

Background

The City of Edmonton has engaged with thousands of Edmontonians since 2008 on the planning and design of the Valley Line LRT. Public input played a major role in developing the corridor for the new LRT line, which was approved by City Council in 2009, and the preliminary design, which was completed in the fall of 2013. The City continues to regard public engagement as a priority as the project proceeds through to completion.

Valley Line Southeast between downtown and Mill Woods is under construction as a public-private partnership (P3), and Valley Line West from downtown to Lewis Farms is being prepared for procurement when funding becomes available.

For Valley Line Southeast, the focus of the engagement at this stage of the project is on information-sharing, dialogue and identifying/addressing issues, opportunities and concerns. For Valley Line West, there is initially slightly more opportunity to refine some design elements prior to procurement.

Purpose of the Citizen Working Groups

The City has established ten Citizen Working Groups to provide the Valley Line LRT project team and affected communities with a mechanism that will:

- Build and maintain relationships and trust
- Promote and support community engagement opportunities
- Facilitate information-sharing and dialogue
- Support the identification of issues, opportunities and concerns
- Seek opportunities to minimize and mitigate impacts related to detailed design and construction

These groups are neighbourhood-focused and organized to reflect the common characteristics and interests of ten distinct zones along the entire Valley Line corridor. They are intended to supplement, rather than replace, ongoing stakeholder relations activities involving geographically broader-based organizations and interests.

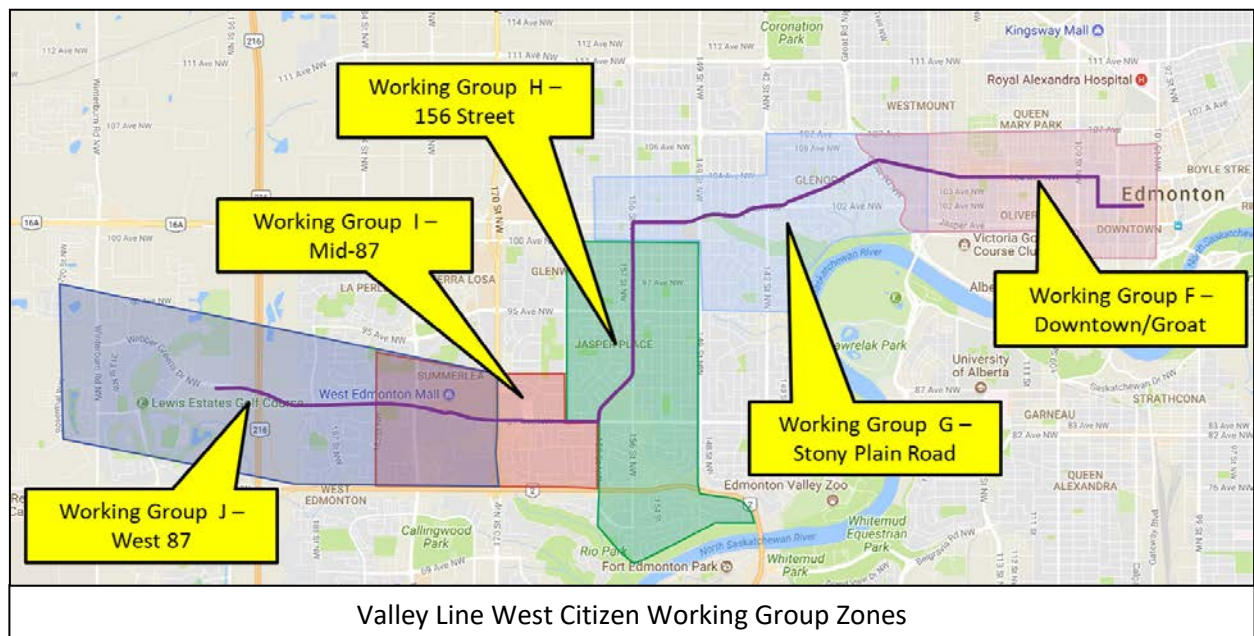
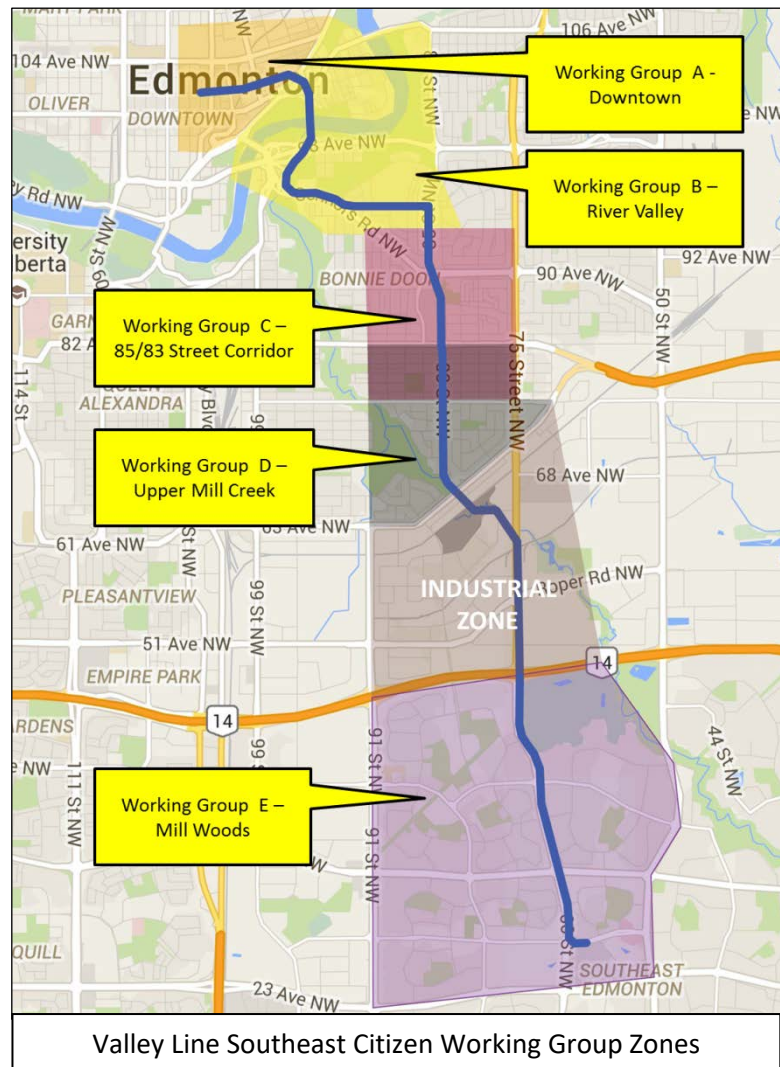
The City's Commitment

The City of Edmonton will:

- Encourage dialogue by providing information, listening and answering questions
- Accept input and consider it objectively
- Provide support and resources through City staff and other resources as needed.

Structure of the Citizen Working Groups

The ten Citizen Working Groups have been established with the involvement of the affected communities. These groups are designed to reflect community and stakeholder interests along the corridor, which has been divided into five zones for Valley Line Southeast and five for Valley Line West, to enable area-specific needs, questions and concerns to be more readily addressed. Detailed zone description for Working Group H is provided in Appendix “A”.



Each of these community-based groups, facilitated by the project team's Community Relations Advisor / Public Engagement Lead, has approximately 10-15 members reflecting various community interests within the LRT corridor. They may also allow for observation/participation by others. It is anticipated that meetings will occur approximately quarterly or as needed.

The groups are composed generally of the following members:

- 1-2 assigned by each community league in the zone
- 2 solicited from the community at large
- 1-2 from the business community, assigned by the local business association, business revitalization zone or chamber of commerce
- 1 from each community organization having a significant presence in the zone
- 1-2 from a local school or School Council, where applicable (where multiple councils exist, obtain consensus on common representative)
- 1 from the administration of a major institution (if present/applicable)

Establishing Membership

The City created awareness of the Citizen Working Groups and the opportunity to participate through advertising, public service announcements, web and social media announcements, subscribed email distribution and other commonly-used communication methods, and leveraged existing engagement initiatives such as the Council Initiative on Public Engagement and Engaging Edmonton.

The communications invited candidates for "community at large" or other positions not filled by organizational appointment. A public meeting was organized for each zone, where candidates were invited to select a member from amongst themselves.

The City arranges with the appropriate organizations for members to be assigned by them.

Guidelines

The Citizen Working Groups operate according to the following guidelines:

Membership & Term

- Members will be volunteers drawn from a cross-section of each affected geographical zone with the intention of achieving a reasonably-representative profile for that zone.
- It is intended that the Citizen Working Groups for both Valley Line Southeast and Valley Line West will remain in place until at least the commencement of service on the respective legs. However, the City reserves the right to dissolve the Citizen Working Groups at its discretion, and to remove/replace any member for neglect of duty or disrespectful conduct.
- Membership and composition will be reviewed annually, at which time existing members may step down and/or new members added.

Conduct of Meetings

- Citizen Working Group meetings will be led by the LRT Design & Construction Community Relations Advisor / Public Engagement Lead, who will facilitate the clear communication of information between group members and the City.
- Meetings may be attended by members of City staff, Council and the P3 contractor (for Valley Line Southeast) as necessary to provide support, share information and listen to members' concerns, issues and matters of interest.
- There will be regular sharing and dissemination of information about the Valley Line LRT project by the City and Citizen Working Group members on a timely basis.
- It is intended that the Citizen Working Group will identify issues, opportunities and concerns.
- As the project team does not have the mandate to delegate decision-making authority, decisions are ultimately made by the project management team under the authority of the City of Edmonton, taking into consideration objectively and with good faith the input, concerns and issues identified by the groups.
- Matters that have already been decided by the City, such as the route alignment, concept plans, preliminary design, the Valley Line Southeast P3 model and process and P3 contract terms/performance requirements may be discussed but for information purposes only. The City will not revisit past decisions.
- Through Citizen Working Group dialogue, the City will promote and support community engagement opportunities, seek opportunities to minimize and mitigate impacts related to detailed design and construction, and build and maintain relationships and trust.
- Citizen Working Group members will make reasonable efforts to understand and share local knowledge and the interests and concerns of the sectors, agencies and neighbourhoods in their zones.
- Citizen Working Group activity will be conducted in an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust between members.
- Participants will respect one another's interests and seek to support the overall best interests of the community.
- Citizen Working Group members will remain accessible to each other.
- Members will respect one another's privacy. Group communications should be relevant to the group's primary purpose, and care must be taken to ensure members' contact information is not shared, either directly or indirectly, outside the group without the individuals' consent.
- Consistent participation by Citizen Working Group members throughout the process is necessary. If a member is consistently unable to fulfil his/her commitment, a collaborative approach will be taken to obtain a replacement.
- Citizen Working Group meetings will be open to attendance by the public. Non-members of the Working Group (other than City staff, Councillors or P3 contractor noted above) will abide by the following guidelines, to be applied at the discretion of the Working Group:

Citizen Working Groups – Public Attendance & Participation		
<i>Guideline</i>	<i>Observers</i>	<i>Speakers</i>
Advance notification of intention to attend	None required (however, courtesy notification of the facilitator is encouraged)	Limit of 5 per meeting; register with the facilitator no later than two business days in advance of the meeting, describing subject matter.
Time to speak	None allowed	3 minutes maximum; additional 5 minutes allowed for questions from Working Group members
Opportunity to ask questions	2 minutes at end of meeting	2 minutes at end of meeting

Scheduling, agendas, minutes and facilities

- Meeting frequency, times and duration will be flexible to meet the needs of each group and will be determined by the group.
- Where possible, topic areas for the next meeting will be identified in advance, at the end of each meeting, and will be determined by input from the City and the desires of group members. This will form the basis of the meeting draft agenda, which will be prepared by the facilitator and circulated to members for input.
- Effort will be made to complete and circulate meeting minutes to members generally within two weeks of each meeting.
- Agendas and minutes will also be posted on the Edmonton.ca website.
- Meeting room facilities will be provided and/or arranged by the City at its expense, where applicable.

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