

City of Edmonton **Yellowhead Trail Freeway Conversion Program**

What We Heard Report: St. Albert Trail to 97 Street Preliminary Design

What We Heard Summary
November 2023

SHARE YOUR VOICE
SHAPE OUR CITY

Edmonton

Thank you for meeting with us and providing your feedback.

Yellowhead Trail will soon become a freeway. We know that these changes may affect you, the way you travel, and the way your business operates.

The Yellowhead Trail: St. Albert Trail to 97 Street Project covers 4.3 km of Yellowhead Trail and is the single largest and most technically complex project of the City of Edmonton's Yellowhead Trail Freeway Conversion Program.

Your valuable input during the concept phase (2019–2021) helped shape and inform the preliminary design for Yellowhead Trail, the active transportation network in the area and neighbourhood open space and landscape plans. This report provides a review of the preliminary design engagement, what we heard from you and how your feedback was used in finalizing the design.

Thank you to everyone who engaged with us in-person and virtually. All comments were considered by the project team.

THANK YOU.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

During the Design stage of the project, which began in 2021, the City continued to develop the roadway and neighbourhood designs for the St. Albert Trail to 97 Street segment of the Yellowhead Trail conversion.

This report provides details of the designs that were shared with the public and stakeholders and summarizes the feedback received during the Preliminary Design engagement phase in spring 2023.



Design Overview

The design for this segment includes:

- + Removal of all traffic signals and direct accesses to Yellowhead Trail
- + Two new interchanges: one at 127 Street and one at 121 Street
- + New roadway connections from 121 Street and 107 Street to the 121 Street interchange to provide access to Yellowhead Trail
- + New service roads parallel to Yellowhead Trail to manage traffic flow
- + A new shared-use path on the south side of Yellowhead Trail from 142 Street to 107 Street
- + Shifting the Yellowhead Trail centreline to the north approximately 18 metres from where it is now to make room for the 127 Street interchange

Some changes were made to the design since the Concept Planning Study (2021). These include:

- + A separate pedestrian bridge crossing Yellowhead Trail at the new 127 Street interchange to improve the north-south connection
- + The new interchange at 121 Street has a direct eastbound on-ramp instead of an eastbound loop ramp
- + Changing the 121 Street interchange from an underpass to an overpass, with Yellowhead Trail going over 121 Street. This improves the drainage design by eliminating the need for a large storage tank thereby reducing the overall construction and future maintenance costs
- + Secondary access to Haggman is no longer provided from the 121 Street interchange. Access to Haggman will be provided at the intersection of 126 Avenue and 127 Street. A right-in access at the 127 Street westbound off-ramp was reviewed; however, access at this location will be for emergency access only
- + The number of traffic lanes and their configuration within the project limits were optimized

Input gathered during this phase of engagement was considered by the project team as it finalized the design for this section of Yellowhead Trail. Construction began in fall 2023 and is scheduled to be complete in 2027.

Visit edmonton.ca/YellowheadSATto97Street for more information.

HOW WE ENGAGED

The following opportunities were provided to share information and gather feedback.



Stakeholder Meetings

- + Yellowhead Youth Centre
- + Alberta Infrastructure



Community Survey: Online and Paper

May 25 to June 21, 2023

- + 2 responses to the Dovercourt neighbourhood survey
- + 7 responses to the Sherbrooke neighbourhood survey
- + 2 responses to the Prince Charles neighbourhood survey



Community Drop-in Event

May 25, 2023
58 participants



Business Drop-in Event

June 12, 2023
12 participants



Public Online Session

June 14, 2023
25 participants



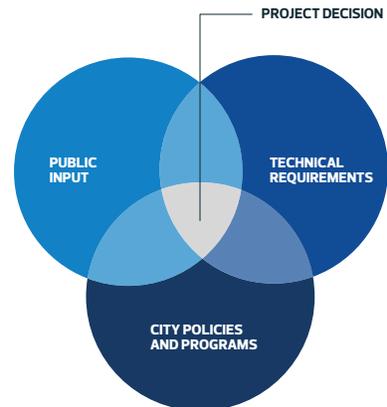
Public Survey: Online

May 25 to June 21, 2023
72 responses

HOW DECISIONS ARE MADE

Public input, technical analysis and City policies are considered in creating the design.

The City's public engagement spectrum defines the public's level of influence in engagement processes. Visit edmonton.ca/publicengagement for more information.



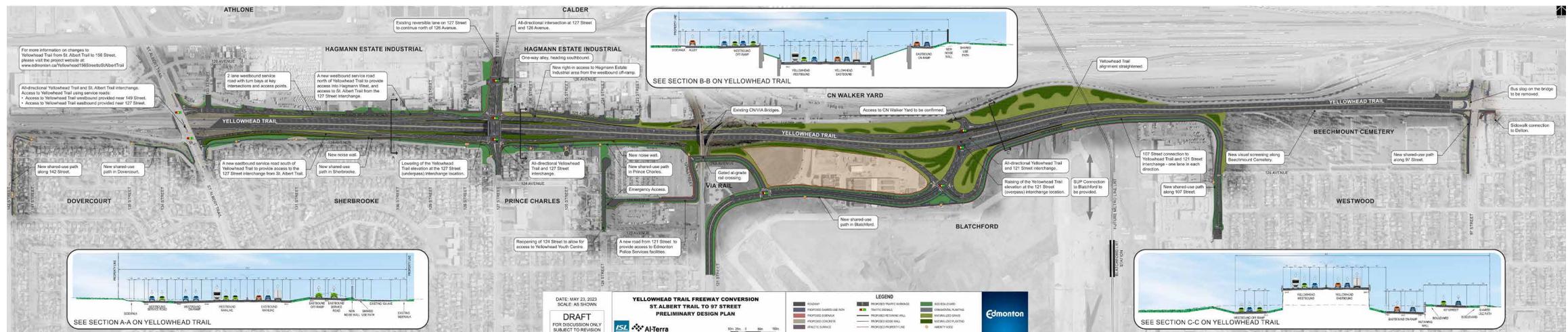
During Preliminary Design engagement, all engagement opportunities were at the Advise level on the City of Edmonton's Public Engagement Spectrum. This means the City consults with the public to gather feedback and perspectives that are considered for policies, programs, projects or services.

ADVISE

WHAT WE SHARED

During this phase, preliminary designs for the roadway, bridges, active transportation network in the area and adjacent residential neighbourhoods were shared. The neighbourhood designs include plans for active transportation, open space and landscaping for Dovercourt, Sherbrooke and Prince Charles.

PRELIMINARY DESIGN: ST. ALBERT TRAIL TO 97 STREET



To view the preliminary designs, as well as renderings for Dovercourt, Sherbrooke and Prince Charles, visit: edmonton.ca/YellowheadSATto97Street

WHAT WE HEARD

What we heard	How we are responding
A desire to include less grass and more pollinator plants, trees and greenery, as well as native flowers and medicinal plants.	<p>Plant species have been carefully selected to balance aesthetic, environmental and maintenance requirements.</p> <p>Ornamental plantings in amenity nodes will include pollinator species, including Blue Grama Grass, Prairie Drop Seed and Cone Flower. Additionally, plantings that add to pollinator benefits include various varieties of Daylily and Iris.</p>
A desire for traffic calming measures to decrease vehicle speeds and short-cutting in Sherbrooke.	<p>The City's Safe Mobility team has been working with the Yellowhead Trail project team to develop traffic calming measures. Based on feedback and traffic operation review, the City has installed traffic signals on St. Albert Trail at 122 Avenue and Sherbrooke Avenue. Other measures will include speed humps and a raised crosswalk on 122 Avenue.</p> <p>The City will continue to monitor traffic in Sherbrooke during and following construction to determine if any additional traffic calming measures are required.</p>
Concern about the shared-use path increasing the potential for crime and other inappropriate activities in the adjacent neighbourhoods.	<p>The Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles have been applied throughout this project to minimize the opportunity for inappropriate activities.</p> <p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Adding a continuous illuminated shared-use path that increases accessibility and activity along the north edge of the Dovercourt, Sherbrooke and Prince Charles. Increased livability of the areas provides natural surveillance and deters inappropriate activities. + Designing green spaces to provide clear sightlines from adjacent communities (design includes highhead trees and low growing understory plantings). + Increasing visibility of shared-use paths from the intersections along Yellowhead Trail, by introducing clear panels at these locations.
A desire for additional noise mitigation in Sherbrooke.	<p>A study was completed to confirm the level of noise mitigation required.</p> <p>The top of the new noise wall will match the top of the existing noise wall and meet the requirements of the City's Urban Traffic Noise Policy.</p>
A desire for a higher berm and noise wall.	<p>The intent of the noise wall design is to balance noise mitigation with the visual impact of the wall on adjacent residences, within the available space.</p> <p>The combination of the new berm and noise wall will meet the requirements of the City's Urban Traffic Noise Policy.</p>

What we heard	How we are responding
A desire to remove from the design the clear panels proposed for the top of the concrete noise wall.	<p>Clear panels have been used in other jurisdictions, including the Ministry of Ontario and they do provide effective noise mitigation. However, these clear panels have been removed from the top of the noise wall design. The concrete panels will extend to the top of the wall.</p> <p>Clear panels will only be used facing Yellowhead Trail at neighbourhood access points, where noise walls overlap. This will improve safety and provide good sightlines, while meeting noise mitigation requirements.</p>
A desire for trees to be planted between the service road and the pathway/residential area rather than between Yellowhead Trail and the service road.	<p>Planting between Yellowhead Trail and the noise wall are intended to minimize the visual impact of the noise wall.</p> <p>Vines and trees will be installed on the residential side of the noise wall to integrate it into the adjacent communities. Low maintenance plantings have been chosen in both locations.</p>
Narrowing 124 Avenue is undesirable.	<p>After receiving community feedback, 124 Avenue will not be narrowed.</p>
Safety concerns related to active transportation crossings and the 127 Street pedestrian bridge.	<p>All intersections have been designed to ensure safe movement for both pedestrians and vehicles.</p> <p>The number of traffic lanes that pedestrians will need to cross has been optimized to minimize crossing time and distance. Pedestrian crossings are signalized where required, and the geometry has been optimized to improve pedestrian visibility and safety. Finally, a stand-alone pedestrian bridge is being constructed on the west side of 127 Street, to separate active mode users from the roadway.</p>
Concern about negative impacts of the design on traffic flow, specifically related to congestion at the interchanges.	<p>Extensive option development and analysis was completed during the planning phase of this project to ensure that the most appropriate and efficient interchange designs were selected. The design team considered future traffic volumes, turning movements, pedestrian crossings, safety and land requirements. With the grade separation from Yellowhead Trail both 127 Street and 121 Street will work substantially better than they do today.</p>
A desire for direct access to Yellowhead Trail at both St. Albert Trail and 107 Street.	<p>Direct access to Yellowhead Trail at St. Albert Trail and 107 Street is not possible due to the close proximity of adjacent interchanges, as well as space restrictions due to CN Walker Yard and the Beechmount Cemetery, north and south of Yellowhead Trail, respectively.</p> <p>107 Street will connect to Yellowhead Trail via the 121 Street interchange.</p>

What we heard	How we are responding
A desire for a noise wall in Blatchford.	A noise study for the project was conducted and noise mitigation in Blatchford is not warranted under the City's Urban Traffic Noise Policy until Blatchford is developed up to its northern limits. Once Blatchford is fully developed and the northern lot alignments are known, a separate noise study is recommended to confirm if any noise mitigation measures are required.
A desire for additional landscaping along the neighbourhood side of the noise walls where houses face the wall.	Neighbourhood plans will include additional landscaping in select locations where there are no conflicts with utilities. Maintenance requirements are also being considered in the final landscaping plans.
Lack of support for the design due to the environmental impact of the project; a desire for a greater emphasis on active transportation and transit.	<p>The project includes 5km of new shared-use path along the south side of Yellowhead Trail that complements the City's Bike Plan, providing options for people to move throughout the city. Amenity nodes, fitness areas and connections to transit stops will be provided along the shared-use path, where appropriate.</p> <p>The project includes a separate pedestrian bridge crossing Yellowhead Trail at the new 127 Street interchange to improve the pedestrians' and cyclists' experience and safety.</p>
A desire for timely information and clear messaging about closures and detours during construction.	The City will provide ongoing construction updates via construction bulletins, signage and other methods.
A desire for construction staging and traffic management to be well considered and managed.	The City will work with the Construction Manager to develop construction staging and traffic management plans to minimize impacts to drivers.
A desire for traffic to be directed to Anthony Henday Drive to avoid congestion on Yellowhead Trail during construction.	The City will work with the Construction Manager to develop construction staging and traffic management plans to minimize impacts to drivers.
A desire for safe access and passage for active transportation users during construction.	The City will work with the Construction Manager to develop construction staging and traffic management plans to accommodate safe active transportation links, as well as to minimize impacts to active transportation users.
A concern about access in the east section of Hagmann and loss of connection to 121 Street.	Access to Hagmann will be provided at the 127 Street/ 126 Avenue intersection which will adequately serve the area.

What Happens Next?

The St. Albert Trail to 97 Street Design phase has come to a close and we want to thank you for your participation.

Your input has been valuable in making any final minor adjustments to the design and preparing for construction.

Detour construction began in fall 2023 with construction of the overpass scheduled to begin in mid 2024.

The City will share updates on the project and construction in early 2024.

To stay up to date, visit edmonton.ca/YellowheadSATto97Street and sign up for the e-newsletter.

QUESTIONS?

Website: edmonton.ca/YellowheadSATto97Street

Email: yellowhead@edmonton.com

The Yellowhead Trail Freeway Conversion Program is a transformational project that will upgrade Yellowhead Trail to a freeway by the end of 2027.