

What We Heard

142 Street Pedestrian / Cyclist Bridge Public Engagement #4

February 2022

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Edmonton

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142 Street Pedestrian/ Cyclist Bridge

Public Engagement #4

Project Background

The Terwillegar Drive Expansion Program identifies a new pedestrian/cyclist bridge over Whitemud Drive, between the Whitemud Drive/Terwillegar Drive interchange and Whitemud Creek. The bridge crossing is funded by the City and in partnership with the Government of Alberta. In addition to the pedestrian/cyclist bridge, the project also includes active transportation connections and open space upgrades.

The City has initiated the planning and design of the bridge, including a comprehensive engagement program which will be used for the development of the concept and preliminary design. Construction will be in coordination with the Terwillegar Drive Expansion Program and is anticipated to start in 2023 or 2024.

Community Committee

To assist in creating an effective engagement process, the City of Edmonton recruited volunteer members to a Community Committee for this project. Members include residents of the local neighbourhoods and representatives of community organizations. The committee is responsible for helping adapt and adjust the public engagement process in order to reach a broad and diverse range of people who are interested in the project.

The Community Committee does not provide input on the design of the bridge or surrounding amenities outside of the opportunities available to the wider public. The Committee provided input that led to refinements in the public engagement approach, such as extending the engagement timeline by one week, and including the small group discussion sessions.

What We Did

The fourth round of public engagement was held between November 16 and December 9, 2021. During this phase, the project team presented the preliminary design and asked the public to provide input. This feedback will be used along with technical, financial and policy factors to further develop the preliminary design as it moves into detailed design. Communication materials also promoted engagement activities for Stage 2 of the Terwillegar Drive Expansion program, which also took place during this period.

Communication

To promote the project and the engagement opportunities, the following communication methods were used:

Postcards

- + 142 Street Bridge project information was circulated with the 11,460 Terwillegar Drive Stage 2 post cards sent throughout the Terwillegar–Riverbend area
- + Over 100 additional letters hand delivered to addresses closest to the project area

Road Signs

- + 142 Street Bridge project information was displayed on 11 Road Signs promoting the Terwillegar Drive Stage 2 project throughout the Terwillegar–Riverbend area

Bridge Banners

- + Project information was displaced on two bridge banners over Whitemud Drive

A-Frames

- + Nine temporary signs were installed in Bulyea Heights and Brookside

Online and Print Advertisements

- + Social media posts
- + Community League posts
- + Project email list updates

Public and Stakeholder Engagement Activities

Recognizing that COVID-19 represents an unpredictable and unique scenario, the City has made the decision to cancel all in-person public engagement events until further notice. The City of Edmonton is committed to offering online engagement opportunities for the public to share their voice, while following public health guidelines for physical distancing. The following outlines the online public and stakeholder engagement activities used:

Online Presentation & Live Q&A Session

- + 97 registrations
- + 70 attendees
- + 35 questions and comments

Small Group Discussions

- + Two sessions
- + 11 total participants

Online Survey

- + 491 total responses

Special Interest Group Meetings

- + Meetings with Brookview Homeowner's Association/Community League, Paths for People, Bike Edmonton, Terwillegar Riverbend Advisory Council and the Brookside Community Group

Paper surveys were available for residents who called 311. At the time of writing this report no paper surveys were requested or received.

What We Heard

This section is a summary of what we heard in the public and stakeholder engagement activities. The summary has been developed to reflect the relevancy, frequency and diversity of responses we received based on the questions and prompts.

Online Presentation and Live Q&A Session

On November 16, 2021 the 142 Street Pedestrian/Cyclist Bridge project team hosted and facilitated an online presentation and live Q&A session open to the public. 97 people registered and the event had an attendance of 70 members of the public. The presentation provided an overview of the project background, purpose and benefits, and shared a summary of what we heard from the third series of public engagement activities, including how we are using the feedback shared by participants. The preliminary design of the bridge and amenity nodes were then presented. The presentation concluded with instructions on how to provide feedback through the upcoming public engagement activities. After the online presentation, participants could ask questions to the project team. A summary of the frequently asked questions is provided in this report.

Online Small Group Sessions

On November 22, 2021 the 142 Street Pedestrian/Cyclist Bridge project team hosted and facilitated two 45 minute small group sessions. These sessions had 11 total participants, who registered in advance. They were given the opportunity to ask questions to the project team and discuss the project with other attendees. A summary of the frequently asked questions is provided in this report.

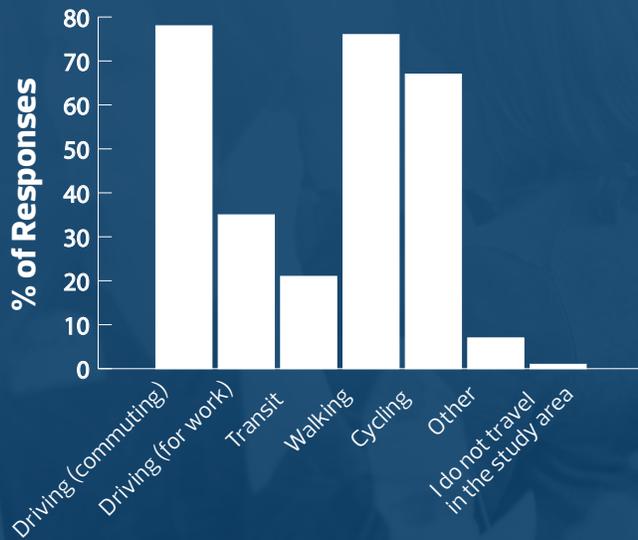
Preliminary Survey

Between November 18 – December 9 a survey was available on the project web page. This survey presented the preliminary design of the project, and asked participants to provide feedback. A paper survey was available by contacting 311.

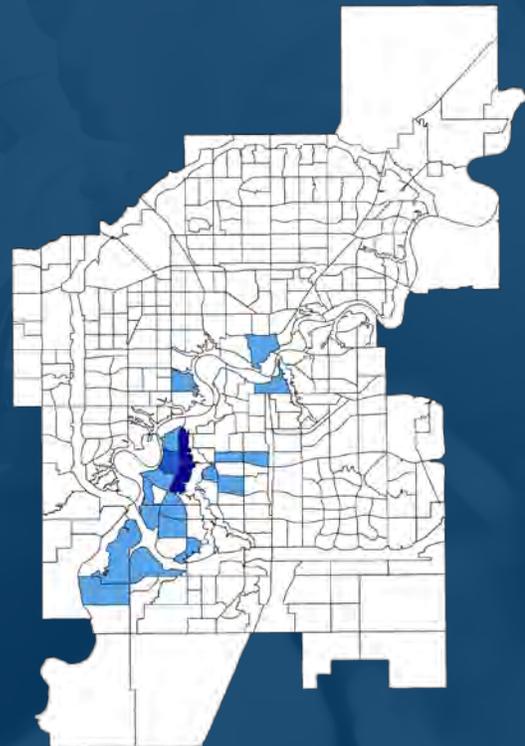
Who Responded to the Online Survey

The following results were obtained from the demographic questions in the online survey:

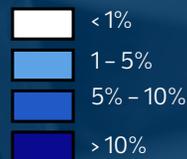
Frequently Used Transportation Modes of Participants



Neighbourhood of Participants



% of Responses



Frequently Asked Questions

The following are questions that were frequently asked during the fourth round of public engagement activities.

Q: Has the preliminary design considered snow removal and winter conditions?

A: The preliminary design has considered snow removal and other winter factors including proper drainage of the bridge deck and the use of materials that are suitable for our climate. Winter conditions will continue to be a key consideration as the design progresses.

Q: What is the budget for the bridge?

A: The budget for the bridge is a part of the Terwillegar Drive Expansion, with a contribution from the City through the 2019 – 2022 Capital Budget and the Province. The budget for planning and design is \$1 million. The estimated cost for detailed design and construction of the bridge is \$6 million.

Q: Is there any opportunity to add colour to this bridge?

A: Some bridge elements may have the opportunity to add colour. This will be further explored in detailed design.

Q: How does this bridge improve access to the River Valley?

A: This bridge connects people south of the Whitemud Drive to Edmonton's larger River Valley system, starting with the shared-use paths north of Brookside.

Q: What is happening to the active transportation connections on the north side of the bridge?

A: In the last round of engagement, three active transportation connections were shared with the public: two shared-use path options running along the east side of Brookside, connecting the bridge to 53 Avenue, and the continued use of the existing shared roadway bike route on 142 Street.

Considering public feedback, technical requirements, City plans and policies and funding availability, the City recommends waiting until the bridge is built to implement any active transportation upgrades on the north side of the bridge beyond connections to the existing network. This will allow the City to gain a better understanding of how users and residents experience the bridge and to better inform improvements that could potentially be implemented as part of the Terwillegar Drive Expansion program or in the future.

Q: Will funding be set aside for the north active transportation connection?

A: It is currently planned to set aside some project funding for a potential north active transportation connection in the future.

Q: What impacts will construction have on the neighbourhood?

A: Construction staging and planning will be further developed in detailed design. Mitigating impacts on neighboring properties will be a factor in this process. Neighbourhood residents will have the opportunity to learn more about construction plans during a pre-construction information sharing session currently anticipated for summer/fall 2022.

Q: How will the choice between a one-span and two-span girder bridge be made?

A: The decision between the one-span or two-span bridge type will consider different factors such as cost, constructibility, maintenance, user benefits, design aesthetics, and public input.

Q: Are there improvements planned for the active transportation connection towards Rainbow Valley Bridge?

A: Improvements to the east-west shared use path north of Whitemud Drive are being planned as part of Stage 2 of the Terwillegar Drive Expansion Program.

Q: What is the proposed height for the bridge railing?

A: A 1.4m high railing has been included as part of the bridge preliminary design, which is the standard for bridges anticipated to accommodate cyclists. The railing will minimize horizontal elements to limit and discourage climbing activities. The railing is also anticipated to integrate LED lighting to keep the bridge deck well lit.

Q: Can 142 Street accommodate increased volumes of pedestrians and bicycle riders safely and accessibly?

A: With under 1000 vehicles per day and with the City-wide speed limit reduction to 40 km/h for most residential roads, 142 Street is anticipated to provide suitable conditions to safely and accessibly accommodate bicycle riders. The City has decided to wait until the bridge is built before implementing any active transportation upgrades on the north side the bridge, including upgrades to 142 Street. This will allow the City to inform the need for additional traffic calming elements.

Q: When is construction anticipated to begin?

A: When the 142 Street Pedestrian/Cyclist Bridge project started, it was believed that construction of the bridge would need to occur after the construction of Terwillegar Drive Stage 2 to allow for safe and efficient delivery for both projects. However, based on further review, including traffic detouring and construction requirements, we have the opportunity to start the construction of the bridge sooner. It is now anticipated that the bridge will start construction in 2023 or 2024.

Q: What impact to traffic on Whitemud Drive is anticipated during construction?

A: Construction staging and planning will be further developed in detailed design, however reducing impacts on Whitemud Drive will be a factor in the planning process, including coordination with Stage 2 of the Terwillegar Drive Expansion Program.

Q: Is the bridge design considering a full pedestrian enclosure?

A: The design of the bridge does not include a full enclosure. It does include a 1.4m high pedestrian/cyclist railing. This is consistent with the applicable codes and standards, and the vast majority of similar bridges in Edmonton and other cities.

Preliminary Design Survey Results

The following is a summary of what we heard in the responses to the preliminary design survey.

Preliminary Design Bridge Feedback

The online survey asked participants what could be improved with the presented preliminary bridge design. Both the single-span and two-span girder bridge types were recommended to be carried through to preliminary design. The renderings of the single-span option were presented, and are shown below:



The feedback on the preliminary design for the bridge is summarized below:

Some participants had the following ideas for the bridge design:

- + Increase the width of the bridge to better accommodate cyclists, pedestrians and mobility-aid users
- + Mixed feedback regarding the decision between the single-span and two-span options
- + Desire to design the bridge with low-cost and low-maintenance considerations
- + Desire for the bridge design to support effective winter operations and snow clearing, with specific concerns about snow drift from the bridge onto Whitemud Drive
- + Desire to add features that shield users from the wind, rain and snow

Many participants mentioned ideas to improve the presented lighting design, including:

- + More functional lighting to improve user safety and experience when it is dark, including lighting integrated into the rail and increased lighting along the bridge and at each end
- + More decorative lighting to improve the aesthetics of the bridge for bridge users and people passing by the bridge, including bridge uplighting to highlight the unique girder shape
- + Using lighting that minimizes glare for drivers on Whitemud Drive, neighbouring properties, and bridge users

Many participants provided feedback on the bridge railing, including:

- + Concern with the bridge railing being an adequate height for cyclists and general user safety
- + Concern with the safety implications of not including a full pedestrian enclosure in the bridge design

Some participants provided feedback on incorporating features on and around the bridge that will make it distinctive and appealing, including:

- + Incorporating public art, with specific ideas including using the art to celebrate Indigenous culture, and incorporating the art in the bridge railing
- + Adding colour to features of the bridge to make it more visually appealing and recognizable
- + Utilize more attractive railings, such as the ones used on the Walterdale Footbridge

Many participants liked the preliminary design of the bridge.

Some participants expressed their perspective that this project was not necessary or a priority.

The survey asked participants to what extent they agreed with the following statement:

The presented bridge design incorporates the project Vision and Principles.

The below chart illustrates the responses:



Preliminary Design Amenity Node Feedback

The online survey asked participants what could be improved with the presented preliminary designs for the amenity nodes on each end of the bridge. These landing areas feature lighting, waste receptacles, signage, landscaping and seating for users. The renderings of both the north and south amenity nodes are shown below:



The feedback on the amenity nodes is summarized below:

- + Many participants liked the preliminary design of the amenity nodes
- + A desire to see adequate lighting that promotes a safe and comfortable environment while it is dark outside, while minimizing light spill onto adjacent properties
- + A desire to see benches and other amenities further pulled away from the area where cyclists will be traveling
- + Mixed feedback on the amenity node design that focuses on the bridge as a connection rather than a destination, with some participants liking this approach and others wanting to see more amenities
- + A desire to see cyclist and pedestrian traffic separated
- + A concern with the tight corners present in the south amenity node and their impact on cyclists, and a desire to design the approaches wider
- + A desire for the amenity nodes to be larger, including a concern with south amenity node being smaller in size than the north node

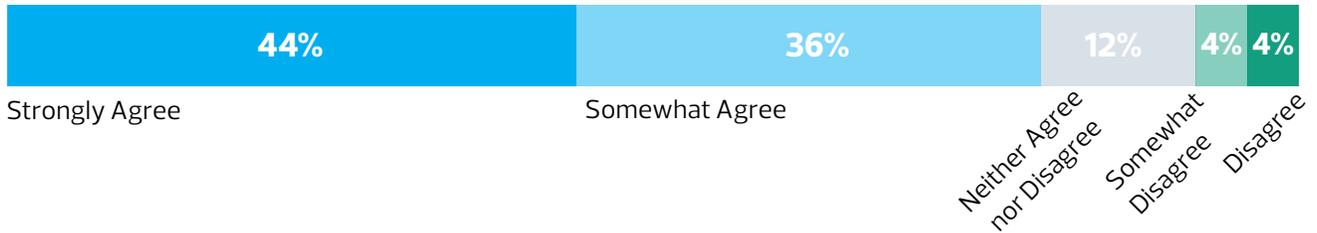
Many participants provided input on additional amenities they would like to see in each area, including:

- + More benches
- + More plantings, specifically species that are native to the area, edible and attractive plantings, and large trees
- + Wayfinding signage to nearby destinations with distance markers
- + Activity areas, such as outdoor workout equipment or spots for children to play
- + Public washrooms and drinking fountains
- + Dog bag station
- + Area with shelter from wind and rain
- + Public Art
- + Emergency Phones
- + Bike racks on the north side
- + Recycling bins

The survey asked respondents were asked to what extent they agreed with the following statement:

The presented amenity node design incorporates the project Vision and Principles.

The below chart illustrates the responses:



Active Transportation Connection Monitoring Feedback

In the last round of engagement, three active transportation connections were shared with the public: two shared-use path options running along the east side of Brookside, connecting the bridge to 53 Avenue, and the continued use of the existing shared roadway bike route on 142 Street.

Considering public feedback, technical requirements, City plans and policies and funding availability, the City recommends waiting until the bridge is built to implement any active transportation upgrades beyond connections to the existing network. This will allow the City to gain a better understanding of how users and residents experience the bridge and to better inform improvements that could potentially be implemented as part of the Terwillegar Drive Expansion program or in the future.

Survey participants were asked if there was anything that the project team should consider with regards to this approach to the active transportation connections. Their feedback is summarized below:

Delaying a decision on the northern active transportation connections was met with mixed feedback, with many participants agreeing with the approach and many expressing concern with it, specific concerns mentioned were:

- + Delaying the construction of any active transportation connection will result in a more costly connection in the future
- + The monitoring program will not gather accurate data as a new connection to the bridge would change the behaviour and number of users
- + Not building an additional active transportation connection will result in an underutilized bridge
- + Not building an additional active transportation connection prevents an all-ages, all-abilities connection
- + Delaying the construction of an additional northern active transportation connection is not in line with public feedback and the City's plans and policies for active transportation and a sustainable city

Many participants brought up suggestions for future active transportation connections that are outside the scope of this project. These included:

- + A bike route from Snow Valley Ski Club to the Alfred Savage Centre
- + A bike route from Fox Drive to Downtown that minimizes hills
- + A top of bank bridge connection between Brookside and Grandview Heights
- + A bridge over the Whitemud Ravine at 53 Avenue
- + Upgraded shared-use path along the Rainbow Valley Bridge
- + A shared-use path on the west side of Brookside that continues north of 53 Avenue
- + A shared-use path connection south of Whitemud Drive between the bridge and Whitemud Ravine

Some participants suggested adding separated bike infrastructure or a shared-use path along 142 Street

A participant suggested to expand the monitoring program as part of a wider cross-neighbourhood active transportation network study

Participants had mixed feedback with 142 Street as the main active transportation connection, with some feedback seeing it as a logical connection and others concerned with the impact it will have on neighbouring properties, interactions between cyclists and other road users

Some participants suggested that 142 Street is not an appropriate all-ages, all-abilities connection

Some participants expressed a desire to see a shared-use path connection along the west side of Brookside

Special Interest Group Meetings

The project team reached out to relevant community and special interest groups to inform them of the project and seek input from the group's perspective. Four virtual meetings were held between November and December, 2021 with the Brookview Community League and Homeowner's Association, Paths for People, Bike Edmonton, the Brookside Group and the Terwillegar Riverbend Advisory Council. The meetings began with a brief project presentation from the project team before opening the discussion based on topics the group was interested in.

Terwillegar Riverbend Advisory Council

The project team met with representatives for the Terwillegar Riverbend Advisory Council (TRAC) on November 23, 2021 to present the preliminary design and discuss any questions or comments the organization had. Points from this discussion are described below:

- + Confirmation that the design of amenity nodes is future-proofed to allow for future improvements
- + Confirmation that a pre-construction session is part of this project which will provide more details about construction-related impacts
- + Confirmation that a noise study for this project was done and confirms that there will be little impact to existing noise levels as a result of the amenity nodes

Brookview Community League and Homeowner's Association

The project team with representatives of the Brookview Community League and Homeowner's Association on November 24, 2021 to present the preliminary design and discuss any questions or comments the organizations had. Points from this discussion are described below:

- + The organizations expressed concerns over the south amenity node and shared-use path tie-in to Bulyea Heights related to noise and privacy
- + The organizations also provided views and perspectives to ways the tie-in could be adjusted, as well as additional design elements that could be added to address their concerns

Brookside Group

The project team with representatives of the Brookside Group on December 9, 2021 to present the preliminary design and discuss any questions or comments the group of residents had. Points from this discussion are described below:

- + The project team followed up on feedback and concerns previously shared by the group, including the bridge location and the north active transportation connection
- + The group presented some ideas to make adjustments to the north amenity node and active transportation connection in Brookside
- + The group shared feedback and asked questions related to the information shared as part of the fourth round of engagement

Bike Edmonton and Paths for People

The project team met with representatives for Bike Edmonton and Paths for People on November 25, 2021 to present the preliminary design and discuss any questions or comments the organizations had. Points from this discussion are described below:

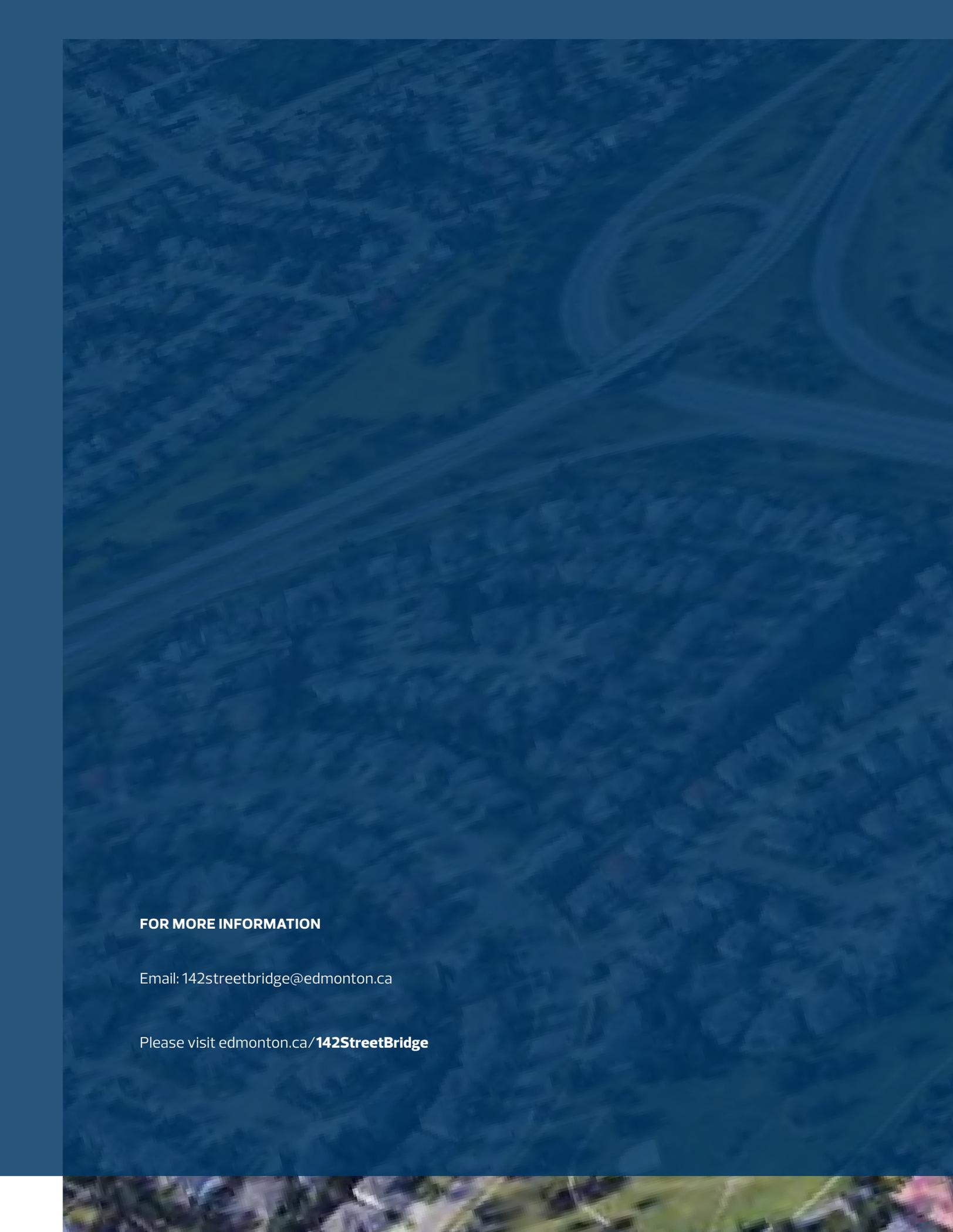
- + The organizations saw 142 Street is a desirable and direct connection to the bridge. However, they expressed that without protected cycling infrastructure, it does not provide an all-ages, all-abilities connection
- + The organizations saw the connection between the 142 Street bridge and the Rainbow Valley bridge as an important route that connects many key areas of the city
- + The organizations saw that a future shared-use path on the west end of Brookside as a reasonable connection, and its location adjacent to the freeway would mean impact to adjacent properties would be minimal
- + The organizations voiced that the amenity node designs should be future-proofed to allow for future additional active transportation connections, and that bike racks may be a desirable amenity in each node

Next Steps

As Public Engagement 4 closes, and preliminary design concludes, the project team will take what we heard during public engagement, along with technical and policy considerations into detailed design. We will return to the public at the end of detailed design in 2022 to present the final designs and provide a pre-construction information session.



View of the southern edge of Brookside



FOR MORE INFORMATION

Email: 142streetbridge@edmonton.ca

Please visit edmonton.ca/142StreetBridge