

# What We Heard Report

## Meyokumin Neighbourhood and Alley Renewal

Community Feedback on Draft Design  
April – May 2023

**REFINE**

**SHARE** YOUR VOICE  
**SHAPE** OUR CITY

**Edmonton**

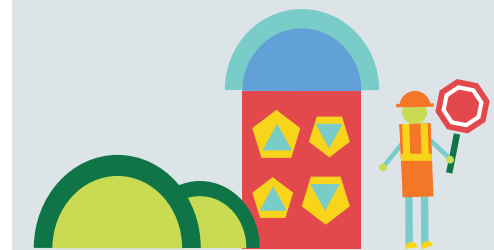
# Project overview

Neighbourhood and Alley Renewal construction in Meyokumin is scheduled to begin in 2024. Through the City of Edmonton's Neighbourhood Renewal program, we will rehabilitate roads, replace street lights, repair sidewalks and connect missing sidewalk and pathways where possible. Alley Renewal will also be included as part of this project and involves rebuilding alleys, improvements to surface drainage where possible and upgrading of existing lighting.

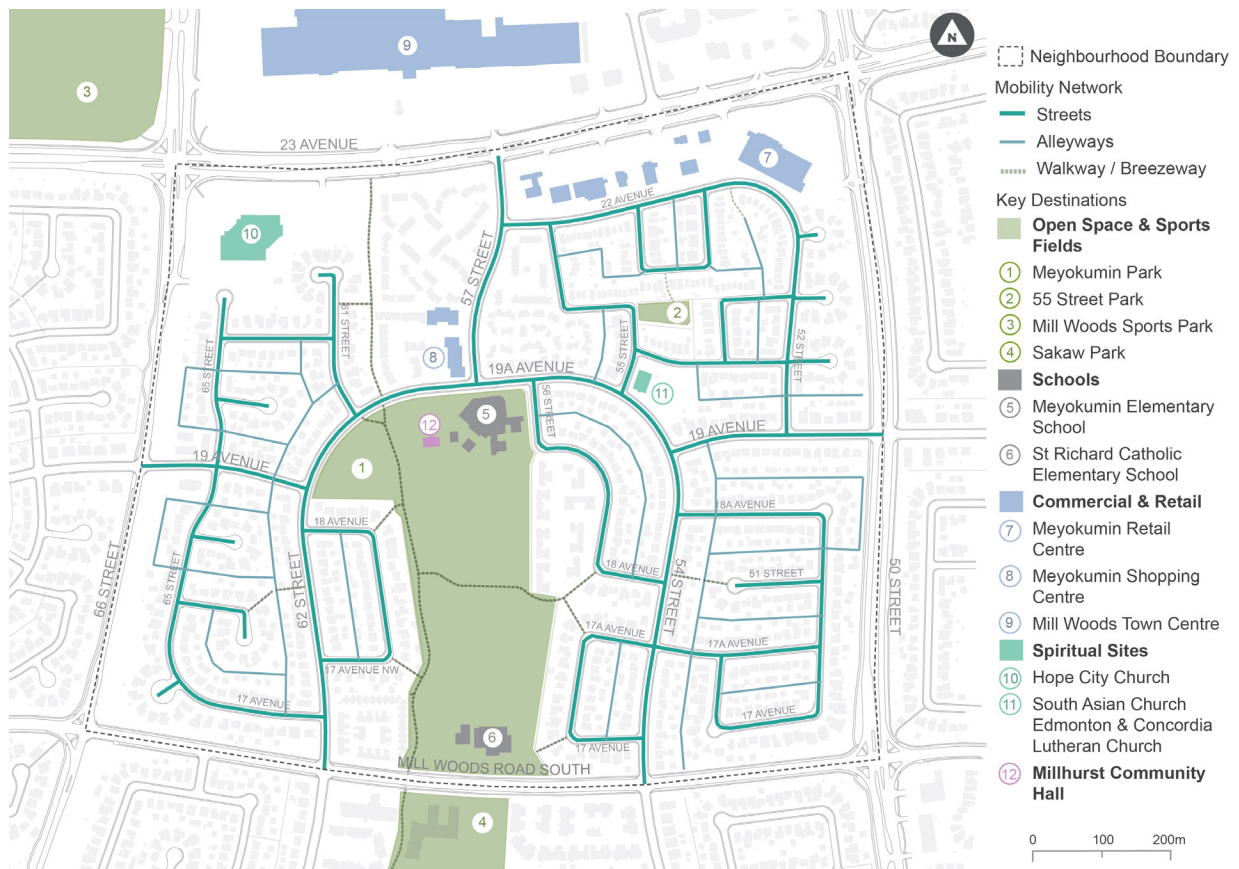
Cost-sharing opportunities will be made available through the Local Improvement process for sidewalk reconstruction and decorative street light upgrades in the neighbourhood. Other opportunities to improve City-owned parks and public spaces will also be explored.

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## Meyokumin Neighbourhood and Alley Renewal Scope Map



# Where we are in the decision making process

The Neighbourhood Renewal program follows the roadmap below and this report focuses on community feedback heard during the **Community Feedback on Draft Design** stage. At each step, the Project Team shares information with you about how your input has and will inform decisions.

## Road Map to Building Great Neighbourhoods



### LEGEND

- Public Engagement and Communications Opportunities
- Concept Phase
- Design Phase
- Build Phase
- Operate Phase

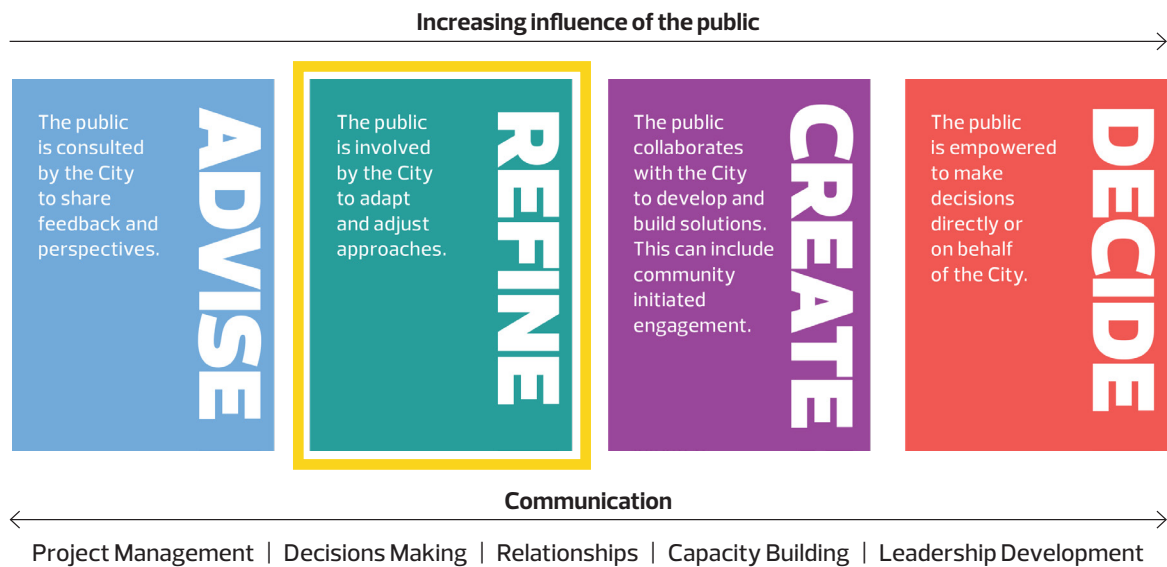
## Public engagement spectrum

The City of Edmonton seeks input from residents to help guide the project. The City's public engagement spectrum shows the four levels of influence that the public can have on decisions made by the City throughout the project.

The public was invited to provide input that would help:

- + **REFINE** the draft design to make sure it reflects the Vision and Guiding Principles

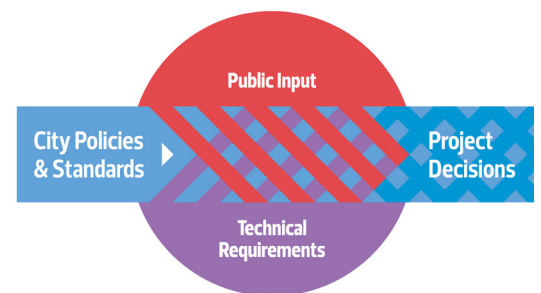
We commit to telling you how the public's comments influence decisions according to the public engagement spectrum.



## Decision making process

The City makes decisions using a combination of policy and program information, public engagement comments, technical requirements and available funding. This process helps to ensure that the decisions we make are fiscally responsible, align with best design practices, consider the existing public and private infrastructure, land uses and activities in the neighbourhood and result in the best outcomes for our city.

City policies and programs such as the Complete Streets Design and Construction Standards, Safe Mobility Strategy and Winter City Strategy provide the overall direction for Neighbourhood Renewal designs. As each neighbourhood is unique, the Project Team asks for input from residents who live, work and play in the neighbourhood and considers technical aspects such as roadway widths and conflicts with utilities and trees to determine what will fit in the neighbourhood.



# What we did and what we asked

The Meyokumin Neighbourhood and Alley Renewal Project Team organized the following opportunities for the public to provide feedback on the draft design. This input will help the Project Team **REFINE** the draft design into a final design for Neighbourhood and Alley Renewal.



## Survey

- + An online survey was available from April 28 to May 18, 2023. We shared specific ideas for Neighbourhood and Alley Renewal in Meyokumin and asked you questions to help **REFINE** the design

**167 Respondents**



## Project web page

- + We asked residents to visit the project web page to learn more about Meyokumin Neighbourhood and Alley Renewal and invited them to provide feedback on the draft design
- + A comprehensive draft design booklet was posted on the web page, making it easier for people to see and understand the full draft design package

**1,229 unique visits to [edmonton.ca/BuildingMeyokumin](https://edmonton.ca/BuildingMeyokumin)**

**243 design booklet views**



## In-person engagement

- + The Project Team held an in-person engagement session at St. Richard School on May 11 to hear and understand people's feedback on the draft design
  - + There were 24 display panels showing the designs to the 45 people in attendance
  - + Activities were also held to engage children in attendance

## Online engagement session

- + On May 16, the Project Team held an online engagement session to hear and understand people's feedback on the draft design
  - + 33 people attended the session

## Stakeholder meetings

- + Meetings were held with the Millhurst Community League, as well as staff at Meyokumin Elementary School and St. Richard Catholic School

**33 participants online, 45 participants in person**



## How we communicated

- + 2 Road signs
- + Facebook advertising (54,000 impressions, 357 clicks)
- + 800 Information door hangers
- + 10 A-frame signs in the community
- + Notice in Millhurst Community League newsletter (260 subscribers)
- + Notice on the Millhurst Community League Facebook page (837 followers)
- + News update emails (53 subscribers)

# What We Heard

Residents of Meyokumin were eager to share their perspectives through several engagement opportunities. While some residents were keen to see improvements to their community, others believed minimal work should be done to change it.

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***Did you know...** Communities are scheduled for Neighbourhood Renewal based on an assessment of the current state of the infrastructure? Neighbourhood Renewal is intended to update infrastructure for current residents and for up to 50 years from now.*

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## BIKING, WALKING AND ROLLING

During the engagement on **Exploring Options and Tradeoffs**, we heard support for new, wider sidewalks as well as shared pathways. People said they were eager to ride bikes, walk side-by-side, or have additional room for strollers and mobility aids, to move comfortably and safely throughout the neighbourhood.

In the last phase of engagement, **Community Feedback on Draft Design**, the Project Team showed how these improvements would be completed in the community. Seeing the ideas caused people to think about the impact the changes would have on them personally and the community as a whole.

### Shared pathways along main walking and biking routes

There was support for making it easier for people to walk, bike and roll, particularly to and from schools. People appreciated that the City would maintain the shared pathways, especially in winter, but questioned the City's ability to keep the shared pathway free from snow and ice.

***“My kids ride to school, I love the new shared use path, and being wider. Right now, they can’t pass each other. And the curbs are too steep. And you don’t want to be by the road you don’t want to fall over.”***

***“Shared use paths need consistent winter maintenance to be usable, especially for people in wheelchairs.”***

Others questioned the need for shared pathways for people who bike. People offered suggestions about where a shared pathway should be included or removed from the plans.

***“This is too expensive for shared pathways when not enough people are biking.”***

***“South side of 19A Avenue from 61 Street to 55 Street needs a shared pathway with boulevard. This is probably the highest foot traffic area in the entire neighbourhood. Use park land to accomplish this.”***

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***Did you know...** The Edmonton Bike Plan, and the Bike Plan Implementation Guide, support the City's vision of a connected, accessible city? Shared pathways are not subject to a Local Improvement and are maintained by the City.*

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## **New sidewalks where they were previously missing**

No single topic drew livelier conversation than plans to add missing link sidewalks.

While some people endorsed the idea of adding missing sidewalks, many residents living in cul-de-sacs, where new sidewalks were planned, expressed concerns. Possible loss of parking, landscaping, trees, as well as needing to shovel and store snow, were also frequent comments.

Some people welcomed the missing link sidewalks, suggesting that they make the community easier to walk through, particularly for people who may have mobility challenges or simply wanted to walk safely throughout the entire neighbourhood.

Many residents were surprised to learn that costs for new 'missing link' sidewalks were fully funded by the project; they thought they would be directly responsible for paying for the new sidewalk.

***“At first, I did not agree with sidewalks in the cul-de-sacs, but then I thought of my neighbour who is a senior and does not go out in the winter. Sidewalks would help her. We can't just think about ourselves. It would help me in the future too.”***

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***Did you know...** The City's Complete Streets approach means new sidewalks are constructed where there are missing links. This allows people of all ages and abilities to walk, bike and roll safely and makes neighbourhoods accessible for everyone.*

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## **New, wider sidewalks**

People agreed that sidewalks in Meyokumin are in poor condition, presenting walking hazards, and making it difficult for those with walkers, strollers and mobility challenges to navigate. Most residents wanted to see the sidewalks replaced and were unaware that new standards meant that the sidewalks, where replaced, would be wider, if possible.

***“The sidewalks are terrible. We want them fixed. Sidewalks are cracked everywhere. They are horrible, it is unsafe.”***

***“Is there a way we can just take out and replace the sidewalk without taking away space?”***



## Treed boulevards on main walking routes and on other streets where feasible

There was a mixed reaction from residents about treed boulevards. Those who liked the concept thought treed boulevards would add beauty to the community, slow down traffic and serve as a buffer between people walking with children, dogs and friends.

Those who were concerned about the boulevards cite loss of parking and private landscaping on City right-of-way as their main concerns. A few participants preferred a row of parked cars to protect pedestrians rather than boulevards in areas where parking was proposed to be removed. A few people thought that wider sidewalks with treed boulevards was not needed and asked for a more basic design.

*“We have dogs in our household. Much safer walks with boulevards.”*

*“A row of parked cars protects pedestrians right now. A row of parking provides a buffer, that’s why we need to keep the parking.”*

*“The only thing it really needs is repaired sidewalks. Do NOT want boulevards or separate bike lanes /shared pathways on roads. Use existing paths.”*

Many people did not know that their properties do not go all the way to the sidewalk or roadway in front of their houses. Some said they have landscaping or portions of their driveway on City right-of-way. Several property owners expressed concerns that they would lose a part of what they thought was a part of their front yards.

*“How big is the right of way for the city in front of my property? Can I choose not to have a tree in front of my house?”*


## TRAFFIC SAFETY AND STREET CROSSINGS

During engagement on options and tradeoffs, we heard that traffic safety and concerns for people walking, biking and rolling are priorities. The draft design shows several measures intended to slow down traffic, increase visibility and ensure safety for people walking, biking and rolling. These include curb extensions, raised crossings, raised intersections and a crossing island on Millwoods Road South, by St. Richard Catholic School. The majority supported the proposed changes and emphasized that slowing traffic was a priority.

Most residents supported these changes, particularly around the two schools. People said they had witnessed dangerous driving situations near both schools and appreciated the efforts to slow traffic and increase sight lines.

There was support for the changes at Meyokumin Elementary School, especially the curb extensions at the intersection of 57 Street and 19A Avenue. The addition of a crossing island on Millwoods Road would increase safety for families and residents of Sakaw Terrace Lodge crossing Millwoods Road South toward St. Richard Catholic School.





*“It’s just not good there. So, that’s good you are doing that. I’m glad you are fixing that area. They think they own the road. When people are parking up there you can barely get a car through.”*

*“The crosswalk sounds good, makes sense, you can wait in the middle.”*

*“I welcome any method that will slow traffic. Hopefully the changes will be enough.”*

Ensuring that buses and emergency vehicles could still move easily through the community was a common concern. A few people were opposed to the traffic calming measures, suggesting that they would cause congestion and not enable vehicles to move quickly through the neighbourhood. Many people thought the addition of raised intersections and curb extensions would result in a loss of parking.

*“Adding raised crossing in areas that already are in a 30 km zone is just a waste of money. People will drive over the speed limit anyway.”*

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*Did you know... The [Safe Mobility Strategy 2021-2025](#) is a plan to achieve Vision Zero: zero traffic-related serious injuries and fatalities through safer, more livable streets for all by 2032? The strategy includes roadway treatments designed to reduce speed and increase safety for people walking, biking and rolling.*

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### **Consolidating parking lot access at Meyokumin Elementary School/Millhurst Community League**

The draft design combines the entryways into the Millhurst Community League parking lot and Meyokumin Elementary School staff parking lot into one access. Reducing the number of entryways makes it safer for vehicles turning in and out of the parking lots, and for people walking and cars moving along 19A Avenue. Concerns were expressed about this approach.

*“I 100% disagree with the plans for the parking lot at the school and community league. They need to remain separate with separate entrances because there’s way too much traffic going in and out of them before and after school to condense it to one entrance would be unsafe.”*

*“If we have to do the one access, can we have it on the community league lot side; that way we can have it so there’s less pressure on the staff parking lot.”*

## OPEN SPACES

Residents of Meyokumin love their park spaces and endorsed most of the improvements suggested in the draft design.

*“Love the new pathway and seating. I think using the open area on 62 Street for other recreational purposes would be nice since there’s still a lot of open space in the park.”*

*“Looks good and opens the park up for more users.”*

*“The centre of our community has wonderful parks/green spaces. Perhaps this could be the continued focus.”*

*“More use of the green spaces for bike, rolling and walking paths is excellent!”*

### Additional and upgraded lighting

During past engagements, people asked for better lighting, especially since there was the perception that the current City lights were not effective. Community safety is a concern to many people and several comments during this engagement phase related to the importance of creating safer spaces in the parks and surrounding areas. Conversations on lighting centred around the need to feel safe in the parks.

*“Safety is a main issue; most people walk down 61 Street because they are too scared to walk through park.”*

People did not know new street lights are part of the Neighbourhood Renewal program. Upgrading to decorative light standards is an option under the Local Improvement Bylaw. The community has selected a colour, pole and luminaire type for an upgrade to decorative street lighting. An expression of interest letter is being prepared by the City and will be sent to all property owners in fall 2023.

### New seating areas

People use the parks as gathering places and were excited about the opportunity to extend their use of the parks through new picnic tables, as well as seating areas in the park and along the boulevards. Some community members believe these seating areas will make it easier for people of all ages and abilities to walk in the neighbourhood and rest as needed. Since some of the bus stops have been removed from the community, there are fewer waste bins available, particularly in seating areas.

*“My only comment would be good to ensure a number of waste bins / garbage cans around the new common areas.”*

## Trees

Residents were pleased that many additional trees were a part of the plan. They emphasized their love of mature trees and advised a thoughtful approach to any tree removal. People advised that the new park design should encourage trimming the lower branches on trees.

*“Love the additional trees! More greenery is always better. More shrubs and bushes could be placed where trees are removed.”*

*“What I don’t like is cutting down trees. But by the time the new ones grow up, it takes forever. I’d prioritize keeping mature trees, specifically in the park.”*

*“Existing trees in the park need to be pruned to avoid unwanted activities happening under them.”*

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**Did you know...** There are several policies and bylaws to help manage trees in Edmonton? The [Urban Forest Management Plan](#) and the [Tree Preservation Guidelines](#) outline roles and responsibilities for protecting and enhancing Edmonton’s urban forest.

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## Additional and upgraded shared pathways through 55 Street Park

The 55 Street Park has been described as a ‘hidden gem’ and possible connector to other areas in the community. Although it may not be well used currently, people are confident that a strong design could make the park a destination for families in the area. A few people were hoping to see more included in the design.

*“All you added was cement and benches in NW Meyokumin. This park needs something to actually bring people there, like BBQ pits, outside gym, etc.”*

*“I really like the design of 55th Street Park, but will the new design be enough to get people to actually use it? To actually stay there and not just cut through?”*

## Connectivity to the Sakaw Neighbourhood

Through all engagement phases we have heard the importance to the community of building a shared pathway through to Sakaw. Participants feel this would improve connectivity and encourage greater use of shared pathways. Although any improvements in Sakaw are beyond the scope of the Meyokumin Neighbourhood and Alley Renewal project, the City is aware of this request and has added it to the Missing Sidewalk Inventory for City-wide prioritization and assessment.

*“I want connectivity into and out of Sakaw, and want a crosswalk at 64 Street and Millwoods Road.”*

# Next steps

Thank you to all who shared their feedback on the **Community Feedback on Draft Design** stage of the Meyokumin Neighbourhood and Alley Renewal project.

The Project Team will use this input to **REFINE** the design for the Meyokumin Neighbourhood and Alley Renewal project. You will have an opportunity to review and comment on the final design in the fall 2023.

Information will also be provided about decorative street lights and sidewalk reconstruction through the Local Improvement Cost-Sharing Opportunities process. The community has selected a colour, pole and luminaire type for an upgrade to decorative street lighting. The expression of interest letter is being prepared by the City and will be sent to all property owners in fall 2023.

For more information regarding the Meyokumin Neighbourhood and Alley Renewal, upcoming public engagement activities and to subscribe for project updates, please visit [edmonton.ca/BuildingMeyokumin](https://edmonton.ca/BuildingMeyokumin).

# Working together to make the most out of your neighbourhood

This is your city and your neighbourhood. We want to understand how you experience your neighbourhood and ask for your input on what we might do to make it better. We will engage and work with you on the renewal of roads, sidewalks, street lights and park spaces. We will also promote other community opportunities to enhance how people live and interact in your neighbourhood. We commit to being open and transparent about how your input is used. Let's make the most out of your neighbourhood.



For more information, visit:  
[edmonton.ca/BuildingMeyokumin](https://edmonton.ca/BuildingMeyokumin)

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