

# Frequently Asked Questions Neighbourhood Renewal

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**Edmonton**



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# General Neighbourhood Renewal Questions

## What is Neighbourhood Renewal?

The Neighbourhood Renewal program renews and rebuilds roads, sidewalks and street lights in mature neighbourhoods, while looking for opportunities to connect missing active transportation links and improve public spaces. The new infrastructure is designed to be in place for 30 to 50 years.

## We like our neighbourhood as it is. What if we don't want any changes?

Design practices and safety features have come a long way since Edmonton's more mature neighbourhoods were designed and built. By bringing these neighbourhoods up to the transportation safety standards of today, the City is making sure the most vulnerable in your neighbourhood have the opportunity to safely live in and get around in your neighbourhood.



# Decision making / Finalizing the design

## How are Neighbourhood Renewal decisions made?

The Neighbourhood Renewal program uses three components to make decisions: City policies and programs, technical requirements and public engagement input. For every decision, the Project Team uses these elements to make some hard decisions that have to include compromises and tradeoffs. This ensures the outcome is good for the neighbourhood as a whole – for today and the future.

### City policies and programs

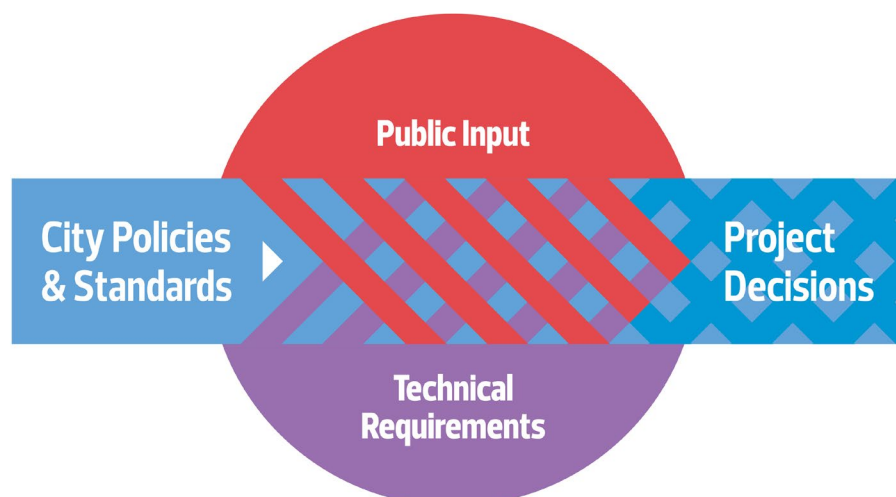
City policies and programs such as the Complete Streets Design and Construction Standards, Vision Zero Edmonton, and Winter City Strategy provide the overall direction for Neighbourhood Renewal designs. This sets the foundation for the Project Team to develop designs for the neighbourhood while technical studies and public input are used to make adjustments for your neighbourhood needs.

### Technical requirements

As each neighbourhood is unique, the Project Team considers technical aspects such as roadway widths and conflicts with utilities and trees to determine what will fit in the neighbourhood. Other studies provide information on traffic flow, parking usage and intersection concerns.

### Public input

To understand resident concerns and gather local knowledge, community conversations and surveys take place in every neighbourhood. These give you the chance to share your local knowledge, experiences and opinions on how to improve the neighbourhood's infrastructure. Your input will be used to help the Project Team generate ideas and solve issues and concerns. It's important to note public engagement feedback is not a vote, nor is it a statistical representation of all residents. It does, however, provide an indication of local concerns and desires. Input received through Neighbourhood Renewal engagement cannot change policy direction.



# Funding Questions

## How is Neighbourhood Renewal funded?

In 2009, City Council approved a Neighbourhood Renewal Tax Levy and the Neighbourhood Renewal Reserve to create a dedicated funding source to be directed towards investing in the renewal of infrastructure in neighbourhoods. Funding for the Neighbourhood Renewal program has come through a combination of City-wide property taxes and provincial funding over this time. The program was fully funded in 2018, with no further tax increases to build the reserve.

Funding for the Neighbourhood Renewal Program was approved in 2022 as part of the 2023–2026 Capital Budget. Projects starting construction during this time are accounted for in the approved budget and do not require additional property tax increases for owners. Property owners will only incur additional costs if any Local Improvements move forward.

## What is a Local Improvement?

Local Improvement is a project that benefits your neighbourhood more than the municipality as a whole. It is typically undertaken near or next to your property and is paid, in whole or in part, by benefitting property owners through a local improvement tax. As part of Neighbourhood Renewal, two specific improvements—decorative street lights and sidewalk reconstruction—are cost-shared by the City and owners of property in the neighbourhood.

Community members initiate whether to explore installing decorative street lights. If there is no interest from the neighbourhood, no further steps are taken and Project Team replaces the street lights with standard, galvanized poles at no extra charge.

The City launches the Local Improvement process for sidewalk reconstruction. Every property owner in the neighbourhood will receive information on how to decide whether the sidewalk reconstruction should move forward. If 50 per cent, plus one, of owners respond “no” before the deadline, the Project Team will take steps to patch and repair sidewalks, but will not remove and replace them with new sidewalks. If the Local Improvement moves forward, the cost of sidewalk reconstruction is split 50/50 between the property owner and the City of Edmonton. Information on how to vote and cost will be mailed directly to property owners four to six months before construction begins.

There is no cost for new sidewalks being added to the design where links were missing.



# Design Questions

## Why are you adding new or widening sidewalks?

The Complete Streets Design and Construction Standards outlines the need to provide a safe and integrated mobility network that is for everyone – people who walk, roll, bike and drive. Sidewalks provide linkages to key destinations (schools, businesses, shopping, transit, etc.) both within a neighbourhood and between neighbourhoods. By providing routes for people to use that are not just a road, there are other potential benefits which include reduced road maintenance (potholes and snow clearing), reduced greenhouse gas emissions, ability to age in place, better public health and safer and more vibrant streets. The sidewalks also support the City Plan outcome of creating walkable communities, active transportation networks and greater connectivity across all travel modes.



## The sidewalk on my block looks just fine but your design says it's changing. Why?

As part of the Neighbourhood Renewal, the curb and gutter for each road is removed and replaced and the pavement surface is rehabilitated. As part of this renewal, we will need to accommodate for tree roots and other constraints that will cause the road to shift elevation, typically higher than what it is today. Water draining from private lots needs to have a continuous path to the road to drain away, and if the sidewalk is not reconstructed, the sidewalk may become a channelized low point, with the lots and the road both higher than the sidewalk. It is more effective and efficient to replace all the sidewalks in the neighbourhood together with the roads. This will also ensure that they last as long into the future as possible.

## Why are trees being removed?

The City of Edmonton values every tree and when tree removals are required as part of Neighbourhood Renewal, the Project Team works to ensure new trees are planted as part of Greener as We Grow – one of Big City Moves outlined in The City Plan.

The Project Team will look for locations to plant new trees in all areas of the neighbourhoods, and to diversify the tree canopy with a variety of species.



# Design Questions

## How will widening sidewalks or adding new boulevards impact my front yard?

The Project Team explores how best to use the space within the City's right of way next to your property line needed for new infrastructure such as new or wider sidewalks or boulevards. As roadway widths vary, the approach may change for each roadway. At a high level, the space needed for new infrastructure could be gained by:

- + Adjusting the sidewalks towards the property line in some locations
- + Adjusting the curbline into the existing roadway in other locations but this may have tradeoffs to on street parking and is dependent on utility locations
- + And a balance of both in other locations is possible

The approach taken would also depend on the location of utilities, mature trees and other existing constraints.

## How will Neighbourhood Renewal reduce speeding and shortcutting?

Neighbourhood Renewal includes building traffic calming measures throughout the community. These features slow traffic and may also bring attention to the other road users (people who walk and bike) and make it less convenient for people who drive to shortcut through the neighbourhood.

Traffic calming measures that work together to reduce speeding and discourage shortcutting may include:

- + Curb extensions
- + Raised/continuous crossings
- + Narrowing road widths
- + Traffic direction and parking changes
- + Road closures
- + Traffic diverters

## Will narrower roads impact the movement of larger vehicles like buses and emergency vehicles?

As part of planning and design, the Project Team works with Edmonton Transit Service and emergency services to ensure vehicles like buses and fire trucks can still access your neighbourhood.

The need for emergency vehicles in a neighbourhood is typically rare and these vehicles may need to use both lanes of a street when responding. In the event of an emergency where response vehicles have to park in the street, residents may have to use another neighbourhood street as a detour, or drive in the opposing lane yielding to oncoming traffic.

# Parking Questions

## Why is street parking being impacted?

To make space for possible changes like new sidewalks, shared pathways, bike infrastructure, trees and enhanced public spaces some parking may be removed. Some areas may experience more impacts to their parking while others won't see a change.

## What about those who need an accessible parking area?

If residents wish to apply for an accessible parking area they can apply on the City's website at: [https://www.edmonton.ca/transportation/driving\\_carpooling/accessible-parking.aspx](https://www.edmonton.ca/transportation/driving_carpooling/accessible-parking.aspx).

Access to every property will be maintained and the Project Team can add in a mid-block crossing complete with connector sidewalks that intersect the sidewalk and lead to the road where curb ramps can be installed.



# Impacts of Construction

## How long will construction activities take in front of my property / business?

The construction activity in front of your home or business is about 12 to 16 weeks. During this time the contractor will work with you to maintain access to your property.

