

*For further information:*

## City of Edmonton

Planning & Development Department

6th Floor, Allstream Tower

10250 - 101 Street

Edmonton, AB T5J 3P4

Phone: (780) 496-6160

Fax: (780) 496-8450

email: [smartchoices@edmonton.ca](mailto:smartchoices@edmonton.ca)

[www.edmonton.ca/smartchoices](http://www.edmonton.ca/smartchoices)

## *The Benefits of Smart Choices Development*

- Revitalized older / mature neighbourhoods
- Improved quality of development
- Increased housing and transportation options for citizens
- Better utilization of existing infrastructure; reduced need for new infrastructure = fiscal savings
- Expanded (re-) development opportunities
- Less air pollution and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions
- More physically active / healthy citizens
- Enhanced community life



credit: IBI Group

## *The Smart Choices Program*

The "Smart Choices Program" is Edmonton's brand of the **smart growth** trend in urban planning. The Program, which represents a change in the way that the City will grow and redevelop, was approved by City Council on March 23, 2004 and is composed of 8 Initiatives:

1. Neighbourhood Re-investment
2. Residential Infill
3. Transit Oriented Development
4. Walkability
5. Urban Design
6. Redevelopment of Older Commercial and Industrial Lands
7. Planning Education and Public Consultation
8. Municipal Growth Scenario

The Smart Choices Program applies to both older / mature neighbourhoods and new suburban areas, and has 2 main objectives:

- To move the city toward a more fiscally and environmentally sustainable future; and
- To improve the quality of life and development in Edmonton.



credit: IBI Group

# *Smart Choices Development in Edmonton*

**SmartChoices**  
for developing our community





# What is Smart Choices Development?

"Smart Choices" is a program to change the way Edmonton grows and redevelops so that the city will be more fiscally and environmentally sustainable.

Smart Choices Development involves:

- **Accommodating a greater proportion of the City's growth within our older neighbourhoods;** on under-utilized commercial and industrial lands; and, around transit stations.
- **Improving the overall quality of development** in the City through greater attention to building and site design ("density with design").
- Providing a greater **mix of land uses** within neighbourhoods and across the city, rather than separating land uses.
- **Revitalizing** and reinvesting in **older neighbourhoods**, and creating more **vibrant new communities** ("urban villages").
- Providing more **options (choices) in housing**, and in **transportation** (with an emphasis on **transit, walking** and cycling) in every neighbourhood.

Unlike the smart growth programs of some other cities, Edmonton's "Smart Choices Program" does **not** involve growth restriction boundaries (e.g. Portland, Oregon). Most importantly, the "Smart Choices Program" is **not** a "carte-blanche" sanction to increase density everywhere in Edmonton.

This Information Brochure provides a brief summary of the key features of Smart Choices Development.

## Features of Smart Choices Development

### 1. Neighbourhood Re-Investment

Neighbourhood Re-investment involves expenditures by the public, private (businesses, individuals) and the non-profit sectors in the City's older / mature neighbourhoods.

Neighbourhood Re-investment includes expenditures to upgrade or replace existing "hard" infrastructure (e.g. roads, sidewalks, sanitary and storm sewers, and street lighting) and "soft" infrastructure (e.g. parks and recreation facilities).

Neighbourhood Re-investment also includes the renovation of existing housing stock, and programs to build communities ("social capital").

Neighbourhood Re-investment is "smart" because it maintains and builds upon existing investments, and can reduce requirements for substantial expenditures in the future to remediate deteriorated neighbourhoods.



credit: IBI Group

### 2. Residential Infill

Residential Infill involves both small-scale and medium density residential redevelopment in Edmonton's older / mature neighbourhoods, in a form that is both compatible and complimentary to existing development.

Small-scale infill includes duplexes, small-lot housing, triplexes, and suites above garages. Medium density redevelopment includes row-housing and low-rise apartments.

Residential Infill is "smart" because it renews older neighbourhoods, uses existing infrastructure, and provides housing choices that allow residents to stay within familiar communities even when their housing needs change.



credit: IBI Group

### 3. Transit-Oriented Development

Transit Oriented Development (TOD) involves the development of a mix of medium to higher density land uses (residential, office, retail and civic) centred around, and integrated with, a transit station. TOD areas include high quality public spaces, and a road and pedestrian network that provides direct routes to the transit station. Buildings in TOD areas "address" the street, and most of the residential / commercial parking is provided underground or in structures.

TOD is "smart" because it contributes to increased ridership and transit system viability, and has environmental benefits. TOD also provides households with the choice to use transit and thereby reduce their transportation costs.



credit: IBI Group

### 4. Walkability

Walkability involves planning and designing the city and its neighbourhoods so that people have the opportunity to walk (and cycle) to everyday destinations for work, shopping, education and recreation. The major elements that contribute to a walkable city are a mix of land uses, higher population density to support businesses and schools, and an extensive and interconnected pedestrian network that includes sidewalks, walkways, and multi-use trails.

Walkability is "smart" because it reduces automobile traffic volumes and the requirements for additional roadway capacity, and it allows citizens to remain healthy through the physical activities of walking and cycling.



credit: IBI Group

### 5. Urban Design

Urban Design involves designing and arranging buildings, public spaces, and streets to enhance their appearance, function, and vitality, and to give character to an area ("place-making"). Special attention to design is essential to the success of mixed-use development and intensification.

Urban design is "smart" because it enhances the livability of the City, and the marketability / profitability of individual projects.



credit: IBI Group

### 6. Redevelopment of Older Commercial and Industrial Lands

The Redevelopment of Older Commercial and Industrial Lands involves the partial or complete redevelopment of older, underutilized commercial areas / shopping centres ("greyfields") and industrial areas ("brownfields"). These large sites provide an opportunity to create mixed-use "urban villages".

The Redevelopment of Older Commercial and Industrial Lands is "smart" because it utilizes existing infrastructure, may remediate contaminated sites, and increases the economic return and tax revenues of these formerly defunct properties.



Heritage Mall Redevelopment  
credit: Armin A. Preiksaitis & Associates Ltd.