

What We Heard Report

Climate Resilience Planning and Development Action Plan

PART 1 OF 2

June 2024

| **SHARE** YOUR VOICE
SHAPE OUR CITY

Edmonton

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Public Engagement Summary and Results	PG 3
a. Project Overview	PG 3
The Climate Resilience Planning and Development Action Plan (PG 3)	
Context and Strategic Direction (PG 4)	
2. Public Engagement Approach	PG 5
a. Who Was Engaged	PG 5
b. How We Engaged	PG 7
Rose, Bud, Thorn Exercise (PG 6)	
Opportunities & Challenges Exercise (PG 8)	
c. What We Asked	PG 9
d. What We Heard From Previous Engagements	PG 10
e. What We Heard From The April 2024 Engagement	PG 10
Rose, Bud, Thorn Exercise (PG 10)	
i. Rose and Buds	
ii. Thorns	
Opportunities & Challenges Exercise (PG 12)	
i. Theme 1: Greenfield Neighbourhood Design	
ii. Theme 2: Infill Neighbourhood Design	
iii. Theme 3: Building Design	
iv. Theme 4: Site & Landscaping Design	
v. Theme 5: Planning Tools - Policies, Strategies, Plans, Guidelines, Bylaws	
vi. Theme 6: City Processes - How We Work	
f. What We Will Do	PG 23
3. What Happens Next	PG 23

Public Engagement Summary and Results

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Climate Resilience Planning and Development Action Plan

The City of Edmonton is building on its existing climate change initiatives by developing a Climate Resilience Planning and Development (CRPD) Action Plan, which is a roadmap focused on the planning and development continuum that identifies priority actions and timelines to advance the City's goals and targets in mitigating and adapting to climate change. Please note that at the time of the workshop the Action Plan was described as a Framework. The name has been changed to reflect the action-based approach to integration of climate resilience within the planning and development continuum. The CRPD Action Plan will need to use the right levers of change at the right time in a just and equitable way to integrate climate adaptation and mitigation within the City's planning and development continuum. This may include:

- Piloting innovative approaches and ideas
- Incentive programs
- Education and capacity building opportunities
- Partnership and advocacy opportunities
- Policy and regulatory changes and associated process changes

The objective of the CRPD Action Plan is to identify and integrate strategic, regulatory, and procedural climate adaptation and mitigation action throughout the City of Edmonton's land use planning and development processes, where feasible and effective (Figure 1).



Figure 1. The City of Edmonton's planning and development continuum - the context for the Climate Resilience Planning and Development Action Plan.

Edmonton's planning and development continuum includes residential and non-residential development and the supporting infrastructure. Across the continuum, development decisions are supported by guiding plans, policies, guidelines, and internal processes (e.g., area structure plans, design and construction standards, zoning bylaws). To comprehensively integrate climate action across the continuum, the CRPD Action Plan will holistically consider each step in the planning and development process (Figure 1). An example of how the CRPD Action Plan may influence the planning and development continuum is by updating the Terms of Reference for Area and Neighbourhood Structure plans to enable climate resilient development.

Context and Strategic Direction

The CRPD Action Plan is guided by multiple City policies and strategies. Each of the policies and strategies below identify the significance of planning and development in building a climate resilient city.

- **ConnectEdmonton (2019)** - Edmonton's strategic plan, which includes Climate Resilience as one of four council goals for the City;
- **The City Plan (2020)** - The City's Municipal Development Plan and Transportation Master Plan, which includes climate action targets within the Greener As We Grow Big City Move;
- **The Community Energy Transition Strategy and Action Plan (2021)** - Outlines key targets, goals, and actions aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions, specifically Pathway #2 - Emission Neutral Buildings and Pathway #3 - Low Carbon City and Transportation

which includes the goal: “Edmonton is planned, designed and built to be a vibrant carbon neutral city”;

- **Climate Resilient Edmonton (2018)** - The City’s Climate Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan, which provides a strategy to build resilience through adaptation to climate impacts and includes Goal 2: Edmonton is planned, designed, developed and built to be climate resilient today and for future Edmontonians; and
- **Climate Resilience Policy (C627) (2021)** - Provides governance accountabilities for achieving a climate-resilient community and demonstrates to Edmonton’s citizens, businesses, and community and industry partners that the City of Edmonton is committed to climate solution leadership in all aspects of city planning, development, and business decisions.

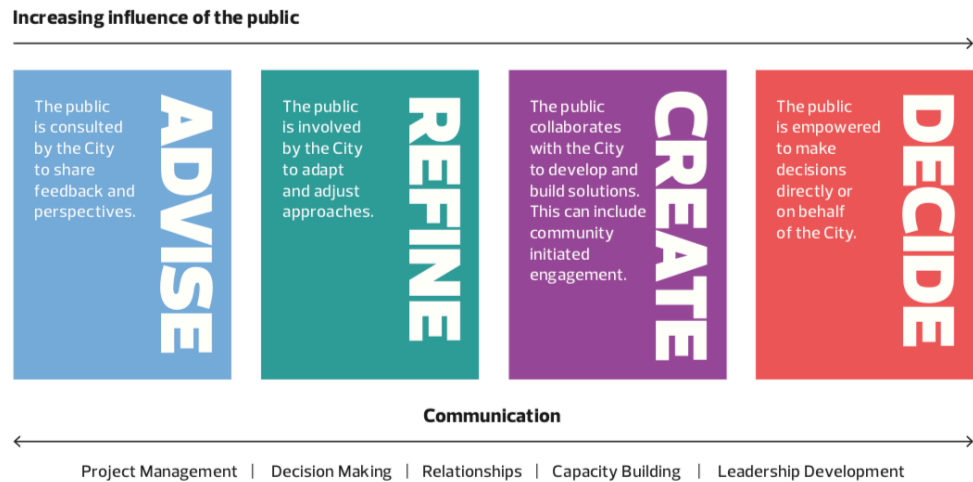
Public Engagement Approach

This engagement included external stakeholders with varied perspectives on climate change and development in Edmonton. The following subsections outline how the engagement was structured, who was invited, and what was asked of participants.

The overall engagement approach for the CRPD Action Plan sought to provide stakeholders with a clear understanding of the project's scope, explore perceptions of relevant climate action, and identify existing weaknesses and potential opportunities for change.

WHO WAS ENGAGED

Stakeholders invited to participate in this engagement were strategically selected by the City of Edmonton project team to represent different perspectives on climate change and development in Edmonton. Following the City of Edmonton’s Public Engagement Spectrum (Figure 2), stakeholders were engaged at the “Advise” end of the spectrum and were asked to share their feedback and perspectives.



The text on this image is not intended to be legible. This image shows the virtual Jamboard platform that was used during the online session. This image shows the “Thorns” that were shared virtually.

Figure 2. The City of Edmonton’s Public Engagement Spectrum.

Stakeholders are external to City of Edmonton staff and were identified through a three-step process that identified possible stakeholders, identified relevant stakeholders, and sorted and streamlined stakeholders. Stakeholders carried forward from step three into the project were stakeholders who met at least one of the following criteria:

- Impacted by the work;
- Provide expertise on climate and/or planning and development, and/or;
- Fit into one of the following perspective groups:
 - Planning and Development
 - Edmonton Residents and Businesses
 - Natural Areas and the Environment
 - Climate Change Expertise
 - Equity-Seeking Groups in Alignment with GBA+ Analysis

Stakeholders represent a range of organizations, including those related to:

- Real estate and development;
- Utilities and energy;
- Community and social services;
- Education; and
- Environment and sustainability.

The number of stakeholders were limited to accommodate a focus group engagement format. Recognizing these limitations, the outputs of this project build on feedback from other engagement sessions that the City has held regarding climate resilience and land use planning, such as the City Plan, the Zoning Bylaw, and District Planning based on an internal synthesis of these engagement findings. Moreover, future phases of the Climate Resilience Planning and Action Plan project will have further engagement opportunities.

HOW WE ENGAGED

Two engagement sessions and one interview were held between April 9 and 12, 2024. This engagement informs the development of critical actions to integrate climate resilience within the planning and development continuum, prior to providing an update to Council and progressing with the implementation of the CRPD Action Plan. All sessions included a Rose, Bud, Thorn exercise and an Opportunities & Challenges exercise, explained further in the next sections.

The sessions and interview started with the introduction of the CRPD Action Plan project, followed by a Rose, Bud, Thorn exercise and an Opportunities & Challenges exercise.

Rose, Bud, Thorn Exercise

This exercise allowed participants to share land use planning and development initiatives and actions that, in their opinion, are excelling in supporting climate change resilience (“Roses”), are emerging (“Buds”), and should be approached with care or are challenging (“Thorns”). Participants were encouraged to brainstorm individually and within small groups. In the in-person session, one recorder documented the ideas on index cards, the cards were exchanged between participants within the same group, and each group presented one piece of feedback to the larger group - one round for each question. In the online session, participants were invited to share verbally or add virtual sticky notes to the Jamboard (virtual whiteboard). In the interview, the project team recorded verbal feedback into written notes.

In all sessions, there were three rounds, each representing a Rose, Bud, and Thorn.

Opportunities & Challenges Exercise

The Opportunities & Challenges exercise allowed attendees to identify challenges and opportunities for different climate, land use, and development initiatives that may be developed under the CRPD Action Plan. In the in-person session, participants shared their responses, recorded them on index cards, and the larger group themed/categorized the comments on a visual discussion board for further consideration. In the online session, participants were invited to share verbally or add virtual sticky notes to the Jamboard. In the interview, the project team recorded verbal feedback into written notes. In all sessions, there were six rounds, each representing a theme (outlined below in the What We Asked section) that may potentially form the structure of the CRPD Action Plan.

The first engagement session was held on Tuesday, April 9, 2024 from 1:30 – 4:30 pm MT and was attended by 14 participants. The second session was held virtually on Thursday, April 11, 2024 from 9:00 am – 12:00 pm MT with 12 attendees. The same engagement approach was used for both sessions; however, Jamboard replaced the index cards used in the in-person session. One interview was conducted on Friday, April 12 from 11:00 am – 12:00 pm with one participant to accommodate their schedule conflicts. An abbreviated version of the presentation was provided and the same engagement activities (Rose, Bud, Thorn and Opportunities & Challenges) were conducted.

WHAT WE ASKED

This Rose, Bud, Thorn exercise was intended to gather general perspectives from the participants and distance the feedback from participant's roles and identities, thereby fostering common ground for the remainder of the session. Participants were asked the following questions:

- What planning and development initiatives to support climate action in Edmonton are working well ("Roses")?



All engagement sessions asked the same questions and followed the same structure. Index cards with feedback were placed on the wall by participants during the in-person session.

- What planning and development initiatives to support climate action in Edmonton are still developing (“Buds”)?
- What planning and development initiatives to support climate action in Edmonton are challenging (“Thorns”)?

The second exercise, which was the Opportunities & Challenges exercise (described above in the How We Engaged section), worked through six themes representing the potential main themes of the CRDP Action Plan:

- Greenfield Neighbourhood Design
- Infill Neighbourhood Design
- Building Design
- Landscaping and Site Design
- General Strategic and Statutory Planning Updates
- City Processes - How We Work

The themes were strategically chosen and ordered by the City project team to solicit a broad range of personal perspectives while also fostering an active learning regarding climate resilience and adaptation. For each theme, participants were asked:

- What are opportunities that you can identify for the planning and development community that could be supported through the CRPD Framework? (Note: at the time of the workshop, the Action Plan was described as a Framework)
- What are challenges that you can identify for the planning and development community that could be supported through the CRPD Framework? (Note: at the time of the workshop, the Action Plan was described as a Framework)

WHAT WE HEARD FROM PREVIOUS ENGAGEMENTS

To inform the recommendations of the CRPD Action Plan, a review was conducted of previous engagement from other key planning projects at the City, including The City Plan, Zoning Bylaw Renewal, and District Planning. This review helped to identify related themes, challenges, and opportunities that could inform the CRPD Action Plan.

WHAT WE HEARD FROM THE APRIL 2024 ENGAGEMENT

Although the feedback was collected and is divided into themes, there is notable overlap. For example, a comment listed in one theme or subtheme could apply elsewhere. The feedback is reported here in the categories in which it was provided. Although in some instances opportunities can be considered threats and vice versa, comments are recorded within the categories in which they were received.

- Rose, Bud, Thorn Exercise

The Roses and Buds had substantial overlap and are therefore reported here in one list, while thorns are reported in the subsequent list.

Roses and Buds



The text on this image is not intended to be legible. This image shows the “Roses” that were shared during the in-person session.

- **Sustainable infrastructure.** Participant feedback refers to the incorporation of renewable and electric alternatives, enhancing energy efficiency and waste reduction, implementation of environmentally-sustainable infrastructure and stormwater management, and transit-oriented development and public transit.
- **Environmental conservation.** Participant feedback refers to tree planting and expanding canopy cover, conservation and preservation of natural environments, and trail networks.
- **Environmentally conscious development.** Participant feedback refers to initiatives for corridor and neighborhood renewal projects, industry involvement to promote more efficient development, and bylaws supporting soft landscape and flexible development opportunities.
- **Climate action awareness.** Participant feedback refers to encouragement of electric vehicles and infrastructure adoption, City programs and alignment of strategic goals towards energy transition, and peer-to-peer sharing of best practices.

Thorns

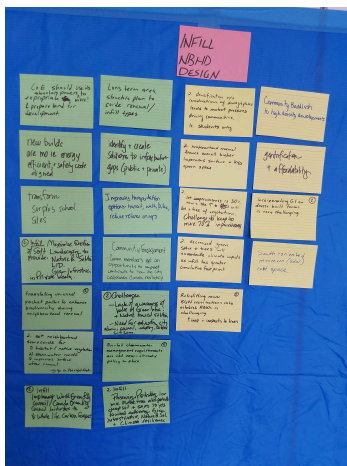
- **Sustainable development and urban planning.** Participant feedback refers to the challenge of balancing affordability with development, redevelopment, and rehabilitation costs. Participant feedback also refers to the challenge of addressing infrastructure density within road right-of-way while considering trade-offs and competing interests, as well as mitigating threats to green space, boulevard trees, natural corridors, and biodiversity amid densification.
- **Policy and governance misalignment.** Participant feedback refers to misalignment among City goals and organizational silos within City administration. Participant feedback also refers to no clear direction to meet defined targets, tracking mechanisms, or common language to facilitate coordinated action, as well as the limitations of the provincial government to support electric vehicles, infrastructure, and emission disclosures.
- **Resource Management and Funding.** Participant feedback refers to limited funding for trails, natural spaces, and Low Impact Development (LID) initiatives and limitations to overcoming barriers such as restricted access to utility data and service standards. Participant feedback also refers to the complexity of tools, policies, and organizations related to landscaping with restricted access to financial support from the provincial government.
- **Stakeholder Engagement and Industry Collaboration.** Participant feedback refers to barriers to encouraging industry partnerships and preparing partners (such as real estate firms) to meet targets. Participant feedback also referred to community members needing an opportunity to impact or contribute to how the City addresses climate change mitigation and adaptation, and bridging gaps in understanding and the approach to decarbonization.

Opportunities and Challenges Exercise

The second workshop exercise was an opportunities and challenges exercise in which participants identified opportunities for overcoming issues they believe they or the City will face in implementing the suggested actions/policies under each theme area. Themes are listed below with corresponding comments.

Theme 1: Greenfield Neighbourhood Design

The purpose of work within this theme is to enable new neighbourhoods (greenfield) that are built to be resilient to climate change impacts and support energy transition through comprehensive planning of infrastructure and neighbourhood design. Participants reflected on potential opportunities in supporting action on climate change through greenfield neighbourhood design. Potential **opportunities** include the following:



The text on this image is not intended to be legible. This image shows the opportunities (green) and challenges (yellow) that were shared during the in-person session.

- **Landscape design that supports public and private greenspace and its co-benefits.** Participant feedback refers to the conservation of natural forests and wetlands, incentivising developers or land owners to include tree stands and corridors, and plans for stormwater management.
- **Development that decreases greenhouse gas (operational and embodied) emissions.** Participant feedback refers to align goals and support for increased (200 amp) electrical services to support increased uptake, pilot the Clean Energy Improvement Program (two-year pilot program that provides homeowners and organizations access to low-cost financing to make energy efficiency upgrades or add renewable energy installations to their properties), consider district heating (where zero-emissions heat is distributed from a central location to multiple buildings in a neighbourhood), wire new builds to support solar and EV infrastructure in the future, support mass transit corridors, and connect to pedestrian networks especially within Edmonton’s river valley.

- **Community and social cohesion.** Participant feedback refers to supporting schools, facilitating development to support multi-generational and multi-family communities, providing mixed lot sizes for blended communities, supporting smaller complete communities that are walkable with high-quality transit, and supporting neighbourhood networks with accurate information.
- **Actions with byproducts that decrease costs and maintenance.** Participant feedback refers to “overbuilding” stormwater management facilities (SWMF) to hold water for outdoor watering during times of drought, build in rain harvesting, and partner with realtors and insurers to provide deductibles for properties with green infrastructure.
- **Physical safety and resilience within communities.** Participant feedback refers to wildfire resistant code minimums and Low Impact Development (LID) landscaping standards in new developments.
- **Qualified personnel and organizations to ensure proper actions and best practices.** Participant feedback refers to using certified contractors to ensure proper construction and reduce ambiguity.

Participants mentioned in order to pursue the above opportunities, it will be important to align with market demand and acceptance, showcase developers and private sector examples that have been successful (i.e., champions), consider supports to make processes as smooth and efficient as possible, and consider strong processes to ensure that initiatives and actions are followed-through to the end of the processes and reach intended outcomes (e.g., to ensure environmentally significant areas defined by Ecological Network Report are not destroyed through Area Structure Plans (ASPs) / Neighbourhood Structure Plans (NSPs) / development stages). Further feedback includes a green permitting concierge to assist in application for environmental standard incentives.

In addition to providing feedback about opportunities, participants reflected on potential challenges in supporting climate action through greenfield communities. **Challenges** include the following:

- **Reduced financial feasibility and affordability.** Participant feedback refers to the potential increased costs that may be associated with design standards.
- **Time added to projects and processes.** Participant feedback refers to the added criteria that often add time and slows down development while increasing costs.
- **Large organizations and systems limiting action.** Participant feedback refers to electric / gas / water utilities and neighbourhood microgrids.
- **Lacking public knowledge.** Participant feedback mentions that this creates challenges in communicating climate resilience initiatives.
- **Limited physical space.** Participant feedback refers to the insufficient land to accommodate vegetation. Participant feedback also mentions that vegetation can mitigate heat island effects and stormwater management.
- **Outdated climate resilient standards.** Participant feedback mentions the need to update Low Impact Development (LID) standards and create synergies between stormwater management and maintenance of green areas within landscaping standards. Participant feedback also mentions the challenge in implementing climate resiliency standards within design and construction standards.
- **Design changes necessitated by land costs and environmental hazards.** Participant feedback refers to the designation of smaller sites and smaller dwellings due to increased land costs. Environmental hazards may also require certain design/construction requirements, such as the use of wildfire resistant building materials.
- **Upholding equity.** Participant feedback refers to potential initiatives that promote charging infrastructure (i.e. for electric vehicles) within

neighbourhoods as this may encourage urban renewal or revitalization. Participant feedback mentions that this renewal or revitalization of a neighbourhood may affect individuals with socioeconomic inequities or unintended outcomes.

- **Trade-offs.** Participant feedback refers to complete streets that can increase concrete coverage.
- **Assumptions of benefits.** Participant feedback refers to understanding and balancing the net impact on overall greenhouse gas emissions before pursuing greenfield development. Feedback also mentions if development can or should be densified downtown rather than expanding into suburbs.

Theme 2: Infill Neighbourhood Design

The purpose of work within this theme is to ensure that new development and neighbourhood renewal builds resilience in mature neighbourhoods through proactive infrastructure updates and the preservation of natural areas and ecological corridors. Participants reflected on potential opportunities in supporting climate action through infill neighbourhood design. Potential **opportunities** include the following:

- **Incentives and investments in priority growth areas and for specific actors.** Participant feedback mentions that the City should consider more green building incentives for developers of new developments rather than homeowners and to transform surplus school sites.
- **Implement existing standards and plans.** Participant feedback refers to the use of long-term Area Structure Plans (ASP) to guide renewal and infill types and to pursue both Canada and Worldwide Green Building standards to help decrease carbon footprints. Participant feedback also mentions implementing existing stormwater management requirements to support decreasing carbon footprints.
- **Statutory powers of the City of Edmonton.** Participant feedback refers to land expropriation and preparation for development.

- **Identify and create new solutions to infrastructure gaps.**
Participant feedback refers to both public and private sectors.
- **Restoration and preservation of ecologically important areas.**
Participant feedback refers to green spaces, creeks, and mature trees.
- **Nature-based solutions.** Participant feedback refers to including Low Impact Development (LID) and soft landscaping as potential climate resiliency initiatives within infill neighbourhood design.
- **Neighbourhood scorecards to promote progress.** Participant feedback refers to habitat, native vegetation, stormwater runoff and impervious surface cover.
- **Mass transit and active transportation.** Participant feedback refers to core communities supporting lower greenhouse gas emissions travel in more parts of the City.
- **Co-development and true partnerships.** Participant feedback refers to in combination with key parties and underrepresented communities.
- **A range of context-specific solutions.** Participant feedback refers to Energy Management Systems (EMS) versus electrical upgrades where it may be feasible.
- **Development that decreases greenhouse gas emissions.**
Participant feedback refers to operational and embodied emissions.

In addition to providing feedback about opportunities, participants reflected on potential challenges in supporting climate action through infill neighbourhood design. Potential **challenges** include the following:

- **Retrofits with impacts and/or unintended consequences.**
Participant feedback refers to gentrification, unaffordability, loss of pervious ground and intensification causing challenges for waste pick-up and servicing.
- **Lack of support and alignment for proactive retrofits and upgrades.** Participant feedback mentions that current electric utility regulations do not support proactive upgrades of the electrical system.

- **Existing conditions that limit opportunities.** Participant feedback refers to the limited south-oriented roof space for solar and the loss of solar access with land intensification.
- **Providing suitable servicing in infill areas.** Participant feedback refers to replacing electrical services like for like.
- **Greater cumulative footprint of infill.** Participant feedback refers to the increase of impervious cover and a loss of vegetation and mature trees.
- **High costs.** Participant feedback refers to the associated costs to incorporate infill neighborhood design that supports action on climate change.
- **Neighbourhood renewal not adding “growth” dollars.** Participant feedback refers to the current structures of neighbourhood renewal-related initiatives that lack the ability to generate additional “growth” dollars.
- **Fulfilling City goals for mobility.** Participant feedback mentions that recent neighbourhood renewals are a positive step towards climate resilience but do not align with sustainable transportation goals set out by the City.
- **Lack of political will, education, and acceptance.** Participant feedback refers to the lack of awareness of the value of green infrastructure and nature-based solutions, community backlash to high density developments and the lack of information about stormwater needs as infill reduces permeable surfaces.
- **Community trust building and engagement that is equitable takes time.** Participant feedback mentions the importance of fostering strong collaboration and consultation with community members.

Theme 3: Building Design

The purpose of work within this theme is to enable climate resilient building design that supports community energy transition and builds adaptive capacity through green building design principles. Participants reflected on

potential opportunities in supporting climate action through building design.

Potential **opportunities** include the following:

- **Modular and offsite housing construction.** Participant feedback refers to the opportunity to support and promote the construction of modular and offsite housing.
- **Standardized pathways for common goals.** Participant feedback mentions within the City of Edmonton.
- **Strategic incentives.** Participant feedback mentions the following examples: converting downtown office buildings to residential buildings, transitioning from single to multi-family homes, and supporting energy efficiency and passive heating and cooling.
- **Skills and capacity building.** Participant feedback refers to improvements through Emissions-Neutral Building Information Exchange (ENBIX), which educates and supports homeowners to maximize the efficiency of their homes. Other participants mentioned the training of tradespeople to promote consistency across companies and sectors.
- **Development that decreases greenhouse gas emissions (operational and embodied).** Participant feedback refers to wiring new builds to support solar and EV infrastructure in the future. Further feedback refers to connecting older neighbourhoods to pedestrian networks, especially within Edmonton's river valley.
- **Design changes.** Participant feedback mentions requiring and implementing wildfire resistant building materials, efficient waste management (such as moloks), smarter interior design, and common areas for laundry / storage / exercise / green space.
- **Adaptive reuse.** Participant feedback refers to repurposing existing structures or spaces over time.

In addition to providing feedback about opportunities, participants reflected on potential challenges in supporting climate action through building design.

Potential **challenges** include:

- **Affordability.** Participant feedback refers to the lack of programs for low income households to improve assets and meet higher green standards (e.g, home upgrades program) or high construction costs.
- **Up-front costs.** Participant feedback refers to elevated costs for resilient material and technology, as well as the added costs for remediation and teardown costs.
- **Lack of existing landscaping to help mitigate climate change effects .** Participant feedback refers to the lack of trees and their orientation towards properties in order to aid in keeping the interior of buildings cool.
- **Technology limitations.** Participant feedback suggests that although technology offers valuable tools, it does not provide all-encompassing building design solutions to complex challenges such as climate change.
- **Marketplace acceptance.** Participant feedback refers to whether supporting action on climate change through building design is supported, valued, or desired by residents.
- **Skills and capacity building.** Participant feedback refers to providing tradespeople with appropriate training and not solely to large companies.
- **Provincial energy context.** Participant feedback refers to Alberta having a relatively carbon-intensive power grid that poses carbon hurdles for developers who may prioritize development in other less carbon-intensive jurisdictions.
- **Logistics for retrofits.** Participant feedback refers to the large logistical challenges for retrofitting sustainable building designs to support climate actions.
- **Misdirected incentives.** Participant feedback refers to incentives for green buildings for homeowners rather than developers.
- **Community education and awareness.** Participant feedback mentions there are gaps in energy and building science literacy that limits the understanding of technology and its benefits.

Theme 4: Site & Landscaping Design

The purpose of work within this theme is to build resilience to changing weather patterns and changing ecosystems through adaptive site design and landscaping. Participants reflected on potential opportunities for supporting action on climate change through site and landscaping design. Potential **opportunities** include the following:

- **Involve proactive measures to enhance resilience against environmental challenges.** Participant feedback includes mentions of fire and hail resistant roofing and wildfire-resistant landscaping.
- **Improvements to current stormwater management requirements and biodiversity conservation efforts.**
- **Educational resources.** Participant feedback includes education behind *why* site and landscaping design is important to address mitigation and adaptation to climate change.
- **Development of professional consultant lists for LID and green infrastructure consultation.** Participant feedback mentions this can be achieved through a list of trusted landscape contractors.

Participant feedback further includes what may be done to pursue the above opportunities. It will be important to consider the development of performance incentives (e.g., depth of soil tree canopy rather than quantity of individual trees) and/or incentives to encourage adaptive site design and landscaping. Moreover, incentives that encourage green infrastructure and landscaping on privately-owned properties should be considered.

In addition to providing feedback regarding opportunities, participants reflected on potential challenges in supporting climate action through site and landscaping design. Potential **challenges** include the following:

- **Cost** of upfront and maintenance costs.
- **Property owners' balance between aesthetic values and functionality.**
- **Lack of educational opportunities.** Participant feedback mentions this may result in the lack of knowledge and willingness to implement.

- **New Zoning Bylaw regulations.** Participant feedback refers to the increase of land intensification brought by the new Zoning Bylaw regulations that may reduce permeable surfaces.
- **Inability to cope with climate change effects.**

Theme 5: Planning Tools - Policies, Strategies, Plans, Guidelines, Bylaws

The purpose of work within this theme is to update key strategic plans and policies to ensure climate resilience is integrated across the planning and development continuum. Participants reflected on potential opportunities in supporting action on climate change through planning tools (such as policies, strategies, plans, guidelines and bylaws). Potential **opportunities** include the following:

- **Integration of climate resilience themes and goals within the new Zoning Bylaw.** Participant feedback includes this could be achieved through the development of specific and thoughtful landscaping requirements to increase tree canopy.
- **Creation and inclusion of new targets and nature-based solutions within policies.**
- **Assessment of existing plans and their alignment with current City Plan and climate goals.**
- **Simplification of planning tools.**
- **Include equity within planning tools.**

In addition to providing feedback regarding opportunities, participants reflected on potential challenges in supporting climate action through planning tools (such as policies, strategies, plans, guidelines, and bylaws). Potential **challenges** include the following:

- **Lack of ecosystem management and preservation policies that apply to private property.** Participant feedback refers to the barrier that is created to support climate action, due to the lack of planning policies that do not provide guidance to managing and preserving ecosystems on privately-owned properties.
- **Misaligned policies.**

- **Disorganization of City planning processes.** Participant feedback refers to the development and finalization of strategies and action plans prior to the creation of a framework.
- **Outdated Area Structure Plans and Area Redevelopment Plans.**

Theme 6: City Processes - How We Work

The purpose of work within this theme is to implement changes to support staff capacity and enable the integration of climate action in policies, plans, and development processes. Participants reflected on potential opportunities in supporting climate action through city processes. Potential **opportunities** include the following:

- **Streamline stormwater management process.** Participant feedback suggests focusing on simplifying requirements and setting clear performance targets while standardizing and simplifying the review and approval process.
- **Facilitate the sharing of climate change adaptation and resilience expertise.** Participant feedback mentions insights to enhance collaboration and informed decision-making, as well as to educate. Involve climate change adaptation and resilience planners in the development permit process. Further feedback includes improvement to the communication between City of Edmonton representatives and industry members.
- **Neighbourhood renewal initiatives.**
- **Community involvement in the creation of Requests for Proposals (RFPs).** Participant feedback refers to the involvement of affected parties.

In addition to providing feedback regarding opportunities, participants reflected on potential challenges in supporting climate action through city processes. Potential **challenges** include the following:

- **Lack of common language.** Participant feedback refers to the challenges of implementing common language across the City of

Edmonton due to the constant changes that occur within the corporate structure.

- **Developing and implementing processes within the City of Edmonton.** Participant feedback refers to the challenge of developing and implementing climate change actions across the City of Edmonton internal departments due to the characteristics of past and present internal structures.
- **Complaint-driven bylaw enforcement versus proactive enforcement.** Participant feedback mentions that landscaping preservation efforts on private property may be difficult if requirements are not periodically enforced and/or reviewed.
- **Lack of urgency.**
- **Procurement of resources and leadership.**
- **Time and economic constraints** with fast tracking projects related to climate resilience.

WHAT WE WILL DO

The feedback that was provided during the engagement sessions and interviews and is reported in this What We Heard document will be:

- Shared among contributors and other key stakeholders,
- Presented by the Climate Team to the Urban Planning Committee on October 8, 2024, and
- Used alongside feedback from previous engagements (summarized in Appendix A) and ongoing engagement to inform the development and prioritization of climate actions within the CRPD Action Plan.

What Happens Next

Stakeholder input is an important aspect of developing comprehensive and effective climate actions for planning and development. The feedback provided and summarized here helps to inform the development and prioritization of climate actions within the CRPD Action Plan. This What We Heard Report will be circulated to stakeholders in June 2024. Stakeholders will

have an opportunity to review and refine the actions in the summer of 2024. The CRPD Action Plan will be presented to the Urban Planning Committee on October 8, 2024.