



Draft Concept Options



Draft Concept Options What We Heard Report

Overview

This report provides a summary of public feedback on the third phase of the River Crossing Business Plan project, which included a public workshop in October 2018 and online surveys through November 2018.

Previous engagement events sought public input on drafting redevelopment objectives to guide the creation of redevelopment concepts (fall 2017), and how different land uses could support those objectives (spring 2018).

During this most recent round of public engagement, the City's project team invited members of the public to provide feedback on three alternative redevelopment concepts, potential road network changes, and the re-use of the Rosssdale Power Plant.

How did we get the word out?

- Edmonton.ca/RiverCrossingPlan
- City of Edmonton social media
- Community networks
- Road signs
- Mailed notifications

Public Workshop

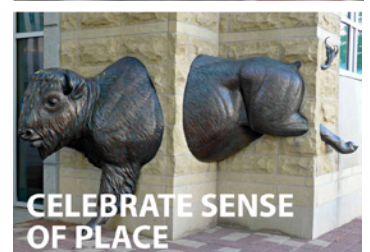
Approximately 70 people attended the public open house. Project staff provided a brief presentation to give an update on work undertaken since the last workshop held in April 2018, then outline the process for the night's workshop. Participants were provided an opportunity to learn about the project and give their input to help guide the preparation of redevelopment concepts for the River Crossing area.

Online Surveys

Two online surveys provided Edmontonians an opportunity to indicate their level of support for elements of the proposed concepts, and give feedback.

The Insight Community November mixed-topic survey included several questions focused on the Big Ideas and potential transportation changes specifically. The intent was to gather feedback from a broader range of Edmontonians who may use the area infrequently or primarily as commuters.

A more comprehensive survey was shared via the project website and newsletter announcements. This survey provided an opportunity for respondents to comment on each of the proposed concepts, as well as transportation changes and the future re-use of the Rosssdale Power Plant.



Workshop Purpose and Process

Purpose

The purpose of the October 18, 2018 public workshop was to gather citizen feedback on the following:

- Big Ideas for redevelopment of the River Crossing area
- three alternative land use concepts for the River Crossing area
- potential changes to the arterial road network
- future re-use of the Rossdale Power Plant

Process

Using an open-house format, the drop-in workshop presented information boards outlining project background and process, redevelopment concepts, transportation analysis and Rossdale Power Plant reuse options. City and consultant staff were present to answer participant questions and gather feedback.

The project team gave a short presentation hourly throughout the event to introduce the project and provide an overview of the event process and purpose to orient participants.

Participant perspectives were captured for each redevelopment concept, seeking to understand what individuals liked and did not like about each concept. Participants were also asked to comment on future re-use options for the power plant, and given an opportunity to record general comments and questions.

Workshop Participant Feedback

Comments related to all proposed concepts

The following comments from participants apply to all three proposed concept options:

- Support for retention of RE/MAX Field ballpark facility
- Support for year-round activation of RE/MAX Field
- Like the activation of Rossdale Power Plant and river access through Touch the Water project
- Concerns about height of new development, especially closer to existing residential area in South Rossdale
- Concerns about parking not being addressed on the concepts - impact on existing neighbourhood by overflow from new development and use of the Power Plant, accommodating parking for events at RE/MAX Field
- Concerns about increased traffic in the area that may cause short-cutting through South Rossdale
- Concerns about increased traffic on 105 Street, 96 Avenue and 97 Avenue as a result of new development
- Concerns about developing within the river valley at all and further loss of natural spaces
- EPCOR facilities detract from creating an attractive destination

Comments on Concept 1

What do you like about this concept?	What do you dislike?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2-way Rossdale Road • Commercial uses create vibrancy • Pedestrian-friendly 104 Street 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amount of development proposed (density, height of buildings) • Inappropriate development considering heritage importance of the area • Keeping Rossdale Road open • Loss of open space • Development on Donald Ross School site

Comments on Concept 2

What do you like about this concept?	What do you dislike?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removal of Rossdale Road section • Improved pedestrian and active transportation opportunities • Larger open space, signature park, preserved green space • Opportunity for Indigenous/settler heritages to be represented in open space • Integration of South and West Rossdale • Small-scale retail • Connecting West and South Rossdale through development on Donald Ross School site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic impacts, including: potential of short-cutting through South Rossdale, event traffic, access to South Rossdale • Development on Donald Ross School site • Not enough open space

Comments on Concept 3

What do you like about this concept?	What do you dislike?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removal of Rossdale Road section • Open space north of Fort Edmonton Cemetery and Traditional Burial Grounds • Residential development south of 96 Avenue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic impacts, including: potential of short-cutting through South Rossdale, event traffic, access to South Rossdale • Development on Donald Ross School site • Not enough open space • 104 Street alignment is indirect

Insight Mixed Topic Survey Result Summary

Purpose

Recognizing the city-wide importance of the River Crossing area, the project team sought input from Edmontonians who may use the area infrequently or primarily as commuters. To reach them, focused questions related to future redevelopment, its impact on transportation and re-use of the Rossdale Power Plant were included in the November Insight Mixed Topic online survey.

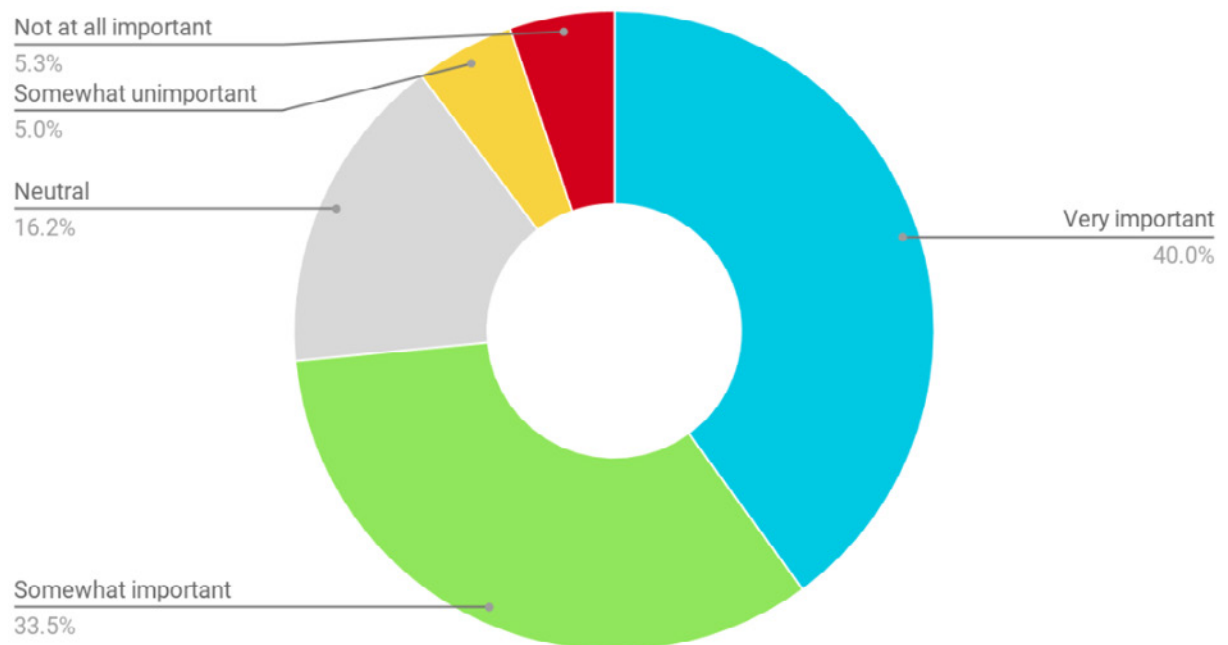
The questions sought to:

- gauge participant support for the six city-building outcomes that could be accomplished through redevelopment (Activate the Riverfront, Create Signature Open Space, Develop Vacant Lands, Simplify Roads, Celebrate Sense of Place, Revitalize Ballpark)
- gauge participant support for those outcomes relative to potential increases to commute times
- gather input on potential uses of the Rossdale Power Plant buildings

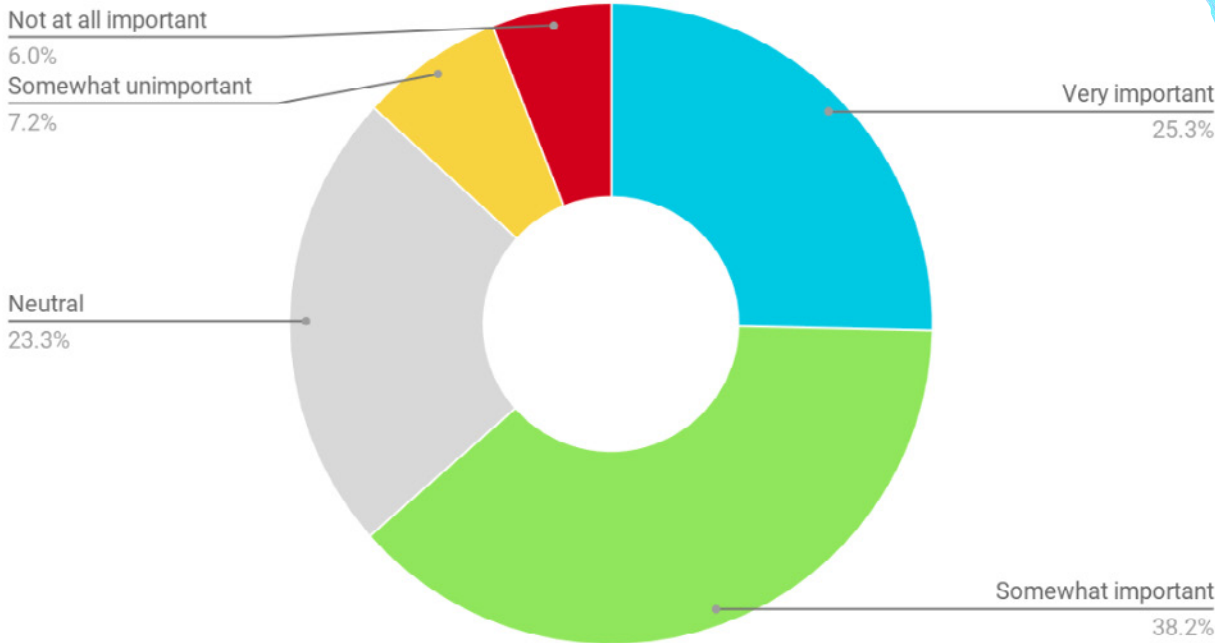
Over 2,100 people responded to the questions. Their responses are summarized below.

Question 1: Potential redevelopment concepts incorporate big ideas to support Council’s vision for River Crossing. In your opinion, how important is each Big Idea?

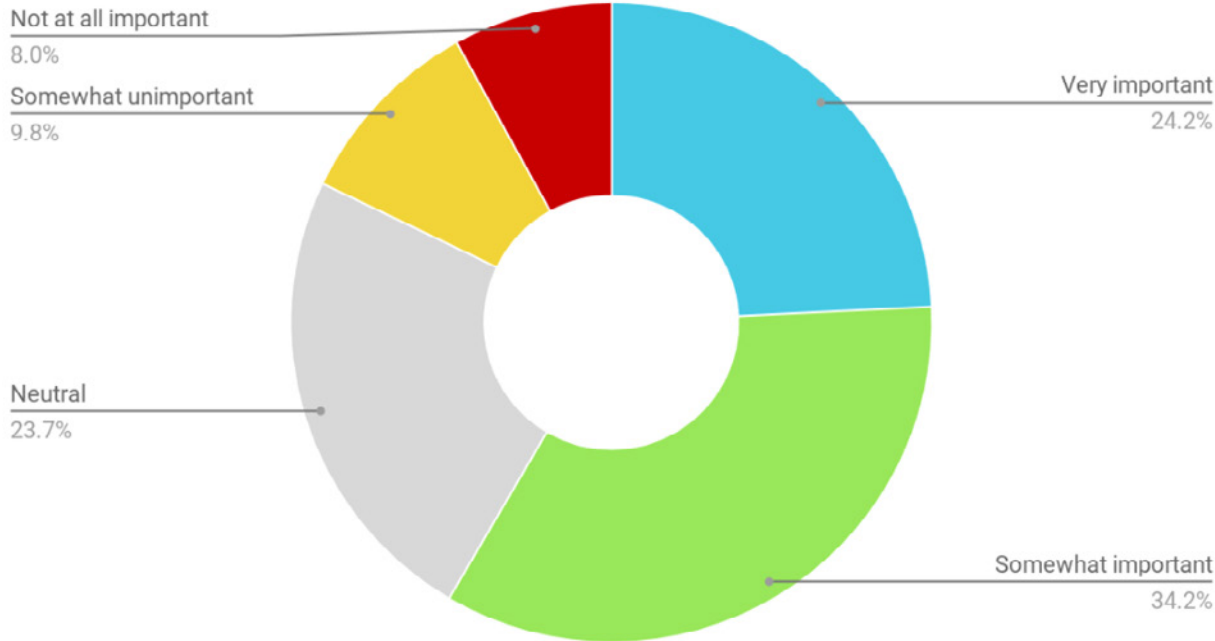
Activate the riverfront: Improved river access and Power Plant reuse



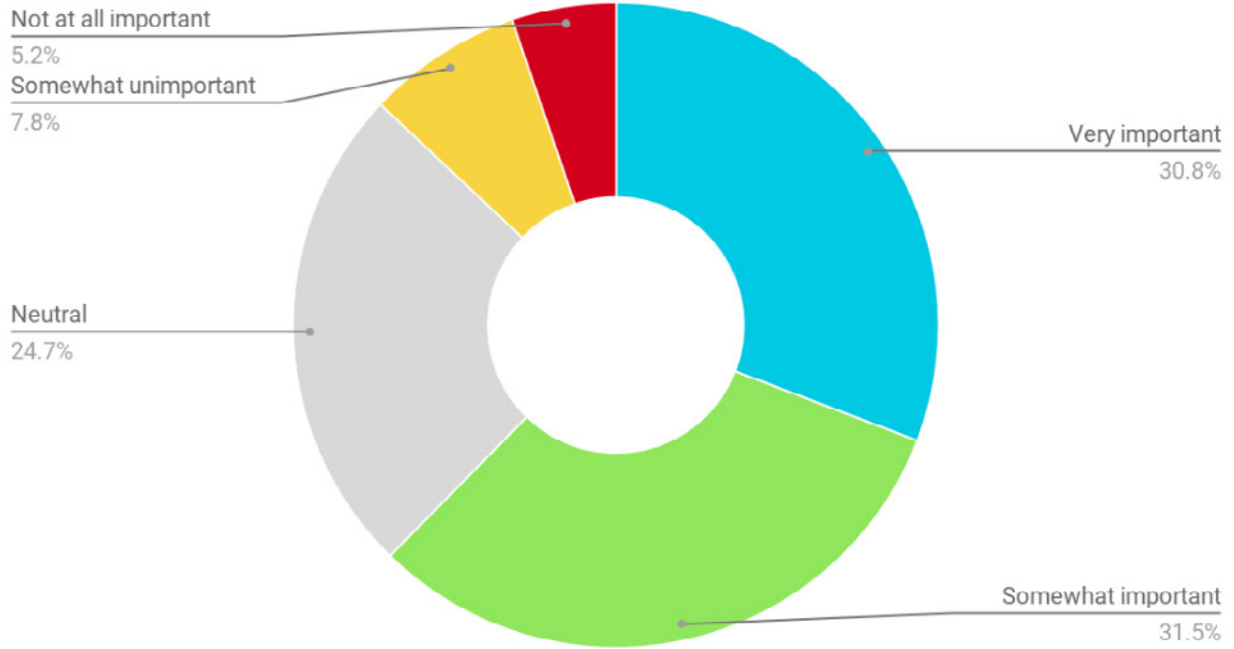
Create signature open space



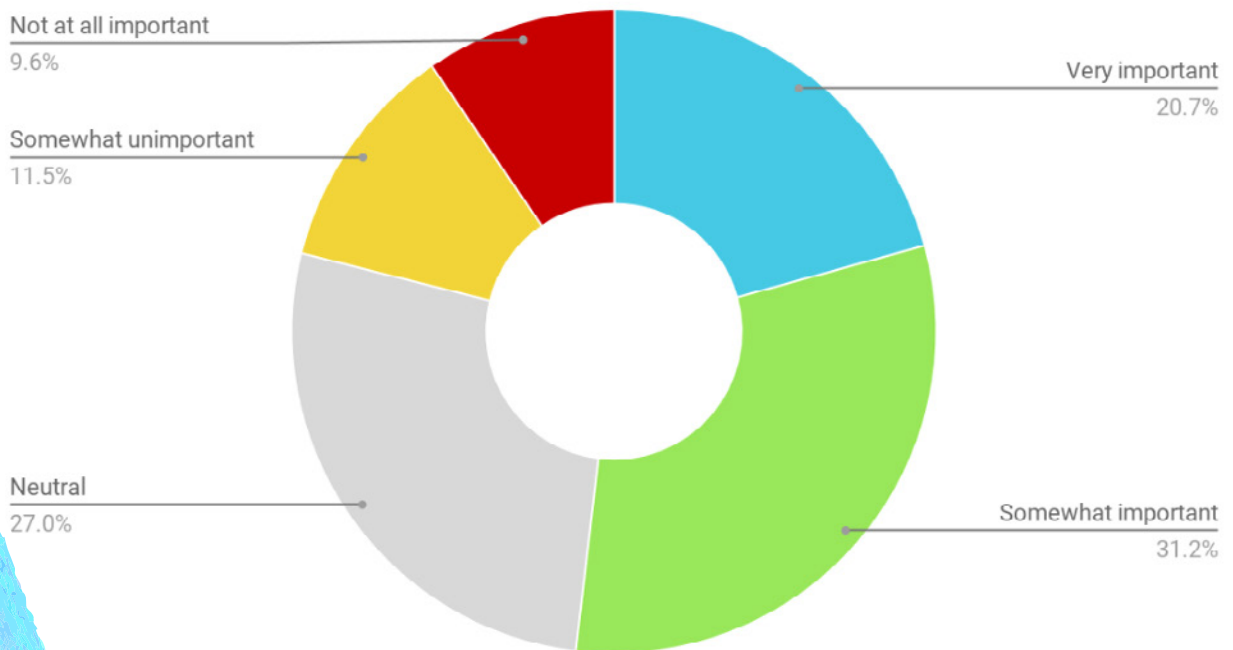
Develop vacant lands



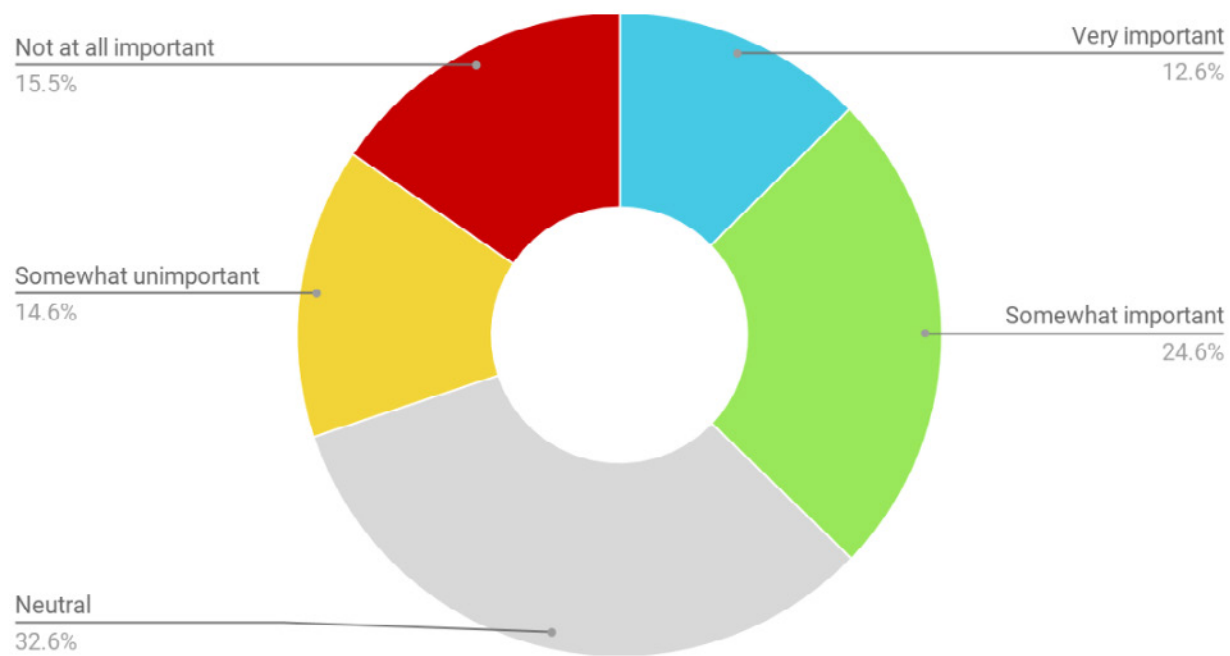
Create signature open space



Celebrate sense of place and layered heritage



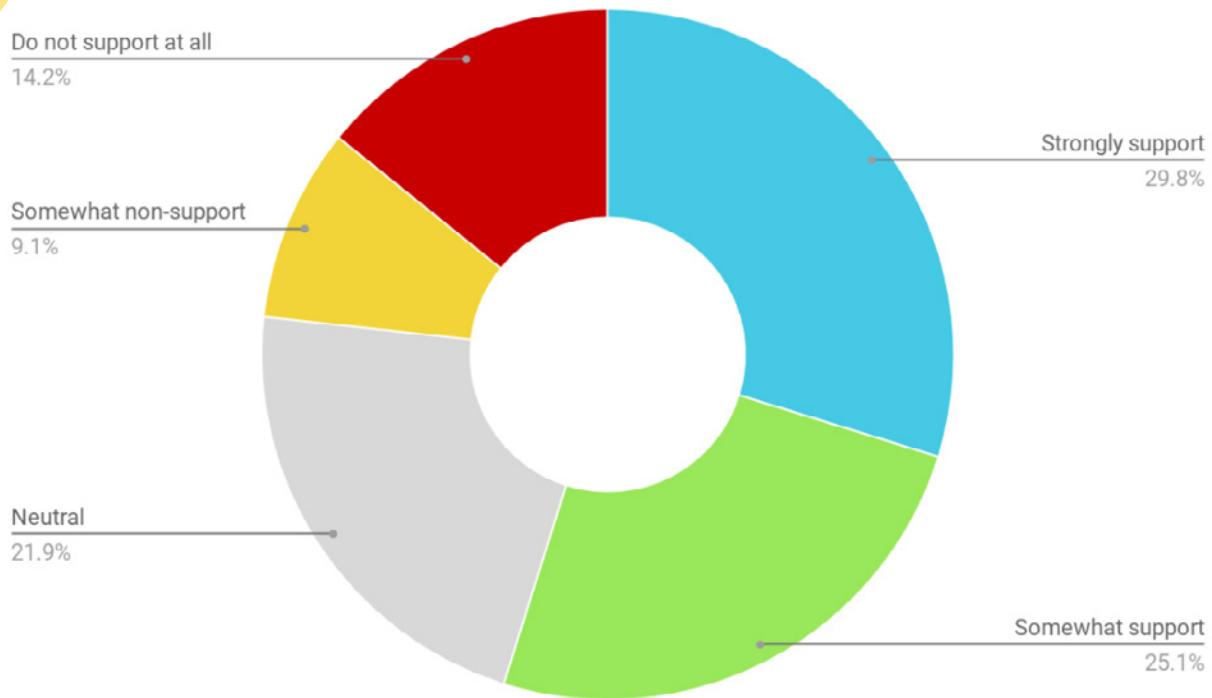
Revitalize ballpark



A follow-up question asked participants for other big ideas they would like to see through redevelopment of the River Crossing area. 612 participants provided additional comments. They are summarized below:

- Recognize and celebrate Indigenous heritage
- Walkable neighbourhood
- Accessibility for all people
- History interpretation and heritage preservation
- River access and canoe/kayak launch
- No development in the river valley
- Environmental protection of sensitive habitats
- Bicycle access
- Parking for new and existing uses
- Space for community events
- Protection of sacred spaces and burials
- Better transit access
- Demolish the power plant
- Affordable housing
- Get rid of the ballpark
- Leave the ballpark alone
- Less focus on downtown revitalization
- Protection of archaeological areas
- Improve commuter routes
- De-prioritize automobiles in the area
- Improve trail connections
- Repurposed power plant
- Do not develop in flood-prone areas
- Gondola to connect the area to downtown and south of the river
- Mixed use development
- Development like The Forks in Winnipeg
- Whatever reduces the tax burden
- Greater recognition and space for Fort Edmonton Cemetery and Traditional Burial Grounds
- Improved access to the river valley
- Leave it to private industry
- More recreation opportunities
- Arts and culture spaces
- Improve wildlife corridors
- Public beach and docks
- River transportation opportunities
- Create a ballpark district
- Services and facilities for all ages
- Focus on other projects first

Question 2: To what extent do you support these city-building outcomes in River Crossing on the understanding that they would increase automobile commute times by 0-3 minutes?



A follow-up question asked participants for additional comments related to potential changes to the road network. 669 responses were received and are summarized below:

- Improve bike and pedestrian system and accessibility for active transportation
- Leave the river valley natural
- Do not develop in flood-prone areas
- Skepticism of commute impact estimates provided in the survey
- Critical of other recent transportation changes in the city, including separated bike lanes, school and playground speed reductions
- The survey questions are unclear or do not provide enough information to comment
- Focus on other priority projects in the city
- Consider impact on emergency services access and response times
- Build additional bridges
- Skepticism about the City’s ability to implement redevelopment
- Do not negatively impact commute times
- Automobile commute times should not be a priority
- Improve transit access to the area
- Concern about cumulative impacts of transportation changes throughout downtown
- Improve parking access
- Limit parking in the area
- Concern about increased tax resulting from development of the area
- Prioritize transportation modes equally
- Protect cemetery and unknown burials
- Consider impact on transit times

Online Project Survey Result Summary

Purpose

The project team hosted an online survey to provide an additional opportunity for members of the public to respond to alternative redevelopment options for the River Crossing area, in addition to the transportation and big idea questions included in the November Insight Mixed Topic Survey. This survey provided a more comprehensive set of questions than was possible in the Insight Survey.

Access to this survey was provided through the project website. It was advertised through the River Crossing project newsletter, emails to stakeholders and on Twitter.

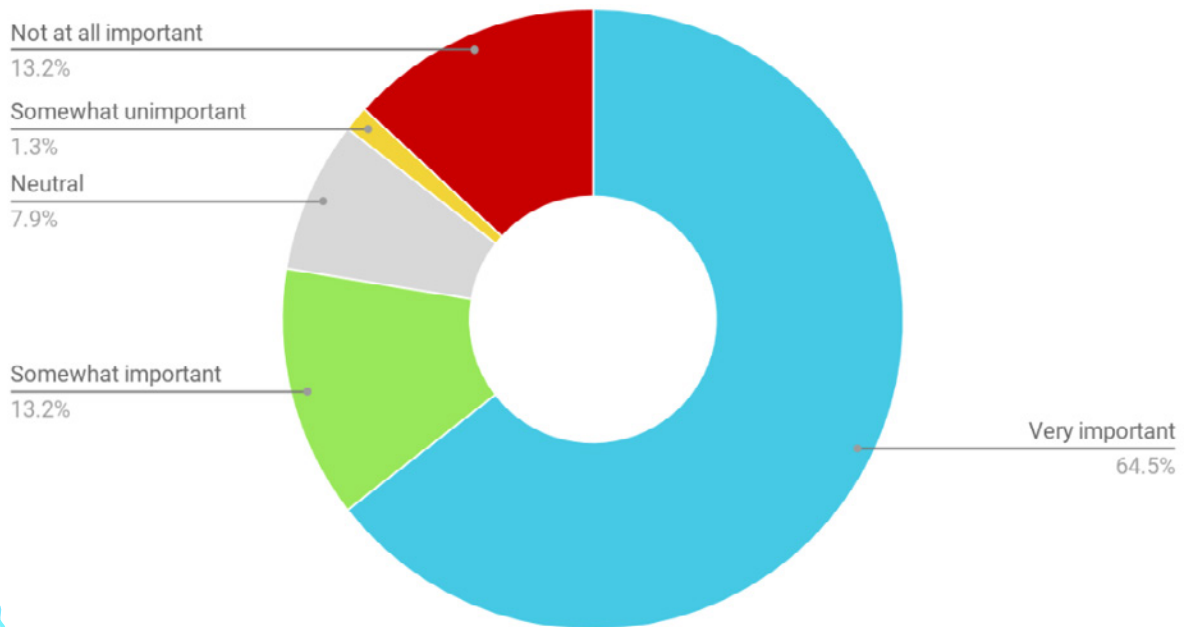
The online project survey sought to:

- gauge participant support for the six city-building outcomes that could be accomplished through redevelopment (Activate the Riverfront, Create Signature Open Space, Develop Vacant Lands, Simplify Roads, Celebrate Sense of Place, Revitalize Ballpark);
- gauge participant support for those outcomes relative to potential increases to commute times;
- gather feedback on what participants liked and disliked about the three potential redevelopment concepts; and
- gather input on potential uses of the Rossdale Power Plant buildings.

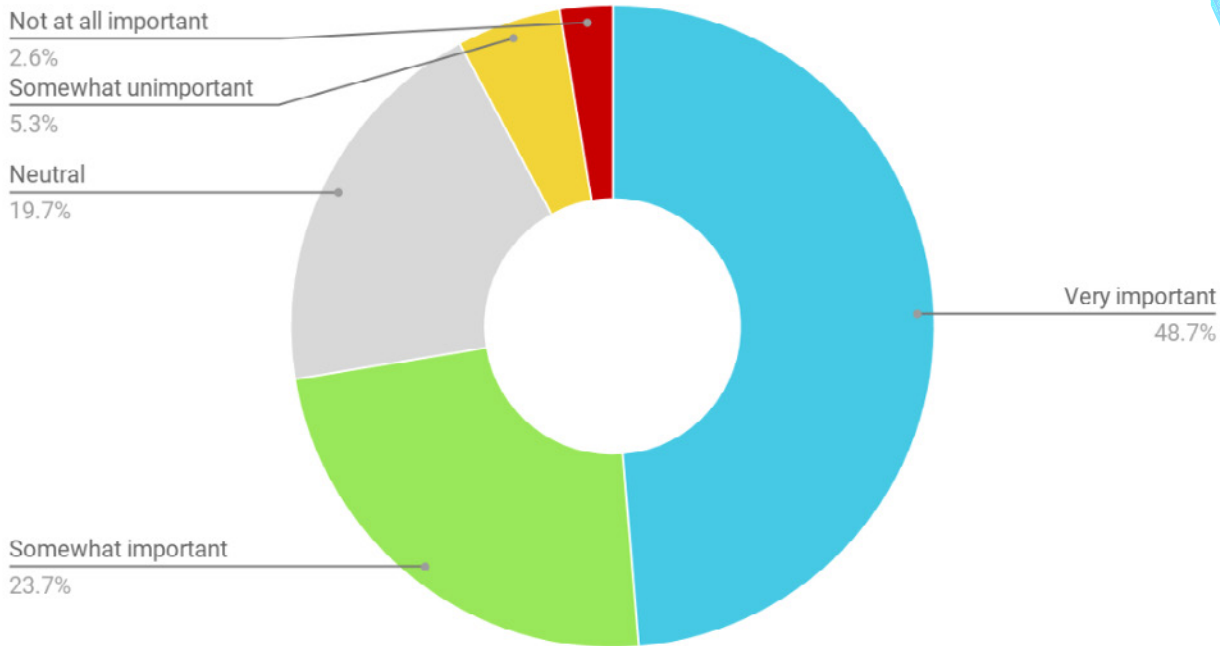
76 people responded to the survey. Their responses are summarized below.

Question 1: In your opinion, how important is each big idea?

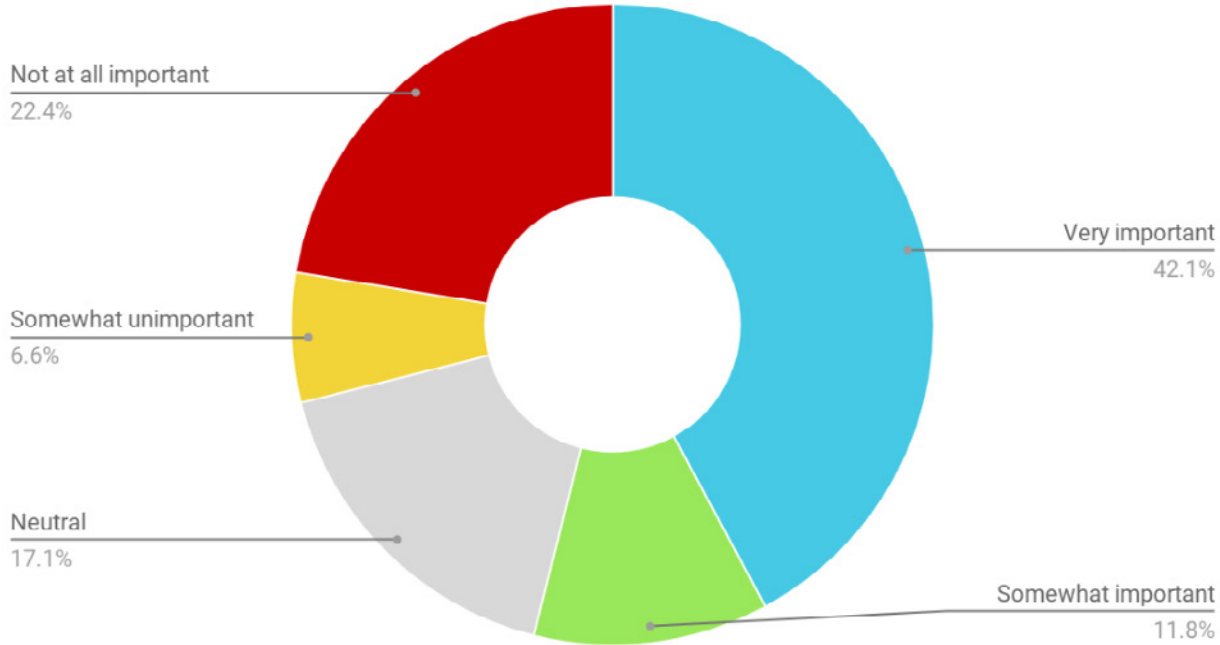
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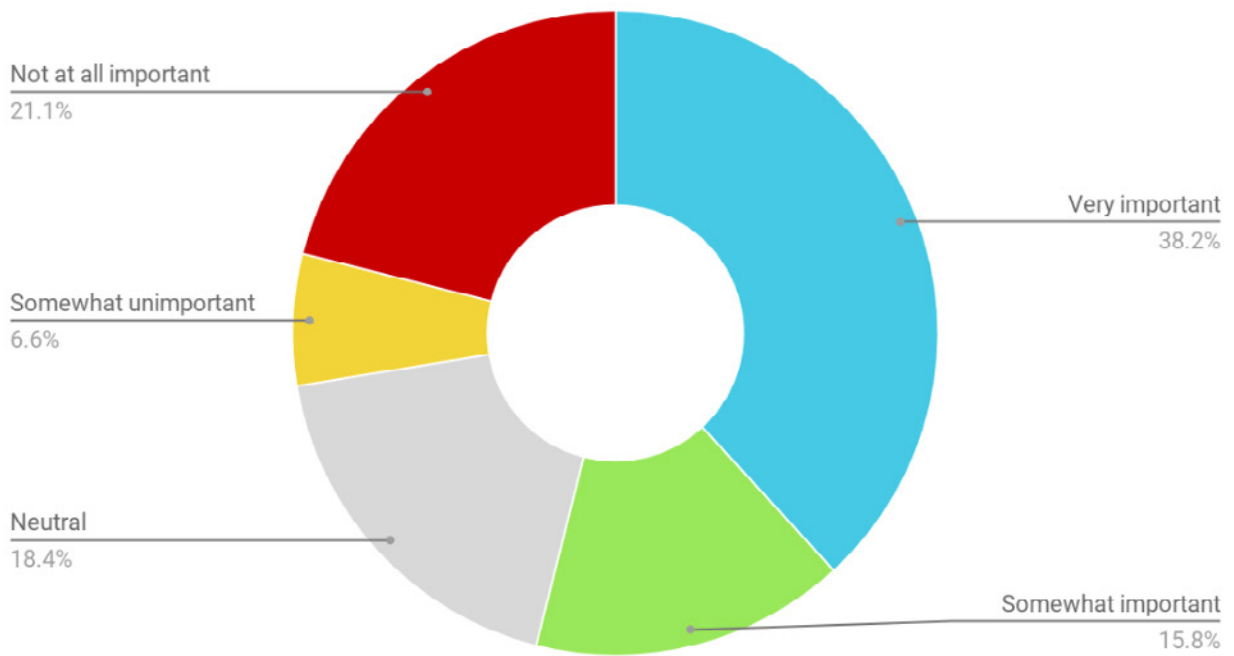
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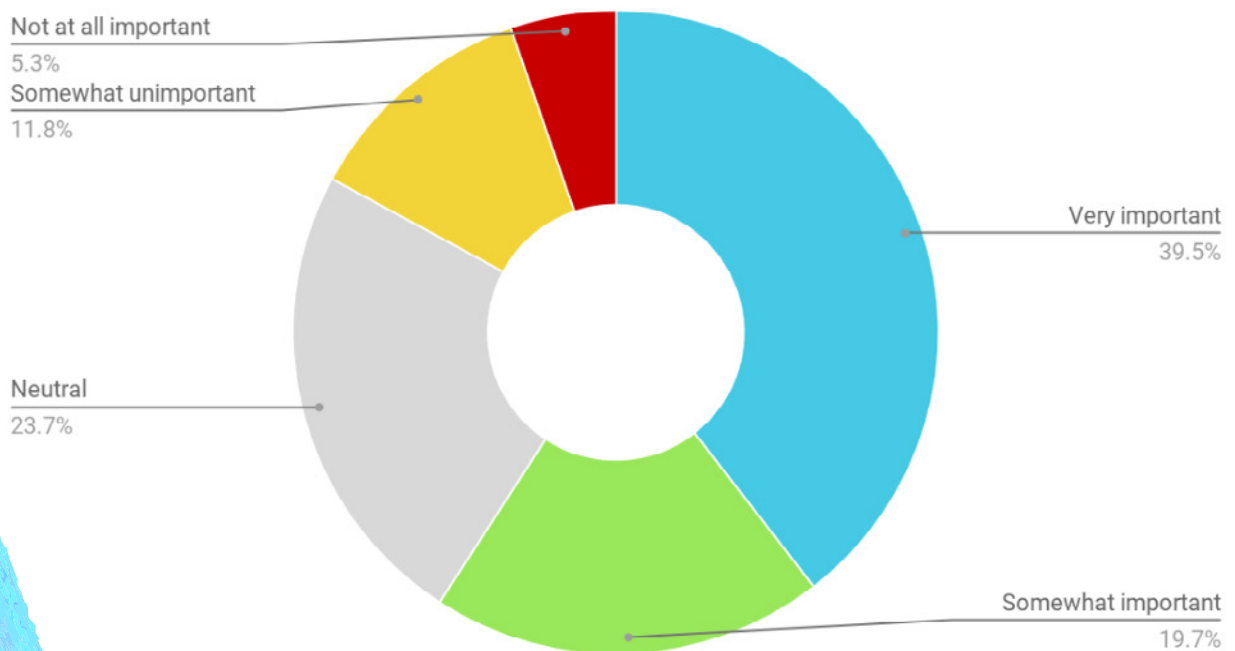
Develop vacant lands



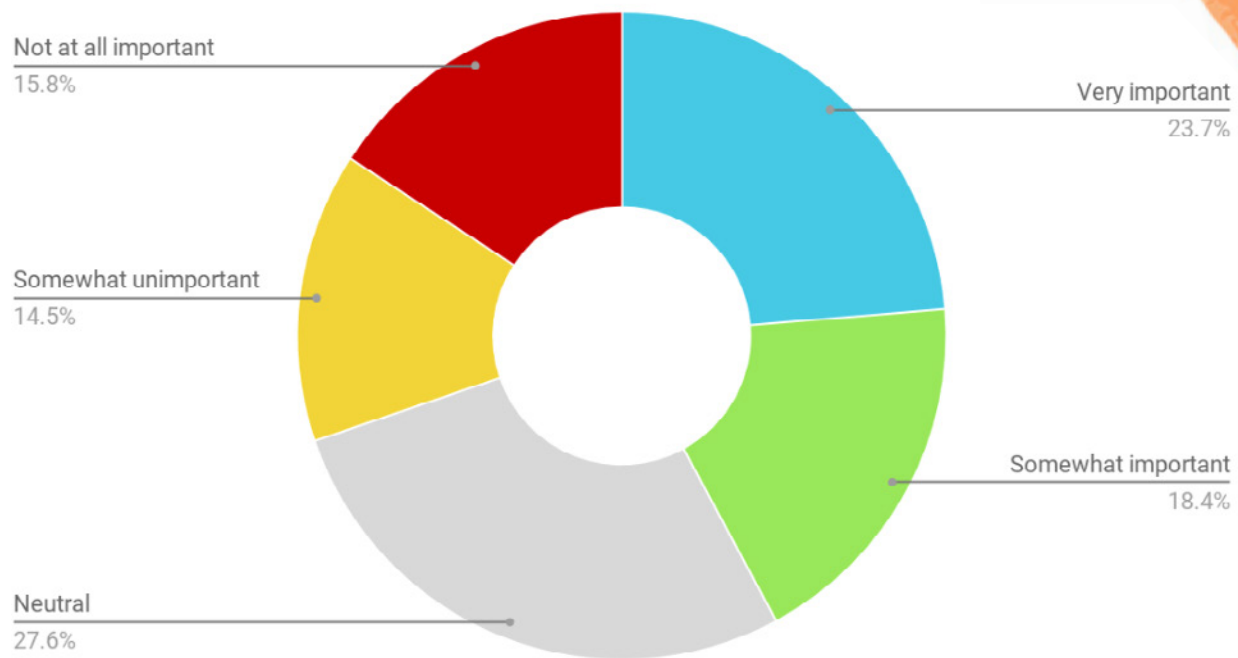
Simplify roads



Celebrate sense of place and layered heritage



Revitalize ballpark



A follow-up question asked participants for other Big Ideas they would like to see through redevelopment of the River Crossing area. The responses are summarized below:

- Improve transit to the area
- Retain open areas and soccer fields
- Build a gondola
- Re-use and revitalize Rossdale Power Plant
- Preserve and celebrate heritage structures
- Celebrate long Indigenous history of the area
- Improve connections to downtown and across the river
- Build a retaining wall along 97 Avenue to reduce vehicle noise
- Don't overbuild the area
- Leave the river valley natural
- Respect Indigenous voices and legal claims
- Play spaces for children in downtown core
- Remove industrial sites before development
- Focus on the river as destination and active recreation opportunity
- Rename the area
- Mixed use development
- Higher density
- Promote development along the river
- Protect natural river habitat
- Improve parking access

Proposed Redevelopment Concepts

Participants were asked to comment on what they liked about each concept, and what concerns they had. Their responses are summarized below:

Concept 1 - Maximum development alternative

What do you like about this concept?	What concerns do you have?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased housing • Pedestrian friendly street and retail of 104 Street • Mix of housing and open spaces • Retention of open space on Donald Ross School site • Retention of the ballpark • Potential tax revenue for the city • Mix of mid- and high-rise housing • Connectivity with trails • Power plant re-use • Honouring the Fort Edmonton Cemetery and Traditional Burial Ground • Development of currently underutilized space • Touch the Water promenade • Preserving Rossdale Road 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indigenous consultation and consent • Lack of parking for RE/MAX Field and new developments • Too much development - height and density • Loss of sports field • Pedestrian safety • Potential traffic impacts on South Rossdale • Loss of open spaces • Removal of river valley trees and natural habitat with Touch the Water • Noise from 97 Avenue and 105 Street • Impact on cemetery and unmarked burial sites • Disjointed open spaces • EPCOR substation • Traffic congestion • Potential congestion on River Valley Road, 105 Street and 97 Avenue • Retaining RE/MAX Field

Concept 2 - Rossdale Road removed, large open space south of 96 Avenue

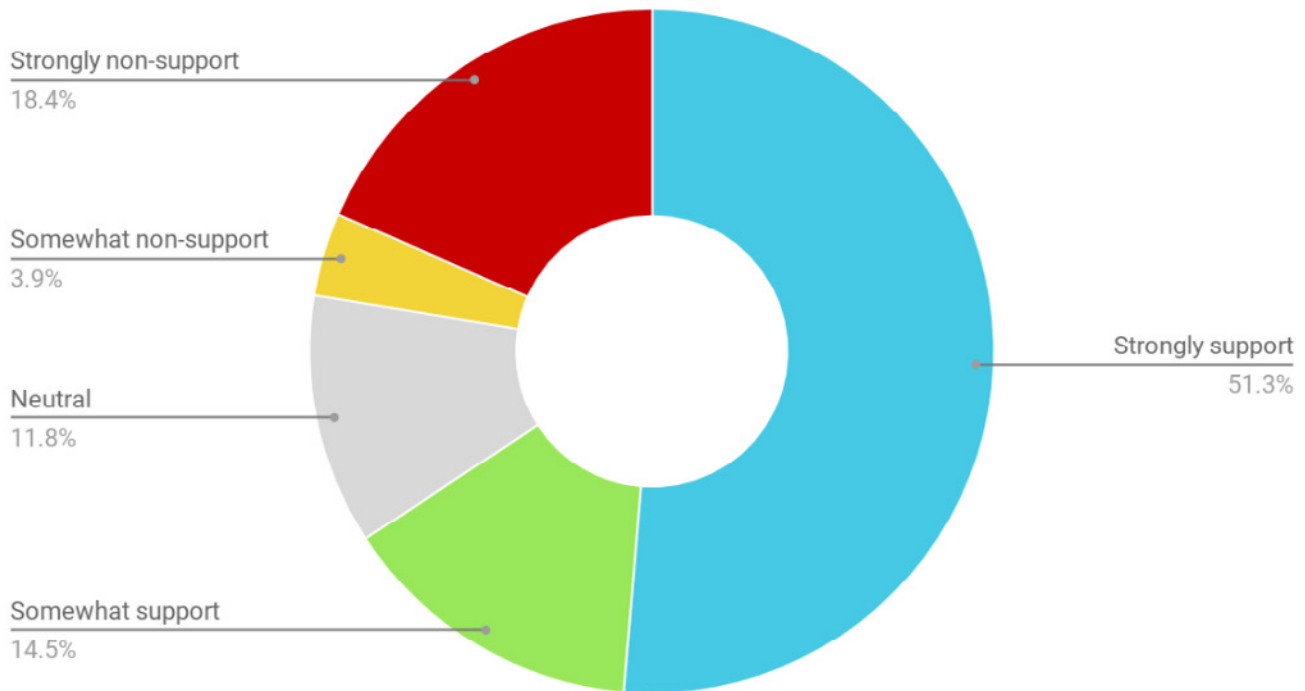
What do you like about this concept?	What concerns do you have?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simplified road network and removal of Rossdale Road • Layout of open space and new development • Larger open space • Improved cycling and pedestrian opportunities with more open space and trail connections • More respect for Fort Edmonton Cemetery and Traditional Burial Grounds • Retention of RE/MAX Field • Commercial opportunities opening up onto a park • 96 Avenue as a clear division between development and open space • Potential tax revenue for the city 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indigenous consultation and consent • Removal of Rossdale Road • Lack of parking for RE/MAX Field and new developments • Too much development - height and density • Loss of Donald Ross School site open space • Potential for large open space to be underutilized • Not enough density to support open space and commercial uses • Not enough of a draw for visitors • Pedestrian safety • Traffic congestion • Not enough commercial uses

Concept 3 - Rossdale Road removed, some development south of 96 Avenue

What do you like about this concept?	What concerns do you have?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development south of 96 Avenue • Simplified road network and removal of Rossdale Road • Layout of open space and new development • Good balance between open space and development • Population density seems appropriate • Potential tax revenue for the city • Retention of RE/MAX Field 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indigenous consultation and consent • Removal of Rossdale Road • Lack of parking for RE/MAX Field and new developments • Too much development - height and density • Loss of Donald Ross School site open space • Traffic congestion • Smaller open space is less likely to be well-used • Not enough open space • Residential development south of 96 Avenue • High-rise development next to an open space • Not enough demand for mid- and high-rise housing

Road Network Changes

Participants were asked to identify their support for the big ideas in River Crossing, with the understanding that they would increase automobile commute times by 0-3 minutes:



Thank You

The project team wishes to thank everyone who has been involved to date and all those who contributed their feedback at the October 18 public workshop or through the online surveys.

How Feedback Will be Used

Input from the workshop will assist in the preparation of a preferred redevelopment concept and will inform the business plan. Participant feedback will help identify resident preferences and provide insight into anticipated interactions between land uses in the redevelopment.

