

WHAT WE HEARD

Edmonton

Newton Corner Store Pilot Project Public Realm Enhancements

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City will invest in public realm enhancements as part of the Newton Corner Store Pilot Project. Improvements are planned for 54 Street between 121 Avenue and 122 Avenue.

In March/April 2017 the project team shared the project concept plan to get resident and business owner feedback and support to inform the final design.

Through the Newton Neighbourhood Renewal Open House held March 14, 2017, and the project survey, residents voiced their general support for the public realm improvements.

BACKGROUND

The Corner Store Program aims to re-establish the neighbourhood shopping centre as a hub of activity in Edmonton communities through improvements to buildings, businesses and City infrastructure. The public realm enhancements concept plan focused on the City infrastructure components of the Corner Store Pilot Program.

The concept plan considered input gathered from residents, business owners, and stakeholders during the strategy phase in 2016 and 2017. The proposed project area is within City road right-of-way and includes:

- Sidewalk widening to 2m (where possible) and the construction of curb extensions as part of Newton Neighbourhood Renewal
- Black standard streetlight poles and decorative pedestrian poles
- Planting beds along both sides of 54 Street, beside St. Leo Catholic School and Newton Centre, as well as within the curb extensions

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A public meeting was held March 14, 2017 for the Newton Neighbourhood Renewal Project where the concept plan for the Newton Corner Store Project was shared with the community. A letter was sent to property owners, business owners and residents near the project area in March/April 2017, inviting them to the public meeting, and to complete the project survey.

GENERAL THEMES & RESPONSES

- *Curb extensions were supported because they prioritize pedestrian safety, especially adjacent to the school. There were some concerns about their impact to traffic and winter snow clearing.*

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Curb extensions are being included in the improvements as they reduce pedestrian crossing distances by the nearby school and local businesses. They are designed to ensure that traffic, including emergency and winter maintenance vehicles, can access through the area.

- *Beautifying the area with planting beds is supported. There were some mixed responses about adding decorative lights in the area. Some people were excited about seeing opportunities in the area where people can enjoy public space.*

Part of the City's Corner Store Pilot Program includes upgrades to the City-owned land near the commercial area. These improvements aim to make the area more attractive, vibrant, and connected to the community. Improvements in Newton include decorative lights and landscaping.

- *There was a desire to see some improvements extend further to Jacob Prins Park, which is nearby.*

There was further engagement on improvements in Jacob Prins Park in fall 2017 to gather additional feedback. Additional information has been added to the Newton Building Great Neighbourhoods webpage, edmonton.ca/BuildingNewton, where a separate What We Heard report will be available.

- *There was a concern about impacting parking for the commercial centre.*

When planning the improvements adjacent to Newton Centre, the City ensured that impacts to the existing parking on site were minimized.

- *There was a question about ownership of the green space north of the commercial area and whether it could also be improved.*

The green space north of the commercial area is privately owned and therefore not considered as part of the project.

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- *Some asked about future plans for Newton Centre and how the proposed improvements would integrate with the existing businesses.*

Other aspects of the Corner Store Pilot Program beyond the public realm improvements include marketing and business supports, as well as a market analysis that helps identify what services will best serve the community. The City will provide these supports to the businesses and property owners who show interest but it is up to the property or business owner to decide what their plans are.

- *Some asked if bike racks are included in the improvements around Newton Centre.*

Bike racks were not initially included in the improvements, as other elements such as landscaping on both sides of 54 Street and bus stop improvements had been prioritized. However, the City will explore the addition of a bike rack as part of these improvements.

NEXT STEPS

The City has reviewed respondents' comments and will complete design in summer 2018. The final design will be posted online. Construction is anticipated to begin later in summer 2019 as part of the Neighbourhood Renewal Construction. Newton residents and business owners will be given a minimum of two weeks' notice prior to construction. Construction activities are anticipated to take between 12 and 16 weeks to complete. Access to businesses will be maintained throughout the construction.

For more information, please visit www.edmonton.ca/NewtonCornerStore.

For more information about Newton Neighbourhood Renewal projects please go to www.edmonton.ca/BuildingNewton.