

What We Heard Report

Victoria Promenade Pilot Project

December 2022
edmonton.ca

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Edmonton

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Project Overview

In summer 2022, Victoria Promenade was transformed using adaptable infrastructure to make this important active transportation corridor safer and more welcoming and accessible for all ages, modes and abilities.

The goal of the 2022/2023 Victoria Promenade Pilot Project was to create a space for people of all ages and abilities to walk, bike and roll. The transformed space was intended to help everyone access the area safely and more comfortably by creating:

- (1) Separate space for people to scoot and bike in the bike lanes
- (2) Sidewalk space for people walking and using mobility aids or strollers
- (3) Clearly defined space for motor vehicles
- (4) Slow vehicle speeds and reduce shortcutting.

The Victoria Promenade is not just an important active transportation corridor but is also home to many residents in the Oliver neighbourhood. Prior to the installation of this pilot project, the City of Edmonton's [Bike Plan](#) identified Victoria Promenade as a substandard route, which, due to high vehicle volume and speeds, did not safely accommodate active transportation for everybody.

In 2020 and 2021, the City of Edmonton installed a mobility lane on Victoria Promenade as part of a city-wide project to help everyone stay safe and comply with Alberta Health Services physical distancing guidelines during the COVID-19 pandemic. Based on the feedback received during that time, the City learned that narrowing the road helped reduce speeds and supported street safety and livability; however, there was frustration with the look and movability of the cones that were used, as well as confusion for people cycling about directionality and how to use the mobility lane.

The pilot project was installed on July 9, 2022 to help everyone access the area safely and more comfortably. The installation included:

- An eastbound bike lane and a westbound bike lane each separated from vehicles with flex posts and parking curbs—the same materials used in the Downtown Bike Network.
- Traffic calming on the northside of 100 Avenue between 116 and 117 Street to encourage slower speeds.
- Pavement markings, parking curb and flex posts to narrow the roadway and create a sharper entry angle at the entrance to Victoria Promenade.

The transformed space was intended to free up the sidewalk for people walking, using mobility devices, and strollers, create a safe, protected space for people cycling, and to clearly define space for motor vehicles.

Public Engagement Approach

The Role of the Public

The City's public engagement spectrum defines the public's level of influence in engagement processes. **The role of the public during this engagement was at the ADVISE level on the City of Edmonton's Public Engagement Spectrum** and the City invited the public to share their feedback and perspectives on their experiences with the new bike lane infrastructure.

Visit edmonton.ca/PublicEngagement for more information on the City's public engagement process.



Public Engagement Overview



Initial Engagement - *March and April 2022*

To understand the lived experience of the people who travel and live along the Victoria Promenade, in March and April 2022, the City of Edmonton gathered feedback on four proposed options for the installation of the infrastructure. A survey was shared publicly on [Engaged Edmonton](#), promoted via signs posted along Victoria Promenade and emails sent to Engaged Edmonton members living in Oliver, Downtown, Central MacDougall, Westmount and Queen Mary Park. In addition, there were two online public engagement sessions held by City staff. This initial engagement approach was limited to digital tools only due to COVID-19 protocols in place at that time.

After reviewing what the City heard from public engagement, direction from City Policies such as [The City Plan](#), [The Bike Plan](#), the [Safe Mobility Strategy](#), and technical requirements, the City proceeded with installing the two protected uni-directional bike lanes with traffic calming on 100 Avenue and 117 Street and between 116 and 117 Street.

The full details from this initial engagement are available in the [What We Heard Report](#) released in June 2022.

Online Feedback Form - July 24, 2022 to September 21, 2022

An online feedback form was launched on [Engaged Edmonton](#) in July 2022 in conjunction with the project installation to gather early insights on peoples' experiences with the new infrastructure. The form was used to gather ongoing feedback on people's experiences with the installation to understand how people were using the space, what they liked or didn't like about the space and to identify any recurring themes.

The feedback form was available from July 24 - September 21, 2022, and there were a total of 189 responses received. In response to the comments and feedback received, the City made several adjustments based on feedback we were receiving included:

- *Signage:* Adjustments were made to improve signage at pedestrian crossings and the transition at 117 Street.
- *Road Condition:* Residents reported concerns about the surface condition of the road. As a result, maintenance to repair cracks and potholes in the asphalt were completed on September 12.
- *Turning vehicles:* Curb design adjustments were made to ensure turning vehicles had as much space as possible to complete their maneuvers.
- *Parking:*
 - An additional loading zone on Jasper Avenue, North of the Annamoe building to help support building access for residents, and
 - Converted parking on Jasper Avenue, immediately East of 121 Street from restricted peak hour parking into unrestricted parking to support residents in the area.
- *Emergency Access:* Prior to implementation, the project team worked with Fire Rescue Services, to ensure the design is in accordance with the City's Complete Streets Design and Construction Standards. All emergency access standards for this project were met.
- *Winter maintenance:* The project team worked with the Snow and Ice Control team to confirm that the pilot project would be cleared to the same standards as similar infrastructure throughout the City of Edmonton.

Fall Evaluation Engagement - September 21, 2022 to October 23, 2022

As part of the Victoria Promenade Pilot Project, the City committed to another public engagement period in the fall 2022 to hear from people about their experiences with the adaptable infrastructure once it had been in place for a period of time. The purpose of this evaluation was to assess the outcomes of the project to date and to

help identify a path forward, including any adjustments for the future state of Victoria Promenade.

The evaluation methods included public engagement activities and a technical analysis. The public engagement consisted of a survey (digital and paper surveys), intercept (in the field) surveys, an online engagement session, and two in-person drop-in sessions. The technical analysis was completed to understand vehicle speeds, shortcutting behaviour, cyclist travel patterns and traffic volumes during the pilot project.

The City heard feedback about the initial engagement process in March and April and adjusted its approach for the fall engagement to be more resident focused. The City strives for continuous improvement in every public engagement process and is grateful to residents who shared their concerns. Data collected through the surveys and engagement events were provided to third party consultants for analysis and reporting on behalf of the City of Edmonton.

The Fall Evaluation Report, which summarises findings of this What We Heard Report and the technical analysis, is available at engaged.edmonton.ca/Victoria-Promenade.

GBA+ Spotlight

The City of Edmonton has adopted a Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) process to identify inequity and discrimination. The project team provided a variety of engagement tools and activities to broaden outreach including:

- In-person options such as intercept (in the field) surveys, paper surveys and drop in sessions for those that may not be comfortable using technology
- Online meeting to provide an additional opportunity to those who want to give their feedback
- Multiple communications tactics including sidewalk decals and resident postcard mail outs using simple language to encourage those members of the public to participate in the survey who we can't reach through digital means.

How We Engaged and Communicated

Online Feedback Form

The online feedback form was made available on [Engaged Edmonton](https://engaged.edmonton.ca) as a channel to share experiences and feedback with the City about the project in advance of future engagement activities.

Fall Evaluation Engagement

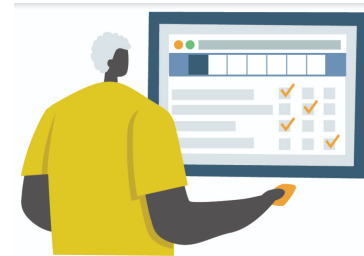
Multiple engagement activities and communications tactics were incorporated into the engagement process to help ensure that anyone interested or affected by the pilot project would have an opportunity to share their experiences.



**Online, paper, and
intercept surveys**

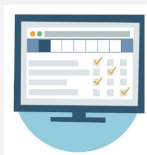


**1 online & 2 in-person
drop in sessions**



**[engaged.edmonton.ca
/Victoria-Promenade](https://engaged.edmonton.ca/Victoria-Promenade)**

The fall engagement period took place between September 21-October 23, 2022. Participation in each activity is summarized below.



1,503

Total completed
surveys

1,080

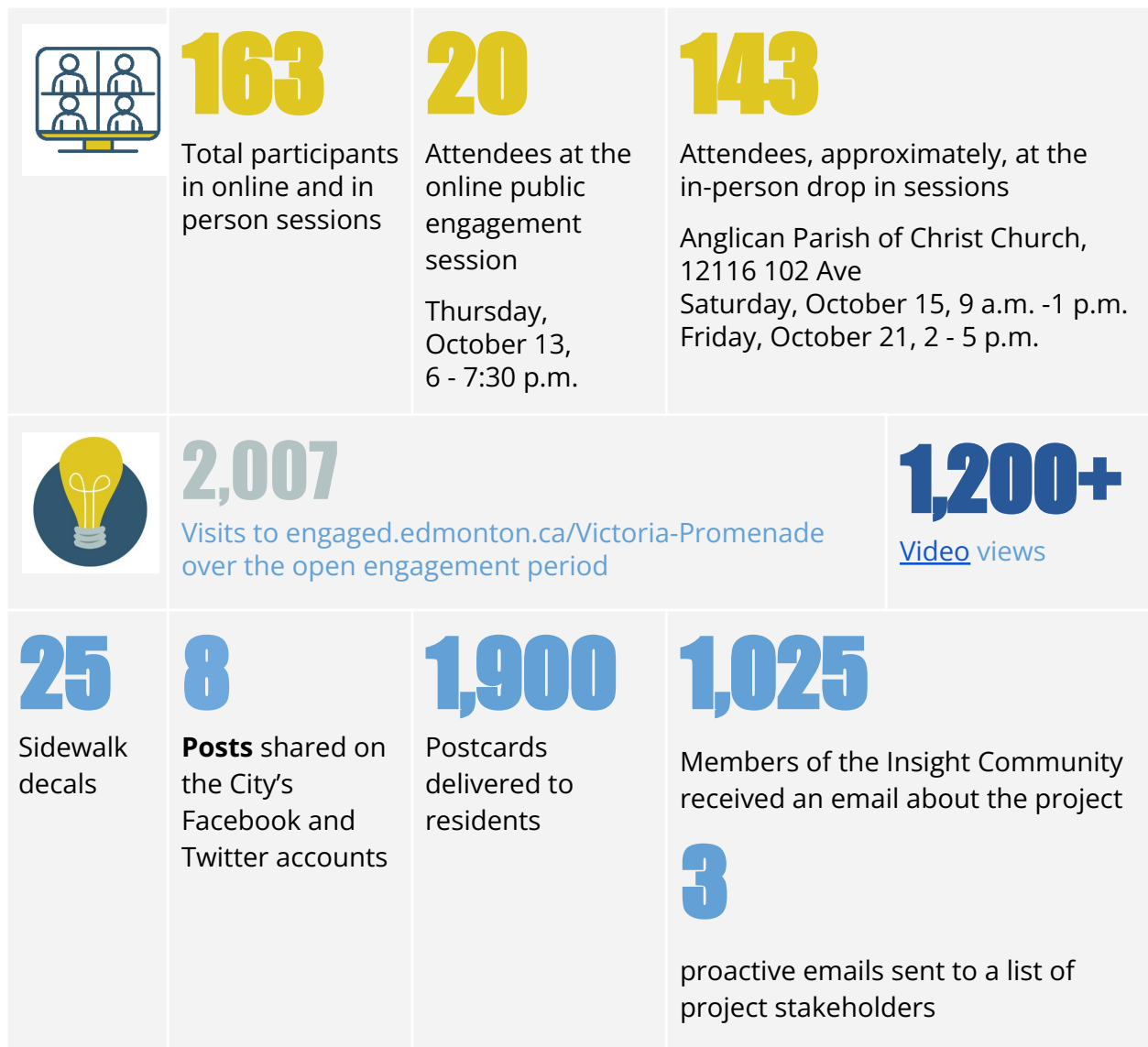
Online surveys

187

Paper surveys
available at the
speaker board in
front of the
Mayflower
apartment
building and at
in-person drop-in
sessions

236

Intercept surveys
along the Victoria
Promenade on
September 21, 24
and 26.



Media Coverage

In October 2022, there were 7 stories published by Global, iNews880, CBC TV, CBC Radio, Edmonton Journal, Edmonton Sun, CTV, Taproot. Headlines included:

- *Frustration mounts over pilot project on Edmonton's Victoria Promenade*
- *Oliver residents petition city for bike-lane changes along Victoria Promenade*
- *Residents of Edmonton's Oliver community seek redesign of Victoria Promenade bike lane pilot*
- *Bike lane battle: Some downtown residents unhappy after promenade parking spaces removed*

What We Heard

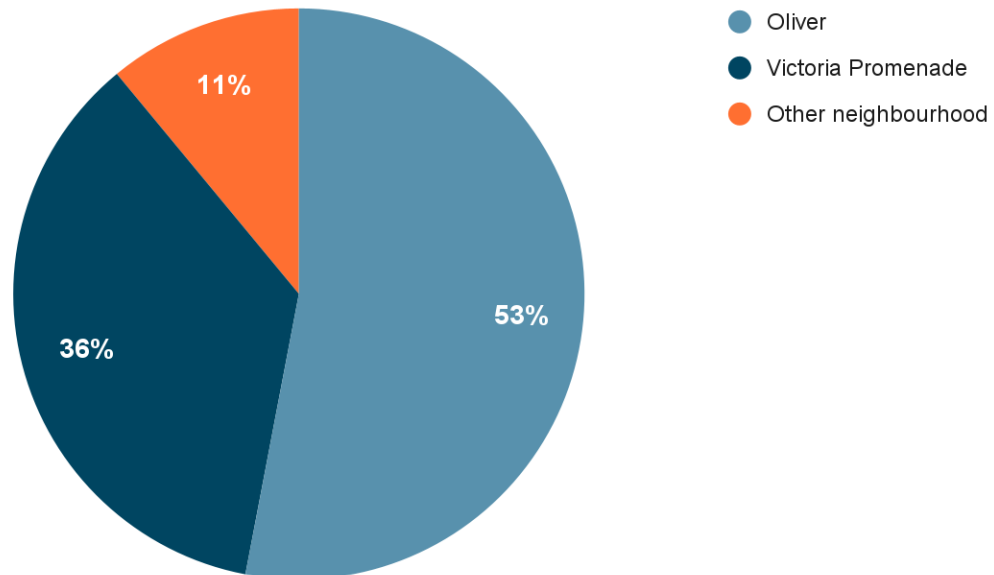
Online Feedback Form Summary

Information about who participated and what was heard from the online feedback form from July - September 2022 is summarized below.

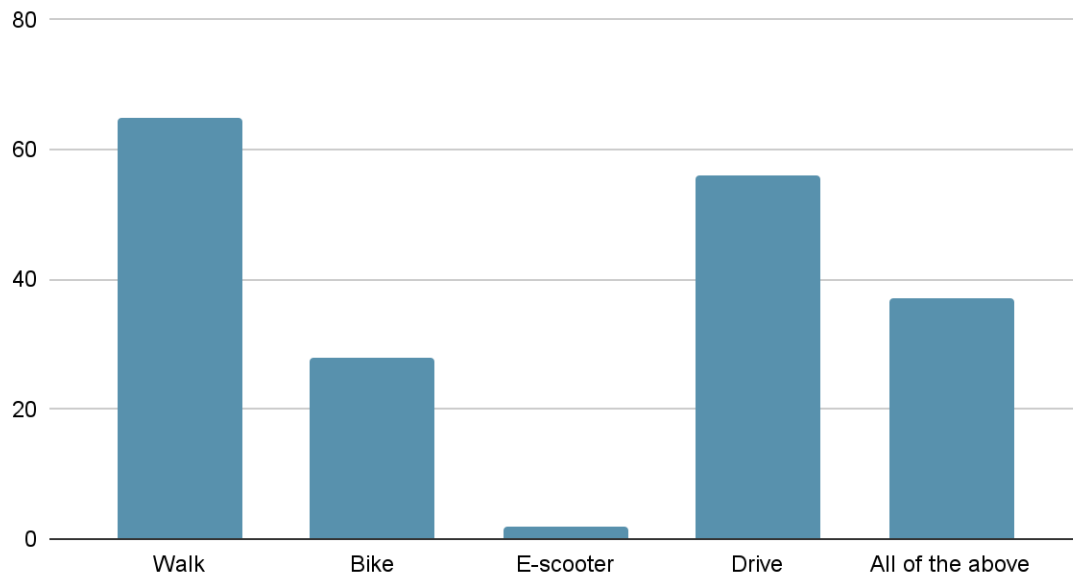
Who Participated

The City asked respondents to share if they lived in Oliver, directly on Victoria Promenade or in another Edmonton neighbourhood and how frequently they travelled along Victoria Promenade.

Location of respondents



Mode of travel N=188



The feedback form provided an opportunity for the public to share their thoughts on the project. Of the 188 responses received, 85% of respondents from Oliver and 93% of respondents who live on Victoria Promenade shared concerns with the pilot project.

There are currently over 18,000 people that live in the Oliver neighbourhood. Approximately 1,900 postcards were delivered to housing and business units in the project area on and near the Victoria Promenade.

Overall, the key themes heard from people who live in Oliver or along Victoria Promenade include:

- Lack of parking for visitors, deliveries, trades people and home care services.
- Emergency vehicles not being able to park in front of buildings and blocking the road.
- Safety concerns, including navigating the concrete barriers on the road and conflicts with cyclists.
- Reduced access for seniors, caregivers of seniors, and people living with mobility challenges.
- Aesthetics of the pilot project installation, such as the green flex posts and parking curb detracting from the beauty of the area.

- Second bike lane on the north side (for cyclists travelling west) is not necessary given the low volume of cyclists using it, and specifically given the close proximity to the 102 Avenue bike lanes.

Those that had a positive feedback of the installation shared the following:

- Solves the current problem of westbound bikes using the eastbound lane.
- Increased feeling of safety with separated lanes and barriers.
- Separate bike lanes make it more convenient for people walking along the Victoria Promenade.
- Adding more bike lanes is essential in the downtown core.
- Allows more space for all users of the Victoria Promenade to travel safely.
- Increases usage for families with kids.
- Money spent on bike lanes, sidewalks, and transit is far less than money spent on road infrastructure.

The 32 respondents who did not live in Oliver or directly on the Victoria Promenade had a more favourable perception of the installation. A summary of non-Oliver residents' feedback is outlined in the table below.

Positive perception - 40%	Negative perception - 60%
• Active transportation corridor connection is important • Families benefit from more protected bike lanes • Encourages slower speeds • Promotes active transportation	• Installation is not warranted due to low volume of people biking • Reduces parking space in the downtown core • Difficult to receive deliveries or for residents moving in and out • Unnecessary and waste of funds • Impacts seniors' ability to have visitors and receive services • Installation ruins the beauty of the Promenade

Comments were also analysed by mode of travel. The breakdown of positive and negative perceptions and experiences with the installation are summarized in the table below.

Mode of travel	Positive perception	Negative perception
Walk (n=65)	16%	84%
Bike (n=28)	82%	18%
E-scooter* (n=2) <i>*Only 2 responses received</i>	50%	50%
Drive (n= 56)	0%	100%
All of the above (n=37)	14%	86%

Fall Evaluation Engagement Summary

Online and Paper Survey

The survey was available online from September 21-October 23 and open to the general public through [Engaged Edmonton](#). A targeted email was also sent to Edmonton Insight Community members that live in four neighbourhoods: Oliver, Westmount, Queen Mary Park and Downtown. The email was sent to a total of 1,025 members.

What is a speaker board?

A large-scale wooden structure (approx. 6ft tall x 2.5 ft wide) placed at a project site to provide an additional opportunity for people to provide feedback on a project via a paper survey.

A speaker board was installed in front of the Mayflower apartment building (address: 11808 100 Avenue) on September 26 to provide access to paper copies of the survey. The speaker board was removed on October 24.

Paper copies of the survey were also available at the in-person drop in sessions to provide an additional opportunity for people to share their feedback on this project.

Who Participated

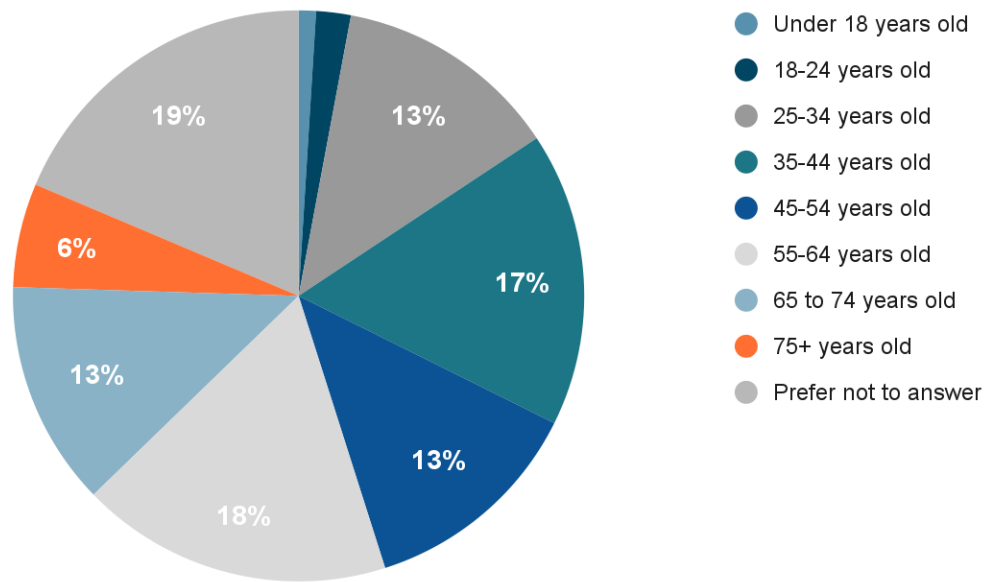
The survey included questions to understand where people lived in relation to Victoria Promenade. Of the 1,267 people that responded to the online and paper survey:

- 38% (487) of respondents said they live directly on Victoria Promenade.
- 7% (83) also said they work directly on the Victoria Promenade.
- Of the 728 respondents who said they do not live directly on the Victoria Promenade:
 - 44% (318) said they live in the Oliver neighbourhood; the greatest proportion of the respondents live south of Jasper Avenue between 109 Street and 116 Street.
 - 56% (410) said they live in a neighbourhood other than the Oliver neighbourhood; the majority of which live in the Garneau, Grandin, or Westmount neighbourhoods.

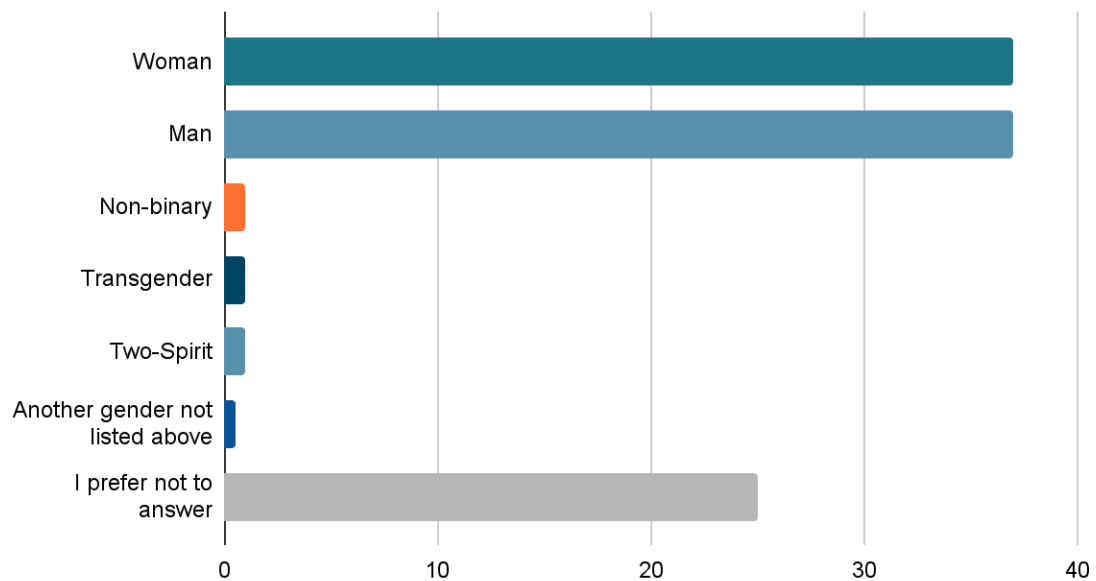
Location of respondents who live in Oliver (N=318)	
Along Victoria Promenade between 116 Street and 121 Street	1%
Not on Victoria Promenade, but south of Jasper Avenue, and between 116 Street and 121 Street	10%
South of Jasper Avenue, between 109 Street and 116 Street	35%
North of Jasper Avenue, between 109 Street and 116 Street	16%
North of Jasper Avenue, between 116 Street and 121 Street	25%
Between 121 Street and 124 Street	14%

In addition to where they live, survey respondents were asked to share their age and gender identity, if they felt comfortable doing so. Collecting demographic data helps the City to better understand who participated and helps us determine if we are hearing from a variety of perspectives.

Age Range N=1267



Identifier N=1267



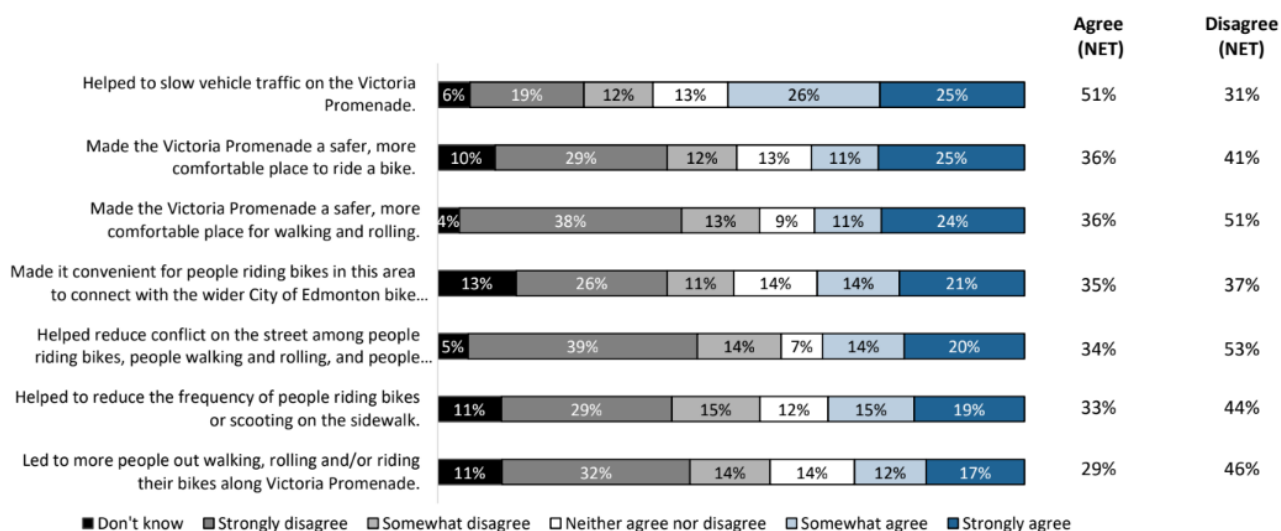
What We Asked and What We Heard

The City wanted to gain an understanding of how many respondents had travelled along the Victoria Promenade since the installation of the pilot project, as well as their modes of travel:

- 92% of survey respondents indicated they had travelled along Victoria Promenade since the installation in July 2022
- the majority of respondents reported that their mode of travel was walking or driving.

How do you travel along Victoria Promenade? Choose all that apply. (N=1267)	
Walk	80%
Bike	42%
Roll (e.g. e-scooter, skateboard etc.)	8%
Mobility aid (e.g. wheelchair, walker or other aid)	4%
Driving a passenger vehicle	69%
Riding as a passenger in a passenger vehicle	26%
Taxi/ride-share	16%
Other	1%

The City asked participants to tell us how much they agreed or disagreed with the following statements: “The recently installed pilot project...”



The majority of survey respondents agreed that the pilot project helped to slow vehicle traffic on the Victoria Promenade; however, respondents were less inclined to agree that it had led to more people walking, rolling and/or riding their bikes along the Promenade.

The City asked respondents to indicate their level of satisfaction with how the infrastructure along the Victoria Promenade was currently working. One-third of survey respondents said they were satisfied (i.e., responded with Satisfied and Very Satisfied) with the current infrastructure.

Overall, how satisfied are you with how the recently installed infrastructure (two bikes lanes) along Victoria Promenade is currently working? (N=1267)	
Don't know	<3%
Very dissatisfied	49%
Dissatisfied	12%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	5%
Satisfied	15%
Very satisfied	17%

When asked to expand on their response, respondents indicated the following reasons why they are satisfied or dissatisfied with the pilot project installation:

Reasons for satisfaction	Reasons for dissatisfaction
• Safer for cyclists/pedestrians • Acts as a buffer from traffic to the sidewalk/slows traffic down • Allows more accessibility for cyclists/pedestrians • More peaceful/relaxing environment • Allows a balance between different modes of transportation • Promotes healthy lifestyle	• Takes away parking from the street • One bike lane was adequate • Has created more traffic congestion on neighbouring streets • Access issues for emergency vehicles • Installation could be more aesthetically pleasing • Creates access issues for loading zones

Intercept Surveys

An intercept survey is an in-field activity which provided the public, including local residents, with the opportunity to share in the moment feedback. The purpose of this engagement activity was to hear directly from people using the space as they were experiencing it and learn from their insights. It was also a proactive tool to share upcoming engagement opportunities with people using the space.

City of Edmonton staff members spent 10 hours over three days (September 21, 24 and 26) engaging with people using Victoria Promenade and administering a short intercept survey. A total of 235 intercept surveys were completed.

Who Participated

The survey sought to understand where people lived:

- 91% of intercept survey respondents indicated they currently live in the Oliver neighbourhood.
- Of those intercept survey respondents who live in the Oliver neighbourhood, the greatest proportion (over two-thirds of respondents) said they live along Victoria Promenade between 116 Street and 121 Street.
- 9% said they do not live in the Oliver neighbourhood, with the majority reporting that they lived in the Garneau, Grandin or Westmount neighbourhoods.

Location of respondents (N=165)	
Along Victoria Promenade between 116 Street and 121 Street	77%
Not on Victoria Promenade, but south of Jasper Avenue, and between 116 Street and 121 Street	4%
South of Jasper Avenue, between 109 Street and 116 Street	3%
North of Jasper Avenue, between 109 Street and 116 Street	4%
North of Jasper Avenue, between 116 Street and 121 Street	7%
Between 121 Street and 124 Street	5%

What We Asked and What We Heard

The majority of intercept survey respondents reported that they walk or drive along Victoria Promenade.

How do you travel along Victoria Promenade? Choose all that apply. (N=218)	
Walk	89%
Bike	39%
Roll (e.g. e-scooter, skateboard etc.)	5%
Mobility aid (e.g. wheelchair, walker or other aid)	3%
Driving a passenger vehicle	52%
Riding as a passenger in a passenger vehicle	2%
Taxi/ride-share	4%
Other	8%

Intercept survey respondents were asked to indicate their level of satisfaction with how the infrastructure along Victoria Promenade was operating. Less than one-third said they were satisfied with the current infrastructure.

Overall, how satisfied are you with how the recently installed infrastructure (two bikes lanes) along Victoria Promenade is currently working? (N=228)	
Don't know	<3%
Very dissatisfied	47%
Dissatisfied	15%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	9%
Satisfied	13%
Very satisfied	16%

65 respondents shared their reasons for being satisfied with the pilot project and the top reasons included:

- 42% felt the space was safer for cyclists and pedestrians.
- 26% felt it was more accessible for cyclists and pedestrians.
- 18% indicated it acts as a buffer from the traffic to the sidewalk and slows down traffic.
- 15% reported less confusion by having two bike lanes and said the space was too tight before.
- 14% of people reported a preference for less parked cars and felt there were other places to park.

The following reasons were the mostly frequently reported by respondents for dissatisfaction with the Victoria Promenade pilot project (N=129):

- 46% said the installation resulted in loss of parking.
- 33% of people feel it creates accessibility issues for loading zones (e.g. people with disabilities, elderly people, deliveries).
- 30% cited general safety concerns with the bike lanes including bike lanes are dangerous for vehicles accessing parkades.
- 28% felt that bike lanes could be more aesthetically pleasing.
- 23% reported confusion about how the bike lanes were installed and that there are too many obstacles and poor visibility.
- 22% felt one bike lane was adequate (south bike lane), they'd like to see the north bike lane removed, preferring how it was before.

When asked to share any additional information or experiences with the City, intercept survey respondents most frequently reported:

- It's harder to find parking.
- There is more traffic congestion on other streets.
- Access issues for emergency vehicles.
- Preference to go back to the pre-COVID set-up, with a painted bike lane for eastbound cyclists, and westbound cyclists travelling with the flow of vehicle traffic.
- The installation is dangerous for vehicles accessing parkades.
- Lack of input from neighbourhood residents and a lack of engagement with City Council.
- More people are avoiding the area, less pedestrian traffic and public safety concerns with less people around.

Online Engagement Session

On October 13, 2022, the City team hosted an online meeting. A summary can be found below.

What We Asked

Participants were asked about their experience with the adaptable infrastructure by answering the following questions.

User Experience

- What changes do you like the most and why?
- What changes concern you the most and why?

Impacts

- How have the changes impacted your neighbours?
- How have the changes impacted the community?

Other Considerations

- Is there anything else you would like the City of Edmonton to know about your experiences along Victoria Promenade since the installation of the pilot project?

What We Heard

Responses were received verbally and in the meeting chat function. The following themes emerged from the comments.

Access and Isolation

Participants spoke about how the loss of front-of-building street parking has impacted people living on Victoria Promenade, especially those with limited mobility who rely on visitors and deliveries (examples include DHL, Skip the Dishes, and home care), and has resulted in increased feeling of isolation by the residents. Participants stated that more and longer-term visitor parking options are required, especially since one building has no visitor parking on-site.

Safety

While participants appreciated the City's efforts to increase safety for cyclists, they view the concrete barriers and flex posts as safety issues for pedestrians. One participant said that his partner is a runner and tripped on the flex posts. Another participant noted safety concerns for people in walkers and wheelchairs including crossing one lane of traffic and two bike lanes to get to the south sidewalk of Victoria Promenade.

Aesthetics and Victoria Promenade as an Attraction

Participants made numerous comments about the unattractive aesthetics of the adaptable installation and the detrimental impact to the overall beauty and character of the Promenade.

Cyclists

Two participants focused their experiences around cycling and shared differing opinions about the useability of the infrastructure.

One person commented that the "project has caused a lack of safety for bikes. They can no longer access the east lane from the alley due to the sticks. They have to go against traffic in the bike lane or road to get to a crossing. Bike congestion occurs at 117 Street (east). They now have to cross the road to get to the sidewalk with other foot traffic."

Another participant said that he "enjoys the accessibility of Victoria Promenade and enjoys using the new infrastructure. I moved from St Albert to enjoy accessibility and feel this project achieved this. Very happy with the changes and feel it slowed traffic a little."

Winter

Session participants noted that all the issues discussed above will only worsen in winter, due to issues with snow and ice removal. They expressed concerns about snow removal and icy sidewalks and wondered how to provide ongoing feedback about the project once the survey closed.

Ideas and Suggestions for Improvements

Participants shared the following ideas and suggestions for changes to Victoria Promenade pilot project:

- Reinstate on-street visitor parking along Victoria Promenade
- More street lights
- Further reduction in speed limit
- Banning through traffic using signs
- Bike lane connection east of 116 Street
- Improve aesthetics
- Split sidewalk for cyclists and people walking
- Bike lane should connect past 117 Street and should also include a stoplight for bikes
- Install bi-directional bike lane with a scramble crosswalk at 121 Street and Jasper Avenue

Engagement and Decision-Making Process

Many participants commented on the engagement and decision-making process for the project.

Concerns included:

- Not enough consultation done with residents living in the buildings along Victoria Promenade prior to the pilot project installation.
- Comments from residents are not being heard or are being ignored.
- Concerns surrounding access for emergency services staff.

Questions about the evaluation process for the pilot project included:

- How do the benefits of this project outweigh the negatives?
- How will area residents and participants in the engagement process be informed about the results of the evaluation process?
- What criteria are being used to evaluate the bike lane installation?
- What are the target numbers (of cyclists, etc.) that will indicate if the project is a success or not?
- Will the November evaluation report be a summary or provide a decision?
- How will the project be evaluated over the winter?
- Has a decision already been made?

In-Person Drop-in Sessions

Two in-person drop-in sessions were held on October 15 and 21, 2022. The sessions were designed for and targeted toward people living along Victoria Promenade in response to feedback from area residents that they felt they were not adequately consulted prior to the installation and that online engagement tools are inaccessible to many seniors.

Each session was organised as a group of stations that participants could rotate through and provide feedback on a series of questions, either by writing comments on flip charts or talking to staff who recorded their feedback.

Who Participated

Approximately 143 people attended the two sessions. Participants were asked where they lived and 123 chose to respond: of those, 75 people said they lived on Victoria Promenade, while another 32 people lived in the Oliver neighbourhood. The remaining participants identified as visitors to Victoria Promenade and lived elsewhere in Edmonton.

The people who participated in the in-person sessions were passionate about their neighbourhood and many shared that they had also provided input into the engagement process by having completed the survey, taking part in an intercept interview and/or attending the online session.

What We Asked

Participants were asked to tell us about their experience with the new adaptable infrastructure by answering these questions:

User Experience

- What changes do you like the most and why?
- What changes concern you the most and why?

Impacts

- How have the changes impacted your neighbours?
- How have the changes impacted the community?

Other Considerations

- Is there anything else you would like the City of Edmonton to know about your experiences along Victoria Promenade since the installation of the pilot project?

What We Heard

More than 1,100 comments were collected on flipcharts and through notes taken by City staff during the one-on-one dialogues. The vast majority of comments (99.5%) were negative and expressed concerns about the configuration of the infrastructure.

An analysis of comments from session participants found that many of their values and interests were in alignment with the City of Edmonton's goals and policies, including a desire for Victoria Promenade to be safe and accessible for all; however, the participants, many of whom were area residents, had a different perspective of what the design should be, resulting in negative perceptions of the project. Comments from the sessions were grouped into eleven themes that have been summarized below.

Parking

The largest number of comments were about parking issues resulting from the installation. The lack of front of building, on-street parking has created challenges for residents, including:

- Difficulty receiving deliveries, including food deliveries.
- Difficulty accessing taxi and ride-share pick-up and drop offs, as well as pick-up and drop offs by family and friends.
- Lack of parking for visitors, especially those with limited mobility. Homecare workers are struggling to find parking, which reduces the amount of time they have with their clients.
- Trades people and moving trucks no longer have access to front of building loading zones, which may result in carrying heavy items a long distance.
- Back alleys/delivery zones are now busier and congested as a result.
- Annamoe Mansion (a historic building circa 1914) has no on-site parking and has challenges with moving and loading in particular.
- The new location for the Mayflower loading zone reduces accessibility as it is a further distance (~30 m) from the front entrance to the building.
- Having to cross the installation when being dropped off by a car at the loading bay outside the Fairmont building and the potential for a collision; having to step over the concrete barricade is perceived to be a tripping hazard, especially by those with limited mobility/limited vision.
- Some residents acknowledged that they had on-site and visitor parking and had not had issues parking during the pilot, but expressed concern that it could be an issue in the future.

The City heard from many participants that the lack of parking has negatively impacted the accessibility of Victoria Promenade, especially for individuals with limited mobility, and has resulted in seniors feeling more isolated as visitors stay away. Many people also noted that a significant portion of residents living along Victoria Promenade are seniors who hope to age in place, making this issue of access of the utmost importance to them.

In addition, there is a widely held perception that fewer people from outside the Oliver neighbourhood are visiting Victoria Promenade to walk and enjoy the view because of the lack of parking.

Safety Concerns

The second largest number of comments related to safety concerns. While many participants acknowledged the City's intention to make the area safer for everyone, they noted that the installation has had some unintended consequences for pedestrians, cyclists and drivers.

Pedestrian safety concerns included:

- Having to cross an extra lane of traffic (now one car lane and two bike lanes) rather than the previous configuration (one car/bike, one bike lane and one parking lane) to reach the Victoria Promenade walkway.
- Feeling that cyclists were not aware of pedestrians and were ignoring the rules.

Cyclist safety concerns included:

- The potential conflict between vehicles and cyclists, where vehicles must cross the north side (westbound) bike lane to turn down the side streets or enter parkades.
- The transition at 116-117 Street for cyclists, where there is no bike lane and cyclists are directed to use the sidewalk (shared pathway). This is perceived to be dangerous for both pedestrians and cyclists.

Driver safety concerns included:

- The potential for hitting a cyclist while turning right across the bike lane on the northside of Victoria Promenade.
- The bike lane installations create a hazard due to the visual obstruction and confusion, especially at night.
- Traffic blockages (for example, when emergency vehicles block traffic) lead to unsafe driving by people blocked in.

Misuse of Sidewalks and Bike Lanes

Related to the safety issues noted above, comments were shared about how cyclists and e-scooter riders misuse sidewalks and bike lanes. Misuse was described as cyclists riding on the sidewalks despite the installation of dedicated bike lanes, riding the wrong way in the bike lanes and not yielding to pedestrians at crosswalks.

People shared that they feel that this misuse is a result of confusion and/or lack of enforcement around bike lanes and the rules that cyclists and e-scooter riders should follow, and that more education, as well as enforcement for cyclists and e-scooter riders, is needed. Participants also noted an increase in tension between cyclists and pedestrians, including verbal (and in one case, physical) altercations when pedestrians asked cyclists to move off the sidewalk onto the bike lane.

Aesthetics and Victoria Promenade as an Attraction

This theme relates to comments that focused on the importance of aesthetics, and the Victoria Promenade as an attraction to be enjoyed by all Edmontonians.

Many participants find the green bollards to be unattractive and detrimental to the beauty of the Victoria Promenade. Participants expressed pride in seeing the Victoria Promenade being used as a backdrop for graduation and wedding photos, a destination for multi-generational family walks and a place people bring visitors to Edmonton. Session participants also included seniors that volunteer to pick up garbage along the Victoria Promenade all year long. These participants noted that this work makes them keen observers of public activities in this area.

Access

The City heard from participants that mobility and accessibility are important to them for both pedestrians and cyclists.

There was a widely held perception among session participants that accessibility for cyclists was prioritised over accessibility for pedestrians with limited mobility (including seniors who make up a large portion of the residents along the Victoria Promenade). While the concrete curbs that line the bike lanes do not block any existing crossings, some participants felt they created a barrier for people with walkers or in wheelchairs who are trying to cross the street.

Several cyclists among the respondents noted that the lack of transition at 116-117 Street makes this stretch of bike lanes difficult to access.

Emergency Services Access

Concerns were also shared about emergency vehicle access. Participants felt that reducing the number of parking zones limits access for emergency medical vehicles responding to calls. Feedback also included concerns about the traffic blockages leading to unsafe driving by people who have been blocked in.

Several participants reported an incident when an ambulance parked a block away and moved a patient down the street by stretcher; people felt this was inappropriate and that the ambulance should have been able to park closer without blocking traffic.

In addition, we heard from a few people that building Fire Department Connections (FDCs) were designed to be accessed from the front of the building, rather than the alley, and they were concerned that had not been considered in the planning for the pilot project installation.

Snow Clearing Winter Season

Some participants expressed concerns about the City's ability to effectively remove the snow, especially on the sidewalks. Perceptions exist that snow removal crews will prioritise the bike lanes and this relates to concerns about accessibility for those with limited access.

Several people had questions about how windrows will be handled, and if people getting out of cars in front of buildings will have to cross windrows along the bike lane to get to the sidewalk. The City also heard requests for the installation to be removed prior to winter, along with concerns about the additional cost for snow removal.

Traffic Concerns

Also related to safety, were comments about some of the traffic issues along the Promenade. The most significant was the perception that changes have not reduced the traffic volume or the use of the Victoria Promenade as a short-cut to Jasper Avenue. A few participants thanked the City for filling the potholes.

Additional Comments

The City also heard comments that did not fit into the larger themes outlined above, including:

- General like or dislike of the installation.
- Concerns about the cost of the design and maintenance of the installation and the impact on property taxes.
- Comments unrelated to the Victoria Promenade pilot project such as the need to licence cyclists, funding for homelessness and a recent survey about potentially renaming the Oliver Neighbourhood.
- Questions and comments about the role and/or values of City Council and the ward's Councillor in the process.
- A handful of concerns about the impact the pilot project may have on their property values.

Ideas and Suggestions for Improvements

Many participants came with ideas and suggestions for how they wanted to see the Victoria Promenade infrastructure changed.

The City heard requests to return the bike lane to its original (pre-COVID-19) configuration, with a bike lane on the south side of the street for east-bound bike traffic, a shared lane for vehicles and cyclists going west, and the re-installation of parking and loading zones along the north side of the street.

The second most common suggestion was to find a way to create a bi-directional bike lane on the south side of the street, even if it meant making changes to the walking area of the Victoria Promenade.

Other comments included:

- Add or improve signage so that cyclists and scooter-riders know what is expected and how to connect to other bike lanes nearby.
- Direct cyclist traffic to 102 Avenue and/or configure bike lanes on the Victoria Promenade to be more like those on 102 Avenue.
- Consider additional traffic calming measures (including speed bumps) to reduce short-cutting through the Victoria Promenade.
- Remove some of the benches on the Victoria Promenade as they are not all being used (or place the benches under the treed area of the Victoria Promenade and add a bike lane to the existing sidewalk).
- Fix the transition at 116 Street (bike lanes directed onto sidewalk).

- Look at other examples of bike lanes that work well. Suggestions included: Vancouver's Yaletown, Kelowna, Vernon, Ada Boulevard, Athens and Amsterdam.
- Remove the flex posts and cement curbs and replace them with painted lines only.
- Install a bi-directional bike lane with scramble crosswalks at 121 Street and Jasper Avenue; and 116 Street and 100 Avenue.
- Wait for the neighbourhood renewal when the entire Victoria Promenade can be reconfigured.

Engagement and Decision-Making Process and Design

The City heard comments about the engagement process and the role of the public regarding decision-making for the project.

Attendees expressed concerns about the lack of engagement with residents living along Victoria Promenade before the pilot project was installed in spring 2022. Many residents felt they were not consulted prior to the changes being made. Concerns were also expressed that the engagement prior to the installation of the adaptable infrastructure was done using online tools, which are inaccessible to many seniors. Attendees commented that the City should have engaged directly and in-person with the residents in the impacted buildings along the Victoria Promenade prior to making any design decisions.

People who did participate in the March/April engagement commented on the survey design, saying that it should have included an option to leave the infrastructure as it was, and that the options were presented in a way that resulted in vote splitting between two similar options. Participants thought that responses for [Options 1 and 1A](#) (which both had a single eastbound bike lane on the north side of the street and westbound cyclists sharing the lane with cars) should have been combined and a single bike lane installed as a result, rather than [Option 2](#) (which was the design installed).

The City also heard concerns about the fall engagement. Many residents expressed a distrust that their voices would be heard and that their opinions would be considered when decisions about the project were made. Many session attendees expressed a perception that the decision has been made and the fall engagement process was insincere.

Residents also expressed concerns that the results of the engagement process will be skewed to favour the outcome desired by the City. This mistrust has resulted in significant effort from residents to ensure their opinions are heard.

These concerns included questions about how feedback from various groups will be weighted in the decision-making process and many attendees felt that the Victoria Promenade residents should have more say than cyclists, who they thought of as a special interest group.

Additional Feedback

Petition From Residents

A group of the Victoria Promenade residents submitted a petition to the City of Edmonton in the summer of 2022. This petition had approximately 580 names signed that were opposed to the Victoria Promenade Pilot Project.

The petition was distributed to at least 14 buildings along or near the Victoria Promenade and encouraged residents to sign if they opposed the project.

What Happens Next?

While there have been positive impacts on speeding, shortcutting and cyclist behaviours as a result of this project, the installation did not meet the needs of some community members. Through public engagement, community members have raised concerns about issues such as reduced building access for seniors and for people who use mobility aids, loss of convenient vehicle access, aesthetics, the impact of winter and safety overall.

As a result, adjustments will be made to the Victoria Promenade Pilot Project. This includes the removal of the north side bike lane and lowering the speed limit along the Victoria Promenade to 30 km/h. The bike lane on the south side, as well as the traffic calming on 100 Avenue east of 117 Street and between 116 Street and 117 Street, will remain in place.

The City is committed to communities and listening and learning to those who utilise our public spaces and appreciates everyone who has shared their experiences with the Victoria Promenade Pilot Project.

Subscribe for project updates and to connect with the project team, visit engaged.edmonton.ca/Victoria-Promenade.