



March 20, 2017

RE: Neighbourhood Renewal – New Shared-Use Path Construction along Saskatchewan Drive

Thank you to everyone who attended the on-site meeting on February 25, 2017. This letter provides information as follow-up to the meeting.

The City of Edmonton's Strategic Plan ("The Way Ahead") and Transportation Master Plan ("The Way We Move") provide the direction and support to shift Edmonton's transportation modes to more sustainable options such as walking and cycling. The City is committed to providing safe, direct and convenient routes for pedestrians by addressing missing links in the pedestrian network. Universally accessible sidewalks and shared-use paths are part of the basic infrastructure necessary to create a walkable and cycle-friendly environment within the city.

Integrated Infrastructure Services is extending the shared-use path (SUP) on the west side of Saskatchewan Drive south of 76 Avenue to provide a continuous, hard-surface connection that links the Belgravia Neighbourhood from Groat Road to Fox Drive. The new portion of SUP would be built as part of the Belgravia Neighbourhood Renewal for **2017 and 2018**. All costs associated with the new SUP connection is included in the Neighbourhood Renewal budget. All construction costs would be at the expense of the City at large. The costs to remove and replace the existing portion of the SUP, and to construct the new SUP connection are at the expense of the City at large. There will be no additional cost to adjacent property owners.

Concerns we've heard about the new portion of the shared-use path:

1. There may be conflict between dogs and shared-use path users in the off leash park.
2. Environmental impact of the shared-use path due to water runoff that will create erosion and tax the stormwater system. Are trees being removed for the new shared-use path?
3. The shared-use path is not necessary as there are sidewalks on the east side of the road.
4. Shared-use paths are not safe for people who are walking.
5. Windrows from snow clearing and where they would be placed.

To address each of the concerns:

1. There may be conflict between dogs and shared-use path users in the off leash park.

The City of Edmonton recognizes various park users' needs and aims to ensure an enjoyable park experience by all. Edmonton's off leash areas are currently multi-use spaces. This means Edmontonians can use these spaces for a variety of activities, like walking, biking, and jogging. Users are expected to be respectful of one another, so everyone can safely enjoy these spaces. Signs will be added to the area to ensure that all shared-use path users are aware that they are passing through an off leash area, and that they will be sharing the space with dogs and their owners. An evaluation of the site will be done by Buildings and Park Operations after the new shared-use path is constructed. If there are any issues after construction, please call 311; these calls will be tracked and added to the evaluation.

The City of Edmonton is also reviewing the information available on the website regarding shared-use path etiquette. The goal of this review is to enhance education and awareness strategies around the safety, security and comfort of path users.

2. Environmental impact of the shared-use path due to water runoff that will create erosion and tax the stormwater system. Are trees being removed for the new shared-use path?

The majority of the new shared-use path will follow the existing slope. Some areas currently drain towards the road and some areas drain away from the road and towards the ravine. Some locations of the new shared-use path may be designed to drain away from the road in certain locations and will be reviewed in more depth during the detail design phase of the project.

The new shared-use path location has been reviewed by City of Edmonton urban forester. No City tree is anticipated for removal. Some bush/shrubs will be removed.

3. The shared-use path is not necessary as there are sidewalks on the west side of the road.

Construction of the shared-use path extension south of 76 Avenue will be addressing a gap in the City's transportation infrastructure network, which provides universal access to the River Valley for all Edmontonians. On January 23, 2013, the City received funding from the River Valley Alliance and the provincial and federal governments for initiatives that will increase access to the River Valley. For more information please see the following link:

https://www.edmonton.ca/projects_plans/parks_recreation/background.aspx

To work toward this goal, hard surface paths and trails for cyclists and pedestrians have been provided at the top of the river bank for much of the River Valley. These are part of the trail and shared-use path network, which will extend the full length of the ravine from Fort Saskatchewan to Devon, on both sides of the river. As it is not feasible to construct the entire shared-use path along this entire distance as a single project, they are constructed as opportunities arise.

4. Shared-use paths are not safe for people who are walking.

Safety is a top priority for the City. It is considered throughout the planning, design, construction and operation phases of any City infrastructure project. While there is no way to ensure total safety on trail facilities, safety can be enhanced through signage and education and awareness initiatives. As in the case of the shared-use path being constructed through the off leash area, wayfinding, safety, and informational signage will be provided; the City's website regarding trail use etiquette is also under review.

To allow for the construction of the shared-use path within existing constraints (e.g. existing trees), it has been determined that the road will need to be narrowed (approximately 1.0 m) adjacent to 74 Avenue approximately in front of properties 7419 to 7203. The shared-use path in this area will also be narrowed, from the typical 3.0 m to a width of 2.5 m with a 0.5 m boulevard for signage. In order to create a safe space for pedestrians and cyclists on the new shared-use path in this area, parking will only be allowed on the residential (east) side of the road. This is necessary to minimize conflicts, such as door-swing of the parked cars into oncoming pedestrians or cyclists on the west side of the road.

Additionally, the existing mid-block bikeway slip ramp (in front of property 11636) on 71A Avenue will be removed, as it is no longer required due to the extension of the shared-use path. A regular ramp will be installed to the west from where the slip ramp is currently located.

5. Windrows during the snow clearing of the path and where would it be placed.

For the majority of the shared-use path, plowed snow will be placed on the boulevard between the shared-use path and the road. For the constrained areas:

- New shared-use path adjacent to 74 Avenue - snow plowed from the path will be placed behind the path. As it melts, it will go down the ravine and not back onto the path. Snow plowed from the road will be placed in the gutter, adjacent to the shared-use path as well as adjacent to the sidewalk.
- New shared-use path between Saskatchewan Drive south and 71A Avenue - snow will be plowed towards the trees. Snow plowed from the road will be placed in the gutter, adjacent to the shared-use path as well as adjacent to the sidewalk.

In all circumstances snow plowed from the path will not be plowed onto the road, and snow plowed from the road will not be plowed onto the shared-use path.

For more details about the project, please visit edmonton.ca/BuildingBelgravia.

Your assistance and continued willingness to engage with the City during this process is greatly appreciated. As mentioned, the City is committed to addressing missing links in the pedestrian network. Universally accessible sidewalks and shared-use paths are part of the basic infrastructure necessary to create a walkable and cycle-friendly environment within the city. The costs to remove and replace the existing portion of the shared-use path and to construct the new shared-use path connection are included in the Neighbourhood Renewal project budget and construction will start in 2017.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'D. Lehman', is positioned above the typed name.

Dale Lehman, P.Eng.
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City of Edmonton
Planning and Design, Building Great Neighbourhoods
Integrated Infrastructure Services Department