

#### **5.4. NORTHEAST EXTENSION PLANNING OBJECTIVES AND PROPOSALS**

*To transform an area disturbed by resource extraction and utility development into a nature oriented outdoor recreation area which recreates a natural environment with emphasis on opportunity for waterfowl and wildlife observation, trail-based recreation activities and picnicking.*

##### **HERMITAGE PARK**

Redesign and landscape to:

- Improve the multi-purpose trail connection to Rundle Park.
- Extend multi-purpose trail northward along river edge connecting Kennedale and Kernohan ravines to future river crossing bridge to the proposed Clover Bar Recreation Area.
- Improve quality and distribution of picnic sites.
- Provide additional amenity services in a central location.
- Undertake an extensive program of naturalization and planting of native species to enhance quality of vegetation and wildlife habitat, to reduce visual intrusion of power line structures, and to rehabilitate disturbed utility corridor areas.
- Review potential for designation of Class 2 trails.

##### **KENNEDALE RAVINE**

- Develop a pedestrian only granular trail through the ravine, following existing trail and utility alignments, including minor pedestrian bridges or boardwalks where required.
- Develop a top of bank connection to the main river valley trail system in Hermitage Park through a combination of multi-purpose trails and on street routes.
- Restore areas of disturbed landscape in the ravine.

##### **LAKES**

- Enhance waterfowl habitat by naturalizing edge planting and careful design of trails adjacent to north lake.
- Naturalize edge treatment of south lakes.
- Relocate/consolidate north maintenance yard.
- Restore landscape at creek mouth.

##### **KERNOHAN RAVINE**

- Develop a trail through the ravine linking to the main river valley trail.

**Proposals for the Northeast Extension are shown on Map 24.**

#### **5.4.1 Recreation Activities and Amenity Proposals**

Recreation activities in this area are proposed to be limited to low intensity activities. The trail-based activities will include walking, jogging, cycling, cross country skiing, nature observation and photography. The activities in the park areas are proposed to be limited to picnicking, unstructured play and nature observation. More intensive and organized activities should be directed to nearby Rundle Park.

Some reorganization of the existing Hermitage Park picnic sites will be undertaken to make them more attractive and functional, but no increase in number of sites is proposed.

The washrooms presently available at the maintenance area near the entrance to the park will be retained. An additional amenity area is proposed north of the south Hermitage lakes where the facility could serve users in north Hermitage Park, the picnic areas adjacent to the lakes and users entering from Kennedale Ravine. The specific siting will depend on the restrictions imposed by the utility alignments. In future a small amenity area may be required near the future pedestrian bridge location. It is proposed that the existing maintenance yard in north Hermitage Park be relocated.

#### **5.4.2 Trails and Access Proposals**

Two parallel trail systems are proposed in this area. A pedestrian-only granular trail is proposed along the existing granular trail alignment from the Strathcona Science Park bridge and into Hermitage Park. The area under the bridge abutments requires a short length of paved multi-purpose trail because it is too narrow for two separate alignments. The granular trail will follow the existing trail alignment through south Hermitage Park to the area of the Tornado Memorial at the north end of the largest lake. A small bridge is required to cross the lake outlet. The granular trail will continue north through the area of the creek mouth where it will meet the trail from Kennedale Ravine and join the multi-purpose trail. A trail loop is proposed around the south lakes, providing a variety of walks. These trails are candidates for Class 2 designation.

In Kennedale Ravine a continuous granular trail is proposed from 40 Street to Hermitage Park. To the extent possible the trail will follow existing trail and utility alignments to avoid additional disturbance of the Ravine. Approximately seven pedestrian bridges will be needed to link the Kennedale trail. Stairs or steps would be installed along 34 Street, Victoria Trail and Clareview Road to provide neighbourhood access due to the steepness of the banks of the ravine.

In Kernohan Ravine short and long term alternatives are possible. In the short term a granular trail is proposed along the existing trail alignment. In the longer term, this trail could be paved providing multi-purpose access to the future bridge crossing to the Clover Bar area.

A network of paved multi-purpose routes is proposed. Starting from the end of the existing system in Rundle Park the trail would follow along the existing park access road to the golf course parking lot and along the top of bank at the east side of the golf course. Trail routes have been identified around the perimeter of the golf course to provide a multi-purpose trail loop through Rundle Park and provide additional access into the adjacent neighbourhoods. The multi-purpose trail would continue under the bridge spans where the bank is too narrow to make separate paved and granular trails feasible.

The multi-purpose trail would continue through Hermitage Park around the west side of the meadow to the parking lot. A loop will be created around the south lakes, following the existing service vehicle track and the park road. The trail would continue into north Hermitage Park along the service road to Kernohan Ravine. A multi-purpose trail will continue north of Kernohan Ravine to 137 Avenue.

A paved multi-purpose trail is proposed along the top of bank on the south side of Kennedale ravine to provide multi-purpose access into Hermitage Park for a substantial area of Hermitage and Homesteader area. This trail will be developed as a combination of separate and on-street routes.

#### **5.4.3 Automobile Access**

Automobile access into Hermitage Park is provided along Hermitage Road. The capacity of the existing parking areas should be reviewed in the longer term.

#### **5.4.4 Landscape Restoration**

Because the area has been extensively disturbed through a combination of resource extraction, utility development and natural disasters, landscape restoration will be an integral part of the site development. Areas of Kennedale ravine will require rehabilitation particularly where roads, utility crossings, and storm sewer outfalls occur. The area at the mouth of Kennedale Ravine between the two lake systems also requires landscape rehabilitation. It is proposed that the rehabilitation will use native plant species so that the effect is of speeding up the natural restorative process. In the south end of Hermitage Park it is proposed that maintenance activities be reviewed to allow regeneration of the forest cover. south of the toboggan hill. Maintenance practices along the perimeter of the lakes should reflect an objective of creating a lake edge of reeds, cattails and other native aquatic plants, to enhance the wildlife habitat and create a more natural lake edge.

#### **5.4.5 Long Term Proposals**

One future pedestrian bridge location has been identified in the Northeast area. This bridge would connect Hermitage Park to the recreation area which is to be created from the Clover Bar landfill site. This bridge will not be needed until the Clover Bar site has been closed and rehabilitated for recreation use. An alternative which may eliminate the need for this bridge would be to provide pedestrian and bicycle access through the future outer ring road river crossing. Both of these proposals are long term options (+10 years), and should be reviewed when plans for the outer ring road and the Clover Bar Landfill site are completed.

A hiking trail to Fort Saskatchewan is proposed as a long term extension of the proposed trail system. A north bank route is preferred and rights-of-way should be secured through subdivision or easements on an opportunity basis.