



City of Edmonton

Councillor Jennifer Rice
Ward Ipiihkoohkanipiaohsi

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July 16, 2023

Re: City's Infrastructure Projects in Ward Ipiihkoohkanipiaohsi Including LRT Update

Dear Ward Ipiihkoohkanipiaohsi residents:

Since there are a number of infrastructure projects currently occurring within our ward, I would like to provide a general update on these projects, as well as provide some detailed information on the Capital Line South LRT Extension project. As the Capital Line South LRT Extension project is a relatively larger project, the LRT project team will be sending out a separate bulletin (via Canada Post) with additional information for residents along the alignment of the LRT track.

City's Infrastructure Projects in Ward Ipiihkoohkanipiaohsi

Project Name	Type	Construction Start
1. Capital Line South LRT Extension (Phase 1)	LRT	Ongoing
2. Heritage Valley District Park	Open Space	Ongoing
3. Richford Trail Renewal	Open Space	Q3 2023
4. Southbrook Trail Renewal	Open Space	Q3 2023
5. Smith Crossing Pedestrian Bridge Replacement	Transportation	Ongoing
6. Twin Brooks Playground Park Redevelopment	Open Space	Q2 2023

1. Capital Line South LRT Extension (Phase 1)

- Early construction is well underway and the project has had a scope change. More information on the project's current status is in the sections below.
- Previous updates I provided to ward residents include two in-person community town halls (May 2 and September 21, 2022), plus two written updates (January and April 2023).

2. Heritage Valley District Park

- The development of the Heritage Valley District Park, includes sports fields, trails, and other base-level amenities (which does not include the development of facilities or open space within the two school envelopes).
- Construction is anticipated to resume in summer 2023 with target completion in fall 2023. The sports fields will not be accessible until fall 2023 as they need a full season for turf establishment.
- I brought two motions to City Council which received the Council's approval during the 2023-2026 city's budget deliberation: one is to start planning for a recreation centre with a swimming



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pool, and the other is to plan and design amenities (e.g., tennis courts) in Heritage Valley District Park.

3. **Twin Brooks Playground Park Redevelopment:** This project involves the redevelopment of the existing playground. The playground equipment supplier has been secured and construction began in spring 2023.
4. **Richford Trail Renewal:** This work includes the renewal of identified sections of the trail in Richford. Construction is anticipated to start in the summer of 2023, with construction completion in the fall of 2023.
5. **Southbrook Trail Renewal:** This project includes the renewal of two sections of asphalt trail that have reached the end of their lifecycle. The design has been completed and construction is anticipated to start in summer 2023, with construction completion in fall 2023.
6. **Smith Crossing Pedestrian Bridge Replacement:** Construction is underway on the Smith Crossing Pedestrian Bridge replacement located at 23 Avenue over Whitemud Creek. The new bridge is expected to open in fall 2023.

Capital Line South LRT Extension Project Update

❖ City Council's Decisions Regarding the Project's Scope Change

To keep the project on a budget in response to rising costs, the City's Administration proposed changes to the project's scope (see my April 16, 2023 update to ward residents for more details).

Ward residents weighed in on the proposed scope change telling me they prefer the LRT crossing at Ellerslie Road to be grade-separated as originally proposed, and expressed a variety of concerns regarding the Twin Brooks LRT station and fence materials along the LRT corridor. To address these concerns, residents provided some suggestions including exploring whether the Twin Brooks station should be delayed or canceled with its budget allocation transferred to the Heritage Valley North Station. As listening to community resident input is important to me, I informed our Mayor and all of Council of our community's input (including from my LRT town hall, follow-up survey, community petition, and recent Council committee meetings discussing the scope change which included input from public speakers from our community, as well as other input from ward residents).

Based on community input, I made three motions at City Council. The first pertained to having the City's Administration explore options including cost analysis for having a grade-separated LRT crossing at Ellerslie Road. The second pertained to building in phases or delaying the construction of the LRT station at Twin Brooks (to be built further in the future after the public safety concerns are addressed) so the Heritage Valley North station and facilities could benefit from additional funds during Phase 1 of the project. The third pertained to listening to community input to have the fence along the 111 Street LRT corridor constructed from concrete, brick, or similar materials, rather than wood. The first motion passed (received a majority vote by Council) and the other two motions did not pass (i.e., did not receive a majority vote from Council).



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❖ **In summary, the outcomes of the City Council's May 16, 2023 meeting include:**

- a. The **Heritage Valley North LRT station** will be built at grade level instead of elevated (Phase 1). Phase 1 construction ends at this station and does not cross Ellerslie Road. Grade separation of the LRT tracks when they cross Ellerslie Road remains a possibility (Phase 2). I will continue to advocate for a grade-separated crossing at Ellerslie Road as originally planned.
- b. The **Twin Brooks LRT station** will be built as originally approved in 2019 (Phase 1).
- c. The City's Administration will make the final decision on **fence materials** along the LRT corridor (Phase 1). The final materials for the wall have not yet been selected. The project team is looking into whether there are alternative materials that are the same quality and cost as wood. More exploration is needed.
- d. Building of additional **Park & Ride stalls at Heritage Valley** (expansion to 1,900 parking stalls) is delayed to a future time and future budget cycle not specified. There are currently 1,100 parking stalls available.
- e. **Fewer LRT cars** will be purchased than originally planned, and the Heritage Valley LRT Operations and Maintenance Centre will have reduced storage capacity and be smaller than originally planned (Phase 1).

Phase 1 of the Capital Line LRT extension will run from Century Park to Heritage Valley North. Phase 2 is envisioned to extend further South with Phase 3 envisioned to reach the airport. There has been some recent news coverage from the provincial government about getting a rail connection from Calgary's and Edmonton's airports to their downtowns; how this might affect the future of the LRT in Edmonton has not yet been determined.

❖ **There are a variety of news stories on the Capital LRT South Extension project from various media outlets, in which you can learn more about my actions, community engagement, and motions at Council**

- Scope change announced:
 - City News: *More LRT frustrations for Edmontonians*, edmonton.citynews.ca/video/2023/04/19/more-lrt-frustrations-for-edmontonians
 - Global News (Edmonton), *City of Edmonton looks to rein in spending on southwest LRT extension*, globalnews.ca/news/9622193/edmonton-scope-change-south-west-lrt-extension-ellerslie-road
 - Urban Affairs: *Should One Station Be Sacrificed for the Other to Survive*, urbanaffairs.ca/edmonton-ish/should-one-station-be-sacrificed-for-the-other-to-survive
 - CTV News Edmonton: *Edmonton proposes changes to Capital Line South LRT project to cut costs*, edmonton.ctvnews.ca/edmonton-proposes-changes-to-capital-line-south-lrt-project-to-cut-costs-1.6361066
 - Edmonton Sun: *GUNTER: Edmonton's LRT reality much different than its ambitious dream of an efficient transit system*, edmontonsun.com/opinion/columnists/gunter-edmontons-lrt-reality-much-different-than-its-ambitious-dream-of-transit-bliss



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- Edmonton Journal: *Edmonton Capital Line LRT extension will be scaled back or cost more*, [edmontonjournal.com/news/local-news/edmonton-capital-line-lrt-extension-will-be-scaled-back-or-cost-more](https://www.edmontonjournal.com/news/local-news/edmonton-capital-line-lrt-extension-will-be-scaled-back-or-cost-more)
- Executive Committee and public presentations:
 - Edmonton Journal, *Changing Edmonton's Capital Line LRT south plan unpopular but elevated station and crossing may cost \$100M more*, [edmontonjournal.com/news/local-news/changing-edmontons-capital-line-lrt-south-plan-unpopular-but-elevated-station-and-crossing-may-cost-100m-more](https://www.edmontonjournal.com/news/local-news/changing-edmontons-capital-line-lrt-south-plan-unpopular-but-elevated-station-and-crossing-may-cost-100m-more)
 - Global News (Edmonton), *LRT extension in south Edmonton, rising in cost, opposed by some residents*, globalnews.ca/news/9672148/capital-line-south-lrt-extension-twin-brooks/
- Council Decision:
 - Edmonton Journal: *Edmonton's Capital Line LRT extension to be scaled back but Twin Brooks station stays*, [edmontnjournal.com/news/local-news/edmontons-capital-line-lrt-extension-to-be-scaled-back-but-twin-brooks-station-stays](https://www.edmontonjournal.com/news/local-news/edmontons-capital-line-lrt-extension-to-be-scaled-back-but-twin-brooks-station-stays)
 - Urban Affairs: *Mayor: "It Makes No Sense" to Defer Twin Brooks Station*, urbanaffairs.ca/edmonton-ish/mayor-it-makes-no-sense-to-defer-twin-brooks-station

Early Works Construction

Early works construction is underway along 111 Street to prepare the alignment for the main Design-Build contractor to start major construction in 2024. Early works construction mainly consists of:

- Utility relocations (EPCOR, ATCO, Telus, Bell, Shaw).
- Construction of a lift station at the NE corner of 23 Avenue (for LRT underpass).
- Median removals at/near 23 Avenue to help with traffic flow.
- Select tree removals where necessary.
- Public impacts (lane closures, pedestrian detours, noise, dust, vibration, etc.).

For a more comprehensive list of early works, visit edmonton.ca/capitalsw

Advanced Left Turn Signal at 9 Avenue NW

I have been working with the City's Administration to address concerns from Twin Brooks residents about traffic challenges on 111 Street for northbound motorists turning left at 9 Avenue. As part of the Capital Line South Extension project, and in response to resident feedback, an advanced left turn signal was installed in June 2023 to help motorists turn left into Twin Brooks.

Questions and Answers

Q: Who is doing the Capital Line South LRT Extension construction?

A: Early works construction along 111 Street is being managed by EllisDon. A different group of companies will be hired in early 2024 to start building the major components of the LRT extension (stations, tracks, bridges, Operations, Maintenance Facility, etc). This group of companies will be referred to as the main Design-Build contractor.



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Q: What will happen to the berm In Skyrattler?

A: The majority of the berm will be removed to make way for the LRT tracks, shared-use path, and LRT underpass at 23 Avenue. A 1.5-1.8 metre high retaining wall will be built to keep the remaining berm in place and will help minimize noise and visual impacts of the train for property owners in this area.

Q: How many trees need to be removed for this project?

A: Approximately 500 trees will need to be removed. Once construction is completed, approximately 1,000 new trees will be planted. The Design-Build contractor is required to pay for every tree removed, so they are motivated to save as many trees as possible.

Q: Will there still be a shared-use path along 111 Street with access to Blackmud Creek?

A: Yes, there will be a shared-use path along the west side of 111 Street between 9 Avenue and Century Park with access to Blackmud Creek. The path will be part of the new LRT bridge over the creek. During construction, there may be times when sections of the shared-use path are temporarily closed.

For more information, please visit the city's project website: edmonton.ca/capitalsw

Construction Works and Impacts

1. Traffic Lane Adjustments at 23 Avenue and 111 Street



EPCOR Water will be adjusting traffic lanes to the north, south, east, and west of the 23 Avenue and 111 Street intersection beginning on/around July 15 until mid-August 2023. The Century Park Transit Centre "Kiss and Ride" will be temporarily relocated further south (see image).

2. Utility Relocation and EPCOR Project: 111 Street between 12 Avenue and 23 Avenue NW

- a. As part of the Capital Line South LRT Extension Project, EPCOR is responsible for relocating all the power, water and drainage utilities to avoid potential conflicts with the future Capital Line South LRT extension infrastructure. The next two stages of drainage work will include sanitary relocations north and south of Blackmud Creek (Work Areas #2 and #4). Regular working hours are 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Monday to Saturday.



b. There are four work areas for the drainage work:

Work Area #1 – Storm relocation on the west side of 111 Street between 19 Avenue and 23 Avenue NW.

- Currently underway and anticipated to be completed by early August 2023.
- Construction notice for this work available on epcor.com/capitalline

Work Area #2 – Sanitary relocation on the west side of 111 Street, north of Blackmud Creek.

- Expected to begin in mid-July and anticipated to be completed by early August 2023. Construction will involve work further outlined in the notice from EPCOR.

Work Area #3 – Outfall & storm line relocation in Blackmud Creek.

- Expected to begin in late-July and anticipated to be completed by December 2023.

Work Area #4 – Sanitary relocation south of Blackmud Creek.

- Construction notice for this work available on epcor.com/capitalline
- Expected to begin early August and anticipated to be completed by early September 2023.
- Construction will involve work further outlined in the notice from EPCOR.

Note: Timelines are estimates and may change based on weather and construction conditions.



3. Traffic Impacts

- Two eastbound lanes on Saddleback Road will be closed near the work area. The westbound lanes will be converted into one lane in each direction to allow two-way traffic.
- The entrance/exit into Heatheridge Estates Apartments from/to Saddleback Road will be closed. Residents will be required to use alternate accesses.
- One westbound lane on 12 Avenue west of 111 Street will be closed.



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4. Pedestrian Impacts

- The sidewalk on the south side of Saddleback Road will be closed near the work area. A detour will be provided at 111A Street.
- The sidewalk on the north side of 12 Avenue will be closed near the work area. A detour will be provided at 112 Street.

5. Green Spaces Impact

- A large portion of the green space on the south side of Saddleback Road and on the west side of 111 Street will be closed and used as the work areas and laydown areas for the project.
- A large portion of the green space on the west side of 111 Street will be closed and used as work areas for the project.

6. Safety

- The construction areas will be fenced and/or marked as restricted areas. Crews will take a variety of precautions to ensure public safety, and the public's assistance is requested in keeping children and pets a safe distance from the construction site and the equipment.

7. EPCOR Water

- Water utility locations will occur along 111 Street both north and south of 23 Avenue. Work will include moving a water transmission main to the east side of 111 Street. Work is anticipated to be completed within two months.

8. EPCOR Power/Power Outages

- Power work is occurring along 111 Street from 19 Avenue NW to 25 Avenue NW to relocate electricity infrastructure. Work is anticipated to be completed by early September 2023, with additional power utility relocation work scheduled for fall.
- Power outages may be necessary at times to ensure work can be completed safely. Customers can learn more about power outages at epcor.com/poweroutages

This is a considerable amount of information, thank you for reading this far. As your councillor, I will continue to deliver on my commitment to listen and address the concerns you have regarding infrastructure improvements in our Ward Ipiihkoohkanipiaohsi including the Capital Line South LRT Extension project and other city issues.

Sincerely,
Jennifer Rice
City Councillor for Ward Ipiihkoohkanipiaohsi