

The following sections address proposals for the Priority 1 areas.

## **5.2 SOUTHWEST EXTENSION PLANNING OBJECTIVES AND PROPOSALS**

*To link existing City-wide facilities and parks through complimentary multi-use and pedestrian trail systems using existing trail alignments extending from Kinsmen Park to a river crossing bridge at west end of Fort Edmonton Park.*

### **KINSMEN PARK, EMILY MURPHY PARK, HAWRELAK PARK**

*To rationalize the existing network of trails to provide opportunities for access while reducing potential for conflict and limiting impact on biologically and physically sensitive areas.*

- Develop a multi-purpose trail linkage from Kinsmen Sports Centre and Dudley Menzies Bridge area to the University and Groat Bridge along the top-of-bank.
- Direct bicycle traffic away from the flood-prone river bank area between Kinsmen Park and Emily Murphy Park.
- Redesign the river edge area of Emily Murphy Park to eliminate conflicts between trail users and picnickers, and simplify route access.
- Upgrade trails on perimeter of Hawrelak Park to provide alternative routes around the Park.

### **HAWRELAK PARK TO WHITEMUD CREEK**

- Provide continuous access to the paved multi-purpose trail by developing a pedestrian bridge connecting Hawrelak Park to Buena Vista Park.
- Direct users to a multi-purpose top-of-bank route to minimize impact on the sensitive river bank area between Hawrelak Park and Keillor Road.
- Convert Keillor Road to a paved multi purpose trail.
- Develop a bridge over Whitemud Creek to provide continuous trail access.
- Honour existing commitments to provide equine trails, while assessing long term needs.
- Identify a location for a potential future bridge between Hawrelak/Mayfair area and MacKinnon Ravine and evaluate need regularly in future.
- Review the appropriateness of Class 2 designation trails in the Hawrelak Park area.

## **MOUTH OF WHITEMUD CREEK TO FORT EDMONTON PARK**

*To integrate the Whitemud Creek trail with the main river valley trail and provide appropriate amenities.*

- Redesign Whitemud Park to reflect the closure of Keillor Road, reduce fragmentation, improve function and aesthetics and connect to Whitemud Creek Nature Reserve trails.
- Provide basic amenities to serve river valley and Whitemud Ravine trail users.
- Retain existing John Janzen Nature Centre river bank trail.
- Provide continuous access to the paved multi-purpose trail (which may connect the Fort Edmonton Park area to Wolf Willow Ravine via a future pedestrian bridge).
- Align trails to connect to Quesnell Bridge in the short term.
- Identify a location for a potential future bridge from Laurier Park to mouth of Whitemud Creek and evaluate need regularly in future.

## **WHITEMUD CREEK (completion of Phase I, Priority 2)**

*To protect a sensitive wildlife habitat and movement corridor by controlling public access.*

- develop a pedestrian-only granular trail and neighbourhood access trails following existing alignments wherever possible with small scale bridges as required for trail continuity.

**Proposals for the Southwest Extension are shown on Maps 21, 22 and 23.**

### **5.2.1 Recreation Activities and Amenity Proposals**

A broad range of recreation opportunities and activities are provided in this section of the river valley. Most activities are focused around the one-of-a-kind facilities presently existing, and are both extensive and intensive. Therefore, it is recommended that no new activities be introduced and that development be confined to rationalizing existing problems (such as reorganization of picnic areas) and upgrading trail linkages. Trail-based activities will increase including biking, walking, jogging, cross-country skiing, nature observation and photography.

Because of existing development in the area, amenities are already available at reasonable intervals at Fort Edmonton Park, the John Janzen Nature Centre, Hawrelak Park, Emily Murphy Park and Kinsmen Park. An amenity area at Whitemud Park is proposed with washrooms, bluphones and drinking water which would serve users of the main trail system and users of the Whitemud Creek trail system.

### **5.2.2 Trail and Access Proposals**

Parallel and complementary trail systems are proposed throughout most of the area. Most of the proposed trails will follow existing trail alignments, to minimize impact on vegetation.

Granular trails are proposed along the river edge and bank from the west end of Fort Edmonton Park, along the bank below Keillor Road, continuing north along the riverbank and around the perimeter of Hawrelak Park. These trails will follow existing alignments. Some of these trails are candidates for Class 2 multi-purpose use. The trail will be realigned through Emily Murphy Park, along the river edge through the University Forest Reserve and will link into Kinsmen Park along the river edge where it will connect to existing CCRP trails. A connection to the granular trail proposed for Whitemud Ravine will be made at the mouth of Whitemud Creek. The existing equine use of the trail from the Whitemud Equine Centre to Groat Bridge can be preserved, either for the short or long term.

A multi-purpose trail is proposed along the river edge from the west end of Fort Edmonton Park, using a portion of the park service road and crossing a new bridge at the mouth of Whitemud Creek. The trail will follow along the Keillor Road alignment to Saskatchewan Drive at 76 Avenue. The multi-purpose trail will continue as an on-street route along the edge of Saskatchewan Drive to University Avenue where it will connect to the existing Class 3 bicycle route to the University. Bicycle use will be excluded from the river bank area between Keillor Road and the south edge of Hawrelak Park. A paved multi-purpose trail will be developed around the perimeter of Hawrelak Park/ Mayfair Golf Club and along Emily Murphy Park Road with improved connections to the Groat Bridge sidewalk. The on-street route will follow an existing Class 3 bike route along Emily Murphy Park Road and Saskatchewan Drive at the northern edge of the University campus. A paved multi-purpose trail will be developed to

upgrade the connection from 111 Street down the river bank to the Kinsmen Sport Centre and to the Dudley Menzies LRT Bridge, and into the existing CCRP multi-purpose trails at the Walterdale Bridge. These trails will provide a combination of river valley and top-of-bank views, will avoid the most sensitive river bank areas in this section of the river valley and will provide opportunity for improved bicycle access to the University and Downtown from the west and southwest.

Five potential pedestrian bridge locations have been identified for this section of the river valley, only two are proposed for short term construction. The first proposed for construction would link the south end of Hawrelak Park (near the amphitheatre) and the north end of Buena Vista Park, and is necessary because of steep, unstable and environmentally sensitive slopes between Buena Vista Park and MacKinnon Ravine, and between Hawrelak and Whitemud Parks. The second proposed for construction is at the west end of Fort Edmonton Park, and is necessary because the route south toward Terwillegar Park is blocked by an area of residential development which extends to the river edge. This bridge will provide access for west end residents.

A future bridge may connect the Whitemud Park area with Laurier Park, because the route on the north bank of the river is blocked west of the Quesnell Bridge. This location has been identified as a potential pedestrian and streetcar bridge which would link the Fort Edmonton Park streetcar system to the Valley Zoo. Further study of the cost/benefit of this bridge is required. It is proposed to be delayed +10 years. In the short term trails will connect to the Quesnell Bridge. Another future pedestrian bridge is proposed between MacKinnon Ravine and the Mayfair Golf Club and is desirable to protect sensitive vegetation and habitat south of MacKinnon Ravine, but may prove to be unnecessary due to improvements to the Groat Bridge to accommodate pedestrians and bicycles and depending on the effectiveness of operational measures to limit access to this area.

A possible future location for a pedestrian bridge has been identified from the Equine Centre area to Buena Vista Park, depending on how and when the University Farm develops.

### **5.2.3 Automobile Access**

Automobile access to the parks and facilities in this section of the river valley is good and no additions are proposed. Reorganization of the Whitemud Park and Equine Centre access is proposed to relocate all automobile access to the Fox Drive entrance.