

EDMONTON'S URBAN WELLNESS PLAN



PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENT PROJECT.
March 2019

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INTRODUCTION

The RECOVER neighbourhoods have areas of vacant, underutilized and run down buildings and spaces that contribute to the perception that the area is undesirable and unsafe.

The purpose of the Public Realm Improvement project is to gain a clearer understanding of existing and new tools that could help spur private and public investment and create a good public realm in the RECOVER neighbourhoods.

The information gathered through the project is summarized in this report and presented in the three supporting tables.

BACKGROUND

In July 2017, Edmonton City Council directed Administration to look at how to best serve the City's very vulnerable population and to create an urban wellness plan. Council named this work RECOVER: Edmonton's Urban Wellness Plan.

Administration assembled a RECOVER team with a particular focus on human-centred design and social innovation. The team worked with researchers and social innovation experts to compile data including ethnographic research, a literature review, geographic information systems data mapping, neighbourhood profiles, strategy mapping, policy analysis and public engagement.

The team ultimately selected and tested 13 small-scale solutions to improve urban wellness. Success was measured against the key performance indicators of social capacity, economic vitality, safety and security, physical and mental health, and built and natural environment.

On August 21, 2018 Administration presented the work of RECOVER to City Council together with the following four recommendations, which Council approved:

1. That Administration continue Recover in the neighbourhoods of Boyle Street, McCauley, Central McDougall, Queen Mary Park and Downtown for up to five years to allow more time to measure changes of the indicators measuring urban wellness.
2. That Recover begin work in the Strathcona neighbourhood.

3. That Administration, in collaboration with partners, develop a Recover governance structure, to replace the three existing committees, and report back to City Council by the end of March 2019.
4. That Administration advance a distributed model for serving marginalized people to ensure facilities and services are available in other areas of the city where need is evident, and that Administration explore tools and incentives—regulatory, policy and funding levers—that can contribute to more informed, human centered infrastructure to support wellness in the core.

The goal of the RECOVER Public Realm Improvement project is to advance recommendation #4, above: specifically, that Administration explore tools and incentives—regulatory, policy and funding levers—that can contribute to more informed, human centered infrastructure to support wellness in the core.

KEY TERMS

For the purpose of the Public Realm Improvement project, “public realm” was defined as publicly accessible and/or visible outdoor space that is either publicly owned (such as streets, sidewalks, parks, trails), or privately owned (such as vacant lots, parking lots, building setback space, storefronts). “Tool” was defined as a policy, practice, program, funding commitment, or financial incentive that plays a role—or could play a role—in creating a good public realm in the RECOVER neighbourhoods.

In addition, when considering what a good public realm looks and feels like, the project team relied on the foundation of [The Community Wellbeing Framework](#). Created by Dialog together with The Conference Board of Canada, The Community Wellbeing Framework articulates five attributes that contribute to a good public realm: cultural, social, political, environmental and economic. Each of these attributes has correlating indicators and metrics which help to assess how design features contribute to community wellbeing.



Much like the RECOVER approach, the Community Wellbeing Framework is community-driven and holistic, recognizing wellbeing as the combination of social, economic, environmental, cultural, and political domains. There is significant overlap between the Framework domains and RECOVER’s wellness indicator categories of social capacity, economic vitality, safety and security, physical and mental health, and built and natural environments. As a result, the Framework lends itself well to being used as a robust, research-based approach for the RECOVER team to evaluate physical design features as they relate to wellness.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The RECOVER team convened two stakeholder workshops in early 2019 to explore the question “how might we improve the public realm in the RECOVER neighbourhoods?”.

The first workshop was held with internal City of Edmonton stakeholders from various business units in Urban Form and Corporate Strategic Development (development and zoning services, local economy, urban design, Walk Edmonton, Downtown and The Quarters), Financial and Corporate Services (real estate), and Citizen Services (Age Friendly Edmonton, community peace officers, Capital City Clean Up, neighbourhood revitalization).

The second workshop was held with members of the community and the development industry, including real estate brokers, small and medium scale developers, representatives from the Canadian Home Builders Association, the Infill Development

in Edmonton Association, the Commercial Real Estate Development Association, the North Edge Business Association, and the Old Strathcona Business Association, as well as artists, architects, consultants, entrepreneurs and community league members.

The output of the workshops was 1) an inventory of existing tools, and 2) ideas for potential new tools (or new combinations of existing tools) that could spur public and private investment in the RECOVER neighbourhoods.

Subsequent to the two workshops, the project team correlated the newly created inventory of existing tools with the Community Wellness Framework indicators, in order to gain a high level understanding of alignment between the tools and indicators. In addition, the team compared the ideas for new tools with the existing tools already in place, in order to help identify gaps and opportunities for action in the RECOVER neighbourhoods.

PROJECT OUTPUTS

EXISTING TOOLS & THE COMMUNITY WELLBEING FRAMEWORK

The [Existing Tools Inventory](#) is a list of tools, actions, assets and levers—identified by stakeholders—that currently exist within the City of Edmonton and could help improve the public realm in the RECOVER neighbourhoods.

Each tool has been correlated with the Community Wellbeing Framework indicators; this correlation is shown through coloured blocks on the spreadsheet.

Overall, the cultural indicators are the most highly represented within the existing tools inventory, closely followed by the political and social indicator categories.

Environmental and economic indicators are somewhat less strongly addressed.

Within the cultural indicator category, 'cultural vitality' and 'sense of belonging' outperform 'learning' and 'play.' Within the social indicator category, 'welcoming' shows up most often, followed by 'socialization' and 'support systems.' For political indicators, 'sense of belonging' comes first, followed by 'collaboration' and then 'integration.'

Economic indicators are slightly more frequently represented than environmental indicators. 'Local economy' is the strongest economic indicator, while 'life cycle value'

shows up least often. The most highly recognized environmental indicator is 'delight and enjoyment', while the other three (natural systems, resilience, mobility) are represented more or less equally.

These findings are the result of a preliminary exploration. Further investigation could include assessing the efficacy of the existing tools, refining and categorizing the inventory, and diving deeper into the Community Wellbeing Framework to assess the tools on the basis of the metrics associated with each indicator.

POTENTIAL TOOLS, ALIGNMENT & GAP ANALYSIS

The [Ideas for Potential Tools](#) table, the second output from the stakeholder workshops, is a list of ideas phrased as “what if” statements. The list comprehensively captures what was said during the workshops.

Six broad themes emerged from the ideas generated for potential new tools: land use and development, maintenance and cleanliness, communication and collaboration, streets and urban design, arts and activation, and culture and enforcement. The themes are overlapping and mutually reinforcing.

After the workshops, the potential new tools were compared to existing tools in order to identify alignment and opportunity areas. The [Tools Gap Analysis](#) table presents a flow of information that starts with “what if” statements generated at the workshops, extrapolates a potential tool from the statement, aligns any existing tools with the potential tool, and suggests whether there is a gap between the two and therefore a good opportunity for action.

“What if” statements were not included in the table if they were repeats of previous statements, or if they were too vague or too high level to be linked to a clear action. In addition, existing tools that do not clearly correspond with a potential new idea were not included in the table, in order to focus on the gap/opportunity between potential and existing tools. The level of opportunity was assessed based on the existing tools’ applicability to the new ideas in terms of geographic area and relevance/similarity of objective.

The gap analysis suggests that there are numerous areas where potential actions, ideas and prototypes could help improve the public realm in the RECOVER neighbourhoods.

The most significant area of opportunity appears to be the domain of land use and development; there are relatively few existing tools in this area and a clear gap between the existing tools and the ideas for potential tools that emerged at the workshops. The domains of streets and urban design and arts and activation also had relatively few existing tools and many new ideas with a high level of potential.

With regard to the domains of maintenance and cleanliness and communication and collaboration, the information suggests that there are a number of initiatives already underway—about half of the proposed new tools correlate with existing tools that have comparable objectives. That being said, there are still numerous gaps and opportunity areas that could be worthwhile to explore.

Culture and enforcement had fewer existing tools in place than the other domains; the ideas for new tools show a split of high and moderately high levels of opportunity for action.

These findings indicate a direction for further exploration; all ideas will require further investigation, scoping and feasibility assessment before being tested or applied.

KEY FINDINGS + NEXT STEPS

The purpose of the Public Realm Improvement project is to gain a clearer understanding of existing and new tools that could help spur private and public investment, create a healthy public realm, and support wellness in the RECOVER neighbourhoods.

Edmonton has many assets to leverage in this regard: the workshops demonstrated that there is a lot of interest in the intersection of wellness with the public realm, an extensive list of existing tools, and many fresh ideas for new tools. There are also a lot of touchpoints for many people and programs, as well as energy to explore the topics more.

That being said, shifting the public realm in the RECOVER neighbourhoods will require a dedicated and multi-faceted approach. While there are many existing tools and levers, programs and/or assets that can be used to improve wellness related to public realm—both within the City of Edmonton and with communities and the development industry—there is not a lot of analysis regarding whether or not these efforts are achieving the desired wellness outcomes for people. Existing tools may be meeting

program objectives, but the program objectives might not align with urban wellness outcomes. As a result, we do not know if they are improving wellbeing for individuals and communities as optimally as possible.

We also do not know how the existing tools are being applied—whether different communities (with different levels of income or ethnic groups) have equal access to the tools. Most City tools or programs are city-wide and might not be applied equitably.

With regard to potential new tools, we have identified some opportunity areas but have not yet prioritized ideas or assessed them for potential effectiveness or feasibility. It should be noted that workshop participants identified numerous ideas for improving public hygiene, creating temporary pop ups and animating storefronts, which provides some validation for the empty storefronts prototype as well as the public washrooms prototype and Project Welcome Mat.

These observations point toward some potential next steps that the RECOVER project team could consider:

- With regard to existing tools, there may be opportunities to provide new training and/or change the performance metrics for some of the programs to better align the tools with wellness outcomes.
- With regard to new tools, the team could consider evaluating and selecting promising tools to pilot from each of the theme areas that emerged during the workshops (land use and development, maintenance and cleanliness, communication and collaboration, streets and urban design, arts and activation, and culture and enforcement). It may be helpful to convene interested stakeholders for another workshop to validate the findings and refine the potential ideas.
- With regard to both existing and new tools, the project team could consider prototyping a selection of tools in a clearly defined geographic sub-area in a RECOVER neighbourhood, such as Church Street in the McCauley neighbourhood. A tightly defined geographic area would allow the project team to establish a baseline and measure improvement over time, after which successful tests could be scaled up and/or out.

During a follow-up workshop, stakeholders could be asked to assess promising existing and new tools relative to their ability to improve wellness outcomes; this would build

on the preliminary wellness indicator correlation performed by the RECOVER project team, shown in the [Existing Tools Inventory](#).

The final takeaway is that evaluation is key. Edmonton has a lot of levers and tools to effect change in the public realm, but there is a need for deeper analysis and much more evaluation both on what we are currently doing, and what we could be doing in the future.

Table 2: Ideas for Potential Tools	
1. Land Use and Development	
How might we encourage diverse housing options?	How might planning tools work towards the desired outcomes?
What if we ensured a mixed / diverse group of people lived here?	What if the zoning bylaw was half the size?
What if we ensured we had a whole range of housing options?	What if the zoning bylaw was modernized?
What if we ensured we had housing for a range of income levels?	What if we rezoned central core land to limited size industrial activity? (i.e.; a body shop in the core---not allowed currently because of zoning)
What if we worked towards spreading affordable housing across other parts of the city (rather than just central communities)?	What if there were tools that discouraged urban sprawl?
What if we removed barriers between people who rent and own?	What if we eliminated sprawl?
What if housing is a human right?	What if we used a density transfer provision under the zoning bylaw to transfer population from one location to another, and to free up land for other purposes?
What if all back alleys in mature neighbourhoods had garden/garage suites?	What if we used a density transfer to trade the value of one area for another?
What if we created movable homes?	What if we used Area Redevelopment Plans?
	How might we permit more temporary uses (including parks and housing)?
How might we reform or boost existing ideas, programs, and initiatives?	
What if we took the green shack idea to a new level?	How might we reevaluation our parking needs?
What if we expand / help facilitate Rust Magic (graffiti murals) to collaborate with property owners, build relationships, and beautify?	What if there were no more surface parking lots? (no incentive to own / operate parking lots or sit on underused land)?
What if we considered different delivery options (i.e. different scale) for grants / programs?	What if there were no more vacant lots in the core?
What if we change the requirements so that incentive programs can be more flexible?	What if we created no pay parking zones (no meters, no impark etc.)?
What if the city had more street teams? (i.e.; social agencies with COE)	What if we eliminated the need for parkades (through public transit, active transit, automated vehicles, etc.)?
What if we continued and expanded the Development Incentive Program so it applied beyond BIAs?	
What if the City could sweeten the pot for the Facade Improvement Program? (i.e.; cover up to 75%)?	How might the City set an example with its own land and buildings?
What if the City builds on the existing program in which BIAs prepare design briefs and students design bike racks accordingly (expand to community)	What if we reviewed City owned land to ensure maximal update and use?
What if we invested more in the Facade Improvement Program?	What if City owned land was reviewed regularly, and with a RECOVER lens?
What if we work with community recreation coordinators to facilitate micro grants to small community groups leading local projects?	What if we used public surplus land?
What if we assisted community leagues in depressed areas to function better (i.e.; programs like abundant communities)?	What if we improve store fronts of City owned buildings (even temporarily)?
What if we took an asset based approach to neighbourhood revitalization?	
What if we provide incentives (funding, tools) to get more people to be block connectors?	How might we promote and direct commercial development?
What if there was funding for both private and not-for-profit organizations that focus on placemaking and community wellness development?	What if we had more retail / commercial development in alleyways?
What if we examined process design and operating models within existing shelters?	What if we had more retail/ commercial at the end of each block?
What if we looked at accessibility for existing programs and projects?	What if we had more retail in general?
What if there were simpler rules for programs like Facade Improvement Program and Development Incentive Program?	What if we had more control over the mix of stores in commercial areas?

How might the City intervene to achieve the desired outcomes?	How might we optimize our buildings and spaces?
What if we used expropriation to unlock land development opportunities?	What if we had different uses of space, like dog parks?
What if property tax was used as an incentive to encourage development (eg. vacant land taxed at a higher rate)?	What if we provided edible parks?
What if there were disincentives for neglected / vacant / nuisance land [uses]?	What if we create a downtown urban forest?
What if there was property tax forgiveness for development of certain properties (vacant lots, derelict, etc.)?	What if we convert green spaces into landscaped gardens or other cool uses? (i.e.; boulevards, empty lots, city owned land)
What if [some] small scale spaces were exempt from taxes?	What if the Remand Centre is repurposed?
What if we use capital projects to advance change?	What if more people working downtown lived in the core?
What if we demolished all derelict buildings?	
What if we reconciled taxation to promote progress and dissuade speculation (ie. density transfer)?	How might we optimize local investment and ownership?
	What if community (groups) [co]owned properties? (ie. pooling money)
How might we address equitable access to food?	What if personal investment was put into local real estate?
What if we we ensured access to quality, affordable food?	
2. Maintenance and Cleanliness	
How might we create programs and systems that will foster cleaner looking neighbourhoods?	How might we address perceptions of lack of safety?
What if there was a deposit on coffee cups?	What if we made the urban core feel safer?
What if there was a deposit on discarded needles?	What if we used better lighting (ie. human scale) to make the urban core feel safer?
What if we use the "plastic bank" model and link it to the City's waste management strategy? (see TED talk)	What if we clean up spaces? (i.e.; in front of the Mustard Seed)
What if we created job opportunities around needle clean up?	
What if there was a community program for cleaning up public spaces (i.e.; Downtown Proud; River Valley Alliance)?	How might the City improve public hygiene?
What if there was a a public realm clean up and other initiatives to improve the public realm in the business improvement areas?	What if the city provided [more] public washrooms? (not porta potties)
What if the City supports a casual labour program in which people can earn money to clean the public realm, increasing community pride and engagement?	What if we created [mobile] public hygiene stations?
What if recyclables were returned in exchange for access to public services or facilities? (i.e. public transit or a rec. centre, etc.)	What if the City explores washroom access for people experiencing homelessness?
What if we have training in multiple languages on how to pick up needles? (for businesses)	What if we provided quality, cared for public washrooms? (learn from Whyte Ave.)
What if we repair broken items?	What if we provided water stations & cleaning stations?
What if we designate block custodians, like Capital City Cleanup Captains?	
What if we continued funding of Downtown Proud?	How might we approach maintenance demands?
	What if we maintained public realms to the same high standard as other areas of the city?
How might the City explore storage areas for the property of transient individuals?	What if we could amend bylaws to require that vacant lots are grassed/landscaped to minimum standards?
What if the City explores ways and places that people experiencing homelessness could keep their stuff and not have to haul it all around?	What if the City expanded the goat program into the RECOVER neighbourhoods?
What if we create storage areas for people living rough so they don't need to push shopping carts everywhere?	What if we began / take over high quality sidewalk maintenance?
	What if the City cleaned key sidewalks?
How might we create attractive walls?	What if we clean playgrounds? Or have 4 ft. fences around them to delineate kid zones?
What if we resurrect the "free walls" program? (EAC + Capital City Cleanup)	What if we examined standards and costs of cleaning key sidewalks?
What if we had all public walls covered with art (and not tagging / vandalism)?	

What if we combat graffiti through a mural program?	
3. Communication and Collaboration	
How might neighbourhoods respect and reflect the residents and their histories?	How might we enhance education?
What if the people who invest in a neighbourhood understood and respected the history and culture?	What if we provided education and/or on the job training for those with low skill levels?
What if there were policies in place that encouraged investors to respect the history and culture of an area?	What if we had social media training?
What if every community reflected the residents in it?	
What if existing organizations collaborated to bring about ONE goal?	How might we improve and enhance citizen engagement?
	What if we did more engagement, in general?
What if the City removed some of the barriers to desired outcomes?	What if there were tools to better engage the community?
What if there was a reduction on restrictions such as time and cost for public amenities (i.e.; public pools)?	What if there were tools to better capture multicultural diversity in our engagement activities? (i.e.; help to access services that break down communication, cultural barriers, etc.)
What if we had fewer barriers to starting and setting up a business?	What if community leagues & BIAs had more resources to engage with people?
What if our public services (like transit) changed to make it easier for people to participate in events, services, and amenities?	What if we provide free wifi in all public spaces?
What if the City reduces property taxes to support short term activations and community initiatives?	
What if we did more in some areas to create equity--to meet the different needs of different areas?	How might we shift the narratives and attitudes to improve outcomes?
What if we give access to funding for groups that aren't registered not-for-profits for events and activations?	What if our communities welcomed our temporary residents (i.e.; students)?
	What if we changed the narrative, our mental maps, by having deeper conversations about inclusion?
	What if we changed the narrative, our mental maps, by having more stories, histories and visuals that are positive? (eg. Giovanni Park)
How might we create new beneficial programs or services?	What if we showcased and shared the great assets and unique elements of each neighbourhood?
What if we provide a 'concierge' service for those in need?	
What if we provide "citizen advice bureaus" like those in England and Australia that give basic life information on everything? (no silos)	What if the City boasted about the great assets and unique elements of each neighbourhood?
What if we create a place where people can work on unclaimed bikes that were seized by police? Bikes could be customized then kept or sold.	What if we changed perceptions of community standards (i.e.; Glenora versus Boyle St.)?
What if we used social enterprise? (i.e.; Mustard Seed)	What if we shared success stories to promote a cultural shift?
What if we connect institutions to communities?	
4. Streets and Urban Design	
How might we facilitate and promote active and multi-modal transportation?	How might we improve the practices and processes that contribute to the creation of the public realm?
What if we had a bike share?	What if we planned spaces and people collectively in the city?
What if we had more pedestrian and cyclist-only streets?	What if we bring transportation department "with us" in projects?
What if there were more incentives to promote multi-modal transportation (eg. one plan for bus, LRT, bike shop, pogo, taxi, rideshare)	What if we coordinate urban design efforts (i.e. between public and private interface) to create higher quality design, as well as more consistency and congruence between the public and private spaces and between blocks, neighbourhoods, and across the city?
What if we facilitate active transportation change? (i.e.; closing a major street)	What if we prioritized good (high quality) design (versus what's cheapest or easiest in the short term)?
What if we facilitate active transportation through promoting a cultural shift?	What if we get more input from urban designers into transportation projects?
What if we facilitate active transportation change through addressing red tape, security concerns, and cost barriers?	What if we work more, and smarter with transportation to improve public realm design?

What if we had free ETS for all?	What if we work with in the City to eliminate silos to make the most of opportunities?
What if we remove barriers for pedestrians and cyclists?	What if we expanded neighbourhood renewal to look at social need and deficits, instead of looking only at the road?
	What if we think about how to alter the design of a new project for usability for disadvantaged persons?
How might we improve our urban design?	What if we think more about the impact of transportation infrastructure on non-drivers?
What if we plant things other than grass?	What if we took a more grassroots approach to urban design and planning, acknowledging that places already have a story / context?
What if we incorporated urban landscaping?	What if we considered the impact of new development on people currently using the space?
What if we change the city's landscaping policies?	What if we look at the public realm in these areas through a cultural lens?
What if the city put in different types of trees?	What if we explore the "urban village" idea?
What if we make lighting better and spruce areas up with greenery?	What if the City subsidizes projects that improve a community?
What if all of our sidewalks had tons of seating and were wider spaces?	
What if the City explores warming huts / shelters?	How might we improve the management of traffic?
What if the City explores bus shelters with warming features?	What if we incorporated traffic calming measures?
What if we had more public art?	What if we used self driving or automated vehicles to address traffic issues?
What if we could expand "paint the rails" at bus stops?	What if we use "smart city" technology to monitor and/or control traffic?
	What if we require drivers to pay for the roadways in proportion to their use?
5. Arts and Activation	
How might we remove the barriers for pop ups and temporary uses?	How might we proactively encourage activation of spaces?
What if the City made it easier to do pop up markets, events, and placemaking? (Cut the red tape, granted forgiveness on permitting, etc.)	What if there were grants specifically for pop ups?
What if we support a healthy local economy through small short term parklets, and easing the procedures to do it?	What if the City explores a pilot project: bring OSCAM to an area to see how street life would change--see what people want and where.
What if we reduce development permit barriers for temporary and short term uses and events?	What if we had a "take back the parking lot day" and animated the parking lots?
	What if the City had walking tours and a lunch guide?
How might we create and enhance amenities for all?	What if the City could infuse arts and culture into the communities?
What if we could develop our playgrounds for less money?	What if we animated spaces to get people outside and together?
What if we created more family spaces?	What if we ensure marginalized folks are included in animating spaces?
What if every community had every amenity?	What if we encouraged arts and culture pop ups in the core neighbourhoods? (i.e.; a travelling program)
What if we have adult playgrounds?	What if we rent shipping containers to artists as temporary art space?
	What if we allow artists to use vacant storefronts?
	What if we use art that is more temporary, organic, and simple?
	What if we encouraged back alley planting and art?
How might we take advantage of Edmonton's festival culture?	How might we incorporate murals?
What if we expanded Heritage Days to welcome diverse cultures with pop ups, closed street parties, etc. on the same weekend?	What if we used Rust Magic more?
What if we had more festivals and programs to bring people out?	What if we could paint more murals?

6. Culture and Enforcement

How might we alter enforcement to achieve desired outcomes?	How might we manage risk and promote innovation?
What if we could amend bylaws to speed up enforcement process (to change behaviours faster)?	What if we could be more proactive instead of reactive?
What if we have more alternative enforcement options?	What if the City entertains ideas that don't fit into the "mold"?
What if we test enforcement that isn't complaint driven?	What if we support risk taking so we don't have to "beg for forgiveness"?
What if we enforced existing bylaws? (i.e.; enforce the Zoning Bylaw to eliminate parking lots without permits?	What if the City, planners, developers, etc. espoused the new Winter City Design Guidelines?
What if we penalized property owners for neglecting properties?	What if the City intentionally were more open to trying new ideas; a cultural change with community input and leadership?
What if we amend the bylaws?	What if the province looked at schools in terms of how they contribute to the public realm (i.e.; St. Brendan's; Highlands)?
	What if we opened minds and hearts in the City, working toward senior leadership buy-in to innovation?
	What if we leveraged relationships with the province and the City (re: schools)?
	What will happen if we have ongoing commitment to these areas?

Table 3: TOOLS GAP ANALYSIS

Green = more opportunity (few or no existing tools in place)

Yellow = possible opportunity (one or more similar tools in place)

Orange = less opportunity (one or more matching tools in place)

GAP ANALYSIS FOR THEME 1: LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT

"What if..." statements	Proposed tool/action	Existing tools with comparable objectives	Opportunity
What if we reviewed City owned land to ensure maximal update and use?	Review City owned land	Vacant Lots For Urban Agriculture	Green
What if there was property tax forgiveness for development of properties (vacant lots, derelict, etc.)?	Targeted tax reduction after redevelopment	Development Incentive Program	Green
What if some small scale spaces were exempt from taxes?	Tax exemption for small sites	-	Green
What if the City reduces property taxes to support short term activations and community initiatives?	Directed tax allocation / community revitalization levies for targeted neighbourhood areas	Community Revitalization Levy Quarters Revitalization Levy	Green
What if there was a different tax rate (i.e. vacant land taxed more)?	Property tax increase on undesired land uses	-	Green
What if we had more retail / commercial development in alleyways?	Retail and commercial development in alleyways	-	Green
What if we had different uses of underused space, like dog parks?	Convert underdeveloped spaces to active uses	-	Green
What if we demolished all derelict buildings?	Demolish derelict buildings / restore heritage buildings	Facade Improvement Program	Green
What if we used expropriation to unlock land development opportunities?	Expropriate land in key areas	-	Green
What if we used density transfers?	Manage density and explore density trading	Grant Funding Program for Secondary and Garden Suites	Green

GAP ANALYSIS FOR THEME 2: CLEANLINESS AND MAINTENANCE

"What if..." Statements	Proposed tools	Existing Tools with Comparable Objectives	Opportunity
What if the City explores ways and places that homeless people could keep their stuff and not have to haul it all around (ie.; shopping cart parking lot)?	Shopping cart parking lot or storage area	-	
What if we created more public washrooms and [mobile] public hygiene stations?	Public hygiene and/or washing facilities	Public washrooms (Whyte Ave.)	
What if the City supports a casual labour program in which people can earn money to clean the public realm, increasing community pride and engagement?	Casual labour program	Capital City Cleanup Master Composter Recycler Partners in Parks	
What if we have training in multiple languages on how to pick up needles? (eg. for businesses)	Safe needle training	Safe Needle Disposal Kit (CCCU) Streetworks Safe injection sites Downtown Proud (temporarily paused)	
What if we use the "plastic bank" model & link to the Waste Management Strategy? What if there was a deposit on needles? coffee cups?	Establish a 'Plastics Bank' or other deposit programs	-	
What if we clean playgrounds, having a 4ft. fences around them to delineate "kid zones?"	Create "kid safe zones" in playgrounds	-	

What if we began high quality maintenance?	Evaluate and enhance enforcement of property maintenance	Beat officers Community liaison officers Regular uniformed patrols (including peace & municipal enforcement officers) Development compliance team (zoning bylaw) Graffiti Management Program	
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GAP ANALYSIS FOR THEME 3: COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATION

"What if..." Statements	Proposed tools	Existing Tools with Comparable Objectives	Opportunity
What if we provide "citizen advice bureaus" like those in England that give basic life info. on everything including municipal, provincial & federal domains?	Citizen Advice Bureau	311 211 City of Edmonton Website Transforming Edmonton Website	
What if citizens put stickers on buildings, spaces, etc. saying "I wish this was...?"	Engage the community through "I wish..."	-	
What if the City builds on the existing program where BIAs prepare design briefs and students design bike racks accordingly?	Collaborate with students or schools	-	
What if we provide free wifi in all public spaces?	Free wifi in the public realm	Free public wifi in City of Edmonton facilities	
What if we expand & help facilitate "Rust Magic" (graffiti murals) to collaborate with property owners---build relationships?	Expand collaboration with Rust Magic	Rust Magic Community Mural Matching Grant Program	
What if we ensured access to quality, affordable food?	Promote access to quality, affordable food	FRESH Community Gardens	

GAP ANALYSIS FOR THEME 4: STREETS AND URBAN DESIGN

"What if..." Statements	Proposed tools	Existing Tools with Comparable Objectives	Opportunity
What if we created no pay parking zones (no meters, no impark etc.)?	Create "no parking" zones / pedestrian streets	(former) City Lab	
What if there were no more surface parking lots? (no incentive to own / operate parking lots or sit on underused land)?	Eliminate surface parking lots	Shared Use Path	
What if we had free ETS for all?	Provide free Edmonton Transit Service	Edmonton Transit System PATH Bike lanes Uber Pogo TappCar PATH: Providing Accessible Transportation Here	
What if we had a bike share?	Bike share	Bike lanes Shared Use Path Uber Pogo TappCar	
What if we could expand "paint the rails" to bus stops?	Expand "Paint the Rails" program to transit centres and bus stops	Paint the Rails	
What if the City explores warming huts / shelters?	Heated shelters	-	
What if we plant things other than grass?	Alternative ground covers	Communities in Bloom Front Yards in Bloom Edmonton in Bloom Directory Community Gardens Bloomin' Boulevards Program Food forest & edible trees Open Data Edible Fruit Trees Map	

What if we support a healthy local economy through small short term parklets, and easing the procedures to do it?	Parklets	Grants for park development	
What if we used better lighting (eg. human scale) to make the urban core feel safer?	Enhanced street lighting	Tree Lighting Program	
What if we improve store fronts of City owned buildings (even temporarily)?	Beautify a neglected City building	Facade Improvement Program The "Graffiti Wall"	
What if we look at the public realm in these areas through a cultural lens?	Apply a cultural lens to development	Indigenous Artist-in-Residence (IAiR) program	
What if we create a place where people can work on unclaimed bikes that were seized by police? Bikes could be customized then kept or sold.	Bicycle repair depot	-	

GAP ANALYSIS FOR THEME 5: ARTS AND ACTIVATION

"What if..." Statements	Proposed tools	Existing Tools with Comparable Objectives	Opportunity
What if we expanded Heritage Days to welcome diverse cultures with pop ups, closed street parties, etc. on the same weekend?	Expand Heritage Days	Thematic crawl / tours (eg. garden, ghost tours, food crawl, etc.)	
What if we had different uses of the space like dog parks?	Set up a temporary dog park in an underutilized space	-	
What if we allow artists to use vacant storefronts?	Create storefront galleries	Facade Improvement Program	
What if we encouraged back alley planting and art?	Back alley planting and art	Community Mural Matching Grant Program	

		Alley of Light	
What if we took a green shack idea to a new level?	Expand the existing Green Shack Program	Green Shack Program	
What if we brought in shipping containers for art space?	Shipping container art park	The Open Source Street Art Pilot Program Soundscape and other activations	
What if we have adult playgrounds?	Adult playgrounds	"Happy Wall" Daily noon hour activities in Churchill Square (summer) Walking tours City Hall & Churchill Square	

GAP ANALYSIS FOR THEME 6: CULTURE AND ENFORCEMENT

"What if..." Statements	Proposed tools	Existing Tools with Comparable Objectives	Opportunity
What if we penalized property owners for neglecting properties?	Evaluate and enhance enforcement of property maintenance	Beat officers Community liaison officers Regular uniformed patrols (including peace & municipal enforcement officers)	
What if we enforced existing bylaws? (eg. enforce the Zoning Bylaw to eliminate parking lots without permits)	Enforce existing zoning bylaws	Development compliance team (zoning bylaw)	
What if we break down silos and do interdepartmental collaboration?	"No-silo" project	-	
What if we have more alternative enforcement options (eg. test enforcement that isn't complaint driven)?	Review Community Standards initiatives	Regular uniformed patrols (including peace & municipal enforcement officers)	