

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

What We Heard Report Fort Road Widening

Fall 2020 Engagement

**SHARE YOUR VOICE
SHAPE OUR CITY**

Edmonton

Thank you for talking with us.

Your valuable input has helped shape the Fort Road Widening project's design plan and helped us better understand the needs of all Yellowhead Trail area road network users, area residents, and businesses.

THANK YOU.

I. PROJECT OVERVIEW

In 2011, the City of Edmonton completed and endorsed a strategic plan to convert Yellowhead Trail to a freeway, with three lanes of free-flowing traffic in each direction and a target speed of 80 km/h.

The Fort Road Widening project will support the conversion of Yellowhead Trail to a freeway with the widening of Fort Road to six lanes from Yellowhead Trail to 66 Street. The Fort Road project also includes:

- + Widening of the CN Rail underpass
- + Increased CN Rail underpass clearance by lowering Fort Road
- + New shared-use path on the west side of Fort Road
- + Improved sidewalk on the east side of Fort Road
- + 125 Avenue, a new industrial collector road from 61 Street to 71 Street, west of Fort Road, will be constructed including a new shared-use path and sidewalk

This project draws on public insights to develop a design that balances the vision and requirements of the Yellowhead Trail Freeway Conversion Program with community, business and commuter needs.

The Fort Road Widening project is an integral part of the Yellowhead Trail Freeway Conversion Program.

II. HOW WE ENGAGED

Due to COVID-19 and to follow restrictions on gatherings, the City placed all in-person public engagement on hold. Online public engagement was held in fall 2020.

Meetings with business stakeholders and property owners were held online, which allowed the project team to continue working on the design. Efforts to reach stakeholders, the surrounding business community and the public included:

- + an online survey from October 21 to November 4
- + two online learning sessions on October 21 and 27

During these engagements we presented a preliminary design plan and engaged with people to gather their feedback to help adjust and finalize this plan.

III. WHO WAS ENGAGED

A total of 377 people completed the online engagement survey, and over 25 people participated in two online learning sessions. We conducted four meetings with impacted property owners in the project area. We continue to be in regular communication with the Fort Road Business Association and other local area stakeholders.

We are continuing to communicate, coordinate and collaborate with other projects and area stakeholders:

- + Yellowhead Trail Freeway Conversion projects: East Widening, 66 Street Overpass, Noise Reduction System (97 Street to Fort Road)
- + Balwin and Belvedere Revitalization Project
- + LRT (Light Rail Transit)
- + Edmonton Transit Service - Kathleen Andrews Transit Garage
- + CN Rail
- + Industrial Heights Neighbourhood Renewal
- + Station Pointe

Over 400 people participated in our online engagement opportunities.

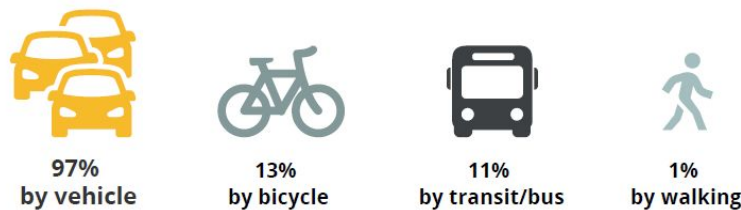
IV. WHAT WE ASKED, WHAT WE HEARD and HOW YOUR FEEDBACK SHAPED CHANGE

We engaged with stakeholders, answered questions during online sessions and received your feedback through an online survey. The project team has reviewed and adjusted elements of the plan based on your input.

How engagement participants currently use the roadway network in the project area



When asked what modes of transportation engagement participants use to travel through the area, we heard:



Engagement participants were asked for their feedback on the project's landscaping, street furniture, pedestrian connectivity and wayfinding signage. Below is a summary of feedback gathered from you and how we are responding:

What we engaged on	What we heard	How we are responding
Identifying areas to provide additional landscaping	<p>Engagement participants were provided with a visual representation of landscaping locations proposed in the project area. When asked if any additional landscaping should be considered in the project area, 90 per cent of participants said no.</p>	<p>Based on the feedback received as well as technical review and need, no additional landscaping areas have been added to the design.</p>
Identifying areas to provide additional street furniture	<p>Participants were provided with a visual representation of locations where street furniture was being proposed in the project area. When asked if any additional locations for street furniture should be considered, 86 per cent of participants said no.</p> <p>Those who felt additional street furniture was required marked areas within the proposed project area where they would like to see street furniture added.</p>	<p>We adjusted our plans based on feedback received and are adding street furniture in the following locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waste receptacles added at NW corner of 62 Street and 125 Avenue and SE corner of Fort Road and 125 Avenue • Waste receptacle and bench added at east and west side of Fort Road and between the CN bridge and 66 Street
Comment on preferred styles of street furniture	<p>53 per cent of participants indicated a preference for Style Option B, the black street furniture option, to match the design features of the Kathleen Andrews Transit Garage.</p>	<p>Black street furniture will be used for all project area street furniture.</p>
Opportunities for pedestrian connectivity and wayfinding signage	<p>Participants were provided with a visual representation of sidewalk and shared-use path locations proposed in the project area. The majority of participants (90 per cent) indicated that they did not believe any pedestrian or cycling pathway opportunities were missed.</p>	

What we engaged on	What we heard	How we are responding
<p>Opportunities for pedestrian connectivity and wayfinding signage (cont'd)</p>	<p>We heard from some participants that a new connection along 66 Street between the CN bridge and Fort Road is desired.</p> <p>Participants indicated they would like to see wayfinding signage included at transit location and points of interest (for example, schools and shopping malls).</p>	<p>We have added a new sidewalk connection along the west side of 66 Street between the CN bridge and Fort Road.</p> <p>We adjusted our plans and included recommendations related to wayfinding signage.</p>
<p>Opportunities for wayfinding signage for drivers</p>	<p>Participants indicated that the City could help improve wayfinding signage for drivers by including improved lane and turning warning signage to help drivers exit and merge. Additionally, there was a desire to see consistent speed postings and clear signage that is easy to see and read.</p>	<p>We developed a signage plan considering these concerns, safe road operations and current standards.</p>

" I'm very keen to see safe travel by bicycle added to these high traffic routes. I am a very experienced cyclist, but would never consider travelling by bike on these roads in their current configurations. "

" Standard signage to give direction when approaching turns....A person using the roadway for the first time should not have a problem finding their destination. "

Additional Thoughts and Comments

Below is a summary of participants' feedback when they were asked to share additional thoughts on the project.

Theme	What we heard	How we are responding
Route access and traffic flow	Participants wanted to see access to 66 Street maintained and the speed limit in the project area to increase up to 60 or 70 km/h.	Access to 66 Street will be maintained from Fort Road. The speed limit for the project area will be maintained at 50 km/hr.
Pedestrians and cyclists	Participants liked how pedestrians and cyclists were considered in the presented plan, but some felt that these roadways will still be unsafe due to heavy traffic.	A road safety audit has been completed for the road design. Wherever possible, the design has provided pedestrian and cyclist space separated from traffic lanes by either boulevards, elevation difference or barriers.
Historical significance	Participants would like to see the historic Fort Road signage on CN bridge protected.	We are working with CN Rail to determine what is needed to receive approval to reinstall the sign on the widened CN bridge.
Construction	Participants indicated they want more information on construction timelines, early communication on detour routes, safe construction sites and timely completion of construction projects.	The project team will provide information and communications regarding constructions changes, timelines and impacts as the project progresses. To sign up for construction updates, visit the project website: edmonton.ca/YellowheadFortRoad
Noise	Some participants noted a concern regarding noise pollution due to construction and increased traffic in the project area.	A noise impact assessment was completed as part of the Fort Road Widening project, which identified that no noise mitigation is required. Sound levels in the area after project completion are expected to remain below the threshold set out in the City of Edmonton's Urban Traffic Noise Policy. Additionally, during construction, contractors are required to adhere to the Community Standards Bylaw 14600 which limits construction noise levels during specific hours and days.

Theme	What we heard	How we are responding
Safety	Some participants noted that this area is prone to crime and suggested video surveillance and regular patrol by law enforcement should be added.	Security concerns will be shared with Edmonton Police Services. The design includes improved lighting, open spaces and clear sight lines which will help to address security concerns.

“ I definitely would like noise mitigation as part of the construction and later when the construction is completed and the road is six lanes. ”

“ I am excited about the Yellowhead Trail being free flowing. ”

“ I like the fact that the city is investing in the Fort Road area.”

V. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT



We have now completed design plans for Fort Road and 125 Avenue within the project area. The project is moving now into "Build Stage" with construction scheduled to start in spring 2021.

Please stay tuned for the pre-construction information session planned for spring 2021.

Staying Connected

We heard you would prefer to be contacted and kept informed about the Fort Road Widening project via emails and updates posted on the city website.

To sign up for project updates, please visit: www.edmonton.ca/YellowheadFortRoad