEYWAYS - SUCH A GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO ADD MORE WALKABILITY AND COMMERCIAL USES TO THE AREA. IT COULD REALLY BECOME A SPECIAL PART OF THE CITY...”

DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT

An overall concept for the Whyte Avenue commercial corridor was created based on the land use, built form, public realm and mobility strategies developed. This is in alignment with the vision and guiding principles confirmed by the public and illustrates what the application of these ideas could achieve 25 years into the future. While the concept provides a general representation of a potential physical outcome, it is heavily dependent on implementation of study findings, favorable market conditions, landowner participation, and an engaged and supportive community.

Proposed Concept



Land Use

- ① Character Districts - Three major districts or character areas are proposed to guide future development
- ② Land Uses - Commercial focus with more emphasis on residential and a Special Study Area identified for City and Provincial lands

Built Form

- ③ Height Strategy - Maintain existing heights within core area (15m), slight increase on Whyte (21m), and tall buildings off Whyte (50m).
- ④ Building Design - Attention to mass, form/shape, articulation/detail, and transition/fit with surrounding area.

Public Realm

- ⑤ Linear Public Space - Multi-purpose Community/City space (e.g. green space, civic, commercial use) informed by Special Study.
- ⑥ Civic Heritage Core - Improve design and connection between existing historic buildings and spaces within the core area.

Mobility

- ⑦ Pedestrian "Spine" - Removal of contra-flow lane south of 83 Avenue and expansion of pedestrian public realm connecting Edmonton's River Valley, Old Strathcona, and Queen Alex neighbourhood.
- ⑧ Alley Network - A series of alley enhancements within the central core area to improve pedestrian safety, comfort and experience throughout the day and during special events.
- ⑨ East-West Connections - New/improved pedestrian and cycling access at 86th, 85th, 84th, and 80th Avenues along Gateway Boulevard and 102 Street that improves access and connectivity.



Encourage commercial mixed use within corridor



Maintain low heights on Whyte Avenue



Explore special study area opportunities for City lands



Ensure quality building design supports local heritage



Re-connect civic and cultural spaces through urban design



Improve walking and cycling safety and connectivity



Support more public space within central corridor area

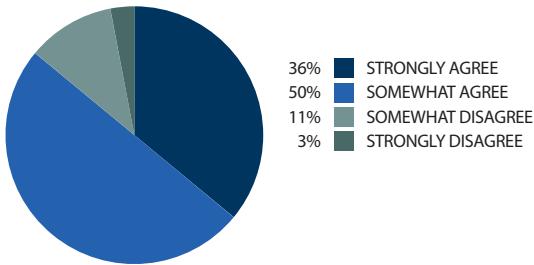


Focus on sustainable transportation and design

Respondents from the third open house generally supported the overall Development Concept and direction of the study findings. There was a strong focus on the need for active mode improvements that would improve the area as well as support for more, taller buildings. More than once the concept was cited as people friendly and attractive. However, there remained concern over tall buildings and impact of shadows on the north side of Whyte Avenue.

At the final open house and through the online survey, participants were asked to rate their level of agreement with the study concept overall. Eighty-six percent of respondents agreed with the concept. This provides a positive snapshot of endorsement for the overall Development Concept, and by extension, the feedback and input that led to it throughout the public engagement process.

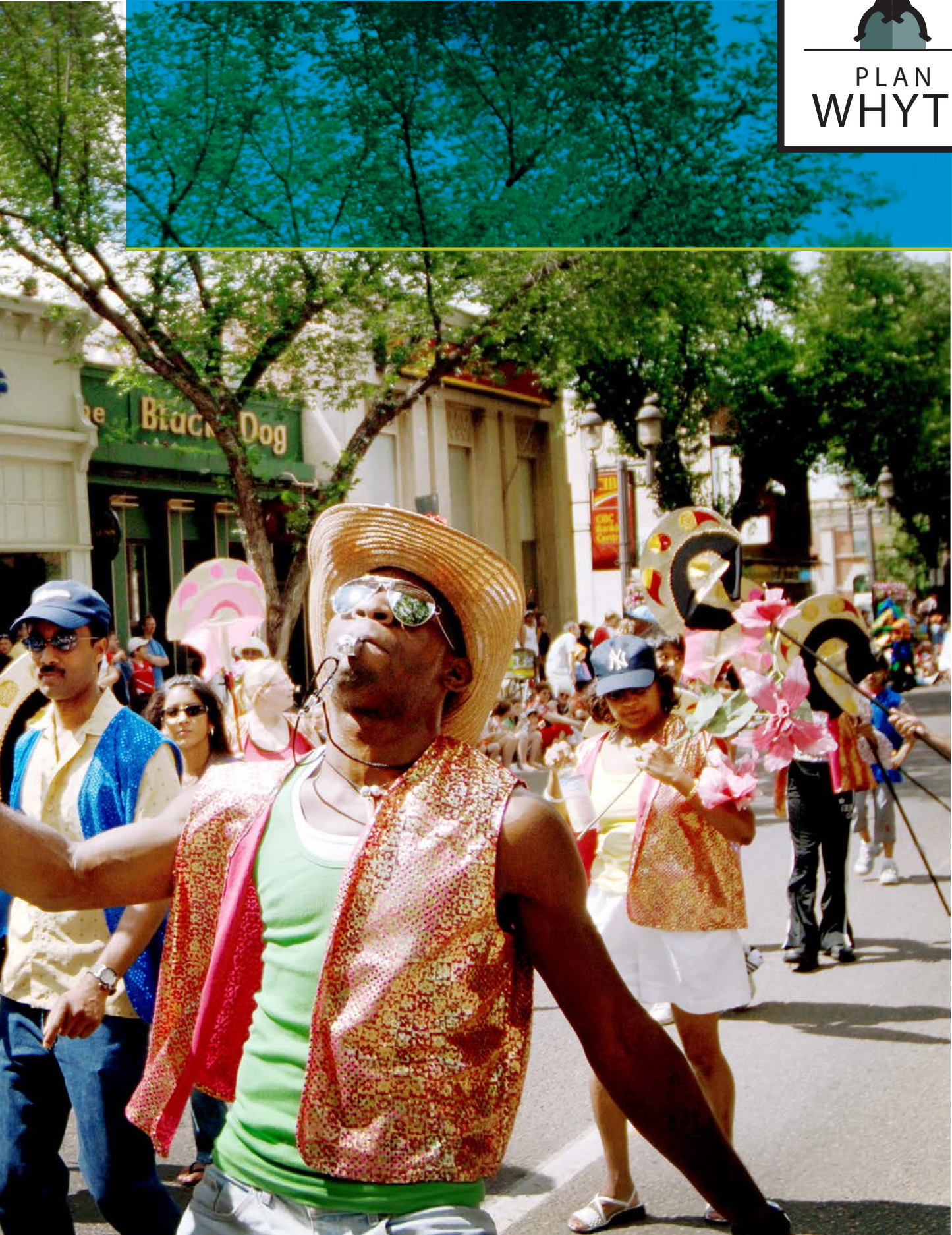
OVERALL STUDY CONCEPT



Additional comments provided by participants and online respondents generally connected to the themes mentioned above. Examples of comments included the importance of local and independent businesses; not neglecting the needs of residents and rentals and different segments of the population that pass through or access services or amenities in the area (everyone from families to the homeless population); and the coordination/consideration for other planning, development and projects. This last thought came through in a variety of different comments that can be summarized as follows:

- Respondents referenced other work or development that they saw could be coordinated considered or complemented; for example the 109 Street Corridor Study, the Bateman development on 99 Street and Strathcona Neighbourhood Renewal.
- A couple of respondents shared concern for Council’s decision regarding Mezzo and Southpark and its impact on the planWhyte Study.
- The Centre LRT was also mentioned. While some were opposed or concerned others talked about the benefits and need to integrate the Centre LRT: “Any future considerations for Whyte Avenue should integrate plans for the Centre LRT line and its prospective stops”; “The integration of the Centre LRT line will provide many opportunities for the area.”







DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT



VISION

Preserve and strengthen the corridor's existing core heritage commercial area and character while ensuring new development supports a compact built form and pedestrian-oriented environment. Manage future growth in support of surrounding communities and local businesses through improved connections, active modes of transportation, and locating higher, more intensive development south of Whyte Avenue.

This approach recognizes the importance of Whyte Avenue's heritage character and traditional main street feel and function. Existing opportunities to redevelop within the area, along with some additional development opportunity east and west of the core will help preserve the area's heritage character and long-term viability. More intensive development will be directed south of Whyte Avenue toward existing vacant and underutilized properties. Future growth and redevelopment pressure will be managed more effectively and limit the impacts of tall buildings on Whyte Avenue providing greater certainty and stability to surrounding neighbourhoods.

New investment, along with improvements to public realm and active modes (i.e. pedestrian and cycling), will provide surrounding communities and visitors to the corridor a more positive environment, greater sense of certainty, safety and stability. Over time, this will preserve the physical and heritage character of Whyte Avenue, provide more housing choice, strengthen local business, and enhance the long-term livability and success of the corridor.



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. ACKNOWLEDGE THE WHYTE AVENUE CORRIDOR AREA WILL CONTINUE TO EVOLVE OVER THE LONG TERM

Future community growth is expected and management of development pressure within the corridor will be necessary. The Whyte Avenue commercial area will continue to evolve over time in response to community needs, market conditions and private or public investment. This study envisions change that will preserve the heritage character of the area, strengthen local business, meet the long-term needs of the community and policy aspirations of the city.

2. PRESERVE AND STRENGTHEN THE HERITAGE AND CHARACTER OF THE CORRIDOR

The existing Provincial Historic Area and core heritage commercial area will be strengthened through a combination of additional land use and urban design policies.

3. ENSURE NEW INFILL AND REDEVELOPMENT IS APPROPRIATELY LOCATED AND SCALED TO BOTH MAIN STREET AND SURROUNDING COMMUNITY.

Whyte Avenue's traditional main street and heritage character will be preserved by locating more intensive change away from the core heritage commercial area and applying fundamental principles of urban design (i.e. building form, mass, transition) to integrate and 'fit' development.

4. IMPROVE MOBILITY AND CONNECTIVITY WITHIN THE CORRIDOR AND TO SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES

New east-west and north-south connections within the corridor will relieve multimodal pressure on Whyte Avenue, and create more, safer options for active transportation modes like pedestrians and cyclists. A combination of pedestrian and cycling improvements, connectivity and amenities will enhance mobility options in addition to transit while encouraging further modal shift toward more complete streets.

5. ENHANCE THE PEDESTRIAN PUBLIC REALM AND PLACE-MAKING OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN THE CORRIDOR

As the commercial area continues to evolve over time, it is important for new development to contribute to the area's distinct sense of place, while creating active streetscapes, public spaces and connections. The pedestrian environment and overall experience will be improved through attention to design quality and opportunities to access and connect into Whyte Avenue. Improvements to public spaces, how they integrate with and connect to each other will strengthen Whyte Avenue's image, identity and sense of place over time.

6. PURSUE SUSTAINABLE, URBAN DESIGN EXCELLENCE

New development within the Whyte Avenue commercial area will adopt a standard of design excellence that will complement the neighbourhood and enhance the heritage character and image of the community overtime. A focus on sustainable development locations, patterns, forms and materials that respect the heritage area, revitalize underutilised parcels and parking lots, introduce a mix of uses and housing density will all be used to manage future growth, community needs and design expectations.

DESIGN STRATEGIES

The following key design strategies advance the corridor vision, guiding principles and policy objectives.

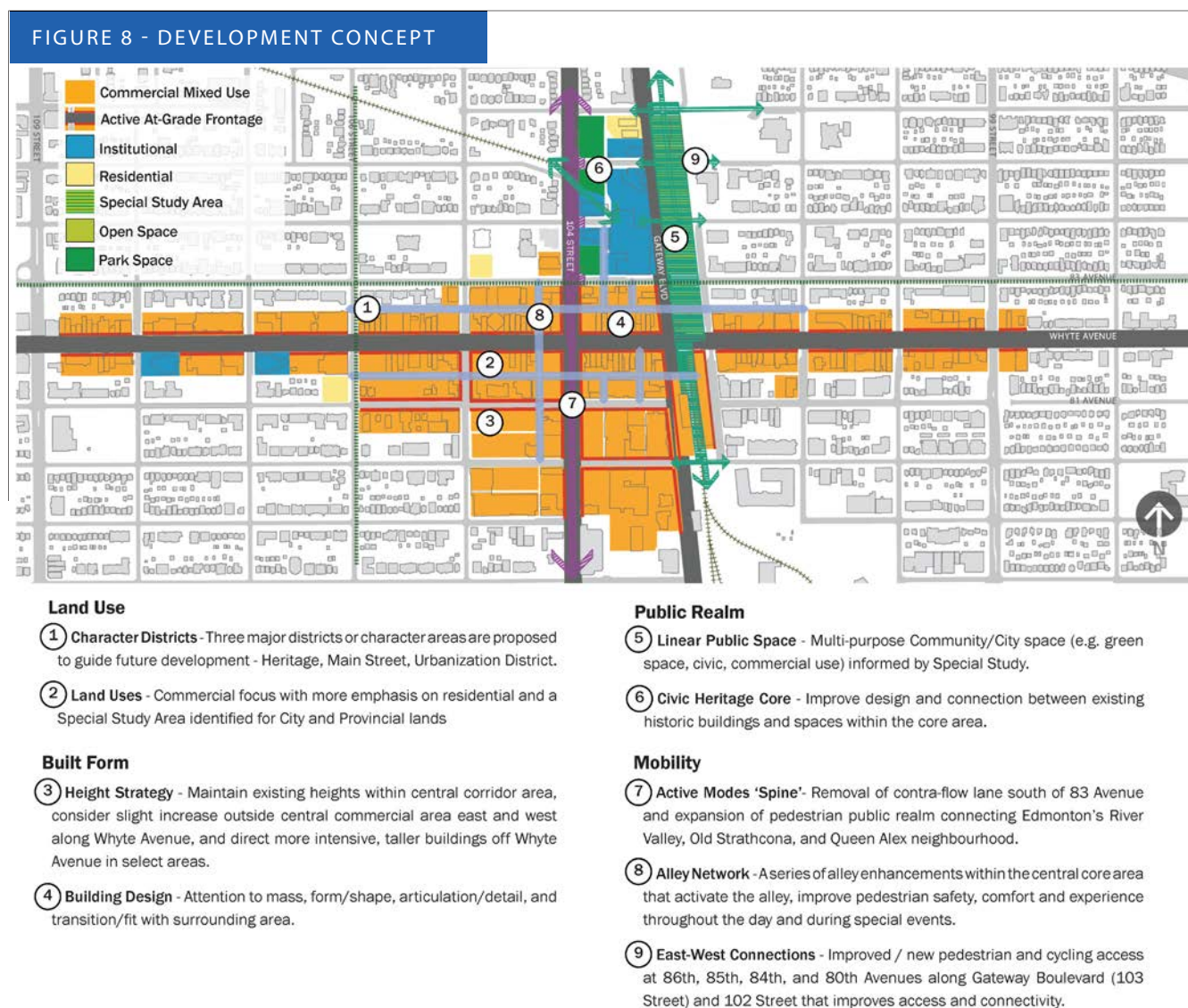
1. Positive sense of place is maintained for the Whyte Avenue corridor by preserving solar access and local heritage resources, strengthening the pedestrian-oriented main street and residential base for local businesses through new character districts.
2. New north-south pedestrian 'Spine' through the corridor connects Whyte Avenue directly to the North Saskatchewan River Valley System, Light Horse Park and existing businesses south of the core area including the Queen Alexandra neighbourhood.
3. Enhanced east-west pedestrian and cycling connections at 80th, 84th, 85th, and 86th Avenues to permit active mode accessibility between 102 Street and Gateway Boulevard (103 Street) to strengthen connections within Strathcona and to the Ritchie neighbourhood.
4. Public spaces are strengthened through urban design better linking civic and cultural spaces within the core area and in consideration of future options for the City owned Farmer's Market parking lot.
5. Activated alley network and public realm enhancements in support of alternative retail space, increased pedestrian safety, comfort and connectivity within the core heritage commercial area.



DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT

The Development Concept illustrates what the application of study findings and design strategies could look like 25 years into the future if a majority of build-out and improvements occurred. While it is a representation of a potential physical outcome of the implementation of study findings, actual

development within the corridor is subject to change during this time period. Figure 8 - Development Concept depicts an envisioned future in terms of applied land use, built form, public realm and mobility strategies.



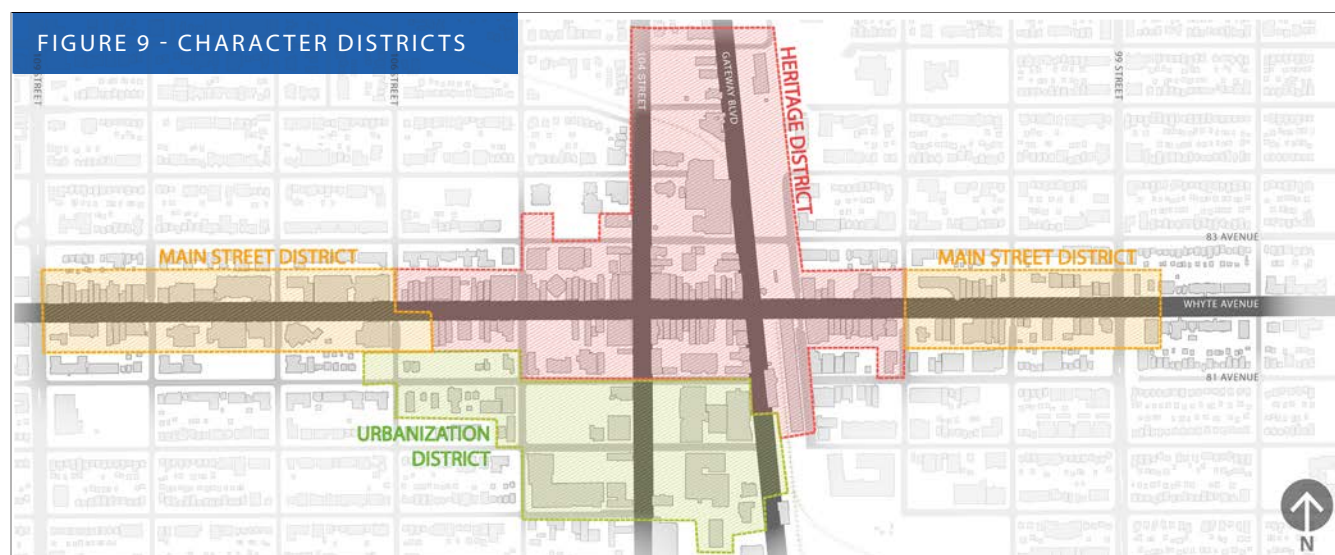
POLICY OBJECTIVES

The Policy Objectives set out guidance for the Character Districts, Land Use, Built Form, Public Realm, and Mobility components necessary to implement the Development Concept and realize the vision for the corridor. The following section provides a description of key policy objectives that will help transform and evolve the Whyte Avenue commercial area.

CHARACTER DISTRICTS

Three character districts and a shift toward more commercial-residential mixed land uses will guide the transition of Whyte Avenue into a more dense, diverse and well connected community. Additional emphasis is placed on pedestrian-oriented main street development on Whyte Avenue, and the greatest concentration of potential change and density directed south of Whyte Avenue. This serves to strengthen the area's heritage character, main street function and role (e.g. walking, shopping, socializing), and ability to accommodate more intensive development that can help sustain local business and surrounding communities' future needs (see Figure 9 - Character Districts). These Character Districts provide a framework to further focus and pursue more specific design and density intentions. Districts include:

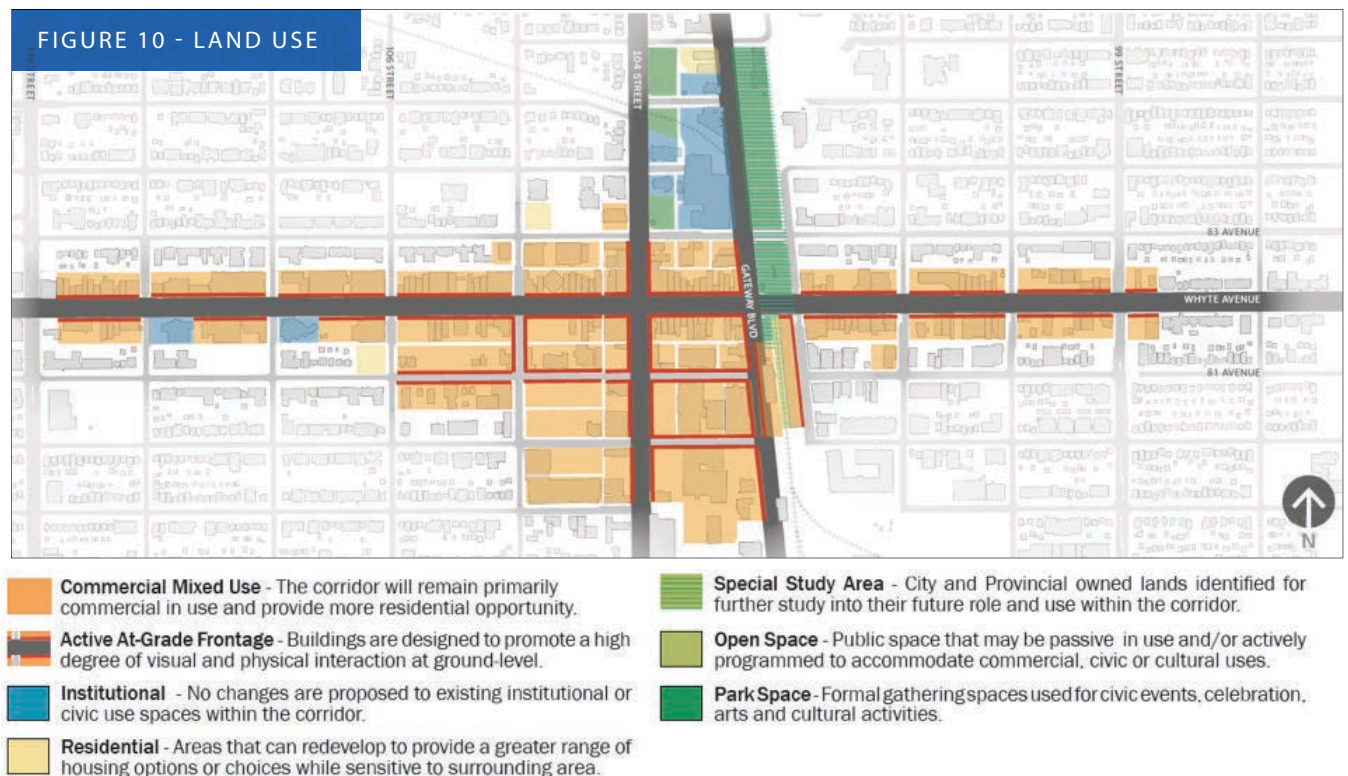
- Heritage District - Focuses on preservation of existing heritage resources and development complementary to the area's history and heritage. Urban design is used to ensure a high quality built form that also strengthens the Provincial Heritage Area, image, identity and function of adjacent heritage buildings, resources, civic, park and open spaces.
- Main Street District - Supports an active pedestrian-oriented mainstreet with slightly higher building heights than allowed within the core heritage commercial area. New development fronts directly on to Whyte Avenue, complements surrounding local heritage, and contributes directly to a pedestrian-oriented streetscape.
- Urbanization District - Directs larger, more intensive development south of Whyte Avenue where underutilized parcels, greater servicing, access and opportunity to support surrounding community and business needs can be accommodated over the long-term. Buildings are of high quality design, materiality, and support a pedestrian-oriented streetscape to facilitate a shift from current auto-oriented development.



LAND USE

The Whyte Avenue commercial area will continue to maintain a pedestrian-oriented retail shopping focus and function. Mixed use commercial-residential will be encouraged within the Whyte Avenue commercial area and active-at-grade frontage along key streets required. Retail frontage is also encouraged within the alleyway network to support small business opportunities and help activate this area as a connective space. In addition to promoting a unique and diverse range of businesses and services for residents and visitors, new residential opportunities in the form of mixed housing types, unit sizes, bedrooms, and affordability will help support students, families and seniors.

Future opportunities for the City of Edmonton owned Farmers Market parking lot will be explored to optimize these and other potential city land holdings. A Special Study is recommended for those lands generally located between 103 Street (Gateway Trail) and 102 Street between 80 Avenue and 86 Avenue to clarify their purpose and future benefit to local community and businesses.



BUILT FORM

The way development is designed in terms of its height, form, massing, and transitions affect neighbourhood character, context, consistency and experience. As the corridor redevelops, more intensive height and density will be directed to the Main Street and Urbanization Districts respectively preserving the role and function of the heritage core area. Buildings will be designed to promote a vibrant and comfortable pedestrian-scaled environment that further complements the area's heritage character.

BUILDING HEIGHTS

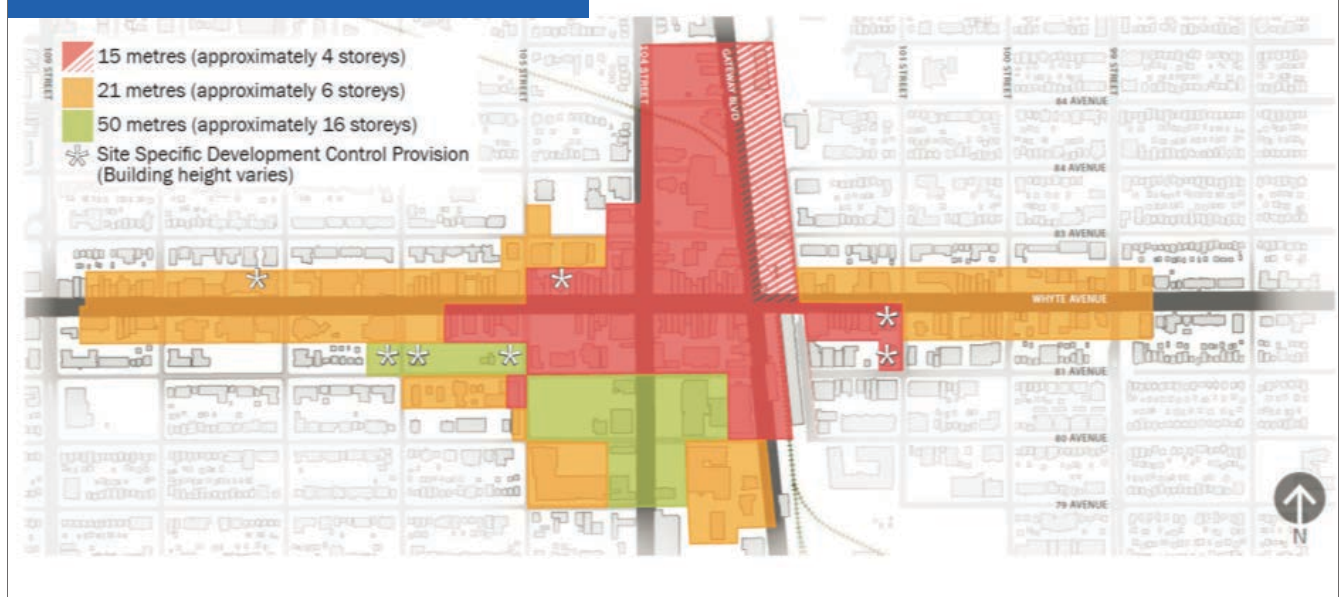
Height forms only one quality or aspect of a building that contributes to its perceived experience and value. This is further informed (or constrained) by its physical site and surrounding context in which height must be thoughtfully considered. Suggested building heights within the Whyte Avenue commercial area are shown in Figure 11 - Building Height Strategy. These respond to existing community context and input as well as future growth. The strategy recognizes both the importance and limitation of building height to protect heritage resources within the corridor, desire to accommodate future growth, and ensure such change can be best supported in ways that contribute to the long-term vibrancy of the broader community.

To maintain the traditional scale of Whyte Avenue, existing building height permissions are proposed to be maintained

within the core heritage commercial area at 15 metres which also aligns with the Heritage District. Further east and west along Whyte Avenue, a slight increase in building height to 21 metres is proposed to accommodate future redevelopment of underused space that will strengthen and expand the pedestrian-oriented nature of the Main Street District.

The greatest intensity of building development and height up to 50 metres is proposed South of Whyte Avenue within the Urbanization District to limit the impacts of taller buildings (e.g. shadowing, wind, view) on Whyte Avenue. A substantial amount of building height is provided within the Urbanization District to develop with, provided proposals demonstrate fit with the corridor's vision and guiding principles, appropriately address building design (i.e. mass, transition, shadowing, wind, views, heritage character), and provide community benefits to accommodate more people living in the area (e.g. dwelling units with three or more bedrooms, contributions in support of Child Care Services, preservation of Historic Resources, public art). There should be flexibility in maximum heights considered within the Urbanization District where buildings proposed over 50 metres respond to their particular site size and context. These proposals should include customized design solutions to mitigate issues of shadowing (especially of the Whyte Avenue corridor), wind impact and massing while demonstrating an even higher performance standard for the pedestrian experience and including a significant commitment to principles of good urban design and winter city design, the quality of active-at-grade frontage, and contributions to community amenities.

FIGURE 11 - BUILDING HEIGHT STRATEGY



MASSING AND TRANSITIONS

Where a limited range of heights are provided along Whyte Avenue, opportunity exists for much more intensive development and height south of the avenue from 106 Street to 103 Street. However, tall buildings within the Urbanization District require careful massing and transition. This will allow for a more sensitive transition to surrounding buildings, streets and open spaces as well as opportunity to mitigate shadow, wind, view and heritage impacts directly on Whyte Avenue. While it is important to support a greater diversity of housing, local businesses and services, there is also a strong desire to maintain Old Strathcona's image, identity and character as new development is added.

A number of techniques can be used to provide appropriate transition between buildings. These include the setback of buildings from a property line, stepback of upper portions of a building, smaller building floorplates, separation and offset of a portion of a building from another. The visual and physical impacts of taller buildings can often be mitigated or adequately addressed using these techniques. Regulations under the recently approved Main Streets Overlay help ensure these principles are addressed and strengthen the pedestrian-oriented character of Edmonton's main street commercial areas. Key regulations that apply to the Whyte Avenue commercial area include:

Building Setbacks

- Buildings built to the front property line where there is a minimum distance of 4.7 metres from curb to property line
- Buildings set back 1.0 metre from the front property line in cases where there is not a minimum distance of 4.7 metres from curb to property line. This may be increased to 2.5 metres to accommodate street related activities at the discretion of the Development Officer

Building Stepback

- Any portion of a building that exceeds 14.5 metres have a stepback of 4.5 metres from the building facade facing a public roadway

Building Articulation

- The maximum frontage width shall be 11.0 metres so as to break the appearance and overall massing of the building

Other factors to be considered during submission of applications include building to the side lots lines in consideration of maintaining streetwall face, smaller building floorplates, separation and/or offset of a portion of a building from another.

WIND

The existing built form of the plan Whyte study area is varied, with height typically between 1 - 4 storeys. A variety of heights along a block length reduces ground-level wind speeds. The current conditions on Whyte Avenue are typically suitable for standing or sitting in both the summer and winter seasons, which benefits year-round patios and gathering spaces. As new development applications for tall buildings are proposed, wind analyses should be required to evaluate their impact and cumulative effect during site specific zoning or at development permit stage with conventional zoning prior to approval.

VIEWS

The Whyte Avenue corridor has a large percentage of sky view which is caused by both narrow and low built form. Limited increases in height on Whyte Avenue will preserve an adequate sky view while enabling more intense development off Whyte Avenue.

Key horizontal views should also be maintained in order to enhance and preserve the legibility of the area. Important views include those to heritage buildings, public spaces, landmarks and destinations. In the Whyte Avenue area, views to the historic CPR train station, the Strathcona Hotel, and buildings with towers or cupolas (especially the post office, Dominion Hotel and Walterdale Theatre) are some of the most popular views. Consideration of views along Whyte Avenue should be assessed early on during the development proposal stage to prevent significant impact or potential loss.

HERITAGE CHARACTER

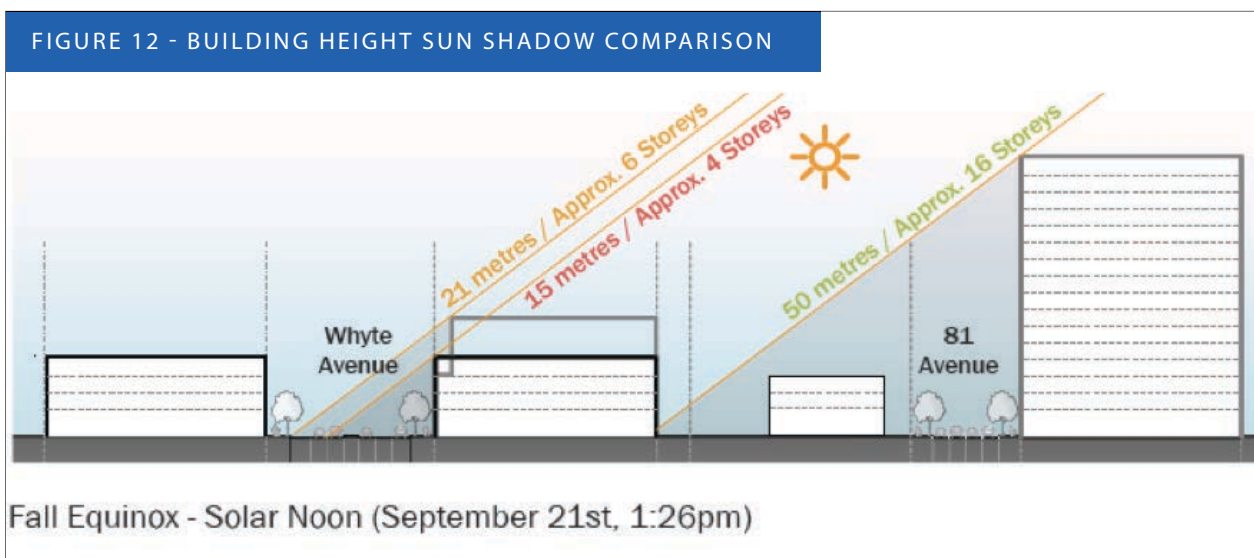
The integration of new development within established architectural character must be carefully considered in order to not compromise the uniqueness of the area. However, this does not necessarily mean that buildings taller than existing structures are detrimental to that established character. New and taller buildings can be designed in ways that complement and enhance existing heritage, but many considerations must be made to their individual sites and adjacent contexts to achieve this.

In the planWhyte study area, the established height of buildings in the core heritage commercial area and Provincial Historic Area has been identified as the most significant element to retaining historic character. The existing height limit of four storeys ensures that any new development within the planWhyte study area is of a scale consistent with that of the historic built environment.

In all cases, impacts on existing structures and the public realm within the core commercial area and the Provincial Historic Area (e.g. built form and massing, transition, materiality, sun-shadow impact) need to be considered, with particular attention paid to structures that are designated Municipal or Provincial Historic Resources, or are listed on the Inventory of Historic Resources in Edmonton. New or redeveloped buildings should be required to provide design features to properly integrate them into the established character of the area and minimize impact on the adjacent Provincial Heritage Area properties. For example, by having the upper storeys of a building stepped back, complementary streetwall, rhythm, facade elements and materiality.

SUN-SHADOW ANALYSIS

The planWhyte study proposes no new shadow be allowed in any one spot on the north sidewalk of Whyte Avenue between the spring and autumn equinoxes (March 21 to September 21). Any building within the Whyte Avenue commercial area that proposes a height greater than 21 metres should be required to submit a sun shadow analysis. Preserving solar access along Whyte Avenue will help encourage greater outdoor activity during spring and fall seasons. In Figure 12 - Building Height Sun Shadow Comparison, a cross section of buildings located within Heritage, Main Street, and Urbanization Districts illustrates how different building heights can be achieved without reducing sunlight along the north sidewalk of Whyte Avenue all day long between the spring and autumn equinoxes at solar noon (i.e. highest position of sun during daytime).



PUBLIC REALM

A high quality public realm is one that offers a range of experiences that contribute to local identity, livability and character of a neighbourhood. This includes not only public open spaces and parks, but streets and alleyways too. Focus on well designed spaces encourages active modes of travel, transit ridership, shopping and tourism by making journeys and visits more enjoyable. Civic and community spaces, parks and open space offer residents and visitors an opportunity to experience Old Strathcona's heritage, arts and culture, to sit, relax, and socialize with others. As the local and surrounding population increases over the next 25 years, increased pressure and demand for public spaces and amenities will rise. Future consideration should be given to ensuring a high quality public realm is provided in support of local community, business and city image as Alberta's capital. Two major public realm strategies are identified.

LINEAR PUBLIC SPACE

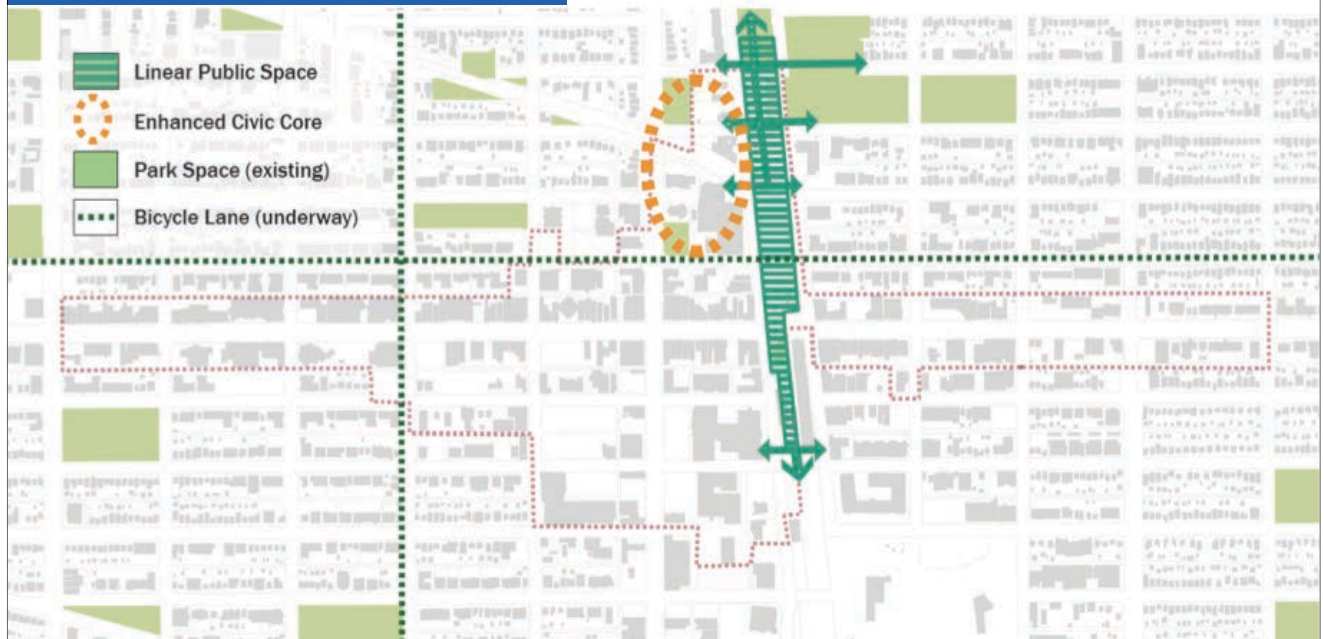
An integrated linear public space offers to provide a range of uses for lands currently vacant and/or underutilized within the heart of Old Strathcona and gateway to Edmonton's river valley and downtown. These include Provincial, city and even

privately owned lands generally located between 103 Street (Gateway Trail) and 102 Street from 86 Avenue to 80 Avenue. There is a strong desire to clarify the future of these lands on behalf of the Farmer's Market, Old Strathcona Business Association, Fringe Festival, and local community. Opportunity exists to explore new ideas and confirm future uses for these lands that may include additional open spaces for community use, special events and festivals, limited commercial, improved pedestrian and cycling connectivity, High Level Streetcar visibility and awareness, and retention of parking space for local area businesses. Upon completion of a special study, it is expected that results will inform a subsequent design programme and capital improvements plan for this area.

ENHANCED CIVIC CORE

An Enhanced Civic Core will improve the overall design integration and connection between existing historic buildings, cultural spaces and uses immediately north of Whyte Avenue west of 103 Street (Gateway Trail). The intent is to stitch together disconnected spaces such as Light Horse Park, CP rail right-of-way, parking lots, Strathcona Streetcar Barn & Museum Terminal, local theatres etc so they function cohesively as a place, and support each other. This will further strengthen Old Strathcona's image, identity and sense of place.

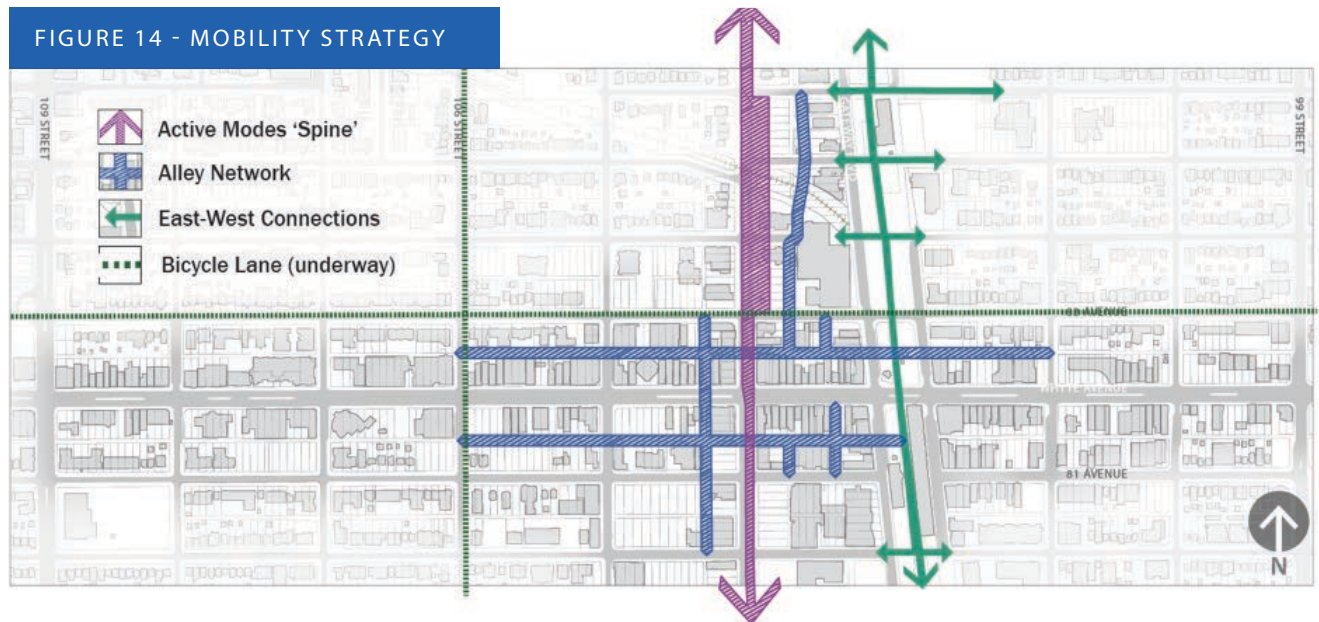
FIGURE 13 - PUBLIC REALM STRATEGY



MOBILITY

The mobility network sets the tone for the evolution of Whyte Avenue into a more pedestrian-friendly main street that supports and connects local businesses and surrounding neighbourhoods. By integrating land use, a well design public realm, and transportation modes in support of complete streets within the study area, a more sustainable, accessible, safe, and economically viable Whyte Avenue corridor can be

achieved. While transportation improvements were not the primary focus of the planWhyte land use study, a number of strategies were identified in response to issues identified either through technical report or stakeholder feedback during the public engagement process. Combined, these strategies aim to provide better mobility options, connections, safety and enjoyment while creating opportunities for reconnecting and re-stitching surrounding communities, civic and public spaces.



ACTIVE MODES 'SPINE'

An active modes 'Spine' is proposed north-south along the east side of 104 Street / Calgary Trail from Saskatchewan Drive to University Avenue. This would utilize existing city right-of-way and replace the underused contra-flow lane to free-up additional space for both pedestrians and cyclists. Further technical study will be required to confirm the feasibility of the concept as well as active modes design detailed integration within the community context.

ALLEY NETWORK

Enhancements to alleys is proposed within the central portion of the commercial area that will provide new opportunities for residents, visitors, and businesses to move within the corridor.

Improved safety, comfort, and experience can be achieved through a range of design treatments (e.g. improved building lighting, paint/murals, planters) and interventions (e.g. facade improvement, storefront) in support of daily activity, special events and new businesses fronting-on and activating the alleyway as a space itself.

EAST-WEST CONNECTIONS

A series of east-west connections for pedestrians and cyclists at 86th, 85th, 84th, and 80th Avenues along Gateway Boulevard and 102 Streets is proposed to provide improved area access and connectivity to local businesses, services, community parks, open spaces, and special events. These active mode connections help link the north-

east and west portions of Strathcona neighbourhood while discouraging traffic-shortcutting.

In addition to pedestrian and cyclist access at 80th Avenue and 103 Street (Gateway Boulevard), a west-only vehicle access from 80th Avenue is also proposed. This would offer existing residents in the Ritchie neighbourhood an alternative to 82 Avenue to exit their neighbourhood to access businesses and services immediately west within the Calgary Trail corridor and beyond. Future discussions with private landowners (for 7930 - 102 Street NW and 8101 Gateway Boulevard NW) will be required as part of the Public Places Plan for Old Strathcona to address and test this important east-west connection.



STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS



The plan Whyte land use study proposes a series of recommendations to strengthen the heritage and character, manage future growth to the benefit of community and local business, and revitalize the heart of Old Strathcona as one of Edmonton's premiere arts, culture and tourism destinations. The recommendations are based on technical assessment, public engagement feedback, and support for a new development concept. These are organized into three strategic areas:

- Amendment of Strathcona Area Redevelopment Plan
- Public Places Plan for Old Strathcona
- Transportation Safety and Operational Improvements

Successful implementation will require effective City leadership and resourcing to address existing challenges, build on local strengths, leverage future opportunities and ultimately transform the Whyte Avenue commercial area over time. The recommendations proposed are intended to guide the City of Edmonton in focusing its support, setting new priorities, allocating resources and monitoring progress.

AMENDMENT OF STRATHCONA AREA REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

Amendment of the Strathcona ARP policy framework is the first step to implementing the vision, guiding principles, and new direction for the Whyte Avenue commercial area. Recommendations support protection of the core heritage commercial area while encouraging new development opportunities, higher quality urban design, public spaces and mobility within the corridor.

It is recommended that the following elements of the Strathcona ARP policy framework be amended:

1. LAND USE

- a. Ensure new development and renovations within the Heritage Character District will respect, complement and or be compatible with the architectural and development styles of the core (local) heritage area.

- b. Encourage all new development within Heritage, Main Street and Urbanization Character Districts be designed in support of a pedestrian-oriented environment, and active-at-grade frontages that animate the street and open spaces.
- c. Enable greater commercial mixed use throughout the Whyte Avenue corridor.

2. BUILT FORM

- a. Retain and or reuse buildings of heritage value from any period that promote cultural and historical understanding, and enable continued preservation of the area's image and identity.
 - b. Strengthen the corridor heritage character through a combination of tools including:
 - i. Applying architectural review / input
 - ii. Apply Appropriate zoning
 - iii. Providing clear guidance when there are development pressures in zone
 - iv. Continuing funding of existing heritage conservation programs
 - v. Working with the Province to regularly conduct additional tours of the area for buildings of interest
 - vi. Working with Old Strathcona Business Association to communicate preservation program and incentives
 - vii. Working with local and other heritage group(s)
- c. Establish a compact built form that supports and complements a high quality urban environment including provision of adequate amenity spaces and other community benefits supportive of families and aging-in-place.
- d. Direct tall buildings to Urbanization Character District south off of Whyte Avenue while sensitively transitioning building height down to surrounding development ensuring no new shadow on Whyte Avenue.
- e. Use a range of building types and massing techniques to create a pedestrian-oriented environment for all seasons while accommodating a range of housing need for students, families, and seniors.

- f. Ensure all new development adopts a standard of design excellence that will complement the community and enhance the character of the corridor over time.
- g. Align and reflect the maximum permitted heights as proposed, building setbacks, stepbacks, articulation and other height-related regulations recently approved under the Main Street Overlay (Section 819, Edmonton Zoning Bylaw 12800).

3. PUBLIC REALM

- a. Enhance the pedestrian main street and heritage character of the area through parks and open space network, street design, civic and cultural space improvements.
- b. Ensure parks and open spaces support future density and contribute to the corridor's long term livability and sustainability
- c. Design streets to provide a safe, comfortable, and attractive pedestrian experience through pedestrian scaled lighting, wayfinding, street furniture, and extension / replacement of the urban tree canopy throughout the corridor.
- d. Strengthen the design and connection between cultural and community uses north of Whyte Avenue to enhance Old Strathcona's image and identity.
- e. Enhance alleyways to encourage their use as connectors and activation as spaces.

4. MOBILITY

- a. Improve pedestrian safety through upgraded crossings, curb extensions, signal light priority at intersections, sidewalk widening and or replacement as part of ongoing maintenance or future capital improvements to achieve more complete streets.
- b. Improve cycling safety and infrastructure through upgraded intersection crossings to reduce potential conflicts with motor vehicles and encourage greater mode shift in conjunction with additional bike parking within the corridor over time.
- c. Ensure Centre Light Rail Transit Concept Design and any other future transit system planning establishes pedestrians as the highest modal priority when designing for streets, stops, stations, crossings and operations along Whyte Avenue.

PUBLIC PLACES PLAN FOR OLD STRATHCONA

In order to realize the long-term vision for the Whyte Avenue commercial area it is essential that clear direction for the programming, design, and development of public places be established. A Public Places Plan will strengthen the attractiveness and connectivity of the community as well as competitiveness of Strathcona's local businesses, capacity of festivals and operation of events for years to come.

Through preparation of the planWhyte land use study, a number of recommendations were identified that when grouped together, form the basis and scope to initiate a Public Places Plan. These include:

1. SPECIAL STUDY

- a. Explore future redevelopment and place-making opportunities for City owned Farmers Market parking lot and surrounding lands to inform Linear Public Space and Enhanced Civic Core opportunities.

2. DESIGN PROGRAM

- a. Develop a design program that addresses local business, community and City needs as identified in the Special Study, including:
 - i. Availability of parking for Farmers Market and surrounding businesses
 - ii. Community desire for more passive and active open spaces
 - iii. Connectivity via east-west connections, alleyway network, north-south active modes 'Spine' along Calgary Trail / 104 Street including Feasibility Study to close the contra-flow lane and west-only vehicle exit from 80 Avenue on to Gateway Boulevard (103 Street)
 - iv. Design opportunities and ideas for alleyway network
 - v. Integration of Edmonton Radial Railway Society High Level Street Car expansion and public amenities.
 - vi. Enhancement and re-connection of public spaces and historic buildings within the civic heritage core area
 - vii. Promotion of place-making opportunities that significantly enhance Edmonton's image and identity as Alberta's Capital

3. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

- a. Prioritize key capital projects identified through completion of the Design Program and develop a funding mechanism through the City of Edmonton Capital and Operating Budget process in alignment with other corporate objectives.

TRANSPORTATION SAFETY AND OPERATION CONSIDERATIONS

Based on feedback from the public engagement, transportation safety and mobility was an important consideration that also needed to be addressed. The following recommendations propose immediate and long-term actions to improve pedestrian safety, accessibility, comfort, interaction and enjoyment of Whyte Avenue as one of Edmonton's premiere historic main streets in support of future developments.

1. PEDESTRIAN SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS

- a. Continue to review reduction of speed limit along Whyte Avenue from 99 Street to 109 Street
- b. Continue to review and consider upgrades to pedestrian crossings along Whyte Avenue from 99 Street to 109 Street

2. FACILITATE GREATER MODE SHIFT WITHIN THE CORRIDOR

- a. Review condition of existing bus stops and opportunities for amenity improvements (e.g. shelters, benches, signage, garbage cans) throughout the study
- b. Conduct a technical feasibility study for the closure of the 104 Street vehicle contra-flow lane and re-design as part of the proposed Old Strathcona Public Places Plan (Design Program phase) in support of integrated active modes connecting from Saskatchewan Drive to University Avenue. Analysis should also evaluate the impacts of:

- i. A vehicle west-only access from 80 Avenue and 102 Street onto Gateway Boulevard (103 Street) including transit operations; and
- ii. Transit operations including: route timing and

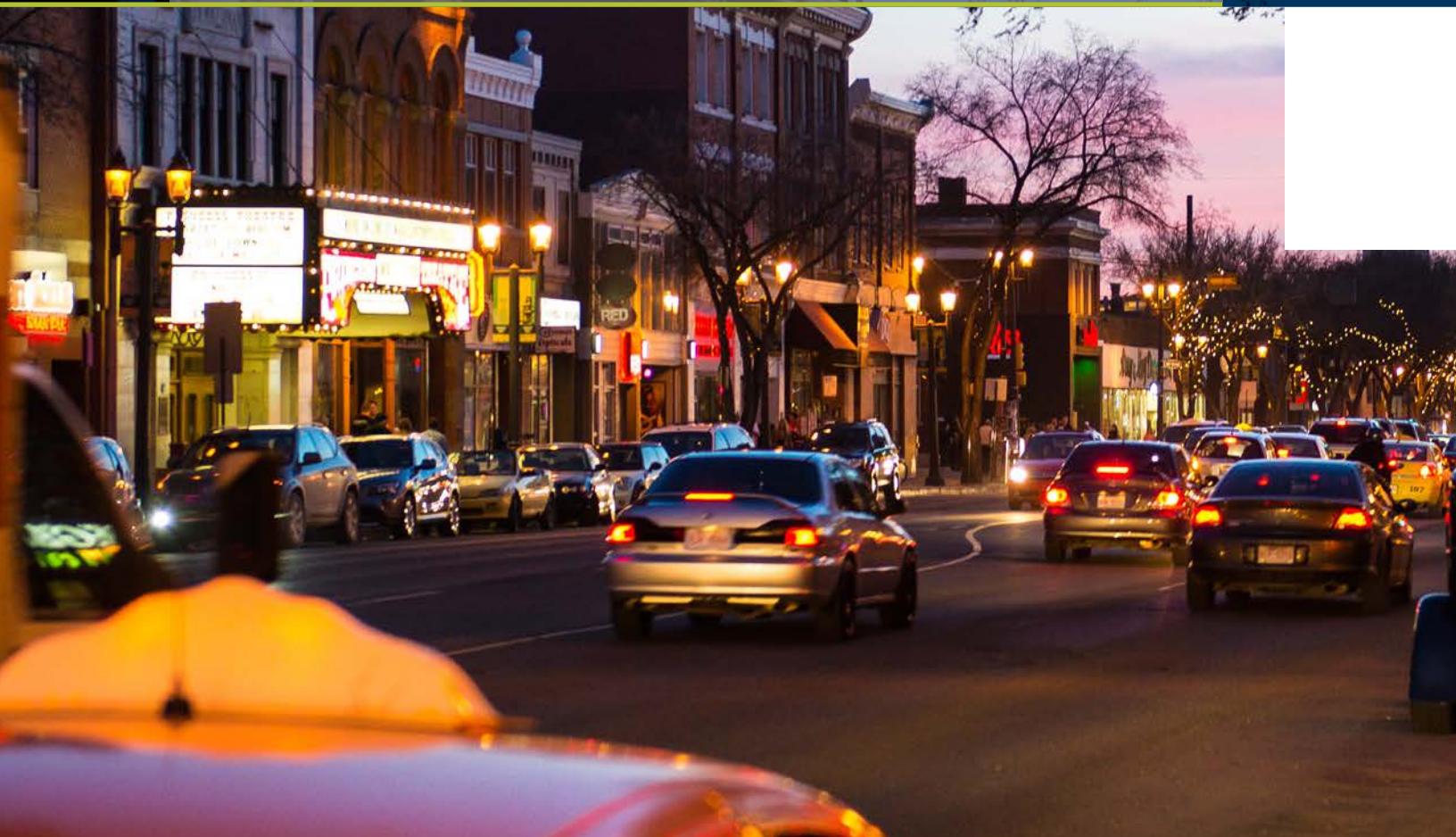
scheduling, ridership, demand and pedestrian access to transit, and infrastructure improvements required to accommodate rerouted transit (e.g. installation of new bus stops on alternate routes, signal timing/priority measures, crosswalk/walkway improvements, curb ramps, etc.)

3. OPTIMIZE EXISTING ROAD NETWORK AND PARKING INFRASTRUCTURE

- a. Review improvements to traffic signalization optimization along Whyte Avenue from 99 Street to 109 Street.
- b. Continue to implement strategies to improve existing area parking efficiency while reducing demand (e.g. signage and wayfinding measures, technology, EPark, partnerships, programmes, transit frequency, cycling infrastructure, parking requirements).



CONCLUSION



The planWhyte land use study was initiated in response to recent and proposed changes within the Whyte Avenue commercial area. This included pressure to redevelop and intensify the area coupled with increased congestion, community events and risk of losing the heritage and character of the area. The planWhyte land use study explored existing conditions through a series of technical studies, engaged community stakeholders in a series of conversations to identify issues and opportunities, and ultimately created a new vision, set of guiding principles and development concept.

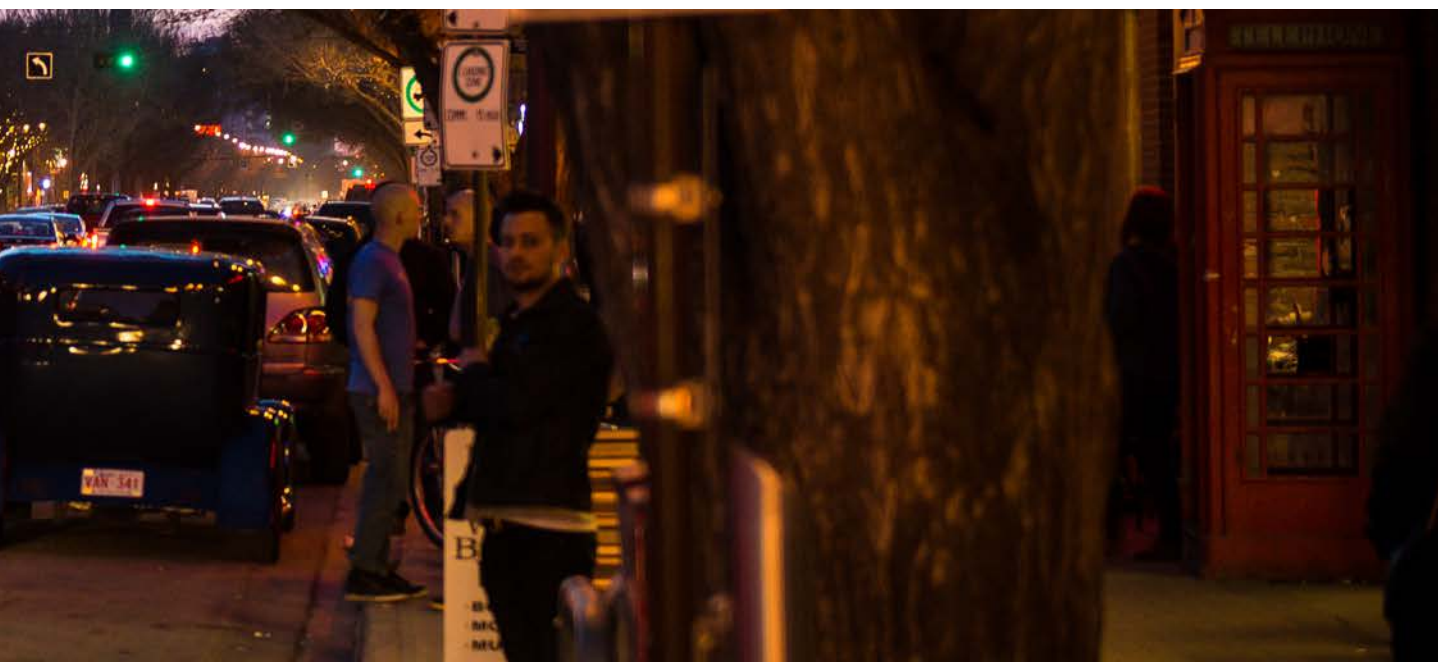
This work recognizes the importance of Whyte Avenue's heritage character and traditional main street feel and function. It identifies existing opportunities to redevelop along with some additional opportunity east and west along Whyte Avenue that will help preserve the area's heritage character and long-term viability. More intensive development opportunity is encouraged and directed south of Whyte Avenue toward existing vacant and underutilized properties. Future growth and redevelopment pressure will be managed more effectively and limit the impacts of tall buildings on Whyte Avenue providing greater certainty and stability to nearby neighbourhoods concerned with change. Lastly, new investment along with improvements to the pedestrian public realm and active transportation offer to provide surrounding communities and visitors a greater sense of certainty, safety, satisfaction and stability over the long-term.

Three major recommendations are proposed for the Whyte Avenue commercial area. The first builds off the existing Strathcona Area Redevelopment Plan and proposes amendments to the plan's policy framework to achieve a new vision for the commercial corridor. The second

major recommendation is initiation of a Public Places Plan to undertake special study, a future design program and a capital improvements plan for City of Edmonton lands including the Farmers Market parking lot, the Linear Public Space and Enhanced Civic Core. The third recommendation calls for continued transportation safety and operational considerations that will provide both short and long-term benefits to pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders and automobile users now and in the future. Together, these recommendations address the need to better manage future growth now and in the future.

As a first step, the Strathcona Area Redevelopment Plan is proposed to be amended. Following amendment of the plan and formalization of recommendations, it is proposed that Administration undertake the Public Places Plan for Old Strathcona Special Study component using existing internal resources. This will provide structure and scope to build the necessary partnerships and hold meaningful conversations essential to building consensus around a future vision for City lands including the Farmers Market parking lot. This will also create a clearer picture of what a Design Program will require in terms of scope, time, cost and measure of success. Completion of the Design Program will provide another level of detail to then structure the best funding mechanisms around it for successful completion.

Over time, the implementation of these ideas and recommendations are expected to preserve the physical and heritage character of Whyte Avenue, provide more housing choice, support local business, strengthen community events and festivals, and enhance the long-term livability and success of Whyte Avenue.







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