

TERWILLEGAR DRIVE CONCEPT PLANNING STUDY

November 2017 – February 2018 Public Engagement Summary – July 2018



Aerial view of Terwillegar Drive

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The City of Edmonton initiated a study in the fall of 2017 to update the approved 2007 concept plan for the Terwillegar Drive corridor, between Whitemud Drive and Anthony Henday Drive, considering current roadway standards, travel demand and population projections.

The project scope includes upgrades to the Haddow Drive, 23 Avenue, Rabbit Hill Road and Bulyea Road/40 Avenue intersections, with goals to accommodate all users, locally and regionally, safely and efficiently, and to alleviate congestion along the corridor.

All modes of transportation are being considered, including passenger vehicles, transit, goods movement trucks, and active modes (cyclists and pedestrians).

Following the February 27, 2018 Notice of Motion from City Council, the City is continuing to explore options for Terwillegar Drive which will improve congestion, maintain neighbourhood access and include opportunities for transit, pedestrians and cyclists.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

The initial phase of public engagement was designed to gather feedback and perspectives on potential design upgrades to the Terwillegar Drive concept plan, including several high-level freeway configuration solutions and interchange design options. The input was used in the evaluation and recommendation of an updated plan for Terwillegar Drive, along with other considerations such as the City's policies and technical requirements.

During this initial phase of engagement (November 2017 to February 2018), engagement activities were conducted with community organizations, area residents, businesses, and the public. They were engaged using the following activities to better understand concerns, opportunities and priorities, and gather local knowledge and input on freeway options between Haddow Drive and 40 Avenue/Bulyea Road.



Meetings with Community League Executives and Commercial Property Owners – 11 meetings between November 2017 and March 2018



Public Engagement Event (January 24, 2018) – 484 attendees, hundreds of comments on maps of design options



Public survey (January 24 – February 15, 2018)
3661 responses



Emails to Project Team/City Council
348 received

This document summarizes input received from Phase 1 engagement activities.

WHAT WE HEARD: RESULTS AND FINDINGS

There is significant interest in the future of Terwillegar Drive, both from residents adjacent to, and north and south of the corridor, community organizations, area businesses and property owners, and commuters from other areas of the City. Area residents strongly voiced the opinion that the priority of the City should be to construct the improvements quickly and meet the needs of the area in the long term.

What follows is a compilation of common themes and issues across the different engagement tactics and audience groups. The compilation of opinions is not ranked or rated in order of importance.

Alleviate Congestion

Most comments received overwhelmingly directed the City to alleviate traffic congestion to enhance traffic flow and shorten travel times.

Neighbourhood Access

Access to the neighbourhoods adjacent to Terwillegar Drive and their businesses, services and schools is of utmost importance. The most comments received after "alleviating traffic congestion" were the comments requesting that the City maintain direct neighborhood accesses from the corridor.

Comments note that area residents feel that upgrades to the corridor should not include the removal of direct access to Terwillegar Drive, including Bulyea Road/40 Avenue and Haddow Drive. This is compounded by concern for the impact that the removal of direct access would have on emergency vehicle response times, neighbourhood roadway congestion and pedestrian safety.

Neighbourhood Traffic

There is great concern around the idea of diverting traffic off Terwillegar Drive and through adjacent neighbourhoods on roads such as Riverbend Road, 53 Avenue and Bulyea Road. Comments express worry about the impact of additional vehicle traffic on already congested roadways, noting that these roads currently do not operate optimally due to school activities, playground zones and on-street parking. Residents feel this will result in increased travel times and negative impacts on the safety of roadway users, most specifically by making playground area roads into high-traffic areas.

Service Roads

The inclusion of service roads into the freeway design has significant support as it is believed these roads have the potential to improve overall corridor operations. Those who support the concept, however, have concerns about increased noise for adjacent residents, increased vehicle emissions, the loss of green spaces and cyclist safety.

Others who oppose the service roads do not believe they bring value to the freeway operations, and do not believe that they will assist in alleviating traffic congestion. There is concern that the service roads will add to both the cost and duration of construction, that they will increase the amount of long-term maintenance required, and will not handle sufficient traffic volumes. There is also the perception that the service roads are linked to the loss of direct neighbourhood access.

Roadway Design at Haddow Drive

There is a strong desire expressed by those who live in the immediate area of Haddow Drive, or those who will be impacted by additional neighbourhood traffic, for the need to maintain all direct access from Haddow Drive onto Terwillegar Drive.

In the event of an overpass configuration at Haddow Drive (no direct access to Terwillegar Drive), as is the currently approved plan, there is more support for a configuration which maintains a vehicle overpass across Terwillegar Drive rather than solely a shared-use path for cycle and pedestrian traffic. Commenters note that the vehicle overpass will benefit traffic flow in the area overall, including emergency vehicle access. Those that support the shared-use path option most commonly noted cost as the reason for their decision.

Other Travel Modes

There is a desire for the City to increase transportation infrastructure and connections for pedestrians and cyclists in the area, both across Terwillegar Drive and heading north and east from area neighbourhoods. Community residents also emphasized the need for increased transit service in Edmonton's southwest, and suggest that Terwillegar Drive should be considered for transit service.

Other Feedback

Comments were also received on additional items that did not aggregate to overall themes like the numbers of responses above. This included concerns including noise impacts along the corridor, roadway safety/weaving concerns, as well as the cycle and pedestrian connectivity in the corridor solution.

NEXT STEPS

The next phase of public engagement will begin this fall, when the City will reconnect with and update community organizations, area residents, businesses, and the public. This will be an opportunity to provide feedback and perspectives on the next stage of planning and how it addresses the priorities and concerns which were shared during the last phase of engagement in January 2018.