

What We Heard & What We Decided

Lansdowne Alley Renewal

ADVISE & DECIDE

Fall 2024

SHARE YOUR VOICE
SHAPE OUR CITY

Edmonton

Property owners can request the City initiate a Local Improvement to add lighting in alleys where it currently does not exist. Information to initiate the Expression of Interest process to have lighting installed is provided online at edmonton.ca/LocalImprovements.

Alley Renewal public engagement



Public Engagement Spectrum

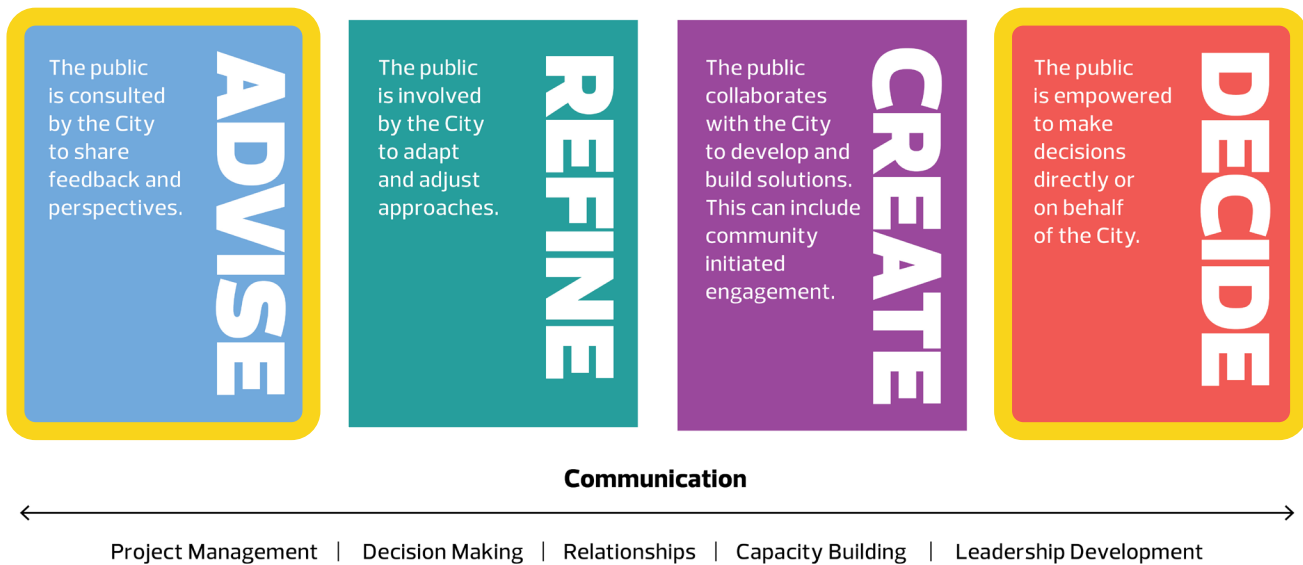
The City of Edmonton seeks input from residents to help guide the project. The City's Public Engagement Spectrum below shows the four levels of influence the public can have on decisions made by the City.

The public was invited to provide input that would help:

- + **ADVISE** the Project Team about:
 - + How Lansdowne alleys function and are used by residents
 - + Ideas to improve safety, mobility and ease of movement
 - + Comfort levels with potential alley closures and repurposing (Alley 1, part of Alley 2 and part of Alley 6)
 - + Comfort levels with adding new components in Alley 2's triangular green space
 - + Construction considerations
- + **DECIDE** whether to add lights to alleys where they do not exist through the Local Improvement process

We commit to telling you how public input influences decisions according to the Public Engagement Spectrum.

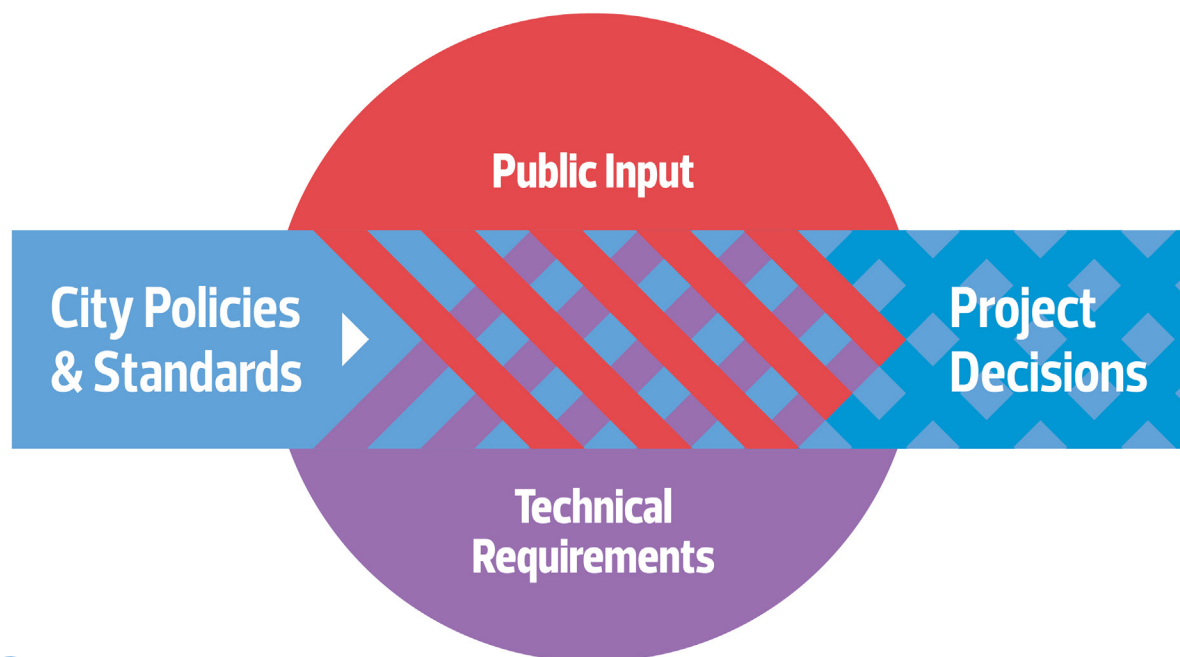
Increasing influence of the public



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 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 City Plan, Complete Streets Design and Construction Standards, Safe Mobility Strategy and Winter City Strategy provide the overall direction for Alley 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 alley widths and conflicts with utilities and trees to determine what will fit.



City policies and programs

The following policies have application in all designs:

The City Plan

- + Supports implementing a multi-modal transportation system that creates a connected and accessible city for people of all ages and abilities

Alley Renewal Program

- + Funds the renewal of existing alleys including a new gravel base and hard surface

ConnectEdmonton

- + Provides direction to create a healthy city, vibrant urban places, regional prosperity and climate resilience
- + Supports safe bike routes, vibrant gathering spaces, the addition of missing sidewalks, partnerships with local businesses, tree planting, the creation of green spaces from existing paved surfaces and measures to calm traffic

Other policies considered:

Active Transportation Policy

- + Includes opportunities for people to walk, roll and bike and promotes the inclusion of sidewalks, shared pathways and shared streets
- + Encourages active transportation in neighbourhoods

Accessibility for People with Disabilities Policy

- + Supports accessibility as fundamental to good public engagement and design for all ages and abilities to use neighbourhood infrastructure for the next 50 years

Breathe – Green Network Strategy

- + Ensures each neighbourhood will be supported by an adequate supply, quality and distribution of open space that is accessible to people of all ages and abilities

City policies and programs

Other policies considered:

Local Improvement Policy

- + Follows the Municipal Government Act of Alberta to outline the process to pay for improvements that are of a larger benefit to those near them than to the city as a whole; such as residents requesting the installation of lighting in alleys

Public Engagement Policy

- + Directs the creation of specific public engagement and best practices to hear from the diverse groups impacted by the project

Safe Mobility Strategy

- + Supports initiatives to manage driver speeds and shortcutting to increase safety for all users

And more

Technical Requirements

Infrastructure assessments including utilities

- + Prioritizes when City infrastructure will be renewed based on current conditions

Complete Streets Design and Construction Standards

- + Provides direction for the design and construction of alleys, sidewalks, shared pathways and shared streets

Winter City Design Guidelines

- + Includes design standards to create inviting and vibrant communities during the winter months that are accessible, safe and enjoyable for people of all ages and abilities

And more

What we asked & how we asked

The Lansdowne Alley Renewal Project Team organized the following opportunities for the public to provide input to help **ADVISE** how neighbourhood alleys are currently being used, how they can be used in the future and what opportunities there are to improve safety, mobility and ease of movement for people who walk, bike and roll.

The public was also made aware that they could **DECIDE** whether to add lights to alleys where they do not exist through the Local Improvement process. Engagement activities and timing were also informed by initial outreach to the neighbourhood community members in spring 2023 where people shared how and when they prefer to engage.

Fall 2023 neighbourhood engagement

There were several engagement opportunities open to the public from November 7 to 26, 2023.



Survey

- + An online survey was available to the public from November 7 to November 26, 2023, asking residents to share feedback on how Lansdowne alleys are being used. It also shared project information and potential changes to some alleys and open spaces

78 survey participants



In-person Alley Talk event

- + An in-person drop-in event was hosted on November 22, 2023, at the Lansdowne Community Hall
- + The event included project information and asked questions about:
 - + Ways to improve safety, mobility and movement
 - + Possible alley closures or repurposing of alleys to accommodate walking, rolling, biking and landscaping opportunities
 - + Possible alley green space changes to accommodate a new seating area, accessible pathways, waste bins, bike racks and/or additional landscaping
- + Participants were encouraged to ask questions and provide feedback through a printed feedback form, interactive posters or the online survey

45 Participants



One-on-one meetings

- + The Project Team hosted one-on-one meetings with key partners (Lansdowne Community League, Lansdowne Centre and Lansdowne Park) throughout November and December 2023 to gather additional feedback and insights about their facilities and users

Three one-on-one meetings



How we communicated

- + One road sign
- + Three A-frame signs
- + 32 yard signs
- + 552 postcards delivered to residents and property owners
- + 631 letters delivered to property owners
- + 564 page views on the project web page

Summer 2024 road closure application notices



Feedback from those notices was collected and considered for decision making.



What we heard

The following sections share what we heard from Lansdowne residents in the fall of 2023 that helped inform the final design.

Which alleys people use and how they use them

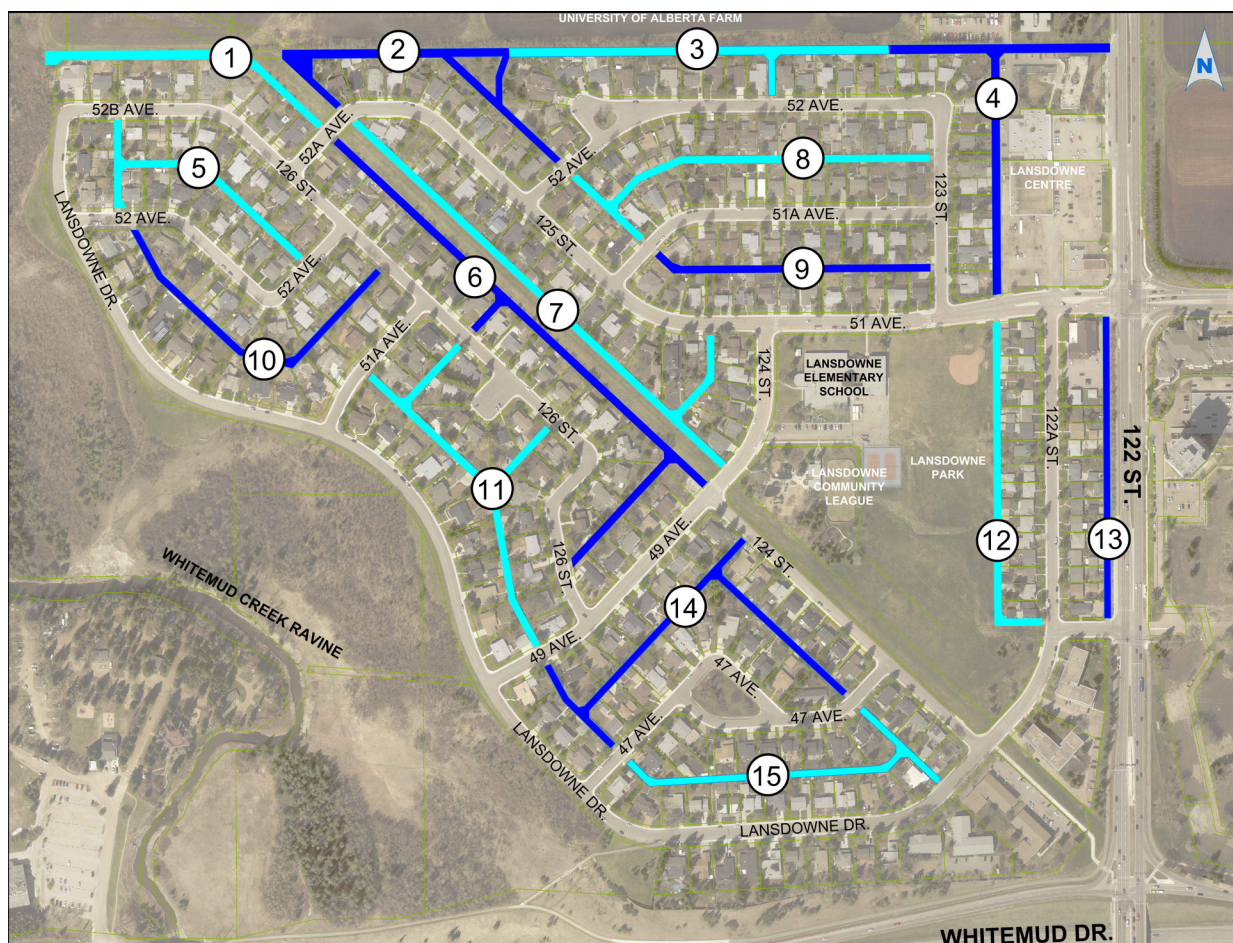


Figure 2. Lansdowne Alley Renewal Scope Map – Numbered Alleys

How people move through Lansdowne alleys

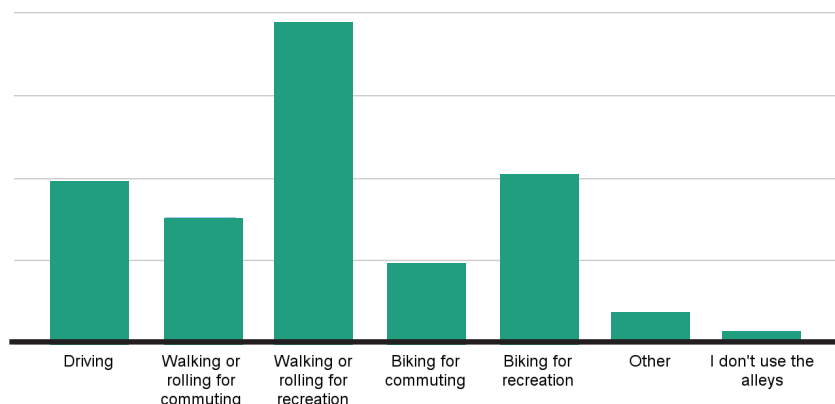


Figure 3. Split of different ways people move within Lansdowne alleys.

Community members were asked to share how they move within and use Lansdowne's alleys (Figure 3). The following conclusions are taken from the feedback:

- + The primary mode of transportation within the alleys is walking or rolling for recreational purposes
- + Many people use the alleys to bike for recreational purposes or drive through the neighbourhood
- + Some people walk, roll or bike in the alleys for commuting purposes

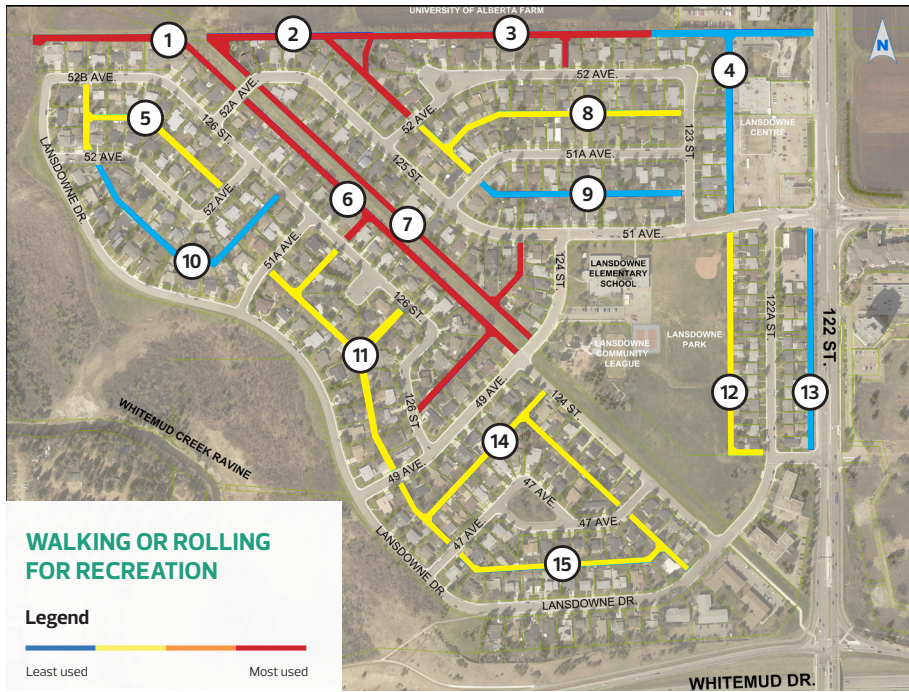
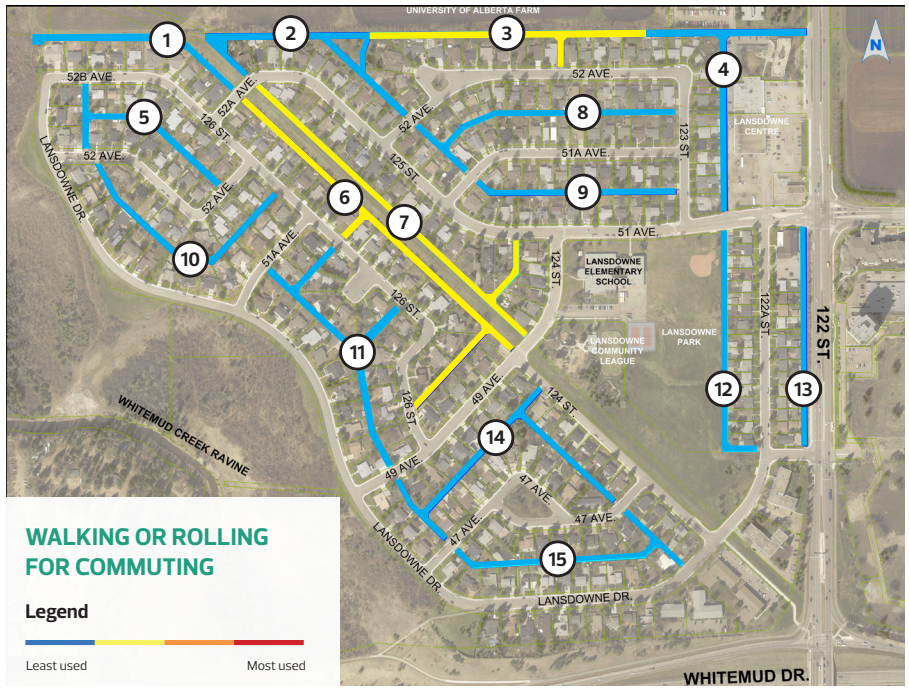
When asked to specify or elaborate on their responses, the most commonly identified responses can be broadly categorized into the following themes:

- + Many people said alleys are either seen as green spaces or act as connectors to green spaces and trails (e.g. the ravine, the University of Alberta Farm, etc.)
- + Some people said alleys serve utility functions such as waste collection and garage access

Data was also grouped and analyzed based on transportation modes per alley. The following conclusions about walking, rolling and biking in the alleys are made:

- + The alleys most often used for walking, biking and rolling are Alleys 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 and 7
- + The alleys least used for walking, biking and rolling are Alleys 9 and 13

The following visuals represent responses for where people walk, roll and bike in Lansdowne alleys.



How Lansdowne's alleys currently function

The most commonly identified responses can be broadly categorized into the following themes.

- + A majority of people said that poor drainage in the alleys is the biggest issue in Lansdowne. Alleys 2, 3 and 12 were most often referenced for poor drainage issues
- + Many people said pavement damage is an issue including potholes, uneven surfacing and ruts from the weight of waste collection trucks
- + Many people expressed concerns about safety and access in the alleys including people speeding and using them as shortcuts and blind corners. The majority of these comments reference these issues taking place in Alleys 6 and 7

Opportunities to improve safety, mobility and ease of movement

The most commonly identified responses can be broadly categorized into the following themes:

- + Some people said traffic calming, like increased signage, painted crosswalks and speed bumps, will improve safety in the alleys, particularly in Alleys 6 and 7
- + A number of people shared ideas about improving mobility for walking, rolling and biking including:
 - + Creating intentional walking, rolling and biking infrastructure towards the ravine (through Alley 1) and the University of Alberta Farm (through Alleys 2 and 3)
 - + Creating intentional walking, rolling and biking infrastructure (e.g. shared pathway, sidewalk, etc.) along the pipeline corridor (between Alleys 6 and 7) while maintaining as much greenery as possible (limiting over-paving in the area)
- + Some participants shared a desire for added lighting, primarily along the pipeline corridor (between Alleys 6 and 7) towards the ravine (Alley 1) and towards the University of Alberta Farm (Alleys 2 and 3)

Based on feedback from the public, the following conclusions were made about each potential alley closure and repurposing:

- + Many people are very comfortable or comfortable with closing and repurposing Alley 1
- + A slight majority of people are very comfortable or comfortable with closing and repurposing part of Alley 2 by the triangular green space
- + People are fairly evenly split about closing and repurposing a portion of Alley 6, with no majority sentiment identified

When asked to explain their level of comfort with potential alley closures and repurposing, the most commonly identified responses can be broadly categorized into the following themes:

- + Many people said they support and believe that these changes will encourage more walking, biking and recreational activities
- + Some people shared concerns about future access to their property, particularly if land uses change (e.g. developments, "skinny" houses, garage suites, etc.)
- + Some people (including those living along Alley 1) shared concerns about waste collection including:
 - + The need for clear communication in advance on if, when and how waste collection for their property will change
 - + A disinterest in relocating waste collection to the front streets of the property because it is inconvenient or unsightly
- + Some people expressed closing Alley 1 will help address safety concerns and may discourage illegal parking, loitering, illegal substance use/consumption and littering
- + Some people advocated for more consultation with nearby property owners before making final decisions
 - + The road closure application gathered additional feedback that was shared with the Project Team. The feedback received reinforced some of the themes already listed above

Comfort with potential new components in the Alley 2 seating node

New elements are being considered for the Alley 2 seating node including:

1. A new seating area with accessible pathways
2. A waste bin
3. Bike racks
4. Additional landscaping

Community members were asked to use the following scale to share how comfortable they are with adding new elements to the Alley 2 seating node in Figure 4:

- + Very comfortable
- + Comfortable
- + Neither comfortable or uncomfortable
- + Uncomfortable
- + Very uncomfortable
- + Unsure/No opinion

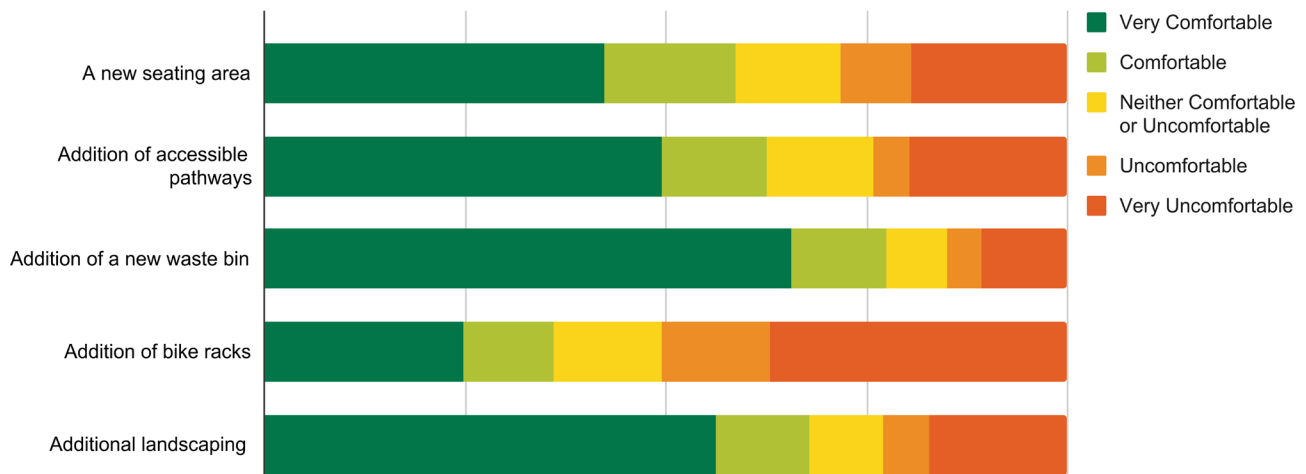


Figure 6. Comfort levels with adding new elements to the Alley 2 seating node

Based on feedback from the public, the following conclusions were made about each potential alley closure and repurposing:

- + A majority of people are very comfortable or comfortable with adding landscaping
- + Most people are very comfortable or comfortable with adding a new waste bin
- + A slight majority of people are very comfortable or comfortable with adding a new seating area and accessible pathways
- + While no majority sentiment is identified, more people are very uncomfortable or uncomfortable with adding bike racks than there are people very comfortable or comfortable

When asked to explain their level of comfort with each element, the most commonly identified responses can be broadly categorized into the following themes:

- + Many people support more landscaping and green space in general
 - + A few people shared concerns about maintenance and upkeep, and are seeking clarity on the maintenance responsibilities
- + Some people said the bike rack is unnecessary because there is no nearby destination or reason to lock bikes
- + Some people said new waste collection is useful (e.g. dog walkers)
- + Some people shared safety concerns, including the belief that locked bikes will attract theft and the bench will attract undesired loitering

Construction considerations

The most commonly identified responses about activities for consideration can be broadly categorized into the following themes:

- + Many people shared they have no concerns about construction
- + Some people shared the need to consider animals or pets (dogs, chickens, etc.) that live on their property
- + Some people shared accessibility concerns (motor homes, campers, trailers, etc.)
- + A few people shared their planned construction projects (garage, garage suite, landscaping, etc.)
- + A few people shared their backyard activities (beekeeping, etc.)
- + Other considerations shared are the desire for clear and advanced communication about waste collection changes, notice of closures and changes to parking patterns and protecting gardening and landscaping on individual properties during construction

Anything else?

Community members were asked to share anything else they would like to tell the Project Team as Lansdowne Alley Renewal design begins. The most commonly identified responses can be broadly categorized into the following themes:

- + Some people shared access concerns related to garages, waste collection, secondary suites and circulation for vehicles
- + Some people expressed a preference for a more "natural feel" (as opposed to manicured lawns) for any future or additional landscaping in the alleys including the use of native plant species
- + A few people shared concerns about damage to private property (e.g. driveway, driveway apron)
- + A few people shared opinions on alley lighting with a mix of positive and negative views. While no majority sentiment was identified, people discussed how alley lighting could:
 - + Increase safety
 - + Support traffic calming
 - + Increase light pollution



What we decided

This section presents the updated Alley Renewal design concepts for specific areas in Lansdowne.

This section focuses on design concepts for:

- + Closure and naturalization* of Alley 1
- + Partial closure and naturalization* of Alley 2




**Naturalization refers to converting an existing hard surface or open space area to native plants for the ground cover, trees and shrubs. Native plants require less maintenance, support biodiversity and are typically less impacted by extreme weather.*

Legend for “What we accounted for to make our decisions”

Decision making is based on City policies and programs while considering technical requirements and public engagement input.




This report uses three coloured icons to illustrate which decision making criteria is a City policy or program, public engagement input or a technical requirement. You will see these icons in the “What we considered” section in each table on the following pages:

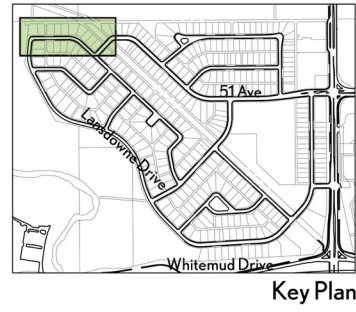
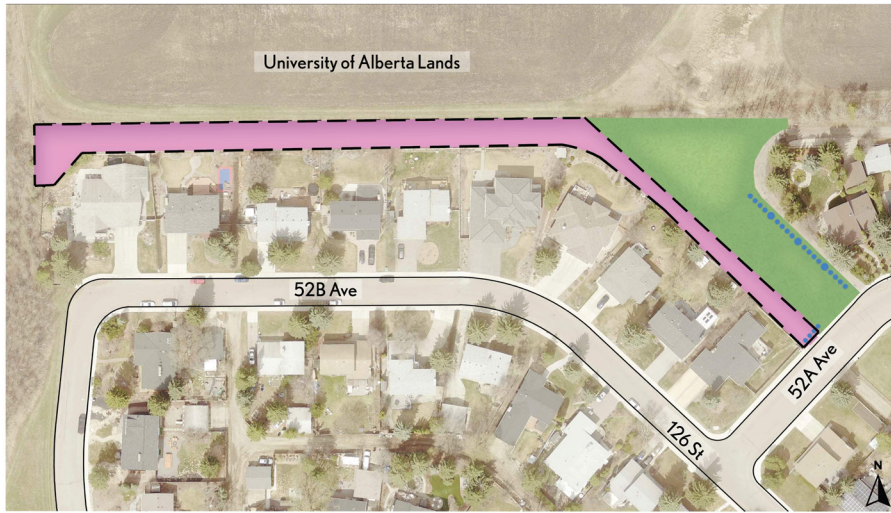
The decision making criteria are:

-  + City policies and programs
-  + Technical requirements
-  + Public engagement input/What we heard

Improvements to Lansdowne alleys

Closure and naturalization of Alley 1

What we decided	What we considered
<p>Concept design</p> <p>Alley 1 is currently proposed to be closed to vehicle access (bollards* placed behind the existing access) and naturalized.</p> <p>*A bollard is a short post used to prevent vehicles from entering spaces not intended for vehicles.</p>	<p> City Policies and Programs</p> <p>This design is informed by the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + The City Plan + Breathe: Edmonton's Green Network Strategy + Corporate Tree Management Policy + ConnectEdmonton
	<p> Technical considerations</p> <p>This design is informed by the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Slope stability along the Whitemud Creek Ravine suggested the removal of vehicle traffic + Currently not used for garage or vehicle access + Waste services would be moved to the front street + Naturalized planting and ground cover to minimize maintenance and absorb rain runoff before reaching the Whitemud Creek Ravine + Complete Streets Design and Construction Standards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Insufficient space for a standard turnaround on the west end + Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CEPTD) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Existing alley is typically out of sight
	<p> Public engagement feedback</p> <p>This design is informed by the following feedback heard during public engagement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + When asked about the potential closure and repurposing of Alley 1, the majority of people shared they were comfortable with the change + Some residents felt the closure of Alley 1 would limit unwanted loitering, illegal parking, littering and illegal drinking and substance use






- Legend**
- New bollards
 - Naturalized planting areas

Naturalization Examples:



Design concept for Alley 1 closure and naturalization

Partial closure and naturalization of Alley 2

What we decided	What we considered
<p>Concept design</p> <p>The updated design concept includes the following features:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Partial closure of Alley 2 (alley section east of the green space) + A waste bin + Naturalized landscaping 	<p> City Policies and Programs</p> <p>This design is informed by the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + The City Plan + Breathe: Edmonton's Green Network Strategy + ConnectEdmonton + Corporate Tree Management Policy + Due to current funding and City direction, seating in alleys is not supported
	<p> Technical considerations</p> <p>This design is informed by the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Currently not used for vehicle or garage access + Naturalized planting and ground cover to minimize maintenance + Waste services will continue being collected in the alley
	<p> Public engagement feedback</p> <p>This design is informed by the following feedback heard during public engagement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + When asked about the potential partial closure and repurposing of Alley 2, a slight majority of people shared they were comfortable with the change + When asked about comfort levels for proposed features, the majority of people were comfortable with a new seating area, pathway, waste bin and additional landscaping. The majority of people were not comfortable with the addition of bike racks






- Legend**
- New waste bin
 - Naturalized planting area
 - Alley near proposed landscaping enhancements
 - New trees
 - Existing deciduous trees
 - Existing coniferous trees

Design concept for the Alley 2 partial closure and naturalization



All other alleys

What we decided	What we considered
<p>Concept design</p> <p>Reconstruct all remaining alleys with a new gravel base and hard surface.</p>	 <p>City Policies and Programs</p> <p>This design is informed by the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + The City Plan + Corporate Tree Management Policy – removal and trimming of existing vegetation in the alley right-of-way
	 <p>Technical considerations</p> <p>This design is informed by the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Drainage and surface conditions will be improved with the reconstructed alley + Current standards for the alley structure were designed for current and future waste collection vehicles + Sightlines will be improved through trimming of existing vegetation + Shortcutting and speeding concerns are typically addressed by closing portions (ends) of alleys <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Traffic calming features were explored but due to the limitations of the function and design of alleys they were generally found to not be effective + To maintain the function, minimum alley access requirements and waste collection in the alleys, only the closures in Alley 1 and part of Alley 2 are proposed + Complete Streets Design and Construction Standards are used to determine standard widths, grading, pavement structure and other parameters
	 <p>Public engagement feedback</p> <p>This design is informed by the following feedback heard during public engagement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + When asked about how the alley functions today and potential improvements, people shared: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Poor drainage and damaged asphalt (i.e., potholes, ruts and uneven surface) including damages due to waste collection vehicles + Safety concerns around blind corners, alleys used as a shortcut and speeding (particularly in Alleys 6 & 7) + When asked about construction considerations, people shared feedback about pets/animals, moving recreational vehicles, planned construction projects (landscaping, garage and/or garage suite), parking patterns and impacts to waste collection and alley landscaping

Local Improvement update – new alley lighting

Property owners along alleys without existing lighting have the opportunity to request a Local Improvement to add lighting to their alley at any time. With the support of the majority of properties along the particular alley, a Local Improvement can move forward with the adjacent property owners paying 100 per cent of the cost.

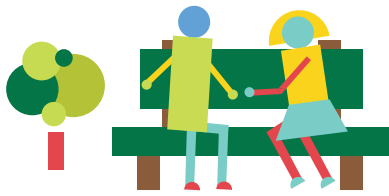
As of November 2024, no alley lighting Local Improvements have been brought forward by property owners in Lansdowne.



Construction considerations

- + Waste collection is moved to the front streets during construction and notices are provided in advance with further details
- + Parking congestion is mitigated by not closing alleys that are side-by-side at the same time, when possible, during construction. Notices and signage will provide advanced notice to move vehicles and other property to the front street for parking
- + Impacts to private landscaping or construction on your property along the alley can be coordinated with the City Project Manager during construction
- + Landscaping or other items in the alley right-of-way that you wish to keep should be removed prior to the construction start date in your notice





Thank you for sharing your feedback

In the spring before construction begins, we will enter the **Preparing for Construction** stage of public engagement. The Project Team will share the Alley Renewal design, provide information on construction timelines, what to expect during construction and answer any questions that residents may have. After the event, and in each spring that follows, specific construction timelines and details will be mailed to residents prior to construction starting. Please sign up on the project web page for email updates and watch your mailboxes for more information.

Residents can expect their alley to be inaccessible for approximately four weeks during construction. Once the work is complete, residents will enjoy improved access and use of the alley.

For further information visit the website: edmonton.ca/LansdowneAlleyRenewal

