

What We Heard Report: Active Transportation Improvements: Corridors

August 2022

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Edmonton

What We Heard Report:

Active Transportation Improvements: Corridors

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Project background

About the project

The City of Edmonton is exploring improvements that can be made to our active transportation infrastructure to complete missing links in the routes, paths and lanes specifically for those who walk, bike and wheel.

Following the direction provided in the City of Edmonton's **Bike Plan**, improvements are being designed for active transportation infrastructure for five arterial corridors:

- + Fort Road – 127 Avenue to 153 Avenue
- + 127 Street – Yellowhead Trail to 137 Avenue
- + 106 Street – Princess Elizabeth Avenue to 118 Avenue
- + 102 Avenue – 136 Street to 139 Street
- + 100 Avenue – 102 Street to 103 Street

When designing the options, the following were considered:

- + Minimize land impacts
- + Minimize environmental impacts
- + Provide consistency and connectivity with existing paths and lanes, where possible
- + Improve active transportation infrastructure and safety for users while maintaining the level of service for drivers

Concept designs are expected to be complete by the end of 2022. There is currently no timeline for construction.

Engagement

Engagement process

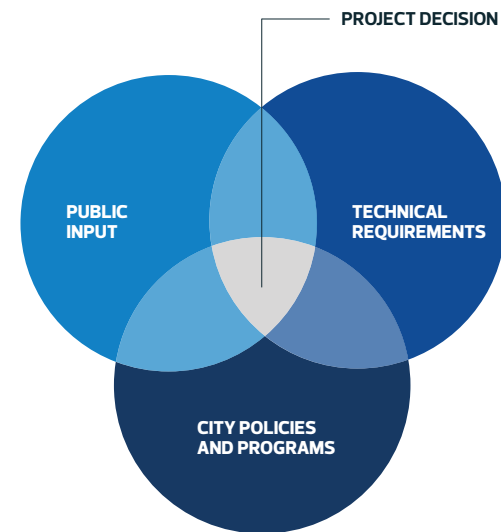
Engagement activities were designed to gather public and stakeholder input to inform the concept designs for the five arterial corridors.

Public engagement was at the ADVISE level of the City's public engagement spectrum.



Decision making

When making decisions, there are three considerations: City policies and programs, technical requirements and public input. These inputs will be considered along with project constraints, including budget, to support the refinement of the preferred concept designs.



Engagement Activities

Stakeholder Meetings

- + A meeting was held on April 21, 2022 with representatives of the active transportation organizations Bike Edmonton and Paths for People to gather input to inform the development of each of the corridor designs.
- + A meeting was held with NAIT on August 24, 2022 to share and discuss the draft concept and how it aligns with NAIT's Master Plan.

Public Survey

A public survey was made available to gather public feedback on the proposed active transportation corridor improvements. The survey was posted on the project website at edmonton.ca/ActiveTransporation from June 13 to 27, 2022. Paper copies were available upon request.

A total of 215 survey responses were received. Respondents could choose to provide feedback on all or select corridor designs; thirty-six per cent (36%) of respondents provided feedback on all five designs.

Communications

The following communication tools were used to promote the public survey to Edmontonians.

Postcards

- + Over 42,000 postcards were delivered to residences and businesses in and around each corridor improvement project area

Road signs

- + 18 road signs were placed on or near each corridor improvement project area

Online advertisements

- + Social media advertisements
- + Email notifications

What we proposed and what we heard

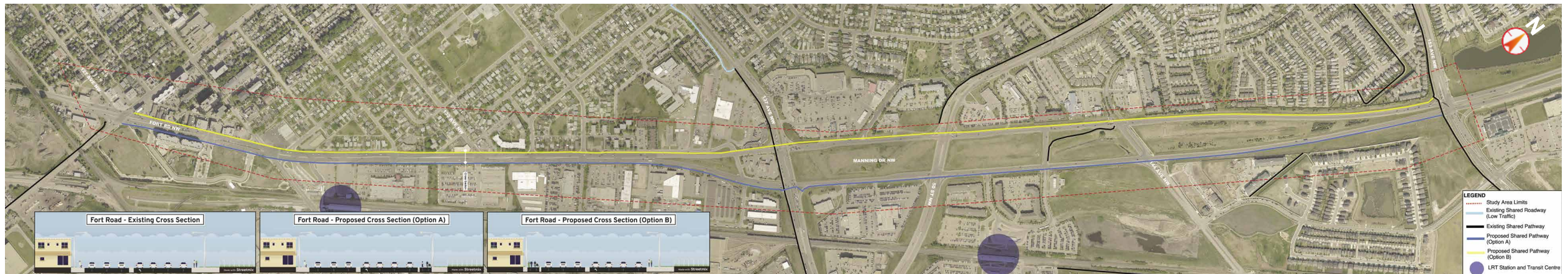
Input was gathered on each of the five proposed active transportation improvement corridor designs. Respondents were asked what they like about each design, as well as what could be improved.

The following provides the proposed infrastructure improvements and what we heard about each.

Fort Road – 127 Avenue to 153 Avenue

Fort Road is a divided arterial roadway with two to three lanes in each direction and a wide median north of 137 Avenue. Existing shared pathway corridors are in place along 137 Avenue and 153 Avenue, as well as along the LRT corridor to the south to 66 Street. This study area would complete the gap from the 66 Street shared pathway on the southeast side of the corridor to the 153 Avenue shared pathway running east-west.

Two design options were proposed for this corridor. In both options, the path may be constructed within the boulevard or the curb may need to be shifted, resulting in narrower travel lanes but not the removal of travel lanes.



Design Option A – Shared pathway on east side of Fort Road

In this option, the pathway is located closer to the Belvedere and Clareview LRT stations and transit centres.

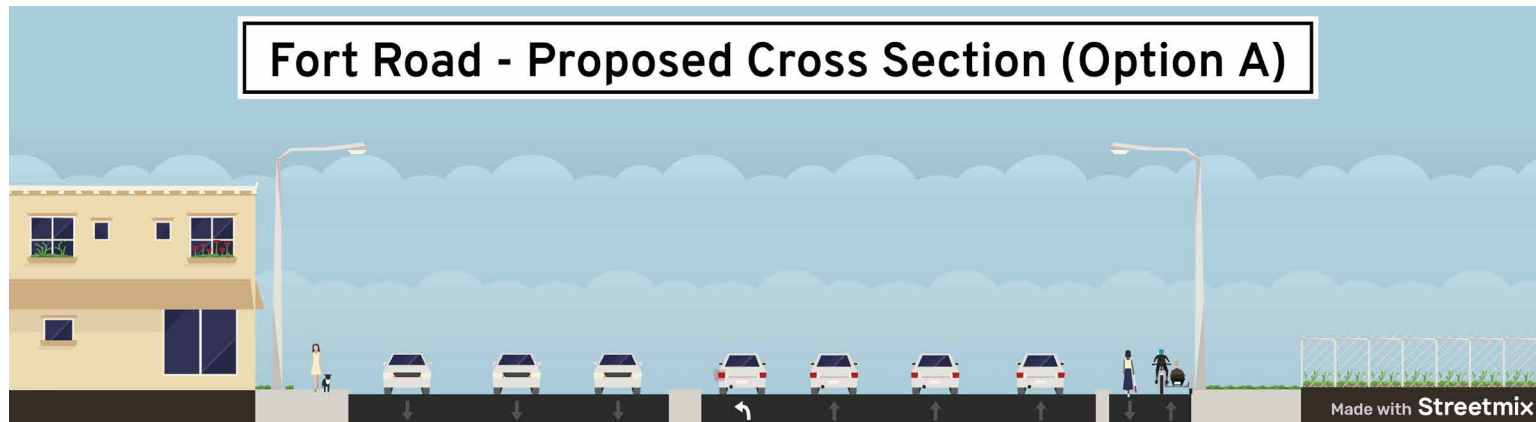
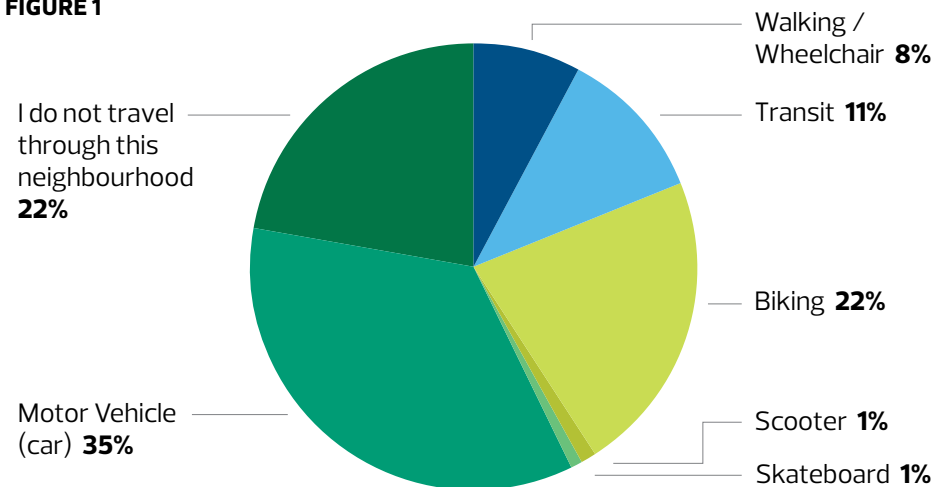


FIGURE 1

One hundred and thirteen respondents provided feedback on these design options. The following chart illustrates how they travel through the project area. Below is what we heard.



What respondents like

Respondents note what they like most about Option A is its proximity to public transit—the Clareview and Belvedere LRT stations and bus stops. Respondents also note that they like that the bike lane is separated/protected from the vehicle lanes to enhance safety for all users. Respondents also like that this connection will provide links to existing bike infrastructure.

What could be improved

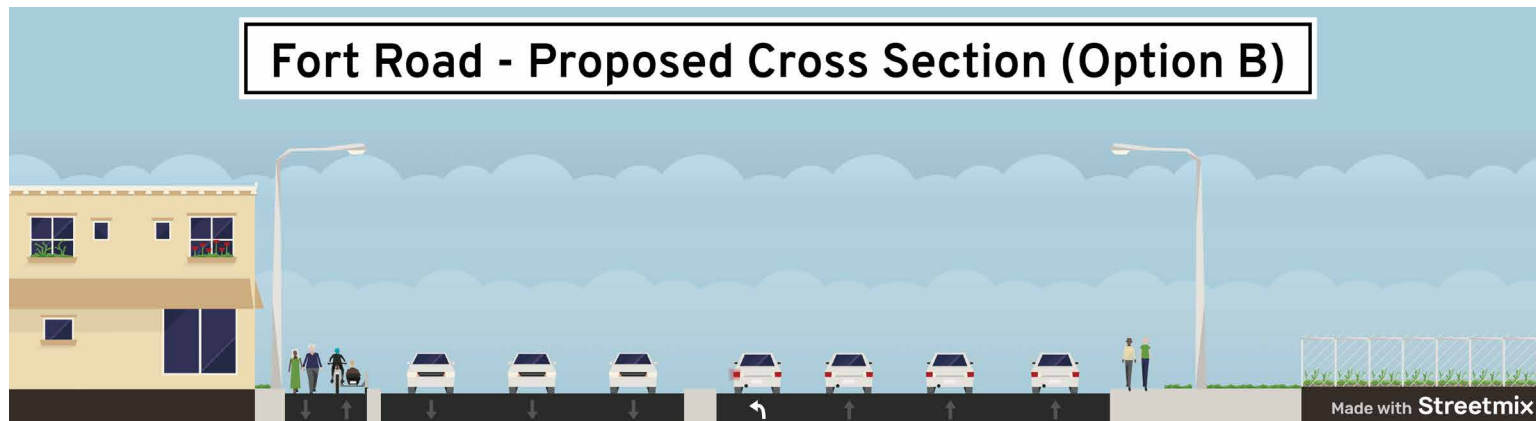
Respondents suggest that reducing the number of vehicle travel lanes would benefit this option by providing additional space which could be allocated to enhance the active transportation connection and improve safety for all users. A seven vehicle lane road is believed to be too wide for safe crossings.

A clear and substantial separation between the vehicle traffic and shared pathway is desired. It is suggested a green boulevard would suit this purpose and trees could be added to enhance the comfort and experience of users. Many suggest that a shared pathway should be provided on both sides of the corridor.

There is a concern about access across the shared pathway to the businesses on the east side of the corridor. The City is encouraged to ensure safe crossings and to continue to expand the active transportation network by adding connections from this pathway to others within the area, as well as key destinations.

Design Option B – Shared pathway on west side of Fort Road

In this option, the pathway is located closer to the nearby residential neighbourhoods (e.g., Belvedere).



What respondents like

Respondents note what they like about Option B is its proximity to both the residential neighborhoods and area businesses. It is felt that this will enhance safety, and encourage pathway usage, by minimizing the need to cross Fort Road. The separation of bikes and cars is also noted. Many respondents however, do not support this option and indicated a preference for Option A.

What can be improved

Similar to Option A, there is a desire to reduce the number of vehicle travel lanes and devote the space to the active transportation connection. Many respondents suggest that shared pathways be placed on both sides of the corridor. To enhance safety, other suggestions include increasing the separation between the vehicle lanes and the shared pathway, widening the sidewalk, and creating a separation between bikes and pedestrians on the pathway.

127 Street – Yellowhead Trail to 137 Avenue

127 Street is an undivided arterial roadway with two travel lanes in each direction, along with a reversible lane which switches direction to accommodate peak direction travel. Existing shared pathways are located along the west side of the road from Yellowhead Trail to 127 Avenue and on the west side north of 137 Avenue. This study area would complete the gap between these two pathways.



Proposed Design – Shared pathway on west side

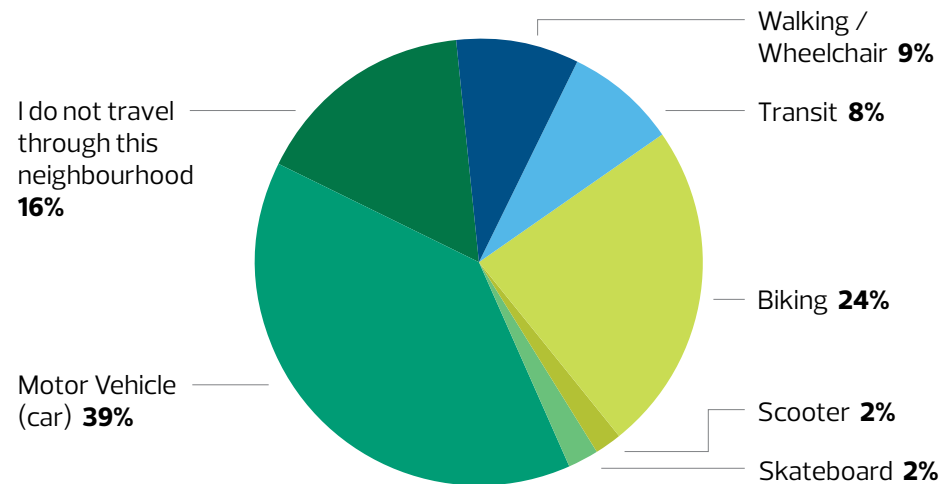
- + The existing shared pathway south of 127 Avenue will be extended north to 137 Avenue, where it will connect to the existing shared pathways to the north
- + In some areas, the existing boulevard will allow for the sidewalk to be widened to a shared pathway
- + In other areas, the vehicle lanes will be narrowed and the west curb will be shifted east to allow for a wider boulevard to accommodate the new shared pathway

Considerations

- + There may be impacts to trees, however they will be avoided wherever possible
- + Some streetlights may need to be relocated
- + Only one feasible option was identified for this corridor due to the existing active transportation network and the constraints identified.

One hundred and twenty-nine respondents provided feedback on this option. The following chart illustrates how they travel through the project area. Below is what we heard.

FIGURE 2



What respondents like

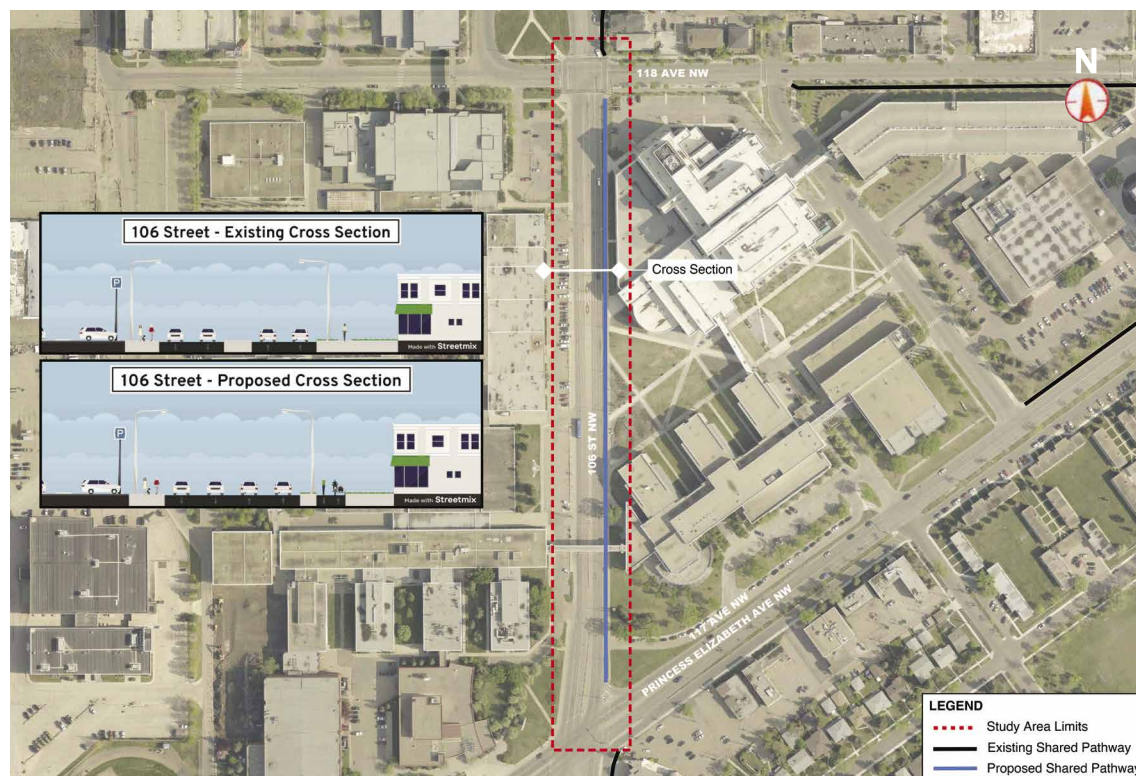
What respondents noted most often about what they like about the 127 Street option is the connection it provides to the existing active transportation network, filling the gap and expanding the network overall, providing additional transportation options to Edmontonians. The narrowing of the vehicle travel lanes was also noted as something that is liked about this option, which respondents believe will provide the benefit of reducing speed. Enhancing safety for users is also noted.

What could be improved

Suggested improvements to the 127 Street option include physically separating the bike lane from the roadway (by adding a barrier or green space, for example). Respondents feel that removing a car lane would provide space to assist with this separation, as well as better balance the allocated space for distinct users and improve safety overall. Crossing safety is a primary concern with suggestions to provide bikes with clear right-of-way/unimpeded crossings and to ensure safe crossings for those who bike and walk across Yellowhead Trail. Trees were noted as a priority with a desire to retain the trees wherever possible. Some commented that a separation between bikes and pedestrians along the pathway would be beneficial for safety.

106 Street – Princess Elizabeth Avenue to 118 Avenue

106 Street is a divided arterial roadway with two travel lanes in each direction and a centre median. Existing shared pathways are located along the east side of the road from 111 Avenue to Princess Elizabeth Avenue and on the east side north of 118 Avenue. This study area would complete the gap between these two pathways. This corridor travels through the NAIT campus.



Proposed Design – Shared pathway on east side

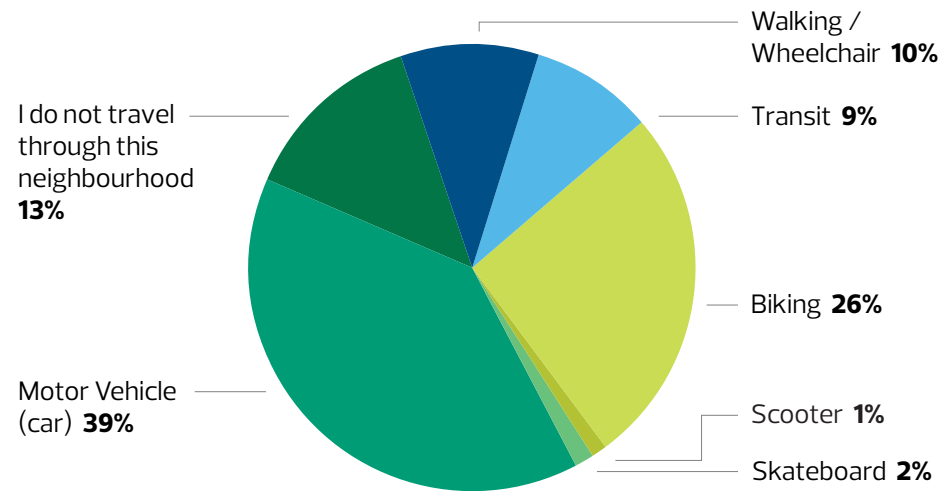
The existing sidewalk will be widened to a shared pathway standard. The existing centre median may be removed and the east curb extended to create a wider boulevard to accommodate this new shared pathway. Alternatively, there may be enough room in the boulevard to widen the existing sidewalk. Both approaches will be explored further in the design phase.

Considerations:

- + Some streetlights may need to be relocated
- + This busy campus pathway would be used for both bikes and pedestrians

One hundred and twelve respondents provided feedback on this option. The following chart illustrates how they travel through the project area. Below is what we heard.

FIGURE 3



What respondents like

What respondents like most about the 106 Street design is that it continues to expand the active transportation network and fills existing gaps. Both the separation from traffic and width of the path are also noted as what respondents like, with some adding that these features increase safety. Respondents also like the access that the path provides to NAIT, as well as the removal of the centre median.

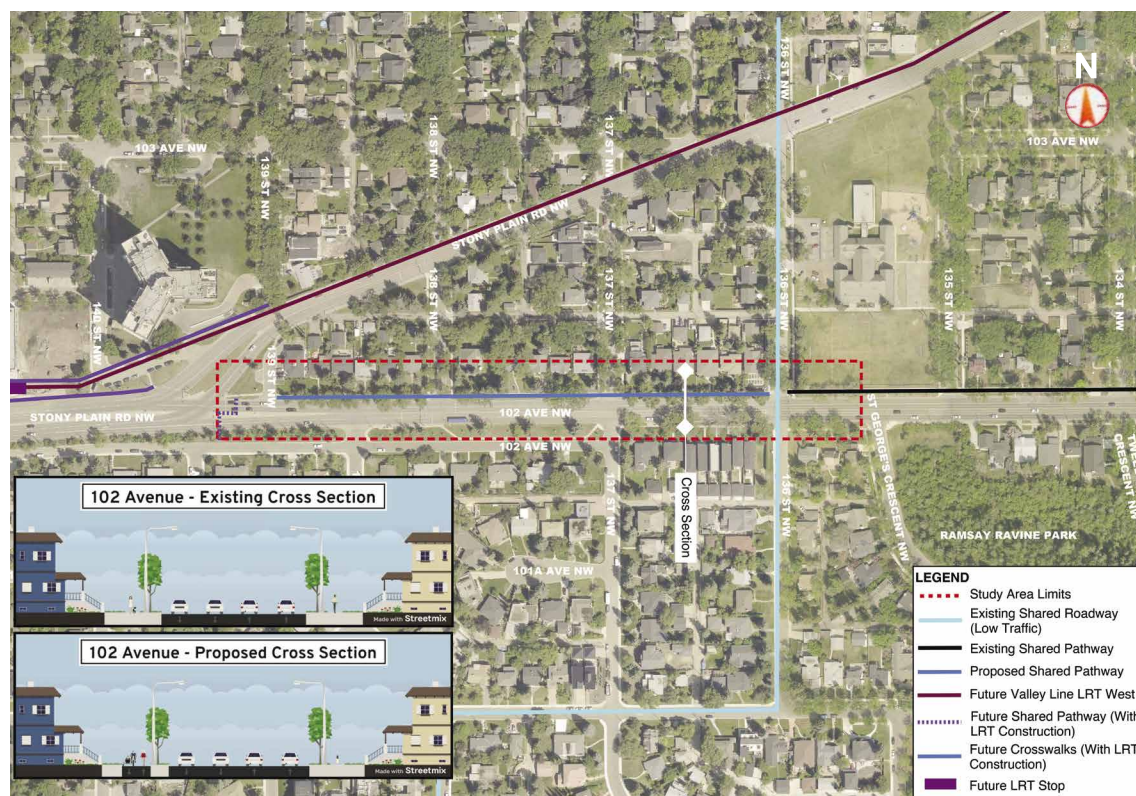
What could be improved

Respondents suggest improvements to the 106 Street design including a separation of bikes and pedestrians along the shared pathway, noting the heavy foot traffic on campus and the potential for conflicts when both bikes and pedestrians will share the same space. Widening the pathway overall is also suggested as a solution.

Some suggest that reducing the number of vehicle lanes will help improve the design overall, adding space to the active transportation connection. The addition of trees is desired, as well as a focus on safe crossings and a physical separation of the active transportation lane from vehicular traffic.

102 Avenue – 136 Street to 139 Street

102 Avenue is an undivided arterial roadway with two travel lanes in each direction. An existing shared pathway is located along the north side of the road east of 136 Street. West of 139 Street, active transportation improvements are anticipated as part of the Valley Line West construction. This study area would complete the gap between these two areas.



Proposed Design: Shared pathway along north side of 102 Avenue

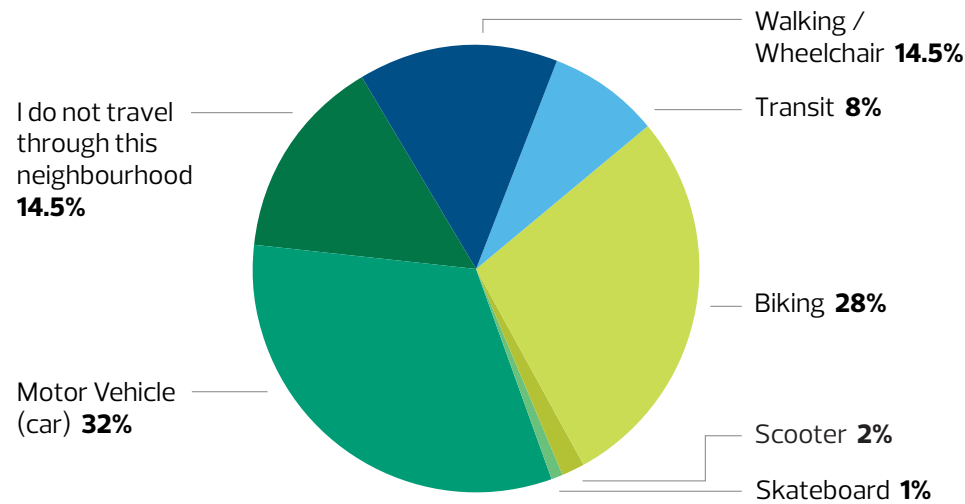
The proposed design provides a shared-use path along the north side of 102 Avenue. In this design the existing shared use path at 136 Street will be extended west to 139 Street, where it will connect with improvements related to the future Valley Line LRT.

Considerations:

- + There may be impacts to trees, however they will be avoided wherever possible
- + Only one feasible option was identified for this corridor due to the existing active transportation network.

One hundred and twenty-eight provided feedback on this option. The following chart illustrates how they travel through the project area. Below is what we heard.

FIGURE 4



What respondents like

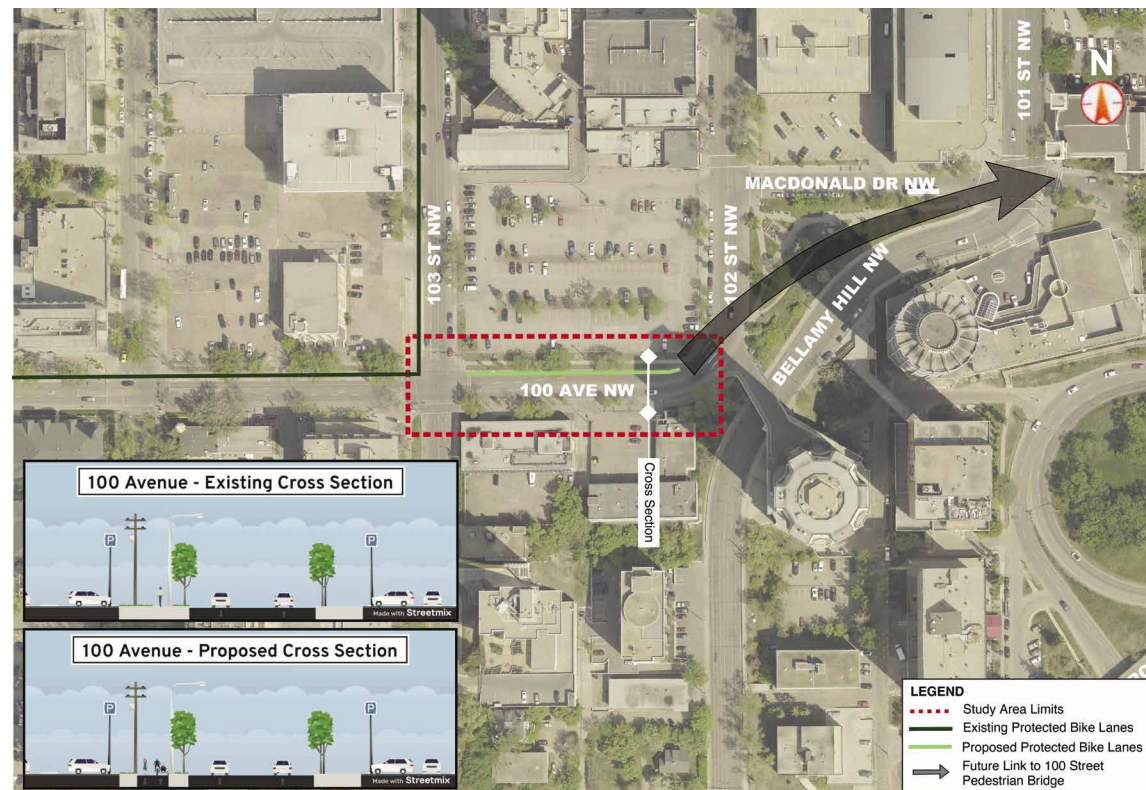
Most respondents note that the expansion of the existing network and the added connection created by this design are what they like most about the 102 Avenue option. A few respondents noted they like that the bike lane is protected and that the design enhances safety.

What could be improved

Crossings were mentioned most often as what respondents suggest would improve the 102 Avenue design. Respondents note a desire to maintain trees along the corridor. Safe and efficient crossings are desired, with specific locations identified as Stony Plain Road at 102 Street and at the future LRT station. A preference for raised crossings is also mentioned. Respondents are eager for the network to expand further, noting that this connection should extend further to the west, as well as both north and south of this location. A few respondents suggest that bikes and pedestrians should be separated on the pathway, with a few others suggesting that a protected bike lane is preferred over the shared pathway.

100 Avenue – 102 Street to 103 Street

100 Avenue is an undivided arterial roadway with one travel lane in each direction. An existing two-way protected bike lane runs along the north side of 100 Avenue west of 103 Street, and along the west side of 103 Street north of 100 Avenue.



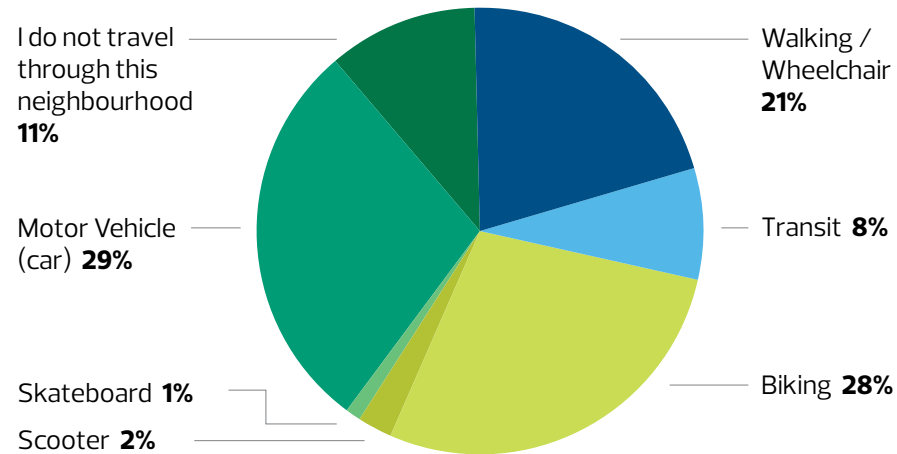
Proposed Design: Protected two-way bike lane along north side of 100 Avenue

The proposed design provides a protected two-way bike lane along the north side of 100 Avenue, as an extension of the existing facility west of 103 Street.

Considerations:

- + Connectivity with the wider active transportation network, including a future connection to the planned 100 Street pedestrian bridge

One hundred and twenty-eight respondents provided feedback on this option. The following chart illustrates how they travel through the project area. Below is what we heard.

FIGURE 5

What respondents like

There is enthusiastic support for this new connection with respondents eager for this missing connection in the downtown area! There is specific mention of the value of providing this link to the funicular and river valley trails. The protected bike infrastructure is also seen as a huge benefit in this heavy vehicle traffic area.

What could be improved

Respondents are concerned about the abrupt end of this proposed connection and urge the City to extend the facility beyond 102 Street. There are concerns about safety with the end point of this connection and the need for carefully planned, safe crossings across 100 Avenue. The link to the 'future' 100 Street pedestrian bridge is received with frustration and call on the City to complete the bridge at the same time to ensure a safe transition for users.

What else should the City consider?

Two hundred and fifteen respondents responded to this question.

When asked if there is anything else the City should consider when planning the corridor improvements, the following comments were shared most often:

- + The proposed improvements are recognized as positive changes to Edmonton's active transportation network
- + The City is urged to continue to expand the network throughout the city
- + Safety is a priority and should be considered in all planning
 - + There is a desire for bike activated signals
 - + The preference is for protected bike lanes over other types of bike facilities
 - + The impacts of snow and snow removal should be considered
- + Appropriate signage is required to direct users safely

Who participated in our survey

FIGURE 6: AGE

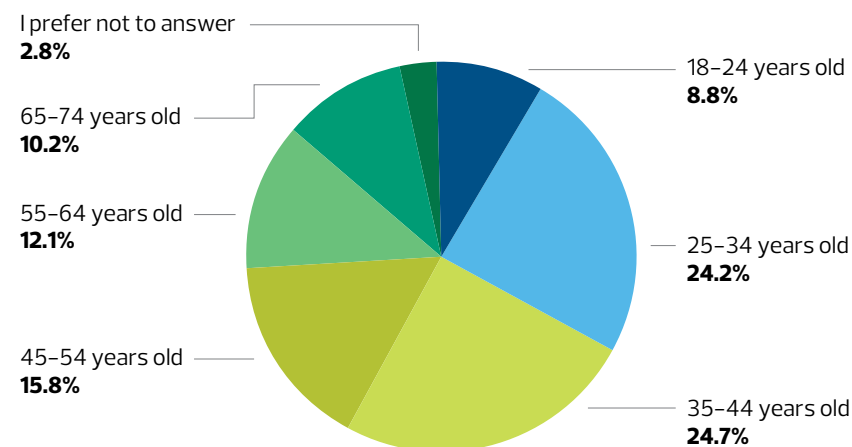
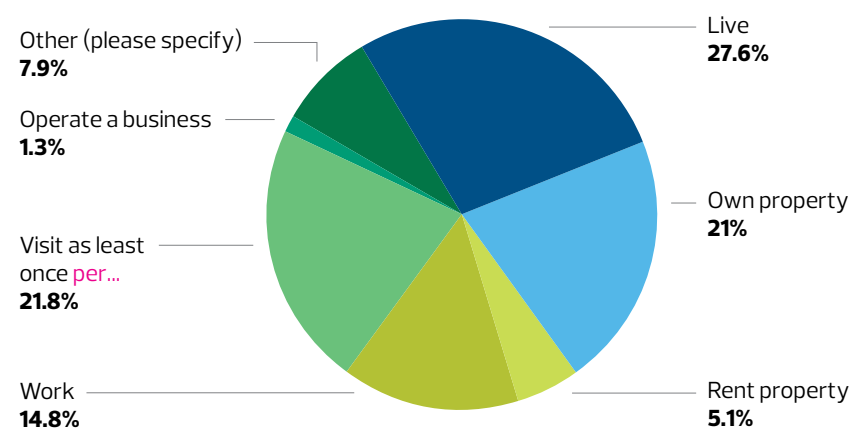


FIGURE 7: HOW RESPONDENTS RELATE TO THE PROJECT AREAS



Next steps

The Project Team thanks all participants for sharing their feedback in this round of engagement, and will consider all comments received as the project moves forward with the design. The concept designs will be shared in fall 2022.

There is currently no timeline for construction.

Stay informed

Visit edmonton.ca/ActiveTransportation for more project information.

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