

NEIGHBOURHOODS OF OPPORTUNITY, GROWTH AND CULTURE

A REVITALIZATION STRATEGY
FOR BALWIN AND BELVEDERE

Edmonton



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We acknowledge that we are on the traditional land of Treaty Six Territory and the Traditional Métis Homeland of Region IV (four).

We would like to acknowledge the diverse Indigenous Peoples whose ancestors' footsteps have marked this territory for centuries such as: Cree, Saulteaux, Nakota Sioux, Blackfoot, Dene, the Métis and the Inuit.

We do this to create awareness that we are all treaty members, and to show recognition and respect for Indigenous Peoples and the traditional territories on which we live and work.

Together we call upon all of our collective honoured traditions and spirits to work in building a truly intercultural city for today and future generations.

Successful revitalization requires the involvement of many members of the community.

The information within this document is a reflection of a co-created revitalization strategy between the neighbourhoods of Balwin and Belvedere and the City of Edmonton.

The passion, dedication and ideas of community members in Balwin and Belvedere were instrumental in the development of this strategy.

WE WISH TO THANK AND ACKNOWLEDGE ALL OF THOSE WHO HAVE CONTRIBUTED THEIR SUPPORT TO THIS EFFORT SO FAR, INCLUDING:

- + Residents, business owners and operators, non profit organizations and other stakeholders who attended the drop-in public engagement workshops.

THOSE WHO ATTENDED FOCUSED NEIGHBOURHOOD DISCUSSION SESSIONS, INCLUDING:

- + Young people attending Trinity Christian Reformed Church youth program
- + Business owners and operators
- + Executive Director of the Fort Road and Area Business Improvement Area
- + Seniors attending the community drop in program at Belvedere Hall
- + Seniors from the Balwin and Belvedere neighbourhoods who came out specifically to participate in the conversation
- + Individuals attending the Al Omari Masjid

The following institutions/non profits operating within the neighbourhoods who extended an invitation to the Revitalization Coordinator to attend their program/event to listen and learn from the participants about their experiences.

- + Balwin School
- + The Gathering Place
- + The Mosaic Centre
- + The RAJO project, Canadian Friends of Somalia

REVITALIZATION STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY WORKING GROUP

- Matthew Burbidge** – Balwin, Excel Society
- Carole Dacko** – Balwin Resident
- Don Grimble** – representing Deanna Fuhlendorf, Executive Director of the Fort Road and Area Business Improvement Area
- Al Hendriks** – Belvedere Resident
- Michael Lawal** – Balwin Property Owner
- Cynthia Lenders** – Balwin Resident and Balwin Community League representative
- Ron Marinas** – Belvedere Resident
- Angela Moroz** – Balwin Resident
- Chris Olthuis** – Belvedere, Trinity Christian Reformed Church
- Amith Pratap** – Belvedere Resident and Property Owner on Fort Road
- Josh Rideout** – Balwin Resident
- Sandra St. Laurent** – Belvedere Resident
- Tracy Presisniuk** – Belvedere Resident and Belvedere Community League representative

CITY OF EDMONTON REVITALIZATION PROJECT TEAM

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- Ocean Luo** – Community Planner, Neighbourhood Services
- Deanne Patsula** – Senior Planner, Neighbourhood Services
- Laura Shewchuk** – Public Engagement Advisor, Communications and Engagement Branch
- Louise Speakman** – Revitalization Program Support, Neighbourhood Services

THE FOLLOWING ORGANIZATIONS THAT GRACIOUSLY PROVIDED PHYSICAL SPACE FOR PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES:

- + Excel Society
- + Al Omari Masjid
- + Balwin Community League
- + Trinity Christian Reformed Church
- + Belvedere Community League
- + Landlord and Tenant Board
- + Deanna Fuhlendorf for graciously providing the research of the Village of North Edmonton through The Fort Trail Historical Foundation



The following staff from other City of Edmonton business areas worked closely with the Neighbourhood Revitalization Project Team to take an integrated approach to the development of the strategy. Through planned and responsive meetings, each business area helped shape the quality and depth of the Balwin and Belvedere Revitalization Strategy.

Cheryl Heiland-Chaulk – Community Development Social Worker

Debra Jakubec – Abundant Community Edmonton Project Manager

Larisa Kreider – Citywide Indigenous Community Development Social Worker

Norma Lorincz – Neighbourhood Resource Coordinator

Shireen Mears – Neighbourhood Initiatives Lead, Building Community Through Recreation

Rocky Pilisko – Neighbourhood Resource Coordinator

Stephen Quinn – Community Safety Liaison, Community Safety

The following staff from the Family Centre worked closely with the Neighbourhood Revitalization Team to contribute the development of the strategy through planned and responsive meetings.

Breanne Grover – Youth Liaison, The Family Centre

Janelle Jaster – Success Coach, The Family Centre

We would like to acknowledge the following City of Edmonton business areas for their contribution in the Balwin and Belvedere neighbourhoods:

- + Family and Community Supports, Social Development Branch
- + Building Great Neighbourhoods Planning and Design, Building Great Neighbourhoods and Open Spaces Branch
- + Local and Emerging Economy, Economic and Environmental Sustainability Branch
- + Policy Development, City Planning Branch
- + Neighbourhood Recreation Experiences, Community and Recreation Facilities Branch
- + Urban Renewal, Economic and Environmental Sustainability Branch
- + Yellowhead Trail Portfolio, Infrastructure Planning and Design Branch
- + Animal Care and Pest Management, Community Standards and Neighbourhoods Branch
- + Community Standards Peace Officers, Community Standards and Neighbourhoods Branch
- + Complaints and Investigations, Community Standards and Neighbourhoods Branch

CONTENTS

Strategy Overview	5	Taking Action As A Community	23
Enhancing Edmonton's Neighbourhoods	7	+ Community-Led Initiatives	23
+ The Neighbourhood Revitalization Program	7	+ Community Capital Priorities	25
+ Creating a More Connected Edmonton	8	Putting Our Strategy Into Action	26
+ Building on Strengths	9	+ Leading the Effort	27
+ Revitalization in Balwin and Belvedere	10	+ Investments to Support Revitalization Work	29
Examining Balwin & Belvedere	11	+ A One-City Approach: Collaborating for Maximum Impact	30
+ About the Neighbourhoods	11	Defining Our Success	31
+ An Area with Rich History	14	Moving Forward Together	33
A Strategy Informed and Developed by Community Members	17		
+ Engaging the Community	17		
Key Assets of the Neighbourhoods	20		
A Vision and Goals for Balwin and Belvedere	21		
+ Community Vision	21		
+ How We Get There	22		



STRATEGY OVERVIEW

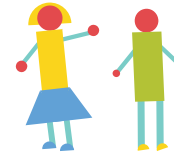
Community Vision for Revitalization

Belvedere and Balwin are committed to creating proud, safe and diverse communities that support and value their people and businesses.

Community Definition of Success for Revitalization

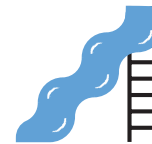
- + Increasing level of involvement
- + Growing level of hope among community
- + Members have opportunities to strengthen skills
- + Good appreciation of the history of the area
- + Growing sense of vibrancy in the neighbourhoods
- + Better reputation of the neighbourhoods amongst Edmontonians at large
- + More people building developments
- + More people buying homes
- + Increased feeling of safety

Community Goals for Revitalization



Goal One

Individuals who live, work and play in Balwin and Belvedere are more connected with each other and engaged in community activities.



Goal Three

Homes, businesses, sidewalks, parks and other places in Balwin and Belvedere are kept clean, tidy and well-lit.



Goal Two

Local businesses in Balwin and Belvedere are welcomed, celebrated and supported by local residents as part of the community.



Goal Four

Residents and businesses in Balwin and Belvedere take deliberate actions to help make the neighbourhoods feel safer for all community members.

COMMUNITY AREAS OF FOCUS

Community-Led Initiatives For Years One and Two

1

COMMUNITY CONNECTEDNESS

Information hub

Create a platform for the community that offers a central list and promotes events, activities, initiatives and other happenings in the Balwin and Belvedere communities.

Historic walk

Develop a historical walking route in the Balwin and Belvedere neighbourhoods that celebrates the roles, achievements and history of the neighbourhoods and showcases important locations and beautiful spaces.

2

ECONOMIC VIBRANCY

Food truck event

Hold an event with multiple food trucks, possibly at Station Pointe, where local residents can show support for businesses.

3

BEAUTIFICATION

Big Bin & Community Cleanup Event

Hold a community-wide cleanup day, in conjunction with a "Big Bin" event. Volunteers could help residents who have difficulty with mobility.

4

SAFETY

Safety/Community Patrol

Enhance the current program in Belvedere

Dialogue with Edmonton Police Services

Support opportunities to talk with enforcement staff.

5

CAPITAL

Investments to be considered on a variety of projects neighbourhood-wide Explore further opportunities in support of current community projects.



ENHANCING EDMONTON'S NEIGHBOURHOODS

The Neighbourhood Revitalization Program

Since 2006, the City of Edmonton's Neighbourhood Revitalization Program has provided a Revitalization Coordinator in selected neighbourhoods to work in partnership with citizens to strengthen and enhance their neighbourhoods.

Members of a community have powerful and crucial roles to play in revitalizing neighbourhoods. As the people who live, work and play in these areas each day, community members have unique perspectives about what the future of their neighbourhoods could look like and what can be done to help make this happen.

Recognizing this, City staff work collaboratively with local residents, property owners, business owners and operators, non-profit organizations and others to help them craft a strategic plan for the revitalization of their neighbourhood that leverages local strengths and opportunities.

Community members take the lead in contributing history, wisdom and thoughts about their neighbourhood. Together, they develop a vision and goals for the neighbourhood, and identify community-level projects that will help advance those goals and vision. These are articulated in a revitalization strategy. Members of the community and the Revitalization Coordinator continue to work together to advance the projects, goals and vision that the community has established for itself.

The goal of Neighbourhood Revitalization is to improve the livability of Edmonton's mature and established neighbourhoods, and mobilize community-led action.

In June 2018, City Council decided to bring the Neighbourhood Revitalization Program to the neighbourhoods of Balwin and Belvedere.

CREATING A MORE CONNECTED EDMONTON

The Neighbourhood Revitalization Program follows the guiding principle of connectedness, as set out in the City's 10-year strategic plan – ConnectEdmonton (2019–2028).

With community partners, the program directly supports two key strategic goals of the City:



Healthy City

Edmonton is a neighbourly city with community and personal wellness that embodies and promotes equity for all Edmontonians.



Urban Places

Edmonton neighbourhoods are more vibrant as density increases, where people and businesses thrive and where housing and mobility options are plentiful.

The Neighbourhood Revitalization Program is guided by four program principles, six program outcomes and four broad areas of focus for community-led initiatives:

PROGRAM PRINCIPLES

- + Diversity & Inclusion
- + Equity
- + Innovation
- + Openness & Transparency

PROGRAM OUTCOMES

- + Properties are attractive and well-cared for
- + People feel safe in their homes and community
- + The local economy is thriving
- + Investment in the community is strong
- + The social fabric of the neighbourhood is strong
- + People are empowered to lead change

FOCUS AREAS FOR COMMUNITY-LED PROJECTS

- + Beautification and Cleanliness
- + Safety
- + Economic Vibrancy
- + Community Connectedness

BUILDING ON STRENGTHS

Neighbourhood Services offers the following community-facing staff to citizens to enhance their neighbourhood:

- + Neighbourhood Resource Coordinators
- + Neighbourhood Revitalization Coordinators
- + Parkland focused Neighbourhood Resource Coordinator

Two types of community investment are included in the Neighbourhood Revitalization Program: Project and Capital. Project funding supports community-led initiatives for the duration of the Revitalization program. Capital funding is confirmed for neighbourhood enhancements in the current budget cycle (2019–2022).

The Neighbourhood Revitalization Program is led by the City of Edmonton Neighbourhood Services Section.

The Section uses a *place-based, asset-based community development approach* to advance its vision of empowering and engaging citizens to foster a connected, inclusive and livable city.

Place-based means that Section staff work face-to-face with neighbourhood residents, organizations and businesses. Place-based work brings together citizens in a place to leverage strengths and address community need by harnessing the vision, resources and opportunities of community.

Asset-based community development is a community-led approach built on four foundational elements:¹

- + It focuses on community assets and strengths, rather than problems and needs;
- + It identifies and mobilizes individual and community assets, skills, and passions;
- + It is community-driven;
- + It is relationship-driven.

In this approach, community members take a prominent role in identifying the strengths of their neighbourhoods. These strengths are supported and leveraged, so that the community can build on what's already working to achieve more success.

¹ The approach was originally developed by John McKnight and Jody Kretzmann. (Kretzmann, 2010; Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993; Mathie & Cunningham, 2003).



Revitalization in Balwin and Belvedere

The Balwin and Belvedere Revitalization Strategy is supported by a dedicated Revitalization Coordinator from Neighbourhood Services. This role includes strengthening coordination and collaboration with other City staff working in the neighbourhood.

THE BALWIN AND BELVEDERE REVITALIZATION STRATEGY IS A PROJECT WITH FOUR STAGES:

- 1 An initiation stage in late 2018 focused on building relationships to support community readiness.
- 2 Strategy development took place from December 2018 to June 2019.
- 3 Strategy implementation will begin in late 2019.
- 4 In the final stage of the project the Revitalization team will co-create a transition plan with the neighbourhoods to leave the community in a good state to maintain momentum from the capacity building that occurred during the revitalization initiative.

The anticipated time to complete these four stages is six to eight years.

*Abundant Community
Edmonton and Building
Community Through
Recreation are two
key approaches that
Neighbourhood Services
staff champion to support,
elevate and transform
neighbourhoods from good
to great by building on
community capacity and
local wisdom.*

EXAMINING BALWIN AND BELVEDERE

About the Neighbourhoods

Belvedere is located in northeast Edmonton. Roughly triangular in shape, the community is bounded by 66 Street to the west, 137 Avenue to the north, and the Capital Light Rail Transit (LRT) line to the south.

As of the 2016 federal census, it was home to approximately 5270 residents. About 43 percent of its residents are of "working age" (i.e., 25 to 54 years of age). Seniors make up a slightly larger proportion of its residents than the Edmonton average, while the proportion of children and youth is roughly in line with those of other neighbourhoods.

A variety of cultures are represented in Belvedere, as shown by the different languages spoken by residents of the neighbourhood. Just over six-in-ten (61.9%) Belvedere residents speak English as their mother tongue. Among the other most common languages in the neighbourhood are Tagalog (2.9% of residents), Somali (2.7%), French (2.7%) and Cantonese (2.4%).²

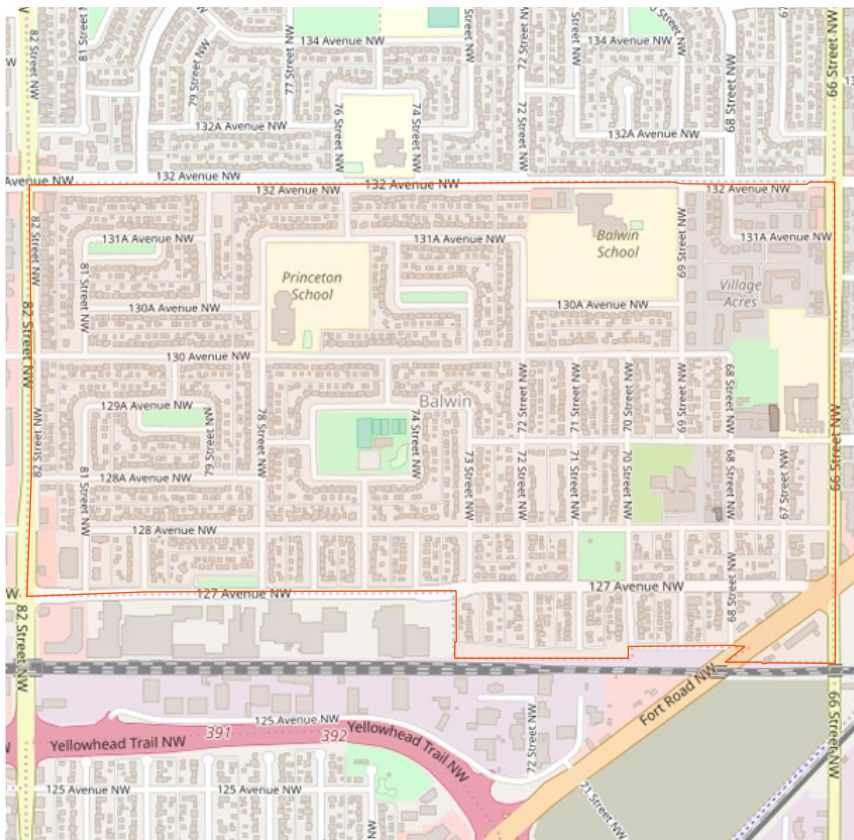
Belvedere is also home to the Fort Road and Area Business Improvement Area. Businesses within this area pool resources and work together, through this formal association, to enhance the economic development of their area. The Fort Road Business Improvement Area works towards: improving, beautifying, and maintaining property in the area; developing, improving, and maintaining public parking and promoting the Edmonton Fort Road Business Improvement Area as a business or shopping district.

² 2016 Census of Canada, Statistics Canada

Belvedere



Balwin



Prepared By: UFCSD | City Planning | Urban Analysis | Research & Analysis

Balwin is located immediately to the west of Belvedere. Roughly rectangular in shape, it stretches from 66 Street to 82 Street, and from 132 Avenue southwards to 127 Avenue. Although the proportion of its working age population is lower than Edmonton's average, Balwin has higher proportions of seniors and children (i.e., aged 14 and under) compared to other communities.

Similar to Belvedere, the neighbourhood of Balwin is multi-cultural. While a slightly higher proportion of Balwin residents (65.6%) have English as their mother tongue, over a third of residents have a first language other than English. The other most common mother tongues found in Balwin include Arabic (2.8% of residents), Ukrainian (2.4%), Somali (2.4%), and Spanish (2.3%).

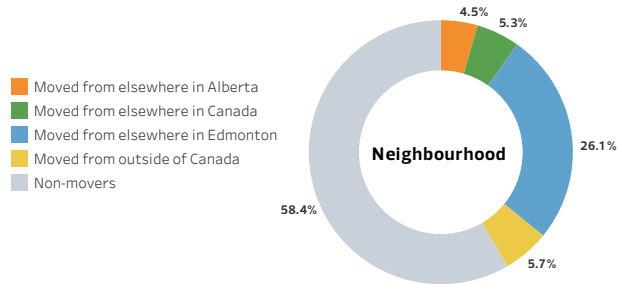
Together, Balwin and Belvedere share many common attributes. As established neighbourhoods, both are home to existing schools, parks and playgrounds. Commercial land fringes both neighbourhoods, and residents have access to many shopping options, including Londonderry Mall. There are a variety of different housing types in both communities, with a healthy mix of both property owners and renters.

Both neighbourhoods have also welcomed many new residents from elsewhere. As of the 2016 federal census, approximately half of Belvedere residents and approximately 40% of Balwin residents lived somewhere else five years previously. This includes a significant proportion of residents who came from outside of Canada, helping contribute to the rich and diverse cultural fabric of the area.

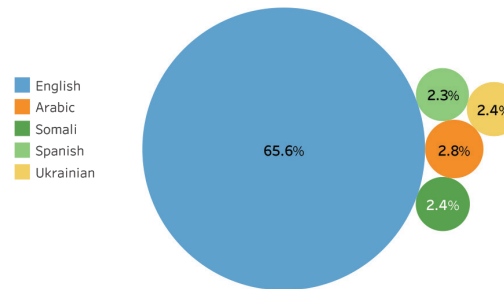
² 2016 Census of Canada, Statistics Canada

Balwin

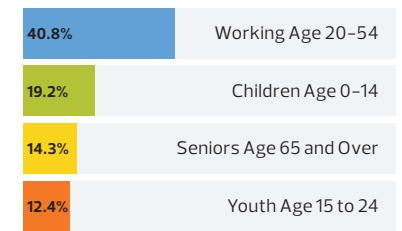
Mobility Status 5 Years Ago



Top 5 Mother Tongue

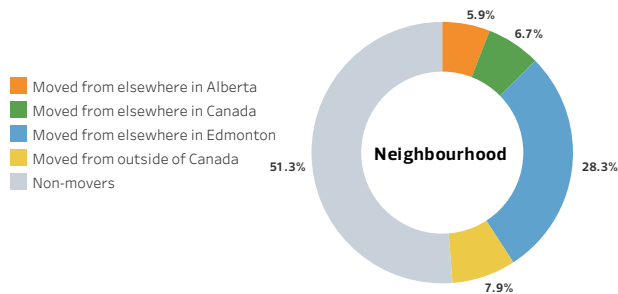


Age Distribution

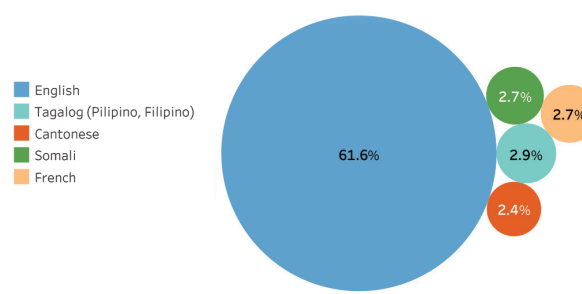


Belvedere

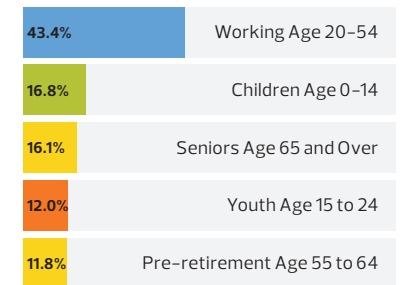
Mobility Status 5 Years Ago



Top 5 Mother Tongue



Age Distribution



HISTORY

AN AREA WITH RICH HISTORY

Although the majority of current dwellings were developed between 1960 and 1980, the entire area has deep roots in history.

INDIGENOUS HISTORY

Indigenous Peoples have lived in Alberta from time immemorial. Edmonton exists today because of its importance among Canada's First Peoples as a gathering place. For more than 500 generations many Indigenous Nations, including the Cree, Chipewyan, Beaver, Nakoda, and Blackfoot gathered on what are today the Rosssdale Flats to trade with one another and to participate in religious and political ceremonies. The Edmonton area was part of a system of their meeting places across Western Canada.³

MODERN HISTORY

In more recent history, Balwin and Belvedere have experienced considerable evolution.

At the turn of the 20th century, entrepreneurial citizens recognized the incredible potential of the location. Lying at the crossroads of two major lines of two major railways (the Canadian Northern Railway and the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway), the area became a hotspot for investment and industrial development.



Led by Swift's Canadian Company (which started operations in anticipation of the two rail lines), multiple stockyards and packing houses sprang up over several years. New settlers came in search of jobs and opportunities, and before long the area served as a major staging point for industry and product distribution.

³ Edmonton Historical Board: Time Periods: Pre-Contact and Fur Trade: Historical Context

HISTORY

Known as “Packingtown”, the area was officially incorporated in 1910 as the Village of North Edmonton. Rapidly growing from hundreds of residents to thousands, the village came to have its own school, hospital and police service. Becoming part of the City of Edmonton in 1913, the area was home at one point to the largest public livestock market in Canada.⁴

Changes in the economy over time have had consequences for the area. Restructuring in the rail industry led to the abandonment of the local rail lines. (These eventually became the right-of-way for Edmonton’s Capital LRT Line.) As livestock and food production industries changed, the local packing houses were also gradually shuttered, with the last of the plants dismantled in 1994.

PRESENT AND FUTURE OUTLOOK

Despite facing economic challenges since these developments, the Balwin and Belvedere area still has a historic spirit of pioneering and entrepreneurship. Efforts have happened over time to turn the page of history and help bring about the next evolution of this area.

In 2002, a Fort Road Old Town Master Plan was approved, and a Fort Road Urban Design plan was crafted in 2007.



Public investments have been committed in the area, which are helping to enhance physical infrastructure in the area around Balwin and Belvedere. These include a redevelopment of the Belvedere LRT station, the widening of Fort Road, and conversion of the Yellowhead Freeway which will improve its flow and efficiency.

⁴ The Fort Trail Historical Foundation





Another significant public project in the Balwin and Belvedere Revitalization area is the construction of the Kathleen Andrews Transit Garage. Named after Edmonton's first female bus driver, the garage will bring new purpose to the old Canada Packers site that has sat vacant for decades. With a capacity for 300 buses, including new electric buses, it will be a LEED-Silver certified structure that provides administrative and operational space for up to 700 drivers and staff. The site will include new landscaping, historical information features, lighting and benches, with interesting and attractive public spaces around the facility.

The City has also sought to play a role with Station Pointe, initially envisioned as a new urban village on lands previously home to packing plants. Located in close proximity to Belvedere LRT station, it is currently undergoing rezoning to encourage more affordable and family-friendly housing types mixed with commercial spaces.

Looking ahead, further investments in the area are expected to include reconstruction of the 132 Avenue collector between Fort Road and 82 Street. As part of implementing the Revitalization strategy, Neighbourhood Revitalization program and capital investments will also be made over the next several years.

A STRATEGY INFORMED AND DEVELOPED BY COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Engaging the Community

Public engagement improves the work of Neighbourhood Revitalization by:

- + Gathering local knowledge of the neighbourhood to inform strategy creation.
- + Creating a relationship with residents built on trust and respect.
- + Strengthening capacity in community members to carry out community-led initiatives.
- + Developing a sense of pride and ownership among residents by participating in the creation of the revitalization vision and strategy and the implementation projects to meet the aspirations in the strategy.

The outcome of public engagement for Neighbourhood Revitalization is to complement the asset-based community development process, in enhancing the community capacity building, when working with the City to co-create the revitalization vision and strategy. Citizens see their contributions reflected in the revitalization strategy and have identified opportunities to mobilize their community networks to strive towards the goals outlined in the revitalization strategy.

At an early stage, a Community Working Group (CWG) was formed. Made up of individuals from both Balwin and Belvedere, the members of the CWG offered diverse representation of both neighbourhoods in terms of gender, age, culture and roles. Offering local knowledge and experience, the CWG worked closely with the City Revitalization Coordinator to guide the overall process.


In December 2018, the CWG was established and held its first meeting. Further meetings of the CWG were held monthly from January to June 2019. During these meetings, the CWG received regular updates on the engagement process and served as a working committee on behalf of the broader Balwin and Belvedere communities. Members of the CWG analyzed the input gathered from community members and identified goals and projects to support the area's revitalization.

A range of tools were used to let community members know about the Neighbourhood Revitalization Program and the process.

THESE INCLUDED:

- + Social media advertising
- + Messages on the City's website and 311 service
- + Roadside signs
- + Community advertorials
- + Postcards mailed out to each resident and business in the neighbourhoods
- + Electronic subscriber updates
- + Posters





The Balwin and Belvedere Community Working Group was deliberately structured to include intersecting identities in terms of gender, age, culture, ability and other characteristics. The group consisted of approximately 12 individuals including:

- + At least 3 members from Balwin
- + At least 3 members from Belvedere
- + At least 1 Community League representative from each neighbourhood (Balwin and Belvedere)
- + A representative from the Fort Road and Area Business Improvement Area
- + An owner or operator of a business in the community
- + Up to 3 representatives of a social agency or non-profit serving the community.

The members of the CWG also helped promote the process by acting as ambassadors in the community and using word-of-mouth advertising.

In November 2018, a meet-and-greet event was held in Balwin. Dozens of community members gathered to learn about the Neighbourhood Revitalization Program, and shared their perspectives about what revitalization of Balwin and Belvedere would mean for them. Attendees offered many thoughts about topics that included safety, the renewal of roads and sidewalks, the development of parks, and community services.

In February 2019, a large community drop-in event was held at the Balwin Community League. At this event, community members were invited to identify the things they like about the Balwin and Belvedere neighbourhoods, and how assets in the neighbourhoods could be enhanced. They also provided ideas for beautifying Balwin and Belvedere, creating connections amongst residents, and increasing safety and economic vibrancy in the two neighbourhoods.

Throughout February, March, April and May, a series of nine focused neighbourhood discussions were held with audiences that the community wanted to ensure were engaged. These included audiences that were traditionally harder to reach or had unique perspectives, including seniors, youth, members of multi-cultural communities, and members of the business community. In these focused neighbourhood discussions, participants offered their viewpoints on the strengths of Balwin and Belvedere and their hopes for how their neighbourhoods might be enhanced. They also offered suggestions for actions or projects that could be undertaken to support revitalization of the neighbourhoods.

Like that from other engagement events, the input gathered from these focused discussions was used by the CWG to help develop a community vision for Revitalization and goals for Balwin and Belvedere. The ideas of community members were also considered by the CWG as it identified a number of specific projects that could be undertaken by the community to support revitalization.

Key Milestones

In May 2019, a second large community drop-in event was held at the Belvedere Community League. Attendees considered the proposed community vision developed by the CWG, and reviewed a number of community-led projects suggested by the CWG. These included projects aimed at enhancing the beauty, economic vibrancy, connectedness and safety of the Balwin and Belvedere neighbourhoods. Representatives from the Station Pointe project team attended the event and provided information to community members about the future direction of Station Pointe.

At the event, community members provided feedback on the proposed projects and identified which projects they were most interested in having implemented. In addition, they reviewed a number of physical spaces in Balwin and Belvedere and identified which ones they would prioritize for capital investments over the next four years.

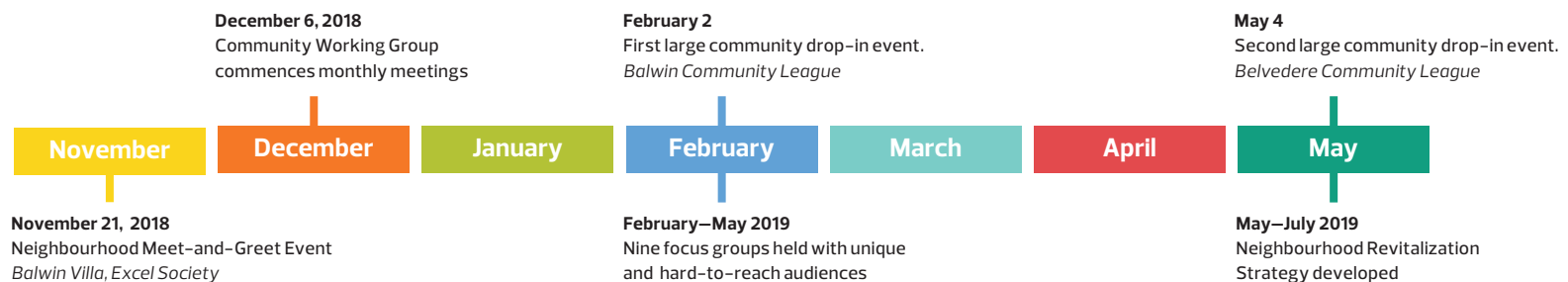
The May drop-in event served as a turning point for the Balwin and Belvedere revitalization work – from a phase focused on community engagement to a phase focused on putting plans into action.

Following the event, the CWG identified a path forward for the development of a Revitalization Strategy for Balwin and Belvedere, and for the implementation of priority projects for the first 24 months.

More details regarding the engagement process can be found in the What We Heard Report for Balwin and Belvedere Revitalization, at edmonton.ca/balwinbelvedererevitalization.

WHAT THE COMMUNITY WORKING GROUP DID:

- + Suggested how to best reach out to community members
- + Served as project ambassadors in the community
- + Identified key stakeholders and organizations
- + Recommended how engagement events should be held
- + Offered suggestions for communications
- + Developed a vision for the area
- + Examined what community members had to say
- + Identified community-led projects and priorities



KEY ASSETS OF THE NEIGHBOURHOODS

It's clear that members of the community care deeply about Balwin and Belvedere. There's a lot of passion about the area's history, its potential and how everyone in the community can work together to build a stronger future for both neighbourhoods.

WE HAVE A PROUD HISTORY

The area was a major centre of industrial activity, business activity and employment, and helped make Edmonton what it is today. Remembering where we've been can help us build a new foundation for a prosperous future.

WE'VE GOT SOME GREAT SPACES THAT PEOPLE ENJOY

The communities have a number of parks and playgrounds that people like to visit. With some additions and enhancements – like BBQ pits, picnic tables and better lighting – these places could be even more enjoyable.

WE HAVE ADVANTAGES AS MATURE NEIGHBOURHOODS

There is plenty of nearby access to amenities like shops and services, a library and even a large shopping mall. The neighbourhoods are well-served by schools, social services and non-profit agencies, and faith-based organizations that serve as key gathering places for residents. With spacious lots, ample parking, large tree-lined streets, green spaces and a mix of architecture, the neighbourhoods offer a unique vibe to younger residents who are looking for affordable urban living.

WITH AN LRT STATION, WE HAVE OPPORTUNITIES

Being next to a major LRT line and LRT station offers opportunities for growth and enhancement. It can help attract residents who want good access to transit, and in turn, attract business investment. The Station Pointe development has the potential to be a major catalyst for the entire area and help re-establish the 66 Street / Fort Road district's reputation as a destination and hub of commercial activity.

LET'S MAKE IT SAFER

Our neighbourhoods have much potential, and people want to feel safer so that they can fully realize that potential. While the City has its own role to play, community members can help promote greater safety by encouraging more connections among residents and enhancing the beauty of our properties. Initiatives such as lighting enhancements, community walking groups and information nights with enforcement staff, can help all members of the community feel safer in the neighbourhoods.

A VISION AND GOALS FOR BALWIN AND BELVEDERE

Community Vision

Belvedere and Balwin are committed to creating proud, safe and diverse communities that support and value their people and businesses.

Collectively, community members have a vision where the people who live, work and play in the Balwin and Belvedere neighbourhoods are included and interacting in fun and positive ways. This includes residents, business owners and operators, non-profit organizations and others who regularly spend time in the neighbourhoods. These diverse individuals should feel their voices are heard and should feel connected with other community members.

By being more connected, members of the community will be better positioned to support each other, including fellow neighbours and local businesses. This will help instill greater community pride and increased safety. With growing recognition that Balwin and Belvedere are good neighbourhoods with incredible potential, our neighbourhoods will welcome new families, new businesses and a new era of activity that builds on our rich history.



GOALS

HOW WE GET THERE

Pursuing the following four major goals will help us achieve our community vision.

Goal One

Individuals who live, work and play in Balwin and Belvedere are more connected with each other and engaged in community activities.

We want our diverse community members to feel included in the community. Creating more opportunities for residents to interact and get to know one another will help improve community connectedness. It can help families build networks of support, help youth build positive life skills, and help seniors remain socially engaged. It will also enhance the reputation of our neighbourhoods as safe, active and vibrant places to live.

Goal Two

Local businesses in Balwin and Belvedere are welcomed, celebrated and supported by local residents as part of the community.

Our community will support, celebrate and engage local business. We welcome more businesses into our neighbourhoods and recognize the benefits they bring. It will create more employment opportunities, lead to more vibrant streets, and help attract newer and younger residents. With good access to transit and good affordability, we have the ingredients to re-establish the area as a place where businesses want to be.

Goal Three

Homes, businesses, sidewalks, parks and other places in Balwin and Belvedere are kept clean, tidy and well-lit.

Keeping our community beautiful will help enhance its reputation, its value, and its attractiveness to people and businesses. By taking care of their properties our residents and businesses will show pride of ownership. Working together as a community, and in partnership with the City, we will work to keep our sidewalks, parks, playgrounds and other community spaces clean and bright.

Goal Four

Residents and businesses in Balwin and Belvedere take deliberate actions to help make the neighbourhoods feel safer for all community members.

While efforts to improve community connectedness and neighbourhood attractiveness will naturally contribute to safer streets, it is also important to take deliberate and proactive steps to directly address public safety concerns. All members of the community want to feel safe in Balwin and Belvedere, so they can fully enjoy everything the neighbourhoods have to offer. By engaging with the City and enforcement staff, and undertaking safety-related initiatives, residents and businesses in Balwin and Belvedere will help make the neighbourhoods feel safer.

TAKING ACTION AS A COMMUNITY

Through the public engagement process, community members brainstormed many potential initiatives.

They were reviewed and refined by the CWG, which selected the initiatives identified as "Initiatives for Years One and Two" as priorities for the first 24 months of implementing this strategy. These selections were reviewed and supported by community members who attended a public drop-in event in May 2019.

These projects will be explored by Community Project Teams which will be formed in late 2019 to early 2020.

Once these initiatives have been completed, the "Other Initiatives Considered" will be included in the process to identify the future projects with the community.

In starting with the first set of initiatives, we will be moving the work of Revitalization forward and allowing flexibility and space to explore new and emergent projects in Balwin and Belvedere. This way, the Revitalization program can make sure that the efforts to revitalize Balwin and Belvedere are relevant and have the support of community members.

GOALS

COMMUNITY-LED INITIATIVES

Goal One

Individuals who live, work and play in Balwin and Belvedere are more connected with each other and engaged in community activities.

INITIATIVES FOR YEARS ONE AND TWO

Information hub – Create a platform for the community that offers a central list and promotes events, activities, initiatives and other happenings in the Balwin and Belvedere communities.

Historic walk – Develop a historical walking route in the Balwin and Belvedere neighbourhoods that celebrates the roles, achievements and history of the neighbourhoods and showcases important locations and beautiful spaces.

OTHER INITIATIVES CONSIDERED

Community garden – Organize, establish and manage community gardens in Balwin and/or Belvedere neighbourhoods. These projects will provide opportunities for community members to interact and enhance the beauty of the neighbourhood(s).

Evening walking group – Organize a regular evening walking group for residents. This will promote interaction between community members and put extra "eyes" on the neighbourhoods.

Expand youth programming – Enhance existing youth activities within the neighbourhoods to expand access for children and youth.



COMMUNITY-LED INITIATIVES

Goal Two

Local businesses in Balwin and Belvedere are welcomed, celebrated and supported by local residents as part of the community.

INITIATIVES FOR YEARS ONE AND TWO

Food truck event – Hold an event with multiple food trucks, possibly at Station Pointe, where local residents can show support for business.

OTHER INITIATIVES CONSIDERED

Painting program – Work with local business owners and operators to paint their storefronts / properties to make them lively, unique, eye-catching and inviting.

Mural projects – In collaboration with business and artists, develop murals in prominent locations, including business buildings, similar to what has been done in the Whyte Avenue area.

Goal Three

Homes, businesses, sidewalks, parks and other places in Balwin and Belvedere are kept clean, tidy and well-lit.

INITIATIVES FOR YEARS ONE AND TWO

Big Bin & Community Cleanup Event – Hold a community-wide clean-up day, in conjunction with a “Big Bin” event. Volunteers could help residents who have difficulty with mobility.

OTHER INITIATIVES CONSIDERED

Enhance Braids Park – Add features such as benches and BBQ pits to improve the beauty, functionality and enjoyability of this popular park

Local beautification contest – Hold a local contest in the neighbourhoods that challenges residents to spruce up and beautify their properties and yards.

Goal Four

Residents and businesses in Balwin and Belvedere take actions that help make the neighbourhoods feel safer for all community members.

INITIATIVES FOR YEARS ONE AND TWO

Safety/Community Patrol – Enhance the current program in Belvedere

Dialogue with Edmonton Police Service – Support opportunities to talk with enforcement staff.

OTHER INITIATIVES CONSIDERED

Address derelict buildings – Work with the City to address run-down properties and explore opportunities to repurpose them.

Community Capital Priorities

In addition to the initiatives outlined above, community members identified priorities for capital investments as part of the public engagement process. These include:

- + Lighting enhancements in Belvedere Park and adjacent to the community league
- + Improvements to the Fort Road / 66 Street node
- + Improved safety at busy intersections for people walking and wheeling
- + The development of more bike and shared-use paths, including a shared-use path between the smoke stack at Kathleen Andrews Garage and Station Pointe
- + Enhancements to Braids Park, Robert Brett Park and Zoie Gardner Park such as play features and picnic tables
- + Additional lighting in green spaces in both Balwin and Belvedere.

A Capital Project Team of community members from Balwin and Belvedere will continue this work with the City's Neighbourhood Revitalization Program to pursue additional public engagement and refinement of these priorities.

In deciding how to pursue these priorities, we will explore ways to potentially collaborate with other planned and potential City projects happening in the broader area. (For example, Station Pointe, the Fort Road Widening project, and Corner Store program.) Taking this approach may enable us to realize efficiencies, achieve faster progress and maximize the impact of our revitalization efforts.



PUTTING OUR STRATEGY INTO ACTION

Putting our initiatives into action will involve collaboration – amongst residents, businesses, and other members of the community. Working in collaboration with staff from Edmonton's Neighbourhood Revitalization Program, representatives of the Balwin and Belvedere neighbourhoods will lead in engaging volunteers and participants in community-led actions.

Leading The Effort

The successful implementation of our Revitalization Strategy will depend upon the participation of residents, businesses and other community members. Implementation of the Strategy will also be supported by a City of Edmonton Revitalization Coordinator, who will lead coordination between community participants and City community development staff.

THREE ENTITIES WILL COLLABORATE TO BRING OUR STRATEGY TO LIFE:

- + Revitalization Guiding Team
- + City of Edmonton Community Development Team
- + Project Teams

Revitalization Guiding Team

PURPOSE

Provides leadership, support and direction on the implementation of the strategy as it aligns with the outcomes of Revitalization.

ROLE

Represents the neighbourhood in the implementation of the strategy.

RESPONSIBILITY

- + Share information about Revitalization with the neighbourhood to encourage participation on the project teams.
- + Encourage and guide project teams.
- + Make evidence-based decisions that align with the Revitalization strategy.
- + Track actions/evaluate progress/problem solve Revitalization work in the area.

COMPOSITION

- + 10-12 individuals reflective of intersecting identities and made up of residents, neighbourhood-based organizations, Community League representatives, Executive Director or alternate of the Business Improvement Area and/or business owner operator within the neighbourhood
- + Applications will be reviewed and approved by the Neighbourhood Revitalization Coordinator based on established criteria

COMMITMENT

- + 1-2 year terms
- + Meet six times annually
- + Participate in professional/personal development opportunities

City of Edmonton Community Development Team

PURPOSE

Provides leadership, support and helps to identify opportunities that could enhance community development work in the neighbourhood(s) through Revitalization.

ROLE

Convene key City of Edmonton staff to support each other and work collaboratively to enhance community development in the Revitalization area.

RESPONSIBILITY

- + Offer a broad perspective on current work in the Revitalization neighbourhood and surrounding area.
- + Discuss and identify opportunities regarding emergent projects in the neighbourhood.
- + Consider the work of the Revitalization Guiding Team as it relates to emergent trends and projects in the area.
- + Share knowledge of the Neighbourhood Revitalization program and opportunities with existing networks and groups within the neighbourhood

COMPOSITION

- + Revitalization Coordinator
- + Neighbourhood Resource Coordinator
- + Park Neighbourhood Resource Coordinator (as needed)
- + Community Development Social Worker
- + Community Safety Liaison – Neighbourhood Empowerment Team
- + Community Relations Advisors – Community Standards and Neighbourhoods

COMMITMENT

Meet six times annually

Project Teams: Community Project Teams

PURPOSE

Create opportunities for people in the Revitalization area to come together, form a team and participate in a community development project in their neighbourhood.

ROLE

Plan and implement the identified project idea in the Strategy or an emergent idea that aligns with the Strategy.

RESPONSIBILITY

- + Use an asset-based, place-based community development approach for planning and implementation of project ideas.
- + Identify a team lead to guide the group through the project.
- + The team lead to update a member of the Revitalization Guiding Team on a regular basis.

COMPOSITION

- + Self-selection with support of the Revitalization Guiding Team and the Revitalization Coordinator.
- + Minimum of 3 people up to a maximum of 6 people.

COMMITMENT

- + Varied – 6 months, 1 year or completion of the project
- + Participate in professional/ personal development opportunities

Project Teams: Capital Project Team

PURPOSE

Plan and support the process of new infrastructure projects in the Revitalization area.

ROLE

Support the selection of capital investment in infrastructure projects and the required City processes.

RESPONSIBILITY

- + Plan and complete public engagement as outlined by the Revitalization Guiding Team.
- + Consider and make recommendations based on community information, public engagement data, budget considerations and other City projects in the area.
- + Identify a team lead to guide the group through the project.
- + The team lead to update a member of the Revitalization Guiding Team on a regular basis.

COMPOSITION

- + Self-selection with support of the Revitalization Guiding Team and the Revitalization Coordinator.
- + Minimum of 3 people up to a maximum of 6 people.

COMMITMENT

- + Varied – 6 months, 1 year or completion of the project
- + Participate in professional/ personal development opportunities

The City of Edmonton Revitalization Coordinator will liaise closely with project teams and will participate in all meetings of the Revitalization Guiding Team and City of Edmonton Community Development Team, to help share knowledge amongst the teams about pertinent information and community decisions that have been made.

An inventory will be taken of the skills and gifts of prospective participants and of the areas where they would like to contribute. A scan of assets – such as important neighbourhood places, information collected from previous public engagement activities, and current projects and programs – will be completed. This information will be used by the Revitalization Guiding Team and the City of Edmonton Community Development Team to help inform their decisions.



Investments to Support Revitalization Work

Implementation of the Balwin and Belvedere Revitalization Strategy will be supported by a dedicated Revitalization Coordinator, annual program funding, and capital funding (2019 – 2022).

Neighbourhood Revitalization investments will reflect the community's vision and goals identified during the development of the Revitalization Strategy, and the Neighbourhood Revitalization Program outcomes and its principles of: diversity and inclusion; equity; a strengths-based approach that recognizes and utilizes the wisdom, talents and skills of neighbourhood residents; innovation, openness and transparency.

Residents, local organizations and businesses can access program funding for community-led initiatives through the Small Sparks Grant and the Neighbourhood Revitalization Fund. Community contributions can be made up of volunteer equity, in-kind donations and/or cash.

The Revitalization Program will collaborate with citizens and other City departments to leverage capital investment opportunities in Balwin and Belvedere.

A One-City Approach: Collaborating for Maximum Impact

The Neighbourhood Revitalization Program integrates and collaborates with several other City departments and business areas including but not limited to:

CITIZEN SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Social Development Family and Community Supports

Community Development Social Worker and Neighbourhood Revitalization staff will work collaboratively to support and enhance the social fabric in the Revitalization neighbourhood(s).

Social Development Neighbourhood Empowerment Team

Community Safety Liaisons commit to providing support to the Revitalization Initiative by exploring projects and community concerns as they relate to crime and disorder as well as factors that contribute to community safety.

Social Development Community Resources

Family and Community Support Services Liaisons will explore opportunities for collaboration between the community and community organizations in the Revitalization neighbourhood.

Community Standards and Neighbourhoods

Complaints and Investigations, Community Standards Peace Officers, Animal Care and Pest Management, Neighbourhood Services

The Community Relations Advisors and Neighbourhood Revitalization team will work in collaboration to provide community information and understanding of City Standards through community-led initiatives that align with the Revitalization Strategy.



URBAN FORM AND CORPORATE STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

Economic and Environmental Sustainability

Local and Emerging Economy

The Local & Emerging Economy team will support the Revitalization team to leverage existing programs and services, including commercial building grant programs, as well as existing relationships with Business Improvement Areas and small business owners, to support stronger connections between communities and local business areas.

Economic and Environmental Sustainability Urban Renewal

Urban Renewal is committed to facilitating the connection between the Balwin and Belvedere Revitalization Program and Station Pointe developers. Urban Renewal will collaborate with the Balwin and Belvedere Revitalization Program to support the animation of the future multi-use trail in Station Pointe.

INTEGRATED INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Infrastructure Planning and Design Transportation

Planning and Design (Yellowhead Trail)

The Balwin and Belvedere Revitalization Team will collaborate with the Yellowhead Trail Freeway Conversion Team on their work for the Fort Road Widening project to leverage capital investment opportunities for a shared-use path in the area that enhances connection and livability for the Balwin and Belvedere neighbourhoods.

Building Great Neighbourhoods and Open Spaces

Building Great Neighbourhoods, Planning and Design

Building Great Neighbourhoods coordinates the City's reinvestment in neighbourhood infrastructure and is committed to partner with Neighbourhood Revitalization to maximize the capital investments made. Building Great Neighbourhoods will support the development of capital investment opportunities through the concept, design

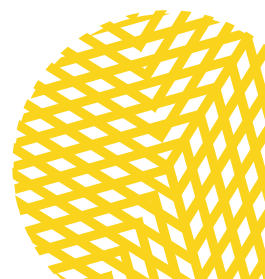
and construction phases in the Revitalization area.

Wherever possible, our community will reach out to and work with partners – within the Balwin and Belvedere neighbourhoods and across Edmonton – to help turn our community-led initiatives into realities. This includes partnership with private sector businesses, non-profit organizations, and other levels of government.

Investments in the Balwin and Belvedere Revitalization area will align with ConnectEdmonton, Edmonton's strategic plan that sets the direction for Edmonton's future over the next 10 years.

The plan's overarching guiding principle of Connected means:

- + We create as a community to connect people to what matters to them.
- + We care about the impact of our actions on our social, economic, cultural, spiritual and environmental systems.
- + We serve those here today and those who come after us.



DEFINING OUR SUCCESS

Early on in the process, we discussed our hopes as a community for the revitalization of Balwin and Belvedere. We talked about what successful revitalization would look like and what it would mean to us. From those discussions, our community has identified several attributes and trends we hope will occur over time.

*Our community vision:
Belvedere and Balwin are committed to creating proud, safe and diverse communities that support and value their people and businesses.*

As we implement our revitalization strategy we will regularly review how Balwin and Belvedere are growing and changing.

OUR COMMUNITY'S DEFINITION OF SUCCESS FOR BALWIN AND BELVEDERE

- + A greater sense among community members that Balwin and Belvedere are good neighbourhoods.
- + Better reputation of Balwin and Belvedere amongst Edmontonians at large.
- + More people building developments in the neighbourhoods.
- + More people buying homes in the neighbourhoods.
- + An increasing level of involvement and contribution in the revitalization strategy.
- + A growing level of hope among community members.
- + Members of the community have opportunities to strengthen their skills.
- + A good appreciation of the history of the area.
- + A growing sense of vibrancy in the neighbourhoods.

In particular, we will consider whether we are moving closer towards our community's definition of success. This information will be used by the Revitalization Guiding Team, in consultation with community members, as it decides how to implement the revitalization strategy and what adjustments are required to create the best outcomes in Balwin and Belvedere.



Evaluation and ongoing adjustment of the strategy will be further supported by capturing residents' stories, as well as evaluating the Neighbourhood Revitalization Program outcomes.

City of Edmonton Neighbourhood Revitalization Program Outcomes

PROPERTIES ARE ATTRACTIVE AND WELL-CARED FOR

Safe properties and a civil urban society are accomplished together with education, compliance and, where necessary, enforcement initiatives.

PEOPLE FEEL SAFE IN THEIR HOMES AND COMMUNITY

City of Edmonton staff work with community members to promote safety and protect their neighbourhoods.

THE LOCAL ECONOMY IS THRIVING

Thriving businesses that provide vital community services and employ local residents support more sustainable and vibrant neighbourhoods.

INVESTMENT IN THE COMMUNITY IS STRONG

Investment by residents and developers in their properties supports neighbourhood vibrancy and sustainability.

THE SOCIAL FABRIC OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD IS VIBRANT

Strengthening neighbourhood vibrancy through investment in social infrastructure.

PEOPLE ARE EMPOWERED TO LEAD CHANGE

Communities have increased leadership and capacity to sustain their neighbourhood.

MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER

Balwin and Belvedere have many positive qualities, including a rich history, an optimistic spirit, a location with lots of potential, and – most importantly – community members who care deeply about their neighbourhoods. By building on these strengths and working together to bring about change, those who live, work and play in the neighbourhoods look forward to seeing an exciting evolution in Balwin and Belvedere.

As implementation of this revitalization strategy moves forward, the voices, wisdom and perspectives of community members will continue to feature prominently. Community participation will also be important for success, and we encourage you to take part in the events, initiatives and further engagement opportunities that take place in the months and years ahead.

For additional information and to get involved, please visit and sign up to the mailing list on the project website at edmonton.ca/BalwinBelvedereRevitalization

Or contact: Serena de Souza
Neighbourhood Revitalization Coordinator
balwinbelvedererevitalization@edmonton.ca

See you in the community!





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