

WHAT WE HEARD
EDMONDS PLAN PHASE 1
PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Phase 1 Public Consultation: By The Numbers

Phase 1 public consultation for the Edmonds Town Centre Plan was conducted between late June and early fall of 2023. In mid-June, staff launched a marketing and public notification campaign which consisted of the following measures to notify the community about upcoming opportunities to participate:

23,204 postcards

were mailed to residents, property owners, business owners and other community members

Digital displays

on TV screens at Edmonds Community Centre began June 14

Organic and paid social media campaign

was launched on June 14 on major platforms

Paid Google advertising

began June 14 until July 31

Media release

was distributed June 14

Webpage content was updated

on Burnaby.ca/YourVoice-Edmonds and Phase 1 online survey was launched on June 14

Posters

were displayed in Burnaby City Hall, Edmonds Community Centre and Tommy Douglas Library starting June 14

Full-page BurnabyNow ads

were published on June 15 and June 29

CityConnect eNewsletter

promoted the survey on June 15

Key highlights of the Phase 1 public consultation process

279

completed online survey submissions were received



175

people attended the first open house on Tuesday, July 4

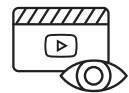
100

people attended the second open house on Thursday, July 13



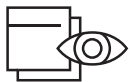
1,878

YouTube views of the Phase 1 introductory video



6,305

web page views



11,075

survey page views



17,451

organic* social media impressions**

79,851

paid advertising social media impressions**



over 88%

of online survey respondents lived within or in areas surrounding the Edmonds Town Centre, based on postal code information provided

Staff attended 4 community-led events

to encourage participation and engagement in Phase 1



* Organic social is social media activity without paid promotion versus paid advertising on social media.

** Impressions refer to the number of times content appeared on a screen, whether it was clicked or not.

Phase 1 Public Consultation: Key Themes

Summarized below are several key themes that emerged from the feedback received during Phase 1 public consultation for the Edmonds Town Centre Community Plan. It is noted that themes raised during Phase 1 public consultation will be considered and addressed through the ongoing development of more detailed draft plan directions in Phase 2, which will be presented as part of a future report to the Planning and Development Committee (PDC) and Council in Spring 2024.

The commentary below references feedback received from a variety of engagement methods, as described in **Attachment 1** of this report. While these themes do not represent the full range of comments and feedback received, they reflect comments that were raised by multiple individuals or community groups during Phase 1 public consultation.


Housing, Community Amenities and Community Building/Placemaking

Over 75% of Phase 1 online survey respondents noted that “facilitating diversity, inclusivity and community resiliency” was a “very important” or “important” value that they would like to see advanced as part of the new vision for the Edmonds Plan.

Many community members emphasized diversity and multiculturalism as some of the key strengths of the Edmonds community that should be valued and further enhanced through future policy direction in the new community plan. Initial ideas put forward in Phase 1 included the following:

- » encouraging the establishment of more non-profit resources, housing and services to immigrant and refugee populations
- » amidst future development, encourage the retention of smaller, independent and culturally-specific businesses (e.g. restaurants, ethnic grocery stores) which are important for establishing a unique sense of place and community belonging
- » supporting diverse housing forms, including those that are more conducive to social interaction and neighbourhood participation (e.g. through providing ground-oriented unit entries, high-quality common gathering spaces and amenity areas)
- » prioritizing Truth and Reconciliation calls to action, including place-naming areas with historical significance

Over 75% of survey respondents noted that “enabling a broad range of housing and employment options” in Edmonds was a “very important” or “important” value to consider as part of the vision for the new Edmonds Plan.



The Phase 1 materials presented initial goals and ideas for providing a wider variety of housing options, forms and tenures for existing and future residents of Edmonds. Many of these ideas were well-received, though concerns were expressed around the impacts of future development on existing residents (e.g. traffic and parking concerns, displacement of existing residential tenants, general density and building form concerns). It was noted during Phase 1 that many of these concerns will be addressed as more detailed policy directions for the new Edmonds Plan are presented in Phases 2 and 3 (e.g. through application of the City's Tenant Assistance Policy [TAP] and Rental Use Zoning Policy [RUZP], and other strategies for encouraging diverse housing options).

Based on feedback received, the following housing-related priorities were identified as crucial considerations for Edmonds looking into the future:

- » high-quality rental housing units, including universally-accessible dwelling units and units with close, convenient access to basic everyday needs and services, public transit and active mobility options
- » housing for a diverse population, including families and individuals who would like to age in place
- » housing that promotes social interaction and a sense of belonging and community stewardship, especially for newcomers and immigrants

Many community members noted that the range and accessibility of local community amenities and services could be improved upon, particularly for services like childcare, health and medical services, and non-profit enterprises. Several respondents also noted that existing facilities like the Edmonds Community Centre and Tommy Douglas Library could be enhanced as part of future policy direction. It was noted that while community plans do not identify specific locations for amenities and services within the plan area, it may include policy direction for how to support and facilitate the establishment of new facilities through future redevelopment.

Sample of Comments:

[paraphrased] I'd like to see the City prioritize Truth and Reconciliation (TRC) calls to action including renaming places to align with Indigenous place names and places of historical significance.

[paraphrased] Edmonds in particular is very multicultural and diverse. I wonder how we can go past simply celebrating diversity to taking a more active role in designing buildings, spaces, and processes that are more equitable and inclusive.

"The diversity of the population that exists is extremely important. This can be seen through the variety of food options available in the area. I worry that development will lead to gentrification and push these businesses out."

"Of course reconciliation and diversity are important. Edmonds is among the most diverse regions in Canada due to its clustering of immigration and refugee services, which is to be celebrated and continued."

[paraphrased] Invest more in community schools as they are on many of the front lines addressing many of the services we lack.

"Housing forms should be pedestrian scaled and provide ground oriented units."

"Housing, a lot of housing with an accent on community, co-op and low income housing. Priority should be given to density, but also to green/smaller/sustainable housing."

"Increasing affordable housing options."

"Mix of heights and densities allowing affordable housing, below market rentals. Mix of services and retail including healthcare and childcare to encourage mix of residents, families, seniors."

"Emphasis on housing that people can afford, as a result of the Mayor's task force recommendations, is of utmost importance. Expansion of amenities, services, etc. must be controlled so as to not affect the natural environment."

"I strongly support providing childcare space in any/every new development."

Transportation, Mobility and Parks/Public Spaces

Approximately 90% of survey respondents identified “enhancing the ecological function and public enjoyment of natural spaces and watercourses” and “improving access to recreation, nature and cultural amenities” as “very important” or “important” values to be considered as part of the vision for the new Edmonds Plan.

Approximately 80% of respondents noted that Edmonds either currently does not have enough parks and green spaces, or that there were enough existing park spaces but they could be improved upon.

Many comments acknowledged that Edmonds is home to a wealth of parks, trails and natural forested green spaces, though not all of it is currently accessible, well-programmed or otherwise useable by the general public. Overall, there was strong community sentiment to maintain and enhance the neighbourhood’s greenspaces, whether to achieve new useable recreational park or public use spaces, or to achieve other objectives such as ecological preservation and enhancement.

Over 75% of survey respondents identified “promoting safe, accessible and well-connected public spaces and streets” as a “very important” value to consider as part of the new Edmonds Plan.

Many residents commented on opportunities and challenges that they face on a daily basis when travelling and moving around the neighbourhood. Community members urged the following to be carefully considered as part of envisioning the future of the Edmonds neighbourhood:

- » improving pedestrian and cyclist access to the Edmonds SkyTrain station
- » addressing traffic congestion and lack of street parking that currently impacts many areas of Edmonds
- » enhancing streetscapes and urban trails to improve safety and accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists (e.g. more lighting, improved separation between user groups), and to introduce more greenery and landscaping to the street (e.g. through rain gardens, street tree canopies, and other forms of urban landscaping)
- » better access and programming of parks and green spaces throughout the neighbourhood, especially at major park spaces that are already valued by the community, such as Edmonds Park

Sample of Comments:

[paraphrased] Edmonds has poor sidewalks, lighting, services. North Burnaby has better services, and street designs/landscaping.

[paraphrased] South Burnaby and Edmonds need more spaces for people to chat, be social, and remain friendly.

“We need safer streets to accompany these goals, but not in 10 years as developers eventually get to it. There is a lack of sidewalks in the area and with increased density it feels unsafe.”

“Please don’t keep developing [in] forests.”

“Should put in new or enhanced parks, trails, public spaces, community services and amenities for residents. More upgrades/enhancements to the Edmonds Community Centre and upgrades/enhancements to the Tommy Douglas Library. More walking trails and greenery in the community.”

“More gathering spaces for families, seniors - benches, cafes, outdoor terraces, walking trails.”

Land Use, Built Form and Development Impacts

Comments received during Phase 1 revealed a mix of opinions on the types of building forms and heights that should be supported in different areas of Edmonds in the future. Many community members agreed that the tallest tower forms that are typical of Town Centres in Burnaby should be limited to the Mixed-Use Node areas at the intersection of Kingsway and Edmonds Street, near the Edmonds SkyTrain station, and at Southgate Village. Many respondents expressed that they did not want to see towers spread throughout the Town Centre, and that Edmonds overall should support a larger variety of shorter building forms than places like Metrotown or Brentwood, where towers are more typical throughout.

Many respondents noted that building heights for residential forms outside of the Mixed-Use Nodes should be carefully considered and further explored in future phases. This was particularly important in consideration of the community's highly diverse and large immigrant population, which many noted would benefit from specific lower-density housing forms (e.g. townhouses, rowhouses, low to mid-rise apartment forms) that encourage social interaction and gathering with neighbours and the community.

Overall, over 50% of survey respondents noted that they would find low to mid-rise apartment forms (between 4-12 storeys) as well as townhouse and rowhouse forms (3-4 storeys) supportable outside of the Mixed-Use Nodes and corridors identified in the preliminary land use framework.

While many supported exploring future opportunities for redevelopment and to renew the ageing building stock in some parts of Edmonds, many expressed concerns about the impacts of future development, such as tall towers, traffic and parking congestion impacts on existing and future residents, and other impacts on existing residents, especially on tenants in purpose-built rental buildings and dwelling units. It was noted that future policy direction to address these and other issues would be necessary as the Edmonds Plan is further developed.

Sample of Comments:

“I am concerned that we are creating too much density at the loss of fostering community open spaces, mental health, and the importance of tree cover.”

“I feel this development has too much density and height...”

“Emphasize community safety as a key aspect of the urban design which will help build community identity in Edmonds.”

“Heights kept to a minimum, not like Brentwood area where towers are all we see and it’s too much.”

“Regarding typography, heights and shapes are aesthetic considerations and will vary widely. Density should take into account the ability for anyone living in the building to feel safe and to retain natural light for each suite.”

“Promote high-quality urban design for all aspects of new developments, including building design, site layout, public spaces and accessibility.”

“No limits on height or density. Encourage growth of intensive industrial and employment uses, instead of converting to residential.”

Local Economy and Employment

Many community members expressed that while Edmonds already has a thriving local economy with many shops and basic commercial services, there is potential for much more improvement, especially as Edmonds continues to grow as a major regional Town Centre with an expanding diverse population. Community members generally appreciated having small, independently-owned businesses nearby that they could access to serve basic everyday needs, and wished for future policy direction to continue supporting similar small storefront businesses.

Discussions around food security were also prominent during Phase 1, with many community leaders and members noting that Edmonds would be a suitable neighbourhood to explore further implementation of community gardens (both in public spaces and in private common amenity areas), farmers' markets, and other strategies for enhancing food security and access to fresh, affordable, culturally-appropriate food and groceries for existing and future residents.

Over 75% of survey respondents supported or strongly supported encouraging creative employment uses in select areas of Edmonds as the community continues to grow.

Creative employment uses refer to places like arts and craft studios, workshops, galleries, small batch manufacturers, and flex-industrial spaces. Unlike more traditional industrial or manufacturing uses, creative employment uses are expected to be environmentally-friendly and non-disruptive to surrounding land uses, including residential uses.

Sample of Comments:

[paraphrased] Food insecurity is a big problem in the Edmonds area. There are lots of unused lands that could be used for community gardens. Community gardens are good for food but also for mental health.

"It will be great if we can extend the commercial area to make the area more pedestrian friendly."

"Creative employment a must. We also need more restaurants and pubs."

"Include spaces for small businesses that serve the community and social enterprises. Be deliberate about leveraging these spaces to support food security and to serve equity-seeking groups."

"Please think about supporting small businesses storefronts as part of mid-rises (e.g. cafes)."

Plan Area Boundary

During Phase 1 public consultation, options for amending the existing plan area boundary for the Edmonds Town Centre were presented, including options to expand the boundary north to Imperial Street, west to Gilley Avenue, and east to Canada Way. Feedback revealed a mix of opinions about the potential to amend the plan area boundary as part of the new Edmonds Plan, with many agreeing that it was an appropriate strategy. Others expressed concern or uncertainty about amending the existing plan area boundary, with some citing that more detailed information was needed about the intent for these additional areas in the future (e.g. future land uses and development potential).

It is noted that during Phase 2 public consultation, staff may seek further feedback on these potential plan boundary adjustments in the context of more comprehensive information that will be presented as part of the detailed draft plan directions, on key topic areas such as potential future land uses, building forms, mobility networks, housing strategies, and community amenities and services. This will help community members to provide more targeted and specific commentary on whether they support amending the plan area boundary for the Edmonds Plan.

Sample of Comments:

“I like that you identified the [amended plan boundary] areas. All good.”

“The boundaries seem logical. These are areas that will see the greatest impact from the plan.”

“Overall I do not agree with any of the changes you propose in any of the marked [plan boundary amendment] areas because you do not provide specifics.”

“Exclude [amended plan boundary] areas from the plan area.”

“I was surprised to know that these ... areas weren’t already part of Edmonds. I’m ok with expanding to these areas.”

Public Consultation Methodology

Aside from providing input on the Phase 1 public consultation content, community members in Edmonds also commented on the methods and strategies being used to reach out to the community and to invite the public to engage in the community planning process. It is noted that staff will continue to seek ways to improve upon future public consultation efforts, based on continual input received from the public.

